CHAPTER V

PARTICULAR DAY / DATE

AŚṬAKĀ DAYS

Aśṭakā day is the eighth day after a full moon. There are twelve Aśṭakā days in a year (JB II.437). Prajāpati was identical with the year. He remained while holding and pervading everything and he saw strength and food in these twelve Aśṭakā days along with the twelve new moon and twelve full moon days (JB III.2).

In the Agnicayana rite on the Aśṭakā day the materials for the fire-pan (ukhā) are collected, for this day is sacred to Prajāpati and also is the Ukhā sacred to Prajāpati. Thus on a day sacred to Prajāpati is performed the work sacred to Prajāpati. Also this day is identical with the joint of the year and the fire-pan is said to be the joint of Agni (the fire-altar); he thus makes joint upon joint. The Ukhā too is said to be identical with the Aśṭakā day as it is eight-fold (i.e. the bottom part, the two side parts, the horizontal belt or rim, four upright bands = 8). It is also said that the fire-pan is prepared on the first Aśṭakā day and thereby does the sacrificer take possession of whatever first-days there are in a year for Agni, the altar, and those days he thereby gains (ŚB VI.2.2.23ff).

In the festival of Aśṭakā, on the day under Anurādhā asterism, in the afternoon are some rites performed according to SatyāGS (II.14.1ff).
On the eighth days of the four dark fortnights of the two seasons of Hemanta and Śīśira are the Aṣṭakās celebrated (The four months referred here are Mārgaśīrṣa, Pauṣa, Māgha ans Phālguna). Or the Aṣṭakā may be celebrated on one of these days (ĀśvaGS II.4.1f).

Offerings to the manes should be done on the day before the Aṣṭakā (ĀśvaGS II.4.3). On the day after the Aṣṭakā is the Anvāṣṭakya ceremony performed (ĀśvaGS II.5.1).

Study is forbidden on the Aṣṭakā day and night and also on the day before and the day after it (KhādGS III.2.30). GobhiGS (III.3.20ff) too forbids study on the Aṣṭakā day.

EKĀṢṬAKĀ DAY

The eighth day in the black fortnight in the month of Māgha is called Ekāṣṭakā. This is the divider of the days (ahnāṁ vidhānī) (TS III.3.8.4 ; GB II.4.9 ; cf. also Satyā.GS II.14.1ff).

According to some ritualists the consecration ceremony, for those who want to perform the sacrificial session, should be done on the Ekāṣṭakā day, since the Ekāṣṭakā is said to be the wife of the year, and on that night the performers dwell with her ; verily thus do they consecrate themselves grasping openly the year (TS VII.4.8.1 ; TMB V.9.1-2). But according to some other ritualists, if the performers consecrate themselves on the Ekāṣṭakā day, then they consecrate themselves in the troubled or the torn part of the year and for them, are the two months (i.e. Pauṣa and Māgha in
the Śiśira season) called the end. This is something defective according to these ritualists. Therefore according to them the consecration ceremony for those who want to perform a sacrificial session should not be done on the Ekāṣṭakā day (TS VII.4.8.1 ; TMB V.9.5).

TS (III.3.8.4f) mentions that on this day the ancient performers (sages) performed a divination / prognostication rite\(^1\). They cooked a sacrificial bread of four Śarāvas in size and fired the thicket with it early. If it burnt it prognosticated a good season and if it did not, a bad season. By this mode of prognostication the ancient sages undertook a long sacrificial session.

BhārGS (II.15) says that the eighth day in the dark fortnight of Māgha conjunct with the asterism Jyeṣṭhā is called Ekāṣṭakā and on this day is the Aṣṭakā ritual performed. According to SatyāGS (II.4.1ff) too the eighth day of the dark fortnight after the full moon of Māgha is called Ekāṣṭakā. There it is also said that in the festival of Aṣṭakā on the day before Ekāṣṭakā, under the Anurādhā asterism, in the afternoon, are some rites performed. In the note on the translation by H.Oldenberg it is said, "Hiranyakesin describes only one Aṣṭakā, the Ekāṣṭakā, while the other texts speak of three or four Aṣṭakās ; compare the quotations in the note on ŚāṅGS III.12.1."\(^2\) Thus here we see that only the Ekāṣṭakā is accepted as an Aṣṭakā by some ritual texts.

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\(^1\) For more about divination rites, see G.U.Thite, 'Vijñāna : A kind of Dvination-rites', WZKS, Vol.22, p.5-17.

NEW AND FULL MOON DAYS

There are twelve new moon days and twelve full moon days in a year (JB II.364, II.437). The first new moon day (i.e. the day prior to the actual new moon day) is called Sinīvālī (yā pūrvā sā amāvasyā sā sinīvālī). That which is the second day (i.e. the actual new moon day) is called Kuhū (yā uttarā sā amāvasyā sā kuhūḥ). The first full moon day (i.e. the day prior to the actual full moon day) is called Anumati (yā pūrvā paurnamāsi sānumatiḥ). That which is the second day (i.e. the actual full moon day) is called Rākā (yā uttarā <paurnamāsi> sā rākā) (GB II.1.10). TS (III.4.9.6) deifies these days. Here it is said that Rākā is the deity of the first fortnight, Kuhū of the second, Sinīvālī of the new moon (night) and Anumati of the full moon (night).

The full and new moon are said to be the beginning of the seasons (paurnamāsi ca amāvasyā ca rtumukhāni, ŚB I.6.3.35).

These days are important in connection with the year. The new and full moon days are the limbs, joints and eyes of the year (TS II.5.6.1). Also new moon days are said to be the joints and full moon days the breaths of the year (JB II.396).

The full moon days are the inhaling and the new moon days are the exhaling of Prajāpati (JB II.394). These two days are also said to be the breasts of Prajāpati as it were (MS I.6.9). Prajāpati was identical with the
year. He remained while holding and pervading everything and saw the strength, food, in the twelve full moon days, twelve new moon days and twelve Aṣṭakā days (JB III.2).

These two days are said to be powerful. ŚāṅB (IV.8) says that the full moon day is the holy power and the new moon day is the lordly power (brahma vai paurnamāsi kṣatramāvasyā kṣatramiva).

In the context of Darśapūrṇāśa sacrifices TS (II.5.6.6) says that it is on the new and full moon nights that the gods are sacrificed to. At the full or new moon if the sacrificer does not perform the specific ritual at the specific time, then he is said to go away from his path. He is then advised to offer a sacrificial bread baked on eight potsherds to Agni Pathikṛt (Maker of path). In this way can the sacrificer make amends and thereby Agni brings him back on the right path (TS II.2.2.1). TS (II.2.5.4) also says that if the sacrificer has omitted the sacrifices either at the new or full moon, then he should offer to Vaiśvānara a sacrificial bread baked on twelve potsherds. As Agni Vaiśvānara is identical with the year, verily he delights the year and thereby also grasping the deities he goes to the world of heaven. TS (II.5.2.4) explains the ritual details by relating them to mythological stories. It says that the gods slew Vṛtra on full moon and made him swell on new moon; therefore the verses referring to the slaying of Vṛtra are uttered at the full moon and those referring to his increase are uttered at the new moon. As a part of the supplementary remarks on Darśapūrṇāśa sacrifices, ŚB (XI.1.7.3f) advises the sacrificer to himself offer the Agnihotra on those two nights (i.e. the full and new moon nights). Then after the offerings when he
takes food he does not become consecrated to the fathers, and also since he performs the offering himself, he does not eat out of the sacrificial essences. It is further said that all the nights concentrate themselves in these two nights: all the nights of the waxing moon concentrate in the night of the full moon and all the nights of the waning moon concentrate in the night of the new moon. Verily he who knowing this offers the Agnihotra himself on the day of the entrance on the fast, for him, the offering is always made by himself (i.e. if on the other nights the Agnihotra was performed by a priest, still it would be counted as having performed himself). GB (II.1.5) forbids the giving of sacrificial gifts on the full moon day as well as the new moon day.

As the full moon and the new moon days are identical with the breasts of Prajāpati so if one establishes fires under either of these two days, he milks Prajāpati as it were. Also the full and new moon days are the Sadas and Havirdhāna of the gods. Therefore he who establishes fires on either of these days, establishes fires on either of the auspicious days as they are both connected with sacrifice. This is the opinion of MS (I.6.9). KS (VIII.1) and KpKS (VI.6) too support this view and say that both these days are auspicious for obtaining piety or merits.

Generally the Agrayaṇeṣṭi is performed either on new or full moon day according to ŚāṅB (IV.12). Also the Dikṣaṇīyeṣṭi is offered on the two days of the full moon and on the two days of new moon, as two means a pair and in this way is a productive pair obtained (ŚB II.4.4.6).
With reference to Agnicayana rite the first full moon day, the first black eighth day and the first new moon day are of prime importance. On the first full moon day is the victim slaughtered, on the first black eighth day is the fire-pan prepared and on the first new moon day is the sacrificer initiated. Thus whatever first days there are in a year, of those, does the sacrificer take possession for Agni, the altar, and those he thereby gains (ŚB VI.2.2.30).

In the performance of a two-day sacrifice too, are these two days important. In this sacrifice the first day may be on the new moon day and the second day on the first day of the bright fortnight, or the first day may be on the full moon day and the second day on the Vyaśṭaka³ day or one may select any two auspicious days in the bright fortnight (TMB XVIII.11.8).

The preceding day of the New and Full moon sacrifices is a vow day. If the sacrificer goes on a journey or approaches a woman or eats flesh on this day, he violates the vow and this is indeed auspicious (GB II.1.14f). ŚB (XI.1.8.4) too says that the sacrificer should spend this night in a restrained manner as a part of the vow; because one redeems oneself by means of performing a sacrifice as it were for the gods, and before the actual performance of the sacrifice the sacrificer is the oblation-material of the

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³ For this word see W.CALAND, Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa, p.500, footnote 2, the above mentioned text; which says, "According to Lātya, the first three days of the dark half of the month are meant. This is far from certain as an aṣṭakā is the eighth day after each full moon." According to Śāyāna this word means the first day of the black fortnight.
gods as it were. It is therefore that the sacrificer has to spend this night in a restrained manner.

GobhiGS (I.5.2ff) in the context of the New and Full moon sacrifices says that one may fast on that full moon day (when the full moon rises) at the meeting (of day and night) but according to some ritualists he may fast on the following day. And also on that on which the moon is not seen should one fast considering it as a new moon day. The ends of the half-months are the time for fasting, the beginnings of sacrifice.

The Cūḍākaraṇa rite is to be performed on a Parvan day (KGS XL.9).

The Vratopāyana of a vedic student is to be performed on a Parvan day (KGS XLIII.4).

Either on a full moon day or a new moon day, should a snātaka perform an animal sacrifice in honour of Agni and thereafter he may at will consume liquor, meat, alkaline and salty things (MānGS I.2.20ff).

ŚāṅGS (VI.1.11) declares that there should be no study on the second half of the days that precede the Parvan days.

NEW MOON DAY

There are two opinions regarding the fasting in connection with the New moon sacrifice. According to one view, one should fast on the day preceeding the day on which one does not see the moon. According to another view, one should fast on the day on which the moon is not seen at all (ŚāṅB III.1). ŚB (I.6.4.14) supports the former view. It says that some
people enter upon the fast on the day before the new moon. Such a sacrificer indeed is in a prosperous state, with whom, while the old food is still unfailing, fresh food is accruing, for such a one has indeed abundant food. However he is now not offering Soma, but he is offering milk (i.e. the Sāñnāyya) and that milk becomes king Soma\(^4\) in the yonder world. TS (I.6.9.11f) declares that the new moon day is as long as the Atirātra sacrifice, therefore when one knowing this makes the new moon offering, one obtains as much as one may obtain after having performed the Atirātra sacrifice.

In the context of Agnyādhāna rite ŚB (XI.1.1.1ff) says that the new moon day is the door of the year as it were. So establishing the fires on the new moon day is like entering a city when the door is open and thereby going to heaven. It further says that on the day on which the moon is not seen either to the east or the west, on that day does the moon come to the earth. At that time all gods, beings, seasons, etc. stay on the earth. Therefore one should observe a fast and establish the fires on that day. Thereby do the fires become established in the gods etc.

In the course of the Nakṣaṭra-ितिस one should offer ghee to the new moon day on the new moon day. The new moon day is identical with desire. One thereby obtains his desires quickly (TB III.1.5.15).

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\(^4\) See J. EGGLING, Śatapatha Brāhmana, Part 1, p.180, footnote 3, which reads, "Who, resides in the plants and waters at the time of new moon, and consequently in the milk used for the Sāñnāyya. If however, one were to enter upon the fast (and hence on the sacrifice) previously to the new moon, he would be offering mere milk, not imbued with, and not liable to change into Soma, and therefore unfit for the gods."
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In a Piṇḍapīṭryajña, when the moon is not seen either in the east or the west, then does the sacrificer present food to the fathers, for that moon doubtless is king Soma, the food of the gods. Now during that night of new moon it fails them and when it fails, he presents food to them and thereby establishes a concord between the gods and the fathers. But were he to present food to them when it is not failing, then he would indeed cause a quarrel between the gods and fathers: hence he presents food to the fathers when the moon is not seen either in the east or in the west (ŚB II.4.2.7).

As a part of the Agnicayana rite is an animal sacrifice performed. According to some ritualists the victim in this sacrifice is slaughtered on the new moon day because Prajāpati is identical with the moon and during the night of the new moon he is said to dwell on the earth. Thus it would be just as if the sacrificer slaughtered him while staying near (ŚB VI.2.2.16ff). Also in the Agnicayana rite the sacrificer is initiated on the new moon day, since from out of the new moon does the sacrifice spread. Being consecrated on a new moon day has also some connection with procreation. Thus when the initiation is performed on a new moon day, then does he verily pour out his own self as seed onto the fire-pan, the womb. He also thereby prepares a place for himself in the other world (ŚB VI.2.2.26f).

In a Soma sacrifice the Soma is purchased on a new moon day (ŚB VI.2.2.28f).

ŚB (XIII.8.1.3) advises the sacrificer to perform the Pitṛmedha at the new moon, since the new moon is a single Nakṣatra - for the sacrificer is a
single person and in that all beings dwell together during that night, thereby
does he obtain that object of desire which is contained in all the Nakṣatras.

In case there is a mistake in identifying the new moon day, then one
has to perform an offering consisting of three oblations. This is an expiatory
rite and it is to be performed because, making a mistake in time is the same
as deviating from the right path of the sacrifice (ŚB XI.1.5.4).

Vedic study is forbidden on the new moon day (KauśiGS III.9.7 ;
GobhiGS III.3.20ff). KGS (IX.11) forbids the study of the veda not only on
the new moon day but also on the day preceding it and on the day following
it. Thus the study is forbidden for three days in a row (cf. KhādGS III.2.30).

One who wants to perform the marriage of his daughter should
observe fast for one day and then sprinkle water on her on the night of the
new moon (SVB I.2.14).

The Gārhapatya fire may be kindled optionally on any new moon day
(ŚāṅGS I.1.6).

A certain ritual is performed on the new moon day for getting a good
position (KauS XXII.8). Also a rite for removing evil beings is performed on
the new moon day (KauS XXV.27). Both the above mentioned rituals are of
the magico-religious type.

On the new moon day in the afternoon optionally, should be
performed the monthly Śrāddha (SatyāGS II.10.1).

They who have lost a Guru by death or are afflicted by other
misfortune, should perform an expiatory ceremony on a new moon day
(ĀśvaGS IV.6.1).
The black-magic ritual (Abhicāra) is to be done on new moon day (KauS XLVII.11).

**SPECIFIC NEW MOON DAYS**

According to ŚāṅB (XIX.3) the performers of a sacrificial session should consecrate themselves on the day after the new moon day of Caitra; for the corn has come, the days are long and they do not come out shivering from the final bath.

One should establish fires on the new moon day of Vaiśākha because this day coincides with Rohiṇī and thereby one becomes established in cattle (ŚB XI.1.1.7).

The Gārhapatya fire may be kindled optionally on the new moon day of Vaiśākha (ŚāṅGS I.1.6).

In a sacrificial session the performers should consecrate themselves on the day after the new moon of Taiṣa or of Māgha. Both these views are current but the one connected with Taiṣa is the more current as it were. This is the opinion of ŚāṅB (XIX.2).

While performing the sacrificial session the performers go to the north for six months starting from the new moon of Māgha (cf. ŚāṅB XIX.3).

According to ŚāṅB (I.3) one should re-establish the fires under the Punarvasū asterism when it coincides with the new moon day. This happens in the rainy season in which the Pūrvā Āśādhā asterism is in conjunction
V. Particular day / date

with the full moon and then after fifteen days is the Punarvasū in conjunction with the new moon. By doing so the desire that is in the new moon is obtained, there is obtained that in the rains, there is obtained that is in the Punarvasū, therefore on that day should one re-establish the fires.

One should begin the Vasiṣṭha sacrifice on the new moon day in Phālguna asterism (ŚāṅB IV.8). Also one should begin the Sākaraṇprasthāyya on this day only (ŚāṅB IV.9).

On the new moon day which follows the Phālguna full moon day and which falls under the Revatī asterism, should the marks on the cattle be made (ŚāṅGS III.10.1).

On the new moon day which coincides with rains and also on the new moon day which coincides with spring should the new moon offering and then the Āgrayaṇa offering be performed (ŚāṅB IV.12f).

FULL MOON DAY

In TB (III.1.1.12) the full moon day is deified and described to be full and victorious. A prayer is made for the gods who are staying there (i.e. in the full moon) to enjoy. It is further said that the full moon day is broad, lustreous, young, beautiful and being such Paurṇamāṣi (full moon day) is expected to milk the sacrifice for the sacrificer. KS (IX.14) declares the full moon day as identical with procreation (praṇanamāṁ pūrṇamāḥ).

There are two opinions regarding the day on which one should observe a fast in connection with the full moon day offering. According to
Paiṅgya one should fast on the day preceeding the full moon day, but according to Kauśitaki one should fast on the day of the full moon⁵ (Śāṅkara III.1). In ŚB (I.6.3.32ff) also different alternatives are mentioned and some results are ascribed to each of them. Thus according to some, one should observe a fast on the full moon day. Thereby one can kill one's enemy. Supporters of the view that one should fast on the following day also ascribe the same result to the fast. But ŚB supports the view of observing fast on the full moon day only. It further adds another result to this fasting on the full moon day by saying that the performer becomes a consumer of food thereby.

In the context of New and Full moon sacrifices TS (I.6.9.1f) says that the full moon day is as big as the Ukthya sacrifice. Therefore when one who knowing this, makes the full moon offering, he gets as much as one may get after having performed the Ukthya sacrifice. TS (II.5.4.3) also says that one should sacrifice to Indra on the full moon day if one has enemies, and not on the new moon day. Thus having slain one's enemy one does not cause him to grow again.

According to TB (III.1.4.15) in the course of the Nakṣatra-īṣṭis when an offering of ghee is made to the full moon day on the full moon day, then one gets his desires fulfilled quickly as the full moon is identical with desire and also ghee is identical with desire.

As a part of the animal sacrifice in the Agnicayana rite ŚB (VI.2.2.16ff) advises the slaughter of the victim on a full moon day because

⁵ For more on this cf. A.B.Keith, The Rigveda Brāhmaṇas, p.607, footnote 6.
the victim is identical with the moon and him (i.e. moon) the gods slaughter on the full moon day. So then it is like doing the rite as the gods did it.

TS (VII.4.8.2) advises those who are about to consecrate themselves for the year-long-session, to consecrate themselves on the fourth day before the full moon. Then the buying of Soma falls on the Ekāṣṭakā, and they do not waste the Ekāṣṭakā. In their case, the pressing (day) falls in the first half of the month, the months end in the first half, they complete the rite in the first half and when they complete the rite the plants and trees come out after them; and after them follows the fair report, "These sacrificers have succeeded" and therefore all succeed.

SPECIFIC FULL MOON DAYS

According to TS (VII.4.8.2) those who are about to consecrate themselves in the year-long-session should consecrate themselves on the full moon day which is in conjunction with the Citrā asterism. Such a full moon day is the beginning of the year and so verily do the performers consecrate themselves grasping the year at the beginning (cp. TMB V.9.10-11).

On the night of the full moon day of Āṣāḍha one should sit having held the grains with a melody beginning with indramiddevatātaye.... After day-break having sung the same melody, one should wash and sprinkle water on the grains and hold them again. The grains which become heavier will prove to be prosperous (SVB III.4.8).
The Upākarma rite should be performed optionally on the full moon day of Āṣādha (BodhāGS III.1.1f).

The Śravaṇa ceremony is performed on the full moon day which falls under the Śravaṇa asterism (BhārGS II.1 ; SatyāGS II.16.2 ; cf. PārasGS II.14.1; ĀśvaGS II.1.1; GobhiGS III.7.1f). The Śravaṇa oblations are offered on the full moon day that falls under Śraviṣṭhās asterism (ŚāṅGS IV.15.1). The opening ceremony of the annual course of study is performed optionally on the Śravaṇa full moon day (BodhāGS III.1.1f; SatyāGS II.18.2; GobhiGS III.3.1; cf. ĀśvaGS III.5.1f).

On the full moon day of Prauṣṭhapada is the sacrifice to Indra performed (PārasGS II.15.1). The Upākarma rite may be performed optionally on the full moon of Prauṣṭhapada (GobhiGS III.3.1).

On the full moon day of Āśvin, the ritual called Dhruvāśva is to be performed (MāṅGS II.6.2). On the full moon day of Āśvayuja, the offerings of Prṣṭātakas are made (PārasGS II.16.1). Also the Āśvayujit ceremony is performed on this day according to ĀśvaGS (II.2.1). On the full moon day of Āśvayuja a milk-rice oblation is made to Indra (ŚāṅGS IV.16.1, KhāḍGS III.3.1).

The Vṛṣotsarga rite is to be performed on the full moon day of Kārttika (KGS LVIII.2). This ceremony is optionally performed on this day according to PārasGS (III.9.3) and ŚāṅGS (III.11.2). Vedic study is forbidden on the full moon day of Kārttika (KhāḍGS III.2.30; GobhiGS III.3.20ff). According to KhāḍGS the study is forbidden for this night and also for one day before and after it.
The Āgrahāyaṇī ceremony is performed on the full moon day of Mārgaśīrṣa (BhārGS II.2 ; SatyāGS II.17.2 ; cf. MānGS II.7.1, PārasGS III.2.1). The Śūlagava rite should be performed on the full moon day of Mārgaśīrṣa (BodhāGS II.7.1 ; cp. ĀgniGS p.86). The 'Redescent' (i.e. the Pratyavarohaṇa rite) is to be performed on the full moon day of Mārgaśīrṣa or on the day before it (ĀśvaGS II.3.1f). ŚāṅGS (IV.17.1) too prescribes the performance of Redescentrite on the Āgrahāyaṇī full moon day. A certain ritual is performed on the full moon day of Mārgaśīrṣa with AV XII.1. In it one offers a rice mess on Darbha grass thrown in a pit (Kauś XXIV.24f).

TS (II.2.10.1) advises the sacrificer to offer an oblation to Soma and Rudra on the full moon day of Tiṣya (i.e. Pauṣa). As Tiṣya is identical with Rudra and full moon with Soma, thus verily does the sacrificer win splendour.

The Utsarga or conclusion of the term of study is celebrated optionally on the full moon day of Tiṣya (SatyāGS II.18.8).

According to KS (VIII.1) one may establish the sacred fires on the Phālgunī full moon day as this is the chief of the seasons.

On the full moon day of the Phālguna month, one should begin the Cāturmasya (four-monthly) sacrifices. This day is said to be the mouth of the year. So by beginning the performance of the Cāturmāśya sacrifices on the full moon day of Phālguna, one holds the year by the mouth. Further it is said that the Uttara Phālgunī asterism forms the mouth and Pūrvā Phālgunī asterism the end. So just as the two ends of a circle are joined, so also are
these two ends of the year joined by performing the beginning of the Cāturmāśya sacrifices on the full moon day of Phālguna (GB II.1.19).

In the animal sacrifice which is a part of the Agnicayana rite, the victim is slaughtered on the full moon day of Phālguna. This day is in conjunction with the Uttarā Phalgunjī asterism which is said to be the first night of the year. Thus does the sacrificer begin the year at the very mouth (ŚB VI.2.2.18).

On the Phālguna full moon day only should the performers of a year-long-session undergo consecration (TMB V.9.7-8). Here too it is said that the Phālguna full moon day is the head of the year and having taken hold of the year at the head the performers are consecrated.

The officiating priests of the Aśvamedha sacrifice meet six or seven days before the Phālguna full moon day (ŚB XIII.4.1.4).

The full moon night in conjunction with the Phalgunjīs is the beginning of the year, the latter two Phalgūs (i.e. Uttarā Phalgunjīs) are the beginning and the two former (Pūrvā Phalgunjīs) are the end of the year. Just as the two ends of what is round may unite, so are these two ends of the year connected (ŚāhB V.1). From this we can observe that time is circular. (Also in a sacrifice the act of binding the two ends and thereby to knot and make a unified whole is very important).

For the Agnyādhāna rite MS (I.6.9) prescribes the full moon day which is in conjunction with the Phalgunjī asterism. This day is said to be the chief of seasons and by establishing fires on this day one makes all seasons auspicious and inspiring. Also as this day is the chief of seasons so also Agni
is the chief if the gods and Brahmin, the chief of men. Therefore MS advises the Brahmin to establish his sacred fires on this day. But MS also says that if one were to establish the fires on this day, one would shut the mouth of the year because this day is said to be the mouth of the year. To avoid shutting the mouth of the year, MS advises one to establish fires either two days or one day before this day. Thereby one takes hold of the next sacrifice and then the mouth of the year is not shut. Also, because one takes hold of the next sacrifice therefore one obtains the power of senses and cattle and agricultural land of the hated enemy.

Since the full moon night in conjunction with the Phalgunīs, is said to be the beginning of the year therefore this day is recommended by ŚāṅB for proceeding with the Dākṣāyaṇa sacrifice (IV.4), the Iḍādadhā sacrifice (IV.5), the Sārvaseni sacrifice (IV.6), the Śaunaka sacrifice (IV.7), the Munyayana sacrifice (IV.10) and the Turāyaṇa sacrifice (IV.11).

He who performs the four-monthly sacrifices, begins on the full moon day in the Phalgunīs. He performs the Vaiśvadeva sacrifice which is a part of the Cāturmāsyā sacrifices on this day because this day is the beginning of the year. He thereby delights the year from the mouth (beginning) (ŚāṅB V.1).

TS (VII.4.8.1f) advises those who are about to consecrate themselves for the year-long-session to consecrate themselves on the full moon which is in conjunction with the Phalgunīs, as this day is the beginning of the year. To this there is an objection that, then the Viśuvat day would fall in the cloudy season and a cloudy day is considered inauspicious.
On the full moon day of Phālguna one should make an offering to Bhaga and Aryaman and then to Rudra (MānGS II.10.1f). Also on the same day in the evening, one should make offerings to Indra and agni (MānGS II.10.3). KGS (LXX.1) says that on the Phālguna full moon day a sacrificial bread fried in oil is to be offered to the ancestors. Vedic study is forbidden on the Phālguna full moon day (KhādGS III.2.30 ; GobhiGS III.3.20ff). KhādGS forbids study on that night as well as on the day before and after it.

On the full moon day which coincides with rains and also on the full moon day which coincides with spring should the Āgrayaṇa offering and then the full moon offering be performed according to ŚāṅB (IV.12f).

FIRST DAY OF A FORTNIGHT (PRATIPAD)

One should not study Veda on the Pratipad day. this is a rule according to MānGS (I.4.10).

The ritual for getting progeny called Śaḍāhuta is to be performed on the first day of a fortnight (MānGS II.18.1).

EIGHTH DAY OF A FORTNIGHT

Vedic study is prohibited on the eighth day of a fortnight according to KauṣGS (III.9.8).

FOURTEENTH DAY OF A FORTNIGHT
KauṣṭGS (III.9.7) forbids the vedic study on the fourteenth day of the dark fortnight.

FIFTH DAY OF THE BRIGHT FORTNIGHT

One who is desirous of getting a son should perform a ritual in honour of ancestors on every fifth day of the bright fortnight (BodhāGŚŚ II.1.1).

SIXTH DAY OF THE BRIGHT FORTNIGHT

The rite called Šaṣṭhikalpa is to be performed on the sixth day of the bright fortnight for the sake of getting wealth (MānGS II.13.1ff).

SEVENTH DAY OF THE DARK FORTNIGHT

One who is desirous of a son should perform a ritual in honour of the ancestors on the seventh day of the dark fortnight (BodhāGŚŚ II.1.1).

NINTH DAY OF THE DARK FORTNIGHT

The Anvaṣṭakya ceremony is performed optionally on the ninth day of the dark fortnight (KhādGS III.5.1).

TENTH DAY OF THE DARK FORTNIGHT

The Anvaṣṭakya ceremony is performed optionally on the tenth day of the dark fortnight (KhādGS III.5.1).
TWELFTH DAY OF THE DARK FORTNIGHT

The ritual called Nārāyaṇa Bali is to be performed on the twelfth day of the dark fortnight (ĀgniGS p.179).

THIRTEENTH DAY OF THE DARK FORTNIGHT

One who wants bliss (śreyas) after death should perform the ancestral ritual in honour of oneself on the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight (BodhāGŚŚ III.19.1). BodhāGŚŚ (III.19.20) also says that one should not delay in this respect because life is impermanent.

FOURTEENTH DAY OF THE DARK FORTNIGHT

A man desirous to marry a particular girl should observe a fast for three days and then on the fourteenth day of the dark fortnight should he offer fish and Kṛkara (a kind of bird) in the fire brought from a cremation place (SVB II.6.16).

SVB (III.6.12) prescribes a black-magical rite in which on the fourteenth day of the dark fortnight, a performer who has already observed a fast for three days should offer sesame oil in the fire brought from the crematorium with a melody consisting of the word 'vrśca'. Then a man with a spike will come up from the fire. To him one should order to kill one's enemy. He then kills the enemy.
FIFTH DAY OF ŚRĀVANĀ

Optionally on the fifth day of Śrāvanā, under the asterism Hasta, one should perform the Adhyāyopakarman (or the opening ceremony at the beginning of the annual course of study (PārasGS II.10.2; cf. ĀśvaGS III.5.1ff).

THE DAY IN ŚRĀVANĀ WHICH IS IN CONJUNCTION WITH ABHIJIT

The Upākarma rite may be performed optionally under Abhijit in the month of Śrāvanā (KauS CXXXIX.1).

EIGHTH DAY OF THE BRIGHT FORTNIGHT OF PROŚṬAPADA

On the eighth day of the bright fortnight of Proṣṭhapada does the Indramaha ritual commence (KauS CXL.1).

THE DAY IN BHĀDRAPADA WHICH IS IN CONJUNCTION WITH ABHIJIT

The Upākarma rite may be performed optionally under Abhijit in the month of Bhādrapada (KauS CXXXIX.1).
THE DAY IN ĀŚVINA WHICH IS IN CONJUNCTION WITH REVATĪ

The Viṣṇotsarga rite is to be performed optionally on that day of Āśvayuja month that falls under the Revatī asterism (ŚāṅGS III.11.2).

FIRST DAY OF THE BRIGHT FORTNIGHT OF MĀGHA

On the first day of the bright fortnight of Māgha, is the study of hymns interrupted. The interruption may last for six months and half or for five months and a half or for one day and one night (ŚāṅGS IV.6.1ff).

VIṢUVAT DAY

The sun joins the worlds which are above this world and those which are below, on this day and because he joins (sews, viṣuvati) therefore this day is called Viṣuvat (JB II.5).

The Viṣuvat day is said to be the body of the year (ātmā vai samvatsarasya viṣuvān, GB I.4.18f, I.5.3ff). In ŚB (XII.1.4.2) year is compared to a man and the Viṣuvat day is said to be his head. TMB (IV.7.1) too says that the Viṣuvat day is the body of the year and on both sides of it (i.e. before and after) are the two halves of the year. In ŚB (XII.2.1.3) the year is compared to an ocean and the Viṣuvat day is said to be the foothold in the form of an island.
GB (I.5.6) explains the uniformity of the year and the position of the Viṣuvat day in respect to it. It says that one Atirātra is performed before and one after the Viṣuvat, fifty-three Agniṣṭomas are performed before and fifty-three after the Viṣuvat, one hundred and twenty Ukhya days are performed before and one hundred and twenty after the Viṣuvat, six Ṣoḍaśins are performed before and six after the Viṣuvat, thirty Ṣaḍahas are performed before and thirty after the Viṣuvat. This is the uniformity of the year. Here we find that the Viṣuvat day is always kept in the middle of the year.

According to ŚāṅB (XXV.10) the performance of the Viṣuvat day should be completed before the setting of the sun.

The gods fashioned out the Viṣuvat day out of the sun (ŚB XII.1.2.2; GB I.4.9) and the Divākīrtya Śāman contains the word meaning 'sun' which symbolises the Viṣuvat day (ŚāṅB XXV.1).

UPAVASATHA DAY

The day preceding the day of the establishment if the sacred fires is called Upavasatha day. On this day the sacrificer should fast (ŚB IX.5.1.6ff) and on that night he should sleep in the house of Āhavanīya fire or in the house of Gārhapatya fire (ŚB I.1.1.11).

PRĀYAṆĪYA DAY

In connection with the Prāyaṇīya day in the Gavāmayana-sacrificial-session, it is said that the gods reached heaven by means of the Prāyaṇīya
day. Therefore one should work as a priest on this day, for this day is nearest to the heaven and one who does not work as a priest on this day does not go to heaven (TMB IV.2.1ff).

ĀRAMBHAṆĪYA DAY

Those who perform the ĀrambhaṆīya day rites in a sacrificial session stay in the year. Since year is identical with heaven they also gain heaven and further they also get food in the year which is heaven (JB II.430).

PRĀJĀPATYA DAY

The Prājāpatya day is a part of the year-long-session. On the Prājāpatya day the Āmahiyava Sāman is used as a Prājāpatya Sāman and then the day becomes congruent (salakṣma) and thereby the performers make the day prosperous with its form (JB II.13).

CHANDOMA DAYS

About the creation of the Chandoma days JB (III.73) narrates the following: Prajāpati created this thunderbolt, this twelve-day period; through the Prāṣṭhya six-day period he reached all. He thought,’ How can I put the four days (the last four days of the Daśarātra contained in the Dvādaśāha) unto it?’ He formed, out of the Gāyatrī the day of twenty-four-versed Stotras (the first Chandoma day), out of Triṣṭubh the day of forty-four-versed Stotras (the second Chandoma day), out of Jagati the day of
forty-eight-versed Stotras (the third Chandama day) and out of the Anuṣṭubh the tenth day. Because he formed \((nir-mā)\) them out of the metres \((chandas)\), therefore they are called 'Chandoma' (cp. TMB X.1.19). These days are also said to be the cattle \((paśavo vai chandomāḥ, TMB III.8.2)\). The days preceeding the Chandoma days are provided with the seasons \((ṛtumāṇi)\), the Chandoma days are however devoid of seasons. But because the Māruta Sāman is used on them, they become mystically provided with the seasons (TMB XIV.12.9).

**Caturvīṁśā Day**

The Caturvīṁśa day is the opening day of the Gavāmayana Sattra (AB IV.12). This day is the beginning of the year and therefore it is an Agniṣṭoma for the Agniṣṭoma is the beginning of the sacrifices, verily thus at the beginning is the year delighted (ŚānB XIX.8).

In the Soma sacrifice on the Caturvīṁśa day is a victim sacrificed for Prajāpati, thinking, "Instigated by Prajāpati, in safety, let us attain this year" (ŚānB XIX.2). Some Sāman chanter makes this day have all the stomas (ŚānB XIX.10).

The gods fashioned out the Caturvīṁśa day from out of the year (ŚB XII.1.2.2).

In ŚB (XII.2.1.1ff) the different days in the year are metaphorically described to be the parts of an ocean. Here the Caturvīṁśa day is said to be in the form of a foothold, a shallow place, such a one as where the water
reaches either to the arm-pits or to the neck, where, having rested, they enter the deep water. Also in ŚB (XII.1.4.1) the year is compared to a man and the Caturviriśa day is said to be his thighs.

**MAHĀVRATA DAY**

The Mahāvrata day corresponds to the end of the Gavāmayana Sattra. The Mahāvrata is the Caturviriśa, by means of the Bṛhaddīva hymn the Hotṛ pours seed on the Caturviriśa day and the seed on the Caturviriśa day with the Mahāvrata day he propagates. Then in a year the seed which was poured is born (AB IV.14).

JB (II.410) says that those who perform the ritual of the Mahāvrata day in the middle of the year-long-session get only half the food. The year ripens the food completely. Therefore the ritual of the Mahāvrata day should be performed at the end of the year-long-session, in order to obtain the fully ripened food.

The gods fashioned out the Mahāvrata day from Prajāpati (ŚB XII.1.2.3).

In ŚB (XII.1.4.3) where year is compared to a man, there the Mahāvrata day is said to be his mouth. Also in ŚB (XII.2.1.5) the year is compared to an ocean and in this description the Mahāvrata day is said to be the foothold, a shallow place, such a one as where the water reaches either to the armpits or to the neck, where, having rested they step out of the water.
SIGNIFICANCE OF CERTAIN PERIODS AND CERTAIN DAYS IN CERTAIN PERIODS

Significance of two-day period - As part of the two-day sacrifice one consecrates one's body by means of the first day and the progeny by means of the second day (JB II.235).

Significance of the sixth day in a twelve-day period - On the sixth day of the Dvādaśāha, two hymns viz. RV X.61 and X.62 are recited, to discern the sacrifice and reveal the world of heaven, to the sacrificer (AB V.14).

Significance of the twelve days in the twelve-day period - In this twelve-day period, for twelve days is the sacrificer consecrated, therefore he becomes fit for sacrifice. Also for twelve nights does he perform the Upasads. With these Upasads he shakes clear his body from all evil. Having pressed Soma continuously for twelve days the sacrificer is born anew and he goes to the gods with his body pure and purified (AB IV.23).

PARTicular Day / Date Deified

As a part of the Śravaṇa oblations offerings are made to the full moon day of Śrāvana and thus is this day deified (ŚāṅGS IV.15.2).

Also as a part of the offering on the full moon day of Āśvayuja, Ājya is sacrificed to the full moon day of Āśvayuja. Thus is this day deified (ŚāṅGS IV.16.2).
CONCLUSION

Particular day or date is very important in vedic rituals. The days like the Aṣṭakā days (eighth day after full moon), Ekāṣṭakā day (eighth day in the dark fortnight in the month of Māgha), new and full moon days, first day of a fortnight, fourteenth day in the dark fortnight, Viṣuvat day, Upavasatha day, Prāyaṇīya day, Ārambhaṇīya day, Prājāpatya day, Chandoma days, Caturvīṁśa day, Mahāvrata day, etc. are important in the performance of vedic rituals.

Also certain periods of time as well as certain days in certain periods of time are ritually significant such as the sixth day in a twelve day period, etc.

The performance of the rites prescribed on these days is said to lead to some positive result such as procreation, food, prosperity and so on.