

Mislav Ježić

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad: Some Considerations Concerning Its Text History
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The Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad is one of the two largest classical Upaniṣads, and therefore difficult to analyse into historical strata. Oldenberg and Deussen considered it to belong to the oldest group of Upaniṣads. Belvalkar and Ranade assumed that it had a quite complex history of composition. Some of its passages have been analysed in depth by scholars: probably most of all the Yājñavalkya- Maitreyī dialogue in BAU 2 and 4 (Hanefeld, Reinvang, Slaje, Hock, Brereton), but also the Yājñavalkya brahmodya in BAU 3 (Brereton, Hock), the Yājñavalkya-Janaka dialogues in BAU 4 (Hanefeld, Hock), the Jaivali-Uddālaka dialogue on the pañcāgnividyā and the two paths in BAU 6 (Schmithausen) and the parallel Citra-Uddālaka dialogue in Kauṣītaki-Upaniṣad 1 (Söhnen-Thieme), etc. So far, I have analysed the Bālāki-Ajātaśatru dialogue in BAU 2 in comparison with Kauṣītaki-Upaniṣad 4 (as Hock has done from a different angle) and the śloka in BAU 4 which show correspondences with the Īśā-Upaniṣad from the viewpoint of text history. In addition to some general considerations about the text history of the BAU, in this paper I try to add some observations concerning the complex structure of the famous chapter BAU 3 in the Mādhyamīna and Kāṇva recension, and their parallels in the brāhmaṇas, to Deussen's remarks and Brereton's fine analysis, and formulate some assumptions concerning its text history.