CHAPTER XV

THE ATRIS AND THE KASYAPAS

THE ATRIS

ATRI BHAUMA

Atri Bhauma, generally known as Atri, was one of the 'saptahotrs', i.e., one of the famous seven rṣis who officiated at the sacrifice of Manu. The name of Atri is also counted amongst the seven seers of the Rgveda. Atri was an astronomer - "iyotiryad avindat atrih".

There are many stories about Atri. Once Swarbhānu an asura created artificial darkness and covered sun by his 'māya' during a battle with Indra. Atri dispelled that 'māya' and the sun began to shine again.

Asuras imprisoned Atri in a place which had hundred shutters and tried to burn him by producing heat. Aśvins came to Atri's rescue. They cooled down the room. Indra showed him the way to come out of the prison.

Atri Bhauma became a hotṛ in a yajña of Kāśīvat Aūśija. Aśvamedha Bhārata gave him one hundred oxen as Daksīṇa. He was also the chaplain of Triarūṇa Aiksvāka and obtained ten thousand

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1 Sarvānukramaṇi mentions one Atri Sāṁkhya also who was thrown into a well by asuras and saved by Aśvins (Rg., X.143.1-3).
2 Rg.,X.63.7. See Ch.VI P.94.
3 As seers of Rg.,IX.67 Sarvānukramaṇi says - 'uta devah sapta rgyah ekāra samitaran'. He was also seer of Rg.,V.27,37-43,76,77,83-86; IX.67.10-12, 86.41-45. He was also seer of Vaj.,VIII.15-30; Sam.,345,366,367,513,514, 1172-74, 1614-16, 1752-54; Ath.,XX.12.7.
4 Ath.,XIII.2.36.
5 Rg.,V.40.5-9.
6 Rg.,I.51.3.
7 Rg.,I.51.7-8.
8 Rg.,V.41.9.
9 Rg.,V.27.9.
gold coins with twenty cows from him. He prayed to get a beautiful wife, wealth and children. Atri desirous of having four excellent sons performed four day rite of Agni and four sons were born to him. All of them further begot four sons each. But Sarvānakramaṇi enlists so many sons of Atri as seers of the Rgveda:

1. Arcaṇānas
2. Avasyā
3. Iṣa
4. Urucaṅkri
5. Evayāmaruta
6. Kumāra
7. Gaya
8. Gaviśthira
9. Gātū
10. Gopavāna
11. Puruṣ
12. Paurāṇīka
13. Pratiṣṭhāṇa
14. Pratikṣatra
15. Pratikṣaṇa
16. Pratiprabha
17. Pratibhānu
18. Pratiratha
19. Babhrū
20. Bāhuvarkta
21. Budha
22. Yajātā
23. Vasuṣrūta
24. Viśvamanas
25. Viśvasāma
26. Śyāvāśva
27. Satyasrava
28. Bāhuvarkta
29. Śrutvīśa
30. Satyasrava
31. Satyaprasa
32. Saptprna
33. Saptavāḍhri
34. Sasa
35. Svasti

11. Rg.,IX.67.10-12.
12. Rg.,V.77.
13. Rg.,V.16,17.
14. Rg.,V.3,4,5,6.
15. Rg.,V.51.
16. Rg.,V.74,74; Sam.,XXX.5.
18. Rg.,V.46.
19. Rg.,V.22.
20. Rg.,V.69,70.
21. Rg.,V.49.
22. Rg.,V.87.
23. Rg.,V.48.
24. Rg.,V.62.
25. Rg.,V.2.
26. Rg.,V.47.
27. Rg.,V.79,80.
28. Rg.,V.9,10.
29. Rg.,V.30.
30. Rg.,V.44,12,45.
31. Rg.,V.1. He was also a seer of Sam.,73,1746-49.
32. Rg.,V.32.
33. Rg.,V.44,12,71,72; Sam.,73,1746-48.
34. Rg.,V.21.
35. Rg.,V.44,10-12.
36. Rg.,V.50,51; He was also author of Vaj.Ś.,XXI.12-46,28-61.
He had two daughters Apālā and Viśavāra too. Some of the names enlisted above appear to be his grandsons. We have mentioned the composition of only those seers whose other details are lacking and have not been mentioned further in this chapter. Though most of them were the seers of other three Vedas yet we have mentioned the details of only those whose parentage is certain.

ARCANĀNAS

Arcanānas’s patrons were Rathavīti Dārbhya, Purumīlha and Taranta Vaiḍadasvī. Arcanānas’s wife was named as Mahyā and his descendants were known as ‘Māheyas’. His sons were Pūrvatithi and Śyāvasva.

Śyāvasva was married to Rathavīti’s daughter (See Ch.IX P.124 for details). Śyāvasva’s sons were Iṣa, Adhrigu and Abhisu. Iṣa was taught Gayatri Upaniṣad by Agastya who learnt it from Indra. Adhrigu was co-author of the Rgveda along with Prajāpati, Manu Samvarana, Nahuṣa and Yayāti.

GOPAVANA

Gopavana performed a yajña for Śrutārvan, the son of Rksa, at...
the bank of Paruṣṇi. His son Gaupavāna was a pupil of Pautimāṣya.

**BABHRA**

Babhru was a protege of Indra and Āsvins. His cows were stolen by Namuci. He propitiated Indra with Soma. Indra got his cows restored by killing Namuci. Āsvins also saved him from some disaster. Rṣançaya, probably king of the Ruṣmājanapada, gave Babhru four thousand cows bedecked with ornaments, clothes and a golden pot for milking the cows. He performed penances near the sea.

**BĀHUVRKTA**

Bāhuvrkta participated in the yajña of Ksatra (see Ch.VIII P.121 for details).

**SAPṬAVADHRI**

Sapṭavadhri’s cousins locked him up in a wooden box to keep him away from his wife. He prayed to Āsvins who got him released. He went to his wife and returned after some time and got himself locked again in the box to hoodwink his cousins. Griffith interprets the legend as that Saptavadhri appears to have got his hand or foot jammed in a split tree, and had been extricated when he called on the Āsvins. One more interpretation is mentioned in

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52 Rg.,VIII.74.4,15.
54 Seer of Rg.,V.30.
55 Rg.,VIII.22.10.
56 Rṣançaya was a king of the Ruṣmāsas, probably a resident of Ruṣmā – a janapada. Ruṣmā (probably a resident of janapada Ruṣmā) was a protege of Indra along with Ruma, Syāvaka and Kṛpa. According to VINS.,1.192 one Kaurama was king of Ruṣmāsas according to the Atharvaveda (XX.127.1). But interpretation is wrong as in the above quoted mantra Ruṣmā is a narrator who is narrating the generosity of king Rṣançaya to Kaurama.
57 Rg.,V.30.12-15.
59 Seer of Rg.,V.44.12; 71,72.
60 Rg.,V.44.10-13.
61 Sayana commenting on Rg.,V.78.5-6.
APALA

Apālā was cured of some skin disease by Indra and her skin began to shine like gold.

RĀTAHAVYA

Rātahavya was a king. Nothing more is known about him.

THE KASYAPAS

KASYAPA MĀRĪCA

Kaśyapa Mārīca was a seer of the Rgveda and Atharvaveda and one of the 'saptarṣis'. Ayurveda owes its origin to Kaśyapa. Atharvaveda calls him a doctor of Yaśaman and a medicine man. He enjoyed a long span of life - 'kaśyapasya tryāyuṣam'. He made a 'Maṇi' which made a man strong if put it on. He performed the coronation ceremony of king Viśvakarman the son of Bhuvana. The descendants of Kaśyapa were:

1. Avatsāra
2. Asita
3. Devala

62 Saṅkī of Rg., VIII.91.
63 Ath., XIV.1.41.
64 Seer of Rg., V.65.66.
65 Sayana commenting upon Rg., I.153.3.
66 I.99, VIII.29; IX.64, 67.4-6, 91, 92, 113, 114.
67 VII.62.
68 Sarva. He was not a husband of Aditi as stated by the Puranas.
69 II.33.7.
70 XII.4.
71 Ath., V.28.7.
72 Ath., VIII.5.14.
73 Ait. Br., VIII.21; SB., XIII.7.1.15.
74 Sarva.
75 Seer of Rg., V.44; IX.53-60; Sam., 755-57, 975-78, 1762-64.
76 Seer of Sam., 485, 486, 502, 306, 758-63. See Fn.75 also.
77 Both were seers of Rg., IX.3-24; Sam., 475, 1119-27, 1128-39, 1266-73, 1444-49. Either of them was seer of Sam., 935-37, 961-74, 999-1001, 1093-95, 1178-1204. Devala was seer of Vaj.8., II.12, XXXIII.62.
4. Nidhruvi⁷⁸
5. Bhutaṇga⁷⁹
6. Rebha⁸⁰
7. Vivṛhā⁸¹
8. Rebhasūnu Kāśyapa⁸²
9. Sikhandinvasu apsarasau⁸³
10. Marici⁸⁴.

**AVATSĀRA KĀŚYAPA**

He accepted in donations clothes worth 30,000 from Dhvasra and Puruṣanti - the two kings⁸⁵. He also participated in the yajña of Kṣatra⁸₆.

**REBHA**

Rebha was a protege of Aśvins who saved him from imprisonment and being drowned in the waters⁸⁷.

**VIVRĀHĀ**

He was also a physician. He could cure of Yakṣaman⁸⁸.

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⁷⁸ Seer of Rg., IX.63.
⁷⁹ Seer of Rg., X.106.
⁸⁰ Seer of Rg., VIII.97.
⁸¹ Seer of Rg., X.163.
⁸² Seers of Rg., IX.99, 100.
⁸³ Raikas of Rg., IX.104.
⁸⁴ Seer of Ath., VII.62.
⁸⁵ Rg., IX.58.3-4.
⁸⁶ Rg., V.44.10
⁸⁷ Rg., I.112.5; 116.24; 117.4; 119.6; X.39.9.
⁸⁸ Rg., X.163.