CHAPTER: IV

MAJOR GODS OF DYUSTHANA

NATURALISTIC INTERPRETATIONS

SURYA

In the Rig Veda ten complete hymns are dedicated to Sūrya and is mentioned on many occasions with other Gods. Sūrya, literally the sun, is primarily the orb of the physical sun itself. He is the aid to vision. Sūrya gives birth to the metronymic Āditya, son of Aditi (RV.I.50.12; 191.9; VIII.90.11) or Ādityas (RV.X.88.11), but elsewhere he is in contrast with the Ādityas (RV.VIII.35.13-15). His paternal parent is Dyaus (RV.X.37.1). He is of Godly birth. The Gods brought him up, who was concealed in the ocean (RV.X.72.7). Being symbolic of Agni he was located by the Gods in heaven (RV.X.88.11). Another school of thought considers Sūrya, to have taken birth from the eye of the world-giant Puruṣa (RV.X.90.3).

Diverse individual Gods are believed to have given rise to the Sun. Indra generated him (RV.II.12.4), compelled him to sparkle and bedazzle or accentuated him to heaven (RV.III.44.2; VIII.78.7). Indra-Vishnu generated him (RV.VII.99.4), Indra-Soma nurtured Sūrya with light (RV.VI.72.2), Indra-Varuna compelled him to ascend to heaven (RV.VII.82.3), Mitra-Varuṇa placed him in heaven (RV.IV.13.2; V.63.4.7).

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1.RV.X.88.11 :
yadedenam adadhurayajñīyāsasūryamāđiteyam //
yadas chariśnu mithunavabhūtāmāđit prepaśyan bhuvanāni visvā //

2.RV.X.90.13 :
chandramāmanasajātačakṣoḥsūryo ajaṣyata //
mukhāindrascagniścha prajñādvayurajāyata //
Sāyana’s commentary on X.88.11 :
āđiteyam aditeḥ putram sūryam enam agnim cha yajñīyāsaḥ yajñārāhāḥ devāḥ divi dyuleko adadhuḥ dhṛtavantaḥ //
Soma incorporated light in the sun (RV.VI.44.23; IX.97.41); generated Sūrya (RV.IX.96.5; 110.5), enhanced him to shine (RV.IX.63.7) or raised him in heaven (RV.IX.107.7). Agni founded the bedazzling flow (brightness) of the Sun at an altitude (RV.X.3.2) and brought about his ascent to heaven.

The most appreciated light of the Sūrya in the sky is as the great usage of Agni (RV.X.7.3). The eye of Sūrya is stated many a time (RV.V.40.8), but he is himself equally often called the eye of Mitra and Varuṇa or Agni as well (RV.I.115.1). In the Atharvaveda he is designated as the ‘lord of eyes’ (AV.V.24.9) and is said to be the one-eye of all created beings and to visualize extensively beyond the sky, the earth and the waters (AV.13.1.45). He is far sighted (RV.VII.35.8; X.37.1); all seeing (I.50.2), takes the form of spy ‘spas’ of the whole world (RV.IV.13.3); compasses all beings and the good and bad deeds of mortals (RV.I.50.7; VI.51.2; VII.60.2; 61.1; 63.1,4). Being inspired by Sūrya men pursue their objectives of life and execute their work (RV.VII.63.2, 3).

He is the soul incarnate or the guardian of all that is dynamic or static (RV.I.115.1; VII.60.2). He possesses a car harnessed by a single steed, called etaśa (RV.VII.63.2); or by an innumerable number of steeds (RV.I.115.3;

3.AV.13.1.45:

sūryo dyaṁ sūryaḥ prthivim sūrya āpo‘ti paśyati ||
sūryo bhutasyaikam chaksurā ruroha divāṁ mahīṁ ||

4.RV.X.37.1:

namo mitrasya varunasya chaksase maho devāya taṛtam saparyata ||
duṛdrśe devajātāya ketave divputrāya sūryāya śaṁsata ||

Sayana’s Commentary on X.37.1:

he rtvijah yuyarh mitrasya vaiunasya mitravarunayoh chaksase drastre mahah mahate devāya
dyoṭamānāya duḍerdrśe dūre santamapi paśyate devajatāya devesu jatāya ketave visvāya
prajñāpakāya divah putrāya prutrabhūtāya |

5.RV.IV.13.3:

yatsimakmvantamase viprche dhruvaksemā anavasyanto arthāṁ ||
tam sūryāṁ haṁitaḥ sapta yahviḥ spasāṁ visvāya jagato vahantu ||

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X.37.3, 49.7) or mares (RV.V.29.5) or by seven horses (RV.V.45.9) or mares called 'haritaḥ' (RV.I.50.8, 9; VII.60.3) or by seven swift mares (RV.IV.13.3). His seven mares are designated as the female offspring of his car 1.50.9. These horses are symbolic of his rays which are seven in count (RV.VIII.61.16).

Sūrya illuminates the whole world (RV.VII.63.1), for men and Gods (RV.I.50.5). He dispels the darkness with his light (RV.X.37.4). Sūrya measures the days (RV.I.50.7)⁶ and extends the days of life (RV.VIII.40.7). He cures ridding sickness, ailments and every evil omen or dreams (RV.X.37.4). All creatures rely on Sūrya (RV.I.164.14). The epithet ‘all creating’ ‘Viśvakarman’ is applied to him also (RV.X.170.4)⁷. By his greatness he is the divine priest ‘asuryaḥ purohitah’ of the Gods (RV.VIII.90.12). At sunrise he is invoked to declare men sinless to Mitra-Varuna and other deities (RV.VII.60.1;62). He is believed at sun rise to approach the Vṛtra-slayer, Indra and is even declared as Vṛtra-Slayer himself, when invoked with Indra (RV.VIII.82.1,2,4).

6. RV.I.50.7:
vi dyāmesi rajasprthraḥ mimano aktubhih |
paśyanjanmāṇi sūrya|

Sayana’s Commentary on RV.I.50.7:
aha ahāni aktubhiḥ raćribhiḥ saha mimānāḥ utpādayan. | ādityagatyadhīnāt vahātravibhāgasya ||

7. RV.X.170.4:
vibhrājanīyotiśā svaragachchho rochanaṁ divaḥ |
yenemā viśvā bhuvanānyabhṛtyā viśvārmanā viśvadevyā vatā ||
Sūrya is conceived as an inanimate object. He happens to be a brilliant weapon ‘udha’ which Mitra Varuna conceal with cloud and rain (RV.V.63.4). Sūrya’s orbit is constructed for him by Varuna (RV.I.24.8; VII.87.1) or by the Ādityas, Mitra, Varuna, Āryamān (RV.VII.60.4). His messenger is Pūsan (RV.VII.58.3). The Dawn exposes Sūrya as well as Agni and the sacrifice (RV.VII.80.2; 78.3). He shines with brilliance from the lap of the dawn (RV.VII.63.3). However, another point of view Dawn is Sūrya’s wife (RV.VII.75.5).

He is pleaded to remove diseases, ‘cure my heart disease, place my jaundice in the yellow birds’ (RV.I. 50.11, 12). Healing is his special province. He is the soul of the moving world (RV.I.115.1); and the source of Madhuvidyā—the knowledge of honey-therapy as antidote to poison (RV.I.191). His light lightens the world, his brightness makes men happy.

8. RV.V..63.4 :
   māyā vāmi mitrāvarunā divi śrītā suryo jyotiścharati chitrāmayudhaṁ |
   tamabhrena vrstvya guhatho divi parjanyā drapsa madhumanta irate ||

9. RV.I.24.8 :
   uruni hi rājā varunaśchakāra suryāya panthāmanvetavā u |
   apade pāda pratiḥatave’ karu tāpavaktā hṛdayāvidhaśchit ||

10. RV.I.50.11 :
   (i) udānmadya mitramaha ārohannuttaram divam |
     hṛdrogam mama surya harimānam cha naśaya ||

11. RV.I.50.12 :
   (ii) sukesu me harimānaṁ ropanākāsau dadhmasā |
     atho hāridravyesu me harimānaṁ ni dadhmasi ||

Sayana’s Commentary on RV.I.50.11 :
   evamvidhastvam mama hṛdrogāṁ hṛdayagatamāntaraṁ rogaṁ harimānaṁ |
   śārīragatakāntiharanasilaṁ vāhyāṁ rogaṁ | yadvā | śārīragataṁ hāridvaranam rogaprāptah |
   vaivarnyamityarthāḥ | tadubhayamapi nāśaya | mām stotāramubhayavidhādrogāṃmochayetyarthāḥ ||

Sayana’s Commentary on RV.I.50.12 :
   me madhyām harimānaṁ śārīragatāṁ hāridvarasya bhāvaṁ śukeṣu tāḍrāṁ varnaṁ kāmayamāṇesu |
   paksisu tathā ropanākāsu śārikāsu paksiviśesu dadhmasi sthāpayāmah | atho api cha hāridravese |
   haritāladesu tāḍgvarnavavatsu me madhyām harimānaṁ ni dadhmasi nidadhimahi ||

12. RV.I.115.1 :
   chitrāṁ devānamudgānikiṁ chaksurmitrasya varunasyāgameti |
   āpṛa dyāvāprthīvī antarikṣam sūrya ātmā jagatastahuyaścha ||
He supports the sky and is called the pillar of the sky (RV.IV.13.5). His knowledge of men's movements gives him the position of a judge of human action. The sun is also a giver of food.

DYAUS

Dyaus is personified as the god of heaven. He is generally coupled with Earth in the dual compound dyāvāprthivī, the universal parents. No single hymn of the RV is addressed to Dyaus alone. When he is mentioned separately the personification is limited almost entirely to the idea of paternity. The name then nearly always appears in the nominative or genitive case. The latter case, occurring about 50 times, is more frequent than all the other cases together. The genitive is regularly connected with the name of some other deity who is called the son or daughter of Dyaus. In about three-fourths of these instances Usas is his daughter, while in the remainder the Āśvins are his offspring (napātā), Agni is his son or child, Parjanya, Sūrya, the Ādityas, the Maruts and the Aṅgirases are his sons.

Out of its thirty occurrences in the nominative the name appears only eight times alone, being otherwise generally associated with Prthivī or mentioned with various deities mostly including Prthivī. In these eight passages he is three times styled as a father (RV.I.90.7; 164.33; IV.1.10), once the father of Indra (RV.IV.72.3), once he is spoken of as rich in seed (suretāḥ) and as having generated Agni (RV.IV.17.4); in the remaining three he is a bull (RV.V.36.5) or a red bull that bellows downwards (RV.V.58.6) and is said to have approved when Vṛtra was slain (RV.VI.72.3). In the dative the name is found eight times. In these passages he is mentioned only three times quite alone, once being called

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the ‘great father’ (RV.I.71.5), once ‘lofty’ (RV.I.54.3) and once the ‘lofty abode’ mentioned (RV.V.47.7). In two of the four occurrences in the accusative Dyaus is with Prthivi, once alone and without any distinctive statement (RV.I.174.3) and once (RV.I.31.4) Agni is said to have made him roar for man. Thus it appears that Dyaus is seldom mentioned independently and in only one-sixth of over ninety passages is his paternity not expressly stated or implied by association with Prthivi. The only essential feature of the personification in the RV is in fact his paternity.

Since Dyaus is called a bull that bellows (RV.V.58.6) as mentioned in few passages of RV (I.160.3; V.36.5) so a touch of theriomorphism is found as he is conceived as a roaring animal that fertilizes the earth. Dyaus is once compared with a black steed decked with pearls (RV.X.68.11), an obvious allusion to the nocturnal sky. The statement that Dyaus is furnished with a bolt (ādānīmat) looks like a touch of anthropomorphism. He is also spoken of as smiling through the clouds (II.4.6), the allusion being doubtless to the lightning sky.

13.RV.I.71.5:

\[
\text{mahe yatpita im rasam dive karava tsaratprśanyasačkitvān} \\
\text{srjadastā śṛṣṭā didyumasmaī svāyānī devo duhitari tvṣīṃi dhāt} ||
\]

Sayana’s Commentary:

\[
\text{mahe mahate pitre pālayitre dive dyotamanāya īm imai rasam prthivyāḥ sārabhutaṁ haviḥ yat yadā}
\text{yajamānāh kah karoti tādāṁni prśanyāḥ} \\
\text{sparsanakusālo rāks̄sādāih āchkitvān haviṃśi vahantaṁ he agne tvāṁ jānan avatsaraṁ}
\text{tvadbhayātpalāyate | astā isuksepanaśilo'gniḥ dhṛṣṭā dharsakena dhanuṣā asmai palāyamānāya}
\text{rāks̄sādāyaye didyum ďipyunām vānaṁ śṛjat visṛjati | devaḥ ďipyunāma uṣaḥkālam pṛāpto'gniḥ}
\text{svāyāṁ svakṣāyāṁ duhitari duhitvṛat samanantarabhāvānmuṣaṇa tvṣīṃ svakṣāyāṁ diptim dhāt}
\text{sthāpayati | uṣaḥkāle hi suryakīranaḥ prādurbhavanti | tāḥ svakṣāyāṁ prakāśāmekikaroti} ||
\]

14.RV.I.54.3:

\[
\text{archā dive vr̥ate śusyam vachah tvaksatram yasya vr̥ate dhṛṣṭanmanah} \\
\text{vr̥achchhṛavā asuro varhanā kṛtaṁ puro hariḥyāṁ vr̥avo ratho hi yah} ||
\]

15.RV.V.47.7:

\[
\text{tadastu mitrāvarunā tadagne śāṁ yorasamabhyanidamastu sastam} \\
\text{aśimahi gādhadunā pratiṣṭham namo dive vr̥ate sādanāya} ||
\]

Sayana’s Commentary:

\[
\text{namah namśkaromi dive dyotamanāya sūryāya vr̥ate mahate sādanāya āśrayaya vīśvasya} |
\]

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Such passages are, however, quite isolated, the conception of Dyaus being practically free from theriomorphism and anthropomorphism, excepting the notion of paternity. As a father he is most usually thought of in combination with Earth as a mother. This is indicated by the fact that his name forms a dual compound with that of Prthvī oftener than it is used alone in the singular, that in a large proportion of its occurrences in the singular it is accompanied by the name of Prthivi, and that when regarded separately he is not sufficiently individualized to have a hymn dedicated to his praise, though in conjunction with Prthivi he is celebrated in Six. Like nearly all the greater gods Dyaus is sometimes called asura (RV.I.122.1; 131.1; VIII.20.17) and he is once (RV.VI.51.5)\textsuperscript{16} invoked in the vocative as ‘Father Heaven’ (dyaus pitar) along with ‘Mother Earth’ (prthivi mātar). In about 20 passages the word dyaus is feminine, sometimes even when personified.

As the universal Father who with Mother Earth embraced all other deified objects and phenomena, he would have been the greatest among the deities of a chaotic polytheism.

The word is derived from the root div, to shine, thus meaning ‘the bright one’ and being allied to deva, god.

\textsuperscript{16}RV.VI.51.5 :
\begin{verbatim}
dyaus'pitah prthivi mātaradhrugagne bhrātarvasavo mrlatā nah |
viśva ādityā adite sajosā asmabhyan śarma vahulan vi yanta ||
\end{verbatim}
Adityas

The group of gods called Adityas is solemnised in six whole hymns and in parts of two others in the Rig Veda. It is rather indefinite both as to the names of the Gods it includes and as to their number. Not more than half a dozen are anywhere narrated and that only once: Mitra, Āryaman, Bhaga, Varuṇa, Dakṣa, Amśa (RV.II.27.1). In the last books of the Rig Veda, the number is once stated to be seven and once eight (RV.X.72.8). Aditi at first presenting only seven to the Gods and bringing the eighth, Mārtanda afterwards. The names of the Adityas are not specified in any of these passages. The Atharva Veda states that Aditi had eight sons (RV.VIII.9.21) and the Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa (I.1.9.1) states these eight by name as, Mitra, Varuna, Āryaman, Amśa, Bhaga, Dhāṛ, Indra, Vivasvat (the first five occur in RV. II.27.1) and the same list is quoted by Śāyāna on RV.II.27.1 as found in a different passage of the Taittiriya branch of the Veda.

17. RV.II.27.1:

\[
\text{ima gira \textit{adityebhyo ghrtasnuh sanādrājasbhyo juhvā juhomī} |}
\text{śrōtu mitra aryamā bhago nāstuvijāto varunō dakṣo amśāḥ} ||
\]

18. (i) RV.X.72.8:

\[
\text{astoi putrāso āditer-ye jātāstanva spari |}
\text{devān upa prait saptabhiḥ purā mārtamāsya} ||
\]

(ii) RV.X.72.9

\[
\text{saptabhiḥ putairaditi-rupa prait purvaṁ yugaṁ} |}
\text{prajāyāi mṛtyave tvat punarmārtamāmāh bharat} ||
\]

19. Sayana's Commentary on RV.II.27.1

\[
\text{ādityebhyah aditeḥ putrebhyah rājabhyaḥ rajamānebhyaḥ} \text{īsvarebhya vā mitrādbhyaḥ ghrtasnuḥ} \text{gṛhaprasravīṁrīghtam kṣaranty imā} \text{girāḥ sutilakṣanā vācāḥ sanāt sarvādā juhvāḥ | vagindriyena}
\text{juhomī prayachchhāmi karomīt yāvat | yadvā juhūstāniyena gḥṛtāṃ kṣarantī vāgrūpāni}
\text{havimśī juhomī ādityānuddiśya tyajāmi | nāḥ asmaṛtyāstā gīro mītrādayaḥ}
\text{pratyekam śrōtu | te cha taittirīye “astoi putrāso aditeḥ” ityupakramya}
\text{spaṣṭamankṛantāḥ | ‘mitraśca varuṇaśca dhāṛā chāryamāḥ} \text{cha āmśuśca bhagāścā indraścā}
\text{vivasvāṁścheteye’ (taittirīya.ārṇyaka.1.13.3) iti | mitraḥ pramīṇestrāyakaḥ | yadvā}
\text{sarveśāṁ snigdhaḥ arin yachchhati niyachchhatiti aryamāḥ | bhagāḥ bhajaniyo devah | tuvīti}
\text{vahunāma | vahusū dēṣeṣu anugraḥāḥ khandhāḥ prādurbhūtaḥ | varunāvisesanāmaḥ itat}
\text{papasya nivāraṇāt varunāḥ | daksah samarthāḥ | etachcha āmśasya visesanami | ete pratyekam}
\text{śrōvantu |}
\]
In addition to the six Ādityas mentioned in RV.II.27.1, Sūrya is on a few occasions addressed as Āditya. Under the name of Āditya, identified with Agni, Sūrya is said to have been placed by the Gods in the sky (RV.X.88.11). The number of the Ādityas was considered by the poets of the Rig Veda to have been definitely seven, the sun must have been the seventh, the eighth Mārtanda whom Aditi throws away and brings back (RV.X.72.8,9) probably being the setting sun. Indra on one occasion is coupled in the dual as an Āditya with Varuna the chief of the Ādityas (RV.VII.85.4). When one God alone is mentioned as an Āditya, it is generally Varuṇa, their chief; however in the hymn in which Mitra is celebrated alone (RV.III.59), that deity is called an Āditya, as well as Sūrya. When two are mentioned, they are Varuna and Mitra, once Varuṇa and Indra; when three, Varuṇa, Mitra and Āryamān, when five, which is only once the case, the same three together with Savitr and Bhaga. Dakṣa manifests its presence only in the enumeration of six mentioned above. The Ādityas are often invoked as a group, the names of Mitra and Varuṇa being generally mentioned at the same time. The name Ādityas appears not infrequently to be used in a broader sense, as an equivalent for the Gods generally. Their nature as a class in fact resembles that of the Gods in general, not being specifically characterized like that of their two chiefs, Mitra and Varuṇa. In the aggregate notion they are the Gods of celestial light, without denoting any particular manifestation of that light, such as Sun, Moon and Stars or dawn. In some of the hymns of the Rig Veda in which the Ādityas are invoked (especially in II.27), only the three

20.RV.X.88.11:
yadedenamadadhuryajiyāso divi devāh sūryamāditeyāṁ |
yadā charisīru mithunavabhūtāmādit prāpasyaṁ bhuvanāṁ viśvāṁ|
most frequently mentioned together, Mitra, Varuna and Āryamān seem to be implied. What is distant is near to them; they support all that is dynamic and is static, as Gods who protect the Universe (RV.II.27.3, 4). They see what is good and evil in men’s hearts and distinguish the honest man from the deceitful (RV.II.27.3; VIII.18.15). They are haters of falsehood and punish sin (RV.II.27.4; VII.52.2; 60.5; 66.13). They are besought to forgive sin (RV.II.27.14; 29.5), to avert its consequences or to transform them to Tītra Āptya (RV.V.52.2; VIII.47.8). They spread fetters for their enemies (RV.II.27.16), however they safeguard their worshippers in the manner as birds spread their over their young (RV.VIII.47.2). Their servants are protected as with armour, in order that no shaft can strike them (RV.VIII.47.7, 8). They cure ailments and distress (RV.VIII.18.10), and bestow various boons such as light, long life, offspring and guidance (RV.II.27; VIII.18.22).

The epithets which describe them are: bright (sucī), golden (hiranyaya), many-eyed (bhūryaksa), unwinking (animīsa), sleepless (asvapnaj), far-observing (dirghadhāī). They are kings, mighty (ksatriya), vast (uru), deep (gabhīra), inviolable (ariṣṭa), having fixed ordinances (dhṛtavrata), blameless (anavadya), sinless (avṛjina), pure (dhār-apūta), holy (ṛtāvan). The name is distinctly a metronymic formation from that of their mother Aditi, with whom they are naturally often invoked. This is also one of the three derivations presented by Yāska (Nirukta, II.13)²¹.

²¹ Nirukta II.13:

sūryāmadīteyam || aditeḥ putraṁ || evamanyāsāmapī devatānāmadītyapravādāḥ stutayo bhavanti ||
手套 yathaitanmitrasya varunasyāryamno daksasya bhagasyā-nisāyeti || athāpi mitravarunayoḥ ||
adityā dānunaspāti || dānapāti || athāpi mitrasyākasya || pra sa mitra marto astu prayasānyāśa
aditya sīksati
vratena || atyapi ngamī bhavati || atyapi varunasyākasya atha vayamādītya vrate tava |
vratamāt karmān || nivṛtikarma vārjayatītī sataḥ ||
idsmapitaradvatamasāmādeva vrnotītī sataḥ || annamapi vracamuchyate ||
yadāvnoti sārurāṁ ||

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The greater Gods belonging to the group have already been dealt with separately. Āryamān has stated about 100 times in the Rig Veda is so destitute of individual characteristics, that in the Naighantuka he is passed over in the list of Gods. Except in two passages, he is always mentioned with other deities, in the great majority of cases with Mitra and Varuṇa. Lesser than the twelve passages the word has only the appellative implications of ‘comrade’ and ‘groomsman’, which are also associated with the God. Thus Agni is once addressed with the words: “Thou art Āryamān when the wooer of maidens” (RV.V.3.2). The derivative adjective aryamya, ‘relating to a comrade’, once occurs as a parallel to mitrya, ‘relating to a friend’ (RV.V.85.7). Thus the concept of Aryaman appears to have differed however little from that of the greater Aditya Mitra ‘the Friend’.

One hymn of the Rig Veda (VII.41) is devoted chiefly to the praise of Bhaga, though some other deities are worshipped in it as well; and the name of the god appears more than sixty times. The word means ‘dispenser’, giver and appears to be used in this sense in excess of a score of times attributively, in several occasions with the name of Savitṛ.

The God is also regularly conceived in the Vedic hymns as a distributor of wealth, and comparisons with Bhaga being generally intended to express glorification of Indra’s and Agni’s bounty. The word Bhaga also occurs about twenty times in the RV with the sense of ‘bounty, wealth, fortune’. Thus in a particular passage (RV.VII.41.2) Bhaga is designated in the role of a distributor (‘vidhartā’).
In another verse (RV.V.46.6) in which he is termed the ‘dispenser’ (Vibhaktā), derived from same root ‘bhaj’, he is invoked to be full of bounty (bhagavān) to his worshippers. Yāska describes Bhaga as presiding over the fornoon (Nir.12,13)\textsuperscript{22}.

The word Aṁśa, which appears less than twelve times in the RigVeda, is almost synonymous with bhaga, expressing both the concrete notion of ‘share, portion’and that of ‘apportioner’. On three occasions it is found as the name of a God.

Dakṣa is mentioned hardly more than six times in the Rig Veda as the name of a God. The word occurs more frequently as an adjective meaning ‘dexterous, strong, clever, intelligent’ applied to Agni (RV.III.14.7) and Soma (RV.IX.61.18) or as a substantive in the context of ‘dexterity, strength, cleverness, understanding’. The name of the personification hence appears to denote the ‘dexterous’ or ‘clever’ God. With exception to the verse (RV.II.27.1) which enumerates the six Ādityas, he is cited only in the first and tenth books.

In one passage (RV.I.89.3) he is presented with reference to the other Ādityas and in another (RV.X.64.5) with Mitra, Varuṇa and Āryanān, Aditi also being referred to in relation to his birth. In a cosmogonic hymn (RV.X.72.4,5)

\begin{verbatim}
22.Nirukta 12,13 :
bhago vyākhyaṭah || tasya kālah-prāgutsarpanāt || tasyaiṣā bhavati ||
prātarjitaṁ bhagamugram huṇe putramaditeryo vidhātṛī ||
āḍhrasāchidyam manyamānaṣṭurasāchīdrāya chidyamī bhagamī bhakṣītyaḥha ||
prātarjitaṁ bhagamugram ḫvayema putramaditeryo vidhāryita sarvasya ||
āḍhrasāchidyam manyamāna ḫdyalidaṃdṛāya || turasāchit || tura iti yamanāma ||
taratervā || tvaratervā || tvarayā tūṅgagatirīyamah || rājā chidyamī bhagamī bhakṣītyaḥha ||
\end{verbatim}

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Dakṣa is said to have originated from Aditi, when it is immediately added that Aditi originated from him and is his daughter, the Gods being born afterwards. In another verse (RV.X.5.7) it is specified that the existent and non-existent were in the womb of Aditi, in the birth place of Dakṣa. Thus the concluding two passages seem to regard 'Aditi and Dakṣa' as universal parents. The Ādityas are considered as 'gods who have intelligence for their father' (RV.VI.50.2), the epithet (dakṣapitara) being also applied to Mitra-Varuna, who in the same verse (RV.VII.66.2) are designated 'very intelligent' (Sudakṣa). The expression is made clearer by another passage where 'Mitra-varuna' are termed 'sons of intelligence (sūnū dakṣasya) as well as 'children of great might' (napātā sāvase mahāḥ). The juxtaposition of the latter epithets reveals that dakṣa is here not a personification but the abstract word applied as in Agni's epithets 'father of skill' (dakṣasya pitṛ : III.27.9) or son of strength (RV.VIII.35).

This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that the ordinary human sacrificers are designated as dakṣapitaraḥ 'having skill for their father' (RV.VIII.52.10). Such expressions probably brought about in the personification of Dakṣa as the father of the Ādityas and his association with Aditi.

SAVITR

Savitṛ is celebrated in eleven whole hymns of the RV and in parts of others, his name being mentioned about 170 times. Savitṛ is preeminently a golden deity, nearly all his members and his equipment being described by that epithet. He is golden-eyed (RV.I.35.8), golden-handed (RV.I.35.9,10), golden-tongued (RV.VI.71.3), all these epithets being peculiar to him. He has
golden arms (RV.VI.71.1,5; VII.45.2) and is broad-handed (RV.II.38.2) or beautiful-handed (RV.III.54.11) and is once called iron-jawed (RV.VI.71.4). He is yellow-haired (RV.V.139.1), an attributive of Agni and Indra also. He puts on a tawny garment (RV.IV.53.2). He has a golden car with a golden pole (RV.I.35.2,5), which is omniform (RV.I.35.3), just as he himself assumes all forms (RV.V.81.2). His car is drawn by two radiant steeds or by two or more brown, white-footed horses (RV.I.35.2,5; VII.45.1).

Mighty splendour (amati) is preeminently attributed to Savitṛ and mighty golden splendour to him only (RV.III.38.8; VII.38.1). This splendor he stretches out or diffuses. He illumines the air, heaven and earth, the world, the spaces of the earth, the vault of heaven (RV.I.35.7,8; IV.14.2; IV.53.4; V.81.2). He raises aloft his strong golden arms, with which he blesses and arouses all beings and which extends to the ends of the earth (RV.II.38.2; IV.53.3,4; VI.71.1,5; VII.45.2). The raising of his arms is characteristic, for the action of other gods is compared with it.

Agni is said to raise his arms like Savitṛ (RV.I.95.7); the dawns extend light as Savitṛ his arms (RV.VII.79.2) and Bṛhaspati is implored to raise hymns of praise as Savitṛ his arms (RV.I.190.3). He moves in his golden car, seeing all creatures, on a downward and an upward path (RV.I.35.2,3). He impels the car of the Aśvins before dawn (RV.I.34.10). He shines after the path of the dawn (RV.I.35.2,3). He has measured out the earthly spaces, (RV.IV.53.5).
His ancient paths in the air are dustless and easy to traverse, on them he is besought to protect his worshippers when he goes to the three bright realms of heaven and is united with the rays of the sun (RV.V.81.3,4). The only time the epithet Sūrya-raśmi is used in the RV. It is applied to Savitṛ: “Shining with the rays of the sun, yellow-haired, savitṛ raises up his light continually from the east” (RV.X.139.1). He thrice surrounds the air, the three spaces, the three bright realms of heaven worshippers (RV.I.35.11). He thrice surrounds the air, the three spaces, the three bright realms of heaven (RV.IV.53.5). His ancient paths in the air are dustless and easy to traverse, on them he is besought to protect his worshippers (RV.I.35.11). He is prayed to convey the departed spirit to where the righteous dwell (RV.X.17.4). He bestows immortality on the gods as well as length of life on man (RV.IV.54.2). He also bestowed immortality on the Rbhus, who by the greatness of their deeds went to his house (RV.I.110.2,3). Like Sūrya, he is implored to remove evil dreams (RV.V.82.4) and to make men sinless (RV.IV.54.3). He drives away evil spirits and sorcerers (RV.I.35.10; VII.38.7).

24.RV.X.139.1: 

suryaśrīmarikeśah purstāt savitā jyotirudayaṁ ājasraṁ|
tasya puṣā prasave yāti vidvāṁ sampāśyanviśvā bhuvanāṁ gopāḥ ||

Sayana's Commentary on RV.X.139.1:

suryaśrīmah | usasah prādurbhāvānteḥ purvaṁ yāḥ kālastasya kālaśyabhimāni
devaḥ savitṛtyuchyaḥ | suryasaṁśah suryasya sarvasya prerakasyādityasya raśmireva raśmirasya
sa tathoṁ haraṁ harayyo haranaśīlaṁ haritavarnaṁ vā keśaḥ keśaṁ keśhāṁ tyāḥ prakāśamanā vā
dīptayo yasya śrīṁ savitṛsarvasya prerako devāḥ purastāṁ purvasyāṁ dīśi ājasraṁ anavarataṁ
jyotiḥ tejāḥ udayāṁ udyāti udgamaṁayāti ||

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Like many other gods Savîtr is called asura (RV.IV.53.1). He observes fixed laws (RV.IV.53.4; X.34.8; 139.3). The waters and the wind are subject to his ordinance (RV.II.38.2). He leads the waters and by his propulsion they flow broadly (RV.III.33.6). The other gods follow his lead (RV.V.81.3). No being, not even Indra, Varuna, Mitra, Āryamān, Rudra can resist his will and independent dominion (RV.II.38.7,9; V.82.3).

Like Pûsan and Sûrya, he is lord of that which moves and is stationary (RV.IV.53.6). He is lord of all desirable things and sends blessings from heaven, air, earth (RV.I.24.3; II.38.11). He is twice (RV.I.123.3; VI.71.4) even spoken of as ‘domestic’ (damūnas), an epithet otherwise almost entirely limited to Agni. Like other gods, he is a supporter of the sky (RV.IV.53.2; X.149.4). He supports the whole world (RV.IV.54.4).
He fixed the earth with bonds and made firm the sky in the rafterless space (RV.X.149.1). Savitṛ is atleast once (RV.I.22.6) called ‘child of waters’ (apāṁ napāt), an epithet otherwise exclusively belonging to Agni. It is probably also applied to him in RV.X.149.2. Savitṛ is once called the Prajāpati of the world (RV.IV.53.2). In the SB (Satapatha Br:12,3,5.1) people are said to identify Savitṛ with Prajāpati and in the TB (Taittiriya Br: 1,6,4.1) it is stated that Prajāpati becoming Savitṛ created living beings.

Savitṛ is alone lord of vivifying power (RV.V.82.5). In his vivifying power Pūṣan marches, beholding all beings as a guardian (RV.X.139.1). In two consecutive verses (RV.III.62.9,10) Pūṣan and Savitṛ are thought of as connected. In the first the favour of Pūṣan who sees all beings is invoked and in the second, Savitṛ is besought to stimulate the thoughts of worshippers who desire to think of the excellent brilliance of god Savitṛ. Savitṛ is also said to become Mitra by reason of his laws (RV.V.81.4). Savitṛ seems sometimes (RV.V.82.1,3;VII.38.1,6) to be identified with Bhaga also.

27.RV.I.22.6 :
apāṁ napālamavase savitāramupa stuhi |
tasya vratānyusmai ||
Sāyana’s Commentary on RV.I.22.6 :
avase āśmiṁ raksitum savitāram upa stuhi | tasya savitūḥ saṁvandhini vratāṁ karmāṁ |
śomayagyēdirupani usṁasi kāmayēmahe | kidrśaṁ savitāram |
apāṁ napāṁ jalasya na pālakam | saṁtāpem āsaṁkamityarthāḥ | apāṁ |

28.RV.IV.53.2 :
divo dhartā bhuvanasya prajāpatih piśāṅgaṁ drāpini prati muñche kaviḥ |
vichaksanāḥ prathayannāpmanurvaįjanatāsavīṁ sumnamukhyāṁ ||

29.Satapatha Brahmana 12.3.5.1 :
English Translation:
Of old, indeed, they were wont to seize this victim as one dedicated to Savitri, but now they seize it as one dedicated to Pragapati, saying, ‘Savitri, in truth, is the same as Pragapati’. It is therefore after having thrown together the sacrificial fires that they ought to perform this (animal) sacrifice on the Grihapati’s own fires, thinking, ‘May we also have a share in this tail of the victim where with they are now making offering together to the wives (of the gods)’. They then perform the initiation ceremony whenever they choose.
The name of Bhaga is indeed often added to that of Savitr so as to form the single expression Savitā Bhagah or Bhagah Savitā. In other texts, Savitr is distinguished from Mitra, Pūṣan and Bhaga. In several passages Savitr and Sūrya appear to be spoken of indiscriminately to denote the same deity. In the hymn (RV.VII.63.1,2,4) Sūrya is spoken of in terms e.g. prasavitr, vivifier usually applied to Savitr and in the third verse Savitr is apparently mentioned as the same god. In other hymns also such as RV.X.158.1-4; I.35.1-11;124.1 it is hardly possible to keep the two deities apart. In passages such as the following, Savitr is, however, distinguished from Sūrya. Savitr moves between both heaven and earth, drives away disease, impels the sun (I.35.9). Savitr declares men sinless to the sun (RV.I.123.3). He combines with the rays of the sun (RV.V.81.4) or shines with the rays of the sun (RV.X.139.1). With Mitra, Āryamān, Bhaga, Savitr is besought to vivify the worshipper when the sun has risen.

According to Yāska (Nirukta 12,12)30, the time of Savitr’s appearance is when darkness has been removed. Sāyaṇa on RV.V.81.431 remarks that before his rising the sun is called Savitr but from his rising to his setting, Sūrya.

30. Nirukta 12,12 :

savitā vyākhyaataḥ || tasya kaloyadā dyoirapahatatamaskākimaraśmirbhavati ||
tasyaśa bhavati || viśvā rupāni prati muñchate kaviḥ prāśavidbhadrani dvipadechatuspade || vi
nākamkhyatsavitā vareṇyo nu prayāṇamuoṣāso vi ṛajati ||
sarvāni prajeñāṇāni pratimuñchate medhāvi || kaviḥ krāntadarśāno bhavati ||
kavatervā || prasuvaṭi bhadrani dvipādbhyaścā chaṭuspādbhyaścā ||
vyāchikhyapannākari savitā varniyah || prayāṇamuoṣāso virajati ||

31. RV.V.81.4 :

uta yāṣi savitastriṇi rochanot sūryasya raśmibhiḥ samuchyasi ||
uta rātrimubhayataḥ pariṣaya utsa mitro bhavasi deva dharmabhiḥ ||
Sayana's Commentary on RV.V.81.4:
udayat purvābhāvi savitā udāyāstamayavātī sūrya iti ||
Savitṛ is also sometimes spokesman of as sending to sleep (RV.IV.53.6; VII.45.1), and must therefore be connected with evening as well as morning. At his command night comes. He brings all two-footed and four-footed beings to rest and awakens them (RV.VI.71.2). The name of Savitṛ is derived from the root ṣu, which has the sense of stimulating, arousing, vivifying. In the case of Savitṛ several derivatives such as prasavitṛ and prasava are used constituting a perpetual play on the name. God Savitṛ has aroused (prāsāvīt) each moving thing (RV.I.157.1). He is the lord of stimulation (prasavasya:V.81.5). Savitṛ bestowed immortality on worshipper (RV.I.110.3). God Savitṛ has arisen to arouse worshippers (RV.II.38.1). Savitṛ removes sickness (RV.X.100.8). With this verb Savitṛ is specially often besought to bestow wealth (II.56.6). This use of ṣu is almost peculiar to Savitṛ, but it is two or three times applied to Sūrya (RV.VII.63.2, 4; X.37.4). It also occurs with Uṣas (RV.VII.77.1), with Varuṇa (RV.II.28.9), with the Ādityas (RV.VIII.18.1), and with Mitra, Āryamān coupled with Savitṛ (VII.66.4). This employment being so frequent. Yāska (Nirukta X.31) defines Savitṛ as Sarvasya prasavitā32, ‘the stimulator of everything’. The fact that in nearly half its occurrences the name is accompanied by deva, god, seems to show that it has not yet lost the nature of an epithet, meaning ‘the stimulator god’. At any rate, the word appears to be an epithet of Tvaṣṭṛ in two passages (RV.III.55.19; X.10.5) where the juxtaposition of the words devas tvaṣṭa savitā viśvarūpa and the collocation with deva indicate that Savitṛ is here identical with Tvaṣṭṛ.

32. Nirukta X.31:

savitā sarvasya prasavitā || tasyaṁśa bhavati ||
savitā yantrāḥ prthivimaramāṇḍakambhane savitā dyāmadṛṣhṇat ||
asvamivādhusaddhunimantaṁkarṣamatute vaddhami savitā samudraṁ ||
savitā yantrāḥ prthivimaramaṁ, adanāram bhane’ ntarikṣe || savitā dyāmadṛṣhṇat ||
asvamivādhusaddhunimantaṁkarṣeme gaṁḥi || vaddhamaturna iti va ||
atvaramāna iti va || savitā samudtrāramitī ||
UŚAS

Uśas is one of the most beautiful deities of ‘Dyuhsthāna’ or Celestial gods. Uśas is the goddess of spiritual consciousness whose outer or physical symbol is the physical Dawn. The symbol is so amenable for poetic metaphors at the hands of the inspired poets of Rig Veda that one is apt to view Uśas simply as the physical dawn and miss the deeper meanings of these hymns. As Sri Aurobindo says, “In the Veda, there are no merely ornamental epithets. Each word is meant to tell, to add something to the sense and bear a strict relation to the thought of the sentence in which it occurs”.

Uśas, goddess of Dawn, is lauded in about twenty hymns of the RV and mentioned more than 300 times. Owing to the identity of name, the personification is but slight, the physical phenomenon of dawn never being absent from the poet’s mind, when the goddess is addressed. Uśas is the most graceful creation of Vedic poetry and there is no more charming figure in the descriptive religious lyrics of any other literature. The brightness of her form has not been obscured by priestly speculation nor has the imagery as a rule been marred by references to the sacrifice.

Arraying herself in gay attire, like a dancer, she displays her bosom (RV.I. 92 4; VI.64.2) Like a maiden decked by her mother she shows her form (RV.I .123.11). Clothed in light the maiden appears in the east and unveils her charms (RV.I.124.3,4). Effulgent in peerless beauty she withholds her light from neither small nor great. Rising resplendent as from a bath, showing her charms she comes with light, driving away the darkness (RV.V 80.5,6). She is young, being born again and again, though ancient,

33.RV.I.123.11:

susamkāṣā mātṛmrṣṭeva yośāvistanaṃ kṛṇuṣe dṛṣe kāṁ
bhadrā tvamūṣe vitarām vyuḥchha na tatte āṇyā uṣaso-naśanta
shining with a uniform hue, she wastes away the life of mortals (RV. I. 92. 10). As she has shone in former days, so she shines now and will shine in future, never aging, immortal (V. I. 113. 13, 15). The maiden coming again awakes before all the world (RV. I. 123. 2). Ever shortcoming the ages of men, she shines forth, the last of the dawns that have always gone, the first of those to come (RV. I. 124. 2). Like a wheel she revolves ever a new (RV. III. 61. 3). She awakens creatures that have feet and makes the birds to fly up. She is the breath and life of everything (RV. I. 48. 5, 10; 49. 3). She awakens every living being to motion (RV. I. 92. 9; VII. 77. 1). The Dawns waken the sleeping and urge the living, the two-footed and the four-footed, to motion (RV. IV. 51. 5). When Usas shines forth, the birds fly up from their nests and men seek nourishment (RV. I. 124. 12). She reveals the paths of men, wakening the five tribes (RV. VII. 79. 1). She manifests all beings and bestows new life (RV. VII. 80. 1, 2). She drives away evil dreams to Trita Āptya (RV. VIII. 47. 14, 16).

She removes the black robe of night (RV. I. 113. 14). She dispels the darkness (RV. VI. 64. 3; 65. 2). She discloses the treasures concealed by darkness and distributes them bountifully (RV. I. 123. 4, 6). She illumines the ends of the sky when she awakes (RV. I. 92. 11). She opens the gates of heaven (RV. I. 48. 15; 113. 4). She opens the doors of darkness as the cows their stall (I. 92. 4). Her radiant beams appear like herds of cattle (RV. IV. 52. 2, 4). She is visible afar, spreading out cattle as it were (RV. I. 92. 12). The ruddy beams fly
up, the ruddy cows yoke themselves, the ruddy dawns weave their web of light as of old. Thus Uṣās comes to be called ‘mother of kine’\textsuperscript{34} (RV.IV.52.2,3;VII.77.2). Day by day appearing at the appointed place, she never infringes the ordinance of order and of the gods (RV.I.92.12;123.9;124.2;VII.76.5). She goes straight along the path of order, knowing the way she never loses her direction (V.80.4). She renders good service to the gods by causing all worshippers to awake and the sacrificial fires to be kindled (RV.I.113.9). She is besought to arouse only the devout and liberal worshipper, leaving the ungodly niggard to sleep on (RV.I.124.10;IV.51.3). Worshippers are however sometimes spoken of as waking her instead of being awakened by her (RV.IV.52.4) and the Vasisthas claim to have first wakened her with their hymns (RV.VII.80.1). She is once asked not to delay, that the sun may not scorch her as a thief or an enemy (RV.V.79.9). She is besought to bring the gods to drink Soma (RV.I.48.12). Hence probably, the gods are often described as ‘waking with Uṣās(RV.I.14.9)\textsuperscript{35}.

\begin{quote}
\textbf{34.}(i)RV.IV.52.2 :
\begin{align*}
asvēva & \text{chitrārusi mātā gavāmrīgarvi} \\
& \text{sakhābhūdāśvinorūṣi} \|
\end{align*}
\textbf{(ii)RV.IV.52.3 :}
\begin{align*}
\text{uta sakhāsyāśvinoruta mātā gavāmasī} \\
& \text{ūtsō vasva śiśe} \|
\end{align*}
\textbf{35. RV.I.14.9 :}
\begin{align*}
\text{ākīṁ suryasya rochanādiśvāndevāṁ uṣārvudhaḥ} \\
& \text{vipro hoteha vakṣati} \|
\end{align*}
\textbf{Sayana’s Commentary on RV.I.14.9 :}
\begin{align*}
vipraḥ medhāvi hota homanispādako’ gniḥ uṣārvudhaḥ \\
usakhāle yāgaganāya pravudhyamānān visvān devān \\
sūryasya saṁvandhināḥ rochanāt svargalokāt iha \\
karmaṇi ākīṁ vakṣati āvahatu \|
\end{align*}
\end{quote}
Usas is born on a car which is shining (RV.VII.76.1), brilliant (RV.I.23.7), bright (RV.III.61.2), well-adorned (RV.I.49.2), all-adorning (RV.VII.75.6), massive (RV.I.48.10) and spontaneously-yoked (RV.VII.78.4). She is drawn by steeds which are ruddy (RV.VII.75.6), easily guided (RV.III.61.2), regularly yoked (RV.IV.51.5) or is said to be resplendent with steeds (RV.V.79.1-10). She is also described as being drawn by ruddy kine or bulls (RV.I.92.2; 124.11; V.80.3). Both the horses and the cows probably represent the ruddy rays of morning light. The distance the dawns traverse in a day is 30 yojanas\(^{36}\) (RV.I.123.8).

Usas is closely associated with the Sun. She has opened paths for Sūrya to travel \(^{37}\)(RV.I.113.16). She shines with the light of the sun (RV.I.113.9), with the light of her lover (RV.I.92.11). Savitṛ shines after the path of Uṣas (RV.V.81.2). Sūrya follows her as a young man a maiden (RV.I.115.2). Thus as followed in space by the sun, she is conceived as his wife or mistress. But as preceding the Sun in time she is occasionally thought of as his mother. She has generated Sūrya, sacrifice, Agni (RV.VII.78.3). She has been produced for

\(^{36}\)RV.I.123.8:

\[
\text{sādṛṣiradya sādṛṣiridu śvo dirgham sachante karunasya dhāma |}
\text{anvadyāstrimśatāni yojanānte ekākā kratum paryānti sadyaḥ ||}
\]

Sayana’s Commentary on RV.I.123.8:

\[
suryo hi pratidināṁ ekonāṣṭhyadhipaḥkaphasahasrayojanāṁ
\text{merum prādaśkṣipya na parihramati tathā sati yatra yatra laṅkādhībūrpradesāme sūryo}
\text{gachchhati tasya tasya purastāṁ trimśādyojananāṁ uṣāḥ api gachchhati |}
\text{survoyoasmin deśe gachchhati tatra trimśādyojananām purastāddesāṣṭhitāṁ mudito drśyate ēvaṁ}
\text{sarvapradesēsvapi tathā uṣāḥ api yatra gachchhati tataḥ purastāṁ}
\text{trimśādyojanaḥ bhūbhūga ēvaṁ māmudito drśyate |}
\text{evāṁ laṅkādīsaśravapradesāṣṭhitāṁ napyuṣṣa udayo‘vagantavyah ||}
\]

\(^{37}\)RV.I.113.16:

\[
\text{udirdhvani jivo asumaagadapa pragāttyaḥ jyotireti |}
\text{āraikpantalāṁ yātave sūryayāj agaṇma śatra pratiranta ayuh ||}
\]
the production of Savitṛ and arrives with a bright child (RV.I.113.1,2). She is also the sister (RV.I.113.2,3; X.127.3) or the elder sister (RV.I.124.8) of Night and the names of Dawn and Night are often conjoined as a dual compound (Usāsā-naktā or naktoṣāsā). Usas is born in the sky (RV.VII.75.1) and she is constantly called the daughter of heaven (RV.I.30.22). She is once also spoken of as the beloved of heaven (RV.I.46.1). The sacrificial fire being regularly kindled at dawn. Uṣas causes Agni to be kindled\textsuperscript{38} (RV.I.113.9). He is thus like the sun sometimes called her lover (RV.I.69.1; VII.10.1).

Various gods are described as having produced or discovered the dawns. Indra, who is characteristically a winner of light, is said to have generated or lighted up Uṣas (RV.II.12.7). Soma made the dawns bright at their birth\textsuperscript{39} (RV.VI.39.3) and constituted them the wives of a good husband (RV.VI.44.23). Brhaspati discovered the Dawn repelling the darkness with light (RV.X.68.9).
The goddess is often implored to dawn on the worshipper or bring to him wealth and children, to bestow protection and long life\(^{40}\) (RV.I.30.22;48.1) to confer renown and glory on all the liberal benefactors of the poet\(^{41}\) (RV.V.79.6). Her adorers ask from her riches and desire to be to her as sons to a mother (RV.VII.81.4). The soul of the dead man goes to the Sun and to Ușas (RV.X.58.8) and by the ruddy ones in whose lap the Fathers are said to be seated, the Dawns are doubtless meant (RV.X.15.7).

Ușas is resplendent, shining, bright, white, ruddy, golden-hued, of brilliant bounty, born in law, most Indra-like, divine, immortal. She is characteristically bountiful. The name of Ușas is derived from the root ʋivas to shine.

The goddess Ușas is termed as having many hues (RV.I.113.4) or variegated since she helps in the manifestation of the various other deities or powers. The wealth she gives us is not limited to the material. She allows all the latent powers to manifest and hence issues forth all the worlds (RV.I.113.4).

The word satya signifies that which is the eternal, the supreme, existence in its own from Sat. ṛtam signifies that which is evident or perceptible, manifested out of the satya, what has come to be in accordance with satya or that which represents the satya. ṛta is the Truth in manifestation.

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\(^{40}\) RV.I.30.22
tvam tvēbhirā gahi vājebhirduhtardivāḥ |
asme rathim ni dhāraya ||

\(^{41}\) Sāyāna's Commentary on RV.I.30.22
he divāḥ duhitāḥ dyudevatayāḥ putri uṣo devi tvēbhir
vājebhir tairannaiḥ saha tvam ā gahi atragachcha |
arame asmāsu rayim dhanani ni dhāraya nitarāṁ sthāpayā ||

\(^{41}\) RV.V.79.6
aiśu dha viravadyāśa uṣo maghoni sūṛiṣu |
ye no rādhamsyahrayarā maghavāno arāsat suJaśe aśvasūnte ||
Uṣas is the guardian of this ṛta and she manifests it. Uṣas is ṛta, guardian of Truth (RV.I.113.12), ṛteja, one who manifests the Truth (RV.I.113.12). Dawn born in heaven opens out things by the Truth. She comes manifesting the greatness (RV.VII.75.1). Happy and true born from the Truth; the goddess who awake from the seat of Truth (RV.IV.51.8). Horses of Uṣas are yoked to Truth (RV.IV.51.5). She is born from Truth (RV.IV.51.5). Uṣas and night are mothers of Truth (V.5.6).

42.RV.I.113.12 :

yaGVayaddvesa ṛtapā ṛtejāḥ,sumnavārī sunrtā śrayantī
sumaṅgalirvibhrati devavitihādyoṣāḥ śfeṣṭhatama vyuchchha ||

Sayana’s Commentary on RV.I.113.12 :

ṛtapāḥ ṛtasya satyasya yajñasya vā pālayiti ṛtejāḥ yajñārtham prādurbhūta ||
Mittra happens to be a celestial God. Etymologically its name is indefinite. However as the word often means 'friend' in the Rig Veda and the kindly nature of the God is often referred to in the Veda, Mitra even appearing as a God of peace.

The interrelationship of Mitra with Varuna is so pronounced that only one singular hymn of the RV (III. 59) is addressed to him alone. The praise of the god is there rather uncertain, but the first verse at least contains something distinctive about him. Uttering his voice he brings men together (yatayati), and watches the tillers with unwinking eye. In another passage (RV.VII.36.2) almost the similar words are applied to Mitra who "brings men together, uttering his voice", in contrast with Varuna who is here addressed as 'a mighty, infallible guide'. This appears as a tolerably clear reference to Mitra's solar character. In the fifth verse of the hymn (RV.III.59) to Mitra the God is spoken of as the great Āditya 'bringing men together'. This epithet (yatayaj-jana) is found in only three other passages of the RV. In one of these it is applied to Mitra-Varuna in the dual (RV.V.72.2) in another to Mitra, Varuna and Āryaman (RV.I.136.3) and in the third (RV.VIII.91.12) to Agni, who 'brings men together like Mitra'.

43. RV.III.59:

mahān ādityo namasopasadyo yatayajjano gmate susēvah
tasmā etat panyatamāya justamagnoi mitrāya havirā juhota ||

Sāyaṇa's Commentary on RV.III.59:

yo'yaṁ ādityaṁ mahāṁ atayaṁ namāṁ namaskāreṇa upasadya sarvārāpasanaṁyaḥ yatayajjanāḥ;
gmate stotram kuryate janāya susevah cha bhavati tamai panyatamāya stutymāya mitrāya ādityāya justam pritisayantam etat haviḥ agno ā juhota juhota | yatayajjanoṁ ||

44. RV.V.72.2:

vratena stho dhruvakṣemā dharmanā yatayajjana |
ni varhiṣi sadatāṁ sūmapātaye ||

Sāyaṇa's commentary on RV.V.72.2:

he mitravamnai yuvāṁ dharmanā jagaddhāraṇena vratena karmanā yogena dhruvakṣemā sthāḥ
avchaliitasthāṇo bhavathāḥ | yatayajjana | yatayantah karmasu pravartayanto janaṁ rtvijō
eyayostoi yatayajjanoṁ | athavā yatayantah śatrūṁ hiṁsanto janaṁ bhṛtyā yayostoi ||

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The attribute therefore seems to have properly belonged to Mitra. The hymn to Mitra further adds that he supports heaven and earth, that the five tribes of men obey him and that he sustains all the gods.

Savītṛ is once (RV.V.81.4) identified with Mitra owing to his laws, and elsewhere Vishnu is said to take his three steps by the laws of Mitra. These two passages appear to indicate that Mitra regulates the course of the sun.

Agni who goes at the head of the dawns produces Mitra for himself (RV.X.8.4); Agni when kindled is Mitra (V.III.5.4); Agni when taking birth is Varuṇa, when kindled is Mitra (RV.V.3.1).

The Vedic evidence as a whole seems to indicate that Mitra did not possess any individuality as such on the physical side. His special characteristic feature is expressed in the Veda through the words mitro janāyātayati bruvāṇah (RV.III.59.1). Mitra places men in their appropriate places through his commands. A clear hint is hereby given that Mitra has something to do with ‘right’ and law (RV.V.81.4). He is usually mentioned together with other Solar Gods, especially with Varuṇa and Aryaman. He is the great protector, for those under his shelter are never harmed. Mitra, in his original nature, is looked upon as a god essentially connected with ‘contract’, ‘treaty’, agreements. The vedic Mitra has remained true from the Aryan prototype, namely that of the God presiding over contracts and agreements and thus preserving law and order mainly among human beings.

45. RV.V.81.4:

utra yāsi savitastrīṇi ročāno ta sūryasya rasārebhiḥ samuchyasi
utra raśtrābhayaṁ paryāsa uta mitro bhavasi deva dharmabhīḥ

Sāyana’s Commentary on RV.V.81.4:

utra api cha he deva savitaśtvāṁ dharmabhīḥ jagaddhārakāṁ karmabhīḥ mitro bhavasi mitrakhyo devo bhavasi | athavā prakāśāpya pradānena sakhā bhavasi sarvajagatāṁ |

46. RV.III.59.1:

mitro janāyātayati bruvāno mitro dādhāra pṛthivimuta dyāṁ
mitraḥ kṛṣṭimījisabhi chaśe mitrāya havyāṁ ghṛtavajuhota

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Mitra creates the firmament, he and Varuṇa are the kings of all creation. The day is Mitra, the night is Varuṇa, the waxing fortnight belongs to Mitra, the waning to Varuna. Mitra gives rise to the varieties, he arrives along the paths of devayana. Thus Mitra and Varuṇa are his intelligence and will. Mitra is the priesthood, Varuṇa forms the nobility. The truth is Mitra due to the fact that Mitra is the Brahman and truth is Brahman. The essential characteristic of Mitra is truth.

The word Mitra was denoted as a friend in post-vedic literature. As a physical phenomenon ‘Mitra’ may have signified the friendly aspect of the Sun, perhaps the newly risen Sun or the Sun in winter when its warmth is most welcome. As the God or the guardian of contracts Mitra constitutes the basis of good faith on which true friendship is founded.

Meditation is another important and significant aspect of this deity. The sixteenth or the middle day of the month was consecrated to Mithra. He was regarded as a mediator between life and death.
VARUNA

Varuna is the greatest of the gods of the RV. The number of hymns dedicated to his praise is not a sufficient criterion of his exalted character. Hardly a dozen hymns celebrate him exclusively. In two dozen hymns he is invoked along with his double Mitra.

The anthropomorphism of Varuṇa’s personality is more fully developed on the moral than the physical side. The descriptions of his person and his equipment are scanty, more stress being laid on his activity. The poet regards the face of Varuṇa as that of Agni (RV.VII.88.2; VII.87.6). The eye of Mitra and Varuṇa is the sun (RV.I.115.1; VI.51.1; VII.61.1; 63.1; X.37.1). The eye with which Varuna is said in a hymn to Sūrya (RV.I.50.6) to observe mankind, is undoubtedly the sun. Together with Āryamān, Mitra and Varuṇa are called sun-eyed (RV.VII.66.10), a term applied to other gods also. Varuṇa is far-sighted (RV.I.25.5, 16; VIII.90.2) and thousand-eyed (RV.VII.34.10). Mitra and Varuṇa stretch out their arms (RV.V.64.2; VII.62.5) and they drive with the rays of the sun as with arms (RV.VIII.90.2). Like Savitṛ and Tvaṣṭr they are beautiful-handed (Supāṇi). Mitra and Varuna hasten up with their feet (RV.V.64.7) and Varuna treads down wiles with shining foot (RV.VIII.41.8). He sits on the strewn grass at the sacrifice (RV.I.26.4; V.72.2) and like other gods he and Mitra drink Soma (RV.IV.41.3). Varuṇa wears a golden mantle (drāpi) and puts on a shining robe (RV.I.25.13). The only part of Varuṇa’s equipment which is at all prominent is his car. It is described as shining like the Sun (RV.I.122.15), as having thongs for a pole, a car-seat and a whip (RV.V.62.7) and as drawn by well-yoked steeds (RV.V.62.4).
Mitra and Varuṇa's abode is golden and situated in heaven (RV.V.67.2; I.136.2) and Varuṇa sits in his mansions looking on all deeds (RV.I.25.10,11). His and Mitra's seat is great, very lofty, firm with a thousand columns (RV.V.68.5; II.41.5) and their house has a thousand doors (RV.VII.88.5). The all-seeing sun rising from his abode, goes to the dwelling of Mitra and Varuṇa to report the deeds of men (RV.VII.60.1,3), and enters their dear dwelling (RV.I.152.4).

It is in the highest heaven that the Fathers behold Varuṇa (RV.X.14.8). According to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (II.6.1) Varuṇa, conceived as the lord of the Universe, is seated in the midst of heaven, from which he surveys the places of punishment situated all around him.

The spies (spaśāḥ) of Varuṇa are sometimes mentioned. They sit down around him (RV.I.24.13). They behold the two worlds; acquainted with sacrifice they stimulate prayer (RV.VII.87.3). Mitra's and varuṇa’s spies whom they send separately into houses (RV.VII.61.3), are undeceived and wise (RV.VI.67.5). In the AV(IV.16.4) it is said that Varuṇa’s messengers descending from heaven, traverse the world; thousand-eyed they look across the whole world. The golden-winged messenger (dūta) of Varuṇa once mentioned in the RV (X.123.6) is doubtless the Sun47.

47. RV.X.123.6

nāke sarvamupāya yatpatantam hrdā venanto abhyachaksata tvā |
hiranyapakṣam varuṇasya dūtaṁ yamasya yonoi śākunam bhūraṁyam ||

Śāyaṇa's Commentary on RV.X.123.6 :
suparnāṁ sobhanapatanaṁ patantam antarikṣe gachchhantaṁ hiranyapakṣam hiraṇmayābhyaṁ paksābhyaṁ upetanāṁ varuṇasya jalābhimānino devasya dūtaṁ chāram yamasya niyāmakasya vaidyutāgneh yonoi sthāne antarikṣe śākunam paksirūpena vartamānaṁ bhūranyum bhartāram ||
Varuṇa alone or conjointly with Mitra is often called a king (rājā), like the other leading deities and Yama (RV.I.24.7,8). He is king of all, both gods and men (RV.X.132.4; II.27.10), of the whole world (RV.V.85.3), and of all that exists (RV.VII.87.6). Varuṇa is also a self-dependent ruler (RV.II.28.1), a term generally applied to Indra. Much more frequently Varuṇa, alone or mostly in association with Mitra, is called a universal monarch (samrāj). This term is also applied to Agni a few times and oftener to Indra.

The attribute of sovereignty (kṣatra) is in a predominant manner appropriated to Varuṇa, generally with Mitra and twice with Āryamān also. Otherwise it is applied only once respectively to Agni, Bṛhaspati and the Aśvins. Similarly the term ‘ruler’ (kṣatriya) in four of its five occurrences refers to Varuṇa or the Ādityas and once only to the gods in general.

The epithet ‘asura’ is connected with Varuṇa alone or accompanied by Mitra. Mitra and Varuṇa are also called the mysterious and noble lords (asurā aryā) among the gods (RV.VII.65.2).

The divine dominion of Varuṇa and Mitra is often referred to with the word māyā. This term signifies occult power, applicable in a good sense to gods. The good sense of māyā, like that of asura is mainly connected with Varuṇa and Mitra. By occult power Varuṇa standing in the air measures out the earth with the sun as with a measure (RV.V.85.5), Varuṇa and Mitra send the dawns (RV.III.61.7), make the Sun to cross the sky and obscure it with cloud and rain, while the honied drops fall (RV.V.63.4) they cause heaven to rain and they uphold the ordinances by the occult power of the asura. And so
the epithet māyin\textsuperscript{48}, ‘crafty’ is chiefly applied to Varuṇa among the gods (RV.VI.48.14; VII.28.4; X.99.10;147.5). Varuṇa is a great lord of the laws of nature. He established heaven and earth and dwells in all the worlds (RV.VIII.42.1). The three heavens and the three earths are deposited within him (RV.VII.87.5). He and Mitra rule over the whole world (RV.V.63.7) or encompass the two worlds (RV.VII.61.4). They are the guardians of the whole world (RV.II.27.4). By the law of Varuṇa heaven and earth are held apart (RV.VI.70.1; VII.86.1;VIII.41.10). With Mitra he supports earth and heaven (RV.V.62.3) or heaven, earth and air (RV.V.69.1,4). He made the golden swing i.e. the Sun to shine in heaven (RV.VII.87.5). He placed fire in the waters, the Sun in the sky, Soma on the rock (RV.V.85.2). He has made a wide path for the Sun (RV.I.24.8; VII.87.1). Varuṇa, Mitra and Āryamān open paths for the Sun (RV.VII.60.4). The order (ṛta) of Mitra and Varuṇa is established where the steeds of the Sun are loosed (RV.V.62.1). The wind which resounds through the air is Varuṇa’s breath (RV.VII.87.2).

By Varuṇa’s ordinances the moon shining brightly moves at night and the stars placed up on high are seen at night but disappear by day (RV.I.24.10). In another passage (RV.VIII.41.3) it is said that Varuṇa has embraced the nights and by his occult power has established the mornings or days.

\textsuperscript{48} RV.X.99.10:

(I)yaṁ daśāyannaryebhirasya dasmo deveḥirvaruṇo na māyir, |
ayam kanina rtupa aveyamimitārarum yasčhatuspāt ||

(ii)tvaṁ sārdhāya mahāna uru krdhi maghavaṁchhagdhi rāyah |
tvaṁ no mitro varuṇo na māyi pitvo na dasma dayase vibhaktā ||
Varuna is sometimes referred to as regulating the seasons. He knows the twelve months (RV.1.25.8) and the kings Mitra, Varuna and Āryamān are said to have disposed the autumn, the month, day and night (RV.VII.66.11). Varuna is often spoken of as a regulator of the waters. He caused the rivers to flow; they stream unceasingly according to his ordinance (RV.II.28.4). Varuna and Mitra are lords of rivers (RV.VII.64.2). In the AV Varuna appears divested of his powers as a universal ruler, retaining only the control of the department of water. He is connected with the waters as Soma with the mountains(AV.III.3.3)  Asa divine father he sheds rain waters(AV.IV.15.12).

His golden house is in the waters (AV.VII.83.1). He is the overlord of waters, he and Mitra are lords of rain (AV.V.24.4,5). In the YV he is spoken of as the child of water, making his abode within the most motherly waters.

Varuna’s ordinances are constantly said to be fixed, the epithet dhṛtavrata being pre-eminently applicable to him, sometimes conjointly with Mitra. The gods themselves follow Varuna’s ordinances (RV.VIII.41.7). Mitra and Varuna are lords of order (ṛta) and light, who by means of order are the upholders of order (RV.I.23.5). Varuna is sometimes called guardian of order (ṛtasya gopā), but this term is also applied to Agni and Soma. The epithet ‘Observer of order’ (ṛtavān), predominantly used of Agni, is also several times connected with Varuna and Mitra.

49. AV.III.3.2,3 :
yat preśita varunenācchhibham samavalgata ||
tadāpmodindro vo yatistasmādāpā anusthan ||
apakāmaṁ syandamāṅga avivarata vo hi kam ||
indro vah saktibhirdevistasmād vānmāna vo hitam ||

50. RV.VIII.41.7 :
ya śvatka aśaye viśvā jātānyesām |
pari dhiāmāni marmśadvarunasya puro gaye viśve
devā anu vratam nabhantāmānyake same ||
Varuṇa’s power is so great that neither the birds as they fly nor the rivers as they flow can reach the limit of his dominion, his might and his wrath (RV.I.24.6). Varuna is omniscient. He witnesses men’s truth and falsehood (RV.VII.49.3). He perceives all that exists within heaven and earth, and all that is beyond. Varuṇa’s omniscience is typical is indicated by the fact that Agni is compared with him in this respect 51(RV.X.11.1).

As a moral governor Varuṇa stands far above any other deity. His wrath is roused by sin, the infringement of his ordinances, which he severely punishes (RV.VII.86.3,4). The fetters (pāśā) with which he binds sinners, are often mentioned (RV.I.24.15;25.21;VI.74.4;X.85.24). Mitra and Varuna are barriers, furnished with many fetters against falsehood (RV.VII.65.3). Once Varuṇa, coupled with Indra, is said to tie with bonds not formed of rope (RV.VII.84.2). The term pāśa is only once used in connection with another god, Agni, who is implored to loosen the fetters of his worshippers (RV.V.2.7). It is therefore distinctive of Varuṇa.

Together with Mitra, Varuṇa is said to be a dispeller, hater and punisher of falsehood (RV.I.152.1; VII.60.5; 66.13).

Varuṇa has a hundred, a thousand remedies and drives away death as well as releases from sin (RV.I.24.9). He can take away or prolong life (RV.I.24.11; 25.12; VII.88.4;89.1). He is a wise guardian of immortality 52 (RV.VIII.42.2), and the righteous hope to see in the next world Varuṇa and Yama, the two kings who reign in bliss (RV.X.14.7).

51 RV.X.11.1 :
व्र्जा व्र्जे दुधे दोहसा दिवाह पयानिः याभो दितेर्दाब्‌याहः
विस्वाम वा वेदा वरुणा याताधिभा स याजियो याजातु याजियात्व र्तुनः

52 RV.VIII.42.2 :
evावंदसवं वरुणाम्‌ व्र्हान्ताम्‌ नमस्या धिरामामर्तस्या गोपाम्‌
सा नाभ सार्मा त्रिवरथानृ वृं यानिसत पाताम्‌ नो द्यावप्रथिी उपस्थे

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Varuna is on a footing of friendship with his worshipper (RV.VII.88.4,6), who communes with him in his celestial abode and sometimes sees him with the mental eye (RV.I.25.18; VII.88.2).

Varuna is regarded as the ‘god of the sky’, presiding over all the natural phenomenon of which the sky is the foundation and in the later development Varuna is regarded as the supreme embodiment and guardian as well as the maker of the law which controlled those phenomena of nature.

Varuna is represented in the Veda, as the lord and friend of waters and rains. Varuna has primarily ethnic vegetation-god, his connection with waters which cause growth and life is particularly emphasized. In RV, he ascends to the sky, becomes the lord of atmospheric ocean and makes the rain-waters stream down. The sky-god to the exalted position of the guardianship of the cosmic and moral order is one of the essential characteristics of Varuna. Varuna’s pāsa is indicative of the tying down of waters. Varuna’s pāsa is the symbolic representation of the power of winter by means of which the waters are fettered.

A common description used for Varuna is uru which means always ‘wide’ in the Rg Veda. Varuna is the lord of all infinities, master of all the oceans and ether. Varuna’s dwelling is in the vast, urukṣaya (RV.I.2.9). Varuna has wide vision uru chakṣasam (RV.I.25.16). He is hymned as urusharṣa in RV.I.24.11, RV.II.28.3. Shamsa in the Veda always stands for the perfect expression or speech. Uru shāṃsa means ‘wide expression’, the bringing out of our being or Sat that which is latent in it and manifesting it in our action. Thus Varuna grants us a broader vision, removes the narrowness of our outlook so that we can express our aspiration for the attainment of infinities.
Consequently, he is also hymned as swarāt\(^53\), the self-ruler (RV.II.28.1) and samrāt, the emperor (RV.VIII.25.3; VIII.42.1). Samrāt means one who has complete kingship or control over both subjective and objective existence. Varuṇa is pictured as self-knowing, self mastering, moving freely with the laws because he is perfectly aware of the laws.

Satya is the Truth-absolute in the Veda, rta is the Truth in manifestation everywhere and at anytime. It is the truth of Divine being regulating the right activity of both body and mind. Varuṇa is said to be touching with the Truth rta sparsha (RV.I.2.8). Varuṇa is also called rta vṛdhā, increaser of Truth, because he along with Mitra increase the truth in the human being, Varuṇa is endowed with a vast will-power. He increases the will-power in man so that the human can perform all actions consistent with the Truth in manifestation (rta). He is hymned as ‘superbly laudable among the laudable’\(^54\) (RV.I.17.5).

Laud or praise in the Veda is not simply a causal utterance, but has the power to bring out the intentions expressed in speech.

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53.RV.II.28.1 :
> .dam kaveradityasya svarajo visvajo visvani santyabhyastu mahna |
> ati yo mandro yajathaya devah sukitim bhikse varunasya bhureh ||

Śāyana’s Commentary on RV.II.28.1 :
> kaveh krāntadarśīnāḥ ādityasya aditeh putrasya svarājāḥ svayameva rājaṃānasya iṣvarasya vai varunasya idam haviḥ stotram vā yajamānaḥ karotiti sēsah | sa cha viśvāni sarvāni sānti dvitiyābhāvavukārabhaṅgi bhūtajñātāni mahāna mahimē navunaprasādām ladvhena abhyastu abhibhavatu ||

54.RV.I.17.5 :
> indraḥ sahasradāvānāṁ varuṇaḥ sāṁsyānāṁ |
> kṛturābhavatyukhyāḥ ||

Śāyana’s Commentary on RV.I.17.5 :
> ayaṁ indraḥ sahasradāvānāṁ sahasrasamkhyākdhana-pradānāṁ madhye kṛtah dhanadānasya kartaḥ bhavati prabhutam dadātityarthāḥ | tatha varuṇaḥ sāṁsyānāṁ stutyanāṁ madhye uktithyā stutyo bhavati atiśāyena stutya ityarthāḥ | varuṇaḥ ||
Luminous Varuṇa has embraced the nights, he holds the Dawns within him by his creative knowledge; visioned, he is around every object (RV.VIII.41.3). He who supports the worlds of life, he who well knows the hidden names of the rays of the dawns, he cherishes much wisdom (RV.VIII.41.5). In whom all wisdom centers as the nave is set within the wheel (RV.VIII.41.6). He wraps these regions as a robe; he contemplates the hosts of Gods and all the worlds of mortals. In the home of Varuṇa all the gods follow his decree (RV.VIII.41.7). He is the hidden ocean and he climbs passing beyond heaven. In the Rig Veda, three different oceans are mentioned. The Vedic mystics saw below an unfathomable night and surging obscurity, darkness hidden within darkness, above them they beheld a remote ocean of light and sweetness, a highest either the supreme step of Vishnu to which their being should ascend between these two oceans they saw a third sea of ever-developing conscious being, a sort of boundless wave. We have to navigate through this ocean to reach the super conscient blissful ocean above.

Three delightful dawns increase according to the law of his workings. He of the all-seeing wisdom dwells in three white-shining earths. There are the higher worlds of Varuṇa when he rules over the harmonies of seven and seven (RV.VIII.41.9). The three dawns mentioned here are the illuminations of the three bodies in man, the physical, the vital and the mental. He harmonizes all the activities both in the macrocosm and in the microcosm in every individual human being.

Varuna prepares the great pathways in the human being so that the illumination of the Sun, Sūrya can enter all the unit regions of the human. The heart is the dwelling place of the inner self of man. Afflictions of the heart are indicative of the effects of the forces of ignorance on our inner being. Only
the light brought in by the Sun can dislodge the forces of ignorance which cause the afflictions as declared in RV.1.25.7.

Varuṇa is the upholder of the laws, vratāṇi, up holder of ṛtam which is the truth of divine being regulating the right activity in both mind and body.

The movement against the law of being may be with full knowledge of what one is doing or in ignorance of the wrong nature of the movement. In each case Karma is forged and the results suffered. Yet where one acts contrary to the law of Truth consciously the results are particularly detrimental to the growth of Soul within. A thick crust of darkness gathers round the soul and prevents its light from coming through to the other parts of our body. But in the action in ignorance, the reactions are mostly on the surface and do not go deep.

The force of ignorance or the falsehood in our being signified by the deity, causes in us the triple cord or band of obscure physical animality, inefficient life often dominated by the lower vital impulses and limited mind which revels in doubts. These are the three bonds or ropes which bind every one of us. When the mighty Varuṇa comes and cuts this threefold bondage we are freed to move towards Delight and Riches.
ASVINS

The twin deities named the Asvins are the most significant in the RigVeda. They are solemnised in more than fifty complete hymns and in parts of several others, while their name appears more than 400 times. They are twins and inseparable (RV.III.39.3; X.17.2). The prime objective of one hymn (RV.II.39) is to compare them with different twin objects such as eyes, hands, feet, wings or with animals and birds going in pairs, such as dogs and goats or swans and eagles (RV.V.78.1-3; VIII.35.7-9; X.106.2-10). They are spoken of as born separately (RV.V.73.4) and as born here and there (iheha), one being addressed as a victorious prince and the other as the son of heaven (RV.I.181.4).

The RigVeda in a different passage (IV.3.6) specifies alone —‘the encompassing Nāsatya’, a frequent epithet otherwise only designating both Asvins in the dual.

The Asvins are young (VII.67.10) and at the same time ancient (VII.62.5). They are bright (VII.68.1), lords of luster (VIII.22.14; X.93.6), of golden brilliancy (VIII.8.2) and honey-hued (VIII.26.6). They possess many forms (I.117.9). They are beautiful (VI.62.5; 63.1) and wear lotus-garlands (X.184.2).

55.RV.III.39.3:
   yamā chidatra śamasūraśīta jihvāyā agram patadā hyasthāt |
   vapunisi jādā ṁitunāsaschete tamohanā tapuṣo vudhna etā ||
56.RV.V.73.4:
   tadu yu vāmenā krtanī visvā yadvāmanu stave |
   nānā jāttvarepasā sāmasme vandhumeyathuḥ ||
57.RV.I.181.4:
   iheha jātā samavāvaśitaśi tarepasā tanvā nāmabhīḥ svaiḥ |
   jiṣṇurvāmanyah sumakhasya sūrirdivo anyah subhagah putra ūhe ||

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They are strong (X.24.4), very mighty (VI.62.5) and are several times called ‘red’ (rudra, V.75.3). They possess profound wisdom (VIII.8.2) and occult power (VI.63.5; X.93.7). The two most prominent and frequent epithets of the Aśvins are dasra, ‘Wondrous’, which is almost completely limited to them, and nāsatya, which is generally elaborated to denote ‘not untrue’ (na-asatya). The attribute rudravartani ‘having a red path’ is peculiar to them and they are the only Gods called ‘golden-pathed’, hiranyavartani. Among all the gods the Aśvins are most intimately linked with honey (madhu) with which they are specified in several passages. They possess a skin filled with honey and they are transferred to hundred jars of honey⁵⁸ (RV.I.117.6). Merely the car of the Aśvins is narrated as ‘honey-hued (madhuvarṇa) or ‘honey-bearing’ (madhuvāhana). They are the only ones considered to be fond of honey (madhūyu, madhvī) or drinkers of it (madhupā).

They, like other gods, are fond of Soma (RV.III.58.7,9) and are invited to drink it with Usās and Sūrya (RV.VIII.35.1).

The car of the Aśvins is sun-like (RV.VIII.8.2) or golden (RV.IV.44.4, 5). It moves lightly (RV.VIII.9.8), it is swifter than thought (RV.I.117.2) or than the twinkling of an eye (RV.VIII.62.2). It is fashioned by the Rbhus (RV.X.39.12). The car of the Aśvins is the only one which has three-wheels.

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⁵⁸.RV.I 117.6:

tadvāṇi narā sāṁśyaṇi prayāṇa kākṣivata nāsatyā pariṣman
śātādāśvasya vājina janāya śatam kumbhān asiṃchataṁ madhunāṁ |
Sāyana’s Commentary on RV.I 117.6:
yat janāya apeksamāṇāya purusāya vājinaḥ vegavatāḥ tadyāya aśvasya śafāṁ nirgataḥ madhunāṁ
madhubhiḥ śatasmākhyākān kumbhān asiṃchataṁ apiūrayataṁ ||
The Aśvins' name denotes only the ownership of horses, with no evidence to justify that they are so named because they ride on horses. Their car is driven by horses (RV.I.117.2). Their car touches the boundaries of heaven and extends over the five countries (RV.VII.63.2,3). It is dynamic around heaven (RV.I.180.10). It travels through heaven and earth within a single day (III.58.8), as the car of the sun (RV.I.115.3) and that of Usas (RV.IV.51.5) are also said to do. The term parijman, 'going round' on several occasions is linked with the Aśvins or their car, as it is also with Vāta, Agni and Sūrya.

The location of the Aśvins is diversely described. They come from a far (RV.VIII.5.30), from heaven (RV.VIII.8.7), heaven and earth (RV.I.44.5), from heaven and air (RV.VIII.8.4;9.2), from air (RV.VIII.8.3), earth, heaven and ocean (VIII.10.1) from far and near. They abide in the sea of heaven (RV.VIII.26.17), in the floods of heaven, plants, houses, the mountain top (RV.VII.70.3). They come from behind, before, below, above (RV.VII.72.5). Sometimes their locality is inquired about as if unknown (RV.V.74.2,3; VI.63.1;VIII.62.4). They are on one occasion (RV.VIII.8.23) said to have three places, possibly because they are invoked three times a day.

Early dawn is the time period of their manifestation and they pursue usas in their car (RV.VIII.5.2.). Hence their relative time appears to be between dawn and sunrise. Occasionally the appearance of the Aśvins, the kindling of the sacrificial fire, the break of dawn and sunrise seem to be spoken of as simultaneous (RV.I.157.1;VII.72.4). The Aśvins are worshipped to come to the offering in the evening (RV.VIII.22.14) or at morning, noon and sunset (RV.V.76.3). As deities of the dawn, the Aśvins dispel darkness (RV.III.39.3) and are sometimes said to chase away evil spirits (RV.VII.73.4;VIII.35.16).
In the RigVeda, Āśvins have come to be typically succouring divinities. They are the most dynamic helpers and deliverers from distress in general (RV.I.112.2; 118.3). Their rescue from all types of distress is a peaceful manifestation of divine grace, not a deliverance from foes in battle, as is generally the case with Indra (with whom, however, they are once associated in fight, even receiving the epithet of Virtra-slayers). They are thus also characteristically divine physicians⁵⁹ (RV.VIII.18.8) who cure diseases with their remedies (RV.VIII.22.10), restoring sight (RV.I.116.16), curing the blind, sick and maimed⁶⁰ (RV.X.39.3).

They are the physicians of the Gods and guardians of immortality, who ward off death from the worshipper (AV.VII.53.1; TB.III.II,11). Apart from their character as helpers, curers and wonder-workers, their general beneficence is often honoured. They bring their worshippers to old age with seeing eye and reward him with riches and abundance of children (RV.I.116.25; VIII.8.13). Āśvins are also praised as giving the humans the relief for the sufferings of old age so that old age does not hold out frightening prospects. Āśvins grant also immortality. However they also have the power of freeing persons from the limitations of old age⁶¹ (RV.I.116.10).

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⁵⁹ RV.VIII.18.8:
uta tya daivyā bhīśajā śūnāh nah karato āśvinā
yuyūtāmīto rapo apa sṛidhaḥ

⁶⁰ RV.X.39.3:
amājuraschidbhavatho yuvāh bhagahanāsoschidavitārāpamasya chit|
andhasya chinnāsatya kṛsāyā chi-dyuḥvāmidāhurbhisajā rutasya chit

⁶¹RV.116.10:
jujuruso nāsatyota vavrimi prāmuñchataṁ drāpimiva chyavānāt |
prātratani jahitasyāyu dṛṣḍādityapakrnutari kanināṁ ||
In the Veda, birth of a child from a womb always symbolizes the manifestation of the power of godhead in man. Being present in the womb denotes that the power is only potential and unmanifested.

The Aśvins help in manifesting this power. There are several mantras in the Rgveda which describe the Aśvins as the leaders of the journey. They lead the human aspirants from the present state of confusion and unhappiness to the other shore of happiness. Aśvins are commonly called as ‘nāsatyas’, the leaders of movement (derived from the word ‘nas’ to move).

By the action of Aśvins, man’s progress toward beatitude becomes itself beatific; all his travail and struggle and labour grows full of divine delight. Aśvins follow the path of Truth.

PŪŚAN

Pūśan is a dyusthāna-devatā. The name of Pūśan is mentioned about 120 times in the RV and he is celebrated in eight hymns. He is also lauded as a dual divinity in one hymn (RV.VI.57) with Indra and in another with Soma (RV.II.40).

Pūśan sees all creatures clearly and at once (RV.III.62.9) these identical words being applied to Agni also (RV.X.187.4). He is ‘the lord of all things moving and stationary’ almost the same words with which Sūrya is described (RV.I.115.1; VII.60.2). He is the wooer of his mother (RV.VI.55.5) or the lover of his sister, similar expression being used of Sūrya (RV.I.115.2) and of Agni (RV.X.3.3).

Pūśan is endowed with features connected with brightness and splendour. He is brought into contact with several phenomena of light (RV.VI.48.17; 56.3; 58.1). A frequent and exclusive epithet of Pūśan is ‘glowing’ (aghmi). He is once termed agohya, ‘not to be concealed’.
Another characteristic feature of Pūṣan’s personality is his close association with ‘paths’. He is the lord of paths and helps the nomadic tribes on their ways (RV.X.17.3-6). As has been pointed out Pūṣan knows the paths, shows the paths, leads on the right paths and guards the people and cattle against missing the ways. Pūṣan is born on the far path of paths, on the far path of heaven and of earth. As knower of paths, Pūṣan is conceived as a guardian of roads. He is besought to remove dangers, the wolf, the way layer from the path (RV.I.42.1-3). In this connection he is called vimuco napāt, ‘son of deliverance’. The same epithet is applied to him in another passage (RV.VI.55.1) and he is twice (RV.VIII.4.15,16) called vimocana, deliverer. As vimuco napāt he is invoked to deliver from sin (AV.VI.112.3). Pūṣan is prayed to disperse foes and make the paths lead to booty (RV.VI.53.4) to remove foes, to make the paths good and to lead to good pasture (RV.I.42.7,8). He is invoked to protect from harm on his path (RV.VI.54.9) and to grant an auspicious path (RV.X.59.7). He is the guardian of every path (RV.VI.49.8) and lord of the road (RV.VI.53.1). He is a guide (prapathya) on roads.

Pūṣan has various attributes in common with other gods. He is called asura62 (RV.V.51.11). He is strong (RV.V.43.9), vigorous (RV.VIII.4.15), nimble (RV.VI.54.8), powerful (RV.I.138.1), resistless (RV.VI.48.15). He transcends mortals and is equal to the gods in glory (RV.VI.48.19). He is a ruler of heroes (RV.I.106.4), an unconquerable protector and defender

62.RV.V.51.11 :

svasti no mimitāmaśvinā bhagah svasti devyaditiranvanah |
svasti pūṣā asuro dadhatu nah svasti dyavaprthivī suchetanā ||
(RV.I.89.5) and assists in battle (RV.VI.48.19). He is a protector of the world (RV.X.17.3). He is a seer, a protecting friend of the priest. He is wise (RV.I.42.5) and liberal (RV.II.31.4). His bounty is particularly often mentioned. He possesses all wealth (RV.I.89.6), abounds in wealth (RV.VIII.4.15), gives increase of wealth (RV.I.89.5), is beneficent (RV.I.138.2), bountiful (RV.VI.58.4; VIII.4.18) and bestows all blessings (RV.I.42.6). He is the strong friend of abundance, the strong lord and increaser of nourishment (RV.X.26.7,8).

The term dasra, ‘wonder-working’, distinctive of the Aśvins, is a few times (RV.I.42.5; VI.56.4) applied to him, as well as dasma, ‘wondrous’ (RV.I.42.10; 138.4) and dasma-vareas, ‘of wondrous splendour’ (RV.VI.58.4), usually said of Agni and Indra. He is also twice (RV.I.106.4; X.64.3) called Narāsāṁsa63 ‘praised of men’, an epithet otherwise exclusively limited to Agni. He is once spoken of as “all pervading” (RV.II.40.6).

He is termed “devotion-stimulating” (RV.IX.88.3) is invoked to quicken devotion (RV.II.40.6) and his awl is spoken of as “prayer-instigating” (RV.VI.53.8).

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63.RV.I.106.4:

narāsāṁsam vājinaṁ vājayanniḥa kṣayadvirāṁ puṣaṇam sumnairīmahe |
rahanī na dugādvasaṁvaḥ suḍānavaḥ visvāsvān naṁharo niśpipartana ||

Sayana’s commentary on RV.I.106.4:
narāsāṁsam nariḥ sāmsaśnaṁ vājinaṁ annavantamagnim |
vājayan upaśvāyaṁ pravālayan iha asmin kāle stoigiti ṣeṣāḥ |
tathā kṣayadvirāṁ ativalināṁ āsmin sarve virāḥ kṣiyante |
evaṁśrīpam puṣaṇam poṣakaṁ devam āsmaṁ sūkhaṁ rauhaharīṁ |
vedāraṇam avatāraṁ stotraṁ raihetubhiḥ īmahe yachāmahe |
abhiṣṭam prārthaṁ viśayāmahe naraśāṁsām ||
His individuality is indistinct and his anthropomorphic trails are scanty. He wields a golden spear (RV.I.42.6) and carries an awl (RV.VI.53.5,6,8) or a goad (RV.VI.53.9;58.2). The wheel, the felly and the seat of his car are spoken of and he is called the best charioteer (RV.VI.56.2,3). His car is drawn by goats (ajāśva) instead of horses (RV.I.38.4;VI.55.3,4). He eats, for his food is gruel(RV.VI.56.1;III.52.7). It is probably for this reason that he is said to be toothless in the SB64 (Satapatha Brāhmaṇ I.7.4,7).

The epithets exclusively connected with Pūṣan are āghrni, ajāśva, vimocana, vimuco napāt, and once each puṣṭimbhara ‘bringing prosperity’, anāṣṭapasū ‘losing no cattle’, anāṣṭavedas ‘losing no goods’, karambhād ‘eating gruel’. The latter attribute seems to have been a cause for despising Pūṣan by some (RV.VI.56.1; I.13.84). Karambha, mentioned three times in the RV is Pūṣan’s distinctive food, being contrasted with Soma as Indra’s (RV.VI.57.2). Indra, however, shares it (RV.III.52.7) and in the only two passages in which the adjective krambhād ‘mixed with gruel’ occurs, it applies to the libation of Indra (RV.III.52.1;VIII.80.2). Pūṣan is the only god who receives the epithet paśūpā65 ‘protector of cattle’ (RV.VI.58.2) directly. The only deities with whom Pūṣan is invoked conjointly in the dual are Soma (RV.II.40) and Indra (RV.VI.57), whose brother he is once called (also.RV.VI.55.5).

64 Satapatha Brahmana I.7.4,7: English Translation:

They said, ‘It has not yet become appeased here, take it round to Pusan!’ They accordingly took it round to Pusan Pushan tasted it it knocked out his teeth. And thus it came to pass. Hence they say, ‘Pushan is toothless;’ and therefore, when they prepare a mess of boiled rice (karu) for Pushan, they prepare it from ground rice, as is done for one toothless.

65 RV.VI. 58.2:

ajāśvaḥ paśūpā vājapastyo dhyaṁjinaḥ bhuvane viśve arpitah |
asrān pūṣaḥ sīthirāmuṇḍavarvijāt samchaksāno bhuvanā deva iyyate ||

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Next to these two, Pūṣan is most frequently addressed with Bhaga (RV.I.90.4; IV.30.24; V.41.4; 46.2; X.125.2) and Vishnu (RV.I.90.5; V.46.3; VI.21.9; VII.44.1; X.66.5), his name in all these passages of the RV being in juxtaposition with theirs. He is occasionally addressed with various other deities.

Etymologically the word means 'prosperer' as derived from the root व्पुष्, 'to cause to thrive'. This side of his character is conspicuous both in his epithets visvavedas, anastavedas, purūvasu, puṣtimbhara and in the frequent invocations to him to bestow wealth and protection (RV.VI. 48.15). He is lord of great wealth, a stream of wealth, a heap of riches (RV.VI. 55.2,3). But the prosperity he confers is not, as in the case of Indra, Parjanya and the Maruts, connected with rain, but with light, which is emphasized by his exclusive epithet 'glowing'. The welfare which he bestows results from the protection he extends to men and cattle on earth and from his guidance of men to the abodes of bliss in the next world. Thus the conception which seems to underlie the character of Pūṣan, is the beneficent power of the sun manifested chiefly as a pastoral deity.
SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATIONS

SŪRYA

Spiritual interpretation of the Vedic god Sūrya is that he is the representative of ‘jyoti’ or light. This light dispels all darkness and upholds to the light of knowledge par excellence. He is ‘viśuddhachaitanya’. The author of Nighantu has placed him in the 50th face of Uttarāyana. But he is the ultimate supreme light and the most magnificent of all lights. This is represented in the verse RV.IV.40.5 which states he is hanisa dwelling in the light, he is Vasu dwelling in the firmament, he is the invoker of the gods dwelling on the altar, he is the guest dwelling in the house. The commentators

66.RV IV.40.5:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RV IV.40.5</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hanisah śuciādvasurantakāsadasdhvotā vediṣadatithi durronasat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sāyana’s Commentary on RV IV.40.5:

anayā soiryaśc ‘ya eso’ntarāditye hiraṇmayaḥ puruso dṛṣyate hiraṇyaśnas’vah
(chhāndgoyopanisad 1.6.6)ītyādīṣṛtyukto mandalābhimānī devo’sti yas’cha
sarvapṛāṇichittārūpāstantḥ paramātmā yacchā nirastasamastotpādhikānān paramān brahma
tatsarvamekamgeveti pratiḍīpyate | hamsah | hantirgatyaṛthah | sarvatra sarvadā gantā ‘yoḥham
so’so’i ityādīṣṛtyukta prakāraṇaikāryopāsyah paramātmmantrapratipādyā ādiyāḥ | sa cha śuchoi
dipte dyuloke sidatīti sūchisat | aha yodatāḥ paro dīvo jeyotirīḍyate (cchhāndgoyopanisad 3.13.7)
ityādīśṛtye | anena dyūsthānā ādiyāḥ pratiḍīpyate | sa eva madhyasthāno vāyuryāḥ | vasuḥ
sarvasya vāsāya jya vāyūḥ | sa cha antarikṣasat antarikṣasānāṃchāri | aha tasyaiva
skitisthāvādikāgnirūpātaṃhā | hoṭi devāṇāmāvāta homapispādako vā vediṣat vedyām
gārhapatyādirūpena sthitāḥ | aṭhitih aṭhitih sarvāt pujyo’gniḥ | duronani grahaṇāṁ | tatra
pākādiśādhanatveṇa sthitāḥ | anena loṅkāṅyāṭmakatvamuktaṁ | nṛṣat | nṛṣu manuṣy’esu
chāṇyaṇārūpena sidatīti nṛṣat | anena parmaṭmarūpāvatvamuktaṁ | punarpāḍātyātmātāmaḥ | vare
varṇiye maṇḍale sidatīti varasat ādiyāḥ | “varami vā etatsadmaṇāṁ yammincesa āsannastapatī’
(aitye ya brāhmaṇa 4.20) iti hi śruṣyate | rtaṁ satyaṁ vrahna yajña vā | tatra sidatīti ṛtataḥ agnīh
| vyomāṇaṃkṣaṇaḥ | tatra sidatīti vyomasat vayuh | idāniṃādiyātochyaṇe | avijāh
udakeṣu jātah | udakmadhye khvalvayāṇi jāyate | gojāḥ gosu raśmiṣu jātah | rtaṁ
satiyaḥ | sarvairdrṣṭavāna satyaḥjātaḥ | na hyāśāvinṛdrādviḥ pacoṣo bhavati | yadvā
| udakeṣu vaidyutarūpena | vādavarūpena vā jaṭah | adrijāḥ adṛvadāyāchale jaṭah
| evaṁ mahānubhāva ādiyāḥ rtaṁ satyaṃvādhyāṃ sarvādiṣṭhānam
vrāhmatattavam | tadrūpo hyāśāvega | ādiyāṣyoktarupatvaṁ ‘hanisah ‘suciṣadityeṣa vai hanisah ‘suciṣatis’ (ai. brā.4.20) ityādīnā vrāhmane samānnātāṁ ||
like Sāyaṇa and Mahīdhara vary a little in their interpretations of the individual terms but they agree to the fact that the sun in the type of Dadhikrā with Parabrahma or the Universal deity and consequently his identity is with all the other supreme beings. This verse actually very beautifully describes the spiritual height of the god Surya. This stanza is known as the hamsavati richa occurs twice in the Yajurveda X.24 and XII.14 as well as in the Aitereya Brāhmaṇa 4.20.1. The observations of Sāyaṇa and Mahīdhara may be mentioned here

1. Haṁsa, from han to go, who goes eternally to destroy individually, or it is resolvable into aham, I, and sa, he, that is, I am that, the supreme.

2. Vasu, the appointer of the stations of all creatures, or all men, or that which abides (vasati) at all times, Sarvada:

3. Hota or sacrificer and

4. Atithi or guest, meaning in both cases Agni, or fire, first as the sacrificial and secondly as culinary, fire;

5. Nṛṣad the dweller among men, is explained Chaitanya consciousness, or Prana, vitality, or according to Sāyaṇa in the scholia on the Brahmana, sight, or the eye, according to the text “the sun, becoming the eye (of the world), entered into the two eyes (of man)”.

6. Varasad is uniformly rendered the dweller in the most excellent station, that is, the solar orb:

67. YajurvedaX.24:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{YajurvedaX.24:} & \\
\text{hāṁsah} & \text{suchi} & \text{advasurantarikṣasaddhotāvediṣadatithirdūroṇasat} & \\
\text{nṛṣad} & \text{vasadṛṣṭasadyomasadavijā gojā rtajā adṛṣṭi rthi vṛhat} & \\
\end{align*}
\]
7. Ṭtasad is he who is present in truth, or in water, or in sacrifice: the comment on the Brāhmaṇa interprets truth, the text of the Veda, Vedavahya:

8. Vyomasad, the dweller in the sky, has its literal meaning everywhere, only Śaṅkara makes it out to be the wind:

9. Abjah, who is born in the midst of the water, as according to another text, udakamadhye khalvoyam jāyate, Mahidhara says, in the form of a fish, etc: the Brāhmaṇa intimates that this refers to the apparent rising of the sun from the ocean and setting in the same:

10. Gojah born gosū rays: Mahīdhara says, gavi prthivyāṁ, in the earth, being identical with the elements:

11. Ṭtajāh, born of truth, from being visible by all, not invisible like Indra and the rest, is Śaṅkara’s explanation in this place; in his scholia on the Brāhmaṇa he interprets it, born from the mantras of the Vedas:

12. Adrija, mountain born, that is, in the eastern mountain, where he rises: Mahīdhara says, born in stone in the form of Agni, as if alluding to flint; or adri, having for one meaning a cloud, he may be said to be generated in the clouds, in the form of rain: finally he is Ṭtāṁ, truth, that is, according to Śaṅkara, in both his comments, sound truth; or Parabrahma, as by another text, “Satyam jñānam anantam Brahma”, truth, wisdom, infinitude, Brahma; and as he explains it in this text, abadhyāṁ sarvādhiṣṭhānāṁ Brahmātattvam, the indefeasible, all-regulating principle, Brahma: so in his gloss on the Brāhmaṇa, truth, he says, is of two kinds, vyavahārikaṁ, truth in speech and worldly dealings, and pāramārthikaṁ, or Parabrahma, the supreme universal spirit: he notices, also, the reading of another Sākhā or Ṭtāṁ bṛhat, which is followed in the Yajus and is explained by Mahīdhara the all pervading, the
infinite sarvajātāṁ aparyantāṁ, that is, Parabrahmarūpa; Aditya in the form of Parabrahma.

Kātyāyana in his Anukramanikā to RV says that the Sun is the only one deity in the eyes of the Vedic seer. What is power or sākti outwardly is life or prāṇa inwardly. All god are born of this great power. Of them the sun is as much visible to the external sense as to the internal one.

What is, therefore, light outside is consciousness within. But, our internal consciousness shines only when it is awakened by the light outside, the sun. So, we all pray that our internal consciousness may become great and illumining and we worship the sun for that purpose. This, the Sun, is the spiritual mirror that reflects the resplendent expansion of individual consciousness. It is the Sun from which we feel the pulse of life. We are awakened to an illumining consciousness. The sun, therefore, is not any physical object that gives us heat; he inspires our consciousness. Shakti when it manifests as heat is matter, but, when it expresses itself as life and consciousness is spirit. The Sun is the centre of the universe.

If the individual soul can be identified with the centre, he may become the lord of the universe. One is to discover one’s individual consciousness that lies hidden within, in the physical or phenomenal sun and expand the same till one becomes aware of participation with Supreme consciousness. This is the central theme of the Vedic doctrine of Spiritual Perception.

SAVITR

The god Savitā of heaven is a god of great knowledge who is worshipped by all. He sends all people to their respective duties and thus he administers the human world. This god is deeply respected by people, by
worshippers for his invaluable power of (dhi) knowledge. Savitā gives birth to the world, the word Savitā actually means ‘Prasavitā’. He derives light from the sun and the world derives knowledge from Savitā. So Savitā is sometimes equated with the Sun. The Savitr mantra which is also called Gāyatrī mantra is also found in RV.III.62.10 where the sage Viśvāmitra is worshipping Savitā for getting the power of knowledge.

The Gāyatrī mantra is enchanted by all classes of Brāhmin of India. Therefore the god Savitā is upheld with glory and devotion. He therefore occupies a venerable position in the midst of gods of Vedic pantheon. The god Savitā unites our knowledge with the great Brahma. He gives us the direction of true path of earning knowledge. He is called the god of the sacrifice of the self. He becomes Īsāna, he becomes Puṣan and sometimes he is called Virat of this world.

Savitā is the god of giving birth, in philosophical term that birth is the source of the advent of self-consciousness. So Savitā in dogmatic sense is the giver of birth to the world and in philosophical sense it is the giver of self-realization.

Savitā also is the giver of riches which are very lovable wealth. He gives us sons and daughters removing our bad luck. He drives us to the auspicious path.

68.RV.III.62.10:

\[\text{tat saviturvarenyam bhargo devasya dhīmahī}
\text{dhiyo yo nah prachodayāt}||

Saśāna’s commentary on RV.III.62.10:

\[\text{yah savitā devah nah āsmākāṁ dhiyāḥ karmāni dharmādiviśayā vā vuddhiḥ prachodayāt prarayet tat}
\text{tasya devasya savitūḥ sarvāntaryāṃśīyaḥ prārakasya jagatsraṣṭaḥ paramesvārasya vareṇyāṁ sarvāḥ}
\text{upāsyatāyā jñeyatāyā cha sambhajīyaṁ bhargāḥ avidyātātkāryoryorharjanādhargāḥ}
\text{svayamjyotī parabrahmātmakāṁ tejāḥ dhīmahī vayaṁ dhīyāyāmāḥ}||

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He stands before the day and night and all people pray to the God Savitā\textsuperscript{69} (RV.V.82.9). Savitā is even beyond all prays.

Rishi Aurovindo, attaches highest spiritual emphasis on the god Savitṛ. So it can be said that Savitṛ was originally an epithet of Indian origin applied to the Sun as the great stimulator of life and motion in the world, representing the most important movement which dominates all others in the universe, but that as differentiated from Sūrya he is a more abstract deity. He is in the eyes of the Vedic poets the divine power of the Sun personified. Savitṛ is the godhead of the Supreme truth and knowledge hymned as ekam sat, one truth. He represents the truth of being, truth of knowledge, truth of process and act and movement and functioning. He is therefore the creator or rather the manifest of all things for creation is expressed what is present in the truth-will. He is the father, fosterer and enlightener of all souls. Thus the luminous vision and luminous creation are the two function of Savitṛ. He is present both in the microcosm and the macrocosm. He is the light of the truth rising in the human consciousness. Devi Uṣas, dawn, represents the onset of the first rays of light in night ridden consciousness, the consciousness covered by the forces of darkness, ignorance and inconscience. So Savitṛ comes after the Dawn i.e. Uṣas and follows and expands the path traced for him by her.

In the Veda, there is only one deity, ekam sat, one existence of which all other powers are aspects connected to one another by an intricate web.

\textsuperscript{69}RV.V.82.9

\begin{verbatim}
ya imā visvā jātānyāśrāvayati ślokena |
pra cha suvātī savitā||
\end{verbatim}

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Sūrya and Savitṛ appellations are used sometimes as if identical and as if distinct at others. Sūrya is reserved for his passive aspects as the body of infinite light and the revelation. In his active power he is addressed by various names like Savitṛ, Tvasṭṛ etc. Savitṛ manifests himself especially in the formation of the truth in man through the four great and active deities, i.e. Mitra, Varuṇa, Bhaga and Āryaman, representing the lords of pure wideness, luminous harmony, divine enjoyment and exalted power respectively. These four deities are, according to Sāyaṇa, solar powers.

Savitṛ by the truth is the creator, but not in the sense of a fabrication or mechanical forming of things. The root of the word means an impulsion, a losing forth or sending out, - the sense also of the ordinary word for creation, srsti- and so a production.

The truth in its largeness moulds all into the terms of the infinite and universal life, replaces with it the limited individual existence, maps out in the terms of their real being the realms of the physical consciousness which, as Savitṛ, it has created. This also is in us a creation, although in reality it only manifests what already exists but was concealed by the darkness of our ignorance, - just as the realms of the physical earth are concealed from our eyes by the darkness, but reveal themselves as the Sun in his march follows the Dawn and measures them out one by one to the vision. Following whose march the other gods to reach the vastness of the divinity by his strength, he who maps out entirely- that brilliant one, the earthly realms of light, the god Savitṛ by his greatness.

Savitṛ means creator, but especially in the sense of producing emitting from the unmanifest and bringing out into the manifest, The Vedic seer seeks the enjoyment in all created things of the immortal and immortalizing Ānanda. It is this Ānanda which is that enjoyment of the divine Producer, of
Savitr, the supreme result of the Truth; for truth is followed as the path to the
divine beatitude. This Ananda is the highest, the best enjoyment. It disposes
all aright, for once the Ananda, the divine delight in all things is attained, it
sets right all the distortions, all the evil of the world. It carries man thorough
to the goal. If by the truth and right of things one can arrive at the Ananda, by
the Ananda also one can arrive at the right and truth of things.

It is the universal Divine, the master of the Sat, from whom all things
are created in the terms of the truth, Satyam, that the sacrificers seek to accept
into themselves under the name of Savitr. He as Savitr, Master of the Truth,
goes in front of both this Night and the Dawn, of the manifest consciousness
and the unmanifest, the waking being and the subconscient and
superconscient whose interaction creates all our experiences and in his motion
neglects nothing, is never unheeding, never falters. He goes in front of both
bringing out of the night of the subconscient the divine Light, turning into the
beams of that Light, the uncertain or distorted reflections of the conscient and
always the thought is rightly placed.

Savitṛ stands between the Infinite and the created worlds within us and
without. All things that have to be born in the creative consciousness he
receives into the Vijnana; there he puts it into its right place in the divine
Rhythm by the knowledge that listens and receives the word as it descends
and so he looses it forth into the movement of things, āśrāvayati ślokena pra
cā suvati savitā (RV.V.82.9). When in us each creation of the active Ananda,
the prajavat soubhagam, comes thus out of the unmanifest, received and
heard rightly of the knowledge in the faultless rhythm of things, then is our
creation that of Savitr and all the births of that creation, our children, our
offspring, praja, apatyam are things of the delight, ‘viśva varani’. This is the
accomplishment of Savitṛ in man, his full portion of the world-sacrifice.
UŚAS

Uṣas is an auspicious goddess who carries with her the sacrifice coveted by gods. In ancient times Uṣas used to rise, even today the Uṣas of the wealth makes the world cleared of darkness. In future she will rise everyday because she is always new and immortal. She gives consciousness to the world (RV.I.113.13). She makes the path for the sun. Uṣas is the dancer of the cabinet of gods of heaven. She is the store house of eternal light. She gives light to the Sun and all Gods. Uṣas invests her Son, Surya with light and power and the Sun drives the cattles of light in the heaven. The great sky is the grazing ground of light created by Uṣas.

Uṣas is the goddess of spiritual consciousness whose outer or physical symbol is the physical dawn. Uṣas signifies the dawn of divine consciousness in the individual aspirant.

The goddess Uṣas is often mentioned with the deity ‘nakta’. Dawn and night guided by the Sun alternately, travel. Well-lighted, different in hues, common-minded, night and dawn do not clash. Here nakta or night stands for our ordinary consciousness which is open to all sorts of forces and influences including that from the great darkness “tamāḥ”. Naktas and tamāḥ, the enveloping darkness which is the haunt of inertia and forces of darkness like the demons, rakshasas, pisāchas etc. Uṣas, the divine consciousness arrives and opens the doors in our inner being and allows the divine light to flood our inner beings. The opening of the doors of inner being which are usually closed is a capital experience in spiritual life⁷⁰ (RV.I.113.4; 48.15). Brilliant guide to happy truths is Uṣas of many hues. She has opened our doors, lighting up the entire world she has illuminated spiritual wealth for us.
When the divine consciousness dawns on us, it cannot last very long because the human vital which clamours for excitement can not appreciate the bliss of the divine consciousness which is suffused with calm and is untinged with sorrow. The ordinary human mental personality which loves to wallow in doubts is not comfortable with the certitude offered by the divine consciousness. Thus Uṇās, the divine consciousness, recedes from the human and in its place, naktas, the night or the ordinary consciousness takes its place. During this period, the great God Agni keeps up the pressure on all the members of the human personality and prepares it for another on rush of the divine consciousness, Uṇās. Thus dawn and night alternate (RV.I.92.11).

Dawn follows the path of Truth. The second line of the Rik71 I.92.6 says Dawn prepares fresh discoveries of knowledge. Here the physical dawn is not meant, but the goddess of Truth who brings fresh revelation of knowledge at each advent.

70.RV.I.113.4:

bhāsватि नेत्रि सुन्दरनामचेति चित्रां वि दुरो अवाह
प्रार्प्यं जगवयु नो राश्यो अक्षयादुशा आजिगार्भुवनानि विस्वा

Sayana’s Commentary on RV.I.113.4:

chitrā chaityaniṣa jñātā sa nāh asmākaṁ duraḥ dvārāṇi tamasā tīrohitānvi vāvāh vaivṛṇot
yathāsmbhīrdṛṣyante tathā tamo nivārya prakāṣayatītāṁ
jagat sarvanā bhuvaṁ prāṛpya prakāśaṁ gamayītvā nāh asmākaṁ rāyāḥ dhanāni vā akhyat
viśīṣṭaprakāśanayuktāṁ yakaṁ

71.RV.I.92.6:

atārisma tamaśasampāramasayoṣa uchchhantī vayunā kṛṣṇot
śrīye chando na smaye tu bhātiṁ supratikā soimanaṁṣaṁyajigah

Sayana’s Commentary on RV.I.92.6:

asya naiśasyo tamaṁ andhakārasya pāram samāptipradeśaṁ atārisma uttiṁ abhūma | anantaram uchchhantī naiśam tamo varjayaṁ uṣāḥ vayunā vayunāṁ sarveṣāṁ prāṁśaṁ jīvaṁ kṛṣṇaṁ nirmimite
Some specific descriptions used for Usas which clearly indicate that Usas is not merely the physical Dawn, but is the goddess of solar radiance who manifests herself in advance before the rise of the Sun which symbolizes the rise or beginning of the Sun of Truth hymned on the Vedas as the "Supernal Light".

Usas follows the path of Truth. Dawn, true in her being with the gods who are true vast with gods who are vast (RV.VII.75.1). She is sunṛtanam netri i.e. impeller of happy truths (RV.I.113.4) and sunṛta i rayanti i.e. impeller of true and happy words, giver of wealth. Rayah in Veda always denotes spiritual wealth which does not exclude material wealth. Dawn appears with great blissful prosperity, with the glory of the vast, with divine wealth. She has illumined the spiritual wealth for us (RV.I.113.4)

Uṣas, the goddess of illumination first activates the inner being or the soul (jīva) to come forward and she prepares the path for all the Sun’s powers to pervade all the parts of our being, physical, vital, mental etc. and carry us to the supramental home of Truth which has an abundance of the powers of life and other powers.

The word “jīva” in the esoteric expression always means the “soul”, the essence of man which participates in divine action. Uṣas propels the “soul” toward divine action and gives expression to the thought of the soul in the form of inspired speech or mantras.

A common descriptor of Uṣas is “Ashvavati Gomati”72 (RV.I.48.2; VII.80.3). “Ashva” in the Veda always stands for the life-powers or vital energies leading to the actions for the enjoyment of the all pervading bliss.

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72. RV I.48.2: aśvāvatīrgomatiḥ rvasuvidā bhūrī chyavanta vastave  
udāraya prati mā sūhrta  usaschoda rādho maghonām ||
“Go” in the Veda stands for the rays of consciousness of knowledge. So Usās grants the powers of life and powers of intelligence. She establishes in us the plenitude of intelligences, life powers and hero might lauded in the hymns (RV.I.48.12).

The mantra⁷³(RV.I.49.3) in which the words dvipada and chatuspada are used which are interpreted as the humans and animals activated by Dawn. But dvipada used in (RV.I.49.3 ) refers in the esoteric interpretation to the two states of consciousness of the human aspirant, the ordinary consciousness, the condition of obscurity and the divine consciousness, the condition of Light. Similarly the word chatuspada (RV.I.49.3) refers to the four planes of earth (bhuḥ), mid region (bhūbaḥ), the mind (suvaḥ) and the great vast (mahas). Again the phrases “patatrinaḥ” (RV.I.49.3.), “ut patayanti pakshinaḥ” (RV.I.48.5) are interpreted as “birds” which are activated by the onset of dawn in the external sense. However “birds” in the Veda always stand for the upward movements and seeking for knowledge which soar upward to the heavenly regions. In the RV.I.49.3 the seer says that twin stationed, four stepped with high soaring energies moving fast beyond the heavenly regions.

Similarly in I.48.6, the phrase “Soaring birds rest not” can only mean the seekings of knowledge of the inner sacrificier which soar upward. The symbolism of birds for the powers of knowledge soaring upward to the higher planes is fairly common in Rigveda.

⁷³ RV.I.49.3: vayaśchitte patatiṇo dvipachchatuspadarjuni | usāḥ prāraṇurūrāṇu divo anteyaspari ||
Regarding Dawn and Night, it is spiritually said that this twin aspect of consciousness with necessary variation in its connotation that is the origin and support of the dictum of the Upanishad that both knowledge and ignorance must be known together. He who knows That as both in one, the knowledge and ignorance, by ignorance crosses beyond death and by the knowledge enjoys immortality (Isha Upanishad)

The goddess Usas is the medium of the awakening, the activity and she is the first condition of the Vedic realization. By the goddess Usas increasing illumination the whole nature of man is clarified, through her he arrives at the Truth, through her he enjoys the Beatitude. The divine dawn is the advent of the divine Light throwing off veil after veil and revealing in man's activities the luminous godhead. In that light the work is done, the sacrifice offered and its desirable fruits gathered by humanity.

This dawn moves in her progression always according to the rule of a divine action; many are the thoughts she brings in that motion, but her steps are sure and all desirable things, all supreme boons, the boons of the Ananda, the blessings of the divine existence- are in her hands. She is ancient and eternal, the dawn of the Light that was from the beginning, purani, but in her coming she is ever young and fresh to the soul that receives her.

She is to shine wide, she that is the divine Dawn, as the light of the immortal existence bringing out in man the powers or the voices of Truth and Joy. Divine Dawn comes thus to the soul with the light of her knowledge, prajnana, confronting all the worlds as field of that knowledge - all provinces of our universal being, - mind, vitality, physical consciousness. She stands uplifted over them on our heights above mind, in the highest heaven, as the perception of Immortality or of the Immortal, amrtasya Ketuh, revealing in them the eternal and beatific existence or the eternal all-blissful Godhead. So
exalted she stands prepared to affect the motion of the divine knowledge, progressing as a new revelation of the eternal truth, navyasi, in their harmonized and equalized activities like a wheel moving smoothly over a level field. For they now, their diversities and discords removed, offer no obstacle to that equal motion.

As this divine Dawn pours out widely its light upon them, so have men by submission to the law of her divine act and movement to bring forward for her the fully energized completeness of their being and their capacities as a vehicle for her light or as a seat for her sacrificial activities.

Dawn divine is the coming of the Godhead. She is the light of the Truth and the Felicity pouring on us from the Lord of Wisdom and Bliss, amrtasya Ketuḥ, svasarasya patni.

Anirvāna also emphasizes on the aspects of light generation of the goddess Uṣas. Light and darkness both constitute the completeness of an existent. Uṣas is the representative of that light which dispels darkness and light is the symbol of Sun, so it can be said that Usas is the manifestation of Sun.

This spiritual attribute refers to the dispelling of all pervading darkness which lads to ultimate light – the highest goal to achieve.

MITRA

Mitra being a god of the Dyuasthāña. In spiritual interpretation he also reveals the same spiritual traits as stated in the heading of Varuṇa.
VARUNA

Spiritually Varuṇa resides in the life-region where the goddess Apañā flows in the majestic waves of ocean. The rains from heaven come down to the mid-region through the passage of river which spreads life’s murmuring sweetness through waters. The water flow of the rainy season are the life of god vibrating through waters and the nectar of joy enjoyed by the sages as divine gift\(^74\) (AV.IV/15/12) This god Varuṇa became our father pouring waters of life downwards. This Varuṇa lives in this mother like rivers. The king of the world, Varuna made the earth wetted and he afterwards tries to milk the earth for producing crops. (RV.V.85.3\(^75\); V.85.4\(^76\))

Varuna brings Sindhu in hundred streams. These streams flowing to the ocean. Varuṇa resides in the ocean. So Sindhu resides in Varuna. This ocean is made of waters on earth, made of life in the mid-region, made of light in the heaven. In the philosophical words there are three Varuṇas. One on the earth, the other on the mid-region the great ocean. Varuṇa is therefore a magical man who crosses the boundary of heaven, mid-region and the earth and another in heaven. So there are three Varuṇas. He being one excels everything. He is our boatman of our life by whom we cross the great ocean. Varuṇa is therefore a magical man who crosses the boundary of heaven, mid-region and the earth.

\(^74\) AV.IV.15.12
apo nisifchanna asuro pitā naḥ ....... varunāva nichir apah srja ||

\(^75\) RV.V.85.3
nichinayarani varunaḥ kavandham pra sasarja rodasī antarikṣam|
tena viśvasya bhuvanāsya rajā yavaṁ na vṛṣṭir vyunattī bhuma ||

\(^76\) RV.V.85.4
unattī bhumīm pṛthivīṁ uta dyāṁ yadā dugdhami vaśyādīt |
sam-ahṭreṇa vasāta parvatāsas-taviṣṭayaṁ śrathayanta virah ||

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There is a four-mouth sacrifice before the beginning of the rainy season called Varuṇa-praghāsa, from the very name the importance of Varuṇa is expressed. Satapatha Brāhmaṇa says that by this sacrifice continued for four months the subjects fastened by Varuṇa were relieved by Prajāpati. As a result they were reborn as free from sin and free from disease and by this sacrifice, the sacrificers become Varuṇa and they come close to Varuṇa\(^77\)(RV.V.63.2). By this sacrifice we get wisdom and life from the great god. He is our saviour of life by contributing Apaḥ, waters of life to us.

\[
\text{77.RV.V.63.2} \\
\text{samrajavasya bhuvanasya rājatho mitravarunā vidathe svardyātā} \\
\text{vrśtimi vāṁ raika amṛtatvamimahe dyāvārṣhivī vi charanti tanyavaḥ} \\
\]
ASVINS

The Asvins usher health, youth, strength and wholeness to the physical man, capability of action and enjoyment to the vital man and the ‘glad energy of the light’ to the mental man. They function along three planes of bhur, bhuuvah and svar, the planes of matter, life or vital.

The Asvins like the other gods descend from the Truth-consciousness, the rtam; they are born or manifested from heaven, from Dyau, the pure Mind; their movement pervades all the worlds,—the effect of their action ranges from the body through the vital being and the thought to the superconscient Truth.

It commences indeed from the ocean, from the vague of the being as it emerges out of the subconscious and they conduct the soul over the flood of these waters and prevents its foundering on its voyage. They are therefore nasatya, lords of the movement, leaders of the journey or voyage of human life from this world to the higher world.

Asvins help man with the Truth which comes to them especially by association with the Dawn, with Sūrya, lord of the Truth and with Sūrya, his daughter, but they help him more characteristically with the delight of being. They are lords of bliss, their car or movement is loaded with the satisfactions of the delight of being in all its planes, they bear the skin full of the overflowing honey(RV.IV.45.3,4); they seek the honey, the sweetness and fill all things with it. They are therefore effective powers of the Ānanda which proceeds out of the Truth-consciousness and which manifesting itself variously in all the three worlds maintains man in his journey.
The mouths of the Aśvins are made to drink of the sweetness. Let them yoke their chariot for the honey, their chariot is beloved of man. For man’s movement, his progressive activity, is made by them glad in all its path with that very honey and sweetness of the Ānanda or immortality.

In the upward movement the horses that draw the chariot of the Aśvins change into birds, into swans. The bird in the veda is the symbol, very frequently of the soul liberated and upsoaring, at other times of energies so liberated and upsoaring, winging upwards towards the heights of our being, winging widely with a free flight, no longer invoked in the ordinary limited movement of labouring gallop of the Life energy, the Horse, asva. Such are the energies that draw the free car of the lords of Delight, when there dawns on us the Sun of the Truth.

Aśvins are golden-winged, hiranyaparsaḥ. Gold is the symbolic colour of the light of Sūrya. The wings of these energies are the full, attaining movement of his luminous knowledge.

For these are the birds that awake with Dawn, these are the winged energies that come forth from their nests when the feet of the daughter of the Heaven press the levels of our human mentality. Such are the swans that bear the swift-riding Twins. Full of the honey these winged energies shower on us as they rise the abundance of the waters of heaven, the full outpouring of the high mental consciousness; they are instinct with ecstasy, with rapture, with the intoxication of the immortal wine and they touch, they come into conscious contact with that superconscient being which is eternally in possession of the ecstasy, rapturous for ever with its divine intoxication. Drawn by them the Lords of delight come to the rishi’s Soma offering like bees to tricklings of honey. For the individual’s delight in things is met by the Aśvins’ triple satisfactions and by the forth, the delight pouring from the
Truth. The cleansed hands of the Sacrificier, niktahastāḥ are possibly symbolic of the purified physical being; the power comes from a fulfilled life-energy; the force of clear mental vision, vichakṣaṇa, is the sign of the truth-illumined mind. These are the conditions in mind, life and body for the overflowing of the honey over the triple satisfaction of the Aśvins.

The Aśvins take knowledge for the human consciousness of all the paths of its progress so that it may affect a complete, harmonious and many-sided movement. This movement advancing in many paths is combined in the light of the divine knowledge by the spontaneous self-arranging action of Nature which she assumes when the will and the knowledge are wedded in the perfect harmony of a fully self-conscious, intuitively guided action.

The Vedic seer has been able to hold firmly the shining thought with its high illumination and has expressed in himself by the shaping and fixing power of the word the chariot, that is to say, the immortal movement of the delight of the Aśvins, the movement of a bliss that does not fade or grow old or exhaust itself, - it is ageless and undecaying, ajarāḥ- because it is drawn by perfect and liberated energies and not by the limited and soon exhausted, soon recalcitrant horses of the human vitality. In this movement they traverse in a moment all the worlds of the lower consciousness, covering it with their speeding delight and so arrive to that universal enjoyment in man full of his offering of the Soma-wine by which they can lead him, puissantly entering into it, through all opposers and to the great goal.