Desire: The Heart of Vedic Religion and Economics

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ABSTRACT

The one discipline that comes closest to religion appears to be economics. It is a most unlikely comparison, but the more one examines the underpinnings of the two, the more obvious the parallel structure of the two. The common foundation is 'desire' in all its forms, manifestations, and variants: drives, inclinations, cravings, hunger, aspirations, thirst, wishes, lust, love, romance, longing, wants, appetite, mania, avarice, dispositions, rapaciousness, voracity, greed, self-interest, power, independence, curiosity, acceptance, order, saving, honor, idealism, family, status, vengeance, tranquility, and eating. This paper demonstrates some ways in which desire functions in Vedic religion, namely in myths of creation and in Vedic ritual, especially in the *Optional or Special Interest Offerings* (kāmyeṣṭi-s) *and the duality that is established in the* Upaniṣads *between desire and non-desire. This existential duality established in South Asian religions is comparable to the dualities of good and evil, salvation and damnation recognized in all Abrahamic religions and Manichaeanism, and of the duality between the faithful and infidel in Islam and to a lesser extent in Christianity.*

For some years now, it has been my suspicion that of all the disciplines that that come closest to religion, economics is that discipline. Religion and economics initially appear to have no connection, but the more one examines the base of the two, the more obvious their bond. Their common foundation derives from one of the more obvious qualities of human nature, a quality that helps define who we are and how we respond to the environment: namely, "desire," whatever its specific form or variant.[1] Desire underscores the human condition to such a degree that to remove this characteristic from human conduct would be to remove the "human" element of conduct. Of all the disciplines and sciences that have developed over the millennia, economics and religion recognize the uniqueness of human desire as both necessary and hazardous. Because of the latter, both disciplines agree that desires must be controlled at the very least. In this regard, because economics understands that our appetites for limited resources are unlimited and uncontrollable, it investigates how these resources can be rationed.[2] One additional observation about the field of economics that is significant is its application. As a discipline more concerned with the community[3] than the individual, it is less likely that any constraint or satisfaction of individual desires be identified solely through ethical, moral, or reflective judgments. Consensus, politics, and the power to implement economic judgments often have greater priority over ethical judgments. Yet desires are not to be considered innately negative or bad; only when they are determined to be operationally out of control will they be considered detrimental to the community. With the exception of "vengeance" and perhaps of "power," those desires mentioned in Steven Reiss' book, *Who Am I? The 16 Basic Desires that Motivate our Actions and Define our Personalities*,[4] are benign. Only when these desires

become excessive—such as greed or avarice, gluttony, lust, and anger, all included in the seven deadly sins—can they cause serious problems to the person committing these actions.

Religion, unlike economics, is not as clearly understood. Some religions focus more on the individual rather than the community despite the fact that many scholars—Emile Durkheim,[5] Glenn M. Vernon,[6] and Peter Williams[7] to name a few—consider religion to be primarily a social phenomenon. While not denying the importance of the social dimension of religion, the individual dimension is important because it is the individual, not the community, who undergoes the spiritual transformation promised by many long-standing religious traditions. When religious traditions in the West and in South Asia are compared, certain general observations become obvious. South Asian religions rely more on right practice (*i.e.,* orthopraxy) rather than right belief (*i.e.,* orthodoxy); South Asian religions consider the fundamental fault of humanity to be based on a defect of the intellect. *Ignorance,* therefore, is the cause of suffering, not disobedience, as it is in Christianity among the other Abrahamic religions. *Egoism* is a manifestation of such ignorance, which in turn is a fundamental mistaking of *what is* for *what is not*. The outcome of such an approach is the recognition that the basic problem of the individual is one of the *intellect*, not *will*. Abrahamic religions place stress on the *will*, interpreting sin as a transgression of God's Will; South Asian religions place stress on the failure to recognize one's true state.

In both traditions, an underlying assumption of a fundamental fault or flaw in human nature is posited. St. Thomas Aquinas, in his tract *On Evil (De malo)*,[8] considers original sin as a "fault of human nature." For Aquinas, in agreement with St. Augustine (in his *Retractions* I, 15) and St. John Chrysostom (*Unfinished Work on Matthew,* hom. 46), the will is the source of good and evil.[9] The sin first introduced in humans is the sin of Adam, but if this sin inflicts all his offspring and descendents, the "redemption of Christ profits all those spiritually begotten of him."[10]

If it is argued that a fault of human nature exists, we can also argue the possibility of a faultless human nature. Sin can be displaced by the redemption of Christ. What is defined as good and evil—good implying that which is desirable and evil its opposite—is best described by St. Augustine in his *Enchiridion* (ch. 11)[11]:

> For what is that which we call evil but the absence of good? In the bodies of animals, disease and wounds mean nothing but the absence of health; for when a cure is effected, that does not mean that the evils which were present—namely, the disease and wounds—go away from the body and dwell elsewhere: they altogether cease to exist; for the wound or disease is not a substance, but a defect in the fleshly substance, the flesh itself being a substance, and therefore something good, of which those evils—that is privations of the good which we call health—are accidents.

The defect that causes evil is sin, considered by Augustine as "a word or deed or desire contrary to the law of God."[12] This leads us to some observations that help us to compare and distinguish the Christian (i.e. Roman Catholic) view from the Vedic and later Hindu view of desire.

First, the most likely term that comes closest to "desire" is *kāma-*.[13] Both "desire" and *kāma-* refer to any kind of longing. The substantive may carry a more specific form of desire involving a "physical or sensual appetite." Like "desire," the root √*kam* serves as the basis for both a noun (in the majority of instances) and its derivatives and a verb. The importance of this and similar terms reflecting desire in early Vedic texts appears especially in creation myths and in the ritual. A cursory review of this term offers a fundamental insight into the teleological origins of the cosmos.

By far the most intriguing observation concerning the beginnings of the world appears in *Ṛgveda* 10.129, portions of which are translated below:

> Neither the non-existent nor the existent was then... (vs. 1a)
> Neither death nor the deathless was then... (vs. 2a)
> Neither was there a discernment[14] of night nor of day (vs. 2b)
> That One breathed without air by its own power (vs. 2c)
> Other than That was there anything beyond (vs. 2d)
> In the beginning darkness was hidden by darkness (vs. 3a)
> All this was the indistinct[15] sea (vs. 3b)
> What was covered in the void arose (vs. 3c)
> That One arose through the influence of heat (vs. 3d)
> Desire then arose in the beginning (vs. 4a)
> Which existed as the first seed from thought (vs. 4b)[16]
> Sages, having searched in their heart with (their) intelligence,
> discovered the connection of the existent in the non-existent. (vs. 4cd)[17]

What is important from the perspective of this paper is the sudden and inexplicable appearance of *kāma-* in vs. 4a.[18] It seems reasonable to assume that the primeval being, "That One," came into being *(ābhú)* or emerged through the power of 'heat' *(tapas-),* from which came desire *(kāma-)*, the seed (as perhaps an actualizer) of thought. The creator or demiurge, so to speak, is *kāma-,* which arises from That One, or thought *(manas-*).

Similarly, there are two hymns in the *Atharva Veda* (Books IX and XIX) that are addressed to *kāma* as a personified divinity or power-substance. The underlying importance of *kāma* is established in IX. 2, 19, which describes Kāma as the first born, [19] and which is repeated in XIX.52,1 with the additional observation that it is the "first seed of mind *(mánaso rétaḥ prathamám)*." [20] *Kāma* is also addressed as one's guardian *(ádhyakṣa-*: IX.2,7) and the destroyer of one's enemies *(sapála-:* vss. 5-6, 9-11, 14-18), whose daughter is a milch-cow *(dhenú-)* named Vāk Virāj *(vắcaṃ virắjam*: vs. 5), who is greater *(jyắyāṅs-)* than the gods *(devắ)*, ancestors *(pitáro)* and mortals *(mártyāḥ:* vs 19), and so too the heaven and earth *(dyắvāpṛthivī*: vs. 20), the quarters *(pradíśo:* vs. 21), to all living

things[21] (vss. 22-23) and the sea (or 'confluence': *samudrá-*) itself (vs. 23). As the first seed of mind, it has the power to give wealth to the sacrificer (19.52,1). Grounded in power (*sáhasā pratiṣṭhato)*, it gives power (*sáha)* and force (*ójo*) to the sacrificer (*yájamānāya:* 19.52, 2). Kāma, therefore, is that power-substance initially manifested from the mind or thought, which comes to the human heart (vs. 4) causing whatever specific desire that may arise and which may be granted through the appropriate oblation in the ritual (vs. 5).

Returning to *ṚV* 10.129, its earliest commentary appears in *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 10.5.3.1f. We find, for instance, a clarification of *idam* 'this' as a reference to both the existent and non-existent cosmos, perhaps alluding to the notion that the world was not ordered:

> In the beginning this (cosmos: *idam*), as it were, was neither non-existent nor existent. ... Neither was thought truly non-existent nor was it existent.[22] .... Then this thought, emitted, *was intent on becoming (abubhūṣat)* manifest...

The presence of desire as a creative element appears a number of times in other Vedic passages.[23] As was noted in vss. 3d and 4a, its connection with heat is common. Some of the passages where the two appear are as follows:

> Prajāpati was this only one in the beginning. He desired (*akāmayata*): "May I be (*syām*), may I reproduce. He toiled (*aśrāmyat)*, he heated himself (*atapyata*) the (creative) heat (*tapas*). From that exertion (*śrāntāt)* and heating (*tepānāt*) were emitted the three worlds (ŚB 11.5.8.1-4).[24]

Similar passages appear in *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 6.1.1,8 (*so 'yaṃ puruṣaḥ prajāpatir akāmayata, bhūyānt syāṃ prajāyeye 'ti. so 'śrāmat sa tapo 'tapyata sa śrāntas tepāno brahmai 'va prathamam asṛjata trayīm eva vidyāṃ)*[25]; and *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* 3.11.8,6 (*prajāpatir vái prajākāmas tápo 'tapyata, sá híraṇyam údāsyat...*).[26]

Aside from the inclusion of desire in cosmological beginnings, its inclusion in the rituals are by means unusual. Indeed, cosmological origins and the ritual are closely related, a typical example being *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* 2.2.1, wherein Prajāpati, desiring offspring, saw this *Daśahotṛ Mantra.*[27]

Of all the rituals that illustrate the connection between ritual action and *desired* results, the most obvious are those offerings for special wishes (*kāmyeṣṭi-*), located throughout the Saṃhitās and Brāhmaṇas. In the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* (2.2. - 2.4[28]), for instance, are a series of offerings for special requests such as acquiring children (*prajā-kāma-*: 2.2.1,1), overcoming the Indra-like strength and heroic force (*indriyam vīryam)* of one's malevolent foe (*pāpmanā bhrātavyeṇa*: 2.2.1,2), leading one on the path from the pathless (2.2.2,1),[29] desiring to possess food (*annavant-*: 2.2.4), wishing to live one's allotted time (*sarvam āyus-),* desiring heaven (*suvarga-kāma-*: 2.3.4), desiring a village (*grāmakāma-*: 2.3,9), and desiring cattle (*paśu-kāma-*: 2.4,6).

All Vedic rituals achieve results from the actions undertaken by the priestly participants. A ritual without a purpose, in other words, is not a ritual. Implied within the purpose is a wish. Therefore, rituals fulfill one's wishes. Sometimes the wish for the results is explicit such as the examples given above or in the following passage: 'If he (the Adhvaryu) should wish (*kāmáyeta)* that he (the sacrificer) should be without cattle, he should bring him a leafless branch with a dry tip; surely he will be deprived of cattle.' Should he wish him to have cattle, he should take a branch with many leaves and branches, surely he will make him possess many heads of cattle.[30]

Or in *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* 3.12. 2,[31] which gives explanations of a series of offerings (*iṣṭi-s)*[32] known as the seven *divaḥ-śyenī-s* or 'eagles of Heaven', the heavenly world (*svargó loká*), no longer visible to the gods, prompted the gods to ask Prajāpati to search for it. The *yajña-kratu-s* or chief rituals (the animal sacrifices or soma rites) were ineffectual but these seven *iṣṭis* were effectual: the seven, including those offered to Wish (*āśā-*), *kāma-, bráhman-, yajña-,* the Waters (*āpas-), Agni Balimant,* and Discovery (*anuvitti-).*

Besides these examples, we find in other Vedic compositions similar desires, such as those within the *Ṛgvidhāna*[33] 1.6 (long life, heaven, wealth, and sons[34]), 1.106 (sons, cattle, wealth, heaven, long life, unimpaired eyesight[35]); 1.120 (desirous of obtaining a[ny] object[36]); 1.124 (desiring everything[37]) ; and 1.137 (dharma, intelligence, wealth, sons, health, increase in brahman, and the highest place of the everlasting light[38]).

Elements of the ritual designed to procure specific desires appear in the *Sāmavidhāna-Brāhmaṇa,* a composition belonging to the Sāmaveda. Herein, the use of chants (*sāman-)* offer results ordinarily achievable only through the practice of the major (*śrauta)* rituals, some of which require several years to perform.[39] It is therefore a work that is designed not for specialists in ritual practice but for those who are called *kāmepsavaḥ* 'those desirous of (any) desired (object).'[40] The sections that cover these desired objects are the (a) *āyuṣya-* or that section covering a full and healthy life (2.1 – 2.5); (b) the *saubhāgya-,* covering good fortune, prosperity, and success (2.6 – 2.8); (c) the *dhānya-*[41] or material goods section (3.1 – 3.3); (d) and the *adṛṣṭadarśana-* or that section dealing with precognition (3.4).[42]

These and other examples indicate that Vedic ritual—or elements of the ritual—is designed to achieve something that is desirous on the part of the ritualist or sacrificer. The early Vedic corpus is permeated with this notion. Indeed, it may be stated that ritual is designed for survival and prosperity in this world or to achieve the world of heaven. A portion of the intelligentsia, however, recognized this for what it is and introduced an alternative solution. Rather than emphasize the fulfillment of one's worldly desires, these teachers of the later Vedic compositions—the Upaniṣads—introduce a radical transformation of the efficacy of the ritual. The *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 4.4.6 contains both a summary of much of ritual speculation and introduces an alternative perspective:

> "A person consists of desire" (*atho khalv āhuḥ kāmamaya evā 'yaṃ puruṣa iti*). As the desire arises, so the motivation (*kratu)*, and as the motivation, so the act is performed, and what action is performed, so it is becomes in accordance with that action (*sa yathākāmo bhavati tat kratur bhavati; yat kratur bhavati tat karma kurute; yat karma kurute tadabhisaṃpadyate).*

This amounts to a good description of the typical ritual process. What follows, however, is unexpected: 'A man not desiring (*akāmayamāno),* without desire *(akāma-),* his desire satiated *(niṣkāma-*), who has achieved his desire (*āpta-kāma-*), having the Self as desire (*ātma-kāma-*), his life breaths do not depart. Truly being brahman, to brahman he goes (*brahmaiva san brahmā 'pyeti*).'[43] It would appear that the primary thrust in the Upaniṣads is not only to rid oneself of desires[44] but also to discover the fulfillment of desires. Thus, in *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 2.1 the one who attains all desires with the wise brahman is one who knows truth, knowledge and the endless brahman fixed in the heart, in the highest firmament.[45]

Conclusion

The importance of desire in the early Vedic texts is alluded to numberless times therein. Every ritual has a motive; every ritual is designed to fulfill a wish or an obligation. Yet, by the time of the Upaniṣads, we find the whole *modus operandi* overturned. Absence of desire is the ultimate goal, but perhaps this is to be taken into context with what desire is to be avoided. If the desire fulfilled is the ultimate desire, then no desire can follow from it. As Gauḍapāda stated: "What can he desire who has all?"[46] Perhaps this "all" is immortality, for the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* 3.10.8 states repeatedly: "I in the immortal, the immortal in Brahman" (*ahám amṛte, amṛtaṃ bráhmaṇi*) and at the end of the section: 'the (divine) self dependent on my self; my self on the heart, the heart on me (*ātmā ma ātmáni śritáḥ, ātmā hṛdaye, hṛdayaṃ mayi)*.'

The implications arising from the presence and absence of desires—presence of the fulfilled desire of "the all" and the absence of those desires not aimed at "the all"—leads to certain observations. First, it would appear during the period discussed in this paper a fundamental duality is assumed that rivals the duality of good and evil in the West. Its ontological foundations are grounded upon the presence and activation of desire or its absence and deactivation. Whether this duality is contrastive or complementary is open to debate.

One assumes, however, a contrastive stance if we consider the absence of desire as good. Yet desires of various sorts are present in Vedic ritual, and ritual is not considered evil or useless in the Upaniṣads. Even those passages in the latter require a desire to reach that ultimate good. It would seem in the ascetic and renunciatory movements that all desires are not eliminated, only those unsatisfactory and intermediate desires that do not lead to the Ultimate.

The Ultimate desire is the desire fulfilled. Could it be that the absence of desire (on the microcosmic level) is the equivalent in the creation texts to *asat* and desire the equivalent to *sat*? Perhaps the teachers of the early Upaniṣads, and presumably in many teachings that follow these compositions is to return to *asat*, to the fourth[47] state, to the dreamless state, the state of desirelessness, or the desire fulfilled.

Second, another outcome of this study is the connection between the early and later Vedic compositions. Are the teachings of the Upaniṣads in contradiction with the practices that appear in the early Veda? A cursory reading and the opinion of some scholars leads to the affirmative. Connections between micro- and macro-cosm are plentiful in both. Granted that the equation between Ātman and Brahman in the Upaniṣads appears unique, what can we conclude about the statement in *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* 3. 10. 8, which contains a similar observation? The similarity between the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* passage and Upaniṣads may reside in ritual connections, thus uniting both early and later sections of the Veda. The only distinction between the two may be the context where this equation is found—in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* the ritual context is obvious; in the Upaniṣads it is not.

Finally, I have stated at the beginning of this paper that to remove 'desire' from human nature is to remove humanity from humans. A story in the Pali Canon tells is of a Brahman, Dona by name, who asks the Buddha whether he is a *deva*, *gandhabba*, *yakka*, or human being. His explanation was 'No' to all—due to the destruction of all defilements. Although we cannot use this passage to demonstrate the status of Upaniṣadic sages, it is clear that one who transcends the unenlightened state to oneness or identity with or proximity to Brahman is no longer human in the usual sense of the term. If this is correct, then it is obvious that the human condition is an imperfect condition due to the presence of 'desire'. Liberation can only come about through the dissipation of all desires.

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Notes

[1] Among which are drives, inclinations, cravings, hunger, aspiration, thirst, wishes, lust, love, longing, wants, appetites, mania, avarice, dispositions, rapaciousness, voracity, greed, self-interest, ambition, and motivation.

[2] Thomas Sowell, Basic Economics: A Citizen's Guide to the Economy (NY: Basic Books, 2000), 1.

[3] These observations originate with Sowell's Basic Economics: *A Citizen's Guide to the Economy*, 1-4.

[4] NY: Berkley Publishing Group (Penguin Putnam Inc. 2000). The 16 are:

Power is the desire to influence others.
Independence is the desire for self-reliance.
Curiosity is the desire for knowledge.
Acceptance is the desire for inclusion.
Order is the desire for organization.
Saving is the desire to collect things.
Honor is the desire to be loyal to one's parents and heritage.
Idealism is the desire for social justice.
Social contact is the desire for companionship.
Family is the desire to raise one's own children.
Status is the desire for social standing.
Vengeance is the desire to get even.
Romance is the desire for sex and beauty.
Eating is the desire to consume food.
Physical exercise is the desire for exercise of muscles.
Tranquility is the desire for emotional calm.

[5] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life.* Translated from the French by Joseph Ward Swain (NY: The Free Press, 1965), 62. (Originally published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1915):

> A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden—beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them.

[6] Glenn M. Vernon, *Sociology of Religion* (NY: McGraw-Hill, 1982), 22 – 24:

> [22] Religion, viewed sociologically, is a part of man's culture and is frequently referred to as one of the major social institutions, along with marriage, government, education, etc. A brief analysis of religion in terms of the characteristics of culture which we have just enumerated will indicate why it is so classified.
>
> **1. Religion is the common property of the group.**
>
> [23] **2. Every society has already developed the blueprint it expects its members to follow in their religious behavior.**
>
> **3. Religious behavior is acquired or learned by man from his society.**
>
> [24] **4. Religion is transmitted socially, not biologically.**

[7] Peter W. Williams, *Popular Religion in America* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980), 9:

> Religion, then, may be tentatively defined as a system of symbolic beliefs and actions—myths, rituals, and creeds and their supporting social structure—which provides its adherents with a coherent interpretation of their universe. Religion is a process of cosmos-construction: it creates order out of chaos, and informs its constituency with a sense of meaning, purpose and significance that would otherwise be lacking. Religion creates order, an order which, ideally, is exhaustive and personally satisfying.
>
> Religion is, moreover, a social phenomenon.

[8] On Evil. Translated by Richard Regan and edited by Brian Davies (NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), 238.

[9] Aquinas, *On Evil*, 95 – 96.

[10] Aquinas, *On Evil*, 220.

[11] Quoted in Aquinas, On Evil, 21.

[12] Against Faustus XXII, 27. Quoted in Aquinas, *On Evil*, 89.

[13] The etymologies, however, are totally different. 'Desire" may have connections in augury or astrology since it is possible that '*-sire*' may be connected with Latin sīderāre (appearing in English desiderate; cmp. 'consider'), *sīdus* 'star': perhaps to "be away from one's lucky star": "to lack or to yearn for." See Joseph T. Shipley, *Dictionary of Word Origins* (NY: Philosophical Library, 1945), 113; Eric Partridge, *Origins: A Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern English* (NY: Greenwich House, 1958, 1959, 1961, 1966, 1983), 148; *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., vol. IV: *desiderate* (p. 518) and *desire* (p. 522). The term comes into English as a verb. It undergoes a functional shift about 70 years later (1303 CE.). The OED editors are uncertain whether there is an etymological connection with *sīdus* (519).

[14] *praketaḥ* is explained by Sāyaṇa as *prajñānam*.

[15] *apaketam* is explained by Sāyaṇa as *aprajñāyamānam*.

[16] Joel P. Brereton, "Edifying Puzzlement: *Ṛgveda* 10.129 and the Uses of Enigma," *The Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 119, no. 2 (1999): 253, translates the verse as follows:

> Then, in the beginning, from thought there developed desire, which existed as the primal semen.

[17] *nā́sad āsīn, nó sád āsīt tadā́nīṃ* (1a); *ná mṛtyúr āsīd, amṛ́taṃ ná tárhi* (2a)
ná rā́tryā áhna āsīt praketáḥ (2b); *ā́nīd avātáṃ svadháyā tád ékaṃ* (2c);
tásmād dhānyán ná paráḥ kíṃ canāsa (2d);
táma āsīt támasā gū́ḷhám ágre (3a); *apraketáṃ salilā́ṃ sárvam ā idám* (3b);

tucchyénā 'bhú ápihitaṃ yád ā́sīt (3c); *tápasas tán mahinā́ 'jāyatáikam* (3d); *kā́mas tád ágre sámavartatā́ 'dhi* (4a); *mánaso rétaḥ prathamáṃ yád ā́sīt* (4b); *sató bándhum ásati nír avindan* (4c); *hṛdí pratīṣyā́ kaváyo manīṣā́* (4d)

For translations, see *Pinnacles of India's Past: Selections from the Ṛgveda*, trans. and annotated by Walter H. Maurer (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1986), 283-85; Arthur Anthony Macdonell, *A Vedic Reader for Students* (London: Oxford University Press, 1917), 207-211; Joel P. Brereton, "Edifying Puzzlement: *Ṛgveda* 10.129 and the Uses of Enigma," *The Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 119, no. 2 (1999). I have also used the Vaidika Saṃśodhana Maṇḍala's (Poona) edition, *Ṛgveda-saṃhitā with the Commentary of Sāyaṇācārya*, vol. IV, Maṇḍalas IX-X, ed. N.S. Sontakke and C.G. Kashikar (Poona: Vaidika Saṃśodhana Maṇḍala, 1946).

[18] For a review of the literature, see Walter H. Maurer, "A Re-examination of Ṛgveda X.129, the *Nāsadīya* Hymn," *Journal of Indo-European Studies* 3 (Fall 1975): 219-37.

[19] *kā́mo jajñe prathamó.* Kāma is also said to have some into being (*sam-√vṛt*) in the beginning (19.52, 1) as the first seed of mind.

[20] "Desire [Kāma] came into being (*sam-√vṛt*) in the beginning, which was the first seed of mind." *Atharva Veda Saṁhitā,* trans. by William Dwight Whitney. Two volumes (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1962). The hymns occur in Vol. 2, 521-25 and 985-87.

[21] Specific creatures are mentioned as also those creatures that blink (*nimiṣat-o)* and stand (*tíṣṭhat-o).*

[22] Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 10.5.3. 1-3: neva vā' idam agre 'sad āsīn neva sad āsīt... neva hi san mano nevā'sat....tad idaṃ manaḥ sṛṣṭam āvír abubhūṣat. In this passage, √bhū replaces kāma-. The form abubhūṣat is an imperfect desiderative of √bhū. The desiderative form replaces the lexical item (kāma-).

[23] Karl F. Geldner was one of the first to indicate the connection between *kā́ma* as *tápas-* in his *Der Rig-Veda*, 3rd vol. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1951), 360, note to 4a. See TS 3.1.1.1: *prajāpatir akāmayata, prajā sṛjeye 'ti. Sa tapo 'tapyata, sa sarpān (vayāṃsi) asṛjyata.* In this passage, two emissions occur: serpents and birds. In the third heating, he saw the consecrated speech (*dīkṣitavādam apaśyat)* in order to emit offspring (*prajā).*

[24] *tepāna-* is a perfect middle participle. This passage was also translated by Brian K. Smith, *Classifying the Universe* (NY and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 63. Otherwise, see *The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,* vol. 5, Julius Eggeling, trans. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1966), 102 [*Sacred Books of the East,* vol. 44]. On the term *tapas-* and its family of derivatives, see Uma Marina Vesci, *Heat and Sacrifice in the Vedas* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1985), 21-23.

That very Person Prajāpati desired, "May I be more, may I reproduce." He toiled, he heated himself the (creative) heat. Wearied and heated, he emitted the Brahman, the Threefold Knowledge.

A similar passage appears in *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 4.23.1 and 5.32.1: *prajāpatir akāmayata, prajāyeya bhūyān syām iti. Sa tapo 'tapyata, sa tapas taptvā...*

Prajāpati as he appears in the Atharva-veda is discussed by Vesci, *Heat and Sacrifice in the Vedas,* 74-78.

[26] Prajāpati, desirous of offspring, heated himself the (creative) heat and expelled (*ud-√vas)* gold...

[27] This begins a series of similar statements in this *Brāhmaṇa.*

[28] Also located in *Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā* IX.17, X.1-11, XI.1-4, 7-10, XII.2-4; *Maitrāyaṇīya Saṃhitā* II.1.1,2,4-7,9-12; II.2.3,4,5,7,10,13; II.3.1-5; II.4.3-5,7,8.

[29] Agni Pathikṛt—Agni the Path-maker—lead him from the pathless to the path (*sa evai 'nam apathāt panthām api nayati...)*. This offering keeps the traveler from danger.
[30] *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* 3.2.1,1: *yáṃ kāmáyetā 'paśúḥ syād íti, aparṇāṃ tásmai śúṣkāgrām āharet, apaśúr bhavati; yáṃ kāmáyeta paśumānt syād íti, bahuparṇāṃ tásmai bahuśākhām āharet, paśumántam evái 'naṃ karoti.*
Paul-Emile Dumont, "The Full and New Moon Sacrifices in the *Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa,*" *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* vol. 101, no. 2 (April 1957): 218-19.
[31] On this passage, see Paul-Emile Dumont, "The Special Kinds of Agnicayana (or Special Methods of Building the Fire-Altar) according to the Kaṭhas in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* vol. 95, no. 6 (Dec. 1951): 658–63.
[32] Those offerings requiring oblations of agricultural products, such as barley, rice, cakes.
[33] M.S. Bhat, *Vedic Tantrism*: *A Study of Ṛgvidhāna of Śaunaka with Text and Translation* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987).
[34] Bhat, *Vedic Tantrism,* 213*: āyuḥ svargo draviṇaṃ sūnavaś ca.*
[35] Bhat, *Vedic Tantrism,* 219: *putrān paśūn vittaṃ svargam āyur anandhatām.*
[36] Bhat, *Vedic Tantrism,* 220: *siṣādhayiṣurartham.* In other words, one who desires an object before embarking on a journey should mentally mutter (*manasā japet)* that object.
[37] Bhat, *Vedic Tantrism,* 220: *sarva-kāmaḥ.*
[38] Bhat, *Vedic Tantrism,* 221: *dharmaṃ buddhiṃ, putrān ārogyaṃ brahma-vardhanam/ prāpnoti ca paraṃ sthānaṃ jyotīrūpaṃ sanātanam//*
[39] *Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa,* critically edited by Dr. B.R. Sharma (Tirupati: Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha, 1964), ii. This statement is based on Sāyaṇa's commentary. Those who were unqualified or unable to perform the major rites could hope to achieve the same results through method.
[40] *Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa* 1.1.17.
[41] The text reads *athāto dhanyānām.*
[42] Viman Chandra Bhattacharyya, "Magical Kāmya-rites in the Sāmavidhāna-brāhmaṇa," *The Indian Historical Quarterly*, vol. 35: 312-26.
[43] So too *Maitri Upaniṣad* 6.30 and more directly 6.34, wherein thought is twofold: pure and impure—impure due to desire; pure from its lack thereof.
[44] This is certainly present in *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 4.4.7 (*yadā sarve pramucyante kāmā ye 'sya hṛdi śritāḥ, atha martyo 'mṛto bhavaty atra brahma samaśnuta iti).*
[45] *satyaṃ jñānam anantaṃ brahma yo veda nihitaṃ guhāyāṃ parame vyoman/ so 'śnute sarvān kāmān saha brahmaṇā vipaścite 'ti//*
Compare too *Aitareya Upaniṣad* 2.6 and 3.4: *amuṣmin svarge loke sarvān kāmān āptvā 'mṛtaḥ samabhavat samabhavat. Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* 2.15: *svargāṁl lokān kāmān āpnuhī 'ti.* Other passages that illustrate fulfilled desires appears in *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 3.1.6; Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 2.11; *Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad* 9; *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 1.1.6–8; 1.2.13–14; 3.14.2; 5.1.4; 7.14.2 8.12.5–6.
[46] Or conversely: "...the soul, inactive by nature, being incapable of effecting either the bondage the salvation), the general philosophical attitude was that the soul must desire, strive for, and deserve its freedom from the shackles of material existence..." This statement is written in the context of Yoga philosophy. The quote appears in Haridas Bhattacharyya, The Cultural Heritage of India, Vol. 3 (Calcutta: Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1953), 53–54.
[47] *turīya*: *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 5.14.