

# Meeting 34: Śrutí, Śrāutá, Śák<sup>h</sup>ā

Examining the Vedic corpus

Nikhil Surya Dwibhashyam

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# Why a Vēda discussion group?

- What is Vedic literature?
  - Sāmhitā-s
  - Brāhmaṇa-s
  - Others?
- Vēda-s vs. Vedānta, Upaniṣād-s, Purāṇá-s
  - Later monism (ádvāita) vs. earlier dualism
  - Moral–political subtexts
- Modern (religious, scholarly) fixation upon later literature

# What is there to discuss?

- History & linguistics
- Metaphysics of religion
- Exegesis (e.g. western vs. Eastern narratives)
- Moral principles
- Nuances of Śrāutá ritual
- How we can apply Vedic principles to our lives

# Our plans

- Weekly “general audience” meetings on Sundays at 1000 EST
  - Followed by in-depth literature meeting at 1130 EST
- Different topic/aspect/angle discussed every week
- Format:
  - Præsentation
  - Free-form discussion
- Eventually something more
  - Children's books
  - Poëtry collective
  - Documentation
  - Actual rituals

# WhatsApp group

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/IXCQEkhfrcwHI7CNY8Fgat>

# Let's introduce ourselves!

- Briefly!
- Name
- School (if student)
- How you found this group
- Background/interest in Hinduism & Vedic literature

# Some questions to consider

- What is the Vedic corpus?
  - What is Śrutī? How accurate is the label?
- What is the chronology of the Vedic corpus?
  - External vs. internal chronology?
- What work needs to be done in collation?
- What new information might future discoveries reveal?

# Overarching division of literature

- Śrutí vs. Smṛtí
  - √śru vs. √smṛ
- Vedic vs. non-Vedic/post-Vedic
- Different themes
- Different theologies
- Different ideologies?



# Four layers of Śrutí

- Sámhitā
  - Mántra
- Bráhmaṇa
- Not to be confused with Brāhmaṇá
- Āraṇyaka
- Upaniṣád

# The Véda-s

- Ṛc
- Yájus
- Sáman

# The Véda-s

- Ṛc
- Yájus
- Sáman
- Át<sup>h</sup>arvan

# Ṣāk<sup>h</sup>ā-s of the Ṛc

- Ṣākala
  - Surviving S
  - B, Ā, U: Āitareya
- Bāṣkala
  - S, B, Ā, U: Kāuṣītaka
- Āṣvalāyana
  - S
  - B, Ā, U?
  - ṢṢ!
- Śāṅk<sup>h</sup>āyana
  - No S
  - B, Ā/U
  - ṢṢ!
- Māṇḍukāyana

# Ṣák<sup>h</sup>ā-s of the Yájus

- Two divisions: White and Black
- White:
  - Mādhyam̐dina
  - Kāṇva
- Black:
  - Tāittirīya
  - Māitrāyaṇi
  - Kāṭhaka
  - Kapiṣṭhala?

# On apāuruṣeyatva

- Sāmhitā
  - “The newest hymn”
  - Poëtic innovation
- Bráhmaṇa
  - Clear lāukika references
    - Disagreement between sages, &c.
  - Ritual manuals rooted in world
- Āraṇyaka, Upaniṣád
  - Similar

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