The Real Awakener

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The Central Notion of The Veda

"….we know Saraswati to be that power of the Truth which we call inspiration. Inspiration from the Truth purifies by getting rid of all falsehood, for all sin according to the Indian idea is merely falsehood, wrongly inspired emotion, wrongly directed will and action. The central idea of life and ourselves from which we start is a falsehood and all else is falsified by it. Truth comes to us as a light, a voice, compelling a change of thought, imposing a new discernment of ourselves and all around us. Truth of thought creates truth of vision and truth of vision forms in us truth of being, and out of truth of being (*satyam*) flows naturally truth of emotion, will and action. This is indeed the central notion of the Veda." (100)

Selections from the Secret of the Veda (CWSA 15)

1. The Central Notion of the Veda

"The central idea of life and ourselves from which we start is a falsehood and all else is falsified by it. Truth comes to us as a light, a voice, compelling a change of thought, imposing a new discernment of ourselves and all around us. Truth of thought creates truth of vision and truth of vision forms in us truth of being, and out of truth of being (*satyam*) flows naturally truth of emotion, will and action. This is indeed the central notion of the Veda." (100)

2. The Image of the Oceans and the Rivers

(**a**) "The three riks of the third hymn of Madhuchchhandas in which Saraswati has been invoked, run as follows, in the Sanskrit: –

Pāvakā naḥ sarasvatī, vājebhir vājinīvatī;
yajñaṁ vaṣṭu dhiyāvasuḥ.
Codayitrī sūnṛtānāṁ, cetantī sumatīnām;
yajñaṁ dadhe sarasvatī.
Maho arṇaḥ sarasvatī, pra cetayati ketunā;
dhiyo viśvā vi rājati.

The sense of the first two verses is clear enough when we know Saraswati to be that power of the Truth which we call inspiration. Inspiration from the Truth purifies by getting rid of all falsehood, for all sin according to the Indian idea is merely falsehood, wrongly inspired emotion, wrongly directed will and action." (100)

(**b**) "Let us then start from this decisive fact put beyond doubt by this passage – whether we take the great stream to be Saraswati itself or the Truth-ocean – that the Vedic Rishis used the image of water, a river or an ocean, in a figurative sense

and as a psychological symbol, and let us see how far it takes us. We notice first that existence itself is constantly spoken of in the Hindu writings, in Veda, Purana and even philosophical reasoning and illustration as an ocean. The Veda speaks of two oceans, the upper and the lower waters. These are the ocean of the subconscient, dark and inexpressive, and the ocean of the superconscient, luminous and eternal expression but beyond the human mind. Vamadeva in the last hymn of the fourth Mandala speaks of these two oceans. He says that a honeyed wave climbs up from the ocean and by means of this mounting wave which is the Soma (*aṁśu*) one attains entirely to immortality; that wave or that Soma is the secret name of the clarity (*ghṛtasya*, the symbol of the clarified butter); it is the tongue of the gods; it is the nodus (*nābhi*) of immortality.

Samudrād ūrmir madhumān udārad,
upāṁśunā sam amṛtatvam ānaṭ;
Ghṛtasya nāma guhyaṁ yad asti,
jihvā devānām amṛtasya nābhiḥ.

I presume there can be no doubt that the sea, the honey, the Soma, the clarified butter are in this passage at least psychological symbols. Certainly, Vamadeva does not mean that a wave or flood of wine came mounting up out of the salt water of the Indian Ocean or of the Bay of Bengal or even from the fresh water of the river Indus or the Ganges and that this wine is a secret name for clarified butter. What he means to say is clearly that out of the subconscient depths in us arises a honeyed wave of Ananda or pure delight of existence, that it is by this Ananda that we can arrive at immortality; this Ananda is the secret being, the secret reality behind the action of the mind in its shining clarities. Soma, the god of the Ananda, the Vedanta also tells us, is that which has become mind or sensational perception; in other words, all mental sensation carries in it a hidden delight of existence and strives to express that secret of its own being. Therefore Ananda is the tongue of the gods with which they taste the

delight of existence; it is the nodus in which all the activities of the immortal state or divine existence are bound together. Vamadeva goes on to say, "Let us give expression to this secret name of the clarity, – that is to say, let us bring out this Soma wine, this hidden delight of existence; let us hold it in this world-sacrifice by our surrenderings or submissions to Agni, the divine Will or Conscious-Power which is the Master of being. He is the four-horned Bull of the worlds and when he listens to the soul-thought of man in its self-expression, he ejects this secret name of delight from its hiding-place."

Vayaṁ nāma pra bravāmā ghṛtasya,
asmin yajñe dhārayāmā namobhiḥ;
Upa brahmā śṛṇavac chasyamānaṁ,
catuḥśṛṅgo avamīd gaura etat.

Let us note, in passing, that since the wine and the clarified butter are symbolic, the sacrifice also must be symbolic. In such hymns as this of Vamadeva's the ritualistic veil so elaborately woven by the Vedic mystics vanishes like a dissolving mist before our eyes and there emerges the Vedantic truth, the secret of the Veda.

Vamadeva leaves us in no doubt as to the nature of the Ocean of which he speaks; for in the fifth verse he openly describes it as the ocean of the heart, *hṛdyāt samudrāt*, out of which rise the waters of the clarity, *ghṛtasya dhārāḥ*; they flow, he says, becoming progressively purified by the mind and the inner heart, *antar hṛdā manasā pūyamānāḥ*. And in the closing verse he speaks of the whole of existence being triply established, first in the seat of Agni – which we know from other riks to be the Truth-Consciousness, Agni's own home, *svaṁ damaṃṛtaṁ bṛhat*, – secondly, in the heart, the sea, which is evidently the same as the heart-ocean, – thirdly, in the life of man.

Dhāman te viśvaṁ bhuvanam adhi śritam,
antaḥ samudre hṛdyantar āyuṣi.

The superconscient, the sea of the subconscient, the life of the living being between the two, – this is the Vedic idea of existence." (102-04)

(c) Indra, Surya and Soma

"The sea of the superconscient is the goal of the rivers of clarity, of the honeyed wave, as the sea of the subconscient in the heart within is their place of rising. This upper sea is spoken of as the Sindhu, a word which may mean either river or ocean; but in this hymn it clearly means ocean. Let us observe the remarkable language in which Vamadeva speaks of these rivers of the clarity. He says first that the gods sought and found the clarity, the *ghṛtam*, triply placed and hidden by the Panis in the cow, *gavi*. It is beyond doubt that go is used in the Veda in the double sense of Cow and Light; the Cow is the outer symbol, the inner meaning is the Light. The figure of the cows stolen and hidden by the Panis is constant in the Veda. Here it is evident that as the sea is a psychological symbol – the heart-ocean, *samudre hṛdi*, – and the Soma is a psychological symbol and the clarified butter is a psychological symbol, the cow in which the gods find the clarified butter hidden by the Panis must also symbolise an inner illumination and not physical light. The cow is really Aditi, the infinite consciousness hidden in the subconscient, and the triple *ghṛtam* is the triple clarity of the liberated sensation finding its secret of delight, of the thought-mind attaining to light and intuition and of the truth itself, the ultimate supra-mental vision. This is clear from the second half of the verse in which it is said, "One Indra produced, one Surya, one the gods fashioned by natural development out of Vena"; for Indra is the Master of the thought-mind, Surya of the supra-mental light, Vena is Soma, the master of mental delight of existence, creator of the sense-mind." (104)

(d) The Panis and the Upper and the Lower Ocean

"We may observe also in passing that the Panis here must

perforce be spiritual enemies, powers of darkness, and not Dravidian gods or Dravidian tribes or Dravidian merchants. In the next verse Vamadeva says of the streams of the *ghṛtam* that they move from the heart-ocean shut up in a hundred prisons (pens) by the enemy so that they are not seen. Certainly, this does not mean that rivers of ghee – or of water, either – rising from the heart-ocean or any ocean were caught on their way by the wicked and unconscionable Dravidians and shut up in a hundred pens so that the Aryans or the Aryan gods could not even catch a glimpse of them. We perceive at once that the enemy, Pani, Vritra of the hymns is a purely psychological conception and not an attempt of our forefathers to conceal the facts of early Indian history from their posterity in a cloud of tangled and inextricable myths. The Rishi Vamadeva would have stood aghast at such an unforeseen travesty of his ritual images. We are not even helped if we take *ghṛta* in the sense of water, *hṛdya samudra* in the sense of a delightful lake, and suppose that the Dravidians enclose the water of the rivers with a hundred dams so that the Aryans could not even get a glimpse of them. For even if the rivers of the Punjab all flow out of one heart-pleasing lake, yet their streams of water cannot even so have been triply placed in a cow and the cow hidden in a cave by the cleverest and most inventive Dravidians.

"These move" says Vamadeva "from the heart-ocean; penned by the enemy in a hundred enclosures they cannot be seen; I look towards the streams of the clarity, for in their midst is the Golden Reed. Entirely they stream like flowing rivers becoming purified by the heart within and the mind; these move, waves of the clarity, like animals under the mastery of their driver. As if on a path in front of the Ocean (*sindhu*, the upper ocean) the mighty ones move compact of forceful speed but limited by the vital force (*vāta, vāyu*), the streams of clarity; they are like a straining horse which breaks its limits, as it is nourished by the waves." On the very face of it this is the poetry of a mystic concealing his sense from the

profane under a veil of images which occasionally he suffers to grow transparent to the eye that chooses to see. What he means is that the divine knowledge is all the time flowing constantly behind our thoughts, but is kept from us by the internal enemies who limit our material of mind to the sense-action and sense-perception so that though the waves of our being beat on banks that border upon the superconscient, the infinite, they are limited by the nervous action of the sense-mind and cannot reveal their secret. They are like horses controlled and reined in; only when the waves of the light have nourished their strength to the full does the straining steed break these limits and they flow freely towards That from which the Soma-wine is pressed out and the sacrifice is born.

Yatra somaḥ sūyate yatra yajño,

ghṛtasya dhārā abhi tat pavante.

This goal is, again, explained to be that which is all honey, – *ghṛtasya dhārā madhumat pavante*; it is the Ananda, the divine Beatitude. And that this goal is the Sindhu, the superconscient ocean, is made clear in the last rik, where Vamadeva says, "May we taste that honeyed wave of thine" – of Agni, the divine Purusha, the four-horned Bull of the worlds – "which is borne in the force of the Waters where they come together."

Apām anīke samithe ya ābhṛtas,

tam aśyāma madhumantaṁ ta ūrmim.

We find this fundamental idea of the Vedic Rishis brought out in the Hymn of Creation (X.129) where the subconscient is thus described. "Darkness hidden by darkness in the beginning was this all, an ocean without mental consciousness . . . out of it the One was born by the greatness of Its energy. It first moved in it as desire which was the first seed of mind. The Masters of Wisdom found out in the non-existent that which builds up the existent; in the heart they found it by purposeful impulsion and by the thought-mind. Their ray was extended horizontally; there was something above, there was

something below." In this passage the same ideas are brought out as in Vamadeva's hymn but without the veil of images. Out of the subconscient ocean the One arises in the heart first as desire; he moves there in the heart-ocean as an unexpressed desire of the delight of existence and this desire is the first seed of what afterwards appears as the sense-mind. The gods thus find out a means of building up the existent, the conscious being, out of the subconscient darkness; they find it in the heart and bring it out by the growth of thought and purposeful impulsion, *pratīṣyā*, by which is meant mental desire as distinguished from the first vague desire that arises out of the subconscient in the merely vital movements of nature. The conscious existence which they thus create is stretched out as it were horizontally between two other extensions; below is the dark sleep of the subconscient, above is the luminous secrecy of the superconscient. These are the upper and the lower ocean." (105-07)

3. The Similarity of the Symbolic Images in the Vedas and the Puranas

"This Vedic imagery throws a clear light on the similar symbolic images of the Puranas, especially on the famous symbol of Vishnu sleeping after the pralaya on the folds of the snake Ananta upon the ocean of sweet milk. It may perhaps be objected that the Puranas were written by superstitious Hindu priests or poets who believed that eclipses were caused by a dragon eating the sun and moon and could easily believe that during the periods of non-creation the supreme Deity in a physical body went to sleep on a physical snake upon a material ocean of real milk and that therefore it is a vain ingenuity to seek for a spiritual meaning in these fables. My reply would be that there is in fact no need to seek for such meanings; for these very superstitious poets have put them there plainly on the very surface of the fable for everybody to see who does not choose to be blind. For they have given a name to Vishnu's snake, the name Ananta, and Ananta means

the Infinite; therefore they have told us plainly enough that the image is an allegory and that Vishnu, the allpervading Deity, sleeps in the periods of non-creation on the coils of the Infinite. As for the ocean, the Vedic imagery shows us that it must be the ocean of eternal existence and this ocean of eternal existence is an ocean of absolute sweetness, in other words, of pure Bliss. For the sweet milk (itself a Vedic image) has, evidently, a sense not essentially different from the *madhu*, honey or sweetness, of Vamadeva's hymn.

Thus we find that both Veda and Purana use the same symbolic images; the ocean is for them the image of infinite and eternal existence. We find also that the image of the river or flowing current is used to symbolise a stream of conscious being. We find that Saraswati, one of the seven rivers, is the river of inspiration flowing from the Truth-consciousness. We have the right then to suppose that the other six rivers are also psychological symbols.

But we need not depend entirely on hypothesis and inference, however strong and entirely convincing. As in the hymn of Vamadeva we have seen that the rivers, *ghṛtasya dhārāḥ*, are there not rivers of clarified butter or rivers of physical water, but psychological symbols, so we find in other hymns the same compelling evidence as to the image of the seven rivers." (107-08)

4. The Herds of the Dawn

"The seven Rivers of the Veda, the Waters, *āpaḥ*, are usually designated in the figured Vedic language as the seven Mothers or the seven fostering Cows, *sapta dhenavaḥ*. The word *āpaḥ* itself has, covertly, a double significance; for the root *ap* meant originally not only to move from which in all probability is derived the sense of waters, but to be or bring into being, as in *apatya*, a child, and the Southern Indian *appā*, father. The seven Waters are the waters of being; they are the Mothers from whom all forms of existence are born. But we meet also another expression, *sapta gāvaḥ*, the seven

Cows or the seven Lights, and the epithet *saptagu*, that which has seven rays. *Gu* (*gavaḥ*) and *go* (*gāvaḥ*) bear throughout the Vedic hymns this double sense of cows and radiances. In the ancient Indian system of thought being and consciousness were aspects of each other, and Aditi, infinite existence from whom the gods are born, described as the Mother with her seven names and seven seats (*dhāmāni*), is also conceived as the infinite consciousness, the Cow, the primal Light manifest in seven Radiances, *sapta gāvaḥ*. The sevenfold principle of existence is therefore imaged from the one point of view in the figure of the Rivers that arise from the ocean, *sapta dhenavaḥ*, from the other in the figure of the Rays of the all-creating Father, Surya Savitri, *sapta gāvaḥ*.

The image of the Cow is the most important of all the Vedic symbols. For the ritualist the word *go* means simply a physical cow and nothing else, just as its companion word, *aśva*, means simply a physical horse and has no other sense, or as *ghṛta* means only water or clarified butter, *vīra* only a son or a retainer or servant. When the Rishi prays to the Dawn, *gomad vīravad dhehi ratnam uṣo aśvāvat*, the ritualistic commentator sees in the invocation only an entreaty for "pleasant wealth to which are attached cows, men (or sons) and horses". If on the other hand these words are symbolic, the sense will run, "Confirm in us a state of bliss full of light, of conquering energy and of force of vitality." It is therefore necessary to decide once for all the significance of the word *go* in the Vedic hymns. If it proves to be symbolic, then these other words, – *aśva,* horse*, vīra,* man or hero*, apatya* or *prajā*, offspring, *hiraṇya*, gold, *vāja*, plenty (food, according to Sayana), – by which it is continually accompanied, must perforce assume also a symbolic and a kindred significance.

The image of the Cow is constantly associated in Veda with the Dawn and the Sun; it also recurs in the legend of the recovery of the lost cows from the cave of the Panis by Indra and Brihaspati with the aid of the hound Sarama and the Angiras Rishis. The conception of the Dawn and the

legend of the Angirases are at the very heart of the Vedic cult and may almost be considered as the key to the secret of the significance of Veda. It is therefore these two that we must examine in order to find firm ground for our inquiry.

Now even the most superficial examination of the Vedic hymns to the Dawn makes it perfectly clear that the cows of the Dawn, the cows of the Sun are a symbol for Light and cannot be anything else. Sayana himself is obliged in these hymns to interpret the word sometimes as cows, sometimes as rays, – careless as usual of consistency; sometimes he will even tell us that *go* like *ṛtam*, the word for truth, means water. As a matter of fact it is evident that we are meant to take the word in a double sense, "light" as the true significance, "cow" as the concrete image and verbal figure.

The sense of "rays" is quite indisputable in such passages as the third verse of Madhuchchhandas' hymn to Indra, I.7, "Indra for far vision made the Sun to ascend in heaven: he sped him all over the hill by his rays," *vi gobhir adrim airayat*. But at the same time, the rays of Surya are the herds of the Sun, the kine of Helios slain by the companions of Odysseus in the Odyssey, stolen by Hermes from his brother Apollo in the Homeric hymn to Hermes. They are the cows concealed by the enemy Vala, by the Panis; when Madhuchchhandas says to Indra, "Thou didst uncover the hole of Vala of the Cows", he means that Vala is the concealer, the withholder of the Light and it is the concealed Light that Indra restores to the sacrificer. The recovery of the lost or stolen cows is constantly spoken of in the Vedic hymns and its sense will be clear enough when we come to examine the legend of the Panis and of the Angirases.

Once this sense is established, the material explanation of the Vedic prayer for "cows" is at once shaken; for if the lost cows for whose restoration the Rishis invoke Indra, are not physical herds stolen by the Dravidians but the shining herds of the Sun, of the Light, then we are justified in considering

whether the same figure does not apply when there is the simple prayer for "cows" without any reference to any hostile interception. For instance in I.4.2 it is said of Indra, the maker of perfect forms who is as a good milker in the milking of the cows, that his ecstasy of the Soma-Wine is verily "cow-giving", *godā id revato madaḥ*. It is the height of absurdity and irrationality to understand by this phrase that Indra is a very wealthy god and, when he gets drunk, exceedingly liberal in the matter of cow giving. It is obvious that as the cow-milking in the first verse is a figure, so the cow-giving in the second verse is a figure. And if we know from other passages of the Veda that the Cow is the symbol of Light, we must understand here also that Indra, when full of the Soma-ecstasy, is sure to give us the Light.

In the hymns to the Dawn the symbolic sense of the cows of light is equally clear. Dawn is described always as *gomatī*, which must mean, obviously, luminous or radiant; for it would be nonsense to use "cowful" in a literal sense as the fixed epithet of the Dawn. But the image of the cows is there in the epithet; for Usha is not only *gomatī*, she is *gomatī aśvāvatī*; she has always with her her cows and her horses. She creates light for all the world and opens out the darkness as the pen of the Cow, where we have without any possibility of mistake the cow as the symbol of light, (I.92.4). We may note also that in this hymn I.92, the Ashwins are asked to drive downward their chariot on a path that is radiant and golden, *gomad hiraṇyavad*. Moreover Dawn is said to be drawn in her chariot sometimes by ruddy cows, sometimes by ruddy horses. "She yokes her host of the ruddy cows"; *yuṅkte gavām aruṇānām anīkam* (I.124.11), – where the second meaning "her host of the ruddy rays" stands clear behind the concrete image. She is described as the mother of the cows or radiances; *gavāṁ janitrī akṛta pra ketum* (I.124.5), "the Mother of the cows (radiances) has created vision", and it is said elsewhere of her action, "vision" or "perception has dawned now where nought was"; and again it is clear that

the cows are the shining herds of the Light. She is also praised as "the leader of the shining herds", *netrī gavām*, VII.76.6; and there is an illuminating verse in which the two ideas are combined, "the Mother of the Herds, the guide of the days", *gavāṁ mātā netrī ahnām* (VII.77.2). Finally, as if to remove the veil of the image entirely, the Veda itself tells us that the herds are a figure for the rays of the Light, "her happy rays come into sight like cows released into movement" – *prati bhadrā adṛkṣata gavāṁ sargā na raśmayaḥ* (IV.52.5). And we have the still more conclusive verse, VII.79.2, "Thy cows (rays) remove the darkness and extend the Light"; *saṁ te gāvas tama ā vartayanti, jyotir yacchanti.*" (123-26)

5. The Parable of the Angiras Rishis

"The Vedic hymns, whatever else they may be, are throughout an invocation to certain "Aryan" gods, friends and helpers of man, for ends which are held by the singers, – or seers, as they call themselves (*kavi, ṛṣi, vipra*), – to be supremely desirable (*vara, vāra*). These desirable ends, these boons of the gods are summed up in the words *rayi, rādhas*, which may mean physically wealth or prosperity, and psychologically a felicity or enjoyment which consists in the abundance of certain forms of spiritual wealth. Man contributes as his share of the joint effort the work of the sacrifice, the Word, the Soma Wine and the *ghṛta* or clarified butter. The Gods are born in the sacrifice, they increase by the Word, the Wine and the Ghrita and in that strength and in the ecstasy and intoxication of the Wine they accomplish the aims of the sacrificer. The chief elements of the wealth thus acquired are the Cow and the Horse; but there are also others, *hiraṇya*, gold, *vīra*, men or heroes, *ratha*, chariots, *prajā* or *apatya*, offspring. The very means of the sacrifice, the fire, the Soma, the *ghṛta*, are supplied by the Gods and they attend the sacrifice as its priests, purifiers, upholders, heroes of its warfare, – for there are those who hate the sacrifice and the Word, attack the sacrificer and tear or withhold from him

the coveted wealth. The chief conditions of the prosperity so ardently desired are the rising of the Dawn and the Sun and the downpour of the rain of heaven and of the seven rivers, – physical or mystic, – called in the Veda the Mighty Ones of heaven. But even this prosperity, this fullness of cows, horses, gold, men, chariots, offspring, is not a final end in itself; all this is a means towards the opening up of the other worlds, the winning of Swar, the ascent to the solar heavens, the attainment by the path of the Truth to the Light and to the heavenly Bliss where the mortal arrives at Immortality.

Such is the undoubted substance of the Veda. The ritual and mythological sense which has been given to it from very ancient times is well known and need not be particularised; in sum, it is the performance of sacrificial worship as the chief duty of man with a view to the enjoyment of wealth here and heaven hereafter. We know also the modern view of the matter in which the Veda is a worship of the personified sun, moon, stars, dawn, wind, rain, fire, sky, rivers and other deities of Nature, the propitiation of these gods by sacrifice, the winning and holding of wealth in this life, chiefly from human and Dravidian enemies and against hostile demons and mortal plunderers, and after death man's attainment to the Paradise of the gods. We now find, that however valid these ideas may have been for the vulgar, they were not the inner sense of the Veda to the seers, the illumined minds (*kavi, vipra*) of the Vedic age. For them these material objects were symbols of the immaterial; the cows were the radiances or illuminations of a divine Dawn, the horses and chariots were symbols of force and movement, gold was light, the shining wealth of a divine Sun – the true light, *ṛtaṁ jyotiḥ*; both the wealth acquired by the sacrifice and the sacrifice itself in all their details symbolised man's effort and his means towards a greater end, the acquisition of immortality. The aspiration of the Vedic seer was the enrichment and expansion of man's being, the birth and the formation of the godheads in his life-sacrifice, the increase of the Force, Truth, Light, Joy of which

they are the powers until through the enlarged and ever-opening worlds of his being the soul of man rises, sees the divine doors (*devīr dvāraḥ*) swing open to his call and enters into the supreme felicity of a divine existence beyond heaven and earth. This ascent is the parable of the Angiras Rishis." (138-39)

6. The Dasyus

"….the Dasyus, sometimes represented as possessing the coveted riches which have to be ravished from them by violence, sometimes as stealing them from the Aryan who has then to discover and recover the lost wealth by the aid of the gods. The Dasyus who withhold or steal the cows are called the Panis, a word which seems originally to have meant doers, dealers or traffickers; but this significance is sometimes coloured by its further sense of "misers". Their chief is Vala, a demon whose name signifies probably the circumscriber or "encloser", as Vritra means the opponent, obstructer or enfolding coverer. It is easy to suggest, as do the scholars who would read as much primitive history as possible into the Veda, that the Panis are the Dravidians and Vala is their chief or god. But this sense can only be upheld in isolated passages; in many hymns it is incompatible with the actual words of the Rishis and turns into a jumble of gaudy nonsense their images and figures." (140)

7. The Use of the Word Angiras in the Veda

(a) "….the word Angiras is used in the Veda as an epithet, often in connection with the image of the Dawn and the Cows. Secondly, it occurs as a name of Agni, while Indra is said to become Angiras and Brihaspati is called Angiras and Angirasa, obviously not as a mere decorative or mythological appellation but with a special significance and an allusion to the psychological or other sense attached to the word. Even the Ashwins are addressed collectively as Angiras. It is therefore clear that the word Angiras is used in the Veda not merely as a

name of a certain family of Rishis, but with a distinct meaning inherent in the word. It is probable also that even when used as a name it is still with a clear recognition of the inherent meaning of the name; it is probable even that names in the Veda are generally, if not always, used with a certain stress on their significance, especially the names of gods, sages and kings. The word Indra is generally used as a name, yet we have such significant glimpses of the Vedic method as the description of Usha *indratamā aṅgirastamā*, "most-Indra", "most-Angiras", and of the Panis as *anindrāḥ*, "not-Indra", expressions which evidently are meant to convey the possession or absence of the qualities, powers or functionings represented by Indra and the Angiras." (161-62)

(b) "The language of the hymns establishes, then, a double aspect for the Angiras Rishis. One belongs to the external garb of the Veda; it weaves together its naturalistic imagery of the Sun, the Flame, the Dawn, the Cow, the Horse, the Wine, the sacrificial Hymn; the other extricates from that imagery the internal sense. The Angirases are sons of the Flame, lustres of the Dawn, givers and drinkers of the Wine, singers of the Hymn, eternal youths and heroes who wrest for us the Sun, the Cows, the Horses and all treasures from the grasp of the sons of darkness. But they are also seers of the Truth, finders and speakers of the word of the Truth and by the power of the Truth they win for us the wide world of Light and Immortality which is described in the Veda as the Vast, the True, the Right and as the own home of this Flame of which they are the children. This physical imagery and these psychological indications are closely interwoven and they cannot be separated from each other. Therefore we are obliged by ordinary common sense to conclude that the Flame of which the Right and the Truth is the own home is itself a Flame of that Right and Truth, that the Light which is won by the Truth and by the force of true thought is not merely a physical light, the cows which Sarama finds on the path of the Truth not merely physical herds, the Horses not merely the

wealth of the Dravidians conquered by invading Aryan tribes, nor even merely images of the physical Dawn, its light and its swiftly moving rays and the darkness of which the Panis and Vritra are the defenders not merely the darkness of the Indian or the Arctic night. We have even been able to hazard a reasonable hypothesis by which we can disentangle the real sense of this imagery and discover the true godhead of these shining gods and these divine, luminous sages.

The Angiras Rishis are at once divine and human seers. This double character is not in itself an extraordinary feature or peculiar in the Veda to these sages. The Vedic gods also have a double action; divine and pre-existent in themselves, they are human in their working upon the mortal plane when they grow in man to the great ascension." (173-74)

8. The Release of the Divine Light from the Three Planes of Mentality

"*Ghṛta* also means shining, it is the shining yield of the shining cow; it is the formed light of conscious knowledge in the mentality which is stored in the illumined consciousness and it is liberated by the liberation of the Cow: Soma is the delight, beatitude, Ananda inseparable from the illumined state of the being; and as there are, according to the Veda, three planes of mentality in us, so there are three portions of the *ghṛta* dependent on the three gods Surya, Indra and Soma, and the Soma also is offered in three parts, on the three levels of the hill, *triṣu sānuṣu*. We may hazard the conjecture, having regard to the nature of the three gods, that Soma releases the divine light from the sense mentality, Indra from the dynamic mentality, Surya from the pure reflective mentality." (193-94)

9. The Interpretations of the Circumstances of the Angiras Legend

"Once we have the key to the meaning of the Cows, the Sun, the Honey-Wine, all the circumstances of the Angiras legend

and the action of the Fathers, which are such an incongruous patchwork in the ritualistic or naturalistic and so hopelessly impossible in the historical or Arya-Dravidian interpretation of the hymns, become on the contrary perfectly clear and connected and each throws light on the other. We understand each hymn in its entirety and in relation to other hymns; each isolated line, each passage, each scattered reference in the Vedas falls inevitably and harmoniously into a common whole. We know, here, how the Honey, the Bliss can be said to be stored in the Cow, the shining Light of the Truth; what is the connection of the honey-bearing Cow with the Sun, lord and origin of that Light; why the discovery of the Sun dwelling in the darkness is connected with the conquest or recovery of the cows of the Panis by the Angirases; why it is called the discovery of that Truth; what is meant by the footed and hoofed wealth and the field or pasture of the Cow. We begin to see what is the cave of the Panis and why that which is hidden in the lair of Vala is said also to be hidden in the waters released by Indra from the hold of Vritra, the seven rivers possessed by the seven-headed heaven-conquering thought of Ayasya; why the rescue of the sun out of the cave, the separation or choosing of the light out of the darkness is said to be done by an all-discerning knowledge; who are Dakshina and Sarama and what is meant by Indra holding the hoofed wealth in his right hand. And in arriving at these conclusions we have not to wrest the sense of words, to interpret the same fixed term by different renderings according to our convenience of the moment or to render differently the same phrase or line in different hymns, or to make incoherence a standard of right interpretation; on the contrary, the greater the fidelity to word and form of the Riks, the more conspicuously the general and the detailed sense of the Veda emerge in a constant clearness and fullness." (195-96)

10. The Vedic Immortality and Its Attainment

"….the physical being visited by the greatness of the

infinite planes above and by the power of the great godheads who reign on those planes breaks its limits, opens out to the Light and is upheld in its new wideness by the infinite Consciousness, mother Aditi, and her sons, the divine Powers of the supreme Deva. This is the Vedic immortality." (200)

"It is now perfectly clear that the achievement of the Angirases is the conquest of the Truth and the Immortality, that Swar called also the great heaven, *bṛhat dyauḥ*, is the plane of the Truth above the ordinary heaven and earth which can be no other than the ordinary mental and physical being; that the path of the great heaven, the path of the Truth created by the Angirases and followed by the hound Sarama is the path to the Immortality, *amṛtatvāya gātum*; that the vision (*ketu*) of the Dawn, the Day won by the Angirases, is the vision proper to the Truth-consciousness; that the luminous cows of the Sun and Dawn wrested from the Panis are the illuminations of this truth-consciousness which help to form the thought of the Truth, *ṛtasya dhītiḥ*, complete in the seven-headed thought of Ayasya; that the Night of the Veda is the obscured consciousness of the mortal being in which the Truth is subconscient, hidden in the cave of the hill; that the recovery of the lost sun lying in this darkness of Night is the recovery of the sun of Truth out of the darkened subconscient condition; and that the down flowing earthward of the seven rivers must be the out streaming action of the sevenfold principle of our being as it is formulated in the Truth of the divine or immortal existence. Equally then must the Panis be the powers that prevent the Truth from emerging out of the subconscient condition and that constantly strive to steal its illuminations from man and throw him back into the Night, and Vritra must be the power that obstructs and prevents the free movement of the illumined rivers of the Truth, obstructs the impulsion of the Truth in us, *ṛtasya preṣā*, the luminous impulsion, *jyotiṣmatīm iṣam*, which carries us beyond the Night to the immortality. And the gods, the sons of Aditi, must be on the contrary the luminous divine powers, born of

the infinite consciousness Aditi, whose formation and activity in our human and mortal being are necessary for our growth into the godhead, into the being of the Deva (*devatvam*) which is the Immortality. Agni, the truth-conscious seer-will, is the principal godhead who enables us to effect the sacrifice; he leads it on the path of the Truth, he is the warrior of the battle, the doer of the work, and his unity and universality in us comprehending in itself all the other godheads is the basis of the Immortality. The plane of the Truth to which we arrive is his own home and the own home of the other gods, and the final home also of the soul of man. And this immortality is described as a beatitude, a state of infinite spiritual wealth and plenitude, *ratna*, *rayi*, *vāja*, *rādhas*, etc.; the opening doors of our divine home are the doors of the felicity, *rāyo duraḥ*, the divine doors which swing wide open to those who increase the Truth (*ṛtāvṛdhaḥ*) and which are discovered for us by Saraswati and her sisters, by the seven Rivers, by Sarama; to them and to the wide pasture (*kṣetra*) in the unobstructed and equal infinities of the vast Truth Brihaspati and Indra lead upward the shining Herds." (202-03)

"The first name of the Mother with her thrice seven supreme seats, that which the dawns or mental illuminations know and move towards, must be the name or deity of the supreme Deva, who is infinite being and infinite consciousness and infinite bliss, and the seats are the three divine worlds, called earlier in the hymn the three supreme births of Agni, Satya, Tapas and Jana of the Puranas, which correspond to these three infinities of the Deva and each fulfils in its own way the sevenfold principle of our existence: thus we get the series of thrice seven seats of Aditi manifested in all her glory by the opening out of the Dawn of Truth. Thus we see that the achievement of the Light and Truth by the human fathers is also an ascent to the Immortality of the supreme and divine status, to the first name of the all-creating infinite Mother, to her thrice seven supreme degrees of this ascending existence, to the highest levels of the eternal hill (*sānu*, *adri*)." (205)

"Finally the Rishi proceeds to the coupling, which we so repeatedly find, of the luminous Cows and the Waters. "By the Truth the Angirases broke open and hurled asunder the hill and came to union with the Cows; human souls, they took up their dwelling in the blissful Dawn, Swar became manifest when Agni was born. By Truth the divine immortal waters, unoppressed, with their honeyed floods, O Agni, like a horse breasting forward in its gallopings ran in an eternal flowing." These four verses in fact are meant to give the preliminary conditions for the great achievement of the Immortality. They are the symbols of the grand Mythus, the mythus of the Mystics in which they hid their supreme spiritual experience from the profane and, alas! effectively enough from their posterity. That they were secret symbols, images meant to reveal the truth which they protected but only to the initiated, to the knower, to the seer, Vamadeva himself tells us in the most plain and emphatic language in the last verse of this very hymn; "All these are secret words that I have uttered to thee who knowest, O Agni, O Disposer, words of leading, words of seer-knowledge that express their meaning to the seer, – I have spoken them illumined in my words and my thinkings"; *etā viśvā viduṣe tubhyaṁ vedho, nīthāni agne niṇyā vacāṁsi; nivacanā kavaye kāvyāni, aśaṁsiṣaṁ matibhir vipra ukthaiḥ*. Secret words that have kept indeed their secret ignored by the priest, the ritualist, the grammarian, the pandit, the historian, the mythologist, to whom they have been words of darkness or seals of confusion and not what they were to the supreme ancient forefathers and their illumined posterity, *niṇyā vacāṁsi nīthāni nivacanā kāvyāni.*" (210)

11. Sarama – The Hound of Heaven

"That Sarama is some power of the Light and probably of the Dawn is very clear; for once we know that the struggle between Indra and the original Aryan seers on the one hand and the sons of the Cave on the other is no strange deformation of primitive Indian history but a symbolic struggle between

the powers of Light and Darkness, Sarama who leads in the search for the radiant herds and discovers both the path and the secret hold in the mountain must be a forerunner of the dawn of Truth in the human mind. And if we ask ourselves what power among the truth-finding faculties it is that thus discovers out of the darkness of the unknown in our being the truth that is hidden in it, we at once think of the intuition. For Sarama is not Saraswati, she is not the inspiration, even though the names are similar. Saraswati gives the full flood of the knowledge; she is or awakens the great stream, *maho arṇaḥ*, and illumines with plenitude all the thoughts, *dhiyo viśvā vi rājati*. Saraswati possesses and is the flood of the Truth; Sarama is the traveller and seeker on its path who does not herself possess but rather finds that which is lost. Neither is she the plenary word of the revelation, the Teacher of man like the goddess Ila; for even when what she seeks is found, she does not take possession but only gives the message to the seers and their divine helpers who have still to fight for the possession of the light that has been discovered.

Let us see, however, what the Veda itself says of Sarama. There is a verse, I.104.5, which does not mention her name, nor is the hymn itself about the Angirases or Panis, yet the line describes accurately enough the part attributed to her in the Veda: – "When this guide became visible, she went, knowing, towards the seat that is as if the home of the Dasyu," *prati yat syā nīthā adarśi dasyor, oko na acchā sadanaṁ jānatī gāt*. These are the two essential characteristics of Sarama; the knowledge comes to her beforehand, before vision, springs up instinctively at the least indication and with that knowledge she guides the rest of the faculties and divine powers that seek. And she leads to that seat, *sadanam*, the home of the Destroyers, which is at the other pole of existence to the seat of the Truth, *sadanam ṛtasya*, in the cave or secret place of darkness, *guhāyām*, just as the home of the gods is in the cave or secrecy of light. In other words, she is a power descended from the superconscient Truth which leads us to the light

that is hidden in ourselves, in the subconscient. All these characteristics apply exactly to the intuition." (211-12)

"…the action of Sarama is precisely that of the Intuition which goes straight to the Truth by the straight path of the Truth and not through the crooked paths of doubt and error and which delivers the Truth out of the veil of darkness and false appearances; it is through the illuminations discovered by her that the Seer-mind can attain to the complete revelation of the Truth." (214-15)

12. The Sons of Darkness and the Conquest Over Them

"We have seen, not once but repeatedly, that it is impossible to read into the story of the Angirases, Indra and Sarama, the cave of the Panis and the conquest of the Dawn, the Sun and the Cows an account of a political and military struggle between Aryan invaders and Dravidian cave-dwellers. It is a struggle between the seekers of Light and the powers of Darkness; the cows are the illuminations of the Sun and the Dawn, they cannot be physical cows; the wide fear-free field of the Cows won by Indra for the Aryans is the wide world of Swar, the world of the solar Illumination, the threefold luminous regions of Heaven. Therefore equally the Panis must be taken as powers of the cave of Darkness. It is quite true that the Panis are Dasyus or Dāsas; they are spoken of constantly by that name, they are described as the Dāsa Varna as opposed to the Arya Varna, and *varṇa*, colour, is the word used for caste or class in the Brahmanas and later writings, although it does not therefore follow that it has that sense in the Rig Veda. The Dasyus are the haters of the sacred word; they are those who give not to the gods the gift or the holy wine, who keep their wealth of cows and horses and other treasure for themselves and do not give them to the seers; they are those who do not the sacrifice. We may, if we like, suppose that there was a struggle between two different cults in India and that the Rishis took their images from the physical struggle

between the human representatives of these cults and applied them to the spiritual conflict, just as they employed the other details of their physical life to symbolise the spiritual sacrifice, the spiritual wealth, the spiritual battle and journey. But it is perfectly certain that in the Rig Veda at least it is the spiritual conflict and victory, not the physical battle and plunder of which they are speaking." (223)

"There are two great divisions of the Dasyus, the Panis who intercept both the cows and the waters but are especially associated with the refusal of the cows, the Vritras who intercept the waters and the light, but are especially associated with the withholding of the waters; all Dasyus without exception stand in the way of the ascent to Swar and oppose the acquisition of the wealth by the Aryan seers. The refusal of the light is their opposition to the vision of Swar, *svardṛś*, and the vision of the sun, to the supreme vision of knowledge, *upamā ketuḥ*; the refusal of the waters is their opposition to the abundant movement of Swar, *svarvatīr apaḥ*, the movement or streamings of the Truth, *ṛtasya preṣā*, *ṛtasya dhārāḥ*; the opposition to the wealth-acquisition is their refusal of the abundant substance of Swar, *vasu*, *dhana*, *vāja*, *hiraṇya*, that great wealth which is found in the sun and in the waters, *apsu sūrye mahad dhanam*. Still since the whole struggle is between the Light and the Darkness, the Truth and the Falsehood, the divine Maya and the undivine, all the Dasyus alike are here identified with the Darkness; and it is by the birth and shining of Agni that the Light is created with which he slays the Dasyus and the Darkness." (224-25)

"The Dasyus stand in opposition to both the Aryan gods and the Aryan seers. The Gods are born from Aditi in the supreme Truth of things, the Dasyus or Danavas from Diti in the nether darkness; they are the Lords of Light and the Lords of Night fronting each other across the triple world of earth, heaven and mid-air, body, mind and the connecting breath of life." (232)

"The word *paṇi* means dealer, trafficker, from *paṇ* (also *pan*, cf. Tamil *paṇ*, Greek *ponos*, labour) and we may perhaps regard the Panis as the powers that preside over those ordinary unillumined sense-activities of life whose immediate root is in the dark subconscient physical being and not in the divine mind. The whole struggle of man is to replace this action by the luminous working of mind and life which comes from above through the mental existence. Whoever thus aspires, labours, battles, travels, ascends the hill of being is the Aryan (*ārya*, *arya*, *ari* with the various senses, to toil, to fight, to climb or rise, to travel, to prepare the sacrifice); for the work of the Aryan is a sacrifice which is at once a battle and an ascent and a journey, a battle against the powers of darkness, an ascent to the highest peaks of the mountain beyond earth and heaven into Swar, a journey to the other shore of the rivers and the ocean into the farthest Infinity of things. The Aryan has the will to the work, he is the doer of the work (*kāru*, *kīri*, etc.), the gods who put their force into his work are *sukratu*, perfect in power for the sacrifice; the Dasyu or Pani is the opposite of both, he is *akratu*. The Aryan is the sacrificer, *yajamāna*, *yajyu*; the gods who receive, uphold, impel his sacrifice are *yajata*, *yajatra*, powers of the sacrifice; the Dasyu is the opposite of both, he is *ayajyu*." (233-34)

"The Vedic idea was that the subconscient darkness and the ordinary life of ignorance held concealed in it all that belongs to the divine life and that these secret riches must be recovered first by destroying the impenitent powers of ignorance and then by possessing the lower life subjected to the higher. Of Indra it has been said, as we have seen, that he either slays or conquers the Dasyu and transfers his wealth to the Aryan. So also Sarama refuses peace with alliance to the Panis, but suggests their submission to the gods and the Aryans by the surrender and ascent of the imprisoned cows and their own departure from the darkness to a better place (*ā varīyaḥ*). And it is by the strenuous touch of the goad of the luminous seer, Pushan, lord of the Truth, the goad that drives open the closed

heart and makes the sacred word to arise from its depths, it is by this luminous-pointed goad which perfects the radiant cows, accomplishes the luminous thoughts, that the conversion of the Pani is effected; then the Truth-god in his darkened heart also desires that which the Aryan desires. Therefore by this penetrating action of the Light and the Truth the powers of the ordinary ignorant sense-activity become subject to the Aryan." (238)

"The Angiras held the supreme manifestation (of the Truth), they who had lit the fire, by perfect accomplishment of the work; they gained the whole enjoyment of the Pani, its herds of the cows and the horses. Atharvan first formed the Path, thereafter Surya was born as the protector of the Law and the Blissful One, *tataḥ sūryo vratapā vena ājani*. Ushanas Kavya drove upward the Cows. With them may we win by the sacrifice the immortality that is born as a child to the Lord of the Law," *yamasya jātam amṛtaṁ yajāmahe* (I.83.4-5). Angira is the Rishi who represents the Seer-Will, Atharvan is the Rishi of the journeying on the Path, Ushanas Kavya is the Rishi of the heavenward desire that is born from the seer-knowledge. The Angiras win the wealth of illuminations and powers of the Truth concealed behind the lower life and its crookednesses; Atharvan forms in their strength the Path and Surya the Lord of Light is then born as the guardian of the divine Law and the Yama-power; Ushanas drives the herded illuminations of our thought up that path of the Truth to the Bliss which Surya possesses; so is born from the law of the Truth the immortality to which the Aryan soul by its sacrifice aspires." (240)

13. Summary and Conclusions

(a) The Real Sense of the Veda

"….the Angiras legend and the Vritra mythus are the two principal parables of the Veda; they occur and recur everywhere; they run through the hymns as two closely

connected threads of symbolic imagery, and around them all the rest of the Vedic symbolism is woven. Not that they are its central ideas, but they are two main pillars of this ancient structure. When we determine their sense, we have determined the sense of the whole Rik Sanhita. If Vritra and the waters symbolise the cloud and the rain and the gushing forth of the seven rivers of the Punjab and if the Angirases are the bringers of the physical dawn, then the Veda is a symbolism of natural phenomena personified in the figure of gods and Rishis and maleficent demons. If Vritra and Vala are Dravidian gods and the Panis and Vritras human enemies, then the Veda is a poetical and legendary account of the invasion of Dravidian India by Nature-worshipping barbarians. If on the other hand this is a symbolism of the struggle between spiritual powers of Light and Darkness, Truth and Falsehood, Knowledge and Ignorance, Death and Immortality, then that is the real sense of the whole Veda." (241)

(b) The Sacrifice

"The sacrifice is the giving by man of what he possesses in his being to the higher or divine nature and its fruit is the farther enrichment of his manhood by the lavish bounty of the gods. The wealth thus gained constitutes a state of spiritual riches, prosperity, felicity which is itself a power for the journey and a force of battle. For the sacrifice is a journey, a progression; the sacrifice itself travels led by Agni up the divine path to the gods and of this journey the ascent of the Angiras fathers to the divine world of Swar is the type. Their journey of the sacrifice is also a battle, for it is opposed by Panis, Vritras and other powers of evil and falsehood, and of this warfare the conflict of Indra and the Angirases with the Panis is a principal episode.

The principal features of sacrifice are the kindling of the divine flame, the offering of the *ghṛta* and the Soma wine and the chanting of the sacred word. By the hymn and the offering the gods are increased; they are said to be born, created or

manifested in man and by their increase and greatness here they increase the earth and heaven, that is to say, the physical and mental existence to their utmost capacity and, exceeding these, create in their turn the higher worlds or planes. The higher existence is the divine, the infinite of which the shining Cow, the infinite Mother, Aditi, is the symbol; the lower is subject to her dark form Diti. The object of the sacrifice is to win the higher or divine being and possess with it and make subject to its law and truth the lower or human existence. The *ghṛta* of the sacrifice is the yield of the shining Cow; it is the clarity or brightness of the solar light in the human mentality. The Soma is the immortal delight of existence secret in the waters and the plant and pressed out for drinking by gods and men. The word is the inspired speech expressing the thought-illumination of the Truth which rises out of the soul, formed in the heart, shaped by the mind. Agni growing by the *ghṛta*, Indra forceful with the luminous strength and joy of the Soma and increased by the Word, aid the Angirases to recover the herds of the Sun." (242-43)

(c) The Divine Dawn

"Usha is the divine Dawn, for the Sun that arises by her coming is the Sun of the superconscient Truth; the day he brings is the day of the true life in the true knowledge, the night he dispels is the night of the ignorance which yet conceals the dawn in its bosom. Usha herself is the Truth, *sūnṛtā*, and the mother of Truths. These truths of the divine Dawn are called her cows, her shining herds; while the forces of the Truth that accompany them and occupy the Life are called her horses. Around this symbol of the cows and horses much of the Vedic symbolism turns; for these are the chief elements of the riches sought by man from the gods. The cows of the Dawn have been stolen and concealed by the demons, the lords of darkness in their nether cave of the secret subconscient. They are the illuminations of knowledge, the thoughts of the Truth, *gāvo matayaḥ*, which have to be delivered out of their

imprisonment. Their release is the upsurging of the powers of the divine Dawn. It is also the recovery of the Sun that was lying in the darkness; for it is said that the Sun, "that Truth", was the thing found by Indra and the Angirases in the cave of the Panis. By the rending of that cave the herds of the divine dawn which are the rays of the Sun of Truth ascend the hill of being and the Sun itself ascends to the luminous upper ocean of the divine existence, led over it by the thinkers like a ship over the waters, till it reaches its farther shore." (244)

14. The Colloquy of Indra and Agastya

न नूनमस्ति नो श्वः कस्तद्वेद यदद्भुतम्।
अन्यस्य चित्तमभि संचरेण्यमुताधीतं वि नश्यति ॥ १॥

Indra

1. It is not now, nor is It tomorrow; who knoweth that which is Supreme and Wonderful? It has motion and action in the consciousness of another, but when It is approached by the thought, It vanishes.

किं न इन्द्र जिघांससि भ्रातरो मरुतस्तव।
तेभिः कल्पस्व साधुया मा नः समरणे वधीः ॥२॥

Agastya

2. Why dost thou seek to smite us, O Indra? The Maruts are thy brothers. By them accomplish perfection; slay us not in our struggle.

किं नो भ्रातरगास्त्य सखा सन्नति मन्यसे।
विद्मा हि ते यथा मनोऽस्मभ्यमिन्न दित्ससि ॥३॥
अरं कृण्वन्तु वेदिं समग्निमिन्धतां पुरः।
तत्रामृतस्य चेतनं यज्ञं ते तनवावहै ॥४॥

Indra

3. Why, O my brother Agastya, art thou my friend, yet settest thy thought beyond me? For well do I know how to us

thou willest not to give thy mind.

4. Let them make ready the altar, let them set Agni in blaze in front. It is there, the awakening of the consciousness to Immortality. Let us two extend for thee thy effective sacrifice.

त्वमीशिषे वसुपते वसूनां त्वं मित्राणां मित्रपते धेष्ठः ।
इन्द्र त्वं मरुद्भिः सं वदस्वाध प्राशान ऋतुथा हवींषि ॥५॥

Agastya

5. O Lord of substance over all substances of being, thou art the master in force! O Lord of Love over the powers of love, thou art the strongest to hold in status! Do thou, O Indra, agree with the Maruts, then enjoy the offerings in the ordered method of the Truth.

COMMENTARY

The governing idea of the hymn belongs to a stage of spiritual progress when the human soul wishes by the sheer force of Thought to hasten forward beyond in order to reach prematurely the source of all things without full development of the being in all its progressive stages of conscious activity. The effort is opposed by the Gods who preside over the universe of man and of the world and a violent struggle takes place in the human consciousness between the individual soul in its egoistic eagerness and the universal Powers which seek to fulfil the divine purpose of the Cosmos.

The seer Agastya at such a moment confronts in his inner experience Indra, Lord of Swar, the realm of pure intelligence, through which the ascending soul passes into the divine Truth. Indra speaks first of that unknowable Source of things towards which Agastya is too impatiently striving. That is not to be found in Time. It does not exist in the actualities of the present, nor in the eventualities of the future. It neither is now nor becomes hereafter. Its being is beyond Space and Time and therefore in Itself cannot be known by that which is in

Space and Time. It manifests Itself by Its forms and activities in the consciousness of that which is not Itself and through those activities it is meant that It should be realised. But if one tries to approach It and study It in Itself, It disappears from the thought that would seize It and is as if It were not.

Agastya still does not understand why he is so violently opposed in a pursuit which is the eventual aim of all being and which all his thoughts and feelings demand. The Maruts are the powers of Thought which by the strong and apparently destructive motion of their progress break down that which is established and help to the attainment of new formations. Indra, the Power of pure Intelligence, is their brother, kin to them in his nature although elder in being. He should by their means effect the perfection towards which Agastya is striving and not turn enemy nor slay his friend in this terrible struggle towards the goal.

Indra replies that Agastya is his friend and brother, – brother in the soul as children of one Supreme Being, friend as comrades in a common effort and one in the divine love that unites God and man, – and by this friendship and alliance has attained to the present stage in his progressive perfection; but now he treats Indra as an inferior Power and wishes to go beyond without fulfilling himself in the domain of the God. He seeks to divert his increased thought-powers towards his own object instead of delivering them up to the universal Intelligence so that it may enrich its realisations in humanity through Agastya and lead him forward by the way of the Truth. Let the egoistic endeavour cease, the great sacrifice be resumed, the flame of the divine Force, Agni, be kindled in front as head of the sacrifice and leader of the march. Indra and Agastya together, the universal Power and the human soul, will extend in harmony the effective inner action on the plane of the pure Intelligence so that it may enrich itself there and attain beyond. For it is precisely by the progressive surrender of the lower being to the divine activities that the limited and egoistic consciousness of the mortal awakens to

the infinite and immortal state which is its goal.

Agastya accepts the will of the God and submits. He agrees to perceive and fulfil the Supreme in the activities of Indra. From his own realm Indra is supreme lord over the substances of being as manifested through the triple world of mind, life and body and has therefore power to dispose of its formations towards the fulfilment, in the movement of Nature, of the divine Truth that expresses itself in the universe, – supreme lord over love and delight manifested in the same triple world and has therefore power to fix those formations harmoniously in the status of Nature. Agastya gives up all that is realised in him into the hands of Indra, as offerings of the sacrifice, to be held by him in the fixed parts of Agastya's consciousness and directed in the motional towards fresh formations. Indra is once more to enter into friendly parley with the upward aspiring powers of Agastya's being and to establish agreement between the seer's thoughts and the illumination that comes to us through the pure Intelligence. That power will then enjoy in Agastya the offerings of the sacrifice according to the right order of things as formulated and governed by the Truth which is beyond." (253-56)

15. Indra, The Giver of Light (I.4)

"Madhuchchhandas, son of Vishwamitra, invokes in the Soma offering Indra, the Master of luminous Mind, for increase in the Light. The symbols of the hymn are those of a collective sacrifice. Its subject is the growth of power and delight in Indra by the drinking of the Soma, the wine of immortality, and the consequent illumination of the human being so that the obstructions of his inner knowledge are removed and he attains to the utmost splendours of the liberated mind.

But what is this Soma, called sometimes amrita, the Greek ambrosia, as if it were itself the substance of immortality? It is a figure for the divine Ananda, the principle of Bliss, from which, in the Vedic conception, the existence of Man, this mental being, is drawn. A secret Delight is the base of

existence, its sustaining atmosphere and almost its substance. This Ananda is spoken of in the Taittiriya Upanishad as the ethereal atmosphere of bliss without which nothing could remain in being. In the Aitareya Upanishad Soma, as the lunar deity, is born from the sense-mind in the universal Purusha and, when man is produced, expresses himself again as sense-mentality in the human being. For delight is the *raison d'être* of sensation, or, we may say, sensation is an attempt to translate the secret delight of existence into the terms of physical consciousness. But in that consciousness, – often figured as *adri*, the hill, stone, or dense substance, – divine light and divine delight are both of them concealed and confined, and have to be released or extracted. Ananda is retained as *rasa*, the sap, the essence, in sense-objects and sense-experiences, in the plants and growths of the earth-nature, and among these growths the mystic Soma-plant symbolises that element behind all sense activities and their enjoyments which yields the divine essence. It has to be distilled and, once distilled, purified and intensified until it has grown luminous, full of radiance, full of swiftness, full of energy, *gomat, āśu, yuvāku*. It becomes the chief food of the gods who, called to the Soma-oblation, take their share of the enjoyment and in the strength of that ecstasy increase in man, exalt him to his highest possibilities, make him capable of the supreme experiences. Those who do not give the delight in them as an offering to the divine Powers, preferring to reserve themselves for the sense and the lower life, are adorers not of the gods, but of the Panis, lords of the sense-consciousness, traffickers in its limited activities, they who press not the mystic wine, give not the purified offering, raise not the sacred chant. It is the Panis who steal from us the Rays of the illumined consciousness, those brilliant herds of the sun, and pen them up in the cavern of the subconscient, in the dense hill of matter, corrupting even Sarama, the hound of heaven, the luminous intuition, when she comes on their track to the cave of the Panis.

But the conception of this hymn belongs to a stage in our

inner progress when the Panis have been exceeded and even the Vritras or Coverers who seclude from us our full powers and activities and Vala who holds back the Light, are already overpassed. But there are even then powers that stand in the way of our perfection. They are the powers of limitation, the Confiners or Censurers, who, without altogether obscuring the rays or damming up the energies, yet seek by constantly affirming the deficiencies of our self-expression to limit its field and set up the progress realised as an obstacle to the progress to come. Madhuchchhandas calls upon Indra to remove the defect and affirm in its place an increasing illumination.

The principle which Indra represents is Mind-Power released from the limits and obscurations of the nervous consciousness. It is this enlightened Intelligence which fashions right or perfect forms of thought or of action not deformed by the nervous impulses, not hampered by the falsehoods of sense. The image presented is that of a cow giving abundantly its yield to the milker of the herds. The word *go* means in Sanskrit both a cow and a ray of light. This double sense is used by the Vedic symbolists to suggest a double figure which was to them more than a figure; for light, in their view, is not merely an apt poetic image of thought, but is actually its physical form. Thus, the herds that are milked are the Herds of the Sun, – Surya, God of the revelatory and intuitive mind, or else of Dawn, the goddess who manifests the solar glory. The Rishi desires from Indra a daily increase of this light of Truth by his fuller activity pouring rays in a rich yield upon the receptive mind.

The activity of the pure illuminated Intelligence is sustained and increased by the conscious expression in us of the delight in divine existence and divine activity typified by the Soma wine. As the Intelligence feeds upon it, its action becomes an intoxicated ecstasy of inspiration by which the rays come pouring abundantly and joyously in. "Light-giving indeed is the intoxication of thee in thy rapture."

For then it is possible, breaking beyond the limitations still insisted upon by the Confiners, to arrive at something of the finalities of knowledge possible to the illuminated intelligence. Right thoughts, right sensibilities, – this is the full sense of the word *sumati*; for the Vedic *mati* includes not only the thinking, but also the emotional parts of mentality. *Sumati* is a light in the thoughts; it is also a bright gladness and kindness in the soul. But in this passage the stress of the sense is upon right thought and not on the emotions. It is necessary, however, that the progress in right thinking should commence in the field of consciousness already attained; there must not be flashes and dazzling manifestations which by going beyond our powers elude expression in right form and confuse the receptive mind. Indra must be not only illuminer, but a fashioner of right thought-formations.." (260-63)

16. Indra and the Thought-Forces (I.171)

"A sequel to the colloquy of Indra and Agastya, this Sukta is Agastya's hymn of propitiation to the Maruts whose sacrifice he had interrupted at the bidding of the mightier deity. Less directly, it is connected in thought with the 165th hymn of the Mandala, the colloquy of Indra and the Maruts, in which the supremacy of the Lord of Heaven is declared and these lesser shining hosts are admitted as subordinate powers who impart to men their impulsion towards the high truths which belong to Indra. "Giving the energy of your breath to their thoughts of varied light, become in them impellers to the knowledge of my truths. Whensoever the doer becomes active for the work and the intelligence of the thinker creates us in him, O Maruts, move surely towards that illumined seer," – such is the closing word of the colloquy, the final injunction of Indra to the inferior deities.

These verses fix clearly enough the psychological function of the Maruts. They are not properly gods of thought, rather gods of energy; still, it is in the mind that their energies become effective. To the uninstructed Aryan worshipper, the Maruts

were powers of wind, storm and rain; it is the images of the tempest that are most commonly applied to them and they are spoken of as the Rudras, the fierce, impetuous ones, – a name that they share with the god of Force, Agni. Although Indra is described sometimes as the eldest of the Maruts, – *indrajyeṣṭho marudgaṇaḥ*, – yet they would seem at first to belong rather to the domain of Vayu, the Wind-God, who in the Vedic system is the Master of Life, inspirer of that Breath or dynamic energy, called the Prana, which is represented in man by the vital and nervous activities. But this is only a part of their physiognomy. Brilliance, no less than impetuosity, is their characteristic. Everything about them is lustrous, themselves, their shining weapons, their golden ornaments, their resplendent cars. Not only do they send down the rain, the waters, the abundance of heaven, and break down the things best established to make way for new movements and new formations, – functions which, for the rest, they share with other gods, Indra, Mitra, Varuna, – but, like them, they also are friends of Truth, creators of Light. It is so that the Rishi, Gotama Rahugana, prays to them, "O ye who have the flashing strength of the Truth, manifest that by your might; pierce with your lightning the Rakshasa. Conceal the concealing darkness, repel every devourer, create the Light for which we long." And in another hymn, Agastya says to them, "They carry with them the sweetness (of the Ananda) as their eternal offspring and play out their play, brilliant in the activities of knowledge." The Maruts, therefore, are energies of the mentality, energies which make for knowledge. Theirs is not the settled truth, the diffused light, but the movement, the search, the lightning-flash, and, when Truth is found, the many-sided play of its separate illuminations.

We have seen that Agastya in his colloquy with Indra speaks more than once of the Maruts. They are Indra's brothers, and therefore the god should not strike at Agastya in his struggle towards perfection. They are his instruments for that perfection, and as such Indra should use them. And

in the closing formula of submission and reconciliation, he prays to the god to parley again with the Maruts and to agree with them so that the sacrifice may proceed in the order and movement of the divine Truth towards which it is directed. The crisis, then, that left so powerful an impression on the mind of the seer, was in the nature of a violent struggle in which the higher divine Power confronted Agastya and the Maruts and opposed their impetuous advance. There has been wrath and strife between the divine Intelligence that governs the world and the vehement aspiring powers of Agastya's mind. Both would have the human being reach his goal; but not as the inferior divine powers choose must that march be directed, – rather as it has been firmly willed and settled above by the secret Intelligence that always possesses for the manifested intelligence that still seeks. Therefore the mind of the human being has been turned into a battle-field for greater Powers and is still quivering with the awe and alarm of that experience.

The submission to Indra has been made; Agastya now appeals to the Maruts to accept the terms of the reconciliation, so that the full harmony of his inner being may be restored. He approaches them with the submission he has rendered to the greater god and extends it to their brilliant legions. The perfection of the mental state and its powers which he desires, their clearness, rectitude, truth-observing energy, is not possible without the swift coursing of the Thought-Forces in their movement towards the higher knowledge. But that movement, mistakenly directed, not rightly illumined, has been checked by the formidable opposition of Indra and has departed for a time out of Agastya's mentality. Thus repelled, the Maruts have left him for other sacrificers; elsewhere shine their resplendent chariots, in other fields thunder the hooves of their wind-footed steeds. The Seer prays to them to put aside their wrath, to take pleasure once more in the pursuit of knowledge and in its activities; not passing him by any more, let them unyoke their steeds, descend and take their place on

the seat of the sacrifice, assume their share of the offerings.

For he would confirm again in himself these splendid energies, and it is a hymn of affirmation that he offers them, the *stoma* of the Vedic sages. In the system of the Mystics, which has partially survived in the schools of Indian Yoga, the Word is a power, the Word creates. For all creation is expression, everything exists already in the secret abode of the Infinite, *guhā hitam*, and has only to be brought out here in apparent form by the active consciousness. Certain schools of Vedic thought even suppose the worlds to have been created by the goddess Word and sound as first etheric vibration to have preceded formation. In the Veda itself there are passages which treat the poetic measures of the sacred mantras, – *anuṣṭubh, triṣṭubh, jagatī, gāyatrī*, – as symbolic of the rhythms in which the universal movement of things is cast.

By expression then we create and men are even said to create the gods in themselves by the mantra. Again, that which we have created in our consciousness by the Word, we can fix there by the Word to become part of ourselves and effective not only in our inner life but upon the outer physical world. By expression we form, by affirmation we establish. As a power of expression the word is termed *gīḥ* or *vacas*; as a power of affirmation, *stoma*. In either aspect it is named *manma* or *mantra*, expression of thought in mind, and *brahman*, expression of the heart or the soul, – for this seems to have been the earlier sense of the word *brahman*, afterwards applied to the Supreme Soul or universal Being.

The process of formation of the mantra is described in the second verse along with the conditions of its effectivity. Agastya presents the *stoma*, hymn at once of affirmation and of submission, to the Maruts. Fashioned by the heart, it receives its just place in the mentality through confirmation by the mind. The mantra, though it expresses thought in mind, is not in its essential part a creation of the intellect. To be the sacred and effective word, it must have come as an inspiration from

the supra-mental plane, termed in Veda, Ritam, the Truth, and have been received into the superficial consciousness either through the heart or by the luminous intelligence, *manīṣā*. The heart in Vedic psychology is not restricted to the seat of the emotions; it includes all that large tract of spontaneous mentality, nearest to the subconscient in us, out of which rise the sensations, emotions, instincts, impulses and all those intuitions and inspirations that travel through these agencies before they arrive at form in the intelligence. This is the "heart" of Veda and Vedanta, *hṛdaya*, *hṛd*, or *brahman*. There in the present state of mankind the Purusha is supposed to be seated centrally. Nearer to the vastness of the subconscient, it is there that, in ordinary mankind, – man not yet exalted to a higher plane where the contact with the Infinite is luminous, intimate and direct, – the inspirations of the Universal Soul can most easily enter in and most swiftly take possession of the individual soul. It is therefore by the power of the heart that the mantra takes form. But it has to be received and held in the thought of the intelligence as well as in the perceptions of the heart; for not till the intelligence has accepted and even brooded upon it, can that truth of thought which the truth of the Word expresses be firmly possessed or normally effective. Fashioned by the heart, it is confirmed by the mind.

But another approval is also needed. The individual mind has accepted; the effective powers of the Cosmos must also accept. The words of the hymn retained by the mind form a basis for the new mental posture from which the future thought-energies have to proceed. The Maruts must approach them and take their stand upon them, the mind of these universal Powers approve and unite itself with the formations in the mind of the individual. So only can our inner or our outer action have its supreme effectivity.

Nor have the Maruts any reason to refuse their assent or to persist in the prolongation of discord. Divine powers who themselves obey a higher law than the personal impulse, it should be their function, as it is their essential nature, to

assist the mortal in his surrender to the Immortal and increase obedience to the Truth, the Vast towards which his human faculties aspire.

Indra, affirmed and accepted, is no longer in his contact with the mortal a cause of suffering; the divine touch is now utterly creative of peace and felicity. The Maruts too, affirmed and accepted, must put aside their violence. Assuming their gentler forms, benignant in their action, not leading the soul through strife and disturbance, they too must become purely beneficent as well as puissant agencies.

This complete harmony established, Agastya's Yoga will proceed triumphantly on the new and straight path prescribed to it. It is always the elevation to a higher plane that is the end, – higher than the ordinary life of divided and egoistic sensation, emotion, thought and action. And it is to be pursued always with the same puissant will towards victory over all that resists and hampers. But it must be an integral exaltation. All the joys that the human being seeks with his desire, all the active energies of his waking consciousness, – his days, as it is expressed in the brief symbolic language of the Veda, – must be uplifted to that higher plane. By *vanāni* are meant the receptive sensations seeking in all objectivities the Ananda whose quest is their reason for existence. These, too, are not excluded. Nothing has to be rejected, all has to be raised to the pure levels of the divine consciousness.

Formerly Agastya had prepared the sacrifice for the Maruts under other conditions. He had put their full potentiality of force into all in him that he sought to place in the hands of the Thought-Powers; but because of the defect in his sacrifice he had been met midway by the Mighty One as by an enemy and only after fear and strong suffering had his eyes been opened and his soul surrendered. Still vibrating with the emotions of that experience, he has been compelled to renounce the activities which he had so puissantly prepared. Now he offers the sacrifice again to the Maruts, but couples with that

brilliant Name the more puissant godhead of Indra. Let the Maruts then bear no wrath for the interrupted sacrifice but accept this new and more justly guided action.

Agastya turns, in the two closing verses, from the Maruts to Indra. The Maruts represent the progressive illumination of human mentality, until from the first obscure movements of mind which only just emerge out of the darkness of the subconscient, they are transformed into an image of the luminous consciousness of which Indra is the Purusha, the representative Being. Obscure, they become conscient; twilit, half-lit or turned into misleading reflections, they surmount these deficiencies and put on the divine brilliance. This great evolution is effected in Time gradually, in the mornings of the human spirit, by the unbroken succession of the Dawns. For Dawn in the Veda is the goddess symbolic of new openings of divine illumination on man's physical consciousness. She alternates with her sister Night; but that darkness itself is a mother of light and always Dawn comes to reveal what the black-browed Mother has prepared. Here, however, the seer seems to speak of continuous dawns, not broken by these intervals of apparent rest and obscurity. By the brilliant force of that continuity of successive illuminations the mentality of man ascends swiftly into fullest light. But always the force which has governed and made possible the transformation, is the puissance of Indra. It is that supreme Intelligence which through the Dawns, through the Maruts, has been pouring itself into the human being. Indra is the Bull of the radiant herd, the Master of the thought-energies, the Lord of the luminous dawns.

Now also let Indra use the Maruts as his instruments for the illumination. By them let him establish the supramental knowledge of the seer. By their energy his energy will be supported in the human nature and he will give that nature his divine firmness, his divine force, so that it may not stumble under the shock or fail to contain the vaster play of puissant activities too great for our ordinary capacity.

The Maruts, thus reinforced in strength, will always need the guidance and protection of the superior Power. They are the Purushas of the separate thought-energies, Indra the one Purusha of all thought-energy. In him they find their fullness and their harmony. Let there then be no longer strife and disagreement between this whole and these parts. The Maruts, accepting Indra, will receive from him the right perception of the things that have to be known. They will not be misled by the brilliance of a partial light or carried too far by the absorption of a limited energy. They will be able to sustain the action of Indra as he puts forth his force against all that may yet stand between the soul and its consummation.

So in the harmony of these divine Powers and their aspirations may humanity find that impulsion which shall be strong enough to break through the myriad oppositions of this world and, in the individual with his composite personality or in the race, pass rapidly on towards the goal so constantly glimpsed but so distant even to him who seems to himself almost to have attained." (268-75)