

**A Synopsis of the Ph.D. Thesis**

**AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE VEDIC THOUGHTS  
AS DEPICTED IN THE CLASSICAL SANSKRIT  
LITERATURE**

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## SYNOPSIS OF THE THESIS

### STATEMENT – I

#### THE RELEVANCE OF THE PRESENT WORK AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO SANSKRIT LITERATURE

The present work “*An Analytical Study of the Vedic Thoughts as Depicted in the Classical Sanskrit Literature*” is first of its kind. The Vedas have been regarded as the most ancient literature of the world. The word Veda is derived from the Sanskrit root ‘vid’ to know. The Vedas consist of four *Samhitās*, fourteen *Brāhmaṇas*, *Āraṇyakas* and *Upaniṣads*. A *Samhitā* is a collection of *Mantras*. The *Mantras* are the hymns addressed to gods and goddesses. The four *Samhitās* are *Ṛk*, *Sāma*, *Yajuh* and *Atharva*. The *Ṛk Samhitā* is the oldest and most important of them. It is believed to be about six thousand years old, some parts being of a later date while some are even earlier consisting of 10 *Maṇḍalas*, 1028 hymns and 153826 words. It was preserved intact orally for more than four thousand years. The other Vedas are *Yajurveda*, *Sāmaveda* and *Atharvaveda*. All these Vedas contain a huge amount of thoughts which later on developed into systems of Indian philosophy and *Śāstras* called knowledge systems or scientific disciplines.

All the Indian philosophical systems like *Sāṃkhya*, *Vedānta* are developed on the basis of Vedic thoughts. The classical poets like Bhāravi, Śrīharṣa, Kālidāsa and others refer to all these philosophical thoughts in their works.

*Dharma* is the soul of Vedic literature. It includes various religious performances and moral code of conduct. *Vedic* teachings aim at the propagation of moral code and ethical principles. The heroes of the great literary works mainly follow the ideals of *Dharma*. They have actualized the ideals in their own lives, who lived and died for the maintenance of *Dharma*.

Sacrifices are the earliest forms of Hindu faith and worship. Non-violence was an important doctrine even in Vedic time. *Yajñas* like *Agniṣṭoma*, *Agnihotra*, *Aśvamedha* etc., are well-known rituals conducted for the gods to make them happy. In the third *maṇḍala* of *Ṛgveda*, we get the *Ṛcas* of Viśvāmitra in which he warns his *Kuśikā* followers to guard the sacrificial horse very vigilantly.

Not only we find the names of different earthen pots, but the process of the manufacture of at least some of them is laid down in more or less details in the *Brāhmaṇas* and *Sūtras*. These *yāgas* are referred to by the classical poets in their creative works like the *Raghuvamśa-mahākāvya* etc.

Vedic mythology occupies an important position in the study of the history of religion. The study of *Vedic* mythology is necessary for the critical understanding of the literary episodes referred to by the classical poets of Sanskrit. The most salient features of the mythology of the *Yajurveda* are the existence of one chief god, Prajāpati, the greater importance of Viṣṇu, and the first appearance of an old god of the *Ṛgveda* under the new name of Śiva.

Many figures of speech (*alaṃkāras*) are framed by the classical poets on the basis of *Vedic* ideas. We find many examples in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Mahābhārata*, *Kumārasambhavam*, *Naiṣadhīyacaritam* etc.

There are many ideas expounded by the Vedic sages regarding society. The *Brāhmaṇas* were held in great respect and were *Avadhya*. The different castes could follow various professions.

Vedic culture as depicted by the classical poets is an interesting aspect for study and research. Many of the points that are not comprehensible from the *Mantras* of the Vedas are made clear by the great Sanskrit poets and writers who heavily deal with Vedic culture in their compositions. Thus, this study will be highly relevant to understand the Vedic thoughts like the concept of sacrificial rituals and its impact on human life. The study will also make important contribution to the Sanskrit Literature.

## STATEMENT – II

### METHODOLOGY, SOURCES AND ORIGINALITY

#### 1. Methodology

In preparing this dissertation, analytical, critical and comparative methods are adopted. The scope of the study is limited to six *Mahākāvyas* of the great poets of the classical period in Sanskrit.

#### 2. Significance of the Study

The Veda is the storehouse of knowledge such as Philosophy, religion, mythology, rituals etc., which are referred to in the Sanskrit *Mahākāvya* literature. The thesis will present a detailed study both comprehensive and critical of Vedic thoughts as they are retold by the poets in their epic poems.

#### 3. The Focus of the Research

This research work makes a critical analysis of *Laghutrayī* (*Raghuvamśam*, *Kumārasambhavam* and *Meghadūtam*) and *Bṛhatrayī* (*Kirātāryunīyam*, *Śiśupālavadham* and *Naiṣadhīyacaritam*) where the thoughts of the *Śruti*, *Smṛti* and *Purāṇas* have been directly and indirectly represented by the Sanskrit poets of Classical period.

#### 4. Problem of the Research Topic

It is known that Vedic thoughts had influenced the great poets of Classical period. The *Mahākāvyas* composed by all the well-known poets do contain thoughts and ideas that are taken from the Vedic sources and develop with sophisticated literary devices. But no such comprehensive and critical study was so far attempted. Therefore I have taken this problem for my study. The result of my study will be presented in this Thesis.

I have included only relevant and important topics which are the significant aspects of the Classical Literature. The thesis is presented in the following nine chapters.

## **CHAPTER – I INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is an introduction to the Vedic thoughts in general and their chronological growth as we find in the literary works like epic poems in particular. It also provides the strong foundational information that are necessary for understanding of the Vedic tradition and as well as the theme of the classical literature.

## **CHAPTER - II**

### **VEDIC PHILOSOPHY AS DEPICTED IN THE CLASSICAL SANSKRIT LITERATURE**

This chapter has explained main aspects of Vedic philosophy such as *pañca-mahābhūta*, *māyā*, *karma*, *bhakti*, *jñāna*, *mokṣa* etc. An attempt has been made to analyse all these concepts as they are presented in the *Mahākāvya*s of the prominent classical poets like Kālidāsa, Māgha, Bhāravi, Śrīharṣa. The doctrines of *mokṣa*, *karma* and *saṃsāra* occupy an important place in the teachings of the Vedas. *Karma* is the fundamental law of the moral world. In Kālidāsa, the conception of the god represents a perfect synthesis of the Vedic religion and *Vedāntic* philosophy.

## **CHAPTER – III**

### **VEDIC RELIGION AS DEPICTED IN THE CLASSICAL SANSKRIT LITERATURE**

This chapter has presented a brief history of Vedic religion like what is the origin of the religion etc. and how Vedic religion has flowed in the *Laghutrayī*, and *Bṛhatrayī*. The world is governed with the religion. So the religion always

prevails with human life in the society. The whole incident about Yudhiṣṭhira in the *Kirātārjunīyam* of Bhāravi is the best example. The king Yudhiṣṭhira appointed a visionary spy to find out everything in the first canto of the *Kirātārjunīyam*. It is duty of a king. The judgment of this duty of the poet comes from Vedic thoughts.

I have thoroughly analysed the religious ideas of the Vedas and their representation as made by the poets of the classical period.

## CHAPTER – IV

### VEDIC RITUAL AS DEPICTED IN THE CLASSICAL SANSKRIT LITERATURE

This chapter focuses on a brief history of *Vedic* ritual and influence of the *Vedic* ritual in the *Laghutrayī* and *Bṛhatrayī*. *Yajñas* like *Agniṣṭoma*, *Agnihotra*, *Aśvamedha* etc. and many rites like *Nāmakaraṇa*, *Cuḍākarma*, *Upanayana* etc. also, are well-known rituals conducted for the gods to make them happy. These *yāgas* and *samskāras* are referred to by the classical poets in their creative works like the *Raghuvamśa-mahākāvya*. In the twenty ninth verse of third canto of *Raghuvamśa*, Kālidāsa mentions the *Upanayana* ceremony. A child is supposed to learn religious literature and chanting of the *Vedas* after his *Upanayana* rite according to the *Pāraskara-gr̥hyasūtra* (अष्टावर्षं ब्राह्मणमुपनयेद् गर्भष्टिमे वा। एकादशवर्षराजन्यम् ॥ II.2.2.1). And Manu says a Kṣatriya should perform this rite in the eleventh year from the mother's womb. (गर्भष्टिमेऽब्दे कुर्वीत ब्राह्मणस्योपनयनम् । गर्भदिकादशे राज्ञो गर्भर्तु द्वादशे विशः ॥ II.36). An analysis has been made in this chapter of all these ritualistic ideas expounded in the epic poems of classical age.

## CHAPTER – V

### VEDIC MYTHOLOGY AS DEPICTED IN THE CLASSICAL SANSKRIT LITERATURE

This chapter deals with a brief history of Vedic mythology and as they are depicted in the *Laghutrayī* and *Bṛhatṭrayī*. Kālidāsa begins his *Mahākāvya*, *Raghuvamśam* with a prayer to the lord Śiva (वागर्थाविव संपृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये ।

जगतः पितरौ वन्दे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ ॥). Kālidāsa's conception of Śiva is on the basis of Vedic conception of Śiva. The first verse of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* praises the *Aṣṭamūrti Śiva*. Here Śiva is known as Vedic god. Rudra's identification with Śiva was put in writing in the *Śatarudrīya* Section of *Taittirīya Samhitā* and the *Vājasaneyī Samhitā* also co-equals Śiva with Rudra. Śiva or Rudra is also referred to as *Bhava*, *Mahādeva*, *Śarva*, *Paśupati* etc. These names are mentioned in the *Vajasaneyī Samhitā*. “नमो भवाय च रुद्राय च नमः शर्वाय च । पशुपतये च नमो नीलग्रीवाय शितिकण्ठाय च ॥ VS., XVI.28”. The epithet *Tryambaka* also occurs in the *Rgveda*. “त्र्यम्बकं यजामहे सुगन्धि..... । Rg., VII.59.12”

## CHAPTER – VI

### VEDIC LITERARY THOUGHTS AS DEPICTED IN THE CLASSICAL SANSKRIT LITERATURE

In the classical Sanskrit literature especially in the *Mahākāvya*s of the great poets we see a clear picture of representation of Vedic literary thoughts. Vedic thoughts have always existed in the minds of the poets. Many *alaṃkāras*, *chandās*, etc. are framed by the classical poets on the basis of Vedic ideas. Kālidāsa says in the twelfth verse of first canto of *Raghuvamśam* “दिलीप इति राजेन्दुरिन्दुः क्षीरनिधाविव”. It means that the king Dilīpa is born always shining

in the Manu's family as the moon is always shining. Here Kālidāsa has taken the luminosity of the moon from the *Vedic* Literature.

## CHAPTER – VII

### VEDIC SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC THOUGHTS AS DEPICTED IN THE CLASSICAL SANSKRIT LITERATURE

This chapter is about Vedic Social and Economic thoughts and how there presented in the *Laghutrayī* and *Bṛhatrayī*. For example - In the fifty-eighth verse of first canto of *Raghuvamśam*, Maharṣi Vasiṣṭha asked the welfare of the king. Here Kālidāsa used the words 'कुशलं' 'राज्ये'. Mallinātha says in his commentary that "राज्य शब्दः पुरोहितादिस्वन्तर्गतत्वाद्राजकर्मवचनः, तथाप्यत्र सप्ताङ्गवचनः।" According to Manu, the king, minister, capital, realm, treasury, army and friend these seven constituents are part of a state. If a state does not have one of these seven organs, then, it cannot be called a 'state'. It is inevitable for a state to have these seven organs because these seven organs complement each other. (स्वाम्यमात्यौ पुरं राष्ट्रं कोशदण्डौ सुहृत्तथा । सप्त प्रकृतयो ह्येताः सप्ताङ्गं राज्यमुच्यते ॥ Ms., IX.294) other things the राज्य is called राष्ट्र according to the *Rgveda*.

## CHAPTER – VIII

### VEDIC CULTURE AS DEPICTED IN THE CLASSICAL SANSKRIT LITERATURE

In this chapter, an analysis is made of the Vedic culture and its various aspects as they are dealt with by the classical poets. The great poet Māgha says in the sixth verse of eleventh canto of *Śiśupālavadha* that he considered the *Brahmamuhūrta* to be appropriate for judging various matters relating to the state. Here Yājñavalkya says about early rising in the *Brahmamuhūrta* "ब्रह्ममुहूर्ते



चोत्थाय चिन्तयेदात्मनो हितम्”. It means a human being should wake up in *Brahmamuhūrta* and think about the wellbeing of oneself.

## CHAPTER – IX

### CONCLUSION

The study of *Laghutrayī* and *Bṛhatrayī* reveal that Vedic thoughts (*Śruti*, *Smṛti* and *Purāṇas*) had a strong impact on the social culture prevailing in the period of Kālidāsa, Māgha, Bhāravi and Śrīharṣa. So the poets were highly influenced by the Vedic philosophy, religion, ritual etc. The Poets have highlighted Vedic thoughts directly or indirectly in their poems. So, it can be said that classical poets’ knowledge of *Śruti*, *Smṛti* etc. had very profound influence which found clear expression in the beautiful verses of their poetic compositions.

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