

The Observances or *vedavratas* for Learning of the Veda

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1 Introduction

In the Vedic religion in ancient India, one who is going to undertake sacred duties such as the religious rituals is required to observe restrictions on his behavior during the undertakings. Such observances are generally called *vrata*, or in some cases, *dikṣā*.

Learning of the Vedic canon is regarded as one of the sacred duties requiring observances. The *vratas* for learning, later called *vedavratas*, are first prescribed mostly in the *Gṛhyasūtras*.¹ However, the system of learning is often far from clear. The names and order of *vratas* are different among the schools. Which text should be learned by which *vrata* is not always explicitly indicated. The examination of the *vratas* for learning can offer us good clues for the investigations of development of the Vedic canon.

In this paper, I will discuss why and in which way the *vratas* are necessary for learning of the Veda. As we will see below, while the *vratas* for learning should be observed generally throughout lessons, their function as preparation by spending a certain period before lessons keeping restricted behavior is especially important.

I will also present lists of the *vratas* for learning of all Vedic schools at the *Gṛhyasūtra* level as a starting point for further investigations of the texts of each school.² Roughly speaking, there are two groups of *vratas* for learning. One is for learning of basic parts of the Veda such as the *Samhitā* and the *Brāhmaṇa* of respective schools. It is not always called *vrata*: the preparatory observance for the first lesson and beyond is often woven in the initiation ritual and the life of Vedic students. The other is the *vratas* observed when one is going to learn more advanced and secret parts such as the *Āraṇyakas* and the *Upaniṣads*.

2 The initiation ritual and the Veda-learning

2.1 The initiation ritual as preparation for being entitled to learn

In order to learn the Veda, one should first approach (*úpa-i*) a teacher and become his Vedic student (*brahmacārín*). The teacher leads near (*úpa-nī*) the novice into himself and makes him his student so that the latter becomes entitled to learn the sacred knowledge. The procedure of a teacher's making a novice his student or one's becoming a teacher's student consists of the initiation ritual, which is called *Upanayana* in the *Gṛhyasūtras* onward.³

* This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number JP17H02268.

¹ Some *Śrautasūtras* also mention *vratas* for learning (see below). The *vratas* for learning continue to develop in the post-Vedic manuals and commentaries.

² For former studies on the *vedavratas*, see OLDENBERG [1886: 78–80 (the note on *ŚāṅkhGS* 12.1ff.)]; KANE [1974: 370–375]; GOPAL [1983 (1959): 306–310]; KAJIHARA [2005].

³ The term *upanayana*- (<*úpa-nī*) in the meaning “the initiation ritual” is attested since the *Gṛhyasūtras*. In the texts before them, the initiation of the Vedic student is expressed with the verbs *úpa-nī* “to lead near [to

The initiation of the Vedic student is first mentioned in the Atharvaveda (AV), the second oldest text in India. There the process of initiation is described in an impressive way: the teacher is said to make the novice an embryo, and keeps it within his belly for three nights, before the novice is born as the Vedic student.⁴

Atharvaveda Śaunaka (AVŚ) 11.5.3; Atharvaveda Paippalāda (AVP) 16.153.2

*ācāryā upanāyamāno brahmacārīṇaṃ kṛṇute gārbham antāḥ /
tām rātrīs tistrā udāre bibharti tām jātām drāṣṭum abhisāmyanti devāḥ //*

The teacher, initiating the Vedic student (*brahmacārīn*) into himself (i.e., initiating him as his Vedic student), makes him his embryo within. He bears him in his belly for three nights. When he (the Vedic student) is born, the gods go together to see him.

The three-night “pregnancy period” of the teacher at the initiation is the time necessary for the novice to pass in order to become entitled to learn the Veda. The custom of spending three nights or its equivalent at the initiation continues throughout the Vedic period.

2.2 The first lesson of the Veda: Learning of the Sāvitrī at the initiation ritual

The first lesson of the Veda is given at the initiation ritual. Since the young Brāhmaṇa texts, the first piece of the Veda taught to the novice is said to be the verse called Sāvitrī.⁵ There are two patterns of preparation for the lesson of the Sāvitrī: (1) the initiation ritual itself is regarded as a sort of *vrata* for learning, or, (2) the *vrata* for learning the Sāvitrī is observed during the initiation ritual. These two patterns represent eventually the same idea of spending a certain period before the lesson of the Sāvitrī.

Pattern 1 : The initiation ritual as a sort of *vrata*

Two of young Brāhmaṇas, the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa (ŚB) of the White Yajurveda and the Kaṭha-Brāhmaṇa (KaṭhB) of the Black Yajurveda, preserve the passages on the initiation ritual. Both texts tell that, at the initiation, the teacher waits for a year or its equivalent before teaching the Sāvitrī to the novice.

The Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa tells about it as follows:

Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa Mādhyandina 11.5.4.6–12 (ŚBK 13.5.4.6–12)

*āthāsmāi sāvitrīm ānvāha. / tām ha smaitām purā saṃvatsarē ’nvāhuḥ. saṃvatsarasammitā
vāi gārbhāḥ prajāyante. jātā evāsmiṃs tād vācam dadhma iti. /6/ ātha ṣaṣṣu māseṣu. ...*

oneself]; to initiate [as one’s student]” in the middle voice; “to lead / to initiate [into the studentship]” in the active voice; and *ūpa-i* “to approach near [the teacher]; to be initiated [as a student].”

⁴ What is impressive is, of course, the teacher is a male who has no womb. A Brāhmaṇa text explains that the teacher gives birth to the embryo (the novice) from his mouth (ŚBM 11.5.4.17 / ŚBK 13.5.4.17).

⁵ The Sāvitrī is the verse dedicated to the god Savitṛ, which verse has been regarded to be especially sacred since the mid-Vedic period. While there is more than one verse dedicated to the god Savitṛ (“*sāvitrī*”), RV 3.62.10 (*tāt savitṛ vāreṇyam bhārgo devāsya dhimahi dhiyo yō naḥ pracodāyāt //*) is generally identified as the sacred Sāvitrī. For the identification of the sacred Sāvitrī and the development of the idea of the sacred verses after the Vedic Sāvitrī in various religious traditions, see KAJIHARA [2018–2019].

*átha caturvímśatyahé. ... átha dvādaśāhé. ... átha śaḍahé. ... átha tryahé. ... /7-11/
tād āpi ślókaṃ gāyanti /*

ācāryò garbhī bhavati hástam ādhāya dākṣiṇam

ṛṭīyasyām sá jāyate sāvitrīyá sahá brāhmaṇā íti.

*sadyó ha tvāvá brāhmaṇáyānubrūyād. āgneyó vai brāhmaṇáh. sadyó vā agnir jāyate.
tāsmāt sadyá evá brāhmaṇáyānubrūyāt. /12/*

Then, [the teacher] teaches the Sāvitrī to him (the novice). In the past, people used to teach it after a year [from the initiation, thinking], “The embryos are born after they have passed [the period] equal to a year. When he is born, we put speech in him.” /6/ Then [they used to teach] after six months. ... Then after twenty-four days. ... Then after twelve days. ... Then after six days. ... Then after three days. ... /7-11/ About this, too, people sing a *śloka*: “The teacher becomes one who has an embryo after putting on his right hand. On the third night, he (the embryo) is born with the Sāvitrī as a Brāhmaṇa (a man of the Brahman class).” Indeed [however], one should teach [the Sāvitrī] to a Brāhmaṇa on the same day [of the initiation]. The Brāhmaṇa indeed belongs to Agni. Agni is indeed born on the same day. Therefore, exactly on the same day, he should teach [the Sāvitrī] to the Brāhmaṇa. /12/

Here, the teacher’s waiting for a year, or a period equated to a year (six months, twenty-four days, twelve days, six days, three days), functions as preparation for the lesson of the Sāvitrī. The ideas of identifying the novice as an embryo, and waiting for his “being born” before giving him the first lesson of the Sāvitrī, clearly reflect the idea of the teacher’s “three-night pregnancy period” told in the Atharvaveda quoted above (AVŚ 11.5.3 / AVP 16.153.2).⁶

Similar ideas are found in the Kaṭha-Brāhmaṇa:

Kaṭha-Brāhmaṇa (*upanayana-brāhmaṇa*) 50.10ff.⁷

*sá vā eśá brahmacārī sāvitrīyá sahá prājāyate. tād āhuḥ. saṃvatsaré (sic) ’nūcyá.
saṃvatsaré vai rétāmsi siktāni prājāyanta íty. átho khálv āhur. dvādaśāhé (sic) ’nūcyá.
dvādaśa māsāḥ saṃvatsaráḥ. saṃvatsaénaiváinaṃ prājanayati. saṃvatsaráśyáptyai.*

This Vedic student is indeed born together with the Sāvitrī [at the initiation]. About this, people say: “After a year, [the Sāvitrī] should be taught [to the newly initiated student]. After a year, indeed, the poured semen [becomes embryos and] are born.” Now, on the other hand, as is known, people say: “After twelve days, it should be taught. A year is [equal to] twelve months. Consequently, by a year, he makes him born. For

⁶ As quoted here, the ŚB eventually opines that the teacher should teach the Sāvitrī immediately. The Pāraskara-Gṛhyasūtra (PGS), which belongs to the same school as the ŚB, does not mention the preparation period before the Sāvitrī lesson, presumably following this final opinion of the ŚB. See PGS 2.3.3.

⁷ The KaṭhB is reserved only in fragments. See SCHROEDER [1898]; CALAND [1920]; SŪRYAKĀNTA [1943]. The fragment on the initiation ritual is called *upanayana-brāhmaṇa* by these editors. In this paper, I will quote the KaṭhB from SŪRYAKĀNTA [1943] with its page and line numbers.

obtaining a year.”

At the Gr̥hyasūtra level, about half of the schools prescribe that the novice should spend a certain period before he learns the Sāvitrī at the Upanayana. For example:

Śāṅkhāyana-Gr̥hyasūtra 2.5.1–3 (Upanayana)

saṃvatsare sāvitrīm anvāha /1/ trirātre /2/ anvakṣaṃ vā /3/

After a year [from the Upanayana, the teacher] teaches the Sāvitrī. /1/ [Or] after three nights. /2/ Or immediately. /3/

Pattern 2 : The *vrata* for learning the Sāvitrī woven in the Upanayana

Some Gr̥hyasūtras elaborate the *vrata* for learning the Sāvitrī within the Upanayana. For example:⁸

Baudhāyana-Gr̥hyasūtra 2.5.34–68 (Upanayana)

atra sāvitravratam /34/ ... / “agne vratapate sāvitraṃ vratam cariṣyāmi tac chakeyaṃ tan me rādhyatām svāhā” /36/ ... / tasyāgreṇa kumāro darbheṣu pratyān̄mukha upaviśya pādāv anvārabhyāha “sāvitrīm bho anubrūhi” iti /39/ ... / “agne vratapate sāvitraṃ vratam acāriṣaṃ tad aśakaṃ tan me rādhi svāhā” /67/ ... /68/

At this point, the *sāvitravrata*. /34/ ... / [The novice says,] “O Agni, the lord of *vratas*, I will perform the *sāvitra vrata*. May I be able to do it. May it be successful to me, *svāhā*.” /36/ ... / In front of him (the teacher), the boy (the novice), having sit down on the *darbha* grass facing toward the west, and having seized [the teacher’s] feet, says, “Teach the Sāvitrī, Sir!” /39/ ... (The lesson of the Sāvitrī and other ritual actions are performed) ... / [The novice says,] “O Agni, the lord of *vratas*, I performed the *sāvitra vrata*. I was able to do it. It was successful to me, *svāhā*.” /67/ ... /68/

The formulas which begin with the words “O Agni, the lord of *vratas*, I will perform the so-and-so *vrata*,” and end with “O Agni, the lord of *vratas*, I performed the so-and-so *vrata*,” make a framework of the whole *vrata*. This construction of the *vrata*-formulas is frequently found in the Vedic texts since the Yajurveda Saṃhitās.⁹

2.3 Learning of the basic parts of the Veda

The Vedic student’s learning of the basic parts of the Veda (i.e., the relatively old strata of the Saṃhitā and the Brāhmaṇa of respective schools) is begun shortly after his initiation ritual Upanayana. Generally, no particular *vrata* is prescribed for the basic lessons. The ascetic

⁸ Some other schools prescribe a *vrata* after the lesson of the Sāvitrī; e.g., JGS 1.12: 13.4–10. Another *vrata* is prescribed in several schools at the end of the Upanayana: the newly initiated student is required to keep standing until sunset of the day of the Upanayana; to restrain speech until sunset of the day; etc. It would be the *vrata* for the Upanayana ritual itself. See KAJIHARA [2021: 230f.].

⁹ E.g. TS 1.5.10.3; 1.6.6.3; VS 1.5; 2.28; MS 4.9.24: 137.8; 4.1.26: 138.5; etc.

practices (*brahmacarya*) which are imposed on the Vedic student at the initiation make him ready for learning.

The lessons are given in an annual schedule every year. The term of the year begins with the Upākaraṇa rite. Then the Vedic student learns the Veda from his teacher every day with occasional interruptions, ends the year's lesson with the Utsarga rite, takes a holiday, and then again begins another annual term with the next Upākaraṇa rite. This cycle is repeated, theoretically, until the Vedic student completes his learning of the Veda, or, in practice, until he passes a decent length of time of learning. Then he concludes his studentship by the graduation ritual Samāvartana to return home from the teacher's house.

3 Preparations for the advanced learning

In order to learn some of more advanced or cryptic parts of the Veda, particular *vratas* are required. Some Gr̥hyasūtras tell that the manner of entering the *vratas* for learning is the same as or similar to that of the Upanayana.

For example, the Kauṣītaka-Gr̥hyasūtra belonging to the Ṛgveda prescribes the manner of entering the *vratas* for learning with the wordings which are parallel to those in the Upanayana. At the Upanayana, the teacher and the novice have the following dialogue:

Kauṣītaka-Gr̥hyasūtra 2.2.1–6 (Upanayana); cf. ŚāṅkhGS 2.2.4–9
*adbhir añjalim pūrayitvāthainam āha “ko nāmāsi” iti /1/ “asāv ahaṃ bhoḥ” itītaraḥ /2/
“samārṣaḥ” ity ācāryaḥ /3/ “samārṣo ’haṃ bhoḥ” itītaraḥ /4/ “brahmacārī bhava” ity
ācāryaḥ /5/ “brahmacārī bhavāni” itītaraḥ /6/*

Having filled the hollow of hands with water,¹⁰ then, [the teacher] says to him (the novice), “Who are you by name?” /1/ The other (i.e., the novice) [replies], “I am N.N., Sir.” /2/ The teacher [says], “[You have been] descended from the same Ṛṣi[?]”¹¹ /3/ The other [replies], “I am descended from the same Ṛṣi, Sir.” /4/ The teacher [says], “Become a *brahmacārin* (Vedic student).” /5/ The other [replies], “I shall become a *brahmacārin*.” /6/

After the Upanayana, the Vedic student begins learning the Veda. When he comes to learning some particular sections, he is required to observe *vratas* in the manner which is said to have been explained by the Upanayana: that is, the Upanayana should be performed again, in an abridged form. The dialogue between the teacher and the student at the Upanayana quoted above is repeated in slightly modified wordings.

Kauṣītaka-Gr̥hyasūtra 2.7.1–4; 2.7.8–11; cf. ŚāṅkhGS 2.11.1–9¹²

¹⁰ After the dialogue, the teacher pours water in his hands into those of the novice. For this ritual action, see KAJIHARA [2014].

¹¹ As to whether this sentence is a statement or a question, see OLDENBERG [1886: 62f. (a note on ŚāṅkhGS 2.2.6 and 7)].

¹² The Kauṣīkatas and the Śāṅkayanas are sister schools (see n. 20 below). In the Gr̥hyasūtra of the

atha vratādeśanam /1/ tasyopanayanena kalpo vyākhyātaḥ /2/ na sāvitṛīm anvāha /3/ daṇḍapradānāntam ity eke /4/ ... / yāṃ vānyāṃ bhaprasastāṃ manyeta tasyāṃ śukriyabrahmacaryam ādiśeta /8/ “śukriyabrahmacārī bhava” ity ācāryaḥ /9/ “śukriyabrahmacārī bhavāni” itītarah /10/ evam uttaraṣāṃ yadyad vratam ādiśeta tasyatasya nāmnā nirdiśet /11/

Now, the direction of the *vratas* [for learning particular sections]. /1/ Its manner has been explained by the Upanayana. /2/ [However,] he (the teacher) does not teach the Sāvitrī (i.e., the lesson of the Sāvitrī is omitted, unlike the Upanayana proper). /3/ Some say, “The giving of the staff forms the end [of the ritual, unlike the Upanayana proper].” /4/ ... / Or on another day which he (the teacher) thinks the constellation is favorable, he should direct the ascetic life of student (*brahmacarya*) for the *śukriya* (the first *vrata* for learning of this school; see below). /8/ The teacher [says], “Become a *śukriya-brahmacārī*.” /9/ The other (i.e., the student) [replies], “I shall become a *śukriya-brahmacārī*.” /10/ Thus, whichever subsequent *vrata* he (the teacher) directs, he should indicate it by its name. /11/

In this way, the procedure of beginning the study of advanced parts of the Veda is made up after the Upanayana by which the Vedic student becomes entitled to learn the basic parts of the Veda.

The *vratas* for learning particular sections have to be observed for a certain length of period such as a year or three nights, just as the lesson of the Sāvitrī at the Upanayana needs a preparatory period. The KauṣGS continues the rules for *śukriya vrata* as follows:

Kauṣītaka-Gr̥hyasūtra 2.7.12–16; cf. ŚāṅkhGS 2.11.10–12

trirātraṃ brahmacaryaṃ caret /12/ dvādaśarātraṃ saṃvatsaraṃ vā /13/ yāvad vā gurur manyeta /14/ godānasya ca /15/ śākvaraṃ tu saṃvatsaraṃ mājāvratikam aupaniṣadaṃ ca /16/

He (the student) should perform the *brahmacarya* for three nights [at the *śukriya-vrata*]. /12/ Or for twelve nights. Or for a year. /13/ Or as long as the teacher (*guru*) thinks fit. /14/ [These rules are] also for the *godāna[-vrata]*. /15/ On the other hand, the *śākvara[-vrata]* [should be observed] for a year. The *mājāvratika* and the *aupaniṣada* also [should be observed for a year]. /16/

4 The *vratas* for learning of the respective schools

The names and numbers of the *vratas* for learning are not always the same among the Vedic schools. The subjects of learning are also not uniform. Roughly speaking, there are *vratas* for learning the *mahānāmni* verses, the *śākvara* [*sāman* applied to the *mahānāmni* verses], the Pravargya ritual (by the *śukriya vrata* or the *avāntaradikṣā*), the *hotṛ* formulas such as

Śāṅkhāyanas (ŚāṅkhGS), the dialogue in question (KauṣGS 2.7.9–11) is omitted.

caturhotrs, and the Upaniṣads. Learning of the Agnicayana ritual is often alluded to at the Godāna (the Gr̥hya ritual of shaving the beard performed at the age of sixteen). In the case of the Sāmaveda, the *vratas* are either for learning particular texts or *sāmans*.¹³

In the following, I will give the lists of the *vratas* for learning according to each school. As mentioned above, the *vratas* are mostly enumerated in the Gr̥hyasūtras (GS), while some are mentioned in the Śrautasūtras (ŚS). Some others are alluded to in the Brāhmaṇas and the Āraṇyakas. I will first examine the *vratas* school by school, and then give an overview of the *vratas* of all schools for convenience.

4.1 The Ṛgvedic schools

Āśvalāyana

The Āśvalāyana-Śrautasūtra (ĀśvŚS) mentions a *vrata* for learning and alludes to two others, while the Āśvalāyana-Gr̥hyasūtra (ĀśvGS) mentions still another one. Later in younger texts of this school, three to five *vratas* for learning are enumerated.¹⁴ The names of the *vratas* and their lengths of the period are as follows.

	ĀśvŚS	ĀśvGS
<i>mahānāmnī</i>	ĀśvŚS 8.14.1ff.	1 year
(<i>mahāvratā</i>)	(ĀśvŚS 8.14.19)	(cf. AitĀ 5.3.3 [1 year] ¹⁵)
(<i>upaniṣad</i>)	(ĀśvŚS 8.14.19)	
[<i>godāna</i>]		ĀśvGS 1.18.9 1 year

The first one, *mahānāmnī*, is the *vrata* for learning the verses of the same name.¹⁶ This *vrata* is explained in the ĀśvŚS. The name of the second and the third in the above list

¹³ PARPOLA [1968–1969: I.1, 69–74]; FUJII [2020: 82f.].

¹⁴ For example, see Āśvalāyana-Gr̥hya-Kārikā [Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series 105: 193f.] 1.14.1–20 (*mahānāmnīvrata*); 1.15.1–3 (*mahāvratā*); 1.16.1 (*upaniṣadvratā*); 1.17.1–7 (*godānavratā*); the Āśvalāyana-Gr̥hya-Parīṣiṣṭa 12 [AITHAL 1963: 244] (*sāvitra vedavratā, mahānāmya, vr̥tika, aupaniṣada, gaudānika, sauparṇā*). For the two Parīṣiṣṭas of this school, see AITHAL [1963]. Nārāyaṇa’s commentary on ĀśvGS 1.22.13 (Upanayana) [Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series 105: 50] enumerates three in sequence (*mahānāmnī, mahāvratā, upaniṣad*); the *godāna* is treated separately. According to KANE [1974: 370] and GONDA [1980: 462], another young text, the Āśvalāyana-Smṛti (not available to the author), lists up four *vratas* (*mahānāmnī, mahāvratā, upaniṣad, godāna*). The Laghvāśvalāyanasmṛti [Smṛtisandarbhā 3:1724] enumerates *mahānāmnīvrata, mahāvratā, upaniṣadvratā*.

¹⁵ AitĀ (Mahāvratā) 5.3.3 *tad idam ahar nānantevāsine prabrūyān. nāsaṃvatsaravāsine no evāsaṃvatsaravāsine nābrahmacāriṇe nāsabrahmacāriṇe no evāsabrahmacāriṇe nānabhiprāptayaitam deśam* “This day one should not teach to one who is not a regular pupil, and has not been so for a year, assuredly not to one who has not been so for a year, nor to one who is not a *brahmacārin* and does not belong to the same school, assuredly not to one who does not belong to the same school, nor to one who has not come to that place” (tr. KEITH [1909: 301]). The “*brahmacārin*” in this passage would refer not only to the Vedic student proper but also “one who is [temporarily] leading the life of the Vedic student”; see KAJIHARA [2019: 547f.; 2021: 87f.]. The term *sa-brahmacārin* generally means “a fellow student”; for KEITH’s translation above, see his note (KEITH [1909: 301, n. 4]) and BÜHLER [1879: 251] (tr. and note on GautDhS 24.21).

¹⁶ The *mahānāmnī* verses are collected in AitĀ 4 etc. For their origin, development, and the use in the rituals, see KEITH [1909: 258–261]; cf. KHARE [2014] (no sources are clearly given for the description of the *mahānāmnī-vrata* in p. 122).

(*mahāvratā* and *upaniṣad*) are not indicated there.¹⁷

The fourth one, the *godāna*, is prescribed in the ĀśvGS. At the end of the prescription of the Godāna ritual, a *vratā* is directed as follows:

Āśvalāyana-Gr̥hyasūtra 1.18.1–9 (Godāna)

etena godānam /1/ ṣoḍaśe varṣe /2/ ... / gomithunam dakṣiṇā /8/ saṁvatsaram ādiśet /9/

In this way (like the Caula¹⁸), the Godāna [should be performed], /1/ when one is sixteen years old. /2/ ... / The fee [for performing the rite] is a pair of cows. /8/ [When the Godāna is finished,] he (the teacher) should direct [him (the one who has undergone the Godāna) the *vratā* which is to be observed] for a year. /9/

As mentioned above, while the Godāna is generally regarded as a rite of passage performed at a specific age, it is also integrated into the Veda-learning system in many schools.¹⁹

Śāṅkhāyana / Kauṣītaki

The *vratas* for learning of the the Śāṅkhāyana and the Kauṣītaki schools²⁰ are as follows:

Śāṅkhāyana	Kauṣītaki	
<i>śukriya</i> ŚāṅkhGS 2.11.9f. [<i>godāna</i>] (ŚāṅkhGS 1.28.18ff.)	<i>śukriya</i> KauṣGS 2.7.8ff. <i>godāna</i> KauṣGS 2.7.15	3 / 12 nights / 1 year 3 / 12 nights / 1 year
<i>śākvāra</i> ŚāṅkhGS 2.11.11 (= <i>mahānāmnī</i>)	<i>śākvāra</i> KauṣGS 2.7.16	1 year
<i>vrātika</i> ŚāṅkhGS 2.11.12	<i>māhāvrātika</i> KauṣGS 2.7.16	1 year
<i>aupaniṣada</i> ŚāṅkhGS 2.11.12 (details ²¹) ŚāṅkhGS 2.11.13–2.12.18 (supplements) ŚāṅkhGS 6.1.1–6.6.16	<i>aupaniṣada</i> KauṣGS 2.7.16 KauṣGS 2.7.17–31	1 year

The Śāṅkhāyana-Gr̥hyasūtra does not include the *godāna* in the list of the *vratas* for learning, while the Kauṣītaka-Gr̥hyasūtra does.²²

¹⁷ ĀśvŚS 8.14.2–19 *mahānāmnīr agre /2/ ... eṣa dvayoḥ svādhyāyadharmah /19/* “First, [one should learn] the *mahānāmnī* [verses]. /2/ ... This is the way of the *svādhyāya* of the [other] two. /19/”

¹⁸ The Caula, called also Cūḍā, is the rite of cutting hair at the age of three.

¹⁹ In the ĀśvGS, the Godāna is put within the sequence of rites of passage from one’s birth (the birth rituals; the Caula at the age of three, which is followed by the Godāna because the procedures of the two rituals are similar; and then comes the Upanayana performed around eight years old). The Āśvalāyana-Gr̥hya-Kārikā deals with the four *vratas* including the *godāna* in a sequence, putting them between the Upanayana (the initiation ritual) and the Samāvartana (the graduation ritual).

²⁰ The texts of these two schools have been often regarded to be the same, because they are similar to each other, and even the colophons of their manuscripts often mention both names. They, however, are not quite the same, and should be examined as different texts. See OLDENBERG [1878: 4ff.]; CHINTAMANI [1944: xviii–lxv]; KAJIHARA [2009/2010: 52, n. 35].

²¹ The detailed rules common to the *vratas* are given in this part. OLDENBERG [1886: 78–80, the note on ŚāṅkhGS 2.12.1] opines that those rules are not applied to the *śukriya vratā*.

²² The texts of the section of *vratas* for learning are actually almost the same in the two schools; the KauṣGS

The manner of the *vratas* for learning is said to follow that of the Upanayana in an abridged form.

Śāṅkhāyana-Gr̥hyasūtra 2.11.1–4 (Vedavrata); cf. KauṣGS 2.7.1–3 (quoted above)
*atha vratādeśanam /1/ tasyopanayanena kalpo vyākhyāto /2/ na sāvitṛim anvāha /3/
daṇḍapradānāntam ity ek[e] /4/*

Now, the direction of the *vratas* [for learning the particular sections]. /1/ Its manner has been explained by the Upanayana. /2/ [However,] he (the teacher) does not teach the Sāvitrī [unlike the Upanayana proper]. /3/ Some say, “The giving of the staff forms the end [of the ritual, unlike the Upanayana proper].” /4/

4.2 The Sāmavedic schools

Kautuma / Rāṇāyanīya

The Kautuma and the Rāṇāyanīya are the sister schools. They have principally the same *vratas* for learning in their Gr̥hyasūtras. Their prescriptions of the *vratas* begin at the end of the Godāna ritual. An “Upanayana” is required to enter the *vrata*, of which manner is said to have been explained by the Upanayana proper.

Gobhila-Gr̥hyasūtra 3.1.10–13 (Godāna; quoted above)
*upanayanenaivopanayanam vyākhyātam /10/ na tv ihāhataṃ vāso niyuktam /11/
nālanikāraḥ /12/ nācarīṣyantaṃ saṃvatsaram upanayet /13/*

The Upanayana [for the *vratas* for learning] has been explained by nothing but the Upanayana [proper]. /10/ In this case, however, no new cloth is used, /11/ nor ornament. /12/ [The teacher] should not initiate one who is not going to perform [the *vrata*] for a year. /13/

Khādīra-Gr̥hyasūtra 2.5.1–9 (Godāna)
*atha godāne caulavat kalpaḥ /1/ ... / uktam upanayanam /6/ nācarīṣyantaṃ saṃ-
vatsaram /7/ aniyuktan tv ahatam /8/ athālamkāro /9/ ...*

Now, at the Godāna, the manner is like the Caula. /1/ ... / The Upanayana [for the *vratas* for learning] has been explained [by the Upanayana proper]. /6/ [The teacher] should not initiate one who is not going to perform [the *vrata*] for a year. /7/ However, no new cloth is used [unlike the Upanayana proper], /8/ nor ornament. /9/ ...

just adds two words “*godānasya ca*” (“Also for the *godāna*[-*vrata*]”), so that the *godāna* is included in the *vratas* for learning (KauṣGS 2.7.15 quoted above). The Godāna ritual itself is prescribed separately (ŚāṅkhGS 1.28.18–24; KauṣGS 1.21.16–22).

The *vratas* for learning of these two schools are as follows:

Kauthuma		Rāṇāyanīya		
<i>godānika</i>	GGs 3.1.10–29	<i>godāna</i>	KhGS 2.5.6–17	1 year
<i>vrātika</i>	GGs 3.1.28f.	<i>vrātika</i>	KhGS 2.5.17	1 year
<i>ādityavrata</i>	GGs 3.1.28; 30-33	<i>ādityavrata</i>	KhGS 2.5.17–21	1 year
<i>aupaniṣada</i>	GGs 3.1.28f.	<i>aupaniṣad</i>	KhGS 2.5.17	1 year
<i>jyeṣṭhasāmika</i>	GGs 3.1.28f.; 3.2.54	<i>jyeṣṭhasāmika</i>	KhGS 2.5.17	1 year
<i>mahānāmnikā</i>	GGs 3.2.1ff.	<i>śakvarī</i>	KhGS 2.5.22ff.	12/9/6/3/1 year

In both schools, the *vrata* for learning the *mahānāmni* verses is explained in detail much more than the other *vratas*.

Jaiminīya

The Jaimini-Gr̥hyasūtra (JGS) prescribes the *vratas* for learning which are similar to those in the Gobhila- and the Khādīra-Gr̥hyasūtras. It has been pointed out that, however, there are differences between the Kautuma-Rāṇāyanīyas and the Jaiminīyas as to what is learnt by each *vrata*.²³ The *vratas* for learning in the Jaimini-Gr̥hyasūtra are as follows:

<i>gaudānika</i>	JGS 1.16: 15.4–6; cf. 1.18: 16.9ff.	1 year
<i>vrātika</i>	JGS 1.16: 15.4; 8	1 year
<i>ādityavrātika</i>	JGS 1.16: 15.6ff.	1 year
<i>aupaniṣada</i>	JGS 1.16: 15.4; 9	1 year
<i>mahānāmnikā</i>	JGS 1.17: 15.10ff.	12 / 9 / 6 / 3 / 1 year

The *vrata* for the *mahānāmni* verses is explained in more detail than the other *vratas*.

The chapters on the *vratas* for learning (JGS 1.16–17) are followed by the chapter on the Godāna ritual (JGS 1.18) and then the Samāvartana (JGS 1.19). Thus, the Godāna bears the characters of a rite of passage as well as an occasion for undertaking a *vrata*. The *vrata* is said to be directed in the manner of abridged Upanayana:

Jaimini-Gr̥hyasūtra 1.18: 16.9–11; 17.1–2 (Godāna)

ṣoḍaśe godānakaraṇam. tat keśāntakaraṇam ity ācakṣate. caudākaraṇena mantrā vyākhyātā. upanayanena vratādeśanam. na tv iha niyuktam ahatam vāsaḥ. ... apoddhṛtya srajam ādeśayetoktā dharmāḥ saṃvatsareṣu. gaur dakṣiṇā. //

At [the age of] sixteen, the Godāna ritual [should be performed]. People call it “the ritual of [cutting] hair (Keśāntakaraṇa).” The *mantras* [for it] have been explained by the Caudā ritual. The direction of the *vrata* [for the Godāna is done] in the manner

²³ See CALAND [1922: 26]; PARPOLA [1968: I.1, 69–73]; FUJII [1989: 14f.; 2020: 82f.; cf. 2012: 110, n. 44]. See also OLDENBERG [1886: 78–80, the note on ŚāṅkhGS 2.12.1].

of the Upanayana. In this case, however, no new cloth is used [unlike the Upanayana proper]. . . . [At the end of the Godāna ritual,] having taken away the wreath [from the student], he (the teacher) should direct [the duties to the student]. The rules (*dharma*) for the years [after the Godāna] have been told. The fee is a cow.

4.3 The Black Yajurvedic schools

Most of the schools of the Black Yajurveda (YV) relate the Godāna ritual with learning, whether or not the ritual is prescribed in the context of learning. A term *agnigodāna* is often found in the Godāna chapters of the Gṛhyasūtras of the YV.²⁴ It strongly suggests that, in the YV schools, the Godāna and the *vrata* in it are related to learning of the Agnicayana.

The Carakas

Kaṭha

The *vratas* for learning of this school are as follows:

	KāṭhGS	Devapāla's comm. ²⁵	KaṭhĀ ²⁶
[<i>upanīṣadarha</i>]	KāṭhGS 10.1–2		
[<i>aṣṭācatvāriṃśatsaṃmita</i>] ²⁷	KāṭhGS 4.1ff.		
<i>traividyaka</i>	KāṭhGS 42.1–4	pp. 38–40	
<i>cāturhauṭṛka</i>	KāṭhGS 43.1–11	pp. 41–51	
(<i>pravargyavrata</i>)		pp. 51–87	KaṭhĀ 3:198ff. (<i>avāntaradikṣā</i>)
(<i>aruṇavrata</i>)		pp. 87–92	
(<i>aupanīṣadavrata</i>)		pp. 92–104	
[<i>godāna</i>]	KāṭhGS 44		

The observance called *avāntaradikṣā* (“intermediate consecration”) makes a part of the Pravargya ritual in several YV schools. It is a curious observance — while *dikṣās* in general are performed as the sacrificer’s consecration in the Soma rituals, the *avāntaradikṣā* focuses on learning the Pravargya. The procedure of the *avāntaradikṣā* is principally prescribed in

²⁴ VārGS 9.1; BaudhGS 3.2.57; BhārGS 1.10: 10.15; HGS 2.6.18; ĀpGS 6.16.13; ĀgGS 2.2.5: 54.15; cf. MGS 1.21.13. Each occurrence will be examined below.

²⁵ The pages are those of SHASTRI [1934]. Cf. WITZEL [2020: vol. I, 462–496].

²⁶ The section number of the KaṭhĀ is that of the edition by WITZEL [2004].

²⁷ In the KāṭhGS, the *aṣṭācatvāriṃśatsaṃmita*[-*vrata*] is prescribed after the Samāvartana (KāṭhGS 3.1–8) and the rules for the *snātaka* (“one who has bathed,” i.e., “one who has finished his studentship”; KāṭhGS 3.9–17). The length of forty-eight (*aṣṭācatvāriṃśat-saṃmita*) may reflect the rule in some texts that the study of the whole Veda takes forty-eight years; cf. GB 1.2.5 (*aṣṭācatvāriṃśadvarṣaṃ sarvavedabrahmacaryam* “The *brahmacarya* for the all Veda takes forty-eight years”); PGS 2.5.13 (*aṣṭācatvāriṃśadvarṣāni vedabrahmacaryam caret /13/ dvādaśa vā pratedam /14/ yāvadgrahaṇam vā /15/* “He (the Vedic student) should perform the ascetic practices of the student for [learning] the Veda (*vedabrahmacarya*) for forty-eight years. /13/ Or twelve years for each Veda. /14/ Or until he has learned [the Veda]. /15/”); cf. PGS 2.6.1–4; cf. also KaṭhGS 2.4; MGS 1.3.6–7; VārGS 6.29–30; BhārGS 1.9; HGS 1.8.14; ĀgGS 1.1.4; cf. KANE [1974: 350–352]. Cf. BaudhGS 3.3.1 (n. 43 below).

the Śrautasūtras, as the Pravargya is a Śrauta ritual. Some of the Gr̥hyasūtras prescribe it too, following the prescriptions in the Śrautasūtras.

In the case of the Kaṭha school, some mentions of it are found in the Kaṭha-Āraṇyaka (KaṭhĀ). The Śrautasūtra of this school is lost.

As in the above table, the Kāṭhaka-Gr̥hyasūtra (KāṭhGS) prescribes a few *vratas*. The commentary on the Laugākṣi-Gr̥hyasūtra (LGS, which is regarded to be substantially the same as the KāṭhGS)²⁸ by Devapāla (ca. 11CE) explains more *vedavratas* of this school.

The KāṭhGS tells that the manner of entering the *traividya* is as same as that of the Upanayana. It also tells that one enters the *cāturhauṭṛka vrata* by the manner of the Vedic student (*brahmacārin*).

Kāṭhaka-Gr̥hyasūtra 42.1–4 (*traividya*)
traividyakam /1/ ... / uktaṃ vratopāyanavimocanam /4/

The *traividya* [-*vrata*]. /1/ ... / The entering and releasing of the *vrata* has been explained [in the preceding Upanayana chapter (KāṭhGS 41)]. /4/

Kāṭhaka-Gr̥hyasūtra 43.1–2 (*cāturhauṭṛka*)
athātaś cāturhauṭṛkam /1/ brahmacārikalpena vratam upaiti /2/

Now, from here, the *cāturhauṭṛka* [-*vrata*]. /1/ He enters the *vrata* by the manner of the Vedic student (*brahmacārin*). /2/

The *godāna* is not counted as a *vrata* for learning in the Kaṭha school. Still, its connection to learning is alluded to in the text. The chapter on the Godāna ritual (KāṭhGS 44), which immediately follows those of the *vratas* for learning (KāṭhGS 42–43), opens as follows:

Kāṭhaka-Gr̥hyasūtra 44.1 (Godāna)
ṣoḍaśe varṣe godānam agnau vā samāpte //

At the age of sixteen, the Godāna [should be performed]. Or, when “Agni” is completed. The phrase “when Agni is completed” suggests the time when the student has finished the lesson of the chapter of “Agni,” which most probably refers to that of the Agnicayana.

Maitrāyaṇīya (Mānava)

In the Mānava-Gr̥hyasūtra (MGS), the chapter which deals with the *vratas* for learning (MGS 1.23) immediately follows that on the Upanayana (MGS 1.22).²⁹ In this school, some of the *vratas* for learning are called “*dikṣā*.” Two of the *vratas* are found also in the Mānava-Śrautasūtra (MŚS).

²⁸ See WITZEL [2020: vol. II, 656f.]. Laugākṣi is said to be the author of the Gr̥hyasūtra of the Kaṭha school. The whole text of the Devapāla’s commentary is included in the edition of the LGS (SHASTRI [1934]); some extracts are included in the edition of the KāṭhGS (CALAND [1925]).

²⁹ In addition, MGS 1.4.12–16 prescribe the rules for learning the Mahāvratas etc.

	MGS		MŚS
[<i>upanīṣadarha</i>]	MGS 1.7.1f.		
[<i>godāna</i>]	MGS 1.21.13f.		
<i>cāturhauṭṛkī dīkṣā</i>	MGS 1.23.1–4	1 year	MŚS 5.2.14.21 ³⁰
<i>āgnikī dīkṣā</i>	MGS 1.23.5–13	12 nights	
<i>āśvamedhikī dīkṣā</i>	MGS 1.23.14–20	12 nights	
<i>rahasya / pravargya</i> ³¹	MGS 1.23.21–23		<i>avāntaradīkṣā</i> MŚS 4.7.1–9 (<i>rahasya</i>) ³² MŚS 4.8.1–4
<i>traividya</i>	MGS 1.23.24–25		<i>traividya</i> MŚS 4.7.8 ³³

In the MGS, the *traividya* (“[the *vrata*] for the threefold knowledge, i.e., three Vedas”) is said to have been explained by the Upanayana.³⁴ The Godāna ritual, being treated separately from the *vratas* for learning,³⁵ is associated with learning of the Agni[-cayana].

Mānava-Gṛhyasūtra 1.21.13 (Godāna)

etena tu kalpena ṣoḍaśe varṣe godānam. agnim vādhyeṣyamānasyāgnir godāniko maitrāyaṇir iti śrutiḥ.

On the other hand, by this manner (of the Cūḍā ritual), the Godāna [should be performed] at the age of sixteen. Or, for [the student who] is going to learn Agni. The canon says, “Maitrāyaṇi is Agni belonging to *godāna*.”³⁶

While the Kāṭha school prescribes, as mentioned above, that the Godāna should be performed after the Agni[-cayana] has been learned, the Mānava prescribes that the Godāna

³⁰ MŚS 5.2.14 deals with the text and the usage of the *hotṛ*-formulas including the *caturhotṛ*. The *vrata* for them is prescribed in MŚS 5.2.14.21.

³¹ MGS 1.23.21 *rahasyam adhyeṣyamāṇaḥ pravargyam /21/ ādeśe yathā purastād vyākhyātam /22/ āditaḥ pañcaviṃśatyanuvākāṇaḥ anuvācayet /23/* “One who is going to learn *rahasya* (“secret”) [learns] Pravargya, /21/ under the instruction as explained before (cf. *avāntaradīkṣa* in MŚS 4.7.1–9). /22/ He (the teacher) should let him learn the twenty-five chapters from the beginning. /23/” For *rahasya* (“secret”), cf. MŚS 4.8.1–4.8.4 *āraṇyam svādhyāyam adhyeṣyamāṇa[s] ... /1/ ... / sarvatra rahasyamantraprayoge pratipattimārjanam ca /4/* “When one is going to learn the self-learning of what belongs to *araṇya*, ... /1/ ... / Wherever the secret (*rahasya*) formulas are used, going [to wilderness] and wiping [for cleaning should be done]. /4/”

³² See the previous note.

³³ MŚS 4.7 deals with the *avāntaradīkṣā*, into which the *traividya* is woven by just three words: *traividyakam ca caret* “He should also perform the *traividya*[-*vrata*].”

³⁴ MGS 1.23.24 *traividyakam upanayanena vyākhyātam //* “The *traividya* has been explained by the Upanayana.” For the novice’s being said to learn three Vedas, cf. KāṭhB(u) 4.7.4ff.; MGS 1.22.18 (Upanayana).

³⁵ The sequence of chapters are: the Godāna (MGS 1.21.13–14), the Upāyana (MGS 1.22); the initiation is called Upāyana in this GS), and the *vratas* for learning some of which are called *dīkṣā* (MGS 1.23). The commentary on MGS 1.21.14 (Godāna) regards the Godāna as one of the *vedavratas* / *dīkṣās*: *godānam uktaṃ dīkṣāsu madhye cūḍākaraṇena godānam vyākhyātam iti vaktavyam syāt* “The Godāna is told in the middle of the *dīkṣās* by the Cūḍākaraṇa. ‘The Godāna has been explained’: thus it should be said”; see DRESDEN [1941: 93, n. 23].

³⁶ The meaning of this line is unclear. It would be telling that one who belongs to the Maitrāyaṇīya school learns the Agnicayana around the time of Godāna. See DRESDEN [1941: 92–93]; cf. the term *agnigodāna* mentioned below. The Śruti text mentioned here may be the lost KāṭhB.

comes before learning it [cf. DRESDEN 1941: 93].

Vārāha

The *vratas* for learning prescribed in the Vārāha-Gr̥hyasūtra (VārGS) are as follows:

<i>cāturhotrkī</i>	VārGS 7.1–3	1 year
<i>āgnivrata</i>	VārGS 7.4	1 year / 12 nights
<i>āśvamedhikī dīkṣā</i>	VārGS 7.4–15	1 year / 12 nights
<i>traividya</i>	VārGS 7.16	
<i>rahasya / pravargya</i>	VārGS 7.17–22	1 year (at least)
[<i>upaniṣadarha</i>]	VārGS 8.12–13	
[<i>godāna</i>]	VārGS 9.1–5	

The VGS prescribes the rites and the *vratas* concerning the Veda-learning in sequence: the Upanayana (VārGS 5), the *vratas* for the Vedic student (*brahmacārin*) (VārGS 6), the *vratas* for learning (VārGS 7), the Upākaraṇa, the Anādhyāya, the Utsarjana, the Anādhyāya, the Upaniṣadarha (VārGS 8), the Godāna (VārGS 9.1–5), the Samāvartana (VārGS 9.6–15), and the Snātakadharma (VārGS 9.16–21).

In this school, too, the Godāna ritual is associated with learning of the Agni[-cayana].

Vārāha-Gr̥hyasūtra 9.1 (Godāna)

ṣoḍaśavarṣasya godānam / agniṁ vādhyeṣyamāṇasya / agnigodāno maitrāyaṇiḥ /1/

The Godāna [should be performed] for the one who is sixteen years old. Or, for the one who is going to learn Agni. Maitrāyaṇi is *agnigodāna*.³⁷

The Taittirīyas

Baudhāyana

Baudhāyana-Gr̥hyasūtra (BaudhGS) 3.1 lists up the *kāṇḍas* (sections) of the canon of this school.³⁸ The *vratas* for learning those *kāṇḍas* are enumerated in BaudhGS 3.2–3.3. The correspondences between the *vratas* and the *kāṇḍas* are as follows.³⁹

³⁷ Cf. MGS 1.21.13 quoted above; DRESDEN [1941: 93]. DATE [1990: 185] interprets *agnigodāna* as “(the student) undergoing the rite of godāna in connection with the cutting of hair as a part of the vow of godāna to be observed at the study of the Agnicayana mantras.”

³⁸ The names in the list have parallels in the Vaikhānasa-Gr̥hyasūtra (VaikhGS); the text of the list is parallel with the Āgniveśya-Gr̥hyasūtra (ĀgGS). See the section of Vaikhānasa below.

³⁹ As noted below, the correspondences in this table do not fully agree with those listed up by CALAND [1903: 32–33].

The <i>vratas</i>		length	The <i>kāṇḍas</i>	
<i>hotāra</i>	BaudhGS 3.2.5–26	1 year	<i>prājāpatyāni</i>	BaudhGS 3.1.21
<i>śukriya</i>	BaudhGS 3.2.27–28 ⁴⁰	1 year	<i>saumyāni</i>	BaudhGS 3.1.22
			<i>āgneyāni</i> ⁴¹	BaudhGS 3.1.23
<i>upaniṣad</i>	BaudhGS 3.2.29–51	1 year	<i>vaiśvadevāni</i> ⁴²	BaudhGS 3.1.24
<i>godāna</i>	BaudhGS 3.2.52–57	1 year		
<i>aṣṭācatvāriṃśat</i> ⁴³	BaudhGS 3.3.1–34	1 year etc.	<i>svāyambhuva</i>	BaudhGS 3.1.25
<i>kārīrivrata</i>		4 nights		BaudhGS 3.1.26
<i>kārāvratā</i>				BaudhGS 3.1.27
[<i>avāntaradikṣā</i>]	BaudhŚS 9.19–9.20	1 year		
[<i>avāntaradikṣā</i>]	BaudhGS 3.4.1–36	1 year		

In the BaudhGS, the Godāna is within the sequence of *vratas* for learning. The term *agnigodāna* is mentioned too. At the same time, it is prescribed to be performed at the age of sixteen, suggesting that it is regarded also as a rite of passage.

Baudhāyana-Gr̥hyasūtra 3.2.52–57

ṣoḍaše varṣe gonānam /52/ ... / agnigodāno vā bhavati /57/

At the age of sixteen, the Godāna [should be performed]. /52/ ... / Or, he becomes the *agnigodāna*. /57/

Bhāradvāja

This school's *vratas* for learning are as follows:

	BhārGS		BhārŚS
<i>hoṭṛ</i>	BhārGS 3.4–3.5		
<i>upaniṣad</i>	BhārGS 3.4–3.5		
<i>avāntaradikṣā</i>	BhārGS 3.6–3.7	<i>avāntaradikṣā</i>	BhārŚS 11.21–11.22 ⁴⁴
[<i>godāna</i>]	BhārGS 1.10		

In this school, the Godāna is in the context of the rites of passage. Still, its relationship with learning of the Agnicayana is alluded to by the term *agnigodāna*. One who has finished

⁴⁰ The *śukriya* is not elaborated here (BaudhGS 3.2.27–28 *atha śukriyāni /27/ teṣām uktā vratācaryā /28/* “Now, the *śukriyas*. Their *vratācaryā* has been explained [before]”). This statement would refer to the *avāntaradikṣā* for the Pravargya ritual in BaudhŚS 9.19–9.20. The *avāntaradikṣā* is found also in BaudhGS 3.4.1–36 (some manuscripts omit this part).

⁴¹ CALAND [1903: 33] allots the *āgneyāni* for the *upaniṣad-vrata*.

⁴² CALAND [1903: 33] allots the the *vaiśvadevāni* for the *godāna-vrata*.

⁴³ See also BaudhGS 3.2.59–63. Cf. BaudhGS 3.3.1 *aṣṭācatvāriṃśatsammitam. sammitam ity ācakṣate* “[Now] the [*vrata*] measures forty-eight (*aṣṭācatvāriṃśat*) [years]. People call it *sammita*.” Cf. BaudhGS 3.2.4 (*sammita*); cf. also KāthGS 4.1ff. (n. 27 above).

⁴⁴ For the *avāntaradikṣā* in the BhārŚS and the BhārGS, see CALAND [1924: 464]; VAN BUITENEN [1968: 38f., n. 120].

the Godāna is required to perform the *brahmacarya* for a year.

Bhāradvāja-Gr̥hyasūtra 1.10: 10.11–15

athāsya ṣoḍaśavarṣasya godānaṃ kurvanti. ... saṃvatsaram kṛtagodāno brahmacaryam caraty. agnigodāno vā bhavati.

Then, when he becomes the age of sixteen, people perform the Godāna [ritual for him]. ... He, having performed the Godāna, performs the *brahmacarya* for a year. Or, he becomes the *agnigodāna*.

Āpastamba

The Śrauta- and Gr̥hya-sūtras of this school prescribe few *vratas* for learning.

ĀpGS	ĀpŚS
	<i>caturhotṛ</i> ⁴⁵ ĀpŚS 14.13.1 1 year
	<i>avāntaradīkṣā</i> ⁴⁶ ĀpŚS 15.20–15.21 1 year
[<i>godāna</i>] ĀpGS 6.16.12–14 1 year	

The Godāna is explained as follows, the word *agnigodāna* being mentioned.

Āpastamba-Gr̥hyasūtra 6.16.12–14

evam godānam anyasminn api nakṣatre ṣoḍaśe varṣe /12/ agnigodāno vā syāt /13/ saṃvatsaram godānavratam ity eka upadiśanti /14/

Thus [like the Caula], the Godāna [should be performed], also under another constellation, at the age of sixteen. /12/ Or, he may become the *agnigodāna*. /13/ Some people direct, “The *godānavrata* [should be performed] for a year.” /14/

Hiraṇyakeśi

The Hiraṇyakeśi-Śrautasūtra (HŚS) includes a chapter on the *avāntaradīkṣā*, which is parallel with that of the ĀpŚS. The Hiraṇyakeśi-Gr̥hyasūtra (HGS) has no systematized list of the *vratas* for learning. The word *agnigodāna* is mentioned in the Godāna.⁴⁷

HGS	HŚS
	<i>avāntaradīkṣā</i> HŚS 24.8.1–42 1 year
[<i>godāna</i>] HGS 2.6.18	

⁴⁵ The *vrata* for learning the *caturhotṛ* in ĀpŚS 14.13.1 would be applied also to other *hotṛ* formulas (*pañcahotṛ*, *ṣaḍhotṛ*, *saptahotṛ*, *daśahotṛ*); see CALAND [1924: 386]; DRESDEN [1941: 103f.].

⁴⁶ For the position of *avāntaradīkṣā* in the ĀpŚS, see CALAND [1924: 464]; VAN BUITENEN [1968: 38f., n. 120].

⁴⁷ HGS 2.6.15–19 (Godāna) *evam vihitam ṣoḍaśe varṣe godānakarma /15/ ... / agnigodāno vā bhavati /18/* “In thus prescribed way [by the Cūḍā], Godāna ritual at the age of sixteen has been prescribed. /15/ ... / Or, he becomes the *agnigodāna*. /18/”

Vaikhānasa

The Vaikhānasa-Gr̥hyasūtra (VaikhGS)⁴⁸ has a series of *vratas* for learning, of which names have correspondences in BaudhGS 3.1 as those of *kāṇḍas*.⁴⁹ No Godāna ritual at the age of sixteen is prescribed in the VaikhGS.

	VaikhGS	Cf. BaudhGS	Cf. ĀgGS
<i>sāvitravrata</i>	VaikhGS 2.7–2.9	BaudhGS 2.5.34–68	
<i>prājāpatyavrata</i>	VaikhGS 2.9	BaudhGS 3.1.21	ĀgGS 1.2.1: 13.9f.
<i>saumyavrata</i>	VaikhGS 2.10	BaudhGS 3.1.22	ĀgGS 1.2.1: 13.10ff.
<i>āgneyavrata</i>	VaikhGS 2.10	BaudhGS 3.1.23	ĀgGS 1.2.1: 13.12ff.
<i>vaiśvadevavrata</i>	VaikhGS 2.10	BaudhGS 3.1.24	ĀgGS 1.2.1: 13.15ff.
<i>brāhmavrata</i>	VaikhGS 2.10		
<i>śukriyavrata</i>	VaikhGS 2.11	BaudhGS 3.2.27f.; 3.4.1ff.	ĀgGS 1.2.3: 16.21ff.

Āgniveśya

In this school, only the Āgniveśya-Gr̥hyasūtra (ĀgGS) is extant; no Śrautasūtra is known. Many chapters or sections of the ĀgGS have parallels with more than one Gr̥hyasūtra, most probably being copied from them. As to the section on the *vratas* for learning, it is parallel with the BaudhGS's chapter on *kāṇḍas* to be learned (see Baudhāyana and Vaikhānasa above).

<i>prājāpatyāni [kāṇḍāni]</i>	ĀgGS 1.2.1: 13.9f.
<i>saumyāni</i>	ĀgGS 1.2.1: 13.10ff.
<i>āgneyāni</i>	ĀgGS 1.2.1: 13.12ff.
<i>vaiśvadevāni</i>	ĀgGS 1.2.1: 13.15ff.
<i>svāyaṃbhava</i>	ĀgGS 1.2.1: 14.1f.
<i>kārīrivrata</i>	ĀgGS 1.2.1: 14.3ff.
<i>kārīravrata</i>	ĀgGS 1.2.1: 14.7f.
<i>avāntaradīkṣā (śukriya vrata)</i>	ĀgGS 1.2.3: 16.21ff.

In this school, the Godāna is prescribed in the context of rites of passage. The word *agnigodāna* is mentioned.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ The VaikhGS is the first half of the Vaikhānasa-Smārtasūtra, of which the latter half is the Dharmasūtra.

⁴⁹ See CALAND [1929: 53–55]; see also Baudhāyana above.

⁵⁰ ĀgGS 2.2.5: 54.14ff. *ity evaṃ vihitam ṣoḍaše varṣe godānakarma ... / agnigodāno vā bhavati* / “Thus in this way [by the Cauḷa], the Godāna ritual at the age of sixteen has been prescribed. ... Or, he becomes the *agnigodāna*.”

4.4 The White Yajurvedic school

Vājasaneyin

The Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa (ŚB) includes in its younger book the passages on rules for teaching the Pravargya ritual. There the student is required to live under the teacher for a year, and to keep the *vrata* for three nights.

Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa Mādhyandina 14.1.1.27–28 (ŚBK 16.1.1.15–16)

saṃvatsaravāsīnē ’nubrūyāt. / eṣā vai saṃvatsaró yá eṣá tápaty. eṣá u pravárgyas. tád etám evàitát prīṇāti. tásmāt saṃvatsaravāsīnē ’nubrūyāt. /27/ tísró rátrīr vratám carati. / tráyo vā rtávaḥ saṃvatsarásya. saṃvatsará eṣá yá eṣá tápaty. eṣá u pravárgyas. tád etám evàitát prīṇāti. tásmāt tísró rátrīr vratám carati. /28/

One should teach [the student] who has lived [under the teacher] for a year. This one which heats (= the sun) is indeed a year. This is, on the other hand, the Pravargya. Consequently, he pleases it by doing so then. Therefore, he should teach [the student] who has lived [under the teacher] for a year. /27/ He (the student / the teacher)⁵¹ performs the observance (*vrata*) for three nights. A year has indeed three seasons. This one which heats (= the sun) is indeed a year. This is, on the other hand, the Pravargya. Consequently, he pleases it by doing so then. Therefore, he performs the observance (*vrata*) for three nights. /28/

The Pāraskara-Gṛhyasūtra (PGS) belonging to the White YV has no list of the *vratas* for learning. The Godāna (called Keśānta in the PGS) is not in the context of the Veda-learning. Still, the *brahmacarya* is required after the Keśānta (= Godāna). Some rules for the sacrificer of the Pravargya are mentioned among those for *snātakas* who have concluded learning.

Pāraskara-Gṛhyasūtra 2.1.25 (Keśānta)

saṃvatsaram brahmacaryam avapanam ca keśānte dvādaśarātram ṣaḍrātram trirātram antataḥ

After the Keśānta (=Godāna) [has been performed], the *brahmacarya* and the not shaving [should be observed] for a year, or twelve nights, or six nights, or at least three nights.

Pāraskara-Gṛhyasūtra 2.8.1–9 (Rules for *snātakas*)

tísro rátrīr vratam caret /1/ ... / dīkṣito ’py ātapādīni kuryāt pravargyavāmś cet /9/

[After the Samāvartana,] one should perform the *vrata* for three nights. /1/ ... / The *dīkṣita* (the sacrificer who has been consecrated for the Soma rituals), too, should

⁵¹ It is not quite clear who performs the *vrata* here. Most naturally, it would be the student. On the other hand, the teacher is also often imposed restrictions on his behavior when he gives lessons. The verb *ānu-brū* can mean both “to teach” and “to learn.”

observe [the rules for the *snātakas*] beginning from [those related to] sunshine (not to void urine in sunshine, etc., prescribed in PGS 2.8.5–8) if he is performing the Pravargya. /9/

The <i>vrata</i> for the Pravargya	ŚB 14.1.1.26–33	1 year / 3 nights
	cf. PGS 2.8.1–9	
[Keśānta (Godāna)]	PGS 2.1.25	1 year / 12 / 6 / 3 nights

4.5 The Atharvavedic school

The Kauśika-Sūtra (KauśS) mentions no *vrata* for learning, except for those in the Upanayana (KauśS 56.5–7) and the Samāvartana (KauśS 42.12–18).⁵²

5 An overview of the *vratas* for learning

Following is an overview of the *vratas* of respective schools examined above.

R̥gveda			Sāmaveda		
Āśvalāyana	Śāṅkhāyana	Kauṣītaki	Gobhila	Khādira	Jaiminīya
<i>mahānāmnī</i>	<i>śukriya</i>	<i>śukriya</i>	<i>godānika</i>	<i>godāna</i>	<i>gaudānika</i>
(<i>mahāvratā</i>)	[<i>godāna</i>]	<i>godāna</i>	<i>vrātika</i>	<i>vrātika</i>	<i>vrātika</i>
(<i>upaniṣad</i>)	<i>śākvara</i>	<i>śākvara</i>	<i>ādityavratā</i>	<i>ādityavratā</i>	<i>ādityavrātika</i>
[<i>godāna</i>]	<i>vrātika</i>	<i>māhāvratika</i>	<i>aupaniṣada</i>	<i>upaniṣad</i>	<i>aupaniṣada</i>
	<i>aupaniṣada</i>	<i>aupaniṣada</i>	<i>jyeṣṭhasāmika</i>	<i>jyeṣṭhasāmika</i>	
			<i>mahānāmnika</i>	<i>śakvarī</i>	<i>mahānāmnika</i>

Yajurveda (Caraka)		
Kaṭha	Maitrāyaṇīya	Vārāha
[<i>upaniṣadarha</i>]	[<i>upaniṣadarha</i>]	<i>cāturhotṛkī</i>
[<i>aṣṭācatvāriṃśatasammita</i>]	[<i>godāna</i>]	<i>āgnivratā</i>
<i>traividyaka</i>	<i>cāturhauṛkī</i>	<i>āśvamedhikī</i>
<i>cāturhauṛka</i>	<i>āgnikī</i>	<i>traividyaka</i>
(<i>avāntaradīkṣā</i> / <i>pravargyavratā</i>)	<i>āśvamedhikī</i>	<i>rahasya</i> / <i>pravargya</i>
(<i>aruṇavratā</i>)	<i>rahasya</i> / <i>pravargya</i> /	[<i>upaniṣadarha</i>]
	<i>avāntaradīkṣā</i>	
(<i>aupaniṣadvratā</i>)	<i>traividyaka</i>	[<i>godāna</i>]
[<i>godāna</i>]		

⁵² Atharvaveda-Pariśiṣṭa 46 deals with the *vedavratas* which are rather different from those of other schools. See MODAK [1993: 300–302].

Yajurveda (Taittirīya)			
Baudhāyana	Bhāradvāja	Āpastamba	Hiraṇyakeśi
<i>hotāra</i>	<i>hotṛ</i>	<i>caturhotṛ</i>	<i>avāntaradīkṣā</i>
<i>śukriya</i>	<i>upaniṣad</i>	<i>avāntaradīkṣā</i>	[<i>godāna</i>]
<i>upaniṣad</i>	<i>avāntaradīkṣā</i>	[<i>godāna</i>]	
<i>godāna</i>	[<i>godāna</i>]		
<i>aṣṭācatvāriṃśat</i>			
<i>kārīrī</i>			
<i>kārā</i>			
<i>avāntaradīkṣā</i>			

Yajurveda (Taittirīya, cont.)		(Vājasaneyin)
Vaikhānasa	Āgniveśya	Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa / Pāraskara
<i>sāvitra</i>	<i>prājāpatyāni</i> [<i>kāṇḍāni</i>]	(<i>vratas</i> for Pravargya)
<i>prājāpatya</i>	<i>saumyāni</i>	[<i>keśānta</i> / <i>godāna</i>]
<i>saumya</i>	<i>āgneyāni</i>	
<i>āgneya</i>	<i>vaiśvadevāni</i>	
<i>vaiśvadeva</i>	<i>svāyaṃbhuva</i>	
<i>brāhma</i>	<i>kārīrī</i>	
<i>śukriya</i>	<i>kārīrā</i>	
	<i>avāntaradīkṣā</i> (<i>śukriya</i>)	

6 The ideas behind the *vratas* for learning

6.1 The “pregnancy period” for the student’s “birth”

The most popular length of the period of the *vratas* for learning in the Gṛhyasūtras is, as the above lists show, one year, or, the periods which are identified with one year, such as three nights. Behind these lengths, there is apparently the old idea found since the Atharvaveda and the Brāhmaṇas that the teacher makes the novice an embryo and bears it within himself at the initiation, which is “born” as the Vedic student after three nights or one year. That is, the “pregnancy” period by the teacher to give birth to the student has been regarded to be the necessary process to make the student entitled to learn sacred knowledge.

6.2 Preparations for further learning and the “scholars’ [repeated] initiation”

As quoted above, several Gṛhyasūtras prescribe that when one enters the *vratas* for learning, he should perform the Upanayana again, or enters those *vratas* by the same way as the Upanayana.

The idea of performing another Upanayana when one enters the *vratas* for learning, i.e., when one is going to learn further than basic curriculum, derives most probably from a

similar custom told in the young Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads. Some stories in those texts depict the scenes of the learned scholars' and the gods' asking for initiation in order to learn cryptic rituals and knowledge, which were unknown until then.

For example, in the following passage of the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, the gods Aśvins ask Dadhyañc for initiation,⁵³ in order to learn cryptic knowledge of the Pravargya. Immediately after the episode of Aśvins's learning the Pravargya from Dadhyañc, the ŚB tells, as quoted above in the section Vājasaneyin, that the knowledge of Pravargya should be taught only to the student who "has lived for a year": that is, a year of stay under the teacher is required for learning the Pravargya. Keeping a *vrata* for three nights is also needed.

Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa 14.1.1.21–33 (ŚBK 16.1.1.11–19)

tāu hétyocatuḥ / úpa tvāyāvēti. kím anuvakṣyamāñāv íty. etám śukráṃ etám yajñám yáthā-yathaitád yajñásya śíraḥ pratidhīyáte yáthaiśá kṛtsnó yajñó bhávaḥfíti. /21/ ... / tán ná sárvasmā ānubrūyāt. ... /26/ saṃvatsaravāsíné 'nubrūyāt. / eśá vai saṃvatsaró yá eśá tápaty. eśá u pravárgyas. tád etám evàitát prīṇāti. tásmāt saṃvatsaravāsíné 'nubrūyāt. /27/ tísro rátrīr vratám carati. / tráyo vá rtávaḥ saṃvatsarásya. saṃvatsará eśá yá eśá tápaty. eśá u pravárgyas. tád etám evàitát prīṇāti. tásmāt tísro rátrīr vratám carati. /28/ ... /33/

They two (Aśvins) went and said [to Dadhyañc Ātharvana who knows the secret knowledge], "We shall go near to you (= We shall become your students)." "What are you two (or 'we two') going to learn [by becoming students]?" [Aśvins said,] "How the [shattered] head of the ritual is replaced, and how this ritual becomes perfect – [we want to learn] the resplendent [knowledge] and the ritual (Pravargya)." /21/ .../ One should not teach it to everyone. ... /26/ One should teach [it] to [the student] who has lived [under the teacher] for a year. This one which heats (=the sun) is indeed a year. This is, on the other hand, the Pravargya. Consequently, he pleases it by doing so then. Therefore, he should teach [the student] who has lived [under the teacher] for a year. /27/ He (the student / the teacher) performs the observance (*vratá*) for three nights. A year has indeed three seasons. This one which heats (= the sun) is indeed a year. This is, on the other hand, the Pravargya. Consequently, he pleases it by doing so then. Therefore, he keeps the observance (*vratá*) for three nights. /28/ ... /33/

The scholars and the gods who ask for initiation in this kind of stories in the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads already have a regular knowledge of Veda, assumedly through their first initiation. That means, their initiation for learning further is a "repeated" one, which I call the "scholars' [repeated] initiation."⁵⁴ The characteristics of the "scholars' initiation" are

⁵³ They utter the formula "We shall go near to you" (*úpa tvāyāva*). The formula "I (or 'We') shall go near (*úpa-i*) to you [and become your student]" consists of the typical elements of the "scholars' initiation." See KAJIHARA [2016; 2021].

⁵⁴ Note that this "repeated" initiation is different from the ritual called Punar-Upanayana (or *punaḥsaṃskāra*).

clearly reflected in the *vratas* for learning in the Gr̥hyasūtras: when he learns further, one repeats an Upanayana and observes the *vratas* for a year or its equivalent.

7 Conclusion

The fundamental idea of the *vratas* for learning, which are later called *vedavratas*, derives from that of the initiation. In order to learn, one has to undergo the initiation and spend a certain length of time. During this preparatory period, the teacher makes the novice entitled to learn sacred knowledge. Since the Vedic canon kept expanding even after the basic form of the initiation ritual was established in the early to middle Vedic period, another “initiation” and preparatory period for learning became necessary to learn the texts and rituals in the younger parts of the Brāhmaṇas, the Āraṇyakas, and the Upaniṣads. Thus, the *vratas* for learning together with an “repeated initiation” developed in the late Vedic period onward.

Abbreviations

ĀgGS = Āgniveśya-Gr̥hyasūtra / AitĀ = Aitareya-Āraṇyaka / ĀpGS = Āpastamba-Gr̥hyasūtra / ĀpŚS = Āpastamba-Śrautasūtra / ĀśvGS = Āśvalāyana-Gr̥hyasūtra / ĀśvŚS = Āśvalāyana-Śrautasūtra / AVP = Atharvaveda Paippalāda-Saṃhitā / AVŚ = Atharvaveda Śaunaka-Saṃhitā / BaudhGS = Baudhāyana-Gr̥hyasūtra / BaudhŚS = Baudhāyana-Śrautasūtra / BhārGS = Bhāradvāja-Gr̥hyasūtra / BhārŚS = Bhāradvāja-Śrautasūtra / GB = Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa / GGS = Gobhila-Gr̥hyasūtra / GautDhS = Gautama-Dharmasūtra / HGS = Hiranyakeśi-Gr̥hyasūtra / HŚS = Hiranyakeśi-Śrautasūtra / JGS = Jaimini-Gr̥hyasūtra / KaṭhĀ = Kaṭha-Āraṇyaka / KaṭhB(u) = Kaṭha-Brāhmaṇa (*upanayana-brāhmaṇa*) / KāṭhGS = Kāṭhaka-Gr̥hyasūtra / KauṣGS = Kauṣītaka-Gr̥hyasūtra / KauŚS = Kauśika-Sūtra / KhGS = Khādira-Gr̥hyasūtra / KS = Kāṭhaka-Saṃhitā / MGS = Mānava-Gr̥hyasūtra / MŚS = Mānava-Śrautasūtra / MS = Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā / PGS = Pāraskara-Gr̥hyasūtra / ṚV = Ṛgveda / ŚāṅkhGS = Śāṅkhāyana-Gr̥hyasūtra / ŚB = Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa (Mādhyandina recension) / ŚBK = Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa (Kāṇva recension) / TS = Taittirīya-Saṃhitā / VārGS = Vārāha-Gr̥hyasūtra / VaikhGS = Vaikhānasa-Gr̥hyasūtra / VS = Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā

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The latter appears since the Dharma literature as a kind of rite for expiation and purification, losing its relationship to learning. See KAJIHARA [2003; 2016; 2021: 255–311].

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⟨Keywords⟩ *vedavrata, vrata, study, Āraṇyaka, Upaniṣad, Gr̥hyasūtra*

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ヴェーダ聖典学習のための誓戒 (vedavrata)

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古代インドのヴェーダの宗教（いわゆるバラモン教）では、祭式などの重要な行事に際して、食餌や起き臥しなどの生活行為に一定の制限が課された。そうした生活制限は一般に、誓戒（ヴラタ）や潔斎（ディークシャー）とよばれる。

ヴェーダ聖典の学習も、誓戒の遵守が要求される重要な行事であった。聖典学習時の誓戒がまとまった形で最初に規定されるのは、後期ヴェーダに属するグリヒヤーストラ群においてである。ただしグリヒヤーストラの段階ではまだ完全に体系化されてはおらず、その後の注釈段階で、学習誓戒（ヴェーダヴラタ）という名のもとに整備されていった。

本稿は、学習の際に誓戒が果たす機能を検討し、学習誓戒の成立とその背景を論じるものである。加えて、グリヒヤーストラ段階を基準に、各学派の学習誓戒の一覧を提示し、ヴェーダ聖典伝承研究の参考に供する。

学習のための誓戒は二種にわけることができる。ひとつは、聖典の基本的部分、すなわち学習者が所属する学派のサンヒターとブラーフマナの古層部分を学ぶ際の生活制限である。これはとりたてて誓戒とよばれるとは限らない。初心者が師につく際に行う入門の儀礼と、入門から修了までの間の学生としての修行生活とがこれにあたる。もうひとつは、聖典の比較的新層に属する秘義的な部分を学ぶ際の生活制限である。これがいわゆる学習誓戒で、学派ごとに複数のものが学習対象に応じて定められる。

学習誓戒の特徴は、しばしば入門儀礼の繰り返しを伴うことと、学習の前に一定の期間をおくことが求められることである。入門儀礼には、古くアタルヴァヴェーダの時代から、師が入門者を一定の期間「妊娠」し、学生として「生む」という観念が付随する。師の「妊娠期間」は、「胎児」たる入門者が知識に触れる前に一定の期間をおくことを含意する。再度の入門儀礼を伴う学習誓戒は、基本部分の学習に加えて秘義部分の学習を行うときに、最初の入門儀礼とそれに続く学生の修行生活を模しているといえる。ヴェーダ聖典は、サンヒターとブラーフマナの古層部分が成立したのちも拡大膨張を続け、アーラニヤカやウパニシャッドなどを生み出した。これらについて、改めて入門し学習するための儀礼が必要になったのであろう。ウパニシャッドには、未知の秘義を学ぶために著名な学匠が入門する場面が収められている。こうした慣習が学習誓戒の成立の源となったとみられる。