

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS

The title of my thesis is: “An Analytical Study of the Vedic Thoughts as Depicted in the Classical Sanskrit Literature”. Therefore I like to begin with a general introduction to Vedic Literature. We all know that Sanskrit literature is very ancient in the world. This literature is divided into two stages, one, Vedic Sanskrit Literature and the other, Classical Sanskrit Literature. The Vedas are the bedrock of Indian culture and civilisation. They are the earliest specimens of Sanskrit Literature. MacDonnell¹ divides the History of Sanskrit Literature into two periods, the Vedic period and the classical period. But it is more appropriate to divide the history into three periods, namely, the *Śruti* period, the *Smṛti* period and the *Bhāṣya* period. A comparison of Vedic and Classical literature gives us an idea that while Vedic literature dealt with a subject matter that is related to the other world, Classical literature devoted itself completely to things of this earth. But the real acquaintance with the two will bring out the true nature of classical literature as many Vedic thoughts are there, as its main content. We can even confidently and clearly say that all literary works are influenced by Vedic thoughts.

1.1. Two Periods of Sanskrit Literature :

(i) Vedic Period :

- The first level consists of the four Vedas - the result of a creative and poetic era, in which hymns and prayers were composed in beautiful, simple and natural language, offering *Ghṛta* oblation or *soma rasa* to the deities. It is a period of poetical in matter and form, and having natural and concrete thoughts.
- When this creative stage is over, no new prayers were offered to the gods and the priests stopped making poetry. They transferred their creative

¹ Macdonell, A.A. HSL., pp. 8-9

talents to the elaboration of sacrificial ceremonies. The result was a complex ritual system. The third stage comprises of *Sūtra* period. The *Sūtras* deal with Vedic rituals on the one hand and domestic rituals on the other.

(ii) Classical Sanskrit Period :

- Unlike the literature of the latter Vedic period, the whole literature of this period was written in poetry and the prose was entirely neglected. It was mostly composed in *Anuṣṭup* metre of four octo-syllabic style.
- The style is artificial and the poetry is made cumbrous by the use of compounds and the application of the elaborate rules of poetics. Various metres are used.
- This literature, however, has a peculiar beauty and grace of its own, which is not possible to produce in any other language.
- This period achieved distinction in many branches of literature like epic, lyric, didactic poetry, drama etc.

1.2. History of Vedic Literature :

The Veda is the most ancient document in the world. It gives us much information all respecting that is most interesting in the deeply thinking of antiquity. Sri Aurobindo said:

“The Veda has given us first types and figures of these things as seen and formed by an imaged spiritual intuition and psychological and spiritual experience”².

Thus, according to the traditional view, the Veda can be ascribed. The Vedic literature consists of *Mantras* and *Brāhmaṇas*.³ Several *Ṛṣis* are said to be composers of various Vedic *Mantras*. The *Ṛṣis* did not create or compose the *Mantras*. They only ‘saw’ or ‘found’ them but don’t discover.⁴ So *Ṛṣis* have certainly ⁵seen the *Mantras*.

² Sri Aurobindo, *On the Veda*, p.11

³ मन्त्रब्राह्मणयोर्वेदनामधेयम् – इति आपस्तम्ब

⁴ ऋषिर्दर्शनात् । Ni., II.11

So the questions that arise in our mind are : What is the Veda? How was the Veda originated? What its origin? What is the history of Veda? How it has been divided?

1.2.A. Derivation and Definition of the Veda :

The Veda is not only the meaningful wordbook but it is paranormal of reciting knowledge.⁶ The word ‘Veda’ is derived from the root ‘Vid’ which takes the form ‘Ved’ and into ‘ghañ’ suffix. ‘Vid’ means ‘to know’. Therefore Veda means knowledge or wisdom⁷. In fact Veda is the repository of all knowledge. The Ṛṣis were not the individual composers of the hymns. But, they were the seers of the Veda. The seers are of an eternal truth and impersonal knowledge. Veda is the treasure of knowledge as well as the supreme knowledge. Bṛhaspati derived the word Veda as “विद्यन्ते ज्ञायन्ते लभन्ते वा एभिर्धर्मादिपुरुषार्था इति वेदः।” Sāyaṇācārya gives the definition of the Veda in the *Taittirīya Bhāṣyabhūmikā*. “इष्टप्राप्त्यनिष्टपरिहारयोरलौकिकमुपायं यो वेदयति स वेदः”⁸. Many scholars have defined Veda, But, the Veda is taken here in sacred sense literature as Uvaṭa⁹ says:

“The Vedas are every single collection of hymns that existed at any time and any place without reference to division into each stage.”

Tradition claims that the Veda is *Apauruṣeya* that to say, no human agency is responsible for the creation of the Veda. It is not manmade but god given. The scholars of the Veda speak that the Ṛṣis had skills and environments of their study. However, it maybe pointed out in this connection that the concept of *Apauruṣeyatva* is understood in various ways. Sāyaṇa has dealt with the question about the authorship of the *Ṛgveda* from the *Mīmāṃsā* point of view in his *Ṛgvedabhāṣya*¹⁰. The *Sūtra* of Jaimini¹¹ which the *Pūrvapakṣa* and *Siddhānta* regarding this subject have repeated. The Veda is

⁶ अलौकिकं पुरुषार्थोपायं वेत्ति अनेन इति वेद शब्दः । RgBhā., p. 45

⁷ विदज्ञाने विदलुलाभे विदसत्तायम्, विदविचारणविदलोचनाख्यात प्रभृतयः । Ad., III.3.121

⁸ TaiBhā., p. 2

⁹ सर्वकालं सर्वदेशेषु प्रतिचरणमविभागेनैकैको मन्त्रराशि वेद इति उच्यते ।

¹⁰ RgBhā., pp.15-16

¹¹ MīS., I.27-32

human creation according to the *Pūrvapakṣa*. The literary compositions like *Raghuvamśam*, *Kumārasambhavam*, *Śiśupālavadham* etc. are known to have been written by the poets like Kālidāsa, Māgha etc. Similarly Veda, a literary composition must have been composed by some human authors.¹² Moreover, the Vedas are considered to be without beginning.¹³

1.2.B. Classification of the Veda :

The Veda is regarded by the Hindus to have been issued from the absolute like breathe and communicated to the inspired sages or *Ṛṣis*. The Veda has four distinct divisions. First is *Mantras* or prayers embodied in metrical hymns. Second are *Brāhmaṇas* or ritualistic precepts and illustrations written in prose. And other two are: *Āraṇyaka* and *Upaniṣad* or the secret doctrine, some appended to the *Brāhmaṇa* and some independent, in prose and occasional verses. Veda is divided into four categories viz. *Samhitās*, *Brāhmaṇas*, *Āraṇyakas* and *Upaniṣads*. There are brief introduction of the all categories of the Veda in the following.

(i) Samhitā Literature :

The *Samhitā* of the first Veda contains *Mantras* or prayers which for the most part the encomiastic, as the name of the *Ṛgveda* implies. This collection is divided into eight *Aṣṭkas*. Each of *Aṣṭka* is divided into many *Adhyāyas*. Total *Adhyāyas* are sixty four. Another mode of division also runs through the volume distinguishing ten books or *Maṇḍalas*. Each *Maṇḍala* is divided into *Anuvāka*. Total *Anuvākas* are eighty five. Each *Anuvāka* is divided into *Sūktas*. Total *Sūktas* are 1028. Total *Mantras* of the *Ṛgveda* are 10850. The names of the respective authors of each passage are preserved in the *Anukramaṇikā*. The author of first *Maṇḍala* is Śātarcina. Gr̥tsamada is the author of the second *Maṇḍala*. The author of all the hymns contained in the third *Maṇḍal* is Viśvāmitra. The fourth *Maṇḍala*'s author is Vāmadeva. The author of the *Ṛgveda*'s fifth *Maṇḍala* is Arti. Bharadvāja is with rare exceptions, the composer of those collected in the sixth *Maṇḍala*. Vasiṣṭa is known as the

¹² वेदांश्चैके सन्निकर्ष पुरुषाख्याः । MiS., I.1.27

¹³ अनित्यदर्शनाच्च । Ibid., I.1.28

author of seventh *Maṇḍala*. In the remaining *Maṇḍalas* of this Veda, the authors are more various. Ninth *Maṇḍala* is also known as *Soma-maṇḍala*. According to the Patañjali, there are twenty-one *Śākhās* in the *Ṛgveda*. But at present, five *Śākhās* are available namely *Śākala*, *Bāṣkala*, *Āśvalayana*, *Śāṅkhāyana* and *Māṇḍukāyana*.

The *Yajurveda* is divided into two parts. One is *Śuklayajurveda* and other is *Kṣṇyajurveda*. According to Pañjali, fifteen *Śākhās* have in the *Śuklayajurveda*. But now *Mādhyāndina* and *Kāṇva* are only available. The *Sāmhitā*, collection of prayers and invocations belonging to this Veda is comprised in forty *Adhyāyas*. This Veda's *Kāṇḍa* has fourteen. According to Pañjali, *Kṣṇyajurveda*'s *Śākhās* are eighty-five. But four *Śākhās* are available at present namely *Taittirīya*, *Maitrāyaṇīya*, *Kāṭhaka* and *Kṛtha-kapaṣṭhala*. Black *Yajus* is more copious with regard to mantras than the white *Yajus* but less so than the *Ṛgveda*. This *Sāmhitā* is arranged in seven *Aṣṭakas* containing from five to eight *Adhyāyas*. Each chapter is subdivided into *Anuvākas*.

A peculiar degree of holiness is attached to the *Sāmaveda*. It is mainly known as the song. *Sāma* means melody. Patañjali tells “सहस्रवर्त्मा सामवेदः।” that means the *Sāmaveda*'s *Śākhās* were thousand. But now three *Śākhās* are available namely *Rāmāyaṇīya*, *Kauthuma* and *Jaiminīya*. It has 1875 *mantras*. This *Sāmhitā* is divided into two parts namely *Ārcika* and *Gāna*. The name of the fourth Veda is the *Atharvaveda*. This Veda is known as *Atharvāṅgīrasa*. It is divided into *Kāṇḍas*. Total *Kāṇḍas* of the *Atharvaveda* are twenty. According to Patañjali, the *Atharvaveda* has nine *Śākhāi* namely *Pappalāda*, *Sauda*, *Mauda*, *Śaunakīya*, *Jājala*, *Jalada*, *Brahmaveda*, *Devadarśa* and *Caranavaidya*.

(ii) Brāhmaṇa Literature :

Brāhmaṇa literature is written in prose form. Many commentators have mentioned the word *Brāhmaṇa*. But the authors and commentators have not given any definition of this word. Sāyaṇa, in his commentary on the *Ṛgveda*, expresses that which not a hymn or a *mantra* is a Brāhmaṇa in the tradition

and a *mantra* is not Brāhmaṇa.¹⁴ The grammatical analysis of the word Brāhmaṇa explains it as : “ब्रह्म वै मन्त्रः”¹⁵ that means *Brahma* is a *mantra* and *Brahma* is also known as the Veda.¹⁶ The word Brāhmaṇa has only been used in the neuter gender. Many Brāhmaṇas are there in the Veda which are mentioned in the following:

Āitareya Brāhmaṇa is the *Ṛgveda*’s Brāhmaṇa. Eight *Pañcikās* are there in this Upaniṣad. Each *Pañcikā* is divided into five chapters. So, forty chapters are there in the *Āitareya Brāhmaṇa*. According to the commentator Sāyaṇa, Mahidāsa Aitareya was exponent it. A. B. Keith gives his opinion that the *Aitareya Brahṇam* is relatively older than the other Brāhmaṇas. He writes in his book:

“There is no sign of Svetaketu or the more famous Aruni in the Aitareya and, therefore, we have another suggestion in favor of its comparatively older date.”¹⁷

The other the *Ṛgveda*’s Brāhmaṇa is *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa*, *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa* has thirty chapters. This Brāhmaṇa’s other name is *Śāmkhyāyana Brāhmaṇa*.¹⁸

The *Śuklayajurve*’s Brahmanas are *Mādyāndina Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* and *Kāṇva Śatapathabrāhmaṇa*. The word *Śatapatha* implies hundred chapters. “शतं पन्थानो यत्र शतपथः तत्तुल्यः शतपथः ।” *Mādyāndina Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* is known as *Vājasaneyana Brāhmaṇa*. It is referred to the *Gaṇapāṭha* of Pāṇini.¹⁹ There are fourteen *Kāṇḍas* of this Brāhmaṇa. Weber writes in his text that there are 100 chapters, 68 *Prapāṭhakas*, 438 *Brāhmaṇas* and 7624 *Kāṇḍas* in this Brāhmaṇa.²⁰ *Kāṇva Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* has 17 *Kāṇḍas*, 104 chapters, 446 *Brāhmaṇas* and 5865 *Kāṇḍikās*.

Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa is the *Kṛṣṇayajurveda*’s Brāhmaṇa. Three *Aṣṭakās* are there in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*. The first two *Aṣṭakās* are known as *Pārakṣudra* and *Agnihotra*. The parts of the third *Aṣṭaka* are named individually. There are twenty eight *Prapāṭhakas* in these three *Aṣṭakās*.

¹⁴ RgvBhā., p.17

¹⁵ ŚB., VII.1.1.5

¹⁶ वेदो ब्रह्म । *Ibid.*, IV.11.4.3

¹⁷ RgVB, A.B. Keith, p.24

¹⁸ Shrava, Satya. CHVL, p.22

¹⁹ Ad., IV.III.106

²⁰ Weber, HIL, p.117

Bhaṭṭabhāskara names of these three as *Praśnas* in his commentary. The other Brāhmaṇa of the *Kṣṇayajurveda* is *Maitrāyaṇīya Brāhmaṇa*.

Nine Brāhmaṇas of the *Sāmaveda* are available namely *Tāṇḍyabrāhmaṇa*, *Śḍaviṃśabrāhmaṇa*, *Matranbrāhmaṇa*, *Daivatabrāhmaṇa*, *Ārṣeyabrāhmaṇa*, *Sāmavidhānabrāhmaṇa*, *Samhitopaniṣadbrāhmaṇa*, *Vaṃśabrāhmaṇa* and *Jaiminīyabrāhmaṇa*. *Tāṇḍyabrāhmaṇa* was perhaps connected to some other *Sāma* recension. It has twenty-five *Prapāṭhakas* and 347 *Khaṇḍas*. Sāyaṇa specifies *Adhyāyas* instead of *Prapāṭhakas* in his commentary. This *Brāhmaṇa* is called *Pañcaviṃśa*, *Prauḍa* or *Mahābrāhmaṇa*. *Śḍaviṃśabrāhmaṇa* has five *Prapāṭhakas*. Sāyaṇa does not recount the number of *Prapāṭhakas* in his commentary but refers to *Adhyāyas* only. The commentator has divided the third *Prapāṭhaka* into two chapters, having increased the number to six *Adhyāyas*. *Matranbrāhmaṇa* is known as *Chāndogyabrāhmaṇa*. It has two *Prapāṭhaks*. Each *Prapāṭhaka* has eight *Khaṇḍas*. *Daivatabrāhmaṇa* is also known as *Devatādhyāyabrāhmaṇa*. It has three *Khaṇḍas*. Three *Khaṇḍas* has 26, 11, 25 respectively. *Ārṣeyabrāhmaṇa* was followed of the *Kauthuma Śākhā* of the *Sāmaveda*. It has three *Prapāṭhakas*. These three *Prapāṭhakas* have 28, 25, 29 *Khaṇḍas* respectively. *Sāmavidhānabrāhmaṇa* has three *Prapāṭhas* having eight, eight and nine *Khaṇḍas*. *Samhitopaniṣadbrāhmaṇa* is a short Brāhmaṇa with only one *Prapāṭhaka* of five *Khaṇḍas*. Name of hymns of the *Sāmaveda* sung in the village or the forest are mentioned in it. *Vaṃśabrāhmaṇa* is another Brāhmaṇa which has three *Khaṇḍas*. In this Brāhmaṇa, there is a description of the genealogy of the preceptors of the *Sāmaveda*. It has similar genealogies as narrated in *Śatapatha* or *Jaimīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa*. The ninth Brāhmaṇa of the *Sāmaveda* is *Jaiminīyabrahmaṇa*. It has main three divisions, the first has 360, the second has 437 and the third has 385 *Khaṇḍas*.

The name of the *Atharvaveda*'s Brāhmaṇa is *Gopathabrāhmaṇa*. It is divided into two parts namely *Pūva* and *Uttara*. The first has five *Prapāṭhakas* and the latter is six *Prapāṭhakas*. There is a description of many sacrifices in its *Pūva* part. At the end of this there is a collection of verses mentioning twelve years of *Prativeda-brahmacarya*. Its end has a collection of verses mentioning *Prativeda-brahmacarya* of twelve years.

(iii) Āraṇyaka Literature:

Āraṇyakas are the last part of the Brāhmaṇas, just as Upaniṣads are the last part of the Āraṇyakas. As the name suggests, they describe the sacrifices performed while living in the forest. These were propounded by Ṛṣis who lived in forests and elaborated on the mysteries of the *Yajñas* as described in the Āraṇyakas. Sāyaṇa has the definition “आरण्यव्रतरूपं ब्रह्मणम् ।” He writes in his commentary on the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*.

ऐतरेयब्राह्मणेऽस्ति काण्डमारण्यकाभिधम् ।

अरण्य एव पाठ्यत्वादारण्यतमितीर्यते ॥

The *R̥gveda*’s *Āraṇyaka* is *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*. Five *Āraṇyakas* are there in this Āraṇyaka. The first *Āraṇyaka* has five chapters, the second has seven, third has two, fourth has one and the fifth has three chapters. Each chapter is further divided into *Khaṣḍai*. The other Āraṇyaka text of the *R̥gveda* is *Sāmkhāyana Āraṇyaka*. It has fifteen chapters. The first chapter has eight, second has eighteen, third has seven, fourth has fifteen, fifth has eight, sixth has twenty, seventh has twenty-two, eighth has eleven, ninth to twelfth eight each, thirteenth has one, fourteenth has two *Kāṇḍas* and fifteenth has one *Kāṇḍa*.

Bṛhadāraṇyaka belongs to Śuklayajurveda. It has six chapters. Each chapter has divided into *Brāhmaṇas*. Total Brāhmaṇas of the all chapters are forty-four. This Āraṇyaka is a portion of *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* of *Mādyandina* recension. *Kṣṇayajurveda*’s Āraṇyaka is *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*. It has ten *Prapāṭhakas*. The first two *Prapāṭhakas* are known as *Kāṭhaka*. *Prapāṭhakas* are divided into *Anuvākas*. Total *Anuvākas* are 170.

Sāmaveda’s Āraṇyaka is *Tavalakāra Āraṇyaka*. There are four chapters in this Āraṇyaka. These chapters of this Āraṇyaka are divided into *Anuvākas* and *Khaṇḍas*.

(iv) Upaniṣad Literature:

Upaniṣads should be considered synonymous with Vedānta as they are the last part of Veda. The Brāhmaṇas have been linked to the Āraṇyakas and the Upaniṣads, sometimes as part of them, sometimes as related texts. The general theme of the Upaniṣads is *Brahmavidyā* or self-knowledge. The

Upaniṣads are mostly written in the form of dialogues with an introduction of short stories. For millennia, the Upaniṣads have been a source of inexhaustible inspiration to Indian seekers and mystics. Most of the available Upaniṣads are a part of the Āraṇyakas. The numbers of Upaniṣads are 108. But there are main Upaniṣads are ten. *Aitareyopaniṣad*, *Taittirīyopaniṣa*, *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, *Īśāvasyopaniṣad*, *Chāndogyaopaniṣad*, *Kāthopaniṣad*, *Kenopaniṣad*, *Praśnopaniṣd*, *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* and *Maṇḍukyopaniṣad*.

Aitareyopaniṣa of the *Ṛgveda* is a part of the *Āitareya Āraṇyaka*. Chapters four, five and six of the second *Āraṇyaka* of the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* are called *Aitareyopaniṣa*. Brahmanvidyā is the main theme of this *Āraṇyaka*.

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad is associated with *Śuklayajurveda*. It is the largest of the Upaniṣads and is considered the last of the ten main Upaniṣads. It is very ancient and many things have been said about *Jiva*, universe and *Brahman* in this Upaniṣad. It is a part of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* text. Other Upaniṣas of *Śuklayajurveda* is *Īśāvāsyopaniṣd*. It has eighteen *mantras*. It is a small Upaniṣad of all. In this Upaniṣad both *Vidyā* and *Avidyā* are talked about and their different qualities are explained.

The *Taittirīyopaniṣad* is the under of the *Kṛṣṇayajurvedic* branch. It is one of the most important ten ancient Upaniṣads. It is divided into three sections, *Śikṣāvalli*, *Brahmanandavalli* and *Bhṛguvalli*. It has total fifty-three *mantras* arranged in forty *Anuvākas*. The other Upaniṣad of the *Kṛṣṇayajurveda* is *Kāthopaniṣad*. Mainly the dialogue between Yama and Nachiketā' is the famous. Nachiketa's father, Uddālaka, the son of sage Aruna, performs the ritual of the *Viśvajita-yajña* out of desire for cosmic fame. The priest should donate his entire property, this is the main method of this *Yajña*.

Chāndogyaopaniṣad belongs to the *Sāmaveda*. It has eight *Prapāṭhas*. This Upaniṣad is famous for Brahma knowledge. In this Upaniṣad, there are many dialogues like Vetaketu and Uddālaka, Śvetaketu and Pravahana Jabāli, Satyakama Jabala and Haridrumat Gautama, etc. The *Kenopaniṣad* is an Upaniṣad which belongs to the branch of *Sāmaveda*.

1.3. History of Classical Sanskrit Literature :

1.3.A. Origin and Sources of the Kāvya :

The great poets of the great calibre like Kālidāsa, Bhāravi, Śriharṣa and Māgha did not have systematic history. Kālidāsa's own period is mixed with the decline of Vedic culture and the rise of the Puranic culture. When Kālidāsa had started the creation of the poetry, at that time he was influenced by these two different cultures. He is highly devoted to the Vedic literature. *Veda, Śruti, Trayī, Chandas* and *Brahma* etc. words written by Kālidāsa, mark the Vedic influence. He had deep interest in *Vedapāṭha* and the Vedic scholars. He wrote two *Mahākāvyas* named *Kumārasambhavam*, *Raghuvamśam*, one *Gītikāvya* named *Ṛtusamhāram*, one *Kaṇḍakāvya* named *Meghadūtam*, three dramas named *Ābhajñānaśākuntalam*, *Malavikāgnimitram*, *Vikramorvaśiyam*.

1.3.B. A Brief Introduction to Laghutrayī :

Kālidāsa is undoubtedly the great Sanskrit poet whose poetic art marked by polish and perfection. His works serve as a model for the later Sanskrit poets. He is famous as a poet of beauty, harmony in the world. His works create enchanting word pictures and express human feelings with poise and restraint. In his flight of poetic imagination Kālidāsa conceives of only the beautiful, refined and harmonious aspects of life and nature. MacDonnell says:

“The two epics *Raghuvamśam* and *Kumārasambhavam* of Kālidāsa are both distinguished by freedom of treatment as well as considerable poetic beauty.”²¹

His poetic art, which is distinguished by elegance, accomplishment and harmony of sound and sense, delights our mind and elevates our soul. A brief estimate of his poetic art revealed in his lyrics and epics are made below. Kālidāsa has given us two longer classics and two short lyrics. But the *Kumārasambhavam*, *Raghuvamśam* and *Meghadūtam* are called *Laghutrayī*.

The *Kumārasambhavam* which ranks among the five famous *Mahākāvyas*, namely the *Raghuvamśam*, the *Kiratārjunīya*, the *Śiśupālvadham* and the *Naiṣādhīyacaritam*, is regarded by most of the modern scholars. Although there are seventeen cantos in the *Kumārasambhavam*, Mallinātha

²¹Macdonell, A. A. HSL., p.326

wrote the commentaty only the first eight cantos. Aruṇagirinātha, considering the original composition of Kālidāsa, said that the remaining nine cantos were added later with a view to bringing the story of the epic to a fruitful conclusion relating to the destruction of the demon Tarakā at the hands of Lord Kumar. The spurious character of cantos IX-XVII of *Kumārasambhava* is fully exposed by the inferiority of their poetic qualities in respect of ideas, expression, metre and style.

Sukumar Sen remarks:

“It appears from the poetry that Kālidāsa, in his *Kumārasambhava* had an intention to preach the magnanimity of Śiva and to set up Śiva worship.”²²

The first seven chapters deal with entirely devoted to the courtship and maggiage of the god Śiva and Pārvatī. This poem has a rich description of miniatures, in which the main literary power of Kālidāsa is embodied. The genealogy of the solar race as set out in *Raghuvamśam* appears to correspond mainly to that given in *Viṣṇupurāṇa* although *Viṣṇupurāṇa* should be later than the time of Kālidāsa.²³ The *Raghuvamśa* is Kālidāsa’s another epic poem which is enumerated amongst the *Mahākāvya*s of classical Sanskrit literature. It is regarded as the best specimen of *Mahākāvya* according to the Sanskrit rhetoricians. Most of the modern scholars are of the opinion that the *Raghuvamśam* was composed by Kālidāsa in his later age, as it refers to *Yoga* philosophy, employs grammatical similes and reflects the maturity of his style and thought.

At present, there are nineteen cantos in this epic poem. But some scholars opine that the epic originally had more cantos and is incomplete in the present form. This epic has been narrated from the family of Dilīpa to descendants Agnivarma, who include Raghu, Daśaratha and Rāma. The *Saṅgītanī* commentary is most popular and widely available which is written by Mallinātha. The theme of the epic *Raghuvamśam*, which literally means an account of Raghu’s dynasty is very vast indeed, covering as many as twenty kings of solar race. The poem opens with Kālidāsa reverential obeisance to the universal parents Pārvatī and Śiva. The poem obviously does not deal with the

²² Sen, Sukumar. *History of Indian Literature*, p.24

²³ ViP, Eng. Trans. H.M. Wilson, pp 384-387

story of one single hero. There are many heroes like Dilīpa, Raghu, Aja, Daśaratha, Rāma etc. The purpose of this epic should be the attainment of one of the four objects of man viz. *Dharma* or duty and piety, *Artha* or worldly success, *Kāma* or love and *Mokṣa* or salvation. The hero should be clever and noble. The *Mahākāvya* must be rich in feelings and sentiments and must be embellished with descriptions of cities, oceans, mountains, seasons, the rise of the sun, marriage, political discussions, the success of the hero etc. Kālidāsa has vast knowledge about the *Vaidarbhī* style. His writings contain a judicious use of compounds, are clear and full of harmony. The poet's mastery over language is matched only by its simplicity and chastity. The figures of speech, especially those of sense are profusely employed and that too mostly with Kālidāsa's aptness and elegance. The various episodes the *Raghuvamśam* has remained a cherished possession to the elite in India. So, we have found the political, social, cultural etc. thoughts which reflected in this *Mahākāvya*.

The *Meghadūta* of Kālidāsa is undoubtedly one of the most successful poems and the best lyrical love-poem in the Classical Sanskrit literature. The *Meghadūta*, which about 120 verses composed the used *Mandākrāntā* metre. This epic shows the poetic art of Kālidāsa in the best form. The poem is divided into two parts, called *Pūrvamegha* and *Uttaramegha*. The opening stanza of the *Meghadūta* described the sad plight of a separated lover (*Yakṣa*), who as a punishment for the negligence of his duty was banished by his master (*Kubera*) for a period of twelve months, who made his temporary stay in a hermitage on the mount *Rāmagiri* where waters were hallowed by Sitā's ablutions.

The subject matter of this poem maybe classified into three broad outlines.

- (i) The story element that Yakṣa couple was separated from each other and rendered helpless by the curse of their master.
- (ii) Background of the story set in the midst of rainy season.
- (iii) Yakṣa's romantic passion for his beloved in a state of separation the outpourings of his heart and his yearning for reunion.

The word *Yakṣa* is found several times in the *Ṛgveda* and the *Atharvaveda* in the sense of sacrifice or an honourable being²⁴. But the later Vedic tradition ‘Yakṣa’ belongs to the class of demi-gods like *Piśāca*, *Rākṣasa* etc.²⁵ So, Yakṣas belong either to the category of gods or demi-gods. Yakṣas are described as supernatural or semi-divine beings.²⁶ They are one of the seven *Pitr-gaṇas* which consist of *Daityas*, *Dānavas*, *Gāndharvas*, *Rākṣasas*, *Ugras*, *Yakṣas* and *Pitṛs*.²⁷ The concept of the Yakṣa or Yakṣinī is closely connected with these superstitious ideas of the Vedic age in the modern folklore. Gāndharvas, Apsarās and Yakṣas are treated as water spirits or mountain spirits or under world spirits in ancient Indian mythology. Yaskṣa means a ghost according to the Brāhmaṇas and *Gṛhyasūtras*. He is ranked with *Piśāca* and other malignant spirits in the Purāṇas and *Kathā* literature.

1.3.C. A Brief Introduction to Bṛhatrayī :

The *Śiśupālavadham* of Māgha is a *Mahākāvya*, one of the five famous great poems. There are twenty cantos in this poem. This *Mahākāvya* belongs to the category of *Vadhakāvya*. By the height of his talent and scholarship, Māgha has composed this epic. Being *Vadhakāvya*, the events are depicted in a fictional manner. But the battle between lord Kṛṣṇa and Śiśupāla and his assistant was depicted more vividly. Not only major battles, but also the policies and principles in general, military ethics, strategies etc. have been depicted by the poet in a very clear and effective manner. The origin of the story of this epic, which is relating to the destruction of Śiśupāla by the lord Kṛṣṇa, is found in the *Mahābhārata*. From *Śiśupālavadham* it appears that the Vedic state was highly influenced by the work done on art and war policies. The poet makes mention of the six-fold policies (*Sadguṇya*).²⁸ The author believed that the use of virtues properly amounts to the destruction of

²⁴ RgV., I.90.4, VI.3.13, X.88.13

AV, VII.9.25, X.2.32, XI.2.24

²⁵ Journal of Oriental Institute, “A critical study of the source-element of the Meghadūta of Kālidāsa, by Dharendra Bandyopadhyaya, Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1985, p.11 (Vol.35, part-1)

²⁶ MD., II.2 (see *Saṅgīti* commentary)

²⁷ गन्धर्वप्सरसः सर्पान् देवान् पुण्यजनान् पितृन् । AV., VIII.4.2.15

MS., I.37

²⁸ षट्गुण्य... ŚP., II.92

administration.²⁹ There is no doubt, of all the works that have come down to us so far on state art and warfare, the earliest and most comprehensive are the *Śruti* and the others are the *Smṛti* and the *Purāṇas*.

Kīrātaryunīyam is written by Bhāravi. It is known as *Bṛhatrayī Mahākāvya*. It has eighteen cantos. This poem includes in the *Bṛhatrayī*. This poem is based on the short story of Arjuna's battle with Śiva in *Kirata* disguise, described in the *Mahābhārata*. The poet has given a beautiful description of politics, religious policy, diplomacy, social policy, war policy, public life, etc. This poem is full of different sensibilities but the feeling of heroism is predominant. There are at least 37 commentaries on *Kīrātaryunīyam* in Sanskrit, of which Mallināth's Ghaṇṭāpatha commentary is the best. The unwavering devotion to his master, the indomitable fearlessness and the high political wisdom of Vanecara are revealed in the dialogue between Yudhiṣṭhira and Vanecara in this poem. Vanecara makes it clear at the very beginning:

क्रियासु युक्तैर्नृपचारचक्षुषो न वंचनीयाः प्रभवोऽनुजीविभिः।

अतोऽर्हसि क्षन्तुमसाधु साधु वा हितं मनोहारि च दुर्लभं वचः ॥³⁰

Bhāravi is known as *Arthagaurava*. “उपमा कालिदासस्य भारवेरर्थगौरवम् ।” A simple language and expression-skill to match this sense-glory is his wealth. He has extraordinary knowledge in various dimensions of life including politics and ethics. Bhāravi has presented a very meaningful discussion on the struggle between the two extremes of politics in this poem.

Śrīharṣa is an outstanding poet, thinker and a philosopher in the classical Sanskrit literature. *Naiṣadhīyacaritam* of Śrīharṣa is known as one of five *Mahākāvyas*. This epic is highly admired by Sanskrit scholars since the date of its composition. The poem is full of references to different schools of philosophy, mythology and many other branches of knowledge. *Naiṣadhīyacaritam* has twenty-two cantos. This poem would not be comprehensible to the readers without the guidance of a qualified scholar. Poetry is the expression of imagination through the medium of refined and embellished language, within the framework of the social, cultural and

²⁹ गुण्याना.... *Ibid*, II.56

³⁰ KJ. I.4

political conditions prevailing. A poet is influenced by his acquaintance with the different *Śāstras*. Our study attempts to analyze the factors and evaluate the art and science of warfare as it was postulated by the authorities in ancient India and its impact on the culture and civilization of the Indian people and society at large. An attempt will also be made to point out their strong and weak points that have persisted through the ages. After shifting and analysing the materials at our command, the present thesis is being organised broadly into the following chapters :

Chapter I

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 is necessary for understanding the Vedic tradition as well as the theme of the classical literature.

Chapter – II

This chapter deals with various aspects such as *Pañca-mahābhūta*, *Māyā*, *Karma*, *Bhakti*, *Jñāna*, *Mokṣa* etc. An attempt has been made here to analyse all these concepts as they are presented in the *Mahākāvyas* of the prominent classical poets like Kālidāsa, Māgha, Bhāravi, Śrīharṣa. The doctrines of *Mokṣa*, *Karma* and *Samsāra* occupy an important place in the teachings of the Vedas. *Karma* is the fundamental law of the moral world. In works of Kālidāsa, the conception of the god represents a perfect synthesis of the Vedic religion and Vedāntic philosophy.

Chapter III :

This chapter deals with a brief history of Vedic religion like what is the origin of the religion etc. How Vedic *Dharma* 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.

Chapter IV :

This chapter is devoted to the brief history of Vedic ritual and influence of the Vedic ritual on the *Laghutrayī* and *Bṛhatrayī*. *Yajñas* like *Agniṣṭoma*, *Agnihotra*, *Aśvamedha* etc. and many well known rites like *Nāmakaraṇa*, *Cuḍākarma*, *Upanayana* etc. also, are well-known rituals conducted for the gods are discussed here. These *Yāgas* and *Saṃskāras* are referred to by the classical poets in their creative works like the *Raghuvamśa-mahākāvya*.

Chapter V :

In this chapter we are dealing with various mythological thoughts from the Veda as depicted in the *Laghutrayī* and *Bṛhatrayī*. Kālidāsa begins his *Mahākāvya*, *Raghuvamśam* with a prayer to the lord Śiva. Kālidāsa's conception of Śiva is on the basis of Vedic conception of Śiva.

Chapter VI :

In this chapter discussion has been made on Vedic social, culture and economical thoughts and how they are presented in the *Laghutrayī* and *Bṛhatrayī*. And an analysis is made of the Vedic culture and its various aspects as they are dealt with by the classical poets.

Chapter VII :

In this chapter the summery of the above mentioned six chapters has been given along with our observations. It is found that the aim of the Vedic thoughts appear to be practical guide to the rulers as to show how the poets should be reflected. 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 and its influence which found clear expression in the beautiful verses of their poetic compositions.

After a careful study of the great classical works I came to know that the classical poets were highly influenced by the Vedic thoughts. I find many

verses which contain the ideas of *Samhitās* , *Brāhmaṇas*, *Āraṇyakas* and the principal *Upaniṣads*. Since the great writers have studied the Vedic literature, they have incorporated the Vedic thoughts in their creative poems. It is very interesting for me to collect all those verses and prepare a systematic study on the basis of them.

The second chapter deals with Vedic philosophy and the classical Sanskrit literature.
