

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Three Mystic Poets, a study of W. B. Yeats, A. E.
and Rabindranath Tagore

The Call of the Vedas (a collection of Vedic stanzas
with English translation & commentary)

Hymns from the Vedas

ORIGINAL TEXT AND ENGLISH TRANSLATION
WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

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परीत्य भूतानि परीत्य लोकान्परीत्य सर्वाः प्रदिशो दिशश्च ।
उपस्थाय प्रथमजामृतस्यात्मनाऽऽत्मानमभि सं विवेश ॥ ११ ॥

परि द्यावापृथिवी सद्य इत्वा परि लोकान्परि दिशः परि स्वः ।
ऋतस्य तन्तुं विततं विचृत्य तदपश्यत्तदभवत्तदासीत् ॥ १२ ॥

सदसस्पतिमद्भुतं प्रियमिन्द्रस्य काम्यम् । सनि मेधामयासिषं स्वाहा ॥ १३ ॥

यां मेधां देवगणाः पितरश्चोपासते । तया मामद्य मेघयाग्ने मेधाविनं कुरु स्वाहा ॥ १४ ॥

मेधां मे वरुणो ददातु मेधामग्निः प्रजापतिः ।
मेधामिन्द्रश्च वायुश्च मेधां धाता ददातु मे स्वाहा ॥ १५ ॥

इदं मे ब्रह्म च क्षत्रं चोभे श्रियमश्नुताम् ।
मयि देवा दधतु श्रियमुत्तमां तस्यै ते स्वाहा ॥ १६ ॥

(२)

ऋग्वेद । म. १०, सू. १२९ ।

७ प्रजापतिः परमेष्ठी । भाववृत्तम् । त्रिष्टुप् ।

नासदासीन्नो सदासीत् तदानीं नासीद्रजो नो व्योमा परो यत् ।

किमावरीवः कुह कस्य शर्मन्नम्भः किमासीद्गहनं गभीरम् ॥ १ ॥

(Continued from p. 303)

He prays for the highest form of it. He gives a welcome to that. The word occurs in the last stanza of the Bhūmi Sūkta of the AV. (XII. 1.63), and of the *Bhagavad Gita* (18.78). [The word is prefixed to names in modern India, meaning 'the illustrious'. It also means 'grace' (See AV. XII. 1.63) and in that sense the prefix will mean, 'the gracious' as in 'Śrī Krishna'.]

(2). St. 1 line 1 : The ultimate is beyond the antithesis of positive and negative concepts.

Having encompassed all creatures, encompassed all worlds,
encompassed all the regions and directions,
and approached the First-born of Eternal Order,
he with the Self entered into the Self. (11)

And going swiftly round the heaven and earth,
around the worlds, around the quarters, around the sky,
and lengthening out the wide-spread thread of Order,
he saw That, he became That, he was That. (12)

The wonderful Lord of the Assembly,
dear to Indra, lovable, who
bestows wisdom, has been approached by me. Hail ! (13)

The talent that Devas and Fathers esteem,
with that talent, Agni, endow me today. (14)

May Varuṇa give me talent,
may Agni and Prajāpati give it ;
May Indra and Vāyu grant me talent,
and Dhātṛi grant it to me. Hail ! (15)

Let both the spiritual and the political man
possess the lustre that I seek.
May the Devas give me the noblest lustre.
To thee, that lustre, Hail ! (16)

(2) THE HYMN OF CREATION

RIGVEDA X. 129

Metre : Tristhubh

Rishi : Prajāpati Parameshthin

There was neither existence nor non-existence then,
Neither the world nor the sky that lies beyond it ;
What lay enveloped? and where? and who gave it protection?
Was water there, deep and unfathomable? (1)

St. 11 : Having manifested himself in the creation, the Divine Being was absorbed in Himself.

St. 12 : *lengthening . . . Order* : establishing the all embracing Rīta, moral and cosmic Law, He saw . . . That — the manifested Deity became the Absolute again.

St. 13 : *Lord . . . Assembly* — Agni, presiding over the ritual.

St. 14 : *talent — medhā*. This is a prayer at the close of the ritual.

St. 16 : *Lustre — Śrī*. It is the brilliance possessed by the enlightened man. The Priest of the ritual passes it on to the men who are either spiritual or secular in their vocation.

(Continued on p. 302)

न मृत्युरासीदमृतं न तर्हि न रात्र्या अह्न आसीत् प्रकेतः ।
आनीदवातं स्वघया तदेकं तस्माद्धान्यन्न परः किं चनास ॥ २ ॥

तम आसीत् तमसा गूळ्हमग्रेऽप्रकेतं सलिलं सर्वमा इदम् ।
तुच्छयेनाभ्वपिहितं यदासीत् तपसस्तन्महिनाजायतैकम् ॥ ३ ॥

कामस्तदग्रे समवर्तताधि मनसो रेतः प्रथमं यदासीत् ।
सतो बन्धुमसति निरविन्दन् हृदि प्रतीष्या कवयो मनीषा ॥ ४ ॥

तिरश्चीनो विततो रश्मिरेषामधः स्विदासी ३दुपरि स्विदासी ३त् ।
रेतोघा आसन् महिमान आसन् त्वघा अवस्तात् प्रयतिः परस्तात् ॥ ५ ॥

को अद्वा वेद क इह प्र वोचत् कुत आजाता कुत इयं विसृष्टिः ।
अर्वाग्देवा अस्य विसर्जनेनाऽथा को वेद यत आबभूव ॥ ६ ॥

इयं विसृष्टिर्यत आबभूव यदि वा दधे यदि वा न ।
यो अस्याध्यक्षः परमे व्योमन् त्सो अङ्ग वेद यदि वा न वेद ॥ ७ ॥

(Continued from p. 305)

In the *Bṛihadāranyaka Upanishad*, Gārgi, plying the sage Yājñavalkya with questions wants to know the origin of the Ultimate Being himself. The sage warns her : 'Gārgi, don't ask too much (mātiprākshih)' — III. 6.1. The idea has been presented in a legendary form in Buddhistic and Puranic literature. (See *The Call of the Vedas*, A. C. Bose, Serial No. 91, Note).

There was no death then, nor immortality,
nor of night or day was there any sign.
The ONE breathed airless by self-impulse ;
other than THAT was nothing whatsoever. (2)

Darkness was concealed in darkness there,
and all this was indiscriminate chaos ;
That ONE which had been covered by the void
through the might of Tapas was manifested. (3)

In the beginning there was desire,
Which was the primal germ of the mind ;
The sages searching in their hearts with wisdom
found in non-existence the kin of existence. (4)

Their dividing line extended transversely.
What was below it and what was above ?
There was the seed-bearer, there were mighty forces ;
impulse from below and forward movement beyond. (5)

Who, really, knows? who can here declare it —
whence was it born and whence come this creation?
The Devas are later than this world's production ;
Then, who knows from where it came into being? (6)

That from which this creation came into being,
whether It had held it together or It had not,
He who surveys it in the highest region,
He, truly, knows it, or maybe He does not know ! (7)

St. 2 lines 3-4 : Here is found the basis for Vedantic monism.

St. 3 *Tapas*—spiritual fire. The manifestation of the Divine (in Creation) is a spiritual act.

St. 4 lines 1-2 : *desire — kāma*. Cf. "He, the Ātman, desired (*akāmayata*) : May I become many ; let me procreate myself. He performed Tapas. Having performed Tapas he created all this". — *Taittirīya Upanishad*, II. 6.

lines 3-4 : This is a special feature of Vedic thought — the finite and the infinite (similarly, the mortal and the immortal, the human and the divine) are not altogether exclusive of each other. (Here the mind works on a plane higher than the logical).

St. 5 : Creation is, to speak biologically, an interbreeding of the non-existent and the existent, the infinite and the finite.

St. 6 : The origin of creation is, after all, a mystery.

lines 3-4 : The Devas are the manifestations of the Absolute on the relative plane; they represent Divine splendour in the universe. See 'Birth of Devas', RV. X. 72, p. 267.

St. 7 : The Upanishad quoted above (Note on St. 4) simplifies the matter by saying that everything proceeded from the Ātman (and accepts monism). The Veda, however, does not do so. It leaves the question of the origin of creation open. (Contd. on p. 304)