4. Waters

A. Waters in the Vedas

Water is one of the most important elements which is invoked in Vedas as well as in the ancient Iranian texts. The waters or Āpah are lauded in four hymns of Rāgveda as well as in a few scattered verses. They are also invoked in many detached verses along with other deities. The personification is only incipient, hardly extending beyond the nation of their being mothers, young wives, and goddesses who bestowed boons like long life, wealth and immortality to worshippers and they come to the sacrifice.¹

According to the Vedas Ambrosia and medicinal herbs are in the waters² (Rāgveda I. 23.19). Waters bring to perfection all disease-dispelling medicaments for the good of the body³ (Rāgveda I. 23.21). Worshippers invoked the waters in which the cattle drink and offer the oblations to the flowing stream⁴ (Rāgveda I. 23.18).

The Water is represented as mother “which come from heaven” or those that wander dug out of the earth. Of flowing free by nature, bright, purifying, and seeding to the ocean. They contain in themselves all the medicines. They wash all evils and sins. Filled with life, they meet the man. They watch over his well-being at home.⁵

¹ MacDonnell; History of Vedic Mythology, P.124  
³ Ibid.  
⁴ Ibid.  
⁵ Olden berg, H. The Religion of Veda, P 123
Waters are goddesses who followed the path of the gods. Indra armed with bolt dig out a channel for them and they never infringe his ordinances. They are also said to be under the commands of Šavitr. They are detailed as well as flowing in channels, and have the sea for their goal. It is implied that they abide where the gods are, and the seat of Mitra and Varuna is. They are beside the sun and the sun is with them. King Varuna moves in their midst, looking, down on the truth and flashed of men.  

The water cleans and purifies the worshipper even from immoral sins, such as lying, cursing and violence. Water takes away whatever sin has been found in worshippers, whatever they have knowingly done wrong or pronounced imprecations against holy man or have spoken untruth (Rg V. I. 23.22).

The goddesses bear away defilement, the worshipper come up out of them pure and cleared. They are remedial bestowing remedies and long life, for all remedies. Immortality, healing are continued in them. They watch over man’s health and in the house. They dispose of boon and wealth and bestow excellent strength and immortality. Their blessing aid is often implored and they are invited to seat themselves along with the Son of waters (Apām napāt) on the sacrificial grass at the offering of the Soma-priest.

Sometimes Agni also is described in the Vedas as dwelling in the water (Rg V. I. 23.23). The waters several times are associated with honey. As mothers

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6MacDonnell; History of Vedic Mythology, P. 124
8MacDonnell; History of Vedic Mythology, P. 124
they mix their milk with honey. The wave of water is rich in honey, dripping with the ghee; it becomes the drink of Indra, whom it exhilarated. The waters are invoked to pour the wave rich in honey and gladden the gods. For Indra who released them from confinement; the wave which intoxicates, the draught of Indra which produced in the sky.\textsuperscript{10}

Priests fetch the waters with this Mantra as follows:

“You wealthy waters, you control all treasure; You bring auspicious, intellect and immorality; You are the queen of independent - Riches…”\textsuperscript{11}(R V. 10.30.12).

\textbf{B. Water in Ancient Iranian Literature and Avesta}

The Water element of water was treated one of very important elements for the ancient Iranians. The Greek historians have remarked on Iranian’s respect for the water. Herodotus Writes as follows:

“Iranian respects the water and the sacrifice for that like other useful elements such as fire, wind and etc”\textsuperscript{12}.

He further added: “Iranians don’t urinate and spit out in the water and don’t wash their hands in it and don’t contaminate it.”\textsuperscript{13}

Strābon, the Greek geographer quotes as follows:

“Iranian doesn’t take a bath in the flowing waters and don’t throw in that the dead corpse and whatever is impure”\textsuperscript{14}.

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid, p. 124
\textsuperscript{11} Oldenberg, H. The Religion of Veda, P 124
\textsuperscript{12} Pour Davoud, Yashts, Vol 1, P. 160
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
He also writes: “When Iranian going to sacrifice for water, they go to side of a river or spring or sea and dig a ditch and do the sacrifice in this place they take care that the blood doesn’t mix with the water. They put the meat of sacrifice on the branches of Laurier plant; and the priests touch the holy strikes (Baresma), and chant some holy text. Then they pour olive oil mixed with milk and honey on the ground while hold in hand the Baresma; bring to end the ritual of sacrifice”\textsuperscript{15}.

The word for water is “Āpi” in Avesta and “Āp” in the Pahlavi texts. This element has been praised all over the Avesta. In the Iranian Mythology the water is the second created being of material world. Ahura Mazda made bright the waters because at the first they were dark. When Ahura Mazda created the waters; the waters came down from “Alborz Mountain”\textsuperscript{16} on the ground. The waters of thousand lakes are placed there which a skilled Jockey can not travel around it. The source of these waters it the lofty “Alborz Mountain” which they shall pass from hundred passages to the holy lake Urvis\textsuperscript{17} and go out after filtration\textsuperscript{18}.

In Avesta book Ābān is another name of water’s Genius .The fifth Yasht of Yashts book (a part of the Avesta) is called Ābān Yasht. In this Yasht, Ardv-Sura Anāhita, “the goddess of waters” is praised. This Yasht is one of the best and oldest Yashts which has remained from the ancient era.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{16} Alborz , the name of the mountain in the north of Iran .
\textsuperscript{17} Urvis, the name of holy lake. According to the Bundahish (one of the Pahlavi texts) the water of thousand lakes are placed there.
\textsuperscript{18} Afifi , A. Mythology and Culture of Iran in the Pahlavi texts, P. 401.
Ābān-Nyāyish or Āb-Nyāyish (water praise) is one of the most important Nyāyish (praise) which is chanted near rivers, streams, spring and falls. This Nyāyish besides other four Nyāyish has been mentioned in the Khorde Avesta (small Avesta). 19

According to the ancient Iranian calendar tenth day of every month and eighth month of solar year is known by the name of Ābān. 20

C. Ardvi-Sura Anāhita and Sarasvatī

1. Ardvi-Sura Anāhita in the Avesta

Ardvi-Sura Anāhita is the goddess of water in ancient Iran. The word “Ardvi-Sura” means “powerful” and “Anāhita” means “Pure” together means “The powerful and pure water”. She is the source of all waters on the earth. This name is used as Nāhid in the modern Persian. The name “Anāhita” has been written in the inscriptions of Achamenian Kings (400 BC) and it is mentioned beside the name Ahura Mazda and “Mitra”. They are invoked to help and support the kings.

The great king, Ardeshir (Artaxerxes), the king of countries, son of second Dariush says: “My grand father first Dariush (Darius) built this place. It was destroyed by fire at the time of first Ardeshir. I built it again due to desire of Ahura Mazda, Anāhita and Mitra. May Ahura Mazda, Anāhita and Mitra protect me and don’t destroy what ever I have built” 21

One of the biggest and oldest “Yashts” from Avesta book namely

19 There are five important Nyāyish (praise) in the Khorde Avesta. They are khorshid(Sun) Nyāyish, Mīhir (Mitra) Nyāyish, Māh (Moon) Nyāyish, Ābān (Water) Nyāyish and Ātash (fire) Nyāyish. (The Zend Avesta, part 2, p. 349)
20 Afifi, A. Mythology and Culture of Iran in the Pahlavi texts, P. 402
21 Ibid, P. 431
“Ābān Yasht” is dedicated to this Iranian goddess.

In the Yasht the Maker Ahura Mazda commands Spitama Zarathustra to offer a sacrifice for Anāhita and then describes her as follows:

“Offer up a sacrifice O’ Spitama Zarathustra unto this spring of mine. Ardvi-Sura Anāhita ,the wide-expanding and health giving who hates the demon and obey the laws of Ahura, who is worthy of sacrifice in the material world, worthy of prayer in material world, the life- increasing and holy, the herd-increasing and holy the fold-increasing and holy, the wealth-increasing and holy”\(^{22}\).

Anāhita is described according to Ābān Yasht as follows:

“Who makes the seeds of all males pure, who makes the wombs of all female for bringing forth, who makes all females bring forth in safety, who puts milk into the breasts of all females in the right measure and right quality.”\(^{23}\)

“She is the large river, as long as the whole of the waters those run along the earth. That runs powerfully from the height “Hukairya\(^{24}\) Mountain” down to the sea“Voura-Kasha”\(^{25}\)

And all shore of sea Vouru-Kasha are boiling over all the middle of it ,is boiling over, when she runs down there, when she streams down there, she, Ardvi-Sura Anāhita, who has a thousand cells and a thousand channels. The

\(^{22}\) The Zend of Avesta, part 2, p. 54
\(^{23}\) Ibid, p 54
\(^{24}\) Hukairya (Hugar) is the lofty Mountain from which the water of Ardvi sure Anāhita leaps the height of thousand men
\(^{25}\) Vouru-Kasha, is the earth surrounding ocean.
extent of each of these cells of each of those channels is as much as a man can ride in forty days, riding on a good horse.

Ahura Mazda him self says as follows:

“From this river (Anāhita) of mine (Ahura Mazda) alone flow all the waters that spread all over the seven countries. This river of mine along goes on bringing waters, both in summer and in winter. I (Ahura Mazda), brought it down with mighty vigor, For the increase of the house, they brought, the town and country, to keep them, to maintain to look over them, to keep and maintain them close …her white arms are beautiful, thick as a horse’s shoulder or still thicker, strong, with thick arms, thinking thus in her heart.

Who drives forwards on her chariot, holding the rein of chariot, she goes, driving on this longing for men and thinking thus in her heart. She is strong, bright, tall and beautiful of form, who sends down by day and night, a flow of motherly waters as long as the whole of waters that run along the earth and who runs powerfully.

Ardvi-Sura Anāhita who stands carried forth in the shape of mind, fair of body, strongest, tall-formed, high-girded, pure, nobly born of glorious race, wearing a mantle, fully embroidered with gold. Ever holding the Baresma in her hand, according to the rule, she wears square golden ear-ring on her ears bored and a golden necklace around her beautiful neck, she the nobly born Ardvi-Sura Anāhita. She girded her waist tightly, so that her breasts may be

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26 The Zend of Avesta, part 2, p. 55
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid, p 56
29 Ibid, p 57
well-shaped, that they may tightly pressed. Upon her head, bound a golden crown, with a hundred stars, with eight rays, a well-male crown. She is clothed with garments of beaver, with the skin at thirty bearers, of those that bear for young ones that are the finest kind of bearers, for skin of the beaver that lives in waters is the finest-colored of all skins, and when worked at the right time shines to the eye with full sheen of silver and gold”.  

In the Ābān Yasht Zarathustra asked Ardvi-Sura Anāhita about the time of her worship, she answered: “O holy Spitama, worship me, from the time when the sun is rising to the time when the sun is setting”.

According to Ābān Yasht, on the top of all sacrifices, first Ahura Mazda himself offers up a sacrifice for Anāhita and asks her; the boon and she granted his boon as follows:

“For her brightness and glory, I will offer sacrifice worth being heard, I will offer up unto the holy Ardvi-Sura Anāhita a good sacrifice with an offering of libations, and thus may you advise as when appealed to! May you be most fully worshipped, O’ Ardvi-Sura Anāhita! With the Haoma and meat, with the Baresma, with the wisdom of the tongue with the holy spells. With the words, with the deeds, with the libations and with the rightly spoken words”. Then the Maker Ahura Mazda offers up a sacrifice in the Airyana Vaēgah with the wisdom of the tongue, with the holy spells, with the libations and with the rightly – spoken words and he bags her a boon saying as follows:

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30 Ibid, p 83
31The Zend of Avesta, part 2, p.75
32 Ibid, p. 56
“Grant me this, O’ good, most beneficent Ardvi-Sura Anāhita! That I may bring the son of Pourushaspa, the holy Zarathustra to think after my law, to speak after my law, to do after my law.”

So Ardvi-Sura Anāhita grants him that boon, as he was offering libations, giving gifts, sacrificing and begging that she would grant him that boon.33

After Ahura Mazda, many great persons from Ahura Mazda creatures, as well as Ahriman’s creatures, offer her a sacrifice and asked some boons, but she only, grants, the boons of Ahura Mazda creatures. So some of them are mentioned as follows:

Haoshyangha Paradhāta34 offers up a sacrifice on the top of Hara35 Mountain with a hundred male horses, thousand oxen and ten thousand lambs, and he bags her boon saying as following:

“Grant me this O good, most beneficent Ardvi-Sura Anāhita! That I may become the sovereign lord of countries of men and Daêvas36 and I may smite down two thirds at Daêvas of Māzana37 and of the Fiends of Varena”38. Ardvi-Sura Anāhita grants his boon.39

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33 Ibid, p. 58
34 Haoshyangha was the first king of Paradhāta (Pishdādyān) dynasty.
35 The Hara or Alborz Mountain is in the Māzandaran (the name of the state in the north of Iran) south of Caspian Sea.
36 Daêva; the original meaning of this word is the god as we see in the Vedas but according to Iranian mythology in the later period, the meaning of this word descent “god” to “demon”. J. Darmesteter believe the descent of word Daêva from god to demon is a mere accident language. (The Zend of Avesta, part 2, p. IXX.).
37 Māzana or Māzandaran at present in modern Persian. It is the name of the state in the north of Iran.
38 Modern tradition supposes Varena, to have been the region of Gilân (a state in north of Iran, beside the Māzandaran).
39 The Zend of Avesta, part 2, p58, 59
Yima Khshaêta\(^{40}\) (Jamshid), the shepherd offers up a sacrifice from the Hukairya\(^{41}\) Mountain, with hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, thousand lambs and he begs her been saying as follows:

“Grant me this, that I may become the sovereign, the lord of all countries and all Daêvas and men and may take from Daêvas riches and welfare, fatness and flocks, both wealth and glory.”\(^{42}\)

Ardvi-Sura Anâhita, grants his boon.

Thraêtaona\(^{43}\), the Heir of the valiant Āthwya\(^{44}\) clan, offers up a sacrifice in the four concerned Varena\(^{45}\) with a hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand; and he begs of her a boon saying as follows:

“Grant me this, O good, most beneficent Ardvi-Sura Anâhita! That I may over come Azi-Dahâka, the three mounted, the three-headed, the six-eyed, who has a thousand senses, the most powerful, Fiendish Drug (false) that demon, baleful to the world, the strongest Drug (false) that Angra-Mianyu created against the material world, to destroy the world at principle”.\(^{46}\)

Ardvi-Sura Anâhita grants his boon.

\(^{40}\) Yima khshaêta (Jamshid) an earthly king , ruled over the world for a thousand years . (the Zend Avesta , Part II., P 59

\(^{41}\) See foot note 16

\(^{42}\) The Zend of Avesta, part 2, p59

\(^{43}\) Thraêtaona (Ferîdûn); son of Āthwya conquered Azi-Dahâka and bound him to mount Damavand (north of Iran), where he stays till the end of the world, when he shall be let loose and then killed by Keresâspa (the name of Iranian hero).

\(^{44}\) See note 35

\(^{45}\) Modern tradition supposes Varena to have been the region of Gilân ( the state in the north of Iran)

\(^{46}\) The Zend of Avesta, part 2, p26
Keresāspa\textsuperscript{47}, the manly-hearted, offers up a sacrifice behind that Vairi-Pisanah\textsuperscript{48}, with hundred male horses … and he begged of her a boon saying as follows:

“Grant me this that I may overcome the golden-heeled Gandarewa\textsuperscript{49}, though all the shares of the sea Vouru-Kasha\textsuperscript{50} are boiling over, and that I may run up to the strong-hold of the friend on the wide, round earth, whose ends lie afar.”\textsuperscript{51} Ardvi-Sura Anāhita grants his boon.

Kavi-Usa\textsuperscript{52} (Kai-Kaus) offers up a sacrifice with a hundred male horses\textsuperscript{53} … and he begs of her a boon saying as follows:

Grant me this, which I may become the sovereign lord of all countries of Daēvas and men…”\textsuperscript{54} She grants his boon.

The gallant Husravah (Kai-Khosrav)\textsuperscript{55}, who united the Aryan nation into one kingdom, offers up a sacrifice behind the Kaēkasta lake\textsuperscript{56}, the deep lake, of salt water, with hundred male horses, a thousand oxen ten thousands lambs and he begs of her boon saying as follows:

“Grant me this, O’ good, most beneficent Ardvi-Sura Anāhita! That I may become the sovereign lord of all countries of Daēvas and men…”\textsuperscript{57}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Keresāspa or Garshāsp in the Firdausi’s Shahname . He is one of the great heroes in the Avestan romance.
\item Vairi Pisanah; the Pishin Valley , south of Cabool( Afghanistan)\textsuperscript{48}
\item Gandarewa, it was a monster, who lived in the sea, on the mountain, and in the valley.
\item Vouru – kasha, The earth surrounding ocean.
\item The Zend of Avesta, part 2, p.63
\item Kavi-Usa (Kai Kaus) was the second king of kayānian dynasty.
\item As other worships namely, “with hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand lambs”.\textsuperscript{53}
\item The Zend of Avesta, part 2, p.65
\item Husravah (Kai Khosrav); a king of Kayānian dynasty\textsuperscript{55}
\item A lake in the Azerbaijan (the name of state in the north- west of Iran) with salt water. Fish con not live in it. It is the same as Lake Urumaih (in the state of Azerbaijan – Iran).
\item The Zend Avesta, Part 2, P 66
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Ardvi-Sura Anāhita grants his boon.

The valiant warrior Tusa (Tus)\(^{58}\) worships her on the back of his horse; and begs; swiftness for his team, health for his own body, and that he might, watch with full success, those who hated him, smite down his foes, and destroy at one stroke his adversaries his enemies, and those who hated him, and he begs her a boon saying as follows:

“Grant me this, that I may over come the gallant sons Vaêsaka\(^{59}\) ...; that I may smite of the Turanian\(^{60}\) people, their fifties, their hundreds, and their thousands and their ten thousands, their myriads of myriads.”\(^{61}\)

Ardvi-Sura Anāhita grants his boon.

Gāmāspa\(^{62}\) offers up with hundred male horses, a thousand oxen ten thousand lambs, when he saw the army of the wicked of the worshippers of the Daève coming from afar in battle array. And he asks her a boon, saying as follows:

“Grant me this, O good, most beneficent Ardvi-Sura Anāhita! That I may be as constantly Victorious as any one of all the Aryans.”\(^{63}\)

Ardvi-Sura Anāhita grants his boon.

The holy Zarathustra offers up a sacrifice in the Airyan Vaêgah\(^{64}\), by the good river Dāitya\(^{65}\), with the Haoma, meat, with the Baresma, with wisdom of

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\(^{58}\) Tusa (Tus), in Firdausi’s Shahname is one of the most celebrated pahlavans (hero) of kai Khosrov.

\(^{59}\) Vaêsaka; was the head of the Visah family; the up right minister of Afrāsyāb (King of Turan and the enemy of Iran).

\(^{60}\) The enemies of Iran in the ancient times

\(^{61}\) The Zend Avesta part 2 p. 67

\(^{62}\) Gāmāspa, is a prime minister of Vishtāsp (a king of Iran)

\(^{63}\) The Zend Avesta, Part 2, P.70

\(^{64}\) Airyana Vaêgah, The origin of land of Iranian and the first land which has been created by Ahura Mazda.
the tongue, with the holy spell, with the deed, with the libation and with rightly-spoken words. And he begs her boon saying as follows:

“Grant me this O’ good, most beneficent Ardvi-Sura Anāhita! That I may bring The valiant Kai-Vishtāsp⁶⁶, to think according to the law, to speak according to the law, to do according law. “⁶⁷ She grants him boon.

The warriors of the war, Āthravans (priest), maids, women also invoke the Ardvi-Sura Anāhita as follows:

The man of strength (warrior) invokes her for swift horses and supremacy of glory. The Āthravans who read (teach); and pupils of the Āthravans beg her for knowledge and prosperity, the victory made by Ahura, and crushing Ascendant. The maids of barren womb, longing for a lord, beg her for strong husband. The women on the point of bringing forth will beg of you a good delivery.⁶⁹

According to Ābān Yasht some time the enemies of Āryan people and the Angra-Mianyu⁷⁰ created also offer a sacrifice for Ardvi-Sura Anāhita, but she does not grant their boon.

Frangrasyan (Afrāsyāb)⁷¹ the Turanian Murderer offers up a sacrifice in the cave under the earth and he begs her boon saying as follows:

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⁶⁵Dāitya, the river which comes from Airyana Vaêgah, it flows through the mountain of Gurjestān
⁶⁶The king of Iran in the time of Zarathustra.
⁶⁷The Zend Avesta, Part 2, P 78
⁶⁸The proper word for a priest in the Avesta.
⁶⁹The Zend Avesta, Part 2, P 74
⁷⁰Angra-Mianyu is “the evil Spirit” opposed to “the good Spirit” Spenta- Mainyu
⁷¹Frangrasyan (Afrāsyāb) was a king of Turan country (the enemy of Iran) for two hundred years.
“Grant me this that I may seize hold of that Glory that is waving in the middle of sea Vouru- kasha and that belongs to the Aryan people, to those born and to those not yet born, and to the holy Zarathustra”\textsuperscript{72}.

But Ardvi-Sura Anāhīta did not grant him that boon, because he was Angara-Mainyu created and enemy of Aryan people.\textsuperscript{73}

The gallant sons of Vaēsaka\textsuperscript{74} offer up a sacrifice, with hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand lambs and he begs her boon saying as follows:

“Grant me this, O ‘good, most beneficent Ardvi-Sura Anāhīta! That we may overcome the valiant warrior Tuse, that we may smite the Aryan people...

Ardvi-Sura Anāhīta did not grant them that boon.”\textsuperscript{75}

2. \textit{Sarasvatī in the Vedas}

Sarasvatī is the wife of Brahmā and the goddess of wisdom and science, the mother of the Vedas and the inventor of the Devanāgari letters. She is represented as fair young woman, with four arms\textsuperscript{76}. She is celebrated both as river and a goddess in the Vedas. According to the Vedas the divine Sarasvatī abiding in the three worlds, comprising seven elements, cherishing the five races of beings\textsuperscript{77} (R\textsuperscript{V} 6. 61.12). She fills (with her radiance) the expanse of the earth and heaven\textsuperscript{78} (R\textsuperscript{V} 6. 61. 11). She is distinguished amongst the divinities (or rivers) as eminent in greatness and her glory; she is the most

\textsuperscript{72}The Zend Avesta, Part 2, P 64
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{74}See note no. 51
\textsuperscript{75} The Zend Avesta, Part 2, P 68.
\textsuperscript{76} Wilkins, W.J. Hindu Mythology, p 107.
\textsuperscript{77} Wilson, H.H. R\textsuperscript{g}veda\textsuperscript{Sam}hitā, Vol 3, p136.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.
impetuous of all other stream\textsuperscript{79} (R\textsuperscript{\textregistered} V. 6. 61.13). By the mightiness of beautiful Sarasvatī men obtain both kinds of foods (\textit{Ubhe andhasi})\textsuperscript{80}. She protects and regards the worshippers. She bestows riches upon those who are affluent in oblations\textsuperscript{81} (R\textsuperscript{\textregistered} V. 7. 96.2). Sarasvatī makes manifest by her acts a mighty river, and in her own form enlightens all understanding\textsuperscript{82} (R\textsuperscript{\textregistered} V. I. 3.12).

Sarasvatī, as river is the chief and pure of rivers, flowing from the mountain to the ocean. She distributes the riches among the many exiting being\textsuperscript{83} (R\textsuperscript{\textregistered} V. 7. 95.2). Sarasvatī, an iron fort, flows with fertile flood, a stream surpassing all other waters in greatness. She tears away with her mighty waves the peaks of mountain, and her immense and impetuous floods moves roaring. She is distinguished by greatness among the great. She is most active among actives and is implored not to with hold her milk.\textsuperscript{84} Sarasvatī is firm as a city made of iron, flows rapidly with all sustaining water; sweeping away in its might all other waters and as charioteer clears the road\textsuperscript{85} (R\textsuperscript{\textregistered} V. 7. 95.1). Sarasvatī has seven sisters (or seven fold) and she is dearest amongst those are dear\textsuperscript{86} (R\textsuperscript{\textregistered} V. 6. 61.10). She is one of seven, a mother of streams. She is the best of mothers, of rivers, and of goddesses. She fills the terrestrial region and wide atmospheric and occupies three abodes. She is invoked to descend from the great mountain, to the sacrifice.\textsuperscript{87}

\textsuperscript{79} Wilson .H.H, R\textsuperscript{\textregistered} gveda Samhitā, Vol 3 , p 137.
\textsuperscript{80} \textit{Ubhe andhasi} is said to mean fires celestial and terrestrial, or if food be intended, domestic and wild (H.H Wilson, R\textsuperscript{\textregistered} gvedaSamhitā, Vol 3 p 326.
\textsuperscript{81} Wilson .H.H, R\textsuperscript{\textregistered} gvedaSamhitā, Vol 3, p 327.
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid , Vol 1, p 9.
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid , Vol 3, p 325.
\textsuperscript{84} History of Vedic Mythology, P 125
\textsuperscript{85} Wilson .H.H, R\textsuperscript{\textregistered} gvedaSamhitā, Vol 3, p 325.
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid , Vol 3 , p136.
\textsuperscript{87} History of Vedic Mythology, P 125
She is once called asūryā or divine. The goddess comes to the sacrifice on the same chariot as the Fathers and seats herself on the sacrificial grass. She herself is a purifier. She is besought to come swelling with streams and along with the waters, bestower of wealth, progeny and immortality, to grant vitality. She bestows vitality and offspring and is associated with deities who assist procreation. Her unfailing breast yield wealth, plenty and nourishment and several times receives the epithet Subhagā (bountiful). She stimulates, directs, and prospers the devotion to the unrenowned. The divine Sarasvatī is the accepters of sacrificial food and the protector of her worshippers and sustains abundant viand for them (R̄ V. 6. 61.4). Sarasvatī is the purifier, the bestower of food, the recompenser of worship with wealth (R̄ V. I. 3.10). Sarasvatī is the inspirer of those who delight in truth, the instructress of the right minded (R̄ V. I. 3.11).

The worshippers invoke her as follows:

- May the auspicious and gracious Sarasvatī hear our praises at this sacrifice, approached as she is with reverence and with banded knees, and most liberal to her friends with the riches she possesses. (R̄ V. 7. 95.4).
- Presenting to you, Sarasvatī these oblations with reverence ( may we receive from you affluence ). You be gratified by our praise and may

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88 History of Vedic Mythology, P 126
91 Ibid.
we, being retained in your dearest felicity, ever recline upon you, as on
a sheltering tree\textsuperscript{93} (R\textsuperscript{a} V. 7. 95.5).

- May the auspicious Sarasvatī bestow auspicious fortune upon us; may
  the faultless –moving, food-conferring goddess think of us.\textsuperscript{94} (R\textsuperscript{a} V. 7.
96.3).

She is invoked along with the goddesses of prayer. She destroys the
revilers of the gods, is terrible, and a Vṛtra slayer. But to her worshippers
she affords protection and conquers their enemies.\textsuperscript{95} Sarasvatī destroys the
revilers of the gods. She has acquired for the men the lands, and has showered
water upon them\textsuperscript{96} (R\textsuperscript{a} V. 6. 61.3). She is ever to be invoked in battle\textsuperscript{97} (R\textsuperscript{a} V.
6. 61.12). The divine Sarasvatī protects her worshippers in combat and gives
them gift\textsuperscript{98} (R\textsuperscript{a} V. 6. 61.6).

There has been much controversy as to identity of the stream of which the
goddess Sarasvatī is a personification. The name is identical with that of
Avestan river Haraqaiti in Afghanistan. And it may have been the latter river
which was first lauded as the Sarasvatī.\textsuperscript{99}

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As we study in this part the element of water is very important in Vedas as
well as ancient Iranian worships. Waters are praised in four hymns of
R\textsuperscript{a}gveda and a few scattered verses and some time they are invoked along

\textsuperscript{93} Wilson .H.H, R\textsuperscript{a} gvedaSamhitā, Vol 3, p 326.
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid, p 327.
\textsuperscript{95} History of Vedic Mythology, P 126.
\textsuperscript{96} Wilson .H.H, R\textsuperscript{a} gvedaSamhitā, Vol 3 , p135.
\textsuperscript{97} Ibid, p 136.
\textsuperscript{98} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{99} History of Vedic Mythology, P 127
with other deities, while in the Avesta one oldest and the biggest Yasht is dedicated to goddess of Waters (Ardvi-Sura Anāhita) and Ābān Nyāyish (water prayer) is one of the important prayer in Avesta. According to Greek historian, Ancient Iranians respect the water and they sacrifice for that and always keep clean the Waters.

There are many similarities between the qualities of Waters and Sarasvatī in R̥gveda with Water and Anāhita in the Avesta and Iranian mythology. These similarities of the waters and Sarasvatī in the R̥gveda and Avesta may explain the new aspects of each goddess, as discussed above.