

be an epithet of Agni. This is the interpretation given to them by Oldenberg.³

³ *Sacred Books of the East*, 46, 33.

Dasyu, a word of somewhat doubtful origin, is in many passages of the Rigveda¹ clearly applied to superhuman enemies. On the other hand, there are several passages in which human foes, probably the aborigines, are thus designated. This may be regarded as certain in those passages where the Dasyu is opposed to the Āryan, who defeats him with the aid of the gods.² The great difference between the Dasyus and the Āryans was their religion: the former are styled 'not sacrificing,' 'devoid of rites,' 'addicted to strange vows,' 'god-hating,' and so forth.³ As compared with the **Dāsa**, they are less distinctively a people: no clans (*viśah*) of the Dasyus are mentioned, and while Indra's *dasyu-hatya*, 'slaughter of the Dasyus,' is often spoken of, there is no corresponding use of *dāsa-hatya*. That the Dasyus were real people is, however, shown by the epithet *anās* applied to them in one passage of the Rigveda.⁵ The sense of this word is not absolutely certain: the Pada text and Sāyaṇa both take it to mean 'without face' (*an-ās*),⁶ but the other rendering, 'noseless' (*a-nās*), is quite possible,⁷

¹ i. 34, 7; 100, 18; ii. 13, 9, etc. See Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, pp. 157, 158.

² Rv. i. 51, 8; 103, 3; 117, 21; ii. 11, 18, 19; iii. 34, 9; vi. 18, 3; vii. 5, 6; x. 49, 3. Probably also in v. 70, 3; x. 83, 6, people are meant.

³ The Dasyu is called *a-karman*, 'riteless,' x. 22, 8; *a-devayu*, 'indifferent to the gods,' viii. 70, 11; *a-brahman*, 'without devotion,' iv. 16, 9; *a-yajvan*, 'not sacrificing,' viii. 70, 11; *a-yajyu*, *id.*, vii. 6, 3; *a-vrata*, 'lawless,' i. 51, 8; 175, 3; vi. 14, 3; ix. 41, 2; *anyavrata*, 'following strange ordinances,' viii. 70, 11; *deva-piyu*, 'reviling the gods,' Av. xii. 1, 37. It is impossible in all cases to be certain that people are meant.

⁴ Rv. i. 51, 5, 6; 103, 4; x. 95, 7; 99, 7; 105, 11. Cf. *dasyu-han*, 'Dasyu-slaying,' i. 100, 12; vi. 45, 24; viii. 76,

11; 77, 3; x. 47, 4 (all of Indra); vi. 16, 15; viii. 39, 8 (of Agni), etc.

⁵ Rv. v. 29, 10.

⁶ This sense allows of two interpretations: 'misfeatured,' which seems that of Roth, St. Petersburg Dictionary, *s.v.*, and Grassmann, *Wörterbuch*; or 'speechless' (that is, unable to speak the language of the Āryans), which is that of Bollensen, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 41, 496.

⁷ This view is supported by Megasthenes' report as to natives who were *ἄστροποι*: see Strabo, p. 711; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, vii. 2, 18, cited by Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, 430. See also Ludwig, *Translation of the Rigveda*, 2, 109; 5, 95; Hillebrandt, *Vedische Mythologie*, 3, 277; Knauer, Kuhn's *Zeitschrift*, 29, 52; Wackernagel, *Altindische Grammatik*, 2, 293 (accent).