CHAPTER I
AN OVERVIEW OF THE VEDAS

1.1 Introduction

The Vedas refer to timeless knowledge of supreme authority. They are truly the oldest and most revered literature available for the upliftment of humanity. One can find in them a refreshing charm which seldom ceases. Vedas are apauruṣeya and have not been composed by any person or agency. Vedic poets are called seers of the Mantras and are not to be construed as the original authors of the Vedic Mantras.

The Vedas are the most sacred and ancient scriptures which constitute the ultimate authority for the Hindu philosophy. The term ‘Veda’ derived from the root ‘Vid’ refers to universal knowledge propagated by inspired and enlightened Rṣis for the spiritual and social benefit of the entire humanity. The Vedas are also known as ‘Aksara Brahman’, meaning eternal reality.

The Vedas are the essence of the worlds.¹
The Vedas are the limbs of the Brahman.²
The Vedas are the nectar.³

The Vedas are preserved in their pristine form through the Gurukula system. The teaching and propagation of the Vedas through the Guru-śisya parampara has ensured that the Vedas are transmitted in their original form from one generation to

¹ Cha Upa iii-5-4
² Ken Upa iv-8
³ Cha Upa iii-5-4
another. The Vedas also called as 'śruti' involving transmission, hearing, chanting, reciting and reflection. The Vedas are to be chanted properly with the appropriate svara (pitch or accent), varna (sound), mātrā (measure) and balam (effort put in articulation). The Vedic accents are important as they may connote different meanings even if changed inadvertently. The study of the Vedas is known as Svādhyāyaḥ.

The joy of a śrutiya (student of the Vedas) is the highest.¹

1.2 Structure of the Vedas

The Vedic literature has two major parts, Samhitā and Brāhmaṇa. Samhitās are also called Mantras. Samhitās are collections of hymns, prayers, incantations, benedictions, invocations, sacrificial formulas and litanies. Brāhmaṇas are dissertations on the Mantras. They are voluminous prose texts of theology dealing with special observations on sacrifices, rites, rituals, ceremonies and their mystic importance.

The Brāhmaṇa literature may be classified into three parts, viz, Pure Brāhmaṇas, Āranyakas and Upaniṣads. While pure Brāhmaṇas present details pertaining to sacrifices, Upaniṣads consist mainly of philosophy. Āranyakas lie midway between the two explaining the Vedic occult science. Though some Āranyakas and

¹ Tai Upa i-2
² Tai Upa ii-8
Upaniṣads can be construed to be independent texts, there is a common ideology and thought holding them together as Brāhmaṇas.

Mantra literature and pure Brāhmaṇas are commonly described as books of work (Karma Kānda) while Āranyakas and Upaniṣads are designated as Books of knowledge (Jñāna Kānda). Despite this, it can be conclusively said that the Samhitās and texts of Brāhmaṇas, Āranyakas and Upaniṣads breathe one single spirit of spiritual realisation of the Vedic seers through their power of intuitive knowledge. As all works end in knowledge, no case exists for any contradiction between Karma and Jñāna. Both in fact are complementary to each other.

Though the Vedas are viewed primarily as spiritual literature, they do deal with matters related to conduct of one’s life, social and materialistic aspects necessary for mundane existence, which can be viewed from a managerial perspective. These immortal Vedas which are replete with new and emerging management thoughts, principles and theories have great relevance even in our contemporary context. Thus from a managerial perspective, the Vedas are like a gold mine containing valued and significant meanings deep inside them. This offers a vast potential for one to interpret the Vedic literature from a management standpoint.

1.3 Scope of the Vedas

The Vedas are countless and the Vedic literature is limitless. The Vedic declaration “anantā vai Vedāḥ”\(^6\) is the authority in this regard. The Vedas have an exhaustive

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\(^6\) Tai Kat i-46
scope and coverage on a wide range of subjects. They have both depth and width.

The subject matter of the *Vedas* may be divided into *Karma, Upāsana* and *Jñāna*. *Karma* means action. This portion of the *Vedas* deals exhaustively with sacrifices, rituals and rites.

*Upāsana* refers to the conscious and ceaseless mental effort in sustaining an unbroken current of thought on a specific deity, divine quality or a particular adorable object.

*Jñāna* denotes knowledge. This part of the *Vedas* deals with philosophical and spiritual expositions of the supreme order.

Offerings are given to the *Vedas*.  

Based on the available *Vedic* literature, the *Vedas* consist of 12 *Samhitās*, 16 *Brāhmaṇas*, 5 *Āranyakas* and 15 principal *Upaniṣads*.

The *Samhitās* constitute the core and main text of the *Vedas*. The *Brāhmaṇas* and *Āranyakas* supplement and complement them.

The *Brāhmaṇas* contain detailed directions, rules and regulations (*Vidhi*) as well as explanatory remarks (*Artha Vāda*) regarding the conduct of various sacrifices and rituals.

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7 Tai Sam vii-5-11
The Āranyakas mainly deal with the philosophical discussions.

The Upaniṣads are the concluding part of the Āranyakas and are also called as Vedānta which consist of the philosophy of the highest order.

Thus the main text is the Samhitā and its interpretation is Brāhmaṇa, the spiritual and mystic findings are seen in the Āranyaka and the philosophic conclusions constitute the Upaniṣads. These four aspects of the Vedic literature are collectively referred to as “Veda”.

1.3.1 Rg Veda

The Rg Veda contains verses of praise and prayers addressed to the various Gods in metrical form. It relates to the power of speech. It is meant for recitation aloud.

The Rg Veda has 10 Mandalas (Books) consisting of Sūktas (hymns) and Mantras (verses).

Offerings are given to the Rg Verses.  

The Rg Veda consists of 1 Samhitā, 3 Brāhmaṇas, 2 Āranyakas and 3 Upaniṣads.

One shall take refuge in the Rg Veda.  

The Rgs are the world of men.

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8 Tai Sam vii-5-11  
9 Cha Upa iii-15-7  
10 Tai Sam vii-5-4
Rk is life-giving.\textsuperscript{11}

Speech alone is Rk.\textsuperscript{12}

That which is speech is Rk.\textsuperscript{13}

With a Rk one sacrifices in order to support the sacrifice.\textsuperscript{14}

Rg Veda is the flower.\textsuperscript{15}

1.3.2 Yajur Veda

The Yajur Veda is primarily in prose form dealing with sacrifices and rituals. It facilitates one to develop a strong mind power. It is meant for soft recitation at rituals.

Offerings are given for the Yajur verses.\textsuperscript{16}

Yajur Veda has two major classifications, namely, Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda and śukla Yajur Veda. śukla Yajur Veda is also known as Vājasaneyi.

Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda has four Samhitās with minor differences in the readings while the core aspects dealing with the form, details and descriptions of sacrifices and rituals are more or less same.

\textsuperscript{11} Tai Sam iii-2-7
\textsuperscript{12} Cha Upa i-1-5
\textsuperscript{13} Cha Upa i-3-4
\textsuperscript{14} Tai Sam vi-1-2
\textsuperscript{15} Cha Upa iii-1-2
\textsuperscript{16} Tai Sam vii-5-11
The *Yajur Veda Samhitas* deal with important sacrifices like *Aśvamedha*, *Vājapeya*, *Rājasūya*, *Cāturmāsya*, *Sautrāmaṇi*, etc.

The *Māitrāyanī Samhitā* of *Krṣṇa Yajur Veda* consists of 4 *Kāndas*, which are sub-divided into *Prapāthakas* and *Mantras*.

The *Tāttviriya Samhitā* of *Krṣṇa Yajur Veda* consists of 7 *Kāndas* which are sub-divided into *Prapāthakas* and *Anuvākas*.

The *śukla Yajur Veda Samhita* is also called *Vājasaneyi Samhitā*. It has 40 *Adhyāyas*, which are sub-divided into *Anuvākas* and *Kandikās*.

The *Yajur Veda* consists of 6 *Samhitās*, 3 *Brāhmaṇas*, 3 *Āranyakas* and 7 *Upaniṣads*. Out of this, *Krṣṇa Yajur Veda* has 4 *Samhitās*, 1 *Brāhmaṇa*, 2 *Āranyakas* and 5 *Upaniṣads*. The *śukla Yajur Veda* has 2 *Samhitās*, 2 *Brāhmaṇas*, 1 *Āranyaka* and 2 *Upaniṣads*.

That part of the sacrifice which is not performed with *Yajus* is unsuccessful.\(^\text{17}\)

One shall take refuge in the *Yajur Veda*.\(^\text{18}\)

*Yajur Veda* is the flower.\(^\text{19}\)

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\(^{17}\) Tai Sam v-1-2

\(^{18}\) Cha Upa iii-15-7

\(^{19}\) Cha Upa iii-2-1
1.3.3 *Sāma Veda*

The *Sāma Veda* is meant for chanting with rhythms in musical form. It enables one to gain control over breath and attain tranquility.

The *Sāma Veda* consists mainly of *Rṣis* while only a few *Mantras* are independent of the *Rg Veda*.

Offerings are given for the *Sāmans*.\(^{20}\)

*Sāma Veda Samhitā* has two main divisions, (i.e) *Ārcika* and *Gāna*. *Ārcika* represents a collection of *Rg Vedic* hymns while *Gāna* denotes song. The *Gānas* are of four types. *Grāma Gāna* which is also known as *Veya Gāna* contains songs to be sung in villages. *Āranya Gāna* refers to songs to be sung only in the forests. *āha Gāna* refers to songs based on the musical notes of *Grāma Gāna*. *āhya Gāna* are the songs based on the musical notes of *Āranya Gāna*.

The *Sāma Veda* consists of 3 *Samhitās*, 9 *Brāhmanas* and 2 *Upaniṣads*.

One shall take refuge in the *Sāma Veda*.\(^{21}\)

The *Sāman* is the world of the Gods.\(^{22}\)

\(^{20}\) Tai Sam vii-5-11
\(^{21}\) Cha Upa iii-15-7
\(^{22}\) Tai Sam vii-5-4, Tai Sam vii-5-1
Sāman protects the body. 23

Anything that is good, people call it as Sāman. 24

Sāma Veda is the flower. 25

Prāṇa is Sāman. 26

With the chanting of Om, Sāma verses are sung. 27

Sāman is fivefold. 28

One shall meditate on the progressively higher and better fivefold Sāman as the senses: The organ of smell is the syllable him, the organ of speech is prastāva, the eye is udgītha, the ear is Pratiharā and the mind is nidhana. 29

1.3.4 Atharva Veda

The Atharva Veda contains verses as well as prose, which are meant for mass recitation. It pertains to sharp vision and hearing powers. It guides one to lead a pure and meaningful life.

The Atharva Veda Samhitās has 20 Kāndas with 34 Prapāthakas, which are subdivided into Anuvākas, Sūktas and Mantras. Nearly 1/6th of the Atharva Veda is
prosaic while the balance is in poetic style. The *Atharva Veda* has a number of *Mantras* of *Rg Veda*.

The *Atharva Veda* is a repository of the knowledge on magic, witchcraft and sorcery. It explains a host of materialistic propositions.

The *Atharva Veda* consists of 2 *Samhitās*, 1 *Brāhmaṇa* and 3 *Upaniṣads*.

1.4 śākhās

The total number of the śākhās (recensions) of the four *Vedas* are believed to be 1131. But with the efflux of time, only 13 śākhās are presently available.

The *Rg Veda* has only one śākhā out of 21 śākhās considered as existing earlier. Thus śākala śākhā alone is available. There is also an unverified claim that the śāṅkhāyana śākhā is known to some scholars of Northern India.

The *Yajur Veda* is believed to have 101 śākhās. Presently only 5 śākhās of *Krṣṇa Yajur Veda* and 2 śākhās of *sukla Yajur Veda* are available. The extant śākhās of *Krṣṇa Yajur Veda* are *Tāttirīya, Kapiṣṭhala, Katha, Kāthaka* and *Mālitrāyani*. The two extant śākhās of *sukla Yajur Veda* are *Kāṇva śākhā* and *Mādhyandina śākhā*.
The Sama Veda has only 3 šākhās now out of 1000 šākhās available earlier. These are Kauthuma, Rāṇāyanīya and Jaïminiya šākhās.

Two šākhās of Atharva Veda are extant out of 9 šākhās available earlier. These are Paippalāda and šaunaka šākhās.

1.5 Samhitās

There are 12 extant Veda Samhitās. The Rg Veda has one, the Yajur Veda six, the Sama Veda three and the Atharva Veda two.

The 12 Samhitās are as follows:

1. Rg Veda
   - śākala Samhitā

2. Yajur Veda
   - Vājasaneyi Mādhyamādina Samhitā of śukla Yajur Veda
   - Vājasaneyi Kāṇva Samhitā of śukla Yajur Veda
   - Tālāttirīya Samhitā of Krṣṇa Yajur Veda
   - Māitrāyanī Samhitā of Krṣṇa Yajur Veda
   - Kāthaka Samhitā of Krṣṇa Yajur Veda
   - Kapiṣṭhala Katha Samhitā of Krṣṇa Yajur Veda

3. Sāma Veda
   - Kauthuma Samhitā
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- Jaiminiya Samhita
- Ranyakinta Samhita

4. Atharva Veda
- ounaka Samhita
- Paippalada Samhita

1.5.1 Samhitas lost

The following three Samhitas of the Rg Veda are stated to be lost:

- Aisyvalayana Samhita
- Mandukayana Samhita
- Shankhayana Samhita

Only certain portions of Baskala Samhita are currently available.

1.6 Brahmanas

There are 16 Brahmanas in the Vedas. The Rg Veda has three, the Yajur Veda three, the Sama Veda nine and the Atharva Veda one as listed below:

1. Rg Veda
   - Aitareya Brahmana
2. **Yajur Veda**

- śatapatha Brāhmaṇa of śukla Yajur Veda
- śatapatha Kaṇva Brāhmaṇa of śukla Yajur Veda
- Tāttiṭṭirīya Brāhmaṇa of Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda

3. **Sama Veda**

- Pañcaviṃśa or Tāndya Brāhmaṇa
- Jaiminīya or Talavakāra Brāhmaṇa
- Upaniṣad or Mantra or Chāndogya Brāhmaṇa
- Ārṣeya Brāhmaṇa
- Devatādhyāya Brāhmaṇa
- Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa
- Saṁhitopaniṣad Brāhmaṇa
- śadviṃśa Brāhmaṇa
- Vamsa Brāhmaṇa
4. *Atharva Veda*

- *Gopatha Brähmana*

1.6.1 *Brähmana* lost

With the passage of time, certain portions of the *Vedic* lore have been lost. The following *Brähmana* are not available now, though a reference about them have been made in the *Vedic* literature:

- *Āarneya Brähmana*
- *Āhvakara Brähmana*
- *Aukheya Brähmana*
- *Āśvalāyana Brähmana*
- *Kāpeya Brähmana*
- *Bhāllavi Brähmana*
- *Chāgaleya Brähmana*
- *Charaka Brähmana*
- *Gālava Brähmana*
- *Haridrāvika Brähmana*
- *Jābali Brähmana*
- *Kālabāvri Brähmana*
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- Kankati Brāhmaṇa
- Kāthaka Brāhmaṇa
- Khendikeya Brāhmaṇa
- Māitrāyanīya Brāhmaṇa
- Māṣasara Brāhmaṇa
- Paingāyani Brāhmaṇa
- Parāśara Brāhmaṇa
- Rauruki Brāhmaṇa
- Śaibali Brāhmaṇa
- Satyāyana Brāhmaṇa
- Saulabha Brāhmaṇa
- Śvetāsvatara Brāhmaṇa
- Talavakāra Brāhmaṇa
- Tumburu Brāhmaṇa

1.7 Āraṇyakas

The Vedas consist of 5 Āraṇyakas. The Rg Veda has two and the Yajur Veda three as presented below:

1. Rg Veda
   - Aitareya Āraṇyaka
• śāṅkhāyana Āranyaka

2. Yajur Veda

• Brihadāraṇyaka of śukla Yajur Veda
• Tāttvārīṣṭa Āranyaka of Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda
• Maitrāyaṇī Āranyaka of Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda

1.8 Upaniṣads

There are 15 principal Upaniṣads in the Vedas. The Rg Veda has three, the Yajur Veda seven, the Sāma Veda two and the Atharva Veda three, as given below:

1. Rg Veda

• Aitareya Upaniṣad of Aitareya Āranyaka
• Bāskala Mantropaniṣad of Bāskala School
• Kāuşātaka Upaniṣad of śāṅkhayana Āranyaka

2. Yajur Veda

• Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad of śukla Yajur Veda
• iśavāsya Upaniṣad of śukla Yajur Veda
- Katha Upaniṣad belonging to Katha school of Krṣṇa Yajur Veda

- Mahānārāyanā Upaniṣad belonging to Tā cittiriya Āraṇyaaka of Krṣṇa Yajur Veda

- Māitrāyanīya Upaniṣad belonging to Māitrāyanī Aranyaka of Krṣṇa Yajur Veda

- śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad belonging to Krṣṇa Yajur Veda

- Tā cittiriya Upaniṣad belonging to Tā cittiriya Aranyaka of Krṣṇa Yajur Veda

3. Sāma Veda

- Chāndogya Upaniṣad

- Kena Upaniṣad

4. Atharva Veda

- Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad of Gopatha Brāhmaṇa

- Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad of Gopatha Brāhmaṇa

- Praṣna Upaniṣad of Atharva Pippalāda school
1.9 Trayī Vidyā

The three Vedas Rk, Yajus and Sāman constitute the threefold knowledge known as Trayī Vidyā. The three Vedas are also referred to as Tri- śukriya and Tri- śukra.30

The Vedas hail and revere the Rk, the Sāman and the Yajus.32

From the Supreme Being originated the Rk, Yajur and Sāman.33

The threefold knowledge proceed with Om.34

The three Vedas are himkāra.35

The orb of the Sun which gives light is Rks: The Sun is the abode of the Rk verses: The shining flame in the orb of the Sun is the collection of Sāman chants:

The Sun is the abode of the Sāman chants: The flame within the orb of the Sun is the collection of the Yajus. Sun is the abode of the Yajus.36

By the Rk hymns this world, by the Yajus the sky and by the Sāmans the world of Brahman is attainable.37

Speech is built with the Rk, Yajus and the Sāman.38

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30 Kat Sam xxxvii-7
31 Tai Brah ii-7-1-2
32 Tai Sam vii-3-12
33 Mun Upa ii-1-6
34 Cha Upa i-1-9
35 Cha Upa ii-21-1
36 Mah Upa xiv-1
37 Pra Upa v-7
38 Sat Brah x-3-5-2
Earth is Rk. Sky is Sāman. Heaven is Yajus.  

Brooding on the three Vedas, Prajāpati extracted Bhūḥ from Rks, Bhuvah from the Yajur Mantras and Svah from the Sāmans. 

The Rg Veda, Yajur Veda, Sāma Veda and Atharva Veda are the breaths of this limitless reality.

Crossing by Rk, Sāman and Yajus, one rejoices in food and growth of riches.

One shall meditate upon the Vedas as a cow. Her four teats are the sounds ‘svāhā’, ‘vaṣat’, ‘hanta’ and ‘svadhā’. The gods live on ‘svāhā’ and ‘vaṣat’, men on ‘hanta’ and manes on ‘svadhā’. The vital force is her bull and the mind her calf.

From that great general sacrifice Rcas and Sāman hymns were born; therefrom were spells and charms produced; the Yajus had its birth from it.

One shall name the child saying, “You are the Veda”.

The vital force is verily the Uktha for it upholds the Universe.

The vital force is verily the Yajus for all these beings are joined if there is the vital force.

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39 Tai Upa 1-5  
40 Cha Upa iv- 17-3  
41 Brh Upa ii-4-10  
42 Vaj Sam iv-1  
43 Brh Upa v-8-1  
44 Vaj Sam xxxi-7  
45 Brh Upa vi-4-26  
46 Brh Upa v-13-1  
47 Brh Upa v-13-2
The vital force is verily the Sāman for all these beings unite if there is the vital force.\textsuperscript{48}

Sāma Veda is associated with Brāhmaṇa, Yajur Veda with Kṣatriyas and Rg Veda with Vaiśyas.\textsuperscript{49}

The Ṛcas, Sāmans and Yajur verses are included like spokes within a car’s nave.\textsuperscript{50}

I take refuge in Speech as Ṛk, in Mind as Yajus text and in Breath as Sāma Chant.\textsuperscript{51}

Crossing by the Ṛk, Sāman and Yajus, one rejoices in food and growth of riches.\textsuperscript{52}

The second part of Gayatri Mantra has eight syllables made up of ‘Ṛcaḥ’, ‘Yajūṃśi’ and ‘Sāmāṇi’ and one who knows thus wins all the knowledge represented by the three Vedas.\textsuperscript{53}

1.10 Vedas about Vedas

In addition to the references about the Trayī Vidyā, the Vedas mention about the four Vedas.

East is the direction of Rg Veda, south is that of Yajur Veda, west is that of Atharva Veda and north is that of Sāma Veda.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{48} Brh Upa v-13-3
\textsuperscript{49} Tai Kat iii-50
\textsuperscript{50} Vaj Sam xxxiv-5
\textsuperscript{51} Vaj Sam xxxvi-1
\textsuperscript{52} Vaj Sam iv-i
\textsuperscript{53} Brh Upa v-14-2
\textsuperscript{54} Tai Kat iii-49
The four-fold Vedas constitute Rk, Yajus, Sāman and Atharvāṅgirasa.  

Of the Ātman, Yajus is the head, Rk is the right side, Sāman is the left side, the scriptural injunction (ādesa) is the support while the hymns of the Atharva Veda constitute the hind part and support.

Therefore one must study the Vedas; Whatever sacrifices are studied, their benefits accrue to him who thus studies.

One recites the Rg Veda, one sings the Sāma Veda, one tells the knowledge of Atharva Veda and the other lays down the rules of sacrificing as per the Yajur Veda.

1.11 Ṛṣi- Chandas- Devatā

Each Vedic Mantra has a seer who saw and realized it (Ṛṣi), its metrical form (Chandas) and the deity addressed by it (Devatā). Thus the Ṛṣi, Chandas and Devatā constitute the key aspects of the Vedic hymns.

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55 Tai Kat iii-46 to 47  
56 Tai Upa ii-3  
57 Tai Ara ii-19  
58 RgV Sam x-71-11
The *Vedas* are the poetry of the Gods which neither fades nor dies even with the passage of time.  

1.11.1 *Ṛṣis*

The *Ṛṣi* is the *Vedic* seer who has seen and realized the *Mantra*.

One shall offer obeisance to the great sages (*Ṛṣis*).  

1.11.2 *Chandas*

The Metrical form of the *Vedas* is referred to as *chandas*. The *Vedas* are also known as *Chandas*.

The Gods verily, being afraid of death took refuge in the three *Vedas*. They covered themselves in the metrical hymns. Because they so covered themselves, the metrical hymns are called *chandas*.  

The metres are *Gāyatrī*, *Uṣṇīḥ*, *Anuṣṭhūp*, *Brhati*, *Paṅkti*, *Trṣṭhūp* and *Jagati*.

*Trṣṭhūp* is power; Cattle are connected with *Jagati*; *Gāyatrī* is splendour; *Viraj* is food; *Anuṣṭhūp* is the support of the metres; Cattle are connected with *Brhati*; All the metres shall be repeated by one who performs many sacrifices for all the metres are won by him. One shall repeat indefinitely to win that which is not definite.

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59 *AtV* *Sam* x-8-32  
60 *Mun* *Upa* iii-2-11  
61 *Cha* *Upa* i-4-2  
62 *Atv* *Sam* xix-21-1  
63 *Tai* *Sam* ii-5-10
1.11.3 Devatā

The presiding deity of the Mantra in whose praise it is addressed is known as the Devatā.

1.12 Vedic Knowledge Bank

The Vedas contain all branches of knowledge. They represent an unceasing storehouse of knowledge, covering a wide spectrum of subjects including the following:

- Agriculture
- Animals
- Assembly
- Birds
- Cattle
- Classes
- Clothing
- Community
- Constellations
- Diseases
- Economic conditions
- Education
- Family
- Festivals
- Food
- Fish
- Furniture
- Grains
- Grass
- Houses
- Implements
- Insects
- Justice
- King
- Literature
- Measures
- Metals
- Morality
- Mountains
- Music
- Occupation
- Ornaments
- Pastoral life
- Places
- Planets
- Plants
- Priest
- Rivers
- Sea
- Serpents
- Ship
- Speech
- Teaching
- Theft
- Time
- Trade
- Tribes
- Villages
- Wars
- Worms

1.12.1 Numbers

As regards numbers, reference is made in the *Vedas* to a hundred hundred thousand million \(^{64}\) and a billion.\(^ {65}\)

Arithmetic progression is seen in the *Vedas*.\(^ {66}\)

1.12.2 Sun

The Sun is the supreme cause of the Universe. It is the source of all energy and the giver of light and water.\(^ {67}\)

1.12.3 Womb

Even while lying in the womb, one can speak and also get the knowledge of the Self.\(^ {68}\)

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\(^{64}\) Tai Sam iv-4-11
\(^{65}\) Vaj Sam xvii-2
\(^{66}\) Tai Sam vii-2-14
\(^{67}\) Mah Upa xv-2
\(^{68}\) Ait Upa ii-1-5
1.12.4 Plants
The boar knows the plant; the mongoose knows the remedial herb; the serpants also know.\textsuperscript{69}
The eagles, swans, birds and beasts know the herbs.\textsuperscript{70}

1.12.5 Animals
The tortoise is the intelligence of animals.\textsuperscript{71}
An ass lives all its days.\textsuperscript{72}

1.12.6 Surgery
The \textit{Aśvins} fixed an equine head on \textit{Dadhya}.\textsuperscript{73}

1.12.7 Dentistry
Dentistry is mentioned in the \textit{Vedas}.\textsuperscript{74}

1.12.8 Ship
One shall build a ship equipped with oars for transport.\textsuperscript{75}

1.12.9 Waters
There are heavenly waters\textsuperscript{76} and celestial waters.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{69} Atv Sam viii-7-23
\textsuperscript{70} Atv Sam viii-7-24
\textsuperscript{71} Tai Sam v-2-8
\textsuperscript{72} Tai Sam v-15
\textsuperscript{73} Brh Upa ii-5-17
\textsuperscript{74} Ait Brah iii-6-3, Ait Brah ii-1-5
\textsuperscript{75} RgV Sam x-101-2
\textsuperscript{76} Cha Upa i-8-4
\textsuperscript{77} Vaj Sam xxxvi-12
1.13 *Vedas: An overview of the Pūrva Mīmāṃsa School*

The *Mīmāṃsa Sutra* of Jaimini is the earliest available text of the *Mīmāṃsa* school, who has summarized the early thoughts of his predecessors and formulated the design of the *Mīmāṃsa* school with his own contribution. It emphasizes that *Vedic* testimony is the supreme valid knowledge which requires no other test for its validity. It provides a mystic meaning and significance to the sacrifices and rituals together with a philosophical justification. According to it, performance of sacrifices constitutes *Dharma*. The desirable matter which is the purpose of what is propounded by the *Vedas* is *Dharma*. This School is also known as *Karma Mīmāṃsa* as it is an inquiry concerning works. According to it, the *Vedas* are absolute and eternal. The articulate *Vedic* sounds are everlasting.

The *Pūrva Mīmāṃsa* school holds the maxim that every part of the *Veda* shall be related with the sacrifice (*yāga*). It attaches paramount importance of sacrifice which is the best means to attain the highest objective of life. The source of knowledge for attaining this goal and the means for the same are the *Vedas*. As performance if sacrifice (*yāga*) is prescribed by the *Vedas*, it becomes the most sacred duty of a person.

According to the *Pūrva Mīmāṃsa* School of thought, the *Vedas* are said to consist of five parts as below:

1. Injunction (*Vidhi*) defined as that portion of *Veda* which makes known a matter not known by any other source of knowledge.
3. Name (*Nāmadheya*) which facilitates to understand some words as names of sacrifices.
4. Prohibitory sentences (*Niṣedha*) deals with acts that are prohibited.
5. Explanatory passage (*Arthavāda*) conveying the praise or glorification of the thing enjoined and censure of the thing prohibited.

1.14 *Vedas: An overview of the Vedānta School*

The *Vedānta* School lays emphasis true knowledge of the Self rather than on sacrifices, rituals and rites. It focusses on the search and inquiry into the ultimate reality and explains the process as well as the supreme bliss of Self-realization. *Vedānta* recognizes both the external world and the internal world investigates the Ultimate truth. The *Vedānta* School is mainly based on the *Upaniṣads*, which constitute the latter part of the *Vedas*.

1.15 *Commentators on the Vedas*

Over the Centuries, some eminent *Vedic* Scholars have attempted to present their commentaries on the *Vedas*. The significant *Vedic* commentators among them are as follows:

- *Yāska*
- *Bhātta Bhāskara*
- Venkata Madhava
- Sāyana
- Uvata
- Mahīdhara
- Dayānanda

For every *Vedic mantra* it is believed that there are three meanings relating to the following:

- Worldly knowledge
- *Vedic* deities
- Spiritual knowledge

Certain eminent scholars of the West have presented their commentaries on the *Vedas*. The following are important among them:

- Max Mueller
- McDonnell
- R.T.H.Griffith
- H.H.Wilson
- A.B.Keith
- W.D.Whitney

1.16 *Vedāngas*

There are six limbs of the *Vedas*, known as *Vedāngas*. 
1.16.1 śikṣā

śikṣā is the science which deals with articulation and pronunciation.

The *Vedic* science of phonetics (*Sikṣā*) consists of sound (*Varnāḥ*), accent or pitch (*Svarāḥ*), measure (*Mātrā*), efforts in articulation (*Balam*), uniformity (*Sāma*), continuity in pronunciation (*Santānāḥ*).\(^{78}\)

1.16.2 Chandas

*Chandas* is the science of metrics. It deals with *Vedic* metres.

1.16.3 Vyākaraṇa

*Vyākaraṇa* is the science of grammar.

1.16.4 Nirukta

*Nirukta* is the science which deals with the etymological interpretation of words.

1.16.5 Jyotiṣa

*Jyotiṣa* is the science of astronomy.

1.16.6 Kalpa

*Kalpa* is the science which deals with rituals and prescribes rituals for sacrificial acts. There are four types of *Kalpa Sutras*.

\(^{78}\) Tai Upa i-2
1.16.6a śrāuta Sūtras

The śrāuta Sūtras contain a detailed description of sacrifices.

1.16.6b Gṛhya Sūtras

The Gṛhya Sūtras prescribe rules for conducting various ceremonies pertaining to domestic life.

1.16.6c Dharma Sūtras

The Dharma Sūtras consist of laws governing religious ways of life and secular matters as well. The rights, duties, obligations and code of conduct for the four Varnas and Āśramas are dealt with therein.

1.16.6d śulva Sūtras

The śulva Sūtras deal with the architecture of sacrificial altars for undertaking different kinds of sacrifices.

1.17 UpaVedas

UpaVedas refer to Books of secondary knowledge.

Āyur Veda (the science of medicine) is the UpaVeda of RgVeda while Gandharva Veda (the science of music) is the UpaVeda of Sāma Veda. Dhanur Veda
(science of archery) is the UpaVeda of Yajur Veda whereas śāstra śāstra
(science of arms) is the UpaVeda of Atharva Veda.

Having presented an overview of the Vedic literature, the next Chapter deals with the objective of this study, its scope and methodology.