

Editorial

With the paper by Y. Ikari on his new discoveries of texts of the Vādhūla school, we begin the second year of the EJVS. Membership has crossed the 350 line just now.

The Vādhūla *śākhā* is a sub-school of the Taittirīya *śākhā* of the Black Yajurveda. It is little known and has been studied even less. As such, it is one of the elusive *śākhās* that need urgent exploration and study.

We especially urge our Indian colleagues (and all those South Asians in the west who make the occasional trip back home to Bhāratavarṣa) to undertake such surveys in other parts of the country as well. We will gladly publish any “travel” reports you send to the journal. For example, we do not know anything of value about the Vedic tradition of Assam (and Manipur!), and the elusive Carakas of rural Maharashtra should also be investigated finally. Western Nepal, Uttarakhanda and Himachal Pradesh are some other good cases to be investigated closely. (If members are interested, the available information on rare schools or unexplored parts of the subcontinent will be published here to facilitate field trips.)

We therefore are most grateful to Y. Ikari for actually having undertaken several field trips to Madras and Kerala to recover some of the last vestiges of this once important school of the Yajurveda which can be traced back all the way to eastern U. P. during the late Vedic period.

About his last trip he wrote to me:

During my last visit to Iriññālakkūṭa (Irinjalakuda) where there are two big collections of Vādhūla *ācārya* houses, I was overwhelmed by the unexpected quantity of MSS many of which have no titles. It took time to identify them one by one and I could not find time to see people of other Manas.

Some of the Vādhūlas are priests for nearby Hindu temples. The head of Nedumpilli Mana has still been invited to the big festivals of the Padmanābha temple of Trivandrum. There are inscriptions of the Padmanābha temple which allow to trace this tradition back to 17th century.

Some of the Vādhūlas expressed their hope of performing *yajñas*. But this is actually difficult as the living oral tradition died out many years ago. One of the oldest Vādhūlas, now about 80 of age, who wrote the Vādhūla Catang (in Malayalam), told me that his father had performed a Soma *yajña*, but he himself didn't see it.

As the present article indicates there is not only much new material but the older (partial) editions of Caland, Sparreboom & Heesterman, and Chaubey all need to be revised in this light. On a personal note I may add that I gave up the idea to publish the *Brāhmaṇa* and *Śrautasūtra* on the basis of the Madras MSS. in 1979 when I learned from D. Bhattacharya (then at Hoshiarpur) that B. Chaubey was working on

the text – retrospectively a felicitous decision, as all materials available then were quite defective.

We look forward to Prof. Ikari’s new edition which has begun to appear now.

The following point may be offered for discussion among the members:

1) Do you wish a list of Frequently Asked Questions about the Vedas to be added to our server on shore.net/~india?

2) If so, please send some of your questions to which you most desire answers to ejvs-list@shore.net. We will try to answer as soon as time allows. Any other questions, discussion pieces, etc. are welcome as well and will be placed in the next issue.

The next issue will probably contain a paper by G. Cardona on *anusvāra* in the grammatical traditions, and I plan to add a companion piece on this sound in medieval and more recent manuscripts. Cf. also, below, Y. Ikari’s interesting observation on a Kerala peculiarity regarding nasal before v.

Finally, I apologize to all for an unnecessary scare with regard to the bogus, so-called “good times” virus a few months ago. Since I learnt from you that this particular virus does not exist I refrained from cluttering everybody’s mailbox with another lengthy message about this, perpetuating this harmless chainmail. If you are interested in this new type of MĀYĀ, and the topic of computer virus in general, please check the anti-viral information on the Internet (or ask me privately for detailed information which I will pass on):

Usenet newsgroups – comp. virus – the Usenet gateway for VIRUS-L (below)
Mailing lists – VIRUS-L is for discussions of viruses and anti-viral products. Send email to listserv@lehigh.edu. In the body of the message, include the line “sub virus-l your-name” (without the quotes).
FTP sites – cert.org in pub/virus-l/docs/ Contains information about viruses and anti-virus products, with pointers to other FTP sites.
World Wide Web – <http://www.singnet.com.sg/staff/lorna/Virus> (Note: the V must be capitalized!)

Our thanks to all who have written on this topic!

M. W.