

HASTAMUDRA SAHITA RIG-VEDA PADA PATHA

Concept: Preservation of unique hand-signals (*hastamudra*) as an error-correcting way of transmitting Vedic samhita accurately from generation to generation. This is a Traditional Expression of Culture practised by Kerala Nambudiris over a millennium, but it is now endangered.

First product: 50 hours of video recordings by Vedic scholars who have mastered the technique. Future plans include similar documentation of *Trisandha*, another unique Vedic ritual with Pada, Krama and Vikriti Paathas.

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Pada Paatha, in Vedic terminology refers to learning of constituent words of ***Samhita*** (Vedamantra) which is an important part of ancient Vedic tradition both in study and ritual renderings of Vedas:

- ❖ It is the first level of expertise after memorization of ***Samhitas*** for scholars pursuing advanced chantings such as Krama and Vikriti Paathas which are renderings of the constituent words of ***Samhitas*** in specified sequences.
- ❖ It is the first step in study and error free rendering of the meter bound ***Samhitas*** which strictly follow Vedic grammatical rules.
- ❖ It is used in many Vedic rituals like Veda initiation, Vaaram, Threeni, Thrisandha etc.

Hastamudra (hand sign) is an integral part of Kerala Rigvedic tradition transmitted from one generation to the next. The technique using the palm and fingers of the right hand in various positions is quite complex and has many unique features:

- ❖ Precise description of Pada Paatha by Mudras in a defined sequence.
- ❖ Specific Mudras used to indicate position in Samhita for breakup into constituent words, Swara or intonation of each syllable in the word and features of the syllables at the beginning, middle and end of each word.
- ❖ Helps in accurate and error free depiction of ***Samhitas*** and ***Pada Paatha***.

Pada Paatha with ***Hastamudra*** enables expert Vedic scholars to communicate all chantings including Pada Paatha simply by hand signs, with no need for oral expression to clarify intonation, accent, emphasis etc. It is very effective for ***Pada Paatha*** students and also leads to improved retention in memory.

Product Highlights

- Unique **Video Documentation** spread over 50 hours of ***Pada Paatha*** with ***Hastamudra*** of entire Rigveda covering more than 10,000 Samhitas (Rks).
- Basic technique of ***Hastamudra***, part of the Kerala School of Vedic tradition, explained and demonstrated for easy understanding by scholars and students.
- Can be used as a novel and effective teaching tool for ***Rigveda Pada Paatha***.
- Excellent reference for Vedic scholars and students for **error-free rendering** of Samhitas (Rks) and learning advanced renderings like ***Krama*** and ***Vikriti Paathas***.
- A valuable asset for Veda Paathashalas, Mathas and libraries.
- Prepared by Sri K. M. Vasudevan Namboodiri, a traditional Vedic scholar, in consultation with a team of experts after careful analysis of available Rigveda Pada Paatha texts.