

ORIGINAL SANSKRIT TEXTS

ON THE
ORIGIN AND HISTORY
OF

THE PEOPLE OF INDIA,

83 THEIR RELIGION AND INSTITUTIONS.

COLLECTED, TRANSLATED, AND ILLUSTRATED

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VOLUME FIFTH.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO A KNOWLEDGE OF THE COSMOGONY, MYTHOLOGY, RELIGIOUS
IDEAS, LIFE AND MANNERS, OF THE INDIANS IN THE VEDIC AGE.



LONDON:
TRÜBNER & CO., 8 AND 60, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1870.

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by the introduction of different names, and the ascription to them of various agencies, to explain the process of creation, forms a striking contrast to the sublime vagueness and sense of mystery which characterize the following composition (R.V. x. 129).⁵⁵⁰

(5) *Nonentity, Entity, and the One*, R.V. x. 129.

1. *Na asad āsid no sad āsit tadānīm nāsīd rajo no vyoma paro yat |*
kim āvarivaḥ kuha kasya tarmann ambhaḥ kim āsīd gahanam gabhiram |
 2. *Na mṛityur asīd amṛitaṁ na tarhi na rātryāḥ ahnaḥ āsit prakṛetaḥ |*
ānīd avātān svadhāyā tad ekam tasmād ha anyad na paraḥ kinchanda |
 3. *Tamaḥ āsit tamasā gūḥam agre aprakṛetaṁ salilam sarvam ā idam |*
tuchhyena ābhu apihitaṁ yad āsit tapasas tad mahinā 'jāyataikam |
 4. *Kāmas tad agre samavartatādhi manaso retaḥ prathamam yad āsit |*
sato bandhum asati niravindan hṛidi pratishya kavayo manishā | 5
 (=Vāj. Sanh. xxxiii. 74). *Tirāschino vitato rāsmir uḥam adhaḥ vīd*
āsīd upari vīd āsit | rotadhāḥ āsan mahimānaḥ āsan svadhā avastāt
prayatiḥ parastāt | 6. *Ko addha veda kaḥ iha pra vachat kutaḥ ājāta*
kutaḥ iyaṁ viśvīkṣiḥ | arvāg devāḥ asya viśarjanema atha ko veda yataḥ
ābabhūva | 7. *Iyaṁ viśvīkṣir yataḥ ābabhūva yadi vā dadhe yadi vā na |*
yo asyādhyakṣhaḥ paramo vyoman so anga veda yadi vā na veda |

"1. There was then neither nonentity nor entity: there was no

⁵⁵⁰ This hymn has been already translated by Mr. Colebrooke and Professor Müller, as well as in the 4th vol. of this Work, p. 4. I have now endeavoured to improve my own version, and otherwise to illustrate the sense of the hymn. The following is a metrical rendering of its contents:—

"Then there was neither Aught nor Nought, no air nor sky beyond.
 What covered all? Where rested all? In watery gulf profound?
 Nor death was then, nor deathlessness, nor change of night and day.
 That One breathed calmly, self-sustained; nought else beyond It lay.
 Gloom hid in gloom existed first—one sea, eluding view.
 That One, a void in chaos wrapt, by inward fervour grew.
 Within It first arose desire, the primal germ of mind,
 Which nothing with existence links, as sages searching find.
 The kindling ray that shot across the dark and drear abyss,—
 Was it beneath? or high aloft? What bard can answer this?
 There fecundating powers were found, and mighty forces strove,—
 A self-supporting mass beneath, and energy above.
 Who knows, who ever told, from whence this vast creation rose?
 No gods had then been born,—who then can e'er the truth disclose?
 Whence sprang this world, and whether framed by hand divine or no,—
 It's lord in heaven alone can tell, if even he can show."

atmosphere, nor sky above. What enveloped [all]? Where, in the receptacle of what [was it contained]? Was it water, the profound abyss? 2. Death was not then, nor immortality: there was no distinction of day or night. That One⁵⁵¹ breathed calmly, self-supported; there was nothing different from, or above, it. 3. In the beginning darkness existed, enveloped in darkness. All this was undistinguishable water.⁵⁵² That One which lay void, and wrapped in nothingness, was developed by the power of fervour. 4. Desire first arose in It, which was the primal germ of mind; [and which] sages, searching with their intellect, have discovered in their heart to be the bond which connects entity with nonentity. 5. The ray [or cord]⁵⁵³ which stretched across these [worlds], was it below or was it above? There were there impregnating powers and mighty forces, a self-supporting principle beneath, and energy aloft.⁵⁵⁴ 6. Who knows, who here can declare, whence has sprung, whence, this creation? The gods are subsequent⁵⁵⁵ to the development of this [universe]; who then knows whence it arose? 7. From what this creation arose, and whether [any one] made it or not,—he who in the highest heaven is its ruler, he verily knows, or [even] he does not know."

I am not in possession of Śaṅkara's commentary on this hymn; but the scholiast on the Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa (see also the explanation of verse 4, in commentary on Taitt. Āraṇy. p. 142) in which the hymn is

⁵⁵¹ Compare R.V. i. 164, 6, "What was that One in the form of the unborn which supported these six worlds?" (*vi yas tastambha shaḥ imā rajāṁsi āsya rūpe kim api vīd ekam*). In Vāṇikhiya, x. 2, it is said: *eka evāgnir bahudhā samiddhaḥ ekaḥ sūryo vīdham anu prabhūtaḥ | ekavīśāḥ sarvam idam vi bhūti ekaṁ vai idam vi babhūva sarvam* | "There is one Agni, kindled in many places; one mighty Sūrya who extends over all things; one Ushas who illuminates this entire world;—this one has been developed into the all."

⁵⁵² In the M. Bh. S'āntip. 6812 ff., it is said that from the æther "was produced water, like another darkness in darkness; and from the foam of the water was produced the wind" (*tataḥ salilam utpannam tamasiṣṭuparam tamaḥ | tasmācḥ cha salilotpīḍād udatiḥḥata mūrutaḥ*).

⁵⁵³ Professor Aufrecht has suggested to me that the word *raśmi* may have here the sense of thread, or cord, and not of ray.

⁵⁵⁴ Does this receive any illustration from R.V. i. 169, 2 (quoted above, p. 21), which speaks of the "thought (*manas*) of the father" (Dyans), and of the "mighty independent power (*mahi svatasas*) of the mother" (Earth)?

⁵⁵⁵ Compare x. 72, 2, 3, quoted above, p. 48, and x. 97, 1, where certain plants are said to be anterior to the gods, by three yugas (*yāḥ ośadhīḥ pūrvāḥ jālāḥ devabhyas triyugam purā*).

repeated (ii. 8, 9, 3 ff.), explains it in conformity with the philosophical ideas of a later period. From such sources we have no right in general to expect much light on the real meaning of the ancient Vedic poets. The commentator in question, who is obliged to find in the words of the infallible Veda a meaning consistent with the speculations believed to be orthodox in his own age, interprets the first verse as follows, in terms which, indeed, after all, may not be far from correctly expressing its general purport: *Yadā pūrvasṛiṣṭiḥ prakāśa uttarasṛiṣṭiś cā na utpannā tadānīm sadasati dve api nābhātām | nāmarūpavishṭatvena spāṣṭapratityamānām jagat "sat"-śabdena uchyate naravishṭāpādisamānām tūnyam "asad" ity uchyate | tadubhayaṁ nāsti | kintu kācid auyaktāvasthā āstī | eā cā viepashaṭvābhavād na sati jagad-utpādakatvena sadbhāvād nāpy asati* | "In the interval between the absorption of the previous, and the production of the subsequent, creation, there was neither entity nor nonentity. The world at the time when, by possessing both 'name' and 'form,'⁵²⁸ it is clearly manifested, is designated by the word 'entity,' while a void which may be compared to such non-existing things as a 'man's horns,' etc., is called 'nonentity.' Neither of these states existed; but there was a certain unapparent condition, which, from the absence of distinctness, was not an 'entity,' while from its being the instrument of the world's production, it was not a 'nonentity.'"

A much older commentary on this verse, probably one of the oldest extant, is the following passage from the Satap. Br. x. 5, 3, 1: *na iva vai idam agre asad āsīd na iva sad āstī | āsīd iva vai idam agre na iva āstī | tad ha tad manaḥ eva āsa* | 2. *Tasmād etad rishinā 'bhyānūktam "na asad āsīd no sad āstī tadānīm" iti | na iva hi sad mano na iva asat* | 3. *Tad idam manaḥ sṛiṣṭam āvirabubhūṣhad niruktataram murtataram | tad ātmānam anvaśikhat | tat tapo 'tapyata | tat prāmārchhat | tat śaṣṭriṁśataṁ sahasrāṇy apatyad ātmano 'gnin arkān manomayān manasohitaḥ ityādi* | "In the beginning this [universe] was not either, as it were, nonexistent, nor, as it were, existent. In the

⁵²⁸ These Vedāntic terms *name* and *form* occur (as observed in the Section on Yama, p. 309) in the Atharva-veda, x. 2, 12: "Who placed in him (Purusha) name, magnitude, and form?" and in xi. 7, 1: "In the remains of the sacrifice (vohhishṭa) name and form, in the remains of the sacrifice the world, is comprehended." The original texts will be found further on in the subsections on Purusha and Uchhiṣṭa. See Satap. Br. xi. 2, 3, 1 ff., to be quoted below, in the subsection on Brahma.

beginning this universe was, as it were, and was not, as it were. Then it was only that mind. Wherefore it has been declared by the rishi (in the verse before us), 'There was then neither nonentity nor entity;' for mind was, as it were, neither entity nor non-entity. 2. Then this mind, being developed, wished to become manifested, more revealed, more embodied. It sought after itself; it practised austere fervour. It swooned. It beheld 36,000 of its own fires, suns, formed of mind, placed by mind, etc." Mind then creates voice, voice creates breath, breath creates eye, eye creates ear, ear creates work (or ceremony), and work creates fire.

These ideas of entity and nonentity⁵²⁹ seem to have been familiar to the later Vedic poets, as in R.V. x. 72 (noticed above, and translated in the section on Aditi, p. 48), we find it thus declared (verses 2, 3), that in the beginning nonentity was the source of entity: "In the earliest age of the gods entity sprang from nonentity; in the first age of the gods entity sprang from nonentity." In the A.V. x. 7, 10 (which will be quoted in the subsection on Skambha), it is said that both nonentity and entity⁵³⁰ exist within the god Skambha; and in verse 25 of the same hymn: "Powerful indeed are those gods who sprang from nonentity. Men say that that nonentity is one, the highest, member of Skambha."⁵³¹ The Taittiriya Upanishad also (Bibliotheca Indica, p. 99) quotes a verse to the effect: "This was at first non-entity. From that sprang entity" (*asad vai idam agre āstī | tato vai sad ajāyata*).

The author of the Chhândogya Upanishad probably alludes to some of these texts when he says (vi. 2, 1 f. Bibl. Ind. p. 387 f.): *Sad eva somya idam agre āsīd ekam eva advītiyam | tad ha eko dhruv "asad eva*

⁵²⁹ The Taitt. Arany. i. 11, 1 (Bibl. Ind. p. 84), ascribes the development of existence from nonexistence to the seven rishis, etc. (*asataḥ sad ye tataḥkṣur rishayaḥ sapta Atiḥ cā yat | sarve trayo Agastyaś cā*).

⁵³⁰ Another verse of the A.V. xvii. 1, 19, says: "Entity is founded (*pratishṭhitam*) on nonentity; what has become (*bhūta*) is founded on entity. What has become is based (*āhitam*) on what is to be, and what is to be is founded on what has become" (*asatī sat pratishṭhitam satī bhūtam pratishṭhitam | bhūtam ha bhavye āhitam bhavyam bhūte pratishṭhitam*).

⁵³¹ This phrase (see above, p. 51) is also applied to Agni in R.V. x. 5, 7, where it is said that that god, being "a thing both *asat*, nonexistent (*i.e.* unmanifested), and *sat*, existent (*i.e.* in a latent state, or in essence), in the highest heaven, in the creation of Dakṣa, and in the womb of Aditi (comp. R.V. x. 72, 4 f.), became in a former age

idam agre āsīd ekam eva aditīyaṁ tasmād asataḥ saḥ jāyeta" | 2. *Kṛas tu khalu somya evaṁ syād iti ha uvācha katham asataḥ saḥ jāyeta iti | sat tv eva somya idam agre āsīd ekam eva aditīyam | tad askhata bahu syām prajāyeya iti* | "This, o fair youth, was in the beginning existent (or entity) (*sat*), one without a second. Now some say, 'This was in the beginning non-existent (or non-entity) (*asat*), one without a second; wherefore the existent must spring from the non-existent.' 2. But how, o fair youth, he proceeded, can it be so? How can the existent spring from the non-existent? But, o fair youth, this was in the beginning existent, one without a second. That [entity] thought, 'Let me multiply and be produced.'"⁴⁴⁰

There does not appear to be any discrepancy between the statement in R.V. x. 129, 1, "There was then neither nonentity nor entity," and the doctrine of the Chhândogya Upanishad, for in the second verse of the hymn, also, a being designated as the One is recognized as existing, which may be regarded as answering to the primal entity of the Upanishad; while the original non-existence of anything, whether non-entity or entity, asserted in the first verse, may merely signify, as the commentator on the Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa explains, that there was as yet no distinct manifestation of the One. In like manner the A.V. x. 7. 10, 25 (quoted above), does not assert the absolute priority of non-entity, but affirms it to be embraced in, or a member of, the divine being designated as Skambha. The Chhândogya Upanishad has, however, a greater appearance of being at variance with itself, iii. 19, 1 (*asad evadam agre āsīd tat sad āsīt*), and with the Taittiriya Upanishad, as well as with verses 2 and 3 of the 72nd hymn of the tenth book of the R.V., above cited, which assert that entity sprang from nonentity. If these verses are to be taken literally and absolutely, we must suppose the poet to have conceived the different creative agents whom he names, Brahmanaspati, Uttānapad, Daksha, and Aditi, to have sprung out of nothing, or from each other, or to be secondary manifestations of the entity which was the first product of nonentity. If, however, with the commentators, we take "nonentity" to denote merely an undeveloped state, there will be no contradiction.

the first-born of our ceremonial, and is both a bull and a cow." In A.V. xi. 7, 3, it is said that the *uchhiṣṭha* (remains of the sacrifice) is both *śan* and *śvan* (masculine).

⁴⁴⁰ See English trans. p. 101, which I have not followed.

The first movement in the process of creation as conceived in the hymn (R.V. x. 129) is this: the One, which in the beginning breathed calmly, self-sustained, is developed by the power of *tapas*, by its own inherent heat (as Professor Müller explains, *Anc. Sansk. Lit.* p. 561), or by rigorous and intense abstraction (as Professor Roth understands the word; see his *Lexicon*, s.v.).⁴⁴¹ This development gave occasion

⁴⁴¹ Roth's interpretation is supported by a text in the A.V. x. 7, 38 (see further on in the subsection on Skambha), as well as by numerous passages in the Brāhmaṇas. Thus in S'atap. Br. xi. 5, 8, 1 (quoted in the 3rd vol. of this work, p. 4), Prajāpati, who is described as being the universe, is said to have desired (*akṣmayata*) to propagate himself, and to have striven and practised rigorous abstraction (*tapo 'tapyata*). And in the same Brāhmaṇa, xiii. 7, 1, 1 (cited in the 4th vol. of this work, p. 26), the self-existent Brahma himself is similarly related to have practised *tapas*, and when he found that that did not confer infinity, to have offered himself in sacrifice. The gods are also said to have attained heaven and their divine character by *tapas* (see above, p. 15, and the 4th vol. of this work, pp. 20, 21, 24, and 288). Compare also the Taitt. Up. ii. 6, where it is said: *Sa tapo 'tapyata | sa tapas taptrā idam sarvam asṛjata yad idam kincha* | "He (the supreme Soul) desired, 'Let me be multiplied and produced.' He performed *tapas*, and having done so, he created all this." In his commentary on this passage, Śāṅkara explains that, in conformity with another Vedic text, knowledge is called *tapas*, and that, as the supreme Soul has no unsatisfied desires, no other sense would be suitable; and that the phrase means "He reflected upon the construction, etc., of the world which was being created" (*tapas itī jñānam uchyate | "yasya jñānamayam tapaḥ" itī śruty-antarād ūpa-kāmatvāch cha itarasya asambhavaḥ eva | "sa tapo 'tapyata" tapas taptrān sṛjyamāna-jagad-rachanādi-vishayam ālochanam akarod ātmā itī arthaḥ*). It is true that all these passages from the Brāhmaṇas are of a later date than the hymn, but the R.V. itself, x. 167, 1, says that Indra gained heaven by *tapas* (see above, p. 14), where the word can only mean rigorous abstraction. The word is also found in R.V. ix. 113, 2, where soma-juice is said to be poured out with hallowed words, truth, faith, and *tapas* (*ṛitavākya satya śraddhayā tapasā utāh*); and in x. 83, 2, 3, where Manyu (wrath personified) is besought to protect, or to slay enemies, along with *tapas*. (*tapasā vjoshāh*, or *tapasā yujā*). This view of the word is also supported by Taitt. Br. iii. 12, 3, 1: "Let us worship with an oblation that first-born god, by whom this entire universe which exists is surrounded (*paribhūtam*)—the self-existent Brahma, which is the highest *tapas*. He is son, father, mother. *Tapas* was produced as the first object" (*yenedaṁ viśvam paribhūtam yad asti prathamajam devaṁ havishā vidhema | svayambhu Brahma paramam tapo yat | sa eva putraḥ sa pitā sa mātā | topo ha yakṣham prathamam sambhūva*). In the Mahābhārata, Śāntiparva, 10836, Prajāpati is said to have created living beings by *tapas*, after having entered on religious observances, or austerities (*vrataṁ*). *Tapas* is also mentioned as the source from which creatures were produced, A.V. xiii. 1, 10. Compare Bhāgavata Purāṇa, ii. 9, 6, 7, 19, 23, and iii. 10, 4 ff. *Tapas* is connected with an oblation of boiled milk in a passage of the A.V. iv. 11, 6: *yama devāḥ svar āruvukur hītoḥ śarīram amṛitasya nūhīm | tena gṛahma sukṛitasya lokam gharmaṣya vrataṁ tṛpasā yajasyavaḥ* | "May we, renowned, attain to the world of righteousness by that ceremony of offering boiled milk, by *tapas*, whereby the

to desire (Kāma) which immediately took possession of the One, and is described as the first germ of mind, and the earliest link⁶⁴ between nonentity and entity. The poet then goes on to speak of impregnating powers, and mighty forces, of receptive capacities, and active energies; but confesses himself unable to declare how the universe was produced. The gods themselves having come into existence at a later stage of creation, were not in a position to reveal to their worshippers the earlier part of the process of which they had not been witnesses. The

gods ascended to heaven, the centre of immortality, having left behind their body." But xi. 5, 6, connects *tapas* with heat: "The Brahmachārin, born before Brahma, dwelling (or clothed) in heat, arose through *tapas*" (*pūro jāto Brahmaṇo brahma-chāri gharmaṇ vāsāno tapasodatiśhat*). In A.V. vii. 61, *tapas* is connected with Agni. In A.V. xvii. 1, 24, *tapas* means the heat of the sun. *Tapas* is mentioned along with *karman* in A.V. xi. 8, 2, and is said to have been produced from it (ibid. v. 6).

⁶⁴ The commentator on the Taitt. Br. ii. 8, 9, 5 (p. 828 of Calcutta edition, in Bibl. Ind.) says: *kūmasya sarva-vyavahāra-ketuṃ Vājasaneyinaḥ samāmananti aho khalo āhuḥ "kūmameyaḥ evāyam puruṣaḥ" iti | Vyāso 'pi amarati "kūma-bandhanam evodaṁ nūnyad astiha bandhanam" iti | amad-anubhavo 'pi tatāhā dṛiṣyate | sarvo hi puruṣaḥ prathamam kinchit kūmayitvā tadartham prayata-mānaḥ sukhaṁ dukhaṁ vā labheta* | "The Vājasaneyins record that desire is the cause of all action, and say: 'this Puruṣa is himself actuated by desire' (Bṛihadār. Up. p. 854). And Vyāso too declares in his smṛiti, 'That which binds this world is desire; it has no other bond.' The same thing, too, is seen within our own observation; for it is only after a man has first desired something that he will strive after it, and so experience pleasure or pain." In numerous passages of the Brāhmaṇas and Upanishads (as in those quoted in the last note), we are told that the first step in the creation was that Prajāpati or Brahma "desired" (*akūmayata*). In his remarks on the passage of the Taittirīya Upanishad, quoted in the last note, S'ankara considers it necessary to explain that the supreme Soul is not subject to the dominion of desire, as if, like men, he had any wish unfulfilled, or were subject to the influence of any desirable objects external to himself, or were dependent on other things as instruments of attaining any such external objects; but on the contrary, is independent of all other things, and himself, with a view to the interests of living beings, originated his desires which possess the characteristics of truth and knowledge (or true knowledge), and from being a part of himself, are perfectly pure (*kūmayitvā eva amad-ādi-ved anūptakūmam chet | na | evāntaryāti | yatā 'nyā paravadiṣṭya kūmādi-doshāḥ pravarttayanti na tatāhā Brahmaṇo pravartitakūḥ kūmāḥ | katham tarhi satya-jñāna-lakṣaṇāḥ svātmabhūtatvād viduddhāḥ | na tair Brahma pravartityate | tatāhā tu tat-pravartitakam Brahma prāgi-karmanapekṣayā | tasmāt evāntaryāṁ kūmasu Brahmaṇaḥ | ato na anūptakūmam Brahma svādhānāntarūpeḥ kṣatvāch cha | kincha yatā 'nyeshām anātmabhūtiḥ dharmādi-nimittāpekṣāḥ kūmāḥ svātmā-oyatirikta-kārya-karāṇa-svādhānāntarūpeḥ kṣatvā [-ād cha?] na tatāhā Brahmaṇo nimittādy-apekṣatvam*). I shall below treat further of Kāma, as a deity, and of his correspondence with the Greek *Eros*, as one of the first principles of creation.

very gods being at fault, no one on earth is able to say what was the origin of the world, and whether it had any creator or not. Even its ruler in the highest heaven may not be in possession of the great secret.

Such a confession of ignorance on the part of a Vedic rishi could not, however, be taken in its obvious and literal sense by those who held the Veda to have been derived from an omniscient and infallible source. And in consequence the commentator on the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa is obliged to explain it away in the following fashion:—

Ata kochid āgamam upakahya eva-eva-buddhi-balād anyathā 'nyathā utprekshante | tatāhā hi paramāṇavo mūlakāraṇam iti Kāṇāda-Gautama-dāyag manyante | evāntarām achetanam pradhānam jagato mūlakāraṇam iti Kapila-prabhritayāḥ | tānyādito jagad-utpattir iti Mādhyamikāḥ | jagato kāraṇam eva nāsti scabhāvātāḥ eva avatiśhate iti Lokāyatikāḥ | to sarvo 'pi bhīrāntāḥ eva | "ko addha veda" jagat-kāraṇam ko nāma puruṣaḥ ekaḥ eva avagacchati | anavagatya cha "kaḥ iha pravochoḥ" evāyam adṛiṣtvā ko nāma jagat-kāraṇam idṛig iti vaktum śaknoti | ko 'yam atra vaktavyānśaḥ iti chet | uchyaते | iyaṁ eviḍhā eṣiṣṭiḥ "kutaḥ ājāta" ta(ka?)emād upādāna-kāraṇāt sarvataḥ utpannā punarapi kuto nimittād utpannā iti tad idam upādānam nimittam cha vaktavyam tach cha vaktum śakyam | kuto 'taktir iti chet | uchyaते | kiṁ devāḥ etad brayuh kuto 'nyaḥ katohid manushyaḥ | na tavad devāḥ vaktum śaktāḥ to hy asya jagato eviḍhasiṣṭer "aroḡ" eva vidyante na tu eṣiṣṭeḥ pūrvam to santi | yadā devānām api idṛiḥ gatir tadānīm "yataḥ" jagad "ābaddhā" tat kāraṇam vaktum anyāḥ "ko" vā "veda" | devāḥ cha manushyāḥ cha eṣiṣṭeḥ prāg anavasthānād na tavat pratyakṣeṇa pātyanti tadānīm evāyam eva abhātvā nāpy anumātum śaktāḥ tad-yog-yayor hotuḍṛiṣṭantayor abhāvāt | tasmād atigambhīram idam paramārtha-tattvaṁ vaidika-samādhigamyam ity abhiprāyaḥ | . . . iyaṁ dṛiṣyomānā bhūta-bhautika-rūpā eviḍhā eṣiṣṭir yataḥ upādānakāraṇād "ābaddhā" sarvataḥ utpannā tad upādānakāraṇam yadi vā kinchit svarūpaṁ dṛiṣtvā 'vatiśhate yadi vā tasya svarūpam eva nāsti tam imaṁ nirṇayaṁ yaḥ Parameshvaro 'ya jagato "dhyakṣaḥ" svāmī "so anga veda" na eva veda yadi vā so 'pi na veda | iṣṭirīṣṭavyādi-laukika-vyavahāra-dṛiṣṭya "so anga veda" ity uktam | yatra to asya sarvam ātmā eva abhūt kena kam pātyed ityādi-sarva-vyavahārātīla-paramārtha-dṛiṣṭya "yadi vā na veda" ity uktam | ato manushyādīḥ tad-vedana-tantā 'pi dūrāpetā |

"There are certain persons who condemn revelation, and propound different theories of creation by their own reason. Thus the followers of Kapāda and Gautama, etc., consider atoms to be the ultimate cause of the world. Kapila and others say that an independent and unconscious Pradhāna is the cause. The Mādhyamikas declare that the world rose out of a void, etc. The Lokāyatikas say that the universe has no cause at all, but exists naturally. All these speculators are in error. Our hymn asks what mortal knows by actual observation the cause of the world? and not having himself had ocular proof, how can any one say it was so and so? The points to be declared are the material and instrumental causes of the universe, and these cannot be told. The reason of this impossibility is next set forth. Can the gods give the required information? Or, if not, how can any man? The gods cannot tell, for they did not precede, but are subsequent to, the creation. Since the gods are in this predicament, who else can know? The purport is, that as neither gods nor men existed before the creation, and cannot therefore have witnessed it, and as they are at the same time unable to conclude anything regarding it, from the absence of any adequate reason or illustrative instance, this great mystery can only be understood by those versed in the Vedas. . . . The last verse of the hymn declares that the ruler of the universe knows, or that even he does not know, from what material cause this visible world arose, and whether that material cause exists in any definite form or not. That is to say, the declaration that 'he knows' is made from the stand-point of that popular conception which distinguishes between the ruler of the universe and the creatures over whom he rules; while the proposition that 'he does not know' is asserted on the ground of that highest principle which, transcending all popular conceptions, affirms the identity of all things with the supreme Soul, which cannot see any other existence as distinct from itself. [The sense of this last clause is, that the supreme Soul can know nothing of any object being created external to itself, since no such object exists]. "*A fortiori*, the supposition that such beings as men could possess this knowledge is excluded."

It would, however, be absurd to imagine that the simple author of the hymn entertained any such transcendental notions as these. He makes no pretensions to infallibility, but honestly acknowledges the

perplexity which he felt in speculating on the great problem of the origin of the universe.⁴⁴³

As a further illustration, both of the more ancient and the later ideas of the Indians regarding the creation of the world, and the manner in which the supreme Spirit, previously quiescent, was moved to activity, I add another passage from the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, ii. 2, 9, 1, with some of the commentator's remarks. The text of the Brāhmaṇa runs thus:⁴⁴⁴ "This [universe] was not originally anything. There was neither heaven, nor earth, nor atmosphere. That being nonexistent (*asat*), resolved, 'Let me be.' That became fervent (or practised rigorous abstraction, *atapyata*). From that fervour (or abstraction) smoke was produced. That became again fervent. From that fervour fire was produced. That became again fervent. From that fervour light was produced." And so on,—flame, rays, blazes, etc., being generated by a repetition of the same process. (It may perhaps be considered that the manner in which the word *tapas* is used in this passage is favourable to the idea that in R.V. x. 129, 3, it signifies heat rather than rigorous abstraction.)

Ibid. ii. 2, 9, 10: *Asato 'dhi' mano 'arjyata | manas Prajāpatiṃ arjyata | Prajāpatiḥ prajāḥ arjyata |* "From the nonexistent mind (*manas*) was created. Mind created Prajāpati. Prajāpati created offspring."

The commentator's explanation of the first part of this passage is in substance as follows: "Before the creation no portion existed of the world which we now see. Let such a state of nonexistence be supposed. It conceived the thought, 'Let me attain the condition of existence.' Accordingly, this state of things is distinctly asserted in the Upanishad (the Taittirīya, see above, p. 359): 'This was originally nonexistent. From it existence was produced.' Here, by the word 'nonexistent,' a state of void (or absolute nullity), like that expressed in the phrase 'a hare's horns,' is not intended; but simply a state in which name and form were not manifested. Hence the Vājasaneyins repeat the text: 'This was then undeveloped; let it be developed through name and form.' Earth, the waters, etc., are

⁴⁴³ Similar perplexity is elsewhere expressed on other subjects by the authors of the hymns. See the 3rd vol. of this Work, pp. 279 f.

⁴⁴⁴ The words of the original will be found in the 1st vol. of this work, pp. 27 f.

'name.' Hardness and fluidity, etc., are 'form.'" The words "undeveloped" and "developed" are then defined, and Manu, i. 5, is quoted in proof. The supposition that the passage before us can be intended to denote a void is next contravened by adducing the text of the Chhândogya Upanishad above quoted, where that theory is referred to and contradicted. "In the Aitareya Upanishad (at the beginning) it is declared: 'Soul alone was in the beginning this [universe]. Nothing else was active.' Hence the negation in our text, 'This [universe] was not originally anything,' refers to the world, consisting of name and form, framed by the Supreme Spirit, and is not to be understood absolutely. Designated by the word 'nonexistent' (*asat*), because devoid of name and form, but still (really) existing (*ast*), the principle [called] the Supreme Spirit, impelled by the works of the creatures absorbed in It, conceived a thought in the way of a reflection, 'Let me be manifested as existent in the shape of name and form.' As a man in a deep sleep awakes that he may enjoy the fruit of his works, so the thought of causing all living creatures to enjoy the fruit of their works arose in the Supreme Spirit. Possessed by such a thought, that principle [called] the Supreme Spirit, practised rigorous abstraction (*tapas*) as a means of creating name and form. Here *tapas* does not mean any such thing as the *krichhra* or *chândrâyana* penances, or the like; but denotes consideration regarding the particular objects which were to be created. Wherefore writers of the Atharva-veda school record the text: 'He who is omniscient, all-understanding, whose *tapas* consists of knowledge.' From the fact that this *tapas* has nothing of the character of any penance, it may be properly regarded as denoting the reflection of a being who, though unembodied, is yet omnipotent," etc., etc. "From the supreme God, being such as has been described, in conformity with his volition, a certain smoke was produced," etc., etc.

(*Yad idam sthāvara-jangama-rūpaṁ bhūlokādīrūpaṁ cha jagad idānīṁ dṛśyate tat kimapi śṛiṣṭeḥ pūrvam naiva asti | tat tādṛiṣam asad-rūpaṁ eva varṭamānām syāt | sad-rūpatām prāpnuyām ity etādṛiṣam mano 'kuruta | tathā cha upanishadi pūrvam asad-rūpaṁ pāśehāt sad-rūpatotpattis cha vispaṣṭam āmnāyate "asad vai idam agre asti tato vai sad ajūyate" iti | atra "asat"-śabdena na śāśa-vishāyādi-samānam śūnyatvam vivakṣitām kiṁ tarhy anabhivṛyaktā-nāma-rūpatvam | ataḥ eva*

Vājasaneyinaḥ samāmananti "tad ha idam tarhy avyākṛitam asti | tad nāma-rūpābhyām eva vyākṛiyate" iti | bhūmir āpaḥ ityādikaṁ nāma kṛīṇya-dravādikam rūpaṁ | . . . Aitareyinas tv adhiyate "ātmā vai idam ekaḥ eva agre asti na anyat kinchana mīśhad" iti | tasmād "naiva kinchana asti" ity ayaṁ nīśhedhaḥ Paramātma-nirmīta-nāma-rūpāt-maka-jagad-vishayo na tu kṛitena-vishayaḥ | nāma-rūpa-rahitatvenu "asat"-śabda-vāchyaṁ sad eva avasthitam Paramātma-tattvaṁ svātmany antarhīta-prāṇi-karmapreritam sad nāma-rūpākāreṇa āvirbhavayam iti paryālochana-rūpaṁ mano 'kuruta | yathā gūḍha-nidrām prāptvāya puruṣasya karma-phala-bhogāya prabodhaḥ utpadyate tathā sarvān prāṇinaḥ eva-eva-karma-phalam bhogayitum idṛiṣo vichāraḥ Paramāt-manaḥ prādurbhūt | tathāvidha-vichāra-yuktaṁ tat Paramātma-tattva-rūpaṁ nāma-rūpa-śṛiṣṭi-sādhana-rūpaṁ tapo 'kuruta | na atra tapaḥ krichhra-chândrāyānādi-rūpaṁ | kintu śraṣṭavya-padārtha-viśeṣa-vishayam paryālochanam | ataḥ eva Atharvaṇikāḥ āmananti "yaḥ sarvajñaḥ sarvavid yasya jñānamayaṁ tapaḥ" iti | krichhṛādi-rūpatvā-bhāvad āsartrasya api sarva-śakti-yuktasya paryālochanam upapannam | . . . tādṛiṣāt tasmāt Paramoṣṭarāt eva-sankalpānusāreṇa kṛiṣṭid dhūmaḥ udapadyate |)

(6) Puruṣha.

Another important, but in many places obscure, hymn of the Rig-veda, in which the unity of the Godhead is recognized, though in a pantheistic sense, is the 90th of the tenth book, the celebrated Puruṣa Sūkta,⁴⁴ which is as follows:

1. *Sahasraśṛiṣṭeḥ Puruṣaḥ sahasrākṣaḥ sahasrapāt | sa bhūmim viśvato vṛitvā aty atishṭhad dāśāngulam |* 2. *Puruṣaḥ svedam sarvaṁ yad bhūtaṁ yach cha bhavyam | utāmrītatvasyevāno yad annenātirohati |* 3. *Etāvān aṣṭa mahimā ato jydyāntḥ cha Pūruṣaḥ | pado 'sya viśva*

⁴⁴ Translations of this hymn (which is also given with slight variations in Vāj. 8. 13, 1-16, and A. V. 19, 6, and 7, 5, 4) will be found in Mr. Colebrooke's Miscel. Ess. i. 167 (see also the note in p. 309 of the same volume), as also in the 1st vol. of this Work, 9 ff.; (into French) in the Preface to Burnouf's Bhāgavata Purāṇa, vol. i. pp. cxxi. ff. (where see the notes); and (into German) in Professor Weber's Ind. Stud. ix. 5 ff. I have now endeavoured to supply some further illustrations of the ideas in the hymn. I have passed over several obscurities on which I have been unable to throw any light. The first two verses are given in the Śvetāśvatara Upanishad, iii. 14, 15, where the commentary may be consulted.