

marriage to the king Soma. All the gods came as paranympths. Prajâpati formed according to the model of a *vahatu*, *i. e.* things (such as turmeric, powder, &c. to be carried before the paranympths), this thousand (of verses), which is called the As'vina (Shastra). What falls short of (*arvâk*) one thousand verses, is no more the As'vin's. This is the reason that the Hotar ought to repeat only a thousand verses, or he might repeat more. He ought to eat ghee before he commences repeating. Just as in this world a cart or a carriage goes well if smeared (with oil), thus his repeating proceeds well if he be smeared (with ghee, by eating it). Having taken the posture of an eagle when starting up the Hotar should recite (when commencing) the call *s'omsâvom* (*i. e.* he should commence repeating the As'vina Shastra).

The gods could not agree as to whom this (thousand verses) should belong, each saying, "Let it be mine." Not being able to agree (to whom it should belong), they said, "Let us run a race for it. He of us who will be the winner shall have it." They made the sun which is above Agni, the house-father (above the Gârhapatya fire³), the goal. That is the reason that the As'vina Shastra commences with a verse addressed to Agni, viz. *agnir hotâ grihapatiḥ* (6,15,13).

According to the opinion of some (theologians) the Hotar should (instead of this verse) commence (the recitation of the As'vina Shastra) with *agnim manye pitaram* (10, 7, 3); for they say, he reaches the goal by means of the first verse through the words (contained in its fourth pada): *divi s'ukram yajatam sūryasya*, *i. e.* the splendour of the sun in heaven which deserves worship. But this opinion is not to

³ That is to say, they started when running the race from the Gârhapatya fire, and ran up as far as the sun, which was the goal (*kâshthâ*).