Our main object in writing this thesis has been to make an exhaustive analysis of the formation of Vedic words by means of the rules of Pāṇini’s Grammar in order to refute the charge of the Western Scholars who allege that Pāṇini’s Aṣṭādhyāyī is meant only for the classical sanskrit and is inadequate to explain the Vedic words and their formation. It is also intended to fill the gap which Sayana has left in his explanation of the words in his memorable commentary on the Rgveda as also to correct his explanations where they seem to be wrong or fanciful.

Moreover, hitherto the study of the Veda, by learned Drs. like Dr. Oldenberg, H.D.Valenkar and S.S. Bhave, had been confined to the hymns assigned to the individual duties and the miscellaneous hymns had not received much attention. Some of these miscellaneous hymns contain those assigned to the sage Dirghatamas and are somewhat mysterious in their nature. Further, the first and the tenth mandalas of the Rgveda have been dubbed as later and therefore escaped receiving the serious study which they deserved.

In our study we have thoroughly examined
Sayana's explanations in order to find how he has applied the rules of Panini. We have also explored other traditional sources like the Nighantu and Nirukta, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, the Srauta, Kalpa and Grihya Sutras, and other Sakhas of the Black Yajurveda - like the Taittiriya, Maitrayani, Kathaka Samhitas, the Epics and the Puranas etc.

It is surprising that nobody has attempted to study the legends of the Puranas in their relation to the Veda in spite of the ancient injunction "Itihasadapuranabhyam Vedaṃ Samupabhrhayet". The Puranas contain very ancient akhyanas which are intimately connected with several problems and phenomena of the Vedas. Sayana has also quoted many legends in his explanation of the mantras, which have their source in the Puranas and the Mahabharata.

The allegorical and symbolical significance of these akhyanas must be understood and applied to the interpretation of the Vedic mantras. Most of the problems of Vedic exegesis will be solved in this way.

It is our confirmed opinion that there is no sacrificial ritual in the Rgveda as it is popularly understood. In view of this, it is rather a very difficult and even hazardous task to make use of the
Brahmanas, which are solely responsible for the spread of the cult of sacrifice in the interpretation of the Veda. No commentary on the Rgveda, older than the Brahmanas, exists, and therefore we are quite in the dark about the interpretation of the Veda by the people in whose times it came into existence. Most of the interpretations now available to us are influenced by the sacrificial ritual. Yaska, the author of Nirukta one of the most ancient authorities who repudiated the theories of the Yajnikas, was mainly concerned with the etymological explanations of the Vedic words. Therefore his Nirukta cannot be regarded as a commentary on the Rgveda, and can only be taken as a guide to the method of the interpretation on the basis of etymology.

It thus becomes clear that no ancient commentary on the Vedas is available. But it is difficult to believe in face of the highest reverence in which the Veda is held, that the people did not understand or care to understand the Veda. It was certainly due to a deep and correct understanding of the Veda that it occupied the most sacred and sublime position in the Aryan society and gave birth to a culture which the millions of millions have not been able to efface from the face of this earth.

In spite of the sacrificial bias of the
Brahmanas, we get some glimpses of the earlier interpretations of the Veda of which several quotations are found in them. In ancient-most method of the Vedic interpreters seems to have consisted in Sutra Style laconic hints such as 'Maruto vai rtvijah'. etc. Such quotations from the Brāhmaṇas have been collected in the Vedic Kośa of Hansraj. An exhaustive list of such quotations is prepared from all the available Brāhmaṇas, it would be of invaluable help in the correct interpretation of the Veda. It will be seen that this practice of equating the deities with various other objects has nothing to do with sacrificial ritual. We have used such equations in our thesis, for the correct interpretation of the Veda. The Brāhmaṇas are, therefore, very useful in this respect.

As a matter of fact, it is our settled opinion that the interpretation of the Veda must be done from the internal evidence of the Veda itself and that should be supplemented by other external evidence where absolutely necessary, for this purpose the "Vedic repetitions" of Blockfield would prove of great help. Serious attention should also be paid to the Rṣi, Deśata, Chandas and Svara of each Sukta. A closer study of the R̄gveda has revealed that the same phenomenon has been expressed in different ways in the
different hymns. The study of all such hymns is necessary for the correct interpretation of a Stanza (Mantra). A comparative study of a particular word has been made from its occurrence in all places and contents of the Veda and then help of the cognate languages has been taken to ascertain its meaning. For this purpose, the Panakramapakośa (Vol. of H. Grāhmam, fifth Volume of Paṇakakśa, I-XII) of Visvabandhu, Mortem, published in Poona, Sanskrit English Dictionary of Monier Williams have proved very useful. External evidence vedic interpretation has been rejected in favour of the internal evidence of the Veda itself. For instance, Asva in the Asvamedha hymns (Rv.I.162,163) has not been taken in the sense of a horse but in the sense of the sun or his rays or electricity, according to the context. This is supported by the fact that Asva is said to be born of (Purīṣa, i.e. waters or of Samudra, i.e. middle region).

No attempt has been made to twist the words to get a particular sense as has been done by the ritualists. We have totally disregarded the ritual interpretation of the later corrupt tradition and have not been influenced by the classical sanskrit.

According to the evidence of the Mahābhārata,
the Purāṇas, etc. the Sacrificial ritual begins in the Treta age. At the same time, these works declared the Vedas to have been revealed in the beginning of the creation and a speech which has neither beginning nor end (ānādi-nīchodhā Vāk).

This shows that before Treta, the interpretation of the Veda that existed must have had no reference to the sacrificial ritual. The srautasūtras like those of Āsvaṭaṇya and Kātyaṇya, have twisted the mantras of the Veda for their application (viniyoga) in the sacrifices. There is no phrase anywhere in Rgveda which indicates any reference to the application of the mantras. This innovation is made only by the Brāhmaṇa-texts and is therefore rejected in our interpretation.

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