In Pursuit of the *Triguṇa*:
The Construction of Identity and the Concept of ‘Self’
Through an Interpretive Analysis of the Symbolism
Stemming from the Vedic Yajña.

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A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements of
the degree of Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Religion at
the University of Queensland.
Cover: Icon of Chinnamastā, the Mahāvidyā arising from the joined bodies of the Originating Couple (Rawson 1978:129).
Above: Śiva / śakti, the divine hermaphrodite symbolising the puruṣa / prakṛti dualism (Rawson 1978:190).
Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in any other form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institute of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given.

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Abstract

The thesis presents a view of Hindu philosophy in the historical context. It is argued that, through the employment of the symbols associated with the Vedic sacrifice (yajña), the diverse socio-political, cosmological, metaphysical and theological concepts that constitute Hinduism may be united to present a single cohesive system of knowledge.

In examining the symbolism of the Vedic yajña, the socio-political concept of Brahmanism is explored. The Brahmanical influences on the formation of the cosmogony of Sāṁkhya, the metaphysics of Vedānta, and the various theological interpretations of Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism are highlighted. Intricate linkages between the concepts of karma, samsāra, mokṣa and dharma, as well as the principles of purity and pollution and the socio-political system of varṇa are established through an examination of Hindu philosophy when viewed from the perspective of the Vedic yajña.

India, in both the historical and modern context consists of diverse kinship attributes such as language and kinship nomenclature. It is argued that Brahmanism presented a system of knowledge that united different models of kinship in India under the system of varṇa.

In undertaking this examination, two key aspects of Hindu thought are engaged. Firstly, the symbolic links associated with the Vedic yajña, and its influence on the Sāṁkhyan principle of the triguna, are examined. It is argued that the triguna presents the key principle that unites early Hindu cosmogony with metaphysical and theological speculation. Secondly, it is contended that the symbolic elements that form the basis of the triguna are representative of the subjective properties associated with procreation.

In undertaking an investigation from the perspective of the Vedic yajña, four hypotheses are presented. Firstly, it is argued that the unhindered cosmological, metaphysical, theological speculations were possible as they reinforced the socio-political system of Brahmanism. Secondly, by employing symbols associated with the Vedic yajña, the defining attribute of Brahmanism, a text may claim its authority in the Vedas. Thirdly, a new interpretation of the term varṇa is postulated, linking the term to the elements of the Vedic yajña: water, fire and earth (food). Fourthly and finally, it is argued, that the dichotomy that surrounds Śaivism, ‘the ascetic’ and ‘the erotic’, can be resolved through an examination of the symbols of the Vedic yajña, thus lending support to the Brahmanical order.
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Table of Contents

DECLARATION ..................................................................................................................... I
ABSTRACT .......................................................................................................................... II
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ......................................................................................................... III
TABLE OF CONTENTS ....................................................................................................... IV
LIST OF FIGURES ............................................................................................................... VI
LIST OF TABLES ................................................................................................................ VII
ABBREVIATIONS ............................................................................................................... VIII

1. INTRODUCTION .............................................................................................................. 1
   1.1. INTRODUCTION: THEME ......................................................................................... 2
   1.2. METHODOLOGY ....................................................................................................... 7
   1.3. CHRONOLOGY ........................................................................................................ 11

2. THE SOCIO-POLITICAL ............................................................................................... 14
   2.1. VEDIC AUTHORITY & BRAHMANISM .................................................................. 15
   2.2. VARNAŚRAMADHARMA, CATURVARNĀŚRAMA, AND PURUŚĀRTHA ..................... 18
       2.2.1. Varṇāśramadharma ....................................................................................... 18
       2.2.2. Catuvārṣaśrāma .......................................................................................... 20
       2.2.3. Puruṣārtha (caturvarga) .............................................................................. 24
   2.3. DHARMA OF THE BRAHMIN ............................................................................... 26

3. THE PHYSICAL ............................................................................................................. 29
   3.1. COSMOGENESIS: THE VEDAS AND SĀMKHYA .................................................. 29
   3.2. INTRODUCTION TO SĀMKHYA ............................................................................ 30
   3.3. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SĀMKHYA ..................................................................... 38
   3.4. EARLY SYMBOLISM OF THE TRIGUNA ............................................................... 43
       3.4.1. The symbols of the Vedic yajña, water, fire and earth .................................... 43
       3.4.2. The macrocosmic and microcosmic ............................................................. 47

4. THE METAPHYSICAL ................................................................................................... 49
   4.1. THE YOGA SŪTRA OF PATAṆJALI ....................................................................... 50
       4.1.1. The guṇas and various states of consciousness .......................................... 50
       4.1.2. Hints of the grhastha and the sarīṇyāśi in the Yoga Sūtras ....................... 53
   4.2. VEDĀNTA ............................................................................................................... 55
       4.2.1. Early Vedānta ............................................................................................... 56
       4.2.2. Advaita Vedānta ......................................................................................... 61
       4.2.3. Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta ............................................................................... 67
4.2.4. Dvaita Vedānta ........................................................................................................70

5. THE THEOLOGICAL....................................................................................................73

5.1. VAISHNAVISM ........................................................................................................74
5.1.1. Vaiṣṇavism and the Bhagavad-Gītā .................................................................75
5.2. ŚAIVISM ..................................................................................................................83
5.2.1. The Rg Veda Śaivism, yajña, kinship, and the sexual metaphor ...................85
5.2.2. The triguna and reproduction............................................................................89
5.2.3. Śiva and the saṁnyāsi.........................................................................................94
5.2.4. Śiva and the grha-sthāya....................................................................................95
5.2.5. Śakti and Tantric mastery over desire .............................................................96
5.3. KASHMIR ŚAIVISM.................................................................................................98
5.4. KĀPĀLIKAS .............................................................................................................104

6. CONCLUSION ..............................................................................................................106

GLOSSARY OF TERMS.................................................................................................109

APPENDICES ...............................................................................................................118

APPENDIX I: KARMA & THE TRANSACTIONAL NATURE OF THE TRIGUNA ...............119
  Transmigration and Liberation .................................................................................119
  The Categorisation of Sentient Beings ....................................................................122
  The transactional nature of Karma & the Triguna ..................................................124
  The Funerary Rites ....................................................................................................124
  Principles of Purity and Pollution ...........................................................................127
  Inter-Varṇa (caste) Relationships ..........................................................................130

APPENDIX II: MANDŪKYA-UPANIŚAD ......................................................................134

APPENDIX III: ĀGAMA PRAKARĀNA .........................................................................137

BIBLIOGRAPHY ............................................................................................................143
## List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Vedas, Sāṁkhya &amp;Vedānta; Śaivism &amp; Vaiṣṇavism; the socio-political, physical and metaphysical</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chronology</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hindu Wedding: <em>Vivah homa</em></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Depiction of the Vedic <em>yajña</em></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Cremations at Varanasi</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The twenty five (25) <em>tattvas</em></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ego (<em>ahāṁkāra</em>) and the <em>triguna</em></td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Śaṅkara’s interpretation of Śaṁkhya</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Flowchart of the ontological relationships of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Flowchart of the ontological relationships of Dvaita Vedānta</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kinship is the underlying theme of the <em>Bhagavad-Gita</em></td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Roadside <em>liṅga</em>. A form of altar.</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>An early statue of <em>liṅga</em> and <em>yoni</em> found at Mohenjo Daro,(2300 -1750 B.C.)</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Icon of the <em>devī</em> displaying her <em>yoni</em> for <em>pūjā</em></td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The thirty-six (36) <em>tattvas</em> of Kashmir Śaivism</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The three (3) <em>devīs</em> of the <em>trīka</em> and the trident</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Tables

Table 1: A tripartite cosmogony as described in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa .......................... 16
Table 2: Marriage by varṇa ................................................................................. 22
Table 3: The constituent components of food as define in the CU 6.5 ......................... 48
Table 4: The varṇas as theorised by guṇa assignment by Śaṅkara ......................... 81
Table 5: The varṇas as theorised by guṇa assignment by Rāmānuja ...................... 81
Table 6: An amalgamation of guṇas according to Larson ........................................ 81
Table 7: The Sāṁkhyan realms of existence .......................................................... 123
Table 8: Food transactions between castes ......................................................... 131
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADP</td>
<td>Advaita Prakarana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ĀP</td>
<td>Āgama Prakarana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ĀŚ</td>
<td>Āgama Śastra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ĀT</td>
<td>Ārthaśāstra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AV</td>
<td>Atharva Veda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BG</td>
<td>Bhagavad-Gītā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bh</td>
<td>bhāṣya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BU</td>
<td>Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS</td>
<td>Brahmāsūtra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CU</td>
<td>Chāndogya Upaniṣad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS</td>
<td>Kailāsa Sāṁhitā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ĪP</td>
<td>Īśvarapratyabhijñā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MB</td>
<td>Mahābhārata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDh</td>
<td>Mānava Dharmaśāstra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MaU</td>
<td>Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MtU</td>
<td>Maitri Upaniṣad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MU</td>
<td>Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PB</td>
<td>Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td>Rudra Sāṁhitā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṚV</td>
<td>Ṛg Veda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŠB</td>
<td>Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SK</td>
<td>Sāṁkhya-kārikā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŠMp</td>
<td>Śiva Mahāpurāṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŠU</td>
<td>Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TĀ</td>
<td>Tantrāloka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB</td>
<td>Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VMp</td>
<td>Viṣṇu Mahāpurāṇam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP</td>
<td>Vaitathya-Prakarana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YSp</td>
<td>Yoga Sūtra (Patañjali)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. INTRODUCTION

स्यो यो यां यां तस्य भक्तं: विविषितस्मिन्द्रति।
तस्य तस्यांश्रद्धा तथा तांतत्रिविदधाम्यहम्॥२१॥

Whatever devotee seeks to worship with faith what form soever, that same faith of his I make unflinching (BG VII:21).¹

वेप्यंत्यदेवनानां यज्ञनां विविषितां।
तेऽविकौन्तेय यज्ञं विदधाम्यहम्॥२३॥

Even those who, devoted to other gods, worship them with faith, worship myself, O son of Kunti, in ignorance (BG IX:23).²

²Ibid., p. 253.
1.1. **Introduction: Theme**

Humanity has long sought to locate their position within their environment, pondering not only their own existence, but seeking answers about their origins and their relationship within the physical envrons in which they live. From these elementary questions individual cultures have been assigning meanings and values that are unique, establishing their defining attributes. In so doing, cultures have established independent systems of knowledge that define and describe the environment they inhabit. The meanings and values ascribed to their perceived environment present a shared set of symbols that binds and defines any given culture and presents an individual concept of Self. Stemming from these symbols, the meanings and values applied form the basis of the social environment; meanings and values that are, arguably reflective of the social mores of a given society. To highlight the linkages between the symbolic and the social, this thesis, examines Hinduism in the historical context. Specifically, this thesis examines the linkage between the symbol and the social mores described in the historical Hindu lawbook, the *Dharmaśāstras*, and the symbols stemming from the Vedic sacrifice (*yajña*).

The major symbols as they relate to the Vedic *yajña*, are the symbols associated with the notion of family and kinship. Kinship defines social relations and lineage groups that are bound ‘through a system of well defined customs, rights and obligations’. Kinship is considered by many social theorists as a primary bond between people that is resilient, or in other words, resistant to change.

In examining the concept of kinship, the notion of ethnicity is also engaged. The notion of ethnicity presents a sociological construct that unites and defines a group of people. Markers of ethnicity vary; presenting a common belief in, and feeling of belonging to a common linguistic, religious, racial, or historical past.

Systems of kinship and ethnicity are defined and supported by power/knowledge relationships that exist within a given cultural context. The power/knowledge systems that

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4 Ibid., pp.324-326.
5 Ibid., p. 191.
exist define and enforce the social mores of that culture, social mores that reflect the meanings and values that define and identify any given culture. The relationships of power and knowledge that exist within a given cultural context, it is argued, can be witnessed when examining a culture’s system of knowledge and belief, systems of power and knowledge that define kinship and the construction of identify (Self).

There are many different systems of kinship present in India today, consisting of various Dravidian, Aryan and indigenous groups. To examine the origins and movements of the various kinship groups that inhabited the Indian sub-continent is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, it is contended many of these kinship groups were united by the single socio-political system known as Brahmanism. The key Brahmanical text, the *Dharmaśāstras*, presents the foundation for this thesis.

Stemming from Brahmanism emerged differing and contrasting metaphysical and theological definitions. The innumerous deities, the plethora of symbols in the form of *maṇḍalas* (graphical symbolic representations of the macrocosmic), *yantras* (graphical representations of the microcosmic), *mudrās* (symbolic gestures made by the hands or fingers), and *mantras* (words or phrases used in meditation), highlight the complex system of knowledge embedded with the Hindu world.

As Eliot Deutsch argues, most Westerners who are acquainted with ancient Indian philosophical texts do not see a single consistent viewpoint, but a rich diversity of experience and reflections upon it. This thesis presents the hypothesis that the diverse metaphysical and theological interpretations of Hinduism can be united through the engagement of the symbols that are representative of Brahmanism, the symbols associated with the Vedic *yajña*.

Originating from the Vedic *yajña*, it is argued, is a set of symbols that formed the backbone of early Hindu cosmogony and metaphysics, upon which different Hindu theologies were founded. Furthermore, it is argued that from the symbols of the Vedic *yajña* emerged the basis for the Hindu conceptualisation of Self.

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6 The use of the term ‘theology’ is not a term that is commonly applied in Hinduism. The term is used in the context of this thesis to distinguish between Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism, Śāktism etc.
In this examination of the symbols of the Vedic yajña, an emphasis is placed on a singular principle, the *triguna*, a key attribute of the *darśana*, Sāṁkhya.\(^8\) The evolution of the symbolism that is attributed to the origins of the *triguna* are traced, and their influences on Hindu cosmogony, psychology, metaphysics and theology highlighted. Importantly, the *triguna* presents a linkage to the systems of kinship through the Brahmanical concept of *varṇa*,\(^9\) a key aspect of the *Dharmaśāstras*.

The *Dharmaśāstras* define the duties (*dharma*) and criminal codes, all of which are dependent on an individual’s *varṇa*. The knowledge systems constructed within the Hindu context, stemming from the *Dharmaśāstras*, continually engage the symbolism of the Vedic yajña. This thesis follows the development of the knowledge construct in the Hindu context as highlighted in Figure 1.

It is argued within this thesis, that stemming from the symbols of the Vedic yajña, the principles of the Sāṁkhyan principle of *triguna* was established. The *triguna* can be employed to theorise the principles of karma, dharma, and the principles of purity and pollution, all of which are supportive of the system of *varṇa*. It is argued that the *triguna* forms a common thread that can unite the socio-political with the physical, metaphysical and theological speculations that combined to constitute what is labelled, ‘Hinduism’.

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\(^8\) To limit this examination I am only engaging in three of the six philosophical positions of Hindu thought these being Vedānta, Sāṁkhya and Yoga. Hindu structures of thought can be divided into six orthodox philosophical schools, *sadārśanas*. In their totality the *sadārśanas* consist of; Nyāya Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta, Sāṁkhya and Yoga. Briefly, the three *darśanas* engaged are, the philosophical school of Sāṁkhya presenting Hindu cosmogony. The various Vedāntan schools define Hindu ontology, while the school of Yoga present the method to separate the cosmogonic from the ontological. All contribute to the major theological schools, Vaiṣṇavism, Saivism and Śāktism.

\(^9\) The four principle divisions of Hindu society are collectively referred to as *varṇa* consisting of, *brahmins*, the custodians of the sacred word, teachers and advisors; *kṣatriyas*, the kings and warriors of Hindu society; *vaśyas*, the merchants and farmers, the economic backbone of society and *śūdras*, the labourers, and servants of the three higher *varṇas*. Importantly, in the orthodox Brahmanical and Vaiṣṇava tradition, the *varṇa* to which one is born cannot be changed and is the product of the *karma* accrued in one’s past lives.
In presenting this investigation into Hindu knowledge constructs, four hypotheses are postulated. Firstly, it is argued that by integrating the symbolism associated with the socio-political system defined by Brahmanism, unhindered cosmological, metaphysical, theological speculation was possible.

Figure 1: Vedas, Sāṁkhya & Vedānta; Śaivism & Vaiṣṇavism; the socio-political, physical and metaphysical.\(^\text{10}\)

\(^{10}\) The structure of the argument presented within this thesis possesses a potential parallel in describing the symbolism presented in the ancient temples, mandirs, of Northern India as depicted in figure 1, (for example the mandirs of Khajuraho). On the lowest layer of some mandirs the socio-political structure of society is depicted. Above this stratum, but to the left and right of centre are depicted the nymphs, surasundari, looking into mirrors, dressed in the finest jewellery while depicting various human moods and emotions (Deva 2002:30-31). These women may depict the Advaita Vedānta concept of māyā, the illusionary world. In the centre male and female are united in maithuna (sexual intercourse) depicting the dualism of male and female, and the force responsible for the reproduction of all sentient beings. As one looks at the higher levels, images of the divas and devis are depicted united in maithuna illustrating the forces responsible for the manifestation of the physical universe from a Śaivite perspective. Finally, at the top, on the spire, the sikhara, no image is presented, only intricate patterns representing the formless brahman. In totality the microcosmic and the macrocosmic are represented, monuments to dharma. The structure of this thesis follows the schema as depicted above.
The employment of symbolism associated with the Vedic *yajña* leads to the second hypothesis: Through the employment of the symbolism associated with the Vedic *yajña*, a text may claim its authority in the *Vedas* and, therefore, be classified as an orthodox (*āstika*) Hindu text.

Thirdly, a new interpretation of the term *varṇa* is postulated. This thesis presents the argument that while maintaining the link to the term ‘colour’, it is argued that the term *varṇa* holds a direct correlation to the colours of principle attributes of the Vedic *yajña*, i.e. the white of water, the red of the fire and the black of the earth (and/or food).

Fourthly and finally it is presented that the dichotomy of ‘the ascetic’ and ‘the erotic’ that engulfs Śaivism can be resolved through an examination of the symbols of the Vedic *yajña*, presenting a resolution that lends support to the Brahmanical order. Specifically, the dichotomy is resolved through the engagement of the Brahmanical concept of *caturvarṇāśrama*.
1.2. Methodology

Notions of ethnicity hold the potential to bind a people into the wider concept of ‘nation’. When one unpacks the nature of ethnicity it can be seen that while people may be united by language, they may differ in their religious beliefs and past histories: each being an individual identifier of ethnicity. Multiple identifiers of ethnicities may be embedded deep within an individual’s psyche as can be witnessed within the Hindu context.

According to Foucault, all identities must be built on notions of ethnicity, fabricated in believable common histories linking ‘dispersed events to... the same organising principle’. These historical constructions by the power elites attempt to claim sovereignty over the fabricated collective consciousness. The collective consciousness in the Brahmanical sense is arguably defined by the Vedic yajña.

As is presented in this thesis, it is the concept of Brahmanism that provides the organising principle that builds on notions of ethnicity. Yet Brahmanism is unique as the notion of ethnicity is not defined by kinship. Brahmanism spans diverse systems of kinship in India supporting numerous kinship nomenclatures, binding them under the common organising principle of varṇa.

Through a singular organising principle, the common interpretation of the symbolic, the symbols associated with the Vedic yajña, the individuals fabricated consciousness is bound to the collective, thus establishing an individual’s concept of Self. Throughout this thesis, it is the symbolic that is central to the argument being presented. As Susan Langer states:

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12 The influence of Brahmanism was far more extensive in the North Western region of India, diminishing to the east and to the south. In contemporary India Brahmanist influences, as reflected in the Hindu nationalist movements in particular, are treated with quite a degree of mistrust. The proportional representation of the brahmin caste drops to the east and to the south of the country. However caste definitions are still strong throughout the country.
[Symbols] are not proxy for their objects, but are vehicles for the conception of objects. In talking about things we have conceptions of them, not the things themselves... It is the conceptions, not the things that symbols directly mean. Wherever a symbol operates, there is meaning; and conversely different classes of experience say, reason, intuition, appreciation, correspond to different types of symbolic mediation.

To gain an appreciation of the power of the symbol, an analysis of the symbol must be made as they relate to the actors. With an understanding of the symbol, an insight into the mechanism’s that may be leveraged to unify a given ethnicity is uncovered. Geertz argues that when examining belief systems, ‘the essential element of all religions was to demonstrate a meaningful relationship between the values that people hold and the general order of existence.’ For Geertz, the meanings embedded within a culture’s symbolism relates to the social-structural and psychological processes of the culture. It is with these processes the ‘imaginary community’ of our existence are constructed.

Bourdieu describes this imaginary community by introducing the concept of *habitus*:

**Habitus is a system of durable, transposable dispositions which functions as a generative basis of structured, objectively unified practices.**

The ‘structured, objectively unified practices’ as defined by Bourdieu are descriptions of the social constructions of class, caste etc. Habitus defines social practices

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16 As discussed in Adams (2001:104), Durkheim hypothesises, that religious belief systems provide an emotional and social function with ‘the idea of society [being] the soul of religion that religion reflects the social function of a community’. Additionally I argue that the social function is also reflected within the religion, anchored in the common interpretation of the symbolic capital.
18 The system of caste, of which the system of *varṇa* forms a principle component, has presented a powerful yet relatively inflexible social order for the Hindus domiciled in the Indian subcontinent. The second component that is the concept of *jātī*, yet while *jātī* is founded on the concept of the fourfold hierarchical structure of *varṇa*, there are thousands of *jātīs* that are normally geographically contained within a singular economic unit of dependent villages. Inter-village economic relationships are reinforced through structured kinship relationships that are *jātī* dependent. *Jātīs* regulate marriage, being village exogamous and *jātī* endogamous. The concept of *varṇa* and *jātī* are collectively referred to by the term *caste*. 

8
that define the boundaries of an individual within a given society. Agents know the value of the habitus they occupy, with the social constructions being historically defined.

Historical definitions leverage symbols of the past to define, redefine, or reinforce cultural values by those who have the power to do so. In this sense symbols take on the form of capital. Symbolic capital is defined within the constructed histories of a given habitus.19 Foucault extends this hypothesis where he argues that, “all… identities must be built on notions of ethnicity, fabricated in believable common histories that link dispersed events to… the same organising principle”.20 The same organising principle is reflected within the symbolic. It is within this context that the changing symbolism, both diachronically and synchronically, is pursued within this thesis.

From the theoretical perspective, meaning associated with the symbol is, arguably, dependent on Foucault’s hypothesis, that relationships of power are responsible for what is, and will be known. In turn, these knowledge constructs are responsible for determining relationships of power. These constructed histories are independent of ethnicity and reside at the core of most, if not all, social systems. This returns us to the principle that lies at the heart of all ethnicities and kinship systems; that systems of kinship are defined by a common interpretation of the symbol. In turn, through the common interpretation of the symbols our conceptualisation of Self and community is defined.

It is highlighted through combining the theories espoused by Geertz, Langer, Bourdieu and Foucault, how systems of knowledge are constructed, thereby, establishing the fabricated collective consciousnesses; a collective consciousness is manipulated through the control of the symbolic.

The primary texts introduced within this thesis are representative of the power/knowledge constructs within the Hindu context. To help reduce undue influence of the translations of the primary texts presented here, multiple translations have been analysed in both the technical and historical components of this thesis. The translated texts are accompanied by the original Sanskrit, presented in Devanagari script wherever

19 The idea of constructed histories is common between the primordialist, situationalist and constructivist theories (Brown 2003:4-29).
possible. In most instances only a single translation is presented as the English translations presented have been deemed as representative of the majority of translations examined. Where key differences in the English translations studied occur, all translations have been included and discussed.

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21 The original Sanskrit texts are included where possible. The actual presentation of the text in Devanagari has been restricted for certain conjuncts due to limitations of the available fonts. Where a conjunct cannot be formed the single preceding consonant will be marked with a virāma (stroke), for example, sattva. Where spelling has varied in the texts, three independent sources of the original Sanskrit presented in Devanagari have been called upon. The spelling that has been utilised is from two concurring texts. The two texts where this has occurred are the SK of Īśvarakṛṣṇa and the BG.


1.3. Chronology

Establishing the chronology of Hindu texts is difficult. Absolute dating of texts, especially for early texts, is at this juncture, not possible. However, establishing a relative chronology based on either linguistic or philosophical principles is possible. Within this thesis, relative chronologies are established by following the development of philosophical principles.

Due to the problems faced with the chronological dating of texts, the dates presented in this thesis reflect approximate dates. Dates presented as a range i.e. 300BCE – 100CE encompass the extremities of the date ranges extracted from academic sources. Following is a summary, in chronological order, of the texts examined, accompanied by a brief on the key aspects of the text (see Figure 2).

The first text examined is book IV of the Rg Veda (RV) exploring attributes associated with the puruṣa (primordial man, pure consciousness, the Divine). Puruṣa of the RV provides three key elements to this thesis, firstly, the divisible nature of the puruṣa (RV 10:90),23 the manifest universe and un-manifest forms. Secondly, the divisible nature of puruṣa provides the foundation for the socio-political system prescribed by Brahmanism. Finally, the reference to puruṣa forms a key principle to the darśana Sāṁkhya engaging the divisible, manifest and un-manifest form of puruṣa.24

Following the Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas formed the socio-political backbone of Brahmanism. Within the Brāhmaṇas, specifically, ŚB 2.1.4.11-13, various realms of existence are postulated.25 The differing realms of existence form a key element of the darśanas of Sāṁkhya and Vedānta.

24 Dating of the Vedas is notoriously difficult. The dates (1500BCE to 2500BCE) reflected in Figure 2 approximate the chronology established by Max Müller. However dates can be found that predate 3000BCE; these however may have political overtones. This said, the Vedas are the earliest writings available for this study.
The next set of texts that developed after the Brāhmaṇas was a corpus of texts, collectively referred to as the Upaniṣads. While philosophical speculation started as early as Book 10 of the RV, it was not until the Upaniṣads that systematic speculation into the nature of the physical, metaphysical and theological began in earnest. As philosophical concepts developed within the Upaniṣads, the symbolism associated with the Vedic yajña began to evolve. The objective elements; water, fire and earth, take on the subjective attributes of colour; white, red and black respectively (CH 6.4.1). It is argued that the objective and subjective attributes of the Vedic yajña present the precursor to the Śāṅkhyan concept of the triguna. The symbolic references that would later form the basis of the triguna continued to develop in the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (ŚU) before finally taking the philosophical form described in the darśana Śāṅkhya, in the Maitri Upaniṣad (MtU) (500 BCE – 300 BCE).

Throughout the early Upaniṣads, symbolic attributes of the Vedic yajña also became associated with the act of sex and procreation. The male sexual fluid semen and female genitalia engage the symbolic attributes associated with the Vedic yajña (BU 6.4) Philosophical contemplation on the properties of sexual fluids developed in the Upaniṣads, became intricately linked within aspects of Śaivism and Śāṅkhya, taking on the attributes that are associated with the triguna.

The definitive text that codifies the darśana Śāṅkhya is arguably the Sāṅkhyaśāstra (SK) by Īśvarakṛṣṇa. The SK is a relatively late text, written approximately between 300CE and 500CE. Within the SK, the concept of the triguna is fully defined. However the principles of the triguna are visible as early as 800 BCE – 600 BCE in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (CU6.4.1).

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26 An example of the subjective qualities of colour can be witnessed when comparing a person with what is attributed as ‘normal’ colour vision, compared to an individual who is ‘colour blind’. Both see colour, and both are perceived as ‘true’ representations of the colour to each individual. It is only when a comparison is made between the two that a difference in colour perception is realised. The differing interpretations of colour highlight subjective nature of ‘colour’.
27 Olivelle, The Early Upanishads, p. 249.
30 Larson and Bhattacharya, Sāṅkhya, p. 5.
The Bhagavad-Gītā (BG) and the Mānava Dharmaśāstra (MDh), both composed between 300 BCE- 200 CE,\(^{31}\) provide a method to examine aspects of Brahmanism and the concept of varṇa. Aspects of Sāṁkhyan philosophy were well established by the time of the writing the BG and the MDh in the MtU. The MtU presents a method to analyses components of the MDh and the BG, thereby providing an insight into the close relationships that existed between the concepts of dharma, karma and varṇa.

Finally, the various forms of Vedānta ascribed by Śaṅkara (788-820 CE), Rāmāmanuja (1025-1137 CE) and Madhva (1197-1276 CE) are introduced describing the various metaphysical conceptualisations that form the core foundations for Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. Additionally the commentaries (bhāṣyas) of Śaṅkara are introduced as they provide a critical insight into how Sāṁkhyan logic was applied to BG texts to support the socio-political background of Brahmanism and kinship as defined by varṇa.

The texts examined in this thesis are depicted chronologically in Figure 1 and Figure 2. The Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas present the socio-political foundations. The darśana Sāṁkhya provides a fully conceptualised cosmogony upon which the varying metaphysical perceptions of Vedānta are founded. In turn, the differing Vedāntic interpretations provide the basis upon which Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Śāktism are established.

\(^{31}\) The Dharmaśāstras defines kinship relationships and the social mores of the Brahmanical order, a system referred to in this thesis as Brahmanism. These are presented as Divine authority by the Brahmanical order to explain the hierarchical social order of varṇa.
Figure 2: Chronology
2. THE SOCIO-POLITICAL

2.1. Vedic Authority & Brahmanism

When a wife unites with her husband according to the rule, she takes on the qualities [guṇas] he has, like a river uniting with the ocean (MDh 9.22).\(^{32}\)

Kinship is arguably the central theme that underlies any society. The social mores support kinship relationships defining how and when knowledge is to be passed from one generation to the next, whom can marry who, at what age and from where etc. Kinship also defines lines of inheritance, ensuring the wealth and power that is accumulated within the family stays within the family. Systems of law are developed to protect kinship relationships within any given culture.

Within the Hindu context, definitions of kinship can be found as early as ṚV 10.90.12, where the fourfold division of humanity is codified, presenting a social division that would become known as the system of varṇa (see Footnote 9). In the set of texts that followed the Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas, a clearly defined social hierarchy, extends the social stratification as prescribed in ṚV 10.90.12. The Brāhmaṇas not only classifies the fourfold social division of humanity, but extends the system of classification to many of the elements that early Hindus used in their interaction and interpretation of nature. The system of classification also provided the foundation for the system of knowledge that would form the basis of Hindu cosmogony, science, metaphysics and theology.

The ṚV and the Brāhmaṇas formed the basis of the social mores of the Hindu domiciled in India, a system that is now referred to as Brahmanism. The following table extracted from the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (ŚB) and the Pañcavimśa Brāhmaṇa (PB) highlights the early Hindu system of classification, and the system of social stratification that assigned various attributes according to the system of varṇa.

\(^{32}\)Olivelle, Manu's Code of Law, p. 191, 750.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Varṇa</th>
<th>Brahmin</th>
<th>Kṣatriya</th>
<th>Vaiśya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essential quality</td>
<td>brahmīn</td>
<td>kṣattra</td>
<td>viṣṭa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essential Power</td>
<td>splendor</td>
<td>greatness</td>
<td>fame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontological Entity</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>human</td>
<td>animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deity</td>
<td>Agni</td>
<td>Indra/Vāyu</td>
<td>Surya/Āditya/Viśva/Devas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmological world</td>
<td>earth</td>
<td>atmosphere</td>
<td>sky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural element</td>
<td>fire</td>
<td>wind</td>
<td>sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of day</td>
<td>morning</td>
<td>midday</td>
<td>afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body Function</td>
<td>speech</td>
<td>breath</td>
<td>sight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veda</td>
<td>RV</td>
<td>Yajur</td>
<td>Śāma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utterance</td>
<td>bhūḥ</td>
<td>bhuvah</td>
<td>savḥ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meter</td>
<td>gāyatrī</td>
<td>trīśṭubh</td>
<td>jagati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priest</td>
<td>hotr</td>
<td>adhvaryu</td>
<td>udgātr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacrificial fire (yajña)</td>
<td>gārhapatya</td>
<td>āgnidhrīya/ānvedāryapacana</td>
<td>ahavanīya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: A tripartite cosmogony as described in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.\(^{33}\)

The social mores prescribed by Brahmanism saw a system of law established in a set of texts that are collectively referred to as the Dharmaśāstras. Within the Dharmaśāstras, a criminal code is defined, as well as prescriptions for marriage, lines of inheritance, education etc. These laws were all based upon, and entrenched the social hierarchical system of varṇa.

While criminal codes favored the higher varṇa, a price was incurred for this privilege in the form of social constraints. The greatest social constraints were placed upon the brahmins where severe restrictions were placed upon permissible food types for consumption, social contact, commensality and marriage (see Inter-Varṇa (caste) Relationships 130). These constraints represent a view of the social mores of the Hindu which are echoed in many of the later texts including the major epics, the Mahābhārata the Rāmān̄yan̄a, and many of the Purāṇas.

The social constraints placed upon the brahmin varṇa protected the brahmin kinship lineage which protected lines of inheritance, one of the subjects covered by the Dharmaśāstras. With the social constraints extending to all of the varṇas, the foundations for the establishment of the concepts of karma, dharma and pollution principles were, arguably, established (see Principles of Purity and Pollution, page 127).

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\(^{33}\) Smith, Classifying the Universe, p. 67.
It is clear from the writings of the Vedas the Brāhmaṇas and the Dharmaśāstras that the brahmin varṇa, dominated society as indicated in MDh 1.100:

सवं स्वं ब्राह्मणस्येदं यत्रिचिज्जगतीम्।
श्रैष्ट्येनाभजनेनेदं सवं वै ब्राह्मणोऽहात॥१००॥

This whole world – whatever there is on earth – is the property of the Brahmin. Because of his eminence and high birth, The Brahmin has a clear right to this whole world (MDh 1.100).

Kinship relationships extrapolated from the ŚB and the PB as presented in Table 1 define a system of kinship that establishes the brahmin varṇa as closest to the Divine: A supposition that is supported when examining the BG (see 5.1.1 7, Tables 4, 5 and 6).

The ontological identities being ascribed to each individual varṇa in the ŚB and the PB would later be incorporated into the dārśana Sāṁkhyan some 500 to 1000 years later where fourteen realms of existence were defined, realms that resemble those presented in Table 1. The various realms of existence, are key elements in establishing a theoretical basis for the function of karma and the functioning of samsāra (the cycle of rebirth), a function that can be theorised through the Sāṁkhyan concept of the triguṇa (See Appendix 1, The Categorisation of Sentient Beings page 122). The concepts of karma and samsāra are two of the major principles that are integrally related to the Brahmanical concept of dharma (duty).

In examining the social mores as described in the Dharmaśāstras, three major categories can be identified as they relate to dharma. Firstly, the system of varṇāśramadharma presents a system of classification that defines dharma and its relationship to each individual varṇa. Secondly, the concept of caturvarṇāśrama defines an individual’s dharma as applied to each of the four stages of life for each varṇa. Again, like varṇāśramadharma, caturvarṇāśrama is dependent on an individual’s varṇa. Finally, there is the system of puruṣārtha, a system that describes the four aims in life.

34 Olivelle, Manu’s Code of Law, pp. 91-92.
35 While the earliest text to discuss the doctrine of karma is the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad, Herman. W. Tull, The Vedic Origins of Karma: Cosmos as Man in Ancient India Myth and Ritual (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 28. karmic law becomes the central theme that governs the Brahmanical concept of varṇa.
Cumulatively, varṇāśramadharma, caturvarṇāśrama and puruṣārtha present the moral law that when followed, bound and protected society. The consequences of these laws being broken were catastrophic; not only for the individual but for his entire kin, both past and present. It was deemed that when broken, society itself was undermined as will be shown in Section 5.1.1.

2.2. Varṇāśramadharma, Caturvarṇāśrama, and Puruṣārtha

2.2.1. Varṇāśramadharma

वाणिज्यं कार्येद्वैश्यं कुसीदं कृषिेव ।
पशूनां रक्षणं चैव दास्यं शूद्रं द्विजनमनाम् ॥४१०॥

The king should make Vaiṣyas pursue trade, moneylending, agriculture and cattle heading and make Śūdras engage in the service of the twice born (MDh 8.410).

क्षत्रियं चैव वैश्यं च ब्राह्मणों वृत्तिकार्योऽधि ।
विभूयानुशसन स्वति कर्मचणि कार्येत् ॥४११॥

A Brahmin should support a Kṣatriya or a Vaiśya who are starved for a livelihood out of compassion and employ them in activities proper to them (MDh 8.411).

शुद्रं तु कार्येद्वयं क्रह्ळतिक्रह्ळतिेव ।
दास्यायैव हि सृष्टिर्भ्राह्मणश्वर्यं स्वयंभुवा॥४१३॥

He [the brahmin] may, however, make a Śūdra, whether he is bought or not, do slave labour; for the Śūdra was created by Self-existent. One solely to do slave labour for the Brahmin (MDh 8.413).

The concept of varṇāśramadharma is arguably the most defining feature of Hindu society on the Indian sub-continent. Every aspect of life, from birth through to death is encompassed. For example, rights of passage are described in MDh 2.36-64, daily rituals in MDh 2.10-1-104, and an individual’s occupation and its dependency on varṇa, in MDh 4.2-12, 410-420; 10.46, 74-129. Varna plays a key role in all aspects of life, dictating a family’s

36 Olivelle, Manu’s Code of Law, p. 189.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
place of residence (MDh 10.50), rules of commensality (MDh 3.94-121,176-182, 224-246; 4.43; 9.238) and types of marriage (MDh 3.20-35, 43). All aspects of life are all defined in the legal texts, the Dharmaśāstras.

The Dharmaśāstras key role is arguably to define and maintain the system of kinship as MDh 3.43 indicates:

पाठिग्रंथसारस्कारः सर्वमूपदिश्यति।
असर्वांस्वयं ज्ञेयो विभिन्नद्राढ्राःकृत्यं।॥ ४३ ॥

The consecratory rite of taking the hand in marriage is prescribed only for brides of equal class (MDh 3.43).  

Collectively, these aspects of varṇa are the defining attributes of dharma, establishing the social mores of Hindu society.

Varṇa in general terms is not a flexible construct; an individual is born into one’s varṇa and cannot move from it except through marriage or rebirth. Examining kinship as codified in the MDh and the Ārthaśāstra (ĀT) help highlight the central role the concept of varṇa and dharma had in defining the socio-political foundations of Hinduism.

There are two main aspects of varṇāśramadharma that need to be discussed, for they present key elements that re-emerge when discussing Hindu theology, specifically Śaivism. These systems are caturvarṇāśrama and puruṣārtha.

39 Ibid., p.110.
40 A process known as sanskritization defines a process that allows a caste of lower ranking to seek upward mobility by emulating the rituals and practices of a higher caste. Downward mobility is also possible as is indicated in the Dharmaśāstras through committing certain offences.
2.2.2. *Caturvarṇāśrama*

To be motivated by desire is not commended, but it is impossible here to be free from desire; for it is desire that prompts Vedic study and the performance of Vedic rites (MDh 2.2).\(^{41}\)

The concept of *caturvarṇāśrama* divides an individual’s lifespan into four clearly defined stages (*aśramas*).\(^{42}\) For each quarter of an individual’s life, their *dharma* is clearly defined. Again like varṇāśramadharma, *caturvarṇāśrama* is dependent on an individual varṇa.

**The Brahmacarya**

The first *aśrama* sees the male as a student (*brahmacarya*), who is one of the twice born, *brahmin*, *kṣatriya* or *vaiśya*, commence studies of the *Vedas*. *Śūdra*s were forbidden to read the sacred texts (MDh 87-91). Further more, the twice born should learn mastery of the Self with the assistance of a selected teacher (*guru*). Mastery of the Self is a key aspect towards an individual’s attainment of *mokṣa* (liberation from the cycle of rebirth), and is central to the cosmogony of *Śāṁkhya*, the metaphysics of *Vedānta* and the theologies of *Vaiṣṇavism*, *Śaivism* and *Śāktism*. It is during an individual’s time as a *brahmacarya* that this key psychological aspect was taught, but what constituted the Hindu notion of Self?

The control of Self embraces a number of characteristics that extend beyond the concept of mind directly, characteristics that will be examined in detail when looking at *Śāṁkhya*. All aspects of Self are incorporated, inclusive of the organs of the body: “ear[s], skin, eye[s], tongue, nostrils, anus, sexual organ, hands, feet, and speech” (MDh 2.88-92). In addition to the control of Self, control of the organs also fosters an adherence to *dharma*, for mastery of the organs presents the means to the mastery over desire (*kāma*) (MDh 2.2-5).

*Kāma* is a function of the organs of the body. These organs are categorised into groups, being organs of perception and organs of action. *Kāma* takes on many forms,

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\(^{41}\) Olivelle, *Manu’s Code of Law*, p. 94.

\(^{42}\) *Caturvarṇāśrama* describes a development theory not dissimilar to Western psychological concepts and the development theory described by Western psychologists; for example Erickson’s, ‘Life Cycle’ theory Erik. H. Erikson, *Identity and the Life Cycle* (New York: Norton, 1980)
desire of employment, family, wealth, etc. Control of the organs of Self presents an underlying purpose, mastery over kāma. The linkage to dharma can be linked directly to maintaining kinship lineages as can be witnessed when examining aspects of kāma in the MDh, for kāma is inclusive of sensual desire.

MDh 2.90 specifies control over the “sexual organ”, naturally a key aspect of kinship. For the brahmacarya this is taught by undertaking a vow of chastity (MDh 2.181, 3.2). A student must not break his vow of chastity, the punishment of which carried the severest of consequences as the ĀT below indicates:

For one carnally approaching the sister of his mother or father, his maternal aunt, his preceptor’s wife, his daughter in law, daughter or sister (the punishment shall be) the cutting off of the generative organ and testicles and death (thereafter) (ĀT 4.13.30). The woman if willing shall receive the same, also a woman having relations with a slave, servant or pledged man (ĀT 4.13.31). 44

The above text is indicative of the laws of kinship as defined in the Dharmaśāstras. Observance to the rules of kinship and the maintenance of lines of inheritance is arguably, the key principle that lies behind the Dharmaśāstras.

The Gṛhastya

At the conclusion of a brahmacarya’s study, the length of time taken being dependent on varṇa (MDh 3.1), the brahmacarya takes up the role of either a householder (gṛhastya) or an ascetic (saṁnyāsi). 45 As the brahmacarya enters the second āśrama, unless the brahmacarya undertakes the path of the saṁnyāsi (MDh 2.166), 46 the male is expected to meet his obligation of a gṛhastya, marrying, gaining employment appropriate to his varṇa, the production of a male heir, and honouring ones ancestors (MDh 3.1 – 4.255).

45 Differing lengths of time are prescribed by differing Dharmaśāstras for the age and period time a person remains a brahmacarya. Differing lengths of time are prescribed for each of the three higher varṇas with the brahmin receiving the longest period of education. The differential in time that is dependent on varṇa highlights the power-knowledge relationships that exist within the system of varṇa.
46 Olivelle, Manu’s Code of Law, p. 103.
Initially, marriages were only permitted between men and women of the same varṇa. However, an examination of the ĀT indicates by Kauṭilīya’s time (see Figure 2), this rule had been disregarded. An expanded hierarchical structure to the system of varṇa can be witnessed in the ĀT as indicated in Table 2 below and the MDh (MDh 10.24-45). ⁴⁷

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Varṇa of Husband</th>
<th>Wife</th>
<th>Anuloma marriages –husband of superior varṇa</th>
<th>Pratiṣṭoma marriages- wife of superior varṇa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Kṣatriya</td>
<td>Vaiśya</td>
<td>Śūdra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>suta</td>
<td>kṣatriya</td>
<td>ugra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kṣatriya</td>
<td>vaidehaka</td>
<td>magadha</td>
<td>śūdra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaiśya</td>
<td>chaṇḍāla</td>
<td>kṣattr</td>
<td>ayogava</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śūdra</td>
<td>chaṇḍāla</td>
<td>kṣattr</td>
<td>ayogava</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Marriage by varṇa (ĀT 3.7.20-23,25-28,30). ⁴⁸

Many references within the Dharmaśāstras indicate the social requirement for the production of children, specifically a male offspring. The ĀT states that a woman cannot conceal a fertile period (ĀT 3.2.44), and a husband is considered “reprehensible” if he does not have sex with his wife at the right time (MDh 9.4) which is during her fertile period (MDh 3.46). A sexual defect must not be hidden from the potential spouse (ĀT: 3.15.14-15). “He should have sex with her once every time she is in season until she bears a child”. (MDh 9.69). If a wife cannot produce a male heir with her husband then by obeying certain rituals she may have sex with her brother in-law to secure a child (MDh: 9.59-61). Such was the importance placed upon a couple to give birth to a son.

A son fulfils two principle roles which represent components of the son’s dharma. Firstly, he continues the family lineage and lines of inheritance. Secondly, he must preside over his fathers funerary rites (see The Funerary Rites, page 124 and Figure 5, page 28). Through the funerary rites the paternal parent, even through his lifelong devotion to dharma, is now dependent on his son to fulfil his ascribed dharma so that the father can finally realise mokṣa. The obligation to dharma is lifelong, from birth to after death.

⁴⁷ Within the Ārthaśāstra there are further sub classifications (ĀT 3.7.31-34). The linkage to the system of jāti is also visible within the Ārthaśāstra for the sub classifications of varṇa are also effected by employment (3.7.29,35).

This introduces one of the apparent paradoxes in Hindu thought and highlights the function of *karma* and *saṃsāra*: for in order to obtain *mokṣa*, a male offspring must be born in order for the paternal parent to attain *mokṣa* thus perpetuating rebirth for another sentient being.

**The Vānaprasthya**

Once a couple’s children mature, the parents enter the third āśrama, that of *vānaprasthya*. The parents commence their withdrawal from family life handing over their household duties to their children. They remove themselves from the family home, taking up residence on the outskirts of the village. Removed from family affairs, the couple or individual, now prepare for death by reading of sacred texts and engaging in yogic practices to master the Self (MDh 6.1).

**The Saṁnyāsi**

Finally, entering the fourth and final āśrama, an individual who has realised the ‘True’ nature of Self and mastered *kāma*, may discard all possessions. Being free of all attachment may take up the life of a wandering saṁnyāsi (MDh 6.1). This āśrama was not taken up by all and presents an extreme existence.

The path of the saṁnyāsi also provides an alternative life to *brahmacarya* once his period of study is complete. He may deny himself the physical comfort and pleasure of the *grha*stya, including his sexual gratification, and take up the path of a saṁnyāsi immediately upon ceasing being a *brahmacarya*. This is the saṁnyāsi’s path to *mokṣa*. 
2.2.3. Puruṣārtha (caturvarga)

He should enjoy sensual pleasures without contravening his spiritual good and material well being; he should not deprive himself of pleasures. Or [he should devote himself] equally to the three goals of life which are bound up with one another. For any of the [three that is], spiritual good, material well being, [and] sensual pleasures, [if] excessively indulged in, does harm to itself as well as to the other two. “Material well being alone, artha, is supreme”, say Kautilya. For spiritual good, dharma, and sensual pleasures, kāma, are rooted in material well being (ĀT 1.7.3-7).49

Each of the four successive āśramas of caturvarṇāśrama, consist of another tetrad, collectively known as puruṣārtha. The puruṣārtha, or four aims of life, describe the goals that an individual should strive to achieve. The puruṣārtha, like the caturvarṇāśrama, is dependent on varṇa. First and foremost is the pursuit of dharma appropriate for an individual’s varṇa. The second aim (varga), is the striving for and the accumulation of material wealth (artha). However this aspect of puruṣārtha was not deemed appropriate for śūdras. The MDh (10.129) states that śudras who accumulation of wealth were deemed “to harass brahmins”. The third varga is kāma, ascribing that an individual must engage in the enjoyment of life in the pursuit of the fourth and ultimate goal, mokṣa.

The pursuit of kāma appears, at least superficially, to be diametrically opposed to the fundamental aim as prescribed in the Dharmaśāstras where it states that kāma is a human attribute that needs to be negated in the quest for mokṣa.50 However kāma is a recognised prerequisite for the four āśramas. For the brahmacarya, desire for learning is the primary requirement. For the gṛhastya, desire is required for family, while the vānaprasthya and the

49Kangle, The Kautiliya Arthaśāstra, p. 15.
50This is a fundamental Hindu aim and is a central theme in many of the texts, Dharmaśāstras, Upaniṣads, BG etc. It presents as a fundamental principle in Buddhism, the foundation of the four noble truths, the cause of all suffering, dhukka.
saṁnyāsi desire for mokṣa. The defining aspect of kāma is that kāma, needs to be appropriate for the relevant āśrama.

The Brahmanical concept of varṇāśramadharma, caturvarṇāśrama, and puruṣārtha as introduced above provided the codified social structure to which Hindus of the early historical period lived. Each of the varṇas has their duties defined and enforced in the texts of the Dharmaśāstras. Central to the Dharmaśāstras is the set of texts, the Vedas. All subsequent texts written after the Vedas needed to claim Vedic authority to be an accepted Hindu text. As will be argued in this thesis one potential way to claim Vedic authority was to engage in the symbolism of the Vedic yajña.

The Dharmaśāstras ascribe the learning of the Vedas for the brahmin, kṣatriya and vaiśya (MDh 1.8). Additionally the Dharmaśāstras prescribe the acceptance of the system of varṇa as it stems from the Vedas, for all four varṇas (MDh 1.31). In this sense the Dharmaśāstras may claim authority. The Dharmaśāstras clearly define the position of the brahmin in society.

The Vedas being of Divine origins, being revealed texts (śruti) establish the brahmin varṇa to the highest position in Hindu society. The brahmin varṇa, in Brahmanical cosmogony, assigned the brahmin as an intermediary between humanity and the Divine. This is the dharma of the brahmin as stated in the Dharmaśāstras.

The primary tool of the Brahmin so as to act as an intermediary to the Divine is the Vedic yajña. The following section investigates the dharma of the brahmin to present the Vedic yajña in context. This is undertaken as it is the symbols of the Vedic yajña that will be engaged throughout the rest of this thesis.
2.3.  *Dharma of the Brahmin*

Karmaṇāṃ ca devānaṃ sāmājātā prāṇiṇāṃ prabhū 
Sādhyānāṃ ca gyan śūndyam yajña sāvatam || 22 ||

The Lord brought forth the group of gods who are endowed with breath and whose nature is to act, the subtle group of Sādhyas, and the eternal sacrifice (MDh 1.22).

Dividing his body into two, be became a man with one half and a woman with the other. By the woman the Lord [Puruṣa] brought forth Virāj. (MDh 1.32).

By heating him with ascetic toil, the man Virāj, brought forth a being of himself – known, you best of the twice born, that I am the being, the creator of this whole world. (MDh 1.33).51

Two different accounts of creation stemming from the *Vedas* are recounted in the first chapter of the MDh, presenting the symbols of the Vedic *yajña* and the divisible nature of *puruṣa* establishing the manifest and un-manifest universe.

In MDh 1.22 above, the gods (*devās*) and the “eternal sacrifice” are manifested from which the world is created. In MDh 1.32-33, the divisible nature of *puruṣa* is engaged from which primordial man, Virāj. It is from the toil and heat, earth and fire, the manifest world is created. This is the knowledge that the *brahmin* must know.

In MDh 1.22 and MDh 1.32-33 the essence of the function of the Vedic *yajña* is introduced. It is from the Vedic *yajña*, consisting of the elements earth and fire (and water), the universe is maintained. The rewards the *brahmin* received from this privileged position in society was the payment for his tendering of the *yajña*. It is the *dharma* of the *brahmin* to preserve the *Vedas* through recitation.52 Through the preservation of the *Vedas*, the manifest universe is maintained (see Figure 4, page 28). As the *Dharmaśāstras* state:

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52 The *Vedas* were originally an oral tradition.
Brahmins, he [the creator] assigned reciting the Veda, offering and officiating at sacrifices, and receiving and giving of gifts (MDh 1.88).\textsuperscript{53}

Rta was seen as the principle of the cosmic order; rta was the power of the natural order; controlling the movement of the sun, moon, the stars, the rhythm of the sea, the flow of the rivers, and the cycle of night and day. Rta was also seen as the governing principle of the human order, specifically the moral order. Rta found its expression in the sacrificial order, through which rta was maintained.\textsuperscript{54}

Vedic sages, the brahmins, maintained rta for the community through the sacrifice. The Vedic yajña maintained the order of the manifest universe through the employment of the three primary elements; water, fire and food (earth).\textsuperscript{55}

In the RV, dharma is explicitly linked with rta (5.12.2, 5.51.2, 5.63.1, 9.7.1, 9.110.4).\textsuperscript{56} With dharma being intrinsically linked to rta the brahmins, through the symbols of the Vedic yajña, could claim Divine authority. It was only the brahmin who could communicate directly with rta by the employment of the elements, water fire and earth (food). It is these three elements and their associated symbolic references that present the focus of this thesis.

The Vedic yajña can be witnessed all over India today. In villages and towns and cities brahmins can be witnessed officiating over the Vedic yajña for purposes such as, fertility rituals, weddings and funerary rites (see Figures 3, 4 and 5, page 28).

The following sections describe how from the Vedic yajña, the concept of the triguna of the Sāṁkhya darśana was formulated. The next section looks at the darśana Sāṁkhya and the concept of the triguna and its influence on the Hindu concept of Self, and conceptualisation of the universe, before examining the historical evolution of the symbols of the yajña and the concept of the triguna and its relationship to the system of varṇa.

\textsuperscript{53} Olivelle, \textit{Manu's Code of Law}, p. 91.
\textsuperscript{56} Holdrege, "Dharma," p. 216.
The vivah homa ceremony is the Vedic wedding yajña ceremony. Firstly, the priest lights the yajña in the altar. A single stone faces to the west while an urn filled with water faces the northeast. Four blades of kuśa grass are spread to the north of the yajña. On the four blades of kuśa grass two small metal bowls containing ghee is kept. One of these urns is to be filled with water while the other contains gee already melted in the fire. The groom then sprinkles water over the ghee and around the fire. This is a purifying gesture. Offerings are then made by the groom to various deities. Note the use of water fire and food in the vivah homa.

No more a dramatic representation of the relationship between the Vedic yajña and the triguṇa than cremations on the banks of the river Ganga at Varanasi, India. Like the Vedic ritual, the body representative of the guṇa tamas (food, black) is burnt, purified by fire (rajas), leaving behind only the gross elements, where the ashes (black, tamas) are swept into India’s most sacred river (water, white, sattva) the Ganga, the locks of hair of Śiva.
3. THE PHYSICAL

3.1. Cosmogenisis: The Vedas and Sāṁkhya

As argued it is the system of varṇa that provides the socio-political background for Hindu culture defining kinship and the associated social mores. The origin of the system of varṇa highlights how the system of varṇa was used, particularly for the categorisation of various properties of the manifest universe (see Table 1, page 16). It has been shown that an association exists between the symbols associated with the system of varṇa and the Vedic yajña. Before examining how the symbols associated with Vedic yajña led to the development of the system of knowledge espoused in the darśana Sāṁkhya: Specifically in relation to the Sāṁkhyan principle of the triguṇa, the philosophy of Sāṁkhya is introduced. In doing so the concept of the triguṇa is contextualised, as many of the terms that are used subsequently within this thesis are employed within this framework.

Sāṁkhya defines the physical environment, the manifest universe, as well as presenting a basis for the Hindu way of seeing or darśana. In a western context Sāṁkhya defines classical Hindu psychology, a perception of Self that is still present today in contemporary Hindu thought. Hindu psychology has profoundly influenced the formulation of metaphysical and theological speculation arguably due to the concept of Self that is represented in the darśana, Sāṁkhya. Central to the system of Sāṁkhya is the concept of the triguṇa, a pivotal mechanism that dictates the attributes of both the physical and psychological, as well as the metaphysical and theological attributes of the Hindu system of knowledge. In essence, the Vedic yajña and the system of varṇa present the fundamental elements that helped formulate the concept of the triguṇa. In turn, attributes of the triguṇa are used to validate the system of varṇa, reaffirming the Brahmansical tradition.

59 Observations deduced from personal observations resultant from conversations with informants of Hindu origins both domiciled in India and Australia.
3.2. Introduction to Sāṁkhya

As introduced in the section on chronology, the term *puruṣa* originates in the oldest of the Hindu texts, the RV. The concept of *puruṣa* introduces a theme that cumulates in the SK by Īśvarakṛṣṇa, arguably the definitive work of Sāṁkhya. It is in the RV 10:90:3 that cosmogonic properties are assigned to the *puruṣa*:

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एवंतवास्य महिमातो ज्वाराः च पूर्वः ।
Pāṇḍोज्ज्व्य स्वयं भूतानि त्रिपार्द्यामूर्ति द्रविः॥ ३॥
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Such is his greatness; and Puruṣa is greater even than this; all beings are one forth of him; his other three fourths, (being) immortal, (abide) in heaven (RV: 10.90.3).\(^6^0\)

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त्रिपार्द्यं उदेतुकुमः, पादेस्तस्येहामहकुमः।
ततो वेदवध्व्यक्षामत्साशनानशे आभि॥ ४॥
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Three-fourths of Puruṣa ascended; the other fourth that remained in this world proceeds repeatedly, and diversified in various forms, went to all animate and inanimate creation (RV 10.90.4).\(^6^1\)

Colebrook’s translation of the term *puruṣa* as “embodied spirit”\(^6^2\) concurs with the translation of Sāyaṇa and Mahīdharā, identifying *puruṣa* with Virāj, the aggregate of all living beings. Virāj presents as the spirit embodied in the egg of Brahmā, i.e. “the universal spirit animating all creation”.\(^6^3\) Colebrook’s translation is representative of the term *puruṣa* as applied in the darśana, Sāṁkhya. In Sāṁkhyan terms, *puruṣa* presents as the basis for all living organisms ascribing ALL as sentient beings, spanning from the realms of the gods, humanity down to “a blade of grass” (SK 54, page 122).

The *puruṣa* as presented in the RV and the SK (SK3, page 34) presents a second definition that is also akin to Sāṁkhyan speculation. The divisible nature of *puruṣa* of the


\(^{61}\) Ibid.

\(^{62}\) Ibid., p. 422.

\(^{63}\) Ibid.
RV: 10.90.3-4, presents the individuated *purusa* of the SK as independent animators. The *purusa* of the RV also hints at the nature of *moksha*, a reunification of the individuated *purusa* with the un-manifested *purusa*.

Of importance to note at this juncture, the Sāṁkhyan conceptualisation of *purusa*, while ascribing the animating force of all sentient beings, is not a godhead. In this sense Sāṁkhya is essentially atheistic in nature.\(^64\)

In the philosophy of Sāṁkhya, *purusa* alone is pure consciousness, inactive, yet all pervading. In the Vedic notion, *purusa* constitutes both the material and spiritual aspects of existence. *Purusa* in Sāṁkhya does not hold any material attributes. In Sāṁkhya, what manifests *purusa* is its interaction with *mūlaprakṛti* or un-manifested materiality.

Resultant from the interaction of *purusa* and *mūlaprakṛti*, twenty three byproducts are produced which can be categorised into two principle divisions. These divisions consist of; the ‘subtle body’ (*lingaśarīa*), which in itself is constituted from eighteen individual non-reducible elements, and the ‘gross body’ (*sthūlaśariya*), the one time aggregate of the gross elements (*mahābhūta*), the five fundamental material elements. The properties of the *lingaśarīa* and the *sthūlaśariya* are both dependent on the proportional representation of the *triguna*. Figure 6 on page 37 graphically depicts the interrelationships of the twenty-five *tattvas* described by Sāṁkhya that are now described.\(^65\)

The broad view from a Sāṁkhyan perspective is that the manifest universe evolves from an un-manifested realm of *mūlaprakṛti*. Due to *mūlaprakṛti’s* interaction

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\(^64\) There are some variations where *purusa* is attributed aspects of the Divine, but in general Sāṁkhya is atheistic in nature.

\(^65\) The concept of the *triguna* possesses many dimensions as will be discussed and elaborated upon throughout this thesis. However in introducing the philosophical concept of the *triguna*, it consists of three constituent components. In generalising the subjective attributes of these are *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (energy), and *tamas* (lethargy, inertia) while the objective attributes of the *triguna* present the theory of the manifest universe. The interpretation of the *triguna* has wide-ranging implications when looking at aspects of the Hindu world. *Triguna* theory is engaged in to validate the conceptualisation of *varṇa*, the fourfold hierarchical stratification of Hindu society. Attributes of deities are determined by principles reflective of the *triguna* which is also associated with the principle of transmigration. Again the concept of the *triguna* can be engaged in the theorisation of transmigration. Closely related to the principle of transmigration within orthodox interpretations of Hinduism, is the concept of purity and pollution.
with puruṣa, mūlaprakṛti becomes manifest as prakṛti. Prakṛti evolves in stages with the grosser elements being formed from the lighter elements. In turn lighter elements are formed from the more subtle homogenous substances that occur overtime in a linear progression. The doctrine of Śaṅkhya postulates; that the process of creation sees the evolution of mind and matter evolving concurrently from the original flow of energy. This flow of energy was generated from the initial interaction of puruṣa, pure consciousness, and mūlaprakṛti, or un-manifested materiality.  

The constituent components that compose this flow of energy are that of the trīguna.

Śaṅkhyan philosophy states that while mūlaprakṛti is in perfect balance, the universe remains un-manifested. Change only happens when the singular mūlaprakṛti comes under the influence of the pluralistic and inactive puruṣa, or pure consciousness. While mūlaprakṛti is in perfect balance, mūlaprakṛti’s three indeterminate continua, the trīguna (three qualities); sattva, rajas and tamas, exist in perfect equilibrium. The attributes associated with the guṇa, sattva, forms the basis for the manifestation of consciousness. Rajas is associated with energy, while the third guṇa, tamas maintains associations with inertia. The resulting disequilibrium ensuing from the interaction between the (1) puruṣa and (2) prakṛti results in one or more guṇas becoming predominant. This imbalance becomes manifest in the form of a material transformation. The resulting diversity of the manifest universe is in a perpetual state of change, yet their totality never changes for it can neither be created nor destroyed.

अध्यवसायो बुद्धिः मात्रे बिराग ऐश्वयास्तः ।
सात्त्विकमेतेऽयूर तामसमस्मादित्यस्तः ॥ २३ ॥

Intellect is determinative. Virtue, knowledge, non-attachment and lordly powers constitute its Sāttvika form i. e. its form when Sattva, goodness, predominates. The Tāmasa form i. e. the form when Tamas dominates is just the reverse (SK 23).

67 Ibid., p.97.
It is the changing proportional representation of the guṇas that forms the fluid psychological attributes of an individual and differentiates the categories of sentient beings (see Table 7, page 123). Note that the categorisation of sentient beings includes the celestial realm giving deities, physical as well as metaphysical attributes. The inclusion of deities within the manifest universe is of importance when the metaphysics of Vedānta is introduced in section 4.2.

The subsequent material transformation of the interaction of (1) puruṣa and (2) prakṛti is responsible for the production of the subsequent twenty-three byproducts or tattvas. The first three elements of the subtle body (lingaśarīa), the ‘internal organs’ (antaḥkaraṇa), consist of the (3) Intellect (buddhi), (4) Egoity (ahaṁkāra) and (5) Mind (manas). These are interlinked and distinguished as mahat (the great principle), the nature of which is dependent on the balance of the guṇas.

A key feature of the antaḥkaraṇa as opposed to the external organs (bāhyakaraṇa), is the nature of time in which the antaḥkaraṇa and the bāhyakaraṇa function:

अन्तःकरण त्रितियं दशाधि वाह्यं त्रयस्य विषयाभ्यम् ।
साम्भवतां वाह्यं तिर्थाभ्यमस्य शास्त्यम् ॥ ३३ ॥

The internal organs are of three kinds. The external organs, which make objects know to these three are tenfold. The external organ functions in the present; an internal organ functions in respect of all the three times (SK 33).  

Stanza 33 of the SK above indicates the aspects of time in which the bāhyakaraṇa operates with the antaḥkaraṇa, having an awareness of the past, the present, and the future. The ahaṁkāra, for example, can perceive a sound generated in the past, present or the future. In contrast, the tenfold bāhyakaraṇa can only perceive and operate in the present, in that a sound can only be heard in the present.

The interaction of the puruṣa and prakṛti gives rise to the initial antaḥkaraṇa which possesses the initial attributes from the triguna. The attributes or dispositions assigned to the

71 Ibid.
antahkaraṇa are discerning (adhyavasāya), ‘self-awareness’ (abhimāna) and intentionality (saṃkalpaka) respectively.  

As indicated in SK 33, the nature of the antahkaraṇa is subject to change over time due to the fluctuating nature of the triguṇa. The changing nature of the guṇas is resultant from the interaction of the antahkaraṇa and the five subtle elements (tanmātra).

Through the initial influence of the guṇas on the buddhi, the attributes of ahamkāra and the manas are dictated. The buddhi and ahamkāra hold a common property of being both the product and productive; that is they dictate perception, and are altered by what is perceived. From the initial influence of the guṇas on the antahkaraṇa input is gained through the tanmātra:

मूलर्कृतिरविकृतिमहाद्वा: प्रकृतिविकृतय: सम ।
पोडशकतु त्रिकारो न प्रकृतिर्विकृतिपुरुषः: ३ ॥

The original Prakṛti, the root of all is not product; the seven principles beginning with Mahat, the Great One, the intellect, are both productions and productive; the sixteen (the five organs of sense, the five organs of action, the five gross elements and the mind) are only products and not productive. The Puruṣa, the spirit, is neither a product nor productive (SK 3).

The tanmātra consist of the following:

(16) Sound (śabda)
(17) Contact (sparśa)
(18) Form (rūpa)
(19) Taste (rasa)
(20) Smell (gandha)

The tanmātra effects and is effected by the antahkaraṇa. The tanmātra acts only in the present (as do the five organs of cognition (buddhindriya), the five organs of action (karmendriya), and the mahābhūta. The buddhindriya and the karmendriya perceive and act under the changing perceptions of the antahkaraṇa.

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72 Larson and Bhattacharya, Sāṃkhya, p. 52.
73 Mainkar, Sāṃkhyaṅkārīkā of Ḫisavarakṛṣṇa, pp. 44-47.
74 The numbers accompanying the listed tattvas, relate to their relative cosmological position as depicted in Figure 6, page 37.
The *buddhindriya* consist of:

(6) Hearing (*śrotra*)
(7) Touching (*tvac*)
(8) Seeing (*caksus*)
(9) Tasting (*rasana*)
(10) Smelling (*ghrāṇa*)

The relative counterparts of the five constituent components of the *buddhindriya*, *karmendriya* are presented as:

(11) Speaking (*vāc*)
(12) Grasping/comprehending (*pāṇi*)
(13) Walking/motion (*pāda*)
(14) Excreting (*pāyu*)
(15) Procreating (*upasthā*)

The *antaḥkaraṇa, bāhyakaraṇa* and *tanmātra*, complete the elements of the *lingāśarīa*, the subjective division.

The second or objective division is comprised of the gross elements (*mahābhūta*). In contrast to the subjective *lingāśarīa*, the *mahābhūta* can be categorised as objective. Like the *bāhyakaraṇa* the *karmendriya* are products only (SK 3).

Furthermore, it will be argued that there is a direct correlation between the attributes of the *guṇas*, the symbolic attributes of the *guṇas* origins and the *mahābhūta* which are comprised of the following:

(21) Either (*ākāśa*)
(22) Wind (*vāyu*)
(23) Fire (*tejas*)
(24) Water (*ap*)
(25) Earth (*prthivī*)

As described by Gauḍapāda in his *Bhāṣya* (commentaries), in SK 22, the *mahābhūta* is the product of the *tanmātra*. The *mahābhūta* is the last form created through the interaction of the *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*.

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75 As is argued in later appendix 1, the *mahābhūta* has a direct bearing on what is deemed to be polluting of purifying.
76 Larson and Bhattacharya, *Sāṃkhya*, p. 49.
From Prakṛti, the Primal Nature, issues Mahut, the Great One, intellect, thence Aharināra, individuation and from this the aggregate of sixteen: from five among the sixteen proceed five gross elements (SK 22).

To graphically represent the relationships of the twenty-five elements, the twenty-five elements are listed below in Figure 6. The nature of the mahābhūta consists of either, wind, water, fire and earth; all contributing factors of the Vedic ritual. Three of the attributes of the mahābhūta are the elements of the triguṇa indicating the triguṇa’s material, physical nature.

The mahābhūta represent all matter from which the universe is constructed; either (ākāśa), air (vāyu), fire (tejas), water (ap) and earth (prthivī). The mahābhūta is the product of the tanmātra. It is from the tanmātra of smell that earth is created: From taste comes water: From touch comes wind: From sound comes either: From form comes fire.

This is how the mahābhūta is created, “these are the specific objects apprehended by man [sic]”. Through the senses of the lingaśarīa, the subjective properties of the triguṇa are reflected in the objective properties of the mahābhūta, reflecting the state of the antahkarana.

The objective properties of the mahābhūta are the pure physicality of the element that is beyond description, as language implies a subjective interpretation. That said, vāc (sound, language, speech) is a key aspect of Hindu thought, a subject that is not engaged in this thesis due to its complex nature.

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78 Ibid., p. 106.
79 Larson and Bhattacharya, Sāṃkhya, p. 49.
80 Mainkar, Sāṃkhya-kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, p. 105.
81 Mainkar, Sāṃkhya-kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, p. 142.
82 The objective properties of the mahābhūta are the pure physicality of the element that is beyond description, as language implies a subjective interpretation. That said, vāc (sound, language, speech) is a key aspect of Hindu thought, a subject that is not engaged in this thesis due to its complex nature.
Three elements of the mahābhūta; water, fire and earth, are continuously referred to in the Brāhmaṇas, being the three elements of Vedic yajña. From the objective properties of water, fire and earth (food) arguably formed the basis of the conceptualisation of the triguṇa. The relationship of the twenty-five tattvas can be seen graphically represented in Figure 6 below.

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Figure 6: The twenty five (25) tattvas.

Legend
- Un-generated/Productive
- Product/Productive
- Products
- Internal organs
- External organs
- Subtle body (lingaśāra)
- Gross elements

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83 See Appendix I: Karma & the Transactional Nature of the Triguṇa, page 119.
3.3. **The Psychology of Sāṁkhya**

Truth alone is eternal, everything else is momentary. It is more correct to say that Truth is God, than to say that God is Truth. ... All life comes from the one universal source call it Allah, God or Parmeshwara (a letter to M. K. Gandhi: 1869-1948).

The cosmogony of Sāṁkhya establishes a clear definition to the Hindu conceptualisation of Self during that period. Key is the precept that all human cognition is subjective. The subjective view of the manifest and un-manifest universe is due to the nature of the *ahaṁkāra*. This section looks at the psychology described by Sāṁkhya as it establishes a key element into the free debate over the nature of the Divine.

It is common in India to hear that “all perceptions of God are valid”. The Hindu perception of the Divine was poignantly echoed by Gandhi in his quote “It is more correct to say that Truth is God, than to say that God is Truth”. From a Hindu perspective every individual’s conceptualisation of the Divine is unique. Each individual’s perception of the Divine represents only one aspect of the Divine. The Divine from a Hindu perspective, in all totality however, is beyond human comprehension.

The *darśana* Sāṁkhya, provides a method to gain an insight into the psychological perspective presented in the Hindu worldview. Sāṁkhya provides an insight into the Hindu conceptualisation of a subjective God. In examining the notions of subjectivity the constraints that bind an individual to the cycle of *saṁsāra* is uncovered, as is the means for the obtainment of *mokṣa*.

When referring to the concept of Self, various definitions emerge when comparing Western and Eastern interpretations of what constitutes the concept of Self. From a Western perspective, arguably the Cartesian (mind/body) duality as defined by Descartes predominates. From an Eastern perspective of Sāṁkhya; mind (*manas*) is considered part of the physical body, with both mind and body being manifestations of the physical, *prakṛti*.

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84 Stemming from three independent trips to India between 2002 and 2006, numerous unsolicited conversations with informants regarding the nature of the Divine from a Hindu perspective indicated that the notion the nature of the Divine form is acknowledged as an individual ‘subjective’ view. Yet while each view differs, each view is considered valid. Each individual’s conceptualisation of the Divine is considered a reflection of a single attribute of the Divine who consists of an infinite number of attributes. Even attributes that appear to be in conflict can be reconciled through the omnipresent nature of the Divine. This aspect of Hindu thought is expanded upon throughout this thesis.
Among these, the mind is both, an organ of sensation and an organ of action. It ponders, and it is an organ on account of its similarity with the rest. They are diverse due to the specific modifications of the gunas, the constituents, and so are the external diversities (SK 27).

Applying a Sāṁkhyan aphorism of Kapilia, “nature, immediately the cause of mind, is mediatly [sic], the cause of all other products” (I: 175).

Puṣṭa is the animator consisting of pure consciousness. It is the manas that is the ‘experiencer’, whose subjective experience is defined by the triguṇa. The balance of the triguṇa is subsequently altered by the dividual experience.

The external organs, the manas and the ahaṁkāra differing from each other characteristically and variously affected by the gunas, the constituents, functioning like a lamp, present to the intellect the Spirit’s whole purpose. (SK 36).  

Again it is stated that, manas is a constituent component of prakṛti. In examining SK 36 above and SK 23 below, it can be seen that the antāḥkaraṇa, consisting of the buddhi, ahaṁkāra and the manas, are all under the influence of the triguṇa.

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85 Mainkar, Sāṁkhya-kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa: With commentary of Gaudapāda, p. 120.
87 The term ‘dividual’ is used to differentiate the western singular notion of ‘Self’ as apposed to ‘Hindu’ divisible notion of ‘Self’ as has been indicated in the examination of Sāṁkhya so far. Western philosophical concepts of ‘Self’ perceive a person as an indivisible single unit, ‘individual’. In many of the philosophies of ‘Hinduism’, a being is subject to two ‘divisible’ components, puṣṭa and prakṛti. The term ‘dividual’ will be used where applicable hence to highlight the dual nature of the Hindu concept of Self.
88 Mainkar, Sāṁkhya-kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa: With commentary of Gaudapāda, p. 139.
Intellect is determinative. Virtue, knowledge, non-attachment and lordly powers constitute its sāttvika form i. e. its form when sattva, goodness, predominates. The tāmasa form i. e. the form when tamas dominates is just the reverse (SK 23).  

The balance of the guṇas is always changing through input gained from the rest of the organs.

Since the intellect with the other internal organs ascertains the objects, therefore, those three internal organs are principle ones, while the rest of the organs are the gatekeepers there to (SK 35).

As the balance of the guṇas change, so does the individual’s perception. The individual associates perception as intelligence, yet it is not intelligence, it is just the perception ascertained under the influence of the triguṇa. Therefore intelligence, as an attribute of the physical body presents a subjective view. True objectivity is the property of the puruṣa only.

Therefore, it is from their association that the Linga, the non-intelligent body seems intelligent and though agency really belongs to the guṇas, the constituents, the indifferent one appears as the agent (SK 20).

Sāṁkhya presents a definition of the objective and subjective that correlates to the literal definition as described by the social sciences today; that the objective is “existent or held to exist independent of our perceptions”. In contrast the subjective is “the perspective of the person”.

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89 Mainkar, Sāṁkhya-kārikā of Īśavāṣṭṛṇa, pp. 107-110.  
91 Ibid., p. 617.
This literal definition of the term subjective provides a key insight into the Hindu perception of the manifest universe, for perception from perspective of Śāṁkhya is a product of the relative proportional representation of the triguna. The nature of the triguna is always changing (SK 23). As new input is received by the antahkaraṇa it is perceived and interpreted by the ahamkāra. Perception by the ahamkāra is subject to the sum total of all past experience of the dividual. In this sense true objectivity is not a property of manas, as the manas is always under the influence of the triguna. A dividual’s perception of the manifest universe and the Divine, is not, and cannot be an absolute truth without the achievement of mokṣa.

Perception, being subject to all of ones past experience therefore can only be a relative or subjective truth. As an acknowledged relative truth, then arguably the free debate of the metaphysical and theological becomes possible, building on the existent power/knowledge constructs of early Hindu thought. Importantly, while the concept of the metaphysical and theological was debated, orthodox Hindu metaphysics and theology did not appear to question the socio-political order of Brahmanism.

Śāṁkhya does not only define the properties and function of manas, it indicates the means to observing objective reality, and in doing so present the means to obtaining liberation from the cycle of saṃsāra. Absolute truth cannot be realised unless the influences of the guṇas are removed, thus realising mokṣa and the True nature of the Divine. As will be shown, Hindu metaphysical and theological speculation is representative of the subjective perceptions theorised in the darśana Śāṁkhya.

Engaging the Śāṁkhyan concept of ahamkāra for the different metaphysical and theological positions in Hindu thought (as will be discussed), presents a method to theorise the means to mokṣa as indicated in Figure 1, page 5 and Figure 7, page 42).

92 There is a correlation between the notion of ‗second nature‘ within Western anthropological terms and the notion of the symbol and the Śāṁkhyan perspective of mind (manas). From a Western anthropological view, what is known can only be deduced by applying meaning to what is perceived. At the centre of meaning is the symbolic. Through symbols, it becomes possible to interpret what is being witnessed. Symbolic interpretation and is learned and is subject to an individual’s experience. In the Hindu context, to realise mokṣa is to move beyond the symbolic to realise the true nature of existence, the absolute truth. It is arguably the ‘symbolic’ which colours our perceptions, presenting a barrier to the realisation of the ‘absolute’ truth.
However, before discussing Hindu metaphysics and theology, the early development of the *triguṇa* needs to be discussed. The origins of the *triguṇa* link attributes of the *triguṇa* to the symbolic attributes of the Vedic *yajña*. The linkage between the *triguṇa* and the Vedic *yajña* presents a key concept of this thesis; that it is the symbols of the Vedic *yajña* that linked the socio-political system of Brahmanism, with early Hindu cosmological, metaphysical and theological speculation.

Figure 7: Ego (*ahaṁkāra*) and the *triguṇa*.
3.4. Early Symbolism of the Triguṇa.

From the introduction on Sāṁkhya, the concept of the triguṇa presents a pivotal position within the conceptual frameworks as it relates to Hindu cosmogony and psychology. In tracing the development of the principle of the triguṇa, a linkage will be presented that unites the socio-political world presented by Brahmanism and the cosmogony of Sāṁkhya through the common use of the key defining attribute of Brahmanism, the Vedic yajña. More specifically the symbols associated with the elements of the Vedic yajña, the elements water, fire and earth (water) link Brahmanism to all metaphysical and theological speculation presented in this thesis.

3.4.1. The symbols of the Vedic yajña, water, fire and earth & early guṇa conceptualisation. 93

Lying at the core of the Vedas is the act of yajña. Though variously enacted and interpreted, the Vedic yajña always stands at the centre of the Vedic tradition. 94 By the time of the Upaniṣads, the elements associated with the Vedic yajña; water, fire and food take on the symbolic attributes that become increasingly recognisable over time as Sāṁkhyan attributes associated with the triguṇa.

The early Upaniṣads see both subjective and objective perspectives of the triguṇa evolving. The ‘primal material energy’ of the Vedic yajña in its objective form is given subjective attributes in the CU: 6.4.1.

यदग्ने रोहितां रूपं तेजसस्त्रूपम्। वच्छुक्लं तदपाम्। बल्कृष्णं तदस्य।
अपगद्रेवप्रित्युप्। वाचार्म्भ्रविकारो नामेयं त्रीणि रुपार्थर्वस्य सत्यम्।
॥ १ ॥

The red appearance of a fire is, in fact, the appearance of heat, the white, that of water, and black that of food. So vanishes from the fire the character of fire—the transformation is a verbal handle, a name—while the reality is just, ‘It’s the three appearances’ (CU 6.4.1). 95

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93 The following is a modified extract by the author in an unpublished paper ‘Principles of Purity and Pollution: an examination of symbols of purity and pollution by an interpretive analysis of the Triguṇa’. (Independent Honours Study, University of Queensland, 2006).
95 Olivelle, The Early Upaniṣads, pp.248-249.
In the CU 6.4.1 the primal material energy attributed to the *triguna* is witnessed, manifested in the form of three colours presenting a linkage to the *mahābhūta* as per the SK (see Figure 6, page 37). Firstly, the color white is associated with the gross element water, secondly, the color red with the gross element fire and finally, black forms an association with food.

With the associations of colour to the elements of the Vedic *yajña* when viewed in conjunction with the attributes specified in the *Brāhmaṇas* (see Table 1, page 16), the first indications appear that the term *varṇa* may be also associated with the colour or properties of the Vedic *yajña* directly.

The ŚU extends the attributes of colour and defines the relationship between the *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*:

अजेतकं वृहितशुक्लकुरुणं बहद्रीः प्रजाः मृजमानां मरपाः।
अजेष द्विवीको जुद्वाणोत्तुशोते जहात्येन भुक्तभोगयां जोत्ययः॥

One unborn male, burning with passion, covers one unborn female coloured red, white and black, and given birth to numerous offspring with the same colour as hers, while another unborn male leaves her as soon as she has finished enjoying the pleasures (ŚU 4.5).\(^{96}\)

*Puruṣa* (the unborn male), covers the un-manifested *mūlaprakṛti* (the unborn female) who is comprised of the *triguna*, (red, white and black). Her offspring consist of the same colour, possessing the same proportional representation of the *triguna* as herself. This cycle continues until *prakṛti* abandons desires whence the *puruṣa* is liberated.\(^{97}\) The subjective notion of colour associated with elements of the Vedic *yajña* also implies the nature of sentient beings; properties that are clearly assigned to the Sāṁkhyan concept of the *triguna*.

This same stanza also echoes the Brahmanical system of *varṇa*. The attributes, “same colour as hers” appears to be a reference to the system of *varṇa*, for a dividual holds the *guna* attributes of the parents, a concept echoed in the *Dharmaśāstras* (MDh

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\(^{97}\) The ŚU holds multiple references that are unmistakably proto-Sāṁkhyan in nature. For example the gross elements as defined in the SK are listed precisely in stanza SV6.2.
A linkage appears within ŚU 4.5 linking the concept of varṇa and the subjective notion of colour, and the evolving concept of the triguṇa.99

Sāṁkhyan logic was well developed by the time of the writing of the MtU (see Figure 2). In stanza MtU 6.10, puruṣa, prakṛti, and the triguṇa is presented in an unmistakable Sāṁkhyan form.

Now there is something subsequent to it be known. It is a modification of the self-sacrifice, as food and the eater; as to its description, Puruṣa is intelligent, when seated in Prakṛti, he is the eater, and eats the food of Prakṛti. This corporal soul is also its food, its maker is pradhāna. The food therefore consists of three guṇas; the eater is the Puruṣa residing inside… The Puruṣa is therefore eater, the Prakṛti is food, being seated in it he eats. The food consisting of Prakṛti by reason of its resulting from the difference of the three guṇas…(MtU 6.10).100

Food has been the fuel of the (external) Vedic yajña, now food is directly related to prakṛti, consisting of the triguṇa presenting the material (physical) nature of the triguṇa. Reference is also made to Vedic yajña, but it is the sacrifice of the self that is specified.

This stanza presents two potentials; food consisting of the triguṇa is transformed through eating, an internal sacrifice, the process of digestion, and the external yajña as indicated in Figures 3, 4 and 5 on page 28. The two potentials appear to be representative of the Hindu concept of the macrocosmic and the microsomic, all that exists without exists within.

When examining the preceding stanza to MtU 6.10, MtU 6.9 below, another key aspect of Brahmanism is engaged, the principles of pollution in defining the attributes of food.

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98 Olivelle, Manu's Code of Law, p. 208-213.
99 While I refer to a linkage to the Vaiṣṇava system of varṇa it is anti Brahmanical in nature (ŚU 5.6). The ŚU is considered as one of the originating texts of Śaivism. Rudra is mentioned frequently, once being the mountain dweller (ŚU 3.5), a direct correlation to Śiva. Savitṛ also has many references while a single reference to the Śiva - Śakti, hermaphrodite relationship is also given this text (ŚU 5.10). Included is a direct reference to the term Sāṁkhya as a mean to comprehending God (ŚU 6.13). All of these references have a direct correlation to Śaivism and not Vaiṣṇavism (Olivelle 1998:414-433).
100 Vidyarnava and Sandal, The Maitri Upanisat, pp. 67-68.
While not discussed directly in this thesis, pollution potentials are a key element of Brahmanism and the system of varṇa, and therefore cannot be ignored. The principles of purity and pollution are discussed in more detail in Appendix 1, page 127.

The pollution principles specified present a direct correlation to the attributes of the individual guṇas, attributes that are later called upon by Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja in their bhāṣyas on the BG as they relate to the system of varṇa:

Therefore one who knows both verily meditates on his self and sacrifices to his self. Let him purify his mind engaged in worship and made impure by leavings in the form of meditation he reads the mantra ‘let the purifying power of Vasu, Agni and the rays of the sun purify my food, made impure by my own leavings or by the leavings of others, given by a sinful person, or polluted by death and birth and purify me from any other sinful person or act of mine’. He sprinkles water on all sides before eating and makes offerings in the fire... Again, over and over he covers it (with water). Let him then after washing…..(MtU 6. 9).101

Within MtU 6.9, clear references are made to the Sāṁkhyan notion of the triguṇa. Water is linked with purity (sattva), fire is linked with energy (rajas), and black is linked to food. Food has been the fuel of the (external) sacrifice and now food is directly related to prakṛti, consisting of the three guṇas.

The attributes of the triguṇa and the pollution principles espoused by Brahmanism can be witnessed interacting in the MaU 6.9 above where food (tamas) is purified by both the sun and the gods (rajas), while water is used to purify All (sattva). Water is used before eating, or making an offering. Other key aspects of Hinduism that highlight the function of the triguṇa are specified in MaU 6.9.

The transactional nature of the triguṇa is stipulated as the “leavings of others”, death and birth, and “sinful people” are also deemed polluting. The transactional nature of the triguṇa allows for the theorisation into the functioning of karma (see Appendix 1, Karma and the Transactional Nature of the Triguṇa, page 119).

The pollution potential of food is also presented as having a direct correlation to the system of varṇa where only sattvic foods can be eaten by brahmins unless offered in sacrifice (see also, The transactional nature of Karma & the Triguna, page 124), and extends into rules of commensality as indicated on page 130.

3.4.2. The macrocosmic and microcosmic

Concepts of Brahmanism and the cosmogony of Sāṁkhya are intricately intertwined throughout many of the stanzas of the Upaniṣads. The example above highlights how multiple aspects of the Hindu system of knowledge are incorporated into a single stanza combining aspects of the socio-political, the physical, the metaphysical or the theological.

The subject of food is a reoccurring theme in Hindu texts. Food breaks down when consumed be it in the Vedic yajña or through eating. From the CU 6.5 below, the macrocosmic and microcosmic conceptualisation of the manifest universe in the Hindu context can be witnessed presenting a key aspect of Hindu thought. The concept that nothing can be created or destroyed as echoed in the Viśvasāra Tantra: यथिहृत्तितदन्यायः यथिहृत्तिन्न न तत्वज्ञितः; “what is here is everywhere, what is not here is nowhere”.102 The characteristics of the different realms of existence as they relate to the triguna can also be seen.

Cu 6.5 below highlights the function of the triguna and the differing proportional representation that it presents within both sentient beings and the gross elements.

When one eats food it breaks it down into three parts. The densest becomes faeces, the medium becomes flesh and the finest becomes mind. When one drinks water it breaks down into three parts, the densest becomes urine, the medium becomes blood, and the finest becomes breath. When one eats heat it breaks down into three parts. The densest becomes bone, the medium becomes marrow and the finest becomes speech (CU 6.5).\(^\text{103}\)

CU 6.5 can be represented graphically as indicated in Table 3 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
<th>Finest (sattvic)</th>
<th>Medium (rajasic)</th>
<th>Densest (tamasic)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water, sattvic, white</td>
<td>Breath</td>
<td>Blood</td>
<td>Urine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat, rajasic, red</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>Marrow</td>
<td>Bone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food, tamasic, black</td>
<td>Mind</td>
<td>Flesh</td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: The constituent components of food as defined in the CU 6.5.\(^\text{104}\)

It can be seen through the texts presented; that the principle of triguṇa evolved over time, its origins clearly embedded within the context of the objective elements of the Vedic yajña moving to subjective qualities of the symbolism associated with the triguṇa.

The themes represented above highlight the tight relationship that exists between the socio-political foundations of Brahmanism in relation to principles of purity and pollution, and the cosmogony and psychology espoused by Sāṁkhya. It will be shown that there are clear linkages between the Vedic yajña, the colours associated with the triguṇa and the system of varṇa, each being mutually supportive of the other.

The following section continues the examination of the evolving system of knowledge within the Hindu context, but moves the focus now to the metaphysical aspects of Hinduism, in particular the darśana Vedānta; building on the socio-political aspect of Brahmanism and the cosmogony of Sāṁkhya.

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\(^{103}\) Olivelle, *The Early Upanishads*, pp.248-249.

\(^{104}\) Column one breathe, speech and mind has a close correlation to prāṇa (breath), the vital airs that occur above the navel Column three, urine, bone and faeces has a correlation apāna, the five vital airs that go downwards below the navel.(Monier Williams 2002: 54). A correlation exists here where in the MDh (5:132) all orifices above the navel are ritually clean, while those below are ritually unclean (Olivelle 2006:145).
4. THE METAPHISICAL

The physical properties of the *triguna* have been discussed as well as their origins. It is the purpose of this section to discuss Hindu metaphysics, in particular, the metaphysics as it applies to the *triguna*. To introduce the metaphysical aspects of the *triguna* a brief examination of *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali* (YSp) is presented. In engaging the YSp it is possible to extend on how systems of knowledge are constructed within a given socio-political construct and its dependency on social identity through the perception of Self.

Patañjali’s extends on the knowledge of the period by an examination of the Hindu perception of consciousness. The YSp insights into different states of consciousness provide another foundation for the *darśana* Vedānta; revealing a potential basis to theorise the various Vedāntic interpretations of Advaita Vedānta, Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Dvaita Vedānta.

The following highlights key sūtras that highlight the YSp’s employment of Vedic and Sāṁkhyan knowledge to present new concepts of Self.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ Image presented on this page is a typical representation of Patañjali. Adiśesha, the primeval residue, the thousand headed snake upon which the world rests was manifest as the human sage Patañjali, thus represented as half-man, half-snake.
4.1. The *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali

4.1.1. The guṇas and various states of consciousness

Isvara is the supreme Purusha, unaffected by any afflictions, actions, fruits of actions or by any inner impressions of desires (YSp I.24).

Isvara is the supreme Purusha, unaffected by any afflictions, actions, fruits of actions or by any inner impressions of desires (YSp I.24).

By recognition of the distinction between sattva (the pure reflection of nature) and the Self, supremacy over all states and forms of existence [omnipotence] is gained as is omniscience (YSp III.50).

Patañjali builds upon the cosmogony as espoused in the RV and Sāṁkhya in the YSp. Sūtras YSp I.24 and YSp III.50 above reflect the divisible nature of puruṣa as defined in RV 10.90.3-4 (see page 30). Reference to the guṇas and the categorisation of sentient beings presents a reflection of the Sāṁkhya. However, unlike Sāṁkhya, puruṣa now takes the form of a godhead, īśvara.

Thus, the supreme state of Independence manifests while the guṇas reabsorb themselves into prakriti, having no more purpose to serve the Purusha. Or to look from another angle, the power of pure consciousness settles in its own nature (IV.34).

The obtainment of mokṣa (*kaivalya*) like Sāṁkhya is dependent on the guṇas.

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107 Ibid., p. 199.
108 Ibid., p. 231.
By *saṁyama* the yogi easily differentiates between the intelligence and the soul which is real and true (YSp III:36).\(^{109}\)

Awareness of the principles of the *triguna*, like in Sāṁkhya, and specifically that of *sattva* is the prerequisite for Self realisation. The YSp maintains the principles of the *triguna* as espoused in the Sāṁkhya in that it is through the negation of all the *guṇas* that *kaivalya* is achieved.

When there is non-thirst for even the *guṇas* [constituents of Nature] due to the realisation of the Puruṣa (true Self), that is supreme non-attachment (YSp I.16).\(^{111}\)

Non-attachment to the qualities of nature, *guṇas*, specifically, the non-attachment to desire, provides the method to negate the ego, the *ahaṁkāra* (YSp III:36). The *sūtras* presented above shows clear linkages to the RV and the *darśana* Sāṁkhya. YSp builds upon this base to theorise the nature of *kaivalya* and in so doing, presents a methodology to discover the true nature of Self. This is undertaken by examining the various states of consciousness as YSp I.38 below indicates:

O, by recollecting and contemplating the experience of dream-filled or dreamless sleep during a watchful, waking state (YSp I:38).\(^{112}\)

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\(^{110}\) Ibid., pp. 203-204.

\(^{111}\) Satchidananda, *The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali*, p. 28.

\(^{112}\) Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Śūtras of Patañjali*, p.84.
Three states of consciousness are defined: the unconscious, dreamless sleep (nidrā), the subconscious or dream filled sleep (svapna) and supa-consciousness or waking state (jāgarita). Desire is overcome through the contemplation of the three stages of consciousness.

क्षीणबुद्धिजातस्येव मरणेभितृणयुग्मधार्येषु तत्स्थतद्वननविशेषत: समाप्ति: ॥४१॥

The yogi realises that the knower, the instrument of knowing and the knower are one, himself, the seer. Like a pure transparent jewel, he reflects an unsullied purity (YSp I.41). 113

Overcoming desire the yogi realises that the nature of īśvara is his own unfettered Self, that the puruṣa that is within himself is the same as the un-manifested puruṣa. This is the nature of kaivalya.

The different states of consciousness identified by Patañjali in the YSp are engaged in latter Upaniṣads and are examined shortly.

In combination, the Vedas, the darśana Sāṁkhya and the theorisation of consciousness by Patañjali present the key footings on which the metaphysical speculation of Vedānta is built.

Various interpretations of key Upaniṣads resulted in differing conceptualisations of Vedānta. The following section looks at the metaphysical speculation of Gaudapāda, the paramaguru (teacher’s teacher) of Śaṅkara, the author of Advaita Vedānta.

Before looking at Vedānta another aspect of the YSp is worthy of investigation to highlight an aspect of Sanskrit and how independent translations can present differing aspects of Hindu thought. The following put forward two translations of the last sūtra of YSp, presenting two contrasting aspects of Self that is dependent on a single Sanskrit compound and how it is translated. Below is YSp IV:34 with three different contemporary translations.

113 Ibid., p. 87.
4.1.2. Hints of the grhastya and the samnyāsi in the Yoga Sūtras

पुरुषार्थशून्यानां गुननां प्रतिप्रसवः कैलाय स्वरूपप्रतिष्ठा व चित्रितनक्तिरिति

[A] Kaivalya [mokṣa] liberation, comes when the yogi has fulfilled the puruṣārthas, the fourfold aims in life, and has transcended the gunas. Aims and gunas return to their source, and consciousness is established in its own natural purity (YSp IV:34).

[B] Thus, the supreme state of Independence manifests while the gunas reabsorb themselves into Prakṛti, having no more purpose to serve the Puruṣa (YSp IV:34).

[C] The process-of-invocation of the primary-constituents, devoid of the purpose of Self, is (what is called) aloneness (of seeing), or the establishment of the power of awareness in (its) own form, Finis (YSp IV:34).

Three English translations of the Sanskrit text of the YSp (IV.34) above, present a range of variations. The translations presented establish two different concepts of Self. Translation A focuses on the Brahmanical ideals outlined in Section 2 of this thesis. Translations B and C appear to portray a focus on the idea of Self. Both interpretations are valid, highlighting the flexibility that Sanskrit displays as a language; also the difficulty that this flexibility presents in translation. Translation A engages directly the puruṣārtha as highlighted in Section 2.2.3, while translations B and C appear to focus directly upon the concept of Self.

To see how these two translations were achieved, a brief examination of a key term that is presented in YSp IV.34 needs to be examined. The term in question is the Sanskrit compound puruṣārthaśūnyānāṃ (f., gen., pl.), (पुरुषार्थशून्यानां).

114 Ibid., p. 265.
115 Ibid.
The term in the context of the complete sūtra is utilised as a bahuvrīhi compound as it acts as an adjective to the term, guṇa (गुणं). The term puruṣārthaśūnyānāṁ, the Self, (puruṣa), of purpose (artha), devoid (śūnya), describes a person free of guṇas (गुणनां).

The term puruṣārthaśūnyānāṁ (mf., gen., pl.) in its own right, presents as a tatpuruṣa (dependent) compound in the genitive form. Śūnyāṁ (devoid), (f., gen., pl.) is a dependent noun to the principle term puruṣārthāṁ (n., nom., sg.) a term that was introduced in Section 2.2.3 of this thesis. Translation A by Iyengar presents the compound puruṣārthaśūnyānāṁ as puruṣārthāṁ śūnyānāṁ, and in doing so, Iyengar engages the Brahmanical concept of varṇāśramadharma.118

The expression puruṣārthāṁ (n., nom., sg.) also presents as a tatpuruṣa compound in the genitive form where artha (purpose) is a dependent noun to the principle term puruṣa (m). Translations B of Satchidananda and C of Feuerstein, the term puruṣārthāṁ, is reflective of the darśana Sāṁkhya, where puruṣa (Self) and artha, translates to “the purpose for Self’ as Satchidananda’s and Feuerstein’s translations indicate.119

All translations presented above maintain negation as the means to mokṣa. Śūnya, is presented as devoid, free or transcendent from the puruṣārtha, be it from the four aims in life as presented by Iyengar, or free of the motivations of desire (kāma), the cause of suffering (duḥkha) (YSp I.33, II.5,18,II.15-16,34) as presented by Satchidananda and Feuerstein.

In the translation presented by Iyengar, it is the dharma of the grhastya that is the focal point. In contrast, the last two translations (B and C) appear to engage in the individual directly that is more reflective of the saṁnyāśi only. Sūtra IV.34 of the YSp hints at a relationship that exists between the grhastya and the saṁnyāśi, a relationship that will be expanded upon later in the thesis when an examination of the theology of Śaivism is undertaken.

Before Hindu theology is engaged however, the darśana Vedānta needs to be examined. Looking at different metaphysical interpretations of Vedānta highlights the links Vedānta holds with Sāṁkhya. Like the YSp, Vedānta expands upon Sāṁkhyan logic, providing the foundations for the various theological interpretations of Vaishnavism, Śaivism and Śāktism.

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118 Iyengar, Light on the Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali, p. 265.
4.2. Vedānta

In introducing Vedānta, the third and final system of support for the theologies of Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism is introduced as depicted in Figure 1, page 5.

Each system discussed so far; the socio-political system Brahmanism as it relates to the system of varṇa and the Dharmāstātras, the cosmogony of Sāṁkhya and Vedānta, define a unique, yet mutually dependent system of knowledge that in its entirety presents and supports a social structure that defines and supports a system of kinship and social mores of Hindu society.

The following section traces the philosophical development of Vedānta, a development that sees different relationships between man and brahman being defined.

The various philosophical variations in Vedānta, arguably, present the basis for the various theological divisions that occur in Śaivism, and in particular Vaiṣṇavism. Yet as is the argued in this thesis, different conceptualisations of brahman do not represent a schism. Each dividual presents as an aspect of brahman. As there are an infinite number of aspects of the Divine, the metaphysical speculation into the nature of the Divine forms the foundation for the darśana Vedānta. Examining the development of the definitions espoused by Vedānta highlights how differing Vedāntic interpretations developed.
4.2.1. Early Vedānta

All the Vedāntists agree on two points, they believe in brahman and they consider the Vedas as revealed. Vedāntan philosophy can be divided into two broad categories; absolutistic and theistic. The former represents brahman as an impersonal principle, while the later is presented as a personal god. The first belongs to the philosophical school referred to as advaita or non-dual, the second presents a qualified non-dualism known as Viśiṣṭādvaita. The third Vedāntic interpretation, dvaita, describes the dualistic school. As indicated in Figure 2, other Vedāntic interpretations exist, however the three presented here represent the three most well known schools of metaphysical thought.

The comparison of the various stages of consciousness, nidrā, svapna, and jāgarita specified in the YSū are replicated in the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad (MaU). The MaU is the earliest work on the philosophy of Vedānta and an examination of the MaU helps identify mechanisms on how the different Vedāntic interpretation may have occurred.

In examining the MaU, and associated texts that are collectively known as the Āgama Śastra (ĀŚ), it is possible to theorise how the three Vedāntic traditions, Advaita Vedānta, Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Dvaita Vedānta arose.

The MaU engages the concept of sound and the four stages of being, concepts first engaged in the Atharva Veda (AV). There is some debate into who is responsible for the authorship of the ĀŚ. Some state that both the MaU and the Āgama Prakaraṇa (ĀP) along with the accompanying three kārikās the Vaitathya-Prakaraṇa (VP), the Advaita Prakaraṇa (ADP) and the Alāta-Śānti Prakaraṇa (ALP), the set of texts that are collectively referred to as the ĀŚ, are generally attributed to Gauḍapāda. Others state that they are separate works. However it is widely accepted that Gauḍapāda was at least responsible for the authorship of the MaU and potentially the ĀP. Of interest is the association of Gauḍapāda, the author of the ĀŚ, and the potential that he may be the same person who wrote the bhāṣya’s on the SK. Philosophical similarities exist between the

121 Iyengar, Light on the Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali, p. 84.
122 Joshi, Bimali, and Trivedi, eds., 112 Upaniṣads, vol 1, p. 56 - 61.
124 Ibid., p. 3.
writings of MaU, the *bhāṣya*’s of Gauḍapāda on the SK. One interpretation of the MaU conceptualities *brahman* in a form that mirrors Sāṅkhya and Advaita Vedānta, both presenting an absolutist definition of *brahman*.

However, an alternate theistic interpretation of the MaU is also possible, defining an active *brahman* as found in Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Dvaita Vedānta. Such potentials, presenting the various interpretations of the Divine help highlight how knowledge may have been constructed within early Hindu society. From a psychological perspective as ascribed by Sāṅkhya, differing conceptualisations of the Divine are not only possible, but expected. To see how diverse perceptions of *brahman* can be constructed, seven stanzas of the MaU are examined.

Sound plays an important part in all Hindu theologies with numerous hierarchical structures defining the sound expressed. A detailed examination into the system of sound is beyond the scope of this thesis; however one sound as it relates to metaphysical and theological speculation dominates and that is the sound *OM* or *AUM*, often represented in a stylised Devanagari form as ॐ.

A description of ॐ is the subject of the first stanza of the MaU:

ॐितत्वातिरिद्रिद्वृत्तः तत्स्वरः तत्श्वरः तत्श्वरः
तत्श्वरः तत्श्वरः तत्श्वरः तत्श्वरः तत्श्वरः

1. *Aum*: this syllable is all this. A clear exposition of it is: what was, what is and what will be –all is only *Aum*. And whatever else is beyond the three times, that also is only *Aum* (MaU 1).  

The syllable *AUM*, and the relationship of ‘three times’ is representative of the three states of consciousnesses as introduced in Patañjali’s *Yoga Sūtra*. The three states consist of *jāgarita*, *svapna*, and *suṣupta* (*nidrā*), each correspond to the relative letter, A, U, and M respectively.

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All that is beyond AUM is often represented by the anusvāra or bindu (dot) when AUM is depicted as ॐ. This is the turīya, the fourth state of consciousness, beyond verbal pronunciation, this supreme brahman. In combination the syllable Aum, is representative of the manifest and un-manifest. Stanza's 2-5 describe the manifest universe and the first three states of consciousness:

सर्वं ह्येतद्वायमात्मा ब्रह्म सोज्यमात्मा चतुष्पातुः ॥ २॥

2 All this, indeed, is Brahman. The Self is Brahman. This Self has four quarters (MaU 2).

जागरितस्थानं बहुः: प्रज्ञ: ससाइग एकोनवशिष्टमितुः: स्त्रुतमुस्विष्वानारः: प्रयम्य: पादः: ॥ ३॥

3 The waking state (jāgarita-sthāna), outwardly cognitive, having seven limbs, having nineteen mouths, enjoying the gross, the universal (vaiśvānara): this is the first quarter (MaU 3).

स्त्रुतमुस्वानाज्ञानीः: प्रज्ञ: ससाइग एकोनवशिष्टमितुः: प्रविविन्तकमुकृ तैज्ञो द्वितीयः: पदः: ॥ ४॥

4 The dreaming state (svapna-sthāna), outwardly cognitive, having seven limbs, having nineteen mouths, enjoying the refined, the brilliant (taijasa): this is the second quarter (MaU 4).

यत्र सुप्तो न कौच्छ क्रामं कामयते न कौच्छ स्वप्नं पस्यति तत्सुप्तम्। सुप्नस्थान एकलुकः: प्रणजानन्धन एवानन्दमयो ह्यानन्दमुक्त चेतोमुखः: प्रज्ञस्तृतीयः: पादः: ॥ ५॥

5 Where one, asleep, does not desire any desire whatever, sees no dream whatever, that is deep sleep (suṣupta). The sleeping state, which has become one, just a cognition mass, made of bliss, verily an enjoyer of bliss, whose face is thought: prājña is the third quarter (MaU 5).

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126 Gambhīrānanda, Eight Upaniṣads : with the commentary of Śaṅkaracarya: vol 2, p. 175. This is an extension to the three levels of consciousness described in the earlier work of Patañjali in his Yoga Śūtras.
130 Joshi, Bimali, and Trivedi, eds., 112 Upaniṣads, vol 1, p. 58.
Certain correlations exist between Sāṁkhya and YSp that are observable in the above stanzas. Prājña has a correlation to the Sāṁkhyan buddhi, it is the intellect devoid of ego (ahaṁkāra) but still influenced by the guṇas. The first quarter, vaiśvānara is the enjoyer of the gross elements; taijasa is the enjoyer of the subtle elements.

There is no ambiguity in the above verses as they relate to each other. However as highlighted by Wood, the relationship of stanza six as to whether it references stanzas five or stanza seven leads to two very different interpretations as to the nature of brahman and brahman’s relationship to Self.

एष सर्वेस्वर एष सर्वज्ञ एयोज्जन्तयाम्येष योनि: सर्वेस्य प्रथवाययू हि ।

6. This is the Lord [iśvara] of all; this is the knower of all; this is the inner controller (antaryāmin); this is the source of all; indeed the origin as well as the end of all beings (MaU 6).

नान्त: प्रज्ञं न बहिष्पत्त्वोऽभिमयतः न प्रज्ञस्यन्तं न प्रज्ञयान्तं

अन्तःमांसवहारयमाद्यमोऽऽन्तःष्ट्वद्रमयात्र नान्तं सामात मात्मा स निषेधः।

7. Not inwardly cognitive, not outwardly cognitive, not cognitive both ways, not a cognition mass, not cognitive, not non-cognitive, unseen, beyond speech, ungrasable, without any distinctive marks, unthinkable, undesignatable, the essence of the knowledge of the one Self, the cessation of the phenomenal world (prapañcopaśama), quiescent, auspicious, nondual (advaita)-such, they think, is the fourth (caturtha). He is the Self (ātman). He is to be known (MaU 7).

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131 Wood, The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad and the Āgama Śāstra: An Investigation into the Meaning of Vedānta
132 Gambhirānanda, Eight Upaniṣads : with the commentary of Śaṅkaracārya: vol 2, pp. 183-184. Of interest this is the last stanza of the MaU in the text by Gambhirānanda. The missing last two stanzas are translations presented by Wood, with the original and other translations verified in other sources such as (Joshi, Bimali, and Trivedi, eds., 112 Upaniṣads, vol 1 pp. 56 – 61).
If stanza six is in reference to stanza five, then the concept of *brahman* is nothing but perception, a creation of the mind, a view referred to as *māyāvāda* (*māyā* illusion; *vāda*, doctrine), a philosophy that is strongly rejected by followers of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Dvaita Vedānta. If Gauḍapāda advocated this meaning, then *iśvara* is associated with “lower *brahman*” (see ĀP 26, Appendix III, page 137). In this interpretation *māyāvāda* is the product of ignorance, *ajñāna*; the attribute associated with sleep, and is therefore phenomenal, rather than absolute. According to the absolutistic philosophy of Advaita Vedānta, as postulated by Śaṅkara, only the transcendental associated with *turīya*, the pure impersonal *brahman* is real.¹³⁴

However if stanza six is associated with stanza seven, then Gauḍapāda is enumerating a theistic tradition, a notion supported when examining ĀP 24-29 (page 140-141). With this interpretation then the potential foundation for Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Dvaita Vedānta can be witnessed.

These contrasting points of view are not unique to the MaU as a brief examination of CU 8.11 indicates where in conversation between Prajāpati and Indra takes place. Prajāpati was trying to explain the nature of *brahman*.

> When one is fast asleep, totally collected and serene, and sees no dreams— that is the Self; that is the immortal; that is the one free from fear; that is Brahman (CU 8.11.1).¹³⁵

Indra contemplated Prajāpati’s explanation but was unsatisfied and challenged Prajāpati, to which he responded:

> This body, Maghavan, is mortal; it is in the grip of death. So, it is the abode of this immortal and nobodily self. One who has a body is in the grip of joy and sorrow, and there is no freedom from joy and sorrow for one who has a body. Joy and sorrow, however, do not affect one who has no body (CU 8.12.1).¹³⁶

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¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 285.
From these two versus again we can witness both potentials for interpreting the nature of *brahman* and the relationship with the material body.

The *kārikā* by Gauḍapāda on the MaU in ĀP 26 Gauḍapāda identifies both a lower and upper *brahman* which appears to confirm that humans perception of the Divine is just that, perception (again Sāṁkhya psychology), for the “higher *brahman*” is beyond perception.

Pravāna is, indeed, the lower *brahman*, and it is traditionally regarded as the higher brahman. Pravāna is unique, without cause, without precedent, without inside, without outside, absolute, immutable. (ĀP 26).

The point at this juncture is that different conceptualisations of *brahman* were being actively debated throughout the period when the *Upaniṣads* were being written. From these *Upaniṣads* the potential to form the various Vedāntic interpretations are observable. These key texts do not definitively describe the true nature of *brahman*, instead they present the potential to support both the absolutist and the theistic interpretations of *brahman*.

### 4.2.2. Advaita Vedānta

When one refers to Advaita Vedānta, Śaṅkara is the prominent philosopher associated with the Advaita School. However, as shown throughout this thesis, the construction of knowledge has been an evolution of thought with each successive generation building on the thought espoused by their predecessors.

The major contrast that exists between Advaita Vedānta and Sāṁkhya is the nature of Self. As discussed, Sāṁkhya defines two realities, both eternal but contrary in nature, individuated *puruṣa* the Self, pure consciousness, “the witness to all that lies in sphere of

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objectivity”, and the other, the material body or prakṛti. In combination the Self experiences phenomenal existence. However the phenomenal experience in Sāṁkhyan logic is subjective due to the guna nature and their influence on the ahaṁkāra. In Advaita Vedānta phenomenal experience is subject to the influence of māyā, a concept that is not that dissimilar philosophically to Sāṁkhya except for its linkage to the godhead brahman.

The non-causal nature (the indiscriminate interaction between puruṣa and mūlaprakṛti as postulated in Sāṁkhya) is challenged in Vedānta, and the duality challenged by Śaṅkara. As Comans highlights, Śaṅkara does not leave a systematic discussion on the nature of brahman. However Śaṅkara does reinforce texts labeled as śruti to validate the existence of brahman. This can be witnessed in Śaṅkara’s bhāṣya on the BU 3.8.9 where it states, “this imperishable, Gārgi, at whose command the sun and the moon stand apart” (BU 3.8.9). Śaṅkara’s comments on BU 3.8.9; “therefore [on the basis of śruti text] the existence of the imperishable is proved”.

...For it is an invariable sign that heaven and earth remain in a fixed order and this is not tenable without a conscious Ruler who is free from the cycle of birth and death(BUbh 3.8.9).

The BU goes on to state in BU 1.4.15 “at the time the world was without real distinctions”; it was distinguished simply in terms of name and visible appearance. Comans raises the question, does this passage indicate that the world manifests itself spontaneously on its own accord, an argument akin to the dualism of puruṣa and prakṛti as ascribed by Sāṁkhya? Comans presents Śaṅkara’s response in which it can also be seen that Śaṅkara discredits the Sāṁkhyan view of puruṣa as an independent creative source when one examines his bhāṣya on the Brahmasūtra (BS) 1.4.5 which states,

From the way the world is manifest as name and form at the present time [it is evident] it manifests as having a controller. We should understand that the situation was the same at the beginning of the emanation of the world, for it is not tenable to conjecture something contrary to what is observed (BSbh 1.4.15).

139 Olivelle, The Early Upanishads, p. 91.
141 Olivelle, The Early Upanishads, p. 47.
143 Ibid., pp. 184-186.
In the same sense Śaṅkara denies that prakṛti is the material cause of the world where he equates the creation of the universe by brahman as play or sport (līlā). In Śaṅkara’s bhāṣya on the BS 2.1.32 brahman manifests the universe without having something to accomplish by it.\textsuperscript{144} In this sense it can be seen as a reflection of the selflessness as described by a dividual’s dharma. Puruṣa and prakṛti in this sense must be a manifestation of māyā as indicated in Figure 8.

Nevertheless, Śaṅkara does engage Sāṁkhya in his comments on the different realms of existence. Examining the \textit{Mundaka Upaniṣad} (MU) II. i. 7 states:

\begin{quote}
And from Him duly emerged the gods in various groups, the Śādhyyas, human beings, beasts, birds, life, rice and barley, as well as austerity, faith, truth, continence and dutifulness (MU II. i.7).\textsuperscript{145}
\end{quote}

Śaṅkara in his bhāṣya responds stating that:

\begin{quote}
…From Puruṣa duly issued out the gods, who are ancillary to rites; variously, in different group of Vasus and others; Śādhyyas, a particular class of gods; human beings, who are entitled to undertake rites; beasts – both domestic and wild; bird and breathing in and out, constituting life; rice and barley meant for sacrificial offerings and austerity as part of that rite meant for personal sanctification… which is the precondition for the application of all means that are productive of human objectives; so also is truth…and dutifulness.\textsuperscript{146}
\end{quote}

The close parallel to the various realms of existence as described by Śaṅkara draws strong parallels with the Sāṁkhyan definition as summarised in Appendix I: The Categorisation of Sentient Beings. The reinterpretation of the realms of existence by Śaṅkara, in conjunction with the concept of māyā, returns us to the various possible interpretations of the MaU, specifically the relationship of the sixth stanza with the fifth or seventh stanza as previously discussed. Śaṅkara attributes the sixth stanza of the MaU with the fifth, relegating the concept of lower brahman to that of a human quality. Lower brahman is described as a physical entity (as theorised in Sāṁkhya) that through the veil of māyā, is nothing but perception, a creation of the mind, a view that is referred to as māyāvāda. For Śaṅkara “Higher brahman” is beyond human comprehension and is impersonal.

\textsuperscript{144} Ibid., p. 187
\textsuperscript{145} Gambhirānanda, \textit{Eight Upaniṣads : with the commentary of Śaṅkaracarya}: vol 2, p. 117.
\textsuperscript{146} Ibid., pp. 117-118.
The bhāṣyas of Śaṅkara on the *Munda Upaniṣad* (MU II.i.3) sees Śaṅkara’s support for both the gross and the subtle elements, as well the sense capacities described in Śāṅkhyā. The five elements; space, air, fire, water and earth and their respective qualities, sound, touch, form, taste, and smell, all originating from puruṣa.\(^{147}\)

\begin{verbatim}
एतस्िाज्जतयते प्राणो मन: सर्वंनद्रयाणि च।
खं बायुव्यविदिन्ताप: पृथिवी विद्यान्त्वं धारिणिः॥३॥
\end{verbatim}

From him originates the vital force [*prāṇa*] as well as the mind [*manas*], all the senses, space, air, fire, water and earth that support everything (MU II.i.3).\(^{148}\)

However Śaṅkara argues that “all modifications have speech only for support [so therefore] it is unreal”.\(^{149}\) Śaṅkara calls upon the CU as evidence:

\begin{verbatim}
यथ सोम्यैकेन मृत्तिकेन सर्वं मृत्तिकेन विज्ञातः स्यात्।
बन्धरमणं विकारो नाधेयं मृत्तिकेत्यं सत्यम्॥४॥
\end{verbatim}

It is like this, son. By means of just one lump of clay one would perceive everything made of clay–transformation is a verbal handle, a name–while the reality is just this: ‘It’s clay’ (CU 6.1.4).\(^{150}\)

This Śaṅkara concludes that the vital force, *prāṇa*, is lacking in ‘clay’ so therefore not a product of *puruṣa*. For Śaṅkara language presents a barrier to real perception (as does Śāṅkhyā), therefore our perceived universe, through the filter of language, binds us in ignorance, *ajñāna*. It is *ajñāna* that is *māyā*, and so too is *puruṣa* according to Śaṅkara. For as Śaṅkara argues, the senses “did not exist before origination, so they become non-existent after dissolution”; an argument which is inclusive of the Śāṅkhyān conceptualisation of *puruṣa*.

Śaṅkara postulates the metaphysical principle above to account for the appearance of the manifest universe which consists of the three primary constituent components, the *triguṇa*. *Brahman* on the other hand is pure consciousness, devoid of qualities (*nirguṇa*).

\[^{147}\] Ibid., pp. 112-113.
\[^{148}\] Ibid., p. 112.
\[^{149}\] Ibid.
Because *ajñāna* consists of the *triguṇa*, anything that is a transformation of ‘it’, is also consistent of the *triguṇa* as depicted in Table 3, page 48. Like Sāṁkhya, the logical extension of Śaṅkara is that the *buddhindriya*, *karmendriya* the *tanmātra* and the *mahābhūta* all consist of the *triguṇa*. Unlike Sāṁkhya, *puruṣa* is devoid of *prāṇa*. This is *ajñāna* resultant from *māyā*, stemming from the limited subjective view of the *ahaṁkāra*. The parallel function of Śaṅkara’s *māyā* and Sāṁkhyan *ahaṁkāra* is now apparent. The ātman is bound by *saguṇa* where brahma, the cause of creation is without qualities, *nirguṇa*. Brahma being the primary cause is free from distinction. Again the subjective vs. an absolute truth is presented.

![Diagram](image)

Figure 8: Śaṅkara’s interpretation of Sāṁkhya.
Looking at another one of Śaṅkara’s predecessors, Bhartṛprapañca; brahman is one, but in its unity is many. The variety of brahman being the infinite number of selves, ātman, that comprehend and establish the innumerous distinctions of the physical universe, a view that again presents linkages to the psychology of Sāṁkhya. This school, while holding similarities to Sāṁkhya, argues that the universe does not evolve from an insentient prakṛti, but the sentient brahman (brahma-parināma-vāda).

So Śaṅkara, while supporting the cosmogony of Sāṁkhya disputes its metaphysical causation, moving away from the puruṣa – prakṛti dualism, to the monism of the jīvātman, describing the unity that exists between the sentient being and (Higher) brahman.151

The following section looks at the theistic interpretations of Vedānta, the qualified dualism of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta as espoused by Rāmānuja, and the dualist Dvaita Vedānta of Madhva.

4.2.3. Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta

While some of the terminology of Sāṁkhya is employed in Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, how it is employed differs, and will not be investigated in detail here. However some of the differences are worth mentioning to highlight how Sāṁkhyaan cosmology is reinterpreted in the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Dvaita Vedānta metaphysics. It highlights differing interpretations of the Divine, and the brahmins relationship to brahman and their claim to Divine authority using the triguṇa to validate this supposition when Vaiṣṇava theology is discussed.

Rāmānuja repudiated Śaṅkara’s concept of māyā finding fault with Śaṅkara’s distinction between nirguṇa and saguṇa brahman. For Rāmāmanuja, nirguṇa meant that brahman was free of evil qualities, not of all qualities as advocated by Śaṅkara. For Rāmānuja, brahman his body is full of sattva, devoid of rajas and tamas. While it is shown below Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta rejects many aspects of SK, Rāmānuja’s shows a strong correlation between the realms of existence proposed for the eightfold celestial realm, daiva in Sāṁkhya and the conceptualisation of brahman. These various metaphysical speculations become important when comparing Śaṅkara’s and Rāmānuja’s bhāṣyas on the BG in Table 4 and Table 5 (page 81); highlighting different interpretations of what constitutes mokṣa and the Divine.

For Rāmānuja the manifest universe and its relationship with brahman is not without qualification. Like Śaṅkara, but unlike Sāṁkhya, Rāmānuja sees a godhead as responsible for the manifestation of the universe. Conversely to Śaṅkara’s theorisation of brahman, Rāmānuja sees brahman as a step beyond a mere creator without desire, brahman is the controller of All matter that is created dwelling within. In this sense, the concept of māyā is rejected in Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. This differentiation of the relationship and qualities of the individual and with brahman sets the foundations to differentiate the conceptualisation of Self between Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism.

153 Ibid., p. 90.
154 Ibid.
155 There are numerous Vaiṣṇava sects and those known to the author appear to reject Advaita Vedānta as their metaphysical foundation. However there appears to be numerous qualified dualisms and dualisms other than those of Rāmānuja and Madhva. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to investigate the numerous theorisations of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Dvaita Vedānta.
The metaphysics of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta sees the manifest universe presenting as a reality. However a reality that is tiered, consisting of three components, the material universe, the innumerable jīvātmans, the individual Selves and brahman. Brahmin is present in, and the controller of all, including matter, prakṛti as is indicated in the Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad (BU):

य: पृथिव्यां तिष्ठन्वित्वा अन्तरों यं पृथिवी न वेद यस्य पृथिवी शरीरं य: 
पृथिवीमन्तरो यमयल्येः त आत्मान्योम्यमृतः: ॥ ३ ॥

This self (ātman) of yours who is present within but is different from the earth, whom the earth does not know, whose body is earth, and who controls the earth from within—he is the inner controller, the immortal (BU 3.7.3).156

Brahmin, the controller of prakṛti, is the controller of the individual ātman.

यो विज्ञाने तिष्ठन्विज्ञानादन्तरों यं विज्ञानं न वेद यस्य विज्ञानमें शरीरं यो 
विज्ञानमन्तरो यमयल्येः त आत्मान्योम्यमृतः: ॥ २२ ॥

This self of yours who is present within but is different from perception, whom perception does not know, whose body is perception, and who controls perception from within—he is the inner controller, the immortal (Bu 3.7.22).157

The various realms of existence as described in Sāṁkhya, and aspects of varnāśramadharma as prescribed by Brahmanism are visible when examining the attributes of the ātman. The Self (ātman) is also of three types, bound, freed, and eternal, with brahmin being the inner controller of each individual ātman.158

Bound souls consist of four types: Divine, human, animal and plant. Of the gods and humans there are two types; those that seek pleasure (bubuṣus) and those that seek liberation (mumukṣus). Pleasure seeking ātmans are devoted to artha, kāma or dharma. Those devoted to dharma only, are either devoted to other gods, or to brahmin only.159

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156 Olivelle, The Early Upanishads, pp. 86-87.
157 Ibid., pp. 88-89.
158 Comans, Advaitāmoda by Vāsudevasastri Abhyankar: A Study of Advaita and Viśiṣṭādviata, pp. 92-93.
The nature of the liberated ātman is consistent with other Hindu metaphysical and theological conventions in that they are untouched by the laws of karma thus free from the cycle of samsāra, untouched by ignorance. An ātman that has achieved mokṣa passes through the realm of the gods, Agni, Vāyu, Varuṇa, Indra and Prajāpati, before obtaining true mokṣa.

Unlike Śaṅkhyā and Advaita Vedānta the ātman as prescribed by Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta is separate to the Divine. As there are four types of bound ātmans, there are four states of mokṣa, dictating the position and attributes that the liberated ātman may take in relation to brahman. However the liberated ātman is never one with the Divine. In Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta the innumerable numbers of ātmans possess an essential likeness to brahmin. While there exists a qualitative monism, there is a quantitative pluralism.

As indicated previously prakṛti, in contrast to Śaṅkhyā, operates as an independent ontological category functioning on its own accord. In Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta prakṛti is deemed as being the body of brahman as well as individual ātman.

The gunas are not attributes of prakṛti, they belong to what is categorised as non-substance (adṛṣṭa) of which there are ten in total. The ten elements of adṛṣṭa are; the gunas; sattva, rajas, and tamas; as well as colour, taste, smell, touch, sound, conjunction and potency (see Figure 9, page 72).

The triguṇa poses only the subjective attributes ascribed by Śaṅkhyā, which qualify prakṛti. The subjective attributes of the gunas are; knowledge and happiness; energy and attachment; inertia and ignorance the attributes of sattva, rajas and tamas respectively. These attributes assigned to the triguṇa reflect the guṇa attributes on the authority of the BG (XIV 6-8).

The means to salvation is neither jñāmārga (the way of knowledge) of Śaṅkhyā nor the karmamārga (the way of action) espoused by Brahmanism. It is bhaktimārga (the way

160 Ibid., p. 171.
162 Hebbar, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita: A Systematic Comparative Study of the Two Schools of Vedānta with Special Reference to Some Doctrinal Controversies, pp.50-51.
of devotion) that presents the means to realising mokṣa. Bhaktimārga cannot be undertaken in isolation, it needs to utilise jñāmārga and karmamārga for the knowledge and energy required for bhakti. Yet there is still a strong connection to the psychological perspective expressed by Sāṁkhya as discussed in Section 3.3. It can be argued that through the self surrender of bhakti, the practitioner negates the Self as defined in Sāṁkhya, replacing the ahaṅkāra with the essence of Brahman, as depicted in Figure 7. For Rāmānuja, brahman is identical with īśvara, who is none other than Viṣṇu.

4.2.4. Dvaita Vedānta

In contrast to both Advaita Vedānta and Viśiṣṭādviata Vedānta, Dvaita Vedānta holds that there is a fundamental qualitative difference between the ātman and brahman that extends beyond the difference that is dictated by the individual ātman’s karmic load. For Dvaita Vedānta there is a fundamental and permanent difference between the innumerous ātmans.

For Dvaita Vedānta, two realities are defined, independent and dependent. Of the independent reality only brahman belongs, all other properties are dependent. The dependent reality is not co-equal to brahman. The dependent substances are dependent on, but are not caused by brahman including prakṛti and the ātman (see Figure 10, page 72).

Both schools, Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Dvaita Vedānta, agree that the ātman is inferior to brahman in both their worldly existence and liberated state; the ātman can never be equal or identical to brahman.

Unlike Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, Dvaita Vedānta does not regarded prakṛti as constituting the body of brahman. Brahmin is the efficient cause of the manifest universe, prakṛti is the material cause. Echoes of Sāṁkhya can be seen here, for in Dvaita Vedānta; prakṛti is distinct from brahman but evolves at brahman’s will. Additionally, the

165 Hebbar, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita: A Systematic Comparative Study of the Two Schools of Vedānta with Special Reference to Some Doctrinal Controversies, p. 169.
166 Ibid.
guṇas are neither an attribute of prakṛti, nor constituent elements of prakṛti but as the first evolutes of prakṛti (see Figure 10, page 72).

The final aspect to be discussed relating to Dvaita Vedānta relates to the means to liberation (mokṣa), and its relationship to the Brahmanical order. Dvaita Vedānta prescribes bhaktimārga as the means to the obtainment of mokṣa as does Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. The nature of bhaktimārga for Dvaita Vedānta is extended to incorporate aspects of caturvarṇāśrama, where devotion is not only aimed at brahmin but to the individual’s parent’s and guru as well and the “renunciation of karma prohibited in scriptures”.

While the theorisation of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Dvaita Vedānta, like Sāṁkhya and Advaita Vedānta, is complex it has been briefly introduced here to highlight that Advaita Vedānta, Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Dvaita Vedānta present a dependency firstly, on brahman. Secondly, all Vedāntic schools incorporate the cosmogony of Sāṁkhya, albeit reinterpreted; and finally, that all schools of Vedānta give support to the socio-political system prescribed by Brahmanism. This support will be demonstrated more fully when examining the bhāṣyas of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on the BG in the following section.

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Figure 9: Flowchart of the ontological relationships of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta.\textsuperscript{168}

Figure 10: Flowchart of the ontological relationships of Dvaita Vedānta.\textsuperscript{169}

\textsuperscript{168} Hebbar, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita: A Systematic Comparative Study of the Two Schools of Vedānta with Special Reference to Some Doctrinal Controversies, p. 47.
5. The Theological

Of the Kaulas it says that, ‘they are at heart Śāktas, outwardly Śaivas, and in gatherings Vaiṣṇavas’.\(^\text{170}\)

The concepts of the triguna and puruṣa form the fundamental foundations of the cosmogony of Sāṁkhya and the metaphysics of Vedānta. The differing evolutes in turn, present the basis of various theological interpretations presented in this thesis, Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism as indicated in Figure 1.

The operation of karma and transmigration, the Hindu concept of purity and pollution (as defined in Appendix 1), and the psychology of the dividual can all be theorised as functions of the triguna. The concepts of karma, samsāra, mokṣa, dharma and the principles of purity and pollution all support the socio-political system of Brahmanism.

This section continues the investigation of the symbols of the yajña as they apply to Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism.

Within the Vaiṣṇava context, the usage of the triguna within the BG is examined to highlight the linkage between the socio-political and the theological, through the BG’s employment of the system of varṇa.

In the Śaivite context, aspects of Kashmir Śaivism are explored to underscore the influences of Sāṁkhya and Vedānta on Hindu theology.

\(^{169}\) Ibid., p. 58.

5.1. Vaiṣṇavism

And out of the body of the intelligent one came out the souls. And thus was generated all those mobile and immobile objects beginning with the deities and concluding with the immovable,—which is established in the several spheres—and of which I have told thee before (VM 1.7.2-3).\(^{171}\)

The Vaiṣṇava theologies founded upon Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta or Dvaita Vedānta establish a clear distinction between *brahman* and the *ātman*. The Vedāntic interpretations adopted reflect some of the differing metaphysical interpretations stemming from the early *Upaniṣads*\(^{172}\). In examining Vaiṣṇavism, within the context of this thesis, it is not the metaphysical interpretations that are being focused upon, it is the socio-political aspects of Vaiṣṇavism as presented in the BG that is of particular interest. The BG presents an opportunity to examine how the socio-political, philosophical and psychological aspects of Vaiṣṇavism are united into a single cohesive system of knowledge.

The BG is arguably one of the most important texts written, not only for the Vaiṣṇava, but for many Hindus theologies and sects.\(^{173}\) Of interest in this section is how the *triguṇa* is employed within the Vaiṣṇava context to validate Brahmanical the system of *varṇa*.

*Guna* attributes have been discussed in the appendices as to their function to *karma* and *samsāra*, and principles of purity and pollution within the context of SK. In undertaking an examination the *bhāṣyas* of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on the BG, an insight is gained into how the *triguṇa* is employed to link the concepts of *dharma* and *karma* through the engagement of the Brahmanical system of *varṇa*.

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\(^{172}\) Śuddhādvaita and Bhedābheda are not investigated as they present a scope that is too broad for this thesis.

\(^{173}\) This statement is resultant from ethnographic data collected personally through unofficial interviews with informants of various Śaivite sects.
5.1.1. Vaishnavism and the Bhagavad-Gita

As discussed, the Dharmaśāstras codify the socio-political structure of Hinduism in the historical sense. It has been argued that the function of the Dharmaśāstras is to protect kinship relationships and the power/knowledge relationships that exists within the system of varṇa, a system that spans India’s numerous kinship nomenclatures.

The BG shows clear linkages that support the social mores prescribed by the Dharmaśāstras, specifically the support and maintenance of systems of kinship as BG I. 40 indicates:

कुलक्षये प्रणश्यिन्ति कुलधिः सनातनः।
धमेव नष्टे कुलमधिमेविभवत्युत ॥ ४० ॥

On the extinction of family, the immoral dharmas of the family disappear. When the dharmas disappear, impiety (adharma) overtakes the whole family (BG I:40).175

The above stanza (BG I:40) highlights that maintenance of the family, and specifically the duties (dharma) of family is paramount. With the breakdown of family dharma, the family itself breaks down:

अधर्माभिव्रताकृष्ण प्रदुष्ट्यिन्त कुलिस्त्रयः।
ख्रीपु दुष्टासु वार्षण्य जायते वर्णसंकरः ॥ ४१ ॥

By the prevalence of impiety, O Krishna, the women of the family become corrupt. Women corrupted, there will be an intermingling of the castes (varṇa-samkara), O descendant of Vrishnis (BG I:41).176

Stanza BG I:41 highlights the linkage to kinship, and specifically the maintenance of the line of varṇa. Principles of purity and pollution can be seen at play in this stanza. As discussed, a woman upon marriage takes on the varṇa of the husband. All children born to them, are therefore born to the varṇa of the husband, thus upholding the

174 The following is a modified extract by the author in an unpublished paper entitled ‘Principles of Purity and Pollution: an examination of symbols of purity and pollution by an interpretive analysis of the Triguṇa’. (Independent Honours Study, University of Queensland, 2006).
175 Sankaracarya and Gokhale, The Bhagavad-Gita : with the Commentary of Śankaracarya, p.16.
176 Ibid., p. 16.
patriarchal structure prescribed in the *Dharmaśāstras*. However, children born to another man, through adultery or out of marriage, pollutes the family in question and all of those come into contact with them. The principles of purity and pollution therefore reinforces the system of *varṇa*, kinship and associated lines of inheritance as BG I:42 below indicates.

Confusion of castes leads the family of these destroyers of families also to hell; for their forefathers fall (down to hell), deprived of *pīṇḍa* (rice ball) and water BG I:42). 177

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177 Ibid.
178 The BG is not the only Hindu text that engages kinship themes that support the *Dharmaśāstras*. The *Rāmāyaṇa*, the tale of Rāma and his wife Sītā, sees Rāma asking Sītā to prove her chastity during her period of abduction by the demon (*rākṣasa*) king of Lanka, Rāvana. In this aspect of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, BG I:40–42 is reflected. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is now a text that is now engaged by feminist’s movements in India to progress woman’s rights. Within the MB the concept of polyandry is raised as Arjuna has to share his wife with his brothers. This may reflect the MDh 9.59-61 (see page 23). Within Śaivite texts the social mores ascribed by the *Dharmaśāstras* are also visible. In the *Rudra Samhitā–Savit Khaṇḍa*, Dakṣa forbids Śiva to attend his *yajña*. Sati, Śiva’s wife, in protest kills herself and falls or throws herself upon Dakṣa’s *yajña*. Sati became the name for the immolation of woman within India and was common up until the 1980’s where a wife would kill herself by throwing herself upon her husband’s funeral pyre, again reflecting the principles of purity and pollution as defined in the *Dharmaśāstras* and the BG I:40-42 above. The same theme can be seen repeated in the *Rudra Samhitā – Kumāra Khaṇḍa*, where Gaṇeśa, not recognising his father, Śiva, forbids him entry to see his mother (Śiva’s wife), Pārvati so as to protect her chastity. Śiva in his rage kills his son, Gaṇeśa by cutting off his head. Within these examples kinship and the social mores as defined in the *Dharmaśāstras* can be seen crossing theological boundaries.
The three stanzas presented above appear in the first book of the BG, indicative of the importance of maintaining kinship relationships within the historical context of Hindu India.

The system of varṇa was not espoused in the darśana Sāṅkhya. The SK defined only a single division for the human realm (see Table 7, page 123). However the various realms of existence present a hierarchical structure that is attributed to the guṇas highlighting their function. In doing so indicates how the guṇas were employed to theorise the system of varṇa in the BG.

The BG engages the subjective attributes of the triguna extensively, defining the system of varṇa and the corresponding system of dharma. Within the BG, dharma differs for each of the four varṇas; the brahmin, kṣatriya, vaiśya and śūdra.\(^{179}\) The system of varṇa presented in the BG as spoken by Krṣṇa (विभमभवान् उवाच)\(^{180}\) possesses a close correlation to that described in the ŚB (Table 1, page 16) as follows:

\begin{verse}
ब्रह्मणक्षिर्त्यिवशां शूद्रणं च परंतपाः
कर्मणि प्रतिवेक्षितानि स्वभावग्रन्धेयाः।

tatra sattvā niśrutatvāt prakāśakamnāmyam
sukhaśāṅgān vajrātānān mārgaṇe cha na tathā॥४१॥
\end{verse}

The duties of the brahmins, kṣatriyas and the vaiśyas as also the śūdras are divided, O Parantapa, the duties are divided according to the qualities [guṇa] born of nature (BG XVIII:41).\(^{181}\)

The dharma ascribed to each varṇa reflects the attributes assigned to the dominant guṇa. The guṇa of sattva holds the following attributes:

\begin{verse}
तत्र सत्त्वं निम्नत्वात्प्रकाशकमनामयम्
सुखाङ्गेन वाः प्रतिहारी अनामस्मिन चानाद॥६॥
\end{verse}

Of these, sattva, which, from its stainlessness, is lucid and healthy, binds by attachment to happiness and by attachment to knowledge, O sinless one. (BG XIV: 6).\(^{182}\)

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\(^{179}\) See footnote 9.


\(^{181}\) Sankaracarya and Gokhale, The BG, p. 472. The commentary on this stanza by Śaṅkara highlights how even textually, the śūdra is isolated from the three other varṇas. The brahmin, kṣatriya and the vaiśya are mentioned in the one compound word, ब्रह्मणक्षिर्त्यिवशां, while the śūdra is separated and mention in a single word, शूद्रणं, highlighting the once born nature of the śūdra against the of the twice born nature of the brahmins, kṣatriya and the vaiśya.

\(^{182}\) Sankaracarya and Gokhale, The Bhagavad-Gītā : with the Commentary of Śankaracarya, p. 382
BG XVIII:42 below associates the guṇa sattva with the brahmin varṇa:

शमो दमस्तप: \( \text{शौिं} \text{क्षिन्त} \text{रा} \text{जाविेव} \text{ि} \)।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानस्तिकं \( \text{ब्रह्मकिा} \) स्वभावजि् ॥४२ ॥

Serenity, self restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness and also uprightness, knowledge, wisdom, faith – these are the duties of the brahmin born of nature (BG XVIII:42).

In addition, Śaṅkara states in his bhāṣyas on the BG that the attributes serenity and self restraint had been attributed as qualities of sattva as defined in BG: XVI 14-16.

The guṇa rajas, provides the impetus or energy that binds a individual to the cycle of saṃsāra as the following stanza of the BG indicates.

रजो \( \text{रागोत्िकं} \) विद्ध \( \text{तृणासङ्गसिुदद्भवि्} \)।
तिन्निध्नाित \( \text{कौन्तेय} \) का
सङ्गेन देिहनि् ॥७ ॥

Know thou rajas (to be) of the nature of passion, the source of thirst and attachment; it binds fast, O son of Kunti, the embodied one by attachment to action (BG XIV:7).

However the guṇa, rajas is an essential guṇa for all of humanity, providing the impetus to bind a individual to the cycle of saṃsāra. Likewise it also provides the source of energy required in the pursuit of mokṣa through jñāmārga, karmamārga, or bhaktimārga.

Action is also the psychological characteristic of the kṣatriya with energy being the dominant characteristic:

शैया \( \text{तेजो} \) \( \text{धृितदाक्ष्यं} \) \( \text{युद्धे} \) \( \text{िाप्यलायनि्} \)।
दानिीश्वरिावश्व \( \text{क्षह्ऴर्त्} \) \( \text{किा} \) स्वभावजि् ॥४३ ॥

Bravery, boldness, fortitude, promptness, not flying from battle, generosity and lordliness are the duties of the kṣatriyas, born of nature (BG XVIII : 43).

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183 Ibid., p. 474.
184 Ibid., pp. 414-415.
185 Ibid., p. 383.
186 Ibid., p. 474.
Examining the *bhāṣyas* of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, the *dharma* of the *vaiśya* and the *śūdra* are reflective of the *rajas* and *tamas*.

Recall that *tamas* provides the negative attributes of the human condition that of ignorance, illusion lust, lethargy, anger and pride, while the *guna rajas* provides the energy that may be applied for either *sattvic* or *tamasic* intent. When *rajas* in combination with *tamas* dominate, attachment is generated (BG XIV : 7), as is greed and desire (BG XIV : 8). The *gunas rajas and tamas* are the attributes that define the *dharma* of *vaiśya* and the *śūdra* (see Table 4, 5 and 6):

\[
\text{kṛṣṇa-gōra-kṣy-viṇ-jaṁ
parichāyān-karm śvabhāva jām} \quad ॥ ४४ ॥
\]

Ploughing, cattle-rearing and trade are the duties of the *vaiśyas*, born of nature. And of the nature of service is the duty of the *śūdra*, born of nature (BG XVIII: 44).\(^{187}\)

The *guna* attributes are the dispositions that a individual is born resultant of the influences of *karma*. These dispositions can be changed through the manipulation of the balance of the *gunas*, giving the individual control over the *guna* dispositions of the next rebirth.

\[
\text{yadā sattve pravṛte tān pralāye vātī devābhūtaḥ
vādītānaṁ vidantām lokaśāyaṇāpratipadabhytē} \quad ॥ १४ ॥
\]

If the embodied one meets death when *sattva* is predominant, then he attains to the spotless region of the knower’s of the highest (BG XIV:14).\(^{188}\)

\[
\text{rājas pralāya gatvā karmśaṅgaṇu jāyate}
\text{tathā pralīnāstamaśi mūḍhyoṁiṇi jāyate} \quad ॥ १५ ॥
\]

Meeting death in *rajas*, he is born among those attached to action; and, dying in *tamas*, he is born into the realms of the irrational (BG XIV:15).\(^{189}\)

\(^{187}\) Ibid.
\(^{188}\) Ibid., pp. 386-387.
\(^{189}\) Ibid., p. 387.
It is the *guna rajas* that provide the propensity to transform the individual’s nature which is determined by the proportional representation of the *triguna*. The *bhāṣyas* of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on the system of *varṇa* in the BG, (XVIII: 41, page 77), shed light into the employment of the *triguna*.

Śaṅkara’s and Rāmānuja’ used the *triguna* to theorise the system of *varṇa* as indicated in Table 4 and Table 5 on page 81. While their interpretations are similar, they do differ, highlighting Śaṅkara’s and Rāmānuja’s independent metaphysical speculations, Advaita Vedānta and Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta respectively.\(^{190}\)

Reading the *bhāṣya* of Śaṅkara, the *brahmin* is closely related with *brahman*, where only the *guna sattva* prevails, highlighting the non-duality of Advaita Vedānta where only *brahman* is *nirguna*. Rāmānuja on the other hand with his inclusion of the *guna rajas* qualifies the non-duality of humanity and *brahman*. For Rāmānuja, only *brahman* is full of *sattva*, devoid of *rajas* and *tamas*. If Rāmānuja validated Śaṅkara’s view, then the *brahmin* would hold the same metaphysical identity as *brahman*.

In incorporating *rajas* as the defining *guna* of the human realm for each of the *varṇas*, Rāmānuja appears to take a position closer to that espoused in the SK, employing all three *gunas* to describe each of the *varṇas*.\(^{191}\) For Rāmānuja, *brahman* is constituted from a single *guna*, that of *sattva*. For Śaṅkara however, *brahman* is *nirguna*. The disparate views of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja present contrasting positions on what constitutes *mokṣa*. The following tables have been constructed from their respective *bhāṣya’s* on the BG.

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\(^{190}\) Larson in Table 6 presents an amalgamation of the classification scheme presented in the *bhāṣyas* of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja and the classification scheme presented in the SK of sentient beings (Table 7).

\(^{191}\) The social classification schema presented here, portrays the *brahmin* occupying the highest position of the social order. The degree of self interest of the authors cannot be overlooked, for as will be discussed, ‘The *Varṇas* of the *Vedas*, the *brahmin* and the *kṣatriya* were the two dominant groups of Vedic society. When reading Vedic texts a mutual understanding appeared to have existed to maintain the dominance of the *brahmin* and the *kṣatriya*. The same political interpretation may be seen at play here with the authors presenting the *brahmin* as the dominant ‘class’ in the Hindu social order. When comparing the *bhāṣya’s* on the BG especially those of Śaṅkara, with the schema presented by Larson, then the *brahmins* at the time presented themselves with the qualities of the *brahman*, a status denied to the three lower *varṇas*. 
Table 4: The varṇas as theorised by guṇa assignment by Śaṅkara.\(^{192}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Realm</th>
<th>Varṇa</th>
<th>Guṇa Nature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Sattva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kṣatriya</td>
<td>Rajas/Sattva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vaiśya</td>
<td>Rajas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Śūdra</td>
<td>Tamas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: The varṇas as theorised by guṇa assignment by Rāmānuja.\(^{193}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Realm</th>
<th>Varṇa</th>
<th>Guṇa Nature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Sattva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kṣatriya</td>
<td>Rajas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vaiśya</td>
<td>Tamas/Sattva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Śūdra</td>
<td>Tamas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Larson, in his essay, *Karma as a “Sociology of Knowledge” or “Social Psychology” of Process/Praxis*, presents his own classification schema providing an amalgam of the theorisation of varṇa by Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja and the categorisation of sentient beings presented within the SK. In this amalgam, Larson highlights the separation of the divine realm of the gods and the animal realm from the fourfold human realm as espoused by the Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja.

Table 6: An amalgamation of guṇas according to Larson.\(^{194}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Realm</th>
<th>Varṇa</th>
<th>Guṇa Nature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divine</td>
<td>————</td>
<td>Sattva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Sattva/Rajas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kṣatriya</td>
<td>Rajas/Sattva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vaiśya</td>
<td>Rajas/Tamas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Śūdra</td>
<td>Tamas/Rajas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal</td>
<td>————</td>
<td>Tamas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Examining the bhāṣyas of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on the BG, it is argued that it is the concept of the triguṇa that has been employed to bind the socio-political structure of Brahmanism to the physical and the metaphysical that cumulates in the Vaiṣṇava theological text the BG.

Through employing the subjective qualities of the triguṇa as defined in the SK, a theoretical basis is established to define the qualities attributed to each varṇa. The Vedic formulation of varṇa, where tangible material properties were assigned to each of the four varṇas in the Brāhmaṇas (see 2.1), now hold cosmogenic, metaphysical and theological foundations.

The term, varṇa, holds references to the elements of the Vedic yajña, those of water, fire and earth (food) through the subjective properties of white and purity, red and energy and black and lethargy respectively. In this sense the dharma, karma, the principles of purity and pollution, and the system of varṇa; all stem from the Vedic yajña, all reinforcing the Brahmanical order. By employing the triguṇa to validate the system of varṇa, the linkages back to the Vedic yajña become visible. It is within this context the hypothesis is presented that the term, varṇa, possesses a reference to the colours of the primary elements of existence of the Vedic yajña as described in the ontology of Sāṁkhya.

In the following section an examination of aspects of Śaivism is undertaken in relation to the symbols stemming from the Vedic yajña. In doing so, Śaivism’s utilisation of the cosmogony of Sāṁkhya, specifically the triguṇa, and the metaphysics of Advaita Vedānta highlights the construction of theological knowledge in the Śaivite context. This is achieved through a brief examination of Śaivite theology of Kashmir Śaivism, and the ancient Śaivite sect, the Kāpālikas.

In addition, the symbolism associated with the sexual attributes presented in Śaivism are also examined, linking the symbols of the Vedic yajña and the subjective attributes associated with the triguṇa, to the sexual fluids of procreation. In doing a resolution to the contrasting positions of the erotic and the ascetic, as they relate to Śiva, is presented.
5.2. Śaivism

But here, O sage, the world is the object of perception. Its cause the great ātman Śiva, who should be known directly. The universe in the form of male and female is clearly perceived (KS 16. 21-22).

Thus the Śiva tattva and the Śakti tattva have been, are found in the supreme soul. With the combination of Śiva and Śakti, Oṁ achieves bliss (KS 16.33).

The complete āmatattva of both Śiva and śakti happens to be Brahman. It can be traced to the root bṛh to increase or grow. (KS 16.35).

Śaivism has developed a vast array of lineages and traditions, each with unique philosophic-cultural and linguistic characteristics. In introducing Śaivism, a choice had to be made as to which Śaivite doctrine to investigate, for like Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism has a rich and diverse history with many sects founded on the contrasting interpretations of Vedānta. Today, six major schools of Śaivism are traditionally recognised (as depicted in Figure 1) consisting of the following:

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196 Ibid., p. 282.
197 Ibid.
Kashmir Śaivism, an intensely monistic theology,
Pāśupata Śaivism, which is simultaneously monistic and theistic,
Śaiva Siddhānta, philosophically a monistic theism,
Siddha Siddhānta, a monistic theism,
Śiva Advaita, a monistic theism and
Vīra Śaivism, a qualified non-dualism.

In examining Śaivism, in particular; Kashmir Śaivism, and the ancient sect the Kāpālikas, like Vaiṣṇavism, embrace the symbolism that is associated with the Vedic yajña. In doing so, it is argued they also embraced the socio-political regime prescribed by Brahmanism.

It will also be shown that Śaivism presents strong roots that stem from the Vedas, in particular the RV, presenting Śaivism with the authority of the Vedas.

In addition Śaivism, in particular Kashmir Śaivism, incorporate the symbolism associated with the triguṇa. The triguṇa defines the attributes of the various Śaivite śaktis, the most well known being the triad (trīka) of Pārvatī, Durgā and Kālī. The śaktis are representative of the guṇa possessing the properties as defined in CU 6.5 (Table 3) in both the macrocosmic and microcosmic manifestations.

A new association of symbols of the Vedic yajña is also introduced in the examination of Śaivism, engaging the subjective properties of the guṇas. These guṇa attributes are associated with the sexual fluids of procreation; the white of semen (representative of purity), the red of menstrual blood (representative of energy), and the black of gross body (the manifest universe).

The following sections explore the symbolism stemming from the Vedic yajña presented above while exploring linkages to the Brahmanical order. In doing so a potential explanation of the paradox of Śiva as the “erotic ascetic” is also presented.
5.2.1. The *Ṛg Veda Šaivism, yajña, kinship, and the sexual metaphor*

The qualities that apply to Rudra as defined in the RV presents a number of attributes of Śiva that are of interest in this examination. The following hymn from the RV presents, not only some of the key qualities of Rudra (Śiva), but also engages the three colours associated with the Vedic *yajña* and the *triguṇa*, the white, red and black. There is also reference to the twice born, the Brahmanical conceptualisation of *varga*.

Two English translations are provided for the hymns of the RV; as numerous commentators state, this hymn has proven difficult to translate.198 This investigation begins with RV 10.61.2.

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स इद्दा॒नाय॒ दभ्या॑य व॒न्वञ्च्यवा॑न : सूदै॑रत्रममीत॒ वेत्रद॑म ्
तूवव॑याणो गू॒तवव॑चस्तम॒ : शोदो॒ न रेत॑इ॒तऊ॑त्रत त्रसञ्चत ्
॥ २ ॥
```

He (Rudra) bestowing on his worshipers the gift (of wealth) and the defeat (of their foes) casting down (the Rāksasas) with his weapons, has constructed the altar: rapid in movement, most fierce in speech, and shedding the procreative fluid like water around. (RV 10.61.2).199

The following is an alternate translation by Griffin,

Cyavāna, purposing deceptive presents, with all ingredients, made the altar ready. Most sweet-voiced Tūrvayāna poured oblations like floods of fertilizing water.200

The translations by Wilson and Griffith of RV 10.61.2 highlight the association of the sacrificial fire and procreation. It likens the procreative fluid, semen, with water (“fertilizing water”). Both Griffith and Wilson concur on this point.

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RV 10.61.4 introduces the second and third symbolic elements associated with the Vedic *yajña* with the engagement of the colour red (*arūṇa, अरुण*), and the colour black (*kṛṣṇā, कृष्णा*).

When the dark night retires before the purple oxen (of the chariots of the dawn), I invoke you, *aśvins*, children of heaven: be desirous of my sacrifice: come to my food and the viands like (two horses) eating together, oblivious of offence (RV 10.61.4).201

I call on you, the son of Dyaus, the *aśvins*, that a cow to my red kin be added. Enjoy my sacrifice, come to my viands, contented, not deceiving expectation (RV 10.61.4).202

Interpretations of this hymn raise some interesting correlations with the *darśana* Sāṁkhya, and the process of procreation. Wilsons translation “dark night [black] retires before the purple oxen [red] of the chariots of dawn [white]” and Ludwigs translation, “When the black sits among the red cows; that is, while it is still dark, but the grey of the morning is beginning to appear”, see white dispelling black while red remains, the colour of *rajas*, the dominant defining *guna* of the human realm. The colours of the Vedic *yajña* are employed in a manner that is reflective of the attributes of the *trīguna*, but predated the *gunas* codification by over one-thousand years.203

The call to the *Aśvins* in hymn 61.4 of chapter 10, of the RV introduces what may form the basis of the *puruṣa–prakṛti* dualism as introduced in Section 3.2 on Sāṁkhya. In this sense there is a correlation with the *aśvins* and the duality of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* in manifesting the universe, for the *Aśvins*, as twins, may represent a duality. The celestial twins, the *Aśvins*, are called upon to witness and accept the Vedic *yajña* being performed, so as to

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201 Sayana and others, *Rg Veda Samhitā*, p. 336.
203 Ibid., p.505.
prevent the heaven from falling (*divo napāta*, दिवो नपात). Yet heaven does fall and the universe is created as the following three hymns explain.

(Rudra), the benefactor of man, whose eagervirile energy was developed, drew it back when disseminated (for the generation of offspring); again the irresistible (Rudra) concentrates (the energy) which was communicated to his maiden daughter (*RV 10.61.5*).

When the deed was done in mid-heaven in the proximity of the father working his will, and the daughter coming together, they let the seed fall slightly; it was poured upon the high place of the sacrifice (*RV 10.61.6*).

When the father united with his daughter, then associating with the earth, he sprinkled it with effusion: then the thoughtfully gods begot *brahma*; they fabricated the lord of the hearth (of the sacrifice); the defender of the sacred rites (*RV 10.61.7*).

In the three hymns above (*RV 10.61.4-7*), Rudra, full of sensual desire for his daughter unites with her, (*RV 10.61.6*) where together, Rudra’s seed fall upon the *yajña* and upon the earth (*RV 10.61.7*).

There are three major themes presented here, firstly, the Vedic *yajña*. As presented in this thesis, the Vedic *yajña*, consisting of a fire, lit upon the earth, was fed by fuel and was

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204 Sayana and others, *Rg Veda Samhitā*, p. 336.
205 Ibid.
206 Ibid., pp.336-337.
207 Ibid., p.337.
purified by water. Within the context of the hymns (RV 10.61.4-7), the Vedic *yajña* establishes another dimension. The “high place of the Vedic *yajña*” (RV 10.61.6), is not the traditional sacrificial altar, but it is arguably the genitalia of Rudra’s daughter.

This interpretation is supported if taken in the context of the two translations of the BU 6.4.3 (page 91) which states using the translation of Wilson, “the genital of female is the altar for offering”, a translation that corresponds to Olivelle’s translation; “her vulva is the sacrificial ground”.

Within the hymns presented above, a new definition of the Vedic *yajña* is being established; water is replaced with the male reproductive fluid, sperm, while the altar consists of female genitalia. Such a presentation, as will be highlighted shortly, holds a direct correlation to the Śiva *liṅga* and *yoni* presented in the many forms that may be witnessed in temples, homes and along the sides of roads in India today (see Figure 12, page 90).

The second inference that can be established from RV 10.61.7 is the depiction of sexual union of the *devā* and *devī* (god and goddess). This sexual union was deemed responsible for the manifestation of the universe by the “associat[ion] with the earth, he sprinkled it [the earth] with effusion (semen)”. Importantly if Rudra had control over his desire (*kāma*), the universe would not have been manifested. This presents an insight into the means to achieve *mokṣa*, for it can be argued through control of the Self, through mastery of *Kama*, the individual *ātman* returns to the un-manifest.

With the unity of the father and the daughter being responsible for the creation of the manifest world, another potential source of the dualism that is represented in Sāṅkhya is presented. Rudra and his daughter may present the basis of the Sāṅkhyan dualism, *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. The associated sexual inferences of the RV are reoccurring themes in Śaivism and can be seen developing from the RV through various Upaniṣads.

The dualism presented in the RV 10.6 sees hallmarks of what was to become in Śaivite cosmogony: a means to unite the microcosmic and the macrocosmic; the physical with the metaphysical, through the employment of the human attributes of procreation.

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208 Joshi, Bimali, and Trivedi, eds., *112 Upaniṣads*, vol 1, p.311.
Thirdly, from Wilson’s translation of RV 10.61.5, a potential correlation exists with Doniger O’Flaherty’s description of Śiva in the title of one of her books, Śiva: The Erotic Ascetic. Doniger O’Flaherty’s discusses the “central paradox of Śaiva mythology”, where Śiva is depicted as “the great ascetic god”, yet is know also as the “god of the phallus”;\(^\text{210}\) two contrasting, but as will be shown, mutually supporting positions. To reconcile these contrasting aspects of Śiva, the Sāṅkhyaan aspect of the triguṇa and the Brahmanical concept of puruṣārtha are engaged.

5.2.2. The triguṇa and reproduction

The following stanzas link the attributes of the triguṇa to the elements that engage procreation. BU 6.4.2-3 expands upon the concept of the Vedic yajña introducing new sets of symbols that become associated with the triguṇa.

\[\text{स ह प्रजापतिरिखाच्ये हन्तसमूहा कल्लयानीति स खिर्यः समुजे। ताँ सुधवाच उपासत। तस्मात् खिर्याभ्य उपासीत। स एवं प्रांवं याननमात्मवं एव समुदधारयत्। तेनानायमुप्जत्॥२॥}\]

Prajāpati wished that he should prepare a resort for the semen (person). He created the woman (the feminine element) and worshiped her considering the base of his clan. This is the reason woman still is adored as a basis of the universe. That Prajāpati had satiated that woman by application of his extreme power alike the boulder. Due to such establishment the female had got prestige in the world (BU 6.4.2).\(^\text{211}\)

Prajāpati then thought to himself: Now why don’t I prepare a base for that semen? So he created woman and, after creating her, had intercourse with her. A man, therefore, should have intercourse with a woman. Prajāpati stretched out from himself the elongated stone for pressing Soma and impregnated her with it (BU 6.4.2).\(^\text{212}\)

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\(^{211}\) Joshi, Bimali, and Trivedi, eds., 112 Upaniṣads, vol 1, p. 311.

\(^{212}\) Olivelle, The Early Upanishads, p. 154-155.
Two translations of the Sanskrit text are presented above for they offer subtle but important variations in the translations. The first translation holds references to kinship to which the Brahmanical order is linked. Both translations refer to procreation and we see elements that are crucial in the formation of Śāṅkhyan philosophy, the Vedic yajña, and the duality of the male and the female. This unity can be seen represented in one of the most common icons visible in India today, an icon central to Śaivism, the elongated stone as mentioned in BU 6.4.2, representing Śiva's linga rising from the yoni (see Figures 12 and 13).

![Figure 12: Roadside linga. A form of altar. (Pavan 2005: 34-35).](image)

![Figure 13: An early statue of linga and yoni found at Mohenjo Daro, Indus Valley dated between 2300-1750 B.C. Current location: National Museum Karachi, Pakistan (Huntington: 1983).](image)

While representations of the male and female united in maithuna dominate above, the female form is represented in its own right. The yoni, in isolation, also takes the form of the altar as BU 6.4.3 below indicates:

\[
\text{तास्या वेदीरुपस्यो लोमानि वहिन्द्रमाधिषिकवर् समिद्रो मध्यतस्ती मुक्तो। स यावानि। वाजपेयिव वजमानस्य लोकों भवति नावानस्य लोकों भवति। य एवं वेदानूः धोप्पाः तर्कासि खीणाः मुक्तं बृहत्कं। अयं य इदमाविप्रीयोघोप्पाः चर्त्यास्य चिरयास्य विविधम: मुक्तं वृहत्कं।}
\]
The genital of female is the altar for offering, the cluster of hairs existing there are like a sheet made of kusa grass, the flesh of the middle part is the edge of Adhiśavana [soma press], the middle part is the blazing fire and the two fleshy limbs existing collaterally are the fuel. Thus the fruit of this reproducing offering is equal to the offering of Vājapeya. The client (the man) who performs this offering of reproducing with this knowledge of this fact attains the great deeds of the female but the females attain the great deeds of a man who is merely sensual but have no knowledge of this fact (BU 6.4.3).²¹³

Her vulva is the sacrificial ground; her pubic hair is the sacred grass; her labia majora is the soma press; and her labia minora is the fire blazing at the centre. A man who engages in sexual intercourse with thus knowledge obtains as great a world as a man who performs a Soma sacrifice, and he appropriates to himself the merits of the woman with whom he has sex. The women, on the other hand, appropriate to themselves the merits of a man whom engages in sexual intercourse with them without this knowledge (BU 6.4.3).²¹⁴

The Vedic yajña as discussed so far has consisted of the white of water, the red of fire and the black of earth (food). In BU 6.4.3 above, see the engagement of the elements of the Vedic yajña; water, fire and food (earth), linked with the human procreation. The Vedic yajña now takes the form of female genitalia, being directly referred to as the

²¹³ Joshi, Bimali, and Trivedi, eds., 112 Upaniṣads, vol 1, pp. 311-312.
²¹⁴ Olivelle, The Early Upanishads, p. 155.
Engaging the female genitalia as a sacrificial altar highlights another linkage between the macrocosmic and the microcosmic. The relationship between Rudra and his daughter, in its creative aspect is mirrored within the human realm. The procreative aspect of the human realm is also venerated for it is reflective of the creative aspect of brahman.

BU 6.4.4 below highlights a new linkage of the symbols of the Vedic yajña. Water, fire and food (earth), are now equated with semen, menstrual blood, and the gross body respectively.

As per the opinion of Āruṇi Uddālaka, Maudgalya and Kumāra Hārita, experts in this subject that there are a number of immortal and stupid Brāhmaṇas who do not know this offering of reproduction so sacred as it is. They loss the fruit of their deed, attached to the sensuality and having attachment only in cohesion befell from the best world. In case, the devotee to the breathing element discharge their semen owing to any of reason in the day or in the night and prior to the menstruation of their wives, they should repent with recital of the successive hymns (BU 6.4.4).

BU 6.4.4 above highlights the importance of semen and menstruation in association to kinship. As discussed in the section on Vedānta, some Vedāntic interpretations see pure sattva, devoid of rajas and tamas as the defining attribute of the celestial realm. The creative aspect of semen as applied to the divas is deemed responsible for the manifestation of the universe. BU 6.4.3 above sees semen taking on the symbolic element of sattva through the association of element of semen with Vājapeya and soma.

The connections between sexual fluids and the three primary constituents of the triguna; water fire and food (earth), continue in the CU. Earlier in stanza 6.4.1 of the CU (page 43), reference was made associating white with water red with fire, black with food.

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216 Joshi, Bimali, and Trivedi, eds., 112 Upanisads, vol 1, p 312.
And it thought to itself: ‘Let me become many. Let me propagate myself’. It emitted heat. The heat thought to itself: ‘Let me become many. Let me propagate myself’. It emitted water. Whenever it is hot therefore, a man surely perspires; and thus it is from heat that water is produced. The water thought to itself ‘Let me become many. Let me propagate myself’. It emitted food. Whenever it rains, therefore, food becomes abundant; and thus it is from water that foodstuffs are produced (CU 6.2.3-4).  

In CU 6.2.3-4 the relationship between fire and water, heat stems from the womb, water is emitted in the plural, indicative of the plurality of puruṣa. Through the union of water and heat, food is produced, as puruṣa only becomes manifest upon interaction with prakṛti.

Water is presented with the power to propagate, the property of semen. When the thought to propagate arises, heat (red and menstrual blood) is generated and with water falling upon the earth (black) and new life is created. CU 6.2.3-4 is reflective of the RV 10.61.5-7 of Rudra and his daughter presented previously in this section, where Rudra’s seed fell upon the ground and clearly highlights the linkage between the āgs and the sexual fluids of procreation.

BU 6.4.5 below stresses the power attributed to semen and the importance placed upon it.

By addressing the discharged semen one should touch it and say that my semen is discharged on the earth and sometime before it also dropped on the medicine and the water. I wish to regain that semen. With these words he should lift up the semen by application of the thumb and the ring finger, put it on the chest and at the middle of both eyes. It should be smeared thereupon with the words – “May this discharge power of genital organ (the semen) return again to me. May I regain my splendor and good luck. May the fir god and the other gods replace it at the proper place in my body (BU 6.4.5).  

218 Joshi, Bimali, and Trivedi, eds., 112 Upanisads, vol 1, p. 312.
It cannot be overstated the importance of procreation in Śaivite theology. The power attributed to semen and its association with the divas and the guṇa attribute sattva, introduces a practice of the saṁnyāśi, that of semen retention; a subject that will be discussed in the next sub-section (5.2.3).

The creative aspect of reproduction between man and woman is a common, if not a central theme, amongst many of the Upaniṣads. The creative power of brahman in the macrocosmic is replicated in the microcosmic between man and woman.

The incestuous relationship that exists between Rudra and his daughter, driven by desire, and the need to procreate as presented above introduces the dichotomy that exists in the nature of Śiva, on the one hand his ascetic nature, while maintaining an erotic persona. This dichotomy can be resolved through the engagement of the Dharmaśāstras, in particular the attributes assigned to the saṁnyāśi and the grhastya.

5.2.3. Śiva and the saṁnyāśi

In Wilsons translation of RV 10.61.5 (page 87), an early depiction of the Tantric ritual of seminal retention presents as an important aspect of the Hindu ascetic. The statement “Eagervirile energy was developed, drew it back when disseminated” is supported in BU 6.4.5 (page 93) where again the concept of seminal retention is engaged. In Sāṁkhya the guṇa sattva is deemed the highest of the three guṇas, and depending on the Vedāntic metaphysical interpretation taken, sattva is the defining attribute of the gods. Semen being the singular most fundamental attribute of the gods within (RV 10.61.5-7) an equivalence is witnessed between the attributes of sattva and the essence attributed to semen.

Being attributed the creative powers of the gods, semen is attributed to hold the energy (tejas) of man as well (BU 6.4.5). It was thought that a brahmin, through abstinence harnesses the essence of creation, an essence that was present within his own semen. Again the Hindu concept of the macrocosmic and microcosmic is engaged, where what exists in the celestial realm, exists in the human realm. The microcosmic mimics the macrocosmic.

The retention of semen was considered to enhance the ascetic’s tejas (radiant energy). In harnessing the creative forces of semen, the saṁnyāśi harnesses the creative
forces of the cosmos. In doing so the saṁnyāsi becomes closer to the Divine, an attribute reflected in the bhāṣyas of Śaṅkara on the BG and as indicated in Table 4, page 81 and the power attributed to the sacred cow of India as highlighted in Appendix I, Purity and Pollution, page 127. It is said that if a highly developed saṁnyāsi is cut, he bleeds not blood, but semen.²¹⁹

The retention of tejas, presents a path to mokṣa for the saṁnyāsi as it gives the saṁnyāsi the control of kāma (MDh: 5.159). If Rudra had control of kāma, the universe would not have been manifested. Therefore through the human control of kāma, a human will not be re-manifested, reborn. Again the macrocosmic can be seen reflected in the microcosmic.

5.2.4. Śiva and the gṛhastya

A contrasting position is presented when looking at the gṛhastya. For the gṛhastya, mokṣa is achieved through procreation. A son releases his father from the cycle of saṁsāra at the time of death through the funerary rites (page 124). This presents a paradox in itself: for in order to gain liberation from the cycle of rebirth, one must beget an offspring; specifically a male child, engaging again concepts of kinship (see page 18).

These two contrasting positions of the saṁnyāsi and the gṛhastya, presents the two positions that present an apparent paradox that encompasses Śiva. The erotic form can be seen as being representative of the gṛhastya who carries out his obligations of puruṣārtha. While the ascetic form of Śiva is representative of the saṁnyāsi engaging in his ascetic practices.

Both the saṁnyāsi and the gṛhastya fulfill their social obligations as defined by the Brahmanical concept of caturvarṇāśrama. Śiva, the “erotic ascetic”, can therefore be reconciled by simply recognizing the Śiva’s omnipresence and Śiva’s representation of both Brahmanical paths to liberation, the saṁnyāsi and the gṛhastya.

5.2.5. Śakti and Tantric mastery over desire

My meaning of brahmacharya is this: "One who never has any lustful intention, who . . . has become capable of lying naked with naked women . . . without being in any manner whatsoever sexually excited” (M. K. Gandhi).

So far we have discussed two sexual dimensions of Hindu thought, the saṁnyāsi, and the role of father, duplicating the creative role of Śiva, and in doing so fulfilling the requirements of the socio-political order defined in the Dharmaśāstras and providing a method of liberation through the fathering of a son to conduct his funerary rites upon his death. These are arguably two of the three sides of Hindu sexual practices that lead to mokṣa.

The third major theology in the Hindu context is Śāktism, a theology closely associated with Śaivism. Of interest specifically, is the left handed Tantric practice of the śakti. These tantric practices merge the practices of the saṁnyāsi and the gṛhastya through the paradoxical practice of ascetism while engaged in maithuna, sexual intercourse; the practice of śakti-sadhana, self control through sexual intercourse.

Kāma, or more precisely overcoming kāma is the central theme, and in the practice of śakti-sādhana, the method employed to tempt the practitioner to the nth degree. The sādhaka, the skilled practitioner, first practiced with his wife (svashakti or ādyāśakti, the technical term in Tantra of the wife or ādyā-śakti). Once passions are conquered the siddha (one who has attained the highest object) is permitted another śakti (paraśakti). The Pranatoshini states, “a man shall obtain siddha with his own śakti, and afterwards he should make japa with paraśakti”. The paraśakti is a superior woman who is in the body of kuṇḍalinī śakti. The practice defeats kāma, presenting another method to negate the ahaṁkāra, the negation of the Self and the achievement of mokṣa. Tantrism

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220 See Appendix I : Karma; The Funerary Rites, Page 114.
221 Maithuna actually has eight forms. There is ashtāṅga maithuna-, smaranam (thinking about maithuna), kīrtanam (talking about maithuna) kelih (play with women), prekshanam (looking upon women), guhyabhāśanam (talk in private with women), sangkalpah (wish or resolve for maithuna), adhyavasāyah (determination towards it), as well as kriyāniśśhatth (actual accomplishment) (Vidyaratna 2004:6).
222 One of the most well known partitioners of this practice is Mahatma Ghandi. Ghandi had taken the vow of the Brahmachari, to abstain from sex. To ensure that he had overcome the last vestige of desire he would sleep naked with his grand-niece, Manu. In Gandhi’s view, a man who could ‘lay by the side of a Venus, in all her naked beauty, without being physiologically or mentally disturbed’ was the perfect Brahmachari (Gopi Krishna 1995).
223 Vimalananda and Avalon, Karpūrā Distotram, pp. 6-7.
can be seen as an attempt to reconcile the grhastya and the saṁnyāsi through the mastery or harnessing of kāma; denying oneself pleasure (the goal of the saṁnyāsi), while engaged in the most primal aspect of humanity, the act of sex (the dharma of the grhastya).

This presents three sides of sexual practices and three means to mokṣa, as a single means for each aspect of control of the self. Again the goal is to negate what is termed in Sāṁkhyan parlance, the ahaṁkāra. The sexual fluids associated with procreation take the attributes of the triguṇa, the constituent components that in their entirety are representative of prakṛti, the feminine aspect of the manifest universe.

The following section examines Kashmir Śaivism, and the ancient Pāśupata sub-sect, the Kāpālikas, to highlight how Brahmanism, Sāṁkhya and Vedānta are united in Śaivite theology. In looking at Kashmir Śaivism, the masculine and the feminine are presented in the form of Śiva and śakti. Furthermore, additional attributes of the feminine in both the manifest and un-manifest form are introduced.

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224 The most well known contemporary practitioner of such methods is arguably Mahatma Gandhi, where he practised an extreme form of ascetism by sleeping naked with his niece to ensure that he did no become aroused.
5.3. Kashmir Śaivism

We bow to Śiva Who is eternally illumines by the lamp of the power of his knowledge the many objects lying in the great Cave of Māyā (īP 1).  

Briefly recapping the material covered thus far, the socio-political aspects of Hinduism, in particular Brahmanism, has been defined. The darśana of Śāṅkhya was introduced defining the cosmogony of the manifest universe according to early Hindu belief. The concept of the triguṇa, along with the symbolism associated with the triguṇa as it evolved from the primary elements of the yajña; water, fire and food (earth), has been discussed. The diverse metaphysical interpretations of Vedānta, its linkage to Śāṅkhya, and the contrasting conceptualisation of the Divine was observed.

When examining Kashmir Śaivism, the influence of Advaita Vedānta can be seen in the operation of two primary principles. Firstly, the relationship between brahman and human realm in Kashmir Śaivism defines a non-duality between brahman and ātman, a relationship that is ascribed to Advaita Vedānta. Yet within Kashmir Śaivism brahman possessing the attributes of a personal god which are akin to those postulated by Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. Secondly, Kashmir Śaivism engages in the concept of māyā albeit reinterpreted from the original definition espoused by Śaṅkara from the form of the ahaṁkāra. As will be discussed, the fluid interpretations of the physical, metaphysical and theological can be witnessed in Kashmir Śaivism.

The concept of brahman in monistic Advaita Vedānta assumes that brahman, while pure is detached, brahman is divorced from the manifest universe, the manifest likened to “play” to brahman. In Śāṅkhya, the nature of puruṣa is non-causal. Both the nature of brahman espoused in Advaita Vedānta and the nature of puruṣa as defined in Śāṅkhya is denied in Śaivism. The nature of Śiva and śakti is perceived as dynamic, and thus the

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226 The darśanas Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika defining the Hindu system of logic and physics have not been engaged, for while relevant in discussing Śaivism the atomic theory espoused is denied in Vedānta and adds an unnecessary complexity to the arguments being presented and steers the argument away from the central theme of the symbols associated with the Vedic sacrifice.
227 For an extended analysis that engages all of the aspects above, it is recommended that one starts their examination through the works of Abhinavagupta, particularly his work, the Tantraloka.
*tattvas* responsible for the manifestation of the universe, are seen manifestations of Śiva himself (similar to the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedāntan concept). Śiva is perceived in the form of Divine vibration that permeates the manifest universe, a vibration referred to as *spanda*. *Spanda* energy, the eternal pulsation of Śiva is the “creative-cum-destructive activity of Reality”, reflected in the personality of Śiva himself, the theme of many of the stories on Śiva that can be read in the Śiva Mahāpurāṇa (ŚMp).

As can be seen in Figure 15 (page 100), the first twenty five *tattvas* espoused in Kashmir Śaivism are based on the twenty five *tattvas* of Sāṁkhya. However, the non-causal nature espoused by Sāṁkhya is replaced by an additional eleven *tattvas*, attributing cause to the Śiva - śakti dualism. While a dualism is implied when referring to Śiva and śakti, one must note that the Śiva - śakti duality, is a manifestation of the non-dual Paramaśiva which is inclusive of Śiva and śakti. Therefore unlike Advaita Vedānta where *brahman* is pure but detached, Śiva is actively present within every element which is inclusive of māyā.

*Spanda* is responsible for the physical manifestation of the *tattvas*, with each lower *tattva* representing a ‘more gross’, or slower vibration of the preceding *tattva*. The higher *tattvas* are always hidden by the lower *tattvas*, yet each *tattva* holds within it all the preceding *tattvas*. Therefore each of the thirty six *tattvas* prescribed in Kashmir Śaivism are Paramaśiva vibrating at different frequencies.

*Spanda* energy emanates from the macrocosmic level, at the microcosmic level the sense of I’ ness, the ahaṁkāra, again as in Sāṁkhya is dictated by the balance of the *triguṇa*, of which the attributes of the macrocosmic *spanda* is reflected in the microcosmic *triguṇa*. *Sattva* presents the knowledge required for mokṣa, rajas, the action or effort required to realise mokṣa, while *tamas* presents the will of attachment to be manifest.

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229 Ibid., pp. 36-37.
230 Ibid., pp. 107-108.
Figure 15: The thirty-six (36) *tattvas* of Kashmir Śaivism.


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Figure 16: The three (3) devīs of the trika and the trident.\textsuperscript{232}

Spanda or pure consciousness is the neutral term for this recurrent “creative-cum-destructive” activity. Be it the male form of Śiva, or the female form or śakti, a polarity exists consisting of two phases of consciousness, inner to outer and outer to inner, from the subtle to the gross and from the gross to the more subtle (see Figure 15). A representation of this duality is presented in images of the Divine hermaphrodite, as shown after the front cover of this thesis.

These two phases represent the supreme (parā) and lower (aparā) form of Śiva. It is at the intermediate level, parāparā, that reality is experienced, the moment of cosmic manifestation. Parā, Parāparā and Aparā are the attributes of śakti possessing the attributes of knowledge, action, and will respectively, presenting the three fold vibration responsible for Śiva’s manifestation of the universe.

The attributes of Parā, Parāparā, and Aparā, present a direct correlation to aspects of the triguna, being representative of the macrocosmic aspects of the triguna. Parā is the supreme; she is white, luminous and benevolent, aspects attributed to the guna sattva. Parāparā, is the intermediate devī, presented as red and wrathful. Finally, there is Aparā, the lower devī, dark red, furious and terrifying, attributes that correspond to the popular devīs, Pārvatī, Durgā and Kālī respectively.

Figure 16 above presents the three devīs of the trika in the form of a maṇḍala. This maṇḍala is significant, for each devī is depicted upon an individual prong of Śiva’s trident (triśūla). The body is a depiction of the lower twenty five lower tattvas as described in Sāṁkhya, while the higher regions are associated with tattvas twenty six through to thirty six (as per Figure 15).

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233 The gross objects are objective in their ‘true’ nature; however our perception of them is subjective. To perceive the gross objects as they truly are, and individual needs to move back towards and beyond māyā. Again the psychology as prescribed in Sāṁkhya is present.


235 Ibid., p. 89.

236 Ibid., p. 82.

237 Within Śaivism and Śāktism, the attributes of the guṇas can also be seen reflected in other devīs, for example Pārvatī, Durgā and Kālī, reflecting the guṇas sattva, rajas, and tamas respectively, Durgā and Kālī being aspects of Pārvatī.

238 Bühnemann, Maṇḍalas and Yantras in the Hindu Traditions., p. 235.
A direct correlation exists between the three prongs of the *triśūla* and the three *dei’s* of the *trika* as the following extract from Abhinavagupta’s *Tantrāloka* (TĀ) indicates:

अस्मिद्धातं श्राभिः स्वतीभूतिविशतितं त्रिशूलत्वमतः प्राह शास्ता
विषुवेशासने निंजनिवं चोकं गुरुभवत्वदर्शिनि:
तोलीभूतिः शक्तिशिरं तत्त्वावलक्ष्म गुरुवाणाशु समावेशाद् भवेद योगी

It is for this reason that at this particular stage—the fourteenth—the three powers of the willing, knowing and acting are fully evident. In the Śri Pūrva, the Lord calls this stage the trident...The trident is thus nothing more than the triad of powers in a state of fusion and balance. As a result of the absorption in the trident the yogin quickly achieves a condition of the un-manifest (TĀ 3.104a-105, 108). 239

In examining Figure 16 (page 101), the relationship between the three *devīs* of the *trika* and the *triguna* becomes apparent. The three *devīs* of the *trika* are representative of the macrocosmic while the *triguna* is representative of the microcosmic; what exists without, exists within, again CU 6.5 as presented in Table 3 is engaged.

The qualities applied to each of the prongs of Śiva’s *triśūla* correspond to the first set of properties attributed to the *devīs* of the *trika* above. The three prongs of the *triśūla* of Śiva are also directly correlated to the *triguna* in the contemporary sense, with each prong being representative of a single *guna*, a *guna* that corresponds to the appropriate *devī* of the *trika*. The *triśūla* is also representative of the destroyer of the *ahaṁkāra*; as is indicated above (TĀ 3.104a-105). The nature of the *ahaṁkāra* and consciousness within Kashmir Śaivism corresponds to the four levels of consciousness as espoused in Advaita Vedānta. *Turīya* however, instead of being the pure consciousness of *brahman*, is now attributed to the pure consciousness of Śiva.

As has been argued throughout this thesis, and again witnessed in Kashmir Śaivism, the concept of Self originates in the Vedic *yajña* through the engagement of Sāṁkhya and Vedānta, but now in a fully theistic form that embraces the underlying metaphysical and cosmological concepts originating from the Vedic *yajña*. The Vedic *yajña* is present in a different form when examining the early Śaivite, and somewhat contentious sect, the Kāpālikas.

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5.4. Kāpālikas

Of all the Śaivite sects, the sect known as the Kāpālikas (also referred to as Mahāvratins), a sub-sect of Pāśupata Śaivism (Figure 2), holds a reputation of practicing the most extreme of religious practices deemed by society as excessive and objectionable. Desai describes the Kāpālika sect as “anti-Vedic”, yet an early reference in the Yājñavalkya-smṛti (100-300CE) prescribes a penance for one who has killed a brahman that reflects the practices of the Kāpālikas.

With a skull (śiraḥ-kapālī) and a staff (in his hands, living on alms, announcing his deed (as he begs) and eating little food, the killer of a brahmin may be purified after twelve years.

This early reference describes some of the attributes associated with the Kāpālika sect, highlighting an origin that stems from Brahmanical texts.

Kāpālikas worship Bhairava-Śiva and his consort, the horrific aspect of Śiva along with the consort Kālī and Chaṇḍikā (recall the threefold aspects of sakti, Pārvatī and her sattva nature, Durgā’s rajas nature and Kālī’s tamas nature as per Footnote 237 and page 102). These saṁnyāsis lived in cremation grounds, smeared themselves in ashes and wore necklaces of human skulls from which they ate. They shouted obscenities in public and partook in human sacrifice. Yet these attributes and their practices hold links that originated in the Vedas and as highlighted above hold to the law described by Brahmanism.

The associated symbols of the yajña have been central to this thesis, the Kāpālikas engaged in this symbolism to the fullest by living within the funerary grounds, fully employing the primary elements associated with the Vedic yajña; water, fire and food (earth).

The Kāpālikas, in their rituals used the corpse itself as the sacrificial altar. In the Harsha-Carita, a biography of the seventh century king Harasha, a story is told of the

Kāpālika Bhairava who took King Harsha as a pupil and asked the king to partake in a nocturnal rite typical of the Kāpālikas. Bhairava anointed a corpse with red sandalwood, and painted black (Bhairava), wearing only black garments seated himself upon the chest of the corpse and lit a fire within the corpses mouth. Bhairava then feed black sesame seeds into the fire lit within the corpse’s mouth while reciting magical incarnations.

The description that king Harasha sees the symbolism of colours and sexual attributes associated with the Vedic yajña being employed by the Kāpālikas. The red of the sandalwood and the fire, again representative of rajas and the feminine procreative aspect, the corpse representative of tamas, and the seeds being representative of sattva, and the male procreative aspect. While the seeds are black, there is little doubt of there association with semen, for the result of the yajña was the birth of a “fierce looking spirit”. 242

The Kāpālikas were also criticised for rejecting the concept of caste, yet the saṁnyāsi as discussed is a valid Brahmanical practice, a practice that once undertaken sees the abandonment of ones caste. 243 The Kāpālikas in general appear to recognise and accept Brahmanical law when examining the symbolism employed within their rituals.

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6. Conclusion

Through desire (kāma) the universe was manifested; to return the manifested world to the un-manifest requires the mastery over desire. However the manifest is where we reside, so to help maintain and control over the manifest the brahmin used the sacrifice, the Vedic yajña, to communicate to the un-manifest. The elements of the Vedic yajña took on the symbolic attributes that became represented by individual devīs. In time these symbolic elements forming the backbone of the Hindu darśana, Sāṃkhya in the form of the triguna. The attributes of the triguna can be witnessed in the physical, psychological, metaphysical and theological attributes of Hindu thought. In linkages to desire (kāma), guṇa attributes were reflected in the fluids of procreation, taking on the same physical, metaphysical and theological properties.

Human psychology is explained through the balance of the guṇas, which could be theorised through the use of the triguna to define dividual’s varṇa and the closely associated dharma. The negation of the guṇas presented a means to liberation from the cycle of rebirth, from saṃsāra. To negate the guṇas, negated any further accumulation of karma, to negate the guṇas, the Self itself is negated. Once a dividual is nirguṇa, devoid of all karma, mokṣa is achieved.

In examining the guṇas, the linkage to the Vedic yajña is arguable the most important of all. Through this linkage, the socio-political system of Brahmanism is supported, specifically the system of varṇa. It has been argued the symbols of the Vedic yajña; water, fire and earth, both defined and bound Hindu cosmogony, psychology, metaphysics and theology. Importantly, it has been argued, that the elements of the Vedic yajña, bound Hindu cosmogony, psychology, metaphysics and theology to the socio-economic and political system of Brahmanism, each an individual discipline complex in its nature, yet complementary to each of the other disciplines presented.

It has been argued that the freedom to freely explore and debate metaphysical and theological principles can be potentially related to two defining aspects of Hinduism. Firstly, the Hindu concept of Self, the psychology presented in Sāṅkhya, restricts the claim to a singular Divine authority due to the subjective nature of perception Sāṅkhya espouses. Secondly, while all human perception in the Hindu context is considered subjective,
through the embracement of the symbols of the Vedic yajña, the socio-political order of Brahmins is given authority.

All metaphysical and theological speculations researched for this thesis that engage the symbols of the Vedic yajña, have been in general considered orthodox, or āstika. A major exception in the historical sense is of the Śaivite sect, the Kāpālikas. Yet as has been shown, the Kāpālikas presented a Brahmanical orthodoxy when the symbols and practices of the Kāpālikas are examined. The Kāpālikas through their engagement of the practice ascribed by caturvarṇāśrama and through their employment of both the symbols associated with the sacrifice, and the act of sacrifice itself, appear to conform to the socio-political constraints ascribed by Brahmanism. Within this context, it has been argued that one means a Hindu text may claim Vedic authority is through the employment of the symbols of the Vedic yajña. The symbols allow disparate and contradictory lines of thought to be united being representative of differing aspects of the Divine.

The sexual attributes presented in Śaivism employ the symbols of the Vedic yajña linking the macrocosmic to the microcosmic, the masculine and the feminine, the manifest and the un-manifest, linked by the attributes ascribed to the triguṇa. Additionally, through linking Brahmanical thought with Śaivism, the contrasting and apparently conflicting attributes of Śiva, the erotic and the ascetic, can be resolved.

The symbols associated with the Vedic yajña in all Hindu texts examined have dominated, presenting a strong linkage to Brahmanism. As highlighted, one of the most defining attributes of Brahmanism has been shown to be the socio-political system of varṇa. The bhāṣyas of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja highlight how the Vedic yajña, can be theorised through the employment of the triguṇa.

This linkage of the system of varṇa to the Vedic yajña, through the triguṇa, presents the final hypothesis of this thesis. The term varṇa is usually referred to in academic texts, to infer the colour of skin or the cardinal points of the Vedic yajña. However, the reference to the colours associated with the elements of the Vedic yajña, is a common occurrence throughout many of the early Hindu texts examined in this thesis. The underlining importance of the Vedic yajña, in particular the primary elements of the Vedic yajña; water, fire and earth (food), and their associated colours, lead to the
hypothesis that the term, varṇa, poses a reference to the colours of the elements of the Vedic yajña itself, the white of water, the red of fire and the black of earth and/or food.

It has been highlighted throughout this thesis that the system of Brahmanism is engaged in all metaphysical and theological Hindu thought investigated in this study. In so doing, the texts examined supported the power/knowledge relationships presented by the Brahmanical order. The close linkages between the cosmogony of Sāṅskhya, the metaphysics of Vedānta and the theologies of Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism (and Śāktism) are tightly bound to, and inseparable from the symbols of the Vedic yajña.

As Foucault argues; relationships of power and knowledge are intertwined and inseparable. Systems of knowledge define society and reflect the relationships of power embedded in society. Throughout this thesis it has been highlighted how relationships of power are intertwined throughout Hindu cosmological, metaphysical and theological speculation. These power/knowledge relationships of historical Hindu can be witnessed within the ancient Brahmanical lawbooks known as the Dharmaśāstras. The power/knowledge relationships that tie the cosmological, metaphysical and theological aspects of Hinduism with the socio-political constructs of Brahmanism, as has been argued, is through the engagement of the symbolic representations of the Vedic yajña. By maintaining the power/knowledge relationships through the symbolic, highlights how representations of power can be engaged and reflected in the symbol. The common interpretations of the symbol bind society in a set of “unified practices”, unified practices that are reflective of the markers of kinship and ethnicity.

Arguably kinship is the key defining attribute of the Dharmaśāstras, and Brahmanism. In prehistory, Dravidian and Aryan thought became intertwined, linking disparate systems of kinships and kinship nomenclatures under the single socio-political structure of varṇa.

In pursuit of the symbols associated with the trigūna, I have argued the numerous deities originating in the Vedas became intertwined; presenting differing, yet mutually supporting aspects of the Divine. The polytheistic nature of the Vedas was maintained, however they evolved in a cohesive system of knowledge that upon close examination, presents as a form of monotheism, presenting a unified and complex system of knowledge that is generally referred to today as Hinduism.
## Glossary of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TERM</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>advaita</td>
<td>Non-duality name of a school of Vedānta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agama</td>
<td>A class of texts separate from the Vedas. Agamas have been written for Vaishnavites, Śaivites, and Śāktas. Originally considered nāstika, due to their widespread following they have become āstika. To define the agamas is hard, while most describe temple (Mandir) ritual, they can describe modes of worship. While predominantly a South Indian set of texts, they are also found in the north. Once a text has been titled agama, then texts that follow the theme or reference that texts are also traditionally labelled agamas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ahaṁkāra</td>
<td>The ego (SK).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ānanda</td>
<td>Divine bliss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apana</td>
<td>Inhalation, downward flowing breath.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>antaḥkaraṇa</td>
<td>The internal organs of SK. The first three elements of the subtle body as prescribed by SK buddhi, ahaṁkāra and manas. Collectively referred to in YSp citta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>antyeṣṭikriyā</td>
<td>Funeral ceremony.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aparā</td>
<td>One of the three aspects of śakti or conditions of Kashmiri Śaivism (see also Parā and Parāparā). One of the three aspects of Kālī. Aparā represents the terrifying aspect of Kālī. Responsible for the attachment of jīvas to the sense objects. Possesses the guṇa properties of tāmas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ārtha</td>
<td>Wealth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>āstika</td>
<td>Orthodox. Doctrine that accepts the authority of the Veda. Conforms to the tenants as defined in Brahmanism. In this thesis it is argued it is the of engagement of the symbols associated with the yajña that presents a text as āstika.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aśvins</td>
<td>Vedic gods, celestial twins, Castor and Pollux.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ātman</td>
<td>Self (relationship to brahman dependent on form of Vedānta).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avidyā</td>
<td>Ignorance of the true nature of reality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bāhyakaraṇa</td>
<td>The external organs (tenfold) as prescribed in Sāṁkhya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhairava</td>
<td>A name of Śiva in his horrific image.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
bhakti  Love, devotion.
bhāṣya  Commentary
Brahmā  Personal creator god.
brahman  Impersonal god, the absolute.
Brāhmaṇa  Class of ritual texts, follows after the Vedas.
brahmacarya  The student, the stage of life that terminates at marriage, beginning after initiation (upanayana). According to the MDh 2.36, the time of Vedic initiation should be carried out in the eight years from conception for a brahmin, the eleventh year for kṣatriya, and the twelfth year for a vaiśya.

Brahmanism  One of the major focuses of Brahmanism is on dharma and as such much of the social mores that are present within Hindu society today the Brahmanical view in the form of caste (see varṇa and jātī below). Within the context of this thesis Brahmanism is confined to the Vedic texts and the Brāhmaṇas. As it relates to the Śaḍdarśanas, only Mīmāṃsā is included within the category of Brahmanism as unlike the others five darśanas, Mīmāṃsā engages the Vedic texts specifically.

brahmin  Member of the highest varṇa, twice born. Priest.
buddhi  Intelligence. The first product produced due to the union of puruṣa and prakṛti in SK. Initial properties set by transmigrating triguṇa.
buddhindriya  The five external organs of cognition of SK.
caturāśrama  The four stages of life. Studenthood (brahmacarya), householder (grhaṣṭya), devotion to spiritual life (vānaprasthya), renunciation (saṁnyāsi).
caturvarga  The four aims in life (see puruṣārtha).
cit  Consciousness, spirit.
citta  The collective term in YSp for the buddhi, ahaṅkāra, and manas.
daiva  The eightfold celestial realm (SK).
darsana  A Hindu Philosophical system, a Hindu way of seeing.
deva  Divine superior being, god.
devī  Goddess
dharma  The laws that govern the universe and humanity. It is the cosmic principle that permeates the material universe that governs the nature
of all beings and as such prescribes the conduct and duty of each
dictated by the laws of \textit{karma}. It is traditionally the primary principle
in defining the social mores of Hindu society.

\textbf{Dharmaśāstra} \hspace{0.5cm} The early socio-legal literature of the Hindu. The \textit{Dharmaśāstras}
defines kinship relationships and the social mores. These are presented
as divine authority by the Brahmanical order to explain the hierarchical
social order of \textit{varṇa}

\textbf{Durgā} \hspace{0.5cm} A form of \textit{devī}, the supreme goddess, depicted as a warrior woman.
Dominated by the \textit{guṇa} attribute of \textit{rajas}.

\textit{dvaita} \hspace{0.5cm} Duality, name of a school of Vedānta.

\textit{gṛhasthya} \hspace{0.5cm} Householder.

\textit{guṇa} \hspace{0.5cm} Quality.

\textit{iśvara} \hspace{0.5cm} Personal God.

\textit{jāgarita} \hspace{0.5cm} The conscious state, being awake.

\textit{japa} \hspace{0.5cm} Constant repetition of a mantra.

\textit{jātī} \hspace{0.5cm} In contrast to the “invariance and fixity characteristic” of \textit{varṇa}, a
national system, the concept of \textit{jātī} is normally geographically
contained within a singular economic unit of dependent villages. In
contrast to the system of \textit{varṇa}, \textit{jātīs} have the capacity to change as
economic forces intervene. However \textit{jātīs} do hold a loose correlation
to the system of \textit{varṇa} as employment categories for each \textit{varṇa} is
defined in the \textit{Dharmaśāstras}. Consequently an (in)dividual has both a
\textit{varṇa} and \textit{jātī}, collectively referred to as caste. Inter-village economic
relationships are reinforced through structured kinship relationships
that are \textit{jātī} dependent. The system of \textit{jātī} regulates marriage, being
village exogamous and \textit{jātī} endogamous.

\textit{jīva} \hspace{0.5cm} Life, individual being, \textit{ātman}.

\textit{jñana} \hspace{0.5cm} Knowledge, wisdom.

\textit{Kālī} \hspace{0.5cm} The black one. The terrible form of the goddess.

\textit{kāma} \hspace{0.5cm} Desire, lust, love.

\textit{Kāpālikas} \hspace{0.5cm} Ancient Śaivite sect. Literally one with a skull.

\textit{karma} \hspace{0.5cm} The law of causality, action and the result of an action.

\textit{karmendriya} \hspace{0.5cm} The organs of action (SK).
**kleśa**
Affliction, pain, suffering, distress.

**Krṣṇa**
Black. Proper name for one of the avatar of Viṣṇu. the Godhead of the Bhagavad-Gītā.

**kṣatriya**
The second varṇa, twice born. Warrior or king.

**kuṇḍalinī**
The serpent in Tantrism that normally lies dormant at the base of the spine. Life energy.

**liṅga**
The Characteristic phallic sign of Śiva. The male aspect of the universe.

**lingaśarīa**
The subtle body (SK).

**mahā**
Great.

**mahābhūta**
The five gross elements (SK).

**Mahāpurāṇa**
Great Purāṇa.

**mahat**
The great one, intellect, synonymous with buddhi (SK).

**maithuna**
Sexual intercourse. In Tantrism, maithuna actually has eight forms:

- *Ashtāṅga maithuna*, *smaranam* (thinking about maithuna).
- *Kīrtanam* (talking about maithuna).
- *Keliḥ* (play with women).
- *Prekshanam* (looking upon women).
- *Guhyabhāṣanam* (talk in private with women).
- *Sangkalpah* (wish or resolve for maithuna).
- *Adhyavasāyah* (determination towards it).
- *Kriyānishattih* (actual accomplishment of maithuna)

**manas**
Mind (SK).

**mānava**
Relating to Manu.

**maṇḍala**
Meditative device. Depicts the macrocosmic.

**mantra**
Word repetition.

**Manu**
Primordial man. The ancestor of Humanity.

**Mārga**
Way, street. The path to salvation.

**māyā**
The mask that hides absolute truth. Illusion.

**māyāvāda**
Describing brahman as nothing but perception, a creation of the human mind.

**mokṣa**
Liberation.

**mūlaprakṛti**
Un-manifested mater or nature.
nāstika | Unorthodox. Denying the authority of the Vedas. I this thesis it is argued that it is the lack of engagement of the symbols associated with the yajña that presents a text as nāstika.

nidrā | The unconscious plane of dreamless sleep.

nirguṇa | Devoid of attributes.

Parā | One of the three aspects of śakti or conditions of Kashmiri Śaivism (see also Aparā and Parāparā). Representing the highest state of life. Possesses the properties to the guṇa sattva. Assists in the attainment of Śiva.

Paramaśiva | The one pure consciousness from which the universe is manifest. Each tattva being Paramaśiva but vibrating at a different frequency (spanda).

Parāparā | One of the three aspects of śakti or conditions of Kashmiri Śaivism (see also Aparā and Parā). Like aparā, responsible for attachment but to the fruit of pain and pleasure. Hinders the jīva from attaining Śiva. Possessing the guṇa properties of rajas.

paraśakti | Supreme consciousness or divine energy.

Pārvatī | Daughter of the mountains. Śiva’s consort.

paśu | A bound jīva.

prakṛti | Material universe, matter, nature.

piṇḍa | A food offering mad to an ancestor normally a roundish ball normally consisting of rice.

prāṇa | Life breath.

preta | Soul of a deceased who has not yet received an offering.

pūjā | Ritual worship of brahman.

Purāṇas | The voluminous set of texts, along with the great epics the Mahābhārata and the Rāmānyana present the set of texts that are the true bible of Hinduism today. These texts are available to all regardless of varna (caste) or gender.

puruṣa | Pure consciousness. In the RV the personal and animating principle in men and other beings. AV the supreme being or soul of the universe. SK sees puruṣa as passive, a spectator to the creative force prakṛti.

puruṣārtha | Any one of the four aims in life. Dharma (moral law); artha (material goods); kāma (enjoyment); mokṣa (liberation).
rajas

One of the three guṇas. Energy, symbolic colour red, associated with menstrual blood.

rajayoga

Patañjali’s system of yoga. The royal way.

ṛk

Hymn.

Rudra

Reddish. The name of the Vedic god. Name of Śiva.

sādhaka

A skilled practitioner of śākti-sadhana, or self control through sexual intercourse.

ṣaḍdarśanas

Hindu structures of thought can be divided into six orthodox philosophical schools, ṣaḍdarśanas, Nyāya Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta, Sāṁkhya and Yoga. Arguably the philosophical school of Sāṁkhya has had the most profound and diverse influence on the major Hindu (theistic) traditions of Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Śāktism. For a system to be classified as orthodox within the Hindu system of thought, acknowledgement and linkages to the original texts need to be made. These texts, a collection of four primary works, are know as the Vedas, the sacred knowledge or that has been revealed or heard, śruti, of the Hindu.

saguṇa

With qualities.

śaivite

Devotee of the god Śiva.

śākta

A devotee to the goddess, śakti.

śakti

The divine energy that creates maintains and destroys. Spiritual energy, the female aspect of consciousness.

śaṁhitā

Collection or class of authoritative scriptures.

Sāṁkhya

Figure, number philosophical (darśana) system.

saṁnyāsi

The homeless ascetic who posses and desires nothing except for the obtainment of mokṣa.

saṃsāra

Trans-migratory existence.

saṁkāra

Rites or rituals.

sanyāsī

A Hindu religious mendicant.

śāstra

Doctrine, treatise.

sat

Truth.

sattva

One of the three guṇas. Purity, associated colour, white. Symbolically associated with the male procreative fluid semen.
Śiva
Ultimate consciousness. The Absolute. The male aspect of consciousness.

Śivaliṅgam
Śiva’s genital organ or Śiva worshiped in the form of the liṅga.

smṛti
Class of scriptures. What has been committed to memory.

spanda
The divine vibration of consciousness, the creative and destructive energy of Śiva and śakti that permeates the manifest universe.

śraddha
A component of the funeral ceremony of which there are several rituals which are defined in the Dharmaśāstras to release an ancestor from the cycle of samsāra.

śruti
Class of scripture. What has been revealed or heard.

sthūlaśariya
The gross body, the one time aggregate of the gross elements (SK).

śuddhi
Ritual of purification.

śūdra
The fourth varṇa. Not twice born, originally denied access to scripture worship and temples.

sūtra
Thread. Aphoristic text.

svapna
The stage of sleep when dreams are manifest.

tairyagyona
The fivefold animal and plant realms (SK).

tamas
Darkness, lethargy, one of the three guṇas.

tanmātra
The five subtle elements of SK

tantra
The loom that weaves together. Branch of Hinduism.

tattva
Principle, real state, essence. In Sāṁkhyan cosmogony, one of the 25 levels of creation. In Śaivite cosmogony one of the 36 levels of creation.

tejas
Radiant energy, splendor, light, heat, element of fire.

triguṇa
The balance of the triguṇa is also responsible for the various human conditions, our physicality (as will be discussed), and our emotions, defining both the objective and subjective realities. These realities, both subjective and objective, help elaborate the properties of each of the three indeterminate continua, of the triguṇa, that of sattva, rajas and tamas.

**Objective Perspective**
The triguṇa sees rajas being responsible for the ‘primal material
energy’ that is capable of spontaneous activity. However the rational ordering of this spontaneous activity is the property of sattva and the determinate formulation of these activities is the property of tamas, and while Larson states that it the triguna does not possess a phenomenal structure, the objective qualities of the triguna are the attributes associated with phenomenological elements.

Subjective Perspective

It is the tripartite process of the triguna that is responsible for the continual flow of experience; it is responsible for our reflectivity and discrimination. It is the triguna that is responsible for our conditioned responses. Subjectively, sattva is responsible for the attributes that reflect notions of goodness, truth, wisdom, purity etc. Rajas hold the attributes of energy, manifest in emotions such as desire and longing, activity and urgency, while tamas provides the opacity which hides the reality of existence. Tamas provides the negative attributes of the human condition, that of ignorance, illusion lust, lethargy, anger pride, sorrow. From the innumerable combinations of the triguna, the profusion of human conditions, our external physicality and our internal psychological makeup, our sense of Self are influenced, generated and continually changing. It is the changing nature of the triguna that also presents the potential for the triguna to return to a perfect balance, to return to the state of the un-manifested.

triṣṭhīka

The threefold components of Kashmir Śaivism. Śiva, śakti and the dividual. Parā, Parāparā & Aparā. Trika holds that there is only one substance in the universe; it is nothing but one consciousness, paramaśiva. Therefore each of the 36 tattvas prescribed in Kashmir Śaivism are paramaśiva vibrating at different frequencies. This vibration is known as spanda.

trimārga

The three paths to liberation; jñāmārga, karmamārga and bhaktimārga.

turīya

The super-conscious state. The fourth state, where the individual ātman merges with the brahman, jīvātman.

Upaniṣad

Term derived from upa (near), ni (down) ṣad (to sit), “sit down near”.

116
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secret</td>
<td>doctrine. Class of authoritative scripture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaiṣṇavite</td>
<td>Devotee to the god Viṣṇu or any of his avatars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vaiśya</td>
<td>Member of the third varṇa. Businessman, artisan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vānaprasthyan</td>
<td>A forest dweller who studies the Vedas and other religious texts, devoted to mokṣa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>varṇa</td>
<td>The four fold principle division of Hindu society consisting of the twice born brahmins, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and the once born śūdras are collectively referred to as varṇa first defined in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and forms the core of the socio-legal literature, the Dharmaśāstras. Importantly, in the orthodox Brahmanical and Vaiṣṇava tradition the varṇa to which one is born cannot be changed and is the product of the karma accrued in ones past lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>varṇāśramadharma</td>
<td>The duties that are ascribed to a individual that is dependent on there varṇa and the stage of life (āśrama).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vedānta</td>
<td>End of the Vedas. Follows the Upaniṣads chronologically. Metaphysical system upon which Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism and Śāktism is supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vidyā</td>
<td>Knowledge of the true nature of Self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viśiṣṭādvaita</td>
<td>Qualified non-dualism. A school of Vedānta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viṣṇu</td>
<td>The deity worshiped by 75% of Hindus today. Traditionally there are eight avatars of Viṣṇu, the most famous being Kṛṣṇa. Some of the most well known variations in the avatars associated with Viṣṇu are, the Buddha, commonly prescribed the ninth avatar, and Jagannath, the most popular god in the state of Orissa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yajñā</td>
<td>Vedic sacrifice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yantra</td>
<td>Meditative device. Depicts the microcosmic. Used to control and manipulate the microcosmic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yoga</td>
<td>Name of philosophical (darśana) system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yoni</td>
<td>Source, womb. The female aspect of the universe.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendices

Above: A pair of snakes, symbolic of cosmic energy, coiled about an invisible liṅga (Rawson 1978:96).
Appendix I:  *Karma & the Transactional Nature of the Triguṇa*

**Transmigration and Liberation**

The concept of transmigration, rebirth, is arguably the core principle underlying most Hindu theologies, both āstika and nāstika. It is argued within this thesis that transmigration, the concept of rebirth provides the fundamental foundations for the socio-political and economic support of the Hindu community. The principles of *varṇa* are, in turn, dependent on the concepts of *karma*, pollution beliefs, and commensality. In combination, the concept of *varṇa*, *karma* and pollution beliefs define what is referred to as *dharma*. The concept of *dharma*, defined economic, political and religious principles of both the individual and each *varṇa*. The principle that eventually underpinned the concept of transmigration is the *triguṇa*. It is within this context the subject of transmigration is introduced. The terminology employed within this appendix is fully defined in Section 3.1 Cosmogenisis: The *Vedas* and Sāṁkhya. The following section highlights how the *triguṇa* is employed in defining the concept of *karma*.

The SK specifies eight realms of existence to which a sentient being may be born, re-born. Of the human realm, the SK defines three key constituent components that constitute the Human realm.

\begin{quote}
सूक्ष्मा मातापितृतुत्वं सह प्रभूतिनिधिः विशोषः स्थः।
सूक्ष्मास्तेषां नियता मातापितृतुत्वान्तवत्तेः॥३९॥
\end{quote}

The specific is threefold, as subtle bodies, as gross bodies born of parents and as the great elements. Of these, the subtle are lasting and constant, while those born of parents perish (SK 39).

As Gauḍapāda’s *bhāṣyas* on the SK identify the gross body, *sthūlaśarīra*, the one time aggregate of the gross elements the product of the father and the mother resultant from “the mixture of the seminal fluids of the parents, cohabiting after menses… endowed with

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244 The Materialists, for example deny the concept of rebirth.
245 The use of the term ‘theology’ is not a term that is commonly applied in Hinduism. The term is used in the context of this proposal to isolate Vaiṣṇavism, Saivism, Śāktism etc.
blood, flesh, tendons, semen, bones and marrow which is composed of the five gross elements", 247 perishes upon death.

It is in combination of the subtle body, lingaśarīa, the gross elements, mahābhūta, and the sthūlaśarīra that present the individuated being. The sthūlaśarīra forms the substantive or physical product of the reaction between puruṣa and prakṛti. It is the physical, apprehendable product of procreation.

It is the lingaśarīa that is characterised by mahat as the component which always exists and migrates. 248 While it is the lingaśarīa that holds the potential to transmigrate, the nature of the lingaśarīa is attributed proportional representation of the triguṇa. Each individual guṇa constitutes a single cord or thread that in combination present a single strand of primordial matter, prakṛti. The balance of the guṇas defines the initial properties of the buddhi upon transmigration established in the dispositions of the lingaśarīa.

पूर्वीप्रत्ययसमस्यं स्विन्तं महदात्रिसप्रभुवन्तम् ।
संसर्ति निरुपभोगं भवेतिध्रिवासिं निर्गमम् ॥४०॥

The subtle body is primeval, unimpeded, constant, composed of intellect and the rest down to the subtle elements and migrates, incapable of enjoyment, mergent and being endowed with dispositions (SK 40). 249

Of which there are fifty;

एष प्रत्ययसवां विपर्ययात्विततुसितचितवयः ।
गुणविभावमद्यं तस्य च मेधास्वं पदवशातु ॥४६॥

This (the group of sixteen-eight causes and eight effects) is a creation of the intellect and is termed Ignorance, Infirmity, Contentment, and Attainment. Through the disparity of the influences of the Guṇas, the constituents, its varieties are fifty (SK 46). 250

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247 Mainkar, Sāṁkhya-kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, p. 144.
248 Some dispute over the identity of Gaudapāda exists which raises a point of interest when examining Advaita Vedānta later within this thesis.
249 Mainkar, Sāṁkhya-kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, pp.147-148.
250 Mainkar, Sāṁkhya-kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, pp. 159-162.
It is the disposition of the intellect, set by the attributes of the guṇas that maintains the cycle of sāṃsāra. Through the removal of the dispositions, the subtle body and thus the dividual is released from the cycle of sāṃsāra, achieving the ultimate aim, mokṣa.

There would be no subtle elements without dispositions and there would be no elaboration of dispositions without the subtle elements. Creation, therefore, proceeds in two ways, the elements and the intellectual (SK 52).

The three guṇas are these dispositions; they set the blueprint of the intellect that in turn establishes the sense of Self, ahamkāra. Self awareness develops from interaction between the buddhi and manas. Awareness of ahamkāra is made possible through active thought processes made possible by the guṇa rajas. Rajas provides the energy while quality of discernment is presented by the guṇa sattva. Without active thought, discernment would not be possible, indicating the dominance of rajas within the human realm.

Disequilibrium in nature is not a natural state, so liberation of any and all sentient beings must eventually occur, for the material manifestation of prakṛti is the product of the disequilibrium. It is the innate nature of prakṛti to regain balance and to be released from the union with puruṣa, to end this cycle of transmigration, of rebirth.

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251 Mainkar, Sāṃkhya-kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, pp. 174-176.
The Categorisation of Sentient Beings

The elemental creation, in belief, consists of the eightfold divine order, the fivefold sub-human creation and the human order of only one variety (SK 53).

It is the relative representations of the guṇas that dictate the realm of existence to which one is born. In human realm, according to the bhāṣyas of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja it the proportional representation of the triguṇa dictates the varṇa to which a human is born (see 5.1.1, page 75). However the guṇas are employed in the SK to theorise fourteen separate realms of existence, of which the human realm is only one.

The existence and the categorisation of the fourteen realms of existence provide a key insight into functioning of karma and the pollution principles ascribed by Brahmanism. The concept of karma, presents a means of liberation from the cycle of samsāra due to the disequilibrium of the triguṇa that presents a hierarchical categorisation of sentient beings as indicated in Table 7 (page 123).

The SK states that the realm of existence a sentient being inhabits is directly related to the triguṇa:

There is predominance of Sattva in the worlds above; below creation is full of darkness [tamas]. In the middle Rajas dominates. This is from Brahmā down to a blade of grass (SK 54).

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252 The following is a modified extract written by the author in preparation for this thesis. Mark Beilby, "Principles of Purity and Pollution: an examination of symbols of purity and pollution of the Vaiṣṇava, by an interpretive analysis of the Triguṇa." (Independent Honours Study, University of Queensland, 2006)

253 Mainkar, Sāṅkhya-kārikā of Īśvara-kṛṣṇa pp.177-178.

The 14 Realms of Existance

| (1) The realm of Brahmā                                                                 |
| (2) The realm of Prajāpati                                                               |
| (3) The realm of Indra                                                                    |
| (4) The realm of Pitṛs                                                                   |
| (5) The realm of Gandharvas                                                              |
| (6) The realm of Yakṣas and Nāgas,                                                       |
| (7) The realm of Rakṣases                                                                |
| (8) The realm of Piśācas.                                                                |
| (9) The human realm (mānuṣa)                                                             |
| (10) The realm of domestic animals (paśu)                                                 |
| (11) The realm of wild animals (mṛga)                                                     |
| (12) The realm of birds and flying insects (pakṣin)                                      |
| (13) The realm of crawling creatures (sarīṣṭpa)                                          |
| (14) The realm of plants and immovables (sthāvara)                                       |

The eightfold celestial realm (daiva);

The single realm of human existence.

The fivefold animal and plant realms (tairyagyona).

Table 7: The Śaṅkhyan realms of existence; dictated by the proportional representation of the triguṇa.

The bhāṣya of Gauḍapāda on stanza 54 of the SK helps elucidate the properties of the fourteen realms. While the realms of the gods, the eightfold divine order is dominated by sattva, it is not the only guṇa present, as elements of rajas, and tamas are still present within this realm. The proportional representation of the guṇas dominated by sattva, provide for eight fold celestial realms. In contrast, the animal realms dominated by tamas, provides for a fivefold animal and plant realm. The single human realm, as defined in the SK, is dominated by rajas.255

Gauḍapāda’s analysis of the guṇas provides an insight into the theorisation employed by Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja in their analyses of varṇa in the BG. All realms of existence, including the eight realms above, the realms inhabited by the devās and devīs belong to the manifest universe.

255 Ibid.
The transactional nature of Karma & the Triguṇa

How a person is born into a particular varṇa or into a different realm of existence is through the function of karma (SK 58). It is from karma that the balance of the triguṇa is altered. However the nature of karma is more complex than a simple guṇa transaction. A key element is the transactional nature of the triguṇa, for the karma of a dividual can also alter the guṇa balance of another. It is this transactional nature of karma that highlights how principles of purity and pollution operate. This can be witnessed in the antyeṣṭikriyā (funeral ceremony).

The Funerary Rites

In examining the antyeṣṭikriyā the other key aspects of Brahmanism can be seen in play as they relate to kinship through son preference and the principles of purity and pollution. The antyeṣṭikriyā, in particular the funeral ritual, śraddha, offers an insight into the transactional nature of karma where the action of one person has a direct correlation to the guṇa balance of another. Examining the antyeṣṭikriyā, it is the guṇa balance of the recently deceased relative that can be manipulated.

The antyeṣṭikriyā is believed to directly influence the realm of existence the deceased relative will be reborn into. The ritual itself varies greatly depending on locality caste, wealth etc. But the essence of the ritual remains constant, that of honouring and importantly to benefiting the recently deceased.256 It is the beneficial component of the śraddha ritual that the concept of transactional karma can be witnessed. The subjective qualities of the triguṇa are employed in conjunction with the objective attributes of the Vedic yajña; water, fire and food (earth), enabling the subjective attributes of the triguṇa to transfer between realms of existence. The following provides a very brief description of the ritual.

The antyeṣṭikriyā, specifically śraddha is one of the most important dharmas of the eldest son of the deceased. The śraddha follows a strict protocol and has severe consequences for the deceased if not performed correctly. Prior to the commencement of śraddha the eldest son purifies himself by employing water (sattva), ritually washing his feet, and sipping water

and praying to the ground (tamas). The body of the deceased (tamas) is then transported to the cremation site, where on arrival the eldest son purifies the ground (tamas) by sprinkling water over the ground upon which the funeral pyre (food, tamas) will be constructed. The funeral pyre is then constructed and the body of the deceased placed upon it. Sattvic food is then utilised, with sesame seeds, purified by the sun, rajas, being placed in the mouth of the deceased. 257 Five small balls of flour are then placed on the body. The pyre is then lit (fire, rajas), by the eldest son. While the corpse is burning, a jug of water, with the water draining onto the ground, is carried around the funeral pyre three times. The cremation site is then cooled with milk and water (white), purifying the fire (red) and ground (black). After the third day the skull must be broken and the remnant of the bones are carried too, and disposed of in a holy river.258

The śraddha ritual employs all the objective elements of the triguna in the yajña, water, fire and food, white, red and black presenting a subjective balance of the triguna to obtain liberation for the deceased. It is in this sense there again appears to be a correlation between the term varṇa (colour) and the three constituent qualities of the yajña; the red of fire, the white of water, and the black of food in the most dramatic sense.

No more a dramatic representation of this relationship may be witnessed in the cremations on the banks of the river Ganga at Varanasi in India. Like the Vedic ritual, the body (food, black) is burnt, purified by fire (rajas), leaving behind only the gross elements, where the ashes (black, tamas) are swept into India’s most sacred river (water, white, sattva) , the Ganga, the locks of hair of Śiva (see Figure 5, page 28).

After the cremation is complete the relatives will proceed to a river to purify themselves, as a corpse is a cause for impurity (tamas). Upon returning home to the threshold of the deceased house (earth, tamas); water (white, sattva) is mixed with sesame seeds (a food purified by the sun (fire, rajas) while reciting an appropriate stanza. Water is again sipped and auspicious objects touched like, water, fire and cow dung before entering the

257 See footnote 101.
dwellings. The funeral rites continue for one year so that the *preta* (*ātman*) can move to into the realm of the *pitṛi*, the realm of the ancestor, one of the eightfold celestial realm (*daiva*).  

Without the ceremony the deceased cannot enter the realm of the *pitṛi*. In this example, the *karma* (action) of those in the human realm directly affects the *guna* balance of a sentient being dwelling in another.

The flow of *karma* between realms is not however unidirectional. In MDh 5.32, deities also have the ability to alter and purify food through offerings so that it can be consumed by those of the human realm.

When a man eats meat—whether it was purchased, procured by himself, or offered by someone else—after making an offering to gods and ancestors, he does not become defiled. (MDh: 5.32).

This indicates that a bidirectional flow of *karma* between the realms of existence, altering the proportional representation of the *triguna*, is possible.

While the example presented here is a funeral ritual, the same form of sacrificial fire can be witnessed at weddings, initiations for the twice born etc, a set of symbols that are central to the rites of passage for every Hindu (see Figures 3, 4 and 5, page 28). In each house or shop a smaller version of the same ritual can be witnessed, with the burning of incense fire (red) and food (black), with the smoke (white) taken by the hands and swept over the head.

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259 It is a common belief if the śraddha ritual is not performed correctly then the man will forever remain a *piśāca*, an evil spirit. No amount of offerings performed at a future date has the ability to release the *piśāca*, into the realm of the *pitṛi* (Klostermaier:191).

260 This could be arguable one of the most important reasons for the son preference in Hindu society. While there are economic benefits in having a son, a father cannot be released from this life without a son, reflecting the patriarchal nature (in general) of Hindu society.

261 Refer to the Brāhmna’s, where water, fire and food are referred to repeatedly within the same context, where water purifies the ground, the site of the sacrifice and food is offered to the fire.


263 Personal observations.
This is the essence of transactional *karma*, for it is the actions of the one sentient being, independent of the realm of existence being performed, not for the benefit of themselves, but for the benefit of others.

**Principles of Purity and Pollution**

अकामत: कृतं पायं वेदाभ्यासेन शुद्धाति।
कामतस्तु कृतं मोहात् प्राययंति पूर्यविधैः॥४६॥

A sin committed unintentional is cleansed by Vedic recitation, whereas a sin committed deliberately through folly is cleansed with the various penance. (MDh 11.46).

To examine the principles of purity and pollution and the ability of *karmic* influences to flow bidirectional (recall, *karma* is representative of the *triguna*), between realms of existence can be witnessed when examining the sacred cow of India.

Within the *antyeṣṭikriyā* the *sattvic* qualities of the products of the cow are mentioned, with milk (page 125), with milk and cheese being classified as *sattvic* foods. However cow dung (page 125) is also employed within the *antyeṣṭikriyā* being used as a purifying agent.

Cow dung being a waste product would not be a product considered as a purifying agent (see Table 3, page 48). The use of cow dung appears to go against the normal pollution principles that apply to the Hindu where according to the *Dharmaśāstras*, eating unfit or forbidden foods classified as a “grievous sin causing the loss of caste” (MDh 11.57). From a non-Hindu perspective, the apparent contradictory use of cow dung as purifying agent is compounded when examining the different realms of existence as defined in Sāṁkhya (see Table 7, page 123). The cow, from a non-Hindu perspective, presents a sentient being of the lower realms thus defying the logic of the transactional

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265 Exceptions do exist in the consumption of products produced by the cow in the *Dharmaśāstras*. Pollution potentials exist when a cow is ‘in heat’, or has given birth within the last ten days, or a cow that has lost a calf cannot be consumed (Olivelle 2006:138), pollution potentials that apply equally to humans. Again attributes the involve birth and death are considered one of the most polluting occurrences.
nature of the *triguna*. As tabulated in Table 3 (page 48), the most *tamasic* are the products of the orifices below the navel. Douglas in her observations reinforces this argument where she states that in Hindu society, the most polluting of substances are any substance issuing from the body and is something that is to be strictly avoided.\textsuperscript{267}

Yet a number of penances are prescribed in MDh 11.1-.266 engage the use of the products of a cow, that include dung, for breaking the Hindu laws, in particular the *Sāntapana* penance of the MDh. The *Sāntapana* penance calls for the consumption of all byproducts of the cow; urine, cow dung, milk, curd and ghee: \textsuperscript{268}

\begin{verse}
गोिूर्तं गोियं क्षीरं दिधं सर्चि: कुशोदकम्।
एकरात्रोपवासं कुष्ठं सांतपनं स्मृतम्॥२१३॥
\end{verse}

Subsisting on cows urine, cow dung, milk, curd, ghee, and water boiled with kuśa grass and fasting for one day– tradition calls this the *śāntapana* penance (MDh 11.213).\textsuperscript{269}

A potential explanation to this apparent discrepancy adds another dimension to the function of the *gunas* and provides another insight into the social function of *varṇa*.

The performance of a penance is prescribed for a man who fails to carry out prescribed acts, performs disapproved acts or is attached to sensory objects (MDh 11.44).\textsuperscript{270} The *Sāntapana* penance presents the argument that the use of substances that are normally categorised as *tamas* can hold the potential to purify, possessing in some form either *sattvic* or *rajasic* properties for the person who consumes them as a prescribed penance. A potential explanation may be presented when considering the various realms of existence, for if a product that is normally classified as *tamas* is the product of a higher sentient being then it may posses’ *sattvic* or *rajasic* qualities for those of a lower realm. As indicated in MDh 5.32 below, foods that are normally considered *tamasic*, forbidden foods, once offered to the deities can be consumed by the twice born.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, p. 123.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
When a man eats meat—whether it was purchased, procured by himself, or offered by someone else—after making an offering to gods and ancestors, he does not become defiled. (MDh 5.32). 271

This highlights another aspect of the *triguṇa* that is the purifying and polluting potential of the *triguṇa*. In the Brahmical context the examples presented in the *antyeṣṭikriyā* and the offering of *piṇḍa* to deities, the properties of the *triguṇa* is relative to the realm of existence.

This presents the potential that the cow must possess a position in society that is higher than the human realm of existence as defined by the schema postulated in Śāṅkhyā. 272

Verses in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* (TB) 2.8.8.9, and the MB (13.104.63) are indicative of this theory where they state the cow together with Agni and fire when combined with the power of *brahman*, form the three manifestations of *tejas*, 273 the spiritual and moral strength that applies to the human realm. 274 Additional texts provide a more substantive relationship between the cow and the gods as is indicated in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (ŚB):

The gods, came upon a cow which had come into being… They said what have we produced here, the cow, is auspicious… Agni desired her: ‘May I copulate with her,’. He united with her and shot his seed into her and it became milk. Therefore even though the cow is uncooked, that which she brings forth is cooked, for it is Agni’s seed. Therefore whether it be in a black or in a red it is ever white and looks like fire, because it is Agni’s seed. Therefore it is warm when first milked, because it is Agni’s seed (ŚB 2.2.4.12-15). 275

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272 The position of the cow in early Hindu society is a topic of considerable debate, there are many references to the cow be the subject of sacrifice and being eaten. However as this thesis indicates, the philosophical ideas of the subcontinent were constantly evolving. By the time of the *Dharmaśāstras* the cow already possessed an elevated position in society.
273 *Tejas* also hold the attributes of fire and the colour red. These are the attributes of the *rajas guṇa*.
274 Smith, *Classifying the Universe*, p.282.
275 Smith, *Classifying the Universe*, p.262.
In this verse, milk is not simply a food substance but is a product of the gods, specifically Agni, the god of fire. All the colours of the cow are pure for they are a product of Agni directly.\textsuperscript{276} In such an instance be it milk, gee, urine or dung, all are a product of the Agni and therefore their consumption increases the moral and spiritual strength of the consumer. This is arguably the principle behind the sāntapana penance. Within this context the pollution potential of the triguna appears to be relative to the realm of the producer, with the most polluting of the higher realm purifying the lower realms of existence. With the potential of the guna tama to be purified or to be presented as purifying presents an opportunity to examine the social mores ascribed by Brahmanism as described in the Dharmaśāstras, and their potential influence on food transactions today.

**Inter-Varṇa (caste) Relationships** \textsuperscript{277}

The social mores ascribed by Brahmanism and the system of caste and principles of pollution are complex. Rules of occupation, commensality and marriage are all dictated by caste. Underlying the social mores of Brahmanism, the concept of the triguna appears as the defining property.

Strict rules of contact existed and still do exist between the various castes. Among all the castes the strictest pollution laws apply to the brahmin being reflective of the properties the triguna. The following provides an example using the transactional nature of the triguna to theorise the interaction between castes in an ethnography presented by Kapferer on a village in Andhra Pradesh on food exchanges.

Kapferer observed the food transactions between castes within the village context. He noted that brahmins only transacted with other brahmins in food exchanges, while the leather workers \textsuperscript{278} accepted food from any other varṇa as is indicated by the ‘*’ in Table 8 below. \textsuperscript{279}

\textsuperscript{276} Again references to the three colours can be seen. The colour of the cow, be it white, red or black, colours that potentially are references to triguna.

\textsuperscript{277} All references in this section refer to caste, for the examples move beyond the strict scope of varṇa, as employment and marriage relate strongly to the concept of jāti combined with varṇa. (see footnote 18).

\textsuperscript{278} According to the classification schema of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, the dominant guna of leather workers would be tama. As mentioned previously dealings with birth and death are deemed the most polluting.

The transactional nature of the food exchanges observed, is reflective of the transactional nature of *karma* and the purifying or pollution potential of the *triguṇa*. The example presented by Kapferer highlights the potential that the *sattvic* nature of food may be contaminated by the *tamasic* or *rajasic* nature of a dividual that in turn holds the potential of lowering the receiver’s *sattvic* nature. However, the reverse can also be theorised, that the *sattvic* and nature of a food handler provides a purifying potential for a person dominated by *rajas* or *tamas* by increasing their *sattvic* nature through food.

The emotional state of the food preparer plays an important part into the energy associated with food. Foods that are prepared unconsciously or while the preparer is angry or in a negative mood are also considered *tamasic*.

References to mood altering the *guṇa* properties of food are supported in the *Dharmaśāstras*, where it is stated that it is forbidden to consume food that has been “seen by a *patita* (outcast), cāṇḍālas [and] dog’s”. Again it appears it is the dominant *guṇa* that presents the influence, for according to the classification stipulated by Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, the dominant *guṇa* of the *patita*, cāṇḍālas is *tamas*. The act of seeing, by a person (or lower sentient being) dominated by the *guṇa tamas*, or to be momentarily under the emotion influence of *tamas* can alter the *guṇa* balance of a food so that it itself becomes dominated by *tamas*. This

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reference has important implications as it describes another attribute of the triguna in that it is transactional in nature and gives clear indication of the polluting potential of the guṇa tamas. From such examples the pollution potential that defines the rules of commensality are directly attributed to the transactional nature of the triguna.

The transactional nature of the guṇas is reinforced when examining the foods and the elements they come into contact with. The Maitri Upaniṣad (MaU VI: 9), states that foods undergo a purification process by being exposed to the sun. Foods that grow above the ground and draw their energy from the sun such as whole grains, fresh fruit, land and sea vegetables pure fruit juices, nut and seed milk and cheese, legumes, nuts, seeds, sprouted seeds, honey, and herb teas, are all considered sattvic. These are food groups that are exposed directly to air and water and the rajasic quality of the sun (fire).

The transactional nature of the guṇas appears to be always in play. Contact between food and the different realms of existence, food and the elements, food and the mood (psychological attribute defined by the guṇa) of a dividual, food handling and various varṇas all alter the guṇa balance of food, and subsequently the dividual who handles and consumes that food. The transactional nature of the guṇas, food, dividuals and differing varṇas, explain the relationships that are indicated in Table 5.

The transactional nature of the guṇas are codified in the Mānava Dharmashastra as they relate to rules of commensality (MDh 3.183—186 10.74-129), employment as is also indicated in Table 5, (MDh 31.87—91), and marriage (MDh 3.12-19). The relationship between bride and bridegroom, and their families needs to be expanded upon to help elucidate the function of the triguna within these complex relationships.

Ethnographic studies by Dumont into marriages in northern India noted the hypergamous practices of the brahmins, a practice that is reflective of the pollution

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282 The category of milk and cheese present a very special quality which will be discussed shortly when examining the status of the cow in the Dharmashastras.
283 Rajasic foods are those foods that are associated with foods that are considered stimulants, energy foods. Foods that are very hot, bitter, sour, dry, or salty are rajasic. They include foods consisting of hot substances, such as sharp spices or strong herbs, stimulants, like coffee and tea, meat of animals and fish, eggs, salt and chocolate (Kacera and Bousquet-Kacera 2006).
285 Olivelle, Manu's Code of Law, p. 91.
principles as they relate to the triguṇa and the food exchanges noted by Kapferer. However this raises the issue of the male taking a bride of a higher caste. The Mānava Dharmaśāstra prohibits the taking of a wife of a higher caste by omission, stating that a wife must be of the same or lower caste. Extending the logic presented in the transference of guna qualities, a bride of a higher caste should provide the potential to purify the male. However this is not the case, for the relationship is not between the bride and bridegroom but as Dumont presents, between the groom and the bridegroom’s father. Once again the principles associated with the triguṇa; water and earth, white and black, can be witnessed and employed to understand the relationships between two parties. In Dummont’s account, during the marriage ceremony the father (or eldest brother of the bride) washes the groom’s feet (earth, black), subjugating the brides family to the groom. The relationships between families and castes in this context are complex and are beyond the scope of this thesis. Nonetheless the essence of these relationships, as indicated above, relate to the pollution potentials of the triguṇa.

The relationships that exist between castes in food exchanges, employment and marriage all appear to reflect a pollution potential that correlates with the objective and subjective qualities of the triguṇa. This is the mechanism that Marriot described as “substance code transference”, a transference potential that can be theorised by employing the transactional nature of karma.

287 Louis Dumont, ‘North India in Relation to South India’, in Patrica Uberoi (ed), Family, Kinship, and Marriage in India (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994) p. 98. Dumont’s account is but one observation. From ethnographic data collected personally from the Dravidian state of Tamil Nadu, the groom, on the first night in the matrimonial home washes the feet of his bride, thus making the wife of equal caste as himself.
288 Kapferer, Institute for the Study of Human, and Association of Social Anthropologists of the, Transaction and meaning : directions in the anthropology of exchange and symbolic behaviour, pp. 109-142.
Appendix II: Māṇḍūkya-Upaniṣad.

ॐिित्येतदक्षरििदँ सवा तस्योिवाख्यािनं भुतं भवद्विष्वदिते सर्वभो.ङ्कर एव ।
यज्ञायतु तकानातीतं तद्योिवकार एव ॥ १॥

Aum: this syllable is all this. A clear exposition of it is: what was, what is and what will be – all is only Aum. And whatever else is beyond the three times, that also is only Aum (MaU 1). 289

सवा ह्येतद्ब्ब्रह्यायिात्िा ब्रह्म सोऽयिात्िा ितुष्ट्िात् ॥ २॥

All this, indeed, is Brahman. The Self is Brahman. This Self has four quarters (MaU 20). 290

जागह्ऱरतसस्थानो बहः:प्रज: समाङ्ग एकोनविष्ठतिुखः स्न्युलमवैश्वानर: प्रथम: पादः ॥ ३॥

The waking state (jāgarita-sthāna), outwardly cognitive, having seven limbs, having nineteen mouths, enjoying the gross, the universal (vaiśvānara): this is the first quarter (MaU 3). 291

स्वप्नस्थानोऽन्त: प्रज: समाङ्ग एकोनविष्ठतिुखः प्रविविक्षिुखः ताजसो द्वितीय: पदः ॥ ४॥

The dreaming state (svapna-sthāna), outwardly cognitive, having seven limbs, having nineteen mouths, enjoying the refined, the brilliant (taijasa): this is the second quarter (MaU 4). 292

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Where one, asleep, does not desire any desire whatever, sees no dream whatever, that is deep sleep (sûṣupta). The sleeping state, which has become one, just a cognition mass, made of bliss, verily an enjoyer of bliss, whose face is thought: prâjña is the third quarter (MaU 5).

This is the Lord [iśvara] of all; this is the knower of all; this is the inner controller (antaryāmin); this is the source of all; indeed the origin as well as the end of all beings (MaU 6).

Not inwardly cognitive, not outwardly cognitive, not cognitive both ways, not a cognition mass, not cognitive, not non-cognitive, unseen, beyond speech, ungrasable, without any distinctive marks, unthinkable, undesignatable, the essence of the knowledge of the one Self, the cessation of the phenomenal world (prapañcopaśama), quiescent, auspicious, nondual (advaita)-such, they think, is the fourth (caturtha).

This is the Self with regard to the Syllable ‘Aum’, with regard to the elements (mātrās): the quarters are the elements and the elements are the quarters, i.e. the letter a, the letter u, the letter m (MaU 8).

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293 Joshi, Bimali, and Trivedi, eds., 112 Upaniṣads, vol 1, p. 58.
294 Gambhirānanda, Eight Upaniṣads : with the commentary of Śaṅkaracarya: vol 2, pp. 183-184. Of interest this is the last stanza of the MaU in the text by Gambhirānanda. The missing last two stanzas are translations presented by Wood, with the original and other translations verified in other sources such as (Joshi, Bimali, and Trivedi, eds., 112 Upaniṣads, vol 1 pp. 56 – 61).
Vaisvanara, (the universal) is the waking state, the letter a, the first element, either from ‘āpti‘ (obtaining) or from ‘adimattva‘ (being first). Verily he obtains (āpnoti) all desires and becomes first (ādi)-he who knows is (MaU 9).

Taijasa, (the brilliant) is the dreaming state, the letter u, the second element, either from ‘utkarsa‘ (exaltation) or from ‘ubhayatva‘ (intermediateness). Verily, he exalts the stream of knowledge and becomes equal-minded; no one ignorant of Brahman is born in the family of him who knows this (MaU 10).

Prajna, is the sleeping state, the letter m, the third element, either from ‘mīti‘ (measuring) or from ‘apīti‘ (merging). Verily, he measures this all and he becomes its merging-he who knows this (MaU 11).

The fourth is (caturtha) is what is without an element, what cannot be dealt with or spoken of, of cessation of the phenomenal world (prapañcopaśama), auspicious, nondual. Thus Aum is the very Self. He enters the Self with the Self – he who knows this (MaU 12).

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Appendix III: Āgama Prakaraṇa

Viśva [the waking state] is all-pervading, the experiencer of external objects. Taijasa [the dreaming state] is the cognizer of internal objects. Prājña [the sleeping state] is a mass of consciousness. It is one alone that is thus known in the three states (ĀP 1).

Viśva is the cognizer through the right eye; taijasa is the cognizer through the mind within; prājña is the ākāśa [open space] in the heart [hrdī]. Therefore the one is perceived threefold in the same body (ĀP 2).

Viśva experiences the gross; taijasa, the subtle; and prajna, the blissful. Know these to be the threefold experience (ĀP 3).

The gross object satisfies viśva; the subtle, taijasa; and the blissful, prajña. Know these to be the threefold satisfaction (ĀP 4).

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The experiencer and the objects of experience associated with the three states have been described. He who knows these both does not become attached to objects though enjoying them (ĀP 5).

Surely a coming into existence must be predicated of all positive entities that exist [prāṇa] manifests all inanimate objects. The Puruṣa manifests the conscious beings in their manifold forms (ĀP 6).

Some of those who contemplate the process of creation regard it as the manifestation of God’s powers; others imagine creation to be like dreams and illusions (svapna-māyā) (ĀP 7).

Those who are convinced about the reality of manifested objects ascribe the manifestation solely to God’s (prabhu) will, while those who speculate about time regard time as the creator of things (ĀP 8).

Some say that the manifestation is or the purpose of enjoyment, while others say it is the object of play or sport. But it is the self-nature (svabhāva) of the effulgent being (deva). What desire is possible for one who has attained all desires (ĀP 9)?
Turiya, [the forth] the changeless Ruler, is capable of destroying all miseries. All other entities being unreal, the non-dual alone is known as effulgent and all-pervading (ĀP 10).

Viśva and tajasa are conditioned by cause and effect. Prājña is conditioned by cause alone. Neither cause nor effect exists in turiya (ĀP 11).

Prājña does not know anything of self or non-self, of truth or untruth. But turiya is ever existent and all-seeing (ĀP 12).

Non-cognition of duality is common to both prājña and turiya. But prājña is associated with sleep in the form of cause and this sleep does not exist in turiya (ĀP 13).

The first two, viśva and tajasa, are associated with dreaming and sleep respectively; prājña, with Sleep bereft of dreams. Knowers of Brahman see neither sleep nor dreams in Turiya (ĀP 14).
Dreaming is the wrong cognition and sleep the non-cognition, of Reality. When the erroneous knowledge in these two is destroyed, Turiya is realized (ĀP 15).

When the jīva, asleep under the influence of beginningless māyā, is awakened, it then realizes birthless, sleepless and dreamless non-duality (ĀP 16).

If the phenomenal universe were real, then certainly it would disappear. The universe of duality which is cognized is mere illusion (māyā); Non-duality alone is the supreme reality (ĀP 17).

If anyone imagines illusory ideas such as the teacher, the taught and the scriptures, then they will disappear. These ideas are for the purpose of instruction. Duality ceases to exist when Reality is known (ĀP 18).

When it is desired to describe the identity of viśva and the letter A, the chief ground given is the fact that each is the first in its respective sphere. Another reason for this identity is the all-pervasiveness of each (ĀP 19).
The clear ground for realizing *taījasa* as of the same nature as the letter U is the common feature of superiority. Another plain reason for such identity is their being in the middle (ĀP 20).

The indisputable reason given for the identity of *prājña* and M is the common feature that both are the measure. The other reason for such identity is another common feature, namely, that both represent the state of mergence (ĀP 21).

He who knows for certain the similarity of the three states and the three letters of AUM, based upon their common features, is worshipped and adored by all beings and also is a great sage (ĀP 22).

Through meditation on A the seeker attains *viśva*; through meditation on U, *taījasa*; and through meditation on M, *prājña*. Meditation on the ‘soundless’ brings no attainment (ĀP 23).

AUM should be known quarter by quarter. There is no doubt that the quarters are the same as the letters. Having understood AUM quarter by quarter, one should not think of anything else (ĀP 24).
The mind should be concentrated on AUM. AUM is the fearless Brahman. He who is always absorbed in AUM knows no fear whatever (ĀP 25).

AUM is verily the lower Brahman. It is also stated to be the higher Brahman. AUM is beginningless and unique. There is nothing outside it. It is unrelated to any effect and is immutable (ĀP 26).

AUM is, indeed, the beginning, middle and end of all things. He who has realized AUM as immutable immediately attains the supreme reality (ĀP 27).

Know AUM to be śvara, ever present in the hearts of all. The calm soul, contemplating AUM as all-pervading, does not grieve (ĀP 28).

One who knows AUM, which is soundless and also endowed with infinite sounds, which is all good and the negation of duality, is a real sage and none other (ĀP 29).
Bibliography


Above: Prakṛti made manifest by the imbalance of the trīguna (the white, red and black).