

are extravagant, they undoubtedly show that there was a time in Hindostan when large bodies of Brahmans spent almost their whole lives in sacrificing. This time is to be sought for at a very early period of Indian history; for the Brâhmaṇas with their frequent allusions and references to the Sattras of the Rishis on the banks of the Sarasvatî, and those held by the half mythical Aṅgiras, and by the Adityas (a class of gods), or even by the cows, trees, snakes, &c., presuppose their existence from times immemorial. Likewise we find in the Mahâbhârata frequent mention made of these sacrificial sessions which constitute one of the characteristic features of the earliest Brahmanic settlements in the north-west of Hindostan. It is chiefly at these Sattras that we have to look for the development and refinement of the sacrificial art, and the establishment of certain rules regarding the performance of sacrificial ceremonies.

When the Brâhmaṇas were brought into that form, in which we possess them now, not only the whole *kalpa* (*i. e.* the way of performing the sacrificial ceremonies) was settled, save some minor points, but even the symbolical and mystical meaning of the majority of rites. It took, no doubt, many centuries before the almost endless number of rites and ceremonies, and their bewildering complications could form themselves into such a regular system of sacrificial rules, as we find already exhibited in the Brâhmaṇas. For the Sûtras which belong to each class of Brâhmaṇas generally contain nothing novel,