CHAPTER V

ASURAS AND VEDA S CRITICS
ASURAS AND VEDIC SACRIFICES

(1) Asuras as performers of the sacrifices

The Asuras are described as performers of Vedic sacrifices. They are said to have the whole sacrifice and the priests to perform it. Their priests are variously named as Śaṅga & Marka, Uṣāma Kavi, Parāvasu, Kilēta & Ānuti, who performed various sacrifices for them. Śautraṃśi, Vidadvasu sacrifice, Ukhya, etc. were with them. They also attained the lotus, established the fire and performed Agni-ādhanā. They

1. जुरेँदुः वेय का बाहीपुँ | Ṭa. VI. 3. 7. 2; Cf. Ms. III. 8. 3; Ks. XXI. 11; Kap. Katha. XXI. 1; जूरेँदुः वेय का बाहीपुँ | Ṭa. Br. VIII. 6. 6.
2. कृत्यन्त निवाणां दुरैपित वाहोधात्मकाणि कुपरुस्यांऽय | Ṭa. VI. 4. 1; Ms. IV. 6. 3; Ks. XXVII. 8.
4. JBr. I. 5. 1. 23.
5. JBr. I. 1. 4. 14.
6. JBr. XI. 9. 3. 7.
8. JBr. I. 9. 40; Ks. XXVII. 11.
10. JBr. I. 2. 2. 8-14.
possessed the holy power 'Brahman' and came to this world with Reśā. 

13. Vatra is said to have every thing - Rk, Yajas and Śāman. 

14. They also had the knowledge of Vedic metres. The Taittiriya Jaimhītā points out that the larger metres were among the Asuras. 

15. The Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa* points out that their smaller metre in the sacrifice was consisting of nine syllables and the larger one of fifteen syllables.

16. To show them as performers of the sacrifices, we have a large number of stories narrated in the Jaimhītās and Brāhmaṇas. We have a story from the Kālakārī Jaimhītā, that tells us that once Kālakaṇḍa, the Asuras established a fire altar with a view to attaining the world of heaven. By its performance, when they started to go for the upper world, Indra who had put a brick on it, assuming the form of a Brāhmaṇa, pulled back his brick in a deceptive manner. 

17. Owing to the destruction of Vedi, they were weakened and destroyed and thus, could not attain the heavenly world. This story is again repeated in the Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa with some detail and in addition.

12. क्रमशः देव चालण्यः क्रमशः शृङ्खलाः ।

T3. VI. 4. 10. 1, MS. IV. 6. 3; K3. XXVII. 8.


14. SBr. V. 5. 5. 1-5.

15. एष्यं का चर्चा ति जन्वर्णावङ्गन्दुरुपः चत्वारिन, कौशिक प्रेमचारण्यः

व्याहरेष्टृपुरुषः ।

T3. VI. 6. 11. 5; Cf. MS. IV. 7. 5.

16. JBr. I. 133; 197; 205; Tā. Br. XII. 12. 27.

17. कलाकल्या वा बन्धुपुरुष प्रतिविन्द ।


18. TBr. I. 1. 2. 4. 6.
tion to the above stated story, here we are informed that due to the construction of the fire altar, two Asuras attained the world of heaven but became two heavenly dogs, owing to the destruction of Vedi, caused by Indra. Here the story runs as follows: There were Asuras named Kālakaṇjas. They constructed a fire altar with a view to attaining the world of heaven. Every one of them put a brick to it for themselves. Indra, passing himself off for a Brahmāṇa, put a brick to it for himself, saying, "This one Citrā, the wonderful or bright one by name, is for me!" They climbed up the heaven. Indra then, however, pulled out his brick, and they tumbled down. And they who tumbled down, became spiders, two of them flew up, and they became the two heavenly dogs. The same story is again repeated in the Astāpatha Brahmāṇa with some improvement. According to the said Brahmāṇa, once the Asuras constructed the fire altar called Raudhra (fit to ascend by), thinking, "Thereby we shall ascend to the heaven". Indra then considered, "If they construct that fire altar, they will certainly prevail over us." He secured a brick and proceeded there, passing himself off for a Brahmāṇa: 'Hark you!' he said, 'I too will put this brick for myself' 'very well', replied the Asuras. He put his brick to it, but when their fire-altar was about to be completely built up, he said, 'I shall take back this brick which belongs to me'. He took hold of it and pulled it out, and on its being pulled out, the fire-altar fell down, and along with the falling altar, the Asuras fell down. He then, converted the bricks into thunderbolt and cleft their necks.

The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa refers to the Ukthya sacrifice performed by them. The said Brāhmaṇa points out that the Devas took shelter in the Agniṣṭoma, and the Asuras in the Ukthyas. Both being, thus, of equal strength, the Devas could not turn them out. Agni then, turned himself into a horse, ran against them and overtook them. The said Brāhmaṇa further points out that they entered the Uktha, Śāstra of Maitreya, Brāhmaṇaśāhānī, and Śāhāvaka respectively but were turned out by Indra with Varuṇa, Indra with Bhṛgaspati, and Indra with Viṣṇu respectively. And thus, they were turned out from the whole Ukthyas. We have also a story from the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa that refers to the sacrifices performed by their priests. Here the story runs as follows: Manu had a bull, into him had entered an Asura-killing, foe-killing voice, and by his snorting and roaring, the Asuras and Rakṣas were continually being crushed. Thereupon, they desired to destroy that bull. Now Kīlāta and Ākūli were the two priests of the Asuras. They reached Manu and asked to perform a sacrifice for him with that bull. When he agreed, they performed a sacrifice with his bull. On his being killed, the (Asura-killing) voice went from him and entered Manāvī, the wife of Manu. When they heard her speaking the Asura and Rakṣas were continually crushed. Thereupon, Kīlāta and Ākūli again went to Manu, and asked to perform a sacrifice for him with his wife, Manāvī. When he agreed, they

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performed a sacrifice with his wife. And on her being killed, that (Asura-killing) voice went from her and entered the sacrifice itself, into the sacrificial vessels, and thence those two Asura priests were unable to expel it.

They seem to have had the master knowledge of the sacrifices at first. In this connection, the Kātrāyāṇī Jaimhitā points out that the sacrifice was with the Asuras and the sacrificial fee 'daśāṅgā' was with the Devas. The Kāpā Jaimhitā says that the Asuras took away the sacrificial fee 'daśāṅgā' from the Devas and the Jaiminiya Brahmana points out that they desired to get the sacrificial Vasā of the Devas, to perform the sacrifice. Sometimes, they are described as performing their sacrifices, following the Devas and most of the stories start with the statement that whatever the Devas did in the sacrifice, the Asuras also did the same. Sometimes, they used to keep their san secretly in the midst of the Devas, keeping in view to know how to perform the sacrifice and tried to perform in the same manner.

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25. JBr. I.184.
26. JBr.III.41, CBII.1.2.11.
27. देव वेव कलकाशेऽन्ते कद्वृत्त वहूऽ
   T5.1.7.3.1; II.6.4.1; III.2.2.2; 4.6.1; V.3.3.1; VI.6.9.1.
28. TBr.1.5.9.4.
(ii) Their method of sacrifice was different from that of the Devas:

As is stated above, they performed various sacrifices from time to time to attain the heavenly world and the worldly glory, but they could not achieve their goal, as they never performed the sacrifice in a usual manner. Their way of performing the sacrifice was different from that of the Devas. They even did not know the milking of the sacrifice and they themselves were milked by the sacrifice. In this connection, the Taittiriya-Samhitā points out that the Devas milked the sacrifice, the sacrifice milked the Asuras, and being milked by the sacrifice they were defeated. In the sacrifice, they called upon idā unlike the Devas. The same Samhitā points out that Manu laboured with the cooked offering, the idā went to Manu. Both the Devas and the Asuras called severally upon her, the former directly and the latter indirectly. She went to the Devas and neglected the Asuras. Here they (Asuras) also should have invoked the idā directly. It further points out that in the sacrifice half they did eat and half they did wipe. In this regard, their sacrifice was broken.

Their method of establishing the fire was also quite different from that of the Devas. When there was a question of

\[W.1.7.1.1-8.\]
\[Ti.1.7.1.3.\]
\[\text{TS.1.7.1.4-5.}\]
establishing the fire, they kindled the ordinary fire while the Devas established that fire in their innermost soul. In this connection, the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa points out that both the Devas and the Asuras established fire. The Devas established the fire in their innermost soul and became immortal and unconquerable, while the Asuras laid it down saying, 'Eat grass here! Eat wood here! Cook pop here! Cook meat here.' Now that fire which the Asuras thus, laid down, is this same fire wherein men prepare their food. The Tañitiriya Brāhmaṇa refers to Agni-ādhis performed by the Asuras in a different way. Here in the said Brāhmaṇa we come across an interesting story that tells us that Manu had a idā, who was able to know the sacrificial element. Once he heard a conversation of the Asuras about establishing the fire and knew each and everything. On seeing this, he went to Manu and told him that the Asuras after establishing the Āvaniya fire settled in the east at first, then the Gārhapatiya-fire settled in the west and then after doing Anavāhārya-Pacana settled in the south, are going to establish the fire. By this method, they will be prosperous for sometimes, but thereafter they will be ruined. For being their Western tendency, their prosperity will go away from them. On the other hand, when the Devas established fire, first of all, they did Anavāhārya-Pacana, then established Gārhapatiya-fire and then established Āvaniya-fire. This was the difference between their methods in establishing the fire. There was a great difference in their times for the

32. ŚBr.11.2.2-14.
33. TB.1.1.4.4-6.
performance of the sacrifice. The same Brāhmaṇa points out that the Asuras performed their sacrifice in the dark half of a lunar month, when the moon was not fully grown, while the Devas performed it in the bright half of a lunar month, when the moon was fully grown.

The 'asuras' method of offering the oblation was also quite opposite to the Devas. They offered the sacrificial oblation into one another's month, while the Devas offered it for Prajapati and worshipped him. In this connection, the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa also points out that once upon a time, both the Devas and the Asuras strove together. The Asuras, through arrogance, thinking, 'Unto whom, forsooth, should we make offerings,' went on offering into their own months. But the Devas offered for one another, thus the sacrifice became only theirs.

The Devas always followed the text, Āṣṭāṅga while the Asuras did not. In this connection, the Taittiriya Brānyaka points out that both the Devas and the Asuras performed the sacrifice. The former followed the text or Āṣṭāṅga and were successful, while the latter did not follow the text and soon relied on their physical strength for success and thus, met with failure.

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34. Br. II. 2. 3. 1.
35. कः कृष्ण? प्रवाहितिमीनार्याणाय सार-सर्यास्यानहुः? यहुः ।
   KS. VIII. 13; Kap. Katha. VIII. 1; Sā. Br. VII. 3.
36. श्री. V. 1. 1. 1-2, XI. 1. 31-2.
37. Tā. II. 1. 1.
Asuras as hinderers of sacrifices

The Asuras are depicted as the hinderers of sacrifices. Whenever the Devas made the libations in the sacrifice, they tore and ate. Even their women were equally mischievous in this matter. They (Mrgahajiv, an Asuri) licked the morning libation of the Devas, with a view to wasting the whole sacrifice and Jambho, the Asura, swallowed the sacrifice of the Devas. Thus, the Devas while performing the sacrifice, were always afraid of an attack on the part of the Asura-Rakṣas. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa narrates a story that tells us that once the Devas spread the sacrifice, but when they were doing so, the Asuras attacked them, intending to put an obstacle on their way to prevent the successful performance of the sacrifice. The attack was made against the sacrificial post from the eastern direction after the animal had been consecrated by the śpṛi verses and before the fire was carried round the animal. But however, the Devas protected the sacrifice. They attacked the sacrifice again and again. In this connection, the said Brāhmaṇa further narrates a story that runs as follows: The Devas spread the sacrifice, but when they were

38. ABr.II.12; Cf.JBr.I.161; TaBr.XII.6.9.
39. ABr.III.12; Kap.Katha. XXXIV.40; Cf.M.III.8.D.
40. ABr.III.3.4.2.
41. ABr.II.11.
42. ABr.II.4.
doing so, the Asuras approached them, thinking, to obstruct their sacrifice. They attacked them from the right side, thinking this to be the weak point, but the Devas drove them away from the morning libation. They after being defeated on the right side, attacked the centre of the sacrifice, but the Devas again defeated them. They attacked the sacrifice on the northern side. Being defeated on the northern side also, they marched arrayed in battle lines towards the eastern part. They, when defeated eastwards, went westwards, but here also they faced a crushing defeat by the Devas. In this manner, the Devas drove them out of the whole sacrifice. Thence, the Devas became masters of the Asuras.

Sometimes, they forbade the Devas from performing the sacrifice in a threatful voice. In this connection, the \textit{Satapatha Brāhmaṇa} points out that when the Devas were engaged in performing the sacrifice, the Asura & Rakṣas forbade them, saying, "You shall not perform the sacrifice! You shall not sacrifice." The \textit{Satapatha Brāhmaṇa} again points out that when the Devas were about to set up their fires, they (Asura & Rakṣas) forbade them, saying, "The fire shall not be produced, you shall not set up your fires." But when the Devas continued their sacrifices, they created disturbance and used all the possible means to spoil the sacrifice. The \textit{Satapatha Brāhmaṇa} points out that whatever sacrificial work the Devas performed, two Asura priests - Saṃđa and Marka - always disturbed and then quickly fled away. Most often they attacked

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44. \textit{Sbr.I.1.1.12}; \textit{VII.3.2.5}; \textit{VII.4.1.37}; \textit{IX.2.3.2}.
45. \textit{Sbr.II.1.4.15}.
46. \textit{Sbr.IV.2.1.5}. 
the sacrifices from the southern side to prevail upon the sacri-
fices. The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa points out that when the Devas
were performing the sacrifice, the Asura-Rakṣas attacked them
from the south and forced them out of the Sadas, and overturned
those hearths 'ādrya' of theirs which were within the Sadas.
The same Brāhmaṇa further points out that all of those hearths
at one time burnt as brightly as this Ahavaṇiya, Garhapatya and
the Āgniḍhiya, but ever since that time when the Āsuras over-
turned them, they did not burn. They forced the Asuras back to
the Āgniḍhi fire and even won from them one of the Āgniḍhi. In
the same Brāhmaṇa, we are further told that they (Asura & Rakṣas)
assailed them from the south, and overturned those southern cups
of Soma, even that southern Soma-cart they overturned. We have
also a story from the Satapatha-Brāhmaṇa that tells us about
the raiding on the part of the Āsuras over again. Here we are
told that having made up the sacrifice, the Devas thought of
spreading out the truth. When doing so, the Āsuras invaded them.
The Devas, eluding the Āsuras, snatched up the sacrifice, and
began doing something else. The Āsuras went away thinking. They
are doing something else. When they had gone away, the Devas

47. कृत्रिते तद्वरूपवाच तांस्म. 48. क्रिष्णवाच एवं नवामुल 
कान्तयत्र ! म3.111.6.2.14। वैधानिकादेवेशानां कं सार्वध्यक्षता।
M3.19.8; क3.36.7.1 कप.काथा. XXXIV.4.

49. श्रिया.111.6.1.27.
50. श्रिया.111.6.1.28.
51. श्रिया.19.6.1.12-27.
prepared the opening-offering. They again besieged the Devas, but the Devas, espying the Asuras, snatched up the sacrifice, and began doing something else. They went away again thinking, 'They are doing something else'. When they had gone away, they having bought and driven about the king Soma, prepared the guest-offering for him. The Asuras again descended then, but they espying the Asuras, snatched up the sacrifice and began doing something else. The Asuras again went away, and when they had gone away, the Devas spread out the Upasads, but laid out no fore-offerings and no after-offerings on either side. Again on the day of preparation, the Devas slaughtered the Agnivesheya victim; they assailed the Devas. The Devas then espying the Asuras, snatched up the sacrifice, and began doing something else. They went away again. The next morning, after they had gone away, the Devas performed the morning-service of the Soma-sacrifice. They again warded at the Devas. The Devas, espying the Asuras, snatched up the sacrifice and began doing something else.' When they had gone, the Devas spread out the midday-service. But they became aware of this also and again surrounded the Devas. The Devas, espying the Asuras, snatched up the sacrifice, and began doing something else. Then they went away again. When they had gone, the Devas went on with the animal-offering of the Soma-sacrifice. They again made aggression and arrived at the sacrificial-place. But the Devas, espying them, snatched up the sacrifice and began doing something else. The Asuras went away again. When they had gone away, the Devas spread the evening-service and completed it, and by completing it they obtained that whole truth. Then the Asuras went down.
Devas prevailed upon and the Asuras came to naught. We have one another legend of the same class from the Upaniṣads-Brahmaṇa, that tells us that when the Devas were spreading the sacrifice, they (Asura-Rakṣas) started shouting, “We shall destruct their sacrifice in the trūya-Savāna, for undeteriorated sacrifice in the trūya-Savāna is always a potent one. Therefore, we shall obliterate their spread sacrifice”.

The Rakṣas, a special force of the Asuras, mainly besieged the sacrifices of the Devas. They are mentioned as one who spoils and pollutes the holy worship and spoils the oblations of the invokers of gods. They are called “Brahma-ādiṣa”, the haters of prayer. They never took oblations but came with friend’s Árhas faces and mingled with the Fathers, perhaps only to spoil the sacrifice. In a verse, they seem to be regarded in the sacrifice. Here the Maruts are invoked to drive him down with wheelless chariots, who regards the Rakṣas at the feasts of the gods. Here obviously ‘regards the Rakṣas’ means one who makes his sacrifice demonic. Hence, the question does not arise for the Rakṣas to be regarded in the sacrifice. In this connection, we may refer to a story narrated in the Trūyāya-Brahmaṇa that points out

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52. GBr. II. 6. 6.
53. RV. VII. D4. 18.
54. RV. VII. D4. 21.
55. RV. L 182. 3.
56. RV. XVII. 2. 28.
57. RV. IV. 42. 10.
58. Dr. 1. 7. 1. 4-5.
that the Rākṣas always deformed and destructed the sacrifice. Hence the said Brāhmaṇa informs us that once upon a time Prajāpati created the sacrifice. Meanwhile the Rākṣas wished to de-
form this abandoned sacrifice. Then, he created the Devas and with their assistance drove the Rākṣas away from the regions.

(iv) Iṣṭis and rituals performed for driving away the evil-doings of the Asuras:

Various Iṣṭis and rituals are said to be performed by the Devas to draw away the evil-doings of the Asuras. The Taittirīya Śāhūṭī points out that with the successful performance of the New and Full moon sacrifice, the Devas conquered the Asuras and drove them away. And the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa points out that Indra slew Vṛtra by means of the Full-moon sacrifice.

By the successful performance of Āgniśṭoma, Ukṣhya and Ātirātras, they dispelled the darkness and all evil doings of the Asuras.

In this connection, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa says that the Asuras enveloped the Devas in darkness, while the latter were passing upwards to the world of heaven. The Devas then entered a sacri-
ficial session of a hundred Āgniśṭoma and dispelled the darkness as far as one might see whilst sitting, and in like manner did they, by a session of a hundred Ukṣhya, dispelled the darkness as far as one might see whilst standing. But they could not dispel the whole darkness and evil. Then they entered a sacri-
ficial session of a hundred Ātirātras, and having thereby re-
pelled the Asuras and darkness and all evil, they found on the

50. तैत्तिरियशाहुती । T. 1.7.4.1-2.
50. ŚBr. 1.6.4.12.
61. ŚBr. XI.5.5.1-6.
way to the world of heaven. The Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa points
out that they defeated the Asuras with the aid of Cāturmāya
sacrifice and the Baudhāyana Śrauta-Uttra says that they defeat-
ed them by means of Vṛṣabha-Yajña.

The Devas drove them away from all these worlds by
means of Upasads also. The Taittiriya Śamhitā says that by
the performance of Upasads in the morning the Devas drove them
from the day and by the Upasads in the evening they drove them
from the night. The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa says that by the per-
formance of Upasads, the Devas eleft their castles and won all
these worlds. The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa deals this story in detail.
Here we are told that by the performance of first Upasad, they
drove the Asuras out of the heaven, by the performance of second
Upasad, they drove them out of the intermediate region and by
the performance of third, they drove them out of this world (the
earth). Being driven out of these three worlds, the Asuras en-
tered the R̥tus, i.e., seasons. Then, the Devas seized the six-
Upasads and by means of these, they drove them out of the R̥tus.
The Asuras driven out of the R̥tus entered the year, i.e., Śaṃvat-
sara. Then, they seized twelve Upasads and with the aid of these
Upasads drove them out from the year. Then the Asuras entered

62. TeBr. I.4.9.3.
63. BŚs. XIV.13.
64. Sv. Br. VIII.8.
65. TŚ. VI.2.3.1-3.
66. SBr. III.4.3.4-6.
67. GBr. II.2.7.
the day and night, i.e., **Ahorr̥tra.** Then by the performance of Upasads in the evening the Devas drove them out of the night and by the performance of Upasads in the morning, they drove them out of the day and the Upasads in morning and evening, they drove them out of all these worlds. The **Utāra Brahmaṇa** also points out that by means of first Upasad the Devas drove them out from this world (the earth), by the performance of the second Upasad, they drove them out of the air, and by the performance of third, out of the sky. Thus, they were driven out of all these worlds by the performance of Upasads.

By the performance of night sacrifices, the Devas gave them a crushing defeat. The Taithāra Jājihita points out that by the performance of the rite of the ten nights, i.e., Dāśaḥotra, in their (Devas) castles, the Devas prospered and defeated the Asuras. And by means of the rite of the fifteen nights, as a bolt, given to him by Prajapati, Indra overcame and conquered the Asuras and attained prosperity with the performance of this rite, he placed force, might, power and strength in himself. The said Jājihita further points out that once the Virāj dividing itself stayed among the Devas with the holy power, i.e., Brahmā, and among the Asuras with food. The Devas desired to acquire both and performed the rite of the twenty nights and acquired both. Thus, the Devas came into the possession of

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68. **Athr. 1.23.**
69. **Ts. VII.2.5.2-3; Cf. Ta-Br. XXI.17.2.**
70. **Ts. VII.3.7.1.**
71. **Ts. VII.3.9.1.**
full Viraj.

By the performance of the sixth day's ceremonies the 72
devas turned them out of all these worlds. The Mitareya Brähmana points out that the devas turned them by means of the sixth day's ceremonies out of these worlds. They seized by means of this metre all that the ausuras had grasped. In Devásura Saigríma, Indra was sent to lead the devas only when the latter performed certain propitiatory rites. In this connection, the Tatiriiya 73 Brähmana says that when the devas and the ausuras were in conflict, Prajāpati, seeing the overwhelming strength of the ausuras, concealed his eldest son Indra. When the devas prayed that Indra should be sent to lead them against the ausuras, Prajāpati asked them to perform certain propitiatory rites, and when they performed those rites, Indra was sent to lead the devas-es-Letie. Thus, the rituals like Jyotiṣoma, Ukthya, etc. came into vogue.

The Satapatha Brähmana points out that by means of Sākeména offerings, the devas slew Vrtra and gained that supreme authority which they now wield - it is rather by means of all the seasonal sacrifices that they slew Vrtra, it is by all of them that they gained that supreme authority which they now wield.

Many other devices were also adopted in the sacrifices to overcome the ausuras.

(v) Various devices adopted in the sacrifices to overcome the ausuras.

The devas are said to have adopted many devices in the 72

72. Br. V. 11, Br. II. 6. 11.
74. Br. II. 6. 4. 1.
sacrifices to overcome the Asuras. The Yajurveda deals in detail the various devices adopted by the Devas in their sacrifices, performed with the aid of Vedic Mantras. The Taittirīya Śāhīta points out that by perceiving the Anvāhārya in the sacrifice they overcome the Asuras. Here we are told that whatever the Devas did in the sacrifice, the Asuras did the same. The Devas then, perceived the Anvāhārya connected with Prajāpati and seized it and made good their sacrifice. Then the Devas overcame the Asuras.

To gain a victory over the Asuras, cakes are offered to the certain deities on the potsherd. The same Śāhīta says that the Devas offered to Indra a cake on thirty-three potsherd and obtained the victory over the Asuras. That was their highest victory won over the Asuras. The same Śāhīta further points out that in their fight against the Asuras, the Devas found a protector in Agni, they offered to Agni, the forward, a cake on eight potsherd, and thereby they repelled the Rākṣasas that were around them. Thus, the Devas prospered, the Rākṣasas were defeated. To appropriate the force, might, power, strength, offspring and cattle of the Asuras, proper formulas are used in the sacrifice. In this connection, the Taittirīya Śāhīta says that the Devas and the Asuras were in conflict. The Gāyatrī, grasping and taking their force, might, power, strength, offspring, and cattle, remained away. Both the parties invoked Gāyatrī. The Devas by using the proper formula, obtained the

75. T3.1.7.3.3.
76. T3.II.4.2.2-3.
77. T3.II.4.1.2-3; KS.X.7.
78. T3.II.4.3.1-3.
Gāyatrī and appropriated the force, might, power, strength, offspring, and cattle of the Asuras.

After the performance of the Full-moon sacrifice some offerings and oblations are given to certain Vedic deities to defeat the Asuras. The Taittiriya Śāhītā says that both the Devas and the Asuras performed the sacrifice. The Devas saw the offering on eleven potsherds for Agni and Viṣṇu, an oblation for Sarasvatī, an oblation for Sarasvatī. They offered this after the Full-moon sacrifice. Then, the Devas prospered, and the Asuras were defeated. The Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa says that the Devas performed victory over the Asuras, by giving oblations to Agni, Soma, Śaivism, Sarasvatī and Puṣan, who bestowed on the Devas victory, sovereignty, force of thought, physical power and glory. The said Brāhmaṇa further points out that the Devas approached Śaivism and Puṣan with jatyaṃ and offered an oblation on twelve potsherds and defeated the Asuras who approached them with Anīta, untruthfulness. The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa points out that in the Sākamedha offerings five regular oblations are given in the first place. By means of these oblations, the Devas slew Vṛtra and gained that victory which was gained by them. The said Brāhmaṇa further points out that by means of the Great oblation, i.e., Mahā-havis, the Devas slew Vṛtra and by means of it they gained that supreme authority which they now wield.

79. TS.II.6.4.1-2.
80. TBś.1.6.25-7.
81. TBś.1.8.3.3-4.
82. ŚBr.II.6.3.4.
83. ŚBr.II.5.4.1; 6.1.1; 6.2.1.
The Taittiriya Samhita refers to the certain devices adopted by the Devas to cheat the Asuras. Here the said Samhita points out that both the Devas and the Asuras performed the sacrifice. But the Devas performed the Agnihotra twice, did animal sacrifice to Agni and Soma during the Full-moon and to Agni during the New-moon. They also performed sacrifice to the all-gods in the morning, and performed Varunapraghasas at mid-day, and Säkamedhas sacrifice to the fathers, and offering to Tryambaka in the evening, as the third pressing. The Asuras sought to follow their sacrifice, but could not get on its tracks. They said, "These Devas have become inviolable, 'Agnvatsayana'. Therefore, the sacrifice is called Adhvara. Then, the Devas prospered and the Asuras defeated. Sometimes the Asuras are cheated by giving up utterings of the Mantras loudly. In this connection, the same Samhita points out that when the Asuras also attained the Iṣṭīs, the Devas gave up uttering the Mantras loudly. Doing so, they (Asuras) could not follow the Devas and were defeated.

Prayājas and Anuyajas are performed the fore and after the sacrifices to protect the sacrifice and sacrificer. The Taittiriya Samhita says that both the Devas and the Asuras were contending for these worlds. The former, by the fore-sacrifices, i.e., Prayājas, drove the Asuras away from these worlds. And to defeat them, they divided the Gayatri, and with five syllables infront and three at the back, they protected the sacrifice, and thus, protected themselves. Hence, the Prayāja

84. Tā. III. 2. 2. 3.
85. Tā. I. 5. 9. 1. ff.
86. Tā. I. 6. 1. 3.
and Amüja are the fore and the after-sacrifices.

With a series of offerings to the deities in the sacrifice, the Devas overpowered the Asuras and won their kingdom. The Taittiriya Samihita points out that in the conflict of the Devas and the Asuras, Indra had recourse to Prajapati, to him, he gave the Jaya, or victory offerings. Then, the Devas were victorious over the Asuras. By silent offerings the Devas took the sacrifice of the Asuras and by means of offerings in the formt, in the east, and at the back in the west, they drove the Asuras away from the sacrifice. The Aitereya Brähmana deals in detail, how the Devas defeated the Asuras by means of silent praise, i.e., Tūmī-jśīśa.

Here, we are told that the Asuras performed at the sacrifice all that the Devas performed. The Asuras became thus, of equal power with the Devas and did not yield to them in any respect. The Devas then saw the silent praise, i.e., Tūmī-jśīśa, as their weapon. They raised it but the Asuras did become aware of it. They aimed with it a blow at the Asuras and defeated them, who did not perceive the weapon which was aimed at them. Thereupon, the Devas became masters of the Asuras. The said Brähmana further points out that when the Devas were performing the sacrifice, the Asuras attacked them. Then the Devas surrounded for their own protection.

87. Tś.11.6.1.5.
88. Tś.11.4.4.1; C.f.Śr.1.4.14.
89. Tś.11.3.6.1-2.
90. Tś.11.4.10.2-3.
91. Aśr.11.31.
92. Aśr.11.11.
as well as for that of the sacrifice, with a three fold wall resembling fire. The Asuras seeing those walls shining and blazing did not venture an attack but ran away. Thus, the Devas defeated the Asuras. The Teittiriya Samhita refers to the victory of the Devas over the Asuras, with special offerings known as Bhuyatamas, Jaya, etc. and conquering their kingdom with the offerings, there after known as Rastrabhrt. The same Samhita further points out that the Devas reduced the Asuras to straits (nirbādha) by means of gold plate with twenty-one projections.

Sometimes some bricks are placed in special ways in the sacrifice to defeat the Asuras. At a number of places, we are told that the Devas placed Durva, As Yapāstomiya, Bhuyasknt, Indratama, and Vāmaabhrt bricks in special ways and defeated the Asuras. Certain cups are also drawn in the sacrifice to overcome the Asuras. At a number of places, we are told that the Devas drew Nyāśa, Upama, Antarīma, Kṛṣṇa, Ukthya, Durva, season, Maṭhยa cups, etc. in the sacrifices to certain deities to overcome the Asuras. Sometimes in the sacrifice cups are drawn for the Asura-Rakṣas to keep them satisfied. In this connection, the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa points out that to drive away two Asura-Rakṣas,

93. T3. Ill. 4.6.1-2.
94. T3. V. 1.10.3-4; Cf. N3. Ill. 2.1.
95. T3. V. 2.8.3-4; 3.2.1; 3.3.3; 4.1.1; 5.6.1; N3. Ill. 2.7; K3. X1.6-7; Kap. Katha. XXXI. 8-9.
96. T3. VI. 1.4.6.1; 4.11.1; 5.1.1-2; 5.2.8; 5.5.1-3; 6.4.4; 6.9.1.
97. ŚBr. IV. 2.1.4.
Sāṇḍha and Ṛṣṇaka, two cups, Jukra and Kandhin are drawn for them and are offered to the deities. A bunch of Kausī-grass is seized in the sacrifice for the destruction of the Rākṣasas and to drive them away, they are offered āghyya with water at the sandhyās, evening prayer. Various metres are also used for the protection of the sacrificer and to drive the Ašura-Rākṣas away from the sacrifice. The Nāitrayāṇī Jāthi points out that the Devas guarded themselves by the metres, i.e., Chandas, and the Taṁtirīya Jāthi points out that the Prastotra, the assistant of the Udāgātr., suits away the Rākṣasas with the chanting of the Śāman hymns. By means of grasping, i.e., Śamgrahana, the Devas grasped the mind of the Ašuras and thus, became of the same mind.

To conclude, it may be said that the Ašuras were the performers of Vedic sacrifices. They performed certain rites and even some one attained the world of heaven. Once they became of equal power with the Devas and did not yield to them in any respect. It is but natural, because the Ašuras were elders and the Devas were younger. Thus, they must have had the knowledge of sacrifices at first. On this authority, they may be called

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98. Tā.VI.9.1.
99. Tā.II.2.1.
100. K3.III.4.7.
103. Ṛ.VII.31.
104. कबीर एव देवा कृताय अनुकूदः | ŚBr.XIV.4.1.1.
the first founders of Vedic sacrifices. But later on the scale changed. They forgot their sacrificial-knowledge and had to follow the Devas or learn it from them. The imitation is always incomplete, thus, they could not perform sacrifices in a proper manner following the text and hence, could not get the reward of it. This was the state of their deficiency in the sacrificial-knowledge and this knowledge went on decreasing and decreasing. Later on due to not receiving the fruits of sacrifices they became the hinderers of Vedic sacrifices and used all possible means to spoil the sacrifices of their opponents, i.e., Devas.

In post Vedic literature, they (Rākṣasas) are known as only the demolishers of sacrifices. Hence, the Devas are said to have performed many āsās and rituals from time to time to draw away the evil-doings of the Mura-Rākṣasas and adopted many devices in sacrifices to overcome them.