

know all Vedas, and understand the whole course and meaning of the sacrifice. He is supposed to be a perfect master of divinity, and has in this capacity to direct and superintend the sacrificial ceremonies. The most eminent of this class of priests laid down rules for the proper performance of sacrificial rites, explained them, and defended their own opinions, on such topics against those of their antagonists; moreover they delighted in speculations on matters of a more universal character, on this life, and that life, on the best means of securing wealth, progeny, fame, heaven, &c., on mind, soul, salvation, the Supreme Being; the dictum of such a Brahma priest who passed as a great authority, was called a *Brâhmaṇam*.

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participation in the *brahma*. Such expressions as, "to make the brahma," "to stir up the brahma," (*brahma jinvati*) throw some light on its nature. They show (as one may clearly see from such passages as Taittiriya Brâhmaṇam 1, 1) that it was regarded as a latent power, like electricity, which was to be stirred up at the time of the performance of a ceremony. The apparatus were the sacred vessels, or the hymns, or chants. So, at a certain ceremony at the morning libation of the Soma feast, the Adhvaryu and Pratipasthâtar put the two Grahas (Soma cups), called S'ukra and Manthi (see Ait. Br. 3, 1) together, and address them in the following way, "Put, ye two (Grahas)! together the Brahma; may ye stir it up for me," &c. (Taittir. Br. 1, 1). This evidently means, that these two Grahas are put together for the purpose of eliciting the Brahma-power, and all the other powers, dependent upon it, such as the *Kshattram*, &c. The presence of the *brahma* at every sacrifice is necessary; for it is the invisible link connecting the ceremony performed with the fruits wished for, such as sovereignty, leadership, cattle, food, &c.

It is, as we have seen, symbolically represented by a bunch of kus'a grass, which is always wandering from one person to another, as long as the sacrifice lasts. It expresses the productive power in nature, which manifests itself in the growth of plants, and all other creatures. The sacrificer wishes by means of the mystical process of the sacrifice to get hold of it; for only then he is sure of obtaining anything he might wish for.