

ANGEL AND TITAN: AN ESSAY IN VEDIC ONTOLOGY

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Ekam vā idam vi babbūva sarvam, RV. VIII. 58. 2.
Bhrātaram varuṇam agna ā vavṛtsva, RV. IV. 1. 2.
Sarpyā vā ādityāḥ, PB. XXV. 15. 4.¹

Introduction

THE LEADING idea to be developed in the present article is that the Devas and Asuras, Angels and Titans, powers of Light and powers of Darkness in RV., although distinct and opposite in operation, are in essence consubstantial, their distinction being a matter

¹ “This One becomes the All;” “Turn hitherwards, O Agni, they brother Varuṇa” (that is, “Reveal thyself,” since Agni is “Varuṇa’s face,” RV. VII. 88. 2, Sūrya the “face” of the Angels, Mitra, Varuṇa, Agni,” I. 115. 1); “The Serpents are the Suns.”

Abbreviations: RV., *Rg Veda Samhitā* (also to be understood where no indication is given; references to the eighth book follow the consecutive numbering, without separation of the Vālakhilya); TS., *Taittiriya Samhitā*; AV., *Atharva Veda Samhitā*; VS., *Vājasaneyi Samhitā*; MS., *Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā*; TB., *Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa*; AB., *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*; PB., *Pañcavimśa Brāhmaṇa*; KB., *Kaushitaki Brāhmaṇa*; SB., *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*; JB., *Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa*; JUB., *Jaiminiya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa*; GB., *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa*; AA., *Aitareya Āranyaka*; BrD., *Bṛhad Devatā*; N., *Yāska, Nirukta*; BU., *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*; ChU., *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*; KU., *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*; TP., *Taittiriya Pratiśākhya*; Āp. Śr. S., *Apastamba Śrauta Sūtra*; Mbh., *Mahābhārata*; BG., *Bhagavad Gītā*; R., *Rāmāyaṇa*; BP., *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*; YS., *Yoga Sūtra*; D., *Digha Nikāya*; SP., *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka*; SBE., *Sacred Books of the East*; HOS., *Harvard Oriental Series*; JAOS., *Journal of the American Oriental Society*; WZKM., *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenländes*; VM., *Macdonell, Vedic Mythology*.

Some of the problems discussed have been previously raised by Professor W. Norman Brown, “The Sources and Nature of *puruṣa* in the Puruṣasūkta (Rig Veda 10. 90),” JAOS. 51. 108-118, and “Proselyting the Asuras,” JAOS. 39. 100-103. The present treatise is independent of Siecke, *Drachenkämpfe*, Leipzig, 1907, and Scharbau, *Die Idee der Schöpfung in der vedischen Literatur*, Stuttgart, 1933.

The following are invariable renderings: *deva*, “Angel;” *asura*, “Titan;” *ahi*, “Serpent” (*sarpa* also, “Serpent” or “serpent”); *vrtra*, “Dragon;” *māyā*, “Magic;” *māyin*, “Magician.”

not of essence but of orientation, revolution, or transformation, as indicated by such express statements as "The Serpents are the Suns" in PB., and the constant employment of *vrt*, to "turn," "-vert," "-volve," etc. in RV. and Brāhmaṇas, in connection with the relations of Angels and Titans, *passim*. In this case, the Titan is potentially an Angel, the Angel still by nature a Titan; the Darkness in *actu* is Light, the Light in *potentia* Darkness; whence the designations Asura and Deva may be applied to one and the same "Person" according to the mode of operation, as in the case of Varuṇa, or alternatively, there may be a distinction of names in the same sense, as in RV. I. 163. 3, "Trita art thou (Agni) by interior operation" (*guhyena vratena*). At the same time it is proposed to show that whereas the Angels are typically "men" or "birds," the Titans are typically theriomorphic and in particular ophidian (*sarpya*). These theses are of primary importance in the exegesis of iconography and that of "serpent-worship." The proposition as outlined above is summarized in the citations pre-fixed by way of "argument." In the present essay account is taken only of the masculine powers; in connection with the corresponding feminine powers, the matter of *sarpatva* has been discussed in "The Darker Side of Dawn," *Smithsonian Miscellaneous Publications*, vol. 94, no. 1; the two papers should be read together.

1. *Indra and Namuci*

The story of Indra and the Titan Namuci, "Holdfast," has been admirably discussed by Bloomfield.² Here we shall only refer

² "The Story of Indra and Namuci," JAOS. 15. 143 ff. I do not agree with Bloomfield that the "foam of the waters" used by Indra as his weapon necessarily means "lead." In SB. XII. 7. 3. 3 Indra's *vajra* is actually made of the foam of the waters. Or we might understand that Indra cut off Namuci's head with the foam "by way of *vajra*," following Mahidhara on VS. X. 33, and on the analogy of PB. XV. 5. 20, "with a reed by way of *vajra*" and JB. III. 266, "blade of grass into which Indra infused his *vajra*." In X. 61. 8 *phena* = *retas*. If then we correlate I. 103. 7 *vajrena* with II. 11. 2 *viryena*, and recall that *virya* is not merely "bravery" but also "seed" (as rendered by Bühler in translation of Manu. I. 8), it is apparent in what sense, viz. by the "seminal virtue" as *vajra*, that Indra decapitated Namuci (and thus generated life); and this is confirmed by PB. XV. 5. 20 *iśikām vajram*, if we equate *iśikā* with *vetasa*, as employed significantly in X. 95. 4 *śnathita vaitasena*, cf. SB. IX. 1. 2. 22 where the bamboo (*vetasa*) is a kind of "water" symbolically

to what is pertinent for present purposes. Indra and Namuci, Titan and Magician, whose identity with Vṛtra is evident, had been boon companions, that is drinkers of soma together, ante principium. A compact is made that Indra shall not slay Namuci "with anything dry nor with anything wet, neither by day or night," that is, ostensibly, not under any circumstances whatever. There is indeed a marked reluctance on the part of either to slay the other; thus, in MS. IV. 3. 4 Namuci says "Let us twain be friends," Indra replying "I will not slay." This reluctance on the part of the Angels to injure the Titans, who are in fact their kinsmen, recurs throughout the traditional literature; cf. Mitra's similar reluctance to slay Soma, SB. IV. I. 4. 8, Arjuna's reluctance in BG. I. 26 f. ("I will not fight"; Arjuna's opponents, "ancestors, relatives, and friends," are in fact the Vedic Titans), and Indra's again in Jātaka, text I. pp. 202-203 (where "not for the sake of empire" parallels BG. I. 35 "not for the kingship of the three worlds," the dominion in question being in both cases that which is in fact reversed in RV. X. 124. 4, *pary āvard rāśtram*, and that which is ultimately won by the Pāṇḍavas in Mbh.).

Indra nevertheless finds means to slay Namuci, evading the conditions by a subterfuge. Namuci's severed head "rolls after" (*anvavarta*) Indra, bitterly reproaching him as the "betrayer of a friend" and "treacherous hero-slayer of the innocent" (TB. I. 7. 1. 7-8 and PB. XII. 6, cf. Mbh. IX. 2436). Indra atones by means of a sacrifice (no doubt a Pravargya ceremony, where the "head of the sacrifice" is symbolically restored) and an expiatory bath in the river Aruṇā.

In the RV. accounts Indra, "seeking a broadway for Manu, wrung off (*avartayah*) the head of Namuci . . . churned (*mathāyat*) Namuci's head, to wit the bright revolving gem" (*aśmānam cit svaryam vartamānam*, V. 30. 7-8); which "gem" is the Sun, cf. V. 47. 3 where Agni is *prśnir aśmā*, "variegated gem," and VII. 104. 19 *pra vartaya divo aśmānam*, "set Heaven's gem a-rolling," addressed to Indra as demon-slayer.

Notice should be taken here of the equivalence of *vrt*, and *math* = "twirl"; the latter root is used in RV. *passim* with reference

used to "quench" (*śamayati*) the fierce interior aspect of Agni, i. e. to "set aside his scorching evil" (*śucam asya pāpmānam apahanti*, *ib.* 20), which is just what Indra does to Namuci.

(1) to the generation of Agni by Mātariśvān (= Vāyu, Spiritus)³ in the beginning, or by sacrificers in the analogous rite, and (2) to the rape of Soma by the Hawk (*śyena* = Agni, as demonstrated by Bloomfield, JAOS. 16. 11 ff.). The nature of the movement implied in both cases is the same, viz. a turning round, hence our rendering “twirl,” the significance “churning” being involved only in so far as the process is applied to a liquid, as in *samudramathana*. The most important passages for the production of Agni by “twirling” include I. 141. 3, where Mātariśvān “twirls him from his ground (*budhnāt*), from the Buffalo’s image (*varpasah*), when he lay hidden” (*guhā santam* = ab intra),⁴ who is thus “brought to us from the Supernal Father” (*pituh paramāt*); III. 9. 5, where Mātariśvān brings “Agni hither from afar, who had been hidden (*tirohitam*) from us, brings from the Angels him that had been twirled” (*mathitam*); and VI. 16. 13 where Atharvan “twirled (*nir amanthat*) thee, Agni, from the lotus (*puṣkarāt* = *budhnāt*, above),⁵ from the head of *Viśva(-rūpa)*, the

³ The “Windnatur” of Mātariśvān (= Mātali) is discussed by Charpentier, *Kleine Beiträge zur indoiranischen Mythologie*, Uppsala, 1911, pp. 68-83; Charpentier concludes (in general agreement with the view of the Indian commentators) “Alles in allen kann ich nicht umhin die Windnatur des Mātariśvān-Mātali für sekundär in Bezug auf seine Natur als Prometheus und einer der ‘Vater’ zu halten.” Mātariśvān is Vāta-Vāyu, the Gale, the Dawnwind (I. 122. 3 *vasarhā . . . vātah*) who awakens Agni (*pra bodhaya purandhim*, see Bloomfield in JAOS. 16. 18 f.), he fans the flame of Life (VI. 6. 3, where Agni is *vātajūtāsah*). Cf. the “Spirit,” the “Wind,” and the “East Wind” in Genesis I. 2 and VIII. 1, and Exodus XIV. 2. Reference to the dawn wind can be traced in almost all nativities, cf. the mediaeval German “Do in der Stāl kimt überall der kalte Wind herein.”

⁴ *Varpas* = *rūpa* (Sāyaṇa); the manifested Agni is “The Father’s own image abiding in himself (cf. PB. VII. 6. 2) . . . his image, that is to say, his Son” (Eckhart), cf. AV. X. 8. 28 (= JUB. III. 11), “Is he their eldest or their youngest? Is he their Son or their Father? Truly it is one Angel that has entered into intellect, erst was he born, and yet is even now in embryo,” i. e. as in RV. III. 55. 7, “albeit he proceedeth foremost, still he stays within his ground.”

⁵ It hardly needs to be demonstrated here (cf. my *Elements of Buddhist Iconography*, 1935, pp. 19-21) that Sāyaṇa correctly explains the lotus, *puṣkara*, as a designation of the ground of existence in any world. It may be added, however, in connection with the kenning *abja*, “born of water,” equivalent to “lotus,” *puṣkara*, that in VII. 34. 16 this epithet is applied to the Serpent, “I celebrate with litanies the Serpent water-born (*abjām . . . ahim*, cf. *apām napāt* = Agni), seated in the rivers’ ground, the

priest" (*mūrdhno visvaśya vāghataḥ*). Those for the production of Soma by twirling are I. 93. 6 where "the Hawk twirls (or 'grinds,' *amathnāt*) Soma from the Rock" (*pari śyeno adreh*), and IX. 77. 2, Soma "whom the Hawk from Heaven wrung" (*yām divas pari śyeno mathāyat*, cf. in V. 30. 8 cited above, *śiro dāsasya namucer mathāyat*). The latter passages are especially intelligible in the light of the repeated "Vṛtra was Soma" in ŚB.

2. *Makha*

The references to a Titan Makha driven away by the Bhṛgus in RV. IX. 101. 13, or whose head is cut off by Indra in X. 171. 2, presupposes the Brāhmaṇa versions in which Makha's head becomes the Sun. In X. 171. 2 Indra "lifts from his hide raging Makha's head" (*makhasya dodhataḥ śiro 'va tvaco bharah*), anticipating the prayer in the fourth verse, to bring back from the West into the East "the Sun, Vaśa that had been hidden from the Angels"

rivers' beds" (*budhne nadīnām rajaḥsu śidān*—a little difficult, but evidently tantamount to *nadi-vṛtam* applied to Vṛtra elsewhere), who in the next verse is referred to more specifically as Ahi Budhnya. The consequent exegesis is very elegant; for we may say that just as Ahi is *abja*, not indeed as being a lotus, but like the lotus in this respect as well as in that he is Agni's source, so Agni born from the lotus is *abjaja*. In full agreement with this is a passage in which Agni is described as found "where he has crept up out of the waters onto the lotus-leaf" (*adbhya upodāsrptam puṣkaraparṇe*, ŚB. VII. 3. 2. 14), with which may be compared also the account of the procession of Arbuda Kādraveya (son of Kadru, i. e. of the Serpent Queen, and probably the same as Ahi, at least an *ahi*), 'The Serpent Prophet had made an incantation, thereby he crept forth, and that, indeed, is called 'Arbuda's creeping forth'" (*sarparāsi mantrakṛt yenopodāsarpat . . . arbudodāsarpaṇi nāma*, AB. VI. 1, where also Arbuda is called a venomous serpent or basilisk, *āśivīśah*, the Skt. equivalent of Avestan *azhi-visha* in Azhi-vishapa; from PB. IX. 8. 7-8, cf. IV. 9. 4-6, it appears that the *mantra* alluded to is RV. X. 189, for here it is "by the *sarparājñā* verse that Arbuda puts off his corrupted skin," *mṛtām tvacam apāhata*).

For the lotus (= earth) as Agni's birthplace cf. also VIII. 72. 11, where soma is "poured in the lotus" (*niṣiktām puṣkare*), and ŚB. VIII. 6. 3. 7, *yonir vai puṣkara-parṇam*. RV. VII. 33. 11, where Vasiṣṭha (Agni) *brahman . . . jātaḥ . . . puṣkare*, corresponds to GB. I. 16 *brahma ha vai brahmāṇām puṣkare asṛje*. That Agni is said to creep up out of the waters onto the lotus corresponds to the Gnostic symbol of nymph and imago.

(*sūryam . . . devānām cit tiro vaśam*) : “raging Makha’s head” corresponding to “raging Vṛtra’s head” severed by Indra with his hundred-jointed bolt in VIII. 6. 6 (*vi cid vṛtrasya dodhato vajreṇa śiro bibheda*) ; “Vaśa” to that “equine Vaśa” who is aided by the Aśvins in I. 112. 10, etc., and in VIII. 46. 33 is evidently the Sun; and the “hide” to the “black skin that Indra hates” (*indra-dviṣṭām . . . tvacam asiknīm*, IX. 73. 5), the “Serpent’s inveterated skin” of IX. 86. 44 where Soma “even as Ahi, creeps forward from the ancient skin” (*ahir na jūrṇām ati sarpati*), in harmony with PB. XXV. 15. 4 where the serpents “abandoning their inveterated skin (*hitvā jīrṇām tvacam*) creep forward (*atisarpanti*), put away Death, and become Ādityas.” Somewhat to anticipate, we may remark that the bisection of the Serpent may be equated with the diremption of Heaven and Earth.

Turning now to the Brāhmaṇa versions, in PB. VII. 5. 6 Agni, Indra, Vāyu, and Makha, all desirous of glory (*yaśas*) take part in a sacrificial session. Makha obtains the glory, but as he leans on his bow, the end springs up, cutting off his head, and “this became the *pravargya*, for Makha is indeed the sacrifice.” This *pravargya* (or *pravarga*) is also called in ritual the *mahāvīra*, or *gharma*, and “the head of the sacrifice.” In TA. V. 1. 1-5, Makha is called Vaiṣṇava (Saumya in ŚB. XIV. 1. 2. 17), the bow “spins up” (*udavartat*) the head, which circles about Heaven and Earth (*dyāvāprthivī anuprāvartata*, cf. RV. V. 30. 8, *vartamānam rodasi*) ; and “that he turned forth” (*prāvartata*, i. e. ‘proceeded,’ cf. *pravṛtti*) is the origin of the term *pravargya*, that he was glowing that of the term *gharma*, that he had great heroism that of the term *mahāvīra*.” TB. II. 6. 13. 1, *sa bibheda valam magham*, cf. RV. III. 34. 10 *bibheda valam*, suggests the identity of the personified “Cavern,” Vala (cf. *vara*, *varāṇa*, *varuṇa*, *vṛtra*, *varāha*) with Makha, but that the reading is *magham* and not *makhām*, cf. IX. 20. 7 *krīlur makha na māṁhayuh pavitram soma gacchasi*, “even as Makha, Soma,” etc., emphasizes the indivisibility of reckless bravery, wealth, and generosity in the ideal hero. The account is fuller in ŚB. XIV. 1. 1; the Angels present are Indra, Agni, Soma, Makha, and Viṣṇu (perhaps we ought to read Soma-Makha or Makha-Viṣṇu) ; it is Viṣṇu’s head that is severed by the bow, the string of which is gnawed by ants, and this head becomes “yonder Sun”; the rest of him lies outspread (*pravṛj*, whence ŚB. derives

pravargya, better than as in TA. cited above).⁶ Indra rushes up to the fallen "hero" (*mahāvīra*) engulfs him (*tam paryagṛhṇāt*, in other words, swallows him up, or rather drinks him, who is really Soma), and thus "became *makhavat*, for *Makhavat* is he who is metaphysically (*parokṣena*) *Maghavat*"; moreover, "Makha is the same as *Viṣṇu* . . . the Sacrifice."⁷ It is evident that an

⁶ In RV. V. 30. 15 the *gharma* is said to be heated *pravr̥je*, "for the *Pravargya*." Closely related to *pravr̥j* is Vedic *parā vr̥j*, to "re-ject," "cast away," so often employed in connection with Agni RV. II. 13. 12; II. 15. 7; IV. 30. 16; and probably in the same connection in I. 112. 8). In I. 116. 24, Soma too is "like Rebha, *pravr̥ktam*"; while in X. 8. 9 *parā vr̥j* in the form *parā vark* is used in connection with the decapitation of *Viśvarūpa*; whence it may be inferred that *parāvr̥j*, *parāvr̥kta*, applied to Agni and Soma are said with reference to the deposition of the body after decapitation. These terms occur in association with the expression "making the blind to see, the lame to walk," and if as we suppose this means "effecting the Sun's procession," who had been as it were a "blindworm," the connection of ideas is evident; for the Sun being Varuṇa's "eye," passim, Varuṇa can only be thought of as blind while yet the Sun is *tamasā apagūlham*, *guhā nikitam*, etc., i. e. before the section of the Serpent's head, and as "crawling," which is expressed by saying that the Sun was originally "footless" (*apad*, often tantamount to "serpent," cf. SB. I. 6. 3. 9, "in that he, Soma, was footless, he was Ahi) and is footless until Varuṇa "makes feet for him, that he may proceed" (I. 24. 8); for the corresponding distinction of the "footless" and the "footed" aspects of the feminine principles, see *The Darker Side of Dawn*. For a fuller discussion cf. *vr̥j* or *varj* on RV. see Bloomfield in JAOS. 35. 273 ff.; the primary sense is that of "do," and hence "do for," as in the expression "done for" == "ruined." *Parā vr̥j* corresponds also to *parāsa* in IV. 18. 8 and *parāsyat* in X. 72. 8.

With reference to the designations of Agni as *pr̥snir aśmā* and of the Sun as *vartamānam aśmānam* previously cited (whence the use in ritual of a "variegated stone," *aśmānam pr̥snim*, representing "yonder Sun," SB. IX. 2. 3. 14), it may be observed that these formulations, taken in connection with the ophidian character of the deity ab intra, explain the origin of what is now (inasmuch as the significance has been forgotten) strictly speaking a superstition, the notion viz. that there is a jewel in a serpent's head.

⁷ By devouring, or as we must phrase it in the present connection, drinking Makha-Soma, Indra appropriates the fallen hero's desirable qualities by an incorporation that is at the same time sacrificial and Eucharistic, cf. John VI. 56, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." This was, of course, the basic principle of cannibalism, and it is notable that it should have survived in both the Vedic and the Christian rituals of Communion.

expiation is required (the slaying of Vṛtra, parallel to that of Viśvarūpa, is indeed one of Indra's *kilbiṣāṇi*, AB. VII. 28; for which sins of Indra's see Bloomfield in JAOS. 19 (2). 118 f.). But only Dadhyāñ Atharvan knows how the head of the sacrifice is to be put on again, and Indra, perfectly satisfied with what has been done, forbids him to reveal it.⁸ The Aśvins nevertheless, as also

The Brāhmaṇa accounts are clearly prefigured in the briefer Vedic references. That Makha is the sacrifice and cause of its efficacy is particularly clear in IX. 20. 7, "Thou, Soma, goest playfully (*krīluḥ*) unto the filter, even as Makha prodigal of gifts (*makho na mañhayuḥ*), lending the laud its heroic-virtue (*suviryam*)," where also it should be noted that *krīluḥ* (cf. the use of *krīl* elsewhere in RV.) implies the same as *līlāvatārana*, or in other words, a willing sacrifice. In IX. 17. 6 Soma is the "head of the sacrifice" (*mūrdhan yajñasya*). In IX. 5-6 Soma is assimilated both to Indra and to Prajāpati explicitly, and by the expressions employed, to Agni as in I. 13. In I. 134. 1, VIII. 7. 27, and VIII. 46. 25 Vāyu alone or the Devas collectively are invited to "partake of Makha (*makhasya dāvane*, better perhaps, "to partake of the sacrifice"), and "to be lavish" (*dāvane*) in turn; and that all actually partake of Makha's virtue in this way may be inferred from the use of *makha*, "brave" (in battle, cf. *gigantomachy*) as an epithet not only of Indra himself (III. 34. 2) but also of Pūṣan, Savitṛ, Agni, Aśvins, and Maruts.

A pale reflection of the foregoing doctrine survives incidentally in Pali Buddhism, where it is explained that Indra is called Maghavā because as a man he had once been a brahman of that name" (*Dialogues of the Buddha*, 2, p. 297, citing S. I. 230 and J. IV. 403 = V. 137). *Makkha*, in Pali, is "wrath," "mercilessness," etc.

⁸ Dadhyāñ himself is made to suffer decapitation, after which his head is replaced with that of a horse; a parallel to the decapitation not only of that by which the procession of Agni-Sūrya is effected, where there is a symbolic replacement in the ritual, but also to that of Gaṇeśa who in Saiva mythology is related to Skanda Kumāra as is Agni to Indra in RV. (the relation of *brahma* to *kṣatra*), and losing his head, is given that of an elephant.

The "mystery," the "honey" i. e. "soma" (cf. X. 68. 8 *aśnāpinaddham madhu*) doctrine is that of the true meaning of the sacrificial ritual, its significance as an act of expiation and reintegration, an undoing of the work of disintegration with which the world begins; which mystery, although outwardly enacted in the ritual, is even now by no means to be revealed to any but a qualified student (SB. loc. cit.).

The nature of the "sweet doctrine" is nevertheless sufficiently indicated in SB. XIV. 1. 2. 18, and more clearly than in TS. VII. 3. 1. 4; three Mahāvīra pots have been made, one addressed with the formula "Makha's head art thou," and the other silently, and it is explained, "By whatever one does (*karoti*) with Yajus formula, by that one constitutes (*samskaroti*,

in RV. I. 116. 12, get the secret from him, and they instruct the Angels accordingly how by the proper use of the Mahāvīra vessel, "the head of the sacrifice is put on again, the sacrifice is made whole"; the Aśvins themselves are then admitted to a share in the sacrifice.⁹ ŚB. XIV. 1. 2. 17 gives formulæ for making the vessel, which has parts corresponding to those of a head, and when completed it is addressed with the words "Makha's head art thou," taken from VS. XXXVII. 8, ŚB. adding "for it is indeed the head of Makha Saumya," i. e. of that Makha who is or was really Soma, cf. "Now Vṛtra was Soma," cited below. In PB. VI. 5 the Sun is emanated (*asrjyata*) from the head of Prajāpati, "he¹⁰ smote off his head" (*udahan* instead of the usual *udvavarta*), and "that became the *drona-kalaśa*," corresponding to ŚB. IV. 4. 3. 4 cited below. The identity of Makha-Saumya with Prajāpati is very

'integrates') that aspect (*rūpam*) of Prajāpati that is explicit and finite (*niruktaś ca parimitaś ca*), and by whatever one does silently (*tusñim*) thereby one constitutes that aspect of him that is implicit and infinite," so that by doing in both ways one constitutes Prajāpati in his entirety (*sarvam kṛtsnam*), and thus reintegrates himself. This explanation applies moreover to the practice of "silent recitation" elsewhere, e. g. *manasā stuvate* in TS. VII. 3. 1. 4, cf. ŚB. II. 1. 4. 29; cf. also the *orationes secretae* in the Christian sacrifice (the Mass). The principle of subtle (*sūkṣma*) as distinguished from gross (*sthūla*) worship in later practice is analogous.

As to the ritual itself, it should never be forgotten that "the observance of the rule thereof is the same as at the creation" (ŚB. XIV. 1. 2. 26 and 3. 1. 36, etc.); and inasmuch as the "creation" is strictly speaking eternal (see my "Eternal Creation in the Rg Veda" to appear in the Ramakrishna Memorial Number of the *Vedanta Kesari* in 1936), it may be said of the sacrifice as envisaged in the Brāhmaṇas, what has been affirmed of the Christian sacrifice, the Mass, that "it is not confined to, nor limited by, the conditions of time and space" (Bede Frost, *The Meaning of Mass*, Oxford, 1934, p. 63), and as to its efficacy, what is affirmed of the Hebrew sacrifice, that "the impulse of the sacrifice is the mainstay of the worlds" and that it is by the impulse of the smoke from below that "the lamp (i. e. the Sun) is kindled above" (Zohar, Vayehi section, II. 374 in the Sperling and Simon version). Here as elsewhere there is nothing whatever unique in the Vedic point of view.

⁹ In which they originally had no part, as we know also in connection with the story of Cyavāna (PB. XIV. 6. 10; ŚB. IV. 1. 5; JB. III. 120 f., etc.), whom we identify with Prajāpati.

¹⁰ "He;" "Indra" must be supplied. In ŚB. IV. 4. 3. 4 (Kānva), *devāḥ . . . vyagṛhṇata*, (Mādhyamīdina) *udvavarta*.

evident also in ŚB. XIV. 1. 2, where both alike are the sacrifice; even apart from which the equivalence would be obvious, inasmuch as in both cases it is always a primary purpose of the ritual to reintegrate the creator, when he is disintegrated by the expression of creatures, has fallen down, and cannot rise (for Prajāpati, see ŚB. I. 6. 3. 35-37, PB. IV. 10. 1, VI. 5. 1, etc.).

3. *The Sacrifice of King Soma*

In ŚB. IV. 4. 3. 4 we find "Now Vṛtra was Soma.¹¹ When the Angels smote him, his head whirled up (*udvavarta*) and became the *drona-kalaśa*," i. e. the soma-vessel, cf. PB. VI. 5. 7 "the vessel of the Angels." That the head becomes a vessel explains the designation of certain vessels as *kapāla*, "skull-cup," in this and other ritual usage. "Vessel of the Angels" would appear to be the Sun, rather than the Moon, which would be the vessel of the Asuras.

The preparation of soma represented an actual sacrifice of King Soma, as is explicit in ŚB. IV. 3. 4. 1, cf. IV. 4. 5, 21-22, where the pressing of the stalks is called the slaying of Soma, and the dry stalks are symbolically rejuvenated by immersion in water, as tantamount to tincture (*rasa*), as an act of expiation; actual sacrifice is similarly indicated in the use of root *śam* in RV. V. 43. 4, *bāhvū . . . somasya ye śamitārā*, "these arms that give Soma his quietus."

Recalling the equivalence of *vṛt* and *math* it can be clearly seen how the grinding of the soma-stalks reflects the passion of Makha-Saumya or Vṛtra. That the obtaining of soma has also to be represented as a rape accomplished by the Hawk (Agni) on behalf of Indra, or as a theft on Indra's own part (another of his *kilbiṣāṇi*) depends of course, on the well known fact that whether as King or Tree, Soma was originally in possession of the Titans, and by them well guarded, cf. X. 97, where Soma is the king of the herbs, that were in being long prior to the being of the Angels themselves.¹²

¹¹ "Vṛtra was Soma" seems to render the text most literally, and better agrees with the sequence of events than does Eggeling's "Soma was Vṛtra."

¹² It is notorious that the Titans were the first possessors of Soma, mighty soma-drinkers before the nativity of any Angel; there "the Gandharva protects his (Soma's) seat," IX. 83. 4 etc., thence that the Hawk (Agni) brings it for Indra, or that Indra steals it for himself, RV. *passim*. Soma as a tree is the king of plants, the Tree of Life as

In connection with the idea of sacrifice it may be noted also that the designations *soma* and *puruṣa* are definitely assimilated in X. 51. 8, where "the Person of the herbs" whom Agni obtains when he accepts the priesthood can hardly be other than King Soma.

It is "as Ahi that he (Soma) creeps forth from his inveterated skin, and as a lusty glaucous courser that he runs and plays" (*ahir na jūrṇām ati sarpati tvacam atyo na krīlann asarad vṛṣā hariḥ*, IX. 86. 44), tallying with "Vṛtra was Soma" cited above, cf. the designation of Soma as "Boar" (*varāha*, IX. 97. 7).

4. *Viśvarūpa and Vṛtra*

Viśvarūpa, "Omniform," occurs both as the name of a Titan, and as an epithet with application to his father Tvaṣṭṛ, the creator per artem. In RV. II. 11. 19, X. 8. 7-9, and X. 99. 6 (combining these accounts) we find that Trita Āptya (i. e. Agni, ab intra, eager to proceed) in alliance with Indra slaughters the three-headed,¹³ six-eyed, seven-rayed *Viśvarūpa*, wrenching away (*parā*

distinguished from the Tree of Death, cf. Genesis III. 22 "lest he take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." As a liquid, obtained when the "tree" is sacrificed, the *soma* is the sap (*rasa*), the blood of the tree, the Water of Life. On the other hand, the *soma* drunk in earthly rituals is never that very wine of life whereby the intoxicated Indra is enabled to overcome the Titans and to bring about the whole emanation, but only *rasa*, *amṛta*, analogically. Expressions such as *parvatāvṛdh*, IX. 46. 1 or *nābhā prthivyā giriṣu*, IX. 82. 3 (cf. V. 43. 4, IX. 72. 7, and Yaśna XLII. 5) are by no means in the beginning designations of a local habitat, the site of which may have been lost in later times; the *soma* is "lost" in quite another sense, "they fancy when the plant is pressed that they drink of the very *soma*, but of him the Brahmans understand as Soma, no one ever tastes, none tastes who dwells on earth," X. 85. 3-4. "What the Brahmans understand by 'Soma'" is not, of course, a physical entity. In this connection the explicit enunciation of a doctrine of transubstantiation in AB. VII. 31 is significant: "it is metaphysically (*parokṣeṇa*) that he obtains the drinking of *soma*, it is not literally (*pratyakṣam*) partaken of by him. The Nyagrodha is metaphysically King Soma; metaphysically the Kṣatriya obtains the semblance of the spiritual power (*brahmaṇo rūpam*), by means of the priest, the consecration, and the invocation, as it were." *Soma, amṛta*, is *divi . . . gūlham*, RV. VI. 44. 23-24. Cf. SB. III. 6. 2. 10-11, where the only approach to Soma is by way of *dīkṣā* and *tapas*.

¹³ The three heads of *Viśvarūpa*, like those of the Sun, may correspond to the three worlds, cf. JUB. III, 11-12, where it is "by three turns"

vark) or carrying off (*ava . . . bharat*) his heads and lifting his cattle. In II. 11. 19 Indra hands over Viśvarūpa to “Trita of our party,” and it is to be inferred that a decapitation takes place, for in the next verse the Sun is set a-going (*avartayat sūryo na cakram*).¹⁴ In X. 99. 6 the epithets are unmistakable, but the *dāsa* is called the Boar (*varāha*), and not otherwise named.

(*āvṛdbhir*) of the Gāyatra (Sāman) that the Puruṣa conquers Heaven, Midhome, and This World, and all that is in them; the Gāyatra itself being *tryāvṛt*. The use of *āvṛt* here, answers to the use of root *vṛt* throughout, as well as to the special sense of *āvṛta*, tantamount to *pravṛtta*, and meaning a coming into the worlds.

¹⁴ Indra’s connection with the Sun has been sometimes misunderstood; his position is strictly speaking that of Lucifer before the Fall. Indra is never at war with his fellow-Angels. It is for them that he is besought to “pull the Sun’s wheel towards us” (*pra sūraś cakram vṛhatād abhike*, IV. 16. 12), it is from the Titans and for Kutsa as he struggled that Indra “steals the solar wheel” (*cakram muṣāya . . . sūryam*, IV. 30. 4); just as he “fixes” (*ni khidat*) the wheel and “steals away” (*apa dhayi*) Life Universal (*viśvāyu*, i. e. Agni) from the Great Fiend (*maho druhah*, IV. 28. 2), and entirely parallel to this is his abduction of the Word (*vācam muṣayati*, I. 130. 9), whose restoration is demanded and effected in X. 109. In X. 23. 5 where Indra “wins” (*jayat*) the Sun as if at a game of chance, it is from the Titans that he wins, not that “he vanquishes the Sun” as pretended in VM. p. 31.

Indra’s great rebellion against the Father, by which the kingdom is overturned, takes place in the beginning. Nevertheless in RV. for the most part Indra observes the legitimate relations of *kṣatra* to *brahma*, he acts as Fidei Defensor (*vratapā*), his courage and loyalty to his companions are far from ignoble; the dual Indrāgnī even preserves the primordial coincidence of kingship and priesthood in one and the same person. But in the later literature (BrD. VII. 54-58) and especially in Buddhism, the possibilities inherent in the principle of temporal power are more fully developed; Indra becomes Mammon.

It must be realised, of course, that Indra, Lucifer and Satan, must not be confused with the “evil” power of Darkness, Death (*mṛtyu, māra*), the Godhead, the “unkindly Father” himself. The width of the entire universe divides the one from the other, divides the “outer darkness” from the Darkness ab intra, “impervious to all illumination and hidden from all knowledge” (Dionysius, *Ep. ad Caium Monach.*, cited St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.* III. 92. 1), but of which St. Thomas says that it is called “Darkness” “on account of its surpassing brightness,” i. e. as being a *blinding* light. Indra, although like every other Angel of Titan birth, remains an Angel even in his pride, being like Satan “fallen not in nature, but in grace”; whereas the Dragon-Father never was nor ever can be natured, it is he that by his nature natures all things.

In the longer versions of TS. II. 4. 12 and 5. 1 ff. (cf. KB. XV. 2-3) Viśvarūpa is Tvaṣṭṛ's son by "a sister of the Titans," Viśvarūpa has already been slain, and Tvaṣṭṛ prepares a soma sacrifice, from which Indra is excluded. But Indra seizes the soma by force, as in so many other texts he is said to have done.¹⁵ Tvaṣṭṛ whirls (*avartayat*) the remainder of the soma upon the sacrificial fire, saying "Hail, wax great, as Indra's foe." It springs to life and is called Vṛtra, either because Tvaṣṭṛ "averted" it into the fire, or (more correctly) because it "envelopes" these worlds.¹⁶ This Vṛtra takes demoniac possession of Agni and Soma, who thus fall into the *asurya* power. Indra, and even Tvaṣṭṛ (as also in RV. I. 80. 14) are alarmed. Tvaṣṭṛ provides Indra with his bolt (as usual, e. g. RV. I. 85. 9, but in VI. 44. 22 Indu—i. e. Indra, as in II. 22—"steals his unkindly father's weapons and his magic") and Indra raises it to slay Vṛtra, but Agni and Soma cry out that they are "in him." Indra makes Vṛtra gape, and Agni and Soma escape from his mouth.¹⁷ Heaven and Earth are extracted by the promise of lights to the former, species (*rūpāṇi*) to

¹⁵ Another of Indra's many *kilbiṣāṇi*. In RV. III. 48. 4 "When at birth he had overcome (his father) Tvaṣṭṛ, Indra by main force stole (*āmuṣya*) the soma and drank it"; in VI. 44. 22 Indu (Indra, here as in II. 22) "steals the weapons (*ayudhāṇi*) and magic-arts (*māyāḥ*) of his unkindly father" (*pitur aśivasya*—mark the contrast in X. 124. 2-4, where Agni, although he chooses Indra and deserts the Father, calls himself unkind, the Father kind); in IV. 17. 12 "What recks Indra of his Mother, what of the Father Progenitor that begat him? (He reck only) of that which immediately whets his fury" (viz. the soma-draught). Indra's violent disruption of the preexisting harmony, and brutal treatment of his parents, as in IV. 18, although really in accordance with the Supernal Father's providence (*dhitiṁ pitur . . . parasya*, X. 8. 7), becomes an occasion of reproach; for these and the other offences, although he acts by infallible necessity and "does what must be done," Indra is sometimes excluded from the sacrifice, e. g. in AB. VII. 28, where his tort against Brhaspati as well as Viśvarūpa is cited, and "because he stole the soma of Tvaṣṭṛ, even today the temporal power (*kṣatra*) is deprived of soma drinking." Agni, on the other hand, is the Redeemer (*kilbiṣasprt*, X. 71. 10).

¹⁶ The derivation of Vṛtra, like that of Varuṇa, from *vṛ*, to "cover," "enclose," "hide away," would seem preferable to a derivation from *vṛt*.

¹⁷ In X. 90. 13-14 it is Agni and Indra that proceed from the mouth of Puruṣa; the Puruṣa's head is "con-verted" (*sam avartata*) into Dyauḥ, here evidently the Sun.

the latter.¹⁸ Very significant is the remark addressed by Indra to Viṣṇu, “Come, let us grasp that by which he (Vṛtra) is these worlds” (*vo yena ayam idam*), cf. RV. X. 88. 9 where “in him (Agni) the Angels offered up the whole universe” (*yasmin ājuhavur bhuvanāni viśvā*). In ŚB. I. 6. 3 the course of events is similar; when the soma is cast into the fire “inasmuch as it was whirling (*vartamānah*) it became the Dragon, inasmuch as it was footless (*apad*) it became the Serpent.” All things, Angels, sciences, glory, food, and beauty come out of Vṛtra, who lies drained of his contents like an empty bag, “contracted and emptied out.”¹⁹ Indra is about to slay him, but he says “Cast not, for thou art now what I (was erst); only dissever me.”²⁰ Indra cuts him in two (*dvedhānvabhinat*), making the moon of that part of him in which the soma inhered, and of the other, titanic part, the belly in all creatures, whence men say that “Vṛtra is within us.”²¹

In PB. VII. 5. 20 it is Uśanas Kāvya, “who was the priest of

¹⁸ Similarly in PB. XVIII. 9. 6, Heaven obtaining from Vṛtra her lights (*nakṣatrāṇi*) and Earth her diversified phenomena (*citrāṇi rūpāṇi*). *Rūpāṇi* in this connection we take to be “things in their kind,” the “works of distinction and adornment”; cf. the *pururūpā vapūṁśi* of Earth in RV. III. 55. 5, *viśvarūpāḥ paśuvāḥ* in VIII. 100. 11, *sarvāṇi rūpāṇi* in AB. V. 23 in connection with Earth as the Serpent Queen, and JB. I. 160, cf. TS. II. 4. 6, where the Earth is *citrā*. The partition of Vṛtra, of Puruṣa, of Prajāpati, is the act of creation involving the separation of Heaven and Earth; for the corresponding division of “lights” and “species,” viz. of image-bearing and omniform light and of exemplified phenomena, see my “Vedic Doctrine of Exemplarism,” to appear in the James Haughton Woods Memorial Volume.

¹⁹ We have pointed out in *The Darker Side of Dawn* that *apad* becomes a kenning for “snake,” and the significance of *apad* as contrasted with *ekapad*, *padavī*, etc.

²⁰ That Vṛtra is “emptied out” corresponds to the expression *aricyata* employed in connection with Prajāpati when he has poured out creatures, e. g. PB. IV. 10. 1 *prajā asrjata so 'ricyata*; and to Eckhart’s words, “the whole of what he knows, the whole of what he can afford,” that is of course his finite and presentable aspect, his “face,” for it is but a “fourth” of his being that “becomes” (*abhavat*, RV. X. 90. 3-4), “three fourths remain within” (*trīṇi padāṇi nihitā guhā*, AV. II. 1. 2).

²¹ In most of the accounts it appears that the Dragon is wounded vitally and rendered impotent rather than slain; as holds also for Prajāpati, the Sacrifice, who “survives this passion” (*tāṁ vā āyusārtim atyajīvat*, PB. VI. 5).

the Titans" that is persuaded to come over to the side of the Angels, who are thus supported by the spiritual power,²² and this explains the allusion "when Uśanas reached you," in RV. V. 31. 8.²³ In JB. I. 125, Brhaspati (also son of Tvaṣṭṛ, RV. II. 23. 17) is the priest of the Angels, Uśanas Kāvya of the Titans; the victory of the Angels is assured when the latter is won over. In the version of BP. VI. chs. 7-13, Vṛtra behaves with great nobility, but accuses Indra of Brahman-slaying, in that he killed his guru, Viśvarūpa, here Vṛtra's brother. It requires 360 days for Indra to cut off Vṛtra's head, that is evidently an aeonic "Year," during which Time is as it were gradually unrolled. This is in fact a repetition of the TS. account, in which Viśvarūpa is a Brahman, and Indra incurs the guilt of Brahman-slaying, which he bears for a "Year," i. e. until the end of an aeon, until the "Day of Judgment."

The version of Tvaṣṭṛ's sacrifice given in SB. II. 2. 4. 1-8 is of

²² Food is the sine qua non of ex-istence in any mode, the *anna-maya* being the support of all modality; hence in X. 90. 2 it is said of the Puruṣa as Lord of Life that he "rises up by food," food as in MU. VI. 11 being the premier manifestation of the Spirit, "by food the breath of life is mode-ified" (-*maya*).

That "Vṛtra is within us" not only answers to the concept of a digestive fire or combustion, but suggests an interesting parallel; for it is by the "stomach" that we are prompted to take "food" (as pointed out in SB. I. 6. 3. 17), and if the stomach be identified with the Dragon or Serpent, then we may say that when the "bird" eats of the sweet fruit of the fig (*svādu pippalam atti*, I. 164. 20) that "the Serpent tempted him"—as in Genesis, "The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat"—and conversely it can be seen that fasting may be regarded, not as a moral exercise, but as a metaphysical rite, in imitation of that other "bird" that "does not eat of the tree" but merely regards it (*abhi cākaśiti*, *ib.*). The designation "food" has of course a very wide application, covering all objects of desire, by the acquisition of which the individual functions as such. The identification of Vṛtra with the belly—the likeness of the bowels to a snake is obvious—corresponds to the conception widespread in antiquity, of the "bowels" as the seat of the emotions, i. e. of the will, in distinction from the "heart," in which the operation of the intellect takes place.

²³ The "persuasion" here, which persuasion is often a bribing, corresponds to the "con-version" accomplished elsewhere by more violent means; in RV. I. 148. 1 for example, it is Agni whom Mātariśvān "grasps and grinds" (*mathid yad īm viṣṭah*) to be the "multiform priest of all the Angels" (*hotāraṁ viśvāpsum viśvadevyam*, where *viśvāpsum* = *vaiśvāraupyam*). Cf. Agni as "Titan priest" in VII. 30. 3, the Sun as "Titan Priest of the Angels" in VIII. 101. 12.

particular interest and throws a clarifying light upon its significance as a creative act. Here the name of Prajāpati replaces that of Tvaṣṭṛ; i. e. the concept of creation by generation replaces that of creation per artem. Prajāpati is single in the beginning, he desires to be propagated; he breathes forth Agni, the sacrificial fire, as indeed might be expected of him who is really the Dragon. The Earth (*prthivi* = *urvarā*, hairless similarly in RV. VIII. 91. 5-6) is “bald,” without vegetation. The Fire is a devourer. Prajāpati is afraid: therefore his Allmight (*mahimā*), his Word (*vāc*), departs (*apacakrāma*); in other words, the diremption of the First Principle, the division of Essence and Nature, Heaven and Earth, that had been conjunct (*parikṣitā*, *samokasā*, etc. in RV.) now takes place (as in BU. I. 4. 3, cf. 17, *ātmānam dvedhāpātayat*, JUB. I. 54, *te vyadravatām*, RV. X. 27. 23 *krntatrād eṣām*, etc.). Prajāpati “seeks to make an offering in himself” (*ātmann eva āhutim īṣe*); he “rubs up” (*udamṛṣṭa*, cf. RV. X. 167. 4, *stomam . . . unmrje*, “I stirred up the hymn”) and he rubbed his hands together so hard, that even now the palms are hairless. What he thus obtains (*viveda*, “found”) is an offering of “milk” (*payas*), evidently the equivalent of soma in the TS. versions cited above. That “milk” he casts into the fire, and thence arise the plants. He rubs again, and obtains a second flow. He is in doubt whether or not to make an offering of this other milk (which corresponds to the “remnant of the *soma*” in the TS. versions). His own Allmight speaks out (*svo mahimābhuvāda*), “Make thou the offering” (*juhudhi*). Again he casts the “milk” into the Fire; “and thereupon the Sun rose (*udiyāya*), the Gale sprang up (*prabahūva*), the Fire was averted” (*agnih parān paryāvartata*, the Fire that is thus “turned back away” being of course the “devouring Fire” against whom so many apotropaic incantations are employed in the Saṃhitās and Brāhmaṇas). Thus Prajāpati “propagates himself, he bears himself across from the Fire, from Death” (*prajāpatih . . . agnir mrtyor ātmānam atrāyata*), note the parallel in RV. X. 53. 8 (*atra jahāma ye asann aśevāḥ śivānvayam uttarema*, where *atra* = *parān* in SB. cited above). Finally, this Resurrection of the Dying God (cf. PB. XXV. 17. 2-3, where Prajāpati when he is “stupified by old,” *jīryā mūrah*, by the performance the sacrifice once more comes into act as the quickening principle of all things, *sarvasya prasavam agacchat*) is for him who understands the promise of a like regeneration, “for when he dies,

and when they lay him in the fire, then is he born (again) of the fire (*agner adhijāyate*), the fire consumes his body only" (SB. loc. cit. 8) all of which is in full agreement with the assumptions of the Funeral Hymns in RV., nor could any doctrine be more explicit.

Certain conspicuous common traits are to be remarked in Viśvarūpa and Agni, Sūrya, and other aspects of the primary proceeding power. In RV. I. 146. 1 Agni ab intra (*pitrōr upasthe*) is like Viśvarūpa triple-headed and seven-rayed; in II. 5. 2 Agni, and in VIII. 72. 16 the Sun are similarly seven-rayed; and "where those seven rays are, thither goeth back mine affinity (*nābhi*, navel), Trita Āptya knoweth that, who converseth with my kin," I. 105. 9, cf. X. 64. 13. In III. 38. 4 it is as the Sun that Viśvarūpa manifests himself, "When he (the Sun) upstood, all things him adorned, who moves self-luminous; that is the Bull's, the Titan's mighty figure, it is the Omniform who takes his stand upon his aeviternities" (*mahat tad vṛṣṇo asurasya nāmā, ā viśvarūpo amṛtāni tasthau*, cf. IX. 75. 2). In VS. V. 35, Agni is addressed as the "omniform light" (*jyotir asi viśvarūpam*).

5. *The Boar, Varāha, Emusa*

The Boar, in Pauranic mythology an avatāra of Viṣṇu, who lifts up Earth from the Waters in the beginning, is in RV. a hostile power who withholds the means of life from Angels and men, and is identified with Viśvarūpa (X. 99. 6) and with Vṛtra (I. 61. 6-8, and I. 121. 11, cf. I. 32 where Vṛtra is also Vyāmsa and the "first-born of serpents," *prathamajām ahinām*, IV. 1. 11 where Agni *jāyata prathamah . . . budhne . . . apād aśirṣā guhamāno antā*, i. e. is Ahi Budhnya, and X. 90. 7 *puruṣam jātam agrataḥ*).

In two of the RV. texts Viṣṇu is associated with Indra in the slaying of the boar; in the first, I. 61. 7, where the theft at the soma-feast is mentioned, *viṣṇu* may be adjectival, qualifying Indra, in the second, VIII. 77. 10, it is explicitly Viṣṇu that "brings back the bacon." In general, the exploit is typically Indra's, though to Viṣṇu's advantage as in TS. II. 4. 12 cited above. In RV. I. 121. 11, for example, we find "Thou great one (Indra) didst with thy bolt put to sleep the Boar, the Dragon (*vṛtram . . . varāhum*) as he lay (*aśayamānam*) in the water-channels." In TS. VI. 2. 4. 2-3 the boar Emusa. is said to have in keeping the

wealth of the Titans, beyond the seven mountains, that would be, apart from the seven worlds, and in accordance with the *asurya* possession of all things in the beginning; Indra, urged by Viṣṇu, pierces the mountains (cf. RV. VIII. 77. 6 and 96. 2) and both come into possession of the food and wealth, i. e. as in RV. VII. 5. 3 the Titans are made to relinquish their “delights” (*bhojanāni*). In TS. VII. 1. 5. 1 the Boar, who now raises the Earth from the Waters, is identified with Prajāpati; Prajāpati, who is the Sacrifice, also with Death and with the Year in SB. X. 4. 3. 1-3. That will no longer surprise us; nor can we wonder at the dual part played by the Boar or Viṣṇu, all such apparent contradictions being inevitable consequences of the opposing operations (*vivrata*, X. 23. 1, *virūpā kṛtāni*, III. 38. 9, etc.) and double seeming (*virūpa*, *viṣurūpa*, *passim*) of the deity who moves in opposite directions (*dviwartani*, X. 61. 20, etc.), stands at the parting of the ways (*panthām visarge . . . tasthau*, X. 5. 6 = VS. XII. 66 *tasthau samare pathinām*), and changes his fashion as he will (*yathāvaśam* = *anu vratā*), from sterility to productivity (VII. 101. 3 as in SB. XII. 7. 2. 17).

6. *Ahi-Vṛtra*

We have already outlined certain versions of the story of Vṛtra; and there can be no doubt from RV. I. 32 and other texts of the identity of the Dragon, Vṛtra, with Ahi,²⁴ the Serpent. Decapita-

²⁴ Ahi corresponds to Avestan Azhi, known also as Vishapa, “of poisonous slaver,” and also to Sumerian Mušhuššu, the seven-headed dragon slain by Ninurta, later Tiāmat bisected by Marduk, who makes Heaven of one of the parts; “it would be remarkable if this entire Indian and Iranian legend was not ultimately Sumerian” (Langdon, *Semitic Mythology*, p. 130, and fig. 57, which might well be described as a picture of Indra with his *vajra*, slaying Ahi-Vṛtra). The like considerations are put forward by Frankfort in “Gods and Myths in Sargonid Seals,” *Iraq*, I, 1934, p. 19 in connection with his Pl. III, fig. h, cf. Pl. I, fig. a in the same journal, of which figures the same may be said as of Langdon’s. It is also pointed out by Frankfort that the Sumerian seals are archetypal for the slaying of the many-headed Hydra by Herakles; it may be added that Zeus is represented in Greek mythology both as snake and bull, and that the conflict of Herakles with the Hydra is really that of son with father, cf. Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, p. 495.

There can be no possible doubt of the correspondance of Vedic *ahi*, *sarpa*, and *prādāku* with later *nāga*; this is not only apparent on ontological grounds (characteristic power of *nāgas* to appear either as “snakes” or

tion is indicated in I. 52. 10 "severed his head" (*abhinac chirah*, cf. II. 11. 2 *ava abhinat*, II. 20. 6 *ava . . . śiro bharad dāsasya*, VIII. 6. 6 *śiro bibheda*), and recalling the equivalence of *śiras* and *sānu* (denoting the "head" of the Mahāvīra vessel respectively in ŚB. XIV. 1. 2. 17 and Āp. Śr. S. XV. 2. 14), the same is apparent in I. 32. 7, where a blow on the nape of the neck may be understood, and this is followed by a further dismemberment. In the texts to

as "men" at will, association of *nāgas* with Varuṇa, and the West, and waters generally, and the manner in which the *nāgas*, often seven-headed, are represented in iconography), but also in the significant designation *ahi-nāga* applied to the Serpent overcome by the Buddha in the fire temple, in *Mahāvagga* I. 15. 7 (P. T. S. *Vinaya Piṭaka*, I. 25).

As regards Varuṇa, the assimilation to Ahi-Vṛtra is developed in the following section. If he is not explicitly called a snake in RV. the later texts and iconography are unanimous in recognizing that such is his real nature. Varuṇa is an adder (*pr̥dāku*) in AV. XII. 3. 57, like the rivers ab intra, *pr̥dākvah*, ib. I. 27. 1; ib. X. 4. 17, Indra overcomes both the male and female adders, i. e. purifies them as he does Apālā in RV. VIII. 91. Apotropaic texts respecting Varuṇa abound, e. g. RV. X. 97. 16, where Varuṇa is assimilated to Yama, and ŚB. XII. 7. 2. 17, where Varuṇa is "evil" (*pāpman*), the purpose of the offering being to convert him into Savitṛ in accordance with RV. VII. 101. 3. The three last cited texts are inseparably connected. Ocean, Varuṇa's express domain, is "abode of *nāgas*" (*nāgānām ālayam*, Mbh. I. 21. 6 and 25. 4), and *nāgas* are represented amongst the angels of the western quarter at Barhut (JRAS. 1928, p. 392). Varuṇa and Sagara are *nāgarājas* in the *Mahāvyutpatti*; Varuṇa-pañcami replaces the more usual expression Nāga-pañcami in the *Nilamata Purāṇa*; in Nepal, a seven-hooded Varuṇa may occupy the centre of a *nāgamaṇḍala*. In Buddhist cosmology Virūpākṣa, who as Regent of the West corresponds to Varuṇa, is again a *nāgarāja*. It should be noted that *virūpa* cannot originally have meant "deformed," for which we have *duṣkṛta* in quite other connections; *virūpa* in RV. always implies a duality of aspect, i. e. an alternation of aspect in what is essentially the same or consubstantial, e. g. I. 95. 1, I. 122. 2, V. 1. 4, where Night and Dawn are *virūpā*, "of unlike aspect," VII. 103 where the Brahman frogs are similarly designated, and X. 95. 16 where Urvaśi dwells amongst mortals "in another aspect," *virūpā*. Virūpākṣa should therefore mean "having unlike eyes," which is appropriate for Varuṇa, whose "eyes" are the Sun and Moon.

The Buddha legend preserves a double version of Indra's (occasionally Agni's or Bṛhaspati's) battle with Ahi-Vṛtra, who is also Mrtyu, the principle of Death: first, in the Māra Dharṣaṇa, where may be noted Māra's (= Mrtyu's) use of weapons characteristic for Ahi, who likewise resorts to lightning, thunder, and rain of hail (RV. I. 32. 13), or for the Dāsa Namuci who "makes women his weapons" (RV. V. 30. 9), and also that the Buddha is deserted by the timorous Angels, just as in Indra in

be cited, it is this subdivision of an originally simple recumbent and sleeping principle that should be especially remarked. In IV. 19. 3 "Thou (Indra) didst dismember (*vi rṇā*) him, the impartite (*aparvan*) Serpent (*ahim* = *vr̥tram* in verse 1), him the insatiate, who was unawakened (*abudhyam*), dormant (*abudhyamānam*), fast asleep (*suṣupāṇam*), outstretched (*viyatam*) lying (*āśayānam*) against the seven scarps" (*sapta prati pravataḥ*, cf. *varāham tiro adrim* in I. 67. 7, *saptāṇāṁ girīṇāṁ* in TS. VI. 2. 4. 3). In II. 11. 5 "Thou, Champion (Indra), hast smitten in thy manly might (*vīryena*) the Serpent (*ahim* = *vr̥tram* in verse 9), the Magician, as he lurked obscured and hidden away in secret in the Waters (*guhā hitam guhyam gūlham apsv apīvṛtam māyinam kṣiyantam*), him that held down the Waters and the Light of

RV. *passim*, e. g. IV. 18. 11, VIII. 93. 14-15, VIII. 96. 7 ("shrinking from the snort of Vṛtra, all the Angels, thy companions, left thee in the lurch"), and in AB. III. 20 and IV. 5; second, in the Conversion of the Jatilas (who are also Kaśyapas, "Tortoises," cf. RV. IX. 114. 2 and AV. *passim* where Kaśyapa is an, or the, Prajāpati, see MV. pp. 151, 153), on which occasion the Buddha spends the night in a fire-temple, the resort of the Nāga Ahi (*ahināgam* in *Mahāvagga*, I. 15. 17), and overcomes him, fighting fire with fire (*tejasā tejam*). In Jaina tradition the story survives in the episode of Mahāvīra's (a name significant of Indra in the Vedic formulations, e. g. I. 32. 6) conflict with an unnamed adversary who appears in the form of a serpent (Hemacandra, *Trīṣaṭīśalākāpuruṣacaritra*, parva 10, see *MFA. Bulletin* No. 197, 1935, pp. 38, 39 with fig. 3 on p. 37); the serpent here, however, is elsewhere called Samgana, i. e. Yama (for fuller discussion see my "The Conqueror's Life in Jaina Painting," to appear immediately in *Journ. Ind. Soc. Or. Art.* The name of Jina, "Conqueror," applied to Mahāvīra, no less than that of Tīrthamkara, is redolent of Vedic phraseology. There is in fact in the Indian tradition no aspect of the proceeding power that is not of necessity engaged in a mortal conflict with Death, in the beginning.

Finally, the whole problem of the Aryan or non-Aryan character of *nāgas* has been somewhat incorrectly stated, cf. Vogel, *Indian Serpent Lore*, pp. 32, 191, 225, 226. The serpents themselves are non-Aryan by definition, only becoming Aryans by "qualification" (*arhaṇa*) and by "creeping farther" (*atisarpaṇa*, whence the imitation of this motion in the sacrificial ritual); on the other hand, the doctrine *about* serpents is just as much an integral and indispensable part of the Vedic Aryan as it is of any non-Aryan, e. g. the Sumerian tradition. The tremendous emphasis laid on the dragon-slaying motif in all traditions can be readily understood when we realize that the dismemberment of the ophidian power is precisely the act of creation.

Heaven" (*apo dyām tastambhvānsam*,²⁵ where as in so many other texts, *dyu* is tantamount to "Sun"). The sequence is explicit in II. 19. 2-3, where "This mighty Indra, hewing apart the Serpent that withheld the flood (*arño vṛtam*),²⁶ propelled the flood of waters to the sea (of life), brought about the Sun's nativity (*ajanayat sūryam*), found the cattle, by means of night fulfilled the work of days," cf. I. 61. 10. Similarly II. 11. 18, "Thou clavest the spidery Vṛtra, son of Dānu"²⁷ (*vṛtram dānum aurṇavābham*, Vṛtra being similarly Dānava in RV. I. 32. 9 and SB. I. 6. 3. 9), unveiled the Light for the Aryan-ilk (*apa avṛnor jyotir*

²⁵ Root *stabh* is employed here not in the favorable sense of "support" but as in RV. VI. 44. 22, where Soma "pins down the miser" (*paṇim asthabhāyat*).

²⁶ *Vṛtam*, from root *vr*, to "invest," etc., and certainly with an implied *vrtram*, as is explicit in I. 52. 2 and VIII. 12. 26, *vrtram nadi-vṛtam*, "the Dragon that invests the rivers and will not let them go." In this connection, and without taking up at length the Qabbalistic exegesis of Genesis, and the correspondence of Pharaoh, Moses, Egyptians, and Israelites respectively to Vṛtra-Namuci, Indra, Asuras, and Aryans, may be remarked the notable text Ezekiel, XXIX. 3, "Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the great Dragon (*tanim* = Babylonian *tiāmat*) that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said: My river is my own, and I have made it for myself."

²⁷ The names are confusing. In SB. loc. cit., Danu and Danāyū or Dānavī receive the stricken Vṛtra "as his mother and father." Danu does not occur in RV. Dānu in II. 11. 18 is evidently patronymic or matronymic, presumably the latter, in which case either Danu or Dānu could be assumed for the mother's name. In I. 32. 9 Dānu with *vṛtraputrā* must be the mother; that when Indra sinks them both, "Mother above and son below, there Dānu lay, like cow with calf" (*sahavatsā na dhenuḥ*), and that *dānu* is also "fluid," "moisture" or "mist" are perfectly consonant, for the floods are said to flow over Vṛtra's stricken body. "Cow with calf" suggest Aditi-Vāc and Agni (cf. I. 164. 17), here, of course, that Agni who takes refuge in the Waters (X. 51. 1 etc.); Dānu is in fact the consort of the Ādityas Mitrāvaraṇā (*dānunas patī* in I. 136. 3 and II. 41. 6) or of the Aśvins (*dānunas patī* in VIII. 8. 16), Ahi is born of the Waters (*abjā* in VII. 34. 16), Śuṣṇa son of the mist (*miho napāt*, V. 32. 4), Agni son of the Waters, passim, the "glittering (*dānucitrāḥ*) Waters" of V. 31. 6, the "Waters whose wealth" (*rādhasā dānuḥ*) flows for Indra in I. 54. 7. Dānu and Dānava discussed above are etymologically distinct from *dānu* and *dānava* derived from *dā* to "give" and meaning generous. Such complexities can only be understood in the light of the doctrine of dual operation (*vivrata*) which is so evidently assumed throughout RV., as it is also in every other body of traditional teaching.

āryāya), sank the Dasyu”;²⁸ the following verse implying an identification of Viśvarūpa with Vṛtra, elsewhere his brother. The fullest and perhaps most interesting account occurs in RV. I. 32; here Indra dissevers Vyamīsa, “the most Vṛtra, firstborn of the Serpents, as a tree is cut up into logs, so that he lies emasculate (*vṛṣṇo vadhrīḥ*),²⁹ divided into many parts” (*purutrā . . . vyastah*).

²⁸ Ārya and Dāsa or Dasyu in RV. are synonymous with Deva and Manuṣya or Narya, and Asura respectively, the Aryans being those who cross the Waters and settle round the Light, a proposition discussed in my *Rg Veda as Land-Nāma-Bók*. It is only by analogy that such terms have been applied to human societies; incidentally, the inconsequence of a racial discrimination based on the supposed existence of an ethnic Aryan type becomes apparent when we reflect that we are all Aryans by father-right and non-Aryans on the mother-side, for the feminine principle is always an Asurī in RV., we are children of day and night, of fire and water, our very existence derives from an exogamy and miscegenation, who inherit accordingly a bilateral symmetry, cf. the correlation of the right and left eyes with Indra and Indrāṇī in SB. X. 5. 2 and Upaniṣads; Eve, “the mother of all living,” is drawn from Adam’s side, cf. Parśu, the “Rib,” daughter of Manu (X. 86. 23), who is the mother of the children of men (SB. I. 8. 1. 8-11); while in the Shah Nāmah, which Professor F. W. Buckler called “an epic of the genealogy of the kingdom of God on earth,” the mother is always Turanian, and many an Indian dynasty traces its ancestry to a Nāginī; and in the Edda, the consorts of the Aesir are always of Wane or giant origin.

²⁹ “Emasculate,” in line with the descriptions elsewhere of the deity ab intra as blind, halt, and ineffectual, and the designation of the feminine principle ab intra as Vadhrimati: “Now is he sterile, now progenitive, he shapes his fashion as he will” (*starīr u tvad bhavati sūta u tvad, yathā-vaśāṁ tanvāṁ cakra eṣāḥ*, RV. VII. 101. 3), corresponding on the one hand to AV. VI. 72. 1, “As by his titan magic the black (snake) extends himself, assuming forms (i. e. those of ‘serpent’ or those of ‘man’) at will” (*yathāsitāḥ prathayate vaśān anu vapūṁsi kṛṇvann asurasya māyayā*), —asita, the “black” (snake, skin, or garment) referring to the ab intra aspect of Agni or the Sun, as in AV. XII. 3. 55 and TS. III. 2. 2,— and on the other to RV. X. 168. 4 where “the Spirit of the Angels moves at will, so let us come unto this Gale with offering” (*ātmā devānām . . . yathā-vaśāṁ carati . . . tasmai vātāya haviṣā vidhema*). The doctrine of the “impotence of the Godhead” is common to Vedic tradition and Christian exegesis (typically in Eckhart), but requires a longer and fuller discussion than can be undertaken here.

The assimilation of Vṛtra’s fall to the felling and cutting up of a tree (cf. X. 89. 7) is itself significant in connection with the question asked in *brahmodya*, X. 31. 7 = X. 81. 4, “What was the wood, what the tree out of which they fashioned Heaven and Earth?”, and with the customary designation of Agni and Soma as *vanaspati*.

In I. 61. 10 Indra cuts to pieces the scorching Vṛtra (*śuṣṭantam* being tantamount to an identification with Śuṣṇa, "Drought," as also in VIII. 6. 14-15); in VIII. 6. 13 "rends him joint from joint, and drives the Waters to the Sea," in I. 130. 4 "using his bolt (on Ahi) like a carving knife," while in VIII. 7. 23 it is Indra's allies the Maruts that "tear him joint from joint" (*vi vr̥trāṁ parvaśo yayuḥ*). It remains to note the conspicuous correspondences and contrasts. The consubstantiality of Agni with Ahi Budhnya is generally admitted (VM. p. 73); in I. 79. 1, Agni is a "raging serpent" (*ahir dhunir, dhuni* occurring also as the name of a Titan in VII. 19. 4 and X. 113. 9); AB. III. 36 employing a strictly technical terminology explains that Ahi Budhnya is invisibly (*parokṣena*) what Agni Gārhapatya is visibly (*pratyakṣa*), and VS. V. 33, where Ahi Budhnya and Aja Ekapad,³⁰ the Sun, are identified and the epithet "Waylord" (*adhvapati*) distinctive of Agni is used in the invocation. The language of II. 11. 5 cited above corresponds to terms that are characteristic for the hidden Sun, e. g. V. 40. 6 f. where when the Sun has been smitten with

³⁰ For the Sun as Ekapad, "One footed," see Dumont in JAOS. 53. 326 ff. The Sun is originally footless, Varuṇa gives him feet that he may proceed, RV. I. 24. 8; thus Varuṇa himself as Sun "with his bright foot ascends the vault of heaven (*arcinā padā nākam āruhat*, VIII. 41. 8. The Sun's feet are his rays; his one foot that is alternately dark and bright (Mbh. XII. 362. 7-8) is coincident with the axis of the universe (*skambhena vi rodasi ajo na dyām adhārayat*, VIII. 41. 10); that it is alternately dark and bright (*asita, śucina*, Mbh. XII. 362. 7-8) corresponds to RV. V. 62. 8 where the pillar that Varuṇa and Mitra mount is golden at dawn and bronze at sunset, what they see from above when the pillar is golden being the finite (*ditim*), and what they see when it is brazen is the infinite (*aditim*). The Sun has also, of course, a "thousand feet" (*sahasrapādam*, in VIII. 69. 16), i. e. indefinitely numerous rays, every one of which is from the standpoint of the corresponding individual the Sun's "one foot," and at the same time the pillar (*skambha* = *stauros*) or bridge (*setu* = *cinvad*, *biföst*, etc.) that at once connects and divides Heaven from Earth, the light from the darkness.

A further allusion to the Sun as *ekapad* occurs in VS. XXIII. 50, *ekena aṅgena paryemi*. The conception must at one time have been visually represented; for it has survived in folk art to the present day, see the two representations of the "Mansion of the Sun," reproduced from *alpōna drawings*, in A. N. Tagore, *Bānglar Vrata*, Calcutta, n. d., Pl. 99, where moreover the Sun's "one foot" is supported by a boat or swing (*nau* and *preṅkha* in RV. VII. 88. 3, cf. VI. 58. 3, golden *preṅkha* in VII. 87. 5, *naunagara* in JB. I. 125).

darkness by the titanic Svarbhānu, Atri “finds him, hidden by the darkness and inoperative” (*gūlham sūryam tamasā apavratena . . . avindat*, where *apavrata* = *avrata*, “idle,” a pejorative designation often applied to the non-Aryan aspect, and denoting the divine “idleness,” here in other words denoting that the Sun does not shine, but is overcast, *apīvṛtam*, as in II. 11. 5); cf. I. 117. 4-5, where Rebha in need of aid is assimilated to the “hidden horse (*āsvam na gūlham*) . . . sleeping in Destruction’s womb (*susup-vānsam na nirṛter upasthe*, cf. I. 164. 32), the Sun abiding in the Darkness” (*sūryam na tamasi kṣiyantam*, cf. *tamasi kṣesi* addressed to Agni, whose procession is delayed, in X. 51. 5, and *kṣeti budhnah* applied to Agni as “remaining in his ground” even while he goes forth, in III. 55. 7).³¹

The designation *aurṇavābha*, patronymic or simply adjectival form of *Ūrṇavābha*, “thread-spinner,” i. e. “Spider,” is of no little interest. In RV. VIII. 77. 1-2 “the stark and far-famed *Aurṇavābha* and *Ahīṣuva*” are destined to be overthrown by Indra, as befalls in VIII. 32. 26, where *aurṇavābham* qualifies *vṛtram* as in II. 11. 18. In the Brāhmaṇas, *Ūrṇāyu* is a Gandharva. In RV. VI. 15. 16 the altar, Agni’s birthplace, is “an anointed, downy nest” (*ūrṇāvantam yonim kulāyinam ghṛtavantam*, where *ūrṇāvantam* may be regarded as synonymous with *aurṇavābham*, and there is also an allusion to the pubescent vulva, cf. Apālā’s prayer in VIII. 91. 5 fulfilled in *Romasā* in I. 126. 7).³² In the same way

³¹ All the associations of Agni with the word *budhna* in RV. imply his *budhnya*, chthonic character; his terrestrial origin in the worlds being always analogous to this origination in the ground of the divine being. Further evidence of the consubstantiality of Agni with the Serpent ab intra may be cited in the identification of Mitra with the Titan Vamacitra or Vipracitti, the eldest son of Danu and father of Rahu or Namuci, as worked out by Przyluski, “Un Dieu Iranien dans l’Inde,” in *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, VII.

In Apuleius, Psyche’s husband, otherwise assimilable to the Indian Purūravas, is described in what purports to be a Miletian oracle as “no wight of humane seed, but Serpent dire and fierce as might be thought, who flies with wings . . . the rivers blacke and deadly floudes of paine, and darkness eke, as thrall to him remaine” (Adlington’s version, 1639).

³² The same is implied in V. 5. 4 where the *barhis* or “strew” is addressed as “soft as down” (*ūrṇamradāḥ*), followed in the next verse by “Open yourselves, ye doors angelic, apt for advent” (*devīr dvāro viśrayadhvam suprāyanāḥ*), an almost literal parallel to X. 18. 10-11 invoking “girlish Mother Earth to be as soft as down to him of the Guerdon”

I. 105. 9, "Where are those seven rays spun forth (*ātatāḥ*), there is my navel" (*nābhiḥ*, i. e. Agni's chthonic navel, *nābhiḥ prthivyāḥ*, and the navel of aeviternity, *amṛtasya nābhiḥ*, *passim*). The latter passage is to be borne in mind in connection with the word *ūrṇanābhi*, the regular designation of the Spider in the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads: e. g. BU. II. 1. 20, where all things are said to proceed from their source "as a spider might ascend by means of

(*dakṣināvate*, Dakṣinā being the Dawn as in I. 123. 1 and X. 107, mother of Agni as in III. 58. 1, likewise Indrāṇī as in II. 11. 21, and the Serpent Queen), followed by "Be opened up (*uc chvañcasva*), O Earth, hinder him not (*mā ni bādhathāḥ*), be apt for advent (*sūpāyanā*), wrap him in down (*abhi . . . ūrṇuhi*, from root *vṛ*, as in *ūrṇa*) as a mother wraps her skirt about her son," by which we understand in due him in the robe of light (*nirṇijam*, *drāpīm hiraṇyam*, etc.) that he puts on when he appears in the worlds; "Be opened up" implying, not "Open to receive," but "Open to give out." It would take overlong to discuss here the proposition that the application of the funeral hymns must be clearly distinguished from their wording, which has all to do with birth, and not with burial. Not that the theme of resurrection is any but fitting matter for a requiem; but rather and on the contrary, that the language of the funeral hymns implies the thought *Mors janua vitae*. That in general the *yogi* and *saṁnyasi* are not cremated, but thrown into water or simply buried is in accord with strictest logic, inasmuch as these have not desired a resurrection, but to be dead and buried in the Godhead.

To *ūrṇamradāḥ* (*barhis*) cited above from RV. V. 5. 4 corresponds exactly to ŚB. I. 3. 37 and BU. VI. 4. 3, *lomāni barhis*. It may be added that there can be no doubt of the identity of the *ūrṇāvantam yonim kulāyinam ghṛtavantam savitre*, Agni's birthplace in RV. VI. 15. 16, cf. AB. I. 28 *savitre kulāyam . . . ūrṇāstukāḥ*, with the *viśvambhara kulāya*, "all supporting nest" in BU. I. 4. 7, rightly although not literally rendered by Hume (*Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, p. 82) as "fire-holder," i. e. fire-place or hearth. But this is not (as Hume surmises) the best source for the Vedantic simile "as fire is latent in fire-wood or in covered embers"; this simile derives far more directly from the familiar Vedic concept expressed in V. 11. 6 where the Angirases find Agni "lying hidden in every log" (*guhā hitam . . . śiśriyāṇam vanevane*, cf. X. 91. 2 and many similar passages).

The "Spider" imagery is the obvious source of the well-known *ūrṇā*, the brow-spot or tuft that is a constant *lakṣaṇa* of the Buddha as Mahāpurisa; which *ūrṇā*, especially in Japanese iconography, is often represented not merely as a mole, but as the source of radiating lines of light. That this *ūrṇā* is also in a certain sense an "eye," and is analogous to the third eye of Śiva, still more marks his solar kinship, who is called the "eye in the world (*cakkuṁ loke*), i. e. that "Eye," the Sun, which in RV. *passim* "surveys all things" (*viśvam abhi caste*).

its thread (*yathorṇanābhiś tantunoccaret*), as sparks ascend from fire," and *Muṇḍaka Up*, I. 7, "Just as a spider emanates and withdraws (*sṛjate ghrṇate*, lit. 'pours out and dries up'), so all this comes into being from him who does not flow forth" (*akṣarāt sambhavati iha viśvam*). The Sun, as we have already seen, shines forth with seven rays; or alternatively, it is the co-creators (*kavayah*) operating sacrificially as mediate causes, who "spin their seven threads to form the web" (*sapta tantūn vi tantire kavaya otavai*, I. 164. 5); which "seven rays spun forth" (*sapta rasmayaś tatāḥ*) are proper to the Inductor of the Sacrifice (Agni or Sun) who as eighth Āditya "impels all things" (*viśvam invati*, II. 5. 2); and these seven rays as we have seen are also Viśvarūpa's.

A sacrificial *gāthā* quoted in KB. XIX. 3 explicitly refers to the Year, the Sun, as a spider. The "Spider," then, is Agni and/or the Sun, regarded as a Titan while the rays are hidden in his belly, as an Angel when he spins the web; each thread of which, for one that can pursue the clew, follow let us say the *via analogia*, unravelling the tissue, provides a pathway leading in again towards its source. Needless to say, the "Spider" image analysed above involves the well-known doctrine of the *sūtrātman*, as can be readily seen if we collate RV. X. 168. 4 where the Sun "is the spiration of the Angels" (*ātmā devānām*) with ŚB. VIII. 7. 3. 10 "Yonder Sun connects (*saṃvayate*) these worlds by a thread (*sūtre*), and what that thread is is the Gale" (*vāyuh*), cf. also BG. VII. 7, "All this universe is strung on me like rows of jewels on a string" (*protam sūtre maṇigāṇā iva*). It may be added that the symbolism of the spider's web of which the threads are rays of light is but a special form of the more universal symbolism of spinning and weaving that is so commonly employed in the Vedic and in other forms of the universal tradition, cf. for example, Dante, *Paradiso*, XXX. 49-51, "living light . . . in such a web of its refulgence" (*luce viva . . . di tal velo di suo fulgor*).

In IV. 19. 3 cited above the terms *abudhyam*, *susupānam*, and *āśayānam* are to be noted. All have a common implication, a shade of which can be recognized when we speak colloquially of the sun as "going to bed" at night; for he similarly "couches" in the night of time. *Abudhya* is primarily "unawakened," and secondarily "stupid," a wellknown characteristic of giants in all folklore, *susupānam* and *āśayānam*, "sleepy and lying" correspond to the equally characteristic notion of "brooding" (over treasure).

It is significant that in I. 103. 7, Indra actually “awakens the inert Serpent with his bolt” (*sasantam vajreṇa abodhayo 'him*); for to be awake (*budh*, *jāgr*) is specific for the Angels in RV. *passim*, and above all for Agni, who is *uṣarbudh*, “awakened at dawn,” awakening being the same as kindling, cf. V. 1. 1, *abodhy agnih samidhā . . . prati . . . uṣasam*, and in IV. 23. 7-8 the sequence “He smites the Indra-less destructive fiend” (*druham jighānsan dhvarasam anindrām*). . . . The radiant cosmic³³ laud pierces the deaf ears of Life, awakening him” (*rtasya śloko badhīrā tatarda karnā budhānah śucamāna āyoh*); in the latter passage Āyus is specifically Agni³⁴ (Bloomfield in JAOS. XX. 180) and we recognize the concept of him as a “deaf adder” ante principium. Alternatively, in I. 113. 4 it is Dawn that awakens the several worlds, or all beings (*ajīgar bhuvanāni viśvā*). That Ahi is smitten and awakened is then the same as to say that the chthonic Serpent is con-verted (*samvṛt*) or extroverted (*pravṛt*), the Darkness literally up-turned (*udvṛt*) into Light. Thus *buddha*, “awakened,” is also “illuminate.” It is most interesting to observe that the original concept of the awakened serpent is clearly preserved in Buddhist thought, viz. in the Commentator’s explanation of *budh* as “an uprising from the sleep of the kindred of the slime” (*bujjhati kilesa-santāna-niddāya uṭṭhahati*, *Atthasālinī*, 464, text p. 217).

Āśayānam, “lying down,” is specific for the deity ab intra, and contrasts with the act of procession, which is a being seated (*sad*), a standing up (*sthā*, generally with *urdhvā*, cf. Sāyaṇa’s *sthitam padārtham jātam*), and a motion (*car*, whence the *pañca jana* are sometimes referred to as *carṣanayah*). To lie and to sleep, to stand up and to wake, are respectively coincident. From the *karmakāṇḍa* point of the latter condition is of course superior, though the former is logically prior; from the *jñānakāṇḍa* point of view, the reverse holds good, the well-known Indian saying “Better to stand than

³³ *Rtasya*, “cosmic,” inasmuch as Greek Kosmos is precisely “Order.”

³⁴ The designation Āyu is here applied to Agni ab intra; the Gandharva Īrṇāyu within is Viśvāyu without: for the raison d’être of īrṇā- here, see the discussion of the “Spider” symbolism, above, and for that of -āyu, “Life” cf. John, I. 3-4 “All things that have been made were Life (*vita* = *āyus*) in Him,” and Col. I. 16, “In him (the Son) were created all things,” cf. AV. XII. 3. 47 “a filial (*kaumāra*) world hath been born, a son.”

walk, better to sit than stand, better to lie than sit" providing a good example of what is known as "inverse thinking" or "procedure upstream."

The divine procession involves an apparent partition; *krama* is *dvitva* (TP. XXI. 16). In the Vedic dragon-slaying texts, others as well as those cited above, nothing is more conspicuous than the emphasis laid on the scission or subdivision of the originally impartite (*aparvan*) ophidian principle. It is precisely in the same way, except that the strictly speaking mental character of the act is also indicated, that RV. describes the subdivision of That One (*tad ekam*, X. 129. 2) Integral Multiplicity (*viśvam ekam*, III. 54. 8—and a characteristic formula in Plotinus), the unity of the Person and the Word (*puruṣa, vāc*), which division is effected by the First Sacrifice. "It is by their wordings that the vibrant co-creators (*viprah kavayah*) conceive him to be manifold who abideth One" (*vacobhir ekam santam bahudhā kalpayanti*, X. 114. 5), "calling him manifold who is but One" (*ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanty agnim . . .*, I. 164. 46), cf. Makha, whom "so long as he was one, the many did not overcome (*ekam santam bahuvo nābhya dhṛṣṇuvan*, TA. V. 1. 3). Similarly as regards the feminine aspect: "By the sacrifice they followed up the footprint (*padaviyam = vestigium pedi*) of the Word, found her harboring in the Prophets, brought her forth, departed her distributively (*vy adadhuh purutrā*), the Seven Singers uttered her in concert everywhere (X. 71. 3), who says also of herself, "The Angels have departed me distributively" (*mā devā vy adadhuh purutrā*,³⁵ X. 125. 3).

It is equally significant that no essential value would be really changed in the Puruṣasūkta by a substitution of "Vṛtra" for "Puruṣa": here, X. 90. 11-14, the question is asked in *brahmodya* fashion, "When they divided up (*vy adadhuh*) the Person, how-many-fold did they think him out to be?" (*katidhā vy akalpayan*),

³⁵ *Vy adadhuh* amounts to "contracted and identified into variety." The use of *vad*, *kṛp* (as also in *samkalpa*, "notion," e. g. Kena Up. 29-30, where the notion formed of deity is contrasted with the blinding vision of the deity as he is in himself) must be understood in connection with the whole Vedic doctrine of creation by designation, *nāmadheya*), see my "Vedic Exemplarism" to appear in the *James Haughton Woods Memorial Volume*, and Scharbau, *Der Idee der Schöpfung in der vedischen Literatur*, pp. 123-132.

the answer following ending with the words "Thus they designed the worlds" (*lokān akalpayan*) ; a further correspondance being patent in verse 14, "from his head was Heaven adverted (*śirṣno dyauḥ sam avartata*), from his feet the Earth,"⁸⁶ whence however it is clear that the *Puruṣa* has already assumed a human aspect, *ante principium*, or rather does so in *principio*; "he shines upon the world as Person" (*puruṣarūpena*, AA. II. 2. 1), for the Brahman-Yakṣa "chooses the Person for procession" (*puruṣam prapapadanāye*, JUB. IV. 23-24), the Sacrifice is the Eternal Man, our Sire (*yajño manuh . . . nah pitā*, X. 100. 5), that is Agni ("Be Manu thou, beget the angelic kindred," *manur bhava janayā daivyam janam*, X. 53. 6), and the Year (AB. II. 17, SB. X. 4. 3. 1-3, etc.). The Sacrifice is an eternal *puruṣa-medha*.

The expression "footless and handless" (*apād ahastah*)—a serpent kenning—applied in I. 32. 7 to Ahi-Vṛtra, in III. 30. 8 to Kuṇāru and Vṛtra,⁸⁷ represents the converse of what is applicable to the manifested Sun, Sun, Sūrya or Savitṛ, respectively "single-footed" and "golden-handed" (*ekapad, hiranyahastah*, *passim*) and the manifested Agni, "footed" or who is preeminently "footed (*padavīḥ*) waywise leader" (*vidvān pathah puraeta*, V. 46. 1), "the herdsman never-falling as he goes about his ways" (*gopām anipadyamānam . . . pathibhiś carantam*, I. 164. 31), but "footless and headless, hiding both his ends (*apād aśīrṣā guhamāno antā*, cf. X. 79. 2, *guhā siro nihitam ṛdhag akṣi*) when first born in the ground of space (*budhne rajasah*, i. e. born as Ahi Budhnya), in his matrix, in the Bull's nest" (*asya yonau . . . vṛṣabhasya nīle*, IV. 1. 11), i. e. *ante principium*, immediately antecedent to his kindling.

⁸⁶ As in the Edda, *Grimnismal*, 40, "From Ymir's flesh the Earth was shapen . . . and Heaven from his skull" (*ór hausi himinn*). The account of the Titan Ymir's prior being found in *Völuspá*, 3, *Ár vas alda þars ymir bygði . . . jörþ fannsk áeva né upphiminn, gap vas ginnunga, en gras hvergi*, corresponds exactly to RV. I. 129. 1 and 3. Similarly in the Babylonian legend, Marduk bisects Tiāmat, the dragon-mother of the gods, and makes Heaven of her upper part, etc.

⁸⁷ In SB. I. 7. 1. 1 the soma-guardian (i. e. the Gandharva, whose consort Indra so often beguiles, e. g. in JB. I. 125, see Bloomfield in JAOS. XXVIII. 80 ff.) is similarly a "footless archer" (*apād astā*); the Gandharva, in other words, is the dragon or serpent guardian of the Tree of Life, as in all other mythologies.

7. *Procession is a sunwise turn*

In connection with the use of *vr̥t*, it is to be observed that the “turn about” is always right handed, the powers of darkness being, as in other traditions, those of the left, the powers of light those of the right. The smitten Dasyu “sinks on Indra’s left” (RV. II. 11. 18), “Indra with his left hand constrains the giants (*vr̥adhatah*, as in X. 49. 8, X. 69. 10), with his right lays hold upon his deeds” (*dakṣiṇe sām gr̥bhītā kṛtāni*). As Dakṣa is virtually the right hand of God, so Dakṣinā is “right lady,” viz. in RV. primarily the Dawn, the milch-cow, and mother of Agni (I. 123. 1, III. 58. 1) and in TS. VI. 1. 3. 6 similarly of Indra, and it may be easily seen how the secondary meaning of *dakṣinā*, “sacrificial fee” is derived; for the First Sacrifice is always a *sattrā* performed by the officiants on their own behalf, and wealthy Dawn with her abundant kine is their reward. On the other hand when the feminine principle is considered with respect to her origin, just as Heaven is “above” and Earth “below,” so “he” is right and “she” left, as in ŚB. X. 5. 2. 9, BU. IV. 2. 2-3, and MU. VII. 11, where the “person” in the right eye is Indra, the “person” in the left Indrāṇī or Virāj, their conjunction taking place in the “heart,” or ritually, within the veiled *sadas*. The sacrificer himself moves sunwise, “He makes a right turn (*prasalavyāvartayati*), thereby he turns yonder Sun to the right, and accordingly yonder Sun moves round these worlds from left to right” (ŚB. VII. 5. 1. 37); in the same way the hempen girdle is twisted sunwise, which is the “human” way, “and were it twisted widdershins, it would be sacred to the Fathers” (*ib.* III. 2. 1. 13, cf. also I. 2. 1. 12 with Eggeling’s note).

The notion of a single principle that faces in two opposite directions, that namely of the Janus type in iconography, is thus extensively developed in RV., e. g. X. 5. 6, where Agni is stationed “at the parting of the ways” (*panthām visarge*), that is of course on the threshold of the gate of the worlds (*lokadvāra*). Amongst the consequences of such an opposite orientation of the light and dark worlds we may note, for example, “Those that come hitherward (*arvañc*) they call departing” (*parācah*), RV. I. 164. 19, and “What incantation the Angels pronounce forwards (*avastāt*), that the Titans pronounce backwards” (*parastāt*), JB. I. 125, analogous to which is the pulling of the Devas and Asuras in

opposite direction at the Churning of the Ocean, and it should not be overlooked that such an opposition of the opposing principles is indispensable for creation. From the *karmakānda* and *kṣatriya* point of view, the auspicious motion is forwards in a rectilinear sense; but from the *jñānakānda* and *brāhmaṇa* point of view the auspicious direction is, not indeed backwards, but—in a sense to be explained—nevertheless an opposite one. Inevitably opposite, for when the forward steps have been taken, they must in some sense be retraced, whatever has been affirmed must also be denied, whatever has been stolen must be restored, if ever the Wayfarer is to reach That One “who never really rises nor sets.” For the extroverted consciousness, accordingly, an introversion is required, and this is what is alluded to in all such expressions as *pratyakcetanā*, “reverse thinking,” defined as follows by Maṇiprabhā on YS. I. 29, “Thought is said to be reversed (*pratyāñc*) when it turns (*añcati*) against the current” (*pratīpam*), which as Bhoja adds, “is effected in the case of yogis.” The “upstream” imagery, which recurs also in the Pali Buddhist *uddhamsota*, “Upstreamer,” is first to my knowledge explicitly employed in TS. VII. 5. 7. 4, *pratikūla iva vā itaḥ svargo lokah*, “Heaven world is counter-current as it were from here,” cf. JB. III. 150 and PB. XXV. 10. 12-18. As a further example of “reverse thinking” may be cited BG. II. 69, “That which is the night of all beings is for the truly poor man (*saṁnyāsi*) the time of wakening; when other beings are awake, then it is night for the seeing Muni,” cf. “The light that is in you is darkness,” and the discussion of *susupānam* in section 6 above, recalling that *suṣupta*, “Deep Sleep,” is contrasted in the *jñānakānda* with the “Waking State” of consciousness, as superior to inferior.

It is important to observe, at the same time, that the “opposite direction” is not a backward one, but onward (TS. VII. 2. 1. 3 *prāṇ iva hi suvargah*). The Wayfarer, whether he continues on the *devayāna* or lingers on the *pitryāna*, is always thought of as following up the circle of the Year, he does not turn about leftwise to go backwards (incantations are repeated backwards and widershins movements made only in *black* magic); any such backsliding (*avasarpaṇa* as contrasted with *atisarpaṇa*) would involve, not the desired integration (*samskarana*) but a disintegration (*vikarana*, *visraṅsana*). It should be added that the circumambulation of the Year which represents the individual’s pilgrimage envisaged as if

taking place on a given level of reference, a single “world” (*loka*), can be regarded from another point of view as a movement outwards (*pravṛtti*) from the centre towards the circumference, and conversely (*nivṛtti*), this motion following first a downward and later an upward course on a continuous spiral centred about the axis of the universe; the points at which the spiral cuts successive levels of reference, and in particular those planes that represent the “seven worlds,” representing the different stations that are occupied by this individual principle in the course of its transmigration (*paribhramana*) and mode-ification (*vr̥tti*). The Wayfarer in either case—when half the circle has been run, or when the spiral is reversed—moves now in a new and opposite direction, “counter-current.” The turning point, so critical in the history of the individual, is referred to in religion as a repentance, or even more significantly as a conversion, while in metaphysics this is the “reversion of the spiritual power,” *brahmaṇa āvartah* as cited above, of which dis-passion (*vairāgya*) is the sign. The pilgrimage is of significance for the pilgrim only until he reaches its end, until he “goes home” (*astam eti*), where none will ask him whence he came or whither he went; the pilgrimage begins with a gliding forth (*prasarpaṇa, upōdāsarpaṇa*, etc.) from the bonds of Varuṇa, of Death, which is coincident with the rising of the Sun, the “Light of them that sit in darkness” (*tamasi harmye*), summoning those asleep to take up their beds and walk, and ends in a “full-gliding” (*atisarpaṇa*) that is a full-release (*atimokṣa*) from “all the ills that follow in the bridesmaid’s train” (X. 85. 31). That emancipation is a return to Varuṇa, to Death, no longer as prisoner, but as a friend, there the pilgrim once more sees his “Father and Mother” (I. 24. 1), Varuṇa and Aditi, Heaven and Earth, united in the common nest (X. 5. 2); Varuṇa is deathless (RV. I. 164. 38), “Death does not die” (SB. X. 5. 2. 3), the Comprehensor unified with Death “becomes the Single Angel, even Death, discards recurrent death, death gets him not” (BU. I. 2. 7). An understanding of the ontology and teleology thus formulated in RV. and later is indispensable for any valid interpretation of the texts themselves—*kas tam praveda . . . so asmin madeta* (AV. IX. 1. 6), or otherwise, *yas tan na veda kim ṛcā kariṣyati* (RV. I. 164. 39).

8. *Casting the snake-skin, or changing color or garment*

The proposition that “The serpents are, that is, are consubstantial with, the Ādityas,” the “Suns” or children of Aditi, already cited from PB., can be supported and amplified from many other texts. In RV. IX. 86. 44, for example, Soma “like Ahi, creeps forward out of his old skin” (*ahir na jūrṇām ati sarpati*) ; in IV. 13. 4 “Thou goest forth with mightiest steeds, discarding the black robe (*asitam . . . vasma*, cf. *asitah* in AV. VI. 72. 1), the quivering rays of the Sun, as he extends his web (*tantum avavyayan . . . raśmayah*, involving the “spider” imagery), sink the darkness like a skin (*carmeva*) into the Waters,” cf. VII. 63. 1; that is, “when man’s libation calls me to the white-garment” (*nirnije*, X. 49. 7), for indeed Varuṇa “changes the black robes into clean and white ones in his operation” (*anu vratā*, VIII. 41. 10, his operations being respectively interior, *guhya*, and exterior, *āvis*), “Agni now wields, now layeth down his tool (*vāśīm*), as does the Titan his white garment” (VIII. 19. 23, cf. X. 20. 6 *agnim . . . vāśīmantam*, “with the flaming sword”?); in X. 63. 4 the Ādityas “man-regarding, with ever open eyes, have won as Angels, won by their qualification (*arhaṇā*) a lofty aeviternity; driving in chariots of light (*jyotirathah*, contrast the young streams that are still ‘footless and careless’ in X. 99. 4), having the serpents’ magic but yet innocent (*ahimāyā anāgasah*, exact equivalent of Matt. X. 16, *prudentes sicut serpentes, et simplices sicut columbae*), have clothed them in a glorious heavenly garment.” In JB. II. 134 “As Ahi casts his skin, as one would pull a blade of grass from its sheath, so he (Indra) is liberated from all evil” (*yathāhir ahi-cchavyai nirmucyeta . . . eva, sarvasmāt pāpmano nirmucyate*). In PB. XXV. 15. 4 “By that sacrificial session, the serpents conquered Death; he conquers Death who follows the same course. Thereby they shook off their old skin, and crept onwards, put away Death and conquered him. The serpents are the Ādityas. He who follows the same course shall shine with the Ādityas’ glory.” In SB. II. 3. 1. 3 and 6 the Sun, who when he sets enters as an embryo (*garbha*) into that womb that is Agni (*agnāv eva yonau*),³⁸ and is

³⁸ “The womb that is Agni,” viz. the Agni that is hidden, ab intra, may seem to stand in need of explanation. The expression tallies with PB. XXV. 10. 10, where “This Mitra pours his seed into Varuṇa” (*retah varuno siñcati*), SB. II. 2. 4. 5 (see p. 387, above) where the consuming

hidden by the night as embryos are hidden, now when he rises, "Even as Ahi, so does he free himself from his skin (*yathā ahis tvaco nirmucyeta*), so does he free himself from night, from evil" (*pāpmanah*, cf. AB. V. 25, where the Sun is called "that Angel who has most effectively smitten evil away"); and all this is imitated in the ritual when the officiating priests "creep" (*srp*, with *pra*, *prati*, *nih*, etc.) to or from the *sadas*, "Even as Ahi frees himself from his skin, even so do they free themselves from all

Agni, Vāc being absent, receives Prajāpati's seed, who thus reproduces himself (cf. AA. II. 3. 7 where the seed in man is proper to the Sun, the blood in woman proper to Agni, and also BU. VI. 4. 3, where in a sacramental interpretation of the sexual act, the place of Agni's kindling is analogically *madhyatas tau muṣkau*); and is likewise in agreement with BG. XIV. 3, "My womb (*yoni*) is the Great Brahman, therein I lay the embryo" (*garbham dadhāmi*, cf. RV. IX. 74. 5, where "Soma lays the embryo in Aditi's womb," *dadhāti garbham aditer upasthe*), this "Great Brahman" corresponding to the "Transcendental Nature" (*para prakṛti*) that is the "womb of all existences" (*etad yonīni bhūtāni sarvāṇi*, BG. VII. 5-6), "which Nature is mine own, and I when I resort to her, I pour forth at her will this whole body of being that hath no independent will" (*ib.* IX.) cf. Eckhart, "From the Father's embrace of his own nature comes the eternal playing (= *lilā*) of the Son"; or again, *Mundaka Up.* III. 1. 3 where the Highest is referred to as "Creator, Lord, and Person, Brahma-womb" (*brahma-yoni*), cf. RV. X. 29. 14 where Agni "is born from the Titan's womb" (*asurasya jaṭharāt ajāyata*), and ŚB. VI. 1. 2. 6-9, where Prajāpati is "pregnant" (*garbhīn*).

None of this is strange, even to Christian theology, but only unfamiliar: the Supreme Identity, *tad ekam*, is the unity of a conjoint principle, and were it otherwise the birth of the Son could not be called a vital operation (St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.* I. 27. 2). That Supreme Identity may be called by the names of either of its conjoint principles, i. e. may be spoken of as Varuṇa or Agni (usually m. but in the passages discussed semantically f.) or as Aditi or Virāj (both usually f. but often also m.), may in other words be thought of either as f. or m. or both at once. What may be said of the Virāj, whence all things milk their characteristic virtue, "Who knoweth her progenitive duality?" (*mithunatvam*, AV. VIII. 9. 10), cf. JUB. I. 54, where the conjoint principles Sāman and R̄k., i. e. Heaven and Earth, "become Viraj," and—only thus in unity, within—"beget" (*tau virād bhūtvā prājanayatām*) the Sun, after whose birth they are again divided, is also repeatedly affirmed in RV. e. g. X. 27. 23 *kr̄ntatrād esām uparā udāyan*, "at their diremption rose the latter."

That he who both "begets" and "brings forth"—we meet in Christian doctrine with such expressions as "the Father's child-bearing"—is a conjoint principle is to allude to his essence and his nature, which are one and the same in him, so that we speak indifferently of the "divine essence"

evil." To put off the snake skin corresponds, accordingly, to "putting off the old man."

To put off Death is to escape from Varuna, that is from the bonds of Varuna. Most of the difficulties that have been felt in the interpretation of Varuna, as "a god of Day" or as a "god of night," have arisen from a failure to observe that he is from the beginning both, now one and now the other "according to his operation" (*anu vratā*, VIII. 41. 10), although when contrasted with Mitra, as Titan with Angel, eternal with mortal, night with day, the non-proceeding Varuna is the power of darkness, the Father or Elder

and "divine nature"; he may as well be called a Mother as a Father, as in the expression "Natura naturans, Creatrix, Deus." The doctrine of the Son's eternal birth indeed implies not merely a temporal mother, but an eternal maternity in God, which is precisely that of the divine nature "by which the Father begets" (St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.* I. 41. 5, cf. Damascene, *de Fid. Orth.* I. 18 and Augustine, *de Trin.* XIV. 9). That God is thus the Father-Mother, or simply "Parents" (plu., du.) may be compared to the Vedic usage, in which the "Parents" are spoken of indifferently as "Mothers" (*mātarā*) or as "Fathers" (*pitarā*), Skr. having the advantage of recourse to grammatically dual forms which do not imply exactly what an "and" implies, but rather specify the dual aspect of a single substance, e. g. *Mitrāvaraṇau*, *Indrāgnī*, in the first case the relation being that of Son-Father, in the second that of King-Priest. It must not be forgotten that from an Indian point of view the "seed" is consubstantial with him whose seed it is, and thus the father is the embryo, and reborn as the son, as for example in RV. VI. 70. 3 "He in his begotten is born again, by law" (*pra prajābhīr jāyate dharmaṇas pari*). Note should be taken of this in connection with the often misinterpreted doctrine of reincarnation and common confusion of reincarnation with transmigration—the father as an individual principle *transmigrates*, and is thus reborn in another mode of being, but as father is *reproduced* in his son in that same mode of being in which the fact of paternity had been occasioned by the fact of filiation. The father, who sooner or later passes away—and this applies as much to the Father as to any individual principle, for "God comes and goes, God passes away" (Eckhart)—is resurrected in the son, who again as in this way bringing his father to birth, as well as inasmuch as filiation is the occasion of paternity, is called his "father's father." Resurrection and transmigration are Vedic doctrines, not so "reincarnation" in the supposedly Buddhist and in the Theosophical sense. Even in BG. II. 22 it is far from likely that the "body-dweller" *dehī* who abandons his inveterated bodies (*śarīrāṇi vihāya jīrṇāni*, echoing PB. XXV. 15. 4 *hitvā jīrṇām tvacam*) does not imply the living principle in all things rather than any individual principle as such.

Brother ab intra (I. 164. 38, X. 85, 17-18,³⁹ X. 132. 4, and more explicitly in TS. II. 1. 7 and 9). In the same way Agni, “Varuṇa at birth, Mitra when kindled” (RV. V. 3. 1), “Varuṇa as Jātavedas, Mitra as priest and house-friend” (III. 5. 4), “Tānūnapāt as Titan embryo, the Praise of Men when born abroad” (III. 29. 11), is from the first point of view a man-devouring, flesh-eating power to be avoided by all means (X. 16. 9 etc.), and from the second the herald (*dūta*) of the Angels and Friend (*mitra*) and Guest (*atithi*) of man, just as his Nordic equivalent, Loki, is now the foe and now the ally of the Aesir. In general theology, these contrasted aspects of the deity are those respectively of Mercy and of Justice; in Islamic metaphysics, for example, Heaven is the reflection of his absolute Love, Hell of his absolute Majesty. Here we are concerned with Varuṇa in the latter aspect, that of the Varuṇa from whose justice the herbs are besought to deliver us⁴⁰—“Release me from the curse, to wit from that of Varuṇa, from Yama’s hobble” (*muñcantu mā śapathyād atho varuṇyād uta, atho yamasya padbiśāt*, X. 97. 16, where may be noted the assimilation of Varuṇa to Yama, and that to be “tied by the foot,” or “hobbled,” is virtually to be “footless,” cf. *padgrbhi*, “Foot-seizer,” a demon in X. 49. 5).⁴¹

In X. 129. 1 the question is posed, “What covered up?” or “Who enveloped?” (*kim āvarīvar*), i. e. when as yet there was no distinction of being and non-being, life and death, day and night; the most evident answers are to be found in VIII. 100. 7 “It was

³⁹ That in X. 85. 18 “he who orders the seasons and is born again” (*ṛtūnṛ anyo vi dadhaj jāyate punah*) may not as Śāyaṇa says, be the Moon, but Agni or the Sun, may be seen by comparison with X. 72. 9 *prajāyai mṛtyave tvat punar mārtāṇḍam ābharat*, II. 38. 4 where Savitṛ *vi ṛtūnṛ adardhah*, and X. 2. 1 and 3, where Agni is addressed, *vidvān ṛtūnṛ rtupate . . . ṛtūn kalpayāti*.

⁴⁰ “The herbs”—whose king is Soma—are invoked here, because it is by the soma-draught that Indra is inspired and empowered to release his friends.

⁴¹ As regards “release from Varuṇa,” the inverse thought (*pratyakcetanā*) should be noted in VII. 86. 2, *kadā nv antar varuṇe bhuvāni*, “When at last shall I come to be within Varuṇa?”, i. e. “dead and buried in the Godhead,” cf. VII. 88, where also Varuṇa is both loved and feared. It is indeed by Varuṇa himself, when he shows his face (Agni, VII. 88. 2), when he becomes Savitṛ (ŚB. XII. 2. 7. 17) that one is freed from Varuṇa’s bonds; the Father as the Son is the redeemer from the Father’s wrath.

Vṛtra that enveloped" (*yo vo avāvarīt vrtrah*), and X. 90. 1 where it is the Person (*puruṣa*), whose identity with Ahi-Vṛtra has already been deduced on other grounds, who "encloses Earth all round about, and overpasses the *daśāṅgulam*" (*sa bhūmīm viśvato vṛtvā aty atiṣṭhad daśāṅgulam*—the meaning of the last word need not detain us); or again in TS. II. 4. 12 "Inasmuch as he enclosed these worlds, that is why he is 'Vṛtra'" (*yad imān lokān avṛṇot tad vṛtrasya vṛtratvam*)—this derivation from *vṛ* being etymologically preferable to that from *vṛt*, though from a *nairukta*, or hermeneutic, point of view, as well as the semantic (since both operations coincide in the referent), both derivations may be regarded as valid.

In any case, and apart from the evident functional equivalence, the common derivation of "Varuṇa" and "Vṛtra" from *vṛ* suggests that "That One" in whom and by whom all things are concealed while as yet he is "equally spirated, despirated" (*ānīd avātam*, X. 129. 2) must be as much Varuṇa as Vṛtra. That Varuṇa is indeed himself the "fence" (*varāṇa*) is indicated by the variant texts, *varāṇo vārayātai* in AV. VI. 85. 1 and X. 3. 5, and *varāṇo vārayāt* in TA. VI. 9. 2; cf. also "vala" = *vāra*, and *varāha*, also from *vṛ*. GB. I. 7 takes up the words of RV. X. 90. 1 with slight variation; the timid waters choose the Brahman to be their king, and "inasmuch as he encompassed them, he was their de-fence (*yac ca vṛtvātiṣṭhañs tad varāṇo 'bhavat*), and being such a 'fence' he is also to be known as 'Varuṇa' (*tam vā etam varāṇam santam varuna ity ācakṣate*), that is, metaphysically" (*parokṣena*). Further, "In that he was separated from the sea (*samudrād amucyata*) he became 'Mucyu,' and this Mucyu is metaphysically known as 'Death' . . . Varuṇa, Mṛtyu, from all whose members as he strove and seethed (*srāntasya taptasya*) the tincture flowed as sweat (*raso 'kṣarat, so 'ṅgaraso 'bhavantam*), and that 'ṅgarasa' is metaphysically known as 'Aṅgirasas.'" The latter part of this relatively "late" text exactly corresponds to BU. I. 2. 2, but whether or not to be regarded as wholly explicit in RV., the exegesis is altogether correct. Mucyu is no doubt the same as the Buddhist Nāga Mucalinda or Mucilinda, cf. Mucukunda in Mbh. In any case, it is impossible to doubt the identity of Varuṇa ab intra with the Asura-pitṛ, Ahi-Vṛtra, and Mṛtyu = Māra, nor his identity with the dreaded forms of Agni and Rudra—*Noster*

*Deus ignis consumens est.*⁴² Nor can it be denied that Mitra, the kindled Agni, is Varuṇa's "face," and Sūrya his "eye." The dual Mitrāvaruṇau is the unity of both in what from our point of view appears to be a dual operation, one of contrasted activity and idleness, productivity and impotence, mercy and judgment, duration and eternity, the *viṣurūpāṇi savratā* of VI. 70. 3. In this identity, the consubstantial or consanguineous pair, Mitra and Varuṇa, the one made manifest and subject to inveteration, the other unseen and eternal (I. 164. 38 and X. 85. 17-18), are respectively the *apara* and the *para* Brahman of the Upaniṣads, likewise mortal and immortal, in a likeness and not in any likeness (BU. II. 3).⁴³

⁴² This identity or coincidence was maintained by Bergaigne, but has been doubted by others, including Norman Brown (JAOS. 39. 108), who however informs me in correspondance that he does not absolutely deny its possibility. It is in fact only if we omit the qualifying *ab intra* from the proposition enunciated as above that "it requires a strong effort of will to identify two characters so extremely dissimilar in the Veda as are Varuṇa and Vṛtra" (Brown, loc. cit.). It may be observed also, that even for the scholar who is not a professed Christian, a modern Christian inheritance and "moralistic" preoccupation have made it difficult to accept the position of the older teaching, by no means unknown even to the Middle Ages in Europe, that "good" and "evil" have a valid significance only "under the sun" and "within the worlds," but in the Supreme Identity are coincident without opposition or composition.

⁴³ In the present article, references are drawn as far as possible from RV. rather than from "later" sources. At the same time, I am far more in agreement with Bloomfield, who argues that we must abandon the belief "that the allusions to the story which may be gathered from the scattered mantras are the only true material for its reconstruction" and like him am "more and more inclined to the belief that *mantra* and *brāhmaṇa* are for the least part chronological distinctions; that they represent two modes of literary activity, and two modes of literary speech, which are largely contemporaneous. . . . Both forms existed together, for aught we know, from the earliest times" (JAOS. 15. 144, cf. Eggeling in SBE. XII. xxiv, and Edgerton in JAOS. 36, 197), than with Brown who argues that "the later material is so liable to follow ideas not really contained in the Rigveda" (JAOS. 51. 108). Even in the Upaniṣads I do not see the development of any new doctrines, merely a certain distinction in phraseology and a difference of emphasis. For example, as to the identity of Varuṇa with Brahman: in the first place, as remarked by Grassmann, *Wörterbuch*, s. v. *brahman*, "die Keime der späteren Sonderung finden sich schon vereinzelt im RV." (a statement certainly erring on the side of moderation), and in the second, it would be very difficult to distinguish the conception of Mitrāvaruṇau, the latter the "immortal, uterine brother

9. *The Endlessness of Agni*

In RV. IV. 1. 11-12 cited above at the close of section 6, q. v., in a description of Agni, when "first born in his ground," *budhne*, i. e. as Ahi Budhnya, he is referred to as "footless and headless, hiding both his ends" (*apād aśīrsā guhamāno antā*). Evidently, *guhamāno antā* is tantamount to *ananta*, "endless," "infinite," "eternal," "without beginning or end," and also the name of the seven-headed *nāga*, Śeṣa, "Residue," who forms the couch (*śayana*) of Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu as the latter lies recumbent on the back of the

of the mortal; men mark the one and fail to mark the other" (RV. I. 164. 38, cf. X. 85. 17-18) from that of the two aspects of the Brahman, *para* and *apara*, respectively immortal and mortal, in a likeness and not in any likeness (BU. II. 3); in such a case it is the reference, and not the name that is significant, and in any case the distinction of *brahma* from *kṣatra*, as well as their coincidence, outwardly in the dual Indrāgnī and inwardly in the Supreme Identity, are sufficiently explicit.

It is not, of course, intended to deny that there is a linguistic development in the Upaniṣads, when we compare them with RV., which denial would be absurd. But literary history and the history of metaphysics are two very different things, one might even say that the *philosophia perennis* has no history, and cannot have a history, which was also Augustine's view. What then do we understand by Bloomfield's "two modes of literary expression (belonging to) the same cycle of thought" (loc. cit.)? Certainly not his "lyric" and "epic-didactic" modes; for RV. is no more "lyrical" in our sense than it is in any part whatever "satirical," and if the Brāhmaṇas are in parts didactic (and we should describe them rather as technical and exegetical), they are certainly not "epic" in any literary sense. The contrasted modes are those of liturgy on the one hand and initiatory teaching on the other: the exegetical parts of the Brāhmaṇas, and the Upaniṣads in general, are primarily concerned with *jātavidyā*, *bhāvavṛtta*, or "Genesis," that kind of knowledge, viz. which is ascribed to and expected of the Brahman par excellence, that priest viz. who does not himself take an active part in the ritual, but *jātavidyām vadati* (X. 71. 11), he in other words who on the proper occasions, that would be either in the colloquies of Brahmans or in giving instruction to a qualified pupil, gives the answers to all those questions that are posed in the *brahmodya* hymns, such questions for example as *kim āvarīvar* in X. 129. 1.

Otherwise expressed, the *karmakāṇḍa*, sanctioning and enjoining action, represents that part of the Vedas proper to the *kṣatra* or temporal power; the *jñānakāṇḍa*, theoretical in the strict sense of the word, that part proper to the *brahma* or spiritual power. Nothing forbids us to suppose that the latter part was not originally "published," nor in fact "published" until later, when a linguistic development had already taken

primordial Waters at the dawn of creation, the beginning of an aeon (Mbh. I. 36. 24, etc.). *Guhamāno antā* furthermore implies a conjunction of extremities, the converse of the separation of the Puruṣa's head and feet in RV. X. 90. 14,⁴⁴ wherewith the creation is initiated; implies, in other words, such a conjunction of extremities as is represented by the ancient and well-known symbol of the serpent with its tail in its mouth, or such strapwork motifs in art as are represented in their simplest form by the familiar symbol ∞ denoting mathematical infinity. It is then by no means surprising that in the ritual, the primary significance of which is a symbolic reintegration of the divided principle and therewith of the

place. Reasons for such a publication at this later time may be connected with the *kṣatriya* reaction against the spiritual power, involving in the first place the claim to an intellectual equality or even a superiority, and leading finally to a heterodox development in Buddhism and Jainism.

However this may be, we could not expect to find in a liturgy also a doctrinal exposition, where it would be out of place. It is true that the material is so extensive, and so infallibly consistent with itself ("its every part seems to be conscious of and assimilated to every other part, Bloomfield in JAOS. XXIX. 288), and we may add with traditional metaphysical doctrines preserved by other than Indian cultures, that it is by no means impossible to extract from the mantras the doctrines assumed in them, just as it would be possible to deduce the implied doctrine from the Psalms or the mediaeval Latin hymns; what in fact the consistency proves is that those who composed the mantras, whether human or super-human beings, must have been fully aware of all their implications, or if not it would be as if we had come upon a series of elegant mathematical formulae, and yet believed that they had been written down blindly, which is as much as to say under verbal as well as theoretical inspiration; whereas it is impossible to suppose that the Veda in its present form could have antedated, let us say, a knowledge of carpentry, which means that the *ipssissima verba* of the Veda, as distinct from their references, must be thought of as in some sense of human and temporal origin. It is not with respect to the words in which it is recorded that the *sanātana dharma* is eternal; the "eternity" of tradition has nothing to do with the possible "dating" of a given scripture as late as the first millennium B. C.

"That in X. 90. 1 the Puruṣa, in the beginning, is said to have a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet, cannot be taken literally; the sense is rather that all these are latent in him, who is omniform or protean, i. e. as in VS. XIII. 41, where the Solar embryo (i. e. *ab intra*, "at night," see ŚB. 3. 1. 3 cited in section 8) is called "the omniform likeness of a thousand" (*sahasrasya pratimāṁ viśvarūpam*), the manifested Sun being accordingly "thousand-footed" (*sahasrapad*, VIII. 69. 16).

officiant himself, there should be so much stress laid on the putting together again of the two ends, for example, the ends of the Year or beginning and end of the Sāman, which ends are divided in the worlds, as Heaven from Earth, or Sun from Moon. In this connection the ritual texts are of the highest interest both with respect to the doctrine involved and also, what amounts to the same thing, as affording an intelligible and authoritative explanation of the meaning of symbols and the content of traditional arts.

In AB. III. 43, for example, we find: "The Agniṣṭoma is (outwardly a rite, but) metaphysically Agni. . . . Again, in that they praised him as the Head (*mūrdhnam santam*) and as having become Light (*jyotis*),⁴⁵ the Agniṣṭoma being the praise of light, they

⁴⁵ *Mūrdhnam santam jyotir bhūtam*; in agreement with all that has already been cited respecting the transformation of the serpent's head into the Sun or Heaven, and more exactly with RV. X. 88. 6 "At night Agni is the Head of being (*mūrdhā bhūvo bhavati naktam agnih*), thence in the morning he is born as the rising Sun" (*tataḥ sūryo jāyate prātar udyan*); which text also makes it clear that the so-called Brāhmaṇa doctrine, which is also Sāyaṇa's (on I. 103. 1), viz. that at night the Sun enters into Agni, is not a new one. Cf. also X. 8. 6 "to Heaven thou (Agni) liftest up thy radiant Head."

These doctrines about the "Head" are paralleled in Gnostic formulations, cf. the Syriac Valentinian hymn included in the *Panarion* of Epiphanius, verse 5, reading "From the Head he proclaimed tidings about the Father," as to which W. R. Newbold (JAOS. 38. 15) remarks "The 'Head' is the first emanation of the Abyss, usually called *Noūs* or *Μονογενῆς*, but often Πατήρ or Αρχή. . . . It was 'from the Head' that the Light proclaimed tidings, for being himself an emanation of *Noūs*, who alone knew the Father, he derived from him all that he proclaimed to the Aeons." In the same way the subdivision of the One, which we have recognized to be the sacrificial act of creation—self-sacrificial in that He lends himself to this division, a suffered passion in that it is by "man" that He is mentally outstretched on the Procrustean bed of time and space in cosmic crucifixion—is also Gnostic doctrine, e. g. in the "Untitled Apocalypse" (Bruce Codex), "He it is whose limbs (or members) make many a myriad of myriad of powers, each of which comes from Him." The gnostic character of the Indian doctrine of Sacrifice was remarked upon by Eggeling in SBE. XLIII. xvii. That the teachings of Plotinus are hardly distinguishable from those of the Upaniṣads has often been recognized. The latter problem has too often been discussed (e. g. by Keith, in *Indian Culture*, II. 135 ff.) as though the only alternatives were those of borrowing or of independent origination. It is not thus, however, that the similarities, often amounting to identity in the scriptures of widely separated cultures, are envisaged by those who speak of

call it *Jyotiṣṭoma*, or 'Light-laud' metaphysically. . . . This is the sacrificial pattern (*yajñakratuh*) without beginning or end (*apūrvo anaparah*, cf. Dante's *nè prima nè poscia*, *Paradiso*, XXIX, 20); the *Agniṣṭoma* is like a chariot wheel, endless (*ananta*),⁴⁶ as is its coming forth so is its onward course (*yathева prāyanām yathodayanam*). As to this a sacrificial verse (*yajñagāthā*) is sung:⁴⁷ 'That which is its beginning is also its end (*yad asya pūrvam aparam tad asya*), that again which is its end is also its beginning';⁴⁸ like the gliding of a serpent (*aher iva sarpanam*) is that of the *Śākala*,⁴⁹ they do not discriminate which of the two

the "Ancient Wisdom"—an expression which, however it may have been abused, is far from meaningless. The true explanation is to be found in the integrity of what has been called "the universal and unanimous tradition": "Die Menschheitsbildung ist ein einheitliches Ganzes, und in den verschiedenen Kulturen findet man die Dialekte der einen Geistes-sprache" (Jeremias, *Altorientalischen Geistes-kultur*, Vorwort); "Eine grosse Weltlinie der Metaphysik zieht sich durch aller Völker hindurch" (Sauter, in *Archiv für Rechts- und Sozialphilosophie*, Oct. 1934, p. 9). Even apart from any comparisons of wordings, this should be self-evident to every student of the history of symbols; visual symbols being essentially the language of metaphysics, as words are of philosophy.

⁴⁶ Cf. RV. V. 58. 5 and VIII. 20. 14, "spokes where none is last in order."

⁴⁷ The source of this *gāthā* is unknown, but *Sāyaṇa* says "it is chanted everywhere."

⁴⁸ Cf. Boethius, *de Cons.* I, prose 6, "Is it possible that you who know the beginning of all things (Skr. *jātavidyā*) should not also know their end"; similar St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.*, I. 103. 2c; Eckhart, I. 224 (Evans ed.) "*In principio* (Skt. *agre*) signifies, in the beginning of all things. It also means the end of all things, since the first beginning is because of the last end. . . . What is the last end? It is the mystery of the darkness of the eternal Godhead which is unknown (Skr. *anirukta*, etc.) and never has been known and never shall be known"; Jeremias, *Der Antichrist in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 1930, p. 4, "Der Abendländer denkt linienhaft in die Ferne, darum mechanisch, areligios, faustisch. . . . Das Morgenland und die Bibel (and might have been added, the Edda) denken nicht linienhaft, sondern zeitraumlich, spiralisch, kreislaufig. Das Weltgeschehen geht in Spiralen, die sich bis in die Vollendung fortsetzen. . . . Das grossartige Symbol der Schlange, die sich in den eigenen Schwanz beißt, stellt den Äeon dar." The circumference of a circle is at the same time "endless," and wholly constituted of coincident beginnings and ends.

⁴⁹ *Sāyaṇa* says that *Śākala* is a "name of Ahi." That is hardly, as Keith calls it, "absurd"; it is none the less likely enough that *śakala* also designated a particular "serpentine" ritual, of such a sort for

(ends) is anterior" (*na vi jānanti yatarat parastāt*, cf. Dante's *senza distinzione nell' esordire, Paradiso*, XXIX, 30).

In JUB. I. 35 "The Year is in the Sāman. . . . The Year is endless (*ananta*), its two ends (*antau*) are Winter and Spring; after (*anu*) this it is that the two ends of a village are united, after this that the two ends of a necklace meet, after this that the Serpent lies wrapping round about his coils (*etad anv ahir bhogān paryāhṛtya śaye*), truly like a necklace laid end to end about (*samantam . . . abhiparyakta*) the neck, so is the Endless Chant" (*anantam sāma*). In JUB. I. 2, again, it is prescribed that the Gāyatra Sāman should be sung "according to the course of the Gale and the Waters" (*vāyoś ca apān cānu vartma geyam*), which course is, with respect to the Gale, "from all quarters together, winding itself in so as to generate a whirlwind" (*reṣmānañ janamāno niveṣṭamānah*), and as to the Waters, "making bends, winding themselves in, flowing in eddies" (*aṅkāñsi kurvānā niveṣṭamānā āvartān*⁵⁰ *sṛjamānah*), and with respect to both, in this way at the same time fontal and inflowing (cf. TS. III. 2. 2, verses), "not straight away (*parān*), lest there be a loss" (*kṣayād eva bibhyāt*, cf. RV. VIII. 7. 16, *utsam duhanto aksitam*). Similarly in AB. V. 2, "they proceed in sets of three days without a break (*samtatais tryahair avyavachinnair yanti*), and ib. III. 44, where it is laid down that the Agniṣṭoma should be celebrated "without haste," and in accordance with motion of the Sun "who never really sets nor rises" (*nā kadācanāstam eti nodeti*), but only "inverts himself" (*viparyasyate*, cf. PB. VII. 10. 3, and *ā vavṛtsva* in RV. IV. 1. 2), "indeed he never sets" (*na ha vai nimrocati*),⁵¹

example as the Pr̄ṣṭhya Śādaha described in AB. V. 22, where the Serpent Queen is lauded.

⁵⁰ Cf. RV. X. 30. 10, *āvarvrttih . . . dvidhārāh*; JUB. III. 33, where when "breath turns resounding up and up" (*prāṇas svarya upary upari vartate*) this is called the "re-turn of the spiritual power" (*brahmaṇā āvartāh*); and the value attached to "auspicious curls" (*nandyāvarta*, etc.) in the later iconography.

⁵¹ Echoed in ChU. III. 11. 3 "He indeed neither rises nor sets, and for him that understandeth this, it is evermore high noon, such is the interpretation of the incantation" (*na ha vā asmā udeti na nimlocati sakṛd divā haivāsmai bhavati, ya etām evam brahmōpaniṣadān veda*, where *nimlocati* replaces the Brāhmaṇā *nimrocati*, in accordance with a familiar change (cf. *jathara* and *jathala* in RV.) and there is no necessity either for Böhtlingk's emendation *nimumloca*, or for Hume's designation of *na*

and “he who comprehendeth this (*ya evam veda*) attains to conjunction, likeness, and same-worldness with Him” (*sāyujyam sārūpatām salokyatām*). In RV. I. 115. 5 the shining of the Sun, although alternately radiant or dark, is called “endless” (*ananta*).

The endless continuity of the divine act of being is emphasized, indeed, throughout RV. For example, I. 164. 51, “One and the same does this Water rise and fall as day succeeds day” (*samānam etad udkam uc caity ava cāhabhīh*) ; I. 123. 8, the Dawns, “Each like other, today, tomorrow, following Varuṇa’s lengthy pathway” (*sadrśir adya sadrśir . . . śvo dīrgham sacante varunasya dhāma . . . trimśatam yojanāni*, the *trimśad dhāma* of X. 189. 3, all day and night) ; I. 124. 3 “straight she followeth the cosmic path” (*ṛtasya panthām anv eti sādhu*) ; I. 160. 1, where the Sun “proceeds by Law” (*īyate dharmaṇā*, cf. in IV. 18. 1 “the ancient pathway found of old,” and the survival of the same conception and almost the same phrasing in the Buddhist account of the Nativity, D. XIV. 1. 21 f. where in connection with every detail it is repeated, *ayam ettha dhammatā*) ; IV. 18. 6, where the Rivers of Life “flow cosmic-orderly” (*arṣanti ṛtavari*) and IV. 19. 7 where these young maidens are “cognizant of Order” (*ṛtajñāḥ*, i. e. foreknow their way).⁵² In I. 113. 3 the paths of Day and Night are “endless (*adhvā anantah*) ; in V. 47. 2 the motion of Heaven and Earth is on “paths without end” (*anantāsah . . . panthāḥ*) ; in AV. X. 7. 42 the tissue woven by Day and Night “shall never undo nor come to an end” (*nāpa vṛṇjāte na gamāto antam*, cf. Dante’s “such a withy as shall never be unwithied,” *Paradiso*, XXIX. 36). This is all summed up in the beautiful verses of TS. III. 2. 2. RV. affirms with no uncertain voice, but

nimloca(ti) as “impossible” (*Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, p. 207). *Nimlocan* (*jaghanārddhah*) occurs in the sense of “West” in BU. I. 1. 1, *nimlocanī* in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* with reference to Varuṇa’s Western Paradise.

⁵² Plotinus offers a striking parallel to the Vedic concept of the Fountain of Life (*utsa*, etc.) with its inexhaustible ever-flowing streams of living water or milk (*utsam duhanto aksitam*, VIII. 7. 16, *avatam aksitam*, VIII. 72. 10) : “Imagine a spring that has no source outside itself; it gives itself to all the rivers, yet is never exhausted by what they take, but remains always integrally as it was; the tides that proceed from it are at one within it before they run their several ways, yet all, in some sense, know beforehand down what channels they will pour their streams” (*Enneads*, III. 8. 10).

rather with Hers who in X. 125. 5 "utters what is most felicitous alike to Angels and to men": *Sicut erat in principio, est nunc et semper erit, in saecula saeculorum.*

10. *The trace of "endlessness" in art*

In connection with JUB. I. 35, cited above, we have pointed out elsewhere in what manner such a passage illustrates the concept of art as an imitation of heavenly "forms," as enunciated for example in AB. VI. 27. We have also repeatedly shown, and once more above in section 6 in connection with the *ūrnā*, that the symbolism and iconography of Indian art can almost always be referred to Vedic formulations, and that apart from these sources, the symbolism and iconography cannot be explained, but only described. Some further illustrations of this may be given in connection with the concept of endlessness discussed above. If the Vedic chant was in fact of such a sort as the Brāhmaṇas indicate, we might well expect to find some traces of a similar quality in the Indian music of much later periods. Indian music is in fact of a kind that has been preserved in Europe only in connection with the Gregorian chant, which in its turn represents a "style" of great antiquity, and may have Babylonian sources (Lachmann, *Musik des Orients*, 1929, p. 9). We find in fact that European auditors have repeatedly remarked upon the unbroken sequences and absence of crisis and finale in Indian music: for example, Keyserling, *Travel Diary*, III. 30, "It is not easy to explain in words what Indian music means . . . no beginning, no end; it is the undulation and the sway of the eternally flowing stream of life," and Fox-Strangways, *Music of Hindustan*, p. 2, "We do not know what to make of music which is dilatory without being sentimental, and utters passion without vehemence." Not long ago an American child of five, hearing phonograph records of Indian music, remarked in my hearing "That kind of music goes round and round, this way and that way and then comes back." These are precisely those formal qualities which are ascribed by the Brāhmaṇas to the Vedic *sāman*.

If again the *philosophia perennis* has come down to us in "spiralisch" terms, such as are so often employed in connection with the eddyings of inexhaustible waters, the possibilities of being, stirred into life by the dawn winds of creation and the light of the

risen Sun, it may well be assumed that spirals and maeanders wherever they occur in primitive art, that is to say in the ideological art of a time when man was thinking in far more abstract terms than any to which we are now accustomed, are the signs and symbols of these waters. Notions of endlessness, eternity, recurrence, surely underlie not only the well-known symbol of the serpent with its tail in its mouth, and in this sense "endless," but also all those Indian or other ancient motifs of interlacing serpent and dragon forms in which beginnings and ends are confused, and those well-known designs of "strapwork" and "knots" of which the component bands have neither beginning nor end.⁵³

11. Conclusion

It has, we think, been shown beyond all question that the Father and the Son, Dragon and Solar Hero, although in outward opposition, are secretly at one, are one and consubstantial. What must be regarded from without and logically as a dual operation of alternate sleep and waking, potentiality and act, is inwardly and really the mere and simple nature of the Supreme Identity (*tad ekam, sadasat*). This Identity, being of conjoint principles, the same equations hold when the problem is approached on the feminine side, as has been done in *The Darker Side of Dawn*. In the course of the analysis it has been brought out that neither the Vedic ontology nor the formulae in which it is communicated are peculiar to RV., but can as well be recognized in all the extra-

⁵³ In Chinese art the *tao t'ieh* motif which whether with or without buffalo horns seems to represent a jawless dragon's head (e. g. *Eumorfopolos Cat.* I, Pl. XX, A, 26); we find examples of the dragon biting its own tail (*Relics of Han and pre-Han Dynasties*, Tokyo, 1932, Pl. LXI, fig. 4, and Pelliot, *Jades Archaiques de Chine*, 1925, Pl. XVII), or chains of dragons similarly disposed (*Eumorfopolos Cat.* I, Pl. LI, A, 72); and if the dragon form is again and again represented against a background of spirals or maeanders, what else can these maeanders represent but the watery abode of these sons of the mist?

On Chinese dragons see also de Visser, *The Dragon in China and Japan*, 1913; Werner, *Dictionary of Chinese Mythology*, 1932, s. v. *lung*; Mackenzie, *The Migration of Symbols*, 1928, where should be noted also, in connection with what has been said above regarding Pharaoh, numerous Egyptian representations of serpents beleaguering waters. On spirals and dragons see again Mackenzie, and for the importance of the spiral problem in art, cf. Cook, *The Curves of Life*, 1914.

Indian forms of the "universal and unanimous tradition." At the same time, the consistency and continuity of the tradition transmitted in Indian literature and art has been suggested; the tradition is expanded rather than deformed in the Epics, Purāṇas, and Tantras; the name "Vyāsa," that of the "author" of the Mbh. denoting indeed not "Compiler," but "Expander," *vyāsatas* signifying "in great detail," "with prolixity," or "diffusely." In the matter of iconography, more could have been said as to the meaning of the Nāga types in Indian and other arts, but this can be readily deduced by the reader for himself; the well-known motif of paired and interlacing Nāgas (as seen on Nāgakals and at Konārak) representing, for example, the co-habitation of the conjoint principles *ab intra*; that of the enmity of Phoenix (*garuḍa*) and Nāga reflecting the outward opposition of the separated principles.⁵⁴ Indications have been given of the significance of certain well recognized characteristics of Indian music, of the use of spiral forms in "ornament," and of the *ūrṇā* as a *lakṣaṇa* of the Mahā-puruṣa; in the latter connection it may be observed that while the Mahā-puruṣa, as the Supernal Sun, thus appropriately wears the solar image on his brow, Śiva, who is the power *ab intra*, as is also indicated by his *nāga*-ornaments, wears the Moon.

⁵⁴ In this connection attention may be called to the well-known Etruscan painting in the Grotta dell' Orco (fourth century B. C.) depicting a winged "demon" with a serpent, or to speak in Indian terms, a Garuḍa and Nāga. In this representation, reproduced and discussed by Evans, *Palace of Minos*, Vol. IV, pp. 188-190, not only are there to be seen two serpent heads rising from the bird-like head of the winged "Phoenix," but as remarked by Evans, the pattern of the wings displays "the same 'wave and dot' pattern as the adders of the Minoan (snake-) Goddess, and clearly represent a similar viperine breed." The ophidian source of the solar power, who at the same time brandishes the Serpent as immediate "Avenger," could not have been more clearly indicated in art. The two serpents heads recalled the *prādāku-sānu* form of Indra represented in the well-known Mathurā image discussed in *The Darker Side of Dawn*, note 25 (we have called attention above to the equivalence of *sānu* and *sīra*). Sir Arthur Evans assumes an ultimately western Asiatic origin of the form.