

The Hotar must recite seventeen verses for the wooden sticks to be thrown into the fire ¹² (to feed it). For *Prajâpati* (the Lord of all creatures) is seventeen-fold; the months are twelve, and the seasons five by putting *Hemanta* (winter) and *S'is'ira* (between winter and spring) as one. So much is the year. The year is *Prajâpati*. He who has such a knowledge prospers by these verses (just mentioned) which reside in *Prajâpati*.

according to the precepts of sacred cookery, at his hands, and they have been sitting on the sacred seat (*barhis*) prepared of the sacrificial grass (*Darbha*). Thence the performance of the Full and New Moon sacrifices is here called one *Dîkshâ*, i.e. one initiatory rite. But if the Agnihotri who is performing a Soma sacrifice, is already initiated (*Dîkshita*) by means of the rites just mentioned, how does he require at the opening of the *Agnishtoma* (Soma-sacrifice) the so-called *Dîkshanîya Ishti*, or "offering for becoming initiated"? This question was mooted already in ancient times. Thence, says *As'valâyana* in his *S'rauta sùtras*, (4, 1), that some are of opinion, the Soma-sacrifice should be performed, in the case of the means required being forthcoming (the sacrifice is very expensive), after the Full and New Moon sacrifices have been brought; others opine the Soma sacrifice might be performed before the Full and New Moon sacrifices. No doubt, the *Agnishtoma* was in ancient times a sacrifice wholly independent of the *Dars'a Pûrnima-ishtis*. This clearly follows from the fact, that just such *Ishtis*, as constitute the Full and New Moon sacrifices, are placed at the beginning of the *Agnishtoma* to introduce it.

¹² These verses are called *Sâmidhenîs*. They are only eleven in number; but by repeating the first and last verses thrice, the number is brought to fifteen. They are mentioned in *As'val Sr. S.* 1, 2.; several are taken from *Rigveda* 3, 27, as the first (*pra vo vâjâ abhidya*) fourth (*samidhyamâna*) 13th, 14th, and 15th (*ilenyo*) verses. Besides these three, *As'v.* mentions: *agna âyâhi vîtaye* (6, 16; 10, 12, three verses), *agnim dûtam vrinîmahe* (1, 12, 1.), and *samiddho agna* (5, 28, 5, 6, two verses). They are repeated monotonously without observing the usual three accents. The number of the *sâmidhenîs* is generally stated at fifteen; but now and then, seventeen are mentioned, as in the case of the *Dîkshanîyâ ishti*. The two additional mantras are called *Dhâyyâ*, i. e. verses to be repeated when an additional wooden stick, after the ceremony of kindling is over, is thrown into the fire, in order to feed it. They are mentioned in *Sâyana's* commentary on the *Rigveda Sâmhita* vol. II. page 762 ed. M. Müller). *S. Asval.* 4, 2, two *Dhâyyâs* at the *Dîkshanîya ishti*.