

# Nāsadīya Hymn from Adhyātma Perspective.

DMITRI SEMENOV  
dmitri@theasis.net

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## Abstract

This paper presents a non-cosmogonical interpretation of *Rgveda* X.129, the *Nāsadīya* hymn. Complete grammatical analysis of each verse is given and a metrical translation derived from the interpretation.

RV 10.129, known as *Nāsadīya* hymn, is obscure and provocative. It touches upon a genesis of something. Long tradition interprets it as presenting a sketch of the creation of the Universe, and in doing so follows, more or less, *adhidaivata* (reference to natural phenomena) path of interpreting *Rgveda*. Attempts to understand it along this path lead to multiple contradictions or distortions, either grammatical or lexical, of the text. Joel P. Brereton explained the contradictions as intended by the hymn composer riddles that were to evoke thoughts in the audience. However, it might be possible to avoid apparent contradictions or having to resort to distortions of the text by following *adhyātma* (reference to individual self) path. It requires, however, a re-interpretation of several key words. What follows is an exposition of author's attempt at such approach. Good sources for detailed, word-by-word examination of previous interpretations are papers by Walter H. Maurer [Mau75] and Joel P. Brereton [Bre99]. Many ideas inhere are borrowed from these papers.

This interpretation springs from the following assumptions:

- A. *This hymn is a digest of a philosophical debate presented by a skeptical participant.*
- B. *The subject of the debate was "How does a mundane consciousness come to be?"*

The exposition is structured in the following way. First, the Sanskrit text of the hymn is given, next the translation, and then verse-by-verse grammatical markup that exposes the choices made along with meanings assigned to words. Details of views advanced by participants of the debate cannot be found out for sure, so it is necessary to reconstruct them by means of a speculation informed by later and detailed philosophical systems and constrained by the text. Such reconstructions are presented in comments to each verse.

The original is quoted from TITUS database [RVS00]. The hymn is divided into seven verses referred to with numbers from 1 to 7. Each verse is divided into four lines that are referred to with letters a,b,c,d. Thus, each line of the hymn is marked with a number and a letter. In the translation, words in square brackets have no direct source in the original; they are in the translation either due to metrical considerations or to emphasize the interpretation which through these additions is less indeterminate and elliptical than the original. Speech of participants other than the skeptic is put in quotation marks which are, of cause, absent from the original text.

Here is the hymn structure as seen here. An initial statement is made (lines 1.ab) to which the skeptic replies (lines 1.cd) with questions. Another participant presents (verses 2, 3, and lines 4.ab) a different position which the skeptic criticizes (lines 4.cd and verse 5) as making unsubstantiated assumption. The skeptic then asks (lines 6.abd, 7.ab) questions which he considers to be the most important for the subject of the argument. No answer to them is given, but some participant of the discussion makes (lines 7.cd) a suggestion how to find an answer. The skeptic doubts (line 7.d) that it did or would work.

## The text

### *Ṛgveda* 10.129.

*nāsadāsīnnó sádāsīttadānīm nāsīdrájo nó vyòmā paró yát |  
kímāvarīvaḥ kúha kásya sármannám̐bhaḥ kímāsīdgáhanaṃ gabhīrám || 1||*

*ná mṛtyúrāsīdamṛtaṃ ná tárhi ná rátryā áhna āsītpraketāḥ |  
ānīdavātám svadháyā tádékaṃ tásmdādhānyánná parāḥ kíṃ canā́sa || 2||*

*táma āsītámasā gūdhámágre'praketám salilám sárvamā idám |  
tuchyénābhvāpīhitaṃ yádāsītápasastánmahinājāyataákam || 3||*

*kāmastádágre sámavartatádhi mánaso rétaḥ prathamám̐ yádāsīt |  
sató bāndhumásati níravindanhṛdí pratīṣyā kaváyo manīṣā́ || 4||*

*tiraścīno vítato raśmíreṣāmadháḥ svidāsīdupári svidāsīt |  
retodhá āsanmahimána āsansvadhá avástātpráyatiḥ parástāt || 5||*

*kó addhá veda ká ihá prá vocatkúta ájātā kúta iyám vísṛṣṭiḥ |  
arvágdevá asyá visárjanenāthā kó veda yáta ābabhúva || 6||*

*iyám vísṛṣṭiryáta ābabhúva yádi vā dadhé yádi vā ná |  
yó asyādhyakṣaḥ paramé vyòmansó aṅgá veda yádi vā ná véda || 7||*

## Translation

1. “Unreal was not and the real was not at that time;  
     no clouds [of passion], nor the space of detachment beyond.”  
 And what did it turn to again and again? Wherein?  
     Protected by what? Were the waters impervious, thick?
2. “No dying there was, nor the nectar that would make immortal,  
     nor there was [any] feature of night [or] of day.  
 It did breathe not moving the air, of its own accord;  
     it [was] one; opposed to it or beyond nothing was.
3. Inertia was. By inertia covered completely at first —  
     a featureless sea; all [indeed] was [just] this.  
 [And] what, [when was] coming-to-be, was adjoined with the void —  
     that through the force of the heat did emerge, [yet] alone.
4. A desire at first in that place did take shape  
     from existence of mind that was the original flow of seed.”  
 Intelligent [men], contemplating, searching within,  
     discovered a chain from the real to something that’s not.
5. The cord of these [men] was transverse and stretched out.  
     Do you think it was [stretched just] above? Do you think it was [stretched just] below?  
 [So,] givers of seed there were, mighty forces to grow;  
     a predisposition before — an intention[, thus,] after.
6. Who in this case did find out so he has explained:  
     from where was it born, from where this emanation [came]?  
 The devas hither [emerged] through that one’s emission.  
     Now, who did find out wherefrom did that [one] come to be?
7. This emanation — wherefrom did it come to be,  
     whether [that one] conceived [it] or not?  
 “Who [was] in the ultimate space of detachment a witness of this —  
     he indeed knows.” And what if he doesn’t?

## Grammar and Comments

### Verse 1

#### Lines 1.ab

##### Grammar markup:

*na* particle; *asat* adj., neuter, sing., nom.;  $\sqrt{as}$  imperf., 3rd, sing.;  
*na* particle; *u* particle; *sat* adj., neuter, sing., nom.;  $\sqrt{as}$  imperf., 3rd, sing.; *tadānīm* indecl.;  
*na* particle;  $\sqrt{as}$  imperf., 3rd, sing.; *rajas* noun, neuter, sing., nom.;  
*na* particle; *u* particle; *vyoman* noun, neuter, sing., nom.;  
*paras* adverb; *yad* pronoun, 3rd, neuter, sing., nom.

##### Words:

Particle *na* everywhere in the hymn is a negation “not”.

Two key adjectives *sát* and *ásat* are often treated as an abstract pair “existent” and “non-existent”, “being” and “non-being”, or “existence” and “non-existence”. Here they are translated as “real” and “unreal” with a more concrete meaning. “Real” in the context of this hymn is “directly perceived by senses”, while “unreal” means “not being directly perceived by senses, imagined or brought to mind from memory”. This choice of meaning has support from other hymns of Rigveda, to wit, 7.104.8.c and 10.5.7.a.

Verbal forms of the root  $\sqrt{as}$  here and elsewhere in this hymn are translated with forms of the verb “to be, to be present”.

The noun *rájas* is assigned meanings “vapour, clouds; space of the vapour, space of clouds”. Additional definition as “vapour, clouds of passions” or “space of passions” is a result of borrowing meaning “passion” for *rájas* from later *Sāṃkhya* philosophy.

The noun *vyòman* denotes some kind of space. *Uṇādi Sūtra* IV.144 derives it from *vi-av* = “to dis-favour”; Mayrhofer suggested derivation from *vi-yu* “to separate”. So, in *adhyātma* contexts it is not too far-fetched to assign to *vyòman* meaning “space of detachment”, “space of emotional detachment”, or “space of impartiality” where “space” is a mental space. The following two words *parás* and *yad*, forming expression *paró yát* = “which beyond”, define *vyòman* as “being beyond the clouds of passion” which agrees well with assigned to *vyòman* meaning. This meaning for *vyòman* also agrees with all occurrences of the word in Rigveda.

The word *tadānīm* is translated as “as that time”.

The word *parás* occurs in this hymn twice: in lines 1.b and 2.d. In both cases it is translated as adverb “beyond”.

## Lines 1.cd

### Grammar markup:

*ki* pronoun, 3rd, neuter, acc.; *ā* preposition;  $\sqrt{vrt}$  intensive, imperf., 3rd, sing.;  
*kuha* particle; *ka* pronoun, 3rd, masc., sing., gen.; *śarman* noun, neuter, sing., loc.;  
*ambhas* noun, sing., nom.; *kim* particle;  $\sqrt{as}$  imperf., 3rd, sing.;  
*gahana* adj., neuter, sing., nom.; *gabhīra* adj., neuter, sing., nom.

### Words:

The word *avarīvar* on the line 1.c is treated following Oldenberg as being a form of verbal root *vrt*; the expression *kīmāvarīvar* is translated simply as “what did it turn to again and again?”

The word *śarman* is translated as “protection”.

The word *āmbhas* means “waters”.

Words *gāhana* and *gabhīrā* are treated as adjectives defining *āmbhas* as “thick” and “impenetrable” correspondingly.

## Comments on verse 1

It is assumed here that an intelligent conversation is reflected in this hymn, thus implying that all four questions of lines 1.cd “What did it turn to again and again? Wherein? Protected by what? Were the waters impervious, thick?” are relevant to the view being discussed. This assumption makes it difficult to interpret the verse as being about a creation *ex nihilo* or *ex uno*, since something to be in and something to be protected against should be prior to whatever is meant by “it” in line 1.c. What is the view that is being discussed in the verse 1? Here is accepted in this interpretation guess at what it is.

There is something, that has the quality of awareness and luminosity, that is in a state of constant change. For the lack of a better word it can be called *the primordial consciousness* (which in verse 3 is denoted by the word *salilā*). What is called *the mind (mānas)* is a shaped, configured, focused, biased *primordial consciousness*. There are various spaces, areas where it functions, or “revolves” (*varate*). One space is the space of sensory stimuli where *the mind* interfaces with “the real”, another space is the space of imagination and memory where *the mind* interfaces with “unreal” or “non-existent”. There is a space of desires, cravings, passions, and there is a space (or spaces) where the mind can observe or survey other spaces, where it becomes detached from “the real”, from “unreal”, from desires. Such a space is called *vyōman*. Ability to introspect and to operate with abstract concepts like numbers is due to the existence of a *vyōman*. Then there are “waters” (*āmbhas*). It is something that attunes, predisposes, biases *the mind*, brings to attention some things more readily than others and create moods. “Waters” have different streams like a stream of speech, a stream of smells, streams of fear, hunger, pleasure, etc. “Waters” tend to make *the mind* pre-occupied.

A *mundane consciousness*, a consciousness into which humans are ordinarily almost completely immersed, is a particular configuration of *the primordial consciousness* that has alternating states of wakefulness (*āhan* = daylight) and sleep (*rātri* = night), habitual behaviours, desires, pleasures,

pains, sufferings, etc. The subject of the debate in the context of this view can be reformulated as “how the *primordial consciousness* becomes, evolves into, or restricts itself unto a *mundane consciousness*?”

The initial statement (lines 1.ab) is that at some point *the primordial consciousness* was not interfacing with sensory stimulation (or with “the real”), nor with imagined or recollected “things” (or with “unreal”); it was not interfacing at that time with desires, nor it was in an observing, or surveying mode that *vyòman* affords. This statement raises questions. First, it can be observed that awareness is constantly turning (*àvartate*) to something. What did it turn to at that time if there were no familiar spaces (“real”, “unreal” etc.)? Next, in what space the awareness was? Since intelligent humans know from personal experience how strong and invasive “waters” are, there are further questions: what protected the *primordial consciousness* from the barrage of sensory stimuli, desires, moods, etc.? If it was not protected, then why there was no interfacing with whatever “waters” could bring? Was it because the awareness could not “enter the waters” due to them being impenetrable? Or, was it because “waters” were too thick to flow rapidly and to keep bringing things up? These are the questions the skeptic was lilely asking in lines 1.cd.

## Verse 2

### Lines 2.ab

#### Grammar markup:

*na* particle; *mṛtyu* noun, masc., sing., nom;  $\sqrt{as}$  imperf., 3rd, sing.;  
*amṛta* noun, neuter, sing., nom.; *na* particle; *tarhi* adverb;  
*na* particle; *rātri* noun, fem., sing., gen. ; *ahan* noun, masc., sing., gen.;  
 $\sqrt{as}$  imperf., 3rd, sing.; *praketa* noun, masc., sing., nom.

#### Words:

The word *mṛtyú* means “death”. But it is not a physical death, like death of the body, that is meant in this context of the hymn. It is a mental death. Such death is felt/perceived as a collapse of/loss of pathways to a mental space into which mental energy was poured and which became personally important.

The word *amṛta* is translated in this context as “the nectar conferring immortality”, that is, some substance that keeps mental spaces from collapsing. It is likely that *amṛta* is a reference to the “inner Soma”.

Words *rātri* and *áhan* that mean “night” and “day” are interpreted here as states of “sleep” and “wakefulness” correspondingly.

The word *praketa* means “a sign, a feature, an indication”.

## Lines 2.cd

### Grammar markup:

√*an* imperf., 3rd, sing.; *avātam* adverb;  
*svadhā* noun, fem., sing., instr.; *tad* pronoun, 3rd, neuter, sing., nom.; *eka* adj., neuter, sing. nom.;  
*tad* pronoun, 3rd, neuter, sing., abl.; *ha* particle; *anyat* adj., neuter, sing. nom.; *na* particle;  
*paras* adverb; *kim* particle; *cana* particle; √*as* perfect, 3rd, sing.

### Words:

The verb √*an* means “to breath”.

The word *avātām* is used as an adverb meaning “without wind”, or “without moving the air”.

The word *svadhā* means “self-position, inherent power, own state or condition or nature”. It occurs in this hymn twice — in 2.c in instr. case and in 5.d in nom. case. In the first case it is translated as adverbial phrase “of its own accord” and in the second as “a predisposition”.

The adjective *ēka* here and in 3.d is translated as “one, alone”.

The word *anyāt* is adjective “different”.

The word *parās* means “beyond”.

## Comments on verse 2

This verse starts an exposition of another view that shares many ideas with the view indicated in verse 1. The exposition continues up to the line 4.b. It states that in the *primordial consciousness* there are no mental spaces; therefore there is no mental death (= collapse of a mental space or loss of pathways to it), there is no “inner Soma” — the ambrosia that makes mental spaces to persist. Next, it states that although there are constant changes in it, the changes are not reflected upon physiological processes — the ebb and flow of energy in the *primordial consciousness* does not cause physical breathing. Probably, the phrase “It did breathe not moving the air” alludes to the state of consciousness of an unborn baby. The expression “there were no features (indications or signs) of neither day nor of night” could be interpreted as “there were no mental dynamic that characterizes states of wakefulness and sleep.” For example, extending towards sensory stimuli characterizes wakefulness, while detaching from sensory stimuli characterizes sleep.

The expression *tād ēkaṃ* “it [was] one” on line 2.c together with line 2.d *tāsmāddhānyānnā parāḥ kīṃ canāśa* “different from it, beyond, nothing was in any way” mean that the view is that of the *creatio ex uno* category; it is quite similar to later conception in Kashmir Shaivism.

It shall be noted that an attempt to translate *mṛtu* and *amṛta* as “mortal” and “immortal” (as was done in [Mau75, 223]) has to ignore the fact that the first word is in masc. and the second in neuter.

## Verse 3

### Lines 3.ab

#### Grammar markup:

*tamas* noun, neuter, sing., nom.;  $\sqrt{as}$  imperf., 3rd, sing.;  
*tamas* noun, neuter, sing., instr.; *gūḍha* adj., neuter, sing., nom.; *agra* noun, neuter, sing., loc.;  
*apraketa* adj., neuter, sing., nom.; *śalīla* noun, neuter, sing., nom.;  
*sarva* noun, neuter, sing. nom.;  $\sqrt{as}$  imperf., 3rd, sing.; *idam* pronoun, 3rd, neuter, sing., nom.

#### Words:

The word *tāmas* is usually translated as “darkness” but doing so seems to create a contradiction with previous verse which states that there were no signs (features, indications) of the night, while darkness is such a sign (feature, indication). To avoid this contradiction, *tāmas* could be translated as “mental inertia”, inertia that is an inhibition, an active suppression of unfolding of mental processes. This meaning is borrowed from later *Sāṃkhya* philosophy.

Adjective *gūḍhā* means “covered”.

Locative of *āgra* means “in the beginning, at first”.

The word *apraketā* denotes a privation of *praketā* (see line 2.d) and means “lack of features”.

The word *śalīlā* means “a sea”. Defined by adjective *apraketā* it means “lacking any features sea” which in the context of this hymn refers to “undifferentiated, primordial consciousness”.

The word *sārva* here means “all, all there was”.

The pronoun *idám* here is treated as “this” (referring to *śalīlā*) instead of “this world” since the differentiation into “this world” and “that world” didn’t exist at “that time”.

### Lines 3.cd

#### Grammar markup:

*tuchya* noun, neuter, sing., instr.; *ābhu* adj., neuter, sing., nom.;  
*apihita* adj., neuter, sing. nom.; *yad* pronoun, 3rd, neuter, sing., nom.;  $\sqrt{as}$  imperf., 3rd, sing.;  
*tapas* noun, neuter, sing., gen.; *tad* pronoun, 3rd, neuter, sing., nom.;  
*mahīman* noun, masc., sing., instr.;  $\sqrt{jan}$  imperf., 3rd, sing., middle; *eka* adj., neuter, sing. nom.

### Words:

The word *tuchyá* occurs in Rigveda only twice, thus its meaning is uncertain. It is translated as “void, emptiness”.

The word *ābhú* is derived as *ā-bhū* and is translated as an adjective “coming-to-be” following discussion in [Bre99][p.253].

The word *ápihita* is derived as *api-dhā* and translated as “adjoined with, placed in close proximity with, bordering”.

The word *tápas* means “heat”.

The word *mahimán* is used twice in this hymn, on line 3.d in instr. case and on 5.c in plural in nom. case. It is translated as “force, power to increase, power to grow”.

The verb *ajāyata* from root  $\sqrt{jan}$  means “emerged”, “became born”.

The adjective *éka* occurring also in 2.c is translated as “alone, one”.

### Comments on verse 3

It continues the idea expressed in the verse 2. At the very beginning the *primordial consciousness* was like a featureless sea. It stirred here and there (“it breathed”), it had some fluctuations, but they didn’t develop into something distinctive like a wave having a shape and a particular pattern of movement because all over the sea such fluctuations were suppressed. To continue the sea analogy, waters of the sea were thick, therefore they suppressed fluctuations. Such suppression is inherent in the *primordial consciousness* itself and is everywhere (it is “covered with inertia or *támas*”). And there was nothing else in it — it was undifferentiated. Next is a description of how something gets differentiated inside it. The process is analogous to creation of a bubble inside heated water. First, there is the heat. The assumption is that “the breathing”, ripples from which are suppressed, results in generation of heat. Then the heat produces a lacuna that has a surface — the boundary between the undifferentiated sea and the void. When this surface is forming, it is “coming-to-be”; it becomes a “a mental space”.

## Verse 4

### Lines 4.ab

Grammar markup:

*kāma* noun, masc., sing., nom.; *tad* adverb; *agra* noun, neuter, sing., loc.;  
*sam* preposition;  $\sqrt{vrt}$  imperf., sing., 3rd; *adhi* preposition; *manas* noun, neuter, sing., abl.;  
*retas* noun, neuter, sing., nom.; *prathama* adj., neuter, sing., nom.;  
*yad* pronoun, 3rd, neuter, sing., nom.;  $\sqrt{as}$  imperf., 3rd, sing.;

#### Words:

The word *kāma* means “desire, longing”.

*tad* is used here adverbially as “in that place”.

Locative of *ágra* means “in the beginning, at first” is it does in 3.a.

Preposition *sám* defines the following verb giving it sense “completely, wholly”.

The verb  $\sqrt{vrt}$  defined by *sám* means “to take shape”.

The preposition *ádhi* is referring here to the next word — *mánas* (this interpretation follows J.P.Brereton’s idea [Bre99][p.254] that to translate 4.ab without violating the syntax one has to assume that the text says “the desire is born because of the mind”, not the other way around); therefore, *ádhi mánaso* is translated as “from the presence of mind”.

The word *rétas* has meaning “flow of semen”.

Adjective *prathamá* here means “initial”.

The pronoun *yád* is referring to *mánas*.

### Lines 4.cd

Grammar markup:

*sat* adj., neuter, sing., abl.; *bandhu* noun, masc., sing., acc.; *asat* adj., neuter, sing., loc.;  
*nis* preposition,  $\sqrt{vid}$  imperf., 3rd, pl.;  
*hṛd* noun, neuter, sing., loc.; *prati-* $\sqrt{iṣ}$  indecl. partic.;  
*kavi* noun, masc., pl., nom.; *manīṣā* noun, fem., sing., instr.

#### Words:

Adjectives *sát* and *ásat* have here the same meaning as in 1.a.

*bándhu* means “connection, chain”. Here it denotes a directional connection starting with *sát* and ending with *ásat* — since *sát* is here ablative case and *ásat* is in locative.

*nīs-√vid* is understood as “to find out”.

The word *hṛ́d* is interpreted not as “physical heart” but as “inside” — the space that can be explored by means of introspection.

The verb *prati-√iṣ* is “to seek, to attend to”.

The word *kaví* has meaning “intelligent, gifted with insight”.

The word *manīṣá* means “reflection, thought”.

## Comments on verse 4

Lines a and b continue the idea expressed in the verses 2 and 3. The mental space that emerges due to heat (verse 3) becomes an area where energy of *primordial consciousness*’ fluctuations concentrates; thus it becomes “the mind”. From the presence of “the mind” (that is, from concentration of the energy) a desire, a longing takes shape. “Desire” in this conception is like a wave or a protuberance on the surface of a lacuna in the sea. The desire in its turn causes further process of differentiation, interfacing with streams of sensory stimulation, etc. The skeptic criticizes this conception as being too speculative. He states (lines 4.cd) that other intelligent men by means of introspection found that a structured sensory stimulation (that is, something “real”) can cause a thought, an idea (that is, something “unreal”) to emerge. Given this insight, how can one justify that it is the mind that is the primary seed of the unfolding of the *mundane consciousness* and not the sensory stimulation? May be, it happens both ways? These are the questions the skeptic asks, albeit in a allegorical form, in the next two lines 5.ab.

## Verse 5

### Lines 5.ab

Grammar markup:

*tiraścīna* adj., masc., sing., nom.; *vitata* adj., masc., sing., nom.;  
*raśmí* noun, masc., sing., nom.; *ayam* pronoun, 3rd, masc., pl., gen.;  
*adhas* adverb; *svid* particle; *√as* imperf., 3rd, sing.;  
*upari* adverb; *svid* particle; *√as* imperf., 3rd, sing.

### Words:

Adjective *tiraścīna* means “transverse”.

Adjective *vitata* means “stretched out”

The word *raśmí* is translated here as “a cord, a thread”. It may refer to *yajñopavīta* — a thread worn across left shoulder and under the right arm by learning or learned students. This meaning would explain the line 5.b.

Adverb *adhás* means “below”, *upári* — “above”.

The particle *svid* is interpreted as a particle of doubt.

### Lines 5.cd

Grammar markup:

*retodhā* adj., masc., pl., nom.;  $\sqrt{as}$  imperf., 3rd, pl.;  
*mahiman* noun, masc., pl., nom.;  $\sqrt{as}$  imperf., 3rd, pl.;  
*svadhā* noun, fem., sing., nom.; *avastāt* adverb;  
*prayati* noun, fem., sing., nom.; *parastāt* adverb.

#### Words:

The adjective *retodhā* means “giving the flow of semen, impregnating”.

The word *mahimán* (occurring also in 3.d) is translated here as “a power to grow” .

The word *svadhā* (occurring also in 2.c) is translated here as “predisposition (for something)”.

The word *prayati* is here derived from *pra-* $\sqrt{yat}$  with the meaning “intention, effort”.

Adverbs *avastāt* and *parastāt* are translated as “before” and “after”.

### Comments on verse 5

Lines 5.ab expresses doubt about the statement of lines 4.ab by ways of analogy. The skeptic says that those intelligent men were wearing a thread from left shoulder to under the right arm. When it is stretched, could be said that it is stretched only below or only above? Similarly, one cannot say if the mind is the seed of a desire or a desire is a seed of the mind, whether “real” is the cause of “unreal”, or “unreal” is the cause of “real”. One can observe it happening in both ways. That’s the essence of the doubt expressed about the view indicated in verses 2, 3, 4ab.

Next, in lines 5.cd, the skeptic concedes the following. For an emergence of something particular from the sea of the *primordial consciousness* there should be some impregnating “things” and powers to grow — similar to starting a fire where sparks and opportunities for them to grow (like kindling in close proximity, flow of fresh air, etc.) should be present. Also, skeptic concedes that there should be a predisposition for a certain change and effort or intent to effect that change — similar to predisposition of wood sticks to produce sparks and an effort to create friction for sparks to appear.

## Verse 6

### Lines 6.ab

Grammar markup:

*ka* pronoun, 3rd, masc., sing., nom.; *addhā* adverb;  $\sqrt{vid}$  perfect, 3rd, sing.;

*ka* pronoun, 3rd, masc., sing., nom.; *iha* indecl.; *pra* preposition ;  $\sqrt{vac}$  aorist, subjunctive, 3rd, sing.;

*ku* pronoun, 3rd, neuter, sing abl.; *ājātā* adj., fem., sing., nom.;

*ku* pronoun, 3rd, neuter, sing abl.; *iyam* pronoun, 3rd, fem., sing., nom.; *visṛṣṭi* noun, fem., sing., nom.

#### Words:

Pronoun *ka* here means “who”; *ku* “wherefrom”.

The word *addhā* means “manifestly, certainly, truly.”

The form *veda* of the root  $\sqrt{vid}$  is translated as “did find out”.

The word *ihā* means “in this case” and refers to topic of the debate.

The verbal form *prā vocat* is understood as “so he has explained”.

Adjective *ājātā* means “born”.

Pronoun *iyam* refers to *visṛṣṭi*.

The word *visṛṣṭi* is derived from *vi-* $\sqrt{srj}$  and means “emanation”. It refers to the *mundane consciousness*.

### Lines 6.cd

Grammar markup:

*arvāk* indecl.; *deva* noun, masc., pl., nom.;

*ayam* pronoun, 3rd, neuter, sing., gen.; *visarjana* noun, neuter, sing., instr.;

*athā* indecl.; *ka* pronoun, 3rd, masc., sing., nom.;  $\sqrt{vid}$  perfect, 3rd, sing.;

*yatas* indecl.;  $\bar{a}$ - $\sqrt{bhū}$  perfect, 3rd, sing.

#### Words:

The word *arvāk* is translated “hither”.

The word *devā* is left untranslated.

Pronoun *ayam* here refers to *salilā*, the sea.

The word *visárjana* means “emission, letting go”.

The word *áthā* is introductory and is translated as “now, then”.

The form *veda* of the root  $\sqrt{vid}$  is translated as “did find out”.

The word *yátas* is translated as “whence, wherefrom”.

The verbal form *ābabhúva* of  $\bar{a}\text{-}\sqrt{bhū}$  is translated “it came to be”.

## Comments on verse 6

Questions the skeptic asks in verse 6 are directed at participants of the debate. First question is “Who of those present here has found out for sure and explained to others where did the *mundane consciousness* come from?” Second question is “Since devas emerged hither by means of the *primordial consciousness*’ emission, wherefrom did the *primordial consciousness* come to be?”

## Verse 7

### Lines 7.ab

Grammar markup:

*iyam* pronoun, 3rd, fem., sing., nom.; *visṛṣṭi* noun, fem., sing., nom.;

*yatas* indecl.;  $\bar{a}\text{-}\sqrt{bhū}$  perfect, 3rd, sing.

*yadi* indecl.;  $vā$  particle;  $\sqrt{dhā}$  perfect, 3rd. sing., middle;

*yadi* indecl.;  $vā$  particle; *na* particle.

### Words:

Pronoun *iyam* refers to *visṛṣṭi*.

The word *visṛṣṭi* has the same meaning as in 6.b.

The word *yádi* is translated as “if”; the expression *yadí vā* is translated as “whether”.

The verbal form *dadhe* from  $\sqrt{dhā}$  is translated as “it conceived”.

### Lines 7.cd

Grammar markup:

*yas* pronoun, 3rd, masc., sing., nom.; *ayam* pronoun, 3rd, neuter, sing., gen; *adhyakṣa* noun, masc., sing., nom.;

*parama* adj., masc., sing., loc.; *vyoman* noun, neuter, sing., loc.

*sas* pronoun, 3rd, masc., sing., nom., *aṅga* indecl.;  $\sqrt{vid}$  perfect, 3rd, sing.;

*yadi* indecl.  $vā$  particle; *na* particle;  $\sqrt{vid}$  perfect, 3rd, sing.

**Words:**

The pronoun *ayam* here refers to *visárjana* (“emission”) of line 6.c.

The word *ádhyakṣa* means “eyewitness”. Here “eyewitness” means “he who sees with mind’s eye”.

Adjective *paramá* is translated as “the highest, the ultimate”.

The noun *vyòman* has the same meaning here as in 1.b.

The particle *anigá* is translated as “indeed, surely”.

**Comments on verse 7**

In lines 7ab the skeptic asks — as if giving up on views indicated in 1.ab and 2–4.ab, and inviting new ideas — “Whether the *mundane consciousness* was conceived by the *primordial consciousness* or not, wherefrom the *mundane consciousness* came to be”? In line 7c, some participant of the debate makes a suggestion how to find out and also answers the question from line 6 “Who in this case did find out...?” by saying that he who got into the state of perfect equanimity (that is, his mind was “in the ultimate space of detachment”) should have been able to observe by means of introspection how a new mental space with further unfolding of mundane consciousness into it did emerge. The skeptic expresses doubt that it might not have succeed. No justification is given for this doubt, but one might guess that mentioned above “inertia, inhibition” (*támas*) was responsible for a failure to know. If it is so, then the skeptic implies that in order to attain sought knowledge one needs, in addition to equanimity, a clear insight. Using Buddhist concepts, the same could be said as “in addition to *śamatha* one needs *vipaśyana*”. Such clear insight was brought to vedic poets by Soma:

*tvám dhíyaṃ manoyújaṃ sṛjá vṛṣṭíṃ ná tanyatúh* 9.100.3.ab.

**References**

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