



A Brief Discussion on Vedanga

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Abstract: Vedangas literally mean the limbs of the Vedas. They are six in number. Just like the limbs of the body, they perform various supportive and augmenting functions in the study, preservation and protection of the Vedas and the vedic traditions. The six Vedangas are Siksha, Chhanda, Vyakarana, Nirukta, Jyotisha and Kalpa. Shiksha = phonetics, Vyakarana = grammar, Chandas = metre, Nirukta = etymology, Kalpa = ritual, Jyotishya = astronomy. Upa Vedas (supplementary Vedas) are largely secular in nature. Gandharva Veda = music, Shilpa Veda = sculpture, Ayur Veda = medicine, Dhanur Veda = archery or art of war Sutras (that guide people in various fields). Grihya Sutras deal with domestic rituals Shrauta Sutras deal with public rituals Sulha Sutras deal with science of altars Dharma Sutras deal with customary law and practices.

Keywords: Veda, Vedanga, Siksha, Chhandas, Vyakarana, Kalpa.

Introduction to Vedangas: The Vedic literature consists of 'Shruti' -revealed literature and 'Smriti' - memorized literature. Shruti literature consist of Vedas: Rig Veda -Collection of prayers, Yajur Veda -Sacrificial manual, Sama Veda -Mostly Rig Vedic hymns in musical form, Atharva Veda - Magical charms. Each Veda has four parts: Samhita - essential part of a Veda containing hymns, Brahmanasprose commentaries on Vedas with detailed observations on prayers and ceremonies, Aranyakas -texts to be read by Risrvis in forests as they deal with mystic meanings of Samhita texts and Upanishads -philosophical aspects which are to be taught by Acharyas to their trusted students . Smriti literature consist of Vedangas, Upavedas, etc. which form supplementary sections of Vedic literature.

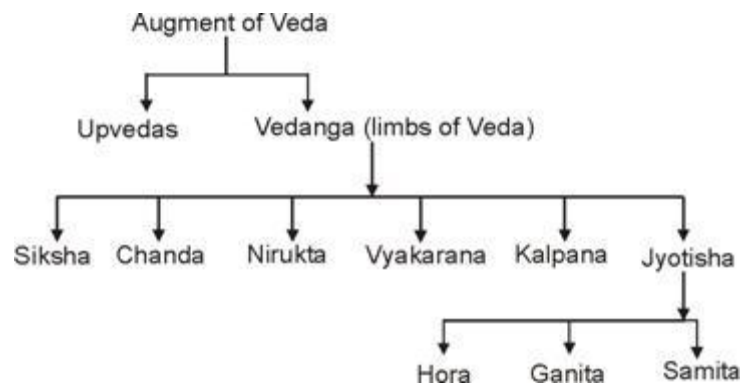
Research Methodology: In this paper qualitative research methodology is applied with historical view.

History and background: The character of Vedangas has roots in ancient times, and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad mentions it as an integral part of the Brahmanas layer of the Vedic texts. These auxiliary disciplines of study arise with the codification of the Vedas in Iron Age India. It is unclear when the list of six Vedangas were first conceptualized. The Vedangas likely developed towards the end of the Vedic period, around or after the middle of the 1st millennium BCE. An early text of the genre is the *Nighantu* by Yaska, dated to roughly the 5th century BCE. These auxiliary fields of Vedic studies emerged because the language of the Vedic texts composed centuries earlier grew too archaic to the people of that time.

Vedangas developed as ancillary studies for the Vedas, but its insights into meters, structure of sound and language, grammar, linguistic analysis and other subjects influenced post-Vedic studies, arts, culture and various schools of Hindu philosophy. The Kalpa Vedanga studies, for example, gave rise to the Dharma-sutras, which later expanded into Dharma-shastras.

Meaning of Vedanga:

The **Vedanga** (Sanskrit: वेदांग *vedāṅga*, "limb of the Veda-s"; plural form: वेदांगानि *vedāṅgāni*) are six auxiliary disciplines of Hinduism that developed in ancient times and have been connected with the study of the Vedas. Vedangas literally mean the limbs of the Vedas. They are six in number. Just like the limbs of the body, they perform various supportive and augmenting functions in the study, preservation and protection of the Vedas and the vedic traditions. The six Vedangas are Siksha, Chhanda, Vyakarana, Nirukta, Jyotisha and Kalpa.



Difference between vedas and vedangas: The Vedas and Vedangas are both important parts of Hinduism, but they have different purposes and structures:-

1. **Purpose:** The Vedas are holy texts that teach about the origin of the world and the reason for existence. The Vedangas are ancillary studies that help maintain the integrity of the Vedic tradition.

2. **Structure:** The Vedas are divided into four collections, called the Rig, Sarna, Yajur, and Atharva Vedas. The Vedangas are six in number: Siksha, Chhanda, Vyakarana, Nirukta, Jyotisha, and Kalpa.

3. **Content:** The Vedas contain hymns, incantations, and rituals. The Vedangas include insights into meters, grammar, and linguistic analysis.

4. **Origin:** The Vedas are some of the world's oldest religious scriptures, composed in archaic Sanskrit by Indo-European-speaking peoples in northwest India around 1500–1200 BCE. The Vedangas are the last treatises of Vedic literature.

Five essential features of Vedangas: The five features are interdependence, interconnectivity, decentralization, cyclic essence or non-linearity, and an acceptance of multiplicity resonating to that one backdrop of unity and transcendence. The five features constitute the wings of Vedanta. They are like ramification or branches of a tree originating from a common root, but manifesting outward with a possibility of full and diverse foliage and floral variety. Within Vedanga, Chhanda represents the key, the linkage, the resonance between the domains of the lower world of manifestation and immanence of the soul and the upper world of liberation, and merger of the soul in absolute transcendence. Often, the term Veda, or Srutis is

equivalent to Chhanda (Purushottama Yoga, Bhagabat Gita, 15.1).

World Views about Vedangas: World Views that expands on the various features of ramification, networking and divergence of Vedanga. It is represented in the form of a TREE. We know that, 1. Trees are fundamental to religion (Bodhi tree; Tree of wisdom) and science (graph theory; stratification); 2. Trees are Dendrograms (Tree-graphs) in information sciences, computing and statistics. Trees are fundamental to neural networking and science of evolutionary stratification; 3. Trees represent the twin flows of evolution and involution, like a two-way connectivity between the seed and the sprouting of that seed to a full branching 4. Trees are the primal essence of Vedanga, covering the systemic ramification of language systems as the carrier of culture over many and manyrungs/ tiers of human history and evolution. 5. Trees represent the linking of the branches of language system based on a certain position of culture and literature at its root. For example, the case of IndoEuropean language systems based on the etymological foundation of all language systems in Sanskrit, and finally, the etymon of etymons (the master root or Logos of the Universe), as evident in Vedangas, the Nirukta. The three pillars of Vedangas namely Siksha, Vyakarana and Nirukta cover these aspects sequentially. On the other hand, we are equally concerned with application, the purpose of growth of development of an individual, the race as a whole like the Indians or Greeks, or a country, or a cultural system that is anthropocentric and climate-sensitive that is tropical and temperate. Here the focus and placement on the harmony-resonance between the internal preparedness of the individual becomes very important. The constructs of Vedanga is initiated and raised through the following fundamental questions: • Aspirant who seeks and asks who am I? • What am I doing here



in this universe? • What is the purpose of my life? • How am I different from the animal world? • What is the role of morality and ethics in my evolution?

Vedangas compared to Limbs of Human Body:

VEDANGA	LIMBS COMPARED WITH
Chandah	Legs
Kalpa	Hands
Jyotisa	Eyes
Nirukta	Ears
Siksha	Nose
Vyakaranam	Face

The six Vedangas: Vedangas literally mean the limbs or the Angas (wings) of the Vedas. The Vedangas are six in number. Just like the wings of the body or a system, they perform various supportive and augmenting functions in the penetration, continuity and innovations of the Vedas and the Vedic traditions.

1. Siksha: It represents the study of sounds and pronunciation associated with each syllable that constitute the mantra or the deep mantic tradition. The sounds and the pronunciation embedded within the syntax, and the syllable that constitutes an agglomeration of syntax (like vowels and consonants) process the thermodynamic property of the language system. The property is the basis of an inner Agni (the igneous principle or psychic fire) that needs to be kindled and elevated. It is achieved through intense concentration and good morality, which is the whole purpose of Tapasya.

Finally, at an advanced stage it becomes Yoga, which processes the unification of the microcosmic self with the Vast Transcendental self, and the journey is achieved with the aid of the universal self or field-consciousness (Mahat) of the macrocosm.

Sikshan is equivalent to suction, which is a process by which two surfaces or interfaces of two systems stick together, when the air between them is removed. It leads to rapture (Samadhi), where the two systems become one. In Yoga, it is analogous to Kumbhaka or a system, which is transcended by exceeding or going beyond the path of breathing, as a characteristics of mortal life.

Shiksha (śikṣā) is driven by the phonetics and the phonology of pronunciation, as a process of internalization. It is a moral, ethical and a disciplined property of the aspirant in converting the pattern of external language systems (Vaikhari = Beaker or the pitcher like external property of language system) to an internal system (Madhyama = Medium or intermediate), and finally, reaching a vast luminescent visible living system that constitutes the lifeline of the universal flow of things (Pashyanti = Patient). From this point, the Yogi moves into a system, which is absorbed in the vast of all vast (Para = Para), the transcendent and the infinite.

The focus of Siksha is on understanding the range and deep taxonomy of Sanskrit alphabets, which we call the Varnamala (The garland of letters). Yoga systematically leads to a cumulative accent of the sound features of each alphabet, along with the quantity, stress, melody and rules of the intrinsic combination of words. At a matured stage, the recitation of a Mantra or syllabic or seed (Vija) sound is promoted, which finally proceeds to the seed of all seeds, the OM.

The 164th sukta of the Rig Veda is by Seer Dirghatama, and the whole sukta can be taken as an ancient reference to explain the evolution of the Vedangas.

The whole purpose of the mantra tradition is to couple Rik (the starter Mantra) into a reciprocal mantra, the Sama (Psalm), which is the rhythmic or melodious mantra. Thus, dry structure of language system is transformed into a Jamala (a duet) of Rik-Sama, catching up to the tunes of cosmic harmony and melody, which is Chhanda (Chanting).

Here, the vast ethereal spans of the Cosmos as an ensemble of word-formation, becomes essentially visible as a rainbow, or an arc of many hues or tones called Pashyanti. As the Srutis say:

Om tad vishnohparamampadamsada
pashyanti surayo diviva chakshur-atatam
tadviprasovipanyavo jagrivamsaha
samindhatevishnoryat paramampadam

Rig Veda 1.22.20

There are some important Pratishakhyas:

- Rigvada- Pratisakhya of Rigveda.
- Tattiriya- Pratisakhya of Krishna Yajurveda.
- Vajasaneyi Pratisakhya of Shukla Yajurveda.
- Atharvaveda- Pratisakhya of Atharvaveda.



2. Kalpa: Kalpa deals with the aspects inducing a person into vedic action. The mastery in the other 5 vedangas mentioned so far is aimed to perform the actions mentioned in kalpa successfully. In a way, it is like a manual which will give details like a) how a ritual should be done; b) what are the functions of brahmacharis, grihastas, sannyasis etc. c) what ritual involves which mantra, devata, materials d) how many priests should perform a given ritual, e) what vessel of what shape, size to be used etc.

Kalpa sastra (sutra) has been compiled by many sages like, Apasthamba, Bhodayana, Vaikhanasa, and others. In each of the veda recessions, there are two kinds of kalpa sutras – the srouta (named after sruti which means veda) sutra and the grihya sutra. They outline the forty rituals (garbhadana, pumsavana, seemantha, etc. – details of which will be covered in a future issue) to be performed from the time of formation of the embryo in the womb to the time of cremation of the body ! They also outline the eight Atma gunas (virtues like, compassion, tolerance, cleanliness etc.) Among the two sutras, srouta sutras describe the major sacrifices and the Grihya sutras describe the domestic rites. When we do abhivadanam to elders, we state what sutra we follow – Apasthamba, Bodhayana etc. These refer to Srouta sutras. In ancient times, the Srouta karmas were given greater importance than grihya karmas. In addition, there are other texts called, sulpa sutras, dharmas sutras etc. Among the four vedas, the kalpa sutras of Atharva Veda (which itself is very less in practice), are not readily available.

The second Vedanga is Kalpa (ritual) which is called the arms of the Veda Purusha. It is especially intended for the proper application of the Vedic texts. The oldest Kalpasutras are those which in their contents are directly connected with Brahmanas and Aranyakas. It was the ritual (Kalpa), the chief contents of the Brahmanas, which first received systematic treatment in the manuals called the Kalpasutras. They contain the rules in the Sutra style, referring to sacrifices, with omission of all things which are not immediately connected with the ceremonial. They are more

practical than the Brahmanas which for the most part are taken up with mystical, historical, mythological, etymological and theological discussions. They are also considered significant for the study of Vedic culture and society.

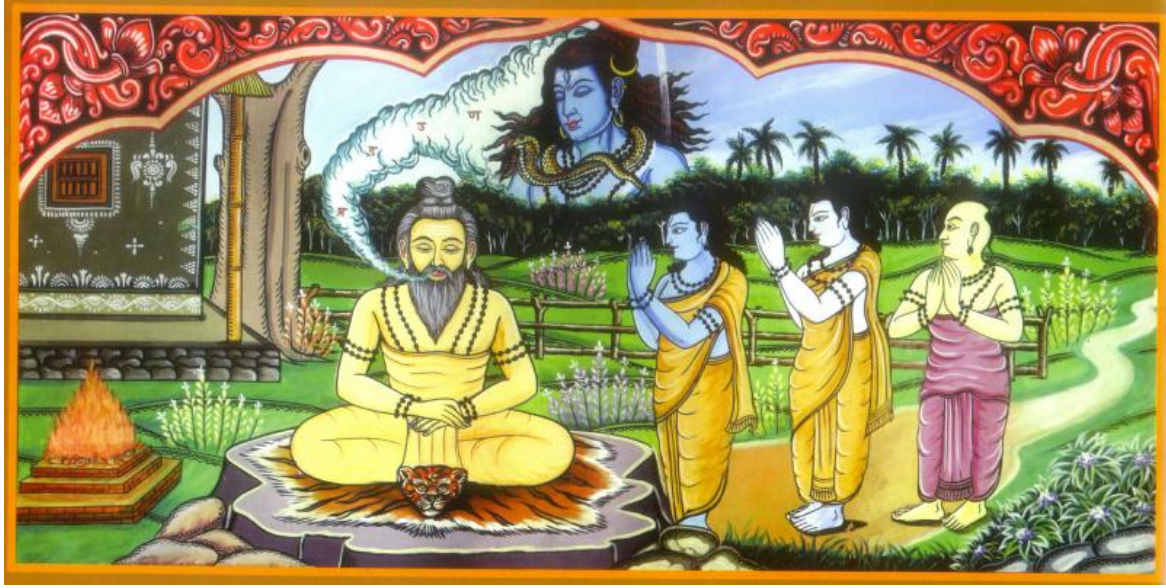
There are four types of Kalpasutras:

- i) Shrauta-sutras, dealing with Shrauta sacrifices.
- ii) Grihya-sutras, dealing with the domestic ceremonies.
- iii) Dharma-sutras, dealing with religious and social laws.
- iv) Shulba-sutras, dealing with the rules of measurement of the fire-altars etc.

3. Vyakarana: The most important exposition of Grammar is that of sage Panini which is in the form of sutras or aphorisms. It is known as ashtadhyayi, because it has 8 chapters. There is an interesting story relating to the origin of the Panini Sutras. At the end of the Cosmic Dance, Lord Nataraja (Siva) clicked his damaru 9 times and 5 times (14 times). The dance was witnessed by Sanaka and other rishis. Sage Panini, also witnessed the dance through his "divya dhruшти". With the 14 sounds produced from His damaru, Lord Siva gave birth to the vyakarana sutras or Mahesvara sutras. Refer Sanskrit Lesson of Vol. 1.1) . They are recited during the observance of Upakarma on Sravana Purnima.

The commentary on the Vyakarana is called Maha Bhashya written by Sage Patanjali. The other commentary was written by Vararuchi. These three - the Vyakarana and the two commentaries - are important texts in Vyakarana Sastra. Vyakarana propounds the Sabda Brahma Vaada – that Sound and Brahman are One - which is the basis of Nada Brahma Upasana (Vol. 1.2) – Music .

Formation of the word is main subject of grammar, It discusses root (Prakriti) and suffix (Pratyaya) of a word to study its meaning. Panini's Vyakarana is in the form of sutras or aphorisms. The fourteen Sutras are referred to here, as Mahesvara Sutras. They are considered the foundation of grammar. Vararuchi has written an elaborate commentary or Vartika. Sage Patanjali wrote commentary or Bhashya on it.



शब्दानुशासनस्य प्रयोजनानि

Mahabhashya explicitly discusses the uses of studying vyakarana. It is well known that unless one is informed of the advantages to be derived from doing any activity, one is not generally inclined to do it. The word प्रयोजनानि means not only "the benefits" but also "the authorities that enjoin (प्रयोजकानि)".

कानि पुनः शब्दानुशासनस्य प्रयोजनानि?
रक्षीहागमलघ्वसन्देहाः प्रयोजनम् ॥ (Maha. Bhas. 3.1)

The advantages are:

1. रक्षा ॥ protection (of the Vedas)
2. ऊहः ॥ modification (of Vedic mantras)
3. आगमः ॥ Agamas (Vedas)
4. लाघवन् ॥ easy means (of acquiring the knowledge of words)
5. असन्देहः ॥ absence of ambiguity and the authority is आगमः (Vedas).

रक्षा ॥ Protection of the Vedas

रक्षार्थं वेदानामध्येयं व्याकरणम्। लोपागमवर्णविकारज्ञो हि सम्यग्वेदान् परिपालयिष्यतीति ॥ (Maha. Bhas. 3.1.1)

To protect Vedas, vyakarana has to be studied. Only one who has a correct knowledge of

application of Lopa (removal of), Aagama (augmentation) and Vikara (substitution) of sounds is capable of preserving the Vedas.

ऊहः ॥ Modification

ऊहः खल्वपि- न सर्वैर्लिङ्गैर्न च सर्वाभिर्विभक्तिभिर्वेदे मन्त्रा निगदिताः। ते चावश्यं यज्ञगतेन पुरुषेण यथायथं विपरिणमयितव्याः। तान्नावैयाकरणः शक्नोति यथायथं विपरिणमयितुम्। तस्मादध्येयं व्याकरणम् ॥ (Maha. Bhas. 3.1.2)

Modification also (is one of the advantages). Mantras are not mentioned in the Vedas in all genders and cases. They have to be necessarily modified by the rtvik in a yajna according to the context (i.e.) to suit the particular devata invoked. It is not possible for a non-grammarians to suitably modify them. Hence is the need to study grammar.

आगमः ॥ Vedas

आगमैः खल्वपि- ब्राह्मणेन निष्कारणो धर्मः षडङ्गो वेदोऽध्येयो ज्ञेयश्च इति। प्रधानं च षट्स्वङ्गेषु व्याकरणम्। प्रधाने च कृतो यत्नः फलवान्भवति ॥ (Maha. Bhas. 3.1.3)

Agama also forms a Prayojana, more so a Prayojaka. Veda with six angas shall be studied and understood by a Brahmana without expecting any reward. Of the six Angas, grammar is important. Effort directed towards the prominent bears rich fruit. The word ब्राह्मणेन meaning 'by the Brahmana'



suggests that the study of grammar is a nitya-karma to Brahmanas and a kamya-karma to others.

The word करण in निष्कारणः means not "cause" but "fruit". The six angas are the Shad Vedangas (Shiksha, Kalpa, Vyakarana, Chandas, Niruktam, Jyotisha). Grammar is said to be important since, without its study, one is not capable of understanding the meaning of sentences.

लघु ॥ Ease of Study

लघ्वर्थं चाध्येयं व्याकरणम्- ब्रह्मणेनावश्यं शब्दा ज्ञेया इति। न चान्तरेण व्याकरणं लघुनोपायेन शब्दाः शक्या ज्ञातुम् ॥ (Maha. Bhas. 3.1.4).

For easy grasp of words is grammar to be studied. Words should necessarily be understood by Brahmanas. There is no easy means of learning words other than grammar.

If the paradigm of one noun is known, the case-forms of similar nouns are also known and hence there is no need to get by heart the forms of all nouns. Similarly if the conjugational forms of one verb is known, those of similar verbs are also known.

असन्देहः ॥ Absence of Ambiguity

असन्देहार्थं चाध्येयं व्याकरणम्। याज्ञिकाः पठन्ति- स्थूलपृषतीमाश्रिवारुणीमनड्वाहीमालभेत इति। तस्यां सन्देहः- स्थूला चासौ पृषती च स्थूलपृषति, स्थूलानि पृषन्ति यस्याः सेयं स्थूलपृषतीति। तां नावैयाकरणः - स्वरतोऽध्यवस्यति- यदि पूर्वपदप्रकृतिस्वरत्वं ततो बहुव्रीहिः, अथ समासान्तोदात्तत्वं ततस्तत्पुरुष इति ॥ (Maha. Bhas. 3.1.5)

For the absence of ambiguity is grammar to be studied. Mantras used in the yajnas are read thus -

Tie to the stake to propitiate Agni and Varuna a cow which is स्थूलपृषति. Here is the doubt whether the word स्थूलपृषति means 'stout and spotted,' or 'having big spots.' The correct meaning cannot be understood by a non-grammarian from its svara. If it has the udatta svara at the usual place of the first member of the compound, it should be taken as bahuvrihi when, it means 'having big spots'; if, on the other hand, it has the udatta svara at the final syllable, it should be taken as tatpuruṣa when, it means 'stout and spotted.'

4. Nirukta: Nirukta is generally known as vedic dictionary or kosa. Amara Kosa is one of the popular sanskrit dictionaries. Dictionary is also called nighandu. Kosa is actually the etymology

where each word is split into syllables and gives the root from which the word is derived with meaning. The root of a word is called dhaatu. In Sanskrit all words have roots.

Nirukta Vedanga is called the ears of the Veda Purusha. 'Nirukta' means 'etymology' and it explains the reason why a particular word has been used i.e., the meaning of usage. The only work which has survived as a specimen of this Vedanga 'etymology' is the Nirukta of Yaska. It is a commentary on Nighantu which is 'list of words' found in the Vedas. Tradition ascribes the Nighantu also to Yaska. The Nighantus are five lists of words, which are again divided into three sections. The first section consists of three lists, in which Vedic words are collected under certain main ideas. The second section contains a list of ambiguous and particularly difficult words of the Veda, while the third section gives a classification of the deities according to the three regions, sky and heaven. Yaska explained these lists in the twelve in the books followed. The most interesting portion of the Nirukta is the discussion which covers the while of the first book and a part of the second, as well as the seventh book, which was as an admirable introduction to the study of Veda. Yaska has mentioned a considerable number of important grammarians as Galava, Shakapuni, Kathakya. Niruka is very important for several reasons. Firstly, it represents the type of the earliest classical style and in this respect stands by itself. Secondly, it is the oldest known attempt in the field of vedic etymology. As regards the importance of the etymology Yaska himself says that without it the precise meaning of the Vedic stanzas cannot be understood.

5. Chhanda: Chhanda represents the next step. With chhanda, the Yogi gets an access to the mastery of rhyme and meter of the mantic tradition.

Chhanda takes the initiated from the structure of language system to the waves of deep aesthetics that are actually embedded in the language system and a system that constitutes various harmonies in creation. It takes the elevated mind to Rasa, which is flow of universal aesthetics and bliss, vide the poetic meters. Chhanda includes the set of relationship based on fixed number of syllables per verse, and those further based on fixed number of constituent text per verse. The simple word analogous to Chhanda is chant.



The Chhandas, have both linear and non-linear systems. The system at times is identified with the “seven birds” or “seven mouths of Brihaspati”, who is also configured as the Hiranyagarbha or the Creative womb of the Universe. He is the ‘Brahma’ of the Puranas or ‘Brahmanaspati’ of the Vedas. But all three means the Priest, the bearer of the Logos or Vak (the ensemble of the cosmic Vocal system and the octaves constituting the river of wisdom in the Vedas, she is known as Saraswati).

The seven major ancient Sanskrit metres are the three 8-syllable Gayatri, the four 8-syllable Anustubh, the four 11-syllable Tristubh, the four 12-syllable Jagati, and the mixed padas or metres named Ushnih, Brihati and Pankti:

गायत्रेणप्रतिमिमीतेअर्कमर्केणसामत्रैष्टुभेनवाकम् ।

वाकेनवाकंद्विपदाचतुष्पदाक्षरेणमिमतेसप्तवाणीः ॥२४॥

With the Gayatri, he measures a song; with the
song – a chant;
with the Tristubh – a recited stanza;
With the stanza of two feet and four feet – a hymn;
with the syllable
they measure the seven voices. ॥24॥

—Rigveda 1.164.24

6. Jyotisha: Jyotisha deals with vedic astrology / astronomy. It was mainly designed to help in arriving at the most favorable time for the performance of vedic rituals; this is to indicate the measure of success or lack of it when vedic rituals are performed under the influence of a particular graha, nakshatra, tithi etc. It involves precise mathematical calculations concerning the transit of planets etc., and so mathematics is an integral part of it. Jyotisha sastra has three parts - skandha trayaatmakam. (the word skandha means main branch from the trunk of a tree) They are,
1. siddhanta skandham deals with trigonometry / arithmetic / algebra / geometry etc.
2. hora skandham : deals with the movement of planets and their effect on people etc.
3. samhita skandham deals with aspects like, the location of underground waters, designing and building houses, of omens, etc.

Jyotisha sastra covers principles of gravitation, rotation of earth etc. Famous astronomers like Arya Bhatta, Varahamihira and others have given beautiful discussions on these and other concepts. The origin of creation is also calculated using astronomical principles; the samkalpam which we perform before doing any ritual is based on such calculations.

Role of Vedanga: The Vedangas played an important role in preserving and protecting the Vedic tradition over a long period of time. They formalized the procedures and techniques of performing various Vedic rites and rituals and established authoritative sources of reference for succeeding generations to practice the Vedic ceremonies and rituals with little ambiguity and fear of transgression. The Vedangas were sciences that focused on helping understand and interpret the Vedas that had been composed many centuries earlier. Individually, these auxiliary disciplines of study are traceable to the 2 nd millennium BCE, and the 5th century BCE Scholar Yaska quotes the Vedangas. However, it is unclear when and where a list of six Vedangas were first conceptualized. Vedangas developed as ancillary studies for the Vedas, but its insights into meters, structure of sound and language, grammar, linguistic analysis and other subjects influenced post-Vedic studies, arts, Culture and various schools of Hindu Philosophy. The Kalpa Vedangas studies, for example, gave rise to the DharmaSutras, which later expanded into Dharma-Shastras. Although they have lost of much of their ancient significance, they continue to occupy an important place in the academic study of the Vedas. Their study inculcates among its students a sense of discipline and respect for tradition and helps them conduct themselves in society as upholders of the Vedic dharma and traditional family values.

To a certain extent the Vedangas were responsible for the popularity of Sanskrit as the main language of communication in ancient India and for its emergence as the language of the elite through such works as those of Kalidasa and Kalhana. They also played an influential role in the development of native languages, education system and vernacular literature of the Indian subcontinent by providing the basic frame work on which they could grow. The Vedangas ensured the purity of language and expression, defined and enforced, through moral fear, the social and religious conduct expected of men belonging to different social strata, and established well defined ground rules for moral, ritual and spiritual behavior of men involved in the performance of rituals. Many principles and



practices of the Vedangas were taken up by other religious traditions such as Buddhism and Jainism which relied upon Sanskrit as their medium of communication and included in their education systems and religious practices. Through them they also extended their sway to other parts of the world such as China, Japan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Tibet and Ceylon where they were used in the study of Buddhism and Buddhist literature and preservation of its traditions.

Conclusion: These six sastras are known as vedangas or the organs (limbs) of the vedas. Our Rishis have done a very great service to humanity through such analytical and sophisticated approach to enable the understanding of the veda mantras. It is really sad that whatever little scholarship remains today in these subjects is fast deteriorating due to lack of adequate appreciation and encouragement. Let us all commit to change this trend for the better as a token of our gratitude to veda mata.

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