

Nāmarūpa; a Linguistic Perspective*

Liudmila Olalde

Abstract

Nāmarūpa (literally “name and form”) is widely known as a Buddhist concept, relevant in the context of dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*), and the *skandhas*. Yet, the compound is also found in the early *Upaniṣads* and a closer look at the Vedic corpus reveals that *nāman* and *rūpa* also appear closely related to each other in earlier texts. Generally, textual scholars explain *nāmarūpa*—both in Buddhist and non-Buddhist texts—as a designation of “individuality” or “empirical reality,” whereby *nāman* and *rūpa* tend to be regarded as counterparts. In this paper I consider the “non-Buddhist” use of the term from a linguistic perspective. Inspired on a 1987 article by Edward S. Small, I intend to explore to what extent modern theories on the linguistic sign—such as Saussure’s bipartite model of *signifier* and *signified*, and the triangle of reference of Ogden and Richards (1923)—may shed light on the relationship between *nāman* and *rūpa* and help us establish finer nuances in the meaning of the compound. The purpose of this analysis is to challenge tacit assumptions about language in recent interpretations of *nāmarūpa* and thus contribute to a better understanding of its usage in Buddhist texts prior to the systematization of the Abhidharma.

Introduction

Probably one of the first things that comes to mind when hearing the word *nāmarūpa* (literally “name and form”) is *nāmarūpa* as the fourth member of the Buddhist chain of dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*), a technical term that in Abhidharma literature is said to refer to the five *skandhas* or constituent groups, whereby *-rūpa* is identified with the *rūpaskandha* and *nāma-* with the other four groups *vedanā*, *saṃjñā*, *saṃskāra* and *viññāna*.¹ Along with this analysis, *nāmarūpa* is often explained as “mind and matter,” “mind and body,” “mental and physical phenomena,” and numerous similar

* Paper presented at the 16th World Sanskrit Conference, Bangkok, 30th June 2015.

¹ *nāma catvāro’rūpiṇaḥ skandhāḥ / katame catvāraḥ? vedanāskandhaḥ / saṃjñāskandhaḥ / saṃskāraskandhaḥ / viññānaskandhaḥ / idaṃ nāma / rūpaṃ katamat? yatkiṃcidrūpaṃ, taccatvāri mahābhūtāni / catvāri ca mahābhūtāny upādāya* (*Arthaviniścayasūtra*, Vaidya 1961: 312f.) “‘name’ refers to the non-material constituent groups. Which four? The feelings constituent group, the perceptions constituent group, the volitional processes constituent group, the consciousness constituent group. What is form? All that is form is the four great elements and what depends on the four great elements” (trans. LO; I follow Bhikkhu Ānandajoti [2009] in my translation of *skandha* and *saṃskāra*).

phrases.² Far less attention has been given to the non-Buddhist usage of the term prior to its fixation by the Abhidharma. As a compound word *nāmarūpa* is actually attested seven times in the early *Upaniṣads*;³ it is also found once in the *Jaiminīyopaniṣadbrāhmaṇa* or *Talavakāropaniṣad* (4.22.8) as well as in the first *Pariśiṣṭa* to the *Atharvaveda* (1.16.1). Moreover, phrases such as *nāma rūpaṃ ca* or *rūpaṃ caiva nāma ca* come up in the *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa*, the *Atharvaveda* and the *Taittirīyabrāhmaṇa*.⁴ Interestingly, scholars of Sanskrit and Buddhism seem to regard the non-Buddhist term as self-explanatory.⁵ Thus the discussions of the non-Buddhist *nāmarūpa* in research literature are normally brief and quite similar. The term is explained as referring either to individuality⁶ or to the “empirical world,”⁷ which is characterized by individuation. In the last decades, however, *nāmarūpa* has attracted the attention of scholars of Buddhism who turn back to the “older” usage in order to elaborate alternative interpretations that aim to grasp the “original” meaning of the Buddhist term. I observe that in doing so they have emphasized the twofold structure of the compound with renderings such as “name and named” (Hamilton 1996: 127), or “appearance and conceptualization.”⁸ These interpretations have three things in common: First, they regard *nāman* as the element in the compound that requires further explanation. Second, they understand “name” as “designation” and neglect the fact that it *also* (or may I say *actually*) means “proper

² For instance, “esprit et corps” (Masson-Oursel 1915: 32); “das Geistige und Materielle” (Geiger 1925: 2); “Geistigkeit und Körperlichkeit” (Nyanatiloka [1953] 1983: 132); “psychischer und physischer Organismus” (Frauwallner 1953: 212); “mental and physical phenomena, i.e., the objects of cognition or mind and body” (Yamada 1980: 267); “psychophysique” (Sugunasiri 1995: 415); “mentality-materiality” (Bodhi [1995] 2005: 30); “mind and bodily form” (Ānandajoti 2009: 6).

³ BĀU 1.4.7 and 1.6.3; ChU 6.3.2, 6.3.3, and 8.14.1; PrU 6.5; and MuU 3.2.8.

⁴ Whereas the phrases *rūpeṇa caiva nāmnā ... rūpaṃ caiva nāma ca* in ŚB 11.2.3 as well as the occurrences of *nāman* and *rūpa* in TB 2.2.7—where they appear in different sentences—are generally understood as equivalent to *nāmarūpa*, in the following passages it remains unclear whether the juxtaposition of these terms is related to the compound: AV 11.7.1. *ucchiṣṭe nāma rūpaṃ ca*; AV 12.5.9. *āyus ca rūpaṃ ca nāma ca*; TB 3.12.7. *tapo damam, nāma rūpaṃ ca bhūtānām*; TB 3.10.5. *tapo nāma rūpam amṛtam*.

⁵ For instance, Heinrich Kern (1882: 432): “Durch Name und Form stellt sich jedes Ding als solches, als Individuum dar. Darum erhält das zusammengesetzte Wort *nāmarūpam* Name-und-Form den Sinn oder die Bedeutung von Individualität.”

⁶ For instance, Stchoupak/Nitti/Renou (1959: 358a s.v. *nāman*) and Frauwallner ([1973] 1984: 72): “[...] the idea of names and forms (*nāmarūpe*) as a formative principle, which defines the nature and uniqueness of different things.” In the original German version (1953: 93): “[...] die Vorstellung von Namen und Form (*nāmarūpam*) als formendem Prinzip, welches Wesen und Eigenart der verschiedenen Dinge bestimmt.”

⁷ For instance: “empirische Realität” (Deussen 1921: 909a s.v. *Name*); “The definition of worldly reality as *nāma-rūpa*” (Falk 1943: 1); and “[...] a general expression for the empirical world is: the world of name and form (*nāmarūpa*)” (Staal 1979: 12).

⁸ Reat (1987: 18): “appearance and conceptualization of a given object of consciousness.”

name;” in this manner they understand *name* as “naming” and assume that it always encompasses conceptualisation.⁹ Third, they focus on the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* and the *Chāndogyopaniṣad*. The question I want to address in this paper is if the equation of *nāman* with conceptualisation and cognitive processes is really supported by the pre-Abhidharmic usage and meaning of the Sanskrit *nāman* or if it rather corresponds to a modern understanding of language as defined in post-Saussurean linguistics,¹⁰ that is, of language as a sign system. In the first part I will give an overview of two main theories on the linguistic sign advanced in modern linguistics in order to assess to what extent they can account for the relationship between *nāman* and *rūpa* in the Vedic texts (beginning with the *Ṛgveda*). In the second part I will examine some interpretations of the so called “pre-Buddhist” term on the basis of these linguistic theories. In the third part I will discuss the usage of *nāman* and *rūpa* as separate terms and lastly I will provide a more differentiated view of the *nāmarūpa*-passages in the *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Upaniṣads*, one that may better explain why *nāmarūpa* was fixed as a technical term in Buddhist literature.

1. The linguistic sign

According to a classical definition, a sign is something that stands for something else (*aliquid stat pro aliquo*). A characteristic feature of signs is furthermore that they are perceptible. Thus Augustine (354–430 CE) explains that

A sign is something that shows itself to the senses and something other than itself to the mind (*Signum est quod se ipsum sensui et praeter se aliquid animo ostendit*).¹¹

⁹ For instance, Hamilton in her discussion of BĀU 1.6.1–3 (1996: 122): “Everything that is *nāma* arises from speech (*vāc*); and everything that is *rūpa* arises from the eye. *Vāc* was an important term in the Brahmanical religion prior to the time of the Buddha as it was one of the subjects of speculation about the nature of the self and the universe in the late Vedic and early Upaniṣadic period. Here, however, apart from connotations associated with such speculation, the association of *nāma* with *vāc* suggests the conceptual nature of *nāma*: that it is the conferral of differentiation by verbal means, i.e. the practice of naming [...]”

¹⁰ Saussure’s pivotal role in the development of linguistics is summarised by Levin (1965: 138f.): “A shift from emphasis on the historical and comparative studies which had largely occupied the scholars of the nineteenth century can be dated at 1915, when F. de Saussure’s posthumous work, *Cours de linguistique générale* made its appearance. [...] Two of his contributions require special mention here: he drew a sharp distinction between the diachronic and the synchronic study of language, and he underlined the difference between *langue* and *parole*.”

¹¹ Augustine, *De dialectica*, ed. Jan Pinborg, translation with introduction and notes by B. Darrel Jackson, Dordrecht: Reidel. Quoted in Meier-Oeser 2011.

The question on whether this “other” is an idea or an object has been a matter of discussion for centuries in different disciplines¹² and the terminology varies considerably from one theory to another. Moreover, the relationship between the sign and this “other” has been approached from different perspectives with diverse consequences in terms of epistemology and ontology. In what follows I will focus on two models which are mainly concerned with the linguistic sign as such: the bipartite one by Ferdinand de Saussure and the so called triangle of signification by Ogden and Richards.

In his *Course of general linguistics*, Ferdinand de Saussure rejects the idea that a sign links a *word* with an *object*. Instead, he argues that the linguistic sign

[...] is based on an association made by the *mind* between two very different things, but which are *both mental and in the subject*: an acoustic image is associated with a concept.¹³

In Saussurean terminology the acoustic image is called “signifier” (*signifiant*) and the concept, “signified” (*signifié*). Other authors also speak of *form* and *content* or *form* and *meaning*.

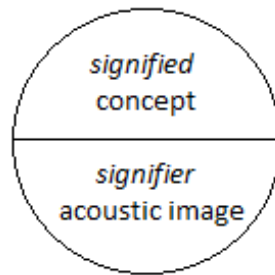


Fig. 1: Linguistic sign according to Saussure.

Some years later, the Saussurean model was modified by Ogden and Richards, who extended the twofold model into a triangle, incorporating the referent.

¹² For an overview, see Busse 2009: 24f.

¹³ Saussure 1993: 74a (my emphasis). In the original French version: “le signe linguistique repose sur une association faite par l’esprit entre deux choses très différentes, mais qui sont toutes deux psychiques et dans le sujet: une image acoustique est associée à un concept” (Saussure 1993: 74).

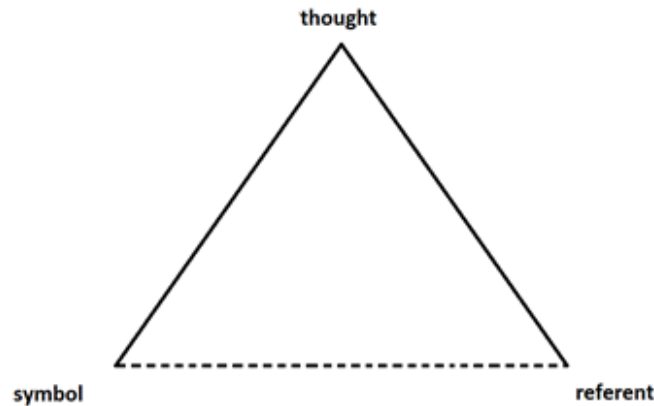


Fig. 2: Triangle of signification. Cf. Ogden and Richards [1923] 1972: 11.

Ogden and Richards' concern was to clarify that the relation between the symbol (or sign) and the referent is not real but merely imputed:

[...] in the normal situation we have to recognize that our triangle is without its base, that between Symbol and Referent no direct relation holds; and, further, that it is through this lack that most of the problems of language arise (Ogden and Richards [1923] 1972: 12, n. 1).

We can combine these two models and thus arrive at the following basic schema:

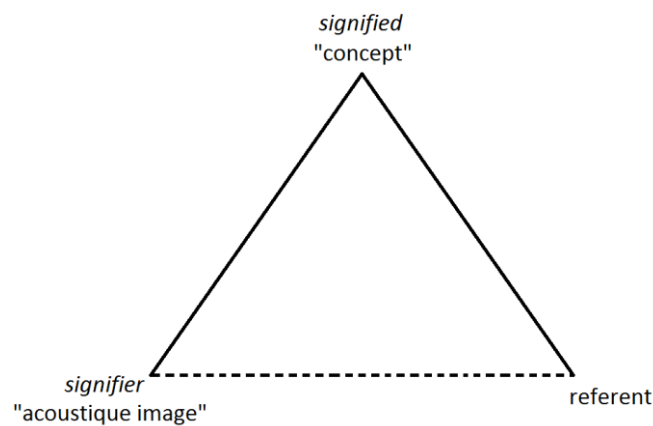


Fig. 3: Basic model of the linguistic sign.

I would like to stress that these models are *not* concerned with the “outside world,” but with the process of signification that makes communication possible. In this manner they turn away from the object and, so to speak, situate the sign *in* the subject. Furthermore, they postulate that the link between signs and their referents is an *arbitrary* one, established by social convention.

2. Some interpretations of the “pre-Buddhist” *nāmarūpa*

The idea of a possible correlation between *nāmarūpa* and Saussure’s linguistic sign was suggested by the linguist Edward S. Small in an article published in 1987. There Small associates *nāma-* with the signifier and *-rūpa* with the signified (Small 1987: 455). I find his suggestion worth considering because it differs from the other explanations I have encountered so far. For, in general, it is *nāma-* and not *-rūpa* which is associated with a concept or signified. Thus Reat interprets *nāman* as “conceptualisation” and *rūpa* as “appearance.”¹⁴ More ambiguous is Hamilton’s rendering “name and named,” which she further explains as “concept and conceived” (Hamilton 1996: 127). Bronkhorst for his part understands *rūpa* as the referent when he rephrases *nāmarūpa* as “words and the things denoted by them.”¹⁵ If we compare these interpretations on the basis of the model of the linguistic sign presented before, we can appreciate the discrepancies.

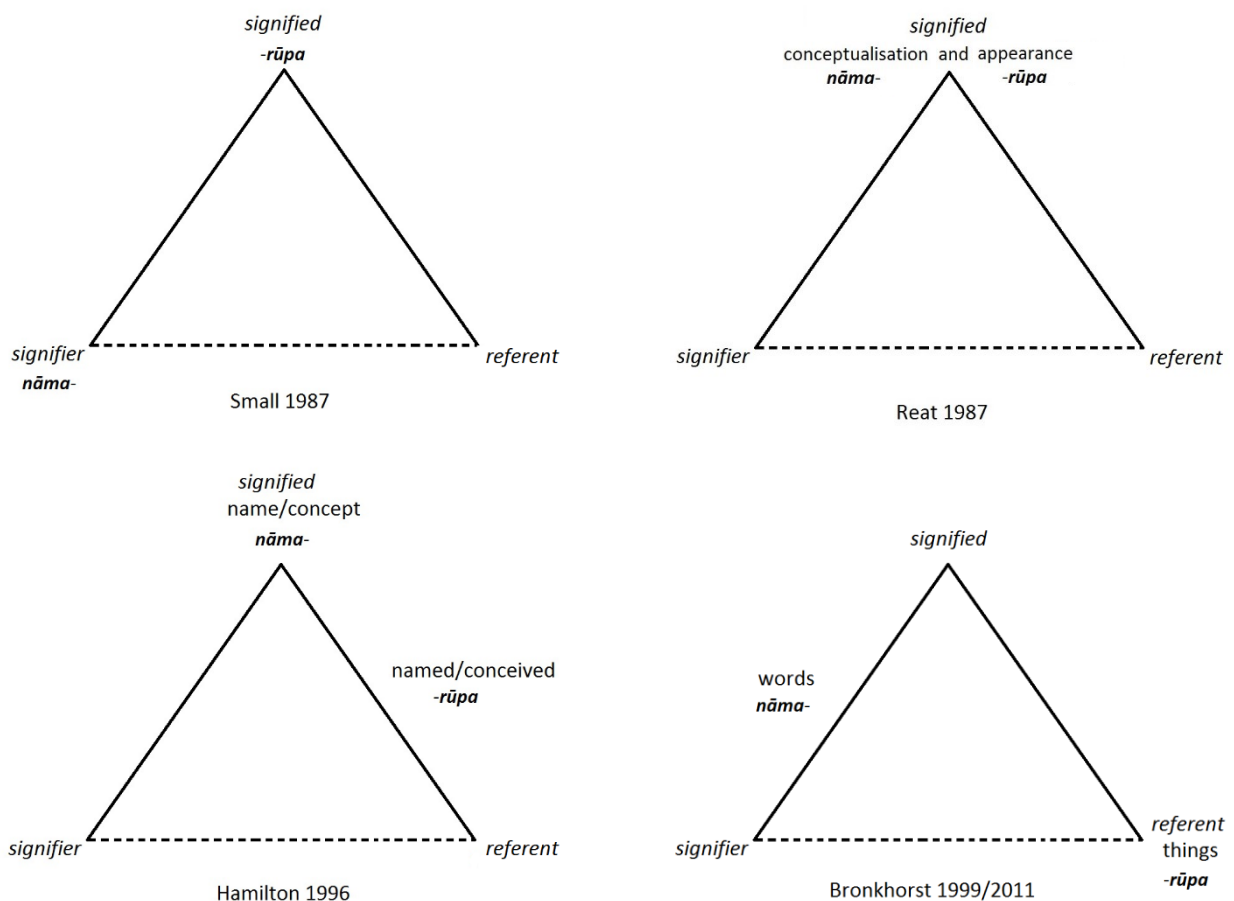


Fig. 4: Interpretations *nāmarūpa* and the basic model of the linguistic sign.

¹⁴ See above, n. 8.

¹⁵ Bronkhorst 2011: 3f. In the original French version: “les mots et les choses dénotées” (Bronkhorst 1999: 9).

3. *nāman* and *rūpa* in the Vedic texts

3.1. *nāman*: Is a name always a “sign”?

As early as the *Ṛgveda*, *nāman* comes up as “designation,” for instance in ṚV 7.103.6,¹⁶ where it is said that the frogs (*maṇḍūka*) bear one common name although they look different and make different sounds. In this case I would not object that *maṇḍūka* (frog),¹⁷ can be considered a sign and that it has a classificatory function. But *nāman* also comes up as a characteristic feature of an individual. For instance, in ṚV 10.169.2, where it is said that the cows look different (*virūpāḥ*) and—unlike the frogs—also bear personal names. And these names seem to be somehow different from our current understanding of personal names, for Agni is the only one who knows them and he gets access to that knowledge through the sacrifice.¹⁸ The same applies to the names of gods. In the *Ṛgveda* the different forms or manifestations of the gods are often called *nāman*¹⁹ and gods are said to have a secret name: *guhyaṃ nāma*.²⁰ This secret name is identified²¹ with the

¹⁶ ṚV 7.103.6a–c *gomāyur eko ajamāyur ekaḥ pṛśnir eko harita eka eṣām / samānaṃ nāma bibhrato virūpāḥ* “One is Cow-bellow and Goat-bleat the other, one Frog is Green and one of them is Spotty. They bear one common name, and yet they vary” (trans. Griffith). “Der eine blökt wie eine Kuh, der andere meckert wie ein Bock. Der eine unter ihnen ist gefleckt, der andere grün. Sie führen den gleichen Namen und sind doch verschiedenfarbig” (trans. Geldner).

¹⁷ Mentioned two verses before in ṚV 7.103.4c.

¹⁸ ṚV 10.169.2ab *yāḥ sarūpā virūpā ekarūpā yāsām agnir iṣṭyā nāmāni veda* “Like-coloured, various-hued, or single-coloured [cows, LO], whose names through sacrifice are known to Agni” (trans. Griffith). “Die gleichfarbigen, verschiedenfarbigen, einfarbigen [Kühe, LO], deren Namen Agni durch das Opfer kennt” (trans. Geldner).

¹⁹ For instance: ṚV 10.63.2ab *viśvā hi vo namasyāni vandyā nāmāni devā uta yajñiyāni vaḥ* “For worthy of obeisance, Gods, are all your names, worthy of adoration and of sacrifice” (trans. Griffith). “Denn alle eure Namen sind ehrwürdig, lobwürdig, ihr Götter, und anbetungswert” (trans. Geldner). Renou, for his part, takes *viśvā nāmāni* as substitute of *viśve devās* and explains: “le ‘nom’ étant du reste la personnalité même” (Renou 1958: 116). ṚV 10.54.4a–d *catvāri te asuryāni nāmādābhyāni mahiṣasya santi / tvam aṅga tāni viśvāni vitse yebhiḥ karmāni maghavañ cakārtha* “Thou [sc. Indra, LO], Mighty Steer, hast four supremest natures [*nāma*, LO], Asura natures that may ne’er be injured. All these, O Maghavan, thou surely knowest, wherewith thou hast performed thy great achievements” (trans. Griffith). “Vier sind deine [sc. Indra, LO], des Büffels, Herren-Namen, die untrüglichen. Du weißt alle diese, mit denen du, Gabenreicher, deine Taten vollbracht hast” (trans. Lüders 1959: 526).

ṚV 8.11.5a–c *martā amartyasya te bhūri nāma manāmahe / viprāso jātavedasaḥ* “We sages, mortals as we are, adore the mighty name of thee [sc. Agni, LO], Immortal Jātavedas’ name” (trans. Griffith). “Wir Sterblichen gedenken deiner [sc. Agnis, LO] vielen Namen, des Unsterblichen, des Jātavedas, wir Redekundigen” (trans. Geldner).

²⁰ ṚV 5.5.10a–c *yatra vettha vanaspate devānām guhyā nāmāni / tatra havyāni gāmaya* “Vanaspati, wherever thou knowest the Gods’ mysterious names, Send our oblations thitherward” (trans. Griffith). “(Da), wo du, Baum [Herr des Holzes], weißt, daß die geheimen Namen der Götter (verborgen sind), dahin mach die Opferspeisen gehen!” (trans. Scarlata). ṚV 9.95.2cd *devo devānaṃ guhyāni nāmāviṣkṛnoti* “As God, the secret names of Gods he [sc.

nature or essence of the name bearer and has to be concealed in order to protect the gods from the effect or influence that someone uttering these names would have on them. As for the efficacy of names, ŚB 6.1.3.9 goes even further. After narrating how Agni asks Prajāpati to give him a name to guard him against evil, it is said that one should therefore give a new-born child many names.²² This passage reveals that the efficacy of names is not restricted to the names of gods.

To my view the relation between personal names and the name bearer expressed in these texts is not that between a sign and its referent, for *nāman*, as a personal name, is not different from the name bearer, on the contrary it is an essential part of it.

3.2. rūpa: *The object of seeing*

In general, *rūpa* comes up as the object of seeing.²³ This is why it is often rendered as “colour,” “appearance” and “form.”²⁴ On the other hand, *rūpa* may also be a particular

Soma, LO] utters” (trans. Griffith). “Der Gott [Soma, LO] offenbart der Götter geheime Namen” (trans. Geldner).

ṚV 10.45.2cd *vidmā te nāma paramaṃ guhā yad vidmā tam utsaṃ yata ājagantha* “We know what name supreme thou [sc. Agni, LO] hast in secret: we know the source from which thou hast proceeded” (trans. Griffith). “Wir kennen deinen [sc. Agnis, LO] höchsten Namen, der geheim ist; wir kennen den Quell, von wannen du gekommen bist” (trans. Geldner).

ṚV 10.55.2ab *mahat tan nāma guhyam puruspr̥g yena bhūtaṃ janayo yena bhavyam* “That is the great much desired (or desired by many: *pr̥spr̥h*) secret name, with which thou [sc. Indra, LO] createdst what had come into existence and what was to exist” (trans. Gonda 1970: 85). “Das ist der große geheime vielbegehrte Name, mit dem du [sc. Indra, LO] alles Gewordene und Werdende erzeugt hast” (trans. Geldner).

²¹ See Grassmann [1872] 1964: 724 s.v. *nāman*; Böhtlingk/Roth 1855–1875: IV 113 s.v. *nāman*; Oldenberg 1919: 103; Lüders 1959: 526; and Mayrhofer 1992–2001: II 35.

²² ŚB 6.1.3.9. *tam prajāpatir abravīt | kumāra kiṃ rodiṣi yac chramāt tapaso 'dhi jāto 'sīti so 'bravīd anapahatapāpmā vā asmy ahitanāma nāma ma dhehūti tasmāt putrasya jātasya nāma kuryāt pāpmānam evāsya tad apahanty api dvitīyam api tṛtīyam abhipūrvam evāsya tat pāpmānam apahanti* “Prajāpati said to him [sc. to Agni, LO], ‘My boy, why criest thou, when thou art born out of labour and trouble?’ He said, ‘Nay, but I am not freed from (guarded against) evil; I have no name given me: give me a name!’ Hence one should give a name to the boy that is born, for thereby one frees him from evil;—even a second, even a third (name), for thereby one frees him from evil time after time” (trans. Eggeling).

²³ Thus in ṚV 1.164.44d it is said and we can only see the gliding of Vāyu, the wind, but not his *rūpa*: *dhrājir ekaśya dadṛṣe na rūpam* “of one the sweep is seen, but not his figure” (trans. Griffith); “das Dahingleiten des einen ist sichtbar, nicht die Gestalt” (trans. Witzel/Gotō). And in ŚB 11.8.3.8 Vāyu is said to be invisible because he has been deprived of his *rūpa*: *rūpam eva vāyor ādatta tasmād etasya lelayata ivaivopaśṛṅvanti na tv enam paśyanty ātmaṃ hy asya rūpam ā ha vai dviṣato bhrātr̥vyasya rūpam datte ya evaṃ veda* “He [sc. Āditya, the Sun, LO] took to himself Vāyu’s form; whence people hear it (the wind), as it were, shaking, but do not see it, for its form has been taken from it; and, verily, he who knows this takes away the form of his spiteful enemy” (trans. Eggeling).

²⁴ For instance: ṚV 7.97.6d *rūpam aruṣam* “rötliche Farbe” (trans. Geldner), “red colour” (trans. Griffith); ṚV 10.96.3d *rūpā haritā* “die goldgelben Farben” (trans. Geldner), Griffith and

instance, form or manifestation of something or someone,²⁵ for example in rituals.²⁶ In this respect *nāman* and *rūpa* actually overlap and nothing indicates that they are somehow dependent on each other. Moreover, in ŚB 11.2.3 *rūpa* is said to be greater (*jyāyas*) than *nāman*, for all that has a name has a *rūpa*²⁷ but not all that has a *rūpa* has a name.

3.3. Nāman and rūpa as constituents of an individual

In later texts (AV, AVPar, TB, JU and CU) *nāman* and *rūpa* are found next to each other in lists of different length.²⁸ These enumerations allow for different interpretations of *nāman* and *rūpa* which cannot be discussed here.²⁹ Suffice to say that they appear among other constituents of a *living being*, such as *prāṇa* (breath), *āyus* (life-time), and *manas* (mind), which indicates that *nāman* and *rūpa* were also considered to fall into this category. An understanding of *nāman* and *rūpa* as constituents is also supported by the passages that state that the loss of *nāman* and *rūpa* is not only possible but even

Wilson, on the contrary, translate “forms of golden hue” (trans. Griffith), “golden-tinted forms” (trans. Wilson); ṚV 10.21.3c *kṛṣṇā rūpāṇy arjunā* “schwarze und weiße Farben” (trans. Geldner), “Black and white-gleaming colours” (trans. Griffith), “black forms and white” (trans. Wilson); ṚV 1.71.10c *nabho na rūpaṃ jarimā mināti* “Das Alter schädigt die Gestalt [*rūpa*, LO] wie die Wolke” (trans. Witzel/Gotō); “Das Alter verändert das Aussehen [*rūpa*, LO] wie die Wolke (ihr Aussehen ändert)” (trans. Geldner). Interestingly, Griffith translates here *rūpa* as “body:” “Old age, like gathering cloud, impairs the body [*rūpa*, LO].”

²⁵ For instance: ṚV 6.47.18a *rūpaṃ rūpaṃ pratirūpo babhūva* “In every figure [*rūpa*, LO] he hath been the model [*pratirūpo*, LO]” (trans. Griffith). “Jeglicher Gestalt hat er sich angepaßt” (trans. Geldner). ṚV 3.53.8ab *rūpaṃ rūpaṃ maghavā bobhavīti māyāḥ kṛṇvānas tanvam pari svām* “Maghavan wareth every shape at pleasure, effecting magic changes in his body” (trans. Griffith). “In eine Gestalt nach der anderen verwandelt sich der Vermögende, am eigenen Körper [*tanū*, LO] (seine erstaunlichen) Fähigkeiten anwendend [*māyāḥ kṛṇvānaḥ*, LO]” (trans. Witzel).

²⁶ Such as ŚB 10.4.3.21: *tān nu sarvān ekam ivaivācakṣate ’gnir ity etasya hy evaitāni sarvāṇi rūpāṇi yathā saṃvatsarasyaḥorātrāṇy ardhmāsā māsā ṛtava evam asyaitāni sarvāṇi rūpāṇi* “all these (altars and hearths) are looked upon as only one, as Agni; for it is merely forms [*rūpāṇi*, LO] of him that they all are,—even as the days and nights, the half-moons, the months, and the seasons (are forms) of the year, so are they all forms of him (Agni)” (trans. Eggeling). “[D]iese alle [sc. Feueraltare, LO] benennt man wie einen: Agni, denn dessen *rūpa* sind sie alle. Wie (*rūpa*) des Jahres die Tage und Nächte, die Halbmonate, Monate, Jahreszeiten, so sind sie alle dessen *rūpa*” (Oldenberg 1919: 107).

²⁷ ŚB 11.2.3.5. *tayor anyataraj jyāyo rūpam eva yad dhy api nāma rūpam eva tat* “One of these two is the greater, namely Form; for whatever is Name, is indeed Form” (trans. Eggeling).

²⁸ For instance: AVPar 1.16.1. *prāṇo’pāno vyānaḥ samāna udānaś cakṣuḥ śrotram vān manas tan navamaṃ ... daśamaṃ nāmarūpe ekādaśadvādaśe* “Life-breath, in-breath, inter-breath, link-breath, up-breath, sight, hearing, speech, mind is the ninth, ... is the tenth, name and form are the eleventh and twelfth” (trans. LO; I follow Olivelle 1998 in the translation of the *prāṇas*). TB 3.10.5. *satyaṃ tapo nāma rūpam, amṛtam, cakṣuḥ, śrotram, mana āyuh* “truth, asceticism; name, form; immortality; sight, hearing; mind, vital power” (trans. Dumont).

²⁹ These passages are discussed in detail in Olalde 2014: chapter 1.3.

detrimental for the individual. Thus, in AV 12.5.9 it is said that a Kṣatriya who steals the cow of a Brahmin³⁰ will lose several things, among them *rūpa* and *nāman*.³¹ An interesting parallel is found in JU 3.20.5 and 3.20.8, where the patron of the sacrifice (*yajamāna*) asks the earth (*pṛthivī*) to give him back his name (*nāman*) and his body (*śarīra*).³² The special status of *nāman* among the other constituents is moreover emphasized in BĀU 3.2.12 when Yājñavalkya explains to Ārtabhāga that when a man dies the only thing that does not leave *him* is his name.³³

In view of the passages discussed so far, I would agree with Gonda when he concludes that:

[...] *nāman*- was regarded in many ancient milieus, as a [...] potency, a ‘power-substance’ which empirically, or within some form of experience is supposed to be present in persons, things and phenomena [...] names are as essential a part of man’s personality as his physical strength, his organs, his life-breath, ritual power etc. (Gonda 1970: 44).

Gonda does not distinguish between *nāman* as a personal name and *nāman* as a designation, a distinction that I am drawing here in order to highlight that an understanding of names as signs might be satisfactory when dealing with designations of objects, but it definitely becomes problematic when we try to account for the relation between living beings (or gods) and their personal names. Another argument against the assumption that *nāman* is necessarily a sign encompassing a series of cognitive processes

³⁰ AV 12.5.5. *tām ādadānasya brahmagavīm jinato brāhmaṇaṃ kṣatriyasya* “Of the Kshatriya who takes to himself that Brahman-cow, who scathes the Brahman” (trans. Whitney)

³¹ AV 12.5.6. *apa krāmati sūnṛtā vīryaṃ puṇyā lakṣmīḥ // 7. ojaś ca tejaś ca sahaś ca balaṃ ca vāk cendriyaṃ ca śrīś ca dharmaś ca // 8. brahma ca kṣatraṃ ca rāṣṭraṃ ca viśaś ca tvīśīś ca yaśaś ca varcaś ca draviṇaṃ ca // 9. āyuś ca rūpaṃ ca nāma ca kīrtiś ca prāṇaś cāpānaś ca cakṣuś ca śrotraṃ ca // 10. payaś ca rasaś cānnaṃ cānnādyam cartam ca satyam ceṣṭam ca pūrtaṃ ca prajā ca paśvaś ca // 11. tāni sarvāṇy apa krāmanti brahmagavīm ādadānasya jinato brāhmaṇaṃ kṣatriyasya //* “6. There departs the happiness, the heroism, the good luck. 7. Both force, and brilliancy, and power, and strength, and speech, and sense, and fortune, and virtue,— 8. and holiness, and dominion, and kingdom, and subjects, and brightness, and glory, and honor, and property,— 9. and life-time, and form, and name, and fame, and breath, and expiration, and sight, and hearing,— 10. and milk, and sap, and food, and food-eating, and righteousness, and truth, and sacrifice, and bestowal, and progeny, and cattle:— 11. All these depart from the Kshatriya who takes to himself the Brahman-cow, who scathes the Brahman” (trans. Whitney).

³² JU 3.20.8. *nāma me śarīram me pratiṣṭhā me / tan me tvayi tan me punar dehī’ti* “My name, my body, my foundation. That of me is in thee; give that back to me” (trans. Oertel).

³³ BĀU 3.2.12. *Yājñavalkyēti hovāca / yatrāyam puruṣo mriyate kim enaṃ na jahātīti / nāmeti / anantaṃ vai nāmānantā viśve devāḥ / anantaṃ eva sa tena lokaṃ jayati //* “‘Yājñavalkya,’ Ārtabhāga said again, ‘tell me—when a man dies, what is it that does not leave him?’ ‘His name,’ replied Yājñavalkya. ‘A name is without limit, and the All-gods are without limit. Limitless also is the world he wins by it’” (trans. Olivelle).

is that, to the best of my knowledge, in the early *Upaniṣads* *nāman* is nowhere described as the object of *manas*.³⁴ Instead it is repeatedly associated with *vāc* (speech), whereas *rūpa* is linked to *caḅṣus*, for instance by Yājñavalkya in his enumeration of the eight sense organs or apprehenders (*graha*) and their corresponding objects (*atigrāha*)³⁵ in BĀU 3.2:

BĀU	<i>graha</i>	<i>atigrāha</i>
3.2.2	<i>prāṇa</i>	<i>apāna</i>
3.2.3	<i>vāc</i>	<i>nāman</i>
3.2.4	<i>jihvā</i>	<i>rasa</i>
3.2.5	<i>caḅṣus</i>	<i>rūpa</i>
3.2.6	<i>śrotra</i>	<i>śabda</i>
3.2.7	<i>manas</i>	<i>kāma</i>
3.2.8	<i>hasta</i>	<i>karman</i>
3.2.9	<i>tvac</i>	<i>sparśa</i>

Fig. 5: The eight apprehenders (*graha*) and their objects (*atigrāha*) according to BĀU 3.2.

A similar scheme is found in KauṣU 3.2 and 3.3,³⁶ where once more *nāman* is associated to *vāc* and *rūpa* to *caḅṣus* (see fig. 6). In both cases, we do find *manas*, but it is associated with *kāma* (desire) and *dhyāna* (thought). Finally, I would like to highlight that in ŚB

³⁴ Although in KauṣU 1.7 Brahman's neuter names are correlated to *manas*, *nāman* here is not to be interpreted as the object of *manas* because this association is restricted to the correspondence in gender (cf. Olivelle 1998: 586). Brahman's feminine and masculine names are respectively associated with *prāṇa* and *vāc*: KauṣU 1.7. *tam āha kena me pauṁśnāni nāmāny āpnoṣīti / prāṇeneti brūyāt / kena napuṁśakānīti / manaseti / kena strīnāmānīti / vāceti / kena gandhān iti / ghrāneneti* "Brahman then asks him: 'By what means do you grasp my masculine names?' He should reply: 'With my breath.' 'And my neuter names?' 'With my mind.' 'And my feminine names?' 'With my speech.' 'And my odors?' 'With my sense of smell'" (trans. Olivelle).

³⁵ "Within the ritual, *graha* refers to a cup used to draw out Soma and *atigraha* refers to the offering of extra cupfuls of Soma. In the context of the body, *graha* is a sense organ and *atigraha* is the sense object grasped by it" (Olivelle 1998: 506).

³⁶ KauṣU 3.2. [...] *na hi kaścana śaknuyāt sakṛd vācā nāma prajñāpayituṃ caḅṣuṣā rūpaṁ śrotreṇa śabdaṃ manasā dhyānam* "For, no one is able to bring himself to perceive separately a name with his speech, a visible appearance with his sight, a sound with his hearing, or a thought with his mind" (trans. Olivelle). KauṣU 3.3. [...] *tad enaṃ vāk sarvair nāmbahiḥ sahāpyeti / caḅṣuḥ sarvai rūpaiḥ sahāpyeti / śrotraṃ sarvaiḥ śabdaiḥ sahāpyeti / manaḥ sarvair dhyānaiḥ sahāpyeti / sa yadāsmāc charīrād utkrāmati sahaivaitaiḥ sarvair utkrāmati //* "[...] his speech merges into it [sc. breath, *prāṇa*, LO] together with all the names; his sight merges into it together with all the visible appearances; his hearing merges into it together with all the sounds; and his mind merges into it together with all the thoughts. And when the breath finally departs from this body, it is together with all these that it departs" (trans. Olivelle).

11.2.3.6³⁷ it is explicitly said that *rūpa* is mind (*mano vai rūpam*), and *nāman* is speech (*vāg vai nāma*), which suggests that, if at all, it is *rūpa* and not *nāman*, which gets closer to a “mental image.”

	BĀU 3.2.3–7	KauṣU 3.2–3	ŚB 11.2.3.6
<i>vāc</i>	<i>nāman</i>	<i>nāman</i>	<i>nāman</i>
<i>cakṣus</i>	<i>rūpa</i>	<i>rūpa</i>	—
<i>manas</i>	<i>kāma</i>	<i>dhyāna</i>	<i>rūpa</i>

Fig. 6: Associations of *nāman* and *rūpa* with speech, the eye and the mind.

4. Nāmarūpa and the linguistic sign

The fact that *nāmarūpa* appears several times in cosmogonic narratives has led some authors to conclude that, according to the *Upaniṣads*, creation consisted of naming, that is, of differentiation and conceptualization by means of *nāmarūpa*.³⁸ Yet, what I observe in the cosmogonic narratives in the *Brāhmaṇas* and *Upaniṣads* where *nāmarūpa* appears is something different:

³⁷ See Appendix.

³⁸ For instance, Reat (1987: 18), who on the basis of BĀU 1.4.7, ChU 6.3.2–3 and 8.14.1 argues: “When it is said in the *Upaniṣads* that *creation consisted of the differentiation of the universe by means of nāma-rūpa*, what is implied is that the myriad discrete entities thus produced were and still are related in an orderly fashion by virtue of the fact that they bear names, which makes possible the conceptual ordering of manyness. Language was thought of as a discovery of the inherent conceptual relationships among things, so that from a very early period in Indian thought *conceptualization* was thought of as primarily a verbal phenomenon.” Another example is Hamilton (1996: 121f.): “In the earliest reference in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* [11.2.3, LO] we read that when the universe consisted just of undifferentiated Brahman (neuter), it differentiated itself by means of *nāmarūpa* [...] Similarly, we read in the *Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad* [1.4.7, LO] [...] that the unmanifest or undifferentiated (*avyākṛta*) world became differentiated (*vyākṛta*) by means of *nāma* and *rūpa* [...]”

ChU 6.2–3	ŚB 11.2.3.1–6	JU 4.22.1–8	TB 2.2.7	BĀU 1.4
the existent (<i>sat</i>)	<i>brahman</i>	space (<i>āśā</i>)	<i>prajāpati</i>	<i>ātman</i> <i>puruṣa</i>
heat (<i>tejas</i>)	gods (<i>deva</i>) deities (<i>devatā</i>) worlds (<i>loka</i>)	water (<i>ap</i>)	creatures (<i>prajā</i>)	husband and wife (<i>pati</i> and <i>patnī</i>)
water (<i>ap</i>)	<i>nāman</i> and <i>rūpa</i>	heat (<i>tapas</i>)	<i>nāmarūpa</i>	human beings (<i>manuṣya</i>)
food (<i>anna</i>)		<i>prāṇa</i>		animals
<i>nāmarūpa</i>		<i>apāna</i>		<i>agni</i>
		<i>vyāna</i>		<i>soma</i>
		<i>samāna</i>		<i>nāmarūpa</i>
		<i>udāna</i>		
		<i>nāmarūpa</i>		

Fig. 7: *nāmarūpa* in cosmogonic passages.

As fig. 7 shows,³⁹ according to these descriptions *nāmarūpa* is neither “responsible” for the creation of the universe nor for all differences in it. Actually, *nāmarūpa* steps in at the end of a more or less complex process of diversification.⁴⁰ That this differentiation is not merely conceptual is moreover stated in ChU 6, where heat (*tejas*), water (*ap*) and food (*anna*)—the “three *rūpās*” (*trīṇi rūpāṇi*)—are said to be the real (*satyam*).

ChU 6.4.1. *yad agne rohitaṁ rūpaṁ tejasas tad rūpaṁ / yac chuklaṁ tad apām / yat kṛṣṇaṁ tad annasya / apāgād agner agnitvam / vācārambhaṇaṁ vikāro nāmadheyaṁ trīṇi rūpāṇīty eva satyam //*

The red appearance of a fire is, in fact, the appearance of heat, the white, that of water, and the black, that of food. So vanishes from the fire the character of fire—the transformation is a verbal handle, a name—while the reality is just, “It’s the three appearances” (trans. Olivelle)

³⁹ These passages are quoted in the Appendix. For a detailed discussion, see Olalde 2014: chapters 1.4 and 1.5.

⁴⁰ Although in ChU 8.14.1 it is said that space “brings forth” (*nirvahitṛ*) name and form (*āśo vai nāma nāmarūpayor nirvahitā*), I think that this passage does not give enough elements to interpret it in cosmogonic terms. The meaning of *nirvahitṛ* is moreover unclear, as the following translations show: “Verily, what is called space is the *accomplisher* of name and form” (trans. Hume, my emphasis). “Der Äther (Raum, *ākāśa*) ist es, welcher die Namen und Gestalten *auseinanderdehnt*” (trans. Deussen, my emphasis). “En vérité, c’est l’*ākāśa* qui rend sensibles le nom et la forme” (trans. Silburn 1955: 111, my emphasis). “He who is called ether (l’*ākāśa*) is the *revealer* of all forms and names” (trans. Board of Oriental Scholars 2006: 250, my emphasis). “What is called space is that which *brings forth* name and visible appearance” (trans. Olivelle, my emphasis).

In these cosmogonic narratives *nāman* is most likely to be taken as a designation and *rūpa* as the form or appearance of things and living beings. And I think that this interpretation can indeed harmonize with the model of the linguistic sign presented at the beginning of this article (see fig. 3), yet in that case I would suggest, with Small, to regard *nāman* as a signifier (or acoustic image) and *rūpa* as the signified, leaving aside any tacit assumptions about the relation between language and the extra-linguistic reality. For, to my view, the ontological and epistemological status of *nāmarūpa* has to be examined in each particular case. Moreover, focussing on the acoustic nature of *nāman* can be the first step towards a better understanding of its relation to *vāc*.

Now, what about the passages that depict the liberation of a person? In MuU 3.2.8, for instance, an individual that has attained liberation is said to merge into *puruṣa* like a river merges into the ocean, losing thus his name and visible appearance:

MuU 3.2.8. *yathā nadyaḥ syandamānāḥ samudre astaṃ gacchanti nāmarūpe vihāya / tathā vidvān nāmarūpād vimuktaḥ parāt paraṃ puruṣam upaiti divyam*

As the rivers flow on and enter into the ocean giving up their names and appearances; So the knower, freed from name and appearance, reaches the heavenly Person, beyond the very highest (trans. Olivelle).⁴¹

Although one could take *nāmarūpa* as a set of cognitive processes that come to an end with liberation, we can also interpret *nāman* and *rūpa* as essential constituents of a living being, that is, *nāman* as a personal name and *rūpa* as shape or perhaps even body. This interpretation may be supported by ChU 6.10.1, where we find the simile of the rivers and the ocean but this time without *nāmarūpa*:

ChU 6.10.1. *imāḥ somya nadyaḥ purastāt prācyāḥ syandante paścāt pratīcyāḥ / tāḥ samudrāt samudram evāpiyanti / sa samudra eva bhavati / tā yathā tatra na vidur iyam aham asmīyam aham asmīti // 2. evam eva khalu somyemāḥ sarvāḥ prajāḥ sata āgamyā na viduḥ sata āgacchāmaha iti / ta iha vyāghro vā siṃho vā vṛko vā varāho vā kīṭo vā pataṅgo vā daṃśo vā maśako vā yad yad bhavanti tad ābhavanti //*

⁴¹ In PrU 6.5 the description is more complex: Puruṣa is said to be within the body (*śarīra*) and to consist of sixteen parts (*kalā*) which merge into Puruṣa at death. This process is compared to the rivers losing their names and visible appearances when merging into the ocean: *sa yathemā nadyaḥ syandamānāḥ samudrāyaṇāḥ samudraṃ prāpyāstaṃ gacchanti / bhidyete tāsāṃ nāmarūpe / samudra ity evaṃ procyate / evam evāsya paridraṣṭur imāḥ ṣoḍaśa kalāḥ puruṣāyaṇāḥ puruṣaṃ prāpyāstaṃ gacchanti / bhidyete cāsāṃ nāmarūpe / puruṣa ity evaṃ procyate / sa eṣo 'kalo 'mṛto bhavati* “Now, take these rivers. They flow toward the ocean and, upon reaching it, merge into the ocean and lose their name and visible appearance; one simply calls it the ocean. In just the same way, these sixteen parts of the person who is the perceiver proceed toward the person and, upon reaching him, merge into that person, losing their names and visible appearances; one simply calls it the person. He then becomes partless and immortal” (trans. Olivelle).

1. Now, take these rivers, son. The easterly ones flow toward the east, and the westerly ones flow toward the west. From the ocean, they merge into the very ocean; they become just the ocean. In that state they are not aware that: ‘I am that river,’ and ‘I am this river.’
2. In exactly the same way, son, when all these creatures reach the existent, they are not aware that: ‘We are reaching the existent.’ No matter what they are in this world—whether it is a tiger, a lion, a wolf, a boar, a worm, a moth, a gnat, or a mosquito—they all merge into that (trans. Olivelle).

Finally, I conclude that we can make sense of the term *nāmarūpa* by understanding that it can be considered from two different perspectives. If we are interested on the processes of conceptualisation that take place in the subject, *nāmarūpa* can be compatible with the linguistic sign. But if we focus on the object, *nāmarūpa* cannot be understood as a sign, because *nāman* and *rūpa* are actually part of the object. Thus, if we look at *nāmarūpa* from the latter perspective and interpret it as a shape or body that has a personal name, we could also explain the passages in the Pāli Canon where *nāmarūpa* is said to coagulate (*samucchissatha*)⁴² or to descend (*avakkanti*)⁴³ into the womb.

	<i>subject</i>	<i>object</i>
<i>nāman</i>	designation	personal name
<i>rūpa</i>	appearance	matter, body <i>tejas, ap, anna</i> (ChU 6.2–3) <i>śarīra</i> (JU 3.20.5 and 3.20.8)
	<i>linguistic sign</i>	<i>no linguistic sign</i>

Fig. 8: Two perspectives on *nāmarūpa*.

Furthermore, taking into account that personal names were considered an essential part of an individual that according to some texts⁴⁴ may persist after death one may speculate that this could go some way to explaining why *nāmarūpa* became a technical term in Buddhism and *nāman* was decomposed into the four non-material *skandhas*.

⁴² *Mahānidānasutta*, DN II 62–63.

⁴³ SN II 66/12.39 and SN II 101/12.64.

⁴⁴ Such as BĀU 3.2.12 (see above, n. 33) and ṚV 5.57.5cd: *sujātāso januṣā rukmavakṣaso divo arkā amṛtaṃ nāma bhejire* “Edel von Geburt, Goldschmuck an der Brust, die Sänger des Himmels, wurden sie unsterblichen Wesens [*amṛtaṃ nāma*, LO] teilhaft” (trans. Lüders 1959: 527); “wohlgeboren durch ihren Ursprung, mit goldenen Brustplatten geschmückt, haben sie als ‘Strahlen des Himmels’ sich einen unsterblichen Namen zugelegt” (trans. Scarlata). Griffith, on the contrary, read *nāman* as a metaphor: “Noble by birth, adorned with gold upon their breasts, the Singers of the sky have won immortal fame [*amṛtaṃ nāma*, LO]” (trans. Griffith).

Primary sources and translations

- AV *Atharva-Veda Saṃhitā. Sanskrit text, English translation, notes & index of verses according to the translation of W.D. Whitney and Bhāṣya of Sāyaṇācārya.* 3 vols., ed. K.L. Joshi. Delhi: Parimal Publications, 2004.
- AV (trans. Whitney) *Atharva-Veda-Saṃhitā. Translated into English with critical and exegetical commentary by William Dwight Whitney.* 2 vols., ed. C. Rockwell Lanman. Delhi/Varanasi/Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1984 (1st ed. 1905).
- AVPar *The Pariśiṣṭas of the Atharvaveda.* Vol. 1, part 1 (*Pariśiṣṭas I–XXXVI*), ed. G. Melville Bolling & J. v. Negelein. Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1909.
- BĀU *Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad.* See Olivelle 1998.
- BĀU (trans. Hume) See Hume 1921.
- BĀU (trans. Olivelle) See Olivelle 1998.
- ChU *Chāndogya Upaniṣad.* See Olivelle 1998.
- ChU (trans. Deussen) See Deussen 1921.
- ChU (trans. Hume) See Hume 1921.
- ChU (trans. Olivelle) See Olivelle 1998.
- DN *The Dīgha Nikāya.* 3 vols., ed. T.W. Rhys Davids & J. Estlin Carpenter. London: The Pali Text Society, 1889–1911.
- JU Oertel, Hanns. 1896. “The Jaiminīya or Talavakāra Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa: Text, translation, and notes.” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 16: 79–260.
- JU (trans. Oertel) See JU.
- KauṣU *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad.* See Olivelle 1998.
- KauṣU (trans. Olivelle) See Olivelle 1998.
- MuU *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad.* See Olivelle 1998.
- MuU (trans. Hume) See Hume 1921.
- MuU (trans. Olivelle) See Olivelle 1998.
- PrU *Praśna Upaniṣad.* See Olivelle 1998.
- PrU (trans. Olivelle) See Olivelle 1998.
- ṚV *Ṛgveda Saṃhitā. Sanskrit text, English translation and notes according to the translation of H.H. Wilson and Bhāṣya of Sāyaṇācārya.* 4 vols., ed. Ravi Prakash Arya & K.L. Joshi. Delhi: Parimal Publications, 1997.
- ṚV (trans. Geldner) See Geldner [1951] 2003.
- ṚV (trans. Griffith) *The Hymns of the Ṛgveda.* Trans. Ralph T.H. Griffith. Varanasi: The Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1963 (1st ed. 1889–1890).
- ṚV (trans. Scarlata) *Rig-Veda. Das Heilige Wissen. Dritter bis fünfter Liederkreis.* Trans. and ed. Michael Witzel (book III), Toshifumi Gotō (book IV), and Salvatore Scarlata (book V). Berlin: Verlag der Weltreligionen, 2013.

- ṚV (trans. Wilson) See ṚV.
- ṚV (trans. Witzel) *Rig-Veda. Das Heilige Wissen. Dritter bis fünfter Liederkreis.* Trans. and ed. Michael Witzel (book III), Toshifumi Gotō (book IV), and Salvatore Scarlata (book V). Berlin: Verlag der Weltreligionen, 2013.
- ṚV (trans. Witzel/Gotō) *Rig-Veda. Das Heilige Wissen. Erster und zweiter Liederkreis.* Trans. and ed. Michael Witzel & Toshifumi Gotō with the collaboration of Ejirō Dōyama and Mislav Ježić. Frankfurt a. M./Leipzig: Verlag der Weltreligionen, 2007.
- ŚB *The Śatapathabrāhmaṇa according to the Mādhyandina Recension.* 5 vols. Delhi: Gian Publishing House, 1987 (1st ed. 1940).
- ŚB (trans. Eggeling) See Eggeling [1882–1900] 1963.
- SN *The Saṃyutta-Nikāya of the Sutta-Piṭaka.* 5 vols., ed. M. Léon Feer. London: The Pali Text Society, 1884–1898.
- TB 2 *The Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa. With a commentary of Bhatta Bhaskara Misra supplemented with Sayana's Ashtaka II.* Ed. R. Shama Sastry. Mysore: The Government Branch Press, 1921.
- TB 3 Dumont, Paul-Emile. 1951. “The Special Kinds of Agnicayana (Or Special Methods of Building the Fire Altar) According to the Kaṭhas in the Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa: The Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Prapāṭhakas of the Third Kāṇḍa of the Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa with Translation.” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 85/6, December: 628–675.
- TB 3 (trans. Dumont) See TB 3.

References

- Ānandajoti, Bhikkhu, trans. 2009. *Pratītyasamutpādādivibhaṅganirdeśasūtram. Paṭicca-samuppādādivibhaṅganiddesasuttam. The Discourse giving the Explanation and Analysis of Conditional Origination from the Beginning. Text edited by P.L. Vaidya. Pāḷi Parallels and English Translation by Ānandajoti Bhikkhu.* <http://www.ancient-buddhist-texts.net/Texts-and-Translations/Short-Pieces-in-Sanskrit/Pratityasamutpadadivibhanganirdesasutram.pdf>.
- Board of Oriental Scholars, trans. 2006. *The Principal Upaniṣads (Sanskrit Text, Transliteration and English Translation with Notes).* Vol. 1. Ed. F. Max Müller. Delhi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishthan.
- Bodhi, Bikkhu. [1995] 2005. *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha. A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya.* 3. ed., trans. Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, ed. Bhikkhu Bodhi. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Böhtlingk, Otto & Rudolph Roth. 1855–1875. *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch.* 7 parts. St. Petersburg: Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Bronkhorst, Johannes. 1999. *Langage et Réalité: sur un épisode de la pensée indienne.* Brepols: Turnhout. (Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études Sciences Religieuses 105)
- 2011. *Language and Reality: On an Episode in Indian Thought.* Trans. Michael S. Allen & Rajam Raghunathan. Leiden: Brill.
- Busse, Dietrich. 2009. *Semantik.* Paderborn: Fink.
- Deussen, Paul, trans. 1921. *Sechzig Upanishad's des Veda.* 3. Aufl. Leipzig: Brockhaus.

- Eggeling, Julius, trans. [1882–1900] 1963. *The Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa. According to the text of the Mādhyandina school*. 5 vols. Oxford: The Clarendon Press.
- Falk, Maryla. 1943. *Nāma-rūpa and dharma-rūpa. Origin and Aspects of an Ancient Indian Conception*. Calcutta: University of Calcutta.
- Frauwallner, Erich. 1953. *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie*. Vol. 1. Salzburg: Otto Müller Verlag.
- [1973] 1984. *History of Indian Philosophy*. Vol 1. Trans. V.M. Bedekar. Delhi/Varanasi/Patna: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Geiger, Wilhelm. 1925. *Samyutta-Nikāya. Die in Gruppen geordnete Sammlung*. Vol. 2. München/Neubiberg: Oskar Schloss-Verlag.
- Geldner, Karl Friedrich, trans. [1951] 2003. *Der Rig-Veda. Aus dem Sanskrit übersetzt und mit einem laufenden Kommentar versehen von Karl Friedrich Geldner*. 3 parts. Cambridge, Mass./London: Harvard University Press. (Harvard Oriental Series 63)
- Gonda, Jan. 1970. *Notes on Names and the Name of God in Ancient India*. Amsterdam/London: North-Holland Publishing Company.
- Grassmann, Hermann. [1872] 1964. *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Hamilton, Sue. 1996. *Identity and Experience. The Constitution of the Human Being According to Early Buddhism*. London: Luzac Oriental.
- Hume, Robert Ernest, trans. 1921. *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*. London: Humphrey Milford/Oxford University Press.
- Kern, Heinrich. 1882. *Der Buddhismus und seine Geschichte in Indien. Eine Darstellung der Lehren und Geschichte der Buddhistischen Kirche*. 1. Bd., trans. Hermann Jacobi. Leipzig: Otto Schulze.
- Levin, Samuel R. 1965. “Modern Linguistics: Its Development and Scope.” *The Journal of Higher Education* 36/3: 137–146. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1979528>.
- Lüders, Heinrich. 1959. *Varuṇa*. Bd. II: *Varuṇa und das Ṛta*. Ed. Ludwig Alsdorf. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Masson-Oursel, Paul. 1915. “Essai d’interprétation de la théorie des douze conditions (*nidānas*). *Pratītya samutpāda*.” *Revue de l’Histoire des Religions* 71: 30–46.
- Mayrhofer, Manfred. 1992–2001. *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindiarischen*. 3 vols. Heidelberg: Winter.
- Meier-Oeser, Stephan. 2011. “Medieval Semiotics.” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Summer 2011 Edition, ed. Edward N. Zalta. <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2011/entries/semiotics-medieval/>.
- Nyanatiloka [1953] 1983. *Buddhistisches Wörterbuch*. Konstanz: Christiani.
- Ogden, C.K. and I.A. Richards. [1923] 1972. *The Meaning of Meaning*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Olalde, Liudmila. 2014. *Zum Begriff ‘nāmarūpa:’ Das Individuum im Pāli-Kanon*. Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute.
- Oldenberg, Hermann. 1919. *Vorwissenschaftliche Wissenschaft. Die Weltanschauung der Brāhmaṇa-Texte*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Olivelle, Patrick, trans. 1998. *The Early Upaniṣads. Annotated Text and Translation*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Reat, N. Ross. 1987. “Some Fundamental Concepts of Buddhist Psychology.” *Religion* 17: 15–28.

- Renou, Louis. 1957. *Études védiques et pāṇinéennes*. Vol. III. Paris: Boccard.
- 1958. *Études védiques et pāṇinéennes*. Vol. IV. Paris: Boccard.
- Saussure, Ferdinand de. 1993. *Troisième cours de linguistique générale (1910–1911): d’après les cahiers d’Emile Constantin*. Ed. Eisuke Komatsu, English translation by Roy Harris. Oxford/New York/Seoul/Tokyo: Pergamon Press. (Language and communication library 12)
- Silburn, Lilian 1955. *Instant et cause. Le discontinu dans la pensée philosophique de l’Inde*. Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin.
- Small, Edward S. 1987. “Semiotic Referentiality: Saussure’s Sign and the Sanskrit *nāmarūpa*.” *The American Journal of Semiotics* 5/3 & 4: 447–459.
- Staal, Frits. 1979. “Oriental Ideas on the Origin of Language.” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 99/1 (January–March): 1–14.
- Stchoupak, Nadine, Luigi Nitti & Louis Renou 1959. *Dictionnaire Sanskrit-Français*. Paris: Maisonneuve.
- Sugunasiri, Suwanda H.J. 1995. “The Whole Body, Not Heart, as ‘Seat of Consciousness:’ The Buddha’s View.” *Philosophy East and West* 45/3 (July): 409–430.
- Vaidya, P.L. 1961. *Mahāyāna-sūtra-saṃgraha*. Part I. Darbhanga: The Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning. (Buddhist Sanskrit Texts 17)
- Yamada, Isshi. 1980. “Premises and Implications of Interdependence.” In Somaratna Balasooriya, ed., *Buddhist Studies in Honour of Walpola Rahula*. London: Gordon Fraser-Vīmaṃsā, 266–293.

Appendix: Nāmarūpa in cosmogonic passages

ChU 6.2.2–6.3.4

6.2.2. [...] *sat tv eva somyedam agra āsīd ekam evādvitīyam // 3. tad aikṣata bahu syāṃ prajāyeyeti / tat tejo ’srjata / tat teja aikṣata / bahu syāṃ prajāyeyeti / tad apo ’srjata [...] // 4 tā āpa aikṣanta bahvyaḥ syāma prajāyema hīti / tā annam asrjanta [...] //*

6.3.1. *teṣāṃ khalv eṣāṃ bhūtānāṃ trīṇy eva bījāni bhavanty āṇḍajaṃ jīvajaṃ udbhijam iti // 2. seyaṃ devataikṣata hantāham imās tisro devatā anena jīvenātmanānupraviśya nāmarūpe vyākaraṇāṅhīti // 3. tāsāṃ trivṛtaṃ trivṛtam ekaikāṃ karavāṅhīti / seyaṃ devatemās tisro devatā anenaiva jīvenātmanānupraviśya nāmarūpe vyākaroḥ // 4. tāsāṃ trivṛtaṃ trivṛtam ekaikāṃ akarot / yathā tu khalu somyemās tisro devatās trivṛt trivṛd ekaikā bhavati tan me vijānīhīti //*

6.2.2. [...] On the contrary, son, in the beginning this world was simply what is existent— one only, without a second. 3. And it thought to itself: ‘Let me become many. Let me propagate myself.’ It emitted heat. The heat thought to itself: ‘Let me become many. Let me propagate myself.’ It emitted water. [...] 4. The water thought to itself: ‘Let me become many. Let me propagate myself.’ It emitted food. [...]

6.3.1. There are, as you can see, only three sources from which these creatures here originate: they are born from eggs, from living individuals, or from sprouts. 2. Then that same deity thought to itself: ‘Come now, why don’t I establish the distinctions of name

and appearance by entering these three deities here with this living self (*ātman*), 3. and make each of them threefold.’ So, that deity established the distinctions of name and appearance by entering these three deities here with this living self (*ātman*), 4. and made each of them threefold.

Learn from me, my son, how each of these deities becomes threefold. (trans. Olivelle)

ŚB 11.2.3.1–6

11.2.3.1. *brahma vā idam agra āsīt tad devān asṛjata tad devān sṛṣṭvaiṣu lokeṣu vyārohayat asminn eva loka ’gniṃ vāyum antarikṣe divy eva sūryam 2. atha ye ’tha ūrdhvā lokāḥ tad yā ata ūrdhvā devatās teṣu tā devatā vyārohayat sa yathā haivema āvirlokā imās ca devatā evam u haiva ta āvirlokās tās ca devatā yeṣu tā devatā vyārohayat 3. atha brahmaiva parārdham agacchat tat parārdham gatvaikṣata katham nv imāṃ lokān pratyaveyām iti taddvābhyām eva pratyavaid rūpeṇa caiva nāmnā ca sa yasya kasya ca nāmāsti tan nāma yasyo api nāma nāsti yad veda rūpeṇedaṃ rūpam iti tad rūpam etāvad vā idam yāvad rūpaṃ caiva nāma ca 4. te haite brahmaṇo mahatī abhve sa yo haite brahmaṇo mahatī abhve veda mahad dhaivābhvam bhavati 5. te haite brahmaṇo mahatī yakṣe sa yo haite brahmaṇo mahatī yakṣe veda mahad dhaiva yakṣam bhavati tayor anyataraj jyāyo rūpam eva yad dhy api nāma rūpam eva tat sa yo haitayor jyāyo veda jyāyān ha tasmād bhavati yasmāj jyāyān bubhūṣati 6. martyā ha vā agre devā āsuḥ sa yadaiva te brahmaṇāpurathāmṛtā āsuḥ sa yam manasa āghārayati mano vai rūpam manasā hi vededaṃ rūpam iti tena rūpam āpnoty atha yaṃ vāca āghārayati vāg vai nāma vāca hi nāma gṛhṇāti teno nāmāpnoty etāvad vā idam sarvaṃ yāvad rūpaṃ caiva nāma ca tat sarvaṃ āpnoti sarvaṃ vā akṣayyam eteno hāsyākṣayyaṃ sukṛtam bhavaty akṣayyo lokāḥ*

11.2.3.1. Verily, in the beginning, this (universe) was the Brahman (neut.). It created the gods; and, having created the gods, it made them ascend these worlds: Agni this (terrestrial) world, Vāyu the air, and Sūrya the sky. 2. And the deities who are above these he made ascend the worlds which are above these; and, indeed, just as these (three) worlds and these (three) deities are manifest, so are those (higher) worlds and those (higher) deities manifest—the (worlds) which he made those deities ascend. 3. Then the Brahman itself went up to the sphere beyond. Having gone up to the sphere beyond, it considered, “How can I descend again into these worlds?” It then descended again by means of these two—Form and Name. Whatever has a name, that is name; and that again which has no name, and which one knows by its form, “This is (of a certain) form,” that is form: as far as there are Form and Name so far, indeed, extends this (universe). 4. These, indeed, are the two great forces of the Brahman; and, verily, he who knows these two great forces of the Brahman becomes himself a great force. 5. These, indeed, are the two great manifestations of the Brahman; and, verily, he who knows these two great manifestations of the Brahman becomes himself a great manifestation. One of these two is the greater, namely Form; for whatever is Name, is indeed Form; and, verily, he who knows the greater of these two, becomes greater than he whom he wishes to surpass in greatness. 6. In the beginning, indeed, the gods were mortal, and only when they had become possessed of the Brahman they were immortal. Now, when he makes the libation to Mind—form being mind, inasmuch as it is by mind that one knows, “This is form”—he

thereby obtains Form; and when he makes the libation to Speech—name being speech, inasmuch as it is by speech that he seizes (mentions) the name—he thereby obtains Name;—as far as there are Form and Name, so far, indeed, extends this whole (universe): all this he obtains; and—the all being the imperishable—imperishable merit and the imperishable world thus accrue to him (trans. Eggeling).

JU 4.22.1–8

4.22.1. *āsā vā idam agra āsīd bhaviṣyad eva / tad abhavat / tā āpo 'bhavan / 2. tās tapo 'tapyanta / tās tapas tepānā huss ity eva prācīḥ prāśvasan / sa vāva prāṇo 'bhavat / 3. tāḥ prāṇyā 'pānan / sa vā apāno 'bhavat / 4. tā apānya vyānan / sa vāva vyāno 'bhavat / 5. tā vyānya samānan / sa vāva samāno 'bhavat / 6. tās samānyo 'dānan / sa vā udāno 'bhavat / 7. tad idam ekam eva sadhamādyam āsīd aviviktam / 8. sa nāmarūpam akuruta / tenāi 'nad vyavinak / vi ha pāpmano vicyate ya evaṃ veda /*

4.22.1. Verily this was in the beginning space, being about to become. It became. It became the waters. 2. They performed penance. Having performed penance [uttering] *huss*, they breathed forth forward. That became breath. 3. Having breathed forth, they breathed out. That became exhalation. 4. Having breathed out, they breathed asunder. That became the *vyāna*. 5. Having breathed asunder, they breathed together. That became the *samāna*. 6. Having breathed together, they breathed up. That became the *udāna*. 7. This [all] was one, associated, not distinguished. 8. He made name and form. Thereby he distinguished it. Distinguished from evil is he who knows thus (trans. Oertel).

TB 2.2.7

prajāpatiḥ prajā asṛjata / tās sṛṣṭās samaśliṣyan / tā rūpeṇānu prāviśat / tasmād āhuḥ / rūpaṃ vai prajāpatir iti / tā nāmnānu prāviśat / tasmād āhuḥ / nāma vai prajāpatir iti

Prajāpati created the creatures. When these were created, they were still adhering or sticking to one another [*samaśliṣyan*, LO]. Then he entered them with the form. That is why it is said: “Prajāpati is the form.” He entered them with the name. That is why it is said: “Prajāpati is the name” (trans. Frauwallner/Bedekar, Frauwallner [1973] 1984: 163).

Prajāpati schuf die Geschöpfe. Als diese geschaffen waren, klebten sie noch aneinander [*samaśliṣyan*, LO]. Da ging er in sie ein mit der Form. Darum sagt man: Prajāpati ist die Form. Da ging er in sie ein mit dem Namen. Darum sagt man: Prajāpati ist der Name (trans. Frauwallner 1953: 206).

BĀU 1.4.1–7

This passage narrates that at the beginning (*agre*) the world was just *ātman*, shaped like a man (*puruṣa*). Finding no pleasure alone he split into husband (*pati*) and wife (*patnī*). They copulated and the human beings were born (1.4.3). Then the wife became a cow, the husband a bull; they copulated and cattle were born. They subsequently transformed into horses, donkeys, etc., and copulated, thus giving rise to all existing animals (1.4.4).

Afterwards *ātman* created the fire (*agni*), Soma and all gods. (1.4.6). Then we find the following description:

BĀU 1.4.7 *tad dhedaṃ tarhy avyākṛtam āsīt / tan nāmarūpābhyām eva vyākriyatāsau nāmāyam idam̐ rūpa iti / tad idam apy etarhi nāmarūpābhyām eva vyākriyate 'sau nāmāyam idam̐ rūpa iti*

At that time this world was without real distinctions; it was distinguished simply in terms of name and visible appearance—“He is so and so by name and has this sort of an appearance.” So even today this world is distinguished simply in terms of name and visible appearance, as when we say, “He is so and so by name and has this sort of an appearance” (trans. Olivelle).