



315en04

THE VEDIC AGE (1500BC–600BC)

In the previous lesson, you read about the Harappan Civilization. The Harappans lived in cities and had a well organized trade and craft activities. They also had a script which we have been so far not able to decipher. However around 1900 BC these cities began to decline. A number of rural settlements appeared afterwards. These rural settlements show continuity of certain Harappan elements. Around the same time we find archaeological evidence of the arrival of new people known as Aryans or Indo-Aryans on the outskirts of the Harappan region. In the present lesson, we shall study the circumstances under which these new people arrived and also learn about the main features of their culture as depicted in the literature called the Vedas.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- learn about the Vedic texts and the nature of their contents;
- know about the Aryans and identify the region from where they migrated;
- locate the regions inhabited by the Early Vedic (1500BC–1000BC) and the Later Vedic people (1000BC–600BC);
- explain the importance and impact of the use of iron implements which began in Later Vedic period, and
- identify the changes which appeared in the economic, social, religious and political structures and institutions of the Vedic people over a period extending from 1000 BC to 600 BC.

4.1 THE VEDIC TEXTS

What is *veda*? The word *veda* is derived from the root *vid* which means ‘to know’. The word *veda* means the sacred knowledge contained in the texts known as Vedic text. Two categories of texts are included in the corpus of the Vedic literature. These are *Mantra* and *Brahmana*. The *Mantra* category forms the core of the Vedic texts and has four separate collections. These are the *Rigveda*, the *Samaveda*, the *Yajurveda*, and the *Atharvaveda*. The *Brahmanas* not to be confused with Brahminical class are prose texts containing the explanations of the *mantras* as well as the sacrificial rituals. The four Vedas together with their *Brahmanas* are also known as *shruti* or ‘hearing’, that which was directly heard by the sages. The *Aranyakas* (literally forest treatises) and the *Upanishads* (sitting down beside) are mainly appendices to the *Brahmanas*. These are also known as the *Vedanta* (end of the *Veda*) and contain philosophical discussions.

**Notes**

The *Rigveda* is a collection of 1,028 hymns divided into 10 *mandalas*. They are the earliest compositions and hence depict the life of the early Vedic people in India. The *Samaveda* is a collection of verses mostly taken from the *Rigveda* but arranged in a poetic form to facilitate singing. The *Yajurveda* is found in two recensions, Black and White, and are full of rituals to be performed publicly or individually. The *Atharvaveda* is a collection of magic spells and charms to ward off the evil spirits and diseases.

Careful studies have shown that the Vedic texts reflect two stages of development in terms of literature as well as social and cultural evolution. The *Rigveda* which is the oldest Vedic text reflects one stage of social and cultural development whereas the other three *Vedas* reflect another stage. The first stage is known as the Rigvedic period or Early Vedic period and the later stage is known as the Later Vedic period. The age of the Early Vedic period corresponds with the date of the composition of the Rigvedic hymns. This date has been fixed between 1500 BC and 1000 BC. The later Vedic period is placed between 1000 BC and 600 BC. Recently, the *Rigveda* has been included by the UNESCO in the list of literature signifying World Human Heritage.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.1**

1. What do you understand by the term *Veda*?

2. Which texts are included in the *Mantra* category of the Vedic texts? Mention them.

3. What kind of texts are included in the category known as *shruti*? Mention them.

4. Explain the contents of the *Brahmana* category of texts.

5. Explain the term *vedanta*.

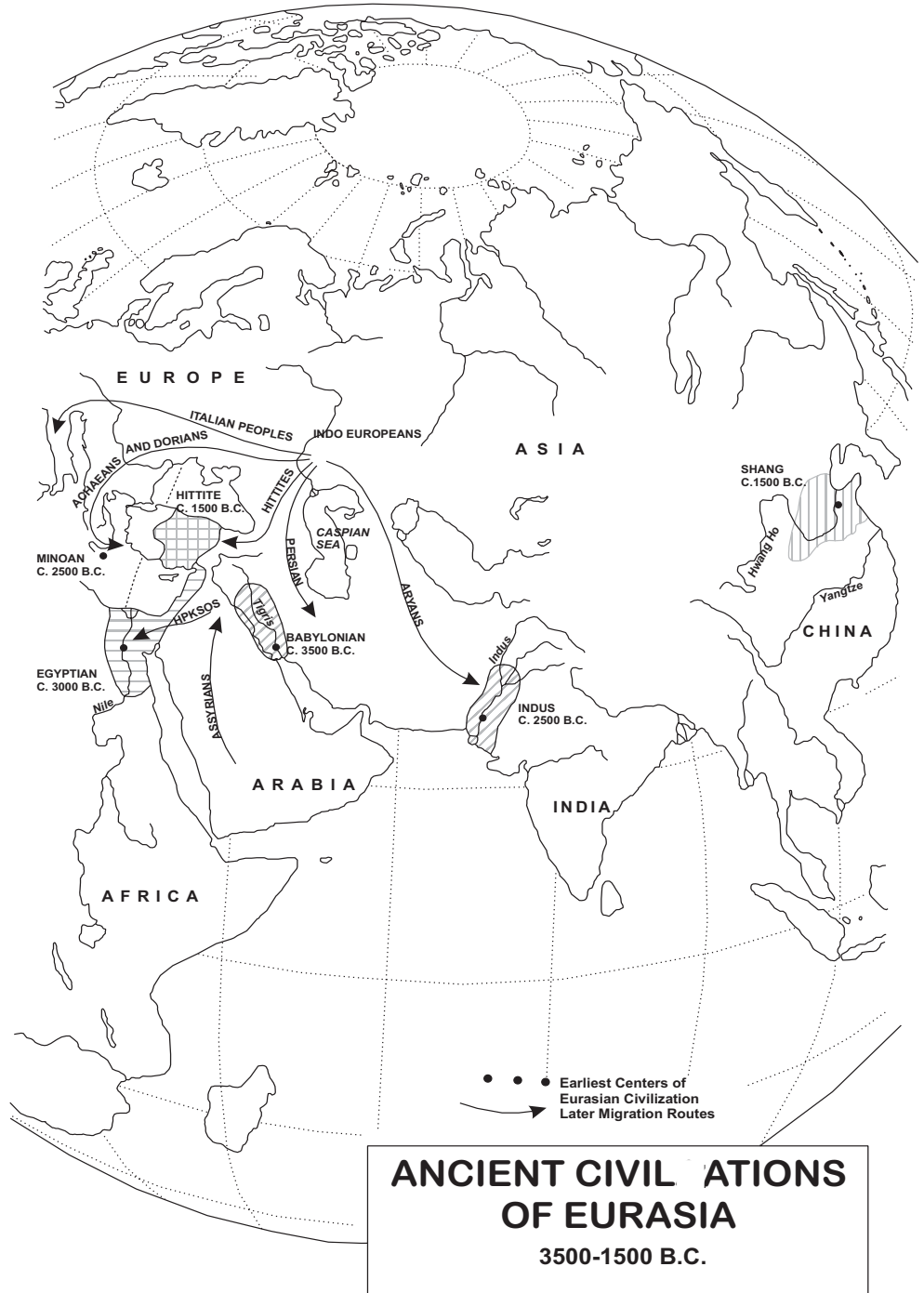
4.2 MIGRATION OF THE ARYANS

The authors of the Vedic hymns were the Aryans. But who were the Aryans? In the 19th century, Aryans were considered a race. Now it is thought of as a linguistic group of people who spoke Indo-European language from which later emerged Sanskrit, Latin, and Greek etc. This is reflected from the words in these languages which are similar in sound and meaning. Thus the Sanskrit words *matri* and *pitri* are similar to the Latin *mater* and *pater*. Similarly, Inar of the Hittite (Turkey) language is similar to Indra of the Vedas. Suryyas and Maruttash of the Kassite (Mesopotamia) inscriptions are equivalent of the Vedic Surya and Marut.

Originally the Aryans seem to have lived somewhere in the Steppes stretching from southern Russia to Central Asia. From here, a group of them migrated to northwest India and came to be called Indo-Aryans or just Aryans. The archaeological evidence of migrations comes from what is known as Andronovo Culture situated in southern Siberia. This Culture flourished in the second millennium BC. From here people moved to north of Hindukush (the area known as Bactria-Margiana Archaeological Complex) and from here they entered India. During the period between 1900 BC



Notes



ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS OF EURASIA
3500-1500 B.C.

Map 4.1 Ancient Civilization of Eurasia

and 1500 BC we get, in these regions, evidence of horses, spoked wheels, fire cult and cremation which formed important parts of Aryan life in India. Apart from these, the artifacts and ceramics also suggest movement of people from Central Asian region to South Asian region. However it may be noted that some scholars still argue that the Aryans were the indigenous people of India and that they did not come from outside.

The new people came in several batches spanning several hundred years. All this while interaction between the indigenous inhabitants and the newcomers continued. One of



the important results of this process of interaction was that the Vedic form of the Aryan language became predominant in the entire Northwestern India. The texts composed in this language, as mentioned above, are popularly known as the Vedic Texts.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.2

1. How do we know that Sanskrit, Latin, Greek, Hittite and Kassite languages belong to one group?

2. From where do we find the archaeological evidence of Aryan migrations?

3. Which are the places which can be identified as the bearers of Aryan cultural traits?

4. Mention the prominent markers of the Aryan culture.

4.3 GEOGRAPHICAL HORIZON OF THE VEDIC ARYANS

The early Vedic Aryans lived in the area known as *sapta-sindhu* meaning area of seven rivers. This area largely covers the northwestern part of South Asia up to river Yamuna. The seven rivers included Sindhu, Vitasta (Jhelum), Asikni (Chenab), Parushni (Ravi), Vipash (Beas), Shutudri (Sutlej) and the Sarasvati. In this area the Rigvedic people lived, fought battles, grazed their herds of cattle and other domesticated animals. Gradually moving eastward, they came to occupy eastern U.P. (Kosala) and north Bihar (Videha) during the Later Vedic period. Here they came into contact with the people who spoke languages different from their own and were living in this area for long.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.3

1. List the rivers included in the collective term *sapta-sindhu*.

2. With which regions did the Aryans come into contact in the Later Vedic period?

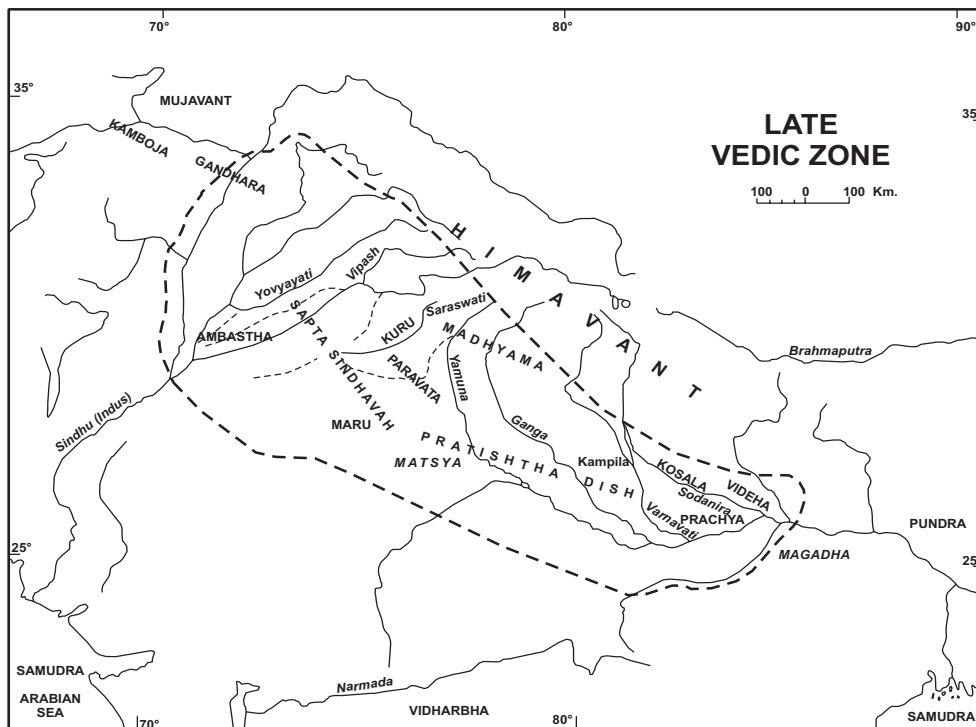
4.4 EARLY VEDIC ECONOMY

The early Vedic Aryans were **pastoralists**. Cattle rearing was their main occupation. They reared cattle, sheep, goats, and horses for purposes of milk, meat and hides. We arrive at this conclusion after analyzing the literary evidence in the *Rigveda*. A large number of words are derived from the word *go* meaning cow. A wealthy person was known as *gomat* and the daughter called *duhitri* which means one who milks the cow. The word *gaveshana* literally means search for cows, but it also means battle since many battles were fought over cattle. The cows were thought of as providers of everything. Prayers are offered for increase in the number of cattle. All the above and many more references show that cattle breeding was the most important economic activity of the Rigvedic Aryans.

However, this is not to suggest that the early Vedic people had no knowledge of agriculture. The evidence for agriculture in comparison with pastoral activities in the early



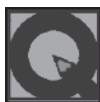
Notes



Map 4.2 Later Vedic Zone

portions is meager and mostly late insertions. A few references show that they had knowledge of agriculture and practiced it to supplement their food requirements. They produced *yava* (modern *jau* or barley), which was rather a generic word for cereals.

Apart from cattle-rearing and small-scale cultivation, people were engaged in many other economic activities. Hunting, carpentry, tanning, weaving, chariot-making, metal smeltry etc. were some such activities. The products of these activities were exchanged through barter. However, cows were the most favoured medium of exchange. The priests received cows, horses and gold ornaments as fees for performing sacrifices.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.4

1. Describe the main occupation of the Early Vedic Aryans.

2. Mention a few examples which underscore the importance of the cattle.

3. How important was agriculture in the life of the Early Vedic Aryans? Explain.

4. What economic activities were the Early Vedic Aryans engaged in? Make a list.

5. Explain the system of exchange during the Early Vedic period.



Notes

4.5 CHANGES IN THE LATER VEDIC PHASE

During later Vedic phase, agriculture became the mainstay of the Vedic people. Many rituals were introduced to initiate the process of agriculture. It also speaks of ploughing with yokes of six and eight oxen. The buffalo had been domesticated for the agricultural purposes. This animal was extremely useful in ploughing the swampy land. The god Indra acquires a new epithet 'Lord of the Plough' in this period. The number and varieties of plant food increased. Apart from barley, people now cultivated wheat, rice, pulses, lentils, millet, sugarcane etc. The items of *dana* and *dakshina* included cooked rice. Thus with the beginning of food production agricultural produce began to be offered in the rituals. *Tila*, from which the first widely used vegetable food-oil was derived increasingly, came to be used in rituals.

The main factor in the expansion of the Aryan culture during the later Vedic period was the beginning of the use of iron around 1000 BC. The Rigvedic people knew of a metal called *ayas* which was either copper or bronze. In the later Vedic literature *ayas* was qualified with *shyama* or *krishna* meaning black to denote iron. Archaeology has shown that iron began to be used around 1000 BC which is also the period of later Vedic literature. The northern and eastern parts of India to which the Aryans later migrated receive more rainfall than the north-western part of India. As a result this region is covered with thick rain forests which could not be cleared by copper or stone tools used by Rigvedic people. The use of iron tools now helped people clear the dense rain forests particularly the huge stumps left after burning, in a more effective manner. Large tracts of forestland could be converted into cultivable pieces in relatively lesser time. The iron plough could turn the soil from deeper portions making it more fertile. This process seems to have begun during the later part of the Rigvedic period but the effect of iron tools and implements become evident only towards the end of the Later Vedic period.

There has been a continuous increase in the population during the later Vedic period due to the expansion of the economy based on agriculture. The increasing number and size of Painted Grey Ware (PGW) settlements in the *doab* area shows this. With the passage of time the Vedic people also acquired better knowledge of seasons, manuring and irrigation. All these developments resulted in the substantial enlargement of certain settlements such as Hastinapur and Kaushambi towards the end of the Later Vedic period. These settlements slowly began to acquire characteristics of towns. Such rudimentary towns inhabited mainly by the chiefs, princes, priests and artisans were supported by the peasants who could spare for them some part of their produce voluntarily or involuntarily.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.5

1. What was the main economic activity during the Later Vedic period?

2. What changes do we notice in the life of the Aryans with the increased importance of agriculture?

3. Who is known as the 'lord of the plough'?

4. Why is the *tila* ritually considered very important?



Notes

5. How did the use of iron implements help agriculture during the Later Vedic period?

6. What were the reasons behind the growing sizes of some Painted Grey Ware sites?

4.6 THE EARLY VEDIC SOCIETY

The family was the basic unit of the Rigvedic society. It was **patriarchal** in nature. **Monogamy** was the usual norm of marriage but the chiefs at times practiced **polygamy**. Marriages took place after attaining maturity. After marriage the wife went to her husband's house. The family was part of a larger grouping called *vis* or **clan**. One or more than one clans made *jana* or **tribe**. *The jana* was the largest social unit. All the members of a clan were related to each other by blood relation. The membership of a tribe was based on birth and not on residence in a certain area. Thus the members of the Bharata tribe were known as the Bharatas. It did not imply any territory. The Rigvedic society was a simple and largely an **egalitarian** society. There was no caste division. Occupation was not based on birth. Members of a family could adopt different occupations. However certain differences did exist during the period. *Varna* or colour was the basis of initial differentiation between the Vedic and non-Vedic people. The Vedic people were fair whereas the non-Vedic indigenous people were dark in complexion and spoke a different language. Thus the *Rigveda* mentions *arya varna* and *dasa varna*. Here *dasa* has been used in the sense of a group different from the Rigvedic people. Later, *dasa* came to mean a slave. Besides, certain practices during this period, such as concentration of larger share of the war booty in the hands of the chiefs and priests resulted in the creation of some inequalities within a tribe during the later part of this Vedic phase.

The warriors, priests and the ordinary people were the three sections of the Rigvedic tribe. The *sudra* category came into existence only towards the end of the Rigvedic period. This means that the division of society in the early Vedic period was not sharp. This is indicated by the following verse in the *Rigveda*: "I am a poet, my father is a physician and my mother grinds grain upon the stone. Striving for wealth, with varied plans, we follow our desires like cattle."

The women in society enjoyed respectable position. She was married at a proper age and could choose a husband of her own choice. She could take part in the proceedings of the tribal assemblies called *sabha* and *samiti*.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.6

1. Describe the forms of marriages during the Early Vedic period.

2. Was the Early Vedic society egalitarian in nature? Give reasons for your answer.

3. On what basis was the Early Vedic society divided?



4. How did inequalities appear in the Early Vedic society?
-

4.7 SOCIAL CHANGES IN THE LATER VEDIC PHASE

The family remains the basic unit of the Vedic society. However, its composition underwent a change. The later Vedic family became large enough to be called a joint-family with three or four generations living together. The rows of hearths discovered at Atranjikhera and at Ahichchhtra (both in western Uttar Pradesh) show that these were meant for communal feeding or for cooking the food of large families. The institution of *gotra* developed in this period. This means that people having common *gotra* descended from a common ancestor and no marriage between the members of the same *gotra* could take place. Monogamous marriages were preferred even though polygamy was frequent. Some restrictions on women appeared during this period. In a text women have been counted as a vice along with dice and wine. In another text a daughter has been said to be the source of all sorrows. Women had to stay with her husband at his place after marriage. The participation of women in public meetings was restricted.

However, the most important change was the rise and growth of social differentiation in the form of *varna* system. The four *varnas* in which society came to be divided were the brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras. The growing number of sacrifices and rituals during the period made the brahmanas very powerful. They conducted various rituals including those related to different stages of agricultural operations. This made them all the more important. The kshatriyas, next in the social hierarchy, were the rulers. They along with brahmanas controlled all aspects of life. The vaishyas, the most numerous *varna* were engaged in agriculture as well as in trade and artisanal activities. The brahmanas and the kshatriyas were dependent on the tributes (gifts and taxes) paid to them by the vaishyas. The shudras, the fourth *varna* were at the bottom of the social hierarchy. They were ordained to be in the service of the three upper *varnas*. They were not entitled to the ritual of *upanayana samskara* (investiture with sacred thread necessary to acquire education). The other three *varnas* were entitled to such a ceremony and hence they were known as *dvijas*. This can be construed as the beginning of the imposition of disabilities on the shudras as well as the beginning of the concept of ritual pollution.

Another important institution that began to take shape was *ashrama* or different stages of life. *Brahmacharya* (student life), *grihastha* (householder), and *vanaprastha* (hermitage) stages are mentioned in the texts. Later, *sanyasa*, the fourth stage also came to be added. Together with *varna*, it came to be known as *varna-ashrama dharma*.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.7

1. What was the nature of the Later Vedic family?

2. What do you understand by the term *gotra*?

3. Which term signifies the beginning of the imposition of disabilities on the shudras?



Notes

4. Explain the composite term *varnashrama dharma*?
-

4.8 THE EARLY VEDIC RELIGION

The prayers to propitiate gods for physical protection and for material gains were the main concerns of the Rigvedic people. The Rigvedic gods were generally personifications of different aspects of natural forces such as rains, storm, sun etc. The attributes of these gods also reflect the tribal and patriarchal nature of the society as we do not find many goddesses mentioned in the text. Indra, Agni, Varuna, Mitra, Dyaus, Pushana, Yama, Soma, etc. are all male gods. In comparison, we have only a few goddesses such as Ushas, Sarasvati, Prithvi, etc which occupy secondary positions in the pantheon.

The functions of different gods reflect their needs in the society. Thus, since the Rigvedic people were engaged in wars with each other they worshipped Indra as a god. He is the most frequently mentioned god in the *Rigveda*. He carried the thunderbolt and was also respected as a weather god who brought rains. Maruts the god of storm aided Indra in the wars in the way tribesmen aided their leader in the tribal wars. Agni, the fire god was the god of the home and was considered an intermediary between gods and men. Soma was associated with plants and herbs. Soma was also a plant from which an intoxicating juice was extracted. This juice was drunk at sacrifices. Varuna, another important deity, was the keeper of the cosmic order known as *rita*. This *rita* was an important aspect of tribal set-up. Pushan was the god of the roads, herdsmen and cattle. In the life of the pastoral nomads, this god must have been very important. Other gods were similarly associated with other aspects of nature and life.

All these gods were invoked and propitiated at *yajnas* or sacrifices. These sacrifices were organized by the chiefs of the tribes and performed by priests. Gods thus invoked in the sacrifices supposedly rewarded the sacrificers with success in wars, progeny, increase in cattle and long life. It also brought large number of gifts in the form of *dana* and *dakshina* to the priests.

It is important here to note that during the entire Vedic phase people did not construct temples nor did they worship any statue. These features of Indian religion developed much later.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.8

1. On what basis do we say that the attributes of the Rigvedic gods reflect the tribal and patriarchal nature of the society?

2. Describe the main features of the Rigvedic god Indra.

3. Why did the tribal chiefs organize *yajnas*?

4. Why was the god Pushan important for the Rigvedic people?

5. What was the main function of the fire god Agni?



Notes

4.9 CHANGES IN THE LATER VEDIC PHASE

We have already noted that in the later Vedic period agriculture had become an important activity of the people. Changes in the material life naturally resulted in a change in their attitude towards gods and goddesses too. Continuous interactions with the local non-Aryan population also contributed to these changes. Thus, Vishnu and Rudra which were smaller deities in the Rigveda became extremely important. However, we do not have any reference to different incarnations or avatars of Vishnu, we are so familiar with, in any of the Later Vedic texts.

Another important feature was the increase in the frequency and number of the *yajna* which generally ended with the sacrifices of a large number of animals. This was probably the result of the growing importance of a class of brahmanas and their efforts to maintain their supremacy in the changing society. These *yajnas* brought to them a large amount of wealth in form of *dana* and *dakshina*. Some of the important *yajnas* were - *ashvamedha*, *vajapeya*, *rajasuya* etc. You must have heard about these *yajnas* in the stories of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. In these *yajnas* which continued for many days a large part of gifts went to the brahmanas. The purpose of these *yajnas* was twofold. Firstly, it established the authority of the chiefs over the people, and secondly, it reinforced the territorial aspect of the polity since people from all over the kingdom were invited to these sacrifices.

You will find it interesting to know that people began to oppose these sacrifices during the later Vedic period itself. A large number of cattle and other animals which were sacrificed at the end of each *yajna* must have hampered the growth of economy. Therefore, a path of good conduct and self-sacrifice was recommended for happiness and welfare in the last sections of the Vedas, called the *Upanishads*. The *Upanishads* contain two basic principles of Indian philosophy viz., *karma* and the transmigration of soul, i.e., rebirth based on past deeds. According to these texts real happiness lies in getting *moksha* i.e. freedom from this cycle of birth and re-birth.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.9

1. Why did the performance of the *yajnas* increase in number during the Later Vedic period?

2. What were the purposes of the *yajnas*?

3. Explain the significance of the *yajnas* ?

4. Why did people begin to oppose the performance of the *yajnas*?

4.10 THE EARLY VEDIC POLITY

We have mentioned above that the chief social unit of the Aryans was known as *jana*. The chief of this unit was the political leader called *rajan*. The main function of the chief was to protect the *jana* and cattle from the enemies. He was helped in his task by the tribal assemblies called *sabha*, *samiti*, *vidatha*, *gana* and *parishad*.



Notes

Out of these *sabha* and *samiti* were the most important assemblies. All aspects of life were discussed in these assemblies. These may include wars, distribution of the spoils of wars, judicial and religious activities etc. Thus these assemblies in a way limited the powers of the chiefs. Interestingly, women were also allowed to participate in the deliberations of the *sabha* and *samiti*.

The post of the chief was not hereditary. The tribe generally elected him. Though the succession in one family was known but that was not based on the rule of primogeniture (i.e., the eldest son acquiring the position). The *purohita* assisted and advised the chief on various matters. Other than the *purohita*, there were a limited number of other officials who assisted the chief in the day-to-day tribal affairs. *Senani*, *kulapa*, *gramani*, etc. are some of the functionaries which find mention in the *Rigveda*. The *sena* or army was not a permanent fighting group and consisted of able bodied tribesmen who were mobilized at the time of the wars. *Takshan*, the carpenter and *rathakara*, the chariot maker were responsible for making chariots. There is no official mentioned as a collector of taxes. The people offered to the chief what is called *bali*. It was just a voluntary contribution made by the ordinary tribesmen on special occasions. All this shows that the early Vedic polity was an uncomplicated system based on the support and active participation of all the tribesmen. This situation, however, changed during the later Vedic phase.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.10

1. Explain the functions of *sabha* and *samiti*.

2. What was the main function of the *rajan*?

3. What was the nature of *bali* during the Early Vedic period?

4. Make a list of the main functionaries who helped the chief in various matters.

4.11 CHANGES IN THE LATER VEDIC PHASE

The changes in the material and social life during the later Vedic period led to changes in the political sphere as well. The nature of chiefship changed in this period. The territorial idea gained ground. The people started to lose their control over the chief and the popular assemblies gradually disappeared.

The chiefship had become hereditary. The idea of the divine nature of kingship gets a mention in the literature of this period. The brahmanas helped the chiefs in this process. The elaborate coronation rituals such as *vajapeya* and *rajasuya* established the chief authority. As the chiefs became more powerful, the authority of the popular assemblies started waning. The officers were appointed to help the chief in administration and they acquired the functions of the popular assemblies as main advisors.

A rudimentary army too emerged as an important element of the political structure during this period. All these lived on the taxes called *bali*, the *shulka*, and the *bhaga* offered by the people.

The chiefs of this period belonged to the kshatriya varna and they in league with the brahmanas tried to establish complete control over the people in the name of *dharma*.



However, all these elements do not show that a *janapada* or territorial state with all its attributes such as a standing army and bureaucracy had emerged in the later Vedic period but the process has started and soon after the vedic period in the sixth century BC we notice the rise of sixteen *mahajanpadas* in the northern India.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.11

1. Describe the nature of the chiefship during the Later Vedic period.

2. Why did the powers of the popular assemblies decline during the Later Vedic period?

3. What were the functions of the coronation rituals?



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

After the decline of the Harappan urbanism, we witness the coming of a new kind of people on the northwestern horizon of India. These people were animal herders and spread out in groups from the Southern Russia to different parts of the world. Many such groups reached India through Afghanistan at different periods. Their language, known as Indo-Aryan or Sanskrit became predominant with borrowings from the local languages. Their earliest compositions are known as the *Rigveda* and many more compositions followed subsequently. We get to know about the culture of these people from these collections known as the Vedas.

The Aryans initially lived in the region drained by seven rivers Septa Sindhu roughly covering the modern states of Punjab, and Harayana. Subsequently they also occupied the region drained by Ganga, Yamuna, Sarayu, Ghaghra, and Gandaka roughly covering the modern states of eastern Uttar Pradesh and western Bihar.

The Aryans, who were mainly cattle herders, became agriculturists later, and assisted by the knowledge of iron technology they were able to establish larger settlements in the Ganga- Yamuna *doab* region. This is shown by the PGW archaeology and the contents of the Later Vedic literature. This change precipitated a series of changes in the other spheres of life. From an egalitarian, tribal socio-political set up during the Early Vedic period it was transformed into a varna divided territorially based set up by the end of the Vedic period. The position of the tribal chiefs became hereditary and the emerging officials usurped the role of the popular assemblies. The growing number of *yajnas* shows the importance of the king as well as of the brahmanas. Similarly, the gods who were important earlier lost their significance and gave way to new deities. All these changes ultimately resulted in the rise of *janapadas* and *mahajanapadas* i.e. bigger territorial states in the sixth century BC.



TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Who were the Aryans? Where did they spread out from?
2. Indicate the geographical location of the Early Vedic people.
3. Describe the main cultural traits of the Aryans.



Notes

4. Explain the changes in the economic pattern of the Aryans during the Later Vedic period.
5. How did the knowledge of iron technology help in the expansion of agriculture?
6. What kind of disabilities were imposed on women in the Later Vedic period?
7. How did the brahmanas become important in the Later Vedic period?
8. Describe the functions of the popular assemblies during the Early Vedic period.



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

4.1

1. Sacred knowledge
2. Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajur Veda, Atharaveda
3. Aranyakas & Upanishads
4. Prose texts containing explanations of mantras and sacrificial rituals
5. philosophical discussions

4.2

1. Words in these languages are similar in sound & meaning
2. Andronovo culture situated in southern Siberia
3. Bactria – Margiana
4. Evidence of Horses, spoked wheels, fire cult, cremation

4.3

1. Sindhu, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, Sutlej, Sarasvati
2. U.P. (Kosala) & North Bihar (Videha)

4.4

1. Pastoralists
2. Refer 4.4 para 1
3. Refer 4.4 para 2
4. Hunting, carpentry, training, weaving, gambling, chariot making, metal smeltry.
5. Barter through medium of cow.

4.5

1. Agriculture
2. Refer 4.5 para 2
3. god Indra
4. It was first widely used vegetable food oil.
5. to clear dense forests; Iron plough could turn soil to make it fertile
6. Due to expansion of economy based on agriculture & continuous increase in population.

4.6

1. Monogamy & polygamy
2. Yes, No caste division, occupation not based on birth, No occupation as taboo.



Notes

3. On the basis of Varna or colour
4. Concentration of larger share of war booty in the hands of chiefs & priests

4.7

1. Joint family
2. Descendent from a common ancestor, no marriage between members of the same *gotra*.
3. Not entitled to the ritual of upanayana Samakara, (ritual pollution)

4. Last para of 4.7

4.8

1. Refer 4.8, para 1
2. Weather god, carried thunderbolt
3. To invoke and propitiate gods
4. As he was god of roads, herdmen & cattle.
5. Being an intermediary between gods and men.

4.9

1. Due to growing importance of a class of brahmins & their effort to maintain supremacy.
2. To establish authority of chiefs over people and to reinforce territorial aspect of polity.
3. A large amount of wealth in forms of dana & dakshina went to Brahmins.
4. It was affecting their economic life.

4.10

1. All aspects of life to be discussed such as distribution of spoils of wars, judicial & religious activities.
2. To protect jana & cattle from enemies.
3. A voluntary contribution made by ordinary tribesmen on special occasions.
4. Purohita, Senami, Kulapa, Gramani

4.11

1. It become hereditary
2. As chiefs became more powerful, officers to help chief in administration acquired the functions of popular assemblies.
3. To establish the chief authority.

HINTS TO TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Refer 4.2 para 1 & 2
2. Refer 4.3
3. Refer 4.2 para 2
4. Refer 4.5
5. Refer 4.5 para 2
6. Refer 4.7 para 1



Notes

- 7. Refer 4.11
- 8. Refer 4.10

GLOSSARY

Pastoralism	–	A life pattern based primarily on cattle rearing with limited agricultural activity.
Patriarchal	–	A social system based on the supremacy of the male members of the family/society.
Monogamy	–	A social practice of having only one wife at any given time.
Polygamy	–	A social practice of having more than one wife at one time.
Clan	–	A group of families claiming descent from one common ancestor having certain obligations towards each other.
Tribe	–	It refers to the groups whose unity is based on extended kinship ties, i.e. family relationships rather than on territorial organization.
Egalitarian	–	A society in which all people are considered equal.
PGW	–	Painted Grey ware; It is associated with the iron using people of the Later Vedic period and was used by the affluent section of the society.