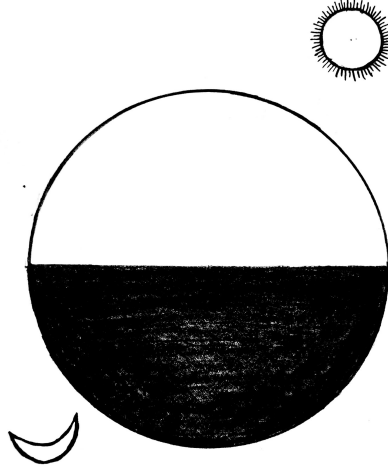


Journey through the Vēdic Thought

An Exploration of Puruṣa Sūktaṃ



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Dedicated to my Guru, Master E. K.,
who kindled the spark of spiritual light in me.

Isn't the music of our soul
A speck of dust on HIS Sole

Is not the cosmic dance of Nataraja
An evolutionary spark to our inner joy

The thousand hooded serpent bed (of Vishṇu)
Weighs the weights of those devoted

One half of the lord hermaphrodite (Arthanāriśvara)
Satiated the worry of sons, while
The other half showed the path of the Bright!

The dark impregnable hair (of Śiva)
Is a refugee place for the Death's Heir (Yama)

The bodily blue hues of the SKY lord (Rudra)
Made our planet, a Blue Lord (the Blue planet)

Lord Rudra had a huge cry
Awakening the musical tones, for us to try

The special arrow of lord Rama
Pierced through our Lazy Karma

The rumbling of Krishna's conch
A house of FIVE natures that ever launch

The melodies of Parvati's foot steps
Thrilled the universal couplets
(Jivātman and Paramātman)

The periodical moon phases
Bring aesthetic joys and mental poise

The red color of the eyes of Narasimha
Smeared itself to the twilight's hue

Son of Vinata (Garuḍa), the matchless might
Gave the bird kingdom, their eternal flight

The Solar god, son of undifferentiated dark glow (Aditi)
Gave the many lives, a ceaseless flow

Oh the creator and master of fate (Brahma) !
Your wit and write is an ever amusing state !!

- Tejaswi Katravulapally

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Preface

The world is full of mysteries. For example, the origin of the Universe, the birth of our consciousness, the state of sleep and dream, our place in the vast cosmos, etc. Humans have been trying to discover the solutions to these mysteries since the dawn of time. Is there a possibility that we have already discovered solutions to few such mysteries? If so, why have we not heard of them? If not, have we overlooked our past humans' efforts? Let us see.

What do we have at our hand to explore many of the aforementioned mysteries? Broadly speaking, we either approach the mysteries through the present sciences like Physics, Biology, Chemistry, etc., or through the ancient scriptures like the Egyptian book of the dead, Old Testament, Vēda, Tantra, Kabbalah, etc. At present there is a tension between the two approaches, in fact, the tension is between the scholars of the two approaches but not the approaches themselves. Scholars of the former are still evolving in their understanding of the Universe and that is why we see new theories and updated views every now and then. This is not wrong, but shows the baby-stage of the former approach and hence we cannot take their word for FINAL yet. Scholars of the later often disagree with each other in regard to the details, which shows that the truth is buried under the veil of their personal interpretations.

Then how are we to find a proper harmonious solution? We can safely leave the former approach of science at its

own pace for now and update ourselves whenever it offers us with a concrete solution and take the second approach. But in taking the second approach, we need to hold on to the approach of the masters rather than that of the modern scholars.

Who is a master? A master is the one who is at a higher state of evolution (of understanding things) than present humanity. Who decides this level of evolution? Well, the words of wisdom and the links they show via their teachings is one of the sure ways to decide. Try to first follow the approach of a teaching of someone and then see for yourself if there is any harmony at the end. I mean harmony in the sense of a link that connects the wisdom of all the ancient scriptures. If there is such harmony, that does not hurt your logic or intuition, then the teaching belongs to a master.

This is my view though. It may differ from person to person. But the take-away point here is that, when one is able to see a link between seemingly different scriptures of the ancient world, which evolved at different time scales, It shows a faint idea of a knowledgeable past. When one can see this harmony, how can the other not see? To not see the link is very easy. But, to see the link requires much effort, especially when the works belong to totally different languages, eras and civilisations. That is why the teachings which show such links are superior in nature and belong to the Masters of high order.

I personally like the works of Madame Blavatsky, Alice, A. Bailey, Sri Aurobindo, Master.E.K., Sir John Woodroffe, Paramahansa Yogananda, Sri Ramaṇa Maharṣi, Bepin

Behari, etc. After reading few of their works one can easily see how harmoniously the world scriptures are linked and how grand the wisdom is embedded within the scriptures.

It is from this angle that I conclude we already have answers to the mysteries of the world and most of us must have just overlooked them either due to lack of time to dedicate or lack of proper exposure into the art of decoding the ancient wisdom. At this juncture, you may ask me if I can show such a harmony of understanding, at least as a form of an example. Well, the present book is an attempt in those lines.

Ancient Indian scriptures are divided into Vēdās, Upaniṣads, Brāhmaṇās, Āraṇyakās, etc. The total wisdom contained in all such categories falls under one name THE VĒDA. Vēda is not the literary text as often spoken by the modern scholars, but is the wisdom contained in the texts. Is Physics the physics textbook or the science that is understood by the reader of the textbook? So, wisdom is ONE and not many, but the ways it is made understood are many!

The text of the Vēda consists of poems and prose. The individual poems can be called hymns. What does these hymns consist of? They often praise the object of the hymn, often the Omnipresent GOD. This is what one gets at first sight. But, when one explores deeper, they will see that the hymn not only praises the GOD but also offers much more details about the mysteries of the creation.

Amongst the many known hymns, Puruṣa Sūktaṃ is one of the most famous hymns of the Vēda, which explores the

nature of COSMIC-MAN. Examples of other hymns are Agni Sūktam (Hymn of the Cosmic-Fire), Viṣṇu Sūktam (hymn of the all-pervading lord), Nāsadīya Sūktam (hymn of riddle of existence), Śrī Sūktam (hymn on the splendours of the world-mother), etc. It should be noted that the word Puruṣa/MAN in Puruṣa Sūktam is not gender specific “man”, but symbolises the source of creation. Translating a Sanskrit word into English has its own limitations and that is why I had to mention this beforehand.

The present hymn of Puruṣa Sūktam (from Rig Vēda) praises the glories of the source of creation, along with giving details of what Vēdic seers perceived as the schema of the whole creation. That is why the title I gave to this book is - “*Journey through the Vēdic thought*”. I want to take you through the vast intellectual world of thoughts of the seers of the Vēda, whose exact era is debated by the scholars but not their antiquity. Their antiquity and the hidden depths of their Vēda surely does make us question our inability to fathom the idea of a glorious past.

In the following pages, what you would find is an excursion into the backbone of Puruṣa Sūktam - its meter, its seer, the role of numbers, etc., an exploration into the stanzas of the hymn of Puruṣa Sūktam with its import, word-to-word meaning and detailed explanation. The goal is to go beyond the generally accepted notion of the hymn and dive into the vast oceans of Vēdic thought.

1. The Vēda

Puruṣa Sūktaṃ belongs to the Vēdic lore. To understand the hymn itself, one must first understand the background in which it occurs i.e., one must first understand the concept of the Vēda. What is Vēda? How many Vēdas are there? What is the difference between these Vēdās? etc., need to be answered first. Here, we will explore in brief, the story encircling the Vēda.

The Root-Words

The Vēdic texts that are available today, are written in the language of ancient form of Sanskrit. Sanskrit words have a definite structure that can be developed from what we call *root-words*. Root words act as seeds which sprout and develop into a family of words. The word “Vēda” comes from the root word “VID”. Vid means to experience or to realize. So, the expanded word Vēda means wisdom. Here, another word is to be studied in parallel to gain more light on the meaning of the word Vēda. That word is Jñāna/Knowledge. The word Jñāna comes from the root word “Jña” which means “to know”.

Knowledge vs Wisdom

What is the difference between knowledge and wisdom? A piece of information which we input to our mind is knowledge whereas the experience or realisation of the piece of information is wisdom. For example, consider chocolate. The information that “chocolate is sweet” is

knowledge. When we taste the chocolate, the sweet taste of chocolate that we experience is the wisdom. Anyone who knows the information that chocolate is sweet, is knowledgeable, but they are not necessarily wise. For example, if they never had chocolate in their life, the statement “chocolate is sweet” has no meaning to them. If you try to ask them which chocolate tastes better, they are not wise to suggest. That means, they lack wisdom or experience of the taste of chocolate. Without wisdom or experience of the taste of chocolate, what is the use of knowing that “chocolate is sweet” ?

The same relation holds between a person who “knows” Vēda and in whom the Vēda took the form of wisdom. In the past, many scholars (mostly western and few Indians) have tried to comment upon the Vēda, but they did so from being in the state of “knowledge”. For them, Vēdic text was Vēda and hence they thought that by knowing the dictionary meaning of each word of the Vēdic text, they understood the Vēda. They are similar to the knowledgeable person we were speaking about, who never had a chocolate in their life. That is why we see many discrepancies in their commentaries. They too saw such discrepancies and blamed the Vēda for being not coherent and meaningful.

In my kindergarten, I remember reading a story titled “The grapes are sour”, where a fox tries to eat the grapes, but could not jump high enough to grab them. So, after many trials, it says to itself “ah! The grapes must be sour, why bother at all!”. The same goes with such commentators who discarded the Vēdic contents. If they really tried to

grasp the wisdom, they would have seen a coherent picture in the Vēda.

Great personalities like Sri Aurobindo, Sri Ekkirala Anantacharya, etc., have dedicated their lives to decode the Vēda in a harmonious way, following the guidelines that are hidden and scattered in the same Vēda. They dug deep and brought of LIGHT necessary to peep into the minds of Vēdic seers. They have also commented upon the Vēda, but from the state of “wisdom”. That is why we can see their works oozing the sweet nectar of harmony. I strongly suggest the readers to read: ***The Secret of the Vēda (by Sri Aurobindo) and Suparṇa - The integral unity of vedic outlook (by Sri Ekkirala Anantacharya) to gain deeper insights into the Vēda.***

Now that you have understood the difference between wisdom and knowledge, from hereon, I urge the reader to read this book (or for that matter, any book related to ancient wisdom) from the point of experiencing the content rather than just analysing the content.

A claim to be verified

By now, you must have got a hunch as to what Vēda is. Of course, to know more, you must explore more, but for now this suffices. Let us go into the details of how Vēdic hymns came into existence. Before that, I want to make a claim and try to argue its validity. The claim is: “*Wisdom is within us. Knowledge just unveils the wisdom in us but can not create any new state of wisdom in us.*” Let us take an example to see what I am trying to claim.

Consider the chocolate example again. Let us say we never had a chocolate in our life. Now, let us say, someone gave a chocolate to us and we started to experience its taste for the first time. Is the taste of chocolate inside the chocolate or inside us? If the taste of the chocolate was inside the chocolate, it would be sweeter to itself. Can it taste itself? No! I would say that, only because “we” have the capacity to taste the taste of chocolate, are we really able to taste it. But, then one may ask, “if what you say is true i.e., the taste is inside us, then when chocolate is not in our mouth, can we taste it? If you cannot, does it not mean chocolate’s sweetness is not inside you?”. To answer this, I would counter ask you, when we are sick, we taste different tastes to what a substance actually should taste like, don’t we?. Why is that so? If the same sweet is given to a sick person and a healthy person, they might taste it differently. Does this not suggest that taste is in us and not in chocolate?

If you are not convinced, let us take another approach. Chocolate only has atoms. We have something more than atoms - consciousness to experience. If we too are only atoms, then who is reading this book? Can the atoms of the book read and understand what I am trying to say?! So, chocolate is just material and its quality lies inside us!

Those who would argue against consciousness, can name the LIFE element with whatever name they want and still they should be convinced that taste can not reside in the chocolate. If they are still not convinced, they are welcome to write on the chocolate packets as to how sweet the chocolate is i.e., something like “This chocolate tastes so and so units of sweetness”. Can they do this? If they can, they need to measure the sweetness. But, how do we

measure? Is there a standard for it? Is it not relative? Those who eat sweets daily may find a small grape sour but those who rarely eat sweets, can find the same grape super sweet! Right? This relativity of taste exists because it is part of our unique EXISTENCE and not of the matter concerned!!

Similarly, you can extend the same logic to numbers, maths, science, pain, pleasure, time, etc. All the elements of life are within us. The events and situations are interpreted by mind and the interpretations trigger “something” in us which we feel as different sensations. Are these sensations not part of wisdom or experience we were speaking of? What was the role of different external elements? The role was only to trigger the sensations. I called this triggering as unveiling, because it does not bring anything new to what we potentially have in us.

So, I am convinced that my claim of **“Wisdom is within us. Knowledge just unveils the wisdom that is already in us but can not create any new state of wisdom in us”**. If you are not still convinced, I have one last example which should break that barrier for you.

Let us say, there is no wisdom of maths/numbers already inside us and we want to learn from the start. We can approach a textbook but all the symbols are meaningless to us, given our ignorance and therefore we need a human to teach us. Let person A help us understand numbers. He would show one apple or a chocolate and tell us “This is ONE”. But because we have no wisdom of numbers in us, we would ask A as to what ONE is. For that matter, we can extend the logic and ask “What is a number”. Can anyone in this world answer? If I ask you who came first: Numbers

or Humans, what would the answer be? If humans came first, then, are they not born with two hands, two eyes, 32 teeth, etc? Does this not suggest that Numbers are born prior to us and exist in us? Think deeply and you should get it. What a maths teacher can do is, open the potential of understanding numbers in us and awaken us into experiencing numbers by physically associating them with objects we sense (sight, touch, etc). If not for the numbers already in us, no one in this world can impart it to us.

Impersonal nature of wisdom

Thus, we can safely conclude that WISDOM lies inside us. This is the fundamental principle of the VĒDA. They call the wisdom as "**APAURUṢĒYA** or **IMPERSONAL WISDOM**". Why is it called impersonal if it is inside us? Because, wisdom does not belong to any individual person. Can you say that the "sense of number" or "taste of a sweet" belongs to only one person? Does the result of you adding " $1+2=3$ " is different from anyone else adding? Because wisdom is in and around us and no one can own it, it is called impersonal wisdom!

Origin of Vēdic hymns and chants

Now, let us come back to our question as to how Vēdic contents came into existence. Vēdic seers lived in harmony with nature and trained their minds to levels unfathomable to modern humans. They realised that their bodies were hosts of conscious entities and they were just guests in a bodily machine run by millions of conscious agents (called dēvās or angels). So, they adhered to harmony of body too. In such a state of synchronous

existence, they could easily experience some wonderful things. which they put in words and tones. When you want your friend to taste the chocolate, do you not offer it? Similarly, when they want the rest of humanity to experience what they experienced, they discovered (or guided by the dēvās) that uttered WORD (Vēdic text) and utterance of the WORD (chanting of the Vēda) acted as powerful agents of transferring the experience. This was possible because, according to them (and above logic) the sound potencies too lie hidden in us and we only need an external/internal triggering sound to kindle it. This is how the Vēdic hymns and Vēdic chants came into existence.

Because the wisdom is inside us and we are but part of creation, the same wisdom must also be around us. That is why they say “**Yat Piṇḍē Tat Brahmāṇḍē**”, meaning, the humans and cosmos have a one to one link to each other. If you can discover an aspect of one entity, the same of the other is easily known. That is why their discoveries were related to both life of beings as well as life of the cosmos. That is why, the Vēdic contents are revered and thought to solve the mysteries of creation.

Four Vēdās

The Vēda suggests that the wisdom spoken above manifests in three fundamental modes of expression. They are the Rig, Yajus and Sāma modes. To understand this, one needs to take help of Bṛhadaraṇyaka Upaniṣad (chapter1 - section 5 - stanza 5), one of the most important and enigmatic upaniṣads, which suggests the following in regard to these modes:

Vāgēva Rig-Vēdaḥ - Uttered word is Rig Vēda

Prāṇaḥ Sāma-Vēdaḥ - Breath is Sāma Vēda

Manō Yajur-Vēdaḥ - Mind is Yajur Vēda

The statements are cryptic and need more digging. In the following, I will try to express what the above statements mean

- Rig Vēda: The word Rig Vēda comes from root-word “RIK”. **Rik means two things - a rumbling sound of vocal cords or a ray of light.** When we utter a word, it happens only through the rumble of the vocal cords i.e., they have to rapidly vibrate and produce the sound. When this sound is heard, the sound causes a stir of thoughts and implants an idea which the sound is pregnant with. For example, let me say “I like chocolate” to you. The moment I utter this, if you already know what “chocolate” is, your thoughts are diverted to your experiences of chocolate. If not, you would be wondering what that chocolate is. In anycase, your thoughts have been kindled. This stir of thoughts caused in us can also be called “light” because it enlightens our intellect. That is why we use light bulbs as a symbol of “idea”. Thus, an uttered word produced by us is because of the RUMBLE and causes LIGHT in us to spark. Thus, Rig Vēda is that mode of wisdom which is associated with uttered sounds and kindling of light in us!

- Sāma Vēda: To utter a word, we need breath. What do the vocals vibrate? The air in the vocal column. The breath we take is base material for sounds to be uttered. Not only that, the breath we take supports the life in us and hence the light-ray or the awareness of “I AM” in us. What is Prāṇa then? Is it the air we breathe? No. Prāṇa is the capacity to periodically breathe the air. **The periodicity or regulated pulsation of things in us is called prāṇa.** Beating heart, breathing lungs, waking & sleeping states, etc., form the pattern of Prāṇa. These periodical manifestations are called Sāmās. Sāma means a song or melody (that is why the text of Sāma Vēda is sung in a tune). The periodical occurrences form a melody of life, don't they! So, that mode of wisdom which presides over the pulsating nature of Prāṇa is called Sāma Vēda.
- Yajur Vēda: **Yajus means a (selfless) act and an act is always steered and guided by Mind.** Mind acts as a link between the physical body and non-physical self. If the mind were physical, we could have quantified it using units of electric currents in the brain. But the mind is beyond the brain. Mind is said to take the seat of the brain and carry out necessary functions. In Vēdic lore, all physical bodies are considered to be having a mind i.e., a stone, a plant, a dog, a planet, etc., all have a mind of their own. But, it is also stated that the state of mind is what is different between them. The esoteric teachings teach us that: *“God sleeps in minerals, dreams in plants, awakens in animals and realises in humans”*. That means, mineral kingdom

or the physical matter has a mind that is in a sleep state. The plant kingdom has a mind that is in a hazy dreamy state (that is why their reaction to external stimulus is subtle). The mind of animals is in a state of awakening (that is why they can realise everything around them, except themselves i.e., they do not know the sense of “I AM”, except for elementary instincts like hunger, fear, etc.). The mind of the human kingdom exists in a state of awakening but has potential to realise the self and answer the question “Who AM I?”. This later realisation is what separates seers from us. So, wisdom or experience to each of these states of mind is different and the totality of it is what forms complete wisdom, which only an evolved human can comprehend. The mode of wisdom that manifests through all these different states of mind is called Yajur Vēda.

There exists one final mode of wisdom which brings a practical meaning to the above triad. That is:

- Atharvaṇa Vēda: The three aforementioned Vēdās are put together called “**TRAYĪ**” or three-fold wisdom. The seers compare this Trayī to the upper jaw. Can you speak with just your upper jaw? No! Similarly, the seers suggest that to work with only these three modes of wisdom is not possible. There should be another mode of wisdom which can turn the potential of this trayī into dynamic activity. **That mode of wisdom which practically puts everything into a structure and helps us use the**

trayī is called Atharvaṇa Vēda. It is compared to the lower jaw. See how articulated the lower jaw is which helps to utter a word? To utter a word is symbolic to utter the wisdom within. Atharvaṇa Vēda utters forth the wisdom of all the three Vēdās!

All these four Vēdās are different from generally known Vēdic texts. Particular Vēdic text is like a text book on the wisdom of the associated Vēda. So, the Vēdic text may help or may not help an aspirant depending on the level of scholarly knowledge of the language. But when the same aspirant leads a life as prescribed by the Vēda (you may see some of the hints in this sūkta), the life itself manifests the four-fold wisdom in the form of sweet experience of bliss. So, Vēdic texts are only a means to bliss but not the bliss itself. For example, take Ramaṇa Maharṣi or Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. They did not read much of the vēdic texts, but their teachings are the essence of the Vēda and often can be correlated to the contents of the Vēdic texts.

So, one should be careful in understanding the term **Vēda** in the Vēdic texts. It's a slippery slope if one is not careful. For example, one often hears the statements like “**Vēdās are created before the creation of the Universe, Vēdās are eternal, etc.**” When we associate the word Vēdas with Vēdic texts, such statements have no logic. How can texts be eternal? But, when associated with the true Vēda, as explored earlier, the Vēda being eternal and Vēda being foremost in the creation does make a lot of sense, does it not? For a moment, consider Sāma Vēda. Humans are born with property to breathe and their hearts are born with property to beat periodically. So, periodicity is a principle which precedes them. Is not this the Sāma we discussed

before? Vēdic theory suggests that the Universe also emerges and merges into a background (GOD) periodically. Does that not mean the Sāma of cosmos is first born and the Sāma in us mimics the cosmic Sāma? In that sense, Vēdas are eternal and Vēdās precede everything and everyone!

O-O-O-O-O

Stanza-1: The Infinitude of Puruṣa

sahasra śīrṣā puruṣaḥ
sahasrākṣaḥ sahasrapāt /
sa bhūmiṃ viśvatō vṛtvā
atyatiṣṭha daśāṅgulaṃ //

Word-to-Word Meaning

Om = utterance of aum; **Sahasra** = infinite; **Śīrṣā** = heads; **Puruṣaḥ** = the indweller; **Sahasra+Akṣaḥ** = infinite eyes; **Sahasra+Pāt** = infinite feet; **Saḥ** = He; **Bhūmiṃ** = Earth; **Viśvataḥ** = on all sides; **Vṛtvā** = enveloped; **Ati+Atiṣṭhaḥ** = Exceeded; **Daśa+Aṅgulaṃ** = ten digits.

Import

The Puruṣa has infinite heads, infinite eyes and infinite feet. He has enveloped the Earth from all directions. He exceeds by ten digits.

Exploration

The general meaning of the word SAHASRA is thousand. But, it is also called “**Ananta Vāci**”, which means a symbol of **infinite**. In the present context, the symbol of infinite suits better than the meaning of thousand. Therefore, I chose to define the meaning of the word sahasra as infinite, in the word-to-word section. Let us stick to this definition.

Who is Puruṣa? Well, the content of this hymn is the answer for this question. Sage Nārāyaṇa, the seer of this hymn, is answering the question of who Puruṣa is with a strange suggestion. He is asking us to contemplate on Puruṣa as the one having infinite heads, eyes and feet. Please do not imagine some human form with so many heads or eyes or feet, that is ridiculous. That only shows the limited capability of a non-imaginative mind. We should go further and dive deep into intuition.

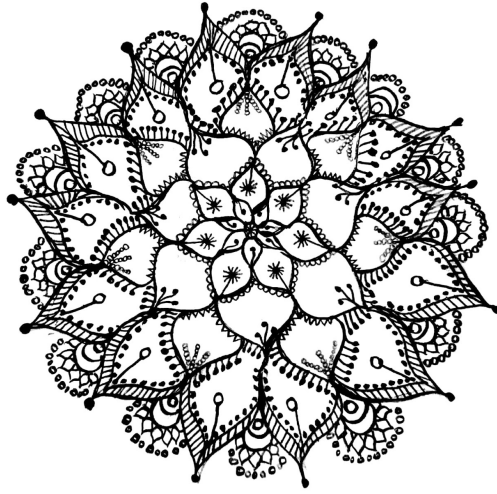
One way to understand the aspect of infinite heads, eyes or feet is a collection of all the beings as one unit. Instead of understanding “head” as a physical head, we may understand it as the principle of head i.e., something that acts as a processing unit. Similarly, eyes can be understood as a symbol of principle of sensing or that which acts as a receptor which receives signals from the external world. Similarly, the feet may be understood as a principle of movement or precisely, the principle of change - a change in time or space. Anything in this creation certainly has at least one of these principles. Starting from unicellular organisms to humans or starting from atoms to galaxies, all of them have at least one of these three functionalities i.e., to change, to perceive the environment and to react via processing the information.

So, extending our field of consideration to the whole Universe, how many units of principle of heads, how many units of principle of sensing and how many units of principle of change exist? Is it not Infinite! Is there anything that goes outside this consideration? No! What do we get when we have a unified set of all these things? It seems that we get an aspect of PURUṢA. *So, the first and*

foremost hint as to who Puruṣa is, is given as the union of all that is in this universe which amounts to INFINITE and the one to whom these belong to is PURUṢA.

So, Puruṣa is the indweller of everything and everyone. This is the root principle with which the most famous Viṣṇu Sahasranāma starts with - “Viśvaṃ Viṣṇuḥ” meaning, “the whole cosmos is pervaded by Viṣṇu”. Here, Viṣṇu is the pervading aspect of the lord or Puruṣa, but not the Viṣṇu that we see in trinity godhead (Brahma-Rudra-Viṣṇu) who sustains the creation. The distinction between the two types of Viṣṇus is essential in properly understanding the scriptures. So, the Puruṣa Sūktam’s first two lines suggest the Viṣṇu aspect of the lord and this is affirmed by Viṣṇu Sahasranāma.

There is another way to look at the same set of infinite heads-eyes-feet. Akṣaṃ means a spoke or a ray of light. So, the infinite Akṣa implies infinite rays that originate from a star. Infinite Śīrṣa would then mean infinite such stars. Infinite Pāt would imply infinite movements caused by all these stars of a myriad of galaxies in the Universe. In a way, our Universe is essentially filled by these stars which are the causes of planets and associated lives in respective solar systems (the scriptures assure of life forms on other planets, but may not be the life as we perceive today!).



So, the beauty of the first few lines of the stanza is that, by association of different meanings to the same words, we arrive at the same pervading aspect of Puruṣa. Instead of analysing these things, we need to contemplate and meditate Puruṣa as the ONE who pervades this universe through the material and non-material forms around us i.e., the **invisible guest (indweller)** or the many stars and planets around us i.e., as the **visible host**. The attached diagram gives a symbolic summary of this concept. The hidden symmetry, the many blooming petals, the evolutionary pattern, the beautiful organisation of different internal elements, etc., are all symbolic to the characteristics of Puruṣa manifesting as this universe. This pic is but a symbol of a small fragment of the infinite-nature, but does its job of kindling the intuitive thought.

It seems that Puruṣa enveloped the Earth and exceeded by 10 inches. The word “Bhūmi” may mean Earth in general sense, but in its root sense means **that which**

supports. So, Bhūmi means anything that supports. In the context of cosmic man, Viśvataḥ+Bhūmi means the all-directional support or the Universe itself, which acts as a means to support the drama of creation.

Let me ask you, what exists between two things? Take atoms for example. What exists between electrons and nucleus? It is SPACE. Space pervades and permeates everything in this cosmos. Infact, it is in space where everything else exists and it is inside space that everything exists. What is this space composed of? Is it pure vacuum or does something exist? If it is pure vacuum, then from vacuum something (the Universe) is originating which means, space is not vacuum! So, actually something exists in this space. Quantum Mechanics calls that something as “**quantum fluctuations**” whereas the Vēda calls it as Puruṣa. The pervading and permeating aspect of Puruṣa in all the things is now extended to all that is between the things as well. So, Vṛtvā means this aspect of pervasion and permeation through and between anything in this cosmos, which by logic gives a sense of wholeness or unity!

If all cosmos is filled by Puruṣa, what is the meaning of saying that he exceeds by 10 digits? This is the story of “NUMBERS”. In the Vēda and similar ancient scriptures, numbers are associated with Dēvās or angels. In mythological stories, they are personified as Prajāpatīs. At any rate, it is better to understand the story of numbers than to glorify their occurrences in scriptures.

If I ask you, in what number system do you think and deal in everyday life, what would you answer? I would say the number system of base-10. That means, we think in terms

of 10 numbers 0 to 9. Rest of the numbers can be extrapolated from these base 10 digits. When we go to a grocery shop, we think of either buying 5 chocolates or 2.5 kilos of rice. But we never think of buying “0101” chocolates or “10.1” kilos of rice, where 0101 or 10.1 are binary equivalents of 5 and 2.5 Kg respectively. Think about it. Yes, we can convert the binary number 0101, but without converting, can we proceed? No! Our perception is by default decimal or 10 digits in nature.

Now, if I ask you are numbers born first or the Universe, what is your answer? When I say numbers, I do not mean the sounds ONE, TWO or the symbols 1, 2, but I mean the concept behind the numbers i.e., the sense of 1 and sense of 2. If you answer Universe is born before numbers, then I would ask you, how many universes were born. You may say 1-Universe (because Uni-Verse itself means one unit existence). Then I would ask you, what does “1” mean at all, in the answer of 1-Universe, if numbers were not born at the time of Universe’s birth? So, this suggests that numbers must pre-exist any creation. Without them, how can the sense of one sun, one star, or so and so number of atoms of atomic-gas, etc., take birth at all? Definitely numbers (sense of numbers) pre-exists any manifestation.

This means, when there are 0-Universes, there is no manifestation of creation, but still numbers exist, in a potential way. Where do they exist? If they did not exist somewhere, from where do they manifest? So, they must exist somewhere. That somewhere is called Puruṣa. The Puruṣa not only pervades and permeates the manifested Universe, he also exists as the source of the Universe even before it manifests. Before the manifestation, he

emanates 10-NUMBERS as basic number-principles which in turn structures the further manifestation of the Universe. So, the Universe is constrained by the 10-digits (0-9) and their bi-products (rational,irrational, imaginary, etc. --- all of them represented using 0-9 digits) while the 10-digits themselves are constrained by Puruṣa. So, he is said to exceed these 10-digits. That is what the term “**Daśa + Aṅgula**” mean.

The puruṣa is thus an indweller of infinite beings of this creation, he is verily the whole cosmos and he surpasses the 10-numbers themselves, which form basic bricks of creation.

Extra Notes

1. **SAHASRA** is made up of ‘SA + HA + SA + RA’. Close your eyes and listen to the breath that you take, by closing your mouth and only through the nose. The sound it makes, as it passes through nostrils is a hissing sound — symbolized by ‘ssssssss’ or ‘**Sa**’. When you exhale, it exists through the vocal region causing a “Haaaaaaa” kind of sound symbolized by ‘**Ha**’. The **second ‘SA’** symbolizes the recurrence in the breath and hence is symbolic for **periodicity**. ‘**RA**’ is the vibration of our vocals (rrrrrrr - the rumble) and so it depicts the expressing ability of the indweller as “The WORD”. This creation is said to be occurring due to the breath of the Lord and the creation itself is called the WORD OF GOD. **So, SAHASRA implies the**

ONE who inhales, exhales and utters the creation as a periodic breath.

2. **Saha** in Sanskrit implies “He”. **Aham** implies self (the sense of “I”). When you combine both, you get Saha+Aham = **Sōhaṁ**. **Sō** is the sound of inhalation and **Haṁ** is the sound of exhalation. Removing the consonant **S** from **Sō** and **Ha** from **Haṁ**, we are left with pure sound (Nāda) of **Ōṁ**. So, When we realise that all that we point out as HE is verily our self, we remove the layer of physical perception (consonants) and perceive the base of existence (vowels) as pure **Ōṁ**. This is hidden in the word Sahasra and the rule to start any invocation with **Ōṁ**.
3. Master E. K., in his seminal lecture on *Puruṣa Sūkta*, elegantly points out that there is an esoteric reason for starting *Puruṣa Sūkta* with the syllable sound “Sa” (**Sahasra śīrṣā....**) and the *Śrī Sūkta* with the syllable sound “Ha” (**Hiraṇya varṇāṁ**). The former is the hymn of cosmic -person whereas the latter is the hymn of cosmic splendour. So, the inhalation or “Sa” is indeed the indweller whereas the exhalation or “Ha” is indeed the splendour or expression of the indweller.
4. The word *Puruṣa* can also be broken as Pura+Īśa which means the lord (Īśa) of a Body (Pura). So, *Puruṣa* is the lord of our bodies or the indweller. Pura can also mean an abode of existence. So, *Puruṣa* is the lord of existence.

5. *In the science of Kuṇḍalinī Yōga, the highest Cakra (an energy center) is named Sahasrāra Cakra. This is said to lie just above the head. So, the term "sahasra+ṣīrṣa" indicates the activation of this Cakra. When this is activated, which the Kuṇḍalinī Yōga suggests as the final stage of spiritual path, the splendors that we see are infinite (sahasra+akṣa) and the soul travels into the infinite dimensions of cosmic reality (sahasra+pāt).*
6. *The number 10 has a symbolic meaning -- '0' representing cycles or periodicity and '1' representing the Unified or ONE-ness of Puruṣa and thus $10 = 1 + 0 = 1$; meaning how much ever we search this creation, which is made up of potencies of 10 digits, what we end up is HIM alone ('1').*
7. *'10' here can imply directions i.e. 8 on a plane (East, West, North-East, etc.) and one above and one below -- basically to say that he pervaded all directions of space.*
8. *Aṅguḷa can also mean inches. In the purāṇas, it is said that Brahma creates the cosmos and he himself originates from the lotus that sprouts at the belly-center of Nārāyaṇa. In us, from this belly-center, about 10-inches towards Sahasrāra Cakra (head), lies the heart center or Anāhata Cakra. Mantra Puṣpaṃ of Yajur Vēda, Kāṭha Upaniṣad, Ādiya Hṛdayaṃ, etc., affirm that the Lord resides in the heart center of a being. So, the location of Puruṣa (jīva in this case) in the heart*

center, which is located 10-inches above the belly-center is another hint given by the term “Daśa+Aṃguḷa”.

O-O-O-O-O

Stanza-2: The All-Pervasive Puruṣa

puruṣa ēvēdaṃ sarvaṃ
yadbhūtaṃ yacca bhavyaṃ /
utāmṛtatva syēśānaḥ
yadannē nātirōhati //

Word-to-Word Meaning

Puruṣa = the cosmic person; **Ēva+Idaṃ** = indeed all this; **Sarvaṃ** = everything; **Yat** = that which; **Bhūtaṃ** = past; **Yat+Ca** = and that which; **Bhavyaṃ** = future; **Uta** = is it not!; **Amṛtatvasya** = for immortal state; **Īśānaḥ** = Lord; **Yat** = that which; **Annēna** = by food; **Atirōhati** = which is surpassing.

Import

All that is being grown by food and yet surpasses it, all that has been and all that will be, is PURUṢA, is it not! Thus, Puruṣa is the lord of immortal states.

Exploration

The present stanza has three aspects to ponder upon:

- FOOD
- TIME
- IMMORTALITY

“Annam” in the Vēda has deeper meaning rather than just the general notion of FOOD. *Annam means that which can become part of something else.* With this definition, the meaning “food” becomes a subset, because food becomes part of our bodies after we eat it. What else becomes part of something else other than food? Consider physical matter. Mass ‘m’ has an equivalent energy inside it, given by Einstein's famous equation $E = mc^2$. So, any mass ‘m’ of physical matter can be converted into energy ‘E’ and vice versa, constrained by the above equation. Because the Universe is basically made up of matter and energy, they are part of each other and encompass all that is manifested. So, Annam would then mean light, heat, particles, etc., which are alternate objectifications of either physical matter or energy.

This objective layer of existence is called as **“Annamaya Kōśa - The Physical SHEATH”** in the Vēdic terminology. The physical sheath of our body grows by integrating physical sheaths of other bodies (consuming food). The physical sheath of light integrates other physical sheaths of light and grows. This integration is true for any manifested entity. This aspect of integrating many physical sheaths into ONE physical sheath and changing in associated dimensions (size, energy, etc.) is what the stanza points out. The stanza says that *“all that is growing by consuming other beings is Puruṣa. But, Puruṣa also surpasses it.”*

Surpassing of Annam by Puruṣa means the following: Imagine the growth of all the things possible - food, animals, stars, light, heat, etc. All are but a fractional part of one known Universe. In the first stanza, we affirmed that Puruṣa permeates and pervades all of the Universe - including the unknown domains of apparent vacuum. So,

all the aforementioned growths occur in him and not to him. He thus stands beyond any changes and hence surpasses the aspect of change itself!

The important aspect to meditate here is to consider our own self. We all grow in dimension by consuming food. But has the sense of our acknowledgement of ourselves changed? Did the “I am so and so ...” change due to this growth? Say, you just had a sweet tasty chocolate. When someone calls for you, will you say “Yes, I am coming” or will you say “Yes, me and the chocolate that I just had are coming”? We say the former. Why not the later? Because, the moment you consumed it, it became an integral part of your constitution. So, the sense of unit existence did not change even though we consumed the chocolate and increased the mass of our body. That which has remained constant amidst the many changes that occur to our body and mind due to regular consumption of food is called soul or **Ātma**, which is but **Puruṣa** in essence. So, this stanza is asking us to meditate upon that Puruṣa who remains constant throughout our life, as the sense of “I AM”.

TIME is understood by our mind in three modes: past (bhūta), present (vartamāna) and future (bhaviṣya). If you really question what time is, our mind enters into zones of paradoxes and no answers. We all know what yesterday is and what tomorrow is, but do we really know what the sense of yesterday and tomorrow actually mean? We surely experience present and present alone. Can you experience the past or future? You may say we can feel what happened in the past - may be a happy event or a sad event. But, interestingly, even though we say the event happened in the past, we are experiencing it in the present, right? So, now I ask you again, are we able to

experience the past or future? No! When we can not experience the past or future, how can we know what it is? So our understanding of the past or future is only a projection of thought in our mind but not a reality. To the absolute reality, do you think there is a time aspect? What about time itself? Do you think there is time-aspect to time itself? A contemplation in those lines would lead us to understanding the true nature of time.

Vēda prescribes a deity or a functional name for the presiding consciousness of every aspect of creation. It prescribes a deity for “time” as well and the deity is none other than Puruṣa, often referred to as “**Kāla Puruṣa** - *The lord of time*”! The present stanza is suggesting that all that we understand as past and all that we perceive as future is nothing but the Puruṣa. Previously we have understood the spatial permeation of Puruṣa. Now, we are trying to understand the temporal permeation of Puruṣa. Because Puruṣa is both past and future, the present-tense of HIS experience is our three-fold time. That means, he knows all that has been and he knows all that will happen. This is the circular nature of TIME that is suggested by the scriptures. It is this aspect that is used by the seers to unlock the key of the future in the scriptures like Bhaviṣya Purāṇa or Bhāgawata, etc. It is to be noted that the future (or any time aspect) as we understand it will be completely different from the future that is perceived by seers. We perceive time from the mind which is veiled by ignorance whereas the seers perceive it from a lens of submission and devotion. The latter are the characteristics that elevate one’s self into the states of Puruṣa and that is the hint being given in this stanza. Meditate Puruṣa as all that has been, all that is happening and all that will be. This is the

key point in this stanza. Viṣṇu Sahasranāma suggests the same - “Bhūta Bhavya Bhavat Prabhuḥ - Viṣṇu is the lord of past, present and future!”.

Puruṣa being everything that is made up of physical sheath as well as that which is beyond it and Puruṣa being the time itself, does he have any “change” in any of his characteristics? If something changes, it means that he did not completely pervade the space or time aspects. If he did pervade space-time matrix in full totality, there is no change that can occur to him. For example, just because 1 hour has passed in a clock, does it mean it caused a change to the “time” itself? No! It only caused a change to our mind’s perception of time as duration of 1hr. Similarly, when we build a new house, does the many rooms of our house affect the “space” in the house? No! The many rooms only create a sense of divisions to our mind’s perception of space of the house. So, the changes occur to our mind alone for carrying out the daily routine but do not affect the course itself. In this sense, Puruṣa is always constant. If he is a constant, is there a time when or location where he is not there? No!

So, the final say of the stanza is that the Puruṣa is **IMMORTAL!** Because our souls or Ātma are miniature replicas of the same Puruṣa, they too are immortal. Whatever scripture you take this fact reverberates. In fact the sense of many an Ātma is only to our minds but to the reality itself, there is only ONE. In our earlier example, to the reality of space, there is only space and no rooms. But to the observing mind, there are rooms and space divided. So, Puruṣa or Ātma remains immortal in the absolute

sense but to the created creation, there are many beings and their souls!

Extra Notes

The first stanza points of his vivid expressions and the second his role in manifested and the un-manifested. These are guiding points for meditation and not to sit and analyze. Analysis gives us more thoughts and he is beyond thoughts, so we can not catch or cage him. But if we meditate, i.e., we become one with the thoughts explored here, we will glimpse his brilliance as our own emanation. This is the secret of Oral tradition - We need to utter this hymn, listen to it and meditate on the meaning behind. This triangle is necessary for proper understanding of Puruṣa.

O-O-O-O-O

Stanza-4: The Story Of Tree Of Life

tripādūrdhwa udaitpuruṣaḥ
pādōsyēhābhavāt punaḥ /
tatō viṣvaṁ vyakrāmat
sāśanānaśanē abhi //

Word-to-Word Meaning

Tripāt = $\frac{3}{4}$; **Ūrdhwaḥ** = that which is at the top; **Udait** = awakening; **Puruṣaḥ** = Puruṣa; **Pādaḥ** = $\frac{1}{4}$; **Asya** = his; **Iha** = this manifested world; **Abhavat** = it so happened; **Punaḥ** = again and again; **Tataḥ** = after that; **Viṣvak** = in all directions; **Vyakrāmat** = spread; **Sāśana** = those that eat; **An+Aśana** = those that do not eat; **Abhi** = directed towards.

Import

The $\frac{3}{4}$ part that was mentioned in the previous stanzas, constitute that part of Puruṣa's scheme which is at the top or that which is the causal world. This causal world causes an awakening of the Universe which forms its primary effect. This awakening, which is the $\frac{1}{4}$ of Puruṣa's scheme, spreads or expands as the manifested creation. It then expands as different entities of the manifestation, which can be broadly classified as those that eat and those that do not. This story happens again and again.

Exploration

This stanza is a continuation of the previous one. In the last stanza, we understood the play of $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ in the scheme of Puruṣa's existence. This stanza further enunciates the deeper concepts in regard to the subtle and gross planes of existence.

It seems that three parts of the Puruṣa are at the top. But, the three parts we discussed previously, belong to immortal divine planes. What does it mean to say that they are at the “top” ? Here, **Ūrdhwa** should be understood as “**primary stages**” or those stages that lie at the top of the scheme of manifestation. These are also subtle and hence the “top” can also refer to “**deep**”. For example, imagine we are standing on the ground and looking above, the top is occupied by the subtle skies whereas the bottom is occupied by the gross matter. As we go from bottom to top, the density of matter (gross manifestation) decreases. This is the symbology used here, but in a finer way. In the Kuṇḍalinī Yōgā, we say that the serpent energy Kuṇḍalinī should rise from the bottom (mūlādhāra cakra) to the top (sahasrāra cakra). Going from bottom to top is the goal of an aspirant i.e., to start from a gross plane of matter, enter into subtle planes of existence and finally realize Puruṣa himself. This is the **path of ascent** - “**Ūrdhva Patham**”.

But, first, how does manifested creation occur and secondly, how did we end up at the bottom of the scheme? This stanza precisely answers these questions. It says that Puruṣa causes a primary impulse in the subtle planes. This impulse causes an “Udaya - Awakening” of consciousness.

This awakening can also be called the **first-differentiation** of consciousness. So, before this impulse, there was only Puruṣa and his $\frac{3}{4}$ unmanifested creation. But, because it is unmanifest, it is in essence, one with Puruṣa. That means, only ONE (Puruṣa) alone existed. When the impulse to create occurred, this caused the first differentiation in ONE existence. So, the ONE became TWO → the unmanifest and the manifest. This process of manifesting from the un-manifest is called the **path of descent** or “**Athō Patham**”. But, the manifest occurs from un-manifest and hence, the manifest is the effect for the cause that occurs in the un-manifest. That is why, the $\frac{3}{4}$ of Puruṣa’s existence can be called the causal world whereas the $\frac{1}{4}$ of his existence can be called the world of effects. So, for every fact that we see in this world of manifestation, Puruṣa Sūkta proclaims a hidden cause in the causal world.

For example, the fact that fire occurs when a match stick rubs against the rough surface of a match box, is a phenomenon on the Earth. But, this phenomenon is a result of the nature of AGNI or the cosmic-fire which belongs to the subtle world. AGNI is defined as “**Aṃganām nihitaḥ Agniḥ**” - meaning, that which is hidden in everything as latent form. Prior to lighting a match stick by rubbing it against the rough surface of the matchbox, where is the fire? It is hidden in the stick and the friction manifests this hidden AGNI as visible fire. So, AGNI as a cause exists in hidden planes whereas the fire as an effect exists in the visible planes. You can put off the fire of the match stick by blowing it off. Can you put off AGNI? i.e., can you destroy the principle of manifestation of fire itself? No! So, every effect on the Earth (manifested

plane) has a cause in the causal world but not all causes of the causal plane, which are infinite (as discussed in previous stanzas), manifest. The latter depends on the play of Puruṣa (the impulse that we spoke about).

So, a cause that occurs in the causal world helps manifest an effect in the material world . But, for the material world to be manifested, there must have been a primary cause. That cause is what is being spoken here. It is suggesting that this primary cause is causing the first manifestation of the material world (**iha**). Now, what happens to the material world? What is the story of its complete manifestation (**bhavat**) from nothing to something? The latter part of the stanza answers this.

It seems that the manifested world expands in all-directions. This statement has a time aspect (suggested by the word expands) and a space aspect (suggested by the word all-directions) hidden in it. So, it is self understood that the space-time matrix has already formed as the base fabric with which the manifested world expands everywhere. The stanza also suggests that the manifested world consists of two broad categories of entities - that which eats and that which does not eat. Here, eat does not only imply "eating food". It implies a process of consuming and integrating one form of matter into another. For example, trees consume minerals and grow. Humans consume other life forms and grow. But stones stay as is. They do not have life activities of their own. So, the two kinds of entities of this creation are those that have an activity of life and those that passively support this activity of life. These are known in this stanza by the name

An+Aśana and Aśana. If we see the creation, these two are the only forms that exist, is what the stanza says.

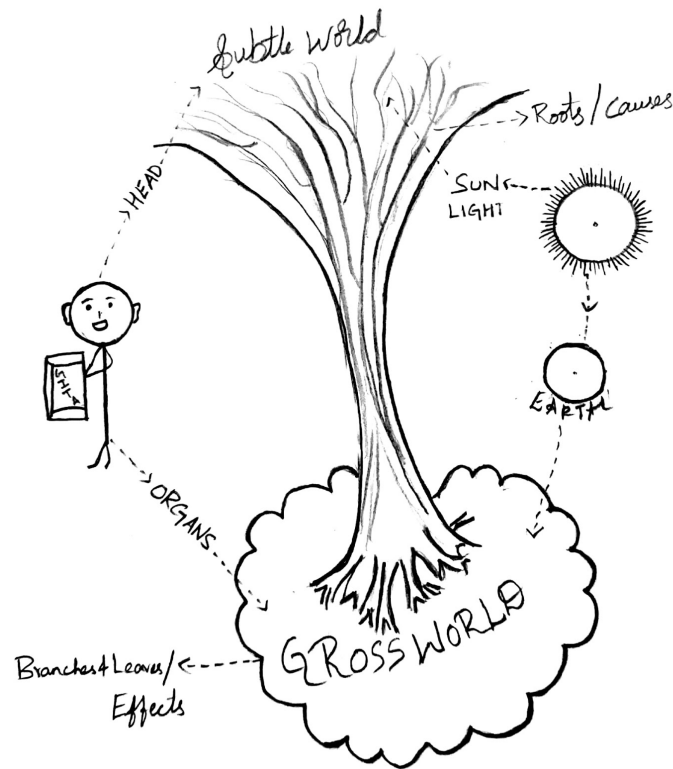
So, Puruṣa first exists as the cause of all causes (1). In him are the causal worlds ($\frac{3}{4}$). These give birth to the material world ($\frac{1}{4}$), its growth into the binaries of life forms & non-life forms and their final dissolution. But this too is a part of Puruṣa's total existence and hence HE stands beyond both cause and effects.

Punah means, again and again. As stated earlier, causal or unmanifested worlds are immortal (divya) whereas the remaining gross worlds are mortal. That means, there is surely a destruction to the manifested world. But, what happens after destruction? The cycle repeats - may be the specifics of creation change, but the principles remain as is, because the change itself exists in the gross world whereas the principle of change, which is immortal, exists in the subtle world. To emphasise this aspect of every cyclical manifestation of creation of the gross world, the word "Punah" is used.

Extra Notes

1. *Please note that we used*
 - **subtle world** = unmanifested world = subtle planes, etc.
 - **gross world** = manifested world = gross planes, etc.
2. **"Uday"** can also mean **"sprout"**, instead of awakening. With this new meaning, we can reframe what we understood above in a slightly different manner. Puruṣa takes his roots in the subtle planes

($\frac{3}{4}$). He then sprouts out of it as the visible or gross creation ($\frac{1}{4}$). He then grows into the gross creation as those that have life activity and those that did not - Cētas and Acētas.



3. What can we infer from the restructured meaning? We should see a symbolic TREE with its ROOTS in the subtle plane and branches on the gross plane. This is what Gīta calls "**Aśvatta Vṛkṣa - The inverted TREE**". So, the first two lines of this stanza explains us, in quintessence, about this ancient inverted tree of Aśwattha. Understanding this tree helps us better understand the present stanza. By inspection we may assign our mind/head to the roots and our physical body to the branches. This is because, the root

causal-principles exist in our mind whereas the effects happen via the body. Similarly, by inspection, we may assign inner-SUN (the cause of solar principle) to the roots and the many planets and their beings as the branches. This is because the solar principle is the cause for the existence of many planets. In this way, the divine planes or causal worlds take their roots in our mind or the solar principle whereas the many effects take place via our body or the planetary beings. Is not this stanza intimately connected with the concept of the Aśvattha tree as proclaimed by Gita? Indeed it is!

- 4. Our visible world can be thought of as composed of Mineral, Plant, Animal and human kingdoms. The invisible world is composed of the Dēva kingdom. Amongst the former kingdoms, the first one i.e Mineral kingdom comes under Anaśana whereas the remaining three come under Aśana.*
- 5. The above story in relation to the Universe or the worlds can be also applied to human existence. Humans initially exist as Ātma (subtle-being). This Ātma, by the Puruṣa's drama of creation, awakens in a body. Before it identifies itself with the body, it was one with Puruṣa - that means, it belonged to the $\frac{3}{4}$ immortal plane. But the moment it awakens in the body, it identifies itself with the body (first differentiation) and thus loses its original identity. It calls itself " I am so and so". It experiences space-time constraints, thus eats (aśana), takes help of Anaśana (like wood, stones, etc.) to life and grows (vyakrāmat). Of course, it eventually wards*

off its body and takes a new one as the cycle repeats (punah). After many such lives it will realize that this is all but a drama of Puruṣa and that itself is a part of the whole Puruṣa. This is the brief and yet profound story of life as suggested by Puruṣa Sūkta.

O-O-O-O-O

Stanza-8: The Birth of Hidden Principles-1

tasmādyajñāt sarvahutaḥ
sambhṛtaṃ Pṛṣadājyaṃ /
paśūn tāṃścakrē vāyavyān
āraṇyān grāmyāścayē //

Word-to-Word Meaning

Tasmāt = because of that; **Yajñāt** = Yajña; **Sarvahutaḥ** = all that which has been sacrificed; **Sambhṛtaṃ** = having been arranged; **Pṛṣadājyaṃ** = clarified butter mixed with curds; **Paśūn** = cattle; **Tān** = those; **Cakrē** = were created; **Vāyavyān** = birds; **Āraṇyān** = wild animals; **Grāmyāscayē** = domestic animals.

Import

From the previously mentioned Yajña, which is an all-sacrifice, the clarified butter was gathered and mixed with curds to make the many beings such as cattle, wild animals, birds, domestic animals, etc.

Exploration

Continuing the exploration of the previous stanza, the next finer step in the process of creation is being expressed in this stanza. It explains the finer folds of Yajña-2. If you look back you will notice that Yajña-1 occurred, where Puruṣa-1 was sacrificed for the birth of Puruṣa-2. But, Yajña-1.5

occurred when the sacrifice of Puruṣa-2 was made for the formation of the indweller of the Solar deity. Through this solar deity, many life forms would be created, which is the essence of Yajña-2. The present stanza explains the finer elements in this latter process of Yajña-2.

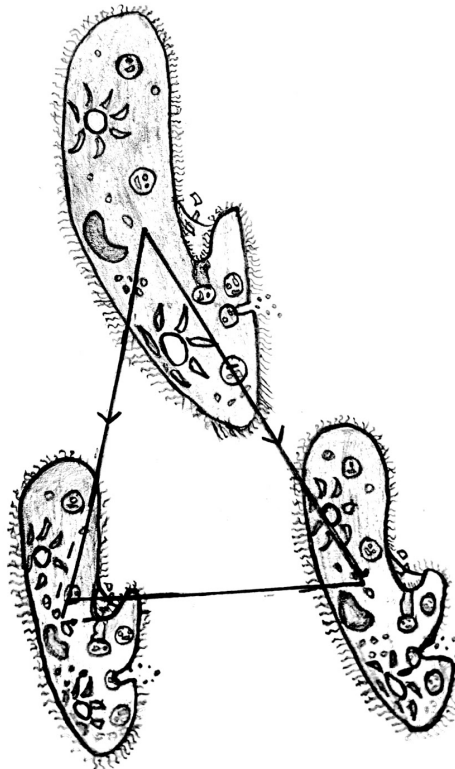
It seems that those who are performing the Yajña, have gathered a special material which is the clarified butter mixed with curds. In the last stanza, when they sprinkled Puruṣa-2 onto all sides of the sacred grass, the symbolism suggested that from ONE Puruṣa-2, the Dēvās have squeezed MANY drops of clarified butter (or externalizing agents of inner-fire). This caused the birth of a myriad of seeds of stars (pre-solar light) in the vast creation. The present stanza is the story of evolution of each of such seeds. It seems that the output of Yajña-2 not only resulted in Puruṣa-2's seed form as pre-solar light, but they also got a special material - the clarified butter mixed with curds i.e., Prṣadājyaṃ. Clarified butter was already there from previous Yajña, the new curd is nothing but the Prakṛti of Puruṣa-2 externalised. This Prṣadājyaṃ substance is actually a symbol to suggest the life giving ability of Puruṣa-2. Milk is often compared to consciousness in the Vēda. Then, curd can be compared to gross form of consciousness and hence to Śōṇita (female reproductive element) and the clarified butter is often compared to spiritual semen or Śukra (male reproductive element). A union of both of these elements causes procreation. In the previous stanzas, you have seen how Prakṛti was also born as half-essence of Puruṣa-2 from earlier Yajña. Therefore, their union is now being ignited by the Dēvās which causes the latter life forms.

An important distinction:

In the Vēdic theory of origin of things, there is a clear distinction between two processes - creation and procreation.

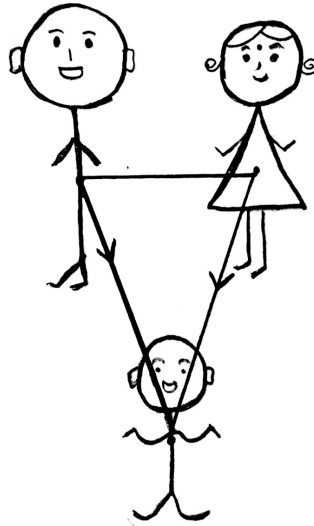
- **Creation or Śṛṣṭi:** This is the birth of many things from one element i.e, the ONE becoming many. For example, birth of stars, galaxies, Universes, etc., from one Omnipresent. In the figure, we show the birth of paramecium (asexual reproduction) representing all the examples belonging to the theme of creation.

ŚṚṢṬI OR CREATION



- **Procreation or Prajananam:** This is the birth of one or many from union of TWO entities: male and female. In the figure we show the birth of humans which requires a male and a female member for the sake of reproduction. This encompasses all the examples that belong to the theme of procreation

PRAJANANAM OR PROCREATION



If this distinction is not made, things may seem repetitive or contradictory. In the present stanza, emphasis is being given to Prajananam or procreation whereas the previous stanzas have emphasised on Śṛṣṭi or creation. But in both the stanzas, both the elements were present, though one of them subtly and the other vividly.

It seems that after the seeds of pre-solar light have formed, they gave birth to the many objective SUNs which inturn created many planets and moons. This was a story of

creation. But to form life on the physical plane, the Dēvās had to combine the Puruṣa-2's male and female aspects i.e, of explicitly combining Puruṣa+Prakṛti. This is the story of procreation. Yajña-2 whose aim is the cyclical birth of Puruṣa-2 as life forms is indeed the divine drama of procreation.

The interesting thing to note is that all the life forms emerging from Yajña-2 have Puruṣa-2 as their indweller - whether woman or man or tree or an amoeba. That which differentiates each of this life form is Prakṛti. In Vēdānta, this is called Māya or illusion. But in the Vēda, it is all under one title PURUṢA, with sub-titles of many Dēvās. At any rate, humans are considered to be in that stage of evolution (spiritually speaking) where they can realise the Puruṣa-2 as Puruṣa-1 of ALL. To teach them by law of correspondences, both the process of creation and procreation remained in the life forms of the Earth. For example, take paramecium. There is no sex difference in it and hence reproduces asexually. This is the ONE-becoming Many - The story of Śṛṣṭi. Another example is the birth of humans which is opposite to that of the earlier example, which requires a male and a female aspect. This is the story of Prajananam. This spectrum of birth of life on the Earth still exists, even though the creation had started eons ago, only to be mediated and contemplated by a truth seeking human to realize the facts stated in these kinds of stanzas!

Continuing with the stanza, it seems that the Yajña-2 resulted in birds, animals - wild as well as domestic, etc. This is a general view of saying that multicellular beings which reproduce sexually are formed by the process of

Prajananam or procreation as a part of Yajña-2, which is exactly what we saw earlier. But, the last two lines of this stanza can be understood in a more subjective manner.

- **Paśūs:** The general meaning of the word Paśu is cattle i.e., an animal which is tied by Pāśam or rope. But, the Puruṣa-2 is tied to the gross matter of qualities (Prakṛti) by the elements like mind, 5-senses, etc. Therefore, a Paśu is any life form which is created by Yajña-2. In particular to human comprehension, a paśu is a human who is bound by the mind which is constrained by the senses. When life is first formed it so happens only by this tying of Puruṣa-2 to the bodily aspects. Only by realization of the TRUTH, can the Puruṣa-2, who falsely attributes that he is the body, can be elevated to the realization that he is verily Puruṣa-1!
- **Vāyavyās:** The general meaning of the word Vāyavyān is that which can fly in air (Vāyu). But, what is Vāyu actually? It is definitely not air in its root sense. The science of Āyurvēda suggests that Vāyu means the principle of pulsation. Therefore, that which pulsates is actually Vāyu. The first pulsation occurs in Space or Ākāśa from which air is born imbibing the nature to pulsate. From air, the beings that breath the air imbibe the nature to respire - a mode of pulsation. So, Vāyavyās are those beings which have the element of pulsation. So, again it represents all life forms, because all the life forms pulsate in one way or another. But, the Vāyu takes majestic form in humans as they can

regularise the pulsation. Regularising the pulsations helps them to regularise the flow of Prāṇa (in Yōga, this is called Prāṇāyāma) helping in the process of spiritual evolution. This lets them fly high over the mundanity of the gross creation and begets freedom from the bondages of being Paśu (see earlier point)!

- **Āraṇyās:** The general meaning of Araṇya is wild. But, Araṇi means a pair of wooden pieces which are placed perpendicular to each other. They are used to cause fire by friction (rubbing against each other). This is symbolic to the latent divine consciousness (vertical) and human consciousness (horizontal) which rub against each other to generate the fire of life in us. The wisdom generated by this process is aggrandised in Araṇyakās which act as guiding torches for the Vēda. In saying the beings of Araṇya are born, it is being stated that the element of potentiality of horizontal becoming the vertical and expressing the inner-fire of Puruṣa is also born in the life forms that were created - more so in Humans! This can be related to the order of evolution of humans Paśu - Vāyavyāñ - Āraṇyāñ i.e., from bound beings to spiritually soaring beings to beings who realize the inner-fire.
- **Grāmyās:** The general meaning of the word grāmya is a village. Therefore, the beings of the village are intended here. But, if you look at the above trend, you can intuitively see the inner meaning here. Gramya actually means a group.

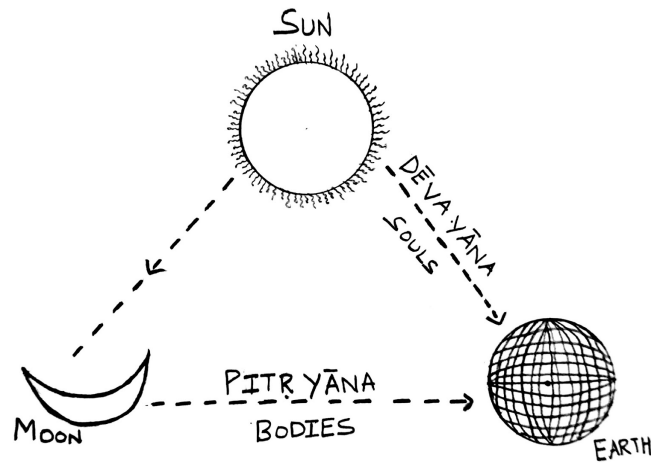
Group implies a collection of seemingly different beings under one common name (which can be the common quality amongst all). If the previously described order of evolution is taken, what seems to be the common quality of all life forms? That they all are submerged in the Omnipresent Puruṣa and also that Puruṣa-2 who resides in all the life forms is one and the same. When this fact becomes a realization, the comprehension enters into the state of Grāmya or Unified consciousness. So, not only the birth of physically/mentally bound beings occurred in Yajña-2, but it also made provisions for the birth of Universal consciousness in the created life forms. Therefore, the Yajña-2 is Sarvabhūtaḥ i.e., it is an all-encompassing sacrifice!

The coherent picture that we get is as follows: After the process of creation, the Dēvās have started the process of procreation. But, this is not just limited to the birth of beings, but also includes the evolution of beings in terms of realizing the truth of the drama of creation i.e., all is verily Puruṣa. The interesting thing to note is that those who tie the Puruṣa-2 to the Prakṛti are Dēvās (including Sādhyās, etc) and also those who take us in the process of evolution from this bondage to freedom are also Dēvās (including Sādhyās, etc).

One may ask why then they take up such repetitive and contradictory jobs? There is no answer per se, except that all this is the play of Puruṣa. We can not get the answer to the question why a negative charge repels a negative charge, can we? But we can study the nature of electrical charges, electric current, etc., knowing this fact. Similarly,

knowing the fact as to how the Dēvās act as mentioned in these stanzas, we may understand and attune ourselves to the plan of divine drama. When our plan resonates with the divine plan, we will be liberated. When it contradicts, we will be bound. Liberation grants bliss. Bondage grants binaries. So, try to understand the theme of divine plan given in Puruṣa Sūkta rather than questing the unanswerable question of “WHY?”.

Extra Notes

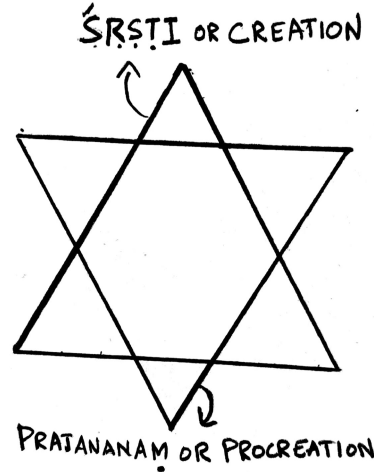


- 1) *Pitru yana and deva yana: In Purāṇās, which are but a commentary to the Vēda, two specific paths of origin of life on the Earth is mentioned. They are the path of the Dēvās and the path of the Piṭṛs. Here, Dēva and Piṭṛ are two kinds of dēvās of which, the former helps in the manifestation of souls (including buddhi, chittam, manas and ahankāra) and the later helps in the manifestation of bodies (physical/sthūla śarīra as well as etheric/sūkṣma śarīra). The path of the Dēvās is said to be Dēvayāna and manifests via the rays of*

SUN directed towards the Earth. The other path, that of the of Pitṛs, is named Pitṛyāna which manifests via those rays that are reflected by the moon. The Puruṣa-2's dual nature of Puruṣa and Prakṛti can be understood as a mirror to these two paths. Puruṣa-2a (Jīva) is transported from the inner SUN who is pervaded by the infinite bank - Puruṣ, via the Dēvayāna while Puruṣa-2b (Prakṛti) is transported via the Putṛyāna. As long as the Puruṣa-2 seems to be Puruṣa-2a and -2b, there is cyclic birth for him i.e., he follows the path of Pitṛs+Dēvās which are directed towards Earth. But when the seeming difference collapses by realization, Puruṣa-2 becomes Puruṣa-1 and hence he is liberated. This is a necessary digression which may clear many subtle knots in understanding and correlating the aforementioned points elsewhere.

- 2) Sarvahuṭaḥ means there is nothing left to not sacrifice. If Dēvās would have held something for themselves and not sacrificed, it would not have been a Yajña. Therefore, in saying Sarvahuṭaḥ, it is being suggested that every aspect of emergence of creation is utilised in continuing to maintain it as a part of Yajña.*
- 3) The term Prakṛti is actually taken from purāṇās for you to get a proper understanding of things. Remember that Purāṇās too are part of "The Vēda" as they act as a commentary to the Vēda. So, there is nothing wrong in borrowing some terminologies from different branches of Vēdic lore. But one*

should be careful in defining them before using. That is why I try to give as many definitions then and there for clarity.



- 4) *If you refer to the earlier diagrams on śrṣṭi and prajananam, you will notice that triangles are given as a part of explaining the process of either one becoming two or two becoming one. When these both ideas are combined, we get a double triangle which is one of the prominent symbols in esoteric branches of wisdom. It signifies Kumāra, known as ṣaṇmukha (6-faced or 6-sided double triangle) or śiva and śakti triangles of tantra. In either case, it encompasses the process of Universal creation and dissolution via the mechanisms of creation and procreation or descent of lord and ascent of man.*