

महस्विनी – विद्वत्समीक्षिता सन्दर्भिता च शोधपत्रिका (ISSN: 2231-0452)

कुसुमम् : जनवरी – डिसेम्बर २०२१

सम्पुटम् : संयुक्तम् (१,२)

Pandit Madhusudan Ojha's Contribution to Veda Vijnana

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The Vedas are considered to be an eternal and perennial source of Indian wisdom. They have been interpreted by different sages and scholars over the centuries. They not only contain the कर्मकाण्ड or the procedure of sacrificial performances but also the quest for truth or ज्ञानकाण्ड. Most of the thoughts and precepts enshrined in the Vedas are so elegant, magnanimous and universal in character that they hold profound relevance even in the modern times. The most striking character of the Vedic thinking is that it is holistic in approach and has a wider canvas of vision.

In the last century Swami Dayanand, a vedic scholar, was in favour of scientific interpretation of the Vedic suktas and expounding their relevance afresh. Maharshi Arvind read newer spiritual messages with Vedas. A versatile and profound Sanskrit scholar of Rajasthan, Pt. Madhusudan Ojha, found that the Vedas contain a systematic and coherent exposition of what the ancient sages thought about the origin of the universe, the evolution of the heavenly bodies, the nature and role of different species that obtain in the creation and so on, though in a language which needed decoding.

Pt. Madhusudan Ojha was perpetuated by such worthy scholars as Pt. Giridhar Sharma Chaturvedi, Pt. Motilal Shastri, Dr. Vasudev Sharma Agrawal, Swami Surjan Das, Dr. R.K. Mishra, Karpur Chandra Kulish

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etc. who carried the message through different languages like Hindi, Sanskrit & English.

Pt. Ojha was a scholar who practically spent his entire life in Vedic research and not only came out with his encyclopediac knowledge of the entire ancient Sanskrit literature, but also gave us real insight into Vedic wisdom. His writings covering a wide range of subjects, can be broadly classified under four heads: 1. ब्रह्मविज्ञान 2. यज्ञविज्ञान 3. इतिहास 4. समीक्षाग्रन्थ.

यज्ञश्च विज्ञानमथेतिहासः स्तोत्रः तदित्थं विषया विभक्ताः ।
वेदे चतुर्धा त इमे चतुर्भिर्ग्रन्थैः पृथक्कृत्य निरूपणीयाः ॥

Although the contribution of Pt. Ojha to the interpretation of Vedic wisdom is not easy, but with few points and their examples, it is attempted to analyse his original contribution.

Pt. Ojha was the first to analyse the word Veda in detail. Generally it is understood that Veda refers to book of knowledge and it is divided in three parts (वेदत्रयी – ऋग्वेद, यजुर्वेद और सामवेद). Actually we do not understand why they should be called infinite (अनन्ता वै वेदाः). Why they are called अपौरुषेय (not the product of human mind).

There are many statements in the literature which explains that the word Veda is intimately connected with the creative processes in Nature. A few examples can be given to prove this statement.

ऋग्भ्यो जातां सर्वशो मूर्तिमाहुस्सर्वा गतिर्याजुषी हैव सृष्टम् ।
सर्वं तेजः सामरूप्यं हि शश्वत् सर्वं हेदं ब्रह्मणा हैव सृष्टम् ॥¹
अथ स सर्वाणि भूतानि पर्येक्षत् त्रय्यामेव विद्यायां सर्वाणि भूतान्यपश्यत्²
सा वा एषा वाक् त्रेधा विहता—ऋचो यजूषि सामानि तेनाग्निस्त्रेधा विहितः³

¹ तैत्तिरीयब्राह्मण, 3.12.9

² शतपथब्राह्मण, 10.4.2.21

³ शतपथब्राह्मण, 10.5.1.2

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We can understand that the word Veda and its division have a much deeper meaning than what is normally understood by us. Ojha ji explained technical terminology of Vedas in his works with reference to the context.

The meaning of the Veda is connected to the creative processes in Nature. Since the creative processes in Nature are infinite the Vedas are also infinite. Since they are not the product of human mind so they are called अपौरुषेय.

The words ऋक्, यजुस् and साम have distinct meanings in the creative process. The ऋक् gives rise to physical form of the object. All the movement is attributed to यजुस्. साम is form of light which forms the halo or the aura of an object.<sup>1</sup> In other words the Veda principal involving ऋक्, यजुस् and साम enters into every object of creation.

The Sun who may be conceived as the embodiment of Prajapati the creator, is also a typical example of the embodiment of all the three Vedas and it is well said: 'एषा त्रयी विद्या तपति' The disc of the Sun represents the ऋक्, the halo around the Sun represents the साम and the purusa inside represents the यजुस्.

Pt. Ojha's contribution to our understanding of Vedic cosmogony (ब्रह्मविज्ञान) is unparalleled in the research contributions to this subject. His works ब्रह्मसमन्वय, ब्रह्मविनय, ब्रह्मचतुष्पदी and ब्रह्मसिद्धान्त form a group in which the concept of Brahman has been analysed from various angles based on the statements of the Vedas, Brahmanas, Upanisadas and Gita.

In Vedic literature we find many philosophical terms which represents Atma or Brahman. They are निर्विशेष, परात्पर, अव्यय, अक्षर, क्षर, विश्वात्मा, जीवात्मा, विश्वातीत, गूढोत्मा, निर्गुणः, निष्कलः, निर्विकारः, षोडशीपुरुषः, प्रजापतिः, चिदात्मा, क्षेत्रज्ञः, ईश्वरः परमेश्वरः, पुरुषोत्तमः and so on. Nobody

<sup>1</sup> अर्चिः सामानि – जैमिनीयब्राह्मण, 10.5.1.5

before Pt. Ojha, ever tried to analyse the real meanings of these terms and reconcile the various contradictory passages. He took great pains to examine all the passages carefully and gave us a clear picture of the meanings of these terms and their role in the creative process.

Ojha analysed ब्रह्म as चतुष्पात् and defined the padas as निर्विशेष, परात्पर, पुरुष and पुर, while निर्विशेष is Brahman in the pure Rasa state and described in the Vedas and Upanisadas as निर्धर्मक, अनिर्वचनीय, अचिन्त्य, अपरिमेय etc. परात्पर is the state where both Rasa and Bala are present in an unlimited background and renders him all powerful (सर्वशक्तिमान्) and all knowing (सर्वज्ञः). Both Rasa and Bala are one and are not distinguishable from each other in this stage. Purusa is the stage where Bala builds itself in the background of Rasa and gives rise to regions of active प्राण. This Purusa is of three kinds i.e. Avara, Paravar and Para. These are also called क्षर, अक्षर and अव्यय.

Avyaya is ज्ञानस्वरूप, Akshara is कर्मस्वरूप and Ksara is अर्थस्वरूप. In other words there are only three entities in the cosmos viz. ज्ञान, क्रिया and अर्थ and these three have their origin in Avayaya, Akshara, and Ksara respectively. When manas appears in the ocean of rasa and bala, as a result of build up of bala, the Avyaya stage is reached.

अक्षर Purusa resides in the प्राण part of Avyaya Purusa. He is responsible for activity (क्रिया) and has three components. ब्रह्मा, विष्णु and इन्द्र which are otherwise named प्रतिष्ठाशक्ति, आकर्षणशक्ति and विक्षेपणशक्ति. The first is responsible for the maintenance of form of the object, the third one throws out matter from the object and the second one fills up the void by bringing matter from outside. In addition to the above, Agni and Soma are also the kalas of अक्षर पुरुष. Thus अक्षर Purusa also has five kalas.

क्षर Purusa resides in the Vak part of Avyaya and is responsible for the material part of the cosmos. In the creative process Avyaya

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Purusa provides the basic support. Aksara Purusa Constitutes instrumental cause (निमित्तकारण) and क्षर Purusa constitutes material cause (उपादानकारण). क्षर Purusa also has five kalas.

The Purusa with his fifteen kalas has the support of परात्पर is called षोडशीप्रजापति. Pt. Ojha explained this concept in great detail about the creative process not found in any other works.

Pt. Ojha opined that one of the primary businesses of Darsana is to trace the origin of universe. Origin of the universe is a riddle which has not been satisfactorily solved either by the scientists or by the philosophers. According to Pt. M.S. Ojha there were ten schools of thought in the pre-vedic period. It is analysis of the ten schools of thought regarding the origin of the cosmos gives him the highest place among the scholars of all times. His is works on these ten schools contain the essence of the Vedic Metaphysics.

While writing the commentary on upanisdas, Pt. Ojha named it उपनिषद्विज्ञानभाष्य and on geeta he wrote गीताविज्ञानभाष्य. One can ask what is the significance of the word Vijnana (विज्ञान) here.

**The meanings of Vijnana :** Pt. Ojha and his disciples used the word Vijnana very frequently. It gives the impression that they were dealing with physical sciences. In fact, they were not. They were using the term vijnana in the sense in which it has been used in the Vedic Literature. Taittiriya Aranyaka says that vijnana is that which deals with the interpretation of yajna and actions.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Krishna says in the Gita that he will instruct Arjuna in jnana with Vijnana. Here jnana is the knowledge of brahman, who is singular cause of the universe and vijnana is the knowledge of yajna, which is the process of how the creation proceeds from Brahman.

Thus Jnana and Vijnana represent cause and effect relationship. Cause is one, effects are many. Brahman is the cause, universe is the

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1 विज्ञानं यज्ञं तनुते कर्मापि च – Taittiriyanayal – 8.5

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effect. That the cause is one which gives birth to the multiple universe, is stated in Rigveda.¹

Ojha's contributions to the interpretation of Vedic Terminology enable us to understand the correct meanings of many words occurring in Vedas, Brahman and Upanisads. Terms like ऋत्, सत्य रस, बल, माया, वयोनाध, ऋषि, आभु, इन्द्र स्वाहा, सावित्री, गायत्री, ज्ञान, विज्ञान etc. receive masterly analysis at his hands.

Pt. Ojha has shown that while the Vaisheshik (वैशेषिक) Darshan stops with क्षर आत्मा, and Samkhyas stop with अक्षरात्मा, the Vedanta and Geeta reach upto अव्ययात्मा.

There are many other works of Pt. Ojha which are equally important. We can mention इन्द्रविजय, जगद्गुरुवैभवम्, महर्षिकुलवैभवम्, कादम्बिनी, अत्रिख्याति and पथ्यास्वस्ति.

Pt. Ojha explained Geeta by commentary named Gita Vigyan Bhashya. According to him Geeta is an attempt to apply the theoretical part of the Vedic philosophy in day to day life. Geeta itself says that Jnana and Vijnana both are to be followed, Jnana is necessary for knowing the self and Vijnana is necessary for knowing the world. The knowledge of Self leads to liberation from bondage and the knowledge of the world leads to prosperity.

Ojha's language is simply marvelous. He explained his style himself:

यत्र प्रदर्श्याः विषयाः पुरातनाः
यत्र प्रकारोऽभिनवप्रकाशने ।।

Although his commentary is on ancient & oriental topics but his style and expression is novel and noteworthy.



1 एकं वा इदं विबभूव सर्वम् – Rigveda, 8.58.2