

**A HISTORY
OF INDIAN LITERATURE**

JAN GONDA

VEDIC LITERATURE

OTTO HARRASSOWITZ · WIESBADEN

A HISTORY OF INDIAN LITERATURE

EDITED BY JAN GONDA

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(SAMHITĀS AND BRĀHMAṆAS)

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A HISTORY OF INDIAN LITERATURE

Contents of Vol. I

Vol. I: Veda and Upanishads

Fasc. 1:	J. Gonda	Vedic Literature
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CONTENTS

Editor's Introduction	1
CHAPTER I <i>Introduction to the Veda in general and the Rgveda in particular</i>	
1. General introductory definitions. Composition of the Rgveda	7
2. The text of the Rgveda	15
3. Chronology; environment and culture	20
4. Development of 'schools'; appendices and ancillary literature	26
5. Commentaries	39
6. Survival of the Veda	43
7. Study of the Veda	55
CHAPTER II <i>Poetry, poet, poem</i>	
1. Inspiration and poetry	65
2. The poet	74
3. Sociology and performance	79
4. Ritual application	83
CHAPTER III <i>Contents of the Rgveda</i>	
1. Introduction	93
2. Invitations and invocations	101
3. Āpri hymns	104
4. Praise	105
5. Prayers	108
6. Myths	114
7. Legends	123
8. History	128
9. Riddles	132
10. Speculative hymns	136
11. Magic	142

12. Ecstatic practices	149
13. Erotic poetry	151
14. Morals and maxims	153
15. Lyrics; emotions	156
16. So-called ballads	159
17. Nature	161
18. Animals	166
19. Labour songs	167
20. Irony; humour	168
21. Dānastutis	170

CHAPTER IV *The structure of the Rgvedic poems*

1. Stanzas and metres	173
2. Structure of the sūktas	178
3. Introductory and final stanzas	185
4. Groupings of stanzas	189
5. 'Composite' hymns	191
6. Similarities and repetitions	193
7. Monologues, dialogues, the ākhyāna theory	198

CHAPTER V *The style of the Vedic hymns*

1. The Rgveda from the stylistic point of view	211
2. Formulas, parallelism and its corollaries, variation	221
3. Epithets	231
4. Brevity	236
5. Ambiguity	240
6. Imagery	248
7. Similes	254
8. Other stylistic features	261

CHAPTER VI *The Atharvaveda*

1. Names and position	267
2. Genesis and recensions of the Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā	272
3. The magical sūktas	277
4. Ritual and speculative sūktas	288
5. Style and structure	298
6. Ancillary and exegetical literature	307

CHAPTER VII	<i>The liturgical Saṃhitās</i>	
	1. The Sāmaveda	313
	2. The Yajurveda	323
CHAPTER VIII	<i>The Brāhmaṇas</i>	
	1. General introduction	339
	2. The texts	344
	3. Chronology	357
	4. The brāhmaṇas as historical sources	361
	5. Interpretation and argumentation	368
	6. Disputations	379
	7. Myths, legends and narrative episodes	384
	8. Style and structure	410
CHAPTER IX	<i>The Āraṇyakas</i>	423
Glossary		433
Abbreviations		437
Index		445

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY

One of the main reasons why Indian thought and Indian civilization make so fascinating a field of study and research lies in their unique history and remarkable structure. Indian civilization has its roots in an ancient heritage, in that pattern of culture which is sometimes called archaic or semi-primitive, sometimes also pre- or non-modern. This culture, or rather structure of the human mind, is, in the main, characterized by presenting, in some essential features, striking contrasts to our modern 'mentalité.' Without being onesidedly intellectual, it gives free scope to the emotional and imaginative sides of human nature; our distinction between the subjective and the objective, our contrast between reality and appearance are almost meaningless; the realm of nature and the realm of man are hardly distinguished; thought often appears wrapped in imagination; logical reasoning is by no means lacking but blended with affective and irrational tendencies; the men of light and leading have a bent for the speculative, more or less visionary, mode of apprehension, transcending experience; they are preferably concerned with man himself, his nature and destiny. On such a basis, reflected in many products of their literature, and without denying these origins, the Indians—anthropologically a mixture of immigrant Aryans and 'autochthonous' peoples of other descent—gradually elaborated a many-sided, highly developed civilization. This civilization is in no small measure characterized by unity in diversity, by homogeneity notwithstanding the utmost variety and complexity of its ethnic composition; by a multitude of languages and a wealth of different cultural patterns; characterized also by considerable diversity in mental character and enormous differences in religion and social customs, beliefs and practices varying widely both regionally and, within a given region, from class to class. While preserving the cohesion of its cultural provinces—religion, art, literature, social organization—to an unusual degree and on the other hand acquiring full scope for intellectual effort and pursuits it can glory in remarkable achievements in various fields.

Owing to the integration of a large variety of heterogeneous elements the Indian civilization constitutes a very complex and as to its main current remarkably continuous whole. As it covers the whole of life it has social and religious, economic, artistic and literary aspects. From the religious point of view it is an utterly diverse conglomerate of cults, practices, doctrines and ways of life. Viewed from the angle of sociology it is a stratified system of social classes which is, at least in traditional India, not only given religious sanction

but also, like many other fields of human effort, impregnated by a characteristic view of life and the world. The more or less constant elements of this conglomerate, the main features of the Indian 'great tradition' are, to a considerable extent, the belief in an eternal, fundamental principle (*brahman*), the ultimate source and goal of all existence, the One that is the All and sole reality; the recognition of a pristine body of religious literature as an absolute authority, however unknown its contents; a deep-rooted want for assuming, maintaining, and clinging to continuity; a craving for a firm foundation on which to build one's life and ideals, and the confidence that one's own existence and the culture of the community to which one belongs are founded on an eternal and infallible basis; the belief in *karman*, and its complement, the almost generally accepted doctrine of transmigration; the conviction that man's best endeavour should be directed towards escaping from impermanence or final emancipation; a complex 'polytheism' subsumed in a fundamental monotheism; a tendency to mysticism and monistic philosophy; a propensity to assimilate rather than to exclude or to abandon what once has been adopted.

This civilization is expressed and reflected by an uninterrupted, immense and utterly varied literary production from the *R̥gveda* onward which, while continually transforming and rejuvenating itself, has always been subject to processes of adaption and assimilation. A more than superficial study of many chapters of this literature requires of the reader, to some degree, familiarization with a non-modern 'mentality'; with a dynamic conception of the cosmic events; with religious convictions indissolubly associated with social life; with a more or less pronounced tendency to be in conformity with tradition and socio-religious norms and ideals; with mythical formulations of thought which, though products of imagination, are far from being mere fantasy; with various forms of speculation that, as a rule unrestricted by disciplined confrontation with the results of objective and analytical investigation, found unlimited possibilities for development. He will be impressed by a luxuriant imagination and a great narrative power; by a sense of the beauty of nature as well as recognition of spiritual values; by the consciousness of man's close and intimate relation with his natural surroundings in general and his fellowship with the other living creatures in particular. If he is not a professional indologist he will learn that India has, throughout many centuries, not only tended to the practice of self-denial, quietism and asceticism, but also to addiction to the pleasures and luxuries of life; that she delighted in the things of the senses no less passionately than in the things of the spirit; that, while aspiring to noble ideals of conduct, tolerance and humanity, she was not averse to extracting all happiness possible from earthly existence. He will hear about cunning and unscrupulous statecraft as well as occasional strenuous effort in the province of applied knowledge and great achievements in art and mathematics. Acquainting himself with the 'modern' literatures he will comprehend the impact of Islam, of the West, the spread of modern ideas, the influence of western ways of life; witness also

remarkable outbursts of intellectual activity, transformations in social and religious ideas, gradual transitions from a traditional to a modern society, a critical outlook on the past, new aspirations for the future, a zeal for reform and remodelling of the orthodox beliefs and traditional habits. In short, when placed in the context of the cultural inheritance this uniquely rich and many-sided literature will introduce him to the development of the *humanitas indica* in all its aspects.

However, the reader will also have to accustom himself to an unfamiliar historical background, to books of unusual length, to poems and prose works of uncommon structure, frequent repetitions of themes and, not infrequently, richness of material and detail and elaborateness of style. In traditional India the identity, biography, and circumstances in life of the authors and the dates of the composition of their works are as a rule not so important as in the West. In the majority of cases dates are only known approximately. The persons of the authors or compilers are not infrequently obliterated or even fated to remain anonymous for ever. Where we would like to base our historical research on reliable facts the only information given to a student of Indian literature often consists of a mythologized biography or some vague, general and contradictory statements. This is not only due to the fact that most literary works are little historically conditioned but also, and in many cases primarily, to the well-known tendency of pre-literate and traditional societies to subordinate the individual to the group; to the static, and theoretically unchangeable nature of the traditional Indian society and—under the influence of an age-long belief in the secondary reality of all empirical existence, in the almost absolute dependence on the power of karman and the continuous divine interference in mundane affairs—to a comparatively weak sense of individuality.

With a few noteworthy exceptions all other—medieval and modern—Indian literatures depend on, or are largely influenced by, the ancient Sanskrit background. To say that Sanskrit literature alone exceeds that of Greece or Rome is an error. It is almost boundless, in the sense that nobody knows its extent and the number of its writings. In the course of its prolonged literary existence Sanskrit—cultivated for literary purposes long after it had ceased to be a spoken language—underwent various and important changes. While many great authors, fond of displaying their erudition, always endeavoured to comply with the recognized standards, striving after grammatical correctness and stylistic elaboration, there is, especially in technical or non-brahminical works, abundant evidence of a mixed, or popular, incorrect Sanskrit. It will be seen that the origin of most of the 'modern' literatures of the Indo-Aryan languages which, through a Middle Indian (Prākṛit) stage, developed from Old Indian, is—like that of the Middle Indian Pāli and Ardha-Māgadhi—connected with the spread of religious ideas. Whereas, after the arrival of Islam, Muslim and Persian influence extended to all major linguistic areas calling into existence

some Muslim literatures, the earliest phase of the 'modern' literatures represent, in their devotional poetry and allied productions—much of which strongly influenced by, or even translated from, Sanskrit—Hindu revivalism. In course of time new literary genres were developed. The earliest literature of the Tamil South—which next to the Sanskrit North may claim one of the longest literary traditions of the world—was, with a specifically south Indian character and secular, independent of Sanskrit. However, in all four great Dravidian languages the influence of the dominant classical language of the North increased considerably, leaving traces not only in the language but also in the themes of these literatures.

The plan of this work reflects, not only the increase in factual knowledge and the widening of our horizon, but also the changed attitudes of the last sixty years. While much space is allotted to Sanskrit literature, the literary works written in the Middle Indian languages receive extensive treatment and much more importance than was possible in Winternitz' days had to be given to the modern literatures. A considerable part of the incorporated material has never been described. Those sections which already found a place in the works of our predecessors are generally much enlarged; old matter had to be brought up to date and a wealth of fresh information to be included.

The dissimilarity of the contributions in size and character can easily be explained. Their length has to depend on the scope of the particular subjects themselves and their relative importance; on the ambit and the state of preservation of the sources, the progress of modern research, and the extent of the relevant secondary literature. It should however be realized that every contributor has to make his choice, because the literature of India is on a gigantic scale and many of its provinces are insufficiently investigated. Since it may be expected that a large class of reader will require more information, whether factual or critical, in richer detail than the size of this History permits, contributors are not sparing with footnotes and bibliographies directing to the textual or historical, primary or secondary sources.

Unity of method and approach would be unrealizable in an enterprise undertaken by more than forty collaborators, first because research has not to the same extent made progress everywhere, and in the second place because it is impossible to insist on so many scholars adhering to one and the same school of literary study. Modern principles of literary research have as yet hardly been applied to Indian literature and the application of methods that have proved to be appropriate and to the purpose in English or other modern literatures of the West cannot be expected to lead to any considerable result if they are slavishly imitated. In any case, they should, in prolonged preparatory work of small compass, be put to the test and adapted to the study of Asian literatures before they can give us the lead in producing a comprehensive handbook. So,

each author has been encouraged to deal with his subject in the manner he feels is most appropriate. Some collaborators will not be able to omit technicalities peculiar to the branch of knowledge they are dealing with, others will have to enter into philological particulars. But many of them will take the opportunity to dwell on style and structure of the poems and prose works under examination; to focus attention on their imagery or narrative procedures; to study them from the aesthetic point of view; to discuss questions of authorship and borrowing or to evaluate some literary text from the standpoint of an historian; to enlarge upon the cultural significance of a genre or a particular work or on the important influence exerted by the social-religious structure of the Old-Indian society upon the motivation of many poems, narrative works and a wealth of other texts as well as upon the characters of the authors' personages, the sort of stories and subjects on which they play their parts, the scenes of action and the atmospheres in which the stories—in the broad sense of the term—take place.

While including, without regard to their standard of merit and without any other limitation, many works and 'genres' that do not satisfy any modern Western criteria the present editor is fully aware of the fact that those scholars who study so-called modern literatures of the West often exclude all non-connotative usage of a language from the sphere of their interest, or limit themselves practically to lyrical poetry, novels and other forms of fiction. However, while dealing with 'genres' and subjects which are nowadays in the West not generally included in surveys of literature we have not departed from what in describing Indian literature is long since usual. That is to say, it has been our endeavour to give an account of the whole written cultural heritage of the Subcontinent not even omitting occasional references to oral traditions. The works on various religious and scientific subjects, which in Sanskrit outnumber the *belles-lettres* many times, have had a greater cultural value than the latter. Religious hymns, ritual handbooks, special works on arts and sciences, complicated philosophical treatises discussing transcendent reality will arrest no less attention than epics, dramas, fables, narratives or grand court-poetry, over-elaborated prose novels or records of the past composed by men who were more interested in the patterns of events than in the events themselves.

All this is by no means a disadvantage because any onesided procedure, especially the exclusive application of an ahistorical method, would entail the serious risk of over-emphasizing formal points of view. Most 'modern' definitions of literature would, when applied to the Indian literary inheritance, involve an enormous amputation and mutilation. They would imply ignoring many of the most representative works; isolating literature from the other provinces of the Indian culture and from the life of the Indian peoples; neglecting historical connexions and eclipsing the significance which the literary works have from

the point of view of the history of civilization; disregarding the conditions under which they were produced, the status of their authors as poets, scholars, devotees of religion, their function in the social and religious life of the Indian continent. Literature—in the broad sense of the term—being one of the most important products of a people's intellectual activity, will always remain by far the most essential source of knowledge of a civilization. Indian literature, taken as a whole, is a unique approach to the study of human evolution in general, and of the development of religious, artistic and philosophical ideas in particular.

January 1975

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VEDIC LITERATURE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE VEDA IN GENERAL AND THE ṚGVEDA IN PARTICULAR

1. General introductory definitions. Composition of the Ṛgveda

The literature of the Veda is one of the most original and interesting productions of human endeavour. Extending over many centuries and consisting of numerous works dealing with a variety of subjects it bears an exclusively religious¹ stamp. The very name Veda, primarily signifying "Knowledge," designates the 'Sacred Lore' which, traditionally considered to be eternal², was believed to enable the experts to know the superhuman powers and the methods

¹ The term religious taken in a wider sense including also outlook and 'Weltanschauung.'

² As might be expected there was some difference of opinion as to the content of the doctrine of the divinity and eternity of the Veda. Whereas according to ṚV. 10, 90, 9 the main elements of the Veda proceeded from Puruṣa (Prajāpati) (see p. 137f.), some ancient authorities (cf. ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 8) taught that it was in the beginning created by that god, to whom it became a firm foundation—"hence *brahman* = the (threefold) Veda is the foundation of everything"—, or (ŚB. 11, 5, 8, 3; ChU. 4, 17, 1ff.) preferred to view the sacred scriptures as being extracted by the same High Being from the three deities representing the threefold universe (Agni, Vāyu, Āditya); according to BĀU. 4, 5, 11 the Veda is the breath of the Supreme Spirit, to AV. 19, 54, 3 it came into being from Time. See e.g. KANE, H.Dh. II, p. 352. In the post-Vedic period the doctrine of the eternity became an unassailable truth which the 'orthodox' philosophers tried to establish by means of logical arguments (see v. GLASENAPP, Lit. Ind., p. 41). Eternity and superhuman origin imply sanctity and supreme authority; the orthodox hold that nothing is cited in the Veda from history. For other particulars: J. MUIR, Original Sanskrit texts, III, London 1873, p. 321 (Index, s. v.); R. N. DANDEKAR, in Univ. of Ceylon Review 11 (1953), p. 135.

of influencing them³. The many works constituting this literature are as to contents and outward form very different. They comprise the fundamental 'Collections' (*saṃhitā*) mostly in verse, the prose explanations (*brāhmaṇa*), in addition to these the more esoteric *āraṇyakas* and *upaniṣads*, and finally a considerable number of ritual handbooks (*sūtra*) and ancillary works. The term Veda is also used in the plural to denote the four different types of *saṃhitā*, those of the laudatory stanzas (*rc*: Ṛgveda), of the sacrificial formulas (*yajus*: Yajurveda)⁴, of the chants to be sung to certain fixed melodies (*sāman*: Sāmaveda), and the Atharvaveda comprising, *inter alia*, magical texts. The last corpus, which was only at a later date recognized as canonical, was often excluded. In that case the terms "three Vedas" or "threefold Veda" (*trayī vidyā*) denote the three types of sacred texts collected in the other *saṃhitās*. The term Veda applies to all works belonging to one of these four divisions (*saṃhitās*, *brāhmaṇas* etc.) in general⁵ as well as to the *saṃhitās* in particular. Nowadays we are no longer inclined to assume⁶ as more or less self-evident that this whole body of literature came into existence in three successive periods or as "three well-defined strata."

In the only recension preserved to us, the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā⁷—"methodically arranged collection of Vedic verses in praise of deities"—as a rule briefly Ṛgveda, consists of 1028 'hymns' including the eleven so-called Vālakhilyas which are inserted after hymn 48 of the eighth book. These 'hymns' (*sūkta* "well-recited (text), good recitation")⁸ are grouped⁹ in ten 'books' (*maṇḍala*

³ According to an Indian belief worded by Sāyaṇa (Introduction to AiB.) the Veda gives man information on the supermundane means of attaining what is desired and avoiding what is evil (undesirable). HAUG, Ai. B. I, p. 51 not improbably surmised that the frequency of the phrase "who knows thus" (*ya evaṃ veda*) in the *brāhmaṇas* etc. has contributed to the general application of the name.

⁴ The ancient Vedic texts themselves often use the shorter terms, by preference in the plural (*rcakṣ*, *yajūṃsi* etc.), Ṛgveda etc. do not appear before AiB. 5, 32, 1.

⁵ Cf. e.g. Kauś. 1, 3 "The sacred tradition (comprises) *mantras* and *brāhmaṇas*." For other definitions see e.g. Medhātithi and Kullūka on Manu 2, 6, Sureśvara on BĀU. 2, 4.

⁶ With F. MAX MÜLLER (see below, p. 22); MACDONELL, H.S.L., p. 28 and others.

⁷ The main editions are: F. M. MÜLLER (with Sāyaṇa's commentary), Rig-Veda-Saṃhita, 6 vol., London 1849-1874, 2nd ed., The hymns of the Rig-Veda, 4 vol., London 1890-1892, ³Varanasi (Benares) 1966; TH. AUFRECHT, Die Hymnen des Rigveda (in transcription, without Sāyaṇa), 2 vol., Berlin 1861-1863, ²Bonn 1877; ³Wiesbaden 1955; ⁴1968; Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā published by the Vaidic Samshodhan Mandal (editors N. S. SONTAKKE, C. G. KASHIKAR and others), 4 vol., Poona 1933-1946; L. SARUP, Ṛgarthadīpikā (Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā with Mādhava's commentary; see below, p. 41), Lahore 1939-; VISHVA BANDHU, Ṛgveda, with *padapāṭha* and the available portions of the commentaries by Skandasvāmin and Udgītha, the *vyākhyā* by Veṅkaṭa-Mādhava and the *vṛtti* by Mudgala, 8 vol., Hoshiarpur 1963-1966.

⁸ Already at an early date some *sūktas* were, in accordance with their contents or after the name of their reputed poet or their initial words, given names: 1, 164, beginning *asyā vāmāsya*, *asyavamiya* (*sūkta*) (VāsDhŚ. 26, 6); 8, 46, an Indra

“cycle”) which vary in length, except that *maṇḍala* X contains the same number of hymns (191) as *maṇḍala* I¹⁰, one of the facts indicating the artificial character of the arrangement. The number of stanzas is 10462, an average of about ten stanzas to each hymn, the shortest hymn (1, 99) comprising only one stanza, the longest (9, 97) fifty-eight; the number of words 165.007¹¹. In bulk the whole *saṃhitā* is equivalent to the surviving poems of Homer.

Whereas the division into ten *maṇḍalas*—invariably followed in the West in quoting from these texts—is, as will be shown presently, an historical one, there is for didactic purposes another, later and purely mechanical, division in “eighths” (*aṣṭaka*) of about equal length. Each *aṣṭaka* is subdivided into eight “lessons” (*adhyaīya*)¹², each of the latter into “groups” (*varga*) of five or six stanzas. Besides, the *maṇḍalas* are, likewise for practical purposes, mechanically divided into “recitations” (*anuvāka*).

Six *maṇḍalas*, II to VII, are homogeneous in character and traditionally regarded as the centre of the whole collection, the hymns of each book being composed, or rather ‘seen’¹³, by poets of the same family which handed them down as its heritage¹⁴. *Maṇḍala* II contains the hymns of the Ṛṭsamadas¹⁵, III of the Viśvāmitras¹⁶, IV of the Vāmadevas, V of the Atris, VI of the Bharadvājas, VII of the Vasiṣṭhas¹⁷. The tradition is born out by internal evidence: there are some typical refrains¹⁸; the names of the ‘seers’ (*ṛṣi*) are not infrequently mentioned in the hymns¹⁹. The *sūktas* contained in these

hymn ascribed to Vaśa: *vaśa (sūkta)* (AiĀ. 1, 5, 1); 10, 30, directed to the Waters (Āpaḥ) or to Apām Napāt: *aponaptrīyam* (ŚB. 1, 4, 9); 10, 90 *sahasraśiṣasūkta* (more commonly, *puruṣasūkta*) (GautamaDhŚ. 19, 12 etc.).

⁹ See e.g. also MACDONELL, H.S.L., p. 39; WINTERNITZ, H.I.L., p. 57.

¹⁰ *Maṇḍala* II etc. comprise 43, 62, 58, 87, 75, 104, 103, 114 *sūktas* respectively.

¹¹ P. POUCHA, in ArchOr 13, p. 105.

¹² H. OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 41, p. 508; 42, p. 362 (= K.S., p. 555; 563); A. BERGAIGNE, in JA 1887 I, p. 211; 1887 II, p. 488.

¹³ See p. 65 ff.

¹⁴ H. OLDENBERG, Über die Liedverfasser des Rigveda, ZDMG 42, p. 199 (= K.S., p. 568); P. L. BHARGAVA, India in the Vedic age, Aminabad 1971, p. 166 (tradition on the families). We shall have to revert to the importance of family traditions, the occurrence of ‘family hymns,’ and the differences in tradition, as apparent, for instance, from the *āpri* hymns.

¹⁵ Cf. A. WEBER, in SB Berlin 1900, p. 601 (in part antiquated or disputable); V. G. RAHURKAR, in Vol. Kavirāj, Lucknow 1967, p. 29 (poetic merits, stylistic devices, relations with Indra); M. K. VARMA, in Centre of Adv. Study in Sanskrit, Univ. Poona 1 (1972), p. 83. M. D. PANDIT, in J. Univ. Poona, Hum. Sect. 25 (1967), p. 135 tried, with uncertain results, to determine the interrelations between Ṛṭsamada and other poets of the family books.

¹⁶ Cf. BERGAIGNE, in JA 1889 I, p. 196; U. CH. SHARMA, in Fel. Vol. Charudeva Shastri, Delhi 1974, p. 149.

¹⁷ H. OLDENBERG, Über die Liedverfasser des Ṛgveda, ZDMG 42 (1888), p. 199 (= K.S., p. 568).

¹⁸ See p. 195.

¹⁹ Cf. GRASSMANN, ṚV. übers. I, p. 1.

'family-books'²⁰ are arranged on a uniform plan differing from that of the other *maṇḍalas*. The first group of *sūktas* is invariably addressed to Agni²¹, the second to Indra, and those that follow to other gods²². Within these deity groups the hymns are arranged according to the decreasing number of their stanzas²³. Thus the Agni group of *maṇḍala* II begins with a *sūkta* of sixteen stanzas (2, 1) and ends with one of only six (2, 10)²⁴. If two or more successive hymns have the same number of stanzas those in a longer metre have precedence. The series of the hymns within each *maṇḍala* are, in principle, likewise arranged according to the diminishing number of their hymns. The *maṇḍalas* II–VII themselves follow each other according to the increasing number of their *sūktas*, if allowance is made for obvious later additions²⁵. These facts combined with the general character of these books render it highly probable that they formed the nucleus of the whole *saṃhitā*. Occasionally this principle of arrangement did not however prevent the redactors from grouping together hymns in accordance with their metrical structure or their more special contents²⁶.

On the other hand, *maṇḍalas* I, VIII, and X²⁷ were not composed each by a distinct family of *ṛṣis*, but consist of groups of hymns based on identity of authorship²⁸. The second part of *maṇḍala* I (51–191) is held to be the earliest addition to the nucleus formed by the family books, the internal arrangement of which it follows²⁹. It consists of nine shorter collections each of which is

²⁰ The term is not too felicitous, because *maṇḍala* I and part of X consist also of 'family collections.'

²¹ One should not (with WEBER, SB Berlin 1900, p. 617) suggest co-ordinating this order to a successive cult, importance or precedence of the gods concerned. Agni owes this position to his being the *purohita* "domestic priest" (ṚV. 1, 1, 1; KANE, H. Dh. II, p. 40) whose task it was to ward off evil and fulfil other priestly functions by being "placed before" (cf. GONDA, in Festschrift Kirfel, Bonn 1955, p. 107).

²² For many details see A. BERGAIGNE, Recherches sur l'histoire de la Saṃhitā du Ṛg-Veda, I, JA 1886 II, p. 193; 1887 I, p. 191; 518; F. PINCOTT, On the arrangement of the hymns of the Ṛgveda, JRAS 1884, p. 381; OLDENBERG, H. R. I, p. 191; WEBER, SB Berlin 1900, p. 603.

²³ For observations on the position of particular hymns see e.g. also GELDNER, ṚV. on 3, 53; 6, 47; 7, 33; 103; VELANKAR, at JUB 11, 2, p. 64 (correspondence in metre).

²⁴ Generally speaking, the tendency to fall into cycles shows the advanced character of the tradition.

²⁵ Likewise, with the exception of *maṇḍala* IV the numbers of their stanzas (429, 617, 589, 726, 765, 841).

²⁶ Cf. ṚV. 3, 40–42; 5, 20–23; 7, 12–14; 1, 165ff., and especially 169–171; 4, 34–36. There are more instances of groups of hymns which belong closely together: 6, 62–63; 10, 51–53. See also below, p. 139; 201f.

²⁷ For a brief survey see GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. XIV.

²⁸ PINCOTT, at JRAS 1887, p. 598 (going too far in the assumption of eclecticism for ritual purposes); BERGAIGNE, JA 1887 II, p. 488 (according to whom some hymns are combinations of fragments).

²⁹ On the arrangement of the hymns: BERGAIGNE, in JA 1886 II, p. 268; A. BARTH, in RHR 19, p. 134 (= Oeuvres, II, Paris 1914, p. 8).

assumed to be the work of one author (or family). Their names are, according to tradition, Savya, Nodhas, Parāśara, Gotama, Kutsa, Kakṣivat, Parucchepa, Dirghatamas, Agastya. They are distinct from the poets of the family books³⁰. The first part of I³¹—which must have combined with these collections at a later date—shows considerable affinity with *maṇḍala* VIII. More than half its *sūktas* are attributed to members of the Kaṇva family, to which belong VIII, 1–66³². There are, moreover, in both collections many parallel and identical passages, and some of the hymns of I are in the favourite strophic metre (*pragātha*)³³ which is so prevalent in VIII. *Maṇḍala* VIII differs in other respects from the family series: it does not begin with Agni hymns and the hymns 67–103 are ascribed, not to Kaṇvas, but to other poets. It has fewer hymns than VII and consequently infringes the rules of the arrangement³⁴.

Book IX, comprising 114 hymns ascribed to more than sixty poets, consists entirely of *sūktas* addressed to Soma while its juice is in process of clarifying (hence *soma pavamāna*). Since the poets belong to the same families as the authors of the *maṇḍalas* II–VII—typical refrains peculiar to those families re-appear in IX—and the family books include not a single hymn to *soma pavamāna*—there are only some *sūktas* invoking the god Soma in his general character³⁵—it cannot be doubted that this *maṇḍala* contains the *soma pavamāna* hymns gathered for liturgical reasons into a single collection which was added after the books I–VIII. This means that the very core of the Vedic ritual texts is separated from the rest which is on the whole less ritually oriented³⁶. This does not imply that the hymns of IX themselves were in their entirety of recent origin. Some of them are probably early as accompanying the soma ritual which goes back to the prehistoric period³⁷. It is however very difficult to distinguish chronological stages in this collection. It can be divided into two parts, the first being almost exclusively composed in the *gāyatrī* metre, the second mainly in other metres. The hymns 1–60 follow each other according to the decreasing number (10–4) of their stanzas, an arrangement not adopted in the second part. As a whole this *maṇḍala*, concentrating upon

³⁰ For a not wholly successful attempt at establishing the chronological relations between the authors of book I and those of II–VII: A. K. CHAKRAVORTY, in *Calcutta Review* 179 (1966), p. 271.

³¹ RV. I, 1–50.

³² On the Kaṇvas: V. G. RAHURKAR, at 22 AIOC II, p. 32.

³³ See p. 111, n. 43

³⁴ On the special position of VIII—which is also apparent from some myths, e.g. 8, 77—see HOPKINS, at JAOS 17, p. 23; BRUNNHOFER, at KZ 25, p. 367; BERGAIGNE, at JA 1889 I, p. 175; HILLEBRANDT, V. M. I, p. 438; RENO, in *Comm. Vol. Nobel*, New Delhi 1963, p. 176.

³⁵ RENO, E. V. P. IX, p. 67; 120.

³⁶ For *maṇḍala* IX compare p. 156 and see GELDNER, RV. III, p. 1; RENO, E. V. P. IX, p. 1 (see also VIII, p. 1); M. PATEL, at BhV 1, p. 11; 2, p. 1; E. GEROW, in JAOS 88, p. 312; translations in RENO, o. c.; S. S. BHAWE, *The Soma-hymns of the R̥gveda*, 3 vol. (9, 1–70), Baroda 1957–1962.

³⁷ Cf. GONDA, *Dual deities*, p. 363.

one particular subject, reducing mythological references and invocations of other gods, and consisting of almost endless variations and combinations of the same or similar phrases, is still more uniform in character than most other parts of the *samhitā*³⁸.

Scholars are long since in entire agreement on the supplementary character of *maṇḍala* X³⁹. It must indeed have been the final addition after the nine other books. It consists of three main collections the first and second of which have much in common: 1–60 comprising thirteen series of ‘family groups’⁴⁰; 61–84 constituting twelve groups of two hymns each which are often addressed to the same god and similar or even complementary in content; 85–191 (the most recent), being a considerable number of isolated hymns⁴¹. In arranging these—very often anonymous—texts⁴² the principle of the diminishing numbers of the stanzas has on the whole been followed⁴³. That this book begins with eight Agni hymns⁴⁴ is hardly due to chance⁴⁵; but there is in the other books nothing that resembles the Yama and funeral texts of the second series (10, 10–19). The large majority of the hymns of the third group, while showing some affinity with the younger and additional elements of I–VIII—with IX it has hardly anything in common—exhibit marked deviations from the usual contents of the corpus: speculation on the origin and the mysteries of the universe and on the ultimate principle, the occurrence of ‘atharvanic’ matter and family rites—the wedding hymn 10, 85—are, besides the presence of gods unknown to the other *maṇḍalas*, its most striking characteristics.

Although it has often been said⁴⁶ that *maṇḍala* X displays, both in subject-matter and linguistic detail, signs of more recent origin than the bulk of the collection, it is generally conceded that it also contains hymns quite as old as the average of those in other books. These texts may have found a place here because their subjects were alien to the purposes of the other collections, because their final redaction was posterior to the completion of the earlier books or because at a later date it seemed expedient to include them also. Ascriptions to poets (families) known from other parts of the R̥gveda—especial-

³⁸ For the contents of *maṇḍala* IX see also BERGAIGNE, R. V. I, p. 148; HILLEBRANDT, V. M. ²I, p. 193.

³⁹ See also BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 21, p. 42; WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 59; MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 42; v. GLASENAPP, Lit. Ind., p. 52; RENOUE, E. V. P. II, p. 1. Cf. e.g. also GRASSMANN, RV. übers. II, p. 288; OLDENBERG, H. R. I, p. 268.

⁴⁰ For details: BERGAIGNE, in JA 1887 I, p. 191.

⁴¹ For a survey: GELDNER, R̥V. I, p. XVIII; III, p. 121.

⁴² Many names of poets were made up by later interpreters.

⁴³ Many exceptions in the first collection.

⁴⁴ As to 10, 8 see RENOUE, E. V. P. X, p. 7; XIV, p. 7.

⁴⁵ See above, p. 10.

⁴⁶ Since R. ROTH, in Tübinger Universitätsschrift 1856, 5, p. 18; see e.g. MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 42; J. N. FARQUHAR, An outline of the religious literature of India, Oxford 1920, p. 153; KEITH, R. Ph. V. U., p. 2 and others mentioned in notes 44ff. of J. WACKERNAGEL, Altindische Grammatik, Introduction générale by L. RENOUE, Göttingen 1957, p. 50.

ly VII and III—are not infrequently corroborated by internal evidence⁴⁷. On the other hand, there is room for the supposition⁴⁸ that the different character of many hymns contained in this book might be due to their originating in other milieus—tending to philosophical speculation, the worship of other gods or atharvanic ideas—rather than a distance of time.

As to the later additions to the whole corpus, the possibility of which cannot be denied, there has been a controversial dispute between Bergaigne and Oldenberg⁴⁹. The latter was inclined drastically to reduce the number of interpolations adopted by the former, also because, he argued, these are not, in style etc., strikingly different from the rest. ‘Violation of the principles of arrangement’ has since been a recurrent argument in discussions of interpolation⁵⁰, relative chronology, possible combinations of shorter hymns so as to constitute a whole, genuineness of refrains, and allied problems⁵¹.

In particular cases doubt has indeed been thrown upon the correct delimitation of two successive hymns. Thus ṚV. 7, 55, 1, which in the ritual is grouped together with the three stanzas of 7, 54 and, like these, invokes Vāṣṭospati, the genius of the homestead, may have originally made up one text with the preceding *sūkta*⁵².

On the other hand, there are many hymns which, while following each other immediately, are more or less closely connected with one another. A reference to a motive or theme⁵³, similarity in style or the use of identical phrases in dealing with the same subject⁵⁴ obviously led the redactors to place two hymns in close proximity also when they are addressed to different deities⁵⁵. The smaller Agni hymn 1, 150, which (in stanza 1) resumes two words of the final stanza of the preceding *sūkta*⁵⁶ dedicated to the same god, creates the impres-

⁴⁷ For details: RENOUE, E. V. P. II, p. 9.

⁴⁸ See also HILLEBRANDT, at GGA 1889 I, p. 400.

⁴⁹ See above, note 12.

⁵⁰ For the possibility of interpolations see e.g. BERGAIGNE, in JA 1889 I, p. 163.

⁵¹ See e.g. BERGAIGNE, in JA 1886 II, p. 199; 205; 1887 I, p. 211; HILLEBRANDT, in GGA 1889 I, p. 399; OLDENBERG, H. R. I, p. 242 (comparing parallel texts in the Atharvaveda); Vedic hymns, p. 17 (on 1, 27, to be divided into some minor hymns); ARNOLD, in KZ 37, p. 209; K. C. CHATTOPADHYAYA, at 8 AIOC, p. 31 (*inter alia* on ṚV. 3, 51–53).

⁵² V. M. APTE, in Comm. Vol. S. VARMA, I, Hoshiarpur 1950, p. 119. See MG. 2, 11, 19; ĀśvG. 2, 9, 9; “7, 55, 2–8 are traditionally held to be lullaby stanzas” (Bṛhaddevatā 6, 2); cf. AV. 4, 5.

⁵³ See e.g. RENOUE, E. V. P. IV, p. 22 (on 1, 105 and 106); 8, 28–30.

⁵⁴ E.g. 1, 162 and 163; 2, 25, 1 and 2, 26, 1 (both addressed to Brahmaṇaspati); cf. H. P. SCHMIDT, Bṛhaspati und Indra, Wiesbaden 1968, p. 115. See also 1, 44 and 45; 1, 116 and 117 (Geldner, ṚV. I, p. 156; RENOUE, E. V. P. XVI, p. 15); 4, 1 and 2; 4, 13 and 14 (RENOUE, E. V. P. XIII, p. 103); 4, 38–40; 5, 67 and 68; 6, 15 and 16; 6, 64 and 65 (RENOUE, E. V. P. III, p. 85); 10, 67 and 68; 83 and 84 (CH. MALAMOUD, in Mélanges Renou, p. 493).

⁵⁵ See e.g. ṚV. 1, 24 and 25 (compare the final stanzas).

⁵⁶ Cf. 8, 29, 1 and 28, 5.

sion of being a continuation of the latter⁵⁷. Similar observations can, for instance, be made in connection with 2, 36 and 37 which, being composed in the same metre and consisting of the same number of stanzas (six) are, like 1, 15 (twelve stanzas) to accompany twelve libations to various gods (*ṛtugraha*⁵⁸). Associations of this description were, rightly or wrongly, also ascertained by the ancient interpreters⁵⁹.

⁵⁷ Cf. RENOUE, E. V. P. IV, p. 24 on 1, 107; and GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 455 on 4, 26 and 27; 10, 48 and 49.

⁵⁸ See GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 15; RENOUE, E. V. P. XVI, p. 77. Compare also ṚV. 1, 2 and 3 (cf. BERGAIGNE, in JA 1889, p. 123; OLDENBERG, R. V., p. 452).

⁵⁹ See e.g. the *anukramaṇikā* on 2, 42 and 43. The above observations are not to say that there do not exist similar relations between non-successive hymns; see e.g. 1, 113 and 1, 124 (RENOUE, E. V. P. III, p. 61); in 10, 121 there are stylistic reminiscences of 2, 12; compare also 7, 34 and 56.

2. The text of the R̥gveda

It is mostly assumed that some hundreds of years must have been needed for the hymns found in the oldest corpus, the R̥gveda—and for those which have been lost—to come into being¹. In any case, they were collected and preserved by oral tradition in the families of their poets². There is much to be said for the hypothesis that at a given moment the 'family books' (II–VII) came to constitute a collection taught to members of all contributory families³. Although a number of undeniable corruptions must belong to this period⁴—memorization did not exclude the preservation of what had become unintelligible—the texts maintained a remarkable high level of authenticity. At a later, undefinable date—but in all probability before ± 600 BC⁵—they were finally arranged and codified. There may be some truth in Yāska's⁶ statement that this took place when the power of oral reproduction began to decline. The codification⁷ involved in some cases an archaization, but—as appears also from the metrical schemes of many verses—mostly a modification of the phonetic form of the words—mainly an application of other *sandhi* rules—which was modernized so as to agree with the pronunciation prevailing in the times of the redactors⁸. As to the exact procedure of these redactors we grope in the dark, but we may be sure that they guarded the verbal integrity of the text with extreme care⁹. Apart from some minor recasts and additions¹⁰ the

¹ Cf. e.g. HILLEBRANDT, at GGA 1889, I, p. 405.

² See W. D. WHITNEY, at JAOS 4, p. 245. 'Family' not to be taken in the narrower sense.

³ Cf. e.g. VON GLASENAPP, L. I., p. 52. That this unification was effected on the initiative of a powerful chieftain (J. N. FARQUHAR, An outline of the religious literature of India, Oxford 1920, p. 9) is a mere, and improbable, guess. K. R. POTDAR, at Oriental Thought 3 (1957), p. 62 and 18 AIOC, S.P., p. 13 tries to distinguish three or more stages (?). See also BERGAIGNE, in JA 1889 I, p. 172 (unification of family rituals); D. D. KOSAMBI, at JBBRAS 27, p. 12.

⁴ See also H. OLDENBERG, Vedaforschung, Stuttgart–Berlin 1905, p. 44.

⁵ GELDNER, V. S. III, p. 144 (contra OLDENBERG, H. R. I, p. 370); SCHEFFTELOWITZ, Apokryphen, p. 5f.; C. G. KASHIKAR, at 13 AIOC, p. 44.

⁶ Yāska, Nir. 1, 20.

⁷ Undertaken under the influence of external circumstances? (cf. J. BLOCH, Les débuts des littératures dans l'Inde, Hommage L. Febvre, II, Paris 1953, p. 3).

⁸ It is possible that then also some standardization of language took place.

⁹ Cf. R. ROTR, at KZ 26, p. 52; ZDMG 48, p. 101; OLDENBERG, at ZDMG 55 (1901), p. 267ff. (= K. S., p. 726, on RV. 6, 1–20: negligence?); cf. V. M. APTE, Textual imperfections of the extant R̥gveda, Comm. Vol. S. Varma, I, p. 119; VISHVA BANDHU SHASTRI, at 15 AIOC, Bombay 1949, p. 69. The views published, with much repetition, by A. ESTELLER, in many articles (*inter alia* in The Indian Hist. Research Inst. Silver Jubilee Comm. Vol., Bombay 1953, p. 103; Proc. 26 Int. Congress of Or., Poona 1969, III, 1, p. 45; 19 AIOC II (1959), p. 13; 25 AIOC (1969), p. 15; ABORI 48–49 (1968), p. 1; 50 (1969), p. 1; 51 (1970), p. 59), according to which the redactor has wilfully and purposely changed the word- and verse-order, rhythm and meaning of the texts, and his attempts at restoring, on the base

corpus has since been preserved with marvellous accuracy even in the smallest details. There is much to be said for the assumption¹¹ that after the redaction of the Ṛgveda the practice was brought into vogue to combine, for liturgical purposes, portions taken from the heritage of different families.

Although four other recensions are mentioned¹²—those of Bāṣkala, Āśvalāyana, Śāṅkhāyana and Māṇḍūkeya—and there may have existed different collections for ritual use¹³, the obviously most authoritative recension, the only one which survived¹⁴, is that which a later tradition¹⁵ ascribes to the legendary Vyāsa, who is also supposed to have arranged the other Vedas, and modern scholarship to Śākalya¹⁶, the same man who—according to some, simultaneously¹⁷—compiled the *padapāṭha*¹⁸. In this *padapāṭha*, or ‘word-text’ prepared for purposes of study¹⁹, mnemonics²⁰ and a correct preservation of

of our present Ṛgveda—which he thinks is no more than a palimpsest—widely divergent texts of the poets, are completely untenable.

¹⁰ GRASSMANN, RV., was mistaken in regarding about one tenth of the corpus as spurious or additional.

¹¹ OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 42, p. 246 (= K. S., p. 615).

¹² In the Caranavyūha. The differences from Śākalya’s recension seem to have consisted mainly in the number and order of the hymns included; see SCHEFFTELOWITZ, o.c., p. 11. For these recensions see HILLEBRANDT, at BB 8, p. 195; ZDMG 40, p. 712; v. SCHROEDER, at WZKM 12, p. 277; SCHEFFTELOWITZ, o.c., p. 8. According to S. K. BELVALKAR, in 2 AIOC (1922), Pres. address, p. 5 there existed texts of other recensions up to the end of the 18th century. For traditions or lost ‘copies’ of the Ṛgveda: P. S. SASTRI, at Prabuddha Bhārata 1947, p. 209. For deviations from Śākalya’s recension in the ŚŚ. see W. CALAND, Śāṅkhāyana-Śrautasūtra, Nagpur 1953, p. XVII; for *mantras* cited in the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa, below, p. 345.

¹³ Cf. APTE, o.c.

¹⁴ For the possibility of other losses: A. K. CHAKRAVORTY, Seer Kaśyapa and his missing hymns, Calcutta Review 180 (1966), p. 31.

¹⁵ The name Vyāsa ‘the Disposer, Arranger’ occurs at TĀ. 1, 9, 2. According to an epic and purānic legend, which is foreign to the Veda, he was called Veda-Vyāsa because he divided the original Veda into four *saṃhitās* and distributed them among his four pupils. See e.g. Mbh. 1, 57, 73 and K. M. SHEMBHAVANEKAR, at ABORI 27, p. 114. For an attempt to co-ordinate traditions: R. MORTON SMITH, at Purāṇa, 7, p. 221.

¹⁶ According to OLDENBERG (H. R. I, p. 384) and KEITH (at JRAS 1907, p. 226) Śākalya must be placed at the end of the *brāhmaṇa* period, according to GELDNER (see note 18) he was a contemporary of Āruṇi (mentioned in Vedic prose texts) and Yājñavalkya and lived earlier, his *sākhā* (the Śākala) being as old as the Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā.

¹⁷ See already WEBER, in I. S. XIII (1873), p. 1.

¹⁸ ROTH, at KZ 26, p. 45; GELDNER, V. S. III, p. 144; B. LIEBICH, in S. B. Heidelberg Acad., ph. hist. Kl. 1919, 15, p. 20; P. K. NARAYAN PILLAI, at BDCRI 2 (1941), p. 247; C. G. KASHIKAR, at 13 AIOC II (1951), p. 39; cf. also the same, at ABORI 28, p. 301; C. K. RAJA, at 14 AIOC, S. P., p. 3; K. CHAṬṬOPĀDHYĀYA, in PO 1, 4, p. 49; K. P. JOG, at NIA III, 3 (1969), p. 56.

¹⁹ For grammatical study of the Veda see J. WACKERNAGEL, Altindische Grammatik, I, Göttingen 1896, p. LXII (French transl.: L. RENOÛ, Göttingen 1957, p. 35) with bibliographical notes.

²⁰ For some technical details: KASHIKAR, in 13 AIOC (see above).

the text, all the words of the continuous text (*saṃhitāpāṭha*) are separated and given in their original form, unaffected by the rules of *sandhi* (euphonic coalition of words etc.); moreover, most compounds and some derivatives and inflected forms are analyzed. For instance, Ṛ.V. 3, 59, 1c reads in the *saṃhitā* text: *mitrāḥ kṛṣṭīr animiṣabhī caṣṭe* "Mitra regards the settlements of men without blinking," in the *pada* text: *mitrāḥ kṛṣṭīḥ āni'miṣā abhi caṣṭe*; 9 a *mitró devēṣv āyūṣu* "Mitra, among gods and privileged men . . .": *mitrāḥ devēṣu āyūṣu*. This ancient analysis of the text, virtually the earliest rudimentary exegesis of the Ṛgveda, is notwithstanding some obvious inconsistencies and misinterpretations²¹, the product of a remarkable comprehension of the structure of the Vedic language. As a means of preserving the sacred text and ascertaining its meaning it was, already at an early date, complemented by the *kramapāṭha*²² or 'step by step arrangement of the text,' in which every word of the *pada* text occurs twice, being connected both with that which precedes and that which follows. On this arrangement was in its turn based the form of the text called *jaṭāpāṭha*²³ 'the twisted hair arrangement,' because each pair of words was repeated three times, one repetition being in inverted order (ab, ba, ab, bc, cb, bc . . .). The climax of complication to secure the text from all possible error is reached in the *ghanapāṭha* 'the compact text' in which the order is ab, ba, abc, cba, abc, bc, cb, bed etc.

Another safeguard of Vedic texts are the *prātiśākhya*s which were composed for the purpose of exhibiting—in oral instruction—all the changes necessary for constituting the *saṃhitā* text on the basis of the *padapāṭha*. In particulars there are considerable differences between these manuals, but in their generality they may go back to the same class of ancient repertories. The versified²⁴ Ṛgveda-prātiśākhya²⁵, rightly or wrongly attributed to Śaunaka of uncertain date, is the most important of this class²⁶ of practical aphoristical handbooks compiled 'in every (Vedic) school' which deal with *sandhi*, quantities and lengthening of vowels, accentuation and some questions of grammar and metrics, not with semantics or exegesis, which in the eyes of their authors must have been less important than a correct pronunciation. The others belong to the Taittirīyas, the Mādhyandinas and (two) to the Atharvaveda²⁷. They are

²¹ See e.g. ROTH, in KZ 26, p. 45; OLDENBERG, *Noten*, I, p. 430; II, p. 381; GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 241; S. K. BELVALKAR, at 2 AIOC, *Pres. address*, p. 6; B. BHATTACHARYA, at IC 12, p. 123. For discrepancies between the *saṃhitā* and *pada* texts: K. V. ABHYANKAR, at ABORI 52, p. 211.

²² For details: L. RENOUE, *Terminologie grammaticale du sanskrit*, III, Paris 1942, p. 55; ROTH, *Zur Litteratur und Geschichte des Weda*, Stuttgart 1846, p. 16.

²³ Cf. G. THIBAUT, *Das Jaṭāpāṭha*. *Lehrbuch des Jaṭāpāṭha für den Rigveda*, Leipzig 1870. There are not less than eight varieties of the *kramapāṭha*.

²⁴ H. OLDENBERG, at NG 1919, p. 170 (= K. S., p. 867).

²⁵ Edited and translated by F. M. MÜLLER, *Rig-Veda*, I, Leipzig 1856; and Leipzig 1869; V. K. VARMA, *Banaras Hindu Univ.* 1970.

²⁶ RENOUE (-FILLIOZAT), I. C. I, p. 305; M. GHOSH, at IHQ 11, p. 761; L. RENOUE, *La forme et l'arrangement interne des Prātiśākhya*, JA 248 (1960), p. 1.

²⁷ For the Sāmaveda see p. 321.

on the whole of greater interest to the grammarian than the student of literature; that is why the problem of the relations, chronological and other, of the *R̥gprātisākhya* with the great grammarian Pāṇini cannot be considered here²⁸.

The date at which the *R̥gveda* was put in writing²⁹ is uncertain³⁰. Statements such as "not before the 2nd century B.C." are hardly more than guesses, but there exists some information on comparatively late initiatives taken in this respect³¹.

Although after Śākalya the text of the *R̥gveda* has for many centuries remained unaltered—there are no variants³²—the fact that before assuming its present form it had been subject to human frailties explains that there nevertheless is occasion for criticism³³. The fortunate circumstance that a considerable part of its contents are found also in the other Vedic texts—which however had been more open to alteration and were less accurately handed down afterwards³⁴—enables us so to say to use these as sources of ancient variant readings and differences in the order of the verses³⁵, or at least to form an opinion of ancient interpretations of *R̥gvedic* passages. There can on the other hand be no doubt that many of these 'variants' owe their existence to the desire for a

²⁸ See e.g. P. THIEME, *Pāṇini and the Veda*, Allahabad 1935; at *IHQ* 13 (1937), p. 329; K. CHAṬṬOPĀDHYĀYA, *ibidem*, p. 343; S. P. CHATURVEDI, at *NIA* 1, p. 450 and 2, p. 723.

²⁹ On writing and written texts in general: WACKERNAGEL-RENOU, o.c., p. 32 (with the notes). The manuscripts show that the assumption that a written text is less liable to corruption has no general validity.

³⁰ For some details see RENOU, *Ecoles*, p. 33; WACKERNAGEL-RENOU (above, n. 19), p. 33; 47; 111. Among those who unconvincingly argue that the Vedic Indians were conversant with the art of writing is V. M. APTE, at *BDCRI* 4 (1942), p. 269; see also ROTH, at *KZ* 26, p. 56 (antiquated); G. PERTSCH, *Upalekha, de Kramapāṭha libellus*, Berlin 1854; L. SARUP, 8 *AIOC*, p. 21 (untenable); and compare LUDWIG, *RV. III*, p. XIV.

³¹ The Arabian author al-Birūnī (11th cent.) mentions a Veda recently written down in Kashmir (for details: RENOU, *E. V. P. VI*, p. 46). For some notices on Vedic manuscripts—which, generally speaking, are not old—e.g. L. VON SCHROEDER, at *S. B. Vienna Acad.* 133 (1896), 11, p. 30 and *ZDMG* 51, p. 666.

³² F. M. MÜLLER, *Rig-Veda, I, Vorrede*. The number and arrangement of the hymns, and even the numbers of syllables of our modern editions are identical with those given by Śaunaka. For a Kashmir manuscript which is an exception see v. SCHROEDER, at *WZKM* 12, p. 277; SCHEFTELOWITZ, o.c., p. 32 and at *WZKM* 21, p. 85.

³³ See CH. R. LANMAN, at *PAOS* 1884 (*JAOS* 11, p. CXCI); GRASSMANN, *RV. übers.* I, p. 3; OLDENBERG, *H. R.*; at *ZDMG* 55 (1901), p. 726 (= *K. S.*, p. 267); H. BRUNNHOFER, at *BB* 26 (1901), p. 76; BLOOMFIELD, at *JAOS* 27, p. 27f.; at *AJPh* 27, p. 401; GELDNER, *RV.*, e.g. on 1, 56; 173, 4; 2, 39, 4; 5, 29, 1; 38, 2; 41; 44; 6, 67, 7 etc.; KASHIKAR, at *NIA* 1, p. 750; V. K. RAJWADE, at *IHQ* 19, p. 153. Not all 'emendations' were, however, justified.

³⁴ A. LUDWIG, at *Abh. Böhmische Ges. d. Wiss.* 1889–90, VII, 3, but compare OLDENBERG, *Noten*, I, p. IV; see also OLDENBERG, at *ZDMG* 38 (1884), p. 472 (= *K. S.*, p. 546).

³⁵ Cf. e.g. OLDENBERG, *H. R. I*, p. 513 (on *RV.* 1, 52; 9, 13–15; 10, 18, 7).

reading that was better adapted to a special liturgical purpose. From the point of view of the employment of Ṛgvedic material for sacrificial purposes these various readings are indeed highly instructive. One should however take full account of the probability that the liturgists had selected Ṛgvedic material before Śākalya's times³⁶ and of the possibility that the compilers of the other *saṃhitās* had drawn part of their material from the same traditions as the poets of the Ṛgveda³⁷, traditions whose exponents must, to a certain degree, have thought in terms of fluidity. Moreover, the tradition of the other *saṃhitās*, the *brāhmaṇas* and *sūtras* is far less sound than that of the Ṛgveda. The authority of the latter seems to have increased after its codification: the younger a *mantra* in the Yajurveda is the more it resembles its Ṛgvedic counterpart³⁸.

It may finally be emphasized that, although we cannot follow Bloomfield³⁹ in considering all hymns of the Ṛgveda to have been liturgical from the very beginning and in regarding the hymns and *brāhmaṇas* as largely contemporaneous modes of literary expression, there is no doubt much truth in his assumption that the *mantras* and the *brāhmaṇas* are in the main based on the same tradition and general conceptions. The redactors of the hymns in their present arrangement must, on the whole, have preceded the redactors of the *brāhmaṇas*.

³⁶ According to V. M. APTE, o.c., there probably existed a recension of the Ṛgveda for ritual use. Cf. also VISHVA BANDHU SHASTRI, in 15 AIOC, Pres. address, p. 96.

³⁷ For internal borrowings etc. see also BLOOMFIELD, Repetitions and, e.g., GELDNER, ṚV. on 7, 54, 2; 55, 1; 10, 131, 3; 170, 4; 177, 3; GONDA, Dual deities, passim.

³⁸ Cf. RENOU, at JAOS 68, p. 82.

³⁹ BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 15, p. 144.

3. Chronology; environment and culture

At this point our account of the history of the Ṛgveda and the study of its text must be interrupted in order to give that minimum of historical, geographical and cultural information which is indispensable for a right understanding of what will follow.

The chronology of the Veda in general and the Ṛg-Saṃhitā in particular¹ has given rise to much controversial discussion. We must distinguish between absolute and relative chronology on one hand and between the date of individual hymns or component parts and the redaction of the collections on the other. As to the former problem we can only be certain that the Ṛgveda is anterior to the other collections because it does not presuppose their existence, whereas the authors of the latter are more or less acquainted with it². Most scholars are moreover also in agreement as to the *terminus ad quem* of the main component parts of the Vedic literature in its entirety. The *saṃhitās*, *brāhmaṇas*, *āraṇyakas* and the earliest *upaniṣads* must for the greater part have existed in their present form before the rise of Buddhism in the second half of the 6th century B.C. and before the spread of the Aryan culture and the establishment of Vedic 'schools' in the South of India. The canonical writings of the Buddhists refer not only to the Veda, but also to Buddha's conviction that a mere knowledge of that literature does not lead to a transcendent goal³.

The determination of the *terminus a quo* is closely connected with the beginning of the Indo-Aryan civilization and the vexed problem of the time at which the Aryans arrived in India⁴. There is indeed no conclusive evidence of an earlier origin of any Ṛgvedic hymn⁵. Suggestions to determine the date of the Ṛgveda on the strength of presumed anti-Zoroastrian allusions in, or striking literary parallels between, some of its texts and passages in the Avesta⁶ which would point to proximity and a close chronological and cultural relationship⁷ are based on quicksand, because, besides the uncertain date of the

¹ For a survey: WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 290 (partly antiquated); A. B. KEITH, in Comm. Vol. Woolner, Lahore 1940, p. 137; E. J. THOMAS, in Mem. Vol. L. Sarup, Hoshiarpur 1954, p. 80; v. GLASENAPP, Lit. Ind., p. 48; T. JA. ELIZARENKOVA, Rigveda, Moscow 1972, p. 9.

² In view of the oral transmission of this literature little reliance can, for chronological purposes, be placed on cross-references and mutual quotation.

³ Cf. e.g. Dīgha-Nikāya I, p. 235 ff.

⁴ Questions which have no bearing upon the history of Vedic literature, for instance the probability of the existence of pre-Vedic Aryans, cannot be considered.

⁵ The completely untenable assumption that the Ṛgveda or part of it was composed in the period of the Indo-European unity (e.g. GRIFFITH, H. ṚV. I, p. VII) was rightly combatted by PISCHEL-GELDNER, V. S. I, p. XXII.

⁶ Cf. e.g. ṚV. 2, 12, 8: Yašt 10, 47; 9, 7, 7: Yasna 10, 8; 9.

⁷ J. HERTEL, in Asia Major, 6, p. 377; IF 41, p. 188; Die Zeit Zoroasters, Leipzig 1924, p. 58; 62; H. C. SETH, at ABORI 23, p. 451 (relying on fantastic identifications of persons such as Suśravas = Cyrus the great); 13 AIOC, p. 91; W. P. SCHMID, at IF 64, p. 1.

Avesta, the cases of cultural⁸, stylistic⁹ and lexicographical¹⁰ parallelism between texts of this description do not necessarily point to simultaneity¹¹. Moreover, the distance in time between R̥gveda and Buddha cannot have been so short as this theory would have us believe. Nor can, in the opinion of the present author, reliable evidence be produced in favour of the supposition¹² that certain parts of the R̥gveda were composed in Iran or in the Indo-Iranian borderland. The attempts at drawing chronological conclusions by the aid of astronomical data, simultaneously and independently from each other made by Jacobi¹³ and Tilak¹⁴ who came to date at least part of the Veda back to ± 4500 B.C. and even ± 6000 B.C., rightly met with violent opposition¹⁵: the relevant passages in the Vedic texts are not unambiguous and some of the exegetical assumptions upon which these speculations rest are wholly improbable¹⁶. Hypotheses concerning a polar origin or even polar reminiscences¹⁷

⁸ Cf. e.g. OLDENBERG, R. V., p. 24.

⁹ Cf. E. BENVENISTE, in *Mélanges Renou*, Paris 1968, p. 73.

¹⁰ For criticism: B. GEIGER, in *ZDMG* 84, p. *96.

¹¹ See also A. B. KEITH, at *IHQ* 1, p. 4 and in *Comm. Vol. A. C. Woolner*, Lahore 1940, p. 137.

¹² E.g. H. BRUNNHOFER, in *BB* 26, p. 76; E. FORRER, in *S. B. Akademie Berlin* 1919, p. 1029; G. HÜSING, in *Prace lingwistyczne J. Baudouin de Courtenay*, Cracow 1921, p. 151; A. HILLEBRANDT, *Aus Alt- und Neuindien*, Breslau 1922, p. 3; J. BLOCH, *L'Indo-aryen*, Paris 1934, p. 2; and especially J. HERTEL, at *IF* 41 (1923), p. 188; *Die Himmelstore im Veda und im Avesta*, Leipzig 1924, p. 7; *Die Methode der arischen Forschung*, Leipzig 1926, passim (for criticism see e.g. W. WÜST, at *GGA* 1934, 1-2, p. 1); P. K. BHATTACHARYA, in *Calcutta Review* 174 (1965), p. 1.

¹³ H. JACOBI, at *Festgruss Roth*, p. 68; *NGGW* 1894, p. 105; *Proc. 10th Int. Congress of Orientalists* (1894), I, p. 103; *ZDMG* 49, p. 218; 50, p. 69. Compare also A. LUDWIG, at *S. B. Böhmische Ges. d. Wiss.* 1885, p. 76, and S. B. DIKSHIT, at *IA* 24, p. 245.

¹⁴ B. G. TILAK, *The Orion or Researches into the antiquity of the Vedas*, Bombay 1893, and at *IA* 24 (1895), p. 85.

¹⁵ However, in India, Tilak's views have ever since found adherence. According to L. SARUP, at 8 *AIOC* (1935-1937), p. 1 the R̥gveda must have been anterior to the Indus civilization ($\pm 2800 - \pm 1500$ B.C.); see also J. CH. RAY, at *IC* 1939 (61, p. 77); P. C. SENGUPTA, at *JRASB, Letters*, 16 (1950), p. 1 (4000-2450 B.C.); N. N. GODBOLE, at *ABORI* 42 (1961), p. 1 (25000-15000 B.C.); cf. v. GLASENAPP, *L. I.*, p. 48. The Indian tendency to date the Veda back to very remote times is closely bound up with the belief in its being eternal. (See AGEHANANDA BHARATI, in *Religion and Change in contemporary Asia*, ed. by R. F. SPENCER, Minneapolis 1971, p. 99). For Indian traditional history see A. D. PUSALKER, in R. D. MAJUMDAR and A. D. PUSALKER, *History and Culture of the Indian people, I, The Vedic age*, London 1951, p. 267. Greatly under the influence of the Indian tradition European pioneers such as F. SCHLEGEL or A. WEBER were also inclined to ascribe hoary antiquity to many Indian literary works. However, to employ traditional (epic and purānic) evidence for these chronological purposes is idle. Others were inclined to believe that the hymns were produced by unsophisticated primitive men (H. BRUNNHOFER, *Über den Geist der indischen Lyrik*, Leipzig 1882, p. 3; 6; H. ZIMMER, *Altindisches Leben*, Berlin 1879, p. 245).

¹⁶ For detailed discussion and a bibliography—compare OLDENBERG, at *ZDMG* 48, p. 629; 49, p. 470; 50, p. 450 (= K. S., p. 643; 663; 28)—see WINTERNITZ, H. I.

belong in the realm of fancy. Neither the as yet unsettled linguistic problems connected with the pre-historic presence of Aryans outside India¹⁸ nor the conclusions drawn from archaeological finds illuminating their migrations and possible relations with other peoples seem to compel us to assign to the Aryan invasion a date earlier than about 1500 B.C.¹⁹ The question as to how much time elapsed between the invasion—which in all probability took a long time—and the first composition of hymns in their present form or even the first redaction of collections has given rise to divergent guesses.

Max Müller's²⁰ chronological estimate, though not devoid of weak points, has, without the author's reservations, often been more or less tacitly regarded as nearest to the mark²¹. Assuming that the *vedāṅgas* and *sūtras* might be approximately synchronous with the origin of Buddhism, that the (earlier) *brāhmaṇas* could not possibly be compiled in less than 200 years, that the composition of the *saṃhitās* must have taken at least a similar period he tentatively arrived at the conclusion that the hymns of the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā must have come into existence in 1000 B.C. at the latest and the *brāhmaṇas* between 800 and 600 B.C. As far as the Ṛgveda is concerned this computation is not unreasonable, but, as may appear from the following chapters, the ideas of chronological succession of 'literary genres' and of corresponding forms of religious interest can no longer be maintained. Latterly a sort of tacit agreement came into vogue to date the composition of the Ṛgveda a few centuries earlier²². For an approximate determination of the origin of its oldest component parts this period, say 13th century B.C.²³, may indeed have much to

L. I, p. 294 and N. N. LAW, *Age of the Ṛgveda*, Calcutta 1965 (supplement to IHQ 36 and 37).

¹⁷ B. G. TILAK, *Arctic home in the Vedas*, Bombay 1903 (Poona 1925; 1956); D. R. MANKAD, at ABORI 12, p. 260; V. M. APTE, in 19 AIOC, p. 106; R. V. VAIDYA, *Asya vāmasya sūktam* (RV. 1, 164), Indore 1961.

¹⁸ See J. GONDA, *Old Indian*, Leiden 1971, p. 21; R. N. DANDEKAR, in Proc. 10 Ind. Hist. Congress, p. 24.

¹⁹ Cf. S. PIGGOTT, *Prehistoric India*, Harmondsworth 1950, p. 255; V. GAMPERT, in ArchOr 20, p. 572; H. D. SANKALIA, at *Artibus Asiae* 26, p. 330 (± 1700–1300). There are reasons for doubting, with S. K. DIKSIT, at ABORI 31, p. 185 the identity of the Aryan invaders and the people or peoples who contributed to the ruin of the Indus civilization.

²⁰ F. MAX MÜLLER, *History of ancient Sanskrit literature*, London 1859 (1860; 1912; 1926), p. 70 etc.; *Physical religion*, London 1891, p. 91.

²¹ Cf. e.g. A. B. KEITH, in *The Cambridge History of India*, I, Cambridge 1922, p. 112. For *vedāṅga* see p. 34.

²² See e.g. R. E. M. WHEELER, *Five thousand years of Pakistan*, London 1950, p. 31; V. GAMPERT, at ArchOr 20, p. 572; A. L. BASHAM, *The wonder that was India*, London 1954 (1956), p. 28; HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 472 (± 1200). About 1500 B.C. was e.g. also the opinion of L. VON SCHROEDER, *Indiens Literatur und Cultur*, Leipzig 1887, p. 28.

²³ Cf. also K. MYLIUS, *Wiss. Zs. der Martin Luther Univ. Halle*, GR. 14 (1965), p. 509.

recommend it²⁴. Anyhow, it is hardly possible to assign²⁵ a comparatively late date to the Ṛgveda on the strength of references to definite sacrificial ceremonies, because these probably were in process of development and had in the times of the poets and compilers not yet reached the elaborated form known to the authors of *brāhmaṇas* and *sūtras*. On the other hand there is much to be said for the supposition that a good deal of the contents of the Ṛgveda is separated from the remaining Vedic literature by a comparatively wide chronological distance and for the correctness of the impression that many peculiarities of the former point to a long period of poetical activity²⁶ preceding the transmitted texts that are known to us.

The geographical area recognized in the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā is large. It is generally assumed that the Aryan invaders entered by the western passes of the Hindu Kush and proceeded thence through the Punjab to the east²⁷. That advance itself—which in all probability covered some centuries—is not reflected in the hymns²⁸, most of which seem to have been composed in the country round the Sarasvatī river, in the hilly and best parts of the Punjab²⁹. Although there is some difference of opinion regarding the identification of rivers mentioned in the texts, also because their courses have since considerably changed and their names have varied³⁰, the abundant references to mountains, the streams of the Indus system, etc.³¹ allow us in any case to say that the Ṛgvedic hymns have their origin in a region that was at a considerable distance from the Ganges. This river is mentioned only once, in a hymn in *maṇḍala* X, viz. 75 (see stanza 5) which significantly is devoted to the laudation of the

²⁴ For divergent opinions: e.g. A. KAEGI, *Der Rig-Veda*, Leipzig 1878, p. 16; 31; 144 (2000–1500); WINTERITZ, H. I. L. I., p. 310 (2500 or 2000–750 or 500 B.C.), followed by L. DE LA VALLÉE POUSSIN, *Le Védisme*, Paris 1909, p. 30; L. RENOU, *Les littératures de l'Inde*, Paris 1951, p. 5 (invasion and oldest hymns ± 2000 B.C.); A. S. ALTEKAR, in *Proc. 22 Ind. Hist. Congress* (1959).

²⁵ E.g. with K. C. CHATTOPADHYAYA, 8 AIOC, p. 31. Deducing chronological criteria from a preference for definite gods (MANILAL PATEL, 11 AIOC, *Pres. address*, p. 9) may easily involve circular reasoning; moreover, other factors than chronology may come into play here.

²⁶ No sound argument can however be adduced in favour of a hypothesis that the Ṛgveda was composed in the course of twelve or even sixty-four (!) generations (thus H. R. DIWEKAR, at *Śāradāpīṭhapatrikā* 8 and 6, Dwarka 1968, p. 1; 1966, p. 1).

²⁷ A. D. PUSALKER's view (at *Comm. Vol. R. K. Mookerji*, II, Allahabad 1947, p. 551): the Aryans were autochthones in India, is completely untenable.

²⁸ For dissentient views see above n. 7 and e.g. A. HILLEBRANDT, *Aus Alt- und Neudien*, Breslau 1922, p. 1; PUSALKER, in *H. C. I. P. I.*, p. 244; D. S. TRIVEDI, at *ABORI* 33, p. 229 (uncritical, in part untenable). See also W. KIRFEL, in *Comm. Vol. J. Nobel*, New Delhi 1963, p. 111 (a questionable suggestion to derive information from definite similes).

²⁹ HOPKINS, at *JAOS* 19, p. 19; A. C. WOOLNER, at *BSO(A)S* 6, p. 549.

³⁰ For the names see MACDONELL and KEITH, *V. I.*, s. s. v. v.

³¹ For a survey: P. L. BHARGAVA, *India in the Vedic age*, Lucknow 1956; 1971, p. 60.

Indus and its tributaries. The great stream, frequently mentioned, made a deep impression on the poet:

- (3) "On earth her roar is striving to reach the vault of heaven;
With brilliant light she dashes up unending surge.
As if the streams of rain pour thundering from the cloud,
The Indus onward rushes like a bellowing bull"³².

To the east the Aryans had not expanded beyond the Yamunā (Jumna) which is mentioned three times. They knew the high mountains in the north, but not the Vindhya.

Only a few words can be said on the political and cultural environment of the poets³³. The indigenous inhabitants (*dāsa* or *dasyu*)—often but without sufficient evidence identified with the survivors of the Indus culture—were gradually subjugated. Against these enemies, not always distinguishable from demoniac beings, there was, underlying the intertribal rivalry of the Aryans, a sense of solidarity springing, not only from common interests but also from a conscious view of common Aryan religion and culture. Yet a process of amalgamation of invaders and aborigines was in all probability going on steadily. Whereas in R̥gvedic times the Aryans were warlike herdsmen, stockbreeders and agriculturalists, organized in tribes ruled by chiefs rather than in kingdoms, they had not developed anything like a city civilization³⁴. Their technique was rather advanced, their priestly schools had already risen in special estimation, their rituals became gradually more extensive and complicated, their poetry had reached a state of marked elaboration and formalization. Most hymns are replete with mythology, but allusions to 'religious life' and the daily cult are much less in number. The texts are silent on some of the most typically Indian doctrines, e. g. that of transmigration. The chiefs and noblemen³⁵ were leaders in war and were expected to order, and defray the cost of, the more expensive sacrifices. In their tribal structure there was no doubt inherited class division: we hear of nobility (*kṣatra*), of the ordinary tribesmen (*viś*) and the traditional

³² Compare also the two poems addressed to the Sarasvatī 7, 95f.

³³ For further information: H. ZIMMER, *Altindisches Leben*, Berlin 1879 (too idyllic a picture, with caution still useful); MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 140; A. B. KEITH, o.c., p. 77; BASHAM, o.c., p. 31; U. N. GHOSHAL, *A history of public life, Calcutta 1945*; P. L. BHARGAVA, o.c. For particulars see also A. LUDWIG, *Der Rigveda*, VI, Prag-Leipzig 1888 (Register); MACDONELL and KEITH, V. I.; W. RUBEN, at JOIB 15, p. 314; GELDNER-NOBEL, *RV.*, IV.

³⁴ However, 19th century Europeans (see also A. WEBER, *Akademische Vorlesungen über indische Literaturgeschichte*, ²Berlin 1876, p. 5) were greatly mistaken in speaking of a primitive and innocent pastoral people. S. S. BHAWE, 20 AIOC (1962), I, p. 36 has completely misunderstood my earlier opinions on this point. It is one thing to argue, as I did, that the outcome of research in the field of cultural anthropology may be helpful in understanding certain aspects of the ancient Indian culture, it is quite another thing to say that Vedic culture has not gone beyond the so-called primitive stage. (Compare also H. C. RAY, at IC 6, p. 241 contra MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 391).

³⁵ B. SCHLERATH, *Das Königtum im R̥g- und Atharvaveda*, Wiesbaden 1960.

system of four classes—in addition to the above the brahmins (the first order) and the lowest class (*sūdra*)—was crystallizing throughout this period. The basic unit of their society was the family³⁶. To what size a family might grow and yet keep together we do not know. A group of patrilinear families formed a *grāma*, a term which in course of time came to denote a settlement or village. Marriages seem to have as a rule been monogamous, the position of the wives being less subordinate than in the post-Vedic period³⁷. Child marriage, so usual in later times, was evidently unknown. Of their domestic life we have a few details, but our knowledge of ‘civil’ and ‘criminal’ law is very scanty. The hymns seem to allow us to sketch the above cultural situation, but it must be recalled that their outlook is generally limited to the interests of the leading groups and classes, that the poets, veiling their thoughts in mythical imagery³⁸, did not intend to describe their social, religious or political life or to supply us with objective information on concrete facts³⁹.

The obscurity of considerable parts of the Veda, and especially of the Ṛgveda, is largely due to our ignorance of the Vedic age in a general sense of the term, that is to say to our deficient knowledge of the cultural circumstances behind the texts and the intellectual equipment of the poets, their view of the world and religious beliefs, the current mythology and ideas of the cosmos and transcendent reality, the intricacies of the contemporaneous ritual and the hieratic idiosyncrasies then in vogue. Unfounded opinions and prejudiced ideas introduced by former generations into Vedic exegesis are not yet completely eradicated.

³⁶ D. N. SHASTRI, 15 AIOC, p. 260.

³⁷ B. S. UPADHYAYA, *Women in Ṛgveda*, Benares 1941; J. B. CHAUDHARI, *The position of women in the Vedic ritual*, Thesis London 1934 (and elsewhere: DANDEKAR, V. B. I, p. 167).

³⁸ This point was much emphasized by RENOU, e.g. H. P., p. 2.

³⁹ Cf. also BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 21, p. 45.

4. Development of 'schools'; appendices and ancillary literature

Bloomfield¹ was no doubt in the main right in drawing attention to the poets' awareness of the fact that Ṛgvedic composition stretched over a long period² preceding their own time. "The Ṛgveda is the final expression of its own type of composition" and it is, consequently, often easy to point out signs of relative lateness, but extremely difficult to find any hymns which show positive signs of coming from the period when hymns of the Vedic variety were first composed. It is therefore also doubtful that the hymns ascribed to a definite poet or collected in the same *maṇḍala* are, as a whole, anterior or posterior to other such collections. There is a great chance that any collection contains older and newer matter brought together without regard to either absolute or relative chronology³. The language on which the decision of the problem as to which hymns are earlier and which later should chiefly rest varies not only according to the age of the texts but also according to their purpose, to the milieu of their origin and to the artistic leanings of the poets⁴. Matters are complicated because even within the same hymn—for instance RV. 1, 164—there is room for distinguishing 'early' and 'advanced' levels of Vedic thought⁵.

In the 19th century questions concerning the relative chronology of Ṛgvedic hymns⁶ were discussed with reference to the violation of the order of arrangement⁷—is it a conclusive proof, or only one of the reasons for regarding certain hymns as of later date?⁸—; to suggestions based on an 'unpolished style,' 'poor imagery' or a presumed early stage of mythological thought⁹; to differences in the presentation of mythical themes and to mythological traditions¹⁰; to likewise disputable conclusions drawn from lexicographical data¹¹. The thesis was defended¹² that those hymns which have an immediate bearing upon rituals are younger.

¹ BLOOMFIELD, *Repetitions*, p. 20.

² Cf. p. 74. According to C. KUNHAN RAJA, *Poet-seers of the Ṛgveda, Vedic and pre-Vedic*, Madras 1963 (speculative) there were about 300 seers.

³ Even ARNOLD spontaneously admitted (KZ 38, p. 495) that any division of the Ṛgveda into periods is artificial.

⁴ See GONDA, *Old Indian*, p. 8.

⁵ Cf. NORMAN BROWN, in JAOS 88, p. 203.

⁶ Cf. BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 21, p. 42.

⁷ See above, p. 13.

⁸ Cf. OLDENBERG, H. R. I, p. 196; GRASSMANN, RV. übers. I, p. 552.

⁹ See e.g. HAUG, Ai. B. I, p. 12 (on RV. 1, 162).

¹⁰ See e.g. WEBER, in SB Berlin 1900, p. 601.

¹¹ For instance, HOPKINS, at JAOS 17 (1896), p. 23 attempted to determine the relative age of *maṇḍala* VIII on the strength of the fact that it has many words in common with the 'younger' books I, IX and X. For criticism: B. GEIGER, at ZDMG 84, p. *96. E. V. ARNOLD, at KZ 37, p. 207 argued in favour of a later date of RV. 7, 33 because it contains many words that are characteristic of the 'popular language' of the Atharvaveda.

¹² LUDWIG, *Rigveda*, III, p. X.

Oldenberg¹³, adopting the method of statistical calculations in order to delimit the so-called popular portions of the Ṛgveda, found that also those parts of the corpus which were not in his view later additions, showed some peculiarities, for instance in their metrical structure. After him Arnold¹⁴ took upon himself to examine these metrical differences. In doing so he assigned, in the mistaken conviction that the components of the Veda constitute a continual chronologic succession, the hymns, in fairly homogeneous groups, to four successive periods to arrive at the conclusion that the formal scheme reached in his investigations is “a true adumbration of the historical development of the whole literature.” His conclusions did not win general acceptance. It was rightly observed¹⁵ that they take no account of the fact that the so-called popular hymns contain much that is old; that they did not recognize that poems antique in form may yet be late in date¹⁶; that they are not free from discrepancies and not always consistent with other evidence¹⁷. They were moreover not in all respects borne out by later statistical investigations. Those instituted by Wüst¹⁸—who basing himself on grammatical and stylistic forms or phenomena (including epithets etc.) of ‘typological’ value, arrived at the conviction that *mandala* IX is the oldest, IV very old, I young and VIII very controversial¹⁹—are no more final than Belvalkar’s²⁰ attempt to detect literary strata with the help of strata in the lists of difficult words in the Nighaṅṭu²¹.

¹³ OLDENBERG, H. R. I.

¹⁴ ARNOLD, at Festgruss v. Roth, p. 145; KZ 34, p. 297; 37, p. 207; 429; 38, p. 491; JAOS 18, p. 2; 22, p. 309; Vedic metre in its historical development, Cambridge 1905. It must be added that ARNOLD did not “for a moment suggest that the materials permit of any accuracy in details” (Vedic metre, p. X). The metrical peculiarities must be left undiscussed.

¹⁵ BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 21, p. 47.

¹⁶ K. C. CHATTOPADHYAYA, 8 AIOC, p. 35.

¹⁷ KEITH, at JRAS 1912, p. 726.

¹⁸ W. WÜST, Stilgeschichte und Chronologie des Ṛgveda, Leipzig 1928, ²1966.

¹⁹ With regard to *mandala* VIII there has been much disagreement. It was argued (HOPKINS, at JAOS 17 (1896), p. 84ff., discussing comparatively frequent allusions to sheep, ploughing (agriculture) in VIII, and regarding many of the proper names occurring in it as ‘late’; “the geography of VIII takes us across the Indus to the West more often than to the Punjab, whereas in II–VII the converse is the case”) that there are many differences between this book and II–VII in time and habitat. Whereas some scholars (CH. R. LANMAN, at JAOS 10, p. 576; ARNOLD, at KZ 34, p. 297) are on the strength of linguistic arguments of the opinion that it was on the whole the earliest book, others held an opposite view (see e.g. BRUNNHOFER, at KZ 25, p. 329; 374; BLOOMFIELD, Repetitions, p. 21; according to HOPKINS, in JAOS 17, p. 26 *mandala* VIII sides more with I, IX and X; in JAOS 16, p. 275 this scholar relied on occurrences of numerical formulae. According to W. Wüst, at WZKM 34, p. 214; 35, p. 165 *mandala* VIII, without being the oldest part of the Ṛgveda, gives evidence of the relations with the prehistoric ‘asianic’ culture of the 14th cent. B.C.). According to HOPKINS *mandala* V has an intermediate position between VIII and the other family books.

²⁰ S. K. BELVALKAR, in 2 AIOC (1923), p. 11.

²¹ See p. 32.

Basing himself on a comparison between obsolete and productive words Poucha²² arrived at conclusions which, though perhaps probable in some of their main lines, cannot claim finality in many particulars²³. These investigations are invalidated by the fact that the statistics of the different criteria are not always in harmony with one another, in the second place by the difference of opinion as to the relative weight of the criteria²⁴ and last but not least by the stereotyped literary form of the R̥gveda and the probability of recasts and mutual borrowings. Bloomfield's²⁵ suggestion to distinguish between inferior repetitions pointing to a later date of the hymns in which they occur and more authentic and older text-places, while introducing an element of subjectiveness, cannot—despite the probability of part of his chronological conclusions—obviate this difficulty.

Attempts at determining the date of Vedic hymns with the help of purānic passages, whether or not dealing with Vedic persons²⁶, or at finding support of a relative chronology in the few passages which might refer to historical events²⁷ can, because of the unreliability of legendary traditions, hardly be expected to lead to acceptable results. Conclusions about contemporaneity or difference in generation²⁸ are hazardous.

Most western scholars are nevertheless agreed that the R̥gveda contains a number of hymns which by their special characteristics in subject, metre and language differ from the main body of the poems and associate themselves instead with the Atharvaveda²⁹. They are generally described as 'popular' and regarded as later additions, which, too, might have been spread over a long period of time³⁰. Among these hymns are the last parts of certain collections which—like those of many other Sanskrit works—notwithstanding the care bestowed on a well-considered arrangement, assume the character of appen-

²² P. POUCHA, Schichtung des R̥gveda. Bestimmung des relativen Alters der Lieder des R̥gveda mit Hilfe zahlenmäßiger Berechnung, ArchOr 13, p. 103; 225; 15, p. 65. The author disregards possibilities of recast and individual preference of poets, specific characteristics of oral poetry and differences in milieu and traditions; bases himself in determining the meaning of words on Grassmann's antiquated translations; draws unconvincing conclusions from cases of repetition of words.

²³ For other literature see WACKERNAGEL-RENOU, Introduction générale (above, p. 16, n. 19), p. 52.

²⁴ Cf. e.g. also BLOOMFIELD, Repetitions, p. 636.

²⁵ BLOOMFIELD, Repetitions, p. 634; cf. p. 13. It may be recalled that after Bloomfield our insight into the significance of formulaic diction and oral poetry in general has considerably deepened. How are we, generally speaking, to know for certain that one occurrence of a word group is imitative and borrowed from a definite other place where it occurs again? Were there no floating verses which could be freely used by any poet for new purposes?

²⁶ See e.g. V. G. RAHURKAR, in PO 22, p. 44; A. D. PUSALKER, in Mélanges Renou, Paris 1968, p. 581.

²⁷ See e.g. K. M. MUNSHI, at Proc. Indian Hist. Congress 20, p. 11 and elsewhere.

²⁸ E.g. between *maṇḍalas* VI and VII: H. D. VELANKAR, in JBBRAS 18, p. 12.

²⁹ See above, p. 12. Now see also N. J. SHENDE, at JASBombay 41-42, p. 56.

³⁰ ARNOLD, Vedic metre, p. X.

dices³¹. Many of these are also linguistically strongly suggestive of the Atharvaveda: 1, 191; 4, 58; 5, 87³²; 7, 59, 12³³; 7, 104³⁴; 8, 103³⁵; 9, 109–114³⁶. It was however wisely observed³⁷ that the difference between the hieratic and the popular hymns³⁸ is not necessarily, or exclusively, one of date, but also, or even largely one of dialect, style or subject-matter, and (we may add) of origin (social or religious milieu). Turning for a moment to the ‘atharvanic’ passages we do well to distinguish two groups. The pertinent hymns or places are either in language and subject-matter reminiscent of the phraseology and contents of the Atharvaveda or recur with or without important variations in that corpus³⁹. A discussion of the latter must be postponed to chapter VI, but here attention may be drawn to the charm against poison and other destructive influences addressed to the gods and goddesses in general 7, 50, the Manyu hymn 10, 83; the so-called praise of the medicinal herbs 10, 97; the ‘battle hymn’ 10, 103⁴⁰; the hymn to counteract the disease called *yakṣma* 10, 161 (cf. AV. 3, 11)⁴¹, etc. Sometimes the atharvanic features are limited to a final stanza: 10, 36, 14 (invocation of four points to which the person speaking can look) or to a group of stanzas at the end of a hymn: 1, 23, 16–24⁴²; 9, 113, 10–11.

Already at an early time the contents of the R̥gveda—like the other Vedas, a subject for oral instruction to male children of the three higher classes—must have been transmitted in, and to a certain extent have developed as, independent traditions or “branches” (*śākhā*)⁴³. Tradition has it that this name is given to those ‘schools’ which possess a recension of the *saṃhitā* of their own, sn contradistinction to the subdivisions called *carana* which are not in possession of such a text. However, the former term applies first and foremost to a text or recension which formed the subject of study, the latter to those following it, those brahmins who recite a definite text or studied it in small ‘colleges’⁴⁴.

³¹ Cf. e.g. OLDENBERG, H. R. I, p. 196; K. GELDNER—A. KAEGI, Siebenzig Lieder des R̥gveda, Tübingen 1875, p. 12; ARNOLD, in KZ 37, p. 209. For differences in phraseology (baroque): RENOUE, E. V. P. XIII, p. 159 (on RV. 8, 103).

³² OLDENBERG, Noten, I, p. 368; RENOUE, E. V. P. X, p. 96.

³³ This stanza belongs, with 1, 99 (, 1); 10, 121, 10; 10, 190 (, 1–3) to the six stanzas which were obviously not recognized as genuine by Śākalya, who left them without a *padapātha*.

³⁴ OLDENBERG, Noten, II, p. 68.

³⁵ RENOUE, E. V. P. XIII, p. 159.

³⁶ PISCHEL, V. S. I, p. 107; GELDNER, RV. III, p. 115; RENOUE, E. V. P. IX, p. 6.

³⁷ BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 21, p. 47; cf. A. V. G. B., p. 46.

³⁸ Cf. GONDA, Old Indian, p. 17.

³⁹ Cf. e.g. RV. 10, 128: AV. 5, 3; 10, 137: AV. 4, 13 and 6, 91, 3; for 10, 109 cf. AV. 5, 17 (see S. S. BHAWE, at Festschrift W. Kirfel, Bonn 1955, p. 17).

⁴⁰ Cf. GELDNER, RV. III, p. 320.

⁴¹ See RENOUE, E. V. P. II, p. 19.

⁴² RENOUE, E. V. P. IV, p. 17.

⁴³ L. RENOUE, Les écoles védiques et la formation du Veda, Paris 1947; E. V. P. VI, p. 28.

⁴⁴ For particulars: RENOUE, o.c., p. 220; LUDWIG, R̥gveda, III, p. 32; V. S.

They were in all probability the men who possessed or knew many *ṛc* verses (*bahvṛca*) mentioned in *brāhmaṇas*⁴⁵. Many particulars regarding the origin of these 'schools' and the development of Vedism in its entirety will escape us for ever because the texts are silent on many points which we would like to know. What seems certain or may reasonably be conjectured is that in that space of time in which the Vedic ritual was taking the form which is known to us specialists in the mythico-ritual speculation and ceremonial practices and observances must have collected their, largely non-Ṛgvedic, formulas; that the mantras of these groups were distinctive; that to the activity of these promulgators—after whom the schools were called—and their descendants and followers⁴⁶ we owe the large collections of the Taittirīyas, Kāthas, Maitrāyaṇīyas, followed by the Vājasaneyins, which they needed with a view to ritual practice and instruction; that the later texts followed this scission mainly with a view to utilizing the respective *mantras*; that this fourfold Yajurveda seems to have become the model for the constitution of schools of other Vedas which not infrequently differed only in minor details; that divergences in textual or—no doubt in most cases—ritual particulars as well as the spread of Vedism over larger regions led to further divisions which often differ from each other only in insignificant details⁴⁷; that in this way also the followers of the isolated Ṛgveda came to be equipped with the different ritual works attributed to Āśvalāyana and Śāṅkhāyana⁴⁸; that the increasing authority and influence of the Ṛgveda Saṃhitā, the arrangement of the *mantras* and the dosage of Ṛgvedic and foreign elements led to the compilation of new *sūtras*, that is to new *caraṇas*. This means that these schools are mainly characterized by the more or less⁴⁹ faithful conservation of definite texts. Nevertheless the Mīmāṃsā⁵⁰—and the orthodox in general—taught that the Veda is present in every *śākhā*⁵¹.

It was a custom of brahminical families and castes to trace their descent from a Vedic *ṛṣi* and to claim to be hereditary students of the sacred literature and its auxiliaries⁵². A brahmin never belonged to more than one school, either

GHATE, Lectures on the Ṛgveda, Bombay 1925, p. 44; M. GHOSH, in IHQ 11, p. 761; S. K. GUPTA, in PO 16, p. 48; G. SAGAR RAI, at Purāṇa 15 (1973), p. 133; P. D. CHANDRATRE, in Bulletin Chunilal Gandhi Vidyabhavan 15 (1970), p. 1. One should not follow V. V. DIXIT, Relation of the epics to the *brāhmaṇa* literature, Poona 1950, p. 47 in regarding these 'colleges' as something like our academies. See also Kāśikāvṛtti 2, 4, 3. The assembly of scholars is a cultural institution of great antiquity in India.

⁴⁵ See e.g. AiB. 2. 36, 6; 6, 18, 7; ŚB. 10, 5, 2, 20.

⁴⁶ See also EGGELING, ŚB. I, p. XXV.

⁴⁷ Cf. also RENOUE, in JA 240, p. 140; MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 51.

⁴⁸ The sole distinction between these was that the former recognized the Vāla-khilyas (see p. 37) integrally as canonical, the latter rejected a few verses of these hymns.

⁴⁹ Cf. VISHVA BANDHU, at VIJ 2, p. 1.

⁵⁰ See below, p. 49.

⁵¹ RENOUE, o.c., p. 219.

⁵² J. BROUGH, The early brahminical system of *gotra* and *pravara*, Cambridge

through family tradition or initiation, but a learned man may also study texts belonging to different *caranās*. Although authorities strongly dissuaded from adopting customs of those who followed other *śākhās*, there is a rule that “what is not stated in one’s own *śākhā* may be taken from others, if it is not found contradictory”⁵³.

Of the history and geographical distribution of the Vedic schools we have only a rudimentary knowledge. The only comparatively ancient source dealing with them as a whole is the metrical *Caranavyūha* “Exposition of the (Vedic) schools”⁵⁴, an in any case post-Vedic anonymous work of little importance. It is reckoned among the appendices (*pariśiṣṭa*) of the White Yajurveda—in another recension, of the Atharvaveda⁵⁵—and gives an (incomplete) enumeration of the Vedic schools, leaving us almost in the dark about those “branches” that became extinct at an early date. The author’s statement that a pregnant woman who hears this text will give birth to a son who is thoroughly conversant with the Veda (§ 47) betrays the character of the treatise⁵⁶. While the *Mahābhārata* overflows with mythical and legendary details on the Veda, any precise information on the *śākhās* and *caranās* is in the large majority of later works lacking. Although several *purāṇas* and other works know the genealogies of Vedic teachers⁵⁷ only a few commentators—among whom *Sāyaṇa* and *Mahādeva*—pay some attention to the geographic situation of the schools. Even such traditionalists as the followers of the *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā* rarely give names or other factual information. The Vedic texts themselves seldom mention where they were composed or in which region their authority extended. Moreover, the place of origin of the different schools is not identical with that of the *saṃhitās*. On the other hand, all Yajurveda *saṃhitās* and several *brāhmaṇas* refer to the region of the Kuru-Pañcālas (in the Middle Country, Madhyadeśa, the NW. and W. of the Ganges-Yamunā region)⁵⁸ so that the conclusion is warranted that the Yajurveda and perhaps the ‘classical’ Vedic ritualism had their origin in that region; but certain schools existed elsewhere, even in the South. The inscriptions, though making frequent mention of brahmins versed in the Ṛgveda, contain only short notices of the schools. Two of these, *Āśvalāyana*

1953; U. N. GHOSHAL, The position of the brāhmaṇas in ancient Bengal, *ABORI* 46 (1965), p. 67.

⁵³ KANE, H. Dh. II, p. 328.

⁵⁴ A. WEBER, *Caranavyūha*, at I. S. III (1855), p. 247; W. SIEGLING, *Die Rezensionen des Caranavyūha*, Thesis Berlin, Leipzig 1906.

⁵⁵ *Atharvaveda-Parīśiṣṭa* 49.

⁵⁶ For some details: L. RENOU, *The Vedic schools and epigraphy*, *Comm. Vol. Siddheswar Varma, Hoshiarpur* 1950, II, p. 214; D. BHATTACHARYA, *The condition of Vedic studies in ancient and medieval Bengal*, *OH* 3, p. 211.

⁵⁷ Cf. G. SAGAR RAI, *Śākhās of the Ṛgveda as mentioned in the purāṇas*, *Purāṇa* 6, p. 97.

⁵⁸ For particulars see MACDONELL and KEITH, *Vedic index*, I, p. 165. Cf. *AiB.* 8, 14, 3.

and Śāṅkhāyana, survive, but the latter, localized in Kanauj and Mālva—in modern times only in Gujarat⁵⁹—always remained far behind, a fact confirmed by the rarity of Śāṅkhāyana manuscripts. The Āśvalāyanas, held in higher esteem, were widely dispersed: Bengal, Jodhpur, and especially in the South. The oft-mentioned non-specified Ṛgvedins, extending over large parts of the subcontinent, are no doubt adherents of the latter tradition⁶⁰.

In the preceding pages we had occasion to observe that already at an early date the Ṛgveda was subjected to interpretation. A good deal of the oldest comment is contained in the ritualistic discussions of the *brāhmaṇas*⁶¹. Although this class of literature explains the Vedic stanzas mostly with reference to the rites, it has preserved some reminiscences of other principles of exegesis (etymological, legendary, metaphysical) behind which there still was an essential unity⁶². Apart from the *brāhmaṇas* the only exegesis originating in the Vedic period is that of the Nirukta⁶³. This work, compiled by Yāska—who may have lived not later than 500 B.C.—and the sole representative of the *vedāṅga* dealing with etymology (*nirukta*) is a commentary, handed down in two recensions, of an older work, the Nighaṇṭu (usually in the plural, Nighaṇṭavaḥ) or Naighaṇṭuka, which, likewise in two recensions⁶⁴, consists of lists of—almost exclusively—Ṛgvedic words: groups of synonyms, difficult vocables (*naigama*), a classification of divine names (*daivata*). Yāska⁶⁵, furnishing his readers with a considerable number of etymological interpretations of these words, accompanies them with a sort of continuous explanation of the stanzas in which they occur⁶⁶. Besides showing that the Ṛgveda had in its time a very fixed form Yāska's work is of interest in that it gives evidence of the author's purpose in composing it:

⁵⁹ On the Śāṅkhāyanas (Kauśītakins) see e.g. PB. 17, 4, 3; for differences between the two: A. D. SINGH, at 25 AIOC, S. P. (1969), p. 24; 26 AIOC, S. P. (1972), p. 380.

⁶⁰ Occasionally we hear of 'colleges' (*maṭha*), teachers and students, e.g. in the Eṇṇayiram inscription of Rājendra I (1014–1044 A.D.), of kings protecting Vedic scholars, of such scholars reciting the Vedas at the times of worship etc.; for other details: RENOU, E. V. P. VI, p. 18; R. NAGASWAMY, Vedic scholars in the ancient Tamil country, VIJ 3, p. 192.

⁶¹ See p. 368ff.

⁶² S. K. GUPTA, Ancient schools of Vedic interpretation, JGJRI 16, p. 143.

⁶³ The Nighaṇṭu and the Nirukta, edited by L. SARUP, Univ. of the Panjab 1927; the analysis in R. ROTH, Jāska's Nirukta, Göttingen 1847–1852 is still worth consulting; translation and introduction: L. SARUP, The Nighaṇṭu and the Nirukta, Oxford 1920 (Delhi 1962). Cf. e.g. also H. SKÖLD, The Nirukta, Lund 1926; SIEG, Sagenstoffe, p. 10. For Yāska's significance in general see H. SCHARFE, in Vol. IV.

⁶⁴ A similar list including also atharvanic words is preserved as Atharvaveda-pariśiṣṭa 48; see BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 15, p. XLVIII.

⁶⁵ For Yāska as a writer of another work (Taittirīya-Sarvānukramaṇi) see C. KUNHAN RAJA, at JOR 5, p. 215.

⁶⁶ L. SARUP, Comm. Vol. Woolner, Lahore 1940, p. 233 pointed out some cases of faulty interpretation of the Ṛgveda.

“The seers had direct intuitive insight. By oral instruction they handed down the hymns to later generations who were destitute of this insight. The later generations, declining in (power of) oral communication, repeated (compiled) this work, the Veda, and the auxiliary Vedic treatises from memory, in order to illustrate (comprehend) their meaning” (1, 20).

Of Yāska’s commentators⁶⁷ the most important is Durga, of uncertain date⁶⁸, who, repeating every word of Yāska, seems to have written his work in order to meet the demand for a good text, elucidation of obscure passages, and amplification of Yāska’s arguments⁶⁹.

Another important work, historically wedged in between the Nirukta and the Sarvānukramaṇī, is the Bṛhaddevatā⁷⁰, the ‘Extensive (repertory) of the gods’ (4th cent. B.C. ?). While borrowing largely from the former, which is in many places repeated *verbatim*, this metrical text is borrowed from still more abundantly by the latter which in its wording is in all that concerns the deities of the Ṛgveda based on that of the Bṛhaddevatā. Whereas owing to its very nature the connexion of this work with the Ṛgveda is very close and other Vedic texts, among which the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa, occasionally throw light on it, several of the forty legends⁷¹ which it contains are historically linked with those of the Mahābhārata⁷². These very valuable narrative passages⁷³—approximately one-fourth of the whole work or about 300 ślokas, constituting the oldest systematic Sanskrit collection of legends—are inserted to explain the circumstances under which the Ṛgvedic hymns they are connected with were composed⁷⁴. The main object of the Bṛhaddevatā—which is quite mechanically divided into eight chapters (*adhyāyas*)—is, indeed, to state the deity for each hymn, stanza⁷⁵, hemistich and quarter or *pāda* (1, 1); 1, 2f.:

“In every formula one should know the divinity with exactness, for he who knows the divinities of the *mantras*, understands their object. He is capable of giving an (authoritative) opinion as to the intentions (of the *mantras*) which were contained in them at the time when the *mantras* were revealed to the *ṛṣis* (and) as to their correct understanding and (that) of the various ceremonies (connected with them).”

⁶⁷ SARUP, The Nighaṇṭu (transl.), p. 49.

⁶⁸ But in any case before 1387, the date of a manuscript of his commentary.

⁶⁹ Edited (with the Nirukta) by P. ŚIVADATTA, Bombay 1912.

⁷⁰ The Bṛhad-devatā attributed to Śaunaka, edited by A. A. MACDONELL (with a translation, introduction and notes), 2 vol., Cambridge Mass. 1904, ²Delhi 1965.

⁷¹ Almost all Ṛgvedic stories are amplified with an epilogue which is not based on the Saṃhitā.

⁷² Part of the pertinent material has been studied by SIEG, Sagenstoffe, who erroneously supposed that the Bṛhaddevatā is posterior to the Mahābhārata; cf. also S. F. MICHALSKI, in RO 24 (1961) p. 29.

⁷³ See e.g. below, p. 126f.

⁷⁴ Cf. MACDONELL, at DLZ 1903, 2302.

⁷⁵ “A stanza is held to belong to that deity, to whom a seer addresses his eulogies with a particular desire and from whom he wishes to obtain his object” (Yāska, Nir. 7, 1).

However, the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā and its *brāhmaṇas* do not supply us with a comprehensive account of all the circumstances under which the hymns were revealed and the deity is not always known⁷⁶. The interpretations given are therefore often neither historically reliable nor such as to satisfy the requirements of modern scholarship⁷⁷. The book contains also other information such as an enumeration of the *ṛsis* (2, 129–131; 3, 55–57), of female *ṛsis* (2, 82–84), of the mounts of the various gods (4, 140–142), a discussion of the character of the Vaiśvadeva hymns (2, 132–134; 3, 41–52), and an account of the Āpri hymns (2, 158–3, 32). There is a very long introduction (1–2, 125) which consists mainly of a classification of the deities as well as of grammatical matter⁷⁸ and at the end a section dealing with the gods who preside over various kinds of ritual verses and over the different tones on which they are sung (8, 104–123). The work is traditionally attributed to Śaunaka, but the fact that this authority is not less than fifteen times mentioned by name, generally with other authorities among whom Yāska, when mention is made of different views, whereas the writer several times uses the first person to indicate himself makes us hesitate to affirm that the authorship was Śaunaka's rather than somebody else's who belonged to his school (Āśvalāyana ?)⁷⁹.

No more than passing mention can in this context be made of the six so-called "members of the Veda" (*vedāṅga*), the auxiliary subjects of study, which in course of time were to develop into separate branches of science. They are phonetics (*śikṣā*), metrics (*chandas*), grammar (*vyākaraṇa*), etymology (*nirukta*), ritual or religious practice (*kalpa*) and astronomy (*jyotiṣa*). Originating in the Vedic period, probably between the 8th and 4th centuries B.C., they were to promote a better reciting and understanding of the Vedic texts and their proper ritual employment. In contradistinction to the latter which are regarded as "heard" or "revealed," and from the beginning orally transmitted (the eternal and infallible *śruti*, later including also the upaniṣads) they were—like the epics, *purāṇas* and especially the *dharma* texts—looked upon as remembered and handed down by human intermediaries (*smṛti*). As such they are authoritative as long as they are not contradicted by the *śruti*.

The *anukramaṇīs*⁸⁰, though not belonging to the *vedāṅgas* proper, cannot be separated from these auxiliary sciences. These succinct versified indexes—Anuvākānukramaṇī, Ārṣānukramaṇī⁸¹ and three others⁸²—provide us with lists of *ṛsis*, metres, deities, sections of the Ṛgveda and (the Chandānukramaṇī)

⁷⁶ Cf. V. CH. BHATTACHARYYA, in OH 2 (1954), p. 337.

⁷⁷ Cf. e.g. GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 227 (on ṚV. 1, 164).

⁷⁸ Cf. MACDONELL, in Album Kern, p. 333.

⁷⁹ Cf. A. KUHN, in WEBER, I. S. I, p. 101.

⁸⁰ C. KUNHAN RAJA, The Anukramaṇī literature, in 6 AIOC (1930), p. 541; N. G. NARAHARI, Pādavidhāna of Śaunaka, Adyar Library Pamphlet 22 (Madras 1950), p. 34.

⁸¹ Cf. MACDONELL, in Festgruss v. Roth, p. 107. The text comprises 292 *ślokas*.

⁸² For details see MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 273.

the numbers of the stanzas of the hymns⁸³. Belonging to the last centuries of the Vedic period (\pm 5th–3rd cent. B. C.) they are attributed to Śaunaka except the more recent and systematic prose *sūtra*-work called Sarvānukramaṇī, a “General Index” (\pm 350 B. C.), which, combining the data contained in the metrical *anukramaṇīs*, is held to have been composed by Kātyāyana, the famous teacher of the Yajurveda⁸⁴. With the Śrautasūtra of the White Yajurveda by the same author it has the concise character of its style in common⁸⁵.

A number⁸⁶ of appendages (*khīla*⁸⁷ “supplement,” properly a piece of waste land situated between cultivated fields, “that which fills a gap”)⁸⁸, as obviously more recent material, never found admission into the *padapāṭha* and *anukramaṇīs*. Although they occur in the manuscripts which follow the *astaka* grouping as annexes to some particular *sūktas* or *maṇḍalas*⁸⁹ always in the same places, they are in the *adhyāya* divisions regarded as non-existent and not commented upon by Sāyaṇa. Two groups can be distinguished, those which show affinity in contents with the preceding *sūktas*⁹⁰ and independent texts. Belonging to Vedic times they reach back to different periods; most of them seem to be contemporaneous with the compilation of the *samhitās* other than the Ṛgveda. They must have belonged to a recension different from Śākalya’s, but it is not possible to say to which. The whole mass of them constituted already in Sāyaṇa’s time a separate collection (Khilagrantha)⁹¹, including also the Kuntāpa hymns at the end of the last book of the Atharvaveda. This collection must have been made at a much earlier date, because it has a *khīla-anukramaṇī* of its own. Several

⁸³ They do not comprise indices of the ritual application of the *mantras*.

⁸⁴ Die Sarvānukramaṇī des Kātyāyana zum Ṛgveda, herausgegeben von A. A. MACDONELL, Thesis Leipzig, Oxford 1885; Kātyāyana’s Sarvānukramaṇī . . . with extracts from Śaḍguruśiṣya’s (12th cent.) commentary, edited by A. A. MACDONELL, Oxford 1886; cf. also SCHEFFTELOWITZ, at ZII 1, p. 89. MACDONELL, Bṛhad-devatā, p. XXI. Some *anukramaṇīs* of later origin need not detain us; see RENOUE(-FILLIOZAT), I. C. I, p. 306; Ṛgvedānukramaṇī of Mādhavabhaṭṭa, ed. C. KUNHAN RAJA, Madras 1932; some editions by VIŠVA BANDHU and others, Hoshiarpur 1966 (DANDEKAR, Bibliography, III, p. 14).

⁸⁵ The information given by these texts should of course be critically evaluated; see e.g. GELDNER, Auswahl, II, p. 155; ṚV. I, p. 6; RENOUE, E. V. P. IV, p. 34.

⁸⁶ In the tradition and editions the number varies considerably: the Bṛhaddevatā mentions 37 (MACDONELL, Bṛhad-devatā, p. XXX, with particulars; 116); in MAX MÜLLER’s edition there are 32 of them (²IV, p. 519); in AUFRECHT’s edition there are 25 (²II, p. 672). The most important and extensive collection is preserved in a Kashmir manuscript of the Ṛgveda (1575 A. D. ?); it has been edited and studied by SCHEFFTELOWITZ (see below, n. 88).

⁸⁷ The term *khīla* does not appear before the Anuvākānukramaṇī and Ārṣānukramaṇī attributed to Śaunaka.

⁸⁸ J. SCHEFFTELOWITZ, Die Apokryphen des Ṛgveda, Breslau 1906; ²1966; KEITH, at JRAS 1907, p. 224; C. G. KASHIKAR, in Ṛgveda-Samhitā ed. by SONTAKKE and KASHIKAR, IV, p. 891; K. PARAMESWARA AITHAL, Ṛgveda *khīlas* and the *sūtras* of Āśvalāyana, ALB 33 (1969), p. 82.

⁸⁹ It is customary to publish them as a supplement to the Śākala recension.

⁹⁰ Cf. V. M. APTE, at VIJ 3 (1965), p. 17.

⁹¹ Cf. Sāyaṇa, on AiB. 6, 32, 1.

khilas are also included in other *saṃhitās*, either in an identical form or with variants. Occasionally, *brāhmaṇas* quote them for liturgical use and the *hotar* recites from them during the performance of minor ritual ceremonies⁹². They do not however stand in close relation to the rites in which they are used and were obviously handed down with less care⁹³. On the occasion of a sacrifice in honour of the defunct *khilas* should, according to Manu 3, 232, be recited together with the Veda, books on *dharma*, legends, tales and ‘*purāṇas*.’ In some regions of India females of brahmin descent were allowed to read them⁹⁴. *Khilas* are not peculiar to the Ṛgveda alone; AV. 20, 127 ff., some of which identical with Ṛgveda *khilas*, and VS. 26 ff. are of the same supplementary character⁹⁵.

To these apocrypha belong also the small collections of sacrificial litanies of comparatively high antiquity called *praiśasūktāni*, i.e. *sūktas* containing directions or invitations addressed to the *hotar* in order to have him recite definite consecratory texts (*yājyā*)⁹⁶, and the *nivīdas*. The latter represent the oldest prose preserved from the period of the Ṛgveda⁹⁷. Most of them begin with an invitation to enjoy the oblation, e.g. “Indra must together with the Maruts have a drink of Soma”. The so-called *purorucas*⁹⁸, formulas recited in the morning before the principal hymn, seem to be of the same age. Some places in the *praiśasūktas* are closely related to definite passages of the Ṛgveda.

Special mention must be made of *khīla* 2, 6⁹⁹, the well-known Śrisūkta addressed to the goddess Śrī. Its central part reaches back to the Vedic period; it supplies us with highly valuable information about this goddess of prosperity, fertility and happiness and guardian deity of the farmers, who does not appear before the Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā. This hymn, which is also handed down separately in many manuscripts and has more than once been commented upon, is recited from olden times¹⁰⁰. Three very small texts, called Saṃjñānam (on

⁹² RENO, in JA 250, p. 163.

⁹³ Gārgya Nārāyaṇa, on ĀśvŚ. 1, 1, 1 makes a distinction between the well-studied and carefully transmitted texts (the *samāmnāya*) on one hand and the *khilas* on the other.

⁹⁴ On Central India: F. E. HALL, JASB 28 (1859), p. 121.

⁹⁵ See also B. H. KAPADIA, The relation of the Khilāni with the ṚV Saṃhitā and their position in Indian literature, JUB N. S. 29 (1960), p. 19.

⁹⁶ Cf. also OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 42, p. 244 (= K. S., p. 613).

⁹⁷ For the texts see SCHEFTELOWITZ, Apokryphen, p. 142 and 136; for a discussion: SCHEFTELOWITZ, at ZDMG 73, p. 42; SONTAKKE and KASHIKAR, Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā (see above, p. 8), IV, p. 902. See below, p. 109 f. The term occurs already RV. 1, 89, 3; 96, 2; 175, 6 etc.

⁹⁸ Cf. SCHEFTELOWITZ, at ZDMG 74, p. 204.

⁹⁹ SCHEFTELOWITZ, o. c., p. 72; the same, Çrisūkta, ZDMG 75, p. 37. See G. HARTMANN, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Göttin Lakṣmī, Thesis Kiel 1933; J. GONDA, Aspects of early Viṣṇuism, Utrecht 1954 (Delhi 1969), p. 212; HALL, o. c., p. 123; U. R. BHISE, at ABORI 53, p. 27.

¹⁰⁰ For the seven stanzas belonging to the *sūkta* edited by SCHEFTELOWITZ, Apokryphen, p. 141 and used in the ritual of the *praiśasastra* see SCHEFTELOWITZ, Die sieben Purorucas, ZDMG 74, p. 204.

concord and harmony), Nairhastyam (an imprecation) and Prādhvarāṇām (a glorification of Brahman) were sometimes combined so as to constitute a separate *khila*, which according to the commentary on the Caraṇavyūha was the final hymn of the Bāṣkala-Saṃhitā¹⁰¹.

Properly speaking the Vālakhilyas, of later composition—eleven (8, 49–59) in number in the Śākalya, seven in the Bāṣkala recension¹⁰²—are *khilas* which found entrance into the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā¹⁰³. They are real, though insignificant, Vedic hymns but are considered to be inferior and half-apocryphal. They are in the Śākalya recension inserted between the sixth and seventh *anuvāka* of *maṇḍala* VIII but do not belong to either group. Although they were recognized as part of this book in Śākalya's *padapāṭha* they were not commented upon by Sāyaṇa. The first four pairs (1–8), which run in a curious way parallel¹⁰⁴, are older, the last three are identical with material belonging to the so-called Sauparṇa hymns, *khilas* inserted after ṚV. 1, 73¹⁰⁵.

A small ritual text associated with the Ṛgveda and probably borrowed from an ancient work on domestic ritual (*grhyasūtra*) is the late Utsarjanaprayoga¹⁰⁶; dealing with a ceremony in connection with the cessation of the annual study of the Veda, it contains many quotations from the Ṛgveda, and some from other Vedic works.

A whole collection of 'magical' effects ascribed to the recitation of hymns or stanzas of the Ṛgveda is contained in the metrical Ṛgvidhāna¹⁰⁷. The very existence of these 'Precepts regarding the Ṛgveda' shows that in the Vedic literature there is no hard-and-fast line between a 'magic' and a 'religious' domain. Ṛgvedic matter was not only used for what we call sacrificial rites, but also for predominantly magic purposes. The four chapters of this work pretend to be a concise manual for those who wish to utilize texts of the Ṛgveda, as an accompaniment of practices widely divergent from the rites described in the *śrautasūtras*, in order to be freed from disease or enemies, to possess a son or "thousandfold gain," to acquire special abilities or a celestial life hereafter. Since the authors—according to the tradition again Śaunaka, but more prob-

¹⁰¹ J. SCHEFTELOWITZ, at ZII 1, p. 50. For the Mahānāmnī verses see below, p. 317; 426.

¹⁰² The Bṛhaddevatā, 6, 84, refers only to Vāl. 1–8.

¹⁰³ For particulars see: AUFRECHT, H. R. II, p. VII; OLDENBERG, Prolegomena, p. 494; at GGA 1907, p. 230; BLOOMFIELD, Repetitions, p. 13; GELDNER, ṚV. II, p. 370; RENO, in JA 250, p. 163; E. PARAMESWARA AITHAL, at ALB 33 (1969), p. 188. The name is unexplained; for a pseudo-etymology see KB. 30, 8; ŚB. 8, 3, 4, 1.

¹⁰⁴ AiB. 6, 28; KB. 30, 4 are aware of this parallelism.

¹⁰⁵ For particulars: SCHEFTELOWITZ, at ZDMG 74, p. 192; for the Dadhyañc myth of ṚV. 1, 117, 22, ibidem, p. 200.

¹⁰⁶ See SCHEFTELOWITZ, at WZKM 35, p. 59; for the *utsarjana*: KANE, H. Dh. II, p. 815.

¹⁰⁷ Edition: R. MEYER, Ṛgvidhānam, Berlin 1878; J. GONDA, The Ṛgvidhāna, English translation with an introduction and notes, Utrecht, 1951; on the language and composition of the text: M. S. BHAT, at JUB, N. S. 33, 39, p. 56.

ably teachers belonging to his school—had a certain predilection for definite purposes they did not deal with the Ṛgveda in its entirety. Their work shows on the one hand many points of resemblance to the Bṛhaddevatā, on the other an undeniable similarity to other texts dealing with rites of the above variety, e. g. the Sāmavidhāna¹⁰⁸, some of the Atharvavedapariśiṣṭas and definite parts of the *gṛhyasūtras*. However, parts of it show the influence of post-Vedic and even post-epic Viṣṇuite rites and practices, some stanzas being even reminiscent of tantric ceremonial. So the Ṛgvidhāna must be regarded as the product of a long evolution¹⁰⁹: it is one of those works that bear witness to the process of penetration of Vedic with younger Hinduistic belief and ritual and throw light on the adaptation of Vedic subject-matter to the requirements of the Hinduistic period.

¹⁰⁸ S. KONOW, *Das Sāmavidhānabrāhmaṇa*, Halle 1893.

¹⁰⁹ Terms such as 'interpolation' (R. MEYER) are in their strict sense not applicable to writings of this variety.

5. Commentaries

The study of the Veda was for a long time an important factor in the intellectual activities of the brahmins¹. In later centuries the Indian interpreters of the R̥gveda produced a number of 'explanatory works' (*bhāṣya*)². However, the practice of commenting upon the ancient sacred texts, which continued till late in the 17th century³, must have had its beginnings at an early date. We grope in the dark as to how far the commentators may have utilized unbroken, genuine traditions⁴. Devoid of a sense of historical development, they often err in giving anachronistic interpretations, in hinduizing the Vedic texts, and in supplying explanations which are otherwise incorrect. They, moreover, had, generally speaking, a bias in favour of ritualistic interpretations. Nevertheless their work is not devoid of value. We should read it critically, rejecting what we know to be impossible, adopting that which is consistent with knowledge gathered from other sources and noting for reconsideration the information which might be correct or valuable but cannot for the moment be checked⁵. Each suggestion that a commentator may have recorded a really ancient tradition deserves consideration on its own merits.

These commentators may be divided broadly into two groups, one commenting upon particular *saṃhitās* and the other explaining select *mantras* occurring in Vedic texts. To the second group belongs Halāyudha, one of the great talents at the court of king Lakṣmaṇasena of Bengal (1178 – ± 1205)⁶. One of his many works is the *Brāhmaṇasarvasva*⁷ in which he explained all the Vedic *mantras* (not more than 400 in number) prescribed for recitation in the domestic rites as performed by the followers of the Kāṇva recension of the Vājasaneyī Yajurveda. Most of these *mantras* are accordingly prescribed in Pāraskara's Ṛ̥ghyasūtra. Apart from being a commentary on these *mantras* the book is also a ritualistic digest, containing a large number of authoritative statements from *brāhmaṇas*, *sūtras*, *dharmasāstras* and other literature. In its often highly ritualistic explanations it does not only take the stand that the *mantras* came into being only for ritual purposes, but adapts their meanings also to the requirements of even the minor rites, and that in different contexts in different ways.

¹ RENOU, Vedic schools and epigraphy; D. BHATTACHARYYA, *Brāhmaṇa-sarvasva*, Introduction (see n. 6).

² For a brief survey: R. N. DANDEKAR, Vedic, Sanskrit, and Prakrit Studies, published on the occasion of the 26th Int. Congr. of Orient., New Delhi 1964.

³ Cf. D. BHATTACHARYYA, at 21 AIOC, I, p. 61.

⁴ It is interesting to notice that generally speaking Indian authors based themselves on predecessors and often lavishly incorporated earlier literature. See V. M. APTE, in 19 AIOC, I, p. 103.

⁵ For other opinions see p. 57.

⁶ *Brāhmaṇa-sarvasva* edited (with a long introduction) by D. BHATTACHARYYA, Calcutta 1960; see the same, in OH 1, p. 141; 2, p. 1; 17 AIOC, S. P., p. 5.

⁷ See also KANE, H. Dh. I, p. 298; D. BHATTACHARYYA, Little known Vedic commentators of Bengal, OH 2, p. 1; and at OH 3, p. 211.

It nevertheless fulfils the requirements of a good Veda commentary as laid down in the Bṛhaddevatā (2, 99f.): it lays emphasis on the sense and purport of the *mantras*, elaborates, when necessary, the half-expressed ideas of the seers by introducing words of its own and indicates the relation between the parts of a stanza by bringing them into a more intelligible order.

We now proceed to those commentators who dealt with the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā as such. Although the discovery of some pre-Sāyaṇa works of this class, in 1926⁸, did not reveal the existence of any really new view or interpretation of the corpus, it showed that there was before the 14th century a continuous tradition of Vedic studies⁹. It is therefore no longer possible to suggest that Sāyaṇa—who however does mention predecessors—had no authority to follow except Yāska. How long this tradition was and whether it reached back to the Vedic period proper we do not however know. Indian scholars¹⁰ have attempted to determine the date of Skandasvāmin¹¹, who left us a fragmentary commentary, at ± 600 or 650 A. D.¹² This author, who mentions predecessors, wrote also a commentary on the Nirukta and seems to have borrowed from Uvaṭa, the compiler of a valuable commentary on the Vājasaneyī Saṃhitā. Just like Yāska and Mādharma, but unlike Sāyaṇa, these authors try to preserve, in their explanations, the word order of the Ṛgveda text. A scholar of repute was Ṣaḍguruśiṣya who wrote in the last decades of the 12th century. His commentary Vedārthadīpikā “The lamp of the meaning of the Veda” and another work, a commentary on the Sarvānukramaṇī¹³, furnish us with interesting information.

The chronological problems¹⁴ are complicated by the existence of namesakes. There have been, before Sāyaṇa, at least two commentators called Mādharma¹⁵.

⁸ By C. KUNHAN RAJA, see 5 AIOC (1928–1930), I, p. 223.

⁹ Cf. C. KUNHAN RAJA, in 12 AIOC, II, p. 30; JOR 10 (1936), p. 256.

¹⁰ Cf. MANGAL DEVA SHASTRI, in 6 AIOC, p. 595; KUNHAN RAJA, in JOR 10 (see above); A. VENKATASUBBIAH, in JOR 10, p. 201.

¹¹ Edited by R. VARMA, The Ṛk-Saṃhitā with the *bhāṣya* of Skandasvāmin and the *dīpikā* of Veṅkaṭamādharma, 3 vol., Trivandrum 1929–1942. On Skandasvāmin: M. M. PANTULA, at Gurukula Patrikā 20, p. 412; 501; 582; 21, p. 361 etc. (Haridwar 1968; 1969).

¹² A relative chronology can in cases such as that before us be established on the basis of quotations, references and polemics in the pertinent works: an author who is quoted by nobody else stands a good chance of being the youngest. However, these commentators do not always indicate that they are quoting from predecessors.

¹³ See above, p. 35.

¹⁴ See e.g. A. VENKATASUBBIAH, Skandasvāmin and Mādharma, at JOR 32, p. 1.

¹⁵ KUNHAN RAJA, in JOR 5, p. 316 and 10 (see above), and in his edition of the Ṛgvedavyākhyā Mādharma, Adyar Library Series, 2 vol., 1939–1947; A. VENKATASUBBIAH, in JOR 10, p. 115; A. J. JOSHI, The problem of Mādharma in the Ṛgvedic commentaries, 12 AIOC, II, p. 249 (according to whom the commentary written by another Mādharma, the author of *anukramaṇis*, is older than Skandasvāmin's work. Occasionally an author gives information about himself in the colophons (of the chapters) of his work).

Of Mādhavabhaṭṭa¹⁶, son of Śrī-Veṅkaṭārya, who is supposed to have lived in the 10th century, we possess a complete commentary, the Ṛgarthadīpikā¹⁷ 'The lamp (illustrator) of the meaning of the Ṛgveda.'

The best known and up to some decades ago the only one known, but actually not the best, of these commentators is Sāyaṇa, a brahman of Dravidian descent¹⁸ who lived in the second half of the 14th century († 1387) in Vijayanagara. He was a brother of the famous philosopher and author Mādhava with whom he was sometimes confounded. He was a prolific author who besides his *bhāṣya* on the Ṛgveda¹⁹ composed other 'explanations of Vedic texts' (*vedārthapra-kāśa*), among which commentaries on the Yajurveda, the Sāmaveda and the Pañcaviṃśa-Brahmaṇa²⁰. Western pioneers such as Wilson were of the opinion that he had a knowledge of the Ṛgveda far beyond the pretensions of any European scholar contemporaneous with themselves, and he has indeed rendered good services in facilitating the comprehension of the Ṛgveda. Others however were inclined to reject his interpretations altogether²¹, first, because, it was assumed, being too far removed from the period of the composition of the hymns, he could not have drawn from an uninterrupted tradition²², and in the second place because he, like his compatriots in general, did not view the Veda in its historical perspective. The second objection is well-founded, but we now know that Sāyaṇa was no isolated figure. This does not however prevent him from proposing many anachronistic misinterpretations, defending wrong etymological or grammatical explanations, failing in the coherent explanation of stanzas and sentences as wholes, and inserting unnecessary discussions. A good many of his explanations—in principle he explains every word—are of course acceptable²³, some of them even valuable²⁴; in many other cases he however gives his readers the option between two possibilities²⁵, explains

¹⁶ Cf. L. SARUP, in Vol. B. C. Law, II, Poona 1946, p. 34.

¹⁷ Edited by L. SARUP (and others), 4 vol., Lahore-Banaras 1939–1955 (*maṇḍala* I–VII).

¹⁸ M. MAYRHOFER, Zum Namen Sāyaṇa, Anzeiger Akad. d. Wiss. Wien 108, 3 (1971), p. 79.

¹⁹ On manuscripts of Sāyaṇa's work etc.: MÜLLER, at JRAS 2, p. 426.

²⁰ See his own notice in Introduction to PB. st. 5. Other exegetical works are in all probability wrongly attributed to him; SURYAKANTA, in 16 AIOC, Pres. address, p. 105 even spoke of "an association of paṇḍits known as Sāyaṇa."

²¹ See p. 57 and R. ROTH, Über gelehrte Tradition . . . in Indien, ZDMG 21 (1867), p. 3. For Sāyaṇa see e.g. also J. MUIR, at JRAS 1866, p. 399; GRIFFITH, H. ṚV. I, p. VII; C. G. KASHIKAR, Sāyaṇa and the text of ṚVSamhitā, NIA 1, p. 750.

²² It was however known that he referred to other authorities.

²³ See e.g. his notes on ṚV. 2, 30, 2; 7, 4, 1, 14; 5, 8, 7; 29, 10; 48, 1; 4; 56, 7; 59, 3; 60, 5; 85, 8; 6, 8, 6; 11, 2; 16, 47; 42, 3; 45, 22; 63, 8; 72, 5; 7, 1, 23; 6, 1; 7, 4; 18, 2; 6; 10; 11; 26, 1; 32, 12; 46, 2; 9, 16, 5; 33, 5; 10, 5, 1; see also GELDNER—who often quotes Sāyaṇa—on these and other places.

²⁴ See e.g. 1, 144, 4; 2, 18, 1; 3, 4, 5; 7, 1; 2; 5; 6; 31, 12; 4, 1, 13; 5, 23, 1.

²⁵ See e.g. 1, 64, 10; 145, 1; 160, 1; 176, 1; 2, 23, 2; 4, 4, 1, 16; 5, 31, 4; 59, 8; 6, 58, 1; 7, 32, 16; 97, 3; 9, 85, 2; 10, 8, 3; it is not always possible to make our choice.

numerous words differently in different places²⁶, or proposes completely improbable solutions; very often he is obviously mistaken²⁷ or in any case not to be followed unreservedly²⁸. The pertinent 'frame-stories' of hymns which he by way of introduction or interwoven in his notes quotes from *brāhmaṇas* are on the whole less reliable than the many valuable indications concerning the ritual application of the texts²⁹. He even preferred such explanations as would suit the ritual application of the stanzas and more than once quotes from other works, e.g. Udgītha's commentary³⁰, that which could serve this end. Like almost all other commentators³¹ Sāyaṇa indeed maintains mostly the ritualistic tradition of Veda interpretation³², although he also adopts symbolic, allegorical and legendary explanations³³.

No more than passing mention can be made of the numerous "elucidations" (*vivarāṇa*, *dīpikā* etc.), collections of hymns or verses, handbooks for the use of officiants and other minor works most of which have remained unpublished³⁴.

²⁶ There is a large number of 'difficult words' of which neither Yāska nor Sāyaṇa had any certain information. The explanations furnished in the different exegetical works written by or attributed to Sāyaṇa are not always consistent; cf. e.g. ṚV. 2, 27, 11: TS. 2, 1, 11, 5; 3, 20, 2: TS. 3, 2, 11, 1; 10, 2, 1: TS. 4, 3, 13, 4.

²⁷ See e.g. GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 173 (on ṚV. 1, 125); 1, 156, 5; 2, 19, 2; 3, 55, 14; 4, 18, 7; 7, 55, 7; 101, 2.

²⁸ Cf. e.g. 1, 153, 3; 166, 11; 189, 5; 2, 15, 2; 3, 16, 2; 38, 9; 54, 7; 4, 16, 3; 5, 63, 3; 6, 12, 3; 21, 3; 44, 14; 50, 15; 75, 7; 7, 1, 17; 25, 1; 37, 8; 82, 4; 10, 59, 10; 79, 6. This is not to say that the at first sight unconvincing notes should be ignored (cf. e.g. 3, 17, 3; 34, 4; 38, 5).

²⁹ Not all quotations found in Sāyaṇa's work are traceable (C. G. KASHIKAR, at 12 AIOC I, p. 261); sometimes he does not mention his sources by name or refers to them in his own words, sometimes he quotes from texts that are lost or unknown to us.

³⁰ C. G. KASHIKAR, A comparative study of Udgītha's bhāṣya on the Ṛgveda, Comm. Vol. Siddheshwar Varma, I, p. 150; KUNHAN RAJA, in 6 AIOC, p. 535; (partial) edition: Ṛgvedabhāṣya of Udgītha, Lahore 1935.

³¹ H. G. NARAHARI, at The Aryan Path 22, p. 211.

³² Cf. also MAX MÜLLER, A history of ancient Sanskrit literature, p. 460; V. CH. BHATTACHARYA, at OH 2, p. 153.

³³ In his general introduction to the Ṛgveda he devotes many pages to a systematic exposition of Indian apologetics (H. OERTEL, Zur indischen Apologetik, Stuttgart 1930).

³⁴ For some particulars: RENOU, E. V. P. VI, p. 36. Among the works describing the characteristics of the Veda (*vedalakṣaṇa*) are numerous treatises on compound words etc. (*anīṅgyam*), one of which has been edited in IHQ 7, add., p. 1.

6. *Survival of the Veda*

As already intimated the Veda has for many centuries—even when manuscripts and, in modern times, printed editions were available—been handed down by word of mouth (*amṇāya*). The right and duty to preserve the tradition—an unbroken succession of teachers and taught (*saṃpradāya*)—falls solely to the brahmins who have transmitted this heritage with unparalleled accuracy. This conscientiousness is identical with the exactitude with which they acquitted themselves of their ritual duties. The brahmins' task is indeed two-fold: the sacrificial performance in which recitation of Vedic hymns and stanzas, appropriately arranged, is an important element (*prayoga*) and study and recitation in the order in which the hymns appear in the great collections (*adhyāya*)¹. Through this recitation—which makes the inherent power of the *mantras* efficacious—brahmins gain merit and perfection² and contribute to the preservation of the sacred order of the universe. Hence the belief that any mistake results in calamities and the preference for oral transmission which was regarded as a safeguard against profanation and divulgement among the unqualified and uninitiated. The instruction of brahmin boys by a qualified teacher (*guru, ācārya, upādhyāya*) is elaborately described in *gr̥hyasūtras* and other ancient texts³. Nowadays *prayoga* is almost extinct while many forms of *svādhyāya* have become very rare.

A thorough study of the Veda requires an insight into the tradition of this literature in later times and its reception by the Indian posterity⁴. And this notwithstanding the paradoxical situation that the Veda, though highly revered, was already at an early date very imperfectly known and understood. For an objective judge this tradition is also a history of attempts at explanation from preconceived points of view. The practice of oral instruction and exegesis co-existing with the tradition of the texts involved, on the one hand the danger of continuous obscuration of the original meaning of the latter and on the other the impossibility, in many cases, of knowing whether a certain doctrine or interpretation had not existed long before its first occurrence in writing. When used for ritual purposes the texts had to be recited without any deviation from

¹ A distinction was made between a "general or ordinary application" (*sāmānyavinīyoga*), i.e. the study (recitation) of the text in the codified order and the "special application" (*viśeṣavinīyoga*) in rituals as taught in the *sūtras*. The latter regards *sūktas*, *ṛcas* (see p. 189) and verses (*rc*). See Sāyaṇa, on ṚV. 1, 1 and compare SIEG, Sagenstoffe, p. 2; below, p. 83.

² See e.g. ŚB. 11, 5, 7, 1; Manu 2, 107; 3, 66; 11, 246f.; cf. also 4, 147.

³ For sources and particulars see KANE, H. Dh. II, p. 268; cf. also R. K. MOOKERJI, Ancient Indian education, London 1947, p. 174; VIDHUŠEKHARA, at 6 AIOC, p. 483; V. M. APTE, at BDCRI 4, p. 269; GONDA, R.I. I, p. 119. The aversion to writing down a Vedic text appears e.g. from an occurrence in the year 1742 communicated by WEBER, in ZDMG 7, p. 235.

⁴ L. RENOU, Le destin du Veda dans l'Inde, E. V. P. VI (1960; Engl. transl. The destiny of the Veda in India, Delhi 1965); J. GONDA, Change and continuity in Indian religion, The Hague 1965, ch. I.

what was supposed to be their original form. Without exactitude in the pronunciation of accents, quantities etc. a recitation is not only null and void, but even detrimental to the one who pronounces it⁵. As the texts were intended for the deities, the sacrificial priests were not interested in interpreting them for men. This neglect of the meaning of the Veda⁶, condemned though it was by various authorities⁷, led many modern orthodox brahmins to indulge in the thought that the meaning of the sacred corpus cannot be known⁸. Yet there are some stray references to interpretative study of the Veda⁹, which however do not inform us about particulars as to which Veda or which texts roused the interest of those who "appropriated, discussed, studied and recited" the Veda, or of those who meditated on its meaning or tried to understand it with a view to obtaining final emancipation¹⁰.

Until recently it was, moreover, difficult for Western scholars to obtain reliable information on the manner of studying, reciting and chanting as practised by the brahmins¹¹. Restricting ourselves to the Ṛgveda we now know that, while the texts themselves remained as good as unchanged, there exist, in different parts of India, different styles of recitation¹² which sometimes coincide with what we know of the geographic distribution of the Vedic schools in ancient times. There is a tradition of the Śākala recension in the West of India with extensions to the North (Maharashtra, Saurashtra, Uttar Pradesh) and one, which is purer and probably richer, in the South (Madras, Andhra Pradesh, Mysore)¹³. Outside these two main traditions there exist, in comparative isolation, some others, the most interesting of which is that of the Nambudiri

⁵ Cf. WEBER, I.S. I, p. 5, and see TS. 2, 4, 12, 1; ŚB. 1, 6, 3, 8. In reciting it is a general practice to extend the ending portions of a verse with unbroken continuance into the initial portion of the following verse (cf. ŚB. 1, 3, 5, 13; 14; GB. 2, 2, 9; VISHVA BANDHU, in 15 AIOC, p. 72). This practice is (at least it originally was) to avoid an ominous interruption.

⁶ "In the regular perusal of the Veda, which . . . is much practised by Mahrattas and Telingas, the student is required to notice, especially, the author, subject, metre, and purpose of each invocation. To understand the meaning . . . is thought less important" (H. TH. COLEBROOKE, Miscellaneous essays, London 1837, I, p. 20). For Śāṅkara, cf. also R. B. ATHAVALE, at 15 AIOC, S. P., p. 2. Tradition indeed has it that the man who teaches or learns the Veda without knowing the *ṛsis*, metres, gods and application runs the risk of being reborn in an inferior state of life (cf. P. S. S(Ī)ASTRI, in QJMS 37, p. 84). In general: RENO, E. V. P. VI, p. 37.

⁷ E.g. Nirukta, 1, 18; Śāṅkara, Bhāṣya on Vedāntasūtra 1, 3, 30; cf. KANE, H. Dh. II, p. 356, and places such as Manu 12, 103.

⁸ Cf. KANE, H. Dh. II, p. 358.

⁹ Cf. RENO, Destin, p. 39.

¹⁰ Dakṣasmṛti 2, 34; VaikhSm. 8, 3; Yājñavalkya 3, 156.

¹¹ Cf. M. HAUG, in ZDMG 17 (1863), p. 799. The knowledge of the villagers, in whose possession important manuscripts remain, about these possessions is often very hazy (see D. BHATTACHARYYA, Fundamental themes of the Atharvaveda, Poona 1968, p. XI; this scholar brought to light many unknown manuscripts).

¹² Which, however, resemble the predominant Yajurveda recitation.

¹³ In some regions of the South *śrauta* rituals continue to be performed. In Eastern India the Vedic tradition is fast dying out.

brahmans of Kerala¹⁴. Their Ṛgveda belongs to the Bāṣkala recension, and they follow either the Kauṣītakī (Śāṅkhāyana) or the Āśvalāyana school, reciting also the *brāhmaṇas*, *āraṇyakas* and *upaniṣads* of the Ṛgveda. The recitation of these brahmans is rhythmical rather than musical; they pay much attention to time units and intervals, and prefer a swinging or trembling pronunciation of final vowels, nasals etc. Some minor characteristics are no doubt influenced by their mother tongue, Malayalam¹⁵.

In the course of the Vedic period it must have become clear that the sacred literature generally speaking dealt with gods, rites and metaphysical matter, the latter subject being mainly discussed in the *upaniṣads*. Already at an early date the doctrine found acceptance that the Veda as a whole—and consequently a given passage of the Ṛk-Saṃhitā etc.—admits of a threefold interpretation, viz. from the point of view of the performance of rites (*adhivajña*); with reference to the deities (*adhidaivata*) and with reference to the 'Soul' (*adhyātma*)¹⁶. The choice between these three views became left to the judgement of interpreters. Ritualists, for instance, became much inclined to take non-ritual matter somehow to be indicative of ritual acts. Since etymological interpretation was, in certain circles, much in vogue, the Indian study and exegesis differentiated into four main¹⁷—non-exclusive and non-inimical—currents or modes of access, viz. a ritualistic, a philosophical, an etymological and a legendary and mythological one¹⁸. According to the first approach the deity of a *mantra* should, in case it is not mentioned explicitly, be inferred from the ritual application. Since this often was the result of a later development, the poet's intentions were easily missed. According to those who prefer the second and more influential approach the *mantras* are philosophical allegories which admit of a speculative interpretation on the basis of the monistic doctrine: all Vedic deities are, in fact, aspects of the one Ātman (*adhyātma* view); in later times, most interpreters of the Veda were Vedāntins, and philosophers often tried to corroborate their arguments with quotations from the Veda. In many cases

¹⁴ J. F. STAAL, Nambudiri Veda recitation, The Hague 1961 (for a survey of the geographical distribution of the *sākhās*, see p. 18). For the Nambudiris STAAL, in Art and Letters, 32, p. 1.

¹⁵ See also J. E. B. GRAY, An analysis of Ṛgvedic recitation, BSOAS 22 (1959), p. 86; An analysis of Nambudiri Ṛgvedic recitation, ibidem, p. 499; V. RAGHAVAN, The present position of Vedic recitation and Vedic *sākhās*, Kumbhakonam 1962; R. N. DANDEKAR, at ABORI 28, p. 138. In 1956 the Indian Government decided on a more systematic search for surviving centres of traditional transmission of the Veda.

¹⁶ Compare e.g. Nirukta 10, 26; 11, 4; Manu 6, 83 and the commentaries on this place.

¹⁷ For some other 'approaches': S. K. GUPTA, Ancient schools of Vedic interpretation, JGJRI 16, p. 143.

¹⁸ For particulars: SIEG, Sagenstoffe, p. 7. Compare e.g. the explanations of the name and the personalities of the Aśvins in Yāska, Nir. 12, 1: called after their horses (*aśva*); or they are heaven and earth, or two virtuous kings.

this interpretation involved serious misapprehensions. The third approach, that of the etymological exegetes (*nairukta*)¹⁹, embraces more than its name suggests: it reduces the many gods of the Veda to three—viz. the representatives of heaven, earth and intermediate space—and propagates a traditional exegetical doctrine on the basis of the Naighaṅṭuka²⁰. The belief in the conclusive force of the (often untenable) etymologies was combatted by the adherents of the fourth method, the Aitihāsikas²¹, who base their interpretations on the traditional belief that the gods are individuals figuring in legends and narratives (*itihāsa*): thus the Aśvins were devout kings, Vṛtra an *asura* and so on; in corroboration of their views they often refer to the stories in the *brāhmaṇas*. It is clear that a modern philologist will in innumerable cases disagree with all these principles of exegesis²².

Vedic learning never became the common property of the masses. Circulating only among the more intellectual classes of society the ancient texts escaped literal interpretation. But instead of this they did not escape the prestige of perfection. The conviction that the Veda contains everything²³ led many authors to cite it in order to justify their own opinions, anachronistic or even surreptitiously reinterpreted though they might be. In doing so they readily availed themselves of the traditional distinction between three 'semantic aspects,' viz. the expressed sense (*abhidhā*), the implied sense (*lakṣaṇā*) and the allusive or suggestive sense (*vyañjanā*)²⁴. In innumerable cases one believed oneself to be in the wake of this literature which is 'the main sign of Indian orthodoxy,' whilst actually turning one's back to it. Contradiction of the Veda became the main criterion of heresy²⁵. While almost any doctrine might combine with professed allegiance²⁶ and lip service enabled certain religious groups, such as the Śivaite Pāsupatas and the Viṣṇuite Pāñcarātrins, to remain within the Hindu fold, explicit denial of the Veda stamped Buddhists, Jains and Materialists (Cārṇvākas) as heretics. However, an adequate understanding of this

¹⁹ See e.g. Yāska, Nir. 2, 8; 3, 13; 19 etc.

²⁰ See p. 32.

²¹ For details: SIEG, Sagenstoffe, p. 13ff.

²² In the view of the orthodox—or rather traditionalists—the true meaning of Vedic texts, whose obscurity is often admitted, can be explained by the qualified with the help of other revealed (*śrauta*) texts, or, subsidiarily, by means of works based on these and transmitted by human memory (*smṛti*), as well as with reasoning (*tarka*), the help of the *vedāṅgas* being a matter of course. (For particulars: VIDHUŚEKHARA ŚĀSTRĪ, in 6 AIOC, p. 483).

²³ Cf. Mbh. 1, 62, 33 "that which is found in (the Veda) exists elsewhere; that which is not, is nowhere."

²⁴ Cf. V. M. APTE, in 19 AIOC, p. 105.

²⁵ That already in Yāska's days there were sceptics appears from a well-known passage (Yāska, Nir. 1, 15; on this Kautsa controversy: RENOU, Destin, p. 68) in which a critic named Kautsa questions the authority of the Vedas and maintains that their stanzas are meaningless.

²⁶ See for instance Kauṭīliya Arthaśāstra, ch. 2 and 3 (H. G. NARAHARI, at BhV 10, p. 49).

body of literature was lost at an early date, a 'philological study' atrophied in course of time, and the commentators give ample evidence of ignorance and false notions.

The *upaniṣads*, while emphasizing the philosophical value and *adhyātma* view of the Veda, consider its study an antidote against the miserable condition of the individual soul and man's ultimate refuge²⁷. They moreover already give evidence of the tendency to co-ordinate ('identify') the divisions of the sacred literature with macrocosmic and microcosmic entities²⁸ and make them the subject of various esoteric speculations²⁹. On the other hand, quotations from Vedic texts are—in contrast with the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*—already absent in the *Chāndogya* and not very frequent in later *upaniṣads*³⁰.

In later *upaniṣads*³¹ there are however besides quotations, imitations in a sort of hybrid Vedic idiom³²; an instance is the *Bāṣkalamantra-Upaniṣad*. Among these imitations³³ is also the *Suparṇākhyaṇa*³⁴, a poem in pseudo-Vedic style dealing with the story—well known from *Mbh.* 1, a. 14 etc.—of *Kadrū* and *Vinatā*, the daughters of *Dakṣa* and wives of *Kaśyapa* who became the mothers of the serpents and of the bird *Garuḍa* or *Tārksya*. This bird is the hero of the story: he frees his mother, the victim of her sister's stratagems, promising to give the soma, for which he goes to the heavenly regions, to the snakes; he does not however hand it to them, and *Indra* allots them to him as his food. The theme—inspired by the hostility between snakes and birds of prey—may be very old, but the poem itself cannot go back to the *brāhmaṇa* period³⁵. Although it is for the greater part composed in the form of a conversation between the principal figures it should not be described³⁶ as a drama. Nor is it a sort of extract from the more fluent *Mahābhārata* story which for a

²⁷ *MaitriUp.* 4, 3; *ChU.* 1, 3, 8f.; 1, 6–7.

²⁸ See also H. G. NARAHARI, at *Comm.* Vol. M. *Hiriyanna*, Mysore 1952, p. 115. Modern scholars have rightly differed in opinion from interpretations offered by *upaniṣads* (cf. e.g. *BĀU.* 1, 4, 10 on *ṚV.* 4, 26, 1; NARAHARI, in *Pres.* Vol. C. *Kunhan Raja*, Madras 1946, p. 336).

²⁹ See e.g. *BĀU.* 3, 1, 7; *ChU.* 1, 3, 4; 7, 1ff.; 4, 17, 2; *KauṣUp.* 1, 5; 2, 6.

³⁰ Cf. *KaUp.* 4, 8; *ṚV.* 3, 29, 2; 4, 9; *AV.* 10, 8, 16; 5, 2; *ṚV.* 4, 40, 5; *AiUp.* 4, 5; *ṚV.* 4, 27, 1 etc. (RENOU, *Destin*, p. 32).

³¹ Cf. N. TSUJI, in *Vol. Miyamoto*, Tokyo 1954, p. 3; RENOU, in *J. Ind. and Buddhist Studies* 3, p. 782.

³² For the *Nītimañjari*, a sort of (late) *Ṛgvedic* anthology, see F. KIELHORN, at *IA* 5, 116; *NG* 1891, p. 182; KEITH, at *JRAS* 1900, p. 127.

³³ Some other details: RENOU, *Destin*, p. 33.

³⁴ J. CHARPENTIER, *Die Suparṇasage*, Uppsala–Leipzig 1920 (with a German translation); see also E. GRUBE, *Suparṇādhyāyaḥ*, Thesis Leipzig 1875 and at WEBER, *I. S. XIV*, p. 1; OLDENBERG, at *ZDMG* 37, p. 67 (= *K. S.*, p. 454); J. HERTEL, at *WZKM* 23, p. 273; *Indische Märchen*, Jena 1919, p. 344 (²Düsseldorf-Köln, p. 357) with a German translation.

³⁵ As was CHARPENTIER's opinion (o.e., p. 395).

³⁶ With HERTEL, o.c.; see A. B. KEITH, in *JRAS* 1911, p. 979; 1912, p. 434; OLDENBERG, in *NG* 1911, p. 460 (= *K. S.*, p. 1414) and 1919, p. 79 (= *K. S.*, p. 1495).

right understanding of the abrupt and badly transmitted text³⁷ must in places be consulted.

The authoritative writings on *dharma* are in agreement on the doctrine that the Veda is their first source: "whatever rule Manu has ordained that has been fully declared in the Veda"³⁸. Generally speaking the *smṛti* often develops ideas expressed in older texts or enshrines interpretations of Vedic passages which then already were traditional. Moreover, after the oldest *dharma* works, the *dharmasūtras*, Vedic texts no longer seem to be quoted³⁹.

It is at first sight less surprising to see that a considerable amount of pre-epical literature is, through citations, adaptations, allusions or imitations, absorbed in the Mahābhārata⁴⁰ than to find that *purāṇas* in several places quote Vedic texts⁴¹. We should however remember that the practice of quoting Vedic passages in support of statements and arguments adopted by the authors of the earlier *upaniṣads*⁴² was pursued not only by philosophers but also by the authors of religious and ritualistic works who pretended to build their doctrines on the foundation of the Vedic tradition.

Moreover, some Vedic personalities and mythical themes did not fail to appeal to these poets who generally speaking addressed themselves to large audiences. The figure of king Purūravas and especially his being a son of Ilā⁴³ was in many variant versions well known to epic and puranic authors according to whom his mother was also his father (or a woman of changing sex) and the daughter of Manu. Agastya, the ṛṣi of RV. I, 165 ff. and one of the interlocutors of I, 170 and I, 179⁴⁴, was, as a teacher and otherwise, to have a great future in

³⁷ Cf. W. RAU, at ZDMG 117, p. 353.

³⁸ See e.g. Manu 2, 6ff.; Āp.Dhs. 1, 1, 1, 2; Yājñ. 1, 7. For references to the Veda in *smṛti* texts see J. MUIR, Original Sanskrit texts, III, London-Edinburgh 1861, 1868, passim; KANE, H. Dh. I, p. 4; JBBRAS 26, p. 57.

³⁹ For details: RENO, Destin, p. 13.

⁴⁰ According to V. M. APTE, in Volume of studies in Indology P. V. KANE, Poona 1941, p. 27 there are 19 references to Ṛgvedic passages in the Mahābhārata, 9 of which in book XII. For a complete list of references: S. SØRENSEN, An index to the names in the Mahābhārata, London 1904, 2Delhi 1963, p. 722; for other details: RENO, Destin, p. 14. For relations between Ṛgveda and Mahābhārata: SIEG, Sagenstoffe, passim; GELDNER, RV., on 1, 158 etc.

⁴¹ P. V. KANE, Vedic mantras and legends in the *purāṇas*, Volume C. Kunhan Raja, Madras 1946, p. 5, quoting, *inter alia*, Brahma Pur. 140, 22: RV. 2, 12, 1; 152, 34: RV. 10, 109, 6 (quotations), and 151, 4; 12: RV. 10, 95, 16; 15 (paraphrase); KANE, H. Dh. V, p. 919 (other *purāṇas*). More quotations could be found.

⁴² See e.g. AiUp. 4, 5: RV. 4, 27, 1; KauṣUp. 2, 8: RV. 1, 91, 16; 18; ŚvetUp. 4, 6 = RV. 1, 164, 20; 4, 8 = RV. 1, 164, 39; KANE, H. Dh. V, p. 918.

⁴³ Cf. also GELDNER, RV. II, p. 42 (on RV. 5, 41, 19), and see e.g. ViPur. 4, 1; MārkaPur. 111; see A. B. KEITH, The birth of Purūravas, JRAS 1913, p. 412 combating J. HERTEL, at WZKM 25, p. 153.

⁴⁴ See p. 200 f.; V. G. RAHURKAR, The role of Agastya in the Vedic and post-Vedic literature, PO 22, p. 40 (cf. 18 AIOC, S. P., p. 14); A. HOLTZMANN, Der heilige Agastya nach den Erzählungen des Mahābhārata, ZDMG 34 (1880), p. 589; J. GONDA, Agastyaparwa, The Hague 1936, p. 99.

the same genres of literature which also preserved the memory of Aṅgiras and other ṛṣis⁴⁵. The stories about Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra and their contest are in post-Vedic literature often narrated and alluded to as if they were real historical tradition, but sometimes also mixed up with marvellous incidents and other material⁴⁶, no doubt as a result of secondary manipulation of the Vedic tradition. This led to two traditions, an epic which may resume a late Vedic theme and a puranic story that in its kernel is totally different from the Vedic account of the enmity between the two priests⁴⁷. Finally, certain passages, among which those dealing with Kaṇva's hermitage (Mbh. 1, a. 65) and Aṣṭāvakra (3, 132 ff.) are full of Vedic memories.

In the so-called orthodox (traditional) view the infallible Veda⁴⁸ is the exclusive source of higher knowledge and of socio-religious duties⁴⁹. The fact that in Indian logic the so-called verbal testimony (of the Veda) came to be one of the means of valid knowledge contributed much to safeguarding its authority. The Mīmāṃsakas—i. e. the adherents of the Pūrva-mīmāṃsā, that so-called orthodox school of philosophical thought which originally devoted itself to the systematic interpretation of the Vedic ritual and injunctions but in course of time elaborated, *inter alia*, an epistemological technique—believe that the Veda has no other purpose than the performance of sacrifices⁵⁰. This led to a preponderance of the Yajurveda over the Ṛgveda⁵¹. According to them, the *mantras* are instruments of offering; the gods are nothing but recipients of oblations and a basis for the eulogies which are a subsidiary of the sacrifices; the scripture in its

⁴⁵ V. G. RAHURKAR, at 20 AIOC, S. P., p. 25; E. W. HOPKINS, Epic mythology, Strassburg 1915, Index, s. v. For other information see DANDEKAR, V. B. II, p. 129.

⁴⁶ See p. 129 f.; F. E. PARGITER, Viśvāmitra and Vasiṣṭha, JRAS 1913, p. 885; cf. A. B. KEITH, at JRAS 1914, p. 118.

⁴⁷ See further R. GOPAL, Vedic sources of the Śārṅgaka legend of the Mahābhārata, JGJRI 25 (1969), p. 397; for Namuci (RV. 1, 53, 7 etc.): Mbh. 3, 276, 4 (also confused with Vṛtra: HOPKINS, o. c., p. 129); Rām. 3, 29, 28.

⁴⁸ In Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's (16th cent.) survey of the 'orthodox' brahminical literature the four Vedas, the six Vedāṅgas, the four *upāṅgas* (*purāṇa*, *nyāya*, *mīmāṃsā*, *dharmaśāstra*) are said to constitute the fourteen basic collections, which together with the four so-called *upavedas*, medicine (*āyurveda*), the science of archery (*dhanurveda*), music (*gāndharvaveda*) and political science (*arthaśāstra*) complete the typical and significant number eighteen. See WEBER, I. S. I, p. 1.

⁴⁹ It would take too long to dwell upon various possibilities of agreement with reservations. Among those who rejected the theory of the eternity of the Veda was, for instance, the illustrious exponent of the 'orthodox' Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy Udayana (± 1000 A. D.); in his opinion the Veda is authoritative because the Lord alone is its author. (Cf. G. CHEMAPARATHY, An Indian rational theology, Thesis Utrecht, Vienna 1972, p. 24; H. CH. JOSHI, JGJRI 22, p. 177). For a dogmatic orthodox view of the authority of the Veda see e. g. R. K. TRIPATHI, at *Ānvīkṣikī* 3 (1970), p. 34. For doubts about the dogma of infallibility e. g. VIVEKANANDA, Complete works, Calcutta 1964, VI, p. 202.

⁵⁰ See e. g. Jaiminisūtra 1, 2, 1.

⁵¹ D. T. TATACHARYA, Ṛgveda and Pūrvottaramīmāṃsā methods of interpretation, JSVOI 1948, p. 25; 63. Cf. also Sāyaṇa, Introd. to Ṛgveda-Bhāṣya and Yajurveda-Bhāṣya.

entirety is the sole means of knowing man's ritual, religious and secular duties⁵², a collection of injunctions to (mostly ritual) actions⁵³. However, when the teachings of this school crystallized the hymns and many portions of the *brāhmaṇas* disappeared beyond the horizon and the original meaning of many stanzas was no longer preserved; their axiom that a ritual act is particularly effective when it is consecrated by a Vedic text conveying an appropriate and favourable meaning led to misinterpretations⁵⁴.

From the standpoint of the most influential Vedānta or Advaita ('Monism') the whole Vedic literature, of superhuman origin and supposed to express one homogeneous doctrine, that of "the oneness of the *ātman*," is to initiate its students into higher secrets, to aid them in experiencing transcendent reality. The Veda reveals truths which man could discover by the exercise of his own faculties—viz. in meditative experience—though it is to our advantage that they are revealed because not all men are able to embark upon such an enterprise. Being a faithful adherent of the Vedānta practically means remaining true to the principles of the Veda. Restoring the *Ṛk-Saṃhitā* to its foremost place among the Vedas this school teaches that this collection is as much concerned with Brahman as the *upaniṣads* and that the names of the individual gods really refer to that Ultimate Principle. Hence the predilection for metaphysical interpretation of Rgvedic passages. Yet Vedic literature preceding the *upaniṣads* was of much less systematic interest to the adherents of this school—which concentrates upon the speculative portions (*jñānakāṇḍa*) of the Veda—than the latter collection of writings, in which all the relevant wisdom of the Veda has, in their opinion, been embedded, the *mantras* being considered something subordinate⁵⁵. For instance, Rāmānuja (1050–1137), while regarding all Vedic texts as equally authoritative and speaking, in his *Vedārthasaṃgraha*, of the Veda in its entirety, actually limits himself to the *upaniṣads*.

The attitude towards the Veda adopted, already in earlier *upaniṣads*, in those circles which do not recognize the Vedic sacrificial rites as the sole way to welfare and salvation has two aspects⁵⁶. The Veda is on the one hand highly revered, regarded as authoritative and embodying eternal truth⁵⁷, cited also to demonstrate Vedic affiliation, but on the other hand considered to contain lower wisdom, to require for a proper understanding knowledge of other works

⁵² Cf. e.g. GANGANATHA JHA, at *Annals of the Śrī-Veṅkaṭeśvara Oriental Institute Tirupati* 1, 1, p. 3; D. V. GARGE, at *BDCRI* 3, p. 531; 4, p. 315.

⁵³ According to GARGE, at *BDCRI* 4, p. 329 Śabara (probably 5th cent. A.D.) cites nearly 2000 passages from Vedic texts, over 200 of which, being unidentifiable, may be supposed to have been quoted from texts lost to us.

⁵⁴ Cf. VELANKAR, at 13 *AIOC*, p. 10.

⁵⁵ See also RENOU, *Destin*, p. 54.

⁵⁶ See K. BHATTACHARYA, *Le 'védisme' de certains textes hindouistes*, *JA* 255, p. 199; a discussion of the anti-Vedic attitude of Jainas etc. and of the semi-Vedic tendencies in definite religious communities lies outside the scope of this work. See RENOU, *Destin*, p. 2; 41, and *passim*.

⁵⁷ Cf. e.g. BĀU. 1, 2, 5; 2, 4, 10; *Manu* 12, 94ff.; *MārkaPur.* 102. Cf. J.C. HEESTERMAN, *Die Autorität des Veda, in Offenbarung*, herausg. v. G. Oberhammer, Wien 1974.

(e.g. *purāṇas*) which often claim equality with, or even a priority of, the Veda. Although the muttering of its *mantras* destroys all sins, it can be dispensed with by devout worshippers of Śiva or Viṣṇu⁵⁸. Moreover, the four divisions of the Veda came to be elements of the speculations of particular groups⁵⁹; they were, for instance, intimately associated with the great divine figures of Hinduism⁶⁰. In tantric rites ancient material was even adapted to the cult of gods unknown to the Veda⁶¹: for instance, ṚV. 1, 99, 1, though addressed to Agni, is used for invoking Durgā. Particular Vedic *mantras* became associated, not only with the worship of Viṣṇu, Śiva and other gods, but also with various ritual ceremonies, the link between *mantra* and rite often being far-fetched. Authors of ritual handbooks and passages emphasized the practical use and significance of the texts, generally appreciating and interpreting these from the point of view of their applicability to their own particular purposes and extending their ritual employment (*vinīyoga*) to a wider circle of ceremonies. In domestic rites, ceremonies for purification or acquisition of special merit or benefit some of the Vedic hymns or *mantras* continued to have a function beside the Hinduist formulas which, after the beginning of the Christian era, gradually came to the fore⁶². That means that many ancient *mantras* have tended to be relegated to personal, that is mainly magic, use.

Whereas in the post-epic period the performances of *śrauta* sacrifices have gradually become less frequent⁶³, certain hymns gained a special vogue and significance⁶⁴, because their mere recital is believed to be an act of merit. These Vedic texts could not have survived if they had not been regarded as absolutely sacrosanct, as the imperishable Word⁶⁵, as a manifestation of Brahman itself. Some outstanding examples of popular and surviving hymns are—apart from some post-R̥gvedic texts—ṚV. 10, 90⁶⁶—the famous *puruṣa* hymn, in course of time re-interpreted as a key-stone of Viṣṇuite philosophy—and the Śrisūkta, the Viṣṇusūkta (1, 154)⁶⁷. The most famous of the isolated Vedic *mantras* that remained in ritual use⁶⁸—however much the spirit of the cult has changed—is

⁵⁸ Cf. e.g. MuU. 1, 1, 5; BhG. 11, 8; 53; Mbh. 18, 5, 43; Manu 11, 264; ViṣṇuPur. 6, 8, 12; KūrmaPur. 2, 46, 129; Kane, H.Dh. IV, p. 44; V, p. 914; 915; 917.

⁵⁹ Cf. e.g. BAU. 1, 5, 5; MārkaPur. 29, 6; 42, 9; Lakṣmi-Tantra 29, 16ff.; 36, 16.

⁶⁰ Cf. e.g. BhG. 9, 17; Mbh. 3, 187, 14; 12, 330, 32.

⁶¹ CH. CHAKRAVARTI, Applications of Vedic *mantras* in tantric rites, JASBL 18 (1952), 2, p. 113; KANE, H. Dh. V, p. 1100.

⁶² For particulars see: GONDA, The use of Vedic *mantras* in the ritual texts of the Vaikhānasas, IJ 14 (1972), p. 1; KANE, H. Dh. V, p. 920; D. BHATTACHARYA, in OH 8 (1960), p. 75.

⁶³ C. G. KASHIKAR, The Vedic rituals through the ages, IA, 3rd ser. 1 (1964), p. 77.

⁶⁴ K. GUPTA published (Aligarh 1955) an anthology of Vedic *mantras* for children: Bāla-Vedāṃṛta.

⁶⁵ Cf. e.g. KANE, H. Dh. II, p. 353.

⁶⁶ GONDA, at WZKSA 12–13, p. 101; V. S. AGRAWALA, in Śrī Venkaṭeśvara Univ. Orient. Journal, 5 (1962), p. 1 (partly untenable); cf. e.g. BhāgPur. 2, 6, 30.

⁶⁷ See GONDA, in OH (forthcoming).

⁶⁸ For some particulars: RENOU, Destin, p. 19.

RV. 3, 62, 10, the Gāyatrī (because it is composed in the metre of that name) or Sāvitrī (it is dedicated to Savitar, the Sun): "That we obtain that desirable (excellent) radiance of god Savitar who is (may be expected) to stimulate our visions"⁶⁹. The muttering of this most sacred *mantra*—to be ceremoniously imparted by the *guru* to a 'student' of the Veda⁷⁰—forms, from remote times to the present day, a vital part of a brahmin's daily worship. Already at an early moment it became an object of esoterical speculation and 'mystic' explanation, of re-interpretation, modification and adaptation to the requirements of post-Vedic religious currents⁷¹.

Some, partly unproved⁷², observations have been made on the influence exerted by the Veda on—or to express ourselves more cautiously, on the continuation of Vedic characteristics in—later Indian literature, inter alia, royal panegyrics⁷³ and *kāvya* poems⁷⁴. It is true that the later generations inherited many stylistic and some structural features (various similes, the metrical variation at the end of a poem) from the Vedic poets, and that the eulogistic literature (panegyrics and *stotras* "hymns of praise") continued Vedic features⁷⁵; however, neither the hymns nor the prose of the *brāhmaṇas* were in the classical period sources for the renewal of literary art. It can generally speaking be maintained that the more profane the literary works the rarer the allusions to the Veda proper. Whereas Kālidāsa's⁷⁶ poems and dramas show hardly anything worth mentioning in this connection, Māgha has a certain predilection for Vedic mythology. Bhavabhūti (\pm 730), who claimed to be a scion of a family of teachers of the Taittiriya *śākhā* of the Black Yajurveda⁷⁷, shows traces of familiarity with the Vedic sacrificial phraseology⁷⁸. Interestingly enough, later *kāvya* poets⁷⁹ seem to have been more inclined to displaying their, superficial, it is true, knowledge of Vedic religion and literature⁸⁰. The Veda was not unknown to the ancient Tamil authors either⁸¹. Their works reflect a

⁶⁹ See below, p. 65 ff.

⁷⁰ For many details: KANE, H. Dh. II, p. 300.

⁷¹ See GONDA, at Oriens 16, p. 284.

⁷² One should not, with P. L. BHARGAVA, India in the Vedic age, Aminabad-Lucknow 1971, p. 351, attach conclusive force to places such as Bharatiya Nāṭya-śāstra I, 16.

⁷³ L. RENO, in Journal de Psychologie, 1951 p. 283.

⁷⁴ S. K. GUPTA, at 17 AIOC, S. P. p. 31 (Kālidāsa's Meghadūta).

⁷⁵ See p. 264 f.

⁷⁶ See BH. S. UPADHYAYA, India in Kālidāsa, New Delhi 1947, p. 274; 279; 297. I would not say that, for instance, RV. 4, 7, 11 has been the model for Rtasamhāra 1, 25.

⁷⁷ See TODAR MALL, Mahāvira-caritam, Oxford 1928, p. XXIV.

⁷⁸ A. B. KEITH, at JRAS 1914 II, p. 729; V. RAGHAVAN, JASBombay 31-32, p. 218.

⁷⁹ The treatises on poetics did not, generally speaking, pay much attention to the Veda. There is on one hand a tendency to archaizing imitation in Rājasekhara's Kāvya-mīmāṃsā (\pm 900) and on the other an inclination to regard its literary value as inferior to that of *kāvya* (RENOU, Destin, p. 25; 76).

⁸⁰ For some details: RENO, Destin, p. 24.

⁸¹ J. FILLIOZAT, at Mélanges Renou, Paris 1968, p. 289.

pan-Indian culture in which this sacred literature ranked among the main elements. They give us also valuable information on its social and religious position: beside the younger Hindu works (*āgama*) which could pave the way for final deliverance the ritual set forth in the Veda remained a means of attaining worldly happiness and prosperity.

Generally speaking, the decline of Vedic literature must be ascribed to the difficulty of style and language of the *mantras*; its esoteric, specialized, abstruse or antiquated contents; the use of isolated stanzas or fragments of hymns in the ritual; the dispersion of those studying it over various regions, groups and schools; the emphasis placed upon mechanical recitation; the rarity, onesidedness and inaccessibility of commentaries; and last but not least, the fact that the Vedic religion had already at an early date ceased to appeal to the feelings, and to attract the attention, of large groups of the population. In the 19th century many prominent Indians, among whom for instance Vivekānanda (1862–1902), knew so little of the contents of the Veda that they mixed them up with beliefs of Buddhist and Hindu origin⁸². Or calling Vedas what really belongs to the *upanīśads* they combined, like Gandhi⁸³, ancient lore with tenets of other provenance.

This lack of first-hand information did not however prevent many Indians from eulogizing the literature exuberantly. The Vedas, “the word of God and in some respects even godlier than God himself”⁸⁴, “nothing less than the basis of our entire religious and social organization”⁸⁵, are “the medium through which the gospel of the life beyond, the super-sensual existence, the longing for the *summum bonum* has been most convincingly revealed”⁸⁶; “Vedic literature has preserved for us the whole story of the growth of our spiritual and philosophical thought”⁸⁷. There is moreover a pronounced tendency to idealize the contents of the Ṛgveda “which breathes an air of happiness and blithe charm”⁸⁸ and to propose extravagant anachronistic interpretations and unfounded idealistic views of the Vedic past and of the poetry of the hymns⁸⁹, some authors exhibiting also tendencies to euhemerism⁹⁰. To mention only some random examples: the frog-hymn RV. 7, 103⁹¹ has been explained as bearing testimony to ‘progressive social consciousness’ in a ‘critical and sceptical

⁸² RENOU, *Destin*, p. 5.

⁸³ M. K. GANDHI, *Autobiography* (quoted after the Washington edition 1954), ch. 22.

⁸⁴ S. K. BELVALKAR, in 2 AIOC, p. 3.

⁸⁵ BANKIM RACHANAVALI, *Collected writings*, Calcutta 1969, p. 150; cf. P. R. DESHMUKH, *Proc. 26 Int. Congr. of Orient.* III, 1, Poona 1969, p. 156.

⁸⁶ P. TARKABHUSHAN, in 10 AIOC (1940), *Pres. addresses*, p. 1.

⁸⁷ H. D. VELANKAR, in 13 AIOC (1946), p. 6.

⁸⁸ P. S. S(Ā)STRI, in PO 10 (1945), p. 97; cf. the same, in ABORI 38 (1957), p. 67.

⁸⁹ See e.g. P. S. SASTRI, in QJMS 40, p. 47.

⁹⁰ S. PRADHAN, at ABORI 12, p. 57. We leave unmentioned those publications which intend to show that the Vedic poets had a knowledge of modern techniques including even nuclear physics.

⁹¹ See p. 143.

society'⁹²; the famous hymn to the earth (AV. 12, 1) as a patriotic glorification of the 'motherland'⁹³; ṚV. 10, 101 as advocating co-operative farming⁹⁴.

☞ In a modernizing interpretation, the Veda, but in reality the *upaniṣads*, became, in the 19th century renaissance of Hinduism, an element of living faith among the followers, limited in number, of Rāmmohan Roy (1772–1833), Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) and S. Radhakrishnan (born 1888). The hymns themselves came decidedly to the fore in Dayānanda Sarasvatī's (1824–1883) *Ārya Samāj*, where, however, they are given a socio-politic, by no means scientific, interpretation⁹⁵. There is, moreover, a widespread tendency to read into the Veda esoteric implications based upon later usage of definite terms, a tendency also to interpret it symbolically⁹⁶ and to discern its spiritual and aesthetic significance by means of a study of the occurrences of these terms in later religious literature⁹⁷. Aurobindo (1872–1950), one of the foremost modern exponents of an esoteric, psychological, mystic and symbolical interpretation, views the Veda as a book of esoteric symbols, almost of spiritual formulae "which masks itself as a collection of ritual poems." Being much more than "a superficial liturgy the Veda is the supreme infallible authority for spiritual knowledge, revealed only to the initiated." Its central teaching is a truth higher and deeper than that of outward existence, a truth which makes us unite ourselves with God and pass from mortality to immortality. The gods, taken allegorically and, as living realities, representing essential powers of God and as such standing for psychological functions, are, if properly called upon by means of the *mantras*, our helpers: for instance, Agni, the Divine Will-force, is "the inner flame, our leader and path-finder". The *mantras*, bearers of spiritual power, have an esoteric meaning known only to the initiate who have learned to perform the 'inner sacrifice.' The sacrifices also are symbolic, namely of an inner exchange between divine power and men. On the world-stage and in the individual soul the same drama is enacted with the same personages, gods and demons⁹⁸.

⁹² P. S. S(H)ASTRI, in *IHQ* 32 (1956), p. 394.

⁹³ V. S. AGRAWALA, in *IA*, III, 1 (1964), p. 154.

⁹⁴ M. R. JAMBUNATHAN, at 20 *AIOC*, S. P., p. 16.

⁹⁵ Dayānanda was also among those spiritual leaders who shared the view that the Veda deals mainly with the Supreme Soul. See S. K. GUPTA, at 14 *AIOC*, S. P., p. 130.

⁹⁶ RAM GOPAL, 23 *AIOC*, Pres. address, p. 40; V. S. AGRAWALA, *Sparks from the Vedic fire*, Banaras 1962; *Vedic Symbolism*, at *Bhāratī* 6, p. 95; and in *Proc. 26 Int. Congress of Orient.* III, p. 1; S. A. DANGE, *Pastoral symbolism from the Ṛgveda*, Poona 1970.

⁹⁷ A. C. BOSE, 19 *AIOC* S. P., p. 25 and compare BLOOMFIELD, at *JAOS* 15, p. 145.

⁹⁸ See e.g. AUROBINDO (GHOSE), *Hymns of the Atris*, *Arya* 2; 3; 4 (Pondicherry 1915–1917); *The greatness of Indian literature*, *Calcutta Review* 58, March 1936; *Hymns to the mystic fire*, Pondicherry 1946, Introduction; *The Vāmadeva hymns to Agni*, *Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual* 10 (1951), p. 9; *On the Veda*, Pondicherry 1964; T. V. KAPALI SASTRY, *Lights on the Veda*, Pondicherry 1947; A. B. PURANI, *Studies in Vedic interpretation on the lines of Sri Aurobindo*, Varanasi (Benares) 1963.

7. Study of the Veda

In the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century Indian contributions to modern Vedic research were scanty¹. Indian scholars have repeatedly complained of the fact that interest in Vedic studies is, in universities as well as in the traditional schools, on the decline². Yet many hitherto unknown commentaries and other works were, in the course of the last century, found and—unfortunately not always critically—edited³, learned societies founded⁴, periodicals and several important enterprises started⁵, with the result that in the last decades Vedic research is in a modernized form winning ground. The publication of studies and translations written in modern Indian languages shows that nowadays the circles of those interested are widening⁶. Many Indian scholars⁷, for whom the Vedas often have a vital and emotional interest and who often find it difficult to be objectively critical, feel inclined to emphasize the beauty of their language and the majesty of their thought⁸; their unparalleled significance for religious life⁹; the devout fervour of mystic communion which they breathe¹⁰. Others¹¹ vindicate the old *adhyātma* exegesis of the orthodox

¹ Cf. H. LÜDERS, at ZDMG 83, p. 1. For philological work done by Europeans and Indians in India: E. WINDISCH, *Philologie und Altertumskunde in Indien*, Abh. Kunde d. Morgenlandes 15, 3, Leipzig 1921.

² Cf. also S. K. BELVALKAR, at 2 AIOC (1923), p. 4; C. G. KASHIKAR, 24 AIOC (1968), Pres. address, p. 27. There is on the other hand merit in promoting Vedic learning: the whole expense of the second edition of MAX MÜLLER's edition of the Ṛgveda was borne by the maharaja of Vijayanagara (E. J. THOMAS, at IHQ 26, p. 91).

³ See e.g. C. KUNHAN RAJA, in 12 AIOC (1947), II, p. 25; S. S. BHAWE, in 20 AIOC (1959), Pres. address, p. 25.

⁴ Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (Poona); Tilak Vaidic Samshodana Mandal (Poona); Vishveshvaranand Vedic Research Institute (successively in Lahore and Hoshiarpur); International Academy of Indian Culture (successively at Lahore, Nagpur, Delhi), etc.

⁵ See e.g. SURYA KANTA, at 16 AIOC, p. 1.

⁶ Most of these publications are hardly known outside their own region. It is with great regret we have to note that many Indian scholars are at a disadvantage because they are insufficiently abreast of what is going on in the West and especially of literature written in languages other than English. Too often MAX MÜLLER and his contemporaries are still quoted as representative authorities whose opinions may be generalized. Fortunately, however, few will in this respect equal KEVAL MOTWANI, *India's ancient literature*, Proc. 27 Int. Congress of Orient. 1967 (Wiesbaden 1967), p. 300 (and a book under the same title, Madras 1956).

⁷ In general, see e.g. D. BHATTACHARYA, *Thoughts on aspects of Vedic studies*, OH 8 (1960), p. 73.

⁸ C. KUNHAN RAJA, in *The Aryan Path* 17 (1946), p. 262.

⁹ See e.g. V. RAGHAVAN, *The Vedas and Bhakti*, *Vedānta-Kesari* 42, p. 330; S. K. BELVALKAR, in 2 AIOC, Pres. address, p. 3.

¹⁰ P. S. SASTRI, in *PrBr* 63, p. 193.

¹¹ E.g. V. S. AGRAWALA, *The Vedas and adhyātma tradition*, IC 5 (1938), p. 285 (not free from circular argumentation and untenable interpretations of texts); the same, *JOIB* 13, p. 95.

tradition. Contending that the *brāhmaṇas* already regarded the Veda as 'documents of spiritual culture' and inclining to an intuitively 'mystic' interpretation they sometimes tend to exaggerate the presence of upaniṣadic and monistic doctrines in the R̥gveda¹². In their eyes "the approach to the deeper meaning of the Veda—the words of which are mere symbols—must be with faith, spiritual rather than humanistic"¹³. "The lauds are means to happiness rather than to pleasure, and it would be an affectation to speak of them as literature"¹⁴. That is not to say that the East is inaccessible to new methods and approaches. Some scholars for instance favour a 'socio-semantic' method of interpreting the ancient texts, attempting to glean information regarding prehistoric development from a 'social' analysis of the myths and legends¹⁵.

It may be useful very briefly to characterize the work, points of view and methods adopted by those western scholars who have contributed most to the study of the Veda. Even from this résumé it will appear that the history of Vedic researches has first and foremost been a struggle for the most adequate methods and that attention has been focussed mainly on problems of strictly philological, linguistic, religious, ritual interest. Up to the middle of the 19th century the West was very badly informed on Indian literature in general. Some short and inaccurate references are found in the works of Portuguese, Dutch¹⁶, French¹⁷, Danish and English¹⁸ authors who had stayed or travelled in India¹⁹. The scientific study of the Veda was founded, in Paris, by Eugène Burnouf (1801–1852)²⁰. To his pupils Rudolph (von) Roth (1821–1895, Tübingen) and F. Max Müller (1823–1903, after 1850 at Oxford) we are, among many

¹² Thus, e.g. A. K. COOMARASWAMY, *A new approach to the Vedas*, London 1933 (cf. p. 52), inaccurate and unreliable in many details (cf. e.g. W. PRINTZ, at ZDMG 88, p. 356); J. B. CHETHIMATTAM, in *Int. Philos. Quart.* 10 (1970), p. 47.

¹³ A. K. COOMARASWAMY, in *Comm. Vol. Woolner*, Lahore 1940, p. 53.

¹⁴ COOMARASWAMY, *New approach*, p. 88.

¹⁵ Cf. O. H. de A. WIJSEKERA, in *Verhandlungen Indologen-Tagung 1959*, Göttingen 1960, p. 233.

¹⁶ Mention may be made of A. ROGERIUS, *De Open-deure tot het verborgen heydendom*, Leyden 1651, translated into French and German, re-edited by W. CALAND, 's-Gravenhage 1915, and PH. BALDAEUS, *Afgoderye der Oost-indische heydenen*, Amsterdam 1672, re-edited by A. J. DE JONG, *Thesis Utrecht 1917* (see p. 176).

¹⁷ F. BERNIER, *Histoire de la dernière révolution des États du Grand Mogol* and three other volumes, Paris 1670–1671.

¹⁸ H. TH. COLEBROOKE, *On the Vedas or sacred writings of the Hindus*, Asiatick Researches 8, p. 369 (also separately Calcutta 1805; and in *Miscellaneous essays*, I, London 1837; 21873; German translation by L. POLEY, Leipsic 1847). He was the first to attempt a sketchy survey of the Vedic literature known.

¹⁹ For general information: W. CALAND, *Ontdekkingsgeschiedenis van den Veda*, Amsterdam Acad. 1918; A. C. BURNELL, at *IA* 8, p. 98; J. CHARPENTIER, at *JIH* 3, p. 161; E. J. THOMAS, at *IHQ* 26, p. 89; E. WINDISCH, *Geschichte der Sanskrit-Philologie und indischen Altertumskunde*, 2 vol., Strassburg 1917; Berlin–Leipzig 1920.

²⁰ For the period between ±1840 and 1920 see L. RENOU, *Les maîtres de la philologie védique*, Paris 1928.

other things, indebted for the compilation of the Vedic element in the so-called Petersburg Dictionary²¹ and the first edition of the Ṛgveda²². Roth—to whom Europe owed the first clear information on the Veda²³—rightly taught that the aim of Veda interpretation is not to ascertain the meaning which Sāyaṇa or even Yāska attributed to the hymns. Very much inclined to call their authority in question he was the first European to emancipate himself from the tradition they represented. In this he was followed by Grassmann, Bergaigne, Oldenberg. Considering the metrical parts of the Veda, not as products of theological speculation or liturgical practices, but as ancient lyrical poetry²⁴ misunderstood by later generations, he tried to view it as a coherent whole. The conviction that there were hardly connections between the Veda and later literature and the belief that there was a long distance in time between the hymns and the ritual texts were two of his errors. Whereas Hermann Grassmann (1809–1877)²⁵ had no opinions on Vedic mythology and ritualism, Alfred Ludwig (1832–1912), following Weber²⁶ and reacting against Roth, tried—not very successfully—to form an idea of the social and historical reality of which the poets are the exponents. It was to be Abel Bergaigne's (1838–1888) task to show that the interpretation of the Ṛgveda is much more complicated and difficult than was assumed by his predecessors. His ambitious attempt at explaining the contents of this corpus as a harmonious and systematic whole²⁷—and that without relying on comparative mythology and evidence drawn from the later literature—led to an insight into the indissoluble relations between cult and myth and the belief of Vedic man in the identity of cosmic, ritual and moral order. Though often overshooting the mark he also contributed to a better understanding of Ṛgvedic diction and phraseology. However, his 'structuralist' approach did not appeal to his contemporaries who thought in terms of historical evolution.

The activity of Richard Pischel (1849–1908) and Karl F. Geldner (1852–1929)²⁸ in his younger days was a deliberate and polemical reaction against the prevailing opinions. In their eyes the Ṛgveda is a purely Indian document to be interpreted, not with the help of comparative linguistics or mythology, but with the later, even the classical Sanskrit literature of the subcontinent. Consequently, in interpreting the hymns, myths were replaced by legends, Sāyaṇa and other commentators were continually consulted, anything Indian,

²¹ O. BÖHTLINGK and R. ROTH, *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch*, St. Petersburg (1852) 1855–1875.

²² See above, p. 8.

²³ R. ROTH, *Zur Litteratur und Geschichte des Weda*, Stuttgart 1846.

²⁴ ROTH, in the 'Vorwort' of the Petersburg Dictionary, I.

²⁵ See below, p. 60.

²⁶ See below, p. 58.

²⁷ BERGAIGNE, R. V.; *Observations sur les figures de rhétorique dans le Rig-Veda*, MSL 4, p. 96; *Quarante hymns du Rig-Veda*, MSL 8, 1 etc.

²⁸ PISCHEL and GELDNER, V. S.; K. F. GELDNER, *Auswahl*; R. PISCHEL, *Die indische Literatur*, in *Kultur der Gegenwart*, I, 7, Berlin–Leipzig 1906, p. 160.

including even modern religions and folk-lore, could be utilized in elucidation of the R̥gveda which, in Pischel's opinion, reflects a culture that is not widely different from that of the epic and classical periods²⁹. Whereas the *Vedische Studien* did not fail to make some appeal to the judgment of the American scholars M. Bloomfield (1855–1928)³⁰ and Ch. R. Lanman (1850–1941), they did not meet with much appreciation in Germany³¹ until, in later years, Geldner himself rightly mitigated³²—and in many particulars even abandoned—the one-sided and often hazardous method advocated in that collection of studies³³.

Hermann Oldenberg (1854–1920)³⁴, less one-sided in his views than most of his predecessors and contemporaries, was perfectly right, not only in detecting the weaknesses of the *Vedische Studien* but also in resorting to all reliable resources which might contribute to the understanding of the Veda. Regarding the other Vedic texts as a sort of commentary on the R̥gveda he had a keen eye for the possibilities offered by two nascent branches of learning, cultural anthropology and the comparative study of religions. In the latter respect he was in the congenial society of Willem Caland (1859–1932) who as a worthy successor of Albrecht Weber (1825–1901) focussed his attention mainly on the *brāhmaṇas* and *sūtras*, leaving us numerous first editions and translations³⁵.

After Oldenberg the study of the R̥gveda was for some decades almost stagnant—textcritical studies all but completely discontinued³⁶—and Caland's death deprived the ritual texts of their most prolific interpreter. It was after World War II that it became clear that representatives of a younger generation had resumed the threads, often however neglecting, like their predecessors, the purely literary aspects of the ancient Indian literature for linguistic and religious problems. Louis Renou (1896–1966)³⁷ was an honourable exception: in his many valuable publications there is much that has deepened our insight into the style, diction, phraseology and literary significance of the Vedic hymns³⁸. Emphasizing the formulaic character of the hymns and eschewing clarification by means of external facts, he tried to understand them first and foremost

²⁹ Cf. e.g. PISCHEL and GELDNER, V. S. I, p. XXII.

³⁰ Who, however, also observed that "Pischel and Geldner are notoriously inclined to the belief that a considerable part of the R̥gveda consists of fairy-tales" (ZDMG 48, p. 543).

³¹ The only work which adopted Pischel's points of view is SIEG, *Sagenstoffe*.

³² Especially in his translation (GELDNER, R̥V.).

³³ One can hardly object to the many—and sometimes critical—references to Sāyana, Yāska, the *anukramaṇīs* etc. found in the notes to his translation.

³⁴ H. OLDENBERG, *Vedaforschung*, Stuttgart–Berlin 1905; for a short review of his principal works: RENOU, Maitres, p. 56.

³⁵ Most Vedic texts have appeared in print and the greater part has been translated, but much remains to be done.

³⁶ Cf. VISHVA BANDHU, at 15 AIOC, p. 69 and RO 21, p. 455.

³⁷ See E. GEROW, Renou's place in Vedic exegetical tradition, JAOS 88, p. 310. While sticking strictly to the philological facts attested Renou however tended to over-estimate the *argumentum e silentio*.

³⁸ RENOU, E. V. P.; H. P.; H. S. and many other works.

by internal comparison. After the wholesome Anglo-Saxon scepticism of W. D. Whitney (1827–1894) and A. B. Keith (1879–1944) his French lucidity, reserve and soundness of judgment as well as his anti-dogmatism are a welcome counterpoise to prejudiced and not infrequently speculative ‘systematic’ views of the Veda.

Recently, an important—though, of course, one-sided—attempt has been made structurally—more exactly, from the view-point of a semiotic approach—to describe part of the contents of the Ṛgveda on the basis of formal features in such a way that a body of facts comes to stand out “in their systematic relations beyond the ranges of any obligatory interpretation”³⁹. It seems beyond dispute that a complete collection of partial descriptions of this type would be greatly helpful as materials for forming a comprehensive idea of what the Ṛgveda really is. A thorough understanding of the literary peculiarity and significance of the Veda will however require supplementation by historical methods. Besides, the poems of the Vedic sages are no treatises of logic or grammar and we can hardly expect them to give exact answers to all our questions. We would probably not be far wrong if we relied as far as possible upon material found in the Ṛgveda itself and in the second place on those Vedic texts which are comparatively close to it, drawing on later sources only as confirmatory, rather than primary evidence⁴⁰. Internal comparison and reconstruction should be supplemented by data and hypotheses furnished by other branches of learning⁴¹.

From the very beginning of Vedic studies in the West scholars, while neglecting the literary and aesthetic aspects of the literature in their learned publications⁴², were strongly inclined to deal with these subjects in works intended for a wider circle of readers⁴³. In these the literary inheritance of ancient India was in most cases dealt with as a source of information on the history of Indian civilization⁴⁴ rather than for the sake of its own value and

³⁹ T. ELIZARENKOVA, in *Mélanges Renou*, Paris 1968, p. 255.

⁴⁰ Cf. also BLOOMFIELD, in *JAOS* 15, p. 153; W. NORMAN BROWN, in *JAOS* 88, p. 201 (contra V. S. AGRAWALA, *The thousand-syllabled speech*, I, Varanasi 1963 (on ṚV. 1, 164)); the confused argument to the contrary by the latter in *Purāṇa 1* (Varanasi 1959) overlooks the fact that the *purāṇas* and similar writings of the later period are not identical with the *purāṇa* mentioned in Vedic literature.

⁴¹ The relevance of some theories claiming to explain the Vedic view of life and the world from a single principle—such as Dumézil’s theory of the three functions (e.g. G. DUMÉZIL, *L’idéologie tripartite des Indo-Européens*, Bruxelles 1958)—to our subject is not immediately apparent.

⁴² Cf. e.g. A. WEBER, *Akademische Vorlesungen über indische Literaturgeschichte*, Berlin 1852, ²1876. See also I.S. I, p. 26.

⁴³ M. WINTERITZ, *Geschichte der indischen Literatur*, I, Leipzig 1905, ²1907 (1968) was explicitly intended “not for learned circles, but for the educated.”

⁴⁴ A perusal of the pertinent publications shows that scholars discussed not only strictly linguistic and philological problems but also the question as to how to form an idea of the Vedic civilization and how to interpret the texts on the basis of such an idea (cf. e.g. A. LUDWIG, *Über Methode bei der Interpretation des Ṛgveda*, *Abh. Böhmisches Ges. d. Wiss.*, 7, 4, 1 (Prague 1890)); problems connected with legends and other post-Ṛgvedic traditions in their relations to the Ṛgveda (e.g. TH.

interest⁴⁵. Whereas L. von Schroeder's lectures⁴⁶ frankly admitted their double interest, the books on Indian literature by A. Kaegi⁴⁷, A. A. Macdonell⁴⁸, V. Henry⁴⁹ paid much more attention to religion, mythology and history of civilization than a modern reader would expect to find in them. In our days this tradition is continued by Krishna Chaitanya's⁵⁰ idealizing book. Authors of other works on Indian literature are more interested in the post-Vedic literature⁵¹.

The now completely antiquated work of those pioneers who enthusiastically undertook to translate the whole of the R̥gveda⁵², Langlois⁵³ and Wilson⁵⁴, suffered much from the defect that they were based on the (not always correctly understood) commentary of Sāyana. Ludwig's⁵⁵ stiff and abrupt style and Grassmann's⁵⁶ wholly inadequate Germanization and often highly arbitrary attempts to replace an exact rendering of the texts as they have come down to us by the results of what he considered to be higher criticism seriously detracted

BENFEY, in BB 7 (1883), p. 298); with the light shed on the texts by the ritual (e.g. BLOOMFIELD, in AJPh 11 (1890), p. 319; nowadays, after 80 years, it can be said that the study of the ritual has contributed largely to the understanding of the *samhitās*); with the peculiarities of ancient Indian thought (cf. e.g. P. REGNAUD, in RHR 21 (1890), p. 63). Controversies upon the character and 'original' or functional significance of gods and myths will continue for many years to come (see e.g. the literature mentioned in GONDA, R.I. I; Dual deities; S. F. MICHALSKI, at RO 24 (1961), p. 7).

⁴⁵ Even F. MAX MÜLLER's History of ancient Sanskrit literature, London 1859 (1860, 1912, 1926) paid hardly any attention to the literary value of the Veda.

⁴⁶ L. VON SCHROEDER, Indiens Literatur und Cultur in historischer Entwicklung, Leipzig 1887 (1922).

⁴⁷ A. KAEGI, Der Rigveda, Leipzig 1881.

⁴⁸ A. A. MACDONELL, A history of Sanskrit literature, London 1900 (1925; New York 1929; Indian editions in 1958, 1961, 1965, 1971; also New York 1968).

⁴⁹ V. HENRY, Les littératures de l'Inde, Paris 1904.

⁵⁰ KRISHNA CHAITANYA, A new history of Sanskrit literature, London 1962.

⁵¹ E.g. V. PISANI, Storia delle letterature antiche dell'India, Milan n. d.

⁵² For translations in languages other than English, French and German the reader may be referred to the bibliographies and to V. M. APTE, in 19 AIOC (1957), Pres. addresses, p. 104.

⁵³ A. LANGLOIS, Rig-Veda ou Livre des hymnes, 4 vol., Paris 1848-1851 (in one volume, 1870; new edition by P. E. FOUCAUX, 1872); a wholly deficient work, inferior to Wilson's and F. ROSEN, Rigveda Sanhita, Liber primus, London 1838.

⁵⁴ H. H. WILSON, Rig-Veda-Sanhitā. A collection of ancient Hindu hymns, 6 vol., London 1850-1858 (vol. IV-VI edited by E. B. COWELL and W. F. WEBSTER, new edition Bangalore 1925-1928, with an introduction which was also separately published: Calcutta 1852).

⁵⁵ A. LUDWIG, Der Rigveda oder Die heiligen Hymnen der Brāhmaṇa, 6 vol., Prag-Leipzig 1876-1888 (with a commentary, a long introduction and a register). Cf. H. BERGER, Grassmann and Ludwig, at Yearbook 1964, Max Müller Bhavan, New Delhi, p. 73.

⁵⁶ H. GRASSMANN, Rig-Veda, 2 vol., Leipzig 1876-77 (mainly intended for specialists). This translation often deviates from the Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda by the same author (Leipzig 1873, republished 1936: a useful repertory of places; semantically unreliable, antiquated and methodically defective).

from the reliability and readability of their otherwise premature work. Up to the present day English-speaking non-specialists⁵⁷ unjustifiably prefer Griffith's⁵⁸ translation, partly based on Sāyaṇa, to more recent renderings. Geldner, whose work⁵⁹ unfortunately was published only thirty years after its completion, went, with clear and sound judgment, his own way; without being much concerned with the results of comparative philology and the dissentient views of his colleagues he took neither the side of those who disregarded the Indian tradition nor that of those who followed it uncritically. However, though superseding his predecessors, he missed the exact meaning of many words, often and without apparent reason offering, in similar contexts, different translations for the same term. The uniformity of his style and choice of words obliterates the considerable stylistic differences between the original texts. Renou had to leave his translation⁶⁰—the most recent—unfinished; although agreeing, in some respects, with Geldner⁶¹ he tried to take full account of the publications of others on points of major and minor interest. The many insertions in brackets are partly to bring out the meaning of the text more clearly, partly due to his—often, it is true, justified—conviction that the poets liked ellipses, 'double meanings', and obscurity⁶².

The problem of translating this untranslatable corpus has almost continually been discussed. Roth⁶³—who was followed by Kaegi, Geldner⁶⁴ and others—optimistically argued against Max Müller in favour of the possibility of an exact and readable metrical rendering which can speak for itself; those parts which prove untranslatable should, he thought, be omitted. Oldenberg⁶⁵ was likewise of the opinion that when an adequate and reliable translation of the greater part had come within reach, the incomprehensible remainder could be disregarded. Whereas Roth did not object to omitting epithets, Windisch⁶⁶ justly observed that the apparent insignificance of many words can be most

⁵⁷ See e.g. J. B. ALPHONSO-KARKALA, *An anthology of Indian literature*, Harmondsworth 1971, p. 16.

⁵⁸ R. T. H. GRIFFITH, *The hymns of the Rig-Veda translated with a popular commentary*, 4 vol., Benares 1889–1892 (2 vol., ²1896–1897; ³1916; ⁴Varanasi (Benares) 1963).

⁵⁹ K. F. GELDNER, *Der Rig-Veda aus dem Sanskrit ins deutsche übersetzt und mit einem laufenden Kommentar versehen*, 3 vol., Cambridge Mass. 1951 (vol. 1, maṇḍala I–IV also Göttingen 1923); see e.g. the recension by L. RENOU, at GGA 1953, p. 182.

⁶⁰ Published in E. V. P. between 1955 and 1969; beside A. A. MACDONELL'S (somewhat antiquated) *Vedic reader for students* (containing only thirty hymns), Oxford 1917 (more than once reprinted) the most recommendable for purposes of study and reference.

⁶¹ Cf. RENOU, E. V. P. XII, p. 1.

⁶² Cf. RENOU, E. V. P. V, p. 1; XII, p. 1.

⁶³ R. ROTH, in ZDMG 24 (1870), p. 301.

⁶⁴ K. GELDNER und A. KAEGI, *Siebenzig Lieder des Rigveda. Mit Beiträgen von R. ROTH*, Tübingen 1875 (cf. also p. VI).

⁶⁵ OLDENBERG, *Vedaforschung*, p. 45.

⁶⁶ E. WINDISCH, in *Festgruss Roth*, Stuttgart 1893, p. 139.

deceptive. While some scholars were right in making high demands upon the translator's knowledge of realia and the cultural background in general⁶⁷ as well as upon the intelligibility of his work⁶⁸, many others discussed the extreme difficulty with which any translator is confronted who with the help of a modern language tries to express the meaning of the numerous words for concepts relating to Vedic man's view of life and the world⁶⁹. We can even say that the Veda teems with rather common words which we can understand only to a certain point with the result that our translations often are vaguely general or even more or less conjectural. The distance in time, space, and cultural environment between the authors of the Veda and modern indologists; the incompleteness of our sources; the reinterpretation suggested by the Indian traditionalists and the prejudices and limitations of modern scholarship itself have contributed to a deplorable state of affairs. The very plurality of meanings so frequently given in our dictionaries shows that a modern language cannot in many cases offer one single equivalent of an ancient Indian term—intelligibly enough, because the speakers of different languages, whilst organizing through their semantic systems the world of experience in which they live, traditionally define, analyse and categorize this experience differently. The arrangement of the 'meanings'—often no more than inadequate attempts to give an idea of one aspect of an Indian concept—gives rise to many pseudo-problems and false impressions, e.g. of historical developments of 'meanings'⁷⁰. Connotations and emotive value of many words, moreover, eluding, in various cases, our observation, a 'literal' rendering of a word may not less pervert the meaning of a place than a guess at what had been the author's choice of words if he had spoken English. That in any translation the beauty of the original metre, the word music and much of the imaginative fervour are lost is not in doubt, but the question as to how to present a translation remains in dispute. There is much to be said for the thesis that the general reader makes other demands than the professional scholar⁷¹; for the desirability of keeping the hemistiches apart—

⁶⁷ W. CALAND, in *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 14, p. 509 (ritual); A. K. COOMARASWAMY, in *Indian art and letters* 7 (1933), p. 19.

⁶⁸ A. K. COOMARASWAMY, *A new approach to the Vedas*, London 1933, p. VII.

⁶⁹ See e.g. H. OLDENBERG, in *NG* 1918, p. 36 (= K. S., p. 831) preferring "eine in die Form einer bloßen Wortübersetzung nicht faßbare Beschreibung des Vorstellungsbildes" to a plurality of approximations.

⁷⁰ For an ample discussion of these points see J. GONDA, *Some notes on the study of ancient-Indian religious terminology*, *History of Religions* 1 (Chicago 1961), p. 243. For particular semantic difficulties e.g. OLDENBERG, *o.c.*, p. 48 (843); P. THIEME, *Untersuchungen zur Wortkunde und Auslegung des Rigveda*, Halle S. 1949; L. RENOÜ, *Études sur le vocabulaire du R̥gveda*, Pondichéry 1958, and E. V. P. I, p. 22; J. GONDA, *The Vedic concept of amhas*, *IJJ* 1 (1957), p. 33; the same, *Vision; Loka; Dhāman*; CH. MALAMOUD, in *Mélanges Renou*, p. 493. See e.g. also RENOÜ, E. V. P. III, p. 15.

⁷¹ A. A. MACDONELL, *The Uṣas hymns of the R̥gveda*, *JRAS* 1932, p. 345; the same, *Hymns from the Rigveda, selected and metrically translated*, Calcutta-London 1922 (sacrificing a little of verbal exactitude to the taste of the general reader).

this is generally possible—without aiming at representing the form of the original in the rhythm and length of the lines; for the translator's right to deviate from the conventions of his own language in order to reproduce more closely the effect of the original Sanskrit⁷². Indian Vedists, who on the one hand have to hold their own against the traditionalist school of interpretation and on the other find much difficulty in coping with the mass of Western critical literature, are often inclined to interpret mythology as figurative language and so to modernize traditional symbolical interpretations; they believe a translation which, while meeting the requirements of modern scholarship, is justified in the light of the results of the traditional interpretation and classical Indian thought⁷³ to be the ideal⁷⁴. Although it is true that both approaches have often ignored each other, there will however always be a serious clash of views⁷⁵.

⁷² We do not mention the special drawbacks of non-Anglo-Saxons writing English.

⁷³ M. PATEL, in 11 AIOC (1943), p. 9.

⁷⁴ In this publication the short translations printed in the text are meant to give an exact rendering of the contents of the original; the indented passages are often somewhat freer.

⁷⁵ Mention may also be made of some anthologies or translations of groups of hymns: F. MAX MÜLLER, *Vedic hymns, I* (Hymns to the Maruts, Rudra etc.), Oxford 1891, ²Delhi 1967 (with a commentary justifying every word of the translation); H. OLDENBERG, *Vedic hymns, II* (Hymns to Agni, book I–V), Oxford 1897 (with a commentary); A. HILLEBRANDT, *Lieder des Ṛgveda*, Göttingen–Leipzig 1913 (about 140 hymns, with notes, literal prose translation, like the two preceding works hardly recommendable to the general reader); A. A. MACDONELL, *A Vedic reader for students*, Oxford 1917 (often republished, i. a. ⁶1965); *Hymns from the Rigveda*, Calcutta–London 1922; E. J. THOMAS, *Vedic hymns*, London 1923; E. SCHWENTNER, *Lieder des Rigveda in metrischen Übersetzungen*, Hagen in Westf. 1923 (from an aesthetic point of view); L. RENOU, *Hymnes et prières du Veda*, Paris 1938; *La poésie religieuse de l'Inde antique*, Paris 1942; *Anthologie sanskrite*, Paris 1947; *Hymnes spéculatifs du Veda*, Paris 1956; CH. MANNING, *Hymns of the Rig-Veda*, Calcutta 1952 (a collection of older translations, antiquated); H. LOMMEL, *Gedichte des Rig-Veda*, München 1953 (with notes); V. RAGHAVAN, *The Indian heritage: an anthology of Sanskrit literature*, Bangalore 1956 (²1958); *Prayers, praises and psalms*, Madras n. d.; D. R. CHANANA, *Ṛg-bhāṣya-saṅgraha*, Delhi 1961; P. THIEME, *Gedichte aus dem Ṛgveda*, 1964; *Ṛgveda maṇḍala VII, II, III* translated and annotated by H. D. VELANKAR, Bombay 1963, 1966, 1968; J. VARENNE, *Le Veda: anthologie de textes traduits*, Paris 1965; *Le Veda* (series: *Le trésor spirituel de l'humanité*), Paris 1967; T. J. A. ELIZARENKOVA, *Rigveda* (selected hymns, translated (with notes) in Russian), Moscow 1972. N. TSUJI, *Veda to Upaniṣad* (in Japanese), Tokyo 1967, contains translations into Japanese.

CHAPTER II

POETRY, POET, POEM

1. *Inspiration and poetry*

The Indian spiritual guides have always been convinced of the necessity of having a direct experience of that transcendent reality which is the ground and essence of all empirical existence. Hence the continuous effort to transcend the empirical level—one of the most striking characteristics of Indian cultural history—and the belief that there are men, such as seers and *yogins*, who, owing to a special gift or a wonderful exertion of will-power, have access to the realm of the Unseen. The ancients were well aware of the resemblance between, and in many cases practical identity of, poets and visionary sages, the rather extensive terminology in this field often admitting of both translations¹. A Vedic poet is a seer (*ṛṣi*)², a gifted man who with his inner or spiritual eye sees things divine and transcendental³, and who through the power of his vision brings the past into the present⁴. The hymns are indeed ascribed to individual *ṛṣis*, whose very function was already at an early date explained in connection with their faculty of ‘seeing’⁵. A *ṛṣi* seeks, or enters into contact with, divinity or transcendent reality⁶: he associates with gods; he may address them, and has an insight into the nature of their greatness; he invites them to do something on behalf of those who have his poem recited. He is inspired and even regarded as ‘born of the gods’⁷, with whom is the origin of the ancient *ṛṣis*⁸, his

¹ For details, GONDA, *Vision*, p. 18; 60; 69 etc. and De ‘inspiratie’ der indische dichters, in *Forum der Letteren* 1963, p. 1; P. S. S(Ĥ)ASTRI, *Rigvedic theory of inspiration*, QJMS 37, p. 72; 151 (whose interpretations are partly anachronistic or based on questionable presuppositions); S. S. BHAWE, at JUB 19, p. 19 (questionable).

² See e.g. also P. S. SASTRI, in QJMS 40, p. 55; M. DAS, in AP 22, p. 555.

³ For “seeing” in the sense of “having an insight into problems which are beyond normal human understanding” see e.g. 1, 22, 20; 139, 2; 164, 44; 3, 38, 5; 4, 13, 5; 5, 61, 1ff.; 7, 76, 2; 10, 130, 6; for his eye 10, 82, 1.

⁴ Cf. V. RAGHAVAN, *Studies on some concepts of the Alamkāra Śāstra*, Adyar 1942, p. 118.

⁵ *Aupamanyava*, in *Yāska, Nirukta* 2, 11, the text adding: “Because the self-born Brahman manifested himself to them while practising austerities they became seers”; and TĀ. 2, 9.

⁶ Cf. e.g. 1, 68, 5; 139, 2; 159, 4; 164, 4; 5; 38; 3, 54, 5; 8; 6, 9, 2; 5.

⁷ RV. 5, 52, 13f.; 1, 23, 24; 10, 90, 7; 8, 23, 24; 10, 54, 3; 5, 29, 1; 3, 53, 9. Cf. also 7, 88, 4.

predecessors. The presentation of his subjects and the phraseology of his hymns stamp many of these as products of 'revelation'⁹. These views of ṛṣiship were at the root of the belief in the non-, i.e. super-human, origin of the Veda¹⁰. 'Registering the intuitions of these perfected souls'¹¹, the Veda is, like the intuitive knowledge of its poets, believed to be free from errors and imperfections, eternal, above the limitations of time and space.

The Vedic poets are not chary of information regarding the 'vision' or 'intuition'—that is their inspiration—which was their only possibility of entering into communication with the transcendental reality¹². Like their colleagues in other countries they were conscious of receiving inspiration and recognized the importance of this inspiration as an indispensable factor in the creation of literary art¹³—which, in their eyes, was not however an onesided production of beauty. They also understood the character of inspiration, its sudden appearance, revealing—not creating—ideas regarded as real and already existent: the poet of 1, 88, 4 compares himself to a vulture circling and waiting (for an opportunity to snatch away, suddenly and unexpectedly, a prey that comes into its range of vision); in the same way he himself circles round the Maruts, vision (*dhī*) and his own 'Muse'¹⁴ or 'patron saint'¹⁵. Stanza 2 of the short hymn 10, 177 addressed to the Bird—that is the inner light of visionary insight—states that this deity bears or cherishes in its 'mind' or 'heart' (*manas*) inspired Speech (*Vāc*)¹⁶ qualified as radiating; and this speech being inspired thought or wisdom (*manisā*) is guarded by the seers on the seat of Ṛta: that is the celestial source of inspiration considered to be microcosmically represented by the 'heart'¹⁷.

The poets are moreover deeply convinced of the existence of an interplay of factors, reciprocity or rather cyclical process with regard to inspiration and the suprahuman power inherent in inspired poetry. They expect to receive intuition

⁸ See ṚV. 1, 139, 9.

⁹ Cf. e.g. the cosmogonical hymns 10, 90 etc.

¹⁰ Yāska, o.c.; see V. S. BHANDARI, Yāska and Vedāpauruṣeyatva, 20 AIOC (1959), p. 28.

¹¹ S. RADHAKRISHNAN, The Hindu view of life, London 1948, p. 17.

¹² Compare also places such as 5, 30, 3; 52, 12; 61 (with Geldner's introductory note, ṚV. II, p. 68); 10, 124, 9. Now compare also B. L. OGBENIN, Sur le symbolisme du type chamanique dans le Ṛgveda, Tartu Univ. 1968.

¹³ See e.g. 1, 37, 4; 105, 15; 2, 9, 4; 23, 2; 3, 31, 18; 34, 5; 7, 36, 1; 8, 59, 6; 88, 6; (100, 10); 101, 16; 10, 98, 7. Paying too much attention to his own inspiration may interfere with a poet's spontaneity (P. EMMANUEL, La création poétique, Journal de psychologie 44 (1951), p. 261).

¹⁴ It has not without reason been surmised (GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 113 and 394; see ṚV. 3, 53, 15f.; Bṛhaddevatā 4, 113f.) that Sasarpārī, the daughter of the sun—or Brahmā—being Speech was the 'Muse' of the Viśvāmitras.

¹⁵ See also 2, 38, 10.

¹⁶ Vāc is the poetess as well as the deity of ṚV. 10, 125. See also 1, 164, 39ff.; 45ff. and in general, RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 1.

¹⁷ Cf. also 6, 9, 4f.; 9, 1, 6; 10, 189, 3; RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 21.

or inspiration from, or through the intermediary of, the divine powers, which are supposed to remain concerned with them also after the moment of 'vision'¹⁸. This inspiration enables them to compose 'hymns' which conform to the requirements of religious formulas and compositions, that is to say, which may be expected to influence¹⁹ the deities presiding over the powers, phenomena and provinces of the cosmos on which man feels himself dependent and to contribute to the preservation of their specific might. For all practical purposes this means maintaining universal Order and keeping the powers of nature operative. Strengthened by the hymns of the poets the gods—caressed by them like husbands by their amorous wives (1, 62, 11)²⁰—will continue furthering their inspirations²¹. This cyclical process is indicated with all clearness desirable at RV. 4, 11, 2 "(O Agni,) give us that abundant (or, mighty) inspired thought by which thou with all the other deities wilt be pleased"²². Thus Indra²³, Agni²⁴, the divine pair Varuṇa and Mitra²⁵ and other gods are said to mediate a poet's vision, or to be its source; they are implored to favour or further inspiration, to give the eulogist, together with the vibration of (the poet's) consciousness, the inspired emotional thought (*manīṣā*), to make the product of poetic vision perfect and successful or to cause it to go straight to its goal, and also to protect the poet or reciter *cum suis*²⁶. Soma is called "Lord of vision" (*dhī*), no doubt because he was supposed to be willing to dispense inspirations²⁷. It is a poet's hope that Sarasvatī, the river goddess who in the course of the Vedic period comes to be identified with Speech (*Vāc*)²⁸, will bestow 'vision' (*dhī*) on him.

Of special interest are those places which, no doubt founded on fact, give significance to the early morning as the moment which was especially proper to the manifestation of visions, that is to receiving inspiration. Addressing Dawn (Uṣas) the poet of 7, 79, 5 implores her "to impart to us, while shining, visions (*dhī*)" and in 3, 39, 2 "this our ancestral inspired poem (*dhī*), born before daylight, (is) recited when the sacred functions are performed, dressed in auspicious-and-beautiful white clothes"²⁹. That the divinities concerned with

¹⁸ Cf. 1, 80, 9; 90, 5; 2, 23, 19; 3, 3, 8; 62, 8; 6, 49, 8; cf. GONDA, *Vision*, p. 65; 86; 89; 91 etc.

¹⁹ The eulogies are said to "turn to the gods (and influence them)": *devayant* (J. GONDA, in JOIB 15, p. 307).

²⁰ See also BERGAIGNE, R. V. II, p. 268; GELDNER, V. S. II, p. 134.

²¹ Cf. 1, 61, 16; 5, 12, 1f.; 10, 25, 1.

²² GONDA, *Vision*, p. 51; 64; 66; 154; see e.g. 4, 11, 2.

²³ See 3, 34, 5; 6, 24, 6; 34, 1; 6, 35, 5; 7, 18, 1; 8, 3, 9; 88, 6.

²⁴ See 2, 9, 4; 4, 6, 1; 11, 2; 3; 8, 102, 8. See also 6, 9; 10, 5, 11.

²⁵ For Varuṇa see 1, 105, 15; Indra and Varuṇa 8, 59, 6.

²⁶ See 1, 79, 7; 94, 3; 4, 56, 1; 8, 5, 6; also 8, 71, 12, and 1, 2, 7; 7, 66, 3, also 5, 66, 4.

²⁷ 9, 99, 6, cf. also 9, 2, 7.

²⁸ GONDA, R. I. I, p. 96; see RV. 6, 49, 7.

²⁹ See also 3, 39, 1; 10, 172, 2; 6, 50, 10 (GONDA, *Vision*, p. 81); 8, 8, 2; 5; 7 (ibidem, p. 80); 26, 25; 35, 2; 10, 20, 1.

light and the early morning³⁰ (besides Uṣas the Aśvins, Savitar, Sūrya) acted as mediators is therefore perfectly intelligible. Visions often consist in 'light'³¹, visitations are attended with luminous apparitions and in order to be effectuated intuitive knowledge needs 'light'. So we hear also in the Ṛgveda of an 'inner light' as a medium of revelation and supranormal insight³². Agni is said to bring the lights of the tremblings of inspiration (3, 10, 5), and elsewhere Bṛhaspati is besought to put the poet in possession of the bright substance which procures brilliant light, shines powerfully and is resourceful among men (2, 23, 15). Best known is the famous stanza, recited up to the present day 3, 62, 10, the so-called Sāvitrī (i.e. addressed to Savitar) or Gāyatrī (after its metre): "We hope to obtain that desirable (excellent) radiance (brightness) of god Savitar, who will (is expected to) stimulate (inspire) our 'visions'".

The conviction which is shared by other peoples—who, to mention only this, attribute poetic inspiration to ancestors appearing in dreams³³—the conviction that the divine father of the speaker or a Muse, possessed of supranormal knowledge enables his descendants to compose songs, seems also apparent from AV. 2, 1, 3 where the father, the Gandharva³⁴—a genius of conception, in later times a celestial musician³⁵—is said to function as such an intermediary.

The well-inspired ṛṣi had so to say to give shape to his vision, to 'translate' it into stanzas and *sūktas* of liturgical applicability, to transform his vision and creative inspiration into powerful words which could successfully appeal to the gods³⁶. That in developing inspiration into intelligible speech he had recourse, not only to his language but also to the traditional style, imagery, metres and phraseology hardly needs saying³⁷. The process which the visions undergo in the poet's heart³⁸ is explicitly described as a purification or clarification: "Like streams (probably, of *ghee*) the words of religious inspiration flow, in the interior, together clarified by heart and 'mind' (*manas*)" (4, 58, 6)³⁹. Although ṚV.

³⁰ Cf. also 1, 23, 3 (Vāyu as the morning wind); 35, 2; 8, 35, 16; 10, 172.

³¹ In speaking of the idea of "shining" and that of "seeing" BERGAIGNE, R. V. I, p. 82 missed the point; cf. also J. GONDA, *Eye and gaze in the Veda*, Amsterdam Acad. 1969, p. 5. There is a constant use of terms denoting "light, shining, bright" etc. with regard to the sacred word and the state of bliss: J. GONDA, *Loka*, Amsterdam Acad. 1966, passim; *Vision*, p. 266. Cf. e.g. also 1, 50, 10; 3, 39, 2; 8, 6, 10.

³² See 3, 26, 8; 5, 66, 4; 6, 9, 4; 6; 8, 6, 8; 9, 9, 8; 10, 177, 1 etc., and compare also 7, 62, 3.

³³ See e.g. C. M. BOWRA, *Heroic poetry*, London 1952, p. 427f.

³⁴ Cf. ṚV. 10, 123, 4; 139, 6; 177, 2.

³⁵ GONDA, R. I. I, p. 101.

³⁶ Cf. e.g. 1, 51, 14; 6, 1, 7; GONDA, *Vision*, p. 106.

³⁷ See also M. DAS, in AP 22, p. 555. E. GEROW's remarks in JAOS 88, p. 311 do not exactly reflect my views and criticism of Renou's opinions (cf. GONDA, R. I. I, p. 21; *Vision*, ch. I; RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 1; 26).

³⁸ Cf. also 6, 16, 47; 8, 76, 8.

³⁹ GONDA, *Vision*, p. 278; RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 24. See also 3, 26, 8; 7, 85, 1; 9, 73, 7f. and, in general, C. M. BOWRA, *Primitive song*, New York 1962, p. 44.

4, 58 is not completely clear⁴⁰ this atharvanic laudation of the *ghee*, considering this important sacrificial material in its various aspects, *inter alia* as *soma* and the sacred word⁴¹, leaves no doubt that the *ghee* of the liturgical word, which the gods produce from the seer (st. 4), flows from the ocean in his heart⁴². Since this *ghee* has come from another ocean, which may have been believed to be in heaven, three ideas have in all probability coalesced: the heavenly origin of sacred speech, the intermediary of the gods, and the 'heart' (or 'mind') as the place where inspiration is received and from which sacred speech originates⁴³.

This process of transformation was assumed to be parallel or identical with that which on the sacrificial ground took place in connection with the *soma* juice and so was *Soma* regarded as a clarifier of poetic thought: "In the strainer which discharges a thousand streams the inspired poets clarify their words" (9, 73, 7)⁴⁴. The clarification by which the *soma* passes into an intoxicating beverage was on the one hand accompanied and viewed as promoted by the activities of the poets and reciters⁴⁵, and on the other, with much variation in phraseology, regarded as stimulating and furthering their inspiration⁴⁶.

From the most interesting 'Hymn of higher knowledge' (*jñānasūkta*, 10, 71)⁴⁷ it is perfectly clear that the poets themselves were completely conscious of the different stages through which the process of liturgical composition had to pass and of the functions for which the productions of their genius were intended. This *sūkta*, in which according to tradition⁴⁸ the divine prototype of priesthood *Ṛhaspati*, who is the reputed poet, praises that knowledge "which is immortal light and by union with which one attains to *brahman*," discusses, in an archaic and unsystematic way, it is true, the problem of sacral speech, its origin, secret and production. Sacral speech⁴⁹ has been 'invented' by the ancient seers (st. 2) and when it was located among them discovered by the wise and given to many seers in historical times: "O *Ṛhaspati*, when they (the mythical seers) started instituting name-giving, the first and foremost part of Speech (*Vāc*)⁵⁰, which was the most excellent (of what they possessed) and pure, (that)

⁴⁰ See LÜDERS, *Varuṇa*, p. 269f. against GELDNER, *ṚV. I*, p. 489; GONDA, *Vision*, p. 281.

⁴¹ The materialized inspiration is not only like ghee but also accompanied by an oblation of ghee (GONDA, *Vision*, p. 132); see e.g. 1, 2, 7; 7, 5, 5; 85, 1.

⁴² Cf. also 10, 5, 1.

⁴³ Cf. also 10, 5, 1 (and GELDNER, *ṚV. III*, p. 126); 10, 177, 1.

⁴⁴ Cf. also 4, 58, 1; 5, 44, 9; 9, 69, 2; 72, 5; 96, 17; 10, 94, 1 and 9, 73 in its entirety; RENOUE, *E. V. P. I*, p. 26.

⁴⁵ Cf. e.g. 1, 91, 11; 135, 5; 9, 8, 4; 10, 4; 17, 4; 33, 5; 37, 6; 61, 14; 64, 16; 65, 16; 71, 3; 72, 1; 97, 22; 105, 2 and see GELDNER, *ṚV. III*, p. 1.

⁴⁶ Cf. e.g. 9, 21, 2; 7, 40, 5; 47, 4; 61, 23; 64, 26; 69, 2; 72, 5; 90, 6. For *Soma* and the *Vena* hymn 10, 123 see the bibliographical note in GONDA, *Vision*, p. 349, n. 1, and RENOUE, *E. V. P. XVI*, p. 167.

⁴⁷ GONDA, *Vision*, p. 107; B. ESSERS, *Vāc*, Thesis Groningen 1952, p. 97; MACDONELL, *H. S. L.*, p. 129; RENOUE, *E. V. P. I*, p. 22.

⁴⁸ *Ṛhaddevatā* 7, 109; cf. 112.

⁴⁹ See, in general, also RENOUE, *E. V. P. I*, p. 14.

⁵⁰ Cf. 8, 100, 10.

being concealed became manifest through their sympathetic disposition. Where the wise seers (those possessing *dhī*), cleaning it like ground meal with a sieve, produced Speech by means of their intentional thought (*manas*), then the partners (in a collective interest) became conscious of their partnership . . . By means of worship they (the historical seers or next generation, being interested in the liturgical function of speech) went the way of Speech; they discovered her that had entered the *ṛṣis* (mentioned in st. 2); they fetched her and distributed her over many places (persons) . . .”. However, those who see and hear Vāc do not always perceive her, but to another she ‘unfolds’ (i.e. reveals) herself, like a willing wife to her husband. Others are not encouraged to join in the ceremonies because their words have become sterile. The man who has deserted a partner⁵¹ has no longer a share in Speech and does not know the way of meritorious acts (st. 5–6). The true brahmans, on the other hand, worship together while the impulses of their minds (*manas*) are fashioned in their hearts, one of the chief officiants developing (increasing) the sacred verses in praise of the gods, another singing a hymn, a third “enunciating the knowledge of what exists” (st. 7–11)⁵².

It is essential that the power inherent in inspired speech⁵³, the materialized vision, should be fresh and vigorous. The vision and its mythical subjects must be quickened, furthered, resuscitated⁵⁴, kept alive. Not infrequently emphasis is laid on the newness of a *sūkta*⁵⁵. Whereas the theme may be familiar, nay, must be borrowed from the current myths relating to the god or gods addressed, the text itself must be fresh⁵⁶. It is not⁵⁷ to give expression to the pride he felt at his achievement⁵⁸ or at the originality of the stylistic devices introduced into his work⁵⁹ that a poet draws special attention to this newness but because a new text is—not only in ancient India—a means *par excellence* of exercising influence upon the much desired renewal of nature and of the powers which are supposed to be active in it or responsible for it—“Start this new (hymn), that his (Indra’s) vigour increases of as of old” (2, 17, 1)—a means also of inaugurating a new period⁶⁰. This is of course not to imply that the hymns were used only once. Every performance was in a way a renewal of the power inherent in

⁵¹ For partners, executing the same ritual or acting as eulogist, see also R̥V. 1, 22, 8; 9, 104, 1; cf. 8, 3, 12.

⁵² The elaboration of a ‘vision’ or ‘thought’ is also clearly described in 8, 6, 32f. Compare also 9, 73 and 10, 177.

⁵³ For the transcendence of speech see e.g. R̥V. 1, 164, 45.

⁵⁴ Cf. 2, 40, 6; 6, 49, 14; 8, 60, 12.

⁵⁵ See e.g. 1, 12, 11; 2, 17, 1; 18, 3; 24, 1; 6, 32, 1; 7, 26, 1; 8, 95, 5; 9, 9, 8.

⁵⁶ J. GONDA, Ein neues Lied, WZKM 48, p. 275; P. S. SASTRI, in IHQ 34, p. 8 and QJMS 37, p. 89 (not wholly convincing); cf. e.g. 1, 109, 2; 7, 15, 4.

⁵⁷ Or perhaps only secondarily.

⁵⁸ Thus H. ZIMMER, Altindisches Leben, Berlin 1879, p. 340.

⁵⁹ Thus H. R. DRWEKAR, Les fleurs de rhétorique dans l’Inde, Thesis Paris 1930, p. 10.

⁶⁰ One might compare, in the Old Testament, Psalm 33, 1–3; 96, 1; 98, 1; in the New Testament, Apoc. 5, 9; 14, 3, the Greek tragedies, and so on.

the inspired word⁶¹, a eulogium of which is in 10, 125 put in the mouth of the goddess Vāc (Speech, Word) herself⁶².

It seems expedient briefly to discuss some terms—difficult of translation and to a certain extent used promiscuously—which shed some light on the ideas the poets themselves had of their art. A priest, sage or reciter could be called a *vipra* when, distinguished for his fervency and enthusiasm, he had experience of spiritual rapture, of religious and artistic inspiration materializing in the vibrant and exalted speech of the moved poet; this word also qualifies a god as a furtherer of rapture, enlightenment and inspiration⁶³. Sometimes it accompanies words such as *ṛṣi* “a seer” of *kavi* “an inspired sage who possessing esoteric wisdom sees (things hidden from others) with his mental eye”⁶⁴. The *kavi* guards the place (or trace) of *Ṛta*, eternal Order and Truth (10, 5, 2) and is supposed to know answers to mysterious and difficult problems (7, 86, 3). The term *kāru*⁶⁵ seems to have been preferred to denote the ‘spokesman,’ the oral poet who was also a performer or eulogist⁶⁶ on the sacrificial ground⁶⁷.

For ‘praising’ the gods verbs of various connotations and implications, such as those of ‘solemn qualification or description of characteristics’ (*śams-*) or ‘praise, strengthening, confirmation’ (*stu-*) are in frequent use. While by the term *dhī* the ancient Indians understood something in the nature of vision or inspiration – the exceptional faculty of acquiring a (sudden) knowledge of transcendent truth or reality—and its materialized form, that is a piece of eulogistic poetry⁶⁸, *manisā*, tentatively rendered by poetic inspiration⁶⁹ or wisdom, expressed, like other derivatives of the root *man-*, a modification of the idea of inspired emotional and efficacious thought⁷⁰; in 10, 177, 2 it is quite intelligibly characterized as a flash of light⁷¹. From the same root derives *matī*⁷²,

⁶¹ GONDA, Vision, p. 64f.; 125, 144.

⁶² A. WEBER, I. S. XVIII, p. 118 (misunderstood); F. S. MICHALSKI, in *Scientia* 87 (1952), p. 127. Cf. also G. DUMÉZIL, in *Bull. Cl. Lettres Acad. de Belgique* 1961, p. 272.

⁶³ Cf. H. OLDENBERG, in *ZDMG* 63, p. 298 (= K. S. p. 314); RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 5; GONDA, Vision, p. 36. According to *RV.* 8, 3, 14 not every *vipra* was a *ṛṣi*.

⁶⁴ GONDA, Vision, p. 42; for one-sided views: L. RENOUE, in *JA* 241, p. 167; 180; in *Journal de Psychologie* 44 (1951), p. 284; R. OTTO, *Varuṇa-Hymnen des Rigveda*, Bonn 1948, p. 11 (cf. e.g. *RV.* 7, 86, 3); L. SILBURN, *Instant et cause*, Paris 1955, p. 21; H. D. VELANKAR, in 23 *AIOC*, p. 253; P. R. RAY, in *IA* III, 3 (1969), p. 177. For *kavi* see *ŚB.* 1, 4, 2, 8.

⁶⁵ J. GONDA, at *JGJRI* 25 (1969), p. 479.

⁶⁶ Cf. *RV.* 1, 31, 8; 3, 33, 8; 39, 7; 7, 68, 9; 8, 3, 18; 46, 3; 10, 110, 7.

⁶⁷ See also P. THIEME, in *Festschrift Weller*, p. 656.

⁶⁸ I refer to GONDA, Vision, p. 360. Cf. e.g. *RV.* 1, 95, 8; 112, 2; 135, 5; 139, 2; 2, 11, 12; 5, 41, 5; 6, 23, 8; 8, 3, 1; 18; 6, 28; 27, 8; 42, 3; 9, 75, 2; 10, 53, 6; 143, 3 etc.

⁶⁹ RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 3.

⁷⁰ Cf. *RV.* 1, 9, 11; 186, 1; 4, 5, 3; 6, 1; 11, 2; 6, 47, 3; and P. THIEME, in *Festschrift J. POKORNY*, Innsbruck 1967, p. 99 (= *Kleine Schriften*, Wiesbaden 1971, p. 239); S. A. UPADHYAYA, in 21 *AIOC* II, p. 21.

⁷¹ Cf. also RENOUE, E. V. P. III, p. 34; 69 (on *arka*).

⁷² R. HAUSCHILD, in *Festschrift Weller*, p. 259; 263.

this thought materialized. The etymologically related *manman*⁷³ denotes a 'hymn' as the product of this thought, sometimes in a context from which it appears that it has been memorized. The likewise allied *mantra*, emphasizing the idea of instrumentality, is up to the present day in use for all units composing the Vedic *samhitās* which on the grounds explained in these pages are traditionally regarded as sacred, eternal and inherently powerful⁷⁴. Provided it is pronounced in the proper way a *mantra*, generally speaking, becomes effective when the consciousness of the one who possesses it achieves its union with that Consciousness which manifests itself in that 'text' or formula, and being so a Vedic *mantra* can, according to the context, be corroborative or minatory, exert beneficent influence in the cosmos, and, of course, bring about communication with the Unseen⁷⁵. If the meaning or the use of a *mantra* results from its content alone which is explicit by itself because it contains a characteristic element (*liṅga*), the *mantra* is 'defined' (*nirukta*), in other cases it is 'undefined'⁷⁶. One other word needs mentioning, viz. the utterly important and much discussed *brahman*⁷⁷. Expressing, in the present author's opinion, the in our eyes perhaps vague idea of 'inherently firm or fundamental supporting principle' this term assumed, in definite contexts, more specific connotations such as the fundamental power inherent in the holy word and ritual⁷⁸ and in the vocabulary of the poets their products considered in one of their characteristic aspects. The gods are strengthened or stimulated by *brahman*; it can gain the victory in battles, protect the people, give offspring, dispel darkness⁷⁹.

It is not surprising that such important and indispensable requisites as the eulogies received various qualifications and other contextual particulars which give us some additional information on the ideas the poets formed of their products. The adjective *soṃya* may point to their being inspired by, or arising together with or like, the divine draught, *br̥hat* to their inherent firmness; they are above criticism, shining, charming and sweet, matchless, well adorned, protective, efficacious and born from the Universal Order (*ṛta*)⁸⁰.

⁷³ S. A. UPADHYAYA, in BhV 28 (1968), p. 88; RENO, E. V. P. VII, p. 29. Cf. e.g. 1, 131, 6; 154, 3; 162, 7; 2, 4, 8; 4, 3, 3; 6, 1; 6, 52, 14; 68, 9; 8, 41, 2; 10, 57, 3.

⁷⁴ J. GONDA, The Indian *mantra*, Oriens 16 (1963), p. 244. Cf. 1, 67, 4; 5; 74, 1; 147, 4; 152, 2; 2, 35, 2; 6, 50, 14; 7, 7, 6; 10, 14, 4; 50, 4; 88, 14.

⁷⁵ In the ritual application the deity addressed is recognizable by his name etc. which in later times is regarded as the "characteristic" (*liṅga*) of the *mantra*.

⁷⁶ L. RENO in Mem. Volume L. Sarup, p. 68.

⁷⁷ For a survey of opinions and theories up to 1950 see J. GONDA, Notes on *brahman*, Utrecht 1950 and in History of Religions 1 (1961), p. 243; for other views e.g. RENO, E. V. P. I, p. 12; II, p. 55; 81; G. DUMÉZIL, in RHR 138, p. 255; 139, p. 122; P. THIEME, at ZDMG 102, p. 91; H. P. SCHMIDT, Brhaspati und Indra, Wiesbaden 1968, p. 16 and at ZDMG 109, p. 445; S. MICHALSKI, at ArchOr 25, p. 388; M. A. MEHENDALE, in Mélanges Renou, p. 519; M. MAYRHOFER, Kurzgefasstes etym. Wörterbuch des Altindischen, II, Heidelberg 1963, p. 452. Compare also p. 134.

⁷⁸ As to the ritual see 3, 13, 6; 9, 96, 10.

⁷⁹ See 1, 31, 18; 2, 12, 14; 17, 3; 1, 129, 4; 152, 7; 3, 53, 12; 9, 86, 41; 5, 40, 6.

⁸⁰ RV. 10, 138, 2; 3, 33, 5; 51, 1; 31, 13; 4, 56, 1; 5, 43, 8; 7, 18, 3; 1, 114, 6; 5, 11, 5; 7, 43, 1; 32, 13; 3, 53, 12; 5, 52, 13; 10, 49, 1; 138, 2.

For the poets' technique the hymns often use words which are primarily applied to the work of artisans or manual labourers (carpenter, weaver, chariot-maker)⁸¹; "I have fashioned for thee (Agni) this eulogy like the gifted artisan a chariot" (5, 2, 11)⁸². This should by no means be taken to point to depreciation on the part of the authors. These verbs have a wide range of 'metaphorical' meanings and are used also of superhuman creative activity⁸³; any specialized industry presupposed uncommon skill, talents and giftedness, nay inspiration and in this respect specialized artisans, artists and poets were in archaic societies regarded as similar: "gifted" in the above quotation renders *dhīra* i.e. 'possessed of *dhī*,' an adjective applying also to sages, poets, gods, demiurges⁸⁴. Moreover, both 'chariots' and poems were means of establishing relations between men and gods⁸⁵.

⁸¹ E. W. HOPKINS, in JAOS 15, p. 274; BERGAIGNE, R. V., II, p. 283; HILLEBRANDT, V. M. III, p. 150; P. S. SASTRI, in QJMS 40, p. 55.

⁸² See also 1, 61, 4; 130, 6; 3, 38, 1; 7, 34, 1; 10, 130.

⁸³ Cf. 3, 38, 2; 10, 46, 9.

⁸⁴ GONDA, Vision, p. 209.

⁸⁵ See below, p. 81; BERGAIGNE, R. V. I, p. VII n.; F. EDGERTON, in AJPh 40, p. 175; RENOU, E. V. P. I, p. 14; GELDNER-NOBEL, RV. IV, p. 219; J. GONDA, *Adhvāra* and *adhvaryu*, VIJ 3 (1965), p. 163; cf. also RV. 2, 18, 1; 5, 35, 7f.; 60, 1; 66, 3; 10, 26, 9 etc.

2. *The poet*

As already intimated fresh inspiration, the impulse of inner necessity, and compliance with the traditional 'literary forms' of the 'genre' are by no means mutually exclusive¹, however detrimental to the inventiveness of the productive artist traditionalism may be. The art of these poets was traditional²; they stood upon the shoulders of their predecessors and were indebted to these, not only for metrical or syntactic units³, but also for their subject-matter, phraseology and poetical technique in general. These predecessors are sometimes quoted or mentioned⁴. The poet of 8, 41, 2 praises Varuṇa at once with his own eulogy and the poetical product of the Fathers; in 8, 15, 6 it reads: "This the reciters continually say in praise (of thee) this very day just as in former times"⁵. Viśvāmitra, the author of 3, 39, 2, seems to express the opinion that the vision he qualifies as 'ancestral' which comes to him at daybreak is identical with that which manifested itself to his ancestors. This may be taken to imply that in his view all 'visions' (*dhī*) are reproductions of one and the same archetype⁶. In the eyes of Vedic man, the heredity of the gift of poetry⁷ and eulogistic activity seems to have been quite natural: "On account of our descent from the ancient father we are speaking" (1, 87, 5)⁸. The Viśvāmitras claim to have fulfilled their function from generation to generation⁹ and Vasiṣṭha prides himself on receiving his inspiration from the immortal generations of yore¹⁰. The seven divine *ṛṣis* who were associated with the gods¹¹ are at 4, 42, 8 spoken of as "our fathers"; this no doubt points to the conviction, on the part of the poets, that there has been an unbroken tradition from the mythical archetypes of priestly poetical art until their days¹². The references to this tradition and the divine origin of their art were no doubt to enhance the efficacy of their products.

One can say that this avowed traditionalism is in consonance with what is long since a common opinion of modern Indologists: this poetry which is so polished and so highly developed, is "not the earliest production of the genius

¹ Cf. e.g. F. BOAS, *Primitive art*, New York 1955, p. 155.

² Cf. e.g. 1, 1, 2; 87, 5; 118, 3; 139, 9; 4, 50, 1.

³ Cf. p. 193 ff.

⁴ Cf. e.g. 1, 24, 12f.; 106, 6; 118, 3; 3, 58, 3. Transmitters of oral traditions often emphasize the exactness of their performances (A. B. LORD, *The singer of tales*, Cambridge Mass. 1960, p. 28).

⁵ Cf. also 8, 3, 8; 13, 7.

⁶ Cf. 10, 67, 1.

⁷ GONDA, *Vision*, p. 60; cf. e.g. 1, 87, 5; 91, 1; 109, 3; cf. 8, 43, 10.

⁸ For 7, 84, 5 compare GELDNER, *ṚV. II*, p. 256 with RENOU, *E. V. P. V*, p. 101; VII, p. 86.

⁹ *ṚV.* 3, 1, 21 and cf. 3, 18, 4; as to the Kuśikas, e.g. 3, 26, 3; 29, 15; 30, 20; 42, 9 (Kuśika was Viśvāmitra's father: 3, 33, 5). See in general also GELDNER, *ṚV. I*, p. 412; II, p. 1; 277; *ṚV.* 7, 56, 23; (8, 15, 6).

¹⁰ *ṚV.* 9, 97, 5; cf. also 10, 67, 1.

¹¹ See 1, 139, 9; 7, 76, 4; 9, 62, 17; 92, 2; 10, 109, 4; 130, 7.

¹² See also 1, 71, 2; 109, 7; 3, 39, 2; 4, 2, 16; 37, 3; 5, 25, 2; 6, 22, 2.

and devout mind of the ancient Indians"¹³. Generations of poets and 'family schools' must have preceded those to whom we owe the present collection; many old hymns must have been replaced and sunk into oblivion, for it may be supposed that the poets imitated the themes and techniques of composition of their masters rather than faithfully copied their poems.

A few lines may be inserted about a point of which we know next to nothing, namely the 'songs' which are assumed to have been the basic form of all other forms of poetry¹⁴. It would appear that in ancient India also sung or recited poetic productions, exerting a hold on the reciters and listeners through their sounds, sense and rhythm, evoking a feeling of mystery and abating troubling thoughts and obsessing anxieties, were, historically and sociologically, the basis of the type of hymn preserved in the Veda, which doubtless does not represent the whole scope of the contemporaneous 'literary' activity.

It would not be warranted to dwell too long on what may be called the psychology of these poets of whose innermost thoughts and feelings we have no knowledge other than the little that can, perhaps, be inferred from their work. That they were fully imbued with a sense of their own importance or indispensability and were conscious of criticism may be taken for granted and is apparent from the claims they lay to fame, recognition and adequate rewards¹⁵. There is, of course, evidence of enmity, emulation and jealousy: "The mountains must press down that man who despises us or wishes to blame our powerful hymn (*brahman*) which is in process of completion; the heavens must consume by their glow the one who hates the *brahman*" (6, 52, 1 ff.)¹⁶. A place such as 1, 27, 13 "Homage to the greater and the less important, to the young and old (gods); we would like to worship the gods if we shall be able" is, perhaps, due to the author's devout modesty. As to the psychological insight they evince¹⁷, it has been suggested that Viśvāmītra in his dialogue with the rivers¹⁸ took advantage of their feminine vanity¹⁹. The assurance that the Goddess of the jungle has no murderous intentions put into the mouth of the one who is forced to pass the night in that solitude (10, 146, 5)²⁰ makes, psychologically, a clever hit. Sometimes a poet devotes a line to his own problems or difficulties—we take cognizance of an apology for an infraction (1, 31, 16), of an oath of purgation (7, 104, 15)²¹—but are these always founded on actual fact, on recent experiences?

¹³ HAUG, *Äi. B. I.*, p. 29.

¹⁴ BOWRA, *Primitive song*, p. 254.

¹⁵ For these *dakṣiṇās* see 79; see e.g. 6, 17, 14; 1, 31, 8; 2, 11, 12; 1, 9, 7; 5, 44; 62, 9; 6, 1, 12, cf. also 1, 147, 2; 7, 32, 13; for an *oratio pro domo* 7, 21, 5.

¹⁶ Cf. 6, 15, 12; 7, 1, 15; 56, 19; 94, 3; 7; 12; 8, 21, 11; 66, 14f.

¹⁷ For an exaggerated opinion: A. K. COOMARASWAMY, in *Indian Art and Letters* 7 (1933), p. 19.

¹⁸ See p. 146; 201.

¹⁹ GELDNER, *RV. I.*, p. 373.

²⁰ For 10, 146 see P. THIEME, *Studies F. B. J. Kuiper*, p. 383 (= K. S. p. 268); S. G. KANTAWALA, in *JOIB* 20 (1970), p. 1.

²¹ Cf. also 1, 105, 18f.; 120; 152, 6; 158; 5, 2, 3f.; 7, 86; 104; 8, 42, 3. See p. 153f.

At this point we must turn to the individual poets²². Poets are qualified as knowing, skilled, inventive, eloquent, as being or acting in consonance with Ṛta²³ but only rarely do we come into relation with a personage or an identifiable individual. If so minded one might except Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra²⁴ in their legendary animosity. It is true that the lists of ṛṣis have, especially in India, been more than once regarded as “not unhistorical and unscrupulous”²⁵, but there is no denying that the Indian tradition does not provide us with reliable information on authors or reciters. And what is worse, the Indians have never been much interested in the poetic personality by which a work of art attained its individual character²⁶.

Our sources of information are: first, stray communications of the authors themselves:—e. g. “I, Viśvāmitra, have praised Indra, my materialized *brahman* protects this people of the Bharatas” (3, 53, 12)²⁷—, but these names are in part obviously what we would call fictive—the word *nema* (‘one, several’) in 8, 100, 3 followed by ‘(he) says’ has occasioned the author’s name Nema; Dharuṇa, the reputed author of 5, 15, owes his name (and existence!) to the homonymous word for ‘bearing, bearer’ which occurs four times in this short text²⁸—or rightly suspected of being deduced from the context: the words *rātahavyasya . . . stōmaiḥ* in 5, 66, 3 may, it is true, mean “with the eulogies of Rātahavya”²⁹—and a man called Rātahavya, descendant of Atri, is according to the Sarvānukramaṇī the poet of 5, 65 and 66—but also “with the praise of the one who offers the oblation”³⁰. Secondly: incidental communications in the later Vedic texts and the more or less reliable traditions—founded, not on historical data concerning the real poets, but mainly on combination, family tradition and the above texts—in the ancillary literature (*anukramaṇī* etc.)³¹. For instance, a certain Kavaṣa Ailūṣa who was abandoned by other seers and afflicted by thirst in the desert, ‘saw,’ according to AiB. 2, 19, ṚV. 10, 30, the Hymn to the Waters³². In the third place, technical names of chanted texts (*sāmans*)³³

²² H. OLDENBERG, Über die Liedverfasser des Ṛgveda, ZDMG 42 (1888), p. 199 (= K. S. p. 568); P. REGNAUD, Recherches sur le point de départ des noms des poètes védiques, JA 10-5 (1905 I), p. 77.

²³ ṚV. 2, 24, 7; 3, 34, 7; 5, 46, 1; 6, 7, 7; 7, 87, 4; 9, 17, 6 (also 1, 71, 10) and see GONDA, Vision, p. 44.

²⁴ See GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 395 (on 3, 53, 21 ff.); MACDONELL and KEITH, V. I. II, p. 274; H. D. VELANKAR, in JBBRAS 18, p. 13 (speculative).

²⁵ S. K. BELVALKAR, in 2 AIOC Pr. p. 6.

²⁶ S. K. DE, Sanskrit poetics as a study of aesthetics, Berkeley 1963, p. 72.

²⁷ See also 6, 16, 33; 8, 19, 2; 35, 19; 10, 20, 10; 23, 7 (cf. 6). Very often poets remain anonymous.

²⁸ ṚV. 5, 87; 9, 35; 10, 34; 38; 41; 135 offer similar cases; (see also 10, 126, cf. st. 8) see also GRASSMANN, ṚV. I, p. 2.

²⁹ Thus GELDNER, ṚV. II, p. 74. See also 5, 19, 1; 10, 100, 12; cf. R. HAUSCHILD, in Festschrift Weller, p. 248.

³⁰ Thus RENOUE, E. V. P. V, p. 81. I also refer to LUDWIG, ṚV. III, p. XI.

³¹ Cf. AUFRECHT, Ait. Br., p. 422.

³² See also MACDONELL and KEITH, V. I., p. 143.

³³ See p. 314 f.

pointing to the authors of the corresponding melodies who were considered identical with the poets³⁴. Lastly, some supplementary information is given by the so-called *pravara* lists³⁵, viz. stereotyped lists of names of ancient *ṛṣis* who are assumed to be the remote founders of brahmin families³⁶.

Names of poets³⁷ occur sometimes in the singular to indicate a member of a family, sometimes in the plural, denoting the whole family which, descended from a seer, possessed definite *sūktas* and guarded this inheritance. For instance, while the second *maṇḍala* of the Ṛgveda makes only mention of the Gṛtsamadas (in the plural)³⁸, not of individual poets, other works³⁹ speak of a poet called Gṛtsamada⁴⁰. The weak sense of individuality and the strong consciousness of family unity and solidarity prevent us from having more than hazy and confused notions of 'authorships' and guardianships⁴¹. It is a legitimate supposition that in many cases later generations have either asserted their authorship where there was none or attributed poems of later origin to a famous legendary ancestor⁴². This has not deterred scholars from attempts at determining the 'authorship' of part of the hymns and stanzas by a comparison of their contents, style, similes used, phraseology and grammatical forms⁴³.

We shall here confine ourselves to mentioning some famous names in addition to those which in a former chapter we saw associated with the divisions of the corpus. The Mānas, descendants of Māna, are in several passages alluded to as singers⁴⁴. Medhātithi, sprung from Kaṇva's family, is held to be the author of various hymns⁴⁵ and so is Dīrghatamas⁴⁶. Kakṣivat appears as a celebrated *ṛṣi*—the poet of 1, 18 wishes to be a second Kakṣivat—an eloquent eulogist, reciter and soma-presser; mentioned frequently in the Ṛgveda, he must have been a Pajra by family and enjoyed the special favour of the Aśvins⁴⁷. Kaśyapa, the legendary sage of 9, 113 and 114, occurs in that corpus only once, but is a

³⁴ OLDENBERG, o.c., p. 222 (591); cf. also 8, 71; JB. 1, 151; 10, 38, 5; PB. 9, 2, 22; 21, 14, 5.

³⁵ J. BROUGH, *The early brahmanical system of gotra and pravara*, Cambridge 1953.

³⁶ These lists are regularly recited at specific points in the sacrificial ritual.

³⁷ See also RENOU (and FILLIOZAT), I. C. I, p. 272.

³⁸ ṚV. 2, 4, 9; 19, 8; 39, 8; 41, 18. See GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 275.

³⁹ AiB. 5, 2, 4; KB. 22, 2 etc.; AiĀ. 2, 2, 1; Sarvānukramaṇī.

⁴⁰ Cf. also A. WEBER, in SB Berlin 1900, p. 618.

⁴¹ Cf. e.g. Vasiṣṭha's name in 7, 88, 4; 96, 3; 10, 181, 1. For attempts at disentangling see e.g. R. S. SATYASRAYI, in JBORS 26, 2; N. G. CHAPEKAR, Atri, ABORI 43 (1962), p. 109 (disfigured by untenable opinions).

⁴² See e.g. GELDNER, ṚV. II, p. 91 (intr. note to *maṇḍala* VI) and N. G. CHAPEKAR, Bharadvāja, ABORI 31, p. 292.

⁴³ See S. K. GUPTA, in PO 18 (1953), p. 22.

⁴⁴ ṚV. 1, 169, 8; 171, 5; 182, 8; 184, 5; cf. LUDWIG, ṚV. III, p. 116; SIEG, Sagenstoffe, p. 106.

⁴⁵ ṚV. 1, 12–23; 8, 1–3; 32; 33; 9, 41–43.

⁴⁶ ṚV. 1, 140–164 are traditionally attributed to him; see however OLDENBERG, o.c., p. 221 (p. 590).

⁴⁷ See e.g. 1, 18, 1; 51, 13; 112, 11; 116, 7; 117, 6; 4, 26, 1.

common figure in the later *saṃhitās* and other works⁴⁸. Interestingly enough, references to blind⁴⁹ and itinerant⁵⁰ poets and eulogists are not lacking⁵¹.

Although a hymn is generally ascribed to one seer only, in several cases authorship was, according to the ancient sources, collective—9, 66 was composed by ‘the hundred Vaikhānasas’⁵²—or attributed to two⁵³ or more⁵⁴ sages. In other cases tradition offers a choice between two authors: 1, 105 Trita Āptya or Kutsa⁵⁵. At times, an identical stanza occurring in different *sūktas* is ascribed to two different seers⁵⁶. Exceptionally a woman could receive inspiration and become a seer⁵⁷. Our sources mention a number of human and divine figures among whom the maiden Apālā of 8, 91 and Ghoṣā whose words are quoted in 10, 39 and 40⁵⁸. Moreover, the goddess Vāc is regarded as the seer of 10, 125, and Śrī as the poetess of the Śrīsūkta. Deities could indeed also figure as seers: Indra Vaikuṅṭha praises himself in 10, 48–50⁵⁹; Manyu is seer and deity of 10, 83 and 84 and Hiranyagarbha is the ‘author’ of 10, 121, the snake Arbuda of 10, 94.

⁴⁸ RV. 9, 114, 2; cf. AV. 1, 14, 4; 2, 33, 7; MS. 4, 2, 9; VS. 3, 62 etc. For other names also M. PATEL, *Die Dānastuti's des Rigveda*, Leipzig 1930, p. 54, and for a complete list AUFRECHT, RV. II, p. 461.

⁴⁹ See 1, 116, 14; 147, 3. As is well known the profession of a ‘bard’ is often associated with blindness (see e.g. C. M. BOWRA, *Heroic poetry*, London 1952, p. 420).

⁵⁰ See 1, 110, 2; 117, 6; 5, 6, 8.

⁵¹ For long-haired seers etc. see GONDA, *Vision*, p. 95.

⁵² Also 1, 100; 9, 107 (the seven *ṛsis*); 109; 10, 108. Cf. 1, 100, 17.

⁵³ Thus 3, 23; 5, 1; 9, 110; 10, 51; 53; cf. also 1, 170; 8, 71.

⁵⁴ Thus 1, 126; 165; 5, 24; 8, 1; 9, 67; 86; 10, 57–59.

⁵⁵ Cf. also 3, 31 and cf. 3, 38; 54ff.; 62; 5, 2; 27; 9, 67.

⁵⁶ RV. 3, 4, 8–11 (Viśvāmitra) = 7, 2, 8–11 (Vasiṣṭha).

⁵⁷ V. G. RAHURKAR, in Vol. R. N. Dandekar, *IA III*, 3 (1969), p. 41. A. KUMARI DEVI, *Female seers of ancient India*, Calcutta (between 1931 and 1946) was inaccessible to me.

⁵⁸ *Bṛhaddevatā* 2, 82–84 and the *Sarvānukramaṇī* identifying the speaker mentioned in a hymn and the poet.

⁵⁹ Cf. *Bṛhaddevatā* 7, 50ff. and GELDNER, RV. III, p. 262.

3. Sociology and performance

The genius of a poet cannot expand without the co-operation of his environment¹, and Vedic poetry required an audience comprising men initiated into its deeper sense. It is however highly improbable that about interest in their work these Vedic poets had any complaint to make, because in archaic and more or less 'primitive'² societies, where ceremonies provide a main focus for social life, the composition of poems is a communal affair; besides, in ancient India, as in other traditional societies, the poets enjoyed the patronage of the noble and the wealthy³. A considerable part of the hymns may have been made to order and the wealthy, though sometimes stingy⁴, patrons figure largely in them. They reward, or are expected to reward, the services⁵ of the poets who pray for their well-being and prosperity⁶; interestingly enough, part of the prayers remembering a patron do not overlook the poet himself⁷. Since the employment of *mantras* for the sake of a livelihood was already in Vedic times forbidden, the relations between poets and patrons were of a ceremonious rather than economic nature⁸. The material aspect of the *dakṣiṇā*—not to be translated by "fee"—has often been too much emphasized in European books. The patrons who are desirous of divine favour, have sacrificial ceremonies performed and earn the ritual and religious merits resulting from these⁹, are of course commended for their support, assisted in difficulties, for instance with imprecations against enemies¹⁰, provided—it is sometimes added¹¹—they back the poet's words unreservedly. A patron is compared to Indra, because both of them are expected to bestow their favours upon those who assist them, in the god's case with worship, in the patron's with support¹². Although we have no data about the poet's activities in other surroundings it may be surmised that their hymns were enjoyed also by others than the patrons and their dependents: Indians have always been anxious to derive merit from attendance at religious ceremonies.

¹ K. SHASTRI, in Volume P. V. Kane, Poona 1941, p. 438.

² 'Primitive' is used, neither as an equivalent of "belonging to the earliest ages" nor to suggest the ideas of rudeness or backwardness but to denote what is characteristic of a culture or society that is not markedly infused with 'modern' rationalism and intellectualism.

³ M. PATEL, *Die Dānastuti's des Rigveda*, Thesis Marburg 1929, p. 76; English translation by B. H. KAPADIA, Vallabh Vidyanagar 1961.

⁴ See e.g. 8, 26, 10; 39, 2; 71, 4f.

⁵ E.g. 1, 48, 4; 73, 5; 122, 8; 192, 16; 5, 27, 2; 33, 8; 8, 49, 10; 10, 62, 11.

⁶ E.g. 1, 54, 11; 73, 5; 9; 97, 3; 125, 7; 5, 34, 9; 79, 2; 8, 68, 19.

⁷ E.g. 1, 51, 15; 2, 2, 12; 4, 9; 4, 29, 5.

⁸ See p. 170 f.

⁹ See 1, 153, 2; 8, 19, 18 and cf. 1, 122, 11; 1, 22, 20; 31, 7; 8, 74, 4.

¹⁰ See 5, 34, 9; AV. 3, 19, 3.

¹¹ RV. 7, 1, 10; cf. 7, 6.

¹² RV. 7, 21, 8; cf. 7, 27, 2.

We now come to a point of considerable difficulty which seems to have given rise to serious misunderstanding. Throughout the R̥gveda mention is made of verbal contests for which German authors, consciously or unconsciously calling to mind "associations with the Nuremberg mastersingers and the minnesängers' tournament of song on the Wartburg"¹³, sometimes used expressions such as 'Dichterwettkämpfe'¹⁴, in French 'joutes oratoires'¹⁵. Moreover, the impression is sometimes created¹⁶ that the hymns were primarily designed for what may be called literary contests. However, in places such as the following there is, as far as I am able to see, no question of two poets or performers competing for prizes or recognition: "I (row,) so to say, to thee (Indra) the ship of eloquence in the contests"¹⁷ (2, 16, 7); "With thy (Indra's) help I (the poet) always run a race about (the materialized) *brahman* (the hymn), striving after generative power (*vāja*)"¹⁸ (8, 53, 8). Part of these texts may be elucidated by a reference to the rivalry of sacrificers mentioned in some *brāhmaṇas*¹⁹: since the gods were not supposed able to be present at several sacrifices at one and the same moment, sacrificers felt themselves compelled to take measures in order to secure their presence. Among these measures were the recitation of the explicit invitation: "Come to my sacrifice," invitations and captations such as "Come to our Soma festivals"²⁰; "The liberal Indra will never refuse us the *vāja* of his gift because of simultaneous invocation" (7, 27, 4); hence no doubt also "In the past and nowadays the words of praise and hymns of the *ṛṣis* have competed for Indra" (6, 34, 1)²¹. These attempts to bring a god over to one's side are sometimes coupled with disparagements of rival eulogists.

This is not all. Like riddle contests, gambling, races and other exhibitions of mental and physical strength contests between two sages or eulogists²² as to who possesses the greater knowledge or more effective formulas are widely

¹³ P. THIEME, at JAOS 77 (1957), p. 53; cf. also H. P. SCHMIDT, at ZDMG 109 (1959), p. 446; RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 18.

¹⁴ See e.g. K. F. GELDNER, V. S. II, p. 154 and in Festgabe Jacobi, p. 242.

¹⁵ RENOUE (and FILLIOZAT), I. C. I, p. 275.

¹⁶ E.g. by GELDNER, RV. and RENOUE, E. V. P. passim.

¹⁷ GELDNER, RV. I, p. 297: "Wettbewerb"; RENOUE, E. V. P. XVII, p. 207: "compétition."

¹⁸ See e.g. J. GONDA, Aspects of early Viṣṇuism, Utrecht 1954 (2^d Delhi 1969), p. 48.

¹⁹ TS. 7, 3, 11; 5, 5; AiB. 2, 2, 18; see M. BLOOMFIELD, Religion of the Veda, New York 1908, p. 186; KEITH, R. PH., p. 251.

²⁰ E.g. 2, 18, 7; 4, 9, 7; 8, 26, 20.

²¹ See also 1, 102, 5; 2, 31, 1ff.; 3, 8, 10; 5, 33, 1; 35, 6; 6, 52, 1ff.; 66, 11; 67, 9ff.; 7, 23, 1; 28, 1; 33, 1f.; 70, 6; 82, 9; 85, 2; 8, 1, 3; 66, 15; 92, 29; 10, 89, 16; 128, 1 and compare GELDNER, V. S. I, p. 144; 256; RV. I, p. 140.

²² F. B. J. KUIPER, in IJ 4, p. 217 ingeniously attempts to show that 'word-duels' etc. were closely associated with a New Year festival of a type which has not however left clear traces in the Veda. In his opinion the nucleus of the R̥gveda was a textbook for that ritual. Compare also B. L. OGIBENIN's book on the Structure of the mythological texts of the R̥gveda (in Russian), Moscow 1968; Structure d'un mythe védique, The Hague, Paris 1973. See also p. 164.

believed to produce beneficial results and to generate, or set in motion, useful power. The prospect of success held out to a ruler can also in the Veda be attained by means of race-horses, eulogists or valiant warriors (8, 19, 10). In cases such as 6, 45 the parallelism between, and equivalence of, races and verbal contests is quite clear: "With inspired poems (*dhī*) and race-horses we will, O Indra, (conquer) the race-horses, manifestations of *vāja*, with thee (with thy help) the price of the contest . . ." (st. 12)²³. In view of the preceding words "in the contest (*vivāc*) of the many eulogists" (st. 29) it seems therefore legitimate to suppose that the prayer addressed to the same god "Our eulogy, O Indra must be that which carries farthest and comes nearest" (st. 30) expresses the wish to win, with the assistance of the god who is a protector and helps over enmities²⁴, the desirable things mentioned in the hymn²⁵. Since the 'price' fell to the share of the reciter who proved himself superior to others, evidence of rivalry is here also not lacking: "O Lord of Speech, keep these down that in speaking they are inferior to me" (10, 166, 3), the victor identifying himself with Indra, the slayer of his rivals (st. 2)²⁶. There can be no doubt that the significance of the solemn word contributed much to inflaming a competitive spirit among poets and performers, which in its turn awakened the desire to achieve literary perfection.

The performers are also to make these products of the poets' inspiration a means of exerting influence upon the gods or overcoming difficulties: "Make them so as to sound pleasantly, extend them; construct a ship that ferries across by means of oars; hold the weapons (which will conquer the evil powers) in readiness, lead the worship forwards (i. e. promote it), O companions" with these words the poet of R̥V. 10, 101 (st. 2) after invoking some of the matutinal deities arouses the reciters to activity²⁷.

The poets themselves are almost reticent about the details of the ceremonious performances of their productions²⁸. The texts were not sung²⁹, but rather—as in other traditional societies—recited in some form of singsong recitative. It would be hazardous to draw any conclusions as to general customs from the fact that the priest who in the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa (7, 18, 12) tells the story of Śunaḥśepa to the king after his consecration, is seated on a golden cushion. The ritual handbooks are much more explicit on this point, but their indications refer to the fully developed Vedic ritual. The stanzas of the R̥gveda are recited

²³ Cf. st. 2; 11; 13; 15; 1, 27, 9; 113, 17; 178, 3f.; 2, 31, 1ff.; 6, 9, 2; 52, 16; 8, 2, 36; 19, 10; 53, 8.

²⁴ Cf. st. 14; 19; 5; 6; see also 4, 17, 16; 6, 32, 3.

²⁵ Cf. 7, 23, 2; 30, 2.

²⁶ Translators (e.g. GELDNER, in 6, 5, 7; RENOUE on 6, 52, 16; E. V. P. V, p. 38) sometimes inserted "competition" where there is no such indication in the original. Compare also RENOUE, E. V. P. II, p. 109.

²⁷ See GONDA, Vision, p. 114; GELDNER, R̥V. III, p. 314f.

²⁸ R̥V. 9, 73, 6; 92, 1 do not help us much farther. For 1, 38, 14 (39, 1; 83, 6 *śloka*) see RENOUE, E. V. P. X, p. 62. See also 1, 164, 24; 8, 12, 5; 10, 78, 4.

²⁹ As was J. HERTEL's opinion, in WZKM 18 (1904), p. 59.

audibly, except for those cases where the contrary (whispering, inaudibly) is expressly stated. The words of a stanza are pronounced with the same pitch, insertions and other foreign elements otherwise³⁰. Some strikingly complicated particularities of the *śrauta* performance—recitation and song, audible and inaudible utterance—are eliminated in the domestic ritual, which in all probability required a muttered recitation (*japa*). Texts pronounced for magical purposes are recited in a low tone³¹.

From a place such as 1, 173, 1 “He will start the song (*sāman*) . . . ; let us sing the swelling (song of praise) that is like the sun” it has been inferred that in the poet’s times an individual singer and a choir executed ritual hymns by turns, to be relieved of their task by the *hotar* who had to start a recitation³². Some strophic hymns have made the impression of being intended for alternate recitation³³. Although it is not, indeed, difficult to imagine that a *sūkta* such as 6, 15 was to accompany the ignition of several fires, we grope in the dark about the performance at the time of the poet himself. However, there existed rites in which oblations were presented, by a succession of individual priests and in a fixed order, to a definite number of individual gods (the so-called *rtugrahas*) and there is no doubt whatever that R.V. 1, 15 was specially composed for this purpose³⁴.

³⁰ ŚŚ. 1, 1, 28ff.; ŚĀśv. 1, 2, 8ff. Other particulars must be omitted here (see e.g. AiB. 3, 44; ĀśvŚ. 8, 2, 12f.). See RENOÜ, in JAOS 69 (1949), p. 11 and in JA 250 (1962), p. 172f.

³¹ W. CALAND, *Altindisches Zauberritual*, Amsterdam Acad. 1900, p. 87; cf. also K. RÖNNOW, in MO 25, p. 279.

³² GELDNER, R.V. I, p. 250, and see ZDMG 71, p. 322; OLDENBERG, R. V., p. 393.

³³ GELDNER, e.g. R.V. II, p. 106 uses the term “(strophischer) Rundgesang.” See also 6, 48; 9, 67 (according to the *anukramaṇī* the first seven triplets were composed by different poets); 86; 97.

³⁴ For particulars see CALAND and HENRY, *L’agniṣṭoma*, p. 224ff.

4. Ritual application

The ancient ancillary literature comprises no index of the ritual applications of hymns and stanzas. This deficiency was at a much later time made up by Sāyaṇa, whose method deserves a brief characterization¹. The famous commentator distinguishes two applications, viz. the recitation of one's particular Veda as obligatory 'study' (the so-called general application) and the special use of *sūktas* or portions of *sūktas* to accompany ritual acts². In determining the latter Sāyaṇa is greatly indebted to the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa and Āśvalāyana's Śrautasūtra, although he sometimes quotes also domestic rites or incantations and exorcisms (*abhicāra*)³. If *mantras* are not ritually prescribed in the *śrauta* literature, their use must be learnt from *smārta* texts, including the R̥gvidhāna etc. Some hymns found, indeed, application, not in *śrauta*, but in domestic rites, e.g. 10, 166, which is to destroy rivals. In those cases in which no ancient text gives any information about the ritual use Sāyaṇa adopted the theory that this use, though not transmitted, is to be understood from the 'characteristics' of the stanzas (the so-called *līṅga*)⁴. There are however many liturgical *sūktas*, especially among those of *maṇḍala* IX, which, though ritually applied—this appears from the Sāmaveda literature—are left without the pertinent comment, because the 'orthodox' Sāyaṇa does not consider other Vedas or *śākhās* than his own. Nor does he take account of the differences between his sources, which sometimes point to the obsolescence of rites. His presupposition, shared by the tradition of the 'orthodox'⁵, that all hymns and stanzas were used in some ritual is however incapable of proof⁶ because many *mantras* are quoted in no other text.

If ritual acts and ceremonies are to be performed successfully the consecratory word is an indispensable requirement. It is part of a eulogist's functions, not only to stimulate divine activity—for instance to awake the goddess Dawn (4, 52, 4)—but also to infuse man's sacred activities with the power generated by solemnly speaking about powerful things, and so, for instance advantageously to influence the preparation of the *soma* draught⁷. The problem of the ritual use of the R̥gveda-Saṃhitā and its component parts, of the relations between the hymns and stanzas on one hand and the contemporaneous and later sacrifici-

¹ S. BISWAS, Kritik der rituellen Bemerkungen Sāyaṇas über die Hymnen des R̥gveda, Akten 24. Intern. Orient. Kongr. München 1957 (Wiesbaden 1959), p. 570.

² See e.g. Sāyaṇa on R̥V., introd. sections.

³ E.g. on 6, 53; 54; 75; 7, 46; 10, 169.

⁴ Hence Sāyaṇa's technical term *gato viniyogaḥ* (e.g. 10, 186) lit. "the ritual application has gone lost," but practically = *laṅgikāḥ* "to be learnt from the *līṅga(s)*." See e.g. Sāyaṇa on R̥V. 1, 40; 82; 90 etc.

⁵ Cf. e.g. V. CH. BHATTACHARYYA, in OH 3, p. 89.

⁶ BLOOMFIELD also (JAOS 15, p. 144) was "incapable of believing that even a single Vedic hymn was ever composed without reference to ritual application."

⁷ See e.g. 9, 26, 3; 60, 1; 64, 10; 97, 22.

cial ritual on the other cannot be left out of consideration. Bergaigne⁸ at the time ventured the opinion that a certain number of hymns are collections of essentially incoherent stanzas, composed to be used at different moments of one and the same ceremony or of successive ceremonies in a way not different from the use of *mantras* in the ritual described in the *brāhmaṇas* and *sūtras* of a later period. Nay, most of the hymns were made for *soma* sacrifices such as the *ḥyotiṣṭoma*⁹ of the *sūtras*. This opinion, which was received with reserve and scepticism¹⁰, was refuted by Renou¹¹. The thesis that all Ṛgvedic hymns were, at least in their present form, written primarily for definite sacrifices¹² is not only hazardous but also untenable¹³. The ritual as we know it from the *sūtras* does not even in the task allotted to the *hotar* and his assistants—the priests entrusted with the Ṛgveda—agree with the Samhitā¹⁴. The ritual known to the poets of the hymns was not identical with the very complicated ceremonies of the later period¹⁵. It was no doubt growing even while the hymns were composed and the corpus was in process of completion, and the later sacrificial ceremonies do not give an adequate idea of the employment of component parts of the Samhitā in earlier times¹⁶.

There is ample evidence that the poets were, generally speaking, very well acquainted with a variety of rites¹⁷. References to sacrifices¹⁸, sacred fires, the kindling of the ritual fire¹⁹, officiants²⁰, priestly offices²¹, 'instituters' (*yajamāna*), ritual performances²², oblations²³, requisites²⁴, the sacrificial ground—

⁸ A. BERGAIGNE, *Recherches sur l'histoire de la liturgie védique*, JA 1889 I (8–13), p. 1; 121; similarly, MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 64. For some general remarks see also LUDWIG, RV. IV, p. XII.

⁹ This is a general name of the *soma* festivals that last one day.

¹⁰ A. BARTH, *Œuvres*, II, Paris 1914, p. 12; OLDENBERG, H. R. I, p. 518.

¹¹ L. RENOUE, *Recherches sur le rituel védique: la place du Rig-Veda dans l'ordonnance du culte*, JA 250 (1962), p. 161.

¹² Thus S. D. ATKINS, in JAOS 58, p. 419.

¹³ See already W. CALAND, in WZKM 22, p. 437. The methodological problem of how to evaluate the Ṛgvedic evidence in its relation to the later Vedic literature cannot be discussed in this book.

¹⁴ See GONDA, R. I. I, p. 10; 108; RENOUE, *Recherches*, p. 162; 178. On special occasions the *hotar* had to recite texts from other collections.

¹⁵ P. S. SASTRI's opinion (IHQ 30, p. 308), viz. "the poets had very little, if anything to do with the rituals" cannot be defended.

¹⁶ See also A. B. KEITH, in JRAS 1911, p. 979.

¹⁷ K. R. POTDAR, *Sacrifice in the Ṛgveda*, Bombay 1953 (in many respects unconvincing); GONDA, R. I. I, p. 108; C. G. KASHKAR, in JA III, 1 (1964), p. 77. For the interesting *sūkta* 8, 72 see also GELDNER, RV. II, p. 397, for 10, 13 GELDNER, RV. III, p. 140.

¹⁸ E.g. 1, 45, 7; 4, 9, 3; 7, 56, 14; 103, 7.

¹⁹ E.g. 2, 6, 1; 10, 1; 4, 12, 1.

²⁰ E.g. 2, 1, 2; 4, 2, 14; 19; 7, 60, 12; 83, 7; 8, 58, 1.

²¹ RV. 1, 162, 5; 2, 1, 2; 2, 5; 4, 9, 3ff.; 8, 60, 16; 10, 107, 6 etc.

²² E.g. 1, 142, 3; 2, 48; 3, 56, 5; 8.

²³ RV. 1, 18, 8; 153, 1; 3, 58, 8; 7, 64, 1; 84, 1; 8, 31, 2; 93, 23; 9, 7, 3; 10, 90, 6; 116, 8; 124, 6 etc.

or the house of the liberal patron²⁵—and the holy grass strewed on it²⁶ and to certain ritual acts²⁷ are very frequent throughout the corpus. In a considerable number of details this R̥gvedic ritual is, however, different from the ‘classical’ Vedic rites²⁸, and the precise meaning of the many technical terms occurring in the poems cannot always be determined. Like any institution the historical sacrifice presupposed an original and exemplary mythical sacrifice of which it is a reproduction²⁹: “Looking back upon the path of the ancestors the wise (inspired) ones have, like charioteers, taken hold of the reins” (10, 130, 7). The relation between the gods and the rites³⁰, the results³¹ and the significance³² and symbolical value³³ of the latter are likewise among the favourite subjects of these poets. R̥V. 1, 95 deals, partly in riddles and mysterious imagery, with the ritual fire, especially with its origin and Agni’s exploits³⁴. In 10, 2 the same god is requested to arrange the sacrifices and make good the mistakes committed by the officiants³⁵. The difficult hymn 1, 151 which contains several allusions to the ritual begins with a stanza addressing the sacrificial fire. Although technical terms pertaining to the ritual are rare, the corpus includes sequences of stanzas which when used ritually bear definite names³⁶. There are unambiguous indications of performances and moments of sacrificial rites: “Born before the day, awake (watchful) recited in the sacrificial ceremony; clad in fine (auspicious), white garments is our inspired hymn here” (3, 39, 2). The stanzas 4–6 of 3, 52, 1 beginning with “O Indra, accept at daybreak our gift of fried barley” make, in the right order, mention of the three offerings of soma, in the morning, at midday, and in the evening. The order in which gods are addressed is sometimes, at least in part, in harmony with a definite ritual order³⁷. According to expectation the ritual practice and technique as such remain in comparative obscurity³⁸. If we knew these, large portions of the R̥gveda would no doubt be less obscure.

²⁴ R̥V. 1, 162, 6; 8, 12, 4; 10, 101; 105, 10 etc.

²⁵ E.g. 7, 74, 4; 8, 13, 10; 22, 3.

²⁶ R̥V. 1, 13, 7; 9; 26, 4; 84, 4; 8, 102, 14 etc.

²⁷ R̥V. 5, 15, 4.

²⁸ See A. HILLEBRANDT, *Ritualliteratur*, Strassburg 1897, p. 11.

²⁹ R̥V. 1, 83, 4f.; cf. 1, 164, 50; 10, 65, 7; 66, 2; 67, 2; 10, 130.

³⁰ E.g. 1, 3, 10; 135, 3; 4, 42, 10; 47, 1; 4; 6, 68, 10; 8, 20, 10.

³¹ E.g. 1, 83, 4; 4, 2, 5; 10, 1; 42, 10; 5, 15, 2.

³² E.g. 1, 83; 10, 65, 7; 66, 2; 67, 2.

³³ Cf. 1, 164, 34f.

³⁴ For 1, 73 GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 12; for 1, 163, p. 28; for 3, 29 see GELDNER, *R̥V. I*, p. 362.

³⁵ See e.g. H. D. VELANKAR, in *JUB 27 NS* (1958), p. 1. For 1, 151 RENOU, *E. V. P. VII*, p. 34.

³⁶ See e.g. 8, 68, 1–3 (*pratipad*); 8, 2, 1–3 (*anucara*) in the midday service of a soma sacrifice (CALAND and HENRY, *L’agniṣṭoma*, p. 300). For 3, 28 see BERGAIGNE, *Recherches*, in *JA 1889* (8–13), p. 20.

³⁷ Cf. e.g. 1, 1; 2; 139.

³⁸ Cf. E. W. HOPKINS, in *PAOS 1895*, p. CCXXXIX.

Some *sūktas* are so clearly recognizable as litanies or sacrificial hymns that there can hardly be any doubt that they were from the beginning intended for the cult of the gods. For instance, 7, 35 "Let Indra-and-Agni be propitious to us by their favour; let Indra-and-Varuṇa, to whom sacrifice is offered, be propitious to us," and 2, 14, beginning with a call to offer to Indra, whose deeds are enumerated in the following stanzas³⁹.

Quotations deriving from the Ṛgveda are frequent in the fire ritual⁴⁰. As to the soma sacrifices⁴¹, in the Agniṣṭoma 47 hymns were utilized in their entirety. Among these are for instance ṚV. 1, 2 and 3 which constitute the second recitation in the morning-service (the *praiḡgasastra*)⁴², and 10, 30 recited when one goes for the water that is required for the ceremonies. The ritualists did not always make the same choice⁴³. Whereas, for instance, 1, 1, addressed to Agni, the divine priest who is to invite the gods and to direct the sacrificial activities, and 1, 74, praising the same god, form part of the morning litany of both Aitareyins and Kauṣītakins, 1, 75 praising Agni and 1, 112 addressing the Aśvins were adopted by the former only, 1, 34 and 116 invoking the Aśvins, 1, 48 and 49 addressing Uṣas and 1, 150 directed to Agni by the latter. In addition to these far over 300 isolated stanzas, triplets or groups of stanzas came to be utilized at different stages of the ritual procedure. However, the great recitations of portions of the Ṛgveda take place on the day on which the *soma* is pressed out. The recitations of complete hymns—twelve in number in the *agniṣṭoma*—are a striking deviation from the usual liturgical practice which is characterized by the use of isolated *mantras* belonging or adapted to the several ritual acts. Because of their special importance they were in the *brāhmaṇas* made a subject for symbolical explanation and ritualistic discussion. Among the texts prescribed in domestic rites⁴⁴ are e.g. 6, 53 and 54, directed to Pūṣan, the god of the paths who helps to recover lost objects. These texts are useful in case one is going out on business or wishes to find something lost.

The ritual application of stanzas (*vinīyoga*) deriving from the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā is in many cases not in harmony with their contents⁴⁵. The acts may even run counter to the sense of the *mantras*. For instance, the motivation given⁴⁶ of the use of a stanza addressed to the Waters in the morning litany does not impress us as historically correct. Not infrequently, however, a stanza quoted in a ritual handbook does not contain more than one name or word

³⁹ Cf. also 3, 21 (BERGAIGNE, at JA 1889 (8–13), p. 22); 4, 6, 11; 5, 7, 1; 10, 88, 7. The quotations are not equally distributed through the books of the Ṛgveda.

⁴¹ See also RENOUE, Recherches, p. 169.

⁴² GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 2; CALAND and HENRY, o.c., p. 239; GONDA, Dual deities, p. 209.

⁴³ Cf. CALAND and HENRY, o.c., p. 505.

⁴⁴ AśvG. 3, 7, 9f.; see 7; 10; 3, 6, 4ff. etc.

⁴⁵ Bṛhaddevatā 5, 95 (and see 94: the application is the more important); RENOUE, Recherches, p. 177.

⁴⁶ AiB. 2, 16, 1; ṚV. 10, 30, 12.

which can be regarded as suitable for the occasion. There is no evidence that once all *mantras* did make appropriate words of consecration⁴⁷. We cannot enter here into a discussion of more or less original or secondary uses of the same *mantras* in different ritual contexts. One instance may suffice: since RV. 10, 57 was clearly intended to bring back the soul of someone who has died, this *sūkta* goes better with a rite in honour of the deceased than with a ceremony in connection with a journey⁴⁸. On the other hand, verses dedicated to a deity whose cult had in later times become less popular may be supposed to have belonged to a hymn which has not been included in the Ṛgveda⁴⁹.

As already intimated, many parts of the Ṛgveda were not used in ritual practice⁵⁰. Some places⁵¹ in the hymns themselves might possibly supply argument for the supposition that a poet, being dissatisfied with his work, did not consider it good enough for ritual purposes, but words such as "How can an act of worship be successful?" may also, and more probably, voice the author's modesty. The comparatively infrequent occurrence of *soma* hymns belonging to *maṇḍala* IX in the *soma* rites finds its explanation in the fact that these rites are not to worship god Soma. The texts were to promote and consecrate the production of the juice. Many hymns, for instance a considerable part of those contained in the second half of *maṇḍala* X, were too divergent or specialized in contents to be ritually utilizable.

In reading the allusions to the contemporaneous ritual in the Ṛgveda one should, moreover, be aware of its chiefly eulogistic nature: these hymns are widely different from ritual handbooks and allude to the ceremonies almost exclusively in their mythical and laudatory framework. How far those hymns which are not employed in the ritual were intended to accompany it at a distance, or were in some way or other associated with it, is difficult to decide: that many of them, though addressed to definite gods, were purely literary without any 'application'⁵² is improbable: like innumerable hymns made in the post-Vedic period they were no doubt highly valued by any adorer and worshipper of the gods⁵³. They may have been used on various occasions of

⁴⁷ As was LUDWIG's opinion: RV. III, p. 71.

⁴⁸ ĀśvŚ. 2, 19, 36; 5, 4.

⁴⁹ A. HILLEBRANDT, in GGA 1889, p. 407 (on Aryaman and TS. 2, 3, 14 t and u).

⁵⁰ E.g. 1, 151 and 153 (Mitra-Varuṇa); 171 (Maruts and Indra); 10, 168 (Vāta, Wind); 171 (Indra); 182 (Bṛhaspati); 6, 72 (Indra-Soma). See also RENOU, Recherches, p. 164.

⁵¹ Cf. 1, 120, 1; 7, 29, 3. POTDAR, Sacrifice, p. 20 goes too far. RV. 10, 88, 8 stating that the gods created, in this order, the recitation of texts, the (ritual) fire, and the oblation, cannot (with POTDAR, o.c., p. 37) be taken to point to a period in which the texts existed alone.

⁵² Thus L. RENOU, at JA 243 (1955), p. 420. WINTERNITZ, H. I L. I, p. 93 unwarrantably distinguishes "hymns valued as works of poetic art" from "sacrificial songs put together in a workmanlike fashion."

⁵³ For hymnic poetry in general see F. HEILER, Erscheinungsformen und Wesen der Religion, Stuttgart 1961, p. 322; for a similar difference of opinion in connection with Egyptian hymns: S. MOBENZ, Ägyptische Religion, Stuttgart 1960, p. 96.

which we have no cognizance. Tradition indeed distinguishes between Vedic and (otherwise) customary rites⁵⁴ and we would not be far wrong in assuming that in performing these ceremonies texts, recited or sung, were a mighty means of expressing emotions.

Since the stanzas of many Ṛgvedic hymns are only loosely connected and—at least in our eyes—more or less arbitrarily combined it is not surprising to see that the later Vedic texts often present texts taken from the oldest corpus in an order of stanzas and hymns which is different from the order in the extant Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā. These differences are not only explicable from the requirements of the ritual which they often serve very well, in many cases they also represent a more natural and satisfactory compilation of the *mantras*. These facts supplied argument for the hypothesis⁵⁵ that there has existed a Ṛgveda for ritual use in a sacrificial system of which we have no exact knowledge, a Ṛgveda which was superseded by the text preserved down the centuries. Anyhow the formulas recited at the morning oblations before the principal hymn (*puroruc*), the inserted formularies (*nivid*)⁵⁶ and the summons addressed to priests to commence their parts of the ceremony (*praiśa*) collected in chapter V of the Khilas must belong to the earlier period of the development of the Ṛgvedic corpus. Being closely connected with the ritual they were, parallel with the Ṛgveda proper, handed down together with the sacrificial technique⁵⁷.

It has often, but incorrectly, been taken for granted that the chronological priority of the Ṛgveda implies that the subsequent elaborate specialization of the ritual and its concomitant literature derived or developed, directly or completely, from that collection. However, the Ṛgveda, in a way, occupies an anomalous position: though chronologically older and the source of most of the formulas contained in the Yajurveda, it was peripheral to what became the main tradition of ritualism into which it was intercalated only at a later date⁵⁸. In some cases a comparison between contents and structure of one or more passages of the Saṃhitā on one hand and of their occurrence in the ritual texts on the other affords evidence for the assumption that hymns or groups of stanzas preserved in the ritual go back to a period anterior to the redaction of the Saṃhitā and that such hymns were, in another order and even in different places, incorporated in the latter. The stanzas accompanying the ritual connected with the sacrificial post (*yūpa*) may furnish an example⁵⁹. In some *brāhmaṇas* they constitute a coherent whole in a logical order, but in the Saṃhitā they appear not only distributed over two hymns, but also in different

⁵⁴ *laukya*: “usual in the world” (Bṛhaddevatā 1, 4); cf. RENOUE, at JAOS 69, p. 15.

⁵⁵ V. M. APTE, in Siddha-Bhāratī, Volume Siddheśvar Varma, I, Hoshiarpur 1950, p. 119.

⁵⁶ See p. 109 f.

⁵⁷ SCHEFTELOWITZ, Apokryphen, p. 8.

⁵⁸ RENOUE, Écoles, p. 210.

⁵⁹ AiB. 2, 2; MS. 4, 13, 1 etc.

order and amplified with other matter or included in another context⁶⁰. On the other hand, it has also been supposed that the so-called *ājyasūkta* (4, 58), extolling the sacrificial butter in its various manifestations, was not composed for the purpose mentioned in the *sūtra*⁶¹ but for an uncomplicated *soma* and fire service⁶². ṚV. 10, 11 may have belonged to a matutinal *soma* service.

The most interesting text 10, 98, no doubt a rain charm⁶³, representing itself as composed for the benefit of a certain Aulāna who is remembered in some more comprehensive final prayers⁶⁴, begins (st. 1-4) with a dialogue in which Devāpi, after imploring god Bṛhaspati to see that rain will come, receives from the latter that eloquence which will enable him to officiate as a priest in a sacrifice for rain. Thereupon Devāpi becomes a *hotar* and the *purohita* of Śantanu and succeeds in producing a shower of rain⁶⁵. The sacrifice meant in this text—the fire is kindled in st. 8 and Agni praised with the following stanzas—must have been one of those uncomplicated rites performed by the domestic priest without assistance on behalf of his patron⁶⁶.

The *sūktas* 10, 94, 76 and 175, addressed to the stones used for pressing out the *soma* are in the midday service of the *soma* ritual as described in the *sūtras*⁶⁷ recited by a special functionary. These *sūktas* are no doubt appropriate to the occasion—the potent stones are stimulated into a display of useful energy—and there is no good reason for doubting that they were composed for practical use. However, before, between or after these texts the reciter inserts hymns directed to Soma Pavamāna (Soma in process of clarification) as many as he can, in order to fill up time⁶⁸ and protect the hearers⁶⁹. These obviously are more loosely associated with the ritual act.

In contradistinction to the few isolated *soma* hymns in other books of the Ṛgveda⁷⁰ which emphasize the effect of the intoxicating draught upon those who drink it the *soma* hymns of *maṇḍala* IX deal with its ritual preparation. They are already at 9, 67, 31f. regarded as a special class of hymns, “the essence collected by the *ṛṣis*.” There is however no question of any detailed, systematic and chronological accompaniment or description of the ritual acts as supplied in the handbooks, for which at a later date suitable *mantras* were

⁶⁰ ṚV. 3, 8, 1; 3; 2; 1, 36, 13; 14; 3, 8, 5; 4. In ṚV. 3, 8 there follow 6; there are 18 other stanzas not used in the ritual.

⁶¹ ĀsvŚ. 8, 6, 6.

⁶² GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 488; and at ZDMG 71, p. 340.

⁶³ See p. 143. See st. 1; 3; 5; 6; 7; 8; 10; 12.

⁶⁴ See st. 10-12, rain, heaven, health etc.

⁶⁵ For the story see Bṛhaddevatā 7, 155ff.; GELDNER, ṚV. III, p. 308.

⁶⁶ Cf. KS. 10, 3: 127, 16ff.; W. CALAND, *Altindische Zauberei*, Amsterdam Acad. 1908, p. 13, n. 18.

⁶⁷ CALAND and HENRY, o.c., p. 269.

⁶⁸ See also RENOU, *Recherches*, p. 176. Cf. e.g. ŚŚ. 7, 15 and for texts needed to fill up pauses in the sacrifice M. WINTERITZ, in WZKM 22, p. 132.

⁶⁹ ṚV. 10, 94 was supposed to destroy eyesight.

⁷⁰ ṚV. 1, 91; 8, 48; 79; 10, 25 and 1, 187; 8, 72; 10, 144.

taken from this *maṇḍala*. The poets speak in a general way of the clarification and mixing of the *soma*, of the sounds accompanying these operations and other particulars and in doing so they create a sphere that is favourable to their main purpose, viz. the laudation of the *soma* during the process of its clarification, that is, the furtherance of this process⁷¹: “Our words shall rear him like cows that have calves” (9, 61, 14). Since however *Soma* is also the vital element in nature, identical with rain, the juice in the plants, the essence of all life-bearing moisture, of drink and food, the draught of life and of the continuance of life⁷², the importance of this process—which ritually reproduces and so furthers the circular course of the stream of life in the universe—transcends the immediate ritual needs. Hence also the phraseology: not only is the preparation described as a magnificent religious festival, the images borrowed from natural phenomena such as raining and thunder, from the process of milking, from semen, bull and cow, are more than suggestive⁷³.

In this connection the three stanzas of ṚV. 10, 179 are of special interest. The ritual authorities prescribe the use of this *sūkta* in connection with the so-called *dadhigharma* libation⁷⁴, which is an episode of the midday-service of a *soma* sacrifice. Stanza 1 calls upon the officiants to prepare the oblations, stanza 2 is the invitatory *mantra* addressed to the gods (*puronuvākya*), stanza 3 the consecratory *mantra* (*yājyā*). These two stanzas are at the same time the priests' answer to stanza 1. In this case the use in the 'classical' Vedic ritual is coincident with the poet's intention.

Among those *sūktas* which seem to have been composed for ritual purposes are no doubt the funeral hymns 10, 14–18⁷⁵, which in their entirety—but not without obvious exceptions—seem to present a ritualistic continuity, almost every *sūkta* and group of stanzas taking up the thread of events where the preceding section dropped it: adoration of Yama, (the first of the deceased and their ruler); leave-taking of the person who died; rituals in honour of the Fathers; cremation rites; appeasement (purification) and extinction of the fire and a neutralization of the contagion of death; the collection of the bones of the deceased; *mantras* prelude the *śrāddha* rites of the later period which were primarily to assure a place in the realm of the Fathers and the security of the survivors. The post-Ṛgvedic ritual does not however use more than some single stanzas and groups of stanzas of these hymns. It hardly needs comment that the presence in these hymns of passages of great poetic beauty and of some expatiations in which the author(s) voice(s) noble sentiments, is not incompatible with their presumably ritual purpose.

⁷¹ See GONDA, R. I. I, p. 62; RENOU, E. V. P. IX, p. 8; S. S. BHAWE, The Soma-hymns of the Ṛgveda, 3 vol., Baroda 1957-1962; M. PATEL, in BhV I (1940), p. 185.

⁷² See e.g. 9, 74, 4; 107, 14.

⁷³ See e.g. 9, 34, 3; 41, 3; 65, 5; 74, 1; 84, 3; 86, 28; 89, 3.

⁷⁴ CALAND and HENRY, o.c., p. 283; cf. ĀśvS. 5, 13, 4f.

⁷⁵ H. J. POLEMAN, in JAOS 54, p. 276; WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 95; RENOU, H. S., p. 59; 239; Poésie religieuse, p. 74. See also p. 139.

Stanzas of 10, 85, the nuptial hymn, traditionally ascribed to the archetypal bride⁷⁶, Sūryā the daughter of Savitar (the Sun), are, either directly or through a ritual collection of *mantras*, used in the wedding ceremonies, to which they are most appropriate⁷⁷: “Be not of evil eye, nor bringing death to your husband, (but) bring luck to the cattle (and) be kindly disposed and full of splendour; give birth to heroic sons, love the gods, be friendly, bring luck to (our) men and animals” (st. 44).

Ṛ.V. 10, 97⁷⁸ may be quoted in answer to the question as to how an atharvanic or otherwise unexpected *sūkta* could have gained access to the corpus. This ‘praise of medicinal plants’ applicable to the cure of a serious illness⁷⁹ is quoted in ŚB. 7, 2, 4, 26, where in a ritual context it is related that the gods, being about to consecrate the ritual fire-place, healed Agni by means of medicine and fifteen stanzas—beginning with “The herbs first grown . . .”—accompanied the same number of libations and a fifteenfold sowing. It may be supposed that this particular ritual use of the text led to its insertion into *mandala X*⁸⁰. There is even room for the observation that some hymns—for instance those addressed to the Viśve Devās⁸¹—give evidence of ritualistic symbolism and speculation. Some philosophical speculations are quite intelligibly couched in terms belonging to sacrificial performances⁸² or, rather, expounded by means of ritual concepts. Some passages⁸³ can be interpreted as pointing to a ‘mental sacrifice,’ so well known from later works.

⁷⁶ See also S. KRAMRISCH, in JAOS 81, p. 116.

⁷⁷ For bibliographical references: M. J. DRESDEN, *Mānavagṛhyasūtra*, Thesis Utrecht 1941, p. 24.

⁷⁸ See p. 168.

⁷⁹ Cf. *Bṛhaddevatā* 7, 154.

⁸⁰ See GONDA, *Secular hymns*, p. 341.

⁸¹ RENOUE, E. V. P. IV, p. 7. Cf. also 9, 10, 8; 110; 10, 114.

⁸² E.g. 10, 81, 2; 10, 90; see also 130; K. R. POTDAR, in *BhV* 12, p. 163.

⁸³ Cf. 8, 102, 16; 19.

CHAPTER III

CONTENTS OF THE ṚGVEDA

1. Introduction

In this chapter it will be our endeavour to study the contents of the Ṛgveda, that is to say, the subjects dealt with in its component parts and the 'genres' or varieties of the hymns as far as these can be determined by criteria derived from their contents. Although the whole of the Ṛgveda consists of what may for convenience be called 'religious hymns'¹, some of them were already in the times of the Sarvānukramaṇi given special names such as 'eulogy' (praise, *stuti*), 'account of the (universe) coming into existence' (*bhāvavṛttam*), 'advanced or esoteric doctrine, to be communicated by one single (teacher) to one single person who wants to be instructed' (*upaniṣad*)². There seems to be no objection to extending this classification and to surveying a considerable number of hymns or passages under separate headings, paying attention to their function and main characteristics. In doing so we are well aware of the 'mixed' character, the lack of homogeneity of the majority of the *sūktas*, and of the similarity of many passages and the almost obligatory recurrence of topics and motives which should properly find their place under other headings.

Vedic thought, the view of life and the world of the poets and their audiences, may briefly be defined as based on the belief in an inextricable co-ordination of what we would call nature, human society, ritual and the sphere of myth and the divine; on the belief also that these spheres influence each other continuously and that men have, by means of the ritual, to play an obligatory part in the maintenance of universal order and the furtherance of their common interests.

In the Ṛgvedic hymns, reality, mundane or supramundane, is almost exclusively viewed through the eyes of the male, intellectual and 'educated' aristocratic interest. Their personnel³ consists first and foremost of the more or less prominent higher and lower and in many cases very incompletely

¹ Some authors (among whom MACDONELL, V. R., p. XXV and P. L. BHARGAVA, India in the Vedic age, Aminabad-Lucknow ²1971, p. 340) erroneously assumed that hymns such as 10, 34 (the lament of the gambler), 10, 85 (wedding hymn), 10, 173 (consecration of a king) are secular. See GONDA, Secular hymns.

² Śaḍguruśiṣya, on ṚV. 1, 50.

³ See MACDONELL and KEITH, V. I.; KEITH, R. Ph. V. U., p. 58.

personified gods⁴, then also of demons, demoniac or dangerous beings, of heroes, legendary or contemporaneous kings or noble patrons of the poets, of the poets themselves and their mythical or legendary ancestors, priestly figures, the blessed deceased, some animals⁵; occasionally also of what we would consider a concept or entity (e.g. Śraddhā 'Faith' in 10, 151) represented as a divine being⁶. In some cases there are no clear lines of demarcation between these categories. Female figures are in the minority⁷. Some deities are believed to appear in groups. A peculiar feature is the celebration in pairs of some of the greater gods, their names forming dual compounds⁸. The scenes of the mythical events are left undefined or vaguely laid in terrestrial environments or in supermundane and sometimes widely remote regions; very often somewhere in the universe, that is—since some of the main gods are thought to function mainly in the atmosphere—in some indefinite regions between heaven and earth. Almost everything is, in this 'mythical sphere,' immemorial and present at the same time, and the divine, supermundane, natural, mundane, mythical ritual and social 'realities' are, in our eyes, incessantly intermingled. The gods—not in the first place conspicuous by 'holiness' or morality—exist mainly in their functions and make⁹ their influence felt in those special events in which they are interested or in the particular provinces of nature, moral standards, or social relations over which they preside. That is why in the hymns their activity is more emphasized than their persons, abodes or manner of life. It was not the task of the poets systematically to describe their characters and qualities¹⁰—which were of minor religious interest—but rather to elucidate their power, functions and beneficial activity. This does not alter the fact that we do distinguish characters, made up, it is true, of a few essential qualities, clearly recognizable in the prayers, in the favours asked from the gods—for instance, Varuṇa is implored to forgive and release from sin, never to give, Rudra is

⁴ The translation of *deva* by 'god' is somewhat misleading, because for instance the 'deity' of 1, 187, in praise of food, is food; of 7, 103 the frogs.

⁵ J. GONDA, *Mensch und Tier im alten Indien*, *Studium Generale* 20 (1967), p. 105.

⁶ Cf. e.g. also RV. 1, 24, 1; 10, 83 and 84 directed to Manyu 'Psychical tension inducing fury etc.': see CH. MALAMOUD, in *Mélanges Renou*, p. 493.

⁷ Untenable views of O. H. DE WIJSEKERA, in *Pres. Vol. C. Kunhan Raja*, Madras 1946, p. 428.

⁸ GONDA, *Dual deities*; RENOUD, E. V. P. VII, p. 1.

⁹ As 'personifications' of the divine forces behind the phenomena, cf. V. RAHAVAN, *The Indian heritage*, Bangalore 1958, Index. For juxtaposition of a 'god' and his 'substratum': 5, 51, 9. Less felicitously, MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 68. See also LOMMEL, *Gedichte*, p. 21 and RENOUD, *Poésie religieuse*, p. 13. Especially in the hymns directed to Agni—'the god to be honoured with fuel' (8, 44, 1)—the poets hardly distinguish between the god Fire and fire.

¹⁰ The main characteristic features of the gods are far from standing out in every passage devoted to them or from being equally delineated in every hymn. Moreover, a god may play the part of a colleague (see e.g. 1, 156, 4). 'Henotheistic' tendencies or addresses to anonymous gods are not lacking (1, 24, 1; 101, 3; 2, 38, 9; 6, 30, 4).

asked to save and spare men and their cattle, never to come¹¹—combined with others which are proper to divinity in general. Nor was it the poets' intention to provide us with exact information about the regions or localities in which they lived themselves¹². Very often a vague 'here' (referring to the sacrificial place), 'in (our) house,' 'in (our) village,' or 'in the forest'¹³ was all they needed. Even the brief allusions to wars and predatory expeditions are hardly pictured in their natural setting¹⁴, and the many references to cattle and agriculture are confined to similes, set or proverbial phrases and, above all, prayers¹⁵. Portraits or characterizations of persons are lacking and the occasional use of the same name for members of a family and their ancestor or for the chief and his people¹⁶ reflect the communal character of ancient Indian society.

The relations between men and the divine powers can best be characterized as one of mutual dependence: the former have to strengthen the gods with praise and oblations lest their potency diminishes: "The oblations are ready, extend your protection with remedies that are far and near" (8, 9, 14f.); "Favour the one who praises thee; drink the soma" (8, 36, 2)¹⁷. That man will be happy and fortunate who satisfies the gods¹⁸. Men and gods are friends¹⁹, but "one does not win the friendship of the gods without effort" (4, 3, 11); they are guests expected to bring goods and blessings²⁰. Especially with Agni, the divine priest who conveys the oblations to the gods, the family friend and lord of the clan, the sacrificers are on an intimate footing²¹. The unquestioned faith in the gods and in the efficacy of the solemn words, the consciousness of the divine presence and of the power of the ritual technique go a great way towards understanding the directness of speech and the frankness and exactitude with which wishes, prayers and mutual obligations are so often stated and formulated²².

¹¹ T. YA. ELIZARENKOVA, in *Mélanges Renou*, p. 255. Some of the authoress' interpretations are disputable. In modern eyes Indra's actions may seem destructive (p. 263), Vedic man certainly was not of that opinion.

¹² For names of rivers (7, 18, 9; 19; 8, 26, 18; 10, 75, 5 etc.) etc. see p. 23 f.

¹³ See e.g. R̥V. 1, 24, 11; 28, 5; 35, 1; 36, 2; 38, 15; 60, 4; 114, 1; 174, 3; 2, 1, 2; 7f.; 7, 1, 19.

¹⁴ Cf. 9, 47, 5; 10, 50, 2; 61, 23; 84, 7; 131, 3; 147, 2.

¹⁵ Cf. e.g. 1, 23, 15; 117, 21; 2, 14, 11; 4, 57; 5, 83, 8; 6, 54, 5ff.; 7, 77, 4; 8, 78, 10; 10, 34, 13; 101, 4.

¹⁶ E.g. Atri, Druhyu.

¹⁷ See also 4, 2, 7; 22, 1; 5, 3, 5; 6, 24, 7; 7, 21, 1; 8, 7, 19; 8, 1; 17; 32, 16; 33, 2f.; 34, 5f. etc.

¹⁸ See e.g. 4, 4, 7; 8, 27, 16.

¹⁹ See e.g. 2, 29, 3f.; 4, 10, 8; 8, 2, 39; 8, 4; 45, 37; 72, 2; cf. OLDENBERG, *Lit.*, p. 32.

²⁰ See e.g. 7, 70, 4; 81, 5; 8, 5, 19; 20; 31; 44, 1; 9, 21, and compare places such as 8, 2, 13; 18.

²¹ See e.g. 1, 26; 3, 25; 35, 5; 4, 1, 3; 5, 1, 8f.

²² Cf. e.g. 1, 102, 10; 4, 23, 5f.; 5, 32, 12; 45, 11; 7, 32, 18; 8, 14, 1f.; 40, 9; 61, 7ff.; 62, 4.

Surveying the hymns addressed to the greater deities²³ we are, as might a priori be expected, struck by differences in themes, motives, phraseology etc. which are closely connected with the characters of the deities and the main features of the mythological and speculative ideas to which they gave rise²⁴. In the case of no other divinity do we find so plastic a figure and so pronounced a tendency to anthropomorphism as in that of Indra, the most popular god, whose huge size, impetuosity, generosity, exploits, readiness to fight²⁵, unerring weapons and mighty horses the poets are never weary of describing²⁶. In one and the same hymn²⁷ they may picture him as great, terrible, mighty, fond of *soma*, heroic, gracious, destructive, generous, indomitable and a source of afflictions as well as of blessings²⁸. Neither his birth and infancy²⁹, nor his various metamorphoses fail to attract their attention. Agni³⁰, second in importance to Indra only and rudimentarily anthropomorphized, is on the one hand connected with the sacrificial aspect of fire—then he may be described as flame-haired and butter-backed³¹ or be compared to various animals³²—, with the light of heaven and that in the atmosphere, his mythology being mainly concerned with his various origins, forms and abodes. His threefold birth corresponds to the structure of the universe. He is on the other hand more closely connected with human life than other gods, because he lives among men³³. Consuming, as fire, the oblations and conveying them, as priest, to the gods³⁴, he is also the deity in whom the divine and human spheres most nearly coalesce. This led the poets to assume various interconnections between the human world and superhuman reality³⁵. His are moreover many spiritual

²³ There are no grounds for holding that each god had his exclusive following. The poets, priests and reciters address their worship to single deities or groups of deities, usually mentioning also other gods more or less closely associated with these. In the pantheon there is no hierarchy in the proper sense of the term.

²⁴ For the gods in general see GONDA, R. I. I, p. 48; R. C. ZAEHNER, *Hinduism*, London 1962, p. 24; for surveys of their main characteristics also the introductory notes in A. A. MACDONELL, *A Vedic reader for students*, London 1917 etc.; for particulars, GELDNER, *ṚV. IV* (Register von J. NOBEL).

²⁵ H. LOMMEL, *Der arische Kriegsgott*, Frankfurt 1939.

²⁶ E. D. PERRY, at *JAOS* 11, p. 136; 193 and *PAOS* 1880 (*JAOS* 11), p. XLVII; E. W. HOPKINS, in *PAOS* 1895 (*JAOS* 16), p. CCXXXVI.

²⁷ E.g. *ṚV.* 1, 55; see also RENOUE, *Poésie religieuse*, p. 53.

²⁸ E.g. *ṚV.* 1, 51, 9; 13; 3, 48, 4; 4, 18; 8, 45, 4; 69, 15; 5, 29, 4; 6, 29, 3; 33, 3; 47, 17.

²⁹ W. NORMAN BROWN, in *JAOS* 62, p. 93 and *Comm. Vol. Siddheshwar Varma*, I, p. 131.

³⁰ See also R. N. DANDEKAR, *Some aspects of the Agni-mythology in the Veda*, *JOIB* 11 (1962), p. 347; confusedly on Agni symbolism: V. S. AGRAWALA, *Fire in the Ṛgveda*, *EW* 11 (1960), p. 28.

³¹ E.g. 1, 45, 6; 127, 2; 3, 14, 1; cf. also 4, 1, 8 etc.

³² E.g. 1, 36, 8; 127, 2; 4, 6, 10; 5, 9, 4; 6, 16, 39; 7, 3, 5.

³³ E.g. 1, 1, 8; 44, 4; 58, 6; 60, 4; 140, 10.

³⁴ E.g. 1, 12, 1; 4; 36, 3ff.; 44, 2f.; 60, 1; 6, 16, 23; 8, 44, 6; 10, 2, 3; 5; 57, 2.

³⁵ E.g. 1, 70, 2f.; 73, 6; 2, 2, 3; 3, 1, 13; 55, 5; 6, 49, 2; 7, 10, 1; 8, 39, 6; 60, 12; 10, 91, 3.

qualities such as wisdom, vision, omniscience³⁶. Generally speaking his hymns, less vigorous than those addressed to Indra, are characterized by a certain simple warm-heartedness³⁷.

In spite of the bewildering variety of interests and activity of some of the greater gods, the forms they assume and the functions they fulfil will in many cases not seem incoherent if we keep their central conceptions clearly before our mind. Varuṇa is the guardian of Rta (Cosmic Order, Law, Truth, Reality) and as such the representative of the static aspects of kingship, the enemy of falsehood, the punisher of sin, lord and upholder of the *vratas* (fixed and regular behaviour, functions, observances³⁸), the god who holds heaven and earth apart and made a path for the sun. Pūṣan³⁹ may answer to the qualifications solar and pastoral, he may be a good shepherd and a psychopompos, these are neither exhaustive nor characteristic of his nature; the main image in which he is invoked is that of his path, he is a wanderer, always on the move⁴⁰. The Maruts, viewed as a clan⁴¹, are represented as young men, singers with a sense of rhythm, noise-makers and that—in our eyes—in the different spheres of nature, religion and warfare. The forces of nature are their weapons, their spears the thunderbolts, as ornaments they bear lightning or lustre; they are a formidable but splendid spectacle. Essentially however they are the gods of lightning, rain, wind and thunder-storm⁴².

There are among the personages some typical inimical figures, viz. the snake Vṛtra, the representative of the unformed world who prevents the cosmos from coming into existence, the great antagonist of Indra who combats him by force of arms, and Paṇi, more often in the plural⁴³, enemies of Indra, Bṛhaspati⁴⁴, the Aṅgirasas and overthrown by the sheer power of words. The Paṇis are the mythical prototypes of the reprehensible and detestable wealthy niggards who do not give offering to the gods or *dakṣiṇās* to the priests⁴⁵.

Special mention must be made of the Fathers⁴⁶, the early or first ancestors. They are more or less deified, receive oblations and almost divine honours, are

³⁶ E.g. 1, 144, 7; 188, 1; 3, 19, 1; 23, 1; 5, 3, 5; 8, 39, 7f.

³⁷ E.g. 3, 1, 21; 2, 6; 4, 1; 27, 6; 6, 16, 25.

³⁸ H. P. SCHMIDT, *Vedisch vrata und awestisch urvāta*, Hamburg 1958 (incorrectly: "vow"); cf. also W. WÜST, in ALB 50, p. 414; H. LEFEVER, *The idea of sin in the Ṛgveda*, 8 AIOC, p. 23.

³⁹ S. A. UPADHYAYA, *Hymns to Pūṣan*, in BhV 25 (1965), p. 38.

⁴⁰ S. KRAMRSCH, in JAOS 81, p. 109 (with a symbolical explication).

⁴¹ RV. 1, 39, 5; 7, 56, 5; 8, 12, 29.

⁴² RENOU, E. V. P. X, p. 1. See e.g. 1, 37, 9.

⁴³ RV. 6, 13, 3; 33, 2; 7, 19, 9 etc.

⁴⁴ H. P. SCHMIDT, *Bṛhaspati und Indra*, Wiesbaden 1968; GONDA, *Dual deities*, p. 310 ff.

⁴⁵ For particulars see MACDONELL and KEITH, V. I. I, p. 471; see e.g. 6, 33, 2; 45, 31; 7, 6, 3; 8, 6, 10; 64, 2.

⁴⁶ See e.g. 1, 106, 3; 6, 52, 4; 7, 35, 12; 10, 14, 2f.; 7; 15; 15, 6; 8; 10; 6, 75, 9 (praise).

invoked for aid, but are rarely praised, rather presented as examples of human behaviour, as prototypes or institutors.

We must for a moment revert to what is often, but inexactly, called personification. While, generally speaking, not even the natural phenomena developed into completely personal or abstract gods⁴⁷, there is in the hymns no more a fixed line of demarcation between person and non-person than between our concrete and abstract ideas. The poets are much inclined to interpret events and occurrences as caused by persons or more or less personal forces⁴⁸, and to apply terms of consanguinity to relations existing in the cosmic and super-human spheres (Dawn daughter of Heavens etc.). Agni's (fire's) flames are described as seven sisters whom the god exhibits as a spectacle (10, 5, 5). Indra's faculties and potencies are represented as his satellites (1, 52, 4). A eulogium can like a bird go to Indra (6, 22, 5). Rivers and sources make their appearance as women⁴⁹. Śaṃsa 'favourable appreciation' is at 7, 35, 2 'half-personified'⁵⁰ between the deities Bhaga and Puramdhi, whose names are however also found as an adjective or a common noun. Soma is not only the divine draught but also a great god; not only Indra's favourite beverage but also, as a heroic figure, his friend and helper⁵¹. As a male par excellence, bull or stallion, the same deity is surrounded by females, mothers, sisters, daughters including Heaven and Earth as well as by the fingers of the one who prepares the draught⁵².

Notwithstanding the almost general preference of the poets for an episodic presentation of the myths, sagas and legends with which they deal in their hymns; for a non-exhaustive treatment of their subjects; for frequent changes in, and alternations of, the themes and for interspersing their eulogistic and recollective passages with stray motifs reminiscent of themes or cycles foreign to the main subject broached in a passage, it is in many cases possible to say that a hymn, in substance, concentrates on one idea or grouping of ideas. Leaving unmentioned those numerous hymns which mainly consist in praise and 'characterization' of an individual god and those likewise numerous special *sūktas*, which are not intended for the usual laudation of the prominent gods⁵³, we deem it expedient here to insert a few observations on some themes dealt with in the hymns addressed to some of the greater deities. The central part of many Indra hymns consists of an episode of a combat between this god and a demon⁵⁴; the main subject of others is his cosmic activities and other important

⁴⁷ See also B. HEIMANN, Studien zur Eigenart des indischen Denkens, Tübingen 1930, p. 203; GELDNER, RV. II, p. 168 (introduction to 6, 66).

⁴⁸ That is not to say, anthropomorphically.

⁴⁹ Cf. RV. 5, 30, 5; 32, 2; 49, 4; 10, 124, 8. For other instances see 5, 41, 5; 6, 49, 14; 51, 8; 64, 1; 7, 34, 6; 9; 23; 10, 6, 6; 103, 12; 107, 7.

⁵⁰ A. BERGAIGNE, at MSL 8, p. 272; cf. also GELDNER, RV. I, p. 161 (on 1, 119, 2).

⁵¹ RV. 9, 61, 22; 64, 15; 96, 12; 97, 43; 98, 6; 101, 6 etc.

⁵² RENOU, E. V. P. IX, p. 15.

⁵³ Many of which will come up for discussion in the following pages.

⁵⁴ See e.g. RV. 1, 104; 5, 32.

feats⁵⁵, his power, greatness, resources and excellent qualities⁵⁶ or his fondness of *soma*⁵⁷. Whereas, for instance, the poet of R̥V. 2, 38 endeavours to draw attention to many aspects of Savitar⁵⁸, 4, 53 creates the impression of being an evening hymn, and 10, 170 centres on the sun as the source of light. The *sūkta* 9, 113 is different from other Soma texts in that it pays much attention to the celestial joy given by the draught. The Ásvin hymn 4, 45 makes the gods' chariot the centre of interest, the Uṣas hymn 1, 123 the periodicity of Dawn. Of the two hundred odd Agni hymns⁵⁹ 1, 58 deals with forest-fire; 1, 95 and 3, 29 with the sacrificial fire; 1, 14 with the god's birth; 2, 1 with his many-sidedness; 4, 4 views the god mainly as the destroyer of demons and enemies; 5, 12 associates him with R̥ta, the fundamental Order and Truth; 5, 23 emphasizes his overwhelming power (*sahas*)⁶⁰; 3, 2; 6, 7, 8 and 9; 7, 5 and 6 his aspect as Vaiśvānara, the Universal, 6, 9 being a profound glorification of Agni as the great immortal conceived as the inner light and placed among the mortals to guide them in the mysteries and intricacies of the ritual⁶¹; 3, 7, esoteric and dwelling on the god's associations, seems to be a morning hymn; in 7, 4 Agni is eulogized as the god who can give a son; in 10, 1 there is a tendency to assimilate him with Viṣṇu; in 10, 2 he fulfils priestly duties. The Varuṇa hymn⁶² 1, 24 dwells on the god's mysterious power, attempts to propitiate him and prays for a long life; the most successful classical hymn 5, 85 describes his might, majesty and cosmic activity⁶³. R̥V. 1, 151, addressed to Varuṇa and Mitra, contains various ritual allusions, but the next one, 1, 152⁶⁴, attempts to explain the nature and function of the double deity; 5, 62 deals with the gods' R̥ta; 5, 63 reminds us that rain and thunder-storm are a concern of theirs⁶⁵; 7, 61 emphasizes their cosmic significance. On the other hand, the eleven hymns dedicated to the R̥bhuv⁶⁶ who have obtained divinity through their wondrous skill, speak with uniform frequency of their great feats of dexterity, for instance their making one cup into four, or fashioning Indra's two bay steeds⁶⁷.

⁵⁵ See e.g. R̥V. 2, 12; 4, 17; 19.

⁵⁶ R̥V. 2, 21; 22; 4, 20.

⁵⁷ R̥V. 3, 36; 6, 39; 10, 112.

⁵⁸ S. D. ATKINS, in JAOS 81, p. 77 and see WINTERNITZ, in ArchOr 3, p. 296.

⁵⁹ RENOUE, E. V. P. XII-XIV; H. D. VELANKAR, in JUB. 24, 2 (1955), p. 36; A. KAEGI, Der Rig-Veda, Leipzig 1880, p. 50.

⁶⁰ J. GONDA, 'Gods' and 'powers' in the Veda, The Hague 1957.

⁶¹ For 6, 9 see GRIFFITH, H. R̥V., II, p. 319: 'Agni is the priest's guide and teacher.'

⁶² RENOUE, E. V. P. V, p. 65; VII.

⁶³ For a comparison between the Varuṇa hymns and the Psalms of the Old Testament (R̥V. 7, 86-88; 1, 25, 13; 5, 85, 2-4; Ps. 104, 19 etc.) see L. VON SCHROEDER, Reden und Aufsätze, Leipzig 1913, p. 10.

⁶⁴ See L. RENOUE and L. SILBURN, in Journal de Psychologie, 1949, p. 266 (= BhV 10, p. 133).

⁶⁵ R. OTTO, Varuṇa-Hymnen des Rigveda, Röhrscheid 1948, p. 21 ('Gewitterpsalm').

⁶⁶ S. KRAMRISCH, The R̥gvedic myth of the craftsman, in ArtAs 22 (1959), p. 113. (subjective); S. A. UPADHYĀYA, at BhV 22 (1962), p. 63.

⁶⁷ MACDONELL, V. M., p. 131; RENOUE, E. V. P. XV, p. 77.

Cases present themselves in which a hymn deals with two or even more mythical themes. The poet of 1, 72 deals with Agni's flight and his being found again, with the stolen herd of cattle and with the activity of the gods and 'patriarchs' in connexion with the renaissance of the world⁶⁸. Not infrequently two or more subjects are combined and intertwined: when, for instance, Agni is described as fire, his other aspects—vital glow, spiritual principle—may be meant implicitly or alluded to incidentally⁶⁹. In the repertories of these poets major themes can of course take several forms. Thus the important problem of the origin of the universe⁷⁰, or the combats between Indra and his chief antagonists are described with much variation. As oral literature never reproduces mythical or narrative matter in exactly the same words we are not surprised at finding hymns identical in contents, but varied in outward form. The *sūktas* 9, 104 and 105, dealing with the same subject and attributed to the same poet, do not repeat a single quarter of a stanza in the same form⁷¹. In reverting to the same subject this poet was not alone⁷².

The above considerations should not however prevent us from observing that a study of a great number of hymns of average contents leads to the conclusion that these contents can, in the main, be classified under two headings. They are chiefly concerned with praise and characterization of a deity or some deities on the one hand and with invocations and prayers on the other⁷³. As to the former, 'descriptive,' passages, these are, of course, though often more or less stereotyped, far from uniform, but less varied than the number of mythological figures would have us believe, because gods may have epithets and characterizations in common. The precative passages may, in the main, be reduced to the two variants of positive and negative requests, the former expressing the wish to obtain what is desirable, the latter aiming at the dissipation or destruction of all that is evil or inimical. Very often, but not necessarily, the prayers follow the eulogies or characterizations. There are also eulogistic hymns without prayers. In the *dānastuti* hymns⁷⁴ there is no praise of gods or mythological description⁷⁵.

⁶⁸ For RV. 6, 47 see GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 96 and RV. II, p. 143.

⁶⁹ LOMMEL, *Gedichte*, p. 16.

⁷⁰ See further on, p. 136 ff. and compare also C. S. VENKATESWARAN, in BDCRI 2 (1941), p. 258; RENOU, *Hymnes spéculatifs*, p. 12.

⁷¹ BLOOMFIELD, *Repetitions*, I, p. 12.

⁷² See e.g. 1, 116 and 117.

⁷³ See also ELIZARENKOVA, *Rigveda*, p. 36.

⁷⁴ See below, p. 170 f.

⁷⁵ In this book no attempt can be made to draw up an inventory of themes and motives occurring in the R̥gveda. The reader may be referred to GELDNER-NOBEL, RV. IV, p. 143 ff. and A. LUDWIG, *Der Rigveda*, VI, Prag 1888.

2. Invitations and invocations

One of the commonest genres or subjects is the invitation addressed to one, or more than one, divine guest¹. A hymn is sometimes described as refreshment or an invigorating drink². In some cases a hymn is, practically speaking, nothing else than a long and varied succession of invitations. After eight stanzas offering hospitality, only the concluding stanza of 1, 16 asks Indra to comply with the speaker's wishes. In the ten stanzas of 1, 47, addressed to the Aśvins, repeated requests to come and drink alternate with assurances that the *soma* has been prepared, and, quite intelligibly, some prayers for the gods' kindness and benevolence³. In the large majority of cases these invitations do not however come so much to the fore, and are either added to or followed by praise, references to the god's exploits or such expatiations as are more or less appropriate to the circumstances⁴—for instance Indra already drank *soma* when he was a new-born child; after having drunk *soma* he made the sun shine—or they are inserted between eulogies, statements of the poet's intentions and other subject-matter⁵.

Some *sūktas* (1, 15; 2, 36 and 37 which belong together) are to accompany the so-called *ṛtugrahas*⁶, libations offered to the twelve months. They accordingly consist of twelve somewhat varied stanzas addressed, in a fixed order, to Indra, the Maruts, Tvaṣṭar⁷, Agni and other gods and pronounced by different officiants. The seven triplets of 1, 2 and 1, 3, which form a unity, are in a similar way distributed over seven deities, invited to come quickly to the *soma* offering, and, in the 'classical' Vedic ritual, used in the *praiṅgasastra*, the second laud recited at the morning libation⁸.

The efficacy of a prayer is widely believed to be dependent, not only upon its correct repetition, but also upon its accuracy and completeness⁹. This accounts for the occurrence of circumstantial invocations such as "If thou, O Indra, hast turned aside, or art in thine own residence, or wherever thou art . . ." (6, 40, 5); "If you are in the West, or in the East, or with Druhyu . . ., I call you" (8, 10, 5); "Whether thou art far away or near . . ." (8, 97, 4). No possibility should be overlooked lest the invitation, or, rather, the summons, remain

¹ P. THIEME, at ZDMG 107, p. 195 spoke of 'Gastmahls poesie.'

² RV. 7, 36, 2; 8, 7, 1; 69, 1.

³ See also 1, 34; 107; 3, 35; 41; 43; 47; 4, 32; 5, 71; 6, 23; 8, 94.

⁴ See e.g. 1, 130; 3, 32; 36; 5, 66; 6, 16; 8, 36.

⁵ See e.g. 1, 153; 2, 16, 4; 6; 7, 22; 8, 4.

⁶ CALAND-HENRY, L'agniṣṭoma, p. 224; EGGELING, ŚB. II, p. 319; GELDNER, RV. I, p. 15.

⁷ K. AMMER, in Die Sprache 1 (1949), p. 68.

⁸ CALAND-HENRY, o.c., p. 239; GONDA, Dual deities, p. 403.—Compare also 1, 23; 2, 41 for which see GONDA, 1. c.

⁹ H. LOMMEL, Eine arische Form magischer Gottesanrufung, AO 10, p. 372. See also p. 181.

ineffective¹⁰. This circumstantiality should not however be put on a par with the mention of the different moments at which a god is expected to come: "I call thee at sunrise, I call thee at noon" (8, 13, 13).

Whilst an exhibition of one's knowledge of a god's abodes or sojourns means making an urgent demand and exercising one's influence upon him, the enumeration of many names of deities helps to reassure the performer with regard to the evil consequences of omissions and negligence. Hence invocations such as 5, 46, 2:

"O Agni, Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra, ye gods, host of the Maruts and Viṣṇu, extend (your sympathy). Both Nāsatyas, Rudra and the wives of the gods, Pūṣan, Bhaga, Sarasvatī must be pleased"¹¹.

As might be expected these enumerations are especially frequent in the hymns dedicated to the Viśve Devās, a name denoting, now the gods in general (All the gods), now a separate class of deities (the All-gods)¹². Irrespective of these enumerations—moulded into a definite syntactic structure¹³ or ending abruptly or elliptically¹⁴—these hymns—which are scarcely less formulaic and ritualistic than the *āpri-sūktas*¹⁵—consist of separate invocations, in principle of a complete stanza¹⁶ or sometimes of two or three stanzas¹⁷, of deities, among whom mountains, rivers and ritual entities considered divine. We would probably not be far wrong if we regarded these *sūktas* as originating in enumerations composed for liturgical purposes¹⁸ comparable to the *nivids*¹⁹, which in the course of time were²⁰ amplified and remodelled upon the majority of the hymns.

¹⁰ See also 1, 101, 8; 5, 73, 1; 8, 8, 14; 10, 1; 12, 16; 17; 97, 4. There are parallels in the Avesta, e.g. Yt. 12, 9–37.

¹¹ See also 1, 136, 6; 6, 50, 1; 13; 7, 44, 1; 59, 1; 8, 28, 2; 10, 35, 10; 64, 3; 65, 1; 66, 11.

¹² RENOU, E. V. P. IV, p. 1 and in Comm. Vol. Nobel, p. 176. In fact the name is traditionally given to the addressees of a variety of hymns including e.g. 1, 164; 5, 45; 7, 37 (dedicated to Indra, the Ṛbhus, Savitar); 42 (where Agni comes to the fore; cf. 3, 20) and many hymns of book X. The addressees are in principle the whole (cf. 6, 52) and part of the whole. Most of the lesser families contributing to the books I, VIII and X have left no hymn of this type. In the ritual the Viśve Devās were a distinct 'deity' and in a way regarded as a single personality.

¹³ See e.g. 1, 90, 4; 107, 3; 2, 31, 1; 4; 6; 3, 20, 5.

¹⁴ See e.g. 1, 14, 3; 186, 10; 4, 55, 10; 10, 36, 1; 65, 9.

¹⁵ See p. 104.

¹⁶ See e.g. 1, 186; 6, 49; 50; 7, 39, 5; 8, 29 (where the gods remain anonymous; cf. 5, 47).

¹⁷ See e.g. 5, 43, 13–15; 45, 9–11; 6, 52.

¹⁸ This might also account for the fragmentary character of some of these hymns (e.g. 5, 48) and for the mediocre arrangement and banal phraseology of others (e.g. 5, 51; 6, 51; 7, 35).

¹⁹ RENOU, in Comm. Vol. Nobel, p. 177.

²⁰ In some cases in a very artless manner; 7, 35 is hardly more than an enumeration of names, amplified by some epithets, and requests for bliss and welfare, preceded by an ever repeated *śam* ("auspicious"). It is a *śānti* litany ritually used to appease evil (GONDA, *R̥gvidhāna*, p. 57).

While they exhibit a preference for speculation rather than mythology, their more or less 'enumerative structure'²¹ remains, in most cases, very clear.

It seems, further, warranted to suppose that the tendency to couch descriptive matter and references to collections of persons in catalogue form²² was not foreign to the structure of these hymns. The closely related *sūktas* 1, 116 and 117²³ attributed to the same poet commemorate in the form of an enumeration, amplified by brief statements of the circumstances, the names of many legendary persons to whom the Aśvins had given help and relief in various difficulties. Enemies, fiends and demoniac beings are often mentioned in groups, along with other wicked antagonists²⁴. The 'Waffensgen' 6, 75 furnishes us with a probably complete list of the equipment of a warrior—welcome information for historians. The component parts of the house which in an atharvanic rite²⁵ is given to a brahman so that the giver would in the hereafter have a firmly built mansion are (AV. 9, 3) as minutely described as the wonderful structure of man in AV. 10, 2. Even in a simile underlining the wish to be escorted as it were by a swift conveyance not less than four parts of a chariot are serially specified (2, 39, 4).

The tendency to minute description and attention to all contingencies imaginable culminates in 'magical' texts such as 10, 161, which in an enlarged form recurs in the Atharvaveda (3, 11). Invoking the dual deity Indra and Agni to cure a patient from an illness the poet takes three possibilities into account: the patient suffers either from 'royal consumption' or from the 'unknown consumption' or he may be 'seized' by the female demon called 'Seizer'²⁶ (st. 1). He tries to recover the patient's health irrespective as to whether his life goes to an end, or he has already died, or even reached the presence of Death (st. 2). He should live a hundred autumns—the usual prayer—, a hundred winters, a hundred springs (st. 4). In the final stanza the performer declares that he has found and recovered the patient and that the latter has come back, sound and safe of body, eye and life.

²¹ See p. 180 f.

²² See e.g. 2, 14, 5; 5, 46 (RENOU, E. V. P. IV, p. 72).

²³ See also 1, 118, 5 ff.

²⁴ E.g. ṚV. 1, 101, 2; 103, 8; 2, 14, 5; 6, 18, 8.

²⁵ GONDA, Savayajñas, p. 107; 376.

²⁶ For these terms see J. FILLIOZAT, La doctrine classique de la médecine indienne Paris 1949, p. 36; 81; 83; 87.

3. *Āpri* hymns

Annexed to the Agni hymns are the so-called *Āpri-sūktas*¹, the “hymns of propitiation” of certain deities—among which the three goddesses Bhārati, *Īā* and Sarasvatī, and the pair Dawn and Dusk, who no doubt were wanted to come at the regular and auspicious moments—and sacrificial requisites regarded as divine, for instance the holy grass on which the gods were supposed to sit down (*barhis*) and the tree serving as the post to fasten the victim (*yūpa*)². Being constructed on the same pattern and characterized by fixed key words in corresponding places, they invoke, in as many stereotyped stanzas, eleven deities. These appear in the same order, with some variation with regard to the second deity, which in some of them is Tanūnapāt, but elsewhere Narāśaṃsa or Tanūnapāt and Narāśaṃsa. Thus ṚV. 1, 13 consists of twelve; 1, 142 (invoking also Indra) of thirteen, and each of the others of eleven stanzas. From the literary point of view these *sūktas* are insignificant—in their totality they are almost a collection of *khilas*—but for the history of Vedic religion their importance is beyond dispute. Accompanying the ten preliminary offerings (*prayāja*) of the animal sacrifice as consecratory texts (*yājyā*), they must, though individually largely imitative, belong, as a type of *sūkta*, to a comparatively early period, in which the ritual had not yet assumed its later proportions. There are serious reasons (for instance, lack of internal evidence) for doubting that they were originally intended for the animal sacrifice. They were rather composed for ritual purposes centering round Agni. Their popularity may have been due to a sort of family ritual associated with them; most families indeed possessed one for their own use. Their use at the animal sacrifice does not exclude the belief that they possessed an autonomous capacity to effect propitiation or to confer much desired qualities on the sacrificer³.

¹ MÜLLER, Skt. Lit., p. 463; BERGAIGNE, R. V. I, p. 124; and in JA 1889, p. 19; J. HERTEL, in Ber. Sächs. Akad. 90 (1938), p. 145; KANE, H. Dh. II, p. 1118; K. R. POTDAR, in 12 AIOC, Benares 1947, III, p. 211; 19 AIOC, Delhi 1957, p. 1; JUB 14, Sept., p. 29; 15, 2 (1946), p. 39; V. S. AGRAWALA, at JOIB 13, p. 93 (subjective); RENOU, E. V. P. XIV, p. 39; GONDA, Dual deities, ch. IV.

² There are nine of them in ṚV. I, II, III, V, VII, X, and an imitation: 9, 5; ṚV. 10, 110 recurs as AVVulg. 5, 12 and VS. 29, 25–26; 28–36; MS. 4, 13, 3; 5; KS. 16, 20; TB. 3, 6, 3; there is a secondary half-metrical *āpri* hymn in VS. 27, 11–32; TS. 4, 1, 8; MS. 2, 12, 6; KS. 18, 17; KapS. 29, 5, occurring also as AVŚ. 5, 27; (cf. K. R. POTDAR, at 13 AIOC, p. 47).

³ AiB. 2, 4; KB. 10, 3; PB. 15, 8, 2; ŚB. 6, 2, 1, 28ff.

4. Praise

It has often and rightly been said that the hymns of the R̥gveda are largely eulogistic, that the poets whilst inviting the gods to the sacrificial feasts enlarge upon their beneficence, greatness and glorious deeds. It would however be a serious mistake to regard these *śastras*, this continual glorification and magnification, as mere poetical effusions, and smaller eulogistic passages as adornments and digressions. Praise—that is laudatory mention of characteristic deeds and qualities, commemoration of powerfulness, exploits and services rendered, enumeration of names and epithets—is a confirmation of a god's power, in the literal sense of this term: a consolidation of the power, of the will, with which man finds himself confronted¹. Far from being cordial or beautiful superfluities or nothing more than description², these commemorative statements strengthen the gods (or persons) addressed, influence their situation, replenish their resources. Hence such statements as 1, 1, 1; 1, 35, 3; 5; 10; 2, 12, 3:

“I praise Agni, who is placed in front³, the god who is the ministrant of the sacrifice, the *hotar*, best bestower of treasure”; “God Savitar comes from a distance, driving away all discomfort. For ever the settlers and all inhabitants of the earth rest in his lap. Chasing away demons and sorcerers the god has stood (there) towards the evening, being lauded”; “Who having slain the serpent released the seven streams; who drove out the cows by unclosing Vala; who between heaven and earth has produced fire, victor in battles; he, O men, is Indra”;

and one of the many other lines dedicated to the same exultingly praised god: 1, 32, 1; 10, 168, 2; 2, 33, 8; 12; 4, 51, 7:

“He slew the serpent, then discharged the waters, and cleft the caverns of the rugged mountains”; “(I will) now (proclaim) the greatness of Vāta's (Wind's) chariot. Its sound goes shattering, thundering, Touching the sky it goes producing ruddy hues, and it goes over the earth scattering dust”; “For the ruddy-brown and whitish bull (Rudra) I pronounce a mighty eulogy of the mighty one . . . We proclaim the terrible name of Rudra. I extol the true lord, the giver of much; (when thou art) praised thou givest remedies to us”; “Those indeed, those Dawns have formerly been auspicious, splendid in superiority, truly born from R̥ta, at which the strenuous sacrificer, praising with recitations, lauding (i.e. stating their qualities according to fact: *samsan*), has at once obtained wealth”⁴.

Being first and foremost confirmatory these eulogistic and panegyric passages influence the ‘situation’ of a divinity, so as to determine it to some result or other. When the poet of 1, 160, 2 states that Heaven and Earth, as Father and Mother, are far-extending, great and inexhaustible, adding that they protect all inhabitants of the world, his emotional, though traditional,

¹ See G. VAN DER LEEUW, *Religion in essence and manifestation*, London 1938, p. 430 and compare RV. 7, 91, 1 “the gods who grow (are fortified) by homage.”

² This term was used by RENOU, E. V. P. VII, p. 57 (on 7, 61); p. 89 (on 2, 27).

³ *Purohita*: see J. GONDA, in *Festschrift W. Kirfel*, Bonn 1955, p. 107ff.

⁴ See e.g. also 4, 1, 6ff.; 4, 6; 5, 66; 6, 9; 7, 61, 4; 10, 22, 4.

utterance is no sentimental assertion, but a contribution to the maintenance of those important processes and phenomena which are controlled, directed or presided over by these deities. As long as man's rites and eulogies succeed in supporting and maintaining life and order in the universe, nature will continue to meet his wants. Praise is a form of truth which should be always repeated, and this repetition is also psychologically motivated: the performer convinces himself and his audience of the existence, unalterability and reliability of that power. Whether the statements made are founded on experience or sensory perception, or on traditional convictions is a matter of indifference; 1, 35, 9; 2, 12, 2:

“Golden-handed Savitar . . . goes between both heaven and earth. He drives away disease, he guides Sūrya. Through the dark space he penetrates to heaven”; “Who made firm the quaking earth, who set at rest the agitated mountains; who measures out the air more widely, who supported heaven: he, O men, is Indra”.

In praising a god a poet sets himself no limits other than those conditioned by the character of the god itself: “Without whom men do not conquer, whom they when fighting call on for help, who is a match for every one, who moves the immovable: he, O men, is Indra” (2, 12, 9) draws attention to the military aspect of the god who elsewhere is lauded as the slayer of Vṛtra and the establisher of the cosmos. And so we find banal and self-evident statements—“While some (waters) flow together, other flow to the sea” (2, 35, 3)—beside well-considered descriptions: “(Parjanya, Rain associated with thunder) shatters the trees and smites the demons. The whole world fears him . . . Even the sinless one flees before him, when thundering he smites the evil-doers” (5, 83, 2)⁵ or attempts to fathom the god's essence such as in the Varuṇa hymn 7, 87.

It would be a misconception to regard such passages as adornments or embellishments, as mere flattery, or mechanical repetition of familiar epithets and references. Being from the religious point of view a turning away from oneself and towards the divine⁶, continual praise of the gods was, in ancient India not less than elsewhere, regarded as an exceedingly important religious duty. Divine service was almost entirely the offering of praise. “To thee, O Agni, day by day we come with an inspired hymn, bringing homage” (1, 1, 7)⁷. Or a reference to the actual oblation is, as in the sacrificial ceremonies, in the very hymn preceded (or followed) by praise: “Mitra he names himself (because) he marshals men in their proper position; Mitra supports heaven and earth; Mitra regards the settlements of men without blinking; to Mitra pour out the oblation rich in sacrificial butter” (3, 59, 1). And passages such as 2, 33, 9 “The Mighty one, with firm limbs and many forms has adorned himself with bright gold ornaments. From the ruler of this great world, from Rudra, let not divine dignity depart” attest to the poet's more or less conscious conviction

⁵ The images and similes cannot be considered in this chapter.

⁶ G. VAN DER LEEUW, o.c., p. 430.

⁷ Cf. also 2, 35, 15. For the Agni hymns in ṚV. I see H. D. VELANKAR, at JUB N. S. 32, 2, p. 1.

that praise contributes to the maintenance of the powers presiding over the provinces of the universe⁸.

Many instances of praise are exact statements of a god's task, function and behaviour: "O Agni, the worship, the sacrifice that thou encompassest on every side, that goes to the gods" (1, 1, 4)⁹. But these laudations may also induce the poet to an expatiation on the significance and salutary results of the god's activity: "The winds begin to blow, lightnings shoot down, the plants sprout; heaven overflows. Nurture is born for the whole world, when Parjanya quickens the earth with seed" (5, 83, 3)¹⁰. We should remember that the solemn spoken word possesses decisive power in its repetition. There is, indeed, neither in form nor in content, a strict line of demarcation between praise and its effects: "The assistance of Mitra, the god who supports the cultivators, assures (us) gain, illustriousness (which brings) most brilliant fame" (3, 59, 6). The poets have no objection whatever frankly to admit that they expect their praise to be rewarded: "That king with his impetuosity and heroism overcomes all hostilities, who . . . honours and praises Bṛhaspati" (4, 50, 7)¹¹.

⁸ Cf. also 2, 21, 1; 3, 59, 5; 7, 61, 6.

⁹ Cf. e.g. also 1, 162; 5, 81; 7, 61, 3; 10, 75; the Soma hymns in book IX.

¹⁰ See e.g. also 7, 63, 4.

¹¹ See e.g. also 2, 42; 43; 6, 13, 6; 17, 15; 7, 61, 2; 9, 110, 7. I cannot follow RENOY (and FILLIOZAT), I. C. I., p. 273 in deriving the praise of gods from eulogies upon earthly rulers.

5. Prayers

Often praise ends in prayer¹: "So being lauded, O great ones, Heaven and Earth, bestow on us great fame (and) firm dominion" (1, 160, 5); "O Rudra, being praised be gracious to the eulogist; let thy missiles lay low another than us" (2, 33, 10). Or the object in view is formulated right at the beginning: "(Because I am) desirous of generative or creative power (*vāja*) I emit this piece of eloquence" (2, 35, 1); "Praise Parjanya. Seek to win him with homage. Roaring, the bull of quickening gifts places seed in the plants as a germ" (5, 83, 1)². These addresses, invocations and requests to listen are of course largely conditioned by the tendency to viewing the gods as persons: "So, O brown one, bull, be listening here, O Rudra, to our invocation, inasmuch as thou art not angry . . ." (2, 33, 15). So are questions without answer: "Will he perchance take note of it?" (2, 35, 2).

Many hymns can indeed be said to consist for the greater part of praise alternating with prayers and references to the god's deeds³. Sometimes the poet is quite explicit on his intentions: "I will now proclaim the heroic deeds of Viṣṇu . . ." (1, 154, 1)⁴ and forms of verbs of praising are frequently inserted in order to show that he is in earnest, to remind the audience of the character of the text⁵, to stimulate them into joining in, but, mainly, because 'praising,' taking the place of sacrifice, means confirming and strengthening the god's power⁶. Some *sūktas* are traditionally⁷ known as 'laudations' (*stuti*). Being addressed, not to the greater deities, but to other potent beings, they likewise purpose their compliance with the performer's wishes or the exigencies of the ritual. In cases such as 2, 38, dedicated to Savitar^{7a}, the poet has succeeded to do justice, in a comparatively limited number of stanzas, to the main features of the god's character and to the influence he exerts upon the doings of men.

Very often the desire to emphasize, by means of epithets and allusions, a god's own nature fuses with the well-known tendency to henotheism which is so characteristic of religious hymns. See 2, 40:

¹ This distinction was made in the *Bṛhaddevatā* 1, 7: "Praise is expressed by means of name, form, action, and relationship, but prayer by means of objects such as heaven, a long life, wealth, and sons." See V. CH. BHATTACHARYA, in OH 2 (1954), p. 337.

² Cf. e.g. also 2, 35, 6; 3, 59, 3; 4; 7, 49, 1; 71, 1.

³ See e.g. 1, 102 (Indra); 154 (Viṣṇu); 155 (Indra-and-Viṣṇu); 160 (Heaven and Earth); 2, 16 (Indra); 21 (Indra); 3, 22 (Agni); 25 (Agni); 5, 84 (Earth); 10, 170 (Sūrya).

⁴ Cf. also 1, 102, 1; 2, 16, 1.

⁵ See e.g. 1, 154, 2; 155, 4; 160, 5; 2, 20, 4; 3, 22, 1; 6, 12, 4; 5.

⁶ Cf. J. GONDA, in *Oriens* 2, p. 195.

⁷ *Sarvānukramanī* (*Bṛhaddevatā*). *RV.* 1, 162 and 163 (praise of the sacrificial horse); 187 (of food); 2, 42 and 43 (of an ominous bird); 4, 27 (of the eagle); 10, 75 (of the rivers); 96 (of Indra's horses); 173 and 174 (of the king).

^{7a} Cf. S. D. ATKINS, at *JAOS* 81, p. 77.

- (1) "O Soma-and-Pūṣan, creators of treasure,
Creators of Heaven, and creators of Earth,
Ye two born herdsmen of the whole world
The gods made the navel of the immortal.
- (2) The gods rejoiced in the birth of these deities.
These two covered the unfortunate dark.
With Soma-and-Pūṣan Indra made cooked food
In the cows who yield the unboiled milk.
- (3) Ye mighty bulls urge on the chariot
That measures the space, has seven wheels,
That rolls to both sides, yoked by mind,
The exclusive car that has five reins.
- (4) The one (Pūṣan) has made his dwellings in heaven,
The other (Soma) on earth, up in midspace.
They should release us abundant wealth,
Granting riches, rich in food . . .
- (5) The one (Soma) has created all the worlds,
The other (Pūṣan) travels, beholding all.
Soma-and-Pūṣan, further my vision.
With you two may we win all battles"⁸.

A considerable part of these hymns or stanzas of praise are like many stanzas of different content more or less traditional and subject to the tendency to formulaic diction. It is here also difficult to decide how great was, in individual cases, the element of personal emotion. That many of them express what has been called 'community-consciousness,' reflecting the general sentiments and attitude of mind of the whole community⁹ of poets and audience may be taken for granted.

According to expectation part of the tribute paid to the gods consist in *captationes benevolentiae*: "The creatures are wise owing to the greatness of him who keeps apart even the vast heaven and earth" (7, 86, 1)¹⁰. Cases are not absent in which this element, intermingled with supplications and introducing a prayer for a privilege, stands out so clearly that one finds some difficulty in distinguishing the eulogy proper¹¹.

Like thank-offerings traces of real expressions of thanks to the gods are scanty.¹²

Some *sūktas*—e. g. 3, 47 and less evidently 1, 160—create the impression of being versified and amplified adaptations of *nivid* formulas. *Nivid* ("proclamation")¹³ is the technical name of eleven prose formularies consisting of a series of short sentences and containing about 65 words each¹⁴. With the exception

⁸ Compare S. KRAMRISCH' translation in JAOS 81, p. 111.

⁹ S. DASGUPTA, in BDCRI 20 (1960), p. 348.

¹⁰ See e. g. also 1, 24, 1 ff.; 2, 38, 10; 5, 4, 10.

¹¹ E. g. 6, 67; RENOUE, E. V. P. VII, p. 51; for 3, 1, 1 see GELDNER, V. S. I, p. 157.

¹² See e. g. 1, 100, 16 f.

¹³ The term occurs in the Ṛgveda (e. g. 1, 96, 2; 175, 6; 4, 18, 7).

¹⁴ Edited by SCHEFFTELOWITZ, Apokryphen, p. 136. See the same, at ZDMG 73 (1919), p. 30; S. NIYOGI, A critical study of the *nivids*, Calcutta 1961, RENOUE, E. V. P. IV, p. 11; 18.

of the last they begin with the name of a deity (Indra and the Maruts, Indra, Savitar etc.) followed by an invitation to partake of the *soma*, by epithets, laudatory names and short invocations or references to the god's main deeds and, except for the last, end with a prayer for help. In performing divine service they were—in order to enhance the effect of the recitation—inserted in definite places of the *sūktas* recited in praise of the gods (*śastra*), to be precise, in the morning before the *sūkta*, in the afternoon in the middle and in the evening at the end¹⁵. This oldest Indian prose¹⁶, contemporaneous with the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā and no doubt older than many a *sūkta*, was regarded as 'the embryo of the litanies' and as constituting, in each of their sentences, counterparts of Ṛgvedic stanzas¹⁷. In view of these connections it is not surprising that already at an early date the hymn ṚV. 3, 47, addressed to Indra-with-the Maruts¹⁸, was associated with the *nivid* dedicated to these deities. The Viśve Devās *nivid* may be said to resume the main phraseological peculiarities of the hymns dedicated to these deities¹⁹.

The ancient authorities qualified some hymns or parts of hymns as self-praise (*ātmastuti*). That is to say, in a case such as 10, 48–50 Indra is not only the deity to whom the texts are addressed, but also their reputed seer or poet, and in 10, 48, 1–49, 10 he is represented as addressing the people of the Pūrus and the gods and as, unrestrained by modesty, singing his own praises²⁰.

Though usually cast in standard shapes the many prayers contained in these hymns often have a conciseness and dignity of their own. Being composed to meet practical needs, the very sense of these needs give them their directness, force and distinction. When properly pronounced, prayers, like blessings and curses, were believed to be practically operative, because man's solemn word exercises potent influence over men, gods and unseen powers.

Although some of the smaller hymns²¹ are in their entirety a chain of petitions, alternations of summons, prayers, expressions of wishes, invitations, laudations and references to divine power and exploits—"Save us; thou art the protector"—are most usual²². Yet the poet of ṚV. 1, 189 does not wind up with two other stanzas before he has strung together six supplicatory strophes. ṚV. 4, 41 (eleven stanzas) is not unjustly known as a request for victory in battle²³—but the prayers proper are introduced by and intermingled with

¹⁵ For particulars see AiB. 3, 10f.

¹⁶ OLDENBERG, Prosa, p. 9.

¹⁷ AiB. 3, 10, 1; 11, 9.

¹⁸ For the ritual application see CALAND and HENRY, L'agniṣṭoma, p. 299.

¹⁹ See also ṚV. 1, 89, 3 (with GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 114; RENOU, E. V. P. IV, p. 18).

²⁰ Cf. Sarvānukramaṇi on ṚV. 10, 47; 151; Bṛhaddevatā 7, 57. For 4, 26, 1–3 see GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 453.

²¹ E.g. 5, 70; 6, 53; 74; 7, 84.

²² See e.g. ṚV. 1, 31; 2, 27; 5, 65; 7, 60; 61; 64; 82; 84; 8, 47.

²³ We do not however know if it ever was recited when Aryan troops were actually marching to battle.

other material—, 5, 31 as a prayer for assistance, 8, 75 as a petition for help and protection²⁴. Or the prayer is, by way of refrain, repeated to conclude every stanza (10, 47). Sometimes, the supplication proper does not appear before the end of the *sūkta*. The poet of 10, 147 prefaces his supplication for the army that goes to war (st. 5, the last) with references to Indra's victory over Vṛtra, his function as the chosen god of raiders and the indispensable reliance placed on him²⁵.

Many precatory passages reflect the fundamental needs of the poets and their patrons and, although they of course bear the colour of their social setting, these needs mostly are of an economic, social and religious nature. The large majority of prayers relate to temporal desires, many of them having well-defined concrete purposes²⁶: "Both (groups), eulogists as well as patrons, we might be under thy protection, O Agni Jātavedas. Exert thyself to (give) us possessions, resplendent wealth which increases, (and) is attended with children and good offspring" (2, 2, 12); "Aryaman, Aditi, worthy of worship . . . , save us from getting into childlessness; our path of life must be rich in children, rich in cattle" (3, 54, 18); ". . . O Agni, give us offspring possessed of vital power . . . May we (live) a hundred winters, rich in vigorous (sons)" (6, 13, 6); "Bring us wealth attended with vigorous (sons), O (Agni) Jātavedas, slay the demons, O resourceful one. Protect us from distress, from the one who intends to injure (us); protect us . . ." (6, 16, 29f.); "Let these two (messengers of Yama, the lord of the deceased) give us back here today auspicious life that we may see the sun" (10, 14, 12). The poet of 5, 64, 5 prays for spiritual illumination²⁷. Prayers of a more general character are however not lacking: "(Agni) Vaiśvānara must favour us that we are protected" (6, 9, 7); "Since we choose thy inspiration (involving thy) benevolence, be gracious to us, protecting three-fold" (6, 15, 9)²⁸. Some of the most frequent petitions tend to recur at the end of hymns, not rarely in stereotyped phrases: "May we be lords of wealth" (4, 50, 6) is not less than five times used in the R̥gveda to occur very often in other works, and the famous final prayer "Do ye protect us evermore with blessings" is repeated in more than seventy hymns.

A prayer may combine with a corresponding statement of divine power or activity: at 5, 63, 6 Parjanya (the god of rain) raises his thunderous voice, O Mitra-Varuṇa let the sky rain! Or it may follow or precede a declaration of homage or worship. "Then to the father to whom belong all the gods, the bull, we would offer worship with sacrifices, obeisance, and oblations. O Bṛhaspati, with good offspring and heroes we would be lords of wealth" (4, 50, 6); "To Yama offer an oblation abounding in ghee . . . ; he must (may) guide us to the

²⁴ GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 76; 80; 130. See also 3, 16.

²⁵ See e.g. also 10, 24, 6; 43, 9.

²⁶ See e.g. 1, 89; 187; 2, 7; 3, 59; 4, 36.

²⁷ See e.g. also 5, 41, 17; 42, 2; 4; 6, 4, 8; 6, 7; 8, 5; 11, 6; 15, 19; 48, 20; 52, 15f.; 56, 5; 7, 96, 6; 8, 3, 2; 5, 9; 9, 60, 4; 61, 30.

²⁸ See e.g. also 3, 31, 18; 5, 65, 5f.; 7, 82, 1; 8, 16, 12; 18, 3.

gods, that we may live a long life" (10, 14, 14). The deceased ancestors are implored to help their descendants: "Ye Fathers . . . (come) hither with aid; these offsprings we have made for you, enjoy them . . . ; then bestow on us welfare and happiness free from hurt" (10, 15, 4)²⁹; "Being praised, fulfil our desire" (7, 62, 3).

Not infrequently the gods are indirectly implored to answer man's prayers: 6, 68, 6 the wealth which Indra and Varuṇa bring to others may fall to our share. Or a general prayer is immediately followed by the expression of a particular wish: 7, 82, 1 "Protect us; we wish to gain the victory." The poets may, moreover, clothe their thoughts in varied language and avail themselves of different phrases and grammatical means expressing many delicate distinctions and gradations in their modes of address: imperatives of the second or the third person, optatives and other verbal forms expressing a wish or possibility, expressions of the wish to be under the god's protection, requests put into the form of a reference to his beneficent activity, statements of the success of those men who have won his favour³⁰. Mythical and actual reality being closely interwoven, and the divine and the human spheres interpenetrating, the poets often stand on a familiar footing with the gods and are not afraid to tell them that, if they were gods, they would shower gifts and blessings on their worshippers³¹. On the other hand, there is also the lamentation of Vasiṣṭha bemoaning himself because his friendship with Varuṇa has come to an end (7, 88). A personal touch is not foreign to other Varuṇa hymns either³²: there are lamentations of patients and a complaint about calumny.

Prayers may alternate with deprecations³³, and in some cases the latter come decidedly to the fore—"ward off the enmities; have mercy; far must be (your) fetters, far suffering!" (2, 29)—and a deprecation may be followed by a veiled curse (6, 48, 17)³⁴. Sometimes however avowed hatred compels a poet to lay an enemy under a malediction³⁵. The curse contained in 3, 53, 21-24 is an undisguised attack against an anonymous enemy³⁶. It is often impossible for us to draw any clear distinction between prayers and entreaties on the one hand and spells or imprecations on the other³⁷: 2, 23, 9 "Through thee we would receive enviable goods; crush the malign misers." In 7, 61, 4 they follow each other complementally: "The moons shall pass without sons for those who

²⁹ See e.g. also 5, 55, 10; 7, 84, 5; 97, 9; 8, 11, 10.

³⁰ Cf. e.g. 1, 189; 3, 30, 18ff.; 55, 2; 4, 4, 9; 41, 2; 5, 42, 2; 4, 65, 3; 6, 54; 68, 6ff.; 7, 62.

³¹ *RV.* 1, 38, 4ff.; 7, 32, 18f.; 8, 14, 1f.; 19, 25f.; 44, 23. See also P. S. SASTRI, in *QJMS* 40, p. 44.

³² Cf. H. LOMMEL, in *Festschrift Schubring*, p. 26 (1, 25; 10, 34); RENOU, E. V. P. XVI, p. 114 (7, 104).

³³ See e.g. 1, 18, 1ff.; 1, 43, 8; 2, 28, 5; 7; 5, 85, 7f.; 7, 86, 2ff.; 87, 7.

³⁴ Cf. also 9, 79, 1.

³⁵ See 6, 52, 1ff.; 7, 94, 12.

³⁶ See GELDNER, *RV.* I, p. 395; II, p. 273.

³⁷ For these see e.g. 1, 147, 4, for a veiled imprecation: 4, 2, 9.

do not worship; he who bends his mind to worship will save the circle of his family." Every stanza of the eulogies upon Agni, Indra and Varuṇa 8, 39-41 ends with the refrain: "The others, whoever they be, must burst!"³⁸

³⁸ Cf. also RENOU, E. V. P. II, p. 43.

6. *Myths*

From the above-mentioned forms of praise commemoration of mythical feats is not essentially different because the essence of myth also lies in its being repeatedly spoken anew: "Thou (Indra) slewest the serpent showing his power as he lay around the flood" (3, 32, 11)¹. The living myth is the parallel of celebration; it is itself verbal celebration, closely related to the ritual, which it certifies: "As with Manu drink, O Indra, enjoying the pressed oblation. Thou causeth the waters to flow" (3, 32, 5)².

A myth refers to the past when a sacred action was first executed. It is no pseudo-historical tale, not necessarily a subject for contemplation but the reiterated presentation of some event replete with power³. It is for those who believe in it a true story and, beyond that, sacred, significant and exemplary. Told in satisfaction of religious, moral, social wants or even practical requirements it is a narrative resurrection of a primeval reality, also if it explains the course of natural phenomena and leads the believers to abide the issue of these with confidence⁴. The rivers flow today because Indra, in the mythical past, made them their bed (6, 30, 3). A mythical event is re-iterated in history: "(Indra) struck Vṛtra"—the power of obstruction which would prevent him from establishing the cosmos—"fatally; the powerful one has conquered in (the) battles" (10, 104, 10); "I entreat Indra, the much invoked one, that he slay Vṛtra, that he secure *vāja* in the battles" (3, 37, 5). The mythical and historical actions run parallel, are identical: "Born for strength and dominion he drove away the enemies and made ample room for the gods" (10, 180, 3)⁵; "When thou throwest down (timeless present) the trees on the head of Śuśṇa (a mythical antagonist) . . . , when thou wilt do that today, who will interfere?" (1, 54, 5). Recollection of a myth enables man to repeat what the gods, heroes or ancestors did 'in the beginning.' The central mythical feature of the R̥gvedic Viṣṇu consists in the three strides he takes traversing the universe, and the time-honoured Indian view of this god as representing spatial extensiveness—and especially that pervasiveness which is essential to the establishment and maintenance of our cosmos and beneficial to the interests of gods and men—seems, in the main, a successful interpretation of this mythical imagery⁶. But all beings are said to dwell (present tense) in these three strides, and the steps themselves are full of honey and bliss and it is the poet's hope to reach (in the future) the god's highest domain, where those who seek the presence of the gods rejoice⁷.

¹ See also 1, 62, 4ff.; 103, 2; 3, 31, 8; 4, 50, 5; 5, 11, 6; 7, 63, 2; 71, 5 etc.

² See also 3, 47, 4; 5, 31, 3ff.; 32, 1ff.

³ See K. TH. PREUSS, *Der religiöse Gehalt der Mythen*, Tübingen 1933, p. 7; VAN DER LEEUW, o. c., p. 413.

⁴ See 5, 40, 5ff. (sun eclipse).

⁵ J. GONDA, *Loka*, Amsterdam Acad. 1966, p. 21.

⁶ J. GONDA, *Viṣṇuism and Śivaism*, London 1970, p. 5.

⁷ R̥V. 1, 154, 2; 4; 5; cf. 1, 22, 20.

Fulfilling an indispensable function these living myths express and, in their way, formulate belief. The *soma* draught offered to Indra is believed to be identical with the mythical beverage which fortified him, when he was to slay Vṛtra and combat Śambara; it will enable him to defeat the present enemies (3, 47)⁸. The *soma* prepared for ritual use is taken on earth while its birth is, according to the myth, in heaven (9, 61, 10). The one who re-enacts a myth, or has it re-enacted, reproduces its reality for his own benefit. In a prayer on behalf of the poet's patron the latter can simply be identified with a mythical figure, Kutsa, who was Indra's associate: "Strike once more for the benefit of Kutsa!" (8, 24, 25). Or an allusion to a mythical event is followed by a prayer, addressed to a god, for a repetition, on behalf of those speaking, of his glorious deed (1, 104)⁹. Recurrent events are seen as belonging to cycles, the nature of which was clarified by means of myths or mythical examples. The sacrifice of Manu, the institutor of sacrificial rites, is the prototype of the present sacrifice¹⁰. However, the belief in the gods and in the effectiveness of texts and rites does not prevent a poet from expressing some doubt: is Indra still able to perform his feats?¹¹

Myths can also vouch for the efficiency of ritual and the legitimacy of the customs and institutions of men. The Sūryāsūkta, ṚV. 10, 85, describes, in the form of a loosely knit account of a variety of incidents, the wedding of Sūryā and Soma, the prototype of any marriage on earth—in st. 20 the mythical Sūryā is addressed, but any human bride can be meant—adding, in its second part, a number of pertinent formulas which recur in the ritual manuals to be used at the marriage of ordinary mortals¹². The supposition that these formulas to be recited at the various stages of the ceremony were part of the text from the very beginning¹³ has much to recommend it. Or rather, the introductory story may serve to found the collection of *mantras* on mythical fact.

The myths were no doubt also to enlighten Vedic man on matters which could not be made intelligible to him by analysis or abstract reasoning. They serve in a way to explain cosmogonic, cosmological and meteorological problems or traditional convictions and their principal figures have special rounds of duty in connexion with various events in human life, for instance the cycle of procreation, birth, growth and decay: Pūṣan, the god who knows the ways and is born on the far path of heaven and of earth, is invoked to conduct the dead (10, 17, 4ff.). The most important and remarkably predominant myth of Indra and Vṛtra—the chief adversary of the great god, who is said to have

⁸ See also 3, 51, 8.

⁹ For which see GELDNER, in ZDMG 71, p. 310.

¹⁰ See 6, 68, 1; 10, 61, 15.

¹¹ Cf. 3, 30, 3; 4, 30, 7; 6, 18, 3.

¹² See J. EHNI, in ZDMG 33 (1879), p. 166 (whose explanation of the 'symbolism' of this text is completely antiquated); PISCHEL, V. S. I, p. 14; H. OLDENBERG, in GGA 1880, p. 7.

¹³ WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 107.

been born for the very destruction of this snake¹⁴ who obstructs the waters and opposes the establishment of an inhabitable world¹⁵—is, as we know now¹⁶, no commemoration of a victory over drought, but a mythical account and explanation of how Indra established a well-ordered world by separating heaven and earth¹⁷ and opening up the space between these, so that the sun could rise and the light and rain of the heavens could reach and fertilize the earth¹⁸. The purport of a myth may be explicitly mentioned in the form of a sort of ‘moral.’ In RV. 10, 109 Soma who had apparently abducted Bṛhaspati’s wife gives her back¹⁹. According to Śāyana—whose explanation may to a certain extent be harmonized with the *sūkta*—she was however deserted by her husband because of some ‘sin’ or defect; this was expiated by the gods who restored her to Bṛhaspati. Says the poet in st. 6 “The gods gave her back and so (should) men do.”

Being representatives of the superhuman world gods are portrayed as ideal figures, which are above deceit and ‘mortality,’ need no sleep, are never careless and do not end their day’s work²⁰. They stand on firm ground, have fixed rules, are lords, are possessed of the sun-eye and extend their protection to their worshippers²¹. A god shows his power and fulfils his mission already as a baby. As soon as born, Indra drinks the soma, seizes his bow, surpasses the other gods and reduces heaven and earth to a state of panic; as soon as born Agni is an adult so as to go at once the great way of his message²².

Awful admiration for the cosmic miracles is one of the distinctive qualities of this poetry: Viṣṇu alone supports heaven and earth and all beings²³. Not a few descriptions of the gods’ incomprehensible power (*māyā*) were well suited for arousing a *sensus numinis* and making the audience conscious of the presence of divine will-power. “Over the trees Varuṇa has spread the atmosphere, in the race-horses he has placed vigour, in the cows milk, in our hearts inventiveness, . . . in the sky the sun” (5, 85, 2)²⁴. Gods are capable of doing what is beyond the reach of men: Dawn finds good paths even in the mountains and crosses windless waters (6, 64, 4). Their origin, birth and adventures are

¹⁴ See e.g. 8, 78, 5; 10, 55.

¹⁵ See e.g. MACDONELL, V. M., p. 58; 152; 158.

¹⁶ W. NORMAN BROWN, in JAOS 62, p. 85; GONDA, R. I. I, p. 55.

¹⁷ See GELDNER, RV. I, p. 379 on RV. 3, 38, 3.

¹⁸ See 1, 32, 1ff.; 51, 4; 52, 2; 6; 8; 56, 6; 57, 6; 85, 9; 165, 8; 2, 12, 2f.; 14, 2; 15, 2; 17, 5; 3, 32, 6; 7, 23, 3 etc. Cf. B. H. KAPADIA, in JOIB 21 (1972), p. 283.

¹⁹ GELDNER, Auswahl, II, p. 199; P. S. SASTRI, in IHQ 33, p. 177; S. S. BHAWA, in Festschrift W. Kirfel, p. 17.

²⁰ RV. 3, 56, 8; 10, 65, 15; 66, 13; 2, 27, 9; 8, 2, 18; 4, 13, 3.

²¹ RV. 4, 13, 3; 3, 56, 1; 10, 66, 9; 1, 89, 7; 7, 66, 10; 1, 90, 3.

²² RV. 3, 48, 1; 8, 45, 4; 1, 63, 1; 10, 115, 1.

²³ RV. 1, 154, 4; see e.g. also 2, 15, 2; 17, 5; 8, 14, 9; 10, 89, 4 (Indra); 3, 5, 10; 6, 7, 7 (Agni).

²⁴ R. OTTO, Varuṇa-Hymnen des Rig-Veda, Bonn 1948, p. 9. For similar stanzas in connection with Varuṇa: 6, 70, 1; 7, 86, 1; 8, 41, 10. Sometimes the prodigies of nature are simply stated as such: 5, 47, 5.

unusual²⁵, they possess miraculous weapons²⁶ and travel through the atmosphere in marvellous vehicles²⁷. They are physically powerful and able to bring about prodigies²⁸. Feats of unusual dexterity are so much characteristic of divinity that the R̥bhus, who originally had no divine nature, became gods by their wonderful manual skill²⁹. Well-known motifs do not fail to occur: when Indra was born, heaven and earth trembled, the mountains shook, the plains sank down³⁰.

The intimate relations between mythical reality and the present situation of the poet and his patron in which this reality is, or may be, re-enacted and in which these persons are seized by the exalting power of the events recollected, explains the sudden transitions, within some hymns, from the myth to those events which were the immediate cause of the composition of the poem. Thus, after praising Indra and commemorating the god's victory over Namuci—the characteristic feature of this conflict, viz. Indra twirling off the head of his antagonist, is not omitted—the poet passes on to the clan of the R̥sāmas who, after offering to Indra, had with his help recovered their cows³¹. Occasionally, transitions—and even practically imperceptible transitions—from the mythical past to actuality add substantially to the obscurity of a *sūkta*³².

A shift to another verbal form, the aorist, allows the poet to present a mythical event as actual past or actuality³³. Or he may use the present tense: "The well-matched counterpart of all that exists, standing in front of all, he (Indra) knows all generations: he slays Śuśṇā" (3, 31, 8)—a demon whose conflict with the great god is elsewhere³⁴ fought out in the mythical past³⁵. The scene of a myth is, indeed, often laid in the present or a god is requested to do now what he is known to do in the myth: "O Agni, manifest yourself to Mātariśvan" (1, 31, 3)³⁶. Or words put into the mouth of a mythical figure are at the same time significant for the present circumstances (4, 16, 8).

Hence also the addition of a request addressed to a god to perform his mythical deed once again immediately after mention has been made of it³⁷. Or the

²⁵ See e.g. 1, 37, 9; 5, 53, 1; 6, 66, 4; 7, 58, 2 (Maruts); 1, 181, 4; 5, 73, 4 (Aśvins).

²⁶ See e.g. R̥V. 5, 86, 3.

²⁷ See e.g. 1, 118, 1ff.

²⁸ See e.g. R̥V. 1, 121, 2; 4, 19, 4ff.

²⁹ MACDONELL, V. M., p. 132; e.g. R̥V. 4, 33, 5f.; 8, 36, 1f.

³⁰ R̥V. 1, 61, 14; 63, 1; 4, 17, 2; 22, 4.

³¹ Cf. GELDNER, R̥V. II, p. 28 on st. 10. See also 1, 7, 7; 4, 1, 18ff. and 3, 1, 15ff.

³² See e.g. 1, 121. Divine and human reality may in a way coincide so that the poet feels justified in omitting grammatical indications of the changing subjects (see e.g. 1, 72).

³³ See 2, 11, 7.

³⁴ R̥V. 1, 51, 11; 8, 1, 28; 96, 17; cf. 1, 130, 9. See also GELDNER, in ZDMG 71, p. 332 (on 10, 22).

³⁵ Cf. e.g. 1, 117, 3.

³⁶ Cf. 1, 143, 2, and see MACDONELL, V. M., p. 71.

³⁷ See 8, 1, 28.

occurrence of quotations in direct speech in mythical passages³⁸ contributes to the actuality of the events narrated or emphasizes those elements of the myth which are of immediate practical interest, because they are well-formulated prayers (10, 22, 7ff.). Or the poet goes so far as to identify his own words with the laudation or prayer pronounced by his mythical predecessors³⁹; it is self-evident that these words help him, for instance, to overcome distress and difficulties.

It seems convenient to distinguish, in principle, between myths proper and stories about gods, or mythical narratives, that is tales or stories in which marvellous events are enacted and gods and (or) other superhuman beings are the leading figures⁴⁰. As a heroic figure Indra became, for instance, embroiled in hostilities with various uncanny beings, among whom the demoniac Namuci whose head the god twisted off with the foam of water (8, 14, 13), a motif which was elaborated in the *brāhmaṇas*⁴¹. Many places in the Ṛgveda contain allusions to deeds or adventures of gods which are otherwise unknown or only imperfectly known: at 6, 44, 23 Indra is said to have found the divine draught among Trita and his brothers in heaven's bright firmament⁴². At 7, 1, 7 Agni is related to have burnt one Jarūtha who may have been a demon, although others—in view of 7, 9, 6 mentioning Vasīṣṭha—preferred to regard him as a human enemy⁴³. Some of these fragmentary tales have long since given rise to various explanations or been a matter of dispute⁴⁴, for instance that of Indra, Drapsa and Kṛṣṇa in 8, 96, 13–15: the god seems to have helped the former in combatting the latter demon.

These myths and mythical tales are as a rule narrated in an incomplete and fragmentary way⁴⁵ and often only alluded to⁴⁶, the events of these episodes being, in a particular context, incompletely given⁴⁷. A hymn such as 1, 32, which makes us acquainted with the main incidents of Indra's combat with Vṛtra described, as usual, in heroic⁴⁸ proportions, is exceptional. In most cases

³⁸ See e.g. 1, 61, 12; 121, 10; 12.

³⁹ Cf. 5, 45, 3; 6, 11. For this poem see GELDNER, *ṚV.*, II, p. 50; LÜDERS, *Varuṇa*, p. 325.

⁴⁰ E.g. 10, 17, 1–2 (see below).

⁴¹ M. BLOOMFIELD, in *JAOS* 15, p. 143.

⁴² See e.g. also 1, 121, 8; 8, 77, 5f. Part of these obscure allusions are, indeed, rather to sagas, e.g. 1, 33; 6, 26, 6; 8, 45, 26; 72, 6.

⁴³ Cf. *Brhaddevatā* 6, 109ff.; *Sāyaṇa* on *ṚV.* 8, 96, 13; Geldner, *ṚV.* II, p. 422.

⁴⁴ See e.g. GELDNER, *ṚV.* I, p. 190 (on 1, 135, 8).

⁴⁵ Cf. e.g. 4, 21, 6ff.; 5, 29, 4; 6, 20, 4f.

⁴⁶ Cf. e.g. 1, 6, 5; 32, 14; 51, 1; 4, 21, 6; 26, 1; 30, 20; 6, 30, 5; 7, 97, 4; 8, 2, 39; 40, 5; 10, 32, 6.

⁴⁷ Instances are the stories of Agni's flight and of Namuci (BLOOMFIELD, l.c.; H. OLDENBERG, at *NG* 1893, p. 342 (=K. S. p. 635) who is right in pointing out that for the poets themselves not all mythical themes may have been equally important). See, in general, K. F. GELDNER, in *Festgabe Jacobi*, p. 242.

⁴⁸ One should, however, not (with R. N. DANDEKAR, in *ABORI* 31, p. 1) regard Indra as a deified human hero.

the poets limit themselves to one or a few typical or characteristic details or to a decisive event. As far as the missing elements do not remain unknown they have to be found in other hymns and the ancillary literature⁴⁹ and in some cases to a certain extent—and cautiously—in other Vedic texts. Readers of the R̥gveda must try with the help of indices and cross references to form a notion of the facts and events the poets are speaking of, and in this they will not always be successful. The poets are moreover not averse from sudden changes or combinations of mythical themes⁵⁰ and the possibility that a taboo may have compelled them to omit certain inauspicious names, events or aspects of a god should not be precluded⁵¹.

Thus the R̥gveda, though abounding in mythical themes, does not furnish us with complete expositions of these themes—for even the above 1, 32 is a torso—to say nothing of systematic mythology. This does not however mean that there is in these myths nothing like a trace of harmony and that they, as a whole, constitute a confused mass of inconsistent beliefs⁵². A good deal of the almost innumerable detached allusions and incidents is remarkably consistent, even when they occur in different collections of hymns. This may point to the existence of a comparatively homogeneous oral tradition, that comprised also parallel or 'duplicate' myths the main events of which follow a similar pattern: between Indra's conquest of Vṛtra and his overthrow of Vala there is, for instance, much similarity⁵³. It would therefore seem a likely supposition that the myths as we possess them in the R̥gveda represent an advanced stage stamped, in a long process of selection and amplification, by the successive generations of poets as more or less representative of their view of life and the world; that within a large range of variability their oral substrata constituted, in their main features, a fairly consistent, though diversified, whole⁵⁴.

Some themes must have been very popular for a long time, because they are also handed down in much later versions. The at first sight not completely clear two initial stanzas of R̥V. 10, 17⁵⁵ referring to the wedding of Tvaṣṭar's daughter, the disappearance of Vivasvat's wife, the creation of a woman of the same appearance, and to a woman becoming pregnant with the Aśvins is a condensed form of a longer story: Saranyū, Tvaṣṭar's daughter, barely married to Vivas-

⁴⁹ See, e.g., for Indra and Dadhyañc GELDNER, R̥V. I, p. 108 (on 1, 84, 13–15). Needless to say that in individual cases allusions are obscure, ambiguous or questionable; see e.g. on R̥V. 6, 49, 8 PISCHEL, V. S. I, p. 11; GELDNER, R̥V. II, p. 150; RENOU, E. V. P. V, p. 32.

⁵⁰ Cf. 2, 11, 7f.; 84, 15; 24, 6f.; 4, 1, 13ff.; 2; 5, 31, 3f. and st. 8–11; 9, 108, 6; 10, 46, 3 as well as cases such as 1, 73, 6.

⁵¹ S. LÉVI, *La doctrine du sacrifice dans les brāhmaṇas*, Paris 1898, p. 167.

⁵² As was the opinion of A. C. BURNELL, in IA 13, p. 19.

⁵³ GONDA, R. I. I, p. 57; LÜDERS, *Varuṇa*, p. 537; A. VENKATASUBBIAH, in ZDMG 115 (1965), p. 120.

⁵⁴ For the poets see also S. KRAMRISCH, in JAOS 81 (1961), p. 104.

⁵⁵ See BLOOMFIELD, in JAOS 15, p. 172; H. LOMMEL, in ZDMG 99, p. 243, and compare *Harivaṃśa* 1, 9, 1ff.; *ViPur.* 3, 2, 2ff.

vat, is displeased with him and deserts him, giving birth to the twins Yama⁵⁶ and Yamī. The gods, siding with her, construct her counterpart to take Saranyū's place in Vivasvat's affections. With her he begets Manu, but after detecting the deception practised upon him he follows Saranyū and begets with her the Aśvins.

The closely connected hymns 4, 26 and 27 furnish an example of a R̥gvedic myth that is distinctly different from the presentation of the same theme, viz. the rape of Soma, in later works⁵⁷. About the interpretation scholars differ in opinion: according to one view the *sūktas* emphasize the falcon's mission to fetch, by order of Indra, the *soma* from the heavens and meanwhile to afford Indra—who is the god of 4, 26—an opportunity to fly so that men have, up to the present day, to offer the *soma*, his due, to this god⁵⁸. On the in itself not improbable assumption of the existence of an ancient Soma ritual a more recent explanation rightly regards the *soma* as both juice and person: hence the double imprisonment, in the stems and in the womb and the twofold liberation, viz. when it is pressed out and when it is taken from the celestial stronghold, where it was imprisoned by the enemies of the Aryans. The one who initiates the liberation through the falcon is Manu, the first man, who establishes the Soma sacrifice and so founds a bond between the Aryans and Indra, the drinker of *soma*⁵⁹.

It is all but impossible to arrive at satisfactory conclusions in regard to the question as to how far popular and priestly versions of the same theme existed beside each other and, if they did, to what extent they have influenced one another. The possibility of penetration of originally non-Aryan themes and motifs is, in principle, not to be rejected, but in concrete cases difficult of demonstration⁶⁰. Prehistoric transformations of mythical themes lie beyond our scope⁶¹. Nor can we enter into a discussion of the possibility of historical elements in the R̥gvedic myths⁶². Suffice it to say that attempts⁶³ at seeing some reflexions of the historical events in the stories related in connexion with

⁵⁶ For Yama and Vivasvat see also 10, 14, 1; 21, 5; 58, 1 etc.

⁵⁷ For the Vedic places see BLOOMFIELD, at Festgruss v. Roth, p. 149. Cf. the *Suparnādhya*; Mbh. 1, a. 28.

⁵⁸ E. SIEG, in Festgabe Jacobi, p. 228.

⁵⁹ U. SCHNEIDER, *Der Somaraub des Manu*, Wiesbaden 1971. For various details and the historical background see GONDA, *Dual deities*, p. 363.

⁶⁰ For Indra and the boar in 1, 61, 7 see F. B. J. KUIPER, *An Austro-asiatic myth in the Rigveda*, Amsterdam Acad. 1950 (basing himself mainly on linguistic arguments). For Rudra as an aryanized Dravidian god (or less hazardously, a god showing non-aryan influences): R. N. DANDEKAR, in JUPHS 1, p. 94.

⁶¹ See e.g. S. WIKANDER, *Vayu*, Uppsala 1941.

⁶² The absence of lines of demarcation between myth and reality should not lead us to follow B. R. SHARMA, *R̥gvedic rivers*, in *The Ind. Hist. Res. Inst. Silver Jub. Comm. Vol.*, Bombay 1953, p. 377, in holding the Vedic rivers to be mythic streams and the Veda to be devoid of any historical content whatever.

⁶³ V. G. RAHURKAR, in PO 22 (1957), p. 40.

the disputed figure of Agastya⁶⁴—whose greatest feat was the reconciliation of Indra and the Maruts, dealt with in three hymns⁶⁵—are far from convincing.

The Indo-European origin of Vedic myths has, since the days of A. Kuhn and M. Müller—in the last decades especially in numerous publications by G. Dumézil—often been argued and doubted. No attempt can be made here even to survey the main results of the debate. The Greek myth of fire, celestial in origin but brought to earth by a human being⁶⁶—Prometheus stole it when Zeus had hidden it from man—has given rise, not only to a discussion of Indo-European origins, but also to a comparison between a Greek and an Indian expression of a similar mythological theme⁶⁷. It is however highly uncertain and not capable of textual proof⁶⁸ whether the complex and enigmatic Vedic *Mātariśvan* may be considered Prometheus' Indian counterpart. Inconsiderate allegations and hazardous conclusions are in this field no rarities⁶⁹. The question as to how far the Vedic portraits of those gods who were already recognized or worshipped in prehistoric times were retouched by the ancient Indian poets⁷⁰ should be the concern, not only of those interested in the history of religion but also of students of Indian literature. So, too, should be the problem of the influence or 'survival' of a (tripartite) organization of the Indo-European society on the structure of the Vedic myths and some of the forms in which they were fixed in verbal expression, an influence fervently vindicated by Dumézil⁷¹, unconditionally rejected by some⁷², critically judged by others. Are places such as R̥V. 9, 2, 10 describing Soma as winning cows, men, horses and generative power (*vāja*) really conclusive evidence, the last element combining the

⁶⁴ See MACDONELL and KEITH, V. I. I, p. 6.

⁶⁵ R̥V. 1, 165; 170; 171; the story is also often mentioned in the brāhmaṇas (e.g. TB. 2, 7, 11, 1; PB. 21, 14, 5).

⁶⁶ A. KUHN, *Die Herabkunft des Feuers und des Göttertrankes*, Gütersloh 1859 (21886).

⁶⁷ A. K. COOMARASWAMY, in *Comm. Vol. G. Sarton*, N. York 1947, p. 465; LÜDERS, *Varuṇa*, p. 521 mentions a Finnish parallel of the Vala myth.

⁶⁸ F. B. J. KUIPER, in *AsSt* 25 (1971), p. 85. Cf. R̥V. 1, 93, 6; 3, 5, 10; 3, 9, 5.

⁶⁹ We should, for instance, be highly sceptical about E. V. ARNOLD's (in *KZ* 37, p. 215) assumption of an Indo-European myth concerning birth without a mother on the strength of the birth of Pallas etc. in Greece, and of Vasiṣṭha in Vedic India.

⁷⁰ For the *Aśvins* see GONDA, *Dual deities*, p. 42, for *Varuṇa*, *ibidem*, p. 145; for *Indra* and *Varuṇa* (4, 42), *ibidem*, p. 229 and NORMAN BROWN, at *C. Kunhan Raja Comm. Vol.*, Madras 1946, p. 38; for *Mitra*, *Varuṇa* etc., *inter alia*, G. DUMÉZIL, *Ouranos-Varuṇa*, Paris 1934; *Mitra-Varuṇa*, Paris 1940 (21948); *Le troisième souverain*, Paris 1949; P. THIEME, *Mitra and Aryaman*, New Haven 1957; GONDA, *Mitra*; for *Sarasvatī* H. WILLMAN-GRABOWSKA, in *RO* 17, p. 250.

⁷¹ E.g. in G. DUMÉZIL, *L'idéologie tripartite des Indo-Européens*, Brussels 1958. DUMÉZIL takes no account of the very frequent occurrences of cosmic and ritual triads.

⁷² See e.g. J. BROUGH, in *BSOAS* 22, p. 69; M. BOYCE, in *BSOAS* 32 (1969), p. 11.

three others which represent Dumézil's 'trois fonctions,' that are, in his opinion, so characteristic of the three classes of society⁷³?

On the other hand, that Vedic mythology was merely a product of poetic phantasy and had come into existence as soon as the poets themselves (and their audiences) took their words seriously⁷⁴ is an untenable thesis, however much they may have been responsible for imagery, variants and amplifications⁷⁵.

⁷³ RENOUE, E. V. P. VIII, p. 50; see also p. 51 on 9, 4, 1-3 (?); p. 56 on 9, 8, 8 (?); p. 94 on 9, 63, 1; IX, p. 94 on 9, 85, 8; p. 110 on 9, 98, 1 (?); p. 121 on 1, 91, 20; X, p. 66 on 1, 64, 13; XII, p. 109 on 2, 1, 2f. (?) etc. Elsewhere he queries himself (E. V. P. VIII, p. 51 on 9, 3, 5; IX, p. 107 on 9, 97, 17). The classes of society represent 'religion,' 'warfare,' production. The present author deals with this problem at greater length in *Triads in the Veda*, Amsterdam Acad. (forthcoming).

⁷⁴ P. THIEME, in *Festgabe Lommel*, p. 142.

⁷⁵ For the ritual use and purpose of the mythical texts see chapter II, p. 83 ff.

7. *Legends*

Legends, in the Ṛgveda often hardly distinguishable from mythical tales, are likewise as a rule referred to vaguely or indirectly or recounted in some essential details but never narrated minutely and systematically. Casual references to the same legend are far from rare. In many cases there is much truth in the supposition that this fragmentary presentation did not interfere with comprehensibility because the audience was not uninformed of the outlines of the main legends. Besides, is complete knowledge of a story indispensable when the listeners seek edification and a renewed confirmation of divine power? Already in this early period a legend, being more typical and exemplary in content, was more appreciated than an historical account. Nor is there any dispute over the possibility that in many cases legendary matter has been rehandled and adapted to the view of life of those who transmitted it and to the ritual and literary purposes of the poets.

We shall not enter here into a discussion of problems concerning the historicity or identity of the legendary characters, for instance the question as to whether there have been one, two, three or four persons bearing the name of Atithigva¹. Apart from the possibility of namesakes, we must take into account the existence of family names²—the custom of calling the descendants after their common ancestor—and the propensity to identify a distinguished descendant with the founder of the family, to regard the former as a sort of representation of the latter. Too often we have no information on the facts underlying the references to legendary persons—if there have been any—which would enable us to distinguish between, for instance, inaccuracy or licence on the part of the poet on one hand and differences in tradition on the other³. Nor shall we discuss the mostly abortive attempts at naturalistic explanations of legendary personages⁴, or the suppositions ventured with regard to the Aryan or non-Aryan descent of some of these⁵.

Legends may constitute the main theme of a *sūkta*, or what is more common, be an incident amid praise and prayer. Or beside a short reference in one part of the Ṛgveda a longer treatment of the same legend may be found in another hymn: the story of Ghoṣā, the spinster, to whom the Aśvins gave a husband

¹ See e.g. GRASSMANN, W. RV., 29; BERGAIGNE, R. V. II, p. 342; MACDONELL and KEITH, V. I. I, p. 15; H. D. VELANKAR, in ABORI 23, p. 657 (unconvincing), and N. G. CHAPEKAR on Sudās, in OT 3, p. 8.

² J. BROUGH, The early brahmanical system of gotra and pravara, Cambridge 1953.

³ Is, for instance, ṚV. 1, 53, 10 irreconcilable with st. 8 as is maintained by Velankar?

⁴ Thus Cyavāna (on him and RV. 10, 61 see S. A. DANGE, at JIH 45, p. 369) has been identified with the sun (N. G. CHAPEKAR, in PO 24, p. 42).

⁵ See e.g. the highly improbable assumptions about Agastya published by M. R. JAMBUNATHAN in 17 AIOC, S. P. p. 8; 18 AIOC, S. P. p. 9; 19 AIOC, S. P. p. 15.

(1, 117, 7), fills the greater part of 10, 40. It is however a usual practice of the poets to give also in these 'legend hymns' not all the events of a story or even of the episode as conceived by them. R.V. 8, 86 is a prayer of Viṣṇāpu's father for his son's safe return⁶, without any further information worth mentioning.

That the succouring power of the divine physicians, the Aśvins⁷, is illustrated by quite a number of legends is not surprising⁸. No less than seven times⁹ mention is made of old and decrepit Cyavāna to whom they restored youth and strength with the result that he became acceptable to his wife. The story most often referred to¹⁰—and occasionally reported with some particulars—is that of the rescue of Bhujyu who, being abandoned in the midst of the ocean or in the water-cloud, invoked the aid of these twin gods. They took him home in a hundred-oared ship, or with animated ships which traversed the air, or also with an animated winged boat or with chariots assisted now by birds, now by winged horses¹¹. These differences in detail are common to many legends and seeming contradictions occur even in successive stanzas¹². When a prominent ancestor was a leading figure in such a story it could become a 'family' legend: according to a tradition handed down by Sāyaṇa in explanation of a passage in the R̥gveda the Maruts once poured out a spring for the benefit of the ṛṣi Gotama who was tormented by thirst¹³.

Some motifs must have been popular: rejuvenation¹⁴; the old man who through divine help obtains a young wife (Indra and Kaksīvat; Aśvins and Kali)¹⁵; recovery from blindness and lameness, rescue of a foundling (Indra, Soma, Aśvins)¹⁶; services rendered to animals¹⁷, among which the story of the quail saved, by the Aśvins, from the mouth of a wolf¹⁸. Popular stories¹⁹ may be mentioned several times, for instance that of Turvīti whom Indra aided over

⁶ See further on, n. 21.

⁷ See GONDA, *Dual deities*, p. 48 (with a critical discussion of the main pertinent publications); CH. MANNING, *Hymns of the R̥gveda*, Calcutta 1952, p. 17; R. F. G. MÜLLER, in *Asia Major* 6, p. 321; F. S. MICHALSKI, in *RO* 24 (1961), p. 7 (unsatisfactory); on R̥V. 1, 118 etc. TH. BAUNACK, at *ZDMG* 50, p. 263.

⁸ See e.g. 1, 117; 118; 119. For Indra as a helper e.g. 4, 19, 9; 6, 20, 6; 10, 49, 6; cf. 10, 24, 4.

⁹ R̥V. 1, 116, 10; 117, 13; 118, 6; 5, 74, 5; 7, 68, 6; 71, 5; 10, 39, 4.

¹⁰ R̥V. 1, 112, 6; 20; 116, 3ff.; 117, 14; 119, 4; 158, 3; 6, 62, 6; 7, 68, 7; 69, 7; 10, 40, 7; 65, 12; 143, 5.

¹¹ See 1, 116, 3ff.

¹² Compare the story of Rebha, another protégé of the same gods, who saved him from the waters and from imprisonment: R̥V. 1, 112, 5; 116, 24; 117, 4; 118, 6; 119, 6; (181, 1); 10, 39, 9.

¹³ Sāyaṇa, on R̥V. 1, 85, 10; cf. st. 11 and 88, 4.

¹⁴ See also 1, 119, 6f.; 4, 33, 3; 36, 3; 10, 59, 1; 143, 1.

¹⁵ R̥V. 1, 51, 3; 1, 112, 15 and 10, 39, 8.

¹⁶ See e.g. 1, 112, 8; 116, 16; 117, 17ff.; 2, 13, 12; 15, 7; 4, 30, 19; 8, 79, 2; 10, 25, 11.

¹⁷ R̥V. 1, 116, 15; 22; 118, 8; 7, 68, 8; 10, 39, 8.

¹⁸ See 1, 116, 14; 117, 16; 118, 8; 10, 39, 13.

¹⁹ Compare e.g. also 1, 116, 8 with 10, 80, 3.

a flood²⁰, or that of Viṣṇāpu who when lost was restored to his father by the Aśvins²¹.

In some cases we are not sure, whether a person played an important part in a legend or was the principal figure of a saga²². Although it is not always clear who is meant²³ the merchant Dīrghaśravas Auśija, who was able to fly²⁴, may have belonged to the latter category²⁵. While epic compositions are completely lacking in the Ṛgveda, reminiscences of, or rather models for, heroic sagas may perhaps with some reason be found in part of the passages mentioning brave warriors²⁶ or conquering, victorious and sacrificing kings²⁷. Thus there may possibly have existed a more or less coherent story of Kutsa, the hero who is associated with Indra in the exploit of defeating the demon Śuśna²⁸.

Too little is known of the complete legends and sagas to say which characteristics of these genres came into prominence and which remained in the background or were completely wanting. The sphere of the numinous, direct contact with gods and divine or demoniac power, unexpected vicissitudes are common features and miracles or unheard-of events practically indispensable²⁹. Gods, be it the Aśvins or the Maruts³⁰, produce, for the benefit of their favourite, a well where there was none; the founder of the Vasiṣṭha family was, as a son of Mitra-and-Varuṇa, born of Urvaśī, not in the natural way, but out of her mind (7, 33, 11 ff.)³¹. When we take the dialogue between Viśvāmitra and the rivers³² for a saga, we may say that the ṛṣi inducing the waters to subside performed a human miracle³³. The exceptional deeds of the mighty seers and sages of the past are more than once emphasized, also to intimate that their descendant, the poet, is able to repeat them³⁴.

Whereas it is beyond doubt that there is some story (*itihāsa*, traditional account of former events) at the back of a definite hymn, it is not always easy to determine what it has been. Was there nothing wrong with the ṛṣi Śara (1, 116, 22) except his being thirsty mentioned in the text? And why did Daśavraja need the protection of the Aśvins (8, 8, 20)? It is moreover highly probable

²⁰ ṚV. 1, 61, 11; 2, 13, 12; 4, 19, 6, and cf. 9, 68, 8.

²¹ ṚV. 1, 116, 23; 117, 7; 8, 86, 3; 10, 65, 12.

²² For Atri in ṚV. 5, 40 see CH. R. LANMAN, in *Festgruss v. Roth*, p. 187.

²³ MACDONELL and KEITH, V. I. I, p. 130.

²⁴ ṚV. 1, 112, 11; 5, 45, 6; 6, 4, 6.

²⁵ See e.g. also 9, 101, 13.

²⁶ E.g. 9, 1, 10; 3, 4; 10, 69, 5f.; 78, 4; 103, 11.

²⁷ E.g. 3, 53, 11; 4, 50, 7ff.; 10, 34, 12; 75, 4.

²⁸ ṚV. 1, 63, 3; 174, 5; 4, 30, 4; 6, 20, 5; 7, 19, 2.

²⁹ B. A. PARAB, *The miraculous and mysterious in Vedic literature*, Bombay 1952.

³⁰ ṚV. 1, 85, 10f.; 116, 9.

³¹ See GONDA, *Mitra*, p. 4; 121ff.

³² See p. 201.

³³ B. A. PARAB, *Human miracles and hymns of will-power in the Rigveda*, 15 AIOC, S. P. p., 12 (not in all respects convincing). Cf. also 5, 40.

³⁴ See 4, 4, 11.

that the current legends and sagas were not handed down without change or variation. This lack of uniformity may to a certain extent account for incidental variants concerning the names of persons and similar inconsistencies³⁵.

In other cases we are rather under the impression that stories—be it legends or sagas—narrated in ancient, but post-Ṛgvedic, works were based on a *sūkta* of the Ṛgveda³⁶. Then it is not always easy to decide whether, or how far, the authors, presenting variant forms of the stories, drew on an oral tradition or on their own imagination³⁷. It is, for instance, almost impossible that the references, in book V and VIII, to Śyāvāśva who is also the reputed author of 5, 52–61; 81–82; 8, 35–38 and 9, 32 and who is the main human figure in 5, 61, do not reflect some form of legend current in the times of the poet³⁸, but it is on the other hand too hazardous a supposition³⁹ that the obscure references in the Ṛgveda put the identity of this presupposed legend with a story narrated in the *Bṛhaddevatā* beyond doubt. ṚV. 5, 61⁴⁰—a hymn of uncommon style and composition—relates, in st. 1–4, a vision of the poet: he sees some wonderful horsemen without horses whom he does not at once recognize—they remain anonymous, but may, on the strength of st. 13 (“that was the host of the Maruts”), be taken to be the Maruts. The poet, Śyāvāśva, after advising them to go on, speaks highly of a woman, his benefactress, who had introduced him to Purumīḥa and Taranta, his future patrons, who remembered him handsomely. According to the long legend, found in the *Bṛhaddevatā*⁴¹, Śyāvāśva was the son of the domestic priest of Rathavīti Dārbhya, a noble patron (mentioned in the hymn, st. 17ff.). When his father was at one time sacrificing for Rathavīti he saw the latter’s daughter and, in agreement with his son, wanted her to become his daughter-in-law. Rathavīti did not object, but his wife, being herself born in a family of royal seers, would not give her daughter to a man who was not a seer. The father and son met on their way home their former patrons, Taranta and Purumīḥa. The former’s wife gave Śyāvāśva manifold wealth. Afterwards he was so fortunate as to meet the Maruts in the jungle and, after asking them ‘Who are ye?’ (ṚV. 5, 61, 1), he recognized them and praised

³⁵ See e.g. GELDNER, ṚV. on 1, 116, 9 (the same miraculous deed now ascribed to the Aśvins, now to the Maruts); 8, 73, 9.

³⁶ See also RENOU, E. V. P. IV, p. 130 (on 10, 109) and GELDNER, ṚV. II, p. 3 (on 5, 2).

³⁷ After Roth, Max Müller, Aufrecht and Oldenberg (at ZDMG 39, p. 81) who put very little faith in what in their opinion was quasi-traditional ‘book-making,’ GELDNER (V. S. I, p. 243), Pischel, Bloomfield and others were more or less strongly inclined to find valuable material even in comparatively late texts. Every case must, without prejudice, be judged on its own merits. The material was collected by SIEG, *Sagenstoffe*.

³⁸ For this point see, in general, also J. CHARPENTIER, in WZKM 25, p. 308.

³⁹ This supposition was advanced by SIEG, *Sagenstoffe*, p. 50; see also GELDNER, V. S. III, p. 148; H. LOMMEL, in ZDMG 99, p. 225.

⁴⁰ See also GELDNER, ṚV. II, p. 68.

⁴¹ *Bṛhaddevatā*, 5, 50–81; for other sources see MACDONELL, *Bṛhaddevatā*, p. 179.

them with 'They that ride . . .' (5, 61, 11), an act which made him a seer. Thereupon he commissioned the goddess Night (who is addressed in 5, 61, 17), on a message to Rathaviti with the stanzas 17 and 18 with the result that the nobleman right willingly offered his daughter to him.

There are more instances of an at first sight suitable exegesis which can be a product of secondary concoction. R̥V. 1, 125 and 126 deal, according to Sāyaṇa, with Kakṣivat who, returning home and resting at night, was found by king Svanaya. This king, after inviting him, gave him many presents which Kakṣivat coming home showed to his father⁴². Whereas the first *sūkta* is no doubt a general laudation of the man who has lodged a foreigner and dismissed him with some gifts, it is uncertain if the second containing the proper names, but seemingly foreign to this theme, was in fact closely connected with it. However, in whatever state of uncertainty we may be this should not prevent us from consulting post-R̥gvedic sources and, if feasible, cautiously supplementing, in particular cases, an incomplete reference to a story with their help or from regarding it as being perpetuated in ritual formulas or other later texts. The comments given in some *brāhmaṇas*⁴³ upon the Subrahmaṇyā formula—an invitation addressed to Indra and others containing the name Medhātithi—recited while the *soma* is being conveyed within the sacred enclosure may be connected with R̥V. 8, 2, 40 where Indra is said to have, in the form of a ram, carried off Medhātithi⁴⁴.

Among the more or less synonymous terms for 'story' which were already at an early date in use in the ritualistic and exegetical literature the above *ītihāsa* was the most common⁴⁵. Although we find considerable difficulty in determining the exact meaning attached to this term by those who introduced it—the commentators are far from sharing the same opinion—it is not unjustly regarded as an indicium of the existence of those kinds of sagas and heroic tales from which in the course of time developed much material which entered into the composition of the Mahābhārata. That is why modern authors apply it also to *sūktas* such as 1, 105⁴⁶ (the story of Trita in the well) and 5, 61 (Śyāvāśva)⁴⁷.

⁴² For critical remarks see GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 23; R̥V. I, p. 173.

⁴³ JB. 2, 79; ŚB. 1, 1, 15; ŚātB. quoted by Sāyaṇa on R̥V. 1, 51, 1.

⁴⁴ H. OERTEL, On the legend of Indra's visit to Medhātithi, in PAOS 1895 (JAOS 16, p. CCXL) and in JAOS 26, p. 194; WEBER, I. S. IX, p. 38.

⁴⁵ Cf. SIEG, *Sagenstoffe*, p. 17; 33; HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 12; 52; 284f.; 308f. etc. See e.g. ŚB. 11, 1, 6, 9; 13, 4, 3, 12.

⁴⁶ See p. 199. Cf. GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 1; R̥V. II, p. 68; Renou, E. V. P. IV, p. 22.

⁴⁷ Sometimes, however, the term is used in a wider sense (see e.g. GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 1; 166; 292).

8. *History*

Judged on their own merits and dissociated from the contexts or collections of which they form part several passages could be taken to reflect some form of heroic or historical narrative poetry. There are no serious reasons for doubting that this genre—in oral tradition of course—existed, be it in some elementary form, although it probably was not kept rigidly apart from sagas and narrative poetry. The themes treated may have been similar to those found in the heroic narrative poetry of other ancient peoples: raids, theft of herds¹, combats, revenge, sports², especially chariot-racing³, wooing, adventures, heroic as well as supernormal in intertwinement. There was no doubt free scope for exaggeration⁴, imagination and one-sided interpretation of facts. However, although what we know may to a certain extent reflect such heroic poetry, it essentially is laudatory poetry and firmly embedded in religious traditions. Mention is made of battles and victories but these are won by Indra or other gods on behalf of an Aryan nobleman or chieftain or of the Aryans in general⁵, or it is Indra who by his help makes some chief victorious⁶, just as it is this great god who led the Aryans to new abodes abounding in water⁷, a fact commemorated in praise of the god, not in memory of human heroes. And reminiscences of the gods' former assistance⁸ are made a means of urging them to new efforts: Assist us, ye gods (the *Aśvins*), with the same assistance which you lent to *Kaṇva*, *Medhātithi* and *Gośarya* (8, 8, 20): a formal declaration of fact followed by a prayer⁹, no résumé of a piece of heroic poetry. That is why, e.g. in 6, 26, prayers for booty and victory are in the same hymn followed by references to feats of arms, which in their turn alternate with the assurance that "this hymn of praise will strengthen the god"¹⁰. By means of hymns in praise of Indra *Rjīśvan* broke open *Pipru's* enclosure; when the word of praise radiated he (the god), changing his form, attacked the stronghold (10, 99, 11).

From the heroic point of view—historiography is altogether out of the question¹¹—there are some outstanding heroes—especially *Sudās* who with

¹ Cf. e.g. *RV.* 4, 17, 16; 7, 32, 23; 83, 1; 10, 48, 2.

² Cf. e.g. 9, 47, 5; 10, 50, 2; 61, 23.

³ Cf. e.g. 1, 73, 9; 4, 16, 21; 5, 66, 3; 86, 4.

⁴ Cf. e.g. 1, 53, 9 (60099 men are defeated); 6, 26, 6; 7, 99, 5.

⁵ See e.g. 6, 26, 4; 27, 4f.; 7, 5, 6 (*Agni*); 99, 5 (*Indra* and *Viṣṇu*); 10, 49, 3ff.

⁶ See 1, 53, 9f.; 117, 21; 1, 131, 5; 8, 8, 20.

⁷ *RV.* 10, 99, 8.

⁸ There are many allusions to acts of heroism, be they known from other places (e.g. 7, 60, 9; 8, 3, 3; 8, 4, 7) or unidentifiable (6, 26, 3; 6).

⁹ See p. 145f.

¹⁰ Compare also 10, 69 addressed to *Agni*.

¹¹ For the *R̥gveda* as an historical source see *OLDENBERG*, *Vedaforschung*, p. 48; *A. B. KEITH*, in *The Cambridge History of India*, I, Cambridge 1922, p. 77; *A. D. PUSALKER*, in *H. C. I. P. I.*, p. 245.

divine help won a famous victory over a confederation of ten kings¹²—and a number of figures pictured in vague outline, and there are the traditional enemies¹³, be they the godless non-Aryans¹⁴—the black foes whose strongholds are forced and who have to retire leaving their possessions behind—or inimical Aryan tribes¹⁵; there are also relics of traditions regarding the eastward progress of the Aryans in the north-west of India¹⁶. It is not always possible to decide whether a definite name belongs to an aboriginal enemy or to a demon. Śambara, for instance, seems to be a demon in part of the corpus¹⁷, but may elsewhere be a human chief¹⁸. No criterion exists by which human beings can be distinguished in every case from non-human powers, but so much is clear that Indra's victories over historical or legendary chiefs could be put on a par with, i.e. regarded as a reiteration of, his greatest feat, the Vṛtra combat¹⁹. The centre of interest and sympathy does not however shift from the own group to the antagonists. The situation is exhaustively described in the brief prayer: "The gods shall appease the fury of the non-Aryan (*dāsa*), they shall guide our race to prosperity" (1, 104, 2). On the other hand, the main, almost only, consciousness of 'national identity' is, as far as appears from the texts, based upon the belief in, and cult of, the same gods and upon the common experience of their favours²⁰.

When mention is made of battles—the most important being the contest between Sudās and the ten kings²¹—the military operations remain largely obscure²². There are in 7, 18 many vivid details, but many of these are varied repetition, emphasizing, not generalship or splendid strategy—the only strategic initiative, on the part of the enemies, ends in failure—but Indra's victoriousness²³. Through his help and intervention, to which he has been roused by Vasiṣṭha's mighty priestly words²⁴, the victory is won, and it is king Sudās' priest, the founder of the Vasiṣṭha family, who is greatly glorified. For these poets the religious interest outweighs the historical or legendary interest and

¹² Cf. e.g. 1, 63, 7; 7, 19, 3; 6; 20, 2; 83, 1; 4; 6–8 and see VELANKAR, R̥V. VII, p. 45.

¹³ For both categories of enemies, *dāsas* and *āryas*, see 6, 22, 10; 33, 3 etc.

¹⁴ See e.g. 1, 117, 21; 7, 5, 3; 10, 38, 3.

¹⁵ See e.g. 6, 27.

¹⁶ Some of the places regarded by GELDNER (e.g. 1, 165, 8; 6, 61, 9; 7, 56, 24) or others as relevant are disputable.

¹⁷ See e.g. 1, 51, 6; 54, 4; 101, 2; 103, 8.

¹⁸ Cf. HILLEBRANDT, V. M. I, p. 103; 108; III, p. 273; MACDONELL and KEITH, V. I. II, p. 355.

¹⁹ R̥V. 10, 49, 6; cf. 48, 8 and 1, 103, 8.

²⁰ See e.g. 1, 96, 3; 117, 21; 7, 5, 6; 10, 65, 11.

²¹ R̥V. 7, 18; 33; 83. For 7, 33 see GELDNER, V. S. II, p. 129; S. A. DANGE, in QJMS 55, p. 83 (speculative); R. N. DANDEKAR, in Comm. 29 Int. Congr. Orient. Paris 1973.

²² Cf. KEITH, in Cambridge History of India, I, p. 81; K. CHATTOPAHDYĀYA, in IHQ 6, p. 261, and as early as 1846, ROTH, Lit. u. Gesch., p. 87.

²³ See also K. M. MUNSHI, in BhV 4 (1943).

²⁴ R̥V. 7, 33, 3.

their works show no sign of social or really political consciousness. Viśvāmitra, who seems to have held the priestly office before Vasiṣṭha²⁵, passes to the inimical camp, but we are kept in the dark about the political background of this step. The personages in these passages are aristocratic or make their appearance clanwise. From 6, 27 it is clear that a chief called Abhyāvartin conquered the Vṛcivants on the river Hariyūpiyā, but here also it is Indra who has won the victory for his protégés, it is Indra who has given an exhibition of his overwhelming power and to whom long laudations are due²⁶. Details concerning the battle are few; the low number of enemies killed, 130, should not tempt us to suppose that the tradition is reliable.

It is no part of our task to consider the 'historical data' contained in the Ṛgveda in their relation to purāṇic and other later Indian traditions²⁷. What however we want to signify is our utter scepticism about the prospects of success of attempts at reconstructing real historical—we do not say, legendary²⁸—incidents on the strength of the recurrence of Ṛgvedic names in epics or *purāṇas*²⁹. Such a solution was proposed for ṚV. 10, 102, a hymn which "will figure in the final irresolvable remnant of the Veda, unless a new accession of material should enrich our present apparatus for its reconstruction"³⁰. If Geldner³¹ was right this *sūkta* deals with a chariot-race, undertaken by an old gentleman, Mudgala, in an ordinary ox-cart drawn by one single steer. Instead of the second ox he puts the yoke upon a block of wood which also appears to smash up the competitors. As Mudgala himself is too old to drive, his young wife holds the reins; she wins the race. Rather than a reflection of a historical event³², a personal satire³³, or a cosmic drama³⁴ this *sūkta* may perhaps be regarded as the description of an achievement during a race or raid³⁵ under enormous disadvantages³⁶, and hence as a charm to arrive at the goal of a race or a chariot-expedition in spite of impediments of any kind³⁷.

²⁵ ṚV. 3, 53, 9, and cf. MACDONELL and KEITH, o.c., II, p. 274; H. LOMMEL, at Oriens, 18-19, p. 200.

²⁶ See 6, 27, 1-4.

²⁷ A. D. PUSALKER, in *Mélanges Renou*, p. 581.

²⁸ See J. GONDA, in *WZKSA*, 12-13, p. 104.

²⁹ For ṚV. 10, 102 see F. E. PARGITER, at *JRAS* 1910, p. 1328; (compare already R. ROTH, in *WEBER*, I. S. I., p. 457); R. O. FRANKE, in *WZKM* 8 (1894), p. 337 drew attention to the Pāli *Jātaka* 28 (I, p. 191): ?

³⁰ BLOOMFIELD, in *ZDMG* 48, p. 541.

³¹ GELDNER, *V. S.* II, p. 1; see also ṚV. III, p. 316. For another, in part wholly improbable explanation see P. S. SASTRI, in *IHQ* 33, p. 182.

³² Thus ancient interpreters, Pargiter, Sastri.

³³ P. VON BRADKE, in *ZDMG* 46, p. 445.

³⁴ VON SCHROEDER, *Mysterium*, p. 346.

³⁵ BLOOMFIELD, l.c., regarding the *sūkta* as an Indra myth, believes the theme to be a serious battle.

³⁶ The 'wooden ox' may have been a mascot: the commentator Durga speaks of its supernormal power.

³⁷ GONDA, *Secular hymns*, p. 345. See also G. DUMÉZIL, in *Nouvelle Clío* 5 (1953), p. 255 who draws attention to a 'magical' interpretation of st. 4-6.

Antiquarian speculation on the origin of the own race, or of special tribes, very common among other peoples, is not lacking in the R̥gveda. It is however only in harmony with the general character of this corpus that the poets are interested in their own ancestors rather than in founders of dynasties³⁸. Most diasceuaasts of the family books have included in their collections a hymn in which the praise of some extraordinary and characteristic deed of a great ancestor is sung and the family is glorified³⁹. The ancestor had direct contact with one of the chief gods or performed, with divine help, some wonderful exploit. That these family hymns invariably occur among the Indra hymns of the collection is not surprising: this god is the chief inspirer of extraordinary achievements. Thus R̥V. 5, 40⁴⁰ deals with the rescue of the sun, by Atri, from the demon Svarbhānu who had enveloped this heavenly body in darkness. When all creatures looked bewildered and Indra had begun to attack the demon the great ancestor rendered help and succeeded in recovering the sun and in placing it again in the heavens. In the family hymn of the Bharadvājas (6, 47) it is Indra whose praises are sounded, because he has helped king Divodāsa to the victory over two fiends, Varcin and Śambara⁴¹. It does not however seem too bold a supposition that the last six stanzas of the *sūkta*, which are a war spell in the Atharvan style⁴², were regarded as the contribution of Bharadvāja, Divodāsa's *purohita*, to his patron's victory⁴³. Since, moreover, this victory is described as taking place in the present time, it does not seem impossible either that a contemporaneous king was—or could be—identified with the legendary Divodāsa, his (reputed) ancestor, and that, according to the usual practice, his enemies also were regarded as identical with the wicked antagonists of the legend⁴⁴.

³⁸ OLDENBERG, Lit., p. 49; H. D. VELANKAR, in JBBRAS 18 (1942), p. 1; 12 AIOC III, p. 223.

³⁹ R̥V. 3, 53; 5, 40; 6, 47; 7, 33. For 1, 165; 4, 18 and 3, 33 see VELANKAR, o.o.c.c.

⁴⁰ V. G. RAHURKAR, in Comm. Vol. Umesha Mishra, Allahabad 1970, p. 511.

⁴¹ See MACDONELL, V. M., p. 161.

⁴² It actually recurs, as 6, 125f., in the Atharvaveda and is, in Kauś. 15, 11 and 16, 1 used in a battle-rite.

⁴³ Cf. PB. 15, 3, 7; JB. 3, 244ff. (CALAND, Auswahl, p. 284).

⁴⁴ For these identifications with the mythical prototype see e.g. M. ELIADE, Le mythe de l'éternel retour. Archétypes et répétition, Paris 1949, p. 63; 152.

9. Riddles

The propensity to elliptic diction and veiled, indirect or paraphrastic expression of thoughts which is so obvious in many parts of the R̥gveda¹ led the poets sometimes to suppress an essential element, for instance the subject, of a stanza or a succession of stanzas with the, no doubt in many cases intended, result that they became enigmatic. When, for instance, two female (beings) of different colour are said to wander about, day and night are meant which, as appears from the following words, are represented as two cows (I, 95, 1)². This stylistic peculiarity meets the demands of those poets who—driven by curiosity in the presence of the unknown and in conformity with a ‘literary’ convention which is found to be common in many archaic milieus—like to insert puzzling metaphors, paraphrases or riddles in their productions. Thus there is an imperceptible transition to regular riddles which as a rule are clearly recognizable and often occur in succession³. It is however important to remember that in these milieus the asking and answering of riddles was traditionally regarded as a test or ordeal applied to people of intellectual pretensions. Riddle contests were frequently held among various peoples⁴.

This type of enigmatic poetry must have been very popular. Among the strophes of 6, 75, which is a blessing of a king’s implements of war, are many riddles of the descriptive type, solved, it is true, in the very context: “He is the father of many, numerous are his sons . . . ; the quiver wins the battles” (st. 5). The poet of 8, 29 describes various gods without mentioning their names; their identity must be understood from some characteristic key words (*līṅga*) or other indications: “One of them”—of course Agni, Fire—“is seated shining in his place of origin” (st. 2)⁵. The same tendency to enigmatic expression can be noticed in other hymns addressed to the Viśve Devās: in 5, 47⁶ no god, except Mitra-Varuṇa and Agni in the last stanza, is mentioned by name. While the audience is left to guess the names and persons of the gods themselves, the secrets of divine power and influence are clothed in riddles, paradoxes and allegories⁷. Elsewhere the end of a very difficult *sūkta*, 5, 44⁸, creates the impression of offering the solution of the long sequence of ambiguities and obscurities of the preceding stanzas. Before actually describing Indra’s exploits

¹ See p. 252.

² Cf. e.g. also 1, 145, 4; 152, 3; 3, 5, 5; 57, 4; 8, 41, 6; 10, 61.

³ RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 11.

⁴ See e.g. N. K. CHADWICK (and V. ZHIRMUNSKY), *Oral epics of Central Asia*, Cambridge 1969, p. 129; 187.

⁵ See GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 125; RENOUE, E. V. P. IV, p. 109. Compare also 1, 87, 1. In general: H. G. NARAHARI, at *The Aryan Path* 21, p. 403; RENOUE, at *Diogenes* 29, p. 37; D. BHAGVAT, *The riddle in Indian life and literature*, Bombay 1965.

⁶ Cf. RENOUE, E. V. P. IV, p. 74.

⁷ See e.g. 3, 55 (GELDNER, *RV*, I, p. 399); 3, 56; 10, 114; and compare 1, 152.

⁸ See GELDNER, *RV*, II, p. 46.

the poet of 2, 13 delineates, in the manner of a riddle, the *soma* sacrifice which essentially is a creation of that god, who receives all his strength from it; stanza 1 alludes to the plant, 2 to the water necessary for the preparation of the draught, 3 to the officiants, 4 to the ritual fire⁹.

While many poets know how to formulate the riddles in varied ways, for instance by giving them the form of questions, they are not always original in devising them, because the same idea may recur in another part of the R̥gveda. Thus the solution of 6, 59, 5: Which mortal is able to understand that, O gods? One of you drives in the same chariot after yoking the horses so as to turn to both directions, is offered at 10, 79, 7¹⁰: Agni is meant who on the same vehicle carries the oblations to heaven and brings the gods to the sacrificial place.

A favourite species of riddle is the 'Zahlenrätsel': "The one-footed has walked farther than the two-footed; the two-footed overtakes the three-footed from behind; the four-footed comes to (obey) the call of the two-footed, attending and having his eyes upon the herds" (10, 117, 8)¹¹. Cryptic numerical statements¹² of the type 10, 27, 15 "Seven men went up from the south, eight from the north, nine from the west . . .," which puzzle us¹³, were no doubt often intended to convey esoteric information. Knowledge possessed by the few is a key to mysteries and an avenue to success¹⁴: "Varuṇa told me (the poet), the wise one: 'Thrice seven names does the cow bear. The one who knows the word (of the enigma—the word *pada* denoting also the trace of the cow), should pronounce it just as secrets (are revealed), if he wishes, as an inspired one, to effect (something useful) for the future generation'" (7, 87, 4)¹⁵.

That part of these riddle sequences were preoccupied with the sacrificial ritual and its supposed correspondence with the natural phenomena—a domain in which the penetration of mysteries was indispensable—appears for instance from 10, 114 in which various ambiguities alternating with questions of the type 'Who can tell . . .' or 'Who has observed . . .' are subservient to an interpretation of the ritual and its cosmic correspondences¹⁶. Hence also the ritual use of these enigmas. The three stanzas of R̥V. 10, 189¹⁷, alluding in a cryptic way to the three provinces of the universe, are as VS. 3, 6ff. recited to accompany the

⁹ H. D. VELANKAR, at JUB 1940, 2, p. 76.

¹⁰ Compare also 10, 88, 18 and 8, 58, 2. Partial solutions given in the text are not however always clear: cf. e.g. 10, 85, 18.

¹¹ The sun, a man, an old man leaning on a stick, a dog. We are reminded of the Greek riddle of the Sphinx solved by Oedipus: "What . . . walks on four legs in the morning, two at noon, and three in the evening?" See also 1, 152, 2; 3, 56, 2; 5, 47, 4; 10, 114, 5ff.

¹² For the occurrence of numerals in Vedic poetry see E. W. HOPKINS, in *Oriental Studies*, Boston 1894, p. 141.

¹³ See GELDNER, R̥V. III, p. 167; VELANKAR, in JUB 22, 2, p. 7.

¹⁴ See also 1, 164, 16 "Who understands these will be the father of the father."

¹⁵ For explicative notes: GELDNER, R̥V. II, p. 258; RENOU, E. V. P. VII, p. 23.

¹⁶ For an attempt to explain this hymn: V. S. AGRAWALA, in VIJ 1 (1963), p. 40; 275.

¹⁷ K. RÖNNOW, in MO 25 (1931), p. 269, esp. 277; cf. also GELDNER, R̥V. III, p. 403.

establishment and worship of Agni represented by the sacrificial fires—which are homologized with earth, air and heavens—, a ritual act by which one obtains “all one’s desires”¹⁸. The prodigies of nature lend themselves admirably to enigmatic formulation (5, 47, 5), but their successful solution means penetrating nature’s mysteries, which in its turn can lead to some form of control over one of its forces.

More or less enigmatic passages¹⁹ call themselves *brahman*—translated by ‘Geheimwort’ or ‘formule incompréhensible’—, no doubt because they are not only founded on *brahman* or are materialized *brahman*, but also because they reveal some aspect or effect of that fundamental and omnipresent power concept²⁰, because they are, by implication, a manifestation of it and for him who understands the passage a disclosure of its mysterious essence. Between these enigmas and the *brahmodyas* of post-R̥gvedic literature²¹ there is no break in continuity and an obvious specimen of this dialogic ‘disputation regarding the nature of *brahman*’ with a preference for ritual or cosmic problems occurs already at R̥V. 1, 164, 34f.²²: “I ask thee the earth’s extremest limit; I ask thee, where is the navel of the world? . . . This sacrificial bank is the earth’s extremest limit; this sacrifice of ours is the world’s navel . . .”²³. There are more fully developed *brahmodyas* in the Atharvaveda²⁴.

The long and much discussed *sūkta* 1, 164²⁵ has indeed long been considered a series of hardly connected riddles (*brahmodyas* in a wider sense), part of which defy any attempt at solution: “Nothing here is directly described, the language being always symbolical and mystical”²⁶. “The prodigies of nature and of human life, speculations on time and (poetic) speech are clothed in allegories and enigmatic questions”²⁷. Whereas it is immediately clear that some of the problems stated as enigmas have a bearing upon the ritual or the divisions of time—the wheel with twelve spokes in st. 11²⁸—others attest to an ability to express philosophical thought in the outward form of beautiful parables. The

¹⁸ ŚB. 2, 1, 4, 29f.

¹⁹ E.g. 1, 88, 4; 152, 5; 7; 10, 61, 1. See also THIEME, at ZDMG 102, p. 102 (= K. S. p. 111).

²⁰ J. GONDA, Notes on *brahman*, Utrecht 1950.

²¹ See L. RENOUE and L. SILBURN, in JA 237, p. 25; for R̥V. 1, 152 the same, in J. de Psychologie 1949, p. 266 and cf. p. 353 etc.

²² Compare also R̥V. 10, 88, 17ff. (RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 11); 10, 90, 11f., and see also 10, 61, 18f.

²³ These stanzas occur also at AV. 9, 10, 13f.; VS. 23, 61f.; ŚB. 13, 5, 2, 21 etc.

²⁴ See AV. 11, 8, 1f.; 5f.; 8f.; 14f.; 16f.

²⁵ M. HAUG, Vedische Räthselfragen und Räthselfprüche, SB München 1875, II, p. 457; P. RÈGNAUD, in Annales Lyon 38, 1; R. ROTH, in ZDMG 46, p. 759; O. BÖHTLINGK, Ber. Akad. Leipzig 45, p. 88; C. KUNHAN RAJA, *Asya vāmasya* hymn, Madras 1956; P. S. SASTRI, The vision of Dīrghatamas, PrBh 62 (1957), p. 63; W. NORMAN BROWN, in JAOS 88, p. 199; see also RENOUE, E. V. P. XVI, p. 88.

²⁶ MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 131; see also WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 117.

²⁷ GELDNER, R̥V. I, p. 227.

²⁸ E. WINDISCH, in ZDMG 48, p. 353.

stanzas 20–22, the allegory of the two intimately united birds of prey, perching on the same tree, one of them eating its fruit, and the other looking on—“where eagles (in the plural) invoke a share in continued life, there the wise herdsman of the universe has entered me, the simple one”²⁹—was to have a great future in Upanishads and Vedānta where the birds were re-interpreted as the embodied and the higher self or supreme spirit. Following Norman Brown’s interpretation we may in this hymn distinguish three main themes, viz. Agni, the Sun, and the sacrifice, all closely interconnected, the treatment of them being augmented by statements about Speech (*Vāc*) as the absolute (st. 39–46). While the possibility of the continued operation of the cosmos and the welfare of mankind lies in the activity of the sun, Speech is the One Real from which emanated the unorganized material of the universe and the sacrificial ritual needed to organize it³⁰; even the sun was brought into being and is reborn every morning by the celebration of the sacrifice, the ritual of which Agni, after learning it from *Vāc*, taught to the first sacrificer. The *ṛṣi* Dīrghatamas learned all this in mystic vision.

²⁹ The so-called tree of knowledge (Geldner). According to the bold explanation proposed by P. THIEME, *Untersuchungen zur Wortkunde und Auslegung des Rigveda*, Halle S. 1949, p. 55, the tree is the night sky, the two birds are the waxing and waning moon, the plurality of birds the stars, the fruit (the fig) light. S. SEN, in *Felic*. Vol. J. N. Banerjea, Calcutta 1960, p. 125 tried to show that the parable is based on a didactic animal tale.

³⁰ For the function of the ritual see GONDA, *R. I. I.*, p. 104.

10. *Speculative hymns*

We are imperceptibly led to the speculative hymns¹. Some passing references to the One in the form of the Unborn (st. 6), the One which the inspired (poets) call by different names (st. 46), show that *sūkta* 1, 164 also belongs to those—mainly younger—parts of the R̥gveda which already disclose the development of a monistic trend. A clearly monotheistic tendency² is found in the hymns to Viśvakarman (10, 81 and 82)³ who is eulogized as the creator of the world. His activity is (in 10, 81) described in four images—the second of which is moulded into the form of a question—viz. those of the sacrificial priest, of the potter, the smith and the architect. In the second poem this primeval creator is identified with the Unborn, the first germ borne by the primeval waters, in which—in the view of this author—is fixed the One, the source of all worlds and their inhabitants.

Of greater reputation are some other hymns of the tenth *maṇḍala*. The cosmogonic hymn 10, 129⁴—one of the six or seven which deal with this subject—has rightly been called the least incomplete, and most profound and coherent R̥gvedic text of its genre. Succinct and carefully worded, yet bold and poetical, it heralds highly important and systematically elaborated ideas of the later periods. Tracing all things to one principle and declaring opposites such as day and night, death and continuance of life to be the self-unfoldment of this One it expresses the quintessence of monism⁵. The origin of the universe is explained as the evolution of the truly existent cosmos (*sat*) from the undifferentiated chaos (*asat*): “. . . There was not space, nor the firmament which is beyond. What moved intermittently? Where? Under whose protection? Was there (or, what was . . .) the (primordial) water, the deep, unfathomable?” These questions, suggestive of the riddle style, are not answered, but the poet continues: “There was not death nor (continuation of) life then. There was no appearance of (distinction between) day and night. That One breathed without wind (breath) by its own nature. Other than that there was nothing else. Enveloped in darkness was this universe in the beginning, indistinguishable,

¹ L. RENO, *Hymnes spéculatifs du Véda*, Paris 1956; *Poésie religieuse*, p. 100; C. KUNHAN RAJA, *Poet-philosophers of the R̥gveda*, Madras 1963 (very subjective); S. MICHALSKI, in *Istoriya kulturny drevnej Indii*, Moscow 1963, p. 189.

² Cf. e.g. also 1, 164, 6; 8, 41, 10.

³ See MACDONELL, V. M., p. 118.

⁴ W. D. WHITNEY, in *PAOS* 1882, p. CIX; A. LUDWIG, in *SB Prague* 1895, 14; T. SAHODA, in *Ritsumeikan Univ. 50th Anniv. Comm. Vol.* 1951; S. F. MICHALSKY, in *Scientia* 87 (Como 1952), p. 123; H. D. VELANKAR, *The creation hymns in R̥V.* X, 17 AIOC, p. 61; M. DAS, in *AP* 22, p. 556; V. S. AGRAWALA, *Hymn of creation*, Benares 1963; J. GONDA, in *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie* 28 (Louvain 1966), p. 670; NORMAN BROWN, in *JAOS* 61, p. 80; 85, p. 33; RENO, E. V. P. XVI, p. 168; R. AMBROSINI, *Studia A. Pagliaro*, Rome 1969, I, p. 95; W. H. MAURER, *Communication 29 Int. Congr. Or. Paris* 1973; V. N. TOPOROV, in *Acta et commentationes univ. Tartu* 284, 1971, p. 9.

⁵ T. M. P. MAHADEVAN, in *C. Kunhan Raja Pres. Vol.*, Madras 1946, p. 319.

something waving. The virtual, viz. the One, which was covered by the void, assumed individual existence by the greatness of internal heating (*tapas*) . . .” After asking, in st. 6, “Who knows for certain? Who can declare here, whence is this creation-in-differentiation . . .”—because “even the gods did not exist before creation”—the poet, who, according to tradition, is Prajāpati, the Creator himself—the only one qualified for solving these problems—, concludes this *bhāvavṛtta* (‘process of evolution’)—as it is traditionally called⁶—in a sceptical mood: “This creation, whence it has arisen, whether it is the result of an act of founding or not, he who surveys it in the highest firmament, he only knows—or else he (also) does not know.” What strikes us in this beautiful poem is first that, though resorting to some unavoidable metaphors, it is free from allegorical symbolism and in the second place that (with one exception) it has hardly any contact with other portions of the corpus. In view of the form into which the poet has moulded his speculation it is inconceivable that he does not stand on the shoulders of predecessors, who had likewise rejected some simple ‘theological’ or mythological solutions of the problem, such as were, for instance, proposed in 10, 72 where after various contradictory hypotheses no synthesis is attempted: first the world was forged together by Brahmaṇaspati, then the gods were produced, and lastly the sun.

Of the other cosmogonic hymns the Puruṣasūkta (10, 90)⁷ was to exert a powerful and permanent influence upon the mythical and speculative thought of the *brāhmaṇas* and *upaniṣads* and in later times to become the foundation stone of Viṣṇuite philosophy⁸. It is the first expression of the idea that the creation of the universe is the self-limitation of the transcendent Person (*Puruṣa*), “who is this All”⁹, manifesting himself in the realm of our experience. The act of creation is here treated as a sacrificial rite¹⁰ in which the Puruṣa—who may perhaps faintly re-echo old popular notions about a primeval giant—was the victim whose members became the portions of the universe:

⁶ It may be remembered that archaic, like more or less ‘primitive’ cultures attached much importance to the knowledge of what happened in the primordial Time; see e.g. M. ELIADE, *Birth and rebirth*, New York 1958. For *tapas*: L. MARINA, at 24 AIOC, p. 227.

⁷ NORMAN BROWN, in JAOS 51 (1931), p. 108; ST. SCHAYER, in ArchOr 7 (1935), p. 319 (discussing also the problem of the origin of the theme); A. K. COOMARASWAMY, in JAOS 66, p. 145 (speculative); RENOUE, in JA 243, p. 436; P. MUS, in *Hommage L. Febvre*, Paris 1953, II, p. 11 (speculative, on possible relationship with primeval giants in other literatures); the same, in *Studies W. Norman Brown*, p. 165; V. S. AGRAWALA, *Sri Venkateshwar Univ. J.* 5 (1962), p. 11 (speculative); A. P. KARMAKAR, in JBBRAS 18 (glorification of human sacrifice: untenable); J. VARENNE, in *Conferenze Ist. Indol. Univ. Torino*, III (1969), p. 6. For cosmogonic speculation in general also F. B. J. KUIPER, at HR 10, p. 91; ÉLIADE, *Le mythe de l'éternel retour*.

⁸ See e.g. J. GONDA, in WZKSA 12–13 (1968), p. 101; *Viṣṇuism and Śivaism*, London 1970, p. 25; 57.

⁹ Cf. also 3, 38 with the motif of the androgynous primeval being (st. 7).

¹⁰ See K. R. POTDAR, *Sacrificial setting of the philosophical hymns in the R̥gveda*, BhV 12, p. 163.

- (11) "When they divided the Puruṣa, how many parts was he made?
What was his mouth, his arms? What called his thighs and his feet?"
- (12) His mouth was the brahmin, his arms the man of royal descent.
His thighs were the vaiśya, from his feet the śūdra was born.
- (13) From his mind the moon was born, from his eye the sun.
From his mouth Indra and Agni, Wind (Vāyu) from his breath."

And so we are informed that the air was produced from his navel, the sky from his head and so on. Being conceived in the spirit of the *brāhmaṇas* and theopanistically coloured this *sūkta* no doubt belongs to the most recent period of the R̥gveda.

The so-called hymn to the unnamed god (10, 121)¹¹—every stanza except the last ends: "To what god shall we pay homage with oblation?"¹²—is a good example of tentative monotheism. While perhaps containing verbal reminiscences of the 'henotheistic' Indra hymn 2, 12, it gives an impressive description of a demiurge who is the creator, animator and ruler of the universe. "In the beginning was evolved the Golden Germ (*Hiraṇyagarbha*); born, it (he) was the sole lord of all existence. He established heaven and earth . . . Who is the life-giver, the strength-giver; whose command all attend, even the gods; of whom life and death are the reflexion; . . . who by his greatness has ever been the sole lord of the world that blinks and breathes; who rules over these two-footed and four-footed beings . . ." To the repeated question, which does not fail to inspire a sense of mystery, the last stanza (10) gives Prajāpati's name as the answer. It is however ignored in the *padapāṭha* and almost generally regarded as a later addition¹³.

Thus many hymns in the tenth *maṇḍala*, while developing various lines of speculative thought paved the way for the cosmogonies and the philosophic doctrines of the Atharvaveda, the *brāhmaṇas* and the *upaniṣads*¹⁴. That special attention was paid to cosmogony is easily explicable: the origin of the universe is continuously repeated in any act of creation¹⁵ and its commemoration is necessary to keep this process going.

Whereas continuance of life is eagerly desired¹⁶, death and life in the hereafter are hardly themes of the poets of the *maṇḍalas* I–IX¹⁷. Even a passage such as 2, 27, 14 "I would like, O Indra, to reach the broad, secure light, let

¹¹ F. EDGERTON, *The beginnings of Indian philosophy*, London 1965, p. 96; NORMAN BROWN, in *JAOS* 85, p. 32; P. S. SASTRI, in *PBh* 53, p. 162; VARENNE, o.c., p. 8; J. GONDA, *The background of the Hiraṇyagarbha concept*, in *Comm. Vol. Raghu Vira*, New Delhi 1973, p. 39.

¹² Interestingly enough, the manuscripts of the Paippalāda Atharvaveda found in Orissa have the reading 'To that god . . .' (D. BHATTACHARYYA, *The fundamental themes of the Atharvaveda*, Poona 1968, p. 57).

¹³ Otherwise: VIDHUŚEKHARA ŚĀSTRĪ, in 6 *AIOC*, Patna 1933, p. 502 (unconvincing).

¹⁴ RENOUE, *E. V. P. II*, p. 26.

¹⁵ ÉLIADÉ, *Le mythe de l'éternel retour*, p. 38.

¹⁶ Cf. e.g. 1, 23, 19; 125, 6; 4, 35, 3; 5, 2, 3; 7, 57, 6; 10, 30, 12.

¹⁷ See also p. 12; RENOUE, *H. S.*, p. 238.

not the long darknesses attain us" is a rare occurrence. In *maṇḍala* X it is otherwise¹⁸: from five successive hymns of this final *maṇḍala* (14–18)¹⁹ it appears that the poets, while concerning themselves with funeral ceremonies, the crematory fire, the blessed deceased and rites to be performed on their behalf, in no way rule out a life beyond cremation. Yama, the first human being and the archetypal defunct, who became the chief of those who followed him, has found the path to the hereafter, which has been trodden by the ancestors; to Yama homage is due, from the ancestors favour expected (14, 1–6). The deceased are expected to meet their forebears and periodically to return to the sacrifices in their honour (14, 7–12).

The kind of knowledge which the authors of the speculative hymns and passages considered important is metaphysical knowledge regarding the origin²⁰ and operation of the universe and in connexion with this the investigation of the attainment of individual transcendence, which, it is believed, may be won in mystic sight and vision²¹. The hymn 10, 154 is a *bhāvavṛtta*, attributed to Yamī, the sister of Yama, the ruler of the deceased. Recurring among the funeral stanzas of the Atharvaveda²² it describes the various classes of blessed Fathers, into whose midst the deceased sacrificer will be reborn, and their situation in the hereafter. R̥V. 10, 130, another *bhāvavṛtta*, deals with the origin of the sacrifice under the well-known image of a texture; this mythical sacrifice is repeated in all ever recurring actual celebrations²³. Other passages raise the question of the path that leads to the gods and attest to a vision of man's descent from the great Father (3, 54, 5; 9) or admit man's ignorance of the ways of the gods, that is of the powers presiding over the provinces of the universe (10, 12, 7). The poet of 10, 5, after making an attempt to fathom the mysterious character of Agni, arrives at the conclusion that there is a limit to speculation²⁴. "Wrapped in mist they walk about, the twaddling reciters of verses" (10, 82, 7). According to 10, 149, 2 Savitar alone knew the source of that cosmic ocean from which arose earth and space²⁵.

However, not all poets concern themselves with the same problems²⁶. While eulogizing the sacrificial horse²⁷ the author of 1, 163 makes it a cosmic entity identical with the 'original horse' and symbolizing the sun; it is also regarded

¹⁸ RENOUE, E. V. P. II, p. 26.

¹⁹ Cf. also Bṛhaddevatā 1, 8.

²⁰ Cf. e.g. 8, 41, 10; 10, 190.

²¹ See NORMAN BROWN, in JAOS 88, p. 208.

²² AV. 18, 2, 14–18.

²³ For other ritualistic speculation see 10, 181.

²⁴ LÜDERS, Varuṇa, p. 100 etc. Compare also 6, 9, 2.

²⁵ Some philosophical hymns—e.g. 10, 71; 125—are discussed elsewhere. Some authors (e.g. H. D. VELANKAR, in 18 AIOC, p. 18 on R̥V. 3, 18 and 4, 9) go too far in assuming the 'philosophical' character of definite texts.

²⁶ Cf. also 7, 34, 2; 10, 138, 1; 149.

²⁷ See GONDA, R. I. I, p. 168.

as the prototype of all race-horses, whose self (*ātman*) is the sun-bird²⁸. Some hymns are concluded with a speculative statement which does not appear to be intimately connected with what precedes. Thus 1, 89, 10 theopastically declares Aditi to be everything existent and 4, 40, 5 eulogizing the horse Dadhikrā ends with a comprehensive definition of Ṛta in the garb of Agni terminology; it is much quoted in later works which affirm the identity of the whole world with the Supreme. Not infrequently 'mystical' speculation is indeed closely interlaced with the traditional laudations, cosmogony and philosophy with mythology and theology²⁹. The poet of the partly obscure *sūkta* 4, 5, whilst eulogizing Agni, refers to certain secrets revealed to him by the god, viz. the value of the inspired word, which he now in enigmatic wordings hesitates to divulge³⁰. In the comparatively profound *sūkta* 10, 88, the poet, beginning with the sacrificial fire, inserting eulogies and commemorating Agni's functions, relates that the birth of Agni Vaiśvānara (Universal Fire) meant the appearance of the sun, which, identical with Agni, is the centre of the world, giving light and warmth to heaven and earth. In the last three stanzas he raises the question of the relation between the many manifestations of fire and the one Universal Fire, intimating that this is only one aspect of a wider problem³¹.

It is difficult to decide whether all passages which Geldner and others stamped as 'mystic' really have an inner, secret meaning³²; part of them may simply be ambiguous or incomprehensible³³. In other cases the poet has resorted to metaphorical phraseology in order to give his audience an idea of religious truths or psychological processes, for instance when he describes poetic speech as proceeding in the form of ghee from the ocean in his heart (4, 58, 5; cf. 11)³⁴. Or he may wish, without indicating the alternation of the subjects, to focus attention on parallelism between divine and human action (1, 72)³⁵, or, while dealing with Agni's 'births,' to describe mundane and celestial events at the

²⁸ For similar exaltation of the sacrificial butter see 4, 58.

²⁹ See e.g. 3, 38; 10, 5, 7; 149.

³⁰ RENOUE, E. V. P. II, p. 55.

³¹ Although many themes could suggest an unknown background to the poets and induce them to speculate concerning the miracles of nature or the relations between the seen and the Unseen (see e.g. 1, 24, 10; 62, 9; 180, 3; 2, 4, 7; 4, 13, 5; 5, 85, 6) these observations must suffice. It is not my present task to evaluate Vedic literature from the points of view of philosophy, history of religion etc. or to discuss those passages which are of interest with regard to the history of ideas or terminology that have a bearing upon the views of life and the world of Vedic men (see also RENOUE, *Poésie religieuse*, p. 8). For some basic concepts the reader may be referred to H. OERTEL, in NIA I (1938), p. 317 (on *asat*); RENOUE, in JA 252, p. 159 (on *dharman*); R. HAUSCHILD, in Festschrift F. Weller, p. 250 (on *manas*); CH. J. BLAIR, *Heat in the Rig Veda and Atharva Veda*, New Haven Conn. 1961; J. GONDA, *Loka*, Amsterdam Acad. 1966; Dhāman, Amsterdam Acad. 1967.

³² Cf. e.g. GELDNER, *RV*, I, p. 57 and RENOUE, E. V. P. XVI, p. 5.

³³ Compare e.g. portions of 1, 140; 141; 3, 56.

³⁴ Cf. LÜDERS, *Varuṇa*, p. 269. See e.g. also 10, 101.

³⁵ Cf. GRASSMANN, *RV*, II, p. 72.

same time (3, 1)³⁶. Or the audience is invited to make sense of a diversity of names and allusions (e.g. 9, 83). Cases are on the other hand not lacking in which fresh light thrown on a hymn forbids the assumption of intended mystic obscurity³⁷. These few remarks should not however be misunderstood. There can be no doubt that the poets were, generally speaking, men of special spiritual knowledge who were used to inquire into the relations between the ritual and the natural phenomena, to speculate about origins and connexions, to investigate the relations between this world and the Unseen which is the Real, and, without establishing integrated systems, to study all that has a bearing upon man's existence in this world and the beyond, poets who then already handed down their knowledge and methods of interpretation in more or less esoteric instruction³⁸. It is possible that sometimes Western scholars believe they encounter mysticism where there is none; it is almost certain that we overlook secret meanings which were intended and easily understood by the initiated³⁹.

³⁶ GELDNER, V. S. I, p. 157; P. REGNAUD, at RHR 11 (22), p. 302.

³⁷ Cf. e.g. GRASSMANN, RV. I, p. 378 and NORMAN BROWN, at NIA 2, p. 115.

³⁸ For some ideas of the poets in their relation to 'philosophy,' 'cosmogony' and ritual see T. SAHODA, in Ritsumeikan Bungaku 50th Anniv. Comm. Vol. 1949.

³⁹ See also p. 240 ff.

11. Magic

The presence of about a dozen poems, occurring almost exclusively in *maṇḍala* X, which are concerned with what modern men prefer to qualify as magical notions¹ is less surprising if we realize that we should not distinguish between 'religion' or 'official ritual' on the one hand and witchcraft on the other², but rather between dignified and complicated ceremonials stimulating the gods into a display of their power to maintain, in the interest of the sacrificer, the normal and desirable state of affairs in the universe, to safeguard his health, wealth, cattle and offspring and simple rites serving the limited and immediate interests of an individual. It is true that the proper place of 'magic' texts is the Atharvaveda, but it is not less certain that *maṇḍala* X contains many atharvanic elements, diverging also in other respects from the rest of the Ṛgveda³. Moreover, suspicion might fall upon an individual poet so that he has to defend himself against calumny: "Unassociated with the evil spirits I invoke the gods . . ." (7, 34, 8)⁴. And indeed, the activities of sages such as Vasiṣṭha who with the help of a deity secured uncommon results (7, 9, 6) could easily be construed as identical with the harmful witchcraft of the non-Aryan 'magicians' and other enemies who are under various names mentioned throughout the Ṛgveda⁵: "If I have worshipped false gods or, O Agni, have a vain conception of the gods . . . this very day I would die if I am an employer of demons" (7, 104, 14f.).

Thus there are two incantations to preserve the life of one lying at the point of death (10, 58; 60, 7-12), the former characterized by a refrain and an enumeration of possibilities which are so typical of texts of this genre: "If your spirit has gone far away to Yama (. . . to the heavens, the earth, the points of the compass . . .), we bring it back, that you will dwell and live here." And 10, 60, 11:

"Downward blows the wind, downward shines the sun,
Downward milks the cow, downward must your disease go."

The purpose of 10, 162 is to destroy, "in unison with Agni," the demon who injures an embryo⁶, that of 1, 191—the last, 'atharvanic' *sūkta* of *maṇḍala* I—to render venomous animals inoffensive; it is called an *upaniṣad* or esoteric text⁷; 10, 87 is an exorcism, directed against somebody possessed by an evil spirit. ṚV. 10, 145, which as 3, 18 occurs also in the Atharvaveda, is directed

¹ MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 120. Cf. e.g. also cases such as 10, 97.

² See also RENO, Poésie religieuse, p. 16.

³ RENO, E. V. P. II, p. 1; 19; GELDNER, ṚV. III, p. 221 (on 10, 57ff.).

⁴ See also 5, 12, 2; 7, 21, 5; 85, 1; 104; 10, 87.

⁵ H. D. VELANKAR, Magicians in the Ṛgveda, Mem. Volume L. Sarup, Hoshiarpur 1954, p. 85.

⁶ See also ṚV. 7, 55 (to induce sleep); 10, 183 (a charm to procure offspring); 161 and 163 (exorcisms, against disease); 10, 159.

⁷ See above, p. 93.

against a rival wife and according to the Anukramaṇī, ascribing it to Indra's wife, a means of disposing of her by means of a potent herb⁸; 10, 166 serves the interests of a man who wants to have the upper hand of his equals: "Here I bind you just as the two ends of the bow with the string."

The well-known and often misunderstood *sūkta* 7, 103⁹, the so-called frog-hymn, is neither a satire on the brahmins—"The frogs that have been quiet during a year (like) brahmins devoted to a priestly function . . ." (st. 1)—nor a comic intermezzo, nor a joke or parody¹⁰, but a serious rain-charm¹¹. After describing the behaviour of the frogs at the beginning of the rains and so furthering the natural phenomenon in producing which these animals, like priests, are believed to be instrumental or to play a mediatorial part the poet asks a blessing: "By means of their croaking the frogs have given us riches: the frogs giving (us) hundreds of cows shall extend (our) life at the end of a thousandfold *soma*-pressing," which means: "You have helped us till now, we have praised (i.e. strengthened) you once more: so you shall continue to help us."

Several hymns have an apotropaeic purport. R̥V. 1, 133 — "Both heaven and earth I purify with the R̥ta, I burn down all great fiends" (st. 1); "Drive away, O benevolent one, the troop of the witches . . ." (st. 3)—invokes Indra to destroy various kinds of evil beings: "muttering these stanzas one kills the evil demoniac powers and subdues one's rivals"¹²; 10, 87 is an Agni hymn of uncommon tone and vocabulary, directed against evil spirits and their human instigators¹³—"Cut off, O Agni, with thy glow the heads of the one who smears himself with the bloody flesh of men, who takes away the milk of cows . . ." (st. 16)—; 10, 155 exorcises evil represented by a witch. The *sūkta* 7, 50 is one of the few R̥gvedic texts which were supposed to have the power of healing¹⁴, *in casu*, of counteracting the effects of poison¹⁵; this power however derives from Varuṇa and Mitra who are invoked in the beginning. In 2, 42 and 43 an ominous bird is invoked to give auspicious signs; a traveller may also use these texts when he does not see the bird, because they perplex robbers¹⁶.

⁸ Cf. R̥V. 10, 159.

⁹ GONDA, Secular hymns, p. 313.

¹⁰ See e.g. GELDNER, Auswahl, II, p. 117; compare also WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 109.

¹¹ BLOOMFIELD, in JAOS 37, p. 186; NORMAN BROWN, in NIA 2, p. 115 (on 7, 101–103) and see also H. H. BENDER, in JAOS 37, p. 186; somewhat hesitating: RENOU, H. P., p. 75. For popular belief in connection with frogs: S. T. MOSES, in QJMS 30 (1939), p. 13; for parallels: K. TH. PREUSS, in Globus 95, p. 41; for an untenable 'sociological' view of the hymn: P. S. SHASTRI, in IHQ 32 (1956), p. 394.

¹² R̥gvidhāna, 1, 25, 2.

¹³ LOMMEL, Gedichte, p. 77. Cf. also 7, 104.

¹⁴ Compare also 1, 50, 11–13. The Sarvānukramaṇī characterizes these stanzas as well as 10, 145 as *upanīṣad*. See also LOMMEL, Gedichte, p. 42.

¹⁵ VELANKAR, Maṇḍala VII, p. 117.

¹⁶ R̥gvidhāna, 1, 31, 5.

However, this is not all. Just as the utterance of a name suffices to make its bearer present, just as speaking about powerful things generates power, just as a word of consecration dedicates the man addressed to the good or evil condition to which it refers, in the same way—that is even automatically and without the intervention of gods or spirits—a word of benediction allocates fortune's gifts to a person and in the same way a mythical tale or holy story possesses decisive power in its solemn repetition which confirms, renews and reiterates its inherent truth or the events replete with power that form its content.

Thus ṚV. 4, 57 is a blessing of the field, 6, 28 and 10, 169¹⁷ are blessings of the cows¹⁸ and 6, 75 has rightly been called a "Waffensegen"¹⁹, a benediction of the king's weapons of war in order to secure victory in battle:

- (1) "Like a thunder-cloud the mailed (warrior) looks,
When he plunges into the lap of battle.
Be victorious without injury to your body.
Let the strength of the armour protect you!"

Winternitz's²⁰ view of this *sūkta*—originally it may have been a war song, which has been changed into a battle charm—is unconvincing, his argumentation—some verses are distinguished by great poetic beauty, others show only the dry inartistic language of incantations—not free from subjectiveness. The standpoint that the metrical texts of the Veda are either hymns of high literary merits or dry and artless magical formulas is untenable, because for instance many 'magical' texts of the Atharvaveda, among which battle charms, are characterized by vigour and outstanding aesthetic merit²¹. Nor can the thesis be substantiated that those hymns which were used for so-called magical purposes or in which a magical element seems to predominate were in their generality recast afterwards or enlarged by the addition of charms and incantations. It is hardly probable that the possibility of magical application of Ṛgvedic texts, which is onesidedly expounded in the Ṛgvidhāna, does not date from an early period, or even from the very beginning. There is no hard-and-fast line between the magic and religious domain. Just as in invoking the gods and in offering sacrifices to them words could be pronounced which shew the belief in man's mastery over powers and natural forces without divine intervention, so, in 'sorcery' and incantations, the help of personal gods was, not infrequently, implored. Moreover, sacred texts could as such arouse and exercise power, either dangerous or beneficent. Since, finally, the brahmins in their solemn ceremonies often borrowed and sanctioned popular rites consecrating these by *mantras*, the occurrence, in the Ṛgveda, of 'popular magic' and the references to uncomplicated popular rites is far from surprising.

¹⁷ See ĀśvG. 2, 10, 5f.

¹⁸ See p. 83.

¹⁹ GELDNER, ṚV. II, p. 176. For the ritual practice see ĀpŚ. 20, 16, 4f.; ĀśvG. 3, 12, 10, 174 is a blessing of a king.

²⁰ WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 110. See GONDA, Secular hymns, p. 320.

²¹ See e.g. AV. 5, 20 and 21.

The popular *sūkta* 8, 91 may be mentioned as a case in point²². It is a monologue of the maiden Apālā introduced by the statement that once a girl found soma. With this and a cake she tries, in a naive way, to come into contact with Indra and implores him to cure three defects which, far from being world-shaking, are of great moment in her domestic circle, viz. the bald hair of her father, his obviously infertile field, and her own hairless abdomen. Whereas the commentator Śaḍguruśiṣya identified the girl mentioned in the introduction and the person speaking, JB. 1, 220²³ tells the story of Apālā²⁴ who wanted to get rid of a skin-disease, had a vision of this text and praised with it with the result that she found a soma-stalk; she chewed it, Indra approached her and she recited the whole *sūkta*. This difference of opinion is as unessential as the disagreement between Yāska²⁵, who regards the *sūkta* as an *itihāsa*, and Śaunaka, according to whom it is a hymn addressed to Indra. Since the text pretends to relate an historical event and girls who were in the unfavourable condition meant by it could probably then already find no husband²⁶, there can hardly be any doubt that the recitation of the *sūkta* accompanied by the simple gifts mentioned in it and the popular rite referred to in the concluding stanza—she is three times purified by means of (water sprinkled through) the holes of a chariot, a cart, and a yoke²⁷—was supposed to bring about the miraculous cure of girls who were in similar circumstances. The final stanza is indeed used in the domestic rite of sprinkling a bride²⁸.

There are many other instances of this type of *sūkta*²⁹, which may be called 'legend spell'—P. Thieme³⁰ coined the term 'Legendenzauber'—; up to recently they were not however always duly recognized as such, and some more are no doubt awaiting detection. The story of Agastya, who, succumbing to Lopā-mudrā's entreaties, broke his vow of chastity³¹ is concluded by two stanzas that according to tradition³² were 'seen' by a student of the Veda—who had

²² TH. AUFRECHT, in Weber, I. S. IV, p. 1; OLDENBERG, at ZDMG 39, p. 76 (= K.S., p. 498); VON SCHROEDER, in WZKM 22, p. 223; GONDA, Secular hymns, p. 328; A. K. COOMARASWAMY, in Speculum 20, p. 391; R. GOPAL, A non-legendary interpretation of the Apālā Sūkta, in VIJ 2 (1964), p. 55 (= Proc. 26 Int. Congr. Orient. III, 1, p. 127) (misunderstood).

²³ See H. OERTEL, in JAOS 18, p. 26. Sāyaṇa quotes a longer version from the ŚāṭBr. For a variant in which Indra is said to have fallen in love with her: Bṛhaddevatā, 6, 99ff. and MACDONELL's notes.

²⁴ Apālā is traditionally regarded as the *ṛṣi* or poetess.

²⁵ Cf. Bṛhaddevatā, 6, 107; GELDNER, V. S. I, p. 292, and Auswahl, II, p. 132.

²⁶ See G.G. 3, 5, 3; Manu, 3, 8.

²⁷ For particulars see M. J. DRESSEN, Mānavagṛhyasūtra, Thesis Utrecht 1941, p. 43, and TH. AUFRECHT, in WEBER, I. S. IV, p. 8.

²⁸ M. WINTERNITZ, Das altindische Hochzeitsrituell, Denkschriften Vienna Acad. 40 (1892), p. 43. Cf. AV. 4, 1, 41; MG. 1, 8, 11.

²⁹ E.g. 5, 78, for which see p. 191.

³⁰ P. THIEME, Agastya und Lopā-mudrā, in ZDMG 113, p. 69 (= Kleine Schriften, Wiesbaden 1971, I, p. 202).

³¹ See p. 202.

³² Sarvānukramaṇī 1, 12; compare also Sāyaṇa's introductory note.

to practise chastity—after taking cognizance of the preceding dialogue (st. 1–4). Since st. 5 contains a petition for deliverance from sin directed to Soma whom we know to charge himself with the purification of students who broke their vow of chastity such people were advised to have recourse to it³³. The ‘truth’ or rather the ‘mythical example’ inherent in the story which makes it a means of purification may be formulated as follows: the ascetic who breaches his vow for the sake of his languishing wife is excused provided he ritually purifies himself³⁴. There is something to be said for the supposition³⁵ that the dialogue between Saramā and the Paṇis³⁶, who had hidden the stolen cattle she was directed to recover (10, 108), is likewise a ‘legend spell’: the words “Go, O Paṇis, as far as possible; the cows must come forth” can indeed be taken to point in that direction³⁷. As to 3, 33 there can hardly be any doubt that this dialogue hymn could from the very beginning—or, if one would express oneself with certain reservations, at least as long as the final stanza, in a different metre, belonged to it³⁸—could serve a similar purpose. After recounting how the great sage Viśvāmitra stopped two mighty rivers at their confluence so as to allow the army of the Bharatas to cross them with all their luggage and booty the *sūkta* expresses, in its final stanza unconnected with the legend, the wish that the waters shall not prevent the cows and vehicles of the army from passing over safely. Here also a spell receives its power from the truth of the preceding story which is analogous to the effect desired. Geldner’s³⁹ earlier interpretation—the general prayer in the last stanza is the point which was given greater prominence by the reference to the preceding legend—was modified⁴⁰ to the effect that the ‘truth’ immanent in the legend was made, by means of the final stanza, an autonomically effective formula to be utilized under circumstances similar to those narrated in the *sūkta*. The final stanza was indeed prescribed in case a bridal train had to pass over a deep river or a man, in the midst of a stream, wished quickly to gain the opposite bank⁴¹.

Winternitz was certainly right in calling R.V. 10, 34, the soliloquy of a penitent gambler, a most beautiful poem, but hardly convincing in character-

³³ SVB. 1, 7, 9, and compare Rgvidhāna 1, 26, 5. In the hymn Agastya also purifies himself with a drink of *soma* (st. 5).

³⁴ For previous interpretations see e.g. OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 39, p. 65; v. SCHROEDER, Ind. Lit. u. Cult., p. 34; SIEG, Sagenstoffe, p. 120; HILLEBRANDT, Lieder, p. 136.

³⁵ THIEME, l.c., p. 71 (204).

³⁶ See p. 201.

³⁷ Compare also SCHMIDT, Bṛhaspati, p. 187. For 10, 108 cf. also G. MONTESI, Il valore cosmico dell’Aurora, in Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni, 24–25 (Bologna 1955), p. 111.

³⁸ Cf. GELDNER, R.V. I, p. 374. See also L. ALSDORF, in JOIB 13 (1964), p. 206.

³⁹ GELDNER, Auswahl, II, p. 55.

⁴⁰ LÜDERS, Varuṇa, p. 19; THIEME, o.c., p. 70 (203).

⁴¹ ŚG. 1, 15, 20; Rgvidhāna, 2, 2, 3f. Now see P. KWELLA, Flußüberschreitung im Rigveda. R.V. III, 33 und Verwandtes, Wiesbaden 1973.

izing it as non-religious⁴². Nor should it be described as didactic⁴³ or moralistic⁴⁴, however much it may strike modern Westerns in that light. The hymn is never prescribed in solemn rituals and its magic use as a means to come off victorious in the gambling-place⁴⁵ can hardly be founded on a serious interpretation of the text. The final stanza, requesting the dice to make friendship and to be gracious—"... do not forcibly bewitch us with magical power. Let your wrath, your enmity now come to rest. Let another now be held in the power of the brown ones⁴⁶"—admits also of another interpretation: the gambler adjures the dice to release him from their uncanny power⁴⁷. An application of the hymn to some form of exorcism, its recitation as an 'act of truth'⁴⁸, would be in harmony with its content: The dice make the gambler unable to resist their fascination (st. 1) and bring ruin on him and his household:

- (2) She (my wife) wrangles not with me, nor is she angry,
To me and my comrades she was ever kindly.
For a die that was too high by one⁴⁹,
I have driven away a devoted wife.
- (3) Her mother hates me, she herself rejects me.
The man in distress finds no one who pities.
I find a gambler no more useful
Than an aged horse that is for sale.
- (7; 9) The dice incite (the gambler), are piercing and deceitful.
They burn the player, causing him to burn.
They overcome the man with hands, though handless.
Though cold themselves, they burn the heart to ashes.

The assertion, in st. 12, that the person speaking has gambled away all his possessions may indeed be regarded as a formal declaration of fact—"This is truth I say"—with the unspoken prayer for deliverance from the power of the dice. His hope is realized: god Savitar releases him: "Do not play with dice! Cultivate your field! Be content with your possessions. There are your cows, there your wife."

⁴² WINTERITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 112. Similarly, A. B. KEITH, in JRAS 1911, p. 1007; P. L. BHARGAVA, *India in the Vedic age*, Lucknow 1971, p. 340 ('entirely secular') and compare RENOU, H. P., p. 90.

⁴³ MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 128.

⁴⁴ BERGAIGNE, R. V. III, p. 177.

⁴⁵ R̥gvidhāna, 3, 9, 5-10, 3.

⁴⁶ Viz. the nuts used as dice.

⁴⁷ Cf. HILLEBRANDT, *Lieder*, p. 109. Cf. also V. HENRY, *Les littératures de l'Inde*, Paris 1904, p. 36.

⁴⁸ NORMAN BROWN, in *Fel*. Vol. K. M. Munshi, Bombay 1963, p. 8f. For the 'act of truth' in general: E. W. BURLINGAME, in JRAS 1917, p. 429; NORMAN BROWN, *Review of Religion*, 5 (1940), p. 36; H. LÜDERS, in ZDMG 98, p. 1. Basing himself upon the perfect performance of his function (*vrata*) a man pronounces a formal declaration of fact accompanied by a command, resolution, or prayer with the result that his purpose shall be accomplished.

⁴⁹ If of the number of dice thrown, divided by four, one remains over, the throw is most unlucky.

Tradition⁵⁰ has it that 10, 142 deals with the epic story of some young birds which succeeded in escaping destruction when Agni was burning a forest⁵¹. This is improbable, but the situation—not unknown from other Indian literature—is similar. After describing the destructive force of a conflagration the poet prevents the god of fire from going on by declaring that “here is a receptacle of water, the dwelling of the sea,” to conclude the poem, not with the wish, but with the imperative: “there grass must grow again!” It is therefore most probable that the text was to counteract forest-fire.

It is therefore perfectly intelligible that the immanent power of the mythical or legendary event referred to in a *sūkta* was also turned to profitable use in the *śrauta* ritual: “The hymn ṚV. 1, 165 produces agreement and continuance (of life), (for) by it Indra, Agastya and the Maruts came to agreement. Thus, in that he (the officiant) recites this (hymn), (it serves) to produce agreement. It also gives a full duration of life. Therefore he should perform this hymn for him who is dear to him” (AiB. 5, 16, 14f.). A story may however have several aspects: in 1, 165 the Maruts who were enraged because Indra had taken away their sacrificial animal, were through Agastya’s intervention appeased and so this *sūkta* came also to serve the purpose of appeasement. As it contains a recognition of Indra’s might (st. 9) it could also be recited in case one would prevent the god from going to the sacrifice of one’s rival⁵². Dealing with the reconciliation of Indra and his chief friends and allies, the Maruts, it could, outside the solemn ritual, be a means of realizing the ambitions of a man who, “together with kinsmen, sons, allies and friends” wished to establish a kingdom⁵³.

Instances could easily be multiplied from which it appears that often a single word occurring in a stanza sufficed to make it suitable for a definite ritual use. Thus ṚV. 1, 120, 12 stating that a dream disappears in the morning—the *sūkta* in its entirety has nothing to do with dreams, sleep and awakening—is among the texts to be recited at the beginning of the day, removing the consequences of an evil dream⁵⁴.

⁵⁰ Bṛhaddevatā 8, 54, Anukramaṇikā and Sāyaṇa.

⁵¹ Mbh. 1, a. 220f. See R. GOPAL, in Vol. Umesha Mishra, Allahabad 1970, p. 397.

⁵² See PB. 21, 14, 5f.; 9, 4, 17.

⁵³ Rgvidhāna, 1, 26, 3.

⁵⁴ ŚG. 1, 4, 20; Rgvidhāna, 1, 25, 1. See, in general, also RENOU, Hymnes spéculatifs, p. 10; for the pertinent terminology VELANKAR, in Mem. Volume Sarup (see above).

12. Ecstatic practices

A few *sūktas* in *maṇḍala* X attest to what may broadly be called ecstatic practices or asceticism. About 10, 119 the opinion has long prevailed that this text, which describes the experiences of a person who has drunk *soma*, is a monologue of Indra pronounced when one day he had consumed too much of the beverage¹. Some authors² even added that the poet wanted to make fun of the god. Others, while rightly rejecting this interpretation unconvincingly regarded the *sūkta* as a profane drinking-song³, as describing the experiences of a bird⁴, or as a monologue and self-praise of Agni as the sacral fire⁵. It would rather seem that the poet describes his own ecstatic drunkenness⁶ in which he has reached a supernormal state of being, a sort of bliss and omnipotence⁷: in this state he deems himself able to fly or soar, to dominate nature, to create or destroy, his 'soul' becoming released from the clog of earth. The traditional explanation⁸—Indra praises himself having assumed the form of a quail (*laba*), hence *Laba Aindra* as the reputed author and *Labasūkta* as the name of the text—may have been based on Indra's fondness for *soma* on one hand and a word for 'wing' on the other⁹. R̥V. 10, 136 is to a great extent similar in aim and tendency. This *sūkta* of the long-haired one (*keśin*) deals with a 'medicine man,' the precursor of the doctor as well as the priest who in the state of ecstasy possessing a power that is superior to himself, is filled with the god, can soar into the atmosphere and becomes united with the gods¹⁰. In this connection mention may be made of 8, 48, a glorification of the *soma* as a producer of ecstasy and to give "room, freedom, comfort" (*varivas*, st. 2): "We have drunk *soma*, we have become immortals; we have attained to the light, we have found the gods. What (trouble) can now enviousness cause us, what injury devised by a mortal, O thou that art immortal!" (st. 3)¹¹; "Weak-

¹ See e.g. WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 85; GELDNER, Auswahl, II, p. 202 (cf. also R̥V. III, p. 344); J. HERTEL, in WZKM 18, p. 152; A. B. KEITH, in JRAS 1911, p. 1004; RENOU, H. P., p. 98 (with ?); for particulars see GONDA, Secular hymns, p. 331.

² P. DEUSSEN, A. G. Phil. I, 1, p. 99; VON SCHROEDER, Mysterium, p. 364.

³ H. OLDENBERG, Noten, II, p. 339, combatted by WINTERNITZ, in WZKM 23, p. 114.

⁴ P. THIEME, Vortrag Orient.-Tagung der Deutschen Morgenl. Ges. 1972.

⁵ HAUSCHILD, in Festschrift Weller, p. 247 (the adjective "bearing the oblation" in st. 13 is elsewhere used of Agni); cf. also J. HERTEL, Die awestische Herrschafts- und Siegesfeier, ASAW 41, 6 (Leipzig 1931), p. 161.

⁶ Cf. BERGAIGNE, R. V. I, p. 150.

⁷ GONDA, Secular hymns, p. 332.

⁸ Ṣaḍguruśiṣya, Sarvānukramaṇi.

⁹ See also H. D. VELANKAR, in JUB, N. S. 23 (1954), 2, p. 7.

¹⁰ OLDENBERG, R. V., p. 404; J. W. HAUER, Die Anfänge der Yogapraxis, Stuttgart 1922, p. 168; GONDA, Secular hymns, p. 333.

¹¹ According to R. G. WASSON's (*Soma*, New York 1968; *Soma and the fly-agaric*, Cambridge Mass. 1972) disputed theory, *soma* was no alcoholic drink but a drug, prepared from the fly agaric.

ness and disease stand aloof; they fled, the oppressing ones; they have become afraid. The mighty *soma* has entered us; we have come (there), where one prolongs one's life-time" (st. 11). In the second part of R.V. 9, 113, which was called¹² 'a prayer for a blissful life'—the poet intuitively foresees superhuman joy—the desire is expressed to be put, through Soma's intermediary, in the 'immortal' and imperishable world, in eternal light, in the interior of heaven, where one moves according to one's wishes, where are bliss and delight, joy and pleasure¹³.

¹² GRASSMANN, R.V. II, p. 286.

¹³ RENOÛ, Hymnes spéculatifs, p. 51; 236.

13. *Erotic poetry*

For a clear apprehension of ṚV. 7, 55 we must anticipate a point which will be dealt with more elaborately in the section dealing with the contents of the Atharvaveda. The stanzas 5-8 are in that corpus expanded into a text of seven verses, viz. 4, 5. In both collections these stanzas are intended to put to sleep the inmates of a house¹. The stanzas 2-4 of the Ṛgveda version addressed to the house-dog may have been used by others than the lover for whose benefit this 'unequaled soporiferous' text² was, like AV. 4, 5, no doubt recited. In the Kauśikasūtra we become acquainted with manifold kinds of love-magic and "rites in connection with women" for which these spells and formulas were employed. It would therefore be incorrect to speak of love poetry, for the emotions and sentiments of those who are supposed to use the stanzas are not revealed. The speakers remain anonymous and the formulas can be recited by anyone who is similarly circumstanced. We read, for instance, "I languish and yearn for love" or "I shall pierce your heart," not "Your unfaithfulness is on my mind." Any reflection on the poet's or speaker's inner life is suppressed. True, the sacral character of these verses makes the occurrence of love poetry *a priori* improbable³ and the romance told by later interpreters⁴ in connection with ṚV. 5, 61 about young Śyāvāśva⁵ "whose heart was fixed on a princess" is without foundation in that text. Places such as 10, 86, 6—Indra's wife boasting of her charms—, or an incidental mention of a lover hastening to a woman (9, 101, 14) cannot be regarded even as indications of the existence of love poetry. The Yama and Yamī (10, 10)⁶ and the Purūravas and Urvaśī (10, 95) dialogues⁷, though no doubt reflecting human emotions, deal with extraordinary circumstances and relations in the mythical sphere.

Women are a rare subject; they are mainly mentioned in metaphors and, as a collectivum, in similes⁸.

Erotic passages such as the above 10, 86, 6 are few in number and those which occur are no more than reproductions of reality⁹. Says the wife of the man who has recovered his virility: "You wear, my lord and master, an excellent object of enjoyment" (8, 1, 34). A girl urging the reciter to whom she was

¹ For particulars see TH. AUFRECHT, in WEBER, I. S. IV, p. 337; PISCHEL, V. S. II, p. 55; GELDNER, ṚV. II, p. 229.

² Ṛgvidhāna 2, 26, 5.

³ This is not to say—with H. LOMMEL, *Die Liebe in vedischer Dichtung*, *Paidema*, 3 (1944-49), p. 102—that Vedic man had not psychologically reached that stage of maturity which makes this genre possible.

⁴ Bṛhaddevatā, 5, 50-81; see SIEG, *Sagenstoffe*, p. 50; GELDNER, ṚV. II, p. 68.

⁵ See above, p. 126.

⁶ See below, p. 153.

⁷ See p. 203 ff.

⁸ E.g. 8, 17, 7; 9, 61, 21; 10, 21, 3; 110, 5. Compare BOWRA, *Prim. song* (see p. 156, n. 6), p. 174.

⁹ See also RENOUE, E. V. P. II, p. 25.

presented and who hopes to enjoy her a hundredfold, does not leave him in doubt about her puberty: "I am all hairy like a Gandharian sheep" (1, 126, 7)¹⁰. The greater part of the pertinent passages occur in *maṇḍala* X¹¹. However, an exclamation such as 10, 38, 5 addressed to Indra, "(A god) like you will not squat bound by his testicles, I suppose" has nothing to do with sexual love, but no doubt much with a painful form of confinement¹². There is no reason whatever to regard such passages¹³ as spurious. Nor should we take offence at 10, 61, 5ff. giving, in a mythical context, a detailed description of a halfway interrupted incestuous coition: "when his (member), performing the manly deed, stood erect, swinging, the male (partner) drew it away, when it was at work; he pulled it back again out of the maiden, (his) daughter, when it was inserted . . ."¹⁴. In contradistinction to later authorities who saw incest in the primal embrace of the Father and the Daughter¹⁵ the poet did not yet apply a moral rule to this 'ontological symbol.' These subjects were, moreover, no taboo in the poet's society¹⁶ and that is why we should not put in an unfavourable light places such as 1, 140, 6 and 7, where the poet compares Agni, bending over the wood which he is to burn, to a bull about to cover his cows: though erotic in a broad sense, they are¹⁷ far from indecent¹⁸.

¹⁰ GELDNER, RV. I, p. 175.

¹¹ The qualification 'obscene' is not applicable to 9, 112, 4 and 10, 101, 12; cf. R. F. G. MÜLLER, in *Asia Major* 6, p. 337; H. LOMMEL, in *Comm. Vol. Nobel*, p. 139; on RV. 1, 28; cf. GELDNER, RV. I, p. 30.

¹² See also GELDNER's note, RV. III, p. 190f.

¹³ With LUDWIG, in *ZDMG* 40, p. 713.

¹⁴ Cf. also 10, 10, 7f.; 10; 86, 6f.; 16f.; 95, 4f.

¹⁵ Cf. ŚB. 1, 7, 4, 3; AiB. 3, 33, 1ff.

¹⁶ Cf. also 1, 48, 5f.; 92, 6; 10, 142, 5.

¹⁷ GELDNER, RV. I, p. 195; RENOU, *E. V. P.* XII, p. 100.

¹⁸ Nor is an occasional reference to genitals (1, 28, 2) or the theme of 1, 179 obscene.

14. *Morals and maxims*

Only a few passages in the R̥gveda can be said to be moralistic and morals as such are hardly discussed. The well-known dialogue between the twins Yama and Yamī (10, 10) has been quoted as a case in point. With all tricks of feminine passion and dialectics Yamī endeavours to win the love of her brother, but he gently and deliberately repels her advances: (2) "blood-relationship should not be considered something different; (4) why should we do now what we have not done formerly; (8) they do not rest, nor close their eyes who as spies of the gods wander on earth." The contrast between the sister and the brother is as striking as the poetic beauty and dramatic strength of the poem as a whole. These two characters are no doubt the first pair of human beings¹, but at the same time the mythical prototype of any pair of twins². It has been maintained³ that the poet, whilst intending to combat the belief that the human race owes its existence to an illicit marriage, left the problem of its real origin unsolved⁴. This does not however interest him at all. The *sūkta* should rather be regarded as belonging to a ritual ceremony which was to secure a pair of twins of different sex against the danger of incest and, in addition to this, even to purify them of antenatal incest⁵. In this case also the myth was exemplary.

This is not to say that there is no moralism in the R̥gveda: "A mortal man should disregard wealth; he should desire to win it along the path of Order, paying homage" (10, 31, 2); "The gods know how to distinguish between the honest and the dishonest" (8, 18, 15). Mitra, who will aid that mortal man who exerts himself for him, beholds men with unwinking eye (3, 59, 1)⁶. 'Sin,' or rather offence, and forgiveness are often motives in the lofty and truly inspired hymns addressed to Varuṇa⁷, who as a moral governor stands above any other deity⁸. Poets express the wish to appear free from 'sin'⁹ for Varuṇa "who may

¹ See GELDNER, R̥V. III, p. 132, and compare also the same, in Festgabe A. Weber, p. 19 (following Śaṅkara); Auswahl, II, p. 145.

² According to HILLEBRANDT, Rigveda, p. 139 they were "a sister and a brother" (not the 'mythical' Yama and his sister).

³ GELDNER, R̥V. III, p. 133.

⁴ WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 105 is likewise of the opinion that the *sūkta*—which hardly is 'only a torso'—deals with an old myth of the origin of the human race. See also S. KRAMRISCH, Indol. studies Norman Brown, p. 118 and S. G. KANTAWALA, at JOIB 15, p. 509.

⁵ U. SCHNEIDER, in IJ 10, p. 1.

⁶ J. GONDA, Mitra, p. 59 etc.

⁷ Cf. e.g. 1, 24, 15; 25, 21; 5, 85, 8; 6, 74, 4; 7, 86, 6f.; 89, 5. Similar passages occur also in hymns addressed to other deities (6, 74, 3 Soma-Rudra; 7, 51 Ādityas; cf. 10, 164). For Varuṇa see also RENOUE, E. V. P. V, p. 65; VII, p. 1. See also A. P. KARMAKAR, in ABORI 22, p. 120.

⁸ For the omniscience in human affairs of Varuṇa, Mitra-and-Varuṇa, for Sūrya's (the Sun's) all-seeing eye etc. see R. PETTAZZONI, The all-knowing god, London 1956, p. 118.

⁹ The idea of 'sin' comprises any transgression or pollution, be it consciously or unconsciously contracted. For other places see S. RØDHE, Deliver us from evil, Lund-Copenhagen 1946.

be gracious also to the one who gives offence" (7, 87, 7). "O Varuṇa, if he who is thy true and dear companion, if thy friend commits 'sins' against thee, may we not atone for it as 'sinners'" (7, 88, 6); "If, O Varuṇa, we have committed sin against a friend, a comrade, a brother, an inmate—be he a native or a foreigner—loosen this (from us)" (5, 85, 7). However, errors of commission and omission result in evil and disaster: a king should not abduct the wife of a brahman because she is fearful, burns up the kingdom and causes discomfort arise in the highest firmament¹⁰. The man who discharges his moral obligations will fare well: the in itself most satisfactory eulogy upon charity (10, 117) was used as "a fulfiller of all wishes, giving food wherever one is and preventing evil from noticing one"¹¹. A psychology of those who commit offences cannot be expected, yet it is worth observing that e.g. 1, 25, 1-3 and 7, 89, though evidencing consciousness of guilt, do not attest to any personal sense of shame before the god. The fear of punishment is predominant¹².

In view of the great talent of the post-Vedic Indians for aphoristic and sententious poetry it is no great surprise to find some forerunners of this genre in this oldest corpus¹³. Proverbial phrases and maxims voicing the feelings and experience of the worldly-wise—part of which may, as 'floating verses,' have been common property—are adduced in a dialogue: "Scanty adroitness (of the performer) spoils the music" (4, 24, 9) or inserted as an admonition: "Not without exertion one wins the gods for friends" (4, 33, 11); "Many a woman is better than a godless and niggardly man" (5, 61, 6); "Like a cloud old age alters one's outward appearance" (1, 71, 10). There is also the statement that the gods bewilder the man at whom they are aiming (2, 30, 6). The man who provokes the enmity of a mightier opponent plans a frontal attack on a mountain (8, 45, 5)¹⁴. Truth resists even vehement assailants (8, 86, 5). Consecutive series of maxims are however very rare¹⁵. R.V. 10, 117¹⁶ "in praise of food and 'money'" is a collection of maxims exhorting the wealthy to be generous to the poor and hungry:

- (1) "To kill a man the gods inflict not hunger,
 Death often falls upon the satiated.
 The charitable giver's wealth melts not away,
 The niggard never finds a pitiful man.

¹⁰ R.V. 10, 109; cf. 51, 4; AV. 5, 17, cf. st. 4; 6.

¹¹ R̥gvidhāna, 4, 4, 1ff.

¹² H. LEFEVER, *The idea of sin in the R̥gveda*, 8 AIOC (1935-37), p. 23; S. N. SHUKLA, *Morality in the Avesta and the R̥gveda*, IA III, 3 (1969), p. 139. In 10, 2 Agni is requested to make good ritual errors and defects.

¹³ Cf. KÆGLI, *Rig-Veda*, p. 113f.

¹⁴ See FISCHER, V. S. I, p. 311; ZDMG 44, p. 499.

¹⁵ Some hymns (9, 112; 10, 71) were (e.g. by MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 129) mistakenly regarded as such.

¹⁶ Cf. WINTERITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 115.

- (5) Who has the power should content the needy,
Regarding well the many years hereafter:
Fortune, like two chariot wheels revolving,
Now to one man comes nigh, now to another.
- (6) Useless is the food gained by the foolish.
I speak the truth: it will be the death of them.
Friends and comrades will they never have:
The man who eats alone will meet mishap alone¹⁷."

¹⁷ Cf. SREG, Sagenstoffe, p. 9.

15. *Lyrics; emotions*

It has mainly been the 'lyrical' aspect of Sanskrit literature which, in the beginning of the XIXth century, attracted some of the greatest minds of Europe¹, who found, or believed to find, in it a happy blend of phantasy, immediate clearness, an appeal to senses and feelings, and an intertwinement of personal emotion, impressions of nature and religious experience. However, this 'lyrical' element was, also in later times, often exaggerated² and the view of the R̥gveda as consisting for the greater part of religious lyrics³ can no longer be subscribed to⁴. Not all emotional poetry is lyric and much of what at first sight seems to be, in the Veda, expression of a poet's sentiments is another reproduction of traditional effusions according to more or less fixed patterns or an impressive expression of thoughts and desires tinged with emotion intended to prevail upon the human and divine audience.

This is however not to contend that for instance the Soma hymns of *mandala* IX⁵ were devoid of any feelings or excitement⁶. Although tradition and the requirements of the genre have a considerable range and relevance, they are no doubt often infused with emotion, simply because the poet believed in what he said and wanted his poem to be effective. It was, moreover, his sentiments which in the last resort enabled him to distinguish between the essential and points of secondary importance, to emphasize the former and to omit the latter. The emotional impulse behind a poem was, further, largely responsible for its imagery even if it was for the greater part borrowed from the works of his predecessors. Nor is it probable that the poets of the Soma hymns were not moved by the ritual and mythical correspondences between the terrestrial *soma* and its divine form as Soma, that they felt no delight in the outward appearance and the unseen qualities of the plant and the divine draught produced from it—the procurer of renown, happiness, wealth and continued life⁷—, that they could not be transported with genuine joy when they described the stages of the process of clarification as the adornment of a race-horse or a beaming youth, as a perching falcon, as a kind of married woman, or as a bachelor meeting some girls⁸. Their sensitive eyes must have seen the beauty of the *soma* enveloped in sunbeams, the brightness and golden brilliance of Dawn,

¹ See e.g. B. HEIMANN, *Studien zur Eigenart indischen Denkens*, Tübingen 1930, p. 275.

² For instance, by H. BRUNNHOFER, *Über den Geist der indischen Lyrik*, Leipzig 1882.

³ MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 63.

⁴ See also S. DASGUPTA, *The lyric in Sanskrit literature*, BDCRI 20 (Felic. Vol. S. K. De), p. 347.

⁵ Which, with many others, were largely regarded as lyrical poetry by P. S. SASTRI, in *IHQ* 30 (1954), p. 301, and *QJMS* 40, p. 41. For Soma see also E. D. PERRY, in *JAOS* 11, p. 164.

⁶ Compare, in general, C. M. BOWRA, *Primitive song*, New York 1963, p. 249.

⁷ See GELDNER-NOBEL, *RV. IV*, p. 228.

the young woman clad in white, who with her rays opens the gate of heaven⁹. But what they composed, and purposed, is no lyrical poetry, but religious hymns intended for practical ends. With this reserve it may be conceded that there is a tinge of 'lyrical' rapture in other hymns too, for instance in 5, 58 or 7, 55, addressed to the Maruts, and in 10, 40, the story of the maiden Ghosā who, growing old in her father's house, implored the Aśvins to give her a husband. The seeming concreteness of the pictures too easily misleads a modern reader, making him assume that the emotional connotation which he would require in poetry must be absent. It seems however safer to suppose that, notwithstanding their traditional phraseology, the emotional settings of the pictures were for the reciters and their audience the essential poetic element, not the objective wordings which alone appeal to those who are not familiar with the emotions of the poets' audiences.

Another oft recurring topic is the mainly economic, partly political need of the Aryans of sufficient room to live in, of pastures and possibilities of expansion. The Aryans—more than once simply contrasted with the inimical autochthons¹⁰—were preoccupied with fear of what they called *amhas*¹¹, that is narrowness, oppression, distress in various senses and applications of these terms. Being often dislodged from their fields and pastures¹² they eagerly longed for broad space and anything representing broadness, i.e. wealth and happiness, possibilities of expansion. Various statements may be taken literally as well as metaphorically: "O gods, we have reached a tract of land without good pastures for our cattle; the earth, though (otherwise, usually) broad, has become narrow" (6, 47, 20); "(O Rudra,) bring us successfully to the opposite side of distress, ward off all assaults of the injurious powers" (2, 33, 3). After imploring Soma as the herdsman of those praying the poet of 10, 25, 8 exclaims: "O Soma, do Thou that art more familiar with localities than man protect us from injury and *amhas*." Similar emotional associations were induced by the ideas of light and darkness. Whereas metaphors such as "We would not take our leave of light" (2, 28, 7) and the inner light of inspiration occur according to expectation, and the wish to attain to light eternal (9, 113, 7)¹³ is easily intelligible, the special connections of the Aryans with light and the claim they lay to it, which are for instance apparent from the Sūrya hymn 10, 170, 2—the light of heaven is said to kill enemies, Vṛtra(s) and the unbelieving (demons and autochthons)¹⁴—should not be left unmentioned; the sacrificial god Agni is a light for the Aryan (1, 59, 2), and even the sun is explicitly called "the Aryan light" (10, 43, 4)¹⁵.

⁸ RV. 9, 14, 5; 38, 4; 43, 1; 56, 3; 61, 21; 82, 1; 4; 86, 16; 91, 1; 93, 2; 96, 1; 20.

⁹ RV. 9, 86, 32; 1, 48, 9; 92, 12; 113, 7; 14; 4, 51, 2 etc.

¹⁰ E.g. 1, 51, 8; 117, 21; 3, 34, 9.

¹¹ J. GONDA, in IJ 1, p. 33.

¹² See also 3, 54, 21; 7, 36, 24.

¹³ Cf. also 2, 27, 41; 14; 7, 101, 2; 10, 185, 3, and see 9, 4, 2.

¹⁴ Cf. 10, 87, 12.

¹⁵ Cf. also 1, 117, 21; 2, 11, 18; 7, 33, 7f. etc.

The keen insight into human nature fostered by the hard calls of life largely depended on emotions which in places are rather violent: curses directed against the envious and avaricious, imprecations against the bad intentions of enemies, against slanderers and malevolent enemies are far from rare¹⁶. On the other hand, the lame and the blind, though typical objects of divine pity¹⁷, do not elicit any emotional adjective. The difficulties of a girl who lacks the protection of a brother are likewise mentioned objectively, not emotionally¹⁸.

¹⁶ Cf. 1, 94, 9; 131, 7; 147, 4; 182, 3; 2, 23, 10; 3, 58, 2; 6, 75, 10; 8, 2, 19; 10, 84, 7; 128, 6; 133, 4; 152, 5.

¹⁷ See e.g. 1, 112, 8; 2, 13, 12; 4, 30, 19.

¹⁸ RV. 1, 124, 7; 4, 5, 5; 10, 10, 11. Otherwise D. N. SHASTRI, in 15 AIOC (1949), p. 200. Cf. also places such as 9, 96, 22.

16. So-called ballads

In order to characterize certain *sūktas* some modern authors have used the term ballad¹. And indeed, if we understand by that term a genre of narrative recitation perpetuated by oral tradition, simple and concrete in diction, fairly uniform in metre, with stanza structure and occasional refrains, objective but more or less dramatic in presentation, compressed and mainly episodic in narrative scope, suggestive rather than explanatory and not infrequently proceeding by dialogue interchange, the term is not infelicitous. Furthermore, Geldner's ballad theory, as compared to other explanations of many hymns², has the advantage of forgoing comprehensive hypotheses. But it cannot be said that the most common subject of these "lyrical poems with epic subject matter and dramatic layout"—as Geldner called them—is that of the European ballads, viz. love. Nor is there any preference for gloomy or tragic themes. And irrespective of whether the Vedic Indians told stories of the ballad genre for amusement or transmitted them as a form of heroic poetry, the function of the Ṛgvedic 'ballads' is no doubt widely different.

It must be conceded that a *sūkta* such as 1, 32 impresses us as reading like a piece of heroic poetry in the outward form of a ballad:

- (1) "Now shall I proclaim the heroic deeds of Indra,
Which first he performed, wielding the bolt.
He slew the snake, split open the waters,
He also slit the bellies of the mountains.
- (2) He slew the snake which was resting on the mountain
—The resounding bolt Tvaṣṭar had forged him—
Like lowing cows rapidly running
At once the waters went down to the ocean.
- (3) Acting like a bull he chose to drink the soma;
He drank of the pressed (draught) in threefold wood.
The generous one took his missile,
He slew him that was the first-born of snakes.
- (8) When as a broken reed there he was lying,
Over him flowed the waters for Man.
Those whom Vṛtra had obstructed by his greatness
At their feet the snake now was recumbent."

However, it seems hardly open to doubt that the powerful and conquering force of its theme which enabled the one who recited it to drive one's enemies back without effort and to win, in imitation of the poet Hiraṇyastūpa, the highest world after going to Indra's presence³, was felt to be inherent in it from the very beginning.

¹ GELDNER, Die indische Balladendichtung, in Festschrift Univ. Marburg 1913, p. 93; compare also Festgabe Jacobi, p. 242, and, e.g., B. K. GHOSH, in H. C. I. P. I, p. 340; for P. S. SASTRI see below. See also M. WINTERNITZ, in Some problems of Indian literature, Calcutta 1925, ch. II.

² See p. 207.

³ Ṛgvidhāna, 1, 18, 1; AiB. 3, 24, 10; cf. also KB. 15, 4 (15, 5, 26).

This practical use and ritual function is, in the concluding stanza of 1, 105, explicitly asserted: "May we by this hymn with Indra as an ally, all our men safe, have the upper hand . . .". This *sūkta*, for the greater part a monologue of a man who has been thrown into a pit or well and abandoned by his companions—about his identity and circumstances there is much difference of opinion⁴—has, on the one hand, some qualities which may justify the characterization 'beautiful lyrical ballad of choice diction and poetic imagery opening with an enchanting background (moonlight on the water) of the entire situation'⁵—there are other poetic merits, e.g. the references to the passage of time (st. 1; 10; 12), parallel with the lamentation and suggesting the long duration of the straitened circumstances; the contrasts between now and then (st. 7f.) and here and there (st. 2). However, it strikes us, on the other hand, as an unmistakable legendary commemoration of a man who in an evil plight is mindful of his religious duties (st. 13f.) and invokes divine assistance (st. 15ff.) with the result that he is delivered from suffering and captivity.

In those *sūktas*⁶ which, with or without good reason, have been regarded as typifying the genre under discussion⁷ the poets' prime concern was the narration of sometimes quite unconnected incidents. Always episodic, these texts give full scope to imagination. These facts do not however exclude the existence of cycles of 'ballad-like' compositions which in the course of time may have given rise to *ākhyānas* or *ītihāsas* of greater length or complication⁸. The distribution of component or complementary parts of the same mythical, legendary or historical narrative over several hymns—e.g. Cyavāna's rejuvenation (in 1, 116, 10; 10, 39, 4) or the battle of the ten kings (in 7, 18; 33; 83)⁹—may point in this direction. In this they do not differ from the mythical stories. Besides, stray references to the same incident or the experiences of a legendary person—e.g. to Śunaḥśepa bound with fetters (1, 24, 12f.; 5, 2, 7)—seem to evidence the existence of ballad-like tales, especially when such an assumption is supported by post-Rgvedic sources.

⁴ H. OERTEL, in JAOS 18, p. 18; OLDENBERG, *Noten*, p. 100 (lamentation of a sufferer); GELDNER, V. S. III, p. 168; ṚV. I, p. 136 (the story of Trita in the well, related in Mbh. 9, a. 35); cf. also JB. 1, 184 and Yāska, Nir. 4, 6; LÜDERS, Varuṇa, p. 576 (a spell against sun eclipse); RENOU, E. V. P. XVI, p. 81.

⁵ P. S. SASTRI, in IHQ 33, p. 180, who in PO 10, p. 97 calls this *sūkta* a 'lyrical tragedy.'

⁶ The dialogue hymns regarded as ballads are discussed on p. 207. GELDNER, ṚV. III, p. 185 characterizes ṚV. 10, 34 as a ballad in the form of a monologue.

⁷ Also P. S. SASTRI, *The Rgvedic ballads*, PO 10 (1945), p. 92 is ready to concede that a Vedic ballad is no ballad in the modern sense of the term; nevertheless, he applies this term (also at IHQ 32, p. 393) too often (e.g. also to 2, 15; 19; 4, 38; 6, 75; 8, 69; 10, 103). It is useless to distinguish a class of martial ballads or ballads of superstition (e.g. 7, 103).

⁸ SASTRI, in PO 10, p. 95 and compare SIEG, *Sagenstoffe*.

⁹ A. B. KEITH, in JRAS 1911, p. 979; SASTRI, in IHQ 33, p. 170.

17. Nature

Vedic man had an extensive knowledge of nature because he lived in it, with it, by it. In his hymns the forest or jungle outside the village, rivers named and unnamed, sun, moon, and atmospheric phenomena are no rare occurrences. Being in close touch with his natural surroundings he is well informed on all phenomena and possibilities which concern him and his search for food and struggle for existence. He is strongly inclined to value the profitable aspects of nature—large and grassy pastures¹, broad lands to cultivate and live in², the light of heaven³—to fear and appease its adverse sides—drought, dangerous animals⁴. When a rare epithet⁵ occurs it is one of utility⁶ or of aversion, rarely one of beauty⁷, a concept which, moreover, is, as a rule, a connotation of the good, auspicious and useful⁸. It is interesting to notice that the great mass of colour words express the lighter shades, especially the glaring colours red and yellow; the opportunity to contrast the brightness of dawn with the darkness of night was however not missed⁹.

But nature is not only man's home and hunting-ground, it is also the seat of supernatural powers whom he attempts to understand, to assuage, to control. He knows that there is much more in nature than meets his eye, and this forces him to look on its phenomena with wonder and uneasy awe, because they are divine in character—which not necessarily means distinct divine individuals—and the proper sphere of many great gods who make their influence felt always and everywhere¹⁰. Lightning¹¹ is viewed as an accompaniment of rain¹² and as a weapon of Indra. The connexion between the great god Agni and fire, between Sūrya and the orb of the sun is never lost sight of. The sun rises, but

¹ See e.g. 1, 91, 13; 102, 2; 5, 53, 16; 7, 93, 2; 10, 25, 1; 99, 8; 100, 10.

² See e.g. 5, 12, 6; 65, 4; 6, 47, 8; 7, 84, 2; 8, 68, 12; cf. 10, 180, 3 and see J. GONDA, *Loka*, Amsterdam Acad. 1966, esp. p. 20.

³ See e.g. 1, 23, 21; 48, 8; 50, 1; 4, 10, 3; 13, 1; 6, 47, 8; 10, 36, 3.

⁴ See e.g. 1, 190, 3; 191; 2, 6, 5; 28, 10; 6, 51, 6; 10, 86, 22; 98, 3; 180, 2.

⁵ For a qualificatory epithet: 7, 36, 3 (whirling wind).

⁶ Cf. also 1, 55, 3; 103, 5.

⁷ 'grassy' (2, 27, 13); 'dreadful' (1, 190, 3; 10, 180, 2); 'inoffensive' (1, 55, 6; 10, 36, 3); 'rich in . . .' (10, 75, 8). Compare E. W. HOPKINS, at PAOS 1882, p. CXXI.

⁸ E.g. *śuci*: clear, pure (also in a ceremonial sense) of water: 2, 35, 3; 4, 51, 2; 7, 47, 1; 49, 2; 3; 10, 124, 7. This point was not sufficiently noticed by H. OLDENBERG, *Die vedischen Worte für 'schön' . . .*, in NG 1918, p. 35 (= K.S., p. 830). See also E. W. HOPKINS, in PAOS 1882, p. CXXI.

⁹ RV. 1, 62, 8; 113, 2; cf. 8, 41, 10.

¹⁰ S. F. MICHALSKI, in *Scientia* 87 (1952), p. 123. In general: B. B. CHAUBEY, *Treatment of nature in the R̥gveda*, Hoshiarpur 1970 (subjective); B. SCHLERATH, *Die 'Welt' in der vedischen Dichtersprache*, IJ 6, p. 103.

¹¹ For lightning and thunder in connection with Indra and other gods: H. LOMMEL, in *Oriens*, 8, p. 258; cf. e.g. RV. 2, 13, 7; 5, 54, 3; 6, 18, 10; 7, 104, 19; 10, 99, 2.

¹² RV. 1, 39, 9.

is also the rouser of men and their guardian¹³. He shines for all the world, for men and gods, dispels the darkness—rolls it up as a skin—but in so doing he triumphs over witches and spirits of obscurity¹⁴, and so he is implored to drive away evil and illness¹⁵. All creatures depend on him; to live is to see the Sun rise¹⁶.

Vedic man is able to deal with the forces of nature on two levels, the natural and the supernatural and so are his poets. When the context gives occasion to do so they speak of cows drinking water, of water borne in a jar¹⁷, but in four hymns and a few scattered stanzas, the Waters (Āpas) are lauded as mothers or young wives who bestow boons, who cleanse and purify, and bring remedy and a long life, and whose aid and blessing is often implored¹⁸.

One should not expect the Vedic poets to have composed hymns simply from delight in nature for its own sake—still they are deeply rooted in their natural setting and have almost always some religious purpose in mind so that their senses work at full stretch and they choose their words carefully. A rudimental description of nature is given in the hymn to the river Sarasvatī, 7, 95: “With her nourishing stream this Sarasvatī, a stronghold (against the enemy), has flowed forth. The river rushes forward, as on a road, surpassing all the streams by her greatness” (st. 1). However, the river is (in st. 4) invited to the sacrifice, and (in 5) implored for protection. Prayer and invitation are absent in 10, 75, mainly addressed to the Sindhu (Indus)¹⁹, but from the last stanza it appears that the river is praised because it is the poet’s hope that the horses bred on its banks will win a race²⁰. It is very improbable that the poet of 10, 127, the only hymn invoking Night (Rātrī), did not find pleasure in the aspects of the bright starlit nocturnal scene which he pictures so attractively:

- (1) “Night approaching has looked forth
In many places with her eyes;
All her glories she has put on.
- (2) The immortal goddess has pervaded
The wide space, the depths, the heights;
With light she drives away the darkness.
- (4) So to us today (be gracious),
At whose approach we have come home,
As birds to their nest upon the tree.
- (5) Home have gone the villagers,
Home creatures with feet, with wings,
Home even the busy hawks.”

¹³ RV. 7, 60, 2; 63, 2–4.

¹⁴ RV. 1, 50, 5; 191, 8f.; 7, 63, 1; 104, 24; 10, 37, 4.

¹⁵ RV. 1, 50, 11; 10, 37, 4.

¹⁶ RV. 1, 164, 14; 4, 25, 4; 6, 52, 5.

¹⁷ RV. 1, 164, 40; 191, 14; then water is *udakam*.

¹⁸ See e.g. RV. 1, 23, 16; 6, 50, 7; 7, 47, 4; 10, 9, 2; 5, 7; 17, 10.

¹⁹ OLDENBERG, o.c., p. 66 (861).

²⁰ RV. 1, 50, dealing with sunrise, is a charm against jaundice.

But this admiration is informed by considerations of safety and of the necessity to secure Night's kindness:

- (6) "Ward off the she-wolf and the wolf,
Ward off the thief, O Night;
Then be easy for us to pass."

So this apparent nature-song is a charm, ritually applied in case one hears a crow in the dead of night or has a bad dream²¹. In 10, 168, addressed to the storm—and likewise free from mythical imagery—the 'description' of the phenomenon actually is an introduction to the intention expressed in the last words: "Let us worship Storm with a sacrifice."

It should not be forgotten that a poet who wishes to control the forces of nature, to prevail upon the deities presiding over them should evince his knowledge of their characteristics and his comprehension of their essence and function. But this does not prevent true poets from showing that they are deeply impressed by the power or violence of nature and understand the hidden significance behind the actual events. So the Parjanya hymn 5, 83 is, it is true, a picture of Rain and the rains, a prayer for sufficient rain and the expression of the desire that rain will cease²², but it is more: it evidences the poet's profound insight into the significance of the phenomenon²³.

The twenty hymns addressed to Uṣas²⁴ (Dawn) deserve special attention. They are almost generally²⁵, and not without reason, regarded as the most beautiful of the whole R̥gveda. Although the physical phenomenon of dawn is never absent from the poets' mind the morning-light becomes a feminine figure, which again dissolves in the coloured sky²⁶. Being the only female deity to whom with any frequency entire hymns are addressed, Uṣas is described as a most charming and graceful maiden borne on a shining car. Young and radiant, proud of her body, decked in gay attire, clothed in light, she appears in the east and unveils her charms²⁷. There is no denying that the poets were impressed by the glories of dawn, but one should not argue that it was only its beauty which they described: certain adjectives (*śreṣṭha* etc.) do not only mean 'beautiful' but also 'prosperous, beneficial, auspicious.' In short, not even in these hymns are the natural surroundings seen solely as such and described for their own sake.

²¹ ŚG. 5, 5, 9; AiĀ. 3, 2, 4. R̥V. 10, 142 dealing with Agni in his destructive aspect is a charm against forest fires.

²² Thus GELDNER, R̥V. II, p. 86.

²³ For the hymn to Savitar (the sun in its dynamic aspect) 2, 38, see WINTERNITZ, at ArchOr 3 (1931), p. 296.

²⁴ A. A. MACDONELL, The Uṣas hymns of the R̥gveda, JRAS 1932, p. 345; RENOU, E. V. P. III, p. 1; G. MONTESI, in Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni 24-25, p. 111; J. R. JOSHI, in IA III, 3 (1969), p. 157.

²⁵ See e.g. MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 80; and see JRAS 1932, p. 345; WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 91; v. GLASENAPP, L. I., p. 57; GHOSH, in H. C. I. P. I, p. 342.

²⁶ OLDENBERG, o.c., p. 62 (857). Cf. e.g. 1, 92, 12; 5, 80, 4; 7, 76, 3.

²⁷ One should not, on the strength of R̥V, 1, 124, 7, follow FISCHER, V. S. I, p. 196 in assuming her to be depicted as a courtesan (P. COLINET, in Muséeon, 9, p. 258; RENOU, E. V. P. III, p. 8).

The scarceness of mythological allusions, the absence of *dānastutis* and of priestly subtleties and reminiscences of the ritual, the comparative simplicity of language and style, their absence in *maṇḍala* X²⁸, and last but not least, the independence of their many formulas of hymns dedicated to other gods make us strongly inclined to subscribe to the view that these Uṣas hymns constitute the oldest stratum of the Ṛgveda. Does it follow that these hymns are mainly 'literary' in character and are preserved because of their 'lyric beauty' and 'the love of nature' of their poets whose only desire it was 'simply to please the deity by flattering songs'?²⁹ This is highly improbable. They should rather be regarded as reflecting the archaic view of the daily return of light, not as a matter of course, but as the subject of perpetual hope. They were made in glorification of the returning light of heaven with a view to securing its unbroken sequence³⁰. The ever repeated assertion that Dawn has appeared on the horizon and shall continue to do so, that the goddess is always reborn³¹, is a confirmation of Dawn's power and willingness to perform her indispensable task. Her daily reappearance means continuation of life: "Rise! The spirit of life has come to us. Darkness has gone far away, light approaches . . . We have come (there) where (men) prolong their term of life" (1, 113, 16)³². Man's life indeed is bound up with the sun in its rising, and although every Dawn brings him nearer to death—"the always renascent (goddess) causes man to grow old" (1, 92, 10)—Dawn is every day a triumph over darkness and inimical powers³³—"Driving away malignity and darkness, Dawn, daughter of Heaven, has come to us with lustre" (5, 80, 5)—and a bringer of the light of heaven³⁴—man's salvation—, fortune and felicity³⁵. She is implored, not only for this wealth and happiness³⁶, but also for continuance of life and the unbroken existence of the family³⁷. "Flushing far and wide with rays and lighting up the whole bright sky" (1, 49, 4)³⁸, and awakening men, Uṣas has them perform their ritual duties necessary for the maintenance of the cycles of days, seasons and years and

²⁸ And in the ritual *maṇḍala* VIII.

²⁹ GHOSH, l.c.; cf. MACDONELL, H. S. L., l.c.

³⁰ And interpreted as Neujahrslieder by HILLEBRANDT, V. M. ²I, p. 28 (otherwise OLDENBERG, R. V., p. 243) and F. B. J. KUIPER, in IJ 4, 223; see also ELIZARENKOVA, *Rigveda*, p. 40.

³¹ See e.g. ṚV. 1, 48, 3; 14; 92, 10; 113, 11; 13; 123, 8f.; 124, 9; 4, 51, 1; cf. 6, 65, 6. Hence also the frequent occurrence of Dawns (in the plural).

³² Cf. also 1, 113, 11. The method adopted by T. ELIZARENKOVA, *Mélanges Renou*, p. 262 has not allowed her to see this point. These requests ('shine!') etc. are really connected with the addressee.

³³ E.g. 1, 48, 8; 15; 92, 5; 4, 51, 9; 5, 80, 5; 7, 75, 1; 80, 2.

³⁴ See 1, 48, 8; 3, 61, 4.

³⁵ E.g. 1, 48, 1; 9; 13; 92, 14.

³⁶ See also 5, 79, 3; 7, 77, 4.

³⁷ 1, 92, 13; 113, 17; 4, 51, 10; 6, 65, 6; 7, 77, 5; 80, 2.

³⁸ V. M. APTE'S view (19 AIOC, I, p. 106) according to which Uṣas cannot be the shortlived dawn of the tropics is completely untenable.

of the stability of the universe³⁹: “Come, O Dawn, with thine auspicious rays from the luminous expanse of heaven. The ruddy (horses) must bring thee to the house of the one who offers *soma*!” (1, 49, 1)⁴⁰.

³⁹ See 1, 48, 9; 11; 113, 4; 5; 9; 4, 51, 5; 7; 5, 79, 1; 80, 2; cf. also 1, 123, 2.

⁴⁰ Phenomena visible at daybreak are also mentioned in the ‘morning hymns’ (1, 6; 69; 4, 13; 10, 35; 189). For evening hymns see 2, 38 (R. РОТН, in ZDMG 24, p. 301); 10, 127.

18. *Animals*

Animals are, as quadrupeds, on a par with—and not subordinated to—men, as bipeds, remembered in prayers and eulogies¹. Some animals play a more important part in the hymns, especially the cow², the falcon³ and the racehorse. Often appearing in similes and metaphors⁴ cows are—for economic as well as religious reasons—appreciated because of their products⁵ and hence a most eagerly desired possession. It is not surprising to see that the poets know the habits of these animals very well and, watching them with expert eyes, have developed feelings of sympathy about them. Their love for and care of their calves⁶ and their daily stay on, and return from, their pastures⁷ are repeatedly mentioned. The horse⁸—in India as in other ancient Indo-European countries the favourite animal of the nobility—is often praised as a valuable and victorious winner of prizes. Famous war-horses of ancient kings were even deified—among them are Dadhikrāvan and Tārksya eulogized in 4, 39f. and 10, 178 respectively, the latter being the tutelary deity of those who compete in running. They were regarded as able to ward off dangerous animals, demons and diseases⁹. Dreadful and noxious are, first and foremost, snake¹⁰ and wolf¹¹, the lamb or sheep as the latter's victim appearing twice in a simile¹². The 'Serpent of the deep' (Ahi Budhnya) was a deified snake mentioned solely in hymns to the Viśve Devās¹³.

Man has often presented some point about his own kind which excites his wonder or amusement in a tale about animals. References to such tales, more or less in the form of proverbial sayings occur in 10, 28, 9f.¹⁴ "The hare swallowed the razor in the opposite (wrong) direction," etc. Fables proper do not occur in the R̥gveda, but knowledge of the ways and habits of animals is apparent from their occurrence in similes¹⁵. Whether such a recognition of a certain kinship between men and animals as the comparison of brahmins to croaking frogs in 7, 103, 1 may point to the existence, in R̥gvedic times, of real fables¹⁶ is utterly uncertain.

¹ RV. 1, 114, 1; 121, 3; 157, 3; 5, 81, 2; 6, 74, 1 etc.

² MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 109.

³ E.g. 1, 33, 2; 118, 11; 4, 38, 5.

⁴ See p. 241 etc.

⁵ E.g. 4, 1, 16; 6, 45, 7; 10, 43, 9; 64, 12; 87, 17; 133, 7.

⁶ See 1, 38, 8; 1, 164, 9; 27f.; 9, 104, 2.

⁷ See 3, 45, 3; 4, 34, 5; 6, 28, 1; cf. 4, 51, 8.

⁸ RV. 1, 27, 1; 3, 22, 1; 4, 3, 12; 10, 1; 6, 12, 4; 8, 102, 12; 9, 6, 5 etc.

⁹ RV. 7, 38, 7f.; 40, 6.

¹⁰ H. P. SCHMIDT, Die Kobra im R̥gveda, at KZ 78 (1963), p. 296.

¹¹ RV. 1, 105, 11; 18; 2, 28, 10; 7, 38, 7; 10, 16, 6.

¹² RV. 8, 34, 3; 66, 8.

¹³ See e.g. RV. 1, 186, 5; 2, 31, 6; 7, 35, 13; MACDONELL, V. M., p. 72.

¹⁴ FISCHER, V. S. I., p. 181.

¹⁵ E.g. 2, 34, 3; 3, 53, 10; 7, 103, 2ff.

¹⁶ Cf. A. B. KEITH, A history of Sanskrit literature, Oxford 1920 (1948), p. 242.

19. Labour songs

A few *sūktas* were not without reason classified as 'labour songs'¹. We can indeed easily imagine that a recitation of 1, 28 describing the rapid and simplified preparation of the soma accompanied this activity. This does not imply that they were 'quite secular poems that had got mixed among the sacrificial chants'²: labour songs are helpful, not only in carrying out rhythmical activities³—they lessen the feelings of exertion—but also in bringing about, by their rhythm, refrain and content, the success of the useful work. The wish that the mortar should sound like the kettledrum of the victorious points in the same direction (st. 5). As to 9, 112⁴ and some other Soma hymns⁵, while we feel an objection to their serving as an accompaniment to any kind of work, they may be adaptations or imitations, for a ritual purpose, of popular labour songs⁶.

The *sūkta* 10, 101⁷ is no labour song, but a poet's address to his colleagues whom he awakens from sleep and arouses to activity. The many similes and metaphorical expressions in which he couches his stimulation are however borrowed from manual labour and therefore of historical interest:

"Yoke (plural) the ploughs; spread out the yokes; sow here the seed in the womb that has been prepared. If the response be in harmony with our invocation, the ripe (fruit) will approach the sickles very near. The inspired poets yoke the ploughs; they spread their yokes one by one, the wise ones, in order to (earn) benevolence among the gods. Set (plural) the buckets in order; fasten the straps together. Let us draw from the well filled with water, which flows well without failing. From the well where the buckets are set in order with good straps, which flows well and is filled with water I am drawing: it does not fail."

Social life, occupations, amusements, possessions and so on are often passing-ly mentioned, but nowhere made the exclusive subjects of even a single passage in a hymn⁸. In view of the fact that a literature such as this will only embrace what is within a limited horizon this is far from surprising. However, much of what in our eyes seems to be a mere amusement was for the ancient Indians no doubt first and foremost a religious act or ceremony, however diverting and exciting it could at the same time be. The references to races and contests⁹ should not figure under the heading sport, but under sacred actions. They were to generate beneficial energy¹⁰ or continually to reiterate divine primordial acts.

¹ E. SCHWENTNER, in ZDMG 90, p. 444; P. S. SASTRI, in IHQ 30, p. 303; cf. also P. POUCHA, in ZII 10, p. 288. For 1, 28 see LOMMEL, in Vol. Nobel, p. 133.

² Thus WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 111.

³ RENOU, Poésies religieuses, p. 69.

⁴ See p. 169; FISCHER, V. S. I, p. 107; RENOU, o.c., p. 70; H. P., p. 97.

⁵ RV. 9, 1; 2; 8 etc.

⁶ The perfect performance of his *vrata* ('personal function,' 9, 112, 1) moreover enables an agent to bend cosmic forces.

⁷ GONDA, Vision, p. 114; S. A. DANGE, in Nagpur Univ. Journal 17 (1967), p. 158.

⁸ H. ZIMMER, Altindisches Leben, Berlin 1879; V. M. APTE, in H. C. I. P. I, p. 384.

⁹ E.g. 1, 179, 3; 3, 53, 23; 5, 35, 7; 41, 4; 86, 1; 6, 66, 11; 9, 66, 8; 110, 2.

¹⁰ J. GONDA, Aspects of early Viṣṇuism, Utrecht 1954 (Delhi 1969), p. 46.

20. Irony; humour

Though covering a wide field of techniques, irony always includes some element of stating or implying the reverse of, or more than, the literal meaning of the words used. As long as these and the situation in which the poet and his audience found themselves are not sufficiently known ironical interpretations¹ stand a good chance of proving serious mistakes. There is certainly no ironical reference to the wolf in R.V. 1, 183, 4² because this animal was notorious for its viciousness: the poet wishes to keep him from attacking the Ásvins³. The stanzas 8, 70, 13–15, an expression of thanks for a small present, seem to admit of this interpretation⁴, but even here we may be in error.

Overlooking the distance between the culture of Vedic India and modern Europe as well as the variety of meanings attached, not only in different languages, to the terms 'humorous' and 'comic' some authors⁵ propagated misinterpretations of a number of hymns. For instance, R.V. 10, 97, an address of a 'doctor' to his herbs, was regarded as a sort of facetious intermezzo. Since however nobody calls in question the serious character of AV. 8, 7, which contains a number of parallel statements of the divine power inherent in the medicinal herbs and prayers for their help in "saving this man's life," we should rather join the native tradition⁶ in characterizing this *sūkta* as a solemn praise of the plants, applicable to the cure of a serious disease⁷. Although in Geldner's translation, preferring "feasting" or "banqueting" to "eating," a text such as R.V. 1, 82⁸—a farewell address to Indra after the *soma* oblations—may impress a modern reader as amusing⁹, it has no doubt never appeared in that light to the ancients themselves. I fail to see why 8, 19, 25f. "If you, O Agni, wert mortal, and I immortal, I would not give thee up to malediction and misery" is a specimen of "humour based on a contrast"¹⁰. It is likewise very dubious whether certain affirmations in connection with wealth or women—who are "indocile" (8, 33, 17), or with whom "friendship is impossible" (10, 95, 15)—

¹ Such as were proposed by A. LUDWIG, in *Festgruss Böhrling*, p. 86.

² GRIFFITH, H. R.V. I, p. 318. Cf. RENOU, E. V. P. XVI, p. 21.

³ Incorrectly also GELDNER, e.g. on R.V. 5, 30, 15; questionably 7, 18, 19.

⁴ PISCHEL, V. S. I, p. 5. Cf. also 1, 120, 3; 1, 176, 4.

⁵ ROTH, in ZDMG 25 (1871), p. 645: "Eine Probe der heiteren Gattung, welche zu unserer Erfrischung da und dort in den Veda Eingang gefunden hat"; VON SCHROEDER, *Mysterium*, p. 369; P. S. SASTRI, *The R̥gvedic poetic spirit*, ABORI 38 (1957), p. 60; A. YA. SYRKIN in *Materialy po istorii i filologii Tzentr. Asii* 3 (1968), p. 66.

⁶ *Bṛhaddevatā* 7, 154.

⁷ GONDA, *Secular hymns*, esp. p. 339; S. K. DE, *Wit, humour and satire in ancient Ind. Lit.*, in OH 3 (1955), p. 157.

⁸ See also GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 5.

⁹ Similar interpretations were e.g. proposed for R.V. 7, 33, 2 (GELDNER, V. S. II, p. 139); 7, 103; 9, 112 (GELDNER, R.V. III, p. 118); 10, 94; 10, 119. See also 8, 24, 30.

¹⁰ SASTRI, l.c. and in IHQ 30, p. 307.

may¹¹ be called cynical. As to 9, 112—"Different indeed are our skill and talents . . . , the carpenter wants a thing that is broken, the physician somebody who is wounded, the brahman one who presses out the *soma*"—this is no more a merry song¹², a piece of moralizing mild humour¹³, "a capital yoke"¹⁴ or "a satirical poem, which derides the manifold desires of mankind"¹⁵—on the contrary, the author requests the god, in a popular way, "to give everybody the things he longs for"¹⁶—than 10, 102¹⁷, the story of Mudgala's race with an ox-cart¹⁸ or the 'Frog song' 7, 103¹⁹. The words added in R̥V. 1, 124, 10; 4, 51, 3 to the prayer "Awake, O Dawn, those who give": "Let the misers sleep never to wake up" are an imprecation rather than²⁰ a sample of the poets' sarcasm.

¹¹ With DE, o. c., p. 158.

¹² B. K. GHOSH, in H. C. I. P. I, p. 346.

¹³ MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 129.

¹⁴ P. S. SASTRI, in ABORI 29, p. 164.

¹⁵ WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 111.

¹⁶ GONDA, o. c., p. 325.

¹⁷ P. VON BRADKE, Ein lustiges Wagenrennen, ZDMG 46 (1892), p. 445; VON SCHROEDER, o. c., p. 346 ff.: "Burleske."

¹⁸ See above, p. 130.

¹⁹ WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 110; GELDNER, Auswahl, II, p. 117; DEUSSEN, A. G. Phil. I, 1, p. 100. See above, p. 143.

²⁰ With P. S. SASTRI, in ABORI 38, p. 60.

21. *Dānastutis*

There are about forty hymns which contain a 'Praise of generosity' (*dānastuti*)¹, in most cases in the form of three to five concluding stanzas². These stanzas express the poet's gratitude for the favours received from his noble patron or patrons. In cases such as 1, 126 or 5, 27 we may speak of a *dānastuti* hymn. The poet—and after him the reciter—praises the man who has presented him with cows—sometimes to the number of ten thousand—bulls, horses, other animals, chariots, gold, women and other wealth³. The supposition is legitimate that these hymns were composed at the request of the donor, a prince or important man, whose name is as a rule mentioned. Many of these hymns are addressed to Indra, but in the *dānastutis* proper Agni is often invoked: e.g. "I invoke this (Agni) of yours, whose radiance is long-lived, with (this) word of praise (addressed) to the benevolent ones whose chariot gets off safely, O giver of horses" (5, 18, 3); "I extol, O Agni, Śātri, Agniveśa's son, who grants a thousand, a shining example of a host. For him the waters shall abound uninterruptedly; with him must remain mighty brilliant dominion" (5, 34, 9). A god may be represented as the real giver of donations which are to hold the patrons captives with a view to future occasions: "O friends, satiate this friend of yours, the bountiful Indra, with *soma*. He will no doubt help us to gain that (gift). Indra will not fail to assist the one who presses *soma*" (6, 23, 9)⁴. The generous patron and Indra share the epithet *maghavan* "benevolent, liberal." This is not to say that a hymn such as 1, 10 containing the words "He is the powerful one; that he, Indra, exert his power for us distributing possessions" is in its entirety a prayer for a *dakṣiṇā*⁵, which is the technical term for these ceremonial gifts⁶. Invoking Uṣas to "bring us wealth and other gifts" the poet of 5, 79 stands up for his patron as much as for himself⁷. Nor should we interpret any passage on gods allotting booty as an allusion to a *dakṣiṇā*,

¹ M. PATEL, *Die Dānastuti's des Rigveda*, Thesis Marburg 1929 (Engl. transl. by B. H. KAPADIA, Vallabh Vidyanagar 1961); OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 39 (1885), p. 83 (= K.S. p. 505); HOPKINS, in JAOS 15, p. 258; B. H. KAPADIA, in JGJRI 17 (1961), p. 203; J. C. HEESTERMAN, at BDCRI 19, p. 320; J. GONDA, *Gifts and giving in the R̥gveda*, VIJ 2 (1964), p. 9.

² Although there is some difference of opinion between the Bṛhaddevatā and the Anukramaṇī about individual cases, they are agreed that a *dānastuti* is either a complete hymn (cf. 8, 55; 56) or, normally, the final part of a hymn, and that it should be addressed to kings. Not all groups of stanzas which we would regard as a *dānastuti* are, however, traditionally recognized as such. Differences of opinion exist e.g. about 1, 100, 16; 1, 126; 5, 18; 5, 27; 8, 24, 28ff.

³ See e.g. ṚV. 1, 122, 7f.; 5, 27, 1; 2; 5; 30, 12; 33, 9; 36, 6; 6, 27, 8; 63, 9f.; 7, 18, 22f.; 8, 1, 32f.; 3, 21ff.; 19, 36; 46, 33 and compare e.g. 1, 125; 126. The exaggeration is obvious.

⁴ Cf. also 4, 32, 19; 5, 33, 6; 41, 16; 42, 7.

⁵ Thus GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 10; cf. also ṚV. 1, 48.

⁶ GONDA, R. I. I, p. 43.

⁷ Cf. also ṚV. 7, 1, 20.

because a conquering god is, like a king, supposed to give all his supporters, worshippers or adherents a share in the spoils of war⁸. On the other hand, references or allusions to this concluding element of the sacrificial ceremonies are not rare⁹. It was even represented as a goddess¹⁰ to receive, in ṚV. 10, 107, a hymn of its own; being originally intended to accompany the gift the *sūkta* praises this as a presentation made to the gods and as the most essential element of the sacrifice, by which the sacrificer himself will benefit most. The fragment of a dialogue between the guest leaving in the morning—perhaps an itinerant reciter who tenders his services—and the wealthy host, to whom the former holds out a prospect of almost unlimited worldly and celestial reward (1, 125)¹¹, illustrates, not only the relation between patron and priestly eulogist, but also the high merit and efficacy attaching to this ceremonial gift¹². However, the hope of a *dakṣiṇā* is not always realized: 1, 120, 12 “Therefore I will have nothing to do with a dream and a rich man who shows no gratitude; they both disappear in the morning”¹³.

The view that the *dānastutis* are generally speaking additions¹⁴ is untenable: in part of the cases they are more or less closely connected with the other parts of the *sūkta*¹⁵. In style, language and sometimes also in their metrum they tend to deviate, showing a preference for certain words and turns of speech¹⁶. As poetic products they are negligible. It has been suggested¹⁷ that hymns of praise addressed to a noble patron have furnished the model for the glorifications of deities, but it is difficult to see how such a thesis could be proved.

⁸ Cf. ṚV. 1, 27, 4–9; 8, 2, 39.

⁹ See e.g. ṚV. 1, 113, 18; 128, 5; 4, 16, 21; 42, 10; 5, 10, 1; 36, 3; 7, 76, 6.

¹⁰ ṚV. 1, 123, 1; 5, 1, 3; 6, 64, 1.

¹¹ See THIEME, *Fremdling*, p. 82. Compare also 10, 107, 8ff.

¹² J. C. HEESTERMAN, at IJ 3, p. 241.

¹³ The *dakṣiṇā* was usually presented in the morning: GELDNER, ṚV. II, p. 363; cf. e.g. ṚV. 1, 123, 1; 6, 64, 1.

¹⁴ Thus, e.g., GRASSMANN in his translations; EGGELING, ŚB. I, p. XI; HOPKINS, in JAOS 15, p. 258, and KEITH, H. S. L., p. 41; otherwise, OLDENBERG, l.c.; PISCHEL, V. S. I, p. 4; PATEL, l.c., p. 30.

¹⁵ cf. e.g. 8, 23, 28.

¹⁶ See e.g. also 4, 15, 9; 5, 27, 6; 34, 9; 6, 45, 33; 8, 6, 48.

¹⁷ RENO(-FILLIOZAT), I. C. I, p. 273.

CHAPTER IV

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ṚGVEDIC POEMS

1. Stanzas and metres

The 'hymns' (*sūkta*) of the Ṛgveda consist of stanzas ranging in number from three¹ to fifty-eight (9, 97), but usually not exceeding ten or twelve². The stanzas of all Vedic metrical texts are almost always complete in themselves and are composed in some fifteen different metres, only seven of which are frequent³. Three of them, used in about four-fifths of all stanzas in the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā, are by far the commonest, viz. the *anuṣṭubh* stanza consisting of four 'feet'⁴ (*pāda*) of eight syllables each⁵; the *triṣṭubh*, consisting of four times eleven; and the *jagatī*, composed of four times twelve syllables⁶. Stanzas are sometimes formed by combining units of different length. From the point of view of syntax and contents a half-stanza (verse or line) is very often a distinct unit⁷; that means that a large majority of the stanzas is essentially bipartite⁸.

¹ There are some fragments, e.g. 1, 99 (consisting of one stanza); perhaps also 10, 176 and some other short hymns.

² For a certain predilection for eleven stanzas: OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 38, p. 456 (= K. S. p. 530).

³ In this section all technical details, in part very complicated, must for reasons of space be omitted. For an introduction see A. A. MACDONELL, *A Vedic grammar for students*, Oxford 1916 (31953), p. 436. The only comprehensive work of greater compass is in some respects antiquated: E. V. ARNOLD, *Vedic metre in its historical development*, Cambridge 1905, 2Delhi 1967. For some particulars see, *inter alia*, ARNOLD in KZ 37, p. 213; BLOOMFIELD, in JAOS 27, p. 72; Repetitions p. 523; H. N. RANDLE, in BSOAS 20, p. 459; V. K. RAJWADE, at IHQ 19, p. 147. For references to metrics in the Vedic texts: WEBER, I. S. VII, p. 1.

⁴ Not to be confused with the feet of Greek metrics; *pāda* (sometimes translated by 'verse') means 'quarter' (from the foot of a quadruped).

⁵ *Pāda* etc. were already mentioned in the Nidānasūtra (WEBER, I. S. VIII, p. 115).

⁶ The number of syllables is not always strictly observed. Stanzas may also contain more or fewer quarters than four; the well-known *gāyatrī* for instance consists of three *pādas* of eight.

⁷ J. GONDA, *Syntax and verse structure in the Veda*, IL 1958 (R. Turner Jubilee Vol.), p. 35; *Syntaxis en versbouw voornamelijk in het Vedisch*, Amsterdam Acad. 1960; The *anuṣṭubh* stanzas of the Ṛgveda, ALB 31-32, p. 14.

⁸ For syntactic and stylistic aspects see p. 211ff. Like the formation of longer units by the accumulation of single lines, the line as an individual unit seems to have been widely normal in songs and poems which are not accompanied by a dance.

In illustration of the processes adopted by the poets to construct stanzas from lines and quarters containing short, single, condensed statements an analysis of the first half of R.V. 1, 10, chosen at random may be inserted here. Stanza 1, a and b⁹ constitute two sentences, stating that the eulogists praise Indra and start a hymn; cd are one sentence, which paraphrases the same idea in poetical imagery. Two telescoped subordinate clauses in 2a and b are continued by a main clause (2c); 2d is a short independent sentence. Stanza 3ab and cd constitute two sentences connected by "then." The line 4ab consists of four short sentences (imperatives) equally distributed over the quarters; cd are one sentence, the verb of which is likewise an imperative. Stanza 5 constitutes one compound sentence—cd are subordinate—both parts of which are of equal length. In 6 the first *pāda* is a complete short sentence, supplemented by the syntactically incomplete second; a similar structure recurs in the second line. Occasionally two stanzas are syntactically connected by means of a particle ("for, because" etc.); instances of enjambment beyond a line are comparatively infrequent; beyond the stanza they are very rare and sometimes wrongly assumed¹⁰.

In studying Vedic verses scholars have too often had a bias in favour of the implicit assumption that they are the natural continuation of 'original Indo-European' verses which in their opinion were characterized, like those of the ancient Greeks, by a more or less fixed arrangement of long and short syllables¹¹. However, the main principle governing Vedic metre is isosyllabism; the systematic alternation of short and long, or of stressed and weak syllables is an incompletely realized secondary characteristic. Such a fixed alternation is, moreover, in all metres more rigidly determined in the latter part of the unit than in the earlier part. So there is much to say for the supposition that in the Indo-Iranian period—as is the case in the Avesta—the principle was the number of syllables only¹². In India the quantities tended to become more and more fixed¹³. The 'popular' and freer *anuṣṭubh* of the Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā and the *gṛhyasūtras*—in which the process of fixing the quantities is in a more rudimentary state—may be regarded as structurally and chronologically earlier

⁹ The quarters are indicated by letters.

¹⁰ Cf. 1, 8, 1f. (one compound sentence); 7, 65, 2; 66, 4–5; 10–11; cf. 1, 10, 6f. Questions of syntactic and stylistic interest will be discussed in chapter V.—In oral poetry of other peoples also a thought is rarely incomplete at the end of a line which is marked by a pause for breath.

¹¹ See e.g. A. MEILLET, in JA 1897, 2, p. 300; Les origines indo-européennes des mètres grecs, Paris 1923.

¹² This is not to say that this versification was 'primitive'; compare e.g. also C. M. BOWRA, Primitive song, New York 1962, p. 87; even a 'bard' in the Yugoslav tradition might not be able to tell how many syllables there are between pauses (A. B. LORD, The singer of tales, Cambridge Mass. 1960, p. 32).

¹³ H. OLDENBERG, Zur Geschichte des Śloka, NG 1909, p. 219 (= K. S. p. 1188); Zur Geschichte des Triṣṭubh, NG 1915 (1916), p. 490 (= K. S. p. 1216); ZDMG 37, p. 54 (= K. S. p. 441).

than the more strictly regulated 'hieratic' octosyllabic verses¹⁴ of the R̥gveda which however did not fail to influence, in course of time, the 'popular' form of the metre.

Very often a hymn of the R̥gveda consists of stanzas in the same metre throughout. A typical divergence from this rule was then already to mark the conclusion of the poem with a stanza in a different metre¹⁵. In the Atharvaveda the metres vary in the same hymn more than is customary in the R̥gveda¹⁶. It has not without reason been supposed that this variation was to a certain extent made a stylistic device¹⁷. In 2, 24 the only stanza in a different metre (12) constitutes the culmination of the poet's address. In part of the cases—especially those in which a hymn consists of two metrically different sets of stanzas¹⁸—the alternation, or rather interruption of the continuity, may, especially when there is at the same place a break in the context or a change in the subjects dealt with¹⁹, be made a serious argument in a discussion of the structure or genesis of the hymn. An unmistakable predilection for one and the same metrical form in the poems ascribed to the same poet or family of poets is indeed not absent²⁰; for instance, outside the Atri hymns of book V the *anustubh* hymns are very rare²¹.

In a considerable number of instances, recurrence of otherwise identical *pādas* is accompanied by changes in the metre which are mostly effected by extensions or abbreviations²². There moreover exists a structural relationship between *tristubh* and *jagati* because in many cases lines composed in these metres are identical, except that they add or subtract a last syllable²³. The very

¹⁴ BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 41, but see also OLDENBERG, at ZDMG 54, p. 181 (= K. S. p. 85).

¹⁵ OLDENBERG, H. R. I, p. 140. See e.g. RV. 1, 64; 82; 90; 143; 158; 2, 8; 13; 5, 55; 59; 64; 65; 6, 8; 7, 104; 8, 78 etc. The tendency to conclude a series with a longer or 'heavier' end is well known also in other arts and among other peoples. In part of the cases the two last stanzas are in a different metre: 1, 51; 141; 157; 166; 5, 44; 8, 17; 10, 9; elsewhere the last and the third last: 1, 52; 182; the last and another stanza: 1, 85; 2, 23; or the second last one: 1, 179; 4, 50; or the first: 7, 41; 44; 8, 37; 92; another stanza 5, 36; 8, 48, 96; 10, 34.

¹⁶ Hymns with two or more different metres are RV. 1, 54; 84; 88; 89; 120; 3, 53; 4, 7; 7, 55; 8, 26; 30 etc. In many hymns two metres are used alternately: 1, 36; 39; 7, 74; 81; 8, 20; 27 etc. The hymns 5, 53 and 8, 46 are examples of a considerable degree of variation.

¹⁷ BLOOMFIELD, l.c. and in JAOS 17, p. 176; 21, p. 46.

¹⁸ Cf. RV. 1, 50; 58; 2, 32; 7, 1; 34; 56; 9, 5. Cases are not lacking in which the metre changes more than once: 5, 51; 8, 89; 103, and compare 1, 91; 3, 52.

¹⁹ Cf. RV. 1, 101; 5, 27; 6, 71; 8, 42; 10, 32.

²⁰ See e.g. 1, 65–70; 137–139 (with curious predilection for interrupted repetition of the type . . . *jātavedasaṃ vipraṃ nā jātavedasam*; cf. AiB. 5, 11, 1); 10, 1–9 (8); compare also the three hymns 7, 1; 34; 56 and see BERGAIGNE in JA 1889 (I = 8–13), p. 151.

²¹ There is, in the Veda, no narrative metre such as its successor, the epic *śloka*.

²² BLOOMFIELD, Repetitions, p. 523; BLOOMFIELD and EDGERTON, Variants, III, p. 22.

²³ BLOOMFIELD, o.c., p. 529; LANMAN, in JAOS 10, p. 535.

extensive interchange between octosyllabic and long metre lines should not however tempt us to consider²⁴ the latter to have originated from the former. The diction of the Vedic poets is so imitative and, at the same time, so free in all matters of form as to preclude, in most cases, any decision as to the chronological precedence of a definite metrical type.

There is ample evidence that metre, style and contents of stanzas or groups of stanzas usually form a harmonious whole²⁵. The comparatively rare *dvipadā virāḥ* stanza—two decasyllabic units which because of a rest in the middle consist of two pentads each—is for instance very well adapted to the ‘chopped’ style, jumping thought and sudden transitions of the Agni hymns 1, 65–73; (1, 66, 3):

*dādāhāra kṣémam óko ná ranvó
yávo ná pakvó jétā jánānām,*
“Guarding peace and rest, pleasant like one’s home
(Is) ripe like barley, victor of peoples.”

The complex and emphatic phraseology of the Vāyu hymn 1, 134 and its many repetitions at the ends of the successive *pādas* are in harmony with the complicated *atyasṭi* strophes (12, 12, 8; 8, 8; 12, 8) of which it consists²⁶:

(3) *vāyúr yun̄kte rōhitā vāyúr aruṇā
vāyú ráthe ajirā dhurī vólhave
váhiṣṭhā dhurī vólhave . . .*
“Vāyu (Wind) yokes the two chestnut horses, Wind the two tawny ones,
Vāyu puts to the chariot the two agile (ones) in the yoke to draw.
The best (draught-horses,) in the yoke to draw . . .”

It is perhaps no accident that the Vedic wedding hymns are prevailingly in *anustubhs*, the funeral stanzas in *tristubhs*²⁷.

Since the verses are largely flexible and adaptable to the different themes²⁸, a change of mood or subject is not infrequently marked by a change of metrical form. In this connection it is worth noticing that already some of the R̥gvedic poets not only had a sensitiveness to the metrical structure of their productions²⁹ and were acquainted with some technical terms³⁰, but also attributed a wonderful creative power to them: “by means of the *ḡagatī* stanza and melody the Creator placed the river in the heavens” (1, 164, 25). They moreover made an attempt to attribute them to, or co-ordinate them with, definite deities: the *virāḥ* is said to belong to the double deity Mitra-Varuṇa, the *tristubh* to Indra, the *ḡagatī* to the Viśve Devās³¹. These tendencies became more pronounced in

²⁴ With W. HASKELL, at PAOS 11 (1881), p. LX.

²⁵ See also BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 41.

²⁶ Cf. e.g. also 1, 139; 9, 111; ARNOLD, o.c., p. 237; RENOU, E. V. P. II, p. 33; 42 etc.

²⁷ R̥V. 10, 85; AV. 14 or against R̥V. 10, 14–18; AV. 18.

²⁸ See also p. 227 etc.

²⁹ Cf. 1, 186, 4; 8, 12, 10; 10, 114, 9; 130, 3.

³⁰ See e.g. 1, 164, 23ff.; 2, 43, 1; 10, 14, 16. Compare also 10, 90, 9 mentioning the creation of metres and melodies.

³¹ R̥V. 10, 130, 4f.; cf. 10, 124, 9.

the Atharvaveda—where a larger number of technical terms appears to be known³²—to be developed into a more systematic whole by the authors of the *brāhmaṇas* and *āraṇyakas*³³. As far as they are attached to the R̥gveda their works are perhaps in a third of all their speculative passages more or less concerned with the metres which are systematically co-ordinated, not only with the gods, but also with other important concepts, such as the social classes, animals, parts of the body, the provinces and quarters of the universe³⁴. The *gāyatrī*, symbolizing the social order of the brahmins, is Agni's metre³⁵, the *triṣṭubh*, the heroic metre *par excellence*, is Indra's and co-ordinated with nobility³⁶. The metres become deities themselves³⁷, instruments of creation, and are even raised higher than the gods³⁸. Being believed to exert various forms of power and influence³⁹ they impart certain qualities or characteristics to their user⁴⁰; they moreover came to be closely associated with definite divisions of the ritual: the *gāyatrī* is at the morning service of the *soma* sacrifice allotted to Agni⁴¹ and the Vasus, the *triṣṭubh* at the midday service to Indra and the Rudras, the *jaḡatī* at the third pressing in the evening to the Viśve Devās and the Ādityas⁴². The *triṣṭubh*, moreover, is the chief metre of the *hotar*, the *gāyatrī* and the *praḡātha*⁴³ of the *udgātar*⁴⁴. The R̥gveda shows traces of this distinction between recitative and song; beside hymns in simple metres are found strophic effects made up of various combinations of series of eight and twelve syllables⁴⁵ intended for *sāman* singing⁴⁶.

³² AV. 8, 9, 14; 20; 10, 25; 11, 7, 8; 12, 3, 10; 19, 21 etc.

³³ RENOUE, in JA 250 (1962), p. 173.

³⁴ Cf. e.g. TS. 1, 7, 5, 4; ŚB. 1, 2, 5, 6; 1, 3, 2, 16; 1, 4, 1, 34; 1, 7, 2, 13ff.; 10, 3, 2, 1ff. For a survey see SIDDHESWAR VARMA, in Proc. 16 AJOC II, p. 10.

³⁵ E.g. TS. 2, 2, 5, 5.

³⁶ Haug, Ai. B. I, p. 76.

³⁷ This great significance of the metres and metrical speech in general depends largely on the number of the syllables of which they consist and the belief that objects and concepts are closely connected with another by their numerical values and proportions. Cf. e.g. AiB. 1, 1, 7. (See also p. 373).

³⁸ ŚB. 1, 8, 2, 14; 8, 2, 2, 8; cf. 8, 2, 3, 9. Elsewhere they are associates of the gods, e.g. AiB. 4, 5, 2.

³⁹ See e.g. TS. 2, 2, 4, 8; ŚB. 1, 3, 4, 6; 1, 8, 2, 8; 4, 4, 3, 1.

⁴⁰ See e.g. TS. 3, 3, 7, 1f.; 4, 4, 12, 1ff.

⁴¹ See also BERGAIGNE, in JA 1889 (8-13), p. 134.

⁴² AiB. 3, 13, 1; see BERGAIGNE, in JA 1889 (8-13), p. 13; 166, who was of the opinion that most R̥gvedic hymns were composed for a *soma* sacrifice that was not essentially different from that described in the *brāhmaṇas* and *sūtras*.

⁴³ *Praḡāthas* are formed by combination of units of 8 and 12 syllables.

⁴⁴ For details see OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 38, p. 439 (= K. S. p. 513).

⁴⁵ Cf. P. D. CHANDRATRE, Longer metres in Rigveda, at Bulletin Chuni Lal Gandhi Vidyabhavan 14 (1969), p. 1.

⁴⁶ E.g. 1, 127; 5, 87; 9, 111. After the observations made in chapter II the moot question as to what portions of the corpus were from the beginning intended to serve liturgical purposes and the problem of the character of ritual and liturgy in the early R̥gvedic period must be left undiscussed here.

2. Structure of the *sūktas*

At first sight many R̥gvedic hymns impress us as consisting of isolated, self-contained stanzas of restricted scope, each of which presents—even without any perceptible inner connection—a single aspect or a single situation¹. In some cases this impression is no doubt correct: many stanzas could be interchanged or even transferred to another *sūkta* without detriment to the intelligibility of the context; there are, in our eyes, many interruptions²; there are disorderly and badly composed or otherwise structurally unsuccessful hymns³. On closer investigation it however appears that in many cases unity in a hymn is more clearly observable than continuity, which is not infrequently difficult to trace because of a certain amount of repetition and the insertion of digressive material⁴. The elaboration of the theme, while contributing much to the unity of the hymn, was, as far as we are able to see, largely the task of the individual poet, who no doubt was acquainted with a great variety of models to choose from⁵. A thorough examination will indeed often show that many times abrupt transitions find their explanation in a certain vivacity of expression⁶ and that an at first sight rather incoherent hymn constitutes a well-considered whole. In 1, 1⁷ Agni is invoked as the divine priest presiding over the sacrifice who is most lavish in bestowing treasures on his worshipper (st. 1). Lauded by sages of old as well as of today, he is adjured to bring the other gods to the sacrificial place (st. 2); through him the sacrificer can gain prosperity (st. 3). Only that sacrifice will be successful that is encompassed by Agni (4); he will, indeed, hear the prayer (5); that will come true (6). The final stanzas (7–9) express the allegiance of those speaking and implore Agni's benevolence.

A great number of Vedic *sūktas*, indeed, are to a remarkable degree characterized by an obviously preconceived plan, by one chief underlying idea or the elaboration of one definite theme, which give them unity⁸. Not infrequently the initial stanza contains an invitation, exposition or some reference to the main subject of the poem, the next stanza an explanation or elaboration of the theme. At the end some conclusion or recapitulation and a final prayer are very common. The more or less recapitulative recurrence to the theme (or the subject or

¹ See e.g. OLDENBERG, *Vedaforschung*, p. 14.

² After dealing, in stanza 1, with the birth of the primeval horse the poet of 1, 163 proceeds to mention those gods who harness the animal etc. before saying (in stanza 3) that it is identical with other deities, a statement which we would have expected to follow immediately after stanza 1. For other interruptions see 1, 164, 12–14 (st. 13 continuing 12a; 14, 12 in general); 2, 27, 13–15; 3, 7, 5–7.

³ See e.g. 1, 139 (RENOU, *E. V. P. IV*, p. 31); 4, 55; 5, 43; 10, 77; 93. The repeated reference to Dabhīti in 2, 15, 9 (cf. 4) is incomprehensible.

⁴ Cf. NORMAN BROWN, in *JAOS* 88, p. 201.

⁵ Cf. LOMMEL, *Gedichte*, p. 23.

⁶ See e.g., *RV.* 1, 92, 6; 113, 16; 8, 48, 3; 11; 10, 31, 3.

⁷ Cf. NORMAN BROWN, in *Congr.* Vol. Gonda, p. 63.

⁸ In the second half of the *maṇḍala* X there are many exceptions.

situation of the initial stanza) brings about, in various cases, a certain relationship between the beginning and the final part of the poem⁹.

There are of course many possibilities of variation or complication; the eulogy may for instance pass into a long prayer, or into invocations and requests, alternating with a confirmation of the god's favour¹⁰. The invitation at the beginning is not infrequently followed by a prayer in one of the next stanzas¹¹. In the Ásvin hymns (e. g. 1, 116–119) the introduction (invitations) is normally followed by a litany listing the gods' deeds in the same metre. The theme is not necessarily indicated in the first stanza¹²; it may follow the exordium¹³.

Very often the theme, though obviously viewed as a unit, is throughout the hymn broken into smaller parts, the poet selecting or emphasizing some aspect or incident, or dwelling, in varied wordings, on the same motives or episodes¹⁴. Minor themes, subsidiary to the larger themes, can assume various forms suitable to different situations. Or some motives or secondary themes combine or alternate with the main theme so as to form a varied whole: in 9, 61 eulogistic and precatory references to the process of Soma's purification succeed, in these passages in the middle of the hymn, to references to Indra's Vṛtra combat in which he was assisted by Soma—in st. 22 both themes combine—, digressions on the draught's significance for man and other matter. So a hymn may expand and modify its theme as it proceeds¹⁵ and, although many poets show considerable skill in treating a subject without losing anything that is essential to them, they sometimes are, especially when the subject matter is complex, forced to leave the poem a fragment or torso or to resume the theme in another hymn¹⁶.

There is, in the elaboration of the themes and the distribution of the descriptive elements over the poems an unmistakable difference between hymns addressed to, for instance Agni, Uṣas, Maruts and other deities. The poems in praise of the Maruts¹⁷ are in these respects more varied, more precise and detailed. They, moreover, insist on definite characteristics of these gods. In using

⁹ B. SCHLERATH, in *Akten 24. Intern. Orient. Kongr., München 1957 (1959)*, p. 532. Compare e.g. *RV.* 1, 6; 17; 35; 140; 145; 2, 16; 19; 24; 3, 32 and see also 2, 28; 7, 87; 10, 40.

¹⁰ See e.g. 2, 23; 27; 48.

¹¹ See 1, 5; 3, 40. Some hymns consist of one long invitation and a very short prayer (e.g. 3, 41). Compare also shorter hymns such as 1, 138.

¹² As e.g. also 10, 15, 1; 23, 1; 25, 1.

¹³ E.g. 4, 24, 2; 6, 9, 2; 10, 31, 3; 88, 3f.

¹⁴ See e.g. 5, 2; 30; 32; 6, 39; 7, 4. Compare also the beautiful and well arranged Uṣas hymn 1, 113. See HENRY, *Les littératures de l'Inde*, Paris 1904, p. 29.

¹⁵ Compare also addresses and invitations such as 4, 4; 32.

¹⁶ For 4, 24 see SREG, *Sagenstoffe*, p. 90; for 1, 165; 169–171, GELDNER, *RV.* I, p. 249; for 4, 18, *ibidem*, I, p. 441. It is impossible to say if all hymns which may give modern readers the impression of fragments (e.g. 5, 66; 8, 58; 9, 58; 5, 48; *RENOU*, *E. V. P.* IV, p. 76) are really torsos.

¹⁷ *RENOU*, *E. V. P.* X, p. 1.

the term theme we should not forget that in many hymns—and now we think first and foremost of the Soma hymns of *maṇḍala* IX—there is no question of any clear time-sequence or even of a thematic development proper. Many poems do not progress and their composition could in a sense be described as cyclical in that they usually recur to the same minor themes and make use of the same—it is true somewhat varied—images. The beautiful—almost ‘epic,’ yet essentially eulogistic—hymn 1, 32 states, in st. 2, 4, 5 that Indra slew Vṛtra, inserting flashbacks in 3, 6, 11 and 12, and mentioning some details of the fight in 6 and 7, and its results in 2, 4, 5, 7, 8 etc., to return in the final stanzas to the varied statement that the god was triumphant.

There are instances of special skill in constructing transitions from one theme or aspect of a subject to another. After praising Agni in the stanzas 6–10 the poet of 4, 1 proceeds to relate the Paṇi myth (13–17), but before doing so he dwells, in two stanzas, on the god’s birth, adding that among those who were born at the same time were also the Aṅgirasas, “our human fathers” who (in 13) are said to have taken away the cows from the Paṇis¹⁸. In the long Indra hymn 8, 4 an apostrophe to Pūṣan (st. 15–18), the god who guides the travelling eulogist, connects the hymn proper and the *dānastuti*. A closer connection between two successive stanzas can be achieved, for instance by continuation of the same syntactic structure; by parallelism or close similarity in contents¹⁹. Occasionally, and especially in passages dedicated to a dual deity, a stanza is followed by its duplicate²⁰.

On the other hand, the poet’s technique made also possible short episodic references to a legendary event, interrupting a definite sequence of more or less coherent statements²¹. Another practice is the insertion of a larger résumé of a definite mythical event in a series of shorter allusions: the poet of 4, 33, whilst enumerating the various achievements of the Ṛbhus, needs two stanzas (6f.) for the most frequently mentioned exhibition of their skill, viz. their having made one cup into four²².

The structure of a confirmation of divine power may be illustrated by the Indra hymn 2, 12: st. 1–3 recall the great feats of the god—the worlds trembled, he made firm the quaking earth, slew the serpent, released the waters—, 5–10 (after a transition in 4) his activities in the mundane sphere; 11–12 refer to legends; after a short recapitulation and transition (13) the poet states that the god, strengthened by the faithful worshipper, will help him (14f.). The essential traits of Viṣṇu’s character are, in 1, 154, presented in a still more condensed form²³. Other hymns consist almost exclusively of an enumeration of the god’s

¹⁸ For transitions see also 2, 35, 10; 3, 31, 3; 7, 18, 21; 10, 56, 5.

¹⁹ Cf. e.g. 1, 164, 17f. (questions); 7, 66, 10f. (relative clauses); 7, 1, 8f.

²⁰ E.g. 1, 108, 9f.; 8, 40, 10f. (RENOU, E. V. P. XIV, p. 129).

²¹ E.g. 1, 19, 6 (GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 69); 6, 64, 7–9.

²² Cf. 4, 16, 9–12; 30, 8–11; 10, 17, 7–9. See also 1, 104; 5, 85, 3f.

²³ Compare also the typically Rudra hymn 2, 33, the Agni hymn 3, 1.

cosmic and legendary²⁴ deeds, or of general statements of his power, alternating with epithets or injunctions to worship him²⁵.

ṚV. 1, 16 is an example of what may be described as a manifoldly varied invitation. In stanza 1 Indra's horses are requested to convey him to the sacrificial place; in 2 this request, clothed in other descriptive words, is repeated; in 3 it is stated that Indra is called upon in the morning, in 4 and 5 he is invited directly to be urged, in 6 and 7, to drink the *soma*; st. 8 states that the god (usually) comes; the final stanza is a prayer. ṚV. 2, 18 is more complicated: after informing the hearer, in figurative wording, that now, in the morning, the god is prepared to come (st. 1 f.), the poet, continuing the same imagery, proceeds to invite him (3), to address him (in 4–6) with three times repeated "come," varied with a climax—"with two, twenty, eighty bay horses"—, and to be quite explicit in 7: "come to my hymn, to this sacrifice"; st. 8 is a prayer, 9 a stereotyped final stanza. ṚV. 8, 25, called a "type of a static hymn"²⁶, invokes Varuṇa-and-Mitra in 1–9; 13; 17 and, between these addresses, Aditi and other gods in 10 (and 11), Viṣṇu and Sindhu in 12; other deities in 14 (and 15), to refer again to the dual deity in the *dānastuti* (st. 23).

Intelligibly enough, special or uncommon subjects may require deviations from the above patterns and tendencies. The cosmogonic hymns 10, 90; 121; 129 quite rationally start their expositions at the beginning of the evolution which they try to describe. The difficult and complicated hymn 1, 164 may be resolved into three closely linked divisions each of which purports to be a part of the poet's transcendental visions²⁷. ṚV. 10, 127 describes the phenomena attending the approach of Night imploring the protection of this goddess. ṚV. 7, 104, which the poet "saw for the destruction of the demons"²⁸ and indeed essentially is a long exorcism, invoking the help of the dual deity Indra-Soma against demons and their adherents, the 'sorcerers,' includes a smaller passage (14–17) in which the poet clears himself from the charge of malpractices. The composition of the hymns addressed to the Viśve Devās²⁹ is remarkable in that, generally speaking, each stanza is directed to a different deity, which is—in 8, 29 even anonymously—eulogized by means of appropriate characteristics and references. A structural principle which some Vedic passages have in common with the Avesta and therefore are regarded as inherited³⁰ consists in an enumeration of various abodes or places of residence of a deity: the well-known tendency to completeness lest the deity or demon addressed can excuse himself from coming and answering the prayer.

²⁴ Compare e.g. 2, 15 (the final stanza is a stereotyped request).

²⁵ E.g. 2, 21; 3, 46; 47.

²⁶ RENOUE, E. V. P. VII, p. 67. According to the *anukramanikā* the dual deity is addressed in 1–9 and 13–24, the Viśve Devās in 10–12.

²⁷ NORMAN BROWN, in JAOS 88 (see above).

²⁸ Bṛhaddevatā 6, 28.

²⁹ See p. 102 and cf. RENOUE, in Comm. Vol. Nobel, p. 178; ṚV. 1, 186; 6, 49; 50 etc.

³⁰ Avesta, Yt. 12, 9–37; ṚV. 1, 108, 7; 8, 12, 16f.; 97, 4f.; see LOMMEL, at AO (L.), 10, p. 372.

Although in hymns directed to the same deities the same topics tend to recur—a certain monotony has, *inter alia* in the Soma hymns of *maṇḍala* IX, more than once been noticed³¹—examples are far from rare in which two hymns which consist, for instance, chiefly of prayers and invitations addressed to the same gods, differ, also in their structure, on many points. Thus 7, 97 (Indra-Bṛhaspati) presents a greater variety of contents than 4, 49 (directed to the same dual deity); moreover, in the latter the deity is invoked in every stanza, whereas in the former the compound expressing the name does not occur³². Even the Āpri hymns are not wholly stereotyped. On closer examination we can indeed subscribe to Macdonell's opinion: "When we consider that nearly five hundred hymns of the Ṛgveda are addressed to two deities (Indra, Agni) alone, it is surprising that so many variations of the same theme should be possible." From a comparative survey of six successive hymns dedicated to Varuṇa-and-Mitra and traditionally ascribed to the same poet (7, 60–65) it appears that all of them begin with paying homage to the Sun (Sūrya), the 'eye' of the dual deity. In part of the hymns this homage expanded into a larger eulogy upon this divine luminary or a prayer for Sūrya's mediation. Whereas, in 63, the double deity recedes into the background, it is in the other hymns circumstantially praised. In 60 and 62 other gods, especially the Ādityas, share in this praise. In 60 and 64—which is largely precatory—the poet introduces prayers on behalf of king Sudās.

A comparison between a shorter and a longer hymn dedicated to the same deity³³ and dealing with the same subject matter may show how in the latter this is elaborated and expanded with new ideas; 7, 102 (in *gāyatrī* metre, stanzas of 24 syllables):

- (1) "Start singing to Parjanya, son of heaven, the bounteous!
He must get us pasturage!
- (2) (He) who places the germ into the plants, the cows,
the mares, the women, Parjanya,
- (3) In his mouth offer the oblation, the sweetest one.
That he will give us refreshment without check";

and in 7, 101 (in *triṣṭubh* metre, stanzas of 44 syllables):

- (1) "Speak out the three voices preceded by light, which milk this sweetness-yielding udder. Making as his calf the germ of the plants, he, the bull, bellows as soon as (he is) born³⁴.
- (2) That he who increases plants, and waters, the god who rules the entire world, provide a triple refuge as our shelter, threefold light for our protection.
- (3) In that he is now sterile and now gives birth, he makes himself what he wishes.

³¹ E.g. MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 65; RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 46; ELIZARENKOVA, *Rigveda*, p. 37.

³² See GONDA, *Dual deities*, p. 322.

³³ Cf. NORMAN BROWN, in *NIA* 2, p. 115.

³⁴ "Speak": either the god, or more plausibly, Soma is addressed, the three voices being those which rise when the *soma* draught is pressed. "Udder": the *soma*-press and the rain cloud.

The mother accepts the juice of the father. By it the father increases and the son³⁵.

- (4) He in whom all worlds (and their inhabitants) stand (firmly), (and) the three heavens, (from whom) the waters flow triply. On all sides the three vessels, pouring out, drip abundance of sweetness³⁶.
- (5) These words must lie in the heart of Parjanya, the autonomous king; that he will take delight in them. Rain, bringing refreshment, must be ours; the plants guarded by the god(s) (be) fruitful.
- (6) He is the bull impregnating all female beings. In him is the soul of all that moves and stands. This manifestation of the universal Order must preserve me for a hundred autumns³⁷. Preserve us evermore (, O gods,) with fortune and well-being!"

Cases are not rare in which these structural tendencies are made obvious by essentially syntactic or stylistic means and processes. The unity of a hymn can, for instance, be more conspicuous if the same word recurs in the greater part of its stanzas³⁸. In the Indra hymn 1, 7 the god is invoked or in different case forms mentioned by name, at the beginning of the stanzas 1-5 and 10 (the last) and after the caesura in 1, 2 and 9; the conclusion of this hymn is not marked by a different metre³⁹. All stanzas of 10, 80 begin with a case form of the name Agni. Most stanzas of 1, 63 begin with "thou" (*tvam*). All stanzas of 10, 78, except the last (8), the prayer, consist of three or four similes; 2-5 are moreover syntactically similar.

The poets can also resort to grammatical means when they wish to distinguish between the present time, the actual past and the remote past, which, whether mythical or historical, they set almost always outside the normal temporal scheme⁴⁰. Sometimes they transfer themselves mentally to the past introducing a divine speaker or addressing a mythical figure⁴¹. Shifts and differences in time are quite common⁴². Often an author starts his poem in the mythical past to continue—in a prayer, invitation or allusion to a recent event—in the present⁴³. Or he returns to the present time of the first stanza⁴⁴. A mythical fact is also transferred to the present, said to take place, that is to be reiterated, in the present situation⁴⁵. This actuality of a mythical fact can however also lead to

³⁵ Juice: the rain. The son: the vegetable kingdom; the mother is the earth. The rain first increases the plants, later it returns to the clouds, increasing the 'father.'

³⁶ Vessels: the clouds; sweetness: the rain, the terms alluding to the *soma* vessels and the *soma*.

³⁷ I. e. years.

³⁸ See e.g. 5, 63; 6, 26 (repeated address with "thou"); and cf. 1, 8, 8-10; 9, 3; 15; 37.

³⁹ See e.g. also 6, 72; 74; 7, 87 (Varuṇa).

⁴⁰ For grammatical particulars: J. GONDA, *Old Indian*, Leiden 1971, p. 129.

⁴¹ E.g. 6, 20, 8; 31, 3.

⁴² Cf. RENOUE, *E. V. P. II*, p. 24.

⁴³ E.g. 1, 104, 7; 3, 1; 5, 30, 10.

⁴⁴ Cf. 1, 104; GELDNER, at ZDMG 71, p. 319.

⁴⁵ E.g. 3, 5, 10; cf. also 1, 121 and places such as 2, 11, 19.

the reverse identification: at 5, 15, 5 the fire, that has been kindled while the poem is recited, is said to have assisted the legendary Atri⁴⁶. Or the mythical—and legendary—events are presented as actual, seen so to say from the point of view of those who witnessed them⁴⁷. The long address inserted in 10, 22 (st. 4–14) contains mainly prayers which are also utilizable in the present.

⁴⁶ Cf. also 5, 45, 3; 6; 11; 6, 17, 3. For 1, 6 see A. VENKATASUBBIAH, in *ALB* 28, p. 55.

⁴⁷ E.g. 5, 40, 8f. and cf. 6, 18, 5; 13; 8, 73, 8; 6, 47; 8, 86.

3. Introductory and final stanzas

Special attention may be invited to the initial and final stanzas of many average *sūktas*. The introductory stanza, in which the poet enters into communication with the deity, very often contains an invocation¹ or invitation², a combination of invocation and prayer³, sometimes only a prayer⁴; often an injunction to start the hymn⁵ or the statement that "we call on the god"⁶ or that the reciters invoke or have invoked him⁷; or that the poet has made the hymn⁸ or that he (the reciter) intends to pronounce it, proclaiming the god's glorious deeds⁹, that he "brings" or offers it¹⁰; there are also references to sacrificial ceremonies¹¹, to the moment or occasion of reciting¹² often clothed in suitable imagery; to general and appropriate truths¹³; sometimes the deity is roused to activity¹⁴, or his presence or activity is stated¹⁵. Elsewhere the author begins with a statement of the god's functions, power or significance¹⁶; signifies his intention to proclaim a god's deeds¹⁷; puts one or more questions about the latter's origin or identity¹⁸.

There are of course many possibilities of variation. The poet of 10, 61¹⁹ created a very successful poem in which the thought: "This will be a hymn approved of by the audience, which will lead producers and priests to their goal" is expressed in solemn and suitable wording. The single *pāda* at the beginning of 10, 20 imploring felicitous inspiration precludes the indications of the topic to be dealt with (*adhikāra*) of the later *sūtra* style. The exordium, as a rule comparatively short, is sometimes expanded into a long introduction: in 2, 21 (six stanzas) it covers just the first half of the hymn, but the author knows how to introduce an amount of variation: "... offer *soma* to Indra; ... pay homage to Indra; ... I shall proclaim Indra's heroic deeds"²⁰. The

¹ E.g. R̥V. 1, 1; 12; 4, 20; cf. 2, 23.

² E.g. 1, 2; 3; 9; 14; 19; 4, 16; 10, 44.

³ E.g. 1, 8; 13; 4, 9.

⁴ E.g. 1, 17; 18; 10, 38.

⁵ E.g. 1, 5; 2, 17; 10, 42.

⁶ E.g. 1, 4; cf. 2, 28.

⁷ E.g. 1, 7; 10.

⁸ E.g. 1, 20; cf. 10, 43.

⁹ E.g. 2, 15.

¹⁰ E.g. 2, 16; 27; 4, 10; 33.

¹¹ E.g. 2, 19, 20; 21; 22; 3, 19; 5, 34.

¹² E.g. 1, 6; 2, 18; 22; 4, 10; 10, 35; 7, 60ff.

¹³ E.g. 2, 25; 26.

¹⁴ E.g. 4, 4; 6.

¹⁵ E.g. in the Agni hymns 4, 7; 11; 13; 14; in the Soma hymns 9, 5; 9; 12.

¹⁶ E.g. 2, 40; 3, 5; 11; 14; 16; 25; 46.

¹⁷ E.g. 2, 15; 3, 2; cf. 3, 39; 51; 61.

¹⁸ E.g. 5, 53, 1f.; 61, 1ff.; 10, 40, 1.

¹⁹ Cf. HAUG, *Ai. B. I.*, p. 23; PISCHEL, *V. S. I.*, p. 71; S. A. DANGE, at *JIH* 45, p. 369.

²⁰ Cf. e.g. also 3, 55, 1-3; 6, 68; 7, 34; 10, 31, 1-5.

poet of 10, 89, after expressing, in a long exordium (st. 1-4), his intention to praise Indra—in which however, suiting the action to the word, he anticipates the eulogies which are to follow in st. 5-7—passes (in st. 8) over to an appeal to the god in his capacity of an avenger willing to bring the wicked to justice. Words of praise are however in the eleven stanzas of the second part not lacking. In 10, 62 the stanzas 1-7, addressing the Aṅgirasas, constitute a prologue to the *dānastuti* in st. 8-11.

There are however also hymns without an exordium. Thus 1, 6 and 7, 33 begin abruptly and 1, 152, directed to Varuṇa and Mitra²¹, begin with a eulogy which (in st. 2) changes into a series of enigmas, the solution of which is (in 5) said to depend on the two gods who recompense the one who finds it; the final stanza is a prayer²². Cases are not absent in which the poet, omitting any introduction, brings his hearers *in medias res*²³, or in which he repeatedly returns to his starting point, Indra's Vṛtra combat²⁴. In 1, 104, 2 the transition between the invitation in stanza 1 and the mythical story—commemorated to urge the god to helpfulness—is abrupt.

It would take too long to make an attempt at describing all structural features of the final portions of the hymns, but some of them may be worth mentioning, the more so as there is an unmistakable tendency to mark, in some way or other, the conclusion of a composition. ṚV. 1, 115 is an instance of a *sūkta* which at the end returns to the idea expressed in the beginning: it opens and closes with emphasis upon the rising aspect of the sun²⁵. A repetition of the address, prayer or invocation of the beginning of the poem in the last stanza is rather frequent²⁶. Elsewhere the closing of a hymn is a sort of recapitulation or repetition of some thoughts expressed in the preceding stanzas²⁷. Or the character of the poem and the aim of its maker are, after various words of praise, references to the god's achievement etc., mentioned in the last stanza or stanzas and followed only by a prayer²⁸. If a hymn is to be recited, or at least utilizable for the fulfilment of special desires, the final stanza formulates that wish: 5, 78, addressed to the divine helpers and physicians, the Aśvins, which consists of three triplets constituting an invitation, praise and prayer, ends in a prayer for a prosperous delivery after a normal pregnancy²⁹. Not infrequently the final stanza mentions a larger number of gods than the preceding parts of the *sūkta*³⁰.

²¹ See L. RENOÜ, in *Journal de psychologie* 1949, p. 266 (= BhV 10, p. 133).

²² See e.g. also 2, 25; 5, 32; 38; 55; 63; 7, 87; 10, 78.

²³ E.g. 7, 33, 1.

²⁴ Cf. e.g. 1, 32 (cf. RENOÜ, H. P., p. 9).

²⁵ S. D. ATKINS, in *JAOS* 58, p. 419. Cf. also 2, 33; 3, 16; 10, 61.

²⁶ E.g. 1, 7; 2, 35; 7, 60; 10, 122.

²⁷ E.g. 1, 32, 15; 179, 6; 2, 1, 15; 4, 35, 8; 10, 37, 12; 90, 16; cf. 6, 49, 15. ṚV. 5, 40, 9 is an explanation of the *arthavāda* type.

²⁸ E.g. 1, 51; 3, 11; cf. also 2, 35; 4, 38; 6, 28.

²⁹ See below; GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 87; GONDA, *Rgvidhāna*, p. 49. For a difference in metre of final 'spell stanzas' (e.g. 3, 33, 13) see ALSDORF, in *JOIB* 13, p. 207.

³⁰ E.g. 2, 32; 40; 3, 20; 4, 54; 7, 82.

That is not to say that a simple prayer, addressed to the god of the hymn, is a rare occurrence³¹. This prayer may, in varied wording, be a request to accept the hymn³², a renewed invitation³³, the statement that it is welcome to the god. Or it mentions the god's activity or benevolence³⁴. The final stanza sometimes addresses the reciters or the audience or stimulates them into a display of their eulogistic ability³⁵. As to its outward form, mention must be made of the extension put to it, sometimes by means of a repetition of some of the preceding words, e. g. 5, 21, 4 . . . *rtásya yónim ásadah, sasásya yónim ásadah*³⁶.

Thus final stanzas often interrupt the order in which the subject matter has been expanded; deviating from it they can bring about a 'destruction'³⁷. In many hymns, however, the last stanza cannot be said to have any typical feature; the poem has simply reached its close. The poet, who could have added more stanzas of a similar character, ends. Instances are the enumerative hymns, such as the Āpri-sūktas and those addressed to many gods addressed individually³⁸.

Some hymns end in a real epilogue. The Agni hymn 3, 6, after praising the god in general terms, in particular (st. 1-6) as the intermediary between worshippers and gods, proceeds to implore him to convey the gods who approve of his activity to the sacrificial place (st. 7-10). The last stanza of 3, 31³⁹, whilst expressing the wish that this poem be identical with its mythical prototype, states its intentions, viz. the winning of the god's favour⁴⁰. An epilogue may be recognizable by the absence of features common to the preceding stanzas, for instance a refrain⁴¹, by a different metre⁴² or in general by a 'destruction.' In 2, 12 the elaboration of the theme continues in st. 13, which is structurally different from the preceding stanzas describing Indra's feats and character; st. 14 expresses the poet's confidence in his help; the last stanza is without refrain.

Mention has already been made of the *dānastutis* as concluding portions⁴³. Another peculiarity of some R̥gvedic hymns is an atharvanic ending, that is the

³¹ E. g. 1, 1; 5; 6; 7; 12; 16; 21; 2, 21; 23; 34; 4, 36, 8f.; 5, 49, 5.

³² E. g. 1, 8; 10; 12; 17; 3, 12.

³³ E. g. 1, 19; 3, 40; 41; 42; 47.

³⁴ E. g. 1, 2; 3; 2, 26.

³⁵ E. g. 1, 4; 9; cf. also 6, 45, 33 and 5, 45, 11 (see RENOUE, E. V. P. IV, p. 72).

³⁶ Cf. e. g. 5, 7; 16; 18, 20ff.; 6, 42; 10, 166.

³⁷ RENOUE, E. V. P. IV, p. 6; cf. e. g. 1, 29, 7; 4, 55, 10; 5, 41, 20; 42, 17f.; 6, 49, 15 (no names of gods).

³⁸ E. g. 1, 13; 22, 5, 46; 51, and see 1, 28; 33; 41, 42; 5, 48; 6, 46. For 1, 103 see GELDNER, at ZDMG 71, p. 319.

³⁹ Cf. also GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 48.

⁴⁰ See also 3, 30, 15-22; 4, 16, 20-21; 5, 61, 17-19; 6, 51, 13-16 (in other metres); 10, 15, 12-14.

⁴¹ See 1, 185, 9-11.

⁴² E. g. 1, 101, 8-11.

⁴³ See p. 170.

addition, at the end of a *sūkta*, of a stanza or a group of stanzas which are either—be it with some differences—found also in the Atharvaveda⁴⁴ or are atharvanic in contents⁴⁵. In the first case the stanza may have been quoted or borrowed by the other corpus. Some final stanzas, whether they are of this type or more conformable to the rest of the hymn, may create the impression of being additions or supplements⁴⁶. The tendency to variation or amplification at the end of a division ('song') was to characterize many poetic compositions of later times.

⁴⁴ ṚV. 1, 23, 23: AV. 7, 89, 1 (VS. 20, 22 etc.); ṚV. 6, 69, 8 = AV. 7, 44, 1 (TS. 3, 2, 11, 2 etc.); 1, 191, 16: cf. AV. 5, 13, 9. The two stanzas of AV. 7, 58 are ṚV. 6, 68, 10f. (see GONDA, *Dual deities*, p. 261).

⁴⁵ Cf. 1, 23, 16ff.; 8, 47, 13ff.

⁴⁶ E.g. 1, 135, 9; 7, 59, 12.

4. Groupings of stanzas

Many hymns¹ in praise of one or more gods show a consistent grouping of stanzas. The most common grouping is that in triplets (*trca*)², the hymn consisting of any number of units composed of three stanzas. Sometimes this grouping is easier to determine by the number of stanzas being a multiple of three or by changes in the metre after each third stanza than by disturbances of the continuity of the subject-matter dealt with disconnected as it usually is³. Yet cases present themselves in which the same syntactic or stylistic features recur in every third stanza so as to mark a grouping in triplets⁴. Or, what is more usual, three successive stanzas stand out by a common feature, for instance identity of or correspondence in their initial words⁵, or by the use of the same metre⁶. In some *sūktas* a final triplet differs in this respect from the preceding part of the hymn, which, then, may in itself also be composed of groups of three stanzas⁷. In other *sūktas* all or some successive triplets are directed to different deities⁸.

Not infrequently the other *saṃhitās* and the *brāhmaṇa* texts quoting from the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā furnish us with valuable information on this point. The large majority of the triplets quoted in the Ṛgvedic *brāhmaṇas* are clearly recognizable as such in the Saṃhitā⁹, and interestingly enough these works sometimes apply the term *sūkta* to parts of the hymn which in our Saṃhitā text

¹ See e.g. 1, 12; 25; 4, 30; 32; 7, 15; 8, 9; 12; 13; 23; 98. Cases are not lacking in which only part of a hymn consists of triplets (e.g. 1, 4; 26; 84; 6, 52; 8, 15; 80).

² The term was already used in the *Bṛhaddevatā* 2, 17; 126.

³ For particulars: ARNOLD, o.c., p. 234; RENOUE, E. V. P. II, p. 4. OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 38, p. 451 (= K. S. p. 525), who rightly distinguishes between *sūktas* consisting of *trcas* and combinations of originally separate groupings which came to constitute one *sūkta*; it is not always possible to arrive at a decision. (See also BERGAIGNE at JA 1889 (I = 8-13), p. 131). OLDENBERG was also right in criticizing the way of distinguishing groups of stanzas followed by K. F. GELDNER and A. KÆGI, *Siebenzig Lieder des Rigveda*, Tübingen 1875.

⁴ Cf. 8, 34; 8, 35 (recurrences of identical *pādas* on corresponding places). However, features of this kind are often limited to part of a hymn (e.g. 6, 16; 1; 7; 13; 7, 31, 3; 6; 9, 61, 6; 9; 12); cf. also 5, 26.

⁵ E.g. 1, 2; 1, 25, 7-9; 38, 1-3; 4, 30, 4-6; 13 (12)-18; 5, 25, 4-6; 8, 12 (rhyme); 64, 7-9; 96, 16-18; 9, 61, 16-18; cf. also 4, 32, 19-21; 9, 64, 1-3. The three stanzas of a triplet express the same thought in a varied form: 1, 2, 4-6; 3, 1-3; 4-6; 7-9.

⁶ Cf. e.g. 1, 84; 3, 51; 62; 6, 44; 52; 7, 31; see also 5, 27; 6, 71.

⁷ E.g. 1, 28, 1-6 *anuṣṭubh*, 7-9 *gāyatrī*; 3, 26; 7, 31, 1-9 *gāyatrī*, 10-12 *virāj*; 8, 34; cf. also 2, 32; 4, 55; 56; in 8, 74 the *dānastuti* at the end is in another metre (*anuṣṭubh*).

⁸ E.g. 1, 3; 43; for 1, 23 see GELDNER, *ṚV*. I, p. 22. Compare also 8, 76 (in 1-9 *Indra* and the *Maruts*; in 10-12 *Indra* alone).

⁹ OLDENBERG, o.c., p. 474 (p. 548). See e.g. *AiB*. 3, 1 (*ṚV*. 1, 2, 1-3 etc.); 3, 2, 4 (*ṚV*. 1, 2, 1-3); 3, 29, 4 (*ṚV*. 5, 82, 1-3); 4, 29, 7 (*ṚV*. 8, 68, 1-3); *KB*. 21, 4 (*ṚV*. 6, 70, 4-6).

actually are *trcas*¹⁰. Moreover, the Uttarāreika of the Sāmaveda, presenting the complete texts used in their liturgical order, mostly quotes these as triplets¹¹. It may suffice to add one detail: no less than about 50 triplets taken from all *maṇḍalas* were utilized in the *agniṣṭoma*¹². In all probability these *trcas* or poetic compositions in *trca* form—and often in the *gāyatrī* metre—were from an early date, or even from the beginning, intended to be sung by the *udgātar* and his assistants.

Of the other groupings of stanzas mention can only be made of the dyads¹³ an example of which is the short hymn ṚV. 3, 28 consisting of three dyads which are explicitly intended for the offering of rice-cakes in the morning, at noon and in the evening¹⁴. Two stanzas in different mixed metres are often combined so as to form a strophe. Thus 1, 36 consists of alternating *brhatīs* (8, 8, 12, 8) and *satobrhatīs* (12, 8, 12, 8)¹⁵. Comparatively rare in the Ṛgveda, this type of *pragūtha* is found chiefly in *maṇḍala* VIII. ṚV. 4, 31 may be quoted as an instance of a combination of dyads and triplets. Other hymns are partly composed of triplets, partly of stanzas or groups of stanzas in other metres which in some cases may have been secondary intercalations¹⁶.

¹⁰ E.g. AiB. 5, 12, 10 (ṚV. 3, 51, 7-9; ŚŚ. 10, 5, 8 uses the term *trca*); KB. 22, 4 (ṚV. 6, 71); cf. KEITH, R. B., p. 470, n. 2.

¹¹ Thus two of the five triplets in *gāyatrī* metre of ṚV. 3, 27 are, at different places, used in the ritual (see e.g. ŚŚ. 5, 14, 11; 1, 4, 8).

¹² The observations at the time made by BERGAIGNE (JA 1889, 8-13, p. 123) could be reconsidered and re-formulated in the light of our present knowledge of the ritual.

¹³ For other particulars and less usual combinations see ARNOLD, o.c., p. 228.

¹⁴ See BERGAIGNE, at JA 1889 (I = 8-13), p. 20 etc. and cf. ĀśvŚ. 5, 4, 6; ŚŚ. 14, 51, 13. See also 3, 52 mentioning the same three oblations; 5, 73.

¹⁵ See e.g. also 1, 39; 44; 48; 6, 46; 7, 16.

¹⁶ E.g. 1, 93 (see BERGAIGNE, at JA 1889 (I = 8-13), p. 26).

5. 'Composite' hymns

Many hymns of different metre have been regarded as owing their genesis to the combination of originally separated compositions of smaller compass¹. However, in part of the instances adduced there are, apart from the principles followed by the redactors in arranging these hymns, hardly objective and convincing arguments in favour of this supposition. In a hymn such as that dedicated to Mitra (3, 59)² we can, it is true, distinguish between a former part (*triṣṭubh*), in which the god's functions and benevolence are commemorated and the wish is expressed to be in his good graces, and a second part (of four *gāyatrī* stanzas) in praise of his assistance, greatness and protection; the possibility of composition, by means of partly pre-existent material, by one and the same poet can however by no means be excluded³. Secondary composition by a redactor has also been assumed in cases such as the beautiful Varuṇa hymn 5, 85, not on metrical considerations—it is in *triṣṭubh* throughout—but because at a certain point (*in casu* after stanza 4) there seems to begin something new; actually however the poet, through changing his syntactic and stylistic devices, continues his exposition of Varuṇa's miraculous power.

There are hymns which, though impressing us as bipartite—for instance, because of a closing prayer somewhere in the middle (4, 50, 6)—constitute a coherent whole: the first part of 4, 50 eulogizes the god Bṛhaspati, Indra's domestic priest, the second his earthly representative, the king's priest⁴. Although the family hymn of the Viśvāmitra's (3, 53) consists of no less than five clearly distinct parts and the reminiscences of the family's history are loosely strung together, it is no doubt conceived as a single whole intended for the glorification of the ancestor⁵. We find more curious instances of 'composition.' In 7, 1 (1–18 *virāj*, 19–25 *triṣṭubh*) the final stanza, including a prayer for Agni's blessing, is already anticipated as st. 20, a fact that gives the *śikta* the indisputable character of a 'double hymn,' the smaller second part of which is clearly an addendum to avert the god's anger and to win his favour. In a case such as 5, 78 the probabilities are strongly in favour of the supposition that a charm or conjuration (st. 7–9) has been secondarily added to an Aśvin hymn consisting of an invitation (in another metre: 1–3) and mythical material⁶. In other cases the connection between two parts of a hymn is not clear⁷, notwithstanding the fact that a thorough study of the texts in relation to the other

¹ GRASSMANN, *ṚV. übers.*, was among those who were much inclined to distinguish between earlier and later or spurious component parts of R̥gvedic hymns; see e.g. ARNOLD, at KZ 37, p. 218; BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 21, p. 44.

² See OLDENBERG, *Noten*, I, p. 258; P. THIEME, *Mitra and Aryaman*, Connecticut Acad. 1957, p. 57; RENOUE, *E. V. P. VII*, p. 8; GONDA, *Mitra*, p. 100.

³ For 'composite' hymns (in different metres) see e.g. also 1, 91; 92; 191; 4, 55; 56; 6, 71.

⁴ Cf. GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 77.

⁵ Cf. GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 56; *ṚV. I*, p. 392.

Vedic literature (quotations, ritual applications) on one hand and the practicabilities of Vedic life and religion on the other has vindicated many so-called appendages⁸.

Leaving the question as to the genesis of the poems as we have them now undecided attention may be drawn to some other instances of so-called composite *sūktas*. RV. 1, 50 consists of a hymn addressed to the Sun (Sūrya) and (in another metre) a shorter spell against jaundice, of which that deity is expected to cure the person speaking. RV. 8, 47 is composed of a longer general part in which the Ādityas are implored for the deliverance from evil and a shorter special section addressing Uṣas and aiming at the annihilation of the results of a bad dream. Even among the shorter hymns there are not a few which can be divided into some clearly distinct parts. In 6, 59, st. 1–2 are in praise of the dual deity Indra-Agni, in 3–4 they are invited to the soma draught; 5–6 deal with riddles in connection with Agni, 7–10 contain prayers and another invitation. Whereas in this case the unity of subject is unquestionable, other *sūktas*—e.g. 5, 40⁹; 9, 61—make the impression of more or less casual conglomerates, of combinations of parts without any organic connection¹⁰. In 6, 48 we can distinguish four parts which are directed to Agni, the Maruts, Pūṣan, and, again, the Maruts.

Cases may present themselves in which the arrangement of a number of stanzas in the ritual literature is more harmonious and satisfactory than the grouping of the same collections in our Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā. In RV. 6, 47, the family hymn of the Bharadvājas, stanza 1–10 looks like an invocation (*śastra*) of Indra for the midday pressing of the *soma*; Indra is invoked in 11–13 and praised in 14–21 (the story of his enemy Śambara); 22–25 constitute a *dānastuti*. So far the structure of the *sūkta* is clear, but st. 26–31 are a strange appendix, consisting of two military charms and constituting a ‘Waffensegen’: as such they occur in the Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā as 6, 125 and 126 where they are to further the success of a war-chariot and a war-drum. In the ritual texts these six stanzas are however combined with the first fourteen verses (or another number of stanzas) of RV. 6, 75, another ‘Waffensegen’ intended to accompany the putting on of the armour by a king and the preparation and equipment of his war-chariot¹¹.

⁸ ALSDORF, in JGJRI 27 (1971), p. 1; see above.

⁷ See e.g. 2, 32 (GELDNER, RV. I, p. 315), the second part of which is addressed to female deities.

⁸ E.g. 1, 126, 6f.; 8, 134. See BERGAIGNE, in JA 1889 (I = 8–13), p. 153; BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 17, p. 178; 21, p. 44.

⁹ See V. G. RAHURKAR, in Comm. Vol. Umesha Mishra, Allahabad 1970, p. 511.

¹⁰ Cf. e.g. also 5, 51; 8, 42.

¹¹ See e.g. TS. 4, 6, 6; VS. 29, 38–57; ĀpŚ. 20, 16, 4–14. For details: V. M. APTE, in Siddha-Bhāratī, Vol. Siddheshwar Varma, I, Hoshiarpur 1950, p. 123.

6. Similarities and repetitions

That communities on the same level of culture and adhering to the same religion resorted, in their literary productions, to similar imagery and phraseology is not surprising. The pertinent facts do not in all cases point to direct or indirect borrowing on the part of the poets. Anyhow, more or less striking similarities between two hymns are far from rare. We should distinguish between a general similarity between, and a recurrence of the same details in, two successive hymns ascribed to the same author¹ on one hand and a relationship in phraseology etc. between other *sūktas* and stanzas on the other². For instance, a special tie connects the two Aśvin hymns of the same length (25 stanzas) R̥V. 1, 116 and 117 ascribed to Kakṣivat and showing close verbal correspondences³. There are however also similar passages in non-successive hymns of one and the same poet⁴.

Of greater importance are the very numerous close similarities and partial repetitions found throughout the R̥gvedic corpus and the other collections of Vedic *mantras*. Verse units often appear either in exactly the same or in a more or less changed form in two or more places⁵. In many cases the variations in form suit the differences in theme, especially the differences in the deity addressed. The changes may, of course, also be imposed by the use of different metres. It is difficult to define the boundary line separating similarities proper and more or less varied repetition. Although there are hymns of related tenor which avoid verbal repetitions of the length of a *pāda*⁶, this community of material is proper to hymns of obviously ritualistic contents as well as to the mythic or legendary passages. As to the former⁷ it may be supposed that the poets drew partly on ancient, prehistoric formularies, partly on the works of their predecessors which they had memorized⁸. Within the latter category of

¹ See e.g. the Indra hymns 4, 24 and 25; 34 and 35; 10, 42 and 43. No more than passing mention can be made of those correspondences between hymns which are of interest from the point of view of their liturgical use. The hymns 7, 1; 7, 34 and 7, 56, all of them consisting of the same number (25) of stanzas, were used on the same day in the same ritual (cf. ŚŚ. 10, 5, 2; 23; 24).

² Including cases such as e.g. 10, 27, 6; 7, 18, 16; 10, 28, 6; 6, 18, 13.

³ BLOOMFIELD, *Repetitions*, p. 18.

⁴ E.g. 4, 34, 3 and 4; 37, 1 and 3.

⁵ For a detailed discussion of all pertinent problems see BLOOMFIELD, *Repetitions*, p. 1; for an exhaustive treatment of the variant readings in the repeated mantras BLOOMFIELD and EDGERTON, *Variants*. See also BLOOMFIELD, in *AJPh* 11 (1890), p. 342.

⁶ E.g. 9, 104 and 105.

⁷ The *āprī* hymns 1, 13 and 1, 142 have no less than six *pādas* in common. For parallelism in wording and structure see also 3, 28 (Agni) and 3, 52 (Indra); 5, 40 and 5, 78 (BERGAIGNE, in *JA* 1888, p. 20); compare also cases such as 9, 104 and 105.

⁸ See p. 15 and AUFRECHT, *H. R.* II, p. 12.

sūktas the hymns addressed to the same deities—especially to the deities of marked physiognomy and a characteristic mythology or legendary—are very often connected by recurrent expressions⁹. It seems that the earlier poets had exploited these themes so thoroughly that nothing was left for their successors but to follow their habits¹⁰. Yet, even in cases of more than average resemblance it is in all probability safer to take the line that two hymns were composed independently than that one was more or less consciously modelled upon the other. This does not however alter the fact that, as far as we are able to see, the Indians then already had what we would call an imperfect sense of literary proprietorship.

The similarity of Vedic stanzas is often due to identical cadences¹¹, recurrences of words being much more frequent at the end of *pādas*—and prose formulas—than at the beginning. As a rule the repeated phrases do not embrace more than two or three words of a given cadence, but sometimes a longer formulaic succession creates the semblance of repeated *pādas*¹². These cadences are to a considerable extent extremely formulaic set phrases consisting, for instance, of a noun with a fixed adjective—e. g. *bhūvanāni viśvā* “all the worlds (and their inhabitants)” —verbs with an object—e. g. *śrudhī hāvam* “hear (my) invocation.”

The number of repetitions in the Ṛgveda is indeed considerable. Groups of stanzas, stanzas, parts of stanzas, lines and *pādas*, repeated entirely or partially amount perhaps to a total of about 2400¹³. The *pādas* being repeated on the average nearly 2½ times make a total of about 6000¹⁴. In addition to this there are about 150 refrain *pādas*, repeated a total of about 1000 times. That means that the total of repeated *pādas*, all included, probably concerns not less than one-fifth of the entire corpus. However, the number of variants, formal as well as syntactic and stylistic, occurring in the repeated *mantras* is enormous: there are many inflexional variations and much more numerous shifts between nominal cases, singular and plural, words and so on. It is self-evident that these repetitions can be made helpful for the interpretation of the text, the proper estimate of its metrical habits and sometimes also for questions regarding the relative chronology of hymns or stanzas¹⁵.

A considerable number of stanzas are, throughout the Veda, repeated either in the same or in different books in any part of a *sūkta*. In the Ṛgveda there

⁹ E. g. 4, 33, 8: 36, 2; 3, 10: 1, 1; 3, 1: 2, 35.

¹⁰ Cf. BLOOMFIELD, *Repetitions*, p. 19. For the formulaic character and the mnemonic significance of these repetitions: P. POUCHA, *ArchOr* 13, p. 257.

¹¹ BLOOMFIELD, *o. c.*, p. 10; 653.

¹² Cf. e. g. 3, 46, 2 (6, 36, 4): 5, 85, 3; 9, 97, 56: 10, 168, 2.

¹³ BLOOMFIELD, *o. c.*, p. 4; for a classification, *ibidem*, p. 491.

¹⁴ Repetitions in the same hymn not included.

¹⁵ See e. g. M. BLOOMFIELD, at *JAOS* 31, p. 49. For all other aspects of a study of the repetitions see BLOOMFIELD, *Repetitions*, Introduction; for their themes, *ibidem*, p. 571.

are 23 of them, repeated each a single time¹⁶, not including the recurrences of substantially identical but somewhat varied stanzas.

The majority of single stanzas that are repeated verbatim occur at the end of *sūktas*. These hymns are usually ascribed to the same *ṛṣi* or family, but there are also other repetitions of this kind, which are probably due to some general similarity in the subjects treated. Although they generally speaking have no close connexion with the contents of the hymn to which they are attached¹⁷, these stanzas, being mostly rounded wholes, may be amalgamated with various surroundings¹⁸. Some hymns seem to have been intentionally constructed on parallel principles—the same general theme, metrical structure, or number of the stanzas—, their main characteristic being the identity of their final stanzas¹⁹. These repeated final stanzas, so-called refrains²⁰—43 in number occurring about 130 times—are of special interest. Containing mainly requests for happiness they belong to the inheritance of individual families: with a few exceptions all repetitions of this type occur in the same book²¹. The final repetition may be limited to a single *pāda*²². Thus the Gr̥tsamadas had a special predilection for the closing prayer “We would, with vigorous (sons) speak firmly (and impressively) at divine worship,” which has aptly been called a sort of ‘seal’ authenticating their poems²³. The last three *sūktas* of *mandala* IX, being more or less appendages²⁴ in the same metre, but according to tradition of two poets, have the same refrain *pāda* “Flow, O Soma, for Indra” in common.

Other refrains concern all or some stanzas of the same *sūкта*. In the Vṛṣakāpi hymn 10, 86 the words “Indra is higher than all” (one *pāda*) end all 23 stanzas. This type is more normal than the repetition of a few words²⁵. All fourth *pādas*, except the last, of the famous Indra hymn 2, 12 are concluded by the

¹⁶ BLOOMFIELD, o. c. , p. 494; and cf. p. 10; K. R. POTDAR, in *Oriental Thought*, 1 (1954), 1, p. 70; and especially RENOUE, E. V. P. II, p. 31. Many particulars must be omitted in this survey.

¹⁷ In several cases they appear to be added after a typically closing stanza (2, 19, 9; 24, 16).

¹⁸ Cf. e. g. 1, 95, 11 = 1, 96, 9 (*ṛṣi* Kutsa, deity Agni); 3, 1; 5; 6; 7; 15; 22; 23 (Agni hymns). For the ritual use of fixed conclusive stanzas (*paridhāniyā*) see BERGAIGNE, in *JA* 1889 (I = 8–13), p. 153.

¹⁹ RV. 7, 34 and 56; 8, 36 and 37.

²⁰ BLOOMFIELD, *Repetitions*, p. 493; P. S. SASTRI, in *PO* 10, p. 99; QJMS 40, p. 41.

²¹ The exceptions are 10, 89, 18 (= 3, 30, 22); 104, 11 (= 3, 30, 22). In VIII and IX there are no refrains; in III and VII their number is above the average.

²² RV. 2, 1, 16d; 2, 13d; 11, 21d etc. (cf. RENOUE, E. V. P. II, p. 31), in some hymns the entire final stanza is repeated. See also BLOOMFIELD, o. c., p. 123; 238 and cf. 9, 86, 48.

²³ Cf. 6, 4; 10; 12, 13 (Agni hymns of the Bharadvājas); for the Vasiṣṭhas see RENOUE, o. c., p. 37, and cf. 9, 90, 6.

²⁴ Cf. RENOUE, E. V. P. IX, p. 118.

²⁵ Cf. 1, 19; 78; 80; 2, 25.

short but emphatic refrain "He, O men, is Indra"²⁶, drawing the hearer's attention to the feats and character of the god lauded in the preceding parts of the *triṣṭubh* stanzas²⁷. The identity of final *pādas* is sometimes limited to a few stanzas²⁸. Or all stanzas except the last, which then is in a different metre, end in the same *pāda*²⁹. In principle, this interior refrain, though stylistically important, appears to be an adventitious element³⁰. Only in a few cases it is an essential part of the contents or the structure of the stanza³¹.

In principle these refrains appear in any type of hymn, but rarely in dialogues and more often in triplet *sūktas* or in those poems which are of a less usual type (for instance the so-called ballads), the atharvanic compositions and in those of a comparatively fixed structure³². Occasionally a refrain expresses the theme of the poem: 3, 55 (22 stanzas) "Great is the unique wonderful divine power of the gods!"³³ As far as I am able to see there are no explicit indications of their being composed for the reciter's company to be brought into the performance³⁴, but the supposition that the words "O Soma, flow for Indra" in the (adapted) labour song 9, 112 (and in 113f.) served such a purpose³⁵ seems legitimate. There is no denying that in conjurations refrains may be largely suggestive³⁶. The recurrence of Ṛgvedic refrains in the Sāmaveda³⁷ shows that these at least were considered to be an integral part of the *sūktas*. The occurrence of the same final *pāda* in three successive stanzas led the ritualists to an esoterical explanation: the words "Indra and Agni, become aware of this" are to prevent valour and strength from flowing away³⁸.

Many occurrences of verse repetition are due to the frequent catenary structure of stanzas³⁹. In the succession of the stanzas of a hymn a motif, statement, expression occurring in a preceding stanza is often taken up anew

²⁶ G. K. BHAT, in JUB 26 (1957), 25 argues that those addressed are 'the people' in general; rather, the poet's audience.

²⁷ In 8, 12 all (eleven) triplets have internal rhymes of this type. In 5, 87 one word is repeated at the end of every second *pāda*.

²⁸ E.g. 2, 13, 2-4; 22, 1-3.

²⁹ E.g. 1, 82; 105; 106; in 1, 94 and 112 the two final stanzas are excepted; 8, 34 consists of five triplets (invitations) in *anuṣṭubhs* of identical second lines; the last triplet (expression of thanks) is completely different.

³⁰ Cf. also 8, 73; and see 10, 24, 1-3 where the refrain is interrupted by other words (VELANKAR, at JUB 21, 2 (1952), p. 4).

³¹ E.g. 1, 106 (two *pādas*); 8, 45, 1-3; 10, 47; 62; 100; 162. In 9, 58 st. 1a is repeated as the refrain of all four stanzas.

³² Such as 1, 112 or 2, 12.

³³ Cf. also 7, 49; 10, 59, 1-4. A. WEBER, in SB Berlin 1900, p. 606 unconvincingly argued that the themes, generally speaking, were adapted to the refrains.

³⁴ RV. 10, 86 could suggest this idea.

³⁵ With PISCHEL, V. S. I, p. 107.

³⁶ Cf. e.g. 10, 162; 163.

³⁷ P. S. SASTRI, at QJMS 40, p. 54.

³⁸ SV. II, 423-425 = RV. 8, 38, 1-3; PB. 13, 8, 5.

³⁹ BLOOMFIELD, Repetitions, p. 5; A. V. G. B., p. 43; RENOU, E. V. P. I, p. 59; GONDA, S. R., p. 298; 307; 313; 321 etc.

in the next stanza, in such a way as to modify, develop, explain, or carry on further the thought expressed, or the events depicted in the first stanza. There even exist cases in which this practice runs through an entire hymn: in 10, 84 stanza 1 ends in “. . . fire-shaped,” stanza 2 begins with “like fire violent . . .” and ends in “. . . dispel” and 3 begins with “overpower . . .” and ends in “. . . thou who art born alone” and 4 begins with “one of many . . . , etc.”⁴⁰. This procedure is also known in the Avesta⁴¹. Retarding the progress of the expositions, and letting them sink into mind and memory of the auditor, it can be realized in various ways⁴². In 2, 11⁴³ we find, *inter alia*, in 2-3 . . . *ukthair vāvṛdhānāḥ. ukthēsu . . .*, in 3-4 . . . *śubhrāḥ, śubhrām . . .*, in 12-13 . . . *dāvāne syāma, syāma té . . .* etc.⁴⁴, in 1, 23, 23-24 *tām mā sām sṛja vārcasā. sām māgne vārcasā sṛja*. While in some cases the phenomenon concerns a single word followed at a distance by a related term—e.g. 2, 26, 1-2 *suprāvīḥ . . .*; . . . *prá vihi*—in the beginning of 10, 119, 3 the last words of the preceding stanza “the soma juices (which I have) drunk have lifted me up” are completely and literally repeated⁴⁵; the poet of 3, 39, after concluding stanza 1 with the words “O Indra, take note of the (hymn) which has arisen for thee,” begins the next stanza with: “Arisen even before day(break), watchful . . .”; 10, 118, 3c “his (Agni’s) face is anointed with the ladle” is followed by 4a “Agni is anointed with ghee”⁴⁶. Stanza 4 of 1, 85 “When ye (the Maruts are meant) who . . . shine with your spears have yoked the spotted mares to your cars” precedes 5 “When ye have yoked the spotted mares before your cars, they discharge the streams . . . and moisten the earth.” In a number of cases⁴⁷ concatenation, which can here be illustrated only by some of its varied forms⁴⁸, extends beyond the limits of a single *pāda*.

⁴⁰ See also AV. 6, 42; 118.

⁴¹ See e.g. Yasna 9, 17-18; Yašt 5, 62-63; 10, 82.

⁴² For cases such as 1, 25, 3-4 see RENOU, E. V. P. VII, p. 12.

⁴³ Cf. A. WEBER, SB Berlin 1900, p. 607.

⁴⁴ Cf. also 8, 1, 13-14.

⁴⁵ Cf. 10, 53, 4-5 (see RENOU, E. V. P. XIV, p. 81); and also 7, 60, 4-5; 83, 6-7.

⁴⁶ Cf. e.g. also cases such as RV. 1, 32, 1-2.

⁴⁷ See BLOOMFIELD, Repetitions, p. 8; e.g. 1, 22, 5-6; 109, 7-8; 9, 67, 31-32.

⁴⁸ Cf. also RV. 2, 16, 5-6; 19, 1-2; 25, 1-2; 4, 35, 2-3; AV. 14, 2, 23-24; 26-27; 34-35.

7. Monologues, dialogues, the *ākhyāna* theory

Among those devices of style to which the Vedic poets were not averse is direct speech, a literal quotation of words supposed to be used by their personages. This is not surprising since their work bristles with addresses, in most cases to gods¹, sometimes to men². Occasionally a poet, using a pronoun of the second person and a present tense, introduces his hearers, so to say, into the company of the gods, whether the words put into their mouths open the poem impressively³, or—more frequently—interrupt eulogy or a graphic account of mythical events⁴. An experienced poet knows how to make such a quotation—for instance, when a god is urged to slay his enemy—also applicable to the present situation⁵. A literal quotation of the words of a god spoken to the poet or heard by him may warrant their authenticity⁶. The vision, narrated in the first person (“I” and “we”) in R̥V. 7, 88, 2f., is no doubt to evoke memories of an intimate relation between poet and deity⁷. Nor is a true reproduction of a prayer⁸ merely a literary embellishment: this form enhances its value in the actual situation.

When they exceed the compass of a single stanza these ‘quotations’ may develop into apostrophes or monologues. The central part of the Aśvin hymn 10, 40 is a long prayer (st. 5–12) of the spinster Ghoṣā, who, after starting with a *captatio benevolentiae* and picturing the joys of the married state, implores the divine twins to give her a husband, able to make her pregnant. This address is duly introduced (st. 5): “Ghoṣā, the daughter of a king, walking round you⁹, O Aśvins, addressed (you) . . .,” but when it has come to a conclusion the poet abruptly resumes his own line of thought, returning in the last stanza to the theme of the beginning. Apālā’s prayer (8, 91)¹⁰ is introduced by three narrative *pādas* and followed by a short account of the cure she had to undergo. The structure of the lament of the gambler (10, 34) is different. Here the first part of the monologue which, starting at the very beginning of the poem, contains the self-accusation of a man who is unable to resist the fascination of the dice,

¹ Compare also cases such as 4, 36, 3f.; 37, 4; 8, 4, 15–18 (apostrophe to Pūṣan linking the *dānastuti* with the Indra hymn).

² E.g. to the one who institutes the sacrifice (R̥V. 1, 4, 4; 7); for a reference to the present situation see 1, 4, 5f.

³ E.g. 4, 19, 1.

⁴ E.g. 5, 30, 8f.; 31, 9f.; 40, 7; 6, 31, 3; 8, 89, 4; cf. also 8, 96, 6–9; 10, 39, 6.

⁵ Cf. 7, 18, 18; 10, 22, 1ff. and 15.

⁶ See 6, 9, 3ff. (GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 89; R̥V. II, p. 101); 7, 87, 4; cf. 7, 33, 1; 4; 8, 69, 7; 93, 26; 96, 14; 100, 4; 101, 15f.; 10, 53, 4f.; 167, 4.

⁷ RENOU, E. V. P. VII, p. 24. For a dialogue between a god and the poet see 10, 27.

⁸ See 7, 83, 1ff.; 5f. and the passages in direct speech in 10, 22, 4ff. Speeches are not utilized for lengthening the narrative by repetition.

⁹ Homage or respectful salutation.

¹⁰ See p. 145.

is separated from the second part in which he, fortified by a divine voice, conjures the dice to leave him alone, by one single stanza (11) in which the poet provides his hearers with some additional comment¹¹.

The Labasūkta (the *sūkta* of the quail), the so-called hymn of the inebriated Indra¹² (10, 119), is in its entirety a soliloquy describing the state of mind of a person who has drunk *soma* and experiences a state of supranormal bliss and power. The refrain, nowhere omitted, "Have I, indeed, drunk *soma*?" is as essential as it is characteristic. Tradition has it¹³ that the whole of 1, 105—dealing with the evil plight of Trita in the well¹⁴—was pronounced by Kutsa who puts a long lament into the mouth of that unfortunate man to add, in the last three stanzas which begin with the statement "(Thus) Trita implores the gods for assistance," a narrative conclusion and a reference to his own situation. This would, not improbably, mean that the poet, being in an analogous situation and pleading his own cause, uses the story of Trita, who was ultimately freed by Bṛhaspati, to put pressure upon the higher powers. The refrain, absent only in the closing stanza where it is replaced by a prayer to six deities, ably throws the parallelism of both situations into relief. Being or impersonating a physician, the poet of 10, 97, while praising the medicinal herbs, delivers a monologue. So does the female speaker of 10, 159 who prides herself on having the upper hand of her rivals.

In a few cases some words and an answer spoken by two partners assume the character of a rudimentary dialogue¹⁵. The theme of the first half of R̥V. 10, 98 is partly elaborated in the form of a dialogue, partly in narrative stanzas; the second half, resuscitating the power inherent in the preceding mythical story, implores Agni to bring rain. Real dialogues however characterize about twenty hymns¹⁶ that differ from the majority and have, in most cases also because of contents, attracted much attention¹⁷. Already in Indian antiquity they were distinguished as 'colloquies' (*samvāda*)¹⁸. In particular cases the ancient authorities were not always unanimous in regarding a *sūkta* or part of it as a real dialogue: it could also be a 'story' (*itihāsa*), a conversation or a

¹¹ GONDA, *Secular hymns*, p. 342, and see above p. 146 f.

¹² See p. 149.

¹³ See GELDNER, R̥V. I, p. 136.

¹⁴ See p. 118; 127.

¹⁵ R̥V. 5, 30, 8f.; 10, 61, 18f.; 10, 135 (RENOU, H. S., p. 255); cf. also 1, 126, 6f. There are also instances of questions and answers, both stated in full and adding to the liveliness or solemnity of the diction: e.g. 6, 27, 1f.; 10, 82, 5f. (BLOOMFIELD, *Repetitions*, p. 7).

¹⁶ Fifteen of them are entirely dialogues, about twelve others contain short conversations. For a short characterization: RENOU, E. V. P. II, p. 17.

¹⁷ In general see WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 100; P. S. S(H)ASTRI, in 13 AIOC, Nagpur 1946 (1950), II, p. 15; RENOU, E. V. P. II, p. 17; G. K. BHAT, in JUB 28 N. S. 2 (1959), p. 51.

¹⁸ Bṛhaddevatā 2, 88; 4, 44; 47 etc.; cf. 7, 153 quoting Yāska.

eology¹⁹. Moreover, with the exception of the curious 10, 86, Yāska, Śaunaka, and also Sāyaṇa did not give a ritual application (*vinīyoga*) preferring to narrate a story in explanation of the text. This genre of composition died out in the later Vedic age; in the Atharvaveda there is but one text of this type (5, 11) in which a priest, Atharvan, begs Varuṇa for a cow which is due to him²⁰. On the other hand, the dialogues of *maṇḍala* X are, generally speaking, more vital and better arranged than those of Ṛgveda I-IX.

Since in interpreting these texts much is left to our imagination there has among ancient and modern scholars often been considerable disagreement with regard to particulars²¹. Thus the rather enigmatic conversation between Indra, his wife and the monkey Vṛṣākapi (10, 86)—according to tradition the god's illegitimate son who obviously had incurred Indrāṇī's displeasure—has been regarded as a piece of erotic mysticism²², as a virility charm²³, as a reminiscence of a clash between the Aryan Indra religion and a non-Aryan Vṛṣākapi cult²⁴, or even of a primitive age in which a line dividing men from animals was not yet drawn²⁵, but also as satire on human relations²⁶ or a humorous scene of Indra's family life remarkable for a fine delineation of the characters²⁷. Another sidelight on Indra's family life is thrown in 10, 28²⁸ which—like the preceding and other dialogue hymns—beginning abruptly, is a conversation carried on by three persons, viz. the god, his son Vasukra and his daughter-in-law, Vasukra's wife.

There are more instances of a conversation between three interlocutors, one of whom may even be a group of persons. In some texts informing us about a conflict between Indra and the Maruts and their conciliation the god, who seems to have appropriated some sacrificial animals which were destined for his allies, disputes with them because they had disgraced themselves in his eyes by deserting him in the Vṛtra contest; at last however they succeed in placating his anger²⁹ (1, 165)³⁰. In 1, 170, which continues the story, Agastya intervenes in the dispute, advising Indra to make it up³¹. It is difficult to imagine

¹⁹ See e.g. Bṛhaddevatā 3, 155f. (on ṚV. 1, 126); 5, 163 (on 7, 33); 7, 153; cf. WINTERNITZ, in WZKM 23, p. 102.

²⁰ Cf. WEBER, I. S. XVIII, p. 201.

²¹ As to 7, 33 see ARNOLD, at KZ 37, p. 214; GELDNER, ṚV. II, p. 210; as to 8, 100, CHARPENTIER, at WZKM 25, p. 209; GELDNER, ṚV. II, p. 427.

²² K. C. CHATTOPADHYAYA, in Allahabad Univ. Studies, 1 (1925).

²³ S. A. DANGE, at Nagpur Univ. J. 16, p. 127.

²⁴ U. P. SHAH, in JOIB 8, p. 41.

²⁵ V. M. APTE, in QJMS 53, p. 1.

²⁶ P. v. BRADKE, at ZDMG 46, p. 465.

²⁷ GELDNER, V. S. II, p. 22; ṚV. III, p. 273. Cf. also VELANKAR, in JUB 22, 2, p. 11.

²⁸ GELDNER, in Festgabe Jacobi, p. 242; ṚV. III, p. 169; VELANKAR, in JUB 21, 2, p. 7.

²⁹ Cf. also 1, 171 and GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 237.

³⁰ VELANKAR, 12 AIOC I, p. 223.

³¹ Cf. V. G. RAHURKAR, in PO 22, p. 40.

whether these Agastya *sūktas* were, in the view of the Vedic audience, so pointless as they would appear to a modern critic³².

Mention has already been made of the beautiful R̥V. 3, 33³³—the most successful dialogue of the older R̥gveda—in which Viśvāmitra's personality so to say develops from that of the poet who pronounces the initial stanza to address the rivers—females—in the next one. In order to make the rivers fordable he praises them and requests them to stop for a while. In their answers, which alternate with the words of the sage, the rivers are represented as pleased with his praise; after informing him that they cannot comply with his request because they flow at the command of Indra and Savitar, Viśvāmitra observes that the former god, it is true, removed the obstacles, intimating that the rivers came of their own accord and may therefore be supposed to cease flowing if they choose to do so. Then they ask him to continue to praise them so that the future generations will hear of them. After a renewed request and an implicit promise they yield to his persuasion. At the end of the conversation the sage, seeing that the king's army has crossed the waters, pronounces two impressive stanzas in order to allow them to resume their activity. It has not without reason been suggested that this poem was an old family ballad moulded or remoulded into the form of a dialogue³⁴. A good dialogue (in alternate stanzas) is also that between the female dog of the gods, Saramā, and the Paṇis (10, 108)³⁵, an episode of the mythical story of the stolen cows. As a messenger of the gods Saramā finds the way to the Paṇis who have hidden the cows at the ends of the world. At first the Paṇis refuse to accord with her wish demanding that Indra should come himself, but in the course of the conversation they become more and more impressed by Saramā's minatory speech and her references to such mighty allies as Bṛhaspati and the *ṛṣis*. Finally they attempt to induce her to remain with them, but this offer is rejected. In the last stanza Saramā enforces the flight of the Paṇis and the recovery of the cows.

The dialogue hymns 10, 51–53³⁶ form a sort of trilogy dealing with successive stages in a mythical event of ritualistic import and glorifying the sacrificial performances as presided over by Agni, the divine *hotar* and heavenly representative of the human *hotar* on the sacrificial place. In the first *sūkta*, a *triṣṭubh* 'stichomyth' between Agni, who speaks the even stanzas, and the gods—whose spokesman appears to be Varuṇa—the latter try to persuade the god of fire, who had fled from them³⁷, to resume his task which he alone can perform. The

³² RENOUE, E. V. P. II, p. 17.

³³ See p. 125 and H. D. VELANKAR, in JBBRAS 18 (1942), p. 3; G. K. BHAT, at ABORI 53, p. 117; as to 1, 179 see p. 145.

³⁴ RENOUE, E. V. P. II, p. 18. But why should it be pure rhetoric?

³⁵ E. D. PERRY, in JAOS 11, p. 141.

³⁶ F. EDGERTON, Studies in the Veda, VII, AJPh 40 (1919), p. 175; cf. Bṛhaddevatā 7, 62ff. Less convincing: J. HERTEL, Das indogermanische Neujahrsopfer, Leipzig 1938, p. 33.

³⁷ Agni's flight is a well-known theme: R̥V. 1, 65, 1; 67, 3; 6; 7; 72, 2; 95, 4 etc. (GELDNER-NOBEL, R̥V. IV, p. 11).

second *sūkta* contains the stanzas spoken by Agni when he is invested with the office of *hotar* and a final comment of the poet. ṚV. 10, 53 is pronounced, partly by the priests who, pleased with Agni's return, intend to sacrifice, partly by the god, whose blessing, promise and injunction to gods and men—forming together a sort of covenant—are the culminating point of the trilogy.

Another dialogue hymn in which the narrator or the poet himself takes part is 10, 124, a fragment of a discussion between Indra and Agni; on the request of the former, the god of fire joins those gods who want him to sacrifice; Varuṇa, up to now the ruler, becomes Indra's co-regent and sets the waters free; Indra, with the help of Soma, slays Vṛtra³⁸: a most interesting sample of poetical imagination attempting to account for Varuṇa's subsidence and the rise of Indra's power in the world of the gods³⁹. The last stanza of 1, 179 seems to be a legend spell⁴⁰ in the form of the poet's conclusion of a conversation between the sage Agastya and his wife Lopāmudrā⁴¹. The discussion in ṚV. 1, 125 is in the initial stanza introduced by the poet.

ṚV. 4, 18, in which we find the fullest account of Indra's early days⁴², has often been described as a dialogue hymn⁴³, but can be interpreted otherwise, although part of the contents is put into the mouth of the persons figuring in it⁴⁴. Opening with the moment of the god's birth the poet says that when his mother makes an attempt to abandon him he follows her, and arriving at the house of Tvaṣṭar, the divine carpenter, he drinks *soma*. Now he is strong enough to conquer his enemies, but his mother, obviously unaware of this, no longer wishes to be rid of him and so she conceals him. Indra, however, emerging from the concealment, puts on his resplendent garment, which makes him visible to his enemies. At the request of the Waters, who see him, he slays Vṛtra and releases the streams, thereby apparently surprising his mother. The poet now extols his deed and victory, referring to his abandonment by his mother and her later adherence to him. Finally he addresses Indra himself reminding him of his most desperate hour, the god in reply acknowledging his dire need and the welcome aid he had received at the moment when the falcon brought him the *soma*.

Love in different forms (conjugal love, twins, lovers) is the subject of 1, 179; and of two of the finest specimens of the genre 10, 10 and 10, 95⁴⁵. The much

³⁸ Cf. E. D. PERRY, in JAOS 11, p. 159; GELDNER, ṚV. III, p. 352.

³⁹ Cf. GONDA, R. I. I, p. 81.

⁴⁰ See p. 145; for ṚV. 10, 10 see p. 153.

⁴¹ Cf. the theme of 10, 183.

⁴² See NORMAN BROWN, in JAOS 62, p. 93.

⁴³ Cf. PISCHEL, V. S. II, p. 42; OLDENBERG, Noten, I, p. 280; SIEG, Sagenstoffe, p. 82; GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 440.

⁴⁴ Thus W. NORMAN BROWN, in Siddha-Bhārati, Vol. Siddheshwar Varma, I, Hoshiarpur 1950, p. 130. For this hymn see also PISCHEL, V. S. II, p. 42; GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 440 (ballad); VELANKAR, in JUB 1938, p. 35; JBBRAS 18 (1942), p. 5.

⁴⁵ For 1, 179 see p. 145 and BERGAIGNE R. V. II, p. 394f.; for 10, 10, p. 153; for 10, 10; 17; 95: R. GOLDMAN, at JOIB 18 (1969), p. 273 (speculative).

discussed dialogue⁴⁶ between Purūravas and the nymph (*apsaras*) Urvaśi (10, 95) clearly deals with the theme of the impossibility of permanent nuptial ties between a human being and a god. Taken by itself the course of the dialogue seems to be as follows:

Purūravas asks Urvaśi for an interview (st. 1.); Urvaśi—to whom modern authors often, but wrongly, imputed cruelty—declares this to be useless, because she has disappeared “like the first of the dawns” and is “difficult to be caught, like the wind” (2). Purūravas observes that it was a ruse which made him lose her (3). After st. 4, in the third person and therefore possibly narrative, Urvaśi admits that she indeed always followed his will (5). When, in 6 and 8, he recalls that the other *apsarases* coquettishly fled from him, Urvaśi interrupts him: they came out of curiosity to see our son whom they will look after (7). He continues: “May the water-woman, flashing like lightning, Urvaśi, lifelong bring me the pleasures of love” (10). Urvaśi replies: “It is true that you have fecundated me, but I cannot stay; I had warned you” (11). “And our son, when he is born, will he not look for his father and shed tears?” (12). “If he does, I shall send him to you” (13). Purūravas threatens suicide (14), but she answers: “Do not die or depart from here. Friendship with women is impossible; their hearts are like hyenas’. Be satisfied with the four years you have had me” (15f.). After a last entreaty (17) she, or a divine voice, consoles him with the prospect of heaven.

The interpretation of this *sūkta* was, as a rule, made dependent on the conception scholars had of the characters, the situation, the nature of the poem and its relation to later versions of the theme. It was described either as an exaltation of a popular fairy-tale and the source from which all the later variant versions have originated⁴⁷ or as a ballad based on the fairy-tale as it appears in the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, with which it has all essential elements in common⁴⁸. Incorporating five stanzas of the *sūkta* this *brāhmaṇa* relates the story, not as an episode, but in a more complete form: When she wedded Purūravas, Urvaśi stipulated that she should not see him naked. But after a long time, when she was with child by him, the *gandharvas*—the natural mates of the *apsarases*—devised a means how she might come back. They took away a lamb which was tied to her bed, and when Purūravas, naked as he was, sprang up after them, they produced a flash of lightning . . . She had vanished, but he found her when she was, in the shape of a swan, swimming in a lake. There they exchanged the words of the stanzas 1, 2, 14, 15 and 16. Thereupon she allowed

⁴⁶ See e.g. OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 39, p. 72 (= K. S. p. 494); GELDNER, V. S. I, p. 243 and RV. III, p. 298; GRIFFITH, H. RV. IV, p. 304; BLOOMFIELD, in JAOS 20, p. 180; CALAND, in Album Kern, p. 57 (discussing *brāhmaṇa* and *sūtra* texts, *inter alia*, BSS. 18, 44f.); H. J. DE ZWART, in Orientalia Neerlandica, Leiden 1948, p. 363 (with a bibliography); D. D. KOSAMBI, in JBBRAS 27 (1951), I, p. 30 (with untenable conclusions); RENOU, H. S. p. 105; 249; J. C. WRIGHT, in BSOAS 30 (1967), p. 526 (quite untenably regarding the *sūkta* as a dialogue between the Holy Spirit and the Mother of God and inclined to explain R̥gvedic mythology in general with the help of ‘parallel material’ embodied in the Bible).

⁴⁷ See e.g. GRIFFITH, l.c.; H. D. VELANKAR, The Vikramorvaśīya, New Delhi 1961, p. XLIII.

⁴⁸ E.g. GELDNER, RV. l.c.; see ŚB. 11, 5, 1.

him to come the last night of the year. The next morning he obtained the boon to become a *gandharva*. This ambition was—quite intelligibly, in this *brāhmaṇa* version—realized by means of a sacrificial ceremony. And this is why the story is told: anybody who now performs this exemplary sacrifice will become one of the *gandharvas*. In a similar way the Baudhāyana-Śrauta-sūtra 18, 44f. inserts a variant form in order to give a mythical foundation for another rite which is recommended to the man who is desirous of offspring⁴⁹.

Whereas it is clear that the author of the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa passage was acquainted with the Ṛgveda text, it is as difficult to determine the mutual relation of the Vedic versions as it is risky to propose an answer to the question as to why the *sūkta* was included in the Saṃhitā⁵⁰. The clue is perhaps provided by the final stanza: Man is mortal (even if he is temporarily allowed to associate with the divine which must remain unknown)⁵¹. Let him therefore worship the gods with sacrifices (to have a chance of attaining heaven). If so, the theme, in other countries represented by the sagas of Amor (Eros) and Psyche, Lohengrin, Melusine, may in the decidedly ritualistic trains of ancient Indian thought have been reinterpreted and made the foundation of a 'symbolical' interpretation of the production of fire—earthly material inflamed by a heavenly spark—which is the indispensable ritual means of transgressing mundane limitations, and of the institution of the above-mentioned fire-rites⁵². The Ṛgvedic and Yajurvedic versions may then have developed side by side and led to parallel, though not identical applications. Then we need not subscribe to the hypothesis⁵³ that the *brāhmaṇa* version was made specially to provide a better understanding of the *sūkta* 10, 95 in place of that meaning which had already been lost. But two questions remain: first, does the Ṛgvedic version presuppose the existence of a prose narrative such as the Śatapatha version which is much more comprehensible?, and secondly, why is it couched in dialogue form?

The presence of these dialogues in the Ṛgveda has indeed given rise to much controversial discussion⁵⁴. Max Müller had already in 1869⁵⁵ conjectured that

⁴⁹ PB. 19, 3, 2; see CALAND, o. c.

⁵⁰ Nobody nowadays will subscribe to such views of the poem as "naturalistic myth of dawn and sun" or "love romance".

⁵¹ For a discussion of this theme in connection with 10, 10; 10, 17, 1f.; 10, 95 see R. GOLDMAN, in JOIB 18, p. 273.

⁵² In ŚB. 3, 4, 1, 22; VS. 5, 2; TS. 1, 3, 7, 1; 6, 3, 5, 3; MS. 3, 9, 5: 121, 4ff.; KS. 26, 7: 131, 3ff.; ApS. 7, 12, 10ff. dealing with the production of fire by means of a fire-drill the lower piece of wood is identified with *Urvaśī*, the mother, the upper piece with *Purūravas*, the father; their son—called *Āyu* "living being; life; genius of vital force"—is the embryo, the fire, and the sacrifice (ŚB. 3, 4, 1, 22)—which are produced. The two pieces of different wood occur in the version of the story in ŚB. 11, 5, 1, 13.

⁵³ KOSAMBI, o. c., p. 11.

⁵⁴ They certainly were no convenient literary device facilitating the expression of a poet's unconventional thoughts.

⁵⁵ M. MÜLLER, *The sacred hymns of the Brahmans*, I, London 1869, p. 172.

the dialogue R̥V. 1, 165 “was repeated at sacrifices in honour of the Maruts or that possibly it was acted by two parties, one representing Indra, the other the Maruts and their followers.” After him Sylvain Lévi⁵⁶ ventured the opinion that the R̥gvedic dialogues in general presupposed dramatic performances of which they formed a sort of libretti, adding that, as appears from other Vedic texts, music and short dramatic spectacles could be introduced into ritual ceremonies⁵⁷. Leopold von Schroeder⁵⁸ elaborated the theory that not only these hymns but also monologues such as R̥V. 10, 119 are relics of Vedic cult dramas, more precisely, mystery plays which must have been an inheritance from pre-historic, probably Indo-European times. The close relation of dance, song, drama and religion among many so-called primitive and archaic peoples⁵⁹ and some references to dancing in Vedic texts led him to the conclusion that these plays, while bringing vividly before the people the majesty of the gods, must have partaken of the nature of sympathetic magic. This theory met with justifiable criticism⁶⁰. There does not appear any trace of such plays or mimes in the ritual; the later literature is wholly silent on a ritual drama; von Schroeder’s argument that this fact was due to the aversion of the priests to dancing and singing gods on the stage is unfounded. There are no indications whatever that, for instance, 1, 179 was staged for ensuring the fertility of the fields, the rain *sūktas* 7, 101 ff. were sung by a party of brahmins standing in a pool with frogs in it—a performance continuing an ancient mimetic frog-dance—or the *sūkta* of the gambler (10, 34) was sung to the accompaniment of dances of the personified dice and staged as an interlude in the midst of a sacrifice to recall the dangers of dicing. We have seen that the dialogue of Yama and Yamī (10, 10) admits of a more plausible explication than that of a fertility drama from which the alleged prudishness of the Vedic age has omitted the, in itself necessary, union of the pair. No conclusion can, finally, be drawn from the presence of certain ‘dramatic’ elements in these *sūktas* because this is nearly always found in sacred texts.

The supporter of a variant dramatic theory, Johannes Hertel⁶¹, was not successful either. Basing his argument largely on the—untenable—supposition

⁵⁶ S. LÉVI, *Le théâtre indien*, Paris 1891 (1963), p. 307.

⁵⁷ Cf. J. GONDA, *Zur Frage nach dem Ursprung und Wesen des indischen Dramas*, AO (Lugd.) 19, p. 329; F. B. J. KUPPER, in *Gedenkschrift W. Brandenstein*, Innsbruck 1968, p. 77.

⁵⁸ L. v. SCHROEDER, *Mysterium und Mimus im Rigveda*, Leipzig 1908, ²1972; see also WZKM 22, p. 223; 23, p. 1 (on R̥V. 10, 72); 270. Cf. also U. SCHNEIDER, *Der Somaraub des Manu*, Wiesbaden 1971, p. 68; 75.

⁵⁹ See e.g. K. TH. PREUSS, in *Globus* 95 (1909), p. 41; GONDA, o.c., p. 333.

⁶⁰ See e.g. W. CALAND, in *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 14, p. 499; A. B. KEITH, in *JRAS* 1909, p. 200; 1911, p. 981; ZDMG 64, p. 534; *The Sanskrit drama*, Oxford 1924 (1970), p. 13; BLOOMFIELD, in *JAOS* 30, p. 78, see also WINTERNITZ, in *WZKM* 23, p. 105 (who was inclined to subscribe to part of VON SCHROEDER’S interpretations).

⁶¹ J. HERTEL, in *WZKM* 18, p. 59; 137; 23, p. 273; 24, p. 117; compare also HILLEBRANDT, in *SBBAW* 1914, 4, p. 31.

that the Vedic hymns were always sung and that it would have been impossible for a single singer to distinguish between the different speakers of a dialogue, he made an attempt to explain the *Suparṇādhyaḥya*⁶² as an actual drama representing in its elaboration a marked advance upon the 'dramas' of the Ṛgveda. There is not however sufficient ground for explaining that text—which is no doubt in part narrative—in this forced way. In short, this theory resolves itself into a complex of bare possibilities which do not substantially add to the interpretation of the *sūktas*⁶³.

A different theory of the character and the purpose of the texts under consideration has, after resolute contestation, energetic vindication and a long period of negligence, recently again met with the attention which it deserves. Windisch⁶⁴ was the first to advance the opinion that these Vedic *sūktas* represent an old type of literature, preserved also in Celtic sagas, which was of epic character and consisted partly of prose, and partly of verses put into the mouth of the principal figures. In the Ṛgveda only the verses, representing the points of highest emotion, were—he thought—preserved and the introductory and connecting prose, which was not stereotyped, was lost. The narrative passages with inserted verses occurring in the *brāhmaṇas* are, in his view, complete representatives of this genre. It was Oldenberg⁶⁵ whose name came to be most closely associated with this *ākhyāna*⁶⁶ ("tale, narrative") theory. Considering that the *sūktas* to which he applied his theory are unintelligible as they stand, he assumed the existence of a genre of literature, narrative in character and consisting of a mixture of prose and verse. That the narrative every now and then took the dialogue form is in view of the preference for direct speech not surprising. The verses—moments of supreme emotion or the point of the story—remained fixed and were handed down with little change, but the prose was allowed to deviate from its original 'text,' because every narrator was at

⁶² See p. 47.

⁶³ B. K. GHOSH, in H. C. I. P. I, p. 345 (dramas in embryo, not necessarily for the stage) and P. S. SASTRI, The Ṛgvedic theory of drama, JGJRI 15 (1957), p. 13 (superficially and without argumentation) return to the dramatic theory; cf. also D. D. KOSAMBI, in JBBRAS 27, I, p. 1. M. M. GHOSH, in IHQ 31, p. 203; 339 wisely limits himself to speaking of dramatic dialogues. For the possibility of interpreting ṚV. 4, 26 and 27 as simple cult dramas: U. SCHNEIDER, Somaraub des Manu, Wiesbaden 1971, p. 75; 78. References to Indra as a dancer (e.g. 1, 130, 7) prove a dramatic performance of some hymns no more than a 'dramatic arrangement' of, e.g., ṚV. 6, 9 (GELDNER, Auswahl, II, p. 89).

⁶⁴ E. WINDISCH, Über die altirische Sage der Táin Bó Cúalnge, Verh. 33. Philologenversammlung Gera, Leipzig 1879, p. 15 (cf. Geschichte der Sanskrit-Philologie, Strassburg 1917, p. 404).

⁶⁵ H. OLDENBERG, Das altindische Ākhyāna, ZDMG 37 (1883), p. 54 (= K.S. p. 441); Ākhyāna-Hymnen im Ṛgveda, ZDMG 39, p. 52 (= K.S. p. 474); GGA 1909, p. 66; NG 1911, p. 441 (= K.S. p. 1395); NG 1919, p. 79 (= K.S. p. 1495); Zur Geschichte der altindischen Prosa, Göttingen 1917, p. 53ff.; Das Mahābhārata, Göttingen 1922, p. 21.

⁶⁶ GELDNER, explaining ṚV. 10, 95 in the light of OLDENBERG's theory, prefers *itihāsa* "tradition" (used e.g. in Bṛhaddevatā 4, 46) to *ākhyāna* (V. S. I, p. 284).

liberty to alter its form⁶⁷ or even to supply it according to circumstances. The comparatively detached character of many stanzas was made an argument in favour of the theory: they presupposed a connective text. In Oldenberg's opinion it even was probable that part of these *sūktas* (e.g. 10, 95)⁶⁸ were composed for the purpose of this type of delivery. Pischel⁶⁹ had already made an attempt to show that the *ākhyāna* theory was capable of combination with a dramatic character of the *sūktas* under discussion, and was inclined to regard the intermingling of prose and verse in the Sanskrit drama of later times as a relic of this early genre of literature. Attempting a similar compromise, Winternitz⁷⁰ argued that the dialogues, whether relics of stories in prose and stanzas, or not, might very well have served liturgical purposes. In contradistinction to Oldenberg, who regarded the original prose portions as lost, Geldner⁷¹ supposed that the stanzas of the dialogue hymns were detached from the complete stories (*itihāsa*). In his opinion, these must have been collected in a prose corpus, lost to us, but utilized as their principal source by the commentators and the authors and compilers of *Bṛhaddevatā*, *Mahābhārata* and *purāṇas*. In after years, however, Geldner sought to explain the longer dialogue hymns as ballads⁷², that is to say, as dialogized narrative poems which, being episodic in form, do not presuppose any connective prose⁷³. Rejecting Oldenberg's *ākhyāna* theory as well as the dramatic explanations, yet recognizing four *sūktas* (one single one and a set of three others) as genuine dramas, Charpentier⁷⁴ came to regard the disputed texts as pieces of epic poetry not needing any additional prose.

Oldenberg's most uncompromising opponent, Keith⁷⁵, objected that the tradition shows no trace of knowledge of the supposed characteristic of these *sūktas*; nor do we find any work actually in this form in the Veda. Why should

⁶⁷ In defending his thesis OLDENBERG also drew attention to the *Suparṇādhyaīya* —which calls itself an *ākhyāna* (1, 5; 31, 7)—Pāli *Jātakas* such as n^o 253, and the *Śunaḥśepa* story in *AiB.* 7, 13ff. (*ZDMG* 37, p. 77).

⁶⁸ Cf. *ŚB.* 11, 5, 1, and, *inter alia*, *RV.* 5, 61; 1, 126; *ŚŚ.* 16, 11; *RV.* 1, 165–178; *Bṛhaddevatā* 4, 44ff.; *RV.* 1, 179; *ibid.* 4, 57ff.; on *RV.* 8, 91 see also OLDENBERG, at *ZDMG* 39, p. 76; on *RV.* 10, 95 *GGA* 1890, p. 417.

⁶⁹ PISCHEL, *V. S.* II, p. 42; in *GGA* 1891, p. 351.

⁷⁰ WINTERNITZ, in *WZKM* 23, p. 132; see also *G. I. L.* III, p. 609 (a confused note with a bibliography).

⁷¹ GELDNER, *V. S.* I, p. 289.

⁷² See p. 159.

⁷³ HILLEBRANDT, *o.c.*, p. 29 observed that in many cases neither the *ākhyāna* nor the ballad theory can account for all problems.

⁷⁴ J. CHARPENTIER, *Die Suparṇasage*, Uppsala 1920, p. 13.

⁷⁵ A. B. KEITH, in *JRAS* 1911, p. 979; 1912, p. 429; *R. B.* p. 68; *The Sanskrit drama*, p. 22; *A history of Sanskrit literature*, Oxford 1920 (1948), p. 67. For other criticism see J. CHARPENTIER, in *WZKM* 25, p. 307 (whose objection: the hymns and the narratives of the *brāhmaṇas* are two parallel offshoots of the same branch composed for different purposes and hence incapable of being intermingled, does not hold water); HORSCH, *V. G. L.*, p. 306; 341; H. VON GLASENAPP, *Die Literaturen Indiens*, Stuttgart 1961, p. 60; GHOSH, *l.c.*

this *ākhyāna* prose have disappeared while that of the *brāhmaṇas* was carefully handed down? In the case of Purūravas and Urvaśī the tale of the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa does not agree with the stanzas of the Ṛgveda and must be considered an attempt to work ṚV. 10, 95 into the explication of a particular rite; some stanzas are quoted because the text on which the story is based is taken from outside the White Yajurveda. Nor do, in his opinion, the other alleged instances fit the theory, some of them being clear enough without any connecting explication postulated by the theory. Yet the theory was accepted by other scholars⁷⁶. It was pointed out that for all *sūktas* discussed by Oldenberg the ancient Indian commentators have handed down stories, legends or traditions, so-called *itihāsas*, and that Durga and Sāyaṇa refer to these *itihāsas* failing indications of the ritual application of the texts⁷⁷. The conclusion was drawn that already in the Brāhmaṇa period there must have existed a rather extensive narrative literature (*itihāsa-purāṇa* "old traditional histories") and that the contents of this collection—which was to become the source of ancient commentators—were known to the poets of the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā⁷⁸. Scholars did not however fail to notice that the stories and legends handed down in the *brāhmaṇas* and ancillary literature are far from identical or completely consistent with the *sūktas* to which they traditionally belong⁷⁹. But this did not prevent them from considering texts such as the four *sūktas* of the Gauṇyānas (10, 57–60) to constitute the collection of stanzas belonging to the 'original' story, notwithstanding the fact that the traditions of this story are not uniform; they all agree in giving the persons figuring in these texts a historical character⁸⁰.

In recent times, the justifiability of the *ākhyāna* theory was from different sides pleaded again⁸¹. Basing himself mainly on more modern views of the Buddhist Jātakas⁸² and what might be called the Jain contribution to the problem under discussion Alsdorf⁸³ arrived at the conclusion that Oldenberg's

⁷⁶ SIEG, Sagenstoffe, p. 1; WINTERNTZ, in WZKM 23, p. 102 (cf. p. 136: part of these *sūktas* are complete ballads, others relics of tales composed of prose with stanzas intermingled, others again stanzas accompanying cult dramas); H. I. L. I, p. 102; MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 119; L. D. BARNETT, in BSOS 2, p. 808; CALAND, o. c., 25, p. 288.

⁷⁷ Cf. Sāyaṇa on ṚV. 1, 105; 3, 53; 4, 18.

⁷⁸ See e.g. SIEG, o. c., p. 33.

⁷⁹ See e.g. the legend of Śyāvāśva Ātreya (SIEG, o. c., p. 50).

⁸⁰ See M. MÜLLER, in JRAS 2, p. 426; OERTEL, in JAOS 18, p. 42; GELDNER, RV. III, p. 221; cf. JB. 3, 168; the Sarvānukramaṇī 7, 83ff.; ŚātyB. quoted by Sāyaṇa on ṚV. 10, 57, 1 etc. For differences in opinion between the ancient authorities see e.g. also VON SCHROEDER, in WZKM 22, p. 224.

⁸¹ Cf. also L. RENOU, Histoire de la langue sanskrite, Lyon-Paris 1956, p. 38 ("plausible"), see also RENOU-(FILLIOZAT), I. C. I, p. 275; but compare Poésie religieuse, p. 14 ("perhaps recitatives in cult dramas"); p. 15 (ballads).

⁸² See e.g. H. LÜDERS, Bhārhut und die buddhistische Literatur, 1942 (Liechtenstein 1966), p. 139.

⁸³ L. ALSDORF, The *ākhyāna* theory reconsidered, JOIB 13, p. 195 (= Proc. 26 Int. Congr. Or. 1964, Poona 1969), III, 1, p. 14.

arguments, though admitting of some slight modifications, were sound and never convincingly refuted. Just as the Pāli Jātaka collection originally included the stanzas (*gāthās*) only, the prose being from the beginning a commentary, which was lost and replaced by the much later prose text that is known to us; just as from the text of the Jain Uttarajjhāyā it appears that every commentator supplied the old stanzas with his own addition to make the tales self-sufficient, so, Alsdorf holds, the Ṛgveda contains specimens—few in number, it is true—of a much vaster literature, popular in character, never written down and therefore lost to us. However, there remains one serious question to be solved: can it be taken for granted that the situation and the relations between the oral tradition of ‘complete’ stories and the stanzas of these Ṛgvedic *sūktas* were similar to those in the Buddhist or Jain communities of later times?

An attempt to understand this relation was subsequently made by Rocher⁸⁴. Regarding the existence of an earlier prototype in verse and prose as unnecessary and in any case as difficult to prove he argues that the hymns under discussion could be understood only by those who were familiar with the background from which they spread and to which they constantly allude. In his opinion this background was the same ‘popular’ Hinduism as that of the Buddhist Jātakas and the natural surroundings of the stories can best be known from the epics and typically Hinduist *purāṇas*, which, he holds, contain much older material than is often believed. Although this background existed alongside with the Veda, no direct evidence for it has come to us from that early period.

We would for the time being prefer modifying these views of the problem as follows. Like all *sūktas* of the Ṛgveda these poems presuppose a mythical and legendary background known to many⁸⁵, but interpreted and consciously handed down in the light of their own views of life and the world by the spiritual élite. Representatives of this élite drew on this oral tradition whenever they were required to give some explanation or supplementary information⁸⁶. Alongside with the *brāhmaṇas* there may have existed more or less fixed compilations of this material. Since in course of time this oral tradition did not remain unaltered the stories communicated and the information furnished by the ancient commentators and epic and puranic works of later time do not—as

⁸⁴ L. ROCHER, A possible background of the *ākhyāna* hymns of the Ṛgveda, Proc. 27 Int. Congr. Or. 1967 (Wiesbaden 1971), p. 297. See also HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 341.

⁸⁵ It may be remembered that sometimes the narrative stanzas of the poet himself supplied some information. An instance of an incomplete statement or a dialogue becoming clear with the help of other passages is RV. 4, 18, 2: cf. 8, 45, 4f.; 77, 1f.

⁸⁶ Oral explanation of texts or chants which often are hardly intelligible to uneducated members of the audience has for many centuries been a common feature of Indian social and religious life. While most of the themes are a matter of common knowledge and the plot and the cast of characters of lectures and dramatic performances are as a rule fixed, the information or ‘message’ is conveyed through the prose parts which—whether they are dialogized or not—permit a great deal of improvisation.

far as we are able to see—always tally with the contents of the *sūktas*. The fact that these *sūktas*, generally speaking, were—like many other hymns, it should be remembered⁸⁷—not enjoined in the ritual ceremonies as described in the *sūtras* etc. known to us is not very surprising. These texts may have been included in the Ṛgveda—a corpus of an on the whole considerably different character—because they were believed to be inherently powerful and could be used, for instance, as legend spells⁸⁸ or accompany optional rites performed from some interested motive⁸⁹. The dramatic element, which is very often present in sacred poems expressing mythical truths or relating traditions about legendary ancestors and intended to secure important results, could be greatly expanded by the literal quotation of the words of the divine or deified principal characters. The wish to preserve these words in a fixed form can therefore have been one of the factors determining the inclusion of these dialogues in the Ṛgveda⁹⁰.

⁸⁷ See p. 83 f., 87.

⁸⁸ E.g. 3, 33; 10, 108; see ALSDORF, o.c., p. 205.

⁸⁹ It seems worth recalling that some dialogue hymns are prescribed in the Ṛgvidhāna, ṚV. 1, 165 in the case of a man who wishes to establish a kingdom (1, 26, 3f.); 3, 33 in crossing a river (2, 1, 4).

⁹⁰ Generally speaking, early or 'primitive' prose often contains passages of fixed and rhythmic form consisting of conversation between the persons who play a part in the story (see e.g. F. BOAS, *Primitive art*, New York 1955, p. 309).

CHAPTER V

THE STYLE OF THE VEDIC HYMNS

1. *The R̥gveda from the stylistic point of view*

Widely divergent judgements have in the course of the last century been pronounced on the aesthetic value of Vedic poetry¹. The perfection and sublimity of the whole collection of verses, the grandeur of its sentiments, the brilliance of its images and the profundity of its inspiration were, in the eyes of an early critic², only marred by a lack of unity and proportions and an excess of subtleness and metaphysics. The unmistakable monotony of part of the prayers and eulogies was as frequently emphasized as the charm of the Uṣas hymns³; the naive and delightful simplicity, the delicacy of thought and feelings so lyrically praised by earlier authors⁴ was in the eyes of others⁵ little more than primitiveness or the effect of an accumulation of worn and trivial liturgical formulas. In the presence of "much genuine joy, sorrow and anger, much beauty of expression, much real poetry" the artificiality of hymns made to order was according to many critics to be condoned⁶. It has been observed that the language of the poets had undergone long cultivation and that much of their work must have been 'artificial' and the expression of speculation or of some vague mysticism. It has also been contended that part of the texts were composed by competing poets without religious inspiration⁷.

However, the R̥gveda is neither a collection of primitive popular poems⁸ (as it was apt to be described at an earlier period of indological studies) nor an anthology of purely literary poems, of fastidiously elaborated artificial com-

¹ Cf. C. KUNHAN RAJA, in 12 AIOC I, p. 32.

² B. ST. HILAIRE, at J. des Savants 1853, p. 463; 1854, p. 204.

³ Cf. e.g. W. GEIGER, in Nord und Süd 16 (1881), p. 84; GRIFFITH, H. RV. I, p. VII; WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 91; 94. According to P. S. SHASTRI, Nagpur Univ. Journal 12 (1948), p. 56 the R̥gveda is an anthology of beautiful lyrics.

⁴ See e.g. A. KAEGI, Der Rig-Veda, Leipzig 1878, p. 4; 33; 35; H. BRUNNHOFER, Über den Geist der indischen Lyrik, Leipzig 1882, p. 5; GRASSMANN, RV. übers. I, p. VI; L. VON SCHROEDER, Indiens Literatur und Cultur, Leipzig 1887, p. 37; cf. also OLDENBERG, at ZDMG 49, p. 172 (= K.S. p. 674).

⁵ See S. LÉVI, A. Bergaigne et l'indianisme, Paris 1890.

⁶ See e.g. E. W. HOPKINS, in JAOS 15, p. 274. P. S. SASTRI (Nagpur Univ. J. 10, p. 30; 11, p. 1) is of the opinion that the R̥gveda is essentially poetic in character.

⁷ KEITH, R. Ph. V. U. p. 14.

⁸ See also OLDENBERG, Vedaforschung, p. 11.

positions, or a mere string of eccentric rhetorical delicacies and subtleties⁹. It is rather a body of, on the whole, skilfully composed religious hymns¹⁰ serving useful purposes, produced by more or less inspired poets belonging to the sacerdotal class, its style exhibiting a most interesting, often almost harmonious, mixture of archaic and archaistic traditionalism on one hand and functional elaboration on the other. The often finished phraseology, the strophic structure and the persistence of a conventional framework all suggest a traditional literary form, the frequent references to inspiration and the poems' functions point to personal impulses. For a modern reader, studying the Veda entails being persuaded to perceive an imaginary world through the instrumentality of a difficult, in places formulaic or technical, language and an at first sight curious, but on closer investigation highly adequate style.

Those authors are no doubt right who have characterized these collections as poetry of very uneven literary merit¹¹. From the stylistic point of view the hymns are neither uniform nor of the same value. Although on the whole the hymns proper and other component parts impress us as skilfully composed, there is indeed no denying that some texts are clumsy, feeble, stereotyped, artificial, or confused compilations¹². Other *sūktas* have, in most cases rightly, been characterized as banal, mediocre or devoid of a deeper meaning¹³, as incoherent or repeating what in other hymns is said in a more felicitous or impressive way. Others again have been stigmatized as obscure, or bristling with rare, ambiguous or enigmatic expressions¹⁴. However, obscurity as well as banality may be due to our lack of comprehension¹⁵. The Mitra hymn 3, 59, for instance, is nowadays held in much higher estimation than half a century ago¹⁶. It would however be hardly natural for a corpus comprising the productions of many poets extending over a long period to include no mechanical stanzas and commonplace¹⁷ hymns beside crisp and vigorous compositions of

⁹ As was BERGAIGNE's opinion, at MSL 4 (1881), p. 96.

¹⁰ Cf. S. K. DE, in NIA 9 (1947), p. 129.

¹¹ See e.g. P. REGNAUD, in RHR 21 (1890), p. 301; MACDONELL, H. S. L. p. 65; V. G. PARANJPE, in 13 AIOC II, p. 29; v. GLASENAPP, L. I., p. 53.

¹² E.g. RV. 1, 186, 4; 2, 39; 8, 5; 10, 93; for 'elementary' poems see e.g. 1, 1 (RENOU, E. V. P. XII, p. 71); 18; 4, 49; 8, 5; 11; 43; 44; 85. As to 2, 18 see GRASSMANN, RV. übers. I, p. 25; 4, 38; RENOU, E. V. P. XVI, p. 161; 8, 35; RENOU, E. V. P. XVI, p. 64; 10, 105; GELDNER, RV. III, p. 323; 10, 149; RENOU, E. V. P. XV, p. 32.

¹³ Cf. e.g. 1, 85 (RENOU, E. V. P. X, p. 6); 137; 5, 42 (RENOU, E. V. P. IV, p. 64); 51; 71; 7, 65; 66; 77 (RENOU, E. V. P. III, p. 95); 8, 13; 10, 170 (GELDNER, RV. III, p. 395); 1, 89, 1f.

¹⁴ E.g. 1, 151 (RENOU, E. V. P. VII, p. 34); 5, 44 (GELDNER, RV. II, p. 46); 8, 13; 41; 10, 73 (E. W. FAY, at PAOS 1895, JAOS 16, p. CCXXIX); 106 (GELDNER, RV. III, p. 325).

¹⁵ Cf. V. HENRY, in MSL 9, p. 108.

¹⁶ P. THIEME, Mitra and Aryaman, New Haven Conn. 1957, p. 39; J. GONDA, The Vedic god Mitra, Leiden 1972, p. 91.

¹⁷ The versifier of 8, 73, 15, for instance, seems to betray himself by bathos and triviality: "Do not overlook us with thousands of kine and horses."

true solemnity¹⁸, genuine religious feeling and real poetical excellence, some of which were never paralleled in later times. However, this is not to endorse the attempts made to distinguish between two genres of Vedic poetry, that of the original formulas and the more or less spontaneous expressions of poetic thought and that of learned and complex, liturgical or theological, patchwork¹⁹.

With the exception of *mandāla* X there are hardly differences of dialect worth mentioning. In many peculiarities of their style²⁰, practically all the hymns are, as far as the selection of syntactic constructions and stylistic 'figures' are concerned, simple or at least in harmony with well-known tendencies, their obscurity being due to our imperfect understanding of allusions, references and terminology. The largely hieratic, sometimes technical²¹, highly archaic—and in places archaizing—language, only half intelligible to anyone who knows only classical Sanskrit, creates the impression of natural vigour. A great wealth of grammatical forms²², a considerable number of nominal compounds and a copious vocabulary, (if appearances are not deceptive) rich in stately words and phrases, an often concise and elliptic phraseology enable the poets to couch their thoughts in melodious, dignified, sufficiently nuanced stanzas which, while being complete in themselves, often leave full scope for imagination and supplementation, stanzas which in their contents and structure may be supposed to have arisen, as a literary form, under the influence of the style of prayer and ritual formula.

There is however a considerable amount of truth in the statement²³ that in many places the phraseology of the R̥gvedic hymns seems to be drowned in an indistinct mass of hyperbolic eulogies; especially within the hymns addressed to the same deity the same selections of words and expressions are found again

¹⁸ Cf. e.g. RV. 1, 21; 2, 12; 5, 85.

¹⁹ REGNAUD, o.c., p. 302. For 'literary strata' also S. K. BELVALKAR, in 2 AIOC, p. 11.

²⁰ For the style of the *mantras* in general see GONDA, Old Indian, p. 153; RENOUE, at BSL 61, p. 1 (emphasizing the isolated, anomalous, esoteric, unnatural and symbolical features); at Silver Jubilee Vol. Zinbun-Kagaku Kenkyusyo, Kyoto Univ. 1954, p. 309. For linguistic questions bearing on stylistics see GONDA, l.c. Surmises have been raised with regard to 'coarse' or 'popular' expressions—often misjudged by westerners—: on 10, 38, 5 A. LUDWIG, in ZDMG 40, p. 713; GELDNER, RV. III, p. 190; to 'slang': PISCHEL-GELDNER, V. S. I, p. 327; II, p. 332; GELDNER, RV. III, p. 135. Questions relating to a preference for rare or special words must be left undiscussed. See e.g. RV. 1, 62; 127–139; 3, 55; 4, 16, 9; 5, 12; 15; 41; 44; 8, 13; 9, 73, and GELDNER's notes (cf. also RV. I, p. 336; II, p. 91; 392; 427). In hymns dedicated to the Maruts there is a certain predilection for terms for "sport-(ing)" (RENOUE, E. V. P. X, p. 59), in those addressed to Dawn for "splendour and prestige" (*dyumna*: E. V. P. III, p. 15).

²¹ See e.g. 8, 31, 5; 9, 6, 5; 11, 5; 10, 4, 5; cf. 9, 113, 5; and compare, in general, L. RENOUE, at Die Sprache, 1 (1949), p. 11.

²² For the stylistic value of grammatical doublets see RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 49; 54.

²³ RENOUE, H. P. p. 4. See also BLOOMFIELD, Repetitions, passim.

and again. This bent for similar and homogeneous expression and more or less stereotyped phraseology was no doubt promoted by the henotheistic tendencies: the poets were almost always inclined to attribute the same or similar high qualities to the gods eulogized²⁴. The phraseology employed, for instance to describe Indra, may recur in poems addressed to a subordinate god, such as Parjanya (5, 83), whose range of action has something in common with Indra's. Many descriptive words are moreover vague and applicable to the plurality of divine beings: they are "active," "zealous," "supporting the cultivators." Fixed combinations of words may, in similar contexts, suffice to indicate a situation which obviously is not in need of a more detailed description²⁵. Yet the occurrence, and especially the combination, of certain images and epithets, and a predilection for typical allusions characterize many passages as dedicated to definite gods even if their names are absent²⁶. There is, in *maṇḍala* IX, a typical *soma* phraseology, but this also is monotonously repeated²⁷. Besides, there are considerable differences between the hymns in complication, in allusive or enigmatic obscurity, in syntactic constructions. Whereas the Uṣas hymns belong to the easiest parts of the corpus²⁸ other poems are known as complicated 'baroque,' studied or overladen with similes²⁹. It is however not always easy to determine whether a passage is 'mystic' or just 'narrative' in character.

Oldenberg at the time found himself unable to detect, in these hymns, many coherent lines of thought. It must be admitted that the independent and often isolated character of many stanzas does not promote the development of elaborated ideas or chains of reasonings³⁰. The texts indeed afford numerous instances of interruption, anacoluthon, abrupt transitions³¹, of successions of sentences without any apparent connexion³². How often a poet has suppressed a thought which would have smoothed an abrupt transition away we do not know³³, but there can be no doubt that in supplying missing links we are liable to exaggerate. Many passages can be elucidated by parallels in other parts of the corpus³⁴.

²⁴ See e.g. also E. W. HOPKINS, in PAOS 1895 (= JAOS 16, p. CCXXXVI); RENOUE, E. V. P. IV, p. 8.

²⁵ See also K. L. JANERT, in IJ 2, p. 85; B. SCHLERATH, Das Königtum im Rig- und Atharvaveda, Wiesbaden 1960, p. 43.

²⁶ Cf. e.g. RENOUE, E. V. P. IV, p. 69 on ṚV. 5, 44.

²⁷ Cf. also MAINKAR, Repetitions, p. 88.

²⁸ See also RENOUE, E. V. P. III, p. 1.

²⁹ Cf. e.g. 4, 1; 5, 19; 8, 103 (RENOUE, E. V. P. XIII, p. 159); 10, 27 (GRIFFITH, H. ṚV. IV, p. 157); 10, 61; 77 (RENOUE, E. V. P. X, p. 110).

³⁰ For an exception see ṚV. 5, 81, 2a and 3-5 and compare 8, 47, 15: 18.

³¹ See e.g. ṚV. 1, 52, 10ff.; 1, 162; 5, 48, 5; 61, 9f.; 8, 1; 9, 86, 1-4; 10, 156, 1-3 and cf. GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 86.

³² OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 38 (1884), p. 452 (= K.S. p. 526).

³³ Cf. GELDNER, ṚV. on 1, 53, 1; 8, 47, 4.

³⁴ Cf. e.g. 6, 29, 5: 6, 37, 5; 6, 61, 1: 1, 93, 4; 7, 33, 1: 7, 18, 21f.; 8, 39, 5: 6, 1, 8; 8, 87, 1: 1, 30, 1; 8, 93, 9: 9, 106, 3; 9, 69, 5: 9, 71, 1.

Parallelism or identity of thoughts are indeed extremely frequent³⁵ showing that notwithstanding differences in subject and poetical value the lines of thought are often governed by uniformity³⁶. On the other hand, a motif once introduced is in a frequency of cases somewhat elaborately continued: (When it rains) "the mountains dress in clouds and 'violent' men (the gods of storm) loosen (the garment)" (5, 85, 4)³⁷. Additions or supplementary explanations—for instance after digressing or lingering over a detail—are not uncommon³⁸. The tendency to accumulate details, to make great play with the possibilities of characterization and descriptive elaboration rather than with an uninterrupted continuation of a theme is already in this earliest document of Indian poetry clearly recognizable.

It is true that generally speaking the way in which these authors compose 'narrative' passages impresses us as irregular and elementary; that many details of the composition are not perceptibly determined by an intrinsic necessity resulting from the structure and character of the whole poem; that passages are few in which a poet pursues the same subject³⁹, allows himself to dwell upon the same event or (what we would call) systematically to relate an important occurrence⁴⁰. Yet many authors prove able to present their hearers with a vivid description of some incident or a sober statement of a mythological fact which would not have been unbecoming in an epic narrative of greater length; 2, 30, 3:

³⁵ We can only touch on the interesting subject of the stylistic interdependence of hymns and groups of hymns. Those dedicated to Parjanya and the frogs (7, 101-103) draw in their phraseology from the Indra hymns (W. NORMAN BROWN, in NIA 2, p. 115), the hymns addressed to the double deities have, in this respect, much in common (GONDA, Dual deities, passim). For similarity of obviously ritualistic hymns (e.g. the *āpri* hymns) see BLOOMFIELD, Repetitions, p. 16; for imitative hymns in general (the *Vālahilyas* and 4, 13-14; 9, 104-105), *ibidem*, p. 13; for 9, 5 (a *soma pavamāna* hymn modelled upon the *āpri* hymns) RENO, E. V. P. VIII, p. 4; for the *Uṣas* and *Soma* hymns, E. V. P. III, p. 2; for the *Aśvin* hymns 5, 73; 74 and 8, 73, OLDENBERG, *Noten*, II, p. 136; in general, T. JA. ELIZARENKOVA, *Rigveda*, Moscow 1972, p. 37; for particulars, BLOOMFIELD, Repetitions, p. 589. It goes without saying that in many cases the meaning of a stanza is elucidated by another text-place.

³⁶ See e.g. 1, 4, 5: 3, 30, 1; 1, 186, 5: 3, 33, 10; 3, 5, 1: 3, 56, 4; 3, 53, 22: 7, 104, 2: 4, 3, 10: 6, 66, 1; 4, 22, 6; 7, 21, 3: 10, 111, 9; 4, 23, 7: 2, 23, 17; 5, 6, 1: 6, 2, 2; 6, 13, 5: 7, 68, 8, etc. etc.; see GELDNER's and RENO's commentaries.

³⁷ Cf. e.g. 7, 18, 4; 36, 9; 7, 82, 5f.; 103, 5; 8, 19, 34f.; 8, 45, 14f.; 36f.; 97, 2f.; 10, 44, 6f.; 52, 4.

³⁸ See e.g. 6, 1, 2ff.; 62, 1f.; 7, 21, 4-6; 72, 2f.; 10, 25, 3f.; 30, 5f.; 45, 1-3; 89, 3-5; 134, 3ff.

³⁹ Cf. RENO, E. V. P. I, p. 45. For some exceptions (of limited compass): 2, 38, 1-2; 3-6; 7-8; 3, 5, 5-6; 30, 12-13; 16-17; 4, 3, 9-10; 4, 6, 4-5.

⁴⁰ Compare also V. HENRY, *Les littératures de l'Inde*, Paris 1904, p. 27. This is not to endorse KERTH's (R. Ph. V. U. p. 6) opinion: "when the Vedic poet seeks to compass more elaborate thought, his power of expression seriously fails him."

“On high he (Indra) stood in the air, Hurling his weapon to Vṛtra, Who, wrapping himself in mist⁴¹, had rushed upon him. Indra whose weapon was sharp conquered the enemy.”

When Indra begins the battle the other gods abandon him for fright: “Shrinking from the snorting of Vṛtra all the gods, thy companions, left thee in the lurch” (8, 96, 7)⁴². When at 10, 113, 8 it reads that they cheered him, they may be supposed to have returned, but this detail is left unmentioned. These narrative portions find their match in the minute and graphic descriptions of the personal appearance and equipment of that most popular deity, the defier of foes, glorious in battle.

On the other hand, the technique of these poets who generally select some special points from a series of mythological or legendary events, of which they presuppose a knowledge, is not well suited to anything that borders on real narrative. While choosing the episodes with care and emphasizing the critical moments, while weaving marvellous elements around the central themes which they vary according to their purpose and insight, they do not provide us with regular accounts of the events for their own sake. In contradistinction to more or less successful recapitulations or succinct indications of a theme⁴³ truly narrative passages of some length are rare and where they occur almost always characterized by what has been called ‘immobilism’⁴⁴; 7, 83, 8:

“To Sudās, in the combat with the ten kings surrounded on all sides,
Ye, O Indra and Varuṇa, tried to render assistance,
While (the clan of) the Ṛtsus, (clad in) white, wearing braided hair,
Respectfully worshipped with inspired poetry, possessors of poetic inspiration.”

Descriptive passages in the proper sense of the term, that is such as fill one or a few stanzas and evoke a clear image in the mind of the hearer, are likewise comparatively few in number. Even in a case such as 4, 4, 10 the picture of a warrior who, laden with booty, gold and horses, returns from the battle-field is interrupted by the statement that Agni is his comrade and protector. What appears to be—and to a certain extent is—a description of the rains (5, 63, 3ff.) is no doubt designed in magnification of divine power. Although the ninth *maṇḍala* consists entirely of hymns dealing with the preparation (‘clarification’) of *soma*, it offers us neither a coherent nor a clearly detailed picture of the pertinent procedure. Instead of this the poets take delight in viewing it in all aspects, in elucidating it by a variety of metaphors and in penetrating its significance. Even highly emotive subjects, for instance war and battle, are

⁴¹ Cf. ṚV. 5, 32, 4; 10, 73, 5; 111, 6. For Indra’s fight with Vṛtra see also E. D. PERRY, at JAOS 11 (1885), p. 136 and PAOS 1880, p. XLVII.

⁴² Cf. 4, 18, 11; 8, 93, 14f.; 10, 113, 6.

⁴³ See e.g. 1, 33, 4ff. (GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 6); 179, 6; 5, 45, 11; 83, 10. Notice also the succinct formulations of prayers, charms etc., such as 5, 78, 9; 6, 28, 8; narrative final stanzas e.g. 1, 158, 6. For 3, 7, 10 see V. HENRY, in MSL 10, p. 93.

⁴⁴ RENO, E. V. P. VII, p. 85. Cf. also GELDNER, V. S. I, p. 291.

pictured with a few—though veracious—strokes⁴⁵. Yet, to mention only one exception, 2, 38, 2f. is a varied description of sunset: when Savitar reaches out his arms everything obeys him: the wind dies down, the traveller unharnesses his horses, the wayfarer takes a rest, the voracity of the birds of prey is for a moment interrupted. Many poets do not fail in a certain ability to insert, by way of illustration, strings of felicitous characteristics: "(Indra,) who slays with his arrows the unexpected many that commit great sin; who does not forgive the arrogant man his arrogance . . ." (2, 12, 10). Especially in monologues and dialogues some poets prove to be able to typify their figures successfully. Hymns such as 10, 119 (the so-called drunken Indra)⁴⁶ and 10, 34 (the gambler) are among the best examples. Some stanzas at least of the dialogue between Indra and the Maruts (cf. 1, 165, 6ff.) give a good idea of the former's character or behaviour: claiming everything for himself he denies that the Maruts in any way assisted him while performing his great deeds. The conclusion that such dramatic or emotional, or at least 'human,' passages should, mainly or exclusively, be due to a clash of religious opinions or differences in cult and worship⁴⁷ is by no means obvious.

Throughout the R̥gveda there are felicitous stanzas, well-expressed thoughts, touching images, sketchy pictures, harmonious and impressive combinations of stylistic procedures⁴⁸. In 1, 115, 2 the Sun is said to follow Dawn as a youth runs after a girl. The Morning-Wind illuminates heaven and earth, because he brings the day-blush, and that is his glory (1, 134, 3). At 1, 122, 2 night and morning, represented as two wives who, at daybreak, will answer a call of their husband, are described as a barren woman dressed in a badly woven (or threadbare) garment and as a beauty resplendent in golden attire with the splendour of the sun. There are many graphic—but almost always short—references to natural phenomena showing that a keen power of observation was often complemented by the gift of pictorial expression. There are the vigorous descriptions of Savitar, the Sun, coming through the firmament in his chariot golden in colour and equipment⁴⁹; of Agni's voracity, when he subdues the

⁴⁵ Cf. R̥V. 6, 46, 11f.; 7, 83, 2f., and also 5, 10, 6.

⁴⁶ See p. 149.

⁴⁷ A. HILLEBRANDT, *Lieder des R̥gveda*, Göttingen-Leipzig 1913, p. 67.

⁴⁸ See also S. F. MICHALSKI, in *Scientia* 87 (1952), p. 123; R. HAUSCHILD, in *Festschrift F. Weller*, Leipzig 1954, p. 284. One should not however subscribe to the view that the R̥gveda is a collection of "lyrics of love and beauty"; the statement that its central theme is "the unravelling and exposition of beauty" (P. S. SASTRI, in *QJMS* 50, p. 21) can lead to serious misunderstanding. In studying the meaning of certain words (*śrī*, *bhadra* etc.) OLDENBERG also too insistently emphasized the aspect of beauty (*Die vedischen Worte für "schön" . . . und das vedische Schönheitsgefühl*, NG 1918, p. 35 (= K.S., p. 830)); very often, what is "beautiful" to Vedic man is also, or primarily, "suited to its purpose, pre-eminently useful, auspicious, excellent etc." G. N. CHAKRAVARTI, in *PO* 7 (1942), p. 49 is nearer to the mark: the Vedic poet is a revealer and fashioner of (what is his eyes was) truth (cf. R̥V. 10, 5, 2).

⁴⁹ Cf. 1, 35, 2; 9; 2, 38; 4, 53, 2; 6, 71, 5; 7, 38, 1.

trees, like a warrior the enemies⁵⁰; of rain accompanied by wind and lightning which makes the plants straighten themselves bringing refreshment to all creatures⁵¹; there is the evocative picture and conjuration of a conflagration in R.V. 10, 142. The sacrificial fire, sprinkled with butter (and) moving gracefully, unites with the brightness of the sun (5, 37, 1); in the rains the waters gush, the trees are swept away (5, 58, 6)⁵²; in a battle "the ends of the earth made the impression of being covered (with dust); the tumult has risen to the heavens" (7, 83, 3). There are references to evening and night in 10, 127, to the sporting, noisy and brilliant troop of the Maruts with their cars, garlands and golden ornaments in 1, 37; 85 and elsewhere and a characterization of the goddess Dawn, who, being conscious of the beauty of her body, stands up, like a bathing (woman) to let herself be seen⁵³; 6, 64:

- (1) "Like waves of water, bright in splendour
The radiant Dawns have risen to be glorious.
She makes all paths easy, fair to travel;
The wealthy, benevolent Dakṣiṇā has appeared.
- (2) Thou showest thyself gracious; far shines thy lustre;
Thy radiance, thy splendours have flown up to heaven.
Looking splendid, thou makest bare thy bosom,
Shining in majesty, thou Goddess Dawn."

Sometimes an event or natural phenomenon is in the same stanza pictured as well as mythologically interpreted; 4, 7:

- (11) "When he has grown, greedily (consuming) the foods with his greedy (flame),
Young Agni makes the greedy (wind) his messenger;
He follows the roaring of the wind, consuming (the foods);
He so to say urges the swift one on; the courser makes haste."

It is self-evident that there often is a strongly religious or ritualistic flavour to these descriptions.

Words for colours, not always easy to determine, are often inserted to add to the clearness and vividness of a descriptive passage⁵⁴. Early in the morning the sun is a brightly coloured animal, the god of fire is a reddish bull appearing among the dark (cows); the officiants are invited to offer the extracted reddish-brown filament (i.e. the *soma*) to Indra; the white udder swelled for a man named Black (Kṛṣṇa). The white and resplendent flashes of lightning are mentioned in the same context as Agni, radiant with light; the sun is the golden⁵⁵ (object) of broad compass in the firmament; night is a black cloth; there

⁵⁰ R.V. 1, 143, 5; cf. 2, 4, 5; 7, 6; 6, 12, 4.

⁵¹ R.V. 5, 83, 4; 9; 10; 9, 41, 3; cf. 1, 164, 42.

⁵² Cf. also 6, 46, 13f. (race); 7, 36, 3 and 8, 20, 4 (rains); 10, 121, 2-6 the power of the primeval god and see also RENOUE, E. V. P. X, p. 10.

⁵³ R.V. 5, 80, 5; cf. RENOUE, E. V. P. III, p. 83. For Uṣas see also RENOUE, Poésies religieuses, p. 26.

⁵⁴ Cf. also P. S. SASTRI, at ABORI 28, p. 62.

⁵⁵ For gold, golden—not always suggesting the idea of wealth—see also 1, 35, 4; 10; 3, 44; 6, 50, 8; 7, 38, 2 (Savitar with the golden hand).

are various classes of frogs, inter alia the speckled or yellowish green⁵⁶. Moreover, to denote objects or concepts the poets often had the choice of a wealth of 'synonyms'—thus a 'horse' may be called *aśva*, *arvat*, *atya*, *haya*, *sapti*, *vājin*; the fine semantic differences between these, so essential for a complete understanding of the texts, are however as a rule difficult to determine⁵⁷. That, for instance, Bharadvāja knew how to phrase effective contrasts appears from 6, 3, 3 putting into relief the differences between Agni's two aspects: "Whose appearance is, like (that) of the sun, spotless, (but) terrible, when thine intuition—(and) glowing (thou art)—vigorous, sets out for booty⁵⁸, the same (god) is at night anywhere pleasant, (affording) a residence, he the wood-born one"⁵⁹. At 10, 97, 23 a medicinal plant is said to be the upper one, the trees its subjects.

There is no lack of eloquent and aptly worded prayers and invitations⁶⁰: "Do not, O beneficent one (Indra), abandon us in this danger in battle, for the end of thy might cannot be fully reached" (1, 54, 1); "Dash, O beneficent one, the whole crew of these witches in the lurking place, on the rubbish . . ." (1, 133, 3); "Destroy the fiend (who appears) as a great owl, as a little owl, as a dog . . . ; grind up the evil being as though with a millstone" (7, 104, 22). Many passages are couched in simple and direct language, whether they are very human prayers—"May I not live to lose a friend or son" (8, 45, 36)—or in the cosmogonic hymns rise to a lofty expression of the underlying thought.

Irrespective of stylistic variations conditioned by differences in subject-matter the styles of different parts of these collections may vary considerably. For instance, those hymns of Ṛgveda IX which are composed in the shorter metres are on the whole in a 'light,' simple and uncomplicated style, whereas those in longer metres tend to be 'heavy' and strained⁶¹. Similar observations have been made with regard to the hymns for the Maruts included in *maṇḍala* I and many of those occurring in other books⁶².

Among those *sūktas* which various authors have praised for the comparatively high order of their poetical excellence are, for instance, some Uṣas hymns, e.g. 1, 113⁶³; 3, 61; 7, 75ff.; the Indra hymn 2, 12⁶⁴; the Savitar hymn 2, 38⁶⁵; 2, 40 addressed to the dual deity Soma and Pūṣan⁶⁶; the *sūkta* 5, 45 describing sun-

⁵⁶ ṚV. 5, 75, 9; 6, 48, 6; 7, 98, 1; 10, 31, 11; 3, 1, 14; 5, 1, 12 (cf. 5, 61, 12); 4, 13, 4; 7, 103, 6; 10.

⁵⁷ See S. S. BHAWÉ, 20 AIOC I, p. 42.

⁵⁸ See GONDA, *Vision*, p. 71.

⁵⁹ Compare also 6, 39, 3 and instances such as ṚV. 6, 14, 3; 10, 10, 2f.; 105, 3f.

⁶⁰ See e.g. ṚV. 3, 42.

⁶¹ Cf. RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 46 (see also IX, p. 13).

⁶² Cf. RENOUE, E. V. P. X, p. 6.

⁶³ BERGAIGNE, in J. A. 1889 (I, 8–13), p. 150f.

⁶⁴ A. A. MACDONELL, *Hymns from the Rigveda*, Calcutta-London 1922, p. 48; WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. p. 85.

⁶⁵ MACDONELL, H. S. L. p. 78.

⁶⁶ BERGAIGNE, R. V. II, p. 430.

rise⁶⁷; the classic hymn 5, 85 in honour of Varuṇa⁶⁸; the *sūkta* addressed to Sūrya and Vaiśvānara 10, 88; “the pure, simple and imaginative hymn to the Forest” (10, 146)⁶⁹; the short and comparatively simple eulogy of Agni 10, 156; and last but not least the cosmogonic hymns⁷⁰ 10, 90; 121; 129⁷¹. Although the study of the Vedas is reserved for specialized scholars, they contain many hymns and other passages which can, also nowadays, be appreciated, not only by those who seek religious edification or a deeper understanding of certain phases of human culture, but also by readers who try to discover well-expressed thoughts, happy combinations of words, harmonious stanzas, in short poetic beauty⁷². In appreciating the aesthetic or evocative value of the individual hymns tastes and opinions will always differ, but the fact that they continue to touch the hearts of modern, and not in the last place of Indian⁷³, readers is most gratifying.

⁶⁷ LÜDERS, Varuṇa, p. 325.

⁶⁸ RENOU, E. V. P. VII, p. 18; for 7, 88 and 89 see VON SCHROEDER, l.c.

⁶⁹ MATILAL DAS, The poetry of the Rigveda, AP 22 (1951), p. 555, who, like other modern Indian authors, is in describing the “richness, beauty, depth and fervour” of these poems too lavish in his use of superlatives.

⁷⁰ Hyperbolically praised by BRUNNHOFER, o.c., p. 14.

⁷¹ Other hymns are characterized as ‘original,’ e.g. 5, 64: RENOU, E. V. P. VII, p. 43; as ‘profound,’ e.g. 6, 9 (GELDNER, RV. II, p. 101) or well-considered, e.g. 6, 51 (ibidem, II, p. 153). One should however avoid speaking of a ‘R̥gvedic theory of poetry or literary criticism’ (P. S. S(Ā)STRĪ, in IHQ 34, p. 6; 12 AIOC III, p. 232).

⁷² For a collection of translations prepared for the use of the latter category of readers: RENOU, H. P. (see p. VII).

⁷³ See e.g. P. S. SASTRĪ, in QJMS 40, p. 41; IHQ 34, p. 6; AUROBINDO, Hymns to the Mystic Fire, Pondicherry 1952, p. XXXIV; and others quoted in this chapter.

2. Formulas, parallelism and its corollaries, variation

Whereas earlier students of Indian literature were inclined to the view that the R̥gveda reflects naive beliefs and sentiments struggling with a language that had never been a vehicle of poetical ideas, the way to a more adequate insight was paved in the last decades of the XIXth century¹. It became clear² that these poets must have stood on the shoulders of many generations of predecessors, that a considerable part of their vocabulary, style and technical procedures was inherited³. Nowadays there is hardly any dispute over the hypothesis that already in prehistoric times poets and reciters drew on and chose from a collective inheritance of fixed forms, words, phrases, etc. which were on the one hand not in all respects identical with the daily parlance of the communities to which they belonged⁴ and on the other possibly varied and reduced in number by gifted poets and redactors. One of the main characteristics of the idiom of this oral poetry was a considerable number of 'formulas,' i. e. of fixed phrases apt to recur in similar circumstances⁵. Helping, in all oral poetry, the task of composition these ready-made phrases, many of which variable or adaptable in accordance with the context, proved their worth also from the point of view of the reciter and of the transmission⁶. Even single words⁷, gravitating to certain positions in the verse according to their metrical value had formulaic tendencies. Some of them most probably are features of prehistoric tradition because they also occur in other ancient Indo-European literatures, e.g. "undecaying renown" (*āksīti śrāvaḥ, śrāvas āksitam*)⁸ which recurs in Homer; "the herdsman of (the) people" for a ruler found also in ancient Greek and German poetry; combinations of the type *vāyav indraś ca* 'Vāyu (vocative) and Indra (nominative)'⁹; certain introductory formulas such

¹ P. VON BRADKE, in ZDMG 40 (1886), p. 669.

² Isolated elements of that 'poetical language' had, it is true, been brought to light at an earlier date: A. KUHN, in KZ 2 (1853), p. 467.

³ See R. SCHMITT, *Dichtung und Dichtersprache in indogermanischer Zeit*, Wiesbaden 1967; W. WÜST, *Von indogermanischer Dichtersprache*, Rhêma 12, München 1969; *Zum Problem einer indogermanischen Dichtersprache*, Studia A. Pagliaro, III, Rome 1969, p. 251; E. BENVENISTE, *Phraséologie poétique de l'indo-iranéen*, in *Mélanges Renou*, p. 73; H. H. SCHAEDEER, in *Die Weltliteratur* 18 (1943), p. 85; GONDA, S. R., *passim*; RENOUE, *Poésie religieuse*, p. 4; E. V. P. III, p. 3; B. L. OGIBENIN, *Semantic aspect of the Vedic poetic language in connection with . . . the Indo-European poetic language* (Russian), Moscow 1971.

⁴ For a definition see M. LEUMANN, *Die lateinische Dichtersprache*, *Museum Helveticum* 4 (1947), p. 116 (= *Kleine Schriften*, Zürich 1959, p. 131). Our term 'plagiarism' is inapplicable; see also BLOOMFIELD, *Repetitions*, p. 19.

⁵ However, the non-narrative character of these texts no doubt prevented the formulas proper from gaining more importance.

⁶ Cf. e.g. BLOOMFIELD, *Repetitions*, p. 582; RENOUE, E. V. P. III, p. 2.

⁷ Among them some pronouns, vocatives, case forms.

⁸ A. FICK, *Die ehemalige Spracheinheit der Indogermanen Europas*, Göttingen 1873, p. 276. See e.g. 1, 40, 4.

⁹ RV. 1, 2, 5; 6; 135, 4; SCHMITT, o. c., p. 11.

as (AV. 20, 127, 1) "Hear, O men . . ." ¹⁰. It is not surprising that the correspondences in ancient Iran are comparatively numerous. Among these are certain combinations of a noun and an adjective, e.g. a 'three-headed and six-eyed' *dāsa* (demon or barbarian: RV. 10, 99, 6); sequences of questions introduced by "I ask" (I, 164, 34) ¹¹; the pre-eminently visual type of nominal compound exemplified by Vedic *vājrahasta* 'thunderbolt-handed' (lit. 'whose hand is with the thunderbolt'), providing a poet with the shortest means possible of picturing the distinctive quality, attribute etc. of his personages ¹². Although the number of compounds is higher in descriptive and emphatic passages, the Vedic poets were far from using them so profusely as did many authors of the later period.

Of much greater frequency and importance than the last-mentioned features are however other stylistic peculiarities some of which may for a moment arrest our attention. Taking full account of the fact that the styles of literary products vary considerably according to their contents and the occasions for which they are composed the Vedic poems may be said to share in general many features which are characteristic of ancient religious poetry elsewhere, whether Indo-European or not ¹³. Many stylistic 'devices,' often incorrectly described as ornaments or redundancies, substantially add to the special flavour and impressiveness of the Vedic *mantra* texts which without them could hardly have fulfilled the requirements of archaic prayers, invocations or conjurations intended to be solemnly recited. ¹⁴ A fair number of these peculiarities are common to both prose and metrical texts ¹⁵. So, though 'hieratic' and therefore to some extent exclusive and artificial, though free in sentence and verse construction, the language of the R̥gveda is by no means a collection of syntactic oddities ¹⁶ or bizarre 'figures of speech.' A considerable part of its stylistic peculiarities are due to hypertrophy or an onesided development of normal usage rather than abnormalities or the products of eccentric literary inclinations.

The style of the poetry and the liturgic 'prose' formulas of the Veda was, indeed, a good substratum for nursing and preserving widespread and often archaic—but fundamentally normal—forms and structures such as several varieties of parallelism and balanced binary groupings of words ¹⁷. Sequences as for instance "Stop lower one; stop, upper one" (AV. 1, 17, 2); "We would like to win, O Varuṇa and Mitra, winning; we would like to prosper, O heaven and

¹⁰ SCHMITT, o.c., p. 30; 201.

¹¹ SCHMITT, o.c., p. 37; 277.

¹² Cf. RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 50, and in *Language*, 29, p. 231.

¹³ Cf. GONDA, S. R., p. 17 and *Old Indian*, p. 153 (also for a review of opinions and misconceptions).

¹⁴ To avoid repetition Vedic poetry will in the following pages be considered as a whole.

¹⁵ 'Carmen style': GONDA, S. R., p. 22.

¹⁶ Cf. e.g. GELDNER, RV. II, p. 150 on RV. 6, 49, 6; p. 162 on 6, 62, 9; 10; III, p. 227 on 10, 61, 5; RENOUE, E. V. P. XIV, p. 126 on 7, 93, 2 and 5.

¹⁷ GONDA, S. R., p. 52.

earth, prospering" (RV. 7, 52, 1) and their variations such as "Varuṇa who is of the same region, who is of a different region" (AV. 4, 16, 8), not exceeding the length of a metrical unit, are far from rare¹⁸. The less frequent instances of three- or fourfold parallel structures may, in many cases, contribute still more to a certain solemnity of a passage and to emphasizing the ideas denoted by the non-identical terms¹⁹, in order to persuade the invisible powers or to restrain them from doing harm.

In reading the following paragraphs one should remember that many Vedic stanzas are, from the point of view of syntax and subject matter, and increasingly also in their metrical form, bipartite, not quadrupartite²⁰. Often the half stanza, not the single *pāda*, constitutes the substructure of the phenomena under consideration²¹. Like other syntactic structures²² the above symmetrical word groups were often skilfully and even admirably adjusted and harmonized with the norms of versification. The widespread tendency to start with shorter elements or at least to end with longer ones manifests itself again and again²³. This effect is not infrequently achieved by adding an epithet or other words to the noun of the second member: "I invoke Mitra (and) Varuṇa of pure ability" (RV. 7, 65, 1); "This man of mine—bring him, relieve him, make him also free from disease for me" (AV. 5, 4, 6). Yet, the verb which both members of the parallelism have in common is—in consequence of the aversion to long and complicated syntagmata—often placed in the middle so as to make the first member longer. Multiple parallelisms in which part of the terms are replaced by similar words are sometimes occasioned by context and situation²⁴.

Some variations²⁵, corollaries and related structures may be mentioned also: for instance, the positive and negative expression of the same thought, e.g. "who overpowers; is not overpowered" (RV. 9, 55, 4)²⁶, often a 'didactic' pleonasm resulting from a desire for exactitude or for emphasizing the thought

¹⁸ See e.g. also RV. 1, 81, 5; 112, 23; 2, 17, 5; 9, 67, 21; 10, 15, 14; AV. 5, 30, 5; 11, 9, 22; 18, 4, 57.

¹⁹ See e.g. RV. 1, 24, 6; 5, 54, 7; AV. 6, 64, 1; 7, 95, 3.

²⁰ GONDA, in IL 20 (1958), p. 42.

²¹ There were ample other opportunities for the poets to fit their thoughts into the metrical patterns: thanks to the so-called free, but by no means arbitrary word order, an abundant supply of indeclinable and often interchangeable words allowed them to fill up their verses if they were in need.

²² GONDA, S. R., p. 64 and especially Syntax and verse structure in the Veda, IL 20, p. 35 (cf. Akten 24. Int. Orient. Kongress, Wiesbaden 1959, p. 534); Syntaxis en verbouw voornamelijk in het Vedisch, Amsterdam Acad. 1960.

²³ O. BEHAGHEL's (IF 25, p. 110) tendency to increasing length or magnitude. See e.g. RV. 2, 21, 6; 6, 58, 1; 8, 48, 3; 10, 14, 7; AV. 6, 102, 1; 11, 10, 3; 12, 2, 1.

²⁴ Cf. AV. 15, 2, 1ff.; 15, 6.

²⁵ Compare also instances such as RV. 6, 50, 6; 9, 89, 4; 10, 159, 1 (a simile in the form of a parallelism).

²⁶ See also 1, 164, 16; 7, 103, 8; 8, 62, 12; 10, 60, 8; 85, 25; AV. 5, 13, 4; 6, 73, 3; 87, 2; 98, 1; 11, 1, 33 etc.; GONDA, S. R., p. 87; RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 64; H. HUMBACH, in MSS. 14, p. 23.

expressed in its first member and sometimes incorporated into a larger unity with variations on the same theme²⁷. There are also the hyperbolic affirmations of the type "Thou alone . . . wilt estimate the worth of a mortal man; there is no other than thee to pardon him" (1, 84, 19).

The frequency of parallel sentence structures, of the repetition of sentence patterns that, once adopted, had proved adequate means of expressing specific thoughts; the emergence of a style in which the train of thought was broken up into short clauses and sentences²⁸ patterned upon the same models, entailed a constant occurrence of so-called vertical correspondences, i.e. of anaphora²⁹, rhyme and other cases of recurrence of the same—or similar—words in the same places in one or more successive utterances³⁰: *spṛīdho ādevīr abhī ca krāmāma viśa ādevīr abhī aśnavāma* "we would overpower the godless rivals, we would overcome the godless clans" (RV. 6, 49, 15)³¹. Enjambement being rare, this parallelism prevented the parts of a stanza from becoming isolated. Anaphora is in the Veda no more than in other ancient literatures an artificial device invented to add charm or beauty to the style, but often rather a natural means of focussing attention on a central or important idea: "Ready are they when I go out early, ready when I go out late" (RV. 4, 32, 24). The repeated "Homage to . . ." at the beginning of five successive *pādas* of the final stanza AV. 11, 2, 31 is more impressive and more suited to accompany ritual acts than a synthetic formulation of the thought "Homage to all of them, whether they are noisy or hairy or . . ." Anaphora is likewise not rare in a frequent type of stanza structure: "If one's life has gone to an end, or if one has deceased, or if one has been led even to the presence of death"; three successive sentences begin with "if," the last occupying the second half of the stanza. Anaphora and an increasing ponderousness of the members of an utterance are a favourite device in emotional or pathetic passages.

Contrary to current opinions alliteration³² is another feature of the Vedic literary style. Just as in other languages it was apt to occur when, under the influence of emotions, a speaker or author was liable to repetitious speech³³. It is moreover a striking characteristic of many paronomastic word

²⁷ For the 'figure' of the litotes (e.g. RV. 7, 83, 2) and the predilection for negative terms or combinations of positive and negative terms see GONDA, S. R., p. 93 and Four studies, p. 95; 116.

²⁸ For the prevalence of juxtaposition and additive sentence construction see also RENOUE, in *Symbolae linguisticae* G. Kuryłowicz, Warsaw 1965, p. 230.

²⁹ Cf. also RV. 1, 61; 108, 6ff.; 3, 4, 4; 4, 16, 21; 36, 9; 5, 25, 4f.; 34, 4; 8, 47, 17; 10, 34, 13; AV. 1, 28, 3; 31, 4; 34, 3; 3, 19, 1; 4, 4, 6; 11, 1; 8, 5, 13.

³⁰ Cf. also 6, 56, 6. For other instances see GONDA, S. R., p. 128; 166; 201; in general, also T. G. MAINKAR, *Some poetical aspects of the R̥gvedic repetitions*, Poona 1966.

³¹ Cf. also RV. 2, 12, 2; 7, 84, 3; 103, 6.

³² GONDA, S. R., p. 177; RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 63.

³³ Cf. e.g. RV. 1, 24, 8; 113, 1; 10, 14, 9; AV. 8, 4, 20.

groups³⁴, e.g. *śukrēṇa śociśā* “with bright light” (ṚV. 1, 48, 14), and combinations of synonyms, complementary terms or other words³⁵, e.g. *kṛṣyaī tvā kṣēmāya tvā* “For land culture thee, for peace and quiet thee” (VS. 9, 22)³⁶. It adds to the suggestiveness of many formulas which often derive their efficacy from sound repetition: *samudrāya svāhā sarirāya svāhā* “To the ocean hail! to the heaving sea hail!” (VS. 22, 25). Like other forms of *responso* (correspondence) it often fulfils a connective function in versification: *pūrṇā darve pārā pata / śūpūrṇā pūnar ā pata* “Full, O Spoon, fly away; well-filled fly back again” (AV. 3, 10, 7). Nor are various types of rhyme and homoioteleuton, whether or not accompanied by one of the preceding phenomena, lacking in these texts³⁷: *hvāyāmi agnīm prathamam suastāye / hvāyāmi mitrāvāruṇāv ihāvase* “I call on Agni first for welfare; I call on Varuṇa and Mitra here for aid” (ṚV. 1, 35, 1)³⁸. They occur in twin phrases: *prēṣṭhaḥ śrēṣṭhaḥ* “dearest, most excellent” (10, 156, 5)³⁹; help to picture a variety of sentiments or dispositions or to express consistency, obsession, insistence: in combination with alliteration and paronomasia e.g. 3, 39, 6 *gūhā hitam gūhyam gūḥdam apsu / hāste dadhe dākṣiṇe dākṣiṇāvān* “him (Vṛtra) that had secreted himself in a hiding-place, deserved to be concealed, concealed in the waters, he (Indra) took in his right hand, the giver of sacrificial presents”; rhyme is another means of welding the parts of a stanza together and of giving it an interior balance: *yāti devāḥ pravātā yāty udvātā* “the god goes by a downward, goes by an upward path” (1, 35, 3)⁴⁰. However, the authors of Indian antiquity made no more than their colleagues in the ancient West a consistent or systematic use of rhyme.

In short, many prayers or conjurations were made more effective, more fitted to activate divine power by these forms of repetition: The oft-repeated “Thou, O Agni . . .” is most helpful in suggesting the idea that Fire is the foremost of all gods⁴¹ (ṚV. 1, 31, 1–15). Invoking Varuṇa to release him from sin the poet of ṚV. 7, 86, 5 says three times “away” at the beginning of a *pāda* to make the verb belonging to this adverb, viz. “let loose” the opening word of the last quarter⁴².

³⁴ On paronomasia and ‘popular etymology’ cf. also POUCHA, at ArchOr 7 (1935), p. 423.

³⁵ See e.g. ṚV. 1, 32, 12; 3, 54, 19; 5, 26, 6; 6, 28, 1; 8, 96, 4; 9, 111, 3; 10, 40, 8; 91, 1; AV. 4, 9, 2; 6, 21, 2.

³⁶ See e.g. also ṚV. 1, 148, 5; 3, 6, 2; AV. 7, 12, 1; 8, 7, 12 and cf. SCHMITT, o.c., p. 265.

³⁷ GONDA, S. R., p. 201.

³⁸ See e.g. also ṚV. 1, 1, 1; 157, 6; 7, 5, 5; 79, 5; AV. 2, 9, 3; 3, 19, 5.

³⁹ See e.g. also ṚV. 1, 143, 1; 180, 6; AV. 9, 3, 13; 14, 2, 21; VS. 30, 14.

⁴⁰ See e.g. also ṚV. 7, 104, 22; 10, 10, 8; 12, 7; AV. 4, 21, 7; 6, 55, 3, and cf. MAINKAR, o.c., p. 103.

⁴¹ On ṚV. 1, 31 see M. FOWLER, in Art and thought, issued in honour of A. K. COOMARASWAMY, London 1947, p. 186 (linguistically unreliable); on 1, 164, 34 see above; on 10, 40, 4ff. MAINKAR, o.c., p. 86.

⁴² For various cases of anaphora see e.g. ṚV. 1, 35, 1; 154, 1; 3, 59, 1; 5, 83, 5; 6, 54, 5; AV. 1, 28, 2; 29, 2; 34, 2; 3, 1, 4; 16, 3; 4, 5, 6; 18, 7 and 8; 16, 7, 12.

Various other patterns of recurrent phonemes, such as paronomasia, assonance, figura etymologica, the recurrence of the same word in another case form⁴³, likewise of considerable frequency, are neither due to an eagerness, on the part of the authors, for puns or humoristic effects⁴⁴, nor mainly 'learned' or artificial⁴⁵. The Vedic poets no doubt readily adopted them as more ponderous means of giving vent to emotions: *prāsam prātiprāšo jahi* "smite the dispute of (my) opponent" (in the refrain of AV. 2, 27); of elucidating or emphasizing connections: *ādityāšo āditayah syāma* "may we be free (like) the Ādityas" (RV. 7, 52, 1); of indicating otherwise nameless powers manifesting themselves in a definite activity: *vicītas tvā vicinvantu* "let selectors select thee" (VS. 4, 24); cf. also *vārsanti vrštāyah* "the rains are raining" (RV. 5, 84, 3); of emphasizing or amplifying a verbal idea: *sudītibhiḥ sū dīdīhi* "shine well with good shining" (6, 48, 3); of facilitating syntactic transitions or calling special attention to relations or oppositions: *yó nah soma susāmsīno / duḥśāmsa ādīdeśati* "whatever ill-famed one, O Soma, shall aim at us of good fame" (AV. 6, 6, 2), and so on. So these widespread syntactic and stylistic phenomena were often used where modern languages would prefer another phraseology.

On the other hand, we cannot always distinguish between these assonant phrases of a predominant syntactic and stylistic significance and word combinations determined by the poet's desire to shed light on a hidden connection between ideas or phenomena⁴⁶. Whereas the frequent associations of the name of the sun in its dynamic aspect, Savitar, with the etymologically related verb *sū-* "to set in motion, impel," and even more generally, in connection with deeds of this god, "to render, to grant" in hymns dedicated to the Sun⁴⁷ attest to the authors' well-founded conviction that instigation or impulse (*sava*) is the god's essential function, it is not always easy to estimate the suggestive force of occasional paronomastic or assonant combinations⁴⁸.

From repetition comes variation: "Set us free from the misdeeds of our fathers, from those that we have committed by ourselves" (RV. 7, 86, 5)⁴⁹. One of the most popular types of variation is, also in the Veda, chiasmus⁵⁰. Like other deviations from a usual or preceding syntactic structure it tends, both in colloquial and literary usage, to arrest the hearer's attention, to

⁴³ GONDA, S. R. p. 232; 273 etc.; Epithets, p. 202; RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 57. See e.g. RV. 1, 132, 2; 2, 12, 1; 6, 49, 4; 75, 14; 10, 22, 9; AV. 12, 3, 1.

⁴⁴ Cf. e.g. BLOOMFIELD, H. A. V., p. 703.

⁴⁵ A. MEILLET, in MSL 18, p. 245.

⁴⁶ For the 'symbolical use' of sound patterns: V. N. TOPOROV, in Poetics, The Hague 1966, p. 61.

⁴⁷ Cf. RV. 1, 164, 26; 4, 54; 5, 82; 7, 66, 4 etc. and see RENOUE, E. V. P. VII, p. 65; XV, p. 23; GONDA, S. R. p. 374 etc.

⁴⁸ Cf. e.g. 2, 17, 5; 3, 34, 3; 5, 43, 12; 85, 1; 7, 41, 2, and RENOUE, E. V. P. X, p. 6; MAINKAR, Poetical aspects, p. 85. For the possibility of etymological allusions see RV. 2, 1, 10 (BERGAIGNE, in MSL 8, p. 6).

⁴⁹ Cf. e.g. also 10, 17, 14 (anaphora with chiasmus).

⁵⁰ GONDA, S. R. p. 109.

throw one or two elements of the utterance into relief, to underline an antithesis. In the chiasmus *vi vrkṣān hanyu utā hanti rakṣasaḥ* "The trees he fells and he fells the demons" (R.V. 5, 83, 2) the immediately repeated verb and the great distance between the two objects lend some special force to this quarter of a stanza. Beside simple instances such as "Dusky is your place of repose, your residence is dusky" (AV. 1, 23, 3) there are more complicated cases in which other syntactic tendencies may have made their influence felt: *ārātir no mā tārin / mā nas tāriṣur abhīmātayaḥ*⁵¹ "The niggard should not get the better of us, not should get the better of us the hostile plotters" (2, 7, 4)⁵².

There is, of course, another type of variation. In dealing with the same subjects and using the same or similar nouns and verbs the poets are free to vary their modes of expression. As a result of this freedom words and meanings often develop, so to say, by an internal process, passing from one phrase to another⁵³.

Thus repetition, in one form or other, is one of the main characteristics of this poetry⁵⁴. When the theme, the qualities and exploits of the divine figures invoked, the fundamental essentiality of the mythical events described are of special importance, they are time and again stressed by iteration. The procedures are too numerous and varied to admit of a detailed discussion⁵⁵. There is the repetition of the same word in the same sentence⁵⁶ which, though no doubt sometimes due to carelessness, can also give special prominence to it or, like other forms of repetition, be an indicium of emotion: R.V. 1, 8, 4 "We wish, O Indra, with valiant shooters, with thee as a companion, to overpower the assailants" "we" is expressed twice⁵⁷; in 1, 32, 12 "Thou conqueredst the cows, thou conqueredst, O hero, the *soma*" the verb. It would be incorrect to consider⁵⁸ the repetition in an emotional exclamation such as "Agni, Agni, they always invoke with invocations . . ." a mere ornament. There is the occurrence of the same word in a principal and a subordinate clause which in archaic, popular and more or less 'technical' usage was so often a conscious or unconscious means of achieving clearness: "Thy paths in the atmosphere, on these . . . paths do thou (come) today and do thou protect us" (Savitar is invoked: 1, 35, 11). There are various forms of concatenation, catenary structure of stanzas⁵⁹ and repetitive concentration on one or more aspects of an

⁵¹ The enclitic *nas* (*no*) normally occupies the second place; longer words tend to follow on shorter elements of the same class.

⁵² For other places see e.g. R.V. 1, 163, 3f.; 2, 1, 13; 35, 3; 15; 4, 25, 8; 5, 82, 4; 8, 35, 16ff.; 10, 14, 13; 90, 10; AV. 1, 19, 1; 2, 3, 6; 8, 2; 4, 13, 1; 36, 2; 5, 8, 7; 6, 130, 4; 18, 3, 62; 19, 54, 5.

⁵³ See L. RENO, in Vāk 5, p. 118 (with examples from *mandala* IX). For two chiasmic pairs of short sentences: 5, 83, 4 (graphic, simultaneity).

⁵⁴ GONDA, S. R., especially p. 296.

⁵⁵ For a classification see H. D. VELANKAR, in JBBRAS, N.S. 14, p. 2.

⁵⁶ See also RENO, E. V. P. II, p. 33.

⁵⁷ Cf. e.g. also 2, 21, 2f.; 3, 21, 1f.

⁵⁸ With H. R. DIWEKAR, *Les fleurs de rhétorique dans l'Inde*, Paris 1930, p. 8.

⁵⁹ See p. 196.

important fact such as in 1, 22, 16ff. where the poet, enlarging upon Viṣṇu's most remarkable feat, his three strides, mentions this point not less than three times⁶⁰. When in 2, 16 the words for "bull" occur seventeen times in the three stanzas 4-6 this is more than a play on words: the author obviously wishes to pronounce a confirmation of Indra's bull-like character; the god's attributes, his drink and the officiants worshipping him, being also bull-like, add to his bull-like potency. A suggestive force residing in the repetition of the same idea is notable in stanzas such as 6, 19, 5 eulogizing Indra as a possessor of cattle, a donor of treasures, and the one in whom the ways of wealth come together. In 7, 63, 1-4 sunrise is described four times, the verb "to rise" being each time followed or supplied by other epithets, images and references to the importance of the phenomenon. The repetition of words and ideas, for which the Uṣas hymn 1, 123 is conspicuous, is perhaps meant to emphasize the recurrence of dawn which is the main theme of the poem⁶¹. Hypercharacterization⁶² easily assumes the outward form of hyperbolic paronomasia. In a eulogy to Rudra it reads "the mightiest of the mighty" (2, 33, 3)⁶³; in 1, 91, 2 this construction occurs not less than four times.

Extended repetition, by no means rare, may become a structural principle of a *sūkta*: "Drink soma . . . like a bull, like a thirsty bull" (1, 130, 2)⁶⁴. The hymns 1, 127-139, all in the same long and complex metre and ascribed to the same poet, provide a typical, but in its consistency unparalleled, instance of complicated internal repetition: the last words of the second and fourth *pādas* and of the sixth and seventh *pādas* are almost continuously identical. The procedure is apt to combine with other forms of repetition, such as paronomasia; 4, 1, 1:

*tvām hi agne sādām it samanyāvo devāso devām aratīm nyerirā iti krátvā nyeriré
ámartyam yajata mártyeṣv ā devām ādevam janata prācetasam víśvam ādevam
janata prācetasam:*

"Thee, O Agni, the god, the gods have for ever

Unanimously appointed their manager,

Appointed with resourcefulness;

They worshipped the immortal one among the mortals,

They engendered the mindful god (so as to be) devoted to the gods,

They engendered the mindful one, (who) belongs to the clan, (who is) devoted to the gods."

It will be clear now that, generally speaking, the poets, sensitive to proportion and completeness of form within the limits of a stanza, are bent on

⁶⁰ See e.g. also 1, 11, 6f.; 24, 12f.; 32, 1f.; 109, 7f.

⁶¹ A. A. MACDONELL, in JRAS 1932, p. 357; cf. also RENOUE, E. V. P. III, p. 1. For repetition of proper nouns or epithets see e.g. 6, 7; 44, 19ff.; 10, 150, and GONDA, Epithets, p. 226; 229.

⁶² E. SCHWYZER, in Abh. Berlin Acad. 1941, p. 9; RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 45.

⁶³ GONDA, S. R., p. 265.

⁶⁴ Cf. 1, 127, 10; 130, 1; 5; 6; 133; 7; 9, 111, 3; and see GRIFFITH, H. RV. I, p. 226.

achieving well-balanced arrangements of words⁶⁵, which, moreover, often are in harmony with well-established syntactic rules or stylistic tendencies⁶⁶. Like rhythmic repetitions in general they often have a certain impressiveness that rests, not only on their form but also on the general emotional trend of the passages in which they occur⁶⁷. In 1, 1, 1 the name of the god invoked, Agni, is significantly⁶⁸ given precedence; after this 'heavy' beginning the verb occupies the second place, followed by an apposition belonging to the god's name, other appositions each of them filling a *pāda* are added to expand this short exordium and qualify the addressee: *agnīm ile puróhitam, yajñásya devám rtvijam | hótāram ratnadhātām*⁶⁹. Triplication, much valued in religious texts, the so-called *tricolon abundans* (in which the third member is the longest), partial parallelism leading to a climax⁷⁰, internal duplications and amplifications⁷¹ do not fail to give strength to a multitude of stanzas⁷². The hypothesis that at the base of these 'balancements' is an old rhythmic prose liturgical mode of expression—or rather a traditional 'carmen' style, neither 'prose' nor 'poetry' in our sense of the terms—has much to recommend it⁷³.

A natural sense of variation and aesthetic alternation is apparent from stanzas such as 1, 44, 5 in which vocatives and accusatives alternate to denote the same god, or as 7, 14, 1, exhibiting an alternation of four datives and three instrumentals, or st. 2 in which anaphora, chiasmus, and a felicitous distribution of five vocatives concur to make it a harmonious whole. In a tripartite structure of 8, 37, 1 a preverb occurring at the beginning is anaphorically repeated, the verb is placed in the first member, the two objects in the first and the second, the two adjuncts in the first and the third, the subject being indicated by two vocatives placed on either side of a caesura in the second and third member⁷⁴. Parallelism of thought and syntactic structure are supported by word correspondence in instances such as 10, 73, 10:

“‘From the Horse he came,’ when they say this,
‘From Power he was born,’ that is my thought of him;

⁶⁵ Cf. also such juxtapositions as “few”: “many” (RV. 1, 31, 6); “higher”: “lower” (7, 20, 7): RENOU, E. V. P. XIII, p. 129; cf. also 3, 59, 2; 10, 15, 2.

⁶⁶ A. ESTELLER's speculations on Word-mobility in the R̥gvedasamhitā, Sri Venkateswara Univ. Orient. Journal, 9 (Tirupati 1966), p. 7 are unfounded.

⁶⁷ GONDA, Syntax and verse structure, etc. (see above).

⁶⁸ And in this case almost necessarily, a fact overlooked by RENOU, E. V. P. XII, p. 71.

⁶⁹ See e.g. also instances such as RV. 1, 1, 3; 90, 9; 114, 7; 8; 2, 7, 6; 12, 2; 13; 15, 2; 3, 30, 11; 45, 2; 5, 4, 6; 83, 4; 5; 7, 49, 1; 61, 4.

⁷⁰ Cf. e.g. AV. 5, 4, 6; RV. 10, 119, 6f. (cf. R. HAUSCHILD, in Festschrift F. Weller, Leipzig 1954, p. 270).

⁷¹ See e.g. 1, 160, 5 (GONDA, Syntaxis, p. 17); GONDA, Four studies in the language of the Veda, The Hague 1959, ch. I.

⁷² Space forbids to mention instances of ‘analytic expression’ of verbal ideas (e.g. 1, 80, 3) and other stylistic features of minor importance.

⁷³ BLOOMFIELD, Repetitions, p. 573; GONDA, S. R., p. 27.

⁷⁴ For an extreme case of application of etymological figures: 6, 18, 4.

From Fury he came, in houses took his place.
Whence he was born, Indra (alone) knows"⁷⁵.

There is an unmistakable predilection for combinations of a positive and negative idea: "felling the slow ones by means of the swift ones" (RV. 2, 15, 6); "he moved the immovable" (2, 24, 2); "thou, the immortal, among the mortal ones" (6, 5, 5); "he made the thoughtless think" (7, 86, 7)⁷⁶; the one who does not know is contrasted with the knowing ones (1, 120, 2) and the Atharvaveda speaks of "growth and diminution," "generosity and niggardliness," "knowledge and ignorance"⁷⁷.

Occasionally the elements of a stanza are distributed according to a principle which in later poetry was retained or even gained in popularity. RV. 10, 146, 6 presents a case of the arrangement in the first half of a stanza of all (four) adjectives qualifying a noun that occurs in the second line; 1, 85, 10 and 7, 92, 1 of stanzas containing three sentences distributed over four *pādas*: a, b, cd; 7, 83, 2 of three *pādas* filled by three subordinate clauses followed by the fourth with the principal clause; 10, 117, 7 and 9 of stanzas with the main point in the last *pāda*; 7, 83, 8 of the initial and final position of two words which syntactically belong together.

These observations on sentences which on the whole are highly disciplined do⁷⁸ not alter the fact that the order of words sometimes creates the impression of an intertwinement whether or not conditioned by rhythmical or psychological reasons⁷⁹. Even when these lines have a ritual character they are—as appears from the many verses that recur in later collections of *mantras*—not absolutely fixed and variations of a minor kind are apt to occur under different influences.

⁷⁵ Cf. E. W. FAY, PAOS 1895 in JAOS 16, p. CCXXXIV.

⁷⁶ See e.g. also 6, 6, 1; 39, 3; GONDA, S. R. p. 87.

⁷⁷ AV. 11, 7, 25; 8, 21ff.

⁷⁸ We cannot enter into a discussion of possible explanations of individual cases; see, e.g. for RV. 1, 71, 4 OLDENBERG, *Noten*, I, p. 74; GELDNER, RV. I, p. 93; for 1, 167, 3 OLDENBERG, o.c., p. 167; GELDNER, o.c., p. 243; for 4, 31, 3 VELANKAR, in JBBRAS N. S. 14, p. 30.

⁷⁹ Cf. e.g. 1, 109, 4; 167, 3; 2, 13, 1; 4, 16, 13.

3. Epithets

It belongs to the style of these hymns that the names and epithets of the gods—the latter often replacing the names—are frequently mentioned. Being an actuality expressed in a word and an essential part of the bearer's personality¹ a name is loaded with his power and essence. Believed to indicate the nature and function of its bearer it shares his creative abilities and may furnish the clue to an understanding of facts, events and connexions. When duly pronounced it is a potent means of exerting influence upon, or through, the bearer. Names are therefore an important feature in requests, prayers and magical formulas². It was even believed that gods, like highly placed persons, are offended, if their complimentary name is omitted³. Hence not only the almost obligatory mention of the name or names of the addressees⁴ of these hymns, but also their repeated use in the same *sūkta*⁵: a means of maintaining the intimate relation with the god, of intimating also that the person speaking knows the various aspects of his personality mentioned together with the name and hence supposes himself to be able to intensify his influence upon him.

Vedic poetry abounds in epithets⁶, a term by which we mean, not only the formulaic or petrified epitheta ornantia, but also all non-distinctive, logically often, but by no means always superfluous, stylistically significant descriptive attributive adjectives or appositions, denoting a quality or attribute which, while being characteristic of a person, object or event, is, or may be supposed to be, known to the audience and is recognized as true and pre-eminently suitable. These words often express and affirm universally acknowledged qualities of a god: the god of fire, the oblation-bearer, is ever young; the eulogist who invokes him as the oblation-bearer who performs the sacrifice well intimates that the god also on the present occasion will convey the offerings to their destination⁷. Since the terrible and dreaded god Rudra may by merely abstaining from inimical deeds be friendly and propitious, his worshippers emphasize that possibility by pronouncing his favourable epithets—e.g. gracious and helpful (RV. 10, 92, 9)—in the conscious or unconscious hope that they make him refrain from evil⁸. A stanza such as 1, 43, 1 is an undisguised *captatio benevolentiae*: "What are we to say to Rudra, the attentive one, the most kind and liberal one, the uncommonly strong one, that makes his

¹ J. GONDA, Notes on names and the name of God in ancient India, Amsterdam Acad. 1970, p. 5; 7; 60. For RV. 1, 103, 4 see GELDNER, in ZDMG 71, p. 317.

² Sometimes the name of the person praying is, no doubt for reasons of exactitude or to underline the speaker's importance, added: RV. 3, 33, 5; 42, 9.

³ See CALAND's note on PB. 14, 2, 6.

⁴ RV. 10, 172 is an exception.

⁵ Cf. e.g. RV. 3, 59 (RENOU, E. V. P. VII, p. 8); 7, 87.

⁶ J. GONDA, Epithets in the R̥gveda, The Hague 1959.

⁷ See e.g. 1, 67, 2; 3, 2, 2; 5, 4, 2; 1, 44, 8.

⁸ Cf. TH. BLOCH, in Wörter und Sachen, 1, p. 80.

heart as happy as possible?" In opening stanzas a more or less extended series of epithets may help to introduce the god addressed and to throw light upon different aspects of his nature; it may be a means of appealing to the deity in one of his functions or capacities; 7, 63, 1 and 8, 48, 1:

"Up rises the genial all-seeing sun"⁹;

"Wisely I have partaken of the palatable food (the *soma*), provoker of inspirational attentiveness, best granter of freedom (relief)"¹⁰.

A similar end is served by the frequent alternation of epithets and proper names, e.g. 4, 21, 1:

"Indra must come near to us in order to favour (us); here the celebrated hero must be our fellow-reveller"¹¹.

Or divine names in the former part of a stanza are replaced by more or less explicative or illustrative epithets in the latter half; 7, 84, 4:

"Supply us, O Indra and Varuṇa, with property consisting of all desirable things . . . ; while the Āditya (Varuṇa) destroys what is contrary to truth and order, the hero (Indra) allots immense wealth"¹².

In other stanzas the name, mentioned at the end, is introduced by a series of significant adjectives; 2, 33, 8:

"For the ruddy-brown and whitish bull I pronounce a mighty eulogy of the mighty one. I will adore the glowing one with obeisances. We extol the awful name of Rudra"¹³.

A large number of epithets can make a final stanza of a hymn or triplet ponderous and recapitulative¹⁴. However, an epithet can at the same time be syntactically relevant: for instance, Viṣṇu is "wide-paced" but when he is said to stride out triply—his most characteristic deed—the addition of the adjective at the end of a stanza qualifies the process of striding¹⁵.

The various positions of the epithets, which are in many cases due to the exigencies of versification, open opportunities to introduce variation or to express, for the sake of emphasis, more or less parallel thoughts: "Being intoxicated by that (drink), slay, O hero, the enemies, relatives or not related, O benevolent one¹⁶, the opponents" (6, 44, 17: Indra is addressed). Some poet even succeeds in constructing pregnant and elegant lines; 1, 81, 1:

⁹ W. KIRFEL, Vergleichs- und Beiworte der Sonne im Ṛg- und Atharvaveda, Comm. Vol. J. Nobel, New Delhi 1963, p. 111.

¹⁰ See also 1, 61, 1; 175, 1; 5, 4, 1; 8, 1; 11, 1; 12, 1; 83, 1; 6, 32, 1; 44, 1; 10, 73, 1. Cf. also GONDA, Epithets, p. 226.

¹¹ See 1, 174, 9; 5, 63, 1; 7, 63, 2; 81, 5; 8, 44, 3; 10; 10, 14, 4.

¹² See GONDA, Dual deities, p. 267. Cf. e.g. also 1, 160, 1; 2, 33, 12; 14; 7, 71, 3.

¹³ See e.g. also 1, 143, 4; 4, 51, 11; 6, 44, 1; 7, 8, 1.

¹⁴ See 1, 190, 8; 3, 62, 6; 5, 57, 8.

¹⁵ Cf. also 2, 1, 3; 1, 154, 2 and see J. GONDA, Four studies in the language of the Veda, The Hague 1959, p. 43; 50.

¹⁶ For the meaning of *maghavan* see GONDA, Epithets, p. 42.

“Indra feels animated to get drunk, the slayer of Vṛtra (has been strengthened) unto a display of heroic energy, by men’s doing” (*Indro mādāya vāvṛdhe, śāvase vṛtrahā nṛbhīh*)¹⁷.

Thus a particular arrangement of names and epithets can effect a well-balanced structure of a stanza, achieve, while keeping the audience in suspense, a certain elegance of style; 3, 1, 18 :

“In the abode of mortals the immortal one
Has settled down, the king, promoting sacrifice.
The ghee-faced one has shone forth wide,
Agni, knowing poetical wisdom of every kind.”

Duplication by means of epithets—a by no means rare device—is practised with some skill by the poet of 1, 16, 8 :

“To every libation (that is) pressed out Indra (with a view) to intoxication comes, the killer of Vṛtra to drink the soma.”

The more or less tautological parallelisms in emotional poetry in general and in archaic style in particular are also significant from a religious point of view. In addressing the Unseen one is by natural instinct inclined to proceed cautiously. Since the divine powers have, or may have, many aspects, to which belong as many names and epithets, it was advisable to approach them as effectively as possible and to make an appeal to those sides and aspects of their personalities, i.e. to those of their supposed functions, which might produce the result desired, or lead to the salvation of those praying. That means that the frequent addition and cumulation of words referring to his aspects, functions, manifestations or epiphanies confirm, consolidate or revivify the power present in the ideas denoted, stimulate the god into a display of these very qualities and strengthen the efficacy of the invocation¹⁸: “I eulogize Indra, the bull possessing manly power, the conqueror and true warrior” (6, 22, 1).

The numerous strings of descriptive or attributive terms occurring in the hymns are not always so varied and unsystematic as we are inclined to believe at first sight. Epithets contribute much to a harmonious and homogeneous content of those stanzas which dwell upon a god’s character¹⁹. R.V. 10, 74, 5, which consists almost entirely of epithets, is an attempt to emphasize two sides of Indra’s personality, viz. his warlike temperament and his generosity which often go together, because he is supposed to distribute the booty²⁰. Even when they seem to be merely honorific these epithets often have a stylistic and religious function: though an inherited procedure, they may, on one hand, be the actual consequence of the poets’ emotional mental attitude, and on the other, an outcome of the well-known ‘idealism’ of archaic poetry in general:

¹⁷ See e.g. also 6, 48, 7; 8, 24, 9; 10, 7, 1.

¹⁸ See e.g. 1, 44, 5; 2, 11, 6; 21, 4; 5, 4, 3; 83, 1; 8, 2, 38; 13, 10.

¹⁹ See e.g. 1, 37, 4; 109, 8; 174, 1; 2, 41, 14; 6, 24, 2.

²⁰ See also 3, 30, 3; 10, 104, 7.

it is almost a necessity to remind the hearer of the beauty, perfection and solidity of, for instance, the weapons, ornaments and vehicles of the gods by means of graphical terms of a certain imaginative force²¹. A king's renown is imperishable, a hymn brightly adorned, a cow dedicated to a god of faultless appearance²².

Often epithets are in perfect harmony with the context. Also in those frequent cases in which they are not purely distinctive or do not play an important part in the conveyance of information they are frequently very appropriately used. They may add an element of vividness, be suggestive or evocative, call up an image or a quality, point to a connection, opposition or motivation, throw part of the communication into relief or be expressive of the poet's emotion. In 1, 92, 5 the adjective "bright," far from being a superfluity, evokes the most essential feature of the matutinal phenomenon: "(Uṣas') bright ray has again become visible"²³. Since the adjective "reddish" (*aruṣa*) in 1, 92, 1 evokes the presence of Dawn, the cows which it qualifies must be related to that goddess. In imploring Indra to give wealth it is not senseless to observe that he is strong, inventive and able to dispense wealth (8, 61, 10). The addition of "strong-hoofed" to the king's horses in 6, 75, 7 is meaningful because these animals are stated to crush the enemies with their feet.

Part of the epithets are almost exclusively attributed to one and the same divine figure. Indra²⁴ is "the killer of Vṛtra" (*vṛtrahan*)²⁵; "of a thousandfold resourcefulness" (*śatakratu*), benevolent and generous (*maghavan*), a shatterer of strongholds (*pūrbhid*)²⁶; Agni is "the bearer of the oblations" (*havyavāhana*); the Aśvins "exhibit marvellous skill" (*dasra*). Yet qualifications which are very common in connection with one god are at times applied to one of his colleagues²⁷. Thus the adjective "purifying, pure" (*pāvaka*) which so often belongs to Agni that—like other epithets, also in connection with other gods²⁸—it may even replace his name is also given to the Dawns (4, 51, 2)²⁹.

More or less fixed, or at least recurrent, noun-adjective combinations seem to be an ancient possession of many peoples. They made the poet's task easier, enabling him to loosen the texture of his poem and to proceed calmly; they gave the audience an opportunity to enjoy the familiar and for a moment to slacken their attention. In Vedic poetry there are the black darkness, the swift

²¹ See e.g. 1, 85, 9; 113, 14; 117, 15; 188, 6; 5, 77, 3; 6, 37, 3.

²² ṚV. 1, 126, 2; 144, 1; 10, 68, 3.

²³ See e.g. also 1, 48, 5; 13; 49, 3; 2, 41, 19; 3, 10, 9; 59, 6; 5, 19, 5; 6, 9, 1; 7, 96, 5; 6; 9, 79, 5; 10, 70, 8; 115, 4; 118, 9.

²⁴ GONDA, Epithets, p. 36.

²⁵ E. BENVENISTE and L. RENOU, Vṛtra et Vṛtragna, Paris 1934.

²⁶ H. LOMMEL, Der arische Kriegsgott, Frankfurt/M. 1939, p. 20.

²⁷ For transfer of epithets cf. also BLOOMFIELD and EDGERTON, V. V. III, p. 20. Identification may lead to transfer of an epithet: 9, 83, 5.

²⁸ See e.g. 5, 58, 2; 6, 5, 1; 39, 1; 8, 44, 10.

²⁹ See also G. V. DEVASTHALI, Epithets of the Ṛbhus, Proc. 26 Congr. Or. III, 1 (1964-69), p. 36.

horse, substantial wealth, the wide atmosphere, the uninterrupted protection³⁰. They are not quite constant, but it is clear that the poets felt the need for these elements of formulaic diction, also in connection with proper names whether of gods or of other beings: mighty Indra, the deceitful thief³¹. The addition of an adjective can be a great help in making the sense of figurative expressions intelligible to the audience. There could be no doubt that the golden arms of the sun are his beams (6, 71, 5). Some of the poets knew very well how to use rare, if not original, compound adjectives: 6, 35, 4 "Do thou, (O Indra,) grant the eulogist refreshments, consisting in gifts of cows, brilliant-with-horses, famous-for-generative power!"; in 6, 49, 15 the adjectives are meant to characterize the wealthy man: "Give us wealth that goes in a chariot, satisfies-the-cultivators, consists-in-many-heroic-sons . . .". Passing mention must also be made of the occurrence of amplifications of epithets such as "knower of hearts, lord of the heart" (Soma: 9, 11, 8), well-known paraphrases of the type "a brilliant and solid wealth consisting of many sons" (6, 6, 7)³², 'kenningar'³³ such as "the dustless paths" instead of "the air" (6, 62, 6); the elliptical use of attributes to denote nominal concepts, e.g. "the spotted ones" for "the cows" (1, 84, 11).

There exist some interesting relations between characterizing adjectives and similes. Whereas, for instance, most occurrences of the word for "wind" are left unqualified, the epithets which do accompany it are in most cases an element of a simile: Agni, probably as lightning, is described as "a noisy serpent like the boisterously impetuous wind" (1, 79, 1); Indra's impetuosity is incessantly excited "like the wind hurried by thundering clouds" (4, 17, 12)³⁴.

³⁰ See 9, 66, 24; 10, 89, 2; 1, 117, 9; 7, 71, 5; 10, 107, 10; 1, 92, 8; 117, 23; 4, 44, 6; 1, 91, 22; 3, 22, 2; 3, 54, 19; 6, 47, 4; 2, 25, 5; 3, 15, 5 etc.

³¹ See 4, 19, 1; 10, 179, 3 and cf. 1, 63, 7; 80, 7; 131, 6; 6, 41, 1; 7, 104, 10 and cf. 5, 79, 9; 6, 51, 13.

³² GONDA, *Epithets*, p. 195.

³³ W. KRAUSE, *Die Kenning*, *Schriften der Königsberger gelehrten Gesellschaft, Geistesw.* 7, 1, Halle (S.) 1930, p. 5; SCHMITT, o.c., p. 277. See below, p. 252.

³⁴ See also 10, 78, 3 and cf. 1, 163, 11; 10, 95, 2.

4. *Brevity*

The eulogistic and mythological character of many passages does not nullify the essentially utilitarian point of view of the *mantra*-producing poets who in spite of digressions are mostly inclined to concentrate on a given need, viz. strengthening, invitation, or stimulation of the higher powers. The traditional style as well as the versification of the hymns often permit them a high degree of concentration in a short space. To their most characteristic syntactic devices belong ellipses and related forms of brevity in expression¹. Brevity in general, economy in the means of expression, terseness and condensation are so frequent and in many cases so conspicuous that translators are often forced to insert one or more words.² Intending by ellipsis the phenomenon that part of a current expression or usual construction is omitted because at the moment of speaking it may be dispensed with and is inevitably and as a matter of course supplied by the audience³, we limit ourselves to some examples. The adjective "red" indicates Agni's flames, "brown" the wood over which he bends; words for "both" or "united" suffice to convey the idea of heaven and earth⁴. Some mixes with milk; the process is simply denoted by "dresses"⁵. Very often—and not only in invocations and enumerations—the subject, verb, object, or name of a god addressed or of an oblation offered is to be mentally supplied⁶. There are even compound sentences in which both verbs, or the pronoun or antecedent are brachylogically lacking: "That hymn of praise, that I as a stimulus" means "listen to that hymn which I pronounce in order to stimulate (thee)" (6, 10, 2); "We would like to overcome the malignities who thy directions" seems to mean "we would like to gain the victory over those who defy thy directions" (6, 4, 5). Other cases of brachylogy—that conciseness which is due to the omission of one or more words that are essential to a logically correct or complete expression of thought or to the immediate understanding—are likewise far from rare. In all probability the poet of 2, 38, 7⁷ wants to say that Savitar has intended the waters for the fishes, the waste for the beasts of prey, the forests for the birds, but whereas the second member of the threefold

¹ GONDA, Ellipsis; RENOÛ, at BSL 50, p. 47; E. V. P. I, p. 29, and in *Symbolae Kurylowicz*, p. 234; H. D. VELANKAR, *Word-economy and R̥gvedic interpretation*, Proc. 26 Int. Congress of Orient. 1964, Wiesbaden 1969, p. 139 and at ABORI 45 (1964), p. 1 (who is too much inclined to view the pertinent phenomena as conscious art). The term 'elliptical' is frequently used vaguely and applied to various forms of brevity in speech.

² See, for instance, RENOÛ's translations in E.V.P. and his notes in E. V. P. I, p. 45 and XII, p. 1.

³ It is self-evident that we are sometimes at a loss to supply omissions.

⁴ RV. 1, 146, 2; 140, 6; 2, 27, 15; 1, 69, 1.

⁵ RV. 9, 26, 4; cf. RENOÛ, E. V. P. VIII, p. 73.

⁶ GONDA, Ellipsis, p. 38; GELDNER, RV. II, p. 214; III, p. 137; cf. e.g. 10, 60, 4; 4, 55, 10; 8, 99, 7; 10, 1, 6; 89, 6; 113, 2; 1, 15, 9; 58, 1; 8, 41, 7.

⁷ Cf. GELDNER, RV. I, p. 326; RENOÛ, E. V. P. XV, p. 19.

communication is complete, the first lacks 'the fishes' as well as a noun or verb indicating that they live in the water⁸. The words "a ripe branch" in 1, 8, 8 are no doubt meant to suggest "a branch loaded with ripe fruit."

Another phenomenon of frequent occurrence is the *sous-entendu*, instances of which are often found in more or less literal repetitions or in parallel utterances subjoined to an—as a rule short—complete statement: "The cloth which they spread under the horse, the upper garment, the objects golden (under) him" (1, 162, 16)⁹. In similes and elsewhere a term, though mentioned once, may function twice: "Fire, whom they hold (in hand) like a bracelet (worn) on the hand" (6, 16, 40)¹⁰. Similes are sometimes formulated in a condensed form¹¹: "(Agni's) back gleams like (that of) a stallion" (1, 58, 2). The frequent occurrence of juxtapositions where we would perhaps expect an indication of a comparison¹² are not only a characteristic of this style but a natural consequence of the poets' view of the world: where we would prefer to say "a hand sharp like a thunderbolt" the poet of 1, 54, 4, omitting the particle, calls the infallibly striking hand (a manifestation of) lightning¹³. It is therefore often impossible to draw a hard-and-fast line between comparison and identification. Furthermore, the *soma* is said to be purified by the pressing-stones (1, 135, 2)¹⁴. In many stanzas a word is haplogically omitted¹⁵. Preverbs are many times used alone instead of preverb and verb¹⁶: stimulating Agni into a display of his power the poet of 3, 18, 4 says only "up," instead of "flame up"¹⁷.

Among the other peculiarities of the often concise¹⁸ style are a predilection for *asyndetic* co-ordination of clauses or sentences and the absence of any indication of causal or chronologic relation¹⁹, enumerative juxtapositions of the type "companion, friend, relation" (R.V. 4, 25, 6)²⁰, abrupt transitions²¹, antithesis²², contrasts of smaller compass: "Virile are you, impotent your

⁸ See e.g. also 1, 62, 8; 120, 8; 135, 2.

⁹ For other examples see e.g. GONDA, *Ellipsis*, p. 64.

¹⁰ Cf. also places such as 4, 17, 4; 24, 3.

¹¹ The so-called *comparatio compendiaris*: GONDA, *o.c.*, p. 55. For other condensations see 1, 100, 13; 10, 29, 5.

¹² RENOU, *E. V. P. I.*, p. 39; GONDA, *Ellipsis*, p. 5.

¹³ Cf. 1, 88, 4; 96, 5; 4, 4, 2; 6, 19, 9; 27, 6 etc.

¹⁴ Also 9, 50, 3; it is of course pressed out by the stones and purified by the sieve.

¹⁵ See e.g. 1, 184, 3; 2, 1, 5; 35, 14; 4, 8, 8; 5, 23, 4; 6, 15, 2; 19, 5; 7, 48, 1; 8, 51, 9; 9, 88, 4; cf. also 9, 35, 4; GONDA, *Ellipsis*, p. 61.

¹⁶ RENOU, *E. V. P. I.*, p. 30; GONDA, *Ellipsis*, p. 77; cf. e.g. also 6, 45, 8.

¹⁷ Cf. e.g. also 1, 14, 6; 78, 1; 2, 13, 11; 8, 44, 11; 45, 40.

¹⁸ Cf. e.g. R.V. 5, 77, 1; 8, 8, 3; 9, 64, 9; 97, 26; 10, 125, 4.

¹⁹ RENOU, *E. V. P. I.*, p. 65; GONDA, *S. R.* p. 402; *Ellipsis*, p. 69f. See e.g. R.V. 5, 59, 1 (PISCHEL, *V. S. I.*, p. 190); 6, 66, 11 (GELDNER, *R.V. II.*, p. 169); 69, 4; 7, 71, 5 (GELDNER, *V. S. II.*, p. 280); cf. also 10, 73, 5.

²⁰ RENOU, *E. V. P. I.*, p. 68 (cf. also *IV.*, p. 5); GONDA, *S. R.* p. 404. Cf. e.g. also *R.V.*, 1, 14, 3.

²¹ See e.g. R.V. 1, 25, 6 (RENOU, *E. V. P. VII.*, p. 12).

²² GONDA, *S. R.* p. 402. Cf. also cases such as 10, 124, 6.

rivals" (AV. 5, 20, 2)²³. It is of course impossible to obtain a perfect insight into the value of these and other forms of literary expression—such as e.g. synecdoche²⁴, hysteron proteron²⁵ and other 'figures' recognized by modern scholars—without an intimate knowledge of the language and culture in which they have come into being²⁶. Anacolutha are far from rare²⁷. Having started with some idea the poet is struck by an aspect of his subject that seems more important with the result that he leaves the first part of his sentence syntactically unfinished: "While we . . . place the splendid bolt in thine arms—when thou, O splendid Indra, has become stronger at our (sacrificial place) thou wilt, we hope, subdue the barbarian tribes with the sun" (RV. 2, 11, 4). There is no denying that these syntactic irregularities²⁸ sometimes produce a striking impression of vividness: "Thus we (the rivers) . . . are flowing on in our bed which has been made by the gods²⁹—nor can our rapid course be checked" (3, 33, 4). Mention may also be made of abrupt changes in the construction or transitions from a narrative in the third person to an address or quotation³⁰; of plural first persons including or excluding the person or persons on behalf of whom the poet is speaking³¹. In dealing with parallel events or activities—for instance in the sphere of men and that of the gods—an indication of the changing subject may be omitted³².

A stylistic feature which, though not uncommon, was not always completely discerned or recognized, is parenthesis³³. The author of 10, 127, 8 interrupts his exposition to address an invitation or request to the goddess: "Like kine I have delivered to thee a hymn—choose it, O daughter of heaven, Night—like a song of praise to a victor." A parenthesis can also be introduced to pay homage to a deity, to compensate for something omitted, to add an explanation or motivation, to insert an after-thought or supplementary assertion, to prepare for a following idea³⁴. It occurs also as a short 'simile' (homologation) inserted

²³ GONDA, S. R. p. 404.

²⁴ See e.g. RV. 4, 27, 5; 10, 159, 2; 167, 1.

²⁵ See e.g. RV. 3, 55, 19; 5, 78, 6.

²⁶ Occasional phenomena such as irregular constructions cannot be considered here.

²⁷ GONDA, Ellipsis, p. 81. Cf. e.g. RV. 1, 30, 1; 2, 17, 4; 19, 4 (VELANKAR, in JUB N.S. 9, 2, p. 92); 21, 3; 34, 14; 6, 7, 1; 7, 64, 1; 8, 66, 1.

²⁸ Cf. also cases such as 7, 47, 4; 8, 53, 7. In considering these constructions the formulaic composition of many stanzas should not be left out of account.

²⁹ Bed: singular, because the poet is speaking at the confluence.

³⁰ Cf. e.g. 2, 11, 14; 3, 38, 2; 5, 55, 2; 6, 17, 11; cf. 10, 70, 6; 3, 53, 9–12.

³¹ H. LOMMEL, Festschrift Schubring, p. 25.

³² See GELDNER, RV. I, p. 94 (on RV. 1, 72).

³³ TH. AUFRECHT, in Festgruß Böhntlingk, Stuttgart 1888, p. 3; W. WÜST, Der Schaltsatz im Rgveda, (unpublished) thesis München 1923, p. 225; V. G. PARANJPE, Parenthesis in the Rgveda, 13 AIOC, p. 29. However, some 'parentheses' are nothing but changes in the construction (e.g. 6, 75, 11).

³⁴ See e.g. 7, 95, 5; 10, 14, 5; 7, 30, 1; 1, 186, 8; 10, 103, 9; 1, 10, 7; 8, 46, 17; 1, 168, 1; 1, 24, 6; 1, 149, 1; 7, 60, 7. For 3, 1, 1 see RENOU, E. V. P. XII, p. 113.

without a particle: "Let the earth to me, a mother to a son, yield milk" (AV. 12, 1, 10). In some cases it may be a premeditated literary device; the way in which this oral poetry came into being made its occasional occurrences almost unavoidable, especially when it was desired to keep the expression of a complicated thought within compass.

Occasional instances of crowded and cumbrous descriptions are not completely absent; R̥V. 1, 136, 2 sunrise is pictured: "A broader course has appeared for the broad (light)—the path of Order has been 'controlled' by the reins (rays), the eye (of the sun) by the reins of Bhaga"³⁵, but the sun itself is left unmentioned.

³⁵ Cf. L. ALSDORF, in LÜDERS, *Varuṇa*, p. 458, n. 2; RENOU, E. V. P. VII, p. 32. For the procedure adopted by the poet of 4, 58 see GELDNER, in ZDMG 71, p. 340.

5. *Ambiguity*

Although obscurity is an elastic notion and the number of passages designated as difficult to understand has, as a result of philological research, been gradually reduced, the frequent remarks on incomprehensibility of hymns and stanzas made by modern translators and commentators are, generally speaking, far from unfounded¹. Our lack of understanding can be due to an imperfect knowledge of the mythological or legendary background², to an, at least in our eyes, too high degree of succinctness or condensation in the expression of ideas³, to unintelligible allusions or to an accumulation of rare or difficult words⁴, and last, but probably not least, to our ignorance of the original occasion of a hymn and an imperfect ability on our part to enter into the ideas and feelings of the poets who, appealing to congenial audiences⁵, selected those particulars which had a lure for them and were, moreover, much inclined to project outwardly into cosmos and mythical reality what they had perceived inwardly. Those scholars who imputed part of these obscurities to the poets themselves are no doubt not always wrong: there is no denying that they in some cases give the impression of revelling in stylistic excesses, enigmatic expressions and poetic licences of every kind⁶. There is also reason to subscribe to the opinion that, at least in part of the pertinent passages, the obscurity has been intentional⁷, although it would perhaps be more correct to speak of premeditated ambiguity. Obviously dealing with esoteric knowledge poets may speak of "the hidden or secret tongue of the sacrifice" (RV. 10, 53, 3) or of "the secret name of Tvaṣṭar's cow in the house of the moon" (1, 84, 15)⁸. Their style often allows comfortably for esoteric digression; 7, 33, 8f.:

¹ Cf. e.g. GELDNER, RV. on 1, 121; 149; 173; 176; 190; 3, 31; 53, 23; 56; 5, 2; 19; 44; 6, 3; 8, 41; 9, 94; cf. also 10, 30, 10; 73; 105 (VELANKAR, in JUB 23 (1954), 2, p. 1); 130, 7; 131, 5.

² E.g. 1, 161, 12; 174, 6; 4, 22, 2; 6, 20, 8; 11; 56, 3; 10, 99; 144; 172.

³ E.g. 1, 48, 3; 174, 3; 180; 5, 50, 4f.; 8, 6, 34. See also RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 46. While every sentence of a passage seems intelligible, the meaning of a larger unit often remains obscure. Cf. also W. NORMAN BROWN, at JAOS 88, p. 199.

⁴ E.g. 1, 134, 2; 2, 38, 8; 5, 1, 3; 8, 4, 8; 102, 14; 9, 22, 6; 71, 4; 10, 20, 7; 31, 8; 77, 4; 96, 2; 99.

⁵ Cf. also ELIZARENKOVA, o.c., p. 66.

⁶ See e.g. GELDNER, RV. on 10, 61 (cf. S. A. DANGE, at JIH 45, p. 369 (speculative)); the same and GRIFFITH, Hymns, I, p. 226 on 1, 127ff.

⁷ See e.g. GELDNER, RV. on 1, 140; 3, 7; 38; 58, 1; 7, 87, 6; 10, 106; cf. also GRASSMANN, RV. übers. I, p. 20 (on 2, 13f.); p. 191 (on 5, 41f.); p. 489 (on 8, 61); GRIFFITH, Hymns, III, p. 292 (on 8, 61); HAUG, Ai. B. I, p. 23 (on 10, 61 and 62); P. S. SASTRI, in ABORI 28, p. 64 (on 10, 106, for which cf. also BARTHOLOMAE, in IF 25, p. 167; LANMAN, in JAOS 10, p. 403; ROTH, in ZDMG 37, p. 112).

⁸ This is however not to say that we are always unable to understand these secrets. We have to be familiar with the poets' modes of expressing particular ideas before we can rightly comprehend the real meaning of these passages. Cf. also 7, 87, 4; 8, 41, 5; 9, 71, 5; 86, 10; 10, 53, 11 etc. and RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 9; V, p. 1; XII, p. 116 (on RV. 3, 7); XIII, p. 92 (on 4, 3). See also BARTH, The religions of India, London (1879) ³1891, p. XIII.

“Their light is the growth of the sun,
 Their greatness profound like the ocean’s.
 Like the haste of the wind is your praise,
 It can’t be followed by others.
 With their hearts’ illumination
 They seek for the thousand-branched mystery.”

For the time being it seems advisable, whilst admitting that we are not in a position to judge and appreciate the dark hymns and passages in the light of a perfect knowledge of all subtleties of the language and a complete cultural congeniality⁹, to take full account of the necessity, on the poets’ side, to resort to dark or veiled expressions for reasons of taboo or prudence, of their desire also to reveal, or at least suggest, connections or parallels between, for instance, the visible world and the Unseen by means of ambiguous¹⁰ expressions or bold or far-fetched allusions and, last but not least, to intimate that the events and personages dealt with admit of interpretations on more than one level, cosmical, mythological, psychological, or esoterical¹¹ and philosophical¹².

The poets availed themselves of the opportunities offered by mythological narratives in general. Being characterized by a typical kind of fluidity myths often elicit different solutions of their contents and imagery. The myth of Indra’s great feat may relate the transformation of primordial chaos into cosmic order, it implies also that only by the domination of obstructing force an orderly universe and an orderly society can emerge: Indra is implored to kill, also now and in the future, all Vṛtras and his worshipper is believed to re-enact the deed¹³. The repetition of the eternal mythical events in the present and the belief that what occurs in nature and in human society or history is made possible because a mythical event, regarded as unique but operating now and always, has taken place at the beginning of all happening, leads a poet to pronounce the at first sight curious words: “Thou (the fire which is being kindled) hast now, fixing thy mind upon wealth, saved Atri (who is a legendary figure)” (5, 15, 5)¹⁴. When some people are said to have made the sun shine by their religious chant, “sun” is apt to be taken ‘metaphorically’ (8, 29, 10). The actual or assumed correspondence between, or identity of, cosmic and terrestrial

⁹ So there is also a good chance of assuming an ambiguity where there is none. It is for instance highly questionable whether the poet’s contemporaries would regard places such as 6, 39, 2 or 10, 17, 2; 75, 8 as ambiguous (GELDNER); at 9, 15, 1 (and in similar contexts) GELDNER’s interpretation is beside the mark.

¹⁰ L. RENOUE, L’ambiguïté du vocabulaire du R̥gveda, JA 231, p. 161 expresses very emphatic opinions on this point; GONDA, Old Indian, p. 191.

¹¹ The esoterical implications of the texts and the difficulty of literary art are more than once affirmed: some poet speaks of the “secret tongue” or “secret mind,” another refers to hidden names or functions (cf. e.g. R̥V. 10, 53, 3; 11; 4, 58, 1; 5, 3, 3; 3, 54, 5). See also RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 9.

¹² Compare also systematic correspondences (correlations) such as R̥V. 10, 158, 1.

¹³ Cf. R̥V. 3, 37, 5f.; 6, 17, 1; 60, 1; 7, 48, 2 etc.

¹⁴ Cf. also 5, 45, 9; 6, 33, 2.

phenomena leads to the conviction that fire is the terrestrial form of the sun, the sun the celestial form of Agni. Natural phenomena and their mythological, symbolical or esoterical interpretation are often interwoven: the luminous phenomena connected with dawn appear like—no, as—cows¹⁵; when they are said to have brilliant or golden rays the text may imply: “they ‘shine’ golden treasures”¹⁶. The “desirable things” of Uṣas (5, 80, 6) can be her personal charms as well as her highly valued gifts. A mythical quest of light (4, 1, 14) may be explained spiritually. A ritualistic interpretation often is as probable as a mythological¹⁷, a reference to earthly life may admit of an esoterical connotation¹⁸. Ritual and psychological processes are occasionally paralleled to the point of identification: hence the relation between the *soma* filter and the sieve of thoughts¹⁹. Ritual entities and objects belonging to our mundane sphere can be systematically related to each other²⁰. The use of a characteristic adjective may suggest a comparison²¹.

This leads to a frequent use of words in a double sense or at least with allusive possibilities²²; to semantic ‘superpositions’²³ of, for instance, concrete (sensorial) and abstract (intellectual) meanings; to what might—not always rightly—appear to be cases of zeugma or syllepsis²⁴; to indirect indications—e.g. “she that should not be killed” for “cow”²⁵—; to transference of the terminology of relationship (son, daughter, father etc.) to divine powers and the outer garb, the phenomena, in which they manifest themselves²⁶. A verb in 1, 124, 10 has, in connection with Dawn, to be taken to mean “awakening” as well as “making old”²⁷. Some authors²⁸ translated the adjective *drapsinaḥ* characterizing, in ṚV.

¹⁵ See e.g. ṚV. 1, 62, 5; 92, 2ff.; 105, 3; 124, 5; 4, 1, 16; and compare texts such as 9, 65, 1. The ‘ocean’ as the source of inspiration is in the poet’s heart; e.g. 10, 5, 1: GONDA, *Vision* p. 281. For the black cow as a symbol of night (cf. 1, 113, 2; 4, 3, 9) see K. L. JANERT, *Sinn und Bedeutung des Wortes dhāsi*, Wiesbaden 1956, p. 29.

¹⁶ ṚV. 1, 48, 9, cf. 2, 2, 4.

¹⁷ For 1, 112, 1 see GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 144; for 7 H. D. VELANKAR, in *Studies* W. Norman Brown, p. 228. Cf. e.g. also 9, 95, 4.

¹⁸ For “combat” and “festivity” (e.g. 6, 75, 1) see LOMMEL, *Gedichte*, p. 61; for “(enjoyment of) food” RENOUE, E. V. P. III, p. 28.

¹⁹ Cf. e.g. 9, 47, 4; 67, 22ff.

²⁰ Cf. e.g. 10, 85, 6ff.; 90, 12ff.

²¹ See e.g. 9, 65, 8 (compare 9, 72, 1).

²² See e.g. RENOUE, E. V. P. XIV, p. 64 on ṚV. 10, 4, 4; GELDNER, ṚV. III, p. 71 on 9, 76, 2; see also 1, 48, 7; 2, 1, 10; 8, 35, 2; 10, 39, 9.

²³ RENOUE, at JA 231, p. 161 and E. V. P. XIV, p. 75 (on 1, 63, 7; 10, 21, 1); III, p. 51 (on 1, 113, 15); VELANKAR, in *ABORI* 45, p. 2.

²⁴ See e.g. 1, 92, 17; 112, 9; 4, 58, 10; 9, 105, 1; 108, 7.

²⁵ E.g. 10, 46, 3; cf. RENOUE, E. V. P. XIV, p. 77.

²⁶ Dawn (Uṣas) is the daughter of the heavens (e.g. 1, 48, 1; 92, 7); fire (Agni) the son, i.e. manifestation or representative of overwhelming power (GONDA, ‘Gods’ and ‘powers’ in the Veda, The Hague 1957).

²⁷ Cf. RENOUE, E. V. P. III, p. 66 and see ṚV. 3, 31, 14; 4, 41, 8; 8, 7, 8; 9, 50, 1.

²⁸ Cf. OLDENBERG, *Noten*, I, p. 64; GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 84; RENOUE, E. V. P. X, p. 64.

1, 64, 2, the Maruts, gods of the winds and shedders of rain, who are compared to warriors, by "bearing banners" as well as "pouring out drops." In Agni hymns the word for "drops of *soma*" (*drapsa*) can assume the secondary meaning "spark"²⁹. When "wealth" or "length of life" implored on behalf of some person are said to be "rich in progeny"³⁰ a modern reader is perhaps tempted to speak of an unsuccessful case of hypallage³¹.

As already intimated the phraseology of many stanzas is, in more than one sense, allusive. When at 1, 120, 3 the poet speaks of the gods' worshipper who having started a hymn will receive his share, the allusion to the *dakṣiṇā* is clear³². If he refers to the gift of the Maruts (1, 166, 12) the auditor understands that this is rain. Many references to ritual acts or mythical events were at least for the contemporary audience clear enough³³. The desire, on the author's part, to avoid, for reasons of 'taboo,' unequivocalness³⁴, to indulge in an accumulation of metaphors³⁵ or to replace a god's name by one of his characteristic features³⁶ can detract from the plainness of a passage. Other instances of ambiguity find their explanation in the metaphorical use of another word in the context: when, in 1, 175, 3 Indra is implored to urge on the chariot of man we should remember that "chariot" often refers to the sacrifice³⁷. Allusive use of words which in a given context are apt to evoke certain images or emotions is of course not foreign to these texts either: in an offer of sexual intercourse the reference to jolting and rocking wheels cannot be meaningless (10, 10, 7f.). Not infrequently the ambiguity of the word or words used and our lack of precise information on mythological or legendary facts do not allow us to make certain about the poet's intentions³⁸. In particular cases he has even been suspected of veiling references to personal experiences by allusive wordings³⁹.

These ambiguities may help to emphasize parallelism, which many times means clarifying homologations or identifications or correlations between

²⁹ Cf. 1, 94, 11 (RENOU, E. V. P. XII, p. 96); 10, 11, 4 (ibid. XIV, p. 71), etc.

³⁰ See 1, 113, 17; 4, 51, 10. Cf. also 1, 117, 6; 181, 2.

³¹ Not infrequently scholars have also been too prone to jump to hasty conclusions with regard to passages that admit of more than one interpretation. At 1, 92, 3 the dawns are said to sing hymns (of praise) like women at work; a double meaning of the verb ("shine?"), though not impossible, is questionable and not necessary. See OLDENBERG, NG 1918, p. 62 (= K. S., p. 857); GELDNER, RV. I, p. 118; RENOU, E. V. P. III, p. 34. Needless to say, modern readers are on the other hand apt to overlook many connotations or appeals to the feelings of the audience. Cases of grammatical ambiguity (e.g. 7, 79, 1) are not necessarily intended.

³² See p. 79 and compare 1, 171, 5; 5, 51, 15; 10, 11, 5; 2, 5, 5; 31, 5.

³³ See e.g. 1, 31, 4; 130, 9; 149, 3; 5, 73, 6; 6, 15, 5 (cf. 1, 61, 15); 49, 8; 65, 5; 69, 8; 7, 79, 4; 99, 1; 8, 2, 39; 45, 37; 63, 9; 9, 41, 2; 10, 109, 4.

³⁴ See e.g. 7, 37, 7.

³⁵ See e.g. 9, 41, 2; 74, 4.

³⁶ See e.g. 7, 99, 1.

³⁷ Compare e.g. also 9, 96, 1.

³⁸ Cf. e.g. 1, 120, 5; 6 (GELDNER, RV. I, p. 163; RENOU, XVI, p. 22); 1, 180, 8; 2, 13, 8; 4, 1, 6; 12, 6; 10, 21, 1.

³⁹ See GELDNER, RV. I, p. 44 (on 1, 36); p. 303 (on 2, 23); 5, 12.

mythical, sacred or celestial reality and ritual 'symbolism' as a participation of the sacred: in 2, 10, 3 dealing with the 'birth' of fire Agni is said to have been the embryo "in those with the many shapes or colours"; the feminine adjective which also suggests the idea of "in those with many embroidered garments" underlines the feminality of the vegetable substance in which fire is known to originate⁴⁰. Identifying the frogs with officiants, busied with an oblation of hot milk, the poet of 7, 103, 8 describes them as *adhvaryu* priests, heated, sweating; in connection with the frogs 'heated' denotes their being oppressed by the sun. In references to the Vala myth the idea of liberation of real cows and cosmic events are more than once mixed up⁴¹.

Although many Soma hymns of *mandala* IX mainly describe the process of preparing the beverage, the poets do not conceal their thoughts and feelings, or suppress the emotions aroused when the juice is extracted⁴². The fact that the *soma* juice and the deity Soma are in these hymns almost unrecognizably identified has given rise to an allusive style which is no doubt to call up this identity in the mind of the hearer rather than to invite him to solve the problem as to whether the deity or the juice is meant and whether the processes described take place on the sacrificial ground or in the celestial regions⁴³. The identity of god and draught is also apparent from statements such as: the *soma*, while being purified, 'flows out' heroic sons, vigour and well-being⁴⁴. However, this tendency to identification can, in the same context, alternate with a dissociation of both aspects of the divine draught: "One birth (of Soma) is concealed, the other takes place when he is offered" (9, 68, 5)⁴⁵.

One of the difficulties with which a modern reader of the Veda is confronted is the absence of such dividing lines as he usually draws between person and non-person, between concrete and abstract⁴⁶. Not only are we tempted to assume figurative speech where there is none⁴⁷, we also run a serious risk of

⁴⁰ Cf. also 6, 75, 3; 7, 3, 2; 24, 2; 47, 3; 101, 1; 8, 24, 6; 9, 16, 1; 66, 25; 69, 9; 10, 123, 1.

⁴¹ Cf. 4, 1, 13; 5, 85, 2 (RENOU, E. V. P. VII, p. 19); 10, 62, 2f. (see LÜDERS, Varuṇa, p. 515).

⁴² P. S. SASTRI, in IHQ 30, p. 301.

⁴³ Cf. e.g. 9, 3, 7; 16, 4; 66, 2; 79, 4; 97, 23, and see e.g. also 9, 10, 5; 48, 4; 62, 3; 83, 2; 96, 22.

⁴⁴ Cf. S. S. BHAWE, in Journal of the Mah. Sayajirao Univ. of Baroda, Hum. 10, 1 (1961), p. 1 (on 9, 68). Cf. e.g. 9, 29, 6; 35, 1; 41, 4; 86, 45, and places such as 9, 4, 7; 20, 4; 30, 3; 31, 1; 59, 1; 69, 10.

⁴⁵ Cf. e.g. also 5, 51, 9; 6, 44, 24; 8, 97, 6.

⁴⁶ For details see GONDA, R. I. I, p. 29; 36 etc.; H. VON GLASENAPP, Entwicklungsstufen des indischen Denkens, Halle S. 1940, p. 9; J. HERTEL, Die Sonne und Mithra im Avesta, Leipzig 1927, p. 6 etc. exaggerated. One should not (with MACDONELL, H. S. L. p. 100) speak of "deifications of abstract nouns."

⁴⁷ Some modern mystics and philosophers—among them Aurobindo, e.g. in Hymns to the Mystic Fire, Pondicherry 1952—go decidedly too far in assuming symbolism and allegories. Interpretations such as *Gotama* (a proper name) "most radiant" because of the relations between cows (*go*) and morning-light are absurd and unfounded.

misinterpreting the tenor of a passage. For Vedic man all processes in the universe were determined by a co-operation of potencies or power substances which were conceived of now as persons, now as non-persons, but at times also as persons and non-persons. This ambivalence led the poet to address prayers for assistance to the river Sarasvatī in the same stanza (6, 61, 2) in which he describes her violence in breaking open the mountains, or to order the kettle-drum to drive away, together with Indra, the enemies, and to impart strength to those speaking (6, 47, 29ff.).

Although we are sceptical about the opinion⁴⁸ that most allegories of the R̥gveda were, 2500 years ago, as hazy and obscure as they are now, it must be admitted that part of them continue to provide food for discussion. There is, in general, almost universal agreement about the poets' intentions to convey, by the symbols and images of cows⁴⁹, another and deeper meaning than the surface one in passages such as 4, 41, 5 stating that the big cow—i.e. poetic art—which with her milk gives a thousand gushes is expected to yield now also as if she had gone through the pasture⁵⁰, but the interpretation of many places remains disputed⁵¹ and the supposition that definite words always have the same metaphorical meaning would easily lead us astray. It is not surprising that an allegorical expression was more than once borrowed from the usual sacrificial terminology⁵² or from handwork such as weaving: the *ṛṣis*, our fathers, are in 10, 130, 1ff. described as having woven (i.e. created) the sacrificial ritual. Nor are allegorical descriptions a strange appearance in speculative contexts: Agni's flames are buffaloes and cows meeting in the same nest (10, 5, 2); the ficus indica (*nyagrodha*) with its aerial roots represents the tree of heaven and the descending rays of light (1, 24, 7)⁵³. In view of the identity of aim and effect⁵⁴ the activity of the poet is compared to a race: 2, 31 "O Varuṇa and Mitra, show favour to our chariot . . ." (st. 1); the concluding stanza, expressing the wish to be successful like the horses before the chariot, explains the allegory⁵⁵.

The desire to elucidate reality by means of images hardly led to the creation of real parables. This term is sometimes applied to the well-known stanzas R̥V.

⁴⁸ Expressed by R. VON ROTH, at KZ 26, p. 47.

⁴⁹ V. M. APTE, The allegorical significance of the word for 'cows' in the R̥gveda, 17 AIOC (1953), p. 227.

⁵⁰ See e.g. also 10, 101, 9; 133, 7 and compare 1, 164, 26; 2, 32, 3; 4, 42, 10. Cf. W. P. SCHMID, Die Kuh auf der Weide, IF 64, p. 1.

⁵¹ See e.g. 3, 31 (GELDNER, R̥V. I, p. 366, hazardously explained as a reminiscence of matriarchy by E. HEROLD, in ArchOr 26 (1958), p. 81); 3, 55 (GELDNER, R̥V. I, p. 399); 10, 114; 135 (GELDNER, R̥V. III, p. 367).

⁵² See e.g. GELDNER, R̥V. I, p. 227.

⁵³ For other allegories see e.g. 1, 152, 6; 3, 26, 8; 57, 3; 5, 37, 3; 54, 12; 7, 44, 5; 64, 4; 85, 1; 8, 12, 11; 42, 3; 9, 100, 1; 10, 113, 10.

⁵⁴ See p. 80 f.

⁵⁵ E. WINDISCH, in Festgruß Roth, Stuttgart 1893, p. 139; RENOÛ, E. V. P. I, p. 20.

1, 164, 20ff.: two birds, inseparable companions, embrace the same tree; one of them eats the sweet fruit (wisdom), the other looks on without eating⁵⁶.

Authors have often believed to find, in these hymns, many instances of various types of puns or play upon words⁵⁷. If however we understand by 'pun' the use of a term in such a way as to suggest two or more meanings or different associations we should remember that what might seem different meanings to us was not always a case of polysemy in Indian antiquity. Vocabulary being a way in which a community classifies the sum total of its experiences, the 'meanings' of words are far from being identical in all languages, so that in translating we are often forced to split up the meaning of a Vedic word or to make distinctions where for Vedic man there were none⁵⁸. We would for instance be quite wrong in saying⁵⁹ that the poet of ṚV. 7, 41 continually plays upon two meanings of *bhaga*, viz. "good fortune" and a proper name of a god. No, the god manifests himself in welfare and happiness; wherever there is good fortune the god is believed to be active in performance of his special function⁶⁰. The combination of the name of Savitar, "the Stimulator" (the sun in its dynamic aspect), with forms of the root *sū-* "to impel, set in motion," is no play on sound repetition⁶¹ but an unequivocal statement of the fact that the god performs the task which he is, in virtue of his character, expected to accomplish. When Agni after being ignited is said to become Mitra (3, 5, 4) the poet supposing the latter to make his presence felt in the sacrificial fire is not playing on the name of the god of 'friendship' but stating a temporary identity of divine functions⁶². The sixteen times repeated "bull" in ṚV. 2, 16, 4ff. may seem an exaggeration not to our taste, it is no play⁶³ but a serious attempt to impress upon the auditor that Indra's weapons, horses and chariot participate in his bull-like nature, that his drink and all that is needed to prepare it, being bull-like themselves, are to preserve this powerful nature. 'Double meanings' such as that of *amśu*

⁵⁶ See chapter III, p. 135 f.

⁵⁷ See e.g. E. W. HOPKINS, at JAOS 15, p. 272; GELDNER, V. S. II, p. 269 (on ṚV. 2, 13, 7); P. S. SASTRI, in IHQ 30, p. 301. For the confusion between these terms—'pun' should be used for the Indian *śleṣa* (WELLER, in Festgabe Von Garbe, p. 58), word-play for the *yamaka* etc.—see E. GEROW, in JGJRI 27, 3-4 (1971), p. 79.

⁵⁸ Cf. GONDA, The study of ancient Indian religious terminology, History of Religions, I (1961), p. 243.

⁵⁹ With A. HILLEBRANDT, Lieder des Ṛgveda, Göttingen—Leipzig 1913, p. 82.

⁶⁰ This is not to deny that this Vedic usage was, in germ, a prototype of the classical *śleṣa* or double entendre; cf. RENOU, at Journal de Psychologie 44 (1951), p. 280; G. V. DEVASTHALI, J. Univ. Poona, Hum. Sect. 23 (1965), p. 39.

⁶¹ See e.g. ṚV. 1, 113, 1; 124, 1 and RENOU, E. V. P. III, p. 62.

⁶² GONDA, Mitra, p. 48 (otherwise BERGAIGNE, in MSL 8, p. 8 and GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 406 (on 3, 59)).

⁶³ 'Spielerei' GELDNER, Auswahl, II, p. 38. In GELDNER's commentary the term *Wortspiel* is a very frequent occurrence (see e.g. 1, 52, 3; 101, 2; 127, 3; 164, 42; 177, 1; 180, 4); see also OLDENBERG, Noten, II, p. 379, s. v. *Wortspiel*, and RENOU, E. V. P. II, p. 71, n. 3.

“stalk (of the *soma*)” and “ray (of the sun)”⁶⁴ find their explanation in the tendency to assimilate or homologize ritual and cosmic entities, the poet suggesting a second sense of the word which elsewhere can come to the fore⁶⁵. Derivatives of the same root often have from the semantic point of view many aspects difficult to translate exactly. This does not however mean that the text “plays on different meanings.” If we take the term ‘play’ as a means of producing a humorous effect we shall in most cases be mistaken. The sharp juxtaposition of “mortal” and “immortal” in 8, 11, 5 (“We mortal men contemplate the name of thee that art immortal . . .”) is a case of conscious antithesis, emphasizing the contrast, no ‘play.’ Making in the same stanza (6, 66, 6)⁶⁶ mention of *ródasī* “heaven and earth” as well as *Rodasī*, a female figure accompanying the Maruts, the author suggests a close connexion between both concepts: complete or partial identity in name was believed to point to identity of, or an intimate association between, the bearers of the names: the rivers are called *nadī* because they resound (*nad-*; AV. 3, 13, 1)⁶⁷. Even *śuśṇam aśuśam* “the voracious Śuśṇa”⁶⁸ (e. g. 2, 14, 5)—probably an oxymoron—is, rather than a mere ‘play,’ an attempt at indicating a discrepancy between the name and the behaviour (notice the privative prefix *a-*) of the demoniac being. It is Vṛtra’s (Obstruction’s) very nature and function to obstruct⁶⁹, but at 3, 34, 3 the positions are reversed: it is Indra who obstructs the demon, a fact consciously or unconsciously emphasized by the juxtaposition of object and verb *vṛtrám avṛnot*. Was, finally, the author of 6, 24, 4 describing Indra as one who binds without bonds (i. e. without being bound himself) and giving lavishly, notwithstanding the ‘play’ upon the homonymous verbal roots, only playing in our sense of the term?

⁶⁴ Cf. RV. 9, 15, 5; AV. 7, 81, 3; 6; 19, 6, 16; RENOU, at JA 1939, p. 341.

⁶⁵ For the use of a word in ‘two meanings’ suggesting identity cf. (probably) 1, 180, 4; 2, 20, 1.

⁶⁶ Cf. VON BRADKE, in Festgruß Roth, p. 117 (overshooting the mark); GELDNER, RV. II, p. 168. Cf. 1, 64, 9 and GONDA, R. I. I, p. 61; 89. Otherwise RENOU, E. V. P. X, p. 6.

⁶⁷ GONDA, Notes on names, p. 7.

⁶⁸ See MACDONELL, V. M., p. 160. Otherwise VELANKAR, in JUB 1940, 2, p. 81.

⁶⁹ Cf. 2, 14, 2; 6, 20, 2; 9, 61, 22.

6. Imagery

Little poetry is possible without imagery¹. Images, often a device to make sense of what is otherwise hard to grasp, to familiarize the unfamiliar, to make explicit hidden qualities or relations, are very frequent throughout these collections. Especially when a language has not yet formed many abstractions imagery is apt to take their place and speakers and authors quite naturally resort to it when they attempt to express clearly what they feel and want to say. Metaphors, parallels, similitudes help them to express their thought more effectively than plain statement, the more so as they usually draw their images from the natural world about them and so make an immediate impact on their audiences. Suggesting ontological as well as perceptual identity or indistinguishability equalizations, omitting any form of explicit comparison, often are evocative and suited to characterize or to reveal what otherwise would remain more or less mysterious².

For a right understanding of this imagery it is essential to realize that many passages which would strike us as exhibiting a metaphorical use of a noun are rather statements of an equalization or assimilation³. That is to say that we run the risk of regarding as an image what in Vedic times was an element of classification or homologation inherent in the outlook of the poets and priests in general⁴. Expressions such as "navel (of the world)"⁵ for the sacrificial place which is conceived of as the centre of the universe connected with heaven by the world axis and on earth the place nearest to heaven, are more than an 'image.' If the *soma*, being purified and flowing through the strainer, is believed to be heroic, the addition to a description of this process "a hero with swift chariots"

¹ One should decidedly avoid the term 'rhetoric' so often found in the pertinent literature (e.g. A. BERGAIGNE, Quelques observations sur les figures de rhétorique dans le Rig-Véda, MSL 4, p. 96; L. RENOU, in JA 243 (1955), p. 420).

² Cf. e.g. 3, 26, 9; 39, 7; 5, 19, 2; 6, 15, 19; 7, 43, 4; 90, 6; 8, 8, 2; 101, 16; 9, 22, 6; 10, 3, 1ff.; 101, 2.

³ Among those devices which, though favoured by these poets, should not be regarded as poetical ornamentation or as products of poetical fantasy is the identification of a god with one or some of his colleagues (L. VON SCHROEDER, Indiens Literatur und Cultur, Leipzig 1887 (1922), p. 77): "Thou, Agni, art Indra"; "Thou, Agni, art Rbhu"; "Thou god Agni art Aditi for the devout worshipper" (RV. 2, 1, 3; 10f.; 3, 36, 5; 5, 3, 1ff.; 82, 1; 7, 9, 3; 12, 3; 8, 101, 15; 9, 77, 5 etc.). As soon as a deity is believed to fulfil a function which is commonly attributed to another divine being, the name of the latter can be transferred to him. In this train of thought the celestial prototype of a terrestrial being can be described as its highest form (RV. 1, 163, 7 (cf. 6); cf. also 8, 89, 1; 9, 62, 9).

⁴ One should not, with CH. MANNING, Hymns of the R̥gveda, Calcutta 1952, p. 37 say that we have, generally speaking, to do with passing metaphors developing into "objects of real belief."

⁵ RV. 1, 43, 9; 59, 2; 164, 34; 185, 5 etc.; cf. also H. WELLER, Zu einigen Metaphern des Rigveda, ZII 5, p. 178. See e.g. M. ELIADE, The sacred and the profane, New York 1961, p. 38.

is no poetic metaphor in our modern sense of the term. The use of "mountain" for the pressing stones is rather conditioned by the belief that an object and its source or material cause are identical than a conscious application of a 'stylistic figure'⁶. The 'ocean' in the poet's heart is the source of his inspiration; hence the identity of heart and ocean in 10, 177, 1.

The cows, which now are said to be fond of Dawn (1, 71, 1), now to be her harbingers or representatives (7, 81, 2), are elsewhere (1, 92, 1) substituted for the phenomenon of daybreak⁷. Not all instances of 'metonymy' should be regarded as poetical embellishments either. Whereas it is difficult to say whether "the pressed jar" (10, 167, 1) is based on colloquial expressions such as our "bottle" for "wine"⁸, the frequent cases of "cows" instead of "milk"⁹ are no doubt mainly due to a belief in the 'identity' of source and product, or rather in the inherence of the former in the latter. When at 8, 79, 1 the *soma* juice is called an inspired *ṛsi*, it is of course true that this title is due to the poet, but other places show us that divine powers mediating the process of inspiration—with the inclusion of Soma himself—are given the same designation¹⁰. Elsewhere the right understanding of an image presupposes an acquaintance with mythological ideas. When in what may appear to us to be a bold metaphor the *soma* is described as a bolt (*vajra*) when it is eulogized by the poet, we should remember that it is this beverage which enables Indra to wield that weapon¹¹. But although images are, generally speaking, an important feature in so-called mystical passages and in communications about higher knowledge revealed to a poet, we cannot discount the possibility that the difficulty found in understanding texts such as 4, 5¹² is not only due to a failing congeniality on our side.

The word of the officiant is on account of its swiftness and efficacy called an arrow¹³, lightning is a smile¹⁴; Agni is the son of victorious and overwhelming power¹⁵, Heaven and Earth are a pair born of the same womb¹⁶; rain is drawn from a heavenly well¹⁷; continuity and communication are 'symbolized' by the thread or texture which increase in length when they are spun or woven¹⁸. The

⁶ Otherwise GELDNER, *RV.* III, p. 296 (hyperbole). Cf. *RV.* 3, 35, 8; 10, 94, 1; a double meaning in 5, 85, 2: RENOUE, *E. V. P.* VII, p. 19; XVI, p. 151; GONDA, *Epithets*, p. 212.

⁷ For particulars see RENOUE, *E. V. P.* III, p. 33.

⁸ Cf. also 8, 15, 13; 10, 14, 3 and cases such as 8, 2, 6.

⁹ E.g. 9, 82, 3; cf. 9, 71, 4.

¹⁰ See 9, 12, 4; 8; 14, 1; 18, 2; 92, 2 etc.

¹¹ *RV.* 9, 47, 3; 72, 7; 77, 1 and see 1, 80, 2.

¹² See also RENOUE, *E. V. P.* XIII, p. 96; *RV.* 5, 2.

¹³ *RV.* 1, 84, 16; 128, 4; cf. 1, 190, 2 etc. and 7, 40, 1.

¹⁴ *RV.* 1, 168, 8; 2, 4, 6.

¹⁵ *RV.* 1, 58, 8; 3, 1, 8 etc.; cf. 1, 141, 1 and GONDA, *Gods and powers* (see above).

¹⁶ *RV.* 1, 159, 4; for the image see e.g. also 3, 1, 6.

¹⁷ *RV.* 5, 53, 6; 59, 8.

¹⁸ *RV.* 1, 142, 1; 159, 4; 7, 33, 9; 9, 22, 6; 10, 57, 2; 130, 1; cf. also 9, 73, 9.

soma in process of purifying itself is addressed as a most splendid bull and invited to gallop near; the milk with which the juice is to mix is 'figuratively' denoted by "cows," and in order to give an idea of its absolute superiority, a poet describes the juice as the guide of the inspired poets, the ṛṣi among those who experienced spiritual rapture, the buffalo among the animals, the falcon among the birds of prey¹⁹.

Now and then an image strikes us as specially successful and at the same time rare or perhaps original. Rain is described as a shining dress of sacrificial butter that follows two gods who are believed to dispense it²⁰; the tongue of the eulogist as a whip producing pleasant sounds (9, 69, 2). Other images occur in a simpler as well as an elaborate form: Indra, often described as a bull, is sometimes fancied as "the bull of the cultivators"²¹.

Some poetic conventions of the classical Sanskrit authors can be traced to the Ṛgveda. The Ásvins approaching in the morning are compared to a couple of *cakravāka* ducks which are supposed to be separated during night (2, 39, 3); a loving woman and her mate to a creeper and a tree (ṚV. 10, 10, 13; AV. 6, 8, 1); a nuptial tie between ocean and rivers is suggested at 8, 16, 2²².

Occasionally a poet succeeds in creating a double or ambiguous image. At 10, 5, 4 the upper garment of Heaven and Earth must be the celestial luminaries on one, and vegetation on the other hand. A tendency to complication is indeed not lacking: the *soma* stalks are depicted as excavated sources milked with stones (4, 50, 3). Other poets combine two images for the same idea—in principle a sort of intensification: thus milk and sacrificial butter are at 9, 74, 4 elements in dealing with the production of the *soma* juice (and parallel to it, of rain)²³. Or they mix them²⁴ even to vacillate on the verge of incomprehensibility: the bulls under the yoke of sacred Order whose mouths have arrows are the officiants (1, 84, 16). There are also curious instances of what would appear to be a blend of image and reality: when, at 9, 86, 46, it reads that the poems lick the (*soma*) stalks when the poets of the stanzas "go to the bright garment" (to be put on by the *soma* during the process of purification), we have to understand that the eulogists treat the *soma* juice like cows their calves. The tendency to combining images or metaphors with other 'figures of speech' has not failed to add to the complexity, difficulty or obscurity of some passages²⁵. An accumulation of characteristic images and elaborated comparisons may on the other hand concur to achieve very suggestive effects in a hymn such as 1, 64 in which

¹⁹ ṚV. 9, 2, 2; 6, 6; 19, 3; 69, 4; 72, 3; 96, 6.

²⁰ ṚV. 5, 62, 4; cf. e.g. 8, 5, 6.

²¹ See 2, 16, 6; 3, 46, 5; 6, 46, 4; 8, 21, 11; 10, 92, 8 etc.; 6, 18, 1; cf. 7, 98, 1.

²² The absence or rarity in Vedic poetry of other well-known classical images (lotus, fig-tree, moonlit night, the god of love etc.) is partly due to the different geographical surroundings. For the lotus see S. BASU, VIJ 6 (1969), p. 61.

²³ Cf. also 5, 47, 7.

²⁴ Cf. also 2, 18, 1 (a chariot with oars); 35, 1; 6, 6, 4; cf. 3, 53, 23.

²⁵ See e.g. 5, 66, 4; 9, 69, 2; 5; 10, 4, 5; 44, 9; 45, 3; 101, 11.

the Maruts, born as bulls (st. 2), shakers who milk the udders of heaven and the thundering source of moisture (5; 6), buffaloes possessed of incomprehensible creative power, swift, strong, brilliant (7), able to make the nights lively (8) and described as good shots who have taken arrows in their hands (10), as warriors with banners (2), as roaring like lions (8) and devouring the trees like elephants (7), are very well characterized as gods of the thunderstorm²⁶.

It is not always easy to say where plain statement ends and metaphorical expression begins. RV. 8, 67, traditionally ascribed to a king of fishes or to fishes caught in a net may owe its origin to a fairy-tale on fishes²⁷; however, those passages which could suggest such an evil plight of aquatic animals—deep water, bonds, leaping over—can also be taken as a continued metaphor²⁸. On the other hand, there is hardly any ground for supposing that a Vedic poet did not resort to imagery when he would express himself in covert terms: the race with a hundred strategems performed by a married couple (1, 179, 3) is no doubt a reference to their amorous sport²⁹.

The metaphor shades into the 'symbol,' but the significance of what in ancient Indian literature is commonly called 'symbolism' should not be missed. The Vedic authors were always convinced of the existence of correlations between the visible and the invisible world, between the ritual acts and natural phenomena or divine agency, between the celestial sphere and human existence³⁰. The hold which nature has over man comes from the unseen powers within it, but if he knows the correlations, he has the command of a mighty means of influencing and controlling these powers, viz. the rites and the ritual texts. That is why various living creatures and natural phenomena are so carefully presented and given an ulterior significance. A practical knowledge of the visible world and a correct comprehension of everything in it that is relevant to human life led the *ṛṣis* to the formulation of correspondences and parallelisms and helped them to bring the remote and the intangible into the range of human comprehension. The horn embodies the idea of strength (8, 86, 5). Whatever the meaning of the "sea" in 7, 88, 3, the voyage of the *ṛṣi* Vasiṣṭha and Varuṇa in one and the same ship symbolizes a deepening communion. Vṛtra, sunk in deepest sleep (4, 19, 3) represents primordial chaos and inertia³¹. We cannot escape the conviction that reference to these symbols many times is of greater importance in the course of thinking than a development of ideas.

Some 'transferred meanings' or 'figurative expressions' have attracted attention because they occur also in other ancient literatures and here the question

²⁶ See e.g. also 1, 140, 9; 2, 18, 1; 8, 66, 3f.; 10, 99, 4.

²⁷ GELDNER, RV. III, p. 390.

²⁸ Cf. also RV. 1, 102 and compare cases such as 4, 58; 8, 69, 9.

²⁹ Cf. also 10, 40, 9.

³⁰ GONDA, R. I. I, p. 176; L. RENOU, *Les littératures de l'Inde*, Paris 1951, p. 6; ELIZARENKOVA, o. c., p. 66.

³¹ For the influence of symbolism upon verbal expression see S. G. OLIPHANT, in *JAOS* 30, p. 174. Differences between Vedic and post-Vedic symbolism are largely explicable from other geographical or cultural circumstances.

arises whether they were borrowed or belonged to an inherited Indo-European poetical phraseology, or are to be explained as instances of 'Elementarverwandtschaft.' The king as herdsman of men or of his people occurs R.V. 3, 43, 5³² and the hands with ten branches (10, 137, 7) has, likewise in ancient Greece, a counterpart in Hesiod³³. A paraphrasis of the type known as kenning among the ancient Scandinavian skalds occurs also in R.V. 1, 65, 8 where the plants are said to be "the hair of the earth"³⁴. Circumlocutions such as "the excellent, praiseworthy celestial and terrestrial wealth"³⁵ are as favourite as phrases of the type "the light of heaven" or "the smoke-bannered one" (for Agni)³⁶.

Before proceeding to a systematic discussion of the similes—which among the above quotations were not completely absent—a short survey of some representative images may find a place here. In elucidating religious or ritual conceptions the poets resorted to images familiar from everyday life; they found the illustration which they needed in their own surroundings³⁷. The two pieces of wood used in kindling fire are Agni's parents (1, 31, 4); this process is a copulation, and the god is able to produce, by means of friction, sons for the eulogist (1, 127, 11); Parjanya, the god of rain, places his seed in the plants (5, 83, 1); Dawn is a beaming young woman (1, 92, 11)³⁸. The image of the wife or mistress is very frequent³⁹: the rivers are Indra's wives and the poet's hymns run towards him in the same capacity; the streams of sacrificial butter "frisk smiling towards Agni like beautiful women to an amorous union." The fingers preparing the *soma* are ten ladies (9, 1, 7) or sisters (3, 57, 3). When sunlight takes the place of the darkness of night a woven (cloth) remains unfinished: what was extended is rolled together again (1, 115, 4)⁴⁰. The hymns which go to Indra to invite him are given a lift in an aerial chariot (6, 35, 1). Varuṇa used the sun as a measuring instrument to mark out the 'site' for the earth (5, 85, 5). Spiritual enlightenment and salvation are called light⁴¹. The poets figure Indra's swift horses as rivers, other steeds as the wings of their owners; the proverbial swiftness of a famous horse as a gale⁴²; the kindling of the ritual fire

³² See J. GONDA, *Ancient Indian kingship*, Leiden 1966, p. 2; 69; R. SCHMITT, *Dichtung und Dichtersprache in indogermanischer Zeit*, Wiesbaden 1967, p. 283f.; W. WÜST, in *Studia classica et orientalia A. Pagliaro, III*, Rome 1969, p. 261. For other images: W. WÜST, in *Festschrift F. Altheim*, Berlin 1969, p. 24f.

³³ Hesiod, *Works*, 742f.; see SCHMITT, *o.c.*, p. 281.

³⁴ Cf. also 6, 46, 11; 7, 63, 4; 9, 69, 2; 73, 1; 93, 1.

³⁵ R.V. 9, 19, 1; see also 1, 163, 5; 9, 21, 5; 75, 2; 10, 15, 7; 92, 4; 7.

³⁶ Cf. R.V. 1, 69, 1; VS. 1, 11; R.V. 1, 27, 11 etc.

³⁷ For imagery from occupations and daily life see e.g. 1, 105, 18; 130, 6; 5, 9, 5; 6, 3, 4; 10, 71, 9.

³⁸ For the expression "daughter of heaven" or "of the sun" see R. GOPAL, at JGJRI 23 (1972), p. 523.

³⁹ See BERGAIGNE, R. V. III, p. 348, Cf. 1, 62, 10f.; 3, 39, 1; 5, 42, 12.

⁴⁰ Cf. RENOUE, E. V. P. XV, p. 5.

⁴¹ E.g. 1, 50, 10; 2, 27, 11; 14; 3, 26, 8; 9, 35, 1; 113, 7; 10, 185, 3.

⁴² P. S. SASTRI, *The imagery of the Rgveda*, ABORI 29, p. 152. Cf. 6, 46, 14; 47, 31 (cf. 5, 74, 9); 4, 38, 3; 5, 1, 1; 9, 62, 17; 5, 46, 1.

as a process of awakening; the sacrifice which goes to the gods⁴³ as a chariot, the officiant being the horse yoked to the pole; the inspired thought as a ship⁴⁴; the eulogy as a well-yoked desire⁴⁵. While martial images are rare chariot driving plays a more prominent part⁴⁶. The swift motion of the *soma* drops⁴⁷ led to the comparison with cars⁴⁸. Ships evoke an image of the movements of the Maruts over the fields, and especially the idea of rescue and a safe crossing, of overcoming troubles and difficulties⁴⁹. Birds symbolize not only swiftness, but also the ability of expanding their wings, soaring higher and higher and going into unknown regions⁵⁰. The wolf was detested, his name more or less clearly transferred to malicious enemies⁵¹. An important feature in R̥gvedic imagery is the cow, which symbolizes, not only milk, food, plenty and liberality, but also poetic art and sacrificial technique⁵². It hardly needs mentioning that the Vedic poets, like their colleagues elsewhere, were inclined to transfer earthly circumstances to the world of the gods, describing for instance the Maruts as bards or singers—that is representing the sound of tempest and thunderstorm as a song—and divine attributes on the analogy of things human and mundane⁵³.

It is not surprising that some metaphorical expressions should be in harmony with more elaborated similes so that the latter—to which we have imperceptibly passed on—provide us with a clue to the former: at 9, 3, 2 *soma* is said to run over the obstacles (i. e. the sieve), in 9, 13, 6 the drops flowing through the sieve are like coursers, driven on by drivers⁵⁴.

⁴³ J. GONDA, *Adhvara*, VIJ 3 (1965), p. 163. Compare e.g. 1, 127, 3; 129, 1; 2, 18, 1; 4, 5, 13; 16, 21; 7, 73, 3; 9, 62, 17; 111, 3.

⁴⁴ RV. 1, 46, 7; 2, 16, 7.

⁴⁵ RV. 4, 23, 5; cf. 4, 31, 14; 5, 35, 7f.

⁴⁶ F. EDGERTON, in *AJPh* 40, p. 175ff.; see e.g. 1, 35, 4f.; 94, 8; 178, 3.

⁴⁷ See 5, 66, 3; 9, 10, 1f.; 22, 1; 38, 1; 67, 17; 10, 26, 9.

⁴⁸ For the comparison of the activities of the poet to those of the cartwright or carpenter and of that between hymn and car see p. 73; cf. e.g. 1, 61, 4; 130, 6; 5, 29, 15; 2, 20, 1; 7, 37, 1. It is not so much the intricate construction of a hymn (EDGERTON, *o.c.*, p. 183) as its being a vehicle conveying the poet's thoughts to the higher powers. In general, see also RENOÛ, *E. V. P. I*, p. 14.

⁴⁹ See 5, 54, 4; 1, 182, 6; 1, 140, 12; 5, 4; 9; 25, 9; 6, 68, 8; 7, 65, 3; 8, 16, 11; 18, 17; 42, 3; cf. also 1, 41, 2.

⁵⁰ E.g. 4, 38, 2; 10, 178, 1; 9, 48, 4; 1, 166, 10; 10, 80, 5; 123, 6; 1, 164, 21.

⁵¹ See 1, 42, 2; 120, 7; 6, 13, 5 and cf. e.g. 1, 105, 7.

⁵² See 1, 139, 7; 164, 29; 2, 34, 8; 3, 33, 1; 6, 48, 13; 8, 1, 10; 100, 10; 10, 65, 6; 71, 5; 133, 7; cf. 1, 160, 3; 8, 7, 10; 10, 87, 17 and 175, 2; cf. RENOÛ, *E. V. P. I*, p. 10; P. S. SASTRI, in *ABORI* 28, p. 42.

⁵³ See e.g. RV. 1, 85, 2; 88, 1.

⁵⁴ Cf. also 9, 74, 1; 79, 2.

7. *Similes*

The number and variety of similes¹ and comparable forms of imagery are, already in Vedic poetry², considerable. They show a vast field of observation³ and experience which are not infrequently flavoured with poetic imagination and encapsulated by traditional belief⁴. Varuṇa's breath "roars in space like an excited animal that has hunted his prey on the pasture" (7, 87, 2); the rising Sun "waves his banner like a warrior" (4, 13, 2). These similes, which often have a tone of sincerity and familiarity⁵, are a valuable source of knowledge of Vedic life, religion and civilization in general⁶. Family-life⁷, daily pursuits such as hunting and cattle-tending⁸, the manners and doings of men and animals⁹, natural phenomena; beautiful and well-dressed girls and women¹⁰, paternal love and filial affection¹¹, friendship and hospitality¹²; the much-prized horse¹³; sun, clouds, wind, stars¹⁴, supply the poets with a good number of examples.

It is however their stylistic significance which should claim our special attention¹⁵. Far from being mere ornaments¹⁶ similes belong to the so-called fig-

¹ A. HIRZEL, Gleichnisse und Metaphern im Ṛgveda in cultur-historischer Hinsicht zusammengestellt, Thesis Leipzig 1890 (Engl. transl.: S. B. VELANKAR, JUB N. S. 7, 2 (1938), p. 46; 9, 2 (1940), p. 126); H. WELLER, Vergleichungen im Rigveda, Festgabe von Garbe, p. 54; J. GONDA, Remarks on similes in Sanskrit literature, Wageningen 1939; Leiden 1949; H. D. VELANKAR, at JBBRS N. S. 14 (1938), p. 1 and 16 (1940), p. 1; at Bhāratiya Vidyā 25 (1965), p. 1; P. S. SASTRI, in ABORI 28 (1947), p. 34; A. VENKATASUBBIAH, in Comm. Vol. Siddheshvar Varma, Hoshiarpur 1950, I, p. 178; at ALB 28 (1964), p. 161; J. TILAKASIRI, at 23 AIOC (1966-69), p. 275; ELIZARENKOVA, o.c., p. 67.

² Attention will also be paid to non-Ṛgvedic poetry.

³ Cf. e.g. RV. 1, 130, 5; 7, 3, 2; 8, 63, 9; 103, 11; 9, 32, 3; 10, 116, 9.

⁴ Cf. also 1, 61, 5 (parallelism of a race and the production of poetry); 6, 27, 6; 7, 36, 2; 8, 6, 7 (HOPKINS, at JAOS 15, p. 272).

⁵ Cf. e.g. 7, 32, 2 (those present at a *soma* offering sit like flies on honey); 10, 134, 5 (missiles fall like drops of perspiration); 8, 24, 6; 9, 69, 1; 10, 31, 3.

⁶ See HIRZEL and WELLER in note 1 above; OLDENBERG, R. V., p. 515; H. D. GRISWOLD, Vedic social life according to the similes in the Agni hymns, J. Panjab Hist. Soc. 1 (1911), p. 56.

⁷ Cf. also 4, 5, 5; 16, 15; 7, 26, 3; 10, 68, 2; 102, 11.

⁸ Cf. 2, 4, 7; 4, 1; 5, 31, 1; 6, 19, 3; 49, 12; 7, 18, 10; 10, 28, 10.

⁹ Cf. 2, 19, 2; 31, 1; 4, 2, 18; 41, 5; 5, 1, 1; 9, 4; 74, 4; 8, 20, 10; 21, 5; 63, 9; 9, 3, 1; 32, 3; 62, 15; 86, 13; 97, 28; 10, 31, 3; 43, 4; 5; 67, 3; 9; 180, 2.

¹⁰ Cf. 1, 124, 8; 4, 58, 9; 7, 2, 5; 9, 46, 2; 10, 71, 4.

¹¹ Cf. 1, 38, 1; 127, 8; 3, 53, 2; 7, 26, 2; 32, 3; 26; 54, 2; 8, 48, 4; 10, 69, 10 and see V. RAGHAVAN, in The Vedanta Kesari, 42 (1955), p. 330, and also R. GOPAL, The figurative use of *dūhitṛ* (daughter) in the Ṛgveda, JGJRI 28 (1972), p. 523.

¹² Cf. 1, 190, 6; 4, 6, 7; 8, 19, 8; 9, 2, 6; 96, 22.

¹³ Cf. 5, 46, 1; 7, 3, 2; 9, 13, 6; 10, 119, 3; and see 1, 186, 7; 5, 86, 5.

¹⁴ Cf. 1, 69, 1; 9; 71, 10; 87, 1; 2, 2, 5; 4, 6, 2; 17, 12; 33, 1; 7, 8, 4; 10, 23, 4; 77, 1. As to the sun see W. KIRFEL, at Comm. Vol. Nobel, p. 111 (not completely convincing).

¹⁵ Observations on the outward appearance and grammatical construction of similes were made by OLDENBERG, Noten; GONDA, o.c., p. 102.

ures of speech which were highly instrumental in making the Vedic sacral language answer its purpose, in giving it the correct and required form of style¹⁷.

The similes of the Atharvaveda¹⁸ are considerably less in number—exclusive of those which occur also in the R̥gveda, about 325. Like other references to parallel situations, they are selected from human association ($\pm 22\%$); among them are ‘professionals’ such as a hunter, a carpenter, a dancing girl, a woman basket-maker¹⁹. Beside cow²⁰ and horse, other animals (lion, wolf and tiger—who is almost absent in the other corpus—monkey, donkey, hawk and vulture) figure among the animals²¹. Of lifeless objects, bow and arrow, axe and millstone²², boat and chariot make their appearance beside trees, rivers, sun and moon, heaven and earth²³. More abstract ideas are however not lacking: “abiding in beings like speech in the speaker” (AVŚ. 2, 1, 4).

In perfect harmony with the normal practice of the speakers of any language Vedic poets insert similes for ‘economical reasons’—the Maruts advanced as if drunk (R̥V. 1, 39, 5)—or for bringing about a connection with familiar facts: “Like a bride, O dwelling, we carry thee” (in a text accompanying the releasing of a house, AV. 9, 3, 24); “. . . like cows rushing forth from the stable” (R̥V. 10, 97, 8). Popular phrases of the type “as deep as the sea” (3, 45, 3, cf. 7, 33, 8) or “turn round like wheels” (1, 185, 1) may be expressive, intensive and graphical: “Let heat boil the wicked up like a fiery pot” (R̥V. 7, 104, 2; AV. 8, 4, 2)²⁴. There are similes that by means of a comparison to human circumstances bring an event or thing nearer to the hearer, e.g. R̥V. 2, 6, 7 “O Agni, thou goeth between both races (of gods and men), as a messenger like a bridegroom’s friend”²⁵. The custom of the geese to walk one behind another helps to form an idea of the manner of walking of celestial horses (1, 163, 10)²⁶. The sun is the very picture of splendour: hence 8, 34, 17 “red mares which beam like the sun.” Lightning suddenly appears and strikes without fail: 1, 176, 3: “Slay him, (O Indra,) like the celestial thunderbolt.” The motherly love of the

¹⁶ Not to mention those who spoke of rhetoric: A. GUÉRINOT, *De rhetorica vedica*, Thesis Lyon 1900; H. R. DIWEKAR, *Les fleurs de rhétorique dans l’Inde*, Thesis Paris 1930.

¹⁷ This was the original meaning of the term *alamkāra* which is usually translated by “(stylistic) ornament” (GONDA, in Volume F. W. THOMAS, (NIA), Bombay 1939, p. 97).

¹⁸ S. G. OLIPHANT, in *JAOS* 35, p. 30; VELANKAR, in *JASBombay* 38 (1963), p. 19.

¹⁹ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 10, 1, 26.

²⁰ Cf. also AVŚ. 4, 39, 6: the sky as a milch-cow, the sun as a calf.

²¹ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 2, 14, 6; 25, 2; 3, 11, 5; 8; 15, 8; 4, 36, 6.

²² Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 1, 1, 3; 2, 12, 3.

²³ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 1, 8, 1; 3, 9; 14, 1; 27, 3; 32, 3; 2, 31, 1; 3, 6, 7; 9, 5; 23, 2.

²⁴ Cf. also R̥V. 1, 51, 14; 2, 5, 3; AV. 8, 6, 19.

²⁵ Cf. also 1, 83, 2; 85, 5; AV. 3, 11, 8.

²⁶ Cf. R̥V. 3, 8, 9.

cow is already in the R̥gveda a favourite model of affection²⁷. Side by side with fixed combinations of nouns and adjectives like “the blowing wind” (4, 38, 3 *vātam* . . . *dhṛājantam*) we find “thy mind hurries on like the wind” (1, 163, 11 *vāta iva dhṛājimān*)²⁸. Savitar is the god who has placed a light on high; when Agni is said to have placed such a light like Savitar the latter obviously is typical in this respect²⁹.

The Atharvaveda furnishes some good examples of similes added, in more or less prolix popular or emotional speech, for the sake of clearness: AVŚ. 10, 1, 14 witchcraft and its practicers are enjoined to “go away, making much noise, like an unfastened she-ass”³⁰. Similes are here also used where the intellectual accustomed to abstract expressions would prefer exact formulations, avoiding images or exaggerations: AVŚ. 6, 142, 2 inviting the grain to “rise up like the sky” and to be “unexhausted like the ocean”³¹. The man who has no difficulty in finding a treasure is compared to a thief who robs somebody sleeping (RV. 1, 53, 1). The graphical concreteness and expressiveness of the vivid descriptions and vigorous phraseology of colloquial usage is at the root of the possibly ‘poetical’ simile “he continues growing like twigs” said of a man of numerous offspring (2, 5, 4)³². Such additions may be serviceable in forming a climax: “Do you here get up, go forth, run forth (like) a chariot well-wheeled, well-tired, well-naved” (AVŚ. 4, 12, 6)³³. In accordance with the tendency to make the end of a composition ponderous there often are one or two similes in the last stanza of a hymn³⁴. The affective character of a simile is frequently obvious from the context. Thus the feelings of the man who after travelling in the intense heat of the sun reaches a shady place are immediately clear: “We have sought refuge with thee, O Agni, as if from the heat of sunshine with a shady spot” (RV. 6, 16, 38)³⁵.

Similes—sometimes creating a parallel world beyond the apparent one³⁶—are also a means of shedding light on the essence or characteristic qualities of the object compared. Those of the *soma* hymns emphasize the brightness,

²⁷ Cf. 1, 186, 7; 6, 45, 25; 28; 8, 69, 11; 9, 12, 2; 13, 7; 100, 1; 7; 104, 2; 105, 2. For the cow see e.g. also 4, 51, 8; 9, 77, 1; 93, 2; 94, 2 and W. P. SCHMID, *Die Kuh auf der Weide*, IF 64, p. 1.

²⁸ For the wind as a model of swiftness see also 1, 113, 18; 4, 17, 12; 6, 45, 32; 8, 34, 17. For other similes of a formulaic character see BLOOMFIELD, *Repetitions*, p. 583.

²⁹ RV. 4, 6, 2; cf. 4, 13, 2; 7, 72, 4.

³⁰ See also 10, 1, 30; 19, 55, 1.

³¹ See also AV. 5, 19, 1; 20, 1; 9, 3, 17.

³² Cf. AV. 8, 6, 24; 10, 4, 19; 12, 3, 33.

³³ Cf. also AV. 6, 21, 2; 115, 2; 8, 6, 17; 8, 3; 9, 2, 6; 19, 28, 2 etc.

³⁴ See e.g. RV. 1, 66, 9f.; 67, 10; 71, 10; 72, 10; 122, 15; AV. 3, 11, 8; 18, 6; 6, 22, 3; 7, 115, 4; 19, 33, 5.

³⁵ See also 2, 33, 6. Cf. VELANKAR, at BhV (see above n. 1).

³⁶ Cf. also instances such as RV. 1, 65, 3; 4, 16, 19; 6, 36, 5 and see K. F. LEIDENCKER, *The philosophic significance of similes in ancient Indian thought*, *The Aryan Path* 25 (Bombay 1954), p. 231.

brilliance, strength, roaring sound, and swift and restless motion of the beverage³⁷. Rousing the hearer's interest and imagination they help him better to understand the process of clarification. The Uṣas hymns show that 'similes' may imperceptibly blend into identifications, the light of dawn becoming a luminous female form, which in its turn dissolves into the brightness of the sky³⁸. This does not however mean that the poets are generally successful in evoking clear images of the unseen reality in the minds of modern readers, who might be inclined to overestimate the poetic value and profundity also of those verses which had to the ancients no other than the emotional appeal of the religious practice.

Comparisons borrowed from nature—intensifying and humanifying nature's life and creating a feeling of being in touch with it—should be viewed in the light of archaic man's conviction that he is part of nature, that he is deeply rooted in his natural setting with which his own existence is inextricably interwoven³⁹. It is not surprising that in many parts of the Veda similes taken from nature are much more frequent than those borrowed from social and spiritual life, mythology or human events. Parallels in nature help to illustrate an event and, in magical contexts, to lend the stanzas, the *mantras*, their specific force because a simile, embodying through the power of the spoken word some natural force, exercises a potent influence⁴⁰. AVŚ. 6, 14, 2 it reads "I destroy the catarrh of this man, I cut its bond like the root of a gourd"⁴¹ and at ṚV. 10, 145, 6 (= AVŚ. 3, 18, 6) a woman imprecates upon a rival wife the misfortune that her mind must run after herself as a cow after her calf, as water on its track. Thus the effective power of the objective fact or event in nature is expected to produce, in the interest of those pronouncing the formula, a similar result in an analogous case within the human sphere: "As the *libujā* (a creeping plant) has completely embraced the tree, so do you (the woman whose love is to be won) embrace me" (AVŚ. 6, 8, 1). These activities of animals, properties of plants and life of nature in general which are felt to be analogous to the emotions or behaviour of man or to the effects desired are called upon to reproduce themselves in the person on whose behalf the rite is executed⁴². The poet of AVŚ. 3, 6 (cf. AVP. 3, 3), a text used in a rite for the destruction of enemies by means of an amulet of *aśvattha* wood (*ficus religiosa*), was inspired

³⁷ B. H. KAPADIA, at VIJ 2 (1964), p. 47; P. S. SASTRI, at IHQ 30, p. 302. See e.g. 9, 2, 9; 3, 1; 6, 5; 7, 5; 10, 1; 14, 5; 16, 6; 7; 32, 5; 45, 4; 46, 2; 54, 2; 57, 1; 3; 61, 21; 64, 3; 70, 6; 101, 2.

³⁸ Cf. ṚV. 1, 113, 7; 124, 3; 8; 4, 52, 1; 5, 79, 1ff. etc. Cf. G. K. BHAT, at Marathwada Univ. Journal 3, Aurangabad 1963, p. 19.

³⁹ GONDA, o.c., p. 70.

⁴⁰ This aspect of the use of similes is almost exclusively emphasized by WELLER, *Festgabe Von Garbe*, p. 54.

⁴¹ Which becomes loosened of itself when the fruit is ripe. For other instances see e.g. AV. 3, 24, 3; 6, 54, 1; 89, 2; 7, 45, 2; 19, 50, 4; ṚV. 5, 78, 7; 8; 10, 18, 5.

⁴² Cf. e.g. also 3, 25, 2; 6, 89, 2; 102, 2; 139, 2.

by a peculiarity of that tree: it begins as an epiphyte and as it grows it often squeezes to death its host⁴³:

- (1) "The male sprung from the male, the *aśvattha* from the *khadira*;
Let it slay my enemies, whom I hate and who (hate) me.
(6) As, O *aśvattha*, climbing the forest trees you put them below you,
So split apart the head of my enemy and get the upper hand."

Divine power, skill, assistance, example, or prototype are invoked or made effective in a similar way: "Just as thou consumest the shrubs . . ., burn everyone who plots against us" (RV. 8, 60, 7); "I take the thunderbolt, cutting to pieces the shoulders of N.N., as Indra of Vṛtra" (6, 135, 1)⁴⁴. Constituting exactly formulated sentences, these similes were consciously employed to exercise, by means of their inherent parallelism, which was understood as an identity, an incantating effect. Part of them are based on a belief in fixed correspondences between macrocosmic and microcosmic entities: AVŚ. 10, 7, 32ff.: sky: head; sun: eye. The verb may be repeated to enhance the exactness and efficacy of the formula: AVŚ. 5, 25, 2, quoted at Kauś. 35, 5 in a ceremony for conception of a male child: "As this great earth receives the embryo of existences, so do I set your embryo."

Some similes may be regarded as familiar or proverbial. Thus the comparison to a hunter following the track of a wounded deer by the drops of blood (Manu 8, 44) was already known to the author of AVŚ. 11, 2, 13⁴⁵. The height of the heavenly expanse is a favourite standard of comparison⁴⁶.

Like other emotive elements of a sentence similes pronounced under the influence of strong feelings and sentiments tend to push themselves to the beginning of the utterance: "As a son to a father go, like a constrictor trampled on bite" (AVŚ. 5, 14, 10)⁴⁷. Many ideas introduced to concentrate the hearer's attention on an important aspect of the communication—i.e. many *upamānas*—that stand at the beginning have a great emotional value in themselves: in the Atharvaveda "like a mother" is always placed in that position, and the Rgveda also furnishes many instances, such as, for instance, the emphatic "As if with an iron club, O bearer of the *vajra*, strike the enemies" (1, 63, 5)⁴⁸.

The frequent and as a rule varied accumulation of images in a small compass is not necessarily to be regarded as an artificial device. In poetical as well as colloquial usage strong emotion, a vivid imagination, or the desire to express oneself unequivocally may prompt the repetition of the same 'figure of speech':

⁴³ Kauś. 48, 3ff.; see M. B. EMENEAU, in Univ. of California Publ. in Class. Philology 13, Berkeley 1950, p. 345.

⁴⁴ Also AV. 2, 27, 5; 4, 12, 7; 14, 1, 53; 19, 31, 9 etc., and compare RV. 1, 76, 5; 2, 30, 4; 3, 17, 2; 36, 3 etc. and instances such as AV. 9, 2, 6.

⁴⁵ Cf. WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. 622.

⁴⁶ RV. 4, 16, 19; 6, 20, 1; 36, 5; 10, 59, 3.

⁴⁷ See e.g. AVŚ. 4, 4, 6; 7, 109, 4; 8, 4, 8; 19, 46, 2 where Indra's mighty name occupies the first place. Cf. GONDA, o.c., p. 52. Otherwise e.g. AVŚ. 4, 18, 4.

⁴⁸ Cf. also RV. 1, 32, 6; 117, 18; 123, 10 etc.

“You are the best of herbs, like the ox of moving creatures, like the tiger of wild beasts” (AVŚ. 8, 5, 11)⁴⁹. This accumulation is especially suited to lend force to an injunction: “Avoid us, O curse, as a burning fire a lake, smite our curser as the thunderbolt from the sky a tree” (AVŚ. 6, 37, 2). Agni is “pleasant like opulence, like a spacious abode, a source of benefit like a mountain, beneficent like a stream of water, dashing along like a course, like a stream . . .” (ṚV. 1, 65, 5f.)⁵⁰. Enthusiastic about the beauty of Uṣas the poet of ṚV. 1, 124, 7 strings four similes together in a well-chosen order to illustrate the increasing splendour of dawn⁵¹:

“Like a brotherless (maiden) she turns towards men;
Like one who mounts a staging for winning riches;
Well-dressed like a willing wife for her husband;
Her secret charms Uṣas bares like a play-girl!”⁵².

Alliteration and homoioteleuton, frequent in the similes of other peoples, occur e.g. at ṚV. 1, 4, 1:

surūpakṛtṇúm ūtāye sudúghām iva godúhe | juhūmāsi dyāvi-dyavi
„Every day we call for assistance Indra who takes a beautiful form
As a good milch cow (is called) to the milker”⁵³.

More complicated or artificial instances of sound repetition, so frequent in classical Sanskrit, do not however seem to occur. Although prolonged or amplified similes are comparatively rare⁵⁴, the amplification is in part of the cases longer than necessary because the object compared (*upameya*) has nothing corresponding⁵⁵. However, an occasional simile of a somewhat expanded form shows that some poets at least were able to produce more refined and profound comparisons; ṚV. 2, 3, 6⁵⁶:

“Dawn and Dusk (accomplish) their perfected works for us like two joyful weaving women who in conjunction with each other weave the ingenious form of the sacrifice in the extended weft (of time).”

It is, in view of the often concise character of the syntax, not surprising to find elliptic or brachylogical similes of the types “I have offered thee hymns

⁴⁹ Cf. also ṚV. 1, 130, 1; 186, 7; 3, 38, 1; 4, 4, 1; 7, 34, 1; 4, 5; 7; 9, 22, 2; 69, 1; 88; 10, 75, 4; 77, 3; 89, 12; 115, 3; 149, 4; AV. 3, 29, 6; 6, 12, 1; 7, 45, 2 etc.

⁵⁰ Cf. BERGAIGNE, in MSL 8 (1894), p. 3. For the accumulation of similes in hymns dedicated to the Aśvins: OLDENBERG, in NG 1918, p. 65 (= K. S., p. 860).

⁵¹ I cannot follow RENOUE, E. V. P. IX, p. 77 in considering the three similes in 9, 69, 1 to relate to DUMÉZIL's ‘three functions’ (viz. that of the priestly order, nobility and husbandry).

⁵² See GELDNER, Auswahl II, p. 22. On some uncertainties in the translation see RENOUE, E. V. P. III, p. 64; cf. also ṚV. 1, 92, 4.

⁵³ Cf. also 1, 38, 8; 10, 149, 4; AV. 6, 42, 1; 2; 80, 2; 11, 4, 10; 12, 1, 45; GONDA, o.c., p. 47. For a combination of simile and adnominatio: AV. 19, 35, 2 (*dhanapālō dhāneva* “as a protector of riches (his) riches”).

⁵⁴ See e.g. 1, 130, 1; 4; 6, 9, 1; 7, 32, 20.

⁵⁵ See e.g. 4, 1, 6; 3, 12.

⁵⁶ Cf. also ṚV. 1, 71, 1; 2, 2, 2.

as a herdsman (viz. drives cattle home)" (1, 114, 9); "to fill as (the rivers fill) the sea" (RV. 1, 52, 4)⁵⁷. Nor are incoherent combinations of figurative and unfigurative expressions lacking: Agni (the ritual fire) "is awakened by man's fuel awaiting Uṣas (Dawn) who approaches like a cow" (5, 1, 1).

⁵⁷ See also 1, 116, 1; 184, 3; 2, 14, 6; 29, 5; 4, 2, 17; 16, 19; 21, 2; 27, 4; 5, 31, 1; 6, 6, 3; 8, 4, 16; 9, 101, 14; 10, 43, 1; Sāyaṇa on 6, 45, 22; GELDNER, RV. III, p. 323 (on 10, 105, 1); compare also his note, I, p. 437 (on 4, 16, 15); A. VENKATASUBBIAH, in ALB 28 (1964), p. 161 (on 8, 41, 1 etc.), and cf. also A. BERGAIGNE, at Mélanges Rénier, Paris 1886, p. 75.

8. Other stylistic features

The frequent mention of numerical concepts¹ is largely conditioned by the belief that many important things are characterized by a fixed number whether this is founded on fact or supposed to be a reality in the ritual or mythological sphere²; that identity of number points to identity in essence³; and that gaining an insight into numerical relations enables the expert to detect hidden connections. Then there are the almost inevitable three and seven, expressing modifications of the idea of totality⁴: Indra is a seven-reined bull who let loose the seven streams to flow (2, 12, 12). The births or birth-places of Agni are three in number: in the sea, in heavens, in the waters⁵; this led the author of 3, 20, 2 not only to state that the god has three generative powers and three abodes, but also that he possesses three tongues and three bodies⁶. The *Asvin* hymn 1, 34 is even composed on the motif of the three⁷: beginning with "Three times ye must remember us" the poet, mentioning this number 36 times in 12 stanzas, proceeds to describe their chariot which has three wheels, three tires and three supports, to commemorate three threefold circuits by day and by night, to pray them for thrice repeated favours and protection and so on. Part of these passages have the character of numerical riddles or of enumerations of, or argumentations by means of, entities that are vaguely indicated by their numerical value⁸.

That high numerals should be used to suggest the idea of extremely large quantities⁹ is not surprising; the curious predilection for numbers such as 60 hundred, 6 thousand, 60 and 6 (7, 18, 14) or 60099 (1, 53, 9) is however worthy of special attention¹⁰. Whereas 101, a typical 'baker's dozen' number is

¹ E. W. HOPKINS, Numerical formulae in the Veda, *JAOS* 16, p. 275; for Triads and heptads etc.: The holy numbers of the *Rg-veda*, *Or. Studies* 1894, p. 141 (on 3, 7, 9); V. S. AGRAWALA, in 26 *Int. Congr. of Orient.* 1964, p. 1 (partly fantastic); GONDA, Triads in Vedic ritual, *Ohio Journal of Religious Studies* 1974, 2, p. 5; Triads in the Veda, *Amsterdam Acad.* 1975.

² Cf. e.g. 2, 18, 1; 9, 114, 3; 10, 124, 1.

³ See GONDA, *R. I. I.*, p. 177.

⁴ See e.g. (3) 1, 34, 8; 140, 2; 142, 9; 164, 25; 10, 87, 10; (7) 8, 96, 16; 9, 86, 25; 36; 10, 67, 1; (3 × 7) 1, 34, 8; 7, 87, 4; 9, 86, 21; 10, 75, 1. For *Viṣṇu's* three strides etc. now see J. GONDA, *Viṣṇuism and Śivaism*, London 1970, p. 2; for five (see e.g. 1, 89, 10; 3, 59, 8; 10, 60, 4) p. 45; for seven, Geldner, *RV. I.*, p. 341; R. OTTO, *Varuṇa-Hymnen des Rgveda*, Bonn 1948, p. 14.

⁵ See 1, 95, 3; 4, 1, 7; cf. 10, 2, 7; 45, 1.

⁶ For similar cumulations of the same number: (3) 3, 56, 3ff.; 4, 53, 5; 7, 33, 7; (7) 1, 164, 3; 8, 28, 5; 9, 114, 3.

⁷ This is no play on the number three as is the opinion of HILLEBRANDT, *V. M.* ²I, p. 58 and RENOU, *E. V. P.* XVI, p. 1. See V. S. AGRAWALA, *RV. I.*, 34, *VIJ* 4 (1966), p. 25 (not completely tenable).

⁸ As to 7, 33, 7 see GELDNER, *Auswahl*, II, p. 109; 10, 114, 5ff. Cf. e.g. also 10, 13, 3 and 10, 88, 18: 8, 58, 2.

⁹ See e.g. 1, 24, 9; 80, 9; 4, 46, 3; 58, 6; 6, 18, 11.

¹⁰ Cf. also 3, 9, 9; 10, 98, 10; it is not always clear how these numbers are obtained.

not absent¹¹, the number 99—or nine times 90—is sometimes symbolical of the defectiveness of enemies, evil powers and of those devoid of importance¹². There are some instances of progressive multiplication. “Come, O Indra, with two bay horses, with four, with six, with eight, with ten . . . !” (2, 18, 4), Sāyana intimating that by their supernormal power the god’s two horses multiply themselves indefinitely¹³.

Some poets at least knew how to enliven their style¹⁴ and to intensify the contact with their auditors by occasionally directing their words to them: “Believe in him: he, O men, is Indra” (2, 12, 5)¹⁵, by addressing a god more directly as a partner in conversation¹⁶, or by inserting other forms of address¹⁷. Yet, direct speech is, outside the dialogue hymns, not very frequent: in 5, 53, 3f. the Maruts are represented as addressing the poet. Self-address or self-adhortation¹⁸ is a frequent device—it may be emotional: “Inquire also after the mighty generations of the seers!” (3, 38, 2)—, but sometimes an adhortation is rather directed to the eulogist who is to recite the poem than to the author himself: “Invoke Brahmanaspati with a view to old age (that is, that he may give that) . . .” (1, 38, 13)¹⁹. Elsewhere however the poet adds his own name: “Offer, O Nodhas, the hymn of praise to the manly host . . ., the Maruts”²⁰.

Questions, partly of the emphatic or emotional (so-called rhetorical) types, sometimes in succession, interrupt the usual prayers and eulogies²¹. An explicit answer is seldom given²². Questions belong also to the hesitating, meandering, progressing and regressing mode of expression which is many times characteristic of passages dealing with mysteries and metaphysical problems: “What will be revealed to me of this word . . . ?” (4, 5, 8)²³.

¹¹ RV. 10, 130, 1; cf. J. GONDA, Reflections on the numerals “one” and “two,” Utrecht 1953.

¹² See 1, 53, 9; 84, 13; 10, 49, 8; for 90 see 3, 12, 6.

¹³ Cf. also 8, 76, 12; 10, 27, 15. For 63 (9 × 7) see 8, 96, 8; for 5 × 7: 10, 55, 3. A depressive series: 2, 1, 8.

¹⁴ There are e.g. instances of aposiopesis (e.g. RV. 5, 30, 8; 74, 4; 7, 36, 6; 91, 4).

¹⁵ See also RV. 3, 13, 1; 8, 17, 13; 19, 7; 27, 12.

¹⁶ Cf. e.g. 8, 92, 30; 93, 4; 25; 10, 96, 1; 132, 6; 139, 4.

¹⁷ Cf. e.g. 9, 46, 4 and GELDNER’s note; 10, 166, 3 (incantation).

¹⁸ Cf. e.g. 1, 37, 5; 56, 4; 2, 8, 1; 3, 1, 10; 5, 45, 11. Not all pertinent interpretations (cf. e.g. BERGAIGNE, in MSL 8, p. 21) are tenable.

¹⁹ Cf. also 6, 16, 22; 8, 49, 1; 101, 5. The priests are addressed e.g. 8, 72, 1.

²⁰ Cf. e.g. 4, 3, 3; 29, 3; 5, 56, 5; 66, 1; 83, 1; 6, 10, 6; 38, 4; 8, 19, 2; in 8, 49, 1 the plural possessive pronoun accompanying the verb form in the singular seems to show that the audience is included in the address.

²¹ Cf. RV. 1, 37, 6; 38, 1–3 (RENOU, E. V. P. X, p. 61; often in hymns addressed to the Maruts); 120, 1; 168, 5f.; 4, 3, 4–8 (ten questions in succession); 21, 9 (three); 55, 1; 5, 30, 1; 53, 1f.; 61, 1–3; 74, 1–3; 7, 86, 2; 8, 7, 31 (three); 10, 27, 11; 86, 22; 135, 5–6.

²² See 1, 164, 34f. For questions and answers in riddles see BLOOMFIELD, Repetitions, p. 7 and above, p. 132.

²³ Cf. RENOU, E. V. P. II, p. 58.

A considerable amount of material would be available for studying the instances of hyperbole²⁴ and hypercharacterization which tend to play an important part in all eulogistic poetry. The great numbers of cows or women offered as *dakṣiṇā*, the exuberant praise of liberal patrons²⁵ are of course laudatory and honorific. The main question arising in connection with Vedic hyperboles is whether the distortion of the proper relation between subject and attribute or predicate is intentional and consciously introduced. Part of what in our eyes would seem exaggerations may have been traditional imagery or a natural consequence of the poet's view of the world. Many statements—e.g. "Indra, as inherently strong as a mountain" (4, 20, 6)—were for the Vedic audience not hyperbolic at all, because the events and personages referred to were *omnium consensu* above earthly limitations and human comprehension. Are we in a position fully to understand all implications of the comparison between the poet's hymn and a mighty torrent notwithstanding the fact that hymns are—more intelligibly—elsewhere compared to flowing water²⁶? How far is the presence of the storm-gods in a context dealing with the fanning of fire²⁷ nothing but a 'poetical hyperbole'? In the light of the belief in the demon-destroying power of *soma* and of the *soma*-drinking god Indra the stones for pressing out the juice could be seen as Indra's tires which without horse and chariot rush at the barbarians (5, 31, 5).

Scholars have not failed to notice the predilection of Vedic poets for paradoxes and other impossibilities or at first sight untenable statements such as the child of two mothers (Agni, produced by two pieces of wood), Agni's being the impregnator of his own mother²⁸, the paramour of the virgin (Sun and Dawn), the udder of the father (the cloud) or of the bull, the calving barren cow. In judging these paradoxes²⁹ one should remember that, although the essential nature of creation and of the divine powers, of the relations between this world and the Unseen, of the mysterious which is beyond the opposites of the phenomenal world is inexpressible, attempts were time and again made to understand these by means of analogies and imagery. Why then could that which is impossible on the plane of daily experience not be formulated as possible in the sphere of the divine or in a transcendent state³⁰?

We shall not enter here in a, largely otiose, discussion of the question of the occurrence of so-called contradictions: the sun sees far (7, 35, 8), is an eye or

²⁴ P. S. SASTRI, at ABORI 28, p. 45.

²⁵ See p. 170 f.; 1, 122, 7; 5, 18, 3; 6, 28, 8; 8, 24, 29; 74, 13ff. etc.

²⁶ RV. 6, 66, 11; see e.g. 9, 95, 3.

²⁷ RV. 3, 16, 2; 26, 4; AV. 3, 3, 1; cf. GELDNER, RV. I, p. 352; 359.

²⁸ RV. 1, 31, 2; 69, 2; 141, 2; 1, 152, 4; 3, 1, 9; 38, 5; 55, 9; 4, 1, 11; 22, 6; 6, 16, 35; 59, 2; 7, 36, 3; 101, 3; 9, 68, 1; 90, 2; 10, 13, 5; 31, 10; 54, 3 etc.; see e.g. BERGAIGNE, R. V., II, p. 103; III, p. 332 (this scholar often emphasized the paradoxical character of R̥gvedic texts); GELDNER, V. S. I, p. 167; MACDONELL, V. M., p. 188.

²⁹ For an instance of oxymoron see 10, 94, 11.

³⁰ WHITNEY's comment (PAOS 1882, p. CXI) is wide of the mark.

the eye of the sun-god (5, 59, 5; 10, 10, 9), is or has a wheel (1, 130, 9), is a bird (cf. 1, 164, 7), has a ship (AV. 17, 1, 25), or a chariot (R̥V. 1, 50, 8)³¹. They are a natural consequence of the fluidity of the traditional views of life and the world on one hand and of the freedom of the poets' fancy in penetrating the mysterious on the other. That at 3, 59, 8 Mitra is said to support all the gods, and at 1, 185, 1 Heaven and Earth are the bearers of everything is one of the many indicia of the tendency to so-called henotheism.

More than the poets of the other *maṇḍālas* those to whom we owe the last evince the inclination to assume a certain critical attitude and to convey moralizing or dissentient views in aphoristic language³². They speak of colleagues whose words bear neither fruits nor blossom (10, 71, 5), or make their comment upon the female character whose hearts are like hyenas' (10, 95, 15) or the significance of paternity (10, 56, 6)³³.

Incidentally a stanza exhibits, in a more or less rudimentary state, turns of speech which could be described by means of one of the technical terms of the classical stylistic theory³⁴. When gods are said to observe the rules of functional conduct as if they trace footsteps, this metaphorical ascription of a mode of behaviour which they have never shown (5, 67, 3)—or of which the subject, generally speaking, is literally incapable—reminds us of the *utprekṣā*³⁵. It is however very difficult to distinguish it from a simile (*upamā*)³⁶. The statement that many a one who hears, does not hear Speech (10, 71, 4) might be regarded as an instance of *viśeṣokti*: despite the presence of a 'cause' there is no 'effect.' When contradictory properties are expressed of the same subject we may speak of 'contradiction' (*virodha*): in 10, 34, 9 cold heavenly charcoals are said to burn the heart³⁷. The justification of the statement contained in 8, 1, 20 "While soliciting I would not make thee angry" by the following "who would not implore a mighty one?" is a regular *arthāntaranyāsa*³⁸. However, when Indra is implored to fell the enemies like trees (6, 33, 3) the exaggeration (*atiśayokti*) exists only on the human plane³⁹, and in stating that the One is given different names the poet of 1, 164, 46 certainly does not intend to produce an instance of *ullekha* (the description of one thing as many)⁴⁰. When in an author's view of

³¹ Cf. W. KIRFEL, in Comm. Vol. Nobel, p. 112.

³² Cf. RENOU, E. V. P. II, p. 25.

³³ Cf. e.g. also R̥V. 10, 117, 7.

³⁴ Cf. GELDNER's note on R̥V. 10, 68 (= AV. 20, 16, 1-12): Auswahl, II, p. 172.

³⁵ See H. D. VELANKAR, in JBBRAS, N. S. 14, p. 1; P. S. SASTRI, in ABORI 28, p. 47; R̥V. 6, 75, 3; 10, 89, 7.

³⁶ Cf. e.g. also 1, 173, 3; 2, 4, 6; 5, 85, 5.

³⁷ When the world is turned upside down the rivers flow upstream and the weaker animals attack the stronger ones (10, 28, 4).

³⁸ Cf. also 1, 179, 5; 10, 95, 15.

³⁹ For an instance see 4, 58, 3.

⁴⁰ Cf. D. R. BHANDARKAR, The development of the figure of speech in R̥gvedic hymnology, Vol. P. V. Kane, Poona 1941, p. 70.

the world Agni's body may be supposed to be identical with pure gold⁴¹ (4, 10, 6), he is not aware that the theoreticians of a later period could regard his words as a case of metaphorical identification (*rūpaka*)⁴². Anyhow, these instances, which could be multiplied, show that the imagination of the Vedic poets foreshadowed essential features of the classical poetry⁴³. We should therefore not object either to the thesis⁴⁴ that these authors, though unaware of the classical *rasa* theory, knew how to evoke sentiments and emotions which later theoreticians would have classified as the marvellous, tranquil or pathetic⁴⁵. In any case part of their work shows that they had a notion of the fact that the effectiveness of poetry does not depend upon the power of description releasing clear mental images, but upon the energy with which words and combinations of words arouse emotions⁴⁶.

⁴¹ See J. GONDA, in *Studies in Indo-Asian art and culture* 3 (New Delhi 1973, = *Raghu Vira Comm. Vol.*), p. 39.

⁴² Cf. also 4, 3, 10; 5, 3; 15, 1 etc.

⁴³ Real *śleṣas* (the intended simultaneous expression of two meanings) are rare; see 4, 41, 8; 10, 94, 9.

⁴⁴ P. L. BHARGAVA, *India in the Vedic age*, Aminabad-Lucknow 1971, p. 350.

⁴⁵ For the pathetic emotion one quotes places such as R.V. 2, 33, 4; 5, 79, 9; 7, 86, 4; 89, 1; for tranquillity the philosophical hymns. Cf. also M. K. VARMA, at 26 AIOC S. P. 1972, p. 382 and ABORI 54, p. 194.

⁴⁶ This is however not to subscribe to the view pronounced by P. S. SASTRI (ABORI 38, p. 54) and J. TILAKASIRI (Univ. of Ceylon Review 13, p. 167) according to which the Vedic poets had developed a theory of *rasa* and poetry.

CHAPTER VI

THE ATHARVAVEDA

1. Names and position

The oldest name of this Veda is Atharvāṅgirasah¹, a plural compound formed of the names of two ancient families of priests, the Atharvans and Aṅgirasas², which already occurs at AVŚ. 10, 7, 20 after the usual names of the three other Vedas. The former are a semi-divine family of (mythical) priests³, descendants of Atharvan, a typical priest and "connection of the gods" (AVŚ. 5, 11, 11). In a considerable range of the literature especially of older times this name refers to those who occupy themselves with appeasing and auspicious (*sānta*) practices. The latter were traditionally regarded as "sons of heaven or of the gods," as sages and (mythical) fire-priests and authors of the "hostile sorcery practices," the terrible (*ghora*) portions of the corpus⁴. In the texts they are invoked to avert evil or to afflict enemies (2, 12, 5; 3, 21, 8), said to be closely associated with the god Agni (6, 35, 3)⁵ and called upon together with the Ādityas and other deities (2, 12, 4; 11, 6, 13). The double name clearly reflects the double character of this Veda which is for instance expressed most unequivocally in the Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa⁶. In course of time the name Atharvan and its derivatives became much more usual throughout the literature⁷. There are moreover two other names the use of which is practically limited to the atharvanic ritual texts⁸, viz. Bhrgvaṅgirasah in which the name of another ancient priestly family, the Bhṛgu—who are sometimes magnified above others⁹—takes the place of that of the Atharvans, and—especially because of

¹ Cf. Mbh. 12, 322, 37 *ṛg-yajuh-sāmbhir . . . atharvāṅgirasaiḥ tathā*.

² Cf. e.g. also AVŚ. 11, 6, 13 where the two names occur separately and after each other. See V. W. KARAMBELKAR, at JIH 26, p. 107.

³ For relevant facts: N. J. SHENDE, at JUB 17 N.S. (1948, 2), p. 23.

⁴ For references see GONDA, Savayajñas, p. 197; BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 7. See also ṚV. 1, 121, 3; 10, 108, 10.

⁵ This association is often mentioned in the Ṛgveda (e.g. 4, 1, 12; 10, 62, 5) and emphasized by N. J. SHENDE, Aṅgiras in the Vedic literature, ABORI 31, p. 108.

⁶ See GB. 1, 2, 21; 5, 10 where two atharvanic Vedas, an "auspicious" and a "terrible," are distinguished.

⁷ Often in the plural (e.g. ŚB. 13, 4, 3, 7); the compound Atharvaveda appears at GB. 1, 20 etc.

⁸ For particulars: BLOOMFIELD, o.c., p. 9; 30; H. AV., p. XXVI; LXII etc.

⁹ Cf. e.g. GB. 1, 1, 3; 2, 22 and see e.g. ṚV. 8, 43, 13; 10, 14, 6; 92, 10. At Kauś. 139, 6 Bhṛgu and Aṅgiras receive divine honours together with Agni, Brahmā and Prajāpati.

its speculative parts¹⁰ in which *brahman* as the Ultimate Principle, soul of the universe, comes to the fore¹¹—Brahmaveda. The names Atharvan, Aṅgiras and Bhṛgu, tending already in atharvanic antiquity to be associated with special practices, came to be traditionally connected, as poets' names, with atharvanic literary activity. The descendants of these exalted beings held the same position of honour as the other families of ṛṣis¹².

The application of the name Brahmaveda, which properly indicated the religious literature as a whole embracing the Threefold Veda¹³ and was as such added to the names of the other collections, to the Atharvaveda may be regarded as one of the indications of the claims laid by the adherents of this religious and ritual tradition to equality with the others. For a long time indeed the Atharvavedins, owing to the general character of their practices and their slight relation to the *śrauta* rites¹⁴, found themselves in an inferior position¹⁵. Although the doctrine of the fourfold Veda—mythologically represented as proceeding from Brahmā's four mouths—found acceptance¹⁶ various later texts continued speaking of the Threefold Holy Knowledge¹⁷. Even in modern times there have been brahmins who refused to recognize the authority of the promulgators of the fourth Veda, because of a certain prejudice prevailing against it¹⁸. Even today brahmins of the other Vedas do not dine or marry with the atharvanic brahmins (*paippalādins*) of Orissa¹⁹. As soon as the great sacrifices which required the co-operation of officiants mastering the three

¹⁰ Cf. RENOUE, in JA 243, p. 418 and see also BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. XLIII; for *brahman* see below, p. 293 f.

¹¹ The Aṅgirasakalpa (see below, p. 277) states that this name is due to the fact that the Atharvaveda imparts knowledge about *brahman*. See also L. BHATTACHARYA, at OH 5, p. 205. According to Sāyaṇa the Atharvaveda is called Brahmaveda, because it was revealed to Brahma (Introd. A. V. p. 4; cf. GB. 1, 1, 20).

¹² Cf. BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. XXXII; KARAMBELKAR, o.c. The Atharvaveda-Samhitā (e.g. AVŚ. 4, 37, 1; 8, 3, 15) mentions also other authorities; for Kaśyapa see V. N. DESHPANDE, at PO 28, p. 12; for Nārada, HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 368.

¹³ See above, p. 8; cf. ṚV. 10, 90, 9; AVŚ. 7, 54, 2; 10, 7, 14 (st. 20 adding the Atharvāṅgirasah); TS. 7, 3, 1, 4; TB. 2, 3, 10, 1; ŚB. 11, 5, 8, 3 etc.

¹⁴ References to the Atharvaveda are absent in the ṚV., SV., YV. *saṃhitās* and in the *brāhmaṇas* of the Ṛveda.

¹⁵ G. V. DEVASTHALI, at Kavirāj Abhinandana grantha (Fel. Vol. Kavirāj), Lucknow 1967, p. 3. In general: BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. XXVIII; A. V. G. B., p. 21.

¹⁶ ViP. 1, 5, 52ff.; MārKP. 48, 31ff. (cf. 102, 3ff.); KūrmaP. 7, 55ff. etc.; see also J. MUIR, Original Sanskrit texts, III, London 1873, p. 10ff.

¹⁷ Manu 1, 23; 2, 76; ViP. 2, 11, 7; 3, 3, 29. Mbh. 13, 10, 34 speaks of the Atharvaveda and the Veda, the latter being, according to the commentator Nilakanṭha, the three other Vedas. See also BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. XLVI. Compare, on the other hand, ŚB. 11, 5, 6, 4ff.

¹⁸ L. VON SCHROEDER, Ind. Lit. u. C., p. 171. This did not of course prevent Manu 11, 33 from allowing brahmins to direct atharvanic texts against their enemies.

¹⁹ D. BHATTACHARYA, The fundamental themes of the Atharvaveda, Poona 1968, p. 39.

other Vedas had developed, been systematized and come to enjoy a good reputation²⁰, the largely simple private rites intended to supply the immediate wants also of the common people assumed the character of something extraneous²¹. This induced the Atharvavedins already at an early date to demonstrate, in striking solidarity, the importance of their traditions, practices and literature and to assert their rights to equality²². Although there are no indications of any systematic polemics against the representatives of the Ṛg-, Sāman- and Yajurvedas, they not unsuccessfully²³ claimed the offices of the influential domestic priest of princes (*purohita*)²⁴ and of the priest who, briefly called the *brahman*, oversees, accompanies (*anumantraṇa*)²⁵ and corrects by means of expiatory formulas (*prāyaścitta*) possible accidents and blunders of the officiants²⁶. Both functions seem to have been fulfilled, as a rule, by the same expert²⁷ whose very presence sufficed to "protect the sacrifice" (ŚB. 1, 7, 4, 18). It was for the ritual use of this *brahman* priest²⁸, and especially for one of his assistants, the *brāhmaṇācchamsin*²⁹, that AVŚ. XX was, as their special collection (*samhitā*), added to the corpus. Some portions (13 of the 143 *sūktas*) excepted this book consists of literal borrowings from the Ṛgveda-Samhitā³⁰ relating to the *soma* ritual and almost entirely consisting of complete Indra hymns. The Vaitāna-Sūtra is a collection of ritual directions for the *brahman* and his assistants which fits easily in the descriptions of the rites as given in the other *sūtras*; no doubt composed in order to supply the Atharvaveda with a

²⁰ Cf. e.g. ŚB. 4, 6, 7, 1.

²¹ U. K. OZA, at AP 21 (1950), p. 360, being a Śaunakiya-Atharvavedin himself, expresses the view that Atharvaveda was the name given to all the unarranged and unsystematized lore remaining after sifting out the three other Vedas.

²² For more particulars: BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. LVII.

²³ Cf. BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. XLVI and see e.g. Yājñ. 1, 312. Their claims did not however meet with the sympathy of those who transmitted the other Vedas: J. v. NEGELEIN, at JAOS 34, p. 262; RENOU, E. V. P. VI, p. 27.

²⁴ GONDA, in Festschrift Kirfel, p. 107; R. I. I, p. 12; 142 etc.; BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 29; H. AV., p. LXVII.

²⁵ Cf. also Vait. 1, 2.

²⁶ Cf. e.g. Kauś. 94, 2ff.; Vait. 1, 1; 11, 2; 37, 2; AVPar. 2, 2ff.; 3, 1; 3 as contrasted with KB. 5, 32ff.; ŚB. 11, 5, 8, 7.

²⁷ For references see also BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. LXI; V. W. KARAMBELKAR, Brahman and purohita, IHQ 26, p. 293. Cf. e.g. AVPar. 2, 1f.; 3, 3, 7 in connection with AiB. 7, 26, 4; TS. 3, 5, 2, 1.

²⁸ Who must be conversant with the Brahmaveda (Vait. 1, 1) and is in this respect contrasted with the representatives of the other Vedas (11, 2).

²⁹ The subordination of this functionary to the *brahman* is due to the eventual schematic division of the sixteen officiants into four groups corresponding with the four Vedas; actually, he was a subordinate of the *hotar*, the priest in charge of the recitation of Ṛgvedic stanzas.

³⁰ W. CALAND, at WZKM 14, p. 115; 18, p. 190; Das Vaitānasūtra des Atharvaveda, Amsterdam Acad. 1910, p. V (also for technical particulars); p. 125 (for a concordance); BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 95.—It is completely intelligible that the Kauśika-Sūtra quotes no text from this book.

sūtra it is no complete and all-embracing ritual handbook³¹. Contrary to the normal relation between *śrauta* and *grhya sūtras* it was compiled later than Kauśika's work which it quotes³².

The Atharvavedins, moreover, urged the importance of special rites of their own which could enter into competition with the *śrauta* rites of other origin. For instance, their comparatively simple rice dish sacrifice (*sava*) is, in the texts, described as if it were a *soma* sacrifice; its efficacy is exalted; for instance, it brings about the fulfilment of various desires, including survival in heaven³³. AVŚ. 11, 3, for the greater part composed in *brāhmaṇa* prose, is an allegoric liturgic exaltation of this sacrificial material (*odana*) which is conceived of as a potency of world-wide and fundamental significance. It is personified and deified, and the earth is said to be the cooking vessel in which it is prepared, heaven being the cover of that vessel. This means that the sacrificial rice-dish is a cosmic entity, commensurate with the universe: a conception which is a logical necessity resulting from the conviction that the sacrificer can transcend the limitations of the finite human condition by means of an adequate ritual technique with the esoteric significance of which he has identified himself³⁴. The use of special texts taken from the Atharvaveda was propagated also in other rites: for instance AVŚ. 3, 14 (AVP. 2, 13) or part of it should be pronounced as a blessing on the kine³⁵; while co-operating in the performance of a *soma* sacrifice (*agniṣṭoma*) the representatives of this Veda should employ AVŚ. 3, 4, 7 and 7, 28, 1 (AVP. 3, 1, 7; 20, 30, 4) accompanying oblations to the deity of good roads (Pathyā Svasti) and other divinities³⁶, and so on.

Generally speaking, the Atharvavedins allude with special predilection and in terms of praise and commendation to their own literature³⁷. For instance, in describing the origin of the universe GB. 1, 1, 4ff., unlike other ancient works which as a rule ignore the Atharvan in this account, places the Atharvan and Aṅgiras texts at the head, relegating the other Vedic works to the rear³⁸. At 1, 3, 4 the same *brāhmaṇa* praises these compositions as the greatest manifestation of fundamental holy power (*brahman*), to mention them (at 1, 2, 16) as the fourth Veda by the name of Brahmaveda³⁹ and to correlate them (at 1, 2, 9) with the services of the *brahman* priest during the performance of *śrauta*

³¹ CALAND, Vaitānasūtra, Introduction (this work contains a German translation); BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 11, p. 375; for an English translation: S. N. GHOSHAL, at IHQ 34-36; see also D. BHATTACHARYA, in OH 5, p. 13.

³² Cf. e.g. Vait. 10, 19; 11, 4; 28, 7. See also CALAND, at WZKM 18, p. 186.

³³ GONDA, The Savayajñas, p. 27. See below, p. 290.

³⁴ GONDA, o. c., p. 31.

³⁵ Kauś. 19, 14; Vait. 21, 26.

³⁶ Vait. 13, 2; CALAND-HENRY, L'agniṣṭoma, p. 29; 33.

³⁷ For similar references to their founder and priests: BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. LVII. Their ritualistic works are not free from a polemic and apologetic note.

³⁸ Cf. also Vait. 6, 1.

³⁹ Later atharvanic authorities are not unanimous in explaining the original significance of this name (for the Aṅgirasakalpa see n. 11, or because so many 'theosophical' *upanishads* are attached to it: Ātharvaṇarahasya).

ceremonies. The atharvanic ritual works constantly include their own Veda among the total number of sacred books⁴⁰ and GB. 1, 5, 25 explicitly asserts that those who study the Threefold Veda will reach, it is true, the highest heaven, but yet the Atharvans and Aṅgirasas go beyond to the great worlds of Brahman⁴¹. In harmony with this statement the learned—and indispensable (cf. 1, 1, 14)—*brahman* priest is described as being “omniscient,” i. e. as having knowledge of the All (Totality: *sarvavid*)⁴²: this implies that he masters religious knowledge as a whole⁴³ and therefore controls all. It is his knowledge which enables him to supervise the ritual ceremonies in their entirety. He is indeed—also according to those who do not, or not yet, acknowledge the claims of the Atharvavedins to his function⁴⁴—“the physician of the sacrifice”⁴⁵. A legend told at TS. 3, 5, 2, 1 according to which Indra made Vasiṣṭha his domestic priest is repeated at GB. 2, 2, 13 but the final words “therefore one should choose a descendant of Vasiṣṭha as one’s *brahman* priest” are significantly omitted. On the other hand, the statement that the three Vedas follow the Bhṛgu and Aṅgirasas (GB. 1, 1, 39) does not seem to occur elsewhere. An effective means resorted to for the achievement of their purpose was the spread of legends and allegorical stories in which the other Vedas are represented as incompetent and the Atharvaveda appears as superior to them⁴⁶.

⁴⁰ The Atharvavedins lay special emphasis on the number four; cf. e. g. GB. 1, 2, 16; 3, 1f. and GONDA, *Savayajñas*, p. 439, Index s. v. For the Atharvaveda as the fourth Veda: MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 192.

⁴¹ Cf. also 1, 1, 15 and see N. J. SHENDE, in JUB 17 N. S. (1948, 2), p. 27; GONDA, *Loka*, p. 108.

⁴² GB. 1, 2, 18; at Vait. 1, 17f. he is said to be the lord (i. e. disposer) of the world and of the whole creation.

⁴³ For the Atharvaveda as embodying also the three other Vedas see e. g. SitāUp. 23; Jayantabhāṭṭa, *Nyāyamañjarī* I, p. 235, refuting also the objection raised to this Veda that it contains texts devoid of sacrificial utility (see H. G. NARAHARI, at AP 22, p. 209).

⁴⁴ Cf. WEBER, I. S. X, p. 34; 137; and see KB. 6, 11.

⁴⁵ ŚB. 14, 2, 2, 19; cf. 6, 1, 7 (BĀU. 3, 1, 6).

⁴⁶ Cf. GB. 1, 2, 18; 19 and see 1, 2, 9.

2. Genesis and recensions of the Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā

Tradition is almost unanimous in distinguishing nine 'schools' of the Atharvaveda¹ in which its hymns or their employment by the practitioners was diversified. Seven of these are for us mere names, some denoting professional aspects of atharvanic interests (wandering medicine-men: *cāranavaidya* etc.) rather than real school differences. Texts representing these *śākhās* have not been found. One cannot therefore escape the conviction that the material originally collected by the Atharvavedins was already at an early date split up into two—and no more than two—versions, the Paippalāda, founded by Pippalāda or Pippalādi², which is regularly placed at the head of the list, and the Śaunakīya, called after Śaunaka³. The differences between the two versions are considerable.

These differences concern, not only the arrangement of the contents, but also the contents themselves, which, though similar and largely identical, are far from agreeing completely: the Paippalāda text has hundreds of stanzas more⁴ (many of which are not found in the Śaunakīya recension) including a large amount of material not known in any other text. The Śaunakīya recension is, however, much better preserved⁵. It has a *saṃhitāpāṭha*, a *padapāṭha*, two *prātiśākhya*⁶, some *anukramaṇis*⁷. Its text is, like that of the Ṛgveda, accented and, except for a few portions, metrical. It consists of three well-arranged parts each of which is followed by appendices and is arranged in divisions that are partly ṛgvedic, partly yajurvedic in character, viz. in 20 books (*kāṇḍa*), lessons (*anuvāka*) and 730 *sūktas*⁸; probably at a later date, the books 1–18 were, moreover, divided into lectures (*prapāṭhaka*). The whole is obviously conceived

¹ For those pertinent details which can be omitted here: BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 11; RENOUE, Écoles, p. 58; G. SAGAR RAI, at Purāna 14, p. 58.

² According to the Āngirasakalpa a son of Āngiras (D. BHATTACHARYYA, The fundamental themes, p. 22).

³ This authority can hardly be identical with the author of the Bṛhaddevatā etc.; see RENOUE, Écoles, p. 59.

⁴ See L. C. BARRET, in JAOS 46, p. 8. The Kashmir manuscript has about 6500 stanzas as against about 6000; according to D. BHATTACHARYYA, Fundamental themes, p. 26 the Orissa manuscripts have about 8000 mantras, the excess consisting of both charms and philosophical passages. Cf. also RENOUE, at JA 252, p. 421; 253, p. 15 (with translations and notes).

⁵ Cf. VISHVA BANDHU, Vedic text-critical studies, RO 21, p. 455. On the divisions of the Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā: RENOUE, in IJ 1, p. 4.

⁶ See below, p. 309.

⁷ VISHVA BANDHU, Atharvavedapāṭhānukramaṇi, Hoshiarpur 1964; Atharvavediḥa-bṛhat-sarvānukramaṇikā, Hoshiarpur 1966; Atharvaveda-ṛsidevatā-chandonukramaṇikā, Hoshiarpur 1970.

⁸ In addition to the *sūktas* there is also a parallel division of each *kāṇḍa* in "hymns divided according to sense" (*arthasūktas*) and briefer subdivisions into groups of stanzas (usually ten), called "period hymns" (*paryāyasūktas*). See WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. CXXVII; 472.

as a systematic great *saṃhitā*⁹. The Paippalāda recension, on the other hand, is less correctly preserved, less consistently arranged, not accented¹⁰, and contains more portions in prose. It is not accompanied by a *padapāṭha* etc. However, a closer examination of the Śaunakiya tradition shows that, while contrasting favourably with its sister, it cannot compare with the *saṃhitās* of the other Vedas in exactitude. In contradistinction to the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā, but in harmony with the Yajurveda, its metrical form is often extremely irregular¹¹. The *padapāṭha*—probably modelled upon that of the Ṛgveda¹²—is frequently in error, the information given by the *anukramaṇīs* is in several respects unreliable¹³.

Fate has decided that the Śaunakiya recension has not only been incorrectly regarded as the 'vulgate'¹⁴, but is also much better known and studied in the West¹⁵. The books I–XVIII—no doubt its oldest components¹⁶—are arranged in accordance with numerical principles which, while being not as strictly carried through as in the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā, seem to have, to a certain extent, been modified by a logical principle such as was recognized in the Yajurveda. The three great divisions (I–VII which is generally regarded as the original nucleus; VIII–XII; XIII–XVIII) are in their arrangement on the whole based on two principles, viz. miscellaneousness or unity of subject and length of the *sūktas*¹⁷, the numerical scheme preventing the grouping of all related *sūktas*. The first division comprehends short hymns of miscellaneous, but generally 'magical' subjects. In the books I–VI the normal numbers of stanzas per *sūkta* is 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 3 respectively, but there are many deviations, the only constant fact being that 4 etc. are minimum numbers. Almost half (52) of the 118

⁹ There is a tendency to group two or more *sūktas* of somewhat similar content

¹⁰ No doubt because the manuscripts were made for ritual, not for didactic use. For the Paippalāda recension see also SUBHADRA JHA, at JBRS 38 (1952), p. 233; 39, p. 331; 40, p. 395.

¹¹ Cf. WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. CXXVI.

¹² WEBER, I.S. XIII, p. 6.

¹³ Cf. WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. LXIX; LXXI.

¹⁴ See below, p. 309.

¹⁵ Editions: by R. ROTH and W. D. WHITNEY, Berlin 1855; ²by M. LINDENAU, Berlin 1924; ³Bonn 1966; with the commentary of Sāyana by SH. PANDURANG PANDIT, 4 vol., Bombay 1895–1898 and by VISHVA BANDHU, 4 (5) vol., Hoshiarpur 1960–1964. Translations: R. T. H. GRIFFITH, The hymns of the Atharva-Veda, 2 vol., Benares 1895–1896, ²1916, ³1968; W. D. WHITNEY, Atharva-Veda Saṃhitā translated with a critical and exegetical commentary, revised . . . and edited by CH. R. LANMAN (with a long and valuable General Introduction), 2 vol., Cambridge Mass. 1905, ²Delhi 1962; anthologies: J. GRILL, Hundert Lieder des Atharvaveda, Tübingen 1879, ²Stuttgart 1888; M. BLOOMFIELD, Hymns of the Atharva-Veda, Oxford 1897, ²Delhi 1967; F. RÜCKERT, Atharvaveda (poetical, written about 1860, published by H. KREYENBORG), Darmstadt 1923; for older translations see RENOU, Bibl., p. 60.

¹⁶ The internal chronology of this corpus (see D. BHATTACHARYYA, at 20 AIOC, S.P., p. 33) is an utterly difficult problem.

¹⁷ See WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. CXLII and for many details BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 38.

sūktas of book VII consist of no more than one stanza. These very short *sūktas*—which like those of two stanzas are not absent from other books also—are characteristic of the Atharvaveda; they were in ritual practice combined with other *mantras* or prescribed in ceremonies which did not require many formulas. Book VII creates the impression of being an addendum, not because of this accumulation of one-stanza *sūktas*¹⁸, but because the total number of its stanzas—which is increasing from 153 in I to 454 in VI—is less than the latter, viz. 286¹⁹. Whereas the longest *sūkta* of the first division has 18 stanzas, the shortest of the second division has 21 stanzas, the longest 73. This division indeed comprises longer ‘hymns’ of miscellaneous subjects, among which not only texts for magical and otherwise ritual use, but also so-called mystic, ‘philosophical,’ cosmogonical texts and some eulogies. The number of the *sūktas* is constant (10), with the exception of book XII (5). The third great division consists of long *sūktas* characterized by a general unity of subject: XIII hymns to the Ruddy One (Sun); XIV wedding stanzas; XV deals with the *vrātya*; XVIII with funeral stanzas. Here also the last book forms an exception; in XIII–XVII the number of the hymns, like that of the stanzas, is decreasing.

The arrangement of the Paippalāda recension is considerably different and less rigorous. As far as the above principles are recognized their application fluctuates²⁰. Those very short Śaunakiya *sūktas* which recur in the Paippalāda text combine with other material to form longer *sūktas*, and the long hymns of the Śaunakiya—part of which are in fact conglomerates, although those of XIII–XVIII are characterized by a general unity of subject—are decomposed into—mostly consecutive—shorter *sūktas*. No *sūkta* is longer than 28 stanzas.

The points of difference between both recensions shed some light on their mutual relations and the genesis of the *samhitā*. Whereas the material contained in Paippalāda I–IV recurs in Śaunakiya I–IV and Paippalāda XVI–XVIII correspond to Śaunakiya VIII–XVII, the material of the other books is, in the latter, widely dispersed. With the exception of some isolated stanzas no parts of Śaunakiya XV (dealing with the *vrātya*), XVIII (the funeral hymns) and XX are found in the Paippalāda text; Śaunakiya XIX (supplementary hymns)²¹ is very incompletely represented. The last two books (Paippalāda XIX and XX) are again mostly ‘magical’ in character, corresponding to the first division of the Śaunakiya, especially to its books VI and VII. These facts seem to allow of the following conclusions²². The rough and rudimentary arrangement of the Paippalāda points to its autonomy and higher antiquity.

¹⁸ As was LANMAN’s opinion: WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. CLI; cf. OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 60, p. 690.

¹⁹ Not infrequently, two *sūktas* of similar content follow each other (3, 1f.; 3f.; 4, 6f.; 34f.; 7, 36f.); see also 10, 7f.; 19, 53f.; RENOU, E. V. P. II, p. 5.

²⁰ For details: RENOU, Écoles, p. 65.

²¹ On XIX and XX see below, p. 275; 304.

²² RENOU, o. c., p. 67.

The contents of Śaunakiya VI and VII may have been borrowed from Paippalāda XIX and XX; those of Śaunakiya XIX, by no means 'late' in character, constitute a regrouping of material found—not infrequently with better readings—in different books of the other recension²³. Add to this that the Paippalāda often has more acceptable readings; that it has more (readings, groups of *mantras*) in common with the Ṛgveda than its sister²⁴—in amplifying the text of the Ṛgveda both recensions go their own ways—and that it is more closely related to the yajurvedic tradition²⁵; so the conclusion is warranted that the text which it represents is more original, often more authentic, than that of the Śaunakiya²⁶. There is finally something to be said for the supposition that the compilers of both *saṃhitās* drew also from a general store of 'floating' *mantras*. The assumption that part of this material is older than many components of the Ṛgveda is far from objectionable²⁷. We should distinguish between the time at which poems were composed, the periods in which their component parts or the ideas expressed were moulded into concrete form (certain atharvanic themes are no doubt older than many ṛgvedic subjects) and the period of ultimate codification (the Atharvaveda is later). Metre and language hardly allow of chronological conclusions because differences may also be due to social or regional peculiarities. Since the Veda under discussion was, as a collection of some kind, known to the authors of the Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa and the last books of the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa²⁸ it must, at least in the main, have been compiled at an earlier date than these treatises. The geographical data contained in it furnish no sufficient evidence as to the region or regions in which its *sūktas* were composed²⁹. It is only possible to say that regions further to the East and the South than the scene of the Ṛgveda had come in sight.

Our only source of knowledge with regard to the Paippalāda recension has for many years been a single birch bark manuscript discovered, through the

²³ Cf. also BARRET, in JAOS 40, p. 151; 44, p. 263; Studies M. BLOOMFIELD, New Haven 1920, p. 19.

²⁴ BARRET, at Studies Bloomfield, p. 1 and at PAmPhAss 63, p. LXIV (material which is in the ṚV. occurs more frequently also in AVP. than in AVŚ.; and if in all three texts, the version of AVP. is likely to agree more closely with the ṚV.; AVP. has some 15 hymns in common with the ṚV. which do not occur in AVŚ.); RENOUE, o. c., p. 69. Cf. e. g. AVP. 8, 14; ṚV. 1, 95 (to the ritual fire); 6, 1; ṚV. 10, 120 (Indra); 4, 16; ṚV. 1, 191 (against venomous animals).

²⁵ Cf. e. g. AVP. 9, 1; TS. 4, 1, 8; 11, 6; TS. 11, 6; 4, 2, 6. AVP. tends to agree with yajurvedic texts, particularly in arrangement of stanzas. Attempts have been made to explain passages in the Atharvaveda by means of yajurvedic themes; see e. g. BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 15, p. 163 on AVŚ. 6, 80.

²⁶ S. K. GUPTA's views of the Paippalāda recension (in PO 16, p. 48) are erroneous.

²⁷ Otherwise: E. V. ARNOLD, at JAOS 21, p. 22. OLDENBERG (see H. R. I, p. 271; 360; 404) was too much inclined to doubt the antiquity of non-Ṛgvedic material. For a completely untenable view of the atharvanic chronology: A. P. KARMARKAR, in ABORI 24, p. 203; see also K. N. SASTRI, Proc. 26 Int. Congr. Or. III, 1, p. 157; S. R. SHENDE, at 24 AIOC, S. P., p. 29. See also HILLEBRANDT, at GGA 1889, I, p. 405..

²⁸ See e. g. TB. 3, 12, 8, 2; ŚB. 11, 5, 6, 7, and cf. TS. 7, 5, 11, 2.

²⁹ Cf. KEITH, in Cambridge History of India, I, p. 48.

efforts of Roth, in Kashmir³⁰. The fact that this manuscript was found in the extreme north of India created the impression that in that region the Paippalādins had held out longer than elsewhere, or even that it was their main sphere of influence³¹. This view was however successfully combatted by the Indian scholar Durgamohan Bhattacharyya who showed that the school of Pippalāda, who was perhaps the most important redactor of the Atharvaveda, must in ancient times have enjoyed a wide recognition³² in various parts of India including the regions to the south of the Narmadā³³. In Orissa and the adjacent parts of West Bengal and Bihar the same scholar discovered, in 1957, communities of followers of this school³⁴ members of which were able to recite the texts from memory³⁵; there are also a few families in Saurāṣṭra and Gujarat. In the Puri district and elsewhere he could lay hands on palm-leaf manuscripts written in Oriya characters; these manuscripts are in a better state of preservation than the Kashmir document. Unfortunately, he died before he could edit more than four books of the text³⁶.

³⁰ For the reasons which had led him to surmise its existence already in 1856—relying on a remark made by a traveller he had induced the British government to search—, the history of its epoch-making discovery, and a brief comparison with the vulgate: ROTH, *Der Atharvaveda in Kaschmir*, Tübingen (Univ.) 1875; cf. also *Atti 4 Congr. Int. Orient.* (1878), II, p. 89. The manuscript was chromophotographically reproduced: *The Kashmirian Atharva-veda*, edited by M. BLOOMFIELD and R. GARBE, 3 vol., Baltimore 1901. For particulars (*inter alia*, on the bad condition, corruptness and peculiarities of the manuscript): WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. LXXX; L. C. BARRET, *The Kashmirian Atharva Veda*, Book I, JAOS 26, p. 197 (= *Diss. J. Hopkins Univ. New Haven* 1906); JAOS 50, p. 104; F. EDGERTON, at JAOS 34, p. 374. The text has been edited (in transcription) and as far as possible emended by BARRET, in JAOS 26–58 (book VI in JAOS 34 by EDGERTON) and separately (XVI and XVII New Haven 1936; XIX and XX, 1940); on these editions are based the editions in *nāgarī* script: *Atharva Veda of the Paippalādas*, book 1–13, Lahore 1936; 14–18, Lahore 1940; 19–20, Lahore 1942; for valuable observations in connection with Barret's edition see RENOÜ, at JA 235, p. 148.

³¹ See e.g. BLOOMFIELD, Preface to the facsimile edition of the Kashmir manuscript; P. THIEME, *Pāṇini and the Veda*, Allahabad 1935, p. 76.

³² D. BHATTACHARYYA, at OH 3 (1955), p. 1. In references to the Atharvaveda BhārG. 3, 15; VaikhSm. 6, 17 mention the beginning of the Paippalāda text (which has been lost in the Kashmir manuscript), etc. Cf. also THIEME, o.c., p. 76.

³³ For geographical references see also: D. B. DISKALKAR, *Atharvaveda and epigraphy*, JASBombay 34–35, p. 75; and *Atharvaveda brāhmaṇas*, PO 27, p. 1.

³⁴ BHATTACHARYYA, at OH 1, p. 1; 5, p. 81; 8, p. 73; ALB 25, p. 203; *The fundamental themes*, p. 18. For an evaluation of the new manuscripts see also RENOÜ, in JA 252, p. 422; for notes on book I RENOÜ, in JA 252, p. 421; 253, p. 15.

³⁵ It may be added that Shankar Pandurang (see above, n. 15) consulted also the oral tradition, represented by three reciters, two of whom did not want to pronounce the inauspicious funeral hymns of AVŚ. XVIII, one being shocked by the variants in the manuscripts.

³⁶ D. BHATTACHARYYA, *Paippalāda Saṃhitā of the Atharvaveda*, I (Book I), Calcutta 1964; II (II–IV), 1970 (with introductions). For criticism: K. HOFFMANN, at IJ 11, p. 1. See also S. ЯНА, *Studies on the Paippalādi Atharvaveda*, books I and II, JBRS 38, p. 233; 39, p. 331; 40, p. 395.

3. The magical *sūktas*

It would be incorrect to describe¹ the Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā as a collection of magical formulas. Just as there is no clear distinction between the 'white' and 'black' elements, between material deriving from 'Atharvans' and that originating among 'Aṅgiras' that what is frequently called 'sorcery' is often bound up with domestic ritual. The difference between this Veda on the one hand and the Rg- and Yajurveda on the other as regards 'magic' lies in the degree of its prominence and applicability². Moreover, many passages are ritualistic without being 'magic'³, and part of them are interlarded with 'philosophical' speculations that in their turn are also included without any apparent ritualistic purpose.

According to the Aṅgirasakalpa of the Atharvaveda⁴ there are in the atharvanic tradition ten classes of rites, viz. those that, like the German *Segen*, are to appease or avert evil (*sāntika*), that are to promote welfare (*pauṣṭika*), to bring others into subjection by means of charms (*vaśa*), to hinder or paralyse (*stambhana*), to bewilder (*mohana*), to bring about hatred (*dveṣaṇa*), to eradicate (*uccāṭana*), to kill (*māraṇa*), to seduce (*ākaraṣaṇa*), and to scare away (*vidrāvaṇa*). In surveying the pertinent literature one may however follow the simpler division suggested in the commentary attributed to Sāyaṇa⁵: the 'magical' elements⁶ of this Veda are to accompany (consecrate) rites relating to this world (*aihika*)—and these are either *sāntika* and *pauṣṭika*⁷, or imprecatory (*ābhicārika*)—and rites relating to the other world (*āmuṣmika*). In modern times, other classifications were attempted⁸ but it was admitted also that the classes distinguished cannot be rigidly delimited and that many *sūktas* are hard to classify because of the variety of themes and objects presented in them. From the point of view of the history of civilization the study of this corpus is indeed perhaps more rewarding than that of the Rgveda⁹. The

¹ With F. EDGERTON, in Studies M. BLOOMFIELD, New Haven 1920, p. 117: "a book of witchcraft"; see also FARQUHAR, Outline, p. 23.

² S. S. BHAWÉ's view (20 AIOC I, p. 40) according to which the 'Vedic people' (Aryans) adopted the magic element from the 'primitive inhabitants' of India is incapable of proof and highly improbable.

³ For relations between the Atharvaveda and *grhyasūtras* see BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 69 etc.

⁴ See below, p. 309.

⁵ In VISHVA BANDHU's edition, I, p. 7.

⁶ For an analysis of the magic *sūktas*: A. V. GERASIMOV, The Atharvaveda as an original source of the history of ancient Indian culture (in Russian), Moscow 1965; for the procedure and effect of 'magic': B. R. MODAK, at J. Karnatak Univ. (Hum.) 13 (1969), p. 8; cf. also MAYA MALAVIYA, at JGJKSV 27, p. 319.

⁷ M. MALAVIYA, *Atharvavede sāntipūṣṭikarmāṇi*, Varanasi 1967 (including a comparison with similar rites in the other Vedas).

⁸ See e.g. BLOOMFIELD, in H. AV. and A. V. G. B., p. 57; N. K. V. PANTULU, at QJMS 29, p. 387.

⁹ D. BHATTACHARYYA, The social significance of the ātharvanic hymns, Fel. Vol. K. M. MUNSHI, Bombay 1963, p. 33 (exaggerative); H. B. PHILLIPS studied

purpose and interpretation of many texts is considerably facilitated by the fact that formulas and ritual actions are more closely allied in this than in any other Veda and that the Kausika-Sūtra frequently furnishes us with most valuable indications of the ritual situations within which many Śaunakiya texts were conceived¹⁰. It must be conceded, of course, that these texts also were open to secondary adaptation and that the compiler of the *sūtra* may have borrowed from the *samhitā* to supply some rite or other with appropriate formulas¹¹.

There are, to begin with¹², many charms to cure diseases and exorcise demons (the so-called 'medical' charms: *bheṣaja*, *bhaiṣajyāni*)¹³, both sorts of evil being not clearly distinguished. Among these there are charms against fever and related diseases¹⁴ "which make all men yellow, heating (them) up like fire consuming," jaundice, headache, cough, excessive discharges from the body, constipation and retention of urine, dropsy, leprosy, scrofulous sores, wounds, 'worms,' poison, disease of the eyes, baldheadedness, sexual incapacity, poisoning and insanity¹⁵; invocations of medicinal plants and other objects expected to destroy the cause of a disease¹⁶: "On the head of the nimble antelope a remedy grows¹⁷; he has driven the leprosy (*kṣetriya*) in all directions by means of the horn"; prayers to or exorcizations of those powers which are conceived as their causes: "The arrow that Rudra hurled at you, at your limbs and heart, that here do we now draw out away from you"¹⁸; prayers also to

book I-V from a didactic point of view in Prabuddha Bhārata 67 (1962), p. 513; see also RENOUE, Poésie religieuse, p. 16.

¹⁰ Cf. BLOOMFIELD, at PAOS 1886 (JAOS 13, p. CXIII). As appears from the internal evidence of the *sūktas* themselves, the use made by Kausika—who must have been a prominent author—is in many cases demonstrably right (otherwise or incomprehensible e.g. Kauś. 14, 1; 17)—that is to say, *mantras* and rites are largely in concordance—, but he does not employ all *sūktas* of magical contents. Was his scope not so broad or did he base his prescriptions on a selection?

¹¹ Cf. BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., l.c. For the rites: V. HENRY, La magie dans l'Inde antique, Paris 1904.

¹² For a more complete survey of the pertinent texts: BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 58 (with many bibliographical notes up to 1899).

¹³ We shall not try here a sub-classification because the names of the diseases are often obscure and the diseases themselves not infrequently grouped in a way divergent from modern classifications. See J. FILLIOZAT, La doctrine classique de la médecine indienne, Paris 1949; Magie et médecine, Paris 1943; Pronostics médicaux, JA 240 (1952), p. 299; V. W. KARAMBELKAR, The Atharva-Veda and the Āyur-Veda, Nagpur 1961.

¹⁴ AVŚ. 9, 8; 5, 22, 2; also 6, 20, 3; 1, 12; 22; 6, 44; 105; 1, 3; 10; 7, 83; 1, 23; 24; 6, 25; 83; 7, 76; 5, 5; 6, 109; 2, 31; 32; 5, 23; 4, 7; 5, 13; 6, 6; 100; 7, 56; 6, 16; 136; 137; 4, 4; 6, 111; AVP. 1, 44-46; 58; 94, and many more.

¹⁵ AVŚ. 4, 6 (AVP. 5, 8); cf. F. EDGERTON, at AJPh 35, p. 438; AVP. 1, 71; 6, 7; 1, 85.

¹⁶ AVŚ. 1, 2; 2, 8; 5, 4; 6, 96; 19, 39.

¹⁷ Viz. the horn which is used as a remedy (Kauś. 27, 29): AVŚ. 3, 7, 1; for *kṣetriya*: FILLIOZAT, Doctrine, p. 93.

¹⁸ AVŚ. 6, 90, 1; cf. also 1, 12; 22; 2, 10; 4, 36; 37; 6, 14; 32; 105.

those divinities that are able to provide remedies; "May the divine waters grant me that cure for heart-ache"¹⁹; charms by means of various amulets (which are largely derived from the vegetable kingdom): "Destruction of magical contrivances is this amulet, also destruction of hostile beings; let this powerful *jaṅgiḍa* also prolong our life-times"²⁰.

As a source of information on 'primitive' medicine these texts are almost unparalleled in any other literature. They give a variegated picture of archaic medicine, cures being wrought by 'symbolic practices,' plants or amulets fortified by consecratory formulas. The striking resemblance between some of them with ancient German medicinal charms²¹—especially in connection with cures for jaundice and fractures—which have often led to the assumption of original Indo-European prototypes²² are in any case indicative of typological relationship pointing, in all probability, to a parallel development of literary expression in the limited domain of charms and incantations²³. Most quoted is AVŚ. 4, 12²⁴, a charm to cure external lesions and the fractures of bones: with that end in view the patient is sprinkled with water that has been consecrated with this text; besides, he drinks, and is anointed with, a special mixture of milk and ghee that is made efficacious in the same way²⁵.

- (1) "Grower art thou, grower; grower of broken bone;
Cause this to grow (heal), O Arundhati"²⁶.
- (2) The bone, the piece of flesh of yours²⁷ that was torn and injured in you,
Dhātara must auspiciously put that together again, joint with joint.
- (3) Your marrow shall come together with marrow, together your joint with joint,
Together let what of your flesh has fallen off, together let your bone grow also.

¹⁹ AVŚ. 6, 24, 1; cf. 6, 80.

²⁰ AVŚ. 2, 4, 6; also 6, 85; 10, 3; 19, 34; 35 etc.; AVP. 1, 47; 58; 4, 18; 7, 6.

²¹ A. KUHN, at KZ 13, p. 49; 113; V. GROHMANN, in Weber, I. S. IX, p. 386; 414; BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. 313; 386; 454; 565. For a comparison with Russian oaths: V. N. TOPOROV in Acta et comm. univ. Tartu 1969, p. 9.

²² Recently: R. SCHMITT, Dichtung und Dichtersprache in indogermanischer Zeit, Wiesbaden 1967, p. 9; 286 (with bibliographical notes).

²³ Cf. also B. SCHLERATH, in Zweiter Fachtagung für idg. und allg. Sprachwissenschaft, Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Kulturwissenschaft, Sonderheft 15 (1962), p. 139; G. Eis, Altdeutsche Zaubersprüche, Berlin 1964.

²⁴ Compare e.g. BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. 19; 384; WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. 166; see also SCHMITT, o.c., p. 287, n. 1666; on the unsatisfactory condition of the text: L. ALSDORF, at ALB 25, p. 112. The text corresponds to AVP. 4, 15 (with a different order of stanzas and variants). ALSDORF may be right in considering both texts compilations of parallel and related charms, but overlooks that repetitions are often to enhance the magical effectiveness (cf. GONDA, S.R., p. 163 etc.). For AVŚ. 5, 5 (AVP. 6, 4; cf. Kauś. 28, 14) see VISHVA BANDHU, in Vol. S. Varma, I, Hoshiarpur 1950, p. 201.

²⁵ Kauś. 28, 5f.; cf. 14 and CALAND's note, Zauberritual, p. 90.

²⁶ This name which could be explained as "the Non-obstructing," i.e. "promoting progress" and agreeing in sound with the word *rohanī* here translated by "grower" appears to denote a vegetable ingredient of the decoction; cf. st. 5.

²⁷ The patient is addressed.

- (4) Let marrow be put together with marrow, let skin grow with skin;
Let your blood grow with blood; let flesh grow with flesh.
- (5) Fit together hair with hair; fit together skin with skin;
Let bone grow with bone; what is severed put thou together, O herb.
- (6) Stand up, go forth, run forth, a chariot well-wheeled, well-tired, well-naved.
Stand upright firmly!
- (7) If he has been crushed by falling into a pit, or if a stone hurled has smitten him,
As R̥bhū the parts of a chariot, he (Dhātār) must fit together joint with joint”²⁸.

The remedial charms—among which are AVŚ. 2, 31; 32; 5, 23, intended to render ‘worms’ harmless²⁹—pass imperceptibly over into the group of texts for obtaining health and a long life-time, if possible the ideal old age of a hundred years³⁰: “Remain ye here, O exhalation and inhalation, do not go away from here; do ye carry anew to old age his body and his limbs” (3, 11, 6)³¹. Thus AVŚ. 19, 44 (AVP. 15, 3), exhibiting in the main the character of such an *āyusyam*, makes mention of various diseases. Diverse substances, among which water and definite plants, are supposed to secure immunity from diseases and expected to be helpful as panaceas³². Generally speaking the pertinent texts belong to—or often coincide with—the enormous quantity of formulas found in *śrauta* and domestic collections that pray for continuance of life and incidentally also for the fulfilment of other wishes such as strength, offspring, cattle, prestige etc. Their relationship with the prose formulas of the Yajurveda is especially clear in cases such as AVŚ. 2, 15 and 16 (the latter being non-metrical: AVP. 6, 5; 2, 43): “O exhalation and inhalation, protect me from death, *svāhā!*”³³. One of the characteristic features of this class is the prominence of Agni, in whose special care life is placed: “Life-breath we drive into you; cachexy³⁴ I drive away from you. That this desirable Agni endow us with life-time from all sides” (AVŚ. 7, 53, 6)³⁵.

Numerous texts are imprecations directed against demons, ‘sorcerers’ and various classes of enemies³⁶, between whom there is no clear distinction³⁷.

²⁸ The words *ben zi bena, bluot zi bluoda, lid zi geliden* of the German charm of Merseburg and “sinew to sinew, joint to joint, blood to blood, bone to bone” in the Orkney charm (KUHN, o.c., p. 54) run indeed strikingly parallel.

²⁹ Cf. KAUS. 27, 14ff.; 21ff.; 29, 20 and WHITNEY-LANMAN, o.c., p. 73; WINTER-NITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 132; V. N. TOPOROV, Acta Tartu Univ., zn. sist. 4 (1969), p. 9.

³⁰ E.g. AVŚ. 3, 11, 4; WEBER, I. S. XVII, p. 193 and below, p. 367; AVP. 1, 80; 6, 19.

³¹ Cf. e.g. also AVŚ. 5, 30; 7, 53; 8, 1; 2.

³² AVŚ. 6, 95; 96; 127; 8, 7 etc.

³³ Cf. also RENOU, in JA 243, p. 418; AVP. 1, 80.

³⁴ For the disease called *yakṣma* see FILLOZAT, Doctrine, p. 83.

³⁵ Cf. also AVŚ. 2, 13, 1; 28, 5; 29, 1; 3, 31, 1; 6; 5, 30, 11; 14.

³⁶ In reading these texts one might remember that evil-doers belonging to milieus that believe in spells and magic can be brought to tremble by an imprecation.

³⁷ E.g. AVŚ. 2, 7; 9; 3, 1; 2; 6; 19; 4, 18; 19; 40; 6, 32; 10, 1; 6; (cf. also 10, 3); AVP. 1, 76; 7, 19; against snakes AVŚ. 10, 4. For the curious “water-thunderbolts” of AV. 10, 5 see CALAND, Zauberritual, p. 171.

What is, in the atharvanic tradition, distinguished is offensive (*ābhicārika*) and defensive or retaliatory practices. Since this 'sorcery' is by no means limited to the Atharvaveda the formulas frequently return in the ritual texts of the other Vedas. There is also everything to be said for the supposition³⁸ that the non-metrical texts (of 5 lines each) AVŚ. 2, 20–23 constitute a secondary development in accordance with specific atharvanic cosmological ideas out of MS. 1, 5, 2 which is identical with AVŚ. 2, 19³⁹: while here Agni is in a repeated scheme invoked to be hot, to rage, burn etc. against the enemy, the other texts are literal repetitions of its words, substituting only the names of Wind, Sun, Moon, and Waters for the god of Fire. Formulas similar to those prescribed at Kauś. 49, 7f.⁴⁰ are banded together as *sūktas* in 4, 40 and 5, 10 which are to counteract inimical attacks from the different quarters of the universe. A large variety of demons and other evil beings⁴¹, often obscure as to their individual designations, but described as greedy and voracious, are addressed in more or less elaborate conjurations in order to prevent them from attacking men and cattle or spreading diseases.⁴² Among these is the curious AVP. 1, 29⁴³, formulas reverentially to force the *apsarases* to go away. Charms directed against human adversaries or intended to counteract their practices⁴⁴ are more numerous but on the other hand often quite general, colourless and stereotyped. Some of them⁴⁵ are mere curses intended to injure the enemies, to deprive them of their strength, to destroy their spells. Others however are more characteristic or even singular: AVŚ. 7, 95 and 96 are directed against the ureter and kidneys of the enemy; 6, 135 conjures one's own food to swallow up the breath of the antagonist. The *sūktas* AVŚ. 5, 8 and 7, 70 are to prevent the gods from hearing the enemy's call and to frustrate his sacrifice. Elsewhere attention is mainly focussed on, or the invocation addressed to, some object which is supposed to be especially offensive to demons: in AVŚ. 1, 16 an amulet of lead or red-lead⁴⁶, in 3, 9 an amulet tied to a reddish thread⁴⁷, in 3, 6; 4, 17–20 and 7, 65 the plants which are to help the practitioner discover the adversaries.

³⁸ BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 66.

³⁹ For details: WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. 62. Cf. AVP. 2, 48 exhibiting only the stanzas 1, 2, 4, 3 of AVŚ. 2, 19.

⁴⁰ For similar formulas: TB. 3, 11, 5; ĀpŚ. 6, 18, 3. The rite belonging to them (cf. also AVŚ. 1, 31) was, variously executed, to have a great future.

⁴¹ N. J. SHENDE, The foundations of the atharvanic religion, Poona 1949; The religion and philosophy of the Atharvaveda, Poona 1952.

⁴² Cf. AVŚ. 2, 14; 3, 9; 6, 32.

⁴³ See RENOU, in JA 252, p. 430.

⁴⁴ See e.g. the non-metrical 2, 11 (one of the rites requiring a vegetable amulet: BLOOMFIELD, at PAOS 1886, JAOS 13, p. CXXXII); cf. AVP. 1, 99.

⁴⁵ E.g. AVŚ. 6, 37; 7, 13; 59.

⁴⁶ Cf. Kauś. 47, 23; BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. 256.

⁴⁷ Cf. Kauś. 43, 1; for the colour: TH. ZACHARIAE, in WZKM 17, p. 146. For an amulet see also the longer *sūktas* 8, 5; 10; 3; 6.

The later systematization⁴⁸ regarded as distinct from the preceding classes of *sūktas* a group of charms described as being “promotive of welfare” (*paṇṣṭi-kāni*). Still more than in the domestic literature and in the so-called “rites for special wishes” (*kāmyeṣṭi*) of the *śrauta* texts it is in these *sūktas* that the practical character of Vedic literature and the wish to provide for individual desires and special exigencies are unmistakably evident. Forming more than one fifth of the contents of the Atharvaveda they have as main themes exemption and protection from all sorts of distress, danger⁴⁹ and calamity, concern about cattle⁵⁰ and horses, house and field⁵¹, rain⁵² and grain⁵³, journeying and returning⁵⁴, trade and gambling⁵⁵. Thus AVŚ. 6, 106 (AVP. 19, 33, 4–6) is prescribed (Kauś. 52, 5) in a rite with water-plants to prevent conflagration of one’s house⁵⁶. AVŚ. 3, 12 is to accompany the building of a dwelling:

- (1) “Right here I erect (my) dwelling firm;
That it stand in security, sprinkling ghee.
Unto thee, O dwelling, may we resort,
With our heroes (sons) unharmed, safe and sound.
- (2) Right here, O house, do thou stand firm;
Rich in horses, kine, abundance.
Rich in vigour, ghee and milk,
Erect thyself for ample happiness”⁵⁷.

There is a herdsman’s charm against wild animals and thieves (AVŚ. 4, 3; AVP. 2, 8):

- (1) “Three have gone away from here, tiger, man and wolf.
- (2) The wolf shall go a distant road, the robber one still more distant.
- (3) Your eyes and jaws we grind up, and all your twenty claws”.

AVŚ. 6, 70 is a characteristic charm intended to secure the attachment of a cow to her calf. Besides, there are various *sūktas* of a general character designed to ward off danger or to procure increase of kine, wealth or prosperity⁵⁸. The performance of the rites and the use of these texts was no less essential than

⁴⁸ Atharvaṇīyapaddhati (for this manual for the domestic practices see BLOOMFIELD, Kauśika Sūtra, JAOS 14, p. XIV): cf. also BLOOMFIELD, Seven hymns of the Atharva-Veda, AJPh 7, p. 477; HILLEBRANDT, Ritualliteratur, p. 169.

⁴⁹ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 4, 23–29; 33; 6, 40; 19, 14–20. See also AVP. 1, 37 (protection from the arrows of the enemy); 1, 65; 5, 1; 7, 3.

⁵⁰ Cf. AVŚ. 2, 26; 3, 14 (cf. M. WILLIS, at IL 1958, p. 235); 4, 21; 6, 59; 7, 75.

⁵¹ E.g. AVŚ. 6, 142; cf. 6, 33 (WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. 305).

⁵² Cf. AVŚ. 4, 15 (WEBER, I. S. XVIII, p. 58); 6, 22; 7, 18 (the rite requires *inter alia* the use of worn shoes and an offering to the Maruts; Kauś. 41, 1ff.).

⁵³ Cf. AVŚ. 3, 24; 6, 50; also 6, 79.

⁵⁴ Cf. AVŚ. 3, 15 (anachronistically: R. B. PANDEY, at Proc. Indian Hist. Congress 16 (1955), p. 30); 6, 55; 7, 8; 55; 60.

⁵⁵ For success in gambling: AVŚ. 4, 38, 1–4; 7, 50; 109.

⁵⁶ Cf. BLOOMFIELD, at AJPh 11, p. 347.

⁵⁷ Cf. also AVŚ. 7, 41 (Kauś. 43, 3; see BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 16, p. 12).

⁵⁸ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 1, 15; 31; 2, 26; 7, 69; 19, 1; 9–11; 31; AVP. 8, 11; 5, 29 (for prestige).

the skill of the farmer and herdsman. Ritual usages possessed the same degree of reality as the crafts and agriculture.

The subject of more than 40 *sūktas* is what in ritual terminology is called *prāyaścitta*⁵⁹, i.e. redress of every form of ritual defilement—such as pollution by a curse⁶⁰, misdemeanour, forgetfulness in religious matters—, irregularities in the course of religious ceremonies⁶¹, correction of inauspicious conditions—for instance the removal of evil characteristics—, personal mishap—birth at an unlucky time, insanity etc.⁶²—ominous and portentous occurrences⁶³, aspersion of one's character, the effects of the evil eye or evil dreams⁶⁴. The boundary-line between what we would regard as misfortune and (conscious or unconscious) transgression⁶⁵ or omission is here again evanescent⁶⁶. Interestingly enough, faults in the performance of sacrificial rites—a frequent topic in the *śrauta* literature⁶⁷—are hardly mentioned in the atharvanic hymns proper⁶⁸ which touch but lightly upon the *śrauta* rites; in later texts of this Vedic tradition this topic becomes very prominent. Kauś. 46, 11f. explains how to counteract the effects of bad dreaming by means of AVŚ. 7, 100f. (AVP. 20, 35, 4f.), the second text dealing also with its prognostic aspects⁶⁹.

Whereas the domestic rites pertaining to women are in the main restricted to the more normal sacramental ceremonies connected with marriage, pregnancy and child-birth, the atharvanic specialists describe, in Kauś. 32, 28–36, 39, a class of practices designated as 'women's rites' (*strikarmāṇi*), the consecratory texts of which are scattered through the first seven books of the Śaunakiya recension (in addition only AVŚ. 8, 6). Most of these deal with the relation between the two sexes. Especially numerous are love-charms performed by men as well as women for obtaining a partner or retaining his affection⁷⁰; further there are charms spoken by a bridal couple or pronounced by the bride over the bridegroom⁷¹; texts to be recited in connection with various objects—such as bracelets or an arrow—to ensure conception, to prevent miscarriage, to

⁵⁹ For the older literature: BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 85; see also GONDA, R. I. I, p. 130.

⁶⁰ AVŚ. 7, 65; 112.

⁶¹ Thus AVŚ. 6, 112 is to expiate the marriage of a younger before an elder brother; 114 disability in sacrifice; 7, 66; 67; 102 (for urinating while standing erect); 106; 19, 40.

⁶² AVŚ. 1, 18; 6, 26; 63; 84; 110; 111, 140; 7, 115.

⁶³ E.g. the birth of twins (3, 28), ominous birds (6, 27ff.; 7, 64). See V. R. PANDIT, in 13 AIOC, p. 65.

⁶⁴ AVŚ. 6, 46 (cf. 45); 7, 100; see also 7, 101.

⁶⁵ For relief from 'sin' or guilt see e.g. AVŚ. 6, 115; 116ff.

⁶⁶ AVŚ. 6, 19; 51; 62 are of a general purificatory character.

⁶⁷ HILLEBRANDT, *Ritualliteratur*, p. 166.

⁶⁸ AVŚ. 6, 114 is an exception; see BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 84.

⁶⁹ R. PISCHEL, in *Album Kern*, p. 115.

⁷⁰ Cf. AVŚ. 1, 34; 2, 30; 3, 25; 6, 8; 9; 89; 102; 130–132; 139; 7, 38; AVP. 1, 43; 55; 64. See also ch. III, p. 151 and WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 139.

⁷¹ AVŚ. 7, 36; 37.

obtain a son⁷², but also charms to allay jealousy⁷³, to make a woman sterile, to defeat a rival etc.⁷⁴. Many stanzas should, here also, be read together with the pertinent passage in the ritual handbook. Thus the simile AVŚ. 3, 23, 2 "Into your womb shall enter a male embryo, as an arrow into a quiver" explains the use of that object, attached to the woman's neck⁷⁵, at Kauś. 35, 3; the words AVŚ. 2, 36, 5 (AVP. 2, 21, 5) "Ascend (a girl is addressed) the full unexhaustible ship of Bhaga (the god of gifts and happiness); with that bring hither the suitor who is responsive to your love" are to be pronounced when the girl ascends a properly prepared boat. Other passages give us an idea of the troubles and straitened circumstances which forced these Vedic men and women to have recourse to these rites, e.g. AVŚ. 6, 60, 2; 7, 45, 2:

"This girl, O Aryaman (the god of domestic and conjugal happiness), has wearied of going to wedding-assemblies of other women. Now shall, without fail, another woman (other women) go to her wedding-feast";

"As if fire is burning him, as if a forest-fire burns in various directions, do thou⁷⁶ quench this jealousy of his, as fire (is quenched) with water."

Many stanzas reveal undisguised passion or hatred: "With the incantation of . . . Kaśyapa do I shut up your vulva" (AVŚ. 1, 14, 4; AVP. 1, 15, 4)⁷⁷; "Indra shall with a pair of pressing stones break both his testicles" (AVŚ. 6, 138, 2; AVP. 1, 68, 3). The *sūktas* pertaining to child-birth and child-life, on the other hand, reflect parental care and grief; in case a child is born under an unlucky star one should recite AVŚ. 6, 110 (AVP. 19, 20, 1f.):

"Save him, O Agni, from being torn up by Yama. Let him not slay, when he grows up, his father nor injure his mother"⁷⁸.

Part of these texts are in close touch with the corresponding 'sacraments' (*saṃskāra*) of the *gr̥hyasūtras*⁷⁹.

It is difficult to draw a hard and fast line between these texts and the charms intended to secure harmony, influence among fellow-men etc. The same *sūkta*—e.g. the conciliatory charm AVŚ. 1, 34—is employed to win love as

⁷² AVŚ. 5, 25; 6, 81; 6, 17; 3, 23; 6, 11 etc.; see also 1, 11; AVP. 5, 12.

⁷³ AVŚ. 6, 18; 7, 45.

⁷⁴ AVŚ. 7, 35; 1, 14; 3, 18 (RV. 10, 145); 7, 113; AVP. 1, 60.

⁷⁵ Cf. also AVŚ. 7, 38 (Kauś. 36, 12; WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. 412; CALAND, Zauberritual, p. 120); for the popular belief see V. HENRY, at JA IX, 9 (1897), p. 328.

⁷⁶ Thou: the water to be drunk by the person who has to undergo the cure; the stanza should be whispered, the 'ceremony' being a quasi-casual affair (Kauś. 36, 27).

⁷⁷ As to the interpretation of AVŚ. 1, 14: H. LOMMEL, in Zs. f. deutsches Altertum 73 (1936), p. 245 (no epithalamium, but an imprecation; German parallels); SHENDE, Rel. Ph. AV., p. 67; E. HEROLD, at ArchOr 24, p. 117 (partly improbable); S. K. GUPTA, at JGJRI 17, p. 79 (untenable).

⁷⁸ See Kauś. 46, 25. Cf. also AVŚ. 6, 140 (AVP. 19, 49, 9–11): Kauś. 46, 43ff.

⁷⁹ For these see R. B. PANDEY, Hindu Saṃskāras, Banaras 1949 (cf. p. 522).

well as respect and prestige⁸⁰. Yet, if we speak of conciliatory 'hymns' two sub-classes may be distinguished: those texts that aim at success, prominence or superiority⁸¹ and those used to assuage wrath, discord and violence⁸². A successful instance of the latter group is AVŚ. 3, 30 (AVP. 5, 19):

- (1) "Unity of heart, unity of mind, freedom of hatred do I make for you;
Take delight in one another, as the cow in her (new-)born calf.
- (2) Devoted to (his) father shall be the son, like-minded with (his) mother;
The wife shall speak friendly words, full of honey to (her) husband.
- (4) The charm-power by which the gods do not disagree or hate each other
That we establish in your house as a means of concord for (your) men.
- (6) The same shall be your drink, in common your share of food.
The same (shall be) the harness in which I join you together.
Worship Agni united, like spokes about the nave".

Though largely supplying the needs of the common people the atharvanic experts did by no means neglect the interests of the higher classes. In view of the fact that it incorporated much material that did not arouse the special interest of the compilers of the other Vedas on one hand and of the claim of its followers to the office of a king's domestic priest and spiritual adviser on the other it is not surprising to find in this corpus a larger number of texts pertaining to royalty⁸³ than in the other *samhitās*, where similar subjects are, it is true, alluded to here and there. As also appears from the long series of "royal rites" in Kauśika (ch. 14–17)⁸⁴ these texts and the ritual acts which they are to consecrate are first and foremost intended to achieve, by means of various 'magical' practices, a king's victory in battle. In their vigour and their eager exploitation of details elsewhere unknown these war charms are one of the most interesting peculiarities of the Atharvaveda. Interestingly enough, many of them appear in the Śaunakiya recension (and partly also in the Paippalāda, e.g. 1, 74f.) in pairs or in groups of three: AVŚ. 1, 19 is a charm to prevent a warrior from being hurt by arrows—"Let not the piercers find us, nor let the penetraters find us; far from us, O Indra, to either side, make the arrow-showers fall" (st. 1)—and 1, 20 and 21 are battle charms of a more general character⁸⁵. Apart from texts that aim at victory or could beside other applications be used for that purpose⁸⁶ there are charms of a more special destructive, deterrent effect, for instance AVŚ. 3, 1 and 2 which are to discomfit the enemy's

⁸⁰ Cf. Kauś. 76, 8f.; 79, 10; 38, 17.

⁸¹ AVŚ. 2, 27; 6, 15; 44; 7, 12.

⁸² AVŚ. 6, 42; 43; AVP. 19, 8, 10–12; 33, 7–9; cf. Kauś. 36, 28ff.; 32; AVŚ. 6, 64; 73; 74; 7, 52; AVP. 9, 4.

⁸³ However, WEBER, in SB Acad. Berlin 1891, p. 786 and BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. XXV went too far in suggesting that it was the Veda of the princes.

⁸⁴ Cf. also AVPar. 3; 17; 18a; b.

⁸⁵ Cf. also AVŚ. 3, 1 and 2; 4, 31 and 32 (RV. 10, 84 and 83) for success in battle and for determining which of the two opposing armies will conquer (Kauś. 14, 26f.; 30f.); 6, 65–67; 97–99; 103 and 104; 11, 9 and 10.

⁸⁶ According to Kauś. 14, 7: AVŚ. 1, 2; 19; 20, 21; 6, 65; 66; 67; 97; 98; 99; cf. AVP. 1, 66; 68; 79.

army (Kauś. 14, 17ff.); 3, 19 intended to put courage into the soldiers of one's own king⁸⁷, st. 1:

"Sharpened up is this charm-power of mine; sharpened up heroism, strength; sharpened up, victorious be the undecaying authority (of those) of whom I am the domestic priest;"

1, 9 and 3, 3 which are to restore a king to his rule and honours (Kauś. 16, 27f.). The *sūktas* 5, 20 and 21 are addressed to the battle-drum, the terror of the enemy (Kauś. 16, 1f.); 5, 20, 5:

"When the wife of the enemy hears the voice of the drum which speaks to a distance, let she, suppliant, starting up at the sound, snatch her son to her arms and run, frightened at the clash of arms"⁸⁸.

There are also prognostic texts: 5, 6⁸⁹ is helpful in knowing whether one is going to come out alive (Kauś. 15, 12ff.). In AVŚ. 6, 128 (AVP. 19, 24, 16-18) the smoke of cow-dung, invoked as a king entrusted with the auspicious day, is requested to give propitious weather and an auspicious morning, noon, evening and night⁹⁰. A number of *sūktas* are designed to ensure to a prince superiority over other noblemen⁹¹ or to secure to him success⁹² or specific qualities such as prestige, splendour, glory or even the vigour of an elephant⁹³. A few hymns concerned with royal rites are conceived in a higher spirit. AVŚ. 3, 4 is a prayer for the benefit of a king who has been called or chosen and is to be inaugurated: "The kingdom has come to you; arise, endowed with lustre!" (st. 1)⁹⁴. AVŚ. 4, 8 has been elicited by the consecration of a king—Vait. 36, 7 prescribes its use at the *rājasūya* unction when the officiant (the *brahman*) causes the royal sacrificer to sit down on a tiger-skin and anoints him; (st. 4; 5):

"(Yourself) a tiger, stride upon (this) tiger-skin (victorious) unto the great regions of the universe . . . With the lustrous energy of all these heavenly waters I sprinkle you."

While its stanza 3 is identical with ṚV. 3, 38, 4 where it refers to Indra, most of its stanzas are also found in chapters of yajurvedic works dealing with that *śrauta* rite⁹⁵.

The many prayers and imprecations in the interest of the brahmins, fully conscious of their worthiness and dignity, and their manifold claims—of

⁸⁷ Cf. also 4, 31 and 32: Kauś. 14, 26f.

⁸⁸ ROTH, at Festgruß Böhlingk, p. 99.

⁸⁹ Cf. WEBER, I. S. XVIII, p. 185.

⁹⁰ Cf. Kauś. 50, 13ff. (where it predicts the weather); 100, 3; BLOOMFIELD, at AJPh 7, p. 484; PAOS 1886 (JAOS 13, p. CXXXIII); RENOU, H. P., p. 151.

⁹¹ AVŚ. 4, 22; 6, 54; 86; 87; 88; cf. 7, 84.

⁹² For the interpretation of AVŚ. 7, 12 see R. N. DANDEKAR, at Comm. Vol. S. K. Bhuyan, Gauhati 1966, p. 77.

⁹³ AVŚ. 1, 9; 3, 22; 6, 38; 39; 19, 37.

⁹⁴ See R. N. DANDEKAR, at Comm. Vol. B. K. BARUA, Gauhati 1966, p. 32; B. SCHLERATH, Das Königtum im Rig- und Atharvaveda, Wiesbaden 1960, p. 45 etc.

⁹⁵ TB. 2, 7, 8; 15; 16; KS. 37, 9; cf. J. C. HEESTERMAN, The ancient Indian royal consecration, Thesis Utrecht 1957, p. 108.

invulnerability, of *dakṣiṇās*, of exceptional advantages—belong to the most interesting parts of the corpus. AVŚ. 5, 17⁹⁶ is an imprecation against the violator of the wife of a brahmin: if such a heinous crime should happen, prosperity would vanish, children and animals would no longer be born, portentous occurrences would terrify the people, for the wife of a brahmin is able to burn the kingdom. The two following *sūktas*⁹⁷ deal, like AVŚ. 12, 5, with the brahmin's cow: he who robs or injures that animal is threatened with terrible punishments: he becomes one who has swallowed poison (5, 18, 13), and the cow will swamp that kingdom as water a leaking ship in which an offender of a brahmin lays violent hands upon this animal (5, 19, 8)⁹⁸. The supernormal abilities ascribed to this cow—and other animals within the range of brahminical interests—are one of the characteristics of these *sūktas*: just as the draught-ox extolled in AVŚ. 4, 11 (AVP. 3, 25) is a divine being able to sustain heaven and earth⁹⁹ this cow is an ill-poisonous adder (5, 18, 3) and, becoming eight-footed (5, 19, 7), shakes down the kingdom. While the *dānastutis* are almost entirely absent¹⁰⁰ liberality is conjured and avarice condemned¹⁰¹.

On the other hand, prayers for wisdom, spiritual elevation, communion with those who know *brahman*¹⁰², purification¹⁰³, success in the study of the Veda¹⁰⁴, prestige¹⁰⁵ and other advantages do not fail to give us an idea of what in these circles was regarded as an ideal life. The *sūkta* 4, 30—which with a few insignificant variants is RV. 10, 125—was prescribed (Kauś. 10, 16; 139, 15) for generation of wisdom and on the occasion of the end of Veda study. Significantly enough, the first *sūkta* of the Śaunakiya recension (= AVP. 1, 6) is, whatever its implications and the exact explanation of details¹⁰⁶, in the main an invocation of Vācaspati (the 'Lord of speech') for the retention of sacred learning. Finally, the difficult dialogue¹⁰⁷ between Varuṇa and his son (st. 11) Atharvan AVŚ. 5, 11 (= AVP. 8, 1) seems to state, not only the divinization of the latter, the unassailable sage and poet, but also the close association of the god and the prototype of atharvanic wisdom which leads to a confidential initiation of the latter: "There is one other thing beyond the welkin, there is something hard to attain . . ., this I, Varuṇa, knowing it proclaim to thee" (st. 6).

⁹⁶ This text occurs in part in AVP., viz. 9, 15; 16, 1; it contains the seven stanzas of RV. 10, 109, for which see S. S. BHAWÉ, at Festschrift W. Kirfel, Bonn 1955, p. 17.

⁹⁷ Part of the stanzas are in another order found also in AVP. 9, 16–19. In the Paippalāda this group also is more numerous.

⁹⁸ See also AVŚ. 12, 4 and 5.

⁹⁹ See below, p. 291 f.

¹⁰⁰ Excepting 20, 127, 1–3. See above, p. 170.

¹⁰¹ Cf. AVŚ. 5, 7; 6, 122; 7, 103; 104.

¹⁰² Cf. AVŚ. 19, 43; 64.

¹⁰³ AVŚ. 6, 19; 51; 62.

¹⁰⁴ AVŚ. 7, 54; cf. 61; 66; 67; and also 7, 105; 19; 19, 68.

¹⁰⁵ AVŚ. 6, 58; 69.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. WHITNEY, at Festgruß v. Roth, p. 94; VISHVA BANDHU, at VIJ 5, p. 13.

¹⁰⁷ See below, p. 303; cf. RENOUE, at JA 243, p. 421.

4. Ritual and speculative sūktas

Turning now to those *sūktas* which were somewhat infelicitously called ritualistic¹ we direct attention first to a considerable number of texts which state distinctly that they are accompanied by an oblation (*havis*, a normally 'vegetarian' offering consisting of milk, butter, rice, a cake etc.). AVŚ. 1, 15 (AVP. 1, 24) is prescribed in a general rite for prosperity to accompany the bringing of water, by two persons, from two navigable streams and the partaking of a dish of mixed grain (Kaus. 19, 4ff.):

- (1) "Together, together let the rivers flow, together the winds, together the birds. This sacrifice of old, let them enjoy, I offer with an oblation of confluence.
- (3) The fountains of the streams that flow together, even unexhausted, With all those confluences we make wealth flow together for me"².

Other *sūktas* of this class³ make mention of an oblation which is to increase as renown, of safety brought about by "the oblation of the seven seers," of concord or harmony, success against enemies ("I hew off the arms of the foes with this oblation"), or prosperity expected in the same way. From places such as 6, 41, 2; 75, 1; 7, 77, 1 it appears that definite gods (*in casu* the Maruts) could be invoked to enjoy the oblation. Although the Ṛgveda occasionally mentions such special *havis* in *sūktas* of atharvanic character⁴ these libations for limited purposes—which might be inserted in rites of wider scope and objective—were to assume in the Atharvaveda, where they found their proper place, a more technical and independent form.

At this point we have for a moment to return to the relations between the Atharvaveda and the *śrauta* rites⁵. In its present form the atharvanic corpus does not only, to a certain extent, give evidence of acquaintance with *śrauta* rites—on which it is a better source of information than the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā—it includes also texts for use in the great solemn rites in which it is occasionally, in a detached manner and in accordance with its own purposes and points of view, interested⁶. It can hardly be doubted that in the circles of those who kept up the atharvanic traditions at least some rites were performed that may be regarded as, probably simpler, counterparts of *śrauta* ceremonies. For instance, AVŚ. 6, 47 (AVP. 19, 43, 10–12)—a prayer for protection, property,

¹ BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 91. As appears from the preceding pages many other hymns are prescribed in atharvanic rites.

² Similarly, AVŚ. 2, 26 (st. 3 "I offer with a *havis* of confluence"); 19, 1.

³ AVŚ. 6, 39 (st. 1); 40 (st. 1); 64; 65 (st. 2; cf. 66); 75; 78; see also 5, 21, 2; 6, 80; 87; 7, 94 etc.; see BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 93.

⁴ ṚV. 6, 75, 8; 10, 173, 6 (= AVŚ. 7, 94, 1); LUDWIG, Rig-Veda, III, p. 371; BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 93.

⁵ For details: RENOU, at JA 243, p. 417. On the other hand, the long and interesting AVŚ. 12, 2 (AVP. 17, 30–35) on the flesh-eating and the householder's fire is Kaus. 69, 7 used in the ceremony of preparing the domestic fire.

⁶ For a refutation of the erroneous assumption that the Atharvavedins could ever celebrate *śrauta* rites of their own: CALAND, at WZKM 14, p. 115; 18, p. 190.

a long lifetime etc.—making mention of libations in the morning, at noon and in the evening, contains the term *savana* which usually denotes the pressing out and libation of the *soma* juice. The small text is, interestingly enough, known also to authorities of the Yajurveda⁷ but not quoted by Kauśika. According to an atharvanic instruction the *brahman* priest has, as a collaborator in a *śrauta* rite, also to offer some oblations to the accompaniment of stanzas from the Atharva-Saṃhitā⁸ which in case the rite should include an incantation must be replaced by AVŚ. 2, 19 (“O Agni, be hot with the heat that is thine against him who hates us, whom we hate”) and 6, 75 (to eject a rival: “I thrust that man out of home, the rival who fights us”)⁹. On the occasion of the immolation of a he-goat—an episode of the ritual preparation of the sacred fire-place (*agnicayana*)—the *brahman* priest has to recite AVŚ. 2, 6 (cf. AVP. 3, 33) which, while praising Agni, clearly refers to his being kindled and his ritual functions¹⁰. These instances may suffice¹¹. This use of atharvanic texts furnishes an explanation of the fact that part of them, recurring with variations in *śrauta* works¹², hardly differ from *yajus* formulas.

This ritual interest of the Atharvaveda is however not always free from speculation and from the tendency to interpret socio-religious customs and ceremonies as events of universal import or manifestations of fundamental power. The long prose *sūkta* AVŚ. 9, 6 (AVP. 16, 111–117) dealing with the significance of the reception and entertainment of guests and identifying these with acts and requisites of the *śrauta* ritual is a case in point¹³. A guest arriving at somebody’s house is a manifestation of *brahman*, the parts of his body are identified with the texts of the three Vedas; when his host meets him with his eyes he looks at a sacrifice; when the host greets him he is consecrated; what is presented to a guest is a libation that annihilates the ‘sins’ of the host; incorrect behaviour towards a guest results in loss of ritual merits, and so on. One of the characteristics of texts of this genre is the effort made to demonstrate,

⁷ TS. 3, 1, 9, 1f.; KŚ. 9, 3, 21. Cf. also Vait. 21, 7 and BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 92; KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. 231.

⁸ AVŚ. 4, 39, 9 (“with homage I offer to Agni who is continually to be found in the fire”); 10; 5, 29, 1 (likewise addressed to Agni); 2, 35, 5 (an invitation to the gods); 7, 97, 3–8 (that the sacrifice will prove a success); for details: CALAND, at WZKM 14, p. 121.

⁹ Cf. Kauś. 47, 8; 10.

¹⁰ Vait. 28, 4; the text occurs also in the Yajurveda (TS. 4, 1, 7 etc.); for an in all probability secondary use: Kauś. 59, 15.

¹¹ See also AVŚ. 7, 27; also at ĀpŚ. 4, 13, 4, not used by Kauś., in Vait. 3, 15 prescribed to accompany the invocation of Idā (representing the essence of the offering, ‘Opfersegen’); 7, 28 dealing with sacrificial implements, prescribed at Vait. 4, 12 to accompany an act which in all probability is to be performed by the *brahman*, whereas at KŚ. 3, 8, 1 it is incumbent upon the wife of the sacrificer; 7, 73; 98; 99 etc.

¹² E. g. the non-metrical AVŚ. 6, 48 (not in AVP.), but see TS. 3, 2, 1, 1; ŚB. 12, 3, 4, 3ff.; ŚŚ. 6, 8, 10ff.; KŚ. 13, 1, 11; and AVŚ. 7, 97.

¹³ RENOU, in JA 243, p. 421.

down to minute details, the equivalence of the various aspects of an institution, *in casu* the hospitable reception, and the sacred acts of the *śrauta* ritual.

Some *sūktas*, though interlarded with 'symbolism' and metaliturgical speculation, are in their entirety used in typically atharvanic rites. The *savayajña*¹⁴ called "rice-mess for the brahmins" (*brahmaudana*) which, as already observed¹⁵, represents itself as a counterpart of a regular *soma* sacrifice, is extolled in AVŚ. 11, 3¹⁶ where it is conceived of as a potency of world-wide and fundamental significance, the cooking-vessel being for instance identified with the earth (st. 11), sun and moon with its eyes (st. 2). By offering this dish to the accompaniment of AVŚ. 11, 1 (AVP. 16, 89ff.; Kauś. 60–63 and 65)¹⁷ the giver will be enabled to ascend to the heavenly regions, to continue his existence through offspring and to realize various other ambitions¹⁸: after identifying himself with the esoteric significance of the rite the sacrificer may by an adequate ritual technique—by means of the rice-mess as a cosmic entity commensurate with the universe—transcend the limitations of the finite human condition. The *sūkta* 11, 1 as well as the much longer 12, 3¹⁹ fit their use very well²⁰; part of the ritual, especially the cooking proper and the feeding of the brahmins, requires stanzas from the former, part stanzas of the latter²¹ which is described (Keśava) as a "rice-mess text leading to heaven" (*svargaudana*), its *mantras* being mainly to consecrate those acts which are of special importance for the realization of the sacrificer's wish to secure continuance of life in heavenly regions²². Other texts prescribed in this connection (Kauś. 60–68) are AVŚ. 4, 34 (AVP. 6, 22) and 4, 35²³ the latter accompanying a rite for escaping death:

- (1) "The rice-dish which the first-born of Order Prajāpati
Cooked with austerity for the embodiment of *brahman*,
Let me, by that boundary-line between the worlds
Which will not go wrong, overcome death."

AV. 11, 7, extolling the remnant of the offering (*ucchiṣṭa*)²⁴—a substance believed to be an important bearer of that concentrated power which ensures continuation—belongs, though not ritually employed in the *sūtra*, to the same collection of texts. So does AVŚ. 9, 3 dealing with a *sava* in which a house is given to a brahmin so that the giver would in the hereafter have a firmly built

¹⁴ GONDA, *Savayajñas*.

¹⁵ See above, p. 270.

¹⁶ GONDA, o. c., p. 30; 41; 433.

¹⁷ GONDA, o. c., p. 77 and *passim*.

¹⁸ See also GONDA, o. c., p. 63.

¹⁹ GONDA, o. c., p. 67.

²⁰ GONDA, o. c., p. 67.

²¹ For particulars, GONDA, o. c., p. 71.

²² WHITNEY-LANMAN (o. c., p. 682) incorrectly characterize this *sūkta* as "cremation as a sacrifice."

²³ GONDA, o. c., p. 95; 96.

²⁴ GONDA, at *Mélanges Renou*, p. 301. The *sūkta* bristles with technical allusions.

mansion²⁵. According to an atharvanic tradition preserved at Cūlikā-Upaniṣad 11 the draught-ox of AVŚ. 4, 11 (AVP. 3, 25)²⁶ is, like the Veda student of AVŚ. 11, 5, the pillar of creation (*skambha*) of 10, 7 and 8, the sun of 13, 1-3, the *ucchiṣṭa* of 11, 7, time (*kāla*) of 19, 53 and 54, breath as the vital principle of 11, 4, primeval Man (the *puruṣa*) and the Lord (*Īśvara*) of 19, 6 (cf. 4), Prajāpati (cf. 2, 1; 4, 2) and Virāj of AVŚ. 8, 9 and 10, identified with the Highest Being. The consecratory stanzas accompanying the rites—in *casu* the draught-ox *sava*²⁷—were to transform the sacrificial substance into, or to identify it with, that High Principle or aspects of it and so to achieve the fulfilment of the sacrificer's aspirations, i.e. survival in heaven, divine existence.

The speculative hymns—hardly dissociated from ritual and 'mystic' subject-matter—and passages of this corpus, though neglected or underestimated by several previous authors²⁸, are from various points of view of the greatest interest²⁹. The at first sight strange inclusion³⁰ of a considerable amount of cosmogonic, 'theosophic,' and other speculative and 'esoteric' matter is only difficult to explain if we incorrectly take it to be philosophical in any modern sense of the term. It is true that the common atharvanic practitioner as well as the *purohita* in his ordinary offices might well have dispensed with them. Part of them are indeed left unnoticed in the Kausika³¹ and Vaitāna sūtras. When these works use speculative *sūktas* their employment often seems secondary. Thus AVŚ. 2, 1 (AVP. 2, 6), which—if the interpretation proposed elsewhere³² is right—deals with the prototype of the inspired seer and poet, here called *vena*, who, knowing all beings and all abodes and being the sole nomenclator (st. 1; 3), attempts to reveal the great mystery, the "highest in

²⁵ AVP. 16, 39-41; Kauś. 66, 22-30; GONDA, Sav., p. 107; 376. For AVP. 9, 4 (gift of a bull): GONDA, o.c., p. 99; for 9, 5 (offering of a goat and five rice-dishes), p. 90; 240; for 9, 7 (offering of an ox), p. 100; for 10, 9, p. 94; for 10, 10, p. 65; 101.

²⁶ J. GONDA, in Vol. Umesha Mishra, Allahabad 1967, p. 1; Savayajñas, p. 64; 97 (translation); 287 (commentary).

²⁷ Keśava, on Kauś. 64-66.

²⁸ E.g. by MACDONELL, H. S. L.; VON GLASENAPP, Lit. Ind.

²⁹ In general, see BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 86 (with the bibliographical note 1 on p. 90 and for the older literature the pertinent introductory notes in WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV.); F. EDGERTON, The philosophic materials of the Atharvaveda, Studies M. BLOOMFIELD, New Haven 1920, p. 117; RENOU, Les hymnes spéculatifs de l'Atharvaveda, Bull. de la Maison franco-japonaise, N.S. 4, 1 (Tokyo 1955), p. 31.

³⁰ Most of these texts occur, because of their length, in the books VIII-XIX, but the presence of such *sūktas* at the beginning of the books II, IV, V and VII is certainly not fortuitous.

³¹ Thus AVŚ. 8, 9 and 10 (on Virāj); 9, 6; 10; 10, 2 and 11, 8 (the structure of man); 10, 7 and 8 (on the *skambha*); 11, 5 (the Veda student); 7 (the remnant of the offering); 19, 6 (Puruṣa); 53 and 54 (*kāla*, time); 11, 3 is not used by Kausika, but mentioned by the commentator Keśava (see WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. 625).

³² GONDA, Vision, p. 356; see also M. LINDENAU, at ZII 1, p. 33, L. SCHERMAN, Philosophische Hymnen aus der Rig- und Atharva-Saṃhitā, Strassburg 1887, p. 82; R. N. DANDEKAR, at Fel. Vol. Mirashi, Nagpur 1965, p. 24.

secret," to see the fundamental unity of the phenomenal world in the highest principle, is at Kauś. 37, 3 in a prognosticative rite pronounced over a variety of articles³³. AVŚ. 4, 30 which, barring a few insignificant variants, is ṚV. 10, 125—the so-called self-revelation of the goddess of Holy Speech (*Vāc*) who is the principle of life of men, the soul of the world (st. 4; 6)—is prescribed in a ceremony for generation of wisdom in a child and also at its first use of speech (10, 16ff.)³⁴. The occurrence of AVŚ. 19, 6³⁵—which is ṚV. 10, 90, the Puruṣa hymn, with variation mainly in the order of the stanzas—at Vait. 37, 19 when in the human sacrifice (*puruṣamedha*) the victim is bathed and released is in view of its use in rites of renewal³⁶ quite intelligible.

There can on the other hand be no doubt that this material represents a genuine atharvanic tradition. There are no grounds for supposing that the sort of speculation of which it gives evidence was foreign to it and inorganic: with the exception of AVŚ. 4, 30 = ṚV. 10, 125 the relevant texts are found in both recensions. That means that they must have had some atharvanic use. Now, aspirations towards higher knowledge in India have usually been associated with practical ends. Esoteric knowledge of the truth, of the nature of things does not only help man out of the bondage of the phenomenal world, but leads also to the acquisition of worldly and practical benefits such as wealth, success, ascendancy over one's fellows, or the discomfiture of one's enemies. This function of higher knowledge—which is not the result of intellectual reasoning—explains many text-places which at first sight may seem rather strange³⁷. The man who knows, i.e. who mentally identifies himself with the milkings of the draught-ox—a reference to the androgynous nature of the Highest Being—obtains progeny and a (celestial) world, that is, both forms of continuance of life (AVŚ. 4, 11, 9; AVP. 3, 25, 9): the animal indeed yields milk—according to the commentary identical with the inexhaustible results of a religious life (to be enjoyed in the 'world' (*loka*)³⁸ of ritual and religious merit (*sukṛta*)). As already intimated, the *atharvavedins* traditionally hold that their scripture helps to attain enjoyment in, and liberation from, this world³⁹. 'Philosophical' speculations could therefore easily be interpreted as a 'theoretical basis,' that is, be used as a consecratory text, of ritual performances. Hence the fact⁴⁰ that theosophic ideas had to some extent found a place in the very tissue of a 'magical' *sūkta*. Stanza 6 of AVŚ. 4, 19 (AVP. 5, 25) which should be used by those who prepare consecrated water to counteract hostile sorcery

³³ Cf. CALAND, Zauberritual, p. 126.

³⁴ See also AVŚ. 7, 1; 9, 4; 11, 4; stanzas of 13, 1 etc.

³⁵ Together with AVŚ. 10, 2. Cf. also Vait. 33, 8 on AVŚ. 8, 9, 6–26; 13, 2, 32–46.

³⁶ GONDA, at WZKSA 12–13, p. 101.

³⁷ The significance of AVŚ. 4, 11 has for instance been completely misunderstood by J. MUR, Original Sanskrit texts, V, London 1884, p. 399; DEUSSEN, A. G. Phil. I, 1, p. 230; WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 153 (where also on 9, 4).

³⁸ For this concept see GONDA, *Loka*, esp. p. 132; 136.

³⁹ Āngirasakalpa, Introduction.

⁴⁰ Observed already by BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 86.

(Kaus. 39, 7) states that “non-being (*asat*, the opposite of cosmic existence) arose from the earth; that goes to the sky . . .; let that, spreading vapours, come back against the performer” (of witchcraft). In AVŚ. 13, 3 (26 stanzas)⁴¹ the sun is exalted as the Ruddy One (Rohita) in the characteristic ‘theosophic style’:

- (1) “He who produced these two, heaven and earth,
Who clothes himself in the worlds, making them a garment,
In whom abide the six wide directions,
Which he, the flying one, penetrates with his sight—
- (2) From whom the winds in their season go purifying,
Out of whom the oceans flow forth—
- (3) Who causes to die (and) causes to breathe,
From whom all existences breathe—,”

but the refrain added to 25 stanzas shows that this glorification of the heavenly body is to discomfit the one who hates and persecutes a brahmin:

“Against that god, angered, is this offence;
Whosoever oppresses a brahmin who knows thus,
Do thou, O Ruddy One, make him quake, destroy him,
Fasten on the fetters of the brahmin-oppressor.”

AVŚ. 13, 1, 1–35 (AVP. 18, 16ff.), likewise a speculative glorification of the sun, were in all probability intended to further the interests of a king: “Let him bear you well unto kingdom” (st. 1; cf. 4f.; 8f.):

- (34) “Ascend the heavens and ascend the earth,
Ascend sovereignty and ascend possessions,
Ascend offspring and ascend ‘immortality,’
Bring your body into contact with Rohita”⁴².

Although the laudation of the Veda student (*brahmacārin*, AVŚ. 11, 5; AVP. 16, 153–155) is not quoted in the *sūtras* it presupposes the existence of the ritual of which that youth is the central figure. However, the text lays much stress upon the supranormal power of this chaste repository of holy knowledge⁴³: he sets heaven and earth in motion, fills his teacher and the gods with austerity (st. 1f.); he fecundates the earth (st. 12); “all creatures which have sprung from Prajāpati are preserved by *brahman* which is concentrated in the *brahmacārin*” (st. 22).

However awkward, naive or incomprehensible these texts may at first sight appear, however fluid and floating the opinions of the problems tackled, however incoherent the argumentation (if there is any) and ‘mystical’ rather than philosophical the verbal expression, they strive—for the above-mentioned practical purpose, it is true—after an insight into the true nature of the phenomena, their mutual relations, their unity in a transcendent Highest Principle. In so doing they seem, whilst incorporating material that is also found in the

⁴¹ See also below, p. 302 f.

⁴² For BLOOMFIELD’S view see AJPh 12, p. 430 (no abstract worship of any divinity, but an allegorical exaltation of a king and his queen).

⁴³ J. GONDA, Change and continuity in Indian religion, The Hague 1965, p. 285.

other Vedas, to have been a receptacle of a considerable variety of previous and contemporaneous speculations and attempts at solving the problems under consideration in which its authors are much more interested than most poets of the Ṛgveda. Whereas the latter almost exclusively concentrated upon cosmogony clad in mythological garb and spoke of the unborn Primeval One, the former were acquainted with a variety of conceptions, terms and 'theories' with regard to the origin and structure of the universe and the relations between the phenomena and the Unseen, the Transcendent "in which everything becomes of one form" (AVŚ. 2, 1, 1; AVP. 2, 6, 1). In the two abstract and often obscure *sūktas* AVŚ. 10, 7 and 8 (cf. AVP. 17, 7-11; 16, 101-103) fine-drawn speculations on the "support or pillar of creation" (*skambha*)⁴⁴—which, though sustaining heaven and earth, and bearing the gods, seers, sacred verses and formulas, death and continuance of life, and though revered as the Highest (10, 7, 21), is utterly mysterious—do not only raise questions about the 'relative position' in the universe of divine powers and important 'concepts' such as asceticism and Order, about the nature of the divisions of time, etc., but deal also with other ideas of the Highest Principle such as *brahman*, Prajāpati, the Golden Germ. Though unconnected with any ritual these *sūktas* do not fail to hold out a prospect of 'knowledge' and the realization of identity; 10, 7, 17:

"Whoever know the *brahman* in man, they know the most exalted One⁴⁵;

Who knows the most exalted One, and whoever knows Prajāpati,

Who knows the chief *brāhmaṇa*⁴⁶, they accordingly know also the *skambha*"

and hence, of freedom from darkness and evil (10, 7, 40). It has rightly been observed⁴⁷ that there is an unmistakable harmony between many speculative passages of this corpus in that they, in the form of alternating and cumulative names, concepts and images, attempt to delimit and determine the last cause of things.

These poets are, moreover, less inclined to make the traditional mythological figures an element of their speculations⁴⁸. Most of the gods, it is true, retain their functions⁴⁹, but the new-comer Kāma (Desire) is though on one hand, as a divine person, revered and called upon for help, on the other minutely described in his aspects and functions (AVŚ. 9, 2; AVP. 16, 76-78) and not regarded as distinct from desire as the "first seed of mind" (AVŚ. 19, 52, 1; AVP. 1, 30, 1 which reminds us of ṚV. 10, 129, 4; cf. AVŚ. 9, 2, 19). The tendency to deal with the highest categories figuratively rather than mythologically or

⁴⁴ Cf. e.g. SCHERMAN, o. c., p. 50; M. LINDENAU, at ZII 3, p. 235; E. A. SOLOMON, at JOIB 9, p. 233; RENOUE, o. c., p. 46.

⁴⁵ This term (*parameṣṭhin*) does not occur in the Ṛgveda.

⁴⁶ That or who is connected with *brahman*.

⁴⁷ RENOUE, o. c., p. 47. See also BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 89 on AVŚ. 4, 1, 7, 2; 8, 9 and 10.

⁴⁸ See also BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 90. Mythology is, of course, not absent; cf. e.g. AVŚ. 10, 7, 18; 22; 30.

⁴⁹ On Varuṇa, RENOUE, at Festgabe Lommel, Wiesbaden 1960, p. 122.

philosophically is, for instance, also apparent from the two *sūktas* devoted to Time (*kāla*: AVŚ. 19, 53f.; AVP. 12, 2)⁵⁰:

(1) "Time, the steed, drives with seven reins, thousand-eyed, unaging, rich in seed, Him the seers mount, of inspired thought; all the beings (worlds) are his wheels."

AVŚ. 9, 1 (AVP. 16, 33f.) may be regarded as an attempt at comprehending the significance of a mythological concept, *in casu* the honey-whip of the Aśvins, mentioned in the Ṛgveda⁵¹.

Whereas these atharvanic texts are most important as evidence of older Vedic thought a special value attaches to them also because they are the immediate harbingers of the oldest *upaniṣads* and as such attest to the continuity of the ancient speculative reasonings and reflections. The *ātman* concept gains in prominence⁵², and there are connections between the *sūkta* to the (cosmic) breath (*prāṇa*: AVŚ. 11, 4; AVP. 16, 21-23) "in whose control is this All" and which is described as the enlivening principle of everything⁵³ and the Praśna-Upaniṣad⁵⁴.

It is however difficult to decide how to judge the outward form of the speculative hymns and passages—were they preserved by the redactors in a very corrupt form⁵⁵?—and their exact relation to parallel texts in other Vedic works⁵⁶. The stage of speculative thought represented by them and the fact that this thought is more varied, more prominent and creates the impression of greater originality than comparable passages of the Ṛgveda allow us to regard them as approximately synchronous with the Yajurveda-Saṃhitās and the chief *brāhmaṇas*: notice the occurrence of passages in 'didactic' prose⁵⁷ and of 'argumentation' by means of equivalences and identifications, e.g. "Breath is *virāj*, . . . the sun, the moon, breath they call Prajāpati" (AVŚ. 11, 4, 12). It is moreover not certain that Ṛgvedic parallels are in every case more original. Yet one can hardly escape the conviction that the Atharvaveda reproduces, and often enlarges, Ṛgvedic material⁵⁸, or—to express it more cautiously—material

⁵⁰ Cf. F. O. SCHRADER, Über den Stand der indischen Philosophie zur Zeit Mahaviras und Buddhas, Thesis Strassburg 1902, p. 20; D. B. KSHIRSAGAR, at 26 AIOC, S. P., p. 360.

⁵¹ See WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. 518; RENO, in Bull. (see above, n. 29), p. 44.

⁵² See e.g. AVŚ. 5, 1, 7; 5, 7; 9, 7; 6, 53, 2; 7, 67, 1; 9, 4, 10 and especially 10, 8, 44 (on which see DEUSSEN, o.c., p. 334; WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. 589).

⁵³ EDGERTON, o.c., p. 121; cf. also J. FILLOZAT, in Revue philosophique 1933, p. 410; BODEWITZ, J.B., p. 349.

⁵⁴ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 11, 4, 19; PrUp. 2, 7 and see P. DEUSSEN, Sechzig Upanishad's des Veda, Leipzig 1921 (Darmstadt 1963), p. 562.

⁵⁵ As is assumed by EDGERTON, o.c., p. 128; 135; see also BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 88 on AVŚ. 19, 6; ṚV. 10, 90 etc.

⁵⁶ One can for instance have grave doubts about the correctness of WEBER's (I. S. XVIII, p. 9) view of the relation between AVŚ. 4, 2 (AVP. 4, 1) and ṚV. 10, 121: the *atharvan* compilers have, in his opinion, adopted (and garbled) the ṛgvedic text on the golden embryo only to sacrifice with gold (Kaus. 45, 1).

⁵⁷ See below, p. 305. The term *brāhmaṇa* is found in the prose *sūkta* 9, 16 (st. 18).

⁵⁸ Compare also AVŚ. 9, 9f. (AVP. 16, 66ff.): ṚV. 1, 164; AVŚ. 13, 2, 16-24 (AVP. 18, 22, 1-9): ṚV. 1, 50, 1-9; cf. also RENO, o.c., passim.

that was, in variant wordings or verse order, also included in the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā. In doing so the Paippalādins seem to have had somewhat more sympathy for, if not more familiarity with, the Ṛgvedic material than did the Śaunakiyas. To conclude with one more example: several speculative thoughts of the Atharvaveda are modelled upon the image of the Primeval Cosmic Giant from whose limbs the world came into existence⁵⁹. However, there is an unmistakable tendency to outline a new development, that is to graft a *brahman* doctrine upon Puruṣa speculation: the hearer of AVŚ. 10, 2 is gradually led to understand that *brahman* is the sole creator and disposer, that it is omnipresent and that man is its 'stronghold' (*pūr*, hence *puruṣa* "man"). This *brahman* speculation is reflected more conspicuously in the Paippalāda recension⁶⁰ where the concept of the oneness of the world in *brahman* is taught in a somewhat developed form⁶¹.

Reverting to the relations between the more popular Atharvaveda and the hieratic Ṛgveda⁶² it may briefly be noted that, in spite of the different character of these collections, about one fifth of the contents of *kāṇḍas* I–XIX of the former is also found in the latter (more precisely, about 2950 passages, of which about 600 in AVŚ. XX). There is, as stated above, atharvanic material in the Ṛgveda and the Atharvaveda has borrowed from the other corpus (especially from the *maṇḍalas* X, I, VIII): there is no fixed line of demarcation between solemn and predominantly 'magical' private rites. Moreover, the Atharvaveda no doubt is an early example of an Indian work that has tended to some form of encyclopaedic comprehensiveness. Shorter borrowings are mostly found in AVŚ. I–VII; XIX, identical passages of some extent, mainly from ṚV. X, mostly—with comparatively less variants—in VIII; IX; XIII, XIV; XVIII. Many of the longer *sūktas* have nothing in common with the Ṛgveda; most Ṛgvedic material occurs in texts consisting of disjointed stanzas. Among the borrowings are many *sūktas* of one stanza or isolated stanzas which often coincide also with Yajurvedic texts. Solemn panegyric verses have rarely been received in the new surroundings. A stanza of Ṛgvedic origin is sometimes adapted or atharvanized but in other cases inserted without motivation perceptible⁶³. An instance of adaptation is ṚV. 1, 164, 49 addressed to the goddess

⁵⁹ See e.g. AVŚ. 10, 2; 11, 8 and cf. RENOUE, in JA 243, p. 437; Bull. (see above, n. 29), p. 48.

⁶⁰ See D. BHATTACHARYYA, at ALB 28, p. 132.

⁶¹ Cf. e.g. AVP. 8, 9, 2; 12; 16, 61, 7; 8; 18, 25, 10; 26, 1 and see 16, 103, 6 on the sole god, 6, 3, 2 on Prajāpati, on Rudra 20, 32, 6. According to Mbh. 13, 16, 47f. B. the reciters of the Atharvaveda extol the Supreme Brahman.

⁶² BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 44; RENOUE, at JA 243, p. 405; N. J. SHENDE, at JAS Bombay 41–42, p. 56.

⁶³ For questions bearing upon metrical divergences, interpolation etc. see BERGAIGNE, at JA 1886, p. 195 and especially BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 41. The metres of the Atharvaveda are on a level with those of the *gṛhyasūtras*, that is freer and more irregular than their ṛgvedic counterparts, which should not necessarily (with E. V. ARNOLD, at JAOS 22, p. 309 (cf. JAOS 17, p. 2)) be regarded as more original. On the contrary, considering the development of the metrical

Sarasvatī and expressing the wish to suck her breast: it reappears at AVŚ. 7, 10 as a formula to be used when a child is seized by a demon when it is being nursed by its mother⁶⁴. There are more than a hundred instances in which material occurring in both corpora is ascribed to different seers; in these cases the Atharvaveda ascribes the passage mostly to Atharvan, or also to other non-ṛgvedic ṛṣis⁶⁵. Irrespective of whether there exist Ṛgvedic occurrences many *sūktas* or sequences of stanzas are common property of Atharva- and Yajurvedins⁶⁶.

schemes and other prosodic properties as a whole it can be said that there exists a tendency of formal regularity to increase with the passage of time. The relations between ṛgvedic and atharvavedic material in general and its distribution in particular—occasionally, a complete ṛgvedic *sūkta* is divided among different *sūktas* in the Atharvaveda—should be subjected to special studies taking the ritual applications into account (see e.g. H. D. VELANKAR, in JUB N. S. 10, 2 (1941), p. 109). For some particular cases, complications etc. see e.g. L. C. BARRET, in Studies M. Bloomfield, New Haven 1920, p. 5 (AVP. 1, 109); S. S. BHAWE, at Festschrift Kirfel, p. 17 (ṚV. 10, 109 and AVŚ. 5, 17); N. J. SHENDE, J. Univ. Poona, Hum. 23, p. 45 (ṚV. 10, 90 and AV. 19, 6); W. NORMAN BROWN, at JAOS 1968, p. 201 (ṚV. 1, 164 and AV. 9, 9 and 10).

⁶⁴ Cf. KAUS. 32, 1 and CALAND, in ZDMG 53, p. 224; Zauberritual, p. 103.

⁶⁵ However, in *kāṇḍa* XX the *ṛṣis* and deities are the same in both corpora.

⁶⁶ For philosophical material see also p. 302 etc.

5. *Style and structure*

It may be true that many of these compositions can be called poetry only on account of their metrical form, that the subject matter was not often poetical in our sense of the term, yet we should neither, with many previous authors, tacitly ignore the aesthetic qualities of this corpus, evaluating it onesidedly according to the merits of its contents, nor by way of unwarranted generalization characterize¹ its authors as less able handlers of the poetical technique, as uninspired and less-educated versifiers. Many 'magical' texts concerning recurrent situations and standardized wishes may be stereotyped and in our eyes monotonous, they are far from dull and dreary. It must be conceded that their imagery and phraseology hardly appeal to modern westerners who often find so many difficulties in understanding² what is meant that they overlook the aesthetic qualities; that translations are as a rule necessarily inadequate and little helpful; that there is, on the other hand, always the risk of regarding as aesthetically successful and even as intendedly 'poetical' what actually was meant to be of value from a utilitarian point of view. However, any composition that fulfils its requirements can produce remarkable aesthetic effects. Those contained in this corpus not infrequently do so because of the elaboration of their themes; the appositeness of its imagery³, their well-balanced diction⁴; the predilection for metaphors, images, 'symbolism,' for descriptions of nature, for triplication and threefold or manifold parallelism⁵, for anaphora and various forms of antithesis⁶; the relief in which important terms are placed by repetition or other stylistic devices⁷; the frequent successions of words of the same class⁸; the evocative enumerations—sometimes in symmetrical order—contributing to the earnest character of prayers or invocations⁹; the successions of short

¹ With M. B. EMENEAU, in Univ. of California Publ. in Class. Phil. 13, p. 353. See, in general, L. RENOUE, *La poésie de l'Atharvaveda*, Bull. de la maison franco-japonaise, N.S. 4, 1 (Tokyo 1955), p. 1; M. TRIVEDI, *Atharva-Veda, a literary study*, Hoshiarpur 1973 (in Hindi).

² For some remarks on the language of the Atharvaveda see BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 45; CH. R. LANMAN, in *Album Kern*, p. 302; WINTERITZ, in *WZKM* 14, p. 259; GONDA, *Old Indian*, p. 225. There are many rare words and also many untranslatable cases of homophony, alliteration etc. Translators often overlooked the use of the imperative in conjurations. On the Paippalāda recension: RENOUE, E. V. P. III, p. 105.

³ See also chapter V; for the 'figures of speech' N.J. SHENDE, *Kavi and kāvya in the Atharvaveda*, Poona 1967.

⁴ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 3, 17; 19; 25; 4, 15; 16, 6; AVP. 4, 11, 1ff.

⁵ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 1, 11, 6; 3, 25, 2; 5, 21, 4-6; 6, 95, 3; 96, 3; 99, 1; 105, 1-3; 9, 2, 19; 16, 1, 4-5; 18, 4, 38; 19, 9, 3; AVP. 1, 34; 35.

⁶ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 1, 11, 6; 7, 115, 4; 8, 9, 9; 10, 8, 12; 17, 1, 6; 19, 27, 8; AVP. 6, 15, 5ff.

⁷ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 6, 9, 1; 2; 16, 1, 12; 7, 1; 8, 1 etc.; 19, 6, 1; RENOUE, o.c., p. 30.

⁸ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 6, 96, 1; 99, 1; 8, 7, 11; 8, 1; 9, 1, 8; 12, 5, 42; 45; 14, 1, 29; 16, 1, 2; AVP. 2, 51, 1.

⁹ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 5, 28, 12; 6, 55, 2; 85, 2; 96, 2; 8, 6, 10; GONDA, S. R., p. 404.

parallel clauses or sentences involving rhythmical variation¹⁰. Impersonality is often balanced by vivid detail. Though shorter than the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā the Atharvaveda is more varied in contents. Its diction is generally speaking more uniform, its phraseology more precise, often more simple and flexible, also more concrete because the authors' interest was less diffuse and often concentrated upon immediate needs. The tendency to address, or speak of, manifestations of evil or danger, divine helpers, ritual instruments, as persons¹¹; the many identifications and suggestive images¹²; the frequent and repeated references to parallel events¹³ add to the liveliness of the style, the continuous concern about man's health and well-being, as well as the bent for referring to the highest and most general categories, to origins, mythical prototypes, the beyond, and cosmic relations to its loftiness¹⁴. The frequent statement that he who knows transcends the ordinary human condition¹⁵, the almost omnipresent assumption of relations or parallelism between the visible world and the Unseen, the very choice of words describing cosmic events and functions¹⁶ do not fail to lend to many places a touch of weirdness or sublimity.

Some very brief observations may be made on the structure and component parts of the magical texts¹⁷. There are descriptions of the nature, aspects or appearance of evil or references to the origin of the dreaded, dangerous or inimical powers (which imply knowledge of their nature and a possibility of successful defence or attack)¹⁸; statements of the might and names of the manifestations of evil and of the objects used in defence¹⁹; directions given to these expedients²⁰; statements of the operator's knowledge and power, of the power of his words which affirm or describe what he wants to come to pass²¹; various forms of exorcism²² or of expulsion of the evil to others²³; prayers and

¹⁰ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 1, 23, 3; 3, 19, 4; 4, 10, 6; 12, 5; 17, 1, 19; AVP. 1, 57, 1f.; 62; 2; 6, 3, 10.

¹¹ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 4, 31, 6; 32, 1; 5, 22, 4; 6; 7; 12; cf. 14; 24, 3; 6, 105, 1ff.; 113, 2; 19, 47, 1; 9; AVP. 6, 3, 1.

¹² Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 5, 18, 8; 6, 140, 1; 11, 1, 14; 12, 5, 16; 3, 6, 7; 5, 14, 10; 13; 18, 3; 6, 37, 1; 2; 5; 138, 5; 12, 1, 57; 19, 45, 1.

¹³ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 2, 15; 6, 8; 105; 7, 50, 1; 18, 4, 55.

¹⁴ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 1, 25, 1; 29, 1; 2, 1; 25, 2; 4, 40, 8; 8, 1, 10; 19, 44, 4.

¹⁵ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 2, 1, 2; 4, 11, 9; 6, 76, 3; 10, 7, 41; 15, 3, 11; 4, 1-6.

¹⁶ Cf. e.g. AV. 5, 25, 2; 13, 1, 1f.; 2f.; 25f.; 35f.; 3, 1.

¹⁷ Cf. A. V. GERASIMOV, *The contents of the hymns of the Atharvaveda* (Russian), *Indija v drevnosti*, Moscow 1964, p. 95.

¹⁸ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 1, 25, 2ff.; 4, 37, 11; 5, 22, 3; 10; 6, 20, 3; 7, 56, 4; 116, 1; 1, 25, 1; 5, 4, 1f.; 8f.; 5, 1; 4; 6, 24, 1; 19, 39, 1.

¹⁹ E.g. AVŚ. 5, 5, 4; 22, 2; 6, 21, 2; 7, 56, 2; 4, 19, 5; 19, 32, 1; cf. 6, 12, 3.

²⁰ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 5, 4, 6; 22, 3; 13; 6, 85, 1; 19, 31, 8; 32, 6; 33, 1.

²¹ E.g. AVŚ. 1, 3; 2, 10, 5; 3, 7, 6; 19; 24, 2; cf. 6, 76, 3; 19, 39, 9. Boasting may have a stimulating effect.

²² E.g. AVŚ. 1, 22; 23, 2; 2, 25, 4; 4, 36, 7; 5, 22, 5ff.; 12; 7, 83, 1.

²³ E.g. AVŚ. 1, 19, 2; 6, 20, 1; 7, 116, 2.

invocation of divine assistance²⁴ not infrequently combining with spells and charms²⁵, some *sūktas* assuming the character of a prayer for help or deliverance from evil²⁶; references to a divine example, an analogous—and successful—deed of an ancient authority or parallels in nature²⁷; (just before the end of a *sūkta*) statements of the successful completion of a rite²⁸. Many *sūktas* consist entirely, or almost entirely, of combinations of these elements²⁹. Mention of structures in accordance with directions or points of the compass has already been made³⁰. *Sūktas* belonging to the same class not infrequently exhibit limited numbers of ‘catchwords’ denoting the stereotyped wishes, recurrent situations and identical or similar means of defence. Thus the charms and prayers aiming at harmony and concord insist on unity of mind and appeasement of anger³¹, those aiming at a long life-time ask for a life that will last a hundred years, for protection against the regrettably large number of deaths, or implore breath not to leave the body etc.³². In the love-charms the formula “that you shall be bent to my will, shall follow my intent” is a frequent occurrence³³. The self-reliance of the performers of the rites is apparent from statements such as “I shall cause you to live unto old age”³⁴. The protective power of amulets is exuberantly praised, they are full of force, slay enemies, assail and attack, and make those who wear them invincible, a lion or a tiger³⁵.

Sometimes the choice, length and order of words, parallelism and repetitions converge to achieving a most suggestive passage; AVŚ. 3, 12, 1f. (AVP. 3, 20, 1f.):

ihaivā dhruvām nī minomi śālām kṣēme tiṣṭhātī gṛtām ukṣāmānā |
tām tvā śāle sārva virāḥ suvirā dṛiṣṭavirā ūpa sām carema ||
ihaivā dhruvā prāti tiṣṭha śālē ’śvavati gomatī sūnṭīvatī | . . .

“Just here I fix (my) dwelling firm; let it stand safely, sprinkling ghee;
 Into thee, O dwelling, may we enter, our good energetic (sons) safe and sound.
 Just here stand firm, O dwelling, rich in horses, in kine, in pleasantness . . .”

²⁴ E.g. AVŚ. 1, 7; 2, 3, 6; 10, 2; 14, 4; 4, 36, 1; 5, 22, 1; 6, 23, 1; 82, 3; 111, 1; 7, 74, 4; cf. 5, 4 (to a plant).

²⁵ Thus AVP. 1, 40 (RENOU, in JA 252, p. 434) is to reduce various gods to subjection. See e.g. also AVŚ. 2, 10, 2; 28; 3, 25, 6.

²⁶ E.g. AVŚ. 1, 5ff.; 7, 83ff.; 89; 91; 19, 16ff.

²⁷ E.g. AVŚ. 1, 2, 4; 2, 32, 3; 3, 31, 1; 4, 4, 1; 6, 3; 6, 12, 1; 2; 44, 1; 81, 3; 90, 1; 105, 3; 109, 1; 3; 137, 1; 7, 50, 1; 53, 1; 10, 6, 6; cf. 8, 5, 5.

²⁸ E.g. AVŚ. 1, 23, 4; 2, 10, 6ff.; 4, 6, 6 (cf. 5); cf. 8, 5, 8 and 2, 10, 1.

²⁹ E.g. 2, 10; 36; 3, 8; 5, 5; 6, 23; 26.

³⁰ See above, p. 281; cf. also AVŚ. 5, 10; 6, 40, 2; 3; 10, 9, 8; 11, 2, 4; 19, 15, 5.

³¹ AVŚ. 3, 30, 1; 4; 5; 6, 42, 1; 2; 3; 43, 1; 2; 64, 1; 2; 3; 73, 1; 74, 1; 2; 3; 7, 52, 1; 2.

³² Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 2, 28, 1; 2; 4; 5; 29, 1; 2; 3, 11, 2ff.; 7, 53, 2ff.; 8, 1, 1; 2, 8; 11.

³³ AVŚ. 1, 34, 2; 3, 25, 5; 6, 42, 3; 43, 3.

³⁴ AVŚ. 5, 30, 5; cf. also 2, 36, 2; 3, 11, 1ff.

³⁵ AVŚ. 8, 5, 1ff.; 10, 3, 1ff.; 6, 1ff.

But in many other places sound or deep thoughts expressed in well-chosen words alternate with repetitions of the same scheme and analytical enumerations. Thus when in AVŚ. 19, 53 after 5 "Time generated yonder sky, time also these earths . . ." it reads: "In time is mind, in time is breath, in time is name . . ." Or 11, 6, a long series of addresses and names of deities, followed by the refrain "Let them free us from distress." Not to mention the wooden syntax and limited scope of, for instance, *yajus*-like formulas such as AVŚ. 2, 16ff.

Most of the longer 'magic' texts contained in book VIII are characterized by unity of theme and elaboration with a considerable degree of variation. In AVŚ. 8, 1 (AVP. 16, 1f.; 21 stanzas), which is to achieve the continuation of somebody's life, the dominant thought is "remain here, do not perish, do not leave this world," its general tone being that of a conjuration; the atmosphere of 2 (AVP. 16, 3ff.), with the same purpose, is more ritual. *Sūkta* 3 (AVP. 16, 6ff., 1-23 are identical with ṚV. 10, 87, 1-23)³⁶ is a graphic and emphatic address to Agni the slayer of demons and 'sorcerers'; 4 (AVP. 16, 9ff. and ṚV. 7, 104) a similar invocation to Indra-and-Soma, interrupted by stanzas addressed to Agni or other gods. *Sūkta* 5 enlarges upon the power of an amulet, a defence which is "to drive the witchcraft backward" and makes its possessor a lion or a tiger. There is also unity of subject in 6 (against demons attacking a pregnant woman with a recurrent "make them disappear"), 7 (to medicinal herbs) and 8 (against enemies: a string of imprecations.) In prevailing upon deities to help or spare them the poets often resort to homage and praise³⁷. In some cases³⁸ the invocation of a god, repeated again and again, is the main theme of a *sūkta*: in 1, 7³⁹ the incantation prevails upon Agni to make those who practise offensive 'sorcery' come out and proclaim their true character (for as soon as they reveal their name and nature they become innocuous):

- (1) "Proclaiming himself do thou, O Agni, convey hither
The wizard and the evil spirit,
For thou, O god, when praised, hast become
The slayer of the impious man.
- (3) The sorcerers shall cry and the devouring spirits;
Then, O Agni, together with Indra,
Welcome this oblation.
- (5) We would like to see thy might, O Jātavedas;
Announce to us the wizards, O thou that watches men.
Let them all, burnt by thee in front,
Announcing themselves come to this place."

³⁶ Cf. OLDENBERG, H. R. I, p. 246.

³⁷ See e.g. the long hymn to Rudra AVŚ. 11, 2 (AVP. 16, 104-106); 17, 1 (AVP. 18, 31ff.), a prayer and praise to Indra, Viṣṇu, and the Sun; AVP. 1, 78; 95; 5, 11; 26; 7, 3.

³⁸ See e.g. also AVŚ. 6, 2 Indra receiving *soma* (but at Kauś. 29, 27 prescribing st. 2 no mention is made of this offering); 2, 5 (Indra); 6 (Agni); 3, 20 (Agni and other gods); 4, 23 (Agni); 7, 77 (Maruts). Some of these *sūktas* are below the usual standard (e.g. 6, 33, Indra) or obscure (6, 49, Agni). Cf. BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 82.

³⁹ Cf. also 1, 8. Jātavedas (in 1, 7, 8) = Agni.

The very themes of some of the larger *sūktas* gave their poets an opportunity to describe the essence of the entity chosen as their theme, and to dwell on its aspects. In the famous Hymn to the Earth, AVŚ. 12, 1 (AVP. 17, 1–6)⁴⁰, one of the most beautiful Vedic *sūktas*, our planet is with much variation celebrated under various aspects: as the bearer and residence of animate and inanimate beings; as the indispensable ground for sacrificing and divine and human activity; as the universal mother and dispenser of many benefits, to whom every being owes his existence. Much inclined to anthropomorphism the poet pushes the traditional mythology into the background, paying homage to the earth as a great goddess who, while sharing in man's cares and interests, wields influence upon elementary force and fundamental powers. Without neglecting such motifs as her origin and speculations about her odour he has an eye for the natural scenery⁴¹. On the other hand, though surpassing all magical texts proper by its length (63 stanzas), the depth of its descriptions and the broadness of its outlook, the spirit of the hymn is in harmony with these, the more so as most of its stanzas—and many of them emphatically in their last quarter—express the personal desires of the poet and his fellows:

- (1) “. . . Let her, mistress of what is and what is to be,
Let the earth make for us wide room.
(63) O Mother Earth, propitiously set me down well-founded,
In concord with Heaven, O sage, place me in fortune, in prosperity.”

Whereas the poet of 12, 1 does not deviate from his subject, the theme, or rather the starting-point, of the four Rohita *sūktas*⁴² of book XIII (1 and 2: AVP. 18, 15ff.) is repeatedly lost sight of. *Sūkta* 1, less precativè in character, describes the phenomenon of sunrise and the safety and other benefits resulting from it, the power of the sun as creator, its various cosmic and mythological aspects and speculative implications with the interruption of st. 27–31, imprecations against rivals addressed to Agni, Indra and other deities. In 2, delineating the phenomena accompanying the appearance of sunlight, the functions, properties, importance and incomprehensive power of the celestial body, now called *Āditya*, come to the fore, the name Rohita remaining in the background. *Sūkta* 3 is mainly welded into a whole by the refrain wording a typically atharvanic anathema against the one who injures brahmins⁴³ which is only absent

⁴⁰ It has the distinction of being the most frequently translated *sūkta* of the Atharvaveda: e.g. BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. 199; M. LINDENAU, in Festgabe H. Jacobi, Bonn 1926, p. 248; H. BECKH, Der Hymnus an die Erde, Stuttgart 1934; RENOU, H.S., p. 189; and see also G. TUCCI, Eranos-Jahrbuch 22 (Zürich 1954), p. 323; P. S. SASTRI, at IHQ 30, p. 101; cf. also RENOU, at Yggdrasil 1938, p. 161.

⁴¹ Generally speaking, in referring to nature, plants etc. the poets—e.g. of AVŚ. 4, 34, 5, see S. BASU, at VIJ 6, p. 61—tend to overlook the aesthetic aspects.

⁴² See also above, p. 293. For a translation: V. HENRY, Les hymnes Rohitas, Paris 1891; see also BLOOMFIELD, at AJPh 12, p. 429; P. REGNAUD, Le mythe de Rohita, Paris 1892; U. K. OZA, at AP 19, p. 547; V. C. SRIVASTAVA, at QJMS 58, p. 122.

⁴³ See above, p. 287.

in the last (26th) stanza, some groups of two or more successive stanzas being more closely connected by common catchwords. The larger part of the last text has nothing to do with the adoration of the Sun, although the initial stanzas identified him with other divine powers, which in the transitional stanza 13 are said to "become one" in him; in the man who knows this all gods become one.

We should however proceed with caution in assuming a double or composite character of a text: AVŚ. 1, 12 (AVP. 1, 17) for instance is not a hymn to lightning and a charm against the diseases attributed to it⁴⁴, but rather such a charm in which the author has, in the usual way, included references to the origin and effects of lightning, homage and the expression of the wish to be spared and freed from disease⁴⁵. The sublime and justly admired hymn to Varuṇa AVŚ. 4, 16⁴⁶, apparently quite original in the Atharvaveda—part of its stanzas are also found in AVP. 5, 32—betrays its purpose in its second half which should not be considered a later magical addition degrading a beautiful piece of art into the exordium of an exorcism. The exceptional statement of divine omniscience, omnipresence and almighty power is only an extreme instance of the heights of poetical fervour, vision and eloquence which occasionally were within the reach of these poets:

- (1) "The firm governor watches them, as it were, closely;
Who thinks to go on stealthily—all this the gods know.
- (2) Whoever stands, who moves, who crookedly goes, who hiddenly (or) in secret (?),
What two sitting down together, talk, king Varuṇa as the third knows that.
- (3) Both this earth is king Varuṇa's, and yonder firm sky with distant margins;
The two oceans are his paunches, in this petty water is he hidden.
- (5) All this king Varuṇa sees, what is between heaven and earth, what beyond;
Numbered by him are the winkings of people; as a gambler the dice, so does he fix these (things)."

And then in

- (7) "With a hundred snares, O Varuṇa, surround him; let the speaker of untruth not escape thee, O watcher of men . . ."

With the probable exception of AVŚ. 5, 11 (AVP. 8, 1) there are no dialogue *sūktas*, but questions, whether introductory or intercalary, are a favourite

⁴⁴ BLOOMFIELD, in PAOS 1886 at JAOS 13, p. CXIII; H. AV., p. 247 (where many particulars regarding the interpretation); A. V. G. B., p. 37; 43.

⁴⁵ That the ritualists had a double employment for the text (Kaus. 26, 1 against certain diseases; 38, 1; 7 against bad weather and superfluous rain) is another thing.

⁴⁶ R. ROTH, Abhandlung über den Atharvaveda, Tübingen 1856, p. 28; A. KAEGI, Der Rigveda, Leipzig 1881, p. 89 (with parallels from the Old Testament); BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. 390 (with a bibliographical note); WEBER, I. S. XVIII, p. 66; WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. 176; WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 144; H. LOMMEL, at ZDMG 92, p. 452.

device⁴⁷. Questions and answers and riddles of the *brahmodya* type⁴⁸ in succession are, in these texts, an attempt to gain an insight or establish a truth⁴⁹ developing into a speculative device. Riddles form, besides praise of princes and of some gods (Agni, Indra), ritual jokes or obscenities, and didactic stanzas, the contents of the Kuntāpa hymns (AVŚ. 20, 127–136)⁵⁰, the only original *sūktas* of book XX; while allied to the *dānastutis* of the Rgveda they are liturgies to be used in the sacrificial ritual, their liturgic tradition corresponding to the natural subdivisions according to their subject-matter. Refrains are frequent⁵¹ and so are, mostly for ritual purposes, repetitions of the same scheme and varied successions of words that with one or a few exceptions are identical⁵². Various forms of progress by means of concatenation⁵³ sometimes interrupt the often abrupt and artless transitions from one stanza or sentence to another.

The peculiarities mentioned last are also proper to the two *sūktas* of book XIV (AVP. 18, 1 ff.) (139 stanzas) which contain the wedding formulas⁵⁴. They coincide largely, but not entirely, with R̥V. 10, 85⁵⁵, the Sūryāsūkta. Other R̥gvedic stanzas, notably 10, 40, 10 ff., reappear also, but many formulas are foreign to the other corpus. Most of them are found also with many variants in the *gr̥hyasūtras* where they are ritually prescribed⁵⁶. However, the order in which the stanzas appear in the Atharvaveda—the differences between both recensions are but slight—deviates considerably from the regular order of the rites which is followed in the *sūtras* (including that of Kauśika). The compiler seems to have arranged the material to a certain extent in accordance with the principles of metrical identity, unity of theme, and, in places, concatenation. AVŚ. 14, 1, 1–5 are in praise of Soma who is to contract the archetypal marriage

⁴⁷ See e.g. AVŚ. 8, 9, 1; 10, 2, 1 f.; 4 ff.; 10, 7, 1 ff.; 18, 1, 4; 6; 7; 12; 33. In oral instruction the number of questions was enlarged; cf. H. R. DIRWEKAR, in JGJKSV 27, p. 197.

⁴⁸ See p. 134. For an etymology see e.g. AVŚ. 4, 7, 1.

⁴⁹ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 7, 1; 10, 2, 8 ff.; 22 f.; 24 f.; 15, 11, 2 ff.; 17, 1 ff.; 8, 4; 11, 8, 1; 8 ff.; AVP. 1, 30, 6; 6, 3, 1 f.; 16, 61, 7 f. The answer may also be implied.

⁵⁰ Not found in AVP.; there is no *pada* text. The meaning of the name is not clear. See BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 96; H. G. NARAHARI, at AP 21, p. 403. Cf. e.g. GB. 2, 6, 13; by means of AVŚ. 20, 133, 1 ff. the gods overcame their enemies (who could make nothing of them), and sacrificers are advised to use them for the same purpose.

⁵¹ Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 2, 27, 2–6; 3, 31; 4, 2; 24; 33; 5, 31; 6, 107; 10, 7; 9; 11, 3; 12, 3, 55 ff.

⁵² Cf. e.g. AVŚ. 2, 24; 3, 26; 27; 4, 40; 5, 10; 15; 16; 31, 1 ff.; 6, 13; 15, 11, 3 ff.; 16, 8. Compare also the structure of a *sūkta* such as AVŚ. 6, 135.

⁵³ See e.g. AVŚ. 3, 23, 1; 4, 7; 6, 18, 1–2; 107; 114, 1 f.; 14, 1, 17 ff.; 34 ff.; 43 f.; 2, 25 f. and BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 43 with n. 15.

⁵⁴ See T. YA. ELIZARENKOVA and A. YA. SYRKIN, An analysis of the Vedic wedding hymn R̥V. 10, 85, Trans. Tartu Univ. 181 Sem. II (1965), p. 173; GONDA, at IJ 8, p. 1; L. ALSDORF, at ZDMG 111, p. 492; M. WINTERNITZ, Das altindische Hochzeitsrituell, Denkschriften Akad. Wien 40 (1892).

⁵⁵ See above, p. 115.

⁵⁶ See also Kauś. 75–79 (which does not use all *mantras*).

with Sūryā, the daughter of the Sun⁵⁷; st. 6–16 deal with the requisites and functionaries present at the ceremony; st. 17ff. are consecratory formulas, part of which are grouped to accompany the same episode of the ceremonies, and so on. Book XVIII⁵⁸ in four *sūktas* containing the funeral stanzas is another version of the corresponding materials in the Ṛgveda, amplified however with a considerable number of stanzas that are found in other parts of that corpus or are even completely foreign to it⁵⁹. Outside this book there are in the Atharvaveda many other allusions to certain funeral practices⁶⁰.

About one-sixth of the Śaunakīya Saṃhitā consists of prose which generally is of the *brāhmaṇa* variety⁶¹. The twenty-seven *sūktas* comprising book XV and almost the whole of XVI, as well as some thirty other *sūktas* scattered in other books (mainly in the second and third great divisions) are entirely unmetrical, in addition to these also parts or single stanzas of over a hundred *sūktas*⁶². In the *sūktas* mentioned last this prose and the metrical elements are generally speaking tolerably well blended. Constituting in all probability the oldest Indian prose extant this mode of expression seems to have developed together with the formation of the speculative portions of the corpus. Two types must be distinguished, the '*yajus*' and the '*brāhmaṇa*' prose. The former occurs, either isolated or serially—but never to form longer *sūktas*—in all parts of the *saṃhitā*. A typical specimen is AV. 2, 17, 1 *ójo 'sy ójo me dāh* "(inaugurative) power art Thou; give me (this) power" (the person speaking wishes to benefit by the statement of a truth). These '*yajus*' are presumably less modified by the versified ṛgvedic *mantras* than the, probably contemporaneous, corresponding yajurvedic formulas. The '*brāhmaṇa*' prose of the *saṃhitā* occurs in larger autonomous and coherent texts—8, 10; 9, 6; 7; 11, 3; 12, 5; 15—all of them being *pariyāya* ("period") hymns⁶³. It is characterized by typically *brāhmaṇa* constructions, an unmistakable monotony, and the use of some formal categories which are foreign to the Ṛgveda⁶⁴. In comparison with the *brāhmaṇas* it is however stiff, more uniform and morphologically poorer.

Book XV, in contents and style like the *brāhmaṇas* and divided into 18 short chapters (*pariyāya*), glorifies the *vrātya*⁶⁵, the representative of unorthodox,

⁵⁷ See also S. KRAMRISCH, in JAOS 81, p. 116.

⁵⁸ Only a few stanzas are in different places found in the Paippalāda recension.

⁵⁹ For particulars see BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 95.

⁶⁰ Cf. BLOOMFIELD, AJPh 11, p. 336.

⁶¹ For a list of these passages: WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. 1011; for a study: RENO, E. V. P. I, p. 71.

⁶² It is not always easy to distinguish whether a piece is composed in prose or extremely free verse.

⁶³ WHITNEY-LANMAN, AV., p. CXXXIII; 471; the term applies to an internal division of these extended compositions.

⁶⁴ See RENO, o.c., p. 81 and, in general, below p. 410 ff.

⁶⁵ The *vrātyas* have given rise to much and partly unsettled controversial dispute: TH. AUFRECHT, in WEBER, I.S. I, p. 121 (translation); J. CHARPENTIER, at WZKM 23, p. 151; 25, p. 355; M. WINTERITZ, at Zs. f. Buddhismus 1924–25,

but Aryan, errant groups with traditions, a cult and a decidedly ritualistic speculative thought of their own—they did not study the Veda (PB. 17, 1, 2)—which must have maintained intimate connections with the Atharvavedins⁶⁶. In these rather abstruse chapters, which are almost completely wanting in the Paippalāda tradition and are not quoted in the two *sūtras*, the *vrātya* is exalted as having become the Lord; section 10–13 describes the prospect of blessings held out to a king who receives a *vrātya* as his guest; sections 2–6 and 14 are arranged in accordance with the well-known system of the regions of the universe, through which the deified *vrātya* makes a creative tour.

p. 48; B. LAL MUKHERJEE, at JASBengal 1925, p. 179; J. W. HAUER, *Der Vrātya*, Stuttgart 1927 and at *Festschrift M. Winternitz*, Leipzig 1933, p. 143; S. BISWAS, at ZDMG 105, p. *53 and *Vrātyastoma*, Thesis Berlin 1955; SAMPURNĀNAND, *The Atharvaveda Vrātyakāṇḍa*, Madras 1956 (following Sāyaṇa); J. C. HEESTERMAN, at IJ 6, p. 1; CH. SEN, at JOIB 12, p. 288; A. C. BANERJEA, *Studies in the brāhmaṇas*, Delhi 1963, p. 81; HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 401 (with a bibliographical note).

⁶⁶ See HORSCH, o.c., p. 406.

6. *Ancillary and exegetical literature*

The so-called *Parīṣiṣṭās* (Supplements, Appendices)¹ of the Atharvaveda actually constitute a detailed, valuable and informative survey—of course, from the atharvanic point of view²—of various kinds of religious practices in vogue in definite milieus in the late Vedic and early Hindu period. They are a well-considered collection of 72 longer or shorter texts³, some of which in *sūtra* style, others metrical, in the older parts in Vedic metres, in the younger sometimes in complicated younger metres, very often in the *śloka*. The style often tends to enumerative exactness. Many of its chapters are Vedic in their general contents, but their language, sometimes even ungrammatical, reminds us of that of the *purāṇas*. This peculiarity is in harmony with the fact that the rites and customs mentioned are not infrequently also described in other works that doubtless belong to the post-Vedic period⁴. Although the method of operation of these texts is genuinely atharvanic and in accordance with the method used by *Kauśika*⁵—ch. 45 on the *agnihotra* is in close agreement with *Vait.* ch. 7—their compilation must have taken place late. They attest, for instance, to the ‘transition’ of Rudra to Śiva⁶. Some texts—for instance 45—while creating the impression of being a *sūtra* inculcate the doctrine of the indispensability of an atharvanic functionary for those who want to perform sacrifices or other ritual⁷. Hence also the passages that urge the necessity for appointing a *purohita* who alone can avert evil⁸, and the ample room given to omens, portents⁹,

¹ Edition: G. M. BOLLING and J. VON NEGELEIN, *The Parīṣiṣṭas of the Atharvaveda*, Leipzig 1909 (containing also references to older literature). The text is often corrupt.

² Atharvanic authorities are frequently mentioned (e.g. 7; 23, 14, 3; 27, 2, 5; 28, 1, 2; 44, 4, 15).

³ See v. NEGELEIN, at *OLZ* 11 (1908), p. 447; CALAND, at *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 14, p. 513; EDGERTON, in *Studies Bloomfield*, p. 117; B. R. MODAK, *A study of the ancillary literature of the Atharvaveda*, with special reference to the *parīṣiṣṭas*, Poona 1951 (not published); and in *Journal Karnatak Univ.* 3 (1959), p. 100; 8 (1964), p. 65.

⁴ To avoid misunderstanding: there are also many parallels in Vedic texts or in *parīṣiṣṭas* to other Vedic works (see CALAND, o.c.).

⁵ Notice also the resemblance between AVPar. 37 and *Kauś.* 93–136 (expiatory ceremonies). *Kauś.* 140 and AVPar. 19 describe the same Indra festival: GONDA, at *JAOS* 87, p. 413.

⁶ Compare e.g. AVPar. 40 a *Pāśupatavratam*, being the rules for an ascetic performance in honour of Rudra as *Paśupati*. The ritual of a ceremony in honour of Skanda is described in 20 (translated by C. J. GOODWIN, at *PAOS* 1890, (*JAOS* 15), p. V); atharvanic Rudra-Śiva ceremonies in 36; 31 deals with a ritual which Atharvan once performed for Śiva and must be reproduced by the *purohita*. For ‘transition’ see also 34.

⁷ Cf. also 5 (lustration ritual); 21 (the objects required at a ceremony); 23, 14, 1 ff.

⁸ See e.g. AVPar. 2 (on the acquisition of a kingdom); 4 (the daily ceremonies to be performed by that functionary); 31 (see above, n. 6); 70, 1, 4 ff.

⁹ D. J. KOHLBRUGGE, *Atharvaveda-parīṣiṣṭa über Omina*, Thesis Utrecht 1938:.

astrology, ritual connected with the constellations¹⁰ as well as to royal rites¹¹. Besides, there are magical practices¹²—e. g. 35 in order to overcome or destroy a person one makes his image out of ground black mustard which is addressed as “the pungent one, the blessed reddish one, daughter of Atharvan and wonderworker”—, rules for a *śrāddha*¹³, popular and consecratory rites, ritual for the presentation of gifts to officiants¹⁴, texts dealing with the objects required at a ceremony¹⁵ and other subject matter. The *Aśanasādhbhūtāni* (AVPar. 71)¹⁶ deal with a large variety of portents, ill-omened occurrences in sacrifices, omens connected with birds and other animals, with things not human that begin to speak or stationary things that move, flesh and blood fallen in showers, withered trees that begin to grow and other such dreaded occurrences. The text presents itself as being communicated by *Uśanas*—hence its name—to *Nārada* who came to him for instruction, a very well-known structure of the Hindu puranic and didactic types of literature.

Another ancillary text, the *Atharvaprāyaścittāni*¹⁷, derives its importance, not only—notwithstanding the highly corrupt state of its text—from its contents, atonements for various mistakes or ominous events in the ritual, but also from the fact that it is the oldest collection of its genre. Although some of its manuscripts regard it as an addendum to the *Vaitāna-Sūtra*, it is an independent treatise which, in contradistinction to *Kauśika* and *Vaitāna*, joins the *Paipalāda* recension¹⁸. The compiler often refers to dissentient opinions of other authorities and likes to digress in *brāhmaṇa* style in order to elucidate the ritual practices or to argue his prescriptions right and effective. The principle on which his argumentation is based is the necessity of an immediate integral restitution. For instance:

(2, 4) “Next, if the *agnihotra* cow which is to give warm milk for some (sacrifice) lows when she is milked, what is then the atonement? She lows because she wishes to announce hunger and thirst to the sacrificer. Therefore one should give her also hay as food with the *mantra* AVP. 20, 11, 4 ‘Feeding in excellent

translation etc. of AVPar. 57, 62 (on earthquakes); 58 (glowing of the horizon and meteors); 59 (lightning); 60 (cyclones); 61 (twilight); 63 (halos); parts of 64; 70; 71 (various portents); for 71 see also J. T. HATFIELD, at JAOS 15, p. 207 (résumé: PAOS 1888, p. XII, CLVI) and BÖHTLINGK, *Berichte sächs. Ges. d. Wiss.* 44, p. 188.

¹⁰ B. R. MODAK, *Nakṣatralpa* (AVPar. 1), Proc. 26 Int. Congr. of Or. III, p. 119; see also G. M. BOLLING, *The Āntikalpa of the Atharvaveda* (a small text containing rules for propitiatory rites), TAPhA 35 (1904), p. 77 and JAOS 33, p. 265.

¹¹ See e. g. 3 (consecration of a king); 6 (lustration); 7 (a nocturnal lustration); 8; 13; 17f.

¹² See for 35: H. W. MAGOUN, at AJPh 10, p. 165.

¹³ W. CALAND, *Altindischer Ahnencult*, Leiden 1893, p. 95; 240.

¹⁴ See AVPar. 9 ff.; 14ff.

¹⁵ See AVPar. 21ff.

¹⁶ Text and translation: see n. 9.

¹⁷ Edition (with notes): J. VON NEGELEIN, at JAOS 33, p. 71; 217; 34, p. 229 (introduction; there is no translation); see also CALAND, at WZKM 18, p. 197.

¹⁸ CALAND, at WZKM, l. c.

meadows, well-portioned (fortunate) (so also may we be well-portioned; eat hay . . .).”

A few words must be said on the *prāṭisākhya*s. The work edited at the time by Whitney¹⁹ is in accordance with its sub-title really the *prāṭisākhya* of the Śaunakiya recension, not that of the Atharvaveda in general or of the Indian vulgate—which is however not very different, the Paippalāda standing apart from the main tradition. Failing to see this the editors Roth and Whitney ‘emended’ the text after this *prāṭisākhya*²⁰. Manuscripts of another work which is fundamentally different, found in 1923, were published in 1939²¹. This *prāṭisākhya* coincides exactly with the manuscripts of the vulgate. It is represented by a shorter (abridged) text comprising stiff and simple *sūtras* and a larger, probably less original one that has been amplified with paraphrases and interpolations. It is a typical illustration of a *sūtra* in the making; from its style it appears that the larger text must have received its present form somewhere between the Ṛgveda-Prāṭisākhya and the later philosophical *sūtras*: there is an admixture of concise mnemonic verses (*kārikā*). The plan of the work is remarkable. Borrowing a long series of examples from the *padapāṭha* it is a sort of codification of that work arranged by means of rubricating *sūtras*. It does not contain any phonetical rule. This type of *prāṭisākhya* is probably older than the normal type in which the *padapāṭha* is converted into the *saṃhitā* text.

The Āṅgirasakalpa²² of the Atharvaveda is a later handbook which, besides an account of the legendary promulgation of this Veda by the Atharvans and Āṅgirasas and myths and legends connected with the founder Pippalāda, includes various rites for the protection of the sacrificer and his officiants, imprecatory rites, counter-rites to face probable ‘witchcraft’ practised by enemies²³, a description of the accessories needed in performing these rites and so on. Like the other ritual handbooks (*kalpa*) and *pariśiṣṭas* of this Veda it is mainly written in the puranic style and embodies also decidedly Hindu, or even almost tantric, matter. In accordance with this character of the contents they are represented as being communicated by Āṅgiras to his son and interrogator Pippalāda: the well-known structure of innumerable Hindu works.

¹⁹ W. D. WHITNEY, The Atharvaveda-Prāṭisākhya or Śaunakiyā Caturādhyāyikā (text, translation, notes etc.), JAOS 7, p. 333 (Varanasi 1962). See also WHITNEY, at PAOS 1862, p. LVII.

²⁰ The corruptions are however part of the atharvavedic tradition. It may be recalled that this tradition was from the beginning less protected from deterioration, intrusion of ‘hybrid’ forms etc. (see also RENOUE, E. V. P. III, p. 119).

²¹ SŪRYA KĀNTA, Atharvaveda-Prāṭisākhya (texts, introduction, English translation etc.), Lahore 1939 (Delhi 1968). For the ‘vulgate’: p. 32. See also RENOUE, at JA 235, p. 149.

²² Cf. CALAND, in GGA 1900, 5, p. 407; V. W. KARAMBELKAR, at 16 AIOC, II, p. 61; D. BHATTACHARYYA, at 21 AIOC, I, p. 73; Fundamental themes, p. 2.

²³ Cf. Ṛgvidhāna 4, 6, 4.

According to Dārila's commentary on the Kauśika-Sūtra²⁴ the Atharva-saṃhitā existed, not only in the form of our printed texts (the *saṃhitā* of the ṛṣis), but also in an abbreviated form for the purpose of instruction (*ācāryasaṃhitā* "teacher's *saṃhitā*") and a form for ritual use (*vidhiprayoga*) in which verses are split in parts or increased by repetition, new words are inserted, etc. As to the literature immediately attaching itself to the Atharvaveda, tradition²⁵ has it that there were five *kalpas* regarded as *śruti*²⁶. Paiṭhinasi, a compiler of *sūtra* and *smṛti* material, whose works seem to have been lost was an adherent of the Paippalāda school²⁷.

In addition to what has already been said on the preservation of the Atharvaveda²⁸ it may finally be observed that various post-Vedic works, among which the epics and *purāṇas*, were acquainted with it and recognized its importance²⁹. According to the Bhāratiya-Nāṭyaśāstra describing the origin of dramatic art (I, 17) the recitative was taken from the Ṛgveda, the songs from the Sāmaveda, histrionic representation from the Yajurveda and the sentiments (*rasa*) from the Atharvaveda. In arguing that all creatures really are *brahman* Bādarāyaṇa's Brahmasūtras 2, 3, 43 refer to AVP. 8, 9, 10 where gamblers etc. are said to be *brahman*³⁰. Epigraphical records mentioning the fourth Veda are not wanting³¹. The commentary³² attributed to Sāyaṇa, but most probably composed by another interpreter³³, contains a mass of etymological and other nonsense, worthless 'variants,' false constructions and other shortcomings; yet, sometimes it may put us, even by a not completely correct interpretation, in a fair way to a better understanding of a passage. Notwithstanding the waning popularity of this corpus—which, while containing much extraneous subject-matter was not of much use in sacrificing³⁴—individual scholars con-

²⁴ Dārila, on p. 1 of the edition (Kauśikasūtra-Dārīlabhāṣya, ed. by H. R. Diwekar and others, Poona 1972). See H. R. Diwekar, in JGJKSV 27 (1971), I, p. 193.

²⁵ CALAND, Ahnencult, p. 99; 109; A. HILLEBRANDT, Ritualliteratur, Strassburg 1897, p. 36; KANE, H. Dh. I, p. 121.

²⁶ AVPar. 49, 4, 7; BLOOMFIELD, JAOS 11, p. 376; for the ritual manuals (*pad-dhati*, the subject-matter is of *grhya* character) of the Paippalādins that have come to light in Orissa see D. BHATTACHARYYA, Fundamental themes, p. 2. A discussion of these texts does not belong here.

²⁷ RENOUE, Écoles, p. 85; KANE, H. Dh. I, p. 121.

²⁸ And to the chapter "The position of the Atharvaveda in Hindu literature in general," in BLOOMFIELD, H. AV., p. XXVIII.

²⁹ See N. K. V. PANTULU, at QJMS 29, p. 407; H. G. NARAHARI, at BDCRI 18, p. 30. Cf. e.g. also Bhavabhūti, Mahāv. 1, 62; 2, 24.

³⁰ For Bādarāyaṇa (and Śaṅkara): D. BHATTACHARYYA, in Mélanges Renou, p. 97; at ALB 28, p. 141, and in Proc. 26 Int. Congr. Or. III, p. 28.

³¹ D. B. DISKALKAR, at JASBombay 34-35, p. 75.

³² For editions see above, p. 273, n. 15.

³³ SŪRYA KĀNTA, o.c., p. 51 and at BhV 11, p. 75. See W. D. WHITNEY's very unfavourable judgement in Festgruß v. Roth, p. 89.

³⁴ See, however, for a text that has been in use up to this century (AVŚ. 1, 33, to the Waters: for purificatory use) N. K. V. PANTULU, at QJMS 29, p. 387.

tinued to take interest in it. Among them was Dhiragovindaśarman who, between 1826 and 1832, wrote an *Ātharvaṇarahasya*³⁵ in which he explains its significance as an authoritative part of scripture and lays special emphasis upon its philosophical aspects. The influence exerted by the Atharvaveda upon spiritual life of later times, the link it constitutes between older and later thought, cannot be considered in this chapter³⁶.

³⁵ See BHATTACHARYYA, in *Mélanges Renou*, p. 97.

³⁶ I refer to N. J. SHENDE, at JUB 19, p. 28; N. K. V. PANTULU, at QJMS 27, p. 153; RENOU, E. V. P. VI, p. 10.

CHAPTER VII

THE LITURGICAL SAṂHITĀS

1. The Sāmaveda

Although *purāṇas* and other later works make mention of no less than a thousand *saṁhitās* of the Sāmaveda¹ only two have come down to us, viz. those of the Kauthumas (considered the vulgate), and of the Jaiminiyas or Talavakāras².

The Kauthuma-Saṁhitā³ consists of 1810⁴—or if the repetitions are excluded 1549—stanzas, distributed in two books called “collections of *ṛc* stanzas” (*ārcika*)⁵. This name is most appropriate because, 76 excepted (a few of these occur in other *saṁhitās* or works on ritual⁶), all these stanzas are taken from the Ṛgveda-Saṁhitā, mainly from the books VIII and IX of that corpus⁷. Most of these stanzas are composed in *gāyatrī* metre or *praṅgātha* stanzas and doubtless

¹ See R. SIMON, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der vedischen Schulen*, Kiel 1889, p. 27; G. S. RAI, *Śākhās of the Sāmaveda in the purāṇas*, *Purāṇa* 8, p. 115; CALAND, *PB*, p. I; N. TSUJI, *An outline of the extant Sāmaveda literature*, I, Tokyo 1948 (in Japanese). The tradition is confused. The name Sāmaveda occurs at ŚB. 11, 5, 8, 3; AiB. 5, 32, 1 etc.

² W. CALAND, *Die Jaiminiya-Saṁhitā mit einer Einleitung über die Sāmaveda-literatur*, Breslau 1907; RENOÜ, *Écoles*, p. 87. For the Rānāyaniyas see below, p. 318.

³ Edited and translated by TH. BENFEY, *Die Hymnen des Sāma-Veda*, Leipzig 1848; reprint 1968–69 (text, translation etc.); by S. D. SATAVALEKAR, *Pardi* 1956. The Saṁhitā text, the four *gānas* and annexed texts were moreover edited by SATYAVRATA SĀMAŚRAMĪ, 5 vol., Calcutta 1871–1878. With the commentaries of Mādhava and Bharatasvāmin ed. by C. KUNHAN RAJA, *Adyar-Madras* 1941. Other editions etc. in the Vedic bibliographies. Translations: J. STEVENSON, *London* 1842, *Calcutta* 1906 (much antiquated); R. T. H. GRIFFITH, *Benares* 1893 (1963, imperfect).

⁴ The *Arāṇyakasaṁhitā* (see below) not included.

⁵ As distinct from *sāman* (see below), the *ārcikas* being a kind of libretti.

⁶ A few may perhaps be regarded as borrowed from a recension—or rather from a *khila* collection—unknown to us, some others are fitted together out of sundry verses of the Ṛgveda. A considerable part of these stanzas is however up to ṛgvedic standard. Some of them are atharvanic in character and may derive their origin from that corpus. Generally speaking these stanzas seem to be insertions added at an early date. Most of them belong exclusively to the Kauthuma and (in the Pūrvārcika) Jaiminiya traditions. For particulars see RENOÜ, at *JA* 240, p. 133.

⁷ Cf. also EGGELENG, ŚB. I, p. XXI.

from the beginning intended for singing⁸. Some of these Ṛgvedic verses appear with different readings which must be explained as due to alterations introduced when the words of the texts were set to music⁹. The first book of the collection under consideration, the Pūrvārcika¹⁰, consists of 585 single (unconnected) stanzas (*rc*), 45 of which are not found in the Ṛgveda; they are arranged in decades (*daśat*), ten decades forming a "lecture" (*prapāthaka*), of which there are six¹¹. The stanzas follow each other roughly in accordance with deities and metres, no doubt in imitation of the *samhitā* of the Ṛgveda. Thus those of the first twelve decades are addressed to Agni, those of the following thirty-six chiefly to Indra¹², those of the last eleven to Soma. The second book (Uttarārcika, 1225 stanzas of which 31 non-Ṛgvedic) contains nine "lectures" each of which is divided into two, and sometimes three, sections (*ardha* "half"). Each of the twenty-two sections consists of a number (from eleven to twenty-three, the last one however nine) small groups of stanzas¹³. Normally these groups are triads: of these there are 287¹⁴. The first in the group is usually found in the Pūrvārcika also and, in contents, closely connected with the rest of the group. The triads and other groups are arranged according to the order of the principal sacrifices¹⁵. In contradistinction to the first *ārcika* the Uttarārcika is only concerned with *soma* sacrifices.

Now, in both books the essential element is not the texts—the Sāmavedins are less interested in the meaning of the words than in prosodic correctness¹⁶—but the melody. To teach the melodies is their very purpose. A brahmin who wished to be trained as an *udgātar*¹⁷—the priest who at *śrauta* rites chants the hymns of the Sāmaveda—had first to learn the melodies (*sāman*)¹⁸. This was

⁸ See OLDENBERG, at ZDMG 38, p. 439; 464 (= K.S., p. 513; 538). J. HERTEL, in WZKM 18, p. 59 erroneously denied any difference between recitation and chant. For *pragātha* etc. see p. 177.

⁹ AUFRECHT, H. R. II, p. XXXVIII; W. D. WHITNEY, in PAOS 1883, p. CLXXXIV (the larger part of the stanzas is wholly identical); OLDENBERG, H. R., p. 289; J. BRUNE, Zur Textkritik der dem Sāmaveda mit dem 8. Maṇḍala des Ṛgveda gemeinsamen Stellen, Thesis Kiel 1909.

¹⁰ Often briefly *ārcika*.

¹¹ The sixth *prapāthaka* has only nine decades; there are some other departures from the rule, for which see BENFEY'S edition and RENOU, in IJ 1, p. 5. There is another, and perhaps older, arrangement in three collections (*kāṇḍa* or *parvan*).

¹² Cf. BLOOMFIELD, at WZKM 17, p. 156 and for the use of the term *sāman* in connection with Indra e.g. RV. 1, 62, 2; 173, 1.

¹³ The sum total of the groups is 399, of which 287 are triads.

¹⁴ For details see also CALAND, PB., p. 18.

¹⁵ Cf. A. HILLEBRANDT, Ritualliteratur, Strassburg 1897, p. 99.

¹⁶ See RENOU, at JA 240, p. 133.

¹⁷ In ritual practice the *udgātar* and his assistants share the divisions (usually five) of a chant among themselves. For particulars see V. M. APTE, at BDCRI 4, p. 286.

¹⁸ The hypothesis suggested by A. HILLEBRANDT, Die Sonnwendfeste in Alt-Indien, Romanische Forschungen 5 (1889–1890), p. 328, BLOOMFIELD, at WZKM

done with the aid of the *pūrvārcika*, for to the stanzas of this collection belong the melodies that are to be used at the sacrificial rites. Considering a melody to be sung upon a particular stanza, tradition describes the former as having originated out of the latter which therefore is called its "womb" (*yoni*). Generally speaking, definite stanzas are the regular *yonis* for certain melodies. As however a stanza can be sung to various melodies—and vice versa—the 585 single stanzas of the Pūrvārcika are in practice sung to about double the number of tunes¹⁹. These numerous melodies have various names, the most important being the oft-mentioned *rathambara* and *brhat*²⁰. Having memorized the melodies the aspirant had to learn the complete texts, usually consisting of three—ritually connected—stanzas (*trca*), which are, at the chief sacrifices, sung to the same melody. The Uttarārcika containing these "hymns of praise" (*stotra*) is therefore the essential completion of the Pūrvārcika, comparable to a song-book which contains the complete texts, while it is presumed that the melodies are already known.

While both parts of the Saṃhitā give us the texts in their spoken form, the melodies²¹ themselves—which in the earliest times were in all probability a matter for oral instruction—are by means of musical notes designated in the song-books proper (*gāna*). These *gānas* contain the texts in the form which

17, p. 161 and WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 167 has—in a modified form—much to recommend it: part of the oldest *sāmans* were presumably popular melodies, to which already in prehistoric times religious songs were sung at various celebrations; others—especially those that were interspersed with exclamations (see below)—may have originated in circles which attributed a decidedly 'magical' power to certain tunes and chants, a practice surviving and systematized in the Sāmavidhāna-Brāhmaṇa, part II. The fact that the sound of *sāmans* and musical instruments was, like the barking of dogs and the cries of wolves, jackals and owls, a reason for discontinuing the study of the Veda (ĀpDh. 1, 3, 10, 19) seems also to point in that direction. For the impurity of the Sāmaveda see also Manu 4, 123f. and J. CH. MITRA, in PrBh 49 (1944). On the other hand, being chanted and regarded as the essence of the Ṛgveda (ChU. 1, 1, 2) it was of special value (BhG. 10, 22). The etymology and original meaning of the term *sāman* are not clear; if *sāman* "kind words, conciliation," is not another word (cf. RENOUE, I. C. I, p. 284) it could have denoted a "propitiation." For a survey see SH. N. GAYATONDE, at JUB N.S. 32, 2, p. 89 (characteristics of 220 *sāmans* as found in the Sāmaveda *brāhmaṇas*).

¹⁹ Cf. OLDENBERG, in GGA 1908, p. 712.

²⁰ Compare RV. 1, 164, 25; 10, 181, 1. See A. C. BURNELL, The Ṛṣeyabrāhmaṇa, Mangalore 1876, p. XXXVIII; S. KONOW, Das Sāmavidhānabrāhmaṇa, Thesis Halle 1893, p. 26; B. R. SHARMA, Ṛṣeya Brāhmaṇa (with the Vedārthaprakāśa), Tirupati 1967, p. 9. These names, mostly derivatives, are sometimes meaningful. Many of them derive from the name of the *ṛṣi* who is assumed to have composed the chant; from initial or other phrases of a stanza; from its concluding part; from the purpose or object for which it is chanted. They have given rise to various 'symbolical' speculations.

²¹ J. M. VAN DER HOOFT, The Vedic chant studied in its textual and melodic form (with a bibliography), Thesis Amsterdam 1929 (compare CALAND, at DLZ 1930, p. 444).

they take in singing, that is with the *stobhas*. *Stobha*²² is a comprehensive term for all modifications to which a *ṛc* is subjected when it is sung to a melody of the Sāmaveda, viz. modifications (e.g. lengthening) of syllables, repetitions, breaking up of words, insertions of apparently insignificant words or syllables such as *hoyi*, *hūva*, *hōi* (so-called 'chanted interjections,' *padastobha*, often briefly *stobha*)—which, admitting of a mystical interpretation²³, could serve esoteric purposes—and short inserted sentences (*vākyastobha*). Since the essence of Vedic chant is just the combination of words and music and its aim is precisely the establishing of contact with creative power²⁴—the effects upon the Unseen of tones sung in a certain way and at a certain pitch in relation to other tones is of great importance—the four "song-books" constitute an integral part of the Sāmavedic literature. It will on the other hand be clear that the luxuriant ornamentation of *sāman* chants effected by repetitions, insertions, ungrammatical mutilations, whatever their spiritual significance for the believers, etc. render them abnormal as pieces of literature.

Four *gānas*²⁵ have been handed down. The Grāmageyagāna²⁶—the songs of which could be practised in the village (*grāma*)—belongs to the Pūrvārcika. It contains, in 17 sections (*prapāthaka*), the *sāmans* of the stanzas of that corpus; these melodies follow each other in exactly the same order as the stanzas in the Ārcika²⁷. For instance for SV. 2, 35 (2, 1, 1, 13)—corresponding to SV. 1, 236 (1, 3, 1, 5, 4)²⁸—the Grāmageyagāna (6, 1, 37) gives five *sāmans*²⁹, the last

²² For variant definitions see v. d. HOOGT, o.c., p. 1. "Shout" may be an approximate translation. There exists a collection of *stobhas* arranged in the order of the first two *gānas*: *staubhika* (S. SĀMAŚRAMI's edition II, p. 519), on which v. d. HOOGT, o.c., p. 83 based his catalogue.

²³ See ChU. 1, 13 ("the sound *hau* is this world, *hai* is the air" etc.), discussed by B. FADDEGON, at AO 5, p. 177. An instance of a *vākyastobha* is *aganma jyotir amṛtā abhūma* "we have gone to light, we have become immortal" (cf. RV. 8, 48, 3). According to SVB. 1, 1, 10 the texts (*ṛc*) are the bones of the *sāmans*, the sound of the melody their flesh, the *stobhas* their hairs. For similar transformations of recitals into chants or the use of "unintelligible emotive noises repeated to fill the space of a recurring tune" see e.g. F. BOAS, Primitive art, New York 1955, p. 315; C. M. BOWRA, Primitive song, New York 1962, p. 64.

²⁴ A. A. BAKE at PrBh. 53, p. 71; in Indian art and letters 8 (1934), p. 62.

²⁵ See W. CALAND, De wording van den Sāmaveda, Amsterdam Academy 1907 (English translation by K. A. NILAKANTHA SASTRI, in JOR 9, p. 295); Jaiminiya-Saṃhitā (see below, n. 50), p. 1.

²⁶ For editions see above, n. 3 and KRṢṆASVĀMIN ŚRAUTIN, *Sāmavedasamhitāyām kauthumaśākhāyāḥ veyagānam*, Tiruvadi 1889. For the contents see also B. FADDEGON, Studies on the Sāmaveda, Amsterdam Acad. 1951, p. 58 (cf. also H. LOSCH, at ZDMG 102, p. 387).

²⁷ The names of these *sāmans* are mentioned in the Ārṣeya-Brāhmaṇa (see above, n. 20).

²⁸ The figure 2 denotes the Uttarārcika, 1 the Pūrvārcika; usually the stanzas of each of the two divisions of the Saṃhitā are numbered continuously. The quotation is from RV. 8, 88, 1, addressed to Indra.

²⁹ An example is the first quarter of RV. 6, 16, 10 *agna á yāhi vītāye grṇāno havyādātaye* "O Agni, come to the banquet, being extolled, to the gift of offerings."

of which is called *naudhasa*; on this *sāman* the stanzas mentioned in the Uttarārcika are to be chanted as the so-called *pr̥ṣṭhastotra* executed at the midday libation of *soma* sacrifices³⁰. The second song-book, the Āraṇyagāna—which was because of its dangerous and esoteric character to be studied in the forest or desert (*araṇya*)—belongs likewise to the Pūrvārcika. It comprises six sections and, as an appendix, the *mahānāmṇīs*, a group of three triplets to be sung on various occasions³¹. It includes the stanzas of the Āraṇyaka-Saṃhitā³², an appendix to the Pūrvārcika, the *sāmans* of which were more efficacious³³. The two other *gānas*, the Ūha- and the Ūhyagāna, belong to the Uttarārcika and were used by the chanters in fulfilling their duties at *soma* sacrifices. Hence also the distribution of their contents over seven chapters (*parvan*): the chants of the ten central days of a long *soma* sacrifice (*sattra*), the year-long sacrifice, the one-day-rites, the rites of two till ten days, the *sattras*, *prāyaścittas* and the rites for the fulfilment of special wishes³⁴. The Ūhagāna containing the *sāmans*

Grāmageyagāna 1, 1 ff. gives three melodies, viz.

- 1 4 2rr 1 1 r 2r 1 1
- (1) *om* | *o'gnā'i* || *ā yāhi*'3 *voitoyā'2i* | *grṇāno ha-* | *vyadātoyā'2i* | *toyā'2i*
- 4 5 4r5r 4 1 1 r r r 2
- (2) *agna āyāhi vi*' || *tayā'i* | *grṇāno havyadātā'23 yā'i* ||
- 4 5 4r5r 4 4 1 r r 2 2 2
- (3) *agna āyāhi* | *vā'5i tayāi* | *grṇāno havyadā'1 tā'3ye* ||

(the figures over the letters indicate the essential notes in descending sequence, those in the syllables the ornamental tones, the *r* denotes lengthening, the oblique stroke marks units to be chanted with one breath). It is clear that the Sāmaveda stands completely apart from the ṛgvedic and yajurvedic recitations. For sāmāvedic accentuation: S. VARMA, at 6 AIOC, p. 517. For transcripts: VON GLASENAPP, Lit. Ind., p. 62; RENOU, I. C. I, p. 284.

³⁰ For technical particulars see CALAND-HENRY, L'agniṣṭoma, p. 318. It may be observed that the Uttarārcika gives only two stanzas; these are however made a triplet by partial repetition.

³¹ Elsewhere 10 or 11 stanzas (11 also as a *khila* to the Ṛgveda: SCHEFTELOWITZ, Apokryphen, p. 134), but nine of them, being the kernel, are known to all Vedas. The study of these verses—in the desert—is connected with many observances; because of their dangerous character the student should be blindfold (GG. 3, 2, 36). For particulars: KEITH, The Aitareya Āraṇyaka, Oxford 1909, p. 258; OLDENBERG, at NG 1915, p. 375 (= K. S., p. 412); I. SCHEFTELOWITZ, at ZII 1, p. 58; CALAND, PB., p. 317.

³² Editions also: S. GOLDSCHMIDT, Der VIIte *prapāṭhaka* des Sāmaveda-Ārcika in der Naigeyaśākhā, Monatsber. Akad. Berlin 1868, p. 228 and F. FORTUNATOV, Moscow 1875. (The Naigeyas seem to have possessed a slightly different recension of the Āraṇyakasaṃhitā; see CALAND, Jaiminiya-Saṃhitā, p. 11; a Naigeyaśākhānukramaṇī has been edited by S. R. SEHGAL, Delhi 1966).

³³ Cf. OLDENBERG, in GGA 1908, p. 723; NG. 1915, p. 394. Of its 59 stanzas 13 are foreign to the Ṛgveda.

³⁴ The number of *gānas* contained in them is 1145.

in their ritual order adapts (*ūh-*) the melodies of the Grāmageya to the exigencies of the ritual praxis. The Ūhyagāna—the name is an abbreviation of Ūharahasyagāna, *rahasya* “secret” being synonymous with *āraṇyaka*—has the same relation to the Āraṇyakagāna with which it is affiliated³⁵.

As to the relative chronology and interdependence of these works the theory proposed by Caland³⁶ may with slight modifications still be adopted. Contrary to the prevailing opinion according to which a text equivalent to our Uttarārcika is of later origin than the Pūrvārcika, Caland argued that the former collection of texts which were used at the ritual ceremonies—or, much more probably, a predecessor of the Uttarārcika extant—must have existed before the latter which was only to register the melodies used³⁷. Before our Uttarārcika and the collection or collections preceding it came into existence—the author of the Pañcaviṃśa-Brāhmaṇa is not acquainted with it—the chanters seem to have borrowed their stanzas—not without adjustments it is true³⁸—directly from the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā³⁹. The chants accompanying the rites—*trcas* on the same melody in the *soma* rites, in other rites also single *stotra* stanzas—were collected in a *saṃhitā* that came to be differentiated in the schools of the Sāmavedins: the Uttarārcika. In order to facilitate the memorization the first and second *gānas* were drawn up, together with the lists of *yonis* that belonged to them, the Pūrvārcika and the Āraṇyakasaṃhitā. Technicalities were fixed in the *sūtras*, especially the Puṣpasūtra⁴⁰ which came into existence at a later date. The last two *gānas* containing the elaborated rules must have been compiled after the *brāhmaṇas* and *sūtras*, which do not mention them. There are no grounds for supposing that the redaction of these works took place at wide intervals⁴¹.

The differences between the *saṃhitās* of the Kauthumas and another *sākhā*, the Rāṇāyaniyas⁴², are slight. Although the tradition of the latter school is not

³⁵ For many particulars concerning the *gānas* and their relation to the *ārcikas* see CALAND's articles mentioned in the preceding notes; for the last two *gānas* also CALAND, at DLZ 1909, 1884.

³⁶ CALAND, Wording, p. 5; Jaiminiya-Saṃhitā, p. 4 (combatting WINTERNITZ, H.I.L. I, p. 166; p. 145 of the German edition); the author modified his views (WZKM 22, p. 436; PB., p. XIV) after some serious objections raised by OLDENBERG at GGA 1908, p. 713; 722. For another view: RENOUE, Écoles, p. 94; SŪRYA KĀNTA, Rkṣtantram (below, n. 65), p. 23.

³⁷ Neither collection is perfectly in tune with the ritual as we know it. See OLDENBERG, at GGA 1908, p. 714; CALAND, Der Ārṣeyakalpa des Sāmaveda, Leipzig 1908, p. VIII.

³⁸ Cf. A. B. KEITH, at JRAS 1932, p. 699; RENOUE, Écoles, p. 95.

³⁹ Which makes mention of *sāman* singers (2, 43, 1; 10, 107, 6). As to the hypothesis of an older *sāman* collection see OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 38, p. 514 (compare p. 538).

⁴⁰ See below, p. 321 and CALAND, at DLZ 1909, 1883.

⁴¹ Cf. also RENOUE, Écoles, p. 214.

⁴² Both names are rare in the Vedic literature proper (RENOUE, Écoles, p. 89).

yet extinct⁴³, there seem to have existed, in the tradition of the Sāmaveda also, only two main currents, the second being that of the Jaiminiyas⁴⁴.

The Jaiminiyas⁴⁵—also called Talavakāras “Musicians”⁴⁶—now a very rare Vedic school surviving in Kerala and Tamilnadu⁴⁷, were over a hundred years ago discovered by A. C. Burnell whose manuscript collection⁴⁸ was until the recent finds of new material a source of copious information that has mainly been made accessible by Caland and some of his pupils⁴⁹. This *śākhā* has a *saṃhitā* of its own⁵⁰ which generally speaking has a strong resemblance to that of the Kauthumas⁵¹; its deviations from the R̥gveda are however less in number. Their Pūrvārcika shows hardly any difference worth mentioning; the *āranyaka* has ten stanzas more. Most differences exist between the Uttarārcikas, especially in the arrangement of the stanzas; moreover, the Jaiminiya Uttarārcika has 184 stanzas less. The first two *gānas*, which for a long time were the only ones that had come to light, contain 3681 items as against 2722 in the Kauthuma collection; they are in a better state of preservation⁵². All material

⁴³ For the 13th century cf. Hemādri, Śrāddhakalpa, p. 1078 (CALAND, Jaiminiya-Saṃhitā, p. 16). Nowadays, there are Rānāyaniyas in Mathura (RAGHAVAN, Present position of Vedic chanting, Bull. Inst. of Traditional Cultures, Madras 1957, p. 18). See also RAT, o.c., p. 125.

⁴⁴ Many points, for instance in respect of affiliation of ancillary, *pariśiṣṭa* and *dharma* texts, are uncertain: CALAND, o.c., p. 16; RENOUE, Écoles, p. 87. According to tradition (RENOUE, Écoles, p. 127 and in Vol. Siddheswar Varma, p. 217) the Kauthumas (they are now also in Bengal, Kanauj and elsewhere; the epigraphical data attest to their being scattered almost everywhere) lived in Gujerat, the Rānāyaniyas in Mahārāṣṭra, the Jaiminiyas in Karṇāṭaka.

⁴⁵ CALAND, Jaiminiya-Saṃhitā, p. 17; RENOUE, Écoles, p. 97; A. PARPOLA, The literature and study of the Jaiminiya Sāmaveda in retrospect and prospect, Helsinki Acad. 1973.

⁴⁶ This is an epithet of the *ṛṣi* Jaimini, a pupil of Vyāsa (see p. 16), the reputed founder of the school—one of these authorities of whom we hardly know anything but his name, references to him in ancient literature being vague (G. V. DEVASTHALI, in ABORI 21, p. 63). The epithet occurs at JG. 1, 14 and in later commentaries. Jaimini’s name became associated with this *śākhā* only at a later moment; see PARPOLA, Mīmāṃsā, Jaimini and Sāmaveda, (forthcoming).

⁴⁷ For particulars see V. RAGHAVAN, Present position, p. 48 and o.c.; PARPOLA, Lit., p. 22. References to the Jaiminiyas in Indian literature are rare (VEDA VYĀSA, in 5 AIOC I, p. 292).

⁴⁸ A. C. BURNELL, Catalogue of a collection of Sanskrit manuscripts, I, London 1869.

⁴⁹ For a survey see PARPOLA, o.c., p. 30. See also CALAND, Eene onbekende recensie van den Sāmaveda, Amsterdam Acad. 1905.

⁵⁰ CALAND, Jaiminiya-Saṃhitā (see above, n. 2), including an abbreviated edition of the *ārcikas*; RAGHU VIRA, Sāma-Veda of the Jaiminiyas, Lahore 1938 (a complete edition).

⁵¹ See also CALAND, Jaiminiya-Saṃhitā, p. 17; RENOUE, Écoles, p. 97. Variants are rare but usually more than mere corruptions.

⁵² The Jaiminiya Ar̥ṣeya-Brāhmana, edited by BURNELL (The J. text of the A. of the SV.), Mangalore 1878 records the names of the chants comprised in these two *gānas*. An edition etc., also by BURNELL, Mangalore 1876; The Ar̥ṣeyabrāhmana. B. R. SHARMA, Jaiminiyār̥ṣeya-Jaiminiyopaniṣad-Brāhmanaṣ, Tirupati 1967 is mainly based on BURNELL’s edition.

proper to the Jaiminiyas is also found in other Vedas⁵³. In recent times the previously unknown *gānas* belonging to the Uttarārcika were transcribed from an oral source, viz. the chant of the Nambudiris, and discovered in *gāna* manuscripts⁵⁴. We cannot enter here into a discussion of the ways of singing of the Jaiminiyas⁵⁵ or into their peculiar notation which has intrigued many scholars⁵⁶. The key of the latter can be found in Sabhapati's Dhāraṇalakṣaṇam⁵⁷.

Besides this Jaiminiya treatise, which gives also valuable information on the *sāmans*, stanzas, metres etc.⁵⁸, there are many other ancillary works dealing with the technicalities of the chant. The large majority of them are affiliated with the Kauthuma school, which has left us the most complete collection of Vedic manuals⁵⁹. A number of *soi-disant brāhmaṇas* really are *anukramaṇīs* (belonging to the latest period of Vedic literature) and other compilations raised to the rank of *śruti*. Generally speaking, they are worthless from a literary point of view. As already mentioned, the Ārṣeya-Brāhmaṇa enumerates, in *sūtra* style, and more succinct than its Jaiminiya counterpart, the *sāmans* of the first two *gānas*; it is handed down with a commentary (Vedārthaprakāśa) to the name of Sāyaṇa. The Saṃhitopaniṣad⁶⁰, another of the six Kauthuma works traditionally called "secondary *brāhmaṇas*" (*anubrāhmaṇa*), is a conglomeration of older fragments, dealing, in a mixture of prose and verse, with the execution of the chants and its effects, the transformation of *ṛcas* into *sāmans*, an attempt at analyzing their relations, etc. The short Vaṃśa-Brāhmaṇa⁶¹ contains a list of sāmavedic authorities. The likewise short Devatādhyāya-Brāhmaṇa⁶² deals with the gods to whom the *sāmans* are addressed, the etymologies of their names, etc. The Sāmavidhāna-Brāhmaṇa⁶³, for the greater part in *sūtra* style, belongs to the category of the *vidhānas* which came to be very important in the sāmavedic tradition. The treatise explains how to achieve, by means of *sāmans*, definite effects, enumerates *prāyaścittas* and gives instruction in the medical, apotropæic and magical application of *sāmans* which are assumed to be more efficacious than the texts to which they are chanted⁶⁴.

⁵³ See OLDENBERG, at GGA 1908, p. 736.

⁵⁴ Cf. J. F. STAAL, Nambudiri Veda recitation, The Hague 1961, p. 76; PARPOLA, o.c., p. 17; 21.

⁵⁵ For details see BAKE, o.c.; STAAL, Nambudiri Veda recitation, p. 64; PARPOLA, o.c., p. 16.

⁵⁶ Cf. R. SIMON, at WZKM 27, p. 305.

⁵⁷ For particulars see PARPOLA, o.c., p. 17; 18, and compare RAGHAVAN, Present position, p. 9.

⁵⁸ CALAND, Jaiminiya-Saṃhitā, p. 19.

⁵⁹ For a survey: CALAND, Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa, p. 13; RENOUE, Écoles, p. 99.

⁶⁰ Edited by A. C. BURNELL, Mangalore 1877; B. R. SHARMA, Tirupati 1965.

⁶¹ Edited by A. WEBER, I. S. IV, p. 371; B. R. SHARMA, Tirupati 1965.

⁶² Edited by A. C. BURNELL, Mangalore 1873; B. R. SHARMA, Tirupati 1965.

⁶³ See above, n. 18; edited also by S. R. SHARMA, Tirupati 1964 (cf. the same, at IA III, 5 (1971), p. 103); for the genre *vidhāna* see p. 37 f.

⁶⁴ The other Kauthuma treatises do not belong to this chapter. For a synopsis of the extant Jaiminiya literature see PARPOLA, o.c., p. 25.

There are two *prātisākhya*s, viz. the Rktaṅtra⁶⁵, somewhat exceptional in its grammatical rather than phonetic contents, and the typically sāmavedic Sāmāprātisākhya. The latter, better known as Puṣpa- or Phullasūtra⁶⁶, lit. "the (collection of) aphorisms (in the form) of flowers" or "the developed aphorisms," and sometimes attributed to Gobhila or Vararuci, comprises, *inter alia*, rules indicating how to adapt the *sāmans* to *rcas* that are not given as corresponding to them in the *gāna* and the correct liturgic content of the words of the Āreika as used in the melodies.

The complicated *sūtra* literature cannot be dealt with in this chapter. Mention may only be made of the Nidānasūtra, improbably attributed to the grammarian Patañjali, an instructive, though difficult, treatise on the metres, melodies and rites, referring also to many unknown Vedic works⁶⁷. The Sāmavedārṣeyadīpa of Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskarādhvarindra is a technical text of the *anukramaṇī* type recording metres, deities and *ṛṣis* and intended to be a work of reference for the chanters⁶⁸.

From the above survey it will become clear that the content of the Sāmaveda can be approached theoretically (by means of the texts) as well as practically (starting from the chant at the actual services). However, up to recent times the study of Sāmavedic practice was badly neglected⁶⁹ to the point that it could incorrectly be declared extinct⁷⁰. In the thirties of the present century a living orthodox Kauthuma tradition was brought to light in the neighbourhood of Baroda, in Kumbakonam, Tanjore, Chidambaram, Trichinopoly, a (rare) Jaiminiya tradition in Tinnevely⁷¹ and Malabar, especially with the Nambudiri Brahmans of Kerala⁷². The melodies were not however what one would

⁶⁵ Edited by SŪRYA KĀNTA (with a long introduction dealing with the Sāmaveda in general), Lahore 1933 (2Delhi 1970); with an appendix: Sāmavedasarvānukramaṇī; cf. WEBER, at I. S. XVII, p. 315; K. MADHAVA KRISHNA SARMA, at ALB 5, p. 128.

⁶⁶ Edited and translated by R. SIMON, München (Munich Acad.) 1909; cf. SIMON, at ZDMG 63, p. 730; 64, p. 602; CALAND, at ZDMG 64, p. 347.

⁶⁷ K. N. BHATNAGAR, Nidānasūtram, Lahore 1939 (2Delhi n.d.); S. VARMA, at 6 AIOC, p. 55. For other works see S. K. GUPTA, at 15 AIOC, p. 37; D. BHATTACHARYYA, at 18 AIOC, S.P., p. 3; for a pre-Sāyaṇa commentary: Chāndogyamantra-bhāṣya of Guṇaviṣṇu, edited by D. BHATTACHARYYA, Calcutta 1930; cf. D. BHATTACHARYYA, at OH 2, p. 1.

⁶⁸ Edited by B. R. SHARMA, Tirupati 1967.

⁶⁹ A. C. BURNELL was an exception; SIMON's studies of the Puṣpasūtra throw light on the execution of the chants in ancient days. Cf. also Mimāṃsāsūtra 2, 1, 35ff. and CALAND(-HENRY), L'agniṣṭoma, p. 461. Only E. FELBER, Die indische Musik, SB Acad. Vienna 170 (1912), ch. 3ff. gave a description of some phonographic records; however, being made in Bengal and Rajputana where the Sāmaveda tradition is not sound, most of them are not very reliable.

⁷⁰ V. D. HOOGE, o.c., p. 79.

⁷¹ A. A. BAKE, The practice of Sāmaveda, 7 AIOC, p. 143. It proved very difficult to induce the brahmans to sing before a stranger. For some similarities between Sāmavedic and later Indian music: V. RAGHAVAN, in Journal of the Music Academy, 33 (Madras 1962), p. 127.

have expected after reading the ancient texts—there are insertions, replacements of syllables, etc.— but it should, on one hand, be borne in mind that not all treatises are known, and on the other that the *gānas* impart knowledge of the melodies as memorized by the students individually, not the form of the chants as executed at the time of the sacrifices. There is, moreover, a considerable difference between the present-day ways of chanting of the Kauthumas and the Jaiminīyas⁷³.

⁷² For the Nambudiris see p. 44 f.

⁷³ Some Sāmaveda recordings may be found in Asch Mankind Series Album AHM 4126, New York (with an introduction dealing with many particulars by J. LEVY and J. F. STAAL). The first quarter of the above (n. 29) stanza ṚV. 6, 16, 10 is, in Jaiminiya recitation: *o agnā i | ā yā hī vo i to yā i | to yā i | grṇāno ha | vya dā to yā i | to yā i . . .* For other particulars see V. RAGHAVAN, The present position of Vedic recitation and Vedic śākhās, Kumbhakonam 1962.

2. The Yajurveda

The Yajurveda is thoroughly ritual in character; its contents are intimately connected with the cult. It was among its exponents, the expert members of the brahminical order to whom the proper observance of the highly complicated ritual was entrusted¹, that the substantial methods of sacrificial practice were developed and explored². This Veda contains liturgical formulas arranged in accordance with the ritual practice—not to mention various interruptions and deviations from the order of the ritual acts as described in the *sūtras*³—and the explanation of their *raison d'être*. These interpretations contained in the *brāhmaṇas* (or *brāhmaṇa* passages) are of considerable prominence. The various texts—*saṃhitās*, *brāhmaṇas*, *sūtras* etc.—belonging to this Veda are well-grouped, their contents well-defined⁴. Each *sākhā* aspires to self-sufficiency producing *sūtras* and other texts of its own. What is lacking is the original Yajurveda-Saṃhitā. The considerable differences between the *sākhās* extant do not even allow us to attempt its reconstruction, except for some sections, among which that dealing with the horse sacrifice. However, so far as that subject-matter is concerned which must have been the nucleus of this Veda the Saṃhitās extant are in entire agreement⁵. This nucleus comprises the Full and New Moon sacrifices (the model for all sacrifices of the *iṣṭi* type⁶), in which the *adhvaryu* does most of the officiating; the Soma sacrifice; the construction of the great fireplace⁷. In the fundamental portions—which follow each other in an order that is essentially the same in all *saṃhitās*—even the Black Yajurveda does not intermingle the *mantras* with their *brāhmaṇa* explanations. Thus Taittiriya-Saṃhitā book I contains the *mantras* for the fortnightly and the Soma sacrifices; IV those for the piling of the fireplace. In the description of the other rites the correspondence between the Saṃhitās is much less in evidence. For instance, the rites for special advantages (*kāmyeṣṭi*)⁸ are lacking in the White, the

¹ Cf. e.g. EGGELENG, ŚB. I, p. IX.

² N. TSUJI, *Existent Yajurveda literature. A philological study of the fundamental sources of the Vedic ritual* (in Japanese), Tokyo 1970.

³ For particulars see KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. LXXXV; RENOUE, *Écoles*, p. 141.

⁴ In later times the name Yajurveda was sometimes applied to encyclopedic surveys of traditional Hindu learning (cf. WEBER, at ZDMG 7, p. 235). For the spurious so-called Ezour-Vedam see E. WINDISCH, *Geschichte der Sanskrit-Philologie*, Strassburg 1917, p. 8.

⁵ For a detailed survey see KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. XLVII.

⁶ As opposed to animal and *soma* sacrifices; A. HILLEBRANDT, *Das altindische Neu- und Vollmondsopfer*, Jena 1880.

⁷ Other rites—among them the animal sacrifice—are scattered in the sections dealing with the above; others—e.g. the royal consecration—have the character of appendices, inserted, in each Saṃhitā, in a different place. Cf. also N. K. V. PANTULU, at QJMS 27, p. 30.

⁸ W. CALAND, *Altindische Zauberei. Darstellung der altindischen 'Wunschopfer'*, Amsterdam Acad. 1908. An instance is KS. 10, 3: "If one desires rain, one should offer a definite cake to Agni."

*pravargya*⁹ is absent in the Black Yajurveda; the long sacrifices (*sattra*) are almost disregarded outside the Taittiriya branch. The less elaborated or secondarily annexed sections are, in the Saṃhitās, much the same. So we are led to assume that, while part of these collections developed from one common source, they were, after their separation, amplified according to a similar plan or similar principles.

According to the tradition preserved in the Caranavyūha¹⁰, commentaries and *purāṇas* there were 101 schools of the Yajurveda¹¹, viz. 86 of the Black and 15 of the White Yajurveda¹². Another number, 27, stands a better chance of being based on reality. In any case, the ramification of the Kṛṣṇa (Black) Yajurveda—later so called because its followers collected *mantras* as well as explanatory matter of the *brāhmaṇa* type in their *saṃhitās*¹³—must have been rather complex. However, what has survived has crystallized in three groups, that of the Carakas, usually called Kāṭhas, that of the Maitrāyaṇiyas and that of the Taittiriyas. As to the first, there are Kāṭhas proper and the Kapiṣṭhala-(Kāṭhas); there have also been other affiliated branches. Among the Maitrāyaṇiyas there were Mānavas, Vārāhas and others; to the Taittiriyas belonged, among others, the Aukheyas and the Khāṇḍikiyas¹⁴.

The Saṃhitās of the Black Yajurveda form a closely connected group. Their material and its distribution point to an organic unity. Their agreement is often even verbal, especially in those *mantras* which were borrowed from the Ṛgveda¹⁵. Though representing a later stage the language of the *mantra* portion on the whole agrees with that of the Ṛgveda. As to the explanatory prose, the portions containing directions and injunctions (*vidhi*) have a stronger resemblance to each other than the legends. Moreover, the Kāṭhaka-Saṃhitā—of which the Kapiṣṭhala text is no more than a variant—and that of the Maitrāyaṇiyas are generally speaking more nearly related to each other than to the

⁹ See below, p. 330.

¹⁰ See p. 31. For particulars see RENOY, *Écoles*, p. 129.

¹¹ For a Yajurveda (a chart on which the 'Yajus tree' is drawn with its 101 branches reaching to every corner of India) see RAGHU VIRA, at *Journal of Vedic Studies* 2 (Lahore 1935), p. 61.

¹² See EGGELING, *ŚB. I*, p. XXVIII; RENOY, *Écoles*, p. 135.

¹³ The *mantra* and *brāhmaṇa* portions are often widely separated and part of the latter—concerning the fortnightly rites—are found in the Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa; cf. e.g. TS. 1, 2, 1: 6, 1, 1; 1, 3, 1: 2, 6, 4, 1; 6, 2, 10, 1-7; 1, 4, 43: 6, 6, 1; 1, 7, 7: TB. 1, 3, 5. On the other hand TS. 2, 4, 9 and 10 explain 2, 4, 7 and 8. Yet, in view of the often verbal similarities between *mantras* and the *brāhmaṇa* portions the former must have been collected before the redaction of the latter.

¹⁴ For the nine pupils of Vaiśampāyana, the reputed first promulgator of the Black Yajurveda see RENOY, *Écoles*, p. 133; for the less complicated ramification of the Śukla Yajurveda, *ibidem*, p. 135; for the Black Yajurveda G. S. RAI, at *Purāṇa* 7, p. 6; 235.

¹⁵ These borrowings consist either of single stanzas or of longer passages, rarely of whole hymns (e.g. as TS. 1, 2, 14: ṚV. 4, 4 (15 stanzas); 10, 87, 1; 5, 2, 9 and 10).

text of the Taittirīyas¹⁶. It is however hardly possible to decide whether the Taittirīya-Saṃhitā represents an older or a younger version.

The Taittirīyas—whose name, like that of the other school names, must be a patronymic¹⁷—seem to have arranged and systematized their traditions at an early moment and in any case in a peculiar way. They have distributed their *saṃhitā* material over three collections¹⁸, viz. the Saṃhitā¹⁹ proper divided into seven books (*kāṇḍa*)²⁰, the Brāhmaṇa and the Āraṇyaka²¹ and in all three collections included *mantra* and *brāhmaṇa* portions. Most of the contents of the Brāhmaṇa and the Āraṇyaka are however supplementary in character. Yet the *mantras* and the *brāhmaṇa* portions of the Saṃhitā show in general close and intimate relations, the latter being clearly dependent on the former. However, the *brāhmaṇa* portions deal only with that which is of interest from the compiler's special point of view, so that many formulas quoted remain unexplained²². In contradistinction to the Brāhmaṇa etc. the Saṃhitā has a very accurate *padapāṭha*²³ and is the subject of a good Prātiśākhya²⁴. There is

¹⁶ See e.g. A. WEBER, Über die Königsweihe, Berlin Acad. 1893, p. 6 (704); v. SCHROEDER, Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā (see below, n. 37), p. XI; RENOUE, Écoles, p. 144.

¹⁷ There is a no doubt secondary puranic legend (cf. e.g. ViṣṇuPur. 3, 5, 1 ff.) according to which Vaiśampāyana, after having taught the Yajurveda to his disciple Yājñavalkya, for some serious reason called upon the latter to give up all that he had learnt; thereupon Yājñavalkya vomited forth the texts stained with blood; they were picked up by the other pupils who were turned into partridges (*tittiri*); hence the "black" Yajurveda and the name Taittirīya. Yājñavalkya then sorrowfully induced the Sun to impart him those *yajus* texts which his teacher had not possessed. The Sun, as a horse (*vājīn*), gave them to him; hence the names Vājasaneyin and 'bright' (*śukla*) Yajurveda. See below and compare CALAND, Kāṇva-recensie van het Brāhmaṇa der 'Honderd Paden,' Amsterdam Acad. 1912, p. 151; E. WINDISCH, in Festgabe Weber, p. 64.

¹⁸ For a survey based on the Kāṇḍānukramaṇikā (edited by WEBER, I.S. III, p. 375; XII, p. 350) see KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. XXVII. (The Kāṇḍānukrama, an index of the *kāṇḍas* (chapters)—see K. V. A. NARAYANA SASTRI, at ABORI 39, p. 266—claims to belong to the Ātreya *śākhā*, for which see RENOUE, Écoles, p. 134).

¹⁹ Edited by A. WEBER, Die Taittirīya-Saṃhitā, 2 vol., I. S. XI and XII, Leipzig 1871-72; by E. RÖER, E. B. COWELL and others, The Saṃhitā of the Black Yajur Veda (with Mādhava's commentary), 6 vol., Calcutta 1854-1899; by S. D. SATAVALEKAR, Kṛṣṇa-Yajurvedīya-Taittirīya-Saṃhitā, Pardi 1945, ²1957 (see also the bibliographies). Translation: A. B. KEITH, The Veda of the Black Yajus School entitled Taittirīya Saṃhitā, 2 vol., Cambridge Mass. 1914; ²Delhi 1967 (for justified criticism: CALAND, at AO (Lugd.) 2, p. 22).

²⁰ For the divisions of the texts of the Yajurveda see RENOUE, at IJJ 1, p. 6; as to the Taittirīya-Saṃhitā, see also KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. XXXIV.

²¹ See below, p. 339, and p. 429.

²² For some particulars and an exception see KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. LXXIV.

²³ See WEBER, I. S. XIII, p. 1; KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. XXX; P. B. ANNANGARA-CHARYA, in Fel. Vol. R. Dravid, Allahabad 1971, p. 87.

²⁴ The Taittirīya Prātiśākhya ed. by R. MITRA, Calcutta 1872. For extensive quotations from the Sarvānukramaṇī of the Taittirīya-Saṃhitā see C. KUNHAN RAJA, in JOR 5, p. 215 and 6 AIOC, p. 541.

a comparatively brief commentary by Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskaramiśra (12th cent.)²⁵ and a longer one by Sāyaṇa. The texts of this school have been well preserved—they are accented, meticulously subdivided, and practically without variants—and are handed down in numerous manuscripts, part of which under the title *Kṛṣṇa-yajurveda-saṃhitā*. This branch has indeed long been regarded as the *Yajurveda par excellence*²⁶.

The Kāthaka-Saṃhitā (or briefly Kāthaka)²⁷, according to tradition compiled by Kātha, a disciple of Vaiśampāyana²⁸, is perhaps a branch of the Caraka school—this name, Cārakaśākhā, occurs in the colophons of our manuscripts and the school calls itself Carakakātha. Only the Saṃhitā has been completely, though not faultlessly, preserved²⁹. Its contents³⁰ are less complete than those of the Taittirīya-Saṃhitā, but there are also passages—*inter alia*, of mythical character—that do not occur in the latter. There are 5 books and 40 chapters; I–III comprising the rites that may be regarded as the nucleus (the *mantras* mostly in I, the corresponding *brāhmaṇas* in II³¹ and III), correspond in the main (and taking no account of variations in order) to TS. I–VI. Book IV contains sacrificial formulas³²; V is a collection of *khilas* pertaining to the horse sacrifice. Special mention may be made of the so-called *rcakas* of the Kashmir Kāthaka, series of *ṛg* verses adapted to practical purposes for the use of yajurvedins officiating as *hotar* priest³³. Many of these stanzas do not occur in the Kāthaka, and part of them exhibit deviations from our Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā. They moreover contain *brāhmaṇa* passages which have a close resemblance to the *brāhmaṇa* portions of the Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka or constitute the ‘com-

²⁵ Edited by A. MAHĀDEVA ŚĀSTRĪ and K. RAṄGĀCĀRYA in *The Taittirīya Saṃhitā* . . . , Mysore 1894–1898; see also KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. CLXXIII.

²⁶ Cf. WEBER, I. S. I, p. 83.

²⁷ Edited by L. VON SCHROEDER, *Kāthakam, Die Saṃhitā der Kāthā-śākhā*, 4 vol. (vol. IV being an Index verborum by R. SIMON), Leipzig 1900–1912 (²1923);

²⁸ Wiesbaden 1970–1972. Compare v. SCHROEDER, at *Festgabe Weber*, p. 5.

²⁹ Cf. WEBER, I. S. XIII, p. 437.

³⁰ See v. SCHROEDER, at ZDMG 49, p. 145, and at SB Vienna Acad. 133 (1896), 11, p. 10; 137 (1897), 4, p. 1.

³¹ Cf. WEBER, I. S. III, p. 451.

³² Book II is called “the middle one”; see also RENOÜ, at IJ 1, p. 7.

³³ Since these are also found at the end of sections of I–III (similarly in TS.) they are not repeated in the edition. These *anuvākyās* (*mantras* to be recited by the *hotar*, or his assistant the *maitrāvaruṇa*, to invite a god to partake of an offering) and *yājyās* (*mantras* to be pronounced by the same officiant to accompany and consecrate a libation offered by the *adhvaryu*) are stanzas belonging to the ritual of the Ṛgveda; they are quoted in pairs and contain, explicitly or implicitly, the name of the same deity, viz. the one to whom the oblation is offered. In the MS. they constitute a *khila*; KKS. and VS. omit them. Part of the *yājyānuvākyās* of the full-grown Vedic ritual were secondarily used for that purpose. See OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 42, p. 240 (= K. S., p. 609); RENOÜ, at JAOS 68, p. 79; at JA 250, p. 165 (p. 180); GONDA, *Dual deities*, p. 253. Compare e.g. also TS. 1, 6, 12; 1, 8, 22 etc.

³⁴ Cf. v. SCHROEDER, at WZKM 12, p. 277; ZDMG 51, p. 666; RENOÜ, *Écoles*, p. 15.

mentary' on the *mantras* of that work³⁴. These facts allow of the conclusion that the Kāṭhkas must have had a *brāhmaṇa* (and an *aranyaka*) of their own.

The Kapiṣṭhala-Saṃhitā³⁵, deriving its name from the ṛṣi Kapiṣṭhala who founded the *śākhā*—it is extinct nowadays—is practically a variant of the Kāṭhaka, although it omits many longer and shorter portions and has—for instance in the division of the text—undergone a greater influence of the Rgveda³⁶.

The Maitrāyaṇī-Saṃhitā³⁷, in the manuscripts usually Maitrāyaṇīya-Mānava³⁸—the Mānavas left us several *sūtras*—is better preserved than the Kāṭhaka. There is a *padapāṭha* giving some interesting variants and a small number of minor texts³⁹. Generally speaking the contents are the same as those of the Kāṭhaka. Though richer in contents, it lacks, as compared with the Taittirīya-Saṃhitā, almost the same portions as that collection, some sections occupying another place. The *mantras* are as a rule—with variant readings from the Taittirīya-Saṃhitā—identical with those of the Kāṭhaka⁴⁰, but the *brāhmaṇa* portions are often widely different, especially in mythological passages, which are, on the whole, more satisfactorily presented. So both schools are rightly regarded as autonomous developments of the same plan⁴¹.

The White Yajurveda is represented by the Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā. The name derives from Vājasaneyā, the patronymic of Yājñavalkya, the famous authority on questions of ritual and, according to tradition, the founder of this branch⁴². This corpus is called "White" or "Clear" (*śukla*) because⁴³ it consists entirely of a conveniently arranged collection of *mantras* to be recited at sacrifices, and is free from the explanatory matter that is collected in separate *brāhmaṇas*⁴⁴. The Saṃhitā, which has been preserved in two recensions, the

³⁴ See RENOÛ, *Écoles*, p. 152. For the *brāhmaṇa* see p. 339 etc.

³⁵ Edited by RAGHU VIRA, Kapiṣṭhala-Kāṭhā-Saṃhitā, Lahore 1932; ²Delhi 1968.

³⁶ H. OERTEL, at SB München 1934, 6; RENOÛ, *Écoles*, p. 154.

³⁷ Edited by L. VON SCHROEDER, Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, 2 (4) vol., Leipzig 1881–1886 (²1923, ³Wiesbaden 1970–1972).

³⁸ Double names of *śākhās* or *caranās*, often caused by splits or secessions, are not uncommon. For a no longer interesting discussion of the name of the *śākhā*—Maitrāyaṇīya appears comparatively late—see the bibliography at RENOÛ, *Écoles*, p. 157.

³⁹ Two *pariśiṣṭas*, dealing with cattle rites and ritual for the fulfilment of special desires, have been edited by RAGHU VIRA in *Journal of Vedic Studies* 1 (Lahore 1934), p. 6; 2, p. 91; on the Chandonukramaṇī RAGHU VIRA at *JRAS* 1932, p. 547.

⁴⁰ For characteristic phonetic particulars see v. SCHROEDER, o.c., I, p. XXIX and at *ZDMG* 33, p. 184.

⁴¹ See also v. SCHROEDER, *Über die Maitrāyaṇī-Saṃhitā, ihr Alter, ihr Verhältnis zu den verwandten śākhās, ihre sprachliche und historische Bedeutung*, *ZDMG* 33, p. 177.

⁴² See JB. 2, 76; BĀU. 6, 3, 7 etc. and especially BĀU. 6, 5, 3.

⁴³ With the exception of a few places (VS. 24, 20; 30, 5); see Rāmākṛṣṇa, *Samskāraganapati*, in SIMON, *Vedische Schulen*, p. 76f.

⁴⁴ See EGCELLING, *ŚB. I*, p. XXVII and also C. L. PRABHAKAR, at *BhV* 28 (1968), p. 64.

Kāṇva and the Mādhyandina⁴⁵, comprises 40 chapters (*adhyāya*). The *mantras* proper, many of which in fact ṛgvedic verses, are more numerous and important than in the Black Yajurveda. The arrangement is better adapted to the sequence of the rites. The text has however in course of time been much enlarged. On the strength of external as well as internal evidence it is generally assumed that the chapters VSM. I–XVIII are older than the later chapters, because they are the only ones that coincide with the ancient parts of the Black Yajurveda and are alone in being commented upon in the corresponding first nine books of the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa⁴⁶, no more than a few quotations from the following chapters being found in that voluminous work. Only this portion (I–XVIII) and a few passages relating to the *śvamedha* in the *adhyāyas* XXII–XXV⁴⁷ contain *mantras* in prose and in verse which recur in the Saṃhitās of the Black Yajurveda, whereas the contents of the other *adhyāyas* are found again only in the Brāhmaṇa and Āraṇyaka of the Taittirīyas. Half of this Saṃhitā consists of verses, most of which (over 700) occur also in the Ṛgveda. The other stanzas as well as the many prose formulas must have originated in the circles of the ritualists when the developing ritual required additional *mantras*⁴⁸.

The following short description of the contents of the Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā will illustrate the general character of its long collections of *mantras* and throw light on the mutual relations of its main component parts. The *adhyāyas* I and II give the formulas for the Full and New Moon sacrifices (*darśapūrṇamāsa*), the regular performance of which is obligatory on the brahminical householder. Chapter III contains the *mantras* for the daily fire-cult, i.e. the obligatory morning and evening burnt-oblation of milk (*agnihotra*)⁴⁹ and for the four-monthly sacrifices at the beginning of the three chief seasons (*cāturmāsya*). In IV to VIII follow the formulas for the *soma* sacrifice in general including the animal sacrifice belonging to it. In IX and X we find the texts required for the performance of two important modifications of the *soma* sacrifice, viz. the *vājapeya*, which was connected with a chariot-race intended to win vigour or

⁴⁵ Edited by A. WEBER, The Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā in the Mādhyandina- and the Kāṇva-sākhā with the commentary of Mahidhara, Berlin–London 1852; in fact this work is an edition of the Mādhyandina recension with a probably incomplete reference to the Kāṇva deviations. There are also Indian editions, e.g. by W. L. ŚĀSTRĪ PAṆŚĪKAR, Bombay 1912; ²1929, with the commentaries of Uvata and Mahidhara; P. R. SAKALA MISRA (with the same commentaries), 4 vol., Benares 1912–1915; S. D. SATAVALEKAR, Pardi 1957. The Kāṇva Saṃhitā was published at Anandvan 1915; (with Sāyaṇa's commentary at Benares 1915); by S. D. SATAVALEKAR, at Aundh 1940.

⁴⁶ Cf. EGGELENG, ŚB. I, p. XXX and see below, p. 352.

⁴⁷ Not to mention a few more or less isolated passages.

⁴⁸ Cf. V. M. APTE, in Comm. Vol. C. Kunhan Raja, Madras 1946, p. 233. It may be recalled that there are numerous *sūktas* in the Ṛgveda without any ritual application; moreover, the order of its *sūktas* is independent of the order of the sacrifices.

⁴⁹ Cf. P. E. DUMONT, L'agnihotra, Baltimore 1939.

vegetative force (*vāja*)⁵⁰, and the royal consecration (*rājasūya*)⁵¹; 9, 5 and 10, 17:

“Thou (the chariot) art the thunderbolt of Indra, winner of *vāja*; with thee may this (man) win *vāja*. In generation of *vāja* we worship with words the Great Mother, Aditi by name, on whom this whole world has settled. In that let god Savitar bring forth for us sunshine.”

“With the splendour of Soma I (the officiant) sprinkle you, with Agni’s brilliance, with Sūrya’s lustre (energy), with Indra’s power. Be lord of princely powers. Protect against the missiles!”

In the chapters XI to XVIII follow the numerous sacrificial formulas for the construction of the great fireplace (*agnicayana*)⁵². Among these is the Śatarudriya (XVI), a litany accompanying no less than 425 oblations and addressed to the hundred forms and powers of the god Rudra⁵³: an early instance of the well-known Indian enumerations of divine names the recital of which is considered most effective as a means of compelling a god to fulfil wishes and meritorious as a work of devotion and a method of entering into spiritual contact with a deity. The following three chapters (XIX–XXI) contain the *mantras* for the *sautrāmaṇi*, a ceremony recommended to expiate and counteract the effects of excessive *soma* drinking and a means of assuring victory, success etc.⁵⁴; XXII–XXV those connected with the horse sacrifice (*aśvamedha*), which only a mighty king can perform⁵⁵. The complex XIX–XXV creates the impression of being additions⁵⁶. This is not however to speak depreciatingly of the level of its religious and literary qualities. In 22, 22 the *adhvaryu* whispers the blessings which the royal sacrificer hopes the sacrifice will secure for his kingdom⁵⁷:

“O Brahman, let there be born in the kingdom the brahmin illustrious through sacred knowledge; the nobleman, heroic, skilful shot, a good marksman, a great warrior; the cow which yields (abundant) milk; the ox good at drawing; the swift steed, the prolific housewife. Let to this sacrificer a plucky son be born who is victorious, a (good) chariot-fighter, eloquent in the assembly. Let Parjanya send rain according to our desire. Let our (nutritive and medicinal) plants ripen. Let acquisition and preservation of property fall to our share!”

⁵⁰ Cf. A. WEBER, Über den Vājapeya, SB Berlin Acad. 1892, p. 765; briefly GONDA, R. I. I, p. 159.

⁵¹ J. C. HEESTERMAN, The ancient Indian royal consecration, Thesis Utrecht 1957, esp. p. 115.

⁵² Compare, in the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa: Full and New moon sacrifices in book I; *agnihotra* etc. in II; *soma* sacrifice in III and IV; *vājapeya* and *rājasūya* in V; *agnicayana* in VI–IX.

⁵³ For other versions see KS. 17, 11; MS. 2, 9, 1f.; cf. RENOÛ, Poésie religieuse, p. 64.

⁵⁴ Cf. GONDA, R. I. I, p. 173.

⁵⁵ Cf. P. E. DUMONT, L’aśvamedha, Paris-Louvain 1927; S. S. BHAWE, in 20 AIOC I, p. 43. The liturgical formulas of the Yajurveda relating to this sacrifice were analyzed and studied by BHAWE in Die Yajus’ des Aśvamedha, Stuttgart 1939. For these rites see ŚB. 12, 7ff. and 13.

⁵⁶ According to BHAWE, Yajus’, p. 70 the *aśvamedha* is a later insertion in the Yajurveda in general.

⁵⁷ Cf. ŚB. 13, 1, 9; DUMONT, Aśvamedha, p. 65.

The supplementary character of the last fifteen chapters is beyond doubt. The sections XXVI–XXXV are even by the Indian tradition itself designated as additions (*khilas*)⁵⁸. They contain supplementary *mantras* and other material connected with various sacrifices (including the *sautrāmanī*, the *aśvamedha*, the human sacrifice which is modelled upon the *aśvamedha*, the sacrifice of all property in order to gain universal success (*sarvamedha*), some litanies, glorifications, prayers and formulas connected with the sacrifice to the deceased ancestors (*pitāras*). Some chapters are remarkable in that they interrupt the sequence of the *mantras*: just like XXIV which contains an exact enumeration of the animals to be dedicated to a number of gods, chapter XXX enumerates the people who are to be sacrificed at the *puruṣamedha*⁵⁹. In continuation of this sacrifice chapter XXXI, 1–16 is a version of RV. 10, 90, the Puruṣa hymn, to be recited to the assembled human victims. This hymn describing the self-immolation of Primeval Man which is the origin of all creation is incorporated in those Vedic texts that deal with the *puruṣamedha*⁶⁰. It is followed by the Uttara-Nārāyaṇa litany with which the Sun is to be worshipped: the first performer of the human sacrifice gained the form of that deity. The next section containing texts to be used at the *sarvamedha* is considered to be an *upaniṣad*⁶¹; it indeed sums up an esoteric doctrine about the one God who is Brahman and Prajāpati. Chapter XXXV contains some funeral stanzas, part of which are taken from the R̥gveda-Saṃhitā. The sections XXXVI–XXXIX—chiefly prayers for health, length of days, unimpaired faculties, security etc.—are devoted to the *pravargya* ceremony at which milk that is to be offered to the Aśvins is boiled in a cauldron which, being made red-hot, represents the sun⁶². The last chapter (XL) is⁶³ the Īśa-Upaniṣad which occurs in all collections of *upaniṣads*⁶⁴. It is not directly connected with sacrificial ceremonies. Teaching that life in the world and life in the Divine Spirit are not incompatible provided one disengages oneself spiritually from the shackles of the world this *adhyāya* reflects an advanced stage of speculative thought⁶⁵. The attempts at distinguishing several chronological strata in this work⁶⁶ are indeed not futile, but

⁵⁸ Adhyāyas XXVI–XXIX even contain formulas connected with the rites dealt with in previous chapters: a clear indication of their supplementary character.

⁵⁹ There are no indications of its being actually performed. In the Śukla-Yajurveda it is a 'symbolic' rite (ŚB. 13, 6, 2, 13).

⁶⁰ Cf. GONDA, at WZKSA 12–13, p. 102.

⁶¹ Most of its stanzas recur in the beginning of the Mahā-Nārāyaṇa-Upaniṣad. VS. 34, 1–6 are likewise, as Śivasamkalpa-Upaniṣad, counted among that class of texts (see P. DEUSSEN, Sechzig Upanishad's des Veda, Leipzig 1897; 'Darmstadt 1963, p. 837; H. VON GLASENAPP, Indische Geisteswelt, I, Baden-Baden 1958, p. 24).

⁶² J. A. B. VAN BUITENEN, The Pravargya, Poona 1968; GONDA, R. I. I, p. 153.

⁶³ With the exception of stanzas 5–17.

⁶⁴ P. THIEME, at JAOS 85, p. 89.

⁶⁵ For the application of the texts of the White Yajurveda in *smārta* ritual: G. U. THITE, at Centre of Advanced Study in Sanskrit Studies, 1 (Poona 1972), p. 65.

⁶⁶ Cf. MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 179 (not correct in all particulars).

we should bear in mind that formulas of the atharvanic type such as "A yoke art thou, injure the injurer; injure him who injures us; injure him whom we injure" (VS. 1, 8, addressed to the yoke of a chariot) and riddles of the *brahmodya* class⁶⁷ did not fall into disuse when speculative thought made some progress.

Of the two nearly related recensions that of the Mādhyandinas⁶⁸ is more complete and more systematically arranged than that of the Kāṇvas⁶⁹. It is also in a better state of preservation. The former has attracted much more attention. Although Kātyāyana in his Śrautasūtra and other ritualists quote from their collection the Kāṇvas gradually fell into the background; there is no *padapāṭha*, no *prātiśākhya*, there are no *śrauta*- and *grhyasūtras* of their school; almost all commentaries known to us refer to the other recension. Most of the differences between the two texts occur in the initial chapters; this observation applies also to the corresponding chapters of the Kāṇvīya Brāhmaṇa which therefore may have been composed simultaneously with the Saṃhitā (I-III). Between VSK. IV-XI and VSM. IV-X there are many more differences than between the later chapters. In quoting the Ṛgveda the Kāṇvīya text is often more 'conservative'—a closer relation to that corpus is essential in many later texts—; while tending also to conform to the Taittirīya school, it sometimes exhibits inferior readings. Although the name of Kāṇva occurs already in the Ṛgveda and that of Mādhyandīnāyana not before later works⁷⁰ the Kāṇva recension impresses us as being not only younger than its sister but the most recent of all Vedic Saṃhitās⁷¹.

The Mādhyandinas possess various ancillary texts, among which a (late) Prātiśākhya and a Sarvānukramaṇī, both attributed to Kātyāyana⁷², who, according to tradition, was not only the founder of a ritual school of the White Yajurveda, but also the main organizer of the learning of the Vājasaneyins. He is also credited with eighteen *pariśiṣṭas*⁷³. To the Kāṇvīya recension belongs a commentary ascribed to Sāyaṇa⁷⁴; to the Mādhyandhina the valuable commentaries by Uvaṭa and Mahidhara⁷⁵.

⁶⁷ See 134; cf. e.g. TS. 7, 4, 18; VS. 23, *passim*, misunderstood by WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 183 ("for amusement of the priests").

⁶⁸ R. T. H. GRIFFITH, *The texts of the White Yajurveda translated*, Benares 1899; ²1927; ³1957.

⁶⁹ For many particulars see RENOUE, at JA 236, p. 21; compare also S. K. GUPTA, at PO 16, p. 54; RENOUE, *Écoles*, p. 159.

⁷⁰ See RV. 1, 36, 10f. and many other places (cf. p. 11); BĀU. 4, 6, 2.

⁷¹ Cf. RENOUE, in JA 236, p. 49. R. MORTON SMITH, in *East and West* 16, p. 112 attempts, in a generally disputable argument, to fix the date of the split between the Kāṇvas and Mādhyandinas at \pm 375 B. C. As compared with Mahārāṣṭra and other manuscripts Orissan manuscripts of VSK. present peculiar features; see P. ACHARYA, *The Orissan recension of the Kāṇva Saṃhitā*, VIJ 2 (1964), p. 79.

⁷² See RENOUE, *Écoles*, p. 161.

⁷³ For particulars see RENOUE, *Écoles*, p. 162.

⁷⁴ See D. BHATTACHARYA, at 21 AIOC I, p. 63.

⁷⁵ See L. SARUP, at IL 2 (1932), p. 73; S. S. MISRA, at 20 AIOC, S.P., p. 31;

The legend, according to which the White Yajurveda is younger than the Black⁷⁶, is from the chronological point of view right. The name Śukla-Yajurveda, which seems to have arisen in opposition to texts in which *yajus* and *brāhmaṇa* portions were not separated, occurs already in the Śatapatha-Brahmaṇa⁷⁷, the other name only in much later works. Moreover, authorities of the former tradition contributing to its Brāhmaṇa, the Śatapatha, often polemize against the Black Yajurveda, and the *mantras* of the White branch are not infrequently corrupt and, consequently, younger⁷⁸. As to the Kṛṣṇa-Yajurveda, after Keith who regarded its *samhitās* as contemporaneous⁷⁹, it has—on the strength of incomplete data—been argued⁸⁰ that the chronological order of its fundamental collections is Maitrāyaṇī, Taittirīya and Kāṭha.

The *yajus*, sacrificial formulas, from which the Yajurveda takes its name and which are its most characteristic element, are generally in prose and, in principle, intended to be muttered by the *adhvaryu*. The prose of these short addresses and invocations cannot always be denied a formal aesthetic value; it is often markedly rhythmical, exhibiting such characteristics of archaic prose as repetition, parallelism, similarity of word order, anaphora, chiasmus, enumerations⁸¹; TS. 4, 3, 6; 4, 1, 5; 4, 5, 2; VS. 4, 3:

“Thou art the queen, the eastern quarter,
Thou art Virāj, the southern quarter,
Thou art Samrāj, the western quarter . . .

Protect my life-time, protect my expiration, protect my inspiration, . . . protect my eye, protect my ear, quicken my mind, strengthen my voice . . .”

“The Vasus must fashion thee with the *gāyatrī* metre, in the manner of Aṅgiras.
Thou art the earth.

The Rudras must fashion thee with the *triṣṭubh* metre, in the manner of Aṅgiras.
Thou art the atmosphere.

The Ādityas must fashion thee with the *jagatī* metre, in the manner of Aṅgiras.
Thou art the sky . . .”

“Homage to the golden-armed leader of hosts, and to the lord of quarters homage!

Homage to the trees with green tresses, to the lord of cattle homage! . . .”

“The milk of the great ones (the cows) art thou. Giver of splendour art thou. Give me splendour.

The pupil of Vṛtra's eye art thou. Giver of eyes art thou. Give me eye (vision).”

P. K. GODE, at ABORI 21, p. 248. On the commentators of the Yajurveda in general: C. L. PRABHAKAR, at Research Journal Bangalore Univ. 1969, p. 12.

⁷⁶ See above, 325, n. 17.

⁷⁷ ŚB. 14, 9, 4, 33 (= BĀU. 6, 5, 3); see above, p. 327.

⁷⁸ CALAND, Kāṇva-recensie (see above, n. 17), p. 154.

⁷⁹ KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. XCIV.

⁸⁰ BHAWE, Yajus', p. 70. K. MYLIUS, in Vol. W. Ruben, Berlin 1970, p. 421 assumes that the Taittirīya-Samhitā was compiled about 650 B.C.

⁸¹ See GONDA, S. R., *passim*; H. OLDENBERG, Zur Geschichte der altindischen Prosa, Berlin 1917, p. 2. There is no reason whatever to speak, with VON SCHROEDER, Ind. Lit. u. Cult., p. 113, disparagingly of those who used these texts.

Part of these formulas are no doubt very old⁸² and a text such as RV. 10, 182 seems to have been affected by their style⁸³. There are very short *yajuses*—e. g. the initial formula of the Yajurvedins TS. 1, 1, 1 etc. “For food thee, for strength (vigour) thee” words accompanying the cutting of a branch with which the calves are driven away from their mothers when milk is required for the offering⁸⁴; dedicatory formulas such as “This (thee) for Agni” with which an oblation is offered; statements of the type “Sūrya is light, light is Sūrya. Hail!”; simple juxtapositions of mighty terms: *bhūr bhuvah svaḥ* (the three regions of the universe)—and long or very long litanies in which many gods are successively addressed, their powerful deeds commemorated, wishes formulated, directions given, homage paid⁸⁵: “To Agni hail! (*svāhā*). To Soma hail! To Savitar hail! . . .” Characteristically enough, many *mantras* are not addressed to gods, but to the offerings and the sacrificial utensils. The razor with which the sacrificer, when he is consecrated, has his beard shaved, is addressed: “O axe, do not hurt him!” (TS. 1, 2, 1c); when the officiant girds his wife he says: “A zone for Aditi art thou,” thus bringing the utensil into relation with a deity. By means of these consecratory formulas the officiant identifies or locates these objects, states their useful or auspicious qualities, or the effects to be achieved through them, averts accidents, imparts a sacred character to them, formulates the purpose in handling them, connects them or declares them identical with important power concepts⁸⁶; in short, he makes them fit to be offered or used successfully. When the officiant takes any utensil into his hand he pronounces the oft-recurring formula: “At god Savitar’s instigation, I take thee with the arms of the Aśvins, with the hands of Pūṣan” therewith raising the act to a divine rank. A throne is placed on a tiger’s skin with the words “Thou art pleasant, good to sit on” (VS. 10, 26).

Of special interest are the numerous identifications by which the objects addressed are filled with higher power and made a means of achieving the purpose of the ritual act⁸⁷: while the purport of the complete formula TS. 1, 6, 2c “Thou art overcoming; may I be overcoming among my kinsmen, overcoming, an attentive one, finding (bestowing) wealth” directed to one of the sticks which are to encircle the sacral fire is in itself clear, many other formulas

⁸² There was an Avestan counterpart of the introductory formula *ye yajāmahe*; cf. Yašt 13, 50.

⁸³ The term *yajus* occurs already at RV. 10, 90, 9, but this place does not prove the existence of a complete *yajus* material at the time of the poet; see also OLDENBERG, at ZDMG 42, p. 244 (= K. S., p. 613).

⁸⁴ For an explanation see e. g. ŚB. 1, 7, 1, 2 “He means to say ‘for that food-essence which springs from rain.’”

⁸⁵ Cf. e. g. KS. 5, 1; 15, 7; MS. 1, 2, 18; TS. 1, 3, 11; 6, 4; 8, 13. Some of these formulas are (with the variation required) repeated more than fifty or a hundred times; cf. e. g. TS. 4, 5ff.; 7, 1, 19.

⁸⁶ See e. g. TS. 1, 3, 3; 1, 6, 1; 1, 4, 34; KS. 40, 4; MS. 2, 7, 6; 2, 13, 19; TS. 1, 6, 1; KS. 5, 6; 1, 4, 28.

⁸⁷ Cf. v. SCHROEDER, Ind. Lit. u. Cult., p. 129.

of this type require the explanations given in the *brāhmaṇa* portions of these collections. For instance, the words "Thou art the maker of wide room" TS. 4, 4, 7a find their explanation in 5, 3, 11, 1: "The gods and the *asuras* were in conflict . . . the gods saw these bricks (to be used in constructing the fire-place), they put them down . . . (with) 'Thou art the maker of wide room,' they conquered this (earth)." The formula is at a given moment to be repeated by the officiant while handling definite bricks: "He for whom these (bricks) are put down becomes greater, conquers these worlds, and prospers . . ." (5, 3, 11, 2)⁸⁸.

Here also 'magic' is interwoven with 'religion': part of the *yajus* are by their very terms and tenor atharvanic in character, e.g. MS. 1, 2, 10 "I cut off the necks of the demons, I cut off the neck of him who has hostile intentions against me, be he my equal or not my equal"⁸⁹. A specimen of 'magico-speculative,' as it were upanisadic formulas, showing also the absence of a hard-and-fast line between *samhitā* and *āranyaka* material, is furnished by the Caturhōtāras, a series of esoteric *mantras* used in *śrūta* as well as domestic ritual, identifying, *inter alia*, priests with deities⁹⁰. In the Maitrāyaṇī and the Vājasaneyi Samhitās the succession of the *yajus* is in harmony with the order of the rites⁹¹.

No long quotations are needed to illustrate the structure and the style of the *brāhmaṇa* passages, the less so as this topic will be more elaborately discussed in the next chapter. A few instances chosen at random may suffice: TS. 5, 1, 2, 1 being the *brāhmaṇa* for the *mantras* of 4, 1, 2, 1 ff. runs as follows:

"That part of the sacrifice is unsuccessful which is performed without a *yajus*. (With the words) 'They grasped this bond of Order' (TS. 4, 1, 2a) he takes up the horse's halter, to consecrate with a *yajus* and to make the sacrifice successful. (With the words) 'Swiftly run hither, O steed' (ibid. b) he halters the horse; verily he proclaims its greatness in this form. (With the words) 'Yoke ye the ass' (ibid. c) (he halters) the ass. Verily he establishes the ass on the non-existent. That is why the ass is less real than the horse . . ."

And KS. 11, 10 (*brāhmaṇa* belonging to the *mantras* in 11, 9) dealing with a rain rite:

"The wealthy gods, the sheltering gods . . . these gods are lords of rain. With them he daily wishes rain for him. He ties up a black antelope skin. The black antelope skin verily is the manifestation of the Ṛc and the Sāman. (It is therefore) with Ṛc and Sāman (that) he wishes rain for him . . ."

In other cases a *brāhmaṇa* passage—even a longer one—is digressive in character or only secondarily connected with *mantras*. For instance, the *mantras*

⁸⁸ See e.g. MS. 1, 4, 14 Agni is all the gods, Viṣṇu the sacrifice (so that by means of an offering to Agni-and-Viṣṇu one wins both gods and sacrifice); 2, 4, 4 a definite act must be performed with the *triṣṭubh* metre because it is (generative) power.

⁸⁹ Cf. e.g. also TS. 1, 3, 2, 1; 6, 2, 11, 1f.; VS. 5, 23.

⁹⁰ MS. 1, 9; KS. 9, 8; TĀ. 3, 1ff. See P. ROLLAND, *La litanie des quatre oblateurs*, JA 1970, p. 261.

⁹¹ BHAWE, *Die Yajus*, p. 69.

quoted at TS. 2, 4, 11 are found in 3, 2, 11; in the long comment given at 2, 4, 11 the word “of three constituents” (*tridhātu*) is used, and this word is, in its turn, explained by a mythical tale in 2, 4, 12. This begins with the god Tvaṣṭar, who, whilst offering *soma* excluded Indra, and narrates how through Viṣṇu’s mediation the disturbance resulting from this deed—Tvaṣṭar ritually produces Indra’s enemy Vṛtra—came to an end. In this narrative the number three is explained: Viṣṇu placed himself on the earth, in the atmosphere and in the sky and in correlation therewith there is three times a gift and an acceptance of power: “That is why the threefold is called threefold” (2, 4, 12, 7)⁹². In a partial duplicate of this story (2, 5, 2) Prajāpati, not Indra, is the third god and Indra, in the course of the events, produces from himself that fever which is marked by alternating cold and burning heat. “That was the origin of that fever. He who knows that the origin of that fever was thus, is not slain by it” (2, 5, 2, 3f.).

MS. 1, 5, 12 may be quoted as an instance of a typical mythical tale⁹³ illustrating also the context and background of many of these narratives, the way they are introduced and the way they serve as a foundation of ritual acts:

“He gives for ever who practises the daily fire service (*agnihotra*). Whatever he should desire for that the one who practises the *agnihotra* should solicit Agni. That falls to his share. With regard to this they say: ‘He, one should know, meets with the gods who solicits them for ever.’ That is why he should not be worshipped at that moment. Yama, one should know, died. The gods begged Yamī (to allow) him (to come) along (with them). When they asked her, she said: ‘He has died today.’ They said: ‘Thus she does not forget him. Let us create night.’ Then, one should know, it was day, there was no night. The gods created night. Then it became the next day. Thereupon she forgot him. That is why they say: ‘Days and nights make (men) forget suffering.’ Now, night, being created, (detrimentally) associated with the cattle. The gods perceived the cattle by means of the metres. By means of the metres they called them up (near) again. When one worships then one perceives (one’s) cattle by means of the metres. By means of the metres one calls (one’s) cattle up (near) again. Then they say: ‘Varuṇa, having become night, devoured the cattle. The (other) gods released them from Varuṇa by means of the metres. By means of the metres one . . .’”

Occasionally it seems possible to detect the method adopted by a compiler in composing a text. MS. 1, 10, 14–16 and KS. 36, 8–10⁹⁴ contain four passages which, when detached from their contexts and combined, seem to constitute a more or less coherent narrative, viz. an episode of Indra’s Vṛtra combat which is the more interesting as it is not known from other works. These passages successively are:

⁹² Cf. also CALAND, in *Festgabe Jacobi*, p. 240. For the number three see J. GONDA, in *Ohio Journal of religious studies*, 1974, 2, p. 5.

⁹³ For some other legends see MS. 1, 6, 12 (Agni’s adultery with Varuṇa’s wife); 1, 10, 13 (the winged mountains); 4, 5, 8; 4, 6, 3. For the god Rudra in the *Yajurveda*: S. BHATTACHARJI, in *ABORI* 41, p. 85.

⁹⁴ See K. HOFFMANN, in *Mélanges Renou*, p. 367.

“He (Indra) desired: ‘I would like to slay Vṛtra.’ After associating himself with these gods, he marched out (to fight) with the Maruts as men . . . When he had reached Vṛtra and saw him, he (suddenly) stopped, afflicted by a paralysis of his thighs, shrinking from (the attack). The Maruts rushed unto him. They tried to pass him (without touching him). When they came to his vulnerable spot he moved (again).”—“Intending to slay Vṛtra the next morning the gods waited while abstaining from food. They said: ‘Whose will this (dominion) be tomorrow, or whose? (i.e. no matter who will rule tomorrow, we must eat). Cook!’ They cooked this rice-dish.”—“Indra had set out (on a voyage) far from both (parties). The gods put down for Indra (his) portion (of rice, thinking): ‘Since a portion has been put down for him he will tomorrow choose us.’”—“When the next day had come, he set out to slay Vṛtra. The Maruts continuously pranced (in exultation) about him. They made (him) dare to fight (Vṛtra).”

While it is clear that these four short passages belong together and may be taken to represent a pre-existent version of the Vṛtra combat, the story shows traces of adaptation to the ritualistic explanation which it is to furnish: e.g. “this rice-dish” must refer to the sacrificial material; in the first passage there is an (untranslated) reference to Agni which must be an insertion for ritualistic purposes; the first passage begins abruptly: Indra’s name is not even mentioned; we are kept in the dark about those elements of the story, e.g. why did Indra not stay with the gods?, which, in this new ritual context, are not relevant. What is relevant is the explanation of the ritual fact that in the sacrifice under discussion the Maruts (and (Agni) receive oblations under names which occur in this text, e.g. “exultantly prancing Maruts.”

The Yajurveda introduces us to a geographical area to the east of that of the R̥gveda. In the *brāhmaṇa* period, as the times of the later *śamhitās* and the *brāhmaṇas* are often called, the centre of the Aryan civilization is Kurukṣetra⁹⁵, the country to the west of the upper course of the Yamunā (Jumnā) in which the typically brahminical religious doctrines and social system are developed to spread over other parts of India. A wider Aryan territory is the Middle Region⁹⁶, the land between the Himālaya in the north, the Vindhya—which does not seem to have been reached in Vedic times—in the south, the confluence of the Ganges and Jumnā in the east and the place where the Sarasvatī river disappears in the west. Its main inhabitants were the Kurus⁹⁷ and Pañcālas, whose brahmins gained fame and eminence. While the Punjab has receded in importance, the Doāb (between the two great rivers), the land of the Kosalas, has come into prominence and the eastern countries of the Magadhas and the Videhas (the modern S. and N. Bihar), though not completely aryanized and brahminized, successively make their appearance in the texts⁹⁸. The Yajurveda

⁹⁵ For Kurukṣetra as the home of the Kapiṣṭhalas see RAGHU VIRA, o.c., p. 1 and the improbable objections raised by L. KALLA, at 7 AIOC, p. 139.

⁹⁶ The name Madhyadeśa occurs at Manu 2, 21 etc.

⁹⁷ For the Vājasaneyi-Prātiśākhya and the country of the Kurus: WEBER, I. S. IV, p. 65.

⁹⁸ For further information see e.g. KEITH, in Cambridge History of India, I, Cambridge 1922, p. 116; MACDONELL and KEITH, V. I. s. s. v. v.; A. D. PUSALKER, in H. C. I. P. I, p. 251. See also RAGHU VIRA, in Journal of Vedic Studies 2, p. 61.

Samhitās and most of the *brāhmaṇa* literature were compiled in this large tract of land, the Middle Region, in which the four Vedas in general must have been forming before they dispersed in 'schools'⁹⁹. The White Yajurveda may to a certain extent be excepted, because there are—outside the Śāṅḍilya books¹⁰⁰ which point to the north-west—some indications of a more easterly origin¹⁰¹. How the dispersion of the schools came to pass remains obscure¹⁰² but the epigraphic records, the origins of manuscripts and various other data¹⁰³—for instance Mahidāsa's commentary on the Caranavyūha (16th century)¹⁰⁴—concur in evidencing the following distribution of the *śākhās* in later times¹⁰⁵. The Kaṭha-Kaṣiṭhalas were spread in the Punjab and Kashmir, the Maitrāyaṇīyas (very rare in modern times) in Gujerat¹⁰⁶ and the region north of the Narmadā, the Taittirīyas must have been widespread in the South whence such prominent exponents of their school as Āpastamba, Hiraṇyakeśin and Baudhāyana originated¹⁰⁷. The Mādhyamdiṇīyas covered many regions of India, especially the north-east and east, the Kāṇvas seem to have been everywhere; nowadays the Mādhyamdina school is dispersed in many regions of the north and the centre of India, and represented also in the east¹⁰⁸. The historical data must however be evaluated in the light of the fact that, for instance, Āpastamba and Baudhāyana were authors of *sūtras*, no representatives of the Taittirīya *śākhā* as a whole¹⁰⁹, and that on the other hand tradition is silent about various points concerning the *saṃhitās* and *brāhmaṇas*: it is, to mention only this, far from certain that the earliest seat of the above Taittirīya schools was in the south¹¹⁰.

⁹⁹ For particulars see v. SCHROEDER, *Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā*, I, p. XIX; KEITH, *V. B. Y. S.*, p. XCII; RENOUE, *Écoles*, p. 199.

¹⁰⁰ See below p. 353 f.

¹⁰¹ Cf. WEBER, *I. S. I.*, p. 189; V, p. 50; EGGELING, *ŚB. I.*, p. XLI; H. C. CHAKLADAR, *Contributions of Bihar to Vedic culture*, 6 AIOC (1933), p. 507 (mainly relying on partly questionable post-Vedic traditions).

¹⁰² See e.g. KANE, in *JBRAS* 1917, p. 620; RENOUE, *Écoles*, l.c.

¹⁰³ See the books mentioned in n. 99 and R. G. BHANDARKAR, at *IA* 1 (1872), p. 163.

¹⁰⁴ W. SIEGLING, *Die Rezensionen des Caranavyūha*, Thesis Berlin 1906, p. 10.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. also RENOUE, in *Vol. S. Varma*, p. 221. The only schools known in epigraphy are those the texts of which are still extant.

¹⁰⁶ See also C. G. KASHIKAR, in *Vol. Kaviraj*, Lucknow 1967, p. 14.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. G. BÜHLER, *The sacred laws of the Aryas*, I, Oxford 1879; ²1898, p. XXXII; W. CALAND, *Über das rituelle Sūtra des Baudhāyana*, Leipzig 1903, p. 11; KANE, *H. DhŚ. I.*, p. 27; 44; 47.

¹⁰⁸ For pandits in Orissa reciting from memory the entire Śukla-Yajurveda-Samhitā, a hereditary tradition waning day by day see P. ACHARYA, at *VIJ* 2 (1964), p. 79.

¹⁰⁹ A difficulty is that some sources seem to speak of Taittirīyas when more precisely they mean the foremost representatives of this *śākhā*, viz. the Āpastambins.

¹¹⁰ CALAND, at *GGA* 1898, p. 956; RENOUE, in *Vol. S. VARMA*, p. 219.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BRĀHMAṆAS

1. General introduction

The main works with which we shall be concerned are the Aitareya- and Śāṅkhāyana- or Kauṣītaki-Brāhmaṇas, which belong to the Ṛgveda, the Sāmavedic Pañcaviṃśa- or Tāṇḍyamahā- (and its 'appendix,' the Śaḍviṃśa) and Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇas, the Taittiriya-Brāhmaṇa of the Black and the Śatapatha of the White Yayurveda and the Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa which is a text of the Atharvavedins. These mostly voluminous prose works are essentially digests or, in a final redaction, collections of a floating mass of views and discourses on the ritual ceremonial. The exponents of this tradition often belonged to the same families that were already productive 'authors' in Ṛgvedic times¹. The practically all-powerful sacrificial (*śrauta*) rites are the one and only theme from which all discussions start and on which everything including the secondary themes hinges. The very aim of the compilers is not to describe, but to explain the origin, meaning, and *raison d'être* of the ritual acts to be performed and to prove their validity and the significance and suitability of the *mantras* and chants used as well as the mutual relations of the acts and their connections with the phenomenal reality. Thus the ceremonies gave occasion for speculative thought which was to justify them and to show their indispensability. Though viewing almost all topics discussed from the ritual angle² the authors generally supposed their audience to be well acquainted with the course of the ritual, its terminology and technicalities³. Many particulars are stated only in outline or omitted altogether. This means that to understand these works, a general knowledge of the complicated sacrificial ritual is, for the modern reader also, an indispensable requirement⁴. The authors endeavoured to expound systems of ritualistic speculations in order to explain, as far as man's interests are concerned, the world and the powers operating in

¹ Cf. OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 54, p. 189 (= K. S., p. 93); N. J. SHENDE, at Comm. Vol. H. D. Velankar, Bombay 1965, p. 133.

² See e.g. WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 188; A. HILLEBRANDT, Aus Brāhmaṇas und Upaniṣaden, Jena 1921, p. 18.

³ Many special directions presupposed in the *brāhmaṇas* are found in the ritual *sūtras* which, whilst often following their *brāhmaṇas*, are compiled for practical purposes.

⁴ A. HILLEBRANDT, Ritualliteratur, Vedische Opfer und Zauber, Strassburg 1897; LÉVI, D. S. B. (and OERTEL at AJPh 20, p. 444); KEITH, R. Ph. V. U., p. 313; GONDA, R. I. I, p. 138.

it and to establish the methods of controlling, or at least exerting influence upon, these powers by means of the ritual which, if properly understood and accurately performed, could, they believed, save man from evil and misfortune in this world and beyond. The belief in the efficacy of the rites founded on the conviction that all things and events are connected with one another, that there exist correspondences between ritual acts and the natural forces and supernatural influences, that it must be possible to maintain beneficial relations with the supra-mundane sacred order and that this possibility was most appropriately realized through ritual institutions made them establish a system of liturgic-cosmical equivalences. Known only to the initiate—or as the *brāhmaṇas* have it—to “the one who knows”⁵ these connections and relations with the Unseen, the so-called *bandhu(s)*⁶, are one of the most characteristic subjects for discussion. This discussion is as a rule carried on with minuteness and intricate argumentation, not always avoiding speculative digressions. The sacrificial ritual, indeed, is important beyond compare, a great regulating cosmic power, elevating man—the only earthly creature who can sacrifice—, indispensable for the gods, who owe their supreme authority to it, granting all wishes, redeeming from death and support of the universe, but it should be performed with a perfect knowledge of its technical intricacies and a full understanding of its higher significance⁷.

According to an ancient authority, Āpastamba (ĀpŚ. 24, 1, 32ff.), *brāhmaṇas* proper—that is, to exclusion of the *mantras*, names of sacrificers etc.—deal—in those sentences which contain an order expressed in the optative—with the rules or modes of conducting sacrificial ceremonies (*karma-vidhāna* or *vidhi*), and with exegesis of *mantras* and rites, with the reasons why a certain rite must be performed in a definite way (*arthavāda*)⁸. The latter part comprises⁹ censure

⁵ See e.g. H. OLDENBERG, *Vorwissenschaftliche Wissenschaft. Die Weltanschauung der Brāhmaṇa-Texte*, Göttingen 1919, p. 4; GONDA, R. I. I, p. 176; 197; 210; 272.

⁶ See e.g. S. SCHAYER, in *Zs. f. Buddhismus* 6, p. 276; RENOU, at JA 237, p. 13; 241, p. 171; GONDA, at ALB 29 (1965), p. 1.

⁷ E.g. ŚB. 1, 3, 5, 16; 2, 3, 1, 5 (“the sun would not rise, were he not to sacrifice . . .”); 3, 1, 4, 3; 3, 6, 2, 16; 3, 6, 3, 1; 9, 3, 3, 17; 9, 4, 3, 11; 10, 1, 5, 4; 10, 2, 6, 18; 12, 2, 3, 12; 13, 4, 1, 3; 14, 3, 2, 1.

⁸ Cf. also Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara, on TS. 1, 5, 1 “a *brāhmaṇa* is an explanation of a ritual act and of the *mantras* belonging to it,” and on AiB. 1, 1, 1. According to the later Mīmāṃsā school of thought there are three classes of injunctions, viz. orders enjoining something not otherwise known (*apūrvavidhi*), orders insisting upon a definite alternative or possibility in performing an act (*niyamavidhi*) and orders concerning actions known but not necessarily as possible alternatives (*pari-saṅkhyavidhi*). The *arthavādas* are likewise threefold: something contradicting everyday evidence (*guṇavāda*), something known from other sources of knowledge (*anuvāda*), something unknown and uncontradicted stated authoritatively (*bhū-tārthavāda*). Cf. also Sāyaṇa, Introduction to R̥V. I, p. 23 and (for more detailed distinctions) Madhusūdana Sarasvatī quoted by WEBER, I. S. I, p. 1. At AiB. 3, 45, 8 *brāhmaṇa* portions and metrical texts of the Veda (*chandas*; cf. ŚB. 11, 5, 7, 3) are clearly distinguished.

⁹ Cf. also HAUG, Ai. B., Introd. p. 49.

or controversy (*nindā*), e.g. “(the tear shed by Agni became silver; therefore) silver is not a suitable gift, for it has arisen from tears” (TS. 1, 5, 1, 2); recommendation (*śamsā*: the performance of a rite with the proper knowledge produces the effect desired): “he offers in the *āhavanīya* fire; verily he makes him go to the world of heaven” (6, 3, 2, 1); references to the (exemplary) performance of sacrificial acts in ‘former times’ (*purākalpa*), i.e. the numerous mythical stories of primeval events (and gods as originators) to which the origin of many rites is attributed; and precedents or the achievements of others (*parakṛti*): stories of certain performances of brahmins who were conversant with sacred knowledge (*śrotriya*), liberal sacrificers etc., and the success they achieved. The many myths contained in these portions have, in some way or other, a bearing upon the ritual or are, in any case, brought into relation with it. For a right understanding of the brāhmanic ‘sacrifice’ they are essential. They explain how a rite originated, why a ritual act is to be performed in a definite way, what is its effect, why a definite utensil should be used, what is the significance and result of definite practices and so on¹⁰. The above means that the contents of the *brāhmaṇas* may be classified under the heads of sacrificial directions, explanations and exegetical, ‘mythological,’ polemical or ‘philosophical’ speculations on the great rites and their ‘connections,’ and the advantages to be gained by means of the rites¹¹.

These prose explanations are called *brāhmaṇa*, i.e. “comment upon *brahman*,” i.e. the Veda¹². For instance, TS. 3, 1, 9, 4f.:

“Manu (the first man) divided his property among his sons. He deprived Nābhānediṣṭha, who lived as a Veda student, of any portion. This one went to him and said, ‘How have you deprived me of a portion?’ He replied, ‘I have not deprived you of a portion; the Angirases here are performing a long *soma* sacrifice; they cannot discern the world of heaven. Declare this *brāhmaṇa* to them. When they go to the world of heaven they will give you their cattle.’ He told them that and they going to the world of heaven gave him their cattle”¹³.

The term *brāhmaṇa* was then also applied to collections of such explanations, to sections of the Śatapatha and to works of this class in general¹⁴. In this collective meaning it occurs, together with the four Vedas (Saṃhitās), in TĀ. 2, 9, 10¹⁵. The *sūtras*, using the term for “ritual explanations,” not for definite corpora, do not recognize any distinction between *brāhmaṇas*, Yajurvedic

¹⁰ See e.g. JB. 1, 7; 11; ŚB. 1, 1, 4, 1ff.; 20ff.; 2, 1 f. For a distinction between purely illustrative and exegetical matter see below, p. 368 ff.

¹¹ The author of the Pañcaviṃśa, for instance, polemizes against the Kauṣītakins, cf. PB. 17, 4, 3 where the latter are blamed for an incorrect ritual procedure.

¹² RENOU, at JA 237, p. 15; MINARD, T. E. I, p. 51.

¹³ See also TS. 3, 5, 2, 1; AiB. 1, 25, 15; 6, 25, 1 “He mounts the difficult mounting; the explanation of this has been given,” viz. in 4, 21, 1: “the difficult mounting is the world of heaven”; 8, 2, 1.

¹⁴ On the possibility of shorter works of this class preceding those known to us: WILLMAN-GRABOWSKA, in RO 6, p. 189.

¹⁵ See also HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 42.

saṃhitās and *āraṇyakas* as regards their *brāhmaṇa* portions¹⁶. In course of time, however, it became necessary to distinguish other classes of literature, the more esoterical *āraṇyakas* and the *upaniṣads* of which the *brāhmaṇas* were the harbingers and into which they lead almost by insensible gradation.

Up to the present day many depreciatory judgments have been passed upon the contents and the literary value of these works¹⁷. However, their importance as the oldest body of Indian prose extant and as religious and speculative documents can hardly be overrated. On the basis of premises that are characteristic of so-called primitive and archaic civilisations—of which they are authentic documents—their authors erected, with refined acuteness and remarkable consistency, a wholly unparalleled superstructure to which Oldenberg's¹⁸ felicitous qualification 'prescientific science' is perfectly applicable. The *brāhmaṇas* represent the intellectual activity of a sacerdotal class which had succeeded in arranging and systematizing the older forms of belief and worship and in transforming them into a highly complicated system of sacrificial ceremonies. However interested the motives of the authors and their disciples might have been in the quest for an explanatory theory basically it was the desire to place all things in a causal context wider than that provided by common sense, the desire to penetrate the mysteries of the world, to find that unity, order and regularity which underlie apparent diversity, disorder and anomaly. It is in these works that we witness a spirit of inquiry and a speculative urge as well as the desire systematically to make the knowledge of the highest categories resulting from these speculations and the insight into the transcendent truth gained subservient to man's highest goal. In many respects these authors have, together with their colleagues of the Atharvaveda, laid the foundations of the Indian speculative thought of the later centuries.

As to the ancient commentators on this class of literature they are generally very sparing of information on their identity, date (Ṣaḍguruśiṣya: 1177 A. D.) or origin. The provenance of manuscripts—e.g. in Govindasvāmin's case Kerala, in Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara's Āndhra Pradesh—, geographical data, references to predecessors—e.g., Ṣaḍguruśiṣya on the Aitareya making mention of Govindasvāmin—, quotations in other works are our main help in filling the gaps in our knowledge. From these data it appears also that part of the commentaries are lost. Whereas Govindasvāmin tries to be as brief as possible, Sāyaṇa is inclined to quote grammatical rules, to explain every word by synonyms and

¹⁶ For particulars: KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. LXXVIII.

¹⁷ "Wunderliche Erzeugnisse . . . irrender Phantasie" (A. KAEGI, *Der Rig-Veda*, Leipzig 1878, p. 7); "aberrations of the human mind" (W. D. WHITNEY, in *AJPh* 3, p. 393); "tristes Bild . . . endloser Spitzfindigkeiten" (OLDENBERG, in *ZDMG* 49, p. 172); "unpalatable" (WINTERITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 187); "most unattractive" (WILLMAN-GRABOWSKA, at *RO* 6, p. 170); "sterile" (V. V. DIXIT, *Relations of the epics to the Brāhmaṇa literature*, Poona 1950, p. 46); "unerquicklich" (K. HOFFMANN, in *Mélanges Renou*, p. 367).

¹⁸ See above, n. 5.

to illustrate his argument with theories. In his *bhāṣyas* (commentaries of wider scope) on the Taittiriya texts Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara keeps the mean between them. Ṣaḍguruśiṣya, giving a brief explanation (*vṛtti*), preferred writing in verses. Commentators often quote, not only ancient authorities¹⁹ but also parallel passages in order to substantiate their own statements and opinions²⁰. Some of them furnish their readers with stanzas giving summaries or constituting explanatory links between two chapters. Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara often inserts a simple indication of the subject matter.

¹⁹ Sāyaṇa, for instance, was acquainted with many texts and predecessors. On quoting in general, S. R. SEHGAL, at NIA 5 (1943), p. 280.

²⁰ E.g. Sāmaśramin on 2, 6, 8, quoting, *inter alia*, TS. 2, 3, 2, 8; ŚB. 6, 2, 1, 18 in favour of the thesis that in the primitive time there were human sacrifices.

2. The Texts

Of the two *brāhmaṇas* attached to the Ṛgveda—and intended for the priest who functioned as *hotar*—the more important is the Aitareya¹. In its present form the work, which is written in a simple, though often crude style, consists of forty chapters ('lessons'; *adhhyāya*), divided into eight books called 'pentads' (*pañcika*) because each of them contains five sections². It is recognized by tradition as handed down by Sāyaṇa as the work of one person, Mahidāsa Aitareya³, but this man, who may have been an authority of some distinction, cannot have been more than the redactor of the present text. There is indeed no reason to doubt that this work is not of one hand or time⁴. That the last ten *adhhyāyas* (*pañcika* VII and VIII), which deal with the animal sacrifice, expiations and the royal consecration, were a later addition is more than probable both from a comparison with the nearly related Kauṣītaki-Brāhmaṇa which contains nothing corresponding to these subjects and from the fact that the real theme of the Aitareya-Kauṣītaki is the *soma* sacrifice (AiB. I-VI, *adhhyāya* 1-16 *agnīṣṭoma*, 17-18 *gavām ayana*, 19-24 twelve days' rite or *dvādaśāha*, 25-32 *agnihotra*; KB. VII-XXX)⁵, on which the account of the consecration related in the latter portion of the work—an account that has nothing parallel in other works—has no bearing (the king's sacrificial drink is not *soma*)⁶. In 8, 24-28, the—no doubt late—last section, the text passes to a doctrine of the resolution of the deities, lightning, rain, moon, sun, fire, in *brahman*; this doctrine is represented as a practical device for enabling the domestic priest to conquer the enemies of his royal patron. The first part of *pañcika* VII deals with the division of the sacrificial animals among the officiants. The authenticity of *pañcika* VI⁷ has, moreover, with good reason been doubted, not only because

¹ Edited and translated (with an introductory essay) by M. HAUG, 2 vol., Bombay 1863 (II ²Allahabad 1922; cf. WEBER, I. S. IX, p. 177); TH. AUFRECHT, *Das Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa* (with extracts from Sāyaṇa etc.), Bonn 1879 (1972); by P. S. SĀMAÇRAMĪ, 4 vol., Calcutta 1895-1906 (with Sāyaṇa); other Indian editions; translation: KEITH, *Rigveda Brahmanas*, Cambridge Mass. 1920 (Delhi 1969).

² In the West the work is usually quoted after books and shorter chapters.

³ See AUFRECHT, o.c., p. III; KEITH, Ai. Ā., p. 16. His name occurs at AiĀ. 2, 1, 8; 3, 7; ChU. 3, 16, 7 etc.

⁴ HAUG, Ai. B. I, p. 68; KEITH, R. B., p. 28.

⁵ Cf. also N. J. SHENDE, *Soma in the brāhmaṇas of the Ṛgveda*, JAS Bombay 38, p. 122. Neither *brāhmaṇa*, however, treats of all the sacrificial rites; see KEITH, R. B., p. 33; 54.

⁶ AiB. 7, 28, 1 " . . . then Indra was deprived of the drinking of *soma*, and in accordance with the deprivation of Indra the lordly power was deprived of the drinking of *soma*," chapter 29f. informing us that *soma* is the food of the *brahmanas*, curds that of the *vaiśyas*, water that of the *śūdras*; a nobleman should, as a sacrificer, take the fruits of various fig trees. In connection with such passages KEITH, R. B., p. 29 speaks of "a spirit of brahmanical self-assertion, which is at any rate not prominent in the rest of the Aitareya."

⁷ Cf. HAUG, AiB. I, p. 65; WEBER, I. S. IX, p. 372; KEITH, R. B., p. 31.

it makes the impression of a supplement, but also because it shows many signs of such defects as confusion and repetition and inconsistency with passages in the preceding part of the work.

As to the procedure adopted by the redactor his main purpose is to account for and justify the deities addressed, the *mantras* applied—i. e. their use in their ritual setting⁸—, the sacrificial material used and the ritual acts prescribed⁹. His devices to realize these intentions are emphasis placed upon a single word of a *ṛg*-stanza, illustrative stories of exemplary ritual performances, references to analogy (for instance in daily experience)¹⁰. In doing so he quotes rival authorities¹¹, siding with the ritualists, not with those who occupy themselves with the esoteric significance of hymns and rites (the *brahmavādins*). Never speaking in the first person he considers it part of his task to recommend certain practices and reject others. A point of interest concerns the handling of the *mantras*¹². Those *mantras* which in the eyes of the compiler are much suited to the occasion are valued as “perfect in form,” e. g. AiB. 1, 16, 8:

“(ṚV. 6, 16, 13b) ‘Atharvan produced fire’ is perfect in form; that in the sacrifice is perfect which is perfect in form, that rite which as it is performed the *mantra* declares”¹³.

Other formulas serve to allude to an authority for a particular ritual act even in the very Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā, e. g. “Beholding this the *ṛṣi* declares . . .”¹⁴. There is ample room for the observation that the expansion of the ritual on the one hand and the preservation of *mantras* which were not¹⁵, or no longer, ritually used on the other, necessarily led the ritualists to look for applicable *mantras* and to argue that these had the sanction of *ṛṣis* of the Saṃhitā or otherwise to adapt the *mantra* material to the exigencies of the ritual practice. Since it was often difficult to fit an old *mantra* into a new ritual frame, part of the Ṛgvedic passages adduced to explain particular features in the ritual impress us as forced or anachronistic. Thus in explanation of the fact that Indra and Vāyu have an oblation of *soma* in common AiB. 2, 25 has the story

⁸ The Aitareya-Brāhmana quotes 647 *ṛg*-verses, of which 119 are repeated, the number of repetitions being 216. However, part of the partial (*pratīkena*) quotations stand for a complete *sūkta*—about 150 complete *sūktas* are quoted: OLDENBERG, at ZDMG 38, p. 473 (K. S., p. 547)—, so that the total amount of verses quoted is much higher. In order and composition of stanzas and triplets there are some divergences between Brāhmana and Saṃhitā.

⁹ It may be recalled that these aim at earthly prosperity as well as fitness for union and communion with the Highest.

¹⁰ See V. CH. BHATTACHARYYA, at OH 1 (1953), p. 289. Cf. e. g. AiB. 1, 1; 1, 7; 2, 13; 2, 23; 3, 47; 5, 1; 6, 9; 6, 23.

¹¹ Cf. N. J. SHENDE, at Comm. Vol. H. D. Velankar, Bombay 1965, p. 133.

¹² See V. CH. BHATTACHARYYA, at OH 3, p. 239; 4, p. 99.

¹³ Cf. e. g. also AiB. 1, 17, 2; 25, 7; 2, 2, 32; KB. 8, 7, and see V. CH. BHATTACHARYYA, at OH 4, p. 99; 227; 5, p. 119; RENOUE, in JA 250, p. 184.

¹⁴ See e. g. AiB. 2, 33, 6; 3, 12, 5; 20, 1.

¹⁵ According to the traditional (‘orthodox’) view—which is untenable—all stanzas of the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā were originally intended for ritual use.

of a race during which Indra, perceiving that Vāyu was winning, asked his colleague to win together with himself if he might receive a fourth of the *soma*, which was the prize. The text adduced, RV. 4, 46, 2 or 48, 2 "with Indra as a charioteer," is only apposite if in the compiler's milieu a charioteer was entitled to a fourth of the prize and if this custom obtained already in Ṛgvedic times¹⁶. While working together, in this way, *mantras*, *itihāsas*, ritualistic rules and expositions the redactor confined himself for the most part to the duties of the *hotar* and his assistants¹⁷.

There are four commentaries¹⁸, by Govindasvāmin, Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara, Ṣaḍguruśiṣya (rather elaborate) and Sāyaṇa¹⁹.

The Kauṣītaki- or Śāṅkhāyana-Brāhmaṇa²⁰, comprising thirty chapters (*adhyāya*), and of a more limited size, is more harmonious, uniform and systematic in character and less discursive and descriptive in the treatment of its subjects than the companion text. The author's deliberate intention to be brief led him to avoid repetitions, to omit many narrative passages, ritual precepts and explanations of the applicability of *mantras*, to refer to ritual particulars in a more succinct way, and to leave the search for many links in his argumentation to his audience. On the other hand, the so-called ritual mysticism is a more prominent feature of his work²¹. As already mentioned, the main subject of this book is the same as that of the original part of the Aitareya. However, the regular exposition of the *soma* sacrifice does not begin before chapter VII. The first six chapters are devoted to the establishment of the fires (*agnyādhāna*), the *agnihotra*, the Full and New Moon offerings, special sacrifices, the seasonal rites and the part to be played by the *brahman* priest²². Some sections have a counterpart in the Aitareya, which on the other hand does without a number of sections of the chapters VII, XI, XVIII etc.²³. In their discussions and argumentations, in their attitude to the gods, in their general similarity both works strongly impress us as belonging to the same tradition. They seem to have borrowed much of their material from one and the same source. The co-

¹⁶ Hence also such laboured attempts to fit the *mantras* in the rites and environments as AiB. 1, 13; 1, 16, 2ff.; otherwise e.g. AiB. 1, 21; 1, 27; 2, 2.

¹⁷ Cf. N. J. SHENDE, at JUB 32 (2), p. 48.

¹⁸ C. KUNHAN RAJA, at ALB 3, p. 17; 63.

¹⁹ C. KUNHAN RAJA, at 12 AIOC II, p. 25. For Sāyaṇa's commentary see above (p. 344, n. 1) and compare BÖHTLINGK, at BSGW 52, p. 413; for Ṣaḍguruśiṣya, the edition by R. SASTRI and P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI, Trivandrum 1942-1955; cf. also M. M. PANTULU, at 25 AIOC, S. P., p. 371. It may be observed that the commentaries on Vedic prose texts are generally speaking better than those on the metrical texts.

²⁰ Edited (Kauṣītaki-Brāhmaṇa) by B. LINDNER, Jena 1887; E. R. SREEKRISHNA SARMA, Wiesbaden 1968 (cf. H. CH. PATYAL, at JOIB 20, p. 102); translated by KEITH, R. B., p. 345 (cf. CALAND, at AO (Lugd.), 10, p. 305).

²¹ Cf. also R. LÖBBECKE, Über das Verhältnis von Brāhmaṇas und Śrautasūtren, Thesis Leipzig 1908, p. 46; KEITH, R. B., p. 22; 36.

²² See also WEBER, I. S. II, p. 288.

²³ For particulars see KEITH, R. B., p. 13.

existence of the two *brāhmanas* may have resulted from a lack of unanimity among those engaged in ritual practice²⁴. Because of its wider subject-matter²⁵ the Kauṣītaki (30 chapters) has been regarded as a sort of expanded supplement to (the first 30 chapters of) the other *brāhmana* and therefore as later than that²⁶. There is however much to be said for a date posterior to the original part and prior to the extension of the Aitareya²⁷.

Proceeding now to the *brāhmanas* of the Sāmaveda it is interesting to notice that Sāyaṇa, whilst enumerating eight²⁸ of them, does not mention the most important Jaiminiya, possibly because he did not reckon it among the works of the Kauthumas²⁹. Curiously enough, considering the bulk of this work and the number of the legends contained in it, it is, moreover, almost unknown to the ancillary literature of the Veda³⁰; it has no commentary or *paddhati*. However, since the commentator of the other great Brāhmana, the Pañcaviṃśa, was a Rāṇāyaniya³¹, the probabilities are in favour of the supposition that these works were common property of the two *sākhās*.

The Pañcaviṃśa or Tāṇḍyamahā³² (Mahā- or Prauḍha-)Brāhmana³³, consisting of twenty-five chapters—hence its former name—and the other great work, also called Talavakāra-Brāhmana³⁴, pursue the same object: they

²⁴ Cf. RENOUE, *Écoles*, p. 217.

²⁵ It does not however represent the whole of the *brāhmana* tradition of the Śāṅkhāyana school: see ŚĀ. I and II, ŚŚ. XIV–XVI (KEITH, R. B., p. 38).

²⁶ For the relative chronology see LINDNER, *o.c.*, p. IX; MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 208.

²⁷ KEITH, *Ai. Ā.*, p. 31; 34; R. B., p. 47.

²⁸ Five of these works have already been dealt with (above, p. 320). As to the Upaniṣad-Brāhmana (Chāndogya-Brāhmana) of this school, the first two sections contain *mantras* for various domestic rites, rites for special purposes etc. (edited and translated, under the title *Mantra-brāhmana*, I, by H. STÖNNER, Thesis Halle 1901; II, by H. JÖRGENSEN, Thesis Kiel 1911. The other sections constitute the Chāndogya-Upaniṣad. Cf. also D. BHATTACHARYYA, *Chāndogya-Brāhmana* with the commentaries of Guṇaviṣṇu and Sāyaṇa, Calcutta 1958, and at OH 2, p. 203.

²⁹ See V. CH. BHATTACHARYYA, at OH 7, p. 91.

³⁰ H. OERTEL, at *Actes 11 Congr. Intern. Orient.* I, p. 225. (Cf. Sāyaṇa, on AiB. 2, 22).

³¹ CALAND, *PB.*, p. VIII.

³² See CALAND, *PB.*, p. XXVI; RENOUE, *Écoles*, p. 91; 100 on the name of the promulgator, Tāṇḍya or Tāṇḍin, of whose authorship there is no evidence in the text itself.

³³ Editions by ĀNANDACHANDRA VEDĀNTAVĀGĪŚĀ, Calcutta 1869–74; A. CHINNASWĀMI ŚĀSTRĪ, Benares 1935–36. Translation: W. CALAND, *Pañcaviṃśa-Brāhmana*, Calcutta 1931.

³⁴ Edition by RAGHU VIRA and LOKESH CHANDRA, Nagpur 1954. There is no complete translation. For partial translations see H. W. BODEWITZ, *Jaiminiya Brāhmana* I, 1–65 (with copious notes) and the portions translated by CALAND, in *Das Jaiminiya-Brāhmana* in *Auswahl*, Amsterdam Acad. 1919 (1960). Book I was also edited by RAGHU VIRA, Lahore 1937; II, 1–80 by LOKESH CHANDRA, Thesis Utrecht 1950. Before, in the twenties and thirties of this century, new manuscripts were found a complete edition and a satisfactory translation were impossible. Men-

interpret the acts pertaining to the *śrauta* ritual as far as regards the Sāmaveda—or, the task of the *udgātar* and his assistants—and, particularly, define and illustrate its most essential element, the *sāmans*. Consequently, they deal exclusively with *soma* rites. The contents of both works run, in the main, parallel without corresponding in particulars³⁵. The first great section of the Jaiminiya, I, 1–65, dealing with the daily fire cult (*agnihotra*), has no counterpart in the Pañcaviṃśa, but I, 66–364, containing the comments upon the *agnistoma*, correspond to PB. VI–IX; II, 1–80 dealing with the *gavām ayana*, i.e. the year-long basic form of the periodic rites (*ayana*) of the *sattra* type, correspond to PB. IV and V; II, 81–234, with the one-day *soma* sacrifices (*ekāha*), to PB. XVI–XIX³⁶; II, 235–333, with the sacrifices lasting up to twelve days (*ahina*) to PB. XX–XXII; II, 334–370 with those sacrifices which last more than twelve days (*sattra*), to PB. XXIII–XXV; II, 371–442 again with the *gavām ayana*; all 386 sections of book III with the rite of twelve days, to PB. X–XV. The first chapter of the Pañcaviṃśa contains, instead of a *brāhmaṇa* text, a collection of *yajus* formulas (I) to be muttered by the chanters on various occasions—a small prayer book, like those of the domestic ritual, no doubt modelled upon similar collections of the Black Yajurveda and composed after the main portion of the work³⁷. Chapters II and III discuss the so-called *viṣṭutis*, the different modes of forming, out of a triplet, the number of verses required for a laud.

However, in spite of the fact that both *brāhmaṇas* have much material in common, they differ widely in style and presentation. Whereas the Pañcaviṃśa, of a technical matter-of-factness, and notorious for its stylistic aridity, does not give more than what is strictly necessary and is often so succinct that some narrative portions (mythical tales etc.) are hardly comprehensible, the Jaiminiya is much more prolix, inserting mythical tales and liturgical anecdotes, many of which new. Yet, fundamental differences are rare and, where they occur, mainly due to the inclination of the more eclectic Jaiminiya to borrow

tion must be made of a number of Contributions from the Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa to the history of the *brāhmaṇa* literature (editions, translations and discussions of numerous passages) by H. OERTEL, in JAOS 18, p. 15; 19, p. 97; 23, p. 325; 26, p. 176; 306; 28, p. 81; Trans. Connecticut Acad. 15, p. 155; Actes 11 Congr. Int. Orient. (see above); see also JAOS 15, p. 233; Journal of Vedic Studies 1 and 2; VEDA VYĀSA, at 5 AIOC I, p. 292. On the Jaiminiya literature in general see W. CALAND, Jaiminiya Saṃhitā (see above, p. 319, n. 50); Over en uit het Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa, Amsterdam Acad. 1914 (on the contents, language, and relative position of this work in the Vedic literature). See also RENOÛ's and DANDEKAR's Bibliographies and (also for an evaluation of the work done) A. FRENZ, Über die Verben im Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa, Marburg 1966, p. IX; BODEWITZ, o. c., p. 2; PARPOLA, Literature (see above, p. 319, n. 45), p. 6.

³⁵ Cf. also CALAND, Over en uit . . . , p. 3.

³⁶ PB. 17, 1–4 deal with the interesting *vrātya-stomas*; cf. JB. 2, 222 (CALAND, Auswahl, p. 183). See above, p. 305.

³⁷ CALAND, PB., p. XXIV.

from other schools, whereas the Pañcaviṃśa hardly ever departs from the Kauthuma tradition³⁸. The chronological relation of the two works is disputed. Whereas Caland³⁹, mainly on the strength of ritual arguments, hesitatingly arrived at the conclusion that the Jaiminiya must be older than the other work, Keith⁴⁰ and Renou⁴¹ inclined to the opposite view.

This chronological problem is complicated by the existence of a considerable number of quotations—in Sāyana and other commentators—from a Śāṭyāyana-Brāhmana⁴² (Śāṭyāyanakam) which could be identified with the Jaiminiya—many of them can be traced almost literally in the latter—, were it not that the Jaiminiyas consider the Śāṭyāyana school to be different from theirs⁴³. We have no doubt to do here with one of those slightly duplicate versions that are far from rare in Vedic literature. The name of its author, Śāṭyāyani, is already, beside Tāṇḍya, mentioned in the Śrautasūtra of the Jaiminiyas⁴⁴. He no doubt was an authority of repute⁴⁵, whose *brāhmana*, lost to us, may have been taken over or recast and amplified by the Jaiminiyas⁴⁶.

The Ṣadviṃśa-Brāhmana⁴⁷ is, in accordance with its name, the "Twenty-sixth," and its desultory character intended to be a kind of supplement to the Pañcaviṃśa⁴⁸. It consists⁴⁹ of five 'lectures' (*prapāthaka*) which deal with (I) the *subrahmanya* litany by which the sacrifice is announced to the gods; the metres and *sāmans* of the *agniṣṭoma*; ceremonies to be performed before the morning recitation (*prātaranuvāka*), the duties of the *brahman* priest, expiatory rites, the pap (*caru*) offered to Soma; (II) the singing of the so-called *bahiṣpavamāna-stotra*, the functions of the main priests, *mantras* to be pronounced by the sacrificer etc.; (III) the expiatory bath (*avabhṛtha*), *viṣṭutis*, incantations; (IV) various topics. *Prapāthaka* V, the so-called Adbhuta-Brāhmana, is devoted to

³⁸ CALAND, PB., p. XXII; RENOU, Écoles, p. 101, and compare HOPKINS, in Trans. Connecticut Acad. 15, p. 19.

³⁹ CALAND, PB., p. XIX.

⁴⁰ KEITH, in JRAS 1932, p. 699.

⁴¹ RENOU, Écoles, p. 101.

⁴² BURNELL, at The Academy, 15 (1879), p. 126; OERTEL, at JAOS 18, p. 15; CALAND, Over en uit . . . , p. 5; B. GHOSH, Collection of the fragments of lost *brāhmanas*, Calcutta 1935.

⁴³ Cf. RENOU, Écoles, p. 106; PARPOLA, o.c., p. 7; 9; BODEWITZ, o.c., p. 11.

⁴⁴ Edited by D. GAastra, Bijdrage tot de kennis van het Vedische ritueel, Thesis Utrecht 1906, p. 2 (JŚ. 1).

⁴⁵ A fairly old Śāṭyāyana-Sūtra dealing with the expiations of the domestic ritual is also (rightly?) attributed to him (CALAND, Brāhmana- en Sūtra-aanwinsten, Amsterdam Acad. 1920, p. 475).

⁴⁶ CALAND, PB., p. XVIII.

⁴⁷ Edited (with the commentary attributed to Sāyana) by H. F. EELSINGH, Thesis Utrecht 1908; B. R. SHARMA, Tirupati 1967; *prapāthaka* I also by K. KLEMM, Das Ṣadviṃśabrāhmana . . . nebst einer Übersetzung, Gütersloh 1894; translation: W. B. BOLLÉE, Ṣadviṃśa-Brāhmana, Thesis Utrecht 1956.

⁴⁸ Hence also Tāṇḍyaśeṣa-Brāhmana (comm. on ŚB. 1, 1, 1).

⁴⁹ For a longer survey (in Dutch) see EELSINGH, o.c., p. XX.

ominous events⁵⁰. The Śaḍviṃśa is no doubt a comparatively late compilation⁵¹.

In contradistinction to the more autonomous *brāhmaṇas* of the other Vedas those of the Yajurveda follow the ritual closely. As already mentioned in the preceding chapter the Maitrayaṇīyas have not left us an independent *brāhmaṇa*⁵², the prose portions of their *saṃhitās* serving that purpose. The Taittirīyas, however, emulating the Ṛgvedic tradition, possess a separate *Brāhmaṇa* which, generally in the same style, and containing *mantras* as well as prose, is a natural continuation or supplement to their *Samhitā*⁵³. Thus only the special methods of building the fireplace⁵⁴ are dealt with in the *Brāhmaṇa*, because the normal form has been abundantly treated in the *Samhitā*⁵⁵. TB. 1, 6 amplifies some details mentioned in the treatment of the royal consecration in TS. 1, 8. On the other hand, the *Brāhmaṇa* sometimes describes or enumerates ritual acts in a way reminiscent of the *sūtra* style. The work, a mere agglomeration of material, consists of three books. These are called *aṣṭaka* "consisting of eight ('lectures,' chapters: *prapāṭhaka*)," a name which is not applicable to book III in its present form: its last four 'lectures' (9–12) as well as the first two books of the Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka originally belonged to the Kāṭhas, although their school has not preserved them⁵⁶. The other parts of the *Brāhmaṇa* are traditionally attributed to Tittiri. In order to protect the text from corruption the smallest divisions (*kaṇḍikā*) are (often mechanically) subdivided into ten clauses, the final words of which are repeated at the end of a section (*anuvāka*)⁵⁷. The following is a brief survey of its main contents⁵⁸: (I) *agnyadhāna*⁵⁹, *gavām ayana*⁶⁰, *vājapeya*, royal consecration; (II) *agnihotra*⁶¹, the so-called *dāśahotra* sacrifices⁶²; *mantras* for subsidiary sacrifices; *sautrāmaṇī* in its

⁵⁰ It was separately edited and translated by A. WEBER, *Zwei vedische Texte über Omina und Portenta*, Berlin Acad. 1858. See also N. TSUJI, *On the formation of the Adbhuta-Brāhmaṇa*, ABORI 48–49, p. 173.

⁵¹ Cf. already WEBER, I. S. I, p. 37 (simultaneous with the Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka).

⁵² For the Kāṭhas see below, p. 351.

⁵³ The Taittirīya-*Brāhmaṇa* of the Black Yajur Veda with the commentary of Sāyaṇa edited by RAJENDRALALA MITRA, 3 vol., Calcutta 1855 (1859)–1870 (compare BÖHTLINGK, in BSGW 1892, p. 199); other editions: SHAMA SASTRI, Mysore 1921; Poona 1938. There does not yet exist a complete translation; for partial translations (mainly by P. E. DUMONT) see the DANDEKAR, Bibl. III, p. 51; IV, p. 89 and the following notes.

⁵⁴ P. E. DUMONT, *The special kinds of agnicayana* (TB. 3, 10–12 with translation), PAPHs 95 (1951), p. 628.

⁵⁵ Cf. KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. CXXV.

⁵⁶ Cf. WEBER, I. S. XIII, p. 269; KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. LXXVIII; RENOUE, *Écoles*, p. 145.

⁵⁷ Cf. BÖHTLINGK, o. c.; C. V. VAIDYA, in 5 AIOC I, p. 278.

⁵⁸ For a more detailed survey: KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. LXXVI.

⁵⁹ For 1, 1, 1–15 and 2, 2–15 see WEBER, I. S. I, p. 90.

⁶⁰ See p. 348.

⁶¹ DUMONT, at PAPHs 108, p. 337.

⁶² See e. g. KEITH, R. Ph. V. U., p. 356.

kaukilā form⁶³; *savas* (a type of rites for special purposes lasting one day); special animal sacrifices⁶⁴ (*kāmyeṣṭi*); (III, 1–8) sacrifices to the constellations or so-called lunar mansions (*nakṣatreṣṭi*)⁶⁵; the important explanations of the rites of New- and Full-Moon⁶⁶ as well as part of the *mantras* belonging to it⁶⁷; the human sacrifice⁶⁸ (with symbolical human victims)⁶⁹; offerings of butter, cakes etc. (*iṣṭi*), animal sacrifice⁷⁰, expiations⁷¹, acts to be performed on the first (III, 8) and on the second and third (III, 9) days of the horse sacrifice⁷²; the elaborate ceremonies connected with the piling of a fireplace for the adoration of the sun; the so-called Nāciketa fire; the Cāturhotra ceremonies⁷³. The number of legends contained in this *brāhmaṇa* is comparatively small. The *mantras*, though generally taken from the R̥gveda, are not infrequently new⁷⁴.

From Āpastamba's Śrautasūtra (e.g. 5, 25, 13f.) it was already known that there must have existed also a *brāhmaṇa* of the Kāṭhaka tradition⁷⁵, and from a short notice in a manuscript it may be inferred that this belonged to a Kāṭhakam, a corpus of the scriptures of that school consisting of a hundred chapters. Some fragments have been preserved, among which an *agnyādheya-brāhmaṇa* (an addition to what is said on this subject in the Kāṭhaka-Saṃhitā), comprising eleven sections, and an *amābrāhmaṇa*, dealing with the names of the days of full and new (*amā*) moon; it refers to the story of the churning of the ocean⁷⁶.

To the White Yajurveda belongs the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, "the Brāhmaṇa of the Hundred Paths," probably so called because—in the Mādhyandina recension—it consists of one hundred "lessons" (*adhyāya*)⁷⁷. It is not only the

⁶³ DUMONT, at PAPHs 109, p. 309; see e.g. GONDA, R. I. I, p. 173 (instead of *soma*, *surā*, a sort of beer, is offered to Indra and other gods; it comprises also an animal sacrifice).

⁶⁴ DUMONT, at PAPHs 113 (1969), p. 34 (in the title read: second kāṇḍa of TB.).

⁶⁵ DUMONT, at PAPHs 98, p. 204.

⁶⁶ DUMONT, at PAPHs 101, p. 216; 103, p. 584; 608; 104, p. 1; 105, p. 11.

⁶⁷ It is remarkable that the formulas and stanzas to be recited by the *hotar* are found in the Brāhmaṇa, while the explanations relating to part of them are given in TS. 2, 5, 7–11; 2, 6, 7–10.

⁶⁸ DUMONT, at PAPHs 107, p. 177.

⁶⁹ This sacrifice, as it is described in some *sūtras*, was in all probability never performed.

⁷⁰ DUMONT, at PAPHs 106, p. 246 (TB. 3, 6, 1–15); 113, p. 34ff. (TB. 2, 8, 1–9).

⁷¹ DUMONT, at PAPHs 107, p. 446. For the expiations in connection with the *agnihotra* (TB. 1, 4, 3f.): DUMONT, at Mélanges RENOU, p. 243.

⁷² DUMONT, The horse-sacrifice in the Taittiriya-Brāhmaṇa. PAPHs 92 (1948), p. 447.

⁷³ See e.g. KEITH, R. Ph. V. U., p. 356. For 3, 10–12 see above, n. 54.

⁷⁴ For those used in the *nakṣatreṣṭi* see VAIDYA, o.c., p. 282.

⁷⁵ For this paragraph see W. CALAND, Brāhmaṇa- en sūtra-aanwinsten, Amsterdam Acad. 1920, p. 466ff.; 478ff.

⁷⁶ Cf. Mbh. 1, a. 16.

⁷⁷ On the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa in general see EGGELING, Introductions to ŚB. I–V; CALAND, Introduction to ŚBK. (see below, n. 80); MINARD, T. E.; H. BRUNNHOFER, Das Buch der hundert Pfade, Bern 1910. In ŚBK. there are 104 chapters.

most extensive and the best known of all the works of this class, but also one of the highest achievements in the whole range of Vedic literature. Being more elaborated than the other *brāhmaṇas* it is, also in passages of smaller compass, a mine of important information and richest in discussions and narratives, part of which are recounted in detail, though always fitted in the ritual framework. As in the case of the Saṃhitā of the Vājasaneyins there are two recensions extant⁷⁸, that of the Mādhyandinas⁷⁹ and of the Kāṇvas⁸⁰. Both recensions are very closely related, the differences being mainly found in ŚBK. I–VII which, in the main, run parallel to ŚBM. I–V. In the Mādhyandina recension the 100 *adhyaṅgas*—which are numbered consecutively—are distributed among fourteen books (*kāṇḍa*, each with a name of its own); they are subdivided into *brāhmaṇas* and *kaṇḍikās*: the smallest units, of the average numbers of words and syllables 39 and 79. The *kaṇḍikās* are—after and before a pause—structured as follows: ‘incipit’ (*pratīka*), minor pause, ‘continuation’ (*anūka*)⁸¹. The text is, like that of the Kāṇvas, accented in a peculiar way. The Kāṇva recension has (in manuscripts of southern origin)⁸² 16—or 17—books.

The first nine books of the Mādhyandina (and eleven of the Kāṇviya) correspond closely to the first eighteen chapters of the Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā⁸³. They deal with the fundamental elements of the liturgy and the ancient nucleus of the Yajurveda: Full and New Moon sacrifices, establishment of the sacred fires, *agnihotra*, seasonal sacrifices and other *haviryajñas* (ŚBM. I and II)⁸⁴, the *soma* sacrifices and the construction of the sacred fireplace (ŚBM. III–IX). Although no doubt older than the last five books they do not constitute a unity, because in ŚBM. I–V, which are more closely connected, Yājñavalkya is quoted as the

⁷⁸ The schools of the Vājasaneyins are stated to have been fifteen or seventeen; their names are mentioned, it is true with considerable variation, in different works. See EGGEING, ŚB. I, p. XXVIII.

⁷⁹ Edited by A. WEBER, *The Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa in the Mādhyandina-çākḥā* with extracts from the commentaries of Sāyaṇa, Harisvāmin and Dvivedagaṅga, Berlin–London 1855, ²Leipzig 1924, ³Varanasi 1964; P. S. SĀMAŚRAMĪ, Calcutta 1899–1911 (I–III, V–VII only); A. CHINNASVAMI SASTRI, Benares 1937; 1950; SATYAPRAKASH, New Delhi 1967—(and other Indian editions); translated by J. EGGEING, ŚB., 5 volumes, Oxford 1882–1900, ²Delhi 1963; 1966 (compare WHITNEY, at AJPh 3, p. 391; PAOS 1888, p. VI; 1894, p. XCV; CALAND, at BSOS 6, p. 297).

⁸⁰ Edited by W. CALAND, *The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa in the Kāṇviya recension*, Lahore 1926–1939 (I–VII, with a long introduction).

⁸¹ MINARD, T. E. I, p. 2 etc., II, p. 1 etc. In reality the numbering system is more complicated, allowing some interesting conclusions with regard to the genesis of this work: MINARD, at *Mélanges Renou*, p. 523.

⁸² For a more original southern and a northern recension: CALAND, ŚBK. I, p. 23; 27.

⁸³ Cf. e.g. CALAND, ŚBK. I, p. 26; 109; RENOUE, *Écoles*, p. 165.

⁸⁴ The Mādhyandinas begin with the Full and New Moon rites, the Kāṇviyas, in accordance with the ritual sequence, with the *agnyādhāna* and *agnihotra* (ŚBM. 2, 1 ff.).

great authority whose opinion, mostly on ritual problems, is conclusive⁸⁵ and in VI–IX, where his name, recurring in the later books, is never mentioned, Śāṅḍilya is the teacher most frequently referred to⁸⁶. Yājñavalkya Vājasaneyā, a native of Videha, protégé of king Janaka and disciple of Āruṇi, is the most prominent exegete of the later Vedic period, to whom tradition attributes, if not the redaction of the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa in its entirety—which actually is an anonymous production—then the promulgation of the *yajus* formulas themselves⁸⁷. He is very often (108 times) mentioned in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad which constitutes the concluding portion (14, 4ff.) of this Brāhmaṇa⁸⁸. This esoteric treatise has a counterpart in the secret doctrine (*rahasya*) expounded in ŚBM. X—on the mystery of the fireplace—joining the Śāṅḍilya books⁸⁹ which deal with the construction of the great fireplace (*agnicayana*)⁹⁰. Book X—in which Śāṅḍilya again figures as the chief authority—moreover ends up with a ‘line of the succession of teachers’ (*vaṁśa*)⁹¹ which, referring to the *vaṁśa* of the whole work at the end of XIV, shows that VI–X were completed after the Yājñavalkya books. The great teacher, a man of simple solutions and somewhat coarse words, plays a prominent part in ŚBM. XI. In a number of dialogues of a free *brahmodya* type⁹²—a sort of liturgic catechism—on the *agnihotra* he answers questions posed by the generous king Janaka⁹³, enabling us to gain an insight into the gradual transitions, in contents, style, and composition from the traditional ritual discussion to the philosophical speculations of the *upaniṣads*⁹⁴.

⁸⁵ See e.g. ŚBM. 1, 1, 1, 9; 3, 1, 21; 26; 9, 3, 16; 3, 1, 1, 4; 4, 6, 1, 10; also 1, 3, 1, 21; 2, 3, 4, 2; compare EGGELING, ŚB. I, p. XXX; RENOUE, Les relations du Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa avec la Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad et la personnalité de Yājñavalkya, Indian Culture 14 (1948), p. 75; A. K. COOMARASWAMY, at IHQ 13, p. 261 (fantastic).

⁸⁶ They sometimes touch upon the same point (cf. e.g. ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 12f.: 9, 3, 4, 8); the Śāṅḍilya place is more spiritual in cases such as 9, 4, 1, 13ff.; 5, 4, 3, 3ff.

⁸⁷ ŚBM. 14, 9, 4; CALAND, ŚBK. I, p. 64; RENOUE, at IC 14, p. 75. Yājñavalkya (cf. also HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 380) is often mentioned in the Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa (CALAND, Auswahl, p. 315; RENOUE, Écoles, p. 165).

⁸⁸ The distinction between *brāhmaṇa*, *āraṇyaka* and *upaniṣad* (portions) of the same tradition—the term corpus is hardly applicable—is not contemporaneous.

⁸⁹ For upaniṣadic passages in ŚBM. X see 10, 5, 3; 6, 1; 3; as to 10, 3, 3, 8 cf. BĀU. 3, 2, 13; as to 10, 5, 2, 11 cf. BĀU. 4, 3, 9ff. etc. The oldest occurrences of the term *upaniṣad* are at ŚBM. 10, 3, 5, 12; 4, 5, 1 etc. The upaniṣadic passage ŚBM. 10, 6, 4 and 5 is in the Kāṇviya text even transposed to book XVI to be the beginning of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka.—For ŚBM. VI–X, ŚBK. VIII–XII see CALAND, ŚBK. I, p. 103.

⁹⁰ See also EGGELING, ŚB. V, p. XIII.

⁹¹ For the *vaṁśas* see also EGGELING, ŚB. I, p. XXXI.

⁹² See p. 134.

⁹³ See e.g. ŚBM. 11, 3, 1, 2; 6, 2, 1ff. and compare 11, 4, 3, 20; 6, 3, 1.

⁹⁴ BĀU. 3 and 4, the Yājñavalkyakāṇḍa, may be regarded as a continuation of these discussions in the Śatapatha.

Whereas in the Yājñavalkya books hardly any but eastern peoples and those of Ganges-Jumna region are named, the peoples mentioned in the Śāṅḍilya books belong to the north-west. Add to this dissimilarity a number of linguistic and stylistic differences⁹⁵—the books VI—IX are more archaic in character—and the conclusion is warranted that the latter are of another provenance⁹⁶, possibly neither Kāṇva nor Mādhyandina⁹⁷. The books ŚBM. XI—XIV (ŚBK. XIII—XVI⁹⁸), besides some appendices to the preceding books—XI, 1 and 2 being a more esoterical supplement to the more technical treatment of the Full and New Moon rites in I—contain, in XIII, the *aśvamedha*⁹⁹, the “human sacrifice” (*puruṣamedha*), the “sacrifice of all” (*sarvamedha*) and the *pravargya* ceremony in the former part of XIV, as well as some sections on subjects which are otherwise foreign to *brāhmaṇas*, e.g. the initiation of the Veda student (*upanayana*), the daily Veda study (*svādhyāya*, considered a sacrifice to Brahman, 11, 5, 6–8) and funeral ceremonies (13, 8). Among the valuable contents of XI and XII are some important myths, and an interesting section treating of the way in which the dead body of the performer of the *agnihotra* is to be dealt with (12, 5, 1–2).

There can be no doubt that the two recensions presuppose the existence of an archetype of which they are rearrangements. It has not however been possible definitely to answer the question of their chronological relation¹⁰⁰. From a number of mutual differences and divergences of either *brāhmaṇa* from its *saṃhitā* it may be inferred that, existing for a long time side by side, they have influenced each other¹⁰¹. Nor is it doubtful that in its present form the Śatapatha is—also because of its more facile style and more systematic treatment of the ceremonial—comparatively late. A date sometime between the texts of the Black Yajurveda and the beginning of the upaniṣadic period (\pm 600 B.C.) may be the best that can be suggested at this moment¹⁰². The Śatapatha, indeed, often mentions—and almost invariably rejects—the views or practices of other

⁹⁵ Cf. WEBER, in I. S. XIII, p. 267; RENOUE, Écoles, p. 165; MINARD, T. E. II, p. 59.

⁹⁶ This does not imply that they were older; see also CALAND, ŚBK. I, p. 103, and compare RENOUE, in BSL 34, p. 91.

⁹⁷ CALAND, Over de Kāṇva-recensie van het Brāhmaṇa der ‘honderd paden,’ Amsterdam Acad. 1912, p. 141; esp. p. 151.

⁹⁸ CALAND, ŚBK. I, p. 105.

⁹⁹ See CALAND, at AO (Lugd.) 10, p. 126 (ŚBM. 13, 1–3 and 4–5 give a double treatment of this sacrifice, viz. a *brāhmaṇa* for the *hotar* and one for the *adhvaryu*).

¹⁰⁰ CALAND, Over de . . . , p. 147; ŚBK. I, p. 85; 107; cf. also RENOUE, at JA 236 (1948), p. 25.

¹⁰¹ According to CALAND, Over de . . . , p. 148; 151 K. was strongly influenced by M.; the books M. XI—XIII originally were the property of the Kāṇvas. For other views and observations see RENOUE, at JA 236, p. 26 (ŚBK.—which, curiously enough, does not comment upon those *mantras* (*yajus*) which are exclusively proper to VSK.—seems to have followed ŚBM. adapting the tenor of the quotations to VSK.); MINARD, T. E. I, p. 24 and compare RENOUE, Écoles, p. 168.

¹⁰² Cf. also HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 473.

authorities, referred to as "some (*adhvaryus*)" or "Caraka-adhvaryu(s)"¹⁰³. In many cases other traditions are completely ignored.

The Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, which to a certain extent provides us with legendary and terminological links between the Vedic culture on one hand¹⁰⁴ and India of the Great Epic and ancient Buddhism on the other, was more than once commented upon. One commentator may be mentioned by name, Hari-svāmin (probably in the second half of the 7th century)¹⁰⁵, a pupil of Skanda-svāmin who explained the Ṛgveda.

From the fact that it does not comprise the complete *brāhmaṇa* material it has been presumed that the Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa¹⁰⁶—probably named after a *ṛṣi*¹⁰⁷—is a secondary treatise in the style of such a work. It consists of two parts, the former comprising five, the latter six chapters. These are perhaps the remainders of a work of a hundred chapters¹⁰⁸. Especially in its second part it is a compilation containing many portions that run parallel to, are more or less identical with, other *brāhmaṇas* (Aitareya, Kauṣītaki, Śatapatha etc.¹⁰⁹) or are even almost literal borrowings from these works, sometimes even without any attempt at assimilation. This second part bears indeed more than the other half the stamp of a regular *brāhmaṇa*, following, in the main, the order of the rites adopted also in the Vaitāna-Sūtra: Full and New Moon sacrifice, *āgrāyana* (the oblation of the first fruits) etc. There is a tendency to include upaniṣadic portions: thus 1, 1, 1–15 is an atharvanic cosmogony in the upaniṣadic manner, 1, 1, 16–30 is almost identical with the Praṇava-Upaniṣad¹¹⁰; the section 1, 1, 31–38, a disquisition on the Gāyatri or Savitṛi (ṚV. 3, 62, 10), calls itself Sāvitrī-Upaniṣad. The atharvanic affiliation is mainly apparent from the form of the *mantras* quoted, slight adaptations and a certain general character of the original portions, which are much more numerous in the first part: there is a discussion of the duties of the brahmin disciple (*brahmacārin*: 1, 2, 1–9), of the

¹⁰³ CALAND, ŚBK. I, p. 92; at AO (Lugd.) 10, p. 126 (ŚB. borrowed from TB. and ŚŚ.); WEBER, Über die Königsweihe, Berlin Acad. 1893, p. 92; S. N. PRADHAN, at IHQ 8, p. 588. Caraka is meant as a comprehensive term embracing the older schools of the Black Yajurveda (see KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. XC).

¹⁰⁴ For particulars see e.g. MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 217.

¹⁰⁵ M. DEVA SHASTRI, at 6 AIOC, p. 595; S. L. KATRE, at BhV 9, p. 325 (chronologically untenable).

¹⁰⁶ Edited by D. GAASTRA, Das Gopatha Brāhmaṇa, Leiden 1919; translated (with notes and introduction) by H. CH. PATYAL (unpublished) thesis Poona 1969. Compare BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 101.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. AVPar. 20, 6, 2; 27, 2, 5; 28, 1, 2; 31, 10, 5; according to the AV. Brhat-Sarvānukramaṇikā, ed. VISHVA BANDHU, Hoshiarpur 1966, p. 121; 124 AVŚ. 19, 25; 47–50 were 'seen' by Gopatha.

¹⁰⁸ Referred to in AVPar. 49, 4, 5; cf. GAASTRA, o.c., p. 9; Sāyana, Intr. to AVŚ. (ed. VISHVA BANDHU, p. 28) quotes a stanza from the GB. which is not found in our text.

¹⁰⁹ For particulars see BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 107; GAASTRA, o.c., p. 17.

¹¹⁰ Cf. BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 109; P. DEUSSEN, Sechzig Upanishad's des Veda, Leipzig 1921 (Darmstadt 1963), p. 858.

precedence of a follower of the Atharvaveda functioning as a *brahman* priest (1, 2, 24–3, 1); there are rules concerning the consecration (*dikṣā*: 1, 3, 21; 23); a discussion of the *sahasradakṣiṇa* sacrifice through which one obtains imperishable results (1, 5, 8); of the three daily *soma* pressings as treated in ŚB. 12, 3, 4, 1 ff. but interlarded with many atharvanic traits (1, 5, 11–20); a number of legends and other matter. It is not possible to decide whether the Brāhmaṇa, which does not like other works of this class follow its own Saṃhitā, was the exclusive property of the Śaunakins or the Paippalādins¹¹¹. The date of its composition, no doubt undertaken in order to provide the Atharvavedins with a *brāhmaṇa*, is unknown, but there can be no doubt that it is one of the latest productions of its genre. Its relation to the Vaitāna-Sūtra has occasioned a protracted controversy between Bloomfield¹¹², who was of the opinion that the Sūtra was composed earlier (and figured as it were as the *saṃhitā* of this Brāhmaṇa) and Caland¹¹³, who advocated the opposite view. Although the correspondence between the two works is not perfect¹¹⁴, Caland's arguments, based on internal evidence (sentence construction, quotations, wrong interpretations, grammatical inaccuracies), are weightier¹¹⁵.

In *sūtras*, the ancillary literature of the Veda, commentaries and later Sanskrit literature passages are occasionally quoted from *brāhmaṇas* that are lost. It may seem difficult to conceive how so many works and even entire schools could expire without leaving traces. Anyhow, the fact that part of this literature was never committed to writing and the production of concise manuals of ritual rules (*kalpasūtra*) were not favourable to the perpetuation of voluminous *brāhmaṇas*. The quotations of fragments are either anonymous or—less frequently—handed down with the name of their reputed author or the text in which they occurred¹¹⁶. In addition to the fifteen *brāhmaṇas*¹¹⁷ from which quoted passages have been collected, several other works are mentioned but not quoted in the post-brāhmanic literature. By far the largest number of quotations derive from the Śātyāyana mention of which has already been made¹¹⁸.

¹¹¹ Cf. BLOOMFIELD, A. V. G. B., p. 13 (Śaunakiya); CALAND, in WZKM 18, p. 193 (Paippalāda); there are however quotations from both recensions of the Saṃhitā.

¹¹² BLOOMFIELD, The position of the Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa in Vedic literature, JAOS 19, p. 1; A. V. G. B., p. 103; in GGA 1912, p. 8; MACDONELL, H. S. L., p. 219.

¹¹³ CALAND, in GGA 1900, p. 104; Das Vaitānasūtra des Atharvaveda, Amsterdam Acad. 1910, p. IV; WZKM 18, p. 186; 191; cf. also KEITH, in JRAS 1910, p. 934.

¹¹⁴ Cf. RENO, Écoles, p. 76.

¹¹⁵ See also D. BHATTACHARYYA, at OH 5 (1957), p. 23.

¹¹⁶ Those belonging to the latter group were (incompletely, of course) collected by GHOSH, o.c. (see above, p. 349, n. 42). Thus ĀpŚ. 6, 4, 7 mentions the Brāhmaṇa of the Śailālis, BŚ. 23, 5 a Chāgaleya-Brāhmaṇa.

¹¹⁷ Āhvaraka, Kaṅkati, Kālabavi, Caraka (e.g. in Sāyaṇa, on ṚV. 8, 77, 10), Chāgaleya, Jābāli, Paṅgāyani, Bhāllavi, Māśaśarāvi, Maitrāyaṇiya, Rauruki, Śātyāyana, Śailāli, Śvetāśvetara, Hāridravika.

¹¹⁸ See above, p. 349; cf. also T. R. CHINTAMANI, at JOR 5, p. 296.

3. Chronology

From the few observations made in connexion with the relative chronology of these works it will already be clear that this is, in many particulars, largely uncertain. There is, to a considerable extent, unanimity with regard to the oldest among the more important works,—viz. the prose parts of the Saṃhitās of the Black Yajurveda and the closely related Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa—and to the latest greater *brāhmaṇas*—viz. the Śatapatha (which in Yājñavalkya's teachings borders on the period of the oldest *upaniṣads*) and, especially, the Gopatha—but the position of the other texts remains a matter of dispute. The problems are, moreover, complicated by the composite character of several texts as well as by the probability that part of them have been recast or were long in the making¹. The discussion was—and will be—carried on with the help of external and internal evidence, including linguistic², stylistic³, ritual, historical and geographical⁴ arguments which however are sometimes contradictory. Whereas, for instance, according to many scholars the priority of the Pañcaviṃśa to the Jaiminiya would be proved on the strength of linguistic considerations—especially the use of narrative tenses—ritual facts might lead us to incline to the opposite view⁵. Wackernagel⁶, relying on linguistic arguments (syntax, accentuation, vocabulary), arrived at the conclusion that the Pañcaviṃśa and the Taittirīya are of the Brāhmaṇas proper the oldest, the Jaiminiya, Aitareya and Kauśītaki of later origin, because the latter are handed down without accentuation and make abundant use of the narrative perfect⁷. Keith⁸ admitted that the relation of the two Ṛgvedic Brāhmaṇas to other texts of the same type does not throw any light of a decisive character on their date; that there is good evidence to maintain the early origin of the Pañcaviṃśa; that Aitareya I-V has priority over the Taittirīya in the *brāhmaṇa* portions. Recently Horsch⁹ thought the older portions of the Aitareya to have been composed immediately after the Taittirīya. Keith was also of the opinion

¹ For the relation between the *āsvamedha* portions in VS. 22–25) and ŚB. (13) and doubles in the *mantra* collections: CALAND, at AO (Lugd.) 10, p. 132, who was led to believe that certain parts of ŚB. are older than parts of VS.

² For the use of the subjunctive see MINARD, T. E. I, p. 205; for the narrative perfect WHITNEY, in PAOS 1891 (JAOS 15, p. LXXXV).

³ HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 471 (absence or occurrence of *gāthās*).

⁴ See e.g. HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 479.

⁵ CALAND, PB. p. XX; see above, p. 349. See WINTERITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 191.

⁶ J. WACKERNAGEL, *Altindische Grammatik*, I, Göttingen 1896, p. XXX. See also KEITH, R. B., p. 46.

⁷ Cf. GONDA, *Old Indian*, p. 12; 129. For the disputed reliability of this criterion see L. RENOUE, *Introduction générale* (to WACKERNAGEL's *Altindische Grammatik*), Göttingen 1957, p. 68, n. 195.

⁸ KEITH, R. B., p. 45; V. B. Y. S., p. XCIX; and in BSOS 1, p. 177.

⁹ HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 471.

that the Kauṣītaki stands, in point of view of style (narrative perfect), on much the same level as the Śatapatha with which it moreover agrees in its doctrine of repeated death (*punarmṛtyu*) and in some references to the same authorities¹⁰. Oertel¹¹ was convinced that the Jaiminiya should not be placed very far back among the earliest strata of brāhmanical writings because of the prolix character of several of its legends and the new, often ritualistic, details, grafted on the old stock. Caland¹², drawing attention to many similarities in form, style and language between the Jaiminiya and the Śatapatha, concluded that these two works are nearer to each other than to others. However, this does not necessarily imply absolute contemporaneity.

These chronological problems are further complicated by the occurrence of common or parallel passages¹³. A close examination of these has often induced scholars to venture opinions on their relation and on questions of priority or posteriority of certain places¹⁴. There are, for instance in the Jaiminiya, passages that show a marked resemblance, not only in general contents, but even in their wordings, to similar chapters in other *brāhmaṇas*¹⁵. Thus, the story of Yājñavalkya's encounter with the brahmins of the Kuru-Pañcālas on the occasion of a sacrifice entailing numerous gifts to the priests and the ensuing discussions is, in its phraseology, almost identical in both works¹⁶. It is however clear that between an essentially identical¹⁷ and a widely different version there are many degrees of similarity and possibilities of shortening or amplification¹⁸. We should take account of the probability that sometimes a well-known theme was, without being a condensation from another fixed *brāhmaṇa* text, dealt with in so short a form that only the essential points are mentioned. Short references such as PB. 9, 2, 14 hardly fail to convince the reader of the pre-existence of a larger version:

¹⁰ Cf. GONDA, R. I. I, p. 197; 206.

¹¹ OERTEL, in JAOS 18, p. 25. See JB. 1, 184, 3, 64; 94; 95; 139.

¹² CALAND, Over en uit . . . , p. 28.

¹³ Instances will be mentioned in the following pages. See e.g. also TB. 1, 1, 2, 4ff.: ŚB. 2, 1, 2, 13ff.; JB. 1, 22ff.: ŚB. 10, 6, 1; JB. 1, 363; ŚB. 1, 6, 9ff. (OERTEL, at JAOS 26, p. 192). For specimens of verbal correspondences see OERTEL, at JAOS 23, p. 325.

¹⁴ For instance: "The fact that ŚB. does not mention the counter-arguments against offering before sunrise . . . might suggest that it belongs to an earlier phase (than JB.)" (BODEWITZ, J. B., p. 29). See also BODEWITZ, o.c., p. 42; 62; 92; 101 (on JB. 1, 42-44: ŚB. 11, 6, 1, 1ff. etc.); for different layers in ŚB., p. 350.

¹⁵ Cf. H. OERTEL, Contributions from the Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa to the history of the *brāhmaṇa* literature, JAOS 23, p. 325. See JB. 2, 76f. and ŚB. 1, 16, 3.

¹⁶ JB. 1, 19f.: ŚBM. 11, 3, 1, 1ff.; ŚBK. 3, 1, 4 etc.; see CALAND, Over en uit . . . , p. 33.

¹⁷ For cases of verbal correspondence see e.g. OERTEL, at JAOS 23, p. 325. For close parallels of the mythical tale of Indra's contest with Tvaṣṭar's son (JB. 2, 153ff.): OERTEL, Trans. Connecticut Acad. 15, p. 180.

¹⁸ See e.g. OERTEL, at JAOS 18, p. 15.

"There was a female Aṅgiras, Akūpārā (by name). Like the skin of a lizard, so was her skin. Indra, having cleansed her three times by means of this chant, made her sun-skinned; that indeed she had then wished"¹⁹.

An elaborate treatment of a subject is not necessarily of later origin than a shorter account, however much later authors may tend to become involved in discussions on what was simply stated by their predecessors²⁰. A special danger lies in over-valuing the similarities between the versions of a theme, story, argumentation or ritualistic subject. Similar versions may have been so popular or generally current or so commonly accepted that no borrowing or other form of interrelation is satisfactorily traceable. The mythical story of the Gāyatrī metre which (who) flew towards Soma to bring it (him) down is, in more than twenty passages, in the main narrated or alluded to in no more than two different forms which differ one from the other only in the framework constructed around them²¹. Hypotheses with regard to the chronological relation between two passages should by no means be generalized and applied to the texts in their entirety.

This is not all. In discussing the problems connected with relationship and borrowing neither the *saṃhitās* of the Yajurveda²² nor the *sūtra* literature²³ can be left out of consideration²⁴. For instance, the oldest version of a section on a seventeenfold *agnihotra*, found at MS. 1, 8, 10, was followed by TB. 2, 1, 7, 1, which in its turn was recast and made a special *agnihotra* at VādhS. 3, 37, whereas JB. 1, 21 seems to have borrowed this *sūtra* passage²⁵. It would be unwise to ascribe all these doubles to constant onesided borrowing, disregarding the possibility of mutual borrowing or of common origin in a third source—something like a "pre-brāhmaṇic *itihāsa* collection"²⁶—lost to us. On closer

¹⁹ Cf. RV. 8, 91; see OERTEL, at JAOS 18, p. 28; GHOSH, *Lost brāhmaṇas*, p. 57. Compare e.g. also ŚB. 1, 5, 7 (Prajāpati creating the Vedas and the holy words *bhūr bhuvahḥ svaḥ*) as against JB. 1, 357f.; AiB. 5, 32f.; ŚB. 11, 5, 8.

²⁰ Cf. e.g. BODEWITZ, J. B., p. 29.

²¹ See e.g. TS. 1, 2, 10, 1 (allusion); 3, 5, 7, 1 (briefly told); 6, 1, 6, 2 (longer); TB. 1, 1, 3, 10; 2, 1, 6; 4, 7, 5; 3, 2, 1, 1; AiB. 3, 25ff. (a longer version with many particulars); ŚB. 1, 7, 1, 1 (very briefly told); 8, 2, 10 etc. etc. Compare RV. 4, 27, 3.—For the different versions of another mythical tale, likewise handed down in more than one form, viz. that of Tvāṣṭar who did not invite Indra to a *soma* sacrifice because the latter had slain his son see GONDA, *Dual deities*, p. 381.

²² See e.g. CALAND, at AO (Lugd.) 10, p. 132.

²³ Relations with *upaniṣads* (e.g. JB. 1, 22ff.: ChU. 5, 11) cannot be considered. ²⁴ There are, of course, also remote parallels. See e.g. JB. 1, 12–14: VādhS. 3, 32.

²⁵ BODEWITZ, J. B., p. 68. Compare e.g. also OERTEL, in JAOS 28, p. 81 (Uśanas Kāvya and Indra: JB. 1, 125ff.; BŚS. 18, 46, CALAND, in *Abh. Kunde d. Morgenlandes* 12, 1, p. 26); BODEWITZ, o.c., p. 80 (on JB. 1, 26ff.); 92 (KS. 6, 5; MS. 1, 8, 5; JB. 1, 39ff. etc. and VādhS. in A. O. (Lugd.), 4, p. 20. A sample of argumentation: "Some information of interest as to the date of KB. might be obtained from AŚS. if it were true that, as Garbe states, that text, in one case at least, cites KB." (KEITH, R. B., p. 48).

²⁶ OERTEL, in JAOS 18, p. 16; See below, p. 407 ff.

inspection the difficulties prove to be enormous, many passages giving rise to controversial discussion. The corresponding passages in the Śatapatha and the *agnihotra* section (1, 1–65) of the Jaiminiya may be mentioned as a case in point. After Oertel had drawn attention to them, Caland—with regard to the relations between the two Śatapatha recensions and the Jaiminiya—observed that ŚBM. I–V and ŚBK I–VII are younger than the Jaiminiya, whereas the later books of the Śatapatha seem rather to have been known to that sāmavedic school. More recently the verses of ŚB. 11, 3, 1, 5 have been regarded as younger—a view that did not find general favour—, while the corresponding section JB. 1, 19f. itself—the discussion between Janaka and Yājñavalkya on the substitutes for the normal offering—has been considered later than the passage in both recensions of the other work²⁷.

As to the absolute chronology of the *brāhmaṇa* literature, dates such as 2800 B.C.²⁸ are beyond possibility²⁹, the hypothesis “after the 11th century B.C. for the oldest *brāhmaṇas*”³⁰ can, in connexion with the problem of the chronology of the Ṛgveda—known to all of them—, be regarded as disputable. As to the Kausītaki and Aitareya they must have been known to Pāṇini who (at 5, 1, 62) mentions two *brāhmaṇas* with thirty and forty chapters; moreover, the language described by the great grammarian is decidedly later than that of these works³¹. But the date of Pāṇini is a vexed question (5th century B.C.?). Anyhow, this mass of explanatory work must have taken much time to produce, especially when we realize that what has survived is probably a small fraction of what has existed. So 10th–7th cent. may for the main texts be a reasonable conjecture. Whether there has even existed an ‘Ur-Brāhmaṇa’ is an insoluble problem; in any case, it cannot be reconstructed.³²

²⁷ Cf. OERTEL, in JAOS 23, p. 328; CALAND, ŚBK. I, p. 101; HORSCH, V.G.L., p. 112; BODEWITZ, J. B., p. 62. On JB. 1, 51–65 (expiations) see BODEWITZ, o.c., p. 150.

²⁸ C. V. VAIDYA, in 5 AIOC I, p. 285; the same author in ABORI 9, p. 267 (± 2350 B.C.); see e.g. also B. V. KAMESWARA AIYAR, at QJMS 12, p. 171; 223; 357 (2300–2000 B.C.); P. CH. SEN-GUPTA, at IHQ 10, p. 532 (3102–2000 B.C.).

²⁹ 1400–1200 B.C. (HAUG, Ai. B. I, p. 47) is also for the oldest *brāhmaṇas* improbable.

³⁰ Cf. H. C. RAYCHAUDHURI, *Studies in Indian Antiquities*, Calcutta 1958.

³¹ *Brāhmaṇas* were monotonously recited in a slow tone (HAUG, Ai. B. p. 72). In manuscripts, the last word or phrase of a section is often put twice—a mark by which to recognize the end of the chapter. There are colophons mentioning, e.g., the name of the author of the commentary. In almost all southern manuscripts there are benedictions. Many corruptions are due to transcription into other scripts or to regional variations in pronunciation.

³² See also K. MYLIUS, in *Festschrift W. Ruben*, Berlin 1970, p. 421.

4. The brāhmaṇas as historical sources

A few words may be said about the importance of these texts from the point of view of the history of Indian civilization¹. They supply us with some information on their geographical background: their *terra cognita* was broadly speaking Brahmāvarta or Madhyadeśa² and some adjacent countries; the Śatapatha belongs to the Ganges valley and the east of Bihar³. Although mention is made of various places and tribes unknown to older texts, passages such as AiB. 8, 14 not only mix up ethnic names based on historical reality with mythological peoples beyond the Himālayas, but are also, while dividing the earth in accordance with the four points of the compass and the central region of the Kuru-Pañcālas, in agreement with an archaic view of the structure of the inhabited world⁴. Legendary matter and allusions to events which might reflect historical facts have in modern times been interpreted as sources of information on eastward migration of the Aryans⁵. The social system was in a state of transition between the fluidity of the older period and the rigidity of the post-Vedic age: we hear of the four classes (*varṇa*), viz. brahmins, nobility, *vaiśyas* and *śūdras*; of their duties, ambitions and functions and privileges⁶; we witness the growing importance of the two higher classes⁷, their relations and prerogatives⁸, and the propagation of the ideal of their co-operation and complementary relationship⁹. Despite the fact that little attention is paid to the lower strata of society we become informed of many particulars concerning the social, political and military aspects of the ancient Indian communities¹⁰. Social order and social behaviour are justified in religious terms¹¹. There are of course many references to social and family life—to marriage, ŚB. 5, 2, 1, 10:

¹ For general information see J. BASU, *India of the age of the brāhmaṇas*, Calcutta 1969.

² See above, p. 336 and E. J. RAPSON, *Ancient India*, Cambridge 1914 (New York 1915), p. 50; MINARD, T. E. I, p. 190; BASU, o. c., p. 1.

³ K. MYLIUS, *Geographische Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgegend des Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*, *Wiss. Zs. K. Marx Univ. Leipzig* 14 (1965), p. 759.

⁴ I refer to J. GONDA, *Viṣṇuism and Śivaism*, London 1970, p. 38; 45 (with the notes).

⁵ See e.g. WEBER, I. S. I, p. 161 (ŚB. 1, 4, 1, 10ff.) and compare EGDELING, ŚB. I, p. XLI; J. v. NEGELEIN, at WZKM 17, p. 99 (ŚB. 1, 4, 1, 10ff.).

⁶ ŚB. 5, 5, 4, 9; 1, 3, 2, 15; 2, 5, 2, 6; 4, 1, 4, 5; AiB. 7, 29; TS. 2, 5, 4, 4 etc. MACDONELL and KEITH, V. I. s. v. Kṣatriya etc.

⁷ The cultural importance of the nobility, for many years a matter of dispute, was recently emphasized by HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 428.

⁸ Cf. e.g. ŚB. 5, 4, 4, 15; 6, 4, 4, 13; AiB. 7, 28 (N. J. SHENDE, at JAS Bombay 38, p. 142).

⁹ E.g. TS. 5, 1, 10, 3; ŚB. 4, 1, 4, 1ff.; AiB. 8, 2, 3; 8, 25.

¹⁰ W. RAU, *Staat und Gesellschaft im alten Indien*, Wiesbaden 1957; A. C. BANERJEA, *Studies in the brāhmaṇas*, Delhi 1963.

¹¹ Cf. also S. G. SATHAYE, at *Philosophy East and West*, 19, p. 435.

“One’s wife is half of one’s own self; hence, as long as one does not take a wife, so long one does not reproduce oneself, for so long one is incomplete”—,

to education and study of the Veda¹², daily events and pursuits, food and drink, games, tools and utensils, dress and decoration¹³, sexual relations¹⁴, diseases and medicine¹⁵, customs, agriculture, pasturage and other occupations¹⁶, as well as various forms of popular belief¹⁷ and intercourse with ‘aborigines’¹⁸. That there is an almost inexhaustible wealth of information on sacrificial rites is self-evident¹⁹.

Many places attest to what may be called a pre-scientific interest in, and study of, the world and to attempts at systematizing the knowledge resulting from this study²⁰. Much attention is paid to chronology and the calendar, the divisions of the year such as months and seasons²¹, rain and other climatic and meteorological phenomena²², astronomy²³, cosmology and cosmogony²⁴. This scientific concern is wholly determined by man’s ritual and religious interests and constitutes an integral part of one and the same harmonious view of life

¹² See e.g. ŚB. 11, 3, 3; 11, 5, 4, 6; GB. 1, 2, 2; TĀ. 2, 9ff.; AiĀ. 5, 3, 3; R. K. MOOKERJI, *Ancient Indian education*, London 1947, p. 71.

¹³ See e.g. TB. 3, 8, 15; ŚB. 7, 5, 2, 42; 11, 7, 1, 3 (“flesh is the best kind of food”: cf. 3, 1, 2, 21; AiB. 4, 3, 4; E. W. HOPKINS, at JAOS 27, p. 455); 12, 7, 2, 9ff.; AiB. 2, 23; 7, 30; (racing) AiB. 2, 25; ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 3; (washing) ŚB. 1, 8, 1, 1; (clothes) ŚB. 3, 1, 2, 18; 13, 4, 1, 15; 14, 2, 1, 8; (utensils etc.) ŚB. 1, 1, 2, 7f.; 3, 1; 4, 6f.; 2, 1, 1, 10; 13, 2, 2, 16; 3, 4, 5; TB. 2, 2, 1, 6; KB. 2, 6 (R. ROTH, *Indisches Feuerzeug*, ZDMG 43, p. 590); (potter) MS. 1, 8, 2f.; ŚB. 11, 8, 1, 1 (W. RAU, *Töpferei und Tongeschirr im vedischen Indien*, Mainz Acad. 1972 and JOIB 23, p. 137). PB. 8, 2, 2 “he heard a cat sneezing” (cf. GELDNER, V. S. I, p. 313).

¹⁴ C. L. PRABHAKAR, at IA III, 3 (Vol. Dandekar, Bombay 1969, p. 181).

¹⁵ Cf. e.g. ŚB. 4, 1, 3, 9; AiB. 1, 25, 13; 7, 15, 1; JUB. 4, 1, 1, 8; ŚB. 3, 1, 3, 7; R. F. G. MÜLLER, at *Asia Major* 6, p. 327.

¹⁶ See e.g. TB. 3, 9, 14, 1; AiB. 4, 26, 3; ŚB. 1, 6, 1, 3; 2, 1, 1, 7; 11, 2, 7, 32; BASU, o.c., p. 67.

¹⁷ Such as portents and supranormal power of certain objects (TB. 1, 1, 3, 3; ŚB. 3, 4, 1, 16; 3, 6, 4, 15); prognostics (ŚB. 3, 3, 4, 11; AiĀ. 3, 2, 4; cf. TSUJI, at ABORI 48–49, p. 173), the significance of the right and left sides (ŚB. 1, 1, 1, 20; 2, 5, 2, 17 etc.; H. OERTEL, in JAOS 26, p. 188ff.; GONDA, *The right hand . . . in Vedic ritual*, Religion 2 (Newcastle 1972), p. 1); the belief in the good and evil eye (J. GONDA, *Eye and gaze in the Veda*, Amsterdam Academy 1969); ‘magic’ (e.g. ŚB. 1, 3, 3, 5; 2, 4, 2, 24; 14, 1, 1, 31).

¹⁸ Cf. e.g. AiB. 8, 11, 8; PB. 16, 6, 7; JB. 2, 183.

¹⁹ For a collection of pertinent facts: N. J. SHENDE, *The hotar and the other priests in the brāhmaṇas of the Ṛgveda*, JUB. N. S. 32, 2, p. 48f.

²⁰ K. MYLIUS, *Die Ideenwelt des Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*, Wiss. Zs. K. Marx Univ. Leipzig 16 (1967), p. 47.

²¹ E.g. TB. 1, 1, 2, 1; 1, 3, 10, 4; AiB. 1, 1, 14; 2, 29; 4, 26; PB. 4, 4, 11; ŚB. 1, 3, 5, 9; 4, 3, 1, 5; 9, 1, 1, 43; 9, 3, 3, 18; 12, 3, 2, 1.

²² E.g. JB. 1, 117; ŚB. 1, 1, 4, 19; 1, 8, 3, 12; 7, 4, 2, 22; 10, 5, 4, 3; GB. 1, 1, 33.

²³ E.g. AiB. 2, 17; KB. 4, 12; ŚB. 2, 1, 2, 17; 7, 5, 1, 37; 14, 3, 1, 17.

²⁴ E.g. ŚB. 3, 9, 1, 1ff.; 6, 1, 1, 1; 6, 1, 2, 1; see also K. HOFFMANN, *Die Weltentstehung nach dem Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa* (3, 360f.), *Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft* 27, p. 59.

and the world. This does not however exclude the occurrence of references to a certain knowledge of anatomy, embryology, and medical practice²⁵. Nor did some linguistic facts—as far as they were utilizable for ritual purposes—escape the authors' notice: at ŚB. 10, 5, 1, 2 the three nominal genders are distinguished to co-ordinate them with the threefold Veda and the three sacred fires. Unintelligible speech is barbarous and not permitted to a *brahman* (3, 2, 1, 24). The phenomenon of linguistic taboo²⁶ is repeatedly utilized to explain unexpected word forms, for instance, when a black antelope skin (*carman*) is in a formula addressed as 'something protective' (*śarman*), "because the former name is used among men, the latter among the gods" (1, 1, 4, 4). The relations between 'mind' and speech were among the problems that arrested the attention of some authors²⁷. However rudimentary, these observations and explanations represent the beginnings of various branches of Indian science²⁸.

The range of stories contained in this literature supplies us with a considerable number of data from which we might gain an insight into what with terms that might easily be misunderstood is called the morals and ethics prevailing in the epoch²⁹. Despite the fact that on one hand the rituals and their interpretation make the gist of the author's religion and view of the world, and on the other the gods are not represented as much interested in morality or in being more squeamish than their worshippers about abstract decency or moral standards, these authors—and among them especially the compiler of the Kauṣītaki³⁰—often took occasion to moralize in passing or to put some words of reproof into the mouth of their personages. Thus the well-known story of Indra and Namuci reads, in PB. 12, 6, 8f., as follows:

"Indra and the asuric Namuci made an agreement: 'of us two one shall not kill the other be it at night or by day, either with something wet or with something dry.' Indra cut off his head at dawn before sunrise with foam of water; dawn before sunrise is neither at night nor by day, and foam of water is neither wet nor dry. The (head), a great evil, rolled after him (crying out): 'Man-slayer, you have cheated, you have cheated' . . ."

The mythical tale of Prajāpati, the father of all creatures, who could not continue creating without committing incest—he had intercourse with his own daughter³¹—led the author of the Śatapatha version to speak of "a sin in the

²⁵ E.g. TS. 6, 4, 9, 3; AiB. 7, 15; ŚB. 1, 5, 4, 1; 1, 6, 4, 9; 3, 2, 1, 31; 3, 8, 3, 17; 4, 5, 2, 4; 6, 4, 1, 7; see also R. S. SHIVAGANESHA MURTHY, at Indian J. of Hist. of Science 5 (1970), p. 80.

²⁶ See further on, p. 378.

²⁷ Cf. PB. 11, 1, 3; ŚB. 1, 4, 4, 7; 1, 4, 5, 11.

²⁸ For an Indian evaluation: H. R. KARNIK, at BhV 13, p. 65.

²⁹ E. W. HOPKINS, Gods and saints of the Great Brāhmana (PB.), Trans. Connecticut Acad. 15 (1908), p. 23; BLOOMFIELD, in JAOS 15, p. 160; H. R. KARNIK, in 10 AIOC, p. 29; JUB 27, 2, p. 95; 28, 2, p. 58.

³⁰ Cf. S. LÉVI, D. S. B., p. 21; see also TB. 1, 7, 1, 7.

³¹ Cf. MS. 4, 2, 12; PB. 8, 2, 10; ŚB. 1, 7, 4, 1f.

eyes of the gods." At AiB. 3, 33, 1, where they are said to have cohabited in the form of a stag and a deer, it is amplified by a story about his punishment, and at KB. 6, 1 modified: there it is not the god who performs the incestuous deed, but his sons.

Although there is hardly anything very lofty the teachers of the *brāhmaṇas* impress upon their disciples the necessity to cultivate some virtues and avoid certain vices. Murder and other forms of severe injury are sometimes implicitly condemned, albeit the 'sin' resulting from it can be atoned for by a particular rite. This possibility of expiation is the very reason for inserting the story of a crime committed in the mythical sphere and the ensuing exemplary atonement in cases such as PB. 13, 6, 9f.:

"A sacrifice-destroying ogress, Dīrghajihvī ("Long-tongued") kept here licking at the sacrificial (food). Indra despaired of slaying her by any stratagem whatever. Now Sumitra Kutsa was a handsome (young man). To him he (Indra) said: 'Call her to you.' He called her to him. She said to him: 'This (invitation) truly is never heard by me, but it pleases me very much.' He (Sumitra) came to an understanding with her. At the (meeting-place) agreed upon they (Indra and Sumitra) slew her. That indeed had at that moment been their wish. The *saumitra* (*sāman*) certainly is a wish-granting chant. Through this (*sāman*) one obtains (the fulfilment) of his wish. (But) an (inauspicious) voice addressed him (Sumitra) thus: 'Although you are Sumitra ("Good-friend"), you have done a bloody deed.' Grief tormented him; he performed austerities; he saw this *saumitra* (*sāman*). Through it he drove away his grief. He who, (*hic et nunc*), in lauding, applies the *saumitra* (*sāman*) drives away his grief"³².

Just as in the older works conformity with Truth and Order is considered a virtue and necessity; ŚB. 4, 5, 2f.:

"The gods and the *asuras* contended. The *asuras* went to the sun (to fight it). The sun was afraid of (them) . . . The sun had recourse to Prajāpati. For him Prajāpati saw this remedy, viz. Order (*ṛta*) and Veracity (*satya*)"³³.

A recommendation of virtues³⁴ such as hospitality, generosity, faith and loyalty may, to a certain extent, be found in various other tales, its first purpose is not to moralize but to explain rites and to justify ritual rules and prescripts. The appreciation of austerity, self-control, endurance and restraint of speech, a chaste life devoted to the study of the Veda must be seen against the same ritual background, as is perfectly clear from the passages in which it is expressed; these 'virtues' or meritorious works are first and foremost prerequisites to the success of a task or enterprise undertaken on thoroughly ritual lines³⁵. At AiB.

³² For this mythical tale see H. OERTEL, Actes 11 Congrès intern. des Orient. 1897, section arylene, p. 225. Cf. e.g. JB. 1, 161ff. KARNIK, at JUB 27, 2, p. 95 is mistaken in considering this tale as well as TS. 6, 5, 5, 2; ŚB. 1, 2, 5, 24ff.; JB. 1, 42ff.; 1, 121 indications of a "persistent demand for *ahimsā*."

³³ Cf. also ŚB. 7, 3, 1, 3f.; AiB. 5, 14; JB. 1, 23; JUB. 1, 10.

³⁴ See e.g. TB. 3, 8, 11, 1ff.; ŚB. 2, 4, 2, 1ff.; 3, 6, 1, 8ff.; 6, 6, 3, 2; 11, 4, 1, 8. In this respect also Karnik is much inclined to exaggerate the ethical element.

³⁵ See e.g. TS. 3, 1, 1, 1; 5, 3, 5, 4; ŚB. 2, 2, 4, 1; 2, 5, 1, 1; 9, 5, 1, 1ff.; 10, 4, 3, 3ff.; 11, 3, 3, 1; AiB. 2, 33, 5; JB. 2, 218; 235; 276f.; 3, 117; and compare also passages such as ŚB. 3, 4, 3, 1.

8, 23 a non-ruling nobleman becomes a paramount king because his priest had communicated to him a special knowledge, viz. that of "the great anointing of Indra"; but he plays the priest false, loses his power and is slain. "Therefore a nobleman should not play a *brahman* who knows thus false." The true significance of what at first sight appears to be condemnation of vices—for instance arrogance, conceit, infidelity, cheating, impure speech, self-aggrandizement and so on—becomes likewise clear only when considered in its context³⁶. For instance, JB. 3, 251:

"Gauṣūkti and Āśvasūkti, the sons of Iṣa, having accepted many (forbidden) gifts, regarded themselves as having swallowed poison. They desired: 'May we expel this swallowed poison.' They saw these two *sāmans*; they lauded with them . . . Thereupon they expelled the swallowed poison. He who regards himself as one who has swallowed poison, because he has received a gift from a person from whom he ought not accept a gift, and he who has eaten food from one whose food he should not eat, should apply these *sāmans* in lauding. Then he expels that swallowed poison."

The autonomous force of 'sin' or 'evil' is clearly illustrated by places such as PB. 14, 12, 7: although the act of slaying demons is in itself virtuous, the sin resulting from it always pursues the slayer, even if he be the god Indra, until he delivers himself from it by means of a ritual device.

The ideas concerning the gods and the pantheon were largely adapted to the environment of the brāhmanic view of the world. The gods³⁷ are closely related to the ritual system, of which they constitute an integral part, and have a share in the usual identifications³⁸, earthly classifications being transferred to their 'society'³⁹. Indra, often a typical warrior, practises austerity and has his strength increased by sacrificial rites or ritual energy, slaying his enemy Vṛtra, for instance, by a cake-offering⁴⁰. Though on the one hand more than once said to assist seers or holy men, he can on the other be ousted from his own world by a wrong sacrificial procedure⁴¹. When the gods want him to be their champion against their enemies he wants *brahman*, represented by Bṛhaspati, the divine domestic priest, to be his ally (ŚB. 9, 2, 3, 3). Stories in which the gods show their weak and all too human sides are not lacking: they are often covetous, envious, quarrelsome, tricky or amorous⁴².

³⁶ See e.g. TS. 2, 3, 5, 1ff.; 5, 1, 1ff.; 6, 6, 1; PB. 8, 1, 9ff.; 19, 4, 10; ŚB. 2, 2, 3, 2ff.; 5, 2, 1ff.; 4, 1, 2, 4; 5, 1, 1, 1 ("arrogance is the cause of ruin"); AiB. 7, 27; JB. 3, 76f.; 193f.

³⁷ See also G. V. DEVASTHALI, *Religion and mythology in the brāhmaṇas*, Poona 1965.

³⁸ Cf. e.g. ŚB. 5, 2, 4, 13; 5, 3, 5, 8; 6, 1, 1, 2; TS. 2, 2, 5, 7; 11, 1.

³⁹ Compare also PB. 22, 10, 3: what is visible for men is cryptic for the gods and vice versa.

⁴⁰ E.g. PB. 12, 13, 5; 14, 9, 34; ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 11; 5, 2, 3, 7; 11, 1, 3, 2

⁴¹ E.g. PB. 15, 5, 20; ŚB. 8, 5, 3, 8. For Indra, see HOPKINS, *Gods and saints* (see above, n. 29); G. H. GODBOLE, at JUB N.S. 25, 2, p. 32.

⁴² E.g. ŚB. 1, 1, 2, 18; 1, 1, 4, 24; 3, 3, 4, 18; 4, 1, 3, 4; 7; 12; 5, 1, 1, 3; 8, 4, 1, 4; ŚB. 1, 1, 16; cf. OERTEL, at JAOS 18, p. 26; 19, p. 118; 26, p. 186; Actes 11 Int. Congress of Orient. I, p. 233.

The story of Indra's unjustifiable murder of the son of Tvaṣṭar is told in many texts⁴³. The continual animosity and strife between the gods and the anti-gods (*devas* and *asuras*) or between the Ādityas and the Angirasas are well-known themes⁴⁴. Mention is also made of earthly beings attacking, disdaining, or distrusting gods⁴⁵. In spite of the process of humanization of the deities, the many references to their limitations (their being born or created, their mortality)⁴⁶, and the importance of impersonal potencies⁴⁷, blessings are still sought from them⁴⁸. There is an unmistakable inclination to see unity in various spheres of the divine; there are tendencies to henotheism, to unification, Agni⁴⁹ and Indra being, in some way or other, superior to the other gods⁵⁰ or being represented as the sons of the great creator god Prajāpati or as identical with this figure who is also identified with other deities, elsewhere described as his children⁵¹. The identity of this central deity, Prajāpati, the creator who is identical with his creation, with the rite, which is the precise counterpart of the great cosmic drama, is ever and anon emphasized. This identification is the theoretical basis of the entire ritual system⁵².

In these discussions some of the philosophical ideas of the following period are already foreshadowed, but not in all works of this class (e.g. the Pañcaviṃśa) so clearly developed as in the Śatapatha. As to the relation between man and universe, an 'anthropocentric subjective idealism' is normal: ". . . so far as the two-footed and the four-footed (extend) so far does this universe (extend)" (ŚB. 1, 9, 1, 28)⁵³. Places such as 3, 4, 2, 5 stating that the blowing wind enters the living creatures as inhalation and exhalation attest to the existence of a doctrine of macrocosmic and microcosmic 'breath'⁵⁴; speculations on the 'self' (*ātman*) are in 10, 6, 3 already very near to an identification with *brahman*⁵⁵, the union with, and participation in the world of, the latter being taught in 11, 4, 4, 1ff. The doctrine of a 'repeated dying' (*punarṁṛtyu*) in the beyond, preached by Āruṇi and Śvetaketu appears already in texts earlier than the

⁴³ E.g. TS. 2, 5, 1, 1f.; PB. 17, 5, 1; ŚB. 1, 6, 3, 2.

⁴⁴ E.g. TS. 5, 4, 6, 3; TB. 2, 2, 3, 5; 3, 9, 21, 1; JB. 1, 97; 1, 153; ŚB. 1, 4, 1, 34.

⁴⁵ E.g. PB. 13, 11, 10; 14, 5, 15; JB. 3, 193.

⁴⁶ E.g. ŚB. 6, 1, 2, 2; 7, 3, 1, 10; 10, 1, 3, 1; 11, 1, 6, 14; 11, 2, 3, 1.

⁴⁷ E.g. ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 1; 10, 5, 3, 1; 11, 2, 3, 1.

⁴⁸ E.g. ŚB. 2, 3, 4, 3; 4, 6, 5, 5, but elsewhere the sacrificial priests are able to fulfil wishes without any assistance of a god: 1, 5, 2, 19.

⁴⁹ For Agni see N. J. SHENDE, at ABORI 46, p. 1.

⁵⁰ E.g. ŚB. 1, 6, 2, 8; 5, 2, 3, 6; 9, 2, 2, 2; 9, 2, 3, 3.

⁵¹ E.g. ŚB. 2, 3, 3, 18; 4, 2, 4, 11; 9, 2, 2, 2; 9, 2, 3, 50; 10, 4, 1, 12; 12, 6, 1, 1.

⁵² I refer to GONDA, R. I. I, p. 190; G. H. GODBOLE, at Comm. Vol. H. D. Velankar, Bombay 1965, p. 45. See e.g. ŚB. 3, 6, 3, 1.

⁵³ Cf. also ŚB. 11, 2, 3, 6. The 'worlds' (*loka*) which at 12, 3, 4, 11 are said to be imperishable do not constitute the universe.

⁵⁴ Cf. also KS. 27, 3; ŚB. 6, 6, 2, 6; 7, 4, 2, 28, and see BODEWITZ, J. B., p. 215; GONDA, Dual deities, p. 215 etc.

⁵⁵ See e.g. E. FRAUWALLNER, Geschichte der indischen Philosophie, I, Salzburg 1953, p. 72; MYLIUS, o.c. vol. 16, p. 53.

Śatapatha, where it is frequent⁵⁶, the transmigration in the latter work at 10, 3, 3, 8. These texts speak also of *amṛtam*, usually translated by 'immortality' but in fact denoting "freedom from death, continuance of life." Considered to be the "highest thing" in the universe it means, for man in this life, a full lifetime of a hundred years⁵⁷; however after death there is (at least according to 10, 4, 3, 9) a prospect of 'immortality' either through 'knowledge' (*vidyā*) or through 'work' (*karman*), concepts which are, in the same contexts, identified with Agni, the fire ritual. What is, indeed, most important is the conquest, whether through rites or through austerity⁵⁸ of a world in which to exist safely, a *loka*, where man's ritual merit will await him⁵⁹.

⁵⁶ TB. 3, 11, 8, 5f. (the story of Naciketas); KB. 25, 1; JB. 1, 23; ŚB. 2, 3, 3, 9 etc.; TĀ. 2, 14, 1; ŚĀ. 13, 1; JUB. 3, 6, 7, 8.

⁵⁷ ŚB. 9, 1, 2, 43; 10, 1, 5, 4; 10, 2, 6, 7.

⁵⁸ Cf. AiB. 3, 47, 9; 48, 4; JB. 3, 201; PB. 18, 3, 1; ŚB. 3, 4, 4, 27; 11, 2, 7, 19 etc.; see J. GONDA, *Loka*, Amsterdam Academy 1966, p. 36.

⁵⁹ For other particulars, S. SCHAYER, *Die Weltanschauung der Brāhmaṇa-Texte*, RO 3, p. 57 and *Die Struktur der magischen Weltanschauung*, Zs. f. Buddhismus 6, p. 259.

5. Interpretation and argumentation

In the preceding pages passing mention has already been made of the relation between the *saṃhitās* (especially that of the Ṛgveda) and the *brāhmaṇas*. Although many investigations, including a systematic general study of how the authors of the *brāhmaṇas* understood the *saṃhitās*¹, remain to be undertaken, a somewhat more coherent, though brief, account of the present position of research may find a place here. The question is of wider interest because it implies also all problems connected with the use made of the *saṃhitās* by the ritualists and the compilers of the *brāhmaṇas* and the methods which they adopted in interpreting the quoted or borrowed texts. It is evident that this subject cannot be regarded as closed by a reference² to the onesided ritualistic prejudices of the authors. Generally speaking the *mantras*—quoted by their initial part (*pratīkena*)³ only, if they belonged to the same school as the text quoting—do not constitute an organic whole with their *brāhmaṇa* contexts. As to the question of the place occupied by the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā, that is, by the use made of its complete hymns or groups of stanzas—its most essential ritual function—as well as by its separate stanzas in the ritual and in the explanations of the *brāhmaṇas*, it has already been noticed that the latter utilize only part of the Ṛgvedic *mantras*⁴. This did not however prevent their authors from using and explaining certain portions of the Ṛgveda more than once⁵. On the whole, the ritualists seem to have been to a considerable extent free in borrowing from the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā even on behalf of officiants other than the *hotar* and his assistants⁶. On the other hand, texts belonging to other Vedas sometimes included sections on the office of the *hotar* (e.g. TB. 3, 5, 1 ff.). From a study of the relevant passages it moreover appears that, in utilizing *mantras*—“divine

¹ Cf. S. S. BHAWE, at 20 AIOC, Pres. address, p. 42. P. REGNAUD, in *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 22, p. 38 lays too much stress on misunderstanding on the part of the compilers of the *brāhmaṇas*.

² H. OLDENBERG, *Vedaforschung*, Stuttgart-Berlin 1905, p. 23.

³ See MINARD, T. E. II, p. 2; RENOUE, *Écoles*, p. 26. *Mantras* cited *pratīkena* in the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa but not traced in our Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā (and belonging to a *khila* collection?) were investigated into by P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI, at BDCRI 3, p. 489; for an examination of variants: BDCRI 4, p. 340. For particulars see also CALAND, in GGA 1900, p. 409; WZKM 18, p. 195.

⁴ Many acts—among which the less important and often those relating to Prajāpati—are performed silently; cf. e.g. ŚB. 6, 4, 1, 6. For the significance of ‘silent praise’ see TS. 2, 5, 11, 3; 6, 3, 7, 1; TB. 1, 6, 8, 8; 2, 1, 2, 12; 3, 2, 4, 6; AiB. 2, 32, 3f.; PB. 4, 9, 10; ŚB. 1, 1, 4, 24; 1, 4, 4, 5; 7, 2, 2, 14. Cf. RENOUE, at JAOS 69, p. 11.

⁵ Thus ṚV. 1, 99 is quoted (and explained) at AiB. 4, 30, 12; 32, 10; 5, 2, 16; 8, 13; 15, 7; 17, 15; 19, 17; 21, 18; ṚV. 1, 50, 10 is (as VS. 20, 21) quoted at ŚB. 12, 9, 2, 8; (as VS. 35, 14) at 13, 8, 4, 7; (as VS. 38, 24) at 14, 3, 1, 28; ṚV. 1, 165, 1 at KB. 19, 9; 24, 5; 25, 3; 11; 26, 9. See also RENOUE, in JA 250, p. 164, and E. V. P. VI, p. 29.

⁶ Compare, e.g., GONDA, *Dual deities*, p. 118ff. (the use of ṚV. 1, 102 in a sacrifice mentioned at TB. 2, 8, 9, 1f.).

speech" (ŚB. 10, 5, 1, 1)—, the deities to whom they are devoted or who are mentioned in them, the metres and certain numerical conditions were generally regarded as more essential than their contents'. The connexions between the Ṛgvedic *mantras* and their ritual contexts were indeed less close⁸ than the formulas pronounced by the *adhvaryu cum suis*.

In quoting the Ṛgveda it was not the authors' purpose to explain *sūktas*, stanzas or difficult places, nor did they wish to exhibit their learning⁹. When drawing on traditional matter that they had, or believed to have, in common with Ṛgvedic poets they liked to quote the latter in order to establish a connexion with the wisdom of the *ṛṣis* and to corroborate their own views¹⁰. The introduction of Ṛgvedic *mantras* into the Yajurvedic *saṃhitās* and *brāhmaṇas* is the initial phase of their liturgical employment in the *sūtra* texts where they appear to have undergone the influence of a long liturgical tradition. In the final phases it is also evident that the successive generations of ritualists had developed some principles—e.g. invocational, sacramental, oblatinal, 'mythological'—underlying the citation for ritual employment¹¹.

Because of their more general character the Ṛgvedic texts are well adapted for invitations, for drawing the gods' attention¹², but as a rule hardly utilizable for more than allusive descriptions of the post-Ṛgvedic ritual acts. This explains also the treatment of the great recitations (*śāstra*) of the *soma* sacrifices composed of complete hymns or long portions of the Ṛgveda¹³. To these verses the two allied *brāhmaṇas* have devoted long explanations, not to interpret their real contents philologically or historically¹⁴—isolated words excepted, there are no glosses on *mantras* in this literature—, but to show their adaptability to their ritual use, their symbolical value, the equivalences which might be deduced from them, sometimes probably also to corroborate an *ākhyāna* (ŚB. 11, 5, 1, 6ff.). Thus AiB. 2, 16, 1f., explaining the deeper sense of ṚV. 10, 30, 12, the initial stanza of the morning recitation, reads as follows:

"When Prajāpati himself as *hotar* was about to recite the morning litany, all the deities took the view, 'With me he will begin; with me.' Prajāpati pondered, 'If I shall begin with one specified deity, then by what means shall I win over the other deities?' He saw this *ṛg*-verse 'O waters, sources of wealth . . .' The waters

⁷ Cf. RENOÛ, in JA 250, p. 176; K. R. POTDAR, in JUB 15, 2, p. 48. Nor are different and even contradictory explanations lacking: cf. e.g. ŚB. 3, 8, 1, 2 and 11, 8, 3, 5.

⁸ V. M. APTE, at BDCRI I, p. 14; 127 arrived at the conclusion that the rubrication of the Ṛgvedic *mantras* in the *sūtras* is not as arbitrary as is often supposed.

⁹ As was J. CHARPENTIER's opinion, at WZKM 25, p. 309.

¹⁰ See e.g. AiB. 2, 37, 5; 4, 26, 12; JB. 3, 96; ŚB. 1, 3, 3, 10; 3, 4, 2, 7; AiĀ. 1, 3, 4; 6.

¹¹ For particulars: V. M. APTE, in Vol. C. Kunhan Raja, Adyar 1946, p. 233. On the chronological relation: BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 15, p. 144.

¹² Cf. THIEME, in ZDMG 107, p. 95; RENOÛ, in JA 250, p. 167.

¹³ See e.g. CALAND and HENRY, L'agniṣṭoma, Paris 1906, p. 417 (morning recitation (*prātaranuvāka*) of the Aitareyins and Kauṣītakins).

¹⁴ Cf. also D. D. KOSAMBI, at JBBRAS 27, I, p. 11.

are all the deities; the sources of wealth are all the deities. With this *ṛg*-verse he began the morning litany. All these deities were delighted, 'With me he has begun; with me!' . . . By him who knows thus the morning litany is provided with all the deities"¹⁵.

In the stanza itself—which eulogizes the Waters as wielding favourable influence—there is however nothing to justify such an explanation. Authorities may of course disagree as to particulars. Whereas, for instance, KB 16, 3, in connexion with R.V. 1, 159, a hymn to Heaven and Earth, observes that it serves for a firm foundation because heaven and earth are firm foundations, ŚBM. 4, 3, 2, 12 (ŚBK. 5, 3, 3, 12) states that creatures subsist on these two and the recitation of the hymn imbues these two with juice or vigour, "and upon these two, thus vigorous and affording the means of subsistence, these creatures subsist."

In interpreting these texts the ritualists sometimes resorted to artifices such as, for instance, the demonstration that a stanza addressed to another god, for instance Varuṇa, was really intended for Indra to whom belongs the sacrifice¹⁶.

The above observations have imperceptibly led us to the dialectics, the explanations, argumentations and interpretations of these authors¹⁷. Before entering into some details, there is room for the following preliminary remarks. Those arguments and explanations which several texts belonging to different schools have in common may be regarded as reflecting more or less general opinions, notwithstanding such eventualities as borrowing or independent adoption of the same line of reasoning. In other cases the possibility of explanations *ad hoc* and of misunderstanding of the ritual acts—of reading more into them than was intended or implied—should by no means be ruled out¹⁸. In interpreting the sacrificial ceremonies these authors were much inclined to 'elevate' the ritual practices and to emphasize their importance, irrespective of whether they were traditional in the Aryan upper circles or of popular origin. For that purpose they resorted to various devices, establishing esoteric signifi-

¹⁵ Compare e.g. also such symbolical interpretations as AiB. 4, 29ff.; 6, 27ff.; KB. 15, 2; 18, 8ff.

¹⁶ AiB. 6, 10 = GB. 2, 2, 20.

¹⁷ S. LÉVI, *La doctrine du sacrifice dans les brāhmaṇa*, Paris 1898; see also the reviews by CALAND, at GGA 1901, 2, p. 125 and OERTEL, at AJPh 20, p. 444; G. U. THITE, *Sacrifice in the brāhmaṇa texts*, (unpublished) thesis Poona 1970; and at IA III, 3 (1969), p. 163. For the rites: KEITH, R. Ph. V. U., p. 252; GONDA, R. I. I, p. 104. One should not subscribe to the views of K. CHAITANYA, *A new history of Sanskrit literature*, London 1962, p. 73.

¹⁸ This is of course not to say that the various trends of modern criticism always enable us to propose correct solutions. Whereas GELDNER was inclined to explain *brāhmaṇa* places by later texts (at Festgruss v. Roth, Stuttgart 1893, p. 191 on ŚB. 11, 8, 4 and Viṣṇu-Purāṇa 6, 6), V. S. AGRAWALA, Proc. 26 Int. Congr. of Orient. III, 1, p. 1 fails to convince his readers that one should consistently interpret the Ṛgveda in the light of the *brāhmaṇas*.

cance, divine connexion or relations with the *soma* rites¹⁹. Their 'symbolic' or interpretative explanations were no doubt in many cases foreign to the original design or tenor of a story quoted or ritual act discussed. On the other hand, not all *śrauta* rituals were a matter of general interest or received a special treatment in all *brāhmanas*²⁰. Lastly, the later *brāhmanas* are not averse to including other ritual performances²¹, evincing also a tendency to more spiritual interpretations.

In the speculations of the *brāhmanas* special value is attached to the Word²², that is the Word of the Veda "in which the sacrifice is firmly established" (PB. 11, 5, 28) and which, as Prajāpati's second, is regarded as the mediating principle in creation²³. At PB. 13, 12, 3 and 7, 7, 9 it reads:

"By means of the Word they perform the whole sacrificial worship. Therefore man speaks the whole Word, for in him it is firmly established, when it is wholly chanted (applied in lauding)." "The word 'word' (*vāc*) is to be made the beginning of the part chanted by him (the *udgātar*); an ocean, verily, is the word; he puts an ocean between, for the sake of security"²⁴.

Now, the Word materializes in metres and *sāmans*²⁵. The metres, "vigour-sustaining deities by which everything living is supported"²⁶, play a very important part in these speculations²⁷. As already mentioned, they are brought into relation, homologized²⁸, identified, *inter alia*, with the three regions of the universe, the cardinal points of the compass, the seasons, gods, the divisions of the population, valuable qualities, the 'vital breaths,' the parts of the body and the sacred fireplace²⁹. On the strength of these homologizations the sacrific-

¹⁹ Compare e.g. ŚB. 14, 1, 1, 26; AiB. 1, 24; KB. 17, 1; JB. 2, 338; 3, 374; ŚB. 11, 7, 2, 3 (the animal sacrifice said to have the character of a *soma* sacrifice); ŚB. 4, 1, 6; 9ff.; G. U. THITE, at Publ. Centre Advanced Study in Sanskrit, Univ. of Poona, A 25 (1968), p. 31; at IA III, 3 (Volume Dandekar, Bombay 1969), p. 163; Sacrifice in the *brāhmaṇa* texts, ch. V.

²⁰ See e.g. CALAND, in AO (Lugd.) 10, p. 127.

²¹ Cf. K. BHATTACHARYA, at JA 255, p. 202. See e.g. ŚB. 11, 2, 6, 1ff.; 5, 6, 1ff. (cf. KANE, H. DhŚ. I, p. 697).

²² Cf. HOPKINS, at Trans. Connecticut Academy 15, p. 26. See also above, p. 70 f. (on ṚV. 10, 125). For the identification of the goddess Sarasvatī with Vāc: RAGHUNATHA AIRI, at 24 AIOC, p. 201.

²³ Cf. PB. 20, 14, 2; JB. 2, 244.

²⁴ Hence also various stories relating to the (divine person) Word: TS. 6, 1, 4, 1; KS. 12, 5; PB. 6, 5, 10; ŚB. 3, 2, 1, 18ff.; 3, 5, 1, 18ff.; 4, 5, 8, 3f.

²⁵ Cf. e.g. KS. 12, 5; PB. 5, 7, 1; 7, 6, 3; 18, 8, 3.

²⁶ ŚB. 8, 2, 2, 8; for mythical tales see e.g. TS. 2, 6, 3, 2; AiB. 3, 13; 3, 25ff.; ŚB. 3, 4, 1, 7ff.; 8, 2, 4, 8ff.

²⁷ See also chapter IV, p. 176 f. and SIDDHESHWAR VARMA, The Vedic concept of metres, 16 AIOC II, p. 10; K. MYLIUS, Die Identifikationen der Metren in der Literatur des Rgveda, Wiss. Zs. K. Marx Univ. Leipzig 17, p. 267. See e.g. TS. 3, 4, 9, 1; ŚB. 9, 5, 1, 39.

²⁸ See e.g. TB. 2, 3, 7, 2ff. (the *agnihotra* is equal to the Full and New moon sacrifice).

²⁹ See e.g. PB. 6, 1, 8; AiB. 1, 5; 28; 6, 15; 7, 23; 8, 12; 17; KB. 3, 5; 10, 6; 14, 3; ŚB. 5, 4, 1, 3ff.; 6, 7, 2, 13ff.; 10, 3, 2; cf. also RENOU, at JA 250, p. 177.

er can, by means of (verses in) corresponding metres realize definite wishes. For instance AiB. 1, 5, 1:

“The one who desires energy or brahmanic illustriousness should . . . use *gāyatrī* stanzas. The *gāyatrī* is energy and brahmanic illustriousness. Energetic and illustrious does he become who knowing thus uses *gāyatrī* stanzas”³⁰.

Before the king who is to be fortified with the rite of the ‘renewed anointing’ (*punarabhiṣeka*) mounts a throne, this seat is covered with a tiger skin—“the tiger is the lordly power of the wild animals, the prince is the lordly power; thus he (the officiant) makes the lordly power prosper with lordly power”—and addressed as follows (AiB. 8, 6, 4):

“Let Agni in unison with the *gāyatrī* metre mount thee; Savitar with the *uṣṇih*, Soma with the *anuṣṭubh* . . .”

The author, explaining the significance of this ritual act observes (8, 6, 6f.):

“The gods in unison with the metres which increase by four syllables mounted on (i.e. gained) this prosperity on which they are now established. . . . Fortune attends him, prosperity ever increasing he attains . . . who, being a nobleman, thus mounts this throne after those deities.”

Thus the ritual fire is kindled with stanzas in the *gāyatrī* metre because the *gāyatrī* is Agni’s metre. It is perfectly evident that then already the Indian genius for categorizing found full scope³¹.

These identifications³², deductions and homologations—which are meant to explain the relations between the ritual acts and their effects in the universe, in the sphere of the divine—really are equations in terms of a more or less consistent classificatory system³³. They are the key-stone of the brāhmanic science. Succeeding each other continually—often also in various contexts that have no bearing upon metres—they impress us as the most characteristic feature of brāhmanic dialectics. When “the man who knows” understands one of the entities which are declared to be identical he knows, and wields power over, the other or the others. Explaining an event, an object, a phenomenon means establishing its identity with some ritual detail: the priest who kindles the sacred fires is the spring, and that is why there are forest-fires in spring (ŚB. 11, 2, 7, 32). One can appease a dreaded entity with water, but also with a frog, a lotus-flower³⁴, and a bamboo-shoot, which are “(kinds of) water” (9, 1, 2, 20ff.). These correspondences are, intelligibly enough, very often accompanied by indications of their practical utility: PB. 2, 8, 2:

³⁰ Cf. ŚB. 1, 3, 5, 4f.: the *gāyatrī* (the first of the metres) is *brahman*. See e.g. also 1, 3, 5, 15; 1, 7, 2, 15; 1, 8, 2, 13.

³¹ See e.g. also TB. 3, 12, 9, 6ff.; PB. 7, 3, 7ff.; GB. 1, 1, 37; 1, 3, 10; 2, 5, 4.

³² See e.g. also TB. 3, 10, 3, 1; 10, 1; 11, 1 (DUMONT, at PAPH.S. 95, p. 628ff.).

³³ See e.g. MINARD, T. E. II, p. 322 (based on TB. 2, 2, 9, 5ff.). In general, OLDENBERG, V. W., p. 110; GONDA, R. I. I, p. 178; K. HOFFMANN, in *Mélanges Renou*, p. 367. Some other examples are ŚB. 4, 1, 4, 1; 6, 4, 4, 10; KB. 12, 1.

³⁴ Founded on participation: ŚB. 6, 4, 2, 2 “the lotus means the waters.”

“The first (stanza) is the regular place of the brahminical order, the middle one of the nobility, the last one of the third estate. In that he gives the largest share (of verses) to the first (which here is used seven times), thereby he brings (inaugurative) power and energy in the brahminical order and makes the nobility and the third estate subject to the brahminical order”³⁵.

The speculations on the significance of the main rites led to identifications of important sacrificial elements with the highest divine concepts and cosmogonic principles, which in their turn were elaborated in the form of mythical episodes. For instance, since the sacrificial horse—on the strength of the conviction that the sacrifice is identical with Puruṣa-Prajāpati—is of Prajāpati’s nature or a form of Prajāpati himself, it is in a cosmogonic account represented as having originated directly from the egg produced by that high god from the cosmic waters and that immediately after brahman and Agni. According to other versions it came into being from Prajāpati’s eye³⁶.

Many so-called ‘magical equivalences,’ for instance those between the sacrifice and the body of the cosmic Puruṣa or between ritual acts and cosmic events³⁷, are presented in a short and abrupt form. According to a probable assumption³⁸ they are fragments of doctrines which, being expounded more elaborately in the *upaniṣads*, were already in the main known to the audience. ŚB. 10, 5, 4, 17, explaining the correspondence between the great fireplace and the universe:

“The earth-fillings are the welkin, the oblations the moon, the fire-logs the constellations; because the moon resides in (with) the constellations, therefore the oblation resides in the fire-wood.”

The relation between cause and effect may also be inverse, PB. 6, 8, 10:

“In the open they chant (certain chants); therefore wild animals live outside enclosures”³⁹.

The metres—to which we have to revert for a moment—are characterized by numbers, the *gāyatrī* and the *anuṣṭubh* consisting of octosyllabic verses (*pāda*), the *triṣṭubh* of four *pādas* of eleven, the *jagatī* of four *pādas* of twelve syllables⁴⁰. That means that these speculations on the inherent divine power of the metres is indissolubly associated with another feature of these works, viz. ‘numerical symbolism’⁴¹. The underlying principle is simple: entities and occurrences that are characterized by a definite number are assumed to belong

³⁵ Cf. e.g. also PB. 4, 9, 1; 6; ŚB. 5, 2, 1, 5.

³⁶ See TB. 3, 9, 20, 2; ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 11; 7, 5, 2, 6; 13, 3, 1, 1.

³⁷ For identity of the threefold Veda and the sacrifice: ŚB. 1, 1, 4, 2f.

³⁸ MINARD, T. E. I, p. 29; cf. LÉVI, o.c., p. 78. See e.g. TB. 2, 3, 7, 1; ŚB. 4, 1, 3; ŚB. 2, 2, 2, 3; 6, 2, 1, 23; 6, 2, 2, 4; 8, 1, 1, 1; 8, 1, 4, 3; 10, 5, 2, 20; 10, 6, 2, 10; JB. 1, 40.

³⁹ See e.g. also PB. 18, 6, 11.

⁴⁰ For hymns of praise (*stoma*) based on numerical proportions see HAUG, Ai.B., p. 77.

⁴¹ Needless to say, there is also symbolism without numbers: cf. DUMONT, at Fel. Vol. Belvalkar, Benares 1957, p. 16 (tortoise).

together, to correspond in some respect or other, to be homologous and identifiable⁴². Since many important beings (e.g. gods), phenomena (e.g. the months and seasons), objects (e.g. the limbs of the body) have their fixed numbers one can, in the opinion of these authors, secure everything sevenfold (worlds of the gods, domestic animals, etc.) by means of a hymn of seven stanzas; or supply Agni with food by performing a ritual act in connexion with the ashes with four stanzas because this means supplying him with four-footed animals, which are food. Twelve stanzas are recited "to obtain the year" which consists of twelve months. "Fivefold is man (because he consists of hair, skin, flesh, bones and marrow), fivefold is cattle (there are five animal victims); by means of this *viṣṭuti* (which comprises five verses) he obtains man and cattle." Seventeen stanzas should be recited for Prajāpati who is seventeenfold. There are on the occasion of a royal consecration eleven recipients of special sacrificial honours, because the *triṣṭubh*, which represents manly energy, consists of eleven syllables⁴³. The *gāyatrī* can "be placed on both sides at the morning pressing" if one follows the direction given at AiB. 3, 12, 1ff.:

"Let us two praise' is his call of three syllables at the morning pressing. 'Let us recite, O divine one' is the *adhvaryu's* response in five syllables. That makes up eight syllables. The *gāyatrī* has eight syllables. Verily they have placed the *gāyatrī* in front at the morning pressing. 'The hymn has been recited' he says, having recited, in four syllables. 'Yes, reciter of hymns' replies the *adhvaryu* in four syllables. That makes up eight syllables. The *gāyatrī* has eight syllables. Verily thus they have placed the *gāyatrī* on both sides at the morning pressing"⁴⁴.

Generally speaking, these authors display a preference for computations, enumerations, numerical analysis, classifications according to, e.g., the increasing number of entities and recurrences of the same number in the same explanatory or illustrative passage⁴⁵. Numerical groupings have always been very popular in India, but the significance of the numbers should—by the contemporary audience as well as by the modern reader—be properly understood.

Another characteristic of this literature is the habit of dividing various categories of beings, entities or phenomena into two groups, or of distinguishing among them two complementary classes and hence a tendency to dichotomous

⁴² See OLDENBERG, V. W., p. 46; GONDA, R. I. I, p. 177; cf. TS. 2, 4, 11, 2 using the term "identity of form" (*sarūpatva*). For numerical congruence (*sampad*) see HEESTERMAN, Ancient Indian royal consecration, p. 35.

⁴³ ŚB. 9, 5, 2, 8; 6, 8, 2, 7; KB. 8, 1; PB. 2, 4, 2; 2, 10, 5; AiB. 1, 1, 14; ŚB. 5, 3, 1, 12. Compare e.g. also PB. 4, 5, 5f.; 6, 2, 2; 19, 5, 6; ŚB. 1, 3, 3, 10.

⁴⁴ Cf. e.g. also TB. 1, 1, 4, 1; 6, 7; 2, 2, 3, 7; AiB. 4, 12; KB. 3, 2; 7, 10; 9, 2; 10, 2; PB. 4, 6, 4; ŚB. 1, 2, 5, 13; 3, 5, 10; 2, 2, 2, 4; 5; 8, 1, 1, 2; 3, 3, 4.

⁴⁵ Cf. e.g. KB. 14, 5; ŚB. 4, 5, 8, 1; 9, 1, 1, 43; 10, 4, 2, 1ff.; 3, 17; KB. 6, 1ff.; 10, 3; 12, 8; JB. 2, 431; PB. 16, 5, 14ff.; ŚB. 1, 2, 3, 1; 1, 3, 5, 11; 9, 3, 2, 8; AiB. 2, 17; KB. 11, 7 (100, 120, 360, 720, 1000); PB. XXIII-XXV; JB. 1, 185f. Needless to dwell on the importance of numbers such as 'three' or 'seven' (see e.g. MINARD, T. E. I, p. 52). For 10800: ŚB. 10, 4, 2, 20 and MINARD, o.c. I, p. 86.

argumentation⁴⁶. "This All was twofold in the beginning, the (differentiated) cosmos and the (undifferentiated) chaos. Of these two the former is the *sāman*, mind, exhalation, the latter the *ṛc*, speech, inhalation . . ." (JUB. 1, 53, 1 f.). If a definite accident should happen both at the morning and evening ceremonies, both categories of gods are deprived of their share (TB. 3, 7, 1, 7). In digging a lump of clay for the great fireplace two formulas should be pronounced: "Two-footed is the sacrificer, and the sacrificer is Agni . . . And twofold is also that form of his, clay and water" (ŚB. 6, 4, 1, 3). A nearly related feature is the importance attached to pairs, pair concepts or pair systems, the tendency to group various things, beings, phenomena in pairs of complements, opposites etc.⁴⁷.

Another device used in argumentative reasoning is the term *rūpa*. The bull is a 'form' (*rūpa*) of Indra, i. e. a representative of Indra's being and power (ŚB. 2, 5, 3, 18). "Those hairs which are white are a 'form' (image, or representatives) of the sky; those which are black, of the earth" (3, 2, 1, 3)⁴⁸.

Just as the formulas of the Atharvaveda often refer to analogies, designed to intensify the power of word and ritual act, in order to realize the practitioner's ambition the authors of the *brāhmaṇas* frequently rely on an argument based on analogy, e. g. TB. 3, 3, 1, 2 f.:

"If he should wish, 'May Parjanya (the god of rain) be raining,' one should brush (the spoons) with the (grass-)tops (turned downwards). (By doing so) he brings down rain, for rain has its points turned downwards"⁴⁹.

Very common are references to the divine archetype such as ŚB. 3, 9, 4, 20:

"As to why he resorts to the *nigrābha* (formula). Now, when he (Soma) first became sacrificial food for the gods, . . . the gods (fulfilled his wish to consort with the regions . . .) by means of the *nigrābha*. In like manner (the sacrificer) now makes him consort with the regions."

Highly frequent are 'syllogisms' of the type MS. 1, 7, 2:

"They (the gods) were united with these bodies; cattle are the dear bodies of the gods; they were united with cattle."

and tripartite variants such as AiB. 2, 4, 1:

"With the *āpri* stanzas⁵⁰ he delights; the *āpri* stanzas are brilliance and brahminical illustriousness; verily thus with brilliance and brahminical illustriousness he causes him to prosper"⁵¹.

⁴⁶ Cf. GONDA, Dual deities, p. 71 and passim; Duality in Indian thought, Thêta-Pi (Leiden 1973) 2, p. 1.

⁴⁷ GONDA, Dual deities, p. 17 and passim. See e. g. MS. 3, 9, 7; TB. 1, 1, 6, 4; 3, 9, 3, 1; JB. 2, 183; ŚB. 1, 1, 1, 22; 1, 6, 3, 23; 3, 8, 4, 16; 7, 2, 3, 2; 10, 1, 4, 1.

⁴⁸ Cf. also KS. 8, 15; 28, 4; TB. 3, 3, 6, 1; AiB. 1, 14, 4; 2, 1, 6; PB. 4, 2, 16; 18; 4, 9; 8, 6, 14; 9, 5, 7; 10, 6, 1; ŚB. 2, 2, 3, 7; 2, 6, 4, 5; 7, 4, 1, 6; 8, 7, 1, 4; 10, 4, 3, 21, and see OLDENBERG, V. W., p. 102; 114; M. FALK, *Nāma-rūpa* and *dharma-rūpa*, Calcutta 1943, p. 19. For the term *pratimā* "image" in a similar context see TB. 3, 2, 8, 8.

⁴⁹ Cf. e. g. also TB. 3, 2, 8, 2; 7; ŚB. 9, 1, 2, 4.

⁵⁰ See p. 104.

⁵¹ Cf. also AiB. 3, 5, 1; 3, 6, 1; KB. 11, 7; PB. 4, 9, 3; 5, 3, 2; 6, 4, 1; JB. 1, 240; ŚB. 2, 6, 4, 5; 5, 2, 1, 20; 5, 5, 5, 17.

A tripartite argument line of reasoning is also TB. 3, 3, 3, 1:

“That sacrifice where the (sacrificer’s) wife is absent is not a sacrifice. (In that case) no children would be born. The wife attends (the sacrifice), (for) it is for the procreation of children that he (the sacrificer) has undertaken the sacrifice.”

Another dialectic device is “The cart represents an abundance, for the cart does indeed represent an abundance” (ŚB. 1, 1, 2, 6)⁵².

The argumentations often start, proceed or conclude with stock phrases and sentence constructions:

“The fore-offerings, one should know, are the seasons. Hence there are five (of them), for (there are) five seasons”; “. . . is offered by the one who knowing thus offers the *agnihotra*”⁵³;

are carried on by means of ‘syllogisms’ such as:

“The waters are the sacrifice. In that they come to the waters, verily they come to the sacrifice.” — “In that they undertake the over-night sacrifice, (it is because) the year is as great as day and night. In that they undertake the *atirātra*, (it serves) to obtain the year.” — “He recites the Sukirti (hymn, i.e. ṚV. 10, 131) The Sukirti is a birthplace of gods. Thus he produces the sacrificer from the sacrifice as a birthplace of gods”⁵⁴;

by argumentations of the types:

“He encloses it, for the world of the gods is hidden from the world of men.” — “For ploughing thee, for good crops’ he says. Therefore plants grow up without ploughing.” — “He transposes the metres, in order to avoid exhaustion.” — “In that they are verses by Jamadagni (they serve) to secure the possession of all forms, of all perfections”⁵⁵;

by repetitions of the same sentence pattern⁵⁶, also, underlying the parallelism, when an actuality is described as a reiteration of its mythical example⁵⁷, by various types of question and answer phraseology⁵⁸; e.g. PB. 4, 8, 11f.:

“Those who discourse on sacred texts say, ‘Have you risen from a proceeding (sacrificial) session, or from one that stands still?’ They who rise after chanting the *rathantara* (*sāman*) rise from a proceeding (session). Regarding these . . . They who rise after chanting the *br̥hat* (*sāman*) rise from a (session) that stands still. Regarding these . . .”⁵⁹

Not infrequently arguments are brought forward or discussions are held in question and answer style⁶⁰, a disjunctive question being not uncommon, e.g. AiB. 2, 30, 2f.:

⁵² See also AiB. 1, 16, 8 quoted on p. 345.

⁵³ ŚB. 1, 5, 3, 1; AiB. 1, 4, 9; JB. 1, 8; cf. also ŚB. 2, 3, 1, 1; AiB. 1, 13, 31; 16, 8; 17, 2; JB. 1, 9; 10; 11; 14; 16 etc.

⁵⁴ KB. 12, 1; 17, 5; similarly, 13, 9; AiB. 6, 28, 1; 29, 1; 30, 1.

⁵⁵ TS. 6, 1, 1, 1; 3, 7; AiB. 4, 27, 3; 26, 8.

⁵⁶ See e.g. ŚB. 1, 4, 3, 11ff.; cf. 1, 5, 1, 1ff.; 2, 9ff.; 6, 1, 16ff.; 2, 1, 1, 5ff.

⁵⁷ See e.g. ŚB. 1, 4, 2, 1; 1, 6, 1, 12; 15; 2, 2, 4, 17; 4, 3, 3, 5.

⁵⁸ Cf. GONDA, S. R., p. 38.

⁵⁹ Cf. also PB. 5, 6, 9; 10, 4f.; 10, 12, 1; 14, 1, 12; ŚB. 1, 6, 1, 20; 3, 23; JB. 1, 60.

⁶⁰ See e.g. AiB. 6, 3, 3ff.; 7, 20, 1f.; KB. 6, 11; ŚB. 1, 6, 1, 20; 7, 3, 1, 39; 10, 1, 4, 14.

“They say, ‘Should he eat first the subdivided sacrificial food? (Or) should he partake of the *hotar*’s goblet?’ He should eat first, and then partake of the goblet.”

Expiations are generally introduced by questions of the type: “If the milk . . . becomes spoiled, what is the expiation?”⁶¹.

An extremely frequent element of these argumentations is the explanation of words⁶². Though most of these ‘etymologies’ are in the light of modern linguistics complete failures, they should not, with previous authors⁶³, be described as quibbles or infantile puns. Always engaged in attempts at finding the connexions between the phenomena and to understand the at first sight mysterious bonds between these and the Unseen and much inclined to take words, and especially names, to be instinct with power these authors practised the art of etymology as a means of gaining knowledge of the ideas expressed by words, of penetrating into the hitherto unknown nature of an object or a person, of acquiring control over them. These ‘etymologies’ reveal to us the authors’ views of the above connexions; the more frequent ones may be regarded as reflecting more or less fixed convictions⁶⁴. The very formula in which the conclusion of such an etymologic argument is expressed is highly illustrative, e.g. AiB. 2, 1, 1:

“They (the gods who went upwards to heaven) obstructed (*ayopayan*) it (the way to heaven) by means of the sacrificial post (*yūpa*); in that they obstructed (*ayopayan*) by means of the post (*yūpa*), that is why the post has its name” (lit. that is the *yūpa*-ship of the *yūpa*)”⁶⁵.

Very often these explanations emphasize that special aspect of an idea which under definite circumstances is important to the exclusion of other ways of looking at it⁶⁶. The offering to be presented at the end of the sacrificial rite to the officiants (*dakṣiṇā*) and regarded as its very keystone is said to owe its name to the fact that the gods invigorated (*adakṣayan*) the sacrifice by it⁶⁷; that means, that *hic et nunc* the gift of a *dakṣiṇā* makes a sacrifice successful.

⁶¹ AiB. 7, 4; JB. 1, 51ff.; ŚB. 12, 4, 1, 2ff.

⁶² P. POUCHA, *Vedische Volksetymologie und das Nirukta*, ArchOr 7, p. 423; J. GONDA, *The etymologies in the ancient Indian brāhmanas*, Lingua 5, p. 61; C. S. VENKATESWARAN, *Ṛgvedic words etymologically quoted in both the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa and the Nirukta*, BDCRI 3, p. 547; N. VERMA, *The etymologies relating to the metres and melodies in the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*, 26 AIOC, S. P., p. 383 (according to whom this *brāhmaṇa* ‘explains’ no less than 422 words).

⁶³ See e.g. EGGELING, ŚB. IV, p. 265; W. RUBEN, *Die Philosophen der Upanishaden*, Bern 1947, p. 91; 130 etc.; P. MASSON-OURSSEL, *Esquisse d’une histoire de la philosophie indienne*, Paris 1923, p. 42.

⁶⁴ Cf. also OLDENBERG, V. W., p. 118f.; S. SCHAYER, in *Zs. f. Buddhismus* 6, p. 290.

⁶⁵ For similar instances see e.g. TS. 6, 1, 3, 5; AiB. 1, 2, 1; PB. 4, 2, 2; 12, 13, 4; JB. 1, 223; ŚB. 1, 3, 5, 1.

⁶⁶ When, generally speaking, a ‘theory’ is founded on analogy between puzzling observations or metaphysical suppositions and familiar phenomena, only a limited aspect of the latter is apt to be incorporated in the resulting formulation.

⁶⁷ ŚB. 2, 2, 2, 2; 4, 3, 4, 2; KB. 15, 1 etc.

Things can have more than one aspect and this meant that two 'etymologies' could be regarded as simultaneously correct: the head is called *śiras* because there well-being (*śrī*) is concentrated, but also because the breath resorted (*śrī-*) to it (ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 4). Etymological combinations of words were utilized in ritual, magic, or religious practice: a *sāman* called *jarābodhīya* served to obtain food because its name was connected with the verb *jiryate* "to be digested" (PB. 14, 5, 27f.)⁶⁸. Not infrequently the *brāhmaṇas* so to say comment upon an explanation that is given in the Nirukta: for instance Nir. 3, 20 *nakṣatra* "constellation" is said to derive from *na* "not" and *kṣatra* "dominion" and JB. 2, 26 Āditya (the sun) is narrated to have appropriated the dominion of the constellations so that they became *nakṣatra*. Therefore the sun is called Āditya, because he took away (*ādatta*) their power (ŚB. 2, 1, 2, 18). Linguistic taboo, the fear of the potencies residing in names, underlies the frequent modifications of word forms needed to arrive at an etymological conclusion and motivated by the statement that the gods "love the cryptic," e.g. ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 2:

"He (Indra) by his particular power (*indriya*) kindled those (other) vital powers . . ., and in as much as he kindled (*indh-*), he is the kindler (*indha*); the kindler indeed, him they call 'Indra' cryptically, for the gods love the cryptic"⁶⁹.

⁶⁸ Cf. also PB. 2, 3, 2. For other instances of reasoning by means of words and their meanings see e.g. ŚB. 5, 1, 3, 3; 5, 2, 1, 9 and MINARD, T.E. I, p. 135; II, p. 62.

⁶⁹ See e.g. also TB. 3, 12, 4, 1; ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 2; 11; 6, 1, 2, 3; 7, 4, 1, 10; 7, 4, 2, 12; 9, 1, 1, 2; 9, 1, 2, 22; 14, 1, 1, 13; AiB. 3, 33, 6 and compare AiB. 3, 34, 6; PB. 4, 8, 9; 7, 10, 8.

6. Disputations

Despite the fact that in those brahminical circles to which we owe this literature tradition was extremely important, one of the most interesting features of the *brāhmaṇas* is the very frequent references to the manifold differences of opinion on the various aspects of the sacrificial doctrines. It is therefore worth while to dwell on the discussions and controversies which are almost continuously carried on, as well as on the ways in which these were presented, stated and settled¹. Ranging from minor details to questions of wider interest such as the mode of performance of a sacrifice, its significance, the possibility of gaining the results desired etc.², these discussions are in part a literary device, viz. short references to the opinions of one or more other authorities, in part represented in the form of episodes relating conversations or meetings of experts debating subjects of common interest and controversy³. It is significant that one of those interested in these discussions was Janaka, king of Videha, who plays a considerable part in the Śatapatha and Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇas as well as in the Bṛhadāranyaka-upaniṣad⁴.

The introduction of an—often anonymous⁵—authority is indeed in many cases an important point in an argument: “About this they (the experts) remark . . .”⁶; “on this point N.N. used to say . . .”⁷. The opinions of authorities—whether mentioned by name or remaining anonymous⁸—are sometimes subscribed to⁹, sometimes rejected; ŚB. 1, 1, 1, 10:

“Let him . . . eat only what grows in the forest, be it forest plants or the fruit of trees. And in regard to this Barku Vārṣṇa said: ‘Cook beans for me, for no offering is made of them.’ One should not however do this, for pulse serves as an addition to rice and barley and hence one increases rice and barley with it; one should therefore eat only what grows in the forest”¹⁰.

The existence of differences of opinion is often apparent only from the rejection of a view held or procedure adopted by ‘some’ or other authorities, a usual scheme being: “but let him not do this, for . . .”¹¹; a favourite formula of the

¹ For a systematic collection of pertinent texts see THITE, Sacrifice, p. 61.

² See e.g. AiB. 8, 4; JB. 2, 89; 94; 177; ŚB. 2, 1, 1, 14.

³ See e.g. JB. 1, 19f.; 245; 2, 42; 76f.; ŚB. 10, 6, 1, 1ff.; 11, 3, 1, 2ff.; 11, 5, 3, 1ff.; 11, 6, 2, 1ff.

⁴ Cf. MACDONELL and KEITH, V. I. I, p. 271.

⁵ E.g. PB. 4, 3, 13; 4, 4, 4; 8; 4, 6, 17; 6, 4, 15.

⁶ E.g. PB. 4, 5, 13; 15; 14, 10, 3; 19, 8, 6; ŚB. 1, 1, 2, 11; 3, 3, 10; 6, 1, 20; 2, 1, 5; (cf. 9).

⁷ E.g. PB. 14, 3, 17.

⁸ Although many names of ‘sages’ and teachers are mentioned (according to N. J. SHENDE, at Comm. Vol. H. D. Velankar, Bombay 1965, p. 133 the two *brāhmaṇas* of the R̥gveda refer to about sixty of them), opponents often remain anonymous.

⁹ E.g. ŚB. 1, 3, 1, 26; 2, 1, 4, 6. Or the reader may use his own discretion: ŚB. 2, 1, 4, 27.

¹⁰ Also ŚB. 1, 9, 1, 21. For variations see e.g. TB. 3, 3, 2, 2; ŚB. 1, 6, 3, 27.

¹¹ See e.g. KB. 2, 3; ŚB. 1, 4, 1, 35; 3, 4, 3, 12; 4, 1, 1, 27; 4, 1, 2, 19; 5, 1, 3, 14; 5, 2, 2, 3; 6, 3, 1, 42; 8, 1, 3, 7; 8, 4, 4, 9; 9, 3, 4, 11.

Aitareyins is: "that is not to be regarded"¹². Any motivation may be omitted¹³. A procedure may be dispatched as mere speculation; or the author, after stating two different opinions, lets his audience take their choice¹⁴. Objections to an opinion are not always explicitly characterized as such¹⁵.

Often an author does not state his own view before he has not only mentioned but also explained a different opinion¹⁶. Such an explanation gathers volume in passages such as ŚB. 1, 1, 1, 7ff. on the question as to whether an evening meal is permitted after the performance of the *agnihotra*; Āśāḍha's opinion, amply expounded, is said to be not so acceptable as Yājñavalkya's. An explanation is also given, when a ritual practice is condemned; ŚB. 2, 1, 4, 3:

"Here now some tie up a he-goat, arguing that the goat is sacred to Agni and that (this is done) for the completeness of the fire. But one need not do this . . ."¹⁷.

Another instance of a divergent opinion that is more or less circumstantially motivated before it is declared incorrect occurs at ŚB. 6, 5, 2, 22:

"Now some make three fire-pans, saying, 'Three (in number) are these worlds, and the fire-pans are these worlds,' and also for mutual expiation, thinking, 'If the one will break, we shall carry (Agni) in the other, and if the other breaks, then in the third.' Let him not do so, for . . ."

The audience is sometimes dissuaded from following opposite advice because it would involve disaster or lead to undesirable results¹⁸. The disapproval of an alternative may be implied in the argumentation, e.g. PB. 4, 10, 3f.:

"Regarding this (rite) they say, 'It is to be undertaken in the middle of the year (because) in the middle (of the body) the food which has been eaten nourishes. Regarding this (however) they (i.e. others) say, 'If they undertake (it) in the middle of the year, they obtain half of the food, but lose the other half.' At the end of the year it is to be undertaken, for in the course of the year all food ripens."

Or the author, after stating his own view, quotes one or more different opinions with the arguments adduced by their supporters to close the passage by a brief restatement of his own position (JB. 2, 200). Or the author's own opinion is given at the end of an account of other views and possibilities (TB. 1, 1, 2, 1ff.; AiB. 2, 17). Sometimes the various opinions are embodied in a story, in which the personage who acts in accordance with the view supported by the author is represented as most successful (GB. 1, 3, 15). An objection of an opponent may count with an author¹⁹, but be invalidated by the force of a counter-argument (ŚB. 6, 2, 2, 38).

¹² E.g. AiB. 2, 3, 12; 2, 26, 5; 3, 18, 10. Cf. also ŚB. 2, 2, 1, 13.

¹³ E.g. ŚB. 3, 5, 2, 3; 3, 6, 3, 6.

¹⁴ ŚB. 4, 5, 4, 7; 9, 5, 2, 11; KB. 4, 14, mentioning many possibilities and giving the option, ends by stating the established rule.

¹⁵ Cf. e.g. PB. 5, 7, 9.

¹⁶ E.g. ŚB. 2, 1, 1, 14.

¹⁷ Cf. also ŚB. 2, 1, 2, 4f.; 1, 4, 8.

¹⁸ See e.g. KB. 10, 3; ŚB. 1, 7, 1, 3; 2, 4, 3, 7.

¹⁹ For acceptance of the view of another authority see TB. 2, 1, 2, 9f.

At ŚB. 1, 7, 3, 17ff. the option is given between *triṣṭubh* and *anuṣṭubh* verses and either possibility is motivated, but the combination of a *triṣṭubh* and an *anuṣṭubh* is rejected by recalling the accident which a certain Bhāllabeya had after using both metres in order to obtain double benefit:

“He fell from his cart and, in falling, broke his arm. He considered, ‘This has befallen because of something or other I have done.’ He then thought: ‘(It has befallen) because of some violation, on my part, of the proper course of the sacrifice.’ Hence one should not violate the proper course . . .”

Sometimes the discussions end in a compromise or in acceptance of the opinions of others²⁰. The reasons for adopting or rejecting a certain procedure are not infrequently found in an exemplary mythical event quoted more or less circumstantially to introduce the author’s advice, e.g. “Let him approach them in the evening, for in the evening the gods approached Agni” (as told in the preceding part of the section, ŚB. 2, 3, 4, 3)²¹. References to daily life or well-known facts or practices in the human sphere can serve the same purpose, e.g. 1, 6, 4, 3:

“Just as one would cook a dish of rice or a goat in common for two relatives or friends who have come to stay with him . . ., in like manner . . .”²².

These authors like to introduce an argument by posing a question or stating an alternative ascribed to some authority, for instance a man who expounds, or discusses on, sacred texts (*brahmavādīn*)²³. Thus PB. 4, 8, 11f.:

“The *brahmavādīns* say: ‘Have you risen from a sacrificial session that goes on or from one that stands still?’ They who rise after chanting the *rathantara* (*sāman*) rise from a session that goes on. As to these one should say: ‘They will be devoid of a firm support.’ They who rise after chanting the *br̥hat* (*sāman*), rise from a session that stands still. As to these one should say: ‘Their prosperity will stand still (stagnate) . . .’”²⁴.

JB. 1, 22–25 is a good instance of a discussion told with a certain circumstantiality. The persons are represented as historical, the event as unique. Five brahmins decide (direct speech) to discuss the *agnihotra* with king Janaka who (they say) considers himself superior to them in the dispute. “They arrived there” (abrupt transition) and have themselves announced. The ceremonious reception and the host’s outfit are described in some detail. The host wishes to be informed of the purpose of the visit (direct speech). The answer: “You out-talk us.” The host takes the initiative: “Brahmins, how do you offer the *agnihotra*?” “You have indeed out-talked us . . .”. Thereupon one of the guests answers. The question is repeated four times and the other guests answer also.

²⁰ E.g. ŚB. 1, 1, 1, 7ff.; 13, 1, 5, 1ff.; TB. 2, 1, 2, 9f.

²¹ For imitation of the gods see e.g. PB. 15, 7, 4; ŚB. 1, 7, 3, 26.

²² Also ŚB. 1, 1, 1, 20; 1, 4, 2, 1; 4, 1, 7, 2, 14; 2, 1, 4, 2.

²³ Interestingly enough AVŚ. 9, 6, 18 uses the term *brāhmaṇa* in connection with an alternative (cf. 11, 3, 27).

²⁴ Cf. e.g. also TB. 1, 1, 6, 9; 1, 3, 10, 6; PB. 4, 3, 13; 5, 17; 6, 4, 15; 13, 10, 15; 14, 5, 8; 11, 35; ŚB. 1, 6, 1, 9; 2, 1, 4, 10.

At this point we have for a moment to revert to the *brahmodya*²⁵, the controversy on a subject that is regarded as important from the point of view of ritualism, macrocosmic-microcosmic correspondences, or in general, outlook and religion, and is presented in the form of a dialogue (questions and answers) whilst exhibiting the general character of a riddle²⁶. Whereas *brahmodyas* were, in a fixed form, a compulsory element in certain great rites—especially the royal rites (*aśvamedha* etc.)²⁷—, less rigorous and more amplified varieties were in vogue among those who debated controversial problems. These are much in evidence in Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa X and XI, e. g. 10, 3, 3, 1 ff. :

“Dhīra Śātaparṇeya once set out towards Mahāsāla Jābāla. He (the latter) said to him, ‘With what knowledge have you come to me?’ ‘I know Agni.’ ‘What Agni do you know?’ ‘Speech.’ ‘What becomes of him who knows that Agni?’ ‘He becomes eloquent . . .’ After Dhīra has described the nature of Agni as speech, the eye, the mind, etc. Jābāla explains that he is breath, for when a man sleeps speech, eye, mind etc. pass into breath, and when he awakes, they again issue from breath. So far this doctrine applies to the microcosmic individual (*adhyātman*); macrocosmically (*adhīdevatam* “with regard to the deities”) speech is Agni himself, the eye is yonder sun, mind the moon etc., and when fire goes out it is wafted up in the air (wind) . . . , and when the sun sets it enters the air (wind) . . . and from out of the air (wind) they issue again . . .”

Occasionally these questions are concatenated, e. g. TB. 3, 10, 9, 3 ff. :

“. . . ‘Whereon is this (Sāvitra) fire established?’ ‘On reality.’ ‘What is that reality?’ ‘It is asceticism.’ ‘Now, whereon is asceticism (established)?’ ‘On strength.’ ‘What is that strength?’ . . .”

At ŚB. 10, 5, 2, 16 ff. the question is debated as to whether there is one death, or many, the answer being “both one and many,”

“for inasmuch as he is that (man in the sun) in yonder world he is one, and inasmuch as he is numerously distributed here on earth among living beings, there are also many of them”²⁸.

The conclusion to which the discussion leads is sometimes communicated, not in the dialogue proper, but afterwards (JB. 1, 271).

Especially in the later parts of the Śatapatha these disputations, often clothed in the form of questions and answers, develop into dialogues between a teacher and a pupil—terms actually used at ŚB. 10, 1, 4, 10. Thus Varuṇa teaches his son Bhṛgu, who deems himself superior in knowledge to his father,

²⁵ See p. 134. For JB. 1, 18; 1, 50; KauṣU. 1, 2 see H. W. BODEWITZ, at ZDMG 1969 (Suppl. I, 3, p. 843). Cf. also TB. 3, 9, 5, 1; ŚB. 4, 6, 9, 20.

²⁶ Cf. RENOU, at JA 237, p. 22; JAOS 73, p. 141; E. V. P. VI, p. 31; MINARD, T. E. II, p. 56. For riddles in general see also L. STERNBACH, Gnostic and didactic poetry in Vol. IV, p. 73 ff. Some other instances are TS. 7, 4, 18; AiB. 5, 25, 13 ff.

²⁷ Cf. e. g. P. E. DUMONT, L’aśvamedha, Paris-Louvain 1927, p. 154; 186 and see also AiB. 5, 25, 14 ff.

²⁸ See also TB. 3, 10, 9, 3 ff.; ŚB. 10, 3, 4, 1 ff.; 10, 6, 1, 2 ff.; 11, 4, 1, 2 ff. (GELDNER, V. S. II, p. 185); 11, 5, 3, 2 ff.; 11, 6, 3, 1 ff.; JB. 1, 19; 76; 262; 271 ff.; 296.

the mysteries of the *agnihotra* (11, 6, 1, 1ff.)²⁹ explaining the meaning of the scenes seen by the young man in the regions of the universe. Svaidāyana explains the significance of the Full and New Moon ritual to Uddālaka Āruṇi in 11, 4, 1, 1–16³⁰, the initial paragraph introducing us to the situation and the next one stating that Svaidāyana acts as the champion of the northern *brāhmanas* in the disputation with Uddālaka. After the salutation “he straightway begins to question him.” But what follows is the fourfold statement that that man alone may pass himself off as a sacrificial priest—and this was what Uddālaka did—who understands definite features and results of the Full and New Moon ritual. Thereupon Uddālaka expresses the wish to become the other’s pupil, but the latter is willing to teach him without entering into that relation with him and now explains the meaning of the problems stated in his former address. The sphere is of course thoroughly ritualistic, but the magical element is not lacking: “the head would fly off of whosoever should (dare to challenge) him (Uddālaka) to a disputation.”

While this established custom of discussing *brahmodyas* helps on one hand to understand the true character of these ‘philosophical’ episodes, these ‘riddle contests’ are on the other continued, in part with the same interlocutors and in similar surroundings, in the oldest *upaniṣads*³¹.

²⁹ Cf. JB. 1, 42ff., H. LOMMEL, at *Paideuma* 4 (1950), p. 93, and BODEWITZ, J. B., p. 99 (with a bibliography), translations also by OERTEL, at JAOS 15, p. 233; H. LOMMEL, *Altbrahmanische Legenden*, Stuttgart 1964, p. 36; VARENNE, M. L., p. 135ff.

³⁰ Cf. GB. 1, 3, 6ff.

³¹ See also RENOÛ, in *Festschrift F. Weller*, Leipzig, 1954, p. 533.

7. Myths, legends and narrative episodes

On the strength of the numerous references and narrative passages in the R̥gveda and the early *brāhmaṇas* we may be certain that at that period ancient Indian myths were at their richest. Although a long or, rather, disproportionate discussion of the myths and legends handed down in Vedic prose¹ might easily prevent us from forming a true picture of this class of literature, there is no denying that, for many modern readers, the chief interest of the *brāhmaṇas* lies in these episodes, many of which, thanks to the Indian genius for telling tales, make very good reading. Without subscribing to the depreciatory remarks made by Winternitz² and others on the ritualistic and speculative portions of these works we must readily concede that the sometimes really poetical and successful narrative passages, the often thoughtful myths and legends, contribute much to enlivening the long expositions on sacrificial rites. It is moreover beyond dispute that many of these passages are of uncommon interest from the point of view of the comparative history of philosophy and religions in the largest sense of this term.

Like other peoples of antiquity the Indians told myths instead of presenting analytical accounts or seeking, in a detached way and without ulterior motives, for intelligible explanations of the world and the natural phenomena. The fundamental significance of a myth is for instance apparent in cases such as JB. 1, 3 where at the very beginning of a long section (1, 1–65) on the *agnihotra* it is told that Prajāpati—who, as so often, is the founder or inaugurator—performed a sacrificial session of a thousand years, by which he—and the gods after him—ascended to the heavenly world, and that afterwards this rite, being too long for human beings, was reduced to the one-day *agnihotra*³.

Many myths are indeed attempts to explain origins⁴. Thus silver is said to derive its origin from the tears which god Agni wept when he was pursued by the gods who were desirous of recovering their treasures with which he had gone away; “therefore silver is not a suitable gift, because it is born of tears” (TS. 1, 5, 1, 1f.). The head of the sacrificial animal cut off by the gods became the *plakṣa* tree (6, 3, 10, 2); Viṣṇu’s head, cut off because the ants had gnawed his bowstring and falling with the sound *ghrī*, the sun (ŚB. 14, 1, 1, 9f.). According to an interesting passage, ŚB. 3, 1, 3, 3ff.:

“Aditi had eight sons. But those that are called ‘the gods, sons of Aditi’ were only seven, for the eighth, Mārtāṇḍa, she brought forth unformed. He was a

¹ J. VARENNE, *Mythes et légendes extraits des brāhmaṇa*, Paris 1967 (fifty translated episodes, with notes, mainly from the Śatapatha); G. V. DEVASTHALI, *Religion and mythology of the brāhmaṇas with particular reference to the Śatapatha-Brahmaṇa*, Poona 1965.

² WINTERITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 208.

³ Cf. also ŚB. 1, 5, 1, 1ff. in connexion with the *vājapeya* rite.

⁴ Cf. e.g. PB. 4, 10, 1; 18, 9, 1; ŚB. 1, 7, 4, 4; GB. 1, 3, 16. For creation myths see below, p. 389.

mere lump of bodily matter, as broad as he was high. Some, however, say that he was the size of a man. The gods, sons of Aditi, then said, 'That which was born after us must not be lost; come, let us fashion it . . .'' They did so and the flesh which they cut off him became the elephant and he himself was Aditya Vivasvat, the sun"⁵.

Some passages may be regarded as accounting for what may be broadly called the origin of evil:

"The gods and the *asuras*, both of them sprung from Prajāpati, entered upon their father Prajāpati's inheritance, to wit, speech—truth and untruth . . .; they, both of them, spoke the truth, and both of them spoke the untruth, and, indeed, speaking alike, they were alike. The gods relinquished untruth, and held fast to truth, and the *asuras* relinquished truth, and held fast to untruth . . ."⁶.

Natural and climatic phenomena find their explanation in the transcendent mythical sphere; JB. 1, 167:

"Prajāpati is the year. During six months he lifts up his warm foot: then here (on the earth) warmth is above and cold is below; . . . that is why in the summer cold water is drawn from the well. When he lifts up his cold foot, then cold is above and warmth below; . . . that is why in winter warm water is drawn from the well."

Very often the pertinent passage establishes a ritual truth by means of a reference to a mythical origin, e.g. PB. 4, 1, 4f.:

"Prajāpati was here alone. He desired, 'May I multiply, may I beget progeny.' He saw this overnight-rite. He practised it. By means of it he begot day and night. In that this (day) is an overnight-rite, they procreate day and night, they get a firm foundation in day and night . . ."

Or a short reference to a mythical occurrence ends in the statement that the one "who knows this" will fare just as the divine beings figuring in the myth⁷.

Many mythical tales provide the audience with one or more explanations of traditional practices by stating that these are re-enactments of exemplary deeds of the gods performed in the 'mythical past'⁸. In cases such as ŚB. 14, 1, 1, 1 ff. such explanations follow each other regularly:

"The gods Agni, Indra . . . performed a sacrifice. Their place of worship was Kurukṣetra. . . Hence wherever in Kurukṣetra one settles there one thinks, 'This is a place for divine worship' . . . They (the gods) entered upon the session thinking, 'May we attain excellence! . . .' And in like manner do these (men) now enter upon the sacrificial session thinking, 'May we attain excellence . . .'"

When a priest is invited to officiate he cannot refuse the invitation unless he has already committed himself to another ritual performance or the person who wants him to be his officiant is one for whom it is not suitable to sacrifice. The

⁵ Cf. LÉVI, D. S. B., p. 63f.

⁶ ŚB. 9, 5, 1, 12ff.; cf. also 5, 1, 1, 1: the gods and the *asuras* became differentiated, the latter offering to themselves, the former to one another; 1, 2, 5, 24ff. on the self-reinforcing effects of evil; see W. DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, in *History of Religions*, 10, p. 288.

⁷ E.g. PB. 5, 5, 15; 6, 3, 9f. and compare e.g. PB. 4, 3, 2.

⁸ See e.g. ŚB. 2, 2, 3, 1.

mythical motivation of this custom is given in a longer, somewhat dramatic tale, the main figures of which—the Ādityas, Aṅgirasas and Agni, one of the latter group who acts as a go-between—find themselves in the delicate position that both groups are simultaneously intending to sacrifice (AiB. 6, 34).

Instances of human or earthly qualities, customs, practices, institutions, manner of life etc. represented as owing their origin to a divine 'precedent' or at least to a mythical archetype are very frequent⁹. On a certain occasion Varuṇa and Mitra were praised with a cow; therefore the victim is a cow (KB. 18, 13); the strength of noblemen resides in their arms because they are created from Prajāpati's arms (PB. 6, 1, 8). Occasionally we even find a simple statement:

"Now, when he performs that sacrifice, he does so either because . . . or because the gods did so"¹⁰.

The never-ending antagonism between gods and anti-gods¹¹, one of the important mythical themes—

"The *devas* and the *asuras*, both of them sprung from Prajāpati, were contending for superiority. The gods vanquished the *asuras*, and yet these afterwards harassed them again"—

gives rise to a considerable variety of tales: the *asuras*, escaping, were shut in by the gods; they were separated by the earth which lay between them; the gods deprived their enemies of the seasons and the year, or of the best part of the sacrifice; the *asuras* built strongholds¹² etc. More than once the gods gain the victory through the assistance or inventiveness of Agni, the sacrificial god who at AiB. 3, 39, 1 is only willing to help them after they have ritually praised him. In AiĀ. 2, 1, 8 there is no question of contest or combat, but the demons are overthrown because they prefer a wrong form of adoration. Now this myth—an event replete with power reiterated in a rite—explains the origin or significance of a ritual act—the flinging away of a grass-bush reiterates the expulsion of the *asuras* (ŚB. 1, 2, 4, 12)—or institution, for instance the fore-offerings which, being "victorious" were 'seen' by the gods (1, 5, 3, 3). The recitation of a formula connected with the myth brings about the victory

⁹ Compare M. ÉLIADÉ, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris 1949, p. 356 (= *Patterns of comparative religion*, London-New York 1958, p. 417); Le mythe de l'Éternel Retour, Paris 1949 (1966), p. 44; 53.

¹⁰ ŚB. 2, 4, 3, 12; 2, 6, 1, 3; 2, 6, 2, 2; see also 1, 4, 5, 13; 2, 1, 1, 11; 7, 2, 1, 4; 7, 3, 2, 6 ("what the gods did is done here"); 7, 5, 2, 5; 8, 5, 1, 7; 9, 2, 3, 4.

¹¹ One should not view this theme, with H. HERAS, at JBRRAS 27, p. 214 in the light of Christian ideas. The *asuras* are on the wrong side holding to the unreal or chaos (cf. ŚB. 9, 5, 1, 12) and cannot perform the sacrifice in the proper way (cf. 13, 8, 1, 5). They continue their adverse activity so that the gods, waging their continual war against them, can preserve the world; together they keep the world cycle going.

¹² TB. 3, 1, 4, 7; 3, 3, 5, 1; ŚB. 1, 2, 4, 8; 1, 4, 1, 34; 1, 5, 3, 2; 1, 9, 2, 35; 3, 4, 4, 3; see also 2, 1, 1, 8; 2, 1, 2, 13; 2, 2, 2, 8; 2, 4, 3, 2; 3, 2, 1, 18 etc.; JB. 1, 97; 105; 107; GB. 1, 1, 23; 1, 2, 19; 1, 3, 5 etc.

of the man for whom it is recited and the defeat of his adversaries (1, 4, 1, 35), for the man who knows the sense of a story in which the gods are narrated to have scored a victory, even through an artifice or after a bargain, will be victorious (cf. PB. 21, 13, 2f.).

There are many good specimens of myths or mythical tales of some extent with strong ritualistic elements. Thus, when Indra had slain Vṛtra he concealed himself (because he was afraid that he was the weaker and had not succeeded¹³), and Agni, a ṛṣi and the metre Bṛhati set about searching for him. Agni discovered him and stayed with him as a guest. The other gods prepared a rice-cake on twelve dishes for their two colleagues—and that is the origin of that ritual practice. The cake, however, did not satiate Indra, and the *soma*, which was prepared for him afterwards, did not agree with him. Thereupon they made it agree with him by means of boiled milk¹⁴. The same passage illustrates the predilection for etymological explanations. The two gods dwell together at (Indra's) home (*amā vas.*). And during that night, *soma*, the food of the gods and here identified with the moon¹⁵, stays at home also. "Therefore the night of new moon—for it is in connection with the special rites of the New moon sacrifice that the story is told—is called *āmāvāsya*"¹⁶.

In the *brāhmaṇas* the god Indra is often represented as a heroic figure and in this capacity embroiled with all sorts of weird and demoniac beings. One of his most popular exploits was his contest with the demon Namuci¹⁷. The story, known also to the Ṛgveda and post-Vedic literature¹⁸, may be treated in four chapters: 1. There is a battle between Indra and Namuci who, though being a natural enemy of the god ultimately to be slain by him, has for some reason or other concluded a very diplomatic treaty with him¹⁹: "Of us two no one shall kill the other either by day or by night, either with something dry or with something wet." This detail was not mentioned in the Ṛgveda. 2. Namuci gets Indra drunk with *surā* and robs him of his strength and vital power²⁰. 3. With the aid of the Aśvins and Sarasvatī who heal him, Indra circumvents the compact and cuts off Namuci's head at dawn (when it is neither day nor

¹³ This seems to be a more explicit statement of the motif of ṚV. 1, 32, 14 (cf. G. DUMÉZIL, *Heur et malheur du guerrier*, Paris 1969, p. 112). In other cases also *brāhmaṇas* and epics have developed motifs which were not elaborated in the older literature. The problem as to whether the complete form was known in early Vedic times does not admit of a *passé-partout* solution.

¹⁴ ŚB. 1, 6, 4, 1ff.; for other instances see e.g. also 1, 7, 3, 1; 1, 8, 1, 1ff.

¹⁵ J. GONDA, *Change and continuity in Indian religion*, The Hague 1965, ch. II.

¹⁶ For other etymological explanations see e.g. PB. 4, 10, 1; ŚB. 1, 2, 5, 7.

¹⁷ See BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 15, p. 143; DUMÉZIL, *Heur et malheur du guerrier*, p. 33.

¹⁸ See above, chapter III, p. 117 f. and e.g. E. W. HOPKINS, *Epic mythology*, Strassburg 1915, p. 255; S. SØRENSEN, *Index to the names in the Mahābhārata*, London 1904 (Varanasi 1963), p. 502.

¹⁹ MS. 4, 3, 4; TB. 1, 7, 1, 6f.; PB. 12, 6, 8; ŚB. 12, 7, 3, 1.

²⁰ ŚB. 12, 7, 1, 10; 3, 1.

night) with foam of water (which is neither wet nor dry)²¹. As also in other cases, the story—which contains some minor points (4) that may be left unmentioned—is in the various texts not presented in its complete form, though, of course, suitably fitted in its contexts.

Not infrequently mention is made of Indra's association with other prominent gods²²; of his being the strongest of the gods and a leader in battle²³; of his identity with nobility, his association with energy, vital and generative power²⁴, his birth or origin²⁵, his relations with various entities; of the help which he rendered to those who are in distress²⁶. It is not surprising that the yajurvedic texts like to associate him with the sacrificial rites of which he is said to be the god or leader, or with entities of ritual importance: he is produced by *Rc* and *Sāman*²⁷. Elsewhere Indra is said to have recourse to an earthly sage: ŚB. 1, 1, 24:

“The gods and the *asuras* contended with each other. Between them Gotama practised austerities. Indra went up to him and said, ‘Act as a spy for us here.’ ‘I cannot do so,’ he answered. ‘Then let me go in your shape,’ said Indra. ‘As you think fit.’”

A popular theme²⁸ was that of Indra's various crimes: he killed the son of *Tvaṣṭar* and other creatures, gave the *Yatis*—a mythical race—to the hyaenas; he went to the forest and after the other gods had declined to sacrifice for him *Agni* rid him of his sin²⁹. There are also references to his love affairs³⁰.

*Prajāpati*³¹ who, assuming the characteristics of a supreme deity, had in the *Śatapatha* come to occupy a very important place, is the central figure in many passages dealing with primordial events which, explaining origins, are

²¹ TB. 1, 7, 1, 6f.; PB. 12, 6, 8f.; cf. TB. 1, 6, 12, 2; JB. 2, 134, otherwise ŚB. 5, 4, 1, 9f.

²² *Agni*, *Varuṇa*, *Indra*, each of them claiming kingship (ŚB. 2, 6, 4, 1ff.); *Agni*, *Indra* and *Sūrya* (ŚB. 4, 5, 4, 1).

²³ ŚB. 4, 6, 6, 2ff.; 4, 6, 9, 14; 9, 2, 3, 3.

²⁴ ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 11 etc.; 5, 2, 3, 8; 5, 3, 5, 9 etc.

²⁵ ŚB. 3, 2, 1, 26; 3, 3, 4, 18; 11, 1, 6, 15.

²⁶ JB. 3, 267; PB. 15, 5, 20.

²⁷ ŚB. 1, 4, 5, 4; 4, 1, 2, 16; 4, 6, 7, 11.

²⁸ Some themes: *Indra's* name and birth (N. J. SHENDE, in JUB. 27 N. S. 2, p. 29); *Agni* now comes much to the fore (SHENDE, in JUB. 26 N. S. 2, p. 36); *Soma* (SHENDE, in JAS Bombay 38, N. S., p. 122); the *R̥bhuv* (N. G. CHAPEKAR, at JBBRAS 29, 2 (1954), p. 81); *Tvaṣṭar* (K. RÖNNOW, at BSOS 6, p. 469); *VIJAYACHANDRA SHASTRI*, Index to the myth-heads of the *Taittiriya-Saṃhitā*, Vol. *Siddheshwar Varma I*, Hoshiarpur 1950, p. 169 makes mention of about 75 mythical themes in that work.

²⁹ JB. 2, 134; cf. TS. 6, 2, 7, 5; AiB. 7, 28; PB. 8, 1, 4; 13, 4, 17 and see OERTEL, at JAOS 19, p. 120; WEBER, at I. S. XIII, p. 191; v. SCHROEDER, at WZKM 23, p. 9.

³⁰ ŚB. 3, 3, 4, 18 and the amusing story of *Indra* dancing to win a married woman: JB. 3, 246.

³¹ See GONDA, R. I. I, p. 180; 187; H. R. KARNIK, at 20 AIOC, II, 1, p. 7; J. R. JOSHI, at ABORI 53 (1972), p. 101.

paradigmatic³². He creates the living beings which are his offspring³³, *devas* and *asuras*³⁴, the universe and the sacrifice as a counterpart of himself. Whereas the myth of his sexual union with his daughter³⁵ is a (differently narrated) variant of the theme of the primeval incest³⁶, exploited to suit a sacrificial purpose, his ritual dismemberment is the very foundation on which the brāhmanic theory of the sacrifice has been reared. Every great sacrifice is a repetition of the archetypal sacrifice in which Prajāpati, taking the place of the Puruṣa³⁷, while being dismembered, was transformed into the universe. This most important theme gives ample occasion to mythological—and at the same time ritualistic—variation and elaboration. When, after having created creatures, he became disjointed, the sacrificial god Agni restored him; “therefore, while being Prajāpati, people call him Agni”³⁸. He is indeed also identified with Agni who, indispensable to the performance, is like Prajāpati himself, assumed to be identical with the sacrifice³⁹. Since the sacral act is believed to be the counterpart of the great cosmic drama it can, in the interest of the sacrificer, influence and determine the cosmic processes, and re-establish the unity and totality of the universe. According to the ritual theory—which was especially applied to the *agnicayana* rite that could be associated with any *soma* sacrifice—the ritual is not only to reintegrate Prajāpati so as to enable him to continue his creative activity, but also to bring about a development, transformation, new birth and higher existence of the sacrificer who in and through this ritual is identified with Prajāpati⁴⁰.

Of special interest are also the creation myths in which Prajāpati is the central figure—in modern eyes curious mixtures of cosmogonic speculation and ritualism. In the majority of these myths he is the only creator. After the creation—of living beings, *brahman*, the earth, Agni, various creatures—is accomplished, Prajāpati, who has mortified himself, is exhausted so that his strength is—not in all narratives, it is true—to be restored by some sacrifice or ritual act, the performance of which is a matter for variation⁴¹. The ritual

³² See ŚB. 1, 7, 4, 1ff.; 7, 1, 2, 1ff.; 11, 1, 8, 3.

³³ E.g. TS. 2, 1, 1, 4; 5, 5, 2, 1; TB. 1, 1, 3, 5; 4, 3; 5, 4; 2, 2, 1, 1; 3, 1, 4, 2. For other stories handed down in various versions see TS. 2, 4, 4; MS. 2, 2, 4; KS. 10, 11 (Prajāpati creating cattle, and Pūṣan becoming their ruler etc.), cf. GONDA, *Dual deities*, p. 353; (JB., JUB., ŚB., ChU.): OERTEL, at JAOS 15, p. 233; 23, p. 326.

³⁴ E.g. TB. 1, 1, 3, 11; 5, 7; 2, 1, 2, 1; 3, 10, 9, 1; ŚB. 1, 2, 4, 8; 4, 2, 4, 11; 11, 5, 9, 3.

³⁵ AiB. 3, 33; PB. 8, 2, 10; JB. 3, 262; ŚBM. 1, 7, 4, 1; ŚBK. 2, 7, 2, 1ff.; cf. R.V. 10, 61, 7 and TB. 3, 1, 4, 2 (PAPhS 98, p. 216).

³⁶ Cf. H. R. KARNIK, at 12 AIOC I, p. 240.

³⁷ See p. 137 f.; 373.

³⁸ ŚB. 6, 1, 2, 11ff.; 7, 1, 2, 1ff.; cf. 10, 4, 2.

³⁹ ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 5; 2, 3; 10, 4, 1, 12.

⁴⁰ Cf. ŚB. 5, 2, 1, 2; 6, 1, 2, 17ff.; 6, 2, 2, 21; 7, 4, 1, 15f.; 10, 1, 3, 10; 10, 1, 5, 1; 11, 1, 1, 1, etc.

⁴¹ AiB. 6, 1ff.; ŚB. 2, 2, 4, 1ff.; 3, 9, 1, 1ff.; 4, 6, 4, 1; 6, 1, 1, 12ff.; 7, 4, 1, 16;

which, in the myth, gives relief is on that occasion performed for the first time and so established as a permanent institution. There are some interesting variants: in ŚB. 2, 5, 1, 1ff. the creatures passed away after they had come into being so that Prajāpati had to create new creatures that produced milk—"by resorting to the breast the beings created by him thenceforth continued to exist"—or, according to another version, he produced rain by means of a *sāman* of which he had a vision⁴².

As may be expected there is a considerable amount of 'mythologizing' and what usually—but not quite correctly—is called personification: Sacrifice, Gāyatri and the other metres are represented as speaking and acting like living beings and the Earth is said to have gone to witness the *asuras'* animal offering⁴³: the well-known personal mode of thought and expression of ancient man. Mention has already been made of the importance attached to Speech or Word (Vāc)⁴⁴, which as a female figure makes her appearance in many narratives. It may—also because of the theories of later grammarians and philosophers in connection with the conception of *brahman*-as-word⁴⁵—be added that the myths about Vāc⁴⁶ are in part cosmogonic—and then Vāc is the manifestation of a latent creative power associated, either as his wife or as his progeny, with Prajāpati—; partly connected with the *soma*—which being in the sky was coveted by the gods but stolen by a *gandharva*; the gods send Vāc to fetch it—and partly with the perpetual struggle between the gods (*devas*) and the anti-gods (*asuras*): first she belongs to the *asuras* but the gods, through the intermediary of Sacrifice (a person) who beckons her, succeed in winning her over to their side⁴⁷.

Other myths deal with the primeval waters⁴⁸ on which the earth is firmly established; TS. 5, 6, 4, 2f.:

"Waters were in the world at first, the moving (ocean). Prajāpati, having become wind, rocked about on a lotus leaf⁴⁹. He could find no firm support. He saw that nest of the waters. On it he piled fire. That became this (earth). Then indeed did he find a firm support,"

cf. GONDA, R. I. I, p. 180. For *brahman* creating in a similar way see GB. 1, 1, 2ff. For Prajāpati and *brahman*, JB. 2, 369f.

⁴² JB. 1, 148; PB. 7, 10, 13; JB. 1, 117; 1, 187; PB. 8, 8, 14ff.; cf. also ŚB. 7, 5, 2, 6.

⁴³ E.g. TB. 3, 12, 4, 2ff.; ŚB. 3, 2, 1, 19; 4, 2, 4, 21; 3, 8, 3, 28.

⁴⁴ See above, p. 69 ff.

⁴⁵ See e.g. M. BIAUDEAU, *Théorie de la connaissance et philosophie de la parole dans le brahmanisme classique*, The Hague-Paris 1964, p. 265.

⁴⁶ V. N. MISRA, in Proc. 26 Int. Congr. of Orient. III, 1, p. 109 and Vol. Kāvīrāj, Lucknow 1967, p. 20.

⁴⁷ Cf. e.g. KS. 12, 5; 27, 1; JB. 2, 252 (see also AiB. 5, 32); AiB. 1, 27; ŚB. 3, 2, 4, 3; 3, 2, 1, 18ff.

⁴⁸ See also ŚB. 6, 8, 2, 2f.; 7, 4, 1, 6; 11, 1, 6, 1; AiĀ. 2, 1, 8 and compare M. ÉLIADÉ, *The sacred and the profane*, New York 1957 (1961), p. 129; *Images et symboles*, Paris 1952, p. 199.

⁴⁹ For the lotus: S. BASU, at VIJ 4 (1966), p. 39; 9 (1971), p. 26.

with a social fact such as the four classes (JB. 1, 68f.), with the existence of a god who is to punish transgressors (3, 262). Or they are variations on the theme of the quest for the elixir of life⁵⁰:

“When (the) Gāyatrī flew towards Soma, a footless archer aiming at her while she was carrying him (it) off, severed one of the feathers, either of (the) Gāyatrī or of king Soma”; “Now Soma was in the sky, and the gods were here on earth. The gods desired, ‘Would that Soma came to us . . .’”; “Soma, when carried off by Gāyatrī, was enclosed in two golden cups; sharp-edged they closed together at every twinkling of the eye”⁵¹.

Or on that of the conquest of a place of the gods, beyond the reach of men and other creatures⁵², combined with the motif of a secret knowledge enabling the hero of the tale to gain access to it; in JB. 3, 76f. there are also the exceptional position of the man who is disloyal and the story of an origin:

“The Aṅgirasas, desirous of heaven, performed a long sacrifice. They did not however know (the way leading to) it. One of the Aṅgirasas had gone away to fetch fuel. Then the *gandharva* Ūrṇāyu flying over (him) with (i.e. while singing) this *sāman* said, ‘This *sāman* leads to heaven; with that you (plural) must praise; having praised with it you will know (the way to) heaven! You should, however, say that the *sāman* is mine. When somebody might ask you, ‘Who has communicated it to you?’, you must say ‘Ūrṇāyu has communicated it to you.’ Don’t say that it comes from another than me . . .’ However, after returning he says that he himself had seen the *sāman*. His relatives praised with it and went to heaven. He had to remain behind and was transformed in a spotted snake (*śvitra*), hence snakes are called *ahi*, because Śvitra had remained behind (*ahiyata*).”

To the episodes which recur in later literature⁵³ (cf. Mbh. 3, a. 185) belongs also the Indian version of the Deluge; ŚB. 1, 8, 1, 1ff.⁵⁴:

When Manu, the first man, washes himself, a fish comes into his hands who promises to save him from a flood which will carry away all creatures, if he is

⁵⁰ A. K. COOMARASWAMY, in *Studies and essays* G. Sarton, New York 1944, p. 465 (not all combinations are capable of proof).

⁵¹ ŚB. 1, 7, 1, 1 (cf. EGGELING, ŚB. I, p. 452); 3, 2, 4, 1; 3, 6, 2, 8; cf. 11, 7, 2, 8; TS. 6, 1, 6; TB. 1, 1, 3, 10.

⁵² AiB. 8, 23, 10. For a variant of JB. 3, 76f.: PB. 12, 11, 9ff. It is a well-known theme in the *brāhmaṇas* that the seers come, after the gods, to know the way to heaven; see e.g. PB. 8, 5, 7.

⁵³ For Viṣṇu as a dwarf (ŚB. 1, 2, 5, 5; cf. TS. 2, 1, 3; TB. 1, 6, 1, 6) see GONDA, R. I. I, p. 251; G. CH. TRIPATHI, *Der Ursprung und die Entwicklung der Vāmana-Legende in der indischen Literatur*, Wiesbaden 1968. For a mythical complex connected with the horse, the taming of its wildness (GB. 1, 2, 18), its association with Agni or fire (ŚB. 7, 3, 2, 14), its being sacred to Varuṇa (5, 3, 1, 5 etc.), the ocean (waters) as the womb of the horse (TS. 7, 5, 25, 2; ŚB. 5, 1, 4, 5), the horse-head connected with the myths of the seeking of Fire and the seeking of *soma* (14, 1, 1, 18ff.) etc. see W. DONIGER O’FLAHERTY, The submarine mare in the mythology of Śiva, JRAS 1971, p. 17. For Manu’s sacrifice (and other themes) see J. HERTEL, at WZKM 25, p. 153; A. B. KEITH, at JRAS 1913, p. 412. For the Naciketas episode (TB. 3, 11, 8): *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 1–6.

⁵⁴ WEBER, I. S. I, p. 161; J. MUIR, *Original Sanskrit Texts*, London 1872, ¶I, p. 181; 196; H. P. KARMARKAR, The fish in Indian folklore, ABORI 24, p. 191 (very uncritical).

willing to rear him. Having reared the fish Manu brings him to the sea. The fish advises him to make a ship, and to enter it after the flood has risen. When the flood happens to Manu the fish brings him safely to a mountain.

Typically enough, the text continues to relate that Manu, in order to obtain descendants, engaged in sacrificing and austerities. From the sacrifice a woman arose within a year, called *Idā*, through whom he generated a human race. This *Idā*, however, is the essence of the offering (the 'Opfersegen'), "and whoever knowing this performs (sacrifices) with (the) *Idā* propagates this race" (11). Origin from a Semitic source, though more than once supposed⁵⁵, is incapable of proof⁵⁶.

These myths are closely related to the prevailing conception of time. Their scene is laid in a remote past, sometimes vaguely indicated but always set outside the normal temporal scheme. Phenomenal time is regarded as a recurring cycle⁵⁷ in which events, such as the seasons and the growth of plants and animals⁵⁸, repeat themselves in a regular sequence. Thus the year is the full time cycle and by 'gaining' it one masters the whole of time; it is the 'womb of all beings' and beyond it is the immortal⁵⁹. In the attempts to clarify the nature of such cycles myths play a large part. Certain powers, the leading figures of the myths, are beyond the cycle⁶⁰ and outside time⁶¹ and, being unaffected by it, able to control or influence what happens in the world. In the stories, whether mythical or legendary, time is not clearly indicated and is no factor of importance. Only those events which are relevant to the 'plot' are narrated and these usually follow each other closely and so as to be connected in their time sequence. The lapse of time between them is however either left unmentioned—"Let a son be born to me . . ." 'Be it so.' To him a son was born" (AiB. 7, 14, 2)—or condensed, the progress of time, if indicated at all⁶², being marked by "then, thereafter"⁶³, a progressive particle or, in a minority of cases, more concretely: "after one year"; "for a year he wandered

⁵⁵ WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 210; Die Flutsagen des Altertums und der Naturvölker, Mitt. d. anthropol. Ges. in Wien 31 (1901), p. 305; A. HOHENBERGER, Die indische Flutsage, Leipzig 1930. Cf. also W. RUBEN, in Indian Studies past and present, 7, p. 137; 337.

⁵⁶ Various flood and deluge motives are, to mention only this, also frequent in myths of American peoples; see e.g. W. KRICKEBERG and others, Die Religionen des alten Amerika, Stuttgart 1961, p. 394 s.v. Sintflut; M. JACOBS, The content and style of an oral literature, Chicago 1959, p. 244.

⁵⁷ The term 'revolving' occurs e.g. ŚB. 2, 3, 3, 11; 3, 2, 2, 4; 3, 4, 4, 15; 11, 2, 5, 4; cf. 8, 4, 1, 25. See also M. ÉLLADE, Time and eternity in Indian thought, Eranos Yearbook 3, New York 1957, p. 173.

⁵⁸ Cf. e.g. PB. 18, 4, 11; 19, 18, 5; ŚB. 7, 2, 4, 26; 8, 4, 1, 25; 8, 5, 2, 10.

⁵⁹ Cf. PB. 4, 7, 6; 18, 9, 7; ŚB. 8, 4, 1, 24; 10, 2, 6, 4; cf. 11, 1, 2, 11f.; 11, 5, 2, 10; 12, 1, 3, 20; 22.

⁶⁰ Cf. e.g. ŚB. 11, 2, 3, 3 ('the sphere beyond').

⁶¹ And so are man's religious merits (ŚB. 2, 3, 3, 11).

⁶² Very often there is no indication; see e.g. AiB. 2, 19; 3, 30; ŚB. 11, 6, 1.

⁶³ See e.g. AiB. 7, 14, 1; 15, 1.

in the wild" (AiB. 7, 14, 9). When a person is not explicitly said to be a girl or an old man⁶⁴ he is practically without age.

Episodes such as the legend of Śuṇaḥśeṣa (AiB. 7, 13–18)⁶⁵, while being almost free from any redundancy, are strictly composed of incidents and coherent wholes mainly by their consistent time sequence. These are nowhere interrupted by a flashback: in 7, 14 successions of short and parallel conversations take place when Rohita is born, is more than ten days old, is teething and so on. Causal relations are not however absent, but may remain implicit: when Varuṇa strikes Rohita's father with dropsy (7, 15, 1) because the young man had gone to the wild, the author uses the connective particle *atha* which introduces a new element or marks the beginning of the following phase of the narrative⁶⁶. There are of course variations: links in the time sequence may be omitted: thus, at JB. 1, 42 Bhṛgu arrives no less than six times in yonder world but only after his last visit mention is made of his return. Or the author has to interrupt the chronological succession of incidents by a descriptive passage (*ibidem*).

That already in the pre-brāhmaṇic period there existed a certain amount of legendary matter which was drawn upon by the compilers of our present *brāhmaṇas* is a plausible supposition, the more so as these texts have in common a number of stories with typically legendary features: the primarily religious purport, manifestation of uncommon abilities, the victoriousness or superiority of the hero, tension or conflict preceding the culminating point. The story of old and decrepit Cyavana⁶⁷, briefly referred to at ṚV. 1, 116, 10 and recalled at PB. 14, 6, 10, is the subject of a long section in JB. 3, 120–128 and ŚB. 4, 1, 5, where the principal figure is described as wedding Sukanyā and as being rejuvenated by immersion in a pond—the first occurrence of a well-known motif. In the former text it reads:

"Cyavana, the son of Bhṛgu, knew the ritual knowledge (*brāhmaṇa*) of (Rudra) Vāstupa⁶⁸. He addressed his sons as follows, 'Surely, I know the knowledge of (Rudra) Vāstupa. Put me then down (thrice) in the (vacated sacrificial) place and take your leave.' They replied, 'We cannot do that. We shall be abused. People will say about us, 'They have abandoned their father.' 'Not so,' said he, 'you will surely be the better for it, and I on the other hand shall have the hope of rejuvenation. Just leave me and go away.' These were his instructions. Depo-

⁶⁴ At TB. 3, 10, 11, 3 Bharadvāja is an old man after three lifetimes' study of the Veda.

⁶⁵ See below, p. 406 and, e.g., also JB. 1, 22ff.; 42ff.; 2, 122ff.; 126f.; 269ff.; 276ff.

⁶⁶ This observation does not of course apply to the 'therefore' or 'that is why' introducing, after the end of the story proper, the statement of a custom, institution etc. determined by the myth (e.g. AiB. 2, 30, 3).

⁶⁷ See chapter III, p. 124; also Mbh. 3, a. 121ff.; HOPKINS, at JAOS 26, p. 1; 411; S. A. DANGE, at JIH 45, p. 369; COOMARASWAMY, at IHQ 13, p. 266; translations by WHITNEY, at PAOS 1883, JAOS 11, p. CXLV; CALAND, *Auswahl*, p. 253 and compare TB. 3, 10, 11, 3.

⁶⁸ Vāstupa; see TS. 3, 1, 9, 6; ŚB. 1, 7, 3, 1.

siting him then by the 'Fount of Youth' at the (river) Sarasvatī they took their leave. Abandoned on the (vacated sacrificial) place he pronounced the wish: 'May I be rejuvenated, find a girl for a wife, and worship (the gods) with a thousand (cattle).' He had a vision of this chant (called the Cyāvana, 'chant of Cyāvana'), and lauded with it. While he was lauding, Śaryāta, Manu's son, settled near him with his clan. The young cowherds and shepherds (of Śaryāta's company) smeared him with clay, balls of dung, ashes and dust. He made discord among the descendants of Śaryāta, so that mother ignored son; son, mother. Then Śaryāta, Manu's son, said, 'Have you seen anything about here which produced this (state of affairs) ?' They replied: 'Nothing other than this: there is an old decrepit man lying here. The young cowherds and shepherds have today smeared him with clay, balls of dung, ashes and dust. Then this has happened thus . . .'" The Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa continues the story as follows: Śaryāta recognizes Cyāvana who, as expiation and referring to his knowledge of the *brāhmaṇa* of Vāstupa, demands and obtains Sukanyā, the former's daughter⁶⁹. Her clan, however, tells her to run away from him as soon as they should break their camp, but Cyāvana prevents her from doing so through the help of a snake. Just at that time the Aśvins were wandering about among men as physicians. On seeing Sukanyā they desired her, but she refused. When they returned she at the instance of her husband (Cyāvana) told them that he could make them partakers of the *soma*-drink to which they never had been invited. Cyāvana then concluded an agreement with them, that they should rejuvenate him and he should make them drinkers of *soma*⁷⁰. So they carried him to the 'Youth-place' of the Sarasvatī⁷¹, from which he came up, fair and beautiful, rejuvenated and indistinguishable from the Aśvins . . . Finally Cyāvana went to Śaryāta and sacrificed for him.

One of the most famous episodes, the earliest example of an *ākhyāna*, is the long legend of Śunaḥśepa in AiB. 7, 13-18⁷². Being not so much based upon, as inseparably embedded in, ritual—it was to be recited after the enthronement of a king who is being consecrated⁷³—it is for many reasons remarkable.

King Hariścandra, being childless, prays, on the advice of Nārada, a priestly seer dwelling in his house, to Varuṇa to grant him a son, vowing to sacrifice him to the god. A son is born and is called Rohita, but, in spite of Varuṇa's repeated demands, the fulfilment of the vow is constantly deferred. When Rohita has grown an adult youth and is told the fate awaiting him, he refuses to be sacrificed and goes to the jungle. When however Varuṇa punishes his father with dropsy he hastens homeward, but Indra confronting him in the form of a brahmin extols the fortune of a wanderer and persuades him to wander for another year

⁶⁹ At ŚB. 4, 1, 5, 7 Śaryāta offers Sukanyā of his own accord.

⁷⁰ At ŚB. 4, 1, 5, 11ff. there is no bargain; the Aśvins make Cyāvana young, and then he explains to them why they are incomplete.

⁷¹ ŚB. 4, 1, 5, 12 speaks only of a pool.

⁷² See e.g. MAX MÜLLER, *History of ancient Sanskrit literature*, London-Edinburg 1859, p. 408; 573; HAUG, AiB. II, p. 460; ROTH, in Weber, I. S. I, p. 457; II, p. 112; WINTERITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 213; OLDENBERG, in NG 1911, p. 461 (= K. S., p. 1415); KEITH, R. B., p. 299; R. CHARMET, in G. DUMÉZIL, *Flamen-Brahman*, Paris 1935, p. 97; H. G. NARAHARI, in Volume P. V. Kane, Poona 1941, p. 302; F. WELLER, in Verh. d. Sächsischen Ges. d. Wiss. 102, 2 (1956); RENOU, in JA 250, p. 162; H. LOMMEL, at ZDMG 114, p. 122.

⁷³ J. C. HEESTERMAN, *The ancient Indian royal consecration*, Thesis Utrecht 1957, p. 158. See ŚŚ. 15, 17ff.; ĀpŚ. 18, 19, 10ff. etc.

in the wild. This is repeated five times. In the sixth year he meets a starving brahmin, Ajigarta, who consents to sell him one of his sons to ransom himself through him. As the father does not wish to part with the eldest and the mother refuses to part with the youngest son, he receives the middle one, Śunaḥśepa. Having gone to his father he has Varuṇa's approval—(the god): “a brahmin is better than a nobleman.” Śunaḥśepa is to be offered in the place of the sacrificial animal on the occasion of a *rājasūya* rite, the royal consecration. When no one is however found who will undertake to bind the victim, Ajigarta volunteers to do so and to slay him, each act for another hundred cows. Then Śunaḥśepa takes refuge with the most prominent gods, praising them with ṚV. 1, 24, 1–27, 13 and 29, 1–30, 22⁷⁴, thus becoming the ‘seer’ of these stanzas. The gods successively refer him from one to another, till by praising the goddess Uṣas (Dawn) he is released from his fetters and his father becomes free from disease. On request of the priests Śunaḥśepa then ‘sees’ a new rite, the ‘immediate (*soma*-)pressing’ using as *mantras* the nine stanzas of ṚV. 1, 28⁷⁵. Thereupon the famous sage Viśvāmitra, who is acting as the *hotar*, adopts Śunaḥśepa as his son, conferring upon him the name of Devarāta; neglecting his own hundred sons he appoints him as his heir.

Omitting a discussion of the question as to whether it preserves any memory of human sacrifices⁷⁶, the first problem concerns the grounds on which this legend became integrated in the royal consecration, for it may *a priori* be supposed to actualize in its own way the same reality as the ritual. The answer has been sought⁷⁷ in the original character of this rite as a yearly recurring festival effecting renewal and regeneration, the birth of a son being conceived of as a rebirth of the royal father round whom the festival centres and whose rebirth is believed to be identical with that regeneration. It may be noticed that Śunaḥśepa, the brahmin substitute, also is ritually reborn, taking another name and entering another family. Perhaps, however, the recitation is simply to protect the royal sacrificer from ‘sin’ (as stated in 7, 18, 13f.): Śunaḥśepa neutralizes the sins committed by others. As to the theme, the sacrifice of one's child, whether intended or actually performed, is well known in other literatures⁷⁸; as always, the theme is elaborated in a typically brāhmanic way. It is difficult to say in which phase of development the origin of the seven Ṛgvedic hymns—which only say that Śunaḥśepa, bound, invoked Varuṇa to set him free (1, 24, 12f.)—was incorporated in it. As regards the composition of the narrative, the last parts—the adoption and the heritage—impress us as being an accretion⁷⁹. Being composed of prose alternating with no less than 97

⁷⁴ TS. 5, 2, 1, 3; KS. 19, 11 mention only one stanza (ṚV. 1, 24, 15). See also GELDNER, ṚV. I, p. 24. The ṛgvedic stanzas are not in tune with the *brāhmaṇa* version.

⁷⁵ See chapter III, p. 81.

⁷⁶ See GONDA, R. I. I, p. 173. I cannot follow DUMÉZIL, *Flamen-Brahman*, p. 28ff. who regards the episode as positive evidence.

⁷⁷ HEESTERMAN, o. c., p. 159.

⁷⁸ See LOMMEL, o. c. For other Vedic versions see GELDNER's note, ṚV. I, p. 24.

⁷⁹ WELLMER, o. c., went so far as to consider the episode a combination of two narratives.

Ṛgvedic stanzas and 31 *gāthās*⁸⁰ it is an unmistakable and ancient example of a mixed form of composition well known in post-Vedic times. The 31 *gāthās* consist of three groups, the first, Nārada's answer to the king's question "What does a man gain by a son?", and the second, Indra's addresses to Rohita, being gnomic in character, the third reporting the conversation between Śunaḥśepa on one hand and Ajigarta and Viśvāmītra on the other. The Ṛgvedic stanzas are, it is true, utilized aptly and skilfully, but also quite conventionally. The story—which obviously was considered very important—survived in later literature, but not in the same form. In the version preserved in the Rāmāyaṇa 1, 60f., the pith is the curse called down by Viśvāmītra on his sons who refuse to take Śunaḥśepa's place as a victim and the latter's deliverance; instead of Hariścandra and his son Ambarīṣa, king of Ayodhyā, his priest and Indra are concerned in the sacrifice.

The end of the story as told in the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa is interesting in that it contains a so-called *śravaṇaphala*, the explicit statement of the good results held out to those who hear it; 7, 18, 14 and 16:

"Therefore a victorious king should, even when not sacrificing, make him (viz. his *hotar*) narrate this tale (*ākhyāna*) of Śunaḥśepa. Not the least tinge of 'sin' (*enas*) is left over in him." "Those who desire sons also should have it narrated: they obtain sons."

Very common in later times, this merit is equivalent to that of a sacrificial rite⁸¹.

These authors like to refer to events which in their eyes represent historical truth and as such are the origin of practices or institutions which are often called after their originator; PB. 12, 11, 25:

"Vatsapri, the son of Bhalandana, could not find faith. He performed austerities and saw this Vātsapra(-chant). Thereupon he found faith"⁸².

In order to show that the knowledge of a particular fireplace is equal to that of the three Vedas it is, at TB. 3, 10, 11, 3ff. told that the famous Bharadvāja who had, during three life-times, studied the three Vedas, was addressed by Indra telling him that the Vedas are endless, so that there would be no point in continuing his study; "Come and know this one (the fireplace); this indeed is the whole of knowledge"⁸³.

In many of the stories which we are studying, no insurmountable barrier exists between man's normal environment and the world of gods and demons. Transitions from the natural to the supernatural take place simply. Gods and

⁸⁰ For this term see below, p. 405.

⁸¹ See also HOUSCH, V. G. L., p. 469.

⁸² See e.g. also AiB. 7, 27; PB. 8, 9, 21; 9, 4, 14; 11, 5, 14; 13, 3, 17; 10, 8; 11, 14; 22; 12, 5; 14, 4, 7; 6, 6; 11, 17; 15, 3, 7; 17, 4, 3; 19, 4, 10; cf. also ŚB. 1, 1, 4, 13.

⁸³ For a complete translation see P. E. DUMONT, in PAPHS 95 (1951), p. 644. For legends dealing with disputes or esoteric knowledge, see e.g. GB. 1, 2, 5; 10; 1, 3, 6, with consecration, 1, 3, 20.

men—that is the men who figure in these works—converse freely with one another⁸⁴; PB. 14, 6, 8:

Upagu, the son of Suśravas, was the domestic priest of Kutsa. This Kutsa cursed anyone who would offer to Indra. Indra, having met Suśravas, said, 'Offer to me; I am hungry.' He offered to him and Indra, the sacrificial cake in his hands, came to Kutsa . . . He told what had happened and Kutsa cut off Upagu's head. He was however revived by means of a *sāman*.

The young boy Naciketās, who was given by his father to Death (Mr̥tyu), calls upon this god in his realm, has a conversation with him and obtains from him the secret of a special fireplace (TB. 3, 11, 8). By praising with a definite chant one may reach Indra's presence (PB. 5, 4, 14). A *sāman* or the sacrifice may appear in human form⁸⁵. Many of the adventures and experiences of the figures are however of a spiritual rather than of a material character; TB. 3, 10, 9, 11f.:

"Devabhāga Śrautarṣa had succeeded in knowing the Sāvitra (fire). Then an invisible (divine) voice said to him, 'Ah! Gautama (= Devabhāga) knows all because he knows the Sāvitra (fire)' and he (D.) said, 'What is this voice?' 'I am the Sāvitra (fire), the highest world (*loka*) of the gods, that possesses a secret might.' Thereupon Devabhāga . . . threw himself down to the ground, (saying,) 'Homage, homage!' And he (the fire) said to him, 'Do not fear, O Gautama, you have conquered your world'"⁸⁶.

Subjoining now some observations on the myths, legends and mythical narratives indiscriminately it must, to begin with, be borne in mind that these passages should not, as regards their function, be put on a par⁸⁷. Part of them are inserted for illustrative purposes and intended to communicate details omitted in a formula, to refresh the memory of the hearer, to furnish material for understanding an allusion, or to explain the special circumstances under which a hymn was 'seen' or a rite or *sāman* introduced. See e.g. PB. 7, 10, 10:

"The gods divided amongst themselves the *brahman* (sacred lore). Unto them came Nodhas, the son of Kākṣivat. They said, 'A seer has come to us; let us give him the *brahman*.' They granted him this *sāman*. In that they granted (it) to Nodhas, therefore it is called the *naudhasa (sāman)*"⁸⁸.

Other episodes are exegetical in character. They are not communicated for the sake of the story as a whole, but on account of certain details by which some element or feature of the ritual may find its explanation. Since most stories did not contain all particulars needed to explain a given ritual, they were liable to adaptation and alteration, some of their parts being disproportionately emphasized and others omitted or cast into the shadow. Whenever two or more versions of the same story are handed down that version which is most intimately

⁸⁴ Cf. TB. 3, 10, 11, 3; PB. 9, 4, 14; 14, 6, 8; JB. 1, 125; 164; ŚB. 1, 1, 4, 15; 12, 6, 1, 39; ŚĀ. 1, 6.

⁸⁵ PB. 13, 10, 8; GB. 1, 3, 20.

⁸⁶ Cf. PB. 13, 11, 22; 14, 9, 32. For the part played by a *gandharva* JB. 2, 126f. and LOKESH CHANDRA, at ABORI 35, p. 71. Conquering one's world means gaining a safe and sacred position.

⁸⁷ Cf. OERTEL, Actes 11 Congres Int. des Orient., p. 235.

⁸⁸ Cf. JB. 1, 147; see also 1, 149; 151; PB. 13, 4, 11; 10, 8; 14, 5, 15 etc.

connected with ritual exegesis may, generally speaking, be suspected of being farthest away from the popular tradition.

Now, the number of narratives, that, in as many variants, have been preserved in more than one work of this class is indeed considerable⁸⁹. Thus the *brāhmaṇa* explanation of the libation of *soma* offered to Indra and Vāyu⁹⁰ is found at TS. 6, 4, 7 where the gods, having persuaded Vāyu to help them, slay Soma who after becoming putrid is made palatable by the god of wind—"therefore people hang out what becomes putrid in a windy place"—; in MS. 4, 5, 8 the gods at first did not succeed because Vāyu was inside Soma as his life-breath; at ŚB. 4, 1, 3 Indra, fearing that he had not killed Vṛtra—who here is identical with Soma—, hides himself and Vāyu, the swiftest of the gods, is to ascertain the state of affairs. The popular elements of this highly ritualized narrative are no doubt the motifs of Vāyu's identity with breath, his swiftness and his cleansing services. The mythical theme of the rape of the *soma*—one of the most valued subjects of the Vedic authors—and that of Kadrū and her sister⁹¹ combine at ŚB. 3, 2, 4, 1 ff.:

"Now Soma was in the heavens, and the gods were here on earth. The gods desired, 'Would that Soma came to us; we might sacrifice with him, when (he has) come.' They created two products of their miraculous creative power, Suparṇī and Kadrū . . ."

but in the other texts of the Yajurveda it is the Gāyatrī which takes the place of the falcon of the Ṛgvedic version⁹²:

"Gāyatrī flew up to Soma for them. While she was carrying him off, the *gandharva* Viśvāvasu stole him from her. The gods were aware of this . . . They said, 'The *gandharvas* are fond of women. Let us send Vāc (Speech) to them, and she will return to us together with Soma.' They sent Vāc to them, and she returned to them together with Soma."

In another version⁹³ three metres, becoming birds, are sent out to fetch Soma. After the Jagatī and the Triṣṭubh have failed to accomplish their task, Gāyatrī is successful.

An instance of a combination of mythical themes handed down in various forms is found in the long passage ŚB. 1, 6, 3, 1 ff. which forms part of the comment on the Full moon sacrifice⁹⁴. Indra, having killed Tvaṣṭar's three-headed

⁸⁹ See e.g. TB. 1, 1, 2, 4 ff.: ŚB. 2, 1, 2, 13 ff. (EGGELING, ŚB. I, p. 286); TS. 2, 4, 4: KS. 10, 11: MS. 2, 2, 4.

⁹⁰ For particulars see GONDA, *Dual deities*, p. 215.

⁹¹ See p. 120 and 47; BLOOMFIELD, at *Festgruss von Roth*, Stuttgart 1893, p. 149; GONDA, *Change and continuity*, The Hague 1965, p. 59 ff. At ŚB. 3, 6, 2 the two sisters lay a wager: "Which of us shall spy furthest (in connexion with a horse) shall win the other": cf. Mbh. 1, a. 18 ff.

⁹² However, this metre is more than once identified with the falcon: ŚB. 3, 4, 1, 12 and 3, 9, 4, 10 (where she, in the form of that bird, carries off Soma from the heavens). Cf. also ŚB. 1, 7, 1, 1; 1, 8, 2, 10.

⁹³ See AiB. 3, 25 ff.; PB. 8, 4, 1 ff. and compare ŚB. 12, 3, 4, 3 ff.

⁹⁴ With a repetition at 5, 5, 4, 1 ff. in connexion with the *sautrāmanī* rite (cf. 1, 6, 3, 7). Compare also KS. 12, 10; MS. 2, 4, 1.

son Viśvarūpa⁹⁵, incurs the father's anger. Being excluded from Tvaṣṭar's *soma*-juice he, though uninvited, nevertheless consumes this draught. It injures him and Tvaṣṭar, furious, lets the remainder of the juice flow into the fire with the result that the sacrifice is desecrated. The juice becomes Vṛtra, who is instantly pursued and eventually cut asunder by Indra. This story is completed by some minor themes, among which the origin of three different birds that spring forth from Viśvarūpa's three mouths with which he consumes different kinds of food and drink; the origin of the moon fashioned by Indra from part of Vṛtra's being; the institution of the *sautrāmaṇī* rite, by which a man who has drunk too much *soma* can be healed; the somewhat mysterious appearance of the double deity Agni and Soma to whom Indra offers a cake on eleven dishes to win them over, an explanation of a special offering to this divine pair. Without entering here into a discussion of the relations between the double deity and the Vṛtra combat⁹⁶, it may be observed that various other, more or less parallel, versions of this complex of myths differ in many points: JB. 2, 155⁹⁷ introduces Soma and Agni as individual gods; at TS. 2, 5, 2, 2 the dual deity—which as such seems to owe its existence to Tvaṣṭar's deed—prevents Indra from slaying Vṛtra because they are within the demon. In the story of the Vṛtra combat as briefly referred to in AiB. 2, 3 Agni-Soma play a decisive part, because Indra slays his antagonist with, or by means of, them. As compared with older versions of the combat the main differences reside in the 'ritual' origin of Vṛtra; in Indra's being drawn into the ritual sphere; in the fact that it is the combination of the two great sacrificial gods—each of whom was already associated with Indra in the R̥gveda—who have replaced other assistants. And another point of interest is that it now is explicitly stated that the sacrificer who offers the oblation due to the dual deity repeats Indra's powerful act and will overcome his antagonist⁹⁸.

Traditional stories are, in these texts, often more liberally treated or interpreted owing to their application to ritual practice as well as to a certain extent to the freer scope given to the authors of prose texts for the exercise of their abilities. Figures belonging to the traditional mythology are brought in, or re-interpreted, to serve the purpose of the sacrificial ritual, e.g. ŚB. 11, 1, 5, 7:

“As to why (he prepares an oblation) for Indra Vṛtrahan (the slayer of Vṛtra)—Vṛtra is evil; . . . with the help of Indra Vṛtrahan he thus slays evil”⁹⁹.

⁹⁵ According to G. DUMÉZIL, *Heur et malheur du guerrier*, Paris 1969, p. 21 a representative of the 'threefold enemy.'

⁹⁶ For this point and other particulars see GONDA, *Dual deities*, p. 378ff.

⁹⁷ Translated by H. OERTEL, at *Trans. Connecticut Acad.* 15, p. 180.

⁹⁸ ŚB. 2, 4, 4, 15; cf. 1, 6, 4, 12; 6, 2, 2, 19; see also N. J. SHENDE, at *JUB N. S.* 27, 2, p. 39. — OERTEL, at *JAOS* 19, p. 97 surmised that JB. 2, 440ff. (Saramā and the Panis) is an attempt to fuse the two conflicting versions of R̥V. 10, 108 (p. 146) and Bṛhaddevatā 8, 24ff.

⁹⁹ Cf. also ŚB. 1, 6, 4, 12f.; 6, 2, 2, 19.

A well-known story about the wedding of Prajāpati's daughter¹⁰⁰ is likewise altered and adapted for exegetical purposes¹⁰¹. It is moreover interesting to notice that a popular theme is often adapted to that particular Vedic tradition in which it is handed down¹⁰². Whereas, in the Ṛgveda, Indra slays Vṛtra with his *vajra*, the compiler of the Pañcaviṃśa-Brāhmaṇa has him do so with the help of *sāmans*, *stobhas* or holy words¹⁰³. The Indra-Vṛtra myth represented by ŚB. 1, 6, 3, 1ff.¹⁰⁴ is clearly sacrificial in character: the sacrificial gods Agni and Soma come on the scene, who are persuaded to go over to Indra after an offer of a special oblation, the Agni-Soma cake. At PB. 14, 6, 10 Cyavana becomes rejuvenated by lauding with a chant, not merely by bathing in the fountain of youth. Nor did favourite and no doubt widely known mythical themes, found in older as well as later literature, escape this form of insertion into a ritual context. The well-known story of the winged mountains¹⁰⁵, briefly alluded to in the Ṛgveda (4, 54, 5) and told in fuller detail in the Rāmāyaṇa (5, 1, 108ff.), is at MS. 1, 10, 13 recalled in connexion with the Varuṇapraghāsa ceremonies (one of the seasonal rites), which is to cause rain to fall in time:

“The mountains, one should know, are Prajāpati's eldest children. They were winged. They flew away and sat down wherever they liked to do so. Then this (earth) became unsteady. Indra cut off their wings and made the earth stable by them (viz. by the mountains). The wings became clouds. That is why these usually hang round the mountain, for it is the place of their origin.”

The author continues his exposition by saying that the first moisture that streamed forth (from the clouds) became the *karīra*-fruits and that by performing the Varuṇapraghāsa one produces these fruits and makes rain continuous¹⁰⁶.

The same story told by adherents of different schools may even bear an entirely different face. Not only are the setting and the motivation often distinct, the main points of the tales are apt to be emphasized in different ways or to be coloured by the changing contexts. The episode of Dirghajihvī, amply exemplifying Indra's sensuality, is a good instance of an essentially double tradition. A shorter version in PB. 13, 6, 9f. and a longer one in JB. 1, 161ff. (where it is quoted for purely illustrative purposes) seem to have preserved a form that is peculiarly adapted to Indra's character. This sāmavedic version is to explain the meaning of a wish-granting *sāman* (it was Indra's wish that Dirghajihvī

¹⁰⁰ AiB. 4, 7; KB. 18, 1; JB. 1, 213.

¹⁰¹ Cf. OERTEL, in JAOS 18, p. 25; Actes 11 Congr. Int. des Orient. I, p. 235.

¹⁰² The interpretation of ṚV. 10, 135 (see GELDNER, ṚV. III, p. 376), (TB. 3, 11, 8; KāṭhaUp. 1, 1ff.) proposed by H. D. VELANKAR, in Mélanges Renou, p. 763 is unconvincing.

¹⁰³ PB. 8, 1, 2; 11, 11, 12; 12, 6, 6; cf. 14, 4, 5.

¹⁰⁴ See p. 398 f.

¹⁰⁵ PISCHEL, V. S. I, p. 173.

¹⁰⁶ *karīra* = *capparis aphylla*; cf. e.g. TS. 2, 4, 9, 2; OERTEL, in Trans. Connecticut Acad. 15, p. 188.

should die) or of a demon-killing verse. In the other, shorter, references¹⁰⁷ to this wicked *asura* woman who licked the oblations Indra does not play a part, the story being quoted in explanation of the ritual use of a milk mess as a remedy for the morning oblation over which the *asura* woman had passed her tongue. It may generally speaking be said that ritualists belonging to different schools which disagree only on minor and minute details strongly adhered to the methods and subtleties of their own traditions¹⁰⁸.

The most prominent characteristic of this mythology is indeed its connection with the sacrifice. Every theme, almost every important detail, gods, seers and their doings and experiences, are directly or indirectly associated with this central subject. When Agni coveted the manifestations ('forms,' *rūpa*) of the gods which they had deposited with him, Tvaṣṭar recovered them by means of a re-established ritual fire; hence the 'forms' are his and "it is for Tvaṣṭar, that one must re-establish the fire" (ŚB. 2, 2, 3, 2ff.). In one of the references to Prajāpati's great creative activity, introducing the so-called Mitravindā sacrifice¹⁰⁹—by which one finds Mitra (Friendship) and gains a complete life-time—, the goddess Śrī (Fortune) is by ten deities robbed of all her qualities which she then, on Prajāpati's advice, asks back by a sacrifice: each god is interested in that aspect of Fortune which from of old is his concern. Mind is better than Speech: whatever at a sacrifice is performed for Prajāpati is done in a low voice (ŚB. 1, 4, 5, 12)¹¹⁰. Kutsa, frequently mentioned in the Ṛgveda, is introduced at PB. 9, 2, 22 as the originator of a particular *sāman*. The theme of RV. 8, 91¹¹¹ recurs at PB. 9, 2, 14 where Indra is stated to have cleansed a female Aṅgiras, named Akūpārā by means of a *sāman*. The *brāhmaṇas* are unanimous in their interpretation of RV. 1, 51, 13—Indra transforming himself into a woman—, reference to the story being made at MS. 2, 5, 5:

"A man who has the form of a woman is seized by Nirṛti (the goddess of perdition). When Indra was in that situation he chased away (Nirṛti, who is) evil. This became a castrated (being). The man who believes himself to be seized by evil should sacrifice this castrated (animal) to Indra"¹¹².

A word may also be said on some leading or central ideas that recur in several mythical tales. There is, for instance, the idea of a flight or escape. Says ŚB. 1, 1, 4, 1f. in explaining the use of an antelope skin ("for wholeness of the sacrifice"):

¹⁰⁷ MS. 3, 10, 6; KS. 29, 1; AiB. 2, 22, 10; cf. OERTEL, at Actes 11 Congr. Int. des Orient., p. 225; GELDNER, RV. III, p. 105.

¹⁰⁸ See e.g. AiB. 6, 30; 7, 27.

¹⁰⁹ ŚB. 11, 4, 3, 1ff.; for this sacrifice which, in accordance with its name, is to acquire friends, see GONDA, in Indologica Taurinensia, I, (Turin 1973), p. 80.

¹¹⁰ See L. RENOU, La valeur du silence dans le culte védique, JAOS 69, p. 11.

¹¹¹ See 145. The name Apālā occurs in a longer version at JB. 1, 220. Cf. OERTEL, in JAOS 18, p. 26; RAM GOPAL, in VIJ 2, p. 55.

¹¹² Cf. KS. 13, 5; ŚB. 1, 1, 16 and OERTEL, at JAOS 26, p. 176.

¹¹³ See also ŚB. 1, 2, 4, 10; 1, 5, 2, 6; cf. WILLMAN-GRABOWSKA, in RO 6, p. 183.

“Once the sacrifice escaped the gods, and having become a black antelope roamed about. The gods having thereupon found it and stripped it of its skin, brought it away with them. Its white and black hairs represent the *ṛg*-verses and the *sāmans* . . .”¹¹³.

A well-known theme is Agni’s flight which at 7, 3, 2, 14 is told as follows:

“Agni went away from the gods. He entered the waters. The gods said to Prajāpati, ‘Go thou in search of him; to thee, his own father, he will reveal himself.’ He became a white horse, and went in search of him. He found him on a lotus leaf, having crept out of the water. He eyed him, and he (Agni) scorched him. Hence a white horse has, as it were, a scorched mouth, and indeed is apt to become weak-eyed . . .”

Then there are the ideas of a bargain¹¹⁴, of the wager or casting lots¹¹⁵, of choosing a boon¹¹⁶, breach of faith and trickery (without the slightest compunction)¹¹⁷. The motif of the secret or of esoteric knowledge (*vidyā*) occurs e.g. TB. 3, 10, 9ff.: the story of how the divinities presiding over the natural day imparted to king Janaka the secret of the Sāvitra fireplace¹¹⁸ and the statement that the man who converses about secret ritual knowledge “gives his prosperity to his partner”; that of the man who, behaving as “the child of a slave woman, a cheat, no *brahman*,” was expelled from his community, at AiB. 2, 19; of the visit to heaven or the realm of the dead of a person who has fainted, at JB. 1, 42ff.; 2, 160¹¹⁹; the motif of creative heat, at ŚB. 11, 5, 8, 3.

Among those mythical themes which some of the books under discussion have in common with post-Vedic literature is the Saṃdhyā myth. Its fundamentals are already clearly stated in ŚB. 4, 5 and TĀ. 2, 2¹²⁰; when the demons had attacked the sun, Prajāpati helped him by means of a powerful defence, the *gāyatrī*¹²¹:

“Therefore, a *brahman* performs the *saṃdhyā* (twilight) rite at the juncture of day and night . . . He throws up drops of water consecrated by the *gāyatrī* which become thunderbolts. These strike down the *asuras*”¹²².

To conclude this section with a random collection of interesting and well-known motifs: the last child, that, born after seven (notice the number) others

¹¹⁴ E.g. P. B. 21, 13, 2.

¹¹⁵ E.g. TS. 7, 1, 6, 1ff.; JB. 2, 249f. (CALAND, Auswahl, p. 188); PB. 21, 1, 1ff.

¹¹⁶ E.g. TS. 6, 4, 10, 1; TB. 7, 3, 10, 1; ŚB. 7, 3, 2, 14.

¹¹⁷ E.g. PB. 13, 6, 9; JB. 1, 163.

¹¹⁸ DANDEKAR, in 14 AIOC II, p. 3; DUMONT, at PAPHs 95, p. 639.

¹¹⁹ Cf. A. C. BURNELL, at JA 13 (1884), p. 16; H. LOMMEL, at Paideuma 4 (1950), p. 93; BODEWITZ, J. B., p. 98; 105 (with bibliographical notes).

¹²⁰ See D. SRINIVASAN, Saṃdhyā: myth and ritual, IJ 15, p. 162.

¹²¹ See p. 373.

¹²² Some other subjects: the thief of the lotus fibres (AiB. 5, 30, 11): CHARPENTIER, at ZDMG 64, p. 65; 66, p. 44; GELDNER, at ZDMG 65, p. 306; HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 76; Ahalyā’s adultery with Indra (ŚB. 1, 1, 19f.; ŚB. 3, 3, 4, 18; Mbh. 5, 12, 6): HOPKINS, at AJPh 20, p. 38; OERTEL, at JAOS 26, p. 186; the story of Uśanas Kāvya, the domestic priest of the *asuras* who went over to the gods after Indra had elicited a ritual secret from a married woman (JB. 1, 125f.): OERTEL, at JAOS 28, p. 81 (cycle of the devil and Noah’s wife).

is deformed (ŚB. 3, 1, 3, 3); miraculous healings¹²³; revival of the dead¹²⁴; incest¹²⁵; the betrayal of a husband's secret by his wife¹²⁶; the inferior position of one of the members of a group¹²⁷. Then there are of course speaking animals¹²⁸, animals rendering help or assistance to men (ŚB. 1, 8, 1, 2), metamorphoses¹²⁹; voices of invisible beings¹³⁰; invulnerability (PB. 14, 6, 6); natural phenomena such as eclipses¹³¹; the beyond as the reverse of this world¹³²; the running of a race to decide a dispute or to win something valuable¹³³; gods going for a decision to Prajāpati, men going for a similar purpose to the king¹³⁴; bad faith on the part of a god¹³⁵; a god's or other being's amorous adventures¹³⁶.

It may be surmised that part of the episodes are based on popular tales or riddles, on local legends and anecdotes or on pieces of folklore rather than on the inventiveness of an individual author¹³⁷. Among these are in all probability: those dealing with the origin of night and of the phases of the moon¹³⁸; with the two heavenly dogs¹³⁹; the belief that serpents, while laying aside their old skin give up evil¹⁴⁰; retaliation in the hereafter¹⁴¹; and themes such as cooking food without fire and reaping immediately after sowing (JB. 3, 168); a dead

¹²³ E.g. JB. 1, 220; PB. 9, 2, 14.

¹²⁴ JB. 3, 95; PB. 14, 6, 8.

¹²⁵ E.g. AiB. 3, 33, 1; PB. 8, 2, 10; ŚB. 1, 7, 4, 1; cf. Lévi, D. S. B., p. 20.

¹²⁶ AiB. 3, 22, 1; JB. 1, 125f.; cf. OERTEL, in JAOS 28, p. 96.

¹²⁷ ŚB. 1, 7, 3, 1ff.; cf. H. R. KARNIK, at JUB N. S. 12, p. 14.

¹²⁸ JB. 2, 276f.; ŚB. 1, 8, 1, 2; 14, 1, 1, 8; GB. 1, 2, 5 (and compare OERTEL, in Trans. Connecticut Acad. 15, p. 194). For speaking stones: OERTEL, in JAOS 28, p. 94. For understanding the language of animals: PB. 10, 2, 7.

¹²⁹ TB. 3, 10, 9, 11; JB. 1, 125; 363; 2, 53; 79; 277; 3, 77; JUB. 4, 20; see OERTEL, in JAOS 26, p. 192; 196.

¹³⁰ E.g. TB. 3, 10, 9, 11; PB. 14, 11, 28; 17, 5, 1; 18, 1, 9; 19, 4, 7.

¹³¹ TS. 2, 1, 2, 2; JB. 1, 80; PB. 4, 5, 2; ŚB. 5, 3, 2, 2; cf. OERTEL, in JAOS 26, p. 190.

¹³² KB. 11, 3; cf. OERTEL, in JAOS 15, p. 234. For other motifs in connection with the other world: WEBER, at ZDMG 9, p. 237; 308.

¹³³ E.g. AiB. 2, 25, 1; 4, 7, 4; KB. 23, 5; 28, 1; PB. 9, 1, 35f.; ŚB. 2, 4, 3, 4; cf. OERTEL, Trans. Connecticut Acad. 15, p. 174.

¹³⁴ E.g. JB. 1, 138; 2, 243; 3, 94; PB. 13, 3, 24.

¹³⁵ E.g. TS. 6, 5, 1, 1ff.

¹³⁶ KB. 23, 4; JB. 1, 162; ŚB. 3, 3, 4, 18. For Indra's 'sexual immorality' see OERTEL, in JAOS 19, p. 120.

¹³⁷ As was, for instance, the opinion of H. R. KARNIK, PO 7, p. 217 in regard to ŚB. 1, 5, 4, 6ff. (JB. 2, 291f. etc.; CALAND, Auswahl, p. 200). See also EGGELING, ŚB. I, p. XXIV.

¹³⁸ MS. 1, 5, 12; KS. 11, 3; see also J. HERTEL, Indische Märchen, Jena 1919 (Düsseldorf-Köln 1953; 1967), p. 15; 16.

¹³⁹ Cf. MS. 1, 6, 9; ŚB. 11, 1, 5, 1; TĀ. 6, 3, 1 and BLOOMFIELD, at JAOS 15, p. 163.

¹⁴⁰ AiB. 6, 1, 6; the question as to whether 'non-Vedic' people contributed the Arbuda episode (V. CH. BHATTACHARYYA, in OH 1, p. 292) is irrelevant.

¹⁴¹ JB. 1, 42ff.; cf. LOMMEL, in Paideuma 4, p. 100.

person making his appearance as a shadow (JUB. 3, 29); thumbs as substitutes of the mother's breast and a fixed shadow as a sign of extraordinary giftedness¹⁴². It is hardly necessary to point out that occasionally the *brāhmaṇas* give more than one narrative in explanation of the same fact¹⁴³.

Scenes of village life are not entirely lacking. There are some references to road accidents: to the king and his domestic priest who, while driving a chariot, killed with a wheel the son of a *brahman* who was playing in the road and laid the blame on each other; the arbiters give the decision that the driver is responsible (JB. 3, 94); Bhāllabeya who fell from his chariot and broke an arm (ŚB. 1, 7, 3, 19); there is a story of an adulterer of high rank who got his deserts (JB. 2, 269 ff.); and of a pupil who used to look after the cattle (JB. 2, 276). We also hear of *ṛṣis* who devoted their time to ritual work in order to rank above the other *brahmans* or to have great success in love (JB. 3, 271)¹⁴⁴.

Unfortunately few *brāhmanic* narratives have come down in such completeness and fulness of detail as the Śunaḥśepa episode. In most cases a short résumé sufficed for the author's purpose, viz. the explanation and justification of a sacrificial rite¹⁴⁵. It is sometimes not even easy to extract from them the nucleus of an old tradition. Legends such as those told in the Jaiminiya about teachers and authorities excite our curiosity: did they profess and promulgate the doctrines referred to in a more complete form?, and how far are the informations on their audience and the attention which their teachings received historically reliable¹⁴⁶?

The question as to whether these legends and mythical tales ever constituted the contents of one or more 'books' has elicited divergent answers¹⁴⁷. There is, on one hand, the indisputable fact that also in their 'narrative' portions the *brāhmaṇas* attest to the existence of a fundamentally homogeneous tradition, and on the other the impossibility to prove the existence, in Vedic times, of well-defined and authorized bodies of writings comparable to the *saṃhitās* and the *brāhmaṇas* themselves. Before discussing this problem it seems expedient briefly to survey the varieties of literary production which, judging from the terms used in our texts, were more or less clearly distinguished by the ancients themselves.

The *brāhmaṇas* and the subsequent literature mention, in addition to the four Vedas, no less than twenty-five 'literary genres.' Though not separate from the

¹⁴² JB. 3, 221; cf. OERTEL, at KZ 69, p. 26, and see e.g. Lalitavistara 11 (Buddha).

¹⁴³ E.g. AiB. 4, 9, 1; TS. 7, 1, 1, 2f.; JB. 1, 67 on the barrenness of the mule.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. also SH. N. GAYATONDE, Miscellaneous information in the myths of the Sāmaveda-Brāhmaṇas, BhV 27, p. 59 (enumerating the seers, sages, singers and teachers mentioned by name, surveying the kings, places, social life etc.).

¹⁴⁵ See e.g. TB. 3, 10, 9, 9ff. (PAPhS 95, p. 641: three short stories in succession).

¹⁴⁶ E.g. JB. 1, 262; 285; 296.

¹⁴⁷ GELDNER, V. S. I, p. 290 (cf. also WEBER, I. S. I, p. 267) was positive, OERTEL, in AJPh 20, p. 445 sceptical; EGGELING, ŚB. I, p. XXIV thought of collections; for a bibliographical note see OERTEL, in JAOS 23, p. 325.

hieratic tradition they were, as far as appears from the pertinent references¹⁴⁸, mainly the concern of 'private persons,' members of the nobility, and the more or less unorthodox and unconventional. Known to us only from those fragments that were received into the literature of the brahmins¹⁴⁹ they may have been spread also by errant 'bards,' teachers and ritualists¹⁵⁰ who, being welcomed to the 'courts' of the mighty, seem to have contributed much to the great interest of the latter in religious and 'philosophical' problems and promoted their participation in discussions¹⁵¹. These fragments may be classified as follows: 1. special forms of stanzas which, occurring also in the *samhitās*, developed into independent classes of metrical compositions; 2. portions of *brāhmaṇa* texts which in style and contents came to differentiate from their origin and to be transmitted independently; 3. subjects which always were independent of Vedic literature proper. It is not however possible to delimit these three categories exactly, the less so as form and contents of a composition do not always lead us to assign it to the same class. The technical terms denoting these species of literature do not appear before the *brāhmaṇas*¹⁵², but only in the subsequent period they are used for separate and independent 'genres'¹⁵³.

To the first category belong the *gāthās*, "texts that are sung," delivered to the accompaniment of stringed instruments¹⁵⁴. Whereas the poets of the Ṛgveda (except *maṇḍala* X) apply the term *gāthā* to hieratic compositions it came in course of time to assume a more or less profane (or rather, non-hieratic) character—at ŚB. 13, 1, 5, 6 etc. *gāthās* are in praise of a sacrificer who has given donations, waged a war and won a battle—and, often in connexion with original literary texts, to be used in opposition to the *ṛcas* and other *mantras* of the *samhitās*. In the oldest *brāhmaṇa*, the Taittiriya, *gāthās* are absent and in the oldest books of the Aitareya they are rare¹⁵⁵. The latter work and the Kauṣītaki

¹⁴⁸ Cf. e.g. ṚV. 10, 85, 6 (cf. also OLDENBERG, in ZDMG 42, p. 238 (= K. S., p. 607)); AVŚ. 15, 6, 4; TS. 7, 5, 11, 2; AiB. 6, 32; ŚB. 13, 4, 3; GB. 1, 1, 10; 21; 23; 1, 2, 10; 2, 6, 11; 12; JUB. 1, 50; 53, etc.; HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 54.

¹⁴⁹ In quoting the authors differentiate them from *ṛcas* and *yajusas* using other formulas.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. ŚB. 10, 5, 5, 8; for travelling KB. 7, 6.

¹⁵¹ For a renewed discussion of the old problem as to the influence exerted by the *kgatriyas* upon the development of Indian culture (R. GARBE, Beiträge zur indischen Kulturgeschichte, Berlin 1903, p. 1; H. OLDENBERG, Die Lehre der Upanishaden, Göttingen ²1923, p. 143) see HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 427.

¹⁵² HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 47.

¹⁵³ P. THIEME, in ZDMG 107, p. 95 proposed to distinguish between an originally secular convivial or banquet poetry (known to us only in its sacral form) and an originally magical, esoteric poetry dealing with the formulation of truth.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. ŚB. 13, 1, 5, 1; 13, 4, 2, 8; 11, 14 "a brahmin harp-player . . . sings three strophes composed by himself." See HORSCH, V. G. L., passim and at WZKSA 6, p. 1, and cf. B. SCHLERATH, at Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft, 25 (1969), p. 99.

¹⁵⁵ For a collection of the anonymous stanzas explicitly called *gāthā* or *śloka* in

make mention of *yajñagāthās* quoted in substantiation of an opinion expressed in a preceding prose portion. For instance, AiB. 3, 43, 4f.:

“This is the sacrificial rite without beginning or end. The *agnīṣṭoma* is endless like a chariot-wheel. As is its beginning so is its end. As to this they deliver a sacrificial stanza (*yajñagāthā*)¹⁵⁶:

“That which is its beginning is also its end.

That again which is its end is also its beginning.

Like the creeping of a snake is the movement of the Śākala (ritual).

They do not discern which of the two is the subsequent”¹⁵⁷.

In contradistinction to such ‘ritual stanzas’ a verse that is quoted “there,” that is, in the world, and deals with blaming the blameless and exonerating the blameworthy (5, 30, 10f.) is simply described as a *gāthā*. Many instances of the latter type are inserted in the Śunahśepa episode, e. g. 7, 13, 5:

“All delights in the earth,
All (delights) in the fire,
All (delights) of living beings in the waters,
Greater than these is that of a father in a son.”

In any case, the contents of these stanzas are concise formulations of thoughts or ideas regarded, to a certain extent and notwithstanding their anonymity, as authoritative at the time when the *brāhmaṇas* were compiled. They are quoted to show that there is a time-honoured tradition behind the ceremonial observance advocated, but they have no function in ritual practice.

A subdivision of the *gāthās* bears the name of *nāraśamsīs* “eulogies of famous kings, ‘ministers’ and other liberal or prominent sacrificers”¹⁵⁸. Both terms often constitute a fixed sequence¹⁵⁹. Their relation to the *mantra* literature is illustrated by the statement in TB. 1, 3, 2, 6 “the impurity (impure portions) of the *brahman* (the Veda) became the *gāthās* and *nāraśamsīs*.” They are, in the texts, often simply introduced as *śloka*¹⁶⁰, “strophe,” an instance being AiB. 8, 21, 14:

“The Maruts as attendants dwelt in Marutta’s house,
Of Avikṣita Kāmapri the Viśve Devāḥ were assessors,”

the *brāhmaṇas* and older *upaniṣads* see HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 74 (with explanatory notes); P. H. JOSHI, at JOIB 21, p. 291 (Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa); 22, p. 250 (Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa).

¹⁵⁶ Introductory formulas are quite common in this connexion.

¹⁵⁷ See also AiB. 5, 30, 2f.; 5f.; 7, 9, 14f.; 8, 21, 2f.; KB. 19, 3; compare HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 218 and V. CH. BHATTACHARYYA, On the *gāthās*, *yajñagāthās*, and *ślokas* in the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa, OH 3, p. 89. For the Yamagāthās at TS. 5, 1, 8, 2 see HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 219.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. OLDENBERG, at ZDMG 54, p. 49 (= K. S., p. 41); at NG 1915, p. 210 (= K. S., p. 382); U. N. GHOSHAL, at IHQ 18, p. 93 and The beginnings of Indian historiography, Calcutta 1944, ch. II; G. DUMÉZIL, Servius et la Fortune, Paris 1943, p. 65; HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 11; 216; 221; 251; Brhaddevatā 3, 154.

¹⁵⁹ At MS. 1, 11, 5; TĀ. 2, 10, 1 they constitute a copulative compound.

¹⁶⁰ HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 31; 223; as to AiB. 8, 21, 14: at ŚB. 13, 5, 4, 6 a similar stanza is called a *gāthā*; see HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 456.

attesting to the high praise bestowed on their patrons by the eulogists. *Ślokas* occur, in the *brāhmaṇas*, not in the *saṃhitās*, as quotations; they do not serve a liturgical purpose but explain, illustrate or corroborate an opinion of the compiler; they are always metrical and, summarizing the leading points of an argument, they are the proper form of 'memorial stanzas.'

Viewed in the light of the *ākhyāna* theory¹⁶¹ these *ślokas* may, at least in part, be regarded as originating in compositions in which a subject was, orally of course, dealt with in mingled prose and verse or in prose interspersed with metrical lines (*ākhyāna*)¹⁶². In those works which have been preserved these verses became customary insertions as soon as the narrative themes developed into longer episodes¹⁶³. They make their appearance, in a limited number, it is true, in the Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa, for instance at 1, 233f., in a short illustrative episode. Asita, the son of Devala, criticizing people who do not sacrifice correctly, predicts in metrical form that misfortune and disaster await those who do not worship in the right way¹⁶⁴. In AiB. 8, 21 ff. some sequences of verses, introduced as *yajñagāthā* and *śloka*, serve the purpose of eulogizing famous kings. In later literature such verses became more numerous, assuming the character of quotations. Part of these verses are gnomic, moralistic or speculative, e. g. AiB. 7, 9, 15:

"Even one who has no wife and who drinks no *soma*
Should sacrifice in the *sautrāmāṇī*.
'Sacrifice to free yourself from debt to father and mother,'
In accord with this word is the rule of the Scripture"¹⁶⁵.

Another, probably more popular genre, the *itihāsa*, literally "thus it has been," comprises tales of definite events. Although there was much diversity of opinion among ancient authorities as to a more exact definition¹⁶⁶ the genre includes any legendary story or cosmogonical account that in the *brāhmaṇas* can serve to furnish a motivation for a ritual precept or to fill an interval between ritual action¹⁶⁷. At ŚB. 11, 5, 7, 9 the *itihāsa* forms, together with the *vākovākya* and the *purāṇa*, the daily lesson to be studied by the man who wishes to satisfy the gods¹⁶⁸. No complete distinction can be drawn¹⁶⁹ between *itihāsa* and *purāṇa* "(a story about) things or events of the past": both terms are often found together even so as to constitute a compound¹⁷⁰. The story of

¹⁶¹ See p. 206 ff.

¹⁶² See e. g. OLDENBERG, Lit., p. 44.

¹⁶³ RENOU, in Festschrift F. Weller, Leipzig 1954, p. 528.

¹⁶⁴ See also JB. 1, 258; 277; 2, 28; 395; KB. 27, 1.

¹⁶⁵ See also AiB. 7, 13, 1; KB. 27, 1; JB. 2, 27; 28; 30; 72.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 13. For *itihāsas* see also GELDNER, V. S. I, p. 259; 285; EGGLING, ŚB. V, p. 98; SIEG, Sagenstoffe, p. 17.

¹⁶⁷ ŚB. 11, 1, 6, 9; 11, 5, 6, 8; 13, 4, 3, 12.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. also TĀ. 2, 10, 1.

¹⁶⁹ Compare e. g. ŚB. 13, 4, 3, 12 and 13; HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 14.

¹⁷⁰ E. g. TĀ. 2, 9, 1; ŚB. 11, 5, 7, 9; GB. 1, 1, 21; ŚĀ. 8, 11.

Purūravas and Urvaśī¹⁷¹ is according to some (Ṣaḍguruśiṣya) an *itihāsa*, to others a *purāṇa* or an *ākhyāyikā* “a short narrative” (Sāyaṇa)¹⁷². In any case, the term seems to have been applicable to cosmogony and accounts concerning the first ages of the world¹⁷³. There can be no doubt that the number of the tales of the *itihāsa* and *purāṇa* varieties was considerable.

Mention may also be made of the *vākovākya* “speech and reply, i. e. dialogue,” a term which at ŚB. 4, 6, 9, 20 is explicitly associated with the *brahmodya*; of the *anūsāsana* “instructions (of a ritual or esoteric character)”¹⁷⁴; and of the *vyākhyāna* and *anuvyākhyāna* “exegesis” and “additional exegesis,” that means, those portions of a *brāhmaṇa* which explain or illustrate difficult texts or obscure statements¹⁷⁵.

Now, returning to the question as to whether, for instance, the term *itihāsa-purāṇa* denoted a definite book, it may be observed that at first sight some facts seem to point to the existence of more or less canonical collections: these ‘genres’ are often enumerated immediately after the *saṃhitās*¹⁷⁶; mention is made of sections (*parvan*) of collections of obviously larger compass¹⁷⁷; some ‘genres’—e. g. that of the *purāṇas*—are in the post-Vedic period represented by numerous and voluminous writings which can hardly be supposed to have been compiled from comparatively recent collections of material¹⁷⁸. On second thoughts it is however more probable that all fragments and technical terms refer to oral and largely anonymous traditions of different age and origin and to more or less homogeneous ‘collections’ of various and variable size which, in part, were handed down in definite intellectual circles, in part were common property. Not even the fact that the *itihāsa-purāṇa*, while being mentioned immediately after the Atharvaveda, is actually called the fifth Veda (ChU. 7, 1,

¹⁷¹ See above, p. 203 f.

¹⁷² GELDNER, V. S. II, p. 285; HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 14; cf. Śaṅkara, on BĀU. 2, 4, 10.

¹⁷³ Cf. Sāyaṇa, on AiB., Intr., p. 6f., and see TB. 2, 2, 9, 1.

¹⁷⁴ For details see HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 18; 16. Cf. TĀ. 7, 11, 4; BĀU. 2, 5, 19; KaU. 6, 15.

¹⁷⁵ See HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 32. Other terms indicating literary ‘genres’ are *raibhī* “a sort of bardic poem”; *vidyā* “knowledge” (see HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 17) and the compounds *sarpavidyā* “knowledge of or connected with serpents” and *devajanavidyā* “knowledge of demons,” no doubt for the use of exorcists, *devavidyā* “mythology” (?); *bhūtavidyā* “demonology”; *nakṣatravidyā* “astronomy and astrology”; the metrical *kumbyā*, probably not much different from *gāthā* but expressing a ritual direction; *māyā* “the art of producing illusions”; *pitrya* “(ritual) concerning the deceased”; *rāśi* probably “arithmetic”; *daiva* “prognostication” and some others of uncertain meaning.

¹⁷⁶ E. g. TS. 7, 5, 11, 2; KS. 45, 2.

¹⁷⁷ See ŚB. 13, 4, 3, 7–10.

¹⁷⁸ That there must have been such ‘books’ was the opinion of GELDNER (see n. 147); SREG, Sagenstoffe, p. 33; HERTEL, in WZKM 23, p. 295; 24, p. 420; OERTEL, in WZKM 24, p. 121; JACOBI, SB Berlin 1911, p. 969 and others; contra: OLDENBERG, at GGA 1890, p. 419; WINTERNITZ, H. I. L. I, p. 313.

2; 4; 2, 1; 7, 1) can be said to prove more than that narratives and stories of past times formed a class of literary production. The very vagueness of the ancient terminology and the fact that only such general terms as *gāthā* and *ītihāsa* have survived, no real titles of books or collections, prohibit us from assuming the existence of 'books.' If this view of these 'literary genres' be true, it follows that it is impossible to say to what extent the authors of the *brāhmaṇas* were acquainted with collections or traditions of 'texts' belonging to each species—or even to those genres which are best known to us—; of what size these collections were; how far each of them had a permanent or unchangeable form; in which regions the doctrines which they might contain were disseminated; to what extent those who studied and preserved the Veda proper had a share in the extension and transmission of this marginal knowledge. Only in a few cases can we arrive at a certain degree of probability. The *pāriplava ākhyāna*¹⁷⁹ of ŚB. 13, 4, 3, which speaks not only of the *samhitās* and their well-known divisions but also of *ītihāsas*, *purāṇas* etc. and their chapters (*parvans*) may be supposed to refer to definite portions of comparatively large masses of traditional material.

¹⁷⁹ See p. 415 f.

8. Style and structure

The stylistic difference between modern prose which is mostly read and ancient prose based on the art of oral delivery is considerable. There is much to be said for the thesis¹ that the diction and phraseology of the *brāhmaṇas* are based on, or are a literary, conventionalized development of, the language of oral instruction and discussions of the ritual experts. Nevertheless, the 'style' of the *brāhmaṇas*—in a large sense of the term—is, even in India, unique. In language, style, expression and line of argument these works show a close affinity². On careful inspection however there is more variation than in the *mantra* literature. Generally speaking, this prose is simple and in many respects fairly clear. The long compounds of later Sanskrit prose are absent. Word order and sentence structure are strictly regulated in accordance with definable and intelligible principles³. A limited number of particles helps to bring out connexions and relations. The grammatical forms (cases, tenses and moods) are used with preciseness. Archaic grammatical forms⁴ are, it is true, slow in disappearing, some of them—e.g. subjunctives—adding to a certain hieratic exactitude and dignity, but innovations are numerous. Syntax, gaining in precision, and style, adapting itself to the deepening of the thoughts and the widening of outlook and horizon, develop from the rudimentary *yajus*-like simplicity to the complex, linguistic structures that are characteristic of Yājñavalkya's contributions to the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa⁵. However, the structure of the sentences is decidedly lacking in variety. Descriptive adjectives and epithets are rare. Parataxis is normal; a succession of short sentences very common⁶. Relative sentences are on the whole well constructed but there are harsh and unexpected changes of construction⁷. Period building is little developed, mainly because of the use of direct speech for references to reported thought, adduced arguments, and desires or considerations of the persons who play a part in author's the expositions. On the other hand, this frequent

¹ Cf. EGDELING, ŚB. I, p. XXV.

² For the *brāhmaṇa* prose see e.g. H. OLDENBERG, *Zur Geschichte der altindischen Prosa*, Berlin 1917 (who rightly emphasizes that notwithstanding a general uniformity, there are clear traces of a certain development); EGDELING, ŚB. I, p. XXV; KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. CLVII; R. B., p. 70; 96; MINARD, T. E. II, p. 365; RENOUE, E. V. P. I, p. 72; *Histoire de la langue sanskrite*, Lyon-Paris 1956, p. 43; BASU, o. c., p. 269. For a more antique style of the *itihāsa* portions see GELDERNER, V. S. I, p. 259.

³ See e.g. J. GONDA, *La place de la particule négative*, Leiden 1951; *La place du verbe*, Utrecht 1952.

⁴ Generally speaking, archaisms are in these texts no reliable indications of antiquity (RENOUE, in JA 236, p. 26).

⁵ For stylistic differences within the Śatapatha: MINARD, T. E. I, p. 1; II, p. 290.

⁶ See e.g. TB. 3, 2, 8, 8ff.; 3, 10; PB. 7, 8, 1f.; JB. 1, 6; 129ff.; 3, 165.

⁷ E.g. TS. 5, 4, 4, 3; ŚB. 2, 5, 1, 22.

introduction of direct speech and quotations does not fail to lend a certain air of life and vividness to many passages⁸.

Cases of alliteration⁹, rhyme and homoioteleuton¹⁰ are, outside formulas, fixed phrases—e.g. *prajāyā paśubhiḥ* “by progeny and by cattle”—flexional rhyme etc., not uncommonly frequent. Instances of paronomasia and ‘etymological’ figures are more in evidence, also because of the many pseudo-etymological explanations such as AiĀ. 2, 1, 5:

taṃ devāḥ prāṇayanta. sa praṇītaḥ prātāyata. prātāyīti taṃ prātar abhavat. “The gods carried him forward. Being carried forward he was stretched out. (Because people say,) ‘He has been carried forward,’ the morning came into being”¹¹.

A considerable part of these stylistic devices is determined by the occurrence of fixed phrases and recurrent series of words—(TB. 3, 5, 10, 2) *ūrjasvatī ca payasvatī ca* “abounding in fortifying food and drink”; (3, 7, 7, 4) *ṛtam ca me satyaṃ ca* “right and truth”; (AiB. 1, 26, 1) *prayājās cānuyajās ca* “the fore-offerings and after-offerings”—other instances of these being (ŚB. 6, 6, 3, 15) *brahma ca kṣatram ca* “the brahminical order and nobility”; (JB. 1, 282) *ya evaṃ veda* “who knows thus”; (1, 321) “the (gods,) having approached (Prajāpati,) said . . .”; (1, 171) “he beheld this *sāman*, with it he praised” and so on. Repetition, in direct speech, of the words of another person is usual (e.g. TB. 3, 11, 8, 2f.), that of a preceding narrative portion of the text is not always avoided; e.g. ŚB. 1, 6, 2, 1f. where a passage dealing with a conquest of the gods and their ensuing considerations and deeds is literally repeated as something heard by the *ṛṣis*.

Hence also the frequent occurrence of short conversations, discussions and dialogues, not only in mythical and legendary narratives but also in explicative and argumentative passages; PB. 8, 4, 2:

“(The metres) Triṣṭubh and Jagatī said to Gāyatrī, ‘Let us join you.’ She answered, ‘What will result therefrom for me?’ ‘Whatever you desire,’ they said. She answered, ‘To me must belong the whole morning service . . .’”¹².

As already observed, in many of these dialogues the persons disputing are

⁸ See e.g. TB. 3, 1, 5, 9; 3, 12, 2, 2, etc.; AiB. 2, 3, 1; 12; 2, 11, 1; 12; KB. 3, 1; 6, 12; JB. 3, 23f.; 92; PB. 6, 5, 1; 7, 5, 6; 19, 17, 8; 20, 14, 5; ŚB. 1, 1, 2, 2; 1, 2, 2, 9; 1, 2, 5, 24; 1, 3, 1, 3; 1, 4, 1, 23; 1, 5, 3, 21; 1, 6, 2, 1; 4, 11; 14; 1, 7, 4, 1; 2; 3; 1, 8, 1, 16; 1, 9, 2, 25 etc. etc.

⁹ Cf. e.g. TB. 1, 2, 1, 14; 3, 7, 7, 3; JB. 1, 233; 2, 285; ŚB. 6, 2, 2, 34; JUB. 1, 36, 4; GONDA, S. R., p. 177.

¹⁰ Cf. e.g. TB. 3, 8, 18, 3; AiB. 1, 10, 1; 1, 21, 5; 6, 2, 6; 6, 14, 2; JB. 1, 287; 2, 299; ŚB. 1, 2, 5, 7; GONDA, S. R., p. 201.

¹¹ Some other instances: TS. 6, 1, 3, 5; AiB. 2, 1, 1; 6, 18, 7; ŚB. 1, 5, 3, 3 and see also AiB. 2, 7, 4; 2, 40, 4; 6, 9, 6; JB. 1, 233; ŚB. 3, 2, 1, 29; AiĀ. 3, 2, 6; GONDA, S. R., p. 232.

¹² Cf. e.g. also TB. 3, 10, 9, 3f.; AiB. 6, 34; KB. 6, 2ff.; 26, 5; JB. 2, 419; 3, 31; 77; 94; 104; PB. 9, 1, 36; 12, 11, 11; 13, 4, 17; 15, 12, 3; ŚB. 1, 2, 4, 9ff.; 1, 3, 3, 13; 1, 4, 5, 8ff.; 1, 6, 1, 4ff.; 1, 6, 3; 1, 8, 1, 8f.; 2, 2, 2, 10ff.; 11, 6, 1, 1ff.; GB. 1, 1, 25.

teacher and pupil or authority and searcher after truth or knowledge, the subjects of the discourse often being of the *brahmodya* variety¹³.

Although almost any ornateness of style is avoided, similes and metaphors—it is true, not very frequent and unequally distributed—are not absent¹⁴; some of them are really successful. Illustrative or explanatory images borrowed from ordinary life are helpful in making some explanation more intelligible. Thus the authors of TS. 5, 3, 10, 1 and AiB. 6, 35, 11 refer to well-known, almost every-day occurrences to explain the function of certain requisites:

“Like a person who takes to the waters in a boat, even so the sacrificer goes with them to these worlds”; “As in this world a wagon without a leader comes to ruin, so a sacrifice without a *dakṣiṇā* comes to ruin”¹⁵.

Some similes are elaborated, e.g. AiB. 8, 11, 8:

“Just as non-Aryans, robbers, or evil-doers, seizing a wealthy man in the wilderness, fling him into a pit and run away with his wealth, so these officiants fling the sacrificer into a pit and run away with his wealth,”

but the short and incomplete type is most common¹⁶. Occasionally, an argument is based on worldly wisdom, TB. 3, 1, 4, 2:

“What is dear to one, that comes back to him, and with what is dear to him, he unites.”

That in teaching these texts gestures¹⁷ underlined or elucidated the meaning of similes and other passages is proved by TS. 6, 4, 11, 3:

“In that the former cups are drawn in silence, that is as when a (hunter) who approaches an animal stealthily shoots (an arrow, thinking), “So far off is my mark, at so far I shall not miss.”

The ‘mystic vision’ of Bhṛgu who is sent by his father Varuṇa to yonder world, where he sees some horrible visions—people cut other people into pieces etc.—the explication of which is given by Varuṇa after Bhṛgu’s return¹⁸ is one of those longer passages that make the impression of a beautiful allegory. Sayings and maxims are not lacking: “the earth has ears” (JB. 1, 126)¹⁹; “arrogance is

¹³ E.g. ŚB. 10, 1, 4, 10; GB. 1, 1, 31; 1, 3, 8; 11; 13f.; 1, 4, 24.

¹⁴ S. N. GAJENDRAGADKAR, *Decorative style and alamkāras in the Aitareya-Brahmaṇa*, JBBRAS 27, Suppl., p. 314; KEITH, V. B. Y. S., p. CLVIII; GONDA, *Remarks on similes in Sanskrit literature*, Leiden 1949, p. 88.

¹⁵ For other similes: TS. 5, 4, 10, 5 (a sleeping tiger); 7, 2, 2, 3 (“as when a man sits down to a cow that has already been milked”); 7, 5, 8, 5 (a flying bird); 7, 5, 9, 2 (“as men being freed from bonds cry aloud”); AiB. 2, 3, 8; 4, 27, 3; 6, 21, 10; JB. 1, 139; 363; PB. 11, 5, 20; ŚB. 4, 5, 2; GB. 1, 3, 2. For references to daily life: AiB. 3, 4, 7, 1; JB. 2, 393; 420; 3, 92; JUB. 3, 7, 6 (“we will not dispute without witnesses, like *sūdras*”).

¹⁶ See also AiB. 3, 38, 4 as against 5, 32, 6.

¹⁷ For gestures: CALAND, *Über das rituelle Sūtra des Baudhāyana*, Leipzig 1903, p. 3. See also ŚB. 1, 3, 1, 7.

¹⁸ JB. 1, 42ff.; ŚB. 11, 6, 1, 1ff.; see BODEWITZ, J. B., p. 99 (with a bibliography).

¹⁹ See H. OERTEL, at JAOS 28, p. 88.

the cause of ruin" (ŚB. 11, 1, 8, 1)²⁰. There are, mainly because of identificatory argumentation, many cases of conscious 'sexualization': "The *vedi* is female; the fire, male" (ŚB. 1, 2, 5, 15)²¹. Some authors have thought certain places humorous or sarcastic²².

For the sake of logical discussion and disputation these authors resort to a uniform phraseology²³. If they wish to quote or to reject a divergent opinion of other brahmins who have to remain anonymous²⁴ they either quote their views in a succinct and fixed form or they simply refer to them with "some" (*eka*). For instance, ŚB. 1, 2, 2, 10 and AiB. 2, 26, 3ff.:

"And now some (experts) say, 'He should make it (a sacrificial cake) of the size of a horse's hoof.' But who knows how large is a horse's hoof? Let him make it of such a size as in his own mind he does not think would be too broad."—"Now some make the invitatory verses²⁵ for that (cup) for Indra-and-Vāyu *anuṣṭubh* stanzas, and the offering stanzas *gāyatrī*s (arguing), 'The cup for Indra-and-Vāyu is speech and breath; thus will the two be in accord with metres also.' Such (opinions are) not to be regarded. (Because) imperfection is produced in the sacrifice when the invitatory verse is longer than the offering verse . . ."²⁶.

Apart from the formulas "Such (opinions are) not to be regarded" or "One should not do so"²⁷ there is a phrase to reaffirm one's own opinion: ŚB. 4, 5, 9, 10f.:

"Now they say, 'He should not transpose the cups . . .' But let him nevertheless transpose them, for the cups are the limbs, and in sleeping one likes to turn one's limbs from one side to the other; therefore let him nevertheless transpose them"²⁸.

A favourite scheme used to dissuade the audience from following certain ritual directions may be exemplified by ŚB. 8, 1, 4, 1:

"Now some lay down (these bricks) so as to be in contact with the (gold) man (laid in the first layer of the great fireplace), for he is the vital air, and these (bricks) sustain him . . . One should not do so; the vital air is indeed identical with the gold man, but . . . Hence . . . One should therefore . . ."²⁹.

²⁰ See e.g. also AiB. 5, 22, 5; 7; ŚB. 10, 4, 1, 14; BASU, o.c., p. 281.

²¹ Cf. also TB. 1, 1, 3, 8; ŚB. 1, 1, 1, 18; 11, 1, 2, 2; MINARD, T. E. II, p. 324.

²² BLOOMFIELD, in JAOS 15, p. 156 (certainly not ŚB. 12, 7, 3, 3); MINARD, T. E. II, p. 244; S. K. DE, at OH 3, p. 157 (not MS. 3, 6, 3).

²³ Cf. MINARD, T. E. I, p. 47 (with a bibliographical note).

²⁴ Many quotations defy any attempt at identification; part of them may be misquotations. See also H. WILLMAN-GRABOWSKA, in RO 6, p. 173, mentioning also verses and other quotations of unknown origin (e.g. ŚB. 7, 5, 1, 21; 11, 5, 5, 8). There are, on the other hand, cross references, e.g. ŚB. 9, 2, 3, 31: "The *bandhu* of this has been explained" (viz. in 6, 7, 2, 3); or quotations from previous passages (BODEWITZ, J. B., p. 19).

²⁵ See p. 326, n. 32.

²⁶ See e.g. also AiB. 1, 11, 1; 2, 13, 11f.; 22, 1f.; 4, 7, 5f.; 8, 6; 2, 22, 1; 3, 18, 9f.; PB. 3, 1, 2; ŚB. 1, 1, 2, 23; 6, 1, 9; 2, 1, 1, 7; 2, 1, 5; 4, 5, 9, 10.

²⁷ E.g. AiB. 1, 4, 5; 1, 11, 2; 2, 3, 12; TB. 3, 11, 9, 1.

²⁸ Cf. e.g. also ŚB. 3, 9, 3, 9 and other variations.

²⁹ Compare e.g. also ŚB. 6, 1, 2, 31; 9, 4, 4, 15; 9, 5, 1, 61; 10, 2, 3, 6. Generally speaking, an elaborate argumentation in defence of the own point of view may imply a refutation (cf. BODEWITZ, J. B., p. 29).

A statement of facts is very often followed by an explication, a reference, an indication of the consequences, or of the practical application, the purpose or end in view, a shorter or longer instruction, etc.; for instance ŚB. 1, 9, 3, 15:

“He then looks up to the sun, for that is the final goal, the firm foundation. To that final goal, to that firm foundation he thereby goes. For this reason he looks up to the sun”³⁰.

The literary device of the debate starting with the well-known and the established is adopted eventually to discover an ultimate or unknown background or esoteric significance³¹.

The composition of larger arguments and explanatory sections is too varied to be studied in full detail. Usually each chapter or small group of chapters forms a little treatise for itself³². As will appear from the following pages the authors do not, in discussing their subjects, avoid various forms of repetition, which are often partly determined by the schematic construction of their arguments. At AiB. 3, 47f. the offerings to the minor deities are systematically dealt with: after a short introduction the author enumerates the oblations to the male deities, identified with the metres. This passage has its counterpart in 48 where the female deities are mentioned in a similar way. Then there follows a longer passage which, except for the name of a deity, is identical in both chapters. The second chapter ends with an epilogue in which reference is made to the result reached by worshipping these gods and to a man who on a certain occasion had performed the sacrifices³³.

Proper names or specific persons, vouching for authenticity and ‘historicity,’ are never absent from mythical tales³⁴. These deal with definite mythical events; the personages attain the object which they pursue, converse in lapidary dialogues and perform exemplary deeds. For instance, TB. 3, 9, 22, 3, dealing with the horse-sacrifice:

“The gods, for this (the horse-sacrifice), killed (as a victim) this deity (Prajāpati) that became an animal fit for the sacrifice. It was the sacrifice (itself). (Consequently) it was the sacrifice (itself) with which the gods worshipped the sacrifice³⁵. They (thus) caused the sacrifice to be the fulfilment of desire. They (then) desired freedom from death, and they reached freedom from death. He who offers the horse-sacrifice goes the way of the gods . . .”

Sequences of parallel syntactic structures are not avoided; on the contrary, the texts show a great variety of parallelisms, e.g. ŚB. 1, 4, 2, 7f.:

³⁰ See e.g. PB. 2, 1, 1f.; 3; 5, 4, 8, 12; 5, 5, 9f.; ŚB. 1, 1, 1, 12; 18f.; 1, 2, 2, 5; 7; 13; 1, 3, 1, 1; 7; 27; 1, 7, 1, 1; 1, 7, 3, 10.

³¹ BODEWITZ, J. B., p. 223; see e.g. ŚB. 11, 5, 3, 8ff.; GB. 1, 3, 13.

³² For particulars regarding divisions: RENOUE, in IJ 1, p. 9.

³³ For the construction of longer passages, groups of chapters etc. in the Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa, see BODEWITZ, o. c., p. 13; 72; 80 etc. For the apparent combination of two different passages, p. 52.

³⁴ For names introducing a discussion see e.g. JB. 1, 22.

³⁵ For Prajāpati = the sacrifice see p. 389.

“‘Gladdened by inspired poets,’ for these poets, the *ṛṣis*, indeed gladdened him . . . ‘Praised by sages,’ for those poets, the *ṛṣis*, indeed praised him . . .”³⁶.

Long successions of parallel sentences and passages are far from rare, and, if the text gives occasion to mark them by a series of numerals authors readily seize the opportunity³⁷. A verbatim repetition of the same events implies rhythmic repetition, a common feature in archaic narrative which obviously was a source of pleasure. Repetition of the author’s words by one of the persons figuring in his account or of an instruction by the person instructed is no rare occurrence either³⁸. Part of these repetitions consist of formulas to be pronounced by an officiant; others are determined by the enumeration of a number of similar formulas³⁹, by references to ritual distinctions or to parallel ritual acts, for instance those resulting in some effect in the three provinces of the universe, e.g. ŚB. 5, 1, 5, 1:

“Now when they run a race, he thereby wins this world. And when the *brahman* sings a *sāman* . . ., he thereby wins the intermediate world. And when he climbs the sacrificial post, he thereby wins the world of the gods. Hence that threefold performance”⁴⁰.

Since these repetitions relate either to the ideas to be expressed or to the forms in which they are expressed—and in most cases to ideas and forms at the same time—recurrences of the same schemes and the same words are throughout these works a common feature⁴¹. Reference to identical or similar acts, events or situations are always likely to be worded in the same stereotyped phrases⁴² or in the same syntactic frames filled up by different nouns and verbs, as the context may require. Thus a number of parallel statements or episodes is not infrequently related seriatim with—as far as possible—the same words: at TB. 3, 12, 4, 2ff. Prajāpati, being exhausted because of his ritual activity worships several successive entities, such as austerity, belief etc. A fine example, showing at the same time that this repetitional style could be a ritual necessity, is the recitation of the so-called revolving tale (*pāriplavam ākhyānam*) which is a special feature of the *āśvamedha*⁴³. During the year in which the horse is wandering about the *hotar*, seated on a cushion wrought of gold threads⁴⁴ is invited by the *adhvaryu* to tell this tale in order to raise the royal sacrificer to a higher

³⁶ See e.g. also TB. 3, 10, 8, 4ff.; 9, 1, 2; 6; 11, 5ff.; 11, 1, 2ff.; 9, 2ff.; ŚB. 1, 4, 3, 4f.; 1, 6, 1, 11; 12; 2, 2, 2, 1; GB. 1, 1, 4; 29; 33.

³⁷ E.g. TB. 3, 1, 4f.; PB. 4, 1, 8ff.; 5, 4, 1ff.; 6, 1, 8ff.; 7, 8, 9ff.; ŚB. 1, 3, 3, 20; 1, 4, 3, 11ff.; 1, 5, 4, 6ff.; 1, 6, 2, 8ff.; 1, 6, 3, 3ff.; 1, 7, 2, 2ff.; 2, 2, 1, 10ff.; 5, 1, 2, 1ff.; 12, 7, 1, 1; GB. 1, 2, 18; 1, 3, 7; MINARD, T. E. I, p. 30.

³⁸ E.g. JB. 2, 134; 3, 77; 246; 246f.; PB. 12, 11, 10f.; 15, 5, 20; 24.

³⁹ E.g. ŚB. 1, 7, 3, 10; 4, 6ff.; 1, 9, 1, 4ff.; 13ff.; 8, 2, 4, 1ff.; 8, 4, 1, 9ff.

⁴⁰ See e.g. also JB. 1, 40f.; 45f.; PB. 6, 1, 6ff.

⁴¹ Cf. e.g. ŚB. 1, 1, 4, 6; 1, 2, 1, 7; 1, 4, 1, 2ff.; also of the same questions and answers: ŚB. 11, 6, 1, 3ff.

⁴² Cf. e.g. ŚB. 1, 2, 1, 8ff. and see WILLMAN-GRABOWSKA, at RO 6, p. 170.

⁴³ P. E. DUMONT, L’āśvamedha, Louvain 1937, p. 39; R. D. KARMARKAR, at ABORI 33, p. 26; HORSCH, V. G. L., p. 20.

⁴⁴ See also AiB. 7, 18, 12; OLDENBERG, PROSA, p. 61; EGGELING, ŚB. V, p. XXXI.

state (ŚB. 13, 4, 3). This *ākhyāna* consists of ten stereotyped accounts of kings, their peoples, their Vedas, etc., the wordings of each account being, as far as possible, identical. Each discourse lasts for one day, the whole series for ten days. After a series is over the cycle is to be repeated in the same order—that means, 36 times but, no doubt, every time with a different section of the respective texts—till the return of the horse. The royal sacrificer will “attain to fellowship and communion with these royalties, gain the sovereign rule over all people and secure for himself all the Vedas” (ŚB. 13, 4, 3, 15).

Generally speaking, repetitions of clauses are more numerous than those of sentences, those of sentences more frequent than those of longer passages. That this natural consequence of oral transmission was of special didactic and mnemonic significance is self-evident.

Another favourite device is the repetition, at the end of a section, of the initial words in order to indicate that the explication has been brought to a conclusion; ŚB. 1, 3, 2, 1:

“Now the sacrifice is the *Puruṣa* (this word also denotes the man who is the sacrificer). The sacrifice is the *Puruṣa* because man (*puruṣa*) performs it, and that in being performed it is made of exactly the same extent as the *Puruṣa*. This is why the sacrifice is the *Puruṣa*”⁴⁵.

A thorough examination of the various types of introductory and concluding phrases and formulas would be worth while. For the time being attention may be drawn to the end of the section JB. 1, 22–25:

“These were the reflections on the *agnihotra*; these were the aims. These very aims he obtains who knows thus and for whom (a priest) knowing thus performs the *agnihotra*.”

Sometimes such formulas mark off a section: “Now we shall set forth . . .”⁴⁶.

Thus parallel events or actions are, also in long successions, referred to in exactly the same syntactic structures and with verbal repetition of constant elements⁴⁷. Intelligibly enough, attention has often been drawn to the unmistakable monotony of many sections⁴⁸. In the oft-repeated accounts of the gods’ endless strife with the demons or of the statements of what the gods won by this or that rite there is very little variation:

“The gods and the *asuras*, (both of them sprung from Prajāpati,) competed with one another. The gods . . ., the *asuras* . . .”⁴⁹. “Thereupon the gods prospered;

⁴⁵ See also AiB. 2, 1, 5; ŚB. 1, 1, 1, 14–17; 1, 1, 3, 8; 1, 8, 3, 23; 1, 9, 3, 13; 15; 2, 1, 2, 4; 2, 5, 2, 6; 5, 1, 1, 10; 5, 2, 1, 22; 11, 1, 5, 7, and compare 1, 1, 3, 3–5; 12; 1, 4, 2, 5; 5, 1, 3, 12; WILLMAN-GRABOWSKA, in RO 6, p. 183.

⁴⁶ E.g. GB. 1, 3, 18; AiĀ. 5, 3, 3; cf. TĀ. 7, 2, 1; ŚB. 4, 6, 1; GB. 1, 1, 24; 2, 3, 12; 1, 3, 18ff.; 1, 4, 9.

⁴⁷ See also TB. 3, 8, 12; 13; 14; 9, 8, 1f.; 11, 5; 12, 6, 1ff. etc.

⁴⁸ E. W. HOPKINS, Gods and saints in the Great Brāhmaṇa, Trans. Connecticut Acad. 15, p. 39; 45; KEITH, R. B., p. 97.

⁴⁹ PB. 8, 3, 1; 11, 5, 9; JB. 1, 105; 129; ŚB. 6, 6, 2, 11; 3, 2; 8, 1, 1; 3, 1 etc.; cf. also TB. 2, 2, 3, 5; 3, 9, 21, 1. For minor variations in grammatical expression: WILLMAN-GRABOWSKA, in RO 6, p. 175.

the *asuras* came to naught (were conquered). He prospers himself, his rival comes to naught who knows this"⁵⁰.

Occasionally, however, a somewhat longer and vital passage, even a brief narrative, breaks the monotony; PB. 12, 5, 23:

"The gods and the *asuras* were competing. Whom they (the *asuras*) slew of the gods, that one did not come to life again. Whom (the gods) slew of the *asuras*, that one came to life again. The gods performed austerities (*tapas*). They saw that *ariṣṭa* (*sāman*). Thereupon whom they (the *asuras*) slew of the gods, that one came to life again; whom of the *asuras*, that one did not come to life again. (Because they then thought,) 'Through this (*sāman*) we have come out unhurt, therefore it is called 'free from harm' (*ariṣṭa*).' The *ariṣṭa* is applied . . . to be free from hurt."

This monotony does not indeed exclude variation from stereotyped formulas and fixed modes of presentation in narrating, or referring to, the same or similar events or situations or even the development of different versions of a theme:

"Indra raised his thunderbolt against Vṛtra. He (Vṛtra) said, Do not hurl (your weapon) at me. I have here a (thing or source of) energy. I shall give you that . . ."—"Indra wished to hurl his weapon (*vajra*) at him. He said to Viṣṇu, 'I will hurl the *vajra* at Vṛtra; stand by me.' 'So be it,' Viṣṇu said, 'I shall stand by you; hurl it.' Indra raised the *vajra* (aiming) at him. Vṛtra was afraid of the raised *vajra*. He said, 'There is here a (source of) energy. I shall give that to you, but do not smite me . . .'"—"Now Vṛtra, being struck, lay contracted like a leather bottle drained of its contents, lay contracted like a skin bag with the barley-meal shaken out. Indra rushed at him, intending to slay him. He said, 'Do not hurl (your weapon) at me . . . Only cut me in two parts'"—"Indra had slain Vṛtra. His energy (virtue) broke asunder in all directions. The gods sought a redress for him but nothing did satisfy him . . ."⁵¹.

Moreover, well-known themes such as this combat of Indra and Vṛtra⁵² or the emulation between gods and *asuras* are each time repeated for another purpose, and every other purpose may require emphasizing other details or aspects. The contexts, or rather the continuations of the authors' expositions, are often widely different⁵³ and sometimes a modern reader⁵⁴ may easily be under the erroneous impression that some of the recurrent passages are makeshifts facilitating transitions.

Among those devices which may break the monotony and add to a certain variation and liveliness are questions and answers⁵⁵ as well as typically 'oral constructions' such as e.g. 'prolepsis'⁵⁶. Besides, there are other means of

⁵⁰ PB. 2, 6, 2; 3, 2, 2; 4, 2, 2; 5, 5, 15; JB. 1, 124 etc.

⁵¹ PB. 20, 15, 6; ŚB. 5, 5, 5, 1 ff.; 1, 6, 3, 16 f.; PB. 18, 5, 2; see also PB. 15, 11, 7; TS. 2, 1, 4, 5.

⁵² E.g. AiB. 1, 26, 3; 2, 3, 12; KB. 7, 2; 15, 2; ŚB. 1, 1, 3, 4 f.; 1, 2, 4, 1; 4, 1, 3, 1 f.; 5, 2, 3, 8; 6, 2, 2, 19; 9, 5, 2, 4; 11, 1, 3, 5.

⁵³ Cf. e.g. ŚB. 1, 2, 4, 8; 1, 2, 5, 1 ff.; 1, 5, 3, 2; 1, 5, 4, 6; 2, 1, 1, 8; 2, 1, 2, 13; 2, 2, 2, 8; 3, 2, 1, 18 ff.; 3, 4, 4, 3 ff.

⁵⁴ WILLMAN-GRABOWSKA, in RO 6, p. 170.

⁵⁵ E.g. PB. 6, 3, 6; 10, 5, 7; ŚB. 8, 1, 3, 1; 8, 1, 4, 2.

⁵⁶ E.g. ŚB. 7, 1, 2, 13; 11, 2, 3, 2; MINARD, T. E. II, p. 297.

producing, in this highly repetitious⁵⁷ style, some variation; for instance, the author points out what would occur if the directions or course of action given by him were not followed, e.g. TS. 6, 1, 2, 3:

“If he should not pronounce that formula, the divine waters would, unappeased, descend on this world.”

In the later *brāhmaṇas* the tendency to variation, to a greater vividness, to constructing sentences and argumentations of different type is clearly increasing. Thus it reads in ŚB. 4, 3, 1, 5:

“Let him ladle twelve spoonfuls of them: there are twelve months in the year, therefore he should ladle twelve spoonfuls. But he may also ladle thirteen, because, they say, there is a thirteenth month. Let him nevertheless ladle twelve only, for such is perfection.”

It is not feasible to aim, in describing the variations in structure, at anything like completeness. At ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 1 ff. we find a long and lively story of the gods running a race which was won by Bṛhaspati because at his request he was ‘impelled’ by the impeller among the gods, Savitar; nevertheless it contains in 6 a literal repetition of part of 4.

Occasionally the natural trend of archaic prose to present the subject-matter analytically—“He sacrifices in the evening and in the morning; to Agni in the evening, to Sūrya in the morning” (KB. 2, 1)⁵⁸—is more pronounced because of the frequent necessity to insert a variety of motivations or explanations. Thus ŚB. 1, 8, 3, 23 ff.:

“He then seizes (two utensils) at the same time, for on the former occasion . . . he makes him an oblation . . . He seizes them, for the Viśve Devāḥ, for . . . He seizes them with the text VS. 2, 18, for . . .”⁵⁹.

This tendency quite naturally entails many, and sometimes long, enumerations of names, authorities, points of the compass and other concepts or entities⁶⁰, as well as continued strings of questions⁶¹ and—a favourite topic—descriptions of disintegration: “his fame goes to the teacher, his sleep to the boar, his anger to the boar . . .” (GB. 1, 2, 2). Ritualistic expositions may require explicit statement of, for instance, qualifications of the process indicated by the verb; JB. 1, 18:

“Him the seasons lead. As one who (leads) one who also knows, as one who understands one who understands also, so the seasons lead him”⁶².

⁵⁷ Notice also the frequent repetitions of the same word in one and the same complex sentence: ŚB. 1, 3, 5, 6; 6, 1, 15 and in general WILLMAN-GRABOWSKA, in RO 6, p. 183.

⁵⁸ Cf. e.g. also KB. 12, 8; 14, 4; 30, 1; PB. 7, 10, 6; GB. 1, 3, 15.

⁵⁹ Also cases such as TS. 2, 4, 4: “Prajāpati created offspring . . . Prajāpati created cattle”; KB. 29, 1; PB. 8, 4, 5.

⁶⁰ E.g. GB. 1, 2, 8 (animals); 10; see also passages such as TB. 3, 4, 1 ff.

⁶¹ E.g. GB. 1, 1, 24; 1, 3, 11.

⁶² Cf. also PB. 7, 2, 6.

Directions and instructions often require a motivation⁶³, *mantras* quoted an explanation or a statement of their application⁶⁴.

When the subject-matter of a story gives occasion to analytic presentation it is by preference narrated—if possible, with recurrent phraseology—in the form of a succession of phases. The gods, desirous to win Speech who sides with the *asuras*, ask Yajña (Sacrifice) to beckon her, ŚB. 3, 2, 1, 19ff.:

“She is a woman and will certainly call you to her . . .’ He accordingly beckoned her. She, however, at first disdained him from the distance. And hence a woman, when beckoned by a man, at first disdains him from the distance . . . He beckoned her (again), but she only replied to him, as it were, by shaking her head. And hence . . . He beckoned her (again), and she called him to her. And hence . . .”⁶⁵.

The occurrence of various forms of recapitulative concatenation, sometimes in succession, is not surprising; ŚB. 3, 6, 3, 14:

“. . . He takes that (the couch of leaves: *prastara*); having taken the *prastara*, he spreads the bed of grass . . .; having spread the bed of grass, he lays the enclosing-sticks . . . round (the fire); having laid the enclosing-sticks around, he puts two kindling-sticks (on the fire) and having put . . .”⁶⁶,

a mode of expression, frequent in archaic and popular literature, which, whilst avoiding long units and extraordinary concentration on the part of the audience, is especially suited to lay emphasis on the processes under discussion and their succession.

Another characteristic of this style, for all its prolixity, repetitional pedantry and minute exactitude in particulars, is a tendency to brevity and ellipsis, conciseness or condensation in contexts of minor compass. This is mainly due to the oral transmission of the texts—matter mentioned allusively could be made clear by the teacher—, the more or less initiate audience, the technical character of many passages (‘demi-mot suffit’), and the stylistic relationship with the modes of expression prevalent in teaching and discussing. A noun may be replaced by a qualificatory adjective or an anaphoric pronoun; a subject of a sentence or of an absolute locative omitted; an important element of the argument mentioned only once; a verb be left without its subject, an answer to a question without an introductory formula⁶⁷. In short, what was considered

⁶³ E.g. PB. 2, 1, 3; 4, 4, 11; 5, 3, 11; ŚB. 1, 1, 1, 11; 21; cf. also cases such as 5, 1, 2, 14.

⁶⁴ e.g. ŚB. 1, 1, 1, 13; 1, 1, 2, 12; 13; 1, 1, 4, 20; 1, 2, 1, 3; 1, 2, 2, 14.

⁶⁵ Some other instances: TS. 6, 5, 1, 1ff.; AiB. 3, 25f.; 3, 30; 7, 15f.; PB. 8, 4, 1; 20, 15, 16; JB. 1, 42; 3, 199f.; ŚB. 1, 2, 3, 6; 1, 4, 1, 10ff.; 2, 5, 1, 1f.; 4, 1, 5, 10ff.; 5, 5, 5, 3ff.; GB. 1, 2, 18ff.; 24; JUB. 4, 20. A formula “for the second, third time” is however sometimes used to condense a story (e.g. JB. 3, 201).

⁶⁶ See e.g. also KB. 12, 8; ŚB. 1, 3, 5, 7; 3, 2, 1, 28; 5, 4, 5, 15; 7, 1, 2, 1; 8, 1, 2, 2; AiB. 1, 18, 1f.; JB. 1, 224; GONDA, S. R., p. 316; MINARD, T. E. II, p. 68. Cf. PB. 5, 3, 9; 7, 2, 1; GB. 1, 1, 34; 1, 3, 14; 1, 5, 8; AiA. 2, 1, 3.

⁶⁷ Examples: TB. 3, 10, 9, 3ff.; ŚB. 4, 6, 9, 22; 3, 4, 1, 17; 2, 3, 3, 16; 6, 6, 4, 14; 14, 3, 1, 30; MS. 1, 8, 4; 4, 6, 2; AiB. 1, 14, 6; KB. 7, 3; 8, 7; 11, 10; JB. 1,

self-evident is often left out⁶⁸. These forms of ellipsis may combine with pregnancy: "If one should pour (the spoonful) during the *stotra* (of the clarification), the embryos would fall out abortively" (MS. 4, 6, 6). Irrespective of what has been said on the many repetitions, succinctness is also achieved by omitting anything superfluous and concentrating, almost always without comment, upon essentials—that is, in narrative passages upon the main stages in the actions and occurrences. A negative answer is a simple 'no,' and a person who no longer takes an active part in the events simply vanishes⁶⁹. Participants in discussions are as a rule short and to the point, avoiding anything like epic prolixity. That means that notwithstanding a certain completeness of the succession of the events the manner of telling stories is as a rule succinct and lapidary. There is hardly any scope for delineation of characters.

This tendency to brevity—often no doubt also a tendency to mnemonic phraseology—which has sometimes led to deprecative judgments⁷⁰ is not to the same extent peculiar to all *brāhmanas*. Excessive in the Kauṣītaki⁷¹, which, pursuing brevity also in its legendary portions, is notoriously hard to understand, it is, notwithstanding a lack of clearness in many passages, less pronounced in the Aitareya⁷² and other works of this class. The style of the Pañcaviṃśa often approaches the succinctness of *sūtra* composition⁷³; e.g. 14, 9, 7f.:

"There is the *vairūpa* (-*sāman*). The *vairūpa* is cattle; (so it is) to obtain cattle; the year is of different features (*virūpa*) and food is of different features; (so) to obtain food"⁷⁴.

This brevity does not however exclude a care for exactitude and preciseness in matters of *vidhi* as well as *arthavāda*⁷⁵.

A related phenomenon is a predilection for abrupt beginnings and transitions⁷⁶. The Śatapatha begins its expositions of the Full and New moon sacrifices (its first subject) as follows (1, 1, 1, 1):

57; ŚB. 13, 4, 2, 6ff.; 1, 7, 1, 10; 1, 6, 3, 23; TĀ. 1, 24, 1; MINARD, T. E. II, p. 212. Brevity is also a corollary of participial constructions, absence of conjunctions, asyndetic transitions.

⁶⁸ See e.g. TB. 3, 10, 8, 4; 9, 1; 3.

⁶⁹ Thus Rohita in the Śunaḥśepa episode AiB. 7, 15, 8. Compare also LOMMEL, at ZDMG 114, p. 125 and see e.g. AiB. 5, 11; 6, 1 and many chapters in CALAND, Auswahl.

⁷⁰ KEITH, R. B., p. 96.

⁷¹ For "a good instance of this defect" see KEITH, R. B., p. 97; 364. See above, p. 346.

⁷² A deviation in this respect has been one of the reasons for doubting the genuineness of AB. 7, 10 and 11.

⁷³ For this see also RENOUE, in JA 251, p. 175.

⁷⁴ H. OERTEL, *Dativi finales abstrakter Nomina*, SB München 1941.

⁷⁵ This is not to say that—at least for a modern reader—there are no ambiguous phrases or sentence constructions; see e.g. MINARD, T. E. I, p. 218; II, p. 355, s. v. *ambiguïté*.

⁷⁶ See e.g. K. HOFFMANN, in *Mélanges Renou*, p. 372. There are of course exceptions, e.g. AiB. 6, 6, 1; 7, 1; KB. 11, 1 "Next the morning recitation"; 12, 6; 13, 8; 14, 4; JB. 2, 25; ŚB. 1, 1, 1, 7.

“He who is about to enter the observance touches water while standing between the *āhavanīya* and *gārhapatya* fires with his face turned towards east. The reason why he touches water is, a man is ritually impure . . .”

and the *Jaiminīya*, starting with a discussion of the ceremonies in connection with the preparation of the sacred fires (*agnyūdhāna*), begins (1, 1):

“Here now they say, ‘What does he offer, in what there is offered?’ He offers life, in (the) life(breath) there is offered. In that here they churn out the fires, thereby they produce the sacrificer’s life breaths . . .”

The subject may change without any indication whatever⁷⁷. Those who take part in a conversation are as a rule introduced abruptly, e.g. JB. 1, 19:

“Now as to this Janaka of Videha asked Yājñavalkya, ‘Do you know . . .’”⁷⁸.

There are many cases of parenthesis and explicative interruption: AiB. 7, 22, 6:

“He who resorts to kingship resorts to lordly power—for kingship is lordly power—; him who resorts to lordly power *brahman* does not oppress”⁷⁹.

A frequent structure of a passage dealing with a mythical tale and its re-enactment *hic et nunc* is the following: a brief statement of the mythical events—which⁸⁰ may contain an explanation of, for instance, a name—followed, if there is occasion for it, by an explanation or motivation of instruments used, devices applied etc., and at the end a statement of the re-enactment⁸¹. In very brief wording at PB. 6, 7, 18:

“The sacrifice, having taken the form of a horse, went away from the gods. The gods brought it to a stand by a bunch of grass. Therefore a horse is pleased when it is wiped with a bunch of grass. That the *adhvaryu* bears the bunch of grass, is for soothing, for not terrifying the sacrifice.”

Not infrequently, a mythical account is interrupted by ritual observations, by some piece of advice or the statement of a divergent opinion. Thus in the long narrative in ŚB. 1, 2, 5, 1 ff.: to the gods, who were worsted in their struggle with the *asuras*, the latter ceded so much space as could be occupied by Viṣṇu, the dwarf, who is also the sacrifice. After enclosing it they sacrificed and succeeded in obtaining the entire earth. When, however, Viṣṇu became tired and found himself unable to escape he hid himself among the roots of plants. The gods searched for him by digging and found him at a certain depth. “Therefore the sacrificial bed (*vedi*) should (according to some authority) be of that depth . . . This however one must not do . . .”⁸². After the motivation of this dissuasion the story continues.

ŚB. 1, 4, 1, 10–21⁸³ is an example of an episode of the saga variety interrupted by an explanatory insertion. In illustration of a formula containing the word

⁷⁷ Cf. e.g. AiB. 4, 5; ŚB. 1, 2, 4, 8; 1, 2, 5, 1; 1, 3, 2, 1; 2, 2, 2, 8; 2, 2, 3, 2.

⁷⁸ Cf. also JB. 1, 19; 22; ŚB. 8, 2, 1, 3; 8, 2, 2, 1; also cases such as 10, 3, 4, 1.

⁷⁹ See e.g. also ŚB. 3, 1, 2, 7f.; 6, 3, 14; 5, 1, 5, 16; 17; JB. 2, 128.

⁸⁰ E.g. at ŚB. 1, 1, 1, 16; cf. PB. 8, 1, 4.

⁸¹ E.g. PB. 6, 7, 19; ŚB. 1, 1, 1, 16f.

⁸² ŚB. 1, 2, 5, 9; cf. 7; see e.g. also 1, 2, 3, 4.

⁸³ Cf. WEBER, I. S. I, p. 170; EGGELING, ŚB. I, p. 104.

“with the buttered (spoon)” it is told that Māthava, king of Videgha, while carrying Agni in his mouth, could not answer his domestic priest for fear that the god might fall down. But as soon as the priest had pronounced ṚV. 5, 26, 2 containing the word ‘ghee’ the god flashed forth from his mouth. Before continuing to relate the ensuing conversation of god and king—the latter wishes to know where he was to abide, the former answering, “To the east of this (river)” —the author inserts a passage on the previous and contemporaneous occupations of the region of the rivers Sarasvatī and Sadānīrā. After another geographical observation he recurs to the conversation between the king and his priest.

A short reference to a mythical event is often to motivate the use of a *mantra*, a *sāman*, a definite ritual act etc.⁸⁴. In case the event is not common knowledge, it may lead the author to recall it briefly:

“The demoniac Svarbhānu struck the sun with darkness. By means of the *svara* (*sāmans*) the gods delivered it. That there are the *svarasāman* (days), is for delivering the sun (from darkness).”—“He now takes the black antelope skin, for completeness of the sacrifice. For once the sacrifice escaped the gods, and having become a black antelope roamed about. The gods thereupon found it, stripped it of its skin and took this with them.”

In a few cases an explanatory element supplies or replaces part of a *mantra*: with reference to the denied truth of the tale about the combats between gods and *asuras* ŚB. 11, 1, 6, 10 quotes a *ṛṣi*:

“Not for a single day hast thou fought, nor hast thou any enemy, O Maghavan. Illusion is what they say concerning thy battles. No (well-matched) foe hast thou fought either to-day or aforetime.”

Actually the first half of ṚV. 10, 54, 2 runs otherwise⁸⁵.

A tripartite structure is not uncommon: in the tale narrated at ŚB. 1, 1, 4, 14ff. the *asura*-killing voice is successively in Manu’s cow, in his wife and in the sacrifice; the two priests of the *asuras* succeed, by sacrificing for Manu in killing the bull and the wife, but are unable to expel it from the sacrifice⁸⁶.

⁸⁴ PB. 4, 5, 2; ŚB. 1, 1, 4, 1; cf. also PB. 4, 6, 13; 6, 6, 8; 14, 11, 14 (the same event, with variations). ŚB. 1, 1, 2, 3; 1, 1, 3, 8; 1, 2, 1, 6; 1, 3, 1, 5; 1, 9, 3, 11; 5, 1, 4, 13.

⁸⁵ Compare also allusions or reminiscences such as TB. 3, 2, 2, 2; ṚV. 10, 86, 23; TB. 3, 10, 4, 3; ṚV. 10, 123, 6.

⁸⁶ Cf. e.g. also JB. 1, 287ff.; ŚB. 11, 2, 3, 1; 11, 5, 8, 1; GB. 1, 2, 1. In cases such as AiB. 7, 15, 7; 16, 1; 2—Śunahśepa’s father is three times given a hundred for selling, binding and slaughtering his son—a modern reader is apt to be onesidedly impressed by the retardation effect. For three wishes in the form of choosing a boon see PB. 13, 4, 17; 14, 11, 19 and GONDA, *The Savayajñas*, p. 142; for triads in the Veda, GONDA, in *Ohio Journal of religious studies*, 1974. For a quadrupartite structure which in a way is tripartite: JB. 1, 12f.

CHAPTER IX

THE ĀRAṆYAKAS

There has long been some uncertainty as to the exact meaning of the name *āraṇyaka* given to the concluding parts of *brāhmaṇas*. This was partly due to a misapprehension, because it was assumed that Sāyaṇa gives two somewhat different interpretations¹. The former led some scholars to the conclusion that this class of literature was to supply a substitute for the sacrificial rites for the benefit of ascetics who lived in the forest or jungle (*araṇya*). According to the other, and no doubt right, interpretation these 'works'—like all other 'books' of the brāhmaṇic variety, subjects of instruction of Vedic schools—were to be imparted to and studied by advanced students in the solitude of the forest because their contents were too 'sacred,' too secret and esoteric, too uncanny and dangerous to be communicated and learnt in the villages². Their main subject was, indeed, not only the explanation of the sacrificial rites, but the relevant texts themselves and their mystic and allegorical, 'symbolical' and 'philosophical' significance.

There can, on the other hand, be no doubt that in course of time the tendency was for the explanation contained in definite portions of the *brāhmaṇas* to develop into expositions of meta-ritualism, and then to grow independent of the ritual until the stage was reached where the name *āraṇyaka* was no longer applicable, because the subject matter had passed into that of an *upanīṣad*³. At that stage the growth of speculation, as leading to the highest goal, had gradually resulted in the suppression of ritualism. As a result of this development these texts came also to be studied by ascetics⁴. As we shall see further

¹ Sāyaṇa, Preface to AiB. (AUFRECHT's edition, p. 3): *āraṇyavratarūpaṃ brāhmaṇam* and Preface to AiĀ.: *āraṇya eva pāṭhyatvād āraṇyakam itiryate*.

² OLDENBERG, H. R. I, p. 291; and especially, at NG 1915 (1916), p. 382 (= K. S., p. 419); KEITH, Ai.Ā., p. 15; compare ŚG. 6, 1, 1ff.; 2, 11f.; ĀśvŚ. 8, 14; ŚĀ. 8, 11; 13; ĀpŚ. 15, 20, 1ff. SH. PANDURANG, Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā (see p. 273, n. 15), p. 2 relates that he had to go to the forest for the purpose of hearing the inauspicious funeral texts of the Atharvaveda. The incorrect view is reproduced e.g. in S. DASGUPTA, A history of Indian philosophy, I, Cambridge 1922 (1951), p. 14 and in E. FRAUWALLNER, Geschichte der indischen Philosophie, I, Salzburg 1953, p. 42.

³ See also RENOU, E. V. P. VI, p. 31.

⁴ The rather late Āruṇika-Upanīṣad, 2, enjoins the study of *āraṇyakas* and *upanīṣads* upon itinerant ascetics. For relations between this literature (especially the Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka) and Śivaite texts see J. VARENNE, in JA 250, p. 185.

on the oldest *upaniṣads* are in part included in these 'forest books,' and in part appended to them.

The structure of the *āraṇyakas* is as little homogeneous as their contents. Some portions have the character of a *saṃhitā*, others of a *brāhmaṇa*, others again of a *sūtra*, according to the material that, varying from Veda to Veda, and from school to school, was collected in an *āraṇyaka* corpus. Linguistically and stylistically also, these works form a transition between the *brāhmaṇas* proper and the speculative literature that follows them and develops part of the ideas and lines of thought which are characteristic of them⁵. Whereas, for instance, the treatment of the four special kinds of *agnicayana* in TB. 3, 10–12⁶ proceeds in the usual way with long enumerations of *mantras*, identifications, etymologies, discussions, questions of the *brahmodya* type, legends, references to automatic effects and 'symbolical' interpretations, the description of the fifth special *agnicayana*, that of the sage Aruṇaketu, in the very beginning of the *Āraṇyaka* strikes us by a simile that gives some evidence of deeper philosophical insight; TĀ. 1, 2, 2:

"(Just as smaller) streams unite with that (big river), and this, becoming broad, does not run dry, thus the spaces of time, of different duration, are contained in the year, whether (they are of the form) of minute particles or of long(er) periods, and this (year), filled with all of these, becoming broad is never interrupted. One should know that (the world, subject to time) belongs to the year."

The Aitareya-*Āraṇyaka*⁷, attached to the Aitareya-*Brāhmaṇa*, consists of five books which are designated as separate *āraṇyakas*. The first three of these form one whole, as distinct from the two others and are written in an essentially simple, though clumsy, style, which bears a close resemblance to that of the *Brāhmaṇa*. It is 'elliptical' and a long series of co-ordinate clauses takes the place of subordination; "the art of constructing sentences is wanting"⁸. But this is not to deny that the harsh and elliptic style has a certain fitness to the speculations and guessings after truth which constitute the subject-matter. The first book consists of an explanation of the *mahāvratā* ritual from ritualistic and meta-ritualistic points of view. Because of the more esoteric character of the speculations to which it gave rise this ritual was not dealt with in the *Brāhmaṇa*⁹. In the form presupposed by the authors of both ṛgvedic *āraṇyakas*

⁵ For a collection of 'philosophical' *āraṇyaka* places see J. C. DESHPANDE, IA III, 3 (Volume Dandekar 1969), p. 169; for a succinct characterization of the *āraṇyakas*, V. M. APTE, in HCIP I, p. 420; 447.

⁶ DUMONT, at PAPH S 95, p. 628.

⁷ Edited, translated and commented upon by A. B. KEITH, Oxford 1909 (1969); other editions by RAJENDRALALA MITRA (with Sāyaṇa's commentary), Calcutta 1876; by B. Ś. PHADAKE, Poona 1898 etc.

⁸ KEITH, o.c., p. 53.

⁹ In contradistinction to the secrecy with which on this occasion the activity of the *hotar* obviously was surrounded no special mystery or sanctity attached to the functions of the *udgātar* or *adhvaryu* which are described in the *saṃhitās*, *brāhmaṇas* and *śrautasūtras* of the other schools.

it is the ceremonial performed on the second last day of the so-called *gavām ayana sattra*, a sacrifice extending over a year. Being a *soma* sacrifice it is characterized by a daily division into three parts, the morning, midday, and evening pressings and libations of the *soma* and their accompanying *stotras* of the *sāman* singers and *śāstras* of the *hotar cum suis*¹⁰. The pertinent litany, to be recited by the *hotar* while he was seated on a swing, was one of the most sacred and complicated performances of this officiant, considered to be equivalent to the whole of the Ṛgveda¹¹. The long description of the different *śāstras*¹² belonging to the three pressings begins as follows, AiĀ. 1, 1, 1:

“Now begins the *mahāvratā* (rite). Indra having slain Vṛtra became great (*māhān*)¹³. When he became great, then there came into being the *mahāvratā*. That is why the *mahāvratā* (rite) is called *mahāvratā*,”

to continue with expositions such as 1, 1, 2:

“He who desires proper food should use the *sūkta* (ṚV. 7, 1, beginning:) ‘Agni men generated from the kindling sticks with splendour.’ For Agni is the eater of food. In the other chants accompanying the ghee-offerings men approach as it were more slowly to Agni, but here they come upon Agni at the very beginning. At the very beginning he (the man who desires proper food) obtains proper food; at the very beginning they (those who approach) smite away evil.”

There are many such esoteric explanations of the deeper sense and applicability of verses from the Ṛgveda in which the usual procedures, such as identifications and numerical ‘symbolism’ lead to a statement of the effect of their recitation. These passages alternate with explanatory digressions of varied length and contents. For instance, after the statement that ṚV. 8, 68, 1–3 and 8, 2, 1–3 belong to the one day ceremony it reads, 1, 2, 1:

“Much indeed is done on this day that is forbidden, and (this hymn) serves for atonement. Now atonement is a firm foundation and so at the end (of the sacrifice) the sacrificers are founded on the atonement of the one day as their firm foundation. He is firmly founded who knows this and they also (are firmly founded) for whom a *hotar*, who knows this, recites this hymn.”

The observation that the stanza ṚV. 6, 17, 1 contains the word ‘greatly’ is at 1, 2, 2 followed by the explanation:

“This (hymn is) composed by Bharadvāja, and Bharadvāja was of the seers the most learned, the longest lived, and the greatest practiser of austerities. By this hymn he drove away evil. When therefore a man recites the hymn of Bharadvāja, (it is) that he (may become, by) driving away evil, learned, long-lived, and versed in asceticism. For that reason he recites the hymn of Bharadvāja.”

Some peculiarities of the no doubt originally popular rite led the author to insert longer explanations, for instance in connexion with the swing on which the *hotar* is swung to and fro (1, 2, 3f.).

¹⁰ For further information see A. B. KEITH, *The Śāṅkhāyana Aranyaka*, London 1908, p. 73; GONDA, R. I. I, p. 161.

¹¹ Cf. ŚB. 10, 1, 1, 5 and EGGELENG, ŚB. IV, p. 110; 112; 283.

¹² As may be expected the *śāstras* alone are systematically explained in the ṛgvedic *āraṇyakas*.

¹³ Cf. also ŚĀ. 1, 2.

Book II, not directly connected with I, consists of two distinct parts. The first (*adhyañyas* 1–3) deals with speculations on the midday *śastra* of this ritual, as being *prāṇa* ('life-breath') or Puruṣa. Its esoteric character is apparent from statements such as "People (i.e. the uninitiated) say 'hymn, hymn,' (but in reality) the hymn is the earth" (2, 1, 2). In 2, 1, 6 and 7 it reads:

"Speech is his (*prāṇa*'s) rope, names the knots. So by his speech as rope, and by names as knots, all this is bound. For all this is names, and by his speech he names everything." "Now (come) the manifestations of the might of this Puruṣa. By his speech are created earth and fire. On this (earth) plants grow; fire makes them palatable. 'Take this, take this,' thus saying do these two, earth and fire, serve their father, speech. As far as the earth extends, so far extends his world (*loka*). And as long as the world of earth and fire does not decay, so long does the world not decay of him who knows thus the manifestation of the might of speech."

There are also cases of a double interpretation, viz. macrocosmically ("with regard to the deities") and microcosmically ("with regard to the self")¹⁴. These chapters are already upanisadic in character and are therefore, together with the second half of this chapter—which actually forms the Aitareya Upaniṣad—and sometimes together with chapter III, called the Mahaitareya-Upaniṣad¹⁵.

Book III treats of the esoteric meaning of the various forms of the text of the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā (viz. the *saṃhita*, *pada* and *krama pāthas*¹⁶). Hence the name which it claims for itself by its opening words, Saṃhitā-Upaniṣad. Being a comparatively recent work it shows a considerable advance of phonetics, mentions various technical terms, introduces some, partly artificial, distinctions, and quotes authorities such as Śākalya and Māṇḍukeya who appear to disagree about the question as to whether the union of the first of two coalescing sounds (in *sandhi*) representing the earth and the second representing the sky means rain or the air (3, 1, 2).

The fourth book consists of the *mahānāmnī* verses¹⁷, literally the 'great-named ones,' which are elsewhere (ŚG. 2, 12, 3) explicitly included in the *āraṇyaka* curriculum. The student to whom they are imparted is now also to keep silence and to wear a turban, the teacher himself maintaining a variety of observances¹⁸. In their original form preserved in the Sāmaveda they consist of three stanzas in which Indra, the able, mighty and generous god, is praised and invoked for aid, wealth, and victory. They are however interrupted by secondary additions and extended into nine stanzas so as to become an artificial liturgical whole which may be assigned to the end of the ṛgvedic period. The verses, which contain reminiscences of the Ṛgveda, are recited in a curious

¹⁴ Cf. Ai.Ā. 2, 1, 2; also 1, 3, 3; ŚĀ. 7, 2 etc.

¹⁵ See KEITH, Ai.Ā., p. 39.

¹⁶ See p. 16f.

¹⁷ See KEITH, Ai.Ā., p. 258; OLDENBERG, at NG 1915 (1916), p. 375 (= K. S., p. 412); SCHEFTELOWITZ, at ZII 1, p. 58; for another ṛgvedic tradition SCHEFTELOWITZ, Apokryphen, p. 135. There exists also a sāmavedic version (see Sāmaśramī's edition, II, p. 366ff.; CALAND, Jaiminiya-Saṃhitā, p. 59f.).

¹⁸ Cf. also GG. 3, 2 dealing with the observances in their sāmavedic form.

way: first one and a half verses are pronounced, then comes a pause, then the remaining one and a half.

Book V, a sort of complement to book I in *sūtra* style, is mainly a description of the *niṣkevalya śāstra*, belonging to the midday libation of the *mahāvratā*. Since neither the preceding parts of the Aitareya nor the Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka contains a formal exposition of the *mahāvratā* as a whole, this addition was obviously felt to be a necessity. For the same reason, the followers of the Śāṅkhāyana tradition added two books, not to their Āraṇyaka, but to their Śrautasūtra, where they are XVII and XVIII. Interestingly enough, the commentator Ānartīya refers to the latter sections as an *āraṇyaka*¹⁹. In AiĀ. 5, 3, 3 the esoteric nature of the doctrine is emphasized with special force:

“No one who has not been initiated should recite the *mahāvratā*, nor should he recite it when there is no ritual fire; nor should one recite it for another, nor if it does not last a year . . . This day one should not teach to one who is not a regular pupil, and has not been so for a year, . . . not to one who is not a student of the Veda and does not belong to the same school . . .”

Although the compiler of the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa, who to all appearance was an authority of some distinction, is traditionally held to have been also responsible for books I–III of the Āraṇyaka, he can hardly be regarded as its author because he is cited in it as a teacher²⁰. Tradition ascribes book IV to Āśvalāyana, who indeed sets forth its use in his Śrautasūtra (7, 12, 10). There are some arguments in favour of the view that he was also the author of book V, but there is more to be said for the assumption, based on Sāyaṇa’s authority, that this *sūtra* was compiled by Śaunaka. As to the date of the work there seems to be no reason for doubting that I–III are older than IV and V. As II is probably later than I, the dates between 700 and 550 for these three parts do not seem an unacceptable supposition.

The text of this work—which seems to be based upon an unbroken tradition, the manuscripts of the north and the south of India presenting the same form—was explained in its entirety by Sāyaṇa. Book II, the chapters II, 4–6 (identical with 4–6 of the preceding) and book III were moreover commented upon by the philosopher Śaṅkara (8th century). To Ānandatīrtha we are indebted for a super-commentary on Śaṅkara’s explanation of the *upaniṣad* in II, 4–6, to Viśveśvaratīrtha for a super-commentary on the former’s commentary on II and III²¹. In contradistinction to the last mentioned work which gives a Viṣṇuite interpretation the other commentaries explain the *upaniṣads* in the light of the Vedānta.

The Śāṅkhāyana-Āraṇyaka²², which in its contents agrees very closely with the Aitareya, consists of 15 chapters (or ‘lessons’: *adhyaṇya*) some of which are

¹⁹ Ānartīya on ŚŚ. 13, 14, 7, quoting 18, 24, 30.

²⁰ AiĀ. 2, 1, 8; 3, 7; cf. 1, 1, 1. For details regarding date and authorship see KEITH, Ai.Ā., p. 16; 18; 20; 261; 25.

²¹ For particulars see KEITH, Ai.Ā., p. 11.

²² Edited by Śrīdhara T. PĀṬHAKA, Poona 1922. The books I and II were edited

very short. In contradistinction to Kauṣītaki, Śāṅkhāyana is not cited as an authority in the book itself, but in *adhyāya* XV (*vaṃśa*) he figures as the first teacher who derived his information from Kauṣītaki. It is interesting to notice that the following four subjects which constitute the chief contents of this work—a loose mass of fragments—are in the Gṛhyasūtra of this school (6, 4) not only enumerated in the same order: *mahāvratā* (*adhyāya* I and II); *upanīṣad* (III–VI); *saṃhitās* (VII and VIII): *manthā*²³ (IX), but also explicitly described as ‘esoteric doctrine’ (*rahasyam*). As to the chapters I and II it is worth observing that the *śāstras* are far from receiving the same share of the author’s attention; the ceremonial of the mounting of the swing is explained at considerable length. As compared with the Aitareya-Āraṇyaka the subject is treated with clearness and conciseness. The chapters III–VI contain the important Kauṣītaki-Upanīṣad. The next section (VII and VIII) corresponds closely to Aitareya-Āraṇyaka III, referring also to the doctrines of Kauṇṭharavya, the Māṇḍukeyas and others. To Pañcālacaṇḍa the theory is ascribed, 3, 18:

“(that) speech is the union, for by speech the Vedas are united, by speech the metres, by speech one unites friends. When one studies or speaks, then breath is in speech, then speech absorbs breath. Again, when one sleeps or is silent, then speech is in breath; then breath absorbs speech . . .”

Both versions seem to go back to a not very distant common source, but that of the Śāṅkhāyana seems more modern than the other.

Chapter IX deals with a common *upanīṣad* topic, the rivalry of the senses; X with the so-called internal *agnihotra*, which either as a starting point or as a reflection may be connected with the *prāṇāgnihotra*, a ceremony in which food is offered to the breaths representing the sacred fires²⁴. The comparatively original book XI deals, *inter alia*, with presages of death; XII with the ritual of an amulet, preceded by a no doubt comparatively late spell in the form of a hymn—there are many correspondences with the Atharvaveda—addressed to that object; XIII with the pre-eminence of the self; XIV with the necessity of knowing the Veda; XV contains the succession of the authorities (the *vaṃśa*).

Being closely connected with, and largely dependent on, the Kauṣītaki-Brahmaṇa, it is more elaborate and systematic, but on the other hand stylistically much more condensed and apparently more modern than its companion *āraṇyaka* of which it can hardly be assumed to take priority. It has even been supposed²⁵ that the ritual referred to in the Kauṣītaki was deliberately modified

and translated by W. FRIEDLÄNDER, *Der mahāvratā-Abschnitt des Śāṅkhāyana-Āraṇyaka*, Berlin 1900; for a translation of the whole work by KEITH see n. 10 above. See also KEITH, in *JRAS* 1908, p. 363.

²³ The ritual for greatness mentioned at ChU. 5, 2, 4; cf. also KEITH, at *JRAS* 1908, p. 373.

²⁴ Cf. BODEWITZ, J. B., p. 213; 265.

²⁵ KEITH, *Ai. Ā.*, p. 34.

to differentiate it from that of the Aitareya; in any case, it impresses us as somewhat younger. As both works form in many respects a parallel to each other and their language is closely related, there is ample room for the hypothesis that their compilers, whilst utilizing common sources, did not refrain from borrowing.

In the Black Yajurveda, the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka²⁶ is a continuation of the Brāhmaṇa of the same name. Being the largest of its class, it consists of ten chapters (*prapāṭhaka*), VII to IX constituting the Taittirīya Upaniṣad, and X the Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad, which is a late addition²⁷. Each of the six books with which we are concerned in this chapter includes from 12 to 42 sections (*anuvāka*)²⁸. They belong no doubt to an earlier date than the Upaniṣad. Being throughout based on the ritual, their object is to point out those peculiarities of the rites and ceremonies which have not been fully described or indicated in the Brāhmaṇa. Thus book I is devoted to the Āruṇaketuka fire²⁹. It is mainly a collection of *mantras* to be used in placing the bricks for the fireplace alternating with quotations—often found at the end of a section—from the Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa and the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā, questions and answers, as well as statements of the merits of the ritual act and the advantages of knowing their significance. Thus there is a passage on some bricks named after the eight suns which give light, health and fruition to the world only one of which—the healer of disease—is ordinarily visible to men; according to some authorities seven of these suns are the seven officiants. A doubt arising as to the possibility of there being more than one sun is obviated by a quotation: “If there were thousands of suns . . .” (R.V. 8, 70, 5) and a reference to the teacher Vaiśampāyana who concluded: “What wonder then that mention should be made of seven (other) suns?” (1, 7). The eighth section comprises questions and answers of the *brahmodya* type:

“Where, O god, do the clouds settle down? What supports the years, day(s), night(s), months, seasons . . .? (The different measures of) time settle down on the waters, and the waters are placed (fixed) upon the sun.”

The next questions bear upon Viṣṇu’s cosmic function (1, 8, 2), Death (10–13) and the realm of Yama (14–17). Among the topics touched upon in the ninth section is an expatiation upon the forms and names of Vāyu; the man who knows this is safeguarded against death by lightning. There is also an interesting passage on Prajāpati’s creative activity: the first being created is the tortoise who assumes the task of creating the universe. The advantage of knowing this myth consists in ‘gaining and entering’ the All (1, 23).

²⁶ Edited (with Sāyaṇa’s commentary and a long, though largely antiquated, introduction) by RĀJENDRALĀLA MITRA, Calcutta 1871; (with Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara-miśra’s commentary) by MAHĀDEVA ŚĀSTRĪ and P. K. RAṄGĀCHĀRYA, 3 vol., Mysore 1900–1902). For book I see S. SUBRAHMANYAM in JOR 13, p. 19.

²⁷ For these works see J. VARENNE in the section on the upaniṣadic literature.

²⁸ For particulars see above, p. 325 and RĀJENDRALĀLA MITRA, o.c., p. 7f.

²⁹ See above, p. 424.

Book II deals with education and study of the Veda, focussing attention on *mantras*, meditation, purification, expiation, origins, advantages rather than the ritual details. The 19th section is interesting in that it prescribes the recitation of certain *mantras* while meditating on *brahman* as an enormous porpoise, the merit being protection against repeated death (*punarmṛtyu*), against perishing while being on a journey, in fire or in water, and attainment of heaven. Book III supplies the *mantras* required for the *cāturohtraciti*³⁰, that is the building of the fireplace with those formulas which 'symbolize' the four chief officiating priests. Its last five sections (17–21) contain *mantras* connected with the funeral rites. The books IV and V belong together, the former supplying the *mantras* for the *pravargya*³¹ and the latter indicating their uses and explaining their meaning and purport. The subject of VI is the *pitṛmedha*, the oblations made to the Fathers, the rites for their welfare. The *mantras*, taken mostly from the Ṛgveda and arranged in consecutive order, are not accompanied by indications of the ritual acts which may be found in the *sūtras*³².

According to tradition the books I and II were composed by the sage Kāṭha, who is also the reputed author of fragments of a Kāṭha-Āraṇyaka³³. Among the lost chapters of the Kāṭhaka collection of scriptures³⁴ there must have been also an *āraṇyaka*, or at least a section containing material that is characteristic of such a 'treatise.' Some fragments have been preserved³⁵. The so-called *grāheṣṭi-brāhmaṇa* deals with the rites to be performed in honour of the planets in order to acquire desirable qualities; the *mantras* pertaining to them have survived also. Among the other fragments is a *śrāddha-brāhmaṇa* mentioning, *inter alia*, the two ways—that of the gods and that of the Fathers—which a deceased sacrificer can follow³⁶.

As to the White Yajurveda, the last (14th) book of the Mādhyam̐dina recension, containing the optional and somewhat recondite *pravargya* ceremony

³⁰ The rite is dealt with at TB. 3, 12 (DUMONT, in PAPH S 95, p. 656). For the Puruṣasūkta (ṚV. 10, 90) in TĀ. 3, 12 see N. J. SHENDE, The Puruṣasūkta in the Vedic literature, J. Univ. Poona, Hum. 23 (1966), p. 45.

³¹ Cf. ŚB. 14, 1, 1, 26 where in connection with the same rite it reads: "One must not teach this to any and every one, since that would be sinful . . ."

³² For the use of stanzas taken from this Āraṇyaka in Hinduism see K. BHATTACHARYA, Le 'védisme' de certains textes hindouistes, JA 255 (1967); p. 199 (p. 219).

³³ Cf. L. v. SCHROEDER, in WZKM 11, p. 118 (who was strongly inclined to consider this tradition correct and supposed the existence in a complete Kāṭha-Āraṇyaka of other parts of the Taittiriya corpus).

³⁴ See p. 326; 351.

³⁵ L. v. SCHROEDER, Die Tübinger Kāṭha-Handschriften, SB Vienna Acad. 137 (1897), p. 52 (TĀ. book II is almost completely represented in the Kāṭha manuscripts); W. CALAND, Brāhmaṇa- en Sūtra-aanwinsten, Amsterdam Acad. 1920, p. 466ff.; 484ff.

³⁶ The Maitrāyaṇīya Āraṇyaka (edited by S. D. SĀTAVALEKAR, Pardi 1956) is a version of the Upaniṣad of the same name.

and (in the *adhyañyas* 4-9) the Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad, is called *āraṇyaka-kāṇḍa*³⁷.

Mention has already been made of two 'forest' collections of the Sāmaveda³⁸. There is, further, the first *āraṇyaka*-like chapter of the Chāndogya-Upaniṣad. To this class of works belongs however also the Jaiminīya- or Talavakāra-Upaniṣad-Brāhmaṇa³⁹, a typically sāmavedic compilation of some extent, comprising four books and including (4, 18-21) the Kena or Talavakāra-Upaniṣad. Almost all of its arguments and episodes deal with the significance of *sāmans*, and metres, or certain syllables as well as with peculiarities and effects of the chant. For instance, 1, 2, 2:

"He who, knowing thus, sings the *udgītha* (i. e. discharges the duties of an *udgātar*) saying *om* takes Agni (fire) and causes him to stand firm on the earth; saying *om* he takes Vāyu (air, wind) and causes him to stand firm in the atmosphere; saying *om* he takes Āditya (the sun) and causes him to stand firm in the sky; saying *om* he takes breath and causes it to stand firm in speech."

And in like manner it is taught how to arrive at a complete age, to slay hunger through food, to become dear to all, to bestow fortune upon a person⁴⁰. For, according to 1, 14, 1 ff.:

"He should not be one whom the gods keep at a distance. Truly to what extent he worships the gods with his internal self to that extent the gods exist for him. And who knows this thus, 'I am the *sāman*, in me are all these divinities,' truly thus in him all these divinities exist. That is the *devasrut* ('heard by the gods') *sāman*, for all these divinities give ear to one who knows thus with a view to what is pure, to what is effective. They make him do what is good, what is effective . . ."

Even the gods, indeed, approach, on Prajāpati's authority, heaven by means of a special, viz. a *ṛc*-less, *sāman*⁴¹, and this great figure himself, frequently mentioned⁴², is at 1, 49, 3 where the *devas*, contending with the *asuras*, have recourse to him, related to instruct them, 'Worship me (under the names) Puruṣa, Prajāpati, Sāman,' because then they will give evidence of their knowing him. Thus this work, in addition to the usual classificatory identifications, 'etymological' explanations, and mythological expression of ideas⁴³, is full of expositions of the supreme power and effectiveness of the *sāman* and references to sāmavedic technicalities. The gods, wishing to make the *sāman* their second, request heaven and earth to unite in order to produce it (1, 50); the question is posed as to what is the vital principle of the *sāman*, the answer

³⁷ For the Kāṇva recension see EGGELING, ŚB. V, p. XLIX.

³⁸ See above, p. 317.

³⁹ Edited and translated by H. OERTEL, in JAOS 16 (1896), p. 79; by P. RAMA DEVA, Lahore 1921 (based on OERTEL's edition).

⁴⁰ Cf. JUB. 1, 3, 1 ff.; 51, 10; 55, 5 ff.

⁴¹ JUB. 1, 15, 1 ff.; cf. 1, 16, 8 ff.

⁴² Cf. e.g. JUB. 1, 1, 1 (conquering the universe by means of the threefold Veda); 11, 1 (creating creatures); 18, 1 (creating the gods).

⁴³ Cf. e.g. JUB. 1, 21; 33; 40, 2; 2, 8, 7; 11, 8; 1, 34, 6.

being 'breath' (1, 41, 2); it is stated that 'the splendour of the *sāman* which we worship is in the sun' (1, 43, 1). The thunder-clouds are said to be identical with the prelude (*prastāva*), lightning with the particular syllables with which the *pratihāra*, i.e. the *pratihartar* (one of the assistants of the *udgātar*) begins to join in singing and so on (1, 13, 1). There are, it is true, many episodes, references to authorities being questioned, explaining, discussing; there are myths, legends and mythical narratives, but these also find their *raison d'être* in the *sāman* speculation⁴⁴. Thus the well-known statement that in the beginning this universe was twofold, cosmos (*sat*) and chaos (*asat*) is immediately followed by the explanation that the former was *sāman*, mind and exhalation, and the latter, *ṛc*, speech and inhalation (1, 53, 1f.). The principles underlying the argumentation are carried through so consistently that even well-known mythical themes are modified: it was not the gods and the *asuras* who contended, but Prajāpati and Death, and the gods, the former's sons, resolved to have themselves consecrated by that *udgātar* who would enable them to overcome death and to go to the heavenly world (2, 10, 1ff.)⁴⁵. The work contains two lists of teachers who were believed to have handed down its contents (3, 40ff.; 4, 16f.), the former reaching back to Brahman, the latter to Indra.

⁴⁴ Cf. e.g. JUB. 1, 6; 30; 38; 42; 45; 53; 3, 29ff. The section 3, 20–28 is an exception.

⁴⁵ Cf. also episodes and statements such as 1, 28f.; 1, 31, 1ff.

GLOSSARY

adhvaryu, the officiant who had to perform manual acts while repeating formulas of the Yajurveda

Aditi, a goddess, mother of the Ādityas

Āditya, name of a group of deities (Varuṇa, Mitra, Aryaman, etc.)

Agni, (the god of) fire

agnicayana, the very solemn ceremony of the piling or constructing of the sacred fireplace

agnihotra, the daily (morning and evening) attendance on, and oblation of milk etc. to, Agni

agnistoma, the simplest form of the one-day soma sacrifice

agnyādhāna, establishment of the ritual fires

agnyādheya, the same

āhavanīya, the ritual fire which, during a *śrauta* sacrifice, receives the oblations

ahimsā, 'non-violence,' i.e. abstention from injury, respect for human and animal life

Āṅgiras, a sage and mythical fire-priest; in the plural, his descendants

arthavāda, explanation of the meaning of a (ritual) precept

asura, a class of deities, in the *brāhmaṇas* anti-gods

aśvamedha, horse-sacrifice, one of the great royal sacrifices

Āsṛins, succouring and matutinal twin gods, divine physicians

atharvavedin, follower of the Atharvaveda

ātman, 'self,' supreme universal Soul of which every intelligent being is a partial individuation (designated by the same term)

brahmacārin, a student of the Veda, observing chastity

Brahmaṇaspati, Bṛhaspati, the (divine) priest of the gods

dakṣiṇā, offering presented to an officiating priest

deva, god (in a larger sense)

dhāman, 'presence' of a deity

dharma, right order, including the *habitus* of the cosmos, law and absolute moral order and its customary observance

Dhātār, a Vedic god, 'The Establisher'

dīkṣā, the consecration (of the sacrificer)

gandharva, a genius of conception and propagation, also celestial musician

gāthā, stanza, especially one not belonging to the Veda

gāyatrī, one of the Vedic metres, esp. the stanza ṚV. 3, 62, 10, the *gāyatrī par excellence* (also *sāvitrī*), addressed to the Sun

ghee, clarified butter (used for religious purposes)

gṛhyasūtra, ritual work containing directions for domestic rites and ceremonies

guru, any venerable or respectable person (parents etc.) esp. a spiritual guide or preceptor

haviryajña, divine worship consisting of oblations of clarified butter etc.

hotar, one of the chief priests, in charge of the recitation of the Ṛgveda

itihāsa, traditional account of former events

kāmyeṣṭi, optional rite performed from desire of definite benefit or from special interested motives

ṛṣatriya, a member of the reigning or 'military order,' nobleman

- loka*, 'world,' position of safety, selected or sacred place in which to exist safely
- maṇḍala*, a 'book' of the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā
- mantra*, Vedic verse, holy or powerful formula
- Maruts, gods of storm, also associated with rain and lightning and forming a troop
- Mīmāṃsā or Pūrvamīmāṃsā, "inquiry into or interpretation of (the mantra portion of the Veda)," at first exegesis of the Vedic ritual, developing into a philosophical school and doctrine of salvation
- pāda*, a fourth part of a regular stanza, verse
- Parjanya, the god of rain
- Prajāpati, "Lord of creatures" the great god among or above the Vedic deities, the creator who is the All or Totality
- prāṇa*, breath, vital breath, life-breath, vital power
- pravargya*, a ceremony introductory to the soma sacrifice at which fresh milk is poured into a heated vessel
- punarmṛtyu*, repeated dying
- purōhita*, domestic chaplain or family priest of a ruler or nobleman
- Puruṣa, Primeval Man as the origin and the 'soul' of the universe
- Pūrvamīmāṃsā, see Mīmāṃsā
- Pūṣan, a god, the knower and guardian of roads who protects cattle and can make hidden goods easy to find
- rājasūya*, the royal consecration
- Ṛbhu, name of three deified artisans celebrated for their unusual skill
- ṛc*, *ṛg*, plural *ṛcas*, sacred verse of the Ṛgveda, recited in praise of a deity
- ṛṣi*, seer and inspired poet of a Vedic text, regarded as a patriarchal sage
- ṛta*, (cosmic and ritual) Order and truth on which human order depends
- Rudra, a god, representative of the uncultivated and unconquered nature, excluded from the soma ritual
- śākhā*, "branch" or school of the Veda, adhering to its own traditional text and interpretation
- saṃdhi*, *saṃdhi*, euphonic combination of the final and initial sounds of words etc. in a sentence
- saṃhitā*, a continuous text treated according to the euphonic rules; a methodically arranged collection of texts
- śāstra*, hymn of praise, invocation
- sattra*, a great soma sacrifice, lasting from 13 to 61 or 100 days
- sautrāmaṇī*, an in all probability originally popular sacrificial rite, performed, *inter alia*, to cure the sacrificer by means of an oblation of beer and an animal sacrifice
- Savitar, the Sun (in its dynamic aspect as the stimulator)
- smārta*, recorded in or based on the *smṛti*
- smṛti*, the whole body of sacred tradition as far as remembered by human teachers
- soma*, the soma plant and its juice, offered in libations to the gods; also king of the plants and representative of the elixir of life
- soma pavamāna*, the soma in process of clarifying
- śrāddha*, a ceremony for the benefit of the dead ancestors observed at fixed periods as well as on occasions of mourning or rejoicing
- śrauta*, based on the *śruti*, relating and conformable to the sacred tradition of the Veda
- śrautasūtra*, a *sūtra* work based on the *śruti*
- śruti*, that which has been heard, the sacred knowledge of the *ṛṣis*, orally transmitted by brahmins, the eternal and infallible truth which is embodied in the Veda
- stotra*, (hymn of) praise; those Vedic texts which are sung
- sūkta*, lit. good recitation; Vedic hymn

surā, a sort of beer

Sūrya, the Sun as a heavenly body (also as a deity)

sūtra, a short or aphoristic rule or formulation; any manual consisting of such succinct formulations

svāhā, hail (to)!, may blessing rest on!

Tvaṣṭar, a god, the celestial carpenter, builder, and artisan

udgātar, the chanter, one of the chief priests of the *śrauta* ritual

vāja, generative and regenerative power

vājapeya, "drink of *vāja*," a form of the soma sacrifice performed by rulers or brahmins aspiring to the highest position

vajra, Indra's 'thunderbolt' weapon

vaṃśa, genealogy

Varuṇa, the great god, representative of the static aspects of kingship, guardian of the *ṛta*

Vāyu, the god of wind

vedāṅga, comprehensive name of (classes of) works regarded as auxiliary to the Veda; six are usually enumerated

vidhi, rule, (ritual) precept, direction (esp. for the performance of a rite)

virāj, the hypostatization of the conception of the universe as a whole; also name of a particular Vedic verse consisting of three *pādas* of eleven syllables; the *dvīpadā virāj* consists of four *pādas* of five syllables each

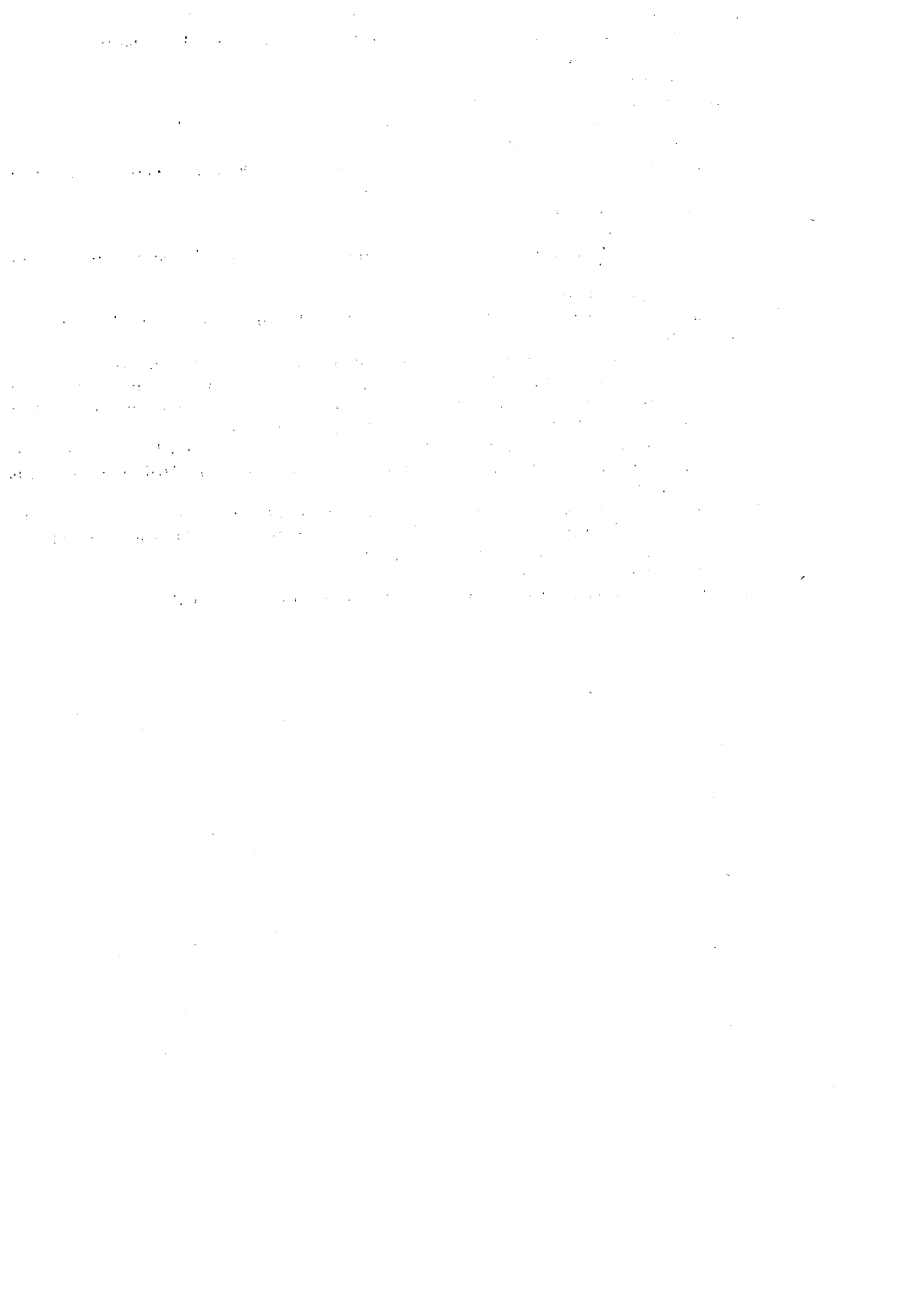
viṣṭuti, a variety of arrangement for reciting the verses of a particular eulogium
Viśve Devās, sometimes all the gods collectively, elsewhere the 'All-gods,' being a particular class of gods

Vṛtra, (power of) obstruction, represented as a snake, the chief adversary of Indra, whom he tried to prevent from establishing a cosmos and a habitable world

Yama, the first man and ruler of the deceased

Yamī, twin-sister of Yama

yūpa, the post or stake to which the sacrificial victim is fastened



ABBREVIATIONS

I. Texts (original sources)

AiĀ.	Aitareya-Āraṇyaka
AiB.	Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa
AiUp.	Aitareya-Upaniṣad
ĀpDh(s).	Āpastamba-(Āpastambīya-)Dharmasūtra
ĀpŚ.	Āpastamba-Śrautasūtra
ĀśvG	Āśvalāyana-Gr̥hyasūtra
ĀśvŚ	Āśvalāyana-Śrautasūtra
AVP.	Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā (Paippalāda recension)
AVPar.	Parīṣiṣṭas of the Atharvaveda
AV(Ś).	Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā (Śaunakiya recension)
AVVulg.	Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā (vulgate text)
BĀU.	Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad
BhāgPur.	Bhāgavata-Purāṇa
BhārG.	Bhāradvāja-Gr̥hyasūtra
BhG.	Bhagavadgītā
BŚ.	Baudhāyana-Śrautasūtra
ChU.	Chāndogya-Upaniṣad
DhŚ.	Dharmaśāstra
GB.	Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa
GG.	Gobhila-Gr̥hyasūtra
JB.	Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa
JG.	Jaimini-Gr̥hyasūtra
JUB.	Jaiminiya-Upaniṣad-Brāhmaṇa
KapS.	Kapiṣṭhala-Kāṭha-Saṃhitā
Kauś.	Kauśika-Sūtra
KauśUp.	Kauśītaki-Upaniṣad
KB.	Kauśītaki- or Śāṅkhāyana-Brāhmaṇa
KS.	Kāṭhaka-Saṃhitā (Kāṭhaka)
KŚ.	Kātyāyana-Śrautasūtra
MārK Pur.	Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāṇa
Mbh.	Mahābhārata
MG.	Mānava-Gr̥hyasūtra
MS.	Maitrāyaṇi-Saṃhitā
MuU.	Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad
Nir.	Nirukta
P., Pur.	Purāṇa
PB.	Pañcaviṃśa-Brāhmaṇa
PrUp.	Praśna-Upaniṣad
Rām.	Rāmāyaṇa
RV.	R̥gveda-Saṃhitā
ŚĀ.	Śāṅkhāyana-Āraṇyaka
ŚātB.	Śātyāyana-Brāhmaṇa
SB.	Śaḍviṃśa-Brāhmaṇa
ŚB.	Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa

ŠBK.	Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, Kāṇviya recension
ŠBM.	Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, Mādhyam̐dina recension
ŠG.	Śāṅkhāyana-Gṛhyasūtra
ŠS.	Śāṅkhāyana-Śrautasūtra
SV.	Sāmaveda
SVB.	Sāmavidhāna-Brāhmaṇa
ŚvetUp.	Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad
TĀ.	Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka
TB.	Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa
TS.	Taittirīya-Saṃhitā
Up.	Upaniṣad
VaikhSm.	Vaikhānasa-Smārtasūtra
Vait.	Vaitānasūtra
Vāl.	Vāḷakhilya
VāsDhŚ.	Vāsiṣṭha-Dharma-Śāstra
ViPur.	Viṣṇu-Purāna
VS.	Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā
VSK.	Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā, Kāṇva-Śākhā
Yājñ.	Yājñavalkya-Smṛti
Yt.	Yašt
YV.	Yayurveda

II. Abbreviated titles of books mentioned in the footnotes

The bibliographical references in the footnotes are only a selection. For complete and systematic lists of books and articles see the very reliable bibliographies by L. Renou, *Bibliographie védique*, Paris 1931 and R. N. Dandekar, *Vedic Bibliography*, 3 vol., Bombay 1946; Poona 1961 and 1973.

Album Kern	Album H. Kern, Leiden 1903
Arnold, Vedic metre	E. V. Arnold, <i>Vedic metre in its historical development</i> , Cambridge 1905
Aufrecht, Ait. Br.	Th. Aufrecht, <i>Das Aitareya Brāhmaṇa</i> (herausgegeben), Bonn 1879, ² 1972
Aufrecht, H. R.	Th. Aufrecht, <i>Die Hymnen des Rigveda</i> (herausgegeben), 2 vol., Berlin 1861–1863 (= Weber, I. S. VI and VII); ² Bonn 1877; ³ Wiesbaden 1955; ⁴ 1968
Bergaigne, R. V.	A. Bergaigne, <i>La religion védique d'après les hymnes du Rig-Veda</i> , 3 vol. and Index, Paris 1878; 1881; 1883; 1897; ² 1963
Bloomfield, A. V. G. B.	M. Bloomfield, <i>The Atharva-Veda and the Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa</i> , Strassburg 1899
Bloomfield, H. A. V.	M. Bloomfield, <i>Hymns of the Atharva-Veda</i> , Oxford 1897; ² Varanasi (Benares) 1964; 1967
Bloomfield, Repetitions	M. Bloomfield, <i>Rig-Veda Repetitions</i> , 2 vol. (3 parts), Cambridge Mass. 1916
Bloomfield and Edgerton, V. V. or Variants	M. Bloomfield and F. Edgerton (vol. III also M. B. Emeneau), <i>Vedic Variants</i> , 3 vol., Philadelphia 1930; 1932; 1934
Bodewitz, J. B.	H. W. Bodewitz, <i>Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa</i> , I, 1–65, Thesis Utrecht 1973 (Leiden 1973)
Caland, Auswahl	W. Caland, <i>Das Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa in Auswahl</i> , Amsterdam Acad. 1919; ² 1960

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- Comm. Vol. S. Varma Siddha-Bhāratī, Siddheshwar Varma Presentation Volume, 2 vol., Hoshiarpur 1950
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- Abh. Abhandlungen
- ABORI Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona
- Acad. Academy, Akademie, etc.
- AIOC All India Oriental Conference (Proceedings of)
- AJPh American Journal of Philology, Baltimore
- ALB Adyar Library Bulletin, Adyar-Madras
- AO (Lugd.) Acta Orientalia, Leiden
- AP The Aryan Path, Bombay
- ArchOr Archiv Orientální, Prague
- ASGW Abhandlungen der sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, Leipzig
- AsSt Asiatische Studien, Bern
- BB Beiträge zur Kunde der indogermanischen Sprachen, herausgegeben von A. Bezenberger etc., Göttingen
- BDCRI Bulletin Deccan College Research Institute, Poona
- Ber. Sächs. Ges. or BSGW Berichte (über die Verhandlungen) der (vgl.) sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, Leipzig
- BhV Bhāratiya Vidyā, Bombay
- BSL Bulletin de la Société de Linguistique de Paris
- BSO(A)S Bulletin of the School of Oriental (and African) Studies, London

DLZ	Deutsche Literatur-Zeitung, Berlin
EW	East and West, Rome
Ges. d. Wiss.	Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften
GGA	Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen, Göttingen
H. C. I. P.	History and Culture of the Indian People, (I, The Vedic Age) edited by R. C. Majumdar and A. D. Pusalkar, London 1951
HR	History of Religions, Chicago
IA	Indian Antiquary, Bombay
IC	Indian Culture, Calcutta
IF	Indogermanische Forschungen, Strassburg, Berlin
IHQ	Indian Historical Quarterly, Calcutta
IJJ	Indo-Iranian Journal, The Hague
IL	Indian Linguistics, Calcutta
Ind. Hist. Cong(ress)	Indian History Congress
Int. Philos. Quart.	International Philosophical Quarterly, Bronx, N. Y.
I. S.	see Weber
J.	Journal
JA	Journal asiatique, Paris
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society, New Haven, Baltimore
JASB(L)	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (Letters), Calcutta
JAS Bombay	Journal of the Asiatic Society, Bombay
JBBRAS	Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay
JBORS	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Society, Patna
JBRS	Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Patna
JGJKSV	see JGJRJ
JGJRI	Journal of the Ganganath Jha Research Institute, or J. G. J. Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha, Allahabad
JIH	Journal of Indian History, Kerala University, Trivandrum
JOIB	Journal of the Oriental Institute, Baroda
JOR	Journal of Oriental Research, Madras
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London
JRASB	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta
JSVOI	Journal of the Śrī-Veṅkaṭeśvara Oriental Institute, Tirupati
JUB	Journal of the University of Bombay
JUPHS	Journal of the University of Poona, Humanities Section
K. S.	Kleine Schriften
KZ	Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung auf dem Gebiete der indogermanischen Sprachen, herausgegeben von A. Kuhn etc., Berlin, Gütersloh, Göttingen
Mem. Vol.	Memorial Volume
MO	Le monde oriental, Uppsala
MSL	Mémoires de la société de linguistique de Paris
MSS	Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft
NG(GW)	Nachrichten der Göttinger Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften

NIA	New Indian Antiquary, Bombay
N. S.	New Series
OH	Our Heritage, Calcutta
Or.	Orientalists
OT	Oriental Thought, Nasik
PAOS	Proceedings of the American Oriental Society; see JAOS
PAPhA(ss)	Proceedings of the American Philosophical Association, Philadelphia
PO	The Poona Orientalist, Poona
PrBh	Prabuddha Bhārata, Almora
Proc.	Proceedings
Purāṇa	Purāṇa, edited by the All-India Kashiraj Trust, Varanasi (Benares)
QJMS	Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society, Bangalore
RHR	Revue de l'Histoire des Religions, Paris
RO	Rocznik Orientalistyczny, Kraków
SB	Sitzungsberichte
SBBAW	Sitzungsberichte der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, München
S. P.	Summaries of papers
TAPhA	Transactions of the American Philological Association
Trans.	Transactions
Univ.	University
VIJ	Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal, Hoshiarpur
Vol.	Volume
Wiss. Zs.	Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift
WZKM	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, Wien (Vienna)
WZKSA	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens, Wien (Vienna)
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft, Leipzig, Wiesbaden
ZII	Zeitschrift für Indologie und Iranistik, Leipzig

INDEX

The order is that of the Roman alphabet. The numbers refer to pages, numbers before n. to a footnote on the page mentioned. The Glossary and the Bibliography are not indexed, the footnotes only sporadically.

- abbreviations (of metrical units etc.) 175
abhicāra 83, 281
 Abhyāvartin 130
 abruptness 420
 accuracy 101
 act of truth 147
 actual past 117, 183
 adaptation (of a narrative) 397f.
 Adbhuta-Brāhmaṇa 349f.
 addendum, addition (see also 'spurious'
 . . .) 28, 188, 191f., 215, 274
 additive sentence construction 224
 address 262
adhikāra 185
adhvaryu 244, 323, 329, 332, 369, 415
adhyātma 45, 47, 55
adhyāya 9, 35, 43, 328, 344
 Aditi 111, 140, 181, 333
 Āditya(s) 177, 182, 192, 267, 302, 366,
 378, 386
 adjective (fixed) 194
 Advaita (see also Vedānta) 50
 aesthetic value 211, 213, 215, 220, 298
 332
āgama 53
 Agastya 11, 48, 121, 145, 148, 200f., 202
 Agni 10, 12, 13, 51, 54, 67, 68, 85, 86, 91,
 94 n., 95, 96, 98, 99, 100, 101, 104, 106,
 107, 111, 113, 116, 117, 132, 133, 134,
 135, 139, 140, 142, 143, 148, 149, 152,
 157, 161, 168, 170, 176, 177, 178, 179,
 180, 182, 183, 187, 191, 192, 199, 201f.,
 216, 217, 219, 220, 229, 234, 235, 236,
 237, 242, 243, 245, 246, 249, 252, 256,
 258, 260, 261, 263, 265, 267, 280, 281,
 289, 301, 302, 304, 314, 333, 336, 366,
 367, 372, 373, 374, 381, 384, 386ff.,
 401, 402, 422
 - -and-Soma 399, 400
agnicayana 289, 329, 352, 353, 389, 424
agnihotra 307, 328, 346, 348, 350, 352,
 353, 359, 360, 380, 381, 383, 384, 428
agniṣṭoma 86, 190, 348, 349
agnyādhāna 346, 350, 352 n., 421
 Agnyādheya-Brāhmaṇa 351
āgrāyaṇa 355
 Ahi Budhnya 166
 Aitareya-Āraṇyaka 424ff., 428f.
 - -Brāhmaṇa 33, 81, 83, 339, 342, 344ff.,
 355, 357, 360, 396, 405, 420, 424, 427
 - -Upaniṣad 426
 Aitareyins 86, 380
 Aitiḥāsikas 46
ājyasūkta 89
ākhyāna 394, 396, 416
 - theory 198, 206ff., 209 n., 369, 407
ākhyāyikā 408
 Akūpārā 401
alamkāra 255 n., 412 n.
 allegories 134f., 137, 245, 270, 271, 293
 n., 412, 423
 alliteration 224, 225, 259, 411
 allusions 213, 214, 240, 241, 242, 243,
 244, 369, 397, 419, 422 n.
 Alsdorf, L. 208f.
 Amā-Brāhmaṇa 351
 Ambariṣa 396
 ambiguity 212, 240, 420 n.
 ambivalence 245
aṃhas 157
āmnāya 43
 Amor and Psyche 204
 amorous adventures 403
 amplification 229, 235
amṛtam 367
 amulet 257, 279, 281, 300, 301, 428
 anachronism 39, 41
 anacoluthon 214, 238
 analogy 345, 375, 377 n.
 analytic expression or presentation 229
 n., 301, 418, 419
 Ānandatīrtha 427
 anaphora 224, 229, 298
 Ānartīya 427
 ancestors 74, 77, 85, 94, 97f., 112, 123,
 124, 131, 139, 191, 330

- ancillary literature 8, 208, 307ff., 319 n.,
 331, 347, 356
 Āndhra Pradesh 342
 androgynous primeval being 137 n.
 anecdote 403
 Aṅgiras, Aṅgirasas 49, 97, 180, 186,
 267f., 270, 271, 277, 309, 366, 386,
 401
 Aṅgirasakalpa 268, 277, 309
 animals 94, 124, 166, 177, 200, 254, 255,
 257, 403
 animal sacrifice 104, 323 n., 328, 344,
 351, 371 n.
 anonymity 405 n., 406, 413
 anonymous authorities or traditions 379,
 408
 anthropomorphism 96, 302
 anti-gods (see also *asuras*) 386
 antithesis 227, 237, 247, 298
anubrāhmaṇa 320
anukramaṇī(s), *anukramaṇikā* 14 n.,
 34f., 35, 40, 58 n., 76, 82, 143, 272,
 273, 320, 321
anumantraṇa 269
anusāsana 408
anustubh 173, 174, 373, 381
anuvāka 9, 272
Anuvākānukramaṇī 34f.
anuvākyā 326 n.
anuvyākhyāna 408
 Apālā 78, 145, 198, 401 n.
 Āpas (see also Waters) 162
 Āpastamba 337, 340
 – -Śrautasūtra 351
 aphorisms, aphoristic poetry 154, 264,
 321
 apocrypha 35f.
 aposiopesis 262 n.
 apotropaic (purport of hymns) 143
 appeasement (see also *śānti*) 148
 appendix (see also addition) 35f., 192,
 195, 354
 Āpri hymns 34, 102, 104, 182, 187, 215 n.
apsaras(es) 203, 281
 Āraṇyagāna or Āraṇyakagāna 317, 318
āraṇyaka 8, 20, 45, 177, 318, 319, 327,
 334, 342, 423ff.
āraṇyakakāṇḍa 431
 Āraṇyakasamhitā 313 n., 317, 318
 Arbuda 78
 archaic (cultures, milieus, style, views
 etc.) 132, 137 n., 164, 205, 212, 213,
 222, 227, 233, 257, 279, 332, 342, 354,
 410, 415, 418, 419
 archaization 15, 212, 213
 archetype (divine) 375, 386, 389
 Āreika 313, 316, 321
 argumentation 293, 295, 340, 346, 359,
 368ff., 376, 411, 413f., 418, 432
 Arnold, E. V. 27
 arrangement (of hymns) 9ff., 13, 15, 16,
 17, 26, 28, 30, 272ff., 314 n.
 – (order) of stanzas 30, 192, 272ff., 314,
 319, 327
 – of words 229, 233
 Ārṣānukramaṇī 34f.
 Ārṣeya-Brahmaṇa 316 n., 320
arthāntaranyāsa 264
arthasūkta 272
arthavāda 186, 340, 420
 artificiality 211, 212, 222, 226
 Aruṇaketu 424
 Aruṇaketuka fire 429
 Āruṇi 353, 366, 383
 Aryaman 111
 Aryans 20, 22ff., 120, 123, 128, 129, 157,
 200, 277 n., 306, 336, 361, 370
 Ārya Samāj 54
 Āśādha 380
asat 136, 432
 asceticism 149, 294, 423
 Asita 407
 assonance 224
 assonant combinations 226
aṣṭaka 9, 35
 Aṣṭāvakra 49
 astrology 308
 astronomy 362
asuras 334, 366, 385 n., 386, 389, 390,
 401, 417, 419, 421, 422, 431, 432
 Āśvalāyana 16, 30, 31f., 34, 45, 427
 – -Śrautasūtra 83, 427
aśvamedha (see also horse sacrifice) 328,
 330, 332, 415
aśvattha 257
 Aśvins 46, 68, 77, 86, 99, 101, 103, 119f.,
 123, 124f., 125, 128, 157, 168, 179,
 186, 191, 193, 198, 215 n., 234, 250,
 261, 295, 330, 333, 387
 asyndeton 237
 Atharvan(s) 200, 267f., 270, 277, 287,
 297, 308, 309
 Ātharvaṇarahasya 270 n., 311
 Atharvāṅgirasah 267
 atharvan(ic) features, matter, style etc.
 12, 13, 29, 69, 91, 103, 131, 142, 187f.,
 196, 268, 331, 334, 355f.
 Atharvaprāyaścittāni 308

- Atharvaveda, Atharvavedins 8, 28f.,
 35, 103, 134, 138, 139, 142, 144, 151,
 174, 175, 177, 188, 192, 200, 230, 254,
 256, 258, 267ff., 339, 342, 375, 408,
 428
 – -Pariśiṣṭa 307f.
atiśayokti 264
 Atithigva 123
ātman 45, 50, 140, 295, 366
ātmastuti 110
 Ātreya 325 n.
 Atri(s) 9, 76, 131, 175, 184, 241
atyasṭi 176
 audience 79, 108f., 116, 122, 123, 156,
 157, 185, 187, 196 n., 197, 198, 200,
 209 n., 231, 233, 234, 236, 240, 243,
 248, 262, 346, 373, 374, 380, 404, 413,
 419
 Aukheya(s) 324
 Aulāna 89
 Aurobindo 54, 244 n.
 Auśanasādbhutāni 308
 authorship 76f.
 Avesta 20f., 102 n., 174, 181, 197
axis mundi 248
 Āyu 204 n.
āyusyam 280

 Bādarāyaṇa 310
bahīṣpavamāna-stotra 349
bahvra 30
 balanced binary groupings 222
 ballad 159f., 196, 201, 203, 207
 banality 212
bandhu 340, 413 n.
 bard 405
 bargain 402
barhis 104
 Barku Vārṣṇa 379
 Baroda 321
 Bāṣkala 16, 37, 45
 Bāṣkalamantra-Upaniṣad 47
 Bāṣkala-Saṃhitā 37
 battle 110, 129, 144, 216, 218
 – charms 144
 Baudhāyana 337
 – -Śrautasūtra 204
 beauty 217 n.
 Behaghel's tendency 223 n.
 Belvalkar, S. K. 27
 Bergaigne, A. 13, 57, 84
 beyond, the 403
 Bhaga 98, 239, 246, 284
 Bhāllabeya 381, 404
 Bharadvāja(s) 9, 131, 192, 219, 396
 Bharatas 146
 Bhārati 104
 Bhāratiya-Nāṭyaśāstra 310
bhāṣya 39, 343
 Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskarādhvarīndra 321
 Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara(miśra) 326, 342f., 346
 Bhattacharyya, D. 276
 Bhavabhūti 52
bhāvavrttam 93, 137, 139
 Bhṛgu(s) 267f., 271, 382, 393, 412
 Bhṛgvaṅgirasah 267
 Bhujuyu 124
 biblical parallels 203 n.
 Bihar 276, 361
 biography 3
 bipartite hymns 191
 – stanzas 223
 bird(s) 66, 135, 143, 148, 149, 246, 253,
 399
 Black Yajurveda, see also Kṛṣṇayajur-
 veda 52, 323ff., 328, 332, 339, 348,
 354, 357, 429
 blessing 144
 blindness 78, 124, 158
 Bloomfield, M. 26, 28, 58, 356
 boon 402, 422 n.
 brachylogy 236f., 259
 Brahmā 268
brahmacārin 293, 355
brahman 2, 7 n., 37, 50, 51, 69, 76, 80,
 134, 268, 269, 270, 271, 286, 287, 289,
 293, 294, 296, 310, 330, 344, 346, 349,
 356, 363, 365, 366, 373, 389, 390, 402,
 404, 406, 430, 432
brāhmaṇa(s) 8, 19, 20, 22f., 30, 31, 32,
 34, 36, 39, 42, 45f., 47, 50, 52, 56,
 58, 70, 72, 75, 80, 84, 86, 88, 118, 127,
 137, 138, 177, 189, 208, 209, 270, 295,
 305, 308, 318, 320, 323, 324, 325ff.,
 332, 334, 336f., 339ff., 381 n., 423f.
 –, titles of some of the lost – 356 n.
brāhmaṇācchamsin 269
 Brāhmaṇasarvasva 39
 Brāhmaṇaspati (see also Bṛhaspati) 137,
 262
 Brahmasūtras 310
brahmaudana 290
brahmavādin 345, 381
 Brahmāvarta 361
 Brahmadeva 268, 269 n., 270
brahmodya 134, 304, 331, 353, 382, 383,
 408, 412, 424, 429
 breach of faith 402

- breath 291, 295, 366, 371, 398, 426, 432
 brevity 236ff., 419f.
 Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad 47, 353, 379, 431
 Bṛhaddevatā 33, 38, 40, 126, 207
 Bṛhaspati 68, 69, 89, 97, 107, 111, 116, 191, 199, 201, 365, 418
brhat 315
brhatī 190, 387
 Brown, W. Norman 135
 Buddha, Buddhism 20ff., 46, 53, 209, 355
 Burnouf, E. 56
 cadence 194
 Caland, W. 58, 318, 319, 349, 356f., 360
captatio benevolentiae 231
 Caraka(s) 324, 326, 355 n.
 Caraka-adhvaryu(s) 355
 Carakakaṭha 326
 Carakaśākhā 326
carana 29, 30f., 327 n.
 Cāraṇavaidya 272
 Cāraṇavyūha 16 n., 31, 37, 324, 337
 carmen style 222 n., 229
 carpenter, cartwright 253 n.
 Cārvākas 46
 catenary structure 196, 227
 Caturhotāras, Caturhotra 334, 351
cāturhotraciti 430
cāturmāsya 328, 346, 352
 causal relation 393
 celebration 114
 celestial prototype 248 n.
 Celtic sagas 206
 chains of reasonings 214
 Chaitanya, K. 60
 Chandānukramaṇī 34f.
 Chāndogya-Brāhmaṇa 347 n.
 Chāndogyamantrabhāṣya 321 n.
 Chāndogya-Upaniṣad 47, 431
 Chandonukramaṇī 327 n.
 change of subject 421
 chant 316, 320, 321f., 339, 431
 characterization 215, 217
 chariot-race 130, 169, 253
 charm 144, 163, 191, 192, 200, 277ff., 281ff., 300, 303
 Charpentier, J. 207
 chastity 145f.
 chiasmus 226f., 229
 Chidambaram 321
 child 284
 chronology 3, 11ff., 15, 18, 20ff., 26ff., 88, 194, 273 n., 275, 332, 347 n., 349, 354, 357ff., 362, 369 n., 393
 circumlocution 252
 civilization, Indian 1ff., 277, 361ff.
 classification 248, 374, 431
 classificatory system 372
 clearness 227
 climax 181, 229, 256
 colloquial usage 256, 258
 colophon 360 n.
 colour words 161, 218, 281 n.
 combination of mythical themes 398f.
 comic passages 168
 commentators 39ff., 310f., 342, 346, 347, 349, 356
comparatio compendiaria 237 n.
 comparison (see also simile) 237, 242, 248, 250, 263
 competition 80f.
 complements 375
 complication 179
 composite hymns 191f.
 compounds 213, 222, 235, 410
 concatenation 197, 227, 304, 382, 419
 concentration 236
 conciliatory charms 284f.
 concise style 237, 419
 concluding phrases 416
 concrete and abstract 244f.
 condensation 419
 confirmation 105, 179, 180, 228, 233
 conjuration 225, 301
 consecration, consecratory word or text 83, 87, 90, 144, 277, 279, 286, 292, 305, 308, 356, 396 n.
 contests 80, 132, 167
 continuity 189
 contradictions 31, 124, 137, 263f., 369 n.
 contrast 219, 237, 247
 controversy 379ff., 382
 conversation 199ff., 210 n., 262, 379, 421, 422
 convivial poetry 405 n.
 correlations 251
 correspondence 251, 258, 382
 corruptions 15
 cosmic drama 130, 389
 – miracles 116f.
 cosmogony 115, 136f., 181, 219, 220, 274, 291, 362, 373, 389, 390, 407, 408
 cosmology 281, 362
 counter-argument 380

- cow(s) 144, 166, 201, 244, 245, **249**, 250, 253, 256, 263, 287
- creation 137, 138, 177, 389
- crow 163
- Cūlikā-Upaniṣad 291
- cult dramas 205
- cumbrous description 239
- curse 112f., 158, 281, 283
- Cyavana, Cyavāna 124, 393, **400**
- cycle(s) 392
- cyclical composition 180
- events 115, 392
- dadhīgharma* 90
- Dadhikrā, Dadhikrāvan 140, 166
- daily life 254, 362, 381, 412
- daivata* 32
- dakṣiṇā* 75, 79, 97, 170, 243, 263, 286, 377
- dānastuti* 100, 164, 170, 180, 181, 186, 187, 192, 287, 304
- dancing 205
- Dārila 310
- darśapūrṇamāsa* 328
- dāsa* 24, 129, 222
- dāśahotra* sacrifices 350
- Daśavraja 125
- dasyu* 24
- dates 3
- Dawn (see also Uṣas) 67f., **83**, **98**, **116**, 156f., 163ff., 213 n., 217, **218**, **234**, 242, 249, 252
- Dayānanda Sarasvatī 54
- death 91, 103, 138f., 142, **290**, **382**, **397**, 403, 428, 429, 432
- deities, see gods
- Deluge 391
- demons 94, 103, 111, 125, **129**, 142, 157, 278, 280, 281, 365, 396, 416
- deprecations 112
- description, descriptive elaboration 215, 216, 217, 218, 256, 393
- destruction 187
- deva* (see gods) 94 n., 386, 389, 431
- Devāpi 89
- Devatādhyāya-Brāhmaṇa 320
- Dhāraṇalakṣaṇam 320
- dharma* (texts), *dharmaśāstras* 34, **36**, 39, 48, 319 n.
- Dharuṇa 76
- dhī* 66f., 70f., 73, 74, 81
- Dhiraḡovindaśarman 311
- dialect 213
- dialectics 370ff., 376
- dialogue (hymn) 146, 151, 154, 159, 171, 196, 198ff., 217, 262, 287, 303, 382, 408, 411, 414
- dichotomous argumentation 374f.
- diction 298f.
- (imitative) 176
- didactic (hymn, stanza) 147, 304
- prose, texts 295, 308
- differences in detail 124
- digressions 178
- dikṣā* 356
- direct speech 118, 198, 206, 262, 411
- Dirghajihvī 364, 400f.
- Dirghaśravas Ausija 125
- Dirghatamas 11, 77, 135
- discussion 352, 379ff., 404, 410, 411, 413, 420, 424
- diseases 278, 280, 281, 303, 362
- disputation 379ff., 413
- distress 282
- Divodāsa 131
- domestic priest, see *purohita*
- ritual (and texts) 82, 83, 86, 145, **277**, 280, 282, 334, 348
- donations 170
- double entendre 246 n.
- image 250
- sense 242, 246f.
- tradition 400
- dramatic (arrangement etc.) 159
- element 210
- performances 205f., 209 n.
- tale 386
- Drapsa 118
- draught-ox 287, 291, 292
- Dravidian languages 4
- dream 148, 163, 192, 283
- dual deities 94, 99, 103, 180, 181, 182, 215 n.
- Dumézil, G. 59 n., 121f., 259 n.
- duplicate myths 119
- stanza 180
- duplication 233
- (internal) 229
- Durga 33, 208
- Durgā 51
- dvīpadā virāj* 176
- dyad 190
- dynasties 131
- Earth (hymn to the) 54, 302
- ecstasy 149
- elaboration 178, 179, 182, 187, **212**, **215**, 298, 301, 359, 389, 412

- Elementarverwandschaft 252
 élite, spiritual 209
 Elizarenkova, T. 59
 ellipsis, elliptic diction 132, 235, 236,
 259, 419f., 424
 emotion 109, 151, 156ff., 206, 224, 226,
 227, 229, 233, 234, 243, 256, 257, 258,
 262
 emphasis 196, 232, 419
 enigma (see also riddles) 186, 240
 enjambment 174, 224
 enumerations 102f., 142, 180f., 187, 236,
 261, 298, 301, 307, 329, 374, 415, 418
 epic(s) 21 n., 34, 49, 125, 148, 159,
 180, 209, 215, 310, 355, 387 n.
 epilogue 187
 episode 179, 180, 216, 379
 epithet 106, 108, 110, 161, 214, 223,
 228, 231ff., 410
 equalization 248
 equivalences 340, 369, 373
 erotic poetry 151f., 200
 esoteric doctrine or information 93, 133,
 142, 240, 292, 345, 353
 – interpretation, knowledge, speculation
 etc. 47, 54, 141, 242, 291, 316, 354,
 370, 396 n., 402, 405 n., 414, 423,
 424ff.
 eternity of the Veda 7 n.
 etymology 377, 387, 411, 424, 431
 euhemerism 53
 eulogist(s), eulogy 70ff., 74, 78, 80f., 83,
 87, 93, 104, 106, 109, 111, 140, 154,
 166, 171, 174, 179, 180, 186, 198, 200,
 211, 213, 236, 262, 274, 407
 exactitude 419, 420
 exaggeration 128, 264
 exegesis (ancient) 17, 25, 32, 43, 45f.,
 397f., 400
 exemplary myth 153, 381, 385
 exorcism 83, 142, 147, 181, 278, 299,
 303
 exordium 185, 186
 expiation 344, 349, 351, 364, 377, 430
 explicative narratives or passages 397f.,
 404, 411, 414
 expressiveness 256
 extension (of metrical units) 175, 187
 Ezour-Vedam 323 n.

 fables 166
 fairy-tale 203
 falcon 120, 166, 202, 398
 family books 9f., 15, 131

 – hymn 131, 191, 192
 – legend 124
 – life 361f.
 – names 123
 – ritual 104
 Fathers 91, 97f., 112, 139, 430
 female figures 94
figura etymologica 226, 229 n.
 figurative (speech etc.) 244f., 251, 260,
 294
 final prayer 111
 – stanza 173, 175, 179, 180, 181, 183,
 185, 186, 187, 195, 204, 224, 232, 245,
 256
 fire 204
 – rites 204
 fixed phrases 221f., 376, 411
 flashback 180, 393
 floating verses 154, 275
 folklore 403
 formula(s), formulaic diction 28 n., 30,
 67, 88, 109, 115, 127, 151, 164, 194,
 211, 212, 213, 221, 225, 231, 235, 238
 n., 256 n., 258, 278, 281, 323, 328,
 332f., 345, 377, 379, 386, 397, 411,
 413, 415, 421f.
 founding 124
 Fount of Youth 394, 400
 four 271 n.
 fragment 10 n., 173 n., 179, 405, 408
 frog(s), frog-hymn 143, 166, 169, 205,
 215 n., 219, 244, 372
 Full and New moon sacrifices 328, 346,
 351, 352, 354, 355, 383, 398, 420
 function of episodes, narratives, stanzas
 397f., 406
 funeral texts 12, 139, 176, 274, 305, 330,
 354, 430

 gambler, gambling 80, 146f., 198, 205,
 217
gāna, 313 n., 315ff., 318, 319f., 321, 322
 Gandharva, gandharvas 68, 203f., 390,
 397 n.
 Gandhi 53
 Ganges 23, 31, 336, 354, 361
 Garuda 47
gāthā(s) 396, 405f., 409
 Gaupāyanas 208
gavām ayana 344, 348, 350, 425
 Gāyatri 52, 68, 355
gāyatri metre 11, 173 n., 177, 182, 190,
 191, 313, 359, 372, 373, 374, 390, 398,
 402

- Geldner, K. F. 57f., 61, 140, 146, 159, 168, 207
genesis of a corpus, hymn etc. 175, 191f., 274f., 352f.
geography 24f., 31, 275, 361
German charms 279, 284 n.
– poetry 221
gestures 412
ghanapāṭha 17
ghee 68f.
ghora 267
Ghoṣā 78, 123, 157, 198
gnomic (passage) 396, 407
Gobhila 321
gods 46, 65, 67, 71, 74, 75, 80, 85, 87, 94ff., 112, 114, 116f., 125, 129, 131, 132, 139, 142, 144, 149, 153, 154, 161, 176, 177, 186, 198, 202, 231, 334, 365f., 369, 371, 386ff., 396, 416, 417, 419, 421, 422, 432
Golden Germ (see also *hiraṇyagarbha*) 138, 294
Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa 267, 339, 355f., 357
Gośarya 128
Gotama 11, 124
Govindasvāmin 342, 346
grahṣṭi-brāhmaṇa 430
grāma 25, 316
Grāmageya(gāna) 316, 318
grammar, grammatical (forms) 183, 213, 363, 410
Grassmann, H. 28 n., 57, 60
Greece, Greek(s) 121, 133 n., 174, 221, 252
grhyasūtra(s) 37, 43, 174, 270, 277 n., 284, 304, 331
Griffith, R. T. H. 61
groupings of stanzas 189
Gr̥tsamada(s) 9, 77, 195
guest 289f.
Gujarat 276, 337
Guṇaviṣṇu 321 n.
guru 43, 52
Halāyudha 39
handwork 245
haplology 237
Hāriscandra 394ff.
Harisvāmin 355
haviṛyañā 352
havis 288
healings (miraculous) 403
heat (creative) 402
heaven 290f., 402, 430, 431, 432
Heaven and Earth 105, 108, 249, 250, 264, 370
henotheism 94 n., 108, 138, 214, 264, 366
Henry, V. 60
herbs 168, 199
hereafter, the 138f.
heresy 46
heroes 94
heroic poetry, sagas or tales 125, 127, 128, 159
Hertel, J. 20 n., 205f.
Hesiod 252
hieratic hymns 29, 296
– language 213, 222
– tradition 405
Highest Principle 291ff.
Hindu literature, period 307, 308, 309
Hiraṇyagarbha 78, 138
Hiraṇyakeśin 337
Hiraṇyastūpa 159
historical poetry 128
– reality 114
historicity 123, 414
history 114, 123, 128ff., 361ff.
Homer 221
homoioteleuton 225, 259, 411
homologation 238f., 243f., 247, 248, 371f., 374
Horsch, P. 357
horse 166, 178 n., 219, 252, 391 n.
– sacrifice 323, 326, 329, 351, 354, 373
hotar 36, 82, 84, 89, 177, 201f., 269 n., 326, 344, 346, 368, 415, 425
human sacrifice 292, 330, 351, 354, 395
humour 168, 200, 226, 247, 413
hymn, see *sūkta*
hypallage 243
hyperbole 213, 224, 228, 263
hypercharacterization 228, 263
hysteron proteron 238
idealism 233f.
identification, identity 237, 242, 243, 244, 248f., 257, 258, 295, 299, 333, 365, 366, 370, 372f., 424
identity of thoughts 215
Iṅā (Iḍā) 48, 104, 289 n., 392
illustrative purpose of a narrative or strophe 397, 400, 407
imagery 156, 163, 174, 193, 248ff., 254, 263, 298
images 180, 211, 214, 217, 228, 245f., 248ff., 252f., 412

- , combination of 250
 imagination 254
 immobilism 216
 imprecation 280, 286f., 301, 302
 improvisation 209 n.
 incantation 83, 142, 144, 279, 289, 349
 incest 152, 153, 363f., 389, 403
 incident 393
 increasing length or ponderousness 223f.
 indirect expression of thoughts 132
 Indo-Aryan civilization 20f.
 — -European (origins) 121, 174, 205, 221, 222, 252, 279
 — -Iranian 174
 Indra 10, 67, 76, 78, 79, 80, 81, 85, 86, 95 n., 96, 97, 98, 100, 101, 104, 108, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115f., 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 124, 125, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132f., 138, 143, 145, 148, 149, 151, 152, 159, 161, 170, 176, 177, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 185, 186, 187, 191, 192, 195, 196, 199, 200, 201, 205, 214, 215 n., 216, 217, 218, 219, 228, 233, 234, 235, 241, 243, 245, 246, 247, 249, 250, 252, 258, 261, 263, 264, 269, 271, 284, 285, 286, 302, 304, 314, 335f., 345f., 363, 365f., 370, 375, 387f., 396, 397, 398f., 400, 401, 417, 426, 432
 — -and-Agni 86, 103, 192, 196
 — -and-Bṛhaspati 182
 — -and-Soma 181, 301
 — -and-Varuṇa 86
 — festival 307 n.
 Indrāṇi 200
 Indus 23f., 162
 — culture 24
 infallibility 49
 initial position 258
 — stanza 178f., 185f., 202
 inspiration 65ff., 73, 74, 81, 211, 212, 242 n., 249
 intercalation (see also 'spurious' . . .) 190
 interpolations 13
 interpretation 370ff.
 interruption(s) 178, 187, 214, 421
 introductory phrases 416
 invitation 101ff., 179, 181, 185, 187, 219, 236, 369
 invocation 101ff., 179, 185, 222, 233, 236
 invulnerability 403
 Iran 21, 222
 irony 168
 Īśa-Upaniṣad 330
 Islam 3
 isolated stanzas 214
 isosyllabism 174
īṣṭi 323, 351
 Īśvara 291
itihāsa 46, 125, 127, 145, 199, 206 n., 207f., 346, 359, 407, 408, 409, 410 n.
 — -purāṇa 208, 407, 408
 Jacobi, H. 21
jaḡatī 173, 175, 176, 177, 373, 398
 Jaiminiya(s) 313, 319f., 321, 322
 Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa 339, 347ff., 357f., 360, 379, 404, 407, 421
 — -Saṃhitā 316, 319
 — -Śrautasūtra 349
 — -Upaniṣad-Brāhmaṇa 431f.
 Jains 46, 208, 209
 Janaka 353, 360, 379, 381, 402
japa 82
 Jarūtha 118
 Jātakas 208f.
jaṭāpātha 17
jñānakāṇḍa 50
jñānasūkta 69
 juxtaposition 237, 247
ḡyotiṣṭoma 84
 Kadrū 47, 398
 Kaegi, A. 61
 Kakṣivāt 11, 77, 124, 127, 193
kāla 291, 295
 Kali 124
 Kālidāsa 52
kalpa 309, 310
kalpasūtra 356
 Kāma 294
kāmyeṣṭi 282, 323, 351
kāṇḍa 272, 325
 Kāṇḍānukrama 325 n.
 Kaṇva(s) 11, 39, 49, 77, 128, 328, 331, 337, 352, 354
 Kāṇviya-Brāhmaṇa 331, 352
 Kapiṣṭhala-(Kaṭhas) 324, 327, 336 n., 337
 — -Saṃhitā 327
kārikā 309
karman 367
karmavidhāna 340
kāru 71
 Kashmir 272 n., 275, 326, 337
 Kaśyapa 77, 284
 Kaṭha(s) 30, 324, 326f., 337, 350, 430
 Kaṭha-Āraṇyaka 430

- Kāthaka-Brāhmaṇa 351
 – -(Saṃhitā), Kāthakam 324, 326f., 332, 351, 430
 Kātyāyana 35, 331
 – -Śrautasūtra 35, 331
 Kauṇṭharavya 428
 Kauśika 270, 278, 285, 289, 307, 308
 – -Sūtra 151, 269 n., 270, 278, 291, 304, 310
 Kauśitakī, Kauśitakins 45, 86, 428
 Kauśitaki-Brāhmaṇa 339, 344, 346f., 355, 357f., 360, 363, 405, 420
 – -Upaniṣad 428
 Kauthumas 313, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 347, 348
 Kauthuma-Saṃhitā 313
 Kautsa 46 n.
 Kavaṣa Ailūṣa 76
kavi 71
kāvya 52
 Keith, A. B. 59, 207f., 332, 349, 357f.
 Kena-Upaniṣad 431
kenning 235, 252
 Kerala 319, 321, 342
 Keśava (commented upon the Kauśika-Sūtra) 290, 291 n.
keśin 149
 Khāṇḍikīya(s) 324
khila 35ff., 88, 104, 313 n., 326, 330, 368
 – -*anukramanī* 35
 Khilagrantha 35
 king(s) 94, 132, 154, 170 n., 171, 191, 285f., 293, 306, 365, 372, 403, 404, 406, 407, 422
 kingship 97
 knowledge 367, 372f., 377, 385, 391, 396, 402, 412, 422
 Kosala(s) 336
kramapāṭha 17
 Kṛṣṇa 118, 218
 – -yajurveda 324, 332
 – -yajurveda-saṃhitā 326
ksatra, *ksatriya* 24, 405 n.
 Kuhn, A. 121
 Kuiper, F. B. J. 80 n., 120 n.
 Kumbakonam 321
 Kuntāpa 35, 304
 Kurukṣetra 336
 Kuru-Pañcālas 31, 336, 358, 361
 Kutsa 11, 78, 115, 125, 199, 401

 Laba Aindra 149
 Labasūkta 149, 199
 labour songs 167, 196

 Langlois, A. 60
 language 164, 171, 211, 354, 358, 410
 Lanman, Ch. R. 58
 legend(s) 56, 57, 59 n., 98, 123ff., 131, 146, 216, 240, 243, 271, 332, 347, 351, 355, 358, 361, 384, 393, 394f., 403, 404, 407, 411, 424, 432
 legend spell 145, 146, 202, 210
 Lévi, S. 205
 liberation (from this world) 290, 292, 299
 life 164
 lifetime 280, 289, 367, 401
 light 68, 69, 157, 164, 242, 252
 lightning 161, 303
linga 72, 83, 132
 litany 86, 110, 179, 331, 425
 literary genres 404ff., 408 n., 409
 – merit 212, 215, 342
 – proprietorship 194
 – research 4f.
 litotes 224 n.
 liturgy 11, 16, 19, 36, 86, 102, 177 n., 190, 193, 207, 304, 323, 348, 369
 Lohengrin 204
loka 292, 367
 Lopāmudrā 145, 202
 love 151f., 153, 202ff., 254, 404
 – -charms 283f., 300
 – magic 151
 Ludwig, A. 57, 60
 lyrics 156ff., 211 n., 217 n.

 Macdonell, A. A. 60, 62 n., 182
 Mād̥hava 40, 41
 Mād̥havabhaṭṭa 41
 Madhyadeśa 336f., 361
 Mād̥hyamdina(s), Mād̥hyam̥diniya 17, 328, 331, 337, 350ff., 354, 430
 Madhyam̥dināyana 331
 Magadha(s) 336
 Māgha 52
maghavan 170
 magic, magical texts 82, 103, 142ff., 205, 257, 273, 274, 277ff., 285, 292, 296, 298ff., 301, 308, 315 n., 334, 378, 383
 Mahābhārata 31, 33, 47, 48, 49, 127, 207
 Mahā-Brāhmaṇa 347
 Mahādeva 31
 Mahaitareya-Upaniṣad 426
 Mahānām̥nis 37 n., 317, 426
 Mahānārāyaṇa-Upaniṣad 429
 Mahāvṛata 427, 428
 Mahidāsa 337

- Aitareya 344
- Mahidhara 331
- Maitrāyaṇī-Saṃhitā 327, 332, 334
- Maitrāyaṇīya(s) 30, 324, 337, 350
- Maitrāyaṇīya-Āraṇyaka 430 n.
- Mānava 327
- Malabar 321
- Malayalam 45
- malediction 112f.
- Māna(s) 77
- Mānava(s) 324, 327
- maṇḍala* 8ff., 26, 27, 35
- Māṇḍūkeya 16, 426, 428
- manīṣā* 66, 67, 71
- manman* 72
- mantha* 428
- mantra(s)* 8 n., 19, 30, 33, 35 n., 39f., 43, 45, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 72, 79, 83, 84, 86, 87, 88, 89, 91, 115, 144, 194, 213 n., 222, 230, 236, 257, 274, 275, 290, 305, 320, 323, 324, 325ff., 332f., 339, 340, 345, 350f., 355, 368, 369, 405, 406, 410, 419, 422, 424, 429f., 430
- Mantra-Brāhmaṇa 347 n.
- Manu 48, 114, 115, 120, 391f., 422
- Manu's sacrifice 391 n., 422
- manuscripts 18 n.
- Manyu 29, 78, 94 n.
- marriage 115, 283, 361f.
- Maruts 66, 97, 101, 110, 121, 124, 125, 126, 148, 157, 179, 192, 200, 205, 213 n., 217, 218, 219, 243, 247, 251, 253, 255, 262, 288, 336
- Mātariśvan 117, 121
- maṭha* 32 n.
- Māthava 422
- matī* 71f.
- maxims 153f., 412f.
- māyā* 116
- Medhātithi 77, 127, 128
- medical charms 278ff.
- medicinal plants (see also herbs) 10
- meditation 430
- melodies 176 n., 314ff., 318, 321f.
- Melusine 204
- memorial stanzas 407
- memorization 15
- mental sacrifice 91
- metaliturgical speculation 290
- metamorphose 403, 412
- metaphor 132, 137, 140, 151, 157, 166, 167, 216, 241, 243, 245, 248, 249, 250, 251, 253, 264, 265, 298
- metaphysics 139, 262
- metaritualism 423, 424
- metonymy 249
- metre(s), metrical schemes, metrum 14, 15, 27, 74, 171, 173ff., 187, 189, 191, 193, 196, 219, 221, 223, 275, 296f. n., 304, 307, 321, 349, 369, 371f., 373, 390, 431
- metrical compositions 405
 - variations 175
- Mīmāṃsā 30, 49, 50
- miracles 125, 126, 140 n.
- Mitra 67, 99, 106, 107, 143, 153, 182, 191, 246, 264, 401
 - -Varuṇa 111, 125, 132, 176, 181, 186, 222, 223, 245, 386
- Mitravindā sacrifice 401
- mixed composition (prose and verse) 206ff., 396, 407
- mnemonic phraseology 420
- monism 136
- monologue 149, 198f., 205, 217
- monotheism 138
- monotony 182, 211, 214, 298, 305, 360 n., 416f.
- moon 399
- 'moral' 116, 152
- moralism, moralistic hymns or stanzas 147, 152ff., 364, 407
- morals 363f.
- morning hymns 165 n.
- motif 13, 93, 96, 124, 179, 196f., 215, 402ff.
- motivation 380, 381, 386, 400, 407, 418, 419, 421
- Mṛtyu 397
- Mudgala 130, 169
- Müller, M. 8 n., 22, 55 n., 56, 121, 204
- music 205, 314, 316, 405
- mysteries 133f., 262f., 383
- mystery plays 205
- mysticism 141, 211, 214, 249, 274, 346, 423
- mythical events (scenes of) 94, 184
 - example 146, 376
 - fact 183
 - figure 183
 - narratives or tales 118f., 123, 241, 335, 341, 345, 348, 358 n., 359, 364, 387, 404, 411, 414, 421, 432
 - past 114, 117, 183, 385
 - predecessors 118
 - reality 114, 117
 - themes 119, 386, 400, 402f., 432

- mythological allusions 164
 – interpretation 242
 myths, mythology 56, 57, 60 n., 94, 98,
 114ff., 216, 240, 241, 243, 257, 294,
 302, 354, 384ff., 401, 422, 431, 432
 – and history 120f.
- Nāciketa (Naciketas') fire 351
 Naciketas 391 n., 397
naigama 32
 Naigeyas 317 n.
 Naighaṅṭuka (see also Nighaṅṭu) 32, 46
 Nairhastyam 37
nairukta 46
 Nakṣatrakalpa 308 n.
nakṣatreṣṭi 351
 Nambudiri 44f., 320, 321
 name(s) 102, 105, 144, 231f., 243, 247,
 301, 329, 340, 377, 378, 414, 421
 names of hymns 8 n. f.
 Namuci 117, 118, 363, 387
 Nārada 268 n., 308, 396
 Narāsaṃsa 104
nārasaṃsīs 406
 Narmadā 276, 337
 narrative literature 208
 – passages or episodes 206, 209 n., 214,
 215, 216, 348, 352, 363, 384ff., 404,
 409, 417, 420
 – poetry, theme 126, 128, 207, 407
 natural phenomena 133, 140, 161, 217,
 254, 384, 385, 403
 nature 93, 94, 161ff., 257, 298, 302
naudhasa 317
 Nema 76
 New Year 164
 Nidānasūtra 321
 Nighaṅṭu 27, 32
 Night 127, 162f., 181
nindā 341
nirukta 72
 Nirukta 32f., 40, 378
niṣkevalya śastra 427
nivid(as) 36, 88, 102, 109f.
 nobility 79, 166, 177
 Nodhas 11, 262
 non-Aryan influences, themes 120, 123,
 129, 142, 200, 362
 noun-adjective combinations 221, 234f.,
 256
 numerals 133 n., 415
 numerical concepts 261f., 369
 – congruence 374 n.
 – statements 133
 – symbolism 373, 425
 – values 177 n.
 nuptial hymn 91
 nyagrodha 245
- objection 380
 obscenities 304
 obscurity 212, 214, 240, 250
odana 270
 Oertel, H. 358, 360
 Ogibenin, B. L. 80 n.
 Oldenberg, H. 13, 27, 57, 58, 61, 62 n.,
 206ff., 214, 342
 omina 283, 307f., 350, 362 n., 428
 omniscience 97, 303
 One, the 136f.
 optional rites 210
 oral explanation or instruction 209 n.,
 304 n., 315
 – reproduction, instruction, tradition
 or transmission 5, 15, 20, 29, 34, 43,
 100, 119, 126, 128, 159, 174, 209, 221,
 239, 276 n., 320, 408, 410, 416, 419
 Order (see also Ṛta) 67, 71, 72, 250, 294,
 364
 order of stanzas 88, 345 n.
 – of *sūktas* 328 n.
 – of words 230, 300
 origins 131, 341, 384ff., 391, 396, 430
 Orissa 268, 276, 337 n.
 oxymoron 247, 263 n.
- pāda* 173, 175f., 185, 189, 193, 194, 195,
 196, 197, 223, 225, 228, 229, 230,
 373
padapāṭha 16f., 29 n., 35, 37, 138, 272,
 273, 304 n., 309, 325, 327, 331
padastobha 316
paddhati 310, 347
 Paippalāda (Atharvaveda), Paippalā-
 dins 138 n., 268, 272ff., 285, 287 n.,
 296, 305 n., 306, 308, 309, 310, 356
 pair concepts 375
 Paithinasi 310
 Pañcālacaṇḍa 428
 Pañcarātrins 46
 Pañcaviṃśa-Brāhmaṇa 41, 318, 339,
 347ff., 357, 366, 420
 panegyrics 52
 Paṇi(s) 97, 146, 180, 201, 399 n.
 Pāṇini 18, 360
 pantheon, see gods
 parables 134, 245f.
 paradox 263

- parallelism 180, 215, 221, 222, 223, 224, 229, 232, 233, 241, 243f., 251, 258, 298, 299, 300, 332, 376, 414, 415
- paraphrastic expression 132, 252
- Parāśara 11
- Pāraskara 39
- parataxis 410
- parenthesis 238f., 421
- paridhāniyā* 195 n.
- pāriplava ākhyāna* 409, 415f.
- pariśiṣṭa* 31, 319 n., 327 n., 331
- Parīśiṣṭas of the Atharvaveda 307ff.
- of the Maitrāyaṇī-Saṃhitā 327 n.
- Parjanya 106, 107, 108, 111, 163, 214, 215 n., 252
- parody 143
- paronomasia 224ff., 228, 441
- Paruccheṣa 11
- parvan* 408, 409
- paryāyasūkta* 272, 305
- passion 284
- Pāsupatas 46
- Patañjali 321
- pathetic passages 224
- Pathyā Svasti 270
- patrons 79, 85, 94, 111, 117, 170, 171, 263, 407
- pauṣṭika* 277, 282
- person and non-person 244f.
- 'personification' 94 n., 98, 108, 390
- philosophical doctrines, episodes, thought 134, 138, 274, 277, 291, 295, 383, 404, 423
- phraseology 112, 157, 193, 212, 213, 243, 252, 256, 298, 299, 413
- Phullasūtra 321
- pictorial expression 217
- pillar of creation 291, 294
- Pippalāda, Pippalādi 272, 276, 309
- Pipru 128
- Pischel, R. 57f., 207
- pītaras* 330
- pitrmedha* 430
- plants 168
- play on words 228, 246f.
- pleonasm 223f.
- poetical excellence 219f.
- poetic conventions 250
- licence 240
- poetics 52 n.
- polemics 341
- political background 130
- polysemy 246
- popular etymology 225 n.
- Hinduism 209
- hymns or poems 28f., 211
- literature 419
- rites 144, 308, 370, 425
- speech 256
- tale, theme, tradition 398, 400, 403
- positive and negative expression or idea combined 223, 230
- post-Ṛgvedic literature or ritual 126f., 134, 369
- post-Vedic literature or period 154, 250 n., 251 n., 264f., 307, 310, 391, 396, 402, 408
- Poucha, P. 28
- Prādhvarāṇām 37
- pragātha* 11, 177, 190, 313f.
- praiṣa* 88
- praiṣasūktas* 36
- praise 71, 93, 105ff., 108f., 114, 123, 128, 130, 171, 186, 304, 373 n.
- Prajāpati 137, 138, 291, 293, 294, 295, 330, 335, 363, 366, 368, 373, 374, 384, 386, 388, 389f., 400, 401, 402, 403, 415, 429, 431, 432
- prāṇa* 295, 426
- prāṇāgnihotra* 428
- Praṇava-Upaniṣad 355
- prapāthaka* 272, 314
- Praśna-Upaniṣad 295
- prastāva* 432
- pratihāra* 423
- pratīka, pratīkena* 345 n., 352, 368
- pratimā* 375 n.
- prātīśakhya(s)* 17, 272, 309, 321, 325, 331
- Praudha-Brāhmaṇa 347
- praiṅgaśastra* 86, 101
- pravara* 77
- pravargya* 324, 330, 354, 430
- prayāja* 104
- prāyascitta* 269, 283, 317, 320
- prayer 108ff., 123, 162, 166, 179, 185, 186, 187, 198, 211, 213, 219, 222, 225, 231, 262, 286f., 300, 330
- prayoga* 43
- pregnancy 420
- prehistoric myths etc. 120f.
- preverbs 237
- primitiveness 211
- 'primitive' societies 79, 205, 277 n.
- primordial acts or time 137, 167
- prodigies 116 n., 117, 134
- profane literature 405
- prognostic (rites, texts) 283, 286, 292

- prolepsis 417
 Prometheus 121
 prose 110, 206, 210 n., 222, 273, 280,
 281 n., 289, 295, 305, 332, 339ff., 350,
 384
 prosperity 282, 288
 prototypes 115
 proverbial phrases or sayings 154, 166,
 258
 psychology of the poets and their per-
 sonages 75, 154
 pun 226, 246, 377
punarabhiṣeka 372
punarmṛtyu 358, 266f., 430
 Punjab 23, 27 n., 336, 337
 Purāṇdhi 98
purāna(s), puranic style etc. 21 n., 28,
 34, 36, 48, 49, 51, 59, 130, 207, 209,
 307, 308, 309, 310, 313, 324, 407,
 408, 409
 purification 287, 430
purohita 10 n., 89, 131, 191, 269, 285,
 291, 307
purorucas 36, 88
 Purumīlha 126
 Purūravas 48, 151, 203f., 208, 408
 Pūrus 110
 Puruṣa 137, 291, 296, 389, 426, 431
 – hymn 51, 137f., 292, 330, 430 n.
puruṣamedha (see also human sacrifice)
 330
 Puruṣa-Prajāpati 373
 Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā 31, 49
 Pūrvārcika 314ff.
 Pūṣan 86, 97, 115, 180, 192, 333
 Puṣpasūtra 318, 321

 quarters of the universe 281, 300, 306,
 371
 question(s) 133, 262, 303f., 381, 418
 question and answer 199 n., 262 n., 304,
 376, 382, 417, 429
 quotation 198, 369, 407, 411, 413 n.

 races 80f., 167, 245, 251, 254, 346
 Radhakrishnan, S. 54
rahasya 318, 353, 428
 rain charm or *sūkta* 89, 143, 163, 205
 Rājaśekhara 52 n.
rājasūya 286, 329
 Rāmānuja 50
 Rāmāyaṇa 400
 Rāṇyāniyas 318f., 347
rasa 265, 310

 Rātahavya 76
rathambara 315
 Rathavīti Dārbhya 126f.
 Rātri 162
 Ṛbhus 99, 117, 180
rc (*rg*) 8, 30, 313f., 316, 320, 321, 326,
 345, 375, 388, 405, 431, 432
rcaka(s) 326
 Rebha 124 n.
 recapitulation 178, 186, 216
 recapitulative concatenation 419
 recensions of the Ṛgveda 8f.
 recitative 177
 reciters, recitation of the Veda 43f., 71,
 74, 81f., 83, 86, 159, 187, 221
 recurrence of the same word 183
 recurrent phraseology 419
 redactor(s) 15f., 191, 221, 344, 346
 refrain 142, 159, 167, 187, 194, 195f.,
 199, 302, 304
 regions, see quarters
 reiteration 114
 rejuvenation 124, 393, 400
 religion, Indian 1ff.
 religious poetry (in general) 222
 remedial charms 278ff.
 remnant 290
 remote past 183, 392
 renewal 292, 395
 Renou, L. 58f., 61, 84, 349
 repeated stanzas 194f.
 repetition 106, 107, 178, 186, 187, 193,
 224f., 227, 228f., 300f., 316, 376, 411,
 414, 415, 416f.
 – (extended) 228
 – (internal) 228
 – (interrupted . . . of words) 175 n.
 repetitious style 418
 repetitive concentration 227f.
responsio 225
 retardation 422 n.
 Ṛgarhadīpikā 41
 Ṛg(veda)-prātīśākhya 17f., 309
 Ṛgveda-(Samhitā) 2, 7ff. etc., 269, 272,
 273, 275, 277, 288, 294, 295, 296,
 297 n., 299, 304, 305, 310, 313f., 315 n.,
 319, 324, 326, 327, 328, 330, 331, 336,
 339, 344, 345, 350f., 360, 368, 369,
 384, 387, 395f., 399, 400, 401, 405,
 425, 426, 429, 430
 Ṛgvidhāna 37f., 83, 210 n.
 rhetoric 248 n., 255 n.
 rhetorical features 212
 rhyme 224, 225, 411

- rhythm 167
 rice dish sacrifice 270, 290
 riddle(s) 80, 132ff., 136, 192, 261, 304,
 331, 382, 403
 riddle contests 132, 383
 rites, ritual 43f., 45, 49f., 53, 83ff., 115,
 123, 133, 134, 137, 140, 142, 147, 148,
 164, 167, 177, 205, 210, 251, 274, 277,
 283, 288ff., 293, 296, 321, 323f.,
 339ff., 362, 364, 365, 378, 380, 382,
 394, 397f., 423
 ritual application 200
 – drama 205
 – stanza 406
 ritualistic elements, interpretation,
 sphere etc. 242, 368ff., 382, 383, 384,
 387, 389, 398, 418, 423
 ritualists 83ff., 345, 368ff., 401, 405, 410
 rivalry 81
 rivers 125, 146, 201, 252
 Rjīśvan 128
 Rktaṅtra 321
 Rocher, L. 209
 Rodasī 247
 Rohita 293, 302, 393, 396
 Roth, R. (von) 56f., 61, 275, 309
 Roy, Rāmmohan 54
 royal consecration (see also *rājasūya*)
 323 n., 329, 344, 350, 374, 394f.
 – rites 308, 382
r̥ṣi(s) 9f., 30, 34, 65f., 68, 70, 71, 74,
 76, 77, 80, 89, 201, 245, 249, 250, 251,
 297, 310, 321, 345, 355, 369, 387, 404,
 411, 422
 Ṛta (see also Order) 66, 71, 72, 76, 97,
 99, 140
ṛtugraha 14, 82, 101
 Rudra 94f., 106, 108, 120 n., 157, 177,
 228, 231, 278, 307, 329
rūpa 375, 401
rūpaka 265
 Ruśamas 117

 Sabhapati 320
 sacred, the 244
 sacrifice(s) 80, 84, 108, 115, 171, 185,
 204, 281, 283, 308, 315, 330, 341, 362,
 379, 389, 390, 397, 401, 404
 sacrificer (see also *yaṅamāna*) 80, 104,
 139, 142, 171, 270, 291, 329, 371, 389,
 399, 416
 sacrificial horse 139
 Sadānirā 422
 Ṣaḍguruśiṣya 40, 145, 342, 346, 408

 Ṣaḍvīmśa-Brāhmaṇa 339, 349f.
 saga(s) 118 n., 125f., 127, 128, 206, 421
 sage(s) 65, 71, 125
sahasradakṣiṇa 356
 Śākala 44
 Śākalya 16, 18f., 35, 37, 426
śākhā 16 n., 29, 30f., 45 n., 83, 272, 318,
 319, 323, 327
sāman 8, 76, 177, 313, 314f., 316, 317,
 320, 321, 348, 349, 371, 375, 378, 388,
 390, 397, 400, 401, 422, 425, 431
 Sāmāprātīśākhyā 321
 Sāmaveda 8, 41, 190, 196, 269, 310,
 313ff., 347f., 426, 431
 Sāmavedārṣeyādīpa 321
 Sāmavedasarvānukramaṇī 321 n.
 Sāmavidhāna(-Brāhmaṇa) 38, 315 n.,
 320
 Śambara 115, 129, 131, 192
 Saṃdhyā 402
saṃhitā(s) 8, 12, 16 n., 19, 20, 22, 29, 31,
 35, 36, 39, 60 n., 72, 78, 189, 269, 273,
 310, 313, 314, 323, 325, 334, 336, 342,
 359, 368, 404, 405, 407, 408, 424, 428
saṃhitāpāṭha 17, 272
 Saṃhitā-Upaniṣad, Saṃhitopaniṣad 320,
 426
saṃjñānam 36f.
sampad 374 n.
saṃpradāya 43
 Śaṃsa 98
śaṃsā 341
samskāra 284
saṃvāda 199
 Śāṅḍilya 337, 353f.
 Śāṅkara 427
 Śāṅkhāyana 16, 30, 32, 45, 347 n., 427f.
 – -Āraṇyaka 427ff.
 – -Brāhmaṇa 339, 346f.
 – -Gṛhyasūtra 428
 – -Śrautasūtra 427
 Sanskrit 3ff., 356
sānta 267
 Śantanu 89
śānti 102, 277
 Śāntikalpa 308 n.
 Śara 125
 Saramā 146, 201, 399 n.
 Saṛaṇyū 119f.
 Sarasvatī 23, 24 n., 67, 104, 162, 245,
 297, 336, 371 n., 387, 422
 sarcasm 169, 413
sarūpatva 374 n.
sarvamedha 330, 354

- Sarvānukramaṇi 33, 35, 40, 76, 93, 331
śastra(s) 105, 110, 192, 369, 425, 426
sat 136, 432
 Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa 203f., 208, 275,
 328, 329 n., 332, 339, 341, 351ff., 355,
 357f., 360, 361, 363, 366f., 379, 382,
 388, 410, 420
 Śatarudriya 329
 satire 130, 169, 200
satobṛhatī 190
 Śatri 170
sattra 317, 324
 Śātyāyana-Brāhmaṇa 349, 356
 Śātyāyanakam 349
 Śātyāyani 349
 Śaunaka (cf. 272 n. 3) 17, 34, 35, 37,
 145, 200, 272, 427
 Śaunakīya 269 n., 272ff., 283, 285, 287,
 296, 305, 309, 356
 Sauparṇa hymns 37
 Saurāṣṭra 276
sautrāmaṇi 329, 330, 350f., 398 n., 399
sava 270, 290, 291, 351
savana 289
savayaṅga 290
 Savitar 52, 68, 91, 99, 108, 110, 139,
 147, 163 n., 201, 217, 219, 226, 236,
 246, 256, 333, 418
 Sāvitra fireplace 402
 Sāvitrī 52, 68, 355
 – -Upaniṣad 355
 Savya 11
 Sāyana 8 n., 31, 35, 37, 40, 41f., 57, 58 n.,
 60, 61, 83, 116, 124, 127, 200, 208,
 262, 268 n., 277, 310, 320, 326, 331,
 342f., 344, 346, 347, 349, 408, 423,
 427
 schematic construction 414
 schools (Vedic) 26ff.
 Schroeder, L. von 60, 205
 science 362f.
 secret 403
 secular hymns or poetry 93 n., 167,
 405 n.
 seer(s) 65f., 78, 125, 291
Segen 277
 self-address 262
 semantic differences 219
 Semitic (origin) 392
 sententious poetry 154
 setting 400f.
 seven 261, 374 n.
 seventeen 374
 sexualization 413
 Sieg, E. 33 n., 58 n., 126 n.
 similarities 193
 simile 23 n., 151, 166, 167, 214, 235,
 237, 238f., 252f., 254ff., 264, 412
 similes (accumulation of) 258f.
 – (amplification of) 259
 sin 116, 153, 283, 289, 363ff., 388, 395
 Sindhu 162, 181
 Śiva, Śivaism 51, 307, 423 n.
skambha 291, 294
 Skandasvāmin 40, 355
śleṣa 246 n., 265 n.
śloka 175 n., 307, 405 n., 406ff.
smārta literature 83
smṛti 34, 46 n., 48, 310
 snake 166
 social classes 24f., 29, 177, 285, 344 n.,
 361
 – consciousness 130
 – life 167, 254 n., 257
 society 93, 121f.
 solemnity 213, 223
 Soma, *soma*, *soma* sacrifice 11, 47, 67,
 69, 83, 86, 87, 89, 90, 96, 98, 99, 101,
 110, 115, 116, 120, 121, 124, 127, 143,
 145, 146, 149f., 156, 157, 165, 167,
 168, 169, 170, 177, 179, 181, 185, 192,
 199, 202, 214, 218, 236, 237, 242, 243,
 244, 248, 249, 250, 252, 253, 256f.,
 263, 269, 270, 289, 290, 304, 314, 317,
 318, 323, 328, 329, 333, 335, 344,
 345f., 348, 349, 352, 356, 359, 369,
 371, 387, 390, 391 n., 398f., 425
 – -and-Pūṣan 219
 – hymns (see also Soma) 156, 167, 180,
 182, 215 n.
soma pavamāna 11, 89, 215 n., 216
 song, 'songs' 75, 177
 sorcery 280f., 292
 sous-entendu 237
 speculative hymns 12, 13, 136ff., 139,
 288ff., 292
 – (literature, passages, texts, thought)
 177, 211, 305, 306, 330, 339, 371, 384,
 407, 424
 speech (see also Vāc) 69ff., 135, 292, 390,
 401, 419
 spell 112, 192
 – stanza 186
 spiritual interpretation 371
 – life 257
 'spurious' (additional) passages 29 n.,
 138, 152, 171, 191 n.
 Śraddhā 94

- śrāddha* 91, 308
 – *-brāhmaṇa* 430
śrauta literature 83, 280, 282f.
 – rites or sacrifices 51, 82, 148, 268, 270f., 286, 288, 289f., 314, 334, 339, 348, 371
śrautasūtras 37, 270, 331
śravanaphala 396
 Śrī 36, 78, 401
 Śrisūkta 36, 51, 78
śrotriya 341
śruti 34, 46 n., 310, 320
 stanza structure 159, 173ff.
 statement of facts 414
 stereotyped passages, phrases etc. 111, 182, 212, 214, 415f., 417
stobha 316, 400
 stones for pressing out the *soma* 89
 story in illustration of an opinion 380
stotra(s) 52, 315, 318, 420
strīkarmāṇi 283f.
 strophic structure 212
 structure (of hymns, passages etc.) 173ff., 212, 298ff., 410, 421
 – of a stanza 173ff., 233
 study of the Veda 43f., 287, 354, 362, 364, 430
stuti 93, 108
 style 13, 171, 176, 189, 191, 194, 198, 211ff., 298, 348, 354, 358, 405, 410ff., 424
 – (simplicity of) 164
 stylistic device 175
 – interdependence 215
 – significance 254
 – variation 219
Subrahmaṇyā 127, 349
 succession of phases 419
 successive hymns 13
 – stanzas 180
 succinctness 240, 420
Sudās 128f., 182
sūdra 25
Sukanyā 393
Śuklayajurveda, see also White Yajurveda 324 n., 325 n., 327, 332
sukṛta 292
sūkta 8ff., 13, 35, 68, 69, 70, 77, 78, 82, 83, 86, 87, 91, 93, 98 etc.
sūktas (length of) 173
 Sun (see also Sūrya) 274, 293, 303, 305, 330
Śunaḥśepa 81, 393, 394ff., 404, 406, 422 n.
- Suparnādhya* (Suparnākhyāna) 47, 206
 supernatural, the 162, 396f.
 superposition (semantic) 242
 supplement 35f., 188, 215, 330, 345, 349, 350
 Sūrya 68, 157, 161, 182, 192, 220, 333
 Sūryā 91, 115, 305
 Sūryāsūkta 115, 304
 Śuṣṇa 114, 117, 125, 247
sūtra(s) 8, 19, 22f., 30, 35, 39, 58, 84, 89, 185, 210, 269f., 290, 293, 306, 307, 309, 310, 318, 320, 321, 323, 337, 339 n., 341, 350, 356, 359, 369 n., 420, 424, 427, 430
svādhyāya (recitation of the Veda to oneself) 43
Svaidāyana 383
Svanaya 127
Svarbhānu 131
svargaudana 290
 Śvetaketu 366
 Śyāvāśva 126, 127, 151
 syllepsis 242
 syllogism 375, 376
 symbolical interpretation 204, 242, 369, 370 n., 371
 symbolism 137, 244, 251, 290, 298, 423
 synecdoche 238
 synonyms 219, 225
 syntactic irregularities 238
 syntax 74, 173, 180, 189, 191, 194, 213, 214, 223, 229, 301, 410, 415
- taboo 241, 243, 363, 378
 Tagore, Rabindranath 54
Taittirīya(s) 17, 30, 52, 324f., 331, 337, 343, 350f.
Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka 325, 326, 328, 350, 429f.
 – *-Brāhmaṇa* 275, 324 n., 325, 328, 339, 357, 405, 429
 – *-Saṃhitā* 323, 325ff., 332
 – *-Sarvānukramaṇi* 52 n.
 – *-Upaniṣad* 429
Talavakāra-Brāhmaṇa 347ff.
Talavakāras 313, 319
Talavakāra-Upaniṣad 341
 – *-Upaniṣad-Brāhmaṇa* 431f.
 Tamil 52f.
 Tamilnadu 319
 Tāṇḍin, Tāṇḍya 347 n., 349
Tāṇḍyamahā-Brāhmaṇa 339, 347ff.
 Tanjore 321

- Tantrism 38, 51, 309
 Tanūnapāt 104
tapas 137
 Taranta 126
 Tārksya 166
 tautology 233
 teacher 353, 404, 405, 412, 419, 427, 428, 432
 technical language, terms 176f., 212, 419
 technique (of the poets) 216, 221
 temporal scheme 183
 ten kings 129
 theme 13, 26, 48, 96, 98, 100, 119, 128, 176, 178, 179, 193f., 196, 199, 209 n., 216, 227, 275, 277, 301, 302, 304, 339, 359, 388 n., 395, 401, 403f., 417
 theosophy 291, 292f.
 Thieme, P. 135 n., 145
 three 261, 335, 374 n., 422 n.
 Threefold Veda 8, 268, 271, 363, 396, 431 n.
 Tilak, B. G. 21
 time 291, 294, 295, 392f.
 – sequence 393
 Tinnevelly 321
 Tittiri 325 n., 350
 torso 179
 tradition 9, 19, 29, 31, 39, 41, 57, 123, 207, 210, 221, 269, 292, 330, 331, 339, 344, 345 n., 346, 347 n., 379, 399, 401, 404, 406, 409, 427
 traditionalism 74f., 79, 109, 156f., 212
 tragic themes 159
 transcendental visions 181
 transcendent reality or sphere 65f., 385
 transference (semantic) 242, 251
 transition(s) 178, 180, 186, 214, 237, 238, 381, 417, 420
trayi (vidyā) 8
trca 189f., 314f., 318
 tree of heaven, of knowledge 135 n., 245
 Trichinopoly 321
tricolon abundans 229
 trilogy 201f.
 tripartite argument 375f.
 triplet (see *trca*) 186, 189f., 196, 232, 348
 triplication 229, 298
tristubh 173, 175, 177, 182, 191, 196, 201, 373, 374, 381, 398
 Trita (Āptya) 78, 118, 127, 199
 truth 146, 147, 305, 342, 364, 385, 396, 412, 422
 Turvīti 124
 Tvaṣṭar 101, 119, 202, 240, 335, 358 n., 359 n., 366, 388, 398f., 401
 twin phrases 225
 twins 153, 202
 two 375f.
uchīṣṭa 290f.
 Udayana 49 n.
 Uddalaka Āruṇi (see also Āruṇi) 383
udgātar 177, 190, 314, 348, 432
udgītha 42, 431
 Ūhagāna 317
 Ūharahasyagāna 318
 Ūhyagāna 317, 318
ullekha 264
 uniformity (lack of) 126
 unity of a hymn 178, 183
 – of subject 192
 universe 177
 Unseen, the 65, 72, 140 n., 141, 233, 241, 263, 294, 299, 340, 377
upamā 264
upamāna 258
upameya 259
upaniṣad(s) 8, 20, 34, 45, 47, 48, 50, 53, 54, 93, 135, 137, 138, 142, 295, 330, 334, 342, 353, 355, 357, 359 n., 373, 383, 406, 423f., 426, 428
 Upaniṣad-Brāhmaṇa 347 n.
 Urvaśi 125, 151, 203f., 208, 408
 Uśanas 308
 Uṣas (see also Dawn) 67f., 86, 99, 163ff., 179, 192, 211, 214, 215 n., 219, 228, 242, 257, 258, 260
utprekṣā 264
utsarjanaprayoga 37
 Uttarajjhāyā 209
 Uttara-Nārāyaṇa litany 330
 Uttarārcika 190, 314f., 317, 318, 320
 Uvaṭa 40, 331
 Vāc (see also speech and Word) 66, 69ff., 78, 135, 292, 390
 Vācaspati 287
 vagueness 214, 409
 Vaikhānasas 78
 Vaiśampāyana 324 n., 325 n., 326, 429
 Vaiśvādeva hymns 34
 Vaitāna-Sūtra 269, 291, 308, 355f.
vāja 80, 81, 108, 114, 121, 329
vājapeya 328f., 350
 Vājasaneyana 327
 Vājasaneyin(s) 30, 331, 352

- Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā 36, 39, 40, 327ff.,
334, 352
vajra 249, 258, 400
vākovākya 407, 408
vākyaśtoṭha 316
Vala 119, 244
Vālakhilyas 8, 30 n., 37
Vāmadeva(s) 9
vaṃśa 353, 428
Vaṃśa-Brāhmaṇa 320
Vārāha(s) 324
Vararuci 321
Varcin 131
varga 9
variants 18f., 126, 194
variation 179, 180, 182, 185, 193,
194, 221, 223f., 226f., 229, 232,
299, 301, 302, 389f., 393, 400, 410,
417f.
Varuṇa 67, 74, 94, 97, 99, 106, 112, 113,
116, 133, 143, 153f., 191, 200, 201,
202, 220, 223, 225, 251, 252, 254, 287,
303, 370, 382, 393, 412
Varuṇapraghāsa 400
Vasiṣṭha(s) 9, 49, 74, 76, 77 n., 112, 118,
125, 129f., 142, 251, 271
Vāṣṭospati 13
Vasukra 200
Vasus 177
Vāyu 176, 345f., 398, 429
Veda 7ff.
vedāṅga(s) 22, 32, 34, 46 n., 49 n.
Vedānta 45, 50, 135, 427
Vedārthadīpikā 40
Vedārthaparakāśa 41, 320
Vedārthasamgraha 50
Veda student 293
vena 291
verbal (literary) contests 80
– forms 117
versification 223 232 236
versions (of a narrative) 397f.
vertical correspondence 224
victory 129ff.
Videha(s) 336, 353, 379
vidhi 324, 340, 420
vidhīprayoga 310
vidyā 367, 402, 408 n.
view of life or of the world 1f., 93, 263,
264f., 362f., 410
village life 404
Vinatā 47
Vindhya(s) 24, 336
vinīyoga 51, 83 n., 86, 200
vipra 71
virāj 176, 191, 291
virodha 264
viś 24f.
viśeṣokti 264
vision 65ff., 70, 97, 126, 198
Viṣṇūpa 124, 125
Viṣṇu, Viṣṇuism 38, 51, 99, 108, 114,
116, 137, 180, 181, 228, 232, 335, 384,
391 n., 421, 427, 429
Viṣṇusūkta 51
viṣṭuti 348, 349, 374
Viśvakarman 136
Viśvāmītra(s) 9, 49, 74, 75, 76, 125, 130,
146, 191, 201, 396
Viśvarūpa 399
Viśve Devāḥ 91, 102, 110, 132, 166, 176,
177, 181
Viśveśvaratīrtha 427
Vivasvat 119f.
Vivekānanda 53
vividness 178, 238
vocabulary 213, 221, 246
voice (divine) 397, 403
vrata 97, 147, 167
vrātya 274, 305f.
Vṛcīvants 130
Vṛṣākapi 195, 200
Vṛtra 46, 97, 106, 111, 114, 115f., 118,
119, 129, 157, 179, 180, 186, 200, 202,
216, 234, 241, 247, 251, 258, 335f.,
365, 387, 399f., 400, 417
vṛtti 343
vulgate Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā 273, 309
vyākhyāna 408
Vyāsa 16
Wackernagel, J. 357
Waffensegen 103, 144, 192
wager 398 n., 402
war(s) 95, 129, 192, 216
war charms 285f.
– song 144
Waters (see also Āpas) 86, 162, 202, 370,
390
Weber, A. 57, 58
wedding formulas, hymns 176, 274, 304
West Bengal 276
whispering 81
White Yajurveda, see also Śuklayajur-
veda 31, 35, 208, 323f., 327ff., 331,
332, 337, 339, 351ff., 430
Whitney, W. D. 59, 309
Wilson, H. H. 41, 53

- Windisch, E. 61, 206
 Winternitz, M. 4, 144, 146, 207, 384
 wisdom 287, 292, 412
 wolf 166, 168, 253
 women 151, 168, 254, 263, 283f.
 Word (see also Vāc) 371, 390
 word correspondence 229
 Wüst, W. 27
- yajamāna* 84
 Yajña 419
yajñagāthā 406, 407
 Yājñavalkya 325, 327, 352ff., 357, 358,
 360, 380, 410
 Yajurveda, Yajurvedins 8, 31, 35, 41,
 44 n., 49, 88, 204, 269, 273, 275, 277,
 280, 286, 289, 295, 296, 297, 305, 310,
 323ff., 341, 350ff., 359, 369, 388, 398
 Yajurvedīkṣa 324 n.
- yajus* 8, 289, 301, 305, 332f., 348, 353,
 405 n., 410
yājyā 36, 90, 104, 326 n.
yakṣma 29
 Yama 12, 91, 111, 120, 139, 142, 151,
 153, 205, 429
 Yamagāthās 406
 Yamī 120, 139, 151, 153, 205
 Yamunā 24, 31, 336
 Yāska 15, 32f., 34, 40, 42 n., 46 n., 57,
 58 n., 145, 200
 Yatis 388
yogin(s) 65
yoni 315, 318
yūpa 88f., 104
- Zahlenrätsel 133
 zeugma 242
 Zeus 121