

style, which served the authors of the present ones as sources of information, and these works may have been coeval with the majority of our Brâhmaṇas.

Although we cannot discover any material difference between the Brâhmaṇas and the Sûtras so as to regard the latter as developing and systematizing the ideas contained in the former, as is the case with the Vedânta philosophy in reference to the Upanishads, yet there exists one between the Brâhmaṇas, and the Mantras and hymns. This difference is, however, not very great, and can be accounted for partially from other causes than that of age. Already the hymns presuppose a settled ritual, and contain many speculative ideas similar to those of the Brâhmaṇas.

Some scholars hold that the occurrence of sacrificial terms, or of philosophical and mystical ideas are suggestive of the late date of the hymn in which they are found. But these circumstances do by no means afford any sure test as to the relative age of the Vedic hymns. One has even drawn a strict line of distinction between a Mantra and Chhandas period, assigning to the former all the sacrificial hymns, to the latter those expressive of religious and devotional feelings in general, without any reference to sacrificial rites. But I have grave doubts whether this distinction will prove tenable on further inquiries, chiefly if this question as to the age of a certain hymn is made entirely to depend upon what period (the Mantra or Chhandas period) it might belong to. There are sacrificial hymns which, to judge from their style and their general ideas, must