An attempt to survey the philosophy of the Advaita in the literature that was produced before Saṅkaracārya, is a peculiar one. Its peculiarity lies in the fact that it is of a mixed nature. The philosophical merit of the Advaita has engaged the attention of the intelligentsia all over the world, and there is no want of philosophical writings on the subject. Though I cannot avoid philosophical discussion altogether, it may be pointed out at the outset that the subject in hand is not merely philosophical. The words "pre-Saṅkara" cover an immensely vast period, from the earliest times of the Rgveda to the eighth Century A.D. which is the generally accepted date of Saṅkara. Though the literature produced in this period is abundant, one is every now and then beset with difficulties about the authenticity of the writer and the date of production. Moreover, though philosophical thought is not absent in the earlier literature, systematic logical presentation is a matter of quite a late

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¹ A brief account on the date of Saṅkara will appear in the proper place.
late age. In the earlier literature which is mostly religious, philosophical thoughts are found applied and reflected in so many places; but it is very difficult to assess the value of those thoughts, unless the culture of the people pictured in that literature is taken into account.

There is again so much divergence in the realm of ancient Indian culture, that at places one finds himself in a chaos. One often hears of exchange and borrowals of ideas by certain people from some other class of people; and a view is rampant that Saṅkarācārya and his predecessor Gauḍapāda are much indebted to Buddhist philosophers for their exposition of the Advaita. With the help of other researches in the field, I have tried to scrutinize this view and show that it is not quite correct. I have also taken liberty to deviate from the normal path of research, marked out by Roth and Max Muller, and followed for the most part by many eastern and western Indologists. While stating in brief my views on the point, I had

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1 This path according to Macdonell "is now accepted by every scientific student of the Veda" - p. 62 "A History of Sanskrit Literature."
had occasions to criticize renowned authorities on the subject. But even though I agree to differ from them on certain points, I have neither forgotten their debt, nor do I under-rate the value of their untiring zeal and contribution to Indology. I do not want to be presumptive anyway. Simply I cannot be unmindful of the other side of the coin.

Traces of philosophical queries are to be found in the earliest record of humanity, the Ṛgveda. According to etymology, Philosophy means love for wisdom. It is admitted on all hands, that a certain sort of love for wisdom is inherent in the nature of man. But every man of course is not a philosopher. For philosophy which marks man a philosopher, is something different from what is generally understood as wisdom. From his birth man acquires all sorts of knowledge and grows with the help of them. But this knowledge, however high its degree and wide its range, fails to completely satisfy the human breast. It only lays before him the grand unquestionable truth, viz. the realisation of the transitory nature of his terrestrial existence. However flattering his circumstances may be, man is compelled some day to realise, inspite of himself, that there is
is no knowing when he would be removed eternally from
them. This fact constantly places before him ques-
tions such as "what is the meaning of this existence?
What is the Universe around him? What is his true nature?
Why is he ushered into this world and will be recalled
without his consent and without even any substantial
achievement for which he struggled? Why these cycles
of misery and happiness, pleas_ and pain, enjoyment and
suffering?" His answer to such questions is his philo-
sophic wisdom. All such questions and the like make him
restless even amidst glory and enjoyment. Almost every
human being has had this experience many a time during
the span of his life. His answer to these questions
is, as said above, the wisdom suggested by the word
"Sophia". From the earliest dawn to the present age
of atomic rupture, man is confronted by these queries,
which no one can boast to have satisfied perfectly.
This was the sublime utterance of a Ṛgvedic Sage:

अथ को वेद यत आच्छादन .....  
कुँत आजाता कुत विष्णुदितः।

1 The same question is repeated in the famous lyric of
Sankaracarya:

कस्त्यं कोझें कुंत आजात:

This must be the fundamental query of philosophy all over the world. Though philosophical schools of the world might differ under different conditions of life, the stages through which they pass are possibly the same everywhere. As remarked by Prof. Bain, Indians being very logical people, they systematised this growth into definite schools of philosophy. However that may be, all philosophic thought can be summed up in the following ideas: Ideas about the origination and dissolution of man and the Universe; ideas about their mutual relation, and their relation with God or the Supreme Being from whom they sprung; ideas about the Be and End of them both; and ideas about God or the Supreme Being. The Vedānta is the particular school of philosophy developed in India, and by the Vedānta is generally understood the Advaita School. The popularity of this school is evident from the fact that sometimes it passes for the whole of the Indian philosophy.

1 Introduction to the "Digest of the moon."

2 "He (Man) can look outward upon the world around him; he can look inward upon the self within him; and he can look upward to the God above him, to the Being who unites the outward and inward worlds, and who manifests Himself in both."

(Evolution of Religion - by Dr. Caird I.77)
As the Vedas are the repository of all Indian wisdom, we shall see what shape the ideas of the Vedānta had under Vedic circumstances. But as we have seen, it is a difficult task to determine the standard of Vedic culture. In all the research regarding the ancient Indian culture, an inexplicable paradox is to be found. On the one hand it is unanimously held that the more ancient the age, the more primitive must be the humanity peopling the earth. But while studying their customs and manners, their ideologies, and the growth of their social, religious, political and other similar systems, and particularly their literature, judgements are passed according to the most up-to-date standards of writing, making no allowance for their infirmities. Perhaps this is due to the chance circumstance, that the pioneers of Indology carried on their antiquarian research relying mostly on philology as their trustworthy guide. But as Prof. Bunsen has put it nicely, philologists assumed like the geologists and Darwinians, "that the same principles which we see working in recent development were also at work at the very beginning, modified in degree and in form, but essentially the
the same in kind."  

It is also difficult to agree with the faulty idea of animism to which Prof. Max Muller has subscribed without any reserve. The idea seems to be erroneous for the following obvious reasons. The assumption on which the idea is based is, that when humanity was in its infancy, man must have thought as we now find children doing. A child has, no doubt, a tendency to personify everything that it comes across. It is unable to understand the difference between the animate and the inanimate. The assumption so far has nothing wrong in it. But while using it for the discovery of later human systems, organizations or thought, it is generally forgotten, that at that stage it is impossible for any child to entertain ideas of reverence and worship; and by the time it grows enough to have these ideas, it has sufficiently developed its reason to distinguish between the inanimate and the animate. Almost all Vedic

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1 Prof. Bunsen quoted by Prof. Max Muller - p.225 Vol.

Vedic research is based on this idea of animism and other similar ideas. We shall try to see, from the very utterances of the founders of the historical method and those of their critics, that the method needs reconsideration.

In the first place, "the evolutionist attitude is inherent in the historical method..." says Rene Guenon, "...... an application of it is to be seen in the strange theory according to which religious or supposedly religious conceptions must necessarily have passed through a series of successive phases, the chief of which are commonly known as fetishism, polytheism and monotheism. The hypothesis is comparable to another that has appeared in the linguistic field, according to which languages, in the course of their development, are supposed to have passed through the successive stages of the monosyllabic, agglutimative

\[\text{1 Compare "..... हमारी यह वृद्ध धारणा है कि दैविक धर्म का यह विकासक्रम नितान्त निराकार है। प्र.२८ भारतीय वर्णन प्रो.चलदेव व्यपारपात।"}

\[\text{2 Dr. Belvalkar has however no hesitation in accepting this method. "Our study of philosophy can be made uncommonly interesting as well as instructive if, taking the Hegelian attitude in the matter, we endeavour to explain each system........", p. 22.}

\[\text{Vedānta Philosophy.} \]
agglumative and inflected forms. This is a quite gratuitous supposition, borne by no facts, and indeed flatly contradicted by the facts, since it has never been possible to discover the least evidence of an actual passage from one of these forms to another. What have been taken for three successive phases on the strength of a pre-conceived idea, are simply three different types to which various linguistic groups are attached, each always remaining true to the type to which it already belong. The same may be said of another more general hypothesis, which Auguste-Comte formulated under the title of the "Law of Three Steps". Though nearly half a century has passed since Max Muller propounded these ideas, inspite of such criticisms, the train of research is still running upon the rails engineered by him, and hence a repeated mention of his name here will, I hope, be pardoned.

1 "Introduction to the Study of Indian Doctrines" by Rane Guenon, p. 306.

2 "Although there have been slight readjustments here and there, no exponent of Indian Philosophy has appreciably deviated from this path which Max Muller has marked out." 'Introduction to Atman' by Dr. Kunhan Raja - p. X.
Taking for granted the order of evolution, Max Muller assigned a period of time to every type of literature, and thus we have the Chāndasa period, Mantra period, Brāhmaṇa period and the Sūtra period. These periods are also taken to be the stages through which ancient Indian Philosophy has developed. Because the Chāndasa or the Mantra periods happen to be at the start, it is also assumed that Vedic people were a homogeneous mass of primitive men, living in the forests of small territories between the rivers of the Punjab, who observed only one manner of life, thought only one thought, and had never broken into diverse ways. Thus the consideration of the date of any of the ancient Indian work, is inextricably mingled with the cultural and philosophical aspect of that work, judged mainly on philological assumptions, which have their root in the evolutionistic idea. Thus the older the work is, the more naive and primitive must

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1 "Max Muller History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature", p. 70.

Macdonell "History of Sanskrit Literature", pp. 26-39
Winternitz has criticised the idea of supporting 200 years for each of the literary epochs. p. 293. "A History of Indian Literature".
must it be from cultural and philosophical standpoint. The \textit{Rgveda} is thus taken to be proved as the record of the dawn of human civilization, wherein must appear the beginning of philosophical thoughts and other characteristics, likely to be found in a people still in the infancy of civilization. From \textit{Rgveda} onwards the development of Indian Philosophy is traced, along the lines laid down by Prof. Max Muller, differing sometimes from him only on assigning a particular chronological destination to a particular work. But chronological inaccuracy is not the only fault of this method. Rene Guenon has pointed out much more. 

"Even if it were only intended to state that traditional doctrine, while always remaining fundamentally the same, received successively several more or less different forms of expression in order to adapt itself to the particular mental or social conditions of such and such a period, this again with particular

\footnote{Prof. Max Muller gives 1200 B.C. as the time of the \textit{Rgveda}. Goldstucker however asks an ironical question, "But is 1200 B.C. a primary age of the world, except in biblical geology?"}

P. 55 note "\textit{Pāṇini}" His place in Sanskrit Literature by Goldstucker:
particular reservations, would be admissible. But this is not the sole contention of the Orientalists; in using a plurality of denominations, they expressly assume a series of deviations or alterations, which are not only incompatible with traditional regularity, but never existed save in their own imaginations.¹ This seems to be correct, when Max Muller voices his own intention to enable the Brāhmanas, the Buddhists etc.² to distinguish between the Doctrines of their own sacred books and of later ages." ¹²² He also does not hesitate to express his sorrow, when his purpose is not served. "Many of my own comparisons will be knocked over. It is sad that it should be so, but so it is."³ Whether sad or happy, comparisons and conclusions based on linguistic and evolutionistic considerations are rejected even by many of the Western Scholars as "far too hasty conclusions." ⁴ Max Muller

¹ "Introduction to the Study of Indian Doctrines", p.183.
² Chips from a German Workshop - Intro. p. 17.
⁴ "A History of Indian Literature" by Winternitz, p. 5 and pp. 309-310.
Muller himself has candidly admitted the worth of his suggestions, but somehow he could not mend the lines laid down by himself, and in all research that followed, philological terminology was employed in an ethnological sense, a fact which even Max Muller has deplored in emphatic words. This denunciation of Max Muller is utilised by the authors of the book "We Europeans", and as their remark too is significant, it will be better to reproduce a quotation from that book.

"Aryas are those who speak Aryan language, whatever their colour, whatever their blood. In calling them Aryas we predicate nothing of them except that the grammar of their language is Aryan. 'I have declared again and again that if I say Aryas, I mean

1 "It will readily be seen how entirely hypothetical all these arguments are.......... As an experiment, therefore, though as no more than an experiment, we propose to fix the years 600 and 200 B.C. as the limits of that period......." pp. 244-245. "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature" by Max Muller.

2 "........ to recognise that while material objects and rationalistic schemes are "higher" or "lower", better or less suited to their purpose, this does not hold for art, religion and morals where no universally recognised standards exist."
History of Ethnological Theories by R.H.Lowie, p.25.
mean simply those who speak an Aryan language......
When I speak of them, I commit myself to no anatomical characteristics. The blue-eyed and fair-haired Scandinavians may have been conquerors or conquered. They may have adopted the language of their darker lords or vice-versa. .... To me an ethnologist who speaks of Aryan race, Aryan blood, Aryan eyes and hair, is as great a sinner as a linguist who speaks of a dolichocephalic dictionary, or a brachycephalic grammar." Max Muller frequently repeated his protest, but alas! in vain. "The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones."

With some such reservations however, the general order of chronology may be made serviceable, for the ancient literature of India is found in a very peculiar condition. Like the historical documents of

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1 "Biographics of words and the Home of the Aryas" London 1888 by Max Muller, p. 245.

Quoted in "We Europeans" by Julian S. Huxley, A.C. Haddon, and A.M. Carr Saunders, pp. 127-128.
of other people, it is not a systematic coherent literature. On the contrary it is found in the most tattered, fragmentary and detached condition. This is perhaps due to foreign invasions and natural agencies. From the Sarvānu-Kramaṇī of Kātyāyana, we learn that nearly a thousand verses of the ninety-ninth hymn of the first Maṇḍala of the Rgveda are lost. In the first daily discourse of his famous disquisition on grammar, Patañjali informs us of over a thousand recensions of the Vedas, out of which only twelve are now found existing. It is quite natural therefore, as observed by Dr. Ambedkar in his book about the untouchables, that a student of this literature is every now and then confronted with "missing

1 जातवेवस पका जातवेवस्यमिति प्रतवादोनि एकमुयांसि गुणत-सहसुमेततु कृष्यपार्ष्मः।

The present 99th hymn of the first Maṇḍala has only one hymn.

2 Saṅkara in his commentary on the Brahma-Sūtras 2-3-43 gives a verse from the Atharva-Samhitā, which we do not find in any of the present recensions of that Veda. He also quotes the name of an unknown Upanisad in his commentary on Brahma-Sūtra.3.3.25.

3 Preface, p. 6.
"missing links" and has to use his imagination and intuition "to bridge the gaps and propound a working hypothesis". It may humbly be submitted here, that tradition, which according to some writers is a "phase of history" would help us immensely in forming such a hypothesis. Along with the modern ways of research, therefore, I have also referred to some traditional views.

Inspite of remarks that the "Structure of Vedic sentences is naive" or that the power of expression of Vedic poet "seriously fails him" when he tries to compass high thoughts, it is now admitted by many scholars that Vedic civilization had reached an appreciably high standard. There have been attempts to

1 Jackson, Biography of Zoroaster.
2 "Religion and Philosophy of Veda and Upanisads" by A. B. Keith, p. 6.

Obsessed with the idea of the primitivity of the Vedic people, Prof. Keith attributes the peculiarity of the Vedic style to failure of the power of expression. Prof. Arnold has, however, something different to tell. "It is difficult to think that a professional board should without motive have left this verse with an irregular rhythm..... In these irregularities there may be meanings not easily recognized..... it must be plain that as works of mechanical art the metres of the Rgveda stand high above those of modern Europe in variety of motive and in flexibility of form." p. 21 "Vedic Metre in its historical development" by B. Vernon Arnold, Litt. D. Cambridge, 1905.

3 "So far as I am concerned, the Rgvedic literature continued on next page."
to fix the antiquity of the Vedic texts, especially the Rgveda, but no attempts have yet succeeded to an acceptable extent. Western scholars too prefer to carry back the Vedic civilization to the third of fourth millenium before Christ, but some others reject this view on the ground that the language of the Veda is similar to that of the language of the Avesta, and hence there should not be a considerable distance of time between these two works. Dr. Winternitz however says, "Though the astronomical arguments of Tilak and Jacobi did not succeed in proving what was to be proved..... indeed from the point of Indian history nothing speaks against the assumption that Vedic literature extends back into the third millenary and ancient Indian culture to the fourth millenary."

Footnote continued from previous page.

literature presupposes a long period of development of civilization in India and represents the final stage in such an evolution" - Dr. K. Raja.

1 "Religion and Philosophy of Veda and Upanisads" by Keith, p. 5.

2 A History of Indian Literature, p. 299.
As is seen from these remarks of Dr. Winternitz, scholars like Lokamānya Tilak and Mr. A. C. Das express quite different views. Mr. Tilak in his book "Orion" has tried to show, with the help of astronomy, that, if properly interpreted, some hymns of the Rgveda throw light on the chronology of the Vedas. Prof. Jacobi too conceived the idea, that astronomical references may be concealed under the mythological references in the Rgvedic hymns; and with the help of astronomical calculations connected with a change in the beginning of the seasons, which must change since the time of the Rgveda, he supposed that the time of the Rgveda, may be extended as far back as the fourth millennium. Mr. Tilak too has found the same clue, and tried to prove in his work, that positive references of such character are found in the Rgvedic hymns, and together with the mythologies of the different branches of the Aryan race, they go to prove that the production of the Rgveda cannot be brought down to any period after the fourth millennium B.C. In another book of his, called the "Arctic home in the Vedas, Mr. Tilak has shown, mainly with the support of geology, that there are
are references in the Rgveda of the Aryans living in the Arctic region, when that region was inhab-
able some eight thousand years before Christ. Of
course he does not maintain that the Rgveda is as
old as the Arctic period, but his proposition is,
that the Rgvedic civilization is synchronous with
the period. But the actual creation of the hymns
must have taken place in the Punjab some time before
the fourth millenium, after the Aryans, migrating
from the Arctic region on account of its destruction
by snows, had, in course time, settled there.

It can be seen how Mr. Tilak has diverged from
the European scholars, in stating that the Vedic
civilization - if not the composition of the Rgveda-
stretches back to the eighth millenium. But the
idea of Aryan migration to, and colonisation of,
India is not contradicted by him. The idea that the
Aryans came to India from somewhere outside, that
-they fought, conquered, drove or dominated the
aborigines, is sponsored by western scholars on
philological considerations, which are further sup-
ported by interpretations of Vedic words or stanzas.
These interpretations however are doubtful, and there is no other evidence in the Samhitās to conclusively prove these theories. Some other stalwarts have therefore set aside these assumptions, and have admirably tried to prove that the home of the Aryans must be in India especially in the Punjab - The view of Mr. Das may here be stated in brief:

1 Cf. Prof. Chattopadhyaya's opinion about the meaning of Dāsa and Dasyu, pp. 132-135 Proceedings and Transactions of the Ninth All-Indian Oriental Conference, Presidential Address.

2 "It is more the analogy of the European colonization of other continents in recent times, than any scientific data, that lies at the root of all such theories of an Aryan invasion of India and extermination or at least subjugation of an aboriginal Tribe that inhabited the country."

Forward to Ātman p. XlV, by Dr. C. K. Raja.

3 "And if the Veda is the earliest record of the Aryans, and if it can be placed in the 4th millenium B.C. and if it has come down to us and to us alone in the world, its original home, and along with it the home of the Aryans themselves, must be sought somewhere in the north-western India, and not in Central Asia or any part of Europe as has been till now attempted. "Dr. Suryakanta Presidential Address, Proceedings and Transactions of the All-India Oriental Conference - Sixteenth Session, pp. 106-107."
(a) The river Sarasvatī so often referred to in the Rgveda had its source in the sub-Himalayan range, and it flowed directly into the sea in Rgvedic times. Cf. Rgv. 7.95.2; and the time when the southern boundary of the land of the Saptasindhu was washed by a sea, existed 25,000 to 50,000 years ago.

(b) The Rṣīs have described the land of Saptasindhu as having four seas round about. Cf. Rgv. 9.33.6; 10.47.2; 10.136.5.

(c) The region between the Indus and the Sarasvatī is called God-created and Sarasvatī as the source and support of life. Cf. Rgv. 3.33.4 and also Manuṣmṛiti 2.17.

(d) The land of the Saptasindhus had witnessed the first great exploits of Indra. Indra is described as tossing up mountains and carving out paths for the

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1 "Rgvedic India" by A. C. Das, p. 38 also p. 8.
2 "Rgvedic India" p. 31.
3 "Rgvedic India", p. 38.
4 "Rgvedic India", pp. 65, 66.
the Indus and other rivers. This indicates almost the beginning of human life on the globe.

(e) Soma sacrifice was the oldest amongst the Aryans, and Soma was available only in the Himalayas and Saptasindhus.

(f) The great diluge took place sometime before the composition of the Atharvaveda. It is not mentioned in the Rgveda, which therefore must have existed before the diluge.

(g) Thus if later hymns of the Rgveda are composed some time in 5,000 B.C., earlier Aryan life can be traced back several thousand years.

Mr. Das calls in aid geological evidences, also, and thus concludes that Vedic civilization goes back to hoary antiquity, and the Aryans are the genuine residents of the land of the Saptasindhu. That no evidence of the Aryan foreign origin can be found even in the most ancient Sanskrit Texts, is admitted even by Prof. Muir. Dr. Winternitz, a recent western

1 "I must however, begin with a candid admission that, so far as I know, none of the Sanskrit books, not even the most ancient, contain any distant reference or allusion to the foreign origin of the Indians." Original Sanskrit Texts Vol. II, p. 322.
western Orientalist, upholds the idea of migration of Āryans into India, but does not oppose the candid admission of Max Muller, "We cannot hope to fix a terminus-ē-quō, whether the Vedic hymns were composed in 1000 or 3000 B.C. No power on earth will ever determine." When some western Indologists stop at these negative verdicts, Dr. Das and others, as we have seen, take a further step and affirm positively, that the early limit of the antiquity of Rgvedic composition must remain obscure, while the later limits may be traced in the fourth or fifth millenium B.C.

One thing can well be noted for our purpose that the philosophy of the Vedas is not a creation of one day. Whether originated in the land of the Sapta-sindhus or far beyond it into the regions extending as far as the Arctic zone, it must have continued for centuries and milleniums, before it took its final shape certainly in India. The lower limit of the general Vedic trend of thought, seen in the Mantra, 

1 Scholars are at variance on this point, which will appear in its proper place.
Brahmaṇa, Āranyaka and Upaniṣad literature, cannot certainly come after the supposed age of the Mahābhārata war. The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa is undoubtedly the work of Yājñavalkya. Yājñavalkya was the disciple of Vaisampāyana, who was one of the four disciples of Vyāsa, the author of the great epic. According to the Mahābhārata, Parīkṣita was the successor of the Pāṇḍavas. Yājñavalkya was either his contemporary or must have followed him immediately. It seems that, even though contemporary, he must have far outlived him. There is a reference in the Satapatha to Janamejaya, the son of Parīkṣita and his sacrifice:

\[ \text{पतेन हैन्द्रोतो देवापः जौनकः जनमेजयं पारिक्षिं याज्यांचार।} \]

It should be observed that the same reference occurs in the Aitareya also, with the slight alteration that, instead of Saunaka, Turahkāvaseya is mentioned there. However the Gāthās are the same.

\[ \text{न्द्रस्कारक}\]

1 सतपथवा: १३.५.४
2 जैतरेय प्राणव ८.२१
In the Mahābhārata Bhāṣya is found narrating the same story. But the evidence of the Mahābhārata is not decisive, as the Mahābhārata was receiving its present form for many centuries after the supposed date of the war. The Parīśita must be the great grandson of Arjuna. In the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, which comprises the ending portion of the Satapatha, a question is put to a man who was possessed by a Gandharva, "What destination the sons of Parīśita had attained after their death." There is no propriety in asking this question many years after their death, and there is also no propriety that the Janamejaya or Parīśita, who preceded in the royal line centuries before are mentioned in the Brhadāraṇyaka by Yajñavalkya. Yajñavalkya, the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, the sons of Parīśita mentioned therein, and the sacrifice of Janamejaya, all seem

1) "The use of अभाव (imperfect tense) in the question clearly shows that the death of the Parīśitas was a recent event." — "Parīśita Janamejaya" by Lt. Col. R.D. Karmarkar, pp. 466-475

2) "........... The use of Abhavan (imperfect tense) in the question..... clearly shows that the death of the Parīśitas was a recent event....." pp. 466-475

seem to be the events of one and the same century. It may not, therefore, be groundless to suppose, that, at the time of the Mahābhārata war, the philosophic thought reflected in the early texts of the Samhitās, Brāhmaṇas and the Āranyakas, is seen in its full-fledged form evidently manifest in the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad. It is needless for our present purpose to go deeper into these questions.

While reviewing the Vedic philosophy, we have to make a start with the Samhitās. There is hardly any doubt about the fact that the Rgveda is the most important of all the Samhitās. The Yajus and the Atharva Samhitās derive nearly one third of their contents from the Rgveda, while the Śāmāveda consists of almost all the stanzas excepting seventy-five from the Rgveda. The Rgveda thus represents the whole of the Samhitā lore. An impression however is current among scholars, that a cultural difference is marked in the Samhitās, and the Atharva Samhitā in particular reveals a lower strata of civilization. That it was added later to the three Vedas or the Traividya has become almost an established fact, and none but the adherents of orthodox views would
would venture to contradict it. The opinion that this Veda was really a later addition need not, however, be taken to be established; nor can it be accepted immediately, that the whole Atharva-Samhitā was condemned to a lower position in comparison with the other Samhitā texts. That in the Rgveda and even in the Brāhmaṇas, three Vedas are mentioned is true, and same is the case with a very late work, the Amarakoṣa which says:

इति वेदांतयायतमि.

About this Prof. Max Muller has observed, "This cannot prove that, when the Brāhmaṇas were composed, the songs of the Atharvāṅgirasa did not exist." But the Professor further remarks, "It only shows that originally they formed no part of the sacred literature." The sacred literature is called Trayi or Traividyā as in the Bhagavadgītā. Here the

1. अमरकोष

2 "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature", p. 446.

3 श्रीविलय भी सोमपा घुलपापा .....। गीता 9.20
the Atharvaveda seems to be excluded. But does the word Trayī mean the three Samhitās viz. Rk, Yajus and Sāma? Tradition holds that Trayī is that lore which elucidates Karma, Upāsanā and Jñāna. The absence of the name Atharvaveda in earlier texts may be due to other reasons. It need not necessarily indicate, that sanctity was denied to this Veda. To show that the Atharva hymns had an inferior position in the eyes of the Brāhmaṇas, the Professor cites a passage from the Taittirīya Āranyaka, where Yajus is called the head, the Rk the right part, the Saman the left part, the Adesṭa the vital breath, and the Atharvāṅgirasa the tail. Now, from the fact that the Atharvāṅgirasa is called the tail, how does it follow that a lower position was assigned to it? Can we not say, that it had a basic position in the performance of sacrifice? The same Āranyaka speaks

1 तैत्तिरीय आरण्यक १.३

2 Rajendralal Mitra also seems to hold the same opinion. Cf. Introduction to Gopatha Brāhmaṇa Ed. by him, p. 3.
speaks of Brahman as the tail, because it is the fundamental principle on which the whole structure of the world stands. It is not intended here to prove the supreme importance of the Atharvaveda, but if we are to decide with the help of analogy, we shall have to say that the Yajurveda enjoyed the highest position, for it is called the head. This would go against the obvious importance of the Rgveda. It is probable, however, that different Samhitās were extolled with respect to the particular function they had to perform. In the Bhagavatgītā, Sāma is described as the personification of the Lord Himself. Such analogies in fact need not be taken to indicate finally the superiority or inferiority of particular texts. In the passage under consideration, the position of Puccha assigned to the Atharvanāgirasa can perhaps be better explained by a view point, which is more allied with tradition.

1 तृतीय शारण्यक ४.५

2 वेदां सामवेदोऽस्मि ... | भगवद्गीता ॐ. ७० ख्लो. २२
We see even in the Rgveda, that fourfold division of work in sacrificial performance was well known. The following stanza mentions it clearly:

"One plies his constant task reciting verses;

One sings the holy songs in Sakvari measures.

One more, the Brahman, tells the lore of being, and one lays down the rules of sacrificing.

This rendering of Griffith needs much emendation. It is better to refrain here from that; but the stanza tells us that Brahman relates everything

Prof. Bloomfield remarks on this, "They do not coincide with the earlier names..... The earlier names refer rather to the different styles of composition than to canonical collections." p. 26 - "Religion of the Veda".

This remark need not be taken as final, for the verses mentioned above amply substantiate, that sacrificial division of performances was perfect and was almost the same as in later time.

everything about the sacrificial performance. This necessitates that Brahman should know the significance of every performance. We find in the Rgveda that the sacrificial fire was first kindled by the Āṅgirasas and that they first made the food offering. It is also mentioned that Atharvā was the first to establish the righteous path by means of sacrifice. The Atharvā or the Brahma having Atharvanaic knowledge had to look after the implementation of all other performances excepting his own. Thus much of the portion of the Vedas ascribed to Brahman is included in the Trayī, which therefore, cannot signify the three exclusive Samhitās of Rk, Yajus, and Sāma as we have them today. The absence of any categorical mention of the Atharvaveda in older books, may thus be better explained by traditional view. The Vedic lore is believed to be a unitary mass of literature, and this belief may not be altogether groundless, as we have seen, we find many verses common to all the

1 कृग्वै १.२३.४-५
the four Šaṁhitās. From amongst this mass, were separated three portions used for three specific sacrificial purposes, and the collation of the remaining was styled as Atharvaveda. This perhaps is also the reason why we find a "surprising number of theosophic hymns" side by side with "conjurations against demons, sorcerers, and enemies". The fact that this Veda contains curses and blessings, etc. need not rob it of its sanctity, for other Vedas too do not refrain from doing that. This Veda was known variously as Chandasa, Atharvaṅgirasa, etc. The word Chandas should not mean metre. It was used to denote the whole of the Vedic lore. We see thus that the whole Vedic lore is one unit representing mostly the same type of civilization, same religious and philosophical ideas. All the Šaṁhitās are therefore treated together here, with particular attention to the Rgveda.

1 "Religion of the Veda" by Prof. Bloomfield, p. 40.
2 "Religion of the Veda" by Prof. Bloomfield, p. 41.
3-3a. यजुः ३१.७, अश्वर्यः ३२.६.२४, तैत्तिरिसंस्कृति ६.५.१२, सतपथ ब्रा. ११.५.६,
4 छंदसिद्धां यस्य परमानि, परमवदुरोगीता १५.१ वहुं छन्दसिद्धि, पाणिनिसुत्र
From the introductory account that deals with the newly introduced method of construing the Vedic lore, it will be evident that we need not take the literature as representing primitive type of civilization. It has also been pointed out that this lore of yore is found in a scattered and detached condition. This fact necessitates the interpretation of the lore, wherein is seen reflected the views of the interpreters. Indian commentators have been interpreting the Rgveda and the Samhitās from the old Brāhmanic times till today; and inspite of the fact that all of them are Indians, their divergence is by no means inconsiderable. The following line

"मुशामुशाम परिवीत शागातु स श्रु श्रेयान्म्यति जाभानः"

is interpreted by the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, as the description of the individual being encased by body and senses; but the Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa interprets the

1 "The Vedic literature does not mark the starting of a Civilization, on the other hand it marks the starting of the decadence of a high civilization."


2 अ. ३.८.४

3 रेत. अं: २. ३-६
the same as the description of the sacrificial post. This wide difference of opinion continued in later times and it persists even to-day. The above line from the Rgveda is taken to give the description of the individual soul in Satasloki, while Sāyana follows the explanation given by the Tattiriya Brāhmaṇa. Dayānanda Svāmi and Pundit Kapāli Sāstri have ventured to break from the line of Sāyana and have suggested metaphysical interpretations. Such a tendency to see philosophical implications in the Vedic Mantras is as old as the Upanisads, and is held up by Ācaryas like Rāmaṇa Gauḍapāda and Sāṅkara. Etymological and ritualistic view points have also been revived from time to time. Sāyana stands the foremost amongst those, who have commented upon the Samhitās as the literature of Karmakānda. He has eclipsed many of his predeces-

2 Pt. Sāstri's Commentary Siddhanjana is now partly published by Śri Aurobindo Ashrama Pondicherry 1950

3 His view will be seen later.

4 Gauḍapāda interprets "Indro Māyabhi" in a metaphysical way.

5 Sāṅkara's Satasloki
predecessors, whose glosses on Vedic literature were not available till recent times. It was, therefore, believed by eminent scholars that Sāyanas interpretations are "simply conjectural". Recent discoveries of certain commentaries on Rgveda written before Sāyana, have proved beyond doubt that such a belief is unfounded. It is also the opinion of some scholars that "In the matter of interpreting the thoughts contained in the Vedic Texts there was a continuous tradition in India....."

Yet Sāyana remains as the main source of Vedic knowledge in modern times. Though there is no one opinion whether all of his renderings are to be readily accepted, he still remains as the main guide in the Vedic regions. His reliance on Karmakānda might have led him to some interpretations which appear to be strained and that has induced many scholars to differ from him. The movement of diverging from Sāyana was carried to the extreme of "Los von Sāyana"; but along with his followers, many of his critics too are not reluctant to accept his

1 Macdonell pp. 61-64.
2 Dr. Kunhan Rāja's Ed. of Madhava's Commentaries.
2a Dr. C. K. Raja : Forward to "Atman", p. VIII.
his deep learning and insight as helpful in understanding the Vedic texts. Many scholars have paid homage to Śāyaṇa for various reasons. Some of them concern the philosophical outlook of the Vedas, and so they demand closer examination.

While taking a review of the Vedic philosophy, Dr. Rādhākrishnan has briefly discussed the question of interpreting Vedic stanzas. He rejects Śri Aurobindo's view, that the real meaning of the Vedas is deliberately clothed in words, which would give an apparent meaning quite different from the real one. The idea of "normal religious growth" appeals to him more, and he prefers the view that philosophical inquiry had its course "starting with the external" and proceeding towards the internal. He adds in conclusion "This interpretation is in entire harmony with the modern historical method and the scientific theory of early human culture, and accords well with classic Indian view put forth by Śāyaṇa." Now if an inter-

1 p. 68 Indian Philosophy, Vol. I.
2 p. 70 Indian Philosophy, Vol. I.
3 p. 70 Ibid.
interpretation is to be in "entire harmony" with the modern historical method, it must have taken for granted all the assumptions of that method. It must accept that Vedic Rṣis were in the babyhood of civilization, and their philosophy was of crude nature. Sāyana however, tells us something quite different. He warns us at the very start, that the Vedas give us supernatural ways of "attaining the desirable and ruling out the undesirable." He forcibly contends that they are Apauruseya. No doubt he renders them as the texts of Karmakānda, but he asserts that Karmakānda prepares the ground for Brahmakānda, and attainment of Brahman is the aim of the whole of the Vedic kore. Sāyana has very clearly expressed his belief thus:

5 In the Veda, the portion of action (Karma) is

4 इष्ट-प्राप्त्यनिष्टपरिहारयोरलौकिकपूर्वं शेषयति।

5 तत्स्मिन्तः केवले कर्मकाण्डः प्रयम्यामान्तः। वषति ब्रह्मो व्यवहितत्वाद ब्रह्मकाण्डस्येव प्राथम्युचिते, तथापि कर्मचः साध्यां चिन्त्यविद-मन्तरेण पुनःस्य ब्रह्मकाण्डेः धिकारामाध्यावधिकारहेतुकर्मप्रतिपादकः काण्डः प्रयम्य समामान्तः।। तद्युक्तानेन तमोगुणपूर्वे चिन्त्यविदिनेन श्रद्धेति सत्यं सत्यव्युनुपपत्ति न एवहस्त्यावात् विवेकार्गायानां विसंपत्तृत: सत्यं परम्पवयार्धूपे ब्रह्मतत्त्वेतोऽस्मिन् मित्तचिन्त- जाप्ते।।

ब्रह्माण्डप्युपप्यमांतः प्र. 110 काण्डसाहित्याचवोपक्रमणिका

by Baladeva Upadhyaya, Benares, The Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series 1934.
is first collated. Although the portion pertaining to Brahman deserves first place because Brahman is the main theme, still, the portion enjoining action (Karma) is first laid down, because without purification of mind attained through action, a person is not entitled to (study) the portion regarding Brahman

Desire for knowledge of Brahman, which is the highest achievement, is roused, when, by performance of action (Karma), impurity of mind, the embodiment of Tamas - is purged off, and through the rise of purity, which is effected by Sattva, are attained discrimination and dispassion." This belief of Sāyaṇa is as old as the Upaniṣadic times. An Upaniṣad clearly points out that the theme of all the Vedas is the knowledge of Brahman. With such convictions, supported by time - honoured traditions, Āchārya Sāyaṇa took up the formidable task of writing commentaries on various Samhitās, Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas. It is for this reason that he could see highest philosophy in some of the Vedic hymns. While explaining them, he has freely exploited the terminology of later Vedaţa.

1 सर्वं वेदा यत्पदशामणन्ति ...... कठ १.२.१५
Perhaps he did not see any considerable divergence between the general line of thinking of the Vedic saints and that of later thinkers of India. If this be the classic Indian view put forth by Śāyaṇa, it will be seriously doubted that it "accords well" with modern historical method. Far from it, it stands in sharp contrast with the western idea about early Vedic civilization. Dr. Rādhākrishnan's remark in this respect appears to be unwarranted.

According to the Western treatment of the subject, there cannot be found any conscious efforts to solve philosophic problems in the Vedic literature. In view of the varied opinion of scholars, it is very difficult to make any final statement as regards the speculative merit of the Vedic sages. On the strength of the much spoken primitivity of the Vedic people, it is generally held, that philosophical thinking was neither important nor very serious in Vedic times. The comparatively small number of speculative hymns is also often adduced in proof, of this verdict. But it cannot be forgotten, that Samhitā literature in itself is not very large, and it is the record of all activities of Vedic people. In such works any search
Research for a systematic presentation of philosophy can never be justified. We may only expect to find philosophical conclusions in an applied form, and they must be judged as such. Looked in this light, statements like "Ekam Sad Vipra Bahudha Vadanti" would show not an occasional soaring of poet's imagination but a definite conviction arrived at after serious thinking. What is, therefore, described as Henotheism by Max Müller may be described as the application of Monism for particular purposes, and thus lead to the conclusion that Vedic Aryans had developed very high philosophy.

In all times and climes the number of people indulging in philosophical speculation is always small, and the literature produced by them is also very small in bulk, as compared to the literature on other aspects, of human life. The argument that the number of speculative hymns is small, has therefore no strength to prove that philosophy had attained no importance in Vedic times. Not the bulk but the hymns themselves will have to be considered important in this respect. It has been pointed out above, that even in the west the necessity of overhauling such older theories is sufficiently felt. Without the help of any extraneous
extraneous theory therefore, if we study the Devas, we get the impression that Vedic Rṣṭis had developed very high philosophy. We may mark the qualifications of Vedic Āryans as philosophical thinkers.

(1) The general outlook of Vedic or even the whole of the Indian philosophy is that, man is moved to speculation by an inherent unrest in his mind. This unrest is roused by the realisation of the transitoriness of the world, and the limitations of an individual that ever keeps him away from his cherished objects. Such an unrest is reflected in the following stanzas:

हृष्टिते ये पुर्वतरामपरस्य-च्युतेष्वरीन्तीपुष्यं मत्यांस।
अत्मामिहू ज प्रतिष्टिक्षापुष्यं ते यन्ति ये अपरीष्ण गर्भान।

"Those mortals who beheld the pristine Uṣas dawning have passed away; to us she is now visible, and they approach who may behold her in after-times."

1 ऋग्वेद १.११३.११
"None among men knows his own life's duration"  
(2) Such a manner of thinking directly takes to discrimination between the eternal and the non-eternal, mortal and immortal. This distinction is clearly made in the Vedas.

"I, the mortal, repeatedly invoke you the immortal, by (my) heart that takes delight in you."

"We the mortals meditate deeply upon the name of you the immortal."

(3) This discrimination leads to rejection of

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4a. रगवेदे ६.१६.४

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of the non-eternal. This means dispassion for temporary pleasures in any form. That the Vedic Aryans disregarded sensual pleasures will be evident from the following:

This is the utterance of sage Vāmadeva. He says, "I shall not come out by this way for it is very difficult." The sage did not want to be ushered into the world through uterus. Later on he relented to the importunity of others, when he saw that his mother was torn by suffering on his account.

It may be argued that heavenly pleasures were always desired by Vedic people, and the contention has much truth in it. Yet it must be remembered that final attainment was not restricted to these ordinary heavens. The last abode is always called Parama

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1 This may be called नित्यानित्यवस्तुधिवेचः

1 Compare:— देवेह्यः कमदुर्भित मुन्ति प्रजायेत कमदुर्भित् न दुःप्रजा

1 कम सोमव्यः ।

2 कृ ० ० ४ १ २.

2 This attitude is later described as इहामुखाक्षमोगविरागः.
Parama Vyoma, and at least in one hymn such an abode is asked for, where the desires of desire are fulfilled, and where even the ordinary heavens set:

1. कामस्य वन्द्यता: कामास्त्र मायेवतु ० कृष्ण।

"Make me immortal in that realm, where the desires of desire are fulfilled."

2. यज्ञायं विवः । ।

"Make me immortal in that realm, where even the heavens set...."

3. (4) For higher attainments certain practical sciences were evolved. These are mentioned as धीरति or बची. By these mortal beings are said to have attained immortality.

1 कृ. ९.११३.११

2 Cf. तबलकामां च प्रविश्यति सयंस स शाष्टिमाध्योति न कामकायेऽ गीता २.७०

3 कृ. ९.११३.८

4 Dr. Raja alone has done justice to the stanza while rendering it. P. 29 "The Cultural Heritage of India" Vol. I Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee Pub. Belur Math, Calcutta.

5 These were later described as साधनंपति.
"The mighty powers wherewith ye formed the chalices, the thought by which ye drew the cow from out the hide, the intellect wherewith ye wrought the two Bay steeds, - through these O! Rbhus, ye attained immortality."

"Having served with zeal at the sacrifice, though mortal, they attained immortality. The Rbhus, children of Sudhanvan, lustrous as the Sun, rose within a year, to a high position by means of their supernatural powers."

1 क. २.९०.२

2 Griffith's translation, p. 387.

3 क. १.११०.४
(5) Release from the cycle of birth and death is signified by the burning desire for immortality, abundantly expressed in the Samhitás.

(6) For all this advancement, it is quite necessary that thinking mind should free itself from ignorance. It is mentioned that due to ignorance people become miserable:

न वि जानामि यद्वेास्मिन्निष्ठ: शंस्यवो मनसा चरामि।

"That I am all this, I know not; and fettered by mind, puzzled, I wander."

नीताहरे भार्ता जल्प्या चात्रुप्य उक्त्यासस्स्मर्ति।

Enveloped by fog, content with ordinary means of life, the hymn-chanters wander, talking as they like.

To remove ignorance enlightenment is often wished.

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1 This giving of mind is later on called युग्मक्त्यां.

2 के ११५४.३७
"Looking upon the loftier light above darkness, we have come to Sūrya, the God among Gods, the light that is most excellent.

There is a pointed statement that one who does not know the "Aksara" or immutable has no use of the Mantra:

यस्तनः चेत विमुच्छा करिष्यति .... !

It is also told that to know the supreme Puruṣa is the only way for final release:

तमेव विदित्वा अतिमुच्छिते नान्यः पनन्या किष्ठे यनाय।

1 कृ. ५०.१० यजू. २०.२१ तैत्तिः.सं. ५.३.४, अधर्म ६.५३.६
3 कृ. १५४.३९
4 वाज.सं. ३१.१८
"Having known Him alone can one transcend death. There is no other path to go beyond."

"Knowing that........ one is not afraid of death."

It is hardly probable that people with such a developed philosophical sense always indulged in thinking about the external and never made the internal as the object of speculation. The scholarly work of Sri Narahari has amply proved, that Ātman as understood by the Upaniṣads was not unknown to the Samhitās. I crave attention to the account added by way appendix to this chapter, wherein Ontological, psychological, cosmological and other Vedic conceptions are briefly dealt with. My apology for this digression is, that I deem it necessary to show, that the whole background,

1 शतर्. १०.४.४४

presupposed by Advaitic solutions of philosophic problems, can be found in the Samhitā literature. Here we may proceed to discuss the expressions in the Samhitās that directly concern the Advaita ideology.

The whole theory of Advaita mainly consists of the following: The concept of God, the fundamental Reality, the individual soul and its real nature, and the real nature of the manifold creation. Regarding these, following are certain expressions that are important from Advaitic standpoint.

1 एंसः दुःखिषयों व्यायामातिरिक्तं होता वेदविदातितिप्रकृतिरूपसः।
   नृपद्वरसंदूर्तं सतंसदूर्तं न्योगसब्बक्ष्णा गोजा क्रजां अच्छिन्नाक्रमः॥

God is here said to be pure, immaculate, the sacrificer and the sacrificed, the enjoyer, and the enjoyed, all pervading, rising through Rta and Himself Rta.

2 शदितिघण्डीः दितिरत्निरिच्छ शदितिजातमविदितिर्जनिनत्वः।

1 क्र. ४.५०.५ शब्द. १०.२४
2 क्र. १.८९.१० शब्द. ७.६.१
Immaculate God is all manifold, what has and will come to being is all He.

The very fire has different names in different modes. Hidden in faggots it is Tanunapāt, actually kindler it becomes "Killer of demons" and when it moves due to motion, it is Vāta. It is through different modes that the same reality has diverse names.

Fundamentally there is only one reality, and that has become the whole universe.

1. क. २.२९.२१

1a. क. १.१६४.५६ अध्याय ६.१०.२८

2. क. ८.७८.२  २. क. १०.९०.१ etc युं २१.२ etc अध्याय १६.१ etc
There is only one supreme Purusa, who transcends and pervades all. There is nothing beyond Him.

The following give idea about the essential nature of Atman.

The existence of God and that of Atman, require no external proof. They are true by themselves. So God and the Atman are essentially of the same nature. We may note the following verses also in this connection:

1. पुस्त्वत्वमिलो विद्यास्वरः: ....... ।
2. श्रां मुनिरावं सूर्यम्: .............. ।
3. मम राष्ट्रु भृतिराद्वत्व स्वायत्र: .... ।
4. श्रां भृतिराध्वत्व महत्त्व: ...... ।
5. श्रां गुरवं वाजन: पूर्वत्स्पति:.... श्रां भृतिराध्वत्व महत्त्व:.... ।

1 क. १.७३.२ Please see the interpretation of
-अत्मर्वित्व तत्व: । - in the appendix.
2 क. १.१६५.१०
3 क. ४.२६.१
4 क. ४.४२.१ and २ etc.
5 क. १०.४६.३ & ५
According to Kātyāyana these are the utterances of the Rsis; and whosoever is extolled in them is its Deity. In the above mantras Rsis speak of themselves as the originators, as the life-principle of the world, as Indra and Varuṇa, etc. etc. It means that the Rsis identified themselves with the Deity. This clearly points not only to the similar nature of the individual and the supreme, but also to their essential identity. The following stanzas of the Atharva indicate the same.

स्त्रम्भ इवं सर्वे मुचनमानविषेष ||
स्त्रम्भ इवं सर्वभाटम्भवूयः यतू प्राणनिर्मिष्च्च यतू ||

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1 अध्यायः १०.१२५.९ अध्यायः ४.३०.१  
2 अध्यायः १०.१८२.३
2a) यस्य वाक्यम् स क्रष्ण:  
या तेन उच्यते सा देवता  
3 अध्यायः १०.७.२५  
4 अध्यायः १०.८.२
Skambha is the only reality and Skambha is self. Whatever breathes in this creation is Skambha, the self. This clearly points to the identity of the individual self and God, the Supreme reality. The following establishes this identity very clearly.

1
उक्मो धीरो श्रृंगतः स्वर्यंभूर रसेन वृष्टो न कुलम्बनोऽऽ।
तत्स्मश विद्वान् न विभाव्य शृङ्गोरात्मां धीरमजर्युवानम्॥

Many are the concepts about the creation or the nature of the world. The world is described as the power, reflection, essenceless covering, etc. These are discussed elaborately in the appendix, and some will come shortly after. A few significant verses however may be given here:

2
यो अभनो प्रदो यो अभ्यस्तवन्तय षोषधवीवलयम श्राविखे।
य हमा विद्वा मुच्चनानि चाक्षुषे तस्मि श्राय नमो अष्ट्वगऽये॥

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1 शर्व १०.८८
2 शर्व ७.८३.७
Doctor Prabhudatta Šastri has traced the idea Māyā in the Vedas. He has analysed the meaning of the word Māyā and has also traced the Doctrine in the Vedas. He has distinguished between the idea of Māyā and the word Māyā and has pointed out that the idea is certainly older than the word. It can be gathered from his work that the word Māyā is used ninety nine times in the Rgveda. About the meaning of this word he says, "The two chief meanings, therefore, which the word is assigned in the Rgveda are "power" and "deception". The above examination of the various passages in which the word occurs has shown us that whenever it means power, the idea of "mystery" necessarily goes with it....." In any case this power is

1. क।०।३२।३
2. क।०।१०९।३
3. The earth......the whole world is changing


5. Doctrine of Māyā, p. 10.
is the power of Gods – or of demons at times – and to know the significance of this power, it will be fruitful to add a word about the nature of Deities in the Vedas. It is pointed out in the appendix, that the concept of nature – Gods often put forward is inadequate; and moreover, when the fundamental unity of Gods was so clearly realised, it is no use entertaining guesses that Indra was a God of warriors while Varuna the God of agriculturists. The One God was worshipped in several natural or personal forms, and this worship was helpful to a devotee in transporting him into transcendent regions. In the Rgveda Indra at times represents cosmic active energy, as Savitā sometimes signifies creative energy, Agni, cosmic intelligence and Varuna, the order and rhythm strictly observed in the cosmos. All these Gods are also described as the supreme God-head. If Indra is taken to be the Supreme God, his power would have a philosophical significance. The favours which

1. History of Indian Literature by Winternitz, p. 88.
which the sages solicited from Indra clearly indicate that Indra was referred to as the Supreme God which the whole creation has sprung. Soma is often prayed to flow for Indra, and inspired by the intoxication of Soma, Indra is described to have done wonderful feats. So this power of Indra, which helps devotees to transcend death, is the same as the Vidyā described in the Isavasya. Avidyā and Vidyā might be later words, but the idea of two ways of manifestation of the same being does not appear to be foreign to the Rgveda. The implication of the word Śacī is noteworthy in this connection. It occurs in seventy six stanzas in the Rgveda. At least nine times we find the word Śacīpati, and eight times it refers to Indra. Sāyana, in his commentary to these optionally interprets the word Śacī the wife of Indra. Indra is also called Śacīva, or Śacīvat. The word in general means some power, or prajñā or some act. Sāyana has

1. इ-हि सत्यमात्र ॥
2. The relation between इ-हि सत्यमात्र will be clear from the following.
3. विधिः प्रततमसः ॥
4. क्र. १.१०६.६ | ४.२०.१६ | ४.२०.१६ | ६.४५.७ | ६.६३.५ |
   ७.२२.२ | ५.१२.१ | ५.२३.९ | १०.२४.२
5. Cf. Sāyana’s Comm. on क्र. १.१०६.६ | ३.६०.६ | ४.२०.१६ |
   १०.२४.२
6. Cf. क्र. २.३२.१ | ६.२४.२ | ६.३२.१ | १.६२.१२ | १.६२.२ etc.
has interpreted it as such. In this connection we can refer to his commentary on Rgveda 8.2.32, 8.96.13
10.39.13, 10.104.3 and 4, 4.44.2, 4.20.9, 1.112.8,
6.17.6, 6.44.24, 7.6.4, 3.60.2, etc. On reading closely all these verses, it will be clear that wherever the word occurs, it occurs in connection with some happy idea. No doubt the word has the meaning of supernatural power, but it is not connected with the bad element expressed by Kapata or Vancana. Māya and Śachi, thus, would give us the idea of two polarised powers of the one fundamental Being. Yāska includes Śacī in his names of Vānī. The words Dhī and Dhīti also give the meaning of mysterious power, and the former is used at least hundred and twenty times while the latter, twice as many times.

That the world is nothing but God manifested and God has thus two forms, one changeable, and the other unchangeable, is an important conclusion of the Advaita. This concept is seen in the following:

हैंतें त प्रकृति पर त एकमा ...... ।

2. क. १०.७६.१
Lord Indra is praised that one of his forms is all this, and the other form is beyond. This may be compared with चे वाच व्रजणो दूरे.

There are some hymns that at once give almost the whole Advaita theory in a nut-shell. A few may be discussed here.

हेतु त्वष्टारमणिष्यं विश्वप्रपूर्वं हवे।
अस्माकपर्यं केवलं।

In this stanza Agni is extolled. He is called the first creator. Though the creator He Himself is Visvarūpa, i.e. He Himself has become all the forms of the world. He is thus the material cause - Upādāna Kāraṇa as well as the efficient cause - nimitta Kāraṇa. Then He is also said to be Kevala, indefinable i.e. formless and hence immaculate.

प्रजापतिच्छवरति गर्म अन्तरजायमानो वहुधा विजायते।

1. K. 10.12.10

2. यतु.३१.१६. अयर्व १०.८.१३

Instead of Ajāyamānah the Atharva reads Adrśya-
mānah.
God, the creator, dwells in everything; and without becoming anything Himself manifests variously. God creates and pervades the world. Yet there is no change in Him. The changeable proceeds from the unchangeable without affecting its unchangeability. Such is the relation between the Being and becoming, the one and the many. Čauḍapada has explained this very verse as

अजात्मानो बहुधा मायया जायते हु सः।

पूर्णर्पूर्णमुदच्छति पूर्णं पूर्णं सिच्छते।

Infinite rises from the Infinite, and the (risen) infinite is nourished by the (fundamental) Infinite. Creation is infinite. It rises from Infinite, God and for its sustenance draws upon God.

लदेजति पत्तिति वच्चिति तिस्थति प्राणप्राणविनिमित्तच्च यथिमुखत।
तद्वाध्वार प्राप्तविं विक्ष्वरुपं तत्समंभूवं मयत्वेक्षेत॥

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1. मांकुकारिका ३.२८
2. अयधर्म १०.८.२९
3. अयधर्म १०.८.११
Whatever moves, flies, stands, whatever is sentient or insentient, winking, the whole creation with form, the earth, all is sustained by that (fundamental principle). Having become (all this) that is always One alone.

\[ \text{नाम नाम्ना जोहवीति पुरा स्वरूपां पुरोहितः} \]
\[ \text{यदजः प्रथमं संवेद्यस्म ह ततौ स्वराज्यमिव यस्मा}-\]
\[ \text{न्नान्यत्परमस्ति युवतम्} \]

This stanza in my opinion gives all the points of the Advaita. The words giving the sense "before the Sun, before the dawn," perhaps imply the state immediately before creation. At that time what happens? Name calls aloud to name. It is all a verbal phenomena, which may be stated in later terminology as Vācārāmbhaṇam. The phe-

1. Atharva 10.7.31.
phenomenon is then thus described. The Birthless principle is born. It undergoes the process of becoming, and ultimately reaches Svārājya, its own pristine state. And apart from that principle there is nothing that existed. The only existing thing is that Birthless Principle and Its becoming is but a phenomenon of words. Does this not state the philosophy of the Advaita as given in the Upaniṣads? We may now turn to the famous hymn of the Ṛgveda which is marked by some as the beginning of philosophy. Lokamānyā Tilak however emphatically asserts that no philosophy has ever yet stepped beyond the utterance of Parameṣṭhi Prajāpati the sage of this hymn.

Let us now analyse the thought of Parameṣṭhi Prajāpati i.e. the Rṣi of the Sūkta. The frank and bold statement here is that in the beginning there

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1. Māyā ? 39

2. गीतारहस्य पृ. २५५. “कर्णं च युध्य बुध्दीस या दुः सुक्तांत ज्ञा परम सिद्धांतां सुकुरण शालेः आहेः, तेन सिद्धांत विवर्तवावसारली योग्य उत्तरं देऊन शविंप डूढ, स्पष्टे रंगिंग तस्करेण निःसंदेह कर्णापलीकहे कोणाची मजल गेली नाहीं व जाण्याची फारसी आशाही नको.”
there was only One, and the One became the many. There is nothing unclear and contradictory about the statement. The original state of the One was beyond Death and Immortality. One cannot but remember the words of the Íśāvasya - विद्या चाविद्या च बस्तन्त्रवोभयं सह। विद्याय पूर्वतीत्वां विद्यायः मृतमण्डुते।

But the positive statement here is that it was a state of some kind of Being and of no annihilation. It will be seen that this directly contradicts the Śūnyavāda (Nihilism) of Gautama Buddha, and the idea is further strengthened by the emphatic assertion that apart from it was nothing whatsoever. Griffith translates parah as "apart from it" and this is certainly preferable to the "beyond it" of the Doctor. The sage further goes on to state how the creation must have progressed from it. In fact, the last two stanzas of the hymn contain the question and the preceding five give the explanation. In our

2. Doctrine of Maya, p. 38.
our opinion Yadi vā dadhe yadi vā na supports later idea of Ajātivāda. At first sight it might give the idea of doubt and contradiction. But what is meant really, is that unconditioned-ness of the state makes knowledge - in our sense - itself impossible. Is it not then impossible to say either "He knows or knows not?". One is remembered here of the Maṇḍukya:

नान्तःप्रशः न बहःप्रशः नोभयः प्रशः न व्रतातन्यनं न - प्रशः नाःप्रशः

When a soul is aware of it (Vastu) it possesses it as a thing that is alien to it; when on the contrary it is not aware of it, it is a real possession. This is the sense of चोःस्त्याध्ययः परमेश्वरम्। सो श्रद्धे वेद यदि वा न वेद।

"Knowledge, in effect, is discourse and discourse is multiplicity. In order to contemplate the first Being, a man must be raised above knowledge. It would in fact be laughable to try to understand that incomprehensible nature."
"The problem must be given up and research falls into silence." If this is true of Man, how much more true it must be of the first Being Itself!

Thus the hymn makes three positive assertions:

(1) The many proceeds from the One.
(2) The One transcends knowledge and not-knowledge of human intellect. When Dr. Prabhudatta says "In order fully to realise such truths the intellect must transcend itself, which it cannot do" or "the human intellect is not made to grasp the reality by its power of reason and by use of words", he seems to have lost sight of the great Vedāntic truth, that intellect is not the innermost portion of the individual soul (Jīva). Transcending intellect there is the existence of this soul - Yo Buddhēh paramātma sah. By means of an applied science like Yoga, the

1. Plotinus.
2. Doctrine of Māyā, p. 76.
3. Doctrine of Māyā, p. 75.
the soul can have the experience of its transcending the intellect and with this experience comes the realisation of the ultimate Reality. But of course as the Doctor rightly puts it in order to give out this experience, "it (the soul and not the intellect as the Doctor has supposed) has to be content with its blurred and indistinct vision". "But, on the other hand, words have to be used for communicating truth, though the moment we use them we land ourselves on quick-sands." 1 With such words, the sage of the hymn has tried to describe the process of becoming many in the remaining verses of the Hymn.

(3) Thus viewed from the stand-point of the thinker, i.e. the Individual soul (Jīva) there are three manners of existence of the One, viz. (a) the transitory and ever-changing existence of the Individual soul. This is called Mṛtyu, because of its changefulness. (b) An existence where there is no such changefulness which is all happiness but in

1. Doctrine of Māyā, p. 76.
in which there can be knowledge transcending and yet the knowledge and enjoyment of the Many, and (c) lastly the absolute unconditioned consciousness of existence which thwarts all attempts at explanation. These are more definitely described in later works on Vedānta as Jīva, Śiva, or Īśvara and Parabrahma or Paramatman.

It is rightly believed that the credit of consolidating and elaborating Philosophical thought goes to the Upaniṣads. But from whatever has been discussed upto now, it can be said with no less confidence, that that credit should go at least in part to the seers of the Samhitās. Even as regards the Advaitic ideas I feel that the remark of Kokileśvara Sāstri carries weight:

शंकराचार्य तांतार व्यास्मात शब्दवाणियों के प्रेमः ऋषवेद हतीस्वत प्रहण करियाँचिलेन, नूतन किंचु आविष्कार करेन नाई - - - -

1. मन्त्र शो संहिता मागेरमध्ये ब्रह्मविश्वार कथा कोंठामधे संयमित कोयामधे व विस्तुतभाये वर्णित आहे।
केलीसिप्रवंशधर्मश्री.म.म.दुर्गाचरण श्रमां
Published by S.N.Chattopadhyaya.

2. अश्श्ववाद श्री.कोकिलेश्वरश्रास्त्री प्रणीत. प.१९०.
कलिकाता विश्वविद्यालयपब्दा प्रकाशित १९२६