

Jaiminīyasāma - Origin, Structure, Accentuation, Oral Gāna Tradition and Commentaries

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Origin

According to the tradition, Bhagavān Vedavyāsa compiled and edited the Vedamantras dividing them into four, *Ṛk*, *Yajus*, *Sāma* and *Atharva*. Before that, we get the names of many seers who composed the hymns like Viśvāmitra, Vasiṣṭha and Vāmadeva. It was left to Parāśaravyāsa or Vedavyāsa to arrange the hymns in a systematic manner for the benefit of the posterity. Accordingly he taught them to five of his students - Paila (*Ṛgveda*), Vaiśampāyana (*Yajus*), Jaimini (*Sāma*), Subantu (*Atharva*) and Romaharṣaṇa (Itihāsa and Purāṇa). They transmitted this knowledge to their disciples who, in turn, enriched them with their interpretations and commentaries. Thus the origin of *Sāmaveda* as a separate Veda as we get it now, can be attributed to Vyāsa and his disciple Jaimini. Vyāsa got the name 'Vedavyāsa' because it was he who codified, edited and divided the Vedas into four.

Meaning of the word 'Sāma'

Generally, the word 'Sāma' means 'Stuti' or 'musical composition in Stuti form'. Thus it is clear that the *Sāmaveda* has much relation to music. Scholars have explained the word 'Sāma' based on different derivative meanings. According to one opinion, the word Sāma has derived from the root 'ṣa' meaning 'to destroy' (षो अन्तकर्मणि). Thus it means that the chanting of the Veda 'destroys all evils and sins'. Pāṇini derives the word from the root 'sām' meaning 'to sooth or give comfort' (साम्

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सान्त्वप्रयोगे). It is meant here that through the melodies of music, the Veda, while chanting or when hearing, soothes the heart or gives comforts of all kind to the mind. Another derivation is from the root 'syati' which means that it destroys all worries by its musical melody (स्यति च्छिनत्ति दुःखं गेयत्वात्, स्यति खण्डयति दुःखानि येन तत्). Some give the meaning 'sorrow' or 'pain' to the root 'syati' with the hint that it is very difficult or painful to learn *Sāmaveda* (स्यति दुःखयति दुःध्येयत्वात्). The word also means that the gods are pleased by hearing the chanting of *Sāma* (सामयति देवान् अनेन).

The word 'Sāma' is the combination of the words 'sā' and 'ama'. This is referred to in *Aitareyabrāhmaṇa* (12. 12), *Atharvaveda* (14. 2. 71) and *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* (1.3.22). According to *Sāyaṇabhāṣya*, 'sā' refers to the Mantras or Ṛks and 'ama' refers to the Svaras or accents while the Ṛks are chanted.

In many contexts in *Ṛgveda*, the word *Sāma* is referred to:

अङ्गिरसां सामभिः स्तूयमानः। (1.107.2)

सामगा इव गायत्रञ्च त्रैष्टुभञ्च। (2.43.1)

उद्गातेव...साम गायसि। (2.43.2)

शुद्धेन साम्ना। (8.84.7)

इन्द्राय बृहत् साम गायत। (8.87.1)

अङ्गिरसो न सामभिः। (10.78.5)

Samhitā and recensions

According to *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali, *Sāmaveda* had one thousand recensions (सहस्रवर्त्मा सामवेदः). *Sāmaveda* having one thousand Śākhās is referred to in *Viṣṇupurāṇa* (सहस्रसंहिताभेदम्) and *Caraṇavyūha* (तत्र सामवेदस्य शाखासहस्रमासीत्) also. In *Caraṇavyūha*, among the one thousand Śākhās, Rāṇāyaṇīya, Sātyamukhya, Kālāpa, Mahākālāpa, Kauthūma and Lāṅgalika are referred to by their names. The sub-divisions of the Śākhās of Kauthūma, six in

number, are also referred to in some texts which are Sārāyaṇīya, Vātarāyaṇīya, Vaidhr̥ta, Prācīna, Taijasa and Anīṣṭaka. In the text *Sāmatarpaṇavidhi*, names of thirteen Śākhās of *Sāmaveda* are given which are Rāṇāyaṇīya, Śāṭyamugrya, Vyāsa, Bhāguri, Auluṇḍi, Gaulguli, Bhānumāna, Aupammanyava, Kārāṭi, Maśakagārgya, Vārṣagavya, Kuthuma and Śālihotra (*Sāmaveda* with Hindi commentary, Damodar Satvalekar, Swadhyayamandal, Surat, 1963, Bhūmikā, p. 7). In this way there are various references getting regarding the Śākhās of *Sāmaveda*.

Among these, only three, Jaiminīya, Kauthūma and Rāṇāyaṇīya are preserved. Puṣpasūtra, a Prātiśākhya text of *Sāmaveda*, refers two more Śākhās of it as current, namely Kālabavi and Śāṭyāyani, but the continuation of which has been lost, it seems. (कालबविनामपि प्रवचनविहितः स्वरः स्वाध्याये, तथा शाट्यायिनाम् । Puṣpasūtra, 8.8.28-29). Kauthūma and Rāṇāyaṇīya are current even now in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra and Bengal. Kauthūma is otherwise known as Cchandoga and the other name of Jaiminīya is Talavakāra. There is no much textual variation regarding Kauthūma and Rāṇāyaṇīya Śākhās, but there are differences in accents while chanting.

Compared to Kauthūma and Rāṇāyaṇīya, Jaiminīyaśākhā is very different in the arrangement of the text, sequence of Ṛks, division of chapters and chanting. Jaiminīyaśākhā has two main divisions, the one practiced by the Namboothiris of Kerala and the other practiced by Tamil Brāhmaṇas. Namboothiri Jaiminīya is now prevelant in the village Panjal in Trissur District in Kerala. Five Namboothiri families, Muṭṭattukāṭṭil, Nellikkāṭṭil, Perumaññāṭ, Korāṭṭikkara and Toṭṭam, preserved the tradition till recent times. But it is in the state of extinction now, as the tradition is being discontinued due to various reasons and is difficult to revamp again. Jaiminīyasāma of Tamil Brāhmaṇa tradition is more vogue and many are

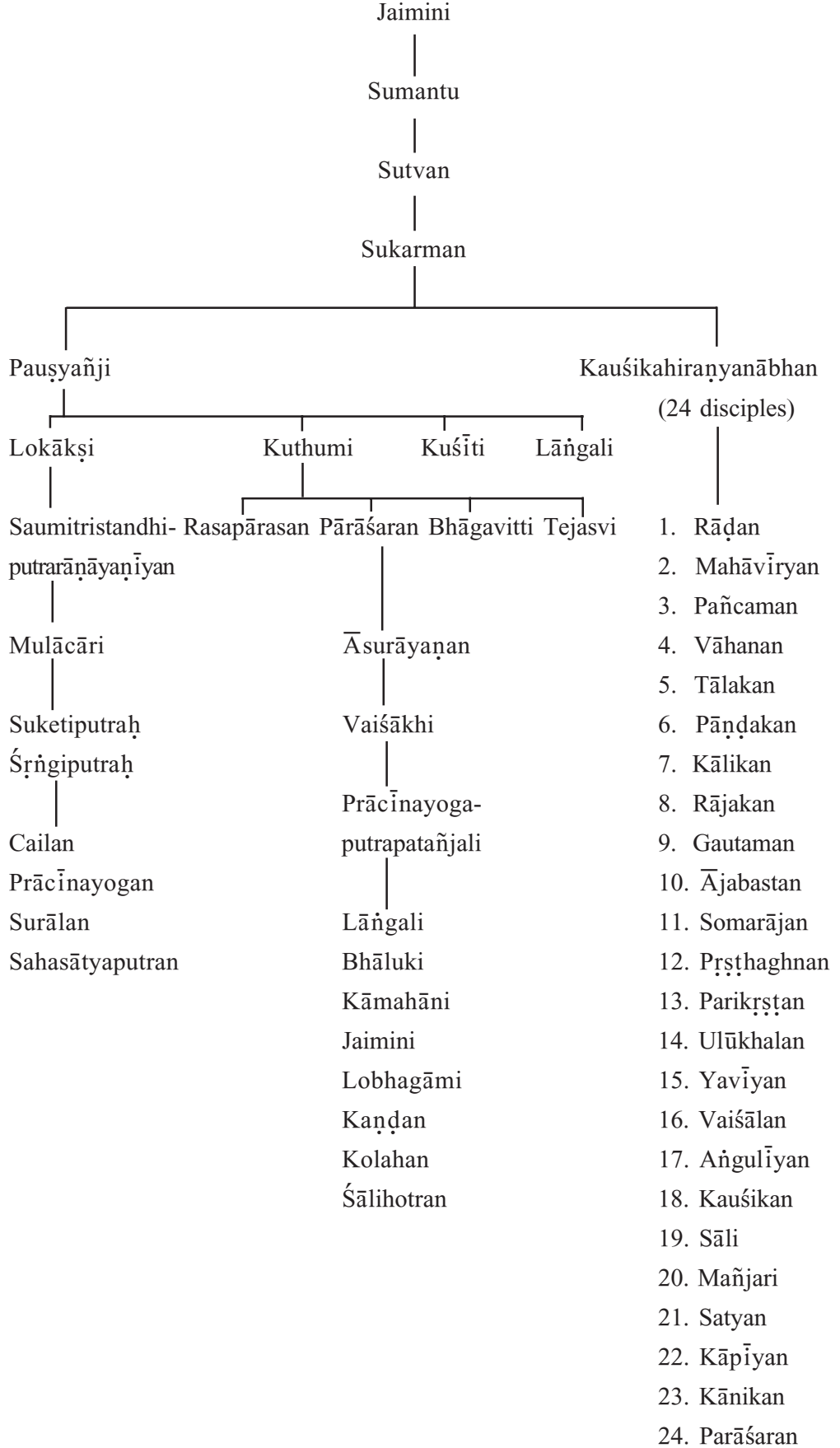
practicing it even now. There is a Gurukula running for Jaiminiyasāma of Tamil tradition at Tanjavoor in Tamil Nadu under the Guru Makarabhushanam Iyankar and one at the village Kodunthirappully near Palakkad in Kerala under the Guru Tiruvenketanatha Sharma.

In *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, there is a reference to the Śākhās and Ācāryas of *Sāmaveda* which is as follows (Amśa 3, Addhyāya 6, Śloka 1-8):

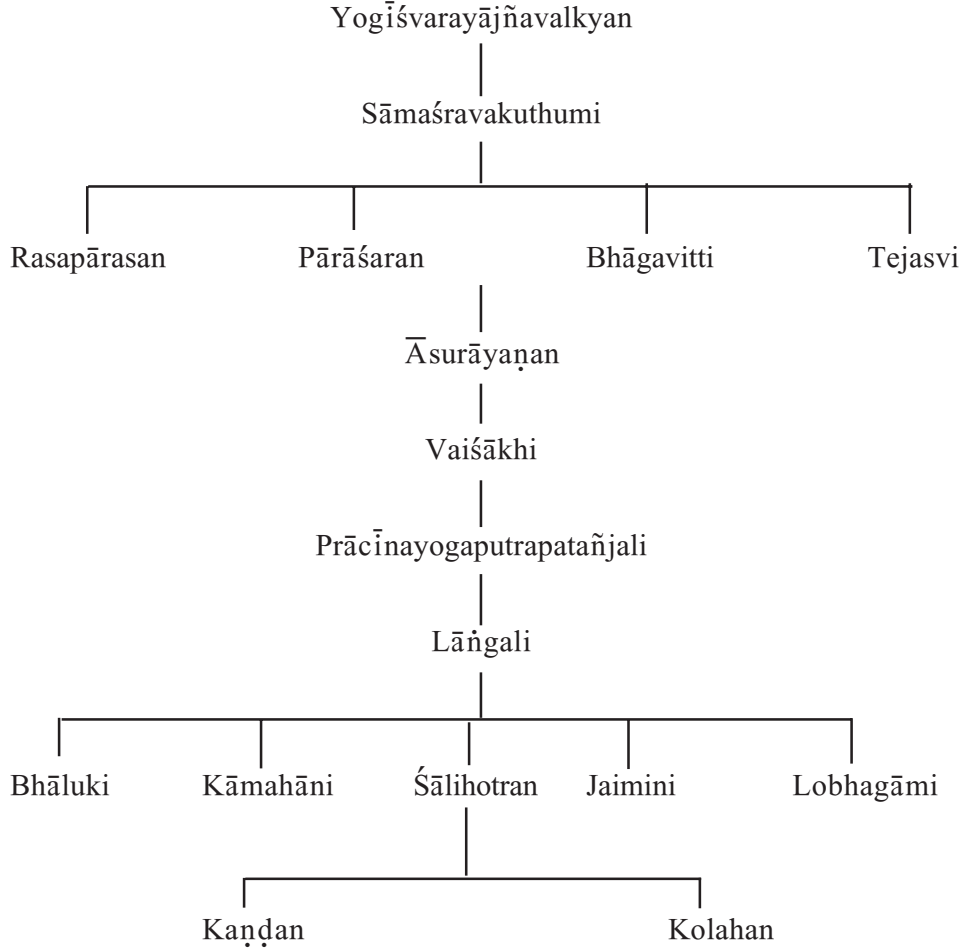
सामवेदतरोशशाखाः व्यासशिष्यस्स जैमिनिः ।
 क्रमेण येन मैत्रेयः बिभेद शृणु तन्मम ॥
 सुमन्तुस्तस्य पुत्रोऽभूत् सुकर्मास्याप्यभूत्सुतः ।
 अधीतवन्तौ चैकैकां संहितां तौ महामती ॥
 सहस्रसंहिताभेदं सुकर्मा तत्सुतस्ततः ।
 चकार तं च तच्छिष्यौ जगृहाते महाव्रतौ ॥
 हिरण्यनाभः कौसल्यः पौष्पिञ्जिश्च द्विजोत्तम ।
 उदीच्यास्सामगाः शिष्याः तस्य पञ्चशतं स्मृताः ॥
 हिरण्यनाभात्तावत्यस्संहिता यैर्द्विजोत्तमैः ।
 गृहीतास्तेऽपि चोच्यन्ते पण्डितैः प्राच्यसामगाः ॥
 लोकाक्षिर्नोधमिश्चैव कक्षीवान् लाङ्गलिस्तथा ।
 पौष्पिञ्जिशिष्यास्तद्भेदैः संहिताः बहुलीकृताः ॥
 हिरण्यनाभशिष्यस्तु चतुर्विंशतिसंहिताः ।
 प्रोवाच कृतिनामासौ शिष्येभ्यश्च महामुनिः ॥
 तैश्चापि सामवेदोऽसौ शाखाभिर्बहुलीकृतः ।
 ॥

In the Introduction to *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa*, reference to the Śākhās of *Sāmaveda* is given, According to that, there are two lineage for the Śākhās of *Sāmaveda* called Brahmasampradāya and Ādiyasampradāya. The Ācāryas under each are listed there as follows:

Brahmasampradāya



Ādityasampradāya



The Kauthūma recension also has two branches, Prācīnakauthūma and Navīnakauthūma. The former is also called Paribhāṣāpāṭha which is not preserved now. There were scholars in Prācīnakauthūma in the village Putukkode near Palakkad in Kerala. They were the descendants of the Kauthūmaśākhā Brahmins of Maharashtra. For some reasons, historical, social and cultural, they happened to get settled in Putukkode village under Palakkad kings and they preserved the Prācīnakauthūma with its pristine purity. Pandit Gopala Vadhyar was the last scholar in the tradition who passed away some years ago without having any

disciples to continue the tradition. An audio/video cassette of the Prācīnakauthūma chanting of Puthukkode Gopala Vadhyar only is now available as an example of the tradition. In the meantime, the Kauthūma style of Maharashtra and other places underwent many changes, which is called Navīnakauthūma. This is now practiced in the Gurukulas in the states like Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra. (For more details of the Prācīnakauthūma tradition of Puthukkode village, vide the article 'Vedic Studies in Kerala', Dr. K. G. Paulose, Kadavallur Anyonyam Silver Jubilee Smaranika, Kadavallur Anyonya Parishath, Kadavallur, Trissur Dist., Kerala, Nov. 2014, pp. 193-199)

Structure of the text and division of chapters

The structure of the text and division of chapters of Kauthūma and Rāṇāyaṇīya recensions are almost similar. The text in these recensions are divided into three namely Pūrvārcika or Cchandārcika, Mahānāmnyārcika and Uttarārcika. Pūrvārcika is again divided into four Kāṇḍas according to the deities invoked and praised namely Āgneya, Aindra, Pavamāna and Āraṇya. Uttarārcika is designed codifying the Ṛks according to the rituals related to the performance of Yāgas. The Ṛks in the Uttarārcika are arranged as trios or Tṛcas. There are only ten Ṛks in the Mahānāmnyārcika which is found in between Pūrvārcika and Uttarārcika.

Each Kāṇḍa in the Pūrvārcika of Kauthūma and Rāṇāyaṇīya recensions is again divided into Prapāṭhaka, Ardhaprapāṭhaka and Daśati (collection of ten Ṛks). In the Pūrvārcika there are 640 Mantras included in four Kāṇḍas. These Mantras are distributed in six Prapāṭhakas, thirteen Ardhaprapāṭhakas and sixty four Daśatis. Ten Mantras of Mahānāmnyārcika is attached to the Pūrvārcika as another Daśati. Uttarārcika is also divided into Prapāṭhakas, Ardhaprapāṭhakas, Sūktas and Ṛks. Daśati type of division is not found in Uttarārcika. There are total

1225 Ṛks in Uttarārcika which are distributed in nine Prapāṭhakas and twenty two Ardhaprapāṭhakas.

The total number of Mantras in Kauthūma-Rāṇāyaṇīya recensions becomes 1875 as follows:

Mantras in Āgneya, Aindra and Pavamāna Kāṇḍas	585
Mantras in Āraṇyakāṇḍa	55
Mantras in Mahānāmnyārcika	10
Mantras in Uttarārcika	<u>1225</u>
Total Mantras	<u><u>1875</u></u>

In the Gānas of Kauthūma recensions, there are total 2722 Gānas (1197 Grāmageyagānas, 294 Āraṇyageyagānas, 1026 Ūhagānas and 205 Ūhyagānas) (Vide *Sāmaveda* with Hindi Commentary, Ed. by Damodar Sattvalekhar, Swadhyayamandal, Surath, 1963, p. 10).

Compared to the Kauthūma-Rāṇāyaṇīya recensions, Jaiminīyasāma recension contains 1698 Ṛks or Mantras in total.

These Ṛks are distributed in five Kāṇḍas in 112 Adhyāyas. The Kāṇḍas in Jaiminīya recension are Āgneya, Aindra, Pavamāna, Dvādaśāha and Uttara. First three Kāṇḍas contain Ṛks praising the deities Agni, Indra and Pavamāna respectively. The Mantras in the Kāṇḍas four and five are related to various Yāga rituals. The Mantras distributed in the Kāṇḍas and Adhyāyas of Jaiminīya recension are as follows:

	Kāṇḍas	Adhyāyas	Mantras or Ṛks
1.	Āgneya	12 (1- 12)	116 (1-116)
2.	Aindra	36 (13-48)	352 (117-468)
3.	Pavamāna	11 (49-59)	119 (469-587)
4.	Dvādaśāha	47 (60-106)	757 (588-1344)
5.	Uttara	06 (107-112)	354 (1345-1698)

Dr. Raghuvira has edited and published *Jaiminīyasāmaveda* from Lahore in 1938. But the arrangement of the text and the arrangement of Mantras of the Jaiminīyasāma of Kerala Namboothiris have some differences when compared to the Jaiminīyasāma edited and published by Dr. Raghuvira. The Jaiminīya recension of Kerala Namboothiris was not printed till very recent times. It was remaining in transcript form in the collection of the Sāma Panditsof Panjal village of Kerala. Dr. K. A. Ravindran brought out the first edition of the Jaiminīyasāma of Kerala Namboothiris in Malayalam script with exhaustive study and introduction in Malayalam from Panchangam Pustakasala, Kunnankulam, Trissur Dist, Kerala, in 2007. Later it was published from Centre for Vedic Studies, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, Kerala, jointly edited by Dr. C. M. Neelakandhan and Dr. K. A. Ravindran in 2014. The edition contains the text in Nāgari script and English transliteration and simple English translation of the Mantras. Dr. K. A. Ravindran has edited the text of *Keralīyajaiminīyasāmaveda* with Ārcika, Sāma and Candrāsāma portions in two volumes as part of a project of National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM), IGNCA, New Delhi which was also published from NMM, New Delhi, in 2014.

Oral Gāna tradition

The oral Gāna tradition of *Sāmaveda* is very unique, elaborate and musical. The oral chanting methods slightly changes with each of the existing Śākhās, Jaiminīya, Kauthūma and Rāṇāyaṇīya. Again, the chanting tradition and the Svaras and the peculiarities of accents change according to each region. Kerala Namboothiris have a particular way of chanting of *Sāmaveda* which is not found in other places. Similarly Jaiminīya of Tamil Nadu tradition is again different in the style of chanting. The same Jaiminīya tradition of Tamil Brahmins settled in Kerala at Koduntirappully village near Palakkad has minor differences from that

of the Jaiminīya tradition of Tamil Brahmins settled in Tamil Nadu. Regional cultures, social environments, historical aspects, accentuation, food habits and the like surely influence the method of articulation of letters and words which is invariably found in the chanting tradition of *Sāmaveda* also. The Prācīnakauthūma retaining its original tradition in its pristine purity in the Puthukkode village near Palakkad and the same subjected to change in Maharashtra and other regions, as noted above, are the best examples for these tendencies.

But the common and most important factor related to the Gāna tradition of *Sāmaveda* in general is invariably found in all these Śākhās in all parts of India in all its stages of development and evolution. This is its close relationship with the music tradition of India, especially classical music. All the seven Svaras of classical music are found and used in its primitive form in Sāma chanting. Kruṣṭa, Prathama, Dvitiya, Tṛtiya, Caturtha, Mandra and Atisvara are the seven Svaras used in Sāma chanting. Kruṣṭa is the Svara in the highest pitch. Tṛtiyasvara is considered the basic Svara (Ādhārasvara) and it is also known as Dhṛtapracaya. *Nāradiyaśikṣā* states that the seven Svaras of Sāma, Prathama, Dvitiya, Tṛtiya, Caturtha, Mandra (Pañcama), Kruṣṭa and Atisvara and respectively the seven Svaras of classical music, Madhyama, Gāndhāra, Rṣabha, Ṣaḍja, Dhāivata, Niṣāda and Pañcama.

प्रथमश्च द्वितीयश्च तृतीयोऽथ चतुर्थकः ।

मन्द्रः क्रुष्टो ह्यतिस्वारः एतान् कुर्वन्ति सामगाः ॥

(Prapāṭhaka I, Khaṇḍa 1, Śloka 12)

यः सामगानां प्रथमः स वेणोर्मध्यमः स्वरः ।

यो द्वितीयः स गान्धारः तृतीयस्त्वृषभः स्मृतः ॥

चतुर्थः षड्ज इत्याहुः पञ्चमो धैवतो भवेत् ।

षष्ठो निषादो विज्ञेयः सप्तमः पञ्चमः स्मृतः ॥

(Prapāṭhaka I, Khaṇḍa 5, Śloka 1, 2)

Thus the oral Gāna tradition of Sāma chanting is related to classical music in many ways.

Close relationship of Sāma chanting with music is highlighted by many earlier scholars in their authoritative statements. Some examples are given here.

सामभ्यो गीतमेव च । (*Nāṭyaśāstram*)

सामवेदात् स्वरो जातः स्वरेभ्यो ग्रामसंभवः । (*Bṛhaddeśī* of Mataṅga)

सामवेदादिदं गीतं संजग्राह पितामहः । (*Saṅgītaratnākara* of Śārṅgadeva)

सप्तस्वरास्तु गीयन्ते सामभिस्सामगैर्बुधैः । (*Māṇḍūkyaśikṣā*)

It is taking into consideration this musical importance of *Sāmaveda* that in *Bhagavadgītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa identifies himself with *Sāmaveda* among the four Vedas (वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि).

Commentaries and editions

Earlier commentators of *Sāmaveda* before Sāyaṇa, like Mādhava, Bharatasvāmi and Guṇaviṣṇu are referred to by different Ācāryas in various texts. But such commentaries are not getting now. Like for other Vedas Sāyaṇa has written commentary on *Sāmaveda* also (for Kauthūma recension). Mainly based on Sāyaṇa, many commentaries and translations were written for *Sāmaveda* both by Eastern and Western scholars in 19th and 20th centuries which is continuing even now. Commentary on *Sāmaveda* in English was written by Dr. Steevanson which was published by Prof. Wilson in 1842. In 1848, Prof. Benfy published *Sāmaveda* with the first English translation in verse. Based on this, Prof. Griffith also wrote an English translation in verse for *Sāmaveda*.

Among the total number of Ṛks in *Sāmaveda*, except more than one hundred, are those found in *Ṛgveda*. Dr. K. A. Ravindran in this work *Sāmavedadarpaṇam* has given in detail the Ṛks found in both the Jaiminīya and Kauthūma recensions of *Sāmaveda*, that are not found in *Ṛgveda* with their Malayalam translation

(Anubandham I, pp. 62-86). Because most of the Ṛks of *Sāmaveda* are those found in *Ṛgveda*, the commentaries, translations and studies on the *Ṛgveda*, especially of the Ṛks in it found in *Sāmaveda*, can also be made use for their study and analysis. The editions and studies on *Sāmaveda* that contain commentaries, studies and translations, are listed here.

1. *Sāmavedabhāṣyam*, with the text of Sāma and Hindi commentary named Bhagavatī by Paramahansa Jagadīśvarānandasarasvati, Samskar Prakasan, Delhi, 1996.
2. *Sāmavedasamhitā*, with text and English translation by R. T. H. Griffith, revised edition by Dr. Ravi Prakash Arya, Parimal Publications, Delhi, 1996.
3. *Sāmavedasamhitā*, with text and English translation by Devichand, Munshiram Manoharlall, Delhi, 1995.
4. *Sāmavedasamhitā* with text and English translation by R. T. H. Griffith, Nag Publishers, New Delhi, 1991.
5. *Sāmavedasamhitā*, with text and English translation by S. V. Ganapathy, Motilal Benarsidass, Delhi, 1992.
6. *Sāmaveda* with English translation in verse by R. T. H. Griffith (no Sanskrit text included), Munshiram Manoharlall, Delhi, 1995.
7. *Sāmavedasamhitā*, text with the Sanskrit commentary named Sāmasamskāram by Svāmi Bhagavācārya, Chowkhamba Publications, Varanasi, 2003 (two volumes).
8. *Sāmaveda*, text with the Hindi commentary by Sripada Damodar Sattvalekar, named Subodh, Swadhyaya Mandal, Surath, 1963.
9. *Sāmaveda* with English translation in prose by Dr. B. R. Kishor, Diamond Pocket Books Pvt. Ltd, Delhi, 2002 (no Sanskrit text included).
10. *Jaiminiīyasāmaveda*, with text only, Dr. Raghuvira, Lahore, 1938.

11. *Sāmaveda* with text in Malayalam script and translation in prose in Malayalam, D. Sreeman Namboothiri, Vidarthimitram Press, Kollam, 1997.
12. *Sāmavedadarpaṇam*, text of the Jaiminīya recension of Kerala Namboothiris first published in Malayalam script with exhaustive study, introduction, notes and appendices, Dr. K. A. Ravindran, Panchangam Pustakasala, Kunnankulam, Trissur, Kerala, 2007.
13. *Jaiminīyasāmaveda of Kerala Namboothiri Tradition*, with text in Nāgari script and transliteration and simple translation in English, jointly edited by Dr. C. M. Neelakandhan and Dr. K. A. Ravindran, Centre for Vedic Studies, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, Kerala, 2014.
14. *Jaiminīyasāmavedasamhitā*, text of Kerala Tradition (Ārcika, Sāma and Candrāsāma portions), both in Nāgari and Malayalam Scripts (two volumes), Ed. by Dr. K. A. Ravindran, National Mission for Manuscripts, IGNCA, New Delhi, 2013.

The list is not exhaustive. All translations and studies that are published in different regional languages have not been included in the list.
