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THEME: ROLE OF VEDANGA IN UNDERSTANDING THE ANCIENT SANSKRIT LITERATURE

TITLE: श्रुतिस्मृतिग्रन्थावबोधने वेदाङ्गस्य परोक्ष प्रयोगः।

VEDANGA AS A FELICITATOR RATHER THAN A FECILITATOR IN INTERPRETING THE VEDAS

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ABSTRACT

योऽर्थज्ञेः सकलं भद्रमश्नुते ।

The one who appraises and comprehends the meaning will gain auspiciousness.

The Vedas which are illimitable source of knowledge, are comprehended through the Vedangas. The role of Vedanga is not limited to the aid the Vedas in phonetics, recitation in a precise manner, comprehending the root of the words through etymology, appropriate time in the performance of rituals, etc.... they also have a deeper unintelligible meaning attached to it. This paper mainly focuses on bringing forth the hermetical meanings of the Vedangas and apprehending them in an indiscernible way. Descriptive research is conducted in a quantifiable manner considering both primary data (through Questioners, using percentage analysis) and secondary data, and through the research, it is ascertained that the Vedangas not only impose the rules on the Vedas but also impose directions on the Vaidikas. It provides the Guru and the Shishya with introspective knowledge of the minute meanings of the Veda Samhitas, when where and to whom the Veda Samhitas are to be

taught, and also their limitations in parting with the knowledge and thus, they will be the reason of felicitation of those Vaidikas who have understood their deep meaning and not merely facilitate the Vedas Samhitas.

Keywords: Veda Samhita, Vedanga – Shiksha, Vyakarana, Chandas, Nirukta, Jyotisha, Kalpa

Felicitator, facilitator.

INTRODUCTION

देव ं वाचमजनन्त देवाः ।

As per this Veda Pramana, the language or literature (Vangmaya) was bestowed upon humans by the Gods.

The *BHARATI* along with *VANGMAYA* first came in the form of the Vedas called **SHRUTI** which was Apaurusheya. It was first rendered to Chatur Mukha Brahma by Sriman Narayana. To give a detailed explanation with illustrative examples of the Veda Pramana, **SMRITI** Grantha originated. these include Vedanga and Purana-Itihasa grantha.

This paper focuses on the Vedanga and its impact on the Apaurusheya Vedas. The Vedangas not only give a deeper insight into the Vedas (facilitator) but also enhance the Yogyata of the reciter if he analyses the deeper sense and minute sense of the Vedas and thereby enabling him to achieve YASHA & KEERTHI through his DHARMA ABHIVRUDDHI (felicitator).

सन्तोषमेव पुरुषस्य परं तनधानम् ।

As happiness is a person's main motive in life the analysis of the Vedas through modes prescribed in the Shastra i.e., through the Vedangas will help a person to attain PARAMANANDA (ultimate bliss).

DEFINING KEY TERMS

VEDANGA:

Vedanga is derived from the words वेदस्य अङ्गम् which literally means the limbs of the

Vedas. The samasa split can also be done as the limbs to the Vedas. they are basically the auxiliaries through which the Vedas are to be comprehended. But the term Anga has a wider scope and can be interpreted in many ways. It is not only a set of rules or sutras which should be applied to the Veda Samhita but also contains certain rules and imposes certain restrictions and conditions on the brahmana. A brahmana can be interpreted as a person who both by virtue of his birth (the yoga aspect) and by virtue of the qualities and capabilities (yogyata aspect) becomes a person who has the authority to both learn the Vedas and teach them to other people with the required capacities.

The word Anga can be etymologically interpreted in many ways some of which are cited below... these will provide a deeper insight into the word Vedanga

□ The word also translates into true... and when the samasa is split as वेदं च तत् अङ्गं च it will yield a meaning that the Vedas are true in the sense that provides sufficient appropriate Pramana to the Vedas and upholds its truth.

□ It also gives the meaning of impatience ... though this comprehension is used rarely when applied with a samasa it highlights the meaning that one should not be impatient in studying, analyzing, comprehending, and teaching the Vedas... through this interpretation, one can dive deep into the scope of the Vedangas.

□ Another derivative is contiguous which means sharing a common aspect...through this, we come to know that Vedanga is closely related to the Vedas and also to the other smriti granthas as Vedanga is itself a smriti grantha it acts as a link and has borders with both the apaurusheya shruti granthas and the smriti granthas.

□ It also sums up to bring forth the meaning of illustration... by this, it is advent that Vedangas act as an illustrative to the Vedas, and by this meaning it is crystal clear that Vedangas are not confined and it has a wider reach.

Through various variations in the meaning assigned to the word Anga, the scope of Vedangas reaches a whole new level.

FACILITATOR:

In this paper, the term facilitator is interpreted in the same sense as the dictionary meaning. A person or thing that makes an action or process easy or easier.

FELICITATOR:

Even the term felicitor is to be comprehended in the dictionary sense.

YOGA:

Though the term Yoga can be interpreted in many ways, in this context it is used to mean original or etymological meaning. It is also used to mean self-concentration and union.

YOGYATA:

It is defined as worthiness, suitability, competence, etc.

OBJECTIVES

- ✚ To analyze the implications of Vedangas in analyzing the meaning of the Vedas to a fairly good extent.
- ✚ To indicate that the Vedangas aren't just a facilitator of the Vedas through which the Vedas can be understood easily rather they have an incidental meaning attached to them, which even governs the reciters
- ✚ To study and comprehend the opinions of the people engaged in Vedic recitation and analyze their views of the Vedangas.
- ✚ To find out the importance of the Vedanga Granthas in understanding the Veda Samhitas.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology followed is quantifiable in nature. Largely it is based on the collection of primary data through the circulation of a structured questionnaire through Google Forms and a response of 51 individuals has been considered which includes a significant number of individuals from Vedic backgrounds. Secondary data is also a source for this research.

The method that has been used here is descriptive research.

AREA OF STUDY

This study is mostly concentrated on the population of Mangalore city. As stated earlier this includes individuals mainly from a Vedic background who are engaged in the study of the Vedas in one or the other forms. It mainly throws light on how many individuals are aware of Vedangas and their importance for the successful assimilation of the Veda Samhitas.

STATISTICAL TOOL

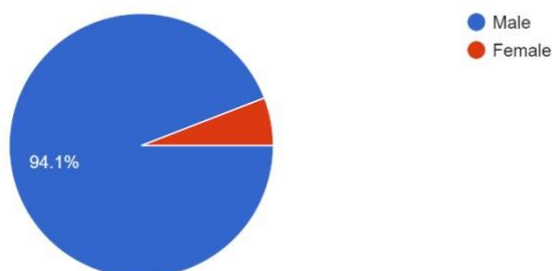
Percentage analysis is used to analyze the data.

LIMITATIONS

- ✦ This research is from the point of view of individuals who belong to the Satsampradaya of Vaishnavism (Madhvasampradaya). Therefore, there will be a biased opinion.
- ✦ This study is confined to only 51 individuals, so it might not be a true representative of the entire population.

DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

Gender
51 responses

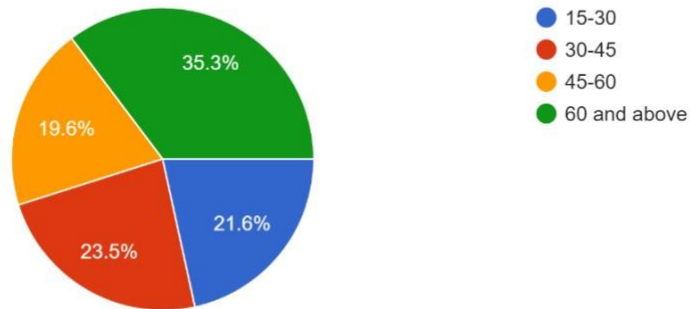


Source: Primary Data

Males comprise 94% of the respondents while females cover up the rest.

Age

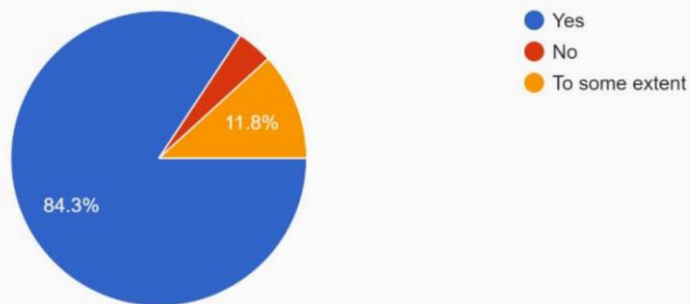
51 responses



18 respondents are of the age group 60 and above followed by 30-45, 45-60, and 15-30 with 12, 11, and 10 respondents respectively

Are you related to sanskrit either through your profession/study/otherwise.

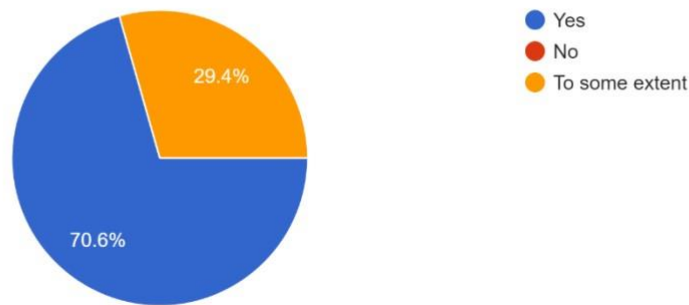
51 responses



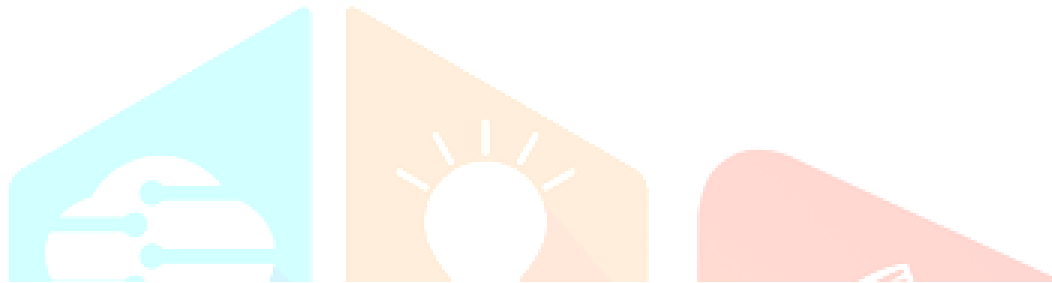
From the above pie Chart, it is known that 43 respondents are related to Sanskrit literature while only 2 of them are not and 6 of the respondents are engaged in a minimum level.

Are you in studying / practicing the vedas and do you possess the vedic knowledge to a reasonable extent

51 responses

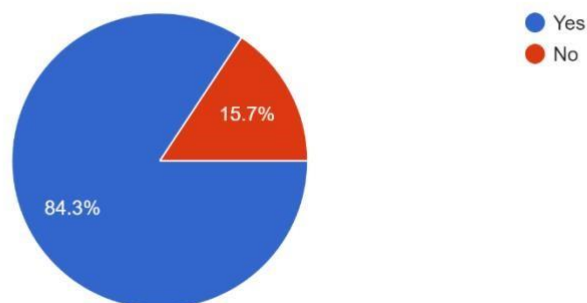


36 respondents are engaged in the study of the Vedas and 15 of them are engaged in a fair extent. this will reveal that the bias in the data collected at the source will be minimum.



Is it necessary to know the meaning of the vedas Or is it just enough if one memorise it.

51 responses

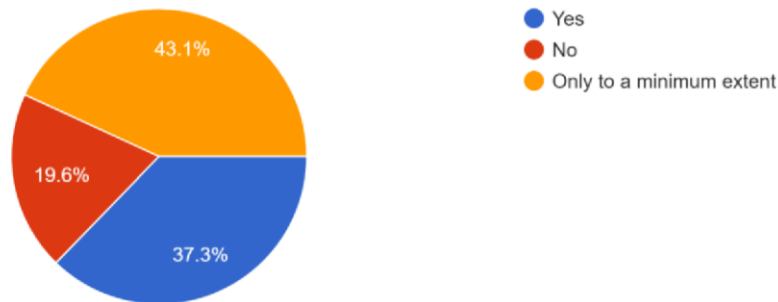


43 respondents feel that understanding the meanings of the Vedas is necessary. while 8 of them have stated that only memorization is sufficient.

This will be a necessary tool in the research.

Can the vedas be interpreted and understood to a fairly good extent just by the applications of the six vedangas

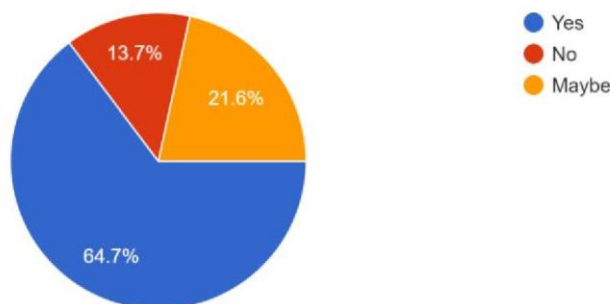
51 responses



22 respondents agree that Vedas can't be fairly analyzed only with the aid of the 6 Vedangas and through them Vedas can be interpreted to a minimum level. while 19 of them feel that it can't be fairly analyzed. while 10 respondents believe that Vedas cannot at all be interpreted only with the support of 6 Vedangas.

Do you feel vedangas have a rather deep meaning than generally understood and comprehended

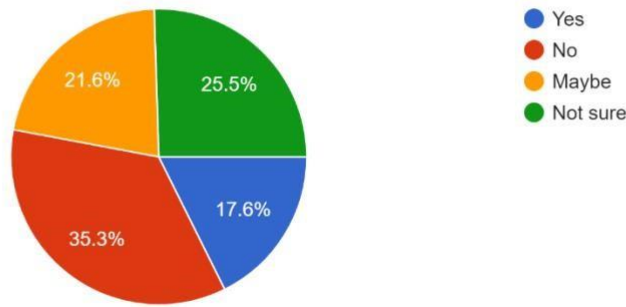
51 responses



33 respondents believe that Vedangas have a deeper meaning than assigned to them. While 7 of them disagreed and stated that Vedangas don't have a deep meaning. 11 respondents are not certain of the meaning.

Is vedanga limited only to 6 in number

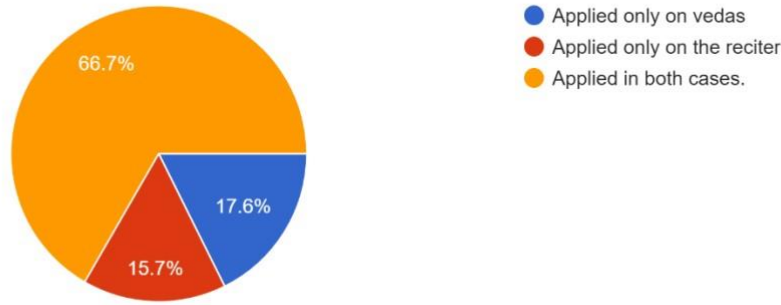
51 responses



this question received a diverse response from the people. 18 respondents believe that they are not limited to 6 while only 9 believe that they are limited to six. 11 respondents feel that it may or may not be limited, while 13 of them are not sure of the proposition.

Are the vedangas rules to be applied for the vedas Or are they rules to be applied on the person reciting them

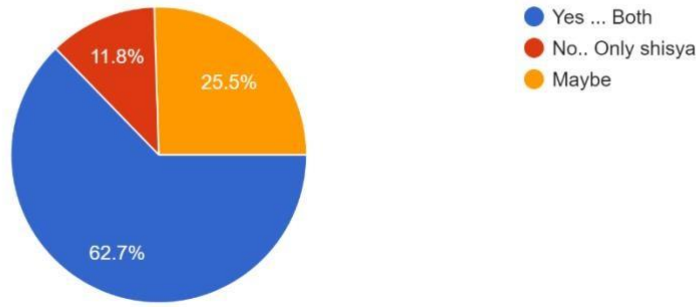
51 responses



This question was also an important one in the research. 34 of the respondents have stated that Vedangas are to be applied to both the Vedas and the reciter. 9 and 8 respondents respectively believe that they are applied to Vedas and reciter only, respectively.

Does vedanga constitute rules prescribed for both guru and shisya?

51 responses



32 respondents believe that Vedanga should be applied to both Guru and Shishya while 6 of them state that they only apply to Shishya while 13 are not certain.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Most of the respondents belong to the age group 60 and above followed by the 30-45 years category and males cover the maximum of it.
- Almost all respondents are related to Sanskrit literature and the Vedas and the Vedangas.
- Almost half of the respondents feel that the Vedas can be comprehended only to a minimum extent with the help of the Vedangas.
- Most of them have responded positively that Vedangas has a broader meaning than generally understood.
- There is mixed response regarding the limit of the Vedangas i.e., only six or more.
- The majority of the respondents feel that Vedangas are rules which are to be applied to both the Vedas and the reciter of the Vedas.
- The majority of the respondents have responded that Vedanga constitutes of rules applicable to both guru and shishya.

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE SIX FACETS OF VEDANGA AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

Veda Purusha Shrimannarayana, referred to as Akshara or Brahma, initiates the creation, preservation, destruction, etc. initiates the Astha vyavaharas through his Anantha Avatara, Anantha Guna, Sarva Lakshna, and Nitya Sadhana. According to the Mundakopanishat

Prathama Anka, he rendered the Brahma Vidya, which is the supreme knowledge to his praja (eldest son). The vidya has then been passed until it reached sage Angirasa who after verifying the capabilities of Shaunaka passed it on to him. There are two types of Vidya which are as follows: **परा चैवापरा च**

**त्रिपरा ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्ववेदः तिक्षा कल्पो व्याकरण
तनरुक्तं छन्दो ज्योतिषतमति । अय परा यया िदक्षरमतधगम्यै ॥**

Shiksha:

This auxiliary discipline has focused on the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet, accent, quantity, stress, melody, and rules of euphonic combination of words during a Vedic recitation. Shiksha deals with the study of the pronunciation of words and syllables through the correct intonation, conjunction (Sandhi), and disjunction (viccheda) of the syllables, recognized primarily as vowels and consonants. It intends to train the students in the art and science of articulation of words and syllables so that they can chant the Vedic hymns perfectly, producing the desired sound vibrations and maintaining the ritual purity and efficacy of the ceremonies they perform. There are 60 Shiksha, the most important originating from Panini and Manduki

Shiksha can be interpreted in several ways... some of them are teaching, training, precepting, punishment, imparting, diffidence, bestowing, and chastisement.

Through various definitions, we come to know that Shiksha is associated with the term **अक्षर** which while split gives **अ** and **क्षर**. Akshara is that which has not got destruction. So, in simple words, it is a term to interpret or comprehend **Akshara**.

Shiksha is an Anaga which silently also indicates that the Guru must analyze (Shiksha as precepting) his Shishya and only after testing his Yogyata must give him the Shiksha (imparting) of the Vedas. The reciter must be aware of the fact that phonetics plays an important role in rendering the meaning so to maintain the purity and integrity of the Vedas the application of Shiksha is necessary both in the generally comprehended sense and also in the indirect sense.

Kalpa:

The second Vedanga is Kalpa (ritual which is called the arms of the Veda

Purusha). Kalpa means sacred rule or law or ordinance and sutra means a thread.

Sutras are threads of knowledge or short statements used as memorial rules. In the absence of written language, the sutras acted as mental hooks and helped the students remember the intricacies of performing Vedic sacrifices and observing the daily rituals Kalpa deals with the practical ceremonial, sacrificial, and ritual aspects of the Vedas. Technically it is the applied science of the Vedas. The field focused on standardizing procedures for Vedic rituals, rites of passage rituals associated with major life events.

The oldest Kalpa sutras are those which in their contents are directly connected with the **Brahmanas and Aranyaka**. It was the ritual (Kalpa), the chief contents of the Brahmanas, which first received systematic treatment in the manuals called the Kalpa sutras.

Kalpa Sutras are usually divided into Srauta Sutras and Smartha Sutras.

Srauta Sutras prescribes rules for the performance of different types of sacrifices and rituals, the amount of fees to be paid to the priests and the type of penances to be practiced in case of violation. The Srauta Sutras were probably composed around the 6th century BC, the same time during which some of the Smartha sutras were composed. The latter are divided into Grihya sutras and Dharma sutras. The Grihya sutras prescribe domestic rites and rituals for the three upper castes (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaisyas), in addition to the duties and responsibilities meant for them as householders so that they can uphold the dharma and lead an ideal life in harmony with truths expounded in the Vedas. The Grihya sutras are treating the rites of passage, such as marriage, birth, name giving, etc., connected with simple offerings into the domestic fire.

The Dharma sutras are the first four texts of the Dharma sastra tradition and they focus on the idea of dharma. The Dharma sutras are written in concise prose, leaving much up to the educated reader to interpret. The Dharma sutras can be called the guidebooks of dharma as they contain the rules of conduct and rites as practiced in the Vedic schools. They discuss the duties of people at different stages of life like studenthood, householdership, retirement, and renunciation. These stages are also called ashramas. They also discuss the rites and

duties of kings, judicial matters, and even personal practices like the regulations in diet, offenses and expiations, daily oblations, and funerary practice. They also suggest the norms for appropriate social and religious behavior for both men and women, norms of marriage, study, and sexual union, and punishments in case of violation. Of the many Dharma Shastras that existed during the Vedic period, only a few have survived, such as the Baudhayana, the

Apasthamba, the Goutama, and the Vashistha. Other important law books of ancient times were Manu Smriti, Vishnu Smriti, Yagnavalkya Smriti, and Narada Smriti.

While Shiksha silently indicates to analyze the yogyata before imparting knowledge; Kalpa gives an insight as to how one can increase the Yogyata and also suggests that Yoga is a key aspect i.e. to say while yoga in this context comes by virtue of birth yogyata is the quality to be inculcated.

Vyakarana:

Vachaspatyam defines Vyakarana (व्याकरणम्) as व्याक्रियन्ते व्युत्पाद्यन्ते अर्थवत्तया प्रकृतपाद्यन्ते शब्दा येन ।The shabdas are separated and derived for the sake of proposing the meanings by which (processes in vyakarana).

Shabdakalpadhrama gives the definition of Vyakarana by Durgadasa

तत्र साध्यसाधनकत्ततथकर्मक्रिया-समासाक्रदक्रनरूपणम् । तस्य व्युत्पक्रत्तयथर्ा । व्याक्रियन्ते व्युत्पाद्यन्ते साधुशब्दा अस्मिन् अनेनेकृत वा । इकृत दुर्ाथदासः ।

Here Sadhya, sadhana, kartra, karma, kriya, samasa, and others are described along with their etymology. The sadhusabdas are separated and derived in this or by this (the process in Vyakarana).

Brahma was the first author of vyakarana, who transmitted this science to Brhaspati, who transmitted it to Indra, who in turn gave it to Bharadwaj. The Rishis learned it from Bharadwaj and then it reached Brahmanas.

The vyakarana is the mouth of the Veda Purusha. It enlightens us on the root formation of the words. It is not only used to analyze the grammar of the Vedas but also while applying the various Linga vibhakti vachana lakara purusha etc. in the mantras.

Chandas:

Chandas is the most highlighted aspect of the Vedas as before reciting any mantra the reciter is bound to remember the chandas and has to place the chandas in his mouth. The first reference of the Chandas appears in the Purusha Sukta of both Rig and Yajur Veda

छन्ांक्रस जक्रिरे तित् ।

The chandas were born from the purusha sarvottama Narayana

प्रजापक्रतरक्रिमक्रचनुत,स क्षुरपक्रवर्भथत्वाऽक्रतष्ठत्तं देवा क्रिभ्यतो नोपायन् ते छन्ोक्ररत्मानं
छादक्रयत्वोपायन् तच्छन्सां छन्स्त्वम् ।

The shield of Chandas can also protect the performer of the yajna from the heat of fire.

छन्यक्रत पतणाक्रत रोचते इक्रत छन्ः । छन्यक्रत

आच्छादयक्रत छन्द्यते अनेन इक्रत छन्ः ।

By these two quotes, it is evident that Chandas not only increases the beauty of the Vedas but also it is a tool that reminisces the reciter to frame his speech through which it delights everyone around him, and only with such an application he will gain the capability to grasp and digest the Vedas.

Niruktam:

Nirukta Vedanga is described as the **Ear** of the Veda Purusha. In simple terms Nirukta means etymology. It explains the word roots and thereby gives an inner meaning of each word in the Samhita and provides insight into how they must be analyzed in the individual sense and the collective sense.

With the analysis of the nirukta, the reciter can obtain the satvika meaning of the Vedas as assigned to them and can avoid the rajasika and the tamasika interpretations and thus gain authority over the Vedas.

Jyotisha:

The last Vedanga Jyotisha is called the eye the organ of sight, of the Veda Purusha. Jyotisha deals with the astronomical and astrological aspects of fixing auspicious dates and times to perform various Vedic rites and rituals including the sacraments or rites of passage. The auspicious time is usually determined based on the position of the luminous bodies (Jyotisha) namely the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, and other heavenly bodies. According to tradition, Sage Bhrigu is said to be the first person who perfected the knowledge of Jyotisha and built a record of the natal charts of every human being who was to be born on earth.

The term **Jyotisha** is derived from the word ज्योतिष and इष which ancillary means one seeking light. Thus, Jyotish implies that the reciter should be seeking to trod on the path of light that is to say he should have a true desire for knowledge. This is the eye of the Veda Purusha and suggests that the reciter should be of clean mind, without dust particles as dust in the eyes causes a lot of uneasiness.

SUGGESTIONS

- Though most scholars feel that by only learning the Vedas from the mouth of the Guru one can only memorize the Samhita and is unable to interpret the meaning. But it should be evident that memorization is the first step in the learning process and without it, the meaning can't be analyzed
- The guru should analyze the yoga and yogyata of the shishya through the application of the Vedangas and shape him accordingly.
- The reciter should analyze the minute sense of the Vedangas along with its greater sense and apply them accordingly in his life to enhance his core capacities.

CONCLUSION:

भाग्यं फलति सर्वत्र न च वर्धा न पौरुषम।□

It is *BHAGYA* that reaps the result in all cases it is neither *VIDYA* nor *PAURUSHA*.

Every person's YOGA and YOGYATA are pre-destined through his Runanubandha.

ऋणानुबन्धेन पि पत्र सुिालयः।

A person may have the Yoga to be born anywhere in any form out of 84 lakh Jeeva Rashi. He may or may not inculcate the necessary Yogyata in his lifetime.

The Vedangas suggest that if the person is having the necessary Yogyata accompanied by good Yoga by the virtue of his birth, he is entitled to receive the **BRAHMA VIDYA** and the Vedangas also suggest the ways one can enhance both his Yoga and Yogyata...and as such we realize that this process is like a Chakra ... एवं प्रवतिथिं चक्रम्।

This Chakra goes on and on... first instilling the yogyata then necessitating the yogyata and so on...

APPENDICES

Gender

Age

Are you related to Sanskrit either through your profession/study/otherwise?

Are you studying/practicing the Vedas and do you possess the Vedic knowledge to a reasonable extent?

Is it necessary to know the meaning of the Vedas or is it just enough if one memorizes it?

Can the Vedas be interpreted and understood to a fairly good extent just by the applications of the six Vedangas?

Do you feel Vedangas have a rather deep meaning than generally understood and comprehended

Is Vedanga limited only to 6 in number?

Are the Vedangas rules to be applied to the Vedas or are the rules to be applied to the person reciting them

Does Vedanga constitute rules prescribed for both guru and shisha?

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