

ORIGINAL CONCEPT OF SOMA

P.V. SHARMA*

(Received 22 May 1995)

Soma is generally taken as a plant but originally it denoted the water-principle which is the source of creation and sustenance of life. *Soma* alongwith Agni plays a pivotal role in this process. Initially in sacrifices *soma* was represented by pure rain-water. Essentially *soma*, the water-principle, supports the moon as well as plants and as such later on *soma* began to denote the moon and on the other hand, was typified by a herb coronated as the king of plants (*Oṣadhirāja* or *rājā*). The evolution is so evident that it can be traced in successive stages. All these aspects are discussed in the present article with exhaustive references.

Key Words: *Abhiṣava*, *Ādāna*, *Adri*, *Agni*, *Candramā*, *Grāvā*, *Hari*, *Hoama*, *Mada*, *Pavamāna*, *Rain-cycle*, *Soma*, *Visarga*, *Water-principle*.

To search for the original concept of *soma* one has to go deep into the *Ṛgveda* which is the oldest document of Indian culture. According to Tilak, the date of the *Ṛgveda* goes back to 6000 BC while Jacobi fixes it as 4500 BC. Winternitz, however, adopting a middle course fixes the date of the Vedas in general from 2500-2000 BC to 750-500 BC¹

Nowadays *soma* is taken as a plant and its description is formed on the basis of some words coming in the *Ṛgveda* (*RV*) but if one critically analyses the hymns of *RV*, there is no sign indicating to it. In fact, the word *oṣadhi* appears with *soma* only in the tenth *maṇḍala* (10.85.3) which is regarded as the latest constituent.² Here too the real *soma* is stated to be different from that in the form of a herb. Griffith translates it as follows :

"One thinks, when they have brayed the plant, that he hath drunk the *soma*'s juice; of him whom Brahmanas truly know as *soma* no one ever tastes."³

Sāyaṇa interprets *soma* both as plant and moon.⁴ In *Oṣadhisūkta* *soma* is mentioned along with herbs as their king.⁵ *Atharvaveda* (*AV*) clearly mentions *soma* with plants like *aśvattha* and *darbha*⁶ while *kuṣṭha* is said to be growing along with *soma* in upper Himālayas.⁷ Keśava in his *paddhati* defines it as remedy for the complications arising from the intake of *soma*⁸ which is certainly a plant. In Brāhmaṇa

literature and Śrautasūtras, there is detailed description of purchase and transport of *soma* in a cart followed by the extraction of its juice (*abhiṣava*) with the help of stone-pieces.⁹ Thus undoubtedly by that time *soma* was reduced to a concrete identity in the form of a plant which is still a matter of controversy though scholars have claimed to have solved the problem once for all.¹⁰

However, to know the original concept of *soma* we have to go back and study the earlier portions of RV which throw immense light on the matter. One thing is evident that it was not a plant then, because it is not mentioned therein as such.

Soma was a deity of the celestial region as he is called 'child of heaven'.¹¹ It was carried from there to the middle (atmospheric) region by Gāyatrī disguised as a falcon.¹² It again descends to earth with rains.¹³ Thus it has place in all the three regions. Yākṣa in *Nirukta* (YN) has described it as a deity of the middle region and has taken it as plant or moon.¹⁴ Durga has further clarified it as a plant in relation to sacrifice (*adhijajña*) and as moon in relation to god (*adhidaiva*).¹⁵ He further discusses the justification for the place of *soma* because of its relation with moon which is again concerned with the functions of Indra's (middle) region that are release of *rasa* (water), slaying of *Vṛtra* are promoting strength.¹⁶

Yākṣa says that there are, in fact, only three gods Agni (fire), Vāyu (air) or Indra (rain-god) and Sūrya (sun) in terrestrial, atmospheric and celestial regions respectively. Durga, in his commentary says that though Vāyu and Indra are synonymous the middle region is chiefly governed by Indra and not so by Vāyu, Varuṇa, Rudra etc. Thus all other gods belonging to these regions are merely various manifestations of these three gods assisting in performance of their respective functions.¹⁷

Śaunaka in the *Bṛhaddevatā* (BD) says that the names of deities are based on their functions.¹⁸ In fact, it is the Sun-god who diversifies Himself in three forms in three regions.¹⁹ Accordingly, Indra is so called as He takes away the sap of the terrestrial region by its rays along with Vāyu (to the middle region) and again pours it down as rains.²⁰ There is also story of *soma's* flight from the gods to the earth from where it was brought again by Indra forcibly.²¹ There is a significant dialogue between Indra and sages in which the former asks the latter as to how they maintain themselves in times of drought. The latter replied that they were sustained by vehicles, vegetables, cows, agriculture, accumulated water, forest, sea, mountains and Rājā.²² The word *Rājā* here is translated by Macdonell as king but it may well mean *soma* which is the sustaining factor for life.

Thus, on the above evidences, it is clear that *soma* is related to Indra in the atmospheric region and is concerned with the functions of the release of water and

promotion of strength.^{22a}

It would now be opportune to discuss the functions of Indra who is the god in charge of rains. The entire cycle of formation of clouds, release of water therefrom and reabsorption of terrestrial water (as *āditya*) is controlled by Indra. He is assisted in this function by Vāyu, Marut, Parjanya, Rudra etc. That Indra is the god of rains is proved by the purāṇic legend of the holding up of the hillock Govardhana by Kṛṣṇa when Indra, in revenge, overflowed the area with torrential rains.

The above physical phenomena are described in *RV* in symbolical form of Vṛtra (also *ahi*), battle of Indra and Vṛtra leading to defeat and death of the latter resulting in release of water in the form of rains. *Vṛtra* is the factor obstructing the rains²³ which is removed by Indra. The lightning and the associated sound depicts the sound of battlefield. The legend of the slaying of Vṛtra is nothing but a symbolic expression of the physical phenomena of rains.²⁴ Durga, commenting on this, says that this legend of battle is only allegorical (and not real) and, in fact, the paraphernalia of rains which occur due to combination of the principles of water and heat simulates a battle.²⁵ It is said in support of the vedic style of symbolism that gods like the indirect statement of facts and not the direct one.²⁶ V.S. Agrawal says that the Ṛṣis of the *Rgveda* have employed the language of symbolism to convey their meaning.²⁷ Thus it is quite natural that *Soma* symbolises some essential factor which we have to search on.

ĀGNI AND SOMA

Agni and Soma play pivotal role in creation. Agni is within soma²⁸ (water) and Soma too is behind Agni to sustain Him.²⁹ Thus they are essentially one like Śiva-Śakti but interplay for the creation and sustenance of the universe.³⁰ As said above, Agni pervades all the three regions in forms of Āditya (sun), Vidyut (lightning) and Agni (fire).³¹ Similarly soma is also existent in all these regions.

Soma absorbed by sun-rays ascends to the atmospheric region^{31a} where it copulates with Agni³² (the fire-principle). It is this copulation of soma and Agni that results in the formation of the water-embryo (*apāṃ garbhaḥ*)³³ which makes nucleus developing into the womb of clouds leading to the delivery of water in form of rains.

According to solar zodiac, both Soma and Agni prepare themselves in *Meṣa* (Aries) and *Vṛṣa* (Taurus) and copulate in *Mithuna* (Gemini) which is the beginning of the rainy season. The words '*Meṣa*' (with synonyms as '*Meḍhra*' and *Vṛṣṇi*),³⁴ *Vṛṣa* and '*Mithuna*' are quite significant in respect of physical copulation and fertilization similar to the physical phenomena. It is noteworthy that *soma* is the master of the

Mṛgaśira nakṣatra.³⁵ which just precedes *Ārdrā*, the beginning of rains and has important place in this phenomenon. The actual copulation starts in this *nakṣatra* falling half in *Vṛṣa* and half in *Mithuna* indicated by the intense heat of the period.

Soma is said as *retas* (semen) and Agni as *ārtava*.³⁶ Somewhere it is stated quite reverse i.e. agni as *retas* and soma as *ārtava*,³⁷ but generally the former view is prevalent. In *Āyurveda* too, *śukra* is said as *saumya* (relating to *soma*) and *ārtava* as *āgneya*³⁸ (relating to agni).

Not only fertilization and reproduction but all the biological phenomena are controlled by Agni and Soma which are represented by *pitta* and *kapha* respectively.³⁹ These two along with *Vāyu* make the *tridoṣa* of *Āyurveda* which govern the physio-pathology of the living body. *Vāyu* is the factor of movement which assists in their normal functions. Life is, in fact, equilibrium of *agni* and *soma*. The lamp is an ideal replica of this combination which burns till there is equilibrium of *agni* (flame) and *soma* (oil). Disturbance in any of them results in extinction of the lamp.

Yajña (sacrifice) is again the similar symbol of the life-process governed by the proper combination of *agni* and *soma*. It does not only depict the input of *soma* (*retas*) in agni (*ārtava*) as allegory of fertilization but also the process of digestion and metabolism (*ādāna* and *visarga*). Sacrificial fire is the symbol of *Vaiśvānara* (digestive fire) to which *soma* is offered as oblation to maintain its energy. For proper maintenance of energy it is necessary that both these factors are in due proportions. If agni is deficient and *soma* is excessive it would create digestive disturbance while in case of the deficiency of *soma* it would lead to malnutrition.

Even *Aśvins* are interpreted as symbol of agni and soma and again as day-night and sun-moon which also represent Agni and Soma.⁴⁰

ĀDĀNA AND VISARGA

In nature, the functions of *ādāna* and *visarga* are controlled by *Āditya* (sun) and *Soma* (moon) respectively. It is said that out of six seasons three-*śiśira*, *vasanta* and *grīṣma* belong to the latter group. In the period of *ādāna*, the sun is stronger and as such takes away the terrestrial sap while in that of *visarga* the moon is predominant and as such replenishes the earth with sap.⁴¹ *Hari* is a synonym of *Āditya* which means 'that who carries away the sap'.⁴² On the contrary, *Soma* has synonyms like '*indu*'⁴³ (who moistens) and '*Candra*'⁴⁴ (who gladdens). The word *Soma* itself has the underlying meaning of creation.⁴⁵

Soma sacrifices are generally held in *ādāna-kāla* particularly in spring time⁴⁶

which is the middle season of the period. Indra is fascinated to Soma. He is always in search of that and wherever he finds it runs after Soma to carry it away.⁴⁷ Here Indra is, in fact, Āditya who consumes *soma*⁴⁸ (the water-principle) through its *haris* (horses – absorbing sun-rays) to the maximum, resulting in inflation of his stomach like a bladder and drenching the whole body.⁴⁹ He acquires by it a sort of *mada*⁵⁰ (saturation associated with exhilaration) and *bala*⁵¹ (energy and strength) by which he breaks away the limbs of *śuṣṇa* and *Vṛtra* who obstruct the fertilization of water-embryo and delivery of rain. *Śuṣṇa*⁵² symbolises the factors which create obstacles in the formation of water-embryo in atmosphere while (*ahi*) *Vṛtra*⁵³ is the factor which obstructs the delivery of rains.

Soma, in this context, cannot be an intoxicating herbal drink on the following grounds –

- (1) An intoxicating drink cannot be consumed to fill the stomach fully and even to drench the whole body.
- (2) An intoxicating drink always produces stimulation followed by depression but in this case there is only saturation with exhilaration without any sign of depression. In fact, the word *mada* here is formed by the verb-root *madi* in the senses of saturation and exhilaration respectively. (*mada tṛptiyoge; madi haṛse*).

In *Avesta* too, there is no mention of intoxication in relation to *Haoma*, the counterpart of the vedic soma. *Haoma* is described as a saturating and exhilarating drink like *Soma*.⁵⁴

Thus Indra's two episodes-*somapāna* and *vṛtravadha*-may be the symbolic expression of *ādāna* and *visarga* respectively.

SOMA – THE WATER-PRINCIPLE

Soma, in the earlier portions of *RV*, is always associated with water and not with any plant. Soma comes down on earth with rains⁵⁵ and abides in various forms of terrestrial water including rivers and oceans.⁵⁶ Such description can not fit to a plant but can denote only the water-principle which is behind all the visible waters. Soma is described mostly in the ninth maṇḍala of *RV*. There we do not come across any word which could denote it as a herbal material. As it comes down with rain-water, the latter could be the direct and true vehicle of *soma*. The rain-water was further clarified and kept in containers. Presumably it was this drink which was taken by gods in glasses and bowls (*camasas*) after taking solid food (*havis*). In fact, *havis* and *soma* made the complete food of gods representing *anna* (solid food) and *pāna*⁵⁷ (drinks). *Soma* besides water is also present in milk, ghee and honey.⁵⁸ *Soma*, at

many places, is also said as *madhu* which is interpreted as sweet.⁵⁹ The *madhura rasa* is stated produced from the predominance of *soma*.⁶⁰ The jar full of honey carried in the chariot of Aśvins seems to be the representative of *Soma*.

Surprisingly, even the later rituals of *Soma* represented by a plant could not get rid of the original concept. The plant makes complete *Soma* only when it is combined with water.⁶¹ In *Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra* (KSS) several types of water such as *madanī*,⁶² *vasativarī*⁶³ and *nigrābhya*⁶⁴ are prescribed in *soma* sacrifice. The word *madanī* reminds the *madan* effect of *Soma* mentioned in *RV*.

The position has been complicated by the interpretations of the later commentators who were biased with the idea of *soma*-sacrifice prevalent where *soma* denoted a specific plant. Hence it would be necessary to see the original description of *Soma* first and then to examine the interpretations critically.

SOMA IN THE *ṚGVEDA*

Soma is often mentioned by its synonyms *indu* and *aṁśu*.⁶⁵ *Indu* is formed by the verb-root *undī kledane*, meaning moistening. Thus *indu* means that which moistens. The word *Indra* is closely related to it which is concerned with release of moisture (water). The word *aṁśu* is formed by *aś vyāptau* meaning that which pervades. *Soma* is so called as it pervades the universe. The rays (of the sun and moon) are also called *aṁśu* as they pierce and pervade. *Aṁśu* also means 'fraction'⁶⁶ which is significant in the case of *Soma* as it is essential fraction of water and in that of moon where it denotes 'digits'. Due to its pervading nature, *Soma* is also mentioned as *āśu*.⁶⁷ It is also *drapsa*⁶⁸ (of liquid nature, in drops) and *camoṣada*⁶⁹ (residing in clouds or vats). *Soma* is copiously mentioned as *matsara*⁷⁰ (saturating) and *mādayiṣṇu*⁷¹ (exhilarating). It is also called as *madhu*⁷² because of its being sweet and essence. It is *go*⁷³ as it is constantly moving.

Soma is the water-principle which resides primarily in water and secondarily in herbs which are nourished by them. *Soma's* connection with water is mentioned in various ways. Streams flow from Him. The waters follow His ordinance. He flows at the head of streams. He is lord and king of streams, lord of spouses, an oceanic king and god. The waters are His sisters. As leader of waters, *Soma* rules over rains. He produces waters and causes heaven and earth to rain. He streams rains from heaven. The *soma* drops themselves are several times compared with rain and *soma* is said to flow clearly with a stream of honey like the rain-charged cloud. *Soma* is the drop which grows in the waters.⁷⁴ *Soma* is mentioned as *sindhu*⁷⁵ because of its flowing nature (*syandamāna*), *sindhu* is also an epithet for *ap*⁷⁶ (water) and *megha*⁷⁷ (cloud). Generally *samudra* is *antarikṣa*⁷⁸ (atmosphere) but it also denotes *soma* because of its liquid nature. There is also reference of the 'waves' of *soma*

(*madhva ūrmi*)⁷⁹ which are waters while sometimes *soma* is mentioned as the waves of water.⁸⁰

That *soma* is the essence of water is indicated explicitly by the word *rasa*.⁸¹ It is also said as *Indriya rasa*⁸² (essence pertaining to Indra). It is also mentioned as *payas* (milk) of water (*udakasya payasā*)⁸³ having varied forms (*viṣurūpa*).⁸⁴ The shining waters in the sky exhilarating Indra indicate the presence of *soma* in them.

The use of the word '*soma*' in plural number such as *somāḥ*⁸⁵ and *somāsaḥ*⁸⁶ also indicate its affinity with '*ap*' (water) used in plural number.

Ap and *oṣadhi* are the main vehicles of *Soma* represented by *pāna* (drink) and *anna* (food) respectively. The words *iṣa* and *ūrja*⁸⁷ so often repeated in *RV* probably denote the same, the former meaning the nourishing food and the latter invigorating drink. The months *Āśvina* and *Kārttika* were named as *iṣa* and *ūrja* because they provide new cereals and fresh purified water (and also milk). *Soma* is quite known as drink but it is also mentioned as *andhas*⁸⁸ and *vāja*⁸⁹ (nourishing food). In fact, the oblations (*havis*) comprising of cereals are essentially *soma* which make *anna* (food) of gods and *soma* the divine drink.

Soma is *amṛta* (nectar) of heaven⁹⁰ and is hidden inside (the heaven and waters).⁹¹ It is the sustaining force behind sun, moon and fire.⁹² It is procreating and strengthening.⁹³ It is present everywhere⁹⁴ and occupies the place with Indra.⁹⁵ It is milked from clouds and stored in vats.⁹⁶ *Soma* is said as *amībahā*⁹⁷ (destroyer of diseases) particularly in collaboration with Rudra.⁹⁸ In tantric literature, there is a detailed description of the soma nectar and the way it is taken in by the yogins.⁹⁹

THE RAIN-CYCLE

The phenomena of *ādāna* and *visarga* are two phases of the rain-cycle. *Ādāna* (absorption) of moisture from earth is effected by *āditya* (sun) through its powerful rays called as *hari*¹⁰⁰ (absorbers, allegorically horses). Terrestrial fire of sacrifice and the oblation of *Soma* therein is the symbolic representation of the process of *ādāna*. The intake of *Soma* by Indra also symbolises the same process.¹⁰¹ The following points support this hypothesis –

1. Indra here is said in the form of *āditya* and is depicted thirsty like a deer.¹⁰²
2. He ingests *Soma* to the maximum capacity of his belly which inflates his whole body.¹⁰³

It indicates the lack of moisture in the atmosphere and its replenishment with

the process of *ādāna* by Indra.

Though Āditya and Indra have been mentioned as gods in charge of *ādāna* and *visarga* (agni being the mediator), practically Indra performs both these functions as BD says.¹⁰⁴ Indra is *somapā*¹⁰⁵ (drinker of *soma*). He is the leader of water (*apāṃ netā*)¹⁰⁶ and takes various forms according to necessity.¹⁰⁷ Before rains, he absorbs water symbolized by drinking of *soma* and during rainy season he releases water in form of rains after killing ahi (*vṛtra*) who is no other than the multi-segmented (*parvata-parvavān*) clouds retaining water. The corpse of *Vṛtra* fell down with the rains in rivers and as such the first rainy waters are foetid and impure and need purification.¹⁰⁸

ORIGINAL SOMA: THE RAIN-WATER

It appears from the foregoing descriptions that most probably *soma* presented at the sacrifice was nothing but simple pure rain-water. It was carefully kept in vats after straining through cloth-pieces and processed with incantations. It is difficult to say if the *trikadruka*¹⁰⁹ was a three-flasked apparatus designed for filtration of this water. Gods who were invited to the sacrifice were offered food (*havis*) to eat and pure rain water to drink. Horses were given parched cereals and rain water. The priests and hosts also took it for their well-being.

Rain water is called as *aindra*¹¹⁰ or *māhendra*¹¹¹ or *divya jala*¹¹² because of its association with Indra, the lord of rains. It is also known as '*āntarikṣa jala*'¹¹³ (water coming from sky). Rain-water is regarded as the best of all types of water. It is pure, anti-toxic and invigorating. Caraka says that all water is basically one which is '*aindra*' (released by Indra) and falls down from sky. He elaborates it in another stanza and praises it as the best one among waters.¹¹⁴ Suśruta has described it more elaborately. He inaugurates the chapter on liquids with rain-water which is described as having unmanifest taste, nectar-like, vitaliser, saturating, sustaining, assuring, pacifier of exertion, exhaustion, thirst, intoxication, fainting, drowsiness, (excessive) sleep and burning sensation and which is solely wholesome. Further, he says that rain-water collected in good containers purifies three *doṣas*, promotes strength and intellect and is *rasāyana*.¹¹⁵

After going through these citations it is clear that rain-water possesses the same invigorating and strengthening properties which *soma* is said to possess in *RV*. It is remarkable that rain-water is mentioned as destroyer of '*mada*' (intoxication) and so must be *soma* in the case of which *mada* has to be interpreted properly.

Rain-water is purified in the atmosphere with the rays of the sun and the moon and that is why in the absence of *āntarikṣa jala* water exposed to these rays is

recommended as its substitute.¹¹⁶

CERTAIN TERMS RELATED TO SOMA

The simple phenomenon of absorption of water by Indra underwent an interesting and complicated mythological transformation in later times resulting in detailed *Soma* sacrifice which consisted of purchase of *soma* herb, carrying it on cart, washing, pressing, straining and storing in containers.¹¹⁷ In this process, the words of *RV* were interpreted differently to suit the desired context. Hence certain terms related to *soma* need re-examination.

1. *Mada* : The word *mada* used in connection with *soma* has been misunderstood often as 'intoxication'.¹¹⁸ As said earlier, *mada* denotes saturation or exhilaration, the latter meaning blissful state of mind and not joyful or agitated mind in ordinary parlance. In any case, it was not intoxication which is characterized by stimulation (*harṣa*) followed by depression (*glāni*). Indra after taking *soma* was quite strengthened and powerful and never felt any sign of depression. Sāyaṇa also has interpreted *mada* as *tr̥pti* or *harṣa* and never as *cittavikāra* (intoxication). *Mada* is one of the ten qualities of the god.¹¹⁹ Śrī Aurobindo takes it as divine bliss.¹²⁰ The intoxicating drink in *RV* is *surā*¹²¹ which seems to be some alcoholic drink. In *SB* the distinction between *soma* and *surā* is indicated by the description of three mouths, taking *soma*, *surā* and food, of Viśvarupa, the son of Tvaṣṭā.¹²²

2. *Abhiṣava* : The word '*sava*' denoting sacrifice has been interpreted as 'that wherein *soma* is pressed'.¹²³ On the other hand, the word *soma* is analysed as that which is 'pressed' (सूयते इति सोमः). This makes a sort of interdependence. The main crux of the problem lies here with the verb-root *ṣu* which is used in the following senses-

1. *Ṣu prasavaiśvaryayoḥ* (*bhvādi* and *adādi*)
2. *Ṣu prerāṇe* (*tudādi*)
3. *Ṣuñ prāṇigarbhavimocane* (*adādi*)
4. *Ṣuñ prāṇiprasave* (*divādi*)
5. *Ṣuñ abhiṣave* (*svādi*)

In the context of *soma*, generally the verb-root '*suñ abhiṣave*' is applied. But here too the meaning of *abhiṣave* is not clear. Kāśikā has not given any interpretation thereof. However, Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita has given four meanings of this word as

follows—*snapana* (to bathe), *pīḍana* (to press), *snāna* (to take bath) and *surāsandhāna* (alcoholic fermentation).¹²⁴ Out of them '*pīḍana*' is the sense applied in earlier ritual texts.

In *RV suta* and *asuta* are the two states of *soma* described.¹²⁵ It is difficult to say that it denotes pressing in these contexts. In my opinion, the word '*abhiṣava*' is directly related to *sava* (sacrifice) and thus means 'presentation to sacrifice' (सर्वं यज्ञं प्रति अभिमुखीकरणं प्रस्तूयनम्). *Sava* itself may be derived from *ṣu prerane* meaning that which produces fruits (सुवति फलतीति सवः). There is no contradiction if *soma* also is derived like that as it is evidently concerned with creation.

3. *Adri* : It is a synonym of *megha*¹²⁶ (clouds) but Sāyaṇa has interpreted it, at several places, as stone-slab by which *soma* is pressed.¹²⁷ Let us see the following verse :

(तं सानावधि जामयो हरि हित्वन्मद्रिभिः । हर्यतं भूरिचक्षसम् ।) (RV 9.26.5)

Griffith, almost on the lines of Sāyaṇa, has translated it as follows-

"Him green, beloved, many-eyed, the sisters with the pressing stones send down to ridges of the sieve."

But if one interprets it without any bias to the *soma* ritual it would be as below-

"Him, benefactor, beloved, many-eyed, situated highly the priests invoke them down from the clouds."

Adri also means 'priest'¹²⁸ or 'honourable'¹²⁹.

4. *Grāvā*: It is also one of the synonyms of *megha*.¹³⁰ Sāyaṇa often interprets it as stone-slab.¹³¹ but in these places it may mean cloud or priest according to context. It is interesting to note that priests are compared with *parjanya*, the cloud-diety,¹³² as they make sound with incantations bringing fruits thereby. '*Grāvāṇah*' may be synonymous with *grṇānāh* (making prayers)^{132a} *Grāvabhīḥ sutam* interpreted by Sāyaṇa as 'pressed with stone slab' may well be explained as 'presented by priests'.

5. *Parvata* : *Parvata* and its synonym *giri* etc. denote *megha*.¹³³ The word *Parvata* means 'that having many segments (*Parva*)'.¹³⁴ Sāyaṇa has related the word *muñjanejana* (RV 1.161.8) with the mountain named *Muñjanejana* which was later taken as the habitat of *soma* (RV. 10.34.1), but *muñjanejana* may simply mean cleaned with or off *muñja* grass. When there is any reference of *soma* growing on *parvata* they mean clouds and not mountains.

6. *Ulūkhalā*.¹³⁵ It may be some spindle-shaped vehicle with which *soma* was offered to gods.

7. *Dhiṣaṇa* : This has been interpreted by Sāyaṇa somewhere (1.109.3) as '*adhiṣavaṇa carma*' (sacrificial hide) and at another place (1.109.4) 'incantation' which seems to be more relevant. Similarly *dhīti* means *stuti* (prayer) even according to Sāyaṇa¹³⁶ but in many contexts he has interpreted it as 'fingers' which are active in the process of soma-pressing.¹³⁷

8. *Camū* : According to Nighaṇṭu it means earth and heaven.¹³⁸ Thus the word *camūṣad* would mean 'that residing in earth and heaven'. Sāyaṇa has mostly interpreted it in restrictive sense of vats and thus according to him *camūṣad* would mean 'kept in vats'. Formed by the same verb-root (*camu ādāne*) *camasa* is the vehicle (cup) in which *soma* is taken.¹³⁹

9. *Pavitra* : It has been interpreted mostly as *daśāpavitra*, a piece of cloth through which soma-juice is strained,¹⁴⁰ but *mantra* (incantation) is also known as *pavitra* by which everything is purified.¹⁴¹ Besides, in the vast atmosphere there are sun-rays which purify the rain-water.¹⁴² Probably the words like *avi-vāra* or *avyaya vāra* which are interpreted by Sāyaṇa as 'sheep-wool' through which soma-juice was strained¹⁴³ are nothing but the divine rays of the sun.^{143a} The words like *pūtāḥ*, *sucayaḥ* etc. should also be interpreted on the same line.

10. *Pavamāna* : The entire ninth *maṇḍala* of *RV* is dedicated to the god *Pavamāna* soma. What is this *Pavamāna*? It has been interpreted mostly as 'being strained through'¹⁴⁴ and in other contexts as purifying.¹⁴⁵ In this connection, we have to consider two verb-roots- (1) *pūṇ pavane*' (*bhvādi*) which makes forms as *pavate* etc. and (2) *Pūṇ pavane* (*kryādi*) having forms *punāti*, *punīte* etc. The latter is commonly used in the sense of purifying but what does the former denote? Nighaṇṭu mentions *pavate in the sense of 'gati'* (movement).¹⁴⁶ It signifies the difference between the above two verb-roots. *Pavate* denotes movement while *punāti-punīte* denote purification. *Pavana* and *pavamāna* these two epithets of *vāyu* denote its purifying and dynamic quality respectively. Again there is an important mention of *parisrava* and *pavasva*, which are interpreted by Sāyaṇa as 'be strained through' in the sense of solicitation (*adhyeṣaṇā*).¹⁴⁷ According to this, their actual meaning would be 'move in solicitation' which is quite relevant.

11. *Hari* : Sāyaṇa has interpreted it as follows –

1. *Aśvau*¹⁴⁸ (horses as they carry chariot)
2. *Rasaharaṇaśīlaḥ Ādityaḥ*¹⁴⁹ (*Āditya* which absorbs water)

3. *Haritavarnaḥ*¹⁵⁰ (Green in colour)
4. *Syāmavarnaḥ*¹⁵¹ (light dark in colour)

In the context of *soma* he has almost always mentioned as *haritavarna* but the second meaning signifying absorption of water is more pertinent in this context. Soma is also called '*hari*' because it is absorbed (ह्रियते इति हरिः) or it destroys debility etc.^{151a} (हरति दौर्बल्यादीनीति हरिः)

12. *Babhru* : It has been interpreted as 'brown' (in colour) in relation to the herb *soma*, it also means 'that which sustains',¹⁵² Similarly *pr̥ṣni* (with variegated colours) has been related to *soma*¹⁵³ but generally it is a synonym of *Āditya* (sun) who has spectra in his rays.¹⁵⁴ It has been tried vainly to define the colour of the herb *soma* on the basis of the words like *babhru*, *hari*, *aruṇa*, and *pr̥ṣni* because it is difficult to extract any definite colour from them.

13. *Śuṣma* : It denotes the absorbing power of Indra¹⁵⁵ (as *Āditya*). A demon causing drought is known as *śuṣma*.¹⁵⁶ *Vṛṣa*¹⁵⁷ is quite opposite to *śuṣma* denoting potency of release. Thus *śuṣma* and *vṛṣa* are the two aspects of the power of Indra in relation to the function of rains.

SOMA AND CANDRAMĀ

Soma devatā in *RV* is not *candramā* (moon) but essentially the water-principle behind it which sustains and replenishes the sap of the living world. However, in some hymns the two ideas are so fused together that it is difficult to distinguish. The reason of confusion is the similarity between them. Both *soma* and *candramā* are born in water and are food of gods which has been elaborated in the post-Vedic literature. Both have epithets '*indu*' and '*candra*' because of their watery and pleasure-giving nature. Hillebrandt asserts that in the whole of the ninth *maṇḍala* *soma*, is the moon and nowhere the ordinary plant. Further he maintains that *soma*, in *RV*, means only the *soma* plant or juice on one hand and, as a deity, only the moon on the other.¹⁵⁸

Gradually the two are distinguished – one the celestial *soma* denoting moon who is regarded as the lord of stars and the other the terrestrial one being the lord of herbs. *AV* mentions them separately¹⁵⁹ and Nighaṇṭu makes them seated separately in the galaxy of gods.¹⁶⁰ Further, moon was related to the realm of mind¹⁶¹ (perhaps because of the unstable nature of both) while *soma* entering into the realm of plants first as the nutrient sap¹⁶² and then as a separate plant.¹⁶³ Even the terrestrial *soma*, initially, was a prototype of moon, a mythical plant having fifteen leaves like the digits of moon and waxing and waning with the same.¹⁶⁴ It took a long time for *soma*

to get rid of the connections with moon and acquire a distinct identity as plant.¹⁶⁵

SOMA VIS-A-VIS HAOMA

Modern scholars have equated *Soma* with Avestan *Haoma* and the pressing and offering of *soma* is said to be an important feature of Indo-Iranian worship.¹⁶⁶ If we go through the *Avesta* carefully three things are found there simultaneously – holy water, haoma and the sweet smelling plant *Hadhanaepata*.¹⁶⁷ Haoma and Haoma-juice also come together at several places¹⁶⁸ as *soma* and *rasa* in *RV* but as in *RV*, in *Avesta* too it is not clearly mentioned that Haoma was a plant. Again, haoma is mentioned in association with the holy water as in *RV*. Likewise it is also described as coming down in thousand streams which sustains all waters.¹⁶⁹

In some contexts it is undoubtedly a plant having miraculous properties and providing health and immortality. It is described as of two types – yellow and white, the latter one specifically named as Goekarna.¹⁷⁰

In the present *Avesta* the picture of *soma* is found in both ways – as water principle and as a plant.¹⁷¹ However, in *RV* its herbal form is observed only in the tenth *maṇḍala* whereas in *Avesta* both are mingled together. The reason is that though *Avesta* originally inherits the Indo-Iranian culture having vedic style and materials, it has been recast from time to time¹⁷² and as such has imbibed even the post-Ṛgvedic tradition in which *soma* was definitely a plant used in *soma*-sacrifice with elaborate rituals as found in Brāhmaṇas and Śrautasūtra literature.

Therefore, from this angle, the present *RV* stands anterior to the present *Avesta* and as such the description of *Soma* found in *RV* can't be interpreted and assessed solely on the basis of that in the *Avesta*.

CONCLUSION

Ṛgveda is the oldest document of Indian culture. Out of ten *maṇḍalas* of the text, the last one is said to be the latest constituent, Upto nine *maṇḍala* there is no indication of *soma* being a plant, it is only in the tenth *maṇḍala* that it is mentioned as such, along with herbs and once as growing on *Muñjavān* mountain. But there also, in one of the hymns it is said that those who take *soma* as a plant do not know the real one whom the seers knew (10.85.3). It clearly shows that the *soma* plant did not represent truly the real *soma* which was quite different.

Macdonell takes the god *soma* as personification of the terrestrial plant and juice.¹⁷³ According to Sri Aurobindo, it is the divine delight hidden in all existence which, once manifest, supports all life's crowning activities and is the force that

finally immortalises the mortal, the *amṛtam*, ambrosia of the gods.¹⁷⁴

After examining all the references carefully I am tempted to explain the *soma* concept on physical theory. It may be concluded that *soma* originally was the water principle manifested primarily in various forms of water and secondarily in plants and animals which are sustained by water. Initially in sacrifices *soma* was represented by pure rain water (*aindra jala*) which was offered to gods alongwith solid food (*havis*).

Soma-yāga was a symbolical representation of the *ādāna* (absorbing) phase of the rain-cycle in which terrestrial water is absorbed by Indra as *Āditya* through intense sun-rays. Thus *soma* is carried upwards¹⁷⁵ and uniting with fire-principle creates the womb of water (rains). Gradually it develops and the clouds are formed which hold the water. Indra strengthened by intake of *soma* and invigorated by human prayers¹⁷⁶ destroys *vṛtra* (clouds) with his thunderbolt and releases the rain-water with which *soma* descends to the earth and resumes the functions of procreation and sustenance in plants and animals. This is the phase of *visarga* which completes the cycle. In this process, the other gods like Parjanya, Mārut, Rūdra etc. assist Indra, the over-all incharge and lord of rains. The sacrificial fire, the *devadūta* (messenger of gods), plays the important role of mediator in the process of communication and interchange between the celestial and terrestrial regions.¹⁷⁷

Soma, the water-principle, essentially supports moon as well as plants. Hence later on *soma* began to denote moon and, on the other hand, was typified by a herb named as *soma* and coronated as the king of plants. This situation is met with in the tenth *maṇḍala* of *RV*, *AV*, *SB*, *CS*, *SS*, and *śrautasūtras* where detailed description of *soma* ritual is found.

The representation of *soma* by some herb developed in three successive phases : (1) Mythical *Soma* plant having characters of moon, (2) Any green herb and (3) a particular species of plant named as *Soma*.

The original concept of *Soma* on different levels may be placed as follows:

1. *Adhidaiva* (relating to god) – *Soma*
2. *Adhiyajña* (relating to sacrifice) – Rain-water
3. *Adhibhūta* (in gross form) – Various forms of water
4. *Adhyātma* (on biological level) Life-sap represented by herb.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AV	: <i>Atharvaveda</i>	BD	: <i>Bṛhaddevatā</i>
CS	: <i>Caraka-saṃhitā</i>	KSS	: <i>Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra</i>
RV	: <i>Rgveda</i>	SB	: <i>Satapatha Brāhmaṇa</i>
SS	: <i>Suśruta saṃhitā</i>	YN	: <i>Yakṣa's Nirukta</i>

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2. *Ibid*; p. 53
3. Ralph Griffith T.H. *The Hymns of Rgveda*, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, (C.S.S.O) Varanasi, 1971 (5th ed.), vol. II, p. 501
4. Sāyaṇa's commentary on the *Rgveda* 1.89.3 (सोमं वेद्वेधात्मानं विमज्य पृथिव्यां लतारुपेण दिवि च चन्द्रात्मना देवतारुपेण वर्तमानम्); also 8.82.8
5. *Rgveda-saṃhitā* with the commentary of Sāyanāchārya (ed. F. Max Muller), Vol. I-IV, C.S.S.O., Varanasi, 1966, 10.97.18-19. (ओषधीः सोमराज्ञीः), 22 (ओषधयः संवदन्ते सोमेन सह राज्ञा), 3 (त्वमुत्तमास्योषधे). Also AV. 9.20.1, SB. 1.1.4.7, 1.6.4.15, Bhāgavata 4.22.65
6. *Atharvavedasamhitā* (ed. S.D. Satavalekar); *svādhyāyamaṇḍala*, Pāraḍī (Surat). 1957 (3rd ed.), 8.7.20 (अश्वत्थो दर्भो वीरुधां सोमो राजामृतं हविः), 11.6.15 (पञ्च राज्यानि वीरुधां सोमश्रेष्ठानि ब्रूमः। दर्भो भङ्गो यवः सहस्ते नो मुञ्चन्त्वंहसः।।)
7. *Ibid*; 19.39.5-8 (स कुष्ठो विश्वमेषजः साकं सोमेन तिष्ठति)
8. *The Kausika-Sūtra of Atharvaveda* (ed. M. Bloomfield), MLBD, Delhi, 1972, 4.25.22 (अथ सोममक्षणे वैषज्यमुच्यते.)
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10. Wasson, R. Gordon; *Soma; Divine Mushroom of Immortality*, New York, 1968
11. RV. 9.33.5 (दिवः शिशु)
12. 1.80.2, 4.26.6-7, 27.4, 9.66.30.; SB. 3.2.4.1-2
13. RV. 9.74.1, 63.27
14. *Yakṣa's Nirukta* with Durga's commentary, Anandasrama, Poona, 1921, 11.1-5 (सोमो रूपविशेषै-रोषधिश्चन्द्रमा वा)
15. Durga's commentary on the above. (चन्द्रमसो वाधिदैवमालक्ष्य, ओषधिसोमस्य वाधियज्ञमालक्ष्य)

16. *Ibid* on YN 11.2; also YN 7.10, अथास्य कर्म रसानुप्रदानं वृत्रवधो याच काच बलकृतिरिन्द्रकर्मैव) BD 26
17. YN. 7.5 (तिअ एवं देवता इति नैरुक्ताः – अग्निः पृथिवीस्थानो वायुर्वेन्द्रो वान्तरिक्षस्थानः सूर्यो द्युस्थानः) BD 1.69; Durga on the above (मुख्यतरः संबन्धो मध्यमस्येन्द्रशब्देन न तथा वायुवरुणरुद्रादिभिः)
18. *The Bṛhaddevatā attributed to Saunaka* (ed. A.A. Macdonell). MLBD, Delhi, 1965 (2nd issue), 1.27 (सर्वाण्येतानि नामानि कर्मतस्तान्याह शौनकः)
19. *Ibid.* 1.63
20. *Ibid.* 1.68
21. *Ibid.* 6.109-15
22. *Ibid.* 6.138 (शकटं शाकिनी गावः कृषिरस्यन्दनं वनम्। समुद्रः पर्वतो राजा एवं जीवामहे वयम्)
- 22a. God making Indra calf milched Soma and got *vīrya*, *ojas* and *bala* (different forms of strength) as milk in a golden vessel (*Bhāgavata*. 4.18. 15-16)
23. SB. 1.1.3.4. (स यदिदं सर्वं वृत्वा शिशये तस्माद् वृत्रो नाम), YN. 2.17 (वृत्रो वृणोतेर्वा वर्ततेर्वा वर्धतेर्वायदवृणोत् तद्वृत्रस्य वृत्रत्वम्) .
24. YN. 2.16 (वृत्रो मेघ इति नैरुक्ताः अपां च ज्योतिषश्च मिश्रीभावकर्मणो वर्षकर्म जायते, तत्रोपमार्थेन युद्धवर्णाः भवन्ति)
25. Durga on the above (उदकतेजसोरितरेतरप्रतिद्वन्द्वभूतयोरुपमार्थेन रूपककल्पनया युद्धवर्णाः भवन्ति), also on YN 1.16 (रूपककल्पनयैवैषा युद्धप्रवादा स्तुतिः)
26. *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, Nirnayasagar press, Bombay, 1925. 3.33 (परोक्षाप्रिया इव हि देवाः)
27. Agrawala; V.S. *Chhandasvatī Vāk*, B.H.U., 1964, Preface p. 4. Also Dayānand Sarasvatī; *Rgvedabhāṣyabhūmikā*, Ajmer, Sam. 1949 (2nd ed.), pp. 302, 305, 298 (अयमपि रूपकालंकारः)
28. RV. 1.56.9-10, 67.9.10, 70.3-4, 2.35.13. This *agni* is termed as '*apām napāt*' (water's progeny).
29. *Ibid.* 10.85.2. (सोमेनादित्याः बलिनः), 'प्रथमां पिवते वहिर्द्वितीयां पिवते रविः' quoted by Sāyaṇa.
30. The word सोमः analysed as 'उमया सहितः' exposes this hidden meaning. CS (Ci 3.310) has used this word in the same sense (सह उमयेति तम् – Cakrapāṇidatta's commentary on the above)
31. RV. 1.141.2
- 31a. 9.3.7, 36.6, 86.22 (सूर्यं मारोहयो दिवि)
32. YN. 2.16
33. RV. 1.164.52 (अपां गर्भं दर्शतमोषधीनां), 3.1.12 (अपां गर्भो नृतमो यद्गो अग्निः), 9.97.41 (अपां यद् गर्भोऽवृणीत देवान्)
34. *Amarakośa*, 2.9.76
35. Rāma Daivajña : *Muhūrtacintāmaṇi*, 2.1. *Aśvinī*, *Bharaṇī*, *Kṛttikā* and *Rohiṇī nakṣatras* falling under *Meṣa* and *Vṛṣa rāśis* have their masters as *Aśvins*, *Yama*, *Agni* and *Brahmā* respectively. The first two belonging to the realm of sun-god and agni pertaining to the fire-principle prepare the

background as *ārtava*. *Brahmā* in *Rohiṇī* nakṣatra represents the initiation of the creative process which culminates in the following nakṣatra. *Rohiṇī* and *Mṛgaśīrā* are the *nakṣatras* auspicious for conception of women (ibid. 5.6). The combination of *sūrya*, the fire-principle, and *candra*, the water-principle, indicates good rains (*Bṛhat Jyotiṣa-sāra*, p. 315 'चन्द्रेऽपि सूर्यः कुरुते सुवृष्टिं सूर्येऽपि चन्द्रः कुरुते तथैव')

36. *RV. or* 71.8.2.4.5; *SB. 1.9.2.9*, (रेत वै सोमो रोते एवैतत् सिञ्चति यत् सोमं यजति) 3.8.5.2.
37. *SB. 1.1.1.20* (योषा वा आपो वृषाग्निः)
38. *SS. Sa. 3.3.* (सौम्यं शुक्रमार्तवमाग्नेयम्)
39. *CS. Su. 12.8.11.12*
40. *YN. 12.1* (अश्विनौ यद्दयश्नुवाते सर्वं रसेनान्यो ज्योतिषाऽन्यः। तत्कावश्विनौ द्यावापृथिव्यावित्येके, ऽहोरात्रावित्येके, सूर्याचन्द्रमसावित्येके); *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa*, 5.1.20
41. *YN. 11.11*, (अथास्य कर्म रसादानं), *Durga on YN. 11.2.* (तस्मादस्यैषैव स्वा तनूर्यच्चन्द्रमाः रसात्मकत्वात्); *CS.SU. 6.4-7*
42. हरिः रसहरणशील आदित्यः – *Sāyaṇa on RV. or 1.95.1*
'Āditya' is so called as He is concerned with *ādāna* and takes away the terrestrial sap-*YN. 2.13* (आदित्यः कस्मादादत्ते रसान्)
43. *RV. 1.2.4*, (उन्दी क्लेदने इति धातोःसोमरसस्य द्रवत्वात् – *Sāyaṇa*), 1.14.4, 15.1, 30.1
44. *RV. 1.52.3, 53.5, 150.3* (चन्द्र आह्लादकः, यदि आह्लादने दीप्तौ च – *Sāyaṇa*). Both 'candra' and 'indu' are used as epithets of *Soma* (*RV. 3.40.4*).
45. सुवति फलानीति सोमः (स्व.)
46. *KSS. 7.1.4.* (वसन्तेऽग्निष्टोमः),
47. See the legend of *Apālā* (*RV. 8.91.1-7*) in which Indra is said as running after the lady on hearing the sound of soma being crushed under her teeth. The sound produced may be of prayers to Indra also. See also *Sāyaṇa's comm. on RV. 1.3.4.* (इन्दौ सोमे रमत इतीन्द्रः)
- The sound produced in connection with soma is interpreted as of two types-one, the sound of stone-pieces during the process of crushing of soma and two, the sound produced while soma moves through straining to the vats. In fact, they are allegorical. The first one, represents the sound of priests' prayers and the second one the thundering sound (*krandan*, *kanikradat*, see *RV. 9.42.4, 38.6., 37.2*) accompanying the descent of *soma* with rains. Such sounds can't be naturally expected during the process of straining.
48. *RV. 1.83.5*, (सूर्यरूप इन्द्रः) 84.15 (सूर्यश्चेन्द्र एवं तद्वादशादित्येषु इन्द्रस्यापि परिगणितत्वात्) 103.4, 83.5. (इन्द्रः सूर्यात्मना वृष्टिं सृजति), 121.13 (सूरः सूर्यात्मना वर्तमानः)
49. *RV. 1.104.9, 108.2, 2.14.11, 16.2, 22, 3.51.12, 8.2.1, 17.5.8*
50. *RV. 1.4.2, 16.8, 46.12, 52.5, 14* (हर्षः)

1.38.15, 101.8-9 etc. (तृप्तिः). *Durga in his comm. on YN. 4.8* says that there are two types of *mada-* one which causes intoxication and the other which makes one victorious. Out of them the latter is

meant in Indra's battle (द्विविधो हि मदः संमोहकरो जैत्रश्च, तयोर्जैत्र इष्टः संग्रामे)

51. RV. 1.9.10, 27.8
 52. RV. 10.111.5 (हन्ति शुष्णं – शुष्णं सर्वस्य शोषकमेतन्नामानमसुरं हन्ति)
 52. RV. 1.32.2, 3.30.8
 54. The *Zend-Avesta*, pt. 3, *yasna* IX. 16; pt. 2, *Mihir yast* XXIII. 88
 55. RV. 9.74 (रेतसोदकेन सह दिवो द्युलोकात् पार्थिव लोकं समवैति – Sāyana) Soma's connection and movement with rains is indicated at several places (RV. 9.88, 39.2, 49.1, 65.3)
 56. RV. 2.13.1, 14, 11, 36.1, 7.49.4
 57. *Gopatha*. II. 4.6 (यदा वा आपश्चौषधयश्च संगच्छन्ते अथ कृत्स्नः सोमः संपद्यते)
 58. RV. 6.44.24, 72.4
 59. RV. 1.14.7.8, 15.11, 47.9. 'madhu' is also interpreted as '*madakara*' (saturating and exhilarating) See Sāyana's comm. on RV. 3.40.1, 8.69.6
 60. CS. SU. 26.40 (सोमगुणातिरेकान्मधुरः)
 61. See 57
 62. KSS. 8.1.10, 2.6 (मदन्तीमिरुष्णाभिः)
 63. *Ibid.* 8.9.7 (सोमार्था आपो वसतीवरीशब्देनोच्यन्ते)
 64. *Ibid.* 9.3.15 (आपो निग्राम्यासंज्ञकाः भवन्ति अभिषवार्थाः)
 65. RV. 1.91.17, 125.3, 137.3, 2.13, 5.43.4
- Sāyana mostly interprets it as parts of the herb or the weak plant (*latā*) of soma. However, in the last reference he says it as *vyāpta* (pervaded).
66. 'अंशुर्लेशे रवौ रश्मौ इति विश्वः' quoted in the Bhānuji Dikṣita's comm. on the *Amarakoṣa* i. 4.33
 67. RV. 1.4.7, 5.7, 9.13.6 (शीघ्रगामिनः)
 68. RV. 1.14.4, 9.89.2, 69.2; also 'द्रप्सिनः' (1.64.2 वृष्ट्युदकबिन्दुभिर्युक्ताः – Sāyana)
 69. RV. 1.54.9
 70. RV. 1.14.4, 15.1, YN 2.5 (मत्सरः सोमो मन्दतेस्तृप्तिकर्मणो मत्सर इति)
 71. RV. 1.14.4
 72. RV. 1.15.11, 47.9, 14.7-8
 73. RV. 1.19.1
 74. Macdonell; A.A., *Vedic Mythology*, MLBD, Delhi, 1974, p. 107
 75. RV. 1.11.6
 76. RV. 1.23.18
 77. RV. 2.11.9

78. RV. 1.30.18, YN. 2.10 (समुद्द्रवन्त्यस्मादापः समभिद्रवन्त्येनमापः)
79. RV. 1.110.1
80. RV. 6.41.2, 7.47.1, 2, 4, 96.5, 9.12.3, 61.5
81. RV. 1.71.523.23, (रसेन जलसारेण), also AV. 4.4.5 (अपां रसः प्रथमजः), 6.124.1
82. RV. 8.3.20
83. RV. 1.79, 3, 104.4, 105.2
85. RV. 1.2.1
86. RV. 1.5.5
87. RV. 8.72.16, 93.28, 9.63.2
88. RV. 1.9.1, 52.2, 5, 85.6, 3.40.1
89. RV. 5.5.9
90. RV. 9.52.2, 110.8, also see RV. 6.7.7, 44.23, 47.4, 8.49.12
91. RV. 1.23.14, 19.20
92. RV. 10.85.2
93. RV. 7.102.2, 1.83.6
94. RV. 1.91.4
95. RV. 1.15.1
96. RV. 1.54.9 (अद्रिदुग्धाश्चमूषदः) also चमूसुतः (RV/10.24.11)
97. RV. 1.91.12, 9.85.1, 43
98. RV. 6.76.2-3
99. Dasgupta; S.B., *Obscure Religious Cults*, Calcutta University, 1946, pp. 275-78, 287-89
100. हरन्तीति हरयः— Sāyana on RV. 1.16.1
101. See 48
102. RV. 1.16.5, (गौरो न तृषितः पिब) also 1.16.6, 8.4.3, 10, 11
103. RV. 1.104.9, 108.2, 2.14.11, 16.2, 22.2, 8.2.1, 17.5, 8. Indra is filled up and saturated by waters as sea-(RV. 8.7, 30.3)
104. See 20. Also Dayānanda Sarasvatī; op. cit, p. 302, 305
105. RV. 1.4.2, 3.32.10
106. RV. 2.12.7
107. रूपं रूपं मघवा बोभवीति RV. 3.53.8
108. RV. 4.18.7; SB. 1.1.3.5

This 'cakra' (cycle) has been well explained in *Gītā* 3.16

109. RV. 1.32.3, 11.17, 15.1, 8.92.21. Sāyana has interpreted it as 'ज्योतिगौरायुरित्येतन्नामकास्त्रयो यागास्त्रिकद्रुका उच्यन्ते'।
110. CS. SU. 27.196, 201
111. *Ibid.* 6.39
112. *Ibid.* 27.198
113. *Ibid.* 5.12
114. *Ibid.* 27.201
115. SS. SU. 45.3.7, 8.26
116. *Ibid.* 45.25. Also see 'hamsodaka' in CŞ SU. 6.46-47
117. See 9
118. Macdonell: op. cit, p. 104, Winternitz; op. cit, p. 52, James Darmesteter (Tr.): *The Zend-Avesta*, pt. I, int. IV, p. LXIX
119. Dayānanda Sarasvatī: op, cit, p. 69 (देवशब्दे दिविधातोर्देदशार्थास्ते संगताः मवन्तीति—तद्यथा क्रीडा विजिगीषा व्यवहारः द्युतिः स्तुतिः मोदः मदः स्वप्नः कान्तिः गतिश्चेति ।)
120. Sri Aurobindo: *The Secret of the Veda*, Pondicherry, 1987, p. 177
121. RV. 1.116.7, 191.10, 7.86.6, 2.12
122. SB. 1.6.3.1-2
123. RV. 1.126.1 (सूयन्ते सोमा एषु इति सवाः सोमयागाः) 1.173.8 (सवनम्—सूयते सोमोऽत्रेति सोमयागः)
124. षुज् अमिषवे। अमिषवः स्नपनं पीडनं स्नानं सुरासन्धानञ्च— *Siddhāntakaumudī*, p. 476 (Beginning of *svādi gaṇa* in *tinanta*)
125. RV. 8.64.3
126. *Nighaṇṭu* 1.10, also Sāyana on RV. 1.7.3. etc.
127. RV. 1.88.3, 121.8
128. आद्भिः स्तोता — Sāyana on RV. 3.58.3
129. अद्रयः आदरणीयाः — Sāyana on RV. 10.94.8,13
130. *Nighaṇṭu* 1.10, also Sāyana on RV. 10.78.6
131. RV. 1.83.6, 84.3, 89.4, 3.42.2
132. RV. 1.38.14
- 132a. YN. 9.8 (प्रावाणो हन्तेर्वा गृणातेर्वा गृह्णातेर्वा)
133. *Nighaṇṭu* 1.10, also Sāyana on RV. 1.19.7, 38.12
134. YN. 1.20 (पर्ववान् पर्वतः), Commentary of Devarāja yajvan on *Nighaṇṭu* (Manasukhharai More, Calcutta, 1952), p. 81 (पर्वाण्यवयवाः सन्त्यस्य इति पर्वतः); also Sāyana on RV. 1.54.10 (पर्वतः पर्ववान्; मेघः)

135. *YN.* 9.20 (उलूखलमुरुकरं वा, ऊर्करं वा, ऊर्ध्वखं वा) see *RV.* 1.28.1, 6 (उलूखलसुतानां)
136. *RV.* 1.110.1.3.526; Interpreted as कर्मणि: in *RV.* 9.68.7, 77.4
137. *RV.* 9.93.1. 'kṣīpa', 'harit' and 'yoṣaṇa' are also explained like this. Nevertheless, these may mean the ten directions or ten fingers in folded hands in prayer.
138. *Nighaṇṭu* 3.30. That in the context of soma it means earth and heaven is supported by a statement in *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 1.26 (द्यावापृथिव्योरन्तरे सोमो राजा)
139. चमूषु चमसेष्ववस्थिताः — *Sāyaṇa* on *RV.* 1.54.9. *camasa* is also a synonym of *megha* (see *Nighaṇṭu* 1.10).
140. *Sāyaṇa* on 9.39.3 etc.
141. मन्त्रः पवित्रमुच्यते — *RV.* 10.27.17
142. *RV.* 9.36.4, 37.3, 77.4, 83....1-2, 85.9
143. *Sāyaṇa's* comm. on *RV.* 9.36.4, 38.1
- 143a. रश्मयः पवित्रमुच्यन्ते — *YN.* 5.6, ते हि स्पर्शनेनैव पावयन्ति — *Durga*. The words 'vāra' and 'keśa' also denote rays that is why the sun is called 'harikeśa'
144. See *Sāyaṇa's* commentary on *RV.* 1.3.4
145. See *Sāyaṇa's* commentary on *RV.* 1.5.5, 30.2.
146. *Nighaṇṭu* 2.14
147. *Ibid.* 3.21.
148. *RV.* 1.5.4, 6.2.
149. *RV.* 1.95.1
150. *RV.* 9.2.6
151. *RV.* 7.42.2
- 151a. The word 'hari' comes often for soma. See *RV.* 9.3.3, 5.9, 8.6, 19.3, 26.5 etc.
152. *RV.* 1.140.6 (बभ्रुवर्णास्वोषधीषु भरणकुशलासु वा)
153. *RV.* 1.164.43
154. *YN.* 2.14 (पृश्निरादित्यो भवति, प्राश्नुत एनं वर्णः)
155. *RV.* 1.30.3, 2.17.3, 6.38., 44.5
156. *RV.* 10.111.5
157. *RV.* 1.80.2
158. *Macdonell:* op cit. p. 113
159. *AV.* 5.24.7 (सोमो वीरुधामधिपतिः), 10 (चन्द्रमाः नक्षत्राणामधिपतिः), also 19.19.4-5, In one of the verses (11.6.7) Soma and Candrama are made as synonymous.
160. *Nighaṇṭu* 5.5, also *YN.* 11.5

161. *RV.* 10.90.13 (चन्द्रमाः मनसो जातः)
162. पुष्पामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः – *Gītā*, 15.13
163. *CS. SU.* 25.40 (सोम ओषधीनां)
164. *Ibid. Cit.* 1.4.7 (सोमो नामौषधिराजः पञ्चदशपर्णः स सोम इव हीयते वर्धते च)
165. *SS. CI.* 29.4-8
166. Macdonell; *Op. cit.*, p. 113
167. *Zend-Avesta, Yasna III.* 3, XXII, 1-2, 20; LXVI. 1, Visparad XI. 2
168. *Ibid. Yasna III.* 2, 21, IV. 3, VII. 21, VIII. 1
169. *Ibid. Aban Yast* I.1-5.

Though this is the description of *Ardvi Sura Anahita*, the spring of Holy Waters, it fits into that of Vedic *soma*. It creates seeds of male, wombs and breastmilk in women. (Also *Farvardin Yast* 8-11, *Vendidad, Fargard VII.* 16 (37))

170. *Ibid. int. IV.* p. LXIX
171. Soma drives death afar. He made both herds and people free from dying, both plants and waters free from drought and men could eat imperishable food (*Yasna IX.* 4). Because of its essential relation with waters and trees it has affinity with Haurvatat and Ameretat who rule over them. (*int. IV.*, p. LXXI)
- Haoma is healing (*Yasna IX.* 16 LVII. 19). Thritha was one of the first priests of Haoma who treated diseases with haoma and other similar plants growing around it. (*Vendidad, Fargard XX.* 1-4). Cf. *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 3.4
172. 'It follows hence that *Zend* texts may have been composed even as late as the fourth century AD' (*Int. III.* p. XXXVIII)
173. Macdonell: *Op. cit.*, p. 113.
174. See 120
175. See 31a.
176. *RV.* 2.13.14 (यस्य ब्रह्म वर्धनं), 5.31.4, 6.17.3, 23.1, 5-6, 24.7, 34.4, 44.13, *Soma* was effective to Indra only when it was presented with prayers (न सोम इन्द्रमसुतो ममाद नाब्रह्माणो मघवानं सुतासः *RV.* 7.26.1)
177. Aurobindo: *op. cit.*, p. 62

The idea of interchange between earth and heaven is expressed in several hymns of *RV* (1.26.9, 72.8, 164.51, 3.55.12, 6.60.11). In *Gītā* (3.11) also it is mentioned as 'परस्परं भावयन्तः'