

Society With Reference to Vedic Literature

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ABSTRACT: The Vedas are India's oldest known works of literature. The Vedas were written in Sanskrit and passed down orally from generation to generation. Vedic literature consists of four Vedas: the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda, and the Atharva Veda. In this article an attempt has been made to explore how the society is depicted in the vedic literature and discuss the status of women as depicted in the vedic literature. It was made feasible by the military training they had when they were younger. The educated women were invited to the sabha, according to the Rig Veda. The requirement for women to join the sabha was that they have some level of education. The ladies of the Vedic tradition obtained such knowledge through which they could regulate the domestic difficulties in their lives. In Vedic India, where intelligent women could be found everywhere, female students were encouraged to mix with them whenever they went out. They demonstrate that education was important to women in Vedic society.

KEYWORD: Literature, Vedic Literature, Religious Freedoms, Science, And Poetry, Female Students.

Introduction: Vedic Literature has always been in an impeccable study position in ancient Indian history because it is one of the oldest literatures in India. Vedic literature throws light into the transition of prehistoric period to historic period since it provides the written records of the past. Vedic period is simply meant by the period where the Vedas are written. All the literature which is written at the time of the Vedic period is called the Vedic literature. Which means Vedic literature not only comprises Vedas only but more. To study Vedas is more controversial in today's time because it consists of all the past social orders which enforced the inequality in the society. But to know our past is investable. Vedic literature should be given utmost importance to study and to know how the social orders and inequalities started to flourish in the Indian society where the clutches of it are still prevailing. Apart from the religious perspective let us look into the history and facts of the Vedic literature.

The term "Vedic literature" refers to a large collection of books that mostly discuss rites. They comprise the Rgveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda, and Atharvaveda, the four main Vedas. Each of these writings has its own unique qualities, despite the fact that they all essentially consist of mantras, prayers, or chants that were intended to be performed on ceremonial occasions. The hymns in the Rgveda are typically dedicated to three gods: Indra, the god of battle, and Soma, a plant from which a special beverage was made. Agni, the god of fire, is also known as the god of the sacrifice fire. In addition to these three main deities, there are many additional gods and a few goddesses. The hymns are divided into ten books or mandalas, with books 2–7 being the oldest. These books are sometimes referred to as "family books" since they are said to have been written and collected by a single priestly family or clan. The Samaveda is made up of Rgvedic chants that have been organized according to melodic specifications. As a result, it has very little unique content. On the

other hand, mantras are organized in the Yajurveda in the order that they were intended to be utilized in certain sacrificial ceremonies. Although some of them are taken directly from the Rgveda, others are original works, including some of the first examples of literature written in Sanskrit. Last but not least, the Atharvaveda contains chants and petitions made to the Vedic gods, as well as requests for health and success in love-related endeavours. It is often recognized as a work that sheds light on widely held opinions and customs.

TYPES OF VEDIC LITERATURE

There are broadly two types of Vedic literature:

Shruti Literature – The phrase "Shruti Literature" refers to the holy books, which include the Vedas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, and Upanishads. The word "Shruti" from the verb "to hear" defines these works. Shruti Literature is regarded timeless since it contains revelation and undeniable truth.

Smriti Literature – In contrast, the term "Smriti" literally means "to be remembered," is supplemental, and is subject to change. The Smriti Literature, which includes the Vedanga, Shad darsana, Puranas, Itihasa, Upveda, Tantras, Agamas, and Upangas, is the whole of post-Vedic Classical Sanskrit literature.

The following categories may be used to group the Vedic literature:

- ✓ The four Vedas i.e. the Rig, Sama, Yajur, and Atharva, and their Samhitas. (Learn the difference between Vedas and Puranas in the linked article.)
- ✓ The Brahmanas
- ✓ The Aranyakas
- ✓ The Upanishads

Significance of the Study: The Vedic literature, which has great religious and historical significance, is one of India's oldest and rich literary genres. Vedic literature describes not just the many Hindu rites and ceremonies that have been practised by individuals since the Vedic Era, but also the many philosophical tenets that underlie Hinduism. The current research is noteworthy in the current environment since it tries to examine the vedic literature in relation to social portrayal.

Objectives: This article aims at the following-

- ✓ To study how the society is depicted in the Vedic literature
- ✓ To discuss the status of women as depicted in the vedic literature

METHODOLOGY: The work was mostly created utilizing secondary sources, such as volumes of references, websites, and textbooks. The study mostly relies on analytical research.

KINSHIP RELATIONS AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF PATRIARCHAL STRUCTURES

We have a wide range of familial evidence from the early Vedic setting. Gods (and goddesses, on occasion) are pictured in terms of kinship, such as fathers, brothers, and even sons. There are other representations of romantic relationships. These representations of the heavenly realm most likely drew inspiration from everyday life. The father-son relationship is the one that comes up most often. This relationship is envisioned as one of reciprocal support: just as a father raises his kid, the son is supposed to care for his father as he ages. On another plane, the Rgveda often includes prayers for courageous sons. While there are many prayers for children in general, prayers for daughters are almost nonexistent.

In the later Vedic setting, when we see various rites being recommended to guarantee the birth of boys as well as to strengthen the relationships between father and son, this scenario remains essentially unaltered.

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They include significant rites like the asvamedha and rajasuya as well as daily offerings to the fire (agnihotra) that were prescribed for the householder. Also, we start to come across views that paint girls as undesirable traits and sources of grief for their parents.

The relationship between a father and son was also seen as going beyond the immediate couple. The patrilineal ancestor, or pitr, concept was used to establish this notion. The eleventh mandala, which is a relatively late portion of the book and where the pitrs are most often addressed, is a rather insignificant section of the Rgveda. The later Vedic tradition, where they were summoned on almost every ceremonial occasion, gave them a lot greater significance. The father, the grandpa, and the great grandfather were considered the three generations of male patrilineal ancestors known as the pitrs. As prayers were offered to them, the memory of other ancestors, such as matrilineal kinsfolk, would be pushed to the background. It is probable that highlighting the father-son relationship was crucial in resource control settings, where laying a claim to belonging to a certain lineage was often a method of asserting a claim to the inheritance of its resources. Relationships with other kinsmen are thought to be more difficult, even if patrilineal connections seem to be becoming more important over time. They fall into two categories: kinship relationships via marriage (affinal relatives) and kinship relationships that are seen as prospective competitors.

The father-in-law and the maternal uncle would fall under the first group. The former appears in a work known as the marriage hymn, which is a component of the late eleventh mandala of the Rgveda, whereas the latter is essentially unknown in the early Vedic tradition. Particularly in the post-Vedic tradition, both are treated with respect, acknowledgment, and particular hospitality, suggesting that ties to these groups were given growing importance.

The bhratravya and the sapatna were placed in the second group. The first phrase refers to a brotherly guy, while the second term refers to a rival (the literal meaning seems to be men who either share a common wife or are related through a woman who is the wife of one of them). These two phrases are very uncommon in the Rgveda, but they become significant in later Vedic contexts when rituals were used to settle disputes with the bhratravya and the sapatna. Generally, the envisioned resolution included the eradication/destruction and/or capture of these adversaries' resources.

Other relatives were referred to as samana, which means "equals," sva, which means "one's own," or sajata (those who shared a common birth). Later Vedic rites often aimed to gain the allegiance of these communities while also treating them as inferiors. What we can infer then is that familial ties were being envisioned in terms of conflict and inequity. The father-son relationship was the only significant exception to this rule.

g in the d d d d, d, that d, that d, in the most wanted to be in the most. There are several terminologies used to describe the home in the Rgveda. Some of them could have been synonymous, while others probably denoted other institutions. Dam or dama and grha are two words that have garnered a lot of attention.

STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE VEDIC LITERATURE:

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS The Rig-Veda, the first of the Vedas, is replete with hymns describing natural events. The position of women is described in the Rig-Veda with a great deal of respect. Usha (the goddess of Dawn) and Aditi, the mother of several Gods including Mitra, Varun, Rudra, and Aryaman, are depicted in the Rig-Veda. Usha, the goddess, ushers in the new day by driving out the night and awakening the living things. Usha and Rati, who are both daughters of Heaven, allow all things to rest after a day of labour, while Rati, the Night, is Usha's sister. The family was a significant institution in the Rig-Vedic era. Duhitri was the name given to the family's daughter. While allusions in the Rig-Veda indicate that female children should also be honoured, it seems that society places more value on male offspring. In the Vedic era, a parent did not wish to make a distinction between his son and daughter. He was fair to all of them. The

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ladies received the best education possible so that they may live their social and personal lives to the fullest. Gosha, Apala, Lopamudra, Saci, and Vishvavara are only a few examples of hymn writers who achieved significant intellectual prestige.

RELIGIOUS STATUS AND RESPECT Women were encouraged to do certain tasks throughout the Vedic era based on their abilities. She was able to make the sacrifices because to certain religious freedoms. She was given prominent position in the sacrifice. In Brahmanvidya, the greatest knowledge, Gargi and Maitreyi may be seen setting themselves apart. At a sacrifice, Visvavara is seen replacing a rtvik.

EDUCATIONAL STATUS Throughout the Vedic era, education was not only for male pupils; women's education was also valued. They were handed the sacred thread as the first lesson in their schooling. It was believed that only "upanita" females could carry out the arduous tasks. Back then, women had the same military training as males. Vispala and Mudgalani are seen heading towards the front lines of combat. It was made feasible by the military training they had when they were younger. The educated women were invited to the sabha, according to the Rig Veda. The requirement for women to join the sabha was that they have some level of education. The Vedic women received this kind of schooling so they could manage their daily home issues. In Vedic India, where intelligent women could be found everywhere, female students were encouraged to mix with them whenever they went out. They demonstrate that education was important to women in Vedic society.

CONCLUSION: The Vedic literature may be thought of as the cornerstone of Hinduism in India. Hinduism would not have been able to develop its rituals and rules without it. So, the early and later Vedic literature provides us with a vivid understanding of the societal contexts, rituals, rules, various types of books, and educational process of our ancient India. The greatest and most scientific work of Hindu literature, Vedic Literature is a reliable source of information about India. The cornerstones of Vedic literature are knowledge, devotion, and Karma. They epitomize the pinnacle of Aryan philosophy's intelligence. The literature of the Aryans comprises a variety of literary genres, such as romance, theatre, science, and poetry, and is a remarkable contribution to Indian literature. The Vedas (Rigveda, Samveda, Atharvaveda, and Yajurveda), Brahmanas, Samhitas, Aranyakas, Ramayana, Mahabharata, and other literary works let us reflect on how keen they were to seek perfection in a variety of domains of life.

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