

are metrical compositions, and represent the Shastras of the Brahmanical Soma service. He must repeat five such Gâthâs, just as there are five Shastras, at the morning and midday libations, and at the Ukthya Soma sacrifice at the evening libations also.

These are only a few of the points of comparison which I could easily enlarge; but they will be sufficient to show, that the Agnishtoma Soma sacrifice was originally the same ceremony as the Homa rite of the Parsi priests. The opinions of both the Brahmans and Parsis on the effect of the drinking of the Soma (Homa) juice are besides exactly the same. The Brahmans believe that it leads to heaven; so do the Parsi priests. They say, that Homa is a plant, and a great angel. Any one who has drunk the Homa juice becomes united with this angel, and after his death an inhabitant of paradise. For the juice which is in the body of the priest who has drunk him, goes to heaven, and connects him mystically with the angel.

With particular care are the so-called Shastras or recitations of the Hotri priests treated in the Aitareya Brâhmaṇam. The fifth chapter of the second, and the three first chapters of the third book are entirely taken up with the exposition of the Shastras of the Hotar at the morning, midday, and evening libations. As the reader may learn from a perusal principally of the third book, the Shastras always belong to Stotras or performances by the Sâma singers, viz. the Udgâtar or chief singer, the Pras-totar who chants the prelude, and the Pratihartar