

as they awake to activity at the beginning of the rains. It has been explained by Max Müller⁵ as a satire on the Brahmins. Geldner,⁶ agreeing with this view, thinks that it is directed by its Vasiṣṭha composer against rival Brahmins, probably the Viśvāmitras.⁷ The view, however, which interprets the hymn as a rain charm⁸ seems on the whole more likely. The frog, from its connexion with water, was considered to have cooling properties. Thus after the burning of the dead body the frog is invited to come to the spot where the cremation has taken place in order to cool it down.⁹ Similarly the frog is invoked in the Atharvaveda against the fire of fever.¹⁰

⁵ *Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, 494, 495.

⁶ *Rigveda, Kommentar*, 117.

⁷ Geldner, *loc. cit.*, very plausibly points out that the last Pāda of this Vasiṣṭha hymn is borrowed from the most important Viśvāmitra hymn (Rv. iii. 53, 7).

⁸ Yāska, *Nirukta*, ix. 5; Bloomfield, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 17, 173-179. Cf. Macdonell, *Vedic*

Mythology, p. 151; *Sanskrit Literature*, 121, 122.

⁹ Rv. x. 16, 14. See Bloomfield, *American Journal of Philology*, 11, 342-350; Lanman in Whitney's Translation of the Atharvaveda, 850.

¹⁰ Av. vii. 116. See Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharvaveda*, 565.

Cf. Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, 95.

1. **Matsya**, 'fish,' is mentioned only once in the Rigveda,¹ but frequently later.²

¹ x. 68, 8.

² Av. xi. 2, 25; Maitrāyaṇi Saṃhitā, iii. 9, 5; 14, 2; Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā, xxiv. 21. 34; Taittiriya Saṃhitā, ii. 6, 6, 1; Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, i. 8, 1, 1 (the famous fish of the deluge legend); Chāndogya Upaniṣad, i. 4, 3; Kauṣītaki

Upaniṣad, i. 2; mahā-matsya, 'great fish,' Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad, iv. 3, 18. In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, xiii. 4, 3, 12 (cf. Āśvalāyana Śrauta Sūtra, x. 7, 8; Sāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra, xvi. 2, 23), a Matsya Sāmmada is personified as the king of the fishes.

2. **Matsya** appears to be the name of a people in one passage of the Rigveda,¹ where they are ranged with the other enemies of Sudās, although it is possible to see merely the sense of 'fish' in that passage. In the list of Aśvamedhins, 'offerers of the horse sacrifice,' in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,² Dhvasan Dvaitavana is mentioned as a Matsya king (Mātsya). The Matsyas as a people occur also in the Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad³ in

¹ vii. 18, 6.

² xiii. 5, 4, 9.

³ iv. 1.