



nance or prāyaschitta occupy, in several instances, one third of the whole collections of ceremonial rules. But this was not enough. Discussions were raised, not only how to remedy mistakes, that had been observed at the time; but how to counteract the effects of mistakes, unobserved during the performance of the sacrifice. To settle this question, the Kaushîtâkins quote the following story:—

“And then Pratardana, the son of Divodâsa, (a famous king) having gone to the sacrifice of the Rishis of Nimisha, sat down in their presence and asked the question: ‘If the Sadasyâ (the superintending priest, according to the ceremonial of the Kaushîtâkins) should make known a past blunder, or any one of the priests should observe it, how would you be free from sin?’ The priests were silent. Their Brahman was Alikayu, the descendant of Vâchaspati. He said, ‘I do not know this, alas! Let us ask the teacher of our fathers, the elder Jâtukarnya.’ He asked him: ‘If the performer himself should observe a past blunder, or some one else should make it known, how could that blunder become not a blunder? by saying the passage again, or by an offering?’ Jâtukarnya said, ‘The passage must be said again.’ Alikayu asked him again: ‘Should he say again the Śâstra, the Anuvachana, the Nigada, the Yâjyâ, or whatever else it may be, from beginning to end?’ Jâtukarnya said: ‘As far as the blunder extends, so far let him say it again, whether a verse, a half verse, a foot, a word, or a letter.’ Then said Kaushîtaki: ‘Let him not say the passage again, nor let him perform a penance offering (Kaush.-br. vi. 11.). It is not a blunder,’ so said Kaushîtaki; ‘for, whatever blunder the Hotris commit at the sacrifice without being

aware of it, all that, Agni, the divine Hotṛi, makes whole; and this is confirmed by a verse from the *Rig-veda*.¹

There are, however, other passages in the Brâhmanas, full of genuine thought and feeling, and most valuable as pictures of life, and as records of early struggles, which have left no trace in the literature of other nations. The story of Sunahśepha, for instance, which we find in the *Aitareya-brâhmaṇa*, and in the *Śaṅkhâyana-sûtras* is interesting in many respects. It shows that, at that early time, the Brahmanas were familiar with the idea of human sacrifices, and that men who were supposed to belong to the caste of the Brahmanas were ready to sell their sons for that purpose. The text of this story, together with the various readings, as gathered from the *Śaṅkhâyana-sûtras* will be printed in the appendix.¹

“*Hariścandra*², the son of *Vedhas*, of the family of the *Ikshvâkus*, was a king without a son. He had a hundred wives, but had no son by them. In his house lived *Parvata* and *Nârada*. He asked *Nârada*: ‘Tell me, O *Nârada*, what do people gain by a son, whom they all wish for, as well those who reason as those who do not reason?’

Being asked by one verse, *Nârada*³ replied in ten verses:

¹ See Professor Wilson’s *Essay on Human Sacrifices in the Veda*, and Professor Roth, in *Weber’s Ind. Studien*, i. p. 457.

² *Hariścandra* was, according to the *Purâṇas*, the son of *Triśanku*, king of *Ayodhyâ*, whom *Vasishṭha* had cursed, and who made *Viśvâmitra* his *Purohita*. *Viśvâmitra* in the *Brâhmaṇa* is represented as one of *Hariścandra*’s priests, but the office of Brahman is held by *Vasishṭha*. In the *Râmâyana*, the sacrifice of *Sunahśepha* takes place under King *Ambarisha*.

³ *Nârada* is known as a frequent interlocutor in the epic



‘If a father sees the face of a son, born alive, he pays a debt in him, and goes to immortality.

‘The pleasure which a father has in his son is greater than all the pleasures that are from the earth, from the fire, and from the waters.

‘Always have the fathers overcome the great darkness by a son; for a Self is born from his Self; it (the new-born Self, the son) is like a ship, full of food, to carry him over.

‘What is the flesh? What is the skin? What are the hairs? What the heat? Try to get a son, you Brahmans; he is undoubtedly the world.

‘Food is life for men, clothing his protection, gold his beauty, cattle his strength. His wife is a friend, his daughter is a pity¹; but the son is his light in the highest world.

‘As husband he embraces a wife, who becomes and puranic poetry, particularly in dialogues where moral and legal precepts are given. Cf. Burnouf, *Bhagavat-purāṇa*, vol. iii. preface.

¹ The commentator gives a very different version of this line. He takes *mala*, which usually means matter, or mud, to signify the state of life of a *Gṛihastha*, or householder. *Ajina*, the skin, particularly of the antelope (*aja*), he takes as a symbol of the *Brahmachārin* state, because the pupil wears a skin. *Śmaśrūṇi*, used in the singular for beard, he takes as a symbol for the *Vana-prastha*, because he does not shave any more; and *tapas* he explains to mean the penance practised by the *Parivrājaka*.

Why the birth of a daughter was considered a pity we learn from the following verse (metre Rathoddhatâ):—

संभवे स्वजनदुःखकारिका।

संप्रदानसमयेऽर्थहारिका।

यावनेऽपि वज्रदोषकारिका।

दारिका हृदयदारिका पितुः॥

his mother, when he becomes her child. Having been renewed in her, he is born in the tenth month.

‘A wife is a wife (jâyâ) because man is born (jâyate) again in her. She is a mother (âbhûti) because she brings forth (âbhûti) ; a germ is hidden in her.

‘The gods and the old ages brought great light unto her. The gods said to men: “In her you will be born again.”

‘There is no life for him who has no son, this the animals also know.

‘The path which those follow who have sons and no sorrows, is widely praised and happy. Beasts and birds know it, and they have young ones everywhere.’

Having thus spoken, he said to him: ‘Go to Varuṇa the king, and say: May a son be born to me, and I shall sacrifice him to you.’ The king assented, he went to Varuṇa the king, and said: ‘May a son be born to me and I shall sacrifice him to you.’ Varuṇa said, ‘Yes.’ A son was born to him, called Rohita. Then Varuṇa said to Hariścandra: ‘A son is born to thee, sacrifice him to me.’ Hariścandra said: ‘When an animal is more than ten days old, it can be sacrificed. May he be older than ten days and I shall sacrifice him to you.’

Varuṇa assented. The boy was more than ten days old, and Varuṇa said: ‘He is older now than ten days, sacrifice him to me.’ Hariścandra said: ‘When an animal’s teeth come, then it can be sacrificed. May his teeth now come, and I shall sacrifice him to you.’

Varuṇa assented. His teeth came, and Varuṇa said: ‘His teeth have come, sacrifice him to me.’ Hariścandra said: ‘When an animal’s teeth fall

out, then it can be sacrificed. May his teeth fall out, and I shall sacrifice him to you.'

Varuṇa assented; his teeth fell out, and Varuṇa said: 'His teeth have fallen out, sacrifice him to me.' Hariśchandra replied: 'When an animal's teeth come again, then it can be sacrificed. May his teeth come again, and I shall sacrifice him to you.'

Varuṇa assented. His teeth came again, and Varuṇa said: 'His teeth have come again, sacrifice him to me.' Hariśchandra said: 'When a warrior (kshatriya) is girt with his armour, then he can be sacrificed. May he be girt, and I shall sacrifice him to you.'

Varuṇa assented. He was girt, and Varuṇa said: 'He has been girt, let him be sacrificed to me.'

Hariśchandra assented. He addressed his son and said: 'Child, he gave you to me; Death! that I sacrifice you to him.' The son said, 'No!' took his bow, and went to the forest, and lived there for a year.

And Varuṇa seized Hariśchandra, and his belly swelled. This Rohita heard and went from the forest to the village (grâma). Indra, in the form of a man, went round him, and said: 'For a man who does not travel about there is no happiness, thus we have heard, O Rohita! A good man who stays at home is a bad man. Indra is the friend of him who travels. Travel.'

Rohita thought, a Brahman has told me to travel, and thus he travelled a second year in the forest. When he went from the forest to the village, Indra, in the form of a man, went round him, and said:

'A traveller's legs are like blossoming branches,



he himself grows and gathers the fruit. All his wrongs vanish, destroyed by his exertion on the road. Travel!'

Rohita thought, a Brahman has told me to travel, and thus he travelled a third year in the forest. When he went from the forest to the town, Indra, in the form of a man, went round him, and said:

'The fortune of a man who sits, sits also; it rises, when he rises; it sleeps, when he sleeps; it moves well when he moves. Travel!'

Rohita thought, a Brahman has told me to travel, and thus he travelled a fourth year in the forest. When he went from the forest to the town, Indra, in the form of a man, went round him, and said:

'A man who sleeps is like the Kali age¹; a man who awakes is like the Dvâpara age; a man who rises is like the Tretâ age; a man who travels is like the Krita age. Travel!'

Rohita thought, a Brahman has told me to travel, and thus he travelled a fifth year in the forest. When he went from the forest to the town, Indra, in the form of a man, went round him, and said:

'A traveller finds honey, a traveller finds sweet figs. Look at the happiness of the sun, who travelling never tires. Travel!'

Rohita thought, a Brahman has told me to travel, and thus he travelled a sixth year. He met in the forest a starving Rishi, *Ajîgarta*, the son of *Sâyavasa*. He had three sons, *Sunahpuchha*, *Sunahsépha*, and *Sunolângûla*. Rohita said to him: 'Rishi, I give you a hundred cows, I ransom myself with one

¹ This is one of the earliest allusions to the four ages of the world.



of these thy sons.' The father embraced the eldest son, and said: 'Not him.' 'Nor him,' said the mother, embracing the youngest. And the parents bargained to give Śunaḥśepha, the middle son. Rohita gave a hundred, took him, and went from the forest to the village. And he came to his father, and said: 'Father, Death! I ransom myself by him.' The father went to Varuṇa, and said: 'I shall sacrifice this man to you.' Varuṇa said, 'Yes, for a Brahman is better than a Kshatriya.' And he told him to perform a Râjasûya sacrifice. Hariścandra took him to be the victim for the day, when the Soma is spent to the gods.

Viśvâmitra was his Hotṛi priest, *Jamadagni* his Adhvaryu priest, *Vasishṭha*, the Brahman, *Ayâsya*, the Udgâṭṛi priest. When Śunaḥśepha had been prepared, they found nobody to bind him to the sacrificial post. And Ajigarta, the son of Sûyavasa said: 'Give me another hundred, and I shall bind him.'¹ They gave him another hundred, and he bound him. When he had been prepared and bound, when the Âpṛi hymns had been sung, and he had been led round the fire, they found nobody to kill him. And Ajigarta, the son of Sûyavasa said: 'Give me another hundred, and I shall kill him.' They gave him another hundred, and he came whetting his sword. Then Śunaḥśepha thought, 'They will really kill me, as if I was not a man.'² Death! I shall pray

¹ Langlois, in his translation of the *Harivaṃśa* (i. 124.), takes a different view of this circumstance. According to his translation Śunaḥśepha "avait été dans une autre existence un des coursiers attelés au char du soleil." Langlois reads in the text *Haridaśva*, which he takes as a name of the sun with green horses.

² The commentator observes here, that although at a sacrifice men and wild beasts were bound to the post, yet both beasts



to the gods.' He went with a hymn to *Prajâpati* (Lord of the World), the first of gods. *Prajâpati* said to him: 'Agni (fire) is the nearest of gods, go to him.' He went with a hymn to Agni, and Agni said to him: '*Savitri* (the progenitor) rules all creatures, go to him.' He went with a hymn to *Savitri*, and *Savitri* said to him: 'Thou art bound for *Varuṇa* the king, go to him.' He went with a hymn to *Varuṇa* the king, and *Varuṇa* said to him: '*Agni* is the mouth of the gods, the kindest god, praise him, and we shall set thee free.' Thus he praised Agni, and Agni said to him: 'Praise the *Viśve Devâḥ*, and we shall set thee free.' Thus he praised the *Viśve Devâḥ*, and they said to him: 'Indra is the greatest, mightiest, strongest, and friendliest of the gods, praise him, and we shall set thee free.' Thus he praised Indra, and Indra was pleased, and gave him in his mind a golden car, which *Śunaḥśepha* acknowledged by another verse. Indra said to him; 'Praise the *Aśvinau*, and we shall set thee free.' Thus he praised the *Aśvinau*, and they said to him: 'Praise *Ushas* (dawn), and we shall set thee free.' Thus he praised *Ushas* with three verses. While each verse was delivered, his fetters were loosed, and *Hariśchandra*'s belly grew smaller, and when the last verse was said, his fetters were loosed, and *Hariśchandra* well again."

This story is chiefly interesting as revealing to us three distinct elements in the early social life of India. These are represented by the royal or

and men were set free immediately after the *Paryagni-karaṇam* (purification by fire, carried round), and only animals like sheep, &c., were killed.



reigning family of the Ikshvākus, by their priests or ministers belonging to several famous Brahmanical races, and by a third class of men, living in the forests, such as Ajigarta and his three sons. It is true that Ajigarta is called a Rishi, and one of his sons a Brahman. But even if we accept the Aryan origin of Ajigarta, the seller and butcher of his own son, it is important to remark how great a difference there must have been between the various Aryan settlers in India. Whether we ascribe this difference to a difference in the time of immigration, or whatever other reason we may assign to it, yet there remains the fact, that, with all the vaunted civilisation of the higher Aryan classes, there were Aryan people in India to whom not only a young prince could make the offer of buying their children, but where the father offered himself to bind and kill the son, whom he had sold for a hundred cows. This was a case so startling to the later Brahmans, that the author of the Laws of *Manu* was obliged to allude to it, in order to defend the dignity of his caste.¹ *Manu* says, that hunger is an excuse for many things, and that Ajigarta, although he went to kill his own son, was not guilty of a crime, because he did so to appease his hunger. Now the author of the *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa* certainly does not adopt this view, for Ajigarta is there, as we shall see, severely abused for his cruelty, so much so, that his son, whom he has sold, considers himself at liberty to leave the family of his parents, and to accept the offer made by Viśvāmītra of being adopted into his family. So revolting, indeed, is the description given of Ajigarta's behaviour

¹ *Manu*, x. 105.



in the Brāhmaṇa, that we should rather recognise in him a specimen of the un-Aryan population of India. Such a supposition, however, would be in contradiction with several of the most essential points of the legend, particularly in what regards the adoption of Śunaḥśepha by Viśvāmitra. Viśvāmitra, though arrived at the dignity of a Brahman, clearly considers the adoption of Śunaḥśepha Devarāta, of the famous Brahmanic family of the Ângirasas, as an advantage for himself and for his descendants; and the Deva-rātas are indeed mentioned as a famous branch of the Viśvāmitras. (V.-P. p. 405, 23.). Śunaḥśepha is made his eldest son, and the leader of his brothers, evidently as the defender and voucher of their Brahmahood, which must have been then of very recent date, because Viśvāmitra himself is still addressed by Śunaḥśepha as *Rāja-putra*, and *Bharata-rishabha*.

The Aitareya-brāhmaṇa goes on to state that the priests asked Śunaḥśepha to perform the sacrifice of the day. Śunaḥśepha then invented the ceremony called *Anjāḥsava*, and prepared the Soma, accompanied by four verses.¹ He poured the Soma into the Droṇa-kalaśa vessel with one verse, and made the libations with the four first verses of the same hymn, accompanied by Svāhā exclamations, as the sacrifice had been begun by Hariśchandra. Afterwards he carried out all the things belonging to the Avabritha ceremony, employing two verses, and made Hariśchandra go to the Âhavanīya fire with another hymn.

“When the sacrifice had thus been performed Śunaḥśepha sat down on the lap of Viśvāmitra. Ajigarta,

¹ These verses are to be found in the sixth Anuvāka of the first Maṇḍala of the Rig-veda.



the son of Sūyavasa, said: "Rishi, give me back my son." Viśvāmitra said, "No; for the gods have given him to me." He became Devarāta (Theodotus) the son of Viśvāmitra, and the members of the families of Kapila and Babhru became his relations. Ajigarta the son of Sūyavasa said: "Come thou, O son, we, both I and thy mother call thee away." Ajigarta the son of Sūyavasa said: "Thou art by birth an Ângirasa, the son of Ajigarta, celebrated as a poet. O Rishi, go not away from the line of thy grandfather, come back to me." Śunaḥśepha replied: "They have seen thee with a knife in thy hand, a thing that men have never found even amongst Śūdras; thou hast taken three hundred cows for me, O Angiras." Ajigarta the son of Sūyavasa said: "My old son, it grieves me for the wrong that I have done; I throw it away, may these hundred cows belong to thee." Śunaḥśepha replied: "Who once commits a sin will commit also another sin; thou wilt not abstain from the ways of Śūdras; what thou hast committed cannot be redressed." "Cannot be redressed," Viśvāmitra repeated. "Dreadful stood the son of Sūyavasa when he went to kill with his knife. Be not his son, come and be my son." Śunaḥśepha said: "Tell us thyself, O son of a king, thus as thou art known to us, how I, who am an Ângirasa, shall become thy son." Viśvāmitra replied: "Thou shalt be the eldest of my sons, thy offspring shall be the first, thou shalt receive the heritage which the gods have given me, thus I address thee." Śunaḥśepha replied: "May the leader of the Bharatas say so, in the presence of his agreeing sons, for friendship's and happiness' sake, that I shall become thy son." Then Viśvāmitra ad-



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dressed his sons: "Hear me, Madhuchhandas, Rishabha, Reṇu, Ashtaka, and all ye brothers that you are, believe in his seniority."

This Viśvāmitra had a hundred sons, fifty older than Madhuchhandas, and fifty younger. The elder did not like this, and Viśvāmitra pronounced a curse upon them, that they should become outcasts. They became Andhras, Puṇḍras, Śabarās, Pulindas, Mûtibas, and many other outcast tribes, so that the descendants of Viśvāmitra became the worst of the Dasyus. But Madhuchhandas, together with the other fifty sons, said: "What our father tells us, in that we abide; we place thee before us and follow thee." When Viśvāmitra heard this, he praised his sons and said: "You sons will have good children and cattle, because you have accepted my will, and have made me rich in brave sons. You, descendants of Gâthin¹, are to be honoured by all, you brave sons, led by Devarâta; he will be to you good counsel. You, descendants of Kuśika, follow Devarâta, he is your hero, he will give you my riches, and whatever knowledge I possess. You are wise, all you sons of Viśvāmitra together; you are rich, you stood to uphold Devarâta, and to make him your eldest, descendants of Gâthin. Devarâta² (Śunaḥśepha) is mentioned as a

¹ Purûravas

Jahnu

. × Gâthin Kausika (Bhṛigus)

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|-------------|--|-----------|---|--------------|-------------|
| | | | | | |
| Viśvāmitra. | | Satyavatî | × | Rîchîka | (Ikshvâkus) |
| | | | | | |
| | | Jamadagni | × | Reṇukâ | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | Paraśu-râma. | |

² This last verse, which is also attributed to Viśvāmitra, ought



Rishi of both families, in the chiefdom of the Jahnus, and in the divine Veda of the Gāthins."

The same chapter of the Aitareya-brāhmaṇa, where this story of Śunaḥśepha is told, contains many curious details on the mutual relation of the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas. The story of Sunaḥśepha is said to form a part of the inauguration of a king, to whom it is related by the Hotṛi priests, the Adhvaryu priest acting the second part; perhaps an early attempt at dramatic representation.

It does not necessarily follow from this legend that the Rishis, the authors of the Vedic hymns, offered human sacrifices. No one would conclude from the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his own son in obedience to a supposed command from Jehovah, that the Jews had been in the habit of offering their sons as victims. It is not, however, because human sacrifices seem to belong only to the most savage races of men, that we doubt the prevalence of this custom among the ancient Hindus. Human sacrifices are not incompatible with a higher stage of civilization, particularly among people who never doubted the immortality of the soul, and at the same time felt a craving to offer whatever seemed most valuable on earth to the gods in whom they believed. There are few nations in the history of the world whose early traditions do not exhibit some traces of human sacrifices. And though I doubt the continuance of that custom during the Chhandas period, I see no reason

to be taken rather as a recapitulation of the whole story. *Jahnu* is one of the ancestors of Viśvāmitra, belonging to the Lunar Dynasty; Gāthin is considered as Viśvāmitra's father. The commentator gives *Jahnu* as a Rishi of the family of Ajjigarta, which seems better to agree with the Vedic story.



to doubt its previous existence. A passage from the Aitareya-brāhmaṇa offers a striking confirmation of this opinion. It is said there (Ait.-br. 6. 8.) that the gods took man for their victim. "As he was taken, medha, (the sacrifice or the spirit,) went out of him. It entered the horse. Therefore the horse became the sacrificial animal. Then the gods took the horse, but as it was taken, the medha went out of him. It entered the ox. Therefore the ox became the sacrificial animal. The same happened with the ox. Afterwards the sheep, then the goat, and at last the earth became the victim. From the earth rice was produced and rice was offered in the form of puroḷāśa, in lieu of the sacrificial animal. The other beings which had formerly been offered and then been dismissed, are supposed to have become changed into animals unfit for sacrifice: man into a savage, the horse into a Bos Gaurus, the ox into a Gayal ox, the sheep into a camel (ushṭra), the goat into a śarabha. All these animals are anedhya or unclean, and should not be eaten."

The drift of this story is most likely that in former times all these victims had been offered. We know it for certain in the case of horses and oxen, though afterwards these sacrifices were discontinued. As to sheep and goats they were considered proper victims to a still later time. When vegetable offerings took the place of bloody victims, it was clearly the wish of the author of our passage to show that, for certain sacrifices, these rice-cakes were as efficient as the flesh of animals. He carries out his argument still further, and tries to show that in the rice the beard corresponds to the hair of animals; the husk to the



skin; the phalīkaraṇas to the blood; the meal to the flesh; the straw to the bones.

The next story, from the Śatapatha-brâhmaṇa¹ serves to illustrate the relations between the priestly and royal families in the early history of India, and allows us an insight into the policy of the Brahmanas in their struggle for political influence.

“Janaka of Videha once met with some Brahmanas who had just arrived. They were Śvetaketu Āruneya, Somaśushma Sâtyayajni, and Yâjñavalkya. He said to them: ‘How do you perform the Agnihotra?’ Śvetaketu replied: ‘O king, I sacrifice to two heats in one another, which are ever shining, and pervading the world with their splendour.’ ‘How is that?’ said the king. Śvetaketu replied: ‘Âditya (the sun) is heat; to him do I sacrifice in the evening in the fire (Agni). Agni is heat; to him do I sacrifice in the morning in the sun (Âditya).’ ‘What becomes of him who sacrifices thus?’ said the king. The Brahman replied: ‘He becomes evershining with happiness and splendour, and has his dwelling with these two gods and is one with them.’

Then Somaśushma began: ‘O king, I sacrifice to light in light.’ ‘How is that?’ said the king. Somaśushma replied: ‘Âditya is light, to him do I sacrifice in the evening in Agni. Agni is light, to him do I sacrifice in the morning in Âditya.’ ‘What becomes of him who sacrifices thus?’ said the king. The Brahman replied: ‘He becomes full of light and splendour in this life, and has his dwelling with these two gods and is one with them.’

¹ Śatapatha-brâhmaṇa, Mâdhyandina-sâkhâ, xi. 4. 5. The same story is alluded to in the Bṛihadâraṇyaka, iv. 3. 1.

Tqen said Yājñavalkya: 'I offer the Agnihotra in taking out the fire (from the house-altar); for when Āditya sets, all the gods follow him, and if they see that I take out the fire, they come back, and, after having cleaned the sacrificial vessels, having filled them again, and after having milked also the sacred cow, I shall delight them, when I see them again, and they see me.'

Janaka said: 'Thou, O Yājñavalkya, hast come very near to the Agnihotra; I shall give thee a hundred cows. But thou dost not know what becomes afterwards of these two libations (in the morning and evening).' So he said, then mounted his car and went away.

The priests said: 'This fellow of a Rājanya has insulted us; let us call him out for a Brahman-dispute.' Yājñavalkya observed, 'We are Brahmans, he a fellow of a Rājanya. If we vanquished him, whom should we say we had vanquished? But if he vanquished us, people would say of us that a Rājanya had vanquished Brahmans. Do not think of this.' They allowed what he said, and Yājñavalkya mounted his car, and followed the king. He reached the king, and the king said to him, 'Yājñavalkya, dost thou come to know the Agnihotra?' 'The Agnihotra, O king,' replied Yājñavalkya."

Here the king begins to explain to Yājñavalkya his own view of the two morning and evening libations, called Agnihotra. He says, that these two sacrifices rise into the air, and are there again performed; the wind being the fuel, and the rays the bright libation. Then he goes on explaining how these two sacrifices, after having delighted the air, enter the sky, where they are performed by sun and moon; how they

come back to the earth, and are performed by fire (warmth) and plants ; how they enter the man, and are performed by his tongue and food ; how they enter the woman, and a son is born. “This is the true Agnihotra, O Yâjnavalkya,” said the king ; ‘there is nothing higher than this.’ Yâjnavalkya granted him a boon ; and the king said, ‘May I be allowed, Yâjnavalkya, to ask thee what I wish.’ Since then Janaka became a Brahman.”

The two following stories are of a more mythological character, and contain curious traditions about Manu, the supposed ancestor of mankind. The first is from the Aitareya-brâhmaṇa, v. 14.

“Nâbhânedishṭha, the son of Manu, had been deprived of his paternal share by his brothers, while he was pursuing his studies (in the house of his Guru). When he came home, he said, ‘What is my share ?’ They replied (pointing to Manu), ‘The father, who is our governor and arbitrator.’ (Therefore sons call now their father, governor (nishṭhâva¹) and arbitrator (avavaditri)). He went to his father and said, ‘Father, they have made thee to be my share.’ The father replied, ‘Do not believe it, my son, by

¹ The commentary explains, निष्ठावः by धनविभागादिर्धर्म-
रहस्यं निःशेषेण स्थितिनिर्णयो निष्ठा। सा यस्मिन्नस्ति स
निष्ठावः। तादृशं धर्मरहस्यनिर्णेतारमित्यर्थः॥ अववादितारं।
ज्येष्ठपुत्रस्यैतावत् द्वितीयस्यैतावत् अन्यस्यैतावदित्यवच्छिद्य
वेदितुं समर्थोऽववदिता। तादृशं॥ अयमर्थः। अयं मनुर्धर्मशा-
स्त्रकर्तृत्वाद्धर्मरहस्यनिर्णयवान् पितृत्वेन तवैतावदित्यवच्छिद्य
वक्तुं समर्थश्च॥



any means. The Angiras' there perform a sacrifice in order to go to heaven, but every time they come to the sixth day, they get confused. Let them recite these two hymns (of thine¹) on the sixth day, and when they go to heaven they will give thee all the great riches which they have brought together for the sacrifice.' The son said, 'Yes;' went to them, and spoke: 'Ye sages, receive me, the son of Manu.'² They replied, 'What is thy wish that thou speakest thus?' He answered, 'I shall teach you this sixth day, and you shall give me, when you go to heaven, all these great riches which you have brought together for the sacrifice.' They agreed, and he recited for them these two hymns on the sixth day. Thus the Angiras' understood the sacrifice and the life in heaven. Therefore, when the Hotri priest recites these two hymns on the sixth day, it leads to an understanding of the sacrifice and of the life in heaven.

When the Angiras' were going to heaven they said, "All these great riches are thine, O Brahman."³ While he was putting them together, a man⁴ in dark dress came up from the north, and said,

¹ Two hymns ascribed to Nâbhânedishtha, occur in the Rig-veda, Maṇḍala, x. 5. 1. & 2.

² These words are taken from the second hymn of Nâbhânedishtha.

³ The text is एतन्ते ब्राह्मण सहस्रमिति। but the commentator says, it is to be understood of a thousand cows or animals, left on the spot of the sacrifice, and that in a different Śâkhâ of this Brâhmaṇa the text is ते सुवर्गं लोकं यतो य एषां पशव आसन् तानस्मा अद्दुरिति॥

⁴ The commentator says, that this is Rudra, the lord of animals, and that this is clearly indicated in a different Śâkhâ, where the text is तं पशुभिश्चरन्तं यज्ञवास्तौ रुद्र आगच्छदिति॥



'This is mine, mine is what is left on the sacred spot.' Nābhānedishṭha replied, 'They gave it to me.' The man said, 'Then let us ask thy father about it.' He went to his father, and the father said, 'Have they given thee nothing, my son?' Nābhānedishṭha replied, 'They gave me a portion, but then a man in dark dress came up from the north, and said, "This is mine; mine is what is left on the sacred spot," and took it.' The father said, 'It belongs to him, indeed, my son, but he will give it to thee.' Thereupon Nābhānedishṭha went back and said, 'This is thine indeed, O reverend sir; thus spoke my father.' 'This I give to thee,' replied the man, 'who hast spoken the truth. Therefore the truth must be spoken by a man who knows it. These verses of Nābhānedishṭha give great riches. They give great riches; and he understands on the sixth day the life in heaven who knows this.'"

The next extract is taken from the Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa, i. 8. 1. 1. (Prap. vi. 3. 1.):—

"To Manu they brought in the morning water to wash. As they bring it with their hands for the washing, a fish comes into the hands of Manu as soon as he has washed himself.

He spoke to Manu the word: — 'Keep me, I shall preserve thee.' Manu said, 'From what wilt thou preserve me?' The fish said, 'The flood will carry away all these creatures. I shall preserve thee from it.' 'How canst thou be kept?' said Manu.

The fish replied, 'As long as we are small there is much destruction for us; fish swallows fish. First, then, thou must keep me in a jar. If I outgrow it dig a hole, and keep me in it. If I outgrow this,



take me to the sea, and I shall be saved from destruction.'

He became soon a large fish. He said to Manu, 'When I am full-grown, in the same year the flood will come. Build a ship then, and worship me, and when the flood rises go into the ship, and I shall preserve thee from it.'

Manu brought the fish to the sea, after he had kept him thus. And in the year which the fish had pointed out Manu had built a ship, and worshipped the fish. Then when the flood had risen, he went into the ship. The fish came swimming to him, and Manu fastened the rope of the ship to a horn of the fish. The fish carried him by it over the northern mountain.

The fish said, 'I have preserved thee. Bind the ship to a tree. May the water not cut thee asunder while thou art on the mountain. As the water will sink, thou wilt slide down.' Manu slid down with the water; and this is called the Slope of Manu on the northern mountain. The flood had carried away all these creatures, and thus Manu was left there alone.

He went along meditating a hymn, and wishing for offspring. And he sacrificed there also (a pākayajna). Taking clarified butter, coagulated milk, whey and curds, he made an offering to the waters. In a year a woman was brought forth from it. She rose unctuous and trickling; and where she stood there was clarified butter. Mitra and Varuṇa came to meet her.

They said to her, 'Who art thou?' She said, 'The daughter of Manu.' 'Say thou art ours,' they said. 'No,' she replied; 'he who has begotten me



to him I belong.' Then they asked her to be their sister, and she half agreed and half did not agree. She went off and came to Manu.

Manu said to her, 'Who art thou?' She said, 'I am thy daughter.' 'How art thou my daughter?' he asked. She replied, 'The oblations which thou hast thrown into the waters, clarified butter, coagulated milk, whey and curds, by them thou hast begotten me. I am a blessing. Praise me at the sacrifice. If thou praise me at the sacrifice, thou wilt be rich in offspring and cattle. Whatever blessing thou wilt ask by me, will all be given to thee.' Thus he praised her in the middle of this sacrifice; for the middle of the sacrifice is that which comes between the introductory and the final prayers (prayâjâs and anuyâjâs).

Manu went along with her, meditating a hymn, and wishing for offspring; and by her he begat this offspring, which is called the offspring of Manu, and whatever blessing he asked was all given to him.

She is indeed *Idâ*. Whoever knows this, and goes with *Idâ*, he begets the offspring which Manu begat; and whatever blessing he asks by her, is all given to him."

These extracts from the Brâhmanas will be sufficient to show that there is much curious information to be gathered from these compilations. / In spite of their general dreariness, the Brâhmanas well deserve to be preserved from destruction, which can only be done by the help of European editors. / It is true that the ceremonial, the vidhis, can be better studied in the Sûtras, but if we want to know what meaning was assigned to every act of the sacrifice, such as it



had been handed down and become fixed in the Brahmanic society of India, long before the composition of any Brāhmaṇa, we must consult these works. Though their professed object is to teach the sacrifice, they allow a much larger space to dogmatical, exegetical, mystical and philosophical speculations, than to the ceremonial itself. They appeal continually to earlier authorities, and in some of them, particularly in the Kaushītaki-brāhmaṇa, the conflicting opinions of ancient sages are so well confronted, and their respective merits so closely discussed, that we sometimes imagine ourselves reading the dogmatic philosophy of Jaimini. According to the views of native commentators, the characteristic feature of the Brāhmaṇas consists in doubt, deliberation, and discussion, and the word Mimāṃsā, which afterwards became the title of Jaimini's philosophy, is frequently used in the Brāhmaṇas to introduce the very problems which occupy the attention of Jaimini and his followers. Of course the discussion is not a *bonâ fide* discussion. The two sides of every question are stated, but they only serve to lead us on to the conclusion which the author of the Brāhmaṇa considers in the light of a divine revelation. We are reminded of the disputations of two Doctors of Theology who defend for a time the most heretical propositions with the sharpest weapons of logic and rhetoric, though they would extremely regret the final victory of that cause which, for argument's sake, they are called upon to maintain. Never was dogmatism more successfully veiled under the mask of free discussion than in the Mimāṃsā or discussion of the Brāhmaṇas. /

/The fact of so many authorities being quoted by



name in these works shows that the Brāhmaṇas exhibit the accumulated thoughts of a long succession of early theologians and philosophers. But the very earliest of these sages follow a train of thought which gives clear evidence of a decaying religion. The Brāhmaṇas presuppose, not only a complete collection of the ten Maṇḍalas of the Rig-veda, not only the establishment of a most complicated ceremonial, not only the distribution of the ceremonial offices among three or four classes of priests, but a complete break in the primitive tradition of the Aryan settlers of India. At the time when the law was laid down about the employment of certain hymns at certain parts of the sacrifice, the original meaning of these hymns, and the true conception of the gods to whom they were addressed, had been lost. The meaning also of the old and sacred customs by which their forefathers had hallowed the most critical epochs of life and the principal divisions of the year, had faded away from the memory of those whose lucubrations on the purport of the sacrifices have been embalmed in the so-called Arthavādas of the Brāhmaṇas. It is difficult to determine whether, before the beginning of the Brāhmaṇa period, there existed various Śākhās among the Bahvrichas. The collection of the Rig-veda-saṁhitā must no doubt have been completed long before the age which led to the composition of Brāhmaṇas. Various readings also may have found their way into that collection before the Brāhmaṇa period. But the scrupulous preservation of such variations, which were the natural result of oral tradition, seems more akin to the spirit of the Brāhmaṇas than to that of an earlier age. There is less



room for doubt as to the date of the Śâkhâs of the Adhvaryus and Chhandogas. They belong to the Brâhmaṇa period. What is called the Taittirîya-sanhitâ is no Sanhitâ, in the usual sense of the word, but was originally the Brâhmaṇa of the ancient Adhvaryus. It contains the description of the sacrifice, such as it would be required by the Adhvaryus. The composition of a separate Sanhitâ in their behalf, the so-called Sanhitâ of the White Yajurveda, is contemporaneous with, if not later than, the collection of the Śatapatha-brâhmaṇa. We therefore consider all the Śâkhâs of the Adhvaryus, with the exception of their Sûtra-śâkhâs, as Brâhmaṇa-śâkhâs which had grown up during the Brâhmaṇa period. And if we feel more hesitation with regard to the Sanhitâ of the Chhandogas, it is not with reference to what is usually called the Sâma-veda-sanhitâ, but with regard to the Gânas. These collections of hymns, though they have a purely ceremonial object, have an air of antiquity, and we could hardly understand how the Tândya-brâhmaṇa, even in its original component parts, could have arisen, unless we suppose that there existed previously collections and groups of hymns, comprised under special names, such as we find in the Gânas. Without, therefore, pronouncing a definite opinion on the existence of any Śâkhâs of the two minor Vedas, previous to the first appearance of Brâhmaṇa literature, we confine ourselves to the assertion, that not one line of any of the Brâhmaṇas which we possess could have been composed, until after the complete collection of the Rig-veda, and after the three-fold division of the ceremonial. Not one of the Brâhmaṇas was composed by a Brahman who was not either a Bahvricha, an Adhvaryu, or Chhandoga.



There was a fourth class of superintending priests, who were supposed to be cognisant of the duties of all the three other classes: but there was, as we shall see, neither Brâhmana nor Sanhitâ for their special benefit. According to the opinion of some, the superintendent or Brahman might indeed be an Adhvaryu, or even a Chhandoga, but the general rule is that he should be a Bahvricha¹, because the Bahvricha had the widest knowledge of Vedic hymns. There must have been a time when every Brahman who had to act as a priest, whatever offices he had to perform at the sacrifice, was acquainted with the complete body of the sacred hymns, collected in the Rig-veda. But of that time no traces are left in our Brâhmanas. Our Brâhmanas know of no hymns which are not the property of Hotri, Adhvaryu, or Udgâtri; they know of no priests, except the four classes which have divided between themselves all the sacrifices, and have distinct duties assigned to them, whether they officiate singly or jointly. Such a system could only have been carried out by a powerful and united priesthood; its origin and continuance can hardly be conceived, without the admission of early councils and canons. Originally every sacrifice was a spontaneous act, and as such had a meaning. When the sacrifices fell into the hands of priests, the priest was at first the minister, afterwards the repre-

¹ Kaush.-br. vi. 11. तदाहुः किंविदं किंकदसं ब्रह्माणं दृणीत इत्यध्वर्युमित्येके स परिक्रमाणां चेचज्ञो भवतीति कुंदोगमित्येके तथा हास्य त्रिभिर्वेदैर्हविर्यज्ञाः संस्क्रियन्त इति बह्वृचमिति त्वेव स्थितं। Some allowance must be made for the fact that the Kaushîtakins are Bahvrichas.



sentative, of those who offered the sacrifice. But it is only in the last stage of priestcraft that the spoils are divided, and certain acts made the monopoly of certain priests. All this had taken place before the rising of what we call the Brāhmaṇa literature, and we may well conceive that but few traces are left in these works of the thoughts and feelings which had suggested the first spontaneous acts of the early worshippers of India.

The transition from a natural worship to an artificial ceremonial may take place gradually. It had taken place long before the beginning of the Brāhmaṇa period, and the process of corruption continued during this and the succeeding periods, till at last the very corruption became a principle of new life. But there is throughout the Brāhmaṇas such a complete misunderstanding of the original intention of the Vedic hymns, that we can hardly understand how such an estrangement could have taken place, unless there had been at some time or other a sudden and violent break in the chain of tradition. The author of the Brāhmaṇas evidently imagined that those ancient hymns were written simply for the sake of their sacrifices, and whatever interpretation they thought fit to assign to these acts, the same, they supposed, had to be borne out by the hymns. This idea has vitiated the whole system of Indian exegesis. It might be justified, perhaps, if it had only been applied to the purely sacrificial hymns, particularly to those which are found in the Sanhitās of the Sāma-veda and Yajur-veda. But the Rig-veda too has experienced the same treatment at the hands of Indian commentators, and the stream of tradition, flowing from the fountain-head of the ori-



ginal poets, has, like the waters of the Sarasvatî, disappeared in the sands of a desert. Not only was the true nature of the gods, as conceived by the early poets, completely lost sight of, but new gods were actually created out of words which were never intended as names of divine beings. There are several hymns in the Rig-veda containing questions as to who is the true or the most powerful god. One in particular is well known, in which each verse ends with the inquiring exclamation of the poet; "Kasmai devâya havishâ vidhema?" "To which god shall we sacrifice with our offering?" This, and similar hymns, in which the interrogative pronoun occurred, were employed at various sacrifices. A rule had been laid down, that in every sacrificial hymn, there must be a deity addressed by the poet. In order to discover a deity where no deity existed, the most extraordinary objects, such as a present, a drum, stones, plants, were raised to the artificial rank of deities. In accordance with the same system, we find that the authors of the Brâhmanas had so completely broken with the past, that, forgetful of the poetical character of the hymns, and the yearning of the poets after the unknown god, they exalted the interrogative pronoun itself into a deity, and acknowledged a god Ka or Who? In the Taittirîya-saṁhitâ¹ (i. 7. 6. 6.), in the Kaushîtaki-brâhmana (xxiv. 4.), in the Tândya-brâhmana (xv. 10.), and in the Śatapatha-brâhmana, wherever interrogative verses occur, the author states, that Ka is Prajâpati, or the Lord of Creatures (prajâpatir vai Kaḥ). Nor did they stop here. Some of the hymns in which the inter-

¹ See Böhlingk and Roth's Dictionary, s. v.



rogative pronoun occurred were called *Kadvat*, *i. e.* having *kad* or *quid*. But soon a new adjective was formed, and not only the hymns, but the sacrifice also, offered to the god, were called *Kāya*, or who-ish. This word, which is not to be identified with the Latin *cujus*, *cujā*, *cujum*, but is merely the artificial product of an effete mind, is found in the *Taittirīya-saṁhitā* (i. 8. 3. 1.), and in the *Vājasaneyi-saṁhitā* (xxiv. 15.). At the time of Pāṇini this word had acquired such legitimacy as to call for a separate rule explaining its formation (Pāṇ. iv. 2. 25.). The Commentator here explains *Ka* by Brahman. After this, we can hardly wonder that in the later Sanskrit literature of the *Purāṇas*, *Ka* appears as a recognised god, as the supreme god, with a genealogy of his own, perhaps even with a wife; and that in the laws of Manu, one of the recognised forms of marriage, generally known by the name of the *Prajāpati-marriage*, occurs under the monstrous title of *Kāya*.

What is more natural than that the sun should be called in the hymns, golden-handed? The *Brāhmaṇa*, however, affected with a kind of voluntary blindness, must needs explain this simple epithet by a story of the sun having lost his hand, and having received instead a hand made of gold.

It would be useless to multiply these instances, as every page of the *Brāhmaṇas* contains the clearest proof that the spirit of the ancient Vedic poetry, and the purport of the original Vedic sacrifices, were both beyond the comprehension of the authors of the *Brāhmaṇas*. But although we thus perceive the wide chasm between the *Brāhmaṇa* period and that period by which it is preceded, we have still to answer the question whether any probable limits can be assigned



to the duration of this literary period. The Brāhmaṇas are not the work of a few individuals. By whomsoever they were brought into that form in which we now possess them, no one can claim the sole authorship of the dogmas which are incorporated in each Brāhmaṇa. The Brāhmaṇas represent a complete period during which the whole stream of thought flowed in one channel, and took, at least in that class which alone sustained intellectual activity, the form of prose, never before applied to literary productions. There are old and new Brāhmaṇas, but the most modern hardly differ in style and language from the most ancient. The old Brāhmaṇas passed through several changes, represented by the Brāhmaṇa-śākhās, and even the most modern were not exempt from these modifications. Considering, therefore, that the Brāhmaṇa period must comprehend the first establishment of the threefold ceremonial, the composition of separate Brāhmaṇas, the formation of Brāhmaṇa-charaṇas, and the schism between old and new Charaṇas, and their various collections, it would seem impossible to bring the whole within a shorter space than 200 years./ Of course this is merely conjectural; but it would require a greater stretch of imagination to account for the production in a smaller number of years of that mass of Brāhmaṇic literature which still exists, or is known to have existed. Were we to follow the traditions of the Brāhmaṇas themselves, we should have much less difficulty in accounting for the great variety of authors quoted, and of opinions stated in the Brāhmaṇas. They contain lists of teachers through whom the Brāhmaṇas were handed down, which would extend the limits of this age to a very considerable



degree. The Chhandogas have assigned a separate Brâhmaṇa to the list of their teachers, viz. the Vanśa-brâhmaṇa, a work the existence of which ought not to have been called into question, as a copy of it existed in the Bodleian Library.¹ In the Śatapatha-brâhmaṇa these lists are repeated at the end of various sections. There seems to be no imaginable object in inventing these long lists, as in the eyes of the Brahmans they would have been much too short for the extravagant antiquity assigned to their sacred books. With the exception of the highest links in each chain of teachers, the lists have an appearance of authenticity rarely to be met with in Indian compositions. The number of teachers in the Vanśa-brâhmaṇa amounts to 53, the last of them, Kaśyapa, the father, having received the tradition from Agni, or the god of fire. From Agni the tradition is further traced to Indra, Vāyu (wind), Mṛityu (death), Prajâpati (the Lord of Creation), and lastly to Brahman, the Self-existing. From Kaśyapa, down to Râdha Gautama, his 26th successor, the line of teachers seems to have been undivided. Râdha Gautama had two pupils, who apparently became the founders of different schools. One is called Anśu Dhânanjayya, who received instruction from Râdha Gautama and Amāvâśya Śāṇḍilyâyana; the other, Gobhila, had no teacher besides Râdha. The successors of Gobhila are eleven in number, while those of Anśu Dhânanjayya are twenty-five.

In the Śatapatha-brâhmaṇa we find four Vanśas.

¹ Prof. Weber's recent edition of this tract, is the best *amende* he could have made for his former scepticism with regard to the existence of this and other Brâhmaṇas of the Sâma-veda.



The most important of them stands at the end of the whole work, and consists of fifty-five names; the last of the human teachers being again Kaśyapa, who here is supposed to have received his revelation from Vâch, the goddess of speech. She received it through Ambhinî from Âditya, the sun. Among the successors of Kaśyapa we mark the 10th, Yâjñavalkya, the pupil of Uddâlaka and the teacher of Âsuri; and the 15th, Sânjivîputra. Sânjivîputra seems to have united two lines of teachers; he was the pupil of Kârśakeyîputra, and, according to the Vanśa of the 10th book, he was likewise the pupil of Mâṇḍûkâyani, the 9th successor of Tura Kâvasheya, who is fabled to have received his revelation, not through the agency of Vâch, Ambhinî, and Âditya, but direct from Prajâpati and the self-existing Brahman. There are two other Vanśas, one at the end of the Madhukâṇḍa, the other at the end of the Yâjñavalkîya-kâṇḍa. Both are, in reality, varieties of one and the same Vanśa, their differences arising from the confusion caused by the recurrence of similar names. That of the Madhukâṇḍa consists of sixty names, only forty-five or forty-six of which have an historical appearance. The principal divine teachers after Brahman, the Self-existing, are Parameshṭhin (Prajâpati?), Mrityu (death), Dadhyach Âtharvaṇa, and the two Aśvins.

At the end of the Khila-kâṇḍa a fifth list is found, not a Vanśa, but a list of teachers who handed down the Vanśa. This seems to be ascribed to Uddâlaka Âruṇeya, the teacher of Yâjñavalkya, as its original author.

Lists of Teachers from the Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa.

| Madhukāṇḍa. | Yājñavalkya-kāṇḍa. |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Śaurpanāyya. | The same as in the Ma- |
| 2. Gautama. | dhukāṇḍa. |
| 3. Vātsya. | |
| 4. Vātsya and Pārāśarya. ¹ | |
| 5. Śāṅkṛitya and Bhā- | |
| radvāja. | |
| 6. Audavāhi and Śāṅ- | |
| dilya. | |
| 7. Vaijavāpa and Gau- | |
| tama. | |
| 8. Vaijavāpāyana and | |
| Vaiśṭapureya. | |
| 9. Śāṇḍilya and Rauhi- | |
| nāyana. | |
| 10. Śaunaka and Ātreya, | Jaivantāyana instead of |
| and Raibhya. | Ātreya. |
| 11. Pautimāshyāyana and | The same as in the Ma- |
| Kaundīnyāyana. | dhukāṇḍa. |
| | Kaundīnyau. |
| | Aurṇavābhāh. |
| 12. Kaundīnya. | Kaundīnya. |
| 13. Kaundīnya. | Kaundīnya. |
| 14. Kaundīnya and Āg- | Kaundīnya and Āgni- |
| niveśya. | veśya. |
| 15. Saitava. | Saitava. |
| 16. Pārāśarya. | The same as in the Ma- |
| 17. Jātukarṇya. | dhukāṇḍa. |

¹ When there are two teachers, it is always the second through whom the tradition was carried on, except in No. 28. where there has evidently been a great confusion.



Madhukāṇḍa.

Yājñavalkya-kāṇḍa.

18. Bhāradvāja.
19. Bhāradvāja and Āsurāyana and Gautama.
20. Bhāradvāja.
21. Vaijavāpāyana.
22. Kauśikāyani.
23. Gṛitakauśika.
24. Pârāsaryāyana.
25. Pârāsarya.
26. Jâtukarṇya.
27. Bhāradvāja.
28. Bhāradvāja and Āsurāyana, and Yâska,
29. Traivani.
30. Aupajandhani.
31. Âsuri.
32. Bhāradvāja.
33. Âtreya.
34. Mânṭi.
35. Gautama.
36. Gautama.
37. Vâtsya.

Valâkâkauśika.

Kâshâyana.

Saukarâyana.

} desunt.

Traivani.

Aupajandhani.¹

Âsuri.

¹ The Yājñavalkya-kāṇḍa inserts here: Sâyakāyana.

Kauśikāyani (22).

Gṛitakauśika (23).

Pârāsaryāyana (24).

Pârāsarya (25).

Jâtukarṇya (26).

Bhāradvāja (27).

Bhāradvāja and
Āsurāyana and Yâska (28).

Traivani (29).

Aupajandhani (30).



Madhukâṇḍa.

38. Śāṇḍilya.
39. Kāśīśya Kāpya.
40. Kumārahārīta.
41. Gâlava.
42. Vidarbhikaundīnya.
43. Vatsanāpāt Bābhrava.
44. Pathas Saubhara.
45. Ayāśya Âṅgīrasa.
46. Âbhūti Tvāshṭra.
47. Viśvarūpa Tvāshṭra.
48. The two Aśvins.
49. Dadhyach Âtharvaṇa.
50. Atharvan Daiva.
51. Mr̥tyu Prādhvansana.
52. Prādhvansana.
53. Ekarshi.
54. Viprajitti.
55. Vyashṭi.
56. Sanārtu.
57. Sanātana.
58. Sanaga.
59. Parameshṭhin.
60. Brahman Svayambhu.

Last Book.

1. Bhāradvājī-putra.
2. Vātsīmāṇḍavī-putra.
3. Pārāsarī-putra.
4. Gārgī-putra.
5. Pārāsarī-kaundīnī-putra.
6. Gārgī-putra.
7. Gārgī-putra.
8. Bāḍeyī-putra.



9. Maushikî-putra.
10. Hârikarnî-putra.
11. Bhâradvâjî-putra.
12. Paingi-putra.
13. Śaunakî-putra.
14. Kâśyapîvâlâkyâmâṭharî-putra.
15. Kautsî-putra.
16. Baudhî-putra.
17. Śâlankâyanî-putra.
18. Vârshagaṇî-putra.
19. Gautamî-putra.
20. Âtreyî-putra.
21. Gautamî-putra.
22. Vâtsî-putra.
23. Bhâradvâjî-putra.
24. Pârâsarî-putra.
25. Vârkârūṇî-putra.
26. Ârtabhâgî-putra.
27. Śaungî-putra.
28. Sâṅkṛitî-putra.
29. Âlambî-putra.
30. Âlambâyanî-putra.
31. Jâyantî-putra.
32. Mâṇḍûkâyanî-putra.
33. Mâṇḍûkî-putra.
34. *Sâṇḍilî-putra.*
35. Râthitarî-putra.
36. Kraunchikî-putra.
37. Vaidabhṛitî-putra.
38. Bhâlukî-putra.
39. Prâchînayogî-putra.
40. *Sânjîvî-putra.*
41. Kârśakeyî-putra.
42. Prâśnî-putra Âsurivâsin.

Xth Book.
Sânjîvî-putra.
Mâṇḍûkâyanî.
Mâṇḍavya.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 43. Āsurāyaṇa. | Kautsa. |
| 44. Āsuri. | Māhitthi. |
| 45. Yājñavalkya. (Vāja- saneya Yājñavalkya, Kh.) | Yāmakakshāyaṇa. |
| 46. Uddālaka. (Uddā- laka Āruneya, Kh.) | Vātsya. |
| 47. Aruna. | Sāṇḍilya. |
| 48. Upaveśi. | Kuśri. |
| 49. Kuśri. | Yajnavachas Rājastambā- yāna. |
| 50. Vājaśravas. | Tura Kāvasheya. ¹ |
| 51. Jihvāvat Bādhyoga. | Prajāpati. |
| 52. Asita Vārshagaṇa. | Brahman Svayambhu. |
| 53. Harita Kaśyapa. | |
| 54. Śilpa Kaśyapa. | |
| 55. Kaśyapa Naidhruvi. | |
| 56. Vāch. | |
| 57. Ambhinî. | |
| 58. Āditya. | |

Khila-kāṇḍa.

Satyakāma Jābāla.
 Jānaki Āyasthūna.
 Chūḍa Bhāgavitti.
 Madhuka Paingya.
 Vājasaneya Yājñavalkya.
 Uddālaka Āruneya.

Vanśa of the Sāma-veda.

1. Śarvadatta Gārgya.
2. Rudrabhūti Drāhyāyaṇi.
3. Trāta Aishumata.

¹ The priest of Janamejaya Pārikshita, at his Abhisheka sacri-
 fice, is called Tura Kāvasheya in the Ait.-br. viii. 21.



4. Nigada Pârṇavalki.
5. Girīśarman Kāṇṭheviddhi.
6. Brahmavṛiddhi Chhandogamâhiki.
7. Mitravarchas Sthairakâyana.
8. Supratîta Aulundya.
9. Bṛihaspatigupta Śâyasthi.
10. Bhavatrâta Śâyasthi.
11. Kustuka Sârkarâksha.
12. Śravaṇadatta Kauhala.
13. Suśârada Śâlankâyana.
14. Ūrjayat Aupamanyava.
15. Bhânumat Aupa- Aryamabhûti Kâlabava.
manyava.
16. Ânandaja Chândha- Bhadrâsarman Kauśika.
nâyana.
17. Śâmba Sârkarâ- Pushyayaśas Audavraji.
ksha, and Kâamboja Aupa-
manyava.
18. Madragâra Śaungâ- Sankara Gautama.
yani.
19. Sâti Aushtrâkshi. Aryamarâdha Gobhila and
Pûshamitra Gobhila.
20. Suśravas Vârsha- Âśvamitra Gobhila.
gaṇya.
21. Prâtarahna Kauhala. Varuṇamitra Gobhila.
22. Ketu Vâjya. Mûlamitra Gobhila.
23. Mitravinda Kauhala. Vatsamitra Gobhila.
24. Sunîtha Kâpatava. Gaulgulaviputra Gobhila.
25. Sutemanas Śândi- Bṛihadvasu Gobhila(pitâ).
lyâyana.
26. Ansu Dhânanjâyya. Gobhila.
27. Amâvâsya Śândilyâyana and Râdha Gautama.
28. Gâtri Gautama.



29. Samvargajit Lâmakâyana.
30. Śâkadâsa Bhâditâyana.
31. Vichakshana Tândya.
32. Gardabhîmukha Śândilyâyana.
33. Udaraśandilya (the father).
34. Atidhanvan Śaunaka and Maśaka Gârgya.
35. Sthiraka Gârgya (the father).
36. Vâsishṭha Chaikitâneya.
37. Vâsishṭha Âraihanya (a prince).
38. Sumantra Bâbhraiva Gautama.
39. Śûsha Vâhneya Bhâradvâja.
40. Arâla Dârteya Śaunaka.
41. Dṛiti Aindrota Śaunaka (the father).
42. Indrota Śaunaka (the father).¹
43. Vṛishaśushṇa Vâtâvata.
44. Nikothaka Bhâyajâtya.
45. Pratithi Devataratha.
46. Devataras Śâvasâyana (the father).
47. Śavas (the father).
48. Agnibhû Kâśyapa.
49. Indrabhû Kâśyapa.
50. Mitrabhû Kâśyapa.
51. Vibhaṇḍaka Kâśyapa (the father).
52. Rishyaśṛinga Kâśyapa (the father).
53. Kâśyapa (the father).
54. Agni (fire).
55. Indra.
56. Vâyu (wind).
57. Mrityu (death).
58. Prajâpati (Lord of Creation.)
59. Brahman Svayambhu.

¹ The priest of Janamejaya Pârikshita, at his Horse sacrifice, is called Indrota (Daivâpa) Śaunaka in the Śatapatha, xiii. 5. 4. 1., and in the Mahâbh. xii. 5595. seq. Cf. Weber, Ind. Stud. i. pp. 203. 483.



It would be difficult to tell how these long strings of names are to be accounted for, whatever system of chronology we adopt. If we were in possession of the Vanśas of the Bahvrichas and the ancient Adhvaryus, we might perhaps see more clearly. But it is important to observe that these two, which are decidedly the two most ancient Vedas, seem to have had no Vanśas at all. However this may be explained hereafter, certain it is,—and these long lists of names teach at least this one thing,—that the Brahmans themselves looked upon the Brāhmaṇa period as a long continued succession of teachers, reaching from the time when these lists were made and recited to the most distant antiquity, back to the very dynasties of their gods. If, therefore, we limit the age of the Brāhmaṇas to the two centuries from 600 to 800 B. C., it is more likely that hereafter these limits will have to be extended than that they will prove too wide.

There is one work which ought to be mentioned before we leave the Brāhmaṇa period, the *Gopatha-brāhmaṇa*. It is the Brāhmaṇa of the *Brahma-veda*, the Veda of the *Atharvângiras'* or *Bhrigu-Angiras'*. This Veda does not properly belong to the sacred literature of the Brahmans, and though in later times it obtained the title of the fourth Veda, there was originally a broad distinction between the magic formulas of the *Atharvângiras'* and the hymns of the *Bahvrichas*, the *Chhandogas*, and the *Adhvaryus*. *Madhusûdana* states the case simply and clearly. "The Veda," he says, "is divided into *Rich*, *Yajush* and *Sâman* for the purpose of carrying out the sacrifice under its three different forms. The duties of the *Hotri* priests are performed with the *Rig-veda*, those of the *Adhvaryu* priests with the *Yajur-veda*, those of the *Udgatri* priests with the *Sâma-veda*. The duties



of the Brahman and the sacrificer are contained in all the three. The Atharva-veda, on the contrary, is totally different. It is not used for the sacrifice, but only teaches how to appease, to bless, to curse, &c." But although the hymns of the Atharvans were not from the first looked upon as part of the sacred literature of the Brahmanas, the Brāhmaṇa of the Atharvans belongs clearly to the same literary period which saw the rise of the other Brāhmaṇas; and though it does not share the same authority as the Brāhmaṇas of the three great Vedas, it is written in the same language, and breathes the same spirit. The MSS. of this work are extremely scarce, and the copy which I use (E. I. H. 2142) is hardly legible. The remarks, therefore, which I have to offer on this work will necessarily be scanty and incomplete.

The original division of the Veda, and of the Vedic ceremonial, was, as we have seen, a threefold division. The Brahmanas speak either of one Veda or of three; of one officiating priest, or of three. "Trayī vidyā," the threefold knowledge, is constantly used in the Brāhmaṇas¹ with reference to their sacred literature. This, however, proves by no means that at the time when the Brāhmaṇas were composed the songs of the Atharvāṅgiras' did not yet exist. It only shows that originally they formed no part of the sacred literature of the Brahmanas. In some of the Brāhmaṇas, the Atharvāṅgiras' are mentioned. The passage translated before (p. 38.) shows that at the time when the Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa was composed the songs of the Atharvāṅgiras' were not only known, but had been collected, and had actually obtained the title of Veda. Their original title was the Atharvāṅgiras' or the Bṛigvāṅgiras', or the Atharvans,

¹ Nirukta-parīśiṣṭa, I, 10.



and these very titles show that songs which could be quoted in such a manner¹, must have been of ancient date, and must have had a long life in the oral tradition of India. Their proper position with reference to the other Vedas is well marked in a passage of the Taittirīyāranyaka (viii. 3.), where the Yajush is called the head, the R̥ich the right, the Sāman the other side, the Âdeśa (the Upanishad) the vital breath, and the Atharvāṅgiras' the tail.

The songs known under the name of the Atharvāṅgiras' formed probably an additional part of the sacrifice from a very early time. They were chiefly intended to counteract the influence of any untoward event that might happen during the sacrifice. They also contained imprecations and blessings, and various formulas, such as popular superstition would be sure to sanction at all times and in all countries. If once sanctioned, however, these magic verses would soon grow in importance, nay, the knowledge of all the other Vedas would necessarily become useless without the power of remedying accidents, such as could hardly be avoided in so complicated a ceremonial as that of the Brahmans. As that power was believed to reside in the songs of the Atharvāṅgiras', a knowledge of these songs became necessarily an essential part of the theological learning of ancient India.

According to the original distribution of the sacrificial offices among the four classes of priests, the supervision of the whole sacrifice, and the remedying of any mistake that might have happened belonged to the Brahman. He had to know the three Vedas, to follow in his mind the whole sacrifice, and to advise the other priests on all doubtful points.² If it was, the office

¹ See page 362. ² Sāyana's Introduction to the Rig-veda, p. 3. l. 3.



of the Brahman to remedy mistakes in the performance of the sacrifice, and if, for that purpose, the formulas of the Atharvāṅgiras' were considered of special efficacy, it follows that it was chiefly the Brahman who had to acquire a knowledge of these formulas. Now the office of the Brahman was contested by the other classes of priests. The Bahvrichas maintain that the office of Brahman should be held by a Bahvricha (Hotri), the Adhvaryus maintain that it belongs to one of their own body, and the Chhandogas also preferred similar claims. It was evidently the most important office, and in many instances, though not always, it was held by the Purohita, the hereditary family priest. Certain families also claimed a peculiar fitness for the office of Brahman, such as the Vasishthas and Viśvāmitras. (See p. 92.)

Because a knowledge of the songs of the Atharvāṅgiras' was most important to the Brahman or Purohita¹, these songs themselves, when once admitted to the rank of a Veda, were called the Veda of the Brahman, or the Brahma-veda. In the Gopatha-brāhmaṇa the title of Brahma-veda does not occur.² But the songs of the Atharvāṅgiras' are mentioned there. They are called both Ātharvaṇa-veda (i. 5.), and Āṅgirasaveda (i. 8.), and they are repeatedly represented as the proper Veda for the Brahman. Thus we read (iii. 1.): "Let a man elect a Hotri who knows the Rich, an Adhvaryu who knows the Yajush, an Udgâtri who knows the Sâman, a Brahman who knows the Atharvāṅgiras'." It seems in fact the principal object of the Gopatha to show the necessity

¹ Yâjñavalkya's Lawbook, i. 312.

² See, however, i. 22.



of four Vedas. A carriage, we are told, does not proceed with less than four wheels, an animal does not walk with less than four feet, nor will the sacrifice be perfect with less than four Vedas.¹ But although a knowledge of the fourth Veda is thus represented as essential to the Brahman, it is never maintained that such a knowledge would be sufficient by itself to enable a person to perform the offices of a Brahman. Like the Chhandogas (Rv. Bh. vol. i. page 3.), the Âtharvanikas also declare that the whole sacrifice is performed twice, once in words, and once in thought. It is performed in words by the Hotri, Udgâtri, and Adhvaryu separately; it is performed in thought by the Brahman alone (Gop. Br. vol. iii. 2.) The Brahman, therefore, had to know all the three Vedas and in addition the formulas of the Atharvângiras'. It is a common mistake in later writers to place the Atharva-veda coordinate with the other Vedas, and to represent it as the Veda of the Brahman. The Gopatha-brâhmaṇa raises no such claims; when it describes the type of the sacrifice, it says :

Agni (fire) was the Hotri,
 Vâyu (wind) the Adhvaryu,
 Sûrya (sun) the Udgâtri,
 Chandramas (moon) the Brahman,
 Parjanya (rain) the Sadasya,
 Oshadhi and Vanaspati (shrubs and trees) the
 Chamasâdhvaryus,

¹ At the end of the fifth Prapâthaka we read : अग्निः पृथिवी
 यजुषांतरिचं सान्ना दिवं लोकजित्सोमजंभाः। अथर्वभिरंगि-
 रोभिश्च गुप्तो यज्ञश्चतुष्पादिव - - - ॥



The Viśve Devas were the Hotrakas,
The Atharvāṅgiras', the Goptris or protectors.

In another place (v. 24.) the persons engaged in the sacrifice are enumerated as follows :

Hotri, Maitrāvaruṇa, Achhāvāka, Grāvastut (Rig-veda), 1 — 4.

Adhvaryu, Pratiprasthātri, Neshtri, Unnetri (Yajur-veda), 5 — 8.

Udgātri, Prastotri, Subrahmanya, Pratihatri (Sāma-veda), 9 — 12.

Brahman, Brāhmaṇāchhansin, Potri, Agnīdhra (Atharvāṅgiras'), 13 — 16.

Sadasya, 17.

Patnī dikshitā (the wife), 18.

Śamitri (the immolator), 19.

Grihapati (the lord), 20.

Angiras, 21.

Here we see that besides the four Brahman-priests to whom a knowledge of the Atharvāṅgiras' is recommended, there were other priests who are called Goptris, *i. e.* protectors or Angiras', and whose special office it was to protect the sacrifice by means of the magical formulas of the Atharvāṅgiras', against the effects of any accidents that might have happened. Such was the original office of the Atharvans at the Vedic sacrifices, and a large portion of the Gopatha-brāhmaṇa (i. 13. ; i. 22.) is taken up with what is called the Virishṭa, the Ūna, the Yātayāma, or whatever else the defects in a sacrifice are called which must be made good (sandhāna) by certain hymns, verses, formulas, or exclamations. There are long discussions on the proper way of pronouncing these salutary formulas, on their hidden meaning, and their miraculous power. The syllable Om, the so-called



Vāhritis, and other strange sounds are recommended for various purposes, and works such as the Sarpaveda, Piśācha-veda, Asura-veda, Itihāsa-veda, Purāṇa-veda, are referred to as authorities (i. 10.).

Although, however, the Gopatha-brāhmaṇa is more explicit on the chapter of accidents than the Brāhmaṇas of the other Vedas, the subject itself is by no means peculiar to it. The question of expiation or penance (*prāyaścitta*) is fully discussed in the other Vedas, and remedies are suggested for all kinds of mishaps. The ceremonial in general is discussed in the Gopatha in the same manner as in the other Brāhmaṇas. There is, in fact, very little, if any, difference between the Gopatha and the other Brāhmaṇas, and it is not easy to discover any traces of its more recent origin. It begins with a theory of the creation of the world, such as we find in many places of the other Brāhmaṇas. There is nothing remarkable in it except one idea, which I do not remember to have seen elsewhere. Brahman (neuter), the self-existing, burns with a desire to create, and by means of his heat, sweat is produced from his forehead, and from all the pores of his body. These streams of sweat are changed into water. In the water Brahman perceives his own shadow, and falls in love with it. This, however, is only one phase in the progress of creation, which is ultimately to lead to the birth of Bhrigu and Atharvan. Atharvan is represented as the real Prajāpati, or Lord of Creation. From him twenty classes of poets, the same as those mentioned in the Anukramaṇī, are produced, and their poems are said to have formed the Âtharvaṇa-veda.

Then follows a new series of creation. Brahman creates the earth from his feet, the sky from his

belly, heaven from his skull. He then creates three gods: Agni (fire) for the earth, Vâyu (wind) for the sky, and Âditya (sun) for the heaven. Lastly, he creates the three Vedas: the Rig-veda proceeds from Agni, the Yajur-veda from Vayu, the Sâma-veda from Âditya. The three Vyâhritis also, or sacred syllables (*bhûh bhuvah svar*), are called into existence. It is important to remark, that nothing is here said of the fourth Veda; its origin is described separately, and its second name, Ângirasa, is explained in detail. We look in vain for any traces of more modern ideas in the Gopatha-brâhmana, till we come to the end of the fifth Prapâthaka. This is the last Prapâthaka of the Gopatha-brâhmana, properly so called. The text is very corrupt, but it seems to contain an admission that, besides the twenty-one sacrifices which are acknowledged in all the Vedic writings, the Angiras' had some new sacrifices of their own.¹ That the Gopatha-brâhmana was composed after the schism of the Charakas and Vâjasaneyins, and after the completion of the Vâjasaneyi-saṁhitâ, may be gathered from the fact that where the first lines of the other Vedas are quoted in the Gopatha, the first line of the

¹ सप्त सुत्याः सप्त च पाकयज्ञा हविर्यज्ञाः सप्त तथैक-
विंशतिः। सर्वे ते यज्ञा अंगिरसोऽपि यंति नूतना यानृषयो(?)
सृजन्ति ये च सृष्टाः पुराणेः॥ And again यांश्च यामे
यांश्चारण्ये जपन्ति मंत्रान्नानार्थान्बहुधा जनासः। सर्वे ते
यज्ञा अंगिरसोऽपि यंति नूतना सा हि गतिर्ब्रह्मणो
यावराद्ध्या॥ त्रिविष्टपं त्रिदिवं नाकमुत्तमं तमेतया
चख्या विद्यथेति। अत उत्तरे ब्रह्मलोका महांतोऽथर्वणासं-
गिरसां च सा गतिः॥



Vajur-veda is taken from the Vājasaneyins, and not from the Taittirīyas.

The five Prapāṭhakas which we have hitherto discussed, form only the first part of the Gopatha-brāhmaṇa. There is a second part, called the Uttara-brāhmaṇa, which consists of more than five Prapāṭhakas. It is impossible to fix their exact numbers, as the MS. breaks off in the middle of the sixth book. It is likewise reckoned as belonging to the Atharva-veda, and quoted by the name of Gopatha. In this second part we meet repeatedly with long passages which are taken from other Brāhmaṇas. Sometimes they coincide literally, sometimes the differences are no greater than what we find in different Śākhās of the same Brāhmaṇa. Thus the legend of the sacrifice running away from the gods, which is told in the Aitareya-brāhmaṇa, i. 18, is repeated in the Uttara-brāhmaṇa, ii. 6. The story of Vasishṭha receiving a special revelation from Indra which is told in the Taittirīyaka¹ (iii. 5. 2.) is repeated in the Uttara-brāhmaṇa, (ii. 13.). And here a difference occurs which is characteristic. The Taittirīyas relate that owing to this special revelation which Vasishṭha had received from Indra, the Vasishṭhas had always acted as Purohitas. So far both the Taittirīyas and the Atharvans agree. But when the Taittirīyas continue that therefore a Vasishṭha is to be chosen a Brahman, the Atharvans demur. The sentence is left out, and it is inculcated on the contrary that the office of Brahman belongs by right to a Bhṛigu, or to one cognisant of the songs of the Atharvāṅgiras'.²

¹ See page 91, note.

² See also Uttara-brāhmaṇa ii. 1. = Ait.-br. iii. 5. ; Utt.-br.



If, as we have little reason to doubt, these passages in the second part of the Gopatha-brāhmaṇa were simply copied from other Brāhmaṇas, we should have to assign to the Uttara-brāhmaṇa a later date than to the Brāhmaṇas of the other Vedas. But this would in no way affect the age of the original Gopatha-brāhmaṇa. In it there is nothing to show that it was a more modern composition than, for instance, that Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa. In the Sanhitā of the Atharva-veda we find something very similar.¹ Here also the last, if not the last two books, betray a more modern origin, and are full of passages taken from the Rig-veda. The Anukramaṇī calls the nineteenth book the Brahma-kaṇḍa, and the hymns of the last book yajñīyaśansanamantras, *i. e.* hymns for sacrificial recitations. The collection of the Sanhitā was probably undertaken simultaneously with the composition of the Gopatha-brāhmaṇa, at a time when through the influence of some of the families of the Bhrigus and Angiras' the magic formulas of the Atharvans had been acknowledged as an essential part of the solemn ceremonial. With the means at present at our disposal it is impossible to trace the history of these verses back to the earlier period of Vedic literature, and I shall not return to them again. What is known of their origin and character has been stated by Professor Whitney in several very careful articles in the Journal of the American Oriental Society.² "The Ātharvaṇa," he says, "is, like the R̥ich, a his-

v. 14. = Ait.-br. vi. 17.; Utt.-br. vi. 1. = Ait.-br. vi. 18.; Utt.-br. vi. 3. = Ait.-br. vi. 21.

¹ Atharva-veda-sanhitā, herausgegeben von Roth und Whitney. Berlin, 1855, and 1856.

² Journal of the American Oriental Society, iv. p. 254.



torical and not a liturgical collection. Its first eighteen books, of which alone it was originally composed, are arranged upon a like system throughout: the length of the hymns, and not either their subject or their alleged authorship, being the guiding principle: those of about the same number of verses are combined together into books, and the books made up of the shorter hymns stand first in order. A sixth of the mass, however, is not metrical, but consists of longer or shorter prose pieces, nearly akin in point of language and style to passages of the Brāhmaṇas. Of the remainder, or metrical portion, about one-sixth is also found among the hymns of the Rich, and mostly in the tenth book of the latter: the rest is peculiar to the Âtharvaṇa." And again', "The most prominent characteristic feature of the Âtharvaṇa is the multitude of incantations which it contains; these are pronounced either by the person who is himself to be benefitted, or, more often, by the sorcerer for him, and are directed to the procuring of the greatest variety of desirable ends; most frequently, perhaps, long life, or recovery from grievous sickness, is the object sought: then a talisman, such as a necklace, is sometimes given, or in very numerous cases some plant endowed with marvellous virtues is to be the immediate external means of the cure; further, the attainment of wealth or power is aimed at, the downfall of enemies, success in love or in play, the removal of petty pests, and so on, even down to the growth of hair on a bald pate."

¹ Loc. cit. iii. p. 308.



CHAPTER III.

MANTRA PERIOD.

HAVING ascribed to one period the first establishment of the three-fold ceremonial (*trayî vidyâ*), the composition, and collection of the *Brâhmanas*, and the ramification of the *Brâhmana-charanas*, we have now to see whether we can extend our view beyond the limits of this period and trace the stream of Vedic literature still further back to its source and its earliest diffusion.

According to its general character, the *Brâhmana* period must be called a secondary period. It exhibits a stratum of thought, perfectly unintelligible without the admission of a preceding age, during which all that is misunderstood, perverted, and absurd in the *Brâhmanas*, had its natural growth, its meaning, and purpose. But can it be supposed that those who established the threefold ceremonial, and those who composed the threefold *Brâhmanas*, followed immediately upon an age which had known poets, but no priests, prayers, but no dogmas, worship, but no ceremonies? Or are there traces to show that, even previous to the composition of the *Brâhmanas*, a spirit was at work in the literature of India, no longer creative, free, and original, but living only on the heritage of a former age, collecting, classifying, and imitating? I believe we must decidedly adopt the latter view. The only document we have, in which we can study the character of the



times, previous to the Brâhmaṇa period, is the Rig-veda-sanhitâ. The other two Sanhitâs were more likely the production of the Brâhmaṇa period. These two Vedas, the Yajur-veda and Sâma-veda, were, in truth, what they are called in the Kaushîtaki-brâhmaṇa, the attendants of the Rig-veda.¹ The Brâhmaṇas presuppose the Trayî vidyâ, the threefold knowledge, or the threefold Veda, but that Trayî vidyâ again presupposes one Veda, and that the Rig-veda. We cannot suppose that the hymns which are found in the Rig-veda, and in the Sanhitâs of the two supplementary Vedas, the Sâma and Yajur-veda, were collected three times by three independent collectors. If so, their differences would be much greater than they are. The differences which do exist between the same hymns and verses as given in the three Sanhitâs, are such as we should expect to find in different Śâkhâs, not such as would naturally arise in independent collections or Sanhitâs.

/ The principle on which the Sanhitâ of the Rig-veda was made is different from that which guided the compilers of the Sanhitâs of the Adhvaryus and Udgâtris. These two Sanhitâs follow the order of an established ceremonial. They presuppose a fixed order of sacrifices. This is not the case in the Sanhitâ of the Bahvrichas. There is, as we shall see, a system in that Sanhitâ also, but it has no reference to the ceremonial.

/ The different character of the Rig-veda-sanhitâ, as compared with the Sanhitâs of the other two Vedas, has attracted the attention of the Brahmans, and we

¹ तत्परिचरणावितरौ वेदौ॥ vi. 11.



may quote on this subject the remarks of Sāyaṇa, in his Introduction to the Rig-veda.¹

“Has Āśvalāyana,” he says, “when composing his ceremonial Sūtras, followed the order of the Sanhitā of the Rig-veda, or of the Brāhmaṇa? He could not have followed the order of the hymns, because he says at the beginning of his Sūtras, that first of all he is going to explain the new and full-moon sacrifices (Darśa pūrṇamāsa), while the first hymns of the Rig-veda are never used at that sacrifice. Nor does he seem to have followed the Brāhmaṇa. For the Brāhmaṇa begins with the Dīkṣhañiyā ceremony. Here then it must be observed that the collection of hymns follows the order which is observed at the Brahmayajna and on other occasions where prayers are to be recited. It does not follow the order in which hymns are employed at the different sacrifices. Brahmayajna is the name given to the act of repeating by heart one’s own sacred text or even a single verse of it, whether a Rich, Yajush or Sāman. This repeating of all the Rich, Yajush or Sāman verses is enjoined by many passages of the Brāhmaṇas, and whenever hymns are thus enjoined to be repeated, that order is to be observed in which they have been handed down by an uninterrupted tradition. But as Āśvalāyana teaches the particular employment of particular hymns, basing it upon the authority of what are termed indicative passages of the revelation, it is but natural that he can not follow the order of the hymns of the Rig-veda. The texts of the Yajur-veda, however, are given, from the first beginning, according to their

¹ P. 34.



order at the performance of sacrifices, and thus have Āpastamba and others proceeded in the same order in the composition of their Sūtras. As this order has once been received, it is likewise adopted in the Brahmayajna. That Āśvalāyana should explain in the first place the Darśapūrṇamāsa sacrifice, while the Brāhmaṇa begins with the Dikṣaṇīyā sacrifice, is no objection, because the Dikṣaṇīyā is only a modification of the Darśapūrṇamāsa, and many of its rules must be supplied from the typical sacrifice. Thus the Kalpa-sūtra of Āśvalāyana assists in teaching the performance of the sacrifice by showing the employment of the hymns. That Āśvalāyana should teach the employment of passages which do not occur in the Sanhitā of the Rig-veda¹, is no fault, because these

¹ Our MSS. represent, according to tradition, the text of the Śākala-śākhā, and the same text is followed by Āśvalāyana in his Sūtras. Now, whenever Āśvalāyana quotes any verses which form part of the Śākala-śākhā, he only quotes the first words. Every member of his Charaṇa was supposed to know the hymns of the Śākala-śākhā by heart, and it was sufficient, therefore, to quote them in this manner. But when he has occasion to refer to the verses which are found in the Brāhmaṇa of the Aitareyins, without being part of the Śākala-sanhitā, Āśvalāyana quotes them in full. As these verses are not quoted in full in the text of the Aitareya-brāhmaṇa, we may fairly suppose that the text of the Rig-veda-sanhitā, current among the Aitareyins, was different from that of the Śākala-śākhā, and contained the full text of these hymns. Sāyaṇa, in his Commentary, does not state that these additional verses belonged to the Śākhā of the Aitareyins, but there can be little doubt that at his time the text of their Sanhitā was lost and forgotten. He says, however, that these verses belonged to a different Śākhā, and that they must be supplied from Āśvalāyana's Sūtras, where, for this very reason, they were given in full. At the time of Āśvalāyana, therefore, the text of the Sanhitā of the Aitareyins was still in existence, and he likewise notices in his Sūtras peculiarities in the ceremonial of the

hymns occur in different Śākhās, and their employment is prescribed by a different Brāhmaṇa, so that their being mentioned can only increase the value of his Sūtras. Those who know the logic of this subject say, that there is but one sacrifice and that it is to be learnt from all the different Śākhās."/

/ Here then we see that even so late a writer as Sāyaṇa is fully aware of the peculiar character of the Rig-veda, as compared with the other Vedas. In his eyes the collection of hymns, preserved in the Rig-veda, has evidently something anomalous. He, brought up in the system of a stiff liturgical religion, looks upon the Sanhitās simply as prayer-books to be used at the sacrifices. The sacrifices as taught in the Brāhmaṇas and Sūtras, are to him a subject of far greater importance than the religious poetry of the Rishis. It is but natural, therefore, that he should ask, what is the use of this collection of hymns, in which there is no order or system, as in the hymn-books of the Yajur-veda and Sāma-veda? His answer, however, is most unsatisfactory. For if the other two collections of hymns can be used for private devotion although they follow the order of the sacrifices, why should not the same apply to the hymns of the Rig-veda? /

/ Whenever we find in the ancient literature and Aitareyins. Dr. Roth has pointed out one of these verses (Nirukta, xlv.). The passage in the Aitareya-brāhmaṇa from which the verse is taken, is, i. 4. 2.; and Sāyaṇa says there: ता एताश्चतस्र

चतस्रः शाखांतरगता आश्रयायनेन पठिता द्रष्टव्याः॥ In a similar manner the modern Sūtras of the Fratres Attidii (Tab. vi. vii.) contain the Mantras in full, which in the ancient statutes (Tab. i.) are only indicated as generally known. See Aufrecht und Kirchhoff, Die Umbrischen Sprachdenkmäler.



Theology of the Brahmans anything that is contrary to their general rules, anything that seems anomalous to them and is yet allowed to exist, we may be sure that it contains some really historical elements, and that it was of too solid a nature to receive the smooth polish of the Brahmanic system. It is so with the Rig-veda-sanhitâ. It belongs to a period previous to the complete ascendancy of the Brahmans; it was finished before the threefold ceremonial had been worked out in all its details. /

And yet there is some system, there is some priestly influence, clearly distinguishable in that collection also. It is true that the ten books of the Rig-veda stand before us as separate collections, each belonging to one of the ancient families of India; but were these collections undertaken independently in each of these families, at different times, and with different objects? I believe not. There are traces, however faint, of one superintending spirit. /

Eight out of the ten Maṇḍalas begin with hymns addressed to Agni, and these hymns, with the exception of the tenth Maṇḍala, are invariably followed by hymns addressed to Indra.¹ After the hymns ad-

¹ First Maṇḍala, Anuvâka 1.=Agni.

Anuvâka 2. 3.=Indra.

Second Maṇḍala, Anuvâka 1.=Agni (—11).

Anuvâka 2.=Indra.

Third Maṇḍala, Anuvâka 1. 2.=Agni.

Anuvâka 3. 4.=Indra.

Fourth Maṇḍala, Anuvâka 1.—2, 5.=Agni.

Anuvâka 2. 3.=Indra.

Fifth Maṇḍala, Anuvâka 1.—2, 14.=Agni.

Anuvâka 2, 15.—3, 8.=Indra.

Sixth Maṇḍala, Anuvâka 1.—2, 1.=Agni.

Anuvâka 2, 1.—4, 4.=Indra.



dressed to these two deities we generally meet with hymns addressed to the *Viśve Devāḥ*. This cannot be the result of mere accident, nor is there anything in the character of the two gods, Agni and Indra, which would necessitate such an arrangement. Agni is indeed called the lowest of the gods, but this neither implies his inferiority nor his superiority.¹ It simply means that Agni, as the god of fire on the hearth, is the nearest god, who descends from his high station to befriend men, and who, in the form of the sacrificial fire, becomes the messenger and mediator between god and men.² This would not be sufficient to account for the place assigned to him at the beginning of eight out of the ten *Maṇḍalas* of the *Rig-veda*. Indra, again, is certainly the most powerful of the Vedic gods³, but he never enjoys that supremacy which in Greece and Rome was allowed to Zeus and Jupiter. We can hardly doubt, therefore, that the place allowed to hymns addressed to Agni and Indra, at the beginning

Seventh *Maṇḍala*, *Anuvāka* 1.=Agni.

Anuvāka 2.=Indra.

Eighth *Maṇḍala*, *Pragātha* hymns.

Ninth *Maṇḍala*, Soma hymns.

Tenth *Maṇḍala*, *Anuvāka* 1.=Agni.

¹ Schol. ad *Pind. Nem. x. 59*. *Kaì γὰρ τὸ πρῶτον ἔσχατον ποτέ δύναται γενέσθαι, καὶ τὸ ἔσχατον πρῶτον, κέχρηται καὶ Σοφοκλῆς τῷ ἔσχάτῳ ἀντὶ τοῦ πρώτου, Ἥδη γὰρ ἔδρα Ζεὺς ἐν ἔσχάτῳ θεῶν (ἔχει γὰρ ἔδραν. Brunck.)*

² *Rv. iv. 1. 5*. स त्वं नो अग्नेऽवमो भवोती नेदिष्ठो अस्मा उषमो युष्टौ॥ “Come down to us, O Agni, with thy help, be thou most near to us to-day as the dawn flashes forth.”

³ इंद्रो वै देवानामोजिष्ठो बलिष्ठः। *Kaushītaki-brâhmaṇa*, vi. 14.



of the Maṇḍalas, was the result of a previous agreement, and that the Maṇḍalas themselves do not represent collections made independently by different families, but collections carried out simultaneously in different localities under the supervision of one central authority.

Another indication of the systematic arrangement of the Maṇḍalas, is contained in the Âprî hymns.

There are ten Âprî-sûktas in the Rîg-veda: —

1. I. 13., by Medhâtithi, of the family of the Kāṇvas (ii. b.); 12 verses.

2. I. 142, by Dîrghatamas, son of Uchathya, of the family of the Ângirasas (ii. a.); 13 verses. (Indra.)

3. I. 188, by Agastya, of the family of the Agastis (vii.); 11 verses. (Tanûnapât.)

4. II. 3, by Gṛitsamada, son of Śunahotra, (Ângirasa), adopted by Śunaka (Bhârgava) (i. 7.); 11 verses. (Narâśansa.)

5. III. 4, by Viśvâmitra, son of Gâthin, of the family of the Viśvâmitras (iv.); 11 verses. (Tanûnapât.)

6. V. 5, by Vasuśruta, son of Atri, of the family of the Âtreyas (iii.); 11 verses. (Narâśansa.)

7. VII. 2, by Vasishṭha, son of Mitrâvaruṇau, of the family of the Vâsishṭhas (vi.); 11 verses. (Narâśansa.)

8. IX. 5, by Asita or Devala, of the family of the Kâśyapas (v.); 11 verses. (Tanûnapât.)

9. X. 70, by Sumitra, of the family of the Bâdhryasvas (i. 6.); 11 verses. (Narâśansa.)

10. X. 110, by Râma, the son of Jamadagni, or by Jamadagni, of the family of the Jâmadagnyas (i. 2.); 11 verses. (Tanûnapât.)

These hymns consist properly of 11 verses, each of



which is addressed to a separate deity. Their order is as follows : —

First verse, to Agni Idhma or Susamiddha, the lighted fire.

Second verse, to Tanûnapât, the sun hidden in the waters or the clouds, or to Narâsansa, the rising sun, praised by men.

Third verse, to the Îlas, the heavenly gifts, or Îîta, Agni, implored to bring them.

Fourth verse, to Barhish, the sacrificial pile of grass.

Fifth verse, to Devîr dvârah, the gates of heaven.

Sixth verse, to Ushâsâ-naktau, dawn and night.

Seventh verse, to Daivyau hotârau prachetasau (*i. e.* Agni and Âditya, or Agni and Varuṇa, or Varuṇa and Âditya; Shadguruśishya).

Eighth verse, to the three goddesses Sarasvatî, Ilâ, Bhârati.

Ninth verse, to Tvashtîri, the creator.

Tenth verse, to Vanaspati, the tree of the sacrifice.

Eleventh verse, to the Svâhâkritis. (Viśve Devâh, Shadguruśishya.)

The only differences in the ten Âprî hymns of the Rig-veda arise from the name by which the second deity is invoked. It is Tanûnapât in hymns 3, 5, 8, 10; Narâsansa in hymns 4, 6, 7, 9; whereas in hymns 1 and 2 the second deity is invoked under either name in two separate verses. This raises the number in these two hymns to twelve, and this number is again raised to thirteen in hymn 2, by the addition at the end of a separate invocation of Indra.

The whole construction of these hymns is clearly artificial. They share the character of the hymns which we find in the Sâma and Yajur-vedas, being evidently composed for sacrificial purposes. Never-



theless, we find these artificial hymns in seven out of the ten Maṇḍalas, in I., II., III., V., VII., IX., X. This proves a previous agreement among the collectors. For some reason or other, each family wished to have its own Âprî hymn, a hymn which had to be recited by the Hotṛi priest, previous to the immolation of certain victims¹, and such a hymn was inserted, not once for all in the Saṁhitâ, but ten times over. Some of the verses in the Âprî hymns are mere repetitions, and even families so hostile to each other as the Vasishṭhas and Viśvâmitras have some verses in common in these Âprî hymns. But, if on one side the presence of the Âprî hymns in different Maṇḍalas proves a certain advance of the ceremonial system in the Mantra period, and the influence of a priestly society even in the first collection of the hymns; it proves likewise, that the traditional distribution of the Maṇḍalas among various Vedic families is not a merely arbitrary arrangement. These families insisted on having each their own Âprî hymn recorded, and whereas for the general ceremonial, as fixed in the Brâhmaṇas and Sûtras, the family of the poet of certain hymns employed at the sacrifices, is never taken into account, we find an exception made in favour of the Âprî hymns. If a verse of Viśvâmitra is once fixed by the Brâhmaṇas and Sûtras as part of any of the solemn sacrifices, no sacrificer, even if he were of the family of the Vasishṭhas, would have a right to replace that verse by another. But with regard to the Âprî hymns that liberty is conceded. The Aitareya-brâhmaṇa records

¹ Burnouf, *Journal Asiatique*, 1850, p. 249. Roth, *Nirukta*, p. xxxvi.

this fact in the most general form.¹ "Let the priest use the Âprîs according to the Rishi. If he uses the Âprîs according to the Rishi, he does not allow the sacrificer to escape from the relationship of that Rishi." Âśvalâyana enters more into details.² He says that those who belong to the Śunakas, should use the hymn of Gṛtsamada; those who belong to the Vasishthas, that of Vasishtha. The Âprî hymn of Râma or Jamadgni he allows to be used by all families, (excepting the Śunakas and Vasishthas) but, he adds, that each family may choose the Âprî hymn of its own Rishi. How this is to be done is explained in a Śloka, ascribed to Śaunaka.³ He ascribes the first Âprî hymn to the Kaṇvas; the second to the Ângiras', with the exception of the Kaṇvas; the third to the Agastis; the fourth to the Śunakas; the fifth to the Viśvâmitras; the sixth to the Atris; the seventh to the Vasishthas; the eighth to the Kâśyapas; the ninth to the Badhryasvas; the tenth to the Bhrigus, with the exception of the Śunakas and Badhryasvas.⁴

The original purpose of the Âprî hymns, and the

१ यद्यच्छ्रद्धाऽप्रीणीयात् यद्यच्छ्रद्धाऽप्रीणाति यजमानमेव तद्वधुताया नोत्सृजति। Ait.-br. ii. 4.

२ Âśv.-sûtra, iii. 2.

३ तत्र भगवता शौनकेन यद्यर्षिपत्र आऽप्रीविवेकार्थमेव श्लोक उक्तः।

कण्वोऽंगिरोऽगस्त्यः शुनको विश्वामित्रोऽत्रिरेव च।

वसिष्ठः कश्यपो बध्यश्चो जमदग्निरथोत्तमः॥

४ सगोत्राणामपि भिन्नार्षेयत्वसंभवात् Nârâyana on Âśv. Śrauta-sû. iv. 1.



motive for allowing the priest to choose among them according to the family to which his client belonged, are difficult to discover. An ancient author of the name of Gāṇagari¹, endeavoured to prove from the fact that one and the same Âpri hymn *may* be used by all, that all people belong really and truly to one family. It is possible, indeed, that the Âpri hymns may have been songs of reconciliation, and that they were called *âpri*, i.e. appeasing hymns, not from their appeasing the anger of the gods, but the enmities of members of the same or different families. However that may be, they certainly do prove that there had been an active intercourse between the ancient families of India long before the final collection of the ten books, and that these ten books were collected and arranged by men who took more than a merely poetical interest in the ancient sacred poetry of their country.

Although we see from these indications that the collection of the hymns which we possess in the Rig-veda took place during a period when the influence of the Brahmans, as a priestly caste, had made itself felt in India, we must claim, nevertheless, for this collection a character not yet exclusively ceremonial. Not only is the order of the hymns completely independent of the order of the sacrifices, but there are numerous hymns in our collection which could never have been used at any sacrifice. This is not

¹ सर्व समानगोत्राः स्मुरिति गाणगारिः कथं ह्याग्नीसूक्तानि भवेयुः। Āśv.-sūtras, xii. 10. See also Anuvākānukramaṇī-bhāṣya, śloka 7. हे शाकलाः। के ते। सर्वेषां शाकलत्वं आग्नीद्वारेण॥



the case with the other Vedas. Every hymn, every verse, every invocation in the Sanhitās of the Sāma and Yajur-vedas are employed by the Udgâtrîs and Adhvaryus, whereas the hymns of the Rig-veda are by no means intended to be all employed by the Hotri priests. If we speak of the sacred poetry of the Brahmans, that of the Sāma and Yajur-vedas is sacred only because it is used for sacrificial purposes, that of the Rig-veda is sacred, because it had been handed down as a sacred heir-loom from the earliest times within the memory of man. The sacredness of the former is matter of system and design, that of the latter is a part of its origin./

/ There is an objection that might be raised against this view, and which deserves to be considered. No one acquainted with the ceremonial of the Brahmans could well maintain that, after the final division of that ceremonial among the three classes of priests, a collection like that of the Rig-veda could have been conceived. The Rig-veda is not a Veda for the Hotri priest, in the same sense in which the Sāma and Yajur-vedas are for the Udgâtrî and Adhvaryu priests. But it might be said that there is a fourth class of priests, the Brahman class, and that the Rig-veda might have been collected for their special benefit. In order to answer this objection, we shall have to examine more closely the real character of the four classes of priests./

/ Āsvalāyana (iv. 1.), says that there are four priests, each having three men under him. These are:

I. Hotri, with Maitrāvaruṇa, Achhāvāka, Grāvastut.¹

¹ This is not the order as given in Āsvalāyana; he places the Brahman and his three men before the Udgâtrî and his attendants.



II. Adhvaryu, with Pratiprasthâtri, Neshtri, Unnetri.

III. Udgâtri, with Prastotri, Âgnîdhra or Agnîdh, Potri.

IV. Brahman, with Brâhmanâchhansin, Pratihatri, Subrahmanya.

These sixteen priests are commonly called by the name of Ritvij, and are chosen by the man in whose favour the sacrifice is offered, the Yajamâna or Svâmin. There are other priests, such as the Samitri, (the slayer,) the Vaikartas, (the butchers,) the Chama-sâdhvaryus, (the assistants of the Adhvaryus,) but they do not rank as Ritvij. The Kaushîtakins admit a seventeenth Ritvij, the so-called Sadasya, who is to superintend the whole sacrifice.¹ This large array of

Some would seem to place the Brahman first of all, but Âśvalâyana (Gṛihya, i. 22.) remarks that the Brahman is first chosen when there is an election of four priests only. If all the sixteen are chosen, then the Hotri comes first, afterwards the Brahman, thirldy the Adhvaryu, and lastly the Udgâtri.

¹ Âśv.-Gṛihya, i. 22. सदस्यं सप्तदशं कौषीतकिनः समामनन्ति स कर्मणामुपद्रष्टा भवतीति। सप्तदशग्रहणमृत्तिकधर्मो भवतीति ज्ञापनार्थं॥ This is confirmed by the Kaushîtaki-brâhmana. Other authorities admit several Sadasyas. (शाखांतरेऽ-

नेके दृष्टाः) For the Sattrâ sacrifices a seventeenth priest, called the Gṛihapati, lord of the house, is admitted. He is not considered as the Yajamâna, but seems to be the actual sacrificer.

(गृहपतिसंज्ञकेन केवल्यजमानपदार्थकारिणा सप्तदशेन पुरुषेण सहिताः Nârâyana on Âśv. Śrauta-sûtra, iv. 1.) In the Aitareya-brâhmana (vii. 1.), where the division of the animal among the various priests is described, we have the sixteen Ritvij, and besides one Sadasya, three Gṛihapatis (probably the sacri-

priests was only wanted for certain grand sacrifices. In the Gautama-sûtra-bhashya (p. 30.) we are told that for the Agnihotra and Aupâsana one priest, the Adhvaryu, was sufficient; for the Darśapûrnamâsa, four; for the Châturmâsyas five; for the Paśubandha six; for the Jyotishtoma sixteen. Âśvalâyana prescribes the sixteen priests for the sacrifices called Ahîna (sacrifices lasting from two to eleven days), and Ekâha (sacrifices of one day), and restricts the seventeen priests to the Sattras (sacrifices lasting from thirteen to one hundred days). Each of the four classes of these priests had peculiar duties to perform. These duties were prescribed in the Brâhmanas. The duties of the Hotri are laid down in the Brâhmanas of the Bahvrichas, such as the Kaushîtaki and Aitareya-brâhmanas; those of the Adhvaryu in the Brâhmanas of the Charakas (the Taittirîyaka) and in the Brâhmanas of the Vâjasaneyins (the Śatapatha); those of the Udgâtri in the Brâhmanas of the Chhandogas (the Tândya.) Âpastamba, who describes the sacrifice in his Paribhâshâ-sûtras¹, says that it is prescribed by the three Vedas, the Rig-veda, Yajur-veda and Sâma-veda.² "The Hotri," he says,

ficer himself, one who acts for him, and one who acts for his wife), one Śamitri (a slayer, who need not be a Brahman), two Vaidartas (butchers), several Upagâtris (choristers), and an Âtreya. Other wives (patnîs), besides the bhâryâ, are mentioned as present. In the Tândya-brâhmana (25. 15.) the Pratiprasthâtri is left out, but two Adhvaryus, two Unnetris, and two Abhigarâpagarau are mentioned.

¹ Translated by me in the ninth volume of the German Oriental Society.

स त्रिभिर्वेदैर्विधीयते॥३॥

ऋग्वेद यजुर्वेद सामवेदैः॥४॥



performs his duties with the Rig-veda, the Udgâtri with the Sâma-veda, the Adhvaryu with the Yajur-veda; the Brahman with all the three Vedas.”

The Adhvaryus were the priests who were intrusted with the material performance of the sacrifice. They had to measure the ground, to build the altar (vedi), to prepare the sacrificial vessels, to fetch wood and water, to light the fire, to bring the animal and immolate it. They formed, as it would seem, the lowest class of priests, and their acquirements were more of a practical than an intellectual character. Some of the offices which would naturally fall to the lot of the Adhvaryus, were considered so degrading, that other persons besides the priests were frequently employed in them. The Samitri, for instance, who had to slay the animal, was not a priest, he need not even be a Brahman¹, and the same applies to the Vaikartas, the butchers, and the so-called Chamasâdhvaryus. The number of hymns and invocations which they had to use at the sacrifices was smaller than that of the other priests. These, however, they had to learn by heart. But as the chief difficulty consisted in the exact recitation of hymns, and in the close observance of all the euphonic rules, as taught in the Prâtisâkhyas, the Adhvaryus were allowed to mutter their hymns², so that no one at a distance could

ऋग्वेदेन होता करोति॥१६॥

सामवेदेनोद्गाता॥१७॥

यजुर्वेदेनाध्वर्युः॥१८॥

सर्वैर्ब्रह्मा॥१९॥

¹ Ait-brâhmaṇa, vii. 1.

² उपांशु यजुर्वेदेन॥९॥ करणवदशब्दममनः प्रयोगमु-



either hear or understand them. Only in cases where the Adhvaryu had to speak to other officiating priests, commanding them to perform certain duties¹, he was of course obliged to speak with a loud and distinct voice. All these verses and all the invocations which the Adhvaryus had to use, were collected in the ancient liturgy of the Adhvaryus together with the rules of the sacrifice. In this mixed form they exist in the Taittirīyaka. Afterwards the hymns were collected by themselves, separated from the ceremonial rules, and this collection is what we call the *Yajurveda-saṁhitā*, or the prayer-book of the Adhvaryu priests.

There were some parts of the sacrifice, which according to ancient custom, had to be accompanied by songs, and hence another class of priests arose whose particular office it was to act as the chorus. This naturally took place at the most solemn sacrifices only. Though as yet we have no key as to the character

पांशु। अन्यत्राश्रुतप्रत्याश्रुतप्रवरसंवादसंग्रहेष्व॥१०॥ एतेषामु-
च्चारणस्य परार्थत्वादुच्चेदमेव॥

¹ An instance of this occurs in a passage of the Aitareya-brâhmaṇa, translated by Prof. Roth. The first words (ii. 2.) अञ्जो

यूपमनुब्रूहि are spoken by the Adhvaryu, and not, as Professor Roth supposes, by the Hotri. It is the Adhvaryu only who can say, "We anoint the sacrificial stake, do thou accompany us with the hymns." A passage like this, as it is addressed to another priest, the Adhvaryu would have to pronounce with a loud voice.

The Brâhmaṇa itself says, इत्याहाध्वर्युः "so says the Adhvaryu." The presha, or command, "anubrûhi," can only be addressed to the Hotri, and there was no ground for placing the following verses in the mouth of the Adhvaryu. Roth, Nirukta, xxxiv.



of the music which the Udgâtris performed, we can see from the numerous and elaborate rules, however unintelligible, that their music was more than mere chanting. The words of their songs were collected in the order of the sacrifice, and this *libretto* is what we possess under the name of *Sâma-veda-sanhitâ*, or the prayer-book of the Udgâtri priests.¹

Distinct from these two classes, we have a third class of priests, the Hotris, whose duty it was to recite certain hymns during the sacrifice in praise of the deities to whom any particular act of the sacrificer was addressed. Their recitation was loud and distinct, and required the most accurate knowledge of the rules of euphony or *Śikshâ*. The Hotris, as a class, were the most highly educated order of priests. They were supposed to know both the proper pronunciation and the meaning of their hymns, the order and employment of which was taught in the *Brâhmanas* of the *Bahvrichas*. But while both the *Adhvaryus* and *Udgâtris* were confessedly unable to perform their duties without the help of their prayer-books, the Hotris were supposed to be so well versed in the ancient sacred poetry, as contained in the ten *Maṇḍalas* of the *Rig-veda*, that no separate prayer-book or *Sanhitâ* was ever arranged for their special benefit.

¹ The *Sanhitâ* consists of two parts; the *Ârchika* and *Staubhika*. The *Ârchika*, as adapted to the special use of the priests, exists in two forms, called *Gânas*, or Song-books, the *Veyagâna* and *Âranyagâna*. The *Staubhika* exists in the same manner as *Uḥagâna* and *Uhyagâna*. Cf. Benfey, Preface to his edition of the *Sâma-veda-ârchika*, Leipzig, 1848, and Weber, *Ind. Studien*, i. 30. The supposition that the modern origin of some of the hymns of the *Rig-veda* could be proved by their not occurring in the *Sâma-veda*, has been well refuted by Dr. Pertsch.

There is no Sanhitâ for the Hotris corresponding to the Sanhitâs of the Adhvaryus and Udgâtris. The Hotri learnt from the Brâhmana, or in later times, from the Sûtra, what special duties he had to perform. He knew from those sources the beginnings or the names of the hymns which he had to recite at every part of the service. But in order to be able to use these indications, he had previously to know the whole body of Vedic poetry, so as to be ready to produce from the vast store of his memory whatever hymn or verse was called for at the sacrifice. There exists among the MSS. of Walker's Collection a work entitled, Âsvalâyana-sâkhoktamantra-sanhitâ, a collection of hymns of the Âsvalâyana-sâkhâ, which contains the hymns as required according to the Grihya-sûtras of Âsvalâyana. It would have been easy to construct a similar collection for the Śrauta-sûtras, but such a collection was never made, and it is never alluded to in the ancient literature of the Brahmins.¹

¹ Sâyana (Rv. Bh. i. p. 23.) remarks that some verses of the Yajur-veda are called Rich in the Brâhmanas of the Adhvaryus. Thus the verse देवः सवितोत्पुनातु is called a Rich addressed to Savitri. Sâmans also are mentioned, as when it is said, "Singing the Sâman he sits down." In the Sâma-veda there are not only Rich verses, but also Yajush invocations, such as अक्षितमसि, अच्युतमसि, प्राणशंसितमसि। The Hotri priests have likewise to use invocations which would more properly be called Yajush, such as अवेरपोऽध्वर्या इउ "Adhvaryu, hast thou got the water?" to which the Adhvaryu replies: उतेमननमुः "Yes, it has come." Here the Commentator says, होतुर्यजुरात्मकं कचिन्मंत्रं विधत्ते॥



If then the Rig-veda-sanhitâ was not composed for the special benefit of the Hotris, much less of the other two classes of priests, it might be supposed that it had nevertheless a sacrificial character, and was intended to assist the fourth class of priests, or the Brahman, properly so called. The Brahman, as we saw, had to watch the three classes of priests and to correct any mistake they might commit. He was therefore, supposed to know the whole ceremonial and all the hymns employed by the Hotri, Adhvaryu, and Udgâtri. Now the Rig-veda does contain most of the hymns of the other two Vedas¹, and in several places it is maintained that the Brahman ought properly to be a Hotri. All this would render it not improbable that the Rig-veda-sanhitâ belonged to the same age as the other two Sanhitâs, that its collection was suggested by the same idea which led to the collection of the hymns of the other two classes of priests, and that, for the special benefit of the Brahman, it comprehended in one body all the hymns which the Hotri, the Adhvaryu, and Udgâtri were expected to know singly. In this case the Rig-veda-sanhitâ,

¹ The invocations, properly called Yajush, are of course not to be found in the Rig-veda. Some of the hymns of the Sâma and Yajur-vedas, which have a more modern appearance, are to be found in the tenth Mandala of the Rig-veda, or among the latest additions, such as the Vâlahkilyas. There are, however, some, which, though they occur in the Sâma and Yajur-vedas, are not to be found in the Rig-veda. This may possibly be accounted for by the fact that we do not possess all the Śâkhâs of the Rig-veda. The differences also in the text of hymns, as read in the three Vedas, must be ascribed to the influence of early Śâkhâs, and cannot be used as an argument for determining the more or less ancient date of the three Vedas.



instead of being more ancient, would in fact represent the latest collection of a sacred poetry. ✓

It would be of no avail to appeal to the testimony of later authorities, such as the Purâṇas, in order to refute this theory. The Vishṇu-purâṇa (p. 276), for instance, has the following remarks on this subject: "Vyâsa," it is said, "divided the one sacrificial Veda into four parts, and instituted the sacrificial rite administered by the four kinds of priests, in which it was the duty of the Adhvaryu to recite the Yajush verses or direct the ceremony; of the Hotri to repeat the Rîch; of the Udgâtri to chaunt the Sâman; and of the Brahman, to pronounce the formula called Atharvan. Then the Muni, having collected together the hymns called Rîch, composed the Rig-veda, &c., and, with the Atharvans, he composed the rules of all the ceremonies suited to kings, and the function of the Brahman agreeably to practice." This passage only serves to show that the authors of the Purâṇas were entirely ignorant of the tone and character of the Vedic literature. For although the Brahman priest was the only Rîtvij who had occasionally to use passages from the Atharva-veda, blessings, imprecations, etc.; yet the so-called Atharva-veda had nothing in common with the three ancient Vedas, and contained no information on the general features of the great sacrifices, such as would have been indispensable to the superintendent of the other priests.¹

¹ Prasthâna-bheda, p. 16., l. 10. अथर्ववेदसु यज्ञानुपयुक्तः

शान्तिपौष्टिकाभिचारादिकर्मप्रतिपादकत्वेनात्यन्तविलक्षण एव।

Against this statement that of Kumârila should be taken into



The real answer to a supposition which would assign the Rîg-veda-sanhitâ to the Brahman is, that to him also that collection of hymns would have been of no practical utility. He would have learnt from it many a hymn never called for, never used at any sacrifice; and he would have had to unlearn the order both of hymns and verses whenever he wished to utilise his knowledge for the practical objects of his station.

We may, therefore, safely ascribe the collection of the Rîg-veda, or, as Professor Roth calls it, the historical Veda, to a less practical age than that of the Brâhmaṇa period; to an age, not entirely free from the trammels of a ceremonial, yet not completely enslaved by a system of mere formalities; to an age no longer creative and impulsive, yet not without some power of upholding the traditions of a past that spoke to a later generation of men through the very poems which they were collecting with so much zeal and accuracy.

The work of the Mantra period is not entirely represented by the collection of the ancient hymns. Such a work would be sufficient in itself to give a character to an age, and we might appeal, in the history of ancient Greek literature, to the age of the Diaskeuasts. A generation which begins to collect has entered into a new phase of life. Nations, like individuals, become conservative when they cease to trust implicitly in themselves, and have learnt from experience that they are not better than their

account : (i. 3.) शान्तिपुष्पभिचारार्थां ह्येकब्रह्मविंशतिः
क्रियास्तत्र प्रसीदन्तेऽत्राप्येवात्मीयगोचराः॥



fathers. But though the distinctive feature of the Mantra period consisted in gathering the fruits of a bye-gone spring, this was not the only work which occupied the Brahmans of that age. Where poems have to be collected from the mouth of the people, they have likewise to be arranged. Corrections are supposed to be necessary; whole verses may have to be supplied. After collecting and correcting a large number of poems, many a man would feel disposed to try his own poetical powers; and if new songs were wanted, it did not require great talent to imitate the simple strains of the ancient Rishis. Thus we find in the Rig-veda, that, after the collection of the ten Mandālas was finished, some few hymns were added, generally at the end of a chapter, which are known by the name of *Khilas*. We can hardly call them successful imitations of the genuine songs; but in India they seem to have soon acquired a certain reputation. They found their way into the *Sanhitās* of the other Vedas; they are referred to in the *Brāhmaṇas*; and though they are not counted in the *Anukramanīs*, together with the original hymns, they are there also mentioned as recognised additions.

Besides these hymns, which were added after the collection of the ten books had been completed, there is another class of hymns, actually incorporated in the sacred Decads, but which nevertheless must be ascribed to poets who were imitators of earlier poets, and whose activity, whether somewhat anterior to, or contemporaneous with the final edition of the *Rig-veda-saṁhitā*, must be referred to the same Mantra period. We need not appeal to the tradition of the *Brāhmaṇas*, who, in matters of this kind, are ex-



tremely untrustworthy. They place a very small interval between the latest poets of the hymns and the final collection of the ten books. The latter they ascribe to Kṛishṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, the embodiment of the Indian *διασκευή*, whereas one of the poets whose hymns form part of the Sanhitā, is Parāśara, the reputed father of Vyāsa.

But we have better evidence in the hymns themselves, that some of their authors belonged to a later generation than that of the most famous Rishis. The most celebrated poets of the Veda are those who are now called the *Mādhyamas*¹, from the fact of their hymns standing between the first and the last books of our collection. They are Gṛitsamada, (2d Maṇḍala), Viśvāmitra (3d Maṇḍala), Vāmadeva (4th Maṇḍala), Atri (5th Maṇḍala), Bharadvāja (6th Maṇḍala), and Vasishṭha (7th Maṇḍala). Added to these are, in the beginning, the hymns of various poets, collected in the first Maṇḍala, called the book of the Sātarchins, from the fact that each poet contributed about a hundred verses; and at the end, the book of the Pragātha hymns (8th Maṇḍala), the book of the Soma hymns (9th Maṇḍala), and the book of long and short hymns, ascribed to the Kshudrasūkta and Mahāsūkta poets, which, in accordance with its very name, is a miscellaneous collection.

✓ It by no means follows that all the hymns of the seven middle Rishis are more ancient than those of the first and the last books; or that these books contain nothing but modern hymns. But the very name of *Mādhyamā*, given to the poets of the books from the second to the seventh, shows that they were considered, even by the Brahmans, as dis-

¹ See page 42, note 2, and page 59.



tinct from the first and the three last books. They are not the middle books numerically, but they are called so because they stand by themselves, in the midst of other books of a more miscellaneous character. /

Traces, however, of earlier and later poems are to be found through the whole collection of the Rig-veda; and many hymns have been singled out by different scholars as betraying a later origin than the rest. All such hymns I refer to the Mantra period, to an age which, though chiefly occupied in collecting and arranging, possessed likewise the power of imitating, and carrying on the traditions of a former age.

It is extremely difficult to prove the modern origin of certain hymns, and I feel by no means convinced by the arguments which have been used for this purpose. At present, however, I need not enter into the minutiae of this critical separation of ancient and modern poetry. It is not my object to prove that this or that hymn is more modern than the rest; but I only wish to establish the general fact that, taken as a whole, the hymns do contain evidence of having been composed at various periods.

In order to guard against misconceptions, it should be understood that, if we call a hymn modern, all that can be meant is that it was composed during the period which succeeded the first spring of Vedic poetry, *i.e.* during the Mantra period. There is not a single hymn in the Rig-veda that could be ascribed to the Brâhmana period. Even a few of the *Khilas*, modern as they appear to us, are presupposed by the Brâhmanas and quoted, together with other more ancient hymns. The most modern hymns in the Rig-veda-



Saṁhitā, if our calculations are right, must have been composed previous to 800 B.C., previous to the first introduction of prose composition.

In order to prove that the hymns which are now thrown together into one body of sacred poetry, were not the harvest of one single generation of poets, we have only to appeal to the testimony of the poets themselves, who distinguish between ancient and modern hymns. Not only has the tradition of the Brahmins, which is embodied in the *Anukramanīś*, assigned certain hymns to *Rishis*, who stand to each other in the relation of father and son, and grandson, but the hymns themselves allude to earlier poets, and events which in some are represented as present, are mentioned in others as belonging to the past. The argument which Dr. Roth¹ has used in order to prove the comparatively modern date of the *Ātharvāṇa*, applies with equal force to some of the hymns of the *Rig-veda*. Here, also, the names of *Purumīḥa*, *Vasishṭha*, *Jamadagni*, and others, who are known as the authors of certain hymns, are mentioned in other hymns as sages, who in former times enjoyed the favour of the gods.

“As our ancestors have praised thee, we will praise thee,” is a very frequent sentiment of the Vedic poets. A new song was considered a special honour to the gods. The first hymn of the *Rig-veda* gives utterance to this sentiment. “*Agni*,” says *Madhuchhandas*, “thou who art worthy of the praises of ancient, and also of living poets, bring hither thou the gods.”

Viśvāmītra, the father of *Madhuchhandas*, and

¹ *Abhandlungen*, p. 43.



himself one of the ancient Rishis, concludes his first hymn¹ with the words, "I have proclaimed, O Agni, these thy ancient songs², and new songs for thee who art old. These great libations have been made to him who showers benefits upon us: the sacred fire has been kept from generation to generation."

In another hymn³, Viśvâmitra distinguishes between three classes of hymns, and speaks of Indra as having been magnified by ancient, middle, and modern songs.

The sacrifice itself is sometimes represented as a thread which unites the living with the departed, and through them, with the first ancestors of man, the gods.⁴ The son carries on the weaving which was interrupted by the death of his father⁵, and the poet, at the beginning of a sacred rite⁶, exclaims, "I believe I see, with the eye of the mind, those who in byegone days performed this sacrifice." With a similar feeling, Viśvâmitra, in his morning prayer, looks back to his fathers, who have gazed on the rising sun before him, and have exalted the power of the gods:⁷

"To Indra goes my thought, spoken out from the heart, to him, the Lord, it goes, fashioned by the bard. It awakes thee when it is recited at the sa-

¹ Rv. iii. 1. 20.

² Janimâ, originally creations, ποιήματα; it is likewise explained as works. Cf. iii. 39. 1.

³ Rv. iii. 32. 13.

⁴ See my Essay on the Funeral Ceremonies, p. xxii. note.

⁵ Rv. x. 130. 1.

⁶ Rv. x. 130. 7.

⁷ Rv. iii. 39.



sacrifice; Indra, take heed of that which is made for thee!

"Rising even before the day, awakening thee when recited at the sacrifice, clothed in sacred white raiments¹, this is our prayer, *the old, the prayer of our fathers.*

"The Dawn, the mother of the twins, has given birth to the twins (*i. e.* Day and Night)—the top of my tongue fell, for he (the Sun) came. The twins, who have come near the root of the Sun, assume their bodies as they are born together, the destroyers of darkness.

"Amongst men there is no one to scoff at them who were our fathers, who fought among the cattle. Indra, the mighty and powerful, has stretched out their firm folds."²

Vasishṭha, another of the ancient Rishis, speaks likewise of ancient and modern hymns by which others, besides his own family, secured the favour of the gods.³ "Whatever poets, ancient or modern, wise men, made prayers to thee, O Indra, ours may be thy propitious friendship: protect us, O gods, always with your blessings!"

One of the greatest events in the life of Vasishṭha was the victory which King Sudâs achieved under his guidance. But in the Maṇḍala of the Vasishṭhas, the same event is sometimes alluded to as belonging

¹ The Viśvâmitras wore white raiments. Their colour, called *arjuna*, can hardly be distinguished, however, from the colour of the dress of the Vasishṭhas, which is called *śveta*.

² Gotra, originally a hurdle, then those who live within the same hurdles or walls; a family, a race.

³ Rv. vi. 23. 9.



to the past, and in one of the hymns ascribed to the same Vasisht̥ha we read: "Committing our sons and offspring to the same good protection which Aditi, Mitra, and Varuṇa, like guardians, give to Sudās, let us not make our gods angry."

These passages, which might be greatly increased, will be sufficient to show that there were various generations of Vedic poets. The traces of actual imitations are less considerable than we might expect under such circumstances; and where we do meet with stereotyped phrases, it is often difficult to say which poet used them for the first time. When we find Dirghatamas Auchathya, beginning a hymn to Viṣṇu with the words, "Let me now proclaim the manly deeds of Viṣṇu;" and another hymn of Hiranyastūpa Âṅgīrasa to Indra, beginning with, "Let me now proclaim the manly deeds of Indra," we may suppose that the one hymn was composed with a pointed reference to the other; but we cannot tell which of the two was the original, and which the copy.

The fact, however, of ancient and modern hymns being once admitted, we may hope to arrive gradually at some criteria by which to fix the relative age of single hymns. Some of the hymns betray their comparatively modern origin by frequent allusion to ceremonial subjects. I do not mean to say that the sacrifice as such, was not as old and primitive an institution as sacred poetry itself. Most of the hymns owe their origin to sacrifices, to public or domestic holy-days. But those sacrifices were of a much more simple nature than the later Vedic ceremonial. When the father of a family was priest, poet, and king, in one person, there was no thought



as yet of distributing the ceremonial duties among sixteen priests, each performing his own peculiar office, or of measuring the length of every log that should be put on the fire, and determining the shape of every vessel in which the libations should be offered. It was only after a long succession of sacrifices that the spontaneous acts and observances of former generations would be treasured up, and established as generally binding. It was only after the true meaning of the sacrifice was lost, that unmeaning ceremonies could gain that importance which they have in the eyes of priests. If a hymn addressed to the gods had been heard, if a famine had ceased after a prayer, an illness been cured with a charm, an enemy been vanquished with war songs; not only would these songs, however poor, be kept and handed down in a family as the most precious heirloom, but the position in which the poet recited them, the time of the day, the most minute circumstances of every act, would be superstitiously preserved, in order to insure the future efficiency of the prayer. This was the origin of a ceremonial so complicated as that of the Brahmans. Now, we find in some of the hymns allusions which refer, not to a naturally growing, but to an artificial and a decaying ceremonial.

The most ancient name for a priest by profession was *Purohita*, which only means *præpositus* or *præses*. The *Purohita*, however, was more than a priest. He was the friend and counsellor of a chief, the minister of a king, and his companion in peace and war. *Vasishṭha* and *Viśvâmitra*, who with their families have both been the *Purohitas* of King *Sudâs*, did more for the king than chaunting hymns to implore the aid of their gods. *Vasishṭha* was with the



army of Sudâs when that king conquered the ten kings who had crossed the Parushnî (Hydraotis, Rawi); Viśvâmitra, when Sudâs himself crossed the Vipâś (Hyphasis, Beyah) and the Śatadru (Hesudrus, Sutlej).¹ The importance of their office is best shown by the violent contest which these two families of the Vasishṭhas and Viśvâmitras carried on, in order to secure for themselves the hereditary dignity of Purohita. There was a similar contest between the priests at the Court of Asamâti, a descendant of Ikshvâku. He, not satisfied with his four Purohitas, Bandhu, Subandhu, Śrutabandhu, and Viprabandhu, who were brothers and belonged to the family of the Gaupâyanas, dismissed them, and appointed two new priests (mâyâvinau). These new Purohitas, seeing that the Gaupâyanas used incantations against the life of King Asamâti, retaliated, and caused, by their charms, the death of one of them, Subandhu. Thereupon the other three brothers composed a song to appease the wrath of the two priests, and to save their own lives. This song and some others connected with the same contest, form part of the 8th Asṭaka of the Rig-veda.

✓The very fact of the office of Purohita being hereditary shows that it partook of a political character. It seems to have been so at an early time. In a hymn of the Rig-veda, i. 94. 6, where Agni is invoked under several priestly names, he is called, Janushâ Purohita or Purohita by birth. Cf. i. 102. 8. And we find several instances where priests, if once employed by a royal family, claim to be employed always. When Janamejaya Pârikshita ventured to perform a sacrifice

¹ See Prof. Roth's excellent essay on Vasishṭha and Viśvâmitra, in his work, "Zur Literatur und Geschichte des Veda," published as early as 1846.



without the Kāśyapas, he was forced by the Asitāmrigas, a family of the Kāśyapas to employ them again. When Viśvāntara Saushadmana drove away the Syāparnas from his sacrifice, he was prevailed upon by Rāma Mārgaveya to call them back.¹ All this shows that the priestly office was of great importance in the ancient times of India.

The original occupation of the Purohita may simply have been to perform the usual sacrifices; but, with the ambitious policy of the Brahmans, it soon became a stepping-stone to political power. Thus we read in the Aitareya-brāhmaṇa: "Breath does not leave him before time; he lives to an old age; he goes to his full time, and does not die again, who has a Brahman as guardian of his land, as Purohita. He conquers power by power; obtains strength by strength; the people obey him, peaceful and of one mind."

Vāmadeva, in one of his hymns², expresses the same sentiment; and though he does not use the word Purohita, there can be little doubt that the Aitareya-brāhmaṇa is right in explaining the words Bṛihaspati and Brahman by Purohita.

"That king withstands his enemies with strong power who supports a Bṛihaspati³ in comfort, praises him, and honours him as the first.

¹ Aitareya-br. vii. 27. Roth, Abhandlungen, p. 118. Weber, Ind. Studien, i. 39. Mārgaveya is a difficult name. It may be simply, as Sāyaṇa says, the son of his mother Mṛigû; but Mṛigû may be a variety of Bṛiḡu, and thus confirm Lassen's conjecture that this Rāma is Rāma, the son of Jamadagni, of the race of Bṛiḡu, commonly called Paraśu-rāma. Cf. Weber, Ind. Stud. i. 216. Marghu is the name of Margiana in the Cuneiform Inscriptions.

² Rv. iv. 50. 7.

³ "Bṛihaspati," says the Aitareya-brāhmaṇa, "was the Purohita of the gods, and the Purohitas of human kings are his successors."



"The king before whom there walks a priest, lives well established in his own house ; to him the earth yields for ever, and before him the people bow of their own accord.

"Unopposed he conquers treasures, those of his enemies and his friends, himself a king, who makes presents to a Brahman : the gods protect him."

✓ This shows that the position of the Brahmans at the courts of the Kshatriya kings was more influential than that of mere chaplains. They walked before the king, and considered themselves superior to him. In later times, when the performance of the ceremonies no longer devolved on the Purohita, the chief priest took the place of the so-called Brahman priest, who was the *episcopos* of the whole, though he himself took little active part in it. Thus at the sacrifice of Hariśchandra, described in the Aitareya-brāhmaṇa (vii. 16.), Ayāśya acts as Udgātri, Jamadagni as Adhvaryu, Viśvāmitra as Hotri, and Vasishṭha, who is known as the Purohita of the Ikshvāku dynasty, as Brahman. In the Taittirīya-saṁhitā (iii. 5. 2), we read : "Men were born, having a Vasishṭha for Purohita, and therefore a Vasishṭha is to be chosen as Brahman." In the Aitareya-brāhmaṇa again the Brahman is identified with Brihaspati, who was the Purohita, or pura-etri of the gods.

✓ The original institution of a Purohita, as the spiritual adviser of a king or a chief, need not be regarded as the sign of a far advanced hierarchical system. The position of the Brahmans must have been a peculiar one in India from the very beginning. They appear from the very first as a class of men of higher intellectual power than



the rest of the Aryan colonists; and their general position, if at all recognised, could hardly have been different from that of Vasishṭha in the camp of Sudâs. The hymns, therefore, which only allude to a Purohita, or priests in general, need not be ascribed to a late age. But when we meet in certain hymns, not only with these, but with various grades of priests, we may be sure that such hymns belong to the Māntra period, and not to the age of primitive Vedic poetry./

This is a question of degree. If we find such verses as "the singers sing thee, the chaunters chaunt thee¹," where the singers are called not by their technical name of Udgâtri, but Gâyatrins, and the chaunters not by their technical name of Hotri, but Arkins, all we can say is that the later division of the sacrifice between Hotri and Udgâtri priests is here found in its first elements. It does not follow that there existed at that time two recognised classes of priests, still less that the Udgâtris were then in possession of their own Sanhitâ. But in Rv. v. 44. 14. we read :

"The Rich verses long for the god who watches; the Sâman verses go to him who watches; this Soma libation calls for him that watches : I, O Agni, am at home in thy friendship."²

Here it is clear that the distinction between Rich verses, that were recited, and Sâman verses, that were

¹ Rv. i. 10. गायन्ति त्वा गायत्रिणो ऽर्चयन्तु कर्मकिणः ।

² यो जगार तमृचः कामयन्ते यो जगार तमु सामानि यन्ति ।

यो जगार तमयं सोम आह तवाहमस्मि सखे न्योकाः ॥

Rv. viii. 3. 22. अक्वामाभ्यां ॥



sung, must have been established, though again we need not go so far as to maintain the actual existence of a prayer-book for the Udgâtri priests.

The third class of priests, the Adhvaryus, who performed the principal acts of the sacrifice, are likewise alluded to in the hymns. We read, Rv. iii. 36. 10: "Accept, O Indra, what is offered thee from the hand of the Adhvaryu, or the sacrifice of the libation of the Hotri."

There are several hymns which contain allusions to the Darśapūrṇamâsa, the famous New and Full Moon sacrifices. These sacrifices in themselves may have been of the greatest antiquity, as old as any attempt at a regulated worship of the gods. Passages therefore, where we only meet with allusions to the phases of the moon, and their recurrent appeal to the human heart to render thanks to the unknown Powers that rule the changes of nature, and the chances of human life, prove by no means, as the Indian commentators suppose, that at the time of the ancient Vedic poets the lunar ceremonies were of the same solemn and complicated nature as in later times. We read, Rv. i. 194. 4: "Let us bring fuel, let us prepare oblations remembering thee at each conjunction of the moon."¹

¹ I translate *parva* by conjunction, because *parvaṇi*, the dual, is used for the full and new moon; Āśvalāyana-sūtras, i. 3. 12. Mr. Weigle, in his interesting article on Canarese literature (*Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*), states that *habba* or *pabba* means a festival in Canarese, whereas in Sanskrit its usual signification is a chapter of a book. Mr. Weigle therefore refers *pabba* to a class of words, which, in being transferred from the Sanskrit into the Dravidian languages, have changed their meaning. We see, however, that the old meaning of *parva* new and full moon, would account very well for the meaning attached to *pabba* in Canarese, a festival.



Do thou perfect our sacred acts that we may live long. Let us not fail in thy friendship, O Agni."¹ Passages like this do not necessitate the admission of a full-grown ceremonial, they only point to its natural beginnings. The same remark applies to the three daily prayers, at sun-rise, noon, and sun-set. Nature herself suggests these three periods as the most appropriate for rendering thanks to the heavenly givers of light and life. Thus Manu Vaivasvata² alludes several times to the three periods of the day which the gods themselves have fixed for their sacrifice, sun-rise (sūrya udyati, or sūra udite), mid-day (madhyandine divah, or madhyandine), and sun-set (nimruchi, or ātuchi), and he calls this established order of the sacrifice *rita*, the law or the truth.

But when these sacrifices are mentioned with their technical names, when the morning, and noon, and evening prayers are spoken of as first, second, and third libation, we feel that we move in a different at-

¹ भरामेभं हणवाम हवीषि ते चितयंतः पर्वणा पर्वणा वयं।

जीवातवे प्रतरं साधया धियोऽग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव॥

² Rv. viii. 27. 19:—

यदद्य सूर्य उद्यति प्रियक्षत्रा चतं दध।

यन्निमुचि प्रबुधि विश्वेदसो यदा मध्यंदिने दिवः॥१८॥

यदाभिपिले असुरा चतं यते हृदिर्यम वि दाऽऽषे।

वयं तदो वसवो विश्वेदस उप खेद्याम मध्य आ॥२०॥

यदद्य सूर उदिते यन्मध्यंदिन आतुचि।

वामं धत्य मनवे विश्वेदसो जुक्कानाय प्रचेतसे॥२१॥

वयं तदः सम्राज आ वृणीमहे पुत्रो न वज्रपाथ्यं।

अश्वाम तदादित्या जुक्तो हविर्येन वस्योऽनशामहे॥२२॥