

Vol. XXX, Pts i-ii

ISSN 0507 - 1410

June-Dec., 1992

VISHVESHVARANAND INDOLOGICAL JOURNAL

Edited By

GIRISH CHANDRA OJHA

Professor-Chairman

IND Z: 71/3011-2

17. März 1992



**VISHVESHVARANAND VISHVA BANDHU INSTITUTE
OF SANSKRIT AND INDOLOGICAL STUDIES**

PANJAB UNIVERSITY

HOSHIARPUR

146 021

THE R̥GVEDIC FEMALE DEITIES : SOMA SACRIFICES

By

SHRIMANTA CHATTOPADHYAYA

Senior Lecturer in Sanskrit, Burdwan Raj College,
Burdwan — 713 104, West Bengal

A careful study of the *R̥gveda-Saṁhitā* reveals that there are *mantras* pertaining to *jñānakāṇḍa*, that is, connected with the absolute *brahman* (*RV. I. 164, X. 90, 121, 125, 129* etc.), and to *karmakāṇḍa*, that is, connected with ritualistic functions: A *mantra* having no bearing on sacrifice is meaningless : *āmnāyasya kriyārthatvād ānarthakyam atadarthānām* (*JaimS I. 1.1*), as a sacrifice without *mantra* is inconceivable¹. Incidentally, since there are quite a few Priest-names (*RV. II. 1. 2, 43. 1, 2, X. 52. 3*), names of sacrificial articles (*RV. I. 164. 35, X. 130. 3*) and vivid description of sacrifice in the *R̥gveda* (*RV. III. 53. 3, IV. 58. 9*), we may venture to state that the *mantras* in the *R̥gvedic* period were visualized in a sacrificial context. The whole setting of the *Soma-maṇḍala* (Book IX) also bears out this point. 'The amplitude of technical terms connected with the sacrificial ritual that we find in the *R̥gveda*,' V.M. Apte rightly argues, 'reveals a fairly high stage or ritual development'².

Much learned ink has been spilt over the dispute whether *mantras* were conceived before being applied to sacrifice or vice versa. Many scholars³ think that during laying down the hymns *ṛsis*⁴ were inspired, possessed and therefore unconscious of ritual applications. Not a few Vedic authorities hold that applications come first. Prof. Phillips, for example, notes : 'Sacrifice (*yajña*) is the soul of Veda. It is older than the hymns, for they were composed for its celebration'⁵. However, if we judge the hymns from the angle of applications,

1. Cf. *mantrabrāhmaṇayor vedanāmadheyam, Āpastamba-Yajñaparibhāṣā-Sūtra* (ĀPYS). 34, (ed.) Indrani Dutta. Sanskrit Pustak Bhandar. Calcutta, 1993.
2. "Vedic Rituals", *Cultural Heritage of India*, vol. I. The Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 2nd edn., 1958, reprint 1982, p. 245.
3. a large number of hymns arose independently of the sacrificial ritual.....*ibid*, p. 235.
4. According to *TaiĀ* (II. 9. 1) *brahman* itself goes to (*ṛṣati*) the persons who practise penance with a view to attaining it (*Veda*). Hence those persons are called *ṛsis* (*ṛṣ* to go, *Dhā. 1287*).
5. Maurice Phillips, *The Teaching of the Vedas*, Seema Publications, Delhi, First Indian Reprint, 1976, p. 190.

we may find that all the hymns have applications in the sacrifice, direct or indirect, overt or covert.

The term *yajña* is derived from the root *yajadevapūjāsamgati-karanādāneṣu* (*Dhā.* 1002) meaning an offering of oblation to god : *dravyam devatātyāgaḥ* (*KŚS.* I. 2 . 2). So sacrifice has three features-oblation, god and offering.⁶ Among these three, offering sometimes is ranked higher than gods because the gods are to depend on the deeds of the sacrificers : *api vā śabdapūrvatvād yajñakarma pradhānam syād guṇatve devatāśrutih* (*JaimS.* IX. 1. 9). But this view was expounded by the Mīmāṃsā School to show that the forms of the deities could easily be dispensed with. Elsewhere, *Mīmāṃsakas* too admit that the gods are indispensable to sacrifice. They think that gods have no right to perform *yajña* because they have no gods to worship: *na devānām devatāntarābhāvāt.*⁷ Admittedly, 'there is a close.... relation of the gods with *ṛta/yajña* in the *Ṛgveda*.....'⁸ and realising this 'the priests and the sacrificers, while reciting them in earnestness, concentrate their mind both on the ritual and its significance and realise the omnipresence of god'⁹. Now the term god in this context includes goddesses also. Enumeration of relevant rituals in which female deities occur would substantiate our point as well as help us understand their position in the *Ṛgveda-Samhitā*. The present monograph, however, would show the share of *Ṛgvedic* female deities in the Soma-sacrifices.

(i) **Agniṣṭoma** : This is the model of all Soma-sacrifices, though a sacrifice of one pressing day, requires four more preparatory days in which *Dikṣaṇīyeṣṭi*, *Prāyaṇīyeṣṭi*, *Ātithyeṣṭi*, *Pravargya*, *Upasadiṣṭi*, *Agnīṣomīya*, Animal sacrifice etc. are the main functions. On the pressing day, Soma juice is offered to various gods in three sessions-morning, noon and afternoon in which twelve *stotras* and twelve *śāstras* are applied. This sacrifice is called *Agniṣṭoma* because it ends with *Agniṣṭomastotra*.

Here, the hymn (*RV.* I. 159) of *Dyāvāpṛthivī* is applied as a *nividdhānīya*, that is, this hymn would be inserted in the *nivid* chapter, a part of *śāstra*. At the time of third pressing the verse (*RV X.* 63. 3) of *Aditi* and *Dyauḥ* is used as a *dhāyyā* (meaning insertion)¹⁰ in *Vaiśvadevaśāstra*. In the Morning pressing, the verse (*RV.* I. 22 . 9) of *Devī* is used as a *prasthitayājyā*, to be pronounced by

6. Dhūrtasvāmin says in his Commentary on *ĀpYS.* 1 : *daivam prati svadravyasyotsarjanam yajñah.*

7. Śābarasvāmin says on *JaimS* VI. 1. 5.

8. H. Aguilar, *The Sacrifice in the Ṛgveda*, Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan, Delhi, 1976, p. 63.

9. S. Narasimhācārya, *A True Interpretation of Vedic Sacrifice*, Madras, 1932, p. 21.

10. Though Pāṇini takes *dhāyyā* as a synonym for *sāmidhenī* (*Pā.* III. 1. 129), technically *dhāyyā* means the inserted verse between two hymns.

Neṣṭr at the time of praising dual gods (*dvidaivatagraha*)¹¹. In Āgnimārutaśāstra, a śāstra to be recited by Hotṛ in the third pressing time, ṚV VI . 49 . 7 of Sarasvatī, X . 9 . 1-3 of ĀPŚS and V . 46 . 7, 8 of Devī are used. In this śāstra ṚV II . 32 . 4,5 of Rākā are inserted (as *dhāyā*).

(a) **Havirdhānapravartana** : On the Upavasatha-day i.e. the fourth day of Agniṣṭoma, Soma plant, the main offering of Soma-sacrifice, is placed upon the two carts. So these two carts are called *havirdhānas*. The wife of the sacrificer anoints the yokes of the cart with *ghṛta*. Adhvaryu and Pratiprasthātṛ drive those carts to the great altar (*mahāvedi*) upon which the *havirdhānamandapa* (a *pandal* for placing oblation) is to be erected. When the carts move, Hotṛ and Yajamāna recite *mantras*¹². This act of moving the cart is called Havirdhānapravartana. Three verses (ṚV II. 41. 19-21) of Dyāvāpṛthivī are applied then.

(b) **Prātaranuvāka** : At mid-night preceding the Pressing day the sacrificer awakes all the priests who enter the sacrificial *pandal* after a pure bath. Being asked by Adhvaryu to recite morning litany Hotṛ then starts praising Agni, Uṣas and Aśvins in a grave tone (*mandra-svara*) sitting between two carts comprising oblations (*havirdhānas*). This is called Prātaranuvāka though strictly speaking it is not recited in the morning : *yadyapy ayam uṣaḥkālo na tu prātaḥkālas tathāpi prātaḥkālasamīpavartitvāt prātaranuvākatvam draṣṭavyam* says Sāyaṇa on *AitBr.* VII. 5. There is no fixed prescription as to the exact number of Vedic *mantras* to be recited here. But Hotṛ should continue his recitation unless darkness lifts off its veil. It is not that this recitation continues until the chirping is heard because there is a direct injunction of Āśvalāyana that if there is still darkness even when all the stipulated *mantras* are recited, Hotṛ should repeat the Dyāvāpṛthivī-hymn : *ile dyāvīyam āvartayed ā tamaso'paghātāt* (ĀŚS. IV. 15). When there is light in the horizon Hotṛ leaving his seat should recite *prati priyatamam* etc. (ṚV V. 75) in the middle tone.

However the following verses are recited in Prātaranuvāka :

Of Uṣas 177 verses of the ṚV¹³; of Dyāvāpṛthivī I. 22. 13, 14, 94. 16cd, 112. 1ab, 160. 1 ; of Rātri I ; 113 . 1cd, of ĀPŚS X. 30. 12.

(c) **Pravargya** : On the second day of Agniṣṭoma Ātithyeṣṭi being over, Pravargya is performed in the morning and later in the afternoon. Similarly, on the third day Pravargya is performed twice but on the fourth day it is performed twice in the morning. This is an independent rite by itself and 'it appears from

11. Though Hotṛ is asked to pronounce the *yāyā*, others Praśāstr, Brāhmaṇaccharṣin, Potṛ, Neṣṭr, Āgnīdhra or Acchāvāka may also utter the *yāyā*. This is called *prasthitayāyā* [see ĀŚS. V. 5. 15-16].

12. See *Rāmendrasundar Racanāsamagra*. vol. II, (ed.) Buddhadev Bhattacharya, Calcutta, 1383 (*Bengali Era*) p. 49.

13. See. *Rksaṁhitā* vol. I. (ed.) S. Goswami & H. Chakrabarti, Calcutta, 1974, p. 76.

ĀPŚS XIII. 4. 3-5; as P.V. Kane notes, that the Pravargya rite was not necessarily performed in every Agniṣṭoma¹⁴. He further points out that 'the Pravargya was not to be performed at a sacrificer's first Soma-sacrifice and it was not to be performed for anyone and everyone, but only for him who was well-known or was a complete master of the Veda'¹⁵. The wife of the sacrificer initially was not allowed to see this rite because it was considered to be a mystic and recondite affair but later this prohibition was lifted off as the wife also uttered *mantra* during sacrificial ritual (KŚS. XXVI. 4. 13).

However, the oblation here is *gharma*, a mixture of goat milk and cow milk with hot ghee. The god for whom the oblation is to be offered is also *gharma*. The earthen vessel with which the oblation is to be offered is Mahāvīra. There are also two milking bowls and two round plates called Rauhiṇa for baking two *purodāśas*. *Gharma* and *Rauhiṇapurodāśa* are given to Aśvins, Vāyu, Indra, Savitr, Bṛhaspati and Yama. Hotṛ recites *mantras* while Prastotr sings.

However, the verse (RV I. 164. 49) of Sarasvatī, RV I. 112. 1ab of Dyāvapṛthivī and RV X. 183. 2 of Yajamānapatnī are applied as the *adhīṣṭava* praise, a praise to be pronounced by Hotṛ to favour the deeds of Adhvaryu.

(d) **Aponaptriya** : On the fourth day of Agniṣṭoma the Animal sacrifice called Agniṣomīyapaśu being over, the water named Vasatīvarī is to be brought from preferably a stream or from a pond. Next morning, when Prātarānuvāka, the morning litany, comes to an end, the sacrificer, his wife, the priests and some other attendents go to the pond to bring water named Ekadhanā. Then with the mixture of Vasatīvarī and Ekadhanā the third type of water called Nigrābhya is prepared for Soma-pressing. At the time of mixing of these two water the Aponaptriya hymn is to be uttered. The first nine verses are to be recited at a stretch without pause unlike the verses of Prātarānuvāka. Then the verses (RV I. 23. 16, 17, 18; X. 30. 10-15) of goddess *Ap* are applied (ĀŚS. V. 1).

(ii) **Bṛhaspatisava** : *Sava* is one kind of Soma-sacrifice with One Pressing day : *sava nāma kecana ekāhaviśeṣāḥ somayāgāḥ taittirīyabrāhmaṇe vihītāḥ*¹⁶. Vājapeya being over the Brahmins perform Bṛhaspatisava and the Kṣatriyas Rājasūya¹⁷. But according to ŚBr. (V.2.1.19) Vājapeya and Bṛhaspatisava are identical : *bṛhaspatisavo vā eṣa vājapeyam*. However, one who craves lustre and wants to override others should perform Bṛhaspatisava :

14. *History of Dharmasāstra*, vol. II. part II, 2nd edn. Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1974, p. 1148.

15. *Ibid.* p. 1150. See also *JaimS* III. 3. 32-33 ; ŚBr. XIV. 2. 2 : 44-46.

16. A. Chinnaśwami Śāstrī, *Yajñatattvaprakāśa*, (ed.) A. M. Ramanatha Dikshita, Madras, 1953, p. 122

17. Cf. Shānti Bandyopādhyāya, *Vaidikayuger yāgayajña*, Calcutta, 1395 (Bengali Era) p. 58.

ādhipatyakāmo brahmavarcaskāmo vā bṛhaspatisavam yajeta (ĀŚS IX. 5. 3). Here, Trivṛtstoma is applied in each Pressing time. Prṣṭhastotra is sung with Rathantarasāman. Hotṛ must be a bald headed (*parisrajī*). At the end of the sacrifice the priests sprinkle water and clarified butter on the sacrificer sitting on the black deer skin. The rest function of this *sava* is like Agniṣtoma.

Here, three verses of Dyāvāpṛthivī (RV VI. 70. 1-3) are recited by Hotṛ as a part of Vaiśvadevaśastra in the Third Pressing time (ĀŚS IX. 5).

(iii) **Prṣṭhyaśadaha** : A *śadaha* which comprises six pressing days is of three kinds—Prṣṭhyaśadaha, Abhiplavaśadaha and Abhyāsangyaśadaha. In Prṣṭhyaśadaha the Prṣṭhastotra in the *Mādhyandina-savana* (mid-day pressing time) is sung in six days with six different tones (*sāman*) viz. Rathantara, Bṛhat, Vairūpa, Vairāja, Śākvara and Daivata respectively. Here, on the first and fourth days the Agniṣtoma type of Soma sacrifice is performed and on the rest the Ukthya. In Agniṣtoma on the pressing day twelve *stotras* followed by twelve *śastras* are applied, but in Ukthya the number is fifteen each.

On the second day here (i.e. the Ukthya) the triplet (RV II. 41. 16-18) of Sarasvatī is recited by Hotṛ as a part of the Praugaśastra at the time of morning pressing and the hymn (RV I. 160) of Dyāvāpṛthivī in the Vaiśvadevaśastra in the third pressing time is applied. On the third day (Ukthya) in the Vaiśvadevaśastra the verses (RV X. 63. 15-16) of Pathyāsvasti are used as *nivid*. On the sixth day the triplet (RV VI. 61. 1-3) of Sarasvatī is used in the Praugaśastra and the hymn (RV I. 159) of Dyāvāpṛthivī is used as a *nivid*.

(iv) **Abhiplavaśadaha** : The Prṣṭhastotra in the Abhiplavaśadaha is sung on odd days with Rathantarasāman and on the even days with Bṛhat. On the first and last days the Agniṣtoma type of Soma-sacrifice is performed and on the rest Ukthya.

Here on the second day (the Ukthya) in the Praugaśastra to praise Sarasvatī and others the hymn (RV II. 41) minus the last triplet is used. The hymn (RV I. 160) of Dyāvāpṛthivī is applied in the Vaiśvadevaśastra as *nivid*. On the third day, the triplet (RV I. 70. 4-6) of Dyāvāpṛthivī and RV X. 63. 15-16 are also applied there. On the fourth day, the hymn (RV I. 35) in which Rātrī finds mention and the triplet (RV II. 32. 1-3) of Dyāvāpṛthivī are also used in the Vaiśvadevaśastra as *nivid*. On the fifth day, the triplet (RV VI. 70. 1-3) of Dyāvāpṛthivī is also mentioned there. On the sixth day, the hymn (RV I. 185) of Dyāvāpṛthivī is applied there too. The hymn (RV I. 94 in which Dyāvāpṛthivī is also praised) is found in the Āgnimārutaśastra in the evening as a *nividhānīya*.

(v) **Atirātra** : Atirātra, a modification of Agniṣtoma, is one of the seven types of Soma-sacrifice. For this rite a lot of soma juice is necessary for its third pressing time unlike Agniṣtoma. After the Śodaśigraha the first *stotra* of Rātrīstotra is sung followed by a *śastra* recited by Hotṛ. Twelve *stotras* and *śastras* are applied at night in three parts (*rātriparyāyas*). There is no *graha* but *camasa* after Śodaśigraha. The god is Indra. After the completion of

stotras and *śāstras* Pratiprasthātṛ prepares the oblation of two potsherds for Aśvins. Then starts Sandhistotra followed by Āśvinaśāstra, a recitation of series of *mantras* like Prātarānuvāka until the sun rises. Then Pratiprasthātṛ offers two potsherds to Aśvins. Then comes the drinking of the residue (*camasabhakṣaṇam*). The rest is like Agniṣtoma except the curd to Maitrāvaruṇa in place of Anubandhya animal sacrifice.

The hymn (RV IV. 30) in which Uṣas is also praised is applied in the Maitrāvaruṇaśāstra in the third part of Atirātra.

In Āsvinaśāstra all the verses used in Prātarānuvāka (already referred to) are applied (ĀŚS VI. 5).

(vi) **Aptoryāma** : Aptoryāma is an extension of Atirātra. Here after Rātristotra and Sandhistotra four more *stotras* are sung for which four *camasa* classes of priests headed by Adhvaryu and Pratiprasthātṛ are required.

The hymn (RV I. 112) in which Dyāvapṛthivī is praised is applied in Aptoryāma as an extra *uktha* of Acchāvāka.

(vii) **Mahāvratā** : Gavāmayana, the model of *sattra* (a long sessioned sacrifice), has two parts *pūrvapakṣa* (ist half) and *uttarapakṣa* (last half) having 180 days each. Both the parts are symmetrically set. The *sattra* begins with Atirātra and ends with the same. While the second day of the first part is called Caturviṃśa, the penultimate day of the last part is Mahāvratā.¹⁸ Of course, these two days are not similar to each other. In Mahāvratā many heterogenous incidents take place. That is why, the day is called Mahāvratā.¹⁹ Udgātṛ sings on the *audumbarī* seat. Adhvaryu sits on the *phalaka*. Hotṛ recites Niṣkevalyaśāstra at noon on the cradle. While the Śūdra slanders the sacrificers, the Brāhmins praise. On the each angle of the altar some play drums. Different enjoyments with dance, songs with hundred stringed lyre and funs take place here.

Here in the Niṣkevalyaśāstra, RV X. 172 of Uṣas and RV I. 89. 10 of Aditi are applied. RV I. 185 of Dyāvapṛthivī is also applied in the Vaiśvadevaśāstra.

(viii) **Viṣuvadina** : The middle day of Gavāmayana is called Viṣuvadina. On its preceding ten days we have three Svarasāmans, one Abhijit and one Prṣṭhyaśadaha and on the following ten days three Svarasāmans, one Viśvajit and one Prṣṭhyaśadaha. So Viṣuva is the twenty first day. Besides, on that day twenty one *stomas* are sung. This is why Viṣuva is called the Ekaviṃśa. This day follows the rules of Agniṣtoma.

Here, RV IV. 58 of *Ap* is used in the Ājyaśāstra in the morning (ĀŚS VIII : 6).

(ix) **Caturviṃśa** : The second day of Gavāmayana is called Caturviṃśa

18. Cf. Prof. Yogīrāja Basu notes that in Bharatadvādaśāha the penultimate day is called Mahāvratā.-*Veder Paricay*, Firma KLM, Calcutta, 2nd. ed., 1975, p. 133.

19. Cf. *anekaviśeṣayuktatvād evāśya mahāvratatvam-Śrutisañcayanam*, part II, (ed.) Ayodhyānath Sanyal Śāstri, The University of Burdwan, 1980, p. 28.

because this day enjoys twenty four *stomas*. Since the day follows the Ukthya type of Soma-sacrifice there are five *stotras* and five *śastras* in each pressing time.

Here, in the Vaiśvadevaśastra the hymn (RV I. 160) of Dyāvāpṛthivī is applied as a *nividdhānīya*.

(x) **Daśarātra** : Dvādaśāha having two parts-Vyūḍha and Samūḍha (some call it Bharata) begins and ends with Atirātra type of Soma-sacrifice. Excluding the Prāyaṇīya (the first) day and Udayanīya (the last) days we have Daśarātra, one Pṛṣṭhyaśadaha is performed on the first six days of Daśarātra and Chandomas on the next three.²⁰ The tenth day is called Avivākya since no false sentence is pronounced on that day. However, on the first Chandoma day Ukthya type of sacrifice, thirty three *stomas* Śukrāgrata and Raivatasāman etc., on the second Chandoma Ukthya, twenty four *stomas*, Śukrāgrata and Rathantarāsāman etc and on the third Chandoma Ukthya, forty four *stomas*, Āgrayaṇāgrata and Bṛhatsāman etc, are performed. On the Avivākya day Agniṣṭoma/Atirātra/Ukthya twenty four *stomas*, Aindravāyavāgratā and Rathantarāsāman are performed.²¹

Now on the first day of Daśarātra the triplet of Sarasvatī (RV II. 41. 16-8) is applied in the Praugaśastra. On the third day, the triplet of Sarasvatī (RV VI. 61. 10-12) is applied therein. On its fourth day, the triplet of Dyāvāpṛthivī (RV VII. 53. 1-3) and the hymn (RV VII. 34 in which *Ap* and *Devī* are praised) are used as *Vaiśvadevanividdhānīya*. On its fifth day the three consecutive verses of Sarasvatī (RV VII. 96. 1-3) are used in the Praugaśastra. The four verses of Dyāvāpṛthivī (RV IV. 56. 1-4) are used as *nividdhānīya* in the Vaiśvadevaśastra. On the seventh day i.e. on the first Chandoma the hymn of *Ap* (RV IV. 58) is used in the Ājyaśastra and RV VII. 95. 1 of Sarasvatī is applied in the Praugaśastra. The hymn (RV X. 172) of Uṣas is used before Vaiśvadeva hymn. There in the Vaiśvadevaśastra RV II. 41. 19-21 of Dyāvāpṛthivī are applied as *nividdhānīya*. On the second Chandoma (8th day) three verses of Dyāvāpṛthivī (RV I.22. 13-15) are used as *vaiśvadevanividdhānīya*. The triplet (RV VII. 95. 4-6) of Sarasvatī is applied in the Praugaśastra. On the ninth day of Vyūḍha-daśarātra (3rd Chandoma) in the Praugaśastra the verses (RV V. 43. 11. X. 17. 7) of Sarasvatī are used.

On the tenth day or Avivākya day the hymn (RV X. 189) of Sārparājñī is used in the *mānasagraha*.

(xi) **Bhūmistoma** : Bhūmistoma, a modification of Agniṣṭoma, is a sacrifice of one day²². Here in the Marutvatīyaśastra at noon the RV V. 84. 1 of Pṛthivī is applied.

20. Prof. Yogīrāja Basu maintains that the eighth, ninth and eleventh days of Vyūḍhadvādasāha Chandoma is performed., *op. cit.*, p. 134. This difference may be due to the difference of recension.

21. *Vide, Yajñatattvaprakāśa, op. cit.*, p. 127.

22. Nārāyaṇa comments on ĀŚS IX, 5, 2 : *gostomo bhūmistomo vanaspatīya trayā ekāhāh.*



(xii) **Vipruddhoma** : If one accidentally spittles while chanting, Vipruddhoma is to be performed as an atonement on the pressing days. Then *RV* X. 17. 11 & 12 of *Ap* are to be pronounced.

(xiii) **Skannahavirabhimarśaṇa** : An expiatory offering designed to atone is to be performed if the oblation/ Soma juice spills inadvertently during offering. This is called Skannahavirabhimarśaṇa. Then *RV* X. 17. 11 of *Ap* is applied. When the *sānnyājya*, a mixture of milk and curd, spills over, the verse *RV* I. 22. 13 (14) of *Dyāvāprthivī*, is recited.

From the foregoing analysis, it is clear that almost all the female deities in *RV* have applications in Soma-sacrifices. The hymns in the application of which they are not explicitly mentioned are also no exceptions in this regard, for, there their presence can be established by alluding to the occurrence of their names in *Prātaranuvāka* and *Āśvinaśāstra*. Besides, without two female deities-*Ap* (water) and *Vāc* (speech or *mantra*) no sacrifice can be performed. So, there is no merit in the prejudice that as regards applications the female deities have an humble inglorious status.
