

## **CHAPTER – V**

# **Subjects studied in the Vedic and Buddhist Period**

## Subjects studied in the Vedic and Buddhist Period :

### ***Samhitā* Period :**

Subjects studied during the Vedic period is an effort to find out an outline of the objective scope of education in those days. The concept of syllabus oriented education, as found in modern days, of course was not there. In course of time i.e., during the post Vedic period, some coinage of the subject came up which is the basis of the chapter.

At the early stage of the *Vedas*, the Seers acquired knowledge through long austerities and visioned the *R̥k*, *Sāma*, and *Yajus* which initiated the early stage of education. *R̥k* VII/35/14 states that the Seers visualised the new *mantras* constantly and those were transmitted among the disciples through recitation<sup>1</sup>. But Buddhism was a new sect and had new education system. They had proper subjects of studies. They follow the Vedic education system. From the *Jātaka* stories we find that in *Takṣasilā*, the *Vedas* are the most important subjects of study. Students always choose *Vedas* instead of other Buddhistic subjects.

In the first half of the Vedic period, i.e., in the *Samhitā* period the recitation was the only method of teaching. In course of time they developed various metres i.e. *Sapta Chandamsi*. These *Sapta Chandamsi* were *Gāyatrī*, *Uṣṇik*, *Anuṣṭup*, *Bṛihatī*, *Pañkti*, *Triṣṭupa*, *Jagatī*. The *R̥gvedic* passage

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<sup>1</sup> *Ādityā rudrā vasavo juṣantedarṇ brahma kryamāṇarṇ navīyaḥ | śṛṇvantu no divyāḥ pārthivāso gojātā uta ye yajñīyasāḥ|| R̥V VII.35.14.*

I.164.24 very clearly mentioned that the conjunction of the letters produced the seven metres or *Sapta Chandamsi*<sup>2</sup>. These *Sapta Chandamsi* were the roots of the recitation of any text. We also find that the Ṛgvedic passage X.71.1 mentioned that the child in the first stage uttered those words which were free from defects<sup>3</sup>. That means, it was the indication for the study of Grammar because without the study of Grammar, the words would not be uttered flawlessly or perfectly. The same sense was conveyed by Ṛk X.71.3 where Vedic words were described as refined words. The speech was refined and created by the mind of the learned scholar through the proper practice of grammar<sup>4</sup>. So, it is clear that in the first half of the Vedic period, the Grammar and Phonetic were developed as very important subjects of study. It is a matter of fact that the understanding of the meaning of the *mantras* is necessary. The *Ṛgveda*<sup>5</sup> is very clear on this point that the *Veda* is useless learning to him who just imitates the *mantras* without understanding the real meaning. The six *Vedāṅgas- Śikṣā, Kalpa, Vyākaraṇa, Nirukta, Chanda and Jyotiṣa* were also developed and included in the Vedic curriculum. In the Vedic period, we find references of *Gāthā, Nārāśamsī, Itihāsa and Purāṇa*. Both *Ṛgveda and Atharvaveda* give references of *Gāthā, Nārāśamsī Itihāsa and Purāṇa*<sup>6</sup>. So

<sup>2</sup> *Gāyatrena prati mimīte arkamarkeṇa sāmā traiṣṭubhena vākaṁ | vākena vākaṁ dvipadā catuspadākṣareṇa mimate sapta vāṇīḥ ||RV.I.164.24.*

<sup>3</sup> *Bṛhaspate prathamam vāco agram yatprairata nāmadheyam dadhānāḥ | yadeṣām śreṣṭhām yadaripramāsīpreṇā tadeṣām nihitam guhāvih | |Ibid.X.71.1.*

<sup>4</sup> *Yajñena bacāḥ padavīyamāyantāmanvavindannṛṣiṣu praviṣṭām | Tāmābhṛtya vyadadhuḥ purutrā taṁ sapta rebha abhi saṁ navante || Ibid.X.71.3.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ṛco akṣare parame vyomanyasmindevā adhi viśve niṣeduh| yastanna veda kiṁrcā kariṣyati.....||Ibid.I.164.39.*

<sup>6</sup> *Itihāsasya ca vai sa purāṇasya ca gāthānām ca nārāśamsīnām ca priyam dhām bhavati ya evam veda □ A.V.XV.6.12; raibhyāsīdanudeyī nārāśamsī nyocanī| suryāyā bhadramidvāso gāthayaiti pariṣkṛtam|| RV.X.85.6.*

these subjects were the part of Vedic curriculum. Like that there was an arrangement for secular and vocational education for the people in Vedic age. From the Ṛgvedic hymns we find reference that during the Vedic age people have various occupations<sup>7</sup>. For the development of economic life, people in those days choose diverse occupation. The following hymns<sup>8</sup> throws light on the economic life of those days, which indicates that people choose various occupations which might have some academic exercises before opting those as occupations :

I am the Physician; papa is the Panegyrist, mamma throws the corn upon the grinding stones; having various occupations, desiring riches we remain (in the world) like cattle (in the stalls): flow *Indu* for *Indra*

Various our acts, (various) are the occupations of men; the carpenter desires timber, the Physician disease, the *Brāhmaṇa*, a worshipper who effuses Soma: flow, *Indu* for *Indra*.

With dried plants (are arrows made), with the feathers of birds (and) with glistening stones; the smith seeks a man who has gold: flow *Indu*, for *Indra*.

The draught horse (desire) a cart easy (to draw); those who invite guests (desire) merriment; the frog desires water: flow, *Indu* for *Indra*.

<sup>7</sup> *nānānaṁ vā u no dhiyo vratāni janānām | takṣā riṣṭarṁ rutarṁ bhiṣagbrahamā sunvantamicachatīndrāyendo pari strava || ṚV.IX.112.1*

<sup>8</sup> *Kārunaharṁ tato bhiṣagupalaprakṣiṇī nanā | nānādhiyo vasuyavo 'nu gāiva tashimendrāyendo pari strava || Jaratūbhiroṣadhībhiḥ parṇobhiḥ śakunānām | kārmāro aśmabhirddyubhirhiraṇyavantamicchatīndrāyendo pari strava || aśva volhā sukharṁ ratharṁ hasanāmupamantriṇaḥ | śepo romaṇvantau bhedaṁ vārinmanḍūka icchatīndrāyendo pari strava || Ibid.IX.112.1,2,3,4. Śatamśamanmayīnārṁ purāmindro vyāsyat | divodāsāya dāśuṣe || Ibid.IV.30.20.*

*Indra* has over turned a hundred stone built cities for *Devodas*, the donor of oblations.

From the afore mentioned hymns we presumed that since the people had different occupations; so they definitely received vocational training for the prosperity of their life. So during the age, the following subjects such as Composing of verse, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal husbandry, Science of Medicine, Science of Building, Hand crafting subjects such as Carpentering, making Carts, Chariots and draught and wagons were developed and may included in the Vedic curriculum as per the reference of the Ṛgvedic hymns.

### **Brahmanic Period :**

In the Brahmanic period the subjects of study were large in number than those of the earlier Vedic age. The different new subjects and the new rules were added to the curriculum. But the earlier subjects were still popular in this age. From the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* we find the detailed syllabus of various subjects. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* mentions that the *Vedas* including *Brāhmaṇa*, *Āraṇyaka*, *Upaniṣats* remained the main subjects of study. For the continuity of Vedic studies, the students daily recite *Ṛk*, *Yajus*, and *Sāma*. This Vedic study was called the *Svādhyāya*. With the concentration of mind, every day the students had to study the *Vedas*<sup>9</sup>. It was also called *Brahmayajña*<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> *Aharahaḥ svādhyāyamadhīte tasmāt svādhyāyo, dhyetavayaḥ | ŚR.B.XI.5.6.3.*

<sup>10</sup> *Svādhyāyo vai brahma-yajñaḥ | Ibid.XI.5.6.3.*

Apart from the *Vedas*, the many other subjects were also included in the curriculum. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*<sup>11</sup> mentions that *Anuśāsana*, *Vidyā*, *Vākovākyam*, *Itihāsa- Purāṇa*, *Nārāśaṃsī*, *Gāthās*, *Ākhyāna*, *Anvākhyāna*, *Anuvyākhyāna*, and *Vyākhyāna* were the important subjects of study during the age.

*Sāyaṇa*<sup>12</sup> commenting on this passage mentions that *Anuśāsanās* were the six *Vedāṅgas* viz- *Śikṣā*, *Vyākaraṇa*, *Nirukta*, *Chanda*, *Jyotiṣa* and *Kalpa* or the rules of the Grammar and etymology.

*Vidyā* was the philosophical systems of *Nyāya*, *Mīmāṃsā* and so on. While the other authorities mentioned that it was the special science or the Science of Snakes (*Sarpa Vidyā*).

*Vākovākyam* was the theological discourses or the art of disputation. *Sāyaṇa* mentions that it was identical with *Brahmodya*, where the theologians started discussion about the spiritual matters.

*Itihāsa- Purāṇas* were the cosmological myths and the stories of old times. The *Atharvaveda*<sup>13</sup> first properly mentions these two terms. Later on *Brāhmaṇa* and *Upaniṣat* explain the meaning of these two terms. They mentioned that *Itihāsa* and *Purāṇa* were the fifth *Veda*<sup>14</sup>. But *Sāyaṇa*<sup>15</sup> clearly

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<sup>11</sup> *Yadanuśāsānāni vidyā vākovākyamitihāsapurāṅgāthā nārāśayaṃsaya sa ya evaṃ vidvānanuśāsānāni vidyā vākovā kyamitihāsapurāṅgāthā .....// Ibid.XI.5.6.7.*

<sup>12</sup> *Anuśāsānānī|anuśīyante vyutpādyante ebhīryānuśāsānāni vyākaraṇaniruktādīni ṣaḍaṅgāni|nyāyamīmāṃsādayaḥ 'vidyāḥ'|uktīprayuktīrupaṃ prakaraṇaṃ 'vākovākyam'|Sāyaṇa Bhāṣya. ŚR.B..XI.5.6.7.*

*The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa edtd by Maitreyee Despande, Book-4, New Bharati Book Corporation,2008, P. 1526.*

<sup>13</sup> *A.V.XV.6.12.*

<sup>14</sup> *Itihāsa veda.ŚR.B.XIII.4.3.12. Purāṇam vedaḥ.Ibid.XIII.4.3.13.*

explained that the *Purāṇa* means the stories of old heroes and heroines like *Purūravas* and *Urvaśī*, whereas the *Itihāsa* means the stories of universe like ‘In the beginning this universe was nothing but water’.

*Nārāśamsī* and *Gāthās* were the ballads or a kind of memorial hero songs. *Sāyaṇa*<sup>16</sup> in the first place takes the two as one meaning i.e., the stanzas telling about men. But later on he refers that *Gāthās* were such verses about the great Snake driven from the lake and the *Nārāśamsīs* were such verses that telling about men such as *Janamejaya* and his horses.

*Ākhyāna*, and *Anvākhyāna* were the short narrative and supplementary narrative. *Anuvyākhyānas* were the explanations of *mantras* and the *Vyākhyānas* were the commentaries.

These were some important subjects of study during the age. Each and every student tried to specialise in these varied subjects. But these subjects were gradually swelled and became bulky with the inclusion of new subjects. This fact is proved by the dialogue between *Nārada* and *Sanat Kumāra* in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣat*. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣat*<sup>17</sup> *Nārada* insisted *Sanat Kumāra* on instructing him, then we find that he mentioned that he had already studied the *Ṛgveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Sāmaveda*, the *Atharvaveda*, the Epic and mythological poem as fifth *Veda*, Grammar (*Vyākaraṇa*), Necrology (*Pitrya*),

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<sup>15</sup> *Āpo ha vā idamagre salilamevāsa ityādikaṁ sṛstipratipādakaṁ brāhmaṇam 'itihāsa' | urvaśī hāpsarāḥ pururavasamañḍarāṁ cakame ityādīni purāṇānapuruṣavṛttāmatapratipādakāni 'purāṇam' | Sāyaṇa Bhāṣya. Ibid.XI.5.6.7.*

<sup>16</sup> *Narā manuṣyāḥ tatpṛśarāṁśāpādakāḥ lokāḥ 'nārāśarāṁsthaḥ' gāthāḥ | Sāyaṇa Bhāṣya.*

<sup>17</sup> *adhīhi bhgava iti hopasasāda sanatkumārāṁ nāradaṣṭarāṁ hovāca yadvethe tena mopasāda tatata urdvarāṁ vakṣyamīti sa hovāca || Ṛgvedaṁ bhagavohadhyemi yajurvedaṁ sāmavedamārthavaṇarāṁ caturthamitihāsapurāṇarāṁ pañcamarāṁ vedānāṁ vedaṁ pitryarāṁ rāśim daivarāṁ nidhirāṁ vākovākyamekāyanarāṁ devavidyārāṁ brahmavidyārāṁ bhūtavidyārāṁ kṣtravidyārāṁ nakṣatravidyārāṁ sarpadevajanavidyāmetad bhagavohadhyemi || Ch.U. VII.I.1.*

Arithmetic(*Rāsi*),Divination(*Nidhi*),Chronology (*Kāl nirupan Vidyā*), Theology (*Vākovākyam*), the doctrine of prayer (*Deva Vidyā*), Necromancy (*Bhūta Vidyā*), the art of War (*Kṣhatravidyā* or *Dhanur Veda*), Astronomy (*Nakṣatra Vidyā*), Snake charming (*Sarpa Vidyā*) and the Fine Arts (*Deva-Jana-Vidyā*). These subjects were very popular subjects of those days. Students studied all these subjects. But in spite of varied subjects *Sanat Kumāra* mentioned that he was only *Mantravit*<sup>18</sup>. So *Sanat Kumāra* should instruct him about the highest knowledge or *Parā Vidyā*. The supremacy of the *Parā Vidyā* was declared during the age.

In the Brahmanic age *Parā Vidyā* or the knowledge of Absolute was the main subject of study. After getting all the knowledge, the students try to realise the highest knowledge because it was the supreme knowledge. It was the *sarva-vidyā-pratiṣṭha*<sup>19</sup>. All the authorities declared that it was the supreme knowledge technically called the *Parā Vidyā*. Without the *Parā Vidyā* everything was in words. It was the essential part of education during those days. All the learned persons tried to become a master in *Parā Vidyā*. In the *Upaniṣat* we come across several learned scholars, elderly persons approaching famous teacher for this highest knowledge or secret knowledge. In the above we already mentioned that *Nārada* approached *Sanat Kumāra* where he admitted that he was only *Mantravit* and not *Ātmavit*. He was desirous to become a master in *Ātmavidyā* from *Sanat Kumāra*. In the several other examples as found in the ancient Indian scriptures we find that learned persons

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<sup>18</sup> *soharaṁ bhagavo mantravidevāsmi nātmvicachrat tarṁ..... || Ch.U.VII.1.3.*

<sup>19</sup> *sa brahmavidyāṁ sarvavidyā pratiṣṭhām| Mun.U.1.1.1.*



try to master in *Parā Vidyā*. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣat*<sup>20</sup>, we see that where *Śvetaketu*'s father himself realised that his son's education was incomplete because he was not a master in *Parā Vidyā*. He himself took responsibility to educate his son. Later on *Śvetaketu* and his father also approached King *Pravāhaṇa Jaivali* for this highest knowledge because they realised that their education was incomplete<sup>21</sup>. In the *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣat*<sup>22</sup> we find that *Maitreyi*, *Gārgī*, *Ārthabhāga* approached *Yājñavalkya* for this secret knowledge. In the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣat*<sup>23</sup>, *Śaunaka*, who is described as great scholar also approached *Aṅgīrasa* for this special knowledge. From these above mentioned examples it is clear that besides the other useful knowledge, the *Parā Vidyā* was the most important part of education during the age. Without this *Parā Vidyā* anyone was not regarded as a learned person. The *Upaniṣat* mentioned that *Parā Vidyā* cannot be gained by mere scholarship. Every individual had to develop his individual personality by rigorous discipline and also by means of controlling his senses and thereby he could be a master in *Parā Vidyā*. It was a long austerity. Through the eight fold *Yoga- Yama* (discipline consisting in truthfulness, honesty, chastity, non-injury), *Niyama* (self-restraint, purity, contentment, study and devotion), *Āsana* (sitting in the right place and in the correct bodily attitude or Correct posture), *Prāṇāyama* (regulation of breath), *Pratyahāra* (suppression of the organs of the sense),

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<sup>20</sup> Ch.U.VI.1.

<sup>21</sup> *Yatheyaṁ vidyeteḥ pūrvaṁ na kasmīnścana brāhmaṇa uvāsa tāṁ tvaḥaṁ tuyaṁ vakṣyāmi ko hi tvaivaṁ bruvantamarhati pratyākhyātumiti ||B.U.VI.2.8.*

<sup>22</sup> *Yadeva bhagvān veda tadeva me bruhīti || Ibid.II.4.3; Ibid III.8.3; 2.13; IV.3-4.*

<sup>23</sup> *Atharvaṇe yāṁ pravadeṭa brahmātharvā tāṁ purovācāṅgīre brahmavidyāṁ|Mun.U.I.1.2.*

*Dhāraṇā* (concentration of the attention), *Dhyāna* (meditation) and *Samādhi* (absorption) one can be able to master in *Parā Vidyā*<sup>24</sup>.

So in Brahmanic age subjects of study were larger in number than those of the *Samhitā* period and this gradual progress were till continued in *Sūtra* period.

### **Sūtra Period :**

In *Sūtra* period the subjects of study were comparatively large than the other periods. During the age all the subjects were expanded. Because the *Sūtra* age was close to Buddhist period. In Buddhist period there were gradual developments of new subjects of study. These subjects were much easier than those of the *Sūtra* period. They developed a new system of easy devotion. The vast majority of people liked this easy devotion system. They also attracted the people, who were trying hard to gain the knowledge of *Vedas* but they were unable to get this. So people were attracted in Buddhism for easy devotion. For this reason, there began a conflict between the two education systems. That is why, for defence, the *Sūtrakāras* developed easier method of instruction for the people. To acquaint the reader, the variety of subjects came in to existence. First the *Śrauta Sūtras* developed. These *Śrauta Sūtras* may be regarded as the continuation of the *Brāhmaṇas* especially in their ritualistic and formal aspects. Secondly *Gṛihya Sūtras*, mainly deal with the ceremonies applicable to domestic life of man and his family from birth to death. Thirdly the

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<sup>24</sup> *tena etasyai devatāyai sāyujyaṁ salokatāṁ jayati || B.U.I.5.23.*

*Dharmasūtras*, deal with the customs of our daily social life. And the *Śulvasūtras*, acquaint us the measurement required for the construction of the *Vedi* (Altar). This was also to be regarded as the earliest mathematical literature of India. These were the new invented subjects of *Sūtra* Period<sup>25</sup>.

Besides this, the traditional subjects like *Vedas*, *Brāhmaṇas*, *Rahasyavidyā* (the transcendental knowledge of *Upaniṣats* and *Āraṇyakas*), *Itihāsa*, *Purāṇa* were the indispensable part of education during the age. *Manu*<sup>26</sup> mentioned that a twice born *Brāhmaṇa* had to master in all the *Vedas* with their *Rahasyas*. During the age the *Vedas* were the most important part of education. *Manu*<sup>27</sup> on this point mentions that *Veda* is the ‘*akhila dharmamūla*’. So for pursuing other knowledge, the Vedic knowledge was necessary. He also states that by practising the pieties of *Vedas* one is able to acquire fame and happiness in this life and excellent happiness in the next life.

For the sake of comprehending the *Vedas*, the knowledge of *Śikṣā*, *Chandas*, *Vyākaraṇa*, *Nirukta*, *Kalpa* and *Jyotiṣa* were also necessary. These are collectively known as *Vedāṅgas*. According to *Viṣṇu Dharmasūtra* a student must acquire all the *Vedas* and *Vedāṅgas* by heart. If any student not studied the *Vedas* and *Vedāṅgas* then he degrades himself as *Śūdras*<sup>28</sup>.

Next it is necessary to mention here that the *Sūtra* age was an age of scientific study and specialization. In this period specialisation of any branch of

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<sup>25</sup> *History of Sanskrit Literature by MacDonnell, Kessinger Publishing, 2006, P. 264.*

<sup>26</sup> *Tapoviśeṣairvividhairvrataiśca vidhicoditaiḥ |  
vedaḥ kṛtsnohadhigantavyaḥ sarahasyo dvijanmanā || M.S.II.165.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.II.6-9.*

<sup>28</sup> *Evaṁ vedaṁ vadau vedānvā svīkuryāt | Viṣ.D.S.XXVIII.34;  
Tato vedāṅgani |Ibid.XXVIII. 35;  
Yasvanadhītavedo 'nyatra sraṇam kuryādasau saśatātānaḥ śudratvameti ||Ibid. XXVIII.36.*

learning is necessary. During the age the subjects of education were widen out and the several *Aṅgas* of the *Vedas* were developed. So it was not possible for any particular student to study the entire Vedic literature. This led the system of specialised subjects like Geometry and Algebra, Astronomy and Astrology, Science of Anatomy, Grammar and Philology, which reached the highest points in this age. Geometry and Algebra arose out, to elaborate rules for the construction of altars. Astronomy and Astrology arose, to give proper knowledge of the position and movement of stars and planets. It was also essential to know the suitable days and hours for the performance of sacrifice. The Science of Anatomy or surgery was founded on dissection of the animal to be immolated. And the Grammar and Philology grew out, for the proper care and preservation of sacred text<sup>29</sup>.

During the age caste system was also prevalent, so all the *Varṇas* were not allowed to study all the subjects. Particular courses of study were prescribed for particular *Varṇas* of students. The *Brāhmaṇa* student was able to study all the courses. But especially *Vedas* and their *angas* were meant for *Brāhmaṇas*. The *Kṣatriya* student was entitled to study the *Vedas* and *Rājñītvīdyā* but *Manu* states that from the learned *Brāhmaṇas* they must study the *Veda*, *Danḍanīti*, *Ānvīkṣikī*, *Brahmavidyā*, Trade and Agriculture, Cattle rearing, and the Science of wealth<sup>30</sup>. And *Vaiśya* students were also entitled to study the *Vedas* but the Agriculture, Trade and Commerce, Cattle rearing and

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<sup>29</sup> Mookerji, R.K. *Ancient Indian Education (Brahmanical and Buddhist)*, Motilal Banarasi Dass Publishers, Delhi 2011, P. 168.

<sup>30</sup> *Traividyevyastyāyīrṇ vidyād danḍanītiṅca śāśvatīm | Ānvīkṣikīkūncātmvidyārṇ vārtāramvārṇśca lokataḥ ||M.S.VII.43.*

Science of wealth were the main subjects of their study. Because *Manu*<sup>31</sup> states that Rearing of cattle (sheep, etc.) gift-making, performance of sacrifices, study (of the *Vedas*), merchandise, money-lending and agriculture are the duties of *Vaiśya*. So they had to study all these above mentioned subjects.

During the age the other few subjects also began to develop as a result of their freedom of thought and study. The *Pāṇini* Grammar, the Commentary of *Patanjali* or *Patanjali Mahābhāṣya* and the *Kautilyas' Arthaśāstra* were the creation of this age. Along with this, the study of Philosophy and Metaphysics, which had its origin in *Vedic Saṁhitās* also developed and the six systems of Indian Philosophy viz. *Purva Mīmāṃsā*, *Uttar Mīmāṃsā*, *Sāṁkhya*, *Yoga*, *Nyāya*, *Vaiśeṣika* were also evolved<sup>32</sup>. We also find that Secular studies were simultaneously developed during the period. Several Fine Arts viz., Dancing, Singing, Music as well as Economics and other sciences of useful arts and trades were attaining a high water mark of perfection during the age. These Arts were cultivated mainly by Women and *Śūdras*<sup>33</sup>. These treasuries of knowledge were known as *Upavedas* which had linked up with other branches of knowledge of the *Vedas*.

### **Epic Period :**

The Epic also introduced the variegated curriculum of studies. During the age, Vocational and Professional educations received special emphasis. The

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<sup>31</sup> *Paśūnārṅ rakṣaṅarṅ dānamijyādhyanameva ca|  
Vaṅikpatharṅ kusīdañca vaiśyasya kṛṣimeva ca||Ibid.I.90.*

<sup>32</sup> *Manusarṅhitā, edtd by Dr.Manavendu Bandoyapadhya Sastrī, Sanskrit Pustak Bhandar,  
Kolkata,1419, P 141.*

<sup>33</sup> *sā niṣṭhā yā vidyā strīṣu śūdreṣu ca| Āp.D.S.II.11.29.11.*

hermitage education system was popular during those days. In one hermitage there were several departments like department of *Veda*, department of *Rājñīti*, department of Astronomy and department of transport<sup>34</sup>. This departmental education system shows that during the age the courses of study were become numerous and variegated. Basically both the epics, the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata*, mention that during the age *Veda*, *Vedāṅgas*, *Dhanurveda*, *Nitiśātra*, *Vārttā*, *Daṇḍanīti*, *Anvikṣikī*, Music, Poetry, *Itihāsa*, *Purāṇa*, the lore of elephant and chariots, *Langhana* (*Jumping*), *Plavana* (*Swimming*), *Lekhya* (*Writing*), *Ālekhya* (*Painting*), *Śabdaśāstra*, *Yuktiśāstra*, *Gāndharvaśāstra* and *Astaṅga Āyurveda* were the chief subjects<sup>35</sup>. During the age all the students were not allowed to study all these varied subjects. Specialisation of course was necessary. The each *Varṇa* had their own profession. According to differentiation of *Guṇa* and *Karman* the each *Varṇas* were developed<sup>36</sup>. For their profession they choose their own subjects and become specialized in that subject.

The *Brāhmaṇas* were the priest. Their main duties were studying, teaching of *Vedas*, performance of *Yajña* for themselves as well as others, receiving and giving gifts<sup>37</sup>. They guide the entire community. They also undertake the responsibility of the education of the *Kṣatriyas* and *Vaiśyas*. That

<sup>34</sup> Mookerji, R.K. *Ancient Indian Education (Brahmanical and Buddhist)*, Motilal Banarasi Dass Publishers, Delhi 2011, P.333.

<sup>35</sup> *Trayī cānvikṣikī caiva Vārttā ca bharatarṣabha |daṇḍanītiśca vipulā vidyāstatra nirdirśitā|| M.Bh.Śhānti.59.33; yuktiśāstra ca te jeṅyārṇ śavdaśāstraṁ bhārata |Ibid.Anu 104.147; Gāndharvaśāstra ca kalāḥ parijñeyā narādhipa |purāṇamitihāsaśca tathākhyānāni yāni ca||Ibid Anu.104.148;Rām I.80.27.*

<sup>36</sup> *Cāturvarṇyārṇ mayā sṛṣṭārṇ guṇakarmavibhāgaśaḥ || Śrīmatbhagvadgītā.IV.13.*

<sup>37</sup> *Yajanaṁ yajanaṁ caiva tathā dānapratigrahaḥ |adhyāpanaṁ cādhyayanaṁ ṣaṭkarmā dharmabhāg dvijaḥ||M.Bh.Anu.141.65.*

is why, they studied all the subjects. But they were specially trained in the *Vedas*. The *Mahābhārata*<sup>38</sup> gives reference on this point that ‘*Traividyo brāhmaṇo vidvān.....eṣa smṛto dvijaḥ*’. That means the *Brāhmaṇa* who have the knowledge of three *Vedas* become actual *Brāhmaṇa*. The *Kṣatriyas* were the rulers. The defense, protection of people and administration was their main duty<sup>39</sup>. For the efficient performance of such responsibility, the training of intellectual faculties, military education, knowledge of *Dharmaśāstra*, *Nitiśāstra* were essential. But greater importance was given to the knowledge of *Vedas* and military training. The *Rāmāyana* contains a reference to the military training of King *Daśaratha*’s sons during their boyhood<sup>40</sup>. Like that in the *Mahābhārata* we also find the military training of *Kauravas* and *Pāṇḍavas*. *Guru Droṇācārya* imparts education to *Kauravas* and *Pāṇḍavas* in a very short time<sup>41</sup>. As regards the *Vaiśyas*, agriculture, animal husbandry, and trade was their chief occupations. That is why, they studied all the *Vārttāśāstras*<sup>42</sup>. But it is also natural that a student was not able to study all the subjects. That is why, in the *Mahābhārata*<sup>43</sup> *Mahātmā Bhīṣma* suggested his grandson *Yudhiṣṭhira* that he had to study the *Vedas Rājñīvidyā*, *Tarkaśāstra*, *Vārttāśāstra* and *Daṇḍanīti* because it was expected that a King must be proficient in all these subjects.

<sup>38</sup> *M.Bh.Anu.141.66.*

<sup>39</sup> *Kṣatriyasya smṛto dharmah parjāpālanamāditaḥ |Ibid.Anu.141.47.*

<sup>40</sup> *Te cāpi manujavyāgrā vaidikādhyayane ratā |pitṛśūsrupaṇaratā dhanurvede ca niṣṭitāḥ| Rām.18.35-36.*

<sup>41</sup> *Tato droṇaḥ pāṇduputrānastrāṇi vividāni ca | grāhayāmāsa divyāni mānuṣāni ca vīryavān|| M.Bh.Adi.131.9;*

*gadāyuddheo `sīcaryāyāṁ tomaraprāsasaktiṣu | droṇaḥ saṁkīrṇayuddhe ca sikṣayāmāsa kauravān|| Ibid.Adi.131.29.*

<sup>42</sup> *Kṛṣi gorakṣā vāṇijyam vaiśyam karma svabhāvajam| Ibid. Bhīṣma.40.48;*

*vaiśyasya satatam dharmah pasupalyam krsistatha|Ibid.Anu.141.54.*

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.Śhānti.63.*

Besides this, the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata* give many examples where a person is qualified in diverse course of subjects. In *Rāmāyana* we find that *Rāma* and his younger brothers were well versed in various subjects. *Rāma* was well versed in *Veda*, *Vedāṅgas*, *Dhanurveda*, *Nītiśāstra* and all the other subjects<sup>44</sup>. From the time of childhood he studied all the *Vedas* and observed the vow of *Brahmacāri* and became master in all the *Śāstras*. When *Rāma* went with *Viśwāmitra* to kill the demons, he learnt various kinds of sciences of missiles and weapons and became master in all the weapons<sup>45</sup>. During this time he learnt the two *mantras* called *Valā* and *Ativalā* which were the mother of all learnings<sup>46</sup>. He was profoundly proficient in *Dhanurveda*. He was first class charioteer and expert in riding elephant<sup>47</sup>. He was a master in all those arts that are specially studied for travelling purpose. He was also proficient in poetry, philosophy, music and in fine arts<sup>48</sup>. It was matter of fact that *Rāma* was proficient in all these varied subjects because during the time of intervals he used to cultivate the *śāstras* and became a master in all these varied subjects.

*Lakṣmaṇa* was also proficient in all the *śāstras* .But he was specially proficient in the art of warfare and in *Nitisastra* where as *Bharata* was proficient in three *Vedas*, *Vārttāśāstras* and in *Daṇḍanīti*<sup>49</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> *Vedavedaṅgatavajno Dhanurveda ca niṣṭītaḥ*||*Rām.Bāla.1.14.*

*Sarvaśāstarthatatvñjaḥ smṛtimānpratibhānavān*|*Ibid.Bāla.15.*

<sup>45</sup> *Dhārayantyasurā yāni dadāmyetāni sarvaśaḥ* ||*Ibid.Bāla.27.13.*

<sup>46</sup> *Mantraḡrāmaṛṅ ghāṇa tvarṅ valāmativalaṛṅ tathā* |*Ibid.Bāla.22.12;*  
*valā cativalā caiva sarvajñānasya mātarau* |*Ibid.Bāla.22.16.*

<sup>47</sup> *Dhanurvedavidāṛṅ śreṣṭo lokeo 'tirathasammataḥ* | *Ibid.Ayodha.1.29);*  
*ārohe vinaye caiva yukto vāraṇavājinām* |*Ibid.Ayodha.1.28.*

<sup>48</sup> *gāndharve ca bhuvī śreṣṭo vabhuva bharatāḡrajaḥ*||*Ibid.Ayodha.2.34.*

<sup>49</sup> *Eṣeo 'sya lakṣmaṇa .....naye yuddhe ca kuśalaḥ sarvaśastrabhṛtāṛṅ varah*||  
*Ibid.Yuddha.28.25.*



*Rājarṣi Daśaratha*, the father of *Rāma* and his brothers was well versed in all the *śāstras*. But he was specially specialised in the *Veda* and the *Vedāṅgas*.<sup>50</sup>

*Rāvana*, the king of *Lañkā* was proficient in *Veda* and *Vedāṅgas*<sup>51</sup>. His son *Indrajit* and Prince *Akṣa* were well versed in the art of warfare. *Indrajit* was very proficient in the use of the *Brahmāśtras* where as *Akṣa* was proficient in aiming and throwing the arrows<sup>52</sup>.

*Hanumāna* the minister of *Sugriv* was a Vedic scholar. He observed life time the bow of *Brahmacāri*. His educational attainment was so impressive that *Rāma* also appreciated his talent. He was a *Pandita* and master in all the *Vedas*, *Vedāṅgas*, *Nitiśāstras*, *Dharmaśāstras*, art of warfare, *Nyāya* and in statecraft. He was a great grammarian because he never used wrong and unsuitable words. His speech was very fluent and clear. He also knew *Ayurvedaśāstra*. His debating skill was so impressive that he surpassed *Bṛhaspati* the *guru* of Gods<sup>53</sup>.

The twin sons of *Rāma* and *Sita*, *Lava* and *Kuśa* were also highly talented. They were both educated at the hermitage of *Vālmikī* or *Vālmikīs'* *Āśrama*. The *Vālmikī* gave them specialized training. They were expert in

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<sup>50</sup> *Tasyāṁ puryāmyodhyāyāṁ vedvitsarvasaṁgrah.....tayā daśaratho rājā vasañjagadapālayat|| Rām.Bāla.6.1-4.*

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.Yuddha.110.*

<sup>52</sup> *Tamastra vicchastravidāṁ variṣṭaḥ.....pitāmahārāghaṅsancitāstraḥ|| Ibid.sundra.48.2; tataḥ sa virah sumukhānpatatriṇaḥ suvarṇapuñkānasaviṣānivīragān | Samādhisaṁyogavimokṣatavavit śarānatha trīṅkapimūrdhanyapātayat ||Ibid.Sundara.47.14.*

<sup>53</sup> *yo brāhmamastraṁ vedāśca veda vedavidāṁ varaḥ |Ibid.Yuddha.28.21. samūtravṛtyarthapadaṁ mahārthaṁ.....vaiśārāde chandogatau tathaiva||Ibid. Uttara.36.45; Sarvāsu vidyāsu tapovidhāne praspardhateyaṁ hi guruṁ surāṅgam |Ibid.Uttara.36.46.*

*Vedas, Vedāṅgas*, and were very much comprehensive in knowledge in music, poetic and in elocution<sup>54</sup>.

In the *Mahābhārata* we meet with similar account. On the educational attainments of *Kauravas* and *Pāṇḍavas* we find that all the Princes were proficient in their own field. *Duryodhana* and *Bhīma* were expert in mac fighting<sup>55</sup>. *Nakula* and *Sahadeva* were expert in swords<sup>56</sup>. *Dharmarāj Yudhiṣṭhira* was expert in *Vedas* and *Dharmaśāstras* but he was highly expert in driving horse and chariots. And *Arjuna* was an unrivalled Bowman<sup>57</sup>. They also studied the other *Śāstras* but they were specially trained in their own field. *Droṇācārya*, the son of *Ṛṣi Varadvāja* was the *guru* of *Kauravas* and *Pāṇḍavas*. *Mahātmā Bhīṣma* appointed him as their *guru*. He was master in all *Vedas* and *Vedāṅgas*. From *Parśurāma* he had learnt all the *Astra vidyās* and the *Dhanurvedaśāstra*<sup>58</sup>. *Kauravas* and *Pāṇḍavas* received all education from *Guru Droṇācārya* within a very short time.

*Mahātmā Bhīṣma* was expert in all the *śāstras*. He learnt all the *Vedas* and *Vedāṅgas* from *guru Vaiśiṣṭha*. He was an unrivalled Bowman and master in *Dhanurvedaśāstra*, and in *Yudhaśāstra*. As a warrior he was equal to *Devrāj Indra*<sup>59</sup>. Like that *Pāṇḍu* was an expert *Dhanurveda*. *Bidura* was an expert in

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<sup>54</sup> *Sāṅgaṁ ca vedamadhyāpaya kiñcidutkrānta –śaiśavau| svikṛtīṁ gāpayāmāsa kavi-prathamapaddhatim||Raghuvarṁśam.XV.33;*

*tau tu gāndharvatattvajñau murchanāsthānakovidau |*

*Bhrātarau svarasaṁpannau .....|| Rām.Bāla.IV.10.*

<sup>55</sup> *Droṇasya tu tadā śiṣyau gadāyogyau babhūvatuh |M.Bh.Ādi.131.61.*

<sup>56</sup> *tathāpi puruṣānanyāna tsārukau yama jāvubhau||Ibid.Ādi.131.62.*

<sup>57</sup> *Yudhiṣṭhira rathasreṣṭhaḥ sarvatra tu danamjayah| Ibid..Ādi.131.63.*

<sup>58</sup> *Vedvedāṅgavidvān sa tapasā dagdhkilbaṣaḥ|Ibid.Ādi.129.45;*

*pratigrhaya tu tatsarvaṁ kṛtāstrao dvijasattamaḥ|Ibid.Ādi.129.66.*

<sup>59</sup> *Vedānadhijage sāṅgan vasiṣṭādeṣa viryavān |*

*kṛtāstrah parameṣvāso devrājsamo yudhi ||Ibid.Ādi.100.35.*

*Dharmaśāstra* and in *Nitiśāstra* whereas *Dṛtharāstra* was an expert in his own strength<sup>60</sup>.

During the age various other subjects like *Yuktiśāstra*, *Śabdaśāstra*, *Gandarvaśāstra*, *Itihāsa*, *Purāṇa*, *Ākhyāna*, *Hastisūtra*, *Aśvasūtra*, *Rathasūtra*, *Yantrasūtra*, *Nāgaraśāstra*, *Nitiśāstra*, *Pañcharātraśāstra*, *Mahābhāṣya*, *Ganitvidyā*, *Vanaspatividyā*, *Aṣṭvavidyā* and *Yudhavidyā* also receive importance<sup>61</sup>. During the age subjects of study were divided in to two parts- Primary course and the Secondary course. In primary course the students generally studied all the *Vedas* and *Vedāṅgas* and in Secondary course they studied all the *Śāstras* and became proficient in their own field. In the *Mahābhārata* we find that *Pāṇḍavas* and *Kauravas* before started their secondary education they learnt the entire primary course from *Kṛpācārya*<sup>62</sup>.

### **Buddhist Period:**

The Buddhist education system also introduced very rich curriculum of studies. They also started with scriptures. Their principal and prominent subjects of study were the *Sutta Pitaka*, *Vinaya Pitaka* and *Abhidhamm Pitaka*<sup>63</sup>. These three were the core subjects of study. All the students had to learn by heart these subjects. Besides these, many other subjects were also included in the Buddhist curriculum.

During the age education system was divided into Primary course and Secondary course. Hiuen Tsang and I-tsing the two Chinese travellers very

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<sup>60</sup> *Pāṇḍurdhanuṣi vikrānto nareṣvbydhiko 'bhavat .....dharmanityastathā rājan dharme ca paramaṁ gath||M.Bh.Ādi.108.21-22.*

<sup>61</sup> *Misra,Babulal.Mahabharat kain siksa pranali, Pratibha prakasan,Delhi,2003,P.48.*

<sup>62</sup> *M.Bh.Ādi.129.23-25.*

<sup>63</sup> *Mahāvagga.IV.15.4.*

clearly mentioned that during the age the students had to learn the primary courses; after that they received the secondary courses of knowledge. I-tsing mentioned that the education of the child began at six years of his age. From the very beginning of his education, the students first studied the *Siddhirastu*<sup>64</sup>. This *Siddhirastu* contained the *Sanskrit* alphabet and syllables arranged in *ślokas*. Next at the age of eight, the child learnt the *Sūtras* of *Pāṇini*. This took the eight months to finish. After gaining the knowledge of alphabet and *Sūtras* of *Pāṇini*, from ten to fifteen years the student learnt the *Dhātu*, *Khilas* and *Kāśikāvṛitti*<sup>65</sup>. These were the *ślokas* and commentaries which were composed by learned *Jayāditya*, a man of very striking literary power.

Next the student began to learn the composition in prose and verse, logic, metaphysics and the introductory work composed by *Nagārjuna* called *Nyāya-dvara-taraka-śāstra*. And at the end of the elementary course, the students studied the five *vidyās* viz. *Śabdavidyā*, *Śilpsthānavidyā*, *chiktsāvidyā*, *Hetuvidyā*, and *Adhyātmavidyā*<sup>66</sup>.

Having finished the elementary courses, the students studied the secondary courses. In the secondary courses included with Grammar, *Mahābhāṣya*, *Bharṭṛihari-Śāstra*, *Bharṭṛihari's Vākyapādiya*, and *Bharṭṛihari Beḍa*(probably Sanskrit *Beḍa*) . These *Bharṭṛihari* works probably are the *ślokas* and commentaries which were composed by great scholar *Bharṭṛihari*<sup>67</sup>.

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<sup>64</sup> I-Tsing.P.170-172.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.P.175.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.P.127.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.P.178-180.

Besides these, from the *Jātaka* stories and from the evidence of *Milinda Pañha* give idea about the subjects of studies in Buddhist education system. The *Jātaka* stories and the *Milinda Pañha* mentioned that *Vedas* and *Sippas* or liberal arts were the principal subjects of study in Buddhist period. In *Takṣaśilā* the students always studied the *Vedas* and eighteen *Sippas*<sup>68</sup>. The *Jātaka* stories mentioned that *Sippas* were eighteen in number. They did not enumerate the *Vedas* in the *Sippas*. Whereas *Milinda Pañha* referred to nineteen *Sippas*, they enumerated *Vedas* in the *Sippas*. *Milinda Pañha* also gives the individual names of the nineteen *Sippas* viz., *Satthas* (*Śāstras*) which includes the four *Vedas* and described as *Suti* (*Śruti*), *Samuti* (*Smṛti*), *Sāṅkhya* (*Sāṅkhya*), *Yoga*, *Nīti* (*Nyāya*), *Viśeṣika* (*Vaiśeṣika*), *Gaṇikā* (arithmetic) *Gāndharba* (music) *Tikkicchā* (Medicine), *Catubbedā* (four Vedas), *Purāṇa*, *Itihāsa*, *Jyotiṣa*, *Māyā* (Magic) *Hetu* (casuistry), *Mantanā* (Polity), *Yuddha* (military science), *Chandasa* (prosody) and *Muddā* (conveyancing). Though *Vedas* and *Sippas* were the main subjects of study in Buddhist education system but some subjects were separately mentioned in the *Jātakas* and *Milinda Pañha*. These subjects were Elephant lore, Magic Charms, Spell for bringing back the dead life, Hunting, Spell for understanding all animal's cries, Archery, The art of prognostication, Charm for commanding all things of sense, divining from signs of the body and Medicine. These subjects were actually come under the *Sippas*, but *Takṣaśilā* gave special attention of these subjects. Students always

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<sup>68</sup> *Takkasilarāṅ gantva tayo veda aṭṭhārasaṅ ca sippāni uggaṇhitva* | *Brahāchatta Jataka* 336; *Brāhmaṇakumārā ca yebhuyyena tass eva santike Sippaṅ uggaṇhanti. Atheko janapadavāsi brāhmaṇo bodhisattassa santike tayo Vede aṭṭaharasaca vijjaṭṭhānāni* | *Kosiya Jātaka* 130; *so vayappato Takkasilāya sabbsipāni uggaṇhitva Bārāṇasim paccāgantvā rājānaṅ passi* | *Sattubhastā Jātaka* 402.

tried to specialize these subjects. We find in the *Jātaka* stories that a *Brāhmaṇa* boy was specialized in Archery, another specialized in Magic charms<sup>69</sup>. Like that *Jīvaka* was also specialized in Medicine<sup>70</sup>.

During the age theoretical and practical aspects of education also receive importance. Basically the students who became mastered in Medicine, Law and Military sciences, they had to know the practical usage of their subjects. But in the *Jātaka* stories we also find that all the students after receiving the theoretical knowledge, they used to go to the far off places to realize the practical experience of their subjects. *Jīvaka* after seven years of his education in *Takṣasīlā*, his teacher suggested him to go far off places to receive the practical knowledge of his subjects<sup>71</sup>. We also find many other examples where the students first received the theoretical knowledge after that they wandered various towns, cities and villages for the practical knowledge. In the *Jātaka*<sup>72</sup> stories mentioned that Prince of *Magadha* who was mastered in all the arts of *Takṣasīlā*, wandered through the various countries to acquire the practical use of his subjects. There was mentioned of Prince of *Kośala* who after receiving education at *Takṣasīlā*, travelled about the idea of mastering the practical uses of the sciences<sup>73</sup>.

<sup>69</sup> *Tadā eko bārānasībrāhmaṇo mānavo takkasilāyā dhanukamme nipphattim.....paṇḍito nāma ahosi |Jātaka 219; bodhisattvo hatthācariyakule nibbattivā vayappatto hattacariyasippe nipphattim.....upaṭṭhasi|Ibid.94.*

<sup>70</sup> *Takkasilā yena so vejo ten-----icchāṃ ahaṃ ācariyo Sippaṃ sikkhitum ti. Ten he bhane Jivaka sikkhassū ti|Mahāvagga.VIII.1.6*

<sup>71</sup> *Ahaṃ kho ācariya bahuṃ.....satta ca me vassani.....|teno hi bhaṇe Jivaka khattim ādāya Takkasilāya samantā yojaneṃ āhiṇḍanto yaṃ kiñci abhisajjaṃ paseyyāsi taṃ āharāti| Ibid. VIII.1.7.*

<sup>72</sup> *Darīmukha.....sabbasippāni ugghhitvā sabha samayasippāni ca sikkhissāma descārittaṃ ca jānissāma ti gāmanigamādisu caranta.....|Darīmukha Jātaka 378.*

<sup>73</sup> *Takkasilato nikhami, sabbasamayasippāni sikkhanto ekam paccantagāmakam pāpuṇi |*

But when we look at the educational institution of Buddhist period, we find that the subjects of study during the age were not only rich but were very vast in number. They offered both the Brahmanic and Buddhist subjects of study. The renowned teachers were the master of both Brahmanical and Buddhist subjects. We are told a teacher at *Takṣaśilā* from whose lips five hundred *Brāhmaṇa* pupils learnt the *Vedas*<sup>74</sup>. Even from the *Jātaka* stories we find that instead of *Sippas* the student can able to choose the *Vedas* as their core subject of learning. There were no restrictions. As a matter of fact during the age caste distinction did not come in the way of choosing the subjects. There we find many references that many *Brāhmin* students in *Takṣaśilā* learnt divination, magic charms, archery, science under their teachers in exclusion their own subjects<sup>75</sup>. The *Bhimsena Jātaka*, *Koseya Jātaka*, *Asadisa Jātaka* and many other *Jātakas* mentioned that *Bodhisattva* himself was mastered in three *Vedas* and eighteen *Sippas*. At the age of sixteen he went to *Takṣaśilā* and learnt the *Vedas* and *Sippas*<sup>76</sup>.

The *Milinda Pañha* also indicates that the Brahmanical education too was existence in Buddhist curriculum. The Brahmanical subjects like the *Vedas*, *Vedāṅgas*, *Itihāsa*, *Purāṇa*, *Sāṃkhya*, *Yoga*, *Nyāya*, and *Vaiśiṣika* were

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*Brahāchatta Jātaka* 336.

<sup>74</sup> *Atit Takkaśilāyaṃ Bodhisatto disāpamokkho ācāriyo hutvā pañca māṇavakasatāni mante vācesi* | *Nāmasiddhi Jātaka* 97.

<sup>75</sup> *Tadā eko bārānasibrāhmaṇo mānava takkaśilāyā dhanukamme nipphattirī.....*  
*paṇḍito nāma ahosi* | *Culladhamuggaha Jātaka* 374.

<sup>76</sup> *Tesu Bodhisatto soḷasavassakāle Takkaśilāyaṃ gantvā disāpāmokkhasa ācariyassa santike tayo vede aṭṭhārasa sippāni ca uggaṇhitvā issāsasippe asadiso hutvā Bārāṇassirī paccāgami* | *Asadisa Jātaka* 181;

*Bodhisttassa santike tayo vede aṭṭhārasa* | *Kosiya Jātaka* 130;

*Takkaśilāya disāpāmokkhasa ācariyassa santike tayo Vede aṭṭharasa vijjattāhānāni ugghetvā sabbasippe hippattimpatva* | *Bhimsen Jātaka* 80.

the main subjects of study during the age. Besides these, many other subjects like special knowledge of *Kṣatriya* was also included in the curriculum<sup>77</sup>.

During the age *Mahāyāna* and *Hīnāyāna* the two schools of Buddhist thought were very popular. Many universities provided one branch of learning. *Nālandā* University provided *Mahāyāna* school of thought where as *Valabhī* was specialised in *Hīnāyāna* Buddhism. But both the universities did not neglect each other thought. That is why, the *Nālandā* University also provided education in *Hīnāyāna* Buddhism. Here the curriculum of some famous Buddhist Universities is given :

***Takṣasilā* :**

*Takṣasilā* was a centre of higher education and students went there at the age of sixteen. They provided higher education curriculum. The many *Jātakas* mentioned the conventional list of the subjects of study at *Takṣasilā*. These subjects were the *Vedas*, Grammar, Philosophy and eighteen *Sippas*. These were the principal subjects of study. Among these subjects many other subjects like Medicine, Surgery, Archery, Military Science, Astronomy, Astrology, Conveyancing, Magic, Snake Charming, the Art of finding treasures, Law, Music, Dancing and Painting were also included in the curriculum.

***Nālandā* :**

*Nālandā* was also centre of higher education. The subject of study in *Nālandā* was very exhaustive. They basically provided education in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism. Hiuen Tsang studied the *Mahāyāna* Buddhism in *Nālandā*

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<sup>77</sup> *Milinda pañha*.IV.3.26;I.9.



University where as I-tsing studied *Hīnāyāna* Buddhism in *Nālandā* University. *Nālandā* also provided Brahmanical subjects of study because Hiuen Tsang mentioned that the students at *Nālandā* study both the old and new books. The old and new books mentioned by Hiuen Tsang includes works such as *Vedas*, *Vedāṅgas*, *Sāṃkhya*, *Nyāya*, *Yoga śāstra*, *Vaiśeṣika* and works on Buddhist *śāstras* with all its subdivisions. Besides this, from reference of Tibetan works of *Nālandā*, it is evident that *Tantra* was very popular among the students as well as the teachers of *Nalanda*. The *Tantra* was also included in the curricula of *Nālandā* University. *Nālandā* also provided the ordinary subjects of study like *Hetuvidyā*, *Śabdavidyā*, *Chikitsāvidyā* and the works on Magic. But they thoroughly investigated the miscellaneous works.

#### ***Valabhī and Vikramśilā :***

*Valabhī* and *Vikramśilā* Universities were famous for their educational activities. Both the Universities provided very rich educational facilities to their students. But we have very little information about the subjects of study in *Valabhī* and *Vikramśilā* Universities. As a matter of fact both the Universities faced many political vicissitudes, so their curricula were thoroughly destroyed for these political ups and downs. We do not find any material evidence about the curricula of *Valabhī* and *Vikramśilā* University. But it is gathered that both the Universities follow the curricula of *Nālandā* Universities. We also find that *Valabhī* was school of *Hīnāyāna* Buddhism. They provided education in *Hīnāyāna* Buddhism. They also imparted education in secular subjects like Economics, Accountancy, Politics, Medicine, and literature. Where as in

*Vikramśilā* University, Grammar, Logic, Mataphysics, *Tantra* and Ritualism were the main subjects of study. The *Vikramśilā* University had special arrangement for the study of non religious or secular subjects.

The Vedic and Buddhist education systems started with their scriptures and both aimed at over the subjects studied. It was not only religious but non religious and secular subjects were also part of the study.

Although the education systems started with their scriptures, the Buddhist education system incorporated the Brahmanical subjects too. It is a matter of fact that Buddhist education systems always tried to establish their own faith and cult. As Buddhism was a new thought and new religion. They always faced the Brahmanic challenges. For this reason they required to know more about the Brahmanical subjects and Buddhist teachers also encouraged their students to study the Brahmanical subjects. But Buddhist and Brahmanic systems did not remain antagonistic to each other. Both the systems were complimentary to each other. The Brahmanic scholars respected the Buddhist society. They also imparted education to Buddhist scholars. Brahmanic scholar also went to Buddhist University to gain the knowledge on Buddhistic subjects. We have already mentioned in the third chapter that in *Kathāsaritsāgar*, we find the reference of a *Brahmin* boy completed his education in *Valabhī* University<sup>78</sup>.

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<sup>78</sup> *Antaravedayāmbhūtpūrvarṅ vasudatt iti dvijaḥ /  
Viṣṇudattavhidhānśca putrastasyopapadyata ||  
Sa viṣṇudatto vayasā pūrṇaṣoḍaśavatsarah|  
Gaṁtuṁ pravavṛte vidyāprāptaye valbhīpuram ||  
Kathāsaritsāgar,XXXII,42-43.*