

for the gods like to hide the proper meaning of words.

On account of four classes of gods having praised Agni with four Stomas, the whole was called *Chatuḥstoma* (containing four Stomas). They called it so to hide the proper meaning of the word; for the gods like to hide the proper meaning of words.

It (the Agnishtoma) is called *Jyotishtoma*, for they praised Agni when he had risen up (to the sky) in the shape of a light (*jyotis*). They called it so to hide the proper meaning of the word; for the gods like to hide the proper meaning of words.

This (Agnishtoma) is a sacrificial performance which has no beginning and no end. The Agnishtoma is like the endless wheel of a carriage. The beginning (*prāyaṇīya*) and the conclusion (*udayaṇīya*) of it are alike (just as the two wheels of a carriage).

About this there is a sacrificial stanza sung "what is its (of the Agnishtoma) beginning, that is its end, and what is its end, that is its beginning; just as the Sākala serpent it moves in a circle, that none can distinguish its first part from its last part." For its opening (the *prāyaṇīya*) was (also) its conclusion.<sup>21</sup>

But to this some raise objections, saying, "they make the beginning (of the Stotras of the Soma day) with the Trivṛit Stoma, and conclude with the twenty-one-fold Stoma (at the evening libation); how are they (the beginning and conclusion) then alike?" To this one should answer, "they are alike as far as the twenty-one-fold Stoma is also a Trivṛit Stoma, for both contain triplets of verses, and have their nature."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> This refers to the Charu oblation to be given to Aditi at the Prāyaṇīya as well as at the Udayaṇīya Ishti. See 1, 7.

<sup>22</sup> For performing the Trivṛit Stoma at the commencement of the morning libation, the nine Bahish-pavamāna verses are required