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VEDIC MYTHOLOGY
BY
A. A. MACDONELL.

STRASSBURG
VERLAG VON KARL J. TRÜBNER
1897.

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Die Verlagshandlung.
VEDIC MYTHOLOGY

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§ 1. Religion and mythology. — Religion in its widest sense includes on the one hand the conception which men entertain of the divine or supernatural powers and, on the other, that sense of the dependence of human welfare on those powers which finds its expression in various forms of worship. Mythology is connected with the former side of religion as furnishing the whole body of myths or stories which are told about gods and heroes and which describe their character and origin, their actions and surroundings. Such myths have their source in the attempt of the human mind, in a primitive and unscientific age, to explain the various forces and phenomena of nature with which man is confronted. They represent in fact the conjectural science of a primitive mental condition. For statements which to the highly civilised mind would be merely metaphorical, amount in that early stage to explanations of the phenomena observed. The intellectual difficulties raised by the course of the heavenly bodies, by the incidents of the thunderstorm, by reflexions on the origin and constitution of the outer world, here receive their answers in the form of stories. The basis of these myths is the primitive attitude of mind which regards all nature as an aggregate of animated entities. A myth actually arises when the imagination interprets a natural event as the action of a personified being resembling the human agent. Thus the observation that the moon follows the sun without overtaking it, would have been transformed into a myth by describing the former as a maiden following a man by whom she is rejected. Such an original myth enters on the further stage of poetical embellishment, as soon as it becomes the property of people endowed with creative imagination. Various traits are now added according to the individual fancy of the narrator, as the story passes from mouth to mouth. The natural phenomenon begins to fade out of the picture as its place is taken by a detailed representation of human passions. When the natural basis of the tale is forgotten, new touches totally unconnected with its original significance may be added or even transferred from other myths. When met with at a late stage of its development, a myth may be so far overgrown with secondary accretions unconnected with its original form, that its analysis may be extremely difficult or even impossible. Thus it would be hard indeed to discover the primary naturalistic elements in the characters or actions of the Hellenic gods, if we knew only the highly anthropomorphic deities in the plays of Euripides.


Essays. 1; Chips from a German Workshop, IV, 155—201; Physical Religion 276—8; SCHWARTZ, Der Ursprung der Mythologie; MANNHARDT, Antike Wald- und Feldkulte, Berlin 1871, Preface; MÜLLENHOFF in preface to MANNHARDT'S Mythologische Forschungen, Strassburg 1884; LANG, Mythology. Encyclopaedia Britannica; GRUPPE, Die griechischen Culte und Mythen. Introduction; BLOOMFIELD, JAOS, XV, 135—6; F. B. JEVONS, Mythology. CHAMBERS' Encyclopaedia; Introduction to the History of Religion, London 1896, pp. 23. 32. 249—69.

§ 2. Characteristics of Vedic mythology. — Vedic mythology occupies a very important position in the study of the history of religions. Its oldest source presents to us an earlier stage in the evolution of beliefs based on the personification and worship of natural phenomena, than any other literary monument of the world. To this oldest phase can be traced by uninterrupted development the germs of the religious beliefs of the great majority of the modern Indians, the only branch of the Indo-European race in which its original nature worship has not been entirely supplanted many centuries ago by a foreign monotheistic faith. The earliest stage of Vedic mythology is not so primitive as was at one time supposed, but it is sufficiently primitive to enable us to see clearly enough the process of personification by which natural phenomena developed into gods, a process not apparent in other literatures. The mythology, no less than the language, is still transparent enough in many cases to show the connexion both of the god and his name with a physical basis; nay, in several instances the anthropomorphism is only incipient. Thus ugas, the dawn, is also a goddess wearing but a thin veil of personification; and when agni, fire, designates the god, the personality of the deity is thoroughly interpenetrated by the physical element.

The foundation on which Vedic mythology rests, is still the belief, surviving from a remote antiquity, that all the objects and phenomena of nature with which man is surrounded, are animate and divine. Everything that impressed the soul with awe or was regarded as capable of exercising a good or evil influence on man, might in the Vedic age still become a direct object not only of adoration but of prayer. Heaven, earth, mountains, rivers, plants might be supplicated as divine powers; the horse, the cow, the bird of omen, and other animals might be invoked; even objects fashioned by the hand of man, weapons, the war-car, the drum, the plough, as well as ritual implements, such as the pressing-stones and the sacrificial post, might be adored.

This lower form of worship, however, occupies but a small space in Vedic religion. [The true gods of the Veda are glorified human beings, inspired with human motives and passions, born like men, but immortal. They are almost without exception the deified representatives of the phenomena or agencies of nature.] The degree of anthropomorphism to which they have attained, however, varies considerably. When the name of the god is the same as that of his natural basis, the personification has not advanced beyond the rudimentary stage. Such is the case with Dyaus, Heaven, Prthivi, Earth, Sūrya, Sun, Ušas, Dawn, whose names represent the double character of natural phenomena and of the persons presiding over them. [Similarly in the case of the two great ritual deities, Agni and Soma, the personifying imagination is held in check by the visible and tangible character of the element of fire and the sacrificial draught, called by the same names, of which they are the divine embodiments.] When the name of the deity is different from that of the physical substrate, he tends to become dissociated from the latter, the anthropomorphism being then more developed. Thus the Maruts or Storm-gods are farther removed from their origin than Vāyu, Wind, though the Vedic poets are still conscious of the connexion. Finally, when in addition to the difference in name, the conception of a god dates from a
pre-Vedic period, the severance may have become complete. Such is the case with Varuna, in whom the connexion can only be inferred from mythological traits surviving from an earlier age. The process of abstraction has here proceeded so far, that Varuna's character resembles that of the divine ruler in a monotheistic belief of an exalted type. Personification has, however, nowhere in Vedic mythology attained to the individualized anthropomorphism characteristic of the Hellenic gods. The Vedic deities have but very few distinguishing features, while many attributes and powers are shared by all alike. This is partly due to the fact that the departments of nature which they represent have often much in common, while their anthropomorphism is comparatively undeveloped. Thus the activity of a thunder-god, of the fire-god in his lightning form, and of the storm-gods might easily be described in similar language, their main function in the eyes of the Vedic poets being the discharge of rain. Again, it cannot be doubted that various Vedic deities have started from the same source, but have become differentiated by an appellative denoting a particular attribute having gradually assumed an independent character. Such is the case with the solar gods. There is, moreover, often a want of clearness in the statements of the Vedic poets about the deeds of the gods; for owing to the character of the literature, myths are not related but only alluded to. Nor can thorough consistency be expected in such mythological allusions when it is remembered that they are made by a number of different poets, whose productions extend over a prolonged literary period.

1 BRI. XIII ff.; P. V. BRADKE, Dyum Asura, Halle 1885, 2—11; ZDMG. 49, 670.
2 ORV. 591—4. — 3 L. V. SCHROEDER, WZKMI. 9, 125—6; cp. BRI. 25.

§ 3. Sources of Vedic Mythology. — By far the most important source of Vedic Mythology is the oldest literary monument of India, the Rigveda. Its mythology deals with a number of coordinate nature gods of varying importance. This polytheism under the influence of an increasing
tendency to abstraction at the end of the Rigvedic period, exhibits in its latest book the beginnings of a kind of monotheism and even signs of pantheism. The hymns of this collection having been composed with a view to the sacrificial ritual, especially that of the Soma offering, furnish a disproportionately presentment of the mythological material of the age. The great gods who occupy an important position at the Soma sacrifice and in the worship of the wealthy, stand forth prominently; but the mythology connected with spirits, with witchcraft, with life after death, is almost a blank, for these spheres of belief have nothing to do with the poetry of the Soma rite. Moreover, while the character of the gods is very completely illustrated in these hymns, which are addressed to them and extol their attributes, their deeds, with the exception of their leading exploits, are far less definitely described. It is only natural that a collection of sacrificial poetry containing very little narrative matter, should supply but a scattered and fragmentary account of this side of mythology. The defective information given by the rest of the RV. regarding spirits, lesser demons, and the future life, is only very partially supplied by its latest book. Thus hardly any reference is made even here to the fate of the wicked after death. Beside and distinguished from the adoration of the gods, the worship of dead ancestors, as well as to some extent the deification of inanimate objects, finds a place in the religion of the Rigveda.

The Sāmaveda, containing but seventy-five verses which do not occur in the RV., is of no importance in the study of Vedic mythology.

The more popular material of the Atharvaveda deals mainly with domestic and magical rites. In the latter portion it is, along with the ritual text of the Kauśika sūtra, a mine of information in regard to the spirit and demon world. On this lower side of religion the Atharvaveda deals with notions of greater antiquity than those of the Rigveda. But on the higher side of religion it represents a more advanced stage. Individual gods exhibit a later phase of development and some new abstractions are deified, while the general character of the religion is pantheistic. Hymns in praise of individual gods are comparatively rare, while the simultaneous invocation of a number of deities, in which their essential nature is hardly touched upon, is characteristic. The deeds of the gods are extolled in the same stereotyped manner as in the RV.; and the AV. can hardly be said to supply any important mythological trait which is not to be found in the older collection.

The Yajurveda represents a still later stage. Its formulas being made for the ritual, are not directly addressed to the gods, who are but shadowy beings having only a very loose connexion with the sacrifice. The most salient features of the mythology of the Yajurveda are the existence of one chief god, Prajāpati, the greater importance of Viṣṇu, and the first appearance of an old god of the Rigveda under the new name of Śiva. Owing, however, to the subordinate position here occupied by the gods in comparison with the ritual, this Veda yields but little mythological material.

Between it and, the Brāhmaṇas, the most important of which are the Aitareya and the Śatapatha, there is no essential difference. The sacrifice being the main object of interest, the individual traits of the gods have faded, the general character of certain deities has been modified, and the importance of others increased or reduced. Otherwise the pantheon of the Brāhmaṇas is much the same as that of the RV. and the AV., and the worship of inanimate objects is still recognized. The main difference between the mythology of the RV. and the Brāhmaṇas is the recognized position of Prajāpati or the Father-god as the chief deity in the latter. The pantheism of the
Brāhmaṇas is, moreover, explicit. Thus Prajāpati is said to be the All (SB. 1, 3, 5\(^{10}\)) or the All and everything (SB. 1, 6, 4; 4, 5, 7\(^{2}\)).

The gods having lost their distinctive features, there is apparent a tendency to divide them into groups. Thus it is characteristic of the period that the supernatural powers form the two hostile camps of the Devas or gods on the one hand and the Asuras or demons on the other. The gods are further divided into the three classes of the terrestrial Vasus, the aerial Rudras, and the celestial Adityas (§ 45). The most significant group is the representative triad of Fire, Wind, and Sun. The formalism of these works further shows itself in the subdivision of individual deities by the personification of their various attributes. Thus they speak of an 'Agni, lord of food', 'Agni, lord of prayer' and so forth\(^{3}\).

The Brāhmaṇas relate numerous myths in illustration of their main subject-matter. Some of these are not referred to in the Samhitās. But where they do occur in the earlier literature, they appear in the Brāhmaṇas only as developments of their older forms, and cannot be said to shed light on their original forms, but only serve as a link between the mythological creations of the oldest Vedic and of the post-Vedic periods.

1 HRI. 153. — 2 BRI. 42; HRI. 182.

§ 4. Method to be pursued. — Vedic mythology is the product of an age and a country, of social and climatic conditions far removed and widely differing from our own. We have, moreover, here to deal not with direct statements of fact, but with the imaginative creations of poets whose mental attitude towards nature was vastly different from that of the men of to-day. The difficulty involved in dealing with material so complex and representing so early a stage of thought, is further increased by the character of the poetry in which this thought is imbedded. There is thus perhaps no subject capable of scientific treatment, which, in addition to requiring a certain share of poetical insight, demands caution and sobriety of judgment more urgently. Yet the stringency of method which is clearly so necessary, has largely been lacking in the investigation of Vedic mythology. To this defect, no less than to the inherent obscurity of the material, are doubtless in considerable measure due the many and great divergences of opinion prevailing among Vedic scholars on a large number of important mythological questions.

In the earlier period of Vedic studies there was a tendency to begin research at the wrong end. The etymological equations of comparative mythology were then made the starting point. These identifications, though now mostly rejected, have continued to influence unduly the interpretation of the mythological creations of the Veda. But even apart from etymological considerations, theories have frequently been based on general impressions rather than on the careful sifting of evidence, isolated and secondary traits thus sometimes receiving coordinate weight with what is primary. An unmistakable bias has at the same time shown itself in favour of some one particular principle of interpretation\(^{4}\). Thus an unduly large number of mythological figures have been explained as derived from dawn, lightning, sun, or moon respectively. An à priori bias of this kind leads to an unconsciously partial utilization of the evidence.

Such being the case, it may prove useful to suggest some hints with a view to encourage the student in following more cautious methods. On the principle that scientific investigations should proceed from the better known to the less known, researches which aim at presenting a true picture of the character and actions of the Vedic gods, ought to begin not with the meagre
and uncertain conclusions of comparative mythology, but with the information supplied by Indian literature, which contains a practically continuous record of Indian mythology from its most ancient source in the RV. down to modern times. All the material bearing on any deity or myth ought to be collected, grouped, and sifted by the comparison of parallel passages, before any conclusion is drawn. In this process the primary features which form the basis of the personification should be separated from later accretions.

As soon as a person has taken the place of a natural force in the imagination, the poetical fancy begins to weave a web of secondary myth, into which may be introduced in the course of time material that has nothing to do with the original creation, but is borrowed from elsewhere. Primary and essential features, when the material is not too limited, betray themselves by constant iteration. Thus in the Indra myth his fight with Vṛtra, which is essential, is perpetually insisted on, while the isolated statement that he strikes Vṛtra’s mother with his bolt (1, 329) is clearly a later touch, added by an individual poet for dramatic effect. Again, the epithet ‘Vṛtra-slaying’, without doubt originally appropriate to Indra alone, is in the RV. several times applied to the god Soma also. But that it is transferred from the former to the latter deity, is sufficiently plain from the statement that Soma is ‘the Vṛtra-slaying intoxicating plant’ (6, 17), the juice of which Indra regularly drinks before the fray. The transference of such attributes is particularly easy in the RV. because the poets are fond of celebrating gods in couples, when both share the characteristic exploits and qualities of each other (cp. § 44). Attributes thus acquired must of course be eliminated from the essential features. A similar remark applies to attributes and cosmic powers which are predicated, in about equal degree, of many gods. They can have no cogency as evidence in regard to a particular deity. It is only when such attributes and powers are applied in a predominant manner to an individual god, that they can be adduced with any force. For in such case it is possible they might have started from the god in question and gradually extended to others. The fact must, however, be borne in mind in this connexion, that some gods are celebrated in very many more hymns than others. The frequency of an attribute applied to different deities must therefore be estimated relatively. Thus an epithet connected as often with Varuṇa as with Indra, would in all probability be more essential to the character of the former than of the latter. For Indra is invoked in about ten times as many hymns as Varuṇa. The value of any particular passage as evidence may be affected by the relative antiquity of the hymn in which it occurs. A statement occurring for the first time in a late passage may of course represent an old notion; but if it differs from what has been said on the same point in a chronologically earlier hymn, it most probably furnishes a later development. The tenth and the greater part of the first book of the RV. are therefore more likely to contain later conceptions than the other books. Moreover, the exclusive connexion of the ninth book with Soma Pavamāna may give a different complexion to mythological matter contained in another book. Thus Vivasvat and Trita are here connected with the preparation of Soma in quite a special manner (cp. §§ 18, 23). As regards the Brāhmaṇas, great caution should be exercised in discovering historically primitive notions in them; for they teem with far-fetched fancies, speculations, and identifications.

In adducing parallel passages as evidence, due regard should be paid to the context. Their real value can often only be ascertained by a minute and complex consideration of their surroundings and the association of ideas.
which connects them with what precedes and follows. After a careful estimation of the internal evidence of the Veda, aided by such corroboration as the later phases of Indian literature may afford, further light should be sought from the closely allied mythology of the Iranians. Comparison with it may confirm the results derived from the Indian material, or when the Indian evidence is inconclusive, may enable us either to decide what is old and new or to attain greater definiteness in regard to Vedic conceptions. Thus without the aid of the Avesta, it would be impossible to arrive at anything like certain conclusions about the original nature of the god Mitra.

The further step may now be taken of examining the results of comparative mythology, in order to ascertain if possible, wherein consists the Vedic heritage from the Indo-European period and what is the original significance of that heritage. Finally, the teachings of ethnology cannot be neglected, when it becomes necessary to ascertain what elements survive from a still remoter stage of human development. Recourse to all such evidence beyond the range of the Veda itself must prove a safeguard against on the one hand assuming that various mythological elements are of purely Indian origin, or on the other hand treating the Indo-European period as the very starting point of all mythological notions. The latter view would be as far from the truth as the assumption that the Indo-European language represents the very beginnings of Aryan speech.


Cp. also Ludwig, Über Methode bei Interpretation des Rgveda, Prag 1890; Hillebrandt, Vedainterpretation, Breslau 1895.

§ 5. The Avesta and Vedic Mythology. — We have seen that the evidence of the Avesta cannot be ignored by the student of Vedic mythology. The affinity of the oldest form of the Avestan language with the dialect of the Vedas is so great in syntax, vocabulary, diction, metre, and general poetic style, that by the mere application of phonetic laws, whole Avestan stanzas may be translated word for word into Vedic, so as to produce verses correct not only in form but in poetical spirit. The affinity in the domain of mythology is by no means so great. For the religious reform of Zarathustra brought about a very considerable displacement and transformation of mythological conceptions. If therefore we possessed Avestan literature as old as that of the RV., the approximation would have been much greater in this respect. Still, the agreements in detail, in mythology no less than in cult, are surprisingly numerous. Of the many identical terms connected with the ritual it is here only necessary to mention Vedic yajña = Avestan yasna, sacrifice, hotr = zoti or, priest, atharvan = áthrawan, fire-priest, jīta = asa order, rite, and above all soma = haoma, the intoxicating juice of the Soma plant, in both cults offered as the main libation, pressed, purified by a sieve, mixed with milk, and described as the lord of plants, as growing on the mountains, and as brought down by an eagle or eagles (cp. § 37). It is rather with the striking correspondences in mythology that we are concerned. In both religions the term asura = ahura is applied to the highest gods, who in both are conceived as mighty kings, drawn through the air in their war chariots by swift steeds, and in character benevolent, almost entirely free from guile and immoral traits. Both the Iranians and the Indians observed the cult of fire, though under the different names of Agni and Atar. The Waters, āpah = āpe, were invoked by both, though not frequently.² The Vedic Mitra is the Avestan Mithra, the sun god. The Aditya Bhaga corresponds to bagha, a god in general; Vāyu, Wind is vāyu, a genius of
III. RELIGION, WELTLM. WISSENSCH. U. KUNST. I A. VEDIC MYTHOLOGY.

air; Apām napāt, the Son of Waters = Apām napāt; Gandharva = Gandarewa and Krṣānū = Keresāni are divine beings connected with soma = haoma. To Trita Aptya correspond two mythical personages named Thrita and Athwya, and to Indra Varāhan the demon Indra and the genius of victory Verethragna. Yama, son of Vivasvat, ruler of the dead, is identical with Yima, son of Vivanhvant, ruler of paradise. The parallel in character, though not in name, of the god Varuna is Ahura Mazda, the wise spirit. The two religions also have in common as designations of evil spirits the terms druh = dru> and yātu.


§ 6. Comparative Mythology. — In regard to the Indo-European period we are on far less certain ground. Many equations of name once made in the first enthusiasm of discovery and generally accepted, have since been rejected and very few of those that remain rest on a firm foundation. Dyaus = Zeus is the only one which can be said to be beyond the range of doubt. Varuna = Oûpavos; though presenting phonetic difficulties, seems possible. The rain-god Parjanya agrees well in meaning with the Lithuanian thunder-god Perkunas, but the phonetic objections are here still greater. The name of Bhaga is identical with the Slavonic bogu as well as the Persian bagha, but as the latter two words mean only ‘god’, the Indo-European word cannot have designated any individual deity. Though the name of Ušas is radically cognate to Aurora and Hœs, the cult of Dawn as a goddess is a specially Indian development. It has been inferred from the identity of mythological traits in the thunder-gods of the various branches of the Indo-European family, that a thunder-god existed in the Indo-European period in spite of the absence of a common name. There are also one or two other not improbable equations based on identity of character only. That the conception of higher gods, whose nature was connected with light (Vē, to shine) and heaven (div) had already been arrived at in the Indo-European period, is shown by the common name deivos (Skt. deva-s, Lith. deva-s, Lat. deus-s), god. The conception of Earth as a mother (common to Vedic and Greek mythology) and of Heaven as a father (Skt. Dyaus pitar, Gk. Zeô patep, Lat. Jupiter) appears to date from a still remoter antiquity. For the idea of Heaven and Earth being universal parents is familiar to the mythology of China and New Zealand and may be traced in that of Egypt. The practice of magical rites and the worship of inanimate objects still surviving in the Veda, doubtless came down from an equally remote stage in the mental development of mankind, though the possibility of a certain influence exercised by the primitive aborigines of India on their Aryan conquerors cannot be altogether excluded.


II: VEDIC CONCEPTIONS OF THE WORLD AND ITS ORIGIN.

§ 7. Cosmology. — The Universe, the stage on which the actions of the gods are enacted, is regarded by the Vedic poets as divided into the three domains of earth, air or atmosphere, and heaven. The sky when regarded as the whole space above the earth, forms with the latter the entire universe consisting of the upper and the nether world. The vault (nāka) of the sky is regarded as the limit dividing the visible upper world from the
third or invisible world of heaven, which is the abode of light and the dwelling place of the gods. Heaven, air, and earth form the favourite triad of the RV., constantly spoken of explicitly or implicitly (8, 106, 906 &c.). The solar phenomena which appear to take place on the vault of the sky, are referred to heaven, while those of lightning, rain, and wind belong to the atmosphere. But when heaven designates the whole space above the earth both classes of phenomena are spoken of as taking place there. In a passage of the AV. (4, 143 = VS. 17, 67) the 'vault of the sky' comes between the triad of air, heaven, and the world of light, which thus forms a fourth division. Each of the three worlds is also subdivided. Thus three worlds, three atmospheres, three heavens are sometimes mentioned; or when the universe is looked upon as consisting of two halves, we hear of six worlds or spaces (rajānśi). This subdivision probably arose from the loose use of the word pṛthivī 'earth' (1, 10829; 7, 104411) in the plural to denote the three worlds (just as the dual pītara, 'two fathers' regularly denotes 'father and mother').

The earth is variously called bhūmi, ksām, kṣī, gma, the great (mahī), the broad (pṛthīvī or urveś), the extended (uttānā), the boundless (apārā), or the place here (idam) as contrasted with the upper sphere (1, 2217, 15413).

The conception of the earth being a disc surrounded by an ocean does not appear in the Samhitās. But it was naturally regarded as circular, being compared with a wheel (10, 894) and expressly called circular (parimaṇḍata) in the SB.

The four points of the compass are already mentioned in the RV. in an adverbial form (7, 723; 10, 3674, 4211) and in the AV. as substantives (AV. 15, 211). Hence 'four quarters' (pradīṣāḥ) are spoken of (10, 199), a term also used as synonymous with the whole earth (1, 16442), and the earth is described as 'four-pointed' (10, 583). Five points are occasionally mentioned (9, 8620; AV. 3, 243 &c.), when that in the middle (10, 4211), where the speaker stands, denotes the fifth. The AV. also refers to six (the zenith being added) and even seven points5. The same points may be meant by the seven regions (disāḥ) and the seven places (dhāma) of the earth spoken of in the RV. (9, 1143; 1, 2216).

Heaven or div is also commonly termed vyomam, sky, or as pervaded with light, the 'luminous space', rocana (with or without divādh). Designations of the dividing firmament besides the 'vault' are the 'summit' (śām), 'surface' (viśapa), 'ridge' (prēthā), as well as the compound expressions 'ridge of the vault' (1, 1255 cp. 3, 212) and 'summit of the vault' (8, 923). Even a 'third ridge in the luminous space of heaven' is mentioned (9, 8627). When three heavens are distinguished they are very often called the three luminous spaces (trie rocana), a highest (uttama), a middle, and a lowest being specified (5, 606). The highest is also termed uttara and pārya (4, 266; 6, 405). In this third or highest heaven (very often parama rocana or vyoman) the gods, the fathers, and Soma are conceived as abiding.

Heaven and earth are coupled as a dual conception called by the terms rodast, kṣoni, dvayāvaḥpṛthivī and others (§ 44), and spoken of as the two halves (2, 2715). The combination with the semi-spherical sky causes the notion of the earth's shape to be modified, when the two are called 'the two great bowls (camvā) turned towards each other' (3, 5528). Once they are compared to the wheels at the two ends of an axle (10, 894).

The RV. makes no reference to the supposed distance between heaven and earth, except in such vague phrases as that not even the birds can soar to the abode of Viśnu (1, 1555). But the AV. (10, 818) says that 'the two wings of the yellow bird (the sun) flying to heaven are 1000 days' journey

Apart. A similar notion is found in the AB., where it is remarked (2, 15) that '1000 days' journey for a horse the heavenly world is distant from here'. Another Brâhmâna states that the heavenly world is as far from this world as 1000 cows standing on each other (PB. 16, 86; 21, 19).

The air or intermediate space (antariksa) is hardly susceptible of personification. As the region of mists and cloud, it is also called rajás which is described as watery (1, 124 5 cp. 5, 85) and is sometimes thought of as dark, when it is spoken of as 'black' (1, 35 2 4 9; 8, 43). The triple subdivision is referred to as the three spaces or rajás (4, 53 5; 5, 69). The highest is then spoken of as uttama (9, 22); parama (3, 30 3), or śātiya, the third (9, 74 6; 10, 45 3, 123), where the waters and Soma are, and the celestial Agni is produced. The two lower spaces are within the range of our perception, but the third belongs to Viṣṇu (7, 99 cp. 1, 155). The latter seems to be the 'mysterious' space once referred to elsewhere (10, 105). The twofold subdivision of the atmosphere is commoner. Then the lower (uparū) or terrestrial (pārthiva) is contrasted with the heavenly (divyam or divah) space (1, 62 5; 4, 53). The uppermost stratum, as being contiguous with heaven (āī) in the twofold as well as the triple division, seems often to be loosely employed as synonymous with heaven in the strict sense. Absolute definiteness or consistency in the statements of different poets or even of the same poet could not reasonably be expected in regard to such matters.

The air being above the earth in the threefold division of the universe, its subdivisions, whether two or three, would naturally have been regarded as above it also; and one verse at least (1, 81 5 cp. 90) clearly shows that the 'terrestrial space' is in this position. Three passages, however, of the RV. (6, 9 1; 7, 80 1; 5, 81) have been thought to lend themselves to the view that the lower atmosphere was conceived as under the earth, to account for the course of the sun during the night. The least indefinite of these three passages (5, 81) is to the effect that Savitr, the sun, goes round night on both sides (ubhayataḥ). This may, however, mean nothing more than that night is enclosed between the limits of sunset and sunrise. At any rate, the view advanced in the AB. (3, 44) as to the sun's course during the night is, that the luminary shines upwards at night, while it turns round so as to shine downwards in the daytime. A similar notion may account for the statement of the RV. that the light which the sun's steeds draw is sometimes bright and sometimes dark (1, 115), or that the rajás which accompanies the sun to the east is different from the light with which he rises (10, 37 3).

There being no direct reference to the sun passing below the earth, the balance of probabilities seems to favour the view that the luminary was supposed to return towards the east the way he came, becoming entirely darkened during the return journey. As to what becomes of the stars during the daytime, a doubt is expressed (1, 24 10), but no conjecture is made.

The atmosphere is often called a sea (samudra) as the abode of the celestial waters. It is also assimilated to the earth, inasmuch as it has mountains (1, 32 2 &c.) and seven streams which flow there (1, 32 12 &c.), when the conflict with the demon of drought takes place. Owing to the obvious resemblance the term 'mountain' (parvata) thus very often in the RV. refers to clouds, the figurative sense being generally clear enough. The word 'rock' (adīr) is further regularly used in a mythological sense for 'cloud' as enclosing the cows released by Indra and other gods.

The rainclouds as containing the waters, as dripping, moving and roaring, are peculiarly liable to theriomorphism as cows, whose milk is rain.
The cosmic order or law prevailing in nature is recognized under the
name of \textit{rta} \textsuperscript{11} (properly the ‘course’ of things), which is considered to be
under the guardianship of the highest gods. The same word also designates
‘order’ in the moral world as truth and ‘right’, and in the religious world as sacrifice or ‘rite’.

\textsuperscript{1} \textsc{Roth}, \textsc{ZDMG.} 6, 68. \textsuperscript{2} \textsc{Cp. Sp.AP.} 122; \textsc{KRV.} 34, note 118. \textsuperscript{3} \textsc{Hopkins},
\textsc{AJP.} 4, 189. \textsuperscript{4} \textsc{Bolleisen}, \textsc{ZDMG.} 41, 494. \textsuperscript{5} \textsc{Bloomfield}, \textsc{AJP.} 12, 432. \textsuperscript{6} \textsc{Cp. Weber}, \textsc{IS.} 10, 358–64. \textsuperscript{7} \textsc{Hlf.} 178; \textsc{Delbrück}, \textsc{ZVP.}
1865, \textsc{pp.} 284–5. \textsuperscript{8} \textsc{KHF.} 187; \textsc{Zitt. f. deutsche Mythologie,} 3, 378. \textsuperscript{9} \textsc{Gw.},
v. 69; \textsc{Welt.} 1894, p. 13. \textsuperscript{10} \textsc{Ludwig}, Religiöse und philosophische Anschau-
ungen des \textsc{Ved} (1875), p. 15; \textsc{Lrv.} 3, 284–5; \textsc{Harlezi}, \textsc{JA.} (1878), 11, 105–6;
\textsc{Darmesteter}, Ormazd et \textsc{Ahirman}, 13–4; \textsc{Ogr.} 198, 243; \textsc{Krv.} 28; \textsc{Brv.} 3, 220; 
\textsc{WC.} 91–7; 100; \textsc{Sp.AP.} 139; \textsc{Orv.} 195–201; \textsc{Jackson}, Trans. of \textsc{10th Or.} 
Congress, 2, 74.

\textsc{Bruce}, Vedic conceptions of the \textsc{Earth}, \textsc{Jras.} 1865, p. 321 ff.; \textsc{Brv.} 1, 1–3; 
\textsc{Wallis}, Cosmology of the \textsc{Rigveda} (\textsl{London} 1887), 111–17.

\section{8. Cosmogony.}

The cosmogonic mythology of the \textsc{Br} fluctuates between two theories, which are not mutually exclusive, but may be found
combined in the same verse. The one regards the universe as the result of
mechanical production, the work of the carpenter’s and joiner’s skill; the other
represents it as the result of natural generation.

The poets of the \textsc{Br} often employ the metaphor of building in its
various details, when speaking of the formation of the world. The act of
measuring is constantly referred to. Thus \textsc{Indr} measured the six regions,
made the wide expanse of earth and the high dome of heaven (6, \textsc{47} \textsuperscript{3}–4).
\textsc{Visṇu} measured out the terrestrial spaces and made fast the abode on high
(1, \textsc{15} \textsuperscript{4}). The measuring instrument, sometimes mentioned (2, \textsc{15} \textsuperscript{3}; 3, \textsc{38} \textsuperscript{3}),
is the sun, with which \textsc{Varuṇa} performs the act (5, \textsc{85} \textsuperscript{3}). The \textsc{Fathers}
measured the two worlds with measuring rods and made them broad (3, \textsc{38} \textsuperscript{3}
cp. \textsc{1}, 190 \textsuperscript{3}). The measurement naturally begins in front or the east. Thus
\textsc{Indr} measured out as it were a house with measures from the front (2, \textsc{15} \textsuperscript{3}
cp. \textsc{7}, 99 \textsuperscript{3}). Connected with this idea is that of spreading out the earth, an
action attributed to \textsc{Agni}, \textsc{Indr}, the \textsc{Maruts}, and others. As the Vedic house
was built of wood, the material is once or twice spoken of as timber. Thus
the poet asks: ‘What was the wood, what the tree out of which they fashioned
heaven and earth?’ (\textsc{10}, \textsc{31} \textsuperscript{2} \textsc{=} \textsc{10}, \textsc{81} \textsuperscript{4}). The answer given to this question
in a \textsc{Brāhmaṇa} is that \textsc{Brahma} was the wood and the tree (\textsc{TB.} 2, 8, \textsc{9} \textsuperscript{4}).

Heaven and earth are very often described as having been supported (\textsc{skabh}
\textsuperscript{3} or \textit{shabh}) with posts (\textsc{skambha} or \textit{skambhara}), but the sky is said to be
rafterless (2, \textsc{15} \textsuperscript{2}; 4, \textsc{56} \textsuperscript{3}; \textsc{10}, \textsc{149} \textsuperscript{1}), and that it never falls is a source of
wonder (5, \textsc{29} \textsuperscript{1}; 6, \textsc{17} \textsuperscript{7}; \textsc{8}, \textsc{45} \textsuperscript{5}). The framework of a door is called \textit{ātā;}
in such a frame of heaven \textsc{Indr} fixed the air (1, \textsc{56} \textsuperscript{3}). The doors of the cosmic house are the portals of the east through which the morning light
enters (1, \textsc{113} \textsuperscript{4}; 4, \textsc{51} \textsuperscript{2}; 5, \textsc{45} \textsuperscript{1}). Foundations are sometimes alluded to.
Thus \textsc{Savitr} made fast the earth with bands (\textsc{10}, \textsc{149} \textsuperscript{1}), \textsc{Visṇu} fixed it with pegs
(7, \textsc{99} \textsuperscript{3}), and \textsc{Brhaspati} supports its ends (4, \textsc{50} \textsuperscript{1} cp. \textsc{10}, \textsc{89} \textsuperscript{3}). The
agents in the construction of the world are either the gods in general or
various individual gods; but where special professional skill seemed to be
required in details, \textsc{Tvaṣṭr}, the divine carpenter, or the deft-handed \textsc{Bṛhaspati}
are mentioned. \textsc{Littl}e is said as to their motive; but as man builds his house
to live in, so of \textsc{Visṇu} at least it is indicated that he measured or stretched
out the regions as an abode for man (6, \textsc{49} \textsuperscript{13}; \textsc{69} \textsuperscript{5} cp. \textsc{1}, \textsc{155} \textsuperscript{4}).

The notion of parentage as a creative agency in the universe, chiefly
connected with the birth of the sun at dawn and with the production of rain
after drought, has three principle applications in the RV. The first is temporal, as involving the idea of priority. One phenomenon preceding another is spoken of as its parent. Thus the dawns generate (ṣun) the sun and the morning sacrifice (7, 78), while Dawn herself is born of Night (1, 123). As the point of view is changed, contradictions with regard to such relationships naturally arise (cp. p. 48). When the rising of the dawn is ascribed to the sacrifice of the Fathers, the explanation is to be found in this notion of priority. Secondly, a local application frequently occurs. The space in which a thing is contained or produced is its father or mother. Illustrations of this are furnished by purely figurative statements. Thus the quiver is called the father of the arrows (6, 75) or the bright steeds of the sun are termed the daughters of his car (1, 50). This idea of local parentage is especially connected with heaven and earth. Paternity is the characteristic feature in the personification of Dyaus (see § 11), and Dawn is constantly called the ‘daughter of Heaven’. Similarly the Earth, who produces vegetation on her broad bosom (5, 84), is a mother (1, 89 &c.). Heaven and earth are, however, more often found coupled as universal parents, a conception obvious enough from the fact that heaven fertilizes the earth by the-descent of moisture and light, and further developed by the observation that both supply nourishment to living beings, the one in the form of rain, the other in that of herbage. They are characteristically the parents of the gods (§ 44). As the latter are often said to have created heaven and earth, we thus arrive at the paradox of the Vedic poets that the children produced their own parents; Indra, for instance, being described as having begotten his father and mother from his own body (1, 159; 10, 54). Again, the raincloud cow is the mother of the lightning calf, or the heavenly waters, as carrying the embryo of the aerial fire, are its mothers, for one of the forms of the fire-god is ‘the son of waters’ (§ 24). ‘Son of the steep’ also appears to be a name of lightning in the AV. (1, 13; 3; cp. 26 and RV. 10, 142). Thirdly, the notion of parentage arises from a generic point of view: he who is the chief, the most prominent member of a group, becomes their parent. Thus Vāyu, Wind, is father of the Storm-gods (1, 134), Rudra, father of the Maruts or Rudras, Soma, father of plants, while Sarasvatī is mother of rivers.

There are also two minor applications of the idea of paternity in the RV. As in the Semitic languages, an abstract quality is quite frequently employed in a figurative sense (which is sometimes mythologically developed) to represent the parent of sons who possess or bestow that quality in an eminent degree. Thus the gods in general are sons (śunavah or putrah) of immortality as well as sons of skill, dakṣa (8, 25; cp. § 19). Agni is the ‘son of strength’ or of ‘force’ (§ 35). Pūṣan is the ‘child of setting free’. Indra is the ‘son of truth’ (8, 58), the ‘child of cow-getting’ (4, 32), and the ‘son of might’ (śunavah, 4, 24; 8, 81), his mother twice being called śavasī, 8, 45. Mitra-Varuna are the ‘children of great might’. Another application is much less common. As a father transmits his qualities to his son, his name is also occasionally transferred, something like a modern surname. Thus viśvarupa, an epithet of Tvāṣṭṛ, becomes the proper name of his son. Analogously the name of Vivasvat is applied to his son Manu in the sense of the patronymic Vāivasvata (Val. 41).

A mythological account of the origin of the universe, involving neither manufacture nor generation, is given in one of the latest hymns of the RV., the well-known purusa-sukta (10, 90). Though several details in this myth point to the most recent period of the RV., the main idea is very primitive,
as it accounts for the formation of the world from the body of a giant. With him the gods performed a sacrifice, when his head became the sky, his navel the air, and his feet the earth. From his mind sprang the moon, from his eye the sun, from his mouth Indra and Agni, from his breath, wind. The four castes also arose from him. His mouth became the brāhmaṇa, his arms the rājanya or warrior, his thighs the vaiśya, and his feet the śūdra. The interpretation given in the hymn itself is pantheistic, for it is there said (v. 2) that Puruṣa is ‘all this, both what has become and what shall be’. In the AV. (10, 17) and the Upaniṣads (Mun. Up. 2, 116) Puruṣa is also pantheistically interpreted as identical with the universe. He is also identified with Brahma (Chānd. Up. 1, 7). In the SB. (11, 1, 6) he is the same as Prajāpati, the creator.

There are in the last book of the RV. some hymns which treat the origin of the world philosophically rather than mythologically. Various passages show that in the cosmological speculation of the RV. the sun was regarded as an important agent of generation. Thus he is called the soul (ātmā) of all that moves and stands (1, 115). Statements such as that he is called by many names though one (1, 164; 10, 114 cp. Vāl. 105) indicate that his nature was being tentatively abstracted to that of a supreme god, nearly approaching that of the later conception of Brahmā. In this sense the sun is once glorified as a great power of the universe under the name of the ‘golden embryo’, hiranya-garbhā, in RV. 10, 121. It is he who measures out space in the air and shines where the sun rises (vv. 5–9). In the last verse of this hymn, he is called Prajāpati, ‘lord of created beings’, the name which became that of the chief god of the Brāhmaṇas. It is significant that in the only older passage of the RV. in which it occurs (4, 53), praśāti is an epithet of the solar deity Savitr, who in the same hymn (v.6) is said to rule over what moves and stands.

There are two other cosmogonic hymns which both explain the origin of the universe as a kind of evolution of the existent (sat) from the non-existent (asat). In 10, 72 it is said that Brahmaṇaspati forged together this world like a smith. From the non-existent the existent was produced. Thence in succession arose the earth, the spaces, Aditi with Dakṣa; and after Aditi the gods were born. The gods then brought forward the sun. There were eight sons of Aditi, but the eighth, Mārtanda, she cast away; she brought him to be born and to die (i. e. to rise and set). Three stages can be distinguished in this hymn: first the world is produced, then the gods, and lastly the sun.

In RV. 10, 129, a more abstract and a very sublime hymn, it is affirmed that nothing existed in the beginning, all being void. Darkness and space enveloped the undifferentiated waters (cp. 10, 82, 121, AV. 2, 8). The one primordial substance (ekam) was produced by heat. Then desire (kama), the first seed of mind (manas) arose. This is the bond between the non-existent and the existent. By this emanation the gods came into being. But here the poet, overcome by his doubts, gives up the riddle of creation as unsolvable. A short hymn of three stanzas (10, 190) forms a sequel to the more general evolution of that just described. Here it is stated that from heat (tapas) was produced order (ṛta); then night, the ocean, the year; the creator (dhātā) produced in succession sun and moon, heaven and earth, air and ether.

In a similar strain to RV. 10, 129 a Brāhmaṇa passage declares that ‘formerly nothing existed, neither heaven nor earth nor atmosphere, which being non-existent resolved to come into being’ (TB. 2, 2, 91 ff.). The regular cosmogonic view of the Brāhmaṇas requires the agency of a creator, who is
not, however, always the starting point. The creator here is Prajāpati or the personal Brahmā, who is not only father of gods, men, and demons, but is the All. Prajāpati is here an anthropomorphic representation of the desire which is the first seed spoken of in RV. 10, 129. In all these accounts the starting point is either Prajāpati desiring offspring and creating, or else the primeval waters, on which floated Hiranyagarbha the cosmic golden egg, whence is produced the spirit that desires and creates the Universe. This fundamental contradiction as to the priority of Prajāpati or of the waters appears to be the result of combining the theory of evolution with that of creation. Besides this there are many minor conflicts of statement, as, for instance, that the gods create Prajāpati and that Prajāpati creates the gods. The account given in the Chāndogya Brāhmaṇa (5, 19) is that not-being became being; the latter changed into an egg, which after a year by splitting in two became heaven and earth; whatever was produced is the sun, which is Brahma (cp. Ch. Up. 3, 19-4). Again, in the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad (5, 6), the order of evolution is thus stated: In the beginning waters were this (universe); they produced the real (satyam); from this was produced Brahma, from Brahma Prajāpati, from Prajāpati the gods.

The All-god appears as a creator in the AV. under the new names of Skambha, Support, Prāṇa, the personified breath of life (AV. 11, 4), Rohita, as a name of the sun, Kama, Desire, and various others. The most notable cosmogonic myth of the Brāhmaṇas describes the raising of the submerged earth by a boar, which in post-Vedic mythology developed into an Avatar of Visnu.

1 OST. 5, 52. 2 OST. 5, 175, note 271; BRV. 2, 422 ff.; DARMESTETER, Haarvatāt et Ameratāt, 83; ORV. 232, note 2. 3 SPH. 27–8; HRI. 208. 4 SPH. 29. 5 OGR. 295; WC. 50–1. 6 OST. 5, 48. 7 OST. 4, 20 ff.; HRI. 208–9. 8 WEBER, IS. 1, 261. 9 SPH. 69–72. 10 HRI. 209. 11 MACDONELL, JRAS. 1895, pp. 178–89.

§ 9. Origin of gods and men. As most of the statements contained in the Vedas about the origin of the gods have already been mentioned, only a brief summary need here be added. In the philosophical hymns the origin of the gods is mostly connected with the element of water. In the AV. (10, 7-23) they are said to have arisen from the non-existent. According to one cosmogonic hymn (10, 129) they were born after the creation of the universe. Otherwise they are in general described as the children of Heaven and Earth. In one passage (10, 63) a triple origin, apparently corresponding to the triple division of the universe, is ascribed to the gods, when they are said to have been born from Aditi, from the waters, from the earth (cp. 1, 139). According no doubt to a secondary conception, certain individual gods are spoken of as having begotten others. Thus the Dawn is called the mother of the gods (1, 113) and Brahmaṅgaśpati (2, 263), as well as Soma (9, 87), is said to be their father. A group of seven or eight gods, the Adityas, are regarded as the sons of Aditi. In the AV. some gods are spoken of as fathers, others as sons (AV. 1, 30).

The Vedic conceptions on the subject of the origin of man are rather fluctuating, but the human race appear generally to have been regarded as descended from a first man. The latter is called either Vivasvat's son Manu, who was the first sacrificer (10, 63) and who is also spoken of as father
Manus (1, 80); or he is Yama Vaivasvata, Vivasvat's son, who with his twin sister Yami produced the human race. The origin of men, when thought of as going back beyond this first ancestor, seems to have been conceived as celestial. Vivasvat (§ 18) is the father of the primeval twins, while once the celestial Gandharva and the water nymph are designated as their highest kin (10, 104). Men's relationship to the gods is sometimes also alluded to; and men must have been thought of as included among the offspring of Heaven and Earth, the great parents of all that exists. Again, Agni is said to have begotten the offspring of men (1, 96-4), and the Angirases, the semi-divine ancestors of later priestly families, are described as his sons. Various other human families are spoken of as independently descended from the gods through their founders Atri, Kanya, and others (1, 139). Vasishtha (7, 33) was miraculously begotten by Mitra and Varuna, the divine nymph Urvasi having been his mother. To quite a different order of ideas belongs the conception of the origin of various classes of men from parts of the world giant Purusa (§ 8, p. 13).


III. THE VEDIC GODS.

§ 10. General character and classification. — Indefiniteness of outline and lack of individuality characterize the Vedic conception of the gods. This is mainly due to the fact that they are nearer to the physical phenomena which they represent, than the gods of any other Indo-European people. Thus the ancient Vedic interpreter Yaska (Nir. 7, 4) speaking of the nature of the gods, remarks that what is seen of them is not anthropomorphic at all, as in the case of the Sun, the Earth, and others. The natural bases of the Vedic gods have, to begin with, but few specific characteristics, while they share some of the attributes of other phenomena belonging to the same domain. Thus Dawn, Sun, Fire have the common features of being luminous, dispelling darkness, appearing in the morning. The absence of distinctiveness must be still greater when several deities have sprung from different aspects of one and the same phenomenon. Hence the character of each Vedic god is made up of only a few essential traits combined with a number of other features common to all the gods, such as brilliance, power, beneficence, and wisdom. Certain great cosmical functions are predicated of nearly every leading deity individually. The action of supporting or establishing heaven and earth is so generally attributed to them, that in the AV. (19, 32) it is even ascribed to a magical bunch of darbha grass. Nearly a dozen gods are described as having created the two worlds, and rather more are said to have produced the sun, to have placed it in the sky, or to have prepared a path for it. Four or five are also spoken of as having spread out the earth, the sky, or the two worlds. Several (Surya, Savitri, Pusan, Indra, Prajanya, and the Adityas) are lords of all that moves and is stationary.

Such common features tend to obscure what is essential, because in hymns of prayer and praise they naturally assume special prominence. Again, gods belonging to different departments, but having prominent functions in common, are apt to be approximated. Thus Agni, primarily the god of terrestrial fire, dispels the demons of darkness with his light, while Indra, the aerial god of the thunderstorm, slays them with his lightning. Into the conception of the fire-god further enters his aspect as lightning in the atmosphere. The assimilation is increased by such gods often being invoked in pairs.
These combinations result in attributes peculiar to the one god attaching themselves to the other, even when the latter appears alone. Thus Agni comes to be called Soma-drinker, Varuna-slayer, winner of cows and waters, sun and dawns, attributes all primarily belonging to Indra.

The indefiniteness of outline caused by the possession of so many common attributes, coupled with the tendency to wipe out the few distinctive ones by assigning nearly every power to every god, renders identification of one god with another easy. Such identifications are as a matter of fact frequent in the RV. Thus a poet addressing the fire-god exclaims: 'Thou at thy birth, O Agni, art Varuna; when kindled thou becomest Mitra, in thee, O son of strength, all gods are centred; thou art Indra to the worshipper' (5, 3). Reflexions in particular on the nature of Agni, so important a god in the eyes of a priesthood devoted to a fire cult, on his many manifestations as individual fires on earth, and on his other aspects as atmospheric fire in lightning and as celestial fire in the sun, aspects which the Vedic poets are fond of alluding to in riddles, would suggest the idea that various deities are but different forms of a single divine being. This idea is found in more than one passage of the RV. 'The one being priests speak of in many ways; they call it Agni, Yama, Mātariśvan' (1, 164; cp. AV. 10, 8, 13, 4). 'Priests and poets with words make into many the bird (= the sun) that is but one' (10, 114). Thus it appears that by the end of the Rigvedic period a kind of polytheistic monotheism had been arrived at. We find there even the incipient pantheistic conception of a deity representing not only all the gods but nature as well. For the goddess Aditi is identified not only with all the gods, but with men, all that has been and shall be born, air, and heaven (1, 89); and Prajāpati is not only the one god above all gods, but embraces all things (10, 121). This pantheistic view becomes fully developed in the AV. (10, 7) and is explicitly accepted in the later Vedic literature.

In the older parts of the RV. individual gods are often invoked as the highest, but this notion is not carried out to its logical conclusion. The fact that the Vedic poets frequently seem to be engrossed in the praise of the particular deity they happen to be invoking, that they exaggerate his attributes to the point of inconsistency, has given rise to the much discussed theory which Max Müller originated and to which he has given the name of Henotheism or Kathenotheism. According to this theory, 'the belief in individual gods alternately regarded as the highest', [the Vedic poets attribute to the god they happen to be addressing all the highest traits of divinity, treating him for the moment as if he were an absolutely independent and supreme deity, alone present to the mind.] Against this theory it has been urged that Vedic deities are not represented 'as independent of all the rest', since no religion brings its gods into more frequent and varied juxtaposition and combination, and that even the mightiest gods of the Veda are made dependent on others. Thus Varuṇa and Śūrya are subordinate to Indra (1, 161), Varuṇa and the Aśvins submit to the power of Viśnu (1, 156), and Indra, Mitra-Varuṇa, Aryaman, Rudra cannot resist the ordinances of Saviṭṛ (2, 389). It has been further pointed out that in the frequent hymns addressed to the viśvedevaḥ, or All-gods, all the deities, even the lesser ones, are praised in succession, and that as the great mass of the Vedic hymns was composed for the ritual of the Soma offering, which included the worship of almost the entire pantheon, the technical priest could not but know the exact relative position of each god in that ritual. Even when a god is spoken of as unique or chief (eka), as is natural enough in laudations, such statements
rose their temporarily monotheistic force through the modifications or corrections supplied by the context or even by the same verse. Thus a poet says that 'Agni alone, like Varuṇa, is lord of wealth'. It should also be remembered that gods are constantly invoked in pairs, triads, and larger groups, even the exalted Varuṇa being mostly addressed in conjunction with one other god (as in 6, 67) or with several other gods (as in 2, 28). Henotheism is therefore an appearance rather than a reality, an appearance produced by the indefiniteness due to undeveloped anthropomorphism, by the lack of any Vedic god occupying the position of a Zeus as the constant head of the pantheon, by the natural tendency of the priest or singer in extolling a particular god to exaggerate his greatness and to ignore other gods, and by the growing belief in the unity of the gods (cf. the refrain of 3, 55), each of whom might be regarded as a type of the divine. Henotheism might, however, be justified as a term to express the tendency of the RV. towards a kind of monotheism.

The Vedic gods, as has been shown, had a beginning in the view of the Vedic poets, since they are described as the offspring of heaven and earth or sometimes of other gods. This in itself implies different generations of gods, but earlier (pūrve) gods are also expressly referred to in several passages (7, 217 &c.). An earlier or first age of the gods is also spoken of (10, 722-3). The AV. (11, 810) speaks of ten gods as having existed before the rest. The gods, too, were originally mortal. This is expressly stated in the AV. (11, 519; 4, 116). The Brāhmaṇas state this both of all the gods (SB. 10, 4, 33) and of the individual gods Indra (AB. 8, 14), Agni (AB. 3, 4), and Prajāpati (SB. 10, 1, 31). That they were originally not immortal is implied in the RV. For immortality was bestowed on them by Savitṛ (4, 542 = VS. 33, 54) or by Agni (6, 71; AV. 4, 23). They are also said to have obtained it by drinking Soma (9, 1068 cp. 1092-3), which is called the principle of immortality (SB. 9, 5, 18). In another passage of the RV. (10, 5310), they are said to have acquired immortality, but by what means is not clear. According to a later conception Indra is stated to have conquered heaven by tapas or austerity (10, 1671). The gods are said to have attained divine rank by the same means (TB. 3, 12, 31), or to have overcome death by continence and austerity (AV. 11, 519) and to have acquired immortality through Rohita (AV. 13, 17). Elsewhere the gods are stated to have overcome death by the performance of a certain ceremony (TS. 7, 4, 21). Indra and several other gods are said to be unaging (3, 461 &c.), but whether the immortality of the gods was regarded by the Vedic poets as absolute, there is no evidence to show. According to the post-Vedic view their immortality was only relative, being limited to a cosmic age.

The physical appearance of the gods is anthropomorphic, though only in a shadowy manner; for it often represents only aspects of their natural bases figuratively described to illustrate their activities. Thus head, face, mouth, cheeks, eyes, hair, shoulders, breast, belly, arms, hands, fingers, feet are attributed to various individual gods. Head, breast, arms, and hands are chiefly mentioned in connexion with the warlike equipment of Indra and the Maruts. The arms of the sun are simply his rays, and his eye is intended to represent his physical aspect. The tongue and limbs of Agni merely denote his flames. The fingers of Trita are referred to only in order to illustrate his character as a preparer of Soma, and the belly of Indra only to emphasize his powers of drinking Soma. Two or three gods are spoken of as having or assuming all forms (niṣvarāṇa). It is easy to understand that in the case of deities whose outward shape was so vaguely conceived

Indo-arian Philologie. III. 1 A.
in the RV. where they are spoken of as great and small, young and old (1, 27 13). It is probable that this statement represents the settled view of the Vedic poets as to gradation of rank among the gods (cp. pp. 14, 17). It is only a seeming contradiction when in one passage (8, 30 1) it is said with reference to the gods, 'none of you is small or young; you are all great'; for a poet addressing the gods directly on this point could hardly have expressed himself differently. It is certain that two gods tower above the rest as leading deities about equal in power, Indra as the mighty warrior and Varuṇa as the supreme moral ruler. The older form of Varuṇa became, owing to the predominance of his ethical qualities, the supreme god of Zoroastrianism as Ahura Mazda, while in India Indra developed into the warrior god of the conquering Aryans. Varuṇa appears as preeminent only when the supreme laws of the physical and moral world are contemplated, and cannot be called a popular god. It has been held by various scholars that Varuṇa and the Adityas were the highest gods of an older period, but were later displaced by Indra (p. 28). There is at any rate no evidence to show that Indra even in the oldest Rigvedic period occupied a subordinate position. It is true that Ahura Mazda is the highest god and Indra only a demon in the Avesta. But even if Indra originally possessed coordinate power with Varuṇa in the Indo-Iranian period, he was necessarily relegated to the background when the reform of the Avestan religion made Ahura Mazda supreme 20 (cp. p. 28). Next to Indra and Varuṇa come the two great ritual deities Agni and Soma. These two along with Indra are, judged by the frequency of the hymns addressed to them, the three most popular deities of the RV. For, roughly speaking, three-fifths of its hymns are dedicated to their praise. The fact that the hymns to Agni and Indra always come first in the family books, while the great majority of the hymns to Soma have a whole book, the ninth, to themselves, confirms this conclusion 21. Following the number of the hymns dedicated to each of the remaining deities, combined with the frequency with which their names are mentioned in the RV., five classes of gods may be distinguished: 1) Indra, Agni, Soma; 2) Aśvins, Maruts, Varuṇa; 3) Uṣas, Savitṛ, Brhaspati, Sūrya, Pūṣan; 4) Vāyu, Dyāvā-pṛthivi, Viṣṇu, Rudra; 5) Yama, Parjanya 22. The statistical standard can of course be only a partial guide. For Varuṇa is celebrated (mostly together with Mitra) in only about thirty hymns, his name being mentioned altogether about 250 times, while the Aśvins can claim over 50 hymns and are named over 400 times. Yet they cannot be said to approach Varuṇa in greatness. Their relative prominence is doubtless owing to their closer connexion with the sacrifice as deities of morning light. Again, the importance of the Maruts is due to their association with Indra. Similar considerations would have to enter into an estimate of the relative greatness of other deities in the list. Such an estimate involves considerable difficulties and doubts. A classification according to gradations of rank would therefore not afford a satisfactory basis for an account of the Vedic gods.

Another but still less satisfactory classification, might take as its basis the relative age of the mythological conception, according as it dates from the period of separate national Indian existence, from the Indo-Iranian, or the Indo-European epoch. Thus Brhaspati, Rudra, Viṣṇu may be considered the creations of purely Indian mythology; at least there is no adequate evidence to show that they go back to an earlier age. It has already been indicated (§ 5) that a number of mythological figures date from the Indo-Iranian period. But as to whether any of the Vedic gods besides Dyaus may be traced back to the Indo-European period, considerable doubt is justified.
A classification according to the age of the mythological creation would therefore rest on too uncertain a foundation.

The stage of personification which the various deities represent, might furnish a possible basis of classification. But the task of drawing a clear line of demarcation would involve too many difficulties.

On the whole, the classification of the Vedic deities least open to objection, is that founded on the natural bases which they represent. For though in some cases there may be a doubt as to what the physical substrate really is, and a risk is therefore involved of describing a particular deity in the wrong place, this method offers the advantage of bringing together deities of cognate character and thus facilitating comparison. It has therefore been adopted in the following pages. The various phenomena have been grouped according to the triple division suggested by the R.V. itself and adhered to by its oldest commentator.

A. The Celestial Gods.

§ 11. Dyau.s.—By far the most frequent use of the word dyau.s is as a designation of the concrete 'sky', in which sense it occurs at least 500 times in the R.V. It also means 'day' about 50 times. When personified as the god of heaven, Dyau.s is generally coupled with Earth in the dual compound dyau.s-pitriv.i, the universal parents. No single hymn of the R.V. is addressed to Dyau.s alone. When he is mentioned separately the personification is limited almost entirely to the idea of paternity. The name then nearly always appears in the nominative or genitive case. The latter case, occurring about 50 times, is more frequent than all the other cases together. The genitive is regularly connected with the name of some other deity who is called the son or daughter of Dyau.s. In about three-fourths of these instances Ušas is his daughter, while in the remainder the Āśvins are his offspring (napāta), Agni is his son (sīnu) or child (śīṣu), Parjanya, Sūrya, the Adityas, the Maruts, and the Aṅgirases are his sons (pātra). Out of its thirty occurrences in the nominative the name appears only eight times alone, being otherwise generally associated with Pitriv.ī or mentioned with various deities mostly including Pitriv.ī. In these eight passages he is three times styled a father (1, 907, 164.33; 4, 110), once the father of Indra (4, 72.3), once he is spoken of as rich in seed (sūretāḥ) and as having generated Agni (4, 17.4); in the remaining three he is a bull (5, 365) or a red bull that bellows downwards (5, 58.9), and is said to have approved when Vṛtra was slain (6, 72.9). In the dative the name is found eight times. In these passages...
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A. THE CELESTIAL GODS.

§ 11. Dyaus.—By far the most frequent use of the word dyaus is as a designation of the concrete ‘sky’, in which sense it occurs at least 500 times in the RV. It also means ‘day’ about 50 times. When personified as the god of heaven, Dyaus is generally coupled with Earth in the dual compound dyauṣprthiṣvī, the universal parents. No single hymn of the RV. is addressed to Dyaus alone. When he is mentioned separately the personification is limited almost entirely to the idea of paternity. The name nearly always appears in the nominative or genitive case. The latter case, occurring about 50 times, is more frequent than all the other cases together. The genitive is regularly connected with the name of some other deity who is called the son or daughter of Dyaus. In about three-fourths of these instances Uṣas is his daughter, while in the remainder the Aśvins are his offspring (napatā), Agni is his son (sūnu) or child (śiṣu), Parjanya, Śūrya, the Adityas, the Maruts, and the Angirases are his sons (putra).

Out of its thirty occurrences in the nominative the name appears only eight times alone, being otherwise generally associated with Prthiṣvī or mentioned with various deities mostly including Prthiṣvī. In these eight passages he is three times styled a father (1, 907, 164; 4, 110), once the father of Indra (4, 72), once he is spoken of as rich in seed (surdāk) and as having generated Agni (4, 17); in the remaining three he is a bull (5, 36) or a red bull that bellows downwards (5, 58), and is said to have approved when Vṛtra was slain (6, 72). In the dative the name is found eight times. In these passages
he is mentioned only three times quite alone, once being called the 'great father' (1, 71\(^5\)), once 'lofty' (1, 54\(^3\)), and once the 'lofty abode' (5, 47\(^7\)). In two of the four occurrences in the accusative Dyaus is mentioned with Prthivi, once alone and without any distinctive statement (1, 174\(^3\)), and once (1, 31\(^4\)) Agni is said to have made him roar for man. Thus it appears that Dyaus is seldom mentioned independently and in only one-sixth of over ninety passages is his paternity not expressly stated or implied by association with Prthivi. The only essential feature of the personification in the RV. is in fact his paternity. In a few passages Dyaus is called a bull (1, 160\(^3\); 5, 36\(^9\)) that bellows (5, 58\(^6\)). Here we have a touch of theriomorphism inasmuch as he is conceived as a roaring animal that fertilizes the earth. Dyaus is once compared with a black steed decked with pearls (10, 68\(^11\)), an obvious allusion to the nocturnal sky. The statement that Dyaus is furnished with a bolt (\textit{asma\textit{mat}}) looks like a touch of anthropomorphism. He is also spoken of as smiling through the clouds (2, 4\(^6\)), the allusion being doubtless to the lightening sky\(^2\). Such passages are, however, quite isolated, the conception of Dyaus being practically free from theriomorphism and anthropomorphism, excepting the notion of paternity. As a father he is most usually thought of in combination with Earth as a mother\(^3\). This is indicated by the fact that his name forms a dual compound with that of Prthivi oftener than it is used alone in the singular (§ 44), that in a large proportion of its occurrences in the singular it is accompanied by the name of Prthivi, and that when regarded separately he is not sufficiently individualized to have a hymn dedicated to his praise, though in conjunction with Prthivi he is celebrated in six. Like nearly all the greater gods\(^4\) Dyaus is sometimes called \textit{asura}\(^5\) (1, 122\(^1\), 131\(^1\); 8, 20\(^17\)) and he is once (6, 51\(^8\)) invoked in the vocative as 'Father Heaven' (\textit{dyaus pitar}) along with 'Mother Earth' (\textit{prthivi m\textit{\texta}}\textit{\textt}}\textit{\texta}). In about 20 passages the word \textit{dyaus} is feminine, sometimes even when personified\(^6\). Dyaus, as has been pointed out (§ 6) goes back to the Indo-European period. There is no reason to assume that the personification in that period was of a more advanced type and that the RV. has in this case relapsed to a more primitive stage. On the contrary there is every ground for supposing the reverse to be the case. Whatever higher gods may have existed in that remote age must have been of a considerably more rudimentary type and can hardly in any instance have been conceived apart from deified natural objects\(^7\). As the Universal Father who with Mother Earth embraced all other deified objects and phenomena, he would have been the greatest among the deities of a chaotic polytheism. But to speak of him as the supreme god of the Indo-European age is misleading, because this suggests a ruler of the type of Zeus and an incipient monotheism for an extremely remote period, though neither of these conceptions had been arrived at in the earlier Rigvedic times.

The word is derived from the root \textit{div}, to shine, thus meaning 'the bright one' and being allied to \textit{deva}, god\(^8\).

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\(^{1}\) V. \textsc{Schröder}, \textsc{WZKM.} 8, 126—7. — \(^{2}\) \textsc{PVS.} 1, 111; \textsc{SBE.} 46, 205. — \(^{3}\) \textsc{HRL.} 171. — \(^{4}\) \textsc{BDA.} 119—23. — \(^{5}\) \textsc{BDA.} 85. — \(^{6}\) \textsc{BDA.} 114; cf. \textsc{GW.} s. v. \textit{div}; \textsc{Osthoft, IF.} 5, 286, n. — \(^{7}\) \textsc{BDA.} 111. — \(^{8}\) \textsc{Cp. KZ.} 27, 187; \textsc{BB.} 15, 17; \textsc{IF.} 3, 301. \\
\textsc{OST.} 5,21—3; \textsc{OGR.} 209; \textsc{LRV.} 3, 312—3; \textsc{BRV.} 1,4—5; \textsc{Sr.AF.} 160; \textsc{JAOS.} 16, \textsc{CXLV.}

\(^{12}\) \textsc{Varuna}.—Varuna, as has been shown (p. 20), is by the side of Indra, the greatest of the gods of the RV. The number of hymns dedicated to his praise is not a sufficient criterion of his exalted character. Hardly a dozen hymns celebrate him exclusively. Judged by the statistical standard he would rank only as a third class deity; and even if the two dozen hymns
in which he is invoked along with his double Mitra are taken into account, 
he would only come fifth in order of priority, ranking considerably below 
the Aśvins and about on an equality with the Maruts (cp. p. 20).

The anthropomorphism of Varuṇa’s personality is more fully developed 
on the moral than the physical side. The descriptions of his person and 
his equipment are scanty, more stress being laid on his activity. He has a 
face, an eye, arms, hands, and feet. He moves his arms, walks, drives, sits, 
eats and drinks. The poet regards the face (anikau) of Varuṇa as that of 
Agni (7, 883 cp. 875). The eye of Mitra and Varuṇa is the sun (1, 1151; 
6, 511; 7, 611, 631; 10, 371). The fact that this is always mentioned in 
the first verse of a hymn, suggests that it is one of the first ideas that occur when 
Mitra and Varuṇa are thought of. The eye with which Varuṇa is said in 
a hymn to Śūrya (1, 506) to observe mankind, is undoubtedly the sun. 
Together with Aryaman, Mitra and Varuṇa are called sun-eyed (7, 6610), a 
term applied to other gods also. Varuṇa is far-sighted (1, 25b10; 8, 90c) 
and thousand-eyed (7, 3410). Mitra and Varuṇa stretch out their arms 
(5, 642; 7, 623) and they drive with the rays of the sun as with arms (8, 90d). 
Like Śaṅvir and Tvasṭr they are beautiful-handed (supāṇi). Mitra and Varuṇa 
hasten up with their feet (5, 647), and Varuṇa treads down miles with 
shining foot (8, 418). He sits on the strewn grass at the sacrifice (1, 261; 
5, 724), and like other gods he and Mitra drink Soma (4, 413 &c.). Varuṇa 
wears a golden mantle (drāpī) and puts on a shining robe (1, 2513). But 
the shining robe of ghee with which he and Mitra are clothed (5, 624; 7, 641) 
is only a figurative allusion to the sacrificial offering of melted butter. The 
glistening garments which they wear (1, 1524) probably mean the same thing. 
In the SB. (13, 3, 69) Varuṇa is represented as a fair, bald, yellow-eyed old 
man. The only part of Varuṇa’s equipment which is at all prominent is 
his car. It is described as shining like the sun (1, 12210), as having thongs 
for a pole (ibid.), a car-seat and a whip (5, 627), and as drawn by well-yoked 
steeds (5, 624). Mitra and Varuṇa mount their car in the highest heaven 
(5, 631). The poet prays that he may see Varuṇa’s car on the earth (1, 2510). 
Mitra and Varuṇa’s abode is golden and situated in heaven (5, 672; 
1, 1362) and Varuṇa sits in his mansions (pastāyasu) looking on all deeds 
(1, 251011). His and Mitra’s seat (sadas) is great, very lofty, firm with a 
thousand columns (5, 685; 2, 415) and their house has a thousand doors 
(7, 885). The all-seeing sun rising from his abode, goes to the dwellings of 
Mitra and Varuṇa to report the deeds of men (7, 6053), and enters their 
dear dwelling (1, 1524). It is in the highest heaven that the Fathers behold 
Varuṇa (10, 149). According to the SB. (11, 6, 1) Varuṇa, conceived as the 
lord of the Universe, is seated in the midst of heaven, from which he surveys 
the places of punishment situated all around him.¹

The spies (spasāh) of Varuṇa are sometimes mentioned. They sit down 
around him (1, 2413). They behold the two worlds; acquainted with sacrifice 
they stimulate prayer (7, 873). Mitra’s and Varuṇa’s spies whom they send 
separately into houses (7, 613), are undeceived and wise (6, 675). In the 
AV. (4, 168) it is said that Varuṇa’s messengers descending from heaven, 
traverse the world; thousand-eyed they look across the whole world. The 
natural basis of these spies is usually assumed to be the stars; but the RV. 
yields no evidence in support of this view. The stars are there never said 
to watch, nor are the spies connected with night. The conception may very 
well have been suggested by the spies with whom a strict ruler on earth is 
surrounded.² Nor are spies peculiar to Varuṇa and Mitra, for they are also 
attributed to Agni (4, 43), to Soma (9, 7347, here perhaps suggested by the
previous mention of Varuna), to demons combated by Indra (1, 33\(^8\)), and to the gods in general (10, 16\(^8\)). In one passage the Adityas are said to look down like spies from a height (8, 47\(^11\)). That these spies were primarily connected with Mitra and Varuna is to be inferred from the fact that the Iranian Mithra also has spies, who are, moreover, called, by the same name (spāa) as in the Veda\(^3\). The golden-winged messenger (dīta) of Varuna once mentioned in the RV. (10, 123\(^9\)), is doubtless the sun.

Varuna alone, or conjointly with Mitra, is often called a king (rājā), like the other leading deities and Yama (1, 24\(^7\) &c.)\(^1\). He is king of all, both gods and men (10, 132\(^4\); 2, 27\(^10\)), of the whole world (5, 85\(^2\)), and of all that exists (7, 87\(^6\)). Varuna is also a self-dependent ruler (2, 28\(^9\)), a term generally applied to Indra. Much more frequently Varuna, alone or mostly in association with Mitra, is called a universal monarch (samrāj). This term is also applied to Agni a few times and oftener to Indra. Counting the passages in which Varuna and Mitra together are so called, it is connected with Varuna nearly twice as often as with Indra. Considering that for every eight or ten hymns celebrating Indra only one is dedicated to Varuna in the RV., the epithet may be considered peculiarly appropriate to Varuna.

The attribute of sovereignty (ksattra) is in a predominant manner appropriated to Varuna, generally with Mitra and twice with Aryaman also. Otherwise it is applied only once respectively to Agni, Brahaspati, and the Aśvins. Similarly the term ‘ruler’ (ksatriya) in four of its five occurrences refers to Varuna or the Adityas and once only to the gods in general. The epithet asura (§ 67) is connected with Varuna, alone or accompanied by Mitra, oftener than with Indra and Agni; and, taking account of the proportion of hymns, it may be said to be specially applicable to Varuna\(^5\). Mitra and Varuna are also called the mysterious and noble lords (asurā arya) among the gods (7, 65\(^2\)).

The divine dominion of Varuna and Mitra is often referred to with the word māyā\(^6\). This term signifies occult power, applicable in a good sense to gods or in a bad sense to demons. It has an almost exact parallel in the English word ‘craft’, which in its old signification meant ‘occult power, magic’, then ‘skillfulness, art’ on the one hand and ‘deceitful skill, wile’ on the other. The good sense of māyā, like that of asura (which might be rendered by ‘mysterious being’) is mainly connected with Varuna and Mitra, while its bad sense is reserved for demons. By occult power Varuna standing in the air measures out the earth with the sun as with a measure (5, 85\(^5\)), Varuna and Mitra send the dawns (3, 61\(^7\)), make the sun to cross the sky and obscure it with cloud and rain, while the honied drops fall (5, 63\(^4\)); or (ibid. 3\(^7\)) they cause heaven to rain and they uphold the ordinances by the occult power of the Asura (here = Dyaus or Parjanya)\(^7\). And so the epithet māvīn, ‘crafty’, is chiefly applied to Varuna among the gods (6, 48\(^1\); 7, 28\(^4\); 10, 99\(^10\), 147\(^5\)).

In marked contrast with Indra, Varuna has no myths related of him, while much is said about him (and Mitra) as Upholder of physical and moral order. Varuna is a great lord of the laws of nature. He established heaven and earth and dwells in all the worlds (8, 42\(^1\)). The three heavens and the three earths are deposited within him (7, 87\(^5\)). He and Mitra rule over the whole world (5, 63\(^7\)) or encompass the two worlds (7, 61\(^4\)). They are the guardians of the whole world (2, 27\(^4\) &c.). By the law of Varuna heaven and earth are held apart (6, 70\(^1\); 7, 86\(^1\); 8, 41\(^10\)). With Mitra he supports earth and heaven (5, 62\(^3\)), or heaven, earth, and air (5, 69\(^1\) & 4). He made the golden swing (the sun) to shine in heaven (7, 87\(^9\)). He placed fire in
the waters, the sun in the sky, Soma on the rock (5, 85¹). He has made a wide path for the sun (1, 24; 7, 87¹). Varuna, Mitra, and Aryaman open paths for the sun (7, 60⁴). The order (yāta) of Mitra and Varuna is established where the steeds of the sun are loosed (5, 62¹). The wind which resounds through the air is Varuna’s breath (7, 87²).

By Varuna’s ordinances (vratani) the moon shining brightly moves at night, and the stars placed up on high are seen at night but disappear by day (1, 24¹⁰). In another passage (8, 41) it is said that Varuna has embraced (pari śasvaje) the nights, and by his occult power has established the mornings or days (usrah). This can hardly indicate a closer connexion with night than that he regulates or divides night and day (cp. 7, 66¹¹). In fact it is the sun that is usually mentioned with him, and not the moon or night. Thus in the oldest Veda Varuna is the lord of light both by day and by night, while Mitra, as far as can be judged, appears as the god of the celestial light of day only.

In the later Vedic period of the Brāhmaṇas Varuna comes to be specially connected with the nocturnal heaven⁹. Thus Mitra is said to have produced the day and Varuna the night (TS. 6, 4, 83); and the day is said to belong to Mitra and the night to Varuna (TS. 2, 1, 7)⁹. This view may have arisen from a desire to contrast Mitra, who was still felt to be related to the sun, with Varuna whose natural basis was more obscure. The antithesis between the two is differently expressed by the SB. (12, 9, 2¹²), which asserts that this world is Mitra, that (the celestial) world is Varuna.

Varuna is sometimes referred to as regulating the seasons. He knows the twelve months (1, 25⁵)¹⁰; and the kings Mitra, Varuna, and Aryaman are said to have disposed the autumn, the month, day, and night (7, 66¹¹).

Even in the RV. Varuna is often spoken of as a regulator of the waters. He caused the rivers to flow; they stream unceasingly according to his ordinance (2, 28¹). By his occult power the rivers swiftly pouring into the ocean do not fill it with water (5, 85⁶). Varuna and Mitra are lords of rivers (7, 64²). Varuna is already found connected with the sea in the RV., but very rarely, perhaps owing to its unimportance in that collection. Varuna going in the oceanic waters is contrasted with the Maruts in the sky, Agni on earth, and Vātā in air (1, 161¹⁴)¹¹. The statement that the seven rivers flow into the jaws of Varuna as into a surging abyss (8, 58¹²), may refer to the ocean¹². Varuna is said to descend into the sea (sindhum) like Dyaus (7, 87⁶)¹³. It is rather the aerial waters that he is ordinarily connected with. Varuna ascends to heaven as a hidden ocean (8, 41⁸). Beholding the truth and falsehood of men, he moves in the midst of the waters which drop sweetness and are clear (7, 49⁹). Varuna clothes himself in the waters (9, 96² cp. 8, 69¹¹⁻¹²). He and Mitra are among the gods most frequently thought of and prayed to as bestowers of rain. Varuna makes the inverted cask (of the cloud) to pour its waters on heaven, earth, and air, and to moisten the ground, the mountains then being enveloped in cloud (5, 85¹⁴). Mitra and Varuna have kine yielding refreshment and streams flowing with honey (5, 69⁵). They have rainy skies and streaming waters (5, 68⁵). They bedew the pasturage with ghee (= rain) and the spaces with honey (3, 62¹⁶). They send rain and refreshment from the sky (7, 64⁵). Rain abounding in heavenly water comes from them (8, 2⁵). Indeed, one entire hymn (5, 63) dwells on their powers of bestowing rain. It is probably owing to his connexion with the waters and rain, that in the fifth chapter of the Naighaṇṭuka Varuna is enumerated among the deities of the atmospheric as well as those of the celestial world. In the Brāhmaṇas Mitra and Varuna are also gods of rain⁴⁴. In the AV. Varuna appears divested of his powers
as a universal ruler, retaining only the control of the department of waters. He is connected with the waters as Soma with the mountains (AV. 3, 3').

As a divine father he sheds rain-waters (AV. 4, 15'). His golden house is in the waters (AV. 7, 83'). He is the overlord of waters, he and Mitra are lords of rain (AV. 5, 24^3'). In the YV. he is spoken of as the child (śītū) of waters, making his abode within the most motherly waters (VS. 10, 7). The waters are wives of Varuna (TS. 5, 5, 4'). Mitra and Varuna are the leaders of waters (TS. 6, 4, 3').

Varuna's ordinances are constantly said to be fixed, the epithet dhiṭavrata being preëminently applicable to him, sometimes conjointly with Mitra. The gods themselves follow Varuna's ordinances (8, 41^2) or those of Varuna, Mitra, and Savitr (10, 36^2). Even the immortal gods cannot obstruct the fixed ordinances of Mitra and Varuna (5, 69^4 cp. 5, 63^2). Mitra and Varuna are lords of order (ṛta) and light, who by means of order are the upholders of order (1, 23^2). The latter epithet is mostly applied either to them and sometimes the Adityas or to the gods in general. They are cherishers of order or right (1, 2^2). Varuna or the Adityas are sometimes called guardians of order (ṛtasya gopa), but this term is also applied to Agni and Soma. The epithet 'observer of order' (ṛtāvann), predominantly used of Agni, is also several times connected with Varuna and Mitra.

Varuna's power is so great that neither the birds as they fly nor the rivers as they flow, can reach the limit of his dominion, his might, and his wrath (1, 24^2). Neither the skies nor the rivers have reached (the limit of) the godhead of Mitra and Varuna (1, 151^2). He embraces the All and the abodes of all beings (8, 41^4-7). The three heavens and the three earths are deposited in him (7, 87^4). Varuna is omniscient. He knows the flight of birds in the sky, the path of ships in the ocean, the course of the far-travelling wind, and beholds all the secret things that have been or shall be done (1, 25^7-9 14). He witnesses men's truth and falsehood (7, 49^2). No creature can even wink without him (2, 28^6). The winkings of men's eyes are all numbered by Varuna, and whatever man does, thinks, or devises, Varuna knows (AV. 4, 16^2-5). He perceives all that exists within heaven and earth, and all that is beyond: a man could not escape from Varuna by fleeing far beyond the sky (AV. 4, 16^4-5). That Varuna's omniscience is typical is indicated by the fact that Agni is compared with him in this respect (10, 11^4).

As a moral governor Varuna stands far above any other deity. His wrath is roused by sin, the infringement of his ordinances, which he severely punishes (7, 86^3-4). The fetters (pāśāh) with which he binds sinners, are often mentioned (1, 24^15, 25^31; 6, 74^4; 10, 85^24). They are cast sevenfold and threefold, ensnaring the man who tells lies, passing by him who speaks truth (AV. 4, 16^6). Mitra and Varuna are barriers, furnished with many fetters, against falsehood (7, 65^3). Once Varuna, coupled with Indra, is said to tie with bonds not formed of rope (7, 84^2). The term pāśa is only once used in connexion with another god, Agni, who is implored to loosen the fetters of his worshippers (5, 2^7). It is therefore distinctive of Varuna. According to BERGAIGNE the conception of Varuna's fetters is based on the tying up of the waters, according to HILLEBRANDT on the fetters of night^15. But it is seems to be sufficiently accounted for by the figurative application of the fetters of criminals to moral guilt. Together with Mitra, Varuna is said to be a dispeller, hater, and punisher of falsehood (1, 152^1; 7, 60^5. 66^13). They afflict with disease^16 those who neglect their worship (1, 122^9). On the other hand, Varuna is gracious to the penitent. He unites like a rope and removes sin
(2, 285; 5, 857-8). He releases not only from the sins which men themselves commit, but from those committed by their fathers (7, 865). He spares the suppliant who daily transgresses his laws (1, 254) and is gracious to those who have broken his laws by thoughtlessness (7, 895). There is in fact no hymn to Varuna (and the Adityas) in which the prayer for forgiveness of guilt does not occur, as in the hymns to other deities the prayer for worldly goods.

Varuna has a hundred, a thousand remedies, and drives away death as well as releases from sin (1,249). He can take away or prolong life (1,2411, 2513; 7, 884, 895). He is a wise guardian of immortality (8, 423), and the righteous hope to see in the next world Varuna and Yama, the two kings who reign in bliss (10, 147).

Varuna is on a footing of friendship with his worshipper (7, 884-5), who commune with him in his celestial abode and sometimes sees him with the mental eye (1, 2515; 7, 884).

What conclusions as to the natural basis of Varuna can be drawn from the Vedic evidence which has been adduced? It is clear from this evidence, in combination with what is said below about Mitra (§ 13), that Varuna and Mitra are closely connected with the sun, but that the former is the much more important deity. Mitra has in fact been so closely assimilated to the greater god that he has hardly an independent trait left. Mitra must have lost his individuality through the predominant characteristics of the god with whom he is almost invariably associated. Now, chiefly on the evidence of the Avesta, Mitra has been almost unanimously acknowledged to be a solar deity (§ 13). Varuna must therefore have originally represented a different phenomenon. This according to the generally received opinion, is the encompassing sky. The vault of heaven presents a phenomenon far more vast to the eye of the observer than the sun, which occupies but an extremely small portion of that expanse during its daily course. The sky would therefore appear to the imagination as the greater deity. The sun might very naturally become associated with the sky as the space which it traverses every day and apart from which it is never seen. The conception of the sun as the eye of heaven is sufficiently obvious. It could not very appropriately be termed the eye of Mitra till the original character of the latter had become obscured and absorbed in that of Varuna. Yet even the eye of Sûrya is several times spoken of in the RV. (p. 30). The attribute of 'far-seeing'; appropriate to the sun, is also appropriate to the sky, which might naturally be conceived as seeing not only by day but even at night by means of the moon and stars. No real difficulty is presented by the notion of Varuna, who has become quite separate from his physical basis17, mounting a car in the height of heaven with Mitra. For such a conception is easily explicable from his association with a solar deity; besides every leading deity in the RV, drives in a car. On the other hand, the palace of Varuna in the highest heavens and his connexion with rain are particularly appropriate to a deity originally representing the vault of heaven. Finally, no natural phenomenon would be so likely to develop into a sovereign ruler, as the sky. For the personification of its vast expanse, which encompasses and rises far above the earth and on which the most striking phenomena of regular recurrence, the movements of the luminaries, are enacted, would naturally be conceived as watching by night and day all the deeds of men and as being the guardian of unswerving law. This development has indeed actually taken place in the case of the Zeus (— Dyaus) of Hellenic mythology. What was at first only an appellative of the sky has here become the supreme ruler of the gods dwelling in the serene
heights of heaven, who gathers the clouds, who wields the thunderbolt, and whose will is law.

The phenomena with which the two greatest gods of the RV. were originally connected, largely accounts for the difference in their personality. Varuṇa, as concerned with the regularly recurring phenomena of celestial light, is the supreme upholder of law in the moral as well as the physical world. His character as such afforded no scope for the development of myths. Indra as the god fighting in the strife of the elements, was conceived by the militant Vedic Indian as a sovereign of the warrior type. Owing to his close connexion with the meteorological phenomena of the thunderstorm, which are so irregular in time and diversified in feature, the character of Indra on the one hand shows traits of capriciousness, while on the other he becomes the centre of more myths than any other deity of the RV. The theory of Röth as to the supersession of Varuṇa by Indra in the Rigvedic period, is dealt with below (§ 22).

With the growth of the conception of Prajāpati (§ 39) as a supreme deity, the characteristics of Varuṇa as a sovereign god naturally faded away, and the dominion of the waters, only a part of his original sphere, alone remained to him. Thus he ultimately became in post-Vedic mythology an Indian Neptune, god of the Sea.

The hypothesis recently advanced by Oldenberg[18] that Varuṇa primarily represented the moon, cannot be passed over here. Starting from the assertion that the characteristic number of the Ādityas was seven and that their identity with the Amesaspentas of the Avesta is an assured fact, he believes that Varuṇa and Mitra were the moon and sun, the lesser Ādityas representing the five planets, and that they were not Indo-European deities, but were borrowed during the Indo-Iranian period from a Semitic people more skilled in astronomy than the Aryans. The character of Varuṇa when borrowed must further have lost much of its original significance and have already possessed a highly ethical aspect. For otherwise a distinctly lunar deity could hardly have thrown Mitra, who was clearly understood to be the sun, into the shade in the Indo-Iranian period, or have developed so highly abstract a character as to account for the supreme position, as a moral ruler, of Ahura Mazda in the Avesta and of Varuṇa in the Veda. This hypothesis does not seem to account at all well for the actual characteristics of Varuṇa in the RV. It also requires the absolute rejection of any connection between Varuṇa and oṗраvός[19].

It has already been mentioned that Varuṇa goes back to the Indo-Iranian period (§ 5), for the Ahura Mazda of the Avesta agrees with him in character[20] though not in name. The name of Vārūṇa may even be Indo-European. At least, the long accepted identification of the word with the Greek oṗраvός, though presenting phonetic difficulties, has not been rejected by some recent authorities on comparative philology[21].

But whether the word is Indo-European or the formation of a later period[22], it is probably derived from the root var, to cover[23], thus meaning 'the encompasser'. Śāyaṇa (on RV. i, 89) connects it with this root in the sense of enveloping or confining the wicked with his bonds[24], or commenting on TS. i, 8, 16, in that of enveloping 'like darkness' (cp. TS. 2, 1, 74). If the word is Indo-European, it may have been an attribute of dyauš, the ordinary name of 'sky', later becoming the regular appellative of sky in Greece, but an exalted god of the sky in India[25].

§ 13. Mitra. — The association of Mitra with Varuna is so predominant that only one single hymn of the RV. (3, 59) is addressed to him alone. The praise of the god is there rather indefinite, but the first verse at least contains something distinctive about him. Uttering his voice (bruvanah) he brings men together (yatayati) and watches the tillers with unwinking eye (animiṣā), said also of Mitra-Varuna in 7, 60).

In another passage (7, 36) almost the same words are applied to Mitra who 'brings men together, uttering his voice', in contrast with Varuna who is here called 'a mighty, infallible guide'. This seems a tolerably clear reference to Mitra's solar character, if we compare with it another verse (5, 82) where it is said that the sun-god Savīr 'causes all creatures to hear him and impels them'. In the fifth verse of the hymn to Mitra the god is spoken of as the great Aditya 'bringing men together'. This epithet (yatayaj-jana) is found in only three other passages of the RV. In one of these it is applied to Mitra-Varuna in the dual (5, 72), in another to Mitra, Varuna, and Āryaman (1, 136), and in the third (8, 91) to Agni, who 'brings men together like Mitra'. The attribute therefore seems to have properly belonged to Mitra. The hymn to Mitra further adds that he supports heaven and earth, that the five tribes of men obey him, and that he sustains all the gods. Savīr is once (5, 814) identified with Mitra because of his laws, and elsewhere (Vāl. 4) Viṣṇu is said to take his three steps by the laws of Mitra. These two passages appear to indicate that Mitra regulates the course of the sun. Agni who goes at the head of the deities produces Mitra for himself (10, 81); Agni when kindled is Mitra (3, 5); Agni when born is Varuna, when kindled is Mitra (5, 3). In the AV. (13, 3) Mitra at sunrise is contrasted with Varuna in the evening, and (AV. 9, 3) Mitra is asked to uncover in the morning what has been covered up by Varuna. These passages point to the beginning of the view prevailing in the Brāhmaṇas, that Mitra is connected with day and Varuna with night. That view must have arisen from Mitra having been predominantly conceived as allied to the sun, Varuna by antithesis becoming god of night. The same contrast between Mitra as god of day and Varuna as god of night is implied in the ritual literature, when it is prescribed that Mitra should
receive a white and Varuna a dark victim at the sacrificial post (TS. 2, 1, 74; 97; MS. 2, 57). The somewhat scanty evidence of the Veda showing that Mitra is a solar deity, is corroborated by the Avesta and Persian religion in general. Here Mithra is undoubtedly a sun-god or a god of light specially connected with the sun 5.

The etymology of the name is uncertain 6. However, as the word also often means 'friend' in the RV. and the kindly nature of the god is often referred to in the Veda, Mitra even appearing as a god of peace (TS. 2, 1, 87), while in the Avesta Mithra is on the ethical side of his character the guardian of faithfulness 8, it must have originally signified 'ally' or 'friend' and have been applied to the sun-god in his aspect of a beneficent power of nature.


5 Hillebrandt 113—4; Eggens 70. — 7 Eggens 42—3. — 8 Eggens 53—6.

§ 14. Sūrya. — Ten entire hymns of the RV. may be said to be devoted to the celebration of Sūrya specifically. It is impossible to say how often the name of the god occurs, it being in many cases doubtful whether only the natural phenomenon is meant or its personification. Since his name designates the orb of the sun as well, Sūrya is the most concrete of the solar deities, his connexion with the luminary never being lost sight of. The adorable light of Sūrya in the sky is as the face (anikā) of great Agni (10, 72). The eye of Sūrya is mentioned several times (5, 408 &c.), but he is himself equally often called the eye of Mītra and Varuṇa (p. 23) or of Agni as well (1, 115); and once (7, 77) Dawn is said to bring the eye of the gods. The affinity of the eye and the sun is indicated in a passage where the eye of the dead man is conceived as going to Sūrya (10, 163 cp. 90-1, 158-4). In the AV. he is called the 'lord of eyes' (AV. 5, 249) and is said to be the one eye of created beings and to see beyond the sky, the earth, and the waters (AV. 13, 145). He is far-seeing (7, 35; 10, 37), all-seeing (1, 50), is the spy (gopā) of the whole world (4, 13), beholds all beings and the good and bad deeds of mortals (1, 507; 6, 512; 7, 602, 611, 631-4). Aroused by Sūrya men pursue their objects and perform their work (7, 63). Common to all men, he rises as their rouser (7, 632-3). He is the soul or the guardian of all that moves or is stationary (1, 115; 7, 607). He has a car which is drawn by one steed, called etāsa (7, 632), or by an indefinite number of steeds (1, 115; 10, 37, 49) or mares (5, 295) or by seven horses (5, 459) or mares called harītal (1, 508-9; 7, 603) or by seven swift mares (4, 13).

Sūrya's path is prepared for him by Varuṇa (1, 248; 7, 87) or by the Ādityas Mitra, Varuṇa, Aryaman (7, 601). Pūṣān is his messenger (6, 589). The Dawn or Dawns reveal or produce Sūrya as well as Agni and the sacrifice (7, 803, 783). He shines forth from the lap of the dawns (7, 633). But from another point of view Dawn is Sūrya's wife (7, 755).

He also bears the metronymic Āditya, son of Aditi (1, 5012; 191; 8, 9011) or Āditeya (10, 8811), but he is elsewhere distinguished from the Ādityas (8, 3513-15). His father is Dyaus (10, 37). He is god-born (ibid.). The gods raised him who had been hidden in the ocean (10, 727). As a form of Agni
he was placed by the gods in heaven (10, 831'). According to another order of ideas he is said to have arisen from the eye of the world-giant Pūruṣa (10, 903). In the AV. (4, 105) the sun (divākara) is even described as having sprung from Vṛtra.

Various individual gods are said to have produced the sun. Indra generated him (2, 12 4 &c.), caused him to shine or raised him to heaven (3, 442; 8, 782). Indra-Viṣṇu generated him (7, 994). Indra-Soma brought up Sūrya with light (6, 724); Indra-Varuṇa raised him to heaven (7, 824). Mitra-Varuṇa raised or placed him in heaven (4, 133; 5, 637). Soma placed light in the Sun (6, 4431; 9, 9741), generated Sūrya (9, 968, 1104), caused him to shine (9, 633), or raised him in heaven (9, 1074). Agni establishes the brightness of the sun on high (10, 33) and caused him to ascend to heaven (10, 1564). Dīhṛ, the creator, fashioned the sun as well as the moon (10, 193). The Angirases by their rites caused him to ascend the sky (10, 623). In all these passages referring to the generation of Sūrya the notion of the simple luminary doubtless predominates.

In various passages Sūrya is conceived as a bird traversing space. He is a bird (10, 1771'), or a ruddy bird (5, 471), is represented as flying (1, 1913), is compared with a flying eagle (7, 635) and seems to be directly called an eagle (5, 451). He is in one passage called a bull as well as a bird (5, 473) and in another a mottled bull (10, 1894 cp. 5, 473). He is once alluded to as a white and brilliant steed brought by Uṣas (7, 773). Sūrya's horses represent his rays (which are seven in number: 8, 6116), for the latter (ketavah), it is said, bring (vahanti) him. His seven mares are called the daughters of his car (1, 509).

Elsewhere Sūrya is occasionally spoken of as an inanimate object. He is a gem of the sky (7, 633 cp. 6, 511) and is alluded to as the variegated stone placed in the midst of heaven (5, 473 cp. SB. 6, 1, 23). He is a brilliant weapon (ayudha) which Mitra-Varuṇa conceal with cloud and rain (5, 634), he is the fell (pavi) of Mitra-Varuṇa (5, 623), or a brilliant car placed in heaven by Mitra-Varuṇa (5, 633). The sun is also called a wheel (1, 1751; 4, 309) or the 'wheel of the sun' is spoken of (4, 282; 5, 2916).

Sūrya shines for all the world (7, 631), for men and gods (1, 505). He dispels the darkness with his light (10, 371). He rolls up the darkness as a skin (7, 631). His rays throw off the darkness as a skin into the waters (4, 131). He triumphs over beings of darkness and witches (1, 1918, 9 cp. 7, 10441). There are only two or three allusions to the sun's burning heat (7, 3419; 9, 10716); for in the RV. the sun is not a maleficent power, and for this aspect of the luminary only passages from the AV. and the literature of the Brāhmaṇas can be quoted5.

Sūrya measures the days (1, 507) and prolongs the days of life (8, 487). He drives away sickness, disease, and every evil dream (10, 371). To live is to see the Sun rise (4, 251; 6, 525). All creatures depend on Sūrya (1, 16414), and the sky is upheld by him (10, 851). The epithet 'all-creating' (viśva-karman) is also applied to him (10, 1704; cp. § 39). By his greatness he is the divine priest (asuryah purohitah) of the gods (8, 9012). At his rising he is prayed to declare men sinless to Mitra-Varuṇa and other gods (7, 607, 623). He is said, when rising, to go to the Vṛtra-slayer Indra and is even styled a Vṛtra-slayer himself when invoked with Indra (8, 8215, 4). The only myth told about Sūrya is that Indra vanquished him (10, 435) and stole his wheel (1, 1751; 4, 304). This may allude to the obscuration of the sun by a thunderstorm.

In the Avesta, the sun, hivare (== Vedic svar, of which sūrya5 is a de-
rivative and to which Gk. ἀλόξιος is allied) has swift horses, like Śūrya, and is called the eye of Ahura Mazda.  

§ 15. Savitr. — Savitr is celebrated in eleven whole hymns of the RV. and in parts of others, his name being mentioned about 170 times. Eight or nine of these are in the family books, while all but three of those to Śūrya are in the first and tenth. Savitr is preeminently a golden deity, nearly all his members and his equipment being described by that epithet. He is golden-eyed (1, 359), golden-handed (1, 359–10), golden-tongued (6, 713), all these epithets being peculiar to him. He has golden arms (6, 711–5; 7, 459), and is broad-handed (2, 381) or beautiful-handed (3, 339). He is also pleasant-tongued (6, 714) or beautiful-tongued (3, 5411), and is once called iron-jawed (6, 714). He is yellow-haired (10, 1392), an attribute of Agni and Indra also. He puts on a tawny garment (4, 539). He has a golden car with a golden pole (1, 352–9), which is omniform (1, 353), just as he himself assumes all forms (5, 819). His car is drawn by two radiant steeds or by two or more brown, white-footed horses (1, 352–5; 7, 451).  

Mighty splendour (amātī) is preeminently attributed to Savitr, and mighty golden splendour to him only (3, 389; 7, 389). This splendour he stretches out or diffuses. He illumines the air, heaven and earth, the world, the spaces of the earth, the vault of heaven (1, 357–8; 4, 142, 534; 5, 818). He raises aloft his strong golden arms, with which he blesses and arouses all beings and which extend to the ends of the earth (2, 382; 4, 534–6; 6, 711–5; 7, 452). The raising of his arms is characteristic, for the action of other gods is compared with it. Agni is said to raise his arms like Savitr (1, 952); the dawns extend light as Savitr his arms (7, 792), and Brhaspati is implored to raise hymns of praise as Savitr his arms (1, 1903). He moves in his golden car, seeing all creatures, on a downward and an upward path (1, 352–3). He impels the car of the Āsvins before dawn (1, 3410). He shines after the path of the dawn (5, 812). He has measured out the earthly spaces, he goes to the three bright realms of heaven and is united with the rays of the sun (5, 813–4). The only time the epithet śūrya-rāsmi is used in the RV. it is applied to Savitr: 'Shining with the rays of the sun, yellow-haired, Savitr raises up his light continually from the east' (10, 1392). He thrice surrounds the air, the three spaces, the three bright realms of heaven (4, 536; cp. Viṣṇu, § 17). His ancient paths in the air are dustless and easy to traverse, on them he is besought to protect his worshippers (1, 3511). He is prayed to convey the departed spirit to where the righteous dwell (10, 174). He bestows immortality on the gods as well as length of life on man (4, 542). He also bestowed immortality on the Rbhus, who by the greatness of their deeds went to his house (1, 1102–3). Like Sūrya, he is implored to remove evil dreams (5, 824) and to make men sinless (4, 543). He drives away evil spirits and sorcerers (1, 3510; 7, 387).  

Like many other gods Savitr is called asura (4, 531). He observes fixed laws (4, 531; 10, 348, 1393). The waters and the wind are subject to his ordinance (2, 382). He leads the waters and by his propulsion they flow broadly (3, 336 cp. Nir. 2, 26). The other gods follow his lead (5, 813). No being, not even Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra, Aryaman, Rudra, can resist his will and independent
dominion (2, 387. 9; 5, 82b). His praises are celebrated by the Vasus, Aditi, Varuna, Mitra, and Aryaman (7, 383 4). Like Pūṣan and Sūrya, he is lord of that which moves and is stationary (4, 53b). He is lord of all desirable things, and sends blessings from heaven, air, earth (1, 243; 2, 3811). He is twice (1, 123; 6, 7114) even spoken of as `domestic' (damūnas), an epithet otherwise almost entirely limited to Agni. Like other gods, he is a supporter of the sky (4, 53b; 10, 1491). He supports the whole world (4, 543). He fixed the earth with bonds and made firm the sky in the rafterless space (10, 1491).

Savitṛ is at least once (1, 226) called `child of Waters' (apāṃ napāt), an epithet otherwise exclusively belonging to Agni. It is probably also applied to him in 10, 1492. Yāska (Nir. 10, 32) commenting on this verse regards Savitṛ here as belonging to the middle region (or atmosphere) because he causes rain, adding that the sun (Aditya, who is in heaven) is also called Savitṛ. It is probably owing to this epithet and because Savitṛ's paths are once (1, 3511) said to be in the atmosphere, that this deity occurs among the gods of the middle region as well as among those of heaven in the vai-gaṃtika. Savitṛ is once called the prajāpati of the world (4, 53b). In the Sh. (12, 3, 51) people are said to identify Savitṛ with Prajāpati; and in the TB. (1, 6, 41) it is stated that Prajāpati becoming Savitṛ created living beings. Savitṛ is alone lord of vivifying power and by his movements (yāmabhik) becomes Pūṣan (5, 825). In his vivifying power Pūṣan marches, beholding all beings as a guardian (10, 1391). In two consecutive verses (3, 629 10) Pūṣan and Savitṛ are thought of as connected. In the first the favour of Pūṣan who sees all beings is invoked, and in the second, Savitṛ is besought to stimulate (cp. Pūṣan, p. 36) the thoughts of worshippers who desire to think of the excellent brilliance of god Savitṛ. The latter verse is the celebrated Sāvitrī, with which Savitṛ was in later times invoked at the beginning of Vedic study. Savitṛ is also said to become Mitra by reason of his laws (5, 814). Savitṛ seems sometimes (5, 826 3; 7, 38b 6) to be identified with Bhaga also, unless the latter word is here only an epithet of Savitṛ. The name of Bhaga (the good god bestowing benefits) is indeed often added to that of Savitṛ so as to form the single expression Savitā Bhagāḥ or Bhagāḥ Savitā. In other texts, however, Savitṛ is distinguished from Mitra, Pūṣan, and Bhaga. In several passages Savitṛ and Sūrya appear to be spoken of indiscriminately to denote the same deity. Thus a poet says: `God Savitṛ has raised aloft his brilliance, making light for the whole world; Sūrya shining brightly has filled heaven and earth and air with his rays' (4, 143). In another hymn (7, 63) Sūrya is (in verses 1, 2, 4) spoken of in terms (e. g. prosavitr, vivifier) usually applied to Savitṛ, and in the third verse Savitṛ is apparently mentioned as the same god. In other hymns also (10, 1581 4; 1, 351 1241) it is hardly possible to keep the two deities apart. In passages such as the following, Savitṛ is, however, distinguished from Sūrya. `Savitṛ moves between both heaven and earth, drives away disease, impels (vati) the sun' (1, 359). Savitṛ declares men sinless to the sun (1, 123). He combines with the rays of the sun (5, 814) or shines with the rays of the sun (10, 139 cp. 1813; 1, 157; 7, 358 10). With Mitra, Aryaman, Bhaga, Savitṛ is besought to vivify the worshipper when the sun has risen (7, 664).

According to Yāska (Nir. 12, 12), the time of Savitṛ's appearance is when darkness has been removed. Sāyana (on RV. 5, 814) remarks that before his rising the sun is called Savitṛ, but from his rising to his setting, Sūrya. But Savitṛ is also sometimes spoken of as sending to sleep (4, 53b; 7, 45b), and must therefore be connected with evening as well as morning. He is, indeed,

Iindo-arische Philologie. III. 14.
extolled as the setting sun in one hymn (2, 38); and there are indications that most of the hymns addressed to him are meant for either a morning or an evening sacrifice. He brings all two-footed and four-footed beings to rest and awakens them (6, 712 cp. 4, 531; 7, 451). He unyokes his steeds, brings the wanderer to rest; at his command night comes; the weaver rolls up her web and the skilful man lays down his unfinished work (2, 383-4). Later the west was wont to be assigned to him (SB. 3, 2, 318), as the east to Agni and the south to Soma.

The name Savitr has all the appearance of being a word of purely Indian formation. This is borne out by the fact that the root sū, from which it is derived, is continually used along with it in a manner which is unique in the RV. Some other verb would nearly always be used to express the same action in connexion with any other god. In the case of Savitr not only is the root itself used, but also several derivatives (such as prasavita and prasava) constituting a perpetual play on the name. These frequent combinations show clearly that the root has the sense of stimulating, arousing, vivifying. A few examples may here be given in illustration of this peculiar usage. "God Savitr has aroused (prasavita) each moving thing" (1, 1571). "Thou alone art the lord of stimulation" (prasavasya: 5, 815). "Savit bestowed (āsuvat) that immortality on you" (1, 1103). "God Savitr has arisen to arouse (savāya) us" (2, 381). "Thrice a day Savitr sends down (sasavita) boons from the sky" (3, 56). "Do thou, o Savitr, constitute (suvatāt) us sinless" (4, 54). "May we being sinless towards Aditi through the influence (sava) of Savitr possess all boons" (5, 829). "Send away (parā savā) evil dream, send away all calamities, bestow (āsuvā) what is good (ib. 4, 5). "May Savitr remove (apa sāvīsat) sickness" (10, 100). With this verb Savitr is specially often besought to bestow wealth (2, 566 &c.). This use of sū is almost peculiar to Savitr; but it is two or three times applied to Sūrya (7, 63; 4; 10, 371). It also occurs with Uṣas (7, 771), with Varuṇa (2, 289), with the Adityas (8, 181), and with Mitra, Aryaman coupled with Savitr (7, 664). This employment being so frequent, Yāska (Nir. 10, 31) defines Savitr as savasya prasavitā, 'the stimulator of everything'.

The fact that in nearly half its occurrences the name is accompanied by deva, god, seems to show that is has not yet lost the nature of an epithet, meaning 'the stimulator god'. At any rate, the word appears to be an epithet of Tvāṣṭṛ in two passages (3, 5510; 10, 109), where the juxtaposition of the words devas tvāṣṭrā savitā vītvārīpa and the collocation with deva indicate that Savitṛ is here identical with Tvāṣṭṛ.

We may therefore conclude that Savitr was originally an epithet of Indian origin applied to the sun as the great stimulator of life and motion in the world, representing the most important movement which dominates all others in the universe, but that as differentiated from Sūrya he is a more abstract deity. He is in the eyes of the Vedic poets the divine power of the sun personified, while Sūrya is the more concrete deity, in the conception of whom the outward form of the sun-body is never absent owing to the identity of his name with that of the orb (cp. 1, 359, 1241).

OLDENBERG, reversing the order of development generally recognized, thinks that Savitr represents an abstraction of the idea of stimulation and that the notion of the sun, or of the sun in a particular direction, is only secondary in his character.

§ 16. Pūṣan. — The name of Pūṣan is mentioned about 120 times in the RV. and he is celebrated in eight hymns (five of them occurring in the sixth, two in the first, and one in the tenth book). He is also lauded as a dual divinity in one hymn (6, 57) with Indra and in another with Soma (2, 40). Thus statistically he occupies a somewhat higher position than Viṣṇu (§ 17).

In the later Vedic and the post-Vedic periods his name is mentioned with increasing rareness. His individuality is indistinct and his anthropomorphic traits are scanty. His foot is referred to when he is asked to trample on the brand of the wicked. His right hand is also mentioned (6, 54\textsuperscript{10}). He has (like Rudra) braided hair (6, 55\textsuperscript{2}) and a beard (10, 267). He wields a golden spear (1, 42\textsuperscript{3}) and carries an awl (6, 53\textsuperscript{5}, 6\textsuperscript{8}) or a goad (53\textsuperscript{9}, 58\textsuperscript{2}). The wheel, the felly, and the seat of his car (6, 54\textsuperscript{3}) are spoken of and he is called the best charioteer (6, 56\textsuperscript{2}). His car is drawn by goats (ajāśe) instead of horses (1, 38\textsuperscript{1}; 6, 55\textsuperscript{3}, 52\textsuperscript{4}). He eats, for his food is gruel (6, 56\textsuperscript{1} cp. 3, 52\textsuperscript{7}). It is probably for this reason that he is said to be toothless in the SB. (1, 7, 4\textsuperscript{7}).

Pūṣan sees all creatures clearly and at once (3, 62\textsuperscript{9}), these identical words being applied to Agni also (10, 187\textsuperscript{4}). He is 'the lord of all things moving and stationary' almost the same words with which Sūrya is described (1, 115\textsuperscript{1}, 7, 60\textsuperscript{5}). He is the wooer of his mother (6, 55\textsuperscript{2}) or the lover of his sister (ib. 4, 5). Similar expressions being used of Sūrya (1, 115\textsuperscript{1}) and of Agni (10, 3\textsuperscript{3}). The gods are said to have given him, subdued by love, to the sun-maiden Sūryā in marriage (6, 58\textsuperscript{8}). Probably as the husband of Sūryā, Pūṣan is connected with the marriage ceremonial in the wedding hymn (10, 85), being besought to take the bride's hand and lead her away and to bless her in her conjugal relation (v. 37). In another passage (9, 67\textsuperscript{19}) he is besought to give his worshippers their share of maidens. With his golden ships which move in the aerial ocean, subdued by love he acts as the messenger of Sūrya (6, 58\textsuperscript{3}). He moves onward beholding the universe (2, 40\textsuperscript{3}; 6, 58\textsuperscript{2}) and makes his abode in heaven (2, 40\textsuperscript{4}). He is a guardian, who goes at the instigation of Savitṛ, knowing and beholding all creatures. In a hymn devoted to his praise, Pūṣan is said as best of charioteers to have driven downwards the golden wheel of the sun (6, 56\textsuperscript{3}), but the connexion is obscure (cp. Nir. 2, 6). A frequent and exclusive epithet of Pūṣan is 'glowing' (aśīrṇ). He is once termed agohya, 'not to be concealed', an attribute almost peculiar to Savitṛ.

Pūṣan is born on the far path of paths, on the far path of heaven and of earth; he goes to and returns from both the beloved abodes, knowing them (6, 117\textsuperscript{6}). Owing to this familiarity he conducts the dead on the far path to the Fathers, as Agni and Savitṛ take them to where the righteous have gone and where they and the gods abide, and leads his worshippers either in safety, showing them the way (10, 17\textsuperscript{3})—. The AV. also speaks of Pūṣan as conducting to the world of the righteous, the beautiful world of the gods (AV. 16, 9\textsuperscript{2}; 18, 25\textsuperscript{3}). So Pūṣan's goat conducts the sacrificial horse (1, 162\textsuperscript{2}–3). Perhaps to Pūṣan's familiarity with the (steep) paths is due the notion that his car is drawn by the sure-footed goat.

As knower of paths, Pūṣan is conceived as a guardian of roads. He is besought to remove dangers, the wolf, the waylayer, from the path (1, 42\textsuperscript{1}–3). In this connexion he is called vimucna napāt, 'son of deliverance'. The same
epithet is applied to him in another passage (6, 55) and he is twice (8, 4\textsuperscript{15}; 10) called vimocana, ‘deliverer’. As vimuca nap\textsuperscript{\textdagger} he is invoked to deliver from sin’ (AV. 6, 112). Pûṣan is prayed to disperse foes and make the paths lead to booty (6, 53\textsuperscript{1}), to remove foes, to make the paths good, and to lead to good pasture (1, 42\textsuperscript{7}; 8). He is invoked to protect from harm on his path (6, 54\textsuperscript{9}) and to grant an auspicious path (10, 59). He is the guardian of every path (6, 49\textsuperscript{1}) and lord of the road (6, 53\textsuperscript{1}). He is a guide (prapathya) on roads (VS. 22, 20). So in the Sūtras, whoever is starting on a journey makes an offering to Pûṣan, the road-maker, while reciting RV. 6, 53; and whoever loses his way, turns to Pûṣan (AGS. 3, 78; 5; SSS. 3, 4\textsuperscript{3}). Moreover, in the morning and evening offerings to all gods and beings, Pûṣan the road-maker receives his on the threshold of the house (SGS. 2, 14\textsuperscript{9}).

As knower of ways he can make hidden goods manifest and easy to find (6, 48\textsuperscript{15}). He is in one passage (1, 23\textsuperscript{14}; 15) cp. TS. 3, 3, 9\textsuperscript{1}) said to have found the king who was lost and hidden in secret (probably Soma), and asked to bring him like a lost beast. So in the Sūtras, Pûṣan is sacrificed to when anything lost is sought (AGS. 3, 79). Similarly, it is characteristic of Pûṣan that he follows and protects cattle (6, 54\textsuperscript{5}; 6, 58\textsuperscript{2} cp. 10, 26\textsuperscript{3}). He preserves them from injury by falling into a pit, brings them home unhurt, and drives back the lost (6, 54\textsuperscript{2}). His goad directs cattle straight (6, 53\textsuperscript{9}). Perhaps connected with the idea of guiding straight is the notion that he directs the furrow (4, 57). Pûṣan also protects horses (6, 54\textsuperscript{8}) and weaves and smooths the clothing of sheep (10, 26\textsuperscript{1}). Hence beasts are said to be sacred to Pûṣan (1, 5\textsuperscript{1}2), and he is called the producer of cattle (MS. 4, 3\textsuperscript{2}; TB. 1, 7, 2\textsuperscript{4}). In the Sūtras verses to Pûṣan are prescribed to be recited when cows are driven to pasture or stray (SGS. 3, 9).

Pûṣan has various attributes in common with other gods. He is called asura (5, 51\textsuperscript{1}). He is strong (5, 43\textsuperscript{9}), vigorous (8, 4\textsuperscript{15}), nimble (6, 54\textsuperscript{3}), powerful (1, 138\textsuperscript{1}), resistless (6, 48\textsuperscript{18}). He transcends mortals and is equal to the gods in glory (6, 48\textsuperscript{9}). He is a ruler of heroes (1, 106\textsuperscript{1}), an unconquerable protector and defender (1, 89\textsuperscript{5}), and assists in battle (6, 48\textsuperscript{9}). He is a protector of the world (10, 17\textsuperscript{3} cp. 2, 40\textsuperscript{1}). He is a seer, a protecting friend of the priest, the unshaken friend born of old, of every suppliant (10, 26\textsuperscript{8}). He is wise (1, 42\textsuperscript{9}) and liberal (2, 34\textsuperscript{1}). His bounty is particularly often mentioned. He possesses all wealth (1, 89\textsuperscript{9}), abounds in wealth (8, 4\textsuperscript{15}), gives increase of wealth (1, 89\textsuperscript{9}), is beneficent (1, 138\textsuperscript{7}), bountiful (6, 58\textsuperscript{2}; 8, 4\textsuperscript{18}), and bestows all blessings (1, 42\textsuperscript{6}). He is the strong friend of abundance, the strong lord and increaser of nourishment (10, 26\textsuperscript{7}). The term dasra, ‘wonder-working’, distinctive of the As\\'vins, is a few times (1, 42\textsuperscript{2}; 6, 56\textsuperscript{4}) applied to him, as well as dasma, ‘wondrous’ (1, 42\textsuperscript{10}; 138\textsuperscript{4}) and dasma-varcas, ‘of wondrous splendour’ (6, 58\textsuperscript{4}), usually said of Agni and Indra. He is also twice (1, 106\textsuperscript{4}; 10, 64\textsuperscript{3}) called Narā\'śa\'naS ‘praised of men’, an epithet otherwise exclusively limited to Agni. He is once spoken of as ‘all-pervading’ (2, 40\textsuperscript{5}). He is termed ‘devotion-stimulating’ (9, 88\textsuperscript{1}), is invoked to quicken devotion (2, 40\textsuperscript{6}), and his awl is spoken of as ‘prayer-instigating’ (6, 53\textsuperscript{3}; cp. Savit, p. 33).

The epithets exclusively connected with Pûṣan are a\'ghṛṣ, ajā\’va, vimoca\'na, vimuca nap\textsuperscript{\textdagger}, and once each pustim\’hara, ‘bringing prosperity’, anasuta\'pasu, ‘losing no cattle’, anasautvedas, ‘losing no goods’, karamb\’had, ‘eating gruel’. The latter attribute seems to have been a cause for despising Pûṣan by some (cp. 6, 56\textsuperscript{1}; 1, 138\textsuperscript{4}). Karambha, mentioned three times in the RV., is Pûṣan’s distinctive food, being contrasted with Soma as Indra’s (6, 57\textsuperscript{7}). Indra, however, shares it (3, 52\textsuperscript{7}), and in the only two passages in which the
adjective *karambhīn* ‘mixed with gruel’ occurs, it applies to the libation of Indra (3, 52; 8, 80). Pūṣan is the only god who receives the epithet *pāsūpā,,* ‘protector of cattle’ (6, 58) directly (and not in comparisons).

The only deities with whom Pūṣan is invoked conjointly in the dual are Soma (2, 40) and Indra (6, 57), whose brother he is once called (6, 55). Next to these two, Pūṣan is most frequently addressed with Bhaga (1, 90; 4, 30; 5, 41; 46; 10, 125; cp. SB. 11, 4, 33; KŚŚ. 5, 13) and Viśnu (1, 90; 5, 46; 6, 21; 7, 44; 10, 665), his name in all these passages of the RV. being in juxtaposition with theirs. He is occasionally addressed with various other deities also.

The evidence adduced does not show clearly that Pūṣan represents a phenomenon of nature. But a large number of passages quoted at the beginning point to his being closely connected with the sun. Yāṣka, too, (Nir. 7, 9) explains Pūṣan to be ‘the sun (*Aditya*), the preserver of all beings’, and in post-Vedic literature Pūṣan occasionally occurs as a name of the sun. The path of the sun which leads from earth to heaven, the abode of the gods and the pious dead, might account for a solar deity being both a conductor of departed souls (like Savitr) and a guardian of paths in general. The latter aspect of his character would explain his special bucolic features as a guide and protector of cattle, which form a part of his general nature as a promoter of prosperity. Mithra, the solar deity of the Avesta, has the bucolic traits of increasing cattle and bringing back beasts that have strayed.

Etymologically the word means ‘prosperer’ as derived from the root *pūj*, ‘to cause to thrive’. This side of his character is conspicuous both in his epithets *visavēlas, anaśavēlas*, *purūvasu, pūṣimbhara*, and in the frequent invocations to him to bestow wealth and protection (6, 48; &c.). He is lord of great wealth, a stream of wealth, a heap of riches (6, 55). But the prosperity he confers is not, as in the case of Indra, Parjanya, and the Maruts, connected with rain, but with light, which is emphasized by his exclusive epithet ‘glowing’. The welfare which he bestows results from the protection he extends to men and cattle on earth, and from his guidance of men to the abodes of bliss in the next world. Thus the conception which seems to underlie the character of Pūṣan, is the beneficent power of the sun manifested chiefly as a pastoral deity.

1 KRV. note 120. — 2 IS. 5, 186, 190. — 3 GGA. 1889, p. 8. — 4 OST. 5, 175; GW.; IRV. 4, 444; HVBP. 34, and BRV. (who explains the original meaning differently); ‘Sohn der Einkehr’ (= unyoking): ROTH, I.W. und ORV. 232: ‘Son of the cloud’: Śāyaṇa and GRIFFITH on RV. 1, 421. — 5 Purāṇakāli according to HILLEBRANDT, WZKM. 3, 192-3, means ‘active, zealous’. — 6 HRI. 51. — 7 SP.AP. 184.

WHITNEY, JAOS. 3, 325; OST. 5, 171-80; GUBERNATIS, Letture 82; BRV. 2, 420-30; KRV. 55; PVS. 1, 11; HVIM. 1, 456; HVBP. 34; ORV. 230-3 (cp. WZKM. 9, 252); PERRY, Drisler Memorial 241-3; HRI. 50-3.

§ 17. Viśnu. — Viśnu, though a deity of capital importance in the mythology of the Brāhmaṇas, occupies but a subordinate position in the RV. His personality is at the same time more important there than would appear from the statistical standard alone. According to that he would be a deity only of the fourth rank, for he is celebrated in not more than five whole hymns and in part of another, while his name occurs only about 100 times altogether in the RV. The only anthropomorphic traits of Viśnu are the frequently mentioned strides which he takes, and his being a youth vast in body, who is no longer a child (1, 155). The essential feature of his character is that he takes (generally expressed by *vi-kram*) three strides, which are referred to about a dozen times. His epithets *urugāya, ‘wide-going’ and urukrama,*
which also occur about a dozen times, allude to the same action. With these three steps Viṣṇu is described as traversing the earth or the terrestrial spaces. Two of these steps or spaces are visible to men, but the third or highest step is beyond the flight of birds or mortal ken (1, 155\textsuperscript{5}; 7, 99\textsuperscript{4}). The same notion seems to be mystically expressed (1, 155\textsuperscript{3}) when he is said to bear his third name in the bright realm of heaven. The highest place of Viṣṇu is regarded as identical with the highest place of Agni, for Viṣṇu guards the highest, the third place of Agni (10, 1\textsuperscript{3}) and Agni with the loftiest station of Viṣṇu guards the mysterious cows (probably = clouds: 5, 3\textsuperscript{3}).

The highest step of Viṣṇu is seen by the liberal like an eye fixed in heaven (1, 22\textsuperscript{20}). It is his dear abode, where pious men rejoice and where there is a well of honey (1, 154\textsuperscript{5}), and where the gods rejoice (8, 29\textsuperscript{7}). This highest step\textsuperscript{1} shines down brightly and is the dwelling of Indra and Viṣṇu, where are the many-horned swiftly moving cows\textsuperscript{3} (probably = clouds), and which the singer desires to attain (1, 154\textsuperscript{9}). Within these three footsteps all beings dwell (1, 154\textsuperscript{2}), and they are full of honey (1, 154\textsuperscript{4}), probably because the third and most important is full of it\textsuperscript{3}. Viṣṇu guards the highest abode (pāthas)\textsuperscript{4}, which implies his favourite dwelling-place (3, 55\textsuperscript{20}) and is elsewhere expressly stated to be so (1, 154\textsuperscript{5}). In another passage (7, 100\textsuperscript{5}) Viṣṇu is less definitely said to dwell far from this space. He is once spoken of (1, 156\textsuperscript{5}) as having three abodes, triṣadhastha, an epithet primarily appropriate to Agni (§ 35).

The opinion that Viṣṇu’s three steps refer to the course of the sun is almost unanimous. But what did they originally represent? The purely naturalistic interpretation favoured by most European scholars\textsuperscript{5} and by Yāska’s predecessor Aurnavābha (Nir. 12, 19) takes the three steps to mean the rising, culminating, and setting of the sun. The alternative view, which prevails throughout the younger Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas, as well as post-Vedic literature, and was supported by Yāska’s predecessor Śākapūṇi and is favoured by BERGaigne and the present writer\textsuperscript{6}, interprets the three steps as the course of the solar deity through the three divisions of the universe. With the former interpretation is at variance the fact that the third step of Viṣṇu shows no trace of being connected with sunset, but on the contrary is identical with the highest step. The alternative view does not conflict with what evidence the RV. itself supplies, and is supported by the practically unvarying tradition in India beginning with the later Vedas.

That the idea of motion is characteristic of Viṣṇu is shown by other expressions besides the three steps. The epithets ‘wide-going’ and ‘wide-striding’ are almost entirely limited to Viṣṇu, as well as the verb vi-kram. The latter is also employed in allusion to the sun, spoken of as the variegated stone placed in the midst of heaven, which took strides (5, 47\textsuperscript{2}). Viṣṇu is also swift ēṣa (otherwise said only once of Bṛhaspati) or ‘swift-going’ evayā, evayāvin (otherwise connected only with the Maruts). Coupled with the constant idea of swift and far-extending motion is that of regularity. In taking his three strides Viṣṇu observes laws (1, 22\textsuperscript{18}). Like other deities typical of regular recurrence (Agni, Soma, Sūrya, Uṣas), Viṣṇu is the ‘ancient germ of order’, and an ordainer, who (like Agni, Sūrya, Uṣas) is both ancient and recent (1, 156\textsuperscript{2}-4). In the same words as the sun-god Śaśi (5, 81\textsuperscript{1}), he is said (1, 154\textsuperscript{4}; 6, 49\textsuperscript{13}) to have measured out the earthy spaces. With this may also be compared the statement that Varuṇa measured out the spaces with the sun (p. 11). Viṣṇu is in one passage (1, 155\textsuperscript{6} cp. 1, 164\textsuperscript{4}, 45\textsuperscript{9}) described as setting in motion like a revolving wheel his 90 steeds (= days) with their four names (= seasons). This can hardly refer to anything but
the solar year of 360 days. In the AV. (5, 267) Viṣṇu is besought to bestow heat on the sacrifice. In the Brāhmaṇas Viṣṇu’s head when cut off becomes the sun. In post-Vedic literature one of Viṣṇu’s weapons is a rolling wheel which is represented like the sun (cp. RV. 5, 634), and his vehicle is Garuḍa, chief of birds, who is of brilliant lustre like Agni, and is also called garutma and surpana, two terms already applied to the sun-bird in the RV. Finally the post-Vedic kaustubha or breast-jewel of Viṣṇu has been explained as the sun by KUHN. Thus though Viṣṇu is no longer clearly connected with a natural phenomenon, the evidence appears to justify the inference that he was originally conceived as the sun, not in his general character, but as the personified swiftly moving luminary, which with vast strides traverses the whole universe. This explanation would be borne out by the derivation from the root viṣ which is used tolerably often in the RV. and primarily means ‘to be active’ (PW.). According to this, Viṣṇu would be the ‘active one’ as representing solar motion. OLDENBERG, however, thinks that every definite trace of solar character is lacking in Viṣṇu, that he was from the beginning conceived only as a traverser of wide space, and that no concrete natural conception corresponded to the three steps. The number of the steps he attributes simply to the fondness for triads in mythology.

Viṣṇu’s highest step, as has been indicated, is conceived as his distinctive abode. The sun would naturally be thought of as stationary in the meridian rather than anywhere else. So we find the name of the zenith in Yāśka to be viṣṇupada, the step or place of Viṣṇu. Probably connected with the same range of ideas are the epithets ‘mountain-dwelling’ (girikṣit) and ‘mountain-abiding’ (giristha) applied to Viṣṇu in the same hymn (1, 1542–3); for in the next hymn (1, 155) Viṣṇu and Indra are conjointly called ‘the two unendeavourable ones, who have stood on the summit (sānuni) of the mountains, as it were with an unerring steed’. This would allude to the sun looking down from the height of the cloud mountains (cp. 5, 87). It is probably owing to such expressions in the RV. that Viṣṇu is later called ‘lord of mountains’ (TS. 3, 4, 5).

The reason why Viṣṇu took his three steps is a secondary trait. He thrice traversed the earthly spaces for man in distress (6, 4913); he traversed the earth to bestow it on man for a dwelling (7, 100); he traversed the earthly spaces for wide-stepping existence (1, 155); with Indra he took vast strides and stretched out the worlds for our existence (6, 695). To this feature in the RV. may ultimately be traced the myth of Viṣṇu’s dwarf incarnation which appears in the Epic and the Purāṇas. The intermediate stage is found in the Brāhmaṇas (SB. 1, 2, 55; TS. 2, 1, 3; TB. 1, 6, 15), where Viṣṇu already assumes the form of a dwarf, in order by artifice to recover the earth for the gods from the Asuras by taking his three strides.

The most prominent secondary characteristic of Viṣṇu is his friendship for Indra, with whom he is frequently allied in the fight with Vṛtra. This is indicated by the fact that one whole hymn (6, 69) is dedicated to the two deities conjointly, and that Indra’s name is coupled with that of Viṣṇu in the dual as often as with that of Soma, though the name of the latter occurs vastly oftener in the RV. The closeness of their alliance is also indicated by the fact that in hymns extolling Viṣṇu alone, Indra is the only other deity incidentally associated with him either explicitly (7, 995–6; 1, 155) or implicitly (7, 991; 1, 154). Indra strode his three steps by the energy (ayasa) of Indra (8, 12), who in the preceding verse is described as slaying Vṛtra, or for Indra (Vāl. 4). Indra about to slay Vṛtra says, ‘friend Viṣṇu, stride out vastly’ (4, 1811). In company with Viṣṇu, Indra slew Vṛtra.
(6, 20°). Viṣṇu and Indra together triumphed over the Dāsa, destroyed Śambara's 99 castles and conquered the hosts of Varcin (7, 994°). Viṣṇu is Indra's intimate friend (1, 22°). Viṣṇu accompanied by his friend opens the cows' stall (1, 156°). In the SB. (5, 5°) Indra is described as shooting the thunderbolt at Vṛtra, while Viṣṇu follows him (cp. TS. 6, 5, 1°). Viṣṇu is also invoked with Indra in various single verses (4, 24°. 55°: 8, 10°: 10, 66°). When associated with Indra as a dual divinity, Viṣṇu shares Indra's powers of drinking Soma (6, 69°) as well as his victories (7, 994°-6). Indra conversely participating in Viṣṇu's power of striding (6, 69°; 7, 99°). To both conjointly is attributed the action of creating the wide air and of spreading out the spaces (6, 69°) and of producing Śūrya, Uṣas, and Agni (7, 99°). Owing to this friendship Indra drinks Soma beside Viṣṇu (8, 3°. 12°) and thereby increases his strength (8, 3°: 10, 113°). Indra drank the Soma pressed by Viṣṇu in three cups (2, 22° cp. 6, 17°), which recall Viṣṇu's three footsteps filled with honey (1, 154°). Viṣṇu also cooks for Indra 100 buffaloes (6, 17°) or 100 buffaloes and a brew of milk (8, 66° cp. 1, 61°). Along with Mitra, Varuṇa, and the Maruts, Viṣṇu celebrates Indra with songs (8, 15°).

Indra's constant attendants in the Vṛtra-fight, the Maruts, are also drawn into association with Viṣṇu. When Viṣṇu favoured the exhillierating Soma, the Maruts like birds sat down on their beloved altar (1, 85°)18. The Maruts are invoked at the offering of the swift Viṣṇu (2, 34°1 cp. 7, 40°5). They are the bountiful ones of the swift Viṣṇu (8, 20°). The Maruts supported Indra, while Pūṣāṇ Viṣṇu cooked 100 buffaloes for him (6, 17°). Viṣṇu is the ordainer associated with the Maruts (māruta), whose will Varuṇa and the Åsvins follow (1, 156°). Throughout one hymn (5, 87, especially verses 4-5) he is associated with the Maruts, with whom, when he starts, he speeds along16.

Among stray references to Viṣṇu in the RV. may be mentioned one (7, 1006°) in which different forms of Viṣṇu are spoken of: 'Do not conceal from us this form, since thou didst assume another form in battle'. He is further said to be a protector of embryos (7, 36°9) and is invoked along with other deities to promote conception (10, 184°). In the third verse of the Khila after 10, 184°, Viṣṇu is, according to one reading, called upon to place in the womb a male child with a most beautiful form, or, according to another, a male child with Viṣṇu's most beautiful form is prayed for18.

Other traits of Viṣṇu are applicable to the gods in general. He is beneficent (1, 156°), is innocuous and bountiful (8, 25°19), liberal (7, 40°5), a guardian (3, 55°19), who is undeceivable (1, 22°), and an innnoxious and generous deliverer (1, 155°). He alone sustains the threefold (world), heaven and earth, and all beings (1, 154°). He fastened the world all about with pegs (7, 99°3). He is an ordainer (1, 156°).

In the Brāhmaṇas Viṣṇu is conceived as taking his three steps in earth, air, and heaven (SB. 1, 9, 3°; TB. 3, 1, 2°). These three strides are imitated by the sacrificer, who takes three Viṣṇu strides beginning with earth and ending with heaven19, for that is the goal, the safe refuge, which is the sun (SB. 1, 9, 3°10°. 17°). The three steps of the Amāsappans taken from earth to the sphere of the sun, are similarly imitated in the ritual of the Avesta40. A special feature of the Brāhmaṇas is the constant identification of Viṣṇu with the sacrifice.

Two myths connected with Viṣṇu, the source of which can be traced to the RV., are further developed in the Brāhmaṇas. Viṣṇu in alliance with Indra is in the RV. described as vanquishing demons. In the Brāhmaṇas the gods and demons commonly appear as two hostile hosts, the former not, as in the RV., uniformly victorious, but often worsted. They therefore have
recourse to artifice, in order to recover the supremacy. In the AB. (6, i5) it is related that Indra and Viṣṇu, engaged in conflict with the Asuras, agreed with the latter that as much as Viṣṇu could stride over in three steps should belong to the two deities. Viṣṇu accordingly strode over these worlds, the Vedas, and speech. The SB. (1, 2, 5) tells how the Asuras having overcome the gods began dividing the earth. The gods placing Viṣṇu, the sacrifice, at their head, came and asked for a share in the earth. The Asuras agreed to give up as much as Viṣṇu, who was a dwarf, could lie on. Then the gods by sacrificing with Viṣṇu, who was equal in size to sacrifice, gained the whole earth. The three steps are not mentioned here, but in another passage (SB. 1, 9, 3), Viṣṇu is said to have acquired for the gods the all-pervading power which they now possess, by striding through the three worlds. It is further stated in TS. 2, 1, 3, that Viṣṇu, by assuming the form of a dwarf whom he had seen, conquered the three worlds (cp. TB. 1, 6, 15). The introduction of the dwarf as a disguise of Viṣṇu is naturally to be accounted for as a stratagem to avert the suspicion of the Asuras\(^2\). This Brāhmaṇa story forms the transition to the myth of Viṣṇu’s Dwarf Incarnation in post-Vedic literature\(^2\).

Another myth of the Brāhmaṇaṇas has its origin in two passages of the RV. (1, 617; 8, 66\(^1\)). Their purport is that Viṣṇu having drunk soma and being urged by Indra, carried off 100 buffaloes and a brew of milk belonging to the boar (== Vṛtra), while Indra shooting across the (cloud) mountain, slew the fierce (emusam) boar. This myth is in the TS. (6, 2, 4\(^2\)-3) developed as follows. A boar, the plunderer of wealth, kept the goods of the Asuras on the other side of seven hills. Indra plucking up a bunch of kuśa grass and piercing through these hills, slew the boar. Viṣṇu, the sacrifice, carried the boar off as a sacrifice for the gods. So the gods obtained the goods of the Asuras. In the corresponding passage of the Kāṭhaka (IS. XI. p. 161) the boar is called Emūṣa. The same story with slight variations is told in the Caraka Brāhmaṇa (quoted by Śāyana on RV. 8, 66\(^1\)). This boar appears in a cosmogonic character in the SB. (14, 1, 2\(^1\)) where under the name of Emūṣa he is stated to have raised up the earth from the waters. In the TS. (7, 1, 5\(^1\)) this cosmogonic boar, which raised the earth from the primeval waters, is described as a form of Prajāpati. This modification of the myth is further expanded in the TB. (1, 1, 3\(^1\). In the post-Vedic mythology of the Rāmāyana and the Purāṇas, the boar which raises the earth, has become one of the Avatārs of Viṣṇu.

The germ of two other Avatārs of Viṣṇu are to be found in the Brāhmaṇaṇas, but not as yet connected with Viṣṇu. The fish which in the SB. (1, 8, 1\(^1\)) delivers Manu from the flood, appears in the Mahābhārata as a form of Prajāpati, becoming in the Purāṇas an incarnation of Viṣṇu. In the SB. (7, 5, 1\(^3\), cp. TA. 1, 23\(^3\)) Prajāpati about to create offspring becomes a tortoise moving in the primeval waters. In the Purāṇas this tortoise is an Avatār of Viṣṇu, who assumes this form to recover various objects lost in the deluge\(^3\).

The SB. (14, 1, 1) tells a myth of how Viṣṇu, the sacrifice, by first comprehending the issue of the sacrifice, became the most eminent among the gods, and how his head, by his bow starting asunder, was cut off and became the sun (aḍītya). To this story the TA. (5, 1, 1—7) adds the trait that the Aśvins as physicians replaced the head of the sacrifice and that the gods now able to offer it in its complete form conquered heaven (cp. PB. 7, 5\(^6\)).

In the AB. (1, 1) Viṣṇu as the locally highest of the gods is contrasted
with Agni the lowest, all the other deities being placed between them. The same Brāhmāṇa (1, 30) in quoting RV. 1, 1564, where 'Viṣṇu accompanied by his friend opens the stall', states that Viṣṇu is the doorkeeper of the gods.


Whitney, JAOS. 3. 325; OTS. 4, 63—98. 121—9. 298; WEBER, IST. 2. 226 f.; Omina und Portenta 338; BRV. 2, 414—8; ORV. 227—30; Hopkins, PAOS. 1894, CXLVI f.; HRI. 56 f.

§ 18. Vivasvat.—Vivasvat is not celebrated in any single hymn of the RV., but his name occurs there about thirty times, generally as Vivāsvat, five times also as Vivasvat. He is the father of the Āśvins (10, 174) and of Yama (10, 145. 174). As in post-Vedic literature he is already also in the Vedas the father of Manu (§ 50), the ancestor of the human race, who is once (Vāl. 41) called Vivasvat (= Vajyasvata, p. 12) and receives the patronymic Vaivasvata in the AV. and the SB. Men are also directly stated to be the progeny of Vivśvān Ādityāh (TS. 6, 5, 62; SB. 3, 1, 3). The gods are also once spoken of as the offspring (janīma) of Vivasvat (10, 63). Vivasvat's wife is Saranyū, daughter of Vāṣṭrī (10, 174). It was to Vivasvat as well as to Mātārisvān that Agni was first manifested (1, 31). Vivasvat's messenger is once (6, 84) stated to be Mātārisvān, but is otherwise Agni (1, 589; 4, 74; 8, 395; 10, 215). Agni is once said to be produced from his parents (the fire-sticks) as the sage of Vivasvat (5, 11). The seat (sadana) of Vivasvat is mentioned five times. The gods (10, 127) and Indra delight in it (3, 513) and there singers extol the greatness of Indra (1, 537; 3, 345) or of the waters (10, 75). Perhaps the same notion is referred to when a new hymn is said (1, 139) to be placed in Vivasvat as a centre (nabhā).

Indra is connected with Vivasvat in several passages of the RV. He rejoices in the prayer of Vivasvat (8, 69) and placed his treasure besides Vivasvat (2, 138). With the ten (fingers) of Vivasvat Indra pours out the pail from heaven (8, 618, cp. 5, 53). Indra being so closely associated with the abode of Vivasvat, Soma is likely to be there. And indeed Soma is in the ninth book brought into intimate relation to Vivasvat. Soma dwells with Vivasvat (9, 261) and is cleansed by the daughters (= fingers) of Vivasvat (9, 14). The prayers of Vivasvat urge the tawny Soma to flow (9, 95). The seven sisters (= waters) urge the wise Soma on the course of Vivasvat (9, 666). The streams of Soma flow through the sieve having obtained (the blessing) of Vivasvat and producing the blessing (bhaga) of dawn (9, 109). The Āśvins who dwell with Vivasvat are besought to come to the offering (1, 46). At the yoking of the Āśvins' car the daughter of the sky is born and the two bright days (probably day and night) of Vivasvat (10, 39; cp. SB. 10, 5, 24). Vivasvat is also mentioned along with Varuṇa and the gods as an object of worship (10, 65). In one passage Vivasvat shows a hostile trait, when the worshippers of the Ādityas pray that the missile, the well-wrought arrow
of Vivasvat, may not slay them before old age 2 (8, 56 ; cp. AV. 19, 9 ). On
the other hand, Vivasvat preserves from Yama (AV. 18, 39 ).

The word vivasvat occurs a few times as an adjective meaning ‘brilliant’
in connexion with Agni and Uśas. Agni is said to have produced the children of
men and by brilliant sheen heaven and the waters (1, 96 ). Agni is the
wise, boundless, brilliant sage who shines at the beginning of dawn (7, 9 ).
Agni is besought to bring the brilliant gift of dawn (1, 44 ), and men desire
to see the shining face of brilliant dawn (3, 30 13 ). The etymological meaning
‘shining forth’ (vi + v̄ vas) is peculiarly appropriate in relation to Uśas,
whose name is derived from the same root and in connexion with whom the
words vius and viuṣṭi, ‘shining forth, dawning’ are nearly always used.

The derivation is given in the SB. where it is said that Aditya Vivasvat illumines
(vi-vaste) night and day (SB. 10, 5, 2 4 ).

In the YV. (VS. 8, 5; MS. 1, 6 13 ) and the Brāhmaṇas Vivasvat is called
Aditya and in the post-Vedic literature is a common name of the sun.

He goes back to the Indo-Iranian period, being identical with Vīvaṇhvant
(the father of Yima), who is described as the first man that prepared Haoma,
Athwya being the second, and Thritha the third (Yasna, 9, 10). The first and
third of these are found connected in the RV. also (Vāl. 4 1 ), where Indra
is said to have drunk Soma beside Manu Vivasvat and Trīta.

As a mythological figure Vivasvat seems to have faded by the time of
the RV. like Trīta 3 . Considering the etymology, the connexion with the
Ašvins, Agni, and Soma, the fact that his seat is the place of sacrifice 4 , the
most probable interpretation of Vivasvat seems to be that he originally
represented the rising sun 5 . Most scholars 6 explain him simply as the sun.
Some take him to be the god of the bright sky 7 or the heaven of the sun 8 . BERGaigne (1, 88) thinks that Agni alone, of whom the sun is a form,
can be responsible for the character of a sacrificer which is prominent in
Vivasvat. Oldenberg 9 comparing the Avestan Vīvaṇhvant, the first mortal
that prepared Haoma, believes that the reasons for considering Vivasvat a
god of light, are insufficient and that he represents simply the first sacrificer,
the ancestor of the human race.

1 Cp. LRV. 4, 356. — 2 SVL. 148. — 3 Roth, ZDMG. 4, 424. — 4 PW., BRV.
1, 87; ORV. 275; FVS. 1, 242 (chapel of V ā); Fov, KZ. 34, 228. — 5 The later view of
Roth, PW. (Morgensonne’); cp. ZDMG. 4, 425 (‘das Licht der Himmelshöhe’).
6 A. Kuhn, Sp. ÄP. 248 ff., HVM. 1, 488, HrK. 128, 130, and others. — 7 LRV. 3, 333;
5, 392; EIRI, Yama, 19, 24. — 8 BRL. 9—10. — 9 ORV. 122, ZDMG. 49, 173, SBE.
45, 392. Cp. also Roth, ZDMG. 4, 432; BRV. 1, 86–8; HVM. 1, 474–88; Bloom-
field, JAOS. 15, 176–7.

§ 19. Adityas.—The group of gods called Adityas is celebrated in six
whole hymns and in parts of two others in the RV. It is rather indefinite
both as to the names of the gods it includes and as to their number.
Not more than six are anywhere enumerated and that only once: Mitra, Aryaman,
Bhaga, Varuṇa, Dakṣu, Aṃśa (2, 27 1). In the last books of the RV. the
number is once (9, 114 1) stated to be seven and once (10, 75 8 ) eight, Aditi
at first presenting only seven to the gods and bringing the eighth, Mārtanda 1,
afterwards (ibid. 9). The names of the Adityas are not specified in either of
these passages. The AV. states that Aditi had eight sons (8, 9 7), and the
TB. (1, 1, 9 1) mentions these eight by name as Mitra, Varuṇa, Aryaman,
Aṃśa, Bhaga, Dhārtr, Indra, Vivasvat (the first five occur in RV. 2, 27 1),
and the same list is quoted by Sāyaṇa (on RV. 2, 27 1) as found in another
passage of the Taittirīya branch of the Veda. The SB. in one passage speaks
of the Adityas as having become eight by the addition of Mārtanda, while
in two others (6, 1, 2 8 ; 11, 6, 3 9 ) they are said to be twelve in number and
In 605. If They their hearts the Visvedeva. The fact that Mitra, Aditya, Varuna, being the setting sun. In the AV. (13, 23–37) the sun is called the son of Aditi, the sun and moon Adityas (8, 215), and Visvù is invoked in an enumeration containing gods who in the RV. are Adityas: Varuna, Mitra, Visvù, Bhaga, Anuśa besides Vivasvat (11, 62). The mother of the Adityas is here once (9, 14) said to be not Aditi but the golden-hued Madhukāśa, daughter of the Vasus.

Indra is, however, in the RV. once coupled in the dual as an Aditya with Varuna the chief of the Adityas (7, 84), and in Val. 47 he is directly invoked as the fourth Aditya. In MS. 2, 112 Indra is a son of Aditi, but in the SB. (11, 6, 39) he is distinguished from the 12 Adityas. When one god alone is mentioned as an Aditya, it is generally Varuna, their chief; but in the hymn in which Mitra is celebrated alone (3, 59), that deity is called an Aditya, as well as Sūrya. When two are mentioned, they are Varuna and Mitra, once Varuna and Indra; when three, Varuna, Mitra, and Aryaman; when five, which is only once the case, the same three together with Savitr and Bhaga. Dakśa occurs only in the enumeration of six mentioned above. The Adityas are often invoked as a group, the names of Mitra and Varuna being generally mentioned at the same time. They also appear frequently along with other groups (§ 45) Vasus, Rudras, Maruts, Angirases, Bhūs, Viśvedeva. The term Aditya seems not infrequently to be used in a wider sense, as an equivalent for the gods generally. Their nature as a class in fact resembles that of the gods in general, not being specifically characterized like that of their two chiefs, Mitra and Varuna. In the aggregate sense they are the gods of celestial light, without representing any particular manifestation of that light, such as sun, moon, and stars, or dawn. The hypothesis of Oldenberg that the Adityas originally represented sun, moon, and the five planets, is based on their abstract nature and names (such as Bhaga, Anuśa, Dakśa) and the supposition that their characteristic number is seven, which is also the number of the Iranian Amesəspentas. It is here to be noted that the two groups have not a single name in common, even Mithra not being an Amesəspenta; that the belief in the Adityas being seven in number is not distinctly characteristic and old; and that though the identity of the Adityas and Amesəspentas has been generally accepted since Roth's essay, it is rejected by some distinguished Avestan scholars.

In some of the hymns of the RV. in which the Adityas are celebrated (especially in 2, 27), only the three most frequently mentioned together, Mitra, Varuna, and Aryaman, seem to be meant. What is distant is near to them; they support all that moves and is stationary, as gods who protect the universe (2, 273–4). They see what is good and evil in men's hearts and distinguish the honest man from the deceitful (2, 273; 8, 1815). They are haters of falsehood and punish sin (2, 274; 7, 52; 608. 6613). They are besought to forgive sin (2, 2714. 295), to avert its consequences or to
The epithets which describe them are: bright (śuci), golden (hiranyayya), many-eyed (bhūryakṣa), unwinking (animita), sleepless (aswapnaj), far-observing (ārghadhit). They are kings, mighty (kṣatriya), vast (uru), deep (gabhira), inviolable (ariṣṭa), having fixed ordinances (dērtavrata), blameless (anavadya), sinless (avṛjina), pure (dērāpañā), holy (ṛtvān).

The name is clearly a metronymic formation from that of their mother Aditi, with whom they are naturally often invoked. This is also one of the three derivations given by Yāska (Nir. 2, 13, cp. TA. 1, 14). The greater gods belonging to the group have already been dealt with separately, but the lesser Adityas having hardly any individuality may best be described here in succession.

Aryaman though mentioned about 100 times in the RV. is so destitute of individual characteristics, that in the Naighanṭuka he is passed over in the list of gods. Except in two passages, he is always mentioned with other deities, in the great majority of cases with Mitra and Varuṇa. In less than a dozen passages the word has only the appellative senses of ‘comrade’ and ‘groomsman’, which are occasionally also connected with the god. Thus Agni is once addressed with the words: ‘Thou art Aryaman when (the wooer) of maidens’ (5, 3). The derivative adjective aryamya, ‘relating to a comrade’, once occurs as a parallel to mitrya, ‘relating to a friend’ (5, 85). Then the conception of Aryaman seems to have differed but little from that of the greater Aditya Mitra, ‘the Friend’. The name goes back to the Indo-Iranian period, as it occurs in the Avesta.

One hymn of the RV. (7, 41) is devoted chiefly to the praise of Bhaga, though some other deities are invoked in it as well; and the name of the god occurs over sixty times. The word means ‘dispenser, giver’ and appears to be used in this sense more than a score of times attributively, in several cases with the name of Savitr. The god is also regularly conceived in the Vedic hymns as a distributor of wealth, comparisons with Bhaga being generally intended to express glorification of Indra’s and Agni’s bounty. The word bhaga also occurs about twenty times in the RV. with the sense of ‘bounty, wealth, fortune’, and the ambiguity is sometimes played upon. Thus in one passage (7, 42) where Bhaga is called the distributor (vidharta), it is stated that men say of the god, ‘May I share in Bhaga’ (bhagam bhaksi). In another verse (5, 46) in which he is termed the ‘dispenser’ (vidhaktā, derived from the same root bhaj), he is invoked to be full of bounty (bhagavân) to his worshippers.

Dawn is Bhaga’s sister (1, 123). Bhaga’s eye is adorned with rays (1, 136), and hymns rise up to Viṣṇu as on Bhaga’s path (3, 54). Yāska describes Bhaga as presiding over the forenoon (Nir. 12, 13). The Iranian form of the name is bagha, ‘god’, which occurs as an epithet of Ahura Mazda. The word is even Indo-European, since it occurs in Old Church Slavonic as bogi in the sense of ‘god’. There is no reason to suppose that it designated any individual god in the Indo-European period, for it cannot have attained a more specialized sense than ‘bountiful god’, if indeed it meant more than merely ‘bountiful giver’.

The word Aṁsa, which occurs less than a dozen times in the RV., is
almost synonymous with bhaga, expressing both the concrete sense of 'share, portion' and that of 'apportioner'. It is found but three times as the name of a god, only one of these passages stating anything about him besides his name. Agni is here said to be Aṃśa, a bountiful (bhājayu) god at the feast (2, 1).  

Dakṣa is mentioned hardly more than half a dozen times in the RV. as the name of a god. The word occurs more frequently as an adjective meaning 'dexterous, strong, clever, intelligent', applied to Agni (3, 14) and Soma (9, 61 &c.), or as a substantive in the sense of 'dexterity, strength, cleverness, understanding'. The name of the personification therefore appears to mean the 'dexterous' or 'clever' god. Excepting the verse (2, 27) which enumerates the six Adityas, he is mentioned only in the first and tenth books. In one passage (1, 89) he is referred to with other Adityas, and in another (10, 64) with Mitra, Varuṇa, and Aryaman, Aditi also being spoken of in connexion with his birth. In a cosmogonic hymn (10, 72) Dakṣa is said to have sprung from Aditi, when it is immediately added that Aditi sprang from him and is his daughter, the gods being born afterwards. In another verse (10, 57) it is stated that the existent and non-existent were in the womb of Aditi, in the birthplace of Dakṣa. Thus the last two passages seem to regard Aditi and Dakṣa as universal parents. The paradox of children producing their own parents has been shown (p. 12) to be not unfamiliar to the poets of the RV. The manner in which it came to be applied in this particular case seems to be as follows. The Adityas are spoken of as 'gods who have intelligence for their father' (6, 50), the epithet (dakṣapītara) being also applied to Mitra-Varuṇa, who in the same verse (7, 66) are called 'very intelligent' (śudakṣa). The expression is made clearer by another passage (8, 25), where Mitra-Varuṇa are termed 'sons of intelligence' (śaṇtā daksasya) as well as 'children of great might' (napāta śavasō mahāḥ). The juxtaposition of the latter epithets shows that dakṣa is here not a personification but the abstract word used as in Agni's epithets 'father of skill' (daksasya pitṛ: 3, 27) or 'son of strength' (§§ 8, 35). This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that ordinary human sacrificers are called daksāpītaraḥ, 'having skill for their father' (8, 52). Such expressions probably brought about the personification of Dakṣa as the father of the Adityas and his association with Aditi. In the TS. the gods in general are called daksāpītaraḥ, and in the SB. (2, 4) Dakṣa is identified with the creator Prajāpāti.


§ 20. Uṣas.—Uṣas, goddess of Dawn, is celebrated in about 20 hymns of the RV. and mentioned more than 300 times. Owing to the identity of name, the personification is but slight, the physical phenomenon of dawn never being absent from the poet's mind, when the goddess is addressed. Uṣas is the most graceful creation of Vedic poetry and there is no more charming figure in the descriptive religious lyrics of any other literature. The brightness of her form has not been obscured by priestly speculation nor has the imagery as a rule been marred by references to the sacrifice. Arraying
herself in gay attire, like a dancer, she displays her bosom (1, 924, cp. 6, 644). Like a maiden decked by her mother she shows her form (1, 1231). Clothed in light the maiden appears in the east, and unveils her charms (1, 124b–4). Effulgent in peerless beauty she withholds her light from neither small nor great (ib. 6). Rising resplendent as from a bath, showing her charms she comes with light, driving away the darkness (5, 805–6). She is young, being born again and again, though ancient; shining with an uniform hue, she wastes away the life of mortals (1, 9210). As she has shone in former days, so she shines now and will shine in future, never aging, immortal (1, 11313–15). The maiden coming again awakes before all the world (1, 1234). Ever shortening the ages of men, she shines forth, the last of the dawn's that have always gone, the first of those to come (1, 1244). Like a wheel she revolves ever anew (3, 614). She awakens creatures that have feet and makes the birds to fly up: she is the breath and life of everything (1, 485–10, 493). She awakens every living being to motion (1, 923; 7, 774). The Dawns waken the sleeping and urge the living, the two-footed and the four-footed, to motion (4, 514). When Ușas shines forth, the birds fly up from their nests, and men seek nourishment (1, 124b). She reveals the paths of men, wakening the five tribes (7, 794). She manifests all beings and bestows new life (7, 805–6). She drives away evil dreams to Trita Aptya (8, 4714–15). She removes the black robe of night (1, 1134). She dispels the darkness (6, 644, 654). She wards off evil spirits and the hated darkness (7, 754). She discloses the treasures concealed by darkness and distributes them bountifully (1, 1234–6). She illuminates the ends of the sky when she awakes (1, 9211). She opens the gates of heaven (1, 4815, 1134). She opens the doors of darkness as the cows their stall (1, 924). Her radiant beams appear like herds of cattle (4, 524–6). She is visible afar, spreading out cattle (pastien) as it were (1, 9215). The ruddy beams fly up, the ruddy cows yoke themselves, the ruddy dawns weave their web (of light) as of old (ib. 6). Thus Ușas comes to be called 'mother of kind' (4, 524–6; 7, 774).

Day by day appearing at the appointed place, she never infringes the ordinance of order and of the gods (1, 9212, 1238, 1242; 7, 765); she goes straight along the path of order, knowing the way she never loses her direction (5, 804). She renders good service to the gods by causing all worshippers to awake and the sacrificial fires to be kindled (1, 1134). She is besought to arouse only the devout and liberal worshipper, leaving the ungodly niggard to sleep on (1, 12410; 4, 514). Worshippers are however sometimes spoken of as wakening her instead of being awakened by her (4, 524–6 &c.), and the Vasiṣṭhas claim to have first wakened her with their hymns (7, 804). She is once asked not to delay, that the sun may not scorch her as a thief or an enemy (5, 794). She is besought to bring the gods to drink Soma (1, 4814). Hence probably, the gods are often described as 'waking with Ușas' (1, 149 &c.).

Ușas is borne on a car which is shining (7, 784), brilliant (1, 237), bright (3, 614), well-adorned (1, 494), all-adorning (7, 756), massive (1, 4816 &c.), and spontaneously-yoked (7, 784). She is also said to arrive on a hundred chariots (1, 484). She is drawn by steeds which are ruddy (7, 756 &c.), easily guided (3, 614), regularly-yoked (4, 514), or is said to be resplendent with steeds (5, 791–10). She is also described as being drawn by ruddy kite or bulls (go: 1, 924, 12411; 5, 804). Both the horses and the cows probably represent the ruddy rays of morning light; but the cows are generally explained as the red morning clouds. The distance the dawns traverse in a day is 30 yojanas (1, 1239).
As is to be expected, Uṣas is closely associated with the sun. She has opened paths for Sūrya to travel (1, 113\textsuperscript{46}). She brings the eye of the gods and leads on the beautiful white horse (7, 77\textsuperscript{3}). She shines with the light of the sun (1, 113\textsuperscript{9}), with the light of her lover (1, 92\textsuperscript{14}). Sāvitr shines after the path of Uṣas (5, 81\textsuperscript{2}). Sūrya follows her as a young man a maiden (1, 115\textsuperscript{8}). She meets the god who desires her (1, 123\textsuperscript{10}). She is the wife of Sūrya (7, 75\textsuperscript{5}); the Dawns are the wives of the Sun (4, 5\textsuperscript{9}). Thus as followed in space by the sun, she is conceived as his wife or mistress. But as preceding the sun in time she is occasionally thought of as his mother (cp. p. 35). She has generated Sūrya, sacrifice, Agni (7, 78\textsuperscript{3}). She has been produced (prasūtā) for the production (sarvāya) of Sāvitr, and arrives with a bright child (1, 113\textsuperscript{12}). Uṣas is the sister of the Āditya Bhaga (1, 123\textsuperscript{5}; cp. p. 45) and the kinswoman (jāmi) of Varuṇa (1, 123\textsuperscript{5}). She is also the sister (1, 113\textsuperscript{2-3}; 10, 127\textsuperscript{3}) or the elder sister (1, 124\textsuperscript{8}) of Night; and the names of Dawn and Night are often conjoined as a dual compound (uṣasā-naktā or naktoṣāsā). Uṣas is born in the sky (7, 75\textsuperscript{5}); and the place of her birth suggests the relationship most frequently mentioned in the RV.: she is constantly called the daughter of heaven (1, 30\textsuperscript{22} &c.)\textsuperscript{4}. She is once also spoken of as the beloved (priya) of heaven (1, 46\textsuperscript{4}).

The sacrificial fire being regularly kindled at dawn, Agni is naturally often associated with Uṣas in this connexion, sometimes not without a side-glimpse at the sun, the manifestation of Agni which appears simultaneously with the kindling of the sacrificial fire (1, 124\textsuperscript{1-11} &c.)\textsuperscript{5}. Agni appears with or before the Dawn. Uṣas causes Agni to be kindled (1, 113\textsuperscript{9}). He is thus like the sun sometimes called her lover (1, 69\textsuperscript{1}; 7, 10\textsuperscript{1}, cp. 10, 3\textsuperscript{3}). He goes to meet the shining Uṣas as she comes, asking her for fair riches (3, 61\textsuperscript{4}). Uṣas is naturally also often connected with the twin gods of the early morning, the Aśvins (1, 44\textsuperscript{2} &c.). They accompany her (1, 183\textsuperscript{2}) and she is their friend (4, 52\textsuperscript{2-3}). She is invoked to arouse them (8, 9\textsuperscript{17}), and her hymn is said to have awakened them (3, 58\textsuperscript{3}). When the Aśvins' car is yoked, the daughter of the sky is born (10, 39\textsuperscript{12}). Uṣas is once associated with the moon, which being born ever anew goes before the dawns as harbinger of day (10, 85\textsuperscript{9}).

Various gods are described as having produced or discovered the dawns. Indra who is characteristically a winner of light, is said to have generated or lighted up Uṣas (2, 12\textsuperscript{7} &c.). But he is sometimes also hostile to her, being described as shattering her wain (§ 22). Soma made the dawns bright at their birth (6, 39\textsuperscript{1}) and constituted them the wives of a good husband (6, 44\textsuperscript{2}), as Agni does (7, 6\textsuperscript{5}). Brhaspati discovered the Dawn, the sky (svar), and Agni, repelling the darkness with light (10, 68\textsuperscript{9}). The ancient Fathers, companions of the gods, by efficacious hymns discovered the hidden light and generated Uṣas (7, 76\textsuperscript{4}).

The goddess is often implored to dawn on the worshippers or bring to him wealth and children, to bestow protection and long life (1, 30\textsuperscript{22}, 48\textsuperscript{1} &c.), to confer renown and glory on all the liberal benefactors of the poet (5, 79\textsuperscript{6}, cp. 1, 48\textsuperscript{4}). Her adorers ask from her riches and desire to be to her as sons to a mother (7, 81\textsuperscript{4}). The soul of the dead man goes to the sun and to Uṣas (10, 58\textsuperscript{8}), and by the ruddy ones in whose lap the Fathers are said to be seated, the Dawns are doubtless meant (10, 15\textsuperscript{7}).

Besides the sixteen enumerated in the Naighantuka (1, 8) Uṣas has many other epithets. She is resplendent, shining, bright, white, ruddy, golden-hued, of brilliant bounty, born in law, most Indra-like, divine, immortal\textsuperscript{9}. She is characteristically bountiful (maghonī: ZDMG. 50, 440).
The name of Uṣas is derived from the root vis to shine and is radically cognate to Aurora and ‘Hóς’ (p. 87).

1 GVS. 1, 265—6. — 2 Cp. Kühn, Entwicklungsstufen, 131. — 3 See the passages quoted above, where the rays of dawn are compared with cattle or cows. — 4 Ost. 5, 190; cp. above p. 21. — 5 Ibid. 191. — 6 Ibid. 193—4. — 7 Sonne, KZ. 10, 416. Whitting, JAOS. 3, 321—2; OST. 5, 181—98; MM., LSL. 2, 583—4; GKR. 35—6; KRV. 52—4; BRV. 1, 241—50; Brandes, Uṣas (Copenhagen 1879, pp. 123).

§ 21. Aśvins.—Next to Indra, Agni, and Soma, the twin deities named the Aśvins are the most prominent in the RV. judged by the frequency with which they are invoked. They are celebrated in more than fifty entire hymns and in parts of several others, while their name occurs more than 460 times. Though they hold a distinct position among the deities of light and their appellation is Indian, their connexion with any definite phenomenon of light is so obscure, that their original nature has been a puzzle to Vedic interpreters from the earliest times. This obscurity makes it probable that the origin of these gods is to be sought in a pre-Vedic period. They are twins (3, 39*; 10, 17*) and inseparable. The sole purpose of one hymn (2, 39) is to compare them with different twin objects such as eyes, hands, feet, wings, or with animals and birds going in pairs, such as dogs and goats or swans and eagles (cp. 5, 78*—3; 8, 357*—6; 10, 106*—10). There are, however, a few passages which may perhaps point to their originally having been separate. Thus they are spoken of as born separately (nāṇa: 5, 73*) and as born here and there (ihēka), one being called a victorious prince, and the other the son of heaven (1, 181*). Yāśaka also quotes a passage stating that ‘one is called the son of night, the other the son of dawn’ (Nir. 12, 2). The RV., moreover, in another passage (4, 3*) mentions alone ‘the encompassing Nāsatya’, a frequent epithet otherwise only designating both Aśvins in the dual.

The Aśvins are young (7, 67*), the TS. (7, 2, 7*) even describing them as the youngest of the gods. They are at the same time ancient (7, 62*). They are bright (7, 68*), lords of lustre (8, 22*4; 10, 93*), of golden brilliancy (8, 8*), and honey-hued (8, 26*6). They possess many forms (1, 119*). They are beautiful (6, 65*5, 63*) and wear lotus-garlands (10, 184*2; AV. 3, 22*4; SB. 4, 1, 5*46). They are agile (6, 63*), fleet as thought (8, 22*6), or as an eagle (5, 78*4). They are strong (10, 24*), very mighty (6, 62*), and are several times called ‘red’ (rudrā, 5, 75*4 &c.). They possess profound wisdom (8, 8*) and occult power (6, 63*5; 10, 93*7). The two most distinctive and frequent epithets of the Aśvins are dasra, ‘wondrous’, which is almost entirely limited to them, and nāsatya, which is generally explained to mean ‘not untrue’ (na-asatya), but other etymologies, such as ‘the savers’ have been proposed. The latter word occurs as the name of a demon in the Avestā, which, however, sheds no further light on it. These two epithets in later times became the separate proper names of the Aśvins. The attribute rudravarātani ‘having a red path’ is peculiar to them, and they are the only gods called ‘golden-pathed’ (hiranyavarātani), an epithet otherwise only used (twice) of rivers.

Of all the gods the Aśvins are most closely connected with honey (madhu), with which they are mentioned in many passages. They have a skin filled with honey, and the birds which draw them abound in it (4, 45*4). They poured out 100 jars of honey (1, 117*). Their honey-goad (1, 122*3, 157*) with which they bestrew the sacrifice and the worshipper, is peculiar to them. Only the car of the Aśvins is described as honey-hued (madhuvarna) or ‘honey-bearing’ (madhu-vāhana). They only are said to be fond
of honey (mādhūva, mādhavī) or drinkers of it (mādhupā). The priest to whom they are invited to come is called honey-handed (10, 413). They give honey to the bee (1, 1122 cp. 10, 406) and are compared with bees (10, 1062). They are, however, like other gods, fond of Soma (3, 587-9 &c.) and are invited to drink it with Usas and Sūrya (8, 355). Hillebrandt (VM I, 241), however, finds traces showing that the Āsvins were at first excluded from the circle of the Soma-worshipped gods.

The car of the Āsvins is sun-like (8, 83) or golden (4, 445-5), and all its parts, such as wheels, axle, fellies, reins are golden (1, 180; 8, 529, 229). It has a thousand rays (1, 1109) or ornaments (8, 811-14). It is peculiar in construction, being threefold, having three wheels, three fellies, and some other parts triple (1, 1183-9 &c.). It moves lightly (8, 98), is swifter than thought (1, 1172 &c.) or than the twinkling of an eye (8, 623). It was fashioned by the Rbhus (10, 3912). The Āsvins’ car is the only one which is three-wheeled. One of its wheels is said to have been lost when the Āsvins came to the wedding of Sūryā (10, 851-2; cp. § 37).

The Āsvins’ name implies only the possession of horses, there being no evidence to show that they are so called because they ride on horses. Their car is drawn by horses (1, 1172 &c.), more commonly by birds (5, 636 &c. or patatrin, 10, 1439), swans (4, 454), eagles (1, 1184), bird steeds (6, 637) or eagle steeds (8, 57). It is in some cases described as drawn by a buffalo (kakuha) or buffaloes (5, 731; 1, 1843 &c.) or by a single ass (rāsa-bha: 1, 349; 1162; 8, 741). In the AB. (4, 7-9) the Āsvins are said at the marriage of Soma and Sūryā to have won a race in a car drawn by asses (cp. RV. I, 1167 and Śāyaṇa’s comm.). Their car touches the ends of heaven and extends over the five countries (7, 634-5). It moves round heaven (1, 18010). It traverses heaven and earth in a single day (3, 585), as the car of the sun (1, 1153) and that of Usas (4, 515) are also said to do. It goes round the sun in the distance (1, 11213). Frequent mention is also made of their course (vartis), a word which with one exception is applicable to them only. The word parijman, ‘going round’ is several times connected with the Āsvins or their car, as it is also with Vāta, Agni, and Sūrya.

The locality of the Āsvins is variously described. They come from afar (8, 539), from heaven (8, 87), heaven and earth (1, 449), from heaven and air (8, 849), from air (8, 831), earth, heaven, and ocean (8, 101), from the air, from far and near (5, 731). They abide in the sea of heaven (8, 2617), in the floods of heaven, plants, houses, the mountain top (7, 703). They come from behind, before, below, above (7, 723). Sometimes their locality is inquired about as if unknown 12 (5, 748; 5, 639; 8, 622). They are once (8, 822) said to have three places (padāni), possibly because invoked three times a day.

The time of their appearance is often said to be the early dawn 13 when ‘darkness still stands among the ruddy cows’ (10, 614) and they yoke their car to descend to earth and receive the offerings of worshippers (1, 22 &c.). Usas awakes them (8, 917). They follow after Usas in their car (8, 529). At the yoking of their car Usas is born (10, 3912). Thus their relative time seems to have been between dawn and sunrise. But Savitr is once said to set their car in motion before the dawn (1, 34). Occasionally the appearance of the Āsvins 14, the kindling of the sacrificial fire, the break of dawn, and sunrise seem to be spoken of as simultaneous (1, 1579; 7, 728). The Āsvins are invited to come to the offering not only at their natural time, but also in the evening (8, 2214) or at morning, noon, and sunset (5, 763). The appearance of the Āsvins at the three daily sacrifices may have been the
starting-point of the continual play on the word ‘three’ in the whole of a hymn devoted to their praise (1, 34). As deities of the morning, the Aśvins dispel darkness (3, 39) and are sometimes said to chase away evil spirits (7, 73; 8, 35). In the AB. (2, 15), the Aśvins as well as Uṣas and Agni are stated to be gods of dawn; and in the Vedic ritual they are connected with sunrise. In the SB. (5, 5, 4) the Aśvins are described as red-white in colour and therefore a red-white goat is offered to them.

The Aśvins are children of Heaven (1, 182; 184; 10, 61) or from Heaven (1, 184). They are once (1, 46) to have the ocean as their mother (sindhumārā). Otherwise they are in one passage (10, 17) said to be the twin sons of Vivasvat and Tvāṣṭr’s daughter Saranīyā (p. 42), who appear to represent the rising sun and dawn. On the other hand the solar deity Puṣan claims them as his fathers (10, 85) by their sister (1, 180) Dawn seems to be meant (cp. p. 48). They are, as male deities of morning light, often associated with the sun conceived as a female called either Sūryā or more commonly the ‘daughter of Sūrya’. They are Sūryā’s two husbands (4, 43; cp. 1, 119), whom she chose (7, 69). Sūryā (5, 73) or the maiden (8, 8) ascended their car. The daughter of the sun mounts their car (1, 34; 116; 118; 6, 63) or chose it (1, 117; 4, 43). They possess Sūryā as their own (7, 68), and the fact that Sūryā accompanies them on their car is characteristic (8, 29).

She must be meant by the goddess called Aśvinī and mentioned with others in 5, 46. In a late hymn (10, 85) it is said that when Savitṛ gave Sūryā to her husband (pātrye) Soma was wooer (vadjāyu) while the Aśvins were grooms (varā). In another passage (6, 58) the gods are said to have given Puṣan to Sūryā. Owing to their connexion with Sūryā the Aśvins are invoked to conduct the bride home on their chariot (10, 85). They are also besought along with several other deities to bestow fertility on the bride (10, 184). They give the wife of the eunuch a child and make the barren cow yield milk (1, 112). They give a husband to the old maid (10, 39) and bestowed a wife on one of their favourites (1, 116 &c.). In the AV. (2, 30 &c.) they are said to bring lovers together.

The Aśvins may originally have been conceived as finding and restoring or rescuing the vanished light of the sun. In the RV. they have come to be typically succouring deities. They are the speediest helpers and deliverers from distress in general (1, 112; 118). They are constantly praised for such deeds. In particular, they rescue from the ocean in a ship or ships. They are also invoked to bring treasures from the ocean or from heaven (1, 47) and their car approaches from the ocean (4, 43); here, however, the celestial ocean appears to be intended. Their rescue from all kinds of distress is a peaceful manifestation of divine grace, not a deliverance from foes in battle, as is generally the case with Indra (with whom, however, they are once associated in fight, even receiving the epithet of Vṛtra-slayers). They are thus also characteristically divine physicians (8, 18 &c.), who heal diseases with their remedies (8, 22 &c.), restoring sight (1, 116), curing the blind, sick, and maimed (10, 39). They are the physicians of the gods and guardians of immortality, who ward off death from the worshipper (AV. 7, 53; TB. 3, 1, 24). Apart from their character as helpers, healers, and wonder-workers, their general beneficence is often praised. They bring their worshippers to old age with seeing eye and reward him with riches and abundance of children (1, 116; 8, 8 &c.).

Quite a number of legends illustrating the succouring power of the Aśvins are referred to in the RV. The sage Cyavāna, grown old and deserted,
they released from his decrepit body; they prolonged his life, restored him to youth, rendered him desirable to his wife and made him the husband of maidens (1, 116\(^{60}\) &c.; OST. 5, 143). A detailed story of how Čyavāna was restored to youth by the Āśvins is given in the SB. (4, 1, 5)\(^{61}\). They also renewed the youth of the aged Kāli (10, 39\(^{8}\)) and befriended him when he had taken a wife (1, 112\(^{55}\)). They brought on a car to the youthful Vimala wives (1, 112\(^{10}\)) or a wife (1, 116\(^{1}\)) named Kamadyū (10, 65\(^{19}\)), who seems to have been the beautiful spouse of Purumitra (1, 117\(^{20}\); 10, 39\(^{7}\)). They restored Viśnūpi, like a lost animal, to the sight of their worshipper Viśvaka, son of Kṛṣṇa (1, 116\(^{2}\), 117\(^{7}\); 10, 65\(^{19}\)), who according to the commentator was his father. The story most often referred to is that of the rescue of Bhuju, son of Tūgra, who was abandoned in the midst of the ocean (samudra) or in the water-cloud (udameghe) and who tossed about in darkness invoked the aid of the youthful heroes. In the ocean which is without support they took him home in a hundred-oared ship. They rescued him with animated, water-tight ships, which traversed the air, with four ships, with an animated winged boat, with three flying cars having a hundred feet and six horses, with their headlong flying steeds, with their well-yoked chariot swift as thought. In one passage Bhuju is described as clinging to a log (erkeśa) for support in the midst of the waves\(^{22}\). The sage Rebha, stabbed, bound, hidden by the malignant, overwhelmed in the waters for ten nights and nine days, abandoned as dead, was by the Āśvins revived and drawn out as Soma is raised with a ladle\(^{23}\). They delivered Vandana from calamity and restored him to the light of the sun (1, 112\(^{5}\), 116\(^{11}\), 117\(^{8}\), 118\(^{8}\)), raising him up from a pit in which he lay hidden away as one dead (10, 39\(^{8}\)) or restoring him from decrepitude (1, 110\(^{6}\) 7)\(^{24}\). They succoured the sage Atri Saptavadhri who along with his companions was plunged in a burning pit by the wiles of a demon. They brought him a cooling and refreshing draught, protected him from the flames, and finally released him in youthful strength. They are also said to have delivered him from darkness. When Agni is spoken of as having rescued Atri from heat (10, 30\(^{3}\)), the meaning probably is that Agni spared him through the intervention of the Āśvins\(^{25}\). The Āśvins even rescued from the jaws of a wolf a quail which invoked their aid\(^{26}\).

To Rījāśva who had been blinded by his father for killing one hundred and one sheep and giving them to a she-wolf to devour, they restored his eyesight at the prayer of the she-wolf (1, 116\(^{10}\), 117\(^{17}\), 18\(^{8}\)); and cured Parāvj with blindness and lameness (1, 112\(^{8}\)). When Viṣāpāla’s leg had been cut off in battle like the wing of a bird, the Āśvins gave her an iron one instead\(^{27}\). They befriended Ghoṣā when she was growing old in her father’s house by giving her a husband (1, 117\(^{9}\); 10, 39\(^{6}\), 40\(^{5}\)). To the wife of a eunuch they gave a son called Hīraṇyahasta (1, 116\(^{63}\), 117\(^{21}\); 6, 62\(^{7}\); 10, 39\(^{7}\)), who is, however, once called Śyāva (10, 65\(^{13}\)). The cow of Śayu, which had left off bearing they caused to give milk (1, 116\(^{2}\) &c.). They gave to Pedu a swift, strong, white, incomparable, dragon-slaying steed impelled by Indra, which won him unbounded spoils (1, 116\(^{6}\) &c.). To Kakṣvāt of the family of Pajra they granted blessings in abundance, causing a hundred jars of wine (surā) or of honey to flow from a strong horse’s hoof, as from a sieve (1, 116\(^{7}\), 117\(^{5}\))\(^{28}\). Another miraculous deed of theirs is connected with honey or mead. They placed a horse’s head on Dadhyānc, son of Atharvan, who then told them where was the mead (madhu) of Tvāṣṭṛ (§ 53)\(^{29}\). Besides the persons referred to above, many others are mentioned as having been succoured or befriended by the Āśvins in RV. 1, 112 and 116—19. These may be largely the names of actual persons who were saved or cured in a
remarkable manner. Their rescue or cure would easily have been attributed to the Aśvins, who having acquired the character of divine deliverers and healers, naturally attracted to themselves all stories connected with such miraculous powers. The opinion of BERGAIGNE and others that the various miracles attributed to the Aśvins are anthropomorphized forms of solar phenomena (the healing of the blind man thus meaning the release of the sun from darkness), seems to lack probability. At the same time the legend of Atri (cp. § 56) may be a reminiscence of a myth explaining the restoration of the vanished sun.

As to the physical basis of the Aśvins, the language of the Rṣis is so vague that they themselves do not seem to have understood what phenomenon these deities represented. The other gods of the morning, the night-dispelling Agni, the man-waking Uśas, and the rising Sūrya are much more vividly addressed. They may be called possessors of horses, because the latter are symbolical of rays of light, especially the sun's. But what they actually represented even the oldest commentators mentioned by Yāska. That scholar remarks (Nir. 12, 1) that some regarded them as Heaven and Earth (as does also the SB. 4, 1, 516), others, as Day and Night, others, as sun and moon, while the 'legendary writers' took them to be 'two kings, performers of holy acts'.

Yāska's own opinion is obscure. ROTH thinks he means Indra and the sun, GOLDSTÜCKER, that he means the transition from darkness to light, which represents an inseparable duality corresponding to their twin nature, and agrees with this view. This is also the opinion of MYRIANTHEUS as well as of HOPKINS, who considers it probable that the inseparable twins represent the twin-light or twilight before dawn, half dark, half light, so that one of them could be spoken of alone as the son of Dyaus, the bright sky. Other scholars favour the identification of the Aśvins with sun and moon. OLDENBERG following MANNHARDE and BÖLLENSEN (ZDMG. 41, 496) believes the natural basis of the Aśvins must be the morning star, that being the only morning light besides fire, dawn, and sun. The time, the luminous nature, and the course of the Aśvins round the heavens suit, but not their duality.

The morning star would indeed naturally be thought of in connexion with the evening star, but they are eternally separate, while the Aśvins are joined. The latter are, however, in one or two passages of the RV. spoken of separately; and though the morning in Vedic worship is so important, while sunset plays no part (5, 77), the Aśvins are nevertheless sometimes (8, 2214; 10, 391, 401) invoked morning and evening. The Aśvins, sons of Dyaus, who drive across the sky with their steeds and possess a sister, have a parallel in the two famous horsemen of Greek mythology, sons of Zeus (Διος ἥρωες)34, brothers of Helena, and in the two Lettic God's sons who come riding on their steeds to woo the daughter of the sun, either for themselves or the moon. In the Lettic myth the morning star is said to have come to look at the daughter of the sun. As the two Aśvins wed the one Sūryā, so the two Lettic god-sons wed the one daughter of the sun; they too are (like the Διος ἥρωες) rescuers from the ocean, delivering the daughter of the sun or the sun himself. If this theory is correct, the character of the Aśvins as rescuers may have been derived from the idea of the morning star being a harbinger of deliverance from the distress of darkness. WEBER is also of opinion that the Aśvins represent two stars, the twin constellation of the Gemini. Finally GELDNER thinks that the Aśvins do not represent any natural phenomenon, but are simply succouring saints (Notheilige) of purely Indian origin.
The twilight and the morning star theory seem the most probable. In any case, it appears not unlikely that the Aśvins date from the Indo-European period in character though not in name.


§ 22. Indra. — Indra is the favourite national god of the Vedic Indians. His importance is indicated by the fact that about 250 hymns celebrate his greatness, more than those devoted to any other god and very nearly one-fourth of the total number of hymns in the RV. If the hymns in parts of which he is praised or in which he is associated with other gods, are taken into account, the aggregate is brought up to at least 300. As the name, which dates from the Indo-Iranian period and is of uncertain meaning, does not designate any phenomenon of nature, the figure of Indra has become very anthropomorphically and much surrounded by mythological imagery, more so indeed than that of any other god in the Veda. The significance of his character is, however, sufficiently clear. He is primarily the thunder-god, the conqueror of the demons of drought or darkness and the consequent liberation of the waters, the winning of light forming his mythological essence. Se-..}

B. THE ATMOSPHERIC GODS.

He is the dominant deity of the middle region. He pervades the air (1, 51). He occurs among the gods of the air alone in the Naighanțuka (5, 4), and is the representative of the air in the triad Agni, Indra (or Vaiyu), Sūrya.

Many of Indra's physical features are mentioned. He has a body, a head, arms, and hands (2, 162; 8, 85). His belly is often spoken of in connexion with his powers of drinking Soma (2, 162 &c.). It is compared
when full of Soma to a lake (3, 36\textsuperscript{8}). His lips (the probable meaning of \textit{stip\textipa{}}) are often referred to, the frequent attributes \textit{susipta} or \textit{siprin}, 'fair-lipped', being almost peculiar to him. He agitates his jaws after drinking Soma (8, 65\textsuperscript{10}). His beard is violently agitated when he is exhilarated or puts himself in motion (2, 11\textsuperscript{17}; 10, 23\textsuperscript{1}). He is tawny-haired (10, 96\textsuperscript{5} - 8) and tawny-bearded (10, 23\textsuperscript{1}). His whole appearance is tawny, the changes being rung on that word (\textit{hari}) in every verse of an entire hymn (10, 96) with reference to Indra. He is a few times described as golden (1, 7\textsuperscript{2}; 8, 55\textsuperscript{3}), an attribute distinctive of Sāvītṛ (p. 32), as golden-armed (7, 34\textsuperscript{1}), and as iron-like (1, 56\textsuperscript{3}; 10, 96\textsuperscript{4} - 8). His arms as wielding the thunderbolt are mentioned particularly often. They are long, far-extended, great (6, 19\textsuperscript{3}; 8. 32\textsuperscript{10}; 70\textsuperscript{3}), strong and well-shaped (SV. 2, 1219). Indra assumes the most beautiful forms and the ruddy brightness of the sun (10, 112\textsuperscript{3}) and takes many different forms at will (3, 48\textsuperscript{4}; 53\textsuperscript{8}; 6, 47\textsuperscript{18}).

The thunderbolt (\textit{vajra})\textsuperscript{1} is the weapon exclusively appropriate to Indra. It is the regular mythological name of the lightning stroke (cp. p. 59). It is generally described as fashioned for him by Tvāṣtr (1, 32\textsuperscript{2} &c.), but Kāyā Usanā is also said to have made it and given it to him (1, 121\textsuperscript{12}; 5, 34\textsuperscript{2}). In the AB. (4, 1) it is the gods who are said to have provided Indra with his bolt. It lies in the ocean enveloped in water (8, 89\textsuperscript{9}). Its place is below that of the sun (10, 27\textsuperscript{2}). It is generally described as \textit{ajyasa} or metallic (1, 52\textsuperscript{3} &c.), but sometimes as golden (1, 57\textsuperscript{2} &c.), tawny (3, 44\textsuperscript{1}; 10, 96\textsuperscript{6}) or bright (3, 44\textsuperscript{2}). It is four-angled (4, 22\textsuperscript{2}), hundred-angled (4, 7\textsuperscript{19}), hundred-pointed (8, 6\textsuperscript{18} &c.), and thousand-pointed (1, 80\textsuperscript{18} &c.). It is sharp (7, 18\textsuperscript{18} &c.). Indra whets it like a knife or as a bull his horns\textsuperscript{4}, (1, 130\textsuperscript{1}; 55\textsuperscript{1}). It is spoken of as a stone (\textit{asman}) or rock (\textit{parvata}; 7, 104\textsuperscript{19}). The bolt in Indra's hand is compared with the sun in the sky (8, 59\textsuperscript{7}). Epithets derived from or compounded with \textit{vajra}, some of which are very frequent, are almost entirely limited to Indra. \textit{Vajrabhṛt, 'bearing the bolt', vairivat, 'armed with the bolt', and vajraḍaksina, 'holding the bolt in his right hand' are applied to him exclusively, while \textit{vajrābāhu or -hasta, 'holding the bolt in his arm or hand', and the commonest derivative \textit{vajrin}, 'armed with the bolt', otherwise occur as attributes of Rudra, the Maruts, and Manyu only once each respectively.}

Indra is sometimes said to be armed with a bow and arrows (8, 45\textsuperscript{4}; 66\textsuperscript{6}; 11; 10, 103\textsuperscript{2} - 3). The latter are golden, hundred-pointed, and winged with a thousand feathers (8, 66\textsuperscript{7}; 11). He also carries a book (\textit{ankusā}) with which he bestows wealth (8, 17\textsuperscript{10}; AV. 6, 82\textsuperscript{3}) or which he uses as a weapon (10, 44\textsuperscript{9}). A net with which he overwhelms all his foes is also attributed to him (AV. 8, 8\textsuperscript{8}; 5).

Indra is borne on a car which is golden (6, 29\textsuperscript{2} &c.) and is swifter than thought (10, 112\textsuperscript{2}). The epithet 'car-fighter' (\textit{ratheśṭāḥ}) is exclusively appropriated to Indra. His car is drawn by two tawny steeds (\textit{hari}), a term very frequently used and in the great majority of instances referring to Indra's horses. In a few passages a greater number than two, up to a hundred and even a thousand or eleven hundred are mentioned (2, 18\textsuperscript{4} - 7; 4. 46\textsuperscript{3}; 6, 47\textsuperscript{18}; 8, 1\textsuperscript{24}). These steeds are sun-eyed (1, 16\textsuperscript{1}; 2). They snort and neigh (1, 50\textsuperscript{6}). They have flowing manes (1, 10\textsuperscript{3} &c.) or golden manes (8, 32\textsuperscript{10}; 82\textsuperscript{2}). Their hair is like peacocks' feathers or tails (3, 45\textsuperscript{1}; 8, 1\textsuperscript{23}). They swiftly traverse vast distances and Indra is transported by them as an eagle is borne by its wings (2, 16\textsuperscript{3}; 8, 34\textsuperscript{2}). They are yoked by prayer (2, 18\textsuperscript{3} &c.), which doubtless means that invocations bring Indra to the sacrifice. Indra is a few times said to be drawn by the horses of Sūrya (10, 49\textsuperscript{7}) or by those of Vātā (10, 22\textsuperscript{4} - 6), and Vāyu has Indra for his charioteer (4, 46\textsuperscript{2}; 48\textsuperscript{7}) or his car-com-
panion (7, 916). Indra's car and his steeds were fashioned by the Rbhus (1, 111; 5, 314). Indra is once said to be provided with a golden goad (kaśā: 8, 3311).

Though the gods in general are fond of Soma (8, 218, 5811), Indra is preëminently addicted to it (1, 104 &c.). He even stole it in order to drink it (3, 481; 8, 41). He is the one Soma-drinker among gods and men (8, 21), only Vāyu, his companion, coming near him in this respect. It is his favourite nutriment (8, 412). The frequent epithet 'Soma-drinker' (soma-pā, pāvan) is characteristic of him, being otherwise only applied a few times to Agni and Brhaspati when associated with Indra, and once besides to Vāyu alone.

Soma is sometimes said to stimulate Indra to perform great cosmic actions such as supporting earth and sky or spreading out the earth (2, 152). But it characteristically exhilarates him to carry out his warlike deeds, the slaughter of the dragon or Vṛtra (2, 151; 192; 6, 471; 2) or the conquest of foes (6, 27; 7, 222; 8, 816). So essential is Soma to Indra that his mother gave it to him or he drank it on the very day of his birth (3, 482-3; 320-10; 6, 402; 7, 983). For the slaughter of Vṛtra he drank three lakes5 of Soma (5, 297 cp. 6, 171); and he is even said to have drunk at a single draught thirty lakes of the beverage (8, 664). One entire hymn (10, 119) consists of a monologue in which Indra describes his sensations after a draught of Soma. But just as too much Soma is said to produce disease in men, so Indra himself is described as suffering from excessive indulgence in it and having to be cured by the gods with the Sautrāmaṇi ceremony6. Indra also drinks milk mixed with honey (8, 49).

He at the same time eats the flesh of bulls (10, 283), of one (10, 279), of twenty (10, 8641), or of a hundred buffaloes (6, 1711; 8, 6649), or 300 buffaloes roasted by Agni (5, 297). At the sacrifice he also eats an offering of cake (3, 527-8), as well as of grain (3, 353; 434; 1, 165), and the latter his steeds are supposed to eat as well (3, 357; 527).

Indra is often spoken of as having been born. Two whole hymns (3, 48; 4, 18) deal with the subject of his birth. Once (4, 181-2) he is represented as wishing to be born in an unnatural way through the side of his mother5. This trait may possibly be derived from the notion of lightning breaking from the side of the storm-cloud. On being born he illuminates the sky (3, 444). Scarcely born he set the wheel of the sun in motion (1, 130). He was a warrior as soon as born (3, 518; 5, 305; 8, 454; 667; 10, 1134) and was irresistible from birth (1, 1028; 10, 1332). Through fear of him when he is born, the firm mountains, heaven and earth are agitated (1, 6141). At his birth heaven and earth trembled through fear of his wrath (4, 172) and all the gods feared him (5, 3069). His mother is often mentioned (3, 482-3 &c.10). She is once (4, 1819) spoken of as a cow (grṣṭī), he being her calf; and he is spoken (10, 1119) of as a bull, the offspring of a cow (gṛṣṭeyā). He is once (10, 1014) called the son of Niṣṭigri, whom Śāyana regards as synonymous with Aditi (cp. § 41). According to the AV. (3, 1042-3) Indra's (and Agni's) mother is Ekaṣṭakā, daughter of Prajāpati. Indra has the same father as Agni (6, 592), who is the son of Dyaus and Pṛthūvi (§ 35). According to one interpretation of a verse in a hymn (4, 172) in which his father is twice mentioned, the latter is Dyaus. A similar inference may be drawn from a verse in an Indra hymn (10, 1201) where it is said that 'among the worlds that was the highest from which this fierce (god) was born', and from a few other passages (cp. 6, 305; 8, 364 with 10, 541, and 10, 1383 with 1, 16411). His father is said to have made his thunderbolt (2, 179), which is elsewhere generally described as fashioned by Vṛṣṭ (§ 38). Indra drank Soma in
the house of his father, where it was given to him by his mother (3, 48). He drank Soma in the house of Tvaṣṭṛ (4, 183). Indra having at his birth overcome Tvaṣṭṛ and having stolen the Soma, drank it in the cups (3, 48). Indra seizing his father by the foot crushed him, and he is asked in the same verse who made his mother a widow (4, 184). From these passages it is clearly to be inferred that Indra’s father whom he slays in order to obtain the Soma, is Tvaṣṭṛ11 (cp. 1, 864). The hostility of the gods, who in one passage (4, 303) are said to have fought against him, is perhaps connected with the notion of his trying to obtain Soma forcibly.12

A few different accounts are given of the origin of Indra. He is said to have been generated by the gods as a destroyer of fiends (3, 49)1, but the verb jan is here no doubt only used in the figurative sense of ‘to constitute’ (cp. 2, 135; 3, 518). Soma is once spoken of as the generator of Indra and some other gods (9, 962). In the Puruṣa hymn Indra and Agni are said to have sprung from the mouth of the world-giant (10, 904). According to the SB. (11, 1, 64) Indra, as well as Agni, Soma, and Paramesṭhin, is said to have been created from Prajāpati. The TB. (2, 2, 101) states that Prajāpati created Indra last of the gods.

Agni is Indra’s twin brother (6, 59) and Pūṣan is also his brother (6, 55). The sons of Indra’s brother are once mentioned (10, 55), but who are meant by them is uncertain.

Indra’s wife is several times referred to (1, 825.6; 3, 531.6; 10, 865.16). Her name is Indrāṇī in a hymn in which she is represented as conversing with Indra (10, 86612) and occurs in a few other passages which contain enumerations of goddesses (1, 22112; 2, 328; 5, 464). The SB. expressly states Indrāṇī to be Indra’s wife (14, 2, 15). The AB. (3, 227), however, mentions Prāsahā and Senā as Indra’s wives13. These two are identified with Indrāṇī (TB. 2, 4, 278; MS. 3, 81; 4, 121). Pischel (VS. 2, 52) thinks that Śaci is the Proper name of Indra’s wife in the RV. as well as in post-Vedic literature14. The AV. (7, 389) refers to an Asura female who drew Indra down from among the gods; and the Kāṭhaka (IS. 3, 479) states that Indra enamoured of a Dānāvī named Vilistengā, went to live among the Asuras, assuming the form of a female among females and of a male among males.

Indra is associated with various other gods. His chief friends and allies are the Maruts, who in innumerable passages are described as assisting him in his warlike exploits (§ 29). His connexion with these deities is so close that the epithet marutvat, ‘accompanied by the Maruts’, though sometimes applied to other gods, is characteristic of Indra, this epithet, as well as marudgana ‘attended by the Marut host’, being sufficient to designate him (5, 428; 9, 9516). With Agni Indra is more frequently coupled as a dual divinity than with any other god (§ 44). This is natural, as lightning is a form of fire. Indra is also said to have produced Agni between two stones (2, 123) or to have found Agni hidden in the waters (10, 326). Indra is further often coupled with Varuṇa and Vāyu, less frequently with Soma, Brāhaspati, Pūṣan, and Viṣṇu (§ 44). The latter is a faithful friend of Indra and sometimes attends him in his conflict with the demons (§§ 17. 44).17

Indra is in three or four passages more or less distinctly identified with Śūrya18. Speaking in the first person (4, 261) Indra asserts that he was once Manu and Śūrya. He is once directly called Śūrya (10, 897); and Śūrya and Indra are both invoked in another verse (8, 82) as if they were the same person. In one passage Indra receives the epithet Savitṛ (2, 301). The SB. (1, 6, 418), too, once identifies Indra with the sun, Vṛtra being the moon.

The gigantic size of Indra is dwelt upon in many passages. When Indra
grasped the two boundless worlds, they were but a handful to him (3, 30). He surpasses in greatness heaven, earth, and air (3, 46). The two worlds are but equal to the half of him (6, 30\(^1\); 10, 119\(^2\)). Heaven and earth do not suffice for his girdle (1, 173\(^3\)). If the earth were ten times as large, Indra would be equal to it (1, 52\(^4\)). If Indra had a hundred heavens and a hundred earths, a thousand suns would not equal him nor both worlds (8, 59\(^5\)).

His greatness and power are lauded in the most unstinted terms. He has no parallel among those born or to be born (4, 181). No one, celestial or terrestrial, has been born or shall be born, like to him (7, 32\(^2\)). No one, god or man, either surpasses or equals him (6, 30\(^5\)). Neither former, later, nor recent beings have attained to his valour (5, 42\(^6\)). Neither gods nor men nor waters have attained to the limit of his might (1, 100\(^3\)). No one like him is known among the gods; no one born, past or present, can rival him (1, 165\(^9\)). He surpasses the gods (3, 46\(^3\)). All the gods yield to him in might and strength (8, 51\(^7\)). Even the former gods subordinated their powers to his divine glory and kingly dignity (7, 217). All the gods are unable to frustrate his deeds and counsels (2, 32\(^1\)). Even Varuṇa and Sīrya are subject to his command (1, 101\(^3\) cp. 2, 38\(^9\) p. 16). He is besought to destroy the foes of Mitra, Aryaman, and Varuṇa (10, 89\(^8\). 9) and is said to have acquired by battle ample space for the gods (7, 98\(^4\)). Indra alone is king of the whole world (3, 46\(^7\)). He is the lord of all that moves and breathes (1, 101\(^5\)). He is the king of things moving and of men (5, 30\(^2\)); he is the eye of all that moves and sees (10, 102\(^12\)). He is the leader of human races and divine (3, 34\(^2\)). He is several times called a universal monarch (4, 19\(^2\) &c.) and still oftener a self-dependent sovereign (3, 46\(^1\)&c.; cp. p. 24). He is also said to rule alone (eka) by his might as an ancient seer (8, 61\(^4\)). A few times he receives the epithet asura (1, 174\(^1\); 8, 79\(^6\)). Indra bears several characteristic attributes expressive of power. Sakra 'mighty' applies to Indra about 40 times and only about five times to other gods. Śācīvat, 'possessed of might' describes Indra some fifteen times and other deities only twice. The epithet śacīpāti 'lord of might', occurring eleven times in the RV. belongs to Indra with only one exception (7, 67\(^7\)), when the Āsvinīs as 'lords of might' are besought to strengthen their worshippers with might (śacībhīṣ). In one of these passages (10, 24\(^2\)) Indra is pleonastically invoked as 'mighty lord of might' (śacīpate śacīnām). This epithet survives in post-Vedic literature as a designation of Indra in the sense of 'husband of Śaci' (a sense claimed for it by Pischel even in the RV.). The very frequent attribute satakratu, 'having a hundred powers', occurring some 60 times in the RV. is with two exceptions entirely limited to Indra. In the great majority of instances satpati, 'strong lord' is appropriated to Indra. Indra's strength and valour are also described with various other epithets. He is strong (tavas), nimble (ṛṣtu), victorious (tura), heroic (śara), of unbounded force (1, 114. 102\(^6\)), of irresistible might (1, 84\(^3\)). He is clothed in might like the elephant and bears weapons like the terrible lion (4, 16\(^14\)). He is also young (1, 114 &c.) and unaging (ajara), as well as ancient (pūnya).

Having dealt with Indra's personal traits and his character, we now come to the great myth which is the basis of his nature. Exhilerated by Soma and generally escorted by the Maruts he enters upon the fray with the chief demon of drought, most frequently called by the name of Vṛtra, the Obstructor (§ 68) and also very often styled ahi the 'Serpent' or 'Dragon' (§ 64). The conflict is terrible. Heaven and earth tremble with fear when Indra strikes Vṛtra with his bolt (1, 80\(^11\); 2, 11\(^9\). 10; 6, 17\(^9\)); even Tvaṣṭr who forged the
Thus x while or He mountain The 22* 10,10,89) with his pointed weapon (1, 5215), and finds his vulnerable parts (3, 324; 5, 325). He smote Vṛtra who encompassed the waters (6, 205 &c.) or the dragon that lay around (parisayānam) the waters (4, 199); he overcame the dragon lying on the waters (5, 309). He slew the dragon hidden in the waters and obstructing the waters and the sky (2, 115), and smote Vṛtra, who enclosed the waters, like a tree with the bolt (2, 145). Thus 'conquering in the waters' (apsujit) is his exclusive attribute. Indra being frequently described as slaying Vṛtra in the present or being invoked to do so, is regarded as constantly renewing the combat, which mythically represents the constant renewal of the natural phenomena. For many dawns and autumns Indra has let loose the streams after slaying Vṛtra (4, 198) or he is invoked to do so in the future (8, 781). He cleaves the mountain, making the streams flow or taking the cows (1, 575; 10, 897), even with the sound of his bolt (6, 271). When he laid open the great mountain, he let loose the torrents and slew the Dānava, he set free the pent up springs, the udder of the mountain (5, 3212). He slew the Dānava, shattered the great mountain, broke open the well, set free the pent up waters (1, 577; 5, 331). He releases the streams which are like imprisoned cows (1, 6116) or which, like lowing cows, flow to the ocean (1, 329). He won the cows and Soma and made the seven rivers to flow (1, 3219; 2, 12117). He releases the imprisoned waters (1, 575; 1039), released the streams pent up by the dragon (2, 119), dug out channels for the streams with his bolt (2, 151), let the flood of waters flow in the sea (2, 193), caused the waters pent up by Vṛtra to flow (3, 266; 4, 171). Having slain Vṛtra, he opened the orifice of the waters which had been closed (1, 3211). His bolts are dispersed over ninety rivers (1, 809). References to this conflict with Vṛtra and the release of the waters are extremely frequent in the RV. The changes on the myth are rung throughout the whole of one hymn (1, 80). Another deals with the details of the Vṛtra fight (1, 32). That this exploit is Indra's chief characteristic, is shown by the manner in which the poet epitomizes the myth in the two first verses of the latter hymn: 'I will proclaim the heroic deeds of Indra, which the wielder of the bolt first performed: he slew the dragon lying on the mountain, released the waters, pierced the belly of the mountains'. The physical elements are nearly always indicated by the stereotyped figurative terms 'bolt', 'mountain', 'waters or rivers', while lightning, thunder, cloud, rain (vṛṣṭi, varṣa, or the verb vṛṣ) are seldom directly named (1, 5259; 6, 11 &c.)59. The rivers caused to flow are of course often terrestrial (BRV. 2, 184), but it cannot be doubted that waters and rivers are in the RV. very often conceived as aerial or celestial (1, 105; 2, 205; 224 cp. BRV. 2, 187). Apart from a desire to express the Vṛtra myth in phraseology differing from that applied to other gods, the large stores of water (cp. arghas, flood) released by Indra would encourage the use of words like 'streams' rather than 'rain'. The 'cows' released by Indra may in many cases refer to the waters, for we have seen that the latter are occasionally compared with lowing cows. Thus Indra is said to have found the cows for man when he slew the dragon (5, 293 cp. 1, 528). The context seems to show that the waters are meant when Indra is described as having, with his bolt for an ally, extracted the cows with light from darkness (1, 3310). But the cows may also in other cases be conceived as connected with Indra's winning of light, for the ruddy beams of dawn issuing from the blackness of night are compared with cattle coming out of their dark stalls (p. 47). Again, though clouds play no great part in the RV.20 under their
liliteral name (*abhra* &c.) it can hardly be denied that, as containing the waters, they figure mythologically to a considerable extent under the name of cow (*go; § 61*), as well as udder (*iudhara*), spring (*utsa*), cask (*kavandha*), pail (*kosha*) and others. Thus the rain-clouds are probably meant when it is said that the cows roared at the birth of Indra (8, 59°).

It is however rather as mountains (*parwata*, *giri*: p. 10) that they appear in the Indra myth. They are the mountains (1, 32°) on which the demons dwell (1, 32°; 2, 12°), or from which he casts them down (1, 130°; 4, 30°; 6, 26°). Indra shoots forth his well-aimed arrow from these mountains (8, 66°). He flest the mountain to release the cows (8, 45°). Or the cloud is a rock (*adrī*) which encompasses the cows and which Indra moves from its place (6, 17°). He loosened the rock and made the cows easy to obtain (10, 112°). He released the cows which were fast within the stone (6, 43° cp. 5, 30°). The cloud rocks or mountains would seem to represent the stationary rainless clouds seen during drought, while the cloud cows would rather be the moving and roaring rain-cloud (p. 10). OLDENBERG (ORV. 140 f.) thinks that to the poets of the RV. the mountains as well as the rivers in the *Vṛtra*-myth are terrestrial, though he admits that they were originally aerial and at a later period also were understood as such.

In the mythical imagery of the thunderstorm the clouds also very frequently become the fortresses (*purak*) of the aerial demons. They are spoken of as ninety, ninety-nine, or a hundred in number (2, 14°; 19°; 8, 17°; 87°). These fortresses are 'moving' (8, 1°), autumnal (1, 130°; 131°; 174°; 6, 20°), made of metal (2, 20°) or stone (4, 30°). Indra shatters them (1, 51° &c.), and so the epithet 'fort-shatterer' (*purvhit*) is peculiar to him. In one verse (10, 111°) he is spoken of as a fort-shatterer and lover of waters at the same time. In another the various features of the myth are mentioned together: he slew *Vṛtra*, broke the castles, made a channel for the rivers, pierced the mountain, and made over the cows to his friends (10, 897).

Owing to the importance of the *Vṛtra*-myth the chief and specific epithet of Indra is *Vṛtrahan*, 'Vṛtra-slayer'21. It is applied about 70 times to him in the RV. The only other deity who receives it with any frequency is Agni; but this is due to Agni's frequent association with Indra as a dual divinity. The few applications of the epithet to Soma are also clearly secondary (§ 37). Though Indra is sometimes expressly stated to have slain *Vṛtra* by his own might alone (1, 165°; 7, 21°; 10, 138°) other deities are very often associated with him in the conflict. The gods in general are said to have placed him in the van for action or battle (1, 55°; 6, 17°) or the slaughter of *Vṛtra* (8, 12°). They are also said to have increased his vigour for the fray with *Vṛtra* (10, 113°), or to have infused might or valour into him (1, 80°; 6, 20°; 10, 148°; 120°), or to have placed the bolt in his hands (2, 20°). But most frequently he is urged on and fortified by the Maruts (3, 32°; 10, 73° &c. § 29). Even when the other gods terrified by *Vṛtra* fled away (8, 85° cp. 4, 18°; AB. 3, 20), they stood by him; but the Maruts themselves are said to have deserted him (8, 73°). Agni, Soma, and Viṣṇu are often also allied with Indra in the fight with *Vṛtra*. Even priests on earth sometimes associate themselves with Indra in his combats (5, 30°; 8, 51°; 10, 44°). The worshipper (*jarītā*) is said to have placed the bolt in Indra's hands (1, 63°), and the sacrifice is spoken of as having assisted the bolt at the slaughter of the dragon (3, 32°). Hymns, prayers, and worship, as well as Soma, are also often described as increasing (*Vṛzdha*) the vigour of Indra.25.

Besides *Vṛtra*, Indra engages in conflict with many minor demons also
He said to sweep away the Asuras with his wheel (8, 859), to consume the Rakṣases with his bolt as fire a dry forest (6, 1810) and to overcome the druḥah or malignant spirits (4, 237; 258).

With the liberation of the waters is connected the winning of light, sun, and dawn. Indra won light and the divine waters (3, 349). The god is invoked to slay Vṛtra and win the light (8, 784). When Indra had slain the dragon Vṛtra with his metallic bolt, releasing the waters for man, he placed the sun visibly in the heavens (1, 514; 528). Indra, the dragon-slayer, set in motion the flood of waters to the sea, generated the sun, and found the cows (2, 193). He gained the sun and the waters after slaying the demons (3, 349). When Indra slew the chief of the dragons and released the waters from the mountain, he generated the sun, the sky and the dawn (1, 324; 6, 309). The sun shone forth when Indra blew the dragon from the air (8, 390). Though the sun is usually the prize of the conflict, it also appears as Indra's weapon, for he burns the demon with the rays of the sun (8, 129). Without any reference to the Vṛtra fight, Indra is said to find the light (3, 349; 8, 155; 10, 433) in the darkness (1, 108; 4, 165). Indra is the generator of the sun (3, 494). He placed the sun, the brilliant light, in the sky (8, 129). He made the sun to shine (8, 390; 873), and made it mount in the sky (1, 73). He gained the sun (1, 100; 853, 3, 349) or found it in the darkness in which it abode (3, 396) and made a path for it (10, 111).

Indra produces the dawn as well as the sun (2, 127; 214; 3, 315; 328; 494). He has made the sun and the sun to shine (3, 453). He has opened the darkness with the dawn and the sun (1, 625). He steals the dawn with the sun (2, 205). The cows which are mentioned along with sun and dawn (1, 625; 2, 127; 6, 175) or with the sun alone (1, 73; 2, 193; 3, 349; 6, 173; 325; 10, 1388) as found, delivered, or won by Indra, probably do not so much represent the waters or rainclouds, as the morning beams (§ 61) or, according to BERGAIGNE (BRV. 1, 245) and others, the red clouds of dawn. The waters are probably meant by the ruddy watery (apya) cows (9, 1086), but the morning beams or clouds in the following passages. The cows on seeing Indra went to meet him, when he became the lord of the cows (3, 314). When he overcame Vṛtra he made visible the cows (thenah) of the nights (3, 343 cp. BRV. 2, 200). Dawn is in some passages spoken of in expressions reminding of the winning of the cows. Thus 'Dawn opens the darkness as cows their stall' (1, 921). Dawn opens the doors of the firm rock (7, 794). The cows low towards the dawn (7, 757). The Angirases burst open the cowstalls of Ušas on the heights (6, 653). The dawn is sometimes said to have been produced along with the sun in the same passages in which the conquest of the waters is celebrated (1, 324; 2, 6, 308; 10, 1388). Thus there appears to be a confusion between the notion of the restoration of the sun after the darkness of the thunderstorm and the recovery of the sun from the darkness of night at dawn. The latter trait is in the Indra myth most probably only an extension of the former.

Indra's activity in the thunderstorm is sometimes more directly expressed. Thus he is said to have created the lightnings of heaven (2, 137) and to have directed the action of the waters downwards (2, 175).

With the Vṛtra fight, with the winning of the cows and of the sun, is
also connected that of Soma. When Indra drove the dragon from the air, fires, the sun, and Soma, Indra’s juice, shone forth (8, 320). After his victory over the demon, he chose Soma for his drink (3, 368). After he conquered the demons, Soma became his own property (7, 983); he became the king of the Soma mead (6, 203). Indra disclosed the juice pressed with stones and drove out the cows (3, 443). He won Soma at the same time as the cows (1, 3219). He found in heaven the hidden nectar (6, 442). He found the honey accumulated in the ruddy cow (usriyâyám: 3, 396). The raw cow goes with ripe milk, in the ruddy cow is accumulated all sweetness, which Indra placed there for enjoyment (3, 3034). Indra places ripe milk in the cows (8, 3228), which are raw (8, 787) black or red (1, 622), and for which he opens the gates (6, 173). These passages seem to have primarily at least a mythological reference to rainclouds, as the context in most cases describes the great cosmical actions of Indra.

Indra is said to have settled the quaking mountains and plains (2, 122; 10, 443). In a later text Indra is said to have cut off the wings of the mountains, which originally alighted wherever they pleased and thus made the earth unsteady. The wings became the thunder clouds (MS. 1, 1031). This is a favourite myth in post-Vedic literature. Pischel (VS. 1, 174) traces its origin to a verse of the RV. (4, 543). Indra also fixed the bright realms of the sky (8, 143). He supported the earth and propped the sky (2, 175 &c.). He holds asunder heaven and earth as two wheels are kept apart by the axle (10, 893). He stretches out heaven and earth (8, 396) like a hide (8, 63). He is the generator of heaven and earth (8, 364 cp. 6, 474). He generated that which is and shall be by his great secret name (10, 555) and made the non-existent into the existent in a moment (6, 243). The separation and supporting of heaven and earth are sometimes described as the result of Indra’s victory over a demon (5, 299), who held them together (8, 617). When he was born for the Vṛtra fight, Indra spread out the earth and fixed the sky (8, 783). The dragon-slayer made earth visible to heaven, when he opened a path for the streams (2, 133). Similarly he is said to have found heaven and earth which were hidden (8, 8526) or to have won them along with light and waters (3, 348). Possibly the effect of light extending the range of vision and seeming to separate heaven and earth apparently pressed together by darkness, may have been the starting point of such conceptions.

Indra, the wielder of the thunderbolt, who destroys the aerial demons in battle, is constantly invoked by warriors (4, 243 &c.). As the great god of battle he is more frequently called upon than any other deity as the helper of the Aryans in their conflicts with earthly enemies. He protects the Aryan colour and subjects the black skin (3, 349; 1, 1308). He dispersed 50,000 of the black race and rent their citadels (4, 1613). He subjected the Dasys to the Aryan (6, 183) and gave land to the Aryan (4, 264). He turns away from the Arya the weapon of the Dasyus in the land of the seven rivers (8, 2427). Other deities are only occasionally referred to as protectors of the Aryas, as the Aśvins (1, 11721), Agni (8, 921), or the gods in general (6, 2111).

More generally Indra is spoken of as the one compassionate helper (1, 8439; 8, 5513. 691), as the deliverer and advocate of his worshippers (8, 8520), as their strength (7, 315), and as a wall of defence (8, 697). His friend is never slain or conquered (10, 1521). Indra is very often called the friend of his worshippers27, sometimes even a brother (3, 535), a father (4, 1717; 10, 481) or a father and mother in one (8, 8712). He was also the friend of the fathers in the olden time (6, 218 cp. 7, 334), and the epithet Kaśśika which
he once receives (i, 10^11), implies that he particularly favoured the family of the Kusikas^28. Indra does not desire the friendship of him who offers no libations (10, 42). But he bestows goods and wealth on the pious man (2, 19^4, 22^3; 7, 27^3), and is implored not to be diverted by other worshippers (2, 18^3 &c.)^29. All men share his benefits (8, 54^7). Both his hands are full of riches (7, 37^7). He is a treasury filled with wealth (10, 42^7). He can shower satisfying wealth on his worshippers as a man with a hook shakes down ripe fruit from a tree (3, 45^7). Gods and mortals can no more stop him wishing to give than a terrific bull (8, 70^7). He is an ocean of riches (1, 51^3), and all the paths of wealth lead to him as the rivers to the sea (6, 19^8). One entire hymn in particular (10, 47) dwells on the manifold wealth which Indra bestows. Cows and horses are the goods which Indra, like other gods, is most often asked to bestow (1, 16^5, 101^4 &c.), and it is chiefly to him that the epithet gopati, 'lord of cows' is applied. His combats are frequently called gavisthi, literally 'desire of cows' (8, 24^5 &c.) and his gifts are considered the result of victories (4, 17^10, 11 &c.; cp. BRV. 2, 17^8). Indra also bestows wives (4, 17^16) and male children (1, 53^3 &c.). His liberality is so characteristic that the very frequent attribute maghavan, 'bountiful' is almost entirely monopolized by him in the RV. (cp. p. 48) and in post-Vedic literature remains his exclusive epithet. The epithet vasupati, 'lord of wealth', is also predominantly applicable to Indra.

Though the main myth concerning Indra is his combat with Vṛtra, various other stories attached themselves to him as the performer of heroic deeds. Some passages describe Indra as coming into conflict with Ušas. He struck down the wain (anar) of Dawn (10, 73^9). He shattered the wain of Ušas with his bolt and rent her slow (steeds) with his swift (mares: 2, 15^6). Terrified at the bolt of Indra, Ušas abandoned her wain (10, 138^5). Indra performed the heroic manly exploit of striking and crushing the female meditating evil, Ušas, the daughter of the sky; her wain lay shattered in the river Vipāś and Ušas fled away in terror (4, 30^6-11). The obscuration of the dawn by a thunderstorm is usually regarded as the basis of this myth. Against such an interpretation BERGAINNE urges that it is not Indra who obscures the sky but a demon, and that the application of the bolt, Indra's characteristic weapon, need not be restricted to the Vṛtra-fight. He concludes that the sunrise overcoming the delaying dawn (cp. 2, 15^5; 5, 79^6) is here conceived as a victory of Indra bringing the sun^30.

Indra comes in conflict with the sun in the obscure myth about a race run between the swift steed Etās, who draws a car, and the sun drawn by his yellow steeds. The sun being ahead is hindered by Indra. His car loses a wheel, a loss which in some way seems to have been caused by Indra (§ 60_D). With this myth is probably connected the statement that Indra stopped the tawny steeds of the sun (10, 92^8). Indra is also associated with the myth of the rape of Soma. For it is to him that the eagle brings the draught of immortality (§ 37). Another myth which is not often mentioned and the details of which chiefly occur in a single hymn (10, 108) is that of the capture by Indra of the cows of the Panis (§ 67). These demons, who here seem to be the mythical representatives of the niggards who withhold cows from the pious sacrificer, possess herds of cows which they keep hidden in a cave far away beyond the Rasā, a mythical river. Saramā, Indra's messenger, tracks the cows and asks for them in Indra's name, but is mocked by the Panis. In another passage (6, 39^5) Indra desiring the cows around the rock is said to have pierced Vała's unbroken ridge and to have overcome the Panis. Elsewhere the cows are spoken of as confined by the demon
Vala without reference to the Panis, and driven out by Indra (2, 123; 3, 3019). In various passages the Aṅgirases are associated with Indra in piercing Vala, shattering his strongholds, and releasing the cows (§ 54).

Fragmentary references, often in enumerations, are frequently made to the victory of Indra over Dāsas or Dasyus. These are primarily human foes whose skin is black (1, 130° cp. 2, 207), who are nameless (5, 291°), are godless and do not sacrifice. Though mythological elements are no doubt largely mingled in the account of his victory over individual Dāsas, the foundation of these myths seems to be terrestrial and human. For while Vyṛta is slain for the good of man in general, individual human beings are mentioned for whom or with whom Indra overcame the Dāsa or Dāsas. These protîgès of Indra are not as a rule ancestors of priests but are princes or warriors who seem to have been historical. Thus Divodâsa Atithigva31 is the father of the famous king Sudâs, his Dāsa foe being Śambara, the son of Kūlītara (§ 69 B). But when the term dâsa is applied to the dragon (ahi), from whom Indra wrests the waters (2, 112) or to the three-headed six-eyed monster whom Tṛta combats (10, 99°) or to Vyamsa who struck off Indra’s jaws (4, 189), it unmistakably designates regular demons. An account of Namuci and other Dāsas vanquished by Indra will be found in the chapter on demons.

A myth which seems to have no general significance but to be simply the invention of a later poet of the RV., is that of Indra and Vṛṣākapi, the details of which are given somewhat obscurely in RV. 10, 86. This hymn describes a dispute between Indra and his wife Indrāṇî about the monkey Vṛṣākapi, who is the favourite of the former and has damaged the property of the latter. Vṛṣākapi is soundly threshed and escapes, but afterwards returns, when a reconciliation takes place. v. Bradke considers the story a satire, in which under the names of Indra and Indrāṇî a certain prince and his wife are intended32.

Among stories preserving historical traits is that of Indra having safely brought TurVASa and Yadu across the rivers (1, 1749 &c.). They are the eponymous heroes of two closely connected Aryan tribes, which are, however, sometimes mentioned by the poets in a hostile sense. This varying attitude is a tolerably sure indication of historical matter. Here the national warrior god appears as the patron of Aryan migrations. In another passage Indra is said with Suśrava to have crushed twenty chiefs and their 60,000 warriors with fatal chariot wheel. The accounts of the conflicts of king Sudâs have all the appearance of a historical character. Thus Indra is said to have helped him in the battle of the ten kings (7, 331), to have aided him in answer to the prayers of his priests the Tṛtsus (among whom Vasiṣtha is prominent), and to have drowned his foes in the river Paruṣṇî (7, 189–13).

Finally, a hymn of the RV. (8, 80) relates how a maiden named Apâlâ having found Soma beside a river and having pressed it with her teeth, dedicates it to Indra who approaches and from whom she receives as a reward the fulfilment of certain desires33.

Regarded as a whole the attributes of Indra are chiefly those of physical superiority and of dominion over the physical world. Energetic action is characteristic of him, while passive sway is distinctive of Varuṇa. Indra is a universal monarch, not as the applier of the eternal laws of the universe nor as a moral ruler, but as an irresistible warrior whose mighty arm wins victory, whose inexhaustible liberality bestows the highest goods on mankind, and who delighting in the exultation of magnificent Soma sacrifices, confers rich rewards on the hosts of priests officiating in his worship. The numerous hymns which celebrate him dwell on these features in more or less stereo-
typed terms and are seldom free from references to the Soma offering. He is not usually described as possessing the moral elevation and grandeur of Varuna. There are, however, several passages which ascribe to Indra actions characteristic of Varuna. There are also a few, mostly in the later books, in which an ethical character is attributed to him and faith in him is confessed or enjoined (1, 55 &c.), faith in the reality of his existence being sometimes expressed as against the disbelief of sceptics (2, 125 &c.) Once he is said in a late passage of the RV. to have attained heaven by austere fervour (10, 167\(^1\) cp. 159\(^1\)).

To the more intense anthropomorphism of Indra's nature are doubtless due certain sensual and immoral traits which are at variance with the moral perfection elsewhere attributed to him and essential to the character of the Vedic gods. This incongruity cannot be accounted for by different passages representing chronologically different stages in the development of his character, for it is apparent in the words of the same poet, sometimes even in the same verse. It is chiefly connected with his excessive fondness for Soma. In one passage (8, 67\(^5\)\(^6\)) he is said to hear and see everything, viewing the zeal of mortals, and in the next verse his belly is described as full of the vigorous draught. One entire hymn (10, 119) consists of a monologue in which Indra is intoxicated with Soma, boasted of his greatness and capricious power. It is even indicated that he once suffered from the effects of excessive drinking (§ 69). His love of Soma is even represented as having driven him to parricide (4, 18\(^5\)). In judging morally of Indra's inmoderate indulgence in Soma, it must be borne in mind that the exhilaration of Soma partook of a religious character in the eyes of the Vedic poets and that the intoxicating influence of Soma itself led to its being regarded as the drink of immortality. It is probably from the latter point of view that Indra is conceived as having performed his grandest cosmical feats, such as fixing heaven and earth, under the influence of Soma (2, 15\(^3\)). And the evident sympathy of the poets with the effect of Soma on the god but reflects the moral standard to the age. Amorous adventures, on the other hand, are entirely absent from the exploits of Indra in the RV. and there is hardly a trace of such even in the Brāhmaṇas, except that he is spoken of as the paramour of Ahalyā the wife of Gautama. It is only natural that the poetry of the Soma offering should have dwelt on the thirsty aspect of his nature.

It has been maintained by Roth\(^3\) followed by Whitney (JAOS. 3, 327) that the preeminence of Varuna as belonging to an older order of gods was in the course of the Rigvedic period transferred to Indra. This view is based partly on the fact that not a single entire hymn in the tenth book is addressed to Varuna, while Indra is celebrated in forty-five. There are, however, two hymns (126, 185) of book X, in which Varuna is lauded with two other Adityas, and in many single verses of that book Varuna is invoked or referred to along with other deities. The argument from the number of hymns is not very cogent, as in all the earlier books of the RV. far more hymns are addressed to Indra than to Varuna. In book III no hymn is devoted to Varuna but 22 to Indra, and in book II there is only one to Varuna and 23 to Indra. Moreover, these two books added together are considerably shorter than the tenth alone. It is, however, true that Varuna is much less frequently mentioned in the last book than in the earlier books of the RV. Beyond this fact there seems to be no direct and decisive proof of the supersession of Varuna by Indra during the composition of the RV. One hymn (4, 42) of the earlier part, describing in the form of a dialogue the rivalry

\[^{1}\text{Indo-aryische Philologie. III. 1 A.}\]
between Indra and Varuṇa has, however, been regarded (GKR. 27) as characteristically indicating a transition from an older period in the relative importance of the two gods. The conclusion is perhaps hardly justified by the statements of another (cp. GRV. 2, 401) of the last book (10, 124) 30. At the same time it must be remembered that on the one hand Varuṇa seems to have occupied a more important position than Indra in the Indo-Iranian period, while on the other, Indra in the Brāhmaṇas (AB. 8, 12) and in the epics has become chief of the Indian heaven and even maintains this position under the Purāṇic triad Brahmā-Visṇu-Siva, though of course subordinate to them 39. Varuṇa meanwhile had become divested of his supreme powers by the time of the AV. (p. 26). Thus there must have been at least a gradually increasing popularity of Indra even in the Rigvedic age. By BENFEY (OO. 1, 48) and BRÉAL (Hercule et Cacus 101) Indra in the Vedas is considered rather to have superseded the ancient Dyaus. This may perhaps with greater probability be maintained with regard to the Indo-Iranian Tīra Aptya. For Tīra though rarely mentioned in the RV. is there described as performing the same exploits as Indra, occasionally appearing even as the more important personage in the myth (§ 23).

The name of Indra occurs only twice in the Avesta 40. Beyond the fact of his being no god, but only a demon, his character there is uncertain 31. Indra's distinctive Vedic epithet vṛtraḥkana also occurs in the Avesta in the form of vēdhrāγhina, which is, however, unconnected with Indra or the thunderstorm myth, designating merely the God of Victory 42. Thus it is probable that the Indo-Iranian period possessed a god approaching to the Vedic form of the Vṛtra-slaying Indra. It is even possible that beside the thundering god of heaven, the Indo-European period may have known as a distinct conception a thundergod gigantic in size, a mighty eater and drinker, who slays the dragon with his lightning bolt 43. The etymology 44 of Indra is doubtful, but that the root is connected with that in indu, drop, seems likely.


KHF. 8; ROTHI, ZDMG. 1, 72; WHITNEY, JAOS. 3, 319–21; DELBRÜCK, ZVP. 1865, 277–9; OST. 5, 77–139; 9, 99–105; LKV. 3, 317; KRV. 40–7; BRK. 12–3; BRV. 2, 159–96; PERRY, Indra in the Rigveda, JAOS. 11, 117–208; HILLENBRANDT, Literaturhinweise; 1, 1884–5; cp. p. 108; Die Sonnwendfeste in Alkimien (1889), 16; SP. AP. 194–7; HBVP. 60–80; ORV. 134–75; ZDMG. 49, 174–5; HRL. 91–6; v. SCHÖDER, WZKM. 9, 230–4.
§ 23. Trīta Āptya.—Trīta Āptya is not celebrated in any entire hymn of the RV. but is only incidentally mentioned there in forty passages occurring in twenty-nine hymns. The epithet Āptya accompanies or alternates with Trīta seven times in four hymns of the RV. (1, 109; 5, 41; 8, 47; 10, 8). He is oftenest mentioned or associated with Indra; he is seven times connected or identified with Agni, is several times spoken of with the Maruts, and ten times with Soma either as the beverage or the deity. Trīta is mentioned alone as having rent Vṛtra by the power of the Soma draught (1, 187).

The Maruts aided Trīta and Indra in the victory over Vṛtra (8, 74). Such action must have been regarded as characteristic of Trīta, for it is mentioned as an illustration. When Indra in the Vṛtra fight strove against the withholder of rain, he cleaved as Trīta cleaves the fences of Vala (1, 524-5). So again the man who is aided by Indra-Agni, pierces rich strengthens like Trīta (5, 86). Trīta Āptya knowing his paternal weapons and urged by Indra fought against and slew the three-headed son of Tvastra and released the cows (10, 8). In the following stanza Indra performs exactly the same feat; for he strikes off the three heads of Viśvarūpa the son of Tvastra and takes possession of the cows. Indra (or perhaps Agni) subdued the loudly roaring three-headed six-eyed demon and Trīta strengthened by his might slew the boar (i.e. the demon, cp. 1, 12141) with iron-pointed bolt (10, 999). Here the feat performed by the two gods is again identical. Indra produced cows for Trīta from the dragon (10, 482). Indra delivered over Viśvarūpa the son of Tvastra to Trīta (2, 119). Indra strengthened by the Soma-loving Trīta, cast down Arbuda and with the Āgirases rent Vala (2, 1120). When the mighty Maruts go forth and the lightnings flash, Trīta thunders and the waters roar (5, 54). In two obscure passages of a Āgirases hymn (2, 34) the bright path of the Maruts is said to shine forth when Trīta appears (v. 10) and Trīta seems to be conceived as bringing the Maruts on his car (v. 14). In an Agni hymn the winds are said to have found Trīta, instructing him to help them (10, 115). The flames of Agni rise when Trīta in the sky blows upon him like a smelter and sharpens him as in a smelting furnace (5, 99). Trīta eagerly seeking him (Agni) found him on the head of the cow; he when born in houses becomes as a youth the centre of brightness, establishing himself in dwellings. Trīta enveloped (in flames) seated himself within his place (10, 463-4). Trīta is spoken of as in heaven (5, 9). His abode is secret (9, 1022). It is remote; for the Adityas and Usās are prayed to remove ill deeds and evil dreams to Trīta Āptya (8, 4713-7). It seems to be in the region of the sun. For the poet says: ‘Where those seven rays are, there my origin is extended; Trīta Āptya knows that; he speaks for kinship'; which seems to mean that he claims kinship with it (1, 1059). In the same hymn (v. 17) Trīta is described as buried in a well (kūpe) and praying to the gods for help; Brhaspati heard him and released him from his distress. In another passage (10, 87) Trīta within a pit (vavre) prays to his father and goes forth claiming his paternal weapons; and in the next stanza (10, 88) he fights with Viśvarūpa. Indra is said to drink Soma beside Viṣṇu, Trīta Āptya, or the Maruts (8, 1216) and to delight in a hymn of praise beside Trīta (Vāl. 4). In the ninth book, doubtless owing to its peculiar character, Trīta appears in the special capacity of a preparer of Soma, a feature alluded to only once in the rest of the RV. (2, 112)40. Soma is purified by Trīta (9, 34). Trīta's maidens (the fingers) urge the tawny drop with stones for Indra to drink (9, 32, 38). Soma occupies the secret place near the two pressing stones of Trīta (9, 1022) and is besought

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to bring wealth in a stream on the ridges (prṣṭhesu) of Trita (9, 102<sup>3</sup>). Soma caused the sun along with the sisters to shine on the summit (sāma) of Trita (9, 37<sup>4</sup>). They press out the stalk, the bull that dwells on the mountains, who, like a buffalo, is purified on the summit; hymns accompany him as he roars; Trita cherishes (him who is like) Varuṇa in the ocean (9, 95<sup>4</sup>). When Soma pours the mead, he calls up the name of Trita (9, 86<sup>20</sup>).

There are several passages from which little or nothing can be gathered as to Trita's original nature. Thus his name occurs in some enumerations which furnish no information (2, 31<sup>5</sup>; 5, 41<sup>4</sup>; 10, 64<sup>9</sup>). In two other verses (5, 41<sup>9</sup>-<sup>10</sup>) the interpretation is uncertain, as the text seems to be corrupt. In one passage in the middle of a Varuṇa hymn Trita is described as one in whom all wisdom is centred, as the navel in the wheel (8, 41<sup>6</sup>). In another passage Trita is said to have harnessed a celestial steed fashioned from the sun and given by Yama, this steed being in the following stanza said to be identical with Yama, the Sun, and with Trita 'by secret operation' (1, 163<sup>2</sup>-<sup>3</sup>). The half dozen passages of the AV.<sup>4</sup> which mention Trita, add no definite information about him. They suggest only the idea of a remote god, to whom guilt or dream is transferred (1, 113<sup>2</sup>-<sup>3</sup>; 19, 56<sup>4</sup>). The TS. (1, 8, 10<sup>2</sup>) describes Trita as a bestower of long life. This is no doubt a secondary trait<sup>3</sup> accruing to Trita as the preparer of Soma, the draught of immortality. The Brāhmaṇas speak of Trita as one of three deities, the other two being Ekata and Dvita, sons of Agni and born from the waters (SB.1, 2, 3; TB. 3, 3, 8<sup>10</sup> -<sup>11</sup>). Śāyana on RV. 1, 105 quotes a story of the Sātvāyanins, in which the same three brothers are Rṣis, Trita being cast into a well by the other two. It is clear that here the three names have a numerical sense. Dvita already occurs in the RV., once along with Trita (8, 47<sup>16</sup>) and once alone in an Agni hymn (5, 18<sup>2</sup>) and apparently identified with Agni. The name of Trita is not mentioned in the list of deities in the Naighantūka. Yāska (Nir. 4, 6) explains the word to mean 'very proficient in wisdom' (deriving it from ṛtr), or as a numeral referring to the three brothers Ekata, Dvita, Trita. In another passage (Nir. 9, 25) he explains Trita as Indra in three abodes' (i.e. heaven, earth, air).

In examining the evidence of the RV. we find that Indra and Trita in three or four passages perform the same feat, that of slaying a demon. Trita in one is impelled by Indra, while in another Indra is inspired by Trita; and twice Indra is said to have acted for Trita. Further, Trita is associated with the Maruts in the thunderstorm. Moreover, he finds Agni, kindles Agni in heaven, and takes up his abode in human dwellings, clearly as a form of Agni. His abode is remote and hidden, and Soma is there. In the ninth book Trita as the preparer of Soma diverges more from Indra, who is only a drinker of Soma. Corresponding to Trita in the Avesta we find Thrita, who is a man (as Trita becomes in the Indian Epic). He is once (Yasna 9, 10) described as the third man who prepared Haoma (= Soma) for the corporeal world (Āthwa = Aptya being the second) and once (Vend. 20, 2) as the first healer who received from Ahura Mazda ten thousand healing plants which grow round the white Haoma, the tree of immortality. Thrita is also called the son of Śāyuzhdri in two passages (Yasht 5, 72; 13, 113) in one of which he is said to have dwelt in Apām nāpā (as a locality on earth)<sup>3</sup>. This shows that Trita was connected with Soma as early as the Indo-Iranian period. The other side of Trita's activity, the slaughter of the three-headed six-eyed demon or dragon we find in the Avesta transferred to a cognate personage, Thraetaona, who slays the fiendish serpent (Asi dahāka), the three-mouthed, three-headed, six-eyed demon. It is noteworthy that Thraetaona in
his expedition against Dahāka is accompanied by two brothers who seek to slay him on the way. The word *triti* phonetically corresponds to the Greek *tritōs*, the third. That it was felt to have the meaning of 'the third', is shown by the occurrence beside it of Dvita in the RV. and by the invention of Ekata beside these two in the Brāhmaṇas. The collocation of *trīni*, three, with Trita (RV. 9, 102; AV. 5, 1) points in the same direction. Finally, it is highly probable that in one passage of the RV. (6, 44) the word *trita* in the plural means 'third'.

Trita's regular epithet Áptya seems to be derived from āp, water, and hence to be practically equivalent in sense to Apāṃ napāt. Sāyaṇa (on RV. 8, 47) explains it as 'son (putra) of waters'. Another epithet of Trita, *vaibhūvāsa*, which is formed like a patronymic and only occurs once (10, 46) may be connected with Soma.

The above evidence may perhaps justify the conclusion that Trita was a god of lightning, the third or aerial form of fire, originally the middle member of the triad Agni, Vāyū or Indra, Sūrya. By a process of natural selection Indra seems to have ousted this god originally almost identical in character with himself, with the result that Trita occupies but an obscure position even in the RV. If this interpretation be correct, Trita's original connexion with Soma would signify the bringing of Soma from heaven by lightning (as in the Soma-eagle myth: § 37). The paucity of the evidence has led to many divergent views. Only some of these need be mentioned here. ROTH (ZDMG. 2, 224) considered Trita a water and wind god. HILLEBRANDT 10 regards him as a deity of the bright sky. PERRY believes him to be a god of the storm, older than Indra. 11 PISCHEL who formerly (PVS. 1, 186) thought him to be 'a god of the sea and of the waters' has recently (GGA. 1894, p. 428) expressed the opinion that Trita was originally a human healer who was later deified. HARDY thinks Trita is a moon god 12.


MACDONELL, The god Trita; JRAS. 25, 419–96. To the authorities here quoted may be added: LRV. 3, 355–7; KRV. 33, note 112 d; BRI. 11; BDA. 82, n. 3; SP.AP. 262–71; BLOOMFIELD, AJP. 11, 341; PAOS. 1894, clxxix–cxlix; LUDWIG, Rgveda-Forschung 117–9; FAY, PAOS. 1894, clxxiv; AJP. 17, 13; ORV. 143; SBE. 46, 406; HRJ. 104; OERTEL, JASOS. 18, 18–20.

§ 24. Apāṃ napāt. — The deity called Apāṃ napāt is celebrated in one whole hymn (2, 35), is invoked in two verses of a hymn to the waters (10, 304), and is mentioned by name nearly thirty times altogether in the RV. The waters stood around the brilliant Son of waters; the youthful waters go around him the youthful; three divine females desire to give food to him the divine; he sucks the milk of the first mothers (2, 353–5). He, the bull, engendered the embryo in them; he the child, sucks and they kiss him (v. 13); the Son of waters growing strong within the waters, shines forth (v. 7). He shines without fuel in the waters (v. 4; 10, 304). Clothed in lightning the Son of waters has mounted upright the lap of the slanting (waters); carrying him the swift (waters) golden in colour go around him (v. 9; cp. Agni in 1, 954). The Son of waters is golden in form, appearance and colour; coming from a golden womb he sits down and gives food to his worshipper (v. 19). Standing in the highest place he always shines with undimmed (splendour); the swift waters carrying ghee as food to their son, fly
around with their garments (v. 14). The face of the Son of waters, whom the maidens kindle, whose colour is golden, and whose food is ghee, increases in secret (v. 11). He has a cow which in his own house gives good milk (v. 7). Steeds (vyāpaha) swift as thought carry the son of waters (1, 1863). The son of waters is connected with rivers (nādyas: v. 1). The son of waters has engendered all beings, who are merely branches of him (v. 2, 8). In the last stanza of the Apāṃ napāt hymn, the deity is invoked as Agni and must be identified with him. Conversely Agni is in some hymns addressed to him, spoken of as Apāṃ napāt (cp. VS. 8, 24). Agni is the Son of waters (3, 91). He is the Son of waters who sat down on earth as a dear priest (1, 1433). But they are also distinguished. Agni, accordant with the Son of waters, confers victory over Vṛtra (6, 13). The Son of waters unites here with the body of another as it were (2, 3513). The epithet āsiheman, ‘swiftly speeding’, applied three times to Apāṃ napāt, is in its only other occurrence used of Agni.

Apāṃ napāt is mentioned in various enumerations, especially with Aja ekapād (2, 316; 7, 3513), Ahi budhnyā (1, 1865; 2, 316; 7, 3513), and Saviṭ (2, 316; 6, 5013). The epithet is directly applied to Saviṭ at least once (p. 33), perhaps because Saviṭ represents another fertilizing form of Agni.

Apāṃ napāt, who is golden, is clothed in lightning, dwells in the highest place, grows in concealment, shines forth, is the offspring of the waters, comes down to earth, and is identified with Agni, appears to represent the lightning form of Agni which is concealed in the cloud. For Agni, besides being directly called Apāṃ napāt, is also termed the embryo (garbhā) of the waters (7, 93; 1, 703). As such he has been deposited in human dwellings (3, 53), his abode is in the waters (8, 433) and the two fire-sticks engender Agni who is the embryo both of plants and of waters (3, 14). Agni is also called the ‘son of the rock’ (10, 207 cp. 6, 488), which can hardly refer to anything but the lightning which issues from the cloud mountain. As contrasted with his celestial and terrestrial forms, the third form of Agni is described as kindled in the waters, the ocean, the udder of heaven, the lap of the waters (10, 451–3). In fact the abode of the celestial Agni in the waters is one of the best established points in Vedic mythology. The term Āptya applied to Tītra appears to bear a similar interpretation (§ 23).

Apāṃ napāt is not a creation of Indian mythology, but goes back to the Indo-Iranian period. In the Avesta Apāṃ napāt is a spirit of the waters, who lives in their depths, is surrounded by females and is often invoked with them, drives with swift steeds, and is said to have seized the brightness in the depth of the ocean. Spiegel4 thinks this deity shows indications of an igneous nature in the Avesta, and Darmesteter considers him to be the fire-god as born from the cloud in lightning. L. v. Schroeder agrees with this view; some scholars, however, dissent from it. Oldenberg7 is of opinion that Apāṃ napāt was originally a water genius pure and simple, who became confused with the water-born Agni, a totally different being. His grounds are, that one of the two hymns in which he is celebrated (10, 30), is connected in the ritual with ceremonies exclusively concerned with water, while even in 2, 35 his aqueous nature predominates. Hillebrandt9, on the other hand, followed by Hardy10, thinks Apāṃ napāt is the moon, and Max Müller11 that he is the sun or lightning.


357. — 8 Cp. v. Schroeder, WZKM. I. c.; MACDONELL, JRAS. 27, 955–6. — 9 HVM. 1, 365—50; ZDMG. 48, 422f. — 10 HVBP. 38f. — 11 Chips, 47, 410; NR. 500. — RIALE, Revue de Lingu. 3, 49 ff.; WINDSCHMANN in SPIEGEL’s Zoroastrische Studien 177–86; SPIEGEL, Avesta Tr. 3, XIX. LIV; GRV. I, 45; BRV. 2, 17–19; 36–7; 3, 45; Manuel pour étudier le Sanscrit védique, s. v. apām napāt; LRV. 4, 181; GRUPPE, Die griech. Culte 1, 89; BDA. 82, note 2; LRF. 93; MACDONELL, JRAS. 25, 475–6; HRI. 106.

§ 25. Mātariśvan. — Mātariśvan is not celebrated in any hymn of the RV., and the name is found there only twenty-seven times, occurring twenty-one times in the latest portions of that Veda and otherwise only five times in the third and once in the sixth book. In these six older passages Mātariśvan is always either identified with Agni or is the producer of fire. Though the myth of Mātariśvan is based on the distinction between fire and a personification which produces it, the analysis of the myth shows these two to be identical. Nothing even in any of the later books of the RV., can be said to show clearly that the conception of Mātariśvan prevailing in the other Vedas and in the post-Vedic period, had begun to appear in that Veda.

Mātariśvan is a name of Agni in three passages (3, 59, 26; 1, 961). This is probably also the case where the name occurs in the vocative at the end of an Agni hymn (9, 8819). In another verse, where an etymological explanation of the name is given, he is spoken of as one of the forms of Agni: ‘As heavenly germ he is called Tanunāpāt, he becomes Narāśāmsa when he is born; when as Mātariśvan he was fashioned in his mother (amīna mātari: cp. 1, 1419), he became the swift flight of wind’ (3, 2918). It is further said elsewhere: ‘One being the wise call variously: they speak of Agni, Yama, Mātariśvan’ (1, 16416). Once Mātariśvan is also a form of Brhaspati, who is several times identified with Agni (§ 36): ‘That Brhaspati appeared (sam abhavat) at the rite as Mātariśvan’ (1, 1904).

Elsewhere Mātariśvan is distinguished from Agni. ‘He (Agni) being born in the highest heavens appeared to Mātariśvan’ (1, 14318). ‘Agni first appeared to Mātariśvan and Vivasvat; the two worlds trembled at the choosing of the priest’ (1, 311). ‘Agni being the highest of the luminaries has supported with his flame the firmament, when Mātariśvan kindled the oblation-bearer who was concealed’ (3, 519). This verse follows one in which Agni is directly called Mātariśvan. The only explanation of such a discrepancy in contiguous verses of the same hymn, seems to be that the name of a specific personification of Agni in the latter verse is used as an epithet of the generic Agni in the former. Mātariśvan brought to Brhaspati as a gift the glorious offerer, the banner of the sacrificial gathering, the messenger who has two births (1, 604). Mātariśvan brought the one (Agni) from the sky, the eagle wrested the other (Soma) from the rock (1, 936). Mātariśvan brought Agni the adorable priest, the dweller in heaven (3, 213). Mātariśvan (and) the gods fashioned Agni, whom the Brhaspatis produced, as the first adorable (priest) for man (10, 469). Him, the god, Mātariśvan has brought from afar for man (1, 128). Mātariśvan, the messenger of Vivasvat, brought hither from afar Agni Vaisvānara, whom the mighty seized in the lap of the waters (6, 81). Mātariśvan brought from afar the hidden Agni, produced by friction, from the gods (3, 9). Mātariśvan produced by friction the hidden Agni (1, 1419). Agni was produced with friction by Mātariśvan and was set up in human abodes (1, 714, 1481). Indra produced cows for Trita from the dragon and delivered the cowstalls to Dadhyac (and) Mātariśvan (10, 483).

There are a few obscure passages in late hymns which hardly shed any further light on the character of Mātariśvan. In two of these he seems to
be regarded as purifying and enjoying Soma (9, 673; 10, 114) and in another, he is mentioned in an enumeration of Fathers beside whom Indra drank Soma (Vāl. 4). Indra is once compared with him as with a skilful artificer (10, 105), probably in allusion to Mātariśvan's skill in producing Agni (cp. 10, 469, where the same verb taks is used). This notion of skill is probably also present in a verse of the wedding hymn (10, 857), where Mātariśvan is invoked along with other deities to join the hearts of two lovers (cp. Tvaṣṭr, § 38). Finally, in a very obscure verse (10, 109) Mātariśvan is spoken of as 'boundless' and 'wandering' (salita, an adjective several times used with vāta in the AV.), attributes which possibly already represent the conception of Mātariśvan to be found in later times.

Mātariśvan would thus appear to be a personification of a celestial form of Agni, who at the same time is thought of as having like Prometheus brought down the hidden fire from heaven to earth. Hardly anything but lightning can be his natural basis. This would account for his being the messenger of Vivasvat from heaven to earth (6, 84), just as Agni himself is a messenger of Vivasvat (§ 35) between the two worlds. In the AV. Mātariśvan is still found as a mystic name of Agni (AV. 10, 839-40); but generally in that (AV. 12, 151 &c.) and other Saṃhitās, the Brāhmaṇas and all the subsequent literature, the name is a designation of wind. The transition to this conception is to be found in a passage already quoted (3, 29): 'Agni, when as Mātariśvan he was formed in his mother, became the swift flight of wind' and Agni in the air as a raging serpent is elsewhere compared with the rushing wind (1, 79). Such a statement might easily have been taken later to interpret Mātariśvan as the wind.

The word mātariśvan, which is without a cognate in any other Indo-European language, has every appearance of being a purely Indian compound (like mātariśbhamā, ṛjśvan, durgībhīśvan). The Rigvedic poet's explanation of the name as 'he who is formed in his mother' can hardly be dismissed as an etymological conceit, since the word in all likelihood dates from a contemporary phase of language. It probably means 'growing in his mother' (V.āt, to swell, from which we have ātus, child, and other derivatives), Agni being also said to grow (Vṛyṛdh) in his mothers (1, 141). There is a change of accent from the second to the third syllable, probably due to the influence of numerous words in -van (like prātariśvan). By the mother either the lower aranī or the thundercloud might be meant; but the latter is the more probable, as Mātariśvan comes from heaven. Yāska (Nir. 7, 26), who regards Mātariśvan as a designation of Vāyu, analyzes the compound into mātari (= antariṣce) and śvan (from śas to breathe or āśu an to breathe quickly), so as to mean the wind that breathes in the air.

1 ORV. 122, n. 1 thinks the frequently expressed opinion that Mātariśvan is nothing but a form of Agni, has no sure foundation, and regards Mātariśvan simply as the Prometheus of the RV.; cp. ORV. 108, n. 1, and SBE. 46, 123. —
2 Cp. BRV. 1, 27; BDA. 51; OLDENBERG, SBE. 46, 306. — 3 Cp. WHITNEY, Sanskrit Roots p. 176; ROTH, Nirukta 111-3; WEBER, IS. 1, 416; REUTER, KZ. 31, 544-5.
3 KHF. 8.14; MUIR, JRAS. 20, 416, note; OST. 5, 204, note; SCHWARTZ, KZ. 20, 210; GW. s. v.; BRV. 1, 52-7; BRL. 9; KRV. 35; HVBP. 110; EGGLEING, SBE. 12, 186, note 2; ORV. 122-3.

§ 26. Ahi budhnya. — The serpent of the Deep, Ahi budhnya, whose name is mentioned solely in hymns to the Viṣvedevas, is spoken of only twelve times in the RV. and hardly ever alone. He is associated with Aja ekapād, three times with Apām napāt, three times with the ocean (samudra), and twice with Savitṛ. There are only three verses (5, 41).
7, 3416, 17) in which he is invoked alone. When only one other deity is referred to with him, it is either Ṛṣm napāt (1, 186) or Aja ekapād (10, 64). When Ahi budhnya and Aja ekapād are mentioned together in the same verse, they are always (with the slight exception of 10, 6611) in juxtaposition. The most characteristic enumerations in which the name is invoked are: Aja ekapād, Ahi budhnya, the ocean, Ṛṣm napāt, Prśni (7, 3519); Ahi budhnya, Aja ekapād, Tīrta, Ḡbhukṣan, Savītr, Ṛṣm napāt (2, 31'); the ocean, the stream, the space (rajas), the air, Aja ekapād, the thundering flood, Ahi budhnya, and all the gods (10, 6611). Judged by these associates Ahi budhnya would seem to be an atmospheric deity, and he is enumerated in the Naighaṇṭuka (5, 4) among the divinities of the middle or aerial region. But it is only where he is mentioned alone that anything more definite than this can be gathered. In the verse which gives most information about him, the poet exclaims: ‘I praise with songs the serpent born in water (abjam), sitting in the bottom (budhne) of the streams in the spaces’ (7, 3416; cp. 10, 935). This indicates that he dwells in the atmospheric ocean, and Yāska explains buddha as air (Nir. 10, 44). In the verse immediately following he is besought not to give his worshippers over to injury, and these identical words are addressed to him in another passage also (5, 4116). This suggests that there is something hurtful in his nature. Ahi is otherwise a term commonly applied to Vṛtra (§ 68), and Vṛtra enclosing the waters is described as overflowed by the waters or lying in them (ibid.) or at the bottom (budhna) of the air (1, 526). Agni in the space of air is called a raging ahi (1, 791) and is also said to have been produced in the depth (budhne) of the great space (4, 111). Thus it may be surmised that Ahi budhnya was originally not different from Ahi Vṛtra, though he is invoked as a divine being, who resembles Ṛṣm napāt, his baleful aspect only being hinted at. In later Vedic texts Ahi budhnya is allegorically connected with Agni Gārhapatya (VS. 5, 33; AB. 3, 36; TB. 1, 1, 103). In post-Vedic literature Ahi budhnya is the name of a Rudra as well as an epithet of Śiva.

WEBER, IS. 1, 96; ROTH, PW. s. v. budhnya; OST. 5, 336; BRV. 2, 205—6, 401; 3, 24—5; HVBP. 41 (as a name of the moon).

§ 27. Aja ekapād. — This being is closely connected with Ahi budhnya, his name occurring five times in juxtaposition with that of the latter and only once unaccompanied by it (10, 6515). The deities invoked in the latter passage, ‘the thundering Pāvīravī (‘daughter of lightning’: PW.), Ekapād aja, the supporter of the sky, the stream, the oceanic waters, all the gods, Sarasvati, are, however, almost identical with those enumerated in the following hymn: ‘the ocean, the stream, the aerial space, Aja ekapād, the thundering flood, Ahi budhnya, and all the gods’ (10, 6611). These two passages suggest that Aja ekapād is an aerial deity. He is, however, enumerated in the Naighaṇṭuka (5, 6) among the deities of the celestial region. In the AV. Aja ekapāda is said to have made firm the two worlds (AV. 13, 19). The TB. (3, 1, 28) speaks of Aja ekapād as having risen in the east. The commentator on his passage defines Aja ekapād as a kind of Agni, and Durga on Nirukta 12, 29 interprets him as the sun. Yāska himself does not express an opinion as to what Aja ekapād represents, merely explaining Aja as ajana, driving, and ekapād as ‘he who has one foot’ or ‘he who protects or drinks with one foot’. Though hardly any longer an independent deity, Aja ekapād as well as Ahi budhnya receives a libation in the domestic ritual (Pārask. 2, 15). In the Epic Ajaiakapād is both the name of one of the eleven Rudras and an epithet of Śiva.

ROTH1, with whom GRASSMANN agrees2, regards Aja ekapād as a genius
of the storm, translating the name as the ‘one-footed Driver or Stormer’. Bloomfield and Victor Henry think he represents a solar deity. Hardy believes that ‘the goat who goes alone’ is the moon. Bergaigne, interpreting the name as ‘the unborn (a-jä) who has only one foot’, thinks this means he who inhabits the one isolated mysterious world. If another conjecture may be added, the name, meaning ‘the one-footed goat’, was originally a figurative designation of lightning, the ‘goat’ alluding to its agile swiftness in the clouds.

§ 28. Rudra. — This god occupies a subordinate position in the RV., being celebrated in only three entire hymns, in part of another, and in one conjointly with Soma, while his name occurs about 75 times.

His physical features in the RV. are the following. He has a hand (2, 337 Kāc.), arms (2, 333; VS. 16, 1), and firm limbs (2, 3311). He has beautiful lips (2, 335) and (like Piṣan) wears braided hair (1, 1143-5). His colour is brown (bahlhr: 2, 335 &c.). His shape is dazzling (1, 1145), and he is multiform (2, 339). He shines like the brilliant sun, like gold (1, 435). He is arrayed with golden ornaments (2, 339) and wears a glorious multiform necklace (niska: 2, 334). He sits on a car-seat (2, 334). The later Saṁhitās (especially VS. 16) add a number of other traits. He is thousand-eyed (AV. 11, 26, 7, VS. 16, 7). He has a belly, a mouth, a tongue, and teeth (AV. 11, 26). His belly is black and his back red (AV. 15, 17-8). He is blue-necked (VS. 16, 7) and blue-tufted (AV. 2, 276). He is copper-coloured and red (VS. 16, 7). He is clothed in a skin (VS. 3, 61; 16, 51) and dwells in mountains (VS. 16, 2—4).

The RV. often mentions Rudra’s weapons of offence. He is once said to hold the thunderbolt in his arm (2, 333). His lightning shaft (didyut) discharged from the sky traverses the earth (7, 463). He is usually said to be armed with a bow and arrows (2, 3310, 11; 5, 4211; 10, 1235), which are strong and swift (7, 466). He is invoked with Krṣanu (§ 48) and the archers (10, 648); and seems to be intended when Indra is compared with the archer on the car-seat (6, 209, cp. 2, 3311). In the AV. he is also called an archer (1, 281; 6, 933; 15, 537—7). In that and other later Vedic texts his bow, arrow, weapon, bolt, or club are frequently referred to (AV. 1, 285 &c.; SB. 9, 1, 16).

One of the points most frequently mentioned about Rudra is his relationship to the Maruts. He is their father (1, 1145-9; 2, 331); or they are more frequently spoken of as his sons and are also several times called Rudras or Rudriyas. He is said to have generated them from the shining udder of Prśāni (2, 343). But Rudra is never associated, as Indra is, with the warlike exploits of the Maruts, for he does not engage in conflict with the demons. Tryambaka, a common epithet of Śiva in post-Vedic literature, is already applied to Rudra in Vedic texts (VS. 3, 58; SB. 2, 6, 29) and seems to refer to him once even in the RV. (7, 598). The meaning appears to be ‘he who has three mothers’ (cp. 3, 565) in allusion to the threefold division of the universe (cp. GRV. 1, 555). Ambikā, a post-Vedic name of Śiva’s wife, is mentioned for the first time in VS. 3, 5, appearing here, however, not as Rudra’s wife, but as his sister. Umā and Pārvati, regular names of Śiva’s wife, seem first to occur in the TA. and the Kena Upaniṣad.

In a passage of the RV. (2, 16) Rudra is one of several deities identified...
with Agni. He is also identified with Agni in the AV. (7, 871), in the TS. (5, 4, 31; 5, 5, 74), and the SB. (6, 1, 310, cp. 9, 1, 13). The word rudra often occurs as an adjective, in several cases as an attribute of Agni (though rather oftener as an attribute of the Asvins (§ 21). Sarva and Bhava are, among several others, two new names assigned to Rudra in VS. (16, 18, 28). These two also occur in the AV, where their destructive arrows and lightnings are referred to (2, 278; 6, 931; 10, 133; 11, 26 12); but they seem here to have been regarded as deities distinct from one another and from Rudra. Bhava and Sarva are in a Sūtra passage, spoken of as sons of Rudra and are compared with wolves eager for prey (SSS. 4, 201). In VS. 39, 8 Agni, Asani, Paśupati, Bhava, Sarva, Isāna, Mahādeva, Ugradeva, and others are enumerated as gods or forms of one god. Rudra, Sarva, Paśupati, Ugra, Asani, Bhava, Mahān devaḥ are names given to represent eight different forms of Agni (SB. 6, 1, 37; cp. Sāṅkh. Br. 6, 1 &c.), and Sarva, Bhava, Paśupati, and Rudra are said to be all names of Agni (SB. 1, 7, 38). Asani, one of the above names assigned to Agni Kumāra in the SB. (6, 1, 310), is there explained to mean lightning (vidyut) but in the Sāṅkh. Br. it is interpreted as Indra. The epithet paśupati, 'lord of beasts', which Rudra often receives in the VS., AV., and later, is doubtless assigned to him because unhoused cattle are peculiarly exposed to his attacks and are therefore especially consigned to his care.

Rudra is described in the RV. as fierce (2, 339; 10, 1265) and destructive like a terrible beast (2, 3311). He is the ruddy (arusa) boar of heaven (1, 1145). He is a bull (2, 33718), he is exalted (7, 104), strong (1, 431, 1141), strongest of the strong (2, 339), unassailable (7, 461), unsurpassed in might (2, 3310), rapid (10, 925), and swift (1, 1146). He is young (2, 331, 5, 605) and unaging (6, 4910). He is called asura (5, 4214) or the great asura of heaven (2, 16). He is self-glorious (1, 1291; 10, 925), rules heroes (1, 11452 &c.), and is a lord (itiṇa) of this vast world (2, 339) and father of the world (6, 4910). He is an ordainer (6, 461), and by his rule and universal dominion he is aware of the doings of men and gods (7, 465). He makes the streams flow over the earth and, roaring, moistens everything (10, 925). He is intelligent (1, 431), wise (1, 1141), and beneficent (2, 337; 6, 4910). He is several times called 'bountiful', mūdhvas (1, 1141), and in the later Vedas the comparative and superlative of this word have only been found in connexion with Rudra. He is easily invoked (2, 339) and is auspicious, śiva (10, 925), an epithet which is not even in the AV. as yet peculiar to any particular deity.

Malevolence is frequently attributed to Rudra in the RV.; for the hymns addressed to him chiefly express fear of his terrible shafts and depreciation of his wrath. He is implored not to slay or injure, in his anger, his worshippers, their parents, children, men, cattle, or horses (1, 11478), but to spare their horses (2, 339), to avert his great malevolence and his bolt from his worshippers, and to prostrate others with them (2, 331114). He is besought to avert his bolt when he is incensed and not to injure his adorers, their children, and their cows (6, 287, 4624), and to keep from them his cow-slaying, man-slaying missile (2, 339). His ill-will and anger are deprecated (2, 334615), and he is besought to be merciful to the walking food (10, 1691). His worshippers pray that they may be unharmed and obtain his favour (2, 3356). He once even receives the epithet 'man-slaying' (4, 39), and in a Sūtra passage it is said that this god seeks to slay men (AG. 4, 884). Rudra's malevolence is still more prominent in the later Vedic texts. His wrath is frequently deprecated (VS. 3, 61 &c.; AV. 1, 285 &c.). He is invoked not to assail his worshippers with celestial fire and to cause the lightning to
descend elsewhere (AV. 11, 225; 10, 112). He is even said to assail with fever, cough, and poison⁸ (AV. 11, 221, 26; 6, 90 cp. 93). Rudra's wide-mouther, howling dogs, who swallow their prey unchewed, are also spoken of (AV. 10, 110, cp. VS. 16, 28). Even the gods were afraid of the strung bow and the arrows of Rudra, lest he should destroy them (SB. 9, 1, 116). Under the name of Mahādeva he is said to slay cattle (TMB. 6, 97). In another Brāhmaṇa passage he is said to have been formed of a compound of all the most terrible substances (AB. 3, 331). It is probably owing to his formidable characteristics that in the Brāhmaṇas and Śūtras Rudra is regarded as isolated from the other gods. When the gods attained heaven, Rudra remained behind (SB. 1, 7, 3). In the Vedic ritual after offerings to other gods, a remainder is not uncommonly assigned to Rudra (Gobh. GS. 1, 828; Ap. Dh. S. 2, 43). His hosts, which attack man and beast with disease and death, receive the bloody entrails of the victim (SSS. 4, 19), just as blood is poured out to demons as their peculiar share of the sacrifice⁹ (AB. 2, 71). The abode of Rudra in these later texts is commonly regarded as in the north⁰, while that of the other gods is in the east. It is perhaps due to his formidable nature that in the RV. Rudra only appears once associated with another deity (Soma: § 44) as a dual divinity in one short hymn of four stanzas.

In the VS., besides many other epithets too numerous to repeat, several disgraceful attributes of Rudra are mentioned. Thus he is called a 'robber, cheat, deceiver, lord of pilferers and robbers' (16, 20—1). In fact, his character as shown by the various epithets occurring here, approximates to the fierce, terrific, impure, and repulsive nature of the post-Vedic Siva.

Rudra is, however, not purely maleficent like a demon. He is also supplicated in the RV. to avert the anger or the evil that comes from the gods (1, 114; 2, 337). He is besought not only to preserve from calamity (5, 5113), but to bestow blessings (1, 1142; 2, 336), and produce welfare for man and beast (1, 436). His healing powers are mentioned with especial frequency. He grants remedies (2, 3313), he commands every remedy (5, 4211), and has a thousand remedies (7, 463). He carries in his hand choice remedies (1, 1149), and his hand is restorative and healing (2, 337). He raises up heroes by his remedies, for he is the greatest physician of physicians (2, 334), and by his auspicious remedies his worshipper hopes to live a hundred winters (2, 334). He is besought to remove sickness from his worshippers' offspring (7, 463) and to be favourable to man and beast, that all in the village may be well-fed and free from disease (1, 114). In this connexion Rudra has two epithets which are peculiar to him, jālāsa, (perhaps) 'healing' and jālāsa-bhēṣaja, 'possessing healing remedies (1, 431; AV. 2, 276). These medicines against sickness are probably rains¹¹ (cp. 5, 5314; 10, 599). That this attribute was essential to his nature, appears from a verse of a hymn in which various deities are characterized without being named (8, 29): 'One bright, fierce, possessing healing remedies, holds a sharp weapon in his hand'. Rudra's lightning and his remedies are also mentioned together in another verse (7, 463). The healing Rudra with the Rudras is invoked to be favourable (7, 356). The Maruts are also in another verse associated with Rudra as possessing pure and beneficent remedies (2, 3313). The healing power of Rudra is sometimes referred to in the other Samhitās (VS. 3, 59; 16, 5, 49; AV. 2, 276); but much less frequently than his destructive activity. In the Śūtras, sacrifices to him are prescribed for removing or preventing disease in cattle (AG. 4, 840; Kauś. S. 51, 7 &c.).

The evidence of the RV. does not distinctly show with what physical
basis Rudra is connected. He is generally regarded as a storm-god. But his missile is malefient, unlike that of Indra, which is directed only against the enemies of his worshippers. Rudra appears therefore to have originally represented not the storm pure and simple, but rather its baleful side in the destructive agency of lightning. This would account for his deadly shafts and for his being the father or chief of the Maruts or Storm-gods, who are armed with lightning and who are said to have been born 'from the laughter of lightning'. His beneficent and healing powers would be based partly on the fertilizing and purifying action of the thunderstorm and partly on the indirect action of sparing those whom he might slay. Thus the depre-
cations of his wrath gave rise to the euphemistic epithet 'auspicious' (iśva), which became the regular name of Rudra's historical successor in post-Vedic mythology. This explanation would also account for Rudra's close connexion with Agni in the RV.

Weber expresses the view that this deity in the earliest period specially designated the howling of the Storm (the plural therefore meaning the Maruts), but that as the roaring of fire is analogous, Storm and Fire combined to form a god of rage and destruction, the epithets of the Satarudriya being derived partly from Rudra = Storm and partly from Agni = Fire. H. H. Wilson thought that Rudra was 'evidently a form of either Agni or Indra'. L. V. Schroeder regards Rudra as originally the chief of the souls of the dead conceived as storming along in the wind (cp. p. 81). Oldenberg is of opinion that Rudra probably represented in his origin a god of mountain and forest, whence the shafts of disease attack mankind.

The etymology of the word rudra is somewhat uncertain as regards the meaning. It is generally derived from the root rud, to cry, and interpreted as the Howler. This is the Indian derivation. By Grassmann it is connected with a root rudh having the conjectural meaning of 'to shine' or, according to Pischel, 'to be ruddy'. Rudra would thus mean the 'bright' or the 'red one'.

1 Cp. Pischel, ZDMG. 40, 120—1. — 2, 1, 64; 2, 11; 5, 42; 6, 504. 66; 8, 207 (cp. 5, 59; 7, 564. 583). — 3 Vāyu is once said to have generated the Maruts from the sky (1, 1344) and Vātā is approximated to Rudra in 10, 1601.— 4, 1, 27 (cp. Nir. 19, 8; Erl. 136): 5, 25; 4, 3; 5, 33; 8, 613. — 5 Cp. BLOOMFIELD, AJP. 12, 429; PVS. 1, 57; ORV. 335, note 4. — 6 Cp. BDA. 46. 54; GELDNER, FaW. 20. — 7 BLOOMFIELD, AJP. 12, 428—9. — 8 BLOOMFIELD's explanation (AJP. 7, 469—72) of AV. 1, 12 as a prayer to lightning conceived as the cause of fever, headache, and coughs (otherwise WEBER, IS. 4, 409). — 9 HRI. 250, note 2; cp. ORV. 488. 302—3. 324—5. 458. — 10 Cp. ORV. 335, note 3. — 11 The remedy is explained by BRV. 3, 32 as Soma, the draught of immortality, and by BLOOMFIELD (AJP. 12, 425—9) followed by HVB. 83—4, and Hopkins, PAOS. Dec. 1894, cl.vii, as rain (jālaṣa = the miśra of Rudra). — 12 Macdonell, JRAS. 27, 957; Hopkins, PAOS. Dec. 1894, p. cl1; HRI. 112; cp. KRV. 38, note 133. — 13 IS. 2, 19—22. — 14 Translation of the RV., introductions to vol. 1, 26—7. 37—8; cp. vol. 2, 9—10. — 15 WZKM. 9, 248. — 16 ORV. 216—24 (cp. Hopkins, PAOS. L.c.). — 17 KUHN, Herakl Pent. 1777; KZ. 2, 278; 3, 335; Weber, IS. 2, 19—23; MM. HGR. 216; otherwise V. Brandke, ZDMG. 40, 359—61. — 18 Ts. 1, 5; 11; SB. 6, 1, 310; YN. 10, 5; Sātaya on RV. 1, 1141. — 19 GW. — 20 PVS. 1, 57; ZDMG. 40, 120.— 21 Cp. BRI. 14; HVB. 83. — 22 Roth, ZDMG. 2, 222; Whitney, JAOS. 3, 318—9; Oriental and Linguistic Studies 1873, p. 34—5; OST. 4, 290—393. 420; 3; LRV. 3, 320—2; BRV. 5, 31—8. 152—4; v. Schroeder, WZKM. 9, 233—8. 248—52; HI. 99. 578.

§ 29. The Maruts. — These are prominent deities in the RV., thirty-three hymns being dedicated to them alone, seven at least to them conjointly with Indra, and one each to them with Agni and Pūṣan. They form a troop, gāna (a word generally used in connexion with them) or sāridhas (1, 37; &c.),
of deities mentioned only in the plural. Their number is thrice sixty (8, 85^9) or thrice seven (1, 133^6; AV. 13, 1^13). They are the sons of Rudra (p. 74), being also often called Rudras (1, 39^7 &c.) and sometimes Rudriyas (1, 38^7; 2, 34^10 &c.), and of Prśni (2, 34^7; 5, 52^16. 65^5; 6, 66^4), often also receiving the epithet prśnīmatarāh, 'having Prśni for their mother' (1, 23^10 &c.; AV. 5, 21^11). The cow Prśni (5, 52^16), or simply a cow is their mother (8, 83^5) and they bear the epithet gomātāraha, 'having a cow for their mother' (1, 85^3, cp. 8, 20^8). This cow presumably represents the mottled storm-cloud (88^43. 61^B.), and the flaming cows having distended udders with whom they come (2, 34^2), can hardly refer to anything but the clouds charged with rain and lightning. When born from Prśni the Maruts are compared with fires (6, 66^11>). They are also said to have been born from the laughter of lightning (1, 23^12, cp. 38^8). Agni is said to have fashioned or begotten them (6, 3^8; 1, 71^8). Vāyu is once said to have engendered them in the wombs of heaven (1, 134^4), and once they are called the sons of heaven (10, 77^2), being also referred to as the heroes (virāh) of heaven (1, 64^4. 122^1; 5, 54^19) or as the males (marīyāh) of heaven (3, 54^13; 5, 59^6). Once they are said to have the ocean for their mother, sindhumātāraha (10, 78^6 cp. p. 51). Elsewhere they are said to be self-born (1, 168^3; 5, 87^2).

They are brothers among whom none is eldest or youngest (5, 59^4, 60^5), for they are equal in age (1, 165^1). They have grown together (5, 56^5; 7, 58^1) and are of one mind (8, 20^1. 2^1). They have the same birthplace (5, 53^1) and the same abode (1, 165^1; 7, 56^1). They are spoken of as having grown on earth, in air, and heaven (5, 55^7) or as dwelling in the three heavens (5, 60^8). They are also once described as dwelling in the mountains (8, 83^3).

They are associated with the goddess Indrāṇi, who is their friend (10, 86^6), and with Sarasvati (7, 96^2, cp. 39^5). Their connexion is, however, closest with the goddess Rodasi, who is described as standing with them on their car bringing enjoyments (5, 56^8) or simply as standing beside them (6, 66^5). In all the five passages in which her name occurs, she is mentioned with them (cp. 1, 167^1. 5). She therefore appears to have been regarded as their bride (like Sūryā as the bride of the Aśvins). It is probably to this connexion that they owe the epithet bhadrājānāyāḥ, 'having a beautiful wife' (5, 61^4) and their comparison with bridegrooms (5, 60^4) or youthful wooers (10, 78^8).

The brilliance of the Maruts is constantly referred to. They are golden, of sun-like brightness, like blazing fires, of ruddy aspect (6, 66^2; 7, 59^11; 8, 77). They shine like tongues of fire (10, 78^3). They have the form or the brilliance of Agni (10, 84^4; 3, 26^5), with whom they are compared in brightness (10, 78^4). They are like fires (2, 34^1) or kindled fires (6, 66^5) and are expressly called fires (3, 26^4). They have the brilliance of serpents (ahhāhāna-vahāh: 1, 172^1). They shine in the mountains (8, 7^5). They are self-luminous (1, 37^2&c.), an epithet almost exclusively applied to them. They are frequently spoken of in a more general way as shining and brilliant (1, 165^12 &c.).

They are particularly often associated with lightning, vidyut (5, 54^2-3. 11; 1, 64^9). The lightnings smile down on earth when the Maruts shed their ghee (1, 168^8, cp. 5, 52^9). The lightning lows like a cow, as a mother following her calf, when they shed their rain (1, 38^8). They are like lightnings shining with rain (7, 56^13). Lightning is so characteristic of them that all the five compounds of vidyut in the RV. are connected with the Maruts and,
excepting a single instance, with them only. They hold lightnings in their hands (8, 723; 5, 5411), they delight in lightnings and cast a stone (5, 543). Their lances (ṛṣṭi) are often mentioned, and that these represent the lightning is shown by their epithet ṛṣṭīvidyut, "lightning-spearer" (1, 1684; 5, 5213). Less frequently they are spoken of as having axes (1, 372, 883; 5, 331, 572; 8, 201), which are golden (8, 727). Once (ibid.) they are said to bear the bolt (vajra), Indra's peculiar weapon, in their hands. Sometimes they are said to be armed with bows and arrows (5, 531, 572; 8, 20412), once being termed archers shooting an arrow; but as this trait is rare in the numerous hymns addressed to them, it may be borrowed from their father Rudra. The Maruts are decorated with garlands and other ornaments (5, 534). They wear golden mantles (5, 556). Like rich wooers they deck their bodies with golden ornaments (5, 604). Armlets or anklets (khāḍī) are an ornament peculiar to them. With these they shine like the sky with stars and glitter like showers from the clouds (2, 342). One verse describes their appearance more fully than usual. They have spears on their shoulders, anklets on their feet, golden ornaments on their breasts, fiery lightnings in their hands, golden helmets upon their heads (5, 5413).

The Maruts ride on cars which gleam with lightning (1, 881, 3, 5413), which are golden (5, 571), which have golden wheels or fellies (1, 6414, 885), in which are weapons (5, 576), and which have buckets standing in them (1, 872). The courser which draw their cars are ruddy or tawny (1, 882; 5, 574), golden-footed (8, 727), and swift as thought (1, 854). These courser are spotted, as appears from the epithet ṛṣaḍaśva, 'having spotted steeds', which is several times and exclusively connected with the Maruts. More frequently the animals which draw their car are spoken of in the feminine as ṛṣatiḥ (1, 396 &c.). These are in two passages (5, 556, 588), mentioned with the masculine āśvāḥ. The Maruts are also described as having yoked the winds as steeds to their pole (5, 587).

The Maruts are great as the sky (5, 574), they surpass heaven and earth (10, 773), are immeasurable in greatness (5, 582), and no others can reach the limit of their might (1, 167). The Maruts are young (1, 642, 1652; 5, 4213) and unaging (1, 643). They are divine (asura), vigorous, impetuous, without soil (1, 6411) and dustless (6, 668). They are fierce (1, 194), irascible (7, 569), terrible (5, 562; 7, 582), of terrible aspect (5, 569), of fearful form (1, 195, 649), and are terrible like wild beasts (2, 341; cp. p. 75). They are playful like children or calves (1, 166; 7, 5616; 10, 785). They are like black-backed swans (7, 597). They are iron-tusked boars (1, 885); they are like lions (1, 648).

The noise which they make is often referred to (1, 1697 &c.) and is expressly called thunder (1, 2311); but it is also the roaring of the winds (7, 563). At their coming heaven as it were roars with fear (8, 726). They are often described as causing the mountains to quake as well as making the earth or the two worlds tremble. With the fellies of their cars they rend the mountains or the rock (1, 6411; 5, 524). It is when they come with the winds that they cause the mountains to quake (8, 74). They rend trees and like wild elephants devour the forests (1, 393, 647). The forests bow down before them through fear (5, 606). Resistless as mountains they cast down terrestrial and celestial creatures (1, 643). All creatures are afraid of them (1, 858). They speed like boisterous winds (10, 785) and whirr up dust (1, 6413). They make the winds or the noise of the winds (7, 563). They come with the winds (8, 73417) and take them as their steeds (5, 587).

One of the main functions of the Maruts is to shed rain. They are


79
clothed with rain (5, 57). They rise from the ocean and shed rain (1, 389). Milking the unfailing well, they blow through the two worlds with rain (1, 64); 8, 710). Rain follows them (5, 5310). They bring water and impel rain (5, 583). They obscure their brilliance with rain (5, 591). They cover the eye of the sun with rain (5, 591). They create darkness with the cloud when they shed rain (1, 389). They scatter mist when they speed with winds (8, 74). They cause the heavenly pail (5, 536, 598) and the streams of the mountains to pour (5, 597). When they hurry on, the waters flow (5, 586). A terrestrial river receives its name, Maruduṛḍhā, ‘swelled by the Maruts’ (10,759), from this action. The sweat of the sons of Rudra became rain (5, 587). The rain shed by the Maruts is also figuratively referred to as milk (1, 1661), ghee (1, 853; 10, 784), milk and ghee (1, 646); or they are said to pour out the spring (1, 8511) or to wet the earth with honey (5, 548). They raise waters from sea to sky and discharge them from the sky upon the earth (AV. 4, 271). The waters which they shed are often clearly connected with the thunderstorm. Desiring to give water, whirling hail, violent, they rush on with thunder (5, 541). They cause winds and lightnings with their might, milk heavenly gifts from the udder, and fill the earth with milk (1, 645). The spring which they milk, thunders (1, 646). The sky, the ruddy bull, bellows when they shed the waters (5, 586). They cause the stallion to make water (1, 646). They bestow the rain of heaven and shed abundantly the streams of the stallion (5, 83). They assume a golden colour when they make water with the steed (2, 3413). The streams resound with the fellows of the Maruts, when they raise the voice of the cloud (1, 1688). The waters which Indra sheds are called marutvatik, ‘attended by the Maruts’ (1, 801). In connexion with their character as shedders of rain, the Maruts receive the epithets purudrapsāk (5, 573) or drapsināk (1, 645) ‘abounding in drops’ and the frequent sudānavah, ‘dripping well’. They also avert heat (5, 541). But they likewise dispel darkness (7, 5620), produce light (1, 8610), and prepare a path for the sun (8, 76). They are also said to have measured out the air (5, 553), stretched out the terrestrial regions as well as the bright realms of heaven, and held apart the two worlds (8, 83711).

Doubtless in allusion to the sound of the wind, the Maruts are several times called singers (5, 521, 608; 7, 358). They are the singers of heaven (5, 571). They sing a song (1, 191, 1661). While singing they made the sun to shine (8, 2910) and while blowing their pipe they cleft the mountain (1, 8510). For Indra when he slew the dragon, they sang a song and pressed Soma (5, 291, 306). In singing a song they created Indra-might (1, 851). Though their song must primarily have represented the sound of the winds (cp. 4, 224), it is also conceived as a hymn of praise (3, 141). Thus they come to be addressed as priests when in the company of Indra (5, 293), and are compared with priests (10, 783). They were the first to perform the sacrifice as Daśayavas (2536), and they purified Agni in the house of the pious, while the Bhṛgus kindled him (10, 1225). Like the other gods they are several times also spoken of as drinkers of Soma (2, 361; 8, 83812 &c.).

Thus identified with the phenomena of the thunderstorm, the Maruts are naturally intimate associates of Indra, appearing as his friends and allies in innumerable passages. They increase his strength and prowess (3, 358; 6, 1711), with their prayers, hymns, and songs (1, 16512 &c.). They generally assist Indra in the Vṛtra fight (8, 6523; 10, 1133). They help Trīta as well as Indra in slaying Vṛtra (8, 724). They are besought to sing a Vṛtra-slaying hymn (8, 7813). They helped Indra in the conflict with the dragon and with Sambara (3, 4714). With them Indra gains the light (8, 654), found
the cows (1, 63) and supported the sky (7, 473). In fact Indra accomplishes all his celestial exploits in their company (1, 100. 101. 165; 10, 65). Sometimes the Maruts appear more independent in these exploits. Thus they strike Vṛtra, assisted by Indra (1, 231) and are even spoken of alone as having rent Vṛtra joint from joint (8, 713) or as having disclosed the cows (2, 341). They (like the gods in general) have Indra as their chief (1, 231 &c.) and are accompanied by Indra (10, 1283). They are like sons to Indra (1, 1005) and are called his brothers (1, 1705). The Maruts are, however two or three times said to have left Indra in the lurch. They involved him alone in the fight with the dragon (1, 1658) and they abandoned him (8, 713). One verse even gives evidence of hostility between Indra and the Maruts, when the latter say to him: ‘Why dost thou seek to kill us, Indra? Do not kill us in the fray’ (1, 1705 cp. 1716). A Brähmana passage (TB. 2, 7, 111) also refers to a conflict between the Maruts and Indra.

When not associated with Indra, the Maruts occasionally exhibit malevolent traits. They then to some extent participate in the maleficient nature of their father Rudra. They are implored to ward off the lightning from their worshippers nor to let their ill-will reach them (7, 563), and are besought to avert their arrow and the stone which they hurl (1, 1724), their lightning (7, 571), and their cow- and man-slaying bolt (7, 5617). Evil can come from them (1, 398), their anger is deprecated (1, 1711; 7, 585), and they are said to have the wrath of the serpent (1, 6438). But like their father Rudra, the Maruts are supplicated to bring healing remedies, which abide in the Sindhu, the Asīkni, the seas, and mountains (8, 2035-6), and once they are associated with Rudra in the possession of pure, salutary, and beneficent remedies (2, 3313). The remedies appear to be the waters, for the Maruts bestow medicine by raining (5, 5314). Like Agni, they are several times also said to be pure or purifying, pāvaka (7, 5612 &c.).

From the constant association of the Maruts with lightning, thunder, wind, and rain, as well as from other traits mentioned above, it seems clear that they are Storm-gods in the RV. According to the native interpreters the Maruts represent the winds, and the post-Vedic meaning of the word is simply ‘wind’. But in the RV. they hardly represent the winds pure and simple, as some of their attributes are borrowed from cloud and lightning as well. A. KUHN and BENFEY held the Maruts to be personifications of the souls of the dead (cp. p. 77), and with this view MEYER and v. SCHROEDER substantially agree. This origin is historically possible, but the RV. furnishes no evidence in support of it. The etymology being uncertain can throw no additional light on the beginnings of the conception. The root appears to be mar, but whether in the sense of ‘to die’, ‘to crush’, or ‘to shine’, it is hard to decide. The latter meaning, however, seems to accord best with the description given of the Maruts in the RV.

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1 PVS. 2, 73. — 2 On the various names for rain in the RV. see BOHNERBERGER. op. cit. 43-4. — 3 BRV. 2, 391. — 4 PVS. 1, 59. — 5 QQ. on RV. 1, 64. — 6 Indogermanische Mythen 1, 218. — 7 WZKM. 9, 248-9. — 8 Nirukta 11, 13; GRASSMANN, KZ. 16, 161-4; BDA. 112-3; ZDMG. 40, 349-60; KRV. note 136; MM, Vedic Hymns, SBE. 32, xxiv-xxv; HRL. 97.

Roth, ZDMG. 2, 222; WHITNEY, JAOS. 3, 319; OST. 5, 147-54; GRV. 1, 44; BRV. 2, 369-402; BRI. 14; KRV. 39; MMPH. 317-20; HVBL. 83-5; V. BRADKE, FaR. 117-25; ORV. 224-5. 283; HRL. 96-9.

§ 30. Vāyu-Vāta. — Each of the two names of wind Vāyu and Vāta is used to express both the physical phenomenon and its divine personification. But Vāyu is chiefly the god and Vāta the element. Vāyu is celebrated alone in one whole hymn besides parts of others, and in about half

Indo-aryische Philologie. III. 1 A. 6
a dozen others conjointly with Indra. Vātā is invoked only in two short hymns (168 and 186) at the end of the tenth book of the RV. The names of both sometimes occur in the same verse (6, 50; 10, 92). The difference between the two is illustrated by the fact that Vāyu alone is as a god associated with Indra, the two deities being then often invoked as Indravāyu. This couple was regarded as so closely connected by the ancient native interpreters, that either of them might represent the deities of the atmospheric region in the Vedic triad (Nir. 7, 5). Vātā on the other hand, being less fully personified, is only associated with Parjanya (§ 31), whose connexion with the thunderstorm is much more vivid than that of Indra. Different sets of epithets are applied to the two wind-gods, those belonging to Vātā being chiefly expressive of the physical attributes of swiftness and violence.

Few references are made to Vāyu's origin. The two worlds are said to have generated him for wealth (7, 90). He is once spoken of as the son-in-law of Tvāṣṭr (8, 26), though his wife's name is not mentioned (cp. § 38). In the Purusa hymn he is said to have sprung from the breath of the world-giant (10, 90). Vāyu is rarely connected with the Maruts. He is, however, once said to have generated them from the wombs of heaven (1, 134) and to be accompanied by them (1, 142) as well as by Pūṣan and the Viśvedevas. His personal attributes are rather indefinite. He is beautiful (1, 2) and with Indra is spoken of as touching the sky, swift as thought, and thousand-eyed (1, 23). He is once said to have roaring velocity (10, 100). Vāyu has a shining car drawn by a team or by a pair of red (rohita) or ruddy (aruna) steeds. His team consists of 99 (4, 48), 100 or even 1000 (4, 46) horses yoked by his will. The attribute niyutvat, 'drawn by a team', often occurs with reference to Vāyu or his car, being otherwise used only once or twice in each case with reference to Indra, Agni, Pūṣan, or the Maruts. Vāyu's car, in which Indra is his companion (4, 46; 48; 7, 91), has a golden seat and touches the sky (4, 46). Like the other gods, Vāyu is fond of Soma, to which he is often invited to come with his teams and the first draught of which he obtains as his share (also in company with Indra: 1, 135), for he is the swiftest of the gods (SB. 13, 1, 2 &c.)

The AB. (2, 25) tells a story of how in a race which the gods ran for the first draught of Soma, Vāyu reached the goal first and Indra second. He is in the RV. also called a protector of Soma (10, 85) and has the characteristic epithet sūcīpā, 'drinking the clear (Soma draught)', an epithet which Indra once shares with him. He is also once connected with the 'nectar-yielding' (sabardughā) cow (1, 134). Vāyu grants fame, offspring, wealth in steeds, oxen, and gold (7, 90). He disperses foes (4, 48) and is invoked for protection by the weak (1, 134).

Vātā, as the ordinary name of wind, is celebrated in a more concrete manner. His name is frequently connected with the root va, to blow, from which it is derived. One of the hymns devoted to his praise (10, 168) describes him as follows. Shattering everything and thundering, his din presses on; he goes along whirling up the dust of the earth; he wanders in the air on his paths; he does not rest even a day. Firstborn, he is a friend of the waters; but the place of his birth is unknown. This deity wanders where he lists; one hears his roaring, but his form one does not see (cp. 1, 164). He is the breath of the gods (cp. 7, 87; 10, 92) and is worshipped with oblations.

Vātā, like Rudra, also wafts healing and prolongs life, for he has the treasure of immortality in his house (10, 186). This healing power of wind doubtless represents its purifying character (cp. p. 77). The activity of wind
is chiefly mentioned in connexion with the thunderstorm (4, 1712; 5, 834; 10, 1651, 2). Blasts of wind being coincident with the appearance of lightnings and preceding the reappearance of the sun, Vāta is spoken of as producing ruddy lights (10, 1681) and of making the dawns to shine (1, 1344). The swiftness of wind often supplies a comparison for the speed of the gods (4, 1712; 5, 413; 9, 975). Its noise is also frequently mentioned (4, 224; 8, 913; 10, 1684). The name of Vāta has been identified with that of the Germanic god of storm and battle, Odin or Wodan6, which is explained as formed with a derivative suffix from the cognate base. But this identification seems to be very doubtful.  

1 1, 1341, 1537; 4, 461; 5, 433; 7, 921; 8, 892. — 2 OLDENBERG, ZDMG. 39, 55, note 1; HVM. 1, 260. — 3 Cp. OLDENBERG, SBE. 46, 244. — 4 GROHMANN, KZ. 10, 274; ZIMMER, ZDA. 19, 170–2. 179–82; MANNHARDT, ibid. 22, 4; MOG in Paul’s Grundriss 1075; STOKES, BB. 19, 74; MACDONELL, JRAS. 25, 488; V. SCHROEDER, WZKM. 9, 239. — 5 Cp. BDA. p. x; IF. 5, 272.  

OST. 5, 143–6; KRV. 38; BRV. 1, 24–8; SP. AP. 159–8; HVB. 82–3; ORV. 225–6.

§ 31. Parjanya. — This god plays a very subordinate part among the deities of the RV., being celebrated in only three hymns, while the name is mentioned less than thirty times. His praises are also sung in one hymn of the AV. (4, 15), which, however, chiefly consists of verses from the RV. In the following passages the word parjanya can only have the appellative sense of ‘rain-cloud’. ‘This same water rises and descends day by day; the rain-clouds (parjanyaḥ) quicken the earth, the fires quicken heaven’ (1, 1643). The Maruts ‘even during the day cause darkness by the water-carrying rain-cloud, when they inundate the earth’ (1, 389); ‘they poured out the pail of heaven, they discharge the raincloud through the two worlds, the rain pervades the dry places’ (5, 53). Brhaspati is besought to cause the cloud to rain and to send the rain-charged (prṣimantam) cloud (10, 981, 8). Soma flows like the rain-charged cloud’ (9, 29) and the drops of Soma speed ‘like the rains of the cloud’ (9, 22). In the AV. the rain-shedding cow Vaśā is thus addressed: ‘The rain-cloud is thy udder, o excellent goddess, the lightnings are thy teats, O Vaśā’ (AV. 10, 10). In all such passages the native commentators explain parjanya by megha, ‘cloud’. On the other hand, parjanya is used to explain dyaus in VS. 12, 6 and stanayinu, ‘thunder’ in SB. (14, 5, 50). In some cases it is hard to say whether we have the appellative or the personified meaning. Thus the might of Agni is said to resound like parjanya (8, 913); and the frogs are spoken of as uttering their voices when roused by parjanya (7, 103). In most passages, however, the word clearly represents the personification which presides over the rain-cloud, while generally retaining the attributes belonging to the phenomenon. The latter then becomes an udder, a pail (kośa) or water-skin (dyāti: 5, 838, 9; 7, 101). The personification is to a considerable extent theriomorphic, Parjanya being often spoken of as a bull, though with a certain confusion of gender (probably because clouds are otherwise cows). He is a roaring bull with swift-flowing drops, who places his seed in the plants as a germ (5, 831, cp. 2–9; AV. 4, 15). The clouds (abhiratn) impelled by the wind come together, and the roaring waters of the great bellowing aqueous (nabhasvataḥ) bull delight the earth (AV. 4, 15). Sometimes Parjanya is like a barren cow, sometimes he is productive, disposing of his body according to his wish (7, 101). The shedding of rain is his most prominent characteristic. He flies around with a watery car and loosens and draws downwards the water-skin (5, 837). Like a charioteer urging on his horses, he displays his rainy messengers; when he sheds rain water, the roar of the lion resounds from afar;
with thunder he comes shedding rain-water as our divine (asura) father (5, 83\(^2\) 6). He is besought for rains (7, 101\(^2\)) and is implored to withhold rain after shedding it (5, 83\(^9\)). It is, however, implied that the action of Parjanya, as well as of the Maruts, in shedding rain is subordinate to that of Mitra and Varuṇa (5, 63\(^3\) 6). He is several times said to thunder (5, 83\(^9\)). Thundering he strikes down trees, demons, evil-doers; the whole world is terrified at his mighty weapon (5, 83\(^2\)). He and Vāta are the wielders of mighty thunder (10, 66\(^9\)). Parjanya is also associated with lightning, though less frequently than with thunder. The winds blow forth, the lightnings fall, when Parjanya quickens the earth with his seed (5, 83\(^4\)). Parjanya thunders with lightning in the (aerial) ocean (AV. 19, 30\(^3\)). He also appears to be meant, in a hymn of the RV. to the Viśvedevas, by the god who thunders and roars, rich in clouds and water, who with lightning excites the two worlds, besprinkling them (5, 42\(^14\)).

As the shedder of rain Parjanya is naturally in a special degree the producer and nourisher of vegetation. When he quickens the earth with his seed, the plants spring up; in his activity are plants of every form; he has produced plants for nourishment (5, 83\(^2\) 5\(^{10}\); cp. 6, 52\(^6\); AV. 4, 15\(^3\) 3\(^{15}\); 8, 7\(^{21}\)). He is the fructifier and increaser of plants; protected by the god they bear good fruit (7, 101\(^1\) 5). Reeds and grass are produced by his action (7, 102\(^4\); cp. 5, 75\(^{15}\); AV. 1, 21\(^{1}\) 3\(^{1}\); 19, 30\(^5\)). Parjanya places the germ not only in plants but in cows, mares, and women (7, 102\(^2\)), and is invoked to bestow fertility (5, 83\(^7\) cp. 6, 52\(^6\)). He is the bull that impregnates everything: in him is the soul of what moves and stands (7, 101\(^2\); cp. 1, 111\(^5\)). He is even described as a self-dependent sovereign, who rules over the whole world, in whom all beings and the three heavens are established, and in whom the threefold waters flow (7, 101\(^2\) 4\(^{9}\)). Owing to his generative activity Parjanya several times receives the epithet of ‘father’ (7, 101\(^3\); 9, 82\(^3\); AV. 4, 15\(^2\); 12, 1\(^1\) 6). He is once called ‘our divine (asura) father’ (5, 83\(^6\)); and in another passage ‘the occult power of the Asura’ (5, 63\(^3\) 7) perhaps refers to him.

His wife is by implication the Earth (5, 83\(^3\); 7, 101\(^3\); cp. 1, 160\(^3\)). The AV. (12, 1\(^2\)) states that Earth is the mother, Parjanya the father\(^2\), but elsewhere explicitly calls Vaśā his wife (10, 16\(^6\)). In these respects as well as in the theriomorphic conception of him as a bull, his relation to thunder, lightning, and rain, he approximates to the character of Dyaus (cp. 10, 45\(^1\); 2, 4\(^6\); 27\(^{13}\)) whose son he is once called (7, 102\(^1\)). Parjanya himself is said to produce a calf (vatsam), the germ of plants (7, 101\(^1\); cp. v. 3; 5, 83\(^3\)), who perhaps represents lightning. Soma may, however, be meant, for his father is once (9, 82\(^3\)) said to be Parjanya\(^3\), and he is spoken of as ‘increased by Parjanya’ (9, 113\(^3\)).

Parjanya is associated with various other deities. His connexion is closest with Vāta, who, with the single exception of Agni in one passage, is the only god forming a dual divinity with him (§ 44). The Maruts are also a few times invoked with Parjanya (5, 63\(^6\); 83\(^3\)) and are called upon to sing his praises (AV. 4, 15\(^1\)). Agni is celebrated with him in two verses of one hymn (6, 52\(^6\); 16; cp. § 44). Indra has much in common with the ‘rainy’ Parjanya, being compared with him in this respect (8, 6\(^3\)). The two gods have in fact much the same natural basis, the connexion with which is, however, much clearer in the case of Parjanya (cp. p. 82).

Parjanya’s name is of uncertain derivation. But it is still usually identified, owing to the similarity of character, with that of the Lithuanian thundergod Perkūnas\(^3\), though the phonetic difficulties of the identification cannot be explained. The freshness of the conception in the RV. renders it probable that
if the two names are really connected, their Indo-European form was still an 
appellative. It seems clear that in the RV. the word is an appellative of 
the thundering rain-cloud as well as the proper name of its personification, 
the god who actually sheds the rain. The senses of rain-cloud and rain-god 
both survive through the Brāhmaṇas into the later language. The native 
dictionaries explain the appellative as ‘thunder-cloud’ (garjanmṛgha &c.), while 
the deity is sometimes found identified with Indra in the Mahābhārata.

1 Cp. OO. 1, 223. — 2 The TA. 1, 10, 12 says that Bhāmi or Earth is the wife 
and Vyoman or Sky is the husband. — 3 Cp. BLOOMFIELD, FaR. 153. — 4 OO. 
1, 223; ZEMMER, ZDA. 19, 164 f., CP. AIL. 42 f.; LRV. 3, 322 f.; ZDMG. 32, 314 f.; 
KRV. note 139; HERT, IF. 1, 481—2.

BELER, OO. 1, 214—29; DELBRÜCK, ZRP. 1865, p. 275 f.; ROTH, ZDMG. 24, 
302—5 (on RV. 1, 165); OST. 5, 140—2; BRV. 3, 25—30; KRV. 40; BRI. 14; 
WC. 56 f.; HVB. 80—2; ORV. 226; SBE. 46, 105; HRL. 103—4.

§ 32. Āpāh. — The Waters, Āpāh, are lauded in four hymns of the RV. 
(7, 47. 49; 10, 9, 30), as well as in a few scattered verses. They are also 
invoked in many detached verses along with other deities. The personification 
is only incipient, hardly extending beyond the notion of their being mothers, 
young wives, and goddesses who bestow boons and come to the sacrifice. 
They are goddesses who follow the path of the gods (7, 473). Indra armed 
with the bolt dug out a channel for them (7, 474. 49'), and they never 
infringe his ordinances (7, 473). They are also said to be under the commands of 
Savitṛ (p. 32). They are celestial, as well as flowing in channels, and have 
the sea for their goal (7, 492). It is implied that they abide where the gods 
are and the seat of Mitra and Varuṇa is (10, 30'). They are beside the sun 
and the sun is with them (1, 2317). King Varuṇa moves in their midst, looking 
down on the truth and falsehood of men (7, 492). In such passages at least, 
the rain-waters must be meant (HRL. 99). But the Naighantuka (5, 3) enumerates 
the waters among the terrestrial deities only (cp. YN. 9, 20).

Agni is often described as dwelling in the waters (p 92). He is said to 
have entered into them (7, 49'). As mothers they produce Agni (10, 91', 
cp. 27; AV. 1, 33'), one of whose forms is called ‘Son of Waters’ (§ 24). The 
waters are mothers (10, 17'; 1, 2316'), who are the wives of the world, equal 
in age and origin (10, 30'). They are besought to give their auspicious fluid 
like loving mothers (10, 9'). They are most motherly, the producers of all 
that is fixed and moves (6, 50').

The waters cleanse and purify; these goddesses bear away defilement; 
the worshipper comes up out of them pure and cleansed (10, 17'). They 
are even invoked to cleanse from moral guilt, the sins of violence, cursing, 
and lying (1, 2322 = 10, 9'). They are remedial (6, 507), bestowing remedies 
and long life, for all remedies, immortality and healing are contained in them 
(10, 95—7; 1, 2319—21). They watch over man’s health in the house (HGS. 
2, 4'). They dispose of boons and wealth and bestow excellent strength and 
immortality (10, 9'; 3012'). Their blessing and aid is often implored (7, 474. 
49'; 10, 9. 3011'), and they are invited to seat themselves along with the 
Son of waters on the sacrificial grass at the offering of the soma-priest (10, 
3014—15).

The waters are several times associated with honey. As mothers they 
mix their milk with honey (1, 2316'). The wave of the waters is rich in honey; 
dripping with ghee it became the drink of Indra, whom it exhilarated (7, 47'). 
Apāh napāt is besought to give waters rich in honey, by which Indra grew 
to heroic strength (10, 30'). The waters are invoked to pour the wave, rich 
in honey and gladdening the gods, for Indra who released them from con- 
finement; the wave which intoxicates, the draught of Indra, which is produced 85
in the sky (10, 30\(^5\)-2). These passages appear to show that sometimes at least the celestial waters were regarded as containing or identical with the heavenly Soma, the beverage of Indra. In other passages the waters used in preparing the terrestrial Soma seem to be meant. When they appear bearing ghee, milk, and honey, they are accordant with the priests, bearing well-pressed Soma for Indra (10, 30\(^5\)). Soma delights in them as a young man in lovely maidens; he approaches them as a lover; they are maidens who bow down before the youth (10, 30\(^5\)-2).

OST. 5, 24, note. 343. 345; BRV. 1, 260; DARMESTETER, Haurvātāt et Ameretāt 73-4; WC. 56; Šp. AP. 153-5; ORV. 242.

C. TERRESTRIAL GODS.

§ 33. Rivers. — Beside the divine Waters, deified rivers occupy a not unimportant position in the RV. The whole of one hymn (10, 75) celebrates the Sindhu or Indus with the exception of the fifth verse, in which several of its tributaries are invoked besides other streams, while in the sixth verse a number of other rivers are mentioned as affluents of the Indus. Another entire hymn (3, 33) is devoted to the invocation and praise of the sister streams Vipās and Sutudrī.

The Sarasvāti is, however, more greatly celebrated than any other river. But though the personification in this case goes much further than in the others, the connexion of the goddess with the river is in the RV. always present to the minds of the poets. Sarasvatī is lauded in three hymns of the RV. and in numerous detached verses. Sarasvatī, Sarayu, and Sindhu are invoked as great streams (10, 64\(^2\)) and elsewhere (10, 75\(^5\)) Gāṅgā, Yamunā, Sarasvatī, Sutudrī, Paruṣūni, and others known and unknown, altogether twenty-one, are addressed. Kings and peoples living on the banks of the Sarasvatī are referred to (7, 96\(^2\); 8, 21\(^18\)). Sarasvatī, an iron fort, flows with fertile flood, a stream (sindhu) surpassing all other waters in greatness; she alone of rivers appeared pure, flowing from the mountains, from the (celestial) ocean (7, 95\(^1\)-\(^2\); cp. 5, 43\(^11\)). She tears away with her mighty waves the peaks of mountains, and her immense and impetuous flood moves roaring (6, 61\(^2\)-\(^9\)). She is distinguished by greatness among the great, she is the most active of the active, and is implored not to withhold her milk (6, 61\(^13\)). The poet prays that he may not be removed from her to fields which are strange (6, 61\(^14\)). She has seven sisters and is sevenfold (6, 61\(^10\)-\(^12\)). She is one of seven, a mother of streams\(^2\) (7, 36\(^6\)). She is the best of mothers, of rivers, and of goddesses (2, 41\(^16\)). She is called pāvīravi, an epithet (applied also to tanyatu, thunder', in 10, 65\(^13\)) probably meaning 'daughter of lightning', and is said (6, 49\(^7\)) to be the wife of a hero (probably Sarasvatī). She fills the terrestrial regions and the wide atmospheric space and occupies three abodes (6, 61\(^11\)-\(^12\)). She is invoked to descend from the sky, from the great mountain, to the sacrifice (5, 43\(^11\)). The last three passages (cp. also 7, 95\(^1\)) seem to allude to the notion of a celestial origin, like that of Gāṅgā in post-Vedic mythology. She is once called asurā or divine (7, 96\(^4\)). The goddess comes to the sacrifice on the same chariot as the Fathers and seats herself on the sacrificial grass (10, 17\(^8\)-\(^9\)). Even here she must be conceived as the river goddess, for in the following two verses the waters are invoked to cleanse from defilement.

She herself is a purifier (1, 3\(^10\)). She is besought to come 'swelling with streams' (6, 52\(^9\)) and, along with the waters, the bestowers of wealth, progeny,
Terrestrial Gods. 33. Sarasvatī.

and immortality, to grant vitality (10, 301). She bestows vitality and offspring (2, 4117) and is associated with deities who assist procreation (10, 1842). She is also said to have given a son named Divodāsa to Vadhrasya (6, 611). Her unfailing breast (cp. AB, 4, 1) yields riches of every kind (1, 16419). She is often said to bestow wealth, plenty, and nourishment (7, 95; 8, 211; 9, 6732; 10, 1789), and several times receives the epithet subhaga, 'bountiful' (1, 897; 7, 956; 8, 211). As a mother (ambā) she grants reputation to the unrenowned (2, 4110). She stimulates, directs, and prospers the devotions of her worshippers (1, 311; 2, 38; 6, 611). She is invoked along with the goddesses of prayer (7, 3711; 10, 6519). She destroys the revilers of the gods, is terrible, and a Vṛtra-slayer (6, 6117). But to her worshippers she affords protection and conquers their enemies (7, 955; 2, 308; 6, 497).

Sarasvatī is often invoked with other deities. Besides Pūṣan and Indra, she is particularly associated with the Maruts (3, 5413; 7, 95; 395; 401) and is said to be accompanied by them (2, 308) or to have them as her friends (7, 967). She is also once in the RV. connected with the Āśvins. When the latter aided Indra, Sarasvatī is said to have refreshed him (10, 1313). With reference to the same myth the VS. (19, 12) states that when the gods celebrated a healing sacrifice, the Āśvins as physicians and Sarasvatī through speech (vācā) communicated vigour to Indra. The VS. even speaks of Sarasvatī as the wife of the Āśvins (19, 94). Sarasvatī is several times associated in the eighth and ninth verses of the āpīr and āpra hymns with the sacrificial goddesses Ijā and Bhārati (with whom she forms a triad), and sometimes also with Mahī and Hotrā. This association may have been due to the sacred character of the river. Allusion is made to Agni being kindled for sacrifice on the banks of the Sarasvatī and Drṣadvatī (3, 2346); and the AB. (2, 19) refers to a sacrifice performed by Rṣis on the Sarasvatī. Hence on the banks of the Sarasvatī there were perhaps places of worship of the Bharatas; in that case, Bhārati, the personified offering of the Bharatas, would naturally find a fixed place along with Sarasvatī in the Āpīr litany which accompanied the animal sacrifice.

Though there is nothing to show distinctly (cp. 7, 3511) that Sarasvatī is ever anything more, in the RV. than a river goddess, we find her identified in the Brāhmaṇas (SB. 3, 9, 17; AB. 3, 110), with Vac, Speech, and in post-Vedic mythology she has become goddess of eloquence and wisdom, invoked as a muse and regarded as the wife of Brahmā. The transition from the older to the later conception is perhaps to be found in passages like VS. 19, 12 quoted above.

There has been much controversy as to the identity of the stream of which the goddess Sarasvatī is a personification. The name is identical with that of the Avestan river Haraqaiti in Afghanistan, and it may have been the latter river which was first lauded as the Sarasvatī. But Roth (PW.), Grassmann (GW.), Ludwig11, and Zimmer (AII. 10) are of opinion, that in the RV. Sarasvatī usually and originally meant a mighty stream, probably the Indus (Sarasvatī being the sacred and Sindhu the secular name), but that it occasionally designates the small stream in Madhya deśa, to which both its name and its sacred character were in later times transferred. Max Möller12 believes it to be identical with this small river Sarasvatī, which with the Drṣadvatī formed the boundaries of the sacred region Brahmāvarta and which loses itself in the sands of the desert, but in Vedic times reached the sea. According to Oldham13 a survey of ancient river-beds affords evidence that the Sarasvatī was originally a tributary of the Šutudrī (the modern Sutlej), and that when the latter left its
old bed and joined the Vipās, the Sarasvatī continued to flow in the old bed of the Sutudrī.

Sarasvatī has a male correlative named Sarasvatī, who after the praises of the river goddess have been sung in three verses of one hymn (7, 96), is invoked in the next three by worshippers desiring wives and offspring, protection and plenty. Here his fertilizing waters and even his exuberant breast are referred to. In another passage (1, 164\textsuperscript{2}9), Sarasvatī, here apparently a name of the bird Agni\textsuperscript{15} is spoken of as refreshing with rain. Roth (PW.) regards him as a guardian of the celestial waters who bestows fertility. Hillebrandt\textsuperscript{16} identifies Sarasvatī with Apām napāt (= Soma, the moon) and Hardy\textsuperscript{17} expresses a similar view.


§ 34. Prthivi. — The Earth, Prthivi, being, as has been shown (p. 22), generally celebrated conjointly with Dyaus, is lauded alone in only one short hymn of three stanzas in the RV. (5, 84) and in a long and beautiful one in the AV. (12, 1). The personification is but slight, the attributes of the goddess being chiefly those of the physical earth. According to the RV. she abounds in heights, bears the burden of the mountains, and supports the trees of the forest in the ground (ksma). She quickens the soil, for she scatters rain, and the showers of heaven are shed from the lightning of her cloud. She is great (maht), firm (dṛṣṭha) and shining (arjun).

The meaning of Prthivi is ‘the broad one’; and a poet of the RV. (2, 13) alludes to the etymology when he says that Indra upheld the earth (prthi) and spread it out (paprathat). The TS. (7, 1, 5) and TB. (1, 1, 3) in describing the origin of the earth, expressly derive the name of Prthivi from the root prath, to extend, because she is extended.

Prthivi is spoken of as ‘kindly Mother Earth’, to whom the dead man in a funeral hymn (10, 18\textsuperscript{20}), is exorted to go. When mentioned with Dyaus, Prthivi frequently receives the epithet of ‘mother’ (cp. §§ 11. 44).

Bruce, JRAS. 1862, p. 321; OST. 5, 21–2; BRV. 1, 4–5; BDA. 48; Bollensen, ZDMG. 41, 494–5; HVBP. 25–6; Thurneysen, IF. 4, 84.

§ 35. Agni. — The chief terrestrial deity is Agni, being naturally of primary importance as the personification of the sacrificial fire, which is the centre of the ritual poetry of the Veda. Next to Indra he is the most prominent of the Vedic gods. He is celebrated in at least 200 hymns of the RV., and in several besides he is invoked conjointly with other deities.

As his name is also the regular designation of fire, the anthropomorphism of his physical appearance is only rudimentary, his bodily parts having a clear reference to the phenomena of terrestrial fire mainly in its sacrificial aspect. He is butter-backed (5, 4\textsuperscript{3} &c.), butter-faced (3, 1\textsuperscript{18} &c.) and beautiful-tongued (1, 14\textsuperscript{3}). He is butter-haired (8, 49\textsuperscript{3}), flame-haired (1, 45\textsuperscript{6} &c.) or tawny-haired (3, 2\textsuperscript{13}), and has a tawny beard (5, 7\textsuperscript{7}). He has sharp (8, 49\textsuperscript{3} &c.) or burning jaws (1, 58\textsuperscript{3} &c.), golden (5, 2\textsuperscript{1}) or shining teeth (5, 7\textsuperscript{4}) and iron grinders (10, 87\textsuperscript{2}). He is once described as footless and headless (4, 1\textsuperscript{1}),
but elsewhere he is said to have a burning head (7, 34) or three heads and seven rays (1, 146); 2, 5). He faces in all directions (2, 34 &c.). His tongue is often mentioned (8, 618 &c.). He is also said to have three tongues (3, 20) or seven (VS. 17, 79), his steeds also being seven-tongued (3, 6). A name was later given to each of these seven tongues 1. Butter is Agni’s eye (3, 267); he is four-eyed (1, 31), thousand-eyed (1, 79), and thousand-horned (6, 1). In his hand he bears many gifts for men (1, 72). Like Indra, he has the epithet sahasra-mukha (8, 19). He is called an archer (4, 41) or is compared with an archer (1, 70), who sharpens his flame like a blade of iron (6, 35).

He is often likened to various animals, in most cases doubtless with a view to indicating his functions rather than representing his personal form. He is frequently called a bull (1, 585 &c.). He is a strong bull with a mighty neck (5, 24). As such he bellows (10, 8), abounds in seed (4, 5), and is provided with horns (5, 1; 6, 16), which he sharpens (8, 49), which he shakes, and which make him difficult to seize (1, 146). He is many times spoken of or alluded to when born as a calf (vatasa). He is also often compared with (1, 58 &c.) or directly called a steed (1, 49); 6, 12). The tail which he agitates like a horse (2, 4) is doubtless his flame. When purified by sacrificers he is compared with a groomed horse (1, 60 &c.). Sacrificers lead (3, 21), excite, and set him in motion like a horse (7, 7 &c.). He is the horse they seek to tame and direct (2, 5; 3, 27). He is kindled like a horse that brings the gods (3, 27). He is attached to the pole at places of sacrifice (2, 2) or to the pole of the rite (1, 143). He is yoked in order to waft the sacrifice to the gods (10, 517). He is also compared with (3, 63) or directly called a neighing steed (1, 368). He is further likened to a horse as conquering (8, 91) or causing to escape from dangers (4, 2). Agni is, moreover, like a bird. He is the eagle of the sky (7, 15) and a divine bird (1, 164). As dwelling in the waters he resembles the aquatic bird hayasa (1, 65). He takes possession of the wood as a bird perches on a tree (1, 66; 6, 35; 10, 912). He is winged (1, 585; 2, 21), his course is a flight (6, 37, 46 &c.), and he darts with rapid flight to the gods (10, 61). He is once described as a raging serpent (1, 79).

Agni is besides frequently compared with inanimate objects. Like the sun, he resembles gold (2, 2; 7, 3). When he stretches out his tongue (6, 31) he is like a hatchet, to which he is elsewhere also several times compared (1, 127 &c.). He resembles (1, 141 &c.) or is directly called a car (3, 115), as bringing riches (1, 583; 3, 155) or as being formidable in battle (1, 66). He seems to be thought of as a car directed by others, for he is conducted to the sacrifice like a laden car (10, 176). He is even compared to wealth (1, 586, 60) or to wealth acquired by inheritance (1, 73).

Wood (2, 76) or ghee (7, 3) is his food, melted butter is his beverage (2, 76; 10, 69). He is nourished by ghee poured into his mouth (3, 21; 5, 113 &c.) and is an eater of oil (AV. 1, 7). He eats and chews the forests with sharp tooth (1, 143) or eats and blackens them with his tongue (6, 60; 10, 79). He is all-devouring (8, 426). He is nourished three times a day (4, 12, cp. 1, 140; 7, 11). He is sometimes spoken of as the mouth and the tongue by which the gods eat the sacrifice (2, 114); and his flames are spoons with which he besprinkles or honours the gods (1, 76; 10, 6). But he is more frequently asked to eat the offerings himself (3, 211; 286). With upright, god-ward form he strives after the ghee that is offered (1, 127). Though the regular offering to him is fuel or butter, he is sometimes, and then nearly always with other gods, invited to drink the Soma juice (1, 14).
III. RELIGION, WELTL. WISSENSCH. U. KUNST. I A. VEDIC MYTHOLOGY.

198. 211, 3; 2, 364). In one hymn he is called somagopa, 'guardian of Soma' (10, 458). He is invited to come to the sacrifice (10, 983) and is often spoken of as sitting down on the sacrificial grass along with the gods (3, 147; 5, 112; 265; 7, 114; cp. 439).

Agni's brightness is naturally much dwelt upon. He is of brilliant lustre (2, 103; &c.), brilliant-flamed (6, 103), bright-flamed (7, 159; &c.), clear-flamed (8, 431), and bright-coloured (1, 140; 5, 24). He has a golden form (4, 310, 10, 204). He shines like the sun (1, 149; 7, 39). His lustre is like the rays of the dawn and the sun and like the lightnings of the rain-cloud (10, 914). He shines even at night (5, 71). Like the sun he dispels the darkness with his rays (8, 431). He is a destroyer of darkness and sees through the gloom of the night (1, 943; 7, 93). Kindled he opens the gates of darkness (3, 53). The earth enveloped in darkness and the sky become visible when Agni is born (10, 883). For he is kindled at dawn and is the only individual god who is described as 'waking at dawn', usarbudh (though the gods collectively sometimes receive this epithet).

On the other hand, Agni's course, path, or track, and his fellies are black (1, 141; 2, 437; 6, 7; 7, 85; 8, 239), and his steeds make black furrows (1, 140). Driven by the wind he rushes through the wood (1, 584-5), invades the forests and shears the hairs of the earth (1, 65), shaving the earth as a barber a beard (10, 142).

His flames are like the roaring waves of the sea (1, 448). His sound is like the Wind or the thunder of Heaven (5, 259; 7, 3). He roars like the thundering Dyaus (10, 455), or Parjanya (8, 915), or a lion (3, 211). He bellows like a bull when he invades the forest trees, and the birds are terrified at the noise when his grass-devouring sparks arise (1, 945-6). He cannot be checked any more than the sound of the Maruts, an army let loose, or the bolt of heaven (1, 143).

Agni flames upwards (6, 15). Driven by the wind his flames shoot into the sky (8, 435). His smoke wavers and his flame cannot be seized (8, 231). His red smoke rises up to heaven (7, 316). His smoke spreads in the sky (6, 29). Like the erector of a post (metr), he supports the sky with his smoke (4, 6). He touches the ridge of heaven with his crest and mingles with the rays of the sun (7, 24). He encompasses heaven with his tongue (8, 619) and goes to the flood of heaven, to the waters in the bright space above and below the sun (3, 213). The Agni of Divodasa spread along mother earth towards the gods and stood on the ridge of the sky (8, 928). 'Smoke-bannekerd' (ahumaketu) is a frequent epithet exclusively connected with Agni.

Agni is born on an lightning car (3, 14), on a car that is luminous (1, 140), bright (1, 141), shining (5, 111), brilliant (10, 15), golden (4, 18) or beautiful (4, 21). It is drawn by two or more horses, which are butter-backed (1, 145), ruddy (rrohita, arusa), tawny and ruddy (7, 42), beautiful (4, 21), omniform (10, 70), active (2, 4), wind-impelled (1, 945), mind-yoked (1, 145). He yokes them to summon the gods (1, 1412; 3, 65; 8, 645). For he is a charioteer (1, 253 &c.) of the sacrifice (10, 92 &c.). With his steeds he brings the gods on his car (3, 69). He comes seated on the same car as the gods (3, 411; 7, 111) or in advance of them (10, 701). He brings Varuna to the offering, Indra from the sky, the Maruts from the air (10, 7011).

According to the ordinary view of the Vedic poets, Agni's father is Dyaus, who generated him (10, 458). He is the child (stitu) of Dyaus (4, 15; 6, 49) and is said to have been born from the belly of the Asura (3, 29). He is often called the son of Dyaus and Prthivi (3, 21; 311; 25; 10, 12, 27).
140). He is also spoken of as the offspring of Tvāṣṭṛ and the Waters, as well as of Heaven and Earth (10, 27, 469), or even simply of Tvāṣṭṛ (1, 957) or of the Waters (10, 916; AV, 1, 331). It is otherwise incidentally said that the Dawns generated Agni as well as the Sun and Sacrifice (7, 783) or Indra-Visṇu generated Agni besides Sun and Dawn (7, 997), or Indra generated Agni between two stones (2, 123, cp. 1). Agni is also described as the son of Iśā (3, 291) or as the embryo of the rite (6, 485). The gods, it is sometimes said, generated him (6, 71; 8, 9177), as a light for the Aryan (1, 597), or simply fashioned him for man (10, 467) or placed him among men (1, 3610; 2, 43; 6, 161; 8, 737). At the same time Agni is the father of the gods (1, 691, cp. p. 12). The different points of view which give rise to these seemingly contradictory statements, are sufficiently clear.

Owing to his slightly developed anthropomorphism, the myths of Agni have little to say about his deeds, being, outside his main activity as sacrificial fire, chiefly concerned with his various births, forms, and abodes.

The divergent accounts given of the births of Agni are not inconsistent, because they refer to different places of origin. His daily terrestrial birth by friction from the two araṇīs or firesticks6 is often referred to (3, 292, 232, 3; 7, 17; 10, 79). In this connexion they are his parents, the upper being the male and the lower the female (3, 291). Or they are his mothers, for he is said to have two mothers (1, 317). The two sticks produce him as a newborn infant, who is hard to catch (5, 934). From the dry (wood) the god is born living (1, 683). The child as soon as born devours the parents (10, 794). He is born of a mother who cannot suckle him (10, 1157). With reference to this production by friction, men are said to have generated him (1, 603; 4, 17; 7, 17), the ten maidens8 that produce him (1, 932) being the ten fingers (cp. 3, 231) employed in twirling the upright drill, which is the upper araṇī. Pramantha, the name of this fire-drill, occurring for the first time in a late metrical Śaṅkha work9, the Karmapraṇāpa (1, 78)10 has, owing to a superficial resemblance, been connected with Ṣrīṣaṇaḥ35.11. The latter word has, however, every appearance of being a purely Greek formation, while the Indian verb math, to twirl, is found compounded only with nis, never with pra, to express the act of producing fire by friction.

The powerful friction necessary to produce fire is probably the reason why Agni is frequently called the 'son (śīnu, putra, once yuvan) of strength' (sahasāḥ)14. This explanation is supported by a passage of the RV. stating that Agni 'rubbed with strength (sahasā) is produced (jāyate) by men on the surface of the earth' (6, 483). According to a later text, the kindling of Agni by friction must not take place before sunrise (MS. 1, 610). Being produced every morning for the sacrifice Agni appropriately receives the very frequent epithet, exclusively connected with him, of 'youngest' (yavīṣṭha, yavīṣṭhya). His new births are opposed to his old (3, 189). Having grown old he is born again as a youth (2, 43). In this sense, he does not grow old (1, 1289), his new light being like his old (6, 1613). Like some other gods, Agni is also spoken of simply as 'young'. At the same time he is old. There is no sacrificer older than Agni (5, 37), for he conducted the first sacrifice (3, 151). He shone forth after former dawns (1, 4410), and the part played by Agni in the sacrifices of ancestors is often referred to (8, 4311 &c.). He is thus sometimes in the same passage paradoxically called both 'ancient' and 'very young' (10, 441).

More generally Agni is spoken of as born in wood (6, 31; 10, 797), as the embryo of plants (2, 114; 3, 113) or as distributed in plants (10, 17). He is also said to have entered into all plants or to strive after them (8, 439).
When he is called the embryo of trees (1, 70) or of trees as well as plants (2, 11), there may be a side-glance at the fire produced in forests by the friction of the boughs of trees.

The terrestrial existence of Agni is further indicated by his being called the 'navel of the earth' (1, 59). This expression appears, in the many passages in which it occurs, to allude to the receptacle of the sacrificial Agni on the excavated altar or vedî.13 In the Vedic ritual nābbhi or 'navel' is the technical term designating the hollow in the utārā vedî, in which Agni is deposited. The earlier use of the term probably suggested the figure, that the gods made Agni the 'navel' or centre of immortality (3, 17). The only two occurrences in the RV. of the attribute vedīsad, 'sitting on the altar', refer to Agni.

Agni's origin in the aerial waters is often referred to. The 'Son of waters' has, as has been shown (§ 24), become a distinct deity. Agni is also the 'embryo' (gārbha) of the waters (3, 112-13); he is kindled in the waters (10, 45; AV. 13, 15); he is a bull who has grown in the lap of the waters (10, 81); he is ocean-girt (8, 91). He is also said to descend from the dhāmu or cloud-island (1, 144; 10, 4) and to be the shining thunder dwelling in the bright space (6, 6). In such passages the lightning form of Agni must be meant. Some of the later hymns of the RV. (10, 51—3. 124)14 tell a legend of Agni hiding in the waters and plants and being found by the gods. This legend is also often related in the Brāhmaṇas.15 In the AV. the Agnis in the waters are distinguished from those that go on the path of lightning or from the celestial Agni with the lightning (AV. 3, 21-7; 8, 11) and are said to have dwelt on earth (AV. 12, 13). In one passage of the RV. also it is stated that Agni rests in all streams (8, 39, cp. Ap. SS. 5, 21); and in the later ritual texts Agni in the waters is invoked in connexion with ponds and water-vessels. Thus even in the oldest Vedic period, the waters in which Agni is latent, though not those from which he is produced, may in various passages have been regarded as terrestrial. Oldenberg17 thinks that the terrestrial waters are chiefly meant in this connexion and doubts whether the lightning Agni is intended even in the first hymn of the third book.18 In any case, the notion of Agni in the waters is prominent throughout the Vedas. Water is Agni's home, as heaven is that of the sun (5, 85; cp. AV. 13, 150; 19, 33). The waters are also often mentioned along with the plants or wood as his abode (2, 11 &c.).

Agni's origin in heaven is moreover frequently spoken of. He is born in the highest heavens (1, 143; 6, 8). He existed potentially though not actually in the highest heavens (10, 5), and was brought from heaven, from afar by Mātariśvan (§ 25). In such passages Agni doubtless represents lightning; for lightning is regarded as coming from heaven as well as from the waters (AV. 3, 21-7; 8, 11), and in a Brāhmaṇa passage (AB. 7, 7) it is spoken of as both celestial (divyā) and aqueous (apsumati). When lightning is mentioned by its proper name vidyā (which occurs hardly 30 times in the RV.) along with Agni, it is commonly compared with and thereby distinguished from him, doubtless as a concrete phenomenon in contrast with the god. The myth, too, of the descent of fire from heaven to earth, due undoubtedly to the actual observation of conflagrations caused by the stroke of lightning, implies the identity of the celestial Agni and lightning. The heavenly origin of Agni is further implied in the fact that the acquisition of fire by man is regarded as a gift of the gods as well as a production of Mātariśvan; and Agni's frequent epithet of 'guest (atithi) of men' may allude to the same notion (5, 19 &c.).
In other passages, again, Agni is to be identified with the sun; for the conceptions of the sun as a form of Agni, is an undoubted Vedic belief. Thus Agni is the light of heaven in the bright sky, waking at dawn, the head of heaven (3, 24). He was born on the other side of the air and sees all things (10, 1874). He is born as the sun rising in the morning (10, 889). The AB. (8, 283) remarks that the sun when setting enters into Agni and is produced from him. The same identification is probably alluded to in passages stating that Agni unites with the light or the rays of the sun (5, 37; 7, 2). That when men light Agni on earth, the celestials light him (6, 2), or that Agni shines in heaven (3, 27; 8, 44). Sometimes, however, it is difficult to decide whether lighting or the sun is intended. The solar aspect of Agni's nature is not often mentioned, the sun being too individual a phenomenon to be generally conceived as a form of fire. Agni is usually thought of in his terrestrial form, being compared rather than identified with the sun. Thus the poet says that the minds of the godly are turned to Agni as eyes towards the sun (5, 1). At the same time there is frequently a side-glance at Agni's other forms, it being therefore in many cases doubtful which of his aspects is intended.

Owing to the diverse births above described, Agni is often regarded as having a triple character, which in many passages is expressly referred to with some form of the numeral 'three'. This earliest Indian trinity is important, for on it is based much of the mystical speculation of the Vedic age. Agni's births are three or threefold (1, 95; 4, 1). The gods made him threefold (10, 889). He is threefold light (3, 26), has three heads (1, 146), three tongues, three bodies, three stations (3, 20). The epithet *trisadhashta*, 'having three stations', is predominantly connected with Agni, and the only passage in which the word *trisasa*, 'having three dwellings', occurs (8, 39), it is an attribute of Agni. The triad is not always understood in exactly the same way or mentioned in the same order. Thus one poet says: 'From heaven first Agni was born, the second time from us (men), thirdly in the waters (10, 45, cp. vv. 2, 3). The order of Agni's abodes is also heaven, earth, waters in other passages (8, 44; 10, 27, 46), while one verse (1, 95) has the variation: ocean, heaven, waters. Sometimes the terrestrial Agni comes first: 'He was first born in houses, at the base of great heaven, in the womb of this atmosphere' (4, 11); 'the immortals kindled three flames of Agni: of these they placed one with man for use, and two went to the sister-world' (3, 2). A Sūtra passage (Āp. SS. 5, 16) distinguishes a terrestrial Agni in animals, an aerial one in the waters, and a celestial one in the sun. Occasionally the terrestrial Agni comes third. He is one of three brothers of whom 'the middlemost brother is lightning (aśvaḥ) and the third is butter-backed' (1, 164, cp. 141). 'Agni glows from the sky, to god Agni belongs the broad air, men kindle Agni, bearer of oblations, lover of ghee' (AV. 12, 1, 20). CP. 13, 22; 18, 41).

The third form of Agni is once spoken of as the highest (10, 1; cp. 5, 3; 1, 72). Vāskha (Nir. 7, 28) mentions that his predecessor Sākapūni regarded the threefold existence of Agni referred to in 10, 889 as being in earth, air, and heaven, a certain Brāhmaṇa considering Agni's third manifestation, which is in heaven, to be the sun (cp. Nir. 12, 19). This threefold nature of Agni, so clearly recognised in the RV., was probably the prototype not only of the posterior triad of Sun, Wind, Fire (8, 183), which is spoken of as distributed in the three worlds (10, 158; AV. 4, 39) and is implied in another verse (1, 164), but also of the triad of Sun, Indra, Fire, which though not Rigvedic is still ancient. Here Vāta or Vāyu and Indra have
taken the place of Agni Vaidyuta, the lightning Agni, as the Brāhmaṇas and commentators call him. This substitution is perhaps partly due to the transient nature of lightning and partly to the lack of any name other than Agni for the personified lightning, which could therefore be expressed only by epithets or allusions. The triad of Agnis may have suggested and would explain the division of the sacrificial fire into the three sacrificial fires\(^{25}\) which in the Vedic ritual are kept distinct from the domestic fire\(^{26}\) and which form an essential feature of the cult in the Brāhmaṇas\(^{27}\). The ritual may have then reacted on the myth. At any rate, later Hindu literature took the three fires as representative of the three forms of Agni known to the RV.\(^{28}\) The three sacrificial fires may go back to the time of the RV., possibly even to an anterior period\(^{29}\). Thus Agni is besought to bring the gods and to seat himself in the three receptacles (\textit{yonisu}: 2, 3\textsuperscript{6}, cp. 5, 11\textsuperscript{7}; 10, 105\textsuperscript{9}).

Doubtless on the basis of the twofold division of the Universe into heaven and earth, Agni is in several passages said to have two births, being the only single god spoken of as \textit{dvijanman} (1, 60\textsuperscript{1}, 140\textsuperscript{2}, 149\textsuperscript{2-3}). An upper and a lower birth are mentioned (2, 9\textsuperscript{3}), his abode in lower and upper spheres is referred to (1, 128\textsuperscript{1}), and the opposition is generally between terrestrial and celestial fire (3, 54\textsuperscript{1}; 10, 45\textsuperscript{10}), though in one passage at least (8, 43\textsuperscript{8}) the contrast is between his birth in heaven and in the waters. Agni is summoned from his supreme abode (8, 117) and comes thence to the lower ones (8, 64\textsuperscript{15}). When he is brought from the highest father he rises into the plants (1, 141\textsuperscript{4}). Here Agni is conceived as coming down in rain and then entering the plants, out of which he is again produced. The fires, like water, after descending to earth again rise to heaven (1, 164\textsuperscript{9}). On this distinction of two forms of fire are based such prayers as that Agni should sacrifice to himself (10, 7\textsuperscript{0}), that he should bring Agni (7, 39\textsuperscript{5}), or that he should descend with the gods to the sacrifice (3, 6\textsuperscript{9} &c.). Allied to this distinction is the notion that Agni was kindled by the gods as contrasted with men\(^{30}\) (6, 2\textsuperscript{3}). The latter notion is due to the assumption that celestial fires must be kindled by some one and gods must sacrifice like men (cp. AB. 2, 34).

From another point of view, Agni is said to have many births (10, 5\textsuperscript{1}). This multiplicity no doubt primarily refers to the numerous fires kindled on terrestrial altars. For Agni is very frequently said to abide in every family, house, or abode (4, 6\textsuperscript{8}, 7\textsuperscript{1-3}; 5, 15, 6\textsuperscript{6} &c.). He is produced in many places (3, 54\textsuperscript{19}) and has many bodies (10, 98\textsuperscript{10}). Scattered in many places, he is one and the same king (3, 55\textsuperscript{4}). Kindled in many places, he is but one (Vāl. 10\textsuperscript{8}). Other fires are attached to him as branches to a tree (8, 193\textsuperscript{3}). Thus he comes to be invoked with the Agnis (7, 3\textsuperscript{1}; 8, 189, 49\textsuperscript{1}; 10, 141\textsuperscript{9}) or all the Agnis (1, 26\textsuperscript{10}; 6, 12\textsuperscript{6}).

The accounts given of Agni's abodes or birthplaces sometimes involve cross divisions. Thus his brilliance in heaven, earth, air, waters, and plants is referred to (3, 22\textsuperscript{4}) or he is said to be born from the heavens, the waters, stone, woods, and plants (2, 1\textsuperscript{1}). Longer enumerations of a similar kind occasionally occur elsewhere (AV. 3, 21; 12, 1\textsuperscript{9}; Ṛg. SS. 5, 16\textsuperscript{7}). When Agni is said (1, 70\textsuperscript{1}; cp. 6, 48\textsuperscript{5}) to dwell in a rock (\textit{adrau}) the reference is probably to the lightning latent in the cloud (cp. p. 10). The same is probably the case when he is said (2, 1\textsuperscript{1}) to be produced from a stone (\textit{āsmanak}) or to have been generated by Indra between two stones (2, 12\textsuperscript{3}) but here there may lurk an allusion to the production of fire from flint. Animal heat is of course meant when Agni is said to be in the heart of man (10, 5\textsuperscript{1}), or in beasts, horses, birds, bipeds and quadrupeds (AV. 3, 21\textsuperscript{2}; 12, 1\textsuperscript{9}, 23\textsuperscript{1}; TS. 4, 6, 1\textsuperscript{3}). As being the spark of vitality and so widely diffused in nature,
Agni naturally comes to be described as the germ (garbha) of what is stationary or moves and of all that exists (1, 70); AV. 5, 257.

The triple nature of Agni gave rise to the notion of three brothers (1, 164); while the multiplicity of sacrificial fires may have suggested the idea of Agni's elder brothers who are spoken of in the plural (10, 516). The number of these is later stated to be three (TS. 2, 6, 61). The same are probably meant by the four Hotrs of the gods, of whom the first three died (Kāth. 25, 7)31. Varuṇa is once spoken of as Agni's brother (4, 11). Elsewhere Indra is said to be his twin brother (6, 59)32. Indra is indeed oftener associated with Agni than with any other god and is, with two slight exceptions, the only god with whom Agni forms a dual divinity (§ 44). It is doubtless owing to this association that Agni is described as bursting the rock with heat (8, 4616) and vanquishing the unbelieving Panis (7, 63). In one entire hymn (1, 93) Agni is also coupled with Soma (§ 44).

Agni is occasionally identified with other gods, especially with Varuṇa and Mitra33 (2, 11; 3, 54; 7, 123). He is Varuṇa when he goes to the sacrifice (10, 81). He is Varuṇa when he is born and Mitra when he is kindled (5, 31). Agni in the evening becomes Varuṇa, rising in the morning he becomes Mitra; becoming Sāviṣṭra he traverses the air, becoming Indra he illuminates the sky in the midst (AV. 13, 33). In one passage of the RV. (2, 1377) he is successively identified with about a dozen gods besides five goddesses. He assumes various divine forms (3, 387) and has many names (3, 203). In him are comprehended all the gods (5, 30), whom he surrounds as a ferry the spokes (5, 156).

What is probably the oldest function of fire in regard to its cult, that of burning and dispelling evil spirits and hostile magic, still survives in the Veda. Agni drives away the goblins with his light (3, 154 &c.)34 and receives the epithet raksohan, 'goblin-slayer' (10, 87). When kindled he consumes with iron teeth and scorches with heat the sorcerers as well as the goblins (10, 872514), protecting the sacrifice with keen glance (ib. 9). He knows the races of the sorcerers and destroys them (AV. 1, 84). Though this function of dispelling terrestrial demons is shared with Agni by Indra (as well as by Brhaspati, the Aśvins, and especially Soma), it must primarily have belonged to Agni alone, just as, conversely, that of slaying Asuras or aerial demons is transferred to Agni (7, 134) though properly peculiar to Indra. This is borne out by the fact that Agni is undoubtedly more prominent as a goblin-slayer than Indra, both in the hymns and in the ritual35.

Agni is more closely connected with human life than any other god. His association with the dwellings of men is peculiarly intimate. He is the only god to whom the frequent epithet grhapati, 'lord of the house', is applied. He dwells in every abode (7, 155), never leaving his home (8, 4919). The attribute 'domestic' (damānā) is generally connected with him (1, 604 &c.). This household deity probably represents an old order of ideas; for in the later elaborate ritual of the three sacrificial fires, the one from which the other two (the āhavaniya or eastern and the dakṣiṇa or southern) were taken, is called the gārhapatya or that which belongs to grhapati. In this connexion it is interesting to observe that even as early as Rigvedic times there are traces of the sacrificial fire having been transported39. For Agni is led round (4, 91, 155), strides round the offerings (4, 153) or goes round the sacrifice three times (4, 6, 5, 156); and as soon as he is released from his parents, he is led to the east and again to the west (1, 31).

He is further constantly designated a 'guest' (atithi) in human abodes. He is a guest in every house (10, 912), the first guest of settlers (5, 85). For
he is an immortal (a term much more commonly applied to Agni than to any other god), who has taken up his abode among mortals (8, 60\(^v\)). He has been established or settled among human habitations (3, 5\(^t\); 4, 6\(^s\)). It is the domestic Agni who caused mortals to settle (3, 17\(^v\)). He is a leader (3, 2\(^t\)) and a protector of settlers (1, 96\(^d\)), and the epithet vis\(\hat{p}\)ati, 'lord of settlers' is mainly connected with him.

Thus Agni comes to be called the nearest kinsman of man (7, 15\(^t\); 8, 49\(^v\)), or simply a kinsman (1, 26\(^d\) &c.) or a friend (1, 75\(^t\) &c.). But he is oftenest described as a father (6, 15\(^t\) &c.), sometimes also as a brother (8, 43\(^i\); 10, 73 &c.), and even as a son (2, 19\(^t\)) or mother (6, 15), of his worshippers. Such terms seem to point to an older order of things, when Agni was less sacrificial and, as the centre of domestic life, produced an intimate relation such as is not easily found in the worship of other gods.\(^{37}\)

The continuity of Agni's presence in the house would naturally connect him more closely than any other god with the past. Hence the ancestral friendship of Agni with his worshippers (1, 11\(^t\)) is probably more typical of him than of any other deity. He is the god whom the forefathers kindled, to whom they prayed. Thus mention is made of an Agni of Bharata (2, 7\(^t\); 7, 84 &c.), of Vadhyasa\(\tilde{\text{v}}\)a (10, 69\(^t\)), of Devav\(\tilde{\text{a}}\)ta (3, 23\(^t\)), of Divod\(\tilde{\text{a}}\)sa (8, 92\(^t\)), and of Trasadasya (8, 19\(^i\); 38). The names of ancestors sometimes identified with Agni are in part those of families to which composers of the RV. belonged. Some of these, like Vasi\(\tilde{\text{s}}\)tha, seem to have had a historical origin, while others, like Angiras (§ 54) and Bh\(\tilde{\text{r}}\)gu (§ 51), are probably mythical (cp. § 58).

Agni is further brought into close relations with the daily life of man in the sacrifice. He is, however, not merely a passive receiver of the offering, but is an intermediary between heaven and earth. He transmits the oblation to the gods, who do not get exhilarated without him (7, 11\(^t\)). On the other hand, he brings the gods (3, 14\(^t\)) to the sacrifice as well as takes it to them (7, 11\(^i\)). He seats them on the strewn grass (1, 31\(^i\); 8, 44\(^t\)), to eat the offering (5, 11\(^t\)&c.). He goes on the paths leading both to the gods (10, 98\(^s\)) and to earth (8, 7\(^t\)), knowing these paths (6, 16\(^t\)). He is therefore constantly and characteristically called a messenger (\(d\)\(\acute{\text{u}}\)\(\tilde{\text{t}}\)\(a\)), who knows the paths and conveys the sacrifice (1, 72\(^t\)) or visits all abodes (4, 18\(^t\)), who flies swiftly (10, 60\(^t\)), moving between heaven and earth (4, 78, 84; 10, 4\(^t\)), or the two races, gods and men (4, 21\(^t\); who has been appointed by the gods (5, 8\(^t\)&c.) and by men (10, 46\(^t\)), to be an oblation-bearer (\(h\)\(\acute{\text{a}}\)\(\tilde{\text{y}}\)\(a\)v\(\tilde{\text{a}}\)\(\tilde{\text{v}}\)\(\acute{\text{a}}\) \(v\)\(\tilde{\text{a}}\)\(\tilde{\text{h}}\)\(\acute{\text{a}}\)\(\tilde{\text{h}}\)\(\acute{\text{a}}\)), terms always connected with Agni) and to announce the hymn of the worshipper (1, 27\(^t\)) or to bring the gods to the place of sacrifice (4, 8\(^t\)). He is the messenger of the gods (6, 15\(^t\)) and of Vivasvat (p. 42); but as knowing the innermost recesses of heaven, as conveying the sacrifice, and bringing the gods (4, 78, 84\(^t\)) he is mainly to be considered the messenger of men. A later text states that Agni is the messenger of the gods, and K\(\acute{\text{a}}\)\(\tilde{\text{y}}\)\(\acute{\text{a}}\)\(\tilde{\text{u}}\)\(\acute{\text{s}}\)\(\acute{\text{s}}\)\(\acute{\text{n}}\)\(\acute{\text{a}}\)\(\tilde{\text{n}}\)\(\acute{\text{a}}\) that of the Asuras (TS. 2, 5, 85, 118). Another describes Agni not as the messenger of, but as the path leading to, the gods, by which the summit of heaven may be reached (TB. 2, 4, 1\(^t\)).

In consequence of his main function in the Veda of officiating at the sacrifice, Agni comes to be celebrated as the divine counterpart of the earthly priesthood. He is therefore often called generically the 'priest' (\(r\)\(\acute{\text{t}}\)\(\acute{\text{i}}\)\(\acute{\text{i}}\)\(\acute{\text{j}}\), \(v\)\(\acute{\text{i}}\)\(\acute{\text{r}}\)\(\acute{\text{r}}\)) or specifically the 'domestic priest' (\(p\)\(\acute{\text{r}}\)\(\acute{\text{o}}\)\(\acute{\text{h}}\)\(\acute{\text{i}}\)\(\acute{\text{t}}\)\(\acute{\text{a}}\)), and constantly, more frequently in fact than by any other name, the 'offerer' (\(h\)\(\acute{\text{o}}\)\(\tilde{\text{r}}\)\(\acute{\text{t}}\)\(\acute{\text{r}}\)) or chief priest, who is poet and spokesman in one. He is a Hot\(\tilde{\text{r}}\) appointed by men (8, 49\(^t\); 10, 7\(^t\)) and by gods (6, 16\(^t\)). He is the most adorable, the most eminent of Hot\(\tilde{\text{r}}\)
(10, 21). He is also termed an adhvaryu (3, 51) and (like Bṛhaspati, Soma, and Indra) a brahman or praying priest (4, 99). He combines in himself the functions, in a higher sense, of the various human priests called by the above and other specific names (1, 942; 2, 18 &c.). He is constantly invoked to honour or worship the gods (3, 251; 7, 113 &c.), while they in their turn are said to honour Agni three times a day (3, 4). He is the accomplisher of the rite or sacrifice (3, 31; 273), promoting it by his occult power (3, 273), making the oblations fragrant (10, 1511), and causing the offering which he protects to reach the gods (1, 19). He is the father (3, 31), the king (4, 31), the superintendent (8, 4314), the banner (3, 31; 104; 6, 23; 10, 19), of sacrifice. In one hymn (10, 51) it is related that Agni grew weary of the service and refused to fulfil his sacrificial offices, but on being granted the remuneration he required from the gods, continued to act as high priest of men.39 Agni's priesthood is the most salient feature of his character. He is in fact the great priest, as Indra is the great warrior. But though this phase of Agni's character is so prominent from the beginning to the end of the RV., it is of course from a historical point of view comparatively recent, due to those mystical sacerdotal speculations which ultimately led to the endless sacrificial symbolism of the later ritual texts. From the ordinary sacrificial Agni who conveys the offering (havyayā or rāhana) is distinguished the form of Fire which is called 'corpse-devouring' (kravyād: cp. § 71). The VS. distinguishes three forms, as the Agni who devours raw-flesh (amād), the corpse-devouring or funereal, and the sacrificial Agni (VS. 1, 17, cp. 18, 51). The TS. (2, 5, 83) also distinguishes three, the Agni that bears the oblation (havyavāhana), as belonging to the gods, the Agni that bears the funeral offering (havyavāhana), as belonging to the Fathers, and the Agni associated with goblins (saharakṣas) as belonging to the Asuras.

Agni is a seer (ṛṣi) as well as a priest (9, 6620); he is kindled as an eminent seer (3, 213); he is the most gracious seer (6, 142); he is the first seer Aṅgiras (1, 31). He is the divine one (asura) among the sages (3, 31). Agni knows the sacrifice exactly (10, 1101) and knows all rites (10, 1223). Knowing the proper seasons he rectifies the mistakes which men commit through ignorance of the sacrificial ordinances of the gods (10, 24). He knows the recesses of heaven (4, 834). He knows everything (10, 111) by his wisdom (10, 913). He has all wisdom (3, 117; 10, 215), which he embraces as the belly the wheel (2, 53) and which he acquired as soon as born (1, 963). He is 'all-knowing' (visvavid); and the epithets 'possessed of all knowledge' (visvavedas), 'sage' (kavi), and 'possessing the intelligence of a sage' (kavikratu) are predominantly applicable to him. He exclusively bears the epithet jātavedas, which occurs upwards of 120 times in the RV. and is there (6, 1513) explained as meaning 'he who knows all generations' (visvā vedā janinā). He knows the divine ordinances and the generations of men (1, 703). He knows and sees all creatures (3, 5520; 10, 1874) and hears the invocations addressed to him (8, 433). Agni is also a producer of wisdom (8, 913). Wisdom and prayers arise from him (4, 113). He is an inspirer (10, 463), an inventor of brilliant speech (2, 99), the first inventor of prayer (6, 1). He is also said to be eloquent (6, 43) and a singer (jaritr).

Agni is a great benefactor of his worshippers. He protects them with a hundred iron walls (7, 37. 163; cp. 6, 483; 1, 189). He preserves them from calamities or takes them across calamities as in a ship over the sea (3, 203; 5, 43; 7, 122). He is a deliverer (8, 493) and a friend of the man who entertains him as a guest (4, 446). He grants protection to the worshipper who sweats to bring him fuel (4, 29). He watches with a thousand eyes the

Indo-arische Philologie. III. 1A.
man who brings him food and nourishes him with oblations (10, 793). He consumes his worshippers' enemies like dry bushes (4, 4) and strikes down the malevolent as a tree is destroyed by lightning (6, 85, cp. AV. 3, 21 &c.). He is therefore invoked in battle (8, 43\textsuperscript{21}), in which he leads the van (8, 73\textsuperscript{8}). The man whom he protects and inspires in battle wins abundant food and can never be overcome (1, 277). All blessings issue from him as branches from a tree (6, 13\textsuperscript{4}). He gives riches, which he abundantly commands (1, 14, 31\textsuperscript{10}, 364). All treasures are collected in him (10, 69) and he opens the door of riches (1, 68\textsuperscript{10}). He commands all riches in heaven and earth (4, 5\textsuperscript{4}) or in earth, heaven, and ocean (7, 6\textsuperscript{7}; 10, 91\textsuperscript{3}). He gives rain from heaven (2, 65\textsuperscript{9}) and is like a water-trough in the desert (10, 4\textsuperscript{5}). He is therefore constantly besought to bestow every kind of boon: food, riches, deliverance from poverty, childlessness, enemies, and demons\textsuperscript{41}. The boons which Agni bestows are rather domestic welfare, offspring, and prosperity, while Indra for the most part gives power, victory, and glory. Agni also forgives sin\textsuperscript{42} committed through folly, makes guiltless before Aditi (4, 12\textsuperscript{4}; 7, 93\textsuperscript{7}, cp. p. 121), and averts Varuṇa's wrath (4, 14). He even frees from guilt committed by a man's father and mother (AV. 5, 30\textsuperscript{1}; TB. 3, 7, 123\textsuperscript{-1}).

Agni is a divine (asura) monarch (samrāj), strong as Indra (7, 6\textsuperscript{9}). His greatness surpasses that of mighty heaven (1, 59\textsuperscript{9}). He is greater than heaven and earth (3, 6\textsuperscript{2}; 10, 88\textsuperscript{44}), than all the worlds, which he filled when born (3, 3\textsuperscript{10}). He is superior to all the other gods in greatness (1, 68\textsuperscript{7}). All the gods fear and do homage to him when he abides in darkness (6, 9\textsuperscript{1}). He is celebrated and worshipped by Varuṇa, Mitra, the Maruts, and all the gods (3, 9\textsuperscript{3}, 14\textsuperscript{4}; 10, 69\textsuperscript{9}). Agni performed great deeds of old (7, 6\textsuperscript{7}). Men tremble at his mighty deeds (8, 92\textsuperscript{3}). In battle he procured space for the gods (1, 59\textsuperscript{5}) and he delivered them from curse (7, 13\textsuperscript{3}). He is a conqueror of thousands (sahasrājī: more commonly an attribute of Soma). He drives away the Dasyus from the house, thus creating a wide light for the Arya (7, 5\textsuperscript{6}). He is a promoter of the Arya (8, 92\textsuperscript{3}) and a vanquisher of irreligious Panis (7, 6\textsuperscript{8}). He receives with some frequency the epithet of 'Vrtra-slayer', and two or three times that of 'fort-destroyer' (purāṇīdara), attributes primarily appropriate to Indra (p. 60). Such warlike qualities, though suitable to Agni in his lightning form, are doubtless derived by him from Indra, with whom he is so frequently associated (p. 127).

Although Agni is the son of Heaven and Earth he is nevertheless called the generator of the two worlds (1, 96\textsuperscript{4}, cp. 7, 5\textsuperscript{7}), his ordinance, which does not perish (2, 83), being followed by heaven and earth (7, 5\textsuperscript{6}). He stretched them out (3, 6\textsuperscript{5}; 7, 5\textsuperscript{1}) or spread them out like two skins (6, 8\textsuperscript{1}). With his flame or his smoke he supported the vault of heaven (3, 5\textsuperscript{10}; 4, 6\textsuperscript{2}). He kept asunder the two worlds (6, 8\textsuperscript{1}). He supported earth and heaven with true hymns (1, 67\textsuperscript{3}). He stands at the head of the world or is the head of the earth at night (10, 88\textsuperscript{5}; 6), but he is also the head and summit (kakud) of the sky (1, 59\textsuperscript{2}; 6, 7\textsuperscript{1}; 8, 44\textsuperscript{16}). He measured out the air and touched the vault of heaven with his greatness (6, 8\textsuperscript{3}). He measured out the aerial spaces and the bright realms of heaven (6, 7\textsuperscript{7}). He caused the sun to ascend the sky (10, 156\textsuperscript{4}). The notion that the kindling of Agni exercised a magical influence on the sunrise seems not to be entirely absent in the RV.\textsuperscript{43}. Such appears to be the meaning of the poet when he exclaims: 'Let us light Agni, that thy wondrous brand may shine in heaven' (5, 6\textsuperscript{4}). This notion is clearly stated in a Brāhmaṇa passage: 'By sacrificing before sunrise he produces him (the sun), else he would not rise' (SB. 2, 3, 15, cp. TS. 4, 7, 13\textsuperscript{3}). Otherwise the kindling of Agni and the sunrise are represented merely as simultaneous...
in the RV.: ‘The sun became visible when Agni was born’ (4, 3\textsuperscript{14}). This trait of the Agni myth resembles the winning of the sun in the Indra myth, but the original point of view in the two cases is clearly different. Agni is further said to have adorned the sky with stars (1, 68\textsuperscript{3}). He created all that flies, walks, stands, or moves (10, 83\textsuperscript{4}). He placed the germ in these beings (3, 2\textsuperscript{16}), in plants, in all beings, and engendered offspring in the earth and in women (10, 183\textsuperscript{1}). Agni is once spoken of as having generated these children of men (1, 96\textsuperscript{6}); but this is a mere incidental extension of the notion expressed in the same stanza, that he created heaven, earth, and the waters, and cannot be interpreted as a general belief in Agni as father of the human race\textsuperscript{44}. Finally, Agni is the guardian (7, 7\textsuperscript{1}) and lord (7, 4\textsuperscript{3}) of immortality, which he confers on mortal men (1, 31\textsuperscript{6}).

Though agni is an Indo-European word (Lat. igni-s, Slavonic ognii), the worship of fire under this name is purely Indian. In the Indo-Iranian period the sacrificial fire is already found as the centre of a developed ritual, tended by a priestly class probably called Atharvan; personified and worshipped as a strong, pure, wise god, giver of food, offspring, intellectual power, fame; friendly to the house, but a destroyer of foes; probably even thought of as having different forms like lightning or the fire produced from wood\textsuperscript{45}. The sacrificial fire seems to have been an Indo-European institution also\textsuperscript{46}, since the Italians and Greeks, as well as the Iranians and Indians had the custom of offering gifts to the gods in fire. But the personification of this fire, if it then existed, must have been extremely shadowy\textsuperscript{17}.

The word ag-ni may possibly be derived from the root which in Sanskrit appears as \textit{aj}48, to drive (\textit{ajāmi}, Lat. ago, Gk. ἀγω), meaning ‘nimble’, with reference to the agility of the element.

Besides epithets of celestial fire which, like Apān napāt, have become separate names, some epithets of Agni exhibit a semi-independent character. The epithet Vaiśvānara\textsuperscript{49}, occurring about sixty times in the RV. and with two exceptions restricted to Agni, is, apart from some five detached verses, to be found in fourteen hymns of the RV., in nearly all of which, according to the native tradition of the Anukramaṇī, Agni Vaiśvānara is the deity addressed. The attribute is never in the RV. unaccompanied by the name of Agni. It means ‘belonging to all men’ and seems to designate ‘Universal Agni’, fire in all its aspects, celestial as well as terrestrial. Thus the hymns addressed to this form of Agni sometimes refer to the myth of Mātariśvan and the Bhṛgus, which is connected with the descent of celestial fire to earth (3, 21\textsuperscript{1}; 6, 8\textsuperscript{4}), and Agni Vaiśvānara is once even directly styled Mātariśvan (3, 26\textsuperscript{3}). In the Naighaṇṭuka (5, 1) Vaiśvānara is given as one of the names of Agni. Yāska in commenting on the epithet states (Nir. 7, 23) that ancient ritualists (yajñikād) took Agni Vaiśvānara to be the sun, while Sākapūṇi considered him to be this Agni\textsuperscript{50}. Later on (Nir. 7, 31), he states as his own opinion that the Agni Vaiśvānara who receives praise and sacrifice is this (i.e. terrestrial) Agni, while the two higher (\textit{uttare}) lights (i.e. the aerial and the celestial) only occasionally share this designation. In the ritual texts Vaiśvānara is distinguished as a special form of Agni (ĀŚS.1,3\textsuperscript{23}; KŚS.23,3\textsuperscript{1}; FB. 21, 10\textsuperscript{11}; SB. 1, 5, 1\textsuperscript{15}).

The epithet Tānūnapāt, generally unaccompanied by the name of Agni, occurs eight times in the RV. and, with two exceptions (3, 29\textsuperscript{14}; 10, 92\textsuperscript{2}) always in the second verse of the Āpṛi hymns, which are liturgical invitations introducing the animal sacrifice and in which fire under various names and forms is invoked\textsuperscript{51}. The word occurs as an independent name in the Naighaṇṭuka (5, 2). The explanations given by Yāska (Nir. 8, 5) are artificial
and improbable. It seems to mean 'son of himself', as spontaneously generated in wood and cloud. According to Bergaigne's interpretation, it signifies the bodily (i.e. own) son of the divine father. Tanūṇāpāt as contrasted with Mātariśvan and Narāṣāṁśa is said to be the divine (āṣura) embryo. The daunis are said to kiss Agni 'the domestic priest, the Tanūṇāpāt of the ruddy one' (10, 92', cp. 5, 58'). Tanūṇāpāt is beautiful-tongued (10, 110'). He is besought to take the sacrifice to the gods (1, 13'; 10, 110'); he distributes the sacrifice rich in ghee and mead (1, 142', cp. 158'). The gods honour him three times a day, Varuṇa, Mitra, Agni, every day (3, 4'). Hillebrandt (comparing 9, 5') identifies Agni Tanūṇāpāt with Agni Somagopa or the lunar Fire, which he assumes to be a special form of Agni.

The somewhat more frequent epithet Narāṣāṁśa which is given as an independent appellation in the Naigṛhaṇḍuṣa (5, 3) and is unaccompanied by the name of Agni in the RV., is not restricted to Agni, being twice connected with Pūṣān (1, 106; 10, 64')55. It has the third verse as its fixed place in the Āpṛi hymns and the second in those which are technically called Āpra. Narāṣāṁśa is 'four-limbed' (10, 92') and is the 'lord of a celestial wife (gnaṭa-pati: 2', 38')56. With honey on his tongue and in his hand, he performs the sacrifice (1, 13'; 5, 5'). Three times a day he besprinkles the sacrifice with honey (1, 142'). He anoints the three heavens and the gods (2, 3'). He comes at the head of the gods and makes the sacrifice pleasant for them (10, 70'). Through his sacrifices worshippers praise the greatness of the gods (7, 2'). Soma is said to go between Narāṣāṁśa and the celestial (daivya) one (9, 864') which seems to mean, between the terrestrial and the celestial Agni. As contrasted with Tanūṇāpāt and Mātariśvan, Agni is called Narāṣāṁśa when he is born (3, 29'). In one hymn to Brhaspati (10, 182') Narāṣāṁśa is invoked for protection, and in another he is spoken of as the sacrificer of the seat of heaven (1, 189'). He thus seems in these two passages to be identified with Brhaspati. The word nārā-sāṁśa is apparently an improper compound (in which the m of the genitive plural has disappeared), having a double accent and having its parts separated by particles in two passages (9, 864; 10, 64'). As the expressions nārāṁ sāṁśa and devānāṁ sāṁśa occur (2, 34'; 1, 141') and a poet once calls Agni sāṁsam ayaḥ, 'Praise of Ayu' (4, 6'), Narāṣāṁśa appears to mean 'Praise of men' in the sense of 'he who is the object of men's praise'. Bergaigne expresses the opinion that the exact aspect of Agni represented by Narāṣāṁśa, is that of a god of human prayer, like a second Brhaspati.

§ 36. Brhaspati. — This god occupies a position of considerable prominence in the RV., eleven entire hymns being dedicated to his praise. He also forms a pair with Indra in two hymns (4, 49; 7, 97). His name occurs about 120 times and in the form of Brahmaṇas pati about 50 times besides. The two forms of the name alternate in different verses of the same hymn (e.g. in 2, 23). The physical features of Brhaspati are few. He is seven-mouthed and seven-rayed (4, 504); beautiful-tongued (1, 1905; 4, 504); sharphorned (10, 1555); blue-backed (5, 4312); and hundred-winged (7, 977). He is golden-coloured and ruddy (5, 4312); bright (3, 627; 7, 977); pure (7, 977); and clear-voiced (7, 975). He has a bow, the string of which is the rite (ṛta), and good arrows (2, 248; cp. AV. 5, 1889). He also wields a golden hatchet (7, 977); and is armed with an iron axe, which Tvaṣṭr sharpens (10, 538). He has a car (10, 1034) and stands on the car of the rite, which slays the goblins, bursts the cowstalls, and wins the light (2, 233). He is drawn by ruddy steeds (7, 975).

Brhaspati was first born from great light in the highest heaven and with thunder (ravena) drove away darkness (4, 504; cp. 10, 6812). He is the offspring of the two worlds (7, 978), but is also said to have been generated by Tvaṣṭr (2, 2317). On the other hand, he is called the father of the gods (2, 267), being said to have blown forth the births of the gods like a blacksmith (10, 724).

Brhaspati is a domestic priest (2, 249; VS. 20, 11; TS. 6, 4, 10; AB. 8, 264), a term almost peculiar to Agni (p. 96). The ancient seers placed him at their head (puro-ḍhā) (4, 504). He is Soma’s purohita (SB. 4, 1, 2). He is also a brahman or praying priest (2, 1; 4, 508), once probably in the technical sense (10, 1411). In later Vedic texts Brhaspati is the brahman priest (in the technical sense) of the gods3. He is even called the prayer or devotion (brahma) of the gods (TS. 2, 2, 94). Brhaspati promotes the yoking of devotion, and without him sacrifice does not succeed (1, 187). As a pathmaker he makes good the access to the feast of the gods (2, 2367). From him even the gods obtained their share of sacrifice (2, 23). He awakens the gods with sacrifice (AV. 19, 631). He himself pronounces the hymn in which Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra, Aryaman, the gods take pleasure (1, 405). He sings chants (10, 369). His song (tiṣṭa) goes to heaven (1, 1905) and metre (chandas) belongs to him (MS. 1, 9). He is associated with singers (7, 104; 10, 143). He sings with his ‘friends that cry like Hamásas’ (10, 679), by whom the Angirases 4 (§ 54) mentioned in the preceding verse (10, 677) seem to be meant. He is also said to be accompanied by a singing (ṛkvaṭa)5 host (gana: 4, 505). This is doubtless the reason why he is called gaṇapati, ‘lord of a host’ (2, 231), a term once applied to Indra also (10, 1129).

As the name Brahmaṇas pati shows, the god is a ‘lord of prayer’. He
is also described as the supreme king of prayers, the most famous sage of sages (2, 23). Mounting the car of the rite he conquers the enemies of prayer and of the gods (2, 23). He is the generator of all prayers (1, 190). He utters prayer (1, 40) and communicates prayers to the human priest (10, 98). Thus he comes later to be called a 'lord of speech', vācaspati (MS. 2, 65, cp. SB. 14, 4, 1.28), a term specially applied to Brhaspati as god of eloquence and wisdom in post-Vedic literature. 6

There are several passages in which Brhaspati appears identified with Agni. Thus 'the lord of prayer, Agni, handsome like Mitra' is invoked (1, 38). In another passage (2, 13 ff.) Agni, though identified with other gods as well, is clearly more intimately connected with Brahmanaspati, as only these two names are in the vocative. In one verse (3, 26) both Mātariśvan and Brhaspati 'the wise priest, the guest, the swiftly-moving' seem to be epithets of Agni, while in another (1, 190) Mātariśvan seems to be an epithet of Brhaspati. Again, Brhaspati, who is blue-backed, takes up his abode in the house, shines brightly, is golden-coloured and ruddy (5, 43), Agni must be meant. In two other verses (1, 18; 10, 182) Brhaspati seems to be the same as Narāśaṃsa, a form of Agni (p. 100). Like Agni, Brhaspati is a priest, is called 'Son of strength' (1, 40) and Angiras (2, 23) as well (the epithet angiras belonging to him exclusively), and burns the goblins (2, 23) or slays them (10, 103). Brhaspati is also spoken of as ascending to heaven, to the upper abodes (10, 67). Like Agni, Brhaspati has three abodes (4, 50); he is the adorable one of houses (7, 97), and 'lord of the dwelling', sadasas pati (1, 186; Indra-Agni are once called sadaspati, 1, 21). On the other hand, Agni is called brahmānas kavi, 'sage of prayer' (6, 163) and is besought (2, 27) to make heaven and earth favourable by prayer (brahmāna). But Brhaspati is much more commonly distinguished from Agni (2, 25; 7, 104; 10, 68), chiefly by being invoked or named along with him in enumerations (3, 205 &c.) 8

Like Agni, Brhaspati has been drawn into and has obtained a firm footing in the Indra myth of the release of the cows. The mountain yielded to his splendour, when Brhaspati, the Angiras, opened the cowstall and with Indra as his companion let loose the flood of water enveloped by darkness (2, 23, cp. 1, 56. 89). Accompanied by his singing host (cp. § 54) he with a roar rent Vala; shouting he drove out the lowing cows (4, 50). He won treasures and the great stalls full of cows; desiring waters and light, the irresistible Brhaspati slays his foe with flames (6, 73). What was firm was loosened, what was strong yielded to him; he drove out the cows, he left Vala with prayer; he covered up the darkness and made heaven visible; the stone-mouthed well filled with honey, which Brhaspati pierced with might, that the celestials drank, while they poured out together abundantly the watery fountain (2, 24). When Brhaspati with fiery gleams rent the defences of Vala, he revealed the treasures of the cows; as if splitting open eggs, he drove out the cows of the mountain; he beheld the honey enclosed by the stone; he brought it out, having cloven (Vala) with his roar; he smote forth as it were the narrow of Vala (10, 68). He drove out the cows and distributed them in heaven (2, 24). Brhaspati fetched the cows out of the rock; seizing the cows of Vala, he took possession of them (10, 68). His conquest of Vala is so characteristic that it became proverbial (AV. 9, 3). Being in the clouds (abhiriya) he shouts aloud after the many cows (10, 6812, cp. 67). These cows may represent the waters, which are expressly mentioned (2, 23; 6, 73) or possibly the rays of dawn (cp. 10, 675, 689).

In releasing the cows Brhaspati seeks light in darkness and finds the
light; he found the Dawn, light, and Agni, and dispelled the darkness (10, 68\textsuperscript{4}). In shattering the fort, he found the Dawn, the Sun, the Cow (10, 67\textsuperscript{3}). He hid or dispelled the darkness and made visible the light (2, 24\textsuperscript{3}; 4, 50\textsuperscript{6}). Brhaspati thus comes to acquire more general warlike traits. He penetrated the mountain full of riches and split open the strongholds of Sambara (2, 24\textsuperscript{3}). Brhaspati Angirasa, the first-born holy one, cleaver of rocks, roars as a bull at the two worlds, slays V"tras (v"tr"\=ani), shatters forts, overcomes foes (6, 73\textsuperscript{4}; 2). He disperses foes and wins victory (10, 103\textsuperscript{4}). No one can overcome him in great fight or small (1, 40\textsuperscript{5}). He vanquishes the enemy in battle (2, 23\textsuperscript{13}). He is to be invoked in combats (2, 23\textsuperscript{13}) and is a priest much praised in conflict (2, 24\textsuperscript{9}).

Being the companion and ally of Indra (2, 23\textsuperscript{18}. 24\textsuperscript{2}; 8, 85\textsuperscript{15}), he is often invoked with that deity (4, 50\textsuperscript{10}. 11 &c.). With Indra he is a soma-drinker (4, 49\textsuperscript{1}. 50\textsuperscript{10}) and, like him, is styled maghavan, 'bountiful' (2, 24\textsuperscript{12}). Indra, too, is the only god with whom he forms a pair (2, 24\textsuperscript{12}; 4, 49\textsuperscript{1}. 6). Thus he comes to be styled vajrin, 'wielder of the bolt' (1, 40\textsuperscript{5}) and to be described as"hurling the bolt, the Asura-slaying missile (AV. 11, 103\textsuperscript{2}). He is also invoked with the Maruts at the same time as Indra (1, 40\textsuperscript{5}) and is once besought to come accompanied by the Maruts, whether he be Mitra, Varu\=na or P\=usan (10, 98\textsuperscript{1}). In one passage he is said to have heard the prayer of T\=rita buried in a well and to have delivered him (1, 105\textsuperscript{17}).

Brhaspati favours the man who offers prayer (2, 25\textsuperscript{1}) but scourges the hater of prayer (2, 23\textsuperscript{4}). He protects the pious man from all dangers and calamities, from curse and malignity, and blesses him with wealth and prosperity (1, 18\textsuperscript{3}; 2, 23\textsuperscript{14}. 10). Possessed of all desirable things (7, 10\textsuperscript{1}. 97\textsuperscript{1}), he is opulent, a procurer of wealth, and an increaser of prosperity (1, 18\textsuperscript{5}). He is a prolonger of life and a remover of disease (1, 18\textsuperscript{7}). Having such benevolent traits he is called a father (4, 50\textsuperscript{6}; 6, 73\textsuperscript{3}).

He is asurya, 'divine' (2, 23\textsuperscript{4}), belongs to all the gods (3, 62\textsuperscript{1}; 4, 50\textsuperscript{6}), and is the most god-like of the gods (2, 24\textsuperscript{3}). As a god he widely extended to the gods and embraces all things (2, 24\textsuperscript{11}, cp. 8, 61\textsuperscript{18}). Mightily he holds asunder the ends of the earth with his roar (4, 50\textsuperscript{1}). It is his inimitable deed that sun and moon rise alternately (10, 68\textsuperscript{16}). He is also spoken of as stimulating the growth of plants (10, 97\textsuperscript{15}. 16). Later Brhaspati is brought into connexion with certain stars. Thus in the TS. (4, 4, 10\textsuperscript{5}) he is stated to be the deity of the constellation Tisya\textsuperscript{2}, and in post-Vedic literature he is regarded as the regent of the planet Jupiter.

Brhaspati is a purely Indian deity. Both forms of the name occur throughout the older as well as the later books of the RV. But since appellations formed with pati (like v\=acas pati, v\=as\=os pati, k\=se\=d\=r\=a\=s\=ya pati) to designate deities presiding over a particular domain, must be comparatively recent as products of reflexion\textsuperscript{10}, this mythological creation can hardly go much further back than the beginning of the Rigvedic period. The accentuation of the word br\=h\=has\=p\=ati shows it to be an improper compound. The prior member might possibly be a neuter noun in -\=ar\=i\textsuperscript{11}, but the contemporaneous form br\=ah\=m\=a\=nas pati, which is a kind of explanation, indicates that the poets of the RV. regarded it as the genitive\textsuperscript{12} of a noun br\=\=h, from the same root as brahman.

The evidence adduced above seems to favour the view that Br\=h\=as\=p\=ati was originally an aspect of Agni as a divine priest presiding over devotion, an aspect which (unlike other epithets of Agni formed with pati, such as vis\=i\=\=m pati, gr\=h\=a\=p\=ati, sadas\=p\=ati) had attained an independent character by the beginning of the Rigvedic period, though the connexion with Agni was
not entirely severed. Langlois13, H. H. Wilson14, Max Müller15 agree in regarding Brhaspati as a variety of Agni. Roth16 was of opinion that this sacerdotal god is a direct impersonation of the power of devotion. Similarly Kaegi17 and Oldenberg18 think him to be an abstraction of priestly action, which has appropriated the deeds of earlier gods. Weber19 considers Brhaspati to be a priestly abstraction of Indra, and is followed in this by Hopkins20. Finally, Hillebrandt21 holds him to be a lord of plants and a personification of the moon22, representing predominantly the igneous side of that luminary.

As the divine brahman priest, Brhaspati seems to have been the prototype of Brahma, the chief of the Hindu triad, while the neuter form of the word, brahma, developed into the Absolute of the Vedānta philosophy23.


§ 37. Soma. — Since the Soma sacrifice forms the main feature of the ritual of the RV, the god Soma is naturally one of the most important deities of that Veda. All the 114 hymns of the ninth besides 6 in other books, are dedicated to his praise. He is also celebrated in portions of four or five other hymns, and as a dual divinity with Indra, Agni, Pūṣan, or Rudra, in about six more. The name of Soma, in its simple form and in compounds, occurs hundreds of times in the RV. Judged by the standard of frequency, Soma therefore comes third in order of importance among the Vedic gods. Soma is much less anthropomorphistic than Indra or Varuṇa, the constant presence of the plant and its juice setting limits to the imagination of the poets who describe its personification. Consequently little is said of his human form or action. The marvellous and heroic deeds attributed to him are either colourless, because common to almost all the greater gods, or else only secondarily belong to him. Like other gods, he is, under the name of Indu as well as Soma, invoked to come to the sacrifice and receive the offerings on the strewn grass. The ninth book mainly consists of incantations sung over the tangible Soma while it is pressed by the stones, flows through the wooden strainer into the wooden vats, in which it is finally offered on a litter of grass to the gods as a beverage, sometimes in fire (1, 9411; 5, 51; 8, 4311 &c.) or drunk by the priests. The processes to which it is subjected are overlaid with the most varied and chaotic imagery and with mystical fancies often incapable of certain interpretation.

In order to make intelligible the mythology of Soma, the basis of which are the concrete terrestrial plant and the intoxicating juice extracted therefrom, it is necessary briefly to describe these as well as the treatment they undergo. The part of the Soma plant which is pressed is called aṣṭu, 'shoot or stalk' (9, 6728). The shoots swelling give milk like caṇus with their udders (8, 919). As distinguished from the stalk, the whole Soma plant seems to be intended by aṇdhas (8, 3228; 10, 9411 &c.), which is said to have come from heaven (9, 6110) and to have been brought by the eagle (5, 459; 9, 686; 10, 1444). The same term is applied to the juice also1 and is distinguished from Indu the god (9, 513; 10, 1153). The juice is also designated by soma (which
means the plant as well) and generally by *rasa*, fluid. In one hymn (1, 187) the juice is called *pitu*, the 'beverage'; and it is often styled *mada*, 'intoxicating draught'4. Soma is occasionally also referred to with *anna*, 'food' (7, 982; 8, 412; SB. 1, 6, 43). The term *madhu*, which in connexion with the Asvins means 'honey' or 'mead', comes to be applied, in the general sense of 'sweet draught', not only to milk (*payas*) and ghee (*ghṛta*), but especially to the Soma juice (4, 275; 8, 696). Mythologically *madhu* is the equivalent of Soma when the latter means the celestial ambrosia (*amṛta*)5. Conversely, *amṛta* is frequently used as an equivalent of ordinary Soma (5, 23; 6, 373 &c.; VS. 6, 34; SB. 9, 5, 13). King Soma when pressed is *amṛta* (VS. 19, 72). Another expression is *somyam madhu*, 'Soma mead' (4, 265; 6, 203).Figuratively the Soma juice is called *piyasa* (3, 482 &c.), milk (9, 1073), the wave of the stalk (9, 963) or the juice of honey (5, 434). The most frequent figurative name applied to Soma is *indu*, the 'bright drop', another term of similar meaning, *drapsa*, 'drop', being much less common.

The extraction of the juice is generally described by the root *su*, 'to press' (9, 624 &c.), but often also by *dhuh* 'to milk' (3, 3667 &c.). The juice is intoxicating (1, 1253; 6, 1711. 206) and ' honied', *madhumat* (9, 971). The latter expression simply means 'sweet', but as applied to Soma originally seems to have meant 'sweetened with honey', some passages pointing to this admixture (9, 173. 8648. 9711. 1098). As flowing from the press, Soma is compared with the wave of a stream (9, 809) and directly called a wave (9, 6411 &c.) or a wave of honey (3, 47). With reference to the juice collected in the vat, Soma is spoken of as a sea (*aryavata*: 10, 1153) and frequently as an ocean (*samudra*: 5, 473; 9, 648 &c.). The heavenly Soma is also called a well (*utsa*), which is in the highest place of the cows (5, 453), which is placed in the cows and guided with ten reins (i. e. fingers: 6, 4431), or a well of honey in the highest step of Viṣṇu (1, 154).

The colour of the plant and juice, as well as of the god, is described as brown (*babhrī*) or ruddy (*aruna*), but most frequently as tawny (*hari*). Thus Soma is the branch of a ruddy tree (10, 943); it is a ruddy milked shoot (7, 981); the tawny shoot is pressed into the strainer (9, 921). The colour of the Soma plant or its substitute prescribed in the Brahmāṇas is ruddy (SB. 4, 5, 103); and in the ritual the cow which is the price paid in the purchase of Soma, must be brown or ruddy because that is Soma's colour (TS. 6, 1, 67; SB. 3, 3, 116).

Soma is described as purified with the hands (9, 8634), by the ten fingers (9, 84. 158 &c.), or, figuratively, by the ten maidens who are sisters (9, 17. 65), or by the daughters (*nāpi*) of Vivasvat (9, 149). Similarly, the maidens of Tītra are said to urge on the tawny one with stones as a drop for Indra to drink (9, 322. 383). Soma is also spoken of as purified or brought by the daughter of the sun (9, 15. 723. 1133). Sometimes it is said to be purified by prayer (9, 9613. 1139). The priests who press Soma are Adhyāryas10 (8, 411).

The shoot is crushed with a stone (9, 6719) or pressed with stones (9, 10710); the plant is pounded to produce the Soma draught (10, 853). The stones tear its skin (TB. 3, 7, 13). The stones lie on a skin; for they 'chew him on the hide of the cow' (9, 794). They are placed on the *vedi* or altar (5, 3112): a practice differing from that of the later ritual11. They are held with hands or arms (7, 22; 9, 794; AV. 11, 110). The two arms and the ten fingers yoke the stone (5, 434). Hence the stones are said to be guided by ten reins (10, 9438). Being spoken of as yoked, they are compared with horses (10, 9438). The usual name for the pressing stones is *adri*
(generally used with the verb *su*, to press) or *grāvan* (generally connected with *vad*, to speak, or verbs of cognate meaning, and hence showing a greater tendency to personification than *adṛ*). Both terms nearly always occur either in the singular or the plural, and not in the dual. The stones are also once respectively called *aśā* (8, 2*), *bharitra* (3, 36*), *parvata* (3, 35*) and *parvata adrayaḥ* (10, 94*). The pressing of Soma by means of stones was the usual method in the period of the RV. But the extraction of the juice by mortar and pestle, which is also sanctioned by the ritual texts, was already known to the RV. (1, 28*–4*); and as this method is in use among the Parsis, it may go back to the Indo-Iranian age.

The pressed drops are poured upon (9, 63* &c.) and pass over the strainer of sheep's wool (9, 69*). For it removes Soma's impurity, so that he goes cleansed to the feast of the gods (9, 78*). This strainer, which is very frequently mentioned, passes under various names. It is called a skin (traca), hair (roman), wool (vāra), filter (pavitra), or ridge (sānu, as the top of the contrivance). All these terms are used with or without an adjective formed from avi, sheep. The word avi itself is sometimes figuratively employed in this sense. As passing through the strainer Soma is usually called *pavamāna* or *punāna*, 'flowing clear' (from *vāpa*). The more general term *myṛ*, 'to cleanse', is not only applied to the purification of Soma with the strainer, but also to the addition of water and milk (9, 86*). The purified (unmixed) Soma juice is sometimes called *śuddha*, 'pure', but much oftener *śukra* or *ṣuci*, 'bright' (8, 21*; 9, 33*; 1, 5*; 30*). This unmixed Soma is offered almost exclusively to Vāyu and Indra, the epithet *śucipā*, 'drinking clear (Soma)' being distinctive of Vāyu (p. 82). This agrees with the later ritual, where, in the Grahas or draughts for dual divinities, clear Soma is offered to Vāyu and Indra-Vāyu, but is mixed with milk for Mitra-Varuṇa, and with honey for the Aśvins.†

After passing the filter, Soma flows into jars (kalaśa, 9, 60* &c.) or vats (drona)†. The streams of Soma rush to the forest of the vats like buffaloes (9, 33*; 92*); the god flies like a bird to settle in the vats (9, 3*); like a bird sitting on a tree, the tawny one settles in the bowls (camā: 9, 72*). Soma is mixed with water in the vat. United with the wave, the stalk roars (9, 74*). Like a bull on the herd, he rushes on the vat, into the lap of the waters, a roaring bull; clothing himself in waters, Indu rushes around the vat, impelled by the singers (9, 76*; 107*). The wise milk him into the waters with their hands (9, 79*). Having passed over the wool and playing in the wood, he is cleansed by the ten maidens (9, 6*). Several other passages refer to the admixture of water with Soma (9, 30*; 53*; 86*–25*). The Soma drops are said to spread brightness in the streams (9, 76*). Besides the verb *myṛ*, 'to cleanse', which is commonly used to express the admixture of water (e. g. 9, 63*), *ā-dhāra*, 'to wash', is also employed (8, 1*). In the preparation of Soma, the pressing (*vṣu*) comes first, then the mixing with water (7, 32*; 8, 1*; 31*; AV. 6, 2*), just as in the later ritual the *savana*, 'pressure', precedes the *ādharana*, 'washing'. In the bowls Soma is mixed with milk (9, 8* &c.)†, which is said to sweeten it (8, 23*). In several passages the addition of both water and milk is mentioned. Thus it is said that Soma clothes himself in waters, that streams of water flow after him, when he desires to clothe himself in cows (i.e. milk: 9, 23*). They press him with stones, they wash him in water, clothing him as it were in cow-garments, men milk him out of the stalks (8, 17*; cp. 2, 36*; 6, 40*; 9, 86*–5. 96*).

Soma is recognised in the RV. as having three kinds of admixture (tryāśīr: 5, 27*), with milk (gavāśīr), sour milk (adhyāśīr), and barley (yavā-
The admixture is figuratively called a garment (\textit{vastra, vāsas, atha}) or a shining robe (\textit{miṣṭīj}: 9, 14\textsuperscript{e}) the latter term being applied to the strainer also (9, 70\textsuperscript{f}). Hence Soma is spoken of as decked with beauty (9, 34\textsuperscript{f} &c) and as richly adorned (9, 81\textsuperscript{r}). Mention is also made, though rarely, of mixture with ghee (9, 82\textsuperscript{t}); but neither this addition nor that of water, is a regular \textit{āśīr}\textsuperscript{18}.

In the ritual there is a ceremony called \textit{āpyāyana} or causing the half-pressed Soma stalks to swell by moistening them with water afresh. The beginnings of it are found in the MS. (4, 5\textsuperscript{e}). The verb \textit{āpyā} to swell, occurs in the RV. in connexion with Soma (1, 91\textsuperscript{e}\textsuperscript{-}3\textsuperscript{-}8; 10, 85\textsuperscript{t})\textsuperscript{19}; but here it seems to refer to Soma as identified with the moon. In one other passage, however, (9, 31\textsuperscript{f}) it may have a ritual application. Soma is also said in the RV. to swell (\textit{pi, pinv}), like a sea or river (9, 64\textsuperscript{f}, 107\textsuperscript{f})

Soma is described in the RV. as pressed three times in the day. Thus the Rbhus are invited to the evening pressing (4, 33\textsuperscript{f} &c.)\textsuperscript{20}, Indra to the midday pressing (3, 32\textsuperscript{f}; 8, 37\textsuperscript{e}), which is his alone (4, 36\textsuperscript{f}), while the morning libation is his first drink (10, 112\textsuperscript{b}).

The abode (\textit{sadhastha}) of Soma is often referred to\textsuperscript{21}; once, however, mention is made of three, which he occupies when purified (9, 103\textsuperscript{f}), the epithet \textit{triṣadastha}, having three abodes', being also applied to him in another passage (8, 83\textsuperscript{f}). These three abodes may already designate the three tubs used at the Soma sacrifice of the later ritual (TS. 3, 2, 1\textsuperscript{f}; KSS. 9, 5\textsuperscript{e}, 7\textsuperscript{i}; cp. RV. 8, 2\textsuperscript{f}); but BERGAIGNE (BRV. 1, 179) regards them as purely mythological. A similar remark applies to the three lakes of Soma which Indra drinks (5, 29\textsuperscript{f}; 6, 17\textsuperscript{f}; 8, 7\textsuperscript{f})\textsuperscript{22}. The epithet \textit{tripṛṣṭha}, three-backed', is peculiar to Soma. Being applied to the juice at least once (7, 37\textsuperscript{i}) it probably refers (as Sayana thinks) to the three admixtures, much as the Agni's epithet \textit{ghṛtapṛṣṭha} alludes to ghee being thrown on the fire\textsuperscript{23}.

Based on the mixture of water with the juice, the connexion of Soma with the waters is expressed in the most varied ways. Streams flow for him (9, 31\textsuperscript{f}). The waters follow his ordinance (9, 82\textsuperscript{f}). He flows at the head of streams (9, 86\textsuperscript{f}). He is lord and king of streams (9, 15\textsuperscript{e}, 86\textsuperscript{f}, 89\textsuperscript{f}), lord of spouses (9, 86\textsuperscript{f}), an oceanic (\textit{samudrīyā}) king and god (9, 107\textsuperscript{f})\textsuperscript{24}. The waters are his sisters (9, 82\textsuperscript{f}). As leader of waters, Soma rules over rain (9, 74\textsuperscript{f}). He produces waters and causes heaven and earth to rain (9, 96\textsuperscript{f}). He streams rains from heaven (9, 98\textsuperscript{e}, 49\textsuperscript{f}, 97\textsuperscript{e}, 108\textsuperscript{f})\textsuperscript{25}. The Soma drops themselves are several times compared with rain (9, 41\textsuperscript{f}, 89\textsuperscript{f}, 106\textsuperscript{f})\textsuperscript{26} and Soma is said to flow clearly with a stream of honey like the rain-charged cloud (9, 2\textsuperscript{f}). So too the Pavamāna drops are said to have streamed from heaven, from air, on the ridge of earth (9, 63\textsuperscript{f})\textsuperscript{27}. There are some other passages in which the soma that is milked appears to refer to rain (8, 7\textsuperscript{i}; 9, 74\textsuperscript{f}., cp. 10, 30\textsuperscript{f})\textsuperscript{28}. The SB. (11, 5, 4\textsuperscript{f}) identifies the \textit{amṛta} with the waters. This identification may have given rise to the myth of Soma brought down to man by an eagle (p. 111)\textsuperscript{29}. But the celestial Soma descending to earth was doubtless usually regarded as only mixed with rain, and not confounded with it\textsuperscript{30}.

The waters are invoked to set in motion the exhilarating wave, the draught of Indra, the sky-born well (10, 36\textsuperscript{f}). Soma is the drop which grows in the waters (9, 86\textsuperscript{f}, 89\textsuperscript{f}). Hence he is the embryo of the waters (9, 97\textsuperscript{f}; SB. 4, 4, 5\textsuperscript{f}) or their child, for seven sisters as mothers are around the child, the newly born, the Gandharva of the waters (9, 86\textsuperscript{f}; cp. 10, 13\textsuperscript{f}), and the waters are directly called his mothers (9, 61\textsuperscript{f}). Soma is also spoken of as a youth among the waters or cows (5, 45\textsuperscript{f}; 9, 93).
The sound made by the Soma juice as it is being purified and rushes into the vats or bowls, is often referred to. It is compared with that of rain (9, 41). But the language is generally hyperbolical. Thus the sweet drop is said to flow over the filter like the din of combatants (9, 69). The noise is constantly designated by various verbs meaning to roar or bellow (krand, nad, mā, ru, vās: 9, 91, 95 &c.). Even the verb stan, ‘to thunder’, is used (9, 86) and the wise are described as ‘milking the thundering unrolling stalk’ (9, 72). Lightning also is in some verses connected with the purification of Soma (9, 41, 85, 86, 87); this in all probability alludes to the purification of the celestial Soma and may have referred to the phenomena of the thunderstorm.

When Soma is said to roar he is commonly compared with or directly called a bull. ‘As a bull he bellows in the wood’ (9, 73); ‘the tawny bull bellows and shines with the Sun’ (9, 26). As the waters, added with or without milk, are figuratively called cows, the relation of Soma to them is usually that of a bull to cows. He is a bull among the cows (9, 16, 69, 96) or is lord of the cows (9, 72). He bellows like a bull traversing the cows (9, 71) or like a bull towards the cows (9, 71), the cows also bellowing towards him (9, 86 &c.). He is the bull of heaven as well as of the earth and the streams (6, 44). The impetuousness of Soma is also several times illustrated by comparison with a buffalo (mahīṣa). Thus he even comes to be called an animal (paśu: 9, 86). Being a bull among the cow-waters, Soma is the fertilizer of the waters (10, 36, cp. 9, 196). He is also (9, 86) an impregnator (retodā), an epithet especially applied to the moon in the YV. (e. g. MS. 1, 6). Hence he is a bestower of fertility (9, 64, 74). Soma being so frequently called a bull (uksan, vṛṣan, vṛṣabha) is sharp-horned (tigmaiṅga), an epithet which in five of its six occurrences in the RV. is accompanied by a word meaning ‘bull’. Thus the brewed drink (manṭha) of Indra is like a sharp-horned bull (10, 86). Soma is also said (like Agni) to sharpen his horns (9, 15, 70) 31.

Soma is swift (1, 47) and, in illustration of the speed with which the pressed juice flows, is very often compared with or designated a steed. Thus the ten maidens are said to cleanse him like a swift steed (9, 6). The drop which intoxicates Indra is a tawny steed (9, 63). Soma flowing into the vats is sometimes also compared with a bird flying to the wood (9, 72 &c).

Owing to the yellow colour of the juice, the physical quality of Soma mainly dwelt on by the poets, is his brilliance. His rays are often referred to and he is frequently assimilated to the sun. He shines like or with the sun or clothes himself in its rays (9, 76, 86; cp. 71). He ascends the car of the sun and stands above all beings like the sun 31. He fills heaven and earth with rays like the sun (9, 41). When born a bright son, he caused his parents to shine (9, 93). The daughter of the sun purifies him (9, 1). Thus it comes to be said of him that he combats the darkness (9, 97), wards it off with light (9, 86), or creates bright light, dispelling the darkness (9, 66, 106, 108 &c.).

Its mysteriously exaltrberating and invigorating action, surpassing that of ordinary food or drink and prompting to deeds beyond the natural powers, led to Soma being regarded as a divine drink which bestows immortal life. Hence it is mythologically called amṛta, the draught of immortality. It is an immortal stimulant (1, 84), which the gods love (9, 85) and of which, when pressed by men and mixed with milk, all the gods drink (9, 100); for they hasten to exalterioration (8, 25) and become exalted (8, 58). Soma is immortal (1, 43; 8, 48; 9, 3 &c.); and the gods drank him for immortality.
He confers immortality on the gods (1, 91; 9, 106) and on men (1, 91; 8, 48). He places his worshipper in the everlasting and imperishable world where there is eternal light and glory, and makes him immortal where king Vaivasvata lives (9, 113; 32). This Soma naturally has medicinal power also. It is medicine for a sick man (8, 61). Hence the god Soma heals whatever is sick, making the blind to see and the lame to walk (8, 68; 10, 25). He is the guardian of men’s bodies and occupies their every limb (8, 48), bestowing length of life in this world (1, 91; 8, 48; 9, 4; 91). The Soma draught is even said to dispel sin from the heart, to destroy falsehood and to promote truth.

When imbibed Soma stimulates the voice (6, 47; 9, 84; 95; 97), which he impels as the rower his boat (9, 95). This is doubtless the reason why Soma is called ‘lord of speech’ vācus patti (9, 26; 101) or leader of speech, vāco agriya or agre (9, 73, 62; 86; 106). He is also said to raise his voice from heaven (9, 68). In the Brāhmanas vāc, ‘speech’, is described as the price paid by the gods for Soma. Soma also awakens eager thought (6, 47). So his worshippers exclaim: ‘We have drunk Soma, we have become immortal, we have entered into light, we have known the gods’ (8, 48). Thus he is also spoken of as a lord of thought and as a father, leader, or generator of hymns. He is a leader of poets, a seer among priests (9, 96). He has the mind of seers, is a maker of seers (9, 96) and a protector of prayer (6, 52). He is the ‘soul of sacrifice’ (9, 2; 6), a priest (brahmā) among the gods (9, 96), and apportions to them their share of sacrifice (10, 85). Soma’s wisdom thus comes to be predominantly dwelt upon. He is a wise seer (8, 68). He knows the races of the gods (9, 8; 95; 97; 108). He is a wise man-seeing wave (9, 78). Soma with intelligence surveys creatures (9, 71). Hence he is many-eyed (9, 26) and thousand-eyed (9, 60).

Soma stimulated the Fathers to deeds (9, 96); through him the Fathers found the light and the cows (9, 97). Soma is also said to be united with the fathers (8, 48) or to be accompanied by them (AV. 18, 412; SB. 2, 6, 14, &c.), the Fathers, conversely, being called soma-loving, (somya: 10, 142; AV. 2, 125).

The exhilarating effect of the draught on man was naturally transferred to the gods, to whom the Soma was offered. The main application of its intoxicating power is its stimulating effect on Indra in his conflict with the hostile powers of the air. That Soma strengthens Indra for the fight with Vṛtra, is mentioned in innumerable passages of the RV. (8, 81 &c.). In the intoxication of Soma Indra slays all foes (9, 119) and no one can resist him in battle when he has drunk it (6, 47). Soma is the soul of Indra (9, 85), the auspicious friend of Indra (10, 25), whose vigour he stimulates (9, 76) and whom he aids in slaying Vṛtra (9, 61). With Soma as a companion Indra made the waters to flow for man and slew the dragon (4, 28). Thus Soma is sometimes even called the bolt (vajra) of Indra (9, 72; 77 i 113). Soma, Indra’s juice, becomes a thousand-winning bolt (9, 47). It is the intoxicating draught which destroys a hundred forts (9, 48) and is a Vṛtra-slaying intoxicating stalk (6, 17). Thus the god Soma is said to be ‘like Indra a slayer of Vṛtras and a fort-destroyer’ (9, 83) and comes to receive half a dozen times the epithet vṛtrahan, ‘Vṛtra-slaying’, which primarily belongs to Indra.

When drunk by Indra Soma caused the sun to rise in heaven (9, 86). So this cosmic action comes to be attributed to Soma independently. He caused the sun to shine (9, 285; 371), caused the lights of the sky to shine
(9, 859), and produced the sun in the waters (9, 424)38. He caused the sun to rise, impelled it, obtained and bestowed it, and caused the dawns to shine39. He makes his worshippers participate in the sun (9, 49) and finds light for them (9, 354). He found the light (9, 594) and wins light and heaven (9, 34). Just as even the sacrificial butter is spoken of as the ‘navel of immortality’, on which rests the whole world (4, 581-11), the conception of Soma comes to be extended to that of a being of universal dominion (9, 864829), who is ‘lord of the quarters’ (9, 1134), who performs the great cosmic actions of generating the two worlds (9, 904), of creating or establishing heaven and earth, of supporting heaven, and of placing light in the sun (6, 444424, 4734449).

Being so intimately connected with Indra in the conflict with Vṛtra, Soma comes to be spoken of independently as a great fighter. He is a victor, unconquered in fight, born for battle (1, 9124). He is the most heroic of heroes, the fiercest of the terrible, ever victorious (9, 6647-7). He conquers for his worshippers cows, chariots, horses, gold, heaven, water, a thousand boons (9, 784), and everything (8, 684). Without reference to his warlike character, he is constantly said to bestow all the wealth of heaven and earth, food, cattle, horses, and so forth (9, 451, 494, 524 &c.). Soma himself is, occasionally called a treasure (rañi: 9, 484) or the wealth of the gods (SB. 1, 6, 454). Soma can also afford protection from foes (10, 254). He drives away goblins (9, 494) and, like some other deities but more frequently, receives the epithet of goblin-slayer (rakshaman). Soma is the only god who is called a slayer of the wicked (9, 286 &c.). In the later Vedic literature the statement occurs that Brāhmans who drink Soma are able to slay at a glance (MS. 4, 8544).

Being a warrior, Soma is said to have weapons (9, 9646), which like a hero he grasps in his hand (9, 764) and which are terrible and sharp (9, 614904). In one passage he is said to have obtained his weapons by robbing his malignant father of them (6, 44422). He is described as armed with a thousand-pointed shaft (9, 854, 864) and his bow is swift (9, 9043).

Soma rides in the same chariot as Indra (9, 874, 964, 1034). He is charioteer to the car-fighter Indra (AV. 8, 834). He drives in a car (9, 34), which is heavenly (9, 1114). He has light (9, 86445) or a filter for his car (9, 8345). He is the best of charioteers (9, 6646). He has well-winged mares of his own (9, 8634) and a team like Vāyu (9, 8843).

Soma is naturally sometimes connected with Indra’s intimate associates, the Maruts. They are said to milk the bull of heaven (9, 108415, cp. 544) and to adorn the child when born (9, 96417). Like Indra, Soma is attended by the Maruts (6, 474) or the troop of the Maruts (9, 66422). The Winds, too, are said to be gladdening to Soma (9, 314) and Vāyu is his guardian (10, 854). Soma forms a pair with Agni, Pūšan, and Rudra respectively (p. 128-9). A few times he is mystically indentified with Varuṇa (9, 775, 954; cp. 7349; 8, 414).

The Soma plant is once in the RV. (10, 344) described as maṇjavata, which according to later statements42 would mean ‘produced on Mount Mūjavat’. Soma is also several times described as dwelling in the mountains (giptihā)43 or growing in the mountains44 (parvatāvyah: 9, 464). Mountains are also called ‘Soma-backed’ (AV. 3, 214), a term which, perhaps by sacrificial symbolism, is applied to the pressing stones (adrayah) in RV. 8, 524. All these terms point to the abode of the Soma plant being on terrestrial mountains (cp. especially 9, 8243). This is confirmed by the statement of the Avesta that Haoma grows on the mountains45. Since the Soma plant actually
grew on mountains, it is probable that this fact is present to the mind of the poet even when he says that 'on the vault of heaven sweet-tongued friends milk the mountain-dwelling bull' (9, 85\(^{10}\) cp. 95\(^{10}\)). Terrestrial hills may also be intended when it is said that 'Varuna has placed Agni in the waters, the sun in heaven, and Soma on the rock' (5, 85\(^{4}\)), or that 'Mātariśvan brought the one (Agni) from heaven, while the eagle carried off the other (Soma) from the rock' (1, 93\(^{6}\)); but here there is more doubt, as 'mountain' and 'rock' mythologically often mean 'cloud' (p. 10).

Though Soma is a terrestrial plant, it is also celestial (10, 116\(^{3}\)); in fact its true origin and abode are regarded as in heaven. Thus it is said that the birth of the plant is on high; being in heaven it has been received by earth (9, 61\(^{10}\)). The 'intoxicating juice' is the 'child of heaven' (9, 38\(^{5}\)), an epithet frequently applied to Soma. In one passage, however, he is called the offspring (jāt) of the sun (9, 93\(^{1}\)) and in another Parjanya is spoken of as the father of the mighty bird (9, 82\(^{3}\) cp. 113\(^{3}\)). In the AV. the origin of amṛta is also traced to the seed of Parjanya (AV. 8, 7\(^{1}\)). When Soma is called a child (śīta) simply (9, 96\(^{17}\)) or a youth (yuvan), this is doubtless in allusion to the fact that, like Agni, he is continually produced anew\(^{46}\).

Soma is the milk (pūjaka) of heaven (9, 51\(^{2}\) &c.), is purified in heaven (9, 83\(^{1}\), 86\(^{22}\) &c.). He flows with his stream to the dear places of heaven (9, 12\(^{6}\)). He runs through heaven across the spaces with his stream (9, 37). He occupies heaven (9, 85\(^{9}\)), is in heaven (SB. 3, 4, 3\(^{13}\)), or is the lord of heaven (9, 86\(^{11}\)-33). As bird of heaven he looks down on earth and regards all beings (9, 71\(^{9}\)). He stands above all worlds like god Śūrya (9, 54\(^{3}\)).

The drops being purified have been poured from heaven, from the air, on the surface of the earth (9, 63\(^{27}\)\(^{47}\)) for he is a traverser of space (rajastur: 4, 48\(^{4}\), 108\(^{7}\)). Fingers rub him surrounded with milk 'on the third ridge, in the bright realm of heaven' (9, 86\(^{2}\)). His place is in the highest heaven (3, 32\(^{10}\); 4, 26\(^{6}\); 9, 86\(^{15}\)) or in the third heaven (TS. 3, 5, 7\(^{1}\) &c.)\(^{48}\). 'Heaven', however, also seems to be frequently a mystical name of the strainer of sheep's wool\(^{49}\). This seems to be the case when Soma is spoken of as being 'on the navel of heaven, on the sheep-filter' (9, 12\(^{1}\)), as traversing the lights of heaven, the sheep-filter (9, 37\(^{3}\)), as running with Śūrya in heaven, on the filter (9, 27\(^{3}\)); or when it is said that 'the bull has occupied heaven, the king goes soaring over the strainer' (9, 85\(^{9}\) cp. 86\(^{8}\)). The term sānu, 'summit', so frequently applied to the filter, is suggestive of divaḥ sānu, 'the summit of heaven'. Such terms would naturally come to be connected with the terrestrial Soma, because heaven is the abode of the celestial Soma or amṛta (6, 44\(^{2}\)).

Soma has been brought from heaven (9, 63\(^{27}\), 66\(^{30}\)). The myth most commonly expressive of this belief is that of Soma and the eagle. It was brought by the eagle (1, 86\(^{5}\)). The bird brought Soma from that highest heaven (4, 26\(^{6}\)). The eagle brought the Soma or mead (madhu) to Indra (3, 43\(^{7}\); 4, 18\(^{13}\)). The swift eagle flew to the Soma plant (5, 45\(^{9}\)); the eagle tore off the sweet stalk for Indra (4, 20\(^{7}\)). The eagle brought it for Indra through the air with his foot (8, 71\(^{9}\)). Flying swift as thought, the bird broke through the iron castle (cp. 4, 27\(^{1}\)), going to heaven he brought the Soma for the wielder of the bolt (8, 89\(^{8}\)). The eagle bore the plant from afar, from heaven (9, 68\(^{3}\), 77\(^{4}\), 86\(^{4}\); 10, 114, 99\(^{3}\), 144\(^{4}\)). The myth is most fully dealt with in RV. 4, 26 and 27\(^{9}\). In the Brāhmaṇas it is Gāyatrī, a mystical sacerdotal name of Agni\(^{51}\), that carries off the Soma. In the RV. the eagle is constantly distinguished from Indra as bringing the Soma to him. There is only one passage (unconnected with this myth) in which Indra seated
at the Soma offering is called an eagle (10, 99\(^6\)). 'Eagle of heaven' is an
epithet applied to Agni (7, 15\(^4\); otherwise twice said of the Maruts), the
term eagle is connected with Agni Vaidyuta or lightning (TB. 3, 10, 5\(^1\) cp. 12, 1\(^2\)),
and Agni is often called a bird in the RV. (p. 89). On this evidence Bloom-
field, who subjects his predecessors' interpretations of RV. 4, 27 to a searching
criticism, with much plausibility explains the carrying off of Soma by
the eagle as a mythological account of the simple phenomenon of the
descent of lightning, darting from the cloud (i.e. the iron castle) and causing
the fall of the ambrosial fluid Soma (i.e. the water of the cloud). At the
same time he refers to a passage of the RV. (1, 93\(^6\)) in which the descent
of fire and of Soma are mentioned together\(^52\). A detail of the myth (pro-
bably a mere embellishment added by the individual poet) is the trait that
as the eagle carried away Soma, the archer Kṛṣṇu\(^53\) shot at him knocking
out a feather (4, 27\(^3\)-4; cp. AB. 3, 25). This trait is related with greater
detail in the Brāhmaṇas. Either a feather or a claw is here stated to have
been shot off. Falling to the ground, it became a parna (palāśa) or a
śalyaka tree. The tree hereby acquired a specially sacred character in conne-
xion with the ritual\(^54\).

Being the most important of herbs Soma is said to have been born as
the lord of plants (9, 114\(^{7}\)), which are also said to have Soma as their king\(^55\)
(9, 97\(^{18-9}\)). He receives the epithet vanaspati, 'lord of the wood' (1, 91\(^6\);
9, 12\(^7\)) and is said to have generated all plants (1, 91\(^2\)). In the Brāhmaṇas
plants are connected with Soma, being styled saumya (SB. 12, 1, 1\(^2\))\(^56\).
Irrespective of his being lord of plants, Soma is often, like other leading
gods, called a king\(^57\). He is also a king of rivers (9, 89\(^5\)), a king of the
whole earth (9, 97\(^5\)), a king or father of the gods (9, 86\(^10\); 87\(^7\); 109\(^1\)) a king
of gods and mortals (9, 97\(^{24}\)), and a king of Brāhmans (VS. 9, 40; TS. 1, 8\(^10\);
MS. 2, 69). He is of course often called a god; but in one passage he is
described as 'a god pressed for the gods' (9, 3\(^4\)-7).

In the post-Vedic literature Soma is a regular name of the moon, which
is regarded as being drunk up by the gods and so waning, till it is filled up
again by the sun. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (5, 10\(^1\)) the statement is
found that the moon is king Soma, the food of the gods, and is drunk up
by them\(^58\). Even in the Brāhmaṇas the identification of Soma with the moon
is already a common-place\(^59\). Thus the AB. (7, 11) remarks that the moon
is the Soma of the gods; the SB. (1, 6, 4\(^9\)), that king Soma, the food of
the gods, is the moon; and in the Kauśitaki Br. (7, 10; 4, 4) the sacrificial
plant or juice is symbolic of the moon-god. The mythology of the Brā-
hmaṇas already explains the phases of the moon as due to the gods and
Fathers eating its substance, which consists of ambrosia\(^60\). Soma, as the
moon, is in the YV. also conceived as having the lunar asterisms, the daughters
of Prajāpati, for his wives\(^61\). In the AV., moreover, Soma several times
means the moon (7, 8\(^1\)-4; 11, 9\(^7\), &c.). A large number of scholars agree
that even in a few of the latest hymns of the RV. (in the first and tenth
books) Soma is already identified with the moon\(^62\). Most of them, however,
hold that Soma as a god is celebrated in the Vedic hymns only as a per-
sonification of the beverage, regarding his identification with the moon as
merely a secondary mythological growth\(^63\). The most important of the
passages in which the identification is generally admitted, is that which
describes the wedding of Soma and the sun-maiden Śūryā (10, 85)\(^64\). Here
Soma is spoken of as ‘in the lap of the stars’, (v. 2), and it is said that no
one eats of that Soma which the priests know and which is contrasted with
that which they crush (v. 3). The Soma nature of the moon being referred
to as a secret known to Brāhmans only, shows that it cannot yet have been a popular notion. The process by which the celestial Soma gradually coalesced with the moon is not difficult to understand. Soma is, on the one hand, continually thought of as celestial and bright, sometimes as dispelling darkness and swelling in the waters; on the other hand, it is very often called a 'drop', īndu (6, 44)\(^{65}\). Comparison with the moon would therefore easily suggest itself. Thus Soma in the bowls is said in one passage to appear like the moon in the waters (8, 71; cp. 1, 105); and in another, Soma being described as the drop (drapha) which goes to the ocean, looking with the eye of a vulture (10, 123\(^{8}\)), is generally admitted to allude to the moon.

Hillebrandt, however, in his Vedische Mythologie not only claims this identification for a number of other passages in the RV., but asserts that in the whole of the ninth book Soma is the moon (p. 309) and nowhere the ordinary plant (p. 326), the ninth book in fact being a book of hymns to the moon\(^{56}\). Soma, he maintains, means, in the earliest as well as the latest parts of the whole RV., only the Soma plant or juice on the one hand, and, as a deity, only the moon on the other (pp. 274, 340, 450). According to his view, the moon is a receptacle of Soma or amṛta and is the god whom the worshipper means when he presses the draught, which is part of the lunar ambrosia. Hillebrandt goes even further than this complete identification of Soma and the moon in the RV. He also asserts that the moon-god as Soma forms the centre of Vedic belief and cult (p. 277), being the creator and ruler of the world much more than the sun (p. 313), while Indra is the most popular Vedic god only next to the moon\(^{67}\) (p. 315).

In opposition to this hypothesis, it has been argued that, in the vast majority of the references to Soma in the RV., the character of the god as a personification of the plant and juice is clear and obvious. On the other hand, while the identification of Soma and the moon is perfectly clear in the later literature, there is in the whole of the RV. no single distinct and explicit instance either of the identification or of the conception that the moon is the food of the gods. It is only in passages where the brilliance of Soma, so constantly connected with the sun, is vaguely expressed, that references to the moon can be found. At the same time it is possible that amid the chaotic details of the imagery of the Soma hymns, there may occasionally lurk a veiled identification of ambrosia and the moon. Here and there passages celebrating the luminous nature of Soma or referring to his swelling (āpyāyana), which affords a parallel to the swelling of the moon, may allude to such a notion. But on the whole, with the few late exceptions generally admitted, it appears to be certain that to the seers of the RV. the god Soma is a personification of the terrestrial plant and juice\(^{68}\).

It is, moreover, hardly conceivable that all the Vedic commentators, in whose day Soma and the moon were believed to be one, should not know that Soma means the moon in the RV. also\(^{69}\).

It is an undoubted fact that Soma, the Avestan Haoma, was already prepared and celebrated in the Indo-Iranian period. In the RV. Soma is described as growing on the mountains or a particular mountain; in the Avesta it is said to grow on a certain mountain. In the RV. Varuna places it on the rock; in the Avesta it is placed on the great mountain Haraiti by a skillful god. In the RV. it is brought by an eagle; in the Avesta it is distributed from its native mountain by certain auspicious birds. In both it is king of plants. In both it is a medicine which gives health, long life, and removes death. As Soma grows in the waters, so Haoma in the waters of Ardvi-śūra\(^{70}\). The pressing and offering of Soma was already an important
feature of Indo-Iranian worship. But while three daily pressings are referred to in the RV., only two are mentioned in the Avesta (Yasna 10, 2). In both it is stated that the stalks (anšu = āšu) were pressed, that the juice was yellow and was mixed with milk (Yasna 10, 13). In both the celestial Soma is distinguished from the terrestrial, and the beverage from the god. In both the mythical home of Soma is heaven, whence it comes down to earth. In both the Soma draught (like the sacrificial fire) had already become a mighty god and is called a king. As Soma is vṛtraḥ, so Haoma is vṛtrārajan and casts missiles (vadare = Vedic vadhar). Both are light-winning (svāra = āvaresa) and wise (sukratu = hukhratu). Both remove the machinations of the wicked, bestow victory over foes, and confer the celestial world. Both grant steeds and excellent children. The RV. and the Avesta even agree in the names of ancient preparers of Soma, Vivasvat and Trita Aptya on the one hand, and Vivanhvant, Athwya, and Thrtha on the other. The belief in an intoxicating divine beverage, the home of which was heaven, may be Indo-European. If so, it must have been regarded as a kind of honey-mead (Skt. mádhu, Gk. μέθυ, As. medu) brought down to earth from its guardian demon by an eagle (the Soma-bringing eagle of Indra agreeing with the nectar-bringing eagle of Zeus and with the eagle which, as a metamorphosis of Odhin, carried off the mead). This madhu or honey-mead, if Indo-European, was replaced in the Indo-Iranian period by Soma; but may have survived into the Vedic period, by amalgamating with Soma.

Etymologically Soma = Haoma means 'pressed juice', being derived from the root su = hu, 'to press'.

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D. Abstract Gods.

§ 38. Two Classes. — There are in the RV. two classes of deities whose nature is founded on abstraction. The one class consisting of the direct personifications of abstract notions such as 'desire' is rare, occurring only in the very latest hymns of the RV. and due to that growth of speculation which is so plainly traceable in the course of the Vedic age. The other and more numerous class comprises deities whose names primarily either denote an agent, in the form of a noun derived from a root with the suffix -tr, such as Dhatr, 'Creator', or designate some attribute, such as Prajapati, 'Lord of Creatures'. This class, judged by the evolution of the mythological creations of the Veda, does not represent direct abstractions, but appears in each case to be derived from an epithet applied to one or more deities and illustrating a particular aspect of activity or character. Such epithets gradually becoming detached finally attained to an independent position. Thus Rohita, the Red One (whose female form is Rohini), originally an epithet of the sun, figures in the AV. as a separate deity in the capacity of a Creator.¹

A. Various Agent Gods. — The most important of the gods whose names denote an agent in -tr, is Savitṛ, who has already been treated among the solar deities (§ 15). Most of the others are of rare occurrence in the RV. Dhatṛ, found in a few passages as an appellative designating priests as 'establishers' of the sacrifice, occurs as the name of a deity about a dozen times and, with the exception of one indefinite mention in company with a number of other gods (7, 35), only in the tenth book. In one of these passages the name is an epithet of Indra (10, 167) and in another of Viṣvavārman (10, 82²). The frequent ascription of the action of establishing (Vdhā) the phenomena of the world to different gods, gradually led to the conception of a separate deity exercising this particular activity. Thus Dhatṛ generally has the independent character of a god who creates sun, moon, heaven, earth, and air (10, 190), and is lord of the world (10, 128). In a hymn to the Sun, Dhatṛ is invoked to grant a clear eye (10, 158). He is besought with Viṣṇu, Tvaṣṭṛ, Prajāpati, to grant offspring (10, 84) and, by himself, to bestow length of days (10, 185). He is also prayed to indefinitely with Viṣṇu and Savitṛ (10, 181³—3) or with Mātariśvan and Deśṭri (10, 85⁴). In the Naighañṭuka (5, 5) Dhatṛ is enumerated among the gods of the middle region and by Yāska (Nir. 11, 10) explained as the 'ordainer of everything'. In the post-Vedic period, Dhatṛ is the Creator and Preserver of the world, being the equivalent of Prajāpati or Brahmā. The rare name Vidhātṛ, the 'Disposer' is in two passages an epithet, beside Dhatṛ, once of Indra (10, 167) and once of Viṣvavārman (10, 82); but appears twice in enumerations of deities to have an independent character (6, 50; 9, 815). Dhartṛ, 'Supporter',

¹
frequently used (almost exclusively with the genitive of that which is supported) as an epithet of Indra and other gods, occurs once as an independent name along with Dhātr and other deities (7, 35\textsuperscript{i}). Similarly, Trātr, the ‘Protector’, mostly employed as an epithet of Agni or Indra and, in the plural, of the Adityas, occurs independently as the ‘Protector God’ in five passages along with other deities (1, 106; 4, 55\textsuperscript{5}; 7; 8, 18\textsuperscript{10}; 10, 128\textsuperscript{7}). In Roth’s opinion, Savitr especially and also Bhaga are intended by this god\textsuperscript{2}. A ‘Leader God’ (deva netṛ) is invoked two or three times in one hymn (5, 50) as a guide to prosperity in life.

B. Tvastr. — The only deity bearing a name of this type, who besides Savitr is mentioned with any frequency, is Tvastr. His name occurs about 65 times in the RV., pretty uniformly in the family books (though rarely in the seventh as well as the eighth), but relatively oftenest in the first and tenth. No hymn is, however, devoted to his praise.

No part of Tvastr’s physical form is mentioned except his arm or hand, it being characteristic of him to hold an iron axe in his hand (8, 29\textsuperscript{7}). He is once described as yoking his two steeds to his chariot and shining greatly (6, 47\textsuperscript{8}). Tvastr is beautiful-armed (sugabhasti: 6, 49\textsuperscript{9}), or beautiful-handed (supāni: predominantly applied to him and Savitr).

He is a skilful workman (1, 85\textsuperscript{3}; 3, 54\textsuperscript{2}), producing various objects showing the skill of an artificer. He is in fact the most skilful of workmen, versed in crafty contrivances (10, 53\textsuperscript{9}). He is several times said (5, 31\textsuperscript{4} & c.) to have fashioned (वतस्) the bolt of Indra. He also sharpens the iron axe of Brahmanaspati (10, 53\textsuperscript{9}). He formed a new cup (1, 26\textsuperscript{9}) which contained the food of the asura (1, 110\textsuperscript{3}) or the beverage of the gods (1, 161\textsuperscript{5}; 3, 35\textsuperscript{5}). He thus possesses vessels out of which the gods drink (10, 53\textsuperscript{9}). The AV. (9, 4\textsuperscript{3}-6) describes him as an old man bearing a bowl of wealth, a cup full of Soma. From Tvastr the swift horse was produced (VS. 29, 9), and he gives speed to the horse (AV. 6, 92\textsuperscript{8}).

The RV. further states that Tvastr adorned all beings with form (10, 110\textsuperscript{9}). He develops the germ in the womb and is the shaper of all forms, human and animal (1, 188\textsuperscript{5}; 8, 91\textsuperscript{18}; 10, 184\textsuperscript{7}). Similar statements are frequently made in later Vedic texts (AV. 2, 26\textsuperscript{6}, & c.), where he is characteristically a creator of forms (SB. 11, 4, 3\textsuperscript{3}; TB. 1, 4, 7\textsuperscript{1}). He himself is called omniform (विस्वरुपः) oftener than any other deity in the RV. As fashioner of living forms, he is frequently described as presiding over generation and bestowing offspring (3, 4\textsuperscript{9} & c.). Thus he is said to have fashioned husband and wife for each other from the womb (10, 10\textsuperscript{2}; AV. 6, 78\textsuperscript{3}). He has produced and nourishes a great variety of creatures (3, 55\textsuperscript{19}). Beasts belong to Tvastr (SB. 3, 7, 3\textsuperscript{11}. 8, 3\textsuperscript{11}). He is indeed a universal father, for he produced the whole world (VS. 29, 9).

He is also the ancestor of the human race in so far as his daughter Saranyū, wife of Vivasvat, becomes the mother of the primeval twins Yama and Yamī (10, 17\textsuperscript{1}. 2, cp. 5, 42\textsuperscript{13}). Vāyu is once said to be his son-in-law (8, 26\textsuperscript{2}). Tvastr begot Brhaspati (2, 23\textsuperscript{7}). Agni produced by the ten fingers, is the offspring of Tvastr (1, 95\textsuperscript{9}), who, along with Heaven and Earth, the Waters, and the Bhūrgus, generated him (10, 27, 46\textsuperscript{9}). It is to be inferred that Tvastr was also the father of Indra (p. 57). Tvastr is especially a guardian of Soma, which is called the mead of Tvastr (1, 117\textsuperscript{22}). It is in his house that Indra drinks Soma and presumptively steals it, even slaying his father in order to obtain it (p. 57). The omniform Tvastr has a son named Viśvarūpā (the Omniform), who is a guardian of cows. The hostility of Indra is directed against the son in order to win these cows, just as against the father in
order to gain possession of the Soma. Even Tvaṣṭṛ himself is said to tremble with fear at the wrath of Indra (1, 80\(^{14}\)) and is represented as inferior to Indra, inasmuch as not even he was able to perform a feat done by Indra (10, 49\(^{10}\)). The TS. (2, 4, 12\(^{1}\)) tells a story of how Tvaṣṭṛ, whose son had been slain by Indra, refused to allow the latter to assist at his Soma sacrifice, but Indra came and drank off the Soma by force. The Brāhmaṇas often relate a similar tale (SB. 1, 6, 3\(^{6}\), &c.).

Probably because of his creative agency in the womb\(^1\), Tvaṣṭṛ is closely allied with celestial females (gwāḥ, janayah) or the wives of the gods, who are his most frequent attendants (1, 22\(^{8}\) &c.)\(^5\). Tvaṣṭṛ is chiefly mentioned with gods of cognate activity, Pūṣan, Savitṛ, Dhātr, Prajāpati. ‘Savitṛ’ is indeed an attribute of Tvaṣṭṛ in two passages (3, 55\(^{19}\); 10, 10\(^{5}\)) in which occurs the identical collocation devas tvāṣṭa savitā visvarūpah\(^6\), ‘god Tvaṣṭṛ, the omnipresent vivifier’, and in both of which the generative or creative faculty of the deity is referred to. In the Kauśika Śūtra, Tvaṣṭṛ is identified with Savitṛ and Prajāpati\(^7\), and in the Mārkaṇḍeyā Purāṇa, with Viśvakarman and Prajāpati. In the later mythology Tvaṣṭṛ is one of the twelve Adityas and in the Mahābhārata and the Bhāgavata Purāṇa is once or twice a form of the sun.

The RV. adds a few rather indefinite traits, which throw no light on Tvaṣṭṛ’s character. He is said to be the first (1, 13\(^{30}\)) or the first-born (agrajā) and one who goes before (9, 5\(^{9}\)). As a companion of the Āngirases he knows the region of the gods (10, 70\(^{9}\)), goes to the place of the gods (2, 19\(^{\text{a}}\)) between heaven and earth (MS. 4, 14\(^{\text{a}}\)). He is a bestower of blessings and is possessed of excellent wealth (10, 70\(^{9}\), 92\(^{9}\)). He is supplicated to grant riches to his worshippers and to delight in their hymns (7, 34\(^{21}\)). Tvaṣṭṛ also confers long life (10, 18\(^{\theta}\); AV. 6, 78\(^{3}\)).

The word is derived from a rare root tvāks, of which only one verbal form, besides some nominal derivatives, occurs in the RV., and the cognate of which, thwakṣ, is found in the Avesta. It appears to be identical in meaning with the common root takṣ, which is used with the name of Tvaṣṭṛ in referring to the fashioning of Indra’s bolt. The meaning therefore appears to be the ‘Fashioner’ or ‘Artificer’.

Tvaṣṭṛ is one of the obscuresest members of the Vedic pantheon\(^8\). The obscurity of the conception is explained by KAEGL\(^9\) as due to Tvaṣṭṛ, like Trita and others, having belonged to an earlier race of gods who were ousted by later ones; while HILLEBRANDT thinks Tvaṣṭṛ was derived from a mythical cycle outside the range of the Vedic tribes. Different explanations have been offered of Tvaṣṭṛ’s original nature. Owing to Tvaṣṭṛ being called Savitṛ, A. KUHN\(^{10}\) thought that he meant the sun, but seems later\(^{11}\) to have withdrawn this view. LUDWIG\(^{12}\) regards him as a god of the year, while OLDENBERG believes him to be a pure abstraction expressing a definite characteristic activity\(^13\). HILLEBRANDT holds KUHN’s earlier view that Tvaṣṭṛ represents the sun, to be probable\(^14\). HARDY also considers him a solar deity\(^15\). It does not indeed seem unlikely that this god, in a period anterior to the RV., represented the creative aspect of the sun’s nature. If such was the case the Rigvedic poets themselves were only very dimly conscious of it. The name itself would have encouraged the growth of mythical accretions illustrative of creative skill, the desire to supply the pantheon with a regular divine artificer being natural enough. Much in the same way it was supplied with a divine priest in the person of Brhaspati.

The cup of Tvaṣṭṛ has been explained as the ‘bowl of the year’ or the nocturnal sky. But neither of these could well have been conceived as full
of Soma and drunk by the gods. Hillebrandt’s interpretation of it as the moon is more plausible (cp. p. 133).

§ 39. Viśvakarman, Prajāpati.—A few other abstract deities originating in compound epithets and all representing the supreme god who was being evolved at the end of the Rigvedic period, are found in the RV. As the name of a god Viśvakarman occurs only five times in the RV. and always in the tenth book. Two whole hymns (10, 81, 82) are dedicated to his praise. The word also occurs as an attribute once (8, 87) of Indra and once (10, 170) of the Sun as the ‘all-creating’. It is not uncommon as an adjective in the later Vedas, where it also appears as an attribute of Prajāpati (VS. 12, 61). The two hymns of the RV. describe Viśvakarman thus. He is all-seeing, having eyes, as well as a face, arms, and feet, on every side. (In this the Brahmā of later mythology, who is four-faced and four-armed, resembles him.) He is also provided with wings. He is a seer, a priest, our father. He is a lord of speech (vācas pāti), swift as thought, beneficent, the source of all prosperity. He knows all places and beings, and he alone gives their names to the gods. He is wise and energetic, the highest appurtenant (paramā samītrā). He is an establisher (dhātṛ) and a disposer (vidhātṛ), having produced the earth and disclosed the sky. It seems likely that the word was at first attached as an epithet chiefly to the sun-god, but in the later Rigvedic period became one of the almost synonymous names given to the one god (10, 81) the conception of whom was then being tentatively evolved, and who as Viśvakarman was, owing to the name, mainly thought of in his architechtonic aspect 1. Viśvakarman in the Brāhmaṇas is expressly identified with the creator Prajāpati (SB. 8, 2, 14. 35, cp. AB. 4, 22). In post-Vedic times he was conceived as the artificer of the gods.

Prajāpati occurs in one passage of the RV. (4, 53) as an epithet of Savitṛ, who is spoken of as a supporter of heaven and praśātpati of the world 2, and in another, as an epithet of Soma compared with Tvaṣṭṛ and Indra (9, 52). Otherwise the word is found four times as the name of a distinct deity, always in the tenth book. The god Prajāpati is invoked (10, 85) to bestow abundant offspring (prajām), is besought, along with Viṣṇu, Tvaṣṭṛ, and Dātṛ, to grant offspring (10, 184), and is spoken of as making cows prolific (10, 169). As a protector of generation and living beings Prajāpati is also often invoked in the AV. 3 In the one hymn devoted to his praise in the RV. (10, 121), he is invoked by this name only in the last verse. In this hymn he is celebrated as the creator of heaven and earth, of the waters and of all that lives; who was born (jāta) as the one lord (pāti) of all that is, the one king of all that breathes and moves, the one god above the gods; whose ordinances all beings and the gods follow; who established heaven and earth; who traverses space in the atmosphere; who embraces with his arms the whole world and all creatures. Here Prajāpati is clearly the name of the supreme god. Though only mentioned once in the RV. in this sense, he is commonly in the AV. and VS., and regularly in the Brāhmaṇas, recognized as the chief god. He is the father of the gods (SB. 11, 1, 6; TB. 8, 1, 3 &c.), having existed alone in the beginning (SB. 2
2, 4\(^3\)). He created the Asuras as well (TB. 2, 2, 2\(^3\))\(^4\). He is also described as the first sacrificer (SB. 2, 4, 4\(^3\); 6, 2, 3\(^3\)). In the Sūtras Prajāpati is identified with Brahmā (AGS. 3, 4, &c.). In the place of this chief god of the later Vedic theology, the philosophy of the Upaniṣads put the impersonal Brahma, the universal soul or the Absolute.

A myth is told in the MS. (4, 2\(^3\)) of Prajāpati being enamoured of his daughter Uṣas. She transformed herself into a gazelle; whereupon he transformed himself into the corresponding male. Rudra incensed at this aimed his arrow at him, when Prajāpati promised to make him lord of beasts if he did not shoot (cp. RV. 10, 61\(^7\)). The story is several times referred to in the Brāhmaṇas (AB. 3, 33; SB. 1, 7, 4\(^3\); PB. 8, 2\(^10\))\(^5\). The basis of this myth seem to be two passages of the RV. (1, 7, 1\(^5\); 10, 61\(^5\)-7) in which the incest of a father (who seems to be Dyaus) with his daughter (here apparently the Earth) is referred to and an archer is mentioned\(^6\).

In the refrain of the first nine verses of RV. 10, 12\(^1\) the supreme god is referred to as unknown by the interrogative pronoun Ka, Who? The answer given in the tenth verse, is that Prajāpati alone embraces all beings. This later led to the employment of Ka not only as an epithet of Prajāpati (AB. 3, 2\(^2\)7), but as a name, used by itself, of the supreme god (MS. 3, 1\(^2\))\(^8\). In the TS. (1, 7, 6\(^6\)) Ka is expressly identified with Prajāpati.

In the first verse of RV. 10, 12\(^1\) the supreme god is referred to as Hṛnṇṅyagarbha, the 'Germ of Gold', the one lord of what exists. This is the only occurrence of the name in the RV., but it is mentioned several times in the AV. and the literature of the Brāhmaṇa period (cp. p. 1\(^3\)). Hṛnṇṅyagarbha is also alluded to in a passage of the AV. (4, 2\(^3\)) where it is stated that the waters produced an embryo, which as it was being born, was enveloped in a golden covering. In the TS. (5, 5, 1\(^3\)) Hṛnṇṅyagarbha is expressly identified with Prajāpati. In the later literature he is chiefly a designation of the personal Brahmā.

\(^1\) OST. 4, 5—11; 5, 354—5; WC. 80—5; SPH. 33—40. —\(^2\) Cp. BLOOMFIELD, AJP. 14, 493. —\(^3\) See PW. s. v. prajāpati. —\(^4\) Cp. OST. 5, 80—1. —\(^5\) ASL. 529; OST. 4, 45; SBE. 12, 284, n. 1; DELBRÜCK, FaB. 24; WVB. 1894, p. 34; GELDNER, FaW. 21. —\(^6\) Cp. BRV. 2, 109\(^4\); OLDENBERG, SBE. 46, 78 f. —\(^7\) SPH. 27, n. 2; ASL. 433; IS. 2, 94; SBE. 12, 8. —\(^8\) ASL. 596 f.; OGK. 295; OST. 4, 15—18; 5, 352, 355; WC. 50—1; HVM. 1, 380, n. 1; HRI. 141—2; GELDNER, l. c.

§ 40. Manyu, Śraddhā &c. — We have yet to deal with the deification of abstract nouns. Manyu, Wrath, a personification suggested chiefly by the fierce anger of Indra, is invoked in two hymns of the RV. (10, 83, 84). He is of irresistible might and self-existent. He glows like fire, is a god, who is Indra, Varuṇa, Jātavedas. He slays Vṛtra, is accompanied by the Maruts, grants victory like Indra, and bestows wealth. United with Tapas, Ardour, he protects his adorers and slays their foes. One short hymn of the RV. (10, 15\(^l\)) is devoted to the praise of Śraddhā, Faith.\(^4\) She is said to be invoked morning, noon, and night. Through Faith fire is kindled and ghee offered. Through Faith wealth is obtained. In the Brāhmaṇas Śraddhā is the daughter of the Sun (SB. 12, 7, 3\(^1\)) or of Prajāpati (TB. 2, 3, 10\(^4\)). Her relationships are still further worked out in the Epics and Purāṇas. Anumati, Favour (of the gods), occurs twice as a personification in the RV. She is besought to be gracious and let her worshippers long see the sun (10, 59\(^6\) and her protection is referred to (10, 167\(^3\)). In the AV. and VS. she becomes a goddess of love and presides over propagation. The later ritual connected her with the moon, regarding her as representing the day before full-moon.\(^2\) Aramati, Devotion, Piety, is occasionally personified.
in the RV. The name has a counterpart in the Avestic Armaiti, a genius of earth as well as wisdom, but the personification can hardly go back to the Indo-Iranian period. Sūrta, Bounty, appears to be personified as a goddess two or three times in the RV. (1, 40; 10, 141). Asunīti, Spirit-life, is personified in one passage of the RV. (10, 59-65), being besought to prolong life and grant strength and nourishment. Nīrūti, Decease, Dissolution, appears about twelve times in the RV. as a personification presiding over death.

Other personifications appear for the first time in the later Vedas. Kāma, Desire, is deified in the AV. (9, 2; 19, 52). Here he is not, as in post-Vedic literature, a god of love, but a deity who fulfills all desires. His arrows, with which he pierces hearts, are already referred to (AV. 3, 25). He is described as the first who was born (AV. 9, 2). The origin of the conception is most probably to be traced to the kāma ‘desire’, which in a cosmogonic hymn (p. 13) of the RV. (10, 129), is called the first seed of mind. Kāla, Time, is personified as a cosmogonic force in the AV. (19, 53, 54), and Skambhā, Support, an abstraction postulated by the speculation of the AV. to uphold the universe created by Prajāpati, comes to be praised as the All-god (AV. 10, 8). Prāṇa, Breath, is also deified and identified with Prajāpati (AV. 11, 4-12 &c.). Other personified abstractions of a like nature are to be found in the AV. Śrī as a personification of Beauty or Fortune first appears in the SB. (11, 4, 3).1

1 Cp. Oldenberg, ZDMG. 50, 450 f. — 2 ZDMG. 7, 608; IS. 5, 229. — 3 ZDMG. 7, 519; 8, 770; 9, 690-2; Sp. AP. 151, 200-3; HVBP. 91; HRI. 136. — 4 Oldenberg, ZDMG. 50, 440. — 5 But cp. MM., JRAS. 2, 460, n. 2. — 6 Weber, IS. 5, 224; 17, 290; ZDMG. 14, 269; OST. 5, 402; SPH. 76-7. — 7 SPH. 78-82; HVBP. 88. — 8 SPH. 50-9; HRI. 269. — 9 SPH. 35. — 10 SPH. 14. — 11 GGH. 4.

§ 41. Aditi. — There is one deity who, if rightly interpreted as the personification of a pure abstraction, like those treated in the preceding paragraph, occupies an anomalous position in the RV. For the name is not limited to the latest portion, but occurs throughout the collection. This would be accounted for by the peculiar manner in which the personification came about, supposing the explanation offered below to be correct. Otherwise this deity would have to be classed with abstractions of the epithet type (§ 39).

The goddess Aditi is not the subject of any separate hymn, but is often incidentally celebrated in the RV., her name occurring nearly eighty times. Very rarely mentioned alone (8, 19), she is constantly invoked with her sons, the Ādityas.

She has no definite physical features. She is often called a goddess (devī), who is sometimes styled anarvā, ‘intact’ (2, 40; 7, 40). She is widely expanded (5, 46), extensive, a mistress of wide stalls (8, 67). She is bright and luminous, a supporter of creatures (1, 136): otherwise said of Mitra-Varuṇa only, and belongs to all men (7, 104: also said of Heaven and Earth). She is invoked at morning, noon, and sunset (5, 69).1

Aditi is the mother of Mitra and Varuṇa (8, 25; 10, 36, 132) as well as of Aryaman (8, 47). Hence she is called the mother of kings (2, 27, cp. v. 1), of excellent sons (3, 411), of powerful sons (8, 56), of heroic sons (AV. 3, 83; 11, 11), or of eight sons (10, 728; AV. 8, 9). She is once said to be the mother of the Rudras, being the daughter of the Vasus and (strange to say) sister of the Ādityas (8, 90), and the AV. (6, 4) mentions her brothers as well as her sons. In another passage of the AV. (7, 62 = VS. 21, 5) she is invoked as the great mother of the devout, the mistress of ṛta, strong in might, undecaying, widely extended, protecting, skilfully guiding. Such passages and the constant invocation of Aditi along with the Ādityas, her sons, show
that her motherhood is an essential and characteristic trait. Her epithet 
pastya, housewife (4, 55); 8, 275) may possibly also allude to her mother-
hood. In the Epic and Purānic mythology Aditi is the daughter of Dakṣa and mother of the gods in general, and expressly of Viṣṇu, the Sun, and of Viṣṇu in his dwarf incarnation. She is said to be the wife of Viṣṇu in VS. (29, 60 = TS. 7, 54).

Aditi is several times spoken of as protecting from distress (anāhas), and she is said to grant complete welfare or safety (10, 100; 1, 94); but she is more frequently invoked to release from guilt or sin. Thus Varuṇa (1, 245), Agni (4, 124), and Savīr (5, 826), are besought to free from guilt against Aditi. Aditi, Mitra, and Varuṇa are implored to forgive sin (2, 274). Aditi and Aryaman, to loosen (the bonds of) sin (7, 93). Worshippers beseech Aditi to make them sinless (1, 1623); praying that by fulfilling her ordinances they may be without sin towards Varuṇa (7, 87) and that evildoers may be cut off from Aditi (10, 8718). Hence though other gods, Agni (3, 5419), Savīr (4, 543), Sun, Dawn, Heaven and Earth (10, 3521) are petitioned to pardon sin, the notion of releasing from it is much more closely connected with Aditi and her son Varuṇa, whose fetters that bind sinners are characteristic, and who unites sin like a rope and removes it (p. 26).

This notion is nearly allied to the etymology of the name. The word aditi is primarily a noun meaning ‘unbinding’, ‘bondlessness’, from di-ti ‘binding’ (=Gk. ὅτι-τιν), derived from the root ἄτα, ‘to bind’. The past passive participle of this verb is employed to describe Sūnaḥsepa ‘bound’ (di-ti) to the stake (5, 27). As a goddess Aditi is naturally invoked to release her worshippers like a tied (bandha) thief (8, 6714). The original unpersonified meaning of ‘freedom’ seems to survive in a few passages of the RV. Thus a worshipper exclaims, ‘who gives us back to great aditi, that I may see father and mother’? (1, 24). The Adityas are besought (7, 51) to ‘place the offering in guiltlessness (anāgāstve) and freedom (adītītve). The poet perhaps means the same thing when he prays to Heaven and Earth for the ‘secure and unlimited gift of aditi’ (1, 185). The word aditi also occurs several times in the adjectival sense of ‘boundless’. It is thus used as an attribute twice of Dyaus (5, 598; 10, 634) and more frequently of Agni (1, 9415; 4, 120; 7, 93; 8, 1914).

The indefiniteness of the name would easily have lent itself to mystical identifications, and the conception was naturally affected by the theogonic and cosmogonic speculations found in the more recent portions of the RV. Thus the gods are said to have been born from Aditi, the Waters, and Earth (10, 634; cp. p. 14). In the verse immediately following, the ‘boundless’ Sky (dyaur aditi), their mother, is said to supply the gods with honied milk. Here therefore she appears to be identified with the sky2. Elsewhere (1, 729; AV. 13, 138) Aditi seems to be identified with the Earth, and this identification is frequent in the TS. and SB. In the Naigraṇjuka the name is given as a synonym of earth, and, in the dual, of Heaven and Earth3. In many passages of the RV., however, she is distinguished from Heaven and Earth by being mentioned separately along with them (10, 63406&c.)4. In another passage (1, 89) Aditi represents a personification of Universal Nature: ‘Aditi is the sky; Aditi is the air; Aditi is the mother, and father, and son; Aditi is all the gods and the five tribes; Aditi is whatever has been born; Aditi is whatever shall be born’ (p. 16; cp. Katha Up. 4, 7).

Though according to the older mythology of the RV. Aditi is the mother of Dakṣa as an Aditya (2, 27), she is in a cosmogonic hymn (10, 724; 5) said to be his daughter as well as his mother by the reciprocal generation
which is a notion not unfamiliar to the RV. (p.12; cp.10,90\textsuperscript{3}). In two other hymns of the tenth book (5\textsuperscript{v}, 64\textsuperscript{4}) these deities are connected in such a way that Aditi can scarcely be the mother of Dakṣa, but seems rather to be subordinate to him. Though Aditi is the mother of some of the leading deities, she plays an inferior part in a few other passages also. Thus she celebrates, along with her sons Varuṇa, Mitra, Aryaman, the praises of Savitri (7, 38\textsuperscript{4}) and is said to have produced a hymn for Indra (8, 12\textsuperscript{4}, cp. 5, 31\textsuperscript{5}).

Probably as the mother of the luminous Ādityas, Aditi is sometimes connected with light. She is asked for light (4, 25\textsuperscript{5}, cp. 10, 36\textsuperscript{3}), her imperishable light is celebrated (7, 82\textsuperscript{10}), and Dawn is called the face of Aditi (1, 113\textsuperscript{9}). Occasionally Aditi is referred to in general terms which might apply to other deities. Thus she is implored to protect or bless her worshippers, their children, and their cattle (8, 18\textsuperscript{6}, 7; 1, 43\textsuperscript{8}). She is prayed to for wealth (7, 40\textsuperscript{2}), her pure, intact, celestial, imperishable gifts are supplicated (1, 185\textsuperscript{2}), and the large blessings bestowed by the Maruts are compared with the beneficent deeds of Aditi (1, 166\textsuperscript{14}).

In some passages of the RV. (1, 153\textsuperscript{3}; 8, 90\textsuperscript{15}; 10, 11\textsuperscript{4} &c.) as well as in later Vedic texts (VS. 13, 43. 49), Aditi is spoken of as a cow, and, in the ritual, a ceremonial cow is commonly addressed as Aditi\textsuperscript{12}. Terrestrial Soma is compared to the milk of Aditi (9, 96\textsuperscript{13}); and milk only can be meant\textsuperscript{5} by the daughter of Aditi who yields to Soma as he flows to the vat (9, 69\textsuperscript{3}). There may be a similar allusion when priests with their ten fingers are said to purify Soma on the lap of Aditi (9, 26\textsuperscript{1}. 71\textsuperscript{5}).

A review of the evidence indicates that Aditi has two and only two prominent characteristics. The first is her motherhood. She is the mother of a group of gods whose name represents a metronymic formation from hers. Her second main characteristic, in conformity with the etymological meaning of the name, is her power of releasing from the bonds of physical suffering and moral guilt. Mystical speculation on the name would lead to her being styled a cow, as representing boundless plenty, or to her being identified with the boundless earth, heaven, or universe. But how are we to account for so early a personification of such an abstract idea, and in particular for Aditi becoming the mother of the Ādityas? BERGAIGNE\textsuperscript{7} thinks the transition to Aditi's motherhood is to be found in such an expression as dyaur aditih, the 'boundless sky', the mother who supplies the gods with milk (10, 63\textsuperscript{3}). According to this view, the rare and secondary adjectival meaning 'boundless' would have developed from being an epithet of the sky, otherwise characteristically regarded as a father, into an independent female deity. Nor does this explanation seem to account satisfactorily for the conception of Aditi releasing from bondage. Another explanation is possible. The expression adīteh ṁtṛāh, sons of Aditi, several times applied to the Ādityas in the RV., may in the pre-Vedic period have simply meant 'sons of freedom' (like sahāsah ṁtṛah, 'son of strength': p. 12) as describing a prominent quality of Varuṇa and cognate gods. Such an expression would easily lead to the personification of Aditi as a mother. Similarly Śāvasī was evolved as a name of Indra's mother in the RV. itself from his epithet 'Son of Might' (śavasah: p. 12) and Indra's epithet śācīpati, 'lord of might', later led to śācī being personified as the wife of that god, the compound being interpreted as 'husband of Śaci'. The formation of a metronymic Āditya, son of Aditi, would tend to the limitation of the group comprising her sons. The deified personification would naturally retain a connexion with the original meaning of existence free from all fetters, but would assume a few additional fluctuating attributes, such as brightness, from the Ādityas. As mother of some of the leading gods
or of the gods in general, she might occasionally be identified with Heaven and Earth, the universal parents, and the meaning of the word would encourage cosmogonic speculations. Thus Aditi, an entirely Indian goddess, is historically younger than some at least of her sons.

The opinion that Aditi is a personification of the idea of ‘freedom from bondage’ is favoured by WALLIS and OLDENBERG. MAX MÜLLER thinks that Aditi, an ancient god or goddess, is the earliest name invented to express the infinite as visible to the naked eye, the endless expanse beyond the earth, the clouds, and the sky. ROTH at first interpreted Aditi to mean ‘inviolability, imperishableness’, denoting as a personification the goddess of eternity. Later he explained her as ‘eternity’, the principle which sustains the Adityas, or imperishable celestial light. He regards her not as a definite but only an incipient personification. In the St. Petersburg Dictionary, however, he explains Aditi as a personification of the boundlessness of heaven as opposed to the finite earth. PISCHEL, on the other hand believes Aditi represents the earth. This is also HARDY’S opinion. COLINET considers Aditi the female counterpart of Dyauṣ.

The Naighañṭuka gives aditi as a synonym of prthivī (earth), vaś (speech), go (cow), and, in the dual, of dyāvā-prthivī (heaven and earth). Yāṣka defines Aditi as ‘the mighty mother of the gods’, and following the Naighañṭuka (5, 3) locates her in the atmospheric region, while the Adityas are assigned to the celestial, and Varuṇa to both.


BENFEY, Hymnen des Śāmaaveda 218 (= Unteilbarkeit); OST. 1, 26; 5, 35–53. 55; BRV. 3, 88–98; HILLEBRANDT, Uber die Göttin Aditi, Breslau 1876; BRV. 19; DARMESTETER, Ormazd p. 82; COLINET, Etude sur le mot Aditi, Museun 12, 81–90; ROTH, IS. 14, 392–3; BLOOMFIELD, ZDMG. 48, 552, note 1; HRL. 72–3.

§ 42. Diti. — The name of Diti occurs only three times in the RV, twice along with that of Aditi. Mitra and Varuṇa are said to behold from their car Aditi and Diti (5, 62). Śāyāna here explains the two as the indivisible earth and the separate creatures on it, ROTH, as ‘the eternal and the perishable’, and MUIR as ‘the entire aggregate of visible nature’. In a second passage (4, 211), Agni is besought to grant diti and preserve from aditi. Here Śāyāna interprets the two words as ‘liberal giver’ and ‘illiberal giver’, ROTH as ‘wealth’ and ‘penury’. BERGAIGNE takes the words to designate the goddesses of the previous passage; but it is more likely that they are here quite different words, derived from dā, ‘to give’, and thus meaning ‘giving’ and ‘non-giving’. This view seems to be favoured by both the context and the order in which the words occur. In the third passage (7, 152) Diti is mentioned without Aditi, but along with Agni, Savitr, and Bhaga, being said to give (dā) what is desirable (vāryam). Diti is named along with Aditi as a goddess in the later Śāmhitās also (VS. 18, 22; AV. 15, 181; 16, 67). Her sons are mentioned in AV. 7, 7. These are the Daityas, who in post-Vedic mythology are the enemies of the gods. The name of Diti as a goddess seems to be merely an antithesis to that of Aditi, formed from the latter to express a positive sense, as sura, ‘god’, was later (by false etymology) evolved from asura, ‘demon’.

1 ZDMG. 6, 71. — 2. OST. 5, 42. — 3. BRV. 3, 97. — 4. MM., SBE. 32, 256; cp. WC. 46.
§ 43. Goddesses. — Goddesses occupy a very subordinate position in Vedic belief and worship. They play hardly any part as rulers of the world. The only one of any importance is Uṣas, who judged by the statistical standard ranks as a deity of the third class (p. 20). But, unlike nearly all the gods, she received no share in the Soma offering\(^1\). Next to her comes Sarasvati (§ 33), who, however, only ranks with the lowest class of deities. A few other goddesses are praised in one hymn each. Pṛthivī, hardly separable from Dyauṣ, is praised in one short hymn of three stanzas (§ 34). Rātri, Night, is also invoked in one hymn (10, 127). Like her sister Dawn, she is called the daughter of Heaven. She is not conceived as the dark, but as the bright starlit night. She shines manfully with her eyes. Decked with all splendour, she fills the valleys and heights, driving away the darkness with light. At her approach men return home like birds to their nests. She is invoked to keep away the wolf and the thief, guiding her worshippers to safety. Night probably became a goddess by way of antithesis to Dawn, with whom she is invoked in several verses as a dual divinity\(^2\) (pp. 48, 129). Vāc, personified Speech, is celebrated in one hymn (10, 125 cp. 71), in which she describes herself. She accompanies all the gods and supports Mitra-Varuṇa, Indra-Agni, and the Aśvins. She bends Rudra’s bow against the unbeliever. Her place is in the waters, the sea. She encompasses all beings. In another passage (8, 89\(^\text{10}\) 11) she is called queen of the gods and divine\(^1\). In the Naigāṇṭukā (5, 5) Vāc is enumerated among the deities of the atmosphere; and thunder, or mādhyamikā vāc, ‘the voice of the middle region’, in the terminology of the commentators (Nṛ. 11, 27), may have been the starting point of the personification. A legend about Vāc frequently referred to in the Brāhmaṇas is that of Soma being bought back from the Gandharvas at the price of Vāc transformed into a woman (AB. 1, 27). Purāṇḍhi, whose name occurs about nine times in the RV., is goddess of Plenty\(^4\). She is nearly always mentioned with Bhaga\(^3\), two or three times also with Pūṣan and Saviṣṭ, and once with Viṣṇu and Agni. Pārendi, commonly regarded as identical with Purāṇḍhi, is generally considered a goddess of riches and abundance (cp. Yāṣṭ 8, 38) in the Avesta\(^6\). Hillebrandt, however, thinks Purāṇḍhi is a goddess of Activity\(^7\). Another goddess of abundance is Dhiṣaṇā, mentioned nearly a dozen times in the RV\(^8\). Iḷa, Nourishment, is the personification (mentioned less than a dozen times in the RV.) of the offering of milk and butter, thus representing plenty derived from the cow. Hence Iḍā in the Brāhmaṇas frequently connected with, though never an actual name of, the cow; and in the Naigāṇṭukā (2, 11) it occurs as one of the synonyms of cow. Owing to the nature of the offering Iḷa is called butter-handed (7, 16\(^\text{8}\)) and butter-footed (10, 76\(^\text{8}\)). As a personification she generally appears in the Āpī hymns, in which she usually forms a triad with Sarasvatī and Mahī or Bhāraṭi\(^9\). It is doubtful whether the literal or the personified sense is intended by the phrase īḍāyās pade, ‘in the place of nourishment’ (i.e. of the sacrificial fire). Agni is once called the son of Iḷa, clearly in allusion to the place of his production (3, 29\(^\text{9}\) 10). Purūravas is also said to be her son (10, 95\(^\text{18}\)). She is once called the mother of the herd (yātha) and connected with Urvāśī (5, 41\(^\text{19}\)). She is once mentioned with Dadhikrāvan and the Aśvins in reference to the morning sacrifice (7, 44\(^\text{5}\)). In the SB. she is called the daughter of Manu (1, 8, 1\(^\text{8}\); 11, 5, 3\(^\text{5}\)) as well as of Mitra-Varuṇa (1, 8, 1\(^\text{27}\); 14, 9, 4\(^\text{27}\); ASS. 1, 7). The name of the goddess Br̥haddivā occurs four times in hymns to the
Viśvedevas. She is called a mother (10, 64) and is mentioned with Ila (2, 31; 5, 41), Sarasvatī and Rākā (5, 42). Rākā (probably from Vrā, to give) is mentioned only twice in the RV. as a rich and bountiful goddess, who is invoked with others (2, 32; 5, 42). Sinibāli is referred to in two hymns of the RV. (2, 32; 10, 184). She is a sister of the gods, broad-handed, fair-armed, fair-fingered, prolicī, a mistress of the family, and is implicated to grant offspring. She is invoked with Sarasvatī, Rākā, as well as Gungū (who is only mentioned here). In the AV. (8, 46) Sinibāli is called the wife of Viṣṇu. The later Saṃhitās and the Brāhmaṇas also mention a goddess Kuhū, a personification of the new moon. Rākā and Sinīvāli are in later Vedic texts connected with phases of the moon, the former being the presiding deity of the actual day of full moon, and the latter, of the first day of new moon. There is nothing to show that any such connexion is to be found in the RV.

A few other goddesses occasionally mentioned in the RV. have already been incidentally referred to. Prṣni, the mother of the Maruts (p. 78) presumably represents the motted storm-cloud. The word is also used as an adjective in the sense of speckled (cp. 7, 1034), in the singular as an attribute of both bull and cow, and in the plural, of the cows which milk Soma for Indra (1, 84: 11; 8, 64. 74. 584). It thus came to mean ‘speckled cow’, and finally ‘speckled cloud’. Saranīyū occurs once in the RV. (10, 174) as the name of Tvastṛ’s daughter, wedded to Vivasvat. The most likely interpretation seems to be that which identifies her with the sun-maiden Sūryā or Uṣas, the Dawn. The word also occurs four times as an adjective in the RV. meaning ‘swift’. It is an ordinary Sanskrit formation, derived with the suffix -yu from sarana, speed (Vṛ, to run), like caran-yu and others.

Goddesses as wives of the great gods similarly play an insignificant part in the Veda. They are altogether without independent character, simply representing the spouses whom such gods as Indra must have had. Hardly anything about them is mentioned but their names, which are simply formed from those of the gods with the feminine suffix -āni. Thus Indrāni is simply ‘wife of Indra’. Varunaṇā and Agnayī also occur in the RV., but rarely. Rudrāni is not found till the Sūtras, but she plays a decidedly more important part in the cult than any of the other goddesses in -āni. The wife of the Āsvins is once in the RV. called Āsvini (= Sūryā: p. 51). The ‘wives of the gods’ (devānāṁ patunā) occasionally mentioned in the RV. have in the Brāhmaṇas an established place assigned to them in the cult apart from the gods (SB. 1, 9, 2).

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1 BERGAINE, Recherches sur l’histoire de la liturgie védique, p. 9. — 2 OST. 5, 191; HRIL. 79 f. — 3 WEBER, IS. 9, 473 ff.; BRI. 16; OLDENBERG, ZDMG. 39, 58—9; WC. 85—6; HRIL. 142—3. 226. — 4 PVS. 2, 202—16; BLOOMFIELD, JAOS. 16, 19; ORV. 63. — 5 CP. OLDENBERG, SBE. 46, 190. — 6 DARMESTETER, Ormazd et Ahriman 25; SBE. 4, LXX; 23, 11; MILLS, SBE. 31, 25; PVS. 1, 202; SPA. 207—9; COLINET, BOR. 2, 245; 1, 121; TRANS. OR. Cong. 1892, 1, 396—420. — 7 HILLEBRANDT, WZKM. 3, 188—94. 259—73; cp. also V. HENRY, Vedica, 1er série, p. 1 ff., Mémoires de la Société de ling. 9. — 8 PVS. 2, 82 ff.; OLDENBERG, SBE. 46, 120—2. — 9 WEBER, IS. 1, 168—9; BRV. 1, 325; GGH. 51; ORV. 238. 326; SBE. 46, 11, 156. 191. 288; BAUNACK, KZ. 34, 563. — 10 ZDMG. 9, LVIII — 11 IS. 5, 228 ff. — 12 CP. ROTH on Nir. 10, 39, p. 145. — 13 BLOOMFIELD, JAOS. 15, 172—88, where the opinions of his predecessors are stated. — 14 ORV. 172; cp. LEUMANN, KZ. 32, 290. — 15 ORV. 219. — 16 KRV. n. 148; on Sūryā and the Āsvins cp. WEBER, IS. 5, 178—89; BRV. 2, 486; PVS. 1, 13—29; OLDENBERG, GGA. 1889, 7—8; ORV. 241. — 17 On female divinities cp. HOPKINS, FASOS. 1889, p. CLXII; on Saramā (above pp. 63—4) see below, § 62.
§. 44. A peculiar feature of Vedic mythology is the celebration in pairs of a number of deities whose names are joined in the form of a special kind of dual compound in which both members are dual, accented, and occasionally separable. About a dozen gods are thus conjointly praised in at least sixty hymns of the RV. The name of Indra enters into seven or more than half of these combinations, but by far the largest number of hymns — twenty-three, and parts of several others — is addressed to the pair Mitrâvârûnâ. Eleven are dedicated to Indrâgni, nine to Indrâ-vâruṇâ, about seven to Indra-vâyû, six to Dyâvâ-prthivî, two each to Indrâ-sômâ and Indrâ-bhâspati, and one each to Indrâvîśu, Indrâ-pusâna, Somâ-pusâna, Somâ-rudrâ, and Agni-sômâ. A few other couples, including the names of nine or ten deities not mentioned above, are invoked in detached verses. These are Indra-nâsatâ, Indrâ-parvâtâ, Indrâ-marutaḥ, Agnî-parjanya, Parjanya-vâtâ (once Vâtâ-parjanya), Uṣâsânâkta or (less often) Nâkoṣâsâ, Sûryâ-mâsâ or Sûryâ-candramâsâ.

There can be little doubt that the analogy for this favourite formation was furnished by Dyâvâ-prthivî, Heaven and Earth, the pair which to early thought appeared so indissolubly connected in nature, that the myth of their conjugal union is found widely diffused among primitive peoples and has therefore probably come down to the Veda from a period anterior to that immediately preceding the separation of the Indo-European nations. In the RV, itself this couple is so closely associated that while they are invoked as a pair in six hymns, not one is devoted to the praise of Dyaus alone and only one of three verses to that of Prthivî. So hard was it for the poets to dissociate the two, that even in this hymn Prthivî is praised for sending the rain of heaven from her cloud (5, 84). The dual compound, moreover, occurs much more frequently than the name of Dyaus as a god. It occurs, including the comparatively rare synonyms Dyâvâksâmâ and Dyâvâbhûmi, about a hundred times, or more frequently than the name of any other pair. Heaven and Earth are also called rodasî, the two worlds (spoken of as sisters, 1, 185, owing to the gender of the word), an expression occurring at least a hundred times in the RV. Heaven and Earth are parents, being often styled pîtrâ, mátârâ, jânîtrî, and also separately addressed as father and mother (1, 159-53, 160). They are primeval parents (7, 53; 10, 65). Their marriage is referred to in the AB. (4, 29). They have made and sustain all creatures (1, 159, 160, 185). Though themselves footless, they support much offspring with feet (1, 185). They are the parents of the gods also; for to them exclusively belongs the epithet devâpentre, ‘having the gods as sons’. They are in particular said to be the parents of Bhrâspati (7, 97) and, with the Waters and Tvaṣṭr, to have begotten Agni (10, 27). At the same time they are in different passages spoken of as themselves created by individual gods. Thus a poet observes that he who produced heaven and earth must have been the most skilful artisan of all the gods (1, 160; 4, 56). Indra is said to have generated or fashioned them (6, 30; 8, 36; 10, 29. 54). Viśvakarman produced them (10, 81 cp. AV. 12, 160). They received their forms from Tvaṣṭr (10, 110). They sprang from the head and feet of Puruṣa (10, 90). One poet is puzzled as to how they were produced and which of the two first came into being (1, 185; cp. p. 13). Many of the epithets applied to Dyâvâ-prthivî are suggested by their physical characteristics. The one is a prolific bull, the other a variegated cow (1, 160). They are both rich in seed (1, 159; 6, 70). They yield milk, ghee, and honey abundantly...
(6, 701–5), and produce amṛta (1, 1592; 1856). They never grow old (6, 701). They are great (1, 1592) and wide-extended (1, 1607). They are broad and great abodes (1, 1856). They are fair-faced, wide, manifold, with ends which are far away (1, 1856–7). Sometimes, however, moral qualities are attributed to them. They are wise and promote righteousness (1, 1597). As father and mother they guard beings (1, 1606) and protect from disgrace and misfortune (1, 18510). They grant food and wealth (6, 706; 1, 1595) or bestow great fame and dominion (1, 1605). They are sufficiently personified to be called leaders of the sacrifice and to be conceived as seating themselves around the sacrifice (4, 560–7), as coming to their worshippers along with the heavenly folk (7, 533), or taking the sacrifice to the gods (2, 4120). But Heaven and Earth never attained to a living personification or importance in worship. These two deities are quite coordinate. But in most of the other couples one of the two greatly predominates, his characteristic qualities being shared by his companion. Thus Indra-Agni are conjointly called ‘wielders of the bolt’ and ‘Vṛtra-slayers’. Occasionally an attribute of the lesser deity is predicated of both. Thus Indra-Viṣṇu are together said to have taken wide strides (6, 695). Frequent association of this kind may lead to a deity receiving by himself an epithet to which he originally had no right. Thus Agni when mentioned alone is often called a ‘Vṛtra-slayer’. The characteristics of each member of the pair are, however, in some passages distinguished.

Next to Heaven and Earth, the pair most frequently named is Mitra-Varuṇa. These two deities are invoked conjointly in many more hymns than are dedicated to their separate praise. As Mitra has hardly any individual traits, the same attributes and functions belong to the pair conjointly as to Varuṇa alone. Scarcely anything need therefore be here added to what has already been said about Varuṇa. The couple are conceived as young men (3, 5410; 7, 625). Like various other gods, they are spoken of as shining (candra), bright (suci), sunlike (śvarṣat), ruddy (rudra), and terrible (ghora). The priority of the name of Mitra in the compound might seem to indicate that he was originally the more important deity; it is, however, probably due simply to the tendency to make the shorter word the first member of a compound. This dual invocation goes back to the Indo-Iranian period, for Ahura and Mithra are thus coupled in the Avesta.

Indra-Varuṇa, the two universal monarchs (1, 175), hollowed out the channels of the waters and set the sun in motion in the sky (7, 823). They are vanquishers of Vṛtra (6, 689), aid in battle (4, 4111), and grant victory (1, 177). They cast their mighty bolt against the wicked (4, 417). They bestow protection and prosperity (1, 1775), fame, wealth, and abundance of steeds (4, 41210; 6, 688). They are drinkers of the pressed Soma, their car comes to the sacrifice, and they are invoked to exhilarate themselves seated on the sacrificial grass (6, 6810–11). In some passages the characteristics of each member of the pair are distinguished. Thus Varuṇa is besought to divert his wrath from his worshippers, and Indra to procure them wide space (7, 842). Indra is contrasted as the warlike god who slays Vṛtra, with Varuṇa who supports men in peace and wisdom (6, 683; 7, 8256–851). The association of the couple Indra-Agni9 is very intimate; for Indra is invoked conjointly with Agni in more hymns than with any other deity10, while Agni is otherwise addressed as a dual divinity only in one hymn and two detached verses with Soma and in one verse with Parjanya. Indra-Agni, the best of Soma-drinkers (1, 211), come on their car to drink Soma (1, 1085), and are invited together to come and drink it (7, 936; 8, 384.7–9), to sit down on the sacrificial grass at the offering, and to exhilarate themselves with the
pressed draught (1, 1095). They are often called Vrtra-slayers. They are armed with the bolt (6, 593 &c.), and their lightning is sharp (5, 863). They are fort-destroyers who aid in battle (1, 1097-8). They together demolished the 99 forts of the Dāsa (3, 123) and are invincible in battle (5, 863). They released the rivers from their imprisonment (8, 483) and accomplished heroic deeds together (1, 1083). They are bountiful (5, 863). All these are traits characteristic of Indra. Indra-Agni are also called the two priests of sacrificial (8, 383), and are wise (8, 403). They are lords of the abode (sadaspati) and drive away the goblins (1, 213). These features are more appropriate to Agni. The two gods are twin brothers who have one father (6, 593). They are once called Aśvins (1, 1095), possibly in allusion to this close relationship. They bestow food, wealth, strength, cattle, steeds (4, 603-14). They are greater than heaven and earth, rivers, and mountains (1, 1095).

The two gods are once contrasted, though not when addressed as a pair; Indra being said to slay, but Agni to burn, the Dasyus (6, 283). The two hymns (4, 49; 7, 97) addressed to Indra-Brhaspati consist chiefly of invitations to drink Soma and of prayers to bestow great wealth abounding in steeds and to promote devotion. Indra-Vāyu are constantly invited to come and drink Soma (1, 231-2 &c.), little else being said about them. They come to the offering with their teams (4, 472-4) or in their golden-seated car (4, 464) and seat themselves on the sacrificial litter (7, 94). They are thousand-eyed, lords of devotion (dhiyas pāti: 1, 231), and lords of might (javasas pāti: 4, 473). They help in battle (7, 924) and bestow wealth in steeds, cattle, and gold (7, 965). Indra-Soma perform the warlike exploits characteristic of Indra or the great cosmic actions so often ascribed to him. They made the waters flow for man, released the seven rivers, slew the dragon, depressed the wheel of the sun (4, 284-5; 6, 723). The true work of the two bountiful gods was that they destroyed their foes and broke open what was enclosed in the rock (4, 284-5). They performed the first great deeds in finding the sun and light, dispelling the darkness, causing the sun to shine, supporting heaven, and spreading out the earth (6, 724-5). They too placed ripe milk in the raw bodies of cows (ib.4). They grant victorious might to men (ib.5). Indra-Viṣṇu, who are receptacles of Soma, lords of intoxication (madapaṭi), are invited to come with their steeds, to drink Soma, and to fill their belly with it. The two gods strode out widely in the intoxication of Soma, made the air broader, and spread out the spaces for existence. Ever victorious, they grant wealth, and conduct safely across dangers. As generators of all prayers, they are besought to hear the invocations of their worshippers (6, 69)12. Indra-Pūṣan are invoked conjointly in only one short hymn (6, 57), and their names form a dual compound only twice. When Indra made the great waters flow, Pūṣan was his companion. With him as a friend, Indra slays Vṛtras (6, 565). One of them drinks Soma and is drawn by two steeds with which he slays Vṛtras, while the other desires gruel (karambhā) and is drawn by goats. Mention is once (1, 1625) made of the abode (pāṭhas) of Indra-Pūṣan, to which a goat conducts the sacrificial horse. The two gods are as usual also besought to confer welfare and booty.

Soma-Pūṣan (2, 40) drive away darkness and are invoked to quicken the seven-wheeled five-reined car, yoked by thought, which measures out space. They are generators of wealth, of heaven and earth, and protectors of the world (cp. 10, 173), whom the gods made the centre of immortality. For them Indra is invoked to produce ripe milk in the raw cows. Together they bestow victory over foes and grant abundance of wealth and food.
But they are also contrasted. One of them has made his abode high in heaven, while the other dwells on earth and in air; one generated all beings, while the other moves seeing everything. Soma-Rudra (6, 74) are invoked to drive away sickness and decay from the house, to place all remedies in the bodies of their worshippers, to remove from them all sin, and to free from the fetter of Varuṇa. Wielding sharp weapons, they are besought to have mercy and are implored for prosperity to man and beast. Agni-Soma are celebrated together for having released the confined streams, obtained the light, and set the luminaries in the sky. At the same time they are distinguished, Mātarīsvan being said to have brought the one from heaven, and the eagle the other from the rock (1, 93). Their joint help and protection are invoked, and they are besought to grant cattle, horses, offspring, health, happiness, and wealth (10, 19, 66). This pair is mentioned several times in the AV. In the MS. (3, 71) they are spoken of as 'two eyes'. The ŚB. refers to them as brothers (11, 1, 6), also stating that the sun belongs to Agni and the moon to Soma (1, 6, 3). In the ritual Agni-Soma seem never to receive a share in the Soma offering, but only cakes and animal sacrifices. It is somewhat remarkable that the two great ritual deities, who form a very frequent couple in the sacrificial literature, should, outside the one hymn (1, 93) devoted to their praise, be mentioned only twice as a pair, and that only in the most recent part of the RV. 4

A few other pairs are invoked in detached verses only. Agni-Parjanya are mentioned in one passage (6, 52). They are together besought to bestow food and progeny, but are at the same time contrasted, the one being said to have produced the oblation (īlam) and the other offspring (garbhām). Parjanya-Vāta are invoked in four passages. As bulls of earth they are besought (6, 49) to impel the watery vapours (purīśāni). Along with Indra-Vāyu and other gods, they are invoked as vaperous (purīśina) bulls (10, 65). In another enumeration they are entrated to bestow abundant food (6, 50). They are also once (10, 66 cp. Nir. 7, 10) invoked as connected with 'the thundering buffalo' (probably Dyauṣ)15. Dawn and Night are invoked several times. They are mentioned almost exclusively in Viṣvedeva or Āpī hymns. They are rich goddesses (2, 315; 10, 76), divine maidens (7, 2; 10, 116), daughters of heaven (5, 417; 10, 76). They are like two wives (1, 122) and abound in milk (2, 3). Changing their colour they suckle a single child who beams between heaven and earth (1, 96). They are two sisters who are of one mind but of different colour, whose path is the same and endless, who, taught by the gods, move alternately and never clash or stand still (1, 113). They are the shining mothers of order (1, 1427); they conduct with bright rays every offering (5, 417) and weave the web of sacrifice (2, 3). They are bountiful, much invoked, and sit on the sacrificial grass (7, 2). They are great and well-adorned (10, 36; 110; 1, 132, 1427). Appearing alternately they arouse all living things (2, 315)16. Sun and Moon are mentioned five times in the form of sūryāmāsā and three times in that of sūryācandramāsā. These are the only dual compounds formed with the name of Śūrya.17 In most cases the concrete luminaries only are meant. Thus they are said to move alternately so that we may see (1, 102). It is the act of Brhaspati that sun and moon rise alternately (10, 68). The Creator fashioned sun and moon (10, 190). A poet says, 'let us go on our path like sun and moon' (5, 51). There is, however, an incipient personification when the pair is invoked with other deities (10, 641, 92, 93). In a few passages sun and moon, though not expressly mentioned, are evidently thought of in their dual character. 'The two go round the sacrifice like

Indo-ärische Philologie. III. 1 A.
playing children; the one surveys all beings, the other is born again, ordering the seasons (10, 85<sup>18</sup>). There is no doubt that they are meant by the two bright eyes of Varuna (8, 41<sup>9</sup>) and by the two eyes of heaven made by the immortals (1, 72<sup>10</sup>.

1 KHF. 161 f.; OGR. 297 f.; HVM. 1, 98. — 2 Sp.AP. 159; cp. ORV. 93, 240. — 3 Tylor, Primitive Culture 322—8 (Chapter on Mythology). — 4 Haug


G. GROUPS OF GODS.

§ 45. The mythology of the Veda recognised a certain number of more or less definite groups of divine beings, generally associated with some particular god. The largest and most important of these, the Maruts, whose number in the RV. is variously stated to be 21 or 180 (p. 78), is, as has been known, constantly described as attending Indra in his warlike exploits (p. 57). The same group under the name of Rudras is occasionally associated with their father Rudra (7, 10<sup>4</sup> 35<sup>6</sup>). The number of the Rudras, treated as a separate class in the Brāhmaṇas, is stated to be eleven in the AB. and SB. (p. 19) but is thirty-three in the TS. (1, 4, 11<sup>1</sup>). The smaller group of the Adityas, whose number in two passages of the RV. is seven or eight (p. 43) and in the Brāhmaṇas becomes twelve, is in the RV. constantly associated either with their mother Aditi (7, 10<sup>4</sup> &c.) or with their chief Varuna (7, 35<sup>6</sup> &c.). This group is more definite than that of the Maruts inasmuch as its members have separate names. A third group frequently mentioned in the RV. is more vague than the other two, for they are neither characterized nor is their number mentioned. That they were conceived as specially connected with Indra, is shown by two passages in which Varuṇa or Aditi with the Adityas, Rudra with the Rudras, and Indra with the Vasus, are invoked (7, 10<sup>4</sup> 35<sup>6</sup>). But in later Vedic texts Agni is the leader of the Vasus<sup>1</sup>. They are regarded as eight in number in the AB. and SB. (p. 19), but in the TS. (5, 5, 2<sup>9</sup>) become 333. The three groups of the Adityas, Rudras and Vasus are invoked together in a few passages of the RV. (2, 31<sup>2</sup>; 10, 66<sup>12</sup> cp. 7, 10<sup>4</sup> 35<sup>6</sup>)<sup>5</sup>. The Brāhmaṇas distinguish, as three kinds of gods, the Vasus of earth, the Rudras of air, and the Adityas of heaven (SB. 1, 3, 4<sup>12</sup>; 4, 3, 5<sup>1</sup>). In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (3, 6—10) five groups are mentioned, the Vasus being connected with Agni, the Rudras with Indra, the Adityas with Varuṇa, the Maruts with Soma, and the Sādhyas with Brahmā (cp. RV. 10, 97<sup>2</sup> 10<sup>9</sup>). There is besides the group of the semi-divine Āṅgirasas who are chiefly connected with Bhṛṣpati (§§ 36, 54) and the small one of the three R̥bhus who are nearly always associated with Indra (§ 46). Finally, a comprehensive group is formed of the Viśvedevas or All-gods, who occupy an important position in the sacrifice, for at least forty entire hymns of the RV. are devoted to their praise. It is a factitious sacrificial group meant to represent all the gods in order that none should be excluded in laudations intended to be addressed to all. But the All-gods are sometimes conceived as a narrower group, being invoked with other groups, such as the Vasus and Adityas (2, 34<sup>4</sup>).

<sup>1</sup> TS. 5, 240; BRV. 2, 370; BLOOMFIELD, FoR. 151. — 2 LRV. 6, 147; cp. PERRY, JAOS. 16, 178. — 3 WEBER, IS. 9, 6; SPH. 23. — 4 HRI. 137. 143, note 1. 182.
§ 46. Ṛbhus. — Besides the higher gods of the Veda there are a number of mythical beings not regarded as having the divine nature fully and originally. The most important of these are the Ṛbhus. They are celebrated in eleven hymns of the RV. and are mentioned by name over a hundred times. They form a triad. Their individual names, which often occur, are Ṛbhu or less commonly Ṛbhukṣan (‘chief of the Ṛbhus’), Vāja, and Vibhvan. These three names are several times mentioned together, sometimes only two of them, while occasionally Ṛbhu is referred to alone. They are most often spoken of in the plural as Ṛbhavaḥ, but the plural of each of their names may designate the triad. Sometimes the plurals of all three (4, 36; 8, 48) or of only two (Vāja Ṛbhukṣanaḥ or Vāja Ṛbhavaḥ) appear to be used together pleonastically to indicate the trio. Once the combination Vāja Vibhavaḥ Ṛbhavaḥ occurs (4, 36). Occasionally an indefinite group seems to be meant, as all (vīśvē) the Ṛbhus (7, 51), or Ṛbhu with the Ṛbhus, Vibhvan with the Vibhvaḥ (7, 48) are invoked. In the latter passage Ṛbhu and Vibhvan are evidently thought of as chiefs of groups of the same name. The three Ṛbhus are once distinguished as eldest, younger, and youngest (4, 33).

The Ṛbhus are about a dozen times called by the patronymic name of Saudhanavana, sons of Sudhanavan, ‘the good archer’. They are also once collectively addressed as the son (śūṇa) of Indra (4, 37). In the same verse they are invoked as ‘children of might’ (śavasavapātāḥ), as if a play on the meaning of nāpāt (also ‘grandson’) were intended, in contrast with the epithet ‘son of might’ (śavasah śūṇu), which is applied exclusively to Indra. The epithet śavasavapātāḥ is almost peculiar to them, being applied to them five times and otherwise only once to Mitra-Varuṇa. In one passage (3, 60) they are spoken of as ‘children of Manu’ (manor nāpātāḥ) and their parents (piṭara) are several times mentioned. In one hymn they address Agni as their brother (1, 161).

They are very frequently invoked to come to the sacrifice (4, 34; 37) and to drink the Soma juice (4, 34; 36; 7, 48). Being high in heaven they are besought to come to the Soma in the lower abodes (4, 37). In this they are generally associated with Indra (3, 60; 4, 33; 34; 35), a few times with the Maruts (1, 20; 111; 4, 34), and once with the Adityas, Savitṛ, Mountains, and Rivers (4, 34). In other respects also they are closely connected with Indra. They are Indra-like (4, 35) and Ṛbhu is like a new Indra (1, 110). With Indra they help mortals to victory (4, 37) and are invoked with him to crush foes (7, 48). They are said to have obtained the friendship of Indra by their skilful work (3, 60; 4, 35); for it is they who fashioned his steeds. In the hymns devoted to their praise, they are rarely invoked with gods other than Indra, there being only one such passage (4, 34) in which Indra is not mentioned as well. Indra’s connexion with them is indeed so characteristic, that he is, like the eldest of the triad, called ‘chief of the Ṛbhus’ (ṛbhukṣan), a term also two or three times applied to Indra’s associates, the Maruts. In some of the Viṣvedeva hymns they are brought into connexion with a few other gods, chiefly Tvāṣṭṛ.

The references to the physical aspect or the equipment of the Ṛbhus are scanty. They are of sunlike appearance (1, 110). They have a car (1, 161), which is drawn by steeds (7, 48). Their car is bright, their steeds are fat; they wear metal helmets and fair necklaces (4, 37). Ṛbhu is a possessor of steeds (āśvin: 4, 37). The Ṛbhus are characteristically deft-
handed (suhasthāk) and skilful (apās, suapas: 4, 33$^{1-3}$ &c.), their skilful deeds being incomparable (3, 60$^1$). They are frequently said to have acquired the rank of gods in consequence of their marvellous skill. Through their wondrous deeds they obtained divinity (3, 60$^1$). By their skilful deeds they became gods and immortal, alighting like eagles in heaven (4, 35$^9$). They are men of the air who by their energy mounted to heaven (1, 110$^6$). For their skilful services they went the path of immortality to the host of the gods (4, 35$^9$), obtaining immortality among the gods and their friendship (4, 33$^{10, 4}$, 35$^1$, 36$^4$). But they were originally mortals, children of Manu, who by their industry acquired immortality (3, 60$^3$; 1, 110$^4$). The AB. (3, 30$^2$) speaks of them as men who by austerity (tapas) obtained a right to partake of Soma among the gods. The gods rejoiced so greatly in their work, that Vāja became the artificer of the gods, Rbhuksan of Indra, and Vibhyan of Varuṇa (4, 33$^9$). They went to the gods and obtained the sacrifice, or a share of the sacrifice, among the gods through their skilful work (1, 20$^{1-8}$, 121$^6$, 7). Thus the third or evening pressing or libation (savaṇa) belongs to them, they having obtained it by their skilful work (1, 161$^8$; 4, 33$^{10, 11}$, 34$^4$, 35$^9$). They are thus sometimes expressly invoked as gods (4, 36$^5$, 37$^7$).

Like the higher gods, they are besought to give prosperity and wealth (4, 33$^8$, 37$^9$), in cattle, horses, heroes (4, 34$^{10}$), and to grant vigour, nourishment, offspring, dexterity (1, 111$^7$). They grant treasures to the Soma presser (1, 20$^7$; 4, 35$^6$). He whom they help is invincible in fight (4, 36$^9$), and Rbhu and Vāja are besought to give aid and booty in battle (1, 115$^9$).

The same verb takṣ, to fashion, is generally used with reference to the manual skill of the Rbhus as to that of Tvaṣṭr. The five great feats of dexterity by which they became gods, are spoken of with pretty uniform frequency and are all or most of them mentioned in nearly every hymn dedicated to their praise. They fashioned or made a car (1, 111$^1$, 161$^3$; 4, 33$^8$, 36$^2$), which is horseless, re-inless, three-wheeled, and traverses space (4, 36$^9$). The car which goes round they fashioned for the Āśvins (1, 20$^1$, 161$^2$; 10, 39$^{12}$). When in a verse (4, 34$^9$) which enumerates each of their feats with a single word, they are said to have fashioned the Āśvins themselves, this appears to be only a loose way of referring to the same exploit.

For Indra they fashioned the two bay steeds (harī) which waft him (4, 33$^{10}$ &c.). It appears to be only a varied reference to the same feat when the Rbhus are represented as desiring to make a horse or as having made one horse after another (1, 161$^3$, 7).

They further fashioned or made a cow (1, 161$^3$, 4, 34$^9$), which yields nectar (1, 20$^1$) and is all-stimulating and omniform (4, 33$^8$). This cow they formed out of hide (1, 110$^6$) or extracted (ariniṣṭa) from a hide (1, 161$^7$ &c.). They guarded her and formed her flesh (4, 33$^4$). That they formed this cow for Brhaspati may be inferred from a verse (1, 161$^9$) which states that Indra yoked the two bay steeds and the Āśvins the car, while Brhaspati drove up the omniform (cow). A minor feat, only twice referred to and perhaps connected with the foregoing one, consists in their having re-united the mother with her calf (1, 110$^8$, 111$^1$).

The Rbhus also rejuvenated their parents (1, 20$^1$, 111$^1$; 4, 35$^5$), who were frail and lay like decaying posts (1, 110$^5$; 4, 33$^{2-3}$). They made the two who were old young again (1, 161$^3$, 7). When in the brief enumeration of their feats already referred to (4, 34$^9$), they are simply said to have fashioned their parents, the same feat is doubtless meant. It was their laudable fame among the gods, that they made their frail and very old parents young again so as to walk (4, 36$^3$). In the first verse of the same hymn it is said
to have been the great proclamation of their divine power, that they made heaven and earth to thrive. The latter thus seem to be intended by their parents.

The exhibition of skill which is most frequently mentioned and appears to have been thought the greatest, as showing the Rbhus in the character of successful rivals of Tvaśṭr, consists in their having made the one cup, the work of Tvaśṭr, into four (1, 208; 1103; 4, 353-5, 364). This cup is the drinking vessel of the gods (1, 1615; 4, 359) or of the Asura (1, 1103). The Rbhus were commissioned by the gods through their messenger Agni, to make the one cup, which was of wood, into four, promising as a reward that they should receive worship equally with the gods (1, 1615-2). Tvaśṭr praised (panayat) the proposal of the Rbhus to make two, three, or four cups, and acquiesced (avenat) when he saw the four shining cups (4, 335-6). But in another passage it is said that Tvaśṭr, on seeing the four cups, hid himself among the females and desired to kill the Rbhus for desecrating the drinking vessel of the gods (1, 1615-5), though the Rbhus in a previous verse of the same hymn (v. 1) disclaim any wish to desecrate it. They are described as measuring out like a field the one wide drinking vessel (pāṭra), desiring fame among the immortals (1, 1103). The same feat is less definitely referred to when they are said to have formed or fashioned cups (1, 1619; 3, 602 cp. 4, 359).

The skill of the Rbhus is incidentally exemplified by the statement that they fashioned prayer (10, 807), sacrifice (3, 5412), and the two worlds (4, 349), or that they are supporters of the sky (10, 6610).

Another myth connects the Rbhus with Saviṭr. They are said to have been round the sky, wind-sped, in swift course (4, 331 cp. 1, 16115). After much wandering they came to the house of Saviṭr, who conferred immortality on them when they came to Agohya (1, 1103-3). When, slumbering for twelve days, they had rejoiced in the hospitality of Agohya, they made fair fields and directed the streams, plants occupied the arid ground and waters the lowlands (4, 332). By their skill they made grass on the heights and waters in the depths, when they slumbered in the house of Agohya (1, 16115). Having slept, they asked Agohya as to who had awakened them; in a year they looked around (ib. 13).

The word ṛbha is apparently derived from the root ṛabh, to grasp (cp. 2, 381), thus meaning 'handy', 'dexterous'. It frequently occurs in the RV. as an adjective and is several times thus used as an attribute of Indra, Agni, and the Adityas. It seems to be identical with the German elbe and the English elf. Vāja (from the root vaṭ) means the 'vigorous one', and Vibhavān (from vi and the root bhā), 'the eminent' (artist). Thus both the name of the Rbhus and the account given of them in the RV. indicate that their essential character is that of skilful artificers.

It is clear that they were regarded as not having been gods from the beginning. Whether their close connexion with Indra has in any way to do with their original nature is doubtful. It is also uncertain who is meant by their patronymic Saudhanvana, since the word sudhanvan occurs only twice in the RV. as an attribute of Rudra and of the Maruts. It is, however, most probable that their parents who are mentioned so often, represent heaven and earth. The notion that they produce fertility is connected with their sojourn of twelve days in the house of Saviṭr or Agohya, the sun 'who cannot be concealed'. They have therefore by various scholars been taken to be genii of the three seasons, which are at a stand-still during the twelve days of the winter solstice. The cup of Tvaśṭr possibly represents the moon,
and the four into which it was transformed by the Rbhus, its four phases. On the whole it seems probable that the Rbhus were originally terrestrial or aerial elves, whose dexterity gradually attracted to them various myths illustrative of marvelous skill. But the evidence furnished by the RV is hardly sufficient to warrant any certain conclusion.

1 Cp. Wackernagel, Altind. Gr. p. 70. - 2 Brugmann, Grundriss 2, 298; cp. A. Kuhn, KZ. 4, 103-20; Wackernagel, KZ. 24, 297. - 3 ‘Riches’ according to BRV. 2, 407. - 4 Cp. Oldenberg, SBE. 46, 191. - 5 A. Kuhn, Entwicklungs-stufen 134; AII. 366. - 6 WVB. 1894, 37, note 3; according to BRV. 3, 52, ‘from whom nothing is concealed’. - 7 AII. 1. c.; LRV. 3, 335; KRV. 53-4; HVM. 1, 515; HVBP. 100. - 8 According to Weber, l. c., they are genii of creative time, past, present, and future; according to BRV. 2, 412, three ancient skilful sacrificers who acquired immortality and whose number is connected with the triad of sacrificial fires.

Nève, Essai sur le Mythe des Rbhas, Paris 1847; cp. Roth, ZDMG. 2, 126; OST. 5, 226-7; GKR. 119; GRV. 1, 103; BRV. 2, 403-13; 3, 51-5; GGH. 108, 110; WC. 24-6; E. H. Meyer, Germanische Mythologie 124; Anzeiger für deutsches Altertum 13, 31-5; ORV. 235-6 (cp. L. v. Schroeder, WZKM. 9, 253).

§ 47. The Apsarases. — Apsaras denotes a kind of nymph that even in the RV appears almost entirely separated from her physical basis. The information there obtainable is very scanty, as the name occurs only five times. The Apsaras smiles at her beloved (the Gandharva mentioned in the preceding verse) in the highest heaven (10, 123). Vasishtha was born of the Apsaras (7, 33) and the Vasishthas are said to have sat close to the Apsarases (ibid. 9). The Apsarases of the sea are described as flowing to Soma (9, 78), with reference to the water which is mixed with the juice. The long-haired ascetic with semi-divine powers is spoken of as able to move on the path of the Apsarases and the Gandharvas (10, 136). The Apsaras is also doubtless meant by the aqueous nymph (apya yosa), the wife of the Gandharva in the waters (10, 10).

More is said about the Apsarases in the AV. Their abode is in the waters, whence they come and go in a trice (AV. 2, 23); and they are besought to depart from the vicinity of men to the river and the bank of the waters (AV. 4, 37). The goddesses accompanying the Gandharva Viśvāvasu are described as connected with clouds, lightning, and stars (AV. 2, 2). They are expressly called wives of the Gandharvas (AV. 2, 2), and their connexion with the latter has assumed the character of a formula in the later Samhitās (VS. 30, 8; AV. 8, 9, &c.)1. In the SB. (11, 5, 14) the Apsarases are described as transforming themselves into a kind of aquatic bird (atayak: cp. RV. 9, 5). In the post-Vedic literature they are very often spoken of as frequenting forest lakes and rivers, especially the Ganges, and they are found in Varuṇa’s palace in the ocean2. The etymological meaning of the word is most probably ‘moving in the waters’3.

The above evidence indicates that the oldest conception of the Apsaras is that of a celestial water nymph, already regarded in the RV. as the consort of a genius named Gandharva. In the later Samhitās the sphere of the Apsarases extends to the earth and in particular to trees. They are spoken of as inhabiting banyans (nyagrodha) and sacred fig-trees (asvattha), in which their cymbals and lutes resound (AV. 4, 37). Elsewhere the same trees as well as other varieties of the fig-tree (udumbara and plakṣa) are said to be the houses of Gandharvas and Apsarases (TS. 3, 4, 81). The Gandharvas and Apsarases in such trees are entreated to be propitious to a passing wedding procession (AV. 14, 2). In the SB. (11, 6, 1) the Apsarases are described as engaged in dance, song, and play. Post-Vedic texts even speak of mount-
ains, both mythical and actual, as favourite resorts of these two classes of beings. The AV. adds the traits that the Apsarases are fond of dice and bestow luck at play (AV. 2, 25 &c.), but that they are feared especially as causing mental derangement, magic therefore being employed against them (AV. 2, 33 &c.).

The love of the Apsarases, who are of the great beauty (cp. SB. 13, 4 37.9), is enjoyed not only by the Gandharvas, but occasionally even by men (cp. 10, 95). A myth turning on such a union is related of at least one individual Apsaras in Vedic literature. The names only of several other Apsarases are there mentioned. The AV. refers to three, Ugrajit, Ugraṇ-paśyā, and Rāṣṭrabhṛt (AV. 16, 118-9), while the VS., among several others, speaks of Urvasī and Menakī (VS. 15, 15—19). The SB. (3, 4, 12) also specifies Śakuntalā, the ancestress of the royal family of the Bharatas (SB. 13, 5, 413), as well as Urvasī (SB. 11, 5, 1).

The only one of these names occurring in the RV. is that of Urvasī. That she was there regarded as an Apsaras, appears from the fact that Vaśiṣṭha is said in one verse to have been born of Urvasī and, in the next, of an Apsaras (7, 3311—13). She is once invoked with the streams (5, 4119). Her name is otherwise only mentioned twice in a late and obscure hymn (10, 9510—17), which consists of a dialogue between her and her lover Purūravas, son of Iīṣā. She is there described as aqueous (apya), as filling the atmosphere, and traversing space (the latter expression is also applied to the celestial Gandharva in 10, 1392). She is said to have spent four autumns among mortals (v. 16) and is besought to return (v. 17). The request is apparently refused; but Purūravas receives the promise that his offspring shall worship the gods with the offering, while he himself shall enjoy bliss in heaven (svarga: v. 18). Several verses of this hymn find their setting in a continuous story told in the SB. (11, 5, 1), which fills in details partly based on a misunderstanding of the text of RV. It is there related that the Apsaras Urvasī joins herself with Purūravas, son of Iīṣā, in an alliance, the permanence of which depends on the condition that she shall never see him naked. The Gandharvas by a stratagem produce a noise during the night. Purūravas springs up naked, when he is seen by Urvasī illuminated by a flash of lightning. Urvasī vanishes forthwith. Purūravas wanders about in search of her, till he at last observes her swimming in a lotus lake with other Apsarases in the form of an aquatic bird. Urvasī discovers herself to him and, in response to his entreaties, consents to receive him for one night a year later. He returns at the appointed time, and on the following day the Gandharvas grant him the boon of becoming one of themselves by producing fire in a particular way. Excepting 10, 95, the name of Purūravas, which means 'calling aloud', occurs only in one passage of the RV. (1, 314), where Agni is said to have caused the sky to thunder (vasāya) for the righteous man (manave) Purūravas. The word may here, however, have the adjectival sense. Purūravas and Urvasī have by some scholars been interpreted as sun and dawn.

1 See PW. s. v. gandharva. — 2 HOLTZMANN, ZDMG. 33, 635. 641. — 3 Explained by YN. 5, 13 by ap-tārini; cp. MEYER, Indogermanische Mythen 1, 183; GGH. 10; PVS. 1, 79 cp. 183 ff.; LUDWIG, Methode 91; otherwise WEBER, IS. 13, 135, GW., BURY, BB. 7, 339. — 4 HAAS, IS. 5, 394; 13, 135; E. H. MEYER, op. cit. 13. — 5 HOLTZMANN, ZDMG. 33, 640 f.; v. SCHROEDER, op. cit. 67; MANNHART, Wald- und Feldkunde 1, 99 ff. — 6 In the Epic period the Apsarases have become regular celestial courtesans. — 7 Cp. WEBER, IS. 1, 198—201; HOLTZMANN, ZDMG. 33, 635 f.; LEUMANN, ZDMG. 48, 80—2; v. BRADKE, ibid. 498 ff. — 8 Cp. OLDENBERG, SBE. 46, 323. — 9 They have a son named Ayu: cp. KHF. 65. 71;
§ 48. Gandharvas. — With the Apsaras or Apsarases are associated even in the RV., as has been shown, a male being or beings named Gandharva. Of the twenty occurrences of the word in the RV. only three are in the plural, while of the thirty-two occurrences in the AV. half are in the plural. The name is found a few times in the Avesta as Gandarewa⁴ (a dragon-like monster) and only in the singular. This points to the Gandharvas as a class having been gradually developed from a single being. In the later Samhitās they are spoken of as forming a distinct class by the side of Gods, Fathers and Asuras (AV. 11, 5⁴; TS. 7, 8, 25⁴). Their number is fixed as 27 in some Yajus texts and is even said to be 6333 in the AV. (11, 5⁴). The fact that the conception goes back to the Indo-Iranian period, accounts to some extent for its obscurity. The evidence of the RV. is, moreover, so scanty and vague that no certain result as to its definite original character is attainable. It is worthy of note that the name is found only once in books II to VII, while in book VIII it occurs twice as that of a being hostile to Indra. The word seems sometimes to be only an appellative.² It is occasionally accompanied by the epithet visāvāvasu, ‘possessing all goods’ (9, 86⁴; 10, 139⁴-⁵; AV. 2, 2¹; VS. 2, 3). This epithet is in one hymn used alone to designate Gandharva (10, 85²¹-²² cp. 40⁴-⁴¹); and in the later Samhitās, the Brāhmaṇas, and the post-Vedic literature it frequently occurs as the name of an individual Gandharva.

In the RV. Gandharva seems to be localized in the high region of air or sky. He is a measurer of space (10, 139⁴). He is found in the fathomless spaces of air (8, 66⁴). He is heavenly (divya) and stands erect on the vault of heaven (10, 123⁷). He is the lover on whom the Apsaras smiles (ib. ⁵). His abode is in heaven (AV. 2, 2¹-²) and the Blest live with the Gandharvas (AV. 4, 34⁴). In several passages Gandharva is closely connected with some form of celestial light. Thus he is brought into relation with the sun, ‘the golden-winged bird, the messenger of Varuṇa’ (10, 123⁴), with the sun-bird (10, 177⁷), with the sun-steed (1, 163⁴), with Soma likened to the sun (9, 85¹²). He is further connected with the 27 stars of the moon’s orbit (VS. 9, 7) and in particular with Rohini (AV. 13, 1²). He is possibly also associated with the rainbow⁴ in one hymn of the RV. (10, 123). In the VS. (18, 38 ff.) the Gandharvas are enumerated with Agni, Sun, Moon, and Wind. In post-Vedic literature one of the names of the mirage is ‘city of the Gandharvas’⁵.

Gandharva is, moreover, in the RV. often associated (chiefly in the ninth book) with Soma. He guards the place of Soma and protects the races of the gods (9, 83⁴ cp. 1, 22¹⁴). Observing all the forms of Soma, he stands on the vault of heaven (9, 85¹²). Together with Parjanya and the daughter of the sun, the Gandharvas cherish Soma (9, 113⁷). Through Gandharva’s mouth the gods drink their draught (AV. 7, 7³). The MS. (3, 8⁴) states that the Gandharvas kept Soma for the gods, but having allowed it to be stolen, were as a punishment excluded from the Soma draught. Doubtless owing to this association with Soma, Gandharva is described as knowing plants (AV. 4, 4¹). It is probably as a jealous guardian of Soma that Gandharva in the RV. appears as a hostile being, who is pierced by Indra in
the regions of air (8, 66) or whom Indra is invoked to overcome (8, 11). For in a later text Soma is besought to elude the Gandharva Viśvāvasu in the form of an eagle (TS. 1, 2, 9). Soma is further said to have dwelt among the Gandharvas or to have been stolen by the Gandharva Viśvāvasu, but to have been bought from the Gandharvas, as they were fond of females, at the price of the goddess Vac (AB. 1, 27; TS. 6, 1, 65; MS. 3, 7). The trait of hostility appears to be old, for in the Avesta (Yt. 5, 38) the hostile Gandarwa, dwelling in the sea Vourukaśa, the abode of the white Haoma, is fought with and overcome by Keresḵisp. Moreover, the archer Kṛṣṇa, who shoots at the eagle that carries off the Soma (RV. 4, 279), appears to be a Gandharva, being expressly said to be one in TA. 1, 9.

Gandharva is sometimes connected with the waters. ‘Gandharva in the waters’ and the ‘aqueous nymph’ are alluded to as the parents of Yama and Yamī (10, 10). Soma poured into water is called ‘the Gandharva of the waters’ (9, 8650). Gandharva, connected with the Apsarases, is also said to dwell in the waters in the AV. (2, 23; 4, 371). In the Avesta Gandarewa is a lord of the abyss who dwells in the waters (Yt. 15, 28).

The union of Gandharva with the water nymph is typical of marriage. He is therefore connected with the wedding ceremony, and the unmarried maiden is said to belong to Gandharva as well as to Soma and Agni (10, 8540–41). The Gandharva Viśvāvasu in the first days of wedlock is regarded as a rival of the husband (ib. 22), and the Gandharvas’ love of women is prominent in later texts (cp. MS. 3, 7). The Gandharvas and Apsarases thus preside over fertility and are prayed to by those who desire offspring (PB. 19, 3).

Of the conception of the Gandharvas being celestial singers, which appears in the Epics and later, there seems to be no distinct trace in the RV. (cp. 10, 177, 11).

There are only two or three references to their physical appearance in the RV. They are wind-haired (3, 386) and Gandharva has brilliant weapons (10, 123). The AV. is more definite (especially 4, 37; 8, 61 ff). Here they are said to be shaggy and to have half animal forms, being in many ways dangerous to men. Elsewhere, however, they are spoken of as handsome (SB. 13, 4, 37). The RV. adds the touch that Gandharva wears a fragrant (surabhi) garment (10, 123), while in the AV. (12, 13) the odour (gandha) of the earth is said to rise to the Gandharvas.

This suggests the derivation from gandha as possible. But such an etymology, even if true, would seem to shed no light on the original conception. The name has even been identified with Kέντυκος; but in order to justify this equation the aid of popular etymology has to be called in as well as the doubtful eponymy of u assumed in the Greek word. The two conceptions, moreover, appear to have nothing in common. The utmost, from a review of the evidence, it seems possible to say about the original nature of the Gandharva is, that he was a bright celestial being, sometimes thought of as dwelling in the waters with his spouse the Apsaras. Various conjectures have, however, been made by different scholars. Some regard the Gandharvas as wind-spirits, others think that Gandharva represents the rainbow, or a genius of the moon, or Soma, or the rising sun, or a cloud-spirit.

1 Yasht 5, 37; 19, 41; cp. Sp. AP. 276; BARTHOLOMAE, ZD MG. 42, 158. — 2 WVB. 1894, p. 34. — 3 HVM. 1, 427. — 4 Disputed by BERGEIN and HILDEBRANDT; cp. ORV. 246, note 1. — 5 See PW. s. v. gandharva-nagara, -pura. — 6 KHIF. 151–2; WVB. 1894, 7–9 (cp. 1888, p. 13, n.); as to Kṛṣṇa, cp. also WEBER, IS. 2, 313–4; KUHN in KZ. 1, 523; ROTH, ZD MG. 36, 359; BRV. 3, 30 ff; Sp. AP. 223–4; BLOOMFIELD, JAOS. 16, 20; ORV. 181. — 7 V. SCHROEDER, GGH. 73;

A. KUHN, KZ. 1, 513 ff.; WEVER, IS. 1, 90; 5, 185. 210; 13, 134 ff.; MEYER, op. cit. 11—2. 16—8. 32. 55. 179; BRV. 3, 64—7; PVS. 1, 77—81; SP. AF. 210—15; HVM. 1, 427—66; ORV. 244—9; ZDMG. 49, 178—9.

§ 49. Tutelary Deities. — The name of Vástóš páti occurs only seven times in the RV., and one hymn of three stanzas (7, 54) is devoted to his praise. He is there invoked to grant a favourable entry, to remove disease, to bless man and beast, to confer prosperity in cattle and horses, and always to afford protection. In the first verse of the hymn immediately following (7, 551) he is described as a destroyer of disease, who assumes all forms. He is once (7, 542) identified with Soma, being addressed as Indu. In a verse of a hymn to the All-gods (5, 419) he is invoked in immediate juxtaposition withTvåśṭr and is perhaps identified with him as the great artificer. In another verse (8, 1714) he is called a firm pillar, a cuirass of Soma-pressers, and seems to be identified with Indra. In the only passage of the tenth book which mentions him, he is spoken of as the observer of ordinances who, along with prayer (brahma), was fashioned by the gods (10, 617). According to GELDNER1 Rudra is here meant, Vástospati being an epithet of that god in TS. 3, 40, 103. Though identified with various deities in the above passages, there seems no sufficient reason to suppose that the name was originally attached to any one particular greater deity as an epithet (like grhapatī to Agni). The Gṛhya Sūtras (AGS. 2, 92; SGS. 3, 4; PGS. 3, 42) prescribe that Vástospati is to be propitiated when a new house is to be entered. This, together with the contents of the hymn devoted to his praise, points to his having been simply a tutelary deity of the house,2 as the name itself 'Lord of the dwelling' implies. He thus seems to be one of the lower order of deities which in primitive beliefs animate, inhabit, or preside over natural objects such as trees and mountains.

To the same order belongs Kṣetrasyapáti the tutelary deity of the field. He is invoked, in the first three verses of 4, 57, to grant cattle and horses as well as to fill heaven and earth, plants and waters with sweetness3. In a verse of a hymn to the All-gods (7, 3594) he is besought, along with Savitṛ, the Dawns, and Parjanya, to bestow prosperity. In a similar hymn (10, 6613), worshippers express a desire to have him as a neighbour. The Gṛhya Sūtras state that he is sacrificed to or worshipped when a field is ploughed (AGS. 2, 108; SGS. 4, 139). In one verse of a hymn addressed to agricultural deities (4, 579) Sītā, the Furrow, is invoked to grant rich blessings and crops. Sītā later appears (PGS. 2, 179) as the wife of Indra (perhaps because that god is once in the RV. called urvarīpáti, 'lord of the field': 8, 213 cp. 4, 577) and bears the patronymic Sāvitṛ (TB. 2, 3, 10). In the Sūtra passage just mentioned the blessings of Urvarā, the arable Field, described as 'having a garland of threshing-floors', are invoked.


IV. MYTHICAL PRIESTS AND HEROES.

§ 50. Manu. — As the appellation Manu or Manus is often used in the sense of 'man', there is sometimes an uncertainty as to when it has the value of a proper name in the RV. It appears to have the latter signification
nearly twenty times in the form of Manu and almost as often in that of Manus. Manu is five times styled a father, and in two of these passages more definitely as ‘our father’ (2, 3313 &c., cp. § 9). Sacrificers are spoken of as the people (viśāḥ) of Manus (4, 371 &c.) and Agni is said to abide among the offspring of Manu (1, 681). Manu was the institutor of sacrifice. For when he had kindled the fire, he presented the first offering with the seven priests to the gods (10, 637). The sacrifice of Manu is the prototype of the present sacrifice. For the latter is compared to the sacrifice which Manus offered to the gods (1, 768). Such comparisons are frequently made with the adverb manuvat, ‘like Manu’. Worshippers make Agni the accomplisher of sacrifice, as Manus did (1, 4411). They kindle Agni like Manus (5, 211 &c.). Like Manus, they invoke Agni who was kindled by Manu (7, 29). They offer Soma as Manus did (4, 371). Soma is prayed to flow as he once flowed for Manu (9, 9612). Manu established Agni as a light for all people (1, 3617).

Manu is also mentioned with other ancient sacrificers, with Áṅgiras and Yayāti (1, 3112), with Bṛgū and Áṅgiras (8, 4313), with Atharvan and Dādhyāنق (1, 8014), with Dādhyāنق, Áṅgiras, Atri and Kaṇva (1, 13915). The gods (1, 3616), Mātariśvan (1, 12817), Mātariśvan and the gods (10, 4619), and Kāvyā Uṣāनā18 (8, 2317) are said to have given Agni to Manu or to have instituted him a sacrificer for Manu. In the last four passages the word has perhaps only the appellative meaning of ‘man’.

Indra is said to have drunk Soma beside Manu Vivasvat (Vāl. 41) or Manu Sāṃvaraṇi (Vāl. 31), and to have drunk the Soma of Manus, three lakes, to strengthen himself for the Vṛtra-fight (5, 291). Soma is said to have been brought to Manu by the bird (4, 261). In the TS. and the SB. Manu is also frequently described as a celebrator of religious ceremonies.

Manu appears to have been regarded as the son of Vivasvat even in the RV.; for he is once (Vāl. 41 cp. 31) called Manu Vivasvat (cp. p. 42). In the AV. (8, 1021) and the SB. (13, 4, 33), as well as in post-Vedic literature, he bears the regular patronymic Vaivasvata. Yama also is a son of Vivasvat, and the first of mortals. Manu is thus a doublet of Yama as ancestor of the human race2. But Manu is regarded as the first of men living on earth, while Yama, as first of men who died, became the king of the dead in the other world. Hence in the SB. (13, 4, 3317) Manu Vaivasvata is described as ruler of men, and Yama Vaivasvata as ruler of the Manes. Yāska (Nir. 12, 10) explains Manu to be the son of Vivasvat, the sun (Āditya), and of Savarṇa the substitute of Sarāṇyū (cp. 10, 172; p. 125), counting him (Nir. 12, 34) among the divine beings of the celestial region (Naigh. 5, 6).

The SB. (1, 8, 1110) relates a legend of how Manu was saved in a ship from a deluge, which swept away all other creatures, by a fish (in post-Vedic mythology an Avatar of Viṣṇu). Manu is then said to have become the progenitor of mankind through his daughter Idā, who was produced from his offerings. That the story of the flood was known as early as the time of the AV. is implied in a passage of that Samhitā (19, 398). The myth of the deluge occurs in the Avesta also, and may be Indo-European4. It is generally regarded as borrowed from a Semitic source5, but this seems to be an unnecessary hypothesis6.

1 An ancient sage and sacrificer, see § 58B. – 2 Possibly ancestor of the Aryans only, as he is in several passages contrasted with Dasyus, cp. OST. 1, 174; Sp.AP. 272. – 3 HRL. 160. – 4 Lindenau, Die iranische Flutsage, FaR. 213–6. – 5 Burnouf, Bhāgavata Purāṇa, prefacc, LI–LIV; WEBER, IS. 1, 160 ff.; Sp.AP. 271–4; ORY. 276 note. – 6 MM., India 133–8; HRL. 160.

KHF. 21; KZ. 4, 91; Corssen, KZ. 2, 32; WEBER, IS. 1, 194; ZDMG. 4, 302; 18, 286; Roth, ZDMG. 4, 430; ZDMG. 5, 525 ff.; KZ. 12, 293; 19, 156; Ascoli,
§ 51. Bhṛgus. — Bhṛgus is a name met with twenty-one times in the RV., besides two occurrences in the adverbial form bhṛgwaṭ. It is found only once in the singular; and appears therefore to have properly designated a group of mythical beings. Mentioned twelve times in Agni hymns, they are chiefly connected with the communication of fire to men. Mātāriśvan brought Agni as a treasure to Bhṛgus (1, 60) or kindled the hidden Agni for the Bhṛgus (3, 510). Mātāriśvan and the gods fashioned Agni for Manu, while the Bhṛgus with might produced him (10, 469). The Bhṛgus found Agni lurking in the waters (10, 469); worshipping him in the waters, they placed him in the abodes of Āyu or man (2, 42 cp. 4). They established Agni like a friend well-deposited in the wood (6, 15) or as a treasure among men (1, 586). For Agni is the Bhṛgus' gift (3, 21). Rubbing him they invoked him with prayer (1, 1277). With songs of praise they caused him to shine forth (10, 122) in wood (4, 71). They brought him to the navel (cp. p. 92) of the earth (1, 1434). While Atharvan established rites with sacrifices, the Bhṛgus showed themselves as gods with their dexterity (10, 9216). Their skill, primarily manifested in producing fire, is incidentally spoken of as artistic. For worshippers make a prayer for Indra or the Aśvins as the Bhṛgus (made) a car (4, 1620; 10, 3914).

They are an ancient race. For sacrificers speak of them, together with the Aṅgiras and Atharvans, as their Soma-loving fathers (10, 149) and invoke Agni as the Bhṛgus (bhṛgwaṭ), the Aṅgiras, and Manu did (8, 4313). They implore Indra to hear their prayer like those of the Yatis and Bhṛgus (8, 618), or to aid them as he did the Yatis, Bhṛgus, and Praskanva (8, 39). The Bhṛgus are mentioned, along with the Druhyus and Turvaśa, as the foes of king Sudās (7, 189). In the last three passages their name appears in the historical character of the designation of a tribe. The Bhṛgus are invoked to drink soma with all the thirty-three gods, the Maruts, the Waters, the Aśvins, Uṣas, and Sūrya (8, 353). They are compared with suns and said to have gained all their desires (8, 316). In one passage (9, 1013) they are connected with an unknown myth, when worshippers express a wish to drive away the niggardly, as the Bhṛgus the demon (makham).

Thus the Bhṛgus never designate actually existing priests in the RV., but only a group of ancient sacrificers and ancestors, to which Bhṛgus bears the relation of chief, just as Aṅgiras does to the group of the Aṅgiras, or Vasiṣṭha to that of the Vasiṣṭhas.

The myth of the descent of fire and its communication to man is chiefly connected with Mātāriśvan and the Bhṛgus. But while Mātāriśvan brings it from heaven as lightning, the Bhṛgus do not fetch it, but are rather regarded as kindling it for the establishment and diffusion of the sacrifice on earth.

In the later Vedic literature Bhṛgus occurs as the name of a seer representing a tribe (AV. 5, 191; AB. 2, 207). He arises as a spark from Prajāpati's seed and being adopted by Varuṇa receives the patronymic Vārūṇi (AB. 3, 341 cp. PB. 18, 91) and is expressly called a son of Varuṇa (SB. 11, 6, 11).2

Etymologically the word bhṛgus means 'shining' from the root bhṛj, 'to shine'. Bergaigne3 thinks there can hardly be a doubt that bhṛgus was originally a name of fire, while Kuhn4 and Barth5 agree in the opinion that the form of fire it represents is lightning. Kuhn6 and Weber7 further identify the Bhṛgus as fire-priests with the Greek φλεγονή.

1 Cp. Oldenberg, SBE. 46, 243. — 2 Weber, ZDMG. 9, 240 ff. — 3 BRV. 1,
§ 52. Atharvan. — The name of Atharvan occurs fourteen times in the RV., thrice in the plural, and is also several times found in the AV. Atharvan generally appears in the character of an ancient priest. He rubbed Agni forth (6, 163) and priests rub Agni as Atharvan did (6, 157). Agni produced by Atharvan became the messenger of Vivasvat (10, 213). Atharvan first established (order) by sacrifices, while the Br̥ghus showed themselves gods by their skill (10, 9210). By sacrifices Atharvan first extended the paths; then the sun was produced (1, 835). Atharvan along with Father Manu and Dadhyaṅc practised devotion (1, 8016). Indra is the helper of Atharvan as well as of Trita, Dadhyaṅc and Mātāriśvan (10, 482). The goblin-destroying Agni is invoked to burn down the fool with divine flame like Atharvan (10, 8719). The AV. adds some further traits. Atharvan brought a cup of Soma to Indra (AV. 18, 35). A miraculous cow was given to him by Varuṇa (AV. 5, 11; 7, 104). Atharvan is a companion of the gods, is related to them, and dwells in heaven (AV. 4, 17, &c.). In the SB. Atharvan is spoken of as an ancient teacher (14, 5, 512, 7, 323).

In the plural the Atharvans are enumerated as Fathers along with the Āṅgirases, Navagvas, and Br̥ghus (10, 143). They dwell in heaven and are called gods (AV. 11, 63). They destroy goblins with a magical herb (AV. 4, 377).

In a few passages of the RV. the word atharvan appears to have the appellative meaning of 'priest'. Thus it is an attribute of Br̥haddiva, the composer of a hymn (10, 129 cp. 8). In this sense it seems to be an epithet of Agni, when a seer is described as pouring the libation on the Atharvan (8, 9). The word also means priest when it is said that the Atharvans mix Soma (9, 4) or that they receive a hundred cows from a patron (6, 4724). That this is the original sense is borne out by the fact that the cognate Avestan word atarva signifies 'fire-priest', which is also the etymological sense; for atar (for athar), fire, is the same as the Vedic athar-1, which also occurs in athar-ya, flaming (said of Agni, 7, 1). This old name must then have been mythologically applied to designate an ancient priestly race of a semi-divine character, generally represented in the singular by their chief.

1 Brugmann, Grundriss 2, 360; cp. Bloomfield, SBE. 42, xxiii, n. 2; Bartholomae, IF. 5, 221, rejects the connexion of atar with atharvan. — Cp. also Lassen, Indische Alterthumskunde 1, 523; KHF. 10; IS. 1, 289 ff.; OST. 1, 160; BRVI, 49; HRI. 160, n. 1.

§ 53. Dadhyaṅc. — Dadhyaṅc, who is the son of Atharvan (6, 1641, 11624, 11728), is mentioned nine times in the RV. and, with one exception, only in the ninth, the tenth, and especially the first book. He is a seer who kindled Agni (6, 164) and is mentioned with Atharvan, Āṅgiras, Manu, and other ancient sacrificers (1, 8016, 13923). The Aśvins gave a horse's head to Atharvan's son Dadhyaṅc, who then proclaimed to them the (place of the) mead (madhu) of Tvāṣṭr (1, 1177). With the head of a horse Dadhyaṅc proclaimed to the Aśvins the (place of the) mead (1, 11623). The Aśvins won the heart of Dadhyaṅc; then the horse's head spoke to them (1, 11923). Indra is also connected with this myth. For it is said that, when seeking the head of the horse hidden in the mountains, he found it in Saryānāvat and slew with the bones of Dadhyaṅc ninety-nine Vyras (1, 8413-15). Indra, besides producing cows from the dragon for Trita, gave cowstalls to Dadhyaṅc (and) Mātāriśvan (10, 489). These are probably the cowstalls which Dadhyaṅc opens by the power of
Soma (9, 1084). It is noteworthy that in the only older passage (6, 1641) in which the name of Dadhyaṅc occurs, he is the son of the ancient fire-priest Atharvan and is himself a kindler of fire. Otherwise he is chiefly connected with the secret abode of Soma and with Indra in the release of the cows. Owing to his horse’s head and his name he can hardly be altogether disassociated from the steed Dadhikrā. The etymological sense of dadhi-aṅc, ‘curd-ward’ might signify either ‘possessing’ or ‘fond of’ ‘curdled milk’. In Bergaigne’s opinion Dadhyaṅc does not differ essentially in origin from Soma. The evidence is, however, insufficient to justify any certain conclusion. But it does not seem an altogether improbable conjecture that Dadhyaṅc originally represented the lightning form of fire. The horse’s head would indicate its speed, the voice with which it speaks, the thunder, its bones, the thunderbolt. His connexion with the secret abode of Soma, would resemble that of the eagle with the celestial Soma. The name, too, suggests the curdling effect of the thunderstorm. In post-Vedic literature the name generally occurs in the form of Dadhīca, and in the Mahābhārata the thunderbolt for slaying Vṛtra is said to have been fashioned out of his bones.

1 ‘Unu ai lait’, BRV. 2, 457. — 2 BRV. 2, 458. — 3 PW. s. v. — Cp. also BRV. 2, 456–60; GRV. 2, 84; PERRY, JAOS. 11, 138; LRF. 120–2; OERTEL, JAOS. 18, 16–18.

§ 54. Āṅgiras. — Of the more than sixty occurrences of this name in the RV. about two-thirds are in the plural. Derivatives of the word are also found there about thirty times. The whole of one hymn (10, 62) is voted to the praise of the Āṅgiras as a group.

The Āṅgiras are sons of heaven (3, 537; 10, 672 cp. 4, 215). They are seers who are sons of the gods (10, 621). A single Āṅgiras being regarded as their ancestor, they are also termed ‘sons of Āṅgiras’ (10, 622). Poets speak of them as ‘fathers’ (ib. 2), ‘our fathers’ (1, 713), or ‘our ancient fathers’ (1, 623). They are once mentioned as fathers with the Atharvans and Bhrgus (10, 146), being especially associated with Yama (ib. 5–5). They are also in a more general way connected with other groups of divine beings, the Ādityas, Vasus, Maruts (7, 444; 8, 3544), or the Ādityas, Rudras, Vasus, as well as the Atharvans (AV. 11, 813). Soma is offered to them (9, 622), and they are invoked like gods (3, 537; 10, 62). They are brahman priests (7, 423). They found Agni hidden in the wood (5, 115) and thought of the first ordinance of sacrifice (10, 679). It is by sacrifice that they obtained immortality as well as the friendship of Indra (10, 621).

With the latter deity the Āṅgiras are closely associated. To them Indra disclosed the cows (8, 523), for them he opened the stall (1, 513, 134), and drove out the cows which were hidden, casting down Vāla (8, 146). Accompanied by them Indra pierced Vāla (2, 1125) and drove out the cows (6, 176). As their leader Indra is twice called āṅgirastama, chief Āṅgiras (1, 1004, 1305). Soma (as inspiring Indra) is also once said to have opened the cowstall for the Āṅgiras (9, 862). In connexion with the myth of the delivery of the cows the song of the Āṅgiras is characteristic. Praised by them Indra pierced Vāla (2, 156), and burst the cowstalls (4, 1618), slew Vāla and opened his citadels (6, 185), or dispersed the darkness, spread out the earth, and established the lower space of heaven (1, 623). So characteristic is their singing that the Maruts with their varied songs are said to be like the Āṅgiras (10, 785), and the gods are invoked to the offering with the chants of the Āṅgiras (1, 107). Hymns addressed by actual priests to Indra are also several times compared with those of the Āṅgiras (1, 621.2 &c). Incidentally Indra assumes a less prominent position than the Āṅgiras in the myth of the cows. Thus the Āṅgiras are said to have emptied the
stall containing cows and horses, with Indra as their companion (10, 627). Here we have the transition to the omission of Indra altogether, his characteristic action being directly attributed to the Āṅgiras themselves. By the rite they drove out the cows and pierced Vala (ib. 2), caused the sun to mount the sky, and spread out mother earth (ib. 3). By the rite they cleft the rock and shouted with the cows (4, 310). Singing they found the cows (1, 627). They burst the rock with their songs and found the light (1, 724). The Āṅgiras are further connected with the finding of the cows of the Panis for Indra by Saramā (10, 108⁵, 19), who is said to have assisted Indra and the Āṅgiras in tracking them (1, 623 cp. 728). The Āṅgiras are also described alone as having found the cows and steeds of Papi (1, 83⁴).

Brhaspati, who is connected with the same myth (10, 108⁶-¹¹), receives the epithet Āṅgirasas when piercing the rock and capturing the cows (6, 73¹) or giving cows like Bhaga (10, 68⁴).

Brhaspati is even directly called Āṅgiras when he drives out the cows and releases the waters with Indra (2, 23¹⁸). Otherwise in nearly all the occurrences of the word in the singular, Āṅgiras is an epithet of Agni, who is the first seer Āṅgiras (1, 31¹), the ancient Āṅgiras (10, 92¹⁵) or the oldest (1, 127⁷) and the most inspired (6, 11¹) of the Āṅgiras. Agni is several times also called the chief Āṅgiras (1, 75² &c.). This term is, however, once or twice applied to Indra, Uṣas, and Soma. Sometimes Āṅgiras only designates an ancient priest without direct allusion to Agni, as when ‘the ancient Āṅgiras’ is mentioned in an enumeration of ancestors (1, 139⁷) or when the context shows that in the form āṅgirasat the singular sense ‘like Āṅgiras’ is meant (1, 45³). In one passage (1, 31⁷), in which the poet exclaims, ‘O Agni, come to us as to Manus, as to Āṅgiras, o Āṅgiras’, the name designates both the ancestor and Agni.

According to the tradition found in the Anukramanī of the RV., the Āṅgirasas must have been regarded as an actual priestly family, as the composition of the ninth book is attributed to members of it.¹ Priestly families also seem to be alluded to in the compound Atharva-āṅgirasas, which occurs as a designation of the AV. in that Veda itself (AV. 10, 7²⁰) and later (SB. II, 5, 67 &c.)².

On the whole it seems probable that the Āṅgiras were originally conceived as a race of higher beings intermediate between gods and men, as attendants of Agni, who is so often described as a messenger between heaven and earth (p. 96), and that their priestly character was a later development.³ They may possibly have been personifications of the flames of fire as messengers to heaven (cp. RV. 7, 3¹). This view is borne out by the etymological connexion of āṅgiras with the Greek ἀγγέλος, ‘messenger’⁴. Weber, however, is of opinion that they were originally priests of the Indo-Iranian period.⁵


§ 55. A. Virūpas¹. — Closely connected with the Āṅgiras are the Virūpas, whose name is mentioned three times in the plural. The Āṅgiras, the Virūpas, are sons of heaven (3, 53⁷). The Virūpas are seers, sons of Āṅgiras, born from Agni, from heaven (10, 62⁵-⁶). Virūpa once occurs as the name of a single being, who sings the praises of Agni, in a stanza (8, 64⁶) immediately following one in which Āṅgiras is invoked. The name also has the singular sense in the adverb virūpasat, ‘like Virūpa’, as is indicated by
the occurrence in the same stanza (1, 453) of Priyamedhavat, Atrivat, besides Angirasvat. The word once occurs in its patronymic form in a verse (10, 145) in which Yama is invoked with the Angiras and the Vairūpas. As the word is most usually a simple adjective meaning 'of variable form' and, when a name, is always found in company with that of Angiras or the Angiras, it would seem to have been hardly more than an epithet of the latter.

B. Navagvas. The name of these beings occurs altogether fourteen times in the RV., six times in association with that of the Angiras. The Navagvas are spoken of as 'our ancient fathers' (6, 223), or as 'our fathers' along with the Angiras, the Atharvans, and the Bhrgus (10, 145). Like the Angiras, they are connected with the myth of Indra, Saramā, and the cows of the Panis (1, 623-4; 5, 457; 10, 1083). Indra with the Navagvas as his friends sought the cows (3, 395). Pressing Soma they laud Indra with songs; they broke open the stall of the cows (5, 2912). In one hymn they are described as having sung with the pressing stones for ten months (5, 457-11). In two of its occurrences in the plural the word navagva is a simple adjective, being in one of these cases an attribute of the rays of Agni (6, 63). It is also found three times in the singular, when it appears to be an epithet of Angiras (4, 514; 10, 626) or of Dadhyaṅic (9, 1084). It apparently means 'going in (a company of) nine', designating as a plural noun a group of nine ancient priestly ancestors.

C. Daśagvas. This name occurs seven times in the RV., three times in the singular, and only twice unassociated with that of the Navagvas. The Daśagvas were the first who offered sacrifice (2, 3412). Indra with the Navagvas sought the cows and with the ten Daśagvas found the sun (3, 395). With the Navagvas and the Daśagvas Indra rent the rock and Vala (1, 623). The Navagvas and Daśagvas praise Indra and broke open the stall of the cows (5, 2912). The dawns shine on the Navagva Angira and the seven-mouthed Daśagva (4, 514). Daśagva, mentioned with Navagva, is once spoken of as chief Angiras (10, 626). Daśagva is described in one passage as having been succoured by Indra (8, 123). The name, being merely a numerical variation of Navagva, was most probably suggested by the latter.

D. The seven Ṛṣis. The ancient seers are represented by a definite numerical group as 'the seven Ṛṣis', who are, however, only mentioned four times in the RV. One poet speaks of them as 'our fathers, the seven seers' (4, 423). They are called divine (10, 1307), and in another passage (10, 1094) the 'seven ancient seers' are associated with the gods. The number may have been suggested by that of the seven technical priests (enumerated in 2, 12), of whom they would, in that case, have been regarded as the prototypes. In the SB. they become individualized by each receiving a name (SB. 14, 5, 26; Brhadā. Up. 2, 25). In the same Brāhmaṇa (2, 1, 24 cp. 8, 1, 10) they are also regarded as the seven stars in the constellation of the Great Bear and are stated to have been originally bears5. This identification is doubtless due partly to the sameness of the number in the two cases and partly to the similarity of sound between ṛṣi, 'seer', and ṛṣa, which in the RV. means both 'star' (1, 2410) and 'bear' (5, 563).

Probably the same ancient sacrificers are referred to as the seven priests (vīprā) who with the Navagvas praise Indra (6, 223 cp. 3, 315; 4, 215), or the seven Hōtras6 with whom Manu made the first offering to the gods (10, 637). Similarly the 'two divine Sacrificers' (dāniva hotāra) mentioned nearly a dozen times in the RV. seem to have been the celestial counterpart of two technical priests.

§ 56. Atri. — This is one of the seers of ancient days most frequently mentioned in the RV. The name occurs there about forty times in the singular and six times in the plural as a designation of his descendants. Atri is spoken of as a seer belonging to the five tribes (1, 117) and is mentioned along with Manu and other ancestors of the human race (1, 399).

Agni is said to have helped Atri (7, 15) as well as other ancient seers (1, 45; 10, 150). Indra also heard the prayer of Atri (8, 367) and opened the cowstall for him and the Angirases (1, 51). Atri is, however, chiefly represented as the protégé of the Āṣvins, and the characteristic myth about him is connected with them. They delivered Atri from the darkness (6, 50; 7, 71). They rescued him out of a chasm (5, 78) with all his host (1, 116. 117), when they destroyed the wiles of the malignant demon (1, 117). The chasm into which he has fallen and from which they deliver him is a burning one, but they gave him a strengthening draught (1, 116. 118). They made the burning chasm (ṛbīsa) or his abode (ghṛha) agreeable for him (10, 39; 8, 62); they prevent the fire from burning him (8, 62). They rescued Atri who was in the heat (10, 80), and they protected him from the heat with coolness (1, 119; 8, 62), and made the burning heat agreeable for him (1, 117). Once they are said to have rejuvenated Atri, who had grown old (10, 143). 2

In one hymn Atri is said to have found the sun when it was hidden by the demon Svarbhānu and to have placed it in the sky (5, 46. 8). But in the very next verse (9) this deed is attributed to the Atris collectively. The AV. also refers to Atri finding and placing the sun in the sky (AV. 13, 24-12. 36). In the SB. Atri is a priest who dispelled darkness (4, 3, 4), originated from Vāc (1, 4, 5), and is even identical with her (14, 5, 2).

The plural form of the name in the RV. regularly occurs in the last or one of the last verses of a hymn. The Atris here designate the family of seers who are the composers of the hymns (5, 39 &c.). The whole of the fifth book is attributed to the family of the Atris, and about one-fourth of the occurrences of the name in the singular or plural are found in that book.

The name is perhaps derived from the root *ad*, to eat, in the sense of 'devouring', as the cognate word atrin, a frequent adjective in the RV. used to describe demons, seems to have this meaning. The word atrī itself is once employed as an attribute of Agni, probably with this signification (2, 85). Bergaigne 2 is even of opinion that, though Atri has become a priest, he originally represented some form of Agni. The name of Atri is four times accompanied or, in the next verse, followed by that of Saptavādhrī. The latter is a protégé of the Āṣvins, a seer whom they are invoked to release from captivity (5, 78-8), and who is said to have sharpened the blade of Agni with his prayer (8, 62). For Atri Saptavādhrī the Āṣvins made the burning chasm agreeable (10, 39). The two are therefore probably identical 1.


§ 57. Kanva &c. — The name of Kanva occurs about sixty times in the RV, as that of an ancient seer and of his descendants, the occurrences in the singular and plural being nearly equally divided. Kanva is spoken of as the son of Nṛṣad (10, 31) and bears the patronymic Nārṣada (1, 117; Indo-arische Philologie. III. 1 A.
AV. 4, 19). He is mentioned in an enumeration of ancient ancestors such as Manu and Aṅgiras (1, 139). The gods gave Agni to Ķanva and others, who kindled him and were blessed by him (1, 3610. 11., 17). Agni helped Ķanva, as well as Atri, Trasadasyu, and others, in battle (10, 505), and is spoken of as a friend and chief of the Ķanvas (10, 115). Indra conferred gold and cattle on Ķanva, Trasadasyu, and others (Vāl. 116. 210). The Maruts bestowed wealth on Ķanva along with Turvaśa and Yadu (8, 718). The Āsvins are several times said to have helped Ķanva (1, 475. 1123; 8, 575. 829). He was blind when succoured by the Āsvins (8, 525), who restored his sight (1, 1187).

Most of the hymns of the eighth book of the RV. are attributed to the family of Ķanva, and poets there speak of themselves as Ķanvas. The name as that of a family is therefore historical. But the ancestor whose name was transferred to them in reality never appears in the RV. as that of a contemporary. Roth thinks his origin may have been mythical like that of Aṅgiras; and Bergaigne is of opinion that the blind Ķanva represents the sun during the night or, more generally, the hidden Agni or Soma.

Mṛdhyaśātiḥ, a descendant of Ķanva, being called by the patronymic Kāṇva (8, 229), is mentioned nine times in the RV., occasionally with Ķanva in enumerations of ancestors (1, 3610. 11., 17). The name seems to mean 'he who has a sacrificial guest (i.e. Agni)'. Priyamedha, whose name occurs four or five times and is found beside that of Ķanva (8, 525), belongs to the past, but his descendants often speak of themselves in the plural as Priyamedhas.


§ 58. A. Kutsa. This warlike hero belonging to the Indra myth is mentioned nearly forty times in the RV. The name occurs only once in the plural as a designation of a family of singers who address a hymn to Indra (7, 259). Kutsa is four times called by the patronymic Arjuneya, son of Arjuna (1, 1123 &c.). Mention is made of a son of his, whom Indra aided in fight against a Dasyu (10, 19511). Kutsa is young and brilliant (1, 631). He is a seer, who called upon Indra for aid when plunged in a pit (1, 1069). Kutsa rides on the same car as Indra (4, 1611; 5, 299), who waifs him (5, 318; 8, 111) or takes him as his charioteer (2, 196; 6, 205). Kutsa is similar to Indra (4, 1610) and is even invoked with him in a dual compound as Indrākutsa, the pair being besought to come on their car (5, 319).

The foe against whom Kutsa is associated with Indra is Śuṣṇa. Indra śmote Śuṣṇa for Kutsa (1, 631. 1219; 4, 1612; 6, 263), aided Kutsa against Śuṣṇa (1, 516), subjected Śuṣṇa to him (7, 197), or, associated with Kutsa and the gods, vanquished Śuṣṇa (5, 299). Indra is invoked to fight with Kutsa against Śuṣṇa (6, 313) or to bring Kutsa as a slayer of Śuṣṇa (1, 1754). Indra fights for Kutsa even against the gods (4, 302—3) or against Gandharva (8, 111). The conflict with Śuṣṇa results in the stealing of the wheel of the sun (1, 1754; 6, 313). For Kutsa pressed by his foes Indra tore off the wheel of the sun (4, 306) while the other he gave to Kutsa to drive on with (5, 299). This miracle of stopping the sun (cp. 1, 12110; 10, 1383) seems to be a transference of the myth of Indra gaining the sun for human happiness, to the reminiscence of a semi-historical battle. In winning the sun Indra is said to have made wide space for his charioteer Kutsa (6, 205). He is invoked to crush the fiends with Kutsa and to roll forward the wheel of the sun (4, 1619). In one passage Indra is said to have subjected other foes than Śuṣṇa to Kutsa, viz. Tugra, Smadibha, and the Vetasus (10, 494).
Kutsa, whom Indra aided and loved (1, 334), nevertheless sometimes appears as his enemy. Thus Indra struck down the heroes of Kutsa, Āyu, and Atithigvā (2, 147), harassed Āyu, Kutsa, and Atithigvā (Vāl. 5'), delivered these three into the hand of the young king Tūrvayānā (1, 5310), or smote them to the earth for him (6, 183). This seems to indicate the historical character of Kutsa. For a deity of light would naturally have been regarded by the Vedic poets as always a friend, and a demon of darkness always as a foe. Tradition also attributes a number of the hymns of the first and ninth book of the RV. to a seer Kutsa of the family of the Āṅgirases. BERGaigne, however, thinks that Kutsa is purely mythical, originally a form of Agni (or Soma), sometimes seeming to represent the sun. In the Naighaṭjukā (2, 20) kutsa appears as one of the synonmys of thunderbolt (vajra).

B. Kāvyā Uśanā2. The ancient seer Uśanā is mentioned eleven times in the RV. He is twice called a sage (kavi) and five times receives the epithet Kāvyā. He is characteristically wise; for Soma uttering wisdom is compared (9, 973) and, owing to his wisdom, is identified with Uśanā (9, 873). Kāvyā Uśanā established Agni as the hotr of sacrifice (8, 2313). He is said to have driven hither the cows, in the same verse in which Atharvan, the institutor of sacrifice, is referred to as having prepared the path of the sun (1, 835). He was a protégé of Indra (6, 2011), who rejoiced with him (1, 5111) and who is represented as identifying himself with Uśanā as well as Kutsa and others (4, 261). He was associated with Indra when the latter, along with Kutsa, vanquished Śuṣṇa (5, 299). Uśanā also fashioned for Indra the bolt for slaying Vṛtra (1, 12112; 5, 342 cp. 1, 5110).

C. Several other ancient seers of a historical or semi-historical character are mentioned in the RV. Such are Gotama, Visvāmitra, Vāmadeva, Bharadvāja and Vasistha3 to whom, or to whose families, the composition of the second, third, fourth, sixth, and seventh books are respectively attributed. Agastya is another seer mentioned several times in the RV. More or less historical warriors of the olden days are king Sudās, Purukutsa and his son Trasadayu, as well as Divodāsa Atithigvā5.

Even the most mythical of the ancestors of man or of particular families treated of in this chapter seem, with perhaps two or three exceptions, to have been either actual men of bygone days or to have been projected into the past to represent the first progenitors of actually living men. The deeds attributed to them are partly historical reminiscences, partly aetiological myths, and partly poetical creations. By association with the gods they are often drawn into participation in the mythological actions, such as the winning of the sun, on which the order of nature is founded. Most of what is told about the priestly ancestors, is intended to furnish evidence of sacerdotal art and power, which are therefore treated supernaturally. It is not likely that they represent powers of nature and are faded gods come down to earth.


V. ANIMALS AND INANIMATE OBJECTS.

§ 59. General Traits. — Animals enter to a considerable extent into the mythological creations of the Veda. There are still numerous traces surviving from a more primitive age, when the line dividing men from animals
was not definitely drawn (§ 65) and gods might be conceived as having animal forms also. The higher Vedic gods themselves being anthropomorphic in character, the supernatural beings of the Veda which have an animal form belong to a lower order, being semi-divine only or demoniac according as the animal is useful to man, as the cow, or injurious, as the serpent. Moreover, just as man has attached to him various animals which are serviceable to him, so the great anthropomorphic gods are naturally surrounded by a celestial animal world of a similar character. Lastly, actual animals are in the ritual connected with mythological conceptions of the gods. They are symbolical representatives intended only as an instrument for the time being to influence the gods they in some respect resemble. This fetishistic point of view is probably the faded remnant of a more primitive identification of gods with visible objects. The part which such animal fetishes play in Vedic times is, however, no longer great, since the representation of deities by animals conflicted with the higher conception prevailing of the gods as mighty men dwelling in heaven and coming invisibly to the sacrifice.

§ 60. The Horse: — A. Dadhirā. Besides the celestial horses which draw the cars of the gods, various individual divine steeds occur in Vedic mythology. One of the most notable of these is Dadhirā, who is celebrated in four rather late hymns of the RV. (4, 38—40; 7, 44)). The name is mentioned there twelve times, interchanging with the extended form Dadhirāvan, which is found ten times. The name hardly ever occurs in other Vedic texts. Dadhirā is so characteristically a steed that the word is given in the Nai-gañṭā (1, 14) as a synonym of horse. He is swift (4, 384.9, 391), being the first steed at the head of chariots (7, 444) and a vanquisher of chariots (rathatur), who speeds like the wind (4, 383). The people praise his swiftness and every Puru praises him as he runs on a precipice as it were (ib. 9.3). He bounds along the curves of the paths (4, 404). He is also conceived as winged. For he is called bird-like, his wing being compared with that of a bird and of a speeding eagle (4, 402.3). He is likened to a swooping eagle and even directly called an eagle (4, 385.4). In one passage (4, 405) he is spoken of as the swan (hamsa) dwelling in light, as well as the Vasu in the air, the priest at the altar, the guest in the house — all epithets appropriate to various forms of Agni.

Dadhirā is a hero, smites the Dasyus, and is victorious (4, 381—3.7). His adversaries fear him as the thunder of heaven, when he fights against a thousand; he wins booty in combats and the tribes cry after him in contests (ib. 8.5.4). Making himself (kṛyāṇa) a garland, he tosses the dust and scatters it from his brows (ib. 6.7). He belongs to all the tribes, pervades the five tribes with his power, as Sūrya the waters with his light, and observes the assemblies (ib. 2.10.4). Mitra-Varuṇa gave him, the victorious steed, like shining Agni, to the Purus (4, 392 cp. 385.5); they gave us the horse Dadhirā as a blessing for the mortal (ib. 3).

The steed Dadhirāvan is praised when Agni is kindled at the dawning of Uṣas (4, 394). He is invoked with the Dawns (ib. 4.401), who are prayed to turn to the sacrifice like Dadhirāvan (7, 416). He is regularly invoked with Uṣas, nearly as often with Agni, less frequently with the Aśvins and Sūrya, sometimes with other deities also (3, 201—5; 7, 441—7; 10, 1015); but Dadhirā is invoked first (7, 444).

The etymological meaning, being uncertain, cannot be said to throw any additional light on the original nature of Dadhirā. The second part of the compound may be a by-form of the root kṛ, ‘to scatter’, and the word would then mean ‘scattering curdled milk’, in allusion to the dew or
rime appearing at sunrise, according to Roth and Grassmann, who both think that Dadhikrā represents in the form of a steed the circling ball of the sun. This view is supported by the fact that the deity with whom Dadhikrā is most closely connected is Uṣas, that the sun is often conceived as a steed or bird (p. 31) and that he is sometimes regarded as warlike (ib.). The statement that Dadhikrā was given by Mitra and Varuṇa might be connected with the notion of the sun being the eye of those deities. Bergaigne thinks that the name of Dadhikrā refers rather to lightning, but that he represents Agni in general, including his solar and lightning forms. Ludwig, Pischel, v. Brădice, and Oldenberg, however, agree in the opinion that Dadhikrā was not a deity, but an actual horse, famous as a racer or charger, which received divine honours.

It has already been remarked (p. 142) that Dādhyāc is allied to Dadhikrā in name, and possibly in nature, since he is spoken of as having a horse's head.

B. Tārkṣya. Nearly related to Dadhikrā is Tārkṣya, whose name is mentioned only twice in the RV. (1, 89; 10, 178). One late hymn, consisting of three stanzas (10, 178), is devoted to his praise. He is there described as a god-impelled mighty steed (vaṇjīn), a vanquisher of chariots (cp. 6. 44), swift, and speeding to battle. He is invoked as a gift of Indra. In the identical words applied to Dadhikrā (4, 38), he is said to have pervaded the five tribes with his power, as Surya the waters with his light. That he was primarily conceived as a steed is shown (v. 2; 1, 89) by his epithet arīṭanemi, 'whose fellies are intact' (which in VS. 15, 18 appears as an independent name beside Tārkṣya and Garuḍa). In the Naighanṭuka (1, 14) the word tārkṣya occurs as a synonym of 'horse'. In one or two later Vedic texts Tārkṣya is, however, referred to as a bird; and in the Epic and subsequent literature, he is identical with the swift bird Garuḍa, the vehicle of Viṣṇu. It seems on the whole probable that Tārkṣya originally represented the sun in the form of a divine steed. The word seems to be derived from Trkṣi, the name of a man, with the patronymic Trāsadasya, once mentioned in the RV. (8, 22). This derivation leads For to believe that Tārkṣya was an actual race horse (like Dadhikrā), belonging to Trkṣi of the family of Trāsadasyu.

C. Paidentva. Another mythical steed is that which the Aṣvins are said to have brought to Pedu (1, 119; 7, 71) and which is therefore called Paidentva (1, 116; 9, 88). The object of the gift was to replace an inferior horse, as may be inferred from the description of Pedu as aghāta, 'he who has a bad horse' (1, 116). This steed is several times spoken of as 'white', śveta (1, 116, &c.). He is praiseworthy (1, 119; 10, 39; cp. 4, 38) and is to be invoked (1, 116) by men, like Bhaga (10, 39). He is compared with Indra (1, 119) and is called a 'dragon-slayer', ahīhan (1, 117. 118 cp. 9, 88), an epithet otherwise peculiar to Indra. He is a conqueror invincible in battles, seeking heaven (1, 119). Here again the evidence, as far as it goes, appears to favour the interpretation of the steed of Pedu as symbolic of the sun.

D. Etāṣa. The word etāṣa, which occurs a few times as an adjective meaning 'swift', more frequently signifies 'steed' in the RV. In the plural it designates the horses of the sun (7, 62; 10, 373, 497). It occurs about a dozen times as a proper name in the singular, always connected with the sun, often with reference to the wheel of the sun. Savītra is the steed (etāṣa) who measured out the terrestrial regions (5, 81). The swift god Etaṣa draws the bright form of the sun (7, 66). Yoked to the pole, Etaṣa moves the
wheel of the sun (7, 63°); he brought the wheel of the sun (1, 1211; 5, 3111). Indra urged on the steed (etāsa) of the sun (8, 111 cp. 9, 636). Indra helped Etāsa contending in a race with Sūrya (1, 6115). It may be gathered from stray references to this mythical contest, that Etāsa being at first behind takes up the lost wheel of the sun and fixes it to the car of Sūrya; he has now gained the lead, and in the end Sūrya seems to concede to him the place of honour before his own car13. It appears to be impossible to suggest any satisfactory interpretation of this myth. It can, however, hardly be doubted that Etāsa represents the steed of the sun.

E. The Horse symbolical of Sun and Fire. That the horse is symbolical of the sun, is indicated by a passage of the RV. in which Dawn is said to lead a white steed (7, 773), and is suggested by another (1, 1635) in which the sacrificial steed is said to have been fashioned by the gods out of the sun41. In a particular form of the Soma ritual, the horse also appears to be symbolical of the sun15.

Agni, the swift and agile god, is often, as has been shown (p. 89), spoken of as a steed. In the ritual the horse is symbolical of Agni. A horse is stationed so as to look at the place where fire is produced by friction. When the fire is borne towards the east, it is deposited in the track of the horse which goes in front16. In the ceremony of piling the fire-altar, the horse is addressed with the verse: 'In heaven is thy highest birth, in air thy navel, on earth thy home' (VS. 11, 12). Such a rite is explained in the SB. as bringing Agni together with himself17. The same Brāhmaṇa speaks of lightning as a horse descended from the waters or the clouds (SB. 5, 1, 45; 7, 5, 218).


§ 61 A. The Bull. — Indra is in the RV. constantly designated a bull, a term applied much less frequently to Agni, and occasionally to other gods, such as Dyaus (p. 22). In the AV. (9, 49) a bull is addressed as Indra, and in the SB. (2, 5, 319) the bull is stated to be Indra's form1. In the Avesta the bull appears as one of the incarnations of Verethraghna, the Avestan Indra3. In one of the sacrifices of the Vedic ritual, a bull also represents the god Rudra3. A bull plays a part in the obscure and much discussed myth of Mudgala and Mudgalanī (RV. 10, 1023).

B. The Cow. — Owing to its great utility on earth, the cow naturally enters largely into the conceptions of Vedic mythology. The beams of Dawn are personified as cows5, which draw her car (p. 47). The rain-cloud is personified as a cow, the mother of a (lightning) calf (pp. 10, 12). This cloud-cow is individualized as Ṛṣnī6, the mother of the Maruts (VS. 2, 16), her milk (6, 4839) and udder being several times referred to (cp. p. 125). The bountiful clouds are doubtless the prototypes of the many-coloured cows which yield all desires (kāmaduhā) in the heaven of the Blest (AV. 4, 349) and which are the forerunners of the Cow of Plenty (kāmaduhā) so often mentioned in post-Vedic poetry7. Indā, the personification of the offering of milk and butter, has a tendency to be regarded as a cow (p. 124). Aditi
also is sometimes spoken of as a cow (p. 122). The gods are sometimes called cow-born, gojātāḥ. The most frequent application of the cow is, however, in the myth of the kine released from the rock by Indra (pp. 59, 61).

The terrestrial cow herself has already acquired a certain sanctity in the RV., being addressed as Aditi and a goddess, while the poet impresses on his hearers that she should not be killed (8, 9015 16 cp. VS. 4, 19, 20). The inviolability of the cow is further indicated by her designation aghnya, 'not to be slain', which occurs sixteen times in the RV. (the corresponding masculine form aghnya being found only three times). In the AV. the worship of the cow as a sacred animal is fully recognised (AV. 12, 4, 5).8 In the SB. (3, 1, 22) he who eats beef is said to be born again (on earth) as a man of evil fame; though beef is allowed to be cooked for guests (SB. 3, 4, 12).9

1 Cp. MS. i, 1016; TB. 1, 6, 74; Ap. ŚŚ. 8, 1119. — 2 ORV. 76, note 2. — 3 ORV. 82. — 4 Last treated of by V. HENRY (with reference to his predecessors) in JA. 1892 (6), 516 48. — 5 Cp. GRUPPE, op. cit. 1, 77. — 6 Cp. ROTH, Nir. Ert. 145; PV. 8 v. — 7 KHF. 188. — 8 HH. 156; cp. BLOOMFIELD, SBE. 42, 656. — 9 WVB. 1894, p. 36; HH. 189; cp. WINTERNITZ, Hochzeitsrituell 33.

§ 62. The Goat &c. — In the RV. the goat is specially connected with Pūšan as drawing his car (p. 35). It also appears there as a divine being in the form of Aja ekapad, the one-footed Goat (§ 27). In the later Vedic literature the goat is several times connected or identified with Agni.4

The ass appears in Vedic mythology mainly as drawing the car of the Asvins (p. 50).3

The dog is found in the RV. mythologically in the form of the two brindled hounds of Yama, called Sārameya (p. 173). This name indicates that they were regarded as descendants of Saramā (p. 63), the messenger of Indra. There is nothing in the RV. directly showing that Saramā was there conceived as a bitch, though in the later Vedic literature she is regarded as such and by Yāska (Nir. 11, 25) is described as the 'bitch of the gods' (dvāsūni).

The boar occurs in the RV. as a figurative designation of Rudra, the Maruts, and Vṛtra. In the TS. and TB. this animal appears in a cosmogonic character as the form assumed by the Creator Prajāpati when he raised the earth out of the waters. A later development of it is the boar incarnation of Viṣṇu.8

In the later Sanshitās the tortoise is raised to a semi-divine position as 'lord of waters' (VS. 13, 31)9, or, as Kaśyapa, often appears beside or identical with Prajāpati in the AV., where he receives the epithet swayambhū, 'self-existent' (AV. 19, 5310). In the AB. (8, 2110) the earth is said to have been promised to Kaśyapa by Viṣvākarma. In the SB. Prajāpati is described as changing himself into a tortoise (7, 4, 5), in which form he produced all creatures (7, 5, 1)11. This assumed form of the creator became in post-Vedic mythology the tortoise incarnation of Viṣṇu.12 In the TS. (2, 6, 3) the sacrificial cake (purodāsa) is said to become a tortoise.

A monkey appears in a late hymn of the RV. (10, 86) as Indra's favourite, who is expelled for his mischievousness by Indrāni, but is finally restored to favour (§ 22, p. 64).

Frogs awakened by the rains are in RV. 7, 103 the objects of a panegyric as bestowing cows and long life, and seem to be conceived as possessing magical powers.13 This hymn has, however, been interpreted by MAX MÖLLER as a satire on Brahmans. BERGAIGNE interprets the frogs as meteorological phenomena.15
One while Cp. The Birds In and 66 among In 77) 3
gods Vedic RV. assumes Vrtra, the same intertwining as Verethraghna. When mankind is often compared to or called a bird (p. 106). Agni in particular is frequently likened to or directly designated a bird, once being spoken of as the eagle of the sky (p. 89). The sun is also sometimes conceived as a bird (p. 31), twice under the name of garumata5. The fact that Viṣṇu’s vehicle in post-Vedic mythology is Garuda, the chief of the birds, is probably based on the same notion (cp. p. 39). The main application of the bird in the Veda is as the eagle which carries off the Soma for Indra and which appears to represent lightning6. In the Kāthaka it is Indra himself who in the form of an eagle captures the Soma or amṛta. Similarly in the Avesta, Verethraghna assumes the form of Vārāghna, the swiftest of birds, and in Germanic mythology, the god Odin transforming himself into an eagle, flies with the mead to the realm of the gods (p. 114).

Ominous birds as well as beasts are occasionally connected with certain gods by whom they are supposed to be sent. Thus in the RV. the owl and the pigeon are spoken of as messengers of Yama (§ 77)8. In the Śūtras the owl is ‘the messenger of evil spirits’; while the beast of prey besmeared with blood and the carrion vulture are called messengers of Yama8. In the RV. a bird of omen is once invoked to give auspicious signs (2, 4241).


§ 64. Noxious Animals. — These generally appear as demons or show demoniac traits. Demons are sometimes in the RV. referred to with the generic term mrṛga, ‘wild beast’ (1, 807; 5, 294, 323). One demon who is mentioned three times (2, 1118; 8, 3266, 663) is called Auravābha, ‘Spider-brood’; another referred to only once (2, 144) is named Urāna, ‘Ram’.

The most common animal form applied in this way is the serpent (ahi = Av. azhi)3. This is generally only another designation of the demon Vṛtra, who probably received his name (cp. § 68) as a formidable enemy of mankind enveloping his prey like a serpent in his coils3. The Vṛtra-slayer Indra, who is also called the serpent-slayer, is said to have slain the serpent (8, 822 cp. 4, 171); the identity of Ahi and Vṛtra is clear where the terms interchange (1, 3218–27–14); and by the ‘first-born of the serpents’ (ib.3–4) no other can be meant than ‘Vṛtra, the most Vṛtra’ (ib.9). In several passages, too, the words are in apposition and may be translated ‘the serpent Vṛtra’4. When Ahi is mentioned alone, the results of Indra’s victory over him are the same as in the case of Vṛtra, the god causing the waters to flow, delivering the seven streams, or winning the cows5. The waters are also described as encompassed by the serpent, the action being expressed by the root vṛ (2, 197) among others. They are similarly said to be swallowed (ygras) by the serpent (4, 177; 10, 1119). Ahi is armed with lightning thunder and hail (1, 3221). He is bright, for the Maruts are called ahi-bhānavah, ‘shining like Ahi’ (1, 172); and the term ahi is applied to Agni,
who is described as a 'raging serpent, like the rushing wind' (1, 79)\(^5\). Soma
is once besought to deliver an enemy to Ahi (7, 104\(^9\)). The plural of the
word is occasionally used to express a race of demons (9, 88\(^1\); 10, 139\(^9\)), of
whom the Ahi is the first-born (1, 32\(^3\)–\(^4\)).

The serpent, however, also appears as a divine being in the form of
Ahi budhnya (§ 26), who seems to represent the beneficent side of the charac-
ter of Ahi Vṛtra.

In the later Sanshitās the serpents (sarpat) are found as a class of
semi-divine beings beside the Gandharvas and others. They are spoken of
as being in earth, air, and heaven (VS. 13, 6; cp. TB. 3, 1, 17). They are
often mentioned in the AV.\(^6\), one hymn of which (11, 9) is sometimes inter-
preted as an invocation of certain serpent divinities\(^7\). In the Sūtras offerings
to the serpents of earth, air, and heaven (AGS. 2, 1\(^9\); PGS. 2, 14\(^9\)) are pre-
scribed; serpents are satiated along with gods, plants, demons, &c. (SGS.
4, 9\(^3\), 15\(^1\); AGS. 3, 4\(^1\), and blood is poured out for them (AGS. 4, 8\(^2\)).
In this worship the serpent, owing to its hurtfulness, is naturally regarded as
having a demoniac nature, which has to be propitiated. In a similar sense
offerings are sometimes made to ants (KS. 116).

\(^1\) Cp. BENFEY, GGA. 1847, p. 1484; GUBERNATIS, Zoological Mythology 2,
392–7; WINTERNITZ, Der Sarpabali, Vienna 1888. — 2 SP.AP. 257. — 3 CP. SP.AP.
261. — 4 BRV. 2, 204. — 5 GRIFFIT, RV. Transl. 1, 133, note 1; MACDONELL,
JRAS. 25, 429. — 6 WEBER, Jyotisā 94; PW. s. v. sarpa. — 7 CP. BLOOMFIELD,

§ 65. Survival of prehistoric notions. — The primitive conception that
man does not differ essentially from beast, has left a few traces in the
form of a belief in beings of the werewolf order. These are represented by
the man-tigers (VS. 30, 8; SB. 13, 2, 4\(^8\)) and by the Nāgas, human beings
in appearance but in reality serpents, which are first mentioned under this
name in the Sūtras\(^8\) (AGS. 3, 4\(^1\)). It does not seem likely that the later
serpent worship had any connexion with the myth of the Vṛtra serpent, but
its development was probably due rather to the influence of the aborigines.
For on the one hand there is no trace of it in the RV., and on the other
it has been found prevailing very widely among the non-Aryan Indians.
The Aryans doubtless found the cult extensively diffused among the natives when
they spread over India, the land of serpents\(^1\).

Similarly, there are possibly in the RV. some survivals of totemism or
the belief in the descent of the human race or of individual tribes or families
from animals or plants. Kaśyapa, 'Tortoise', the name of a seer (9, 114\(^4\))
and of a priestly family (AB. 7, 27), is also frequently found in the AV.
and in the later Vedic literature\(^4\) as that of a cosmogonic power nearly related to
or identified with the Creator Prajāpati. In a passage of the SB. (7, 5, 15)
Prajāpati appears in the form of a tortoise (kūrma). Here it is remarked that,
as kūrma is identical with kaśyapa, 'therefore men say: all beings are the
children of the tortoise (kaśyapa)'. The RV. (7, 186, 19) mentions as tribal
names the Matsyas (Fishes)\(^5\), the Ajas (Goats), and the Śigrus (Horse-radishes).
As names of Vedic, priestly families also occur the Gotamas\(^6\) (Oxen), the
Vatsas (Calves), the Śunakas (Dogs), the Kauśikas (Owls), and Māṇḍukeyās\(^7\)
(Frog-sons). The father of Saṁvarāṇa (a name occurring in RV. 5, 53\(^9\)),
from whom the kings of the Kuru claimed descent, is in the Epic called
Rkṣa (Bear)\(^8\). HOPKINS, however, expresses a doubt whether the names of
animals ever point to totemism in the RV.\(^9\)

\(^1\) Cp. the Man-lion incarnation of Viṣṇu. — 2 Cp. WINTERNITZ, Sarpabali 43.
— 3 ORV. 69, note 2. — 4 PW. s. v.; 1S. 3, 457. 459. — 5 Also mentioned in

§ 66. Deified Terrestrial Objects. — A. Besides the phenomena and forces of nature, mostly aerial and celestial, and the earth itself (§ 34), various natural features of the earth's surface, as well as artificial objects, are treated as deities in the RV. It is the worship of inanimate things chiefly regarded as useful to man.

It is not pantheistic, since each object is regarded as a separate divinity, but is rather fetishistic in its character.

Rivers personified as goddesses have already been dealt with (§ 33).

Mountains (parvata) are often in the RV. conceived as divinely animate, being invoked as deities nearly twenty times in the plural and four times in the singular. In this capacity they never appear alone, but only with other natural objects such as waters, rivers, plants, trees, heaven and earth (7, 34, 64, &c.), or with gods like Savitr, Indra, and others (6, 49, &c.). They are invoked as manly, firmly fixed, rejoicing in plenty (3, 54). Parvata is even three times lauded with Indra in the dual compound Indrāparvata (1, 122. 136). The pair are spoken of as driving in a great car and are besought to come to the offering (3, 53). Here Parvata seems to be a mountain god, conceived anthropomorphically as a companion of Indra.

Plants (osadhi) are also personified as divine. The whole of a long hymn of the RV. (10, 97) is devoted to their praise, mainly with reference to their healing powers. They are called mothers and goddesses (v. 4), and Soma, to whom trees are subject, is described as their king. In another text a herb to be used medicinally is spoken of as a 'goddess born on the goddess earth' (AV. 6, 136). An animal sacrifice is even offered to plants in order to remove their obstruction to the attainment of offspring (TS. 2, 1, 53).

Large trees, called vanaspati, 'lord of the forest', are a few times addressed as deities either in the plural (7, 34; 10, 64) or the singular (1, 90; Vāl. 61), chiefly along with Waters and Mountains. Later texts refer to the adoration paid to large trees passed in marriage processions (cp. p. 134).

The forest as a whole appears as a deity under the name of Aranyāni, the jungle goddess, who is invoked in RV. 10, 146. Here she is called the mother of beasts, abounding in food without tillage; and the various uncanny sounds heard in her dark solitudes are weirdly described. The plant, tree, and forest deities, however, play a very insignificant part not only in the RV., but even in the AV. and in the ritual of the lesser domestic sacrifices; while in the Buddhist literature they seem to have been more closely connected with human life than any other lower deities.

B. Implements. Another group of inanimate objects susceptible of personification and worship is formed by various implements of sacrifice. The deification of these is by BARTH called by the rather misleading name of ritualistic pantheism. The most important of these objects is the sacrificial post, which under the name of vanaspati and svaru is deified and invoked in RV. 3, 8. The tree is here described as well-lopped with the axe, as anointed and adorned by priests; and the posts set up by priests are gods, and as gods go to the gods (vv. 6, 9). In the tenth or eleventh verses of the Āpri hymns, the post is described as thrice anointed with ghee and being set up beside the fire is invoked to let the offering go to the gods. In other verses of the same hymns the sacrificial grass (barhis) is twice (2, 3; 10, 7) addressed as a god, and more frequently the doors leading to the place of sacrifice, as goddesses (devī dvāra). The pressing stones (grāvan, also adri) are deified in three hymns (10, 76. 94. 175). They are spoken of as immortal, unaging, and more
mighty even than heaven\textsuperscript{14}. When pressing they are like steeds or bulls and the sound of their voice reaches to heaven. They are invoked to drive away demons and destruction, and to bestow wealth and offspring. In two verses of the RV. (1, 285-6) the mortar and pestle are invoked to resound aloud and to press Soma for Indra.

The AV. ascribes divine power of the highest order to Ucchiṣṭa, the ‘remnant’ of the sacrifice (AV. 11, 7)\textsuperscript{12} as well as to different sacrificial ladles\textsuperscript{13}.

Agricultural implements named Suna and Sirā, probably the ploughshare and the plough, are invoked in a few verses of the RV. (4, 575-8), and a cake is assigned to them at the sacrifice in the ritual (SB. 2, 6, 3).\textsuperscript{3}

Weapons, finally, are sometimes deified. The whole of RV. 6, 75 is devoted to the praise of various implements of war, armour, bow, quiver, and arrows. The arrow is adored as divine and is besought to grant protection and to attack the foe (vv. 11, 15-16). The drum (dundubhi) is invoked to drive away dangers, foes, and demons (vv. 20-31); and a whole hymn of the AV. (5, 20) celebrates its praises\textsuperscript{14}.

C. Symbols. Material objects are occasionally mentioned in the later Vedic literature as symbols representing deities. Something of this kind (possibly an image) must be meant even in a passage of the RV., in which the poet asks, ‘Who will buy this my Indra for ten cows? When he has slain his foes he may give him back to me’ (4, 24\textsuperscript{10}; cp. 8, 15). References to idols\textsuperscript{15} begin to appear in the later additions to the Brāhmaṇas and in the Sūtras\textsuperscript{16}.

The wheel is in various ritual performances employed as a symbol of the sun, as representing both its shape and its motion. It is thus used in the Vajapeya sacrifice\textsuperscript{17}, in the ceremony of laying the sacrificial fire, and at the solstitial festival\textsuperscript{18}. In post-Vedic mythology, moreover, one of the weapons of Viṣṇu is a wheel (cakra)\textsuperscript{19}.

Gold or a firebrand was employed as a symbol of the sun, when drawing water after sunset (SB. 3, 9, 2\textsuperscript{8}); gold served the same purpose when the sacrificial fire was made up after sunset instead of before (SB. 12, 4, 4\textsuperscript{4}); and in piling the fire-altar, a disc of gold was placed on it to represent the sun (SB. 7, 4, 1\textsuperscript{10})\textsuperscript{20}.

A symbol must have been used, as at a later period, in the phallic worship which was known in the earliest Vedic period, as is shown by the occurrence in two passages of the word śiśnadevaḥ, ‘those who have a phallus for their deity’. Such worship was, however, repugnant to the religious ideas of the RV.; for Indra is besought not to let the śiśnadevaḥ approach the sacrifice (7, 21\textsuperscript{5}), and he is said to have slain the śiśnadevaḥ, when he won the treasure of the hundred-gated fort (10, 99). In the post-Vedic period the phallus or linga became symbolical of Siva’s generative power and its worship is widely diffused in India even at the present day\textsuperscript{21}.

\textsuperscript{1} HRI. 166. — \textsuperscript{2} HRI. 135. — \textsuperscript{3} Cp. Roth, ZDMG. 25, 645—8. — \textsuperscript{4} Cp. Darmesteter, Haurvaṭṭ and Ameraṛṭṭ 74—6. — \textsuperscript{5} ORV. 252; tree-worship also appears in the Sūtras, where a newly married couple are said to bring offerings to the ndumbara and to invoke its blessing: Winternitz, Hochzeitsrituell 101—2. — \textsuperscript{6} ORV. 259—61. — \textsuperscript{7} BRL. 37, note. — \textsuperscript{8} HRI. 135. — \textsuperscript{9} Cp. Oldenberg, SBE. 46, 12, 253—5. — \textsuperscript{10} Cp. Roth, Nir. xxxvi, ErI. 117—8. 121—4; ASL. 465—6; Weber, IS. 10, 89—95; GRV. 1, 6; KRV, n. 126; Oldenberg, SBE. 46, 9—10. — \textsuperscript{11} HVM. 1, 151. — \textsuperscript{12} OST. 5, 396; SPh. 87—8. — \textsuperscript{13} OST. 5, 398. — \textsuperscript{14} Roth, FaB. 99. — \textsuperscript{15} The allusion to idols of Agni, seen in RV. 1, 145—5 by Bollensensen (ZDMG. 47, 586), is inconclusive. — \textsuperscript{16} Weber, Omina und Portenta 337. 367 f.; IS. 5, 149; KRV. note 794; HRI. 251. — \textsuperscript{17} Weber, Vajapeya 20. 34 f. — \textsuperscript{18} ORV. 88, note 4. — \textsuperscript{19} v. Brdke, ZDMG. 40, 356. — \textsuperscript{20} ORV. 255—61. 87—92. — \textsuperscript{21} v. Schroeder WZKM. 9, 237; HRI. 150.
VI. DEMONS AND FIENDS.

§ 67. A. Asuras.—Opposed to the beneficent gods is a body of malevolent beings called by various designations. Asura is throughout the Vedic literature the name of the celestial demons who are regarded as the regular adversaries of the gods in their mythical conflicts and who only rarely appear as present foes of men (e. g. AV. 8, 62; KS. 8710; 8811). The term, however, occurs only a few times in the RV. with the later sense of demon. It is there found only four times in the plural with this meaning. Indra is invoked to scatter the godless Asuras (8, 859). Otherwise they are only mentioned in the tenth book, always as opposed to the gods in general. The gods, it is said, smote the Asuras (10, 1571). Agni promises to devise a hymn by which the gods may vanquish the Asuras (10, 534). The gods are even said to have placed faith in the formidable Asuras (10, 1511). The word also occurs three times as the designation of an individual demon. Brhaspati is besought to pierce with a burning stone the heroes of the wolfish Asura (2, 301). Indra shattered the forts of the crafty Asura Pipru (10, 1381) and Indra-Viṣṇu smote the 100000 heroes of the Asura Varcin (7, 995). The sense of ‘demon’ is also found in the epithet asurahan, ‘Asura-slayer’, which occurs three times and is applied to Indra (6, 228), to Agni (7, 131), and to the Sun (10, 1701). The older Rigvedic notion of the conflict of a single god with a single demon, mainly exemplified by Indra and Vṛtra, gradually developed into that of the gods and the Asuras in general being arrayed against each other in two hostile camps. This is the regular view of the Brāhmaṇas. A new and frequent feature of the conflicts constantly described in these works is that the gods are worsted at the outset and only win by artifice. The most notable illustration of this notion is the myth of Viṣṇu taking his three strides in the form of a dwarf on behalf of the gods1.

In the Brāhmaṇas the Asuras are associated with darkness (ŚB.2,4,25). Day belongs to the gods, night to the Asuras (TS. 1, 5, 91). They are, however, constantly spoken of as being the offspring of Prajāpati and as having originally been equal to and like the gods3. It is perhaps for this reason that malignant spirits are sometimes included by the term deva (TS. 3, 5, 41; AV. 3, 155).

In the AV. and later asura means ‘demon’ only; but in the RV. the word is predominantly a designation of gods, and in the Avesta Ahura (= asura) is the name of the highest god. Thus the sense of ‘god’ is clearly the older. An attempt has been made to explain the transition from this meaning to that of ‘devil’, from national conflicts in consequence of which the Asuras or gods of extra-Vedic tribes became ‘demons’ to the Vedic Indian4. There is, however, no traditional evidence in support of this view. The explanation seems rather to be found in the following development within the Veda itself5. Asura as compared with deva has in its older sense a peculiar shade of meaning. It is especially applied to Varuṇa or Mitra-Varuna6, whose māyā or ‘occult power’ is particularly dwelt upon7. But the word māyā in the sense of ‘craft’ is also applied to hostile beings8 and is closely connected with the bad sense of asura (10, 1241. 1383). To the Vedic poets asura must therefore have meant ‘possessor of occult power’9 and as such would have been potentially applicable to hostile beings. In one hymn of the RV. (10, 124) both senses seem to occur10. Towards the end of the Rigvedic period the application of the word to the gods began to fall into disuse. This tendency was perhaps aided by the want of a general word to
Demons and Fiends. 67. Asuras, Pañis, Dāsas. 157
denote the higher hostile demoniac power and by an incipient popular etymology\textsuperscript{19} recognising a negative in the word and leading to the invention of sūra, 'god' (first found in the Upaniṣads)\textsuperscript{13}.

B. Pañis.—A group of demons of the upper air, primarily the enemies of Indra (6, 20\textsuperscript{i}, 39\textsuperscript{a}), secondarily also of his allies Soma, Agni, Brhaspati, and the Āngirases, are the Pañis. In nearly all the passages in which these demons are named, their cows are either expressly mentioned (10, 108; 6, 39\textsuperscript{a}) or alluded to as the treasure or wealth of the Pañis (2, 24\textsuperscript{b}; 9, 111\textsuperscript{a}). There is a similar reference when Agni is said to have opened the doors of the Pañis (7, 9\textsuperscript{a}). In one passage the gods are described as having found in the cow the ghee hidden by the Pañis (4, 58\textsuperscript{a}). The Pañis are comparatively powerful, for they are said to be surpassed in might by Indra (7, 56\textsuperscript{a}) and not to have attained to the greatness of Mitra-Varuṇa (1, 151\textsuperscript{a}).

The name occurs in the RV. about sixteen times in the plural, but is also found four times in the singular as representative of the group. Thus Indra or Agni-Soma are described as having robbed the cows from Pañi (10, 67\textsuperscript{a}; 1, 93\textsuperscript{a}), or Soma is invoked to strike down the voracious Pañi who is a wolf (6, 51\textsuperscript{a}).

The word pañi occurs with considerably greater frequency, and here oftener as a singular than a plural, in the sense of 'niggard', especially with regard to sacrificial gifts. From this signification it developed the mythological meaning of demons similar to those who primarily withhold the treasures of heaven\textsuperscript{14}.

C. The word dāsa or its equivalent dasyu, is also used to designate atmospheric demons. Its history is the converse of that of Vṛtra (§ 68). Primarily signifying the dark aborigines of India contrasted with their fair Aryan conquerors, it frequently rises to mythological rank in the RV. as the line between what is historical and mythical is not clearly drawn. This is especially the case with individual Dāsas, some of whose names even (e. g. Susṇa) lend themselves to a mythological interpretation, though others seem to be those of non-Aryan men (e. g. Ilibiśa)\textsuperscript{15}.

Thus both the singular (2, 12\textsuperscript{b}, &c.) and (mostly of dasyu) the plural (1, 101\textsuperscript{a}) are frequently used to designate foes vanquished by Indra, sometimes beside the name of Vṛtra (6, 23\textsuperscript{a}, &c.). Hence Indra is sometimes called dasyuhaṇa, 'Dasyu-slayer' (1, 100\textsuperscript{a}, &c.) and the combat is several times referred to as dasyuḥaṇya (1, 51\textsuperscript{a}, &c.). In favour of individual protégés Indra 'sent to sleep' (i. e. slew) 30,000 Dāsas (4, 30\textsuperscript{a}), bound a thousand Dasyus (2, 13\textsuperscript{b}), or won cowstalls from the Dasyus for Dadhyaṅc (and) Mātariśvan (10, 48\textsuperscript{b}). When Indra's aid is invoked against both Ārya and Dāsa foes (10, 38\textsuperscript{b}, &c.) or when he is spoken of as discriminating between Āryas and Dasyus or Dāsas (1, 51\textsuperscript{a}; 10, 86\textsuperscript{a}), terrestrial foes are undoubtedly meant. This is probably also the case when Indra fights against the Dasyus in favour of the Āryas (6, 18\textsuperscript{a}, 25\textsuperscript{a}). Owing to the Dāsas being so frequently taken captive by the conquering Aryans, the word dāsa comes to be used two or three times in the RV. (7, 86\textsuperscript{f}; Vāl. 8\textsuperscript{a}) in the sense of 'servant', 'slave', its ordinary meaning in post-Vedic Sanskrit\textsuperscript{16}. On the other hand, the Dasyus who endeavoured to scale heaven are cast down by Indra (8, 14\textsuperscript{a} cp. 2, 12\textsuperscript{d}), the Dasyu whom he burnt down from heaven (1, 33\textsuperscript{a}), whom he vanquished from birth (1, 51\textsuperscript{a}; 8, 66\textsuperscript{b}-\textsuperscript{c}), or against whom he aids the gods (10, 54\textsuperscript{a}), must be demons. This is also the case, when Indra attacks the Dasyu, scattering the mist and darkness (10, 73\textsuperscript{a}), or wins the sun and the waters after slaying the Dasyus (1, 100\textsuperscript{d}), and when the gods and the Dasyus are contrasted as foes (3, 29\textsuperscript{a}). A demon must be meant
by the Dāsa who is the husband of the waters (1, 3211; 5, 305; 8, 8518),
which by his victory Indra makes the wives of a noble husband (1ο, 433).
The seven forks of the Dāsas, which, like those of Vṛtra (1, 1742),
are called autumnal (6, 2010 cp. 7, 1039), are doubtless atmospheric.

As the words dāsa and dasyu primarily mean ‘malignant foe’ and then
‘demon’12, it seems convenient to render them by ‘fiend’. They are frequently
added as a generic term to the names of individual fiends combated by
Indra, being most commonly thus applied to Namuci (5, 3073, &c.),
Sambara (4, 3014, &c.), Susṇa (7, 193, &c.), sometimes to Pipru (8, 322; 10, 1383).
Cumuri and Dhuni (2, 159; 7, 194), Varcin (4, 3015; 6, 4721),
Navāvāsta (10, 496), Vṛtrahan, Vṛtras, or Vṛtras, which
is born of Danava the adversary of Indra (10, 19),
and Vṛtras, as a demon (10, 19), is combated by Indra,
whose wily demigod Indra has shatters (10, 19),
and Vṛtras, as a demon (10, 19), is combated by Indra,
which, when he slays him (10, 897) and which are ninety-nine in number
(7, 195; 8, 829).

120 ff. — 7 BRV. 3, 81 cp. GVS. 1, 142. — 8 BRV. 3, 80. — 9 AV. passim; cp.
ORV. 164, note 2. — 10 ORV. 162–5; cp. DARMETTER, Ormus et Ahirvan 260 ff.
The Indo-Iranian meaning was according to BDA. 86, ‘Herr’ (lord). —
11 Oldenberg, ZDMG. 39, 70, note 2. — 12 On the etymology cp. v. Brādke,
HVM. 1, 83 ff. — 15 Cp. WACKERNAGEL, Altindische Grammatik 1, xxii. —

§ 68. A Vṛtra1. — Of the individual atmospheric demons by far the
most important and the most frequently mentioned is Vṛtra, who is the chief
adversary of Indra and for whose slaughter that deity is said to have been
born or grown (8, 785; 10, 55). Hence the most distinctive epithet of Indra is
vṛtrahan, ‘Vṛtra-slayer’. This compound is analyzed in two passages of the
RV.: ‘May the Vṛtra-slayer slay Vṛtra’ (8, 783) and ‘Vṛtra-slayer, slay the
Vṛtras’ (8, 179). Indra’s conflict with Vṛtra is also frequently referred to with
vṛtrahatya, ‘slaughter of Vṛtra’ and sometimes with vṛtratūrya, ‘conquest of
Vṛtra’.

It has already been shown that Vṛtra is conceived as having the form
of a serpent (§ 64). Hence he is without feet or hands (1, 327; 3, 308).2
His head, which Indra pierces, is mentioned several times (1, 5218; 8, 6565),
as well as his jaws, into which Indra strikes his bolt (1, 523). His
hissing or snorting is sometimes referred to (8, 857; 5, 20 cp. 1, 5210, 6110;
6, 1710). He has thunder at his disposal (1, 8012), as well as lightning, mist,
and hail (1, 323).

Vṛtra’s mother is called Dānu and is compared with a cow (1, 329).
This name seems to be identical with the word dānu, which is several times
used as a neuter meaning ‘stream’ and once as a feminine to designate
the waters of heaven3. The same term is applied as a masculine, apparently in
the sense of a metronymic, to Vṛtra or the dragon (2, 1211; 4, 307), as well
as to the demon Aurnavānha (2, 1118), and to seven demons slain by Indra
(10, 1206). The regular metronymic Dānava is used five times to designate
a demon combated by Indra and doubtless identical with Vṛtra. Indra cast
down the walls of the wily Dānava (2, 1119), he struck down the snorting
Dānava (5, 204), to release the waters (5, 321).

Vṛtra has a hidden (nīnya) abode, whence the waters, when released by
Indra, escape overflowing the demon (1, 3210). Vṛtra lies on the waters
(1, 1211; 2, 1119) or enveloped by waters at the bottom (budhna) of the
rajas or aerial space (1, 526). He is also described as lying on a summit
(sānu), when Indra made the waters to flow (1, 805), or as having been cast
down by Indra from lofty heights (8, 319). Vṛtra has fortresses, which Indra
shatters when he slays him (10, 897) and which are ninety-nine in number
(7, 195; 8, 829).
There can be no doubt that the word vy-tra is derived from the root vy, 'to cover or encompass'. Poets several times speak of Vṛtra as having encompassed the waters, apa varivānsam (2, 14; &c.) or vṛtavi (1, 52\(^\text{25}\)), or as being an encompasser of rivers, nadi-vṛt (1, 52\(^\text{2};\) 8, 12\(^\text{26}\) cp. 6, 30\(^\text{1};\) 7, 21\(^\text{3}\)). These are clearly allusions to the etymology of the name. There is also evidently a play on the derivation when it is said that Indra 'encompassed the encompasser', vṛtram avṛṇot (3, 43\(^\text{3}\)), or that in slaying Vṛtra he uncovered (apa vy) the prison of the waters (1, 32\(^\text{11};\) 51\(^\text{4}\)). A similar notion is implied in a passage in which the (cloud) mountain (parvata) is described as being within the belly of Vṛtra and Indra strikes the streams, placed in a covering (vāvri), down declivities (cp. 1, 57\(^\text{6}\)). Vṛtra is also said to be an encloser (paridhi) of the streams (3, 33\(^\text{9}\)).

It has been shown above that Indra's epithet vṛṭrahan was understood by the Vedic poets to mean not only 'slayer of Vṛtra' but also as 'slayer of Vṛtras'. This plural, which is of frequent occurrence in the RV. and is always neuter, sometimes appears in passages mentioning the names of various individual fiends (7, 19\(^\text{5}\); 10, 49\(^\text{8}\)). The result of Indra's conflict with the Vṛtras is the release of the waters (7, 34\(^\text{3}\)) or of the rivers (8, 85\(^\text{18}\)) which are 'encompassed', vṛtān (4, 42\(^\text{7}\)). It is the Vṛtras which, as well as the fiends, he is to smite as soon as born (6, 29\(^\text{6}\)) and to destroy which he has been produced by the gods (3, 49\(^\text{1}\)). With the bones of Dadhyaṇic he slew 99 Vṛtras (1, 84\(^\text{13}\)) just as he shatters the ninety-nine forts of Vṛtra (7, 19\(^\text{5}\)).

The term Vṛtras, which is regularly employed with the verb han, 'to slay', also refers to terrestrial foes, as when Āryas and Dāsas are distinguished as two kinds of Vṛtras (6, 22\(^\text{10};\) 33\(^\text{3}\)). There are, moreover, many passages in which it is quite as applicable to human enemies as to celestial demons. Then, however, it does not mean simply 'enemy', which is amitra (= inimicus) or sātru (cp. 6, 73\(^\text{2}\)), but is employed with a side-glance at the demon Vṛtra, much as the English word 'fiend' in its present use, when applied to men, is suggestive of 'devil'. This relation of meaning is the converse of that in dāsa or dasyu, which first meant 'foe' and then 'fiend'. The use of vṛtra in the plural, as it is then always neuter, can hardly be derived from a generalization of the proper name Vṛtra, but must be based on an earlier meaning such as 'obstruction', then 'obstructor'. In the Avesta verehtra means 'victory', which is, however, a secondary development of 'obstruction'.

In the Brāhmaṇas Vṛtra is interpreted as the moon, which is swallowed by Indra identified with the sun, at new moon\(^\text{5}\).

B. Vala\(^\text{6}\). This word occurs about twenty-four times in the RV. and is regularly connected with the release of the cows by Indra or his allies, especially the Āṅgiras (§ 54). Vala is a guardian of cows, whom Indra rent when he robbed Pāṇi of his cows (10, 67\(^\text{6}\) cp. 6, 39\(^\text{3}\)). He laments for his cows when taken by Brhaspati (10, 68\(^\text{10}\) cp. 67\(^\text{6}\)). He has castles which were forced open by Indra (6, 18\(^\text{25}\)), fences which were pierced by Indra (1, 52\(^\text{3}\)), and an unbroken summit which was broken by Indra (6, 39\(^\text{7}\)). The TS. (2, 1, 5\(^\text{1}\)) speaks of Indra having opened the hole (bila) of Vala and cast out the best beast in it, a thousand others following. There are, however, several passages in which the word is still unpersonified. The primary meaning in these cases seems to have been 'covering' or 'cave' (from the root vy, to cover). Thus the word is twice (1, 62\(^\text{1};\) 4, 50\(^\text{3}\)) used in apposition with phaliga, the receptacle of the (atmospheric) waters (8, 32\(^\text{25}\)) and appears in the Naiguṇṭukā (1, 10) as a synonym of megha, 'cloud'. Indra is said to have driven out the cows and opened (apa var) the vala (2, 14\(^\text{3}\)) or to have opened (apāvar) the aperture (cp. 1, 32\(^\text{11}\)) of the vala containing
cows (1, 113). The PB. (19, 7) speaks of the cave (vala) of the Asuras being closed with a stone. In several passages the word may have either the primary or the personified sense (1, 525; 2, 123; 3, 3410). It has probably the latter in Indra's epithet valanrjuka, 'breaker of Vala', which occurs immediately after vyrakha, 'destroyer of Vṛtra' (3, 45 cp. 2, 123). The transition to the personified meaning appears in a passage (3, 3011) in which Vala is spoken of as the stable (eraja) of the cow and as having opened (vi arā) for fear before Indra strikes. That the personification is not fully developed, is indicated by the action of Indra and others, when they attack Vala, being generally expressed by bhid, 'to pierce', sometimes by dr, 'to cleave', or rue, 'to break', but not (as in the case of Vṛtra) by han, 'to slay'. The connexion of the verb bhid with the name of Vala is preserved in valabhid, which is a frequent epithet of Indra in post-Vedic literature. Here Vala is regarded as the brother of Vṛtra, and the two are associated in Indra's compound epithet vala-ṛtra-han, 'Slayer of Vala and Vṛtra'.

C. Other demon foes of Indra. Arbuda is mentioned seven times (twice oxytone, five times proparoxytone) in the RV., always as an adversary of Indra. He is a wily beast, whose cows Indra drove out (8, 319). Indra cast him down (2, 1110. 14 cp. 8, 323), trod him down with his foot (1, 5116), pierced him with ice (8, 323) or struck off his head (10, 6712). He is mentioned two or three times with Vṛtra (or Ahi) and appears to be cognate in nature to him.

Viśvarūpa8, the son of Tvaṣṭr, is a three-headed demon slay by both Trita and Indra, who seize his cows (10, 889). He is mentioned simply by his patronymic Tvāṣṭra in two or three other passages, in which he is described as rich in horses and cattle (10, 7613) and is said to have been delivered over by Indra to Trita (2, 1113; cp. pp. 61, 67). In the TS. (2, 5, 11) Viśavārupa, though related to the Asuras, is spoken of as Purohitā of the gods9. In the Mahābhārata (5, 22 f.) the three-heated son of Tvaṣṭr and Vṛtra are identical.

Svarbhānu10 is a demoniac (āśura) being mentioned four times in one hymn of the RV. (5, 40). He is described as eclipsing the sun with darkness. Indra fought against his wiles and Atri put the eye of the sun (back) in heaven. This demon is also mentioned several times in the Brāhmaṇas. In post-Vedic mythology his place is taken by Rāhu. The name appears to mean 'withholding the light of the sun'.

Uruṇa, a demon slay by Indra and described as having ninety-nine arms, is mentioned only once (2, 144).


§ 69. Individual Dāsas. — A. Śuṣṇa1. This fiend, who is mentioned about forty times in the RV., is the chief enemy of Kutsa, for or with whom Indra vanquishes him (4, 1612; 5, 299, &c.). He is horned (1, 3314). He has eggs (8, 4010, 11), i. e. a brood (cp. 10, 2213), from which it may be inferred that he is a serpent. He is described as hissing (śvasana: 1, 5492). He is six times spoken of as asuṣa, a term which is otherwise only once applied to Agni and perhaps means 'devouring'. He has strong forts (1, 5110) or a fort (4, 3013), which is moving (8, 118). Indra releases the waters in shattering Śuṣṇa's forts (1, 5111), obtains the receptacle of waters (kṛiti) in smiting
Suṣaṇa (Vāl. 38), or wins heavenly (svaṛcaṭiḍi) waters when he destroys the brood of Suṣaṇa (8, 4010). The name of Suṣaṇa is four times accompanied by the epithet kṣuṇava, 'causing bad corn or harvest'. In the two passages in which this word is used independently as the name of a demon (1, 1033, 104), it may refer to Suṣaṇa. The result of the conflict between Indra and Suṣaṇa is not always the release of the waters, but is also the finding of the cows (8, 8512), or the winning of the sun (cp. § 58). Suṣaṇa in his conflict with Indra moves in darkness, is a 'son of mist', miho napit, and a Dāṇava (5, 324). In the Kāṭhaka (IS. 3, 466) Suṣaṇa is called a Dāṇava who is in possession of the amrita.

The above evidence seems to point to Suṣaṇa having been a demon of drought from the beginning rather than a reminiscence of some historical human foe. This view is supported by the etymological meaning which must be either 'hisser' (from the root śvāṣ, śuṣ) or 'scorcher' (from śuṣ, 'to dry')

B. Sambara. The name of this fiend occurs about twenty times in the RV. He is mentioned along with others, chiefly Suṣaṇa, Pipru (1, 1014, 1033; 2, 193; 6, 185), and Varacin. Indra was re-inforced by the Maruts in the fight against the dragon and Sambara (3, 474). Indra shook the summit of heaven when he cut down Sambara (1, 544). He found Sambara dwelling in the mountains (2, 1226) and struck him down from the mountain (1, 1307; 6, 265). He struck down from the great mountain the Dāsa Sambara, the son of Kulitara (4, 3014). He struck down from the height Sambara, who thought himself a little god (7, 1810). Sambara is often said to have forts, ninety (1, 1307), generally ninety-nine (2, 193, &c.), or a hundred (2, 145, &c.). The word sambara once occurs in the neuter plural, meaning 'the forts of Sambara'4. These Brhaspati is said to have cleft and then to have entered the mountain rich in treasure (2, 242). Indra vanquishes Sambara in the interest of Atithiga (1, 516), but generally of Divodāsa (2, 196, &c.), and sometimes of both (1, 1307; 4, 265). The two names are usually thought5 to refer to the same person, but this is doubted by Bergaigne6.

C. Pipru. This fiend, mentioned eleven times in the RV., is the enemy of Indra's protégé (Vāl. 110) Rjiśvan, who offers Soma to Indra and is aided by him in the conflict (5, 2911; 10, 9914). Indra with Rjiśvan (1, 1011; 2, 10, 1383) or for him (4, 1613; 6, 207) conquered Pipru. The fiend, who has the wiles of Ahī, possesses forts which are shattered by Indra (1, 515; 6, 207). When Indra slew the Dāsa Pipru as well as some other rarely mentioned beings, he shed the waters (8, 324). When the sun unyoked his chariot in the midst of the sky, the Aryan found a match for the Dāsa: Indra acting with Rjiśvan, shattered the strong forts of the wily Asura Pipru (10, 1383). He delivered the wild beast (mṛgaya) Pipru to Rjiśvan, overthrew 50000 blacks, and rent the forts (4, 1613). With Rjiśvan he drove out those who have a black brood7 (1, 1011). Since Pipru is called an Asura as well as a Dāsa, it is doubtful whether he represents a human foe with a historical foundation, as some scholars think8. The name has the appearance of a Sanskrit word as a reduplicated derivative of the root par or pr (like si-ṣu-u from Vṣan)9, possibly meaning 'resister', 'antagonist'.

D. Namuci10 is mentioned nine times in the RV. besides several times in the VS., TB., and SB. He once receives the epithet dūra, 'demonic', in the RV. (10, 1314; SB. 12, 7, 119) and is called an Asura in later Vedic texts. He is also spoken of as a Dāsa in three or four passages of the RV. (5, 3018, 8, &c.) and once as 'wily' (1, 532). In vanquishing Namuci Indra is twice associated with Namī Sāpya as his protégé (1, 534; 6, 206). Namuci is slain like several other demons (2, 145; 7, 195) or struck down (1, 537) by
Indra. Indra destroyed a hundred castles, slaying Vṛtra and Namuci (7, 19^6). The characteristic feature about the conflict is that Indra twirls (V math) off the head of Namuci (5, 30^6; 6, 20^6), while he is said to pierce V bhid that of Vṛtra. Otherwise Indra is described as having twisted (vartaya) the head of Namuci (5, 307) or to have twisted it off with the foam of water (8, 14^3). The Brāhmaṇas also refer to Indra's cutting off Namuci's head with the foam of the waters^{11}. In one passage of the RV. (10, 134^5) Indra is described as having drunk wine beside the demoniac Namuci, when the Aśvins aided and Sarasvatī cured him (cp. p. 87).

The etymology of the name is according to Pāṇini (6, 3, 75) na-muci, 'not letting go'. In that case it would mean 'the demon withholding the waters'^{12}.

E. Dhuni and Cumuri^{13}. The Dāsa Cumuri is mentioned six times, with one exception always along with Dhuni. The closeness of the association of these two is shown by their names once appearing as a dual compound (6, 20^3). Indra sent them to sleep (2, 15^5; 6, 20^13; 7, 19^6), the same being said of Cumuri alone (6, 26^6). Along with Śambahra, Piprū, Susaṇa, they were crushed by Indra, so that their castles were destroyed (6, 18^8). They were sent to sleep or overcome by Indra (10, 11^3) in favour of Dabhiti, who pressed Soma for him (6, 20^3) and who was rewarded by the god for his faith (6, 26^6). Without any mention of the two fiends, Indra is also said to have sent to sleep for Dabhiti 30,000 Dāsas (4, 30^21) and to have bound the Dasyus for him without cords (2, 13^9).

Dhuni means 'Roarer' (V dhvan), the word being frequently also used in the RV. as an adjective in the sense of 'roaring, raging'. Cumuri on the other hand looks like a borrowed aboriginal name^{14}.

F. Varcin and others. Varcin is mentioned four times, always with Śambahra. He is called an Asura (7, 99^5), but he and Sambahra together are termed Dāsas (6, 47^22). Indra is said to have shattered the hundred forts of Sambahra and to have dispersed or slain the 100,000 warriors of the Dāsa Varcin (2, 14^6; 4, 30^14). The name appears to mean 'shining', from varcas, 'brilliance'.

Several others, whose names occur only once, are mentioned, along with Vala, Susaṇa, Namuci and other fiends, as vanquished by Indra. Such are Drbhika, Rudhikrā (2, 14^3^9), Anarṣāṇi^{15}, Śrbinda (8, 32^7), and Ilibisa (1, 33^12). They probably preserve a historical reminiscence of prominent terrestrial foes. For the last two of these names have an un-Aryan appearance; nor does it seem likely that original individual demons should have received names which do not designate a demoniac attribute like the appellations Vṛtra, Vala, and Susaṇa.


§ 70. A. Rakṣases. — By far the most frequent generic name in the RV. for terrestrial demons or goblins, enemies of mankind, is rakṣas. It is mentioned (upwards of fifty times) both in the singular and plural, nearly always in conjunction with a god, who is invoked to destroy or praised for
having destroyed these demons. In two hymns of the RV. (7, 104; 10, 87) which deal with the Rakṣases, the much less common terms yātu or yātudhāna (strictly speaking 'sorcerer') alternate with, and in some verses appear to be used in the same sense as, rakṣas. As the latter word designates evil spirits in general (especially in the YV.), rakṣas here perhaps expresses the genius and yātu the species.

These demons have the form of dogs, vultures, owls, and other birds (7, 104, 20–22). Becoming birds they fly about at night (ib. 18). Assuming the form of a brother, husband, or lover, they approach women and desire to destroy their offspring (10, 1625). They also lie in wait for women in the shape of a dog or an ape (AV. 4, 3711). Thus they are dangerous during pregnancy and childbirth (AV. 8, 6). They prowl around the bride at weddings, and little staves are therefore shot into the air to pierce the eye of the Rakṣases (MGS. 1, 10). The AV. gives the most detailed account of the appearance of the Rakṣases. They have mostly human form, their head, eyes, heart, and other parts being mentioned; but they have frequently some kind of monstrous deformity, being three-headed, two-mouthed, bear-necked, four-eyed, five-footed, fingerless, with feet turned backwards, or with horns on their hands (AV. 8, 6; HGS. 2, 37). Blue and yellow or green demons are also spoken of (AV. 19, 224–3). They are further described as male and female, having families and even kings (AV. 5, 2212; HGS. 2, 37); and they are mortal (AV. 6, 32 &).

The Yātudhānas eat the flesh of men and horses, and drink up the milk of cows (10, 8716, 17). In order to satisfy their greed for flesh and blood the Rakṣases attack men, usually by entering them. Agni is besought not to let the Rakṣas enter (ā viś) into his worshippers (8, 4910), and the AV. describes a demon of disease, which flies about, as entering into a man (AV. 7, 76). These evil spirits seem chiefly to have been regarded as entering by the mouth, especially in the process of eating and drinking (AV. 5, 296–8), but also by other entrances (AV. 8, 6). When once within they eat and lacerate a man's flesh and cause disease (AV. 5, 295–10). The Rakṣases are also said to produce madness and take away the power of eloquence (AV. 6, 111; HGS. 1, 155). Human dwellings are invaded by them (KS. 135). Some of these spirits are described as dancing round houses in the evening, braying like donkeys, making a noise in the forest, laughing aloud, or drinking out of skulls (AV. 8, 610, 11, 14; HGS. 2, 37).

The time of the Rakṣases is the evening or night (7, 10415). In the east they have no power, because they are dispersed by the rising sun (TS. 2, 6, 6). A falling meteor is regarded as an embodiment of a Rakṣas (KS. 1269). It is especially the dark time of new moon that belongs to evil spirits, as to the souls of the dead (AV. 1, 164; 4, 36). The sacrifice is peculiarly exposed to their attacks. Thus the RV. speaks of Rakṣases that have produced taints in the divine sacrifice and of Yātus that throw the offering into confusion (7, 10428, 21). They are haters of prayer (10, 183). Agni is besought to burn them in order to protect the sacrifice from curse (1, 763). The AV. contains a spell meant to nullify the sacrifice of an enemy through the wiles of Yātudhānas and of the Rakṣas (AV. 7, 70). These evil spirits also obtrude themselves at the sacrifice to the dead in the form of the souls of ancestors (AV. 18, 238 cp. VS. 2, 29). In post-Vedic literature this notion of the Rakṣases (there often also called raksiṣa) disturbing the sacrifice is still familiar.

Agni, being the dispeller of darkness as well as the officiator at the sacrifice, is naturally the god who is oftenest opposed to them and who is
frequently invoked to burn, ward off or destroy them (16, 87\textsuperscript{2}, 6, &c.). In this capacity he (as well as some other deities) receives the epithet of rakṣōhā, 'Rakṣas-slayer'. These evil spirits injure not only spontaneously but also at the instigation of men. Thus the RV. speaks of the 'yoker of Rakṣasas', rakṣōyuj (6, 62\textsuperscript{3}), and refers to the Rakṣas and the Yātu of sorcerers (7, 104\textsuperscript{3}; 8, 65\textsuperscript{8}). One suffering from hostile sorcery drives away the Rakṣasas by sacrificing to Agni Yaviṣṭha (TS. 2, 2, 3\textsuperscript{3}), and in a hymn of the AV. (2, 24) demons are called upon to devour him who sent them.

As a designation of demons rakṣas is both masculine as an oxtone and neuter as paroxytone (in the latter case meaning also 'injury'). It may be derived from the root rakṣ to injure\textsuperscript{8}, which occurs in only one verbal form in the AV. (cp. also ṭhṣa, 'injurious'). It is, however, possibly connected with the ordinary root rakṣ to protect\textsuperscript{9}. In this case it must have meant 'that which is to be warded off'. Bergaigne, however, thinks it may originally have signified (avaricious) 'guardian' of celestial treasure.

B. Piśācas. A third and important class of goblins are the Piśācas. The name occurs only once in the RV. as a singular in the form of piśāci (1, 133\textsuperscript{5}). Indra is here invoked to crush the yellow-peaked (piśāṅgabhṛṣṭim) watery (ambhṛnam) Piśāci and to strike down every Rakṣas. In the Ts. (2, 4, 1\textsuperscript{1}) the three hostile groups of Asuras, Rakṣasas, and Piśācas are opposed to the three classes of gods, men, and Piṭṛs. The Piśācas would therefore seem to have been specially connected with the dead. They are frequently spoken of as kravyād, eaters of raw flesh or corpses (AV. 5, 29\textsuperscript{9} &c.), a term which may be regarded as a synonym of Piśāca\textsuperscript{10}. Agni is besought to restore to the sick man the flesh which the Piśācas have eaten away (AV. 5, 29\textsuperscript{9}). They were thus apparently a kind of ghoul. Piśācas are also spoken of as shining in water (AV. 4, 20\textsuperscript{9}, 37\textsuperscript{10})\textsuperscript{11}, or infesting human dwellings and villages (AV. 4, 36\textsuperscript{8}).

A lesser group of demons, mentioned about a dozen times in the RV. and frequently in later Vedic texts, are the Arātis\textsuperscript{12}, a personification of illiberality (a-rātī) and, owing to the gender of the word, always feminine. A group of 'injurious' demons, the Druhs, both male and female, is referred to about twelve times in the RV. They are Indo-Iranian, their name occurring in the Avesta as druṣ (§ 5, p. 8).

Goblins of various kinds are usually conceived as forming an indefinite crowd, but are sometimes thought of as pairs. The latter constitute a class named Kimidin, already mentioned in the RV. (7, 104\textsuperscript{3}; 10, 87\textsuperscript{8})\textsuperscript{13}.

The nature of the spirits which surround the everyday life of man consists in injury, and that of their various species in a particular kind of injury usually indicated by their names. They are as a whole unconnected with phenomena or forces of nature, seeming partly at least to be derived from the spirits of dead enemies\textsuperscript{14}. Less personal than the demons mentioned above and probably due to a more advanced order of thought, are the hostile powers which are conceived as a kind of impalpable substance of disease, childlessness, guilt, and so forth, which flying about in the air produce infection, and to deflect which to enemies is one of the chief tasks of sorcery\textsuperscript{15}.

Some of these terrestrial spirits are, however, not injurious, but are regarded as helping at the harvest or weaving long life for the bride, while others, with Arbudi at their head, assist in battle by striking terror into the foe (AV. 3, 24. 25\textsuperscript{4}; 14, 145; 11, 9\textsuperscript{11}).

\textsuperscript{1} Brv. 2, 216—19; ORV. 262—73. — \textsuperscript{2} Yātu in the Avesta = 'sorcery' and 'sorcerer': Sp. AP. 218—22. — 3 Cp. ORV. 263, note 1. — 4 Hopkins, AJP. 1883.
Eschatology. 71. Disposal of the Dead.


VII. ESCHATOLOGY.

§ 71. Disposal of the Dead. — In the Vedic hymns there is little reference to death. When the seers mention it, they generally express a desire that it should overtake their enemies, while for themselves they wish long life on earth. It is chiefly at funerals that the future life engages their thoughts. Burial and cremation were concurrent. One hymn of the RV. (10, 16) describes a funeral by burning, and part of another (10, 18—13), one by burial. The 'house of clay' is also once spoken of (7, 89). Fathers burnt with fire and those not burnt with fire (i.e. buried) are referred to (10, 15); AV. 18, 294). But cremation was the usual way for the dead to reach the next world. The later ritual (cp. AGS. 4, 1) practically knew only this method; for besides the bones and ashes of adults, only young children and ascetics were buried.

With the rite of cremation therefore the mythology of the future life was specially connected. Agni takes the corpse to the other world, the fathers, and the gods (10, 16—4, 174). He places the mortal in the highest immortality (1, 317). Through Agni, the divine bird, men go to the highest place of the sun, to the highest heaven, to the world of the righteous, whither the ancient, earliest-born seers have gone (VS. 18, 51—2). Agni Gārhapatya conducts the dead man to the world of righteousness (AV. 6, 120). Agni burns his body and then places him in the world of the righteous (AV. 18, 372). The Agni that devours the body (kravyād) is distinguished from the Agni that takes the offering to the gods (10, 169). Agni is besought to preserve the corpse intact and to burn the goat (aja) which is his portion (10, 164). A goat is also immolated with the sacrificial horse to go before, as the first portion for Pūṣan, and announce the offering to the gods ere it reaches the highest abode (1, 162ff, 163ff—13). In the ritual (AGS. 4, 2; KSS. 25, 719) the corpse is laid on the skin of a black goat, and when an animal is sacrificed, it is a cow or a goat. During the cremation Agni and Soma are also prayed to heal any injury that bird, beast, ant, or serpent may have inflicted on it (10, 165).

The dead man was supposed to go with the smoke to the heavenly world (AGS. 4, 47). The way thither is a distant path on which Pūṣan protects and Saviṇ conducts the dead (10, 174). The sacrificial goat which precedes and announces the deceased to the fathers, passes through a gulf of thick darkness before reaching the third vault of heaven (AV. 9, 5—3; cp. 8, 18).

The dead man was provided with ornaments and clothing for use in the next life, the object of the custom being still understood in the Veda (AV. 18, 422). Traces even survive (RV. 10, 188—9) which indicate that his widow and his weapons were once burnt with the body of the husband. A bundle of faggots (küḍī) was attached to the corpse of the departed to wipe out his track and thus to hinder death from finding its way back to the world of the living (AV. 5, 1912 cp. RV. 10, 182; 9758).

1 ROTH, ZDMG. 8, 467—75; cp. BRL. 23—4; v. SCHROEDER, WZKM. 9, 112—3; HOPKINS, PAOS. 1894, p. ciii; CALAND, Die altindischen Todten- und Bestattungs-
§ 72. The Soul. — Fire or the grave are believed to destroy the body only. But the real personality of the deceased is regarded as imperishable. This Vedic conception is based on the primitive belief that the soul was capable of separation from the body, even during unconsciousness, and of continued existence after death. Thus in a whole hymn (10, 58), the soul (manas) of one who is lying apparently dead is besought to return from the distance where it is wandering. There is no indication in the Vedas of the later doctrine of transmigration; but in a Brâhmaṇa the statement occurs that those who do not perform rites with correct knowledge, are born again after their decease and repeatedly become the food of death (SB. 10, 4, 3\(^{10}\)).

Besides prāṇa, 'respiration', and ātmāna, 'breath' (several times the express parallel of vātā, 'wind'), the usual terms denoting the animating principle are asu, 'spirit', expressing physical vitality (1, 113\(^{16}\), 140\(^{8}\)), even of animals (AB. 2, 6), and manas, 'soul', as the seat of thought and emotion, which already in the RV. (8, 85\(^{9}\)) seems to be regarded as dwelling in the heart (hrd)\(^{1}\). Many passages, especially in the AV., show that life and death depend on the continuance or departure of asu or manas; and the terms asunīti, asunīta, 'spirit-leading' refer to the conduct by Agni of the souls of the dead on the path between this and the other world (10, 15\(^{4}\), 16\(^{2}\)).

Funeral ritual texts never invoke the asu or manas of the deceased, but only the individual himself as 'father', 'grandfather', and so forth. Hence the soul is not a mere shadow, but is regarded as retaining its personal identity. Though men obtain immortality only after parting from the body (SB. 10, 4, 3\(^{9}\)), the corpse plays an important part in the myth of the future state, which is corporeal. For the body shares in the existence of the other world (10, 16\(^{5}\); AV. 18, 2\(^{26}\). A body, however, from which all imperfections are absent (AV. 6, 120\(^{3}\)), can hardly have been regarded as a gross material body, but rather as one refined by the power of Agni (cp. 10, 16\(^{6}\)), something like the 'subtle' body of later Indian speculation. An indication of the importance of the corpse in connexion with the future life, is the fact that the loss of a dead man's bones, which according to the Śūtras were collected after cremation, was a severe punishment (SB. 11, 6, 3\(^{12}\); 14, 6, 9\(^{28}\)). In one passage of the RV. (10, 16\(^{3}\)) the eye of the dead man is called upon to go to the sun and his breath (ātmā) to the wind. But this notion, occurring in the midst of verses which refer to Agni as conducting the deceased to the other world, can only be an incidental fancy, suggested perhaps by the speculations about Puruṣa (10, 90\(^{1}\)), where the eye of the latter becomes the sun and his breath the wind. In the same passage (also in 10, 58\(^{7}\)) the soul is spoken of as going to the waters or the plants, a conception which perhaps contains the germ of the theory of metempsychosis\(^{2}\).

Proceeding by the path which the fathers trod (10, 14\(^{7}\)), the spirit of the deceased goes to the realm of eternal light (9, 113\(^{3}\)), being invested with lustre like that of the gods (AV. 11, 13\(^{7}\)), in a car or on wings (AV. 4, 34\(^{9}\)), on the wings with which Agni slays the Rakṣases (VS. 18, 52). Wafted upward by the Maruts, fanned by soft breezes, cooled by showers, he recovers his ancient body in a complete form (AV. 18, 2\(^{21\text{–}6}\)), and glorified meets with the fathers who revel with Yama in the highest heaven (10, 14\(^{8}\), 10, 154\(^{4\text{–}5}\)). This is spoken of as a return home (astam: 10, 14\(^{5}\)). From Yama he
obtains a resting place (10, 140), when recognized by Yama as his own (AV. 18, 237).

According to the SB., the ordinary belief is that the dead leaving this world pass between two fires, which burn the wicked but let the good go by. The latter proceed, either by the path leading to the Fathers or by that leading to the sun (SB. 1, 9, 3, &c.). In the Upanisads there are two paths for those who know the Absolute, the one (as a consequence of complete knowledge) leading to Brahma, the other to the world of heaven, whence after the fruit of good works has been exhausted, the spirit returns to earth for rebirth. Those ignorant of the 'Self', on the other hand, go to the dark world of evil spirits or are reborn on earth like the wicked.

1 ORV. 525. — 2 The AV. is already acquainted with the breaths or vital airs familiar to post-Vedic literature: HRI. 153. — 3 BRI. 23. — 4 Cp. KUHN, KZ. 2, 318. — 5 WEBER, ZDMG. 9, 237; IStr. 1, 20—1; OST. 5, 314—5; SVL. 121; HRI. 206. — 6 HRI. 227.

§ 73. Heaven. — The abode where the Fathers and Yama dwell, is situated in the midst of the sky (10, 154), in the highest heaven (10, 149), in the third heaven, the inmost recess of the sky, where is eternal light (9, 1137—9). The AV. also speaks of it as the highest (11, 411), luminous world (4, 343), the ridge of the firmament (18, 287), the third firmament (9, 518; 18, 43), and the third heaven (18, 248). In the MS. (1, 1058; 2, 30) the abode of the Fathers is said to be the third world. The abode of the Fathers is in the RV. also spoken of as the highest point of the sun (9, 1139). The Fathers are united with or guard the sun (10, 1074, 1543), or are connected with the rays of the sun (1, 1097; cp. SB. 1, 9, 330), and suns shine for them in heaven (1, 1256). They are connected with the step of Viṣṇu (10, 153), and pious men are said to rejoice in the dear abode, the highest step of Viṣṇu (1, 1543). As Viṣṇu took his three steps to where the gods are exalted, so the sun follows the Dawn to where pious men offer sacrifice.

Stars are also said to be the lights of virtuous men who go to the heavenly world (TS. 5, 4, 13; SB. 6, 5, 49), and ancient men, especially the seven Rṣis, besides Atri and Agastya, are said to have been raised to the stars (TA. 1, 11, 13). The RV. mentions a tree beside which Yama drinks with the gods (10, 1354). This according to the AV. (5, 43) is a fig-tree where the gods abide in the third heaven (no mention being made of Yama).

1 PVS. 1, 211. — 2 JAOS. 16, 27. — 3 Cp. MACDONELL, JRAS. 27, 172. — 4 WINDISCH, FaB. 118. — 5 WEBER, Nakṣatra 2, 269; KRV. note 286.

§ 74. The most distinct and prominent references to the future life are in the ninth and tenth books of theRV., but it is also sometimes referred to in the first. Heaven is regarded as the reward of those who practise rigorous penance (tapas), of heroes who risk their lives in battle (10, 1542—5), but above all of those who bestow liberal sacrificial gifts (ib.3; 1, 1253; 10, 1072). The AV. is full of references to the blessings accruing to the latter.

In heaven the deceased enter upon a delectable life (10, 148, 154, 167—5), in which all desires are fulfilled (9, 1138—11), and which is passed among the gods (10, 149), particularly in the presence of the two kings Yama and Varuṇa (10, 147). There they unswervingly overcome old age (10, 274). Uniting with a glorious body they are dear and welcome to the gods (10, 148, 165, 56). There they see father, mother, and sons (AV. 6, 120), and unite with wives and children (AV. 12, 317). The life is free from imperfections and bodily frailties (10, 148; AV. 6, 120). Sickness is left behind
and limbs are not lame or crooked (AV. 3, 28\textsuperscript{5}). It is often said in the AV. and SB. that the deceased are in that world complete in body and limbs\textsuperscript{1}.

The dead are in the RV. often spoken of in general terms (madanit, mādayante) as enjoying bliss (10, 14\textsuperscript{10}, 15\textsuperscript{14}, &c.). The most detailed account of the joys of the life in heaven is given in RV. 9, 113\textsuperscript{7--11}. There are eternal light and swift waters; there movement is unrestrained (cp. TB. 3, 12, 2\textsuperscript{9}); there is spirit food and satiety; there joy, glee, gladness, and the fulfilment of all desires. The joys here indefinitely referred to, are later explained to be those of love (TB. 2, 4, 6\textsuperscript{6} cp. SB. 10, 4, 4\textsuperscript{4}); and the AV. (4, 34\textsuperscript{9}) states that in the heavenly world there is abundance of sexual gratification. According to the SB. the joys of the Blest are a hundred times as great as the highest on earth (14, 7, 13\textsuperscript{2--3}). In the heaven of the Blest, the RV. further says, the sound of the flute and of songs is heard (10, 135\textsuperscript{7})\textsuperscript{2}; Soma, ghee, and honey flow for them (10, 154\textsuperscript{7}). There are ponds filled with ghee and streams flowing with milk, honey, and wine (AV. 4, 34\textsuperscript{5,6}; SB. 11, 5, 6\textsuperscript{4}). There are at hand bright, many-coloured cows yielding all desires (kāmadughāḥ: AV. 4, 34\textsuperscript{8}). There are neither rich nor poor, neither powerful nor oppressed (AV. 3, 29\textsuperscript{3}). To the celestial life of the Blest in the Samhitās and Brāhmaṇas corresponds in the Upaniṣads the lower and transient bliss of the heaven of the gods which is followed by rebirth, only those who know the truth attaining to immortality and the changeless joy of unending peace by absorption into the world-soul\textsuperscript{3}. Thus the life of the righteous dead in heaven was clearly regarded as one of indolent, material bliss, in which freed from all frailties they were united with the gods, and which was devoted to music, drinking, and sensual joys (such as the gods themselves are occasionally alluded to as indulging in: cp. 3, 53\textsuperscript{6}).

Heaven is a glorified world of material joys as pictured by the imagination not of warriors but of priests\textsuperscript{4}. It is the world of the righteous (10, 16\textsuperscript{4}), where righteous and godly men, familiar with rites (ṛta) dwell in bliss\textsuperscript{5}. There they are united with what they have sacrificed and given (iṣṭāpūrtā)\textsuperscript{6}, especially reaping the reward of their pious gifts to priests (10, 154\textsuperscript{3} &c.)\textsuperscript{7}. In the Brāhmaṇas it is said that those who sacrifice properly above all attain union and identity of abode with the sun (āditya) and with Agni, but also with Vāyu, Indra, Varuṇa, Brhaspati, Prajāpati and Brahmatr (SB. 2, 6, 4\textsuperscript{8}; 11, 4, 4\textsuperscript{21}, 6, 2\textsuperscript{2--3}; TB. 3, 10, 11\textsuperscript{6}). A certain sage is described as having through his knowledge become a golden swan, gone to heaven, and obtained union with the sun TB. (3, 10, 9\textsuperscript{11}). In the TS. (6, 6, 9\textsuperscript{5}) the notion occurs that a man by the performance of certain rites can reach heaven without dying (śivan)\textsuperscript{8}.

One who reads the Veda in a particular way is said to be freed from dying again and to attain identity of nature (sātmātā) with Brahmatr (SB. 10, 5, 6\textsuperscript{9}). As a reward for knowing a certain mystery a man is born again, in this world (SB. 1, 5, 3\textsuperscript{14}). Thus we have in the SB. the beginnings of the doctrine of retribution and transmigration. That doctrine (as well as the doctrine of hell) is not only to be found in the earliest Sūtras\textsuperscript{8}, but appears fully developed in the later Brāhmaṇa period, that is to say, in the oldest Upaniṣads, the Chāndogya, the Brhadāranyaka, and especially the Kaṭha Upaniṣad\textsuperscript{10}. In the latter Upaniṣad the story is related of Naciketas, who pays a visit to the realm of Death and is told by the latter, that those who have not sufficient merit for heaven and immortality, fall again and again into the power of death and enter upon the cycle of existence (samsāra), being born again and again with a body or as a stationary object. He who
controls himself reaches Viṣṇu's highest place. On the other hand, there is no hell for those not found worthy.\footnote{References in OST. 5, 315; cp. AIL. 411; HRI. 205. \footnote{2 At the sacrifice to the Manes music was performed (KŚ. 84, 8).} — 3 HRI. 230. — 4 ORV. 532. — 5 1, 115\textsuperscript{2}, 154\textsuperscript{5}; 10, 15\textsuperscript{3}, 174. 154\textsuperscript{2}-\textsuperscript{5}; AV. 6, 9\textsuperscript{5}, 120\textsuperscript{5}; VS. 15, 50. \footnote{6 WINDISCH, FaB. 115.-8.} — 7 For references to the same idea in the AV. see OST. 5, 293, note 433; cp. IStr. 1, 20 ff. \footnote{8 WEBER, ZDMG. 9, 237 ff.; OST. 5, 317; HRI. 204.} — 9 HRI. 175. \footnote{10 HRI. 145, note 4; cp. V. SCHROEDER, Indiens Litt. u. Kultur 245; GARBE in this encyclopedia 3, 4, p. 15.} \footnote{11 Origin of the myth, TB. 3, 118; cp. SVL. 10, n. 1; BRI. 78.}

§ 75. Hell. — If in the opinion of the composers of the RV. the virtuous received their reward in the future life, it is natural that they should have believed at least in some kind of abode, if not in future punishment,\footnote{1 For the wicked, as is the case in the Avesta.\footnote{2 As far as the AV. and the Kaṭha Upaniṣad are concerned, the belief in hell is beyond doubt. The AV. (2, 14\textsuperscript{2}; 5, 19\textsuperscript{3}) speaks of the house below, the abode of female goblins and sorceresses, called nāraka loka\footnote{3 In contrast with svarga loka, the heavenly world, the realm of Yama (12, 4\textsuperscript{3}).} in, in the RV. several times described as ‘lowest darkness’ (8, 24\textsuperscript{4} &c.), as well as ‘black darkness’ (5, 30\textsuperscript{1}) and ‘blind darkness’ (18, 3\textsuperscript{3}). The torments of hell are also once described in the AV. (5, 19) and with greater detail in the SB. (11, 6, 1)\footnote{4 For it is not till the period of the Brāhmaṇas that the notion of future punishment appears plainly developed.\footnote{5 The same Brāhmaṇa further states that every one is born again after death and is weighed in a balance\footnote{6}, receiving reward or punishment according as his works are good or bad (SB 11, 2, 7\textsuperscript{3}; cp. 12, 9, 1\textsuperscript{4}). This idea is also Iranian.\footnote{7 ROTH favours the view that the religion of the RV. knows nothing of hell, the wicked being supposed to be annihilated by death. Evidence of the belief in some kind of hell is, however, not altogether wanting in the RV. Thus, ‘this deep place’ is said to have been produced for those who are evil, false, and untrue (4, 5\textsuperscript{5}). Indra-Soma are besought to ‘dash the evil-doers into the abyss (vāvare), into bottomless darkness, so that not even one of them may get out’ (7, 104\textsuperscript{2}); and the poet prays that ‘she (the demoness) who malignantly wanders about like an owl concealing herself, may fall into the endless abysses’ (ib.\textsuperscript{7}); and that the enemy and robber may lie below all the three earths (ib.\textsuperscript{11}). But such references are few and the evidence cannot be said to go beyond showing belief in a hell as an underground darkness. The thoughts of the poets of the RV., intent on the happiness of this earth, appear to have rarely dwelt on the joys of the next life, still less on its possible punishments.\footnote{8 The doctrine of the Brāhmaṇas is that after death, all, both good and bad, are born again in the next world and are recompensed according to their deeds (SB. 6, 2, 27\textsuperscript{2}; 10, 6, 3\textsuperscript{3}); but nothing is said as to the eternity of reward or punishment.\footnote{9 The notion also occurs there that those who do not rightly understand and practise the rites of sacrifice, depart to the next world before the natural term of their terrestrial life (SB. 11, 2, 7\textsuperscript{3}). The idea of a formal judgment to which all the dead must submit, seems hardly traceable to the Vedic period. One or two passages of the RV. in which reference to it has been found, are too indefinite to justify such an interpretation. In the TA. (6, 5\textsuperscript{3}) it is said that the truthful and untruthful are separated before Yama, but that he acts in the capacity of a judge, is not implied\footnote{10 That the belief in a hell goes back even to the Indo-European period, has been argued by WEBER on the strength of the equation Bhṛgu = Ṛṣeṣṭhūṣṭi.\footnote{11}}}.}

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and the fact that the former is described in the ŚB. as sent by his father Varuṇa for pride to see the tortures of hell, and the latter are condemned for pride to undergo severe tortures in hell. But the similarity of the two legends is probably only a coincidence, as belief in the torments of hell seems to be a later development in India.  


§ 76. The Pitṛs. — The blessed dead who dwell in the third heaven are called Pitṛs or Fathers. By this term are generally meant the early or first ancestors (10, 15.6–10), who followed the ancient paths, seers who made the paths by which the recent dead go to join them (10, 14.7–15). They are connected with the (third) step of Viśnu (10, 15) cp. 1, 154. Two hymns of the RV. are devoted to their praise (10, 15.54).

Their different races are mentioned by name as Navagvas, Vairūpas, Áṅgirasas, Atharvans, Bhrugas, Vasiṣṭhas (10, 14.6–6. 15), the last four being identical with the names of priestly families, to whom tradition attributed the composition of the AV.¹ and of books II and VII of the RV. These Áṅgiras are particularly associated with Yama (10, 14.5 5). The Pitṛs are spoken of as lower, higher, and middle, as earlier and later, and though not all known to their descendants, they are known to Agni (10, 15.6–13). The AV. speaks of the Pitṛs as inhabiting air, earth, and heaven (AV. 18, 249 cp. RV. 10, 15).

The ancient fathers themselves once offered the Soma libation (10, 15). They revel with Yama (10, 14.10 cp. 135; AV. 18, 4.10), and feast with the gods (7, 76). Leading the same life as the gods, they receive almost divine honours. They come on the same car as Īndra and the gods (10, 15.10). They are fond of Soma (soma: 10, 15.1 &c.) and sitting on the sacrificial grass to the south, they drink the pressed draught (ib. 5.6). They thirst for the libations prepared for them on earth, and are invited to come with Yama, his father Vivasvat, and Agni, and to eat the offerings along with Yama (ib. 8–11, 14.5–8). Arriving in thousands they range themselves in order on the sacrificial ground (10, 15.10–11). When the Pitṛs come to the sacrifice, evil spirits sometimes intrude into their society in the guise of friends according to the AV. (18, 2.8).

The Fathers receive oblations as their food, which in one passage (10, 14.3) is referred to with the term svadhā as contrasted with svāhā, the call to the gods; so too in the later ritual the portion of the gods at the daily pressings was strictly distinguished from that of the Pitṛs (SB. 4, 4, 22). They receive worship, are entreated to hear, intercede for and protect their votaries, and invoked not to injure their descendants for any sin humanly committed against them (10, 15.5–6 cp. 31 55). Their favour is implored along with that of the dawns, streams, mountains, heaven and earth, Pūṣan and the Rbhus (6, 52.1, 75.10; 7, 25.12; 1, 106). They are besought to give riches, offspring, and long life to their sons (10, 15.11; AV. 18, 3.14, 4.2), who desire to be in their good graces (10, 14.6). The Vasiṣṭhas collec-
tively are called upon to help their descendants (7, 33 cp. 10, 15\(^8\)); and individual ancestors, as Turvaśa, Yadu, and Ugrādeva, are invoked (1, 36\(^8\)).

The Fathers are immortal (AV. 6, 41\(^3\)) and are even spoken of as gods (10, 56\(^8\)). In the Angirases and similar groups the divine character is combined with that of ancient priests. Cosmical actions like those of the gods are sometimes attributed to the Fathers. Thus they are said to have adorned the sky with stars and placed darkness in the night and light in the day (10, 68\(^11\)), to have found the hidden light and generated the dawn (7, 76\(^1\) cp. 10, 107\(^5\)), and in concert with Soma to have extended heaven and earth (8, 48\(^13\)).

Just as the corpse-devouring Agni is distinguished from the Agni who wafts the sacrifice to the gods (10, 16\(^9\)), so the path of the Fathers is distinguished from that of the gods (10, 27, 18\(^1\) cp. 88\(^5\)). Similarly in the SB. the heavenly world (svarga loka) is contrasted with that of the fathers (pitṛ-loka), the door of the former being said to be in the north-east (SB. 6, 6, 2\(^4\)), and that of the latter in the south-east (13, 8, 1\(^9\)). The fathers are also spoken of as a class distinct from men, having been created separately (TB. 2, 3, 8\(^8\)).

\(^1\) The attribution of the AV. to fire-priests, the Atharvans and Angirases, is historically justified, as the cult of fire is still associated with the AV. in the epic: cp. Weber, History of Ind. Lit. 148; HRI. 159. — \(^2\) Haug, GGA. 1875, 94; SBE. 42, 660; Oldenberg, SBE. 46, 162. — \(^3\) Otherwise HRI. 145, n. 1. — \(^4\) Cp. Hiranyakṣi Pitṛmadhūṣṭra, ed. Caland, Leipzig 1896, p. 55; HRI. 145, n. 4. — \(^5\) The South is in general the quarter of the Manes (SB. 1, 2, 5\(^1\)): this is Indo-Iranian, cp. KERN, Buddhismus 1, 359; Caland, Altniederländ. Ahnenleit., Leiden 1893, p. 178. 180; ORV. 342, n. 2; ZDMG. 49, 471, n. 1; HRI. 190.

§ 77. Yama. — The chief of the blessed dead is Yama. Reflection on the future, life being remote from the thoughts of the poets of the RV., only three hymns (10, 14, 135, 154) are addressed to Yama. There is besides one other (10, 10) consisting of a dialogue between Yama and his sister Yami. Yama’s name occurs about 50 times in the RV. but almost exclusively in the first and (far oftener) in the tenth book.

He revels with the gods (7, 76\(^4\); 10, 135\(^1\)). Individual gods with whom he is referred to, are Varuṇa (10, 14\(^9\)), Brhaspati (10, 13\(^4\), 14\(^9\)), and especially Agni, who as conductor of the dead would naturally be in close relations with him. Agni is the friend (kāmya) of Yama (10, 21\(^9\)) and his priest (10, 52\(^3\)). A god (10, 51\(^1\)) and Yama (who by implication are identical) found the hiding Agni (ib.\(^3\)). Agni, Yama, Mātrarṣivas are mentioned together as the names of the one being (11, 164\(^9\)). Yama is also mentioned in enumerations of gods including Agni (10, 64\(^3\), 92\(^11\)).

Thus it is implied that Yama is a god. He is, however, not expressly called a god, but only a king (9, 113\(^6\); 10, 14 passim), who rules the dead (yamārājah: 10, 16\(^9\)). Yama and god Varuṇa are the two kings whom the dead man sees on reaching heaven (10, 14\(^4\)). Throughout one of the hymns devoted to his praise (10, 14) he is associated with the departed fathers, particularly with the Angirases (vv.3-5). With them he comes to the sacrifice and is exhilarated (vv. 3-4, 15\(^8\)). Later texts (TA. 6, 5\(^\circ\); Āp. SS. 16, 6) make mention of the steeds of Yama, which are described as golden-eyed and iron-hoofed. He is a gatherer of the people (10, 14\(^1\)), gives the dead man a resting place (10, 14\(^2\); AV. 18, 23\(^7\)) and prepares an abode for him (10, 18\(^13\)).

Yama’s dwelling is in the remote recess of the sky (9, 113\(^9\)). Of the three heavens two belong to Savitri and one to Yama\(^1\) (i, 35\(^6\) cp. 10, 123\(^5\)), this being the third and highest (cp. § 73). The VS. (12, 63) speaks of
him along with Yamī as being in the highest heaven. In his abode (sūdana) which is the home of the gods (devamāna) Yama is surrounded by songs and the sound of the flute (10, 135).

Soma is pressed for Yama, ghee is offered to him (10, 141-14), and he is besought to come to the sacrifice and place himself on the seat (10, 144). He is invoked to lead his worshippers to the gods and to prolong life (10, 144).

His father is Vivasvat (10, 149) with whom Saranya is mentioned as his mother (10, 171). He is also several times called by the patronymic Vivasvata (10, 14, &c.). This trait is Indo-Iranian, for in the Avesta Vīvanvant, as the first man who pressed Soma, is said to have received Yima as a son in reward. In the AV. (18, 236 cp. 341-2) Yama is described as superior to Vivasvat, being himself surpassed by none.

In their dialogue in the RV. (10, 104) Yama and Yamī call themselves children of Gandharva and the water nymph (apṛyā vēṣā). Yami further speaks of Yama (v. 3) as the ‘only mortal’. In another hymn Yama is said to have chosen death and abandoned his body (10, 134). He passed to the other world, finding out the path for many, to where the ancient fathers passed away (10, 141). He was the first of mortals that died (AV. 18, 319). Here ‘mortals’ can only mean ‘men’, though later even gods are spoken of as mortal. As first and oldest of the dead he would easily be regarded as the chief of the dead that followed him. He is called ‘lord of settlers’ (vipātī), ‘our father’ (10, 135). Through Yama men come in later texts to be described as descendants of Vivasvān ādityah (TS. 6, 5, 6 cp. SB. 3, 1, 3; RV. 1, 1059). Even in the RV. Yama seems to be connected with the sun; for the heavenly courser (the sun) ‘given by Yama’ probably means the solar abode granted by Yama to those who become immortal (1, 163 cp. 83).

Death is the path of Yama (1, 385) and once (1, 1654; cp. MS. 2, 56; AV. 6, 231, 93) he appears to be identified with death (mṛtyu). Yama’s foot-fetter (padbīṣa) is spoken of as parallel to the bond of Varuṇa (10, 97). Owing to such traits and also to his messengers, Yama must to a certain extent have been an object of fear in the RV. But in the AV. and the later mythology Yama, being more closely associated with the terrors of death, came to be the god of death (though even in the Epic his sphere is by no means limited to hell). In the later Saṃhitās Yama is mentioned beside Antaka, the Ender, Mṛtyu, Death (VS. 39, 13), and Nirṛti, Decease (AV. 6, 293; MS. 2, 56), and Mṛtyu is his messenger (AV. 5, 3012; 18, 227, &c.). In the AV. Death is said to be the lord of men, Yama of the Manes (AV. 5, 243-4), and Sleep comes from Yama’s realm (19, 561 &c.).

The word yamā has also the appellative meaning of ‘twin’, in which sense it occurs several times in the RV. (generally in the dual masculine or feminine), while yāma, which is found a few times in the RV., means ‘rein’ or ‘guide’. Yamā actually is a twin with Yamī in the RV. (10, 10)5. The sense of ‘twin’ also seems to belong to Yima in the Avesta (Yasna 30, 3). A sister of Yima is mentioned, not in the Avesta, but in the later literature only, as Yimeh, who with her brother produces the first human couple. At a later period of Indian literature, when Yama had become the god of death who punishes the wicked, the name was understood to be derived from yam, ‘to restrain’, but this derivation is not in keeping with the ideas of the Vedic age.

A bird, either the owl (ulīka) or the pigeon (kapota), is said to be the messenger (10, 1654 cp. 123618) of Yama apparently identified with death. The messenger of Yama and of death would therefore appear to be the
same (AV. 8, 8\textsuperscript{11}). Yama's regular messengers, however, of whom a fuller account is given (10, 14\textsuperscript{10}-\textsuperscript{12}), are two dogs. They are four-eyed, broad-nosed, brindled ("\textit{sabala}"), brown ("\textit{udumbala}"), sons of Saramā ("sārameya"). They are guardians that guard the path (10, 14\textsuperscript{11}) or sit on the path (AV. 18, 2\textsuperscript{12}).

The dead man is exhorted to hasten straight past these two dogs and to join the fathers who rejoice with Yama (10, 14\textsuperscript{10}); and Yama is besought to deliver him to them and to grant him welfare and freedom from disease. Delighting in lives (\textit{asuṭṛḥ}) they watch men and wander about among the peoples as Yama's messengers. They are entreated to grant continued enjoyment of the light of the sun. Their functions therefore seem to consist in tracking out among men those who are to die, and in keeping guard on the path over those who enter the realm of Yama. In the Avesta a four-eyed yellow-eared dog keeps watch at the head of the Cinvat bridge\textsuperscript{19}, which leads from this world to the next, and with his barking scares away the fiend from the souls of the holy ones, lest he should drag them to hell\textsuperscript{20}. There does not seem to be sufficient evidence for supposing that the two dogs of Yama were regarded as keeping out the souls of the wicked, though it is quite possible that they were so regarded\textsuperscript{21}. If, however, RV. 7, 55\textsuperscript{2-5} is rightly interpreted by AUFRECHT\textsuperscript{22}, the object of the dogs was to exclude the wicked. In the AV. the messengers of Yama, sent by him among men, are spoken of both in the plural (AV. 8, 2\textsuperscript{11}, 8\textsuperscript{11}) and the dual (AV. 5, 30\textsuperscript{6}). Of the two dogs one is described as \textit{sabala}, 'brindled' and the other as \textit{syāma}, 'dark' (AV. 8, 1\textsuperscript{9}). The word \textit{sabala} has been identified with \textit{Kapikapota}\textsuperscript{23}, but this equation has been called in question\textsuperscript{24}. BERGAIGNE (1, 93) thinks the two dogs are simply another form of Yama (as fire) and Yami; and the trait of the later mythology, which represents Yama as coming to fetch the dead himself, is regarded by him as primary (1, 92). BLOOMFIELD\textsuperscript{25} identifies Yama's two dogs with sun and moon\textsuperscript{26}.

The most probable conclusion to be drawn from all the available evidence seems to be, that Yama represents a mythological type found among the most diverse peoples, that of the chief of the souls of the departed. This would naturally follow from his being the mythical first father of mankind and the first of those that died. The myth of the primeval twins that produced the human race, Yama and Yami = Yima and Yimeh\textsuperscript{27}, seems to be Indo-Iranian. The attempt to clear Yama of the guilt of incest in RV. 10, 10, shows that the belief in that incest already existed\textsuperscript{28}. Yama himself may have been regarded in the Indo-Iranian period as a king of a golden age, since in the Avesta he is the ruler of an earthly\textsuperscript{29}, and in RV. that of a heavenly paradise. That Yama was originally conceived as a man, is the view of ROTH and other scholars\textsuperscript{30}. E. H. MEYER, thinking Yami to be a later creation like Indrāni and others, believes that Yama, the twin, originally represented the soul as the \textit{alter ego}\textsuperscript{31}. A number of other scholars believe that Yama originally represented a phenomenon of nature. Some think he was a form of Agni\textsuperscript{32}, the sun\textsuperscript{33}, the parting day\textsuperscript{34}, or the setting sun and thus god of the dead\textsuperscript{35}. HILLEBRANDT\textsuperscript{36} thinks Yama is the moon, in which dying is typical, and thus the mortal child of the sun and closely connected with the Manes. He considers him, however, to have been a moon-god in the Indo-Iranian period only, but no longer so in either the Avesta or the Veda, where he is merely king of a terrestrial paradise or of the realm of the Blest.

\footnotetext[1]{By LRV. 4, 134 regarded as a hell. — \footnotetext[2]{This abode (also AV. 2, 127; 18 2\textsuperscript{56}, 37\textsuperscript{29}), which seems always to mean the world of Yama or the place of burial TA. 6, 7, 2\textsuperscript{6} cp. RV. 10, 18\textsuperscript{13}) is understood by PVS. 1, 242 to refer to a 'chapel of Yama'. A \textit{harmya} of Yama, spoken of in AV. 18, 4\textsuperscript{55}, is understood by EHNI}
to mean 'tomb' (cp. SVL. 138). — 3 Cp. ROTH, ZDMG. 2, 218. — 4 MM., with Sayana, regards these two as identical with Vivasvat and Sarasyu. — 5 The interpretation is doubtful, cp. SVL. 146. — 6 Cp. ROTH, Nir. Erld. 138; SVL. 113. — 7 HRI. 128. — 8 KHF. 21; SVL. 137. — 9 *Vihāri is often said of Agni, once or twice of Indra and Varuna. — 10 Cp. ROTH, IS. 14, 393. — 11 But the passage may mean 'Yama (and) Death'. — 12 Cp. BLOOMFIELD, AJP. 11, 354—5. — 13 SVL. 155. — 14 Op. cit. 142, note 1. — 15 Yama and Yamī mentioned together as in heaven: TS. 4, 2, 53; VS. 12, 63; ŚB. 7, 2, 110; TA. 6, 42. — 16 SPIEGEL, Fränische Altertumskunde 1, 527. — 17 This is also the explanation of GRASSMANN, KZ. 11, 13; LEUMANN, KZ. 32, 301. — 18 SVL. 130, note 3. — 19 There is no reason to assume such a bridge in RV. 9, 412 (cp. SVL. 110) nor a river (WEBER, Indische Skizzen 10) in RV. 10, 6310 (cp. SVL. 111). — 20 SBE. 42, LXXIV. — 21 AIL. 419; SVL. 127, 152; ORV. 538. — 22 IS. 4, 341 ff.; cp. AIL. 421; KRV. note 274. — 23 BENFEY, Vedica und Verwandtes 149—64; KUHN, KZ. 2, 314; WEBER, IS. 2, 298; MM., Chips 42, 250; LSL. (1891), 2, 595; Selected Essays (1881), 1, 494; KRV. note 274a; VAN DEN GHEYN, Cerbère, Brussels 1883. — 24 Cp. ROÎNE, Psyche 1, 280, note 1. — 25 JAOS. 1893, p. 163—72. — 26 KAH. 37, 14 (MS. p. 101, note 2), Kauṭś. Br. 11, 9 (= day and night); ŚB. 11, 1, 53 (moon a heavenly dog); on the dogs of Yama cp. also RĀJENDRALĀLA MĪTRA, PRASĀ. May 1881, pp. 94, 96; Indo-Aryans, Calcutta 1881, 2, 156—65; SP. AP. 239—40; HVM. 1, 225. 510—1; CASARTELLI, Dog of Death, BÓR. 4, 269 ff. — 27 SP. AP. 246. — 28 ROTH, JAOS. 3, 335; DARMESTETER, Ormazd et Ahriman 106. — 29 ROTH, ZDMG. 4, 420; on traces of Yima having been the first man in the Avesta, cp. SVL. 148 n. 1. — 30 ROTH, ZDMG. 4, 425 ff.; IS. 14, 392; SCHRÉMANN, Festschrift für K. HOFMAN, Erlangen 1890, p. 573 ff.; HOPKINS, PAOS. May 1881. — 31 Indo-germanische Mythen 1, 229, 232. — 32 KHF. 208; BRV. 1, 89; cp. WEBER, Rāṣāya 15, n. 1; YN. 12, 10 (Yama = lightning Agni, Yami = voice of thunder); SVL. 132, n. 2. — 33 BRI. 22—3; EHNI, Die urspr. Gotth. d. ved. Yama, p. 26 κκ. — 34 WVB. 1894, p. 1 (Yami = night). — 35 MM., LSL. 2, 634—7; India 224; AR. 297—8; BERGAGNE, Manuel Vedique 283 (sun that has set). — 36 HVM. 1, 394 ff.; IF. 1, 7; also HVBP. 43.

On this chapter cp. also ROTH, ZDMG. 4, 417—33; JAOS. 342—5; WHITNEY, JAOS. 3, 327—8; 13, ch.—viii.; OLS. 1, 46—63; WESTERGAARD, IS. 3, 402—40; OST. 5, 284—335; DONNER, Pinācपितरनाम, 10—14, 28; AIL. 406—22; BRV. 1, 85—94; 2, 96; KRV. 69—71; SP. AP. 243—56; LANMAN, Sanskrit Reader 377—85; SVL. 122—61; HVM. 1, 480—513; ZDMG. 48, 421; EHNI, Der vedische Mythus des Yama, Strassburg 1890; Die ursprüngliche Gottheit des vedischen Yama, Leipzig 1896; HOPKINS, PAOS. 1891, xciv—v; HRI. 128—50. 204—7; MM., PSR. 177—207; ORV. 524—43; SBE. 46, 29; JACKSON, JAOS. 17, 185.
**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AB.</td>
<td>= Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF.</td>
<td>= Arische Forschungen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGS.</td>
<td>= Aśvalayana Gṛhya Sūtra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIL.</td>
<td>= Zimmer’s Altrindisches Leben.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AJP.</td>
<td>= American Journal of Philology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Åp.</td>
<td>= Åstamābha.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR.</td>
<td>= Max Müller’s Anthropological Religion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL.</td>
<td>= Max Müller’s History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ĀŚŚ.</td>
<td>= Āśvalayana Śrauta Sūtra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AV.</td>
<td>= Atharvaveda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BR.</td>
<td>= Bezzensberger’s Beiträge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BDA.</td>
<td>= Brandke, Dyans Asura.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOR.</td>
<td>= Babylonian and Oriental Record.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Br.</td>
<td>= Brāhmaṇa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRV.</td>
<td>= Bergaigne, La Religion Védique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dh. S.</td>
<td>= Dharma Sūtra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPV.</td>
<td>= Deussen, Philosophie des Veda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaB.</td>
<td>= Festgruss an Böhtlingk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaR.</td>
<td>= Festgruss an Roth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaW.</td>
<td>= Festschrift an Weber (Gurupūjāt-Sūkrumād).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GGA.</td>
<td>= Götinger Gelehrte Anzeigen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GGH.</td>
<td>= Schroeder’s Griechische Götter und Heroen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GKR.</td>
<td>= Geldner, Kægi, Roth, Siebenziger Lieder des Rigveda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRV.</td>
<td>= Grassmann’s Translation of the Rigveda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS.</td>
<td>= Gṛhya Sūtra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GVS.</td>
<td>= Geldner, Vedische Studien.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GW.</td>
<td>= Grassmann, Wörterbuch (Rigveda Lexicon).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HGS.</td>
<td>= Hiranyakāsi Gṛhya Sūtra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRL.</td>
<td>= Hopkins, Religions of India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HWBP.</td>
<td>= Hardy, Vedisch-brahmanische Periode.</td>
</tr>
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<td>HVM.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISR.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>JA.</td>
<td>= Journal Asiatique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRAS.</td>
<td>= Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Kauś. S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>KHF.</td>
<td>= Kuhn, Herabkunft des Feuers und des Göttertrakts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRV.</td>
<td>= Kægi, Der Rigveda (quoted from Arrowsmith’s translation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KŚ.</td>
<td>= Kauśika Sūtra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KŚŚ.</td>
<td>= Kātyayana Śrauta Sūtra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KZ.</td>
<td>= Kuhn’s Zeitschrift.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRF.</td>
<td>= Ludwig, Ueber die neuesten arbeiten auf dem gebiete der Rgveda-forschung (1893).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRV.</td>
<td>= Ludwig, Rigveda Translation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGS.</td>
<td>= Māṇava Gṛhya Sūtra.</td>
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<tr>
<td>MM.</td>
<td>= Max Müller.</td>
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<tr>
<td>MS.</td>
<td>= Maitrāyaṇi Samhitā.</td>
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<tr>
<td>NR.</td>
<td>= Max Müller’s Natural Religion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nir.</td>
<td>= Nirukta.</td>
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<tr>
<td>OGR.</td>
<td>= Max Müller’s Origin and Growth of Religion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>OLS.</td>
<td>= Whitney’s Oriental and Linguistic Studies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>OO.</td>
<td>= Benfey’s Orient und Occident.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ORV.</td>
<td>= Oldenberg, Die Religion des Veda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OST.</td>
<td>= Muir’s Original Sanskrit Texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PB.</td>
<td>= Paścavimśa Brāhmaṇa (= TMB.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PGS.</td>
<td>= Prasakara Gṛhya Sūtra.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PhR.</td>
<td>= Max Müller’s Physical Religion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ps.R.</td>
<td>= Max Müller’s Psychological Religion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRASB.</td>
<td>= Proceedings of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PVS.</td>
<td>= Fischel, Vedische Studien.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PW.</td>
<td>= Petersburger Wörterbuch (Böhtlingk and Roth’s larger Sanskrit Dictionary).</td>
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<tr>
<td>RV.</td>
<td>= Rigveda.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SE.</td>
<td>= Satapatha Brahmana.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBE.</td>
<td>= Sacred Books of the East.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF. AP.</td>
<td>= Spiegel, Die Arische Periode.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPH.</td>
<td>= Scherman, Philosophische Hymnen.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SV.</td>
<td>= Sāmaveda.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SVL.</td>
<td>= Scherman, Visionsliteratur.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSS.</td>
<td>= Śāṅkhyāṇa Śrauta Sūtra.</td>
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<tr>
<td>TA.</td>
<td>= Taittirīya Āranyaka.</td>
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<tr>
<td>TB.</td>
<td>= Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa.</td>
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<tr>
<td>TMB.</td>
<td>= Tāḍyāya Mahābrāhmaṇa (= PB).</td>
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<tr>
<td>TS.</td>
<td>= Taittirīya Samhitā.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Up.</td>
<td>= Upaniṣad.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vāl.</td>
<td>= Valakhiya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VS.</td>
<td>= Vaiṣṇavayī Samhitā.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WC.</td>
<td>= Wallis, Cosmology of the Rigveda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WVB.</td>
<td>= Weber, Vedische Beiträge (Sitzungsberichte der Berliner Akademie).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WZKM.</td>
<td>= Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes (Vienna Oriental Journal).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YN.</td>
<td>= Yaska’s Nirukta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YV.</td>
<td>= Yajurveda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZDA.</td>
<td>= Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZDMG.</td>
<td>= Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZVP.</td>
<td>= Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B. The figures in parentheses without an added abbreviation refer to the Rigveda.
### CONTENTS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 1. Religion and Mythology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 2. Characteristics of Vedic mythology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 3. Sources of Vedic Mythology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 4. Method to be pursued</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 5. The Avesta and Vedic mythology</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 6. Comparative Mythology</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. VEDIC CONCEPTIONS OF THE WORLD AND ITS ORIGIN</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 7. Cosmology</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 8. Cosmogony</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE VEDIC GODS</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 10. General character and classification</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. CELESTIAL GODS</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 11. Dyaus</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 12. Varuṇa</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 13. Mitra</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 14. Sūrya</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 15. Savitṛ</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 16. Puṣan</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 17. Viṣṇu</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 18. Viṣṇavat</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 19. Ādityas</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 20. Uṣas</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 21. Āśvins</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. ATMOSPHERIC GODS</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 22. Indra</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 23. Trīta Āpīta</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 24. Āpāṃ napāt</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 25. Mātarisvan</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 26. Āhi budhnya</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 27. Aja ekapād</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 28. Rudra</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 29. The Maruts</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 30. Vāyu-Vata</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 31. Parjanya</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 32. Apāḥ</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. TERRESTRIAL GODS</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 33. Rivers. Sarasvatt</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 34. Prthivit</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 35. Agni</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 36. Bṛhaspati</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 37. Soma</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. ABSTRACT GODS</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 38. Two Classes</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Various Agent Gods</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Tvaṣṭṛ</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 39. Viśvakarman, Prajāpati</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 40. Manyu, Śraddhā &amp;c.</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 41. Aditi</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 42. Diti</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. § 43. GODDESSES</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. § 44. DUAL DIVINITIES</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. § 45. GROUPS OF DEITIES</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. LOWER DEITIES</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 46. Rbhus</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 47. Apsaras. Uṛvaṣṭ</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 48. Gandharvas</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 49. Tutelary Deities: Vāstoṣ</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 50. Manu</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 51. Bhṛgus</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 52. Atharvan</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 53. Daḍhyaṇe</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 54. Angirases</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 55. Vișūpaš, Navałyas, Daśāgyas, Seven Ṛṣis</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 56. Atri</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 57. Kañva &amp;c.</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 58. Kutsa, Kañya Uṣāṇa &amp;c.</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. MYTHICAL PRIESTS AND HEROES</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 59. General Traits</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 60. The Horse: Daḍhyak, Tārk-ṣya, Paɪdva, Etaṣa, &amp;c.</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 61. A. The Bull. B. The Cow</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 62. The goat, boar, dog, monkey, tortoise, frogs</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 63. The Bird</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 64. Noxious animals; serpent, &amp;c.</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 65. Survivals of prehistoric notions about animals</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 66. Deified terrestrial objects</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. DEMONS AND FIENDS</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 67. Aerial demons: Asuras, Paṇiṣ, Dāsas</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 68. Vyta, Vaḷa &amp;c.</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 69. Śuṣu, Śaṁbara, Naṁuc, &amp;c.</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 70. Rakaṣaṇa, Piśācas and other terrestrial demons</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. ESCHATOLOGY</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 71. Disposal of the dead</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 72. The Soul</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 73. Heaven</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 74. Joys of the future life</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 75. HELL</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 76. The Pit or Manes</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 77. Yama, King of the Dead</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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I. SANSKRIT INDEX.

The references in both Indexes, unless accompanied by §, are to pages.

Agni § 35 (88—100); 2, 7, 10,
11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22,
23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 32,
33, 35, 38, 40, 42, 43,
44, 45, 46, 48, 92, 94, 97,
99, 116, 121, 124, 126,
130, 139, 141, 142, 143, 147,
148, 151, 152, 158, 170, 171.
Agni kumāra 75, gārhapatya
165, yaviṣṭha 164, vaidyuta
94, 112.
Agni's aerial form 92; his
ancestral friendship 96; as
a benefactor 97, 98; as a
bird 88; his births 91; his
three births 93; his many
births 94; his brothers 95;
burns goblins 163—164; his
car and steeds 90; his ce-
estal form 92; compared with
inanimate objects 89;
conductor of the dead 165,
166; corpse-devouring 171;
is cosmical actions 98—
99; demon-dispelling 95;
domestic 95, 96; etymology
of the name 99; his father
90; his food 89; is foot-
less and headless 88; for-
gives sin 98; his various
forms 5, 6; his greatness
98; hidden 140, 146; hymns
to Agni 140; identified with
other gods 93; is Indra's
twin brother 57; contrasted
with Indra 97, 98, 99; his
lightning form 98; his lunar
form 100; as a messenger
96; as a priest 96, 97; as
a rakṣas-slayer 166; his roa-
ring 90; his seven tongues
89; as a serpent 153; son
of Dyua 21; son of strength
12; as the sun 129; his ter-
restrial form 91, 92; in the
waters 57, 70; his wisdom
97; his youth 91.
Agni associated with Atri 145,
146; with Kuva 145; with
Parjanya 84, 120; with
Soma 95; contrasted with
Parjanya 129; with Soma
129.
Agni-parjanya 126.
Agni-soma 126.
agrasū 117.
agniṣa 109.
agre 109.
anakusa 55.
Aingira 144.
Aligiras 96, 97, 102, 139; as
an epithet of Agni 143, 146.
Anāgirasah 54 (142—143); 15,
44, 61, 64, 67, 101, 117,
130, 140, 141, 143, 144, 145,
147, 159, 170, 171; as an-
cient fathers 142; as foes
of the Pañis 157; their song
142; are sons of Dyua 21.
angirastama 142.
agniśravat 143, 144.
aghāśa 149.
aghnyā 151.
aj 99.
aja 74.
Aja ekapāḍ 27 (73—74); 70,
72, 151.
ajana 73.
ajara 58.
Ajā 153.
ajasva 36.
Ajaikapad 73.
atithi 92, 95.
Atithigva 64. 147.
atka 107.
Atrayah 145.
atri 145.
Atri § 56 (143); 15, 53, 139,
160, 167; finds the sun 145;
etymology of the name 145.
atrīvat 144.
atharya 141.
Atharvan § 52 (141); 139, 147;
identified with Agni 141.
Atharvaveda 4.
Atharvāṅgirasaḥ 143.
Atharvānīḥ 140, 141, 142, 170.
ād 145.
Aditi § 41 (120—123); 13, 14,
16, 33, 44, 45, 46, 56, 61, 121,
123, 130, 150, 151; her two
main characteristics 122;
associated with Dakṣa 121,
122; etymology of her name
121; frees from guilt 121;
identified with the universe
121; her motherhood 122;
her sons 13.
adittiva 121.
Aditeḥ putrāḥ 122.
adri 10, 60, 94, 105, 106, 154.
adhvarya 97, 105.
anarvā 120.
Anarṣani 162.
anavadya 45.
anāṣṭapāṇ 36.
anāṣṭavāṃś 36. 37.
anas 63.
anāgāvsta 121.
animīṣa 45.
Anukramānt 99, 143.
Anumati 119.
Antaka 172.
antarīkṣa 10, 72.
adhas 104.
anna 105.
ap 69, 159.
apās 132.
Apām napāt § 24 (69—70); 72,
73, 85, 88, 99; identified
with Agni 70, with Savitṛ
33; is the Avestic Apām
napāt 8.
Apalā 64.
apya 61.
apya 35; —yoga 134, 172.
Apsaras 136, 137.
Apsarasah § 47 (134—135).
apujit 59.

Indo-arische Philologie. III. 1 A
apsumat 92.
abāja 73.
abhra 60, 83.
abhrīti 102.
amati 32.
amitra 159.
amā 87.
ambhikā 74.
ambhṛṇa 164.
arat 72, 91.
aravāṇa 154.
aratāyaḥ 104.
aratī 164.
arīṣṭa 45.
arīṣṭanemi 149.
arūga 82, 105.
arūga 75.
arjuna 88.
arjuna 146.
arnāva 105.
arṣas 50.
Arbuda 61, 67, 160; his cows 160.
Arbudā 164.
Aryaman § 19 (43); 16, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 33, 34, 44, 45, 46, 120.
aryāmya 45.
avi 106.
avyāna 45.
Aṣani 75.
asu 160.
asā 93, 106.
asān 55, 94.
asā 79.
asvātha 134.
asvātin 131.
Aśvin 51, 128.
Aśvināu § 21 (49–54); 16, 20, 24, 32, 36, 40, 41, 42, 43, 48, 106, 124, 125, 132, 141, 149, 151, 162; their physical basis 53; their locality 50; are red-white 51; originally perhaps separate 49; are matutial gods 51; perhaps morning and evening star 53; are succouring gods 51; are divine physicians 51; come to the sacrifice three times a day 50; ancient explanations of their nature 53; are sons of Dyaus 21, 51; sons of Vivasvat and Saranyu 51; their wife 51; their sister 51; their ships or boat 52; associated with Atri 145, with Kanva 146, with Sāvitya 50, with Uṣas 50; identified with Indra- Agni 128.
ⅰsat 13.
Asiṇī 51.
ⅰsa 166.
ⅰṣupit 173.
ⅰṣunīta 166.
ⅰṣunīti 166.
ⅰṣunīti 120.
asura 22, 24, 32, 36, 58, 75, 79, 84, 97, 98, 116, 123, 156; means both god and demon 156; identical with the Avestic ahura 7.
Asura 90, 133, 161, 162.
asurahan 156.
Asurāḥ § 67 A; 5, 39, 41, 57, 61, 95, 96, 97, 119, 136, 160; offspring of Prajapati 156; connected with darkness 156.
Ahuyla 65.
ahī 58, 64, 73, 152, 153.
Ahi 158, 160, 161; identical with Vṛtra 73.
Ahi budhīna 70, 72, 153.
ahibhānu 78, 152.
ahīhan 149.
Agnihi 35, 36.
āṅgiras 102, 103, 143.
atāyaḥ 134.
atā 11.
atman 166; connected with wind 106.
adityāya 30.
Aditya 29, 42, 139, 188.
Adityāya § 19 (43–46); 5, 14, 15, 18, 20, 24, 26, 27, 28, 30, 34, 42, 116, 117, 120, 121, 130, 142; sons of Dyaus 21.
adāhvā 106.
adātvana 106.
Apaḥ § 32 (85–86); identical with Avestic apō 7.
Apta 70; etymology of the word 69.
apyā 107.
apyāyana 107, 113.
apa 87, 100.
apā 87, 99, 100, 124, 129, 154.
amād 97.
ayāsā 55.
Ayu 100, 135 n. 9, 140, 147.
ayudha = sun 31.
Arujeyaya 146.
aryā 62, 98.
asīr 107.
asuheman 70.
asura 100, 160, 161.
athāvāniya 95.
Indā 139, 150.
Indu 66, 105, 113.
Indu 104, 106, 138.
Indrā § 22 (54–60); 6, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 19, 24, 26, 31, 33, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 45, 48, 53, 115, 116, 118, 119, 126, 130, 131, 138, 141, 142, 144, 147, 149, 151, 154, 155, 156, 160, 161, 162, 165, 170; associated with Agni 57, 60, 67, 95, 102, 124, 126, 127, 128, with the Avisins 126, with Kutsa 146, with Parvata 126, with Pāṇa 37, 126, 128, with Brhaspati 101, 103, 126, 128, with the Maruts 57, 60, 126, with Varuṇa 126, 127, with Vāyu 82, 106, 126, 128; with Viṣṇu 57, 60, 91, 126, 127, 128, 156, with Soma 60, 126, 128, 169; as an Aśvita 44; god of battle 62; bestower of riches 56; his birth 56; his bolt 56, 57; brother of Agni 57, of Pāṇa 57; his car 55; his leading characteristic 64–65; contrasted with Agni 128; contrasted with Varuṇa 20, 64, 65, 127; as a demon in the Avesta 8, 66; etymology of the name 65; his father 56; slays his father 18, 57; his physical features 54–55; his food 59; fights against the gods 18, 57, 146; his gigantic size 58–59; his greatness 58; as a helper 62; immoral and capricious traits 18, 19, 65; his intoxication 65; identified with Manus 57; his steeds 55; threatens the Maruts 18, 81; his mother 56; clips the wings of the mountains 62; settles the mountains 62; his parents 12; releases the cows of the Pāni 59; produces Agni 57; produces heaven and earth 62; produces the sun 61; is produced from the mouth of Puruṣa 57; scepticism as to his existence 65; son of truth 12; his steeds 55; releases the streams 59; supports heaven and earth 62; identified with Śūrya 57; transference to him of Varuṇa’s preeminence 20, 65–66; shatters the ear of Uṣas 18, 48, 63; his weapons 55; his wheel 61, 64; his wife 57, 125; as winner of light 61; as winner of Soma 62.
ghora 127.
Ghōṣā 52.
Cakrā 155.
candra 127.
camū 106.
Caraka Brāhmaṇa 41.
caranyu 125.
Cumuru 158, 162; associated
with Dhuni 162.
Cayāvāna 51.
Chandās 101.
Chandogyopanisād 14.
Ijān 57.
janayaḥ 117.
janīttr 126.
janīma 97.
jarit 60, 97.
jalaśa 76.
jalāśabhēṣaja 76.
jāt 111.
jāta 113.
jātvedas 97, 119.
jāmī 48.
jīvan 168.
Jtāks 72, 116, 117, 132.
Tanūnapātī 71, 99-100.
tanayu 56.
tapās 13, 17, 132, 167.
tapas 119.
tavas 58.
Tārṣyakā 149.
tāṁśigīta 108.
Tīṣyā 103.
Tugrā 52, 146.
tura 58.
Turvāṣa 64, 140, 146, 171.
Tārvāyāṇa 147.
Iṛtr 68.
-ṛ (suffix) 115.
Trkṣi 149.
Trtavāya 64.
Trāsadasya 146, 147; Agni
ϕ of — 96.
Trāṭ 116.
Trāsadasya 149.
tritā 69.
Trīta 23 (67–69); 6, 43,
64, 71, 73, 80, 103, 117,
141; — Āptya 8, 14, 45,
47, 66, 67; associated
with Agni 67; his abode
67; his fingers 17; his
mādīsa 67, 105; associated
with the Maruts 67; is
remote 68; as a Soma
prresser 67.
tripāsta 93.
tripṛṣṭha 107.
triśadhastha 38, 93, 107.
triti 69.
Tryambaka 74.
trayaśī 106.
Itvāks 117.
tvāc 106.
Tvaśī 38 B; 11, 12, 19,
23, 34, 55, 56, 58, 82, 91,
101, 115, 116, 126, 136,
141; associated with Indra
116, 117, with the Rbhus
133; his cup 116, 117, 133;
his daughter 125; etymo-
logy of the name 117; his
mead 52; as a shaper of
forms 116; his skill 116;
his son 160; his steeds 116.
Tvāstra 158.
Dakṣa 12, 13, 43, 44, 46, 121.
dakṣapiti 46.
dakṣasya pitṛ 46.
dakṣina 95.
Dadhikrā 142, 148, 149.
Dadhikrāvan 124, 148.
Dadhīca 142.
Dahyāṅe 53 (142–143);
52, 71, 139, 141, 144, 149,
157; his bones 159; ety-
mology of the name 142;
as an ancient fire-priest142.
dahyāyīṣ 106.
Dabhitī 162.
damānas 33, 95.
darbha 15.
Dasāyavāḥ 80, 144.
dasāma 36.
dasmavarca 36.
Dasāyavāḥ 62, 64, 98, 148, 162.
dasyu 146, 157, 158, 159.
dasyuḥata 157.
dasyuḥaṇa 157.
darsa 36, 49.
Iḍā 121, 123.
Divāna 59, 158, 161.
Dinavā 57.
dānu 158.
Dānu 158.
dāsa 157, 158, 159.
Dāsa 40, 158, 161, 162.
Dāśaś 96 (160–162); 64, 157,
dita 121.
diti 121, 123.
Dīti 24 (123).
diva 8, 9, 10.
Divodāsa 87, 90, 161; Agni
of — 96; — Atithigvā 147.
divya 92, 136.
dīsā 9.
dṛghṛdaḥ 45.
dundubhi 155.
Durgā 73.
durgabhīṣau 72.
Iḍu 105.
dāta 96.
Iḍr 160.
dṛṣṭī 83.
Dṛbhikā 162.
Dṛsadvattā 87.
deva 8, 34, 156.
devaputra 126.
devaṁāna 172.
Devabhāṣa, Agni of 96.
devaṣaṃ 91.
devā 9.
devī 120.
devīr āru 154.
Devīṣī 115.
Dāityāḥ 123.
dāityā 100.
Dāitya 96.
dāityaḥ hotāra 144.
Dyahākvāma 126.
Dyahāvṛthīv 9, 20, 21, 123,
126.
Dyahāvṛthīma 126.
Dyahāvṛthīv 90, 121, 122.
Dyahāvṛthīma 126.
dāyur aditiḥ 121, 122.
Dyaus pitar 8.
Dyaus 11 (21–22); 2, 12,
19, 25, 27, 28, 30, 53, 61,
83, 88, 121, 123, 124, 126,
129; has a bolt 22; as a
bull 21; as a father 8, 21,
22; as father of Indra
21; conceived as feminine
22; his incest 119; associ-
ated with Pythīvī 90; roars
21, 22; thunders 90; iden-
tical with Zeus 8.
drapas 105, 113.
drāpasin 50.
druḥ = druḥ 8.
Druḥ 164.
druḥāḥ 61.
Druḥāyavāḥ 140.
drona 106.
Dhanu 92.
Dhārti 115.
Iḍā 115.
Dhārtr 118.
Dhārti 13, 43, 116, 117, 118.
dhiyas patti 128.
Dhiṣāna 124.
Dhuni 158, 162.
dhuṃação 90.
dhartavarta 45.
dhena 106.
Iḍhav 162.
Naktoṣāṇa 48, 126.
Naciketas, story of 168.
nadvītpāt 159.
napāt 131.
napāt savasāḥ 46.
napāt 105.
nahhasvat 83.
Nāmī Sāya 161.
Namuci 64, 158, 161–2; ety-
mology of the name 162.
Narāśana 100.
Narāśāmpa 36, 71, 100, 102.
navnagya 144.
Navagya 141, 144, 170.
Navavatīva 158.
Nāga 8.
Nāgaḥ 153.
nādyā 70.
nābhī 42, 92.
nāraka loka 169.
nārāṣada 145.
nasatya 49.
nīnya 158.
nīyutvat 82.
nirṛtī 172.
nirṛtīṣ 107.
niṣa 74.
niṣīṣī 96.
niṣīṣīrṇā 56.
rūtī 58.
rṛṣad 145.
nṛṣṇet 116.
Nalīghauṭa 19, 25, 33, 45,
48, 54, 68, 73, 99, 100, 115,
121, 123, 124, 147, 148, 149,
159.
nīyagrodha 134.
Paṭra 52.
pāṭibhāṣā 172.
Patanyā 95, 98, 143, 144, 157;
their cows 63; as foes of
Bṛhaspati 157; as foes of
Indra 157.
pāṇi 157.
Pāṇi 157, 159.
patatrin 50.
pāṭi 51, 118; names formed
with 103, 138.
patīn devānām 125.
pada 50.
Paṇam 133.
payās 105.
Parameṣṭhīn 57.
Parāvy 52.
parījman 50.
parīdhi 159.
parīsāyana 59.
Paṛśū 64, 86.
Paṛjanya-vāt 126.
pārāṇa (tree) 112.
pārvata 10, 55, 60, 106, 159.
Pārvata 154.
pārvatāydh 110.
palāṣa 112.
pavamāna 106.
Pavamāna 107.
pavitra 106.
pāśu 47; = Soma 108.
Pāṣuṣa 75.
pāṣāpū 37.
pāṣāy 121.
Pāṇini 162.
pātra 133.
pāthas 38, 128.
Paṛvatī 74.
pāvaka 81.
pāvṛati 86.
pāvṛati 73.
pāśa 26.
Paḥ 107.
Paṭarāḥ § 76; 164; classes of
niṣa; cosmical actions of
17; worship of 170.
pūtara 126, 131.
pitū 105.
pītloka 171.
pin 107.
Pipru 156, 158, 161, 162; ety-
mology of the name 161;
his forts 161.
pīṣāṅgabhṛṣi 164.
Pīṣācāḥ 164.
pīśači 164.
pītaḥ 105, 111.
putra 69.
pūṭa 106.
pūna 106.
pur 60.
purāndara 98.
purāṇḍhi 37, n. 5.
Puraṇḍhi 124.
purīṣa 129.
purūṣin 129.
Paṇurkutsa 147.
purūṣaspāsa 80.
Paṇumitra 52.
Paṇuṣa 13, 15, 31, 166; hymn
to 82.
purusasūkta 12, 57.
Paṇuravas 124, 135.
pūruṣaspāsa 37.
pūrūḍāṣa 151.
pūrohita 99; = the sun 31.
Pūrohita 160.
Paṇap 37.
Paṇum 36, 37.
pāṭa 106.
Paṇur 148.
pārah ī 60.
pūrya 58.
Paṇshā 21; 12, 15, 20, 33,
40, 82, 100, 117, 124, 151,
165, 170; his car 35; con-
ducts the dead 35; protects
the dead 163; etymology of
the name 37; his goats
18; is son of the Asvins
51; is Sūrya's messenger
30; is toothless 35.
Paḥ 161.
pṛthīvi 9, 123.
Pṛthīvi § 34; 2, 19, 21, 22,
124, 126.
Paṁśi 73, 74, 75, 125, 150.
pṛṣṇimāt 78.
praṣāt 79.
pāḷadāśa 79.
pṛṣa 9, 68.
Paṇu 52, 149.
Pāudva 149.
pāra 118.
praja 118; = Saviṣṭ 33.
Prājapati § 39; 4, 5, 13, 14,
16, 17, 19, 28, 41, 46, 56,
57, 115, 117, 120, 140, 151,
153, 168; identified with
Savīṭ 33; and Uṣas 119.
Prthū 88.
pradāśa 9.
prapathyā 36.
pramāṇa 91.
prasava 34.
prasavīra 33, 34.
prasūta 48.
Praskanyā 140.
prāna 166.
Prāṇa 14, 120.
prātratīv 72.
Prāśaṣṭ 57.
Priyamedhā 146.
prīyamedhāvat 144.
prīya (Uṣā) 48.
plakṣa 134.
Phaliga 159.
Baddha 121.
Babhru 74, 105.
bārīs (deified) 154.
bilā 159.
buddha 73, 158.
Bhāhdayarakapāniṣad 14.
Bhāhdiva 141.
Bhāddidiva 124.
Bhāraspaṇī, etymology of 103.
Bṛhaspati § 36; 11, 13, 20,
24, 32, 38, 48, 71, 83, 100,
117, 126, 129, 130, 132, 143,
156, 159, 161, 168, 171; his
three abodes 102; identified
with Agni 102; his car and
steeds 101; his cosmical
actions 103; releases the
cows 102; as a light-winner
103; his origin 103; associated
with the Maruts 103; associa-
ted with singers 101,
to his song 101; as auro-
hita 101; his weapons 101.
brāhma 138.
Brāhma 11, 13, 14, 101, 104,
119, 167.
brāhman 97, 101, 102, 103,
104, 142.
Brāhmaṇas pati § 36; 13, 14,
101.
Brāhma 87, 104, 115, 118,
119, 130, 168.
Brāhmaṇaṣṭa 87.
Brāhmaṇa 81, 93, 94.
Dhaga § 19; 37, 44, 45, 48,
116, 123, 124, 149; his eye
45; his path 45; his sister
45; = bagha 7, 8.
dhaga 45, 46.
bhagavat 45.

| bhaj 45.

bhadrājāni 78.

Bharata 96.

Bharataḥ 87, 135.

Bharadvāja 147.

bhārīta 106.

Bhava 75.

Bhāgavata Purāṇa 117.

bhājaya 46.

Bhārati 87, 124.

bhīd 160, 162.

Bhūyu 52.

| bhū with vi 133.

bhūmi 9.

bhūryakṣa 45.

Bhṛgavā ṣ 51; 80, 99, 116, 141, 142, 170; ancient fire-
priests 140.

Bhṛgū 71, 96, 139, 140; = gṛṣṭha 169.

bhṛguvā ṣ 140.

| bhṛjā 140.

Makha 140.

maghaṇa 63, 103.

maghoni 48.

Matṣyaḥ 153.

| math 91, 162.

| mad 168.

mada 105.

madapati 128.

madhu 49, 52, 105, 111, 114, 141.

Madhukāśa 44.

madhupa 50.

madhumat 105.

madhuvāhana 49.

madhuyu 50.

Madhyadeśa 87.

manas 13, 166.

manu 135.

Manu | 50; 12, 15, 41, 42, 43, 140, 141, 144, 145, 146; as first ancestor 139; as first man 14; as first sac-
rificer 139; called Viṣṇu-viṣṇu 139.

manuṣya 139.

Manus 138, 143.

Manor nāpataḥ 131.

mantha 108.

Manyu | 40.

| mar 81.

Marutah | 29; 2, 11, 12, 18, 20, 23, 25, 37, 38, 40, 44, 76, 119, 122, 130, 142, 146, 150, 151, 152, 161, 166; their brilliance 78; their cars 79; etymology of the name 81; as allies of Indra 80–81; as hostile to Indra 81; associated with lightning 78; malevolent traits in their character 81; as priests 80; as shedders of

rain 79, 80; their remedies 81; their roaring 79; as Soma drinkers 80; sons of Dyaus 21; sons of Rudra 78; their steeds 18, 79; associated with Tīt 67.

marutavā ṣ 80.

marudgana 57.

Marudvīdhā 80, 88.

maya 78.

Mahādeva 75, 76.

Mahābhārata 41, 85, 117, 142, 160.

mahīṣa (= Soma) 108.

mahī 88.

Mahi 87, 124.

| ma 71, 108.

Maṇḍākeyaḥ 153.

mātārā 126.

mātāribhāvart 72.

Mātārīśvan | 25; 16, 42, 92, 99, 100, 102, 111, 115, 129, 139, 140, 141, 157, 171; etymology of the name 71; as a name of Agni 71, 72.

māt 71, 72.

mādhyamikā vāc 124.

mādhyāv 50.

māyā 24, 156.

māyin 24.

mārata 40.

Markandeya Purāṇa 117.

Martāgāla 13, 43, 44.

Mitra | 13; 7, 16, 20, 23, 24, 25, 27, 33, 34, 40, 43, 44, 45, 46; etymology the name 30; identical with the Ave-
sen Mīthra 7.

Mitra-Varūṇa 12, 15, 16, 85, 100, 120, 124, 127, 131, 148, 156, 157; their eye 23; associated with other gods 31.

Mitrāvārunā ṣ 126.

mitrā ṣ 45.

miḥo nāpāt 161.

mīdhvas 75.

Mudgala 150.

Mudgālāni 150.

Mājīvā 110.

mṛgā 152.

mṛgaya 161.

mṛj 106.

mṛtyu 172.

megha 83, 159.

metr 90.

Medhyātithi 146.

Menaka 135.

mājauvā ṣ 110.

Yajurveda 4, 26.

yaśa (= yasna) 7.

Yatayā ṣ 140.

Vadu 64, 146, 171.

Yām 172.

Yama 172.

Yama | 77; 16, 19, 20, 27, 42, 43, 68, 71, 139, 142, 144, 151, 152, 166, 167, 169, 170; his abode 171; his foot-tattoo 172; his messengers 152; 172, 173; the first mortal that died 172; his path 172; his steeds 171; connected with the sun 172; associated with Yami 116, 137, 171, 172, 173; identical with the Ave-
sen Yima 8; has the patronymic Vaivāsava 15.

yamāraj 171.

Yamunā 86.

Yayūti 139.

Yavāśīr 106.

Yavīṣṭha 91.

Yavīṣṭhya 91.

yājñika 99.

yātayajñana 29.

yātu 8, 163, 164.

yātudāna 163.

Yāṣka 15, 19, 33, 34, 37, 38, 39, 45, 49, 53, 68, 72, 73, 93, 99, 115, 123, 139, 151.

yuvan (= Soma) 111.

yītha 124.

yojana 47.

yoni 94.

| rākṣ 164.

rākṣas 162, 164.

Rākṣasah | 70; 61; their appearance 163.

rākṣoyaj 164.

rākṣohān 95; 110, 164.

rājas 9, 10, 73, 158.

rājastūr 111.

rathatur 148.

rāṣṭheṣṭha 55.

| rābh 133.

rayi 110.

rava 101.

rasa 105.

Rasi 63.

| rā 125.

Rāka 125.

rākṣaka 163.

Rājāna 13.

Rātri 124.

Rāmāyaṇa 41.

Rāstrabhṛty 135.

rāsabha 50.

Rāhu 160.

| rā 108.

rāj 160.

| rud 77.

rūdra 49, 75, 77, 127.

Rūdra | 28; 12, 16, 20, 35, 73, 74, 119, 124, 130, 138, 151; identified with Agni 75, 77; his colour 74; his

injuries 18; con-
trasted with Indra 77; his malevolence 75; as father of the Maruts 74, 78; is mountain-dwelling 74; his physical features 74; his remedies 76; is clothed in a skin 74; his repulsive traits 76; his weapons 74.

ruda-vartani 49.

Rudra-Soma 76, 129.

Rudrāṇī 125.

Rudrā 5, 44, 74, 120, 130, 142; are eleven in number 19.

Rudrīyāḥ 74, 78.

Rudhāktra 102.

retodhā 108.

Rebha 52.

rocana 9.

rodat 9, 126.

Rodast 78.

roman 106.

Rohinī 115, 136.

rohita 52.

Rohita 14, 17, 115.

Līgīa 155.

I vrj 133.

vajra 55, 79, 109, 147.

vajradākṣiṇa 55.

vajrabhū 55.

vajrabhist 55.

vajraḥasta 55.

vajrīn 55, 103.

vajrīvat 55.

vatsa 84.

Vatsāḥ 153.

vadhā 91.

vadhāyū 51.

Vadhāryāsa 57; Agni of — 96.

vanaspati 154; (= Soma) 112.

Vandana 52.

vara 51.

Varuṇa 5;

3, 6, 11, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 29, 30, 33, 34, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 48, 119, 130, 168, 171, 172; his abode 23; identical with the Avestan Ahura Mazda 8; his car 23; etymology of the name 28; his face 23; as father of Bhṛgu 170; his fetters 26; contrasted with Indra 28; he and Śūrya subordinate to Indra 58; his messenger 130; his natural basis 27; connected with night 25, 29, with rain 25, with waters 25, 29; his omniscience 26; as up-holder of order 24; identical with (Upa) 8; as a punisher of sin 26; his spies 23, 24; associated with Yama 167.

Varuṇaṇī 125.
Śūṣa § 69 A; 146, 147, 157, 158, 162; his brood 160, 161; his eggs 160; his forts 160; his horns 160.

Śūdra 13.
Śūra 58.
Śātāma 173.
Śāvya 52.
Śraddhā 119.
Śrī 120.
Śvāsas 72, 161.
Śvāsana 160.
Śvetā 149.

Śaṃvarāṇa 153.
Śaṃśāra 168.
sat 13.
saptati 58.
sadāna (of Vivasvat) 42.
sadaspati 102.
sadaspati 102, 103.
sadaspati 128.
sadānasthā 107.
sāmṛḍh (paramā) 118.
Saptavadhri (Atri) 52, 145.
sabardūghi 82.
samudra 52, 72, 105; = celest.
Samudriya 107.
samrāj 98.
saraṇā 125.
Saranyū 42, 51, 116, 125, 139, 172.
Sarameya 63, 125 (note 17), 143, 144, 151, 173.
Sarayū 86.
Sarasvatī 86, 88.
Sarasvatī 12, 73, 78, 86—88; 124, 125; associated with the Āśvin and Indra 87; associated with Indra 162; associated with the Maruts 87; as a sacred river 87.
sarpāḥ 153.
sahā 72.
sava 34, 48.
savana 106, 132.
Savanā 139.
Savītrī § 15; 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 23, 26, 29, 35, 37, 38, 44, 45, 48, 55, 57, 70, 72, 73, 85, 115, 116, 117, 118, 122, 123, 124, 138, 149, 154, 171; his arms 32; his car and steeds 32; conducts the dead 165; connected with evening as well as morning 34; etymology of the name 34; he is golden 32; play on the name 34; is called praṇāṭi 13; identified with Bhaga 33, with Prajāpatī 117, Sūrya 33.
Tvaṣṭrī, Viśvakarman 117.
saharañjas 97.
sahas 91.

Sahasā putrā 9, 122.
sahasrajit 98.
sahasramuṣṭa 89.
satmatā 168.
sādāna 172.
sādhyā 130.
sānu 39, 68, 106, 111, 158.
Samaveda 4.
Sāyana 28, 33, 41, 43, 68, 69, 107, 123.
Sārameya 151, 173.
Sūntvāli 125.
sindhu 86, 87.
Sindhu 81, 86.
sindhumāti 51, 78.
Sirā 155.
sīṣu 161.
Sūtyu 105, 106, 114.
sukratau 114.
sugabhasti 116.
sudakṣa 46.
sudānu 80.
sūdās 64, 140, 147.
sudhanvān 133.
Sudhanvan 131.
supaṅga 39.
supāni 116.
sūbhaga 87.
sura 123, 137.
surabhi 137.
susīpra 55.
susravas 64.
sahasta 132.
sūṣ 34, 72.
sūnī daksasya 46.
sūnītā 120.
Sūryā § 14; 2, 15, 16, 20, 23, 33, 34, 35, 38, 40, 44, 48, 148, 149, 150; as a form of Agni 30; his daughter 51; is a son of Dyaus 21; his eye 30; vanquished by Indra 31; measures days 31; his messenger 35; is a spy 30; his steeds 30, 55; his wife 30.
sūryarāṣṭi 32.
Sūryā 50, 51, 125; associated with Soma 112.
Sūryatandramastā 126, 129.
Sūryāṃṣa 126, 129.
Śrībinda 162.
Śtā 138.
Sena 57.
Soma 104.
Soma § 37; 2, 6, 9, 10, 12, 14, 17, 18, 20, 23, 25, 26, 35, 38, 40, 42, 43, 46, 47, 48, 50, 72, 125, 130, 134, 137, 138, 139, 146, 147, 152, 153, 162, 168, 170, 171, 172; as bestower of wealth 110; bought with Vāc 109; as a brahma priest 109; his brilliance 108; brought by an eagle 111—112; his car
and steeds 110; is celestial 111; his colour 105; his
cosmical actions 109—110; etymology of name 114;
as drink of immortality 108; as a fighter 110; first
draught of — 82; as food of the gods 112; the gods
fond of — 108; Indra's ex-
cessive indulgence — 56; his healing power 109; as a
king 112; as king of plants
154; magical power of —
110; mixed with milk 106;
identified with the moon
107, 112, 113, 129; grows
on mountains 110, 111;
offering 16, 124; rape
of — 63; his roaring 108;
sacrifice 4, 18; stimulates
Indra 56, 109; stimulates thought 109; stimulates the
voice 109; three or thirty-three lakes of — 56; his wea-
pons 110; his wives 112;
associated with the Fathers
109, with the Maruts 110, with
Parjanya 84, with Pūšan
37, 128, 129, with rain 107,
with Rudra 129, with waters
86, 107; compared with
rain 85, with Sūrya 108,
111; identified with Varuṇa
110; identical with the
Avestan haoma 7; — Pa-
māna 6.
somagopā (Agni) 90, 110.
somapā 56.
somapāvan 56.
Somā-pūśāna 126.
Somā-rudrā 126.
somya 105, 109, 170.
Saudhanvana 131, 133.
sautrāmaṇi 56.
saumya 112.
skambha 11.
skambha 14, 120.
skambhana 11.
śtan 108.
stanayitnu 83.
smadibha 146.
svadhā 170.
svāpas 132.
II. GENERAL INDEX.

Aborigines of India 153, 157.
agricultural implements defied 155.
Ahura 156; — Mazda 20, 28, 32, 45, 68.
alter ego 173.
Ameša spentas 28.
Amșaspands 40.
agent gods § 38 (115—118).
ancestors 141, 142, 170.
ancestor-worship 4.
animals, animal-sacrifice 68,
ancestor-worship 4.
asuras 141.
Asvins 64(114—115);
nousious § 64
asvans 141.
asuras 152, 152, 163.
Ass 172;
Agni 89, 152, 165;
Soma 106, 108, 152;
sun 9, 31, 152.
Assyrians 153, 165.
Asṭła 156, 166.
Bogus 45.
Bollenсен 53.
bolt, Indra’s 18.
bones, of Dādhya 142; of
the dead 165, 166.
bow 55; deified 155.
v. Bradkre 64, 66, 149.
Brahmans 13.
Brahman, secret of 113.
Brahmanas 4, 5, 6, 13, 17,
25, 29, 31, 33, 37, 38, 39,
40, 41, 43, 44, 68, 69, 72,
76, 87, 92, 109, 111, 122,
117, 118, 119, 124, 125, 130,
136, 155, 156, 159, 160, 168,
169.
Buddhist literature 154.
bufallo 16, 129.
bufaloes 40, 41, 56, 106.
bull 75, 80, 83, 84, 125;
Agni 88, 90, 92, 150;
Dyusas 120, 150; — Indra
150, connected with Indra
18; — Rudra 150; — Soma
106, 108; — sun 31; — in
mythology § 61 A (150).
bulls 56, 129.
burial 165.
Cake, offering of 56.
calf = Agni 89; — lightning
12, 150.
car, of the Asvins 50, 51, 52,
of Indra 55, of Usas 18, 47,
of the gods 18; — the sun
31; three-wheeled — 50.
castes, four 13.
cave 159, 160.
Cinvat bridge 173.
claw of the Soma eagle 112.
clothing of the dead 165.
cloud 88, 107, 112.
clouds 10, 59, 60, 78, 134.
cloud-spirit 137.
Colinet 123.
commentators 124.
Comparative Mythology § 6
(8).
cosmical functions of Vedic
15.
cosmogonic hymns 13, 46.
cosmogonic paradox 12, 45.
Cosmogony § 8 (11—14).
Cosmology § 7 (8—11).
cow 56, 70, 78, 82, 122, 124,
125, 148; — Aditi 122;
— Prthivi 126; — raincloud
10, 12, 150; — sacrificial
165; — sanctity of — 151;
— of Plenty 150; — of Rbhus
132; — in mythology 150;
— raw — 62.
cows 10, 107, 116, 141, 142,
144, 147, 152, 157, 159, 161,
168; = beams of dawn 59, 61,
150; = waters 59, 61, 108;
— of light 47, of Vala 102.
craft 156.
cremation 165.
cymbals 134.
Dakṣa 69.
Darmesteter 70.
Dawn 14, 15, 30, 45; associ
ciated with Aditi 122, with
cows 61, with Indra 61,
with night 129; her car 13.
dawns 138.
dead, souls of the 163, 164.
death 168.
deities, lower 131—138; agri
cultural 138; tutelary § 49
(138).
deluge 139.
demons 4, 18, 152, 156—164;
— of the mountains 60.
descent of fire 140.
II. General Index.

187

devil 156, 159.
dice 135.
gods 148.
dog 151; four-eyed — 173.
dogs 163, 173; — of Rudra 76.
donkeys 163.
drum, sacrificial 154.
devil 157.
dual divinities 44(126—130),
15—16.

Eagle 71, 104, 111, 113, 137, 148; — Agni 89, 112;
— Indra 112, 152; — Maruts 112; — sun 31;
carries off Soma 63, 112, 152;
— of Zeus 114.
Earth 15, 121; is circular 9;
as a mother 8, 12.
est, connected with Agni 34;
as region of the gods 76.

egg, cosmogonic 14.
elbe 133.
elephants 58, 79.
elf 133.
elves 134.
epenthesis 137.
Epic 39, 149, 153, 172.
Epicas 119, 121, 137.
eschatology 165—173.
eternity of reward and punishment 169.
etymological equations in mythology 5.
etymology, popular 157.
evil dreams 47.
evil spirits 47.
every-Vedic tribes 156.
eye = sun 38; associated
with the sun 166; — of
Mitra and Varuna 23, 149;
— of the gods (= sun) 48.

Father Heaven 22.

Fathers 11, 12, 48, 86, 136,
165, 166, 177, 170; as
distinct class 171; path of
the — 171.

feather of the Soma eagle 112,
felly = the sun 31.
fetishistic animals 148.
fetishistic worship 154.
fiend 158.
fingers 111.

fire 15; domestic = 94.
fire-altar 155.
fire-cult 7.
fire-drill 91.

fires that burn the wicked 167.

flesh-eating goblins 163.

Hel 121.

Hail 169.

Heaven § 73 (167) — 150; as
abode of Soma 111, 114;
highest — 165, 166, 167;
path to — 166, 167; — of
priests 168; as reward of
virtue 167; third — 167,
171.

Heaven and earth 116, 121, 123,
154; distance between
9, 10; as universal parents
8, 14, 15, 126.

Heavenly bliss § 74 (167—8).

Hecate 53.

hell § 75 (169—170); 172,
173; darkness of — 169;
discipline of — 168; torments
of — 169, 170.

henotheism 16—17.

Henry 74.

Hillebrandt 26, 69, 70, 88,
100, 104, 117, 118, 124, 173;
his lunar theory 113.

honey 102, 168; associated
with the Aśvins 49, with
the waters 85.

Hopkins 53, 104, 153.
horns of Soma 108.
horse 132; head of a —
141, 149; — in mythology
§ 60 (148—50); sacrificial
— 165; = sun 48.
horses of the Aśvins 50.

Y/hu 114.
hukhratu 114.
hvare 31.

Ice 160.

identifications of different
gods 16.

idoles 99.
ignis 99.

image 155.

images 18.

immortality, acquired by the
gods 17; novel of — 110.

implements, defied 154.
inanimate objects, deification
of 2, 4.

incest 173.

Indo-European period 8, 20,
45, 66, 85, 169.

Indo-Iranian period 7, 20, 28,
43, 45, 66, 68, 70, 106,
113—114, 120, 127, 136,
143, 173.

Indus 86.

iron leg of Vispala 52.

Judgment 169.

Jupiter (planet) 103.

Kaege 104, 117.

Kathenotheism 16.

Kentauros 137.

Kipær 173.

Kuhn 39, 81, 117, 140.

Langlois 104.

Lettic myth 53.

life after death 4.

lightning 12, 15, 16, 56, 59,
61, 67, 69, 70, 73, 75, 76,
77, 78, 81, 83, 84, 88, 90,
92, 112, 128, 134, 135, 140,
142, 149, 152, 158; as a
form of Agni 92, 93, 94;
associated with Soma 108.
lion 58, 79, 83, 90.

Ludwig 87, 117, 149.
lutes 134.

Magical effect of kindling
fire 98.
magical rites 8.
man and beast 153.
man-tigers 153.
Mannes 172, 173.
MANNHARDT 53.
marrriage processions 154.
Max MÜLLER 16, 70, 87, 104, 123, 151.
mead, Indo-European 114.
measuring the earth 11.
medu 114.
men and animals 148.
men, origin of 14.
messengers 143, 172, 173.
metamorphoses 134, 151, 163.
metempsychosis, germ of 166.
meteor 163.
method in mythology § 4 (5—7).
MEYER 81, 173.
milk 168; = rain 10, 80; = water 86; ripe — 62.
milky way 88.
mirage 136.
mist 158.
Mithra 30, 37, 44, 127.
monkey 64, 151.
monothelism, a kind of 4; polytheistic — 16, 17.
moon 31, 48, 69, 70, 73, 74, 88, 104, 108, 111, 118, 136, 137, 159, 173; = Soma 112; phases of the — 112, 125, 133, 134; waning of the — 112.
morning star 53.
motor and pestle 106; deified 155.
mother earth 22, 88, 90.
mothers, Agni’s two 91.
Waters as — 85.
mountain = cloud 111, 159.
mountains 135, 161; aerial — 115; deified 154.
MUHR 123.
Mythian 53.
mythological conceptions, relative ages of 20.
mythology, comparative § 6 (8); definition of — § 1; characteristics of Vedic — § 2 (2—3); post-Vedic — 86, 87.
myths, primary and secondary traits in 6.
Names, un-Aryan 162.
niggard 157.
night 12, 48; time of goblins 163; associated with morning 124.
north, region of Rudra 76.
north-east 171.
Odin 83, 152; as an eagle 114.
ogni 39.
Oldenberg 28, 34, 39, 43, 44, 53, 50, 70, 77, 93, 104, 117, 123, 149.
Oldham 87.
omen, birds and beasts of 152.
origin of various deities identical 3, 15.
ornaments of the dead 165.
Oṣṇīva, 28, addenda, line 10.
wolf 152, 163, 169, 172.
Pantheon 4, 13, 16, 154; ‘realistic’ — 154.
paradise, earthly 173; heavenly — 173.
paradox 12, 46, 91, 121, 122.
Parendi 124.
parentage, mythological applications of 11, 12.
Paris 106.
Pernīs 84, addenda, line 31.
Perry 69.
phallic worship 155.
phyletic = 140.
plague 152, 172.
Pischel 57, 58, 62, 69, 77, 123, 149.
plants 84, 154; deified 154.
points of the compass 9.
post-Vedic literature 102, 136, 139, 142, 160, 163; — mythology 118, 155; — poetry 150; — period 155; — Sanskrit 157; — Soma 112.
prehistoric notions about animals § 65 (153).
pressing-stones 195, 110, 144, 154.
pressings of Soma 114.
priest, Atharvan 7, 141.
Adivarṇa 107; Hotr 7, 96, 147.
priests and heroes, mythical 137—147.
Prometheus 72, 91.
punishment, future 169.
Prānas 39, 41, 119, 121.
Quail 52.
quiver, deified 155.
Rain 24, 59, 83, 88; names of — 81, n. 2.
rainbow 136, 137.
rain-cloud 83, 85, 90; names of — 83.
rain-clouds 60.
rain-god 85.
rain-waters 85.
rays = steeds of the sun 31.
rebirth 167, 168.
retribution, definition of § 1 (1).
religion, definition of § 1 (1).
rivers, deified § 33 (86—88); 154.
rock = cloud 111.
Sacrifice, attacked by goblins 163; celestial — 167.
sacrificial fire 99; — fires 47; — gifts 167, 168; — horse 35; — implements 154; — ladles 155; — post 154.
Satires on Brähmans 151.
Sayyūzhi 68.
Schmidt, Joh., addenda, l. 10, 29.
V. SCHROEDER 70, 77, 81.
Semitic legend 139.
serpent 72, 148, 152, 153, 158, 160, 165; = Agni 89.
serpent-slayer 152, 153.
seven, hotrs 144; — priests 139, 144; = Rṣis 144, 167; — stars 144.
sheep 36; wool of — 106.
sin, pardoned by various gods 121.
sleep 172.
solar year 39.
solstitial festival 155.
soma-backed 110.
soma-drinker (Agni) 16.
soma-drinkers 127.
soma-eagle 69, 107, 114, 142, 152.
soma-strainer 106, 111.
soma vat 106.
son, figurative use of the word 12; — of strength 102; — of waters 85.
song 168, 172; = of the Agnirases 142; = of the Maruts 80.
sorcerers 95.
Soul § 72 (166—167); = of the dead 48, 81.
south, connected with the Fathers 179, with Soma 34.
south-east 171.
SPIEGEL 70.
spirits, friendly 164; dark world of evil — 167.
stallion 80.
stars 10, 103, 112, 134, 136, 144, 167, 171.
steed 148; = Agni 89; = lightning 150; = Soma 108; = sun 31.
steeds of Indra 55; of Apaṃnapāt 70.
steps of Viṣṇu 37, 38, 39.
stone, burning 156; = sun 31.
storm-cloud 125.
storm-gods 81.
strainer, Soma 106, 111.
stratagem of the gods 156.
sun 15, 148; as a cosmogonic
agent 13; as a form of
Agni 93; daughter of the —
53, 105, 108, 119; eye of
the — 160; as abode of
the Fathers 167; coupled
with the moon 129, 173;
its whereabouts at night
10; restoration of the —
51, 53, 61; rising — 43,
137; steeds of the — 12;
wheel of the — 56, 63.
sun-bird 39, 136.
sunrise, Agni produced at 91.
sunset 153; unimportant in
Vedic worship 53.
sun-steed 136.
supertension of Varuṇa by
Indra 28.
Sutlej 87.
Sūtras 36, 75, 76, 119, 125,
152, 153, 155, 166, 168.
swan, golden 168.
symbolical steed 150.
symbols 155.

Temples, unknown in Rgveda
18.
ten fingers 105, 116, 122.
ten maidens = fingers 91, 106.
terrestrial gods 86–114.
terrestrial objects deified 154.
third daily Soma pressing 132.
Thraetaona 68.
three Agnis 94; — classes of
beings 164; — daily invoca-
tions 119, 120; — daily offer-
ings 89; — daily Soma press-
ings 107; — earths 169;
lakes of Soma 107, 139;
sacriifical fires 94, 95; —
Soma-tubs 139; — worlds 41.
three-headed demon 61, 64,
67, 68, 160; — goblins 163.
three-wheeled car 132.
Thrita 8, 43, 68, 114.

thunder 59, 84; — of the Mar-
uts 80.

thunder-god 54.
thunderstorm 108.
Thwaks 117.
time of the Aśvis' appearing
50.
tortoise 41, 151, 153.
totemism 153.
track of death 165.
transmigration 166, 168, 169.
tree, celestial 167.
trees 134, 154.
triad of gods 5, 19, 54, 69,
93; — of sacrificial god-
desses 87; — of worlds 9.
triple character of Agni 93.
twined 172.
twins, Aśvis 49; primaeval
173.
two births of Agni 94;
— classes of abstract gods
115; — eyes = sun and
moon 130.

Universe, mechanical produc-
tion of 11; three divisions
of 8, 11, 14.
Upanisads 119, 167, 168.

Vadare 114.
Vārāghna 152.
Vedic commentators 113.
Vedic gods, beneficent 18;
their character § 10 (15–
19); classified 19–21; their
common features 15; their
number 17, 19; originally
mortal 17; subordinate to
one another 16.
Vedic mythology, sources of
§ 3 (3–5).
verethra 159.
Verethragha 8, 66, 150, 152.
verethrajan 114.
Vivānhvant 43, 114, 172.
Vourukaṣa 137.
Vytra-slayer 87, 98, 109, 152;
= Agni 16; = sun 31.
Vytra-slayers 127, 128; = Aš-
vins 51.
Vytra-slaying 6, 80.
vulture 152.
vultures 163.

WALLIS 123.
water-nymph 15, 134, 137,
172.
Waters 10, 91, 116, 121, 126,
152, 154, 158, 159, 161;
aerial 59; associated with
Agni 92; in cosmogony 14;
as mothers 12, 69, 85, 107;
porifying and healing 85;
son of — 12; as wives of
Varuṇa 26.
Weapons, deified 155; — of
the dead 165; — of the Maruts 79.
WEBER 53; 77, 104, 140, 143,
169.
wedding hymn 35.
wedding procession 134.
weddings 163.
were-wolf 153.
west, connected with Savitṛ 34.
wheel = sun 31, 155; — of
the sun 146; — of Viṣṇu 155.
WHITNEY 65.
widow-burning 165.
WILSON 77, 104.
wind 72.
wind-spirits 137.
wine 168.
winged steed 148.
Wodan 83.
wolf 52, 157.
wolves 75.
wood, cosmogonic 11.
world-giant 13, 15, 82.
world-soul 168.

Yima 43, 172, 173.
Yimeh 172, 173.
Zarathustra 7.
Zimmer 87.
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