Hindu
Rites of Passage

A Historical Overview

Jayanta Bhattacharya

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Preface

Like, most of the Indians, I was always interested to know how my ancestors welcomed a newborn infant, celebrated marriage or encountered death in the past four millenniums of our civilization, but I could not get enough time for a systematic study earlier. I knew that, Hinduism being the major and most ancient religion in South Asia, the rites of passage have been mostly celebrated throughout most part of its history as Hindu religious ceremonies. Therefore, almost four years from now, I started my journey in search of a comprehensive work on the Hindu rites of passage. During my quest, I found that the major works on this subject belong to either of the two distinct genres. The works belonging to the first genre, written by the most erudite modern scholars, like P.V. Kane, Rajbali Pandey, Ram Gopal, Willem Caland and Jan Gonda and many others are extremely rich in material from the Hindu normative texts and their scholastic insight, but the normative texts are not discussed in these studies in the historical perspective. On the other hand, the works belonging to the second genre, written by the eminent cultural anthropologists all over the world are mostly based on the ethnographic data and the historical evolution of the rites of passage is not elaborated from the normative texts. A study, combining the both is the need of the hour and it can be made possible only by a scholar, who has the mastery over the diverse subjects. Such mastery is already evident in the recent works of the scholars like Ute Hüsken. Indeed, a significant number of research papers and monographs written by the finest brains of the world in the last few decades have made tremendous inroads into many hitherto unknown aspects of the Hindu rites of passage, but only a few of them are known outside the academic arena.

I must confess here that, I did not get the opportunity to study any one of the subjects, which are required to be mastered for such a comprehensive work in any university. Still, I decided to attempt for collating the related materials to present them in a systematic manner with the hope that it can be used as a preparatory material for a comprehensive study on this subject in a future date by an expert. If my study is really found useful by such an expert as a starting point for his project, the purpose of this work will be accomplished. Due to lack of resources, I could only access a very limited number of texts and modern works for the preparation of this edition. However, I can assure the readers that I will continue my endeavour to access more materials on the life-cycle rites, most of which are still available only as manuscripts and incorporate the data extracted from them in the future editions.

I have to accept the fact that there is a huge room for improvement or elimination of the unintentional mistakes in this study. It is my humble request to all readers to come forward with the suggestions and criticism. I can assure that in the next edition, they will be definitely taken care of. I would also like to admit here that a major shortcoming, which I experienced while organizing the materials for this work is the lack of proper guidance. If any sympathetic scholar agrees to guide me in future, I promise to bring forth a much better edition.

At the end, I like to express my gratitude to the Digital Library of India. Most of the ancient and medieval texts I cited in this study are downloaded from this site.

1st January, 2015   Jayanta Bhattacharya
Mumbai, Maharashtra

> "*asato mā sadgamaya;*
> *tamaso mā jyotirgamaya;*
> *mṛtyormāmṛtaṃ gamaya.*"
>
> *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* **XIV.4.1.30**

Contents

Tables

Figures

Timeline of South Asian history

• **Proto-historic period**	**3000 BCE – 600 BCE**
• **Ancient period**	**600 BCE – 700 CE**
• **Early medieval period**	**700 CE – 1200 CE**
• **Late medieval period**	**1200 CE – 1707 CE**
• **Pre-modern period**	**1707 CE – 1858 CE**
• **Modern period**	**1858 CE – till date**

Transliteration of Sanskrit alphabet

In this study, the words and phrases in Vedic Sanskrit/ Classical Sanskrit as well as the other Indic languages are transliterated using the IAST letters in most of the cases. Following are the Sanskrit letters in the *Devanāgarī* script and their equivalent IAST (International Alphabet for Sanskrit Transliteration) letters. It is to be noted that vedic accents are not used in this study.

अ	आ	इ	ई	उ	ऊ	ऋ	ॠ	ऌ	ॡ
a	ā	i	ī	u	ū	ṛ	ṝ	ḷ	ḹ
ए	ऐ	ओ	औ	अं	अः				
e	ai	o	au	ṃ	ḥ				
क	ख	ग	घ	ङ	च	छ	ज	झ	ञ
k	kh	g	gh	ṅ	c	ch	j	jh	ñ
ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण	त	थ	द	ध	न
ṭ	ṭh	ḍ	ḍh	ṇ	t	th	d	dh	n
प	फ	ब	भ	म	य	र	ल	ळ	व
p	ph	b	bh	m	y	r	l	ḻ	v
श	ष	स	ह						
ś	ṣ	s	h						

Abbreviations:

Abbreviation	Text	Abbreviation	Text
ABr	*Aitareyabrāhmaṇa*	LŚS	*Lāṭyāyanaśrautasūtra*
ĀgGS	*Āgniveśyagṛhyasūtra*	MārP	*Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*
AgnP	*Agnipurāṇa*	MatsP	*Matsyapurāṇa*
ĀGP	*Āśvalāyanagṛhyapariśiṣṭa* (Nārāyaṇa)	MBr	*Mantrabrāhmaṇa*
ĀGS	*Āśvalāyanagṛhyasūtra*	MDh	*Mānavadharmaśāstra*
ĀpDh	*Āpastambadharmasūtra*	MGS	*Mānavagṛhyasūtra*
ĀpGS	*Āpastambagṛhyasūtra*	MīmS	*Mīmāṃsāsūtra* of Jaimini
ĀpMP	*Āpastambamantrapāṭha*	MNT	*Mahānirvāṇatantra*
ĀpPS	*Āpastambapitṛmedhasūtra*	MS	*Maitrāyaṇīsaṃhitā*
ĀpŚS	*Āpastambaśrautasūtra*	MŚS	*Mānavaśrautasūtra*
ĀŚS	*Āśvalāyanaśrautasūtra*	Mitā	*Ṛjumitākṣarā* of Vijñāneśvara
AVP	*Atharvaveda, Paippalādasaṃhitā*	NārP	*Nāradapurāṇa*
AVŚ	*Atharvaveda, Śaunakīyasaṃhitā*	NirS	*Nirṇayasindhu*
BāU	*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*	PadP	*Padmapurāṇa*
BDh	*Baudhāyanadharmasūtra*	PBr	*Pañcaviṃśabrāhmaṇa*
BGS	*Baudhāyanagṛhyasūtra*	PDh	*Pārāśaradharmaśāstra*
BGŚS	*Baudhāyanagṛhyaśeṣasūtra*	PGS	*Pāraskaragṛhyasūtra*
BhGS	*Bhāradvājagṛhyasūtra*	RV	*Ṛgveda, Śākalasaṃhitā*
BhPS	*Bhāradvājapaitṛmedhikasūtra*	RVKh	*Ṛgveda Khilāni* (in Kashmir ms of RV)
BhŚS	*Bhāradvājaśrautasūtra*	ŚBM	*Śatapathabrāhmaṇa Mādhyaṃdina*
BPS	*Baudhāyanapitṛmedhasūtra*	ŚGS	*Śāṅkhāyanagṛhyasūtra*
BŚS	*Baudhāyanaśrautasūtra*	SmC	*Smṛticandrikā*
DŚS	*Drāhyāyanaśrautasūtra*	SmM	*Saṃskāramayūkha*
GarūḍP	*Garūḍapurāṇa*	SmP	*Saṃskāraprakāśa*
GarūḍSār	*Garūḍapurāṇasāroddhāra*	SmR	*Saṃskāraratnamālā*
GBr	*Gopathabrāhmaṇa*	ŚŚS	*Śāṅkhāyanaśrautasūtra*
GDh	*Gautamadharmasūtra*	ŚudP	*Śuddhiprakāśa*
GGS	*Gobhilagṛhyasūtra*	ŚudT	*Śuddhitattva*
GPS	*Gautamapitṛmedhasūtra*	SV	*Sāmaveda, Kauthumasaṃhitā*
HDh	*Hiraṇyakeśīdharmasūtra*	SV(J)	*Sāmaveda, Jaiminīyasaṃhitā*
HGS	*Hiraṇyakeśīgṛhyasūtra*	TĀ	*Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*
HGŚS	*Hiraṇyakeśīgṛhyaśeṣasūtra*	TBr	*Taittirīyabrāhmaṇa*
HPS	*Hiraṇyakeśīpitṛmedhasūtra*	TS	*Taittirīyasaṃhitā*
HŚS	*Hiraṇyakeśīśrautasūtra*	ViṣDh	*Vaiṣṇavadharmasūtra*
JBr	*Jaiminīyabrāhmaṇa*	VārGS	*Vārāhagṛhyasūtra*
JGS	*Jaiminigṛhyasūtra*	VārŚS	*Vārāhaśrautasūtra*
KauṣGS	*Kauṣītakagṛhyasūtra*	VasDh	*Vasiṣṭhadharmasūtra*
KauśS	*Kauśikasūtra*	VDh	*Vedavyāsīyadharmaśāstra*
KauthG	*Kauthumagṛhya*	VDhP	*Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa*
KGS	*Kāṭhakagṛhyasūtra*	ViṣP	*Viṣṇupurāṇa*
KāS	*Kāṭhakasaṃhitā*	VkhDh	*Vaikhānasadharmasūtra*
KP	*Karmapradīpa*	VkhGS	*Vaikhānasagṛhyasūtra*
KpS	*Kapiṣṭhala-Kaṭhakasaṃhitā*	VkhŚS	*Vaikhānasaśrautasūtra*
KhādGS	*Khādiragṛhyasūtra*	VSM	*Vājasaneyīsaṃhitā Mādhyaṃdina*
KŚS	*Kātyāyanaśrautasūtra*	YDh	*Yājñavalkīyadharmaśāstra*
Laghu-Āś	*Laghu-Āśvalāyanasmṛti*	YS	*Yamasmṛti*

Chapter 1

Saṃskārāḥ: Hindu rites of passage

Every culture in the world, ancient, medieval or modern has devised its own ways to deal with biological and sociological events, which typify life. Performing public ritual ceremonies, mostly religious, to help an individual and the community to deal with the emotionally charged situations during crises of life of at the time of the transition from one social identity to another, is a common phenomenon across the cultures. In 1909, Belgian anthropologist Arnold van Gennep (1873-1957) noticed this commonality and named these ceremonies as 'les rites de passage' (the rites of passage). On the basis of his studies, Van Gennep identified three successive but separate stages of these rites of passage: an initial or pre-liminal stage of separation from the earlier identity, a transitional or liminal stage of destruction of the earlier identity and creation of a new identity and the final or post-liminal stage of incorporation into the society with new identity.[1] In South Asia, the rites of passage are celebrated as the Hindu religious ceremonies, as Hinduism remained as the most dominant, ancient and vibrant religion in this geographical region.

In South Asia, the adherents of the dominant sets of intertwined beliefs were together explicitly termed as the 'Hindu' for the first time by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in his work *Translation of an Abridgement of the Vedant* (1816). However, there are earlier instances of usage of this word in the same meaning in some late medieval texts and the articles of the European authors. These sets of intertwined religious beliefs, designated together as Hinduism in the early 19th century, are actually based

Āśrama (stages of life)	Brāhmaṇ (4)	Kṣatriya (3)	Vaiśya (2)	Śūdra (1)
brahmacarya (stage of a student)	√	√		
gārhasthya (stage of a householder)	√	√	√	√
vānaprastha (stage of a forest hermit)	√	√	√	
saṃnyāsa (stage of a renouncer)	√			

Figure 1: Brahmanical perception of *Vaṃāśramadharma* in the early centuries of the Common Era (*Vāmanapurāṇa* 15.62-63)

upon very ancient religious traditions of South Asia originated either in the proto-historical period or earlier. In fact, unlike the other three major world religions, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity, Hinduism was never based on a common set of beliefs codified in a particular canonical scripture. The adherents of the Hinduism rather led a particular way of life, following a large common set of traditions, rituals and practices, defined as *dharma* in the Hindu normative texts since the last centuries of the first millennium BCE. This huge set of common traditions, which was the basis for formation of the Brahmanical perception of *varṇāśramadharma* in the early centuries of the Common Era, comprises a large number of intersecting sub-sets of common traditions based on the social class (*varṇa*), caste (*jāti*) and gender of the adherent. These common rituals performed by the followers of Hinduism include the rites of passage of the life cycle.

In the last three millenniums, the Hindu *śāstras* (normative texts) have examined their religion in almost every possible way and developed the terminology to explain most of its aspects. Most of these terms are unique to Hinduism and cannot be translated properly in to any non-Indic language. Hence, in this study, the majority of the terms related to Hinduism have been mentioned in Sanskrit or other Indic languages for the better understanding and their literal translations in to English have been provided within the brackets.

In the early vedic ritual texts, influenced by the predominant importance of the sacrificial rituals in the contemporary social context, the rites of passage of the life-cycle were codified as the sacrifices belonging to a genre of domestic sacrifices known as the *pākayajña* (the sacrifices, which involve offering of cooked food as oblations into fire) and included them among its various categories.

Since the early centuries of the Common Era, the life-cycle rites of passage are being mentioned in the *smṛti*[2] texts as *saṃskāra* (plural *saṃskārāḥ*), which literally means "a sanctifying rite" for the body of the performer and every *saṃskāra* has been prescribed as obligatory, whenever the occasion requires it. In contrast, *Dīkṣā* (literally, "initiation"), the rite of passage for religious initiation in Hinduism (as well as in Jainism) was always remained a voluntary one.

As the Hindu *śāstras* (normative texts) are composed only by the Brāhmaṇs (social class of the priests, performances of most of the codified life-cycle rites prescribed by the *śāstras* are restricted to the Hindu males belonging to the three elite 'twice-born' *varṇas* (i.e., the social classes of the priests, rulers and commoners) within the framework of Brahmanical orthopraxy. As a result, performances of a significant number of life-cycle rites for a Hindu female or a Śūdra (social class of the slaves) or an 'Antyaja'[3] have always remained grounded in the folk traditions outside this framework and the descriptions about the performances of these life-cycle rites are not available in the *śāstras*. Major source of information about the rites of passage performed by them is the ethnographic field studies of the modern era, the travelogues of the ancient and medieval foreign travellers, the district gazetteers published during the British rule in South Asia and the descriptions found in the ancient, medieval and modern literature in almost every Indic language. As an example, to get a detailed information on the Hindu female life-cycle rites such as *Vaḷaikāppu* (literally, "adorning with bangles") and *Puchutal* (literally, "bedecking with flowers"), the pregnancy rites performed in Tamil Nadu or *Sādh* (literally, "gratification of cravings"*)*, a pregnancy rite performed in Bengal, we have to depend on ethnographic field studies by the modern scholars.

The scope of this study has been kept limited to the construction of a historical overview of the Hindu rites of passage, based on the data available in the written sources, mostly in the Hindu *śāstras* (normative texts). In certain cases, archaeological data also have been used for a comparative study. The Hindu *śāstras*, in spite of being composed by the Brāhmaṇs and their study being limited to the Brāhmaṇs, never ignored the contemporary customary practices of the other social classes throughout the historical period and continuous attempts have been made by them to codify these practices. Similarly, the social groups who lived beyond the framework of Brahmanical orthopraxy also incorporated many rituals prescribed by the Hindu *śāstras* in their life-cycle ceremonies. So a broad outline of the celebrations of the life-cycle rites by the Hindus of South Asia in ancient and medieval period, irrespective of their perceived social class can be constructed, based on these textual sources. In modern India, with the rapid urbanization, the cultural differences between the social groups as well as the social classes are reducing every day and as of now, except perhaps the marriage and funeral rites, influence of the ritual texts on the performances of the life-cycle rites has been reduced to a minimal. The elements of the Hindu marriage rite in different regions of India are also changing with the time and a significant number of cross-cultural elements are being added continuously.

1.1 Textual Sources

The vedic texts, vedic ritual texts, some of the *dharmaśāstra* texts, the medieval commentaries of these texts and the independent digests on *smṛti* are the major textual sources for the study of the performance of life-cycle rites in line with the Brahmanical framework of orthopraxy. The *Mahābhārata*, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and several *Purāṇas* also included the descriptions of the life-cycle rites within the periphery of the same framework. In this study, the descriptions from the *āgama* texts are also included to understand the nature of the performances of the life-cycle rites beyond the instructions of the vedic texts and vedic ritual texts.

1.1.1 Vedic texts

Early descriptions of the marriage rite are found in the *Ṛgveda* (*Śākalasaṃhitā*) X.85 and the

Śaunakīyasaṃhitā XIV.1-2 (*Paippalādasaṃhitā* XVIII.1-14) of the *Atharvaveda*. The descriptions of ancient funeral rites are found in the *Ṛgveda* (*Śākalasaṃhitā*) X.14-18 and *Śaunakīyasaṃhitā* XVIII.1-4 of the *Atharvaveda*. The detailed descriptions for the funerary rites are found in the *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* and the *Jaiminīyabrāhmaṇa*. An early description of the initiation rite, *Upanayana* is available in the *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* XI.5.4.1-17 and references to this rite are found in the *Gopathabrāhmaṇa* I.2.1-8.

However, most of the life-cycle rites are only occasionally mentioned in the early vedic texts. Perhaps, the exceptions are a short Sāmavedic *brāhmaṇa* text, the *Mantrabrāhmaṇa* (as the first two *prapāṭhakas* or sections of the *Chāndogyabrāhmaṇa* are known) and two fragmentary *brāhmaṇa* texts of Kṛṣṇayajurvedic *Kāṭhaka śākhā*, the *Upanayanabrāhmaṇa* and the *Śrāddhabrāhmaṇa*. The *Mantrabrāhmaṇa* is a collection of the *mantras* (the *mantras*, one of the essential components of any Hindu ritual, are the formulas and incantations, believed as possessing supernatural power, which must be recited of murmured according to the instruction to get the desired result) for usage in various domestic rituals. The majority of the *mantras* of this text are prescribed for usage in marriage and pregnancy rites by the vedic ritual texts. The passages from the sixth *prapāṭhaka* of the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* are used by several vedic ritual texts as the *mantras* for the funeral rites. Detailed descriptions of the rites for pregnancy and childbirth are found in one of the early *Upaniṣads*, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* VI.4.

1.1.2 Vedic ritual texts

Earliest precise, systematic and detailed descriptions of the life-cycle rites are found in the *gṛhyasūtras,* a genre of vedic ritual texts, which codified the *gṛhyakarmas* (domestic rituals). The probable intended purpose of the composition of the *gṛhyasūtras* was to equip the performer or the priest with an instruction manual for the proper procedure to perform of the *gṛhya* (domestic) rites including the life-cycle rites in their codified form, in a pattern, similar to the *śrauta* (solemn) rites. The performances of both of these genres of rites were believed in the contemporary pre-dominantly rural South Asia as the essential acts for a married male to achieve religious merits. Most of the early *gṛhyasūtra* texts like the BGS (ca. 6th century BCE) began with the description of *Vivāha,* the marriage rite and ended with the description of *Samāvartana,* the rite for ending vedic study.**4**

Early descriptions of the funeral rites are found in the *śrautasūtras* (handbooks for performance of the solemn rites), mostly in context of the death of a performer of the solemn rites or his wife. The *gṛhyasūtra* texts, which narrated the funeral rites, added the descriptions of the funerary rites for those who are not eligible to perform the solemn rites also. This same tradition was followed in the *pitṛmedhasūtra***5** (specialized handbooks for the performance of the funerary rites) texts belonging to some of the vedic *śākhās* (literally "branches"; the theological schools formed due to the differences in opinion about the procedures for performance of the rituals). Some vedic *śākhās* also had *śrāddhakalpa* texts for detailed description of post-cremation funerary rites and the rites for veneration of the ancestors.

1.1.2.1 Ṛgvedic domestic ritual texts

Three extant *gṛhyasūtra* texts belonging to the Ṛgvedic *śākhās* are available to us. The *Śāṅkhāyanagṛhyasūtra,* one of the early *gṛhyasūtra* texts has six *adhyāyas* (chapters), further divided into 28, 18, 14, 19, 11 and 6 *khaṇḍas* (sections). Its fifth and sixth chapters and the 26th *khaṇḍa* of the first chapter are seems to be late additions. This text is believed as composed by Suyajña Śāṅkhāyana. It belongs to the *Śāṅkhāyana śākhā*, an early sub-branch of the *Bāṣkala* branch.

Another extant Ṛgvedic *gṛhyasūtra* text, the *Kauṣītakagṛhyasūtra*, probably written somewhere in

south India, had closely followed the *Śāṅkhāyanagṛhyasūtra,* in its first four *adhyāyas* (chapters). These four chapters are further divided into 21, 8, 15 and 4 *khaṇḍas*. Its fifth chapter on the funeral rites seems to be based on the *Śāṅkhāyanaśrautasūtra*. This text is ascribed to Śāmbavya and it belongs to the *Kauṣītaki śākhā.*

The third extant Ṛgvedic *gṛhya* text, the *Āśvalāyanagṛhyasūtra*, comprises four *adhyāyas* (chapters), which are further divided into 24, 10, 12 and 8 *kaṇḍikās*. This text is believed as composed by Āśvalāyana, a student of Śaunaka and it belongs to the *Āśvalāyana śākhā,* which was a sub-branch of the *Śākala* branch. Unlike the ŚGS, which cited the complete *mantras* (mostly the verses from the early vedic texts), this text mentioned the *mantras pratīkena* (by the beginning words) only. A separate text, the *Āśvalāyanamantrasaṃhitā* provided the *sakalapāṭha* (the complete text) form for all the *mantras* from the RV mentioned in the ĀŚS and the ĀGS in the *pratīka* form.[6] A late domestic ritual text, the *Āśvalāyanagṛhyapariśiṣṭa*, comprising 30 sections, is considered as the supplement to this *gṛhyasūtra* proper. There is another text bearing the same name, ascribed to Nārāyaṇa and comprising four chapters. The names of several other Ṛgvedic *gṛhyasūtra* texts, like *Śaunaka*, *Bhāravīya, Śākalya* and *Paiṅgi* are found in the later *nibandha* texts and the commentaries, all of which are lost.[7] It is also possible that the *Śaunakagṛhyasūtra* mentioned in the later texts is identical with the *Āśvalāyanagṛhyasūtra.*

1.1.2.2 Sāmavedic domestic ritual texts

Three extant *gṛhyasūtra* texts belonging to the Sāmavedic *śākhās* are available to us. Among the three extant Sāmavedic *gṛhyasūtra* texts, the *Gobhilagṛhyasūtra*, a comparatively late *gṛhyasūtra* text, comprises four *prapāṭhakas*, which are further divided into 9, 10, 10 and 10 *kaṇḍikās*. According to the tradition, it was composed by Gobhila. This text was used by both the followers of *Rāṇāyanīya* and *Kauthuma śākhās*. A large portion of the *mantras* from the *Mantrabrāhmaṇa* has been used in this text. A very late domestic ritual text of this *śākhā*, known as the *Gṛhyasaṃgraha* or *Gṛhyasaṃgrahapariśiṣṭa* is considered as the supplementary text to this *gṛhyasūtra* proper. This text is divided in to two *prapāṭhakas* and ascribed to certain Gobhilaputra. Another late but more significant text, the *Karmapradīpa*, comprising 3 *prapāṭhakas* and 29 (or 30) *khaṇḍas* (chapters), is also considered as the supplement to the *Gobhilagṛhyasūtra.* This text is also known as the *Chandogapariśiṣṭa* and the *Gobhilasmṛti* and sometimes ascribed to Kātyāyana, a Śuklayajurvedic authority. The *Gobhilīyaśrāddhakalpa*, comprising eight *kaṇḍikās*, is considered as the handbook for funerary rites of these two *śākhās*.

Another extant Sāmavedic *gṛhyasūtra* text, the *Khādiragṛhyasūtra*, a brief text, comprising four *paṭalas* (sections), further divided into 5, 5, 5 and 4 *khaṇḍas*, is almost entirely based on the *Gobhilagṛhyasūtra*. This text is believed as composed by Khādirācārya. It belongs to the *Drāhyāyaṇa śākhā*, which was probably a sub-branch of the *Rāṇāyanīya* branch. A late medieval digest, *Gṛhyaratna* of Veṅkaṭanātha Vaidikasārvabhauma, while citing the passages from this text, mentioned it as the *Gautamagṛhyasūtra.*[8] A late text, the *Drāhyāyaṇagṛhyapariśiṣṭasūtra* comprising two *prapāṭhakas*, is considered as its supplement. Another late text of this branch, the *Gautamapitṛmedhasūtra*, the handbook for the funerary rites, comprises two *paṭalas*, each of which are further divided in to seven *khaṇḍas.* A further later text, the *Gautamaśrāddhakalpa* or *Khādiraśrāddhakalpa* is also considered as the handbook for the funerary rites of this branch.

The *Jaiminigṛhyasūtra*, the third extant *gṛhyasūtra* text is divided in to two halves, *pūrvam* (first half) and *uttaram* (second half), which are further divided in to 24 and 9 *khaṇḍas* (parts) respectively. This text belongs to the *Jaiminīya śākhā*[9] and this text is believed as one of the compositions of Jaimini, a teacher of Sāmaveda and student of Vyāsa, son of Parāśara.

In 1956, The Asiatic Society, Calcutta published a text, under the title, "*Kauthumagṛhya*" based on a single corrupt manuscript. The modern scholars are not unanimous, whether this text is the fourth

Sāmavedic *gṛhyasūtra* text or a medieval *paddhati* text.

1.1.2.3 Śuklayajurvedic domestic ritual texts

The only extant *gṛhyasūtra* text belonging to any Śuklayajurvedic *śākhā* is the *Pāraskaragṛhyasūtra*, which is also known as the *Kātīyagṛhyasūtra*. This early text is traditionally ascribed to Pāraskara and it belongs to the *Mādhyaṃdina śākhā*. Most probably, the text mentioned as the *Mādhyaṃdinagṛhyasūtra* by Nārāyaṇa, a medieval scholiast of the ŚGS is identical with this text. This text comprises three *kāṇḍas*, which are further divided into 19, 17 and 16 *kaṇḍikās* respectively.

Extensive citations from a very late Śuklayajurvedic *gṛhyasūtra* text, the *Baijavāpagṛhyasūtra* are found in several commentaries and *nibandha* texts composed between the 11th and 16th centuries, Aparārka being the earliest. Barring a few fragments, this text is no more available to us.[10] A late ritual text, the *Kātyāyanaśrāddhakalpa* or *Kātīyaśrāddhsūtra*, comprising 9 *kaṇḍikās*, is considered as the handbook for funerary rites of this branch.

1.1.2.4 Kṛṣṇayajurvedic domestic ritual texts

Nine *gṛhyasūtra* texts belonging to the Kṛṣṇayajurvedic *śākhās* have been published so far. Six of them belong to the *Taittirīya śākhā* alone.[11]

The *Baudhāyanagṛhyasūtra*, one of the earliest *gṛhyasūtra* texts of the *Taittirīya śākhā*, is incorporated in a larger corpus, the *Baudhāyanakalpa,* which is believed as composed by Baudhāyana. This text forms four (33rd to 36th) *praśnas* (sections) of the *Baudhāyanakalpa*, which are further divided into 11, 11, 13 and 12 *adhyāyas* (chapters). In the *Baudhāyanakalpa*, this *gṛhyasūtra* proper is followed by another much later domestic ritual text, known as the *Baudhāyana-gṛhyaparibhāṣāsūtra,* forming its next two *praśnas* (sections). Its two *praśnas* are divided into 16 and 7 *adhyāyas* (chapters) respectively. It is followed by another late domestic ritual text, known as the *Baudhāyanagṛhyaśeṣasūtra*, forming the next five *praśnas* (sections) of the corpus, which are further divided into 24, 22, 23, 21 and 8 chapters respectively. This text is followed by the manual for the funerary rite, *Baudhāyanapitṛmedhasūtra,* which forms next three *praśnas* (sections) of the corpus, comprising 21, 12 and 12 chapters respectively. A very small late text, the *Baudhāyanapitṛmedhaśeṣasūtra*, comprising 3 chapters, is also considered as part of this *śākhā*.

The *Bhāradvājagṛhyasūtra*, also a very early text of the *Taittirīya śākhā*, is part of the larger *Bhāradvājakalpa,* believed as composed by Bharadvāja. It comprises three *praśnas*, which are further divided in to 28, 32 and 21 *kaṇḍikās* (sections) respectively. The handbook for the funerary rites of this *śākhā*, *Bhāradvājapaitṛmedhikasūtra*, comprising two *praśnas*, each further divided into 12 chapters, is also part of this larger *Bhāradvājakalpa*.

The *Āpastambagṛhyasūtra*, a slightly later text of the *Taittirīya śākhā*, forms the 27th *praśna* of the *Āpastambīyakalpa*, comprising thirty *praśnas* and believed as composed by Āpastamba. This text is divided into 8 *paṭalas* and 23 *khaṇḍas*. Most of the *mantras* mentioned in this text belong to an earlier compilation, known as the *Āpastambamantrapāṭha* or the *Ekāgnikāṇḍa*, which forms the 25th and 26th *praśnas* of the *Āpastambīyakalpa*. In later traditions, the *Āpastambapitṛmedhasūtra*, manual for the funerary rites of this *śākhā*, comprising 5 chapters, was considered as the 31st *praśna* of the *Āpastambīyakalpa*.

The *Hiraṇyakeśīgṛhyasūtra*, another *gṛhyasūtra* text belonging to the *Taittirīya śākhā*, is part of the *Hiraṇyakeśīkalpa* or the *Satyāṣāḍhakalpa* and forms the 19th and 20th *praśnas* of this corpus. Each of its *praśnas* is further divided in to eight *paṭalas*. A late text, the *Hiraṇyakeśīgṛhyaśeṣasūtra*, considered as its supplement, is also divided in to eight *paṭalas*. The *Hiraṇyakeśīpitṛmedhasūtra*,

funerary ritual text of this *śākhā*, forms the 28th and 29th *praśnas* of this corpus and each of its *praśnas* is further divided into 4 *paṭalas*. This text is believed as written by Satyāṣāḍha Hiraṇyakeśī.

The *Vaikhānasagṛhyasūtra,* fifth *gṛhyasūtra* text belonging to the *Taittirīya śākhā*, is a very late text and its extant version was probably composed in somewhere in south India. It forms 1st to 7th *praśnas* of the complete corpus of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* of ten *praśnas*, comprising 21, 18, 23, 14, 15, 20 and 9 chapters respectively. The complete form of the *mantras*, which are mentioned in this text *pratīkena* (by the beginning words) are found in the first four *praśnas* (sections) of another text, known as the *Vaikhānasa mantrapraśnaḥ* (and also the *Mantrasaṃhitā Vaikhānasīya*, a text consulted by Caland for his translation of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*).

The sixth *gṛhyasūtra* text of the *Taittirīya śākhā* is also a very late text, *Āgniveśyagṛhyasūtra,* believed as composed by Agniveśya. This text, comprising three *praśnas,* which are further divided into 7, 7 and 12 chapters, belongs to the *Agniveśya śākhā*, a sub-branch of the *Vādhūla śākhā.* Based on a commentary named, the *Vādhūlagṛhyakalpavyākhyā*, it was inferred by the modern scholars that a *gṛhyasūtra* text of the *Vādhūla śākhā* proper also existed and some parts of the lost *gṛhyasūtra* text in all probability preserved in this commentary. Later, the manuscripts of the *Vādhūlagṛhyasūtra* and the *Vādhūlapitṛmedhasūtra* have been found, but these texts are not yet published and not much is known about them.

Two extant *gṛhyasūtra* texts belong to the *Maitrāyaṇī śākhā*, the *Mānavagṛhyasūtra* and the *Vārāhagṛhyasūtra.* The *Mānavagṛhyasūtra,* belonging to the *Mānava* sub-branch, is ascribed to certain Mānavācārya by the medieval scholiast Aṣṭāvakra. This text is divided in to two *puruṣas*, which are further divided into 23 and 18 *khaṇḍas* respectively. The *Mānavaśrāddhakalpa* is considered as the handbook for the funerary rites for this *śākhā*. The *Vārāhagṛhyasūtra*, belonging to the *Vārāha* sub-branch is a comparatively late text, comprising a large number of *sūtras* common to the *Mānavagṛhyasūtra* and the *Kāṭhakagṛhyasūtra*. It is a small text, comprising only 17 *khaṇḍas*, believed as composed by Varāha (boar) incarnation of Viṣṇu.

The *Kāṭhakagṛhyasūtra* is believed as composed by Laugākṣī (or Laukākṣī) in the tradition of Kashmir and hence, it is also known as *Laugākṣīgṛhyasūtra.* This text belongs to the *Kāṭhaka śākhā* and its 73 chapters are distributed in to five big sections, from which, the name *Gṛhyapañcikā* for its commentary of Brāhmaṇabala was originated. With all probability, the *mantras* mentioned in this text by their *pratīkena* (beginning words) belong to a separate text, now lost. The names of some other Kṛṣṇayajurvedic *gṛhya* texts, like *Śāṇḍilya*, *Māvila* and a certain *Maitareyasūtra* are found in the later *nibandha* texts, but they text have not yet been found.[12]

1.1.2.5 Atharvavedic domestic ritual texts

The *Kauśikasūtra,* comprising 141 *kaṇḍikās* distributed into 14 *adhyāyas*, believed as composed by Kauśika, belongs to the *Śaunakīya śākhā* of the Atharvaveda. This ancient text, probably composed before the *Vaitānasūtra*, solemn ritual text of this *śākhā*, is not a mere *gṛhyasūtra* text. It was composed to describe all rituals of the Atharvavedic tradition including the life-cycle rites, domestic rituals, royal consecration rituals and the magical Atharvanic rituals.[13] Although, no extant *gṛhyasūtra* text is available for the *Paippalāda śākhā* of the Atharvaveda, citations from a certain *Paiṭhīnasisūtra* are available in several late medieval *nibandha* texts. From these citations, it has been inferred that probably it was the *gṛhyasūtra* text of this *śākhā*. Only the fragments of the handbook for the funerary rites of the *Paippalāda śākhā*, the *Paippalādaśrāddhakalpa* are available in the citations. Some of the *Pariśiṣṭa* texts of the Atharvaveda like *Śrāddhavidhiḥ* (44th *Pariśiṣṭa*) and *Uttamapaṭala* (46th *Pariśiṣṭa*) also described the life-cycle rites.

1.1.2.6 The *dharmasūtras*

The youngest genre of the vedic ritual texts, *dharmasūtras* also described the life-cycle rites, but in

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