

Sociology and Philosophy of Śukla Yajurveda

Prof. Dr. C.L. Prabhakar

Preface

This doctoral thesis on Śukla Yajurveda was worked out under the able guidance of Late Dr. N.J. Shende, Late Prof. G.V. Devasthali and Dr. C.G. Kashikar of Centre for Advanced study in Sanskrit, Pune University, Pune, during 1965-68. I express my gratefulness to these ācāryas. I record my gratefulness to late Dr. R.N. Dandekar, then director of CASS, Poona University, Poona. Ph.D. Degree was awarded to me in 1969 by the Pune University. Since the volume of my thesis is quite large, it was suggested to me to publish in parts for the convenience of readers and the interested scholars in the field of research on Veda. I am thankful to all those learned scholars, who were encouraging me to publish like this. I am really thankful to my teacher, Research Guide, Dr. C.G. Kashikar, Pune, who expressed his happiness for this kind of endeavour and gave foreward. This book has the fortune and blessings of His Holiness Sri Sri Rangapriya Swamiji, Aṣṭāṅga yoga mandira, Bangalore. I also express my gratefulness to him. I express my thanks to our Vedādhyayana Kendra, J.P. Nagar, Bangalore for having taken up to publish this book. I thank the Vāgartha printers, and Kum. Shreeya Pujar and my wife Dr. T. Seetha Ramalakshmi, Prof. of Music and Sri Vaidyanath Prabhakar who helped me through the proof materials. I thank my children Smt. Lalitha Jyostna, Smt. Annapurna and Mr. Anjaneya Prasad for their support.

Prof. Dr. C.L. Prabhakar

Foreword

The Vedas the texts of knowledge formed the most ancient literature not only of India, but of the whole world. Being written in the Sanskrit language of an archaic type, they cannot be understood fully. Attempts have, therefore, been made from old times for the elucidation of those texts. Just as several vedic scriptures have been lost for ever for want of a continuous tradition, similarly several commentarial works pertaining to those scriptures are no more available to us. In this connection, Śāyanāchārya of 14th Century deserves our gratitude. Uvvata and Mahidhara have worked by their commentaries to unravel the meanings of the Kandikas of Śukla Yajurveda employed in various sacrifices. They are the authority on this Veda.

Śukla Yajurveda is peculiar in number of aspects when compared to Krishna Yajurveda. For example, mantra portion and Brahmana portions are separate from each other. The Brahmana is separated from the mantra. Hence, the Vājasaneyā Samhitā of the Śukla Yajurveda which consists of mantras alone is comparatively smaller. In the consolidated studies of the vedic literature, this samhita is inadequately represented as much as its contribution to history and culture of India and world indeed.

I am happy that Dr. C.L. Prabhakar my student has come forward to publish his thesis by parts for convenience. The approach to elucidate the aspects; sociology and philosophy from the samhita of the Śukla Yajurveda is laudable. I send all my best wishes to my student for the success of the publication.

23-7-2003

1489, Sadashivpet
Pune.

Dr. C.G. Kashikar
Ex.Vice chancellor,
Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapitha
Poona

Abbreviations

The references are of VMS

VMS = Vājasaneyi Mādhyandina Samhitā

YV = Yajurveda

KYV = Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda

Ch. = Chapter

RV = Ṛgveda

HIL = History of Indian Literature

HSL = History of Sanskrit Literature

SB = Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa

K = Kandika

Asvs = Aśvamedha Sacrifice

Mahi = Mahidhara

UV = Uvvata

Sautrs = Santramani sacrifice.

Sociology and Philosophy of Śukla Yajurveda

आ ब्रह्मन् ब्राह्मणो ब्रह्मवर्चसी जायतामाराष्ट्रे राजन्यः शूर
 इषत्योऽतिव्याधि महारथो जायतां दोग्ध्री धेनुः वोळ्हा
 नड्वानाशुः सप्तिः पुरन्धिर्योषा जिष्णू रथेष्ठाः सभेयो युवास्य
 यजमानस्य वीरो । जायतां निकामे निकामे नः पर्जन्यो वर्षतु
 फलवत्यो न ओषधयः पच्यन्तां योगक्षेमो नः कल्पेताम् ।

‘Oh Brahman’! May Brahman grow brilliant in the city a
 rajanya, a hero, possessing arrows and skilled. Archer
 able to fight with many enemies; May cow give more milk;
 May Bull bear more weights; May horse be speedy and
 strong; May woman be a devoted lady; May victor,
 learned brave, young son be born to the sacrificer (the
 king); May parjanya shower rains time by time, May all
 herbs and plants be fruitful; May prosperity and security
 attend on us.

-Śukla Yajurveda 22.22

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Introduction

The title of the present work namely 'Sociology and Philosophy of Śukla Yajur Veda' is supposed to add knowledge to the history of Sociology and Philosophy of Veda specially from the point of view of Śukla Yajurveda. This Yajurveda is a metrical saṁhitā like Ṛg Veda. This Samhita originally contains 1975 Kaṇḍikas distributed into 40 Chapters. It contains sacrificial formulas for various sacrifices and at the same time, Upanishadic portions- namely Tadevopanishad, Ātmopanishad and Īśāvāsyopa- niṣad. These two upaniṣads are unique and have become popular among the several upaniṣads of Veda. That study is seperate and not included here. My work on Śukla Yajurveda was based on the peculiar portions (separated) and Kaṇḍikas of the Saṁhitā which are not found in other Vedas. After eliminating the common portion that of Ṛg Veda and Atharva Veda, either in full or in part, I have arrived with a portion of nine hundred and a little more number of Kandikas in the Mādhyandina Samhita. The same is true with regard to Kāṇva Saṁhitā of Yajurveda also.

That portion of Saṁhitā is subjected to study in my thesis relating to many aspects like Religion, Mythology, Literary Critisim, etc. At present, I have the pleasure to

putforth the material from the Śukla Yajurveda relating to the aspects : Sociology and Philosophy only which would signify the extent of 'Land and People' and their 'Economic and Civic Life also with various items which come under the purview of Philosophy. It looks the details are not far removed from that of the mode of life of people today. Although Yajur Veda preaches Religion of practical nature namely to perform sacrificial, still it backs up the science and rewards of sacrifices and love for wisdom (philosophy). I earnestly hope that this small venture would benefit, the needy people working in the field of Veda and Śukla Yajur Veda in particular. I have limited my observations to the genuine portion of Śukla Yajurveda, since there is already adequate studies conducted on the Samhitas of the other vedas. particularly kṛṣṇa yajurveda. Śukla yajurveda is more known in North than south in respect of the followers of the tradition. But the tradition of this veda is a matter of great honour.

Chapter I **Sociology** **Land and People**

Introduction

In the Sociology we delineate the VMS society in a space of two Chs viz. Land and People and Economic and Civic life.

Obviously the VMS is a book on Religion. However, it contains much material which can be exploited in depicting a picture of the society in that period.

The discussion in this book would show that the YV does throw some light upon the structure and condition of the society; and that a picture of the society depicted in the YV deviated to a certain extent from that depicted in the RV (see History of Sanskrit Literature pp. 155). In attempting the picture of the VMS society reference has been made to the relevant position in the RV whenever convenient.

Further we realise that the Vedic society was not unsophisticated but was equipped with knowledge and experience because we find their attempts to define and imagine things beyond. All this go by the term Vedic

tradition, an Intellectual tradition. Chs. sixteen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty-four, twenty-five and thirty of the VMS are remarkable because they contain mine of information on various topics like professions, customs etc.

The scope to understand the details of the society is wider here than the RV, since the YV (VMS) specialises in sacrifice which is basically a social function (*sambhūya samutthāna*) that presupposes the cooperation of men of all trades. Obviously, the priests and the sacrificer always appear on the scene. However, this does not deny the existence and cooperation of other people more or less connected with the sacrificial performance. This fact, often, is reminded in some of the prayers found in the VMS because the VMS believes: “the prosperity of the people is the prosperity of the king as he is rooted in the people” (*...viśirājā pratiṣṭhitaḥ*: 20.9) (often the pronoun “they,” used in course of this discussion, refers to the VMS society unless otherwise specified).

1. Geographical sketch

It would be proper to open the Ch with the geographical sketch of the region in which the VMS people were living in. At first, let us note references to the land.

Weber has proposed (HIL pp.114) that Kāmpili mentioned in the VMS, may be taken to be district in the

country of Pāñcālas. So also there is the name of the lady: Subhadrikā who is supposed to be the wife of the king of that district. There are names of three more ladies: Amba, Ambikā and Ambālikā who are said to belong to Pāñcālas. There is also the name of a person: Arjuna/Phalguṇa (VMS/VKS) said to be one of the chief heroes of that country. The term Magadheyah (belonging to Magadha) is said to represent Magadha country.

When we turn to the VKS, we notice the mention of names of two more countries: Kuru and Pāñcāla. These two names are not mentioned in the VMS.

1. Water Sources

The people were aware of several water sources since we often find references to them.

Rain is the chief water-source that comes from heaven and hence we meet with the prayer for timely rains (‘*nikāme nikāme parjanya varṣatu*’: 22.22). We have the mention of sea or a large ocean with a great depth. Metaphorically the three worlds are described as three big oceans (13.31). There were flowing waters viz. rivers. There is a reference (34.11) that Sarasvati is the ultimate name of those five rivers (names not mentioned) at the point of their conjunction. The two banks (*kūla*) of a river in general are also mentioned.

The other water sources mentioned are: nīpya (water falls), kūlya (tanks), kūpa (wells), whirlpools, saras (lakes), kṣayaṇa (stagnant waters) and so on. Among lakes we have the mention of smaller and larger lakes and they are termed as: vaiśnta and saras (16.37) respectively. They also well rejoiced at the sweet and cold water.

The use of water was manifold. It was used for sprinkling, drinking and medical etc. purposes.

2. Mountains

In the VMS we come across various terms to indicate the mountains in general. There is no special mention of any mountain peculiar to the Saṁhitā.

The Mūjavat mountain which is already familiar to the RV is mentioned here also. the Himālayan mountain is mentioned in the VMS while the same is not clear in the RV.

The various terms denoting a mountain are: parvata, giri, sānu etc. In the mountains there were caves which are generally termed as guhā.

Asma, upala, sikaṭā etc. are the terms denoting rocks and stones and sand. But specially the *apāmpuriṣa* is mentioned to denote sand (Mahī). However, these stray references do not help to locate any particular place geographically except indicating their awareness of the same.

3. Trees and Plants

Now we shall point out the trees and plants that are referred to in the VMS.

The terms aranya, vana, vanya, etc. are often met with in the Saṁhitā which indicates that much of the region was covered with forests. In fact, it is pointed out that forests were inhabited by men who were notorious (11.73) as they were given for different ways.

Vanaspati, vṛkṣa, vanya, oṣadhi are among the terms which refer to trees and plants in general in the VMS. A big tree is described (5.42-43) referring to its size and height. This gives a suggestion for the existence of large trees in those days.

Now we consider certain particular trees and plants mentioned in the VMS.

Nyagrodha (Ficus Indica) is a large tree whose wood was used to make utensile. This we can mark from the expression: 'nyagrodhaś camasaiḥ'.

Sālmali (Seemul) is silk-cotton tree counted among the largest trees as the SB too points out. This tree is not mentioned in the RV and therefore this is unique to the YV.

Vetas is a reed growing in rainy season (varṣa vṛddham).

Oṣadhi, vanya etc. are the terms which indicate plants. Among plants we have two categories mentioned viz. those grown through cultivation (kr̥ṣṭapacya) and those that grow by themselves (akr̥ṣṭapacya.) So also we have another category viz. plants which grow in water (vāritiṣ) and on the river banks. As a contrast to all these we have the mention of plants which grow in deserts.

Apāmārga is a biennial plant frequently used in medicine.

Avaka is a grass plant.

Dūrva or durbha (grass) is a creeping grass which spreads widely throwing out perpetually new branchlets.

Kakṣa is a grass creeper (tṛṇavalli: Uv)

Saṣpi is a kind of grass grown on the banks of Ganges (Mahī). The color of this plant is remarkable and hence we see Rudra being prayed with this epithet (Śaṣpiñjara: Mahī).

Soma is a well known plant.

Avaka, kakṣa and śaṣpi are peculiar to this Saṁhitā (YV). They are not mentioned in the RV.

5. Animals

We may now turn to point out certain kinds of animals like grāmya (paśús), ekaśapha (paśús), kṣudra (paśús) and

āraṇya (paśús), which are shown out in the Saṁhitā assigning mythical origin to them.

These are said to have come into existence when Prajāpati praised himself with certain sāmans (14.29-30). Chs twenty four and partly twenty-nine contain a big enumeration of animals and birds totaling over six hundred. Some of them still remain unidentified.

Among the domestic animals the following may be mentioned: aja (goat), aśva (horse), avi (ewe), dhenu (cow), meṣa (ram), rāsabha (ass) and vṛṣbha (bull). The other animals are: ākhu (rat), mahiṣa (buffalo), markata (monkey), mūṣaka (mouse), śvan (dog) and so on.

The animals that live in waters are: kūrma (tortoise), mandūki (frog), matsya (fish), nakra (crocodile) and so on. The colors and other peculiarities of some of these animals are mentioned.

Wild animals are also mentioned in the VMS. They are: hariṇa (deer), hasti (elephant), simha (lion), sūkara (bear), vṛka (wolf) and vyāghra (tiger) and so on.

The names of some of the unidentified animals are: gaura, halikṣaṇa, mayu, ula and so on.

Curiously enough we have a K (19.92) wherein the hairs of vṛka, vyāghra and simha are compared with those

of man. Several of the animals enumerated in the VMS are peculiar to the YV only; in the RV we have not the mention of animals like deer, hare, mangoose etc. among identified and mayu, ula etc. among the unidentified.

6. Birds

In the Saṁhitā we are introduced to a great variety of birds as compared with the RV. Among these there are certain birds which cannot be identified.

The falcon (garutmān: 12.4) is referred to often. Agni is identified with the falcon (see: Agni: Book III).

Among the identified birds we have: balāka (crane), cakravāka (ruddy-goose), ṛḍhra (eagle), haṁsa (swan), kukkuṭa (hen), mayūra (peacock), pika (cuckoo), sūka (parrot), tittiri (potridge) and so on.

Of these the cuckoo and parrot, ruddy goose and swan have assumed a greater importance in later literature especially in poetry. The cuckoo is noted for its melodious voice. The expression that love is the divinity of the cuckoo is very significant (kāmāya pikaḥ: 24.40). The parrot is noted for its ability to imitation of human voice. Likewise the ruddy goose for its pangs of love during separation at night and fidelity. But in swan we find a curious power of separating milk from water. The

Saṁhitā itself points out (19.73-74) that the curlew (krauñca) has too the quality of a swan.

Now we go to the second kind of birds which are not identified hitherto and about which the Commentators are not also of much help. Some of these are : *ati*, *vāhasa*, *dhuñkṣa*, *kakara*, *kapiñjala*, *kulīpaya*, *kutaru*, *śaka*, *śārga*, *sicāpu*, *sayandaka* and so on.

Turning to describe the creatures we have the bees (bhr̥ngāh), the flies (maśaka), the white ants (plāśi), the small creatures viz. worms (vamri), dandasūkas and small insects (kṛmi) etc. are also mentioned in the VMS. Besides these creatures, we have some reptiles like serpents (sarpa) which could be found in holes, waters, etc. and python (mahā ajagara), snakes that are red in colour (lohitāhi) and iguana (godhā) etc. being mentioned also. In the RV many of them are not mentioned.

In the paragraphs above, we have seen some of the animals, birds and flies and reptiles that are mentioned in the VMS. Particularly there are animals and birds mentioned with their different colors, genders and other features. Especially in the case of cows and oxen their different ages are also mentioned. This goes to show the knowledge of the VMS people; of so many categories of animals and birds etc. and to tame some of them so that they could be tied to the stakes in a sacrifice (Aśvs).

II. Units and Divisions of Time

Turning to describe the units and divisions of time, we find the divisions of a day as follows: uṣas (dawn), prātaḥ (morning), madhyandina (noon), sāyam (evening), sandhi (the junction of night and day) and rātri or naktam (night).

To indicate the day as against night the term used is : *ahah*. To indicate the day and night collectively we have the word : *ahorātri*. The smallest unit of time is nimeṣa (32.2) meaning the time taken at each twinkling of the eyelids.

So far as units, formed by days are concerned, *ardhamāsa* denotes a fortnight while *māsa* a month. We have the names of twelve months as Mahī makes them to correspond to the twelve months beginning with the caitra and ending with the phalguṇa. The months thus mentioned are: *madhu*, *mādhava*, *śukra*, *śuci*, *nabha*, *nabhasya*, *iṣa*, *ūrja*, *sahas*, *sahasya*, *tapas* and *tapasya*.

The Saṁhitā is aware of the six seasons. The name of seasons thus mentioned extend from our vaśanta to śiśira. Each season is termed as ṛtu.

An interesting point to be noted is that: the VMS reads '*..satam himāḥ*' referring to the desire for long life while the VKS reads '*...śatam saradaḥ...*' at the corresponding place.

The terms : *sama*, *vatsara*, *samvatsara* etc. indicate the year in general. Apart from this, we also see the mention of names : *parivatsara*, *idāvatsara* and *iḍvatsara* (30.15) which would denote certain kinds of year. The word *reṣmya* (16.39) has been explained by Mahī as deluge.

Apart from the terms seen above, we also meet with certain words like *sūṣā*, *sudina* etc. which indicate the realisation of value of time. Further, it is interesting to note that the names of the yugas are found in the *Saṁhitā*. The terms are : *kṛta*, *treta*, and *dvāpara* which, however, connote the names of certain dice.

III. Stages of Life

Let us now pass on to discuss the stages of human life that the VMS suggests. The life of man on earth extends to a hundred years ('śatamānam āyuh': 19.93).

The terms 'garbham ādhatta', *garbhaḥ* 'grabham dadhe' etc. indicate the conception of a being. Later the terms: prasū, yamasū, janma, etc. indicate the birth of that being. The child thus born is denoted by the terms śiśu, garbhaḥ etc. which occur often in the Saṁhitā. The movements of an infant are, according to 19.11, confined to the suckling of the milk of its mother and further rest at ease in the lap of its mother ('seṣa mātuh....upasthe...').

Then we have the terms *arbhaka*, *kumāra* which denote a boy. No more information is available on the activities of this age group. Then we have the term 'taruṇa *kumāra*' which denotes a grown up boy. His mischievous attitude is referred to (28.13). He rushes unto forbidden wells and brings forth troubles to his elders.

Before, a being (man) approaches manhood meanwhile he will have to have certain training. That is, during that period one would turn to learning of lores as we understand from the words : *adhītam*, *suśikṣā* etc. More we shall see about learning elsewhere. After the completion of the stage of learning they took to the household life, becoming lords of houses (*grhapatis*). Even here they aim to be at best in that stage (*...grhapatinā bhūyāsam...2.27*). Here, we have the next stage of youth. The 22.22 says that a youth should be worthy of sitting in as assembly.

Next we see the stage manhood. The man is indicated by the terms *manuṣya*, *nara*, *margya*, *puruṣa* and so on whereby the quality of thinking and mortality are implied. Here we may point out a fascinating point that: the VMS contains reference to the penance or a stage where such self discipline is practiced. The word *tapas* (30.5) has been taken to refer to this concept. However, we may say that there was sometime in these stages of life where at some such discipline was practiced.

The ultimate stage of human life is old-age and the same is referred to the *Samhitā* by the words: *vrddha*, *jara* etc. There is a prayer that by dint of sacrifice old age may be prosperous (18.3). An old lady and a lady with gray hair (*phalīkñi*) are mentioned in the Ch thirty of the VMS. Finally the death takes care of man after the stipulated period of hundred years as he is essentially *marya*.

IV. Social Organisation

The *Samhitā* provides us some idea as to the social organisation of that time. Indeed the Chs sixteen and thirty of the VMS are the rich sources of information on this point. From the description below it becomes evident that the organisation of the society into castes and occupation etc. was complete.

The term *varṇa* occurs in the VMS more than two times, but it is hardly possible to say that the various castes were due to the colors of the skin.

The names of the four castes primarily referred to are: *Brāhmaṇa*, *Kṣatriya*, *Arya* or *Vaiśya* and *Śudrā*. Of these, the first two castes have greater regard and power compared to the other castes obviously. The 22.22 defines what a *Brāhmaṇ* or *Kṣatriya* is expected to be. However, the *Samhitā* refers each caste as containing a brilliance (*rucas*) and the same is prayed for (to *Agni*).

The Brāhmaṇ seems to distinguish himself from the others and claim a status in the society. The expression 'eṣa vo amī rājā somo' smākam brāhmaṇānām rāja' would suggest that Brāhmaṇs claimed an Immortal to be their king attributing a mortal king to be the king of other people. The VMS 1.13 refers to the vessels to be purified before use at a sacrifice. Here Mahī reasons that: they are thus to be purified because they are impure on account of the touch of the maker who belonged to a lower caste.

This caste is be spoken for its brahmavarca (22.22) and that fetches merit to that caste. As a contrast we have the mention of nonbrāhmaṇas (abrāhmaṇāḥ) and outcast Brāhmaṇs (Vrātya) who were Brāhmaṇas by birth but swerved from the prescribed religious practices.

The Brāhmaṇa caste was claimed by a sacrificer as his wealth (Brahma draviṇam). Series of prayer are seen to the effect that the priests or Brāhmaṇa caste in general should prosper by dint of sacrifice; be well established; be well protected and steadied and so on. The sacrificer desires for the favour of the Brāhmaṇs as seen in his prayer: 'brahmavani' (Brāhmaṇa caste winning). Further he prays that "may my priestly class attain wealth", etc. The expression reveals the mutual longing and reciprocation. As the priest prays for blessings for the sacrifices so the sacrificer too prays for the prosperity of

his priesthood in general. So the safety and security of the priestly class in general was well guarded and this marks the importance of sacrifice.

Next in rank is the Kṣatriya class - the class of rulers. The Kṣatriyas were entitled to perform the sacrifices and it was the privilege of the ruling class to perform specific sacrifices like Rāj and Aśv. We shall see more about it under "State and Kingship" (elsewhere).

The function of Vaiśyas was to rear the cattle, to do agriculture and to practice craftsmanship. The Śūdra caste is mentioned only by name in the VMS and nothing particular is said about it.

Apart from this clear division of castes, a fifth caste (outcast) viz., caṇḍāla is mentioned in the VMS.

All these castes had a council (vrāta: 16.25) of their own as Mahī points out and it was headed by somebody (vrātapati: 16.25). The details further are not known.

Besides these castes there is the mention of other classes of people like potters, hunters, farmers, cowherds, paṇakas, niṣādas etc., (see Ch. thirty of the VMS). We may include all these lower classes under the general caste viz. śūdra.

Further the VMS shows that the castes were not rigidly water tight compartments and that there existed room for

contacts between the different castes. Certain cases to illustrate this feature, will be discussed elsewhere.

V. Social Conditions

We may now pass on to sketch the social conditions to cover family, the relations, the position of women, sex, dress and so on. In each item, the SYV, however, has something to mark a stage of development compared to the RV. Many of the points we note under this topic are in experience even today.

1. Family and Relationship.

Family consisting of conjugal relations, is the foundation of the society. To start with, the various terms that indicate the relationship as found in the VMS are: mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, husband, wife, jāmi, parivitti, parivividāna, edidhiṣuḥpati. The word bandhu (twice occurring) denotes relatives in general. Sakhā, mitra denote friends who are external to family but quite dear to persons.

The soothing care of mother is proverbial in the VMS because comparisons are drawn to depict the relations between deities. For example, Agni and Āpaḥ (details see under Book III). The expressions: 'mātaḥ māmā himsiḥ', 'mātrutamāsu....cakre sadhastham; '...śiṣe māturyatho-pasthe....' etc. speak the respect paid for a mother. So a

woman in the office of a mother commended immense regard from the people.

Father was the lord of the house (gṛhapati). He is described to be of easy access to son and taking care to protect the boy. Further, the VMS points out three earlier generations to a son viz. father, grandfather and great grandfather (pitṛ, pitāmaha and prapitāmaha respectively).

The desire for the birth of son was heralded with great enthusiasm (4.23) and repeated prayers are offered for the same. The son is expected to grow heroic, strong and God-desiring (devakāma) and so on (2.2.22)

The desire for the birth of a daughter is never entertained in the VMS. The term kumārī (feminine form) indicates daughter because the term kumāra (masculine) means a son (2.33).

The relationship between brother and sister seems to be encouraging. Perhaps, the brother used to enjoy his share along with his sister (3.57). Svasā and bhaginī are the words which mean a sister. Because of that feature (3.57) and also of 2.20, the term bhaginī (2.20 Uv) is coined specially in the YV. This term is not found in the RV. By analogy we may notice that brother's consent too was required if his sister were to go away to another's house (4.20) by marriage.

By marriage a man and a woman acquire the relationship mutually as husband (pati) and wife (patnī). The wife had love and affection for her husband. She remained always at the service of her husband and contributed to the well-being of the family. Such wives are termed as supatnīḥ. The comparison: 'janayo na supatnīḥ' is more than twice repeated in the VMS. Indeed a woman commanded a great deal of honor when she was wedded. She associated herself with him during the sacrificial performance and recited the prayers which she was asked to recite (irrespective of the character of the prayers e.g. 23.18-19)

A husband reciprocates the love and this we see in the 15.50 that in the order of preference wives are said to be on equal footing in accompanying him to heaven. A man commands respect when he is with his wife. He is then respectfully called as patnīvān.

Turning to the remaining terms of relationship, we find that it was customary for sons and daughters to marry in the order of their age. The RV speaks of girls who remained unmarried and grew old in their father's house. Such a reference is not directly found in the VMS.

Now we concern with the new terms. Parivitta is he who has (ever) an unmarried elder brother Parivividāna

(30.9) is he who has married while yet his elder brother is not married. Edidhiṣuḥpati is the husband of a younger sister whose elder sister had not yet married.

These relations spring when the order of marriage is disturbed in respect of brothers and sisters. A sister or brother could marry even though her/his elder brother/sister still remained unmarried. The age order was obviously observed in the case of brothers and sisters.

The terms sakhā, mitra which we noted earlier (in the introductory paragraph) indicate the bondage of friendship with members of the society outside one's family. One may grow quite intimate with the other and when the other is called as 'yujyaḥ sakhā. One acquires friends in one's own company (sayūthyah sakhā: 4.20). When they come closer one would say asmāko śi with affection. The VMS shows how important or necessary is the consent of one's own colleague when one departs from the others (4.20). The kindly looks of a friend and happy meeting of his are well reflected in the expressions: 'mitrasya cakṣuṣā Īkṣadhvam' and 'mitro na ehi.....' and so on.

The VMS is not slow in appreciating the other aspects of a woman which play a role in the economic life of the society. In the Ch. thirty especially we find her engaged in so many occupations, She works with canes and makes

articles of cane (*vidalakāri*). She works in thorns (*kantakikāri* : 30.8) perhaps to clear the ground. She works in beautifying things (*peśaskari*) like knitting, embroidery etc., She dyes the clothes (*rajayitri*) and washes the clothes (*vāsaḥ palpūli*). She make scabbards to swords (*kośakāri*) and ointment (*añjanikāri*). She brings water (*udahāryaḥ*). The woman in that period indeed contributed to the prosperity of the society sharing a division of labour.

A woman is regarded as one of the symbols of beauty. To describe the beauty of a lady her shapely limbs, golden hue of the skin and beautiful appearance are referred to in the VMS (more we saw under Book II). The kurira (crest let) is one of the particular decorations.

It is no wonder that a woman was also deemed as a harlot a means of pleasure (*kāma*) and delight. She was useful for a pastime (*narma*) of men. She could be fickle and seducing, and is termed as *atitvarita*. She used to employ love charms.

Further a woman could give birth to twins (*yamasū*) or remain without issues, *asū*, *avotoka*, *avajāta* (30.25). Because of the age she would become worn out (*vijarjara*) and develop grey hair.

A respectful lady (in the VMS the deity: *Iṣṭaka*) could be addressed with dignified terms like *rājñī*, *adhipatnī*,

dhartrī, *dharinī* and so on (Chs fourteen, fifteen of SYV). Such terms were also applicable to the queens of the royal sacrifices.

It was customary perhaps to address a lady by the respectful term *arṃba* (*mahī*). This term occurs only once in the VMS. They expect a lady (*yoṣā*) to be a good wife (*wint*) (*purandhi*). According to the SB the word *purandhi* denoted a lady with a beautiful form so that she became dear to men. (13.2.1.6).

2. Sex

In the Ch. twenty-three we find a short course of obscene conversation referring to the sexual act; the request to deposit the *retas* in the *yoni* by introducing the procreative organ which is the very object of pleasure to ladies (*yaḥ strīṇām jīvaḥojanaḥ*); the way of act pointing out the onomatopia therein; and finally the way how one is produced resultantly (23.19-31). The *Ks* are so naked that even *Vātsyāyana* (of *Kāmasūtra*) has not ventured to present such a vivid picture. This particular portion may be regarded as the beginnings of the *Erotics*.

Apart from this portion, in other Chs also expressions are there referring to the pleasure of the testicles and penis (*'ānanda nandāvāndau saubhāgyam pasaḥ....'* 20.9); and the depositing places of semen and urine

(*'reto mūtram vijahāti yonim praviśadindriyam'*: 19.76) and so on which further indicate how important was that and the act leading to creation and bliss. In this connection the SB clearly points out that rati to be the best bliss for men on earth.

Thus we notice that the vedic people had freely expressed their sexual urge.

3. Dress

Coming to the garments, robes, etc. we notice that there are no references to any stitched garments. However, the terms that bespeak something connected to dress are: *tvac*, *carma*, *kṛttivāsa*, *upavīta*, *uṣṇīṣa* and *vāsa* in general. The first three words might mean the skin clothes and *uṣṇīṣa* would mean the head-dress viz. turban. Because of the reference to the female-dyer of clothes and washer-woman we may say that their garments were colored and washed. Secondly since the Śālmali tree which is identified to be cotton tree, is mentioned in the VMS, we may understand that cotton was perhaps known to them and was put to use. We find further, the terms: *ūrṇamṛdā* (soft-wool), *ūrṇāsūtra*, *tantavaḥ*, *vayanti* etc., and these would suggest the woollen to be in vogue even then. Likewise weaving was practised. They used to derive wool from the animal *ūrṇāyu* (ewe). The terms *samvyayasva*, *paridhatsva* etc.

indicate the awareness of the way of wearing clothes either stitched or unstitched. Further the words *syūḥ* (needle) and *tasara* (shuttle cock to weave), the means to stitch and weave or spin might suggest both the acts with regard to cloth (*vāsaḥ*).

The hair on the head was braided and wound into a shape of conch shell. Rudra is described to have worn such hair. The hair on the face viz. beard and moustache was left off to grow. There is a prayer that the hair should be blessed with light and brilliance (*tviṣi* 20.5). The śikhā on head was well commended (*śriyai śikhā*). There were men who had no hair at all (viz., bald headed). Women used to plait their hair and well trim it (*sukapardā* : 11.56).

The shaving of the hair seems to have been occasionally practiced. The hair on the head is removed (*viśikhāśinaḥ*: 16.61; *vyuptakeśin*). The word *svadhiti* (*svadhiti* is your father: 3.63) means razor also and the term *nivartayāmi* means shaving and therefore shaving is seen practiced. Perhaps during the act of shaving some cuts or injuries might result and so a prayer not to harm is addressed to the razor (3.63). This act is calculated to bring the person longevity, wealth etc.

The VKS clearly indicates the act of shaving because of the terms *vapat*, *vapāmi* with a legendary explanation (VKS 3.74-76).

4. *Standard of Morality*

The standard of morality seems to be high because the VMS shows the consciousness of the same. The caste barrier was generally observed. Its violation was seriously felt. The word śīla (30.14) which occurs not in the RV, but here, connotes the moral character.

The instance that queen's lying with the immolated horse and her hurrying into him lest he should lie with another lady (23.18) in the Aśvs is quite a different matter which has sacrificial background. The other instances that follow hereunder are glaringly testifying how seriously the pinch was felt.

The husband of a śūdra lady feels distressed instead growing happy if his wife rejoices intercourse with a vaiśya. Similarly, a vaiśya, if his wife indulges with a śūdra. A comparison is drawn that if a deer eats grains in a field and grows fat, the farmer feels not gladdened that the animal has grown stout by eating the grains in his field, but becomes distressed. So if a married lady indulges with a man other than her husband, the husband plunges in sorrow. The VMS (23.30-31) stops with that remark; it does not indicate the consequences.

There were cases when maidens used to indulge with men and deliver sons (modāya kumārīputram: Ch. thirty)

we cannot imagine under what circumstances maidens were led to such positions. Such things were, of course, never encouraged.

The caste barriers were broken sometimes and such cases were taken seriously. This violation suggests the fancy of men to go out of the way for pleasure. We find references to sons born to Vaiśyas through Kśatriya ladies; to Kśatriyas through Brāhmaṇ ladies (30.6 Mahī) and to śūdras through Brāhmaṇ ladies.

Even among men there were some who perhaps remained as paramours only and keeping company with ladies (strīsakham: 30.6) not minding marriage because the society could afford harlots and such loose women. Under mythology we notice certain absurdities. It would however, not be reasonable that such strange things were actually happened among the society.

5. *Crimes*

Turning to crimes we find that the element of crime was prevalent in the society. There were thorns in the society violating the peace of the society and hence often prayers are addressed to deities asking for protection. Certain criminals were caught and punished also.

The crimes recorded are killing of man, hero, Brāhmaṇ and cow. Among these, the hero killer and the

cow killer (goghātam) are punished viz., each is spared to hell (nārakāya: hell. Comms are silent.) and to death (antaka) respectively.

The other crimes are theft and robbery. The following criminals are mentioned: deceivers, skilled deceivers, stenas, taskaras, malimlucus (plunderers), nicerus (who approach with a mind to steal), paricaras (who move about to steal) pariparaṇas, (way layers), vikṛntins (who kill on the way and seize away properties), kuluncas (confiscators of lands, houses, etc.) muṣṇas (who steel grains from fields) and so on. Malimlucus, stenas etc. inhabited the woods (11.79). There are in the VMS prayers for protection against these bad elements. Thus Agni is prayed to eat the malimlucus, with his tusks; the taskaras with his teeth, the stenas with his jaws (hanu). Excepting such prayers we have no reference to physical means to attack and put down these criminals. In this connection sacrifice took an upper hand to maintain or protect the order in society.

6. Warfare

Warfare seemed to be one of the chief occupations. This was to protect the soft run of the other occupations like Agriculture and the economic production. Other than the actual warfare we find the Ātharvaṇic charms to be in vogue an account of plenty of references that we see in the VMS connected with them.

There are certain terms like saṁghāta, (Vṛtra) tūrya, mṛdha, vājasāta etc. which are related to the warfare. So also several words like sapatnas, arātis, śatrus, bhrātṛvyas, arva etc. indicate the different kinds of enemies that they had to confront and get rid of. Similarly the terms connoting the war weapons viz. bow arrows sometimes tipped with poisonous horns or with a metal point (śalya) etc. on one hand and the coats of mail and helmets (kavaca) mentioned indicate the means available for them to undertake fights. Likewise references to heroic sons, warriors, charioteers, military army (senā) the army commanders (senāpati) and leaders (senāni) suggest the fighting class ready to fight battles. Moreover, a Rājanya is referred to be bold, skilled in shooting and a mahāratha (a rank in the army referring to soldiers who can fight singly with thousand enemies) etc. and which again suggests the leadership of such army.

There were certain weapons useful for defence and they are mostly mentioned in the Ch. Sixteen. They are: *asi*, *āyudha*, *bilma*, *didyu*, *dhanus*, *heti*, *iṣu* (*bāna*), *kavaca*, *niṣaṅga*, *niṣaṅgadhi*, *praheti*, *prasiti* and *sruka*, *svadhiti* and *varma* and *vajra*. Among these the *bilma* and *kavaca* are to protect the breast portion of the body and the rest are handled by the hands. The bow's two ends, the string (*jyā*) of the same are also mentioned. The

arrows are said to be having sometimes poisonous tips (*śalya*). *Niṣangadhi* is a scabbard to encase the sword (*niṣaṅga*).

Śruka is a certain weapon. *Mahī* simply says: '*āyudhaviśeṣaḥ*' *Prasiti* is the net by which people are caught as *Mahī* explains. *Svadhiti* is the axe to cut the trees, logs and so on. Generally bow-arrows were in much vogue than the other weapons.

We find prayers addressed to deities like Agni, Indra containing desires for victory. For example, '*āyam śatrūm jayatu....*', '*samghātam samghātam jeṣmaḥ*' and so on. Victory was always coveted either independently or after the manner of deities (e.g., 2.15) in wars and fights.

Chapter II Economic and Civic life

Having depicted the land and people as seen in the VMS, we pass on to the Economic and Civic life discernable in the VMS society. Herein let us begin with

I. State and Kingship

Herein, we meet with certain words and expressions in the VMS which express political concepts and political consciousness. In the *Samhitā* we often see the words *rājan* (king) and *samrāt* (emperor). Consequently we have also the terms *rāṣṭra* and *sāmraṣṭra* denoting respective organised states. Commensurate to that we note words : *vīra*, *sura*, *isavya* etc. referring heroism.

We also notice the terms: *jana*, *jana rājya*, *viś*, *grāma*, *rājya* etc. in the *Samhitā*. Following Macdonell, we may take these terms to denote: tribe, number of settlements, aggregate of villages and so on (See HSL pp.133). This leads us to the conclusion that in those days there existed a systematic organisation of state.

The term *rāṣṭra* (country) is often mentioned. The 22.22 reads that in a *rāṣṭra* may be born a brave *Rājanya* and other persons of great qualities. The king when consecrated was introduced to the public. Thus we read:

‘eṣa vo rājā’ (9.40); an announcement made by the priest while a king became unsurpassable since he was consecrated with the dyumna of Soma, the bhrājas of Agni and the varcas of Sūrya and so on (10.17). A king was expected to be brave, a skilled archer and capable of fighting with several opponents (22.22). Only such a king was capable of protecting the people.

We come across certain words which have some political significance. The terms are: janarāt, svarāt, sarvarāt, sāmrat etc. (5.24). However, it is difficult to ascertain the meaning of these terms in the context of political vocabulary.

In the VMS we find, a good number of prayers invoking blessings to the royal sacrificer. In such blessings he is blessed to have great power, great superiority, mighty dominations, mighty lordship over people and so on. He was also blessed to have command over other rulers, house lords and trees and plants, the speech, the administrators of law etc. (e.g. 19.39 etc.). He is said to have combined within him the activities like performing sacrifices; gifting away presents (dātre 7.47, sudhātu...) and desire to please deities (devakāmam or devayuvam) and so on. He is, therefore, called as Dhṛtavratin.

Now, we pass on to consider his associates. We have no direct references therefore, but by deductive method

we can have some idea. Indra and Varuṇa (and Soma) are described (8.31) as Samrāt and Rājā respectively and hence their affiliations can be made use of to depict our aspect.

Terms connected to describe the associates can be seen spread in the Chs sixteen and of those of the Agni cayana sacrifice. A king would have a chief minister (*prathamavicikivān*), a minister (*mantri* 16.19) and other spirit ministers (*sattvānaḥ* 16.10). Likewise he would have a Purohita (*Bṛhaspatir....purohitaḥ*) perhaps to organise priestly functions on behalf of the king. A king would have a large army (*senā*) and a gaṇa (servants) and the respective lords for the gaṇas (*gaṇapatis*); a chieftain (*grāmaṇi*) perhaps to control rural affairs (*grāma*); a dūta (an ambassador) to convey messages (as Agni) and so on. The very appearance of such terms indicates the awareness in the VMS society for such officers of a king.

According to the VMS a son to be born to a king was expected to be hero (-son) “who is victorious, a mighty chariot-fighter and eloquent in assembly” (22.22) Winternitz) and god-desiring and so on so that he would be capable enough to shoulder the great responsibility of kingship in future. Kingship involved promotion of religion.

A king is described to be desirous of victory and above anxiety etc. in order to do good to the people. The 9.31-35 suggests that a king desired to be triumphant over prāṇa, men (bipeds), the worlds, cattle, quarters, seasons, animals, metres, stomas in the manner of the respective deities who already won them. He claims a victory similar to that of certain deities (2.15). In 20.10 a king expresses his desire to establish his power over the warrior class, the state, horses, cows etc. and ultimately the sacrifice. A king pays his interests even upon the welfare of the people and this shows that he is not always selfish. This fact can be verified from the references, that we meet with often, which contain some such desires expressed (e.g. 18.1-28 etc.)

As regards the relationship between the king and the people, we notice that people liked him well and therefore strive to work for the prosperity of the king. From 6.26, a prayer for Soma, we can infer that there existed reciprocity between the king and the people. The whole description at the Sautramani sacrifice is but an example to show how people cooperate to restore their beloved king in case he meets with difficulties. It has been well said that 'viśi rāja pratiṣṭhitaḥ' (King is rooted established in the people: 20.9). When people like him they surround him to contribute their mite to the well-being of their king (17.86).

II. Economy

1) **Metals** : In the VMS we have seven metals mentioned. They are: gold (hiranya), silver (rajata) lead (sisa), bronze (ayas), iron (loha), copper (tāmra) and tin (trapu).

Of these, gold, as it seems, was available to them abundantly. So we find references to golden chariots, golden spades etc., From 23.37 we notice that needles used to be made out of gold, silver and lead which were employed in the sacrifice. Gold is said to be pure and bright with lustre. Its color was much liked as is evident from the epithets describing female beauty. Female deities (Usāsānakā) are described as suhirāṇye. A desire is expressed that their gold may flourish by dint of sacrifice (18.13).

(2) **Utensils and Implements** : The VMS mentions several sacrificial utensils. Some of these are: abhri, adri, adhiṣavaṇa, camasa, chadi (mat), dhiṣaṇa (kāṣṭha phalaka: Mahī), graha, grāvā (pressing stones), juhū, kalaśa, kumbha, pavitra, pātra, sruk, śruka, sthāli, syū (needle), etc. In addition to these we have also musala, sūrpa, ulūkhala, etc. being mentioned in the Saṁhitā. The VMS does not, obviously, give details about these utensils.

Here we shall record the information, as is available in the Saṁhitā proper.

Abhri (spade) - used to dig out the earth; this is made up of wood. In 11.10 a golden one is mentioned.

Graha - a cup made up of wood to contain Soma or such liquid libations to be offered to deities.

Grāvan - pressing stones with which Soma is pressed out. These are described to have wide bottom ('grāvā'si prthubadhnaḥ').

Kalaśa - A large container made up of wood to contain Soma - juice. It is also called droṇakalaśa (19.27).

Kumbha - A large container to contain a liquid particularly surā. Cf. 'surādhānikumbhī'.

Pavitre - Strainers of Soma or water etc. made up of darbha grass, employed for purifying.

Regarding the other utensils we have no detailed information in the Saṁhitā.

Sūrpa is directly mentioned in the VKS; it is indirectly referred to by the term: 'varṣavṛddham' (referring to its material viz., bamboo that is grown due to rain.)

(For detailed description of numerous implements with diagrams reference may be made to the article:

"Implements and Vessels in the Vedic Sacrifice" (By Raghuvīra: JRAS 1941, pp. 282-305).

Turning to implements of Agriculture, we have only the mention of plough and harrow. But the terms *kṛṣi*, *kṛṣṭapacya*, *laya*, *sīram*, *sasya*, etc. imply quite a good number of agricultural implements. There is a mention of separating the husk from the grain (*sīte vāte punanniva* 23.26).

4) Conveyances :-

We find references in the Saṁhitā to the contrivances to cover distances on land and water.

Carts drawn by bulls; and chariots drawn by horses were the vehicles to cover distances on land. The former is a slow vehicle while the latter is fast. A bull is, therefore, called as anaḍvan (voḍhā anadvān) while the horse is: *rāthyah vṛṣā sapti (āśuḥ saptiḥ* 22.22) etc. Horses were yoked to the chariot by means of reins (*Saṁsīto raśminārathaḥ...23.14*).

To cross waters, ships which were well-built (sunāva) and sturdy were employed (21.7). We have only this solitary reference in the VMS. However, it is well known that navigation was well up in the times of the RV itself.

We have do direct evidence to say that they enjoyed flight in air with any contrivance. However, we find a

good deal of references indicating their ardent wish to fly in air even upto heaven. For example, the 18.52 (a prayer to Agni in falcon-form) shows their desire to fly to heaven by means of the stout and unwithering wings of the falcon. Obviously the idea must have occurred to them by the analogy of the flying birds.

5. Trade and Commerce

As compared to the RV “a great many trade and vocations are enumerated.” (Mac HSL pp. 169) in the VMS.

It appears profession of merchant was often hereditary as the term *vānija* (son of *vañij* 16.19) shows. The *Vaiśya* or *Arya* seemed to have specialised in this profession (30.17: also see SBE XLIV pp. 416). There is also the mention of moneylenders (30.11) in the VMS but we do not know whether they were charging any interest. The very enumeration (in Ch thirty) of vocations like rope-makers, *surā* makers jewellers, carpenters, etc. would indicate the goods probably brought for sale and distribution. Hereunder, we may dilate certain more details regarding the vocations and professions.

In the VMS we find the mention of various professions especially in the Ch thirty which mentions the various human victims. Men and women are engaged in some

occupation or the other. With regard to the occupations of women, we have already seen in the previous Ch. Now some of the interesting occupations are : makers of the chariots, carpenters, blacksmiths, sowers, makers of bows, bow-strings and arrows and ropes; the guards of house, cowherds shepherds, goatherds, wood-cutters, iron-smelters; weavers, fishermen, physicians and so on. The other occupations are: hunters, butchers, *niśādas*, the Elephant keepers, horse keepers etc. Apart from these there are professional artists and astrologers, from the terms *gaṇaka*, *nakṣatrajoṣṭi*, *nakṣatra* which even separately found in the VMS indicate that there were persons who knew astrology as a science. Beyond this, no more details are available in the *Samhitā*. These several people of respective occupations fill the other side of the society apart from priests and kings and his associates and so on. On the contrary there were also cruel people given to crimes and them we pointed out in the Ch. seventeen of this thesis. We find also the mention of people who were disabled due to infirmities in several ways like lacking in eyes, ears etc. and given for diseases.

Coming to consider the commodities, we find in the VMS mention of *Soma* which was brought for sale and which enjoyed a great demand. The pecuniary standard of exchange was either cow or goat or gold. The price of

Soma appears to be very high because the best animal was the price offered for Soma. The terms *kraya*, *paṇa* (*panyamānaḥ*), *krītaḥ*, *paśunā kṛiṇāmi* (4.26) etc. indicate the trade which was in vogue at that time.

We may here mention the awareness of the VMS for various colors both pure and mixed. These colors are mostly mentioned in the twenty-fourth Ch of the VMS. Under pure colors we have: *aruṇa*, *babhru*, *harita*, *kṛṣṇa*, *lohita*, *nīla*, *rohita*, *śukla*, *sveta* and so on. Under mixed ones there are: ‘*dhūmra lohita*’, ‘*karkandhu rohita*’, ‘*nīla lohita*’, ‘*sitababhru*’ etc. The awareness of various colors and shades indicates the sense of appreciation. The scene of colors has been expressed with reference to the animals and birds, plants and trees, etc.

The terms *mā*, *minotu*, *māna* (19.93) etc. indicate measuring of commodities being practiced. Thus the Soma plant had to be measured before purchasing. However, we have no direct references to units of measurements. The term *tula* (balance) indicates the practice of weighing. However, no weights are mentioned.

The system of barter was in vogue. The 3.50 explain the principle of the barter system. The K reads “Give me, I give you. Acquire for me. I acquire for you....”

III. Food and Drink

Many of the articles that come under this item have already been pointed out under Book III (Mythology), yet we point out a few of them here also.

Vāja, *anna*, *iram*, *duvaḥ* etc., are the terms found in the VMS to denote food in general.

Unlike in the RV, here in the YV (VMS) we have the mention of several varieties of grains. Of these a few are: *vrihi*, *yava*, *māṣa*, *tila*, *mudga*, *khalva*, *priyaṅgava*, *masūrāḥ*, *upavāka* (tokma in other words), and so on (see 18.12, 19.21 etc.) These types of grains indicate the developed stage of Agriculture in those days. We have the general desire ‘*susasyāḥ krdhi*’ expressed to Agni in the VMS, which indicates the successful harvest of all these crops.

Among fruits *jujubi* (*badara*) fruits are often referred to. Apart from this particular fruit mentioned we have the term *oudbhidyā* referring to various trees of fruits in general.

They enjoyed cooked preparations: as we come across the terms: *dhāna*, *caru*, *bakṣa*, *purodāśa* etc. Further *Karambha*, a porridge made of grain, barley or sesamum unhusked slightly, parched and kneaded etc. was also known (definition HCIP Vol. II pp.461). What they prepared they offered to deities by way of offerings.

Flesh was an article of food eaten. The flesh of animals like goat, ram etc. was eaten as they are offered to deities. The beef was also eaten and the same was also offered as alms to beggars (*gām bhiksamānam* 30.18) when they approach them. Because of the reference to the wood-fetcher (*dārvā hāra*) we can say that the raw articles of food used to be cooked, baked and made palatable.

Among the drinks we have the mention of milk and its products like curds, clarified butter etc., *surā*, Soma, *vasā* of the animals etc. Of these *surā* and Soma formed the intoxicating and invigorating drinks respectively. The color of the *surā* is described to be brown (*babhru*) and about the *surā*-drunk person it is said (20.28) that he talks quite irrelevantly in that fix.

Pātra, *camasa*, *sthāli* etc. made out of either mud or wood or metal were the vessels used for drinking purposes. Apart from these we have already noted the *Kumbha* and *kalaśa* used to store *surā* and *soma* respectively. The expression ‘*pātreṣu pibato janān*’ (16.62) clearly indicates the way of drinking.

IV. Entertainment

It appears that the people of that (VMS) society were not to tax themselves always with the sacrificial performance, but they afforded a course of time where at

they relaxed and recreated themselves. The practice of this kind is already familiar to the RV.

The term *kriḍā* (18.5) which occurs more than two times in the VMS would indicate the sportive spirit that the people had at that time. Since we find references to the speed of the horses and the chariots drawn by horses, we might infer that the chariot race was one among their sportful activities.

The term *moda*, *pramoda*, *ānanda*, *hāsa* (laughter), *kāma*, *narma* etc. occurring in the VMS at various places indicate the joyous feelings that they had. The harlots, the jesters, the maidens’ - sons, girl friends, woman lovers etc., of the society joined their hands to entertain the public as it appears. In addition to this, the intelligential of the society had their own riddle games (*Brahmodyas*) to entertain themselves.

Among the games of amusement, the play with dice was popular. They had irresistible fascination for this game. Some haunted the “gaming-hall” so frequently that they are described as the “pillars of the playhouse” (*sabhā sthāṇu*: Mac HSL pp. 169) indicating their permanent membership. From the YV we do not have details as to how the game was played. The names of dice mentioned are *kali*, *kṛta*, *treta*, *dvāpara* and *āskanda*

(30.18). We have also the mention of dice-king (akṣarāja) gambling-manager. There were also some nongamblers but they are described to be for excitement. That is, they do not find any rest in the eyes of gambles.

The term *ṛtta* (30.6) suggests that dancing was known. There were some who had developed skill in the art of dance and entertained the public. The *śailūṣa* (actor or public dancer) was among the dancers mentioned. The skill reached such a height that there were some pole dancers (*varṁsa nartin*: 30.21) also. But the dancers here, seem to be only men unlike in the RV where dancers were “nearly always maidens”. (Ibid. pp.170).

Music was one of the entertainments. The musical instruments are: *dundubhi* (trumpet) which is made of leather; *pāṇighna* (cymbals) that are made of metal *śaṅkha* (conch); *tūṇa* (flute) which is made out of bamboo; *vīṇā* (lute) that is made out of wood and strings. There were people who specialised in playing upon these instruments and this formed their recreation.

Since we find the mention of *talava* (musician), *suvācā* (best singers) etc. we can fairly say that vocal music was also prevalent. The term *gīta* (30.6) meaning son (Egge SBE Vol. XLIV, pp.413) occurs in the YV (VMS); it is not found in the RV.

V. Art and Science

1) The learned

To denote quest for knowledge, we have the term: *āśikṣā* (knowledge), *upaśikṣā* (desire for extra knowledge), *maryāda* (moral law) etc. We also have terms to connote the various abilities among people in respect of enquiry. The terms are: *praśnin* (inquisitive man), *Abhipraśnin* (extra inquisitive man), *praśnavivāka* (question or riddle solver) and so on. These indicate the avocation among men to turn to knowledge.

We meet with a class of people who are termed as intellectuals. The terms referring to them are: *Uśijaḥ*, *Ṛtavādin* (advocate 7.5), *Janavādin* (pleader), *Kavi* (wise), *Maniṣin* (intelligent person), *Vidvān* (learned), *Cikitvān* (thoughtful man: 7.15) etc.

To denote knowledge we have words in the VMS. They are: *adhītam*, *jñātram*, *vijñānam*, *matī*, *prajñānam* etc. These terms are quite significant, for, they denote even the higher knowledge that defines the purposes of man on earth distinguished from animals.

The learned used to gather together as the following terms indicate: *goṣṭhi*, *pariṣat*, *sabhā*, *sattra*, and *sadas* and so on. There are references to leaders of such gatherings e.g. *sabhāpati*, *sadasospati* etc.

2. Branches of knowledge

Now we pass on to the various branches of knowledge. We notice that they were aware of what may be called as the beginnings of sciences like Medicine, Anatomy, etc.

A. Medicine

In the VMS we come across the names of certain diseases.

It appears from the expression 'śatasya yakṣamaṇāmā (12.97), that they were aware of innumerability of the kinds of diseases. They pray for cure from all such illnesses.

We may now note some of the names of particular diseases as seen in the VMS.

1. Amīva (some ordinary disease).
2. Arma (some eye disease).
3. Aršana (some anus trouble: gudavyādhi).
4. Balāsa (consumption or tuberculosis).
5. Duradmanya (bad eating).
6. Kilāsa (leper).
7. Pākāru (lack of spittle).
8. Ruta (some bodily disease: roga).
9. Sidhma (a kind of leprosy).
10. Snāma (always eyes with tears full).

11. Vipacit (a kind of disease).

12. Viṣūcikā (cholera).

13. Yakṣma (illness in general).

Besides the above, the Saṁhitā also points out certain abnormalities of the body. They are for example: being too fat or too thin; too black or too white and so on. So also we have cases where people lack certain parts of body viz. legs, feet, eyes, ears etc. Therefore, we see a prayer '...yadvā ūnam tanma āprṇa' (whatever that is lacking in me, you supplement the same).

The VMS suggests a few means by which those (diseases) could be cured.

The Ātharvaṇic charms and spells were, obviously, the fundamental means of curing the diseases and certain infirmities of body.

The term triṣṭhin (three legged) pīṭhasarpin (crawling with hips) etc. point out the cases of those persons who employed some other means supplementing the lacking parts of the body and made their movements.

Waters are described to cure amīva and yakṣma. Perhaps the waters thus employed were charged with some Ātharvaṇic power.

Oṣadhis are described to heal the diseases viz., *Balāsa*, *Pākāru*, *Arśas* and so on (12.97). Apart from

such general hint we have no names of particular drugs mentioned in the VMS to cure the diseases.

In certain Ks dealing with the Sautrs we have the mention of various parts of body like spleen, liver, entrails etc. which are desired to be set right by divine powers.

Just as the human body becomes victim for diseases and debility (and decay), so animals also become prey for the same. The 3.59 shows awareness for the latter when they pray Rudra to protect the cattle and horses. Except such general prayers we do not know anything about the Medicine relating to animals.

B. Anatomy

Even though we have noted certain parts of human body under Mythology (Book III), it would be advisable to register the various anatomical terms which we come across in the VMS. The parts of the human body could be found mostly in the instance of Sautrs (Chs 19-21).

Aṁsa	: Shoulder
Aṅguli	: Finger
Aṇḍa	: Testicle
Atasna	: Gall
Aratni	: Palm
Asthi	: Bone
Antra	: Entrail

Utāni	: Eyebrow
Udara	: Belly
Upastha	: Waist
Ūru	: Thigh
Kanīnikā	: Pupil
Kloman	: Lungs and Liver
Guda	: Buttock
Grīvā	: Neck
Jaṅghā	: Leg
Janitram	: Procreative organ
Jānu	: Knee
Tvac	: Skin
Nas	: Nostril
Nasya	: Nose hair
Nābhi	: Navel
Parus	: Finger Joint
Pakṣma	: Eye lashe
Pāyu	: Rump
Pitta	: Kidney
Plāśi	: Penis
Plihā	: Spleen
Bhruvikeśa	: Eye brow
Majjā	: Marrow
Māṁsa	: Flesh
Mukha	: Face

Rūpa	: Shape
Retas	: Semen
Loma	: Hair
Vamṣṭhu	: Rectum
Vasta	: Bladder
Śiras	: Head
Śukra	: Productive seed
Śroni	: Hip
Śmaśru	: Beard
Hṛdaya	: Heart

From this enumeration we notice that several internal parts of the body are named. Other parts of human body have already been mentioned.

Now we shall see the animal anatomy. The general parts of an animal are already seen in the Ch ten (Book III) and hence they are not repeated here. Of all the animals, the parts of the body of horse are elaborately enumerated and therefore they are reproduced hereunder in the alphabetical order in the interest of convenience. Generally many of them are common to any other animal. It may be noticed that several names of the parts of the human and animal body are common.

Aṁsa	: Shoulder
Aṅga	: Limb

Aṅḍa	: Testicle
Agrajihvā	: Tongue-tip
Adhara Oṣṭha	: Lower lip
Apāna	: Out-breath
Adhara Kaṅṭha	: Lower neck
Avāryaikṣu	: Eyelash
Avārya pakṣma	: Lower eyelash
Aśru	: Tears
Asan	: Blood
Āntra	: Entrails
Āsya	: Mouth
Uttara Oṣṭha	: Upper lip
Udara	: Belly
Ūru	: Thigh
Ūṣman	: Heat
Kanīnikā	: Pupil
Karṇa	: Ear
Kikasā	: Spinal column
Kuṣṭha	: Cavities of loines
Kukṣi	: Stomach
Keśa	: Hair
Kroḍa	: Chest
Kloman	: Spleen
Glau	: Heart vessels
Jaṅghā	: Leg

Jatru	: Clavicle
Jambāla	: Kneepan
Jihvā utsāda	: Root of the tongue
Tālu	: Palate
Tvac	: Skin
Daṁṣṭra	: Fang
Damtamūla	: Gum
Dūṣikā	: Rheum
Dos	: Upper forefeet
Dat	: Teeth
Nābhi	: Navel
Nas	: Nostril
Nāsikā	: Nose
Nipakṣati	: Right flank
Pakṣati	: Left rib
Pājasya	: Belly
Pāyu	: Fissure
Pāryaikṣu	: Upper eyelash
Pitta	: Bile
Puccha	: Tail
Purītat	: Pericardium
Prāṇa	: Breath
Plāsi	: Kidney
Plihā	: Duct
Barsva	: Teeth socket
Bāhu	: Lower forefeet

Bhasat	: Hind part
Bhāsat	: Buttock
Bhrū	: Eyebrow
Matasna	: Cardiac Bones
Manyā	: Nerves ('grīvāpascāt nāḍi' : Mahi)
Mastiṣka	: Brain
Mūrdhan	: Upper part of the head
Rasa	: Flavour
Rūpa	: Beauty
Rora	: Shoulder joint
Retas	: Seed
Loma	: Hair
Vaniṣṭhu	: Rectum
Valga	: Groin
Vasti	: Gut
Vasā	: Oily part of the flesh
Vaha	: Part that bears the yoke
Vṛkka	: Kidney
Samkrośa	: Rugged head
Śakapiṇḍa	: Lump of dung
Śakunisāda	: Quickspring
Śapha	: Hoof
Śepa	: Penis
Śirṣan	: Head
Suṣka kaṇṭha	: Fleshless part of the neck
Śroṇi	: Hip
Śrota	: Internal ear

Skandha	:	Neckbone
Stupa	:	Crest
Sthūlaguda	:	Large intestines
Sthūra	:	Fet locks
Śmasru	:	Mane
Svapasa	:	Active shoulder
Hanu	:	Jaw
Hṛdayaupāśa	:	Aorta

In order to identify the various limbs and organs a careful dissection of the body was essential. The skill seems to have been obtained by certain priests and other members of the society. As the Brāhmaṇa literature lays down, the various parts of the body were to be kept ready so that they could be offered to deities at the proper time. It may further be imagined that certain metallic (surgical?) instruments were used by them for the proper dissection.

C. Animals and Birds

Under the Section I of the Ch.18, we have registered the names of the animals and birds mentioned in the twenty-fourth and twenty-ninth Chs. of the VMS. The Saṁhitā mentions colors and other peculiarities of these beings and this shows the acquaintance of the VMS people with regard to them.

We are further informed by the ŚB and the KŚS that these animals are to be tied to stakes at the Aśvs. This

demonstrates their skill in procuring all these victims for sacrificial purpose. Among the animals and birds, as we have seen several have not been identified so far.

Among the animals the horse was employed for drawing a chariot. From the terms aśvapa, hastipa etc. it may be said that there were persons who were expert in the art of controlling and training these animals (cf.23.7)

D. Numbers

The RV records ayuta (10,000) to be the highest figure, while the VMS (17.2) shows a counting beyond that.

The odd numbers from one to thirty-three (1,3,5,733) and even numbers from four to forty-eight (4,8,12 etc....) with a common difference of four are mentioned in the VMS (18.24-25). The counting of numbers went upto Parārdha. The figures are :

Eka	(1)
Daśa	(10)
Śata	(100)
Sahasra	(1,000)
Ayuta	(10,000)
Niyuta	(1,00,000)
Prayuta	(10,00,000)
Arbuda	(1,00,00,000)

Nyarbuda	(10,00,00,000)
Samudra	(100,00,00,000)
Madhya	(1000,00,00,000)
Anta	(10000,00,00,000)
Parārdha	100000,00,00,000)

(Cf. Zimmer "Altindisches Leben," pp.348)

General Conclusion

In the foregoing pages we discussed the society in a length of two Chs conveniently. The materials of the Samhitā collected herein shows that the society was governed by a definite order and that the different classes of the society enjoyed the privileges permissible under the different categories. The society represents a combination of all types of people including good and bad. Sometimes we have marked certain distinguishing features in comparison with those discernible from the hymns of the RV and have pointed out that the VMS has something more to present in certain respects.

To sum up we have the mention of the river Sarasvati with certain other rivers. Among trees we have seen Śālmali which is not mentioned in the RV. There is the mention of a variety of animals and birds with their peculiarities in form and color. The castes seem not only to have been established but also intermingled. Under

social conditions we notice that a woman could live in society participating in the division of labour and work variously contributing to the progress and prosperity of the society. She could afford to a bad life even without marriage and children. One also finds reference to ladies who led a free and wanton life, being an instrument of pleasure - a feature which is hardly met with in the RV.

In the Ch. two we saw that the people enjoyed happy relationship with king; and in return the king too so rejoiced with his people. So there prevailed a reciprocity and cooperation. There is no mention of any tendency for tyranny or despotism. Under Economy we saw the conveyances for travel and voyage; so also the progress of the Trade and Commerce under the Barter system. We also find in the VMS the genesis of sciences like medicine Ayurveda.

The result of the present study of the VMS society is quite in consonance with the conclusion to which Mac (HSL pp 155) arrived viz. "the people (of the YV) wear an aspect essentially differing from those revealed to us in the hymns of the RV." Finally it may be said that the YV (the VMS) is not only important to the history of worship and religion or to the prayer but also to the history of Ancient Indian Society as a whole.

Chapter III

Philosophy

Introduction

After having described the society, we now pass on to the aspect viz. Philosophy. An interesting feature is that, after a great manual of sacrifices, the VMS ultimately culminates into an Upaniṣad that comes under philosophy. This sudden transition is indeed remarkable. In the words of Weber we may say that “this last adhyāya has no sort of direct reference to the sacrificial ceremonial and this is professedly designed to fix the proper mean between those exclusively engaged in sacrificial acts at all events and those entirely neglecting them.” (HIL pp.108)

The term philosophy is a wide term to which no exact definition can be laid down and hence by this term we may understand all that is connected with truth and inquiry into life here and afterwards. One may also add topics pertaining to the mental activity and so on. Herein I propose to discuss the following points: a presentation of various desires, dialogues and Brahmodyas, the conception of sin, the view of life, the mystic words, some of which are seen employed in the later system of philosophy, the Lokas, the beginning of Upaniṣadic thought and finally Supreme being.

I. Various desires analysed

To begin with, let us consider the various desires that are expressed in the VMS. The desires once expressed are again and again repeated and this tautology would indicate the emphasis on the desires, thereby imploring the deity to fulfill the same. The desires primarily show the optimistic belief in the life and that the life led on this earth must be glorious and complete. Secondly the other desire viz. to go to heaven is entertained. The first twenty-eight Ks of the Ch eighteen of the Samhitā is a grand enumeration of desires covering possible planes of experience.

The deities are addressed to grant brilliance, light, luster etc., Such desires are seen in the expression: ‘Jyotir me yaccha’ (Bestow me brilliance), ‘varco me dhehi’ (Grant me splendor), ‘rucam no dehi’ (Grant me light), etc.

Coming to various bodily parts, we find the various desires expressed in respect of a number of limbs mentioned together (see 20.5-9)

The organs intrinsically possess certain powers. Prayers are seen addressed to deities to safeguard those powers. For example, the sight in the eyes, the hearing power in the ears, and so on are to be protected. Further whatever bodily debility or deficiency is existent that also

is to be made good. So, this kind of securing power contributes to the longevity of life.

The desires seen in the 20.5-9 are: “My breath to be grace, my mouth be fame, my hair and beard be brilliant shing! my breath be king and deathless my eye Sole Lord, mine ear the Prince. My tongue be bliss, my voice be might, my mind be wrath, my rage self lord! joys be my fingers and delight my members,....

Let my two arms be Indra’s power, my hands be of manly might, my soul and breast be princely rule! My ribs be royal government, my belly, shoulders neck and hips, thighs elbows knees.... my members universally.” ‘My navel be intellect, my anus be vijñāna, may the female organ (bhasat) be fertile (viz. delivering children) my testicles to be delightful with bliss (due to sexual dalliance), my penis be lucky and so on’.

So in this candid enumeration we see every part of the sacrificer’s body being mentioned. It is, thereby, suggesting that no part of the body should be deprived of its due pleasure.

So far as the subtle elements in human body are concerned, we find in the VMS, in the first instance, the mention of five vital airs. At one place (7.2.2.20) the SB interestingly says: “Who knows how many are the prāṇas

within the body.” The vital airs thus mentioned are : *prāṇa apāna, vyāna, udāna* and *samāna*. Of these, the first two are seen often repeated while the others are mentioned only once. The divinities are prayed for the protection of these vital airs.

As far as the other internal organs, the desire: ‘...*manome jinva*’ (14.17) would indicate the general characteristic of mind viz. unsteadyness and fickleness and the need for the control of the same. The idea to control the mind, is widely spoken in later philosophical literature. The expression: ‘... *...yadi manasā jagantha*’ (23.49) would indicate the power of the mind to be able to imagine things wide. The mind needs to be yoked for thought and kept engaged and this is clear in the expression: ‘*yuktena manasā...*’ (with harnessed mind: 11.2). Further we meet with a passage: *yogāya yoktāram*’ (30.14) which might give rise for the yoking as such of the mind to thought. The passages: ‘*yuñjate manaḥ*’, ‘*yuñjānaḥ manaḥ tattvāya dhiyā*’ etc. indicate the idea that mind is to be controlled and the thought is to be concentrated.

The desire ‘*manome tarpayate*’ further suggests the idea that the mind may be gratified. Further the expressions ‘*śivena manasāavanayāmi*’ and ‘*Śivena manasā bhakṣayāmi*’ etc. indicate that ‘mind’ has to be restful and auspicious.

Incidentally we may note the importance of mind: the sacrificial formulas are compared to manas ('mano yajuḥ' 36.1) signifying that the formulas form a product of thinking. The epithet to a deity (Agni) 'manaso' si vilāyakaḥ' (20.34) would suggest that the deity is described as the annihilator of such mind which leads one towards undesired paths. Mahī explains that the deity shows entry into the self-knowledge.

Thus, the mind is to be cared more and its discipline is required to be maintained.

Cit is the decisive mind while mati is the wisdom and the buddhi is the culture of mind due to learning, experience and so on; the jñātram is the ability of mind to discern the thought. All these terms are the qualifications of the mind. We see a prayer that each of these may become perfect by dint of sacrifice.

Dhī or intellect is another aspect of mind. It is referred to in a K by way of prayer: 'daivīm dhiyam manāmahe....' (4.11) ("We meditate upon the divine intelligence, most merciful, free giver bringing worship. May it guide gently as we would."). Dhī is here prayed to be the guide in actions. In respect of the preparation of the Ukhā, it is said that Aditi employed her divine intelligence also. To do an act the dhī is important as we see the usage: 'dhiyā

tattvāya...' referring to Savitṛ, meaning 'bestowing considerable thought'. Such *dhī*, it is desired, may flourish by dint of sacrifice. Recently Gonda has shed important light on the meaning of the word *dhi* (see "The Vision of the Vedic Poets").

The term *medhā* connotes the power of memory of the mind. A person possessing this quality is called as *medhāvan*. In the VMS there is a prayer that the *medhā* may be glorious by virtue of the sacrifice.

The word *ātmā* simply means a person or 'corporeal body' in many cases. We have certain instances where prayers are offered for the protection of the same e.g., '*ātmānam me pāhi*' (14.17). The expression '*ātmāne me varcodā....*' (7.28) indicates the desire that *varcas* be bestowed on one's body. Compare also '*stoma ātmā*' (12.4), '*ātmā kṣatram uro mama....*' (20.7) etc., where the term *ātmā* has been explained to connote the soul ('*antaḥkaraṇa sthānīyaḥ*'; '*antarātma*': *mahī*). However, it is difficult to ascertain awareness of the latter meaning in the VMS. However, the desire: '*ātmā me yajñena kalpatām*' indicates that the '*ātmā* may be glorious by virtue of sacrifice'. Even in the SB, this term has the former connotation only. However, the concept of *ātmā* has considerably developed in later philosophical literature.

Further, there are desires for sumptuous food, for long uninterrupted life of hundred winters, for strong health devoid of diseases, for heroic sons (*'atamerur-yajamānasya prajā bhūyāti : 1.23*) and for abundance of riches. There is a prayer: *'rāyaspoṣeṇa mā viyausma'* (etc.) which denotes their objective for prosperity. Likewise the desire for victory in battles (*'saṁghāte saṁghāte jeṣmaḥ'*) signifies their heroic mentality of the other. In addition to these referring to the material wellbeing, they also desire to be protected from death and reach heaven and attain immortality (*amṛtāḥ*).

There are also prayers for rain so that the food crops crop up (*susasyāḥ*) and the security of life be maintained.

The desire extends also to the extent of injury, harming or even killing the enemies and the persons whom they hate. This we saw under Ch seventeen (Book IV).

Finally one meets with the expressions like: *'yatkāmaḥ pune tucakeyam'* and *'mayi vaḥ kāmadharaṇam bhūyāt'*, etc. which show that the Vedic people prayed for the fulfillment of all their desires in general.

Thus it will be noticed that the scope of the desires expressed in the VMS range from material plane to a higher plane.

II. Dialogues and the Brahmodyas

We may now point out the priestly conversation which takes place in connection with a sacrificial performance. At New-moon sacrifice the Adhvaryu puts a question enquiring about the cow who is being milked. After the reply is given, he describes her to be so and so (1.3-4). Similarly there is an instance (2.2.4). Seeking permission of the Brahman priest to bind the sacrificial horse. Such references indicate the conversational spirit to seek advice or permission with regard to the action at the sacrifice and tend to the success of the sacrifice.

Usually the dialogues center round the performance of various rites of a sacrifice. But there are also other dialogues whose subject matter envelops certain other planes of talk.

In the Aśvs the priests viz. the Adhvaryu, the Hotṛ, the Udgāṭṛ and the Brahman priest engage themselves in naked talk with the sacrificer's wives scandalising each other going even to the sphere of sex and sexual congress (2.3.18-31). Factually the Ks 23 and 25 have the words Adhvaryu and Brahman in the vocative whereby it is clear that the preceding Ks respectively are the addresses to the *kumārī* and the chief queen of the sacrificer. To the talk by the Adhvaryu relating to the sexual intercourse, with onomatopoeia observed, the lady retaliates: "...*adhvaryo*

mā tvam abhibhāṣathāḥ.” Likewise to the addressal of the Brahman priest who again repeats the same referring to the parents of the lady she retorts “*Brahman mā tvam vado bahu*” hinting that same was the case with his parents too. This kind of talk readily shows the contempt and the freedom to retaliate so curtly and flatly. The other two priests viz. Hotṛ and Udgātṛ are also regarded as having taken part in this talk.

Anthropologically such dialogues have some sort of significance, because they form a part of rite which is based on fertility magic.

A talk of this kind, occurring in the Vedic literature, is unique; in that it suggests the free relations that perhaps existed between the royal family on the one part and the officiating priests on the other. It may be noticed that there existed the freedom for expression of thought irrespective of its obscurity at least under the garb of a regular sacrificial rite in the great AśvS.

The Brahmodyas or theological riddles (23.45-60) “a few of which remind us of our juvenile riddles, while others refer to the sacrificial mysticism of the Brāhmaṇas and the philosophy of the Upaniṣads” (Winternitz HIL pp. 160) form an interesting pastime to the priests among themselves. Some of the perplexing questions are

addressed to the other priest with a tone of pride and superiority, challenging almost the other’s knowledge. The expressions: ‘...*yadī manasā jagantha...* (23.49), ‘...*brahman upavālhāmasi tvām kimsvinnaḥ prativocāḥ...*’ (23.51); ...*namāyayā uttaraḥ mat bhavasi...*’ and so on, readily point out the challenging spirit.

There are sixteen Ks relating to the Brahmodyas and twenty eight questions and answers to them by different priests emphasising that no priest can supersede the other in spite of the tension of the competitive spirit. Ludwig has well translated all these (riddles) into German (cf. RV into German prose pp. 390 ff).

These riddles form a testimony that the priests quite well cherished the contesting spirit as regards knowledge (of the sacrifice) and wide imagination.

III. The Conception of Sin

The concept of sin which is elaborately discussed, in religious and philosophical literature, has its roots in the Vedas.

The good conduct and the bad conduct find a reference in the Saṁhitā; and the divinity (Agni) is implored to keep away the bad conduct from the worshipper and keep him on the path of good conduct (*‘duscaritā paribādhasva mām sucarite bhaja*). Similarly

the deity is prayed to drive away the bad dreams of the devotee (*'dusvapnyam parāsuva'*).

The terms indicating the sin in general are: *enas*, *aṁhas*, *pāpa repas*, *kilbiṣa*, *agha* and *riṣa* and *himśa*.

The *enas* is the evil aspect which is acquired unintentionally. Its atonement is sought for, since otherwise it would badly inflict a person. The poets have expressed dread of sin against gods, against mankind, against fathers, against one's own self, as also of sin of every sort, sin that is knowingly committed, sin that is unknowingly committed and sin acquired due to all wickedness (8.13).

As Mahī explains the *aṁhas* is the sin acquired by causing diseases to others. Prayers are offered to get rid of such sin. Agni is given the epithet *Amhasaspati*.

Pāpa is also a kind of sin which clings to a person. One desires to be freed from sin (*'pāpmnā viprankta'*). An attempt to kill *pāpa* is demonstrated in a significant action viz. beating the Soma while uttering: *'pāpmā hataḥ na somaḥ'* in the SS.

As regards the other terms denoting sin one meets with prayers offered to deities to protect the worshipper from such sin, e.g., *'riṣaspāhi'*, *'kilbiṣam apasuva'*, *'agham apasuva'* and so on.

The sin against Fathers is referred to also. A person feels indebted (*R̥ṇa*) to his parents and not to redeem that debt is regarded as sin. The K 19.11 expresses the sense of relief exhibited by a devotee. The expression is: *'anṛṇo bhavāmi ahatau mayā pitarau'* (I have (now) become redeemed. The parents are not killed by me). Indeed the utterance is very significant.

Thus the VMS points out, the various ways as to how sin results. It also suggests that one should obviate such sin through offering (*avayajana*: 8.13) and become sinless and thus be pure. Especially the thought *ye ke ca ātmahano janāḥ* (40.3) might give rise for the later concept suicide which is considered as one of the sins. Hence the *Samhitā* has really something to throw light upon the concept of sin in Vedic literature.

IV. View of Life

One meets with certain data in the VMS which helps one in tracing the view of life held by the composers of that *Samhitā*. Naturally enough, this view can be obtained only through a study of the sacrificial situations.

From the terms *atithi* (guest) *ātithya* (guest's reception), *sada* (seat) *āsīda* (to sit) etc., we can infer the practice of honouring a guest. The seat offered to a guest was as soft as wool (*urṇamṛdū*) so that the guest may sit at

comfort. So, hospitality formed one of the disciplines of life at that time. In fact, in the SS, there is a rite (Ātithyeṣṭi) which is performed in reception of Soma.

They seem to uphold the doctrine “harm not the other nor the other may harm you.” This we say when we meet with expressions like: ‘*oṣadhe trāyasvenam svadhite mainam himsīḥ*’ and ‘*mā ma āyuhḥ pramoṣīḥ mo aham tava*’ (4.13) and so on. Thereby we mark the idea viz. promoting mutual coexistence. Even in respect of selection, there need to be mutual reciprocity. This we see in 1.13 which reads: “Indra chose you (Waters) in the battle with Vṛtra. You chose Indra in the fight with Vṛtra.” It was thus appreciated that mutual reciprocation results in success.

In spite of the polytheistic nature of the Vedic religion, one finds that most of the acts in a sacrifice are to be undertaken to the pleasure of the deity concerned. Several expressions to this effect are met with. For example, “doing action for Gods” (‘*devebhyaḥ karma kṛtvā*’ 3.47) “for the pleasure of Gods, I take you (‘*juṣṭam grṇhāmi*’), “this oblation is for Gods” (‘*devebhyo idam haviḥ*’ or ‘*devahaviḥ*’ : 6.10) and so on. This perhaps reminds one of the doctrines in the Bhagavadgīta that every act is to be performed to the pleasure of God.

The VMS insists on purity and perfection. One meets with expressions like : ‘*yadvo asuddhāḥ parājaghnūḥ....*’ (“Whatever of yours the impure have by their touch polluted, hereby I cleanse”1.13), and the terms : punāmi, pune, ‘*ariṣṭam naḥ sandadhātu,*’ etc. point out further their insistence upon the same.

The term *iha* in the expression : ‘*iha ratiḥriha ramadhvam....*’ (8.51) refers contextually to the house of the sacrificer. It bears no reference directly to this world or this earth. But in the 40.2 which reads : ‘*...ākurvanneveha karmāṇi jijīviṣet....*’ the term *iha* has been explained to definitely refer to this earth, whereby we would say that they cared also to the life on earth and try to derive the possible pleasure and satisfaction.

The seers seem to be anxious to follow the religious path which was traversed by their ancestors as is evident from the reference to the Sattra performed by the old Ṛṣis (15.49). This indicates full faith on the part of the seers in the right way by their illustrious ancestors.

Obviously their deeds are motivated by some practical gain. For example, the expressions : ‘*annādhyāyo ādadhe,*’ ‘*rāyaspoṣāya,*’ ‘*iṣe,*’ ‘*ūrje,*’ etc. show that with some expectation a deed is performed by them.

It may be inferred that the Vedic people while undertaking any task, went through some discipline and

invoked the help of the deity for the successful completion of the same (*'vratam cariṣyāmi tatsakeyam tan me rādhyatām'* 1.5). It is remarkable that sometimes ethical principles are directly mentioned. At one place (1.5) the worshipper desires to transcend to truth from untruth (*'anṛtāt satyamupaimi'*).

It is possible to go on multiplying citations shedding light in the ethical view of life held by the Vedic people (VMS). Suffice it to say that the vedic people adequately realised the ethical values of life as is evident from the few references quoted above from their compositions.

V. Mystic Words (Vyāhṛtis)

We meet with certain sacred and mystic syllables and words in the VMS. Their meanings is not always clear. Some of these can be traced in the Tāntric literature which developed in later centuries.

The syllables or words are : Om, Phaṭ, Svāhā, Svadhā, Vāṭ, Veṭ and Vaṣaṭ. These have all pervading effect.

i) Om is a sacred syllable which grew into prominence and ultimately became the Brahman itself. In the Samhitā this syllable occurs three times viz., at 2.13, 40.15 and 40.17. At 2.13 ('Om pratiṣṭha') the syllable means 'yes' or 'Amen' i.e. an expression of assent. In other places viz. in the Īsopaniṣad the meaning is mystical (see Winternitz HIL pp 162 and ERE Vol.9).

ii) The syllable *phaṭ* occurs only once in the VMS indicating an Ātharvaṇic effect to be produced. The reference (*bhaṅgena hato'sau phaṭ...*(7.3)) is obviously showing out that. The syllable *phaṭ* which is grammatically an indeclinable signifies the sense of cracking (See : Agehānanda "Tantric Tradition," pp.116).

iii) There is a reference that by means of praṇavas the form of śāstras is achieved (19.25). Praṇava means Omkāra. That is Om also forms a constituent part of a śāstra.

iv) The Svāhā is a sacrificial calling with which simple offerings are made to deities in fire. The word *svāhā* is always suffixed to mantra - either a prose formula or a Verse.

v) The Svadhā utterance is made when the sacrificial gifts are to be made to the Fathers. This word is also to be suffixed to a mantra. Thus *svāha* is for Devas, *svadhā* for the Pitṛs.

vi, vii) Vāṭ and Veṭ are uttered when offerings are to be made to female and male deities respectively. These syllables, sometimes, are tagged with *svāhā* viz., '*vāṭ svāha,*' '*veṭ svāhā.*' These syllables are found in the VMS for more than three times.

viii) *Vaṣaṭ* is the utterance which is to be made only by the Hoṭṛ priest at the end of the recitation of a *yājya* Vs.

Significant indeed are these syllables when we still find them often in the Tantras and such other religious literature used either independently or combinedly (e.g. Om *Phaṭ*....).

VI. Lokas (worlds)

Here let us note the various references found in the VMS, to the worlds. According to the *Samhitā*, outside this earth, there exist several lokas. Of these only a few are, however, specially pointed out. The VMS does not seem to be definite about the number of lokas in view of the expression '*sarvebhyo lokebhyah*' (30.12) appearing after the mention of some lokas. *Bhuvana*, meaning the Universe at large, encompasses all these worlds. The movements of all beings, created are confined to the Universe.

The VMS primarily mentions the proverbial three lokas viz. earth, mid-air and heaven and these mystically represented as *Bhūḥ*, *Bhuvah* and *Svah*. The earth is the starting point from which their imagination with regard to the worlds above and below starts. This is clear from the expression '*Prthivyāḥ sadhasthāt divamāruhāma*' '*Prthivyāy prṣthe*', *paramasyāḥ (prthivyāḥ)*..etc. Earth is quite wide and encompassing. *Antarikṣa* is the region

which forms the path of Fathers (*Mahī*). This further represents the space in general. The heaven (*dyauh*) is noted for its plentiness (*bhūmnā*).

Coming to some of the particular lokas mentioned we have some to cite viz. the regions of *Agni*, *Vāyu*, *Sūrya* (23.17), *Yama*, *Devas* (30.13), *Sukṛts* (15.30), men (30.12) and finally of all. Presumably these regions are located above this earth and further details regarding their respective locations in particular are not mentioned.

The regions of *Agni*, *Vāyu* and *Sūrya* and attained by the horse victimised at the *Aśvs*, thereby emphasising the merit acquired by the horse (23.17). In other words the region of *Sūrya* is termed as '*divaḥprṣtha*' (15.50 *Mahī*)

The region of *Yama* is termed as *Yamarājya*. The departed Fathers devoid of all distinctions live there with happiness. Obviously, the region of *Yama* does not mean hell as is conceived by *Purāṇas*. At times the departed souls are said to visit their sons on earth when invited. The reference: '*..tatra gaccha yatra pūrve paretāḥ...*' (13.31) indicates *Yama*'s loka to be the goal for departed. *Pitṛloka* is also mentioned separately. It might be the same as the *Yamaloka* or perhaps both may be separate. *Agni* is described (35.20) to be knowing the location of this loka as he is asked to carry *svadhā* to the departed.

The Devaloka is perhaps the heaven and because of separate mention of this region, we may not be in a position to identify this with the Svarloka. Vanaspati is said (29.10) to be knowing the location of this region and hence oblations sweetened by Agni are borne by him to them.

18.52 points out another region termed as Sukṛt loka and which is attained by Ṛṣis (of course, through sacrifices).

The Manuṣyaloka might mean this earth where men live. This region if connoted by the term atra or asminloke contrasted with the region other than this viz. amutra or 'anyasinloka'.

Though the terms: Divaḥ, Nāka, Svarga or Svar in general connote to mean the heaven the highest region, they seem to be different either in rank or in situation.

Divāḥ : This is enveloped with light and splendor (ruc.) To such region the devotee aspires to ascend from the earth. (*'Pṛthivyāḥ Divamāruhāma'*:8.52) so that he can discover the heavenly light (jyotiḥ). Agni is prayed to go unto this region in the form of a bird (..āDivam gaccha'). From this region rain is expected ('tato no vṛṣtimāvaha'). In this region, it is said, the Devayāna (the path leading to Gods) is situated.

Nāka : As is etymologically explained Nāka is a place where there is no suffering. When we see the expressions 'Uttama Nāka' or 'Varṣiṣṭha Nāka' as distinguished from the term simply Nāka we may doubt that there is another subregion of the same.

Bṛhaspati and Indra are described to be having their own respective 'Uttama Nāka' to ascend to which the sacrificer yearns. This region is explained to lie in the 'Ravimaṇḍala' (Mahī : 15.50). The desire to ascend to this region exhibits the desire for merit and happiness (*'...nāke adhirohaya enam...'*).

Svarga : This is the highest place situated, above all the other regions. Unlike the Nāka having different stages, the Svarga is one without any sub-division. Here regions full justice as we understand from the expression '*Svargāya lokya bhāga dugham*' (30.13). In a prayer the situation of this Svarga is made clear viz. '*nākasya pṛṣṭhe, adhirocane divaḥ svarge loke yajamānam casādyantu*' (15.10-14) (Above the Nāka, amidst the splendid Space or atmosphere, in the Svargaloka, may they settle the sacrificer) Further this loka is termed as Sukṛtasyaloka world of virtue where sacrificers have entrance.

Svarloka : The word Svarloka is often met with. Svar :: Svarga. The following expression may be note : Svaḥpata

(fly unto heaven), Svarjyothiḥ (the luminous heaven) to realise which ultimately the devotee strive; Svarnaya (lead me unto heaven) etc. The cherished desire is to look upon the light of heaven ('Svarabhivikhyeṣam' 1.11) which is possible only by means of sacrifice.

In the VKS we have an expression viz. 'jāya ehi Svo ruhāva' (Wife, come! let us ascend the heaven. VKS 10.29) which explains the desire to go to heaven along the one's wife.

Hell : We mean with the mention of hell (Naraka) probably a region meant for punishment and suffering. To hell killer of hero is dedicated ('nārakāya vīrahaṇam'). As regards the details, the VMS is silent.

In later Mythology we have several regions described to be underneath; here, is the VMS (ch 16) only the general mention of a region below ('adhaḥ kṣamā') is found and that is said to be the abode of certain Rudras.

VII. The Beginnings of Upaniṣadic Thought

Weber has already hinted that several parts of this Samhitā can be considered as chips of Upaniṣdic portions. It is possible to substantiate this claim by referring to certain thoughts befitting the Upaniṣadic line of thinking.

(1) Annam

To begin with let us consider the aspect of food (Anna). We have three Ks(18.32-34) in the VMS containing the eulogy of Anna pointing out the benefits of the same. Thus Annam is said to impel the sacrificer to make a gift, to beatify the deities through oblations, to make himself stronger and victorious and so on. This kind of praise of Anna shows that the food was considered as sacred and that it was personified up and developed in the Upaniṣads so that Annam was as a diety to whom prayers were addressed. This attribute is maintained. Identified with the Brahman itself. ("Annam Brahmeti Vyajānāt..") Agni is described in the VMS to be the lord of Anna (Annapati 11.83).

(2) Śarīramīmāṃsa

The next point to be noted is the investigation into self or body (śarīramīmāṃsa). We have the words: tanu, deha and ātmā and śarīra to denote the body. The words tanu and ātmā are generally used to connote the physical body consisting of external and internal organs. Śarīra seems to be a significant word implying the sanctity of the body. The human body was regarded as something more, than a mere conglomeration of several organs. Earlier we saw the body to be associated with manas dhī etc. As a further analysis of the body it is stated that there are seven seers

safeguarding this śarīra ever with unceasing care performing seven different functions even though the śarīra goes into sleep the two vital airs viz. the prāṇa and apāna remain wakeful and guard the body. This single K (34.55) is enough to show the investigating eye into the self or body of the individual in general.

(3) Jiva

So also we have the word Jiva which has fine philosophical significance in later period, found used in the VMS more than three times. As the contextual occurrences show the word only means livelihood (Jīvātave) or men (jīvāḥmāmkaḥ) but does not signify any philosophical thought behind. The word is mentioned here just to point out the occurrence of the same in the VMS. Further jīva is to denote 'essence'.

(4) Transmigration

The human body contains the vital airs. The expressions: 'saṁ te manaḥ manasā sam prāṇaḥ prāṇema gacchatām' (May your mind join with the mind, prāṇa, prāṇa with prāṇa : 6.18) and 'sam te manaḥ vātena gacchatām...' (May your prāṇa join with the wind: 6.10) show the distinction between the extensive manas and the prāṇa and those in the body. The desire has been expressed that the manas and the prāṇa within the body

may rejoin with the extensive ones. The second expression seeking the reunion of the prāṇa with vāyu is further significant because vāyu is the vehicle of traversing afar. These expressions further suggest the thought as to what would happen after death. It is also suggested that the subtle ingredients of the body are very sacred and that after the death of this physical body, those world have to go back to their original points of projection. In the Upaniṣads we find long discussions on the migration of body and its elements into original places.

Moreover, it is noticed from the Ks like 6.10.6.15.6.18 that if the body is hurt or killed the abstract elements viz. manas, Prāṇa, etc. in the body are primarily hurt rather than the body itself. And therefore, action is taken to swell the various organs. Further prāṇa and udāna belonging to Indra are invoked unto the body of the animal (6.20). It shows, when the external powerful elements are thus invoked, the sanctity of the body becomes further enhanced and contribute to the merit of the sacrifice in a way.

(5) Internal Purity

Cleanliness and purity are primarily insisted upon even in the case of the internal organs. The expressions 'vācam te sundhāmi...prāṇam te sundhāmi...' on one hand, and 'vākta āpyāyatām... prāṇasta āpyāyatām...' on

the other indicate the sense of purity. Expressions of this sort speak for the knowledge, on the part of the Vedic seers, of the metaphysical aspect of the body apart from its anatomical study.

(6) Aham (concept)

The concept aham (I) has indeed played a very significant part in the history of Philosophy. It would be worthwhile to see if the VMS can show any traces of Philosophy underlying the principle of aham.

In the Context of the Brahmodyas we have noted the answer "I" given to certain questions. The questions are put to the Brahman: "Who knows the central point of the world ? who knows the Dyāvā pṛthivī Antarikṣa ? who knows the mighty birth place of Sūrya ?" and so on. To all these questions Brahman's reply is "I know". This indicates the self assertion and confidence (23.59-60).

Another question is: "Hath Viṣṇu pervaded in the three steps this whole Universe, wherein the God is worshipped ?" The answer is: "I also am in those three steps of Viṣṇu wherewith he permeated this Universe. This earth and heaven "I" circle in a moment and this heaven's summit with a single organ." (23.49-50)

The K 8.9 reads: "I am above, I am below and what space there is between, that was my father. I saw the Sun

on both sides. I am what is highest to the gods in secret." This again speaks about aham which here means the Supreme Being. The SB cites this (4.4.2.14) but simply says "by 'I' he bestows manhood on men." Leaving out the sacrificial Context, this reference speaks about the importance of one such emphatic expressions are often found in the Upaniṣads and "Bhagavadgīta".

There is an expression wherein the sacrificer associates himself with the Agni and expresses accordingly. "Agni am I who know, by birth all creature. Mine eye is ghee, in my mouth is nectar. I am the triple light, the regions meter exhaustless heat am I, named burnt oblation." At another place it is said: "I am Ṛcs. I am Yajis. I am Sāmans" (18.67). Here the sacrificer identifies himself with the three Vedas.

(7) Self-Enquiry

There are references which contain the inquisitive questions and also their answers which indicate the Upaniṣadic tendency to undertake investigation into metaphysical matters. Thus, the enquiry is : "*kastvā yunakti ?*" (who yokes you). The answer is: "*sa tvā yunakti*" (He yokes you : 1.6). Again : '*ko' so katamo' si kasyāāsi ko nāmā'si...*' (7,29, 20.40). Such kind of enquiry is expected to result into the understanding of one's own self. See also 2.23; 7.48; 23.55-57 etc.

Such enquiries, found scattered in the VMS, indicate the thinking process of Vedic seers which was further developed by the leaders of the Upaniṣadic thought.

(8) The Concept of Rebirth

This is an indication in the VMS that the Vedic seers had had the concept of rebirth which was further developed into the Upaniṣads. The K 35.22 reads : “From him (this man) you are born. May be again born form you. For Svarga’s world the man I name.” (‘tvadiyam Jāyatām punaḥ’).

(9) Emancipation

The expressions ‘amṛtāḥ abhūma’ (9.12) ‘aganma jyotih’ etc. indicate the desire for immortality and attain the splendor. In the Rudrādhya (Ch 16) there are certain epithets to Rudra which are shown to have philosophical significance by the Commentators. According to them, Rudra is pārya that is, beyond the material world; avārya that is in the middle of such ocean as saṁsārin; prataraṇa that is, the remove of all sins; uttārṇa one who enables the worshipper to cross over world (16,42); likewise we have the distinctive words śam denoting material happiness, mayāḥ denoting eternal happiness.

The expression: “be bearer and deliverer to us as Indra to the Devas” (*Svahniḥ santāraṇo bhava* : 35.13) may indicate their eagerness to cross over the material unhappiness and enjoy the eternal bliss and delight. Even the lord Rudra is given the epithet *tāra* meaning thereby that he enables the worshipper to cross over this world of unhappiness. Besides such words and expressions we meet with still several others in the VMS which seem to convey philosophical ideas. No doubt the VMS is inclined to promote the material well-being, still, it indirectly shows its awareness of the impermanence of this happiness and the existence beyond this material world. This idea is more manifest in its Īśā upaniṣad.

(10) Unity and Diversity

The Veda has noted certain facts which leads to the principle of unity and diversity. The principle, in view at present, in general terms, is: two separate things originally undergoing a common passage with unity and again separating to their respective places. Likewise the second one is : two things bound together to the required time at a place and later getting separated after that time.

The same are put by Commentators as : “things having separate places having a common passage. Things having a common place but having many ways. These two are two truths.”

Coming to particular illustrations that we have (19.76) in the VMS: we have: the retas and mūtra two separate things accommodate for the time being and pass through a common passage bearing different character and purpose. Also the embryo by birth removes its ulbum and Jarāyu by which it was originally bound.

So these two-illustrations stand to bring out two philosophical truths unity and diversity in a way.

(11) Power of Knowledge

The Upaniṣads sing the power of knowledge and point out the glory of the same. However, in the Saṁhitā itself we have certain references casually indicating the greatness of knowledge. The reference (31.21) which reads: “...The Brāhmaṇ who may know thee (Āditya) thus shall have the Gods in his control,” would indicate that knowledge relating to Supreme would benefit oneself. References of this kind seen in the Saṁhitā suggest that such knowledge is worthwhile for a being. On the other hand, the knowledge of the Vedic seers, about cosmology and ability to find out the truth, is illustrated in the Brahmodyas. For example, Brahman is said to be the splendor equaling that of the Sun (‘Brahma Sūryasamam jyothiḥ’ 23.48).

VIII. Supreme Being

In the VMS we meet with certain words denoting the conception of the Supreme Being.

Puruṣa denotes the Supreme Being who is responsible for all this creation. The puruṣa-sūkta of the RV which is also found in VMS bears out the significance of Puruṣa.

The term Puruṣa occurs in the Saṁhitā a few times. In course of Brahmodyas, we have a challenging riddle to which Puruṣa has been said to be the answer. The question is: “What are the things that Puruṣa has entered? what are the things which the Puruṣa has contained within him...(23.51)” The answer is: “Within five things has Puruṣa found entrance, these Puruṣa has contained within himself...(23.52).” Mahī explains that Ātmā of Puruṣa entered into the five vital airs (prāṇa etc.) and those vital airs are contained within him. This explanation points out the indispensability of prāṇas and Puruṣa mutually. This thought proves is very interesting.

The character of Puruṣa has been described (32.11) as follows: “...having encompassed the existing creatures, worlds, all quarters and mid-quarters; having approached the first born child of Order (Ṛtasya prathamajām), he with his self (ātmanā) has entered into self”. (‘Ātmanā’tmāna-mabhisamviveśa’). This indicates the

super principle of Puruṣa ultimately claiming his own self to be himself.

We have another K (32.2) stressing the incomprehensible position of the Puruṣa. The reference reads: “all twinkling of eyelid sprang from Puruṣa, the resplendent one. No one has comprehended him above, across, or in the midst.” This tells us the height of the glory of the Puruṣa.

There is another reference pointing out the unequalled position of the Puruṣa. The reference (32.3) reads: “to that Puruṣa whose name is glory, there is no parallel or counterpart” (‘natasya pratimā....’). Thus we note that the Puruṣa as a principle is everything, unequalled or unparalleled and beyond one’s comprehension.

(2) Īśa

All the while we have seen in the Veda that specific deities like Agni, Indra, etc. are eulogized and several epithets are used to describe them but it is only the term Īśa which leads to the monistic philosophy. The chapter forty contains the word Īśa meaning ‘Supreme Lord’. The word is derived from the *Īś* to govern, and a verbal form of that.

Before we enter the discussion relating to Īśa, let us note the upaniṣadic portions of the Saṁhitā. So far as the philosophy of the VMS is concerned the “Īśopaniṣad” is regarded as the central bunch of flower. Apart from this specific Upaniṣad. as Weber has pointed out (HIL pp.108) there are several parts of the saṁhitā which can be considered as strips of Upanishads. For example, the Rudrādhyāya (Ch 16) Puruṣa-Sukta (Ch thirty-one), “Tadevopaniṣad” (Ch thirty-two) and “Śivasamkalpopaniṣad” (Ch thirty-four). Of these the “Rudrādhyāya”, a portion of “Tadevopaniṣad” alone can come under count because the rest are traced to be common to the other Vedas (the RV, the Atharvaveda). Then these two and the “Īśopaniṣad” form the contribution of the YV (VMS) to the Vedic philosophy.

Prof. Hume and others have pointed out the bulk of attempts to comprehend and interpret this Upaniṣad also. By which effort it becomes obvious how greatly eastern scholars like Śaṅkara, Uv, Mahī and Rāja Rāmmohan Roy, Aurabindo etc. and western scholars like William Jones (the first to translate (this Upaniṣad) into English in 1779), Max Müller, Hume, etc. have bestowed sincere thoughts upon this Upaniṣad. In spite of all that it is said

that: simple in language as this” (Īśa) Upaniṣad” is; it presents difficulties in the shape of apparently conflicting sentiments, which have taxed the ingenuity of ancient and modern commentators to reconcile. Yet a doubt sometimes arises whether real sense has been discovered.’

According to Śaṅkara this Upaniṣad is: “establishing Unity and incomprehensibility of the Supreme Being and that His Worship alone can lead to eternal beatitude...” Further this Upaniṣad within a short scope of seventeen Ks deals with metaphysical, mystical, ethical, eschatological ideas (See: Belvalkar History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 2 pp. 168 ff) presenting us two riddles of sphinx....

The version of this Upaniṣad, available in the VKS, is widely studied and commented. The translations are mostly based upon the VKS version. The simple reason is that the readings here are “original and better” (Theme). (For further reasons see: Belvalkar *ibid.* pp.90 ff). Thieme also has followed this version in his latest attempt. (JAOS Vol. 85 1965) discussing the metre and language, etc., of the upaniṣad.

The chief importance of this Upaniṣad lies in the expression : ‘Īśāvāsyamidam sarvam...’ viz., the Supreme Lord has enveloped this whole Universe. Instead of the word Brahman which is common to all other Upaniṣads, we have here the term : Īśa and this has attracted the attention of scholars. It preaches importance of ‘Tyāga’.

Since there have been scholars who have presented thorough studies of this Upaniṣad, a discussion on this Upaniṣad is not be made in detail herein.

When we return to the references to Īśa in the chapters other than the Chapter forty, we find only a reference (20.32) worth our note which reads: “Who is the lord of all creatures (‘bhūtānām adhipatiḥ’), in whom are the worlds rested, who, by himself great, has controlled the great (‘ya Īśe...’)....” and this brings out the Universal Being that operates the whole (creation). However, such kind of thoughts are in plenty seen in the Upaniṣads.

(3) Tat

The Tat or that which cannot be defined has been mentioned in the famous Upaniṣadic maxim: Tattvamasi (“you are That”). However, the concept ‘Tat’ is itself mentioned in the Saṁhitā itself. The VMS

points out Tat to be Agni, Vāyu, Sūrya, Candramā, Śukra, Brahman (three Vedas: Mahi) Waters and Prajāpati (32.1). This K is the very first Vs of “Tadevopaniṣad”. Beyond this reference, we have no further information in the VMS. However, this reference atleast forms an unique contribution to the concept of Tat in later philosophy. The term ‘tat’ needs definition and it is the ‘force’ in the world.

Conclusion

Thus to the bobbin of the sacrificial Saṁhitā viz. SKV we see also wound strings of philosophical thought unlike strings of same color viz. sacrificial rites. As we have observed, the SYV does contain certain philosophical conceptions. There have been attempts to catch philosophy in the Veda. Macdonell found that: “YV contains fantastic legends describing how the creator produces all things by means of omnipotent sacrifice.” (HSL pp 327). This observation might be true when we consider the Brāhmaṇa and other literature also. But from the foregoing pages confining to the VMS strictly, we find that the philosophy does not limit to such but has widely opened the vision and vista throwing challenge to the imagination of the student. The contribution of the SYV

chiefly rests in the “Īśāvasyopaniṣad” and no other Upaniṣad is so simple, yet though and as puzzling as this Upaniṣad. The first thirtynine chapters belong to sacrifices and the last chapter a philosophy, an eye for wisdom.

At the outset of this Chapter we have seen certain desires, expressed in the VMS, covering the material plane and up to the metaphysical plane. We have noted the dialogues and the theological riddles which contain some bearing on them. The conception of sin seems to be quite deep in their estimate and therefore, they try to liberate themselves from the same. The sin against Devas and men is apparently felt more seriously than any other. Attempt to hurt itself is also regarded as sin. They commended certain principles of their own to systematize their way of life adjusting to the will and pleasure of Devas. So this suggests a sort of philosophy of life. Among the mystic syllables there are a few which assumed greater importance in later centuries while the other are mostly confined to sacrifice. We pointed out that the ideas of Rebirth, Emancipation etc. had occurred to them in spite of the desires almost signifying material welfare. Finally we have drawn attention towards the terms: Puruṣa, Īśa and Tat which were worked

out in detail in the Upaniṣads and Vedānta Subsequently. The thoughts portrayed in the Saṁhitā are suggestive for future elaboration and development.

The Brāhmaṇa of the SYV viz. the SB has contributed the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad. These two Upaniṣads have significantly contributed to the philosophical content and thought of Ancient India.

