CHAPTER XIV

VISVĂMITRA AND HIS FAMILY

ISHRATHA

Sarvanukramani gives Ishratha to be the first forefather of Visvamitra family. Ishratha's son was Kusika¹.

KUSIKA AND HIS SON GATHINA

There is a legend that Kusika, desirous of having a son with qualities of Indra, propitiated Indra. Indra then took birth as a son to Kusika who named him Gathin or Gādhi. Gathina was a seer of the Rgveda². The Rgveda³ describes Visvamitra to be the son of Kusika-'kusikasya sunuh' but the Sarvanukramani gives him as the son of Gathin. This is probably due to the fact that Gathin was also known as Kusika as they also say that Kusika himself was born in the form of Gathin.

VISVAMITRA

Visvamitra was a king of Jahnus and defeated Vṛcīvants⁴. Later he became the priest of Bharatas, especially Sudāsa⁵. He helped them in crossing Satudri and Vipāsa⁶. He earned the wrath of Vasiṣṭha for Sudāsa⁷ (See Ch.IV Pp.55-57 for details). Once he was going with the Bharatas. He met Mahavṛṣas⁸, either at Ganges or

---

¹ He was seer of Rg.,III.31.
² III.19-22.
³ III.33.5.
⁴ PB.,XXI.12.2; Ni.,2.75.
⁵ Rg.,III.53.9.
⁶ Rg.,III.33.11.
⁷ Sayana commenting on Rg.,III.53.21-24.
⁸ Mahavṛṣas were remembered with hatred in the Atharvaveda V.22.4.8.8. In the opinion of authors of Vedic Index they were northerners (VINS.,2.142). Bloomfield (Ibid., cf., Hymns of the Atharvaveda,446) suggests that the name may be chosen more for its sound and sense as 'of mighty strength' than for its geographical position. Viśvamitra met them at Rohitakula in the region of Gāṅgā or Yamunā as stated above. Čhāṇḍogya Upaniṣad (IV.2.5) names a place Raivāparṇa in the country of Mahavṛṣas. The king of the Mahavṛṣas was Hrstvāsa (JUp.Br.,III.40.2).
Yamunā. They had an encounter. To win the challenge he saw the Rohita- kūlaya sāmana at Rohitakula.

He was very ambitious and desired to become a king, a ṛṣi and a rich man at the same time. He wanted to conquer the whole of earth, space and heaven. He performed austerities at Jāmadagni along with Jāmadagni. The well known Gāyatri mantra was revealed to him. He also visualized Agni. He was seer of all the four Vedas.

Viśvāmitra had hundred sons. He adopted Śunahśepa as his son when he was saved from being sacrificed in the Yajña of Hariscandra (see Ch.XI P.154 for details) and gave him the rights of his eldest son. He came to be known as Devarāta. His fifty elder sons resented this action. Viśvāmitra disinherited them and they turned into lower castes like Andhras, Pundras, Sabaras, Pulindas and Mutivasas. Madhuchhandas with his fifty younger brothers obeyed

9 JB.,III.183.
10 Ṛg.,III.43.5.
11 Ath.,X.5.25-27.
12 Go.Br.,II.8.
13 Ṛg.,III.62.10.
14 Ṛg.,III.26.7.
16 It appears that they migrated to these areas who were cut off of the pale of the Vedic society. According to Pusalkar (VA.,P.260) the Andhras originally lived between the region of Kṛṣṇa and Godāvari. Pundras were situated in north Bengal. The exact location of Sabaras, Pulindas and Mutibas is not known. Pusalkar gives possible identifications of Sabaras that they may be identified with Sauri of Pliny and the Sabaræ of Ptolemy and were probably ancestors of the Savarī or Sauras of the Vizagapatam hills, the Savarīs of the Gualior territory and the savages on the frontiers of Orissa. The capital of Pulindas according to the Mahābhārata, probably lay to the south east of Bhilsa region. Raychaudhvari (PHAI., P.79) identifies Mutibas with the Muchipas or Mushipas and locates them on the banks of river Musi on which Hyderabad stands.
Visvāmitra and earned the blessing of his father.

The descendants of Visvāmitra given by the Sarvānukramaṇī of Kātayāyana, as seers of the Rgveda were:

1. Aṣṭaka.
2. Rṣabha.
3. Kāta. His son was Utkīla.
4. Devarāta.
5. Pūrana.
6. Madhuchhandas. His son was Aghamarṣaṇa.
7. Renu.
8. Prajāpatī.

All of them were the rsis of the Rgveda.

Prajāpatī's son was Samvarana. Samvarana was a priest of Trasādasyu - son of Purukutsa, Marutāśva - son of Vidatha and Dhvanyak - son of Laksamaṇa. His son was Manu. Manu's son was Nahuṣa and Nahuṣa's son was Yayāti. As Prajāpati, Manu Sāmvarṇi, Nahuṣa and Yayāti all are the seers of same Sūkta it signifies that they all belonged to the same family.

**NAHUṢA**

17 Ait.Br., VII.17,18.
18 Rg., X.174; He was also seer of Ath., XX.33.
19 Rg., III.13,14; IX.71.
20 Rg., III.17.
21 Rg., III.15.
22 Rg., I.24; He was also seer of Sam., 15,17,28,153,154, 163, 18, 3,214,58,743-45, 1084-86, 256-65, 1415-1417, 1497-99, 1595-99, 1601, 1617-19, 1634-36, 1654-56, 1663-65 and Ath., VI.25; VII.83; XX.26.1-3; 45,74,122.
23 Rg., X.160.
25 Rg., X.190.1-3.
26 Rg., IX.70; X.89.
27 Rg., III.38,54-6; IX.101.13-16.
28 A seer of Rg., V.33,34.
29 Rg., V.33.8-10.
30 A seer of Rg., IX.101.10-12.
31 A seer of Rg., IX.101.7-9.
32 A seer of Rg., IX.101.4-6; Sam., 546,547,872-874.
The word 'nahuśa' has been interpreted as a common noun by Sayana as 'manuṣaya sambandhini' i.e., related to human beings in general and Nahuśa as 'manuṣa'. Roth has tried to link Nahuśa linguistically with English word 'neighbour'. Words 'Nahuśa', 'nahuśa' and 'Nahuśisu' are found in the Vedas. Geldner, Ludwig and Griffith has interpreted Nahusa as a tribe. But even if it was a tribe or the word applied to the common people the word literally meant the descendants of Nahuśa—a person. Authors of Vedic Index and Oldenberg also admitted that in the Rgveda Nahuśa may be a person. Sāyana also once interpreted Nahuśa to be the name of a king—'Nahuśasya etat nāmaka rājā viṣeṣayā' and 'nahuśisu kṛṣṭiṣu' as his people—'nahuśa iti manuṣyanāma tat sambandhini prajāsu'. Geldner also confirmed the view of Sāyana. Therefore it is certain that Nahuśa was a king who ruled in the Vedic period.

Nahuśa ruled over the region of Sarasvatī. Sutambhara Ātreya, Kaśyapa Mārīca and Vārṣāgiras performed the Yajñas for him. He was a great warrior. The yatnas helped his people to

---

33 Rg.,V.12.6.  
34 VINS.,1.438 cf.,St. Peter.  
35 Rg.,V.12.6; VI.22.10; VI.46.7.  
36 VINS., I.438,439 and Fn. 12.  
37 Commenting upon Rg.,VI.46.7.  
39 SR.,P.130 cf.,SBE,46,28.  
40 VIII.46.27.  
41 Commenting upon Rg.,I.31.11.  
42 Rg.,VI.46.7.  
43 SR.,P.130 cf.,Rgveda,Glossar,92.  
44 There was one more Nahuśa mentioned in Rg.,VIII.46.27. According to Sāyana he was either a superintendent or officer—'adhyakṣa' of king Prthuśravas or was a king of his times.  
45 Rg.,VII.95.2 Scholars have tried to associate him to the other regions also. R.D.Karmarkar (SR.,P.130 cf.,Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona) identifies him with Dionysus—the first Greek Conqueror. According to Ludwig (SR.,P.130 cf.,TR.,3,206) and Griffith Nahuśa belonged to the Indus.  
46 Rg.,V.12.6.  
47 Rg.,IX.91.2.  
48 Rg.,I.100.16-17.  
49 Rg.,IX.88.2.
flourish and they became capable of paying taxes. He was later deprived of his kingdom by the devas who made Ilā the ruler of his people (see Ch.VII pp.101-102). The Vedas are silent about the reason of this act of devas. From Mahābhārata we get a clue. It says that when Indra felt depressed after killing Vṛtra Devas appointed Nahuṣa as their king. But later on he made signs towards Śacī, the wife of Indra, and insulted the Rṣis. He was dethroned as a consequence. According to the Brāhmaṇas also Indra fell ill on taking too much soma after killing Trisiras Visvarūpa (see Ch.III). Nahuṣa might have become dominant in that period.

YAYĀTI

Yayāti was a son of Nahuṣa. He was a famous sacrificer. Gayapāta performed a yajña for him and called him a ‘rajas’. He was a great philosopher. All other details about him are lacking in the Vedas. From Mahābhārata we come to know that he had two wives Sarmiṣṭhā and Devāṇī who gave birth to Puru, Anu, Druhyu, Yadu and Turvasa. This is supported by Sāyana. But from the Vedas we do not find any evidence. Vedic Index 'sees no

50 Rg.,VII.6.5.
51 Mbh.,Udyog.,V.49.11-17.
52 Rg.,X.63.1.
53 Commenting on Rg. I.31.17.
54 A seer of Rg.,X.63,64; Yaj.,XXI.4-7.
55 V.S.Aggarwal ('Matsya Purana- A Study'.Varanasi,1963. Pp.137-141) says that his philosophy was a summary of Mokṣa Dharma in Śānti Parva of Mahābhārata. The doctrines he propounded were Niyātivāda, Kālavāda, Yonivāda, Svabhāvavāda, Yadrchhāvāda, Bhūtavāda and Puruṣavāda.
56 Commenting on Rg.,IV.50.17.
57 But there is a possibility that they were the descendants of Yayāti as they are seen fighting with the Bharatas time and again. Possibly they fought because Bharatas became rulers of Ilāścapada, which was ruled by Nahuṣa earlier (see Ch.VII, VIII). Further more in the above quoted mantra-‘uta tyā turvāyaḥ hiti asnātārā sacipatīḥ indro vidvānā ārayat’ Rg.,4.50.17. Sāyana interpreted ‘asnātārā’ as that they were not bathed by the waters of sacred rivers which was a tradition performed at the time of coronation so they were not coronated. But it may also be interpreted that Indra enabled them to cross the river without being wet.
relationship between the five and Yayāti. But we believe in the statement of the Mahābhārata and consider them as sons of Yayāti.

They were proteges of Indra in the beginning. Indra killed Ahnavāyya for their sake and helped Yadu and Turvāṣa in crossing river Indus by killing Dhu.nl and Cumu.nl, the two dasyus. Puru, Yadu and Turvāṣa performed a Yajña in which Navavāstava and Bhradratha were invited. But later on when they opposed Bharatas Indra ruined them. These five were generally at war with the Bharatas. Turvāṣa, allied with the Vṛcivants, fought against Srūjaya and Abhyāvartin Cāyamana. Yadu and Turvāṣa also fought against Divodāsa. In another battle at Paruṣni (modern Rāvi) all the five participated and were defeated. Puru, Anu and Druhyu were killed (See Ch.VIII) for details.

Turvāṣa

Turvāṣa was a performer of Yajñas and a worshipper of Indra. Turvāṣa fought a battle against Srūjaya, the Bharata king, and was defeated. He also fought in the battle of twenty one kings at Paruṣni and was defeated.

Kurāṅga

Turvāṣa’s son was Kurāṅga. He performed a yajña with the help of Devātithi and Medhātithi. Turvāṣa’s son Kurāṅga gave 60,000 cows to Priyamedha kāṇya as sacrificial meed, which he further gave to Devātithi.

Epics and Purāṇas state that the descendants of Turvāṣa migrated to the west and were known as Yavanas, Turks and Malecbhas. S.N. Pradhan also equates them with the Yavanas.

50 Rg.,VIII.45.27.
59 Rg.,IV.30.17; VI.20.12.
60 Rg.,I.36.118.
61 Rg.,IX.61.2.
62 Rg.,VII.18.6.
63 Rg.,VIII.4.1.
64 Rg.,VIII.4.19-20.
65 Mbh.,Adi Parva. I.7.80; Pad.P.,Bhumi. II.78.41; Va.P.
YADU

He was a constant companion of Turvasa. He accompanied him in almost all the battles. Names of several descendants of Yadu are found scattered in the Vedic Texts. We are unable to make out their exact pedigree. They are as following –

TIRINDER YĀDVA

Tirinder Yādva was the son of Parsu, a king according to Sayana. He was the patron of Vatsa Kāṇva and gave him thousands of horses, camels, cows and servants as sacrificial meed.

ĀŚAŅΓĀ PLĀYOΓA

Āśaṅga was a Yādva. Perhaps he was born to Prayoga, a

---

IC.3, Bh.P., X.22.27.
He says that 'yavana' is equivalent of 'javana' which means 'who possessed speed'. Same is the meaning of 'turvasa'. In Hebrew literature the son of 'nàwëz or 'nìwëz' (=Noah in English) is called 'yephet' or 'yaphé', and his son is called 'javana'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vedic</th>
<th>Hebrew</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nahusa</td>
<td>Nàwëz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yayáti</td>
<td>Yaphé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yavana = Yurvasu</td>
<td>Javana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He further states that Yavanas were known as Yakṣus. Turvasa was also known as Yakṣu. Raghunatha Singh (RTR., Parisistha ‘Ja’ P.74) also says that Turana of Turanian countries belonged to Turvasa. Zimmer (‘Althindisches Leben’, 122, 124) identifies Turvasas with Vṛcīvantas. Authors of Vedic Index VINS., (1.316) do not agree with him.

67 Rg., VIII.6.48. According to Griffith, Weber (VINS., 1.304-505 cf., Indische Studien, 4,379’, Hillebrandt (Ibid., cf., ‘vedische Mythologie’, I,105), Hopkins Ibid., cf., JOAOS., 15,264, n), and Ludwig (Ibid., cf., TR., 3,194 et seq.) Tirinder and Parsu were not Indian names but Iranian. Zimmer contradicted the view saying that the Parsus were known to Panini(V.3.117) as a warrior tribe; the Paraśas were a tribe in south-west Madhyadesa; and the Periplus knows a tribe of Parthoi in north India (VINS., 1.304-505 cf., Althindisches Leben, 134 et seq.) Potdar connects them to the Yādvas (‘Sacrifice in the Rgveda’ Bombay, 1953.P.177).

68 Sanh. S.S., XVI.11.20.
69 Rg., VIII.6.46.
70 A seer of Rg., VIII.1.
71 Rg., VIII.1.31-33.
Bhārgava from some lady of Yādvas or Āsanga, son of some Yādva was adopted by him. Sayana\textsuperscript{72} narrates a legend that Prayoga or Prayoga was a king. His son Āsanga\textsuperscript{73} changed his sex and became a woman. But with the intercession of Medhyatithi he regained his masculinity to great joy of his wife Sasvati\textsuperscript{74}. Āsanga Yādva was a rich person and had a generous heart. He gave away horses with upholstery, bedecked with gold and thousands of cows to Madhātithi\textsuperscript{75}. He was stated to be a follower of right path – 'prapathi' and an expert marksman – 'paramjyā'\textsuperscript{76}. Griffith\textsuperscript{77} mentioned 'Svanadratha' as a son and 'Paramjyā', 'Ninditāśva' and 'Prapathi' as grandsons of Āsanga but according to the authors of Vedic Index it was a misunderstanding. Sayana also did not interpret the above words as proper nouns.

PRTHUSRAVAS

Prthusravas, the son of Kanīta, gave thousands of camels, cows and horses to Vasa Kānya\textsuperscript{78}.

KASU

Kasu was king of Cedis who were mighty people. King of Cedi had a good hold over his people. It is said that no man could walk upon the path which the Cedis used to walk\textsuperscript{79}. Kasu, king of Cedi gave hundreds of camels and cows to Brahmatithi Kānyā\textsuperscript{80}. Kasu defeated ten kings\textsuperscript{81} and made them subservient to Brahmatithi\textsuperscript{82}. In

\textsuperscript{72} Commenting upon Rg., VIII.1.33.

\textsuperscript{73} According to Vedic Index his connection with Yadu is mere misundstanding (VINS., 1.70-71). There is a probability that he was adopted by either of Prayoga or Yadu.

\textsuperscript{74} Rg., VIII.1.34 In the opinion of authors of the Vedic Index Śaśvati's existence is based upon a misunderstanding of the phrase 'every woman' ('śaśvati nāri) but she also was a rṣikā of the Vedas according to Sarva.

\textsuperscript{75} Rg., VIII.1.31-33.

\textsuperscript{76} Rg., VIII.1.30.

\textsuperscript{77} Commenting on Rg., VIII.1.30 & 34.

\textsuperscript{78} Rg., VIII.46.21-22.

\textsuperscript{79} Rg., VIII.5.38-39.

\textsuperscript{80} Rg., VIII.5.37.

\textsuperscript{81} Rg., VIII.5.38-39. Rveda calls them 'hirayasaṃgha.' Sayana interpreted the word as 'hirayasamāna terajak,' which implies that they were not dasyu kings but amongst
the opinion of Pusalkar\textsuperscript{83} Cedis dwelt between the Yamunā and the Vindhyas. Cedis ruled over Bundelkhand in later days\textsuperscript{84}. The Purāṇas have described them as Yadvas.

**SĀTVATS**

Sātvats mentioned in the Satapatha Brahmana\textsuperscript{85} might have been related to Yadus as Purāṇas state. P.L.Bhargava\textsuperscript{86} counts Sasabindu of Maitrayani Upaniṣad\textsuperscript{87} amongst the Yadvas on the basis of the Purāṇas. Many sites related to Yadvas have been discovered so far by the archaeologists. Most famous of them is Dwārika.

**Puru**

Puru was stated to be an 'asura, rākṣasa'\textsuperscript{88} and 'ardhavāca'\textsuperscript{89} i.e., having corrupt pronunciation or a liar by the authors of Vedic texts due to his hostility with the Bharatas. The words were generally used for the hostile persons by the Vedic rsis\textsuperscript{90}. The Pūrus, the residents of the region of Sarasvatī\textsuperscript{91}, were not related to him as they were ruled over by the Bharatas. He was a residents of some Janapadas at the bank of Paruṣāṇī\textsuperscript{92}.

Puru was defeated by Bharata\textsuperscript{93}. He was later killed in the battle with Sudāsa at Paruṣāṇī\textsuperscript{94} (See Ch.VIII for details). In the

---

\textsuperscript{82} Rg.,VIII.5.37-39.
\textsuperscript{83} VA., p.248.
\textsuperscript{84} CHOI., p.75.
\textsuperscript{85} XIII.5.4.9,21.
\textsuperscript{86} I.IVA., p.140.
\textsuperscript{87} I.4.
\textsuperscript{88} SB.,VI.8.1.14.
\textsuperscript{89} Rg.,VII.18.13.
\textsuperscript{90} Rg.,V.32.8; X.23.5 Roth (VINS.,1.348 Fn.12 cf., 'Erlauterungen Zum Hirukta',97) and Zimmer (Ibid., cf., Op.cit., 114,115) opine that the word was used in the sense of insulting speech. Hillebrandt ('Vedische Mythologie, I.89,90,114) interpreted it as 'speaking an enemies speech' and thinks that the Pūrus were dialectically different from the Bharatas. Muir (OST.,27,114), Davidson ('Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft' 37,23 The Mahabhashya Version) and J.Eggeling (Sacred Books of the East,26,31,n.3) also hold the same view.
\textsuperscript{91} See Ch.XI P.148.
\textsuperscript{92} Rg.,VII.18.11-13.
\textsuperscript{93} Rg.,VII.8.4.
\textsuperscript{94} Rg.,VII.18.13.
later period some 'pauravas' are met with in the west. Alexander found a 'Ilmgos' i.e., a paurava prince on the Hydaspas. Probably they were the descendants of this Puru as other Purus, the residents of Sarasvati, got merged with the Ikṣavākus and Bharatas to form the Kurus.

A son of Puru was a protege of Indra.

**ANU**

Anu was also inhabitant of Paruṣni. Anus prepared the chariot of Āsvins. Devātithi performed a Yajña for Anu's son (See Ch.XIII P.177). He was killed along with his 66066 soldiers in the war against Sudāsa at Paruṣni (see Ch.VIII Pp.118-120 for details). Indra gave the plundered wealth of Anu's son to Sudāsa.

Mahābhārata states that Anu's descendants became the Malechhas. C.R.Kṛṣṇamācarlu states that Ānava kings had relations with kings of Egypt. It is possible that the Ionians and Dorians who invaded Greeks may be the descendants of Anu and Druhyu.

**DRUHYU**

Druhyu was also killed in the battle at Paruṣni against Sudāsa (See Ch.VIII Pp.118-120 for details).

No further accounts are available about them and their descendants.

---

95 VINS.,2.12 cf.,Indica VIII.4.
96 Rg.,VIII.3.12.
97 Rg.,VII.18.14 But according to Grassmann and Roth they were foreign to the Aryans.
98 Rg.,V.11.4.
99 Rg.,VII.81.14.
100 BKVI P.87 cf.,'The Cradle of Indian History', Adyar Library, Madras. 1947.
THE PEDIGREE OF VIŚVĀMITRA

1. Isīratha
2. Kuśika
3. Gāthina
4. Viśvāmitra
5. Prajāpati Reabha Kata Devarāta Puraṇa Madhuchandā Reṇu Aṣṭaka
6. Samvarana Utkīla
7. Manu
8. Nahusa
9. Yayāti
10. Puru Yadu Turvasa Anu Druhyu
11. Kuranta

==========