



CREATION OF UNIVERSE: A STUDY OF VEDIC CONCEPT

Jaya Kundu

Ph.d. Research Scholar Sidho Kanho Birsha University, Purulia

ABSTRACT The principal of cause and effect finds a privileged place in the Vedas. The Vedas recognize the fact that creation out of nothing is an impossibility. Science has also arrived at the same conclusion that matter can neither be created or destroyed. It is immaterial whether science succeeds in ascertaining the exact nature of fundamental particles or not, but the truth remains that whatever be the form of ultimate physical existence is a reality which cannot be denied. The Vedic theory comprehends the existence of an eternal material cause governed by the omniscient lord. In the 4th Rk of the same hymn a question has been posed which further light on the nature of the initial cause. Vedas have explored this most fascinating aspect of our existence and have propounded a comprehensive concept on its creation.

KEYWORDS : Immaterial, Cosmogony, Omniscient, Devotion, Cosmic Energy.

INTRODUCTION

There are four Samhita known as *Rg, Yajur, Sāma and Atharva*. *Rgveda* is said to be the *Jñāna kānda*, one pertaining to knowledge, *Yajurveda* is said to pertain to *Karma*, *Sāma Veda* pertains to *devotion through Rāgas* (36 musical modes) and *Atharvaveda* details with various subjects such as health, medicine, architecture and the like, all concerned with human. In a nutshell the knowledge can be divided into two broad divisions,

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A Rk (M10/S81/2) (1) –

Kim svit āsīt adhiṣṭhānam

What was the station? What was the material? How was it done?
How was the ultimate cause?

*Kathā āsīt yataḥ Bhūmim janyan Viśvakarmā
Vidyāmaurṇot mahinā Viśvackṣaḥ*

Creation of Universe of According to Hindu Belief

According to ancient Hindu beliefs, this universe is made of five basic elements:

- 1) *Kṣiti* (earth)
- 2) *Āpaḥ* (water)
- 3) *Tējah* (fire)
- 4) *Vāyuh* (wind)
- 5) *Ākāśam* (sky)

According to *Rgveda*, each life on this planet came into existence from water. It is usually the basic need of all living creatures. Thus, the Vedic theory comprehends the existence of an eternal material cause governed by the omniscient lord. In the 4th Rk of the same hymn a question has been posed which further light on the nature of the initial cause.

The Rk (4) asks –

Kim svit vanam, kā a sā br̥kṣa āsa yataḥ dyāvā prthivī ni tatakṣuḥ

Which was the forest, which the tree, from which they fabricated heaven and earth?

The Rk further asks –

Kāḥ u sa br̥kṣa āsa ?

Which the tree?

The farther part of Rk poses a leading question which guides us to the conclusion that the existence of the initial cause must be accepted as an axiom. The Rk says –

*Manīśanaḥ manasaḥ prcchata it u tat
Yat adhi atīṣṭhat bhuvanāni dhāryan.*

Inquire, sages in your minds what (place) he was stationed in when holding the worlds.

A Rk (M. 1, S.164/2) describes this universe as a chariot resting on a single dynamic wheel rotation perpetually. The Rk (13) says –

*Sapta yunjanti rathameka chakrameka
āśvo vahati saptanāmā,
trinābhi cakramajaramanarvam
yatremā viśvā bhuvanādhi tasthuḥ*

(*Eka chakram ratham*) To the chariot of one wheel (*Sapta yunjanti*) seven constituents are attached, (*Eka āśvo*) But indeed the single energy (*vahati saptanāmā*) carries itself into seven forms (*one being transformed into rūpāṇi defferent forms*)

In this Rk the universe is described allegorically as a chariot which rest on a rotating wheel. This rotation wheel signifies the ever-changing phase of the universe. The wheel is made up of an outer an inner rim.

The main devatas of the *Veda* which from the pivot on which the cosmos revolves are *Aditi, Āpaḥ, Indra, Soma, Ūṣā, Naktam, Āpaḥ, Napāt, the Ādityās Viṣṇu, Pūsā, Varuṇa, Mitra, Aryamā, and Savitā Agnit, Īṣarutaḥ, Rbhuh, Hiranyagarbhaḥ, Mātrīśvā. Ekaḥ sat viprā bahudh vadanti*, express in a slightly different from by *Yaska – Eka Ātmā bahudhā stayate.*

The other aspect of the *Devatā* is *Apuruṣavidhā* the non-intelligent or material aspect the corporal aspect, about which the European scholars have acclaimed but with unanimity. This dual nature of god is what is exactly described in a Rk (16) –

Ahaṁ rāṣṭrī sangamni vasunām

I am Lords creative faculty, I have co-travelled with matter. The ingenuity of creation can be seen as far as the material universe extends.

Another Rk gives the reason for multiplicity of names of the lord. The Rk (10/114) says (8) –

*Sahasradhā mahimānah sahasram
Yāvad Brahma viṣṭhitam tāvatīvāk*

The thousand great (function) are in a thousand places; as Brahma is variably developed, so is speech.

There is no polytheistic worship in the Vedas but pure monotheistic ideology is cherished throughout the work the Rk (10/114/5) declares (18) –

Ekaḥ santaḥ bahudhā kalpayanti

Many froms the bird which is (only) one.

The other Rk (10/82/3) says (19) –

Yo davānām nāmdhā eka eva

Who is the name-giver of the gods- he is one.

He the sustainer of the names of gods is only one indeed.

Another *Rk* (20)–

Anueko Vadati yatdadāti tadrūpa minat eka eyate

The *Rk* further says –

Viśvā ekasy vinudāḥ titikṣate yastākṛṇo prathamam

This universe is *vinudāḥ root nud* to give incentive the outcome of your incentive The *Rks* of *Rg-Veda Mandala 5, Sūkta 62* are devoted to explaining the source of the continuous release of the solar energy and it has been stated there that a cyclic reaction is set up and of the two great electrical powers jointly representing the matter part of fundamental particles, it is only one of these that makes the cycle rotate, thus governing continuous release of energy from the body of the sun. The first *Rk* of the above reference says (132)–

*Rten ṛtamapihatam dhruvam vām
Sūryasya yatra vimucantyaśvām
Daśa śatā saha tasthustadekam
Devānām śreṣṭham vapuṣāmapaśyam*

The real true eternal nature of you both O, *Mitra, Varuṇa (apihatam)* is hidden (*ṛten*) due to the natural phenomenon.

Another we get a glimpse of the Vedic view on atomic structure in *Sūkta 62* of *Mandala 5*.

The fifth *Rk* says –

*Anu śrūtāmamatim vardhadurvim varhiriva yujaśā rakṣmānā
Namasuantā dhṛtadakṣādhi garte mitrāśthe varuṇelāsvantaḥ*

The heavenly bodies are produced from the chemical part while plant and animal life are produced from the other biological part.

These two board divisions have been designated as *Soma* and *Pūṣan*. A *Rk* (2/40) says (284)–

*Somā pūṣaṇā jananā rayiṇām
Jananā divo jananā Pṛthivyā
Jātau viśvasya bhuvansya gopau
devā akṛṇvannamṛtasya nābhīm.*

The life sustaining principle *puṣan* has been further classified in two divisions one of which sustains in the plant life while the other sustains the animal life.

The *Rk* (2/4/2) says (287)–

*Imam vidhanto apām sadhasthe bhrgavo vikṣvāyoh
eṣa viśvānyabhyastu bhūma devānāmagriraratir jīrāśvaḥ*

(*Imam vidhantaḥ Bhṛgavaḥ*) Utilizing this Agni energy The learned (*dviṭā adadhuh*) classify in two ways (*apām sadhasthe*) (One) in the field of active primordial matter comprising of chemical part and (*vikṣu is locative of viśa*) in the field of human beings or more generally animal lives (*āyoh*) classification of men. (*aratih* = Servant Vedic Grammar, pg 257) Servant (*devānām*) of *devas (esā)* this (*jīrāśvaḥ*) fast moving (*bhūmā agnih*) pervasive agni energy (*viśvāni abhyastu*) may be available all round to all.

The use of *ghṛtam annam* in the sense of animal and plant life is at once seen in the *Rk* (10/5/4) which says (288)–

*Rtasya hi vartanayaḥ sujātamiṣo vājayā praḍivaḥ sacante.
adhīvāsam rodasī vāvasāne ghṛtairannair vāvrdhāte madūnām*

The ancient celebrators of the rite desiring (boons) wait on (Agni), rightly born, for the sake of food; the all-comprising haven and earth cherish him, who abodes above the heavens, with the sacrificial butter and food (produced) from the water.

It was the *Śvetāśvetara Upaniṣad* which first threw to light on the hidden meaning imbibed in the symbol *Hiranyagarbhaḥ*. The *Upaniṣadic* texts clearly revealed that *Hiranyagarbhaḥ* is some physical situation of extraordinary importance so much so that the being seen of the birth of this situation glorifies God himself. The text (4/12) runs as follows (145)–

*Hiranyagarbham paśyat jāyamānam
Sa no buddhaya subhaya sama yunktu*

Let he who saw the *Hiranyagarbha* taking birth, enjoin us with good intellect the visualizing of the act of the inception of *Hiranyagarbha* is

of such a supreme importance that this has been seen as an act bestowing glory on his divine lordship such that the *RSi* while praying makes a mention of it to as a distinction of his great achievement.

Etymology of the words *Hiranyagarbhaḥ* and *Hiranyam*

The word *Hiranya* in Vedic literature stands for brilliancy glitter or glow. A *sūtra (kandikā chap.7)* of *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* defines *hiranya* as follows:

Joytrivai hiranyam jyotireṣo amṛtam hiranyam.

Hiranyam is light, a glow, it is the eternal glow.

This means that *hiranyam* represents the everlasting glow of eternal fundamental particles.

Thus, *Hiranyagarbhaḥ* means that which sustains in its womb the glow of fundamental particles. And this indeed is the true analysis defined by *Amarkośa* in the word:

Hiranyam hiranyamayam aṇdam tasya garbha iva.

One who holds the glowing mass of fundamental particles in its womb is *Hiranyagarbhaḥ*. This glowing fire ball refers to the glowing initial mass of matter that appeared at the beginning of cosmos, as will be seen from discussion to follow.

Thus, *Hiranyagarbhaḥ* is a befitting title for the lord, for that act performed by him.

Lastly the talk of *vilam* (cavity) in the vast expanse of matter is a direct reference to type isolated haules which were completely cut off from the rest of the vast expanse of nature, this solution seems to be in keeping with the spirit of the *Rks* which describe *Vṛtras* (Śambara's forts) as isolated centers cut off from creative cosmic activity.

All the auxiliary literature very clearly endorses the Vedic view of the origination of the cosmos from an initial fire ball. The *Mahābhārata Ādiparvam* (1/1/29) says (146)-

*Nisrabhe asmin nirāloke Sarvastamsāvṛtte
bhṛhadāṇḍamabhūdekam Prajānām bijamavyayam
adbhutam cāpyacintyam ca sarvatra samatā gataim
avyakam kāraṇam sūkṣam yat tat sadasādātmakam*

without light enveloped by darkness all around, there came one great ball into being which was the fundamental seed of all that would be that miraculous, a thinkable everywhere alike of unmanifested fundamental cause and that was in its intrinsic nature of two *Sat* and *Asat* forms.

CONCLUSION

The paper brings out a complete technical terminology of Vedas related to cosmogony. The connoted meaning of such terms as *Aditi, Āpah, Hiranyagarbhaḥ, Apām Napāt, Mitra, Varuṇa* etc. are eventually elaborated. The author has comprehensively established *Rg Vedic* concept on the evolution of creation. Interpretations of hymns have been based on Vedic grammar & roots of the words and are well supported by other subordinate texts such as *Brahman* books, *Upanishads* and others. Interrelations of hymns with continuum of central underlying thoughts contained in *sūktas* have been decisively revealed in the book.

Vedas have explored this most fascinating aspect of our existence and have propounded a comprehensive concept on its creation. What that concept is? How do the most revered texts explain the evolution of the universe? What are their views on the issue? These are definitely the questions which must have crossed the minds of all those connected with the study of philosophy specifically Indian philosophy. This book addresses these questions.

Delving in the question of creation of the universe and how it all might have happened is not only one of most ancient inquisitiveness which has captured the imagination of human mind but also most logical outcome of human curiosity. *Rg Veda* is foremost among the four Vedas, considered to be one of the oldest texts known to mankind. For centuries Vedas are not only revered but are considered by many as treasure house of knowledge & wisdom. All ancient branches of Indian philosophy be it *Brahman* books, *Upanishad* or *Bhagwad Gita* drew their inspiration from the Vedas.

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