Let an overview of the most important canonical literature of hindu vedantic tradition that is rig veda.

and this is also considered to be the oldest and the first human document on philosophy and spirituality.

Rig Veda

The Rig Veda ( that is “ The Book of Mantra “ )

* Rig means “Praise”. It explains various hymns praising the elements of the nature
* The Rigveda was likely composed between roughly 1700-1100 BCE, making it one of the oldest texts of any Indo - Iranian language, this is one of the world’s oldest religious texts.
* The RigVeda is considered to be among the earliest religious texts still reserved by a living tradition and it is estimated to have been formed around 1500 - 1200 BCE.
* It consists of 10117 rhymes composed in Vedic Sanskrit.
* It is a collection of brilliant songs or hymns and it is a main source of information in detail on the social, religious, , and economic background of the Rig-Vedic civilization.
* It is the oldest book in any Indo-European language and contains the earliest form of all Sanskrit mantras.
* Even though some of the hymns of Rig Veda characterize monotheism (belief in the existence of one god), naturalistic polytheism (belief in more than one god,) and monist (belief of different paths to the one god),these can be found in the hymns of Rig Veda.
* The whole of the Rigveda-Samhita is in form of verses, known as Rik. ‘Rik’ is the name given to those Mantras which are meant for the praise of the deities. Thus the collection (Samhita) of Riks is known as Rigveda-Samhita.
* The Rig-Vedic 'samhita' (collection of mantras) consists of 1,017 'suktas' (hymns) divided into eight 'ashtakas' (songs) each having eight 'adhyayas' (sections), which are sub-divided into various groups with a total of about 10,600 stanzas. These are classified into 10 books called Mandalas.
* Each Mandala is divided into several sections called Anuvakas. Each Anuvaka consists of a number of hymns called Suktas This division of the Rigveda is most popular and systematic.
* The hymns are collection of the work of many authors called 'rishis' (according to post Vedic tradition "seers"). Atri,Bharadvaja,Gautama Maharishi,Jamadagni,Kashyapa,Vasistha,Vishwamitra.

A Sukta is a group of Mantras. The number of Mantras in a Sukta is not fixed. Some Suktas have a small number of Mantras while others have a large number of Mantras.

As we know there are 1028 suktas , out of them these are some of the popular and frequently referred ones.

1. **Purusha Sukta**
2. **Hiranya-garbha Sukta**
3. **Dhana-annadana Sukta**
4. **Aksha Sukta**
5. **Nasadiya Sukta**
6. **Duhsvapna-nashna Sukta**
7. **Yama-yami-samvada Sukta**

Besides these , there are many Suktas offered to different deities, such as, Indra, Maruta, Varuna, Usha, Surya, Bhumi, Soma, Agni etc.

The [Aitareya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aitareya_Brahmana), Kausitaki, and Samkhyana Brahmanas are the three known extant Brahmanas of the [RigVeda](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rigveda" \o "Aitareya Brahmana).

 It is 'almost certainly the case that these two Brahmanas represent for us the development of a single tradition

Coming to the first type

**Aitareya Brahmana** : It is also known as Ashvalayana Brahmana.

This work is ascribed to Mahidasa Aitareya and dated variously from 1000 BCE to 500 BCE. It is divided into eight Panchikas

The first six panchikas of Aitareya Brahmana dealing with Soma Sacrifice (fire sacrifice ritual) and in the last two panchikas describe about Rajyabhisheka.

And in the **Kaushitaki Brahmana** It is divided into thirty chapters and 226 Khanda. The first six chapters dealing with food sacrifice and the remaining to Soma sacrifice.

**There are two aranyakas in rig veda**

**Aitareya Aranyaka**and **Shankhayana Aranyaka**

* There are five chapters each of which is even considered as a full Aranyaka.
* The first one deals with the regimen known as ‘Mahaa-vrata’. The explanations are both ritualistic as well as speculative. The second one has six chapters of which the first three are about ‘Praana-vidyaa.
* The third Aranyaka elaborates on the various ways – like pada-paatha, krama-paatha, etc.
* The fourth and the fifth Aranyaka are technical and well respectively on the yajna known as ‘Madhyandina’.

**Shankhayana Aranyaka**

They are the Vedic text containing spiritual thoughts related to Vedic Philosophy.

The Upanishad of the Rig Veda is the **Aitareya Upanishad**.

* The **Aitareya Upanishad** is a [Mukhya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mukhya_Upanishads" \o "Mukhya Upanishads) Upanishad, associated with the [Rigveda](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rigveda" \o "Rigveda).
* It consits of fourth, fifth and sixth chapters of the second book of [Aitareya Aranyaka](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aranyaka" \l "Aitareya_Aranyaka" \o "Aranyaka), which is one of the four layers of Rig vedic text.
* Aitareya Upanishad discusses three philosophical themes: first, that the world and man is the creation of the [Atman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C4%80tman_(Hinduism)" \o "Ātman (Hinduism)) (Soul, Universal Self); second, the theory that the *Atman* undergoes threefold birth; third, that Consciousness is the essence of *Atman*.

**next veda :**

**The Yajur Veda** that is “ **The Book of Ritual “.**

* Yajurveda means “Worship of Knowledge”.
* The Yajur-Veda or the wisdom of sacrifices is also a liturgical collection and was made to meet the demands of a ceremonial religion.
* It lays down various "yajurs" (sacred incantations) which were chanted by a particular sect of priests called adhvaryu They performed the sacrificial rites.
* It has been, since the Vedic times, the primary source of information about sacrifices and associated rituals, more importantly, it has served as a practical guidebook for the priest, or the Purohits, as referred to as in Hindu dharma who execute the acts of ceremonial religion.
* Few hymns are also attributed to various Gods. However, the core of the Veda is dedicated to the theory of the rituals thereby making it very much ritual based.
* The Yajurveda is broadly grouped into two – the "black" or "dark" (krishna) Yajurveda and the "white" or "bright" (*Shukla*) Yajurveda.
* The term "black" implies "the un-arranged, unclear, collection" of verses in Yajurveda, in contrast to the "white" which implies the "well arranged, clear" Yajurveda.
* The black Yajurveda has survived in four shakas, while two shakas of white Yajurveda have survived into the modern times.
* Both of them have verses necessary for rituals, but the Krishna Yajurveda includes the Brahmana discussions within the Samhita (no Brahman) while the Shukla Yajurveda has separately a Brahmana text, the Shatapatha Brahmana.
* The Shukla Yajurveda has two branches:

1. Vajasaneyi Madhyandiniya &
2. Vajasaneyi Kanva.

* Vajasaneyi Madhyandiniya is originally of Mithila and Vajasaneyi Kanva is of originally Kosala.
* Krishna Yajurveda has 4 shakhas

1. **Taittiriya Samhita ( of panchala )**
2. **Kathaka Samhita ( of Mafra and Kurukshetra )**
3. **Kapishthala Samhita ( of Southern Punjab )**
4. **Maitrayani Samhita ( of Kurukshetra )**

**Coming to the Brahmanas of Yajur Veda :**

That is the Shukla Yajurveda contains the Shatapatha Brahmana.

* It is estimated to have been recorded around 1000-800 BCE.
* It provides [scientific](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Science" \o "Science) knowledge of [geometry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geometry" \o "Geometry) and [observational astronomy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Observational_astronomy" \o "Observational astronomy) from the [Vedic period](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vedic_period" \o "Vedic period), and is considered significant in the development of [Vaishnavism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vaishnavism" \o "Vaishnavism) as the possible origin of several [Puranic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puranas" \o "Puranas) legends and [avatars](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avatar" \o "Avatar) of the [Vedic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rigveda" \o "Shatapatha Brahmana) god [Vishnu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vishnu), all of which ([Matsya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matsya" \o "Matsya), [Kurma](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kurma" \o "Kurma), [Varaha](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Varaha" \o "Varaha), [Narasimha](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narasimha" \o "Narasimha), and [Vamana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vamana" \o "Vamana)) are listed in the [Dashavatara](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dashavatara" \o "Dashavatara).

And the Krishna Yajurveda contains 4 brahmanas :

1. Taittiriya Brhamana
2. Maitrayani Brahmana
3. Caraka-Kathaka Brahmana
4. Kapisthala-Katha Brahmana

* In the black Yajurveda, the Taittriya Aranyaka is a continuation of the Taitttriya Brahamana. In the white Yajurveda, the 14th book of the Satapatha Brahmana is in the name of Brihadarnayaka.

Yajurveda, in contemporary Hinduism, has been a reminder of the ancient cultural heritage. The text is a useful source of information about agriculture, economic, and social life during the Vedic era.

* Discussion about Upanishads, there are 2 upanishads in Shukla Upanishad :
  1. **Isha Upanishad**

#### Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

Where,

**Isha Upanishad** is one of the shortest [Upanishads](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upanishads" \o "Upanishads).  A key scripture of the [Vedanta](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vedanta" \o "Vedanta) sub-schools of Hinduism.

#### Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is among the largest and oldest as well. It is a key scripture of [Hinduism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hinduism" \o "Hinduism) that has influenced all schools of [Hindu philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindu_philosophy" \o "Hindu philosophy).

* And in the Krishna Yajurveda

#### Taittiriya Upanishad

#### Katha Upanishad

#### Maitrayaniya Upanishad etc. are included.

* These texts offers a view of education system in ancient India. It also includes sections on ethics and invocation for one's personal development.
* The Katha Upanishad found in the Yajurveda is among the most widely studied Upanishads.
* Thus we can briefly say about the contents of Rigveda and Yajurveda that it has various subjects, which are narrated by Vedic seers poetically, philosophically or religiously.