**A PHILOSOPHICAL EXPLORATION OF ADHYĀTMA YOGA IN YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA**

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ABSTRACT

My proposed research aims to bring to light through intensive textual analysis concepts like what is adhyātma yoga, where it is mentioned in various philosophical texts and in what context. This is important to establish the meaning of adhyātma yoga as will be referred to throughout the research work. The next question will be to elucidate what are its processes and practices and why the current text, Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha, was chosen to talk about adhyātma yoga.

One of the main research questions is to show how the Mind, World and Self are treated in Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha by discussing concepts like the different types of Mind – Physical mind, astral mind, causal mind, cosmic mind and the creative power of thought. I will then attempt to show what Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha has to say about the creative power of thought, worlds within worlds, the different layers of the Self – Physical self, astral self, causal self and cosmic self and finally the concept of Desire and Rebirth/Transmigration.

Another question that will be taken head on is to see what wisdom Yoga Vāsiṣṭha offers for Practical Realisation of the Absolute along the lines of what it has to say about Self-effort for self-realisation/self-initiation, Renunciation and enjoyment/equanimity while living in the world, Character of the aspirant and Experience as the final test of belief.

The crux of the thesis will be made available to the reader from the answer to the following question which is to establish that Dhyāna Yoga is Adhyātma Yoga. This will be done in different stages. In the first stage we will discuss adhyātma yoga as described in Bhagavat Gita. In the second stage we discuss how Adhyātma Yoga as Manonigraha Yoga in Gaudapāda’s Māṇdūkya Kārikā and simliarly to explore other aspects of Adhyātma Yoga as mentioned in different philosophical texts. This will establish how Dhyāna Yoga is Adhyātma Yoga are non-different for the nuanced reader of the Yoga Vāsiṣṭha.

Last but not the least, the aim of the current research is to bring to light misconceptions about adhyātma yoga and critiques about the same. Through the means of all these research questions the objectives aforementioned will be attempted to be achieved.

The methodology which will be followed in my thesis will be primarily analytic in nature. In addition, in some parts of my thesis I will also use descriptive and critical methods. The study will be based on qualitative method of research. In it I will focus on the idea of hermeneutics and analysis of discourse. Most of the primary material for my thesis would include translations of the Yoga-Vasistha given by various authors in both English and Hindi language. I will take an interpretative analysis of the existing articles, speeches, books, journals and publications on the given topic. My aim through this exercise will be to go deep into the nuances of the text and bring forth in a systematised manner the subject matter necessary to further the objectives of this study. This current research work will be an attempt to make a deep philosophical exploration of the different concepts scattered throughout the text and bring them under a conceptual umbrella making it easier for the focused researcher who refers to this work to find what she is looking for with ease.