

32.

(On the origin and nature of the so-called Kuntâpa¹³ hymns, Atharvaveda 20, 127-136. The *Nârâs'aĩsi*, *Raibhĩ* and *Pârikshiti*, *Dis'âm kl̥ipti* and *Janakalpa* verses; the *Indra-gáthás*.)

The juice of the metres which were all done by the sixth day (at the Shalaha) was running (over the brim). Prajâpati got afraid lest the juice of the metres might go away and run over the worlds. Therefore he kept it down by means of metres placed on another part (above them). With the *Nârâs'aĩsi* he kept down (the juice) of the *Gâyatrĩ*, with the *Raibhĩ* that of the *Trishtubh*, with the *Pârikshiti* that of the *Jagatĩs*, with the *Kâravýâ* that of the *Anush-*

¹³ The so called Kuntâpa hymns are to be repeated by the Brâhmaṇâchhaĩsi after he has finished the *Vṛishâkapi*. Their repetition has several peculiarities regarding the response, which all are noted by As'val. S'r. S. (8, 3). The response for the first 14 verses beginning with *idaĩ janâ upa s'ruta* is at the end of each verse only; it is simply *othâmo daivom*. The verses which immediately follow up to *etâ as'vâ âplavanta* have two responses each, after every half verse. The seventy pâdas commencing with *etâ as'vâ* have each a response. The six verses commencing with *vitatâu kiranâu* have each a peculiar response after the first half verse. So the response to *vitatâu* is *dundubhim âhananâbhyâm jaritar othâmo daiva*; that to the second is *ko'sabile jaritar*, &c. they are all given in the Atharvaveda Sâmhita (20, 133) along with the text of which they form however no part. For the response (*pratigara*) is repeated by the Adhvaryu. Similar responses occur in all verses which follow as far as the *devanitham*, *âdityâha jaritar*; they all are given in the Atharvaveda, such as *pipilakâvatah, s'vâ, parṇas'adah*, &c. which all are followed by *jaritar othâmo daivom*. In the Devanitha (Athar. 20, 135, 6-10) the response is in the first pâda of each verse; it is *om ha jaritar othâmo daiva*. These Kuntâpa songs do not bear a strictly religious character; they are praise songs principally referring to Dakshinâ and belong to that class of ancient poetry which bears the name *nârâs'aĩsi*. This may be clearly seen from the commencement of the whole collection, *idaĩ janâ upa s'ruta nârâs'aĩsah stavishyate*, i. e. hearken ye people to this; *Nârâs'aĩsah* will be praised with chants. The recitation of these pieces is accompanied with musical instruments, such as *dundubhi, karkari*, &c. The repeater must have been originally the chanter; for in the response he is always addressed by "*jaritar*" i. e. singer.