"This altar is the earth’s extremest limit; this sacrifice of ours is the world’s centre.

The Stallion’s seed prolific is the Soma; this Brahman highest heaven where Speech abideth."
The Rgveda presents a very vast scope of vedic symbology reaching far up to the remote corners of the Upaniṣads of other Samhitās too. The symbolic nature of the Rgvedic terms is well be examined only through the Brahmānic expressions borrowed from its samhitā with its contents. Now we will try to classify the basic Rgvedic words and concepts responsible for symbolic nature of the vedic language. This bulk of the Rgvedic poetry duly enriched with mystical thought presents a world of symbols from every nook and corner of the life experienced. To have a prima faci acquaintance of the Rgvedic symbolism we shall have not to depend on the mystical and spiritual interpreters but to delve deep into the Brahmānic passages responsible for symbolic interpretation of the Rgvedic terms coming from varied walks of life.

Already we have founded certain grounds of classifying the symbols. Here we intend to classify the Rgvedic symbols into eleven types as follows:

1. Physical symbols
2. Organic symbols
3. Botanical symbols
4. Human symbols
5. Mythical symbols.
7. Sacrificial Symbols.
8. Linguistic Symbols.
11. Psychological Symbols.

Physical Symbols

The mystic-poets of the Rigveda have utilised the physical or natural objects like Sun, Moon, Light, Fire, Air, Sky, Earth, Stars, Cloud, Lightning, Water, River, Oceans, Mountains etc. to denote the higher principles experienced by them during their inspired moments. These physical symbols have played an enormous role in representing the abstract things of mysterious existence in human body as well as in the universe.

(1) Waters (आप) आप

आप have been well known as waters yet they have much more symbolic meaning through identifications with amṛta, pāsū, retas, soma and all gods, appeared in Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. In the Rigveda we have its synonym as salila.
generally used in the physical sense of waters but in cosmological context they have been regarded as primamateria. In the Rgveda X.129.3 salila has been exhausted in sense of indiscriminated chaos. These waters have been identified with ājya, vajra, sāndha, satya, yajña, and prāna in other Brāhmaṇas. There is a long list of identification which give birth to the symbolicity of āpaḥ.

(ii) Air (Vāta, Vāyu and Marut)

Vāyu has attained the symbolic meaning through the synonymous parallels presented by Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. Thus Vāyu has been identified with Prāna, Jātavedas, Yantā.

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1. Rv. 10.109.1
2. R.T.H. Griffith, 'Hymns of the Rgveda'.
3. माध्यमिन्दन शतस्थ्र ग्राहण, 12·8·2·36 - वा: वाक्यः।
4. कोषीतिक ग्राहण, 12·2 - वा: हैः तकायम् वा: ।
5. मैत्राणि सूतिता, 4·1·4 - वा: व्रहः।
6. लदेव, वा: सत्यः।
7. पैलसारी ग्राहण, 1·7·5·3 - वा: प्रयो यः।
8. काण्ड शतस्थ्र ग्राहण, 4·8·2·2 - वा: प्रयो यः।
9. हुः 1·28·6
10. हुः 1·142·12
11. हुः 1·15·2
12. ऐः व्रा: - व्रा: 2·26; 3·2 - वा: प्रयो राजः।
13. ऐः व्रा: - 2·34; वा: प्रयो जलः।
14. ऐः व्रा: - 2·41; वा: प्रयो यः।
tārksya, grhāpati, purohitā etc. In other Brahmānic
cases too vāyu symbolises prsthā of antarikṣa,
samudra, sruva, soma, devānām ātmā, etc. Sri Aurobindo
has used the symbol in the psychic sense of one "associated
with Prāṇa or Life-energy which contributes to the system
of the ensemble of nervous activities that in man are
the support of the mental energies governed by Indra
(Ruler of our being)."²⁹

(iii) Fire (Agni)¹⁰

The Ṛgveda has freely used the symbol of Fire for
the principle of "inward force of unified light and power."¹¹
Aitareya Brāhmaṇa identifies Agni with sarvā devatā,¹²
annāda,¹³ paśu of devas,¹⁴ devayoni,¹⁵ hotā of the gods,¹⁶
agnistoma, 1 adhipati of Svargaloka, 2 Grhapati, 3 Rathantara 
sāman, 4 Varuṇa, 5 Pariksita, 6 Mukha of the god, 7 Purohita, 8 
and Prāṇa and apana. 9 Agni 10 gains major role in mysticism.

(iv) **The Sun** (Sūrya, 10 Aditya, 11 Savitar, 12 Pūṣan, 13 
Bhaqa, 14 and Mitra) 15

The Sun is the popular symbol in the Rgveda. It symbolises the highest principle of the universe. Sri Aurobindo calls it as "The Godhead of supreme Truth and Knowledge. Creative aspect is symbolised by Savitar or Tvāṣṭā (the Fashioner of things) or as Increaser it is Pūṣan. The four aspects of Sūrya i.e. wideness, luminous harmony,
divine enjoyment and exalted power are symbolised by Mitra, Varuna, Bhaga and Aryaman.¹ Aitareya Brāhmaṇa takes Sūrya to symbolise the great mystic syllable Om.² The spiritual meaning of Sūrya has been indicated by the words Nṛsad, vedisad and antarikṣad.³ Savitar is symbol of Prāṇa⁴ as all life comes out of it. In the name of Aditya it symbolises Osw,⁵ Brhat,⁶ Devakṣatram,⁷ and Purohita.⁸ Rgveda itself provides it as soul of movable and immovable.⁹ Vṛṣākapi a name of the Sun is called as Ātman¹⁰ by Aitreyā Brahmāṇa. Thus the Sun is the significant symbol in the Rgvedic mysticism.

(iv) Dyāvaprthīvi (Heaven and earth)

For the Rgvedic mystics heaven and earth is a divine couple between which whole of the creation exists.

2. "ईः " 5·32 - जो भवता तथाशृः सौ तमिर्।
3. 4·20 - एष्येदं सूर्येदं नृसद एष्येदं होता वेदिर्ध, एष्येदं ब्रह्मतिर्क्षाद।
4. 1·19 - प्राणो वे होता।
5. 4·17 - गायो वा बादिच्याः।
6. 5·30 - बादिच्यां बृहत्।
7. 7·20 - बादिच्यां वे देखक्षम।
8. 8·27 - बादिच्याएव दुरोरतसः।
9. "ऋ" 1·115·1 - यथेऽवः ज्ञात्मा अगतस्तत्त्वयिः।
10. "ऋ" 6·29 - ज्ञात्मा वै ज्ञात्माकेष।
11. "ऋ" 1·185·
The heaven full of light and height has always been source of inspiration. Similarly earth is called as mother-principle which sustains the life. The dual concept of dyāvāprthivī symbolised male and female principles responsible for fertility and base of all creation. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa calls them as Havirdhana, Rodasi, pratiṣṭhā, anumati and gāyatī, jyotis and āyu etc.

Sri Aurobindo finds dyāvāprthivī as symbol of psychic and physical consciousness.

(vi) **Intermediary region (Antarikṣam)**

Antarikṣa being meeting sphere of heaven and earth has got 16 synonyms in the Nighantu where ambara, viyat, vyoman, barhis, dhanvan, ṇīkāśa, āpah, adhvan, sangaryu, puṣkara, samudra and adhvara are calculated specifically.

In Nirukta of Yāska etymology suggests it as resting motionless near the earth or between heaven and earth.

Antarikṣa, in Aitareya Brāhmaṇa has been identified with gau, pratishtha, purodhāta, etc.

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1. वेब. 1.29 - धावापृष्ठेयः वै देवानां होवधनि ।
2. 2.41 - धावापृष्ठेयः वै रोदसी ।
3. 3.29 - धावापृष्ठेयः वै प्रतिष्ठेः ।
4. 3.48 - ये घृत्ता अनुमोदता सा एव गायत्री ।
5. 4.15 - अयं तैलोको ज्योतिः असो लोकां आयुः ।
7. RV. 1.52.13
8. Nighantu, 1.3
9. Nirukta, 2.10 - उन्नत्र शान्त्यविलित्स उन्नतेमे निगरितस्त द्व।
10. वेब. 4.15 - उन्नतिर्क्ष्या गृहः । सारीरेष्वन्तार्थार्थोऽविलित्वा ।
11. 2.41 - उन्नतिरिक्ष्यं वै गृहः ॥ ॥ ॥ ॥ ॥ ॥ ॥ ॥ ॥
(vii) Rivers, Ocean and Mountains and Clouds etc.

Rivers (Nadi)

The Rgvedic mystic has freely used the symbol of seven waters or rivers blocked by Vṛtra, the demon. These rivers were set free by Indra. In symbolic usage these rivers mean for Sri Aurobindo, 'stream of conscious being', and seven rivers are conscious currents corresponding to the sevenfold substance of ocean of being which appears to us formulated in seven worlds enumerated by the Purāṇas.

In the Rgveda the rivers are called as mother full of affection, cows, young ladies and threads of light etc.

Ocean (samudra)

In the Rgveda samudra has also meaning of antarikṣa where clouds full of water move freely. In the hymn addressed to Varuṇa samudra means terrestrial ocean where rivers pour their waters. In Brāhmaṇas samudra is the symbol evolved from identifications with numberless desires, manas, purusa, vak, etc. Sri Aurobindo takes it to be a symbol of Infinite and eternal existence. He is of the opinion that ocean lower is related to subconscious,

1. Rgveda, 10.75
2. Key to Vedic symbolism, p.61
3. Ibid, p.66
4. Rv. 3.33; 7.50; 10.75
5. Rv. 1.190.1
6. काठक्र प्राणमण, 9.12 - समुद्र क्या हिनांतपर्यामि?
7. मा शष्ण 7.5.2.52 - मनो येव समुद्र?
8. क्षुधाः 3.6.7.5 - पुल्लो येव समुद्र?
9. दृष्ट्य 5.16 - वाण्ये समुद्रो न ये वाण्येषीयते न समुद्र: क्षीयते
dark and inexpressive existence; and upper is related to superconscient luminous and eternal expression but beyond the human mind. Generally samudra is the symbol of manas that is the source of desires, innumerable. As the waves and suras rise now and then in the ocean, similarly the desires originate.

Mountains (Parvata) and Clouds (Parjanya)

In nature the clouds appear to be the mountain of fumes joining with each other. In the Nighantu parvata, giri, adri, gravan, asman, upala, have been enumerated in group of cloud-synonyms. In the Rgveda seven lights, cows, waters have been captured in the dark caves of mountains or clouds named as Vṛtra, Namuci, Sambara, Vela, Bani etc., all indicating the demonic principles in the nature both external and internal.

As Prajanya clouds are symbol of Agni, vṛṣa, gandharvas etc. in the Brähmanas. Sri Aurobindo finds it as denoting 'giver of rain of heaven'.

2. Rv. 1.32.6
3. Rv. 5.83
4. Nighantu, 1.10
5. तेषं 2.4.9.4 - वृशा पर्जन्यः ।
6. तेषं 3.4.7.2 - पर्जन्यो गन्धारस्तत्स्य विकृतो ॥ पतस्तो खः ॥
(viii) Naksatra, moon (chandramas), light (jvoti) and darkness (tamas).

In the Rgveda Sun, Moon, planets and light in general are connected with bright aspect of life. As Sun symbolises highest principle of creation and truth knowledge, similarly moon denotes beauty, soma and ecstasy in general. Sri Aurobindo considers it as 'lord of the delight of immortality pouring into man ānanda and anātma.'

Candramas attains symbolic meaning based on Brahmānic identifications with manas, vṛtra, anna, soma, prāna etc. The Rgveda establishes the manas of puraṇa as a source of creation of candramas.

Naksatras are the symbol of jyotis, rūpa of āditya, pratiṣṭhā of seasons etc. in the Brahmānic identifications.

The Rgvedic seers loved light and they symbolised the higher, wider, more free and evergrowing nature of life.

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2. Rv. 6.67.6
3. Rv. 10.85.19
4. Rv. 1.36.19
5. Rv. 1.24.10
6. Rv. 8.3.3.11
7. Rv. 1.6.4.13
8. Rv. 2.145
9. Rv. 4.11.11
10. Rv. 27.6
11. Rv. 7.5.25.1
12. Rv. 3.11.1.4
with it and they symbolised all the dark aspects of life with darkness, narrowness, stagnant things and death and sin. Sri Aurobindo takes light to be the symbol of knowledge and of spiritual illumination. In Brāhmaṇas Jyotis has been identified with many gods and remarkably with Yajña and Prāṇa.

(viii) **Samvatsara and seasons**

Samvatsara is the great symbol of time principle and the cosmogonic role of samvatsara can be seen in the Rgveda 1.164.11. In Brāhmaṇas samvatsara has been identified with Adiś, Āditya, Ātman, vāk, prajāpati, yajña, mṛtyu, etc.

Aitareya Brāhmaṇapatha takes it to be a symbol of samasta, agniśṭoma, vaśvānara, visvakarman, parikṣit etc.

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2. का.स. 31.11 - ज्योतिः यजः।
3. का.स. 33.7 - प्राणो वै ज्योतिः।
4. हृ. 1.164.48
5. हृ. 1.15
6. भृ. 2.60 - अद्वयादित्य एव कव्तसः।
7. भृ. 3.5.5.8 - वर्ग (कव्तसः) मे जात्मा।
8. भृ. 2.291 - सवसः प्रणापीर्येः।
9. लक्ष
10. भृ. 1.246 - यो ह स मूलः सवसः एव सः।
11. भृ. 2.17 - सवसः वेष सवसः।
12. भृ. 4.12 - बौज्ञोदमो वै सवसः।
13. भृ. 3.41 - सवसः विशेषायाः।
14. भृ. 4.22 - सवसः विशेषः।
15. 6.32 - सवसः वै पौरिकः।
The spiritual meditation of samvatsara helped evolve samvatsaravidya in the Vedas whose germ can be seen in "Asyavāmiya hymn.\(^1\)

In Brāhmaṇas seasons as ṛtavah have been identified with anna,\(^2\) āditya,\(^3\) prajanana,\(^4\) etc. Regarding this symbol of season Rv. 10.90.6 is noticeable where vasanta is called as ājya, grīṣma as idhma and sarat as havis.

(ix) **Ahorātra (Day and Night)**\(^5\)

Ahorātra has been identified with sides of puruṣa,\(^6\) bonds of Varuṇa,\(^7\) two strides of Viṣṇu,\(^8\) pīṭā and mātā,\(^9\) and gold and silver etc. in the Brāhmaṇas.

In the cosmogonic context ahorātra has got great symbolic sense as unmanifest being and manifest being.

Pandit Madhusudana Ojha has given a good symbolic interpretations in form of ahorātravāda. The germs of such mystic thought may be witnessed in the Rgveda.\(^11\) and Yāska\(^12\) has

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1. शु 1.164.11 - हादशारं नोह तम्राय वबोरं वह परिश्राम्यस्य।
2. मै 1.7.3 - बन्न श्रृङ्खः।
3. काँक्र 28.2 - कसी व आदित्य, श्रृः।
4. गो भ्रा - 2.6.12 - श्रृङ्खो दै पिवा प्रजनः।
5. श्रृ 3.55.11
6. कांक्र 103.9 - बहोरात्रे पथस्य पार्थदेव।
7. मै 3.7.8 - बहोरात्रे वस्त्र पार्घ।
8. सम 6.7.4.10 - तदा बहोरात्रे एव वीर्यम् भवित।
9. जै 1.50 - अभोरेपिता रात्रिमांत।
10. जै 1.98 - अभोरेपिता रात्रिमांत।
11. श्रृ 6.9.1; अधवकृक्षणः अभमृत्युः व। तुलना - श्रृ 10.90 और गोतम 17.
12. निरक्ष 2.21
explained Kṛṣṇa ahaṁ as night. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa has identified rātri\(^1\) with ksapā,\(^2\) Varuṇa,\(^3\) rathāntari\(^4\) etc. In other Brāhmaṇas night has been synonymous with tama,\(^5\) and pāpa,\(^6\) Similarly bright-night rākṣa\(^7\) is a symbol of beautiful young lady and śūrīvai\(^8\) purvā-dark night.

2. **Organic Symbols.**

(i) **Animals**

Animal (paśu) in general has the mystical significance. The Vedic usage of paśu symbols has been duly recognised in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. Paśu is identified with Agni,\(^9\) Puṣan,\(^10\) Marut,\(^11\) havis,\(^12\) medha,\(^13\) the soul of medicinal plant,\(^14\)

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\(^1\) rātri
\(^2\) ksapā
\(^3\) Varuṇa
\(^4\) rathāntari
\(^5\) tama
\(^6\) pāpa
\(^7\) rākṣa
\(^8\) śūrīvai
\(^9\) Agni
\(^10\) Puṣan
\(^11\) Marut
\(^12\) havis
\(^13\) medha
\(^14\) soul of medicinal plant
svara, chhandas, jagati, parikti, uktha, brhat,
triṣṭup, catuspaṭ, chhandamā, vapus, vājś etc.
In other Brāhmaṇaṃpāsū symbolises prāṇa, madhu,
salil, yajna etc.

Particularly Gauḥ has been enumerated in various
groups of synonyms in Naghaṃtu. As a cow the animal
symbolises earth, speech, light and sense organs in

1. ए.आ. 3.24 - परसो वे स्वर: ।
2. ॥ 4.21 - परस: छन्दतिः ।
3. ॥ 5.6 - जागता तिः परशः ।
4. ए.आ. - परक्ता तिः परशः ।
5. ए.आ. 4.12- परसो वा उ शारिन ।
6. ॥ 4.1 - बाह्लता: परशः ।
7. ॥ 5.16 - जेत्रमांचिन ह जागतार्थिन व समुन्त परशः ।
8. ॥ 2.18- चतुष्कथाओ वे परशः ।
9. ॥ 5.16- चरिव: छन्दोधः ।
10. ए.आ. - वपूर्दप परशः ।
11. ए.आ. 5.8 - बाजो वे परशः ।
12. मा.श. 7.5.2.6 - तस्मादाहुः प्राणः परशः ।
13. तै:षः 2.3.2.8 - दौध मधु चतुर्व वापो धाना शौचित प्रश्ने पुराण ।
14. मा:स. 1.4.9 - परसो वे सोलमु ।
15. जै.आ. 3.91 - परसो तिः यश: ।
16. श् 1.23.18
17. काञ्चन 37.6 - तर्पौरोधीः वे गोः ।
18. मा:स. 4.2.3 - गौव वापु गौरविकाह गौरिह, गौरविकाह
gोः, गौ रिदः स्वर्गं ।
19. तै:षः 5.7.6.7
20. मा:स. 5.4.3.10 - हीनन्द्रय वे वीर्य गावः ।
later Vedic Literature.

Vṛṣabha has been symbol of male principle, power and virility for the Rgvedic mystic. The sprinkling semen over the earth or bounteouness has mainly been noticed in the Rgveda. In the Brāhmaṇas the Bull is the symbol of virya, Ṛṣita, Prajāpati of paśus etc.

Sri Aurobindo takes cow and bull to indicate nature principle and force of consciousness i.e. the root of all creations. The famous verse Rv. 4.58.3 gives the description of Puruṣa in mystical significance identified with Vṛṣabha.

Mahisa (the Buffalo) has been symbolically identified with Prāna remarkably. This term has identified with many things in the other Brāhmaṇas. This symbol has been associated with Indra, Śūrya, Soma, Savitā etc.

Aśva (horse) has got a remarkable symbolicity in the Rgveda. The main character of the horse is its swift speed and power. In the Rgveda the horse as a symbol has been used in association with Agni, Prajāpati, Ṛṣita, Indra and others. In the Rgveda I.163 ārva has a mystic significance

1. काठक्र 13.7 - बौद्ध व श्रवण ।
2. माश 8.5.2.3 - अतौ व वाचित्यो वृषावम ।
3. काठक्र 34.1 - ग्रामपित्तक ।
4. श्र 3.46.2
5. माश 6.7.4.5 - प्राणा व गीत ।
6. श्र 1.36.8
7. काठक्र 24.8 - अव बच व ग्रामपित्त रामी।
as a symbol of the human soul. In the various hymns dedicated to Śāditya or Sun the seven horses of the chariot have been taken as symbol of seven principles of nature in the creation. In Asvamedha sacrifice the asva has got the great mystic significance. Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad opens with such description. The sense organs as asva in the name of haya. Sri Aurobindo takes horse to symbolise vital energy and figure of nervous forces that support and carry forward all our actions. Horse-sacrifice ṣāhūṇh is the offering of the Life power with all its impulses, desires, enjoyments to the divine existence.

Aja in the Rgveda has double meaning as a goat and the birthless principle. As an animal Aja symbolises Brahma and Śūrya etc. in the Brāhmaṇas. The Puruṣa hymn in the Rgveda 10.90 describes the creation of Aja and Ātri from the Puruṣa.

Varāha is the symbol of megha and parvata. It has been identified with Prajāpati. The varāha has also been identified with Yajna in the Brāhmaṇic literature.

1. Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad, 1.1
2. Kathopaniṣad 1.147 Indrīṇī Hayāṇāhuḥ
4. Rv. 1.67.3
5. मणि 6.4.4.15 - ब्रह्म वा हूँ जवः जराहाँ अः ।
6. तैम्यम् 3.1.2.8 - पूर्वी देवमेको एको ज्ञातादासो अनुष्ठित सदैव ।
7. तैम्यम् 7.1.5.1 - लोके पुडी मित्रापि वराहो भूतवा कारणेऽवम् ।
8. मेधाविकी सौहित्य 3.8.3
Simha is a symbol of vigour and terror. Visnu is called as tiger. Similarly Indra is also addressed as Simha in the Rgveda.

Kṣa, Vṛka and garabha have also been used to symbolise their violent nature. Mūsa has become the symbol of anxieties that bites the man day and night. Similarly Kacchapa or Kurma are identified with Kacchapa Prajāpati and with praṇas. Saramā and Sārayana have been well known for their searching skill. Saramā has been identified with vak in the Rgveda. Mandūka (frogs) are the symbols of rains and their voice has been symbolised with unintelligible vedic chantings.

Vṛśākapī, in the Rgveda is a friend of Indra who has been identified in the Brāhmaṇas with Ātmā, Aditya and Viśvedevas. Yāśka's etymology of Vṛśākapī denotes its identification with Sun.
one of the thousand sacred names of Viṣṇu.  

Ahi, for the Ṛgvedic mystic has been the sign of crookedness and evil principle. The harassment and dark aspect of life has been denoted by the symbol of serpent. The Vṛtra is described as serpent causing the waters not to flow. 

There are many more organic symbols which are unfolded with their specific nature in the Brāhmaṇas.

(ii) Birds

Vayāṃśi, ṣākuni, ulūka, kapota, śyena, and haṁsa have been mentioned in the Ṛgveda. Generally the birds are the symbol of human soul that flies high in the upper regions of the cosmos. The things that move in the sky or towards the sky are mentioned as birds. Aditya, Agni, Soma etc.

1. विष्णुवन्यनाम २४ - वृषाकोविशेषयात्मा ।
2. श्रेयौ १ ३२ ।
3. श्रेयौ २ श्रेय ।
4. श्रेयौ ३ ३ ।
5. श्रेयौ २ ४२ ।
6. श्रेयौ १० १६५ ।
7. श्रेय १ ३० ।
8. श्रेय १ ३२ ।
9. श्रेय १ १२४ ।
10. श्रेय १ १६४ ।
11. श्रेय १० १५७ ।
12. श्रेय १ १६४ ।
13. श्रेय ९ ७१ ।
have been called as birds (patanga).

Garutmat,\(^1\) is higher principle of human development and is a car of Visnu in later age. Similarly Suparna\(^2\) also serves as a symbol of elevating principle. Ulluka and Kapota are associated with death and are symbols of it.\(^3\) Altareya Brähmana calls the birds as symbol of death and decay.\(^4\)

In other Brähmanas Patala is identified with prâna remarkably.\(^5\) Suparna is also symbol of prâna.\(^6\) Hamsa is also a symbol of Āditya.\(^7\) Sri Aurobindo takes birds as a symbol of soul.\(^8\)

### Botanical Symbols

Ausadhi\(^9\), Forest\(^10\) and Vanaspati have been respectively the symbol of long life, Som, Madhu,\(^11\) and Retas of Devas.\(^12\)

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1. श्र 1.164.46
2. श्र 1.164.52
3. श्र 10.165.4 - यहूदी को बदल मोघमेत्त यत्क्षोत्त पदममालकोभः
4. एँ.ख्रा. 2.15 - निधृ्क्षीच एतन्युगानित यहयानिः
5. कौ.ख्रा. 8.4 - प्राणो दे पत्रमः
6. एँ.ख्रा. 3.1.6 - वायू माता प्राण: पुत्र: एक: तुपण: समदर्माविधेयः
7. एँ.ख्रा. 4.20 - एष एवादित्त्वः दे हस्ते: शुचिकर
8. Key to Vedic Symbolism
9. श्र 10.87
10. श्र 10.146
11. कृ.ख्रा. 4.4.3.4.4भृष.२.५.५ - बौज्याय: सरमः
12. काठ 3.1.7 - बौज्यायो मभुमातीः
13. ऐतरेय अरण्यक - २०१.३ - देवानाः रेत बौज्यायः
Pippala is the symbol of fruits of action i.e. (Karma-phala). Van has been the symbol of prima materia in creation and the mystic has enquired of that wood which was carved as this world by a carpenter Supreme. Libuja (creeper) has been mentioned in context of embracing of human couple.

Soma is the popular symbol in the Rgveda for bliss beatitude and ecstasy. It comes from the botanical plant found on the tops of mountains. It is a mysterious fluid that is lavishly used for ecstatic state of the seer's mind and physically identified with Soma plant. The complete Book IX of the Rgveda is dedicated to the Soma and its aspects of its physical, sacrificial and spiritual nature. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa identifies Soma with uttara, vaśa, garbha of heaven and earth, king, sarva-devata, kṣtra, and ausadha etc. In other Brahmaṇas Soma has been symbolised with Rasa, Satya,

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1. शं 1.164.20 - त्योरव्यः पिप्पल स्वाहीत्।
2. शं 10.81.4 - पित्स्वर्देह क उ स वृष वास।
3. शं 10.10 - परिरङ्गणार्ते निचुतेघ यूक्षु।
4. शं 9वा मण्डल।
5. ऐ.व्रा. 1.8 - उत्तरा है कै सोमे राजा।
6. ऐ.व्रा. 1.13 - यसो वह सोमे राजा।
7. ॥ 1.26 - दावापूर्धेवोवस्त्र एव गर्भ यत्तोऽः।
8. ॥ 2.29 - सोमी वै राजेन्दुः।
9. ॥ 2.3 - सोमे वै सर्व देवता।
10. ॥ 2.38- कश्चोमी।
11. ॥ 3.40- वृक्षणो वै सोम।
12. माश 7.3.1.3 - रस: सोम।
13. माश 5.1.2.10 - सत्य श्रीमातिः सोम।
amṛta,¹ prāna,² and vrtra,³ etc. Sri Aurobindo takes soma to symbolise the divine Ānanda, the principle of bliss.⁴ The Rgveda calls Soma as Vṛṣabha, samudra inherent in cows, purified by rasmi, husband of Śūryā, vena,⁵ soul of sacrifice.⁶ Aitareya Brāhmaṇa calls Soma as Ānandavṛṣabha,⁷Thus the botanical objects have symbolised the various subtle concepts of mystical nature.

4. Human Symbols

There are various synonyms of human being as jana, manuṣa, nāra, puruṣa, cārṣāni, ksiti, vis, krṣṭi, marya and marta etc.⁸ Human being is the true image of the supreme being.⁹ Whole secret is lying hidden in man himself. To the Rgvedic mystic human being is the true symbol of universe and creator. Puruṣa in the Rgveda is the great sacrificer, sacrifice and oblation all in one.⁹ The gods have been described as possessing the human form.

Human being as Manusya has obtained symbolicity through the identification with anṛta in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.

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¹ अमृता ² प्रान ³ वृत्र ⁴ स्री आरुबिंदो व को सोम ⁵ रग्वेद वाल ⁶ सोम एवं ो वेना ⁷ आइप्रेग्मा व सोम ⁸ मनुष्य ⁹ मनुष्यां ¹⁰ की वेदिक सिम्बोलिज्म प ⁷०
Purusa as a human being is identified, in Aitareya Brahmaṇa with ekavimsa, pāṅkta, śatāyu, gāyatra, ausnik, dvipād, śatavīrya and satendriya etc. In other Brahmaṇas purusa has been equated with praṇa, sāman, brahman and amṛta, ekādaśa, prajāpati, yajña etc. Purusa is etymolised as 'one' who abides in a fortress of body.

(1) Human body and its limbs

As Tanū or varpas, human body is a fort of ātman. Aitareya Áranyaka elaborates the idea of devaratha as human body. The chariot takes the god to very swift to the place of
sacrifice. In the Rgveda human body is called as ksetra.1

The human body has also been equated with divine vīṇā. Sāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka develops the idea in chapter 8.9.2

There is wonderful resemblance in both the things:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human body</th>
<th>Vīṇā (Musical instrument)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Head</td>
<td>Upper part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinal cord</td>
<td>The wooden rod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The stomach</td>
<td>The bowl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mouth, nostrils and eyes</td>
<td>The holes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fingers</td>
<td>The strings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tongue</td>
<td>The strokes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The speech, voice</td>
<td>sound</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly human body has been symbolised as divine boat.

The Rgvedic mystics use the symbol of boat for human body.3

With help of this divine ship we can attain happiness (svasti)

Human body is identified with pṛthivi4 and raja-pati5 etc.

The head as sīrās, sīrān or mūrdhan is a symbol of height or upper part of anything but on similarity of the skull it is identified with havirdhaṇa. In the Brāhmaṇas the sense-organs have been symbolised with horses.6 Eyes as cākṣus have been largely identified with Aditya,7 and satya8.

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1. इ. १०.३२.७ - अक्षत्रत्वत् क्षत्रियवंदं युष्माद स प्रेषत् क्षत्रियविदं नु श्रिः।

2. अयं इति देवी कीणा भवित, लदनुक्रितस्मात् मानुषी कीणा भवित।

3. The well oared heavenly ship that lets no water in free from defect, will be ascend for happiness. Griffith, Rv. 10.63.10. देवी नावं स्वरूप्रमनं गो अहृतं तीर्थं सस्तय।

4. ऐं ए. २.३५ - यज्ञश्रीरं पुरुषायं सा पुरुषवी।

5. ऐं ए. ६.२ - शरीरं प्रजीवित।

6. ऐं ए. १.१३ - हृदयं कै वीर्यं वानिमन।
The Rgveda itself calls the Sun as eye of Mītra, Varuṇa
and Agni. Identification of the eye of Puruṣa and Sūrya is
well noticed in the Rgveda 10.90. Srotra or Karna as ears
are symbol of direction. Śāṅkhāyaṇa Aranyaka calls ear as
sāmpad. Nāśike and Mukhāhave also been symbolised in the
Brāhmaṇas, with Āśvinau and Agni and Brāhmaṇi, respectively.
Nabhī is the name for centre. Centre of the cosmos is
called as Bhuvanasya Nabhī. Sacrifice is an answer to this
question. Arms are symbol of power and vigour. The
Rgvedic mystic uses this symbol to denote the warrior class
of the Aryan Society. In sacrifice, separating the havis
grains the Āśvinau have been remembered in context of Bēhu.
Udara has gained symbolicity through identification with
pratistha of annādyā, samudra, and also Vṛtra. The
Rgvedic mystic uses Yoni to denote some central and secret
point. Yoni of Rta has frequently been mentioned in the

1. शं 115.1. चबुर्मभवस्य वस्मस्या वै: । तुः पै वा 215
2. शं 10 90.2 चबुर्मभवस्या वस्मस्या वै: ।
3. शा 9.2 - शौच हि वा उ सम्मद ।
4. शं 10 90.12 ब्राह्मणोऽश्य मुखमास्ति: मुखावै नर्जायत ।
5. शं 10 90.13
6. शं 40 1.164 34-35
7. शं 10 90.18 बाल जपाय: कृत: ।
8. यत्र वेव 1.1c - अर्थवनोवाहव्या त्वा गंभीराम ।
9. पै वा 1.5.1 - प्रतिकौदर मन्नाथानाय ।
10. तेष्या 7.5.25.2 - समुद्र उदरस्मुद्र = वन्तिरक्ष न ।
11. मैः 3.6.7 - उदर वृक्षः पापमा कृष्ण अन्तः: पुरुषस्य ।
Aṣṭādhya. The lower and quarter is symbolised by Pāda.

In the Aṣṭādhya one-fourth or quarter is mentioned by Pāda. This lowest region as earth is the symbol of lowest part of the cosmic person. Three strides of Viṣṇu have been very popular in the Aṣṭādhya. In sacrificial rites Viṣṇu has been remembered whenever there is mention of legs or strides.

(ii) Stages of human life

To the Aṣṭādhya mystic garbha is the popular symbol for secret existence before its manifestation. The 'germ of water' has been used many a times in praise of Agni. In Brāhmaṇas garbha or embryo has been identified with dīkṣita, saṃvatsara etc. Similarly Viṣṇu is associated with garbha and delivery in the Aṣṭādhya.

Sīśu in the Aṣṭādhya is called in various contexts. Agni at the time of kindling is called Sīśu or infant in the Aṣṭādhya. Soma has been called as babe of heaven. The

1. शृङ्गारः 3.54.6 - इतस्य योना विधुते मदन्ति।
2. शृङ्गारः 10.90.4 पदश्याः श्रोऽधिष्ठि: भोज्यात्।
3. शृङ्गारः 1.22.17 - इदं विष्णुदग्धते केषा विनवी पदस्य।
4. यजुः 1.1.9 - विष्णुस्वा कर्मश्च।
5. यजुः 1.70.2 - गर्भः यो अर्था गर्भः वनानां गर्भः स्थाला गर्भवर्ध्यः।
6. कालः 19.10 - गर्भः दीपिकः।
7. मानः 8.4.1.19 - कवित्सी वाल्य गर्भः।
8. शृङ्गारः 10.184.1 - विष्णु मौनिः कर्मः।
9. शृङ्गारः 1.140.3 - कुर्मायुतः वैविवे वस्य शक्ता उभा तर्के बौम्ब मातरा विश्वः।
10. शृङ्गारः 9.38.5 - दिति: विश्वः।
Mystical hymn (X.5.3) in the Rgveda uses *sisu* as the secret principle about to manifest. Here Griffith has taken the *sisu* as Agni and pair as Heaven and Earth. In Brahmanic passages *sisu* has been identified with *madhyama-prana*, etc.

*Yuvan* and *Yuvati* have been used as epithets of Agni. The blooming beauty, power and vigour have been denoted by these symbols. Similarly *Kumāra* too contains the same symbolicity. In the Rgveda I.141.10 Agni is called *Yuvan* and *Yaviṣṭha*. *Usas* has been called *yoṣā* and *yuvati* in the Rgveda. To the Rgvedic seers old age has not been admired. Though the complete span of life includes old age and in some prayers the poet has desired to see old age with his prosperous sons and progeny.

Similarly death and decay are not liked by the Rgvedic seer. *Nīrūti* and *Yama* have been prayed to free him from death.

(iii) Human relations and social occupations

According to V.S. Aggrawala human relations as mother, father, brother, sister etc. are the universal code words of spirituality and mysticism. In the Rgveda the mystics

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1. ॐ 10·5·3 - कृताय यन्ति मायिनि संधकाते मित्या रिष्यु जगद्धित्यंति।
2. ॐ 14·5·2·2 - अर्थ वाद रिष्युः इं महयः प्रण:।
3. ॐ 1·141·10 - त्वमस्मे समामानय गुण्ठते रत्न विविधं देवतातिम्मचिम।
4. ॐ 1·62·8 - सनाद दिवं परि भुमा विम्बे पुनः कुती स्थिरं भवते।
5. V.S. Agrawal, Vedic Lectures. प्र।
have used the symbols of mother and father principle, to
denote the source of fertility and seed. Sky has been
called as father and earth the mother.¹ In the Brāhmaṇas
Pitā is a symbol of prāṇa.² Usas is described as daughter
dister, wife and mother, beloved etc. in various contexts.³
Agni has been called as brother. Similarly Putra has been
identified with hrdaya,⁴ patni with śraddhā and sthāli⁵ etc.
The things which are tender and spoken in feminine gender
are called as female being and the things which are hard and
spoken in masculine gender are called as male principles
in the vedic language. The bravery, hard-work and fertility
are often denoted by male principles and beauty, tenderness
and motherhood is symbolised by mother principle. Sakha,⁶
stithi are the symbols worthy of respect. Similarly kavi,
vipra, etc. are respectable as they are creative talents.
The Rgvedic mystic has duly used these symbols to respect
the gods. The enemies as śatra, dasyu, prītanā, bhrātrya,
dhya, nidāh etc. are the prohibitive simbls in the Rgveda.

(iv) Social occupations

The four classes of Āryan society that is Brāhmaṇa,

1. झ. 6.51.5 - दोषिष्फल: पूर्णाव मातरथ्यां।
2. येश्वा 2.38 - प्राणो वै पिता।
3. झ. 1.30.2 - दृष्टिविषयः। झ. 1.123.5 - भास्य स्वयं वस्म्य जाम।
4. तेष्य 2.2.7.4 -पुत्रो वैह हृदयम।
5. तेष्चप. 10.64.1 - अधो पल्ली।
6. तेष्य =6=2.2=2 -2.1.3.1 - पल्ली स्थाली।
ksatriya, vaisya and sūdra have been treated as symbols due to their respective nature and character. In the Ṛgveda 10.90 Brahmana is created from the mouth of the cosmic person and kṣatriya from the arms and vaisya from thighs and finally the sūdra from feet.¹ In the Brahmanas the Brahmana class has been symbolised as manusya deva,² mukha,³ nākṣatra,⁴ soma,⁵ updraṣṭā,⁶ etc. Similarly kṣatriya and kṣattra have been symbolised with kartā,⁷ pārtha,⁸ prasūtra,⁹ śrīḥ,¹⁰ grīśma,¹¹ and prāṇa¹² etc. Vaisya has been symbolised with...

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1. Ṛgveda 10.90 - "Brahmana symbolised as human, mouth, stars, moon, etc.
2. सुधारी 'brahman' 1.1 - Where has the human being been symbolised?
3. मान्य 3.9.1.14 - What is the significance of the Brahma?
4. ज्ञान 2.13.20 - Brahma's knowledge is being taught.
5. काल 11.5 - Time is Brahma.
6. मंडल 4.6.9 - Brahma is the centre.
7. मान्य 4.1.4.1 - What is the basic symbol of Brahma?
8. को 25.11 - What is the primary symbol of Brahma?
9. मान्य 1.3.4.10 - What is the essential symbol of Brahma?
10. मंडल 4.2.6 - The symbol is.
11. एक्ष्य 7.22 - This is the basic symbol.
12. मान्य 14.8.14.4 - The symbol is.
bhūman, garbha, sūrya, ahutāda, etc. in the Brāhmaṇas.
Similarly sūdra has been identified with the lower and minor things, particularly with feet and tapes. These four classes are in accordance with their respective qualities and character. The gods have been called as king or kṣatriya to denote their ruling nature and giving protection and militant quality. Varuna, Indra, Soma have often called as kings. The Ṛgvedic mystic likes himself to be called as vis (prajā) of Varuna. The leading qualities in scholarship, talent and intelligence are denoted by Brāhmaṇa.

The craftsman and artists, poets and singers are respectable concepts in the Ṛgveda. The mystic has attributed the supreme being with such epithets.

(v) **Objects of daily Life**

Riches in name of Rayi, dhanī, dravīṇa, rāvasposam is attainable things to the Ṛgvedic poets. The happiness and pleasures are denoted by these means. The ratha, cakra, vajra, kṣura, asi and other weapons have been used as symbols with their specific part in human life. The chariot and chakra symbol of swift movement and also

1. माणूस: 3·9·1·17 - भ्रमू वै विद ।
2. वेद: 3·2·7·35 - विद वै गर्भः ।
3. माणूस: 13·2·10·2: विशो वै सूचः ।
4. माणूस: 2·5·2·24 - अहुतादो वै विशः ।
5. शृः 10·90 वै पदभ्यं शाहो अभायत ।
6. माणूस: 13·6·2·10 - तमो वै शुद्धः ।
the cycle of time. In Brahmanas the vṝra has been identified with vṝś̄ śamvatsara, ś̄vāḥ, etc. In Upaniṣads kṣura has obtained the symbolic meaning associated with sharp knowledge. Similarly bow and arrow have been denoted for their sharply hitting the target. In Upaniṣads this symbol can be witnessed. The hiranya, that is gold, obtained the symbolicity in the Āyurveda itself. The glowing light is symbolised by hiranya. Thus the human symbols played their prominent role in enriching the Āyurvedic symbology.

5. **Mythical Symbols**

As the natural objects, plants and human beings serve as symbol to the expression of some higher principle resembling their nature to some extents so do the proper names of the persons like heroes, legendary persons and mythical beings. In the Āyurveda the names of gods, demons, poet-seers and the kings doubly serve the purpose. They form a story and etymologically they are imbedded with mystical meanings. The spiritual schools of vedic interpretation are mainly based on such symbols.

1. ऐ-प्रा- 2.21 - व्र एव वादः ।
2. मा-शा- 3.4.4.15 - सवत्तरो व्रः ।
3. मै-हः- 4.1.4 - वापो व्रः ।
4. कृः-उः- 3.14. हुरस्य धारा निग्रिता दुरस्या ।
5. सु- म. 2.4 - प्रकोषो धनुं शीरोहत्वा त्रहम तल्क्यं उच्यते ।
6. यजु-वे- 40.45 - विरंधयो ज्ञातवे तत्स्यायायीपूर्वत मुक्तः ।

तत्त्व युक्तः अपावृण मत्य-अभमयं दृष्टये ।
Seer (Ṛṣi) in general is not only the poet-mystic but it also signifies Praṇa. Yāska unveils the depth of the term in following way. The seers are of transcendental vision and they are the realised souls. As an epithet Ṛṣi has been addressed to Agni and other gods in multitude. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa identifies Ṛṣi with Prānas.

(i) Names of seers

The proper names of Ṛṣis have also been treated as symbols. They have gone deep into their etymological and symbolic meanings.

Atri symbolises vāk and free from sin. Etymology given by Yāska as 'not three' gains mystical meaning as 'beyond the three gunas of Prakṛti' explained in later literature. Atharvāṇi rasas are identified with anāgāra, agni, rasa, prāna, rasa of organs, etc. in the Brāhmaṇas.

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1. Ṛṣya 2.27 - प्राण रसः
2. निलक्ष्य - क्षण: ग्रन्थराद: ।
3. निलक्ष्य - साक्षा तक्तमार्ग रसः ब्रम्हः ।
4. श्र 9.66.20 - वी नन्दीश: प्रमाण: पाण्डव्य: पुरोहितः ।
5. Ṛṣya 2.27
6. Ṛṣya 2.21 - यो यदं सर्वे पापमणि वर्तन्ति ।सामद्रवः इत्याच्छिन्ति ।
7. निलक्ष्य, 3.17 - न त्र्यः ।
8. ये 3.2.63 - ब्रह्मार्योजोऽद्गर्सः
9. मार्ग 1.4.1.25 - वीर्गर उ हृदयः ।
10. गोऽश्र 1.3.4 - वेष्टिंगरः स रसः ।
11. मार्ग 6.1.2.28 - प्राणो वा वीर्गरः ।
12. गोऽश्र 1.1.7 - सर्वेऽयोऽद्गर्सं रसप्रहस्य सोऽदगरस्य भवः ।
Similarly, Atharvan, the seer, has been identified with Prajāpati, Prāna, Medicines, etc. in the Brāhmaṇas. Kuśa Kānava has been enumerated as vajra in Nighantu and in Vedic Mythology of Macdonell Bargaigne takes it to be the latent fire or Soma in its symbolic sense. Kaśyapa is identified with kūma and akūpā etc. in the Brāhmaṇas. Gṛtsamada denotes prāṇa and aprāṇa. Jamadagni is identified with prajāpati in the Brāhmaṇas. Similarly Bharadvāja is a symbol of prajā, manas, and aditya etc. in Brāhmaṇas. Yāska etymology of Brugu as 'roasted in fire' but not burnt. Vasiṣṭha is identified with śreṣṭha, agni.
prajāpati, prāṇa, vakṣ etc. Similarly Vāmadeva symbolises prāṇa. Visvāmitra is identified with prāṇa the friend of the world, śrotra and vak etc. in the Brāhmaṇas. Manu as a seer gained symbolicity as āyuḥ in the Kaushitaki Brāhmaṇa. Thus we have seen that most of the Rgvedic seers appear to be connected with prāṇa, speech, prajāpati and connected with their etymologies.

(ii) **Legendary Heroes**

Puru-ravas and Urvasī symbolise upper arāṇi and lower arāṇi and also prāṇa and vak in the Brāhmaṇas. Urvāśī as fervour or enthusiasm personified (Griffith)

1. माष्ट्र २.४.४.२ - एव मूस्ट्रापितः वै विसिदः ।
2. माष्ट्र ५.०.१.६ - प्राणो वै विसिदः श्रीः ।
3. शा० जा ९.२ - वा सै विसिदः ।
4. ऐा० २.२.१ - ते प्राणः देवा अञ्जनः वै न: सर्वं वाम होत तस्माद वामदेवः ।
5. ऐा० २.२.१ - प्राणस्य तस्मेद् विश्व विन्यासीविवेदिकम् तस्माद्विवाचारिनः ।
6. ऐा० ६.२० - विश्वस्य ह वै मित्र विश्वाचारितास ।
7. माष्ट्र ८.०.२.६ - शोचः वै विश्वाचारितः श्रीः ।
8. को० जा १०.५ - वा सै विश्वाचारितः ।
9. को० जा २६.१७ - बायुः मनः ।
10. काश्र ४.४.१.१४ - उवादी वैस इत्यादारणः ।
11. मै० ३.०.५ - पुस्तरच अस्तीत प्राण ।
12. मै० ३.०.५ - वा कहा उवादी पुस्तरच अस्तीत प्राण एव तीन्द्राचरः ।
13. इ० ५.४.१.१९ - तुलना विशिष्य
serves as a symbol. Yāska etymologises Urvasī as 'burning desire' i.e. intense feeling for union. Purūrvas as an epithet has been used in a verse addressed to āgni in the Ṛgveda. Some scholars identify Purūrvas and Urvasī with Sun and Uṣas. Being apsaras she appears to be the embodiment of 'lightening' in the waters of intermediary regions and Pururavas appears to be the personified cloud making thunder. In the spiritual sense urvasī is the burning desire for physical pleasures and Pururavas the mind that longs for them.

Similarly Yama-Yami appears to be the twin brother and sisters and identified as the Sun and Uṣas, Agni and Earth, Chandramas and Rātri.

Thus the legendary persons also symbolise various aspects of physical and human nature.

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1. अद्वैतं निः 5.13 - उंसवसो यस्या क, उस्माभमस्य नृत्य, ऊर्बवस्य नृत्य।
2. दुः 4.2.18 - मर्त्यानां मिथुनसिद्धिर रुद्रस।
3. तममने मनः त्वम वासय: पुक्वते तुक्ते सुक्ततरः।
4. वैदिक माध्योलोची वैशास्व।
5. अग्नि 10.10
6. अग्नि 14.1.3.4 - एष वै यमो य एष यस्य तत्त्वेष हिंद सर्वभासामयत।
7. अग्नि 7.2.1.10 - इयः पृथ्वीवरः; ते सत् 3.3.8.3 - बोधवावा यमः।
8. ज्ञानम 1.28 - एष वै यमो य एष नेद्रस्यास्र। एष हिंद सर्वं यथापि।
Superhuman Symbols

In superhuman symbols we aim at discussing the divinities not so transparent in their character so as to identify them as Natural objects. Such symbols may mean some psychical aspects of human being. These symbols are mainly of two types i.e. Gods and Demons. First we can well support the idea that the Gods are the aspirations and ideals of man duly embodied in them and the demons are the dark aspect of life personified with their specific characters.

(i) The Gods

Here we are trying to find out the symbolic meanings of the chief gods as Indra, Varuna, Āśvinu, Viṣṇu, Bṛhaspati, Tvaṣṭr, Dātar, Prajāpati, Viśvākarmaṇ and the female deities like Aditi and a group-deity known as Viśvedēvas.

Indra

Indra is the leading warrior of the Āryans. The character of Indra serves as a symbol of soul and the senses are called as Indriya. Yāska identifies Indra with lightening 'a destroyer of the cloud' known as Vṛtra. He is creator, giver of material good, destroyer of enemies and knower of sacrifices.

1. निसर्गं 10-8 - इन्द्रः कस्मात्, इरा जन्म तैन सम्बन्धाय तैषुद्धितमुद्धक लक्ष्यते। वायूलक्षणात्या तैन अथ त्वदाधारश्रूतेऽभवः। इन्द्र तु दृष्टिते, दयात, दयात, दारयते, दृवीतः। इन्द्रु + दृवीति रमेते
In the Brāhmaṇas Indra symbolises vak, purīsa, āditya, venp, kṣatram, indriya, yajamāna, the soul of sacrifice, aśva, prāna, manas, hṛdaya, aksara, satya, tvāṣṭa, yajña. In Upanisadic science it is Absolute Brahman. Sri Aurobindo takes gods in general as the symbol of “universal powers descended from the Truth.

1. Ģे·㋑·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
2. शाशा·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
3. शाशा·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
4. वॉ·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
5. शाशा·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
6. वॉ·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
7. वॉ·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
8. शाशा·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
9. वॉ·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
10. शाशा·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
11. शाशा·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
12. शाशा·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
13. जे·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
14. वॉ·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
15. वॉ·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
16. वॉ·九龙·九龙 - StackSize:九龙
consciousness which build up the harmony of the worlds and in man his progressive perfection. They are children of light and sons of infinity.\(^1\) Indra has been taken as Ruler of our being, master of svar which the luminous world of Divine Mind.\(^2\)

**Varuna**

Varuna is also a prominent figure among Vedic gods. It is professed that there were two cults known as Indra and Varuna. Both the gods have been also addressed in duet.

The salient feature of Varuna's concept is lover of morality and king with bonds and sentinels or spies. The vrata or universal rules of Varuna are very popular in the Rgveda. Varuna in the Rgveda is called as svarāt, the protector of Rāta.\(^3\) With Mitra Varuna is often lauded. The sun seems like an eye of Varuna i.e. the infinite sky there. The thousand eyes, thousand pillars and thousand doors of Varuna are mentioned in the Rgveda. These epithets helped evolved into the concept of puruṣa.\(^4\) When Mitra represents day, Varuna was suggested to symbolise the night.\(^5\) Nighantu counts Varuna in both celestial and intermediary classes. Varuna is also related with waters in Antarikṣa.

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1. Key to Vedic Symbolism, p.29.
2. Ibid, p.35.
3. इं 2.28.1 - इद्द क्षेत्रार्द्धस्य स्वराजे विश्वानित सान्तत्वभूतः माहना।
4. इं 5.63.1 - वृद्ध्वय गौपाविध तिथियो रथ सत्कारणा परमे ब्योधिन्न।
5. इं 7.34.10 - वसन उप: तदभवश: \(\times 2.41.5; 7.88.5; 10.904\)
6. ऐशः राक्षिसः \(\times 4.10\)
In the Brāhmaṇas Varuna is identified with Savitā, Vātā, Vānā, Sṛih, Saivatsara, Satya and Anṛta, Samudra, Skambha, ruler of Dharma, etc. To Sri Aurobindo Varuna is the symbol of "etherial purity and oceanic wideness of the infinite truth." ¹⁰

Asvinau

The immortal twins as divine healers ¹¹ give madhuvidyā to Dadhyanc aśvasirā. Yāska identifies them with Heaven and earth, Day and night, Sun and Moon etc. ¹² Nāsatyā is the epithet of Asvins i.e. 'not false'. The trinity in Asvins is well noticeable. ¹³ Asvinau is identified with

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1. जै-उ 4.12.1.3 - वस्म यथा साविता ।
2. मै 4.8.4 - वातो वस्म ।
3. माश 12.8.9.16 - व्यानो वस्म ।
4. कौँ-बा 18.9 - श्रीवें वस्म ।
5. माश 4.14.10 - सवत्सरो वस्म ।
6. ते 1.7.10.4 - सतगानुते वस्म ।
7. मै 4.7.8 - समुद्रो वै वस्म ।
8. काट्त 37.13 - सुक्मने पिश वस्मस्य राजो ।
9. मै 2.6.6 - वस्माय धर्ष्य पत्ते ।
11. ऐ-बा 1.18 - वेषवनो वै देवानां भिष्म ।
12. नि 12.1
13. श 1.118.2 - त्रिक्षुपुरेण त्रितुहो रोकेन त्रिक्षुण तुष्टा यात्रवश ।
prāṇa-āpāṇa, śrotṛa, nāśike, and ātman, adhvaryu, etc.

In the sacrifices any act conducted with the arms is dedicated to Āśvins. But in later on the presiding deity of smelling and its organ—nose became Āśvinau. Similarly as Indra became the presiding deity of arms.

Visnu

Visnu as a solar deity earned prominence though number of hymns addressed to him is not so much as compared to Indra or Agni or Varuṇa or others. Yet in later period Visnu cult evolved and a time witnessed Visnu as Supreme and Indra, Varuṇa, Agni etc. lost their status of the Rgvedic period. In the Rgveda Visnu gained all the epithets of Indra as being his co-sharer of hymns. The three strides of Visnu, spring of madhu in his seat, horned-cows around him and killing the eunuṣa in the mountains etc. are the chief characteristics of his personality. Like Indra he is called for Soma, and is prayed for easy delivery and pregnancy. The epithets Indraṣya yujaḥ sakha, sipīvista, gṛṣṭha, urukrama, gopāra are used with Visnu. Aitareya

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1. ते••• 1•7•11•1 - विष्णु द्विशक्रिया प्रथापानां उदाध्यतम्
2. कौँः 13•5 - श्रौँ आरभिवन्
3. दाँ••• 12•9•1•14 - नासिके बिरिवनां
4. ऐऽऽा 2•26 - श्रौँ चात्मा आरभिवन्
5. ऐऽऽा = बिरिवनाववबूँ
6. यजुऽ, 1•10 - देवस्य त्वा सीतुः प्रके विष्णोदवं यागं हस्ताभ्याः
Brāhmaṇa calls Visnu as paraṁ, and Agni as avaraṇa and all the deities are in between the two. Thus the seed of Viśnuism can be seen in this statement of Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. For the Rgvedic mystic Viṣṇu symbolises the rapid journey towards high level of consciousness. As Viṣṇu, etymologically means one who embraces all in himself. He is called sacrifice in himself.

In Brāhmaṇas the Viṣṇu is identified with srotra, yajña, soma, watchman of devas, hṛṣṭa, sarvādevāḥ, vīryam, hrasva, etc. The three strides of Viṣṇu are explained by the scholars in different ways. For Sri Aurobindo Viṣṇu represents the all-pervading principle of Truth-Bliss.

1. ऐ्‌्‌्रा््‌ 1·1 - जीम्स्द्वेदानामवर्ये विष्णुः परम् ।
2. गो्‌्म्‌ 2·4·1 - यय्को represents विष्णुः ।
3. मां्‌्‌ 1·1·2·13 - यशो दे विष्णुः ।
4. मां्‌्‌ 3·3·4·21 - यो दे विष्णुः सोमः सः
5. ऐ्‌्‌्रा््‌ 1·30 - विष्णुः देवान्द्रा द्वारपः ।
6. तै्‌्‌्रा््‌ 2·19·2 - विष्णुद्वारयः ।
7. ऐ्‌्‌्रा््‌ 1·1 - विष्णुः सवां देवताः।
8. तै्‌््‌ 1·7·22 - दीर्ष्यः विष्णुः ।
9. जै्‌ 3·394 - हस्तो विष्णुः ।
10. Key to Vedic Symbolism.
Brhaspati

Brhaspati as a deity has been extolled independently and also coupled with Indra in the Rgveda. He takes part in feats of Indra and seems to be a form of Agni. The priesthood is deified in him as some scholars opine. Brhaspati is presiding deity of prayers and intellect. Later on he was enroned as the Devaguru and was identified with a star known after his name. In the Brahmanas the Brhaspati is identified with apāna, 1 brahmā, 2 sarvam brahman, 3 vīrya, 4 intellect, 5 etc. Aitareya Brahmana calls Brhaspati as Brahman four times. 6

Tvāṣṭar, Dhātar and Viśvākarma

In the Rgveda there are the gods who create the worlds. Tvāṣṭar is symbol of craftsmanship who carves the worlds like a skilled carpenter. He is called viśvarupa many times in the Rgveda. 7 In the Brāhmaṇas Tvāṣṭar is

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1. जै·उ· 2·1·25 - यस्यो 5 पान आसीत् 5 वृहस्पतिरभव्यः ।
2. तै·श्व· 5·4·1 - एष वा एतहैं वृहस्पतिर्युद्व ब्रह्मः ।
3. गो·श्व· 2·1·3 - वृहस्पतिः श्रव ' ब्रह्मः ।
4. देवश्रव्यमादीम्यं - मै० 4·4·5 - दीर्घं वृहस्पति ।
5. मै० 2·4·14 - वृहस्पतियतेन बुद्धय श्रुव्यामम् ।
6. ऐ·श्व· 1·13; 1·19; 1·21; 4·11
7. हृ· 3·55·19 - देवस्वर्णत श्रेष्ठता विचवल: पुष्पोऽष प्रजा: पुष्का जजान ।
identified with yajamāna, the lord of rūpas, prajāpati, vāk, sanvatsara, pasū, etc. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa identifies Īvaśu with Indra. DhāTRA is the another name of the cosmological concepts of creator. Yāska has etymologized it as 'Dhātrasvarasya vidhātā. Dhātra symbolises the concept of all creator god i.e. Prājāpati and also the same character as possessed by Īvaśu.

visvakarman

Visvakarman is one of the most mysterious concept fashioned in the cosmogonical context. Visvakarman the 'creator of all' possessing many eyes, arms, feet and ears is nearer to the puruṣa in the Rgveda. Visvakarman has been etymologised in the Nirukta as 'Visvakarmar sarvasya karta.' Visvakarman as an epithet is used with Indra,
and Sūrya. In Brāhmaṇas Visvakarman is called as 'Prajāpati', sūrya and samvatsara etc.

Prajāpati

Hiranyagarbha sukta of the Rgveda calls it as Prajāpati in the last verse. The sthāyi of the hymn is a question as whom should we offer oblation. This 'kasmī' also became a name of Prajāpati. This monotheistic idea of the Rgvedic mystic is unique in itself as it calls the deity all-creator and all-prevading, also symbolising the supreme unmanifest state of cosmos. Griffith takes it to be the Sun God. Wallis is of the opinion that it is "the great power of the Universe from which all other powers and extra existences divine and earthly, are derived, a conception which is the nearest approach to the later mystical concept of Brahma, the creator of the world. As an epithet it is associated with Savitar, and Soma. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa also identifies it with sacrifice.
etc. In other Brāhmaṇas Prajāpati gains symbolicity through identifications with prāna, ātman, ātmā, these words, hṛdaya, yajña, ka, chandas, prajāpāṇa, pūrṇa, dikṣīta.
mahān, the lord of the world, manu, svārājya, vāk, brahman, manas, yoni, sarīra, and sarvam etc.

The Brahmanic passages clearly indicate that Prajapati is such a cosmic concept which embraces all in itself.

Aditi

Yāska has called Aditi as "adīnā devamātā". The Rgveda 189.10 calls Aditi in pantheistic colour as everything created. Sri Aurobindo takes it to symbolise as "pure consciousness of infinite existence one and self-luminous". Griffit calls Aditi as 'Infinite Nature'.

1. The key to Vedic Symbolism, p.5.
2. Hymns of the Rgveda - 1.89.10
The lap of Aditi is often remembered when any thing is placed on the earth in the sacrifices. Actually Aditi symbolises mother principle equated with nature in cosmogonic context. In the Rgveda the mystic frequently prays to Aditi to set him free from sins and bestow light and life on him. In the Brāhmaṇas Aditi symbolises cow, earth, pratisthā, vak, all-devourer, the consort of Viṣṇu, sinless, etc.

**Visvedevās**

All-gods as Visvedevās have been conceived as a result of an attempt towards monotheism. One-in-all and all-in-one have been the two fold way of approach of the mystical thought. The gods presented previously were extolled as one pervading in all and group deity in real sense.

(ii) **Demons**

There are malignant forces in the nature and man which retard the progress towards perfection. These evil principles can be grouped as Asuras, dasyus and rākṣasas.

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1. कुण्डल । बृद्धिको त्वा सादयारूः ।
2. मात्रः 2.3.4.34 - बैदेत्तीय गौः ।
3. तेषां 4.2.10.2-3 - इव पूर्विकी बैदेत्ति ।
4. काठः 21-1 - प्रतिच्छ वा बैदेति ।
5. मात्रः 6.5.2.20 - वा खा बैदेति ।
6. मात्रः 10.6.5.5 - सर्व । वा अत्तीत तददित्रोदितल्यूः ।
7. काठः 45-10 - बैदेति विद्वन्तै वसः ।
8. काठः 7.16. - अनागर तमादिति : कृष्णौ ।
In the Rgveda the poet-mystic prays to the gods to make their journey of life safe from such evil beings. These elements are also ingrained in his own nature in form of inclination towards lust, greed and anger, idleness and disregard for 'divine laws' as Rta, dharman, vrata and ways of morality. A mystic is aware of such obstacles. Indra plays a pivotal role in the vedic thought, so the Vṛtra too is very much important in the conflict in order to overcoming the flaws of life. Though Indra-Vṛtra fight has been interpreted in many ways but the allegorical interpretation also signifies the mystic's inner conflict against the evil tendencies of his own being. Here Vṛtra is a leading demon in Asura elements.

Asuras have been known in the Rgveda into three types - (1) anti-gods such as Dānava, Pani, Anindra, Mridh, Druha (2) anti-sacrifice and laws such as Ayu, Arāti, Adevyu, Mrīta, Avrata, Mṛdhavacas (3) anti-people such as Dāsa, Dasyu, Ptāna, Sapatna, Satru, Pīhu, Antrin, Piśāca, Yātudhāna and also diseases like jaundice, bad dreams etc.

Asuras in general are identified with all vital energies also attached with the great gods like Dyauh, Indra, Ṛṣita, Varuna, Savitar, etc. The mystic and

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1. ए. १.१३१० - हन्द्राय तै शौरसूरों कुमातेन्द्राय मही धृष्ट्को वदीमीभाव।
2. ए. १.१७४० - तद्य राजेन्द्र व देशत रश्नु पातः स्वमस्ततान।
3. प. १०.१७७० - पत्राणतमसूस्वः स्वमाप्न।
4. ए. २.२७०१० - तद्य विश्वेश्वा वस्यायिः राजा ये च देशव अर्थ ये च मत्ताः।
5. ए. ४.५३०१ - तद्देवेश्वा सोकुमार्य।महद वृणीमें अर्थस्य प्रवेचक:।

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occult power of the gods is meant by this term, but in
demonic context it represents crooked arts and trickful
māyā. Asura is embodiment of viśā, amās, enas, pāpa,
āgas etc. all the synonyms of sin and evils. Similarly
the Rakṣas symbolises ungodly character and they are
termed with hateful sentiments. They denote ignorance,
and obstructing principles as hostile to the beneficent
individuals and actions. They are always conquered by
Indra and his allies—particularly Vṛtra, vala, Arbuda,
svarbhānu, Viśvarūpa, śāmbara, pipru, dhuni, cumuri,
varcin, anargaṇ, ilihiṣa, ṛdhika, rudhikrā, śṛbinda,
namuci and susna—these asuras and dāsas indulge in
fight with Indra and Indra conquers them by setting free
the Cows, rivers, waters and demolishing ninety-nine
autumnal forts.

Vṛtra

The leading asura named Vṛtra is identified with
in the Brāhmaṇas (Water, 1 Soma, 2 Vatsa 3 of Agni, Giri, 4 Ahi, 5

1. में 4·5·1 - आपो वै बृहः ।
2. कात 24·9 - होमो बृहः ।
3. तै अन 16·13 - आनेचर्यः बृहः ।
4. माश 3·4·3·1 - तस्य कृत्स्य एतत्सरीर विद्यायो यदसमानः ।
5. माश 1·6·3·9 - अथ ५०वृहः यथपतिमभवत्तस्मादौहः ।
Udara, Candramas, Papman, etc. Vṛtra has been etymologised by Yāska as enveloping or covering elements. For Sri Aurobindo "Vṛtra represents obstruction done by darkness to all possibilities of divine existence and divine action." Similarly Dasyu is a symbol of "undivine being who does no sacrifice; the power of darkness and ignorance who opposes the seeker of truth and immortality." Pani represents "Powers that preside over those ordinary illumined sense-activities of life whose immediate root is in dark subconscient physical being." Thus super-human symbols of both types positive and negative natures play a significant role in expression of mystical practices of an inner conflict against the dark domain of the hostile forces active in individual and the universe.

7. **Sacrificial Symbols**

The Rgvedic life is full of faith in high ideals and an active journey towards it. The harmony in life and universe is the image that is reflected in form of sacrifice. The mystics used this Institution to denote the cosmic and personal harmony. There are ample evidences regarding the sacrificial environment and its symbolism in the Rgveda.

1. मै 3-6-7 - उदरे वृकः।
2. मा:शा: 1-6-4-13 - अःष एव वृकः यज्ञनमः।
3. मा:शा: 11-1-5-7 - बास्न देव वृकः।
6. Ibid. (7) Ibid.
Under the category of sacrificial symbols we will find out the symbolicity of the Sanskrit words connected with sacrifices in general and in particular, the sacrificer, the priests, the oblations and their sacrificial utensils etc.

The yajña in general is identified in the Brähmanas as Ātma, Agni, Dhenu, Parokṣa, Puruṣa, Savitā, Soul of Devas, Sreṣṭha tama karman, Vāk, Saivatsara, Antarikṣa, Āditya, Kratu, Rta, and Satya, Yoni of Rta.
Jyotis, Divine Horse, Prajāpati, Prāna, Naval of Bhuvana, Makha, Mahān, etc. The Rgvedic Brāhmaṇa i.e. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa identifies Yajña with pāṅkta, Viṣṇu, yajamāna, devaratha, āhavaniya, vāyu, brahman, sutarmā nāu, ēthitya, Prajāpati, etc.

1. का 31.11 - ज्योतिः यजः ।
2. वै-भा 1.83 - यजो वाय देव्यो वाजी ।
3. ऐ-भा 2.17 - प्रजनापतिगः ।
4. मे-4.6.2 - प्रजापतिः सन्तलः ।
5. दै. 3.9.5.5 - यजो वे भ्रमण्य नाभि: ।
6. दै-5. 3.2.4.1 - यजो वे मजः ।
7. गो-भा - 1.2.16 - एष देशान देवो यज्ञः ।
8. ऐ-भा 1.5 - पाँक्तो वै यजः ।
9. १ 1.15 - विचणुः यजः ।
10. २ 1.28 - यजमानो वै क्यः ।
11. ३ 2.37 - देवरथी वा एष यज्ञः ।
12. ४ 5.24 - यजो वे जाहवनीयः ।
13. ५ 5.33 - अर्थ वे यजो यो यद्य पवते ।
14. ६ 7.22 - ब्रह्म वै यजः ।
15. ७ 7.26 - यजो वे मूलम्य नाः ।
16. ८ 1.25 - पितारो वा एत्त्रावस्य वदार्पित्यमः ।
17. ९ 2.17 - प्रजनापतिः यजः ।
After examining the identifications mentioned above, it is clear that the sacrifice is a means to contact the divinity and to gain his grace in form of power, food, long life and sinlessness. In the Rgveda itself sacrifice is identified with Purusa.¹

For Sri Aurobindo sacrifice means "The outer symbol of inner work, an inner interchange between gods and men — the man giving what he has, the gods giving in return the horses of power, herds of light, the heroes of strength to be his retinue, winning victory in his battle with the hosts of darkness." In the Rgveda sacrifice is an humble worship through the media of burning fire approaching to heaven i.e. the region of the light and Supreme Bliss. The burning fire and its flames symbolise the aspiration and flame of innerconsciousness of the devotee and experiencer of communion with the Divinity that is also inherent in himself.

(ii) Sacrificer and Priests

In the Rgveda yajamana³ and purohita⁴ also play a role in Rgvedic Symbolology. Yajamana is identified with

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1. Rv. 10.90
2. Key to Vedic Symbolism, p.63
3. Rv. 10.127.2
4. Rv. 1.1.1
soma, 1 yūpa, 2 medhāpati, 3 prajāpati, 4 jarita, 5 sūkta 6 etc. In other Brāhmaṇas Yajśaṇa is identified with atman, 7 saṁvatsara, 8 pāsu, 9 prāṇa; 10 along with the limbs of sacrifice, 11 seasons, 12 manas, 13 etc. The purohita in the Ṛgveda is addressed to Agni many 14 times. In Aitareya Brāhmaṇa it symbolises Agni 15 itself, Aditya, 16 Vājú, 16 half soul of ksatriya, 17 etc.

1. ऐ.ग्रा. 1.14 - एवैः सोमो राजा यो यजः।
2. 2.3 - यज्ञानो वै युपः।
3. 2.6 - यज्ञानो यज्ञापि:।
4. 2.18 - एव उ एव यज्ञापि:वः यजः।
5. 3.38 - यज्ञानो जोरतः।
6. 6.8 - यज्ञानो प्रह बुक्तः।
7. माणः 9.5.2.16 - आत्मा वै यज्ञस्य यज्ञानो स इंगान्यङ्गः।
8. माणः 3.2.1.7 - कवः राजः यज्ञानः।
9. तेषाः 6.3.5.1 - यज्ञानः पशुः।
10. श 2.5 - प्राणो यज्ञानः।
11. माणः 9.5.2.16 - यज्ञस्य अङ्गो गाणिष्कः।
12. माणः 11.2.7.2 - कुञ्जः क्रित्वः।
13. माणः 12.8.2.4 - मनो यज्ञानस्य स्म।
14. ऐ.ग्रा. 8.24 - ऋग्नार्यां एवैः वैवाकारः पथमेधेन यत्तुरोहितः।
15. 8.27 - वारदस्वी वाच पुरोहितः।
16. 8.27 - वारुषाविं पुरोहितः।
17. 7.26 - क्षरात्मः ह वा एवैः क्षरवस्य यत्तुरोहितः।
In Brāhmaṇas priests have been identified with metres, 1 devadeṣṭa, 2 maḥiṣa, 3 etc. Particularly hotar 4 plays a significant role in the Ṛgvedic sacrifice.

The Brāhmaṇas identify hotar with ṛtvaj of sacrifice, 5 puruṣa, 6 manas, 7 vāk, 8 samvatsara, 9 sūrya, 10 etc. Particularly hotar 4 plays a significant role in the Ṛgvedic sacrifice.

Similarly adhvaryu 11 also appears as a priest in the Ṛgveda and it is identified with ṛtvaj, 12 caṅku, 13 prāṇa and apāna, 14 prāṇa, 15 manas, 16 etc. Brahmā, 17 the
chief of the priests is mentioned in the Rgveda. Brahmā is identified with anirukta, bhiṣaktama, manas, etc. This term evolved in two ways in later Vedic literature i.e. as Brahmā in Purāṇas and Brhaman in Upaniṣads. Because he is the presiding priest of the sacrifice therefore his prominence has been identified with individual and the cosmos.

(iii) Oblations

In the Rgveda there are many things like āhūti, saṅga, caru, havis and particularly purodāsa, ājya, payas, Sarhis, idhma, samidh, madhu etc. which form symbolic nature of the sacrifice duly unveiled in Brāhmaṇic literature.

Āhūti is called as a heavenly āhūti in Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. Similarly havis is identified with ātman, Diksita, the life of Devas, prāṇa, manas, yajmāna.
soul of sacrifice, etc.

Caru has been identified with lokas in Kathaka Brāhmaṇa. Purodāsa is identified in the Brāhmaṇas as anna, the soul of the sacrificer, pasu, mastīṣka, yajamana, kūma etc. Ayya is identified with yajña, atman, retas, amṛta, the body of the Gods.
kāma, citta, chandas, prāna, yajamāna, satya, etc.

Aitareya Brāhmaṇa calls ājya as fragrance of gods. Ṛgveda has various meanings but in mixing with soma milk is intended. It is identified with water, puruṣa, retas, prāna, rasa, soma, etc. in the Brāhmaṇas.

Pārhas, too has been frequently mentioned in Ṛgvedic sacrifices. It is identified with pasu, prajā, loman, etc.
medicines, bhūman, etc. In the Rgveda 10.90.7 barhis has been mentioned in the sacrifice.

Idhāma³ in the Rgveda has been mentioned as summer and it is identified with ātman, prāna, vanaspati, etc. in the Brāhmaṇas. Similarly samidh⁷ is also identified with bones, garbha, prāna, Vasanta, etc. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa calls samidh as vital energies.

Dhānārā pitu, idā are synonymous with anna. Anna has been identified in Aitareya Brāhmaṇa with virāt, pitu, karambha,
Madhu and soma are mentioned in the Ṛgveda as sweetest oblations. Madhu has been identified in the Brāhmaṇas with end of rasas, the sweetness of the being, Pṛajāpati, prajā, all the desires, prāṇa, etc. Madhyandina Satapatha Brāhmaṇa establishes grounds for madhu-vidyā when it says that everything is madhu whatever it is. Soma has already been treated as a symbol in both aspects as physical juice and spiritual sweetness or bliss.

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1. एऽ·ऽऽऽ 5·19 - वन्न पाषः।
2. 6·3 - वन्न दोषः।
3. 6·15 - वन्न वा दषः।
4. 6·21 - वन्न वे कम्म।
5. 6·30 - बापो वन्न।
6. 8·26 - वन्न वा हड़ा।
7. औ 1·23·16
8. जैऽ·ऽऽऽ 1·224 - वन्नी दै रसाना मधु।
9. तैऽ·ऽऽऽ 2·3·2·9 - वात्मा दै पुष्कर्म मधु।
10. जैऽ·ऽऽऽ 5·4·1·12 - छृत च मधु च प्रजापतिराविक।
11. जैऽ·ऽऽऽ 1·88 - प्रजा दै मधु।
12. एऽ·ऽऽऽ 1·1·3 - सबं दै कामा मधु।
13. माःऽ 14·1·3·30 - प्राणो दै मधु।
14. माःऽ 3·7·1·11 - सर्वं वा हदं मधु योद्धं कि-च।
For Sri Aurobindo Āhuti in general represents the havya i.e. action of body and mind giving of our plenty into the cosmic being and cosmic intention. Anna as prayas for him means the soul's satisfaction in its objects. Similarly Ghṛta for him is 'brightness of the solar light in the human mentality.' Thus we see that the oblations offered to the Gods through fire are the best products and the sweetest entity of the human beings. The spiritual aspect of the oblation is clear from the identifications mentioned as above.

(iv) Vedi, Yupa and Sacrificial Fires

Vedi in the Rgveda has been called as paramāṅkanta. In the Brāhmaṇas it is identified with earth, deva-kṣetra, devaloka, ātman, pratiṣṭhā, yosā, vāk, etc.

Similarly yupa, the sacrificial post, is also mentioned in the Rgveda and the Brāhmaṇas it has attained

1. Key to Vedic Symbolism
2. श् 1.164.35 - यदे वेदि: परो बन्त: पृथिव्या: अर्थ यतो भवनस्य नाभि:।
3. माश: 12.8.2.6 - इयोच्या पृथिव्यी के वेिद:।
4. मैे: 3.8.6 - देवक्रेश वे वेिद:।
5. माश: 3.6.2.5 - देिदों देवलोकः।
6. माश: 12.9.1.1 - जात्मवि केिद:।
7. मैे: 4.5.9 - प्रतिलोक वेिद:।
8. माश: 13.3.8 - योशा वे वेिद।
9. मैे: 1.9.1 - बाध वेिद:।
10. श् 5.2.7
symbolic meaning through identification in the Brāhmaṇas. It is identified with vajra, 1 sikhā, 2 hrdaya, 3 all gods, 4 tejas, 5 nose, 6 yajmana, 7 āditya, 8 etc. Similarly sacrificial fires also serve as symbols which have been already dealt with physical symbols' category.

(v) **Sacrificial Utensils**

In the Ṛṣṇedic sacrifice the names of utensils like juhū, sru, sruva, grāvan, ulūkhala - musala, graha, camasa, droma - kalaśa, pavitra etc. occurs many times. They also gain symbolicity in the hands of the Ṛṣṇedic mystic.

Juhū, the special type of ladle, is identified in the Brāhmaṇas with dyau, 10 kṣatra, 11 right hand, 12
mouth of sacrifice, 1 vāk, 2 anna, 3 ātman, 4 etc. Sruṣṭi is identified with arma, 6 gauh, 7 yosā, 8 vāk, 9 etc. and Sruvaḥ is identified with ēditya, 11 prāṇa, 12 and vṛṣā, 13 etc. Similarly grāvān 14 gains snyobility in the Brāhmānas through identification with teeth, 15 kṣepa, 16 prāṇa, 17 mouth of sacrifice, 18 vis, 19 vajra, 20 pasu, 21 vidvān, 22 etc.

1. मेकौ यज्ञादिकः
2. वरा २ भुक्षः
3. मेकौ ठानः
4. मेकौ ताल्मः
5. गृह १४६४
6. मेकौ बाहुः
7. तै ३ ५ ४
8. मायि ३ ४ ४
9. कौऽ १३ ९
10. गृह १०४६
11. मेकौ असिददिकः
12. मायि १ ३ २ ३
13. मायि १ ३ १ ९
14. गृह १ ८९४
15. तै तै ६ २ १० ४
16. तै तै ७ ५ २५ २
17. तै ३ ९ १४
18. मेकौ ४ ५ २
19. ज्ञाना १ ८०
20. मेकौ ४ ५ ४
21. काँ २५ ९
22. मायि ३ ९ ३ १४
Graha has been identified with vak, prāna, the yoni of rta, nāman, etc. Māhyandina Smatpatha Brāhmaṇa enumerates the eight cups as prāna, jihvā, vak, caksus, srotra, manas, hasta, tvac. Camasa has been identified with rasmi, loman, limbs, in Bādvimśa Brāhmaṇa.

Drona and kāla have been identified in Brāhmaṇas with Brāhmaṇ and kṣatra, Prejpati, prāna, mūrdhan, yajña, rāstra, vrtra, etc. Pavitra as a filter of
soma juice is identified with antarikṣa, वृयु, the rays of sun, प्रगांडङ्ग अपान, अग्नि, अपह, दरभा, हिर्या, etc. Ulūkha - मसाला has also been mentioned in the र्यवेद्या and identified with phalus and vagina, at the same time it is related with Viśnu. Thus the utensils have been mentioned largely in the र्यवेद्या and constitute the grounds for sacrificial mysticism and symbolism.

(vi) Minor rituals

As the names of the body symbolise some higher principles so do the minor rituals in the sacrifice. Anuyāja, prayāja, āhāva, avabhrtha etc. too serve as symbols in Vedic Mysticism. Anuyāja is identified with

1. काठ 26.10 - अन्तरिक्ष पवित्र्य ।
2. मास 1.1.3.2 - अर्थे पवित्र्य यो यस्मातः ।
3. नै 3.6.3 - एलत्र अभिष्ट पवित्र्य यत्स्यथा रामय ।
4. नै 3.3.4.4 - प्राणापानो पवित्र्य ।
5. नै 3.3.7.10 - जोम्बावं पवित्र्य ।
6. काठ 8.8 - वापनो वे पवित्र्य ।
7. नै 1.3.7.1 - पवित्र्य वे दर्भः ।
8. नै 1.7.2.6 - पवित्र्य वे हर्षयः ।
9. ज 1.28 -
10. मास 7.5.1.38 - यो नंक्षुक्तस्य मक्षस्य ।
11. नै 3.2.7 - वैश्यं हुयुक्तस्य ।
apāna, prāna, prajā, etc. Similarly pravāja too gains symbolocity through identification like deva-man, etc. Arābhrtha is identified with samudra and related with Varuna in the Brāhmaṇas. Āhāvā is identified with vāk.

The technical terms like swāhā, svadha, and vāsat, too symbolise the aspects of vāk. Svāhā and vāsat are considered as breasts of speech. Similarly vāsat is identified with dhātar, devapātra, vajra, etc.

In the Rgveda dakṣinā is a goddess and a complete
hymn is dedicated to her. Daksīnā has gained symbolicity through identification with pītu (ānna), the cow of yajña in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa in the sacrificial contexts.

8. Promominal & Linguistic Symbols

In the Rgveda there are certain syllables which symbolise some subtle principles. The Brāhmaṇic Literature enriches these syllables with the depth of meaning. Here we can consider few of them.

(i) A

In the Rgveda A is the remnant of āsmad, āt and ādam., which has been identified in Aitareya Āraṇyaka with Brahmā.

(ii) Kā

In the Rgveda Kā is not only a pronoun and denotes question but it also symbolises prajāpatī, prāṇa, and sukha in the Brāhmaṇas.

1. ऐ•च्छा• 1•13 - दीक्षण वै पिलु; इ• 10•107
2. ऐ•च्छा• 6•15 - दीक्षण वै यक्तानाय पुरोगवी।
3. ऐ•च्छा• 2•3•8 - व होत ब्रह्म।
3५क्षृ ऐ•च्छा• 2•3•8 - प्रजापतिथिसं क्।
4. जै•उ• 4•11•2•4 - प्राणो वाव क्।
5. कौ•च्छा• 5•4 - अधी सुमस्य वा एतनअस्मवं कीमति।
(iii) **kha**  
In the **Ṛgveda** क्ता is used for gate and hole.¹ In **Gopatha-Bṛahmanā** क्ता symbolises the same meaning as hole.²

(iv) **na**  
In the **Ṛgveda** ना is meant for negative meaning and also showing similarity.³ **Aitareya Aranyaka** places 'na' for untrue in contrast with ∆० denoting true.⁴

(v) **pra**  
In the **Ṛgveda** this syllable occurs for magnifying the meaning of substantive but in **Bṛahmanas** it stands for antariksa,⁵ prāṇa,⁶ and in contrast with udāna.⁷

(vi) **asau**  
This pronoun is used with many things which are far from the seer. But in the **Bṛahmanas** according to the context it stands for āditya,⁸ and dyauḥ.⁹

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¹ [Vedic Literature](Cf. Kathopanisad 2.1.1.पूर्वकः नसाम्)
² [Vedic Literature](गृहः भ्रान्तः 2.2.5 - हिंदू विश्वविद्यालय)
³ [Vedic Literature](वृ 1.5.4)
⁴ [Vedic Literature](प्र 2.3.6 - भ्रमरित महत्ने नित्यभूतः)
⁵ [Vedic Literature](प्र 2.41 - अतनंशः प्र)
⁶ [Vedic Literature](प्र 2.40 - प्राणी वे प्र)
⁷ [Vedic Literature](प्र 1.4.1.6 - प्र श्रोते वे प्राणः अ प्रमो उदानः)
⁸ [Vedic Literature](प्र 9.4.2.23 - अनो वा आदित्यः सुवः)
⁹ [Vedic Literature](आ. भ्रान्तः 2.2.41.अलावित्यात् दुःः)
In the Rgveda the female deities have been called as ɪyam. In Brähmanas the earth has been specified with this term and in contrast ḏasau denotes Dyauḥ.¹

The sense of 'here' is conveyed by this term. In Brähmanas this world is denoted by this term 'ɪna'.²

Generally in the sacrifices 'ɪhuh' is a vyāhṛti. In the Brähmanas this term signifies praśāpati,³ agni,⁴ Rgveda, ṛc, ⁶ this world, ⁷ prāna, ⁸ etc.

In the Rgveda 'ɪhuh' generally stands for antarikṣa or pertaining to the earth. In the Brähmanas ɪhuh' is identified with Sāman,⁹ agni,¹⁰ antarikṣa,¹¹

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¹ 2.1.4.13 - श्रीरित वा प्राजः ।
² 3.1.4.13 - श्रीरित वा प्राजः ।
³ 4.7.5.2 - श्रीरित वा ब्रागः ।
⁴ 5.7.5.3 - श्रीरित वा प्राजः ।
⁵ 6.7.5.2 - श्रीरित वा प्राजः ।
⁶ 7.5.1.6 - श्रीरित वा प्राजः ।
⁷ 8.7.4.5 - श्रीरित वा ब्रागः ।
⁸ 9.7.5.2 - श्रीरित वा प्राजः ।
⁹ 10.8.1.1.4 - श्रीरित वा प्राजः ।
The verses contained in the Ṛgveda in form of Svah prayers are called Ṛks. This term also carries a symbolic meaning through identifications with anta, these worlds, devas, swargloka, sāman, Sāmaveda, etc.

The Ṛgveda is compilation of the prayers which are called Ṛks. This term too has obtained symbolic meaning in the Brāhmaṇas like prāna, jyotis, bṛhmaṇ, swarga, vak, etc.

The sacrificial formulae contained in the Yajurveda in prose form are called as Yajus. In the Brāhmaṇas Yajus

1. प्रेशा — ज्ञतो दे स्वः।
   नामः 2.2.1 — दे मे लोकः स्वः।
   मानः 1.9.3.14 — देवा दे स्वः।
   जैशा 3.69 — स्वर्गो लोकः स्वः।
   काठक 47.6 — स्वैरौत सामान्यः।
   अथो ठो 1.3.2 — स्वैरौत सामवेदः।
   अथा 2.2.2 — पभ्यां वच द्वितियः स्वैरौतः यो
   स्वैरौतः वै हः।
   जैशा 1.76 — नेच्छतिकत्वः।
   कैशा 4.10 — ब्रह्म वा स्वः।
   काठ 33.7 — लोकः स्वर्गः।
   मानः 4.6.7.5 — वागेश्व पर्यावरण।
has been identified with śraddha, sufrah, etc.

(xiv) Sāman

The chanting of rks in melodious forms and with certain arrangements of the words and the accents is called Sāman collected as Sānveda. In the Brāhmaṇas Sāman has got the symbolic meaning identified with the flame of Sun, vāk, prāna, brahman, devaloka, these worlds, etc. The couple of rks and Sāman has also got the mystical purport in the Brāhmaṇas. Similarly the syllables Sā + Man have also got the symbolic entity in the Brāhmaṇas.

(xv) Om

In the Rgveda we do not witness the presence of this mystic syllable Om but few scholars derive this term from the root Māv. The words like Omasah, Oman, etc. do occur in the Rgveda. In the Brāhmaṇas this syllable was philosophised and represented the Supreme metaphysical entity inherent in this creation.

1. माशं 13827 - च्छ ते तद्वयः । च 10909
2. पुविरोत यज्ञी । - तैं । 752;
3. माशं 10515 - च्छ ब्रह्मस्य सामान्य। । च 10909
4. जै-उ 2534 - एतं ह वाव साम यथा ।
5. माशं 144124 - एव । प्राणः । । प्राण ।
6. शां 46 - लद्व ब्रह्मस्य सामीतुपासाति, सविनिष्ठाः ह अमु भूतानि ।
7. तैं । 15515 - देवलोकः ते साम ।
8. कर्त्त 337 - लोकः ते सामान्य ।
9. जै-उ 11123 - प्राणी वाहामेव वाहकं तद्वयः ।
Symbolically the pronouns like Ayam and Idam meaning 'this creation and Tat and Sah meaning the Supreme being have the mystical depth in them which was unveiled and contemplated at large in the Upanisads. Thus we see in that the certain syllables and pronouns occurring in the Rigveda become symbols in later Brahmanic Literature due to their specific qualifying nature and the concept which is qualified by them.

9. **Mantric or Metre Symbols**

In the Rigveda the mystical thought is expressed in Metric poetry. The metres were created by Purusa through sacrifice. Yaska etymologises it as चन्दनि चादनात्. As the prayer is covered by the metre, hence this is called chandas. For the study of Veda knowledge of chandas is inevitable along with Rsi and deity. In the Rigveda mainly gāyatrī, tristubh and jāgati are described. In the same hymn there is mention of saptavānī. In the Rigveda the metres are depicted in form of birds as we learn from suparnākhyāna that Gāyatri brought soma from Heaven in form of the bird. Metres (chandas) in general are

1. श्रु १०००९ - चन्दनां, स्त्रिया तस्माद ब्रह्मस्माद द्वायः।
2. निर्मक्य ७ हि
3. श्रु १०६४२३
4. श्रु १०६४२४ - अश्रुगणनर निमते सप्त वाणीः।
5. श्रु ३४८४५६७ - अवनतं नागवषो त्यत्ते अंशस्यं चैव दशंकेष।
identified with virya, the bonds of Varuna, the cloth of Agni, vāk, the houses of devas, the horses of gods, the directions, pañcajana, loman, all the gods, swargaloka, pasu, praśa, prajāpati, the limbs of prajāpati, prāna, brahman, etc.

(i) **Gayatri**

Gayatri is the chief of the vedic metres. It is of three quarters each containing eight letters.

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1 • ता ६०९२६ - वरूण वीर्य छन्दारिः
2 • काठ १२६ - छन्दारिः वस्माशा
3 • मः ३०५ - छन्दारिः वा अर्थावः
4 • मः १०९ - छन्दारिः वाक
5 • मः १२८० - छन्दारिः वाक देवान्तः गृहः
6 • मः ३३१३ - छन्दारिः वाक देवावनः सौम देवधा
7 • माँष ८३१२ - छन्दारिः वै दिसः
8 • मः १४९ - छन्दारिः वै पद्मनः
9 • माँष ६४१६ - छन्दारिः वै लोमाँनः
10 • मः १३४२ - छन्दारिः वै सर्व देवतः
11 • मः २२२४ - छन्दारिः वै स्वामः लोकः
12 • तस्त ३४९१२ - छन्दाक्षीर धनु वै पशः
13 • तस्त ३४९१ - छन्दाक्षीर धनु वै प्रजः
14 • मः ४५३ - प्रजापतिः छन्दारिः
15 • पुजः २१८ - प्रजापतिः प्रजाः प्रजातिः छन्दारिः
16 • मः ३०९ - प्रजा वै एतानीतरण छन्दारिः वामुक्तः
17 • तस्त २६०४ - ब्रह्म वै छन्दारिः
18 • शं १०१४१६
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has been identified in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa with Agni-stoma, tejas, Brāhmaṇa, purusa, brahman, etc. In other Brāhmaṇas it symbolises agni, bhūloka, the mukha of metres, brahmavarcas, prāna, sīna, jyotis, pasu, vāk, samvatsara, etc.

(ii) **Tristubh**

In the Ṛgveda the name of the metre occurs and it stands for, in the Brāhmaṇas, Ṛkāhóhi, dyuloka,
ätman, vajra, etc.

(iii) Jagatī

The Brāhmaṇa also mentions the name of this metre.

In Aitareya Brāhmaṇa Jagatī has been called as Gauḥ.

In other Brāhmaṇas Jagatī has been identified with śrotra, dyauḥ, all the metres, the earth, pasu, prajanana, the lower prāṇa, etc.

(iv) Anustup

The Brāhmaṇa also mentions this metre in 10th mandala.

In the Brāhmaṇas this metre is identified with vak, apah, the earth, prajāpati, prāṇa, yajna, yosa, etc.
(v) **Brhati**

*Brhati* as a metre is also mentioned in the *Rgveda* itself. In the *Brāhmaṇas* it symbolises ātman, prāna, antarikṣa, svargaloka, samivatsara, manas, vāk, etc.

(vi) **Pankti**

This metre occurs in the *Rgveda*. It has been identified with anna, yajña, śrotra, etc.

(vii) **Usnik**

*Usnik* also occurs in the *Rgveda* by name. In the
Brāhmanas it is identified with purusa, ayus, griva, vajra, pasu, loman, etc.

Thus we have seen in this section that the metres also enrich the Rigvedic symbology and they are identified with a very wide vision. For the Rigvedic mystic metres are the music of soul and rhythm of eternal word i.e. Brahman. The various chandas protect the spirit of the word with glorious garb of sounds and finally unveiling the supreme knowledge and bliss of the cosmic super conscious mind.

10. Numerical Symbols

Though the numbers are the method of reckoning the physical objects yet in association with abstract concepts or spiritual facts they attained symbolicity. These numbers in the Rigveda have also been used as symbols which are duly unfolded in the Brähmanic texts and Upaniṣadic literature. In the Rigveda we see the numbers used independently and in compositions. There are about twenty radical forms that come in various derived forms in the Rigveda.

1. ऐ·ञः ४·३ - वैशिष्ठ्यां हो पुरस्: ।
2. ऐ·ञः १·५ - आयुर्व उपेश्च: ।
3. माश: ८·६·२·११ - ग्रीवा उपेश्च: ।
4. ऐ·ञः १·२०९ - ब्यो उपेश्च: ।
5. तः ८·१०·४ - काशो वा उपेश्च: ।
6. ऐ·ञः २·२६ - तस्य श्रवणस्यं उपेश्च लोभार्थं ।
7. Key to Vedic Symbolism.
(i) **Eka**

Eka, ekam, eke, eka etc. have been used in the RV. We witness ekatn in Nasadiya hymn taken as a symbol of "one unmanifest being" as Sayana\(^2\) and Atmananda\(^3\) interpret it. There is hardly any scholar who ignores the mystical significance of eka.\(^4\) This eka occurs in compounds with cakra, dhenu, pad, pât, rât, sâta, etc. In Asyamiti hymn\(^5\) alone eka is seen with āva, kimapi, bibhrat, ekaja, pāda, esam abhicaṣte rūpam and also with sat. In Tattiriya Samhitā eka has been identified with Prajapati. This has paved the way to numerical mysticism in later development. We can see in the Yajurveda, Ch. 40, the mystical usage of one is magnified with the term Rsi.\(^6\) This eka is the mysterious number denoting the primal stage of creation and also ultimate state of the universe.

(ii) **Dvi (two)**

The number two denotes dualism conceived in nature and being, may well be witnessed as sensient and insensient, matter and form, good and evil, life and death, moving and unmoving and so on. In the RV we see the dual gods as

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1. RV. 1.164.44
2. यो 10.129.2 - स्वस्मध्व धीरेरं द्रिष्ट ज्ञात्व वर्तत इत स्वधा माया । त्या तद भ्रूषक्वपूर्वागापुरानामवीर्य । -सायण
3. यो 1.164.6 - अस्य नित्यमात्रमल्लभस्य स्वः स्वस्ये जगित विमोक्ष्यं देवैर अदर्जन्याय । आत्मानन्दम्
4. यो 1.164.
5. तैष । महदेवानुभठं तमेकु ।
6. ययौ 40.6- पूण्यकेण ।
7. यो 1.83.3
as dyāvā-prthivī, ahorātra, Ītān ca satyam, Agnisoma,
Asvinau, Yama-Yamī, Āna-ānanda, etc. This duality has
been presented in form of Yama, Yama or Dvandva,
Dvā indicates mystical usage of the term in the popular
verse of Rgveda 1.164.20 where duality of God and
individual soul is symbolised by two birds sitting on a
same twig of the tree. Mostly the commentators of this
verse accept the mystical notion presented by this symbol
of number Two. The various compositions with dvi —
occurs in the Rgveda as Dvijamā, Dvijāḥ, Dvipādī,
Dvibandhu, Dvibarha, Dvimātā, Dvivartani, Dvisavesam etc.
The figure has been used in adverbial forms like dvitā,
dvidhā, dvitāyāyā etc. These terms have been interpreted
in various modes of life in mystical expressions.

(iii) Trin (Three)

Trinity in human life and thought is well witnessed
in the Universe. This notion of plurality in Metaphysical
thinking is most ancient in world religions. The Rgveda
too is interpreted by Swami Dayananda the follower of
trinity ultimately. Tvisraḥ and trayah have been the clear
indication of threefold division of the universe as prthivī,
antarikṣa and dyauḥ. Similarly body, mind and soul in
later developments. Three gods, in Nirukta, Agni- Vāyu-Sūrya
or Agni-Indra-Āditya are the result of this trinity. This

1. RV. 1.164.20 — द्वा पूर्णर्यम् समानः समानः समानं बृक्ष पौर्णस्वस्तये।
लघूरूपः पिपलं चाँड़लं च वाक्ष्यानं च अभवांकृत् सीति॥
trinity may be seen with kakup, kadruka, kasah, cakra, tantu, dive, sriaga, nakha, nabhi, pastya, pajas, pat, pratha, bandhu, barhis, mantu, matii, mirdhan, yuga, vayah, varutha, vastu, viatip, sirshan, sloka, sadhasta, anika, ambaka, aruna, udhan etc. In the sense of triple tridha, trika, tridhatu trivrt etc. are adverbs in the Rgveda. For the Rgvedic mystic trinity is symbol of multitude. Sri Aurobindo finds Saccidananda in Veda as the terms vasu (substance), urj (abounding force of our being and priyan or mayas (delight and love) in the very essence of our existence. Similarly trihi roganani for him means as "three successive worlds of mentality one superimposed on the other sensational, aesthetic and emotional mind, the pure intellect and the divine intelligence". The numbers of three is very favourite to the Rgvedic seers. Trayt symbolising Rgveda, Samveda and Yajurveda is popular.

(iv) Catur (four)

Catvaram, cetasra and catvari and other forms of catur have been duly symbolised by the Rgvedic mystics. In some other context they belong to some higher principles or personified physical phenomena. Turiya attained highest state of consciousness as observer of awakening, sleeping and dreaming states in Indian Yoga and Vedanta. The fourfold

1. Key to Vedic Symbolism.
division of Indian society may be witnessed in the Ṛgveda 10.90. Similarly four quarters of speech and puruṣa may be seen in the Ṛgveda. Catur has also its compounds with aksara, anīka (asrīḥ) yuga, vayam, ṛṅga, kaparda, pāda, pādi, samudra etc. Caturdasā, catvārimśat, catustrimśat, are the numbers used with various nouns. The sense of fourfold is carried by caturdhā.

(v) Pancāma (Five)

Similarly panicma occurs in compounds with (panca)jana, padam, yama, raṁi, hotṛ, ara etc. and paṅca, paṅcādāsa, paṅcāsāta etc. occur to denote the multitude of this number. Five fold division of things are very popular as stavah, janāḥ and priests. This was evolved into five matterś (mahābhūta) and paṅcagnīvidyā or pancakosas in upaniṣads. Griffith finds five linked with Tribes, races, rivers of land, adhvāryu, Bulls, hotarṣ priests, seasons etc.

(vi) Sat (Sixth)

Sat has played a symbolic role in the Ṛgveda being associated with seasons, expansions and enemies. The terms like saṁjura, saṁjatu, aksa, ara, āśva, vidhāna, etc. occur in the Ṛgveda.

1. RV. 10.90
2. Ś. 1.164 - बच्चार्य वाक पैरेमिता पदांनि।
3. Ś. 10.90 - जिकाबुधवर्य युदेत पुलमः पादों स्येला भवें पुनः।
4. Cf. Hymns from the Ṛgveda, Griffith finds four associated with priests, gods, cards, chalices, dice, horns of Agni, vedas, four-eyed agni, four-faced Varuṇa, four-footed cloud, gaurī, vāk etc.
7. **Saptan**¹(Seven)

Number seven has been largely used in the Rgveda. It has compounds with rsayah, go, cakra, rasmayah, jihvāh, tantu, nāman, pādi, putra, budha, mātaram, mānuṣāh, jāmayah, vaḍhirī, sivāsu, sīrans, svāṣa, ahaṇ, hotṛ, aśva and aśya, etc. They have been interpreted variously by the commentators. The multiplied forms of saptan as triṇaṁtaḥ, triṇaṁta, ṣaḍtaḥ, ṣaḍta, etc. denote certain objects according to their contexts and in the mystical verses they are part of symbolic interpretation. This symbolism becomes apparent in Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads.

Asyavāṃya Hymn of the Rgveda is well known for numerical mysticism.² Griffith finds seven (saptan) as linked in various senses with castles, celestial streams, cows, days of week, divisions of year, flames of Agni, forts of the aborigines, germs, solar rays, horses of the sun, metres of the veda, mothers, mouths of Brhaspati, priests, reins, regions of the earth, Rsis, rivers, sages, singers, sisters, sunbeams, times, tones, treasures and sacrifice, Ādityas, communities, fiends, glories, guards of soma, heavenly singers, heroes, hotars, lights of sacrifices, oblations, oceans, ridges of mountains, rivers of air, sons of Aditi, spears of Maruts, threads of sacrifice, troops of Maruts etc.³

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1. RV. 10.72.3
2. RV. 1.164
3. Hymns of the Rgveda, Griffith. (Index)
Seven-headed Sun, Seven-rayed Agni, seven-reined car of Sun, and seven-wheeled car have got the symbols helped by the number seven.

(viii) **Aṣṭaṛ, Navam and Dasan** (Eight, Nine and Ten)

Eight as Aṣṭaṛ possesses very little number of formation in the Rgveda and its compounds as astapadi and aṣṭabandhura. In the Rgveda the mystical notion of eightfold division is not so popular except aṣṭa vasavah, aṣṭau ādityas etc. In the Atharvaveda this number is used as Aṣṭacakrā Ayodṛṣ, meaning human body symbolically. Vaṁ has also been mentioned as having eightfold division because of eight syllables in Gāyatri metre. The eight points of earth are also mentioned in the Rgveda.

Similarly nine is not so popular number as according to Yāska 'it is never new'. In the Rgveda Navam has only two compounds as Navagva and Navapadi. Navamam and Navati are cardinal numbers. Ninety are floods, rivers, forts, steeds=days and Ninety-nine qualify forts, rivers, Vāyu’s horses, Vṛtras (demons), etc.

Dasan has its compounds with gva, mayam, māsya, yantram, yoktr, yojana, ratha, (dāsārajṛa, vrajam, sākhā sipra, angula, aritra, avani, etc. This number ten is

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1. **RGVEDA 1.35.8**
2. **RV 10.39.10**
3. **RV. 2.18.4**
linked with many objects as fingers, sisters, daughters of Tvastr, regions, Sūrya's horses, mouths of sacrifices. Indefinitely for many, usual number of things presented and months of human gestation. Tenfold draught and tenth age of decade of life are also found in the Ṛgveda.

(ix) Numbers upto Ninety¹ (Navati)

Number ekādāsa² also appears as denoting the three-eleven gods in the Ṛgveda. Similarly Dvādaśa (twelve) carries the sense of twelve months of the year. This number is metaphorised as ten spokes of wheel. Dvādaśa Rudras and Aditya were later developments from the symbolicity of the term. Asfti (80) only once appears in the RV.2.18.6. Similarly șaṣṭi, (60) saptati(70) and navati(90) have small number of references. Twenty(20), Trimsat(30), Catvārimśat (40), Paṃcāśat (50) have already/dealt with their radical numbers.

(x) Śatam³ (Hundred)

Śatam has been used in compounds with kratus, gvin, cakram, dātu, dāyam, dāvni, durasya, dhānyam, dhārā; nītha, pātra, pād, parvan, pavitra, Bradnā, bhujı, manyu, śatmūti, yātuh, yāman, rças, (śatēṣṭ, śatāvaneya, valā, vāja, cakṣanāh, vraja, śāradāyā, sāhah, magha, āyusam, aritra.

1. RV.4.48.4
2. RV. 1.139.11
3. RV. 1.164.11
sátāvan, satavāyam, sātasrīm, asva, sātināh, sātinibhip, satotih etc. Sātam has played a significant role in mystical interpretation through symbolicity of the term. In the Rgveda hundred is linked with catsles, forts, years, natural life-time, winters, autumns, powers of lord Indra, Hundred wintered $\frac{1}{10}$ etc. Symbolically Sātam means many, Infinite or multifarious.

(xi) **Sahasra** (Thousand)

Sahasra (1000) is very favourite symbol of the Rgvedic seers. Whenever they like to sublimate and exalt the idea they use the term sahasta to mean Infinite number. Like sātam it is of much more importance as it occurs in many compounds with ketu, cakṣas, cetā, hit, nīthih, nītha, daksīnā, dā, dātu, dāna, dāvan, dvarā, dhārā, nirṇij, parna, pājas, pātha, pāt, pāda, poṣa, pradhana, bāhu, bhara, bharnas, bhraṣṭi, mīhe, muska, utī, bhara, yāna, retas, vata, varcas, valśa, vāja, vīra, śīrṣan, śṛnga, soka, sāh, sātana, sāve, stari, sthūṇā, aksa, aksara, apsah, magha, argha, sahasri, sahasrini, sahasriyam, sahasroti, etc.

Sahasra has been etymologised by Yāska from sahas meaning force or power.

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1. The Hymns of the Rgveda, Griffith.
2. RV. 1.11.8.
Sahasra becomes the symbol of omnipotent and Almighty God. Purusa Hymns (RV. 10.90) and many epithets associated with Agni, Soma, Indra Varuna and also with Visvakarman and Prajapati, denote spiritual symbolicity of sátam and sahasram.

(xii) Ardhan, Bahu, Bhūyas and Bhūri (Half, Many, plenty and numerous)

Ardhan is used as ardham, ardhe, ardhagarbhah, ardhadevan, ardhayāḥ, ardhyam, Ardha meaning half is derived from the root ṛdh by Yāska. Parame parardhe has been very popular expression symbolising the upper hemisphere of the universe contrary to purve parardhe i.e. the earth.

Like sahasra, bahu and bhūyas denote multitude. It makes some sense in compound forms as bahutā, bahupāyyam, bahuprajāḥ, bahutantarāḥ, bahulabhumānāḥ, bahusūvari, bahuvannam, etc.

Bhūri makes compound forms as Bhūri-karmāṇe, bhūrgo, bhūricaksam, Bhūrijamā, bhūridāḥ, bhūridātraḥ, bhūridevattarāḥ, bhūridāvamah, bhūridāvari, bhūridhāyasam, bhūridhāre, bhūri-pāsau, bhūripośīnāḥ, bhūribhārah,

1. RV. 1.92.1
2. RV. 2.18.3.
3. RV. 2.14.10
4. RV. 1.10.2.
5. Nirukta. JU 20
bhūri retasa, bhūrivar pasah, bhūrivāram, bhūrisṛngah, 
bhūristhātrām, bhūryāsutiḥ and bhūryojā etc. Similarly 
this term denotes many aspects of the concepts used with 
it.

The symbolic nature of satam, sahasra, bahu and bhūri 
tends to infinite modes of the ultimate reality described 
symbolically by the seers. Visvakarman hymn is also 
noticeable in this respect.

Some higher numbers as trisāta ca śaṣṭih, sapta 
śatam viṃśatiśca, symbolise respectively yearly number of 
days (360) and days and nights both (720). They have 
been called as putras in the Ṛgveda 1.164.11.

(xiii) Visva¹ (all)

Visva meaning all, is also used as infinite 
number in the Ṛgveda. The compounds with kṛt, jīt, jn, 
tūr, dāni, pis, pūṣ, bhrāj, inva, ejayā, rūpī, vīt, 
śuc, suvid, asa, visvābhu, sāh, karman, kṛṣṭi, gūṛta, 
caḷa, caṛṣani, janya, jīnva, etc. can be seen in the 
Ṛgveda. The aluk-tatpuruṣa compounds as visvataścakṣus, 
visvataḥpā, visvatodhiḥ, bāhu, mukha etc are well 
oticeable. More compounds with Viśva are as tūrti, 
darśata, dṛṣṭa, deva, dohas, dhā, dhāyas, dhenā, pesās, 
apsu, apsnyā, bhara, bhānu, bhesaja, bhoja, manas, manus, 
mahas, mānusa, vārā, vārya, vedas, vyacas, śambhuvam,

1. ṚGVEDA 1.5.9
visvāci, visvānarāh, visvāmitrah, visvāyus, visvāvasu, visvāha etc. In various contexts the term visva enumerates as many and infinite number of the objects whether spiritual or physical ones. Mainly it is meant for 'all'.

In this category of the Numerical symbols in the Rgveda we have seen that the numbers being associated with certain objects or concepts jump into symbolic nature with their new meanings. Then the later interpreters recollect the concepts by the numbers alone as in the Atharvaveda 1.1.1. Here 'trisaptā' is noticeable in various commentaries as thrice-seven or three-seventimes or three times seven. The concepts associated with these numbers vary according to the commentators. But all are based on numerical mysticism or symbolism evolved in Brāhmaṇic expressions but ingrained in the Samhitās.

11. Psychological Symbols

We know that the physical objects symbolise some subtle principles and also the subtle principles become the conveyer of more abstract ideas. No doubt that in the vedic sacrificial symbols, hotṛ is the symbol of prāna and it is simultaneously important that prānas are the symbol of life principle or the cosmic energy of life or Supreme Soul in Upaniṣadic thought. The act of sacrifice is the symbol of one's obeisance and reverence yet this psychic

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1. AV.1: त्रिसप्ताः द्रव द्वरिषयानि विशब्दः
symbol may also play a part in symbolising some higher principle such as relation with Supreme power, God or deity. Uptill now we have approached the subtle principles through the gross symbols. Here we intend to deal with emotions and functions of mind used as symbols, namely kāma, manyu, śraddhā, manas, hṛdaya, vāk, prāṇa, ātman and brhaman etc.

(1) Desire (Kāma)

In the Rgveda aesthetic feeling as 'kāma' can be seen in the sense of desire for various objects. Kāma in the compounds with kāti, mūta, are seen in the Rgveda. Kāma has been used by the seers. In RV 10.129 "Thereafter arose Desire, in the beginning, Desire, the primal seed and germ of spirit" may be witnessed in Griffith. He translates Kāma as 'Eros or Love'.

In Brāhmanic literature Kāma has been identified with vaisvānara, chandas, samudra, all the desires, madhu, prajāpati as ananta etc.

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1. The Hymns from the Rgveda.
2. द्र. 3.1.10 - कामो दि वैस्वानरः।
3. द्र. 1.332 - छन्दपिः दि सद्व कामा:।
4. पै. 1.9.4 - समुद्रे दि कामः।
5. द्र. 1.3.2 - मनोभ सद्व कामा: प्रिष्ठः।
6. द्र. 1.1.3 - सद्वे दि कामा नमु।
7. द्र. 1.314 - कामो भूल्या जनन्तो भवेः।
(ii) **Manyuh (Cosmic anger)**

The Rgveda devotes two whole hymns to Manyu. The mystical significance of Manyu lies in its derivative meaning of root *man*. Certain power of minds thinking faculty is meant from this term but in the hymns manyu has been extolled as 'an anger' and duly identified with that of Indra, Varuṇa, and jātavedas. It is full of austerity. The description of manyu symbolises it with certain mysterious faculty of mind that acts with discrimination automatically abolishing evil and establishing good in life and universe. It has been described as killer of the Vṛttra and other foes. In later developments this manyu may be seen in the Kaṭha and Taittirīya Upaniṣads as "Fire enkindles with the fear of the Absolute, Sūrya too shines with fear of the Absolute. Indra and Vāyu, also the Mṛtyuḥ run their offices with the fear of the Absolute Soul." Manyu is the fierce form of the discipline of the Absolute. Manyu is not the individual's anger but the universal discipline and order or cause of obedience in nature.

(iii) **Śraddhā (Faith)**

Śraddhā has been etymologised by Yaska as Śrāt = Satya + dha, that is the potency of retaining the truth.

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1. RV. 10.83-84
2. Kathopanisad
3. Nirukta 9.36
The Rgveda offers only one hymn to Śraddhā. It is said that with the help of Śraddhā fire is enkindled, oblation of ghee is offered by Śraddhā, the wealth is obtained through Śraddhā, etc. Actually Śraddhā symbolises the receptive tranquil and serene state of mind in which the truth reflects. This Śraddhā has been called as daughter of Sūrya and Prajāpatī in later developments. Its identifications in the Brāhmaṇas may be seen with dīkṣā, the daughter of Sūrya, the base of satya, āpāḥ, brahmavarcasam, tejas, the queen of devas, patni, upper part, etc.

Truth can not be perceived with senses and rational laws of mind. Śraddhā is the only key to open the door of intuition to enter the eternal truth and only Śraddhā is required there. Dr. Radha Krishnan calls faith as 'Vision of Soul'.

1. RV. 10.151
2. माश. १२.८.२.४ - एल्लेदीक्षाये हृष्ट यथासा
3. माश. १२.७.३.११ - श्रद्धा वै दूर्भव्य दुर्लभता
4. मै। ३.११.६ - अध्यात्मानुत्तमाः अहं तत्त्वं प्रजापितः
5. को ४७.३ - ज्ञान अध्यात्माः
6. जे.श्र. २.२१.८ - श्रद्धा वै ब्रह्मवृत्तमूलः
7. माश. ११.३.१.१ - तेज एव अध्यात्माः
8. जे.श्र. २.४२६ - एषा लोकदेवानाः राजस्य यथासा
9. तै.श्र. १०.६४.१ - पत्नी अध्यात्माः
10. शां.श्र. ७.१८ - प्रजापितस्य अध्यात्माः अन्तरस्य कर्म दीर्घता सत्य सत्यानन्यः
The Functions of Manas (Mind)

In the Rgveda manas or mind has been used in various forms as manamsi and its compounds with Manascit, manodhṛtah, manoyujah, manovatā, mananāh, manasmayam, manasvān etc. and also its functions as manīṣa and manīṣināh, manman, manmāñi, matih, matayah etc.¹ The functions of Manas quoted above come in the sense of prayer, wisdom, thoughts or thinking faculty as well. The rational faculty of mind is denoted by the terms like dhīh, dhiyah, dhiyāvāsu, dhiyavāhu, dhirāh, dhirāṇaśāh, dhiyāntah, dhiyāyāh and also dhiyānā, etc. In the Rgveda manas and manas- occur together, hence the concept of hṛdaya also connected with it. In Yajurveda manas is called hṛtpratistham.² The motion of manas is always being symbolised with the speed of horses.³ horses have been called as manoyujā.³ In RV 10.90 the moon has been originated from the mind of the cosmic person.⁴ This equation of mind and moon is well noticeable in later developments of astrology and Indian Philosophy and Religion.

¹ Vedic Word Concordance.
² Yajurveda.
³ RV 11.94.4.
⁴ RV 10.90.18 वन्नमा मनसोजात्स्य चक्षोऽयैं अजायत्.
Manas has been identified, in the Brāhmaṇas, with anant, prthivi, calf of speech, the source of vak, yajuś, candrasa, santati, antarikṣa, most swift, samudra, havis, prajāpati, tapas, īndra, vak, vṛṣan, full of desires, the retas of hṛdaya, etc.

This manas is neither good nor bad. It is also inclined
towards the animal instincts by nature. Gopatha Brāhmaṇa calls manas as 'all and everything'. Thus the functions of mind and manas itself become a symbol of various higher principles in person as well as in the cosmos.

(v) Hṛdaya

In the Rgveda hṛdaya and its functions i.e. emotions have been mentioned at large. Hṛdaya has been called as the 'seat of manas'. There are no clear remarking lines between manas and hṛdaya but the thinking faculty may be called as manas and pākṣes passions and feelings are associated with hṛdaya. Hṛdaya is identified, in the Brāhmaṇas with ātman, the retas of prajā, agni, putra, prajāpati, prāṇa, seat of prāṇa, parama brahman, brahma, yūpa, Viṣṇu, etc.
Hṛdaya is a symbol of most hidden and nearest thing. Hṛdaya is often called as guhā in upanisads. Manas, vāk and the senses are called to be seated at heart. Generally hṛdaya is the symbol of consciousness centered in human being.

(vi) Vāk (Speech)

The Rgveda itself is an eternal speech of the Absolute to the seer mind. Vāk may be witnessed in various grammatical formations like 'vācaḥ, vācāṃ, vāci' and the synonyms of speech meaning prayer may be seen in various contexts. Yāska has mentioned about 57 names for vāk.

Vāk in the Rgveda has got the symbolic meaning in Asyavāmiya hymn (1.164). In the Brāhmaṇas it is identified with the expansion of prāṇa, the consort of prāṇa, the retas of manas, prajñāna, sarasvati, saṁvatsara.
hotā, praśpati, yoni, vedi, virāt, samudra, dhenu, etc. Truth and untruth have been called as two udders of speech. 

Dirghatamas of the Rgveda has mentioned that the fourth quarter of the vak is spoken by the mortal beings while three of them are hidden in the secret place. The four steps of vak and the four steps of puruṣa may be identified in the process of mystification of vak. Vācaknāvi of Ambṛṅa declares the Vibhūtis of speech which is comparable to that of Geeta. Mahābhāṣya of Patañjaliya has commented on the Rāgvedic vak in grammarians' views. Vāk or sabda has been equated with brahman in later Brāhmānic and Upanisadic works. The concept of sphota is well noticeable as mystical concept of vak ingrained in Rgveda Samhita.
(vii) **Prāna, Ātman and Brahman**

Prāna has got a number of references in the Rigveda but in Atharvaveda we find one complete hymn dedicated to prāṇa. In Brāhmaṇas prāṇa-vidyā has been discovered by the devotees in the pantheistic lines. Prāṇa is equated with supremeself and everything originates from it. But in the Rigveda we find only some clues which were developed in later Brāhmaṇas. Thus long list of identifications shows the rich symbology of Prāṇa.

Similarly Ātman too has got various grades of meanings in the Rigveda. It is meant for physical body as well as individual self. In the Brāhmaṇas Ātman too gains symbolic depth being exalted in Upaniṣads on the lines of prāṇa symbology. In the Rigveda Ātman can be witnessed only as a consciousness or life principle.

Brahman has largely been used to denote the prayers, the power of mantra and also an all-pervading principle in the Rigveda. In the Brāhmaṇas we find a long list of identifications enriching the symbology of Brāhman.

These concepts are dealt at length on their respective places in the succeeding chapters.
The eleven categories of Rgvedic symbols are evident that Rgvedic seers selected the symbols from every nook and corner of the experienced world. The external and internal nature and its functions have been largely used to denote the higher principles experienced by them. The long list of identifications of the respective symbols show that the mind of the Rgvedic seers is not only poetic but he is face to face with the inner hidden truth existing in his own being. For example we have seen that Indra is equated with power, fertility, mind, prāṇa and kṣatra etc. We can here well analyse these expressions and find out the depth of symbols representing the spiritual facts. The kṣatra are or valour is associated with arms. We can see in the Rgveda 10.90 that ksatriya has been originated from the arms of the cosmic person. At the same time Indra is also a symbol of prāṇa and manas. When we analyse these expressions we can equate Indra with puruṣa or the cosmic being and at the same time manas is the presiding entity over the senses which are called indriyas. Thus this is one of the hundreds of symbols which tell us of their mystical nature of meaning.

Mysticism is absolutely wedded to symbolism. The mystic school of Rgvedic Interpretation makes its advancement only on the way of Rgvedic Symbology which is ingrained in samhita and developed or flourished in symbolic expressions coming in the Brāhmaṇic and Upanisadic Literature.