

## Challenges to Oriental Studies in 21<sup>st</sup> Century with Special Reference to APSS

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Prologue: Vedic Literature is the oldest literature in the oriental language Sanskrit; it includes four Vedas and other related text and material. Although this literature enjoys the status of 'World cultural Heritage Literature' its legacy is completely ignored in this modern world by the Indian people, which further created many difficulties for the in-depth research in the related and interdisciplinary subjects. As a consequence the knowledge of Vedic language like syntax, grammar etc. and other required material for the research is not easily available, hence it is not easy to carry out the research; for example due to non-availability of apt commentary with appropriate explanation the researchers face many difficulties while analyzing the said literature. The foremost problem that an Indian researcher faces while searching for the appropriate reference material is that most of the original manuscripts of these ancient scriptures are in possession of the International Libraries and are very difficult to refer. This paper is to assess the challenges faced by the research scholars of Vedic Literature in general and of ĀPŚS in particular.

### Introduction:

ĀPŚS is an integral part of 'Taittiriya Branch of Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda'. It consists of Twenty-four Questions. These questions are fragmented into number of 'Patal's. One 'Patal' comprises of number of 'Kandikā's. Each 'Kandikā' is further subdivided into many 'Sūtra's. Which means 'Sūtra' is the smallest unit of ĀPŚS. Like all other Śrauta Sūtras ĀPŚS also describes 'Havi' (Purodash = Cake) and 'Soma' sacrifice. Although ĀPŚS belongs to Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda, while explaining the Sacrifices it refers to, describing rites along with various Mantrās and citations, Brāhmaṇa Passages, teacher's name associated with a particular ritual, name of Brāhmaṇa Text etc. of its own school and also of the various other schools of Vedas. For the purpose of this research paper, the problems faced by the research scholars while researching on ĀPŚS are classified into two types:

- The Brāhmaṇa Passages with the proper reference quoted by ĀPŚS.
- The Passages for which the reference is not given or the source is anonymous.

### Discussion:

ĀPŚS explains the rituals performed in Havi Yajña at the time of establishment and re-establishment of Agni i.e. Fire (Agni Ādhāna & Punarādhāna). This ritual is backed by a myth cited in Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa as 'A horse is born out of an infected eye of Prajāpati and Agni from the mouth. Therefore at the time of taking 'Āhavaniya Agni' to the altar it should follow the horse which signifies the ritual to eliminate the enemy of the host. ĀPŚS refers to this myth and Paiṅgāyani Brāhmaṇa opinion on this as – "तदभावः न इवान्पूर्ववाडेतानि कर्माणि करोतीति पैङ्गायनिब्राह्मणं भवति" If we refer to the original text from the Lost Brāhmaṇa it is not available at all. Similarly, the priest gift given at the time of re-establishment of Agni ĀPŚS does refer to Paiṅgāyani Brāhmaṇa's opinion as – "अनडुहि ह वा एते च कामा अतश्च भूयांस इति पैङ्गायनिब्राह्मणं भवति" All the wishes are included in the Ox hence it is an appropriate gift to the priest. Although this passage can be traced back to Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, but the context is completely different. Therefore one cannot take this citation as reference and some fragments of the lost Brāhmaṇa's also fail to provide this reference. Now the question is that why Paiṅgāyani Brāhmaṇa opts for Ox although other Brāhmaṇa's do mention different priest gifts. The researcher is deprived off from knowing other facets as well as the practical aspect of this ritual because of this lost reference.

The second such example is about who to select the priest for Agniṣṭoma. ĀPŚS explains the qualities and eligibilities of priest for Agniṣṭoma referring to Chandoga Brāhmaṇa as “कः ऋत्विजः के याजयन्ति कच्चिन्न न्यस्तं आर्त्विज्यं or कच्चिद् कल्याणो दक्षिणा इति छंदोग ब्राह्मणं भवति ”. Unfortunately could not trace this particular reference in Lost Brāhmaṇa. I also tried to find this reference with the help of V.V.R.I wherein I found it in Vaikhānas Śrauta Sūtra but the same reference is quoted as ‘इति विज्ञायते’ that means it is anonymous. Secondly, it is not even traceable in Taittiriya Saṁhitā & Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa even though these scriptures belong to the same school. I tried to traced this reference in Sāmaveda’s Brāhmaṇa and also in the fragments of Lost Brahmins. Thus in this situation, prima facie one can doubt that there may be few more Brāhmaṇa which ĀPŚS referred to. I further found that Chandoga Brāhmaṇa quotes as “वसन्ते वसन्ते सोमेन यजेत । तस्य तिस्रो दक्षिणा इति छंदोग ब्राह्मणं भवति” The host must gift three gifts to the priest. The word three cannot be found in the commentary and Sāmaveda’s Brāhmaṇa, also does not comment on the same. Therefore an extensive research is needed to decipher this statement.

The third example is in ĀPŚS there is an elaborate discussion on the Agni and sacrificer (host) consecration. After the rite of consecration to whom should he speak and to whom should he avoid is discussed. ĀPŚS quotes Śātyāyanaka Brāhmaṇa Opinion “कामं शूद्रेण संभाषेत यः पापेन कर्मणाभिलक्षितः स्यादिति शाट्यायनकम्” In the fragments of Lost Brāhmaṇa one can trace many more references of Śātyāyanaka from ĀPŚS except this quote.

The fourth example I would like to quote is about how to remove husk from the grains to prepare sacrificial cake .This process is discussed in Bahvṛca Brāhmaṇa of ĀPŚS as “हस्तेन उपवपति इति बह्वृचब्राह्मणम् ” But unfortunately this reference is not traceable in Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and Kauṣītaki. Brāhmaṇa. These two are the only available and known Brāhmaṇa of Ṛigveda. Whereas Sutra text of Ṛigveda mentions the names of Brāhmaṇa’s as MahāAitareya, MahāKauṣītaki. There is every possibility that this reference might be from either of these two or from both of these texts. This point needs to be explored with the help of research work by various Vedic scholars and referring to an assortment of manuscripts “पुरस्तात् प्रत्यञ्चं अश्वं धारयति” can form the fifth example to support the research topic. This quote is from ĀPŚS regarding Agnyādhana and Punarādhāna. To substantiate the statement ĀPŚS refers to Bahvṛca Brāhmaṇa as “कमण्डलुपद आदधीतेति इति बह्वृचब्राह्मणम्” Priest should take the pugmark of kamandalupada on the altar of Āhavaniya Agni. This reference is not found in Rigvedic Brāhmaṇa but Vaikhānas Śrauta Sūtra of Taittiriya Saṁhitā mentions this reference with the same context but it is not available in Taittiriya Saṁhitā. One can deduce that although some portion of this reference is lost ĀPŚS took the stock of more number of Brāhmaṇa Texts.

Kieth opined that ‘no one knows the actual number of Brāhmaṇa’s lost and the damage to the literary heritage is caused.’

There are many more such examples of lost references in at the same time one gets to know many other aspects of the Vedic literature while studying ĀPŚS. The study of ĀPŚS proves helpful in analyzing the clutter of various branches of Vedas and the practical approach towards the rites. There are many quotes which have no clear reference and they are quoted with the ending phase as either ‘इति विज्ञायते ’ or ‘इति एकेषाम् ’. There are nearly 56 statements ending with ‘इति विज्ञायते ’ and more that 10 statements ending with ‘इति

एकेषाम्' are found in ĀPŚS. Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa, Maitrāyaṇi Saṁhitā, Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa, also contains the statements ending with 'इति विज्ञायते' but they are not the same as mentioned in the previous sentence. If these statements are available in Saṁhitā text and Brāhmaṇa, text one must research on them to know them more clearly. It is a need of an hour to carry out the research on these statements to remove the ambiguity of 'the world cultural heritage' and also to focus on various facets of this most ancient and rich cultural heritage for its conservation and preservation.

From above discussion I conclude to the following points:-

I would say in the procedure of tracing back the Brāhmaṇa passages from the Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra, that I have noticed that some of the Brāhmaṇa passages mentioned by Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra are complicated to trace. Some part of that particular Brāhmaṇa mentioned by the Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra can be found in lost Brāhmaṇa's but the entire, continuous texts of those Brāhmaṇa's is not available ritual was part and parcel of the society in time when Śrauta Sūtra constructed. Lots of variations in the practices of ritual popular those days but as same texts like कालबविव्राह्मणम् , कंकतिब्राह्मणम् , छंदोगब्राह्मणम् , पैङ्ग्यायणिव्राह्मणम् , बह्वृचब्राह्मणम् , वाजसनेयकब्राह्मणम् , शाट्यायणिव्राह्मणम् , शैलालिव्राह्मणम् Brāhmaṇa's are lost . It is difficult to understand these variations.

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