CHAPTER TWO

VARIOUS VEDIC SACRIFICES - THE EARLIEST FORM OF THE VRATAS.

SRAUTA SACRIFICES: There may be a strong case to search for the earliest forms of the vratas in various Vedic sacrifices which are indeed the stores house of different latter literary strata. A deep study of Vedic sacrifices is quite essential for the proper understanding of the Vedic literature for arriving at approximately correct statements about the chronology, the development and the stratification of the different positions of that literature and for the influence that literature extended on the four varnas and the caste system on the splitting up of the Brāhmaṇas themselves, among several sub-castes and on the institution of gotras and pravaras. A careful analysis of a few sacrifices is necessary to show how those can be theoretically and practically called vratas in crude form.

Early European scholars generally paid scant attention to the deep study of the Vedic sacrifices and endeavoured to understand the meaning of the Vedas principally by reference to grammar, comparative philology and the comparison of several passages containing the same word or words. Max Müller put forwarded a tentative scheme of chronology based mostly on subjective consideration and prompted by the great prejudice felt by European scholars generally against admitting any great antiquity for the Vedas. Therefore, the endeavour of most European scholars has been to show that the mantras could not have been composed before 1400 B.C. It is beyond the scope of this work
to enter into any discussion about the dates of the various sections of the Vedic Literature. The hymns may have been composed for aught we know several thousand years before that date. Most of the Vedic Samhitās that we know are arranged (except the Rg Veda to some extent) definitely for the various aspects of the cult of the sacrifice and indicate a state of things when different priests were required for the sacrifices, who used mantras from the collections they had studied.

The fundamental conception of Yajña (sacrifice) goes back to Indo-European antiquities though the traces are rather faint. But it is quite clear that the cult of the sacrifices had been much developed in the Indo-Iranian period. There is a very striking similarity between the Vedic Agnistoma and the Homa ceremony of the Persians. There are numerous indication of the cult of the sacrifice both in the Vedic Language and in the ancient Parsi religious books. For example, words like Stoma Hotr do also occur in the Parsi religious scriptures. Though Vedic sacrifices are now very rarely performed (except a few simple ones like the Darsapurnāma and the Caturmasyas), they were in great vogue several centuries before the Christian era. Centuries after the advent and spread of Buddhism we learn from inscriptions and literary traditions that kings performed the ancient solemn Vedic sacrifices and felt gloried in having done so. In the Harivyāma, in the Malavikāagnimitram, in the Sunga Inscription from Ayodhya, Senāpati Pusyamitra is said to have performed the Asvamedha (or Nājasuya). In the Hatigumpha
Inscription king Kharavela is extolled as having performed the Rajasuya. In the Bilsad stone Inscription of Kumāra Gupta dated in the Gupta year 96 (i.e., 415 - 6 A.D) it is stated that his great ancestor Samudra Gupta performed the Asvamedha that had gone out of vogue for a long time. In the Pardi Plates the Traikutaka king Dahrasena is described as the performer of Asvamedha. The Pikira grant of Siha Varman describes the Pallavas as the performers of many Asvamedhas and another Pallava grant refers to the performance of Agnistoma, Vajapeya and Asvamedha. The Chamakak plate of the Vakataka king Pravarasena II speaks of Pravarasena I as the performer of many Srauta sacrifices.

The original worship of five may have been individualistic as well as communal or tribal. The daily Agnihotra was an individual affair but as even simple ists like Darsapurnamasa required four priests, and some sacrifices required sixteen priests and costly preparation. These sacrifices partook more or less of a public or at least congregational character. As the Brahmans of those days were poor, so they could not carry on even the daily Agnihotra, which pinned them down practically to one place and did not allow them to move out of the village for securing their livelihood, even Agnihotra must have been comparatively rare in early times. As Savara and Jaimini quoted Vedic sentences like 'one who has begot a son or sons and whose hair is still black should consecrate, the Vedic fires establish that 'Agnyādhana' was advised for Brahmans when they had reached middle age. The daily programme of the grhya ceremonies as set forth in the Gṛhya Sūtras closely imitate...
the procedure of the Vedic five cult and Vedic sacrifices formed the first and foremost manifestation of the sentiments of faith and worship in India, a work dealing with Dharmaśāstra cannot be said to have dealt with its subject completely and adequately if the treatment of Vedic sacrifices were left out altogether.

The Srauta Sūtras contain a very detailed, meticulously accurate and vivid description of the several sacrifices that were performed in ancient times. These works were manuals compiled for the practical purpose of giving directions to those who engaged themselves in such sacrifices. They are based on ancient Brahmana texts, which they quote at every step, many individual sūtras being couched in the very language of the Brahmanas and on actual practice and only bring together what was in vogue. The object of the following pages is not to present a thorough and detailed treatment of Vedic sacrifices but only to indicate what the cult of the Vedic sacrifice was like and to furnish a brief description of some prominent sacrifices, showing how these could claim to be the source of Vratas. It must be remembered that for the smooth performance of the sacrifices maintenance of at least two cows, besides thousands of cow dung cakes and fuel sticks are necessary. For the maintenance of Agnihotra and the performance of Darsapūrnāmāsa and the Caturmāsyas, the house-holder was required to be well-to-do kings, nobles and the rich had the right to perform Soma sacrifices because they could collect large subscriptions. At the time of making grants kings often expressed that the object of the grants was to enable
the Brāhmaṇa donees to offer Bali and Caru and to perform Agni-
hotra. For example, in the Sarsavni plates of Buddharāja dated
in Kacceuri Sain 361 i.e., 609 – 10 A.D. we find that the grant
is made for Bali, Caru and Agnihotra and in the Damodarpur plates
(443-44 and 447-48 A.D) the grants are made for Agnihotra and for
the performance of the five daily Yajñas. No help from royalty
could be expected during the centuries of Muslim domination. So
the institution of Vedic sacrifices banquished. In the last hundred
years or so, solemn Vedic sacrifices have been performed only rarely.
Many of the Srauta Sūtras of Āśvalayana, Apastamba, Baudhāyana,
Katyāyana, Satyāsadha with occasional references to the Samhitās
and Brāhmaṇas in their light of the treatment of the Vratas are the
main sources of treatment. The several divergences among the
Sūtras, the Paddhātis and modern practice are not generally dwelt
upon for the sake of furthering repetitions.

We find even in the remotest ages when the hymns of the
Rg Veda Samhitā were composed and compiled, the main features of
the sacrificial system had been evolved. From Rg Veda II.36.4 we
come to understand that there were three fires. The Garhapatya
fire is expressly named in Rg Veda II.15.12. The three Savanas
i.e., pressing of Soma are mentioned in Rg Veda III.28.1, III.28.5,
and III.52.5-6, and in IV.12.1, IV.33.11. The requirement of
sixteen priests in Soma sacrifices was probably known to the com¬
pilers of the hymns of the Rg Veda I.162.5. The sixteen priests are:
Hotā Maitravarna' cchāvako grāvastudaddharyah pratipraṅbhatā neco-
netā brahma brahmāccharasyagnīdhraḥ potodgatā prastotāpratēhanta
Subrahmanya, etc.
Some of the general rules applicable in all Srauta rites may be stated once for all. The sacrificer should always face the north, should sit down cross-legged, and the sacrificial materials like Kusa grass etc. should have their ends pointed towards the east. The sacred thread should be put on in all rites in the Upavīta form, except where the Nivīta or Pracīnnavīta form is expressly ordained. Wherever a limb is mentioned or no particular limb is mentioned, it is the right limb that is meant. Wherever the word Dadāti is used the Yajamāna (the sacrificer) is the agent of the action. Without expressly stating the performer it is the Hotṛ who does and in the case of Prayascittas wherever the words Juhoti and Japati occur the Brahma priest is the agent to do those latter acts. According to Katyāyana 1.10.12 the Yajamāna is the actual performer in the case of gifts or repeating texts where the word Vacayati occurs in the Sutras or in 'Anvārāmbhana' or in choosing a boon, in the case of observances or in the case of measures. When any rite is prescribed without expressly stating the performer, it is the Hotṛ who does it and in the case of Prayascittas wherever the word Juhoti and Japati occur the Brahma priest is the agent to do those latter acts. The whole verse is intended to be recited when the first pada of ṛk is mentioned for being employed in a rite. The whole hymn is to be repeated in that rite wherever more than the first pada of a verse is mentioned, it is intended that three verses are to be recited.
AGNIHOTRA: According to Gautama VIII.20 there are seven forms of Haviryajnas of which Agnihotra is the second. From the evening of the day of Agnyādheya the house-holder has to perform Agnihotra twice daily in the evening and morning to the end of his life or till he becomes a Sannyāsa or as the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa - XII. 4.1.1. says - "those who offer Agnihotra indeed is a Sattva that ends with old age or death, since he becomes free from it only by old age or death". Satyārādhā prescribes that from the time of setting up the three Śrauta fires, Agnihotra and Darsapūrnanāsa are obligatory on all members of the twice born classes and he holds that the Nisāda and rathaka also are bound to perform them though often Śutrapāras are opposed to this. The several sutras present different details and mantras. According to one view all the three fires are permanently maintained by the house-holder according to others only the Garhyapatya is permanently kept only if it was set up by the priest at the time when the house-holder performed Agnyādheya. The house-holder calls upon the Adhvaryu to bring the Ahavanīya from the Garhyapatya in the evening and also in the morning. This is so only if the Yajāmāna engages an Adhvaryu in the daily Agnihotra, but if the Yajāmāna does the daily Agnihotra himself this call is unnecessary. They are Yajus; but they are distinguished from ordinary Yajus formulae by the fact that Nigadas are uttered loudly while ordinarily a Yajus is recited in a low voice. Jaimini in II.1.38-45 brings out the distinction between ordinary Yajus and Nigadas. Verses from the different treatises on the Dharma Sāstras
clearly distinguish between the two modes of recitations of the Vedic Mantra - first by enchanting very loudly keeping in view of the Udatta, Anudatta and Svanta rule while the other in a comparatively low voice there the distinction among the three pitches of accent are not clearly audible. The philosophical treatises also hold the same view. The Yogasūtra says - "tajjapastadarthabhāvanam", i.e., the muttering of a particular mantra where its explanation as related to the God Almighty is clear, is essential for a man of unsullied sole. The same type of silent or loud repetition of Mantras is found in the case of the Vratas also "Aham atra amukāṃ vratas ācarisyey" at least this type of 'Samkalpavākyā' is absolutely necessary.

As to the Dakṣināgni in the daily Agnihotra Ṡāvalīyana mentions several alternatives viz., it may be kindled into flames if it is kept permanently. He should take burning coals from the kindled Garhyapatya in the vessel and carry them to the place of Āhavaniya with the mantra - "devam tva devabhyaḥ sṛīya uddharaṇi" and should repeat when carrying the burning coals towards the east the mantra - "raise me up from sin that I knowingly or unknowingly may have committed; save me from all the sin that I may have committed in the day". He should face the sun and place the burning coals in the Āhavaniya mound with the mantra - "umṛtāhutim ...", etc. In the morning Agnihotra also he should face the sun and do other things stated above. According to Kātyāyana IV.13.2. the evening Agnihotra is to be commenced before the sun sets and the morning one before
the sun rises. Asvalāyana says that the homa is performed after the sun sets. There have been two views on this point from very ancient times viz., whether Agnihotra is to be performed before sunrise or after sunrise. Āpastamba mentions four views as to both evening or morning time for both or it may be when the first star is seen or in the first watch of the night or in the second and at dawn or when a part of the disc of the sun just appears on the horizon or after the sun comes up. The house-holder performs Agnihotra after finishing his Sandhya adoration. There is a difference of opinion, some holding that the homa in the Grhya fire should precede the Agnihotra in the Vedic fires while others hold that it should come after the Vedic Agnihotra. The house-holder after performing Sandhya follows either of two modes; goes towards the Āhavaniya through the space between the places of the Garhyapatya and Dakṣiṇāgni or by route to the south of these two fire places and having gone round the Āhavaniya sits down to the south in his usual place and the wife also sits in her place. The house-holder then sips water with the words "Vidyudasī Vidyā me pāmānām rīvat satyam upaimi mai śraddhā". The wife also sips water. Then both wife and husband should observe silence till the Agnihotra is gone through.

A man who has no wife can perform the daily Agnihotra. The Adhvaryu performs Parisamūhana (wiping with the wet hand from the north-east to the north) thrice for the three fires. He strews round the Āhavaniya fire darbha grass in such a way that the darbhas to the south and west have their ends turned to the north and of those to
the north and south turned to the east and the strewing proceeds from the east then to the south, then to the west, then to the north. In the same way he strews darbha grass round the garbhapatya and daksinagni. Taking water in his right hand, he sprinkles it round the ahavaniya first, beginning from the north-west and ending in the north. Then he walks towards the west pouring continuous flow of water from the ahavaniya up to the garhyapatya. He then sprinkles the garhyapatya from left to right and pours a little water on the daksinagni. Asvalayana says that the mantra in Paryuksana is: "tatasatyabhya tvā paryuksam" and each fire is sprinkled thrice. Water being taken freshly at each time and the mantra being repeated each time and that sprinkling may first be done round the daksinagni, then round garhyapatya and then ahavaniya.

The homa is performed with cow's milk for him who performs agnihotra as a sacred duty and not for any particular reward in view, but one who desires to secure a village or plenty of food or strength or brilliance may employ respectively yavagu, cooked rice, curds or classified butter. Then an order is issued to the person engaged to milk the agnihotra cow that stands to the south of the sacrificial ground with her face to the east or north and that has a male calf. At the time of milking the calf is removed and milking is done. The person to milk the cow should not be a sudra but Apastamba allows even a sudra to milk the cow, while Baudhayana says that he must be a Brāhmaṇa. Rules are laid down about the udders from which milk is to be drawn and about persons for whom it is to be drawn. The milking
is not to be begun by pressing the udders, but by making the calf suck them first. Milking is to be begun the moment the sun sets. The vessel in which milk is to be held is of earthenware manufactured by an arya, but without using a wheel and vessel must have a wide mouth and straight sides and not slanting ones. It is called agnihotrassthati. The Adhvaryu takes from the garhyapatya fire some burning coals for boiling the milk and keeps them to the north of the garhyapatya in a separate spot. Then he goes near the cow, holds the vessel in which the cow has been milked. He brings it towards the east of the ahavaniya, sits to the west of the garhyapatya and heats the vessel on the burning coals mentioned above. He takes a darbha blade, kindles it and holding it over the milk illuminates the milk with its light. He then takes water in a sruva and sprinkles water one drop or some drops into the boiling milk. He should then again hold a burning blade over the hot milk and light it up. He does this thrice and then casts away the blade to the north. Then the pot of milk is slowly lifted with three mantras and drawn down to the north from the burning coals. Then the burning coals on which the milk was boiled or heated are thrown back in the garhyapatya fire. Then a sruva and sruk both made of bikankata wood are cleaned with the hand and are heated in the garhyapatya. He then again heats the sruk and sruva on the garhyapatya, asks the yajaman - 'shall I take out milk from the pot and the yajaman replies standing 'yes, do take out". Then the adhvaryu holds in his right hand the sruva ladle and in his left hand the agnihotra havam with its mouth turned
upward, pours out into the agnihotra havam milk from the milk pot four times and keeps the sruva in the pot.

In Āpastamba VI, 7. 7. 8 and Āsvalāyana II. 3. 13-14, it is said that the adhvaryu knowing the mind of the house-holder should draw the fullest ladle for the most favourite son of the sacrificer or if the latter desires that the eldest son should be most prosperous then the last ladle drawing is the fullest. Then the adhvaryu carrying a samidh of palāsa wood a span in length over the rod of the sruk towards the āhavaniya holding it as high as his nose. In the midst of the distance between the garhyapatya and āhavaniya he brings the sruk down and then again raising it up as high as his mouth, he reaches the āhavaniya and places the sruk and samidh on darbha blades to the west of the āhavaniya. He himself sits to the north-west of the āhavaniya, facing the east, bends his knees, holds sruk in his left hand and with the right hand offers the samidh in the midst of the āhavaniya fire with the mantra - "rājatam tvagnijyotisam". Then he sips water with the mantra "vidyudasi vidyāme pāpmānam ṛta satyam upaimī". When the samidh has caught fire and is burning brightly, he offers the first oblation on the samidh about two finger-breadths from its root with the mantra "om bhūr bhuvah svarom, agnirjotirjyotirogni svāhā". According to Katyāyana - he may optionally repeat the mantra 'sajurdevena'.

According to Āpastamba VI. 10. 8 in the evening agnihotra the mantra is agnirjotir etc., while in the evening agnihotra it is - 'sūryojyotirjyotih sūryah svāhā' (Vaj. S. III.9). Then he
places the sruk on the kusa blades and looks at the ārghyapatiya with the thought "bestow on me cattle". Then he again takes up the sruk, makes a second offering of milk which is larger in measure than the first one. But this is offered silently while he contemplates upon Prajāpati in his mind. This second offering is made to the east or north of the first in such a way that the two will not come in contact. He keeps more milk in the sruk than what is taken up in making the second offering. He then raises the sruk twice in such a way that the flames of the fire turn northwards and places the sruk on the kurca. He scours with his hand turned downwards the spout of the ladle and then rubs his hand to which some drops of the milk stick on the north side of the kurca with the words: - 'Salutation to the gods', or to you for securing cattle. Āpastamba VI. 10. 10 says that he scours in the evening the sruk from the end of the handle down to the bowl with the mantra 'īṣe tvā' and in the morning from the handle to the end of the ladle with the mantra 'ūrja tvā'. Then while the palm is turned upwards and while he wears his sacred thread in the prācināvīta mode he places his fingers to the south of the roots of the kusa blades on the ground silently or with the mantra - 'svadhā pitṛbhyah' or 'avadhā pitṛbhyah pitṛn jīva'. Then he sips water with his face turned to the east. Then he walks to the place of ārghyapatya, takes a fuel stick in his hand while standing. He then sits down to the north-west of the ārghyapatya with his face turned towards the east. He bends his knee and offers the samiddh in the ārghyapatya fire then drawing out in the
sruva milk from the pot offers it into the fire with a mantra 'ta asya sudado' sah'. According to Asvalayana 11.3.26 or 'iha puṣṭim puṣtipatiḥ puṣtipataye svāhā'. He offers a or with the words 'bhūrbhuvah suprajaḥ prajabhīḥ syām suviro viraiḥ supoṣāḥ posaiḥ' and with at least any three verses addressed to Agni and with the verses 'agnā ayumśi pavase' Rg. IX. 66. 19-21. Then he offers one oblation of milk with the sruva ladle into the daksināgni with the words 'annadayaannapataye svāhā' and a second one silently. He then touches water, turns northwards and with one of his fingers he takes out what remains in the sruk and licks the contents of the vessel or his palm once with his tongue. According to Baudhāyana and Āpastamba he holds the sruk in such a way that its rod is turned east or north and licks the sruk itself twice, fills it with water; pours down to the west the water from the ladle with the mantra propitiate those who partake of bearing sips water wipes the agnipraharalam with darbha blades. Then he washes his hand performs ācamana twice, goes near the water from the ladle to the north of the āhavanīya with the words 'deva jinva', he repeats the same process again and wearing the sacred thread in the prācināvīta form and turning to the south he pours water to the south of the āhavanīya for the pītrā with the words 'pitrā jinva'. He then repeats the same process as for gods and sprinkles water upwards in the north east a third time with the words 'saptarṣiṃ jinva'. He fills the sruk a fourth time removes the darbhas from the place (kuṟcaṭṭhāṇā) where they were placed to the west of the āhavanīya, pours down water on that place thrice, so as to end the stream in the east or north. He then heats the sruk and
srava on the āhavanīya fire together and keeps them on the antarvedi
or hands them over to an attendant. He then offers three samidhs to
each of the three fires in the order in which he performed paryuksana
(i.e., in the order āhavanīya, garhāpatya, daksināgni or garhāpatya,
daksināgni; āhavanīya). After this the house-holder engages in wait-
ing upon agni with vatsopra prayers or in a brief worship by repeating
only 'bhūrbhuvah svah, etc. Then he pays silent homage to the
āhavanīya and sits near the garhāpatya. Then he performs paryuksana
for all the fires, then the house-holder breaks silence and performs
ācamana and then when goes out he contemplates in mind the daksināgni.
The wife of also performs ācamana at the end silently.

According to Katyāyana (IV. 12. 1-2) the upasthāna of the
fires in the evening after oblations are offered in agnihotra with the
vatsapra mantras is optional and the house-holder may simply repeat
one verse. Āpastamba prescribes as upasthāna the six verses -
'upaprayanto' and several others which are passed over for want of
space. There were several views about upasthāna. Some holding that
upasthāna was to be performed only in the evening and not in the
morning. Others holding that it was to be performed at both times
but only with the vatsapra mantras or with the Gosūkta (Rg. VI. 28)
or Asvāsūkta.

Āpastamba VI. 15. 10-13 has certain interesting rules about
agnihotra in the case of ksatriyas. At first he says a ksatriya
should permanently maintain the āhavanīya fire but he does not perform
agnihotra daily. He should however send food from his house to a
brahmana at the time when agnihotra is ordinarily performed, whereby he secures the performance of agnihotra, but the adhvaryu should make the rajanya recite the mantras of the worship of fire. A rajanya however, who has performed soma yajña and always speaks the truth may perform agnihotra daily. Āśvalāyana says that a kṣatriya (and a vaisya) may perform agnihotra on the new Moon and full Moon days, that on other days he should send cooked food for a brahmana who is devoted to his duties and that a kṣatriya or vaisya who always abides by truth (in thought and word) and has offered a soma sacrifice may engage in daily agnihotra. It is probable that these rules were made to allow more time to kṣatriyas and vaisyas for their chief occupations. According to Āpastamba VI. 15. 14-16, Āśvalāyana II. 4. 2-4 and others the house-holder should everyday personally perform the agnihotra, but if he cannot do that, he must do it personally at least on parva days and on other days a priest, a pupil or a son may perform his agnihotra for him. The procedure in the morning agnihotra is the same as the evening agnihotra except in a few details, e. g., the paryuksana mantra in the morning is different in Āśvalāyana II. 4. 25. satyartha-bhyām tvā, etc., the samidh is offered into fire in the morning with the mantra 'harinim tvā sūryajyotising aharistakam upadadhe svāhā. The mantra offering an oblation of milk in the fire in the morning is bhūrbhuvah svarom, sūryo jyotir jyotih sūryoh svāhā', while in the evening the word 'agnih' is substituted for sūryah.

The sutras set out rules about what the house-holder is to do when he leaves his homa for one night or for a longer period.
According to Asvalayana the important rules are: he kindles the fires into flames. He sips water (acamana) and performs the worship of the āhāvanīya, ġārhyaapatya and daksīṇāgni by going near them and repeating respectively the three mantras 'sāmīdya pāsun mē pāhi', 'nārya prājām mē pāhi' and atharva 'pītṛn mē pāhi'. Then while standing near the daksīṇāgni he should look at the other two with the mantra - 'imān mē mitravarnān grhan gopayata . . . punarāyanat'. He then traces the same way back and comes to the āhāvanīya and offers worship to it with mantra - 'māma nama'. He should then start on his journey without looking back at his fires and should utter the hymn "mā prāṇama". When he reaches a place from which the root of his fire-house is not visible he may break silence. On reaching the road leading from his house to his destination he should recite 'sādā sugah'. When he returns from his journey to his village, he should repeat 'api panthām'. He then observes silence, takes fuel sticks in his hand and on learning that his fires have been kindled into flames by his son or pupil, he should look at the āhāvanīya with two verses. Then placing the samidhs he does homage to the āhāvanīya with the verse 'māma nama tava ca' and then he places samidhs on the āhāvanīya, ġārhyaapatya and daksīṇāgni with one mantra each.

These rules apply when the house-holder alone goes on a journey leaving the wife at home. When the house-holder is away alone it is his duty to perform all actions at the time of agnihotra and Darsapūrṇāmasa which he can perform without his fires and to go mentally through the whole procedure and observe all vratas. When the
house-holder goes on a journey alone he should entrust his fires to his wife and should appoint a priest to perform the necessary rites. When the house-holder starts on a journey accompanied by his wife he should take his fires with him. If both husband and wife go on a journey without taking their fires with them, then a priest cannot offer the agnihotra homa in their absence and on return the house-holder has to again set up the fires, has to perform punaradhana. Thus basically it conceives the idea of vrata though not in the fuller connotation of the term.

Pindapitryajna is so called because balls of rice is offered to the pitrs in this rite. According to Jaimini IV. 4. 19-21, this is an independent rite and not a mere subordinate part of the dharma sacrifice. On the otherhand several writers hold that it was a subordinate part of dharma sacrifice.

Pindapitryajna is performed on amavasya day when the moon cannot be seen and its distance from the sun is the least, in the last third part of the day or when only the rays of the sun are visible on the tops of trees. The 'carṇa' (boiled rice) is cooked in the daksināgni and the oblation is offered in the same. In this and other ways a contrast is brought out between rites for gods and Manes. He kindles a blade on the daksina fire and carried it to the south-east of that fire with the mantra 'yeva rupani erti'. All actions are to be done facing the south-east unless otherwise specified. The darbha grass is served at one stroke and is brought with or without
its roots. Strewing round the dakšināgni darbha grass with their
ends turned to the south in the case of those that are placed to the
north. He places to the north-east or to the darbhas to the north.
He places to the north-east or the north-west of the dakšināgni
singly the yajñapātra, required in this rite on darbha grass viz.,
carusthālī, sūrpa, sphya, motor and pestle, sruva, dhruva, entelope
skin, fuel sticks cut off at one stroke, meksana, kamandalu and what­
ever else may be necessary. The Adhvaryu going to the south of the
sakata fills the carusthālī that is placed on the sūrpa with paddy
to the brim and removes the grains on to the sūrpa. The mortar is
then placed on the back antelope skin and the wife with her face to
the south-east beats with the pestle the paddy grains taken out in
the carusthālī and removes the husks by means of the winnowing basket.
The grain are washed once and cooked on the dakṣīna fire without try­
ing to separate the husked grains from the unhusked ones. He should
draw with the sphya a line between the gārhyapatyā and dakšināgni
fires or to the south-east of the latter with the words 'the asuras
and evil spirits that occupy the vedi are scattered away.' He should
then sprinkle that line with water, spread round it the darbha grass,
take clarified butter in the dhruva spoon, place it to the south of
the dakšināgni sprinkle on the mess of cooked rice clarified butter
from the dhruva. He places to the south of the dakšināgni, colly­
rium, unguents, a mat and a pillow. Wearing the sacred thread in the
pracīnavita form he offers to the fire the idhma. He takes a portion
of the boiled rice with the meksana, pours clarified butter over it,
cuts off two portions of the rice on it, again sprinkles clarified butter over the portions and the rice from which they are taken, offers into the daksina fire one abuti with the words 'Agnaye kabya-vahanaya svadha namah'. He then throws the meksana on the fire. Then on the line made with the sphya he sprinkles water thrice with the mantra - 'Sundhantam pitarah, sundhantam pitamahah, sundhantam prapitamahah'. He offers three balls of rice on that line one after another with the hand sideways with appropriate. As for example, the first to the father with the words 'this is for you father'. The pinda for the great grand father is the biggest of the three, that for the grand father being larger than that for the father. There was a difference of opinion among the teachers as to the procedure when any of the three ancestors was living. Gaganan holds that pindas were offered only to the deceased ancestors and he who was living was only honoured. Taulavali opines that pindas were to be offered to three ancestors whether living or dead and Gautama states that if any ancestor out of the three above the sacrificer was alive, three pindas were to be offered and an ancestor beyond the great grand father may be included. Avalayana refutes these views by saying that no pindas can be offered to any ancestor beyond the great grand father and none to those who are alive nor to any ancestor intervenes but the pindas meant for ancestor that are alive may be thrown into fire. Apastamba in his I. 9. 8 says if the house-holder's father be living he should not offer pindas but should stop after he performs the homa. If he has two fathers or grand fathers or great grand fathers he
should take two names, with reference to the pindas offered to the ancestor. He invokes the pindas with a formula 'there you may regale yourselves, O pitrs and may you partake according to your shares', when the pindas are placed on the line referred to above. Then he faces the north turning round, sits down holding his breath till he feels exhausted, then again turns round and faces the pindas and utters a convocation 'the pitrs have regaled themselves and have partaken according to their shares'. He smells the boiled rice. Then again he offers water with the words 'sundhantam', etc. On the line made with the sphya, he puts on the three pindas one after another, the unguents and collyrium respectively with the words 'asau abhya-viksasva' and 'asau anksva'. He should then place as garment on each of the pindas the hem of a garment or woolen tuft or a hair from his own body if he is beyond fifty years of age with the words 'O pitrs this is the garment for you, may you not come in contact with any other than this'. Then he should wait upon the pitrs with salutation and matter the mantra 'salutation to you pitrs for food, salutation to you pitrs for strength and also the three verses 'manonva huvahabe'. He should then make the pitrs start forward on a stream of water with the mantra - 'O well disposed pitrs! may you depart away by the ancient and awe-inspiring paths, after bestowing on us wealth and welfare. May you send down to us prosperity including all manly song'. He should walk a little towards the daksinagni with the verse Rg. IV. 10. 1. and then towards the garhyapatya with the mantra - 'May the garhyapatya fire deliver me from whatever sin I may have committed against Heaven and Earth or parents and may the same fire make me
"sinless". He should take hold of the middle pinda with the word - 'O pitrs ! bestow on me a valiant son! and should make his wife eat that ball of rice with the mantra - 'O pitrs ! may you deposit an embryo that will be a sound boy wearing a lotus wreath, so that he may be unhurt'. The other two pindas may be thrown into fire or water or a person who has recently lost all appetite for food may eat the two or one who is harassed by some incurable disease may eat them, the result being that he is either cured or dies. - Katyāyana - IV. 1. 20 adds that the Adhvaryu collects the pindas in a pot and the house-holder bends down and takes the smell thereof. Then the darbha blades taken out with one stroke are thrown in the fire. The utensils are sprinkled with water and then taken up in twos and laid aside.

A house-holder who had not consecrated the three vedic fires also had to perform the Pindapitryajna on amavasya but he offered it in Grhya fire. Gautama V. 5. prescribes that a house-holder should at least daily offer water to the pītr̥̄s and do more according to his ability and inclination. In post-vedic period we come across quite a number of vratas where the offering of balls of rice (following the pattern of the Pindapitryajna) plays a prominent role. The Ananta-pindada vrata practised in the eastern part of India deserves mention in this connection. There the person concerned has to observe fast and offer one hundred and one rice balls sprinkled with honey, milk and clarified butter to his departed father, grand father and great grand father.
CATURMASYA YAGA: According to Asvalayana 11. 14. 1 the term Istyayana comprehends the caturmasya, Turayana, Dakṣayana and other āstis. The caturmasya are three — viz., Vaisvadeva, Varunapraghāsa, Sakamedha (and Sunāsiriya). Each of these is called a parvan of the caturmasya. They are called caturmasya because each of them takes place after four months. They are performed respectively on the full moon days of Phālguna, of Āsara, Kartika and on the fifth full moon from the day on which the Sakamedha is performed or two or three days before it. They indicate the advent of three seasons, viz., Vasanta, Varga and Hemanta.

If the Vaisvadevaparva is performed on Caitra full Moon, then the Varunapraghāsa and Sakamedha will be performed on Sravana and Margasirsa full moon days respectively.

According to Asvalayana, on the day previous to the full moon of Phālguna when beginning the caturmasya he performs an āsti for Vaisvanāra and Parjanya. According to Katyāyana V. 1. 2. there is an option viz., he may perform this āsti or the anvarambhaniya āsti. Then on the full moon day he performs the Vaisvadeva āsti in the morning and then performs the Purṇamāsa āsti. According to the commentary on Katyāyana V. 9. the Vaisvadeva āsti is performed in the morning of the first day after full moon and then follows the Purṇamāsa āsti of Phālguna. The sacrificer has to keep certain observances on all the Parvans of the caturmasyas viz., he has to shave his head and face, to sleep on the ground (not on a cot), to avoid honey, meat, salt, sexual intercourse and decorations of the
body. There is an option as to shaving the moustaches and beard, viz., he should only shave on the first and last parvan or may do so on all four. There are five offerings common to all caturmasyas, viz., a purodāsa (cake) on eight potsherds for Agni, boiled rice (caru) for soma, a purodāsa on 12 or 8 potsherds (12 according to Taj. S. M. 8. 2) for savitṛ (upāmsu, inaudibly) a caru for saraswati, a caru of finely ground rice for pusan. The reward secured by the performance of the caturmasyas is heaven. The caturmasyas may be performed throughout life or for one year only.

In the introductory isti to Vaisvānara and Parjanya, there is a cake prepared on twelve potsherds for Vaisvānara and caru for Parjanya. The amuvākyā verses (according to Asvalāyana) for the two are Vaisvānaro ajijanadagnir, etc. (sets out the whole) and Parjanyāya pragayāta respectively and yājya verses respectively are 'Prasto divi' and 'Pravatavante' (Rg. V. 83. 4). In the Vaisvādeva Parvan itself there are (besides the fire offerings common to all caturmasyas) three more offerings, viz., a cake (purodāsa) on seven potsherds for Marut Svatavas (self strong) or for the Maruts, a payasya (or Amiksā, according to Band V. I) to the all gods (Viṣṇu devaḥ) and a cake on a single potsherd to Dyāvāprthivī (Heaven and Earth). Katyāyana requires that this Vaisvādeva parvan should be performed in a spot which is inclined towards the east, that the sacrificer and his wife each put on two fresh and unknown garments.

1 Asvalāyana Srauta Sutra - 11/15/7.
2 Rg. Veda - 7/102/1.
3 Ibid., - 1/98/2.
which they have to wear again at the Varunapraghasaparvan. Katyāṇa
following Satapatha Brāhmaṇa says that barhīs is tied up in three
bunches separately with a rope of grass and then all three bunches
are tied together with a bigger rope and therein is thrust a bunch
of following kusa grass which is to be used as prastāra. After
putting the yajñapātras on the sacrificial ground, fire is produced
by churning of the aranis. Being directed by the Adhvaryu the hotr
priest repeats at the time of churning fire the verses Rg. I. 24. 3,
I. 22. 13, VI. 16. 13-15. He stops till he receives another direc-
tion from the adhvaryu. If fire is not produced at once the hotr
should go on repeating the hymn Rg. X. 118. till fire is struck from
the aranis. On hearing from the Adhvaryu that fire is produced and
that he should repeat a formula for that event, the hotr repeats the
last pada of Rg. VI. 16. 15 at which he had stopped. Then he should
repeat Rg. I. 74. 3 and stop repeating half of Rg. VI. 16. 40. then
recite Rg. VI. 16. 41-42, I. 12. 6., VIII. 43. 14., the verse —
'tamarjayanta sukram' and then repeat Rg. X. 90. 16 as the paridha-
niya. There are nine Prayājas and nine anuyājas in the Vaisvadeva
parvan, while in the Darsapurnāmasa there are only five Prayājas and
three Anuyājas. The number nine of the Prayājas is made up by adding
before the fifth prayāja of the Darsapurnāmasa four. Rg. Vedas V.
82. 7. and VI. 71. 6. are the anuvākyā and yātya for the offering to
Savitri. Rg. VI. 54. 9. and VI. 58. 1. for that to Puran and Rg. VI.
59. 11. and VI. 66. 9. for that to Maruts. The nine anuyājas are made
up by adding after the first anuyāja of the Darsapurnāmasa six more.
After the anuyājas or after the Śūktavāka or Samyuvāka, an offering
of vājina is made to the deities called vajins. The remainder of
the vājina is brought in a vessel and is dealt with in the same way
as ida. The vessel is then raised as high as the mouth or nose.
The Hotr should request the other priests in order to repeat an
invocation with a mantra and then the Hotr, Adhvanyu, Brahma and
Agniagnidhyva partake of the vājina by merely smelling. The sacrifi-
cer partakes the vājina actually. Katyayana adds that the Adhvaryu
offers three offerings called Samista yājas respectively to Vata,
Yajna and Yajnapati with three mantras or only one Samista yājas may
be offered in Vaisvadeva and Sunāstriya parvans. According to the
Satapatha Brāhmaṇa the dakṣina in this rite is the first born calf
of the season. Katyayana further says that the sacrificer may on
finishing each of the three caturmasyas shave himself. Āmikṣa is the
principal purpose of mixing curds in boiling milk and not vajina and
in VIII. 2. 1-9 that in offering vajina the procedure of īṣṭi is to
be followed and not of Somayāga though Śruti in one passage states
'Soma vai vajinaṁ.'

All these Vedic rituals may be entitled as the earlier form
of the vrataś. The Vratas which are found in the modern societies
are no doubt the modified forms of these vedic rituals. The Tantric
Kumārī Vrata is certainly a significant elaboration of this parvan
of caturmasyaśa which has been explained above.

We may go through some other Vedic rituals Varunapraghāṣaśa is
one of the caturmasya forms. The word Varunapraghāṣaśa is masculine
and is always employed in the plural. The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa explain-
ed this term from etymological viewpoint that Yavas belong to Varuna and as these are eaten (from 'ghaśa' to eat) in this rite, it is so called. This rite is performed in the rainy season four months after Vaisvadeva on the full moon day of Asāḍa or Sravana. The sacrificer should go out of his house to a spot where plenty of shrubs grow. Two altars have to be prepared to the east of the abhāvanīya inclined towards the east one south of the other. The northern vedi is in charge of the Adhvaryu and the southern one in charge of his assistant, the pratiprasthātri. In doing the same actions on the southern vedi that are done by the adhvaryu on the northern vedi the latter follows the adhvaryu. Jaimini in XII. 1. 18 says that the mantras for taking ājya for proksana and the like are to be recited by the two separately. The procedure is like that of Vaisvadeva parvan except where special directions are given. There is a single utkara. The pratiprasāstr moves between the two vedis. He makes ready pots full of karāmbha on the previous day. As per Āpastamba's view these karāmbhapātras should be made by the wife. The number of these pātras should exceed the number of the children of the house-holder by one. The figures of a ram and ewe are also made of the remaining part of the ground and fried barely used for the Karāmbhapātra. The male being made by the adhvaryu and the female by the pratiprasāstr and each figure having the characteristic sign of sex. The figures of the ram and ewe are covered by the adhvaryu and pratiprasāstr respectively with a bunch of the wool of some animal. Other than the edaka or with the ground of tops of
Besides the fire offerings common to all caturmāsya in this rite offerings viz., Indra, Agni, the Maruts and Varuna. All offerings made of yava or only the karambhāpātras are so made and the rest from rice grains. The anuvākyā and yājyā verses of each of these four special offerings to Indrāgni, Maruts, Varuna and Ka respectively are to be made. Straight to the east of the ahavaniya, about three prakarmas from it the northern vedi is prepared and several rules are laid down in Katyayana V. 3. 13. The northern vedi is six or seven aratnas in length from west to east. Its western side is four aratnas and its eastern side is of three aratnas or the vedi may be even much larger than this. On this vedi a fire place is constructed with the earth dug up from the sacrificial pit called catvāla which is measured with a yoke pin thirtytwo angulas in length and made to the east of the utkara and after leaving a space between it and the utkara for the priests to move about. The pit is knee-deep, outside the uttaravedi to its east and is measured from the northern corner. In the midst of the northern vedi a hole is made, a span in length or four sides and having four corners. On the uttaravedi water is sprinkled with a mantra and a gravel is also spread with 'a lioness art Thou'. The uttaravedi in that night is covered with darbhās. In the morning the adhvaryu and pratiprasthatr carry forward fire on the two vedis from the garhyapatya or from ahavaniya by means of kindled fuel sticks held in earthen pots or by dividing the ahavaniya in two parts.
Jayamangala declares that the carrying forward of the fire is done only in the Varunapraghasa and Sakamedhas. The Pratiprassthathra draws a line from ahavaninya to garhyapatya with a sphya. He surrounds the hole with three sticks, one span long of devadaru tree on the west, south and north and puts down thereon perfumed substances and the hair on the head or between the horns of a ram and places the fires on these materials. The pratiprassthathra places daksinā fire on a square mound of one aratni in length after drawing lines and sprinkling water. The figure of the ram is put in the payasya meant for Maruts and that of the ewe in the payasya meant for Varuṇa. The liquid called vajina is collected in separate pots and in the payasya are put the fruit of karīra and leaves of sami. All the offerings except the payasya for Maruts together with the pot for ājya and also the karambha pot on the southern vedī and the vajina is placed near the utkara by both. When the adhvaryu issues a direction to the āgnidhra with the ropes binding the idhma the pratiprassthathra goes to the sacrificer’s wife sitting near the garhyapatya and asks her to declare what lover or lovers she has.

The pots are placed in a surpa made of igika in which a little ājya is sprinkled. There is further sprinkling of ājya thereon twice (abhig̣ḥaraṇa) the surpa is placed on the head of the wife who is led by the pratiprassthathra between the fires and the seats of the Brahma priest and the sacrificer to the east of both ahavaniyas and then to the northern vedī; and she standing to the east of the daksinā fire with her face to the west takes down from her head the surpa into her
right hand and offers the contents (using the surpa as a juhu ladle) into the daksīnā fire with 'mosuna indratra' (Ṛg. I. 173. 12, Vaj. S. III. 46 or Tai. S. 1. 8. 3. 1) muttered by the sacrificer and with the verse 'yad grāme' (Vaj. S. III. 45, Tai S. 1. 8. 3. 1) uttered by the wife as offering prayer (yājya). Āpastamba (VIII. 6. 26) says that the adhvaryu prātiprastātṛ may offer the oblation of karambha pots and the sacrificer and his wife may only touch his hand from behind when the prātiprastātṛ leads back the wife to her seat near the gūrhya-patya fire (by the same way that she came) he makes her repeat the verse 'ākran karmā' (Vaj. S. III. 47, Tai S. 1. 8. 3. 1.) Then the adhvaryu offers the fire offerings common to all cāturmāsya (stated above) and the cake to Indra and Agni on twelve potsherds and then sits silent. The prātiprastātṛ cuts off a portion of the āmikṣā for Maruts together with the whole of the figure of the ewe (this is the first avadana) and offers it into fire. He mixes the second portion of the pāvasya for Marut with the leaves of samī and fruits of Kārīra and offers it. Then the adhvaryu offers two portions from the āmikṣā meant for Varuna mixing the figure of ram in the first or second avadana for Varuna. According to Āpastamba the adhvaryu offers the first portion of the pāvasya along with the figure of the ram and the second portion of pāvasya having in it the fruit of Kārīra and the leaves of samī. Then the adhvaryu offers the cake to Ka silently. Then both adhvaryu and prātiprastātṛ make an offering to Agni Svistakrt. The fee (daksīnā) is either a cow with its calf or a horse or

5 Āpastamba Srauta Sūtra, VIII/6/31.
six or twelve bulls. 2461.

The rite is concluded by the priests and the sacrificer and his wife going for a bath (avabhrtha) in a river or the like taking with them the remainder of payasya for Varuna and the scrapings from the pan that are treated like the refuse (ṛjisa of soma). The remainder of payasya serves as havis (sacrificial offering) at the avabhrtha, a portion of which is offered to Varuna and the whole of what remains is offered to Agni and Varuna instead of to Agni Svistakrt. The sacrificer and his wife silently come to the water, throw into the water the scrapings (nīskāsa) that are placed in a vessel (sthālī) with a mantra (Vāj. S. III. 48, according to Kātyāyana Vājasanayīsamhita 30 and 'Samudretē' Taittāryasyaṃhitā 1. 4. 45. 2, according to Āpastamba VIII. 8. 12). They do not plunge their heads into water but only splash water over their heads and rub each other's backs with water. They then put on new clothes and make a gift of the clothes so far worn (that they had already worn at the Vāśvavadeva-parvan) to one of the (five) priests or to another (worthy) person at their pleasure. After returning to the house the sacrificer puts a fuel-stick on the āhavaniya (with Vāj. S. VIII. 27). Jai (VII. 3. 12-15) states that this avabhrtha has the same characteristics as the avabhrtha in the Somayāga and that the material offered therein is the scrapings from the Pan and not the purodāsa.

Thus it is observed that essentially the principle underlying this Vedic ritual is 'tyāga' i.e., 'nedam mama, tavaiva idam bhavatu'.
(this is not nine, let it belong to you). Some of the latter vratas, e. g., Haritālika vrata, Madanabhānjika vrata are also imbued with that spirit. Thus there cannot be two opinions in it when we say that the kernel of the vratas is embedded in the different Vedic sacrifices.

Sākamedha : This third parvan of the caturmāyasyas is described at great length in Apastamba and Katyayana. Only a few salient features are brought out below. 'Sākamedha' is used in the plural, since there are many rites therein and many and varied types of offerings are contained herein. It literally means 'kindling along with or at the same time' (sākam edha). The name is probably given because the first offering in it is a cake or eight potsherds offered to Agni Anikavat with the rising sun. It is performed four months after the Varunaprāghāsa on the full moon day of Karttika or Margasirsa (accordingly as the Vaisvadeva parvan was performed on the full moon of Phalguna or Caitra). The whole of this parvan requires two days. On the day previous to the full moon there are three iṣṭas offered at the three Savanas (morning, midday and evening) to the three deities respectively viz., to Agni Anikavata cake on eight potsherds in the morning to Santapana, Maruta caru (oblation of cooked rice) at midday, to Grhaemedhin. Maruts in the evening a caru boiled in the milk of all cows belonging to the sacrificer.

If plenty of rice is cooked the priests and the sons and grandsons of the sacrificer (who have had the upanayana performed) eat the food.

7 Katyayana Srauta Sūtra - 5/6/1.
8 Apastamba - 8/2/8-10; Katyayana 5/6/29-30.
to satiety and go to sleep that night in the same hall without indulging in any talk about poverty or hunger. Jaimini refers to the text 'agnaye anikavate pratar aștakapalah' and states as the conclusion that all the three rites are performed on one day and no part of the three is to be performed the next day. On that night the milch cows are let loose to mix up among their calves (which can then drink the milk of their mothers without let or hindrance). He, however, binds down, that calf which is required for milking the cow that has lost its own calf (and which is to be milked the next morning for the offerings to the Manes). That night and in the next morning Agnihotra is performed with rice gruel (and not with milk). On the next day (the principal day of Sākamedha) the sacrificer either before or after the daily agnihotra, performs a homa with a darvī taking a portion of the boiled rice sticking to the bottom of the sthāli (pot) that had been cooked for the offering to grahamdhin Maruts the previous evening. He fills the darvī (tadle) with a mantra. Then the adhvaryu directs the yajamana to fetch a bull and make it bellow. When the bull bellows he takes up the rice in the darvī and offers the same into fire with a mantra. If the bull does not bellow, then the oblation is offered after the Brahma priest directs 'offer'. Asvalayana states that homa may be offered (if the bull does not bellow) at the thunder of a cloud or some make the aṣnīdhva calling him 'brahmaputra' (the son of the brahma priest, whose assistant he is).

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9 Mimamsa Sutra - 5/1/19-22.


12 Asvalayana Srauta Sutra - 2/18/11-12.
The bull is given as fee to the adhvaryu. Then an isti is offered to krdin Maruts with a cake cooked on seven potsherds and a çaru to Aditi. This is followed by a mahāhavis (a great offering) which consists of eight offerings to eight deities. There are five offerings common to all caturmāisyas, the sixth offering is a cake on twelve potsherds to Indra and Agni, the seventh is caru to Mahendra (or according to Asvalāyana II. 18. 18. to Indra or Vṛtrahān Indra or Mahendra), the eighth is a cake on one potsherd to Viśvakuṭāman.

According to Āpastamba he offers the eighth offering of a cake after taking the names of the four months Sahas, Sahasya, Tapas and Tapasya (i. e., Margasira to Phālguni). A bull is the fee of this Mahāhavis (or a cow according to Āpastamba).

Besides the five offerings common to all caturmāisyas, the special offerings in this ēsti are a cake on twelve potsherds to Sunāśvan and to Indra Sunāśiva, an oblation of fresh warm milk direct from the cow to Vāyu, a cake on one potsherd to Surya. There is no uttaravedi in this rite, and no fire is produced by attrition. There are fire prayājas, three anuyājas and one samistyāyajā. The daksīna for the rite is a plough with six bulls or two big bulls and for the cake to Surya a white horse or a white full.

Sunāsirān occurs in the Rg. VI. 57. 6 and 8. In Rg. VI. 57. 4 and 8 the word sunam occurs several times. The meaning is doubtful. Yāska explained the words Suna and Siva means Vāyu and Aditya respectively.
Agrayana is an ēsti without performing which an ahitagni was not to make use of freshly harvested rice, barley and millet. It was either performed on a new moon day or full moon day, but the procedure was the same as that of the ēsti on new moon. The time of agrayana ēsti with rice is Sarat (Autumn) when one had ample rains. As barley and hardy awned cereal become ready in Vasanta (Spring), the agrayana for yavas was to be performed in Spring. The ēsti was so called because here the first fruit is first employed or eaten. Apastamba opines that there are seventeen kindling verses named Samidhem. This particular number is obtained by inserting two additional verses called dhāyya after the eighth or ninth Samidhem of the Darsapurnamāsa ēsti. The deities and offerings are a cake on twelve potsherds for Indra and Agni, a caru cooked in milk or water for all gods.

The agrayana sacrifice will have been noticed that it was a replica of the Srauta sacrifice meant for those who had consecrated the three Vedic fires.

In the Srauta Sutras there are several rules for the performance of different ēstis on the occurrence of certain events or for the purpose of securing some desired object. Asvalayana in 11.10-14, Apastamba XIX. 18-27 and others mention several such ēstis viz., the Ayuskamesti, the Svāstyayani, the Putrakamesti, Lokamesti, Mahavairaji, etc.

Thus taking all these into consideration it is quite reasonable to hold that the germs of the vratas are already there in the Vedic sacrifices which need further analytical and critical study in the light of the different Brāhmanas and Srauta Sutras.