



Aitareya Upanishad

UNKNOWN

Musean Translation

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Translated by Michael Berardi

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THIS EDITION

Complete machine-assisted Musean translation, made directly from the Sanskrit, covering all three chapters, the opening invocation and closing colophon.

TRANSLATOR

Michael Berardi

THE WORK

Written c. 1st millennium BCE · Upanishad

SOURCE

Original text from sa.wikisource.org.

GAPS AND UNCERTAINTIES

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Invocation

May my speech be established in my mind, and my mind established in my speech. Reveal yourself; appear to me. May you both be the supports of the Veda for me. May what I have heard never leave me. Through this study I join day and night. I will speak what is right. I will speak what is true. May that protect me; may that protect the speaker. May it protect me; may it protect the speaker; may it protect the speaker.

Om. Peace, peace, peace.

Chapter 1, Section 1

- ¹ In the beginning, the Self alone was all this; there was nothing else whatever. It considered: “Let me create worlds.”
- ² It created these worlds: Ambhas, the Rays, Mara, and the Waters. Ambhas is beyond heaven; heaven is its foundation. The middle region is the Rays. The earth is Mara. What lies below is the Waters.
- ³ It considered: “Here are the worlds. Let me create guardians for them.” From the waters themselves it drew forth a person and gave him form.
- ⁴ It brooded over him with heat. As he grew hot, a mouth broke open, like an egg. From the mouth came speech, and from speech, fire. Nostrils broke open. From the nostrils came breath, and from breath, wind. Eyes broke open. From the eyes came sight, and from sight, the sun. Ears broke open. From the ears came hearing, and from hearing, the directions. Skin broke open. From the skin came hairs, and from the hairs, herbs and trees. A heart broke open. From the

heart came mind, and from mind, the moon. A navel broke open. From the navel came the downward breath, and from the downward breath, death. A penis broke open. From the penis came seed, and from seed, the waters.

Chapter 1, Section 2

- ¹ These deities, once created, fell into this mighty ocean. He subjected the person to hunger and thirst. The deities said to him: “Find us a dwelling where we may stand and eat food.”
- ² He brought them a cow. They said: “This is not enough for us.” He brought them a horse. They said: “This is not enough for us.”
- ³ He brought them a human being. They said: “Well made indeed!” A human being is indeed well made. He told them: “Enter, each into your own dwelling.”
- ⁴ Fire became speech and entered the mouth. Wind became breath and entered the nostrils. The sun became sight and entered the eyes. The directions became hearing and entered the ears. Herbs and trees became hairs and entered the skin. The moon became mind and entered the heart. Death became the downward breath and entered the navel. The waters became seed and entered the penis.
- ⁵ Hunger and thirst said to him: “Find a place for us too.” He told them: “Among these very deities I allot you a share; I make you sharers in them.” Therefore, to whatever deity an offering is taken, hunger and thirst alike have a share in it.

Chapter 1, Section 3

- ¹ It considered: “Here are the worlds and their guardians. Let me create food for them.”
- ² It brooded over the waters with heat. From the heated waters a form arose. That form which arose was food.
- ³ Once created, the food tried to flee away. He tried to seize it with speech, but could not seize it with speech. Had he seized it with speech, merely naming food would have satisfied him.
- ⁴ He tried to seize it with breath, but could not seize it with breath. Had he seized it with breath, merely breathing toward food would have satisfied him.
- ⁵ He tried to seize it with sight, but could not seize it with sight. Had he seized it with sight, merely seeing food would have satisfied him.
- ⁶ He tried to seize it with hearing, but could not seize it with hearing. Had he seized it with hearing, merely hearing food would have satisfied him.
- ⁷ He tried to seize it with the skin, but could not seize it with the skin. Had he seized it with the skin, merely touching food would have satisfied him.
- ⁸ He tried to seize it with the mind, but could not seize it with the mind. Had he seized it with the mind, merely thinking of food would have satisfied him.
- ⁹ He tried to seize it with the penis, but could not seize it with the penis. Had he seized it with the penis, merely emitting seed would have satisfied him with food.
- ¹⁰ He tried to seize it with the downward breath, and took it in. This wind is indeed what grasps food; this wind indeed lives on food.

- ¹¹ It considered: “How could this exist without me?” It considered: “By which way shall I enter?” It considered: “If speech speaks, if breath breathes, if sight sees, if hearing hears, if the skin touches, if the mind thinks, if the downward breath draws in, if the penis emits seed—then who am I?”
- ¹² Splitting this very seam, it entered through that doorway. This doorway is called the Cleft; it is the place of joy. It has three dwellings, three dreams: “This is a dwelling; this is a dwelling; this is a dwelling.”
- ¹³ Once born, he surveyed the beings: “What else here would one speak of?” He saw this very person as Brahman, the all-pervading. “I have seen this!”
- ¹⁴ Therefore his name is Idandra; Idandra is indeed his name. Though his name is Idandra, they call him Indra indirectly. For the gods seem to love what is indirect; the gods seem to love what is indirect.

Chapter 2

- ¹ In a man, this being first becomes an embryo as that seed. This is the vigor gathered from all his limbs. In himself he bears his very self. When he pours it into a woman, he brings it to birth. This is his first birth.
- ² It becomes part of the woman’s own self, like a limb of her own. Therefore it does not harm her. She nurtures this self of his that has come into her.
- ³ She who nurtures must herself be nurtured. The woman bears him as an embryo. He nurtures the child from the very beginning, before birth. In nurturing the child before birth, he nurtures his own self, for the continuance of these worlds. In this way these worlds continue. This is his second birth.
- ⁴ This self of his is put in his place for the performance of good deeds. Then that other self of his, its work accomplished and its age advanced, departs. Departing from here, he is born again. This is his third birth.

- ⁵ This was spoken by the seer: “While still in the womb, I came to know all the births of these gods. A hundred iron fortresses guarded me. Then, a hawk, I flew out with speed.” Vamadeva spoke thus while still lying in the womb.
- ⁶ Knowing in this way, he rose from the breaking of this body, attained all desires in that heavenly world, and became immortal; he became immortal.

Chapter 3

- ¹ Who is this whom we worship as the Self? Which is that Self? Is it that by which one sees, by which one hears, by which one smells scents, by which one articulates speech, by which one discerns what is sweet and what is not sweet?
- ² It is this heart and mind: recognition, command, discernment, awareness, intelligence, vision, steadfastness, thought, reflection, impulse, memory, resolve, purpose, life, desire, mastery. All these are names of awareness.
- ³ This is Brahma; this is Indra; this is Prajapati. This is all these gods and these five great elements—earth, wind, space, waters, and lights—and these seemingly small and mixed creatures, these seeds of one kind and another: those born from eggs, those born from wombs, those born from moisture, and those that sprout; horses, cattle, human beings, elephants, whatever here is alive, walking or flying, and whatever is rooted in place. All of it is guided by awareness, established in awareness. The world is guided by awareness; awareness is its foundation. Awareness is Brahman.
- ⁴ Through this conscious Self, he rose from this world, attained all desires in that heavenly world, and became immortal; he became immortal.
Thus ends the Aitareya Upanishad.