DEDICATED TO THE HOLY FEET
OF
SHRI SHRI OMNBABA
MY ETERNAL LIGHT & GUIDE
FOREWORD

I had the pleasure to go through Dr. Jogiraj Basu's work 'Ancient Indian culture and civilisation as revealed in the Brāhmaṇas' in manuscript. I have been highly impressed by the work which bespeaks the author's deep erudition, extensive study of abstruse Brāhmaṇa texts in original, and power of presentation. His work is a comprehensive one having taken into account the social, economic, political, military, religious, philosophical and miscellaneous aspects of the Vedic culture and civilisation of the period concerned. The only published work in this field is Dr. Wilhelm Rau's book in German on the social aspect of the Brāhmaṇas; Rau's book has not been translated into English. Dr. Basu's book is more comprehensive, penetrating and scholarly. The work is divided into four books, viz, social and economic, political and military, religion and philosophy, and the fourth book deals with miscellaneous materials. At the end of each book the author has given a critical evaluation of the aspect concerned showing how far it has progressed from the Samhitā period and how far it anticipates the civilisation of the Upaniṣadic age. I am confident Dr. Basu's work is an outstanding original contribution to the field of Vedic research, and fills up a lacuna in the history of ancient Indian culture and civilisation. This valuable work will be of great help to researchers and Indologists. I convey my sincere congratulations to the author and wish the book a wide publicity.

Sorbonne
Paris (France) 10. 8. 1966

Louis Renou
PREFACE

This work is the book form of my thesis 'Ancient Indian culture and civilisation as revealed in the Brāhmaṇas' (four Brs. in particular and all Brs. in general) submitted to the University of Jadavpur for the degree of Ph.D. in 1966. It is an attempt to present a comprehensive picture of the vedic culture and civilisation in all its aspects as recorded in the Br. texts of the four Vedas. The work is divided into four books besides introduction and conclusion, viz, social and economic aspect, political and military aspect, religion and philosophy, and miscellaneous. Such topics as flora and fauna, language and types of literature, calendar etc. which do not come under the purview of the first three books have been put in the miscellaneous section. At the end of each book a summary of the section is given which is a critical evaluation of the aspect concerned showing how far the civilisation of the Br. period has progressed from that of the Śaṁhitā period or early vedic age and how far it anticipates that of the Upaniṣadic period or the last phase of the vedic age. There is only one book in this line, viz, Dr. Wilhelm Rau's book in German on the social aspect of the Brāhmaṇas. The book has not been translated into English. I do not know German and has never seen this book. Dr. Louis Renou in his esteemed foreword on my work remarks that Dr. Rau's book deals with the social aspect only while my book deals with all the aspects of culture and civilisation of the period concerned.

I have given detailed contents. I am indebted to the original vedic texts for collection of materials. I convey my gratefulness to the examiners of my thesis, Dr. Satkari Mookerji, Dr. A. L. Basham, Dr. R. R. Mukherji, as also to Dr. Friedrich Heilar, Dr. Louis Renou, Dr. U. N. Ghosal etc. for their valuable opinions. I am thankful to the publisher Messres Sanskrit Pustak Bhandar for undertaking the publica-
tions of this book. I am very grateful to Dr. Janakiballav Bhattacharya, Reader, Dept. of Sanskrit, C. U. whose constant encouragement went a great way in the accomplishment of my arduous task. I also take this opportunity to convey my sincere thanks to my students Dr. Umarani Chakravarty, Prof. Sudhabasini Basu and Supadma Nag who extended their sincere co-operation in verifying the typescripts with the original and in putting transliteration marks.

'VIRAJ'
Dr. Basu's Road
Dibrugarh
(Assam)

Jogiraj Basu
ABBREVIATIONS

B. V.—Ṛgveda.
S. V.—Sāmaveda.
A. V.—Atharva-veda.
Y. V.—Yajurveda.
T. S.—Taittirīya Samhitā.
V. S.—Vajasaney Samhitā.
Br.—Brāhmaṇa.
Brā.—Brāhmaṇas.
A. B.—Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.
K. B.—Kauśitaki Brāhmaṇa.
T. B.—Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa.
S. B.—Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.
J. B. (P)—Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa (Pūrvārdha).
J. B. (U)—Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa (Uttarārdha).
P. B.—Pañcavimśa Brāhmaṇa.
G. B. (P)—Gopatha Brāhmaṇa (Pūrvārdha).
G. B. (U)—Gopatha Brāhmaṇa (Uttarārdha).
C. B.—Chāndogya Brāhmaṇa.
M. S.—Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā.
K. S.—Kāthaka Samhitā.
A. A.—Aitareya Āraṇyaka.
T. A.—Taittirīya Āraṇyaka.
S. A.—Śāṅkhyāyana Āraṇyaka.
A. S. S.—Āśvalāyana Śrauta Sūtra.
A. P. S.—Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra.
S. S. S.—Śāṅkhyāyana Śrauta Sūtra.
L. S. S.—Lātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra.
K. U.—Kathopaniṣad.
C. U.—Chāndogypopaniṣad.
B. U.—Brhadāraṇyakopaniṣad.
M. U.—Mundakopaniṣad.
S. U.—Śvetāśvataraopaniṣad.
P. M. S.—Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā-Sūtra.
CONTENTS

Introduction (i) to (xxxvii)

Object of this thesis—Definition and import of Veda—Three types of Vedic literature—Bras, distinct from Āryanyakas and Upaniṣads—Sāṁhitās enumerated—Wide range of Vedic literature—Etymology of the term Br. Import of the term Br.—Six topics of the Brs.—Importance of Br. literature—Vedas and their Bras enumerated—The contents and authorship of the A. B. and S. B.—Meaning of Vedic Śākhā—Date of the Veda—Date of the Brs.—Plan of the thesis—Division of the work into four books and succinct gist of each book—Originality claimed—The overall picture—Comprehensive treatment and critical evaluation—Novel angle of vision and mode of presentation—Individual topics claimed to be original.

Book I.

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECT:

Chapter I.—The Geographical and Historical Background.

Shifting of the centre of gravity of Aryan civilisation, p. 1; New states and tribes, p. 2, 5; Three broad division of the country, p. 2; Different designations of monarchy in different regions, p. 2: Superiority of Kuru-Pañcālas, p. 3; Infiltration of Aryan culture in the eastern direction, p. 6; Famous states, p. 5, 7; Floating tribal states of early Vedic age assume territorial shape, p. 8.

Chapter II.—The Caste System and The Relation between Four castes.

Mention of four castes, p. 9; Castes amongst gods, men, animals and plants, p. 10; Duties of four castes,
p. 10: Origin of caste; p. 11: Origin of Śūdras, p. 11; Dāsas and Dasyus, p. 11; Status of Śūdras and their relation with higher castes, p. 12-14; Status of Vaiṣāyas, p. 14-16; Status of Kṣatriyas, p. 16; Royal prerogatives and duties, p. 16-17; Relation between the Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya, p. 18; Rivalry and mutual co-operation as well, p. 18-22; Status of the Brāhmaṇa, p. 23; Superiority to other castes, p. 23; Special privileges, p. 23-24; Status of the Purohita, p. 25; Importance in political and religious sphere, p. 25-28; Supreme position and administrative ability, p. 26-28; Castes other than the four castes, p. 28; Outcastes, p. 28; Upgrading of caste through merit, p. 29; Men of lower caste as authors of Vedic hymns and the A. B., p. 29-30; Various mixed castes and professions, p. 32.

Chapter III.—Women and Marriage.

Importance of wife and women, p. 33; Access of women to sacrifice, p. 34; Relation between married couple, p. 34; Marriage regarded as a sacrament, p. 35; Svayamvara system, p. 35; Polygamy in vogue, p. 36; Polyandry banned, p. 36; Intercaste marriage, p. 37; Sexual morality, p. 37; Beauty of female form, p. 38; Art of fashioning hair, p. 38; Various practices and conventions, p. 38; Relation with father-in-law, p. 39; sisters of husband, p. 39; Nature of women, p. 39; Duties of women, p. 40; Cultivation of fine arts, p. 40.

Chapter IV.—Education.

Education compulsory for higher three castes, p. 41; Spiritual regeneration of the student, p. 41; Preliminary injunctions, p. 42; Daily duties, p. 42; Comparison of studentlife with sacrifice, p. 43; Tending cattle, p. 43; Begging alms, p. 42; Man-
making education-Mandates and taboos, p. 43; Courses of study, p. 44; Exhaustive syllabus, p. 45; Debates and discourses, p. 46; Snātaka, p. 47; Samāvartana-Convocation ceremony, p. 47; Two types of Brahmaśārin, p. 48; Two types of teachers residential and peripatetic, p. 48; Free education, p. 49; Education of women, p. 49; Femal savants, p. 49; Upanayana and Vedic study open to women, p. 50; Cultivation of fine arts, p. 50.

Chapter V.—Music and Dance

Vocal and instrumental music widely practised, p. 51; Eulogy of lute, p. 51; Various musical instruments, p. 51; Chorus of lutes, p. 51; Chorus of drums, p. 52; Dance, p. 52.

Games and Sports:

Horse-race and chariot-race, p. 53; Gambling, p. 53; Origin of drama, p. 54.

Dress and Decorations:

Garments made of cotton, silk, wool etc., p. 54; General dress, p. 55; Good dress, p. 55; Embroidery, p. 55; Priestly garment, p. 55; Dress for sacrificers, p. 55; students and sages, p. 56; Animal hide as dress, p. 56; Armours, p. 56; Cushions, p. 56; Coverlets, p. 56; Ornaments, p. 56.

Food and Drink:

Various food grains, p. 58; Products of milk, p. 59; Fruits, p. 59; Meat-Beef, mutton, goat’s flesh, p. 59; Drinks, p. 60; Soma and surā, p. 60; Denunciation, of wine, p. 60; Parisrut, p. 61; Quantity of food to be taken, p. 61; Different products of rice, p. 58.

Utensils and Tools:

Various utensils, p. 62; Various ladles, p. 62; Needles, p. 62; Knives, p. 62; Chairs, jars etc. p. 63.
Medicine:

Reference to medicine, p. 64; Healing power of natural elements, p. 64; Effect of sun-rays, p. 64; Anti-intoxicants, p. 64; Knowledge of anatomy, p. 65; Osteology, p. 65; Embriology, p. 65; A. V.—a repository of medicine, p. 65.

Diseases:

Various diseases tuberculosis, dropsy, jaundice etc., p. 66.

Chapter VI.—Economic Conditions.

Agriculture and Pasturage:

Agriculture, the main occupation, p. 67; Importance of agriculture and cattle, p. 68; Eulogy of cattle, p. 68.

Occupations and Industries:

Occupations of four castes, p. 69; Emergence of new castes and callings, p. 70; Various industries mentioned, p. 70; More than seventy professions enumerated in Šuklayajurveda some of which are earmarked for women, p. 72.

Trade and Commerce:

References to merchants and merchandise, p. 73; Sea-going vessels and maritime trade, p. 73; Money-lending, p. 74.

House-building:

References to cities and forts, p. 74; Developed architecture, p. 74; Road-making, p. 75; Rājapatha, Mahāpatha, Sruti, p. 75; different kinds of thoroughfares, p. 75.

Transport:

Chariots, mule-carts, bullock-carts, p. 75; Various types of conveyances—Parts of a chariot, p. 76;
Classes of chariot, p. 76; Different types of boat, p. 76; Large sea-going vessels, p. 76; Different parts of a ship, p. 77.

Metals and Measurements:
Various kinds of metal, p. 77; Gold currency, p. 77; Different units of measurement, p. 78.

Summary of Book—I

Book II
THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY ASPECT:

Chapter I.—The system of Govt. and Different Types of Monarchy
Monarchy the prevailing system of govt., p. 84; Kingship in heaven, on earth, in the vegetable and animal kingdom, p. 84; Names of kings, p. 85; Origin of kingship, p. 85; State, p. 86; Different types of monarchy and territory, p. 86; Conception of Imperialism, p. 87; Hierarchy in the types of monarchy, p. 87; Different designations of monarchy in different parts of the country, p. 89.

Chapter II.—Monarchical and Imperialistic sacrifices
Sacrifices connected with monarchy enumerated, p. 90; Aśvamedha, Rājasūya and Vājapeya-Varuṇasava, Bṛhaspatisava p. 91-94; Details and Effect of horse-sacrifice, p. 95-96; Illustrations of horse-sacrifice, p. 98; The Coronation Ceremony, p. 99; The King as upholder of law, p. 99; Details of coronation ceremony-Consecration regarded as a new birth, p. 100; King is both the lord and offspring of people, p. 101; Oath-taking ceremony, p. 102; Covenant between the King-designate and mother Earth, p. 103; The Throne, p. 103; Kingdom as a
sacred trust, p. 104; High moral status and dignity of the ruler, p. 105; Exemption from judicial punishment, p. 105; Demi-divinity of king, p. 106; Important role of king-makers, p. 107; Popular element in the coronation ceremony, p. 108; Ratna-Havis ceremony, p. 108; List of king-makers swells in bulk as ages roll by, p. 109; Nucleus of king-makers in Atharva-Veda, p. 109, culmination in the T. B. and S. B., p. 109; Kingship of later Vedic age, a far cry from that of the early Vedic era, p. 110; Hereditary character of kingship, p. 110; Proofs adduced, p. 111; Illustrations of coronation or royal consecration ceremony, p. 111.

Chapter III.—The Cabinet and The Administrative Organisations.

Ministers, p. 112; The Cabinet, p. 112; Various govt. officials, p. 112; The Popular Assemblies:—Sabhā and Samiti described, p. 113; Difference between the two, p. 114; Sabhā, a smaller body than samiti, 113; Samiti, obsolete in the age of the Brs, p. 114.

Chapter IV.—The Relation between the Ruler and the Ruled; The Nobility and The Common People:

The strength of the ruler depends of the subjects, p. 115; Exploitation of the people by the king, p. 116; Co-operation between the priestly class and military class to keep the people under subjection, p. 117; Good relation between the ruler and the ruled, p. 118; Cordial relations in times of calamity, p. 119; State and the people, p. 119.

Chapter V.—The MEMBERS OF ROYAL FAMILY AND THEIR POSITION.

Four kinds of queens and their constitutional and social status, p. 120; Chief queen Mahiṣī, p. 120;
Chapter VI.—Warfare:

During warfare subjects kept their families in the King's palace, p. 123; The ruler's condescension in times of war to placate the subjects, p. 124; Beginnings of scorched-earth policy, p. 124; Different types of victory, p. 125; Illustrations of warfare, victories and defeats, p. 125.

DEPOSITION Of Kings: Vox Populi:

Dethronement of king Duṣṭarītu and Cākra Sthapati, p. 126; Vox populi in the deposition and recalling of kings, 127; Reformative outlook, p. 127.

Army:

The Commander-in-chief, p. 127; The divisions of army, p. 127; Array of soldiers, p. 128; Vanguard, p. 128; Various classes of soldiers—Cavalry, infantry, charioteers etc., p. 128; Appellations of kings possessing strong army, p. 122; Divisions of army, p. 129.

Weapons and Missiles:

Various weapons and missiles mentioned in the Brs. and V. S., p. 129; Weapons for direct charge, weapons to be hurled etc., p. 129, 130.

Summary of Book—II.

Book III

THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECT:

Chapter I.—The Theory Of Sacrifice:

The origin of sacrifice, p. 137; Obligatory and optional sacrifices, p. 138; Reward of sacrifice both
worldly and otherworldly, p. 139; Vedic Aryans
longed for both material prosperity and heavenly
bliss, p. 139; Sacrifice, the connecting link between
the sacrificer, sacrifices, priests, gods and heaven, p.
140; Sacrifice, the source of truth, piety; the main
—stay of universe, p. 141; Three births of man, p.
141; Initiation, a new birth, p. 142; Three types of
union with gods, p. 143; Sacrifice as the source of
creation, p. 144; Two-fold metaphysical implications
of the hymn of creation, p. 145; Germs of Upaniṣadic
cosmogony, p. 145; First sacrifice, the self-
sacrifice of the creator, p. 146; Its implications, p.
146; Correctness of rituals, p. 146; Illustrations of
repercussion for omissions and commissions, p. 147;
Sacrifice and magic distinguished, p. 148; Mystic
interpretation of the fire-altar, p. 149; Germs of
Image-worship, p. 150.

Chapter II.—The Forms Of Sacrifice:

Five models of sacrifice, p. 152; Details of each
model viz., Agnihotra, p. 152; Darśa-paurṇamāsa,
p. 155; Prājāpatya Paśu, p. 156; Agniśotma, p. 159;
Gavāmayana; they are models of Homa, Iṣṭi, Paśu,
Soma and Satra respectively-Day-to-day chart of
Gavāmayana, p. 162; Connection with the calendar,
p. 154; Sacrifices having a political bearing, p. 165;
Rājasūya, Vaijayeya, p. 165; Aśvamedha, p. 166;
Puruṣamedha, p. 168; Sautrāmaṇī, p. 170; Dvādaśāha, p. 171.

Chapter III.—The Origin and Development Of Priesthood

Importance of the office of the priest, p. 173; Enumeration of priests, p. 174; The antiquity of the offices of some priests, p. 175; Parallellism with priests of Zoroastrian religion—Evolution of the offices of Brahma and Udgātr priests in the later Vedic age, p. 176.
Sacrificial Fee.

Importance of fee in sacrifice, p. 177; Fee is compulsory, p. 177; Result of non-payment, p. 177; Illustrations of fabulous fees, p. 178; Distribution of fees, p. 179; Gifts other than sacrificial fees, p. 179.

Chapter IV.—The Spirit Underlying The Form Of Sacrifice

Conception of Sacrifice as an organic whole imbued with spirit and intelligence, p. 181; Identification of Puruṣa, Prajāpati, fire-altar, Agni, sacrificer and sacrifice with one another, p. 182; Identification of sacrificer with Viṣṇu, p. 182; Henotheism of Vedic pantheon distinct from polytheism of Greek religion, p. 183; Sacrifice effects union of sacrificer with Supreme God, p. 183; Homa and yāga distinguished p. 183; The mental factor behind yāga, 184; End of sacrifice, p. 184; Spirit of sacrifice never lost sight of, p. 185; Germ of Āraṇyaka and Upaniṣadic philosophy, p. 185 188; Reaction against mechanical sacerdotalism, p. 185; Importance of faith and reverence, p. 187; Emphasis on reverence and truth, p. 187; Mental offering superior to external offering—Germ of Bhākta-cult, p. 190.

Chapter V.—Emergence Of Popular Religious Cults.

Evolution of Viṣṇu-cult, p. 191; Viṣṇu in the R. V., p 191; Germ of Vāmana Avatāra, p. 191; Origin of Puranic legend, p. 192; View of Nirukta, p. 192; Viṣṇu and Rudra of Brāhmaṇa, a far cry from those of the R. V., p. 192; Gradual evolution of the Rudra-Śiva-cult from the R. V. and A. V. to the Y. V. and Brāhmaṇa, p. 193; Malevolent aspect of Rudra, p. 195; Benevolent aspects, p. 197; In the Y. V. Rudra comprises both the aspects—Rudra the terrific ultimately becomes Śiva the benign, p. 196; Rudra, the patron deity of both Aryans and non-Aryans,
of the righteous and criminals as well, p. 198; Groups of Rudra, p. 198; Identification of Rudra with the sun, p. 199; Rudra as the Supreme Godhead, p. 201; The thesis, anti-thesis, and synthesis in the concept of Rudra, p. 202; All-comprehensive nature of Rudra, p. 202; The great synthesis foreshadows Vedantic truth, p. 203; Implications of this synthesis from different angles of vision, p. 203; Germs of the evolution of Ganeśa, Kārtikeya, and Ambikā, p. 204; Ambikā is Rudra's sister in the Brs., p. 204.

Influence of Non-Aryan Religion and Primitive Faith.

A word of caution regarding this topic, p. 205; Contention of Slater and Oldham, and Keith's rejoinder, p. 205; Probable non-Aryan influence in the origin of Rudra-cult and in certain rites connected with the horse sacrifice, Mahavrata and Gosava sacrifices, p. 207-209.

Chapter VI.—Sacraments:

Sacraments enumerated, p. 210; All the sacraments not met with in the Brs., p. 210; Natal rites, p. 211; Tonsure ceremony (Cudā-Karana), p. 211; Upanayana, investiture with holy thread, p. 212; Definition of Ācārya, p. 213; Women had access to Upanayana and Vedic study in the Vedic age—Proofs adduced, p. 214; The custom still prevails amongst the Zoroastrians—Upanayana called Navazot ceremony in Zoroastrian religion, p. 215; Stray instances of initiation (Upanayana) of women in post-Vedic age, p. 215; Marriage, p. 216; Disposal of the dead, p. 216; Various conventions and practices, p. 217; Preservation of the bones of the dead, p. 218; erection of sepulchral mounds which vary
according to caste and sex, p. 217, 218; Similar practice amongst the ancient Iranians, p. 219; Certain practices connected with the disposal of the dead, 219.

Five Great Daily Sacrifices:
- Enumeration of five daily sacrifices, p. 220;
- Manuṣya-yajña, hospitality-Ideal of hospitality, p. 221; Homage and courtesy shown to guests, p. 222;
- Bhūtayajña, p. 222.

Four Orders of Life:
- Four orders or Caturāśramas enumerated, p. 223;
- Brahmascarya-Gārhasṭhāya-Vānaprastha-Ascetic life, p. 224; Brā. do not mention the third and the fourth order explicitly which assume distinct shape in the Upanisadic period, p. 225, 226.

Chapter VII.—Cosmogony:
- Cosmogony of the Brā. often mixed up with legends and explanations of sacrifices, p. 227; Hymn of creation and hymn of Puruṣa, p. 227; Monistic trend in cosmogony, p. 228; Different processes of creation, p. 228; Creation ascribed to various causes, p. 229, Names and forms are the warp and woof of creation, p. 230.

Eschatology:
- Three births of man, p. 231; Three kinds of union with the gods, sālokya, Sṛūpya and Sāyujya, p. 232; Grades in these three types of union, p. 232; Death here means birth in heaven and vice versa, p. 233; Weighing in the balance after death, p. 233; this conception is common to Vedic and zoroastrian religion, p. 234; Mystic trance of Bhrigu and vision of hell and paradise, p. 234, 235; Two distinct phases in the Eschatology of the Brā, p. 235; Germ of Vedāntic mokṣa or final liberation, p. 236.
Theology:

Basic conception of the Vedic pantheon, p. 237; Vedic gods are personal deities, p. 238; All gods are manifestations of one Supreme Spirit, p. 238; Conflicting views of western scholars, p. 238; Refutation of the charge that Impersonal unqualified Godhead is not mentioned in the Brân, p. 238; The S.B. and T.B. mention the Impersonal Absolute Brahman in clear terms, p. 238; Gradual evolution in the concept of Brahman and ultimately the identification of the Supreme Self, individual self and truth, p. 239; Nature of the Supreme Self, p. 240; The path of knowledge recommended, p. 241; The holy syllable Prânava, the symbol of Supreme Godhead, p. 242; The Upaniṣadī doctrine of Absolute Godhead and emancipation foreshadowed, p. 243.

Beginnings of Philosophical System:

Beginnings of Nyāya, Vedānta, Śāṅkhyā and Pūrva-mīmāṁsā systems of philosophy, p. 243, 244.

Summary of Book—III.

Book IV.—MISCELLANEOUS:

Chapter I.—Flora & Fauna

Flora: Plants possess life and consciousness, p. 252; Hierarchy in the vegetable kingdom, p. 253; Characteristics of some trees, p. 253; Sacred trees, p. 254; Aromatic plants, p. 255; Shrubs and herbs, p. 255; Flowers, p. 255; (Botanical names are given along with current names.)

Fauna:

Various domestic animals, p. 255; Eulogy of horse, p. 255; Species of deer, p. 256; wild animals, p. 257; Varieties of serpents, p. 258; Dragons and
fabulous animals, p. 258 Birds, p. 259; Insects, p. 259; Bees, p. 260.

Chapter II.—Calendar:
Sacrifice embodying the then calendar, p. 261; Number of days in a year, p. 262; Intercalary month, p. 262; Enumeration of days, months, fortnights, weeks, even muhūrtas of the year, p. 262; Waxing and waning of the moon, p. 264; Parallelism between sacrifice and calendar, p. 264; Seasons enumerated, p. 264; The commencement and termination of the year, p. 265; Year commenced from the full moon of Phālguna, p. 265.

Astronomy:
The earth is round, p. 266; Important observations regarding the sun, p. 267; The sun neither rises nor sets but remains stationary, p. 267; It does not rotate—observation of the A.B., K.B. and G.B. on this point, p. 267; There are many worlds beside the terrestrial one, p. 267; Observation on Stars, p. 268; Gradual discovery of stars—Solar and lunar month—Lunar mansion, p. 268.

Chapter III.—Language & Literature of the Brs.:
The literature of the Brs.—The language is simple, unadorned and lucid, p. 269; Evolution of prose—Popular prose, p. 269; Departure from the language of the early Samhitās and culmination in that of the Upaniṣads, p. 269; Linguistic phenomena.

Observations of the Brs. On Speech:
Three types of speech, divine, human and demoniac, p. 272; Articulate and inarticulate sound, p. 273; Sound of birds and beasts, inarticulate, p. 273; North India, the home of pure speech, p. 273; Relation between mind and speech, p. 273; their
interdependance, p. 274; Speech identified with Brahman, yajña and Brhaspati, p. 275; Variations of the same word due to regional influences illustrated, p. 275.

Types of Literature Referred to in the Brs.

Emergence of three Vedas, p. 275; Sanctity of Vedic study, p. 276; Number of syllables in the Veda, p. 276; Greatness of Sāma-Veda, p. 276; utility of vedic study, p. 276; Various types of literature mentioned such as Trayī (three Vedas), Gāthā nārāyaṇi, Anuśāsana, Vākovākyam, Vidyā, Itihāsa-Puṇa-Purāṇa-Anvākhyāna, p. 277; Explanations of these terms, p. 277; Legends and fables-Illustrations of legends, p. 278; Accessories to Vedic study, p. 279; Beginnings of etymology, p. 280; The art of debate, p. 280; designations of prime mover, opposer etc., of debating competition, p. 281; Maxims, p. 281; Allegory, p. 282; Germs of allegorical drama, Morality plays as also of drama in general, p. 282; So many literary forms in such hoary antiquity surpass our imagination and testify to the wonderful creative genius of the Vedic fathers, p. 283.

Chapter VI.—Crimes & Ordeals:

Various crimes enumerated, p. 284; Interesting varieties of thieves & robbers, p. 284; Ordeals mentioned in Brs. and Upanisads, p. 285; Fire-ordeal of the Postvedic age is reminiscent of Vedic fire-ordeal, p. 285.

Summary of Book—IV.

Conclusion

Bibliography.
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to give an account of the ancient Indian civilisation as revealed in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and Kauśākaki Brāhmaṇa of the Rgveda, the Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa of the Black Yajurveda and the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa of the white Yajurveda in particular, and all the Brs. in general. Civilisation finds expression through social, economic, political, religious and theological cum philosophical aspects. Accordingly the thesis has been divided into several books, each book dealing with a particular aspect and comprising several chapters. Moreover there are certain aspects which do not come under the purview of the aspects mentioned above; such aspects have been discussed in the book captioned 'Miscellaneous'. Thus an attempt has been made to give a comprehensive picture of ancient Indian civilisation as revealed in the A.B., K.B., T.B. and the S.B. The plan of the work is given towards the close of the introduction.

The Brāhmaṇas form a part and parcel of the vast Vedic literature and are generally designated as later Vedic literature. Hence for thorough understanding of the import of the Brāhmaṇas we are to discuss first the import of the term 'Veda'. The word Veda means supreme knowledge or knowledge, par excellence. In the words of Yājñavalkya,—'it enlightens one on the knowledge of supra-sensible matters which lie beyond the domain of perception and inference, hence it is called the 'Veda'. Manu calls the Veda 'the repository or fountain-head of all religions and duties'. The term Veda comprises both the Mantra and the Brāhmaṇa. 'Veda' is the name given to Mantra and Brāhmaṇa jointly.

1. 'Pratyakṣaṇānumityā vā yastupāyo na vidyate; Enam vidanti vedena tasmād vedasya vedatā'.
2 1-1, 'Vedo 'khiladharmamālam'.
3 Āpastamba-śrauta-sūtra, 24-1-31, 'Mantra-brāhmaṇaṇyarvedanāmadheyam'.
Sāyanācāryya in the introduction to his commentary on the Rgveda observes,—'The name Veda is given to the vast body of literature made up of Mantra and Brāhmaṇa jointly'⁴. The great authority on the Pūrva-mīmāṁsā system and the celebrated commentator of its aphorisms, Śabara-Svāmin also defines the Veda as ‘Mantraśca Brāhmaṇam ca Vedaḥ’, ‘Mantras and Brs. together constitute the Veda’, in his commentary on P.M.S. 1-2-33. What the lay man generally understands by the word Veda is comprised by the word ‘Mantra’ which is also termed Samhitā; but that is not the correct view as it leaves out the Brāhmaṇas. What is now called ‘Veda’, i.e., the huge mass of literature denoted by the said term comprises three different classes of literary works; and to each of these three classes belong a number of separate works or treatises, some of which have been preserved as handed down to us and many of which have been lost and still remain untraced. These three different classes of literary works that go to the making of the vast Vedic literature are enumerated below.—

I. ‘Mantras’ or Samhitās which are collections of hymns, prayers, benedictions, incantations, sacrificial formulae called Nīvids and litanies.

II. ‘Brāhmaṇas’ standing for a huge mass of prose texts which contain speculations on the mantras, precepts for the application of mantras in different sacrifices, details of sacrificial paraphernalia and theological, philosophical, grammatical, etymological and metrical speculations.

III. ‘Āraṇyakas’ (Forest-texts) and Upanīṣads which are partly included in the Brāhmaṇas themselves but partly are also reckoned as independent works. They contain the meditations of forest-ascetics on God, creation or the universe and on mankind; the philosophy of ancient India is embedded in these works. Whereas the Brāhmaṇas deal with the huge bulk of sacrificial paraphernalia which represents karma-kāṇḍa, the Āraṇyakas and Upanīṣads, on the other hand, deal with philosophical and theosophical speculations which represent Jāāna-

⁴Mantra-brāhmaṇātmaka-sabdārśtrvedah'.
kāṇḍa; hence from the former has emerged the particular school of Indian philosophy known as Pūrva-mimāṃsā or karma-mimāṃsā or Dharmamimāṃsā; while, the latter is the source of the Vedānta philosophy called the Uttaramimāṃsā or Brahma-mimāṃsā. The Upaniṣads form the very bedrock of the Vedānta philosophy, and the Bhagavat-gitā, the sacred and revered scripture of the Indians is a succinct gist of the Upaniṣads. Thus we find, the Upaniṣads are distinct in character from the Brāhmaṇas. Sacrifice is extolled and highly recommended in the Brāhmaṇas whereas it is decried in the Upaniṣads which extoll knowledge, par excellence, and maintain that supreme knowledge and not sacrifice is the means to attain the goal of liberation or final beatitude. Though they widely differ in character still we find some Upaniṣads forming integral parts of the Brāhmaṇas. For instance, the famous Brahadāranyaka-Upaniṣad is included in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. At this point we make it abundantly clear that in this thesis the Brāhmaṇas concerned have been taken in the strict sense of the term to the exclusion of the Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads so as not to confuse the issue. Hence by the term ‘Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa’ we mean the pure unmixed Brāhmaṇa text alone minus the Brahadāranyaka-Upaniṣad. One can easily infer the difficulty that will arise if we include the Upaniṣad as a part of the Brāhmaṇa while discussing the peculiar characteristics of the Brāhmaṇa; e.g., in our discussion relating to the religion and philosophy of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa if we take into account the tenets of the Upaniṣad concerned, it will not only muddle the issue but also make the position self-contradictory. The underrating of sacrifices and recommendations of the path of knowledge, Jñāna-mārga, adumbrated in the Upaniṣads do not fit in with but run counter to the preachings of the Brāhmaṇas.

The term Mantra or Saṃhitā mentioned above refers to the mantra or samhitā portions of the three vedas.—RK, Śāman and Yauṣ. They also go by the name of Trayī or the triple learning. The Atharvaveda-saṃhitā is a later produc-
tion and unlike the other three samhitās has no direct bearing on the main sacrifices. The Rgveda-samhitā is a collection of prayers and invocations in metrical form. Various duties are invoked therein. The Samaveda-samhitā is a collection of hymns which are eulogies of deities that can be sung. This melody or chant is an essential feature of the Sāmaveda. Almost all the hymns of the R.V. are found in the S.V. with the difference that they are without tune or melody in the R.V. The Yajurveda-samhitā is the collection of sacrificial formulas which are mostly in prose. This Samhitā comprises two divergent texts or schools, viz.—

(i) The Kṛṣṇa-yajurveda or the samhitā of the Black Yajurveda, which has been preserved in several recensions, of which the most important are the Taittiriya-samhitā and the Maitrāyaṇi-samhitā.

(ii) The Sukla-yajurveda or the samhitā of the white yajurveda which has been preserved in the Vājasaneyi-samhitā.

The Atharva-veda samhita is a collection of both prose and metrical pieces bespeaking magic formulae, occult science, knowledge of medicine etc.

On account of these four different samhitas the term Veda is often used in the plural (vedah) to signify the whole range of the sacred lore viz.—the Rgveda, the Sāmaveda. Yajurveda and Atharva-veda. Every work that belongs to the class of the Brāhmaṇas or Āraṇyakas or of the Upaniṣads, is attached to one of the enumerated Samhitās, and for that belongs to one of the four vedas. Thus each Veda has its particular Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads.

From the above discussion it is clear that the word ‘Veda’ does not signify, as Winternitz rightly observes, “one single literary work, as for instance the word ‘korān’, nor a complete collection of a certain number of books, compiled at some particular time, as the world ‘Bible’, or as the word ‘Tipitaka’, the Bible of the Buddhists, but a whole great literature, which arose in the course of many centuries, and through centuries has been handed down from generation to generation by verbal transmis-
sion, till finally it was declared by a younger generation but even
then, at some prehistoric period—to be
'sacred knowledge', 'divine revelation', as
much on account of its great age, as on
account of its contents. It is here not a
matter of a 'canon' which might have been
fixed at some councils; the belief in the
'sacredness' of this literature arose, as it were, spontaneously, and
was seldom seriously disputed”.

As our work is concerned with the Brāhmaṇas we shall first
discuss the etymology of the term 'Brāhmaṇa' and enumerate
the characteristics of this class of vedic texis. After this enu-
meration we shall take up the discussion of the A.B., K.B., S.B,
and the T.B. in particular, on which the present work hinges.

The term 'Brāhmaṇa' has been variously interpreted. It
has come from the word 'Brahman' which means both the Veda
and the Brāhmaṇa or the priestly class who are versed in the
Veda. Some scholars hold that Brāhmaṇa texts are so called
due to their connection with the Veda; that
is, to say, they take the term 'Brahman' in the
sense of the Veda. Some again, with show
of cogent arguments, take the term to mean,
'sayings of Brāhmaṇa priests versed in the
three vedas relating to sacrificial rites'. This
group takes the term 'Brahman' which is the
origin of the word 'Brāhmaṇa' to mean Brāhmaṇa or priests
versed in the sacred lore. There can be no doubt as regards this
meaning or significance of the term 'Brahman'. 'Brahma vai',
Brāhmaṇah', says the S.B. which means 'Brahman is Brāhmaṇa,
the priestly class'. Patanjali, the author of the Mahābhāṣya,
while commenting on Panini 5-1-1, observes,— "The words
'Brahman' and 'Brāhmaṇa' convey the same meaning”.

The erudite scholar Dayānanda-Sarasvatī in his introduction to the
commentary on the Rgveda (Rg-bhāṣya-bhūmikā) remarks,—
"Brahman is a name of the Brāhmaṇas. Here is the authority;

---

6 ‘Samanārthāvetau brahman-śabdō brāhmaṇa-śabdāśeā’. 
the Śatapātha Brāhmaṇa says,— Brahman is verily the Brāhmaṇa”.

Julius Eggeling in the introduction to his English rendering of the S.B. and Martin Haug in the introduction to his edition of the A.B. support the view that the word ‘Brāhmaṇa’ means the sayings and speculations of the learned priests regarding sacrifice. Observes Eggeling,— ‘They are essentially digests of a floating mass of single discourses or dicta on various points of the ceremonial of worship, ascribed to individual teachers, and handed down orally in the theological schools. Single discourses of this kind were called Brāhmaṇa,— probably, either because they were intended for the instruction and guidance of priests (Brāhmin) generally; or, because, they were, for the most part, the authoritative utterances of such as were thoroughly versed in the vedic and sacrificial lore and competent to act as Brāhmaṇs or superintending priests’. Martin Haug lends support to the second half of this observation of Eggeling, i.e., the connection of the term Brāhmaṇa with the Brahman or Superintending priest. He says— ‘Etymologically the word (Brāhmaṇa) is derived from Brahman which properly signifies the Brahman priest who must know all the vedas, and understand the whole course and meaning of the sacrifice. He is supposed to be a perfect master of divinity and has in this capacity to direct and superintend the sacrificial ceremonies. The most eminent of this class of priests laid down rules for the proper performance of sacrificial rites, explained them, and defended their own opinions, on such topics against those of their antagonists; . . . . the dictum of such a Brahman priest who passed as a great authority, was called a Brāhmaṇa’. Two of the most noted vedic scholars of India, Swami Dayānanda Sarasvati and Satyavrata Samaśrami are one with Martin Haug in their contention regarding the etymological meaning of the term ‘Brāhmaṇa’, with the only difference that according to them the Br. texts are the dicta and learned deliberations on sacrificial ritual not only of the particular priests called Brahman but of all

7 ‘Brahmeti brāhmaṇāṇāṃ nāṃasti. Atra Pramāṇam. ‘Brahma va brāhmaṇah’.
8 Introduction to Part I, vol. I, Eggeling’s edition of the S. B.
9 Introduction to Aitareya Brāhmaṇa translated by Martin Haug.
the learned priests who were versed in all the Vedas. Dayānanda Sarasvatī maintains,—"Those works are called Brāhmaṇas which are explanations of the Vedas (saṃhitās) given by Brahman seers versed in all the four Vedas". This view is plausible and is advocated by Satyavrata Samāśramī in his ‘Aitareyālokanam’ which in an introduction to his edition of the A.B. published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal. The Brāhmaṇas contain the accumulated wisdom and speculations of generations of Vedic divines.

We shall now launch on a discussion regarding the denotation or significance of the term Brāhmaṇa". What actually the Brāhmaṇas stand for? Various definitions, rather descriptions are met with in the ancient texts. Jaimini, the author of the Pūrva-mimāṃsā gives the definition,—‘Sece Brāhmaṇa-sābdah’ which means besides the mantras the remaining bulk of the Vedic literature is called ‘Brāhmaṇa’. This definition, supported and approved by Sāyanācāryya etc., does not throw any light on the characteristics of the Br. literature. Apastamba defines Brāhmaṇas as,—‘Karmacodana Bhāmaṇāni’, i.e., to say, Brāhmaṇas are injunctions for the performance of sacrificial rites. Apastamba further elucidates the term ‘Karmacodana’ by giving a detailed characteristics of the Brāhmaṇas. According to him the Vidhi. Brāhmaṇas deal with the following six topics, —Vidhi, Arthavadā, Nindā, Praśamsā, Purākalpa and Parakṛti. Vidhi means injunctions for the performance of particular rites. All sentences in the Brāhmaṇas expressed in the potential mood, such as ‘Yayeta’ ‘he should sacrifice’, samset ‘he ought to recite’ etc., come under the purview of Vidhi. Arthavadā comprises the numerous explanatory remarks on the meaning of mantras and particular rites. These explanations or Artha-vadās form the speculative part of Brs. where-in may be traced the beginnings of Indian philosophy, grammar and philology. We may cite the following as an instance in point. Fre-

---

10 Rg-bhāṣya-bhumikā—'Caturvedavidbhixbrahmabhiḥ brāhmaṇaiḥ mahāśrībhiḥ Prakṛtāni yāni veda-vyākhyānāni tēnī brāhmaṇāni'.
11 Pūrva-mimāṃsā-sutra—2-1-33.
sequently it is stated that one who performs an important sacrifice like Agnihotra or Gavamayana attains ‘Sāujyā’ or union, ‘sārupya’ or same form and ‘sālokya’ or same place with the god invoked in the sacrifice. Later on, these three terms came to signify three different stages in the attainment of supreme beatitude or final emancipation called Mokṣa or Kaivalya in Indian philosophy and religion. Nindā or censure consists in criticism, refutation and denunciation of the opponents’ views. This mainly refers to the controversial passages that occur in all the Br. texts. As is quite natural there existed sharp difference of opinion amongst these priests and divines of antiquity as to the procedure of certain rites, or the choice of particular hymns and the proper import of mantras. One school criticised the practice and preaching of another school and condemned it in the strongest terms. Frequently, the readers come across such remarks in the Brāhmaṇas as,—’it should not be done in that way’ (‘tat tathā na kartavyam’), ‘but this opinion is not to be attended to,’ etc. Such passages bespeak censure. In the S. B., for example, we find numerous remarks censuring particular injunctions of the T. B.

Prāśamsā means eulogy, recommendation. That which is praised is recommended; whenever a rite or a hymn is eulogised, the implication is, one is enjoined to practice that rite or utter that hymn. Likewise when a rite or procedure is censured it is implied that one should shun that rite or procedure. This truth is couched in the current dictum of the Mīmāṃsā system of philosophy,—’That which is praised is enjoined; what is censured is to be avoided’. Thus Prāśamsā mainly comprises those phrases which declare that the performance of particular rites, with the proper knowledge, produces the desired effect. Such passages very often than not contain the phrase,—‘ya evam veda’ i.e., he who possesses such a knowledge.

‘Purākalpa’ refers to the performance of sacrificial rites in former times shrouded in the mists of antiquity. This topic

12 ‘Yat stuyate tat vidhiyate, yannindyate tanniśidhyate’.
of the Brāhmaṇas includes many legends connected with the performance of sacrifices by the gods. Under this head also comes the numerous stories of Titano-machia or fights between the Devas (Gods) and Asuras (demons) to which is attributed the origin of many rites. This interesting element or topic of the Br. texts forms the legendary background of the whole sacrificial ritual. The Gods are the originators of every sacrificial ritual; hence, all rites are traced to them and even to Prajāpati, the Supreme Being, the lord of all creatures who performed the first sacrifice from which creation started. Scholars like Martin Haug, Winternitz etc., have given a historical interpretation of the legends of the fights between the Devas and Asuras. They find in these legends the difference of views on religion and rituals that obtained between the ancient or Vedic Aryans represented by the Devas and the ancient Iranians or Zoroastrians represented by the Asuras, the followers of Ahuramazdā. The term ‘Ahura’ in Ahuramazdā or Great God has come from the word ‘Asura’. The Zoroastrian Iranians are often referred to by the Greek writers as Asura nation and Zarathustra or Zoroaster as the prophet of the Asura nation. The Zorastrian Iranians were dissenters and this religious dissension separated the Iranians from their Indian brothers though both these branches of the Aryan family claim descent from a common stock. This dissension and separation, this great schism took place before the composition of the Brāhmaṇas. This schism is an important landmark in the history of the Aryan civilisation.

The last characteristic feature, i.e., ‘Parakṛti’ means the achievement or feats of others. This head comprises the stories of particular performances of renowned śrotriyas or priests versed in the lore of sacrifice, stories of Dakṣinā or gifts presented by the Kings to the Brāhmaṇas. In addition to these it also contains stories of success achieved by sacrificers due to their sacrifice and gifts. The credit of the success or achievement goes to the priests of the sacrifices. The last pāṇcikā of A. B. is replete with this class of stories and anecdotes. The line of demarcation between Purākalpa and Parakṛti is very slender. As pointed out by orthodox scholars the difference is one of quantity and not quality. Whereas Purākalpa comprises legends of heroic
and other deeds of many persons, Parakṛti relates to the various achievements of one person. Parakṛti is also termed Parakriyā.

The six heads or topics mentioned above are often brought under two main heads only, viz., Vidhi and Arthavāda. In this broad-based classification consisting only of two heads, Arthavāda comprises all the topics except Vidhi or injunction, i.e., all the topics that are not mandatory in character. Hence the five topics Arthavāda, Nīndā, Praśamsā, Purākalpa and Parakṛti come under the general head of Arthavāda.

The importance of the Brāhmaṇa literature can never be over-estimated. The Br. texts are invaluable records not only of sacrificial paraphernalia but also of ancient Indian thought and civilisation which finds expression through legendary lore, metaphysical thought, social and political customs and linguistic speculations. Eggeling observes.—"While the Brāhmaṇas are thus our oldest sources from which a comprehensive view of the sacrificial ceremonial can be obtained, they also throw a great deal of light on the earliest metaphysical and linguistic speculations of the Hindus. Another, even more interesting feature of these works, consist in the numerous legends scattered through them. To the student of sanskrit literature, the Brāhmaṇas with their supplements, the Āraṇyakas and their metaphysical appendages, the Upaniṣāds are of the highest importance as the only genuine prose works which the Sanskrit, as a popular language, has produced. The Brāhmaṇas offer a rich field of enquiry for comparative study of syntax."13 The Brāhmaṇas are, maintains Winternitz, ‘indispensable to the understanding of the whole of the later religious and philosophical literature of the Indians, and highly interesting for the general science of religion. The Brāhmaṇas are as invaluable authorities to the student of religion, for the history of sacrifice and priesthood, as the Samhitās of the Yajurveda are for the history of prayer.”14 In the opinion of Max Muller the great savant and Indologist, there are passages in the Brāhmaṇas full of genuine thought and feeling, and most valuable as pictures of life, and as records of early struggles,

13 The S.B.; introduction to Vol. I. (sacred Books of the East.).
which have left no trace in the literature of other nations. In discussing the importance of the Brāhmaṇas scholars both eastern and western have emphasized the ritualistic, metaphysical, linguistic and legendary aspects; but be it mentioned here that besides these aspects the Br. texts are records of the social and political life of the later Vedic age. The evolution of caste system, the struggle for social ascendancy between the ruling class and priestly class, the callings of different classes, the geographical background, education of men and women, marriage system, occupations, agriculture and other economic conditions, music, flora and fauna, coronation ceremony, different types of monarchy and territory, democratic elements in kingship, paramount sovereignty, the cabinet, political implications of various sacrifices, the then Aryan Calendar and astronomy, knowledge of medicine and diseases, disposal of dead bodies and the like social and political data of ancient Indian civilisation of the later Vedic period are met with in the Brāhmaṇas as such they are invaluable and indispensable for all students of Indian history and civilisation. Besides sacrifice and rituals the beginnings of popular religions such as Viṣṇu-cult, Śiva-cult etc., also trace their origin in the Br. texts. Taking into consideration all these factors and judging from this perspective it is highly misleading to define the Brāhmaṇas as mere manuals of sacrifice or liturgical texts; in fact, they are compendiums of ancient Indian culture and civilisation in its multifarious aspects.

Names of the principal Brāhmaṇas of all the Vedas are enumerated below. To the Rgveda belongs the A. B. and the Kauṭitaki Br, which is also known as Śāṅkyāyana Br. We shall take up the discussion of the A. B. later on in details. The latter, viz., the K. B. consists of thirty Adhyāyas. It is named after the great teacher Kauṭitaka. The first six Adhyāyas deal with the food-sacrifice which consists of the culling of fire, fire sacrifice, new and full moon sacrifices and the sacrifices of the seasons. Adhyāyas from the seventh to the thirtieth deal with the Soma--sacrifice.

To the ŚāmaVEDa belongs several Brs. Kumārila Bhatta observed in his 'Trantravārttika' that there are eight Brāhmaṇas

---

16 'History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature', Page 408.
of the Sāmaveda. Sāyanācārya in his introduction to the Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa has enumerated them. These are the Tāṇḍya-Mahā-Br. or Pañcavimśa Br., the Saḍvimaṇa Br., the Chāndogya Br., Jaiminiya or Talavakāra Br., Sāmavidhāna, Devatādhīyaṇa, Ārṣeya and Vamśa. The last four of the above Brāhmaṇas are nothing but the index of the Sāmaveda. These Brāhmaṇas are full of mystical speculations and are very important historically. The Brāhmaṇa of the Tāṇḍins is divided into forty chapters. The first twenty-five chapters form the Tāṇḍya or Pañcavimśa Br. The Saḍvimaṇa Br. consists of the next five chapters. The following ten chapters go to the compilation of the Chāndogya Br. Of these ten chapters, the first two form the Mantras Br. and the next eight the Chāndogya-Upaniṣad. The Tāṇḍya-mahā-brāhmaṇa is named after its author, Sage Tāṇḍi. As it contains twenty-five chapters it is also called Pañcavimśa Br. The speciality of this Br. is that it supplies us with the details of innumerable varieties of the Soma Sacrifice ranging from the Jyotiṣoma to the sessional sacrifice that covers a thousand years for its completion.

The Jaiminiya or Talavakāra Br. treats of various ceremonials and contains the Kena-Upaniṣad. It is divided into two parts, Pūrva and Uttara.

The Sāmavidhāna Br. explains the application of incantations for various superstitious purposes.

The Devatādhīyaṇa, Ārṣeya and Vamśa Brāhmaṇas furnish us with the names of the deities of the Sāmavedic hymns, and a genealogical table of the teachers of the Sāmaveda respectively.

The Brāhmaṇa of the Krṣṇa or Black Yajurveda is incorporated in its Samhitā portion. These are the Brāhmaṇas of the Katha and Maitrāyaṇi schools. The important Brāhmaṇa of this veda is the Taittiriya Br. which is nothing but a continuation of the Taittiriya Samhitā and contains only later additions to the Samhitā. In this respect the Black Yajurveda is a departure from the other Vedas. In this Veda the characteristics or demarcating features of the Samhitā and the Br. have been mixed up; there is overlapping of boundaries. There are profluse Br. passages in the Samhitā portion and vice versa. This mixture of the Samhitā and Br. is a peculiar feature of the Black Yajurveda which is not met with in the other Vedas including the white Yajurveda. For this characteristic, viz.,
overlapping of Samhitā and Br. texts the Black Yajurveda is called ‘Krṣṇa’ which besides its current meaning of ‘black’ also means ‘mixed’ in Sanskrit. The T. B. contains three Kāṇḍas, also called Astākas, twenty-eight prapāṭhas and 353 anuvakas.

To the white or Śukla Yajurveda belongs the famous Satapatha Br., ‘the Brāhmaṇa of the Hundred paḥs’, so called because of its one hundred Adhyāyas or lessons. There are two recensions of this Br. that of the Kanvas and that of the Mādhyandinas.

To the Atharvaveda belongs the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa which is divided into two parts, Pūrva (former) and Uttara (latter). There are five Prapāṭhas in the first part and six in the second part. Tradition has it that this Br. originally consisted of a hundred chapters (Prapāṭhas) of which eleven chapters are now extant, the rest being lost to the world. From its language and contents the G. B. appears to be much later than the other Brs. It observations on the period of Brahmacaryya, enumeration of the sacrifices etc., are later developments; in some cases its observations appear to belong to the post-brāhmaṇical age.

Now the contents of the two Brāhmaṇas the A. B. and the S. B. will be described in details as these two Brs. are of the highest importance and are veritable mines of information. The A. B. is a collection of the sayings of ancient learned divines and philosophers illustrative and explanatory of the duties of the priests of the Rgvedic category known as Hotṛs who used to invoke the deities in sacrifices reciting hymns from the Rgveda Samhitā. It consists of eight books termed Pañcikās; each pañcikā consists of five chapters or adhyāyas making forty chapters in all. Each chapter is divided into many sub-chapters called Khandaśas, the total number of Khandaśas being 285. This Br. is mostly written in prose and partly in verse. Of these forty chapters the first sixteen deal with the Somayāga or Soma sacrifice known as Agniṣṭoma or Jyotiṣṭoma which is the model or Prākṛti of all Soma sacrifices. The first sixteen chapters thus treat of the duties of the Chief Rgvedic priest Hotṛ at the Agniṣṭoma soma sacrifice only. The ceremony generally lasts for five days. The ceremonies of the first four days are only introductory consisting of the election of priests (Hotṛ-varaṇam), the initiation of the sacrificer or Yajamāna called Dikṣāniya-
iṣṭi, the Prāyanīya or opening iṣṭi (sacrifice), the purchase of Soma (Soma-Kraya), the ceremony of doing hospitality to king Soma (ātithya-iṣṭi), the Pravargya, Upasad, Agni-soma-praṇa-
yanam. Havirdhāna-praṇayanam, the animal sacrifice (Paśu),
the three pressings and libations of soma juice called Soma-
savana taking place in the morning, mid-day and evening, and
lastly the concluding or Udayaniya iṣṭi, the ablution known as
Avabhrata. The above ceremonies covering the first four days
are absolutely necessary and serve as a prelude to the actual
sacrifice which takes place on the fifth day. The universal
character of the Agniṣṭoma and its significance is treated specially
in the fourth chapter of the third book (Pañcikā) i.e., the four-
teenth chapter. In the last chapter of the third book and first
two chapters of the fourth book, the principal modifications of
Agniṣṭoma are mentioned and briefly described, viz.—the Ukthya,
Ṣoḍaśi and Atirātra along with Āśvina Ṛātra. The third chap-
ter of the fourth book embodies the principal rules for the per-
formances of the Hotr priests relating to sattras or sacrificial
sessions which require a long period of time, in some cases a
complete year or a century even for their completion. The
model or prakṛti of Sattra type of sacrifice is Gavāmayana which
covers a whole year consisting of 361 days. The duties of the
Rgvedic priest concerning the Gavāmayana sattra are enumerated
from the sixth Khanda of the seventeenth chapter till the end
of the eighteenth chapter. The last two chapters of the fourth
book and the first four chapters of the fifth book describe
very minutely the duties of the Hotr priest during the ten prin-
cipal days of Dwādaśāha, which may be performed as a Sattra,
or as a Ahina i.e., a soma sacrifice lasting for more than one
and less than thirteen days.

The last chapter of the fifth book, i.e. the twenty-fifth
chapter deals with various matters such as the penances required
of an Agnihotri when he commits mistakes or when some mis-
fortune such as expiry of his wife etc., befalls him. It also
enumerates the expiatory rites to be performed by the Superin-
tending priest Brahman for the mistakes committed by any one
of the performing priests.

The whole of the sixth book treats of the duties of the
minor Hotr-priests, at the great soma sacrifice called Śaḍāha.
At the beginning of the sixth book there are some remarks on the two priests Gravastut and Subhrahaṇaṇa.

The seventh and the eighth books deal mainly with the sacrifices of the Kṣatriyas or the ruling class and the relationship in which the princes stand to the priestly class or Brāhmaṇas. Thus from a historical point of view these two books of the A. B. are of vital importance. The seventh book describes first the vivisection of the sacrificial animal into thirtysix single pieces, and their distribution among the officiating priests, the sacrificer, his wife, and other persons connected with the performance of the sacrifice.

The thirty-second chapter deals with penances or expiatory rites for neglects on the part of an Agnihotri or mishaps which might befall him. This is a continuation of the fifth chapter of the fifth book.

The remaining chapters describe the important ceremony known as royal inauguration or consecration (abhiseka). The coronation or consecration ceremony of ancient India is described in detail in connection with the Rājasūya ceremony. In Chapter XXXIII the interesting story of Sunah-śepa is narrated. On account of its containing R. K. verses and Gāthās as well, it was to be narrated to the King-designate on the day of his inauguration by the Hotr.

Three kinds of inauguratory sacrifices for the king, called the Rājasūya are described, viz., Abhiśeka, Punarabhiseka and Mahabhiseka, inauguration, re-inauguration and great inauguration ceremonies. Aindra-Mahabhiseka or the great consecration or coronation ceremony of Indra is the model for the inauguration of all earthly kings. These ceremonies are called abhiśeka (literally, sprinkling), because one main item of the royal consecration ceremony consists in sprinkling holy-water collected from different sources on the head of the king.

The last chapter of the A. B. is taken up with the appointment by the king of a properly qualified Brāhmaṇa to the office of domestic priest called Purohita. There is also an eulogy of the office of Purohita (Purohitapraśamsā). The ceremonial part of the last chapter is made interesting by short stories of kings who were said to have performed the great consecration ceremony, and as a result thereof attained to paramount sovereignty on earth. The last khaṇḍa of the eighth book, i.e., the
concluding khaṇḍa of the whole Brāhmaṇa enumerates some magical performances called Kṛtya by means of which a king can secretly destroy his enemies.

The authorship of the A. B. is attributed to one Mahidāsa. His mother’s name was Itara and hence Itara’s son Mahidāsa is called Aitareya; ‘It is said by the scholar Mahidāsa, son of Itarā, says Aitareya-Āraṇyaka’; thus according to the Indian Tradition the name of the A. B. is derived from Itarā, the author’s mother. In his introduction to the A. B. Sayanācāryya narrates the following story regarding the name and origin of the Brāhmaṇa itself on the authority of tradition. A seer of yore had many wives one of whom was named Itarā. She begot a son called Mahidāsa, who is mentioned as Mahidāsa Aitareya in Aitareya Āraṇyaka. The sage preferred his other wives to Itarā; hence Itarā’s son Mahidāsa also did not find favour with his father; rather he was shabbily treated by the sage. The age openly insulted him and hurt his feelings one day by placing the children begotten of his other wives on his lap to the exclusion of Mahidāsa. The mother Itarā rudely shocked this ill-treatment meted out to her beloved son by her husband offered fervent prayers to Mother Earth the presiding deity of her family. Thus propitiated Goddess Earth appeared in her radiant celestial form in the midst of the assembly, placed Mahidāsa on a golden throne and as a token of his superiority to all other children in learning granted him a boon which was revealed to Mahidāsa in the form of a Brāhmaṇa. Thus the complete A. B. beginning with the words, ‘Agnir vai devānāb-mavaṃśa (1-1-1) and ending with ‘Śṛṇute Śṛṇute’ (8-5-5) and then the Āraṇyaka commencing with ‘Atha mahāvrataṃ’ (1-1-1) and closing with the words ‘ācārayah ācārayah’ flashed in Mahidāsa’s mind as divine revelations.

The S. B. belongs to the Vājansaneyi Samhitā or white Yajurveda as stated above. It is called Šatapatha. The word Šata means a hundred and the name is very significant as this Br. consists of one hundred lectures or lessons called adhyāyas. This is the best known, the most extensive, and undoubtedly, on the merit of its contents the most important of all the Brs.

10 1-8-2.- ‘Etadu sma vai tad vidvānāha Mahidāsa Aitareyah.’
This Br. in the words of the great Indologist Macdonell, ‘is, next to the R. V., the most important production in the whole range of vedic literature’\(^{17}\). The Vaiṣāsane yi samhitā admits of two recensions or Śākhās, viz., Madhyandina and Kāṇḍa. Likewise the S. B. also is handed down to us in these two recensions of which the Madhyandina Śākhā has gained wide celebrity. Our references to this Br. in this work are from the Madhyandina recension. In this recension of the S. B. the hundred Adhyāyas are distributed among fourteen books called Kāṇḍas. Each book or Kāṇḍa is divided into several Adhyāyas which are subdivided into several Prapāṭhakas; the Prapāṭhakas in their turn are subdivided into several Brāhmaṇas which again are subdivided into many Kāṇḍikās. Thus in all there are fourteen Kāṇḍas, sixty-eight Prapāṭhakas, 438 Brāhmaṇas and 7624 Kāṇḍikās in the Madhyandina recension of the S. B. In the usual procedure of references the Prapāṭhaka is not mentioned, the rest four divisions are mentioned; e.g., the reference 10-4-2-22 will mean the 22nd Kāṇḍikā of the second Brāhmaṇa of the fourth Adhyāya belonging to the tenth Kāṇḍa or book.

In the Kāṇva recension there are seventeen Kāṇḍas, 104 Adhyāyas, 435 Brāhmaṇas and 6806 Kāṇḍikās. The name Śatapatha justly applies to the Madhyandina Śākhā which actually consists of one hundred Adhyāyas whereas the Kāṇva Śākhā consists of four more chapters. In the former, amongst the fourteen books the first nine are a continuous commentary on the first eighteen sections of the V. S. A bare outline of the contents of this Br. is given below as it is not possible to give a detailed content of its hundred lessons which are so vast and varied in their character. The first Kāṇḍa treats of the famous sacrifice known as Darśa-puṇṇa-māsa. The second Kāṇḍa deals with various sacrifices such as the daily rite of Agnihotra, Pṛṇḍa-pitrāyajña, the Dākṣāyana sacrifice, an īṣṭi type of sacrifice called Navānna and the celebrated Cāturmāṣya which consists of various rites and performances such as Varuṇa-praghāsa, Sākamedha, Pitṛyeṣṭi, īṣṭi called Tryamvaka, Śunasīri etc. The third and fourth Kāṇḍas give the details

\(^{17}\) A History of Sanskrit Literature, Page 212.
of the celebrated Soma-sacrifice consisting of dikṣā or initiation.
the commencing sacrifice or Prāyaniya īṣṭi, the purchase of
Soma creeper and the placing of soma in the cart. rites of
hospitality or Ātithyan īṣṭi done to King Soma. Upasad īṣṭi creation of
the great altar; pressing of Soma juice, rites relating to the slaughter of animal, offering of
animal flesh and rice-pap, Upayāja and Patnī-samyāja, (rites
concerning the wife of the YaJamāna or sacrificer), Soma libations,
receiving of different vessels called Grahas in the Soma
sacrifice by the priests, Anubandha and Avabhrta rites etc.
The fifth Kāṇḍa deals with the two important sacrifices known
as Rājasūya and Vājapeya connected with the royal coronation
or inauguration and consecration of Kings. The accounts of
Abhiṣeka or the consecration of Kings are to be found only in
the Atharva-Veda and the Brāhmaṇas, particularly the A. B. and
the S. B. Hence from the historical stand point this book merits
special mention and is of great importance. The then status
of the king, his cabinet, the representative persons of the king-
dom, the status of queens, the relation between the king and
his ministers, the relation between the ruler and the ruled, the
democratic elements in ancient Indian Kingship, different types
of monarchy and territory, the vox populi in matters of adminis-
tration, the tax-system and the like paraphernalia of the state
and politics are met with in the sacrifices having a political
end-in-view such as the Rājasūya. Vājapeya, Aśvamedha,
Sautrāmanī, Puruṣamedha etc. The Kāṇḍas from the sixth to
the tenth mainly deal with the culling of the sacrificial fire
and construction of the fire-altar which is symbolic of Prajāpati,
Agni, YaJamāna and the creation of the universe. The mystic
science of Agni called Agni-rahasya or Agnividadyā imparted by
Sāndilya occurs in this protion of the Brāhmaṇa. YaJñāvalkya
the renowned sage of ancient India is the hero eponymous whose
majestic figure looms large in the whole field of the V.S. and
its Brāhmaṇa; he champions the cause of the white Yajurveda
school against the Black Yajurveda school. Only in the five
books from the sixth to the tenth of the S.B. occurs the name
of the teacher Sāndilya to the exclusion of YaJñāvalkya.

The eleventh book treats of Pañabanda, the five Mahā-
yajñas or great sacrifices, an īṣṭi called Mitrāvinda, Darśapurna-
māsa-sesa etc. The twelfth book deals with the satra or
sessional sacrifice called Dvādaśāha, the annual or samrātsava satra and the expiatory rite for excess in drinking etc., known as Sautrāmani.

The thirteenth book gives the details of four important sacrifices Aṣvamedha or the horse-sacrifice, Puruṣa-medha, Sarvamedha and Piṭmedha. Of these the Aṣvamedha which has gained wide celebrity merits special mention as it is connected with paramount sovereignty. The chapters on the Aṣvamedha are a standing testimony to the constitutional status of the monarch, queens, the royal paraphernalia, the attendants of the four queens, the arms and weapons carried by the protectors of the sacrificial horse, the importance of the chariot-wright class, the hierarchy in the types of monarchy etc. The description of the horse sacrifice also gives us an inkling into the military skill and organisation of the Vedic Aryans and the arms and ammunitions invented by them. The vivisection of the horse and the naming of the different parts of its body bear testimony to the knowledge of anatomy and surgery of the ancients. In the eighth Adhyāya of the thirteenth book the funeral ceremonies of the Vedic age, the disposal of the dead and construction of burial mounds of different sizes according to different sexes and castes of the dead have been embodied in connection with Piṭmedha. This piece merits importance as a record of the then social custom.

The last i.e., the fourteenth book deals with Pravargya and contains the great metaphysical and theological discourse known as Bhādarānyaka-Upaniṣat which is worth its weight in gold. The importance of this Upaniṣat can never be over-estimated. King Janaka’s court was a great seat of learning which witnessed many learned debates, theological disputations and metaphysical discourses. The historical debates that took place between Yājñavalkya and other sages, between Yājñavalkya and Gārgi the most learned female savant and seer who stands out pre-eminently in the field of female scholarship of ancient India, the philosophical discourse between Yājñavalkya and his God-intoxicated wife Maitreyī who longed for immortality in preference to ephemeral earthly riches and mortality,—all these memorable facts are recorded in the Bhādarānyaka Upaniṣad. The great Śankarācāryya, the saviour of Hinduism and the champion of Vedānta also inexhaustibly
draws materials from this Upaniṣad to support his arguments
launched against the Buddhistic doctrines and his reasonings to
prove the tenets of Advait Vedānta. His scholarly com-
mentary on this Upaniṣad is a work of profound erudition and
massive scholarship.

The A.B. derives its name from its author Mahidāsa-
Aitareya son of Itarā) but the S.B. derives its name from its
hundred chapters that make up the bulk of
this Br. Tradition ascribes the authorship of
the S.B. to the versatile scholar, sage Yājñā-
valkya who is the founder of the school of the
white Yajurveda. He is the spokesman of the whole of the S.B.
except the portion on Agni-vidyā which is ascribed to Śaṃdilya
as noted above. The A.B. gives the notion of single author-
ship as it presents a unity of impression whereas the S.B. does
not present such a unity and seems to be the product of different
authors pieced together. The language of the S.B. does not
present a uniformity or homogeneity like that of the A.B.

It has been noted above that there are two recensions or
śākhās of the S.B. We shall now explain what is meant by
a Śākhā of the Vedā generally translated as ‘recension’ or
school. The sacred lore comprised by the term ‘Veda’ was
handed down from generation to generation through oral trans-
mission. It is but quite natural and in the fitness of things that
some variations in the modes of recitation, in the practical ap-
lication of the mantras would take place according to time,
climate and different teachers. Thus crept in
variations in readings, variations in pronun-
ciations and order of texts. These inevit-
able variations or changes lie at the root of
different recensions or śākhās of the Veda.

The Pūraṇas mention innumerable recensions of the Vedas.
Thus various śākhās of the RK, Yajuṣ and Sāman are record-
ed in the Kūrma-Pūraṇa (1-51), in the Viṣṇu-pūraṇa (3.4.16
to 3.4.25), Bhāgavata-puraṇa (1-4-23 and 1-12-6) etc. Patan-
jali, the celebrated author of the Mahābhāṣya ascribes a thousand
recensions, śākhās, to the S.V., a hundred śākhās to the Y.V.,
twentyone to the R.V. and nine to the A.V.¹¹

¹¹Paspaṇa, “Ekaviṃṣatidhā vṛṇcyam, ekaṣatamadhvaryu-
śākhāḥ, sahasravartāmā sāmavedah”.
these recensions or schools are obsolete and untraced. Now, every śākhā is supposed to have its Br. Hence there were as many Brs. as were the śākhās. Many labour under the delusion that the original Samhitā texts become different according to different recensions; that the Samhitā text becomes completely changed when recast in a recension. That is to say, they think the multiplications of recensions of the same Veda leads to the multiplicity of the Veda. In other words, one veda becomes many vedas according to its recensions. But this is wholly a wrong idea. Not withstanding its various recensions the original Samhitā remains one and the same; hence the study of one of its recension means the study of the whole Samhitā. The original Samhitā underlies its diverse sakhas as the abiding unity. The R.V. has twentyone recensions. The study of one of its recension means the study of the R.V. not that the perusal of all its recensions put together will constitute the perusal of the R.V. Thus the alleged `one thousand recensions of the S.V. mean the thousand different modes of changing of the Sāman' observes Dayānand Sarasvati.19 The original Samhitā remains the same in each recension; it does not vary in its essence, only its forms vary. The difference in the modes of instruction, pronunciation etc., lies at the root of the difference of the recensions, not the difference of original Samhitās.20 Hence it is, that Sāyanācārya is universally regarded as the commentator of all the vedas though, in fact, he has written the commentary on one particular śākhā of each veda. The verbal transmission of the veda through countless teachers and pupils from generation to generation covers a long passage of time and constitutes the tradition (sampradāya) of Vedic study. These teachers and pupils, who in their turn, became teachers again

19 Veda-bhāṣya-bhūmikā;—‘Sahasra-vartmā sāmaveda ityasya sahasram gityupāyā iti bhāvah’.
in unbroken continuity are responsible for the creation of different sākhās that cropped up at different times and places. The vedas acquired different recensions through the pupils, grand pupils and great grand pupils, 'says the Bhāgavatapurāṇa. The Brāhmaṇa belonging to a particular recension of a veda has certain characteristics peculiarly its own concerning intonation, accent, movement of tongue and fingers etc.; e.g. the S.B. belonging to the Mādhyaṇḍina sākhā of the V.S. or the Śukla- Yajurveda has only two accents, acute and grave; the 'ya' is pronounced as 'ja'; the 'śa' is pronounced as 'kha'; the 'va' is duplicated in both reading and writing when it is the initial letter of a word; the movement of the finger is prohibited when uttering a visarga (ah) etc.

The date of the Veda is a bone of contention amongst the scholars of the east and the west. The term 'Veda' comprises a huge mass of literature, not a few books; it is a whole library and not merely a shelf of books. The samhitās, the Brāhmaṇa and the Upaniṣads comprised by the Vedic literature make up a rich library of books that belongs to eternity, not time and has withstood the ravage of time. Hence it is not an easy matter to fix the date of composition of such a vast mass of literature, the composition of which must have covered several centuries. Indologists have taxed their ingenuity to fix the uppermost and lowermost limits of the Vedic age but most of them failed to tackle the problem with sagacity and ingenuity. No amount of discussion, research or perusal of the texts helps us in fixing the date of the vedic literature. The problem is a knotty one and eludes our grasp and comprehension. The long passage of time stands a bar to correct estimation and clouds the issue. Sweeps of imagination and stretches of fancy lead us nowhere and are shut out from the domain of history. Rightly does the wise savant Max Müller remark on this issue; 'Whether the Vedic hymns were composed in 1000, or 1500 or 2000, or 3000 B.C., no power on earth will ever determine.'

21 1-4-24,—'Shaityaḥ prasāyaistacshiyaḥ vedāste sākhino 'bha-van'.
22 Gifford Lectures on Physical religion (1889).
putation. Winternitz observes; 'We cannot, however, explain the development of the whole of this great literature, if we assume as date—a date as round' about 1200 to 1500 B.C. as its starting point. We shall probably have to date the beginning of this development about 2000 to 3000 B.C. and the end of it between 750 and 500 B.C. The more urdent course, however, is to steer clear of any fixed dates, and to guard against the extremes of a stupendously ancient period or a ludicrously modern epoch' 23. The reputed vedic scholar and patriot Bālgan-gādhar Tilak of hallowed memory ascribes the early vedic literature, i.e., the RK. Samhitā to 4000 B. C. He concludes his arguments based on astronomical data in the following words: 'We can thus satisfactorily account for all the opinions and traditions current about the age of the vedas amongst ancient and modern scholars in India and in Europe, if we place the Vedic period at about 4000 B.C. in strict accordance with the astronomical references and facts recorded in the ancient literature of India' 24.

The observations of these great Indologists referred to above also hold good regarding the data of the Brāhmaṇa literature which is a part of the sacred lore and contributes to the bulk of the literature implied by the term 'Veda'. In the foregoing lines we have shown that some Brs. are earlier such as the A.B., K.B., etc., and some like the S.B. and T.B. are later in origin, judged by their contents and language, matter and manner. Hence there cannot be a uniform data for all the Brs. Scholars like Śāmaśāmi, Tilak, Dayānanda Saraswatī etc., who consider 4000 B.C. to be the date of the RK. Samhitā, have fixed up the upper limit of the age of the Brs. as 2500 B.C. and lower limit as 1000 B.C. Again, in the opinion of Western Indologists such as Winternitz, Keith, Bloomfield etc., the origin and development of the Brs. cover the period from 1500 B.C. to 800 B.C. approximately. It is difficult and impossible, rather, in the language of Winternitz, 'it is foolish' to ascertain a definite date for both the Samhita period and the Br. period of the Veda. In the age of the A.V. the Aryans have moved eastward from the Indus valley and in the age of the Y. V. and

24 The Orion, chapter VIII, page 220.
the Brs. they have moved further in the eastern direction in the Gangetic plain and for the first time the names of new tribes and territories such as the Kurus, Pañcālas, Kāsis, Koalas, Videhas etc., are met with. This fact has been clearly stated with textual references under the ‘Historical and Geographical background’ in Book I of this work. On the date of the Brs. Winternitz makes the following observation supported by cogent arguments. ‘If we ask in which period we are to locate these centuries of the development of the Br. literature, there can be little question of any definite dates as there is in determining the period of the Samhitās. The only certainty is that the Samhitā of the Ṛgveda was already concluded and that the hymn poetry already belonged to a far distant past, when prayers and sacrifices were first made the subject of a special ‘science’. It is probably certain, too, that the great majority of magic incantations, spells and formulae of the Atharva-veda, and of the Yajurveda, as well as the melodies of the Sāma-veda, are much older than the speculations of the Brs. On the other hand it is likely that the final compilation of the Samhitās of the Atharvaveda and of the liturgical Samhitās was contemporaneous with the beginnings of the Br. literature, so that the latest portions of these Samhitās might be of the same date as the earliest portions of the Brs. At least the geographical and cultural conditions indicate this, as they are represented to us on the one hand in the Samhitās of the A. V. and the Y. V., and on the other hand in the Brs. in comparison with those of the Ṛgveda’ 25.

The subject matter of the thesis is ‘Indian Civilisation as revealed in the A. B., K. B., S. B., and the T. B.’ in particular and all the Brs. in general. There are some extant works on one or other aspect of the vedic civilization covering the whole period from the RK.-Samhitā down to the Upaniṣads, i.e., to say both the early vedic and the later vedic age. There is no work dealing exclusively with the Indian civilization as recorded in the Brs. alone. This thesis is a systematic and comprehensive treatment of the different aspects of the civilization of the Brāhmaṇa period of the Vedic era. The work attempts to deal with all

the major aspects denoted by the term civilization, viz. social, economic, political, military, religious, philosophical and miscellaneous. Such topics as the Flora and the Fauna, calendar, astronomy, the language and literature of the Brs., observations of the Brs. on speech and different types of literature, crimes and ordeals etc., which have no logical connection or homogeneity have been discussed in the book captioned “Miscellaneous”. The findings and observations in each case have been borne out by relevant quotations from original sources at every point. The quotations in original have been given in the foot-notes and the translations thereof in the body of the work. The thesis has been divided into four books dealing with the Social & Economic Aspect, Political & Military Aspect, Religio-Philosophical Aspect and the Miscellaneous respectively. A summary of each aspect has been appended at the end of each book giving a digest of the aspect in question and showing the relation of the Brāhmaṇical civilisation with that of the Samhitā period on the one hand and of the Upaniṣadic era on the other. Thus the summary contains a brief survey of the origin and development of the different aspects of the Brāhmaṇical civilization along with their indebtedness to and difference from those of the early Vedic age as well as their influence on and their divergence from those of the age of the Upaniṣads. The critical analysis of each Book along with the conclusion is given in the summary of the book and need not be repeated in the introduction. Now we shall give a succinct gist of each book in the following lines.

BOOK I

Book I—deals with the social aspect. The book opens with a sketch of the historical and geographical background of the later vedic age. The centre of gravity of the Aryan civilization has shifted from the Indus Valley to the eastern direction i.e., the Gangetic plain. New tribes and territories unheard of in the early Vedic era are met with for the first time, e.g., the Kuru-Paścālas, Kosala, Videha, Kāśi, Uśinara, Vasa, Uttarakuru, Uttaramadra, Vidarbha, Magadha etc. The Gist of Book I. west recedes into the background; the central and eastern territories come into the lime-
light. Very low castes, mixed castes and out-castes such as Sabara, Andhra, Puršā, Pulinda, Mātibā, Nīcya, Apācyā, Niṣāda, Bainda, Kaiyārta, Mārgāra (huntsman), Kiśāta, Jambhāka, Paulkasa, Caṇṭāla etc., are met with for the first time in the Brs, and the V. S. which is contemporaneous with the early Brs. Of the four main castes the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya are superior to the Vaiśya, while all the higher three classes are superior to the Śudra. The real power of the state rests with the military class or nobles. The priestly class is made up of Brāhmaṇas. In the bid for social ascendancy there is keen competition between the ruling class and the priestly class; again, there also exists close cooperation between these two classes to maintain the balance of power and to keep under subjection the Vaiśya and the Śudra classes. The kings are temporal lords whereas the Brāhmaṇas are spiritual lords. Every king has his royal chaplain or family priest whose function is that of a prime minister who advises the king on socio-political matters and acts as a mediator between the ruler and the ruled. The Vaiśyas are the tenants whereas the nobles are the landlords. The king is the owner of all lands. The non-Aryan tribes generally known as the Dasyus who submitted to the hegemony of the Aryans go to the making of the Śudra community. The Śudras are the serfs and serve the upper classes. The Vaiśya can be evicted from the land at the sweet will of the landlord, and the Śudra has no right of property or security of life. These two classes have been gradually upgraded so far as their social status is concerned. Intermarriage between higher and lower castes commenced from the Samhitā period; during the age of the Brs. various mixed castes have come into existence due to intermarriage of every possible variety between the four castes. Thus the pattern of society which was simple in the early Vedic age has become highly complicated. The state has to provide for the economic solvency of all the castes by allotting new professions to each caste for the smooth running of the social machinery. Thus we come across nearly seventy occupations in the V. S., some of which are earmarked for women. The importance of the lower castes is more and more realised by the higher classes on account of their professions without which society would be at a standstill. Gradually the Vaiśya approximates to the position of nobles, and the Śudra to the position
of the humbler freemen. Due to the growing complication of
the social structure the relation of simple slavery is abolished.
Thus the bulk of the Śūdra community stands in the relationship
of serfs. Some mixed castes, for example, the Rathakāras or
the chariotwrights, enjoy an esteemed position in society. They
are even entitled to place the sacrificial fire like the higher
three castes.

Marriage is looked upon as a sacrament and not as a con-
tract. As a rule, chastity and high moral tone obtain in the
conjugal life; stray instances of moral laxity in married life are
exceptions that confirm the general moral trend.

Education is compulsory for the upper three castes. There
is no reference regarding the education of the Śūdras. There
are residential institutions located in sylvan environ run by
learned sages. There are also peripatetic teachers called
‘Carakas’ who move from place to place like mobile schools
and offer instructions. Names of learned ladies and spiritually
enlightened women are met with but we do not know whether
there existed any institution to offer instructions to women.
Women are adept in embroidery, knitting, sewing, weaving and
dyeing. Fine arts are cultivated. Music, both vocal and ins-
trumental, and dance are widely practised by both the sexes.

Gold and silver ornaments are used by the people.
Besides gold and silver mention is also made of brass, copper,
iron, lead and tin. A gold currency is met with.

Agriculture is the main occupation. Wheat, paddy and
barley are the staple food. Various drinks are in use.

Certain passages prove the existence of maritime trade and
large sea-going vessels fitted with hundred oars.

Village life and township are settled facts. From the
terms Pūh, Pur, Purī etc., and references to famous capitals like
Videha of King Janaka and Kāśi of King Ajātaśatru it may be
safely concluded that some towns and cities have assumed de-
finite shape while others were in the making. Public highways
and good roads are constructed for easy journey and speedy
traffic. The headmen of villages called Grāmāṇis hold impor-
tant posts both as civil and military functionaries.
BOOK II

Monarchy is the prevailing system of govt. The first king in both the heaven and earth is elected but successive kings are not elected. Kingship is hereditary in character and succession by the law of primogeniture is the practice.

Eleven different types of monarchy are heard of. Different grades of monarchy such as kingship, imperialism, paramount sovereignty are connected with different forms of sacrifice that have a political bearing. The extents of the territories of emperors and paramount sovereigns are described in exaggerated terms but, in reality, they are small. Vastly extensive territories are an impossibility in an age when the vedic Aryans have neither crossed the Vindhya range nor entered Bengal. The states of the later Vedic age markedly differ from those of the early Vedic age in one important respect: In the era of the RK.-Samhitā the states are still tribal: Gist of Book II. They have no fixed geographical boundary or territorial basis. The early vedic states may be termed floating states having no fixed basis; but in the later Vedic age the states have become territorial with their geographical boundary clearly defined. In the Brs. we find different tribes settling down in different parts of the country.

The coronation or consecration ceremony of kings is an important function. The multifarious rites connected with this ceremony will be found in the body of this work. Each rite is symbolic representing different functions and prerogatives of the king. The presence of ‘King-makers’ in this ceremony marks a popular element connected with kingship. The demi-divinity of the king is proved by certain traditional beliefs and rites. He is both the legislative and the executive head. Dharma or Law is regarded as the real sovereign and the earthly king as the executive to uphold and enforce that law. The king seems to be the head of the judiciary and the army as well.

The Brähmin chaplain of the king functions as his chief adviser in both spiritual and secular matters. He is the main organ of administration and acts as a mediator between the ruler and the ruled. The king and his Purohita smoothly govern the kingdom aided by such important personnel as the village headman, the commander of the army, the tax-collector.
treasurer, chamberlain, and the two important popular assemblies called the sabhā and the samiti. Some Brāhmaṇ priests of exceptional ability hold the post of administrator of two or even three states jointly. The position of the Purohita is that of a Prime Minister. The village headman called Grāmaṇi is both a civil and military functionary. The two popular assemblies called the sabhā and the samiti form two important administrative organisations. They hark back to hoary antiquity. The sabhā is a select body of aristocrats and is less popular than the samiti which is a more comprehensive body comprising the representatives of both the commoner and nobles. Both these bodies exercise considerable authority and act as a healthy check on the power of the king. The sabhā functions both as a popular body and a court of justice. In the age of the Brs. the samiti is almost obsolete; casual references to the sabhā only are met with.

The relation between the ruler and the ruled is cordial; there exists a spirit of co-operation on both sides. The king realises taxes and, in return, protects the life and property of the people. To enlist the sympathy and active co-operation of his subjects in times of war and other national calamities the monarch condescends to come down to the level of the commoner and partake of food from a common plate.

In times of war people place their wives and children in the king's palace for safety. Valuable articles are dropped in, to lakes and seas in such a way that they may be retrieved after the warfare. Various arms and missiles are in use. Four different types of victory are enumerated in the A.B. termed Jiti, Abhijiti, Vijiti and Samjititi.

The queens, brothers and sons of kings enjoy an esteemed position. The inclusion of the chief queen in the list of king-makers and the important role she plays in the horse-sacrifice bespeaks her constitutional status. The son of the monarch is the heir-apparent to the throne. The favourite wife of the king called Vāvātā often acts as a go-between the king and his subjects.

The Brs. record cases of dethronement of wicked kings. Instances are also met with where a deposed king has been pardoned and reinstalled on the throne. This fact bespeaks the Vox populi in matters of administration. Instances of such
malevolent despots are rare in the Vedic age. In the whole range of the vedic literature we come across only two or three instances of dethronement of kings. A close perusal of the Brs. bears testimony to the fact that the state in the later vedic age approximates to the ideals of a welfare state. The state gives protection to citizens from foreign aggressions, maintains internal order by enforcing respect for the traditional law or Dharma.

BOOK III

Book—III—deals with the aspect of religion and philosophy of the Brs. As the philosophy of the Brs. is not highly developed but in the making this aspect has been discussed along with religion in this book called,—‘Religio-philosophical Aspect.’ The theory of sacrifice, the forms of sacrifice, the origin and development of Priesthood, the spirit underlying the form of sacrifice, emergence of popular religious cults, the influence of non-Aryan religion and primitive faith of the religion of the Brs., sacraments, four orders of life and five great daily sacrifices etc. . . . form the major topics of discussion under the portion on religion. The theory of sacrifice partially embodies the cosmogony, theology and the eschatology of the Brs. Sacrifice constitutes the main religious practice during the age of the Brs. The universe comes into being from the first sacrifice performed by the Purusa, the Primal Being. The four vedas, four castes, animals both wild and domestic, the sun and the moon, firmament, fire, air etc. . . . spring from the dismembered limbs of the Purusa who is both the sacrificer and the victim offered therein. Thus the sacrifice is the self-sacrifice of the Creator who becomes many through the sacrifice. The sacrifice achieves the union of the sacrificer with the god. This union admits of three different kinds. The reward of the sacrifice is both worldly and other-worldly. Some sacrifices are obligatory while others are optional. Wish-yielding rituals are optional. Grand-sacrifices such as the Rājasūya, Vājapeya, and Aśvamedha are connected with the coronation, imperialism and paramount sovereignty of rulers. The horses-race and chariot-race connected with some of the grand sacrifices along with
instrumental music present the picture of an Olympic sport and national festivity as well, which influence the common people whereas the cultured mind alone feels the spiritual influence of sacrifice.

The correctness of rituals and procedure is strictly enjoined and any omission or commission brings severe repercussion on the priests and even on the gods. Sacrifice proper has nothing to do with magic or the black art of necromancy.

The priests play the most important role in the performance of sacrifices. There are sixteen priests in all, four Rgvedic priests, four Yajurvedic priests, four Sāma-vedic and four Brahman or superintending priests who are versed in all the three vedas. The priests are held in high esteem and exert considerable influence on the ruler and the ruled. The sacrificer (according to some, the priest called Sadasya) is regarded as the seventeenth priest.

The spirit underlying the form of sacrifice is never lost sight of though the form is made much of. The spirit of reverence, adherence to truth and knowledge are enjoined to obtain the real benefit of rituals. In the S.B. and the T.B., the later Brs., great stress is laid on the spirit of the sacrifice and the path of knowledge.

Popular religious cults like the Viṣṇu-cult, Rudra-Siva-cult etc. . . . evolve and assume definite shape during this age. Rudra the terrific god of the R.V. ultimately becomes Siva in the Y.V., S.B. and the T.B. The beginnings of the cult of Bhakti or devotion are traced in these popular religious cults and the germ of image-worship is found in the image of the gold-man representing the gods Prajapati (Creator) and Agni (Fire) placed inside the mystic Fire-altar. The conception of Rudra-Siva forms an interesting study of an attempt at synthesising the thesis and anti-thesis of the social structure.

The influence of non-Aryan religion and primitive faith may be detected in certain sacrificial practices connected with the horse-sacrifice, Mahavrata, Gosava etc. The Rudra-cult belongs to hoary antiquity and was prevalent among non-Aryan tribes.

The sacraments detailed in the Brs. relate particularly to the natal rites, investiture with the holy thread, marriage and the disposal of the dead. Of the four orders of life two orders
only, viz, those of the householder and the student-life are explicitly stated while the Vānaprastha and the ascetic order are only faintly hinted at; these two orders termed Vānaprāstha and Sannyāsa take definite shape and gain in importance in the age of the Aranyakas and Upaniṣads.

The portion dealing with the philosophical aspect in Book III includes the cosmogony, theology, ethics and eschatology of the Brs. The cosmogony of the Brs. is mixed up with legends and explanations of sacrificial rituals. The creation of the universe is ascribed to different causes such as the sacrifice, the penance of the Primal Being, cosmic waters, space (Ākaśa), the Cosmic Mind etc. The S. B. mentions Brahman (neuter), the Absolute Spirit as the final cause of creation. Brahman is identified with Atman which is also mentioned as the source of creation. Names and forms are regarded as the warp and woof wherewith the creator weaves the texture of the universe.

The theology of the Brs. includes both personal gods and the impersonal Absolute Godhead. The early Brs. like the A.B., the K.B., etc., do not refer to the impersonal unqualified Supreme Spirit but the later Brs. like the S.B. and T.B. mention the impersonal Godhead in clear and unmistakable terms. The personal gods are described in terms of anthropomorphism; they represent different elements of Nature which are deified; all the gods are identified with the Sun-god, each deity representing one or other aspect of the Sun. Later on the gods are regarded as the diverse manifestations of one central Supreme Godhead. The charge that the Impersonal Absolute Godhead is not met with in the Brs. falls to the ground because the S.B. and the T.B. distinctly mention the Supreme Spirit which is impersonal and shorn of attributes termed Brahman and identified with Atman and Truth. A graphic description of the characteristics of this Supreme Self, the All-Soul is given in the S.B. In the case of personal gods whenever a god is invoked and propitiated he is worshipped as the Supreme God; this fact bespeaks the monotheistic character of the Vedic pantheon. The Impersonal Absolute, the Supreme Spirit is the fountain-head of all existence, all names and forms.

The eschatology of the Brs. deals with the problems of life hereafter, 'the great beyond', heaven and hell, and the final emancipation from the worldly bondage. On expiry men
attain the heavenly world and achieve union with the personal
gods. This union admits of three different kinds called Sālokya,
Sārupya and Sāyujya. This heavenly life is not everlasting; it
is commensurate with the term of piety which enables the sacri-
ficer to attain heaven. On termination of his piety he is reborn
on earth. Thus his death here means birth hereafter, and death
hereafter means birth here. The departed soul is weighed in a
balance and is consigned to the joys of the paradise or dam-
nations of the hell according to the indications of the scale.
The Zend Avesta also mentions this scale and similar judgment
on the departed soul. The S.B. and the J.B. present us with
a graphic picture of the idyllic blissful atmosphere of the
paradise as also of the gruesome harrowings of the hell. These
descriptions anticipate the detailed descriptions of the heaven
and the purgatory we come across in the Pūrāṇas and the Korān.
The Brs. clearly state the doctrine of the transmigration of Soul
and metempsychosis. Those who realise the Absolute Godhead
Brahman through knowledge, par excellence, are wholly absorbed
in the All-Soul attaining final emancipation from mundane
thraldom. They elude the clutches of death and birth forever.
Thus the Upaniṣadic doctrine of Mokṣa or final liberation of
the individual soul is anticipated in the Brs. The eschatology
of the Brs. is far more developed than that of the Samhitās and
foreshadows the eschatology of the Upaniṣads.

BOOK IV

The fourth book termed ‘Miscellaneous’ is a medley of het-
erodox topics having no homogeneity or logical connection and
comprises the flora and the fauna, calendar, astronomy, crimes and
ordeal, the language and literature of the Brs., observations
of the Brs. on speech and language, and the different types of
literature referred to by the Brs. The chapter on flora and
fauna enumerates the various plants, trees, herbs, flowers, domes-
tic animals, wild beasts, birds and insects mentioned in the
gist of Book IV.

Aryan calendar forms an interesting study. The astounding
knowledge of the solar science of the vedic Aryans merits great importance. We are taken aback by their discovery of the great astronomical truth that the sun does not move; its apparent motion being illusory, that the sun never rises or sets, it is shining perennially in the firmament and the days and nights are caused by the rotation of the earth. The A. B., K. B and C. B. record this correct scientific observation of the Vedic fathers in clear and lucid language. The time-schedule of ses-sional sacrifices like the Gavamayana etc., preserves the system of ancient calendar in an ingenious manner.

Many grammarians and philologists have written on the linguistic phenomena of the Brs., noting the peculiarities of the syntax. Some observations on the linguistics of the Brs. have been recorded in Book IV but greater stress has been laid on the observations of the Brs. on speech, language, the relation between mind and speech, varieties of speech, articulate and inarticulate speech etc. The different types of literature referred to in the Brs. bespeak richness and variety, and mark the beginnings of many literary forms. The Brs. mention the three Vedas (Trayī Vidyā), Gāthā, Anuśasana. Vidyā, Vākovākyam, Itihāsa-pūrana, Anvākhyaṇa and accessories to the Vedic study as different forms of literature. Debating bouts are a common feature of the later vedic age. Debating has grown into a regular art. The Vākovākyam is the precursor of Indian logic. Many maxims lie scattered like gems in the Br. texts and the beautiful allegorical anecdotes mark the beginnings of Morality Plays and allegorical drama. Many legends and myths of the Puranas and tradition trace their origin in those of the Brs. Fables and didactic stories are also found.

Varieties of crimes and ordeals we come across in the Brs. have been enumerated under 'Crimes and Ordeals'.

The succinct gist of each book given above is virtually a synopsis of the analytical summary of each aspect appended at the end of each book. Hence some repetitions are unavoidable. The summary contains the detailed and critical analysis of the main tendencies, and characteristics of each book along with the conclusions arrived at whereas the gist embodied in the introduction presents a bare outline of the main features of each book. Hence for proper evaluation of each book the summary given towards the close of each book is all important.
The summaries of the books concerned are to be found in the pages mentioned against each book:

The summary of Book I,—vide pages 79 to 83

" " " Book II,—vide pages 131 to 136

" " " Book III,—vide pages 245 to 251

" " " Book IV,—vide pages 286 to 287

Originality Claimed:

The complete or over-all picture of the whole work is given in a nutshell in the following lines. The work attempts to evaluate the civilisation of Brahmanic era from all aspects,—social, economic, political, religious, philosophical, linguistic, literary etc. The treatment is comprehensive and both analytic and synthetic in character. In the discussion and critical evaluation of each aspect the points of similarity and departure of the Brāhmaṇic era with reference to the early Vedic era on the one hand and the Upaniṣadic era on the other have been enumerated. Comprehensive treatment and Critical Evaluation. From the social aspect it was a transition from the clan-life to class-life, from simple social structure to complicated structure, from agriculture and basic cottage industry to multifarious occupations and industries mentioned under ‘Occupations and Industries’ in Book I. The clan-life developed into family life which, in its turn, culminated in the class-life or caste system. It was a march from unsettled life to settled life. The emergence of new castes, mixed castes and the impact of non-

The Over-all Picture. Politically this era was a march from clan-chieftancy to monarchy, from simple kingship to grades of monarchy, from the floating tribal states of the early Vedic age to established states with territorial basis. The Brāhmaṇas enjoyed a supreme position in the field of both politics and religion. They had a equal hold on the ruler and the ruled. Towards the last phase of the Brāhmaṇic age the priestly power
was fast declining in diplomatic as well as spiritual affairs. Sacrifice began to lose its importance and new popular religious cults such as the Viṣṇu cult, Rudra-Siva-cult etc., came into existence. Some non-Aryan practices and primitive religion were adopted and re-oriented by the Aryans. A cultural synthesis was in the making. The Brs. mark the beginnings of Bhakti-cult, popular religious cults and image-worship. In the Upaniṣadic age sacrifice was denounced and Kṣatriyas gained in importance in both political, spiritual and academic spheres. Thus the political and religious picture of the Brāhmaṇic age is much more developed and is a far cry from that of the early Vedic age. From the standpoint of philosophy this period is a transition from the personal gods to the Impersonal Absolute Godhead, from the attainment of heaven to the attainment of supreme Godhead, from the basic conception of the next-world to the transmigration of the soul and metempsychosis, from the path of action to the path of knowledge. These philosophical problems reached their culmination in the Upaniṣadic age. The Brs. mark the beginnings of several philosophical systems such as Vedānta, Sāṅkhya, Nyāya and Pūrva-mīmāṃsā. From the perspective of language and literature also, the Brs. represent the period of transition from the early Vedic literature to the Upanisadic literature. The observations of the Brs. on speech and the multifarious and varied literary forms recorded in the Brs. offer a rich field of research in linguistics and history of literary forms. Thus from all aspects and all angles of vision the civilisation revealed in the Brs. marks a period of transition from the early Vedic to the Upaniṣadic civilisation, and as such the Brahmanic age may be termed a halfway house between the Samhita period and the Upanisadic age. For an exhaustive treatment of this over-all picture vide the conclusion of the whole work entitled ‘Conclusion’ given at the end of the work (vide Pages 378 to 382).

Originality is claimed in the mode of treatment, the way of critical evaluation and presentation, embodied under ‘Conclusion’, the last topic of the thesis. Besides this original way in evaluation and presentation of each aspect and the work as a whole, originality may be claimed for the following topics
discussed in the Book, viz., the relation between the castes, women and marriage, Dress and Decorations, Individual topics claimed as original.

The relation between the Ruler and the Ruled, The Royal Family, various practices and conventions during warfare etc. In Book III the two important items of discussion entitled 'The Spirit underlying the form of Sacrifice' and 'Emergence of Popular Religious Cults' and the dialectic process involved in the evolution of Rudra-Siva-cult may be claimed as original. Similar claim may be made for the topics captioned 'Eschatology', 'The Theory of Sacrifice' and 'Theology' in Book III and The Flora and Fauna, Calendar, Observations of the Brs. on speech and Types of literature referred to in the Brs. in Book IV.

In passing it may be noted that as the V. S. is contemporaneous with the Brs. and as the discussion of certain topics remains incomplete without taking into account the V. S. we have referred to this Samhitā while dealing with the topics of 'Occupations and Industries' and 'Emergence of popular religious cults'.
Book I

THE
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC
ASPECT
BOOK I
CHAPTER I
THE SOCIAL & ECONOMIC ASPECT

GEOGRAPHICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The centre of gravity of Aryan Civilisation was shifting from the North-West to the eastern regions in the later Vedic age. In the Ṛgvedic age the cradle-land of Aryan civilisation was located in the land of the traditional Pañca-Janas in the Punjab and extended eastward to the region bordered by the rivers Sarasvatī and Drśadvatī, the home of Bharatas. In the Brāhmaṇical era the civilisation shifted from the Indus valley to the Gangetic plain; Aryan civilisation is a definite thing in the more eastern regions in that age with Kurukṣetra as its centre bounded on the north by Turghna, on the south by the Khāndava, and on the west by Pariṇāḥ. S.B. (1-6-3-11) refers to the eastern and western oceans. The Ḥimālaya and the Tṛṇakakud (three-peaked) mountain nestled amidst the Himalayan range are mentioned in the T.A. So far as the rivers are concerned the far-famed holy river Sarasvatī of the Ṛgvedic age which is invoked as the greatest among rivers (Naditame), the greatest among mothers (Ambitame) and the greatest of goddesses (Devitame) in the R.V. 1 faded into insignificance and lost her former glory in the Brahmaṇical era. In the tenth Maṇḍala of the R.V. the name of the Ganges is met with along with other rivers such as Yamunā, Sarasvatī, etc. 2

In the earlier Maṇḍalas the name of the Ganges is never heard; this fact proves that the river Sarasvatī gradually receded into the background and the rivers of the Gangetic plain came into prominence during the later vedic age. The rivers of the eastern

1. R.V. 2-41-16, 'Ambitame ṃaditame devitame Sarvasvatī',
2. 10-75-5,—Imaṣṭ me gange yamunē sarasvatī.......suoṁmaṁaṅ.
region became prominent in this period. The S.B. mentions the river Sadānirā as the boundary line between the Kosalas and Videhas.\textsuperscript{3} Weber and Eggeling identify this river with Gaṇḍak; Pargiter identifies it with Rāpti. The Vedic Index (II, pp. 422) lends support to the identification of Sadānirā with Gaṇḍak. The name Sadānirā is very significant; it seems this river never ran dry.

The Brāhmaṇas mention various new places and tribes. Paricakra mentioned in S.B. 13-5-4-7 has been identified with the later Ekacakra which was near Kāmpila. Åsandivat is mentioned as the capital of king Janamejaya, son of Parikṣit, located in Kurukṣetra. Some indologists identify it with Hastināpur. The town of Kāmpila met with in the S.B. has been identified with modern Kampil on the old Ganges between Badaun and Farrukhavād.

The country was divided into three\textsuperscript{4} broad regions,—Brāhmāvarta or Āryāvarta, Madhyadesa and Dakṣināpatha. The A.B. (8-38-3) mentions five divisions or regions of the country according to four directions and the central region viz., the eastern region, southern region, western, northern and central part called Prācyā, Dakṣiṇa, Pratīcyā, Udicya and Madhyadesa respectively. Besides these five the upper direction or Urḍhā dik has been mentioned as the abode of gods. This passage of the A.B. also mentions the different tribes residing in those five regions and the particular type of sovereignty obtaining in each region. The Kings of the eastern region were called Samrāt and the type of sovereignty obtaining in that part was called Sāmrājya. The Satvat people resided in the southern direction and their king was termed ‘Bhoja’; thus suzerainty over the southern region came to be known as Bhaujya. Outcasts and castes of the lower order used to reside in the western region and their rulers were called ‘Svarāt’ as the type

---

3. 1-4-1-17, ‘Sāla (Sadānirā) apyetahi kosala-videhānam maryāda.’
4. 8-38-3,—‘Athisnām prācyān dikī śā paraṁēṣṭhī-prajāpatyō bhavat’.
of kingship prevailing there was termed Svārājya. To the north beyond the Himalayan belt lay the states of Uttara-Kuru and Uttara-Madra; the king of those states was designated Virāj as the type of monarchy obtaining in that region was called Vairājya. In the central part or Madhyadeśa which was firmly established (Dhruvapratiṣṭhita) resided the Vaśas, Uśīnaras and Kuru-paṇcālas whose kings were designated Rājā as the system of monarchy obtaining in those regions was called Rājya. These different types of monarchy and their import will be discussed in Book II. Thus this striking passage of the A.B. is all important as it gives us an inkling into the divisions of the country, names of different regions and tribes, and the types of monarchy prevailing in each region. From this account we can form an idea of the regions where Aryan civilisation infiltrated during the Brāhmaṇical age.

Various tribes mentioned in the Rāk-Saṃhitā underwent considerable changes in the Brāhmaṇical age. Some of the old tribes paled into insignificance, some disappeared wholly while new tribes emerged and came into prominence. The five principal tribes of the Saṃhitā period viz., the Anus, Druhyus, Purus, Turvasus, Yadus were no longer heard of. They receded into the background giving place to new formations and amalgamations of tribes of which the Kurus along with their allies the Paṇcālas stood out pre-eminently. The Bharatas of the early vedic age also lost their prominence but lived in their memorable deeds. The Br. texts recount the glorious deeds of such Bharata Kings as Bharata Dauḥ-śanti, Śatānīka Satrājita etc. The central region called Madhyadeśa was occupied by the Kurus and the Paṇcālas, Vaśas and Uśīnaras. The R.V. does not mention the Kurus as a tribe. Though the Kurus are not directly mentioned in the R.V., a king called ‘Kuru-śravaṇa’ ‘glory of the Kurus’ and a patron Kaurayāṇa are referred to in the hymns of the R.V. According to S.B. (13-5-4-7) the Paṇcālas were called ‘Krivi’ in the early Vedic age and a tribe of this name is referred.
to in the R.V. (7-20-24) in connection with the rivers Sindhu and Asikni. 'The Kuru Kingdom', in the words of Dr. A. D. Pusalkar, 'roughly corresponded to the modern Thaneswar, Delhi and the Upper Gangetic Doab'. The two tribes Kurus and Pañcālas were close allies and the name of the Pañcāla never occurs alone minus the Kurus. The names of the two States always recur jointly as if the two formed a united nation, a composite state. The A.V. states that the Kuru Kingdom flourished during the reign of king Parikṣit. The Pañcāla Kings Kraivya and Śoṇa Sātrāsāha are spoken of as having performed the Āśvamedha and king Durmukha is eulogised as the conqueror of the whole earth. The Br. texts sing the glory of these two states Kuru-Pañcālas and their residents. The two states are spoken of as model states and the peoples as ideal citizens. They were the best representatives of Vedic culture, example of ideal conduct and polished manners, speakers of flawless Sanskrit; their mode of sacrifice was perfect and their Kings were ideal rulers. They had the best scholars, teachers and debators, best academician, and the Brahmins of those states were looked upon as the very model to which others should approximate. The purity and perfection of speech of the Kuru-Pañcālas has been praised in many of the Brs. Observes the S.B.—'Pure speech (Pathyā Svasti) discerned the northern direction; hence the peoples of Kuru-Pañcālas speak the pure language'. 'Pure speech discerned the northern direction', says the K.B. The Kuru-Pañcāla Brahmins acquired fame and celebrity and their way of life was commended. The verse of A.V. quoted above is corroborated by S.B. 13-5-4-2 which states that these two allied states reached

7. 20-127-7, 8, 9,—'Rajña viśva-januṃsaya…….. Janaḥ Sā bhadrāmedhate raṣṭre rajyaḥ Parikṣitaḥ'.
8. A.B. 8-39-9,—'Durmukhaḥ Pañcaślo rājasan vidyayā samantaṃ sarvataḥ prthivīṃ jayan parītyaya'.
9. 3-2-3-15, 'Uḍīcīmeva diśam. Pathyayā Svastyā prājānaṃ stas-madatattaraḥ hi vāg vadați Kurupañcaśalatra'.
10. 7-6,—'Sa (Pathyā Svasti) Uḍīcīm dīaṃ prājānait'. Pathyā svasti means Vāk or speech. Vide S.B. 3-2-3-8; 4-5-1-4 and K.B. 7-6,—'Vāg vā Pathyā Svastiḥ'.
their height of glory under Parīkṣit and Janamejaya, whose capital was Āsandivant with two other towns, Maṣṇāra and Kāroti. Maṣṇāra is mentioned in A.B. 8-5-4 and Kāroti in S.B. 9-5-2-15.

Just as the Kurus were close allies of the Paṇcālas, the Śrījayas were also close allies of the Trūtus and they are described as such in the Ṛk Samhitā. The S.B. bears testimony to the fact that these two states were ruled over by one ruler and one Purohita or Chief Minister—called Devabhāga Śrautarṣa.11

The people called Matsyas appear jointly with the Vaśas. S.B. (13-5-4-9) records the performance of the horse-sacrifice by their King Dhvasan Dvaitavaṇa at the lake Dvaitavaṇa. The A.B. locates the Vaśas in the Madridsēva along with the Kurus, the Paṇcālas and the Uśinaras. The G.B. speaks of the Vaśas and the Uśinaras as united peoples. The K.U. tags the name of Matsyas to the Vaśas and Uśinaras.

From the A.B. (8-39-9) we know of the tribe called Śibis and their King Śaibya Śuṣmiṇa who defeated and killed King Atyarāṭi Jānantapi.12 The Śibis had as their ally the Uśinaras; they inhabited the Shorkot region in Jhang in the Punjab lying between the rivers Irāvatī and Candrabhāgā.

Another tribe of people called Śalvas are met with in the S.B. (10-4-1-10) and according to Dr. Pusalkar 'they occupied probably what is now the modern Alwār State.'13

The Samhitā literature does not mention the Kosala and Videha. We come across the names of these two states in the S.B. (1-4-1-10) which states in clear and unambiguous terms the shifting of the centre of gravity of the Aryan civilisation from the west to the east. The Aryan civilisation so long

11. 2-4-4-5, 'Devabhāgaḥ Śrautarṣaḥ sa ubhayeṣām kurūṇam ca Śrījayaṁca purohita iva.

12. 'Atyarāṭa Jānantapīṁmattāvīrvaṁ niḥṣukram anmitraṭpanaḥ Śuṣmiṇaḥ Śaibya roṣa jaghāna'. The term 'Śaibya' has been explained by Sayaṇa as Šibiputra, 'son of Šibi', whereas some scholars explain it as belonging to the Šibi tribe.

nested and nurtured in the Indus valley or the Suvāṣṭu region sanctified by the waters of the holy Sarasvati shifted towards the Gangetic plain, crossed the river Sadānirā, the eastern boundary of Gaṇḍak and reached the land of Videha. Videgha Māṭhava the King of the Videha along with his priest Gotama Rāhūgaṇa is described as carrying the sacred sacrificial fire eastward from the banks of the Sarasvati over Kosala (Oudh) across the river Sadānirā and finally settling at Videha (Tirhut) after the tribal name of Māṭhava. This memorable passage of the S.B. proves categorically that the Videhas received their culture from the west, that Kosala was Aryanised before Videha and that the territory bordered by the river Sadānirā was conquered by the Vedic Aryans, that Aryan settlement was an established fact in that region.

Besides the Kuru-Paṅcāla three other states gained celebrity and became seats of Aryan culture during this period, viz.,—Kosala, Videha and Kāśi, which sometimes formed a confedercy. S.S.S. (16-9-11) mentions King Para, son of Āṭṇāra as a ruler of both Kosala and Videha; the same text (16-29-5) also testifies to the fact that the three states Kāśi, Kosala and Videha sometimes had the same royal chaplain or priest Jāla Jāṭu-Karnya as their administrator. This observation of the S.S.S. at once proves the close alliance among the three states and the exceptional administrative ability of the priest concerned. The S.B. speaks of the Kosala King Para-Āṭṇāra Hairaṇyanābha to have performed the horse sacrifice. In the Upanisadic era we find two renowned kings of immortal name reigning in two of these states viz.—King Ajātaśatru in Kāśi and the Saint King Janaka of hallowed memory in Videha who were the leaders of Aryan thought and culture and great patrons of learning. In the age of the

14. S.B. 1-4-1-10,—'Videgho ha Māṭhavo' guṇam vaiśvānaram mukhe babhāra. Tasya Gotamo Rāhūgaṇa rāṇaḥ Purohitaa āsa.'
15. S.B. 1-4-1-14,—'Videgho Māṭhava āsa. Sarasvatyāṁ sa...... Sadānirētṛyuttarād gireṃnīrdhavatī tapa haiva mātidadhā.'
16. S.S.S. 16-29-5,—'Jālo Jāṭu-Karnyaḥ...... trāyāṇāḥ rājyaḥ...... pṛāpa.kāśya-vaidhehayoh purohito babhāvav, Kausalyasya ca rājaḥ.'
Brs. there existed a spirit of rivalry between the Kosala-Videhas and Kuru-Pañcālas. Kosala lay to the north-west of the Ganges and corresponded to the modern Oudh. Videha may roughly be identified with modern Tirhut, and Kāśi with Banaras.

S.B. (13-5-4-22) records the defeat of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, King of Kāśi at the hands of the Bharata King Śatānīka Satrājita. The latter seized the white sacrificial horse of the former.

Magadhas are also heard of for the first time in the later Vedic literature but they could not attain celebrity like the Kuru-Pañcālas or Kosala-Videhas. The Magadha country is identified with the Southern part of Bihar.

The territory of Vidarbha is mentioned in A.B. (7-34); one of the Kings of Vidarbha was Bhima who met the sages Parvata and Nārada to enlighten himself regarding the substitute of the creeper Soma.

The name of Vanga is not met with in the Brs. It occurs for the first time in the A.A. 2-1-1.

The people called Satvants inhabited a territory located in the Southern part of India and were the subjects of Bhoja King. The territory of the Bharatas was contiguous to the state of Satvants and the former used to make sudden forays on the latter. S.B. (13-5-4-21) narrates the defeat of the Satvants at the hands of king Bharata who seized their sacrificial horse.

According to the testimony of the A.B. such tribes as Nīcyas and Aparaśyas were termed Pratīcyas or westerners as they belonged to western India.

Another tribe called Ambaśṭhas mentioned in A.B. (8-21) belonged to Punjab.

The Udicyas or northerners comprised the Uttarakūras, Uttaramadras, Mūjavants, Bāhlikas, Keśins, Kekayas and Kambojas. The north as already stated above was celebrated for scholarship, proficiency in debates and chaste speech. The twice-born people in general and the Brāhmaṇas in particular went to the north for study. The Uttaramadra was located beyond the Himālayas to the north. The epithet Uttara or northern is attached to it to distinguish it from the Southern Madra territory or Madras proper.
The Southern Madra or Madras does not appear in the Vedic literature. Some scholars like Prof. Zimmer etc., have identified the Uttarakuru, Uttaramadra territory with Kashmir.

'It is reasonable to accept Zimmer's view that the northern Kurus were settled in Kashmir, especially as Kurukṣetra is the region where tribes advancing from Kashmir might naturally be found. Uttaramadra is the name of a tribe mentioned with the Uttarakurus in the A.B. as living beyond the Himālayas. Zimmer points out that in the Vāṃśa Br. Kamboja Aupamanyava is a pupil of Madragāra,' and thence infers that Kambojas and Madras were not far distant in space. This conclusion is perfectly reasonable in view of the probable position of the Kambojas' (Vedic Index, Vol. I, page 84). The S.B. (10-6-1-2) mentions Aśvapati, a king of the Kekayas, an erudite scholar who offered instruction to a number of Brāhmaṇas. The Kekayas settled down in the tract of land bordered by the rivers Sindhu and Vitastā in north-western India.

The territory of Gāndhāra was included within the region of the Aryans in the Vedic age which was an important centre of learning. As recorded in the A.B. (7-34) Nagnajit, a reputed teacher of the later Vedic period who preached the Soma-cult was one of the kings of Gāndhāra.

From the above discussion it is clear that the state in the later Vedic age was different from that of the early Vedic age. In the early Vedic age, in the era of the ṚK Saṃhitā the state was still tribal. The Bharatas, the Yadus, Anus, Druhyus, Turvasus etc., mentioned in the Saṃhitā had no fixed geographical boundary or territorial basis for their states. Those states may be termed floating states having no fixed basis. The Chiefs moved about with the peoples of their tribes and had thus only a tribal basis without fixed topography. But in the later Vedic age the states became territorial with their geographical boundary clearly defined. In the Br. texts we find different tribes settling down in the different parts of the country. The scanty evidence met with in the Brs. does not throw any light on the successive stages through which the floating states assumed the territorial shape.
CHAPTER II

THE CASTE-SYSTEM AND THE RELATION BETWEEN
THE FOUR CASTES

In the Rg-Veda four castes are mentioned in the Puruṣa-sūkta or the Hymn of creation; there it is said that the Brāhmaṇa sprang from the mouth, the Kṣatriya from the arms, Vaiśya from the thighs and Śūdra from the feet of the Creator. Apart from this hymn, no clear indication of the evolution of caste is found in the Śaṁhitās of the Veda. In the fourth maṇḍala of the R.V. two castes, viz., the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya are mentioned in the Brhaspati hymn (4-50-8).

The Brāhmaṇas mention four castes. S.B. 5-5-4-9 clearly states,—"There are four castes Brāhmaṇa, Rājanya, Vaiśya and Śūdra." The caste-system in the Brāhmanical age was a transition between the laxity of the Śaṁhitā period and the rigidity of the post-Vedic age.

We hear of four castes not only among human beings but also among gods. Commenting on A.B. 1-2-3, Śaṅkara observes—"There are four castes among gods as well. Among them Agni and Brhaspati are Brāhmaṇas. Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, etc., are Kṣatriyas. Vasus, Ādi-tyas, Viśve-devāḥ, Maruts etc., are Vaiśyas among the gods. Puṣaṇa is Śūdra." S.B. 14-4-2-23, 24, 25, also state in unmistakable terms this distinction of castes among the gods. The gods that figure in groups, such as Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, Viśve-devāḥ, are all Vaiśyas. Time and again the Brāhmaṇas mention Indra as Kṣatriya and Brhaspati as Brāhmaṇa.

Mention of four castes.

1. X. 90.
2. Catvāro vai varṇāḥ, brāhmaṇo rājanyo vaiśyaḥ śādraśca.
3. 'Sānti hi devaṣvapi jātiśeṣaḥ. Agnirbrhaspatīśca devaṣv brahmaṇau. kṣatraṇy yāni etāni devaṭkṣatraṇi. . . . . . . tameva Šaudraṇa varṇamāṣṭajata Puṣaṇaṃ.'
4. 'Yāni etāni devaṭkṣatraṇi. . . . . . . sa viśamāṣṭajata yāni etāni devaṭkṣatraṇi gaṇaśa śādyāyante vasavo Rudraś Ādityaś Viśvedevā Maruta-iti. . . . . . . Puṣaṇaṃ.'
Not only amongst gods and men but in the animal world and the vegetable kingdom as well this caste distinction is met with. Thus the goat is Brähmana, the horse is Kṣatriya, and the ass is both Vaiśya and Śūdra.  
Lions and tigers are called kings of beasts and the eagle is termed king of birds. In the vegetable kingdom Palāśa (Butea monosperma) is Brähmaṇa, and Dūrbā (sacrificial grass) is Kṣatriya. Among the vedic metres even we hear of caste-distinction; thus Gāyatri is Brähmaṇa whereas Triṣṭuv is Kṣatriya.

The duties of the four Varṇas have been recorded in the Brähmaṇa texts. A.B. 7-35-3 mentions ‘receipt of gifts, drinking of soma, moving at will, smartness and optional submission to the king as the marks of a Brähmaṇa. The Vaiśya has been described as one who pays tax to another (anyasya vālikṛt) is lived on by another (anyasyādyaḥ), and can be oppressed or enslaved at will (yathākāmanjeyah).’ The Śūdra is the servant of another (anyasya preṣyaḥ), to be evicted at will (kāmotthāpyah) and to be slain at will (yathākānavadhyah). that means, the śūdra has no right of property or security of life against the king or the nobility in general. He is to serve the three higher castes. This passage amply proves the helpless position of the Vaiśya community as well. The Vaiśya enjoyed the right to property or land on condition that he paid the taxes imposed by the ruling class in return of protection by the Kṣatriya. The nobles or Kṣatriyas were the owners of land and the Vaiśyas were the tenants. The position of a Vaiśya was much lower in the social scale than that of a Brähmaṇa or Kṣatriya.

The origin of the caste-system has not been discussed in the Brähmaṇas. The Puruṣa-Sūkta of Rg-Veda, already

---

5. A.B. 6-4-4-12 to 6-4-4-15,—Brahma vā ajah, kṣatrapaḥ vā aśvah, vaiśyaḥca mādraścānurasvah.

6. S.B. 1-1-1-4,—Brahma vai Palaśaḥ.


---

3. (Brāhmaṇaḥ) adīṣyātādyāvasyāḥ yathā-kāmaprayāpyah (valīyaḥ) anyasya vālikṛdanyasyādyo yathā-kāma-jeyah. (Śūdraḥ) anyasya preṣyaḥ kāmotthāpyo yathākānavadhyah.
referred to, contains the sole reference in the samhitās to caste. It seems that the four varṇas were four divisions of the people classified according to their callings or professions, and all the four classes taken together made up the organic whole of the social structure; every varṇa or class was important and indispensable for the functioning of the social body. Thus the Brāhmaṇas were the spiritual guides; the Kṣatriyas were the temporal rulers entrusted with administration and protection of the people; the Vaiṣyas looked after trade and agriculture; and the Śūdras served the upper three classes, attending to their comforts and well-being.

**Origin of the Śūdras:**

By the time the Brāhmaṇas were revealed the Vedic Aryans had moved towards the Gangetic plain from the Indus Valley. Aryan or Vedic civilisation was moving from the west to the east. Hence names of new Janapadas or cities not mentioned in the Samhitās are met with in the Brāhmaṇa texts such as Kuru-Paṇcāla, Kosala (Oudh), Videha (North Bihar), Magadha (South Bihar), Anga (East Bihar) etc. The Aryans were also extending towards the South and Vindhya territory which is unheard of in Mantra texts but is referred to in the Brāhmaṇas. While thus proceeding towards the east and the South the Aryans had frequent clashes and skirmishes with the aboriginal tribes who were children of the soil. These tribes were called Dasyu by the Aryans. A careful perusal of the Brāhmaṇas confirms the fact that the stiffest resistance came from the south; the people of the South wanted to protect their traditional culture against Aryan intrusion. Again and again we hear in the Brāhmaṇas that the Dasyus used to launch attacks and make sudden forays on the Aryans from the South. Those aboriginal inhabitants who surrendered to the victors became Dāsas or Śūdras; their social status was servitude. Those who did not bend their necks to the Aryan yoke and who offered sturdy resistance were designated Dasyus or robbers by the Vedic Aryans.

Now we shall examine the social status of the four castes.
THE STATUS OF THE ŚUDRA:—

Like the serfs in the feudal system, the Śūdra’s status was the lowest in the social hierarchy. He belonged to the lowest rung of the ladder. The hymn of creation (Puruṣa-Sūkta) of the RgVeda sanhitā states that the Śūdra class sprang from the feet of the Creator. Most of the Brāhmaṇa texts do not mention the Śūdra while narrating the legend of the origin of caste. The S.B. 2-1-4-12 mentions the creation of the three higher castes—Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya which is coeval with the creation of the Cosmos.¹⁰ The Śūdra is left out from this list. Again the T.B. 1-2-6-7 states in unambiguous terms that while the Brāhmaṇa sprang from the gods, the Śūdra sprang from the Asuras or demons.¹¹ The probable assumption stated above that the Śūdras came from the Dasyus or aboriginal tribes is borne out by this passage of the T.B. It is clear from the above discussion that a Śūdra served the other castes and that he could be evicted from the land, dispossessed of his belongings and might even be killed at the will of the master. The Br. texts leave no room for doubt about the degraded or low social status of the śūdra community. The Śūdras definitely belonged to the servile class. The following Br. texts amply testify to the deplorable condition of the śūdras. S.B. 13-6-2-10 identifies the Brāhmaṇa, the Rājanya and the Viś or Vaiśya with the Brahma, Kṣatra and Maruts respectively while the Śūdra is identified with toil.¹² T.B. 2-3-9 debars Śūdras from milking cows for sacrificial purposes. It enjoins, ‘A śūdra should not milk (the cow for sacrificial purposes).’ The śūdra sprang from non-existence. If the śūdra milks the cow, that milk is unfit to be offered in sacrifice.¹³

¹⁰ ‘Bhūriti Prajāpatiḥ Brahmā ajanayata, bhūva iti kṣatraṁ svaritī viśametśvad va ēdam sarvaṁ yāvat brahma kṣatraṁ vit sarveṣāṁviś-dhīyate’.
¹¹ ‘Dāivyo vai varṇo brāhmaṇaḥ. Asuryaḥ śūdraḥ’.
¹² ‘Tapo vai śūdraṁ’.
¹³ ‘Śūdro na duḥyaty, asato va eṣa sambhūto yacchūdraḥ. Aha-vireva tadityāhuryacchūdro dogdhīti’.
S.B. 1-7-1-10 enjoins in unmistakable terms that the milkman of the cow meant for sacrificial milk must be one of the upper three castes while T.B. 3-2-3-9 says that the milkman or the milkmaid must not belong to the Śūdra class. S.B. 3-1-1-10 goes farther and enjoins that the sacrificer (Yajamāna) who attains divine communion after Dikṣā, initiation or ordination for sacrifice, should not speak with all sorts of people. He may speak with a Brāhmaṇa, Rājanya or Vaiśya because these three castes are entitled to perform sacrifices; they are yajñīya.\textsuperscript{14}

S.B. 3-1-1-9, 10 clearly states that only the higher three castes, Brāhmaṇa, Rājanya and Vaiśya are eligible to perform sacrifices.\textsuperscript{15} The passage quoted above clearly enjoins the sacrificer not to speak with the Śūdra while engaged in performing a sacrifice and proves that śūdras were not eligible to perform sacrifices.

S.B. 3-1-1-9, 10 prohibits the śūdras’ entrance into the sacrificial ground or hall known as Prācinavāṁśa (eastern hall). In the Rājasūya sacrifice the king is sprinkled with holy water by all castes except the Śūdra community. The ways of the Śūdra are often termed non-Aryan. Thus in the A.B., in the famous ancedote of Śunaḥśepa, a Brāhmaṇa father selling his son as a sacrificial offering is stigmatised for his śūdra way or śūdra like behaviour (śaudra-nyāya).\textsuperscript{16}

S.B. 14-1-1-31 forbids the performer of Pravargya sacrifice to have contact with the śūdra.\textsuperscript{17} Śūdras were not allowed to sit in the line of Brāhmaṇas. Thus in A.B. 2-8-1 we find Brāhmaṇas objecting to a śūdra sitting in their midst.

Again, some Br. passages definitely prove that the śūdra had access to the sacrificial campus in general though his movements were restricted with regard to certain parts of the sacrificial ground.

\textsuperscript{14} 'Sa vai na sarveṣaiva sampvadet............brāhmaṇena vaiva, rājanyena va, vaiśyena va (sampvadet) ; te hi yajñīyaḥ'.

\textsuperscript{15} 'Brāhmaṇo va rājanyo va vaiśyo va te hi yajñīyaḥ'.

\textsuperscript{16} 'Adarṣustva śāsa-hastam nā yacchādṛṣṭeṇvalapata'.

\textsuperscript{17} 'Auṛṭam stri śūdraḥ śvā kṛṣṇah śakunistānī na prekṣeta'.

\textsuperscript{14} 'Sa vai na sarveṣaiva sampvadet............brāhmaṇena vaiva, rājanyena va, vaiśyena va (sampvadet) ; te hi yajñīyaḥ'.

\textsuperscript{15} 'Brāhmaṇo va rājanyo va vaiśyo va te hi yajñīyaḥ'.

\textsuperscript{16} 'Adarṣustva śāsa-hastam nā yacchādṛṣṭeṇvalapata'.

\textsuperscript{17} 'Auṛṭam stri śūdraḥ śvā kṛṣṇah śakunistānī na prekṣeta'.
In S.B. 1-1-4-12 we find that four different addresses have been prescribed for four different varṇas in calling the Haviṣkṛt in Soma-sacrifice; ‘Ehi’ in the case of a Brāhmaṇa, ‘Āgahi’ and ‘Ādrava’ in the case of a Vaiśya and Rājanya respectively; and ‘Ādhāva’ in case of a Śūdra. This passage goes to prove beyond doubt that the śūdra had access to the sacrificial campus.

On account of their dubious origin and their low social status, the śūdras are very often referred to as Anāryas or non-Aryans. The term ‘Ārya’ signified the three higher castes, Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya. Thus we find in the S.B. 13-2-9-8 the statement (śūrā yat Āryajārā) i.e., ‘a śūdra woman who is the concubine of some male belonging to Ārya class’ i.e., one of the three higher castes. This statement demarcates the śūdra from the Aryan. Thus the śūdra community comprises different clans of non-Aryan aboriginal people who submitted to the hegemony of the Aryans.

**The Status of the Vaiśya:**

In the hierarchy of castes Vaiśyas occupied the third rank; they are inferior to the Brāhmaṇa and Rājanya only. It is evident from the Br. texts that this community or class comprised the majority of the subjects, that is why the term Viṣāḥ meant both subjects and vaiśyas. Commenting on A.B. 1-2-3 Sāyaṇācāryya observes,—‘the word viṣā may mean subjects in general or the Vaiśya class in particular.’ The social status of the Vaiśyas was far more exalted and honourable than that of Śudras. They were entitled to Upanayana or investiture with the holy thread; hence the word ‘Dvija’ includes the three higher castes; Upanayana or investiture is regarded as their second or spiritual birth. They are called Yajñīya as they are eligible to perform sacrifices.

---

18. "Tāni ha vā etāni cātāri vāca, chīti brāhmaṇasya, āgahi śādraveti vaiśasya ca rājanyavandhoṣa, śādāveti śūdrasya".

19. "Viṣām ityāya śūdāh praśāṁstravācī vaiśāya-jati-viśeṣavācī vā".
The main calling of the Vaiśya class consisted of trade and agriculture and hence their importance could never be overestimated for the smooth running of the social machinery. A close perusal of the Brāhmaṇas throws ample light on the fact that, notwithstanding concessions and privileges granted to them, there was a constant attempt on the part of Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas to keep down the Vaiśyas so that the latter might not surpass the former two classes in the bid for social ascendency. The following Brāhmanical passages will bear this out.

The passage of the A.B. quoted above under the subheading ‘Duties of four castes’ states in clear terms that the Vaiśya had to pay taxes, was lived on or exploited by the two higher castes and could be conquered at will. It has also been shown that they were the tenants whereas the Kṣatriyas or nobles were the landlords.

A.B. 2-10-1 states that the Kṣatriya is subservient to the Brāhmaṇa and the Vaiśya is subservient to the Kṣatriya. By a particular rite in a sacrifice the priest ‘makes the Kṣatriya subserve Brāhmaṇa and the Vaiśya subserve Kṣatriya’. The political subjection of the Vaiśya to the ruling class or Kṣatriya is time and again mentioned in the Brāhmaṇas. A.B. 8-36-4 observes that the Vaiśya and Śūdra were made followers of or subservient to the Kṣatriya.

The superiority of the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya to Vaiśya and Śūdra has been proclaimed in innumerable passages. S.B. 6-4-4-13 states,—’The Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya never go behind the Vaiśya and Śūdra,...... he thus encloses those two castes (viz. Vaiśya and Śūdra) on both sides by the priesthood and the nobility, and make them submissive.’

Again, the two lower Vaiṣṇas, Vaiśya and Śūdra, are described as incomplete vāṇas whereas Brāhmaṇas and Rājanyas,
the higher two varṇas, are described as complete ones. S.B. 6-6-3-12 says, 'Incomplete is he who is not either a Kṣatriya, nor a Purohita.'

The fact that the Kṣatriya or ruling class found favour with the Brāhmaṇas and that the latter looked down upon the Vaiśyas is crystal clear from the Br. texts. The Brāhmaṇas could tolerate the temporal lordship of the Kṣatriyas and respect them accordingly but they never allowed the Vaiśyas to equal or tower above the Kṣatriyas. Both the priestly class and the ruling class desired that the Vaiśya community should be obedient and subservient to them. S.B. 5-1-5-28 is a passage in point. The chapter deals with the Rājasūya sacrifice. There is a particular function in that sacrifice called 'Madhu-graha' or 'Holding of the cup' ceremony. The particular Brāhmaṇa priest belonging to the Yajurveda order known as Adhvaryu presents a cup to a Kṣatriya and another to a Vaiśya, and in doing so 'the priest imbues the Kṣatriya with truth, prosperity and light, and smites the Vaiśya with untruth, misery and darkness.'

Vaiśyas are frequently enjoined to obey the Kṣatriyas unquestioningly because their trade and agriculture can only flourish if there is a mighty king to provide protection against enemies and marauders. S.B. 1-3-2-15 observes that a Vaiśya becomes possessed of cattle when he is under the rule of a Kṣatriya.

Without a king or protector his life and property are insecure.

THE STATUS OF THE KṢATRIYA:

From the foregoing discussion the Kṣatriya's supreme position as temporal ruler, protector and fighter is evident. The King was looked upon as the symbol of vigour, strength and state. The Kṣatriya was the owner of the land and the Brāhmaṇa, Vaiśya and śūdra were tenants. Land belonged to the state.

---

23. 'Asarvam vā tad yat akṣatriyo vā apurohito vā'.
24. 'Vaiśyasya vā rājanyasya vā pāṇḍava-dhahā śa aṃśa ta imaṃ niṣkriṇāṃśiti. Satyaṃ vai Śrīyotih somo'mṛtaṃ pāpma tamāḥ surś satyamevatāti śrīyam jyotil yajamāne dadhāti, anṛtena pāpmanā tamasā vaiśyasāṃ vidhyati'.
25. 'Kṣatriyasyaiva vaśe sati vaiśyam pāśava upatīṣṭhante'.
26. A.B. 8-37-3,—'Ojah kṣatram vīryam rājanyah'. 
For this reason, as stated in A.B. 7-20, the priestly class, the nobility and the Vaiśya had to beg land of the King for performing sacrifices whereas the king himself had to beg the same from the Sun-god who is the divine Kṣatra for the said purpose.27 People used to pay taxes to the king for the maintenance of the state. ‘These people, i.e., subjects pay taxes or tribute to the Kṣatriya.’28 We shall not enter into the discussion of the political status of the king in this chapter; that topic will be taken up in the next chapter dealing with the political aspects of the later Vedic civilization.

The Kṣatriya was entitled to perform sacrifices; like the Brāhmaṇa and the Vaiśya he also is a Yajña but he has no right to partake of the oblations of sacrifice. Brāhmaṇas alone had the exclusive privilege to partake of sacrificial oblations. Hence they are called ‘Hutāda’ whereas Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas are termed ‘Ahutāda.’ Śūdras are entitled neither to perform sacrifices nor to partake of the oblations thereof. A.B. 7-34-1 states,—‘Those subjects are Hutāda (part-taker of oblations) who are Brāhmaṇas; Rājanyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras are Ahutāda (non-part-taker of oblations).’29

The dress and conveyances of the Kṣatriya were gorgeous and majestic befitting his social status and noble profession. ‘Men of the military or ruling class’, observes the S.B., ‘are known by their chariot and missile.’30 A Kṣatriya should always be prepared to fight his enemies, punish miscreants and render help and succour to the needy and afflicted. On account of the frequent inroads of Dasyus and other tribal chiefs he had to engage in constant warfare and skirmishes. Hence it is said, ‘Fighting is Rājanya’s strength.’31 The Kṣatriya was the guardian of the law as well. His function was both executive and legislative.

27. ‘Daivaṁ Kṣatraṇya yacyet, Ādityadāhuḥ, Ādityo vai daiva-kṣatram’.
28. S.B. 1-3-2-15,—‘Imā viśāḥ kṣatriyāya valim haranti’.
29. ‘Eṣā vai prajā hutāda yad brāhmaṇā athais ahutāda yad rājanyo. Vaiśyaḥ Śūdra iti’.
30. S.B. 1-2-4-2,—‘Rathena ca sa ṛaṇa ca ṛaṇya-vandhayah’.
31. S.B. 13-1-5-6,—‘Yuddhaṁ vai ṛaṇayasya viṣyam’.

2
The high esteem which the Kṣatriyas enjoyed and the grand conception of Kingship are evident from many passages of the Brs. The king was regarded as the great protector of the people, the maintainer of law and order, the mainstay of four castes and the terror of the enemies. Observes the A.B.,—

"The Kṣatriya was born, *i.e.*, the overlord of all beings was born; the employer of the commoner was born; the slayer of the enemy was born; the protector of the Brahmans was born."\(^{33}\)

The social status of both the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas will stand out in bold relief if we discuss the relation that existed between the priestly class and the ruling class.

**Relation between the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya:**

The Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya were the two superior classes. The former comprised the priestly class while the latter the military or ruling class or the nobility. The former were spiritual guardians of the people whereas the latter were the temporal lords. The co-operation of the two was essential for the upkeep and smooth running of the social and political machinery. Amongst the gods in the heavenly kingdom Indra was Kṣatriya whereas Brhaspati was Brāhmaṇa.\(^{33}\) Brhaspati was both the spiritual guide (Purohita) and Prime Minister of Indra. Active co-operation between the two was indispensable for smooth administration. Likewise on earth the same example was emulated with profit and the same ideal relation was maintained between the earthly King and Brāhmaṇas.

In the bid for social ascendance we find that the Brāhmaṇas always endeavoured to maintain their superiority over the Kṣatriyas in particular and the other three castes in general. This assertion is amply borne out by the following Brāhmanical texts.

The Brāhmaṇa was produced from the mouth of the Supreme Lord or Creator. As the head is the best limb of the

---

32. 8-17,—"Kṣatriyo'jani, Viśvasya bhūtasyādhipatirajani, viśamat-
tājani, amitraśāṃ hantājani, brahmaṇānāṃ gopājani'.

33. S.B. 5-1-1-11,—"Brahma hi Brhaśpatir brahma hi brahmaṇaḥ
dvāraḥ kṣatraṃ rājanyaḥ'.
human organism, towering above other limbs, being the seat of intelligence, so the Brāhmaṇa was regarded as superior to all other castes. In the texts quoted below the term Brahma means Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatra means Kṣatriya or Rājanya. A.B. 8-1 and 8-4 repeat: 'Brahma is prior to Kṣatra.'  

The Superiority of the Brāhmaṇa.

'Brahma is yoked before the Kṣatra, for the Brahma comes before the Kṣatra', remarks P.B. 11-1-2. The Brāhmaṇa was not only superior to the Kṣatriya but, in fact, the Kṣatriya was subservient to the Brāhmaṇa just as the Vaiśya was subservient to the Kṣatriya. A.B. 2-10-1 is a passage in point which states 'thereby he makes the Kṣatriya subservient to the Brāhmaṇa and the Vaiśya subserve the Kṣatriya. 'He makes the Kṣatriya and Vaiśya subordinate to the Brāhmaṇa.' The reason as to why a Brāhmin should precede a Kṣatriya in all sacrificial rituals is stated in the same Br. 'If Brahma precedes Kṣatra the Kingdom of that Kṣatriya Yajamāna (sacrificer) will grow strong and ward off invaders.' A farther reference to the beneficial results of a Kṣatriya's obedience to a Brāhmaṇa occurs in A.B. 8-37-5, which runs as follows: —'That kingdom becomes prosperous and teems with heroes where the king is submissive to the Brāhmaṇa; such a king is blessed with valiant sons.'

A Kṣatriya was entitled to perform sacrifices, i.e., to say, he could be a Yajamāna. One desirous of performing any sacrifice had to perform the Dikṣāṇiya-śiṣṭi first. By this ceremony the sacrificer was initiated or ordained. It was believed that he was re-born; it was his spiritual birth which absolved him of past sins and limitations. It was said that after this initiation

34. 'Brahma vai kṣatrāṇī pūrvam'.
35. 'Brahma tat pūrvaṁ kṣatrāṇī yujyate, brahmahī pūrvaṁ kṣatrāṇī'.
36. 'Brahmaṇī eva tat kṣatramanu-nijunakti......kṣatre eva tad viśamamu-nijunakti'
37. P.B. 11-11-1,—'Brahmaṇe kṣatram ca viśam eṣuṇge karoti'.
38. A.B. 8-36-4,—'Brahma khalu vai kṣatrāṇī pūrvaṁ brahma-purastat ma ugram rāṣṭraṁ vyavayathyam'.
39. 'Tat yatra vai brāhmaṇāḥ kṣatram vaśametī tad rāṣṭram samūddhante tad viśavākṣa, asmin viro jāyate'.

A Kṣatriya was entitled to perform sacrifices, i.e., to say, he could be a Yajamāna. One desirous of performing any sacrifice had to perform the Dikṣāṇiya-śiṣṭi first. By this ceremony the sacrificer was initiated or ordained. It was believed that he was re-born; it was his spiritual birth which absolved him of past sins and limitations. It was said that after this initiation
ceremony a Kṣatriya became a Brāhmaṇa. It was only by relinquishing his own weapons and dress and by taking the garb of a Brāhmaṇa that a Rājanya had access to sacrifice. This fact also goes to prove the superiority of the Brāhmaṇas to the ruling class in the spiritual sphere. The superiority of the Brāhmaṇs to the Kṣatriyas has also been expressed through significant similes in the Brs. The K.B. compares the Brāhmaṇa with the full-moon and the Kṣatriya with the dark moon. The T.B. speaks of the former in terms of daylight and of the latter in terms of night.

The Brāhmaṇas carefully guarded the sacred lore and did not allow the Kṣatriyas to be masters of spiritual and ritualistic knowledge in the Brāhmaṇical or later Vedic age. This tendency of the Brāhmaṇas finds expression in certain passages. In S.B. 11-8-4-5 we are told that the counsellors of the Brāhmin Khaṇḍika Audbhāri forbade him to enlighten the King of the Kesin about a certain rite of atonement; because if he was enlightened the king would be a gainer whereas the Brāhmaṇa would gain nothing. Thus the Brāhmin mused,—‘If I tell him, his race, not mine will prevail here, but I shall gain the (other) world; and if I do not tell him, my own race, not his, will prevail here, but he will gain the (other) world.

S.B. 4-1-4-6 makes the striking observation that the Brāhmaṇa should be without a king whereas a king should never be without a Brāhmaṇa. ‘It is quite proper that a Brāhmaṇa should be without a king, but were he to have a King it will be conducive to the success of both. It is, however quite improper that a king should be without a Brāhmaṇa…….A Kṣatriya intending to do a deed ought by all means to

---

40. A.B. 7-34-5,—‘Sa (Kṣatriyah) dīkṣamāṇa eva brahmaṇatama-
bhyupaiti’.
41. 4-8, ‘Brahma vai paurnāmāsī kṣatramamāśvasya.
42. 3-9-14-3,—‘Brahmaṇo vai rūpamahā kṣatrasya rātriḥ’.
43. ‘Yadi asmāi vakṣyāmi amuṣyaśvalvedaṁ praśa bhaviṣyati na mama……
yadi u va asmāi na vakṣyāmi mamaśvalvedaṁ praśa bhaviṣyati nāmu-
ya…………………bhaviṣyaśatīti’.
resort to a Brāhmaṇa for he verily succeeds in the deed when sped by the Brāhmaṇa. 44 ‘The Kṣatriya should approach the Brāhmaṇa for guidance when he is out to undertake any enterprise.’

Apart from this competition or struggle for ascendency in the social scale, as a rule, there was perfect co-operation, mutual goodwill and understanding between the Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas. The real strength and progress of the Society lay in the concerted functioning of these two important classes: The two together maintained the balance of power in the socio-political sphere. He who was either a priest (Brāhmaṇa) or a noble (Kṣatriya) was regarded as a complete whole; Vaiśyas and Śūdras were regarded as incomplete. S.B. 6-6-3-12, already cited above, says,—‘Incomplete is he who is not either a noble or a priest.’ The same Br. thus proclaims the importance of the said two classes,—‘Brahma and Kṣatra are the two vital forces’ (of the Society). 45 The reciprocity and inter-dependence of these two castes, is clearly set forth in A.B. 8-36-2, which observes : ‘Kṣatra is founded on Brāhmaṇa and Brāhmaṇa is founded on Kṣatra.’ 46 Spiritual and sacerdotal powers were vested in the Brāhmaṇa whereas the discharge of civic duties and the smooth running of the administration devolved on the Kṣatriya. ‘Just as heaven and earth work in concert for the smooth working of the cosmic process, just as the ṚK hymns and Sāma chants join hands for the completion of the sacrifice, so we the Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas work in unison for the smooth functioning of the civic machinery,’ remarks A.B. 8-40-4. The literal translation of this passage reads as follows :—‘I am the firmament, thou art the earth, I am sāman, thou art ṚK ; we together discharge the duties relating to the body politic.’ 47

---

44. Yad brahmaṇo’rājanyāḥ syād yadyu rājanaṁ labhate samrddhaṁ tadetad ha..................................................kṣatriyena karma karīṣyamānemopasartavya eva brāhmaṇaḥ..................................ṛdhyaṭe’.

45. ‘Brahma ca kṣatraṁ ca sāṃsāra ubhe vírye’.

46. ‘Brahmaṇi khalu vai kṣatraṁ pratīṣṭhitam, kṣatre brahma’.

47. ‘Dyournahaṁ pūthivī tvaaḥ sāmśaḥ ṛk tvaaṁ tāveha saṃvahā-vahai’. Śṣyaṇa interprets,—‘Tāu udbhau śrīmiha rāṣtra a samantāt puruṣāḥ tadupalakṣita-grāmāśāca saṃvahā-vahai samyag vaḥanaṁ puruṣ-dinirvāham karavāvahai’.
Every king had a Purohita who was naturally a Brāhmaṇ. The position of the Purohita was that of a Chief Minister who gave counsel in matters both spiritual and temporal. Bṛhaspati was the priest and chief minister of King Indra. Bṛhaspati is a Brāhmaṇa. The King and his Brāhmaṇa priest together make up the administrative machinery. Hence a Brāhmaṇ or Purohita is regarded as the half of a Kṣatriya. A.B. 7-34-8 puts it thus,—'The Purohita is one-half of the Kṣatriya’s soul.'

This co-operation between the priestly class and the ruling class is finely stated in T.S. 5-1-10-3. The difference between a Brāhmaṇ attended with a Rājanya and one without a Rājanya or Kṣatriya, and the difference between a Kṣatriya plus a Brāhmaṇa and a Kṣatriya minus a Brāhmaṇa is stated in unambiguous language in the text in question:—'He quickens the Kṣatra by the Brāhmaṇa and the Brāhmaṇa by the Kṣatra; hence a Brāhmaṇ who has a Kṣatriya is superior to another Brāhmaṇ; likewise a Rājanya who has a Brāhmaṇa is superior to another Kṣatriya.'

As a rule the Brāhmaṇa was superior to the Kṣatriya but on certain occasions, e.g., in the Rājasūya sacrifice the Kṣatriya’s superiority was acknowledged by the Brāhmaṇa. ‘There is nothing superior to the Kṣatriya. Hence the Brāhmaṇa worships Kṣatriya from a lower position in the Rājasūya.’ ‘The three other castes (including the Brāhmins) follow the Kṣatriya who goes first.’ Whenever he wanted to subjugate or conquer a Brāhmaṇ the King may do so.

---

48. 'Arāhītam ha va eṣa kṣatriyasya yat Purohitāḥ'.
49. 'Brahmaṇaṁ kṣatrasya saṁśayati kṣatraṇa Brahma tasmād brahmaṇo rājanyevāṁ atyanyam brahmaṇaṁ tasmād rājanyo brahmaṇavāṁ atyanyam rājanyam'.
50. S.B. 14-4-2-23.—'Kṣatrāṁ paraṁ nāsti tasmād brahmaṇaṁ kṣatriyamadhasṭādupeṣte rājasūye'.
51. S.B. 6-4-4-13.—'Kṣatriyasya prathamaṁ yantamitare trayo varṇaḥ paścādānuyanti'.
52. T.B. 3-9-14.—'Yadā vai rāja kāmayaṁ atha brahmaṇaṁ jināti'.

THE STATUS OF THE BRĀHMAṆA :

The foregoing discussion concerning the relationship between the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya throws ample light on the status of the Brāhmaṇa in the later Vedic society. A few observations may be made under the present head of discussion. The supreme position of the Brāhmaṇa as the spiritual guide and as the Prime Minister of the King in temporal or socio-political matters has already been reviewed.

All the three castes, Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya, were eligible to performance of sacrifice, i.e., to say, they were yajñīya, but the Brāhmaṇa alone had the exclusive privilege to partake of the holy leavings or sacred oblations of the sacrifice. He alone was ‘Hutāda’ whereas the others were Ahutāda.

Though there was reciprocity and division of duty between the Kṣatriya and the Brāhmaṇa, the latter was superior to the former in the social status. The earthly king is the ruler of all three castes but he is not the king of the Brāhmaṇas. While consecrating the king during the coronation ceremony the Brāhmaṇas announce to the people,—‘God Soma is the King of us i.e., Brāhmaṇas: he thereby excludes the Brāhmaṇas from the power of the King and makes them such as are not to be fed upon or exploited by the King.’ This text of the S.B. testifies to the unique prerogative and prestige of the Brāhmaṇas. ‘Soma is the King of the Brāhmaṇas’, observes the T.B.

The killing of a Brāhmaṇa was regarded as one of the vilest of crimes. The law strictly prohibited murder or manhandling of Brāhmaṇas. S.B. 3-9-4-17 makes this categorical statement: ‘Whosoever kills a human Brāhmaṇa is deemed guilty.’

---

53. ‘Soma smākaṁ brāhmaṇāṇāṃ rājeti brāhmaṇaṁ eva pūddharati anādyān karoti’.

54. 1-7-4-2, 1-7-6-7,—‘Soma-rājaṁo brāhmaṇāḥ’.

55. ‘Yo na evemāṁ māṁsaṁ brāhmaṇāṁ hanti tāṁ nveva paricaksate, atha ya etāṁ devo hi somo ghanti va enam’.
The King also could not oppress the Brāhmaṇaṣ at his sweet will as he was afraid of moral retribution or divine wrath. S.B. 13-1-5-4 states, 'When the King chooses he may oppress the Brāhmaṇaṣ, but he will fare the worse or become the poorer for doing so.'

The gods such as Agni, Sūrya, Mitra, Varuṇa, Indra, Marut, Rudra, etc., who are invoked in sacrifices, are known as heavenly gods or divine deities. Likewise a Brāhmaṇa was regarded as a human deity or god on earth. S.B. 4-3-4-4 states this in the following terms,—'There are two kinds of gods. One kind comprises the celestial or divine deities whereas the learned Brahmins versed in the sacred lore are human gods or gods amongst men. Hence sacrifice is divided into two parts (in relation to divine deities and human gods). Oblations (offered in sacrifice) are homage or gift offered to divine deities whereas human gods or Brāhmaṇaṣ are propitiated with Dakṣiṇā or sacrificial fee.

Because of their exalted position in the social hierarchy the Brāhmaṇaṣ enjoyed four exclusive privileges as mentioned in S.B. 11-5-7-1; 'People should protect the Brāhmaṇaṣ by performing four duties,—by (showing him) respect and liberality, acknowledging his invincibility and by granting him security against capital punishment.'

The Śaḍ. Br. calls the Brahmins gods amongst men. 'Those who are Brahmins are veritable gods among human beings.'

The T.B. also lends support to this belief. 'The Brāhmaṇa is a divine caste.' The mouth of a Brāhmaṇa was regarded as

---

56. 'Yadhā vai rājas kāmayate brāhmaṇaṁ jināti papiyāṁstu bhavati'.
57. 'Dvayaḥ vai devaḥ. Atha deva atha ye brāhmaṇaḥ suśravamsa'-nucānaste manusya-devastāteṣu dvedha vibhakta eva yajñaḥ. Āhutaya eva devaṁ daksīṇa, manusya-devanam Brāhmaṇaṇam...........dakṣiṇābhīrmanuṣya-devaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ'.
58. 'Catubhārdharmaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ bhunakti arcaṁ ca dānena ca jañayataṁ cāvadhyatayā'.
59. 'Atha hai te manusya-devaṁ ye brāhmaṇaṁ'.
60. 1-2-6-7,—'Dalvya vai varṇo brāhmaṇaṁ'.

---
holy as the sacred sacrificial fire where oblations were offered to
gods.  

**THE STATUS OF THE PUROHITA:**

The discussion of the status of Brāhmaṇa will remain
incomplete without taking into consideration the status of
the Purohita who was inevitably a Brāhmaṇa.

To-day the term Purohita means an ordinary
priest but it had a wider denotation and deeper
significance in the Vedic age. The office of a
Purohita was an important office held by the Brāhmins in
ancient India. Every king or noble had his domestic priest
or chaplain who also functioned as the Chief
adviser or Prime Minister of the King in matters
both temporal and spiritual. He used to precede
the king both physically and metaphorically.

In the RgVeda Samhitā, 4-50-8, Bṛhaspati the priest and
guide of Indra is said to precede Indra: 'He goes before
the King' (yasmin brahmā rājani pūrvameti). 'The human
priest followed in the wake of Bṛhaspati,' says Aitareya
Brāhmaṇa 8-40-3. He used to advise the king on important
social, political and religious issues and show the way. In con-
sultation with him the monarch dictated the policy of the
govt. 'The priest surrounds and protects the king with his
powers just as the ocean girdles the earth.' (Purohitastabhīh-
rājanam parighya tiṣṭhati samudra eva bhūmim). 'The sub-
jects of that king live in perfect harmony, and are devoted
to him who is guided by a wise priest.' (A.B. 8-40-2).

The Kṣatriyas who were Kings and represented the nobi-
licity could not do without a Brāhmaṇa or priest. Their
spiritual guide was a priest in religious affairs; again, their chief
adviser or minister in temporal matters or socio-political
issues was the Priest or Purohita.

The Brāhmaṇa texts constantly stress the importance of
a Brahmin minister or Purohita for the purposes of admin-
istration; he was indispensable to the King and the King had to
seek his advice in all important matters relating to govt. in times

---

61. P.B. 16-8-14, 'Āhutir vā eṣa yad brāhmaṇasya mukham'.
of both peace and war. In the post-vedic age Cānakya or Kautilya, the Chief Minister of Emperor Candragupta Maurya, is a glowing instance of this system of govt. He was a brahmin and, in fact, he was the chief architect of the Maurya empire,—the main force, the motive power behind the administration of Candragupta.

A.B. 8-40-4 observes: ‘Other kings befriend that king and his enemy is vanquished who has for his minister a learned Purohita who is the protector of the state (Rāṣṭra-gopa).’ 62 A Purohita was regarded as one-half of the Kṣatriya i.e., the king’s soul. Bṛhaspati was the Purohita of the gods and the gods could conquer heaven only because they had Bṛhaspati as their supreme guide and adviser. 63

Castes other than the Brāhmaṇas must have priests. It was a convention that every Kṣatriya had his chaplain or family priest; he traced his descent (gotra) from a particular Rṣi or Priest and it was essential that during the coronation ceremony the name of the King-initiate or King-designate should be announced along with the name of his priest or Rṣi. This fact is stated in clear and unmistakable terms in A.B. 7-34-7. 64 The eighth book (Pāñcikā) of the A.B., Chapter XXI, XXII and XXIII in particular, give a long list of Kings who were initiated or consecrated after the manner of the great consecration ceremony (Mahā-abhiṣeka) of Indra by their respective Purohitas with the result that they were victorious everywhere and became paramount sovereigns. These chapters in question emphasise the supreme importance of Brāhmaṇa Purohitas in matters of administration and clearly state that the victory of the paramount sovereigns were mainly due to the guidance of Brāhmaṇa priests or ministers. One important point merits mention here. Any and every Brahmin was not fit or

62. ‘Tasya rāja mitraṁ bhavati dviṣantamapavādhatye yasyaivaṁ vidvān brahmaṇo rāṣṭragopaḥ purohitah’.

63. ‘Bṛhaspati-purohita vai deva ajanayan svargaṁ lokam hyasmin loke’ jayanta.

64. A.B. 7-34-7,—‘Niḥśaya vā eṣa svānyaśudhānī brahmaṇa evaṃ dhālāḥ brahmaṇo rupeṇa brahma bhūtvā yajamupavartata tasmād . . . . purohitasyāryeyena pravaraṁ pravṛttam.’
allowed to be a Purohita. The two epithets of Purohita in A.B. 8-40-4 already quoted above, viz., 'learned' (Vidvān) and 'protector of the state' (Rāṣṭragopa), single out the fit Purohitas from the common run of Brāhmaṇas.

In the Rg Vedic hymn concerning Bṛhaspati, cited above, it is said that 'the subjects bow down of their own accord before that King who is always preceded by the priest.' There is evidence in the Brāhmaṇas to show that some highly efficient Brāhmaṇas held the office of Purohita of two Kingdoms simultaneously. S.B. 2-4-4-5 is a passage in point. It states,—'Devabhāga Śrāutarṣa was the Purohita to both the Kūrus and the Śṛṇjayas. Now, a high position is held by him who is the Purohita of one Kingdom; how much higher, then, is the position of one who is Purohita of two kingdoms.'

A Purohita who could look after the administration of two states was regarded as highly efficient. Not to speak of two states we have evidence that even three states were controlled by one priest. Śāṅkhyaśyana Śrāuta sūtra (16-29-5) bears testimony to the fact that the three famous states of ancient India kāśi, kośala and Videha had one and the same priest.

This fact proves the close connection and alliance of these three states and the extra-ordinary administrative ability of the Brahmin Priest as well, Jāla Jātukarnya by name.

In the consecration ceremony, though the Kṣatriya, i.e., the King, is the Yajamāna (sacrificer), he had to relinquish the sacrificer's share to the Purohita. This is enjoined in the A.B.

Again, at the commencement of a sacrifice a Kṣatriya had to take a solemn vow not to injure or harm the priest throughout

---

65. 'Tasmāi viśāh svayamevānamente yasmin brahmaḥ rajani pūr-vameti'.
66. 'Devabhāga śrāutarṣaḥ sa ubhayesām kurūṇaṁ ca Śṛṇjayeśān ca purohita āsa. Paramāsī vai sa yo eva kasya rāṣṭrasya purohito'asti sa neva paramatā kimū yo dvayoḥ'.
67. 'Jālo Jātukarnyaḥ trayaṁ rajyaṁ pṛṣaḥ kaśya-vaiḍehaṁ purohito babhāva. Kauśalyasya ca rajyaḥ'.

They managed the administration of two, even three States.
his lifetime. The oath is thus recorded in the A.B. ‘From the night of my birth to that of my death, for the space between these two, my sacrifice and my gifts, my place, my good deeds, my life and my offspring mayest thou take, if I play thee false.’

How divine wrath visits a king who cheats or plays false with a Purohita is finely narrated in A.B. 7-23. The Kṣatriya King, Atyārāti Jānāntapi, had to pay dearly for cheating his Brahmin Purohita, Vaśiṣṭha Satyahavya.

CASTES OTHER THAN THE FOUR CASTES:—

Mention is made of lower castes who were termed Nicya and Apacya. The A.B. (8.38.3) observes that the Kings of such lower castes called the Nicyas and Apacyas residing in the western direction were consecrated for the Svārāyya type of kingship and not for other higher types. Sāyaṇa remarks commenting on the text in question that these castes rank very low in the hierarchy of castes and are inferior to others in their manners and ways of life.

Various outcasts and Dasyus are mentioned in the A.B. in connection with the anecdote of Viśvāmitra. The grandsons of Viśvāmitra though born of royal family went down to the lowest rung of the caste system. They disobeyed their father and sage Viśvāmitra being exceeding wroth cursed them thus,—‘Be thy children turned into the lowest of all castes.’ The A.B. records this fact thus,—‘Viśvāmitra cursed them saying,—‘Your children shall belong to the lowest of castes’ such as Andhras, Puṇḍras, Śabarās, Pulindas and Mātibas. Though born of Viśvāmitra’s royal family they turned out to be outcasts and chiefs of Dasyus.

68. 8-39-1.—‘Yāṁ ca rātrīmājāye’haṁ yāṁ ca pretāsmi tadubhaya- mantareṇa istāṇārtaṁ me lokaṁ sukṛtamāyāṁ prajāp vrājīṁ yadi te druhiyeṇāṁ’.
69. ‘Pratīcyāṁ dīśi ye ke ca nicyāṇāṁ rājano ye apacyāṇāṁ svārājyaiva te abhiśīcanti’.
70. ‘Nikārṣamavantīti nicyāṁ apakarṣamavantīti Apacyāṁ, jātyā nikārṣaṁ, vṛṣvahareṇaṇapakarṣaṁ.’
or non-Aryan marauders. They were thus outside the aryan fold. The Andhras originally lived in the tract bounded by the rivers Kṛṣṇā and Godāvari. The Telegu-speaking people of the Deccan represent the Andhras. The Mahābhārata locates the Puṇḍras in Bengal and Bihar. The exact location of the Śabaras is not known. There was close alliance of Andhras and Pulindas during Aśoka’s time. The territory of the Mūtibas has not yet been traced.

As a rule the lower castes, mixed castes and outcasts were looked down upon by the higher castes. We have discussed the relation that existed between the two higher castes and the Vaiśyas and Śūdras in the foregoing pages. Exception to this general practice is also met with. If a man of the lower caste or mixed caste happened to possess the wisdom of the Brāhmaṇas, if he was highly enlightened he was held in esteem by the priestly class even. The A.B., records the anecdote of Kavaṣa, son of Ilūsa. In the days of yore the sages attended a sessional sacrifice called Sattra performed on the bank of the river Sarasvati. Finding in their midst Kavaṣa, son of Ilūsa, who was a bastard born of a maid-servant, the sages thought ‘how could this bastard born of a maid-servant, a cheat who is not a brahmin be initiated into the sacrifice with us.’

Musing thus the sages expelled him from the sacrificial campus of the Somayāga and transported him to a land far away from the river Sarasvati where no water was available so that he might die of thirst. But Kavaṣa was granted the vision of the Vedic hymn called ‘Aponapriya Sūkta,’ and citing that hymn he gained the favour of the Water-god; the river Sarasvati began to flow on all four sides of him. Then the sages who had extermed him ruthlessly were sorry for their hasty act. They called him back and

71. 7-33-6,—‘Antān vaḥ prajā Bhaktīṣṭati ta etc Andhrāḥ Puṇḍrāḥ Śabarāḥ Pulindāḥ Mūtibā ityudanta, bahavo Vaiśvāmitrā Dasyūṁ nam bhūyīṣṭāḥ’.

72. 2-8-1,—‘Ṛṣayo vai sarasvatyāṁ satramāsata. Te Kavaṣamai-

Illustrations.

73. R.V. X-30.
accepted him as one of their colleagues. The K.B. also recounts the same story with slight variations. 'The sages said to him (Kavaṣa), 'You are a bastard born of a maid-servant; we shall not dine with you.' Kavaṣa became angry and propitiated goddess Sarasvatī with this hymn. Then the sages considered him as shorn of sin and made obeisance to him saying, 'O seer, we bow down to you; please do not bear any malice towards us; you are superior to us, as Sarasvatī follows after thee.' Thus they appeased his wrath.

These texts of the A.B. and the K.B. are of great importance as they categorically prove the fact that vedic hymns were seen by the sages of lower castes as well, and that the Brahmans representing the highest caste admitted the superiority of and paid regards to such enlightened souls though they belonged to low castes. Kavaṣa was addressed as a 'Ṛṣi,' 'seer' by the priests. Thus we find that learning or enlightenment could wipe out the barrier of caste and obtain recognition. We may cite the instance of Mahidāsa, the author of the A.B. as another illustration in point. A controversy rages round his name as to whether Mahidāsa was a Śūdra. His birth and the traditional story concerning his parentage has been stated in the introduction to this work. His mother's name was Itarā and his father had other sons by his other wives as well. The father lavished his affection on his other sons whereas Mahidāsa was shabbily treated. From this differential treatment of the father, from the name of the mother, and the Śūdra-like name of Mahidāsa having the word 'dāsa' suffixed, many scholars headed by the erudite vedic scholar of name and fame Satyavrata Sāmaśrami arrive at the conclusion that Mahidāsa's mother belonged to the Śūdra community. Observes Sāmaśrami: 'That he was born of a female slave (Dāsi) or maid-servant is an established fact; not to speak of the authorship of a Brāhmaṇa text.

74. 12-3.—'Madhyamāḥ sarasvatyāṁ sartramāsata: Taddhāpa kavaṣo tasya ha krodhaṁ vinīnyuḥ.'
even vision (authorship) of Vedic hymns (mantra) is ascribed to the son of a maid-servant (Dāśīputra). He cites the anecdote of Kavaṣa to bear out his contention that bastards born of female servants are credited with the authorship of not only a Br. but also mantra, i.e. Vedic hymn. S.B. 11-6-2-10 records that Brahmins declared sage Kṣatriya King Janaka to be a Brāhmaṇa on account of his spiritual attainment and knowledge, par excellence.

In this recognition of the enlightened persons belonging to lower castes one may trace the origin of the upgrading of the caste through knowledge and illumination met with in the upaniṣadic and post-vedic age. Caste or birth cannot stand a bar to a man’s spiritual amelioration or scholarly aspiration. The Dharmasūtras lend support to this view and attach greater importance to spiritual attainment than to heredity in express terms. Observes Āpastamba, “Through acts of piety the inferior castes attain to the status of their immediate higher castes; similarly, through vice or sinful acts higher castes are degraded to their next immediate lower castes.”

The distinction of Ārya and Anārya, Aryan and non-Aryan is not determined by birth but by merits. We have seen how grandsons of Viśvāmitra of royal descent became outcast tribes and gangsters on account of the non-Aryanlike conduct of their fathers. In this instance also heredity was overshadowed by conduct.

75. Aitareyālocanam, Page 14,—‘Sidhyātveya (Mahidāsasya) Dāśīputratvam………………mantradaṣṭvatvamapi jñāyate Dāśīputrasyāpi.’

76. Āpastamba-Dharma-sūtra, 2-5-10, 11,—‘Dharmacaryayaḥ jaghanyo varṇāḥ pārvavā pārvavā varṇamāpadyate jātiparīvṛttan. ’Adharmacaryayaḥ pārvav varṇo jaghanyo jaghanyo varṇamāpadyate jātiparīvṛttan’.

77. Manusāphitṣ, 10-65, ‘Śūdra brāhmaṇatāṃ meti brāhmaṇaśceti śūdratāṃ’.

78. Manusāphitṣ, 10-66,—‘Āryānāryo bhaved guṇaḥ.’
The Śatarudrīya hymn of the V.S. mentions nearly seventy varieties of profession. Every profession was meant for a particular caste in ancient India. We do not know whether this principle applies to this case; in that case it will have to be admitted that many castes emerged during the period of the V.S. as a result of mixture of castes of every description.

These professions have been enumerated in Book I under 'Occupations and Industries.' Besides these occupations and four castes, some outcasts and semi Aryan tribes are also mentioned in the V.S. in the same chapter, such as Niṣāda, Bainda (wild tribesman like Niṣāda), Kaivarta (fisherman), Mārgāra (son of a huntsman), Kirāta, Jambhaka (flesh-eating tribe), Paulkasa (son born of a Niṣāda father and a Kṣatriya mother), and Caṇḍāla.
BOOK I

CHAPTER III

WOMEN & MARRIAGE:

Marriage was looked upon as a sacrament and not a contract. Child marriage was not known in the Vedic or later Vedic age. It was almost compulsory for every man and woman to marry. Exceptions go to prove this general custom. A man was regarded incomplete without a wife. ‘Man regards him’, says A.B. 1-2-5, ‘as a complete whole when he secures a wife’

The S.B. goes further and declares, ‘wife is the one-half of the husband; hence one is not fully born but remains incomplete till he gets a wife. One gets everything and becomes a complete whole when he is blessed with a wife’. These passages at once prove the importance of marriage and woman in the social set-up. Moreover, one without a wife had no access to the performance of any sacrifice because every sacrifice had to be performed by the husband and wife, yajamana (sacrificer) and yajamana-patni (wife of the sacrificer) jointly. The very word Patni etymologically means ‘one who helps the husband in performing sacrifice’. This is evident from Paṇini’s rule ‘Patyuryaḥ ṣastra-samyoge’, i.e. to say, ‘Pati’ is derived from the base ‘Pati’ and the suffix ‘na’ is added to the base ‘Pati’ in the sense of ‘connection with sacrifice’. Hence one who is without a wife whether a widower or a bachelor was not allowed to perform sacrifice. Gods do not accept oblations from their

1. ‘Tasmād puruṣo ṣayāṇaṃ vittva kṛṣṇataramivātmanam manayeṣa.’
2. S.B., 5-2-1-10,—‘Ardho ha va esa atmano yajjaḥ tasmād yāvajjaḥ na vindate naiva tāvat praḥyate; sarva hi tāvad bhavatyaḥ sa yadaiva ṣayāṇaṃ vindate.
3 S.B., 5-1-6-10,—‘Ayajjīyo vaiṣa yo’patniṁkaḥ’.

3
hands. For this reason the sacrificer’s wife was regarded as an integral part of the sacrifice. ‘Wife is the hind part of the sacrifice,’ observes S.B. 5-2-1-8. The wife of the sacrificer or yajamāna had access to the sacrificial altar and had to sit within the campus of the sacrifice. A particular shed known as Prācīna-van śasālā was erected for her within the campus. An essential part of each sacrifice was called Patni-saṃyāja wherein the wife of the sacrificer had to utter Vedic hymns and perform certain rites. The later Vedic age or the age of the Brāhmaṇas was an age of sacrifice; sacrifice reached its heyday in that age and all Brāhmaṇical texts are liturgical or ritualistic texts bearing elaborate records of sacrificial paraphernalia. Hence it may be taken for granted that marriage was looked upon as a compulsory sacrament in that age for the three higher castes for eligibility to the performance of sacrifices.

Just as a wife was regarded as one-half of the husband likewise the husband also was looked upon as the wife’s mainstay. The wife had to depend on the husband for livelihood, maintenance and other necessities of day to day existence. ‘Women are sure to attend upon man. Wife is to follow the husband.’ The sweet and cordial relation between the husband and the wife finds expression in many texts of the Brāhmaṇas. The wife was never looked upon as a slave or a chattel but as a partner in religious matters, as a friend, a confidante and guide. Says A.B. 7-33-1, ‘A wife is indeed a friend, a daughter is the cause of sorrow and a son is a veritable luminary like the sun in the highest heaven.’ The killing of a woman was strictly prohibited like the killing of a Brāhmaṇa as woman was regarded as an incarnation

4. ‘Jaghaṇ̄aṁrdho vā eṣa yajñasya yast patnī’.
5. S.B. 2-6-2-14.—‘Patayo hyeva striyai pratiṣṭha’.
6. S.B. 13-2-2-4.—‘Striyāḥ puṃso ‘nvartmanāo bhāvukāḥ’
7. ‘Sakha ha jaya, kṣapāpya ha duhita, jyotiṁ hi putraḥ paraṁ vyoman.’
of Śrī or Goddess of Grace. "A woman is indeed the
incarnation of Śrī, hence they never kill
a woman." The sweet and holy relation
between the husband and the wife is
finely stated in S.B 12-8-2-6; "Truth is male
faith is female; mind is husband, speech is
wife; wherever the husband is, there is the wife too." Just
as truth and faith go together, just as mind and speech are in-
separable, likewise the relation between the married couple is
indissoluble; it is not only a temporal bond but a union
of hearts, a spiritual bond that exists both here and hereafter.
Mind and speech are inseparable because every speech is
the external expression of a mental act which is often termed
'thinking aloud'. The A.B. clearly explains the true import
of the term "jāyā". "The husband enters into the body of the
wife in the shape of embryo to which the wife becomes the
mother; thus the husband is again delivered from the womb
of the wife in the tenth month putting on a new body in the
shape of the son. Hence the wife is called jāyā as the husband
is reborn in her." Regarding the sacred tie and indissoluble
nature of the marriage sacrament a striking passage of the S.B.
may be cited where a married girl, Sukanyā by name, says,
—"I shall never repudiate my husband to whom my father
offered me."

The custom of the bride selecting her own husband from
amongst a number of suitors, commonly known as Svayam-
vara system was in vogue. A.B. 4-17-1 nar-
rates the story of the marriage of Prajāpati's
daughter. 'Prajāpati wanted to give away his
daughter Sūryā in marriage to the King Soma;
all the gods seeking her hand came to the royal court as suitors. This svayamvara system proves that it was practically impossible for an immature girl who had not attained the stage of puberty to choose her own husband. Girls were given away in marriage after they had attained puberty and maturity in the later Vedic age.

Polygamy was an established fact and was countenanced in society. Sage yājñavalkya, as stated in the Bhādāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad, had two wives, Maitreyī and Kātyāyāni. The Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā records ten wives of Manu. A.B. 7-33-1 states that king Hariścandra who had no issue had a hundred wives. Every king was legally allowed to have four wives or queens known as Mahiṣī, Vāvātā, Parīvṛktā and Pālāgāli. All four of them were adorned with golden necklaces and various ornaments befitting queens. Mahiṣī was the chief queen, the most favourite queen was called Vāvātā, the barren and hence neglected wife of the king was called Parīvṛktā and the fourth wife Pālāgāli was lower than the other three in social status. It seems she was the daughter of some courtier. Thus we find polygamy was the rule of the day but polyandry was unknown and was not countenanced for the upkeep of the social order and purity of the breed. The A.B. and G.B. states in clear and unmistakable terms—'One man may have many wives but one wife must not have more than one husband.' The S.B. also confirms the same—'One man may have many wives.'

Incestuous marriages and marriages within the circle of agnates and cognates were banned. Though marriage

12. Prajasatīr vai somāyā rājē duhitaraṁ prāyacchat sūryāṁ
akvitṛjm; tasyai sarve devā varā ṣacchān.

13. Hariścandro vai vaidhasa aṅkṣavako rājā aputra āsa. Tasya ha
śantaṁ jāyaṁ babhābuḥ.

14. S.B. 13-4-1-8.―'Catastro jāyaṁ upakṛptā bhavanti Mahiṣī vāvās
dariyktā Pālāgalī sarve niṣkinyah ālankṛtāḥ.'

15. A.B. 3-12-12 and G.B. (U) 3-20—'Ekasya bahvyo ājyaṁ bhavanti,
na ekasyai bahavaḥ sahapatayaḥ.'

16. S.B. 9-4-1-6—'Ekasya purṣo bahvyo jāyaṁ bhavanti.'
within the gotra was not explicitly prohibited, marriage outside the gotra must have been the prevalent custom. An exception to the general rule is met with in S.B. 1-8-3-6 which goes to prove that marriage within the third or fourth degree on either the paternal or maternal side was in vogue or was allowed.\textsuperscript{17} Marriage within the same caste is always praised and enjoined upon. But intercaste marriage was also prevalent in the Vedic society. Generally, in intercaste wedlocks a male of the higher caste used to marry a female of the lower caste. Thus marriages of a Brāhmaṇa male with a Kṣatriya female, that of a Kṣatriya male with a Vaiṣya female and Vaiṣya male and Śūdra female are often found in the later Vedic literature. The Smṛti texts characterise this type of marriage, i.e. marriage of a male of higher caste with a female of lower caste as Anuloma marriage. As recorded in the S.B. (4-1-5-9), the Brāhmaṇa Cyavana married the Kṣatriya girl Sukanyā who was greatly devoted to her husband as noted in the foregoing pages of this topic. Sukanyā was the daughter of king Śaryāta. Brhaddevatā (5-50) records the marriage of another Brāhmaṇa Śyāvāśva with the daughter of Rathaviti who was a Kṣatriya. The three wives of the king termed Mahiśī, Vāvātī, Parivṛktā belonged to the three castes Kṣatriya, vaiṣya and Śūdra respectively. Besides lawful Anuloma marriages, illicit sexual relations between men of higher castes and śūdra women are also referred to. S.B. 13-2-9-8 refers to ‘śūdra yat Āryajāra’, i.e. śūdra women who is the mistress of an Aryan, i.e., man belonging to one of three higher castes. Such stray references and isolated rare instances are exceptions to the general rule that the standard of sexual morality was very high. Chastity of women was regarded as a priceless treasure. Rightly does V.M. Apte observe—‘But all these may be looked upon rather as exceptions that prove the rule of a high standard of ordinary sexual morality…….. After all, the society is human,

\textsuperscript{17} Samanādeva puruṣādattā cādyāśca jāyate idam hi caturthe puruṣe tṛṭiye saṃgacchāmahā iti.'
and while we should not entertain highly exaggerated notions of unfailing chastity during the age, disproportionate importance need not be attached to isolated cases, or peculiar and exceptional customs and institutions.

The beauty of the female form did not escape the notice of the authors of Brähmaṇas. In certain passages we meet with poetic descriptions of the female form. The S.B. and the T.B. observe—‘He thereby bestows on the woman beautiful form, whence the beautiful maiden is apt to become dear (to man)’. Again, comparing the shape of the sacrificial altar with the shape of woman two passages of S.B. (1-2-5-16 and 3-5-1-11) remark,—‘Thus they praise the figure of a woman—broad-buttocked and thin in the middle (waist). The beautiful locks of the fair sex and the fashion of braiding and plaiting the same are also referred to. ‘That indeed is the perfect figure of woman, to wit, fair-knotted, well-braided and fair-locked.’

We shall now proceed to refer to certain manners and customs pertaining to the relationship between husband and wife. A wife did not take her food in the presence of her husband. As a rule the husband used to dine in presence of the wife and the latter catered food to the former. But

18. History & culture of the Indian people; The Vedic Age: Book VI, Chapter XXIII.
19. S.B. 13-1-9-6—‘Yoṣityeva rupaṁ dadhāti tasmād rupiṇī yuvatiḥ priyaḥ bhavukṣ.’
20. T.B. 3-8-13-2—‘Yoṣityeva rupaṁ dadhāti, tasmād stri yuvatiḥ priyaḥ bhavukṣ.’
21. ‘Evamiva hi yoṣam praṇamsanti prthuśroṇi vimṛṣṭantaraḥ sa madhye sāṅgrāhyah’.
22. S.B. 6-5-1-10—‘Etadu yoṣayai saṁrddham rupaṁ yath sukapaṁ sukuraṁ svaupāśa samardhayaṇi’.
23. S.B. 1-9-2-12—‘Imsa maṁṣayaḥ striyaṁ tira ivaiva puṁso jīghatsanti’.
there is an exception to this rule in the case of husbands desiring heroic or valiant vigorous sons. He should not eat food in the presence of his wife. She in whose presence the husband does not take food bears a vigorous son.\textsuperscript{24} When the husband approached the wife or the wife approached the husband he or she used to anoint the person with scents and cultivate a beautiful appearance.\textsuperscript{25} While retiring the husband is enjoined to lie on the right side of his wife.\textsuperscript{26} The daughter-in-law used to hold the father-in-law in great esteem and never behaved like a forward lady in his presence. She evinced extreme modesty and fought shy in his presence. It seems that she did not look at his face or have any open dealings with him on account of awe and veneration. Thus we read in A.B. 3-12-1, ‘The daughter-in-law used to fight shy in the presence of her father-in-law and used to conceal herself from him.’\textsuperscript{27} The sisters of the husband used to live with him under the same roof even after his marriage and as such they had to depend a lot on their sister-in-law for happiness and maintenance. Hence remarks the A.B. with a note of sadness and sympathy—‘sisters of the husband born of same parents have to depend for their livelihood on the sister-in-law who is born of different parents.’\textsuperscript{28}

Some stray remarks are found strewn in the Brāhmaṇical texts regarding the nature of woman. ‘Women are given to vain things,’ i.e., things which display vanity, says the S.B.\textsuperscript{29} In the anecdote of Pururavā and Urvaśī which gained wide celebrity and became the inexhaustible source of poetic imagination and inspiration in later ages we find

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{24} S.B. 10-5-2-9—‘Jāyasya ante nāśiniyāt, vīryavantamu ha va sa janayati yasya ante nāśati’.
  \item \textsuperscript{25} S.B. 9-4-1-4 ‘Yaḥ kaśca mithunamupapraitī gandhaṁ caiva sa rūpaṁ ca kāmayate’.
  \item \textsuperscript{26} S.B. 7-5-1-6—‘Dakṣiṇato vai vṛṣa yoṣmupaśete’.
  \item \textsuperscript{27} ‘Snuṣa śvaśūrśal lajjamās niliyamāneti’.
  \item \textsuperscript{28} A.B. 3-13-3—‘Samānodaryā svasaṁyodaryāyai jāyai anuṣṭ-viniṃ ṣivatī’.
  \item \textsuperscript{29} S.B. 3-2-4-6—‘Moghasamhitā eva yoṣa’.
\end{itemize}
Urvasī making this remark to Pururavā regarding hearts of women, ‘Truly there can be no friendship with women; their hearts are the hearts of hyenas.’ This is, of course, with reference to inconstant ladies and women of ill reputation who are of easy virtue and fickle nature. Urvasī herself is a heavenly nymph, a divine damsel and hence her remark applies well to her class of ladies. In general married women and unmarried damsels maintained a high standard of chastity and purity of conduct. They used to resent strongly and set at naught dark overtures of wicked men. They were morally unimpeachable. This is amply evident from a passage of the S.B. referring to such chaste ladies. ‘She disdains men when they beckon her (with sinister motive).’

The woman or the wife used to look after household affairs. She had to do cooking, sewing, knitting, rearing up of children and the like jobs that fall to the mother’s lot. ‘Knitting and sewing are the duty of women.’ Ladies used to cultivate fine arts and in many Brāhmanical passages we come across the statement that music and dancing though practised by men, actually come under the department of women. It seems, formerly wives of Śāma-vedic priests were entrusted with the sweet singing of difficult Śāma-chants; afterwards this task was transferred to the male priests or Udgātṛs. ‘These Udgātṛs actually perform the duties of their wives (in singing Śāma-chants),’ says S.B. 14-3-1-35. The education of women will be discussed under ‘Education’, our next topic.

---

30. S.B. 11-5-1-9—’Na vai straiṣṭi sakhyāni, santi salāyikāṇāṁ hṛdayāṇi te’.
31. 3-2-1-19—’Tasmāt stri puṣpopamantritaś ... aṣṭiyati’.
32. S.B. 12-7-2-11—’Tad va etad strīṇam karma yat ūrṇa-sūtras karma’.
33. ‘Patanjalaiśva ete etra kuryanti yadudgātāraḥ’.
BOOK I

CHAPTER IV

Education

Education was compulsory for the three higher castes; after initiation ceremony or investiture with the holy thread a student had to go to the preceptor's house or forest-school to study. Only the three castes viz., Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya were eligible for initiation and as initiation is regarded as the second birth or spiritual birth they are called Dvija or twice-born. Regarding this second birth of the initiated S.B. 11-5-4-12 remarks—"The teacher lays his right hand on the head of the pupil whereby he is impregnated by him. Within the third night the embryo issues out of the teacher and, being taught the Sāvitrī, obtains true Brahminhood." This is his spiritual regeneration, 'He is like a divine creature born from his teacher's mouth.' The spiritual significance of the ceremony of Upanayana or initiation is set forth in these sayings of the S.B. "Indeed he attains a new birth who undergoes Brahmacarya." The student has to declare formally—"May I enter upon Brahmacarya", 'let me be a brahmacāri' : (S.B. 11-5-4). After initiation they were allowed to study the Vedas. Thus the Upanayana or initiation ceremony was the prelude to student-life known as Brahmacarya. The whole of S.B. 11-5-4 gives a graphic picture of the initiated student's entrance to the preceptor's residential institut-

1. 'Aśrayo garbhī bhavati hastamādhīya dakṣiṇāṃ triyasya sa jayate savitryā saha brāhmaṇa iti'.
2. S.B. 11-5-4—'Daivyāḥ prājātāni mukhato janayate tata etam jayate'.
3. S.B. 11-5-4-16—'Garbhō vā eṣā bhavati yo brahmacaryya mupaitī'.

Education compulsory for three higher castes.

Spiritual regeneration of the student.
tion, and the primary injunctions of the Ācārya or teacher are recorded therein. ‘From to-day thou art a Brahmačāri, i.e., a student observing vows; do your duty; place fuel in the sacred fire; be obedient to the teacher; do not sleep in the day-time’, are some of these injunctions.

The whole of the third Brāhmaṇa of S.B. 11-3-3 deals with the rites and duties of student-life. Herein we find the germs of the detailed duties and rites of student-life met with in the Sūtra literature and Smṛti texts. The gist of this passage of S.B. runs as follows: The student approached the teacher in a submissive and humble spirit and the teacher asking his name accepted him as his pupil. The period of Brahmacarya or student-life was like a prolonged sacrifice (Dirghasatra); he had to study the Vedas and its accessories daily. This was called Brahma-yajña. Daily should he tend the preceptor’s sacred fire by feeding it with fuels (samidh). ‘Thereby he kindles his mind with fire, with holy lustre.’ If the student does not fetch sacrificial faggot he forfeits a part of his longevity on that night. He had to beg alms without feeling ashamed for the same after taking his bath. He should beg alms first of the preceptor’s wife and thereafter from his own mother so that he may not be refused alms in the first begging. Begging was prescribed to create a spirit of humility in the learner’s mind. Observes the S.B.—‘Having made himself poor, as it were, he begs alms shorn of shame’ (and pride). The student had to fetch fuel and place the same daily in the holy fire of the preceptor. On the completion of his study, his academic career, he placed the last fuel in that fire and took his final bath. After this bath he was called a Snātaka or graduate when he returned to his house from

4. S.B. 11-3-3-2—‘Dirghasatraṃ vā eṣa upaiti yo brahmacarya-mupaiti’.
5. S.B. 11-3-3-1—‘Yāṃ rātṛṃ brahmaćāri samidhamā nāharati ayuṣa eva māvadāya vaṣati’.
6. S.B. 11-3-3-6—‘Brahmacāri ahṛṣṭvāḥ bhikṣate’.
the teacher’s residential institution. This returning to parents’ home was known as Samāvartana. On the day of his admission he used to place the first log of wood or samidh and on the day of Samāvartana the last log of wood in the teacher’s fire-pit; S.B. 11-3-3-2 calls the former Prāyanīya and the latter Udayaniya. As Brahmacārya is compared to a prolonged sacrifice (Dīrghasatra), the first placing of firewood (samidh) is compared to Prāyanīya-isti, the last one to Udayaniya-isti or sacrifice and the intervening ones to satra or sessional sacrifice covering a long period of time.

Names of a few students residing in the preceptor’s house for study are also met with in the Brāhmaṇas. The story of Nābhānediṣṭha is an instance in point. It is narrated in A.B. 5-22-9; the whole of the ninth Brāhmaṇa recounts the truthfulness of Nābhānediṣṭha who became a householder on completion of his student career. The story drives home the truthfulness and honesty taught to the pupils by the teachers in ancient India. Likewise in the T.B. we come across the story of pupil Bhāradvāja.

Looking after the house of the teacher and tending his cattle also formed a part of the students’ duty. ‘The students guard their master, his house and cattle.’

The C.U. (4-4-5) recounts how Satyakāma went away with his preceptor’s cattle to a distant land and during his sojourn there the number of cattle increased from four hundred to a thousand. The S.A. (7-19) and the A.A. (3-1-6-3, 4) also refer to this tending of preceptor’s cattle by the pupils.

G.B. 11-1-2-1 to 9 contains some important passages bearing on the internal and external training during the period of Brahmacārya as follows. A Brahmacārin or student should overcome various passions, viz, sleep, lethargy, hanker-

---

7. ‘Yo brahmacaryamupaiti sa yāmupayan samidhamadhati sa prayaṇyaḥ ya śāṅayaḥ sa udayaniyaḥ ya antareṇa satryaḥ evaṣya ta’.
8. S.B. 3-6-2-15,—’Brahmacāriṇa uccaṛyaḥ gopāyanti; gṛhan paśaṁnennāḥ paharṣaṇīti’. 
ing after name and fame, anger, greed, bragging, vanity, cultivation of personal beauty, avoidance of scents, luxury, company of women, music, dancing and the like addictions that stand a bar to the intellectual, moral and spiritual progress of a student. ‘He should put on antelope’s skin, serve the preceptor daily; should shake off addiction to sleep, should not hurt anyone even with angry words, must not take luxurious baths or look at a naked maiden or smell the perfume of aromatic herbs by uprooting them.’ He should not frequent the cremation ground. ‘He should sit low, lie down on the ground, walk and move about with humility.’ He should not lie on a cot, should not see or take part in music or dancing; should not spit.’

As regards the courses of study S.B. 11-5 gives a detailed syllabus of various subjects. The Vedic literature comprising mantra, Brähmana, Āraṇyaka, Upaniṣad and Vedāṅgas formed the chief subject of instruction and essential part of education. The sacred lore was handed down from generation to generation through oral transmission. The Vedic study was called Svādhyāya. It was also known as Brahmayajña. One should study the Veda every day. The whole of the sixth Br. of S.B. 11-5 is a glowing eulogy of the Vedic Study and contains injunctions for the same. ‘The student must study the Veda daily and must utter at least one Āraṇyka, one Sāman, One Gāthā or one Kum byā for the unbroken continuity of Brähmayajña or the Vedic Study.’ Other subjects of study in which instructions were

9. G.B. (P) 2-2,—‘Sa yanurājāminam vaste, sa yadaharaheṣār-yasya karma karoti, sa yat suṣūpsur nīḍrṣaṁ minayati……………….. tassu (oṣadhyatam) punāṁ gandham prachādaya nopāśīghreṇ.’
10. G.B. (P) 2-4—‘Adhaḥ sāyita, adhastiṣṭhedadho vrajaḥ.’
11. G.B. (P) 2-7—‘Noparistrīśyāyaṁ gāyaṁ maṁ na nartano na niṣṭhīveth.’
12. S.B. 11-5-6-3—‘Svādhyāyo vai brahma-yajñaḥ.’
13. S.B. 11-5-6-3—‘Aharahāḥ svādhyāyamadhīte tasmāt svādhyāyaḥ, dhyetavyaḥ.’
14. S.B. 11-5-7-6—‘Svādhyāyo dhyetavyastamasādapi ṛcaṁ va yajurvā sāma va gāthām kumbyaṁ vābhivyāhareṇa vratasyavacchedāya.’
offered are mentioned in the S.B. Among the items of study were included precepts (Anuśāsanāni) or Vedāngas, the sciences (Vidyāḥ), the dialogue (Vākovākyam), traditional myths and legends (Itihāsa-purāṇa) and Nārāyaṇī-Gāthās.  
Sāyana while commenting on this passage takes ‘Anuśāsanāni’ to mean six Vedāngas, ‘Vidyā’ in the sense of philosophical systems such as Nyāya, Mīmāṃsā etc., ‘Vākovākyam’ to mean theological discourses or disputation, ‘Itihāsa-purāṇam’ in the sense of cosmological myths and accounts of kings etc., and Gāthā Nārāyaṇī in the sense of stanzas or verses recounting deeds of human beings. Eggeling takes the term ‘Vidyā’ in a wider sense that comprises such special sciences as the science of snakes (sarpa-vidyā), Viṣa-vidyā etc.  
S.B. 13-4-3 refers to Sarpavidyā (science of serpents), Rakṣovidyā (demonology) and Asura-vidyā (magic trick). The courses of study gradually swelled in bulk with the inclusion of new subjects. This fact is amply borne out by C.U. 7-1-2, where Nārada gives an exhaustive list of the subjects he has studied to his preceptor Sanatkumāra. The list comprises the R.V., the Y.V., S.V., Atharvan, Itihāsa-purāṇa the Veda of the Vedas (Vedānām Vedam), rituals concerning the worship of the manes (Pitṛya), the science of numbers or Arithmetic (Rāṣṭi), the science of portents (Daśa), science of divination (Nidhi), art of debate and theological disputation (Vākovākyam), code of conduct (Ekāyanam), knowledge relating to gods (Deva-vidyā), Brahma-vidyā, the science of Biology or existence (Bhūta-vidyā), the science of politics or govt. (Kṣatra-vidyā), astronomy (Nakṣatra-vidyā), the study of Serpents and toxicology (Sarpavidyā) and Devajanavidyā. Śankara commenting on this passage explains ‘Vedānām Vedam’ as the grammar (Vyākaraṇam), and Brahma-vidyā as the study of Vedāngas, of Śikṣā (phonetics) Kalpa and Chandas (prosody). The term ‘Devajanavidyā’ is taken by Śaṅkara to mean the arts of perfume-making, dancing and music, both vocal and instrumental. Some scholars like Ranga Rāmā-

15. S.B. 11-5-6-8—‘Anuśāsanāni vidyā vākovākyam itihāsapurāṇam gāthā-nārāyaṇaprayah’.
16. Eggeling’s edition of the S.B.
nuja split up the word into ‘Deva-vidyā’ and ‘Jana-vidyā’, the former standing for music and dance, and the latter for the science of medicine (Āyurveda).

Debates, discourses and conferences were often held on educational or sacrificial topics. Debates were called ‘Brahmodyya’ which in classical Sanskrit literature came to be known as ‘Vidyā-vivāda’ or ‘Vidyā-vicāra’ as we find in Kādamvari and the like works. Questions and cross-questions were put in a debate by the contending candidates and there was a judge or board of judges. The V.S. and the T.B. call the questioner ‘Praśnin’ and the cross-questioner ‘Abhipraśnin’. Some scholars are led to think that the term ‘Vākovākyam’ originally meant this debate which consisted of words and counterwords in the shape of dialogue. The germ of logic or Nyāyaśāstra can be traced in this system of debate. Debating competitions were a regular feature of academic career. Not only students, teachers who were eminent scholars and sages also launched on debating bouts with zeal and seriousness. Forest-universities, royal courts and sites of grand sacrifices became seats of learning and witnessed many educational conferences, theological discourses and debating competitions. The S.B. records many debating bouts, and theological and liturgical discourses. King Janaka of Videha was a great patron of learning and his court became a renowned seat of learning where frequent debates and disputationes were held over which the king declared handsome prizes as the palm of victory. Thus in the S.B. we hear of debate between sage Yājñavalkya and Śākalya regarding the number of gods (11-6-3), between Uddālaka Āruṇi and Sauceya Pra-cinā-yogya (11-5-3-1), between the teacher Śaṇḍilya and his pupil Sāptarathavāhana, theological disputation between the Hoṭr and Adhvaryu (13-5-2-11), theological questions and repartees between the different priests in the horse sacrifice (13-5-2). In S.B. 11-6-25 we find brahmmins challenging Janaka to a debate and Yājñavalkya’s rejoinder. An interesting account of a debating bout is recorded in S.B. 11-4-1-1.
wherefrom we know that there existed the custom of flinging a gold coin as the challenge to a debate. A Brahmin youth of Kurupañcāla country, Uddālaka by name went to the north where he flung a gold coin as the prize for a debate. The people of the northern region were afraid of him; they accepted the challenge and put up Svaidāyana Šaunaka, son of Gautama, as their spokesman to take up the gauntlet and champion their cause. In the bout Uddālaka was defeated by Šaunaka; hence the former offered the gold coin to him and became his pupil to study at his feet. These were the beginnings of debates and discourses which had their culmination in the Upaniṣadīc age when the court of King Janaka became a celebrated seat of learning and of famous theological and spiritual discourses and disputations. The debates and disputations between the erudite scholar sage Yājñavalkya and the seers and Gārgī constitute one immortal and unforgettable chapter of India’s sacred lore.

On completion of his study a student was called Snātaka because he used to take his last bath in the residence of the preceptor on the day of returning to his paternal home. This coming back to his home was termed Samāvartana. Hence the graduates are called Snātaka till to-day and the convocation ceremony Samāvartana Utsaba. The convocation address delivered by the preceptor on the completion of academic career to the students in the Vedic age is recorded in the T.U. which is an eternal message to students irrespective of time and clime. The origin of the term ‘Snātaka’ may be inferred from such passage: of the Brs as—‘One should not beg any more after the last bath’; 17. That is to say, begging was prohibited for the householder, and the injunction was judicious and logical considering the economic set-up of the society. ‘Snātvā’ means ‘after taking the bath’. Evidently it means

17. S.B. 11-3-1-7—‘Na ha vai-snātvā bhikṣeta’.
the final ablution on the day of leaving the institution. He who took this final bath was called a Snātaka.

Two classes of Brahmacārins. The Snātakas went also by the name of Upakurvāṇa Brahmacārins as distinct from the Naisthika Brahmacārins who observed permanent celibacy and resided for good in the preceptor's house. 'After the final ablution, i.e., after graduation, a student who had observed the vow of brahmacarya shone forth resplendent with the halo of learning and wisdom just as fire blazes forth when fed with fuel.'18

It is enjoined that 'while receiving lessons from the teacher, the student should sit in front of the teacher facing him towards the west, the teacher faces the east.'19

Mention has already been made of teachers of residential institutions where students had to go for study and spiritual and secular training after the Upanayana ceremony. These teachers were either celibates or married. They were rooted to their institutions. Besides these there was a class of wandering teachers or peripatetic scholars who moved from place to place and imparted learning to the seekers. They were called Carakas or Peripatetic Teachers. They were called Carakas from the root 'car' to wander. S.B. 4-2-4-1 refers to such wandering teachers.20. These peripatetic teachers fulfilled a great need of the society as important medium for propagation of learning and culture, carrying wisdom wherever they went. They were like mobile schools of learning, easily available and accessible. They educated the mass and helped the cause of education campaign.

As a rule preceptors or ācāryas did not accept any monthly tuition fees from the pupils; education was

18. S.B. 11-3-1-7—'Yathā ha vā aṅgīḥ samīḍho rōcate evaḥ ha vai sa aṃtāḥ rōcate ya evaḥ vidvān brahmacaryyaḥ carati'.
19. S.B. 11-5-4-14—'Purastēdeva pratīcēḥ samākṣamāṃśyaṃnuvṛūyāt'.
20. 'Sa yaṇḍa taṃ cārakebhya vā yato vā'nuvṛūvita'.
imported free of any cost. The parents had not to pay a farthing for the education of their children. The students begged (cooked) food from the neighbouring villages and subsisted on the same. The preceptors who did not accept any remuneration and rendered honorary service were termed ‘Srotriyā apratigrāhakāḥ’ (S.B. 13-4-3-14), i.e. honorary teachers versed in the sacred lore.

Though there is no explicit mention about the arrangements to impart education to women it can be taken for granted that education was not denied to them. From the large number of educated ladies mentioned in the Vedic literature we can rightly infer that women also underwent some sort of training under the able guidance of competent teachers who might have been their fathers, brothers, husbands or near relations. The pure Brāhma-nical texts mention some female scholars whereas names of many learned women who could hold their own against male scholars appear in the Samhitā-portion and Upaniṣad portion of the Veda. Several female seers are mentioned in the R.V. to whom some Vedic hymns were revealed such as Ghoṣā, Ambhṛṭī Vāk, Viśva-vārā, Romaśā, Lopāmudrā, Apālā, etc. The Upaniṣads record the names of women savants like Gārgī etc., and spiritually enlightened ladies like Maitreyī etc. Parents longed for the birth not only of learned sons but also of learned daughters. The B.U. observes—’If anyone desires that a learned daughter be born unto him,21 he should cook a particular recipe and feed his wife with it.

In A.B. 5-25-4 we come across a learned maiden obsessed with a Gandharva (Gandharva-ṛhitā Kumārī) pointing out

21. ‘Atha ya iṣchet duhīta me paṇḍita jāyeta’.
the defects in the time-schedule of the Agnihotra sacrifice. She says—'I shall complain to the manes that the Agnihotra which was performed in two days formerly is now performed in one day.' The wife of the sacrificer had to utter Vedic mantras during the performance of sacrifice. Though the mantras were muttered in a very low inaudible voice (Upāṃśu) she had to learn and master the hymns and utter the same. Under 'sacraments' in Book III it has been clearly proved that women of the higher castes were invested with the holy thread, uttered Sāvitri and had access to Vedic study in the Vedic age. Upanayana and Vedic Study were open to women. The gṛhyasūtras also mention the names of women, savants e.g., the A.G.S. mentions Vaḍavā Prātitheyi as a great scholar.

Fine arts such as vocal music, instrumental music and dancing were cultivated by ladies, and Brs. often mention that singing and dancing were woman's pastimes and not man's (nṛttam gītam strīnām karma). It seems women, i.e., wives of Śāmavedic priests (Udgāṭṛs) were formerly entrusted with the singing of Śāma-chants in sacrifices; later on they were supplanted by their husbands. S.B. 14-3-1-35 states—'The Udgāṭṛs actually perform the duties of their wives (in singing Śāma-chants).'

22. 'Vaktāsmo va idāṃ pitrbhyo yad vaitadagnihotramubhayed-yurahāya-tānvedyurvāva tadetarhi hūyatā iti'.
23. 'Patiṇ-karmāvai ēte atra kurvanti yadudgāṭāraḥ' (śāma gāyanti).
CHAPTER V

Music and Dance:

Music, both vocal and instrumental was in vogue. The Sāma-vedic priest Udgātṛ used to sing Sāma-chants to please the deities who were invoked in the sacrifices. The intricate process of Sāma-chant bespeaks the high standard attained by Indian music in the Vedic age. Seven notes trace their origin in the Sāma-chant. The seers of the Brāhmaṇa literature like the seers of Saṁhitā literature had a keen ear for music. They tried to catch the musical element in the sounds of nature. Thus the S.B. remarks—"When it rains hard, a (musical) sound as that of the Sāma-chant is heard".¹ Viṇā (lute) and Dundubhi (drum) are often mentioned. The lute was looked upon as a graceful and sacred instrument; it was identified with Śrī or Grace. "When a man attains grace (Śrī) lutes are played in his honour; Brahmins sing in accompaniment to lute for a year."² Viṇā is an embodiment of grace."³ Sometimes Sāmans were chanted accompanied by the beating of drums. "He sings Sāman in accompaniment to the sound of drums."⁴ One who used to sing in accompaniment to lute was called Viṇāgāthī. Sometimes many lutes were attuned and played on simultaneously giving rise to a chorus of lutes. Masters conducting such chorus of lutes were called Viṇā-gaṇagīna. We find this

1. 11-2-7-32—"Yadā valavad varṣatī sāma śvopabdhiḥ kriyate".
2. S.B. 13-1-5-3—"Yadā vai puruṣaḥ śriyām gacchāti viṇāsmai vadyate, brāhmaṇau viṇāgāthinau saṁvatsaraṁ gāyataḥ."
3. "Śriyai va etadrāpaḥ yad viṇā."
4. S.B. 5-1-5-17—"Dundubhiṇabhī sāma gāyati".

48850
term in S.B. 13-4-3-3. Song is also mentioned as the principal means of livelihood of some persons. It was not a compulsory rule that one would have to sing traditional songs; a singer was given the option to compose songs and sing the same. In S.B. 13-4-2-8 we find a Brāhmaṇa singing songs composed by himself. ‘A Brāhmaṇa lute-player sings three strophes composed by himself, striking up the Uttaramandrā tune.’ The term Uttaramandrā may be construed either with the lute or with the tune. Eggeling observes—‘literally, the upper deep one, i.e., perhaps one the chords of which are pitched in the upper notes of the lower key.’ In certain sacrifices and during horse-races or chariot-races drums were beat. In the sacrifice known as Vājapeya seventeen drums used to be beaten simultaneously as recorded in S.B. 5-1-5-6. In horse-race and chariot-race the rhythmic sound of drums kept time with the cadence of running horses or chariots.

Dancing was practised by both men and women. The terms ‘Nṛttam’, ‘Nartanam’, are met with in both the S.B. and A.B. The rhythmic movements of a dance are referred to in A.B. 5-22-10 which reads as follows:—‘Days and nights rotate and follow each other in a regular rhythmic manner like dancing.’ This passage lends support to the view that there were prescribed rules for dancing in the Vedic age. S.B. 3-2-46 refers to both singing and dancing. When the goddess Vāk was sent by gods to dupe the Gandharvas and fetch Soma which was confiscated by the Gandharvas, she (Vāk) began to dance and sing to please the demi-gods or Gandharvas. She deluded the Gandharvas with her song and dance, and cajoled Soma out of their hands.

5. ‘Brāhmaṇo vyāsagathī dakṣiṇata uttaramandrāmadā-ghnastisraḥ svayam-sambhṛta gathā gayatiyayajata’.
6. Eggeling’s note on the text concerned in his translation of the S.B.
7. ‘Atha saptadaśa duṇḍubhsanuvedyantā saminvanti’.
8. ‘Pratipadasca ahaścteti punaravṛttam punarnirṛttam’.
9. ‘Yā (vāk) nṛttaiṁ gītāmupāvavarta.’
Games & Sports:

Horse-race and chariot-race were very popular sports widely enjoyed by the people. Even gods indulged in these games. A.B. 2-9-1 recounts the story of horse-racing competition amongst the gods. Once there was a dispute amongst the gods as to who should drink Soma first. All the gods began to clamour and contend for that honour. Then they decided to hold a horse-race competition and all agreed that he who would stand first in that competition should have the proud privilege to drink Soma first. The god of wind, Vāyu, stood first, Indra second, Mitra and Varuṇa third and the Aśvins stood fourth in that competition. Horse-race was called ‘Āji-dhāvana’. S.B. 5-1-1-3 also refers to a chariot-race held amongst the gods to settle a dispute regarding priority. In the sacrifice known as Vājapeya chariot-race was a usual feature. There was a winning post called Kāṣṭhā in horse-race and chariot-race. Beating of drums or bands always accompanied these racing competitions.10

Since the RgVedic age Dice-play was a very popular indoor game of the Aryans. In the RgVeda it is called Akṣa. Gambling was prevalent both in the Dice (Akṣa). Vedic and later Vedic age. Vedic hymns denouncing gambling are often met with. The four point was called Kṛta in Dice-play and S.B. 13-3-2-1 makes mention of this Kṛta.11 In the sacrifice known as Rājasūya a game of dice was compulsory. There was a superintendent of gambling appointed by Gambling. the king called ‘Aksāvāpa’; it was his duty to mark the gambling ground for the game of dice in the Rājasūya sacrifice.

From the Samhitā or Brähmaṇa texts it is not clear as to how the game was played. Sāyaṇa, while commenting on

10. S.B. 5-1-5-17—‘Dhāvanti ājīmāghānanti dnnubhbīnabhī sāma gāyatī.’
11. ‘Cstuṭomena kṛtena.’
S.B. 5-4-4-6 remarks that the dice used in the Rājasūya sacrifice were made of gold shells cowries or of gold belleric myroballan (Vibhītaka) nuts. The RgVeda also testifies to the fact that Vibhītaka nuts were used as dice. It seems the dice were marked with dots; eye is called Akṣa and dice was termed Akṣa perhaps for the eye-like dots. The game was played with five dice, four of which were called Kṛta, whilst the fifth was called Kali. If all the dice when thrown fell uniformly, i.e., with dotted sides either upward or downward then that throw was declared as the winning throw.

Origins of drama may be traced in the Br. texts as in the dialogue hymns of Sūrya and Sūrya, Saramā and Pani etc., of the Saṃhitās. The fine dialogue between king Pururavā and the heavenly nymph Urvaśī narrated in S.B. 11-5-1 is highly dramatic in character. In S.B. 11-6-1 we find a concrete presentation of abstract attributes by way of allegory. There Reverence or Śraddhā is represented as a beautiful and graceful lady whereas Wrath or Krodha is represented as a terrific figure—an ugly man of dark complexion with yellow eyes and repulsive features. The beginnings of allegorical play may be traced here which culminated in such allegorical plays as Prabodha-candrodaya etc., in the classical age. The term ‘Śailūsa’ meaning ‘an actor’ occurs in the Puruṣamedha chapter (30-6) of the V.S. (‘Nīttāya sūtam gītāya śailūṣam’).

Dress & Decorations:

Garments made of wool, cotton and silk were worn by the people. Cotton and wool, sewing and knitting are often referred to. The term ‘śūtra’ refers to cotton and ‘ūrṇā’ to wool which was made of sheep’s hair. The general dress consisted of three parts—the main portion fitting the body called vāsa, an outer or over-garment called Adhi-vāsa and an under-garment named Nivi. The outer garment served the purpose of a cloak or mantle. Sewing and knitting were the tasks of women. ‘It is the duty
of women to knit and sew or stitch. 12 Warp, woof and different aspects of weaving are referred to in S.B. 3-1-2-18. People had a fondness for good dress and wanted to be well clad. Hence the terms Suvāsā (well-clad) and suvāsa (good garment) occur frequently in the S.B., A.B. etc. The importance of garment as bespeaking a man’s taste, and position in society is finely expressed in S.B. 13-4-1-15;

Fondness “Garment is man’s outward appearance, for whence people on seeing a well-clad man, asks, ‘who can this be?’ For he is perfect in his outward appearance.” 13 Vedic Aryans had a great fascination for cloth with finely embroidered borders or interlaced with golden and silver threads. ‘When a cloth is woven it is embroidered (at the border) before the actual texture is woven; it is embroidered in the middle and again it is embroidered at the end’, says A.B. 2-11-10. 14 The term ‘Peśa’ occurring repeatedly in this passage means ornamentation or embroidery.

Special garments were prescribed for the priests performing sacrifice. Skirts made of Kuśa grass were used in certain sacrifices. From the S.B. we learn that the sacrificial garment consisted of a garment of pure wool not dyed, an undergarment made of silk called tārpya, an outer garment like Adhivāsa and a head-dress or turban (Uśṇīṣa). Head-dresses or turbans were worn by the Kings during their coronation ceremony in particular. Even queens had to put on turbans. Indra’s queen Īndrāṇī had a most variegated (multi-coloured and embroidered) head-band, says S.B. 14-2-1-8. 15

12. S.B. 12-7-2-11—‘Tad va etat striṇaṁ karma yaṛūpāśūtrain karma.’

13. ‘Rūpaṁ va etat puruṣasya yad vāsastasmād yameva kañca suvāsasamāh ko’ nayamiti rūpasamādho hi bhavati’

14. ‘Pravayātataḥ peśaḥ kuryāt........yathaiwa madhyataḥ peśaḥ kuryat........yathaiwaveda-jjanataḥ peśaḥ kuryat.’

15. ‘Īndrāṇiḥ ha va Īndrasya priya paṇti tasya uśṇīṣo viśvarūpaṇaṁ.’
Sages, mendicants and Brahmacārins used to put on garment made of hides of black antelope (क्रष्णाजिना). Because antelope skin was the garment of Brahmacārins, sometimes they are referred to simply by the term ‘Ajina’ which stood for Brahmacarya or student life—the first order of a man’s life. Thus A.B. 7-33-1 refers to the order of Brahmacarya by the term ‘Ajina’ only. Even female ascetics used to put on garments of black antelope skin and this custom obtained in the epic age too as we gather from the description of the female ascetic called Šabari in the Rāmāyana as ‘Kṛṣṇājīnāmbaradharā’, i.e. one putting on garment made of black deer skin.

The S.B. refers to armours made of iron (3-4-4-23), armours made of silver (3-4-4-24) and those of gold (3-4-4-25). We hear of cushions for seats fashioned Various Armours. with gold threads called ‘Hiraṇya-Kaśipu’ and ‘Hiraṇya-Kūrca’ in S.B. 13-4-3-1. A.B. 7-33-6 also mentions this Hiraṇya-Kaśipu in the same sense. An arm chair with head-cushion Beautiful cushions. (āsandī sopavarhaṇā) is mentioned in S.B. 13-8-4-10. Mats made of twigs of Plakṣa tree (Ficus infectoria) were in use. From the description of Coronation Ceremony recorded in the A.B. it is learnt that a tiger-skin was placed on the throne. Bed-covers called Āstaraṇās and pillows are mentioned in A.B. 8-38-1.

Ornaments:—Ornaments of gold and silver were in vogue and ladies belonging to both middle class and high class used to put them on. S.B. 12-8-3-11 mentions gold and silver ornaments. The nobles used ornaments of gold invariably; they disliked ornaments of silver, brass or iron. Hence it is said—‘gold is a symbol of noble rank.’16 Four wives of the king used to wear gold ornaments, gold neck-
bands or necklaces. The mention of necklaces made of pearl, hundred and one pearls in S.B. 13-2-6-8 goes to prove that Vedic Aryans knew the use of pearls and fashioned ornaments out of them. Not to speak of gold ornaments, gold bricks, gold plates and gold shavings or gold chips were also used as we gather from S.B. 6-1-2-30.

17. S.B. 13-4-1-8—‘Mahiṣi vāvata parivrakta pālagaś sarva nīśkīpa-yaḥ alankṛtāh.’

18. ‘Yad rukma-puruṣa upadadhāti yad hiraṇyaśakalaiḥ prokṣati sā hiraṇyaṃśakā,’
CHAPTER VI

Food & Drink:

In the Brāhmaṇas many items of food have been mentioned, some meant for human consumption and some for offering as oblations to gods in sacrifice. Various food-grains. Rice and Wheat were principal food. Various products of rice were used. A.B. 2-8-5 mentions Dhānā, Karambha, Parivāpa, Purodāsa and Payasyā. These were different products of barley and rice. Fried barley cooked with butter was called Dhānā. The powder of Dhānā, again, fried with butter was called Karambha. Parivāpa was produced from parched rice fried in butter. Rice-cake was termed Purodāsa. Payasyā was curd and milk blended together. S.B. 12-7-2-9 refers to malted rice (saṣpāni) and malted barley (Tokmāni). The S.B. mentions rice-gruel or yavāgu as a food. T.B. 3-8-15 mentions Pṛthukā, Saktu, Lāja, Dhānā, Masūsyā and Karambha as different products of rice. According to Sāyaṇa Pṛthukā means flattened rice also called ‘Chipitaka’; Saktu is the powder of fried rice; Lāja is puffed rice and looks like white flower. Hence Sāyaṇa poetically states, ‘Lāja brīhiprabha-vāḥ puṣpavad vikaśitāḥ’, i.e., ‘Lājas are products of paddy and look like blooming flowers’. Dhānā means both fried rice and fried barley. Masūsyā is a famous paddy that grew in north India (Uttaradeśe prasiddhā dhānayaviśeṣāḥ). Karambha is explained as fried rice and barley mixed with butter. The said passage of the T.B. also mentions ‘Priyangu-taṇḍula’, which, according to Sāyaṇa, means a particular variety of paddy which is golden in colour.

Various products of milk are mentioned such as Dugdha, Payas (milk), Āhya (melted butter), Āmikṣā
(curdled milk), Dadhi (curd), Vājin (whey), Karambha
(Porridge), Ghṛta (unmelted butter), Nava-
nīta (cream or fresh butter), Sānnāyya (curd
and milk mixed together), mixture of milk
and Soma (S.B. 1-6-4-6), Caru (milk, curd, honey, butter etc.,
blended together), Śrita (boiled milk), Sara (thickened sur-
face of the milk), etc.

Among fruits the T.B., S.B., and A.B., K.B., etc., men-
tion sacrificial figs or Udumvara, sugarcane (S.B. 3-4-1-18),
berries and jujubes. S.B. 5-2-2-2- is a glow-
ing eulogy of sacrificial figs and S.B. 5-5-4-10
refers to three kinds of plum or jujube called Kuvala, Karkandhu
and Badara. A.B. 7-35-4 mentions shoots of Banyan tree
and fruits of fig, Plakṣa (Ficus infectoria) and Aśvattha (Ficus
religiosa) trees as fit food for Kṣatriyas (the military or ruling
class)."¹ The A.B. further states—"Soma is the food for
Brāhmaṇas, curd for Vaiṣyas and water for Śūdras."²

Meat was widely used as food. The fleshes of sterile
cow, ox, goat and sheep were favourite items of food. There
is no denying the fact that beef was an
item of food in the Vedic age. Without
beef even Śrāddha ceremony could not be performed :
Māṃsāṣṭakā, an essential part of Śrāddha ceremony,
had to be performed with the flesh of
ox. S.B. 3-4-1-2 states in clear and un-
mistakable terms—"A large ox or he-goat
is to be slaughtered when the king or a
Brāhmaṇa comes to the house as guest."³ A.B. 1-3-4
also observes in the same strain that an ox or a sterile cow had
to be slaughtered when a king or any venerable person
became a guest.⁴ Sage Yājñavalkya says in S.B. 3-1-2-21, ‘I,

1. ‘Athasya svau bhakṣyo nyagrodhasya varodhaseca phalani caudum-
varṣṇi śāvatthani plakṣāni.’
2. A.B. 7-35-3,—‘Somo Brāhmaṇāṁ sa bhakṣaḥ’, ‘Dadhi vaiṣya-
nāṁ sa bhakṣaḥ’, ‘Apaḥ Śūdrāṁ sa bhakṣaḥ.’
3. ‘Rājate vā brāhmaṇaṁ vā mahokṣap vā mahājam vā pacet.’
4. ‘Manuṣyaraśye śgataḥ’ nṝṣaṁ vin va arhati ukṣaṇam vā vehataṁ vā
kṣadantaḥ.’
for one, eat it (beef), provided it is tender (and not tough).  
S.B. 1-6-4-3 refers to flesh of goat and  
S.B. 7-5-2-42 mentions flesh of cattle  
as food for human consumption. Among  
all kinds of eatables 'flesh or meat is the  
best kind of food', observes S.B. 11-7-2-1.  

Now we come to the discussion of the drinks. Almost  
all the Brs. mention Soma, Surā, honey, milk and water  
as items of drink along with fruit juice.  
Drinks.  
Soma was a hieratic drink. Whether Soma  
was an intoxicant or not is still an unsolved problem but  
the majority of scholars holds the view that it was not an intoxi-  
cant. It was a very rare creeper available in inaccessible  
mountains of northern and north-western India and on account  
of its rarity substitutes have been prescribed like the herb  
Pūtikā and the like. It was a hieratic drink. In the  
Br. texts Soma is always eulogised whereas  
Surā or spirituous liquor is always de-  
nounced. Drawing a comparison between the  
two, the S.B. remarks, 'Soma is truth,  
prosperity and light; Surā is untruth, misery or vice  
and darkness.'  
A Brāhmaṇa is enjoined not to drink  
Surā (wine) because it is unpropitious for him.  
The ill effects of wine drinking are also narrated in the S.B.  
'By drinking wine (Surā) one becomes violent  
in temper.'  
The T.B. calls Soma the best drink  
for gods and Surā the best drink for  
human being.  
There were various pro-  
cesses of preparing 'surā'. It was prepared from Oṣadhi  
herbs or medicinal herbs that wither away after producing fruits,

---

5. ‘Hovāca yājñavalkyo’ ānāmi evāhamaṃpsalamp cet bhavatīti.’  
6. ‘Eṭadu paramamamāṇḍyaṃ yanmaṃpsam.’  
7. 5-1-2-10—‘Satyaṃ ārṣijyoṭilh somaḥ anṛtam pāṃprā tamaḥ surā.’  
8. S.B. 12-8-1-5—‘Āśīva iva vṛṣeṣa bhakṣyo yat surā brāhmaṇasya.’  
9. 12-7-3-20—‘Surāṃ pītvā raudramanā.’  
10. 1-3-3-3—‘Eṭad vai devānam paramamamanaṃ yat somaḥ.  
Etanmanuṣyaṃ yat surā.’
and water mixed together.\textsuperscript{11} It was also prepared from fermented rice.\textsuperscript{12} The T.B. compares 'Soma' with men and 'Surā' with women to show the superiority of the former to the latter.\textsuperscript{13} Another kind of drink, an immature spirituous liquor called Parisrut is mentioned in the S.B. It is neither Soma nor surā,\textsuperscript{14} but a halfway house between the two. Wine or surā was prepared by fermenting grains and herbs. Full fermentation was allowed in the case of Surā but not in the case of Parisrut; hence the latter is called semi-fermented or immature spirituous liquor. Like Surā, Parisrut is also denounced and a Brāhmaṇa is forbidden to drink Parisrut.\textsuperscript{15}

Regarding the quantity of food to be taken, the S.B. observes,—'Food which is proportionate to the body satisfies and does not injure it; but when there is too much, it does injure it, and when there is too little, it does not satisfy.'\textsuperscript{16}

Food must not be too much or too little but proportionate to our body so that it may sustain and nourish our life.
CHAPTER VII

Utensils & Tools:

Various utensils and tools have been mentioned in the A.B. and S.B. Some of these were used for household purposes and some for the performance of sacrifice. The S.B., mentions leathern bag (Kumbhi bhastrā 1-1-2-7), wooden jar (1-1-2-8), strainer (Pavitra, 1-1-3-1), mortar (Adri 1-1-4-6), mortar and pestle (ulūkhala-musala 1-1-4-7), wooden sword (sphya), winnowing basket (Śūrpa, 1-1-4-8), shovel and hoe (upaveśa, 1-2-1-3), iron bowl (13-3-4-5), plate (śarāva), pot (kumbhi) and the like utensils. Mortar and pestle were used to husk paddy and wheat; hence the S.B. states—'Food is prepared by the mortar and the pestle.' The strainer was called Pavitra or Daśā-pavitra, which was made of goat's hair and sheep's wool. 'Daśā' means border; as the strainer was bordered on both ends it was called Daśā-pavitra. Various types of ladles made of the holy fig tree wood were used in sacrifice such as Juhu, Sruk, Upabhṛt, Dhrubā, Upayamanī, Darvi, etc.

In the Aśvamedha three kinds of needles were used made of copper, silver and gold respectively. From the evidence of S.B. 13-2-2-16 we know that three kinds of knives made of copper, iron and gold were used in the Aśvamedha. Wooden bowls made of Aśvattha, Fig and Banyan wood were in use.

---

1. 7-5-1-12—'Ulūkhala-musalābhyaṃ hyevānnaṃ kriyate,'
2. S.B. 13-2-10-3—'Trayya sūcyo bhavanti, lohamayyo rajata hiraṇyāḥ.'
3. S.B. 13-2-2-16—'Hiraṇyayo śvasya śāso bhavati. Lohamayyāḥ paryahgānām, āyasa itareṣām.'
The A.B. refers to big earthen jars called Mahāvīra (1-4-2), chairs (Āsandī) made of fig wood (8-37-1), bell-metal utensils (8-37-4). Oven (ukhā) and the process of preparing an oven are mentioned in S.B. 6-5-1-6. The oven was made of clay mixed with sand of gravel, stone and iron dust.

Wine-goblet or surā kaṃsam is mentioned in A.B. 7-35-4.
CHAPTER VIII

Medicine:

The terms Bhiṣak, Bheṣaj, Bheṣajyati meaning physician, medicine and treatment respectively abound in the Brs. The twin gods Aśvins were regarded as the physicians of the gods.1 Nature-cure was the main treatment in the Vedic age, i.e., treatment with the aid of natural elements like water, air, heat and earth. ‘Within water is medicine.’ 2 ‘Fire or heat, says A.B. 1-5-2 ‘is the medicine to restore life.’ 3 Soma is regarded as the king of creepers and medicinal plants. S.B. 3-1-3-7 refers to ointment for sores and itches. Vedic Aryans were fully conversant with the fact that contact with sun-rays infuses medicinal or healing power in water. A.B. 8-37-4 makes a noteworthy observation—‘Rain-water charged with the rays of the sun is a medicinal or potent drink.’ 4 The Vedic fathers had a clear knowledge of toxicology and knew that sour things like tamarind, curd and the like neutralise the ill effect or stupor caused by intoxicating drinks and drugs. Thus A.B. 2-8-4 records how the gods Mitra and Varuṇa neutralised the intoxicating effect of intoxicants with curd.

The term Bhiṣak and its derivatives are often used figuratively. Thus Brahmā is called the physician of the

1. S.B. 12-7-2-3 & A.B. 1-4-1.—‘Aświnau vai devānām bhiṣajau.’
2. S.B. 5-1-4-6.—‘Apsu bheṣaṇam.’
3. ‘Devo (agnih) jīvātave kṛtaḥ.’
4. ‘Atha yadāstapavarṣyā āpo bhavanti teṣaḥca ha vai brahmavar-casam.’
sacrifice; he treats sacrifice to make it whole. The goddess of speech or Sarasvatī was looked upon as a medicine or treatment for defective speech. We read in the S.B., ‘gods said to Sarasvatī, thou art healing medicine.’ Likewise Dakṣiṇā or gift in sacrifice is called a healing balm or medicine.

The wonderful knowledge of anatomy of the Vedic Aryans is finely displayed in the description and minute details of the different organs of the animal sacrificed in Paśu-yāga in S.B. 3-8-2 and 3-8-3. Every limb and every external and internal part of the organism is mentioned therein including fat, liver, omentum, pancreas, lungs, details of the cardiac region, pubic region, sacrum, spinal column and the like. S.B. 11-4-1-5 gives a detailed description of all the teeth—upper row, lower row, molar, incisor and frontal ones. It was also known to the ancient seers that the bones of fat persons and lean persons do not vary though their external appearances, their bulk vary widely. ‘Bones of a fat person and a lean person are alike.’ This observation and similar remarks throw sufficient light on the knowledge of osteology of the ancients. Observations on the growth of the foetus in the embryo are also met with in the Brāhmaṇas. ‘A six months’ embryo is the last that lives when born’, says the S.B. That is, foetus below six months’ development does not survive if born prematurely. The same Br. observes that the foetus becomes full-fledged in the tenth month.

Detailed knowledge of medicine and anatomy are met with in the A.V. which is beyond the scope of our work.

---

5. A.B. 5-25-9.—‘Yajñasya haiva bhiṣaṇaḥ yad brāhmaṇa yajñasyaiva tad bhṛṣaṇam kṛtvā harati.’
6. 12-7-1-12.—‘Te Sarasvatīmabrāvan tvāṃ vai bhaṣaṇaṃ bāṃśamastī.’
7. S.B. 12-7-1-14.—‘Bhṛṣaṇam daksīṇaḥ.’
8. S.B. 11-1-6-34.—‘Samāvantaṃ evaṁ śtìti medyaṭaśca kṛṣṭaścā bhavantī.’
9. 9-5-1-63.—‘Samāṣṭyaḥ va antamā garbhaḥ jāta jñātvantī.’
10. 4-5-2-4.—‘Yādā vai garbhaḥ saṃprādho bhavitayathā daśamāṣyaḥ.’
Diseases :

A few diseases are mentioned in the Brs. Goitre is mentioned in A.B. 1-4-8. Sāyaṇa explains this text thus—‘He was attacked with the disease called Gaṇḍamālā or goitre.’ Dropsy is mentioned in the A. B. King Hariścandra had a hundred wives but no issue. He prayed to God Varuṇa for a son and by the grace of Varuṇa a son was born to him. The king promised to offer the son in a sacrifice to Varuṇa but as he did not keep his word he was attacked with dropsy due to the visitation of Varuṇa’s wrath. ‘His belly became double’ i.e. he was down with dropsy. Sāyaṇa says, this disease is also called Mahodara. Jaundice and constipation are mentioned in the S.B. If one does not act up to a certain injunction he will die of constipation. The Y. V. in general and the V.S. in particular, mention the disease Tuberculosis (Yakṣmā) several times as a dreaded fatal disease. The seer offers sincere prayers to god Rudra in the Śatarudrīya hymn of the V.S. to purge the world of the deadly disease Tuberculosis (‘Ayakṣma jagat’).
Agriculture & Pasturage:

Agriculture was the main profession of the Vedic Aryans and they devised ways and means to improve their methods of cultivation. Ploughs and bullocks were essential and indispensable for the purpose of cultivation. There are many hymns in the R.V. which highly praise agriculture or cultivation of land. Both the Indo-Aryans and Indo-Iranians were agricultural people. Just as the terms ‘Sasya’ (food-grain), ‘Krśi’ (cultivation), ‘Yava’ (barley) etc., are met with in the R.V., similarly the corresponding Zend terms like ‘hahya’, ‘Karesh’, ‘Yao’ are met with in the Avesta. A person called Pythi Vainya is credited with the origination of ploughing in A.V. 8-10-24. Paddy, wheat and barley were the principal food-grains that were grown. The Br. texts record that paddy which was sown in the rains ripened in autumn whereas barley which was sown in winter ripened in summer.

There is also reference to two harvests a year. S.B. 1-6-1-3 mentions the different processes of agriculture as ‘ploughing and sowing, reaping and threshing, tilling the plants’ etc.¹ Cultivated plants are called Grāmya Ośadhi as distinct from indigenous rank vegetation or forest growth termed ‘Āraṇya-Ośadhi’ in S.B. 11-1-7-2. When the Aryans came down to the Gangetic plain, rice became

---

¹ ‘Krśanto ha smaiva pūrve vapanto yauti lunauto’pare mṛṣantah śāsvat haibhvo ‘krṣapacya evaṣadhayaḥ pecire.’
their staple food and main item of cultivation. Hence autumn was looked upon as an important season being the harvesting season and we know rice (paddy) ripens in autumn. ‘Corn ripens in autumn.’\(^2\) Cow-dung was used for manuring the lands. ‘Cow-dung surcharges the earth with sap; hence cow-dung is collected (for cultivation),’ says S.B.—2-1-1-7.\(^3\) Atharva-Veda 3-14-3-4 refers to the value of the natural manure of animals.

During the coronation or consecration ceremony of the king in the Rājasūya sacrifice when the priests proclaimed the monarchy of the king-designate to the people addressing the king, they (priests) said,—‘O king! this state is given to thee for agriculture (kṛṣyai), for the common good (kṣemāya) and for prosperity, progress (pośāya).’ This statement proves the great importance attached to agriculture by the Vedic Aryans. ‘Agriculture is verily food,’ says the S.B.\(^4\)

From the above it is clear that cows and bullocks were regarded as prized possessions by the Vedic Aryans for manure and ploughing respectively. Furrowing of land was done with ploughshares drawn by bullocks. The cow was looked upon as a sacred animal, as the mother earth in a miniature scale, ‘a microcosm of the universe’ in the language of Swami Vivekananda. She was held in high esteem and addressed as goddess, Aditi, etc. A.B. 7-32-2 is a passage in point. ‘This cow is veritable Earth’, says the S.B.\(^5\)

Because the Aryans of the Vedic age realised the utility of cattle, they have described this priceless possession in terms of food, in terms of home, nourishment and wealth. Agriculture or cultivation was impossible without cattle, hence cattle meant food and wealth to them. ‘Cattle

2. S.B. 11-2-7-32,—‘Śarad brahma taśmād yadaś īśayaṁ pacyate.’
3. ‘Tadasya evainametat prthivyai rasena samardhayati, taśmād-khukaṁ sambharati purṣya iti.’
4. 7-2-2-8—‘Annapūrṇa vai kṛṣīṁ.’
5. 5-1-3-3—‘Īyāṁ vai vaśā prāṇīḥ.’
means prosperity or nourishment,"⁶ 'Goods mean cattle"⁷, 'Riches mean cattle"⁸ i.e., wealth lies in cattle, 'Cattle means food"⁹ says the S.B. They could not think of a home without cattle or domestic beasts. Hence the S.B. goes still farther and states in clear terms—'Cattle means a home'.¹⁰ The English word 'pecuniary' meaning money is derived from the Latin term 'Pecu' which means Pasū or cattle. Thus the very term 'Pecu', i.e. cattle means wealth in a secondary sense.

Tending cattle was a major occupation and an important task. Salt is essential for seasoning the food or drink of the cattle. This fact was well known to the ancients. Not only salt itself but even saline soil is good for cattle. 'Salt soil is suitable for cattle'.¹¹ 'Salt means cattle',¹² 'Grace or wealth abides in the cattle'.¹³

The A.B. 19-4 differentiates domestic animals (grāmyāḥ paśavaḥ) from animals residing in forests (āraṇyāḥ paśavaḥ) i.e., wild beasts. Dwellings of human beings are the resort of domestic animals.¹⁴

Occupations & Industries :

The duties or occupations of the original four castes, the Brāhmaṇa, Rājanya, Vaiśya and Śūdra have been discussed at length in Book I, Chapter II under the heading 'The Caste System'. The profession of the Brāhmaṇas or priestly class was to act as minister and adviser to the king, as spiritual guides, teachers, and priests in sacrifices. They gave counsel to the king in both spiritual and political matters. The Kṣatriyas were entrusted with the administra-

---

6. 3-1-4-14—'Puṣṭih paśavaḥ.'
7. 3-7-3-13—'Paśavo vasu.'
8. 11-8-1-3—'Paśavo vai mahaḥ.'
9. 3-7-1-20—'Paśavo hi annam.'
10. 1-8-2-14—'Grha hi paśavaḥ.'
11. 2-1-1-6—'Paśavyamūṣaramityāhuḥ.'
12. 5-2-1-16—'Paśavo vā uṣā.'
13. P.B. 13-2-2—Śrīrva paśavaḥ.'
14. A.B. 3-12-13—'Grha hi paśuṇaṁ pratiṣṭhāḥ.'
tion of kingdom, maintenance of law and order, protection of the people and fighting enemies. Trade, commerce and agriculture were mainly in the hands of the Vaiśyas. The Śūdra community was enjoined upon to serve the three higher classes or castes. From the era of the Samhitās down to the ages numerous mixed castes emerged due to inter-caste marriages of every possible variety which were both Anuloma and Pratiloma. Different callings were prescribed for those cross-bred mixed castes; hence many new occupations came into existence which were not heard of during the early Vedic age.

A.B. 6-30-1 refers to industries of gods called ‘Deva-śilpa and industries of men. The word ‘Śilpa’ is mentioned and as illustration of industries, toy-making, glassworks, weaving, works of gold and chariotwright have been mentioned.¹⁵ In this passage ‘Hasti’ or elephant means elephant and suchlike toys, Kaṃsa means looking-glass i.e., glasswork, Vāsa refers to cloth-making or weaving, ‘Hiranyam’ refers to the calling of the goldsmith and ‘Aśvatariratha’ means construction of chariots fit to be drawn by she-mules. The last item at once proves the fact that chariots to be drawn by horses differed from those drawn by mules in size and shape. Chariotwrights held an important position in the society. They were called ‘Rathakāras’ and their representatives used to attend the coronation ceremony of the king. Carpenters (Takṣā), charioteers, leather-workers, wine-makers (surākṛtaḥ), acrobats have been mentioned in the A.B. and S.B. Weaving, knitting, sewing, embroidery were widely practised by the womenfolk. We have already dilated on this point in the discussion under the caption ‘Women and marriage’. A female embroiderer was called Peśaskari, ‘Peśa’ meaning ornamentation or embroidery. Plaiting of mats with the leaves and fibres of Plakṣa tree was also a profession for the ladies but it was also done by men. The S.B. refers to

¹⁵. ‘Tha śilpamadhitigamyate hasti, kaṃso, väso, hiranyam, aśvatarirathaḥ śilpam.’
brick-making (6-2-1-9), snake-charmers (13-4-3-9 'sarpavidyā'),
bird-catchers (13-4-3-13) etc. It is evident from S.B. 6-2-1
that the Aryans of that age were expert in the art of brick-making.
The bricks were necessary for the construction of colossal sacrificial altars. The references to vessels made of gold, silver,
bell-metal, lead, iron etc. prove the existence of goldsmiths, silversmiths, ironsmiths and workers in lead and bell-metal. Metals mentioned in the A.B. and the S.B. will be described under the heading 'Metals and Measurements'. Various vessels used in sacrifice and the pestle and mortar were made of stone.
Stone-cutting was one of the professions. The term Bhiṣak
refers to physicians. Dancing and singing were also resorted to by some as a means of livelihood as is known from the S.B.
Drivers of bullock-carts, grooms of horses and boatmen are also met with in the Br. texts. During the consecration or coro-
nation ceremony the king had to seek the consent of the representatives of the classes and castes, such as the chief priest,
commander-in-chief, the chief queen, other kings, headman of the village, chariotwright or Rathakāra, Takṣā or carpenter etc. (Vide the discussion of Ratna-Haviṣ ceremony under the caption 'The Coronation Ceremony' in Book II). These representatives were called king-makers (Rāja-kṛtaḥ). The inclusion of two artisan classes viz, chariotwright and carpenter in the list of king-makers goes to prove the importance attached and high status assigned to industry in the Vedic age.

Hunting was a pastime with the kings and nobles though it is not mentioned as an occupation. Killing of wild beasts was also necessary for the protection of domestic animals and human beings. The huntsman was called Govikarta.

- Flute-players, lute-players and drummers have already been referred to under the caption 'Music and Dance'.

The S.B. refers also to potters (Kulāla) (11-8-1-1). Women dyers were called 'Rajayitri', women workers in thorns, 'kan-
takikari' and female basket-makers were termed 'vidalaka-
ri'. Rope-makers used to prepare rope from the bark of the tree known as Rajjudāla or 'cordia myxa' (S.B. 13-4-4-5).

The sixth chapter of the thirteenth kāṇḍa of the S.B. enumerates the sacrifice known as Puruṣamedha. The large number
of victims symbolically offered in this sacrifice comprises more than seventy human beings differing in their castes and occupations. One will be struck dumb with wonder to find so many occupations existing in India at such a hoary antiquity, at least before 1200 B.C. The list of victims is enumerated in the thirtieth chapter of the V.S. Hence this chapter on Puruṣamedha is all-important and the discussion of occupations of the later Vedic age will remain incomplete if the occupations mentioned in the V.S. are not taken into account. The following professions are met with in the text concerned, Minstrel (Magadha), actor (śai-lūśa), herald or panegyrist (sūta), Counsellor (Sabhākara), charioteer (Rathakāra), carpenter (Takṣā), potter (kulāla), blacksmith (karmāra), jeweller (Maṇikāra), barber or sower (vapa), arrowsmith (Iṣukāra), bow-maker (Dhanuṣkāra), maker of the bow-string (Jyākāra), rope-maker (Raju-sarja), huntsman (Mṛgayu), dog-rearer or dog-keeper (Śvanin), bird catcher or fisherman (Puṇjiṣṭha), female cane-worker or basket maker (Vidalakāri), female worker in thorns (Kantakikāri), female expert in embroidery (Peśaskari), physician (Bhiṣaja), astro-nomer (Nakṣatradarśa), elephant-keeper (Hastipa), horse-keeper or groom (Aśvapa), cowherd (Gopāla), shepherd (Avi-pāla), goatherd (Aja-pāla), husbandman i.e., cultivator (kīnāśa), distiller of liquor (surākāra), housekeeper (Gṛhapa), charioteer (kṣattā), assistant charioteer (Anuksattā), fuel-fetcher, wood-gatherer (Dārvāhāra), image-maker (Peśitā), washer-woman (vāsa-palpūli), female dyer (Rajayitri), spy or informer (Piśuna), door-keeper (Kṣattā), assistant door-keeper (Anuksattā), horseman (Aśva-sāda), tax-collector (Bhāga-dugha), a female expert in preparing ungents and cosmetics (Anjani-kari), female scabbard-maker (kośa-kari), furrier (Ajina-sandha), tanner (carmāra), fisherman (Dhīvara), dealer in dried fish (śauṣ-kala), goldsmith (Hiranyakāra), merchant (vanija), keeper of forest (vanapa), lute-player (Vīnā-vāda), flute-player (Tūnavadhma), conch-blower (Śankha-dhma), acrobat, a pole-dancer (Vamśa-nartin), headman of a village (Grāmanī), astrologer (Gaṇaka), and the herald or announcer (Abhikrōṣaka). From this important text of the V.S. we find that all these occupations and industries received religious sanction, as the men following
these occupations were offered as victims in the Puruṣamedha sacrifice. This list also proves that some occupations were earmarked for the women-folk and that women of certain castes had to take to some profession for their livelihood.

**Trade & Commerce:**

As a rule, Vaiśyas were entrusted with agriculture, trade and commerce. Vaiśyas who amassed fortune out of agriculture took to trade and commerce. They were called Vaṇik or Śreṣṭhi and held exalted position amongst the Vaiśyas. The S.B. mentions the terms 'Vaṇik' and 'Vāṇijya'. The śreṣṭhi occurs in the A.B. in the sense of merchant-prince or headman of a guild. Embroidered cloth, garments, turbans, deer-skin, goat-skin, wool of the sheep, ornaments of gold and silver, food-grains, cattle and the like were the commodities of trade and commerce. We shall discuss about coins, measurement and currency under 'Metals and Measurement's. Gold coins called Nīška were in use. Gold, rice or food-grains, cloth and cattle, cows in particular were the medium of barter. These were current as units of value.

There cannot be a shade of doubt that the sea or ocean was well known to the Aryans of the Vedic age. Not only did they possess knowledge of the ocean but there were sea-going huge vessels and maritime trade as well. The RgVeda mentions vessels propelled by hundred oars (śatāritranāva). 'The ocean swells round the earth' says the S.B.\(^{16}\) Ocean or 'Samudra' has been mentioned several times in the A.B. 'A king who will be Ekarāt (one supreme head) will rule over the whole earth stretching as far as the ocean or girdled by the ocean like a paramount sovereign.\(^{17}\) The fathomless deep is mentioned in many Br. texts. T.B. 2-2-9-2. refers to the saline water of the sea and remarks, 'hence

\(^{16}\) 7-4-1-9—'Samudro bīmāmabhītaḥ pinvate.'

\(^{17}\) 8-30-1—'Sarvabhaumaḥ sarvāyuṣa āntāḥ parārdhāt prīthivyai samudraparyantāya ekārāditi'.
men do not drink the water of the sea’. The Vedic Aryans were conversant with the fact that the sea never transgresses its limits; the high water level reached by the full tide remains the same. This observation is recorded in A.B. 5-23-1.

Money-lending was allowed and it became the profession of some members of the Vaiśya community. They were called ‘Kuṣidin’ and lent money on interest. The S.B. mentions such money-lenders. ‘The money-lenders or userers have assembled’.18

House-Building:

The art of house-building attained a considerable standard in the Brāhmaṇical period. Various types of houses, forts and cities have been mentioned. The terms Pura, Purī, Pūḥ, meaning cities and forts, Prākāra meaning ‘ramparts’ or ‘walls’ occur again and again. The A.B. refers to a city created by the Asuras19 and Sāyaṇa explains the term ‘puraḥ’ there as a ‘city bordered with wall’.20 Men lived in well-built houses divided into several apartments fitted with doors, windows and bolts. The S. B. mentions castles, ramparts made of stone, ‘Asma-pura’ (3-1-3-11) and houses with safest roofs’ ‘chhardiṣā śantamena (7-4-2-8)’. Expert masons knew how to fashion palaces of gold. ‘Gold mansions’ occur in S.B. 13-5-1-11.21 Houses of gold, silver and iron are mentioned in the A.B. 1-4-6.22

The construction of different types of altar for different Vedic sacrifices involved an intricate knowledge of geometry and architecture. Some altars resembled the figure of women, some of semi-circle, some of circle, some resembled flying falcons. More

18. 13-4-3-11—‘Kuṣidina upasametbhavanti.’
19. 1-4-6—‘Asurā imānave lokā puro’kurvata.’
20. ’Puro’kurvata prākaraveśṭita-nagarādi kṛta vantaḥ.’
21. ‘Sa. . . . . . . ajagāmed hiranyavimitāni’. Sāyaṇa comments—‘hiranyavimitāni hiranyanirmītāni saudhāni’.
22. ‘Ayasmāyāṁ . . . . . . raṣṭāṁ . . . . . . hariṣāṁ’.

Developed architecture.
than six hundred bricks were needed to erect complex types of altars. The construction of the fire-altar with 10,800 (ten thousand and eight hundred) bricks shaped like a colossal flying falcon with wings outspread bespeaks superb architectural skill. The intricate process of the construction of this fire-altar is recorded in the S.B. Such altars can be termed sculptural architecture or architectural sculpture because the art of sculpture must shake hands with architecture in the creation of such altars.

Good roads and thoroughfares were essential for communication and hence the art of road-construction gradually improved. Royal thoroughfare was called "Rājapatha" or 'Sruti' whereas the national highways was called 'Mahāpatha'. A.B. 18-3, mentions both Sruti and Mahāpatha. It seems that the latter was connected with and fed by many minor thoroughfares leading to different parts of the country. The former was comparatively free from dangers and its construction was better than the Mahāpatha. Rājapatha is comfortable and a short cut whereas Mahāpatha leads to various directions, observes the A.B. Roads connected villages with one another. Roads marking the boundaries of villages used to run parallel to each other.\[23\]

**Transport:**

Chariots drawn either by horses or by mules and carts drawn by bullocks were common conveyances. Chariots were also used for hunting and warfare. Chariots drawn by horses differed in size and shape from those drawn by mules. Again, some chariots were drawn by a single horse while others by two horses. The chariot drawn by a single horse is mentioned in A.B. 5-25-5.\[24\] Chariots drawn by she-mules used to run very fast. The A.B. refers to such

\[23\] S.B. 13-2-4-2—'Samadhvānaḥ krāmeyuh samantikaṃ grāma-yoḥ grāmāntau suśt'.

\[24\] 'Yathā ha va asthūriṇāpikena yāsyat' : Śāyaṇa explains thus, Asthūriṇāśva ratha-vājī'.
chariots called Așvatarī-ratha. There is reference to cart in the Soma-yāga also. The Soma creeper regarded and honoured as a king was placed on a cart called Soma-śakata. The different parts of a cart, šakata, such as yuga or yoke, Śamyā or yoke-pin etc., are mentioned in S.B. 3-5-1-24.

All wheeled vehicles were generally referred to by the term 'cakra' alone. Thus we read in the S.B.—'gods were driving about in wheels', i.e., wheeled vehicles. A matchless chariot was called 'Asama-ratha' and one gloriously poised on a chariot was termed 'Rathecitra'. Descriptions of village headmen and soldiers moving colourfully in chariots are met with in the S.B. The different parts of a chariot are described in the T.B. 1-5-12-5 such as wheels, axle, yoke, the pole connecting the yoke with the chariot, the seat etc. In this passage the journey of god Prajāpati is described. He wanted to go to heaven in a chariot. The different metres became the different parts of that chariot. The metres Gāyatī and Jagatī became the wheels. Uṣṇik and Trṣṭup were transformed into the connecting pole. Bṛhatī became the high seat of the chariot; Anuṣṭup and Paṅkti were the horses of the chariot.

Ferry boats called Naukā or Nāva to cross rivers and sea-going strong-built vessels are referred to. The A.B. refers to boats wherewith one can cross easily (Sutarmā Nauḥ 1-3-2). A.B. 6-29-5 makes an important observation with regard to sea-going vessels. It mentions a particular kind of vessel called Sairāvatī wherewith one can cross the sea. 'Those desirous of crossing the sea should board the vessel known as Sairāvatī'. The mythological story of the great deluge occurs in S.B. 1-8-1. There we read how Manu built himself a strong vessel able to stand the rage of wind and water and kept himself afloat in that vessel which sailed

25. 6-8-1-1—'Te devāscakramacaran : caṅreṇa hi devāscarantuḥ.'
26. 'Tad yathā samudraṁ praplaveran evaṁ haiva te praplavante yathā sairāvatīṁ nāvaṁ pārakāmāḥ . saṁāroheyuḥ' : Sa−yaṇa comments—'samudrasya paratiragamanakṣmāḥ purnaṁ sairāva−tīṁ nāvaṁ saṁāroheyuḥ.'
over the mighty waters of the illimitable fathomless deep. Different parts of a ship such as spars, oars, mast etc., have been described in S.B. 3-5-1-14. Yajña or sacrifice is often described as a boat that carries the sacrificer to heaven. It is a common stock-in-trade simile in the Brāhmaṇas. Thus the daily sacrifice known as Agnihotra is compared to a ship in S.B. 2-3-3-15 which observes—‘The Agnihotra, truly, is the ship (that sails) heavenwards. The Āhavanīya and Gārhapatya are the two sides of that heaven-bound ship, and the offerer of milk is its steersman.'²⁷ ‘He who goes to the sea without a ship does never come out of it’, observes the P.B.²⁸

**Metals & Measurements:**

The A.B. mentions gold, silver (7-32-11), bell-metal (6-30-1) and iron. S.B. adds to this list lead and copper. ‘Lead is neither iron nor gold’.¹ ‘Copper is not gold; it is red in colour’.² In this text ‘Lohāyas’ means copper and not iron. Simply ‘Ayas’ means iron. In the later Vedic age the word ‘Ayas’ was used with different adjectives prefixed to mean either copper or iron. Thus ‘Lohāyas’ or Lohitāyas meant copper whereas Śyāmāyas or Kārṇāyas signified iron. Gold was looked upon as a mark of nobility whereas iron as a mark of the common people.

As for measurement we find reference to definite weights of gold indicating a gold currency in the later Vedic age. Thus Gold currency. S.B. 5-5-5-16 mentions a gift or Dakṣiṇā consisting of three hundred gold coins.³ Here śatamāṇa or ‘measures of hundred’ mean weight of a

²⁷. ‘Naurha vā eṣa svargyā yadagnihotraṁ tasyā etasya navāḥ svargyāya śāvanīyaścaiva gārhapatyaśca nau-maṇḍe; athaiṁ eva navayo yat kṣīraḥ.’

²⁸. 14-5-17—‘Yo vā aplavaḥ samudraṁ prasarāṁ na sa tata udeṭi’.

1. S.B. 12-7-1-17—‘Sīsan na ayo na hiraṇyaṁ.’

2. S.B. 5-4-1-2—‘Na hiraṇyaṁ yallohāyasam, ‘lohāyasam itohita Ḗva.’

3. ‘Tasyai triṇī śatamāṇāni hiraṇyaṁ daksīṇā.’
hundred kṣṇalas. 'Gold weighing hundred grains', 'four
gold plates weighing hundred grains' are also mentioned. Lead
was also used as a medium of barter or exchange. Spirituous
liquor called Parisrut was purchased in exchange of lead. Gold
was produced by smelting ore.

Different parts of the human hand were regarded as
units of measurements for measuring the length, breadth and
thickness of any object. The fingers (Aṅguli), the portion
from the wrist to the elbow (Aratni), the span or stretch from
the tip of the thumb to the tip of the index finger (Prādeśa)
were standards of measurements. The S.B. calls the
finger the lowest unit of measurement. 'The lowest units of
measurement are the fingers'. The term 'Pāda' (foot) appears
as a measure of length in the same Br. This term is also
used to indicate a measure of weight. As a
fraction it means a quarter and this sense is
derived from that of one foot out of four
feet of a quadruped; hence the term 'ṣapha'
cleft hoof) means an eighth part. The R.V., the A.V., T.S.,
S.B. etc., use the term, 'ṣapha' in this sense of a fraction, i.e.,
'one-eighth'. The A.B., S.B., C.U. use the term 'Prādeśa'
in the sense of a span. A man's stride called 'Prakrama'
is mentioned as a unit of measurement in the S.B., but the
exact length denoted by the said term has not been men-
tioned. The term 'Prādeśa' seems to originate from the
index finger or forefinger which is the indicator (Prā-diś);
hence the span from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the fore-
finger when stretched out is called Prādeśa, a common unit
of measurement for all times and climes. The term 'Pra-
sṛta' is met with in the S.B. as a measure of capacity meaning

4. S.B. 12-7-2-13—'Suvarṇam hiraṇyaṁ bhavati......katamanapr
bhavati.'
5. S.B. 13-4-1-6—'Catvāri ca suvarṇāni katamanāni hiraṇyāni.'
6. S.B. 5-1-2-14—'Sīsaena parisrutaṁ krīpāti.'
7. S.B. 6-1-3-5—'Ayaso hiraṇyaṁ tasmat ayaso bahudhmatō hiraṇ-
yasankhaṁimalva bhavati.'
8. 10-2-1-2—'Tasyādavams mātrā yadaṁgulayaḥ.'
9. 6-5-3-2, 7-2-1-7, 8-7-2-17 etc.
10. 10-2-3-1—'Trīṇ prācaḥ prakramani prakramati.'
‘a handful’.

This term literally means ‘stretched out’, ‘expanded’; in the present context it indicates the hollowed palm ‘stretched out’, to receive something. Similarly the term ‘Añjalí’ meant two handfuls joined together, i.e., the double of Prasṛta. An earthen pot called Śarāba was used as a measure of corn. The T.B. and the S.B. mention this measurement. ‘Rice-pudding prepared from Nivāra corn measuring seventeen śarāvas’. He places pudding made of Nivāra corn measuring seventeen śarāvas meant for Bṛhaspati’. The term ‘Vyāma’ used in connection with measurement indicates the span from the tip of the middle finger of one hand to the tip of the middle finger of another hand of a person standing with arms outstretched; that is taken to be the height of a man. S.B. 10-2-3- is a passage in point which gives us the different measurements of the sacrificial altar.

**SUMMARY OF BOOK I**

There were four main castes which consisted of the Brāhmaṇas, the Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and the Śūdras. The Viś or Vaiśya representing the commoner formed the base of the social structure on which the Brāhmaṇa, and the Kṣatriya rested. The Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya were superior to the Vaiśya, while all the higher classes were superior to the Śūdra. The kings and the nobles represented the ruling or the military class and the real power of the state rested with them. The priestly class was made up of Brāhmaṇas. There was keen competition between the ruling class and the priestly class in the bid for social ascendancy; there was also close co-operation between the two classes to maintain the balance of power and to keep under subjection the Vaiśya and the Śūdra classes for the smooth functioning of the social machinery. The Kṣatriyas were temporal lords whereas the Brāhmaṇas were spiritual lords. Every king had his family priest or

11. 4-5-10-7—‘Praśptamātraṃ vañjalimātraṃ va.’

12. T.B. 1-3-4-5—‘Naivāreṣa saptadaśa-saśāvena.’

13. S.B. 5-1-4-12—‘Atha Bṛhaspatyaṃ caraṃ naivāraṃ saptadaśa-saśāvanī nirvapati.’
royal chaplain whose function was that of a Prime Minister; besides religious matters he advised the king on socio-political matters as well and acted as a go-between between the ruler and the ruled. The Vaiśyas were the tenants and the nobles were the landlords. The king was the owner of all lands. The Śūdra community was raised from the non-Aryan tribes, termed Dasyus who submitted to the hegemony of the Aryans. The Śūdras thus comprised many non-Aryan aboriginal races and tribes. They became serfs and served the three upper classes. They along with the Vaiśyas formed the bulk of the Viṣ or commoner. People engaged in agriculture, pastoral pursuits and trade, paid tribute to the king and nobles for the protection afforded them. The Vaiśya could be evicted from his land at the sweet will of the land owner. The Śūdras had no right of property or security of life; he could be slain at the sweet will of his master.

It seems the priestly class attained the height of its glory during the age of the A.B. and S.B. which extol the power, importance and the glory of the priests in hyperbolic terms. But during the last phase of the later Vedic age, i.e., during the age of the Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads the priests began to lose their hold on the ruling class and their importance as an organ of administration. As sacrifices were underrated in the age of the Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads, naturally the priests were also no more held in esteem. The ruling power came to prominence overshadowing the priestly class in that age and the epic age as well.

Notwithstanding the demarcation of castes along with their duties there is very little evidence in the Vedic literature of untouchability of low castes and impurity caused by their contact which is a salient characteristic of the later system of Dharmasūtras and Smṛti-texts. The characteristics of caste in the Vedic age are heredity, pursuit of a common occupation, and restrictions on inter-marriage.

Much stress is given on the descent from a Rṣi, and on purity of gotra, as a rule. The king during the consecration ceremony had to mention his Rṣi, the origin of his line. Notwithstanding this stress on the purity of the breed, we find instances of mixed castes who were born
of cross-breeding between different castes and sub-castes occupying positions of honour. Sage Kavaśa, son of Ilūśa, is an illustration in point. Likewise we come across cases where men of higher castes have been degraded and classed with outcasts on account of their crimes or wrong conduct. The sons of Viśvāmitra became progenitors of inferior castes and outcasts as a result of their father's curse. For his spiritual attainment and knowledge, par excellence, S.B. 11-6-2-10 states that king Janaka, though a Kṣatriya, became a Brāhmaṇa. The sages declared him to be a Brāhmaṇa. Thus in these instances conduct and intellectual or spiritual attainment and not heredity get the upper hand in determining the caste.

The Vaiśya and the Śūdra classes were gradually upgraded so far as their social status was concerned. The pattern of society was simple in the early Vedic age. During the later Vedic era it become complicated as various mixed castes evolved with new occupations allotted to them. The importance of the Vaiśya and the Śūdra communities was realised by the higher two castes. Gradually the Vaiśya was approximating to the position of tenants and nobles, and the Śūdra was approximating more and more to the position to which the humbler free man was reduced. The growing complication of the social machinery gradually abolished the relation of simple slavery. Thus while some of the aboriginal inhabitants became slaves, pure and simple, the bulk of the Śūdra community stood in the relationship of serfs. Some mixed castes, the Rathakāras or chariotwrights, e.g., enjoyed an esteemed position in the society and were put on a par with the Vaiśyas. They had the right to place their sacrificial fire like three upper castes and enjoyed the special prerogative of being designated as king-makers along with other king-makers. During the performance of the horse-sacrifice the royal paraphernalia that attended upon the horse for its protection when it was let loose is allowed to take rest in the house of a chariotwright when it encamped on the way. Chariots were the main conveyances for traffic, trade, warfare, hunting etc. Hence the importance of chariotwrights was realised by the state and society and an esteemed position was given to them. Their co-opera-
tion was essential for victory in war, success in hunting, smooth communication and traffic.

Inter-marriage among the castes had commenced. The three wives of the king, viz.—Mahiṣī, Vāvātā and Pariṇāktā belonged to the three castes, Kṣatriya, Vaiṣya and Šūdra respectively. Women of the šūdra community were kept as mistresses and concubines by the males of the three upper castes. Marriage was looked upon as a sacrament and not as a contract or companionate union. As a rule chastity and high moral tone obtained in the conjugal life. Stray instances of illicit love and moral laxity in married life are exceptions that go to prove the general rule.

Education was compulsory for the upper three castes who were eligible to be invested with the holy thread. There is no reference regarding any arrangement for imparting education to the Šūdras though their economic welfare was looked after by the state. There were residential institutions or forest schools run by learned sages for the education of the boys of higher castes. There were also peripatetic teachers called ‘Carakas’ who moved from place to place like mobile schools and offered instructions. Education was imparted free of cost. Parents had not to pay a farthing for the education of their children. The students were maintained by the villages skirting the sylvan institutions. They begged cooked food as alms from the villagers daily. The syllabus was varied and exhaustive which was drawn up with an eye to both the man-making and brain-making aspects of education. The śnātakas or graduates were held in high esteem in the society. Names of learned women occur in the pages of the Brs., but we do not know whether there existed institutions to offer instructions to women like those meant for boys. People longed for the birth of learned daughters just as they did for learned sons. It seems the womenfolk received their instructions at home from their fathers and relations.

Fine arts were cultivated; women were adept in embroidery, knitting, sewing, weaving and dyeing. The Brs. testify to high class embroidery works done by ladies. Music, both vocal and instrumental, and dance were widely practised by both the sexes but mostly by the fair sex.
Various professions came into existence to provide for the livelihood of the various castes, sub-castes and mixed castes. The Śukla-Yajurveda mentions more than seventy professions some of which were earmarked for women. Those who practised these professions are mentioned as symbolic victims in the sacrifice known as Puruṣamedha. This fact proves that the occupations received religious sanction. The ruler arranged for the economic solvency of the subjects. There was a gold currency; gold and silver ornaments were in use. Besides gold and silver mention is made of brass, copper, iron, lead and tin.

Agriculture was the main occupation. Wheat, paddy and barley were the staple food. Honey, liquors of various kinds, milk, etc., were used as drinks. Some juice was a hieratic drink.

Maritime trade was in existence. There were sea-going vessels equipped with hundred oars. The A.B. distinctly states that while going to distant lands across the sea people used to take provisions and drinking water with them that might last for a good length of time.

Village life and township were settled facts. The headmen of villages called the Grāmapīs held important offices and were included in the list of Ratnins or king-makers. From the references to Pūḥ, Pur, Puri and famous capitals such as Videha of king Janaka and Kāśi of king Ajāstaśatru we may safely conclude that some towns and cities were in existence. Public highways and good roads were constructed known as Mahā-patha, Rājapatha etc.

The centre of gravity of the Aryan civilisation had shifted from the Indus valley to the Gangetic plain and names of new states and peoples are met with for the first time such as Kuru, Pañcāla, Īśīnara, Vaśa, Uttarakuru, Uttara-madra, Kosala, Kāśi, Vidarbha, Videha, Magadha etc. The west recedes into the background; the central and eastern territories come into limelight. Very low castes and outcasts such as Śabara, Andhra, Punḍra, Pulinda, Mūtiba, Nīcyā, Apācyā, Niśāda, Bainda, Kaivarta, Mārgāra (huntsman), Kirāta, Jambhaka, Paulkasa, Caṇḍāla etc., are met with in the Brs. and the V.S. which is contemporaneous with the Brs.
BOOK II

THE POLITICAL & MILITARY ASPECT

CHAPTER 1

THE SYSTEM OF GOVT. AND THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF MONARCHY

Since the Ṛg-vedic period monarchy was the system of govt. prevailing in the Vedic age. The term ‘Rājan’ occurs frequently in the Ṛg-veda. Some kings are mentioned by name as well, e.g., king Citra residing near the river Saraswati. Strifes between tribal kings or chieftains and the historic battle fought by Sudasa in which ten kings took active part are also narrated in the Ṛg-veda. The Kṣatriya caste was called Rājanya, i.e., the ruling class or the military class. The conception of kingship was ingrained in the minds of the people and monarchical government was the rule of the day. The conception of kingship was not only confined to human beings but also obtained in the Vedic pantheon, animal world and vegetable kingdom. Soma and Indra were kings amongst gods. ‘Indra is the Kṣatriya among the gods’. The Sun-god or Āditya is the divine Kṣatriya or heavenly ruler. Amongst beasts the tiger is mentioned as the king and the lion, the overlord. ‘The tiger is the king of beasts’, ‘the lion is the overlord of all beasts’. The falcon is the king of birds. In the vegetable kingdom—‘Aśvattha

1. R.V. 8-21-18—‘Citra id rāja rājakā idanyake yake sarasvatimau.’
2. A.B. 7-34-5—‘Atha Indro vai daivataya kṣatriyo bhavati.’
3. A.B. 7-34-2—‘Ādityo vai daivaṃ kṣatram.’
4. S.B. 12-7-1-8—‘Vyāghra aranyānam paśūnāṃ rājā, simha aranyānam paśūnāṃ rājām.’
5. S.B. 12-7-1-6—‘Śyeno vāyasāṃ rājā.’
(Ficus religiosa) is the emperor and 'the banyan tree is the king of trees.' The A.B. mentions many kings such as king Hariścandra (7-33-1), king Parikṣita and his son Janamejaya, king Śaryāta Mānava, king Śatānika Sātrājīta (8-39-7), kings of Satvat people and kings of untouchable castes (8-38-3), kings of Kuru and Madra countries and kings of Uśīnara and Kuru-paṅcāla territories (8-38-3), etc. Both the A.B. and the S.B. (13-5-4) record the conquests of two Bharata kings, Dauḥṣanti and king Sātrājīta Śatānika.

As to the origin of kingship or institution of monarchy the A.B. recounts the following anecdote. Once the gods were defeated by the Asuras in every direction. At that time there was no king among the gods. Brooding over the cause of their signal defeat at the hands of the Asuras or demons thus said the gods—'Because we are without a king they have been able to defeat us; we shall elect a king.' All consented unanimously. They elected god Soma as their king and conquered all the directions (defeating the demons) guided by king Soma. This passage proves the emergence of kingship by election at the time of emergency or national calamity and the function of that king was more that of a military commander than of a constitutional ruler. Naturally the first king had to be elected whether in heaven or on earth but for that reason it should not be inferred that kingship was elective in character. All the reference to monarchy prove beyond a shade of doubt that hereditary kingship was the rule and inheritance by the law of primogeniture was the practice. Observes Dr. U. N. Ghosal,—'we have concrete evidence of the general prevalence of hereditary monarchy as well as of the survival of dynastic govt. during the present (i.e., later Vedic) period, but of elective monarchy there is hardly any

6. A.B. 7-35-6—'Yadaśvatthāh sāmrajyaṃ va etad vanaspaitinām.'
7. A.B. 7-35-5—'Kṣatraṃ ha va etad vanaspaitināṃ yannyagrodhaḥ.'
8. A.B. 1-3-3—'Te deve śvāvān arājataya va no Jayanti rāja-
naṁ karavāmaḥ iti tatheti. Te somaṃ rājāṇamakurvan. Te somaṇa
rajaś sarvā diśo'jayan.'
trace. In the latest Vedic period the hereditary principle is sufficiently established to make succession by primogeniture the normal rule'.

The conception of state came into being along with the evolution of kingship. The state was called Rā́jya or Rā́stra. State. The term Rā́stra is frequently met with in the Vedic literature from the Samhitā to the Brs. Kingship and kingdom, monarchy and the state were identified with each other as the relation between the two was inseparable. 'Kingship is state indeed', observes the A.B.20 'The king residing in his state is deemed well-established'.11 Observes the S.B., 'Kings are the upholders of states; they maintain or protect the kingdom.'12 'The king should be strong of arms'.

Different types of territory or states bespeaking different types of monarchy or suzerainty are enumerated in the Brāhmaṇaśas. Soma, Indra, Āditya etc., are called Rā́jā' or kings whereas god Varuṇa is termed Samrāṭ. Thus prays the earthly king to Varuṇa—'Varuṇa, the Samrāṭ universal sovereign, the lord of universal sovereigns, bestow universal sovereignty upon me'.14 Soma, again, is called not only king or Rā́jā but also 'Lord of Kings'—'Rājapati'.15 The term Mahārā́ja also occurs in both the A.B. and the S.B. in particular and Br. texts in general. As illustrations of Mahārā́ja or supreme kings the A.B. (7-35-8) enumerates names of such kings as—Janamejaya, Somaka Sāhadevya, Sṛnjaya, Kadrudaiṉaṉaṉ, Bhima-Vaidarba, Nagnajit Gāndhāra, Sanaśruta, Arindama, Kratuvid, Jānaki and Sudāsa Paijavana etc. 'All these rulers were great kings (Mahārā́ja) ;

10. 7-34-4—'Kṣatraṁ hi rā́ṣṭram.'
11. A.B. 8-37-4—'Iha kṣatriyo, rā́ṣtre vasan bhavati pratiśṭhita iva.'
12. 9-4-1-1—'Rā́jano vai rā́ṣtraprā́śaste hi rā́ṣtrapiḥ bhavati.'
13. 13-2-2-5—'Tasmād rā́ja bahuvaliḥ bhavukaḥ.'
14. S.B. 11-4-3-10—'Varuṇaḥ samrāṭ samrāṭpatiḥ samrā́jyaṁ asmin yajñāṁ mayi dadhātu.'
15. S.B. 11-4-3-9—'Somo rā́ja rā́japatiḥ.'
they attended with glory, oppressed (the enemy) like the sun and realised taxes from all directions'. 16 'After obtaining victory alone a king can become a Mahārāja', says the S.B., just as 'Indra became Mahendra after slaying Vṛtra'. 17

The paramount sovereign who rules or holds sway till the end of the country touching the ocean without any rival sovereign is termed Sārvabhauma Samanta in the A.B. 'He is called a Samanta, a paramount sovereign who is the sole and unrivalled ruler (Ekarāt) of the earth extending to the ocean'. 18 Besides these, the A.B. mentions eleven types of sovereignty corresponding to eleven types of territories, viz., Rājya, Sāmrājya, Māhārājya, Bhaujya, Svārājya, Vairājya, Pārameśṭhya, Rājya, Ādhipatyā, Svavaśātā and Ātiṣṭhatva, 19 translated by Keith as 'Kingship, overlordship, paramount rule, self-rule, sovereignty, supreme authority, kingship, great kingship, suzerainty, supremacy and pre-eminence respectively. 20 Sāyaṇācāryya in his commentary on the A.B. explains the first five types of sovereignty as different types or grades of worldly lordship or lordship on earth and the last five as different types or grades of other-worldly monarchy or suzerainty in heaven when the soul shuffles off the mortal coil. Thus does he comment on the A.B. 8-37-5; 21 Rājya means lordship of a country; Sāmrājya means rule with justice; Bhaujya is enjoyment and prosperity; Svārājya means independence; distinction in rank from other kings is Vairājya.

16. A.B. 7-35-8—"Sarve haiva mahārājā asurāditya īva: ha sma śriyām pratiṣṭhātatapanti, sarvabhyo digbhyo valimāvahanti.'
17. S.B. 1-6-4-21 and 2-5-4-9—"Indro vā eṣa purā vṛt̄pasya vadhas-datha vṛt̄pam hatva yathā mahārājō viścigāna evam mahendro'bhatvā.'
18. A.B. 8-39-1—'Ayam samantaparyāyāḥ svāt sārvabhaumalḥ sarvāyaḥ . . . . . . . samudraparyantaḥ ēkarāditi.'
21. 'Tānāhamamurājāya sāmrājya bhaujya svārājya vairaj-yaḥ pārameśṭhyaḥ rājyaḥ mākṣaṇājyaḥ śadhipatyāya svavaśātātiṣṭhayaḥ- rokamiti.'
Thus worldly lordship is enumerated; now post-mortem heavenly lordship is being stated: Pārameśṭhya means attainment of Prajāpatiloka; Rājya means prosperity; superiority to other heavenly lords constitutes Māhārājya; Ādhipatya is to lord over other kings in heaven. Svāvaśya is independence, eternal abode in heaven in Ātiṣṭhatva. But the last five interpretations of Śaṅkara viz, those relating to lordship in the next world or heaven do not appear logical or plausible to us. It seems proper to take all these epithets or designations of sovereignty in the context of earthly lordship having nothing to do with heaven. Śaṅkara explains the term Vairājya as ‘distinction in rank from other rulers’. Peculiarly enough, Martin Haug takes the term to mean ‘kingless state’ from ‘vi’ (without) ‘Rāj’ (king); but his contention is not borne out by the internal evidence of Br. texts. A monarch holding svārājya or Vairājya type of sway over the people was termed Svarāt or Virāt respectively. Thus Indra is called Virāt, Svarāt and Samprat in the Atharvaveda (17-1-22). In R.V., A.V., S.B. etc., the term Virāt has been used in the sense of sovereign ruler. Eggelting translates the term as ‘far ruler’ in his work on the S.B. Keith translates the term ‘Vairājya’, as already pointed out, as ‘Sovereignty’.

The A.B. (8-39-1) while enumerating these eleven types of monarchy mentions the last two as Sārvabhauma and Ekarāt instead of Svāvaśya and Ātiṣṭhatva. Sārvabhauma means overlord of all territory and Ekarāt as the very term signifies, means one single unrivalled ruler of the earth up to its extremities where the earth loses itself into the ocean. After such a long passage of time that separates us from the hoary antiquity of the Vedic age it is very difficult to form a clear-cut idea of the different types of kingship stated above. Indeed some designations are vague and baffle attempts at proper exposition.

While describing the great consecration or Mahābhiṣeka of Indra the A.B. 8-38-3 mentions the different territories

---

Bhaunyaṁ bhogāsamṛddhīḥ........................
...................... Ātiṣṭhatvaṁ cirakāśa-vāṣītvam'.

and the respective kings thereof as illustrations of these different types of kingship. The importance of this passage can never be overestimated as it gives us the geographic features, names of different tribes and their kings which clearly outline the states ruled over and occupied by the Aryans in the later Vedic age. In the eastern quarter the kings of the eastern peoples (Prācyā) were anointed for Śāmrājya or emperorship. They were called Samrāt. In the southern region the kings of the peoples known as Satvat were consecrated for Bhaujya; they were designated Bhoja. In the western quarters the kings of the Nīcyā and Apācyā peoples or tribes were anointed for the Svārājya type of kingship; they were called Svarāt. Towards the north the rulers of the territories known as Kuru and Madra which lay across the Himalaya mountain were consecrated for the Vairājya type of monarchy. In the central (Madhya) region the kings of the peoples known as Uśinara and Kuru-Paṅcāla along with those of Vaśa country were anointed for Rājya and were designated Rājā or king. Hence when a paramount sovereign is consecrated he attains the designation of Samrāt, Bhoja, Svarāt, Virāt, Rājā etc., with reference to the regions mentioned above. This chapter of the A.B. clearly states the names of countries and people where Vedic culture and Aryan civilisation infiltrated.

The S.B. quoting a verse of the Vājansaneyi Saṁhitā mentions the terms Svarāt, Satrarāt, Janarāt and Sarvarāt meaning self-ruler, ruler for a long period of time, ruler of the people and ruler of all respectively.24 Eggeling translates Satrarāt as 'Ever ruling'. The term Śatra does not mean 'eternal' or perpetual; it signifies a long passage of time. Hence it seems proper to render the term as—"ruler for a long period of time".25 The Sarvarāt mentioned here corresponds to Sārvabhauma and Ekarāt mentioned above.

24. V. S. 5-24—"Svarādasi sapatmah. satrarādasi abhimāṭhā. janarādasi rakṣoh sarva-rādasi amitrāhā".
CHAPTER II

MONARCHIAL AND IMPERIALISTIC SACRIFICES.

Some sacrifices have a purely political end-in-view such as the Rājasūya, Vājapeya, Āsvamedha, Bṛhaspatisava, Sautrāmaṇi, Puruṣamedha etc. These sacrifices are connected with kingship and paramount sovereignty. First we shall discuss the significance of the Rājasūya and Vājapeya sacrifices. The Rājasūya or ‘inauguration of king’ is a complex religious ceremony which includes amongst other rites the performance of a number of Soma-yāgas of different kinds. The Vājapeya which literally means ‘drink of strength’ on the other hand, is recognized as one of the different forms Samsthās which a single soma-yāga may take. Both these sacrifices have a political bearing. A complete Soma-yāga consists of seven forms or Samsthās viz, Agniśṭoma, Atyagniśṭoma, Ukthya, Sōḍaśi, Atirātra, Āptoryām and Vājapeya. Thus the last form or Samsthā is Vājapeya. The Rājasūya is a complex ceremony which, according to Śrāuta Sūtra consists of a long succession of sacrificial performances, spread over a period of upwards of two years. It includes seven distinct Soma-yāgas, viz, Pavitra, an Agniśṭoma as the starting sacrifice and followed by the Abhiṣecaniya, an Ukthya sacrifice, being the consecration or anointing ceremony. Then follows the Daśapeya, an agniśṭoma, so-called because ten priests take part in drinking the Soma-juice contained in each of the ten cups. After another year’s interval during which monthly offerings are made, takes place the Keśavapaniya or tonsure ceremony, an Atirātra sacrifice; followed after a month, by the Vyushti-Dvirātra or two nights’ ceremony, and finally the Kṣatra-dhṛti or the ‘wielding of royal power’, an Agniśṭoma performed a month later. The round of ceremonies terminates with the Sautrāmaṇi, an iṣṭi, the object of which is to make amends for any excess committed in the consumption of liquor.
The term Vājapeya is explained as drink of strength, "Vāja" means strength and 'peya' drink. The S.B. 5-1-5-25 and 5-1-3-3 thus explains the Vājapeya, ‘Vājapeya doubtless means the same as Annapayya, food and drink; he who offers Vājapeya wins food”.

But the T.B. 1-3-2-3 explains the term Vājapeya, as that through which the gods wished to obtain strength (Vājām). Regarding the difference between the Rājasūya and the Vājapeya ceremonies or sacrifices it is said that one attains to kingship or becomes a king by performing the Rājasūya whereas by the performance of the Vājapeya one becomes a samrāt or emperor. Thus observes the S.B.—‘One becomes Rājā or king by performing the Rājasūya sacrifice; by performing the Vājapeya sacrifice one becomes a samrāt. Rājya is of a lower order, Sāmrājya is of a superior order. A Rājā or king longs to be an emperor (Samrāt). The emperor never desires to become a king because Rājya or kingship is inferior and Sāmrājya or emperorship is supreme (sovereignty).’

This fact is reiterated in the S.B. 9-3-4-8 where it is distinctly stated that in the hierarchy of kingship the position of a samrāt is higher than that of a Rājā or king. It is the natural process of ascent when a king aspires to be an emperor but the reverse order is a process of descent and absurd. One should not perform the Rājasūya after performing the Vājapeya; that would be a degradation or descent just as if one who was an emperor were to become a king.

Thus the above discussion proves that the Vājapeya is a

26. ‘Annapayyaṃ ha vai nāmaītaḥ yaḍ vājapeyam; annāma va eṣa ujjayati yo vājapeyena yajate.’

27. T.B. 1-3-2-3—'Taṃ va etam vājapeya ityāhun. Vājapyo va eṣaḥ. Vājaṃ hyetena deva aipsaṃ.’

28. 5-1-1-3—'Rajā vai rajasūyenēṣṭvā bhavati, samrād vājapeyena. Avaraṃ hi rajyaṃ paraṃ hi smrājyaṃ. Kāmayate vai rajā samrād bhavītam; na samrāt kāmayete rajā bhavītam’.

29. S.B. 9-3-4-8—'Vājapeyenēṣṭvā na rajasuyena yajeta. prātyavarohaḥ sa yathā samrāt san rajā syāt tāḍik tat.’
ceremony of superior value and import to the Rājasūya. Kātyāyana Śrauta sūtra also states (15-1-1-2) that the Rājasūya may be performed by a king who has not yet performed the Vājapeya. These two authorities the S.B. and K.S.S. prove the superiority of the Vājapeya to the Rājasūya but they do not, however, make any categorical assertion that the Rājasūya must be performed prior to the Vājapeya. The Rājasūya is a ceremony meant for the Kṣatriyas or military class alone whereas the Vājapeya could be performed by both Brahmins and Kṣatriyas. It was open to both the classes or castes. Thus Lāṭyāyana Śrauta sūtra (8-11-1), enjoins—‘Whomsoever the Brahmins and kings may place at their head, let him perform the Vājapeyaḥ’.30 The T.B. observes—‘Brāhmaṇa-Kṣatriyayoreva Vājapeyaḥ, na vaiśyasya’, i.e., the Vājapeya may be performed by a Brahmin or a Kṣatriya but not by a Vaiśya.

The S.B., as we have seen, clearly enjoins that the Rājasūya must precede the Vājapeya and not vice versa; the order should not be reversed. Gopatha Br. also, while enumerating the order of sacrifices according to precedence and succession gives the Rājasūya precedence to Vājapeya. Rājasūya should follow the Agniṣṭoma, Vājapeya follows the Rājasūya, Aśavamedha follows the Vājapeya, Puruṣamedha the Aśvamedha and Sarvamedha the Puruṣamedha.……….this is the order of succession of sacrifices’.31 But, curiously enough, the Aśvalāyana Śrauta sūtra (11-9-19) lays down the rule that,—‘after performing the Vājapeya, a king may perform the Rājasūya and a Brahmin, the Brhaspatisava’.32 Brhaspatisava was a sacrifice similar to the Rājasūya performed for attaining supremacy with the difference that the former was meant for

30. ‘Yaṃ brāhmaṇa rājānaśca puraskurvyān sa vājapeyena yajeta.’
31. G.B. (P)—‘Agniṣṭomād Rājasūyaḥ Rājasūyaḥ vājapeyo vāja
peyośaśvameddhaḥ aśvamedhāḥ Puruṣameddhaḥ Puruṣameddhaḥ sarva-
meddhaḥ.………..te vā ete yajñakramāḥ.’
32. ‘Vājapeyenaśṭvā rājanyo rājasūyena yajeta, brāhmaṇo Brhas-
patisaveneṇa yajeta.’
Brāhmīns whereas Kṣatriyas alone were eligible to perform the Rājasūya. The T.B. (2-7-6-1) calls the Vājapeya a samrātsava and Rājasūya a Varuṇasava, 33 the former meant a consecration to the dignity of a paramount sovereign whereas the latter signifies consecration to the universal sway wielded by Varuṇa. The S.B. also calls Rājasūya a Varuṇasava. 34

All the authorities with the exception of the S.B. and the K.S.S. are agreed in making the Vājapeya a preliminary ceremony to be performed by a Brāhmin who was raised to the dignity of a head-priest or by a king who was elected paramount sovereign by a number of petty kings and other representatives called king-makers (Rājakṛtaḥ); this sacrifice was followed in due time by the respective installation and anointing or consecration ceremony, viz, the Bṛhaspati-sava, in the case of the priest or Purohita, and the Rājasūya in the case of a king or Kṣatriya. These authorities place the Bṛhaspatisava on a footing of equality with the Rājasūya. The S.B. finds itself in a critical position as it places the Rājasūya on a lower level than that of the Vājapeya but it tackles the problem with ingenuity to get out of the difficult situation. It solves the problem by simply identifying the Bṛhaspatisava with the Vājapeya and making the Vājapeya itself to be the consecration of Bṛhaspati; ‘what is called Bṛhaspatisava is the same as the Vājapeya’. 35 Kātyāyana again solves the problem in a different manner. He effects a compromise by combining the two ceremonies—Bṛhaspatisava and Vājapeya in the following manner. He who performs the Vājapeya is to perform the Bṛhaspatisava for a fortnight before and after the Vājapeya.

The Bṛhaspatisava is so called because by this ceremony Bṛhaspati, the priest of gods and the chief adviser of the Bṛhaspatisava, gods, attained pre-eminence and became the spiritual lord.

33. 2-7-6-1—‘Yo vai vājapeyaḥ sa samrātsavaḥ. Yo Rājasūyaḥ sa varuṇasavaḥ.’
34. 5-3-4-12—‘Varuṇasavo vṛ eṣa yad Rājasūyam’.
35. S.B. 5-2-1-19—‘Bṛhaspatisavo vṛ eṣa yad Vājapeyam’.
Thus the Vājapeya ceremony at once stands for the temporal power or lordship of Kṣatriya and the spiritual lordship of the Brāhmaṇa. The S.B. and other authorities stated above mention Sāmrāja or paramount sovereignty as the result of Vājapeya. The T.B. again, mentions Svārājya or self-rule and supremacy as the effect of the Vājapeya ceremony. It (1-3-2-2, 3) states that Indra attained Svārājya and with it the lordship (jyaisthyā) of the gods by performing the Vājapeya; among human beings he who knowing this performs the Vājapeya attains Svārājya and becomes the chief of equals.\(^{36}\)

Among the rites connected with the performance of the Vājapeya, Āji-dhāvana or chariot-race forms an interesting and novel item. The sacrificer or Yajamāna who, as stated above, must either be a Kṣatriya king or a Brāhmaṇ priest is allowed to carry off the palm of victory. From the S.B. 5-1-5 we know that in this sacrifice seventeen drums were placed on the sacrificial altar and the priests had to sing beating those drums. The sound of seventeen drums (Dundubhi) beat simultaneously kept time with the march of stallions in the horse-race invariably connected with this ceremony. Many western indologists find in this chariot race a relic of a time-old national festival which, in the distant past, was a national inter-state tournament in which kings of different regions participated. The function had the appearance of a national Olympic festival.

The A. B. (7-33-4) mention the Rājasūya sacrifice performed by king Harīscandra. Sage Viśvāmitra was the Hota, Jamadagni the Adhvaryu, Vaśīṭha the Brāhma and Ayāsya was the Udgātri-priest in that sacrifice.

Now we shall discuss the political bearing of the sacrifice called ‘Āśvamedha’ which gained wide celebrity in ancient

---

\(^{36}\) 1-3-2-2—‘(Indraḥ) svaḥ graṃ devataṃ paryait. Agacchat svārājyaṃ; atiṣṭhantāsmi jyaisthyāya iti.’

S.B. 1-3-2-3—‘Ya evaṃ vidvān vājapeyena yajate gacchati svārājyaṃ; agraṃ samānāṃ parystī-Tiṣṭhante asmai jyaisthyāya.’
India. The S.B. calls Áṣvamedha 'king of all sacrifices', 'the Bṛṣabha of all sacrifices.' 37 'The T. B. Aśvamedha or the horse-sacrifice praises it as the Rṣabha of all Sacrifices' 'the universal lord of sacrifices', 'the lordly sacrifice.' 38 Those rulers who were not content with Rājya and Sāmrājya but aspired to be unrivalled paramount sovereign termed Sārvabhauma had to perform the Áṣvamedha. The Ápastamba Śrauta sūtra (20-1-1) enjoins that the Áṣvamedha should be performed by a Sārvabhauma or a non-paramount sovereign. 39 The thirteenth kānda of the S.B. deals with the origin, procedure, details and rituals of the Áṣvamedha. The A.B. does not discuss any other sacrifice except Soma-yāga. Enumerating the results that accrue to the performance of Áṣvamedha the S.B. observes—'One who performs the Áṣvamedha conquers all the quarters; conquers the world, the priest makes him a ruler and upholder'. 40 He attains everything who performs the Áṣvamedha; it is the expiation of all (crimes); it is the medicine of all, i.e., universal panacea. 41 'If a Rājanya performs the horse-sacrifice, he becomes a great fighter'. 42 'He acquires all kingdoms, all peoples, all the Vedas, all the gods and all created beings.' 43

Before the actual performance of the Áṣvamedha the sacrificial horse is let loose to roam over the whole country from place to place. From certain marks on its person and its

---

37. 13-2-2-1—'Rājasya eva yajñāṇam yaddaāṣvamedhaḥ.'
13-1-2-2—'Bṛṣabhasya eva yajñāṇam yaddaāṣvamedhaḥ.'
38. 3-8-3-3—'Bṛṣabhas eva yajñāṇam yaddaāṣvamedhaḥ.'
3-9-19-1—'Eṣa (Āṣvamedhaḥ) bibhūrnāma yajñāḥ.' Eṣa Prabhūrnāma yajñāḥ.
39. 'Rājasya stāṛvabhaumo 'āṣvamedhena yajeta. Apyaśāṛvabhaumaḥ.'
3-9-19-1—Eṣa (Āṣvamedhaḥ) Prabhūrnmāma yajñāḥ.
40. 13-1-2-3—'Āṣvamedhahayājī sarvā dīśo’bhijayati bhuvanaṁ jaya-
ti.................yantarārāmevinaṁ dhartaṁ karoti.'
41. S.B. 13-3-1-1—'Yo’āṣvamedhena yajate sarvā eva bhavati sarvasya eva prāyaścittiḥ sarvasya bheṣajam.'
42. S.B. 13-3-7-9—'Yatraiteṇa yajñena yajantaḥ sa rājanyo’tivyā-
dhi jayate.'
43. S.B. 13-4-3-15—'Sarvāṇi rājayāyānṣaḥte sarvā dīṣaḥ sarvān
vedān sarvāṇi devān sarvāṇi bhūtiṇi.............āṣnute.'
attendants people and kings of other states can easily recog-
nise it to be a sacrificial horse. It is a challenge to all the con-
temporary ruling chiefs, princes and monarchs. If anyone
seizes the horse it means he opposes or stands in the way of the
sacrificer’s attaining paramount sovereignty. In that case the
attendants of the horse fight with that king who seizes the
horse. If they fail to defeat him and win back the horse the
sacrificer cannot perform the Aśvamedha. A large number
of royal attendants consisting of various types of fighters
numbering five hundred heads guard the sacrificial horse and
follow in its wake all over the country prepared for any even-
tuality. It is their sacred duty to protect the horse from all
dangers and calamities, and bring it back unscathed to the
sacrificer. The varied and large number of attendants forms
a part of the royal paraphernalia bespeaking the military strength
of the king. The S.B. thus enumerates the
list of attendants: ‘a hundred royal princes
clad in armour; a hundred warriors armed
with swords; a hundred sons of heralds and
headmen bearing quivers fitted with arrows; a hundred sons
of attendants and charioteers bearing staves—and a hundred
exhausted, worn out horses amongst which, having let loose that
(sacrificial) horse they guard it’. 44 This passage is important
as it gives us a clear idea regarding the different classes of fighters
and also the names of different missiles, weapons, armours
used by them in an era of such hoary antiquity. From the list
of attendants of the sacrificial horse it is clear that people
belonging to the rank of both the nobility and the common
people are picked up to form the complete battalion to guard
the horse. Thus Rājaputrāḥ or royal princes and Rājanyāḥ
or warriors belonging to the military or ruling class belong
to the order of nobles of which the princes form the first order
and warriors the second order. The remaining four classes
of attendants or fighters viz, sons of Sūtas or heralds and
Grāmaṇīs or headmen of villages and sons of attendants and
charioteers belong to the common people of which the former
two bespeaks a higher and the latter two a lower rank in the
social hierarchy.

44. 13-4-2-5—‘Tasyaite purastād rakṣitāra upakṛpta bhavanti :
Rājaputrāḥ kavacinsāḥ śatam rājanyā….yasmin enamapi sṛjya rakṣanti.’
Every sacrifice has to be performed by the sacrificer along with his wife jointly. A widower or a bachelor cannot perform any sacrifice as a rule though there are provisions for the performance of Agnihotra daily even if one's wife passed away during his lifetime. In the Aśvamedha also the monarch has to perform the sacrifice with the help of his queens. The queens play an important role in the ceremony and take active part in various performances. Not only the chief queen called Mahiṣi but all the four queens have to attend the ceremony with retinue and equipments bespeaking their queenly status. The queens have to decorate the horse, caress it, lie down by its side and perform various rites connected with the sacrifice. 'The four wives of the king come with four hundred female attendants and a young maiden to wash the feet of the horse'. Of the four queens each is followed by a hundred female attendants differing in rank and dress making four hundred in all. Thus the chief queen called Mahiṣi is attended by hundred princesses (Rājaputri) of royal family. The favourite queen called vāvātā is attended by a hundred females of royal descent (Rājanyā). The childless and barren and hence discarded or neglected wife of the king called parivṛkta is attended by daughters of heraldis (sūta) and headmen of villages (Grāmaṇi) comprising hundred in all. The fourth wife called Pālāgali who is inferior to the other three queens in social rank is attended by a hundred females who happen to be daughters of chamberlains and charioteers. This passage of the S.B. and this function at once bespeak the constitutional status and dignity of the queens in the Vedic age and the gorgeous paraphernalia befitting their status. As in the case of the attendants of the sacrificial horse here also we find a

45. S.B. 13-5-2-1—'Patnyah pānejanairudāyanti catasra jayah kumārī paścamī catvāri ca satāni anucarīpam.'
46. S.B. 13-5-2-5—'Tasyai šataṁ rājaputryaṁ anucaryo bhavanti.'
47. S.B. 13-5-2-6—'Tasyai šataṁ rājanyā anucaryo bhavanti.'
48. S.B. 13-5-2-7—'Tasyai šataṁ sūtagrāmanyaṁ duhitaro nucaryo bhavanti.'
49. S.B. 13-5-2-8—'Tasyai šataṁ kṣātrasamgrahitṛpam duhitaro 'nucaryo bhavanti.'
distinct grade bespeaking social hierarchy amongst the attendants ranging from those of the fourth queen Pālāgalī to those of the chief queen Mahiṣī. The S.B. 13-5-4 furnishes a long list of kings who performed the horse-sacrifice along with the names of their priests. Thus the priest Indrota Daivāpa Śaunaka performed this sacrifice for king Janamejaya Parikṣita who bound for the gods a black-spotted horse adorned with a golden ornament and yellow garlands. Three more kings belonging to the line of Parikṣita viz.,—Bhimasena, Ugrasena and Śrutasena performed this sacrifice. The commentator Harisvāmin takes these kings to be brothers of Parikṣit. The Kauśalya king Para Ātnāra, son of king Atnāra, king Purukutṣa born of Ikṣāku race, the Ayogava king Marutta Āvikṣita, The Pañcāla king Kraivyā, Ddhvasā Dvaityavana, the king of the Matsyas performed the Aśvamedha or horse-sacrifice. King Bharata Dauḫṣyanti performed this sacrifice, and attained the vast territory and wide sway which belonged to the line of Bharata. Seventy-eight (78) steeds did he bind for the sacrifice on the banks of the river Yamunā, and fifty-five steeds near the Ganges. Thus he bound one hundred and thirty-three horses in all and conquered the whole earth overcoming his adversaries in no time. There is a Gāthā or laudatory verse attached to the horse sacrifice of every king. One such Gāthā eulogising the glorious deeds of king Bharata says that once he performed the horse-sacrifice with a thousand steeds and no king on earth who preceded or followed him could attain his greatness. King Rṣabha Yājñatūra of the Sviknas, śona sātrāsāha the Pañcāla king also performed the horse-sacrifice. There are illustrations of one king seizing the sacrificial horse let loose by another king. For example, king Śatānīka Sātrājīta seized the white sacrificial horse let loose by king Dhṛtarāṣṭra roaming at will in its tenth month and performed the horse-sacrifice with that horse.

The Coronation Ceremony:

The consecration or anointing ceremony of king-designates called Abhiṣeka or Mahābhiṣeka forms a part of the Rāja-sūya sacrifice and is of supreme importance as a record of various
aspects of monarchy and imperialism that obtained in the later Vedic age. This ceremony is mentioned in the Atharva Veda and the different Brāhmaṇa texts. The Abhiṣeka or Abhiṣecaniya literally means ‘sprinkling’, as a main item of the ceremony consists in sprinkling the king with holy waters collected from different sacred rivers and seas.

The consecration ceremony consists of five days, viz, one Dikṣā (initiation ceremony), three upasads, and one sutyā or soma-day, the particular form of soma-sacrifice being the Ukthya. The initiation or Dikṣā is performed immediately after the expiration of the dark fortnight following the full moon of Phālguna on the first day of Caitra. The rites and rituals connected with this ceremony are best described in the S.B. 5-3 and 5-4. On the first day offerings are made to eight deities—Savitā, Agni, Soma, Bṛhaspati, Indra, Rudra, Mitra and Varuṇa. These eight gods are called ‘Devasus’ or ‘Divine Quickeners’ and each has an epithet of his own. While offering the oblations each is invoked along with his epithet which bespeaks one or other aspect of royal prerogatives, duties and functions. Thus Savitā is invoked as ‘Satyaprasava’ for true impulse or righteous energy of the king, Agni as Gr̥hapati for mastery of the household, Soma as Vanaspati for the protection of forests and Agriculture, Bṛhaspati Vāk for power of speech, Indra as Jyeṣṭha for supremacy or predominance in matters of administration, Rudra as Paṣupati for protection of cattle, Mitra as Satya for truth, and lastly offering to Varuṇa the moral governor as Dharmapati for upholding of Dharma or law. 50 Thus each epithet is applied with an eye to each prerogative or duty of the King-designate. The last epithet viz, that of Varuṇa makes the king upholder of law or one who enforces law and order. The various qualifications and manifold obligations of kingship are symbolised by the said offerings. Commenting on the term ‘Dharmapati’, observes Dr. R. K. Mukherji—‘The Hindu theory regards Dharma, or Law, as the real sovereign,

---

50. S.B. 5-3-3-11—‘Savitā tvē savānām suvatamagnirgr̥hapatīnām soma vanaspatīnām. Bṛhaspatīḥ…………………. Varuṇo dharmapatīnām’.
and the king as Daṇḍa or the executive to support and enforce Dharma. After the offering of oblations the priests utter the following hymn. “Quicken him O Gods, to be unrivalled”, he thereby says—‘Quicken him, O Gods, so as to be without an enemy, ‘for great chieftdom, ‘for great lordship’, ‘for man-rule’. Here Jana-rājya means lordship over human beings. Dr. U. N. Ghosal observes—“We suggest it to mean ‘rule over the whole folk’ as distinguished from ‘rule over the single tribe’.” After uttering these hymns relating to royal duties and powers the priests declare—‘This person is your king, soma is the king of us, Brahmmins’. This declaration is followed by the Abhiṣeka or Sprinkling ceremony. Holy waters collected from seventeen different sources consisting of rivers, pools, wells, dew-drops, floods, rain-water, seas etc. are collected and mixed together in a vessel made of the wood of Udumvara tree (Ficus Glomerata) and the king is sprinkled with these holy waters. Amongst rivers Sarasvatī occupied that position in the Vedic age which is occupied by the Ganges in the post-Vedic age from the point of sanctity.

Each type of water symbolises some power or character of the king. Thus Sarasvatī, as we learn from the S.B. 5-3-4, symbolises speech, gift of the gab, the flowing river symbolises vigour, flood stands for plenty, sea for dominion and the pool or tank for loyalty of the people to the monarch, which should be sincere and harmless like the waters of a stagnant pool. The sprinkling is done jointly by a Brāhmaṇa (adhvaryu), a Kṣatriya, and also by a Vaiśya. The sprinkling vessel differs in the case of each caste. At first all the holy waters are mixed together in a vessel made of Udumvara wood. Then that mixed consecration water is distributed into four smaller vessels made of woods of Palāśa.
Udumvara, Nyagrodha or banyan (ficus Indica) and Aśvattha or ficus religiosa trees respectively. The Brāhmaṇa sprinkles on the king-elect from the Pālāśa vessel, a relation of the king sprinkles from Udumvara vessel. He may be a brother or a near relation. A friendly king, i.e., an ally (Mitra Rājanya) sprinkles from a Nyagrodha vessel and the Vaiśya sprinkles from an Aśvattha vessel.

The consecration ceremony relating to the coronation is regarded as a new birth of the king. Hence he is made to wear new garments, an under-garment called Tārpya, a garment made of undyed wool (Pāṇḍva), a mantle or cloak (Adhivāsa) and a head-band (Uṣṇīṣa). As this ceremony is regarded as a new birth these garments are symbolic of different parts of an embryo. Thus the tārpya stands for amnion (Ulva), Pāṇḍva for uterus or chorion (Jarāyu), Adhivāsa for womb (Yoni) and Uṣṇīṣa or head-band for the navel or umbilicus. Then the Adhvaryu priest strings a bow and hands over the same to the king with three arrows. The bow is a symbol of strength, vigour and government. The priest says,—‘the bow is a symbol of the king’s strength or military power and I shall consecrate him after he attains strength.’55 While explaining the significance of different kinds of waters the S.B. 5-3-4-5 states that by this sprinkling or consecration the king is made both the lord and the offspring of the people. This is his new birth and the representatives of the people and nobility have to accord sanction to his ascending the throne. Hence he is an offspring in these two senses and the ceremony makes him lord of the people.

There is an oath-taking ceremony at this stage. The priests who anoint or sprinkle holy waters on the king address him thus—‘If you do me harm, in that case all the merits

55. S.B. 5-3-5-30—‘Vyṛyaṃ vā etad rājanyasya yaddhanurvyṛya-vantamabhiścitāṃśritī’. 
acquired by you from the night of your birth to the night of your demise, your pious deeds, longevity and issue will be stolen by me." Accordingly the king takes the oath—'If I betray you or play you false, may I lose the merit of all my pious deeds, religious rites, gifts, my position, life and even my progeny.'

The king is made to step on a tiger's skin as the tiger is the king of beasts. A small gold plate is placed below the king's foot and another gold plate is laid on his head. Gold symbolises immortality; thus immortality is bestowed on the king both from below and from above. The priest 'thus encloses him with immortal life on both sides.' Following this the king is made to mount a chariot yoked with four horses with bow and arrows in hand. The king discharges one arrow to mark the goal of the chariot-race. As to why he shoots one arrow the S.B. (5-1-5-14) states that the king is a manifestation of Prajāpati, the lord of creatures. Prajāpati is one but he rules over the whole creation or many created beings; likewise the king, though one, rules over many. (Eṣa vai Prajāpatēḥ pratyakṣatamāṃ yad rājanyastasmādekaḥ san vahūnāmiṣṭe). The chariot goes round all the directions within the sacrificial campus bespeaking victory of all the quarters.

The chariot-race being over, the king and his wife mount the sacrificial post. This mounting on the sacrificial post bespeaks their approximation to the gods. Ascending the post the king says—'We have become Prajāpati's children' (S.B. 5-2-1-11, 'Prajāpateḥ prajā abhumā'). He who performs the Vājapeya sacrifice becomes the child of Prajāpati and as such becomes immortal. Thus the sacrificer attains the immortality of gods and sonship of Prajāpati.

56. A.B. 8-39-1—'Yāṃca rātrīmājāyethā yāṃca pretāsi tadubhaya-yamantarena .......... yadi me druhyuḥ.'

57. A.B. 8-39-1—'Yāṃ ca rātrīmājaye' hāṃ yāṃ ca .......... yadi te druhyeyam.'

58. S.B. 5-4-1-14—'Aṃrtamāyurhiṣṭavāṃ tadamāṃtvāvaimāṃ .......... tasmād rukmā ubhayato bhavataḥ.'
Thus the Vedic kingship though of human origin is vested with divine glory on account of the sacrificial performance.

The king looks at the mother earth and says—‘O mother Earth, injure me not, nor I thee’. The Earth is afraid of the king-initiate thinking, “Something great surely has he become now that he has been consecrated; I fear lest he may rend me asunder’. The king is also afraid of the Earth, and thus muses—‘I fear lest she may shake me off’. Hence he thereby enters into a friendly relation with her; for a mother does not injure her son, nor does a son injure his mother. After establishing this friendly relation with mother Earth the king alights from the chariot and steps on the ground.

A game of dice is a compulsory part of the consecration ceremony. The game is played with five dice, four of which are called Kṛta while the fifth is termed Kali. If all the dice when thrown fall uniformly i.e., with the dotted sides either upwards or downwards the thrower wins. The king-elect is always favoured with the winning throw symbolising his conquest of all castes and all regions.

The throne called Āsandī is made of Khadira or acacia catechu wood. According to the S.B. it is to be made of Khadira or acacia catechu wood but according to the A.B. it is to be made of Udomvara (Ficus Glomerata) wood with its four legs measuring one span each in length. The planks for the head piece and two sides should measure one ‘Aratni’ or two spans each. Aratni is the portion of human hand stretching from the wrist to the elbow. The texture of the seat should be woven of Muñjā fibres and the throne is to be covered with a tiger-skin symbolic of kingship, tiger being the king of beasts. The throne is a symbol of royal dignity and power. ‘It is a symbol of dominion.’

59. S.B. 5-4-3-20, 21—’Pṛthivirnāmāṁ mā hīnsāṁ mā āhaṁ tvāṁ’(20). ’Pṛthivīṁ u haitasāṁd bhūheti mahād vā ayamabhūd.............

................na hi māṁ putrāṁ hinaṁtita na putro mātaram.’

60. S.B. 12-8-3-6—’Raśtraṁ vāsandī.’
nity is established on a throne.  

A tiger-skin is spread on the ground before the throne. When the formalities are gone through and consecration rites performed, the king-designate duly sanctified ascends the throne. The priest declares him as the sovereign and terms him a precious gem to be protected by the people. Addressing the king the priest says—‘To thee this State (Rāṣṭra) is given, for agriculture, for the common good, for prosperity and nourishment.’ Thus the kingdom is offered to the king as a sacred trust not for exploitation or self-aggrandisement but for the promotion of peace and prosperity of subjects, for the common good. This fact goes to prove the democratic ideal of kingship notwithstanding the hereditary character of succession. The administrators or monarchs of the Vedic age thoroughly realised the truth that the prosperity of a state lay in the sense of security in the people’s mind, in the common good. ‘The cool (i.e., mainstay) of royal power’, remarks the S. B., ‘is, doubtless, security of possession or common good.’ The same idea finds expression in the T.B.  

When the king is seated on the throne the priest touching the chest of the king mutters—‘He hath sat down, the upholder of sacred law and order.’ Verily the king is the upholder of the sacred law, for he is not capable of all and every speech, nor of all and every deed; he should speak only what is right and do the right deed alone.  

Amongst men the Brāhmaṇa versed in the sacred lore called Śrotṛiya and the king—these two are the custodians of the sacred law. This reference bespeaks the high moral status and dignity of the king. ‘This passage’, observes Dr. U. N. Ghosal, ‘by attaching the notion of unrivalled moral greatness to the king alone with the learned  

61. S.B. 12-8-3-4—‘Asandīsad vai sāmṛṣṣyam.’
62. S.B. 13-2-9-5—‘Kṣema vai rāṣṭrasya sītam.’
63. T.B. 3-9-7-2—‘Kṣema vai rāṣṭrasya sīto vātaḥ.’
64. S.B. 5-4-4-5—‘Dhṛtavrata vai rāṣṭra na va eṣa sarvasmā iva vadanāya sarvasmā iva karmage yadeva sādhu vadet yat sādhu kuryāt.’
65. S.B. 5-4-4-5—‘Eṣa ca śrotṛiyaścaitau ha vai dvau manuṣyeṣu dhṛtavratau.’
Brāhmaṇa, marks a distinct phase in the evolution of Vedic kingship. The Vedic king, according to this view, is the embodiment of the moral law, being matched only by the learned Brāhmaṇa. Not that the king cannot commit any wrong but he should not do any wrong or speak any evil or untruth. Falsehood, evil thought or deed, meanness, malice etc., fall far below the standard of imperial dignity. The king must be above all these pettiness and meanness.

At this stage an important rite takes place which makes the king immune or bespeaks his immunity from trial and judicial punishment. The priests take up sticks and silently strike the king on his back with those sticks (Daṇḍa). 'By striking him with sticks they take him beyond the pale of judicial punishment; hence the king is exempt from or beyond the reach of punishment.' From this statement one should not arrive at a hasty but wrong conclusion that the king could turn into a veritable tyrant or oppressor because he was beyond the reach of judicial punishment. The exhortations of the priests addressed to the king that he should not do any wrong or utter anything evil and untrue give the lie to such hasty conclusion exposing its slipshod logic and flagrant fallacy.

The divine right or, strictly speaking, the demi-divinity of the king is apparent from the above observations. He is almost identified with Indra, the king of gods just as his chief adviser the Brāhmaṇa priest or minister is identified with Brhaspati, the spiritual and political guide of Indra. But these similes or observations are more metaphorical than literal. In the Br. texts parallelisms are always drawn between divine rites and human rites because all worldly sacrifices and rites are but imitations of heavenly ones performed by the gods.

66. The Beginnings of Indian Historiography and other Essays,. pp. 268.
67. S.B. 5-4-4-7—'Tasmad raja daṇḍairghanto daṇḍavadhamatinayanti'
Thus sacrificial and liturgical practices of human beings are copies of their divine archetype. In the case of the coronation ceremony the priests consecrate the earthly king in the same manner following the same procedure in which Bṛhaspati, the priest of gods consecrated Indra, the king of gods during the latter’s coronation ceremony.

Let us take the particular ceremony of sprinkling holy waters on the king’s head as an instance in point. The priest while sprinkling the king with the sacred waters says—‘I am sprinkling you with the same waters with which Prajāpati, the creator, consecrated the heavenly kings viz, Indra, Soma, Varuṇa, Yama and Manu. May you be an overlord amongst earthly kings in this world.’

After the game of dice is over a Brāhmaṇa hands over a sacrificial wooden sword to the king as a mark of royal power and military strength. The sword is regarded as Indra’s thunderbolt. This is recorded in the S.B. 5-4-4. The king, in his turn, hands over the sword to his brother who hands it over to Śūta. The Śūta, again, hands over the same to the Grāmaṇi, village headman. The Grāmaṇi, in his turn hands it over to a Sajāta, a tribesman. Every receiver of the sword becomes weaker than the giver. Thus the king or Ksatriya is made weaker than the Brāhmaṇa who offers the sword to the king; the king’s brother is made weaker than the king, Śūta is made weaker than the king’s brother, Grāmaṇi from the Śūta and the Sajāta from the Grāmaṇi. This gradual inferiority or deficiency in power is intended for the proper functioning of the body politic. The Brāhmaṇa priest while handing over the sword to the king makes the king

---

68. A.B. 8-37-3—

‘Yabhirindramabhyaṇḍat Prajāpatih somaṁ
rājänāṁ Varuṇāṁ Yamaṁ Manuṁ.
Tābhīraddhīrabhāṣīṇaṁ tvāmāḥ rājasya
tvamadhīraṇo bhavaḥ.’
weaker than Brähmaṇa but stronger than the king's enemies, says the S.B. 5-4-4-15. But in the actual sprinkling ceremony we find, as stated in the S.B. 5-4-2-7—'the priest pours the remainder of the holy waters into the Brähmaṇa's vessel; he thereby makes the Brähmaṇa an object of respect after the king'. We can tide over these apparent contradictory statements by concluding that the king was temporally superior to the Brähmaṇa and the Brähmaṇa was spiritually superior to the king. The Sajāṭa prepares the gaming ground with that sword. Eggeling in his footnote on the S.B. 5-4-4-19 thus comments on the term Sajāṭa—"The Sajāṭa would seem to be one of the peasant proprietors or 'sharers' constituting the 'village brotherhood' ruled over by the headman, and often actually belonging to the same family as the latter".

In the consecration ceremony the different representatives of the nobility and common people have to give their consent to the accession of the king-elect to the throne. As these representatives of the nobles and commons have a voice in choosing the king they are called Rājakṛta, or Rājakarta, i.e., king-makers. It is only with the express consent of the king-makers that a king can ascend the throne, i.e., become a king. If they do not accord sanction or disallow the king cannot be declared as king. He will have to abdicate in favour of his son or relation chosen by the king-makers. This fact is recorded in clear and unmistakable terms in the Br. texts. 'Only he becomes king', observes the S.B., 'whom the (other) kings allow to assume the royal dignity, but not he whom they do not allow to do so'. The same fact is corroborated by the P.B. which states—'He, forsooth, may be called a king, who is made a king by them, i.e., king-makers'. Amongst the king-makers, the kings had the strongest voice, the most effective

---

69. S.B. 9-4-1-13 and 9-3-4-5—'Yasmai vai rājano rājayamanun- manyante sa rāja bhavati, na sa yasmai na.'

70. P.B. 19-1—'Te tu vai rājeti vadeyuryaṁ ha rāja rājanaṁ ha ikuryāt.'
say in the matter of the selection of king-elect. The king-makers are also called Ratnins i.e., keepers of jewel, the king being the jewel. They acted as the king's ministers or counsellors. For the purpose of the coronation ceremony they are termed Ratnins. There is a ceremony connected with the Rājasūya sacrifice known as "Ratna-haviṣ" iṣṭi which is a prelude to the actual consecration or anointing ceremony. In this ceremony the king-designate goes to the house of each king-maker or Ratnin and offers an oblation at his place in honour of a particular deity. They are called Ratnins because they are like precious gems in the royal crown.

From the details of the 'Ratna-haviṣ' ceremony we can gather the list of king-makers which varies according to the texts of different Brāhmaṇas. The S.B. 5-3-1 enumerates the details of this ceremony and the order of merit of the king-makers following which the king goes to their houses. Thus according to the S.B. there are eleven Ratnins or king-makers serially arranged according to their social status in the following manner—Senāṇī or Commander-in-chief, Purohita or family priest, yajamāṇa, chief queen or consecrated queen called Mahiṣi, Śūta, i.e., chronicler or court-minstrel, Grāmaṇi or headman of the village, kṣattṛ or chamberlain, Saṃgrahitṛ or treasurer, Bhāgadugha or tax-collector, Aksāvāpa or superintendent of dice (gambling), Govikarta or huntsman, Pālāgala or courier. Each king-maker or Rāja-krṭ is described as 'one jewel of the king'. Though we find twelve persons in this list, the S.B. states that Aksāvāpa and Govikarta, i.e., superintendent of the dice and the huntsman, though two individuals should be taken as one jewel. "These two, while being two jewels (of the king), he makes one for the purpose of completeness." Each day the king goes to the house of one king-maker or Ratnin. Thus eleven days are required to complete the circuit. On the twelfth day he goes to the house of the discarded wife called Parivṛtti and offers an oblation to goddess Nirṛti. But

71. S.B. 5-3-1-10—'Te va ete dve satī ratne ekaṃ karoti sampadaḥ kṣamāya; asyaikam ratnam yadakṣavapaśca Govikartaśca.'
this discarded wife is not treated as a jewel in the S.B.; hence she falls outside the list of eleven Ratnins. This list of king-makers slightly varies according to different Brāhmaṇas, there being additions and alterations. The list enumerated in the T.B. is almost identical with that of the S.B. with the only exception that the huntsman (Govikarta) and courier (Pālāgala) are not mentioned. To the list given in the S.B. Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā (2-6-5) adds Takṣā or carpenter, and Rathakāra or chariotwright. In the case of village headman or Grāmaṇi it adds a qualifying adjunct Vaiśya-grāmaṇi. The nucleus of king-makers which had swelled in bulk in the later Vedic age is met with in the Atharvaveda which mentions only five Ratnins viz.,—Rathakāra, karmāra or artisan, Grāmaṇi, the village headman and other kings comprising nobles, chieftains, subsidiary kings and relations of the king-elect. These Ratnins are not kings but king-makers, as the S.B. repeatedly calls them. The M.S. (4-3-8) states ‘these, (king-makers) are the limbs of the king and the kingdom of that king whose ratnins are vigorous also becomes vigorous’.

Jayswal in his ‘Hindu Polity’ (Part I, pp. 20-21) calls these ratnins ‘high functionaries of the state selected on the principle of class and caste-representation’. Thus the priest or Brāhmaṇa represented the Brahmanical class, the Senāṇi, Rājanyas and the chief queen, Mahiṣi represented the military or ruling class, Grāmaṇi, Rathakāra etc., the Vaiśya community and Jayswal takes Akṣāvāpa and Govikarta to represent the Śūdra community. Though it is not explicitly stated in the Br. or Śrauta sūtra texts that the last two belonged to the Śūdra class one may infer them to be Śūdras judging from their social status and profession.

The order of merit of the Ratnins also differs in the different Samhitā and Br. texts. The S.B. alone places Senāṇi or commander first in the list, second and third being Purohita and Mahiṣi while the Brāhmaṇa tops the list in all other Samhitās and Brāhmaṇas, Senāṇi being placed fifth in the M.S.

72. ‘Kṣatrasya vā etanyāṃgani, yasya vā etāni tejasvini bhavanti tadrāṣṭram tejasvi bhavati.’
and the T.S., and sixth in the T.B. From this difference it appears that while the S.B. attaches greater importance to the military aspect of the govt, other texts underrate it laying greater stress on the civil aspect. Except times of danger or warfare, as a rule, the civil branch of administration was given greater importance than the military branch in the Vedic age.

From the above discussion it is abundantly clear that kingship in the Vedic or later Vedic age was a far cry from absolute despotism, autocracy or dictatorship. A faint note of democracy may be traced in the voice of the nobility and common people in choosing their king, in the dependence of the king on king-makers who formed the cabinet, in the conditions imposed upon the king at the time of coronation and in the administrative organisations called Sabha and Samiti which voiced the opinion of the people. But this democratic element must not be made much of or the conclusions should not be pressed too far. Notwithstanding these traces of democratic element there is no denying the fact that kingship was hereditary and the general convention was succession by law of primogeniture. Any and every man could not be made a king or one belonging to non-military class had no right to the throne. In the heaven or on earth the first king had to be chosen and elected by the people but later on kingship became hereditary and the practices that took place during election of the first king became conventional and were observed in the consecration of every monarch as a formality. The hereditary character of monarchy is also proved from other references met with in the Br. texts. The S.B. 12-9-3-1 to 12-9-3-13 recounts the anecdote of Srñjaya king called Duṣtaritu Paumśāyana whose kingdom was inherited by him through ten continuous generations. The A.B. also refers to Daśapurusam Rājyam. The term Rājaputra is also frequently found referring to king’s sons as future successors to the throne. Hence it can be safely con-
cluded that the monarchy was normally hereditary. In the
coronation ceremony, the king is addressed as ‘the father of
king among the kings’ as stated in the A.B. along with other
epithets. This fact also lends support to
the view of hereditary succession. Of course,
in times of emergency or unforeseen national
calamity the Viśaḥ or people who consti-
tuted the rāṣṭra (national unit) could select a
worthy king fit to rise to the occasion and meet the situation from
among the members of the royal family or the nobility.

The A.B. 8-39 records the coronation ceremony of many
kings who ruled over different parts of India in the Vedic
age. The names of the kings consecrated
along with their priests who anointed them
are mentioned. Thus, the priest Tura Kāva-
ṣeya consecrated king Janamejaya, son of
Parikṣhit. Cyāvana Bhārgava consecrated
king Śāryāta, a descendant of Manu; Somā-
śuśmā, son of Vājaratna anointed king Śatānika Sātrājīta;
sages Parvata and Nārada consecrated king Āmvāṣṭhya and
also king Yudhāṃśrauṣṭi Augrasenya; Kaśyapa anointed
king Viśvakarmā Bhauvana; Vaśiṣṭha consecrated king Sudās
Pajavana; sage Saṃvarta Āngirasa consecrated king Marutta
Āvikṣita; sage Udāmaya, son of Atri, anointed king Aṅga
and the latter made a gift of ten thousand elephants, ten thousand
maid-servants decorated with gold ornaments, ten millions of
cows, eighty-seven thousand white stallions to the former out
of gratitude. Sage Dirghatamā consecrated king Bharata, son
of Duṣmanta who conquered the earth and performed one
hundred and thirty-three Aśvamedha sacrifices. Every one of
these consecrated kings conquered the earth and performed
Aśvamedha sacrifice as a mark of their supreme sovereignty.
BOOK II
CHAPTER III

THE CABINET AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANISATIONS

Ministers:—

The Rājakṣṭaḥ or king-makers called Ratnins mentioned above in connection with Ratna-havis ceremony formed the Mantri-pariṣad or the cabinet of the king.

The Cabinet. They were the king's counsellors and the king had to depend on them for guidance and good counsel. The priest, the commander-in-chief, subsidiary kings and the chief queen held important positions in the cabinet. The rural unit was represented by the village headman called Grāmaṇi. The king looked upon each member of the cabinet or each king-maker as his faithful follower. The king became eligible for consecration when each Ratnin had accorded sanction; hence he regarded each of them as his staunch supporter. 'It is for him that he is thereby consecrated', says the S.B., 'and him he makes his own faithful follower'.

The senānī or commander was in charge of military affairs, the karmāra was in charge of industry, the Rathakāra and the Sūta were in charge of different aspects of military organisation; the Samgrahitṛ was in charge of treasury and the Bhāgadugha was entrusted with the collection of taxes and revenue. The superintendent of dice or Akṣāvāpa was a public officer who superintended the gambling halls of the state and collected the revenue due therefrom.

Various Govt. officials.

73. S.B. 5-3-1-6—'Etad vṛ asayal kaṃ ratnaṃ........................................
evaitena sāyate taṃ svamanapakramiṇam kurute.'
Perhaps in times of dangers or necessity the king consulted the Ratnins as his advisers. We do not know whether there was any properly constituted council.

The supreme importance of the Brāhmaṇa Purohita or royal chaplain who was virtually the Prime Minister to the king in matters of administration has been thoroughly discussed in Book I, Chapter II under ‘The Position of the Purohita’.

The Popular Assemblies :—

Sabhā & Samiti : The Sabhā and the Samiti seem to be the oldest popular bodies met with in the history of ancient Indian civilisation. These two assemblies formed an essential feature of the government. The terms occur in the Rgveda but the reference is vague. Repeated references to Sabhā and Samiti are met with in the Atharvaveda. The A.V. (7-13-1) describes these two bodies as the twin daughters of God Prajāpati, to indicate, in the language of Dr. R. K. Mukherji, ‘that they were the original and earliest institutions of Indian polity’. The terms Sabheya, Sabhāpati, Sabhāpāla are found in the Vedic texts. A member of the sabhā was called sabheya or sabhya; worthy of the assembly; the speaker of the assembly was termed sabhāpati; the sergeant who enforced law and order in the assembly hall was designated Sabhāpāla. The S. B. 3-3-4-14 mentions that subsidiary and friendly kings used to attend the sabhā convened by a king. Thus many kings attended the sabhā convened by king Soma and participated in the deliberations. ‘The sabhā functioned as a parliament for the disposal of public business by debate and discussion’. The gift of the gab and proficiency in debating were essentially necessary to make one’s mark in a sabhā. Decision was taken by the vote of the majority. The resolutions adopted in the sittings of the sabhā were binding on others. A minor who had not attained adolescence could not be a member of the sabhā.

74. ‘Sabhā ca mā samitiścavatām Prajāpaterdhitarau sapvidhāne’.
75. ‘Hindu Civilisation’, Chapter V.
76. R. K. Mukherji : Hindu Civilisation ; Chapter V.
A youth could attend the said assembly. The T.B. observes—
A youth who has attained adolescence could be a member of
the sabhā. Hence a young man became dear to all men.77

The samiti, it appears, was a more comprehensive organi-
sation, a larger public body which included not only the
common people but also representatives of
nobles. It was of greater importance than
the sabhā and formed a most valuable asset
of the king. According to Ludwig, the samiti was a more com-
prehensive conference including not only all the common
people (viśāḥ) but also Brāhmaṇas and rich aristocratic patrons.
'It appears that the samiti', observes V. M. Apte, 'was an
august assembly of a larger group of the people for the dis-
charge of tribal (i.e. political) business and was presided over by
the king. The sībhā, a more select body, was less popular
and political in character than the samiti. Although the func-
tions and powers of sībhā and samiti cannot be exactly de-
 fined, numerous passages referring to them clearly indicate
that both these assemblies exercised considerable authority and
must have acted as healthy checks on the power of the king'.78

Of the two organisations the sabhā was definitely a smaller
and select body of representatives which functioned not
only as a popular body but also as a Court
of Justice whereas the samiti was a larger
body—the general assembly of the people,
more representative in character and wide
in its scope. It was the main organ of Vox populi. In
the age of the Brs. the samiti became almost
obsolete. Causal reference to the sabhā
alone are met with in the Brs.

77. 3-8-13-3—'Sabheyo yuvā. Yo vai pūrvavayaśi, sa sabheyo
yuvā tasmāt yuvā pumāṇa priyo bhāvukaḥ'. Sayaṇa explains 'Pūrva-
vayaśi' as—'Pūrva-vayaskasya yauvanamopetavat sabhāyogyatvatam'.
78. History and culture of the Indian People; The Vedic Age;
Chapter XVII, 'Political and Legal Institutions. Page 553.'
BOOK II
CHAPTER IV

THE RELATION BETWEEN THE RULER AND THE RULED

The Nobility and the Common People

The Brāhmaṇas clearly indicate the relation that existed between the nobility and the common people or the ruling class and the ruled in the later Vedic age. This division of the ruling class and the ruled existed amongst the gods also. Indra is looked upon as the representative of the nobility as he is the king. Says S.B. 4-3-3-9—"Indra is the nobility, the Maruts are the people". In this text the term Viṣa is used in the sense of common people—subjects or the ruled.

The real strength of the nobility depended on the people; The foundation of a kingdom rests on the goodwill of the subjects. This truth was known to the Vedic Aryans and finds expression in the Brahmanical texts. The passage of the S.B. quoted above further states—"It is through the people that the noble or king becomes strong." The same idea is repeated in S.B. 4-3-3-6—"The nobility is strengthened by the subjects." In the hierarchy of social structure though the noble was placed above the common people there is no denying the truth that the nobility was but a product of the commonalty. The nobles were upgraded from amongst the common people. S.B. 12-7-3-8 states in unambiguous terms, "It is the people that creates the nobility;
the nobility is produced from out of the people or subjects.'

The nobility was a minority in comparison with the people who represented the majority. Hence 'the nobility was surrounded by the people on all sides'.

One ruler rules over many subjects. The ruler is one but subjects are many. Thus 'chieftaincy (social distinction) is bestowed on one and multiplicity on the people.'

As a rule the relation between the noble and the people was the relation of the ruler and the subject and as such except exceptional cases that relation could not be pleasant or happy. It is amply evident from later Vedic texts that the subjects looked upon the ruling class as the feeder and themselves as the food. They had to pay taxes in kinds and they were exploited by the ruling class in various ways.

S.B. 6-1-2-25 lends support to this fact which runs as follows:—'Nobility is the feeder and the people are the food; when there is abundant food for the feeder, that realm is indeed prosperous and thrives.'

This feeling of the subjects that the relation between the ruler and the ruled is that of the feeder and the food is testified to by most of the Brahmanical texts.

Despotism may be either benevolent or malevolent, and both types of despotism existed in the Vedic age. People looked upon exacting ruthless rulers as torturers that maltreated the subjects. It is with reference to these despots that we come across such passages in the Br. texts. as 'The wielder of royal power feeds on the people; state is the eater and the people are the food; state is the deer, people are the barley.'

'Royal power, indeed, presses hard on the people; the king is apt to

---

4. 'Viśa eva tat kṣatrapaṁ janayati, viśo hi kṣatrapaṁ jāyate.'
5. S.B. 3-6-1-24—'Kṣatramubhāyato viśā pariṣṭhān.'
6. S.B. 9-3-1-14—'Ekasthami tat kṣatramekaṁ śaṁyaṁ karoti, bahava itare viśā tād bhūmānaṁ dadhātī.'
7. 'Attā vai kṣatriyo'naṁ vin yatra vā atturannam bhūyo bha- vati tād rāṣṭraṁ samrāddham bhavati tadedhate.'
8. S.B. 13-2-9-8—'Vid vai yavo rāṣṭraṁ harino viśameva rāṣ- trāyādyamḥ karoti tasmāt rāṣṭrī viśāṁati.'
strike down people.' The Brahmins or priests as spiritual heads enjoined upon the people to be subservient to the ruler and obey him faithfully. 'The priest makes the people subservient to the nobility.'

'He endows the chieftain or ruler pre-eminently with power, and makes the ruler more powerful than the people; he makes the people obedient to the chief from below.'

Again, we find in S.B. 8-7-1-12 — 'He thus builds up the nobility above the peasantry. One should not place the people above the nobility.'

It is also strictly enjoined that one should never attempt to raise the people to the level of the ruler, or the commonalty to the level of the nobility. In that case the subjects will look down upon the ruler, disobey him and revolt. One who makes such an undesirable attempt creates confusion and brings about a chaotic condition amounting to anarchy. S.B. 10-4-3-22 is very emphatic in its censure on persons who desire to bring about such a chaotic condition in the kingdom. 'They who do so produce confusion between the better and the worse; they make the subjects equal to and refractory to the nobility or ruling class.'

Just as the subjects should not be made equal to and refractory to the nobility or ruling class for the upkeep of the social order and smooth running of administration, likewise the subjects should never be detached from the ruler and vice versa. In the sacrifice known as Sautrāmaṇī kṣatriyas are enjoined upon to take the pale of milk which is equal to Soma in this case (Payograhāh) and Vaiśyas are asked to take up the pale of Surā (Surā-
grahah). But if the order is reversed a great chaos will result therefrom. By reversing the process one would detach the nobility from the people which means detaching the body from the soul or life. In this connection S.B. 12-7-3-15 observes—
‘One should not detach the people from the nobility; or the nobility from the people; that will create confusion and lead to evil.’

In exceptional cases, viz, in cases of malevolent despots people looked upon the ruler as a feeder and oppressor. But, as a rule, the relation between the nobility and the people, between the ruling class and the ruled was cordial. People looked upon the chief or ruler as their protector; the ruler enjoyed the love, confidence and co-operation of the subjects. Just as the subjects paid to the ruler his due share as a mark of homage, the ruler also gave the people their due share for which they obeyed him and were grateful to him. ‘He makes the people subservient and obedient to the ruling class by giving them a due share.’ Subjects used to show honour to the ruler when he approached them by prostrating on the ground before him. ‘When a noble approaches, all these subjects, the people go down before him, crouch down by him on the ground.’

The people willingly paid a part of their produces to the ruler as a mark of honour in return of the protection offered by the chief. Thus the fore-share of every possession or acquisition was set apart for the ruler. For the ruling power ‘the people set apart a special fore-share.’ Thus the nobility or ruling class had a share in everything the subjects possessed. ‘Whatever belongs to the people, the chieftain has a share’, observes S.B. 9-1-1-18.

14. ‘Kṣatraṃ vai payograhā viñṣ surāgrahā yadvayatiśaktān grūṇīyāt viśām kṣatraḥ vyavacchindyāt, kṣatraṃ viṣaḥ, pāpavasyaṃ kuryāt.’
15. ‘Pratyudāyāminīṃ kṣatraśa viśaṃ kuryāt........ksatraśaivaivaad viśaṃ kṛtānukāraṇamuvartamānāṃ karoṭi (S.B. 4-3-3-10).’
16. S.B. 3-9-3-7—‘Kṣatriyamāyāntamimāḥ prajā viṣaḥ pratyava- rohanti tamadhaṇstādupāsate.’
17. S.B. 9-1-1-25—‘ṛtasma kṣaṭryāyāṣā viṣo’mrup purastād uddhāramudaharantī.’
18. ‘Tasmād yad viṣāstasmin kṣatriyo’pi bhāgaḥ.’
For the sake of royal treasury and smooth administration the ruling class sought the goodwill and co-operation of the subjects. In times of warfare and national calamity the relation became more cordial. When dire calamity faced the kingdom the barriers of caste and class distinctions were considerably relaxed for the sake of solidarity and united front. When a king launched on warfare or marched out on a campaign against the enemy he did not hesitate to eat from the same plate with the people for the sake of victory and the latter’s whole-hearted co-operation. This fact is recorded in S.B. 4-3-3-15—'A chief or noble may eat from the same vessel with the people for the sake of victory.' The king or chieftain was always conscious of the fact that he could never win victory in battles without the co-operation of his subjects. 'It is with the help of his people or clan' observes the S.B.—'the ruler wins what he desires to win.' This passage proves beyond a shade of doubt that in times of national calamity the rulers condescended to come down to the level of common people to enlist their sympathy and succeeded in making a united front against a common foe. This fact be speaks expediency and states-manlike outlook. They knew that the upkeep of strict class distinction or vaunted pride of the ruling class would bode ill for the nation and drive deep fissures into the solidarity of the body politic.

As referred to above, subjects are compared to food and the state to the consumer. But the opposite idea also occurs in the Brs. Just as the state realised taxes from the subjects likewise it also provided for the economic welfare of the people. In this sense the people also enjoyed the state and fed upon the state. Observes the T.B., 'people are the deer, the state is barley,' that is to say, 'the livelihood of the people' is provided for by the state.

19. 'Sa yathā vijayasya kāmāya viśā samāne pātre aṣṭīyāt.'
20. 5-4-3-8,—'Viśa vai tat kṣatrīyo jayati yajjīgṣati.'
21. 3-9-7-2—'Vid vai hariṇī, rāṣṭraṃ yavaḥ.'
BOOK II
CHAPTER V

THE MEMBERS OF ROYAL FAMILY AND THEIR POSITION

The Position of Queens:

The king had usually four wives or queens called Mahiṣī, Vāvātā, Parivṛktā and Pāḷāgali. The chief queen who was duly consecrated was called Mahiṣī; the most favourite wife of the king was termed Vāvātā; the neglected or discarded wife was called Parivṛktā and the fourth queen termed Pāḷāgali was lower in social status than the other three queens; she might have been the daughter of a courtier or minister who was not of royal descent. Sāyaṇa commenting on the A.B. 3-12-11 observes,—'

'The king had three types of wives of which the Mahiṣī came from higher caste, Vāvātā was a descendant of middle class and Parivṛkti came of the lower caste.'

1 Thus Indra's chief queen or Mahiṣī was Sacī whereas the favourite consort or Vāvātā was Prāṣāhā. A.B. says—'Indra's favourite wife Prāṣāhā was his Vāvātā. In case of king Daśaratha we can term the queen Kauśalyā, as Mahiṣī and Kaikeyī as Vāvātā. The S.B. says, 'Aputrā vai Patni Parivṛktā', i.e., the barren wife of the king is the discarded wife. The chief queen was included amongst the king-makers or Ratnins discussed above and hence was a member of the royal cabinet or mantri-pariṣad. The chief queen was indispensable to the king in the performance of sacrifices and religious rites. In certain sacrifices the presence and active co-operation of all the four queens was essen-

---
1. 'Rajām hi trividhaḥ striyaḥ. Tatrotamajātermahiṣīti nāma, mādhyamajāte Vāvātāti, adhamajāteḥ Parivṛkti riti.'
tially necessary. We have seen how all the queens played an important role in the performance of the horse-sacrifice and the gorgeous retinue that attended upon each queen as described under the Asvamedha in the foregoing pages amply bespeak their queenly status and imperial dignity. The inclusion of the chief queen amongst king-makers bespeaks her constitutional status.

The favourite queen also enjoyed an important position as a go-between between the king and his officers or the king and the people. If the people failed to pluck up courage to place their grievances before the monarch for redress they often appealed to the favourite queen Vāvātā who became their spokesman and championed their cause. Thus we read in the A.B. that once the gods failing to appeal directly to their king Indra approached his favourite wife Vāvātā, Prāśahā by name, and she agreed to move her lord in that matter, and intimated the result thereof to them in the following morning. 2

Princes and Brothers of the King:

True, the names of king’s sons and brothers do not occur in the list of Ratnins or king-makers in the Ratna-Haviṣ ceremony though one expects their names therein. Nevertheless they play important roles in other items of the Rājasūya sacrifice. In the details of the coronation ceremony we have seen during the sprinkling ceremony the king’s son or brother or a near relation of his also sprinkles or consecrates the king with the holy water and for the purpose a special wooden vessel is prepared from the Udumvara (Ficus glomerata) tree which is to be used by the king’s relation alone and not by the other consecrators. 3 This relation of

2. A.B. 3-12-11—'Te devā avrudauniyaṁ va Indrasya priyā jāyā Vāvātā Prāśahā nāma, asyāmeva icchāmahā iti. Tatheti tasyāmaicchanta; sa enān avravit prātarvaḥ prativaktāsmīti.'

3. S.B. 5-3-5-12—'Andumvaraṁ bhavati, tena svo'bhiṣiṇicati.'
the king is referred to by the term ‘sva’ in the S.B. which may mean son, brother or any relation. Later on, there occurs a pointed reference to the king’s son in the details of the same ceremony. After the besprinkling or anointing ceremony the king pours the remnant of holy waters into the Brāhmaṇa’s vessel and hands over that vessel to his (king’s) dearest son, thinking ‘May this son of mine perpetuate this vigour of mine.’ Again, before the game of dice while passing the sacrificial wooden sword from one person to another, as we have seen, the purohita or Adhvaryu priest passes it from his hand to the king’s brother whereas, according to Kṛṣṇa yajuś text, the priest passes it to the king’s dear son and friend etc. These functions viz, that of handing over the vessel of consecration water and of the wooden sword bespeak the constitutional status of the king’s son, brother and near relatives. The point that the king’s son had the right of succession by the law of primogeniture has been thoroughly discussed. The order of merit in which the vessel of holy water or the sacrificial sword is passed deserves importance as it clearly proves that the position of the king’s son or brother was next to that of the chief priest alone. Brothers of kings held honourable position and had the privilege to accompany the kings wherever they went. ‘Seasons are the royal brothers of king Soma and they accompany king Soma just as brothers of earthly king accompany the king,’ says the A.B.

4. S.B. 5-4-2-8—‘Tad yo’sya putraḥ priyatamo bhavati, tasmā etat pātraṃ prayacchatīdaṃ me’yaṃ vīryaṃ putro’msantanaṃva ṛṣitaḥ.’

5. A.B. 1-3-2—‘Ṛtavo vai somasya rājño rājabhrātaro yathā manuṣyasya, taireva irnāṃ tatsahāgamayati.’
BOOK II
CHAPTER VI

WARFARE, DEPOSITION OF KINGS, ARMY AND WEAPONS

Warfare:—

The king was the head of both the civil and the military administration. Frequent skirmishes and even great battles used to take place between different Aryan kings or between kings and non-Aryan tribal peoples. Kings used to take pride in their valour, and warfare was regarded as a part of kingly virtue. 'As the Kṣatriya was created from the arms of the Primal Puruṣa, the creator, strength of arm is possessed by the Kṣatriya', observes the P.B.1 'Battle is the valour of a Rājanya', remarks the S.B.2 while the T.B. enum.rates warfare in the list of royal duties.3 During times of war the kings condescended to rub shoulders with the commoner to enlist his sympathy and support and tried his best to make a united stand against a common enemy. The enemy was not allowed to take advantage of want of unity amongst the opposing party. In times of dire national calamity subjects discussed amongst themselves in groups to devise ways and means to foil the onset of the enemy. During times of war they kept their wives and children in the house of the king as a place of safety. This practice was also a good security against their service and loyalty to the ruling chief because those who were enticed or purchased by the enemy to work as fifth columnists had no chance of getting back their family kept in the royal palace under military surveillance. Thus

1. 6-1-8—'Tasmādu bāhuvṛtyo (rājanyah) bāhūhyāṃ hi sṛṣṭaḥ.'
2. 13-1-5-6—'Yuddhaṃ vai rājanyasya vīryam.'
3. 3-9-14-4—'Yuddhaṃ vai rājanyasya.'
this practice was a safeguard against betrayal. From the A.B. we gather the above facts. Once the gods sensing defeat in the hands of Asuras convened conferences in small groups; god Agni conferred with the eight Vasus, Indra with the eleven Rudras, Varuṇa with the twelve Ādityas and Bṛhaspati with the Viśve-devās. They arrived at the following decision;—‘We shall keep all our dearest relations wives, children etc., in the house of king Varuṇa. He who will transgress this rule or entice others will not be allowed to have his relations back (when the calamity will be over). Conferring thus they placed their beloved ones in the palace of king Varuṇa.’ There was an oath-taking ceremony for the sake of unity. The people used to take oath touching sacrificial holy butter (Ājya) to make united stand against the foe.

In times of war the monarch or ruling chief freely mixed with the common people and, as discussed under the caption ‘The nobility and the common people’, even partook of meal from the same plate with the commons. He conferred special favours and graces upon those ministers and chieftains who helped him in times of war. Thus, as recorded in the A.B. 3-12-9, King Indra conferred special favour upon Maruts who aided him during his fight with the demon Vṛtra.

Defeated kings used to throw away their riches and secret articles in the sea so that the victor or conqueror might not seize the same. Thus the Asuras threw away their riches in the sea when they were vanquished by the gods. The gods had to lay hold on that booty after recovering the same from the depths of the sea with the help of a particular metre.  

4. A.B. 1-4-7—‘Te devā abihayurasmākaṃ vipremāṇamanvi-
dam asurā ābhāvīyatātī te yuvtrayamya...............yā eva na imaḥ priyamānastavastā asya varuṇasya rājñō gṛhe sāṃnidhāmahi.............. te varuṇasya rājñō gṛhe tanāh sāṃnuyadadhat.’

5. A.B. 5-22-6—‘Devāsura vā eṣu lokeṣu samayatanta, te vai devāh saṣṭhalenaivahanaibhyo lokebhīyo’ṣurān...............teṣāṁ..............
Different types of victory are enumerated in the A.B. such as Jaya, Abhijaya, Vijaya, Samjaya. During the ceremony of coronation the king squatting on the ground utters the hymn—‘I bow down to the Brahman; I bow down to the Brahman, I bow down to the Brahman and offer him boon (gift) for the sake of Jiti, Abhijiti, Vijiti and Samjiti (different types of victory).’ Sāyaṇa thus explains these three kinds of victory. ‘Jiti’ means simple victory. Conquering all the gods means Abhijiti. ‘Vijiti’ means various forms of conquest relating to both powerful and weak enemies. Complete victory following the extirpation of enemies is called Samjiti.

Many battles, victories and defeats have been recorded in the Vedic texts among which the Dāsarājña yuddha or the battle of the ten kings stands out pre-eminently. It is an epoch-making battle, a historical event of great importance referred to in various hymns of the Rgveda. Many important tribes and principal heroes of the then Aryāvarta are connected with this battle. Sudāsa, born of Trṣṭu family, was a Bhārata king reigning in Upper India over the particular tract known as Brahmāvarta. Viśvāmitra was the royal priest of Sudāsa. He was the king’s adviser or chief minister and with his counsel Sudāsa conquered many battles on the banks of the Vipās and Śutudri. Later on, Sudāsa dismissed Viśvāmitra in favour of Vasīṭṭha who became his chief priest. This change over was, perhaps, due to Vasīṭṭha’s superior knowledge of the sacred lore, superior spiritual power and wise deliberations in matters both diplomatic and spiritual. Hence Viśvāmitra felt humiliated, became the sworn enemy of Vasīṭṭha and to wreak vengeance on king Sudāsa led a tribal confederacy of ten kings

vasūnyāsamastanyādāya samudrāṇa praṇaḥyanta; ta etenaiva chandaśa
........................vasūnyādada.'

6. A.B. 8-37-5—‘Namō brahmaṇe, namō brahmaṇe, namō brahmaṇe iti tṛṣkṛtvo brahmaṇe namaskṛtya varṣaṇ dadāmi jitaḥ, ab’ījīṭyai, vi jītyai, samjītyai iti vācaṇa vīṣṇu.’
against the Bharatas to which line Sudāsa belonged. The five well-known tribes of Vedic India, Puru, Yadu, Turvasu, Anu, and Druhyu along with the lesser known five Alina, Paktha, Bhatakas, Śiva and Vishānīn went to the making of the confederacy of ten kings. Under the able guidance of Vaśiṣṭha, Sudāsa with his Bharata followers came out victorious utterly routing the opponents on the bank of the river Paruṣñi. The ten tribes referred to belonged to the Aryan race. But Sudāsa had to launch another bloody battle on the banks of the Jumna against three non-Aryan tribes, Ajas, Śigrus and Yakṣus who united under the banner of king Bheda. Sudāsa again emerged victorious inflicting a crushing defeat on the enemy. These battles are described in the seventh maṇḍala of the Rgveda. The T.B. (1-8-4-1) describes the winter raids of Kuru-Pańcāla kings. 7

Deposition of Kings :

Cases of dethronement and expulsion of kings from their kingdom are met with in both the Samhitā and Br. texts. The S.B. records the case of king Duṣṭaritu Paumṣāyana. He inherited the kingdom which came down to him through ten generations (Daśapuruṣaṁ rājyam) but he was expelled from the kingdom 8 for his misdemeanour and maltreatment of subjects. The Śrījayas also expelled Revottaras Rātava Cākra Sthapati. 9 This Cākra Sthapati king wanted to perform Sāturāmaṇi sacrifice for the expelled king Duṣṭaritu to confer upon the latter the dominion over the Śrījayas.

The Pańcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa (19-7-1 to 19-7-4) refers to a special ceremony called Rād-yajña by which a deposed king may get back his kingdom or a ruling king may win back the loyalty of the subjects.

7. 'Tasmād śīśe kuru-pańcālāḥ prāṇico yānti.'
8. S.B. 12-9-3-1—'Duṣṭaritu ha paumṣāyanaḥ. Daśapuruṣaṁ rājyādaśaparuddha āsa.'
9. S.B. 12-9-3-1—'Revottarasamu ha pātavaṇcaśākraṁ sthapatiṁ Śrījayaś aparuddhuḥ.'
In the A.V. 3-3-5, we read of a king who, expelled from his kingdom, was living in another country; later on he was recalled and reinstated. Friends and foes alike welcomed him.

An element of democracy can be easily traced in this deposition and recalling of kings. This fact goes to prove that though kingship was hereditary in character, the voice of the people acted as a healthy check on the monarch and that subjects could depose a king who maltreated the people or proved a failure as a ruler. Likewise when a deposed king mended his ways the people had the privilege to recall and reinstal him.

Army :

The terms 'senā', senāni, Anika etc., occur repeatedly in the Br. texts. The commander was called Senāni or Senāpati and we have seen under the coronation ceremony what an important position was enjoyed by the commander. He was one of the Ratnins or king-makers and the king went to his house first to offer the first oblation in the jewel-offering ceremony. So far as this ceremony is concerned his position is superior to that of the chief priest or the chief queen. The several bands of guards that accompany the sacrificial horse bespeak the different kinds of soldiers. A hundred royal princes clad in armour, a hundred warriors armed with sword; a hundred sons of heralds and headmen of villages bearing quivers filled with arrows, a hundred sons of attendants and charioteers bearing staves and a hundred horses used to accompany the sacrificial horse. The original passage of the S.B. in question has been quoted under the caption 'Monarchy' while dealing with the horse-sacrifice. This passage gives an inkling into the different classes of warriors with their weapons that obtained in that age. Six thousand mail-clad men protected the sacrificial horse of a particular king, says the S.B. 13-5-4-16.

A good army was called Svanīka. The A.B. records a practice observed by commanders or kings desirous of vic-
tory. He who desires that his army should come out victorious in the battle should take a grass, snap it off on both ends and crossing half the length of his own army should fling the same towards the opposing or enemy’s army uttering the words—O Prasahā! ‘Ka’ i.e. Prajahati (your father-in-law) is looking at you.’ The daughter-in-law fights shy and shuns the presence of the father-in-law; hence the enemy’s army take to their heels.”

The soldiers were arranged in several arrays while marching on a campaign. Thus Agni while fighting with the demon arranged his army in three rows putting one commander in charge of every row or battalion; thus equipped he defeated the Asuras.

The front or vanguard of the army should always be terrible to strike terror in the opponent’s heart. ‘The spearhead of the king’s army is sure to become terrible’, says the S.B. ‘A great king placing in front the advance guard of his army pursues his way in safety’—observes the K.B. (5-5).

A leader of a good army is called Susena and a conqueror of army is styled Senajit in the S.B. 8-6-1-20. ‘A Rājanya or man of military class be born as one heroic, skilled in archery, certain of his mark and a mighty car-fighter.’

In the Šatarudriya hymn of the V.S. we come across various types of soldier whose protector is Rudra. God Rudra is termed ‘Senāni’, ‘Senāpati’ (Commander-in-chief). He is ‘Aṣu-senaḥ and Aṣu-rathaḥ’ (16-34) i.e. his army marches with great speed and his chariot runs at a breakneck speed. The diverse types of soldier are but the various mani-

10. A.B. 3-12-11—‘Tad yāsya kāme senā jayettasyā ardhatishthām apramabhāyataḥ parichidyetara senāmabhāyasyet prāsade kastvā paśyatīti………….sā senā bhajyamānā nilīyamāneti.’
11. A.B. 3-14-1—‘Sa triśrenirbātva tryanīko’surān yuddhamupapāpad vijayāya.’
12. S.B. 13-2-2-2—‘Rājālaḥ senāmukhaḥ bhūṣmambhāvukam.’
13. S.B. 13-1-9-2—‘Āraṣtre rājanyaḥ śūra īṣavyo’tivyādhi mahāratho jayatāmiti.’
festations of god Rudra. The thirty-fifth verse of the hymn concerned reads thus:—“Salutation to him (Rudra) who bears a helmet (Vilmin), and to him who puts on a cuirass (kavacin); homage to him who puts on a mail and a defensive armour (varmin), and to him who possesses a stronghold (a small fortlike room) on the elephant’s back to fight therefrom (varūthin); salutation to the far-famed (deity) whose army is renowned (śruta-sena); homage to the skilled drummer (Dundubhya) and the players of military musical instruments (that exhilarate the soldiers).”

Thus the army consisted of infantry, cavalry, charioteers, elephantry; different types of military dress are also described in the said passage such as helmet, cuirass, coat of mail, armour; armoured cars, well-protected elephants with fortified strong rooms on their back. A king whose army was far-famed attained the appellation of śruta-sena. Besides fighters there were also musicians and drummers in every army squadron to encourage the soldiers by rousing their military mettle playing on warlike tune and thus spur them on to action.

Weapons and Missiles:—

Various types of missiles and weapons were used during the later Vedic age. ‘These are the weapons of a Ksatriya’, says the A.B., ‘chariots yoked with horses, armours, bows and arrows.’

The different parts of an arrow are described in the A.B. 1-4-8 as Anika, the headpiece, šalya or the sharpened blade, tejana, the tip of the blade and Parna the feather portion of the tail end of the arrow. The S.B. (1-2-4-7) refers to thousand-spiked hundred-edged thunderbolt. According to the S.B. an arrow measured five span in length. The carpenter’s knife, the chopping knife and razor called Svadhiti are mentioned in the S.B. In the horse sacrifice i.e. Aśvamedha the slaughter-knives of the horse were made of gold, iron and

14. ‘Namo vilmine ca kavacine ca namo varmine ca varūthin ca.’ Namaḥ śrutāya ca śrutasenāya ca namo dundubhyāya cāhananyāya ca.’

15. A.B. 7-34-1—‘Athaltāni kṣatriyasyāyudhāni yadaśvarathāḥ kavaca iṣavaśca.’

16. S.B. 1-2-4-6—‘Sahasrabhṛṣṭirvai sa vajra śāsit śatatejā.’
copper respectively to serve different purposes stated in the S.B. 13-2-2-16. The hooked or crooked knife was termed Pārśva. The sword (Asi), scimitar (śāsa), staves (Daṇḍa), sharp shovel (Abhri), bows, armour called varma or sannāha are mentioned in the S.B. The scimitar or śāsa was used to slaughter the sacrificial animal and the person who performed the slaughter was called śamitṛ. The axe or paraśu was used to chop firewood and in battles as well. Missiles used in war were meant to kill people and shafts of weapons were like the fierce teeth of terrible beasts. Hence the S.B. remarks,—'Manslaughter is missile and shafts (of weapons) are like mordacious beasts."

In the Šatarudriya hymn of the V.S. we come across the names of many weapons of war. God Rudra possesses thousands of weapons. He holds Heti (weapons), Pināka (colossal bow), Dhanu (small bow), Iṣu (arrow), Vajra (thunderbolt), Khāḍga (scimitar), Asi (sword), Niṣaṅga (a kind of sabre), Iṣudhi (quiver), Śara (thin arrow), Āyudha (missile), Śataddhanu (hundred bows); he weilds weapons to be hurled and weapons to pierce (16-23).

17. S.B. 8-6-1-16,—'Daṃkaṣṇavaḥ paśavo hetiḥ paniṣeyo vadhaḥ prahetiḥ.'

18. 16-53—'Śahasrāṇi sahasraśo vāhvostava hetayaḥ.'
SUMMARY OF BOOK—II.

Monarchy was the prevailing system of Government. The first king was elected but for that reason it should not be assumed that kingship was elective in character. All the references to monarchy prove beyond doubt that kingship was hereditary in character, and succession by the law of primogeniture was the practice.

Eleven different types of monarchy are heard of, viz., Rājya, Sāmrājya, Bhaujya, Svārājya, Vairājya, Pārameśṭhya, Rājya, Māhārājya, Ādhipatya, Svavaśatā and Ātiśṭha, i.e., kingship, overlordship, paramount rule, self-rule, sovereignty, supreme authority, kingship, great kingship, suzerainty, supremacy and pre-eminence respectively. Some of these terms such as kingship, self-rule, (svārājya) etc., bespeak kingship and some, e.g., Māhārājya, Ādhipatya, Pārameśṭhya etc., bespeak paramount sovereignty. Different sacrifices were connected with different types of kingship; e.g., one became king by performing the Rājasūya, an emperor (Samrāt) by performing the Vājapeya and paramount sovereign ‘Sārvabhauma’ by the performance of the celebrated horse-sacrifice. Though the extents of the territories of emperors and paramount sovereigns have been described in hyperbolic terms as extending to the very ocean and the farthest end of the earth, it is crystal clear that such vastly extensive territories were an impossibility in that age when the Vedic Aryans have neither crossed the Vindhya range nor entered Bengal. The geographical boundary of the territories termed Svārājya, Ekarājya, Sāmrājya etc., cannot be accurately determined to-day. The states in the both early and later Vedic age were small. The territory of an emperor or samrāt was, perhaps, not much bigger than that of an ordinary king. The states of the later Vedic age markedly differ from those of the early Vedic age in one important aspect. In the era of the R.V. Samhitā the state was still tribal. The Bharatas, the Yadus, Anus, Druhyus and Turvasus mentioned in the Samhitā had no fixed geographi-
cal boundary or territorial basis for their states. Those early Vedic States may be termed floating states having no fixed basis. But in the later Vedic age the states became territorial with their geographical boundary clearly defined. In the Brs. we find different tribes settling down in different parts of the country.

The coronation or consecration ceremony of king-designates called ‘Abhiṣekā’ was an important function. The Rājasūya sacrifice was connected with the coronation ceremony. The details of this ceremony are to be found in the A.V., A.B., S.B. etc. Every rite connected with this anointing ceremony was symbolic representing different functions and prerogatives of the king. A popular element connected with this ceremony merits special mention, viz, the presence of Ratnins or king-makers. The list of king-makers comprises the Purohita or royal chaplain, the chief queen, commander-in-chief, subsidiary kings, headman of villages termed Grāmāṇi, the chronicler or court-minstrel (sūta), chamberlain (kṣattṛ) tax-collector (Bhāga-dugha), treasurer (Graṅghrāḥṛ), etc. The nucleus of these king-makers is met with in the A.V. where only five king-makers are mentioned; the list swelled in bulk as ages rolled on and the figure increased from five to eleven. The king was regarded as a ‘jewel’ (Ratna) and the protectors of this jewel were termed Ratnins. The consent of the king-makers was sought by the king-designate as a convention. The king entered into a covenant with the chief counsellor, the Purohita, as also with his subjects. He regarded himself as the custodian of his kingdom; the kingdom was a sacred trust and not meant for his self-aggrandisement.

The king was regarded as the earthly counterpart of the heavenly kings, Soma, Varuṇa and Indra. During the coronation ceremony the priests used to strike him silently and mildly on the back with sticks. By this rite the king was taken beyond the jurisdiction of judicial punishment. These facts prove the divine right or, strictly speaking, the demi-divinity of the king. The king was both the legislative and the executive head. Dharma or Law was regarded as the real sovereign and the earthly sovereign as the executive to uphold and enforce that law. It seems that the king was also the head of the
judiciary and the army having subsidiary officers to look into the judicial and military affairs on his behalf.

The Brahmin chaplain of the king called the Purohita functioned as his chief adviser or Prime Minister in both socio-political issues and spiritual matters. He was the main organ of the administration. The king and his Purohita smoothly governed the kingdom aided by such important royal officers as the Grāmana or the village headman, the Senāpati or the commander of the army, the tax-collector, treasurer, chamberlain, and the two important popular assemblies called the sabhā and the samiti. The simple organs of administration of the Śrāṅhitā period had increased in number and became complicated in proportion to the growing complications of the social structure and increasing responsibility of the ruler. The Brahmin Purohita was learned and well-versed in the science of government. Some priests acted as administrators of two states, even three states simultaneously. The Priest Devabhāga Śrautarṣa looked after the administration of two states the Kurus and the Śrījayas. Jāla Jāṭukarṇya, again, held the post of Chief adviser or administrator of three states, Kāśi, Kosala and Videha simultaneously. This fact bespeaks the extraordinary administrative ability of the Purohitas of the later Vedic age. The king ruled over the villages through the Grāmana or headmen of villages who formed an important organ of administration. In the age of the Rk-Saṁhitā the Grāmana was only a military official who used to lead a squadron of an army in the battle-field. During the age of the Brs. he was probably entrusted with both civil and military duties relating to villages he represented. The highest ambition of a Vaiśya was to attain the status of a Grāmana. From this we may infer the importance of the Grāmana as a civil functionary. It is quite likely that through him the king controlled the commoner and realised taxes. Another officer called Sṭhāpati not mentioned in the list of king-makers must have been one of the important executive and judicial heads. The Sṭhāpati of king Duṣṭarītu restored to the king his lost kingdom. In the S.B. which is later than the A.B., K.B., P.B., T.B., etc., the name of the ‘Senāpati’ heads the list of king-makers whereas in other Brs. the name of the
Purohita comes first. From this one may be led to infer that the importance of the priest was probably in the descendant in the age of the S.B. The Āranyakas succeed the S.B. and the Upaniṣad the Āranyakas; and we know, the sacrifice was underrated and the path of knowledge was upheld and extolled in the Āranyakas and Upaniṣads. Consequently the Brahmin priests did not find favour with kings and barons in that age.

The two popular assemblies called the sahā and the samiti formed an essential feature of the government. These assemblies hark back to hoary antiquity. They are mentioned in the R.V. and the A.V. The sahā was a select body of aristocrats like the Homeric council of Elders. It was less popular than the samiti which was a more comprehensive organisation—an august assembly of a larger group of people comprising representatives of both the commoner and the nobles for the discharge of political business. It was presided over by the king. Both these bodies exercised considerable authority and must have acted as healthy checks on the power of the king. The sahā functioned not only as a popular body but also as a court of justice. In the later Vedic age the samiti became almost obsolete. Casual references to the sahā alone are met with in the Brs.

The relation between the ruler and the ruled was cordial. There existed a spirit of co-operation, and reciprocation of goodwill between the king and his subjects. The ruler realised taxes and, in return, protected the life and property of the ruled. In times of war and other national calamities the people stood by their king faithfully and made a united front against a common foe. To enlist the sympathy and co-operation of his subjects in times of war the ruler condescended to come down to the level of the commoner in a sportsman-like spirit and partook of food from a common plate. The subjects of a belligerent state placed their wives and children in the palace of the king who enjoyed their confidence. The ruler consulted his counsellors, subordinate officers and chiefs of clans to chalk out the proper course of action in times of difficulty. Beginnings of the scorched earth policy adopted during warfare may be traced in the Brs. During warfare valuable articles were either dumped
under earth or dropped into the sea or lake in such a manner that they might be retrieved after the calamity was over. Thus the enemy was deprived of rich booty. Various arms and missiles were in use. Different types of victory have been enumerated in the A.B. such as Jiti, Abhijiti, Vijiti and Sāmjiti. ‘Jiti’ means simple victory. ‘Abhijiti’ is of a slightly higher order of victory than simple victory. ‘Vijiti’ means various forms of conquest relating to both powerful and weak enemies whereas ‘Sāmjiti’, the highest form of victory, implies complete victory following the extirpation of all enemies.

The queens, brothers and sons of the king enjoyed an esteemed position. The inclusion of the chief queen in the list of king-makers and the important role she played in the horse-sacrifice amply bespeak her constitutional status. The son of the king was the heir-apparent to the throne. During the coronation ceremony, the king was addressed as ‘the father of kings’, which fact proves that monarchy was hereditary in character. Certain rites had to be performed by the brother of the king during the consecration ceremony. As the Mahiṣi or the chief queen was one of the Ratnins or king-makers, some scholars infer that she was included in the cabinet that advised the king. Besides the chief queen the other types of queens known as Vāvātā, Pālāgali etc., also enjoyed an honoured position; they also had parts to play in the horse-sacrifice. Moreover the favourite queen technically known as Vāvātā often acted as a go-between between the king and the subjects; she pleaded for the cause of the people to the king and as she was the most beloved of all wives the king condescended and granted her prayer.

Cases of dethronement of kings are also met with in the Samhitās and Brs. as well. Thus the S.B. narrates the anecdote of king Duṣṭarītu who was expelled from his kingdom by the nobles and the commoner for his misdemeanour and maltreatment of subjects. We come across cases of kings who after deposition and extermination were recalled and reinstated. The P.B. mentions a special ceremony called Rād-yajña by which a deposed king may get back his lost kingdom or a ruling king may win back the loyalty of his subjects. Cases of such malevolent despots or deposed king were a rarity in the Vedic age;
one or two exceptions lend support to the general trend of goodwill that existed between the ruler and the ruled and good government that obtained in Vedic India. Piecing together the informations gleaned from different Samhitās and Brs. it can be safely asserted that the state in the Vedic age approximated to the ideals of a welfare state. The Vedic state gave protection to citizens from foreign aggressions, maintained internal order by enforcing respect for the traditional law or Dharma. Like Varuṇa the king of gods, the earthly monarch also was termed ‘Dharma-pati’ who maintained law and order in his state. In the Upanisadic era which is a sequel to the age of the Brs. we find king Aśvapati, son of Kekaya declaring his state to be an ideal state. ‘In my state’, declares Aśvapati, ‘there is no thief, no miser or mean fellow, no drunkard, no twice-born person who has not established his sacrificial fire, no uneducated man, and as there is no licentious man, the question of lewd woman, or courtesan does not arise.’1 This passage proves the existence of ideal welfare states in the later Vedic age.

1. C.U. 5-11-5—‘Na me steno janapade na kadaryo na madyapo Nāmāhitāgnir nāvidvān na svairī svairīpi kutaḥ?’
BOOK III
CHAPTER I

THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECT

The Theory Of Sacrifice:

The main religion of the Brs. consists in the performance of multifarious sacrifices. After discussing the theory of sacrifice the discussion of the different forms and classifications of sacrifice will be taken up.

Every man is born with three debts viz, debt to the seers, debt to the gods and debt to the Manes. He pays off the debt to the seers or ṛṣīs by observing the vow of brahmacarya, the debt he owes to the gods by performing sacrifices and the debt to the Manes by begetting children.1 Hence is the Vedic injunction: ‘Sacrifice to the gods (yaja devān), study the Vedas (adhiṣṭa vedān), and beget children (prajām-uptādaya).’ Here the injunction ‘study the Vedas’ is a part of brahmacarya. Hence it is compulsory for every twice born, i.e., every member of the higher three castes to observe the vow of brahmacarya, a life of self-control and continence, to perform sacrifices in honour of the gods and to please the manes and fathers by begetting children because without progeny the line will be extinct and that will incur the displeasure of and cause sorrow to the Manes.

His debts are paid off who has completed the term of studentship or brahmacarya, who has sacrificed to the gods and begotten children for the perpetuation of the line. That person is stigmatised as ‘anaddhā’ untruth and misnomer, observes the A.B., ‘who

---

1. ‘Jāyamano vai brāhmaṇapātriḥ ṛṣaiḥ ṛṣavān jāyate, brahma-
caryena ṛṣībhyo yajñena devebhyaḥ praśajāḥ pitṛbhya esa vā anipṣo yaḥ
putri yajvā brahmacārī.’
does not propitiate the gods, the manes and the seers. It follows that the performance of sacrifice was compulsory for the brahmin, the Kṣatriya and the Vaiśya. They had no choice in the matter.

Besides this Vedic injunction the Aryans of the Vedic age were guided by other motives as well to perform sacrifices and offer oblations to the gods. Agriculture was their main occupation and they had to depend on the co-operation of the natural phenomena for a bumper crop. They were afraid of the unforeseen natural calamities and freaks of nature that hampered cultivation and damaged the harvest. The Vedic Aryans sincerely believed that all natural phenomena—the storm, the cloud, the rain, thunder and lightning, the sun and the wind etc. are the visible manifestations of different gods. This deification of natural phenomena formed the nucleus of the Vedic religion in general and the sacrifice in particular. For the sake of favourable weather and successful cultivation the people tried their best to appease the gods through the performance of sacrifice. The deities were invoked and praised in the sacrifice and oblations made of different ingredients were offered in the sacrificial fire which was regarded as the mouth of the gods. “Fire is the mouth of the gods.” ‘Agnirvai mukham devānām.’ Whatever is offered in the fire reaches the gods that are invoked and propitiated.

Sacrifices may be classified under two broad heads—‘nitya’ or obligatory and ‘naimittika’ or occasional. The obligatory sacrifices should be performed without fail; the performance of those rites may not produce any tangible result (karaṇe phalaśrutināsti) but their non-performance will bring disaster (akaraṇe pratyavāyah). Sacrifices like Agnihotra are styled ‘nitya’ because they must be performed daily

2. 7-32-8—‘Ko’naddhā puruṣa iti na devānā piṭāṇa manusyaṁ’. Śāyaṇa comments—‘na pujayediti śeṣaḥ.’
as a compulsory lifelong sacrificial session. The kāmya or wish-yielding sacrifices come under the occasional type and they form the bulk of the liturgical texts of the Vedic literature. Wish-yielding sacrifices are performed for the fulfilment of various desires of the sacrificers ranging from the birth of sons, possession of wealth etc., to the winning of vast empires. The rewards promised by the sacrifice are both worldly and other-worldly. Many labour under the delusion that attainment of heaven alone is the goal of sacrifice. No doubt, the ultimate purpose of performing a sacrifice is to attain heaven and heavenly bliss but besides this final reward, many worldly gains and immediate results are also promised by the Brs. to the sacrificer. Some concrete illustrations will bear out this statement. In the discussion of the famous sacrificial ceremonies connected with kingship recorded in Book II, viz, the Rājasūya, the Vājapeya, the Aśvamedha we have seen that the immediate results of these sacrifices are attainment of kingship, imperial power and paramount sovereignty respectively. The king who performs the Aśvamedha, the celebrated horse sacrifice will, no doubt, enter the heavenly abode and enjoy heavenly bliss, as declared by the Vedic text ‘Svargakāmośvamedha yajeta’, ‘one desirous of heaven should perform the horse sacrifice;’ but the immediate worldly gain of the sacrificer is paramount sovereignty, ‘Aśvamedha sārvabhaumo bhavati’, ‘one becomes a paramount sovereign by performing the horse sacrifice’. Thus the sruti passages promise both worldly gains and heavenly rewards. The sacrificer attains paramount suzerainty as his immediate gain and the world of heaven as the remote reward when he will pass away from this planet of ours. Thus he has his rewards both here and hereafter. Moreover, some sacrifices are performed with the exclusive object of fulfilling certain worldly desires. For example, the sacrifice called Karirshi is performed to bring down rain in times of drought; the ‘Putreṣṭi’ is performed for the birth of a son, etc. Sound health and a long life are desired by all mortals. The full tenure of human life is reckoned to cover a hundred years in the Brs. and
Upanisads. ‘We should live a hundred autumns’, is a common prayer of the Vedic Aryan. He longs to run the full race of life, to be surrounded by children and grand-children and have worldly prosperity. For these worldly gains and selfish ends also he propitiates the gods and the goddesses.

Thus the sacrifice is regarded as the sure means to attain both worldly and other worldly possession. Hence it is considered to be the greatest of all actions and rites. ‘The sacrifice is the greatest of all actions’, declare the T.B. and the S.B.\(^3\)

It is the connecting link between the gods and men, between the heaven and the earth, between the visible and the invisible; through it the sacrificer, the performing priests, the gods and the heaven come into contact with one another of which the former two are visible whereas the latter two are invisible. An insentient or inert being can never achieve such a union; hence the sacrifice has been conceived as a conscious being with an organic whole. This point will be taken up in our discussion on ‘The spirit transcending the form of the sacrifice’. The sacrifice is described as the safe boat, the strong vessel which takes the sacrificer across the troubled waters to the peaceful shore. ‘The sacrifice is the vessel wherewith one can easily cross (the troubled waters).’\(^4\) The A.B. (4-17-7) compares the two sāmans, Bṛhat and Rathantarā, two chants in the Prāśṭhya-sotra to two boats of the sacrifice which take the sacrificer to the goal of sacrifice and ‘if the sacrificer omits these two sāmans, in that case the sacrifice fails to reach its goal being tossed hither and thither like a ship without a rudder or pilot when it is off the mooring.’

The gods long for the oblations, the priests long for the sacrificial fees and the sacrificer desires to attain worldly prosperity and heavenly bliss through the sacrifice. Hence the S.B. calls the sacrifice ‘the soul (ātman) of all beings and

---

3. S.B. 1-7-1—5, ‘Yajñō vai śreṣṭhatamanāṃ karma.’
   T.B. 3-2-1-4—‘Yajñō hi śreṣṭhatamanāṃ karma.’
4. A.B. 1-3-2—‘Yajñō vai sūtrāṃs nāuḥ.’
all gods'. The T.B. regards the sacrifice as 'the unvanquished person of the gods.6 Because it fetches food and wealth to both the priests and the sacrificer it is termed wealth (Basu), food (annam), bhaga in the S.B. and the K.B. As the upkeep of the universe depends on the sacrifice it is called 'the pivot of the universe'6 which helps in the functioning of the cosmic principle. This cosmic principle is called Rṣam in the Veda which also means truth. 'The sacrifice is the source of Rṣam', the principle underlying the creation which is equivalent to truth and moral order.7 Again as the chief act of piety, the principal form of religion is the sacrifice, it is also termed 'the fountain of good deeds, acts of piety.'8

The Brs. observe that in this tenure of life on earth a man is born thrice. His first birth takes place when he is delivered from the mother's womb; this is his physical birth. He undergoes a second birth at the time of his upanayana ceremony which is his spiritual birth where the preceptor is his father and the Sāvitrī verse is his mother. Because of this second birth one is termed 'Dvija' (reborn) on completion of his upanayana ceremony. A man is born for the third time when he is initiated for performing any sacrifice. These three births are narrated by Manu in the following couplet: 'the first birth proceeds from the mother; the second birth takes place at the time of investiture with the holy thread and the third one at the time of initiation into the sacrifice; these three births relate to the twice-born according to the Vedic injunction.9 Some Brs. do not count the Upanayana ceremony as the second birth. Leaving out this ceremony, they regard the initiation into sacrificial rites as the

---

5. 3-3-7-7—'Eṣad vai devānāmaparājītamāyatanāṃ yad yajñāh'.
6. T.B. 3-9-5-5—'Yajñō vai bhūvanasya nābhiḥ.'
7. S.B.1 1-3-4-16—'Yajñō vā ṛtasya yoniḥ.'
8. A.B., 1-5-2—'Sukṛtasya yoniḥ (yajñāh).'  
9. 2-196—'Māturate'dbhijananaṃ dvitīyāṃ maṅgajvanabhane, Triyāṃ yajñādikṣāyāṃ dvijasya śruticodanāt.'
second birth, the first being the birth from parents. Those Brs. regard death as the third birth because death here means birth in the heavenly region. After his expiry leaving his mortal remains in this earth the spirit of the sacrificer is transported to the abode of the immortals where he attains union with the gods to whom he sacrificed during his lifetime. Thus he enters into a new phase of life in heaven and hence this period is treated as his third birth. These three births of man are clearly stated in the S.B. 11-2-1-1, and we shall pursue the discussion on this heavenly life under 'Eschatology'. That the initiation into the sacrifice constitutes a new birth of man is clearly stated by the A.B.: 'The priests again turn him into a foetus whom they initiate.' In the text concerned a full parallelism is instituted between the initiate and the human foetus. The body of the initiate is anointed with butter because the body of the foetus remains clammy. He is enjoined upon to observe silence and close his fists because new-born babe cannot speak and keeps its fists clenched. The foetus resides within the womb; hence the initiated sacrificer also is placed in a shed called Prācīnavaṁśa which is regarded as the womb wherefrom he will emerge a new man. A man is not born in the true sense of the term', observes J.B.(U), 'till he performs a sacrifice; he attains his real birth through the sacrifice.' Just as an embryo undergoes the throes of labour during delivery, the sacrificer also undergoes self-mortification in the process of the initiation ceremony (dīkṣanīyeṣṭi) to achieve his new life of illumination and glory. Thus the sacrifice not only confers rewards here and hereafter but also confers a new birth, a transfigured life upon the sacrificer. Through this symbolical birth the sacrificer shakes off the worldly limitations and this transfigured life achieved by holy rites enables him to achieve union with the gods of the

10. 1-1-3—'Punarvā etaprtviyo garbhaṁ kurvanti yaṁ dīkṣayanti.'

11. J.B. (U)—3-14-8—'Ajāto ha vai tāvat puruṣo yāvanna yajate sa, yajñenaiva jāyate.'
sacrifice, to attain the life divine. The sacrificer attains union with and the same form and the same world of the deities invoked in the sacrifice. These three types of union are termed Sāyujuya, sārupya and sālokya. This topic will be fully treated under “Eschatology” as also under “The spirit transcending the form of the sacrifice.”

Not to speak of mortals even ‘the gods attained to their divine status and glory by performing sacrifice’, observes the S.B. 1-5-1-6. As the gods are immortal, the sacrifice imparts immortality to the sacrificer through his union with the gods. The difference between this doctrine of immortality of the Brs. and the Vedantic conception of mokṣa or final emancipation of the individual soul will be explained under “Eschatology.”

Like the sacrificer, the sacrifice also achieves union with the god and the sacrificer, The A.B., S.B., G.B., K.B., and the P.B., state in identical language, ‘Yajño vai Viṣṇuḥ.’ ‘The sacrifice is Viṣṇu’. Similarly the statements,— ‘The sacrifice is Agni’, ‘Prajāpati is the sacrifice’, ‘Puruṣa is the sacrifice’, ‘Ātman is the sacrifice’, ‘Indra is the sacrifice’ etc., are met with in the Brs. which also declare the identification of the sacrificer, Yajamāna, with the sacrifice in clear terms. ‘Yajamāno vai yajñaḥ’ observe the A.B. and S.B. Due to the identification of Viṣṇu with the sacrifice and as Viṣṇu conquered the universe taking three strides the sacrificial altar is regarded as the representative of the universe in a miniature scale which is conquered by the god Viṣṇu in the shape of the sacrificer through a symbolical rite.”

The sacrifice is the source of the creation of the universe.

12. A.B. 2-8-6—‘Devatānāṁ yajamānaṁ sāyujuyaṁ sarūpatāṁ salokatāṁ gamayati’.
13. A.B. 1-5-2—‘Amṛtatvavemāsmitastaddadhāti’.
14. S.B.1-2-5-7—‘Yadetena imāṁ sarvāṁ prthivīṁ samavindanta tasmād vedirnāma.’
The universe sprang from the first sacrifice that was performed by the great God, the Primal Being called Puruṣa. This cosmic sacrifice has been described in details in the Hymn of creation known as Puruṣaśūkta of the Rgveda.15

As the first sacrifice was performed before the dawn of creation no oblation was available to offer into the sacrificial fire. Hence the creator or Puruṣa offered His own person as oblation in the sacrifice; in liturgical language He Himself became the haviṣ (offering) of that yajña. The whole creation consisting of the four Vedas, four castes, animals both wild and domestic, sprang from this self-sacrifice of the Primal Being. His vivisected limbs were offered in the sacrifice and different objects of creation came into existence from the different organs of His body. Thus the Brāhmaṇa sprang from His mouth, the Kṣatriya from His arm, the Vaiśya from His thigh and the Śūdra from the feet. The moon was created from His mind, the Sun from His eye, Indra and the fire from the mouth and the wind from His vital breath. The welkin region was born of His navel, the firmament sprang from His head, the earth from His feet and the directions or quarters from His ear.16 Thus the sacrifice is the source of creation; the whole universe sprang from the sacrifice. ‘All beings are born of the sacrifice’ says the S.B.17 This first sacrifice is termed Puruṣa-yajña for two reasons; the Puruṣa performed this sacrifice; He was the sacrificer, yaja-māna. Secondly, because He was also the vict’m (Paśu) of this sacrifice. ‘The gods bound the Puruṣa as animal to perform the sacrifice.’18 Thus the Hymn of creation amounts to this that the Puruṣa sacrificed His own self, and out of His self-sacrifice the universe, the whole creation came into being. His self-immolation means the creation of the universe. The

15. R.V.—X—90.
17. ‘Yajśād vai praśāḥ praśāyante.’
18. R.V. X—90, ‘Devā yād yājhaṁ tavrānā avadhānān puruṣaṁ paśum.’
dismembered limbs of His slaughtered body gave birth to different objects of creation. Primal Puruṣa is the cause of creation through the medium of the sacrifice. All visible and invisible objects of the universe are the diverse manifestations of the great God Puruṣa who was without a second before the creation. Puruṣa who was One and undivided before the sacrifice became many afterwards. This fact underwent reorientation in the Upanisadic age and became one of the fundamental principles of Upanisadic philosophy. The truth is adumbrated in almost all the Upanisads that One Supreme Godhead, One Ultimate Principle has become many. The phenomena is the visible manifestation of that imperceptible noumenon or spirit which is the fountainhead of all life and energy. 'His one form has become every form.'[^19] 'He resolved; I shall become many.'[^20] This One has become all.'[^21] As the One has become many, the essence of One pervades the many through and through. This One Supreme Principle is termed Brahman in the Upanisads. Man is a spark of the divine and hence an unconscious yearning lurks in his heart to go back to the source of his being and be merged in the All. He springs from Brahman, lives, moves and has his being by the grace of Brahman and returns to Brahman after shuffling off this mortal coil. This basic doctrine of the Upanisads is also applicable to the theory of the sacrifice in another form. From the primal cosmic sacrifice performed by the Puruṣa, man springs along with the universe from the body of the Puruṣa. Thus he is born of the Creator, the primal Being. He subsists on food, and cattle which are also be products of that sacrifice, i.e., created by the Puruṣa; hence man's existence depends on the grace of the creator. He performed sacrifice to propitiate the gods and achieves union with the gods through the sacrifice. Every god

[^19]: K.U. 2-2-9, 10; B.U. 2-5-19,—‘Rūpaṁ rūpaṁ pratirūpo bahuiva’.

[^20]: C.U. 6-2-3,—‘Tadāikṣata bahu syāṁ praJAyeYa’.

[^21]: ‘Ekaṁ vai idaṁ vibabhuvva sarvam’.
is the sureme Godhead in essence and is worshipped as such. Hence the sacrificer attains union with the creator of the universe. Thus he returns to the very source of his being.

The sacrifice performed by the Puruṣa may be viewed from another perspective. The Creator was both the sacrificer and the victim in that cosmic sacrifice. The sacrificer himself became the victim, i.e., the sacrificer sacrificed himself. From this fact it can be deduced that self-sacrifice is the means to achieve the end of the sacrifice. As the sacrificer is not able to offer himself in the sacrifice an animal or other oblations are offered as his substitute. Hence the animal (Paśu) is regarded as the proxy of the yajamāna. In some sacrifices because the sacrificer cannot offer himself in the sacrificial fire his effigy made of kuśa grass is thrown into the fire and when it is burnt up the sacrificer thinks that his mortal frame is burnt up and his spirit has achieved union with the god of the sacrifice. This ceremony and similar functions of the yajamāna bear out the fact that self-sacrifice is enjoined in the performance of the sacrifice. In the post-Vedic age there are instances where sages have offered their body in the sacrificial fire. The Rāmāyaṇa describes the self-immolation of the great sage Śarabhanga who offered his body in the sacrificial fire after tending that holy fire with butter according to Vedic injunction.22

The Brs. lay great emphasis on the correctness of the rituals, on the flawless performance of the sacrifice. The sacrificer does not perform the sacrificedirectly but through the mediation of the priests who are responsible for the correctness or otherwise of the rites performed. The superintending priest called Brahman looks to the smooth and

22. Aranyakāpḍam 6th Canto, sl. 38,—
'Tato'gniṃ samādhyāya huvā cājyena mantravat
'Sarabhango mahātejāḥ praviveśa hūtāsanam'.

flawless performance of the rites and there is an expiatory rite in every sacrifice to make amends for any error committed unwittingly. But if any serious error creeps in the priests are to pay dearly for it; they are to pay the penalty by their death even. Sacrifice is a dreaded god and spares none if a serious flaw or breach of propriety occurs. Thus the priest Bhāllavēya committed a grave error in the rites and as a result he fell down from the chariot and broke an arm. The priest Āśādhi Sauśrāmateya made an unpardonable error and dearly paid for it by his life. In the building of the fire-altar five heads of victims are necessary. Instead of the heads prescribed Sauśrāmateya picked up any five heads as substitute and thereby committed a serious blunder. The whole sacrifice is established in the performing priests, hence they are mainly responsible for the performance of the rites and rituals. The sacrificer also partakes of the nature of a priest partially and has to perform certain rites as also to utter verses. Hence he also suffers in case of a serious flaw; moreover, due to wrong performance he loses the promised world of heaven, forfeits the privilege of achieving union with the gods. Be it mentioned here that not only the priests and the sacrificer but the gods also are punished by the sacrifice in case of serious errors or on account of indiscretion. Thus god Bhaga's eyes were burnt out and blinded; Puṣan partook of an oblation wrongly and his teeth were knocked out; hence Bhaga is called sightless and Puṣan toothless. Likewise the hand of god Savitṛ was cut off and he was fitted with a golden hand. These punishments of gods Bhaga, Puṣan and Savitṛ are narrated in the S.B. Thus the Sacrifice is a severe and unrelenting task master which does not tolerate any shirking of duty or any serious blunder whether committed wilfully or un-

23. S.B. 1-7-3-13.
25. A.B. 2-9-8,—'Rtvijī hi sarvo yajñaḥ pratiṣṭhitaḥ'.
26. 1-7-4-6, 7, 8.
wittingly. This fact proves the difficult and onerous nature of task the priests have to perform. This is why the priests are held in high esteem and the sacrificers place their implicit trust and confidence in them. The priests rightly deserve the sacrificial fee or dakṣiṇā paid to them by the sacrificer. The sacrificial fee does not only benefit the performing priests but also the sacrificer. When the sacrifice is completed, it goes to the heaven and along with it the sacrificer also reaches the heaven by holding fast to the sacrificial fee.

Many western scholars have wrongly described the sacrifice as a magic, as an art of necromancy. Yajña or sacrifice is not magic or witchery; the two are poles asunder. A magician creates a temporary illusion and for the time being the on-lookers are led to regard the illusion as reality. Men are taken into confidence so long the illusion persists; nevertheless, even during the period of magic performance they know the whole thing to be a sham show and the man behind the show, i.e., the magician to be a deceiver. But in the case of the sacrifice the sacrificer does not regard the sacrifice as an illusion or sham show but as the infallible medium to attain worldly prosperity and heavenly bliss and to achieve union with the gods. The magician is never regarded as a saint or righteous person whereas the priests of sacrifice enjoy highest esteem and implicit confidence. The effect of the magic is transitory whereas the result of the sacrifice is lasting and extends to the other world as well. Unlike magic sacrifice has to be performed regularly with faith and reverence. Magic has no jurisdiction over the other world, its effects being confined to this world whereas in the sacrifice the worldly gains are incidental, the real reward lies in the life hereafter in heaven. Again, magic has no religious sanction or halo of sanctity like the sacrifice. In magic there is force or coercion; the natural elements are coerced to yield the results desired by the magician. In sacrifice there is no coercion; the sacrificer and the priests fervently appeal to the gods to grant their prayer. The magician tries to bend all corporeal agents to his will to produce the desired effect.
by black art or illusion but it is not so in the case of sacrifice.

The discussion of the theory of the sacrifice will be incomplete without a reference to the mystic interpretation of the fire-altar embodied in the S.B., Kāṇḍas six to nine. The construction of the fire-altar known as Agnicayana forms a very important part of the S.B. from the point of view of cosmogony and the metaphysical aspect of the sacrifice. The doctrine adumbrated in these three Kāṇḍas of the S.B. is called Śaṅḍilya vidyā as the sage Śaṅḍilya is the chief authority on this doctrine. Sage Yājñavalkya who is the exponent of the whole of the S.B. is not mentioned in these Kāṇḍas. The construction of the altar is a massive one composed of ten thousand and eight hundred bricks of various kinds. The altar assumes the shape of a huge bird with outstretched wings facing the east. There are several layers of brick in the altar. Below the centre of the first layer a lotus leaf is placed on which rests a gold plate. An image of man made of solid gold lies on the gold plate. Three naturally perforated bricks are placed above the golden man in the first third, and fifth layers respectively. The lord of creation, Prajāpati is identified with the sacrifice which in its turn is identified with the sacrificer on the one hand and Agni the fire god on the other. The Puruṣa of the Puruṣa-śūkta of the R.V. described in the foregoing pages has become the Prajāpati in the Brs. The identification of the Prajāpati, Agni, fire-altar, sacrifice and the sacrificer with one another is symbolically represented in the design of the fire-saltar. Again, the altar is also a symbol of the universe in a miniature scale, the universe being a macrocosm of the altar. Hence the fire-altar also symbolises the creation of the universe from the sacrifice. Prajāpati, the lord of creation, is offered as a victim in the sacrifice and from his dismembered limbs spring forth the different objects of the universe, both the movable and the immovable, the sentient and the insentient. As soon as the sacrifice is concluded it flies to heaven; hence the completion of the sacrifice is treated as its death. For the sake of creation the sacrifice is eternally renewed and Prajāpati is eternally offered
as the oblation in the sacrifice to perpetuate the existence of the universe. Prajāpati created Agni and in this respect Prajāpati is Agni’s father but from another perspective Prajāpati is also the son of Agni for the following reason. When Prajāpati’s person is dissected to be offered as oblation in the sacrifice his spirit is released from the physical thraldom and Agni absorbs that fiery spirit in his own person. Hence when Prajāpati is regenerated by the reconstruction of his dismembered limbs in the shape of the fire-altar Agni becomes his right hand. As Agni plays an important part in the regeneration of Prajāpati Agni becomes his father also. The fire-altar is the body of Agni through which the lord of creation is revived. The lotus-leaf that is placed at the bottom of the fire-altar is symbolic of the cosmic waters and the womb wherefrom Agni-Prajāpati and the human sacrificer are to emerge. The gold plate over the lotus-leaf represents the sungod and the gold image of a man lying on the gold plate symbolises the creator Prajāpati, Agni and the sacrificer jointly. The beginnings of image-worship may be traced in the erection of this symbolic gold image representing the two deities, Prajāpati and Agni. The three perforated bricks placed in three layers symbolise the three worlds through which the gods Agni and Prajāpati, and the sacrificer will have to pass on their way to the fourth invisible world, viz., the world of the immortals. Prajāpati as the lord of creation is also the generator of Time. The construction of the altar takes one year for its completion and the year is a fragmentary unit of Time. Just as the fire-altar is a microcosm of the universe, the year also is a microcosm of Time. With the sacrifice Time is also eternally regenerated in the shape of the year connected with the erection of the altar. The righteous performer of this holy rite, the sacrificer is promised a long and prosperous life covering a century which is another unit of Time. But every creature after running its race of life will cease to exist according to the inexorable divine decree. The sacrificer, as the human representative of his divine counterpart Prajāpati ultimately passes away from this planet, i.e., to say, he himself becomes Death,—Death ceases to exercise power over him and he is translated from this world of toils and
turmoils to the blessed land of the immortals, the region of heavenly bliss. Released from the trammels of the body he becomes pure spirit and pure intellect and in that spiritual form he returns to the source of his being.
BOOK III
CHAPTER II.

The Forms of Sacrifice:—

Sacrifice may be divided into five classes viz, Homa, Iṣṭi, Paṣuyāga, Somayāga and Satra. Every type of sacrifice has its Prākṛti or model and Vikṛti or modifications which follow the pattern of the model. The Prākṛti is also called Pradhāna—the main sacrifice and Vikṛti the Āṅga or accessories. Thus the Prākṛtis or models of the five types of Vedic sacrifices Homa, Iṣṭi, Paśu, Soma and Satra are Agnihotra, Darśa-Paurṇamāsa, Daikṣa or Prājāpatya Paśu, Agniśṭoma and Gavāmayanam respectively.

Homa: The Homa sacrifice is also known as Darvi-homa. It consists in offering oblations of milk, curd, rice etc., to the Sun-god and Agni in the sacrificial firepit every day both in the morning and in the evening. It is also called Darvi-homa as the offerings are poured into the fire by means of a ladle called Darvi. Agnihotra is the model for the Homa type of sacrifices. The higher three castes had to perform the Agnihotra daily in the early Vedic age. Later on the Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas appointed their Brahmin priests to perform it on their behalf. It was obligatory for a Brahmin to perform the Agnihotra every day along with his wife throughout his lifetime. 'A Brāhmaṇa should perform the Agnihotra daily.'1 'This prolonged sacrifice viz, Agnihotra is called 'Jarā-marya-satra' because one can be exempted from its performance either due to excessive senility of old age or death.'2

---

1. 'Brāhmaṇo’haraḥ agnihotraṁ juhuyāt'.
2. S.B. 12-4-1-1,—'Etad vai jārāmāryaṁ sattraṁ ya'dagnihotraṁ jarayā vā hyevāsmāt mucyante mṛtyunā vā'.

---
Even to-day Agnihotrin Brahmins are met with in India particularly in South India. In this sacrifice oblations are offered to the Sun-god in the morning before sunrise and in the evening after the sun had set. The same hymn is uttered both the times with slight variation. In the morning the verse accompanying the oblation reads as—‘Sūryaḥ jyotir jyotiḥ sūryaḥ’ (the sun is the light and the light is the sun) but in the evening the term ‘Agni’ i.e., fire is substituted in place of Sūrya; because the sun relegates its light to the fire when it sets. There is a controversy as to whether the morning oblation should be offered before the rising of the sun or after it had risen. It is said,—‘if one offers before the rising of the sun his oblations defeat the purpose of the Agnihotra rite because when the sun is not yet up to whom will be sacrifice’. The opposite camp also has a fling at those who sacrifice before sunrise. They reason thus,—‘When the sun is already up it is no good to offer oblations; to whom wilt thou sacrifice. He who sacrifices after the rising of the sun his oblations are enjoyed by the swine and not by the god’. The solution is thus given in the Śrautasūtras. The time differs according to different Vedas. The followers of the Bāhyāca and Chandoma schools offer oblations before the sun rises: hence they are styled ‘Anuditahomin’. The followers of Kaṭha, Taittirīya and Maitrāyanīya schools offer oblations after sunrise and are called ‘Uditahomin’. In any case it is binding that before the rise of the sun fire should be culled from the Gārhapatyā Agni and placed in the homa-kuṇḍa or sacrificial fire pit. Another controversy raged over the time element of the Agnihotra during the later Vedic era viz., whether the Agnihotra was a one-day sacrifice or two-day sacrifice. If the evening oblation is offered after the sunset and the morning one before the sunrise in that case the time is counted as one night, i.e., one day and not two days. The time is to be counted from the evening offering and not the morning homa because the Agnihotra starts with the evening oblation. If the evening oblation is offered after the sun has set and the morning one before sunrise the time covered from the previous evening to the following dawn should be reckoned as one day due to the absence of the sun in each case. According to A.B. this is wrong and the performance of both the evening and morning obla-
tions should cover two days. For this purpose the evening oblation should be offered after the sunset but the morning one is to be offered after the sunrise. The sage Vātāvata and a Gandharva-obsessed maiden endorse this view in the A.B. and aver that this was the timehonoured practice and those who perform the rite in one day have made a departure from the traditional practice.

In the Agnihotra the oblation consists of milk and a separate milch cow is reared for that purpose called Agnihotri gābhi. Milk is boiled in an earthen pot within the sacrificial campus and is offered as oblation in the Āhavaniya fire with a ladle called Agnihotra-havani. Two principal oblations are offered in the evening rite the first being offered to Agni and the second to Prajāpati. Similarly, two main offerings are made in the morning of which the first belongs to Sūrya and the second to Prajāpati. These four oblations are the important ones in the Agnihotra. As the first oblation in the evening is offered to Agni the whole sacrifice goes by the name of Agnihotra. This view is advocated by Āpastamba in his Śrauta sūtra (6-13-1 to 9).

The sacrificer (yajamāna) himself should offer these oblations in the morning and evening. If he be physically incapacitated he should get it done by his son or priest. On the full moon and new moon days he will have to do it himself under all circumstances; proxy is not allowed. Milk, curd and gruel (yavāgu) are used as offerings. Each of this offering (haviṣ) is conducive to particular result. Those who desire cattle or heaven should offer milk; those desiring objects of senses should offer curd, and gruel—offering is meant for them who desire possession of villages. Besides these main objects of oblation, rice, paddy and butter are also offered serving different ends. One desiring food should offer rice; one longing for attainment of strength should offer paddy, and butter is the oblation for him who desires mental vigour.

A bachelor has no right to perform Agnihotra. If a widower does not want to remarry it becomes a problem as to how he should perform this Vedic rite. This problem will
be discussed under the caption 'The spirit behind the Form of the sacrifice' in this book, i.e., Book III.

Iṣṭi:—The model for Iṣṭi type of sacrifices is called Darśapaurṇāmāsa. Darśa means the confluence of the sun and the moon (sūryendu-saṅgamaḥ), i.e., the dark moon called Amāvasyā. Paurṇamāsa means the full moon. This sacrifice is to be performed on the new moon and full moon days.

A person belonging to one of the three higher castes who is neither a bachelor nor a widower and who has already established his Gārhapatya fire is entitled to the performance of this sacrifice. The ceremony consists of two days in the full moon and two days in the dark moon. During the full moon the rite commences from the morning of the full moon day and terminates in the forenoon of the following day i.e., Pratipada. Likewise in the newmoon the ceremony covers the period from the morning of that day to the forenoon of the day following. While performing this sacrifice for the first time the sacrificer should commence with the full moon rite and follow it up with the new moon rite; he should not commence in the new moon. Four priests are required for this performance, viz,—Hotṛ, Adhvaryu, Agnīdhra and Brahman. There is no hierarchy of position among these priests. Unlike Somayāga the four priests have equal powers here. Though there are many accessory oblations and deities in this sacrifice, three oblations stand out prominently in both the full moon and new moon rites. In the full moon performance the three principal oblations are as follows. The first one consisting of rice-pap (Purodāsa) is offered to the fire-god. The second oblation characterised as Upāmśu-yāja is offered to one of the four deities viz., Viṣṇu, Prajāpati, Agni and Soma. The third one consisting of rice-pap is meant for the couple Agni and Soma. In the newmoon first oblation of rice-pap is offered to Agni; the second consisting of curd and the third of milk are offered to Indra.

Details of Darśapaurṇāmāsa Sacrifice.

The indispensable parts of this sacrifice viz. the rites known as Prayāja, Anuyāja, Patni-Saṃyāja are performed in both the full-moon and the newmoon ceremonies. An offering to the fire god called Agni Śvistakṛt marks the
close of the offerings. All gods are invoked in the Svistakṛt offering. This is followed by the tasting of the holy leavings of oblations by the priests called Iḍā-bhakṣana. The Superintending priest Brahman has a special share; all the priests invoke the Iḍā collected from all the offerings. While collecting the holy leavings the priests touch the sacrificer. The rice cakes are first distributed and then every one partakes of the Iḍā. Following the Anuyāja and preceding the Patnī-Saṁyāja ceremony an effigy made of kuṣa grass called Prastaraṇa representing the sacrificer is thrown into the fire. When the effigy is burnt up the sacrificer thinks his physical body has been burnt up and through the sacrifice his spirit has achieved union with Viṣṇu. Meditating on this fact he regards himself deified and takes three strides like the god Viṣṇu on the sacrificial ground when the hymn ‘Idam Viṣṇur vicakramē, tredhā nidadhe padam’ (here Viṣṇu strides and takes three steps') is uttered.

This sacrifice may be either obligatory (Nitya) or wish-yielding (kāmya). It is Nitya for those who perform it in every full moon and new moon throughout their lifetime without any break. In their case non-performance or break of performance will lead to some disaster called Pratyavāya. It is Kāmya or wish-yielding for them who do not perform it regularly but only once or twice for the fulfilment of some desire. In the Kāmya form of this sacrifice the rice-pap-oblation is made of either rice or barley.

The Śatapatha Br. says, ‘Darṣapaurṇamāsa is the model of all sacrifice' and this sacrifice has been discussed at the very beginning of the S.B. There are innumerable īṣṭis such as ‘Agrāyaṇa Īṣṭi’ or offering of the first fruit or first produce of the fields, ‘Putreṣṭi’ or īṣṭi for the sake of begetting son, ‘Karīri īṣṭi’ performed in times of drought to bring down rain, various īṣṭis for various types of purification etc. All these īṣṭis look up to the new and full-moon sacrifice Darṣapaurṇamāsa as their model.

Paśu-yāga :

Daikṣa or Prājāpatya Paśu is the model for all Paśu-
yāgas. It is also termed Nirudha-paśu-bandha. One who has
established his household fire (Gārhapatya Agni) is called Āhitāgni. Such a person
should perform the Paśu-yāga every year. It may be performed once or twice or six times
in a year. If it is performed once only it
should be done in the rainy season; if twice, one sacri-
fice should take place in the Uttarāyaṇa of the sun and another
in the Dakṣiṇāyana. If one desires to perform six times one per-
formance should take place in each of the six seasons. At least
once it should be performed every year by an Āhitāgni otherwise
he will be held guilty.

An animal is the offering in this sacrifice; hence it is called
Paśu-yāga. A goat is the offering; all the limbs of the goat
are not offered. Only such special organs such as its heart,
fat etc., are offered as oblation. The deities are Prajāpati, Sūrya
or Indra and Agni jointly. Six priests are necessary for the per-
formance,—Adhvaryu, Pratiprasthātṛ, Hotṛ, Maitrāvaruṇa,
Agnīt and Brahman. In Iṣṭi type of sacrifices both the Anu-
vākyā and Yājyā verses are uttered by one and the same priest
viz., Hotṛ but in the Paśuyāga only yājyā hymns are uttered by
the Hotṛ whereas the Anuvākyās are recited by another Rgvedic
priest called Maitrāvaruṇa who is a helping hand to Hotṛ.
The Praiṣa mantras are also uttered by the Maitrāvaruṇa
priest. In Iṣṭi there is no Puronuvākyā or Praiṣa in the Prayāja
and Anuyāja performances.

In this sacrifice stakes called Yūpas are necessary for tying
the sacrificial animal thereto. These stakes are made of one
of the four kinds of trees—Pālāśa (Butea
Frondosa), Khadira (Acacia Catechu), Vilva
(Aegle Marmelos) or Rohitaka. The different
varieties of stake subserve different purposes.

Öen desirous of attaining heaven should fashion the stake
out of Khadira wood; he who longs for food (anna) and nourish-
ment (puṣṭi) should make the stake out of Vilva tree and
he who desires mental strength and spiritual excellence should
take the Palāśa wood for fashioning the stake. Towards the
easternmost part of the sacrificial altar the stake is posted.
The animal is generally a he-goat without any blemish like blind-
ness, lameness, etc., and whose teeth have grown. It is sanctified by hymns and the priest touches it with kūṣa grass or twig of the Plakṣa tree uttering the verse—‘Agnaye tvā juṣṭamupā-karomi’. Hence this rite is called upākaraṇa. The victim is throttled to death and then its limbs are dissected by the priest called Śamitṛ, and the place of slaughter is called Śāmitra located in the north-eastern quarter of the altar. The fat of the animal belonging to the cardiac region called omentum is offered as oblation by the Adhvaryu in the sacrificial fire known as Āhavanīya. The specified organs of the animals are cooked in an earthen vessel in the Śāmitra Fire. The organs consist of the heart, tongue, chest, liver, two kidneys, left armpit, both sides of ribs, right buttock and one-third of the anus. While these organs are being cooked the priest offers a rice-pap as oblation according to the formula laid down for īṣṭi. All the priests along with the sacrificer with the sole exception of Pratiprasthāṭ partake of the remnant of the offered rice-pap; this ceremony is known as Iḍā-bhakṣaṇa. After this partaking of the Iḍā the cooked organs of the animal are taken out of the pot, minced into small pieces and offered as oblation in the Āhavanīya fire-pit. The meat juice called Vasā collected in the cooking pot is also offered as oblation. This is followed by eleven Anuyājas which again, are followed by the ceremony called Patnī-saṃyāja.

In the animal sacrifice the strangling or killing of the animal is not regarded as slaughter. It is not a crime. When an animal is offered as a victim in the sacrifice it leaves behind its mortal frame and its spirit achieves union with the gods invoked in the sacrifice. The sacrifice helps the animal to attain to this divine status, union with the gods in an easy way. Addressing the animal a Rgvedic verse states, ‘Na va u etan mriyase na riṣyasi devān idesi pathiviḥ sugebhiḥ’, i.e. ‘you will neither die nor will you be slaughtered but you will reach the gods through easy path’. Manu also lends support to this philosophy at the back of animal sacrifice when he asserts in clear terms,—‘Yājña vadhaḥ a-vadhaḥ’ i.e. killing in sacrifice amounts to non-killing.

One school of ritualists objected to the eating of the holy leavings of the animal flesh in the sacrifice on the ground.
that as the animal is the representative of the sacrificer that will amount to eating the flesh of the yajamāna, i.e., human flesh which is prohibited. But the A.B. (2-6-3) meets and refutes this charge in the following manner. With the help of Agni and Soma Indra killed Vṛtra and for rendering this assistance Agni and Soma asked an animal as a boon of Indra. Indra granted their boon. Hence the animal is offered to Agni and Soma as a fulfilment of that boon and not because it is a representative of the sacrificer. Hence the priests should partake of the flesh of the animal.

Agniṣṭoma (Soma-yāga) :

Agniṣṭoma sacrifice is the model for all Soma-sacrifices. It is also called Jyotiṣṭoma. The juice of the creeper soma is the main oblation in this sacrifice. In the twelve Stotras sung in this type of sacrifice the last Stotra goes by the name of Agniṣṭoma. Because the sacrifice terminates with the Śāmavedic chant (stotra) called Agniṣṭoma, the sacrifice also is termed Agniṣṭoma. This sacrifice has been dealt with in many of the Brs. A.B., in particular gives a detailed account of Agniṣṭoma. Out of the forty chapters of the book the first sixteen chapters deal with the duties of the Rgvedic priest in the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. In the introduction to our book while discussing the contents of the A.B. we have given an outline of the different stages of this sacrifice covering five days.

Every year in the spring this sacrifice is to be performed by the twice born caste with his wife. Soma juice is the main oblation. This rare creeper is procured from distant places and preserved with care. As Soma is not available nowadays another creeper called Putikā is used as its substitute. All the sixteen priests are required for the performance of Agniṣṭoma. Some authors of Śrauta sūtras count another priest called ‘Sadasya’ as the seventeenth one. Some again consider yajamāna or sacrificer to be the seventeenth. On the first day the sacrificer welcomes these priests and appoints them for the performance promising sacrificial fees (Dakṣinā). This is known as Ṛtvik-varaṇam. This is followed by the initia-
tion ceremony called Dikşaṇīyeṣṭi. The sacrificer and his wife are initiated. They undergo certain ceremonies like new-born babies. Hence the initiation (Dikṣā) is regarded as the second birth. On the second day the initial sacrifice (Prāyaṇīyeṣṭi) is performed in the morning. Five deities are invoked Pathyā Svasti, Agni, Soma, Savitā and Aditi. Rice is the oblation for Aditi and for the remaining four gods melted butter is the oblation prescribed. The Prāyaṇīya rite is followed) by the ceremony of purchasing Soma creeper (Somakraya). Soma is purchased from a śūdra in exchange of ten mediums of barter viz., one year old cow, gold, she-goat, milk cow and her calf, an ox, a bullock fit to draw cart, a bull-calf, a she-calf and clothes. Soma is the king of gods and Brāhmaṇas. Hence Soma is placed on a cart drawn by two bullocks and driven by the priests towards the sacrificial altar. King Soma becomes an honoured guest and hence a rite is performed known as Ātitheyeṣṭi or the rite of hospitality. Rice-paps placed on nine potsherds are offered to Viṣṇu in this rite. This is followed by Pravargya ceremony Details of Agniṣṭoma. which again is followed by the sacrifice termed Upasad iṣṭi. On the third day a great altar (Mahāvedi) is erected confronting the eastern part of the sacrificial campus technically known as Prāγvamśa or Prācīnavamśa. On the fourth day an animal sacrifice, Paśu-yāga is performed in honour of the deities Agni and Soma jointly after the manner of Nirūḍha-paśu-bandha. On this day Soma is carried to the right Havirdhāna altar; this function is termed Havirdhāna-praṇayananam. At midday libation animal flesh and rice-pap are offered as oblation and at dusk the different organs of the animal are offered as oblation. This is followed by the ceremony relating to the sacrificer’s wife called Patni-saṃyāja. These ceremonies covering the first four days serve as a prelude to the actual Agniṣṭoma sacrifice which takes place on the fifth, i.e., the last day. On the fifth day the ceremony of the extraction of Šoma-juice (Somābhīsava) takes place. All the priests get up before dawn, bathe in holy water and make arrangements for the extraction of the Soma juice. Before the chirping of the birds the Hotṛ recites the verses known as Prataranuvāka at early dawn. Soma is placed on a slab of stone and the water called Vasati-
vari is sprinkled on it. The juice is extracted by pressing it with another piece of stone. The juice is placed in a vessel called graha and strained (percolated) by means of a strainer termed Daśa-pabitra made of the hair of ram or goat. The strained juice is kept in a pitcher named Droṇakalasa. Soma is pressed thrice per day for three oblations. The morning oblation goes by the name of Prāṭahsavānam, the midday libation is termed Mādhyaṃdina savanam and the twilight one Trīyasa-savanam as the evening pressing is the third extraction in order of enumeration. The priests along with the sacrificer partake of what remains of the soma juice after libations are over from spoons called camasa. After the mid-day libation sacrificial fees in the form of gifts are offered to the priests; the gifts consist of cows, horses, mules, asses, goats, sheep, sesamum, lentils called Māṣa, paddy, barley etc. The third and last oblation of Soma is followed by the ablution ceremony called Avabhrththa istī. This sacrifice is performed in the water where all the priests along with the sacrificer go to take bath which marks the conclusion of the Agniṣṭoma. Varuṇa and Agni are the deities invoked there. Four Prayājas and two Anuyāja ceremonies are performed. A rice-pap is offered to god Varuṇa. All the oblations are offered in water instead of fire. The sacrificer sprinkles water on the heads of all the bathers. The Yajamāna and his wife cast away the garments they have been putting on since initiation ceremony and put on new garments handed over to them by the priest called Unnetṛ. Coming back to the sacrificial altar the sacrificer performs the concluding Ṷṣṭi called Udayaniya which is the antonym of Prāyanīya (commencing). The Puro’nuvākyās and Yājyās of the Prāyanīya become yājyās and Puro’nuvākyās in the Udayaniya Ṷṣṭi respectively. The special preparation made of milk, curd, honey, sugar etc., called caru is offered as oblation.

The different Sāṃsthaṣ of the Soma sacrifice viz, the seven varieties Agniṣṭoma, Atyagniṣṭoma, Ukthya, Soḍaśi, Apiṛātra, Vājapeya, and Āptoryāma have been enumerated in the introduction of this book. The Sāṃsthaṣ vary according to the number of hymns. In Agniṣṭoma there are twelve stotras, twelve śastraṣ and four stomaṣ. In Ukthya there are fifteen stotras, fifteen śastraṣ and four stomaṣ. In the Soḍaśi sāṃsthā
there are sixteen stotras, sixteen śāstras and four stomas. Ati-rātra has twenty-nine stotras, twenty-nine śāstras and four stomas—while Āptoryāma has thirty-three stotras, thirty-three śāstras and nine stomas. The term Sāṃsthā means the termination of the sacrifice. The sacrifice is named after the sāṃsthā in which it ends, e.g. Agniṣṭoma is the name of a particular sāman and the sacrifice that terminates with that sāman is named after that sāman.

Verses which are recited without the element of chant or vocal music (gāna) are termed śāstras whereas those put to vocal music are called stotras. One sāman is composed of three Rkverses. The repetition of a sāman goes by the name of stoma.

Gavāmayana: (Satra) —

Gavāmayana is a soma sacrifice and as such has Agniṣṭoma as its model still it is separately enumerated from the perspective of time-element. Sacrifices which are completed in one day are called Ekāha or one-day sacrifice; sacrifices which cover more than one day but less than twelve days are termed Ahinās and those which exceed twelve days and take a long time for completion are designated ‘Satras’, i.e., sessional sacrifices. The satras may take one year, ten year, a hundred year or even a thousand year for its completion according to the nature of the sacrifice. The sacrifice called Gavāmayana is a sessional sacrifice and is the model (Prakṛti) of all satras. Its performance covers 361 days, i.e., nearly a whole year. It can be divided into three parts,—first part consisting of 180 days; the middle part consisting of one day called Viṣuva (equinox) and the last part consists of 180 days. The performance of the last 180 days takes place in the reverse order of the first 180 days. The first part starts with Atirātra and ends with Svarasāman whereas the last part opens with Svarasāman and rounds off with Atirātra. The analogy of a reflection in a mirror has been given to explain this factor. The latter part is the reverse of the first part just as a reflection is reversed in the mirror.
The following is the chart of sacrifices involved in the performance of Gavāmayana.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of sacrifices</th>
<th>Number of days involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atirātra</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukthya having</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caturviniśa stoma</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Abhiplabashaḍaha</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Prṣṭhya-ṣaḍaha</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Repeated five times)</td>
<td>30×5=150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Abhiplaba Saḍaha</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Prṣṭhya-ṣaḍaha</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abhijit</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Svarasāmans</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 180 days.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Viṣuvant day; also called — 1
Ekaviṃśāha

3 Svarasāmans       3
Viśvajit            1
1 Prṣṭhya           6
            Last six months.
3 Abhiplava (3×6)  18
### Names of sacrifices. Number of days involved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sacrifice</th>
<th>Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Prṣṭhya &amp; 4 Abhiplava repeated four times</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Abhiplava (3×6)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Goṣṭoma &amp; 1 Āyuṣṭoma Daśarātra</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahāvrata</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atirātra</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>181</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>361</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus this satra requires a year for its completion. The term Šaḍaha mentioned in the chart means a round of six days as follows:

- **First day** — Jyotistoma.
- **Second day** — Goṣṭoma.
- **Third day** — Āyuṣṭoma.
- **Fourth day** — Goṣṭoma.
- **Fifth day** — Āyuṣṭoma.
- **Sixth day** — Jyotistoma.

Each of these six sacrifices is to be performed thrice daily. Abhiplaba-šaḍaha and Prṣṭhya-šaḍaha are two variations of the Šaḍaha sacrifice. The former starts with Jyotistoma and ends with Jyotistoma the intervening four days being four Ukthya performances. The latter opens with Jyotistoma but terminates with a ukthya. It is called Prṣṭhya because there is Prṣṭhya-stotra in the midday libation of soma-juice.
A careful perusal of this sessional sacrifice Gavāmayana will show that the details of the rites involved have been drawn up in imitation of the annual course of the sun. The whole sacrifice is divided into two distinct parts, each consisting of six months of thirty days each; in the midst of both lies the Višuvant day i.e., the equator or central day, dividing the whole sātra into two equal halves. The ceremonies in both the six monthly halves are the same with the only difference that they are performed in an inverted order in the latter half. This fact represents the increase of the days in the northern and their decrease in the southern progress of the sun; both the increase and decrease take place in the same proportion.

Sacrifices having a political bearing:

Sacrifices such as the Rājasūya, Vājapeya, Aśvamedha, Varuṇa-sava etc., are connected with Kingship and have a political significance. All these sacrifices have been discussed at length with their import in the Book II of this work captioned ‘The Political Aspect’. Descriptions of certain rites left out in the said chapter are given below in broad outline.

Rājasūya:—The importance and necessity of this sacrifice and its relation to the Vājapeya and Varuṇa-sava have been thoroughly discussed taking into consideration all the Brs. and Śrauta sūtras in Book II and need no repetition. This sacrifice was performed by Kings during their coronation ceremony in ancient India. It was also in vogue in the post Vedic era. In the epic age king Yudhisṭhira performed Rājasūya. From the Purāṇas inscriptions and copper plates it is evident that the sacrifice was performed even in the 1st century A.D. It partakes of the nature of Iṣṭi, Paśu, Soma and Darvi-homa rs it comprises 129 iṣṭis, two Paśu-Yāgas, seven darvi-homas (Ladle-libations), and six soma-yāgas. Hence Iṣṭi, Paśu, Soma, Homa merit equal importance in this sacrifice. It also partakes of the
nature of Satra as the total period covered by its performance exceeds a year.

There are some special injunctions as regards the gifts meant for priests. Two mirrors studded with gold are meant for Adhāryu, a gold necklace for Udgāṭr, a round gold ornament for Hotṛ; horses for the priests Prasostṛ and Pratihartṛ, ten pregnant cows are meant for Brahmaṇ, one sterile cow for Maitrāvaruṇa, a bullock for Brāhmanāchāṃṣī, clothes for Neṣṭṛ and Potṛ, a cartload of barley for Acchāvāka and an ox to Agnīdh.

Āsvamedha:

The importance and purpose of this sacrifice has been dealt with in the Book II of this work. Many domestic and wild animals are offered as oblations in this sacrifice of which the main victim is a horse whose fore-part is dark, hind-part is white, which is free from disease and has a special mark on its forehead. The horse is thoroughly washed by the priests aided by men of royal blood. The horse duly sanctified is let loose to roam about at its sweet will. The army and royal para-ephemia that attend on the horse to protect it from enemies have been enumerated in Book II... under the caption “Army”. The yajamāna i.e., the king who performs the sacrifice does not accompany the horse but stays at his capital near the sacrificial campus performing certain homas in honour of Viṣṇu. Till the return of the horse he should appoint some Brahmin and Kṣatriya lyricists who will sing songs to the accompaniment of lyre. In the day-time the Brahmin singers will sing the glory of the king relating to charity, sacrifice and acts of piety. In the evening the Kṣatriya singers will sing his glory relating to his deeds of valour, victory in war etc. While the horse roams about many homas are performed relating to the different limbs and diverse functions of the horse. The Adhvaryu offers oblations in the Dākṣiṇa fire for the safe movement of the stallion and, after sunset, the Dhṛti libations are offered in the Āhavanīya fire to ensure the success of the sacrifice. After the return of the horse the main sacrifice takes place. The chief

Details of the horse-sacrifice.
queen, Mahiṣī anoints the body of the horse and places a hundred and one gold coins in its mane and tail. At this stage a debate consisting of solution of riddles called ‘Brahmodya’ in Br. texts takes place between the superintending priest and the Hotṛ. Another such debate takes place before the Sviṣṭakṛt offerings between Hotṛ and Adhvaryu, Brahman and Udgāṭṛ and between the sacrificer (Yajamāna) and Adhvaryu. Twentyone stakes are placed near the altar for the different animal offerings. The horse is fully caparisoned and thirteen animals are tied to the thirteen different parts of the horse’s body. Altogether three hundred and ninety animals are tied to the twentyone stakes. This is according to the Taittirīya recension whereas according to the Mādhyandina recension 360 wild animals and 349 domestic animals are necessary. The sacrificial horse is laid on a blanket soaked in butter with its head towards the east and legs facing the north and then it is throttled to death. The three wives of the king—Mahiṣī the chief queen, Vāvātā the favourite queen and Parivṛkṣīti the queen belonging to the śūdra caste attend on the horse with their royal retinue. The chief queen Mahiṣī lies down by the side of the dead horse and a blanket is thrown over her. She catches hold of the genital organ of the horse exhorting the animal in slang language. The priest also converses with the queens in slang language in a bantering tone. Then the deceased horse is dissected and different organs are extracted for oblation. The blood is preserved in a vessel for Sviṣṭakṛt oblations. The different organs of the horse and other animals are offered along with butter in the Āhavaniya fire. These offerings are followed by Sviṣṭakṛt homa where the horse’s blood is offered as oblation and this homa, again, is followed by the usual Patrī-saṃyāja ceremony. On the day following a Soma-sacrifice having the Atirātra saṃsthā is performed followed by a Paśuyāga. The sacrifice terminates in the concluding ablation ceremony known as Avabhṛtha. After the ablation three homas are performed on the head of a person born of Atri line (gotra), shorn of hair, perspiring continuously, possessing cat’s eyes and suffering from leprosy. The leper is to be paid a hundred pieces of gold as gift. This ceremony is followed by a sacrifice covering a year where animals prescribed for each season are offered as oblation. The
Aśvamedha sacrifice terminates on completion of this annual animal sacrifice.

The thirteenth Kāṇḍa of the S.B. deals with Aśvamedha, Puruṣamedha, Sarvamedha and Piṭṭmedha sacrifices.

Puruṣamedha:

Puruṣamedha is also a variation of Soma sacrifice like Aśvamedha. It is neither Ekāha nor Satra as it consists of five days; hence it is of the Ahīna type of sacrifice. Instead of animals human beings (Puruṣa) are offered as oblations in this rite as the very name signifies but this offering is only symbolic and not actual. The human victim was neither strangled to death nor dissected; he was released after Upākāraṇa i.e., after being touched with the holy water. Altogether 198 human victims are symbolically offered varying in their castes and professions. The major victims of this huge list have been enumerated in Book I under ‘Occupations and Industries’. Besides human beings goats are also offered as victims. After sanctification human victims are regarded as deified souls that have attained union with godhead. The famous Puruṣa-Sūkta of the Veda is recited when the victims are regarded as the Supreme god. From the term Puruṣa-medha some scholars have been led to infer that actual sacrifice of human beings existed in the pre-Vedic or early Vedic age but that conjecture is not corroborated by any passage of the Saṃhitā, Br. or Śrauta-Sūtra. That the human victim was always released after due purificatory rites is evident from the Śunāḥ-śepa anecdote of the A.B. This is why Śunāḥ-śepa is surprised to find his father sharpening the scimitar to kill his son because his action runs counter to the prevalent practice. Observes the erudite Vedic scholar Cinnasvāmī Śāstri in “Yajña-tattvaprakāśa”,—‘Actual slaughter of human being in Puruṣamedha is never heard in any recension of the Veda or in any Śrauta-sūtra’. Instead of human beings goats are offered as victims according to the rites of Pāśu-yāga.

1. Third part, page 122,—‘Kasyāmapi śākhāyāṃ kvacidapi vā śrauta-sūtre Puruṣamedhe puruṣasya hiṃśyāḥ aśravaṇāḥ’. 
Observe the S.B. in clear terms,—"If human beings are actually offered (as victims) in that case man would eat man's flesh; hence the human victim is released after Paryagni-Karana ceremony." The priests and Yajamana partake of the leavings of oblations; hence if men are actually slaughtered and offered as oblation priests will have to eat human flesh. This passage of S.B. lends support to our findings stated above.

According to the S.B. the sacrifice meant for the five days are Agnistoma, Ukthya, Atiratra, Ukthya and Agnistoma, one for each day respectively in succession.

After performing this sacrifice the sacrificer gives all his wealth to the priests and retires to the forest. Hence the main object of this sacrifice seems to stir up the spirit of renunciation in man by proving the ephemeral nature of the world-show.

Sarvamedha:

This is also a variety of Soma sacrifice covering thirty-four days. Oblations are offered in the Ahavaniya fire placed on an altar made of bricks. The fifth sutyā partake of the nature of the middle sutyā of the Aśvamedha whereas the sixth one resembles the middle sutyā of the Puruṣamedha. In the latter the human victims are released after sanctification. In the seventh libation rice, paddy, etc., befitting Aryan food are cooked and offered in the fire. Soma plants, and creepers which wither away after yielding fruits are chopped to pieces and offered as oblation. In the sixth sutyā after releasing the human victims goats are strangled and offered as oblation.

This sacrifice is performed with a view to gain every kind of food.

2. 1-6-2-13,—"Puruṣa mā saṃāitiśhipho yadi sasthāpayisyati puruṣa eva puruṣamatsisyati".
Sautrāmaṇi:

It is an expiatory sacrifice performed for any excess committed in the drink of Soma. It is a variety of animal sacrifice. It is not a soma sacrifice but has been classified by authors of Śrauta-sūtras as a Haviryajñā; the principal offering as recorded in Br. texts consists of surā which has been substituted by milk now-a-days. This sacrifice admits of two varieties, viz., Caraka-Sautrāmaṇi and Kaukila-Sautrāmaṇi. The Caraka form seems clearly to be a reference to the school of the Black Yājurveda, which is often so named. Three animals are prescribed as victims in this variety of Sautrāmaṇi,—a grey-coloured goat dedicated to god Aśvin, a ram meant for goddess Sarasvatī and another ram for the Moon god. According to the practice of Niruḍha-paśubandha the three victims are to be offered simultaneously. After offering the omenta of animals libations of Surā (wine) are to be offered. As wine is prohibited in the Kaliyuga, iron age, Āpastamba and other authors of Śrautasūtras have prescribed milk as its substitute. The libation of surā is prepared from various kinds of herbs in a wonderful way and hairs of a lion, a tiger and a wolf are mixed in the wine. Three cups are used for containing the surā. The deities of the animal sacrifice are also the deities in this sacrifice. Three rice-paps are offered to Indra, Savitṛ and Varuṇa respectively. The accessory rites known as Prayāja, Anuyāja and Saṃyāja should be performed according to convention. The sacrifice concludes with Avahṛtha iṣṭi. In Kaukili Sautrāmaṇi the number of animals differ from that of Caraka one. There are five animals in this variety dedicated to Indra, Aśvin, Sarasvatī, Indra and Indra-vāyū. On the fourth day of the rite these victims are offered according to the fourth day of Soma sacrifice. The oblations of surā, milk and of omenta are also offered along with animal offerings. The sacrificer takes his seat on a chair made of Munjā grass with silver under his left foot and gold under his right foot. The thirtytwo offerings of fat are then made. The remnant of fat is sprinkled on the sacrificer till it flows out of his mouth. The Adhvaryu touches him and his servants lift him up from the seat gradually; first he is lifted knee-high, then navel-high, and then up to the
mouth. The sacrificer then steps on a tiger-skin symbolizing his attainment of lordship. A milk offering to Mitra and Varuṇa, and a bull for Indra conclude the rite.

Dvādaśāha:

Dvādaśāha (twelve-day) sacrifice merits importance as it is the model for sacrifices that partake of the nature of both Ahīna and satra. From the point of view of the sacrificer, usage of the root 'yaj', injunctions for gifts (dakṣiṇā) etc., it is akin to the Ahīna type of sacrifice whereas from the perspective of number of priests, details of ceremony and certain injunctions it resembles a satra. Like a satra it also begins and terminates with an Atirātra. Just as Agniṣṭoma is the model of all Ekāha sacrifices, Dvādaśāha similarly is the model of all Ahīna Satras which require less than 360 days for their completion. As stated before, Gavāmayana is the model for satras covering more than 360 days. Dvādaśāha needs thirty-six days for its performance. The first twelve days are meant for Dikṣā. The following twelve days are employed in performing Upasad rites. On the twenty-fourth day a Paśu-Yāga dedicated to Agni and Soma is performed after the completion of Upasad. Twelve Sutyas cover the last twelve days. The sacrifice concludes with Avabhṛtha iṣṭi explained before. The first day of this variety of sacrifice is called Prāyaṇiya and the last day Udayanya. The Saṃsthās for the twelve days have been specially prescribed which very according to the two main variation of this sacrifice called Bharata-dvādaśāha and Byūḍha-dvādaśāha. In the Bharata type the first day and the twelfth day are Atirātra; the second and eleventh days are Agniṣṭoma and the remaining days are ukthya. The day preceding the last Atirātra is termed Mahāvrata. In the Byūḍha variety the first and the last day are Atirātra; Pṛṣṭhyaṣaḍaha occupies the six days from the second to the seventh day; the tenth day is Avivakyam and Chandoma falls on the eighth, ninth and eleventh days.
BOOK III
CHAPTER III

The Origin & Development of Priesthood :

The origin of priesthood and the position of the priest in the social and economic set up of the Vedic age, the superiority to other castes and relation with the king, his importance as the chief adviser of the ruler have been discussed under ‘The Position of the priest’ in Book I. Originally the Purohita or the royal chaplain was the chief adviser of the king in matters both spiritual and secular just as Bṛhaspati was the Purohita or Chief adviser and guide of Indra. Every monarch or ruling chief had his domestic priest who was invariably a brahmin and who may be termed the Prime Minister, an important organ of administration. Besides these priests who were royal chaplains there were also other priests who performed rituals and sacrificial rites and were invited by the king or other sacrificers when important sacrifices were performed. The rituals were very simple in the early Vedic age and the number of priests was small but as the rituals swelled in bulk and the sacrifices increased in number considerably and became complicated in form the number of priests also increased for the smooth functioning of the sacrificial machinery. For the purpose of sacrifice priests are indispensable. ‘The gods do not accept obla:ions from hands of one who has no priest.’\(^1\) declares A.B. in clear terms. The king, also, is no exception to this rule. If he desires to perform any sacrifice he will have to appoint priests for that purpose. The A.B. thus enjoins in categorical terms,—‘The gods do not partake of the oblations offered by a king who is without a priest; hence

---

1. ‘Na vai apurohitasya devā valimsānvanti’.
a king bent on performing sacrifice should appoint a brāhmaṇa as priest first'.

Priesthood was indispensable not only to gods and men but also to the Asuras or demons. The demons even could not do without a priest. The S.B. (1-1-4-14) mentions the names of Kīlāta and Ākuli as priests of Asuras. In the post-Vedic age the famous Śukrācārya became their priest and preceptor who pitted his wits against Bṛhaspati, the priest of the gods when the demons measured their strength with the gods.

As a rule, four priests are necessary for performing a sacrifice, viz., Hotṛ, Adhvaryu, Udgātṛ and Brahman. The Rgvedic priest is called Hotṛ who invokes the deities in a sacrifice reciting verses from the R.V. The priest of the Yajurveda is termed Adhvaryu; his task is an arduous one as he is entrusted with the work of preparing the altar, digging the fire-pits, cooking the oblations like rice-pap, porridge caru etc., offering oblations and allied paraphernalia of rites and ceremonies connected with the sacrifice. Sacrifice is called 'Adhvarya' and because he keeps the sacrifice going or looks after the smooth functioning of the rituals he is aptly designated as Adhvaryu; Yāska, the author of Nirukta says,—'Adhvaraṁ Yunakti iti adhvarya,' i.e., 'he is called Adhvarya as he sets the sacrifice in motion'. The Sāmavedic priest is called Udgātṛ whose duty is to chant hymns from the Sāmaveda to praise and please the gods. The fourth priest is the superintending priest of the sacrifice called Brahman who is versed in all the three Vedas, R.K, Sāman and Yajuṣ. Brahman is responsible for smooth conduction, safe completion and any flaw of the sacrifice. Hence he is called 'the physician of the sacrifice as he mends the flaws of the rites to make the function flawless'. In course of time as ages rolled on, sacrifices became more and more complicated and sessional sacrifices termed Sattras came into existence; hence as it became impossible for four priests to perform all the rites, the number of priests swelled

2. 8-40-1,—'Na ha vā apurohitasya rājño devā annamadanti tasmād rājā yakṣyamāṇo brāhmaṇaṁ puro dadhīta'.

3. A.B. 5-25-9,—'Yajñasya haiva bhiṣak yat brāhmaṇa, yajñayaiva tat bheṣajaṁ kṛtvā harati'.

in number, three priests being given as assistants to each priest. Thus we find four Rgvedic priests, four Yajurvedic priests, four Sāmavedic priests and four Brahmans making sixteen in all. The four Rgvedic priests consist of Hotṛ, Maitrāvaruṇa, Acchāvāka and Grāvastut; the group of Yajurvedic priests comprises Adhvaryu, Pratiprasthātṛ, Neśṭṛ and Unnetṛ; the Sāmavedic priests are Udgāṭṛ, Prastotṛ, Pratiḥatṛ and Subrahmaṇḍya while Brahman, Brahmaṇacchānsi, Agnīdhra and Potṛ go to the composition of the group of Brahmans.

The A.B. (5-25-7) thus recounts the origin of the four principal priests along with the origin of the three Vedas. Prajāpati practised penance; the three elements of earth, welkin region (antarikṣa) and firmanent were born of that penance which gave birth to Agni (fire), Vāyu (wind) and Āditya (the sun) respectively. 'The R.V. was born of Agni, Yajurveda of Vāyu and S.V. of the sun. Prajāpati created the priest called Hotṛ from the R.V., Adhvaryu from the Y.V., Udgāṭṛ from S.V. From the essence of these three sacred lores Brahman was created'. The word 'Ṛtvik' is the regular term for sacrificial priest covering all the different kinds of priests employed at the sacrifice. All the priests must be brāhmaṇās. The Rgveda mentions the names of performing priests in the fifth verse of the famous Nābhāneditṣṭha hymn (1-162). They are only six in number viz., Hotṛ, Adhvaryu, Avayāj, Agnimindha, Grāvagṛbha and Śaṁstṛ. Four of these names viz., the last four are obsolete and their counterparts of the later Vedic age are as follows: 'Avayāj' is the Pratiprasthātṛ; 'Agnimindha' means, as the very term signifies, he who kindles the fire i.e., the Agnīdhra priest. Grāvagṛbha became the Grāvastut and Śaṁstṛ the Maitrāvaruṇa of the Brs. Max Müller ascribes a comparatively later date (1000-800 B. C.) to the Nābhāneditṣṭha hymn whereas Martin Haug pleads for a remote antiquity refuting the arguments of Max Müller.

4. 5-25-7.—'Rgveda evāgnerajāyata, yajurvedo vāyoḥ, sāmavada ādityāt; sa račiva hantramakaroṭ, yajuṣā adhvaryavaṃ sāmnā udgāṭham tadetat trayyai vidyāyai śukraṃ tene brahmatvamakaroṭ'.

Haug’s arguments are sound and convincing. The offices of the priests called Hotṛ, Adhvaryu and Agnídhra are regarded as very ancient and were known to both the Vedic Aryans and Iranians. That is to say, these priests came into existence when the Indo-Aryans and Indo-Iranians lived together. The Hotṛ and Adhvaryu stand for the zotā and Rathwi (now corrupted to Raspi) priests of the Zend Avesta. The early vedic form of the name ‘Agnídhra’ was, as we have seen, Agnimindha which is a tell-tale designation and means ‘he who lights and feeds the fire’. The antiquity of the office of Agnídhra is proved by its reference in the R.V. and there is reason to believe that this office came into existence when the Indians and Iranians lived together because the “Rathwi” of the Zoroastrian ritual which is an equivalent of Adhvaryu is called ‘Ātarevakso’ i.e., he who feeds the fire. The term ‘Ātar’ in Zend means ‘fire’. Similarly, the office of the priest Grāvastut called Grāvagrābha in the R.V. is an old one as in the Parsi ritual also a priest is met with who squeezes the soma juice. As the very name suggests Grāvagrābha also holds pieces of stones for extracting the Soma juice. The extraction of soma juice is called Savanam in the Brs. and Havanam in the Avesta. The priest Pratisprasthātṛ appears to have been an assistant to the Adhvaryu from the early Rgvedic days. In the A.B. the two Aśvins are called the two Adhvaryus which expression leads us to conclude that one is a Adhvaryu and the other is his constant companion Pratisprasthātṛ. From the verses 2-37-2, 8-2-4 etc., of the R.V. we may infer the existence of plurality of Adhvaryus during the age of the R.K. Samhitā. R.V. 2-1-2, enumerates the names of seven priests, viz., Hotṛ, Potṛ, Neṣṭṛ, Agnīdh, Praśāṣṭṛ, Adhvaryu and Brahman. The number of seven stated above probably explains the phrase ‘seven Hotṛs’ occurring frequently in the R.V. The office of the Superintending priest Brahman did not

6. Introduction to his edition of the A.B.
exist in the early Rgvedic age when only two types of priests existed, viz., those belonging to the category of Hotṛ and Adhvaryu. Like the Brahman the Sāmavedic priest Udāgtṛ and his assistants are not heard of in the R.V. The separation of the offices of Hotṛ and Adhvaryu marks the first step in the development of the sacrificial art. The introduction of Brahman and Udāgtṛ marks a new epoch in the history of the sacrificial liturgy. These two offices were introduced after the Indo-Iranian separation. The introduction of the office of Brahman heralds a new era in the history of the sacrifice. The origin of the office of Brahman priest is pre-Brāhmaṇa in age. The name of Brahman as a priest occurs in the R.V. in the sense of one of the performing priests only of the soma ritual and not as the supervising priest. Later on this Brahman priest was designated as Brāhmaṇacchamsin to distinguish him from the principal priest called Brahman who supervised the work of other priests and whose office came into existence in the later Vedic age. In addition to the sixteen priests enumerated above some schools mention the name of Sādasya as the seventeenth priest whereas according to Pūrva Mimāṃsā the sacrificer, Yajamāna is recognised as the seventeenth priest as he has to perform certain rites.

Due to the supreme importance of the sacrifice in the Vedic age the priests enjoyed a unique position. Both the king and the subjects revered them and relied on them for both material prosperity and spiritual merit, as these could be procured through sacrifice alone. Sacrifice promised not only rewards in the other world and heavenly bliss but also worldly gains in the form of wealth, food, cattle, son, long life etc. Monarchs could attain kingship, imperial suzerainty and paramount sovereignty through sacrifices alone such as Rājasūya Vāja-peya, Aśvamedha etc. Hence the priests were held in awe and veneration. None dared to incur their displeasure; rather the sacrificers tried to please them by paying sacrificial fee called Dakṣinā which will be our next topic for discussion. Rightly
does the A.B. remark,—‘Rtviji hi sarvo yajñaḥ pratiṣṭhitāḥ’ (2-9-8), i.e., ‘the whole sacrifice is established in the priest’.

**Sacrificial Fee (Dakṣiṇā) :-**

Payment of sacrificial fee in kinds or coins is compulsory in every sacrifice. It is called Dakṣiṇā. The performance of a sacrifice is incomplete and futile without dakṣiṇā. The sacrificer desires to attain heaven by means of the ‘apūrva’, invisible merit or piety caused by the performance of the sacrifice. The sacrifice goes to heaven and the fee which is a part of the sacrifice accompanies it; hence holding fast to the fee the sacrificer also goes to the world of heaven. Thus without the sacrificial fee the sacrifice is like a cart without the bullocks. Observes the A.B. ‘Dakṣiṇā is the fore-runner of the sacrificer to the world of heaven). Just as a cart without the Bullocks harms the driver and is useless likewise a sacrifice without the fee harms the sacrificer; hence it is said—fee, however small, must be paid in the sacrifice’.¹ If a sacrificer is financially handicapped he may not offer rich gifts to the priests but, in the words of the S.B., ‘he should pay according to his means; the sacrifice must not go without the sacrificial fee’.² The sacrificer who does not pay the fee not only forfeits his claim to the heavenly bliss promised by the sacrifice but is also subjected to sufferings caused by the visitation of divine wrath. The S.B. states that the Āpyas wipe off their sin on such a person which accrued to them when Indra slew the son of Tvastṛ, Viṣvarūpa.

Just as the sacrificer is enjoined to pay the sacrificial fee in kinds or coins according to his capacity as a compulsory part of the sacrifice, similarly the priests are also enjoined not to be overgreedy or make any bargaining as to the dakṣiṇā. Just as the sacrificer forfeits his rewards in heaven for non-payment of the fee, the priest also is shut out from the world

---

¹ 6-30-9—‘Dakṣiṇā vai yajñaṁ purogavī yathā ha vā........ dātavyaiva yajñe dakṣiṇā bhavatyālpiṁśpī!’.  
² 11-1-4-4—‘Yat śaknuyāt dadyāt na adakṣiṇāṁ hávīḥ syāt.’
of heaven if he be greedy and bargains with the sacrificer over the fee. Thus the Brs. caution both the sacrificer and the priest against any underhand means and exhort both the parties to be honest and judicious in the offering and acceptance of the fee respectively, 'Let there be no bargaining as to sacrificial fees, for by bargaining the priests are deprived of their place in heaven'.

The sacrificial fee is regarded as an auspicious thing which causes the well-being of the sacrifice. 'Sacrificial fees tend to the welfare or well-being (śubha) of the sacrifice', says P.B. Again, the fee is to be paid to the priests alone and not to other persons who are connected with the sacrifice but do not play the role of priests. The S.B. categorically states,—'The dakṣiṇā is to be paid to the priests and not to the non-priests'.

Details of sacrificial fees to be paid in each sacrifice have been dealt with under 'The forms of sacrifice' in general. The Br. texts record the sacrificial gifts paid by the sacrificers in different sacrifices performed in the past which are varied in their details and range from a simple piece of cloth to the gift of thousand elephants, thousand pieces of gold, nay, even the whole kingdom. Fee is paid mostly in kinds and sometimes in coins of gold and silver. Some dakṣiṇā are enumerated below as illustrations in point. In the Agnihotra sacrifice a milch cow is offered to the priest. In the Sarvamedha and Puruṣamedha sacrifices along with other gifts land was given as the principal fee. In the thirty-three gifts to be paid in the Sautrāmaṇī-Yāga a mare with a foal forms one of the items. In the Aśvamedha the emperor is enjoined upon to give a hundred pieces of gold and a hundred pieces of silver. In the Puruṣamedha the sacrificer is enjoined upon to give his all (sarvasva) to the priests and retire to the forest on completion of the sacrifice. In the Rājasūya sacrifice the gifts consist of two golden mirrors to the Adhvaryu,
one gold necklace to the Udgāṭr, one round gold ornament to the Hotṛ, one horse each to the Prastotṛ and Pratihaṭr, ten cows to the Brahman, a sterile cow to Maitrāvaruṇa, a bullock to Brāhmaṇācchansin, two pieces of cloth to Neṣṭṛ and Potṛ, one cartload of barley to Acchāvāka and an ox to the Agnídhra priest. As monarchs and emperors were the sacrificers of the Rājasūya, Vājapeya and the Aśvamedha sacrifices, the fees were costly consisting of gold, silver, elephants, horses, ox, rich maidens putting on gaudy dresses and gold ornaments etc. The A.B. records fabulous gifts paid by monarchs during their consecration ceremony or the Rājasūya sacrifice to the priests which comprise ten thousand cows (8-37-7), a thousand pieces of gold, land and animals (8-39-6), a thousand elephants (8-39-8), millions of cows (8-39-6) and the like, King Aṅga in return for his great consecration ceremony offered ten thousand elephants, ten thousand rich maid servants wearing gold necklaces, millions of cows and eightyeight thousand white horses as gifts to his priest Udamaya Ātreya (A.B. 8-39-8). In the Somayāga the fees consists of one hundred and twelve cows, one horse, ass, goat, sheep, mule, paddy, māṣa lentils, sesamum and barley. In addition to these a rich sacrificer is asked to offer elephants, cloth and gold also.

Regarding the distribution of the gifts amongst the officiating priests the following principle was observed in the age of the Brs. One half of the fee goes to the Superintending priest Brahman and the other half to the remaining priests. 'Half (of the fee) belongs to the Brahman and the remaining half to the other priests,' observes the A.B. 6 This is also corroborated to by the J.B. 7

Gifts other than sacrificial fees are also recorded in the Brs. and Upaniṣads offered by kings and rich patrons to the brahmins and learned sages. King Janaka the renowned saintly king who was a great patron of learning and whose court was a centre of learned discourses and debates

6. 5-25-9—'Ardhanameva brahmaṇa śārdhamitaśeṣāṁrtvijāṁ.'
7. 3-17-6—'Ardhā ha sma vai purā brahmaṇe dakṣiṇā nayantī ardha itarebhyaḥ rtvīgṛbhyaḥ.'
declared valuable prizes to the winner of debates. Thus he made a gift of hundred cows to the sage Yājñavalkya (S.B. 11-3-1-4), a thousand cows to the same sage (S.B. 11-6-3-1), a hundred cows with their horns studded with gold (B.U.). King Hariscandra offered a hundred cows to the poor brahmin Ajigarta in exchange of the latter’s son Śunahśepa.

Besides ensuring heavenly rewards and worldly prosperity and pleasing the priests the sacrificial fees or other gifts may be viewed from another aspect. By these gifts the kings placated the priestly class whose support was essential for the upkeep of the social structure and for smooth administration. The priests pleased and helped the rulers by performing sacrifices through which kings attained imperial power and paramount sovereignty. In return the kings lavished rich presents on the priests. Thus through mutual co-operation the ruling class and the priestly class held the balance of power keeping under subjection the other two communities.
BOOK III
CHAPTER IV.

The Spirit underlying the Form of Sacrifice :—

Behind the sacrificial liturgy and its vast paraphernalia, behind the externals of the sacerdotal religion we find the faint glimmerings of the spirit of religion, the essence of sacrifice.

Yajñā or the sacrifice is looked upon as an organic whole. It is often described as an organic being or puruṣa termed Yajñāpuruṣa in the Brāhmaṇa texts. Its different aspects are compared to the limbs of a living being. In A.B. 2-8-3, 4 we come across a detailed comparison of these limbs, e.g., Prātaranuvāka is the head of the sacrifice, the two grahas called Upāṃśu and Antaryāma are its two breaths—prāṇa and apāna etc. The S.B. also refers to this organic conception of sacrifice. ‘Puruṣa is the sacrifice. Its head is Havirdhānam; its mouth is Āhavaniya. Its two arms are represented by the Agnidhriya and Mārijāliya.’¹ ‘The sacrifice is a great god’ observes the G.B.(P), (2-16); ‘Eṣa vai mahān devo yad yajñāḥ’. The S.B. 6-1-1- identifies the fire-altar with the primal Puruṣa called Prajāpati, the lord of creation. “That same person became Prajāpati. And that Person which became Prajāpati is this very Agni (Fire-altar), who is now being built.”² While dealing with the doctrine of creation which will be taken up later on we shall see how the erection of this fire-altar stands for a symbol of the reconstruction of the universe, in the shape of Prajāpati. In this

1. S.B. 3-5-3-1-, 2, 3.4—’Puruṣo vai yajñāḥ; śīra evāsyas yat havirdhānam.’

1Mukhamevāśaḥhavaśalyaḥ; Bāhū evāsyāgnidhriyaśca mārijā-

1liyasya.’

2. 6-1-1-5—’Sa yaḥ saḥ purusāḥ prajāpatirabhavadyameva sa yo’yamagnisśityate.’

²

mystic symbolism the human sacrificer or Yajamāna is equated with Agni which is the divine counterpart of the human sacrificer; Agni or the god of Fire, again, is equated with the lord of creation Prajāpati. Thus the human sacrificer is identified with Prajāpati through his identification with Agni. Again, the fire-altar and fire are identified which identification leads to the equation of both Prajāpati and Yajamāna with the fire-altar or sacrifice. The Primal Being which is the fountained of all creation known as Puruṣa described and eulogised in the Hymn of creation of the Rgveda (X-90) has assumed the name of Prajāpati in the Brāhmaṇas. ‘But Prajāpati is himself Time, and Time is in the long run death, so that the sacrificer himself becomes death, and by that act rises superior to death, and is for ever removed from the world of illusion and trouble to the world of ever-lasting bliss. In this the true nature of Prajāpati and of the sacrificer is revealed as intelligence, and the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa urges the seeker for truth to meditate upon the self, made up of intelligence and endowed with a body of spirit, a form of light and an ethereal nature.’ Thus we find a deeper, significance, a spiritual and speculative meaning underlying the mechanical sacerdoctalism or liturgical paraphernalia. Sacrifice is not only looked upon as a cold formality or enormously fabricated ritual but also as an organic whole imbued with spirit and intelligence. In all the Brāhmaṇa texts time and again sacrifice (yajña) has been identified with Viṣṇu the supreme deity. The expression ‘Yajña vai Viṣṇu’—‘Sacrifice is Viṣṇu’ occurs again and again. Sometimes sacrifice is also identified with Prajāpati or Agni. In the Vedic pantheon whenever a deity is invoked and eulogised he or she is worshipped as the supreme godhead. This feature of Vedic religion is a far cry from polytheism of the ancient Greek religion. To differentiate this outstanding feature of Vedic religion

3. Cambridge History of India, I, Page 142.
4. S.B. 1-7-1-21, 1-9-3-9, 3-8-3-3.
from Greek polytheism Max Muller has coined a term Henotheism or Kathenotheism which means whenever a deity is propitiated he or she is worshipped as the supreme Godhead. In the Greek pantheon the gods and goddesses are not viewed or worshipped from that angle of vision; they are endowed with limited powers. Thus this special feature of the Vedic religion places the deities on a equal footing and from this perspective Viṣṇu, Prajāpati and Agni are identical notwithstanding the attributes peculiar to each deity that mark out one from the other. Hence when sacrifice is equated with a deity the sense is that it is identified with the supreme deity or Godhead. Again, the Yajamāna or sacrificer is identified with the sacrifice or yajña. ‘Yajamāna is verily the yajña’, says A.B. Hence the sacrificer is also identified with the supreme Deity. To put it in other words, the end or purpose of sacrifice is identification of the sacrificer with the presiding deity of the sacrifice. Through sacrifice the sacrificer attains the union with, and the same form and place (sājujya, sārupya and sālokya) of the deity. Even the different gods attained their status of godhood through the performance of sacrifice. ‘By worshipping Yajña, i.e., performing sacrifice the gods became the gods they now are’. Thus the sacrificer attains the status of the deity to whom the sacrifice is offered. As the deity is immortal, the sacrificer also attains immortality. When an oblation (āhuti) is offered in a sacrifice the external form of the offering is called ‘Homa’ which consists in offering oblations in the sacrificial fire pit. But the contemplation accompanying this offering, the mental aspect of the external act called ‘Bhāvanā’ constitutes yāga. The external oblations

5. 1-5-2—‘Yajamāno vai yajñaḥ.’
6. S.B. 1-5-2-6—‘Tena pārvittena deva ayajanta teneṣṭvā etadabhavan yadidaṃ devaḥ.’
7. ‘Vaidhe ādāre haviṣaḥ prakṣepe homaḥ.’
8. ‘Yāgastu bhāvanā-pradhānaḥ.’
are physical visible ones whereas the mental offerings are invisible psychical ones which go to constitute the essence of sacrifice of which external offerings are the form. Shorn of its mental or contemplative aspect sacrifice defeats its very purpose. "The sacrificer attains immortality through the invisible mental offerings", says the A.B.9

This intended union of the sacrificer with the deity is also clear from certain sacrificial rites. The following ceremony is an instance in point. After the completion of a particular sacrifice the sacrificer prepares a miniature image of himself with the Kuśa grass called Prastara and throws the same in the sacrificial fire pit. When the image is burnt up the sacrificer thinks his mortal frame is burnt up and his disembodied soul has attained union with the deity. He thus considers himself to be one with Viṣṇu and takes three strides covering the sacrificial altar uttering the Vedic hymn,—"Here Viṣṇu strides placing three steps' etc.10

Explaining the significance of the term 'Āhuti' or oblation the A.B. observes,—"Oblation of fire, oblation of butter and soma—all these oblations are offerings of immortality. All these oblations make one disembodied and immortal'.11

Of course this immortality is not equivalent to the final liberation of the individual soul—the doctrine of emancipation as adumbrated in the Upaniṣads, rather a far cry from it. The immortality attained through sacrifice means union with a personal deity and attainment of the latter's status, privilege and place in heaven after the sacrificer shuffles off his mortal coil; in other words, it amounts to attainment of 'Devatva' or deityhood or divinity in heaven whereas the emancipation or Mokṣa of the Upaniṣads means complete absorption of the individual soul into the impersonal supreme Godhead or All-soul.

9. A.B. 2-7-4—"Yā vai kāśca āsarifrā āhutahāḥ asmṛtavameva tābhīryajamāno jayati.'
10. 'Idaṃ Viṣṇuh vicakrame tredhā nidadhe padam.'
11. A.B. 2-7-4—"Agnyāhutirasmṛṭāhutirājyāhutiḥ somāhutireṇa vā-āsarifrā āhutyayō yā vai kāscāsarifrā āhutyayō'mṛṭavameva tābhīrya- amāno jayati.'
We shall take up and dilate on the personal and impersonal aspects of godhead of the Brāhmaṇas while dealing with the theology of the Brāhmaṇas.

Thus we find that the spirit or metaphysical aspect of sacrifice was never lost sight of though it was clouded by the huge paraphernalia of the externals of religion or huge mass of rituals and rites. The spirit and the form developed side by side and in the long run the spirit gained the upper-hand which tended to transcend ritualism or the so-called mechanical sacerdotalism. This transcendental tendency ultimately led to the metaphysics of the Arānyakas which finally crystallised into the philosophy of the Upaniṣads which decry external sacrifice and rituals in emphatic and unmistakable terms. The germ of this transcendental spirit which set in the anti-ritual reaction may be traced in the very Brāhmaṇa texts which are veritable epitomes of liturgies and rituals of sacrifice. Burdened with the vast mass and minute details of sacrificial rites people began to doubt and question the efficacy of the same in the age of the Brāhmaṇas. They not only doubted the efficacy of sacrifice but also attempted to prove the ill-effects of the same. They were quite in the dark as to whether a man achieved piety or incurred sin by performing sacrifices. Observes the S.B. in categorical terms,— 'Men were possessed with unbelief (aśraddhā); those who sacrifice become sinners, and those who do not sacrifice become righteous or attain good.'

Thus a time came in the later Vedic age when people developed a sceptical attitude with regard to the utility of sacrifices and desisted from performing rituals. Urged on by the gods Bṛhaspati Āṅgirasa met the people and asked them the reason of their not performing sacrifices. They replied that they have stopped performance of sacrifices from a desire as to what for should they

---

12, 1-2-5-24—'Aśraddhā manuṣyān viveda ye yajante pāpyāpsaste bhavanti ya u na yajante śreyāpsaste bhavantī.}'
sacrifice since those who performed sacrifices became greater sinners and those who did not became righteous or obtained good (śreyāḥ). This challenge thrown by the people against the school of sacrifice had to be met by the priestly class. This challenge proves beyond a shade of doubt that already a mass movement was afoot against the sacrificial rites in the Brahmanical age or later Vedic era. The cultured people realised that the external rites alone devoid of reverence or the mere utterance of hymns minus the mental factor failed to reach the gods. To make the sacrifice effective mind must accompany the utterance and the deed; that is to say, the sacrificer must put his whole heart in the performance to prevent mechanical ritualism. "Mind and speech when yoked together, convey the sacrifice to the gods." With mind and speech they truly perform sacrifice," says the S.B. Importance was attached to reverence or belief without which sacrifice failed to achieve its goal. The importance of faith has been stated in clear terms in the Br. texts. Even gods are of lesser importance to him who has realised the importance of reverence. He knows sacrifice produces its result through reverence without the help of the gods. In the T.S. (7-1-8-2) we read of sage Atri who declares Śraddhā or reverence to be his deity. Śraddhā-deva. When he is in need of help or succour he does not appeal to the gods but invents proper rites in which he has full faith and thus disposes of his disabilities. In the words of the K.B. (7-4). 'He who sacrifices with reverence and faith his piety never wanes' ('Sa yaḥ śraddhā-dhāno yajate tasyeṣṭaṁ na kṣiyate'). The T.B. 3-12-3-2 observes,—"The goddess Śraddhā (Reverence) was the first product of Truth. Reverence maintains the universe and is the foundation of the world'. Commenting on this passage Sāyaṇa remarks,—"The Vedic and worldly (domestic) rites of a person devoid of reverence become futile'. In the

13. 1-2-5-25—'Te hucu kiṃkāmyāḥ yajemahi ye yajante pāpyān-
saste bhavanti ya u na yajante śreyāṁsaste bhavantīti.'

14. S.B. 1-4-4-1—'Mannāca haiva vāk ca yujau devebhayo yaj-
—śāmya-vahataḥ.'

15. S.B. 3-5-3-11—'Yujjate mana uṣa yujjate dhiya iti manasā
cā vai vācā ca yajñāṁ tanvate.'
absence of earthly oblations reverence (śraddhā) alone has been enjoined to be offered mentally as oblation. This is known as Śraddhā-homa or offering of reverence. It is also termed Bhāvanā-homa as Bhāvanā or mental offering predominates here. The A.B. cites Agnihotra sacrifice as an instance in point. This sacrifice was a daily performance and was a compulsory rite for the Brahmins. They had to perform the sacrifice twice daily—once in the morning and once at dusk after the sun had set.

In ancient India a milk cow was specially reared in every Brahmin home to supply the milk necessary for daily oblations of this sacrifice. The cow was called Agnihotri gābhi. If the whole milk meant for the offering got split by accident, another milk cow had to be procured to obtain milk. What is to be done if another cow was not available. The A.B. thus solves the problem. 'If another cow is not available, in that case offer the oblation with reverence.'16 This offering of reverence was known as Śraddhā-homa and the sacrificer had to utter the words,—'I offer reverence as oblation' ('aham śraddhāṃ juhomi'). The A.B. goes still farther and makes a memorable observation as follows. Now, Agnihotra had to be performed by the sacrificer jointly with his wife. Again, one could not be relieved of this performance in his life-time. In what manner, then, would a widower perform the sacrifice or keep up the continuity of his vow of Agnihotra if he did not desire a second marriage. The injunction for such a widower is that he should perform the sacrifice mentally. First the question is put,—'How a widower will perform the Agnihotra sacrifice? The solution given reads thus;—

16. A.B. 5-25-2—'Atveva śraddhāyai hotavyam.'
regions'. This performance is wholly mental having nothing to do with external ceremonies and oblations of Agnihotra. Hence it is called Mānasa Agnihotra or mental Agnihotra. This memorable passage drives home the fact that the Brāhmaṇa texts did not minimise the importance of reverence and mental attitude essentially needed for the sacrifice though emphasis was laid on the details of rituals and externals of religion. Herein may be traced the beginnings of the Āranyaka philosophy which under-rates the value of external sacrifice and recommends mental sacrifice in its place. External purity derived from rituals and uttering of hymns is substituted by inner purity and meditation. Pointedly does Aitareya Āranyaka put the question,—‘To what end shall we repeat the Veda ? to what purpose shall we sacrifice ? For, we sacrifice breath in speech and speech in breath’. The discussion of Mānasa or mental Agnihotra of the A.B. referred to above culminates in the spiritual and internal Agnihotra (‘ādhyātmiṇaṃ āntaram Agnihotram’) recorded in Śāṅkhyāyana Āranyaka which observes,—‘It is called spiritual inner Agnihotra.’ In that Agnihotra ‘Prāṇa is the Āhavaniya, Apāna is the Gārhapatiya; Vyāna is Anvāhārya, Mind is Pacana. Manyu is smoke, worshipper is embers taken collectively, Śraddhā or Reverence is milk, speech is samit (sacrificial fuel), Truth is the offering and Wisdom, par excellence, is the soul.’ This description of spiritual and inner or mental Agnihotra at once drives home the fact that the external sacrifice underwent complete reorientation in the Āraṇyaka period being transformed into a sacrifice wholly mental

17. A.B. 7-2-10—‘Apatniko'gñihotraṃ kathamagnihotraṃ juhoti, śraddhā patna satyaṃ yajamānaḥ śraddhā satyaṃ tadītyuttamaṃ mithunāṃ, śraddhāyā satyena mithunena svargān lokān jayatīti.’
18. 3-2-6—‘Kīmarthā vayamadhīyasāmahe, kīmarthā vayaṃ yakṣāmahe vācī hi prāṇaṃ juhumāḥ prāṇe vā vācaḥ.’
19. 10-1—‘Aṭhāta ādhyātmiṇamāntaramagnihotramityācakṣate.’
20. 10-8,—‘Tasya prāṣa evāhavanīyo'pāno gārhapatyo, vyāno'nvāhārya, pacano mano, dhūmo manyurarcayita sañgārāḥ, śraddhā payo vāk samit satyamāhutilī, praṣātmī.’
and spiritual. The excessive ritualism of the Brāhmaṇas finds no place in the Āraṇyakas which record the reaction that naturally stirred the cultural minds produced by mechanical performance of sacrifices. Hence Āraṇyakas do not embody rules for sacrificial performances. Rather the mysticism and symbolism of the sacrifice and priestly philosophy find exposition in the Āraṇyakas. Meditation of the Absolute, rather than external performance, is the essence of their teaching. The complicated sacrificial machinery of the Brāhmaṇas was replaced by a simple ceremonial. Thus the doctrine of knowledge or jñāna-kāṇḍa gained the upper-hand with relation to the path of action or karma-kāṇḍa. Thus the period of Āraṇyaka was an age of transition from the age of Brāhmaṇas to the Upaniṣadic era. The critical outlook of the Āraṇyakas with reference to ritualism is more accentuated in the Upaniṣads which cry down sacrifice or liturgy in unambiguous terms. Śvetāsvataraopaniṣad and M.U. compare sacrifices to weak and leaky boats which cannot take us across the troubled waters of the world to the peaceful shore. ‘Verily the boats of the sacrifice are weak.’ Mūḍakopaniṣad calls those persons fools who are devoted to mere rites and ceremonies. Brhadāraṇyakopaniṣad compares those who offer oblations or sacrifices to Gods to animals catering to the comforts of their masters.

From the above discussion it is quite clear that the Brāhmaṇas did not lose sight of the spirit of sacrifice though this spirit or essence was overburdened with the complicated form which gained in bulk as years rolled on. Due importance was attached to both inner and external purity and mental sacrifice was acknowledged and praised. We have seen how reverence was enjoined and eulogised. Reverence and truth were regarded as essence of yajña. Even without externals or rituals one

---


22. B.U. 1-4-10—‘Ātmā hyeṣāp sa bhavati...............yadeta-nmanuṣyā viduḥ.’
could achieve the end of sacrifice through śraddhā and satya or reverence and truth. The S.B. observes,—"sacrifice is indeed reverence." In these references to and eulogy of reverence one may trace the germs of Bhakticull or the cult of devotion which assumed distinct shape later on.

23 S.B. 9-1-1-10—'Yajñō vai namāh.'
BOOK III
CHAPTER V

Emergence of Popular Religious Cults:—

Beginnings of many popular religious creeds of modern India may be traced in the Brāhmaṇas. The above discussion conclusively proves the inception of the Bhakti-Cult in the age of the Brāhmaṇas which ultimately led to the emergence of new deities and new cults. The Vedic pantheon of the saṃhitā age underwent a reshuffling and re-orientation in this age. Some of the deities such as Viṣṇu, Rudra etc., took new shape and attributes and gained in importance in the later Vedic age. In the Rgvedic saṃhitā Viṣṇu is but one of the many forms and manifestations of the Sun-god ‘Sūrya’. Savitṛ, Uṣā, Aśvins, Bhaga, Sūrya, Viṣṇu, Puṣan Mitra, Varuṇa are nothing but different expressions of the Sun-god with relation to its different attributes and positions. Thus when the sun touches the zenith in the mid-day it is called Viṣṇu in the Rgvedic Saṃhitā. The sun looks smallest but is most powerful and scorching at that hour. This natural phenomenon gave rise to the mythology of the Purāṇa which describes Vāmana, the dwarf god as an incarnation of the Supreme god Viṣṇu. The sun rises at dawn in the eastern direction, touches the highest point of the firmament at mid-day and sets in the west at dusk; again it rises in the east next morn; thus in three strides the sun traverses the whole universe. This natural phenomenon was interpreted as the conquering of the three worlds with three strides by the Vāmana avatāra or dwarf incarnation of lord Viṣṇu. Similar myths were spun round the nucleus of natural phenomena represented by other deities and demons such as Maruts.
Rudra, Vṛtra etc. This interpretation of mythological legends in the light of natural phenomena is thought of by many to be a discovery of modern genius or scholarship but it is highly interesting to note that there was a school of thinkers in the Vedic age who advocated this interpretation. The Nirkuta which is one of the six Vedāṅgas bears glowing testimony to this fact. In the Ṛgveda Vṛtra is represented as a demon who withholds water in his stomach; when Indra strikes the demon with his thunderbolt the latter lets out the water. Yāska, the author of Nirkuta while discussing the characteristics of Vṛtra, remarks,—"Now, who is this Vṛtra. The mythologists say he is a demon born of Tvāṣṭṛ but we the authors or Nirkuta hold he is nothing but the cloud. Lightning and water (clouds) combine to produce rain and that interaction of lightning and clouds is described in the simile of a battle (between Indra and Vṛtra)." This is a memorable observation of the Nirkuta which lends support to this view advocated by modern scholars and proves that such a school of interpretation existed in the later Vedic age. The beginning of these mythologies spun round the natural phenomena may be traced in the Brāhmaṇas though we miss full-fledged myths and legends which assumed distinct shape in the age of the Purāṇas. Gods Viṣṇu and Rudra of the Brāhmaṇa texts are a far cry from those of the Sāṃhitās. We have thoroughly discussed above how Viṣṇu was gaining in importance and held in high esteem in the later Vedic age. The identification of the sacrifice with Viṣṇu which ultimately led to the identification of the sacrificer with god Viṣṇu indicates the growing position and reorientation of this deity. The sacrificer through a symbolical rite as noted above

attained to the status of Viṣṇu and the supreme goal of sacrifice was thought to be attainment of Viṣṇuhood or absorption in the personal deity Viṣṇu. The Yajamāna longed for this union so that he may enjoy the same status after his expiry. The germ of the Vāmana-avatāra or Dwarf Incarnation of Viṣṇu may be traced in the Brāhmaṇas as in the Saṃhitās. ‘Vāmana (dwarf) is Viṣṇu’, says the T.B.25 The S.B. again, identifies Sungod with Brahman, the Supreme Godhead. ‘That Āditya is Brahman.’26 Viṣṇu is but the most powerful form of Āditya. Thus sacrifice came to be looked upon as a form of propitiation of the Supreme God Viṣṇu—a medium to achieve union with Viṣṇu. Thus one of the most popular religions of modern India, viz, the Viṣṇu-cult assumed distinct shape in the Brāhmaṇa era.

The origin of Śiva-cult may be traced in the eulogy of Rudra in the Yajurveda Saṃhitā and the Brāhmaṇas. Śiva is but an equivalent of Rudra which represents the terrific aspect of the said deity. Just as Viṣṇu was one of the many manifestations of the Sungod, viz, the sun when it touches the meridian, god Rudra also represented a natural phenomenon connected with storm, viz, the phenomenon of thunder. This is why in the tripartite classification of gods according to their abodes he is classed with the gods belonging to the welkin or aerial region (antarikṣa-sthāna). Some of the phenomena of the external nature are pleasing, exhilarating and benignant whereas others are awe-inspiring, destructive and malignant. The resplendent orb of the sun, the rosy dawn, the green earth, the azure firmament belong to the former category whereas the terrific storm, thunder, lightning, dark and foreboding clouds etc., representing wild freaks of nature belong to the latter group. In the R.V. Rudra is represented as discharging brilliant shafts towards both the heaven and the earth (7-46-3), as the slayer of cows and men with

25. 1-2-5-5—‘Vāmano vai Viṣṇuḥ.’
26. 7-4-1-14—‘Assu vādityo brahma.’
deadly weapons (1-114-10). Here the destructive agency of the thunder and lightning seems to have been clearly in view. Thunder is always regarded as a dreaded terrific phenomenon which is a menace to human beings, animals and vegetable kingdom. Hence it is that malevolent attributes accompany the concept of Rudra. A.B. (3-13-9) thus recounts the birth of Rudra. When Prajāpati committed incest with his daughter the gods wanted to punish him for such heinous crime. As they failed to find a single god competent to punish Prajāpati they created a new deity from the tragic elements of all the gods combined together. That deity is termed Rudra who is the lord of all beings (Bhūtapati) and lord of beasts (Paśupati). Rudra asked a boon of the gods who created him that he should be made lord of all beasts and the gods readily granted this boon. Rudra hit Prajāpati with an arrow. We have discussed how the creator or Puruṣa of the Rgveda has turned into the Prajāpati, the lord of creation in the Brāhmaṇas, and Prajāpati, in his turn, as we find from Rudra's anecdote was yielding to Rudra who was gradually coming into the limelight as a popular deity since the days of the Yajurvedic Saṃhitā. Rudra was held in such awe and veneration that the A.B. (3-34-7) enjoins that a formula must be altered from the form in which it occurs in the R.V. in order to avoid the direct mention of the name of Rudra.

In the R.V. the benevolent or Śiva aspect of Rudra is not clearly outlined; the malevolent aspects stand out vividly. He is invoked as 'Paśupa' 'the protector of the cattle' (R.V. 1-114-9) and sometimes described as a healer of diseases (R.V. 1-43-4) and the best of physicians (II-33-4). These eulogies and invocations are the outcome of fear and not sincere love or devotion. Because he causes plagues to animals his protection is sought for averting diseases and hence he is described as the protector of cattle.

---

27. ‘Āre te goghnamuta pūrṣaṅghnam.’
28. ‘Bhiṣaktamaṁ tvā bhiṣajaṁ ēṣṇomi.’
In R.V. VII-46-2 the seer appeals to Rudra not to afflict children with diseases; he is requested to bestow immunity from illness on the villagers (1-114-1). From these verses it is crystal clear that Rigvedic Aryans believed god Rudra to be the generator of diseases and afflictions. As he was deemed to be the cause of diseases men propitiated him when they recovered from or were immune from diseases and attributed the recovery or immunity to the healing power of Rudra. Thus evolved the conception of ‘Physician’ attributed to the deity. Thus in the days of the R.K. Sāṁhitā people prayed to Rudra seeking his protection and grace more out of fear than of sincere devotion. One verse of the R.V. reads as follows—‘O Rudra, do not, out of wrath, injure our children and progeny, our people, our cows and horses, houses, and pray, do not kill our men. We invoke thee with offerings.’ Among the many derivations of the term ‘Rudra’ the current one is ‘he who makes every one cry,’ i.e., causes affliction to everyone (‘Rodayati sarvān iti Rudraḥ’). In the A.V. also (11-2-22, 6; 4-90) Rudra is described as a deity that attacks people with fever, cough, poison etc. According to the A.V. he possesses wide-mouthed howling dogs.

The concept of Rudra underwent further evolution in the Yajurveda. The deity appears in a much more developed form in the Satarudhiya hymns contained in the sixteenth chapter of the V.S. The apparently contradictory aspects of Rudra, viz, malevolent and benevolent are clearly stated, the one being distinguished from the other. The deity represents both the darker powers and the benign powers of

29. ‘Viśvaṁ puṣṭaṁ grāme asminnanātum.’

30. 1-114-8—‘Mā na stoke tanaye mā na āyau mā no goṣu mā no aśveṣu ṛṛṣaḥ. Vīrāṇ mā no Rudra bhāmite vadhīrvaṁśitaṁ sadamit tvā havāmahe.’

This verse also occurs verbatim in the V.S. 16-16.
nature. His benignant form is termed ‘Śivātanūḥ’ and ‘Aghorā’
‘non-terrific’\(^\text{31}\) as opposed to his malignant form called Ghora, Bhūma, Ugra etc., meaning terrific and awe-inspiring. Representing the evil forces of nature Rudra is described as living far away from human habitation as the lord of forests and protector of hunters, highway robbers, night-rangers, thieves, pilferers, cheats, pickpockets, outcasts, etc. He is eulogised as the presiding deity of thieves, of swordsmen, archers and robbers armed with swords.\(^\text{32}\) He is the protector of swindlers and house-breakers who roam about in the mountains putting on turbans\(^\text{33}\) The terms stena, stāyu, Muṣānām, Taskara, Kuluṅca, etc., mean different types of thieves and theft such as ordinary theft, pilfering, house-breaking, cutthroat, pickpocket, swindler etc. Rudra is also the lord of soldiers, army and commander-in-chief. All sorts of fierce weapons and sharp missiles are associated with him. He holds bow, arrows, thunderbolt and various deadly weapons. He himself is also described as senāpati and senānī, commander-in-chief. The constant epithet of Rudra as saṃhatṛ or destroyer of the universe at the time of dissolution traces its origin in this Śatarudrīya chapter of the V.S. He is called ‘Bhavasya hetiḥ’ ‘the destroyer of the universe in 16-18. The seer prays to the deity to take pity on him and ‘not to kill his father and mother, and not to injure the persons dear to him,’\(^\text{34}\) not to kill the people and other created beings of the world.’\(^\text{35}\)

---

\(^{31}\) 16-2—’Yā te Rudra śivā tanūraghorā’pāpakāśīni.’

\(^{32}\) 16-21—’Nama vañcate pariwañcate stāyāṃnāṃ pataye nama
Namo nīṣaṅgina iśudhimate taskarāṇām pataye namo
namāḥ śrūkṣyāhyo jīghāṃsadbhīyo muṣṭatāṃ pataye namo
Namo’simadbhīyo naktampatbhyo vikṛntānāṃ pataye
namāḥ.’

\(^{33}\) 16-22—’Nama uṣṇīṣeṇa giricarāyā kulūčcānāṃ pataye namāḥ.’

\(^{34}\) 16-15—’Mā no vadhīḥ pitarāṇaḥ mā tātaṇāṃ mā naḥ pri-
yāstanvya Rudra śriṣaḥ.’

\(^{35}\) 16-3—’Mā hīṃsīḥ puruṣaḥ jagat.’
In his benignant aspect he appears in this chapter of the V.S. as the healer, the lord of medicinal herbs and is termed 'the principal heavenly physician.' Prayer is offered to him to confer healthy minds in all men and to free them from the deadly disease tuberculosis (16-4). The same Rudra who is saluted as the protector of night-rangers, hobgoblins, cutthroats, thieves, non-Aryan tribes and outcasts in his malevolent aspect is also eulogised as the all-powerful deity who can kill 'the venomous serpents and female night-rangers, i.e., female demons (16-5)'. Being the lord of fields and plains, he is also the lord of cattle (Paśūnāṁ patiḥ) that graze about in those fields. In the post-Vedic age 'Paśupati' became a special appellation of this god. The P.B. also (14-9-12 ; 23-13-2) describes him as a hunter and lord of wild cattle. Not only the term 'Paśupati', but also such epithets which accompany the description and conception of Rudra or Śiva in the Puranas such as Kapardin, Śitikantha, Nilagrīva, Gaṇapati, Bhava, Šarva, Pinākin etc., occur in this chapter of the V.S. The epithet 'Tryamvaka' also occurs in the V.S. (3-60), "Tryamvakaṁ yajāmahe'. It is surprising to note that even the epithets of Krśtvāsa (Krśtīṁ vasāṇah), 'putting on the garment of hide' (16-51) and of Giriśaya, 'residing in the mountain' (16-29) are met with in the Ṣatarudṛīya hymn. The deity is also invoked as the lord of directions (Diśāṁ patiḥ), lord of paths (Pathināṁ patiḥ), lord of nourishment (Pūṣṭānāṁ patiḥ), lord of food (Annānāṁ patiḥ), lord of fields (Kṣetraṅāṁ patiḥ), lord of trees (Vṛksaṅāṁ patiḥ), lord of herbs (Oṣadhīnāṁ patiḥ), lord of animals (Śatvānāṁ patiḥ), of horses (Aśvapatiḥ), lord of commoners (Gaṇapatiḥ), lord of the assembly (Sabhāpatiḥ), of talented people (Grītspatiḥ), of hunters (Śva-patiḥ) etc. In the T.S. also (4-5-1-3) the god is described as haunting the hills and is closely related to the trees on which he deposits his weapons.

36. 16-5—'Prathamo daivyō bhīṣak.'
37. (i) 16-28—'Namo Bhavāya ca Rudrāya ca namaḥ śarvāya ca paśupataye ca, namo Nilagrīvāya ca śītikanṭhāya ca.'
   (ii) 16-10—'Vijyaṁ dhanuḥ kapardino visalyo vāṇavān.'
In his benignant aspect the god is also described in the V.S. as the presiding deity of councillors and merchants. Thus he inspires the Mantrins or councillors of the king with good counsel and speeds on the merchants for economic welfare of the country.

Again, Rudra reveals himself not only in the higher castes but also in those low castes who are placed in the lowest rung of the social hierarchy. The Satarudriya chapter of the V.S. merits special importance for this fact as well. Salutation is offered to Rudra who reveals himself in ‘the carpenters, chariotwrights, potters, blacksmiths, Niṣādas, Puṣṭīṣṭhas or bird-catchers, śvanis or those who roam about with dogs, and Ṣrīgatū or hunters.’

Not to speak of human beings he reveals himself also in the vegetable and animal kingdoms such as trees, medicinal herbs, shrub, dogs, etc. He is the lord of both men and beasts and the term Paśu in Paśupati includes both. He assumes the form of both dogs and masters of dogs.

The name Rudra has been generalised and many Rudras are spoken of. The seer prays to those groups of Rudras to stay far away from him so as not to harm him in verses 54 to 63 of the Satarudriya hymn. One central Rudra manifests himself in many groups of Rudras, having different designations according to their regions and functions. Thus there are terrestrial Rudras, Rudras of the welkin region and those of the celestial sphere. Those inhabiting the welkin region are connected with thunder and lightning and those of the celestial abode are termed ‘Nīla-

38. 16-19—‘Namaḥ mantriṃe vāṇijīya.’
39. 16-27—‘Namaṣṭakṣabhyaḥ rathakārebhyaśca vo nāmaḥ, nāmaḥ Kūlālebhyaḥ karmārebhyaśca vo nāmo, nāmo Ṣiṣṭhebhyaśca vo nāmo, nāmaḥ śvanibhyo mṛgayubhyaśca vo nāmaḥ.’
40. 16-28—‘Namaḥ śvabhyayaḥ śvapatibhyaśca vo nāmaḥ.’
grīva', 'Śitikanṭha' etc. One batch of Rudras also occupies the nether world or the Pātāla region and some Rudras reside in the trees and herbs.

The Rudras are also called Gaṇas and Gaṇapatis, leaders of tribes or groups of people having different callings such as potters, blacksmiths etc., described above. The workmen of handicraft and also the forest tribe of Niṣādas are brought into close connection with Rudra. Perhaps the followers of these multifarious crafts and the non-Aryan tribes mentioned along with outcasts and low castes used to worship Rudra as their patron god or presiding deity in some form or other.

In the Rgveda Rudra represents the 'thunder' aspect of the natural phenomena and as such he is classed with the deities of the welkin region like Vāyu, Marut etc. In the Śukla Yajurveda or V.S. Rudra has been identified with the Sungod Sūrya in clear and unmistakable terms in several verses of the Satarudriya hymn. Pointing at the sun with his finger the sage sings the glory of Rudra in the shape of the Sungod in the following strain—'By our supplication we shall avert the wrath of Rudra who is shining in the yonder sky in the shape of the sun, crimson and tawny in colour, the auspicious deity whose thousand rays have pervaded all the directions.'42 Uvata and Mahidhara both the commentators while interpreting this verse remark—'Here Rudra is eulogised in the form of the sun.'43 They hold that the crimson hue refers to both the rising and the setting sun. In the verse following the above-quoted one (16-6) the identification of Rudra and Āditya is stated very poetically—'The cowherd boys and the village maidens who come to the tank for fetching water witness Rudra (in the form of the setting sun) who goes down the firmament tinged all over with the crimson hue but bluish at the neck. Thus seen

41. 16-6—'Asau yastāmro arūpa uta babhrūḥ sumaṅgalaḥ ye cainam Rudrā abhito dikṣu śrītāḥ sahasraśo'vaiśāṁ heḍa imahe.'
42. 'Ādityarūpeṇātra Rudráḥ stūyate.'
the deity bestows happiness on us." The setting sun is identified with Rudra in this verse with a poetic gusto. Though the setting sun looks vermillion red yet a bluish hue is perceptible near the centre of its disc; hence it is termed Nilagriva or Nilakantha ‘Blue-necked’. The cowherd boys looking at the setting sun know it is time to lead the cattle back to the fold and the village maidens come to the tank or river at dusk to fetch water (udahāryaḥ) and with joy and wonder do they look at the glory and the majesty of the setting sun that wildly flaunts the colour-streamers across the earth and heaven turning the western sky into a veritable frenzy of red and vermillion. One of the many synonyms of Rudra is ‘Kapardin’ which means ‘one possessing matted locks’; commentators taxing their ingenuity have thrown in a suggestion that this appellation of Rudra traces its origin in his identification with the sun; the thousand pencils of rays of the sun clearly visible at the time of rising and setting have been conceived as so many matted locks of the deity. This identification of Rudra as also of other gods with Sūrya goes to prove the truth of Kātyāyana’s statement in Sarvānukramaṇi—‘In fact, one deity is eulogised in the Vedas, he is the great Āditya or Sūrya. Yāska, the reputed author of Nirukta, one of the six Vedāṅgas i.e., accessories to the Vedic study, observes—‘Other gods are but the limbs of one (central) Godhead.’ One Supreme power which is the source of all creation manifests itself through the different gods who represent different aspects of the Absolute.

All gods as the different expressions of the sun.

Gods are different manifestations of the Supreme Spirit.

43. 16-7—'Asau yo'vasarpati nilagrivo vilohitaḥ, 
Utānam gopā adrāmannadṛ śrannudahāryaḥ, 
sa dhṛṣṭo mṛḍayati naḥ.'
44. 'Ekaiva devatā vede stīyate, Āditya iti,' 
45. 7-4—'Ekasyātmanah anye devaḥ pratyāṅgāni bhavanti.'
Both in the R.V. and the V.S. Rudra is also described and propitiated as the Supreme Godhead who is the fountainhead of all energy, all life and the whole creation. Even in the R.V. Rudra is raised to supreme power. ‘By his power he perceives all earthly beings and by his universal sovereignty or imperial suzerainty he perceives all divine beings.’\(^{46}\) He moves at once far and near; he is boundless and is free from mortal ailments and limitations. The V.S. also describes and praises the deity in similar strain. Rudra is described as the lord of the universe ‘Jagatāṁ patiḥ’ (16-18), ‘he who assumes all forms ‘Viśvarūpebhyaḥ’ (16-25), ‘the all-powerful Supreme God’ ‘Bhagavāṁ’ (16-52, 53), ‘Īśāna’ (16-53) etc.

In the first portion of the Śatarudra hymn Rudra is depicted as an awe-inspiring terrific deity as the term ‘Rudra’ literally signifies. It is only towards the last portion of the said hymn that the deity assumes the form of Śiva and is described as a benign deity catering to the welfare of worshippers and humanity at large. In his benignant aspect he is invoked as Śambhava, Mayobhava, Śankara, Mayaskara, Śiva and Śivatara. The sixteenth chapter of the V.S. contains sixty-six verses in all and it is only in the forty-first verse that the benignant appellations are attached to the deity which reads as follows:—‘Salutation to him who is Śambhava and Mayobhava; salutation to him who is Śankara and Mayaskara; salutation to him who is Śiva and Śivatara.’\(^{47}\)

All these epithets Śambhava, Mayobhava, Śankara, Mayaskara, Śiva etc., mean the same thing, viz,—the good, the auspicious, benign, well-meaning. Thus Rudra the terrific ulti-

\(^{46}\) 7-46-2—‘Sa hi kṣayena kṣamyasya ānmanaḥ śavrājyena divyasya cetatī.’ (R.V.)

\(^{47}\) ‘Namaḥ Śambhavāya ca Mayobhavāya ca namaḥ Śankarāya ca. Mayāskarāya ca, namaḥ Śivāya ca Śivatārāya ca.’
mately becomes Śiva the benign. Earlier in the same chapter of the V.S. he has been described as ‘Ghora’, ‘Ghoratara’, i.e. fierce, more fierce; now he is called Śiva, Śivatara, the benign, more benign. He is both ‘Yāmya’ and ‘Kṣemya’, i.e. he causes the harrowings of the hell and the contentment of the balanced mind (16-33) as well. Thus in the evolution of the concept of Rudra we find two diametrically opposite ideas developing side by side like thesis and antithesis—one bespeaking the benign and the other the malignant aspect. From the above discussion it is abundantly clear that Rudra is at once the presiding deity of soldiers, merchants, landowners, peasants, forests, trees, herbs, sacrificers, physicians and also of thieves, robbers, marauders, gangsters, hunters, night-rangers, highwaymen, cutthroats, swindlers. He is the protector not only of Aryans but also of non-Aryan tribes such as Niśādas, Puṇjiśtas, Śvanis, and outcasts. He is the protector not only of higher castes but also of the lowest strata of the society; rather, He is specially the patron deity of persons who go down in the estimation of the higher castes such as potters, blacksmiths, bird-catchers, gypsies going about with dogs, gamblers, hunters, meat-sellers and the like. Thus the two contradictory aspects of the society like two watertight compartments shutting out each other represent two divergent aspects of the deity, viz, the Rudra and the Śiva aspects like thesis and antithesis of the dialectic of social fabric. These two apparently contradictory characteristics of Rudra are transcended in his all-comprising comprehensive form which is the solution of all contradictions, the great synthesis encompassing both the thesis and the antithesis of the body politic. In this all-comprehensive aspect Rudra and Śiva join hands and merge into one Supreme deity rising above all contradictions and conflicts. In this supreme synthetic aspect Rudra is described and invoked as the lord of all creation, Lord of all creatures, the source of all life and energy, the deity who manifests himself in diverse forms and whose essence permeates the whole creation through
and through. Both the mobile and the immobile, the sentient and the insentient, the animal and the vegetable kingdom are pervaded by him. In this aspect Rudra or Śiva is the Supreme Godhead where all contradictions are transcended, all differences dissolved, all personal traits merged in the Absolute. In the earlier portion Rudra has been described as a personal deity who possesses blue neck, matted locks, Piṅāka bow, who holds various deadly missiles and puts on a hide and a holy thread (16-17, ‘Upavītine’) as well. But in the latter portion of the chapter concerned these personal characteristics are lost in his almost impersonal character. This description of Rudra evolving through a dialectical process—and ultimately converging in a great synthesis which solves the contradiction of thesis and antithesis embodies the message of the Upaniṣads—the great Vedantic truth that every object of creation, however trivial it may be, is pervaded by the essence of the Supreme Self. ‘Sarvaṁ Khalvidam Brahma’ i.e. all created beings are Brahma, i.e., Supreme Godhead. Every object whether human or non-human, sentient or insentient is a spark of the divine and as such no man, no object should be slighted or underrated. All human beings ranging from the lowest rung to the highest rank of the social hierarchy are indispensable to the functioning of the social organism. Everyone is an integral part of the society which is an organic whole. Every member of the human family or animal world or vegetable kingdom is but a visible manifestation of the invisible spirit, the Supreme Godhead who has assumed all these diverse names and forms. This truth has been adumbrated in such Samhitā passages as ‘This one has become all’ and such Upaniṣadic sayings as ‘I shall become many,’ ‘His one form has assumed all these forms.’

48. R.V. ‘Ekaṁ vai idaṁ vibabhūva sarvam.’
49. ‘Eko’haṁ bahu syām.’
The all-comprehensive nature of Rudra may be explained from another angle of vision which throws a flood of light on the evolution of the Vedic pantheon. In the Śatarudrīya hymn Rudra has been described as ‘Gaṇapati’ and ‘Senāṇi’ meaning ‘the lord of the people’ and ‘Commander-in-chief’ respectively. In the post-Vedic mythology this Gaṇapati-aspect disintegrated from the person of Rudra and gave rise to the conception and the creation of a new deity called Gaṇapati or Gaṇeśa. Again, the characteristic of Senāṇi disintegrated and gave birth to the conception of the deity termed Kārtikeya who was the commander-in-chief of the gods. We know, Ganeśa and Kārtikeya became sons of Śiva in the Purāṇas but in the Vedic age these two sons were merged in the person of the father Rudra in the form of epithets. Moreover goddess Ambikā who became the divine consort of Śiva in the post-Saṃhitā age is described as Rudra’s sister (svasā) in the V. S. (3-5), T. B. and the S. B. ‘Ambikā is verily Rudra’s sister.’

The T. B. connects the season of autumn (śarat) with Ambikā. These passages go to prove that Ambikā was Rudra’s sister in the Vedic age. The observation of the T. B. mentioned above proves that Ambikā was connected with autumn. In the post-Vedic age Ambikā became the consort of Rudra and she was worshipped in the autumn. Again, the conveyance of Rudra is described as Ākhu i.e., the mouse in the S. B. and T. B. whereas in the later age the mouse became the conveyance of Ganeśa, the son of Śiva.

51. 2-6-2-9—‘Amvikā vai nāmāsya Rudrasya svasā.’ (S.B.)
52. 1-6-10—‘Śarad va asya (Rudrasya) Amvikā svasā.’
53. S.B. 2-6-2-10—T.B. 1-6-10-2.—‘Ākhuste (Rudrasya) Paśuḥ.’
Influence of Non-Aryan Religion and Primitive Faith:

A word of caution is necessary before launching on the discussion of this topic. Both history and common sense tell us that whenever a nation or a race comes in close contact with another nation or race by way of victory, commerce or migration, naturally there takes place reciprocation of feelings and ideas; they influence each other. But it is very difficult to pass any judgment or correctly assess the influences and borrowings. Slater in his ‘The Dravidian Element in Indian Culture’ and C. F. Oldham in his ‘The Sun and the Serpent’ have sung the glory of the Dravidian Culture with much fanfare and have made a futile attempt to prove the influence of that culture on the Vedic religion without adducing concrete illustrations as proofs thereof. Their statements are mostly based on imagination lacking cogency of reason. Such statements must be built up on the bedrock of facts. Rightly does Keith remark on the fantastic contentions of Slater to prove the superiority of the Dravidian culture, ‘Unfortunately he (Slater) adduces no evidence for these assertions beyond the unscientific opinions of Mr. C. F. Oldham, and a couple of even less plausible conjectures, and it is sufficient to observe that there is nothing whatever to induce us to believe in the superiority of the culture of the Dravídians or the Muṇḍā-speaking tribes, and that on the contrary the evidence points rather in the opposite direction.’ Scholars like Elliot Smith, etc., do not look eye to eye with Slater and Oldham as they deny originality to the Dravidian Culture which, in their opinion, migrated from Mesopotamia and Egypt in the third millennium B.C. The views of Smith and his camp are also mainly speculative and should be taken with a grain of salt. It is next to impossibility to make a categorical assertion regarding any event of hoary antiquity from which we are separated by a long

---

passage of time covering many centuries or millenniums. Tentative statements may be made but no categorical or dogmatic assertions. The wisest course of action in such matters that baffle our ingenuity or elude verification by facts has been chalked out by Keith. He cautions the scholars in the following vein:—"Assuming, however, the validity of the doctrine (that the Dravidian culture influenced the Vedic culture), there remains the question whether the invaders were essentially responsible for the Vedic religion and philosophy, imposing a superior culture on inferior races, or whether the process as regards culture was reversed; instances of analogical cases can be easily adduced. Here again, however, we must remember that we have no satisfactory evidence of the relative numbers of the invaders and the earlier settlers; we are left in this matter wholly to conjecture. .... On the other hand, we must admit when we come to definite attempts to prove Dravidian influence on Vedic religion or philosophy we are in the region of conjecture. The absence of any really early Dravidian evidence as to culture deprives us of any assured knowledge of pre-Indo-European conditions such as would enable us effectively to gauge Dravidian influences on Vedic religion or philosophy. This leads to the necessity of relying on conjectures, of which many may be easily shown to have no sound foundation, or at most to be mere possibilities. We may, of course, accept such possibilities if we like, but in doing so we cease to be judicial and arrive merely at subjective judgments which have no lasting value."2 In this light of conjecture and subjective judgment we shall make some tentative observations in the following lines regarding the impact of certain non-Aryan practices and primitive popular faith on Vedic or Aryan religion.

In our discussion on the beginnings of popular religious cults we have shown with profuse quotations how god Rudra was looked upon as a presiding deity and protector not only by the Aryans but also by the non-Aryan tribes. Different gaṇas or

2. The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanisads, Appendix G, Pages 629, 630.
groups of Rudras have been conceived inhabiting different regions. Rudra is the protector not only of merchants, soldiers, peasants, commanders-in-chief, higher castes but he is also the patron deity of such non-Aryan tribes as Niṣādas, Pulindas, gypsies going about with dogs called Śvanin etc., and of criminals like thieves, pickpockets, swindlers, gangsters, cutthroats, gamblers, daredevil robbers, marauders and the like miscreants who are menace to the society. From this description of Rudra one may infer that in all probability there existed the worship of Rudra in his terrific and malevolent aspect in some form or other among the aboriginal non-Aryan tribes who submitted to the hegemony of the Aryans. The different groups of Rudra and the description of Rudra as the protector and not the destroyer of diehard criminals, outcasts, outlaws and non-Aryan tribes justify such a hypothesis. Even to-day we find the robbers and gangsters who are Hindu by religion worship either the terrific aspect of Śiva called Kāla-bhairava or his consort goddess Kālī whom they look upon as and sincerely believe to be their protector or protectress.

Some scholars have traced the influence of the non-Aryan phallic worship in certain rituals of the Vedic sacrifice. The celebrated horse-sacrifice, the Mahāvrata etc., are illustrations in point. In the description of the horse-sacrifice we have seen that the queens have to play an important role in the rites concerned. The chief queen anoints the horse aided by other queens. When the horse is strangled to death and laid on the ground on a blanket the chief queen Mahiṣī also lies down by the side of the horse and the priest covers both the queen and the horse with a garment so that no eyes may pry on the rites performed by the queen at this stage. The queen catches hold of the genital organ of the horse and unites with it while the priest utters the verse, ‘O virile male stead, ejaculate your semen’3. While the queen performs this rite

3. 13-5-2-2—‘Aśvasya śīṣṇaṁ mahiṣī upastheṇa nidhate vṛṣṇa ‘vājī reto daḍhātu’, iti.’
Vedic Culture and Civilization

Different priests indulge in ribald dialogue in bantering tone with different female characters; the Adhvaryu converses with the maiden who accompanies the chief queen, the Brahman priest converses with the chief queen, the Udgātri priest with the Vāvātā, the Hotṛ with the Pariyāktā wife of the king and the Kṣatṛ with the fourth wife of the king called Pālāgalī. The details are given in the S. B. 13-5-2 and T. B. 3-9. The ribald dialogue is cryptic, bantering in vein and some non-Sanskrit rustic words have crept in. This rite performed by the chief queen rudely shocks our taste and runs counter to decorum and decency, and the light-hearted ribald slang dialogue referred to above is not in keeping with the sublime atmosphere of the sacrifice. Hence we cannot blame anyone if he finds in this practice a vestige of the phallic worship of the non-Aryans who were children of the soil.

In the sacrifice called Mahāvrata also a similar rite takes place. In the sessional sacrifice Gavāmayana Mahāvrata takes place on the penultimate, i.e., the 360th day. It is an old festival of the winter solstice originally, when the sun has to be strengthened. The sun is honoured with offerings. Drums are beaten on every side of the sacrificial altar. The Rgvedic priest Hotṛ sits on a swing and is swung to and fro, to represent the orbit of the sun in the celestial region. Maidens carrying pitchers full of water dance round the fire while the sound of drums keeps time with their tripping movement. As a part of the ceremony a conversation takes place in abusive indecent language bespeaking fertilisation between a student and a hetaira. This abusive dialogue is followed by actual sexual intercourse between the student and the courtesan. As in the case of the particular rite of the horse-sacrifice here also an influence of the non-Aryan religion may be traced.

The J. B. (2-113) gives the details of a sacrifice called Gosava in which the performer complements the ox for fertilising all of its female relations and tries to imitate the breeding bull's mode of sex life including incest with mother, sister and other female relatives. King Janaka of Videha did not perform this rite as he could
not approve of these illicit and highly objectionable incestuous acts whereas the Śibi King performed the rite and observed that such a ritual should be performed in one's old age when those illicit intercourses might be excusable. This rite outrages all sense of decency and fundamental principles of civilised society. It seems the objectionable rites were influenced by some popular religion of the aboriginal people or some primitive faith.
BOOK III
CHAPTER VI.

Sacraments:

By sacraments or saṃskāras are meant the purificatory domestic rites that cover the whole period of a man’s life from birth to death comprising conception, birth, tonsure, investiture with the holy thread, studentship, marriage, funeral ceremony etc., termed Garbhādhāna, Jājakarma, Cādākarana, Upanayana, Brahmacarya, vivāha, śmaśāna-kr̥tya or Mr̥tadeha-saṃskāra respectively. The details of these ceremonies are found in the Gṛhyasūtras which deal with domestic (gṛhya) rites just as Śrautasūtras deal with sacrificial rites in aphoristic form. The details of these domestic rites i.e., rites governing the life of a householder are not to be found in the Brs. The Brs. casually make certain observations regarding some of these rites such as Upanayana, studentship, funeral ceremony etc., It is only in the G. B. that we come across details of certain domestic rites, e.g., the details, the rules and regulations, mandates and taboos of student life are met with in this Br. Judged by its contents and language it is admitted on all hands that the G. B. is not contemporaneous with the other Brs., but is a work of a later age. Some scholars have even called it post-Vedic. It is contemporaneous with the Gṛhyasūtras. Details are found in the S. B. of two important sacraments, viz., studentship and funeral ceremony. In the following lines we shall attempt to summarise the observations of the Brs. on these sacraments. As the Gṛhyasūtras fall outside the range of our work we shall not enumerate the details of these sacraments which are not met with in the Brs. concerned.
(1) **Natal rites or Birth ceremonies:**

Before the delivery of the child the room is anointed against inroads of Rakṣasas or hobgoblins. A Brahmin loosens all the knots in the house; water and Tūryanti plant are placed before the mother. Following the birth of the child some ceremonies are immediately performed for the long life and intellectual uplift of the new-born child. The father breathes thrice upon the child and offers it to partake of a mixture of butter, honey, milk etc. The child is fed with a small gold rod. According to the S. B. five Brāhmins should breathe upon the baby before the umbilical cord is severed. "In the case of a new-born child whose navel string has not been severed let him (the father) say to five brahmins ‘Breathe over him in this way’."\(^1\) The father makes the five Brahmans stand around the child in respective quarters and breathe upon the baby one after another. ‘In case Brahmans are not available the father himself should breathe over the baby’\(^2\). Hence according to the S. B. the father should perform this act only if the Brahmans are not available as their substitute. A fire is lit and the child is smoked. A prayer is recited in the ear of the baby asking the gods Saviṭr or Mitra and Varuṇa to grant it intelligence. A water jug is placed on the head of the mother and she is commended to the protection of its water.

The Nāmakaraṇa or naming ceremony takes place either on the tenth or the twelfth day or at the termination of a year from the date of birth. The father names the baby in consultation with his domestic priest or Brāhmins in general.

(2) **Cudākarana:**

The ceremony of tonsure known as Cudākarana takes place in the third, fifth and seventh year for a Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and a Vaiśya child respectively. The hair grown on the head of

---

1. 11-8-3-6—'Putraṁ jātamakṛttanābhim pañcabrahmanān brahyādityenamanupraśīteti.'

2. 11-8-3-6—'Yadi u tānna vinedapi svayamevānuparikrāmamama-
nupraṇyāt.'
child since delivery is deemed impure and is shaven in a particular fashion according to family tradition; a tuft of hair is left out at the centre of the head called cūḍā. A verse of the R. V. reads thus—"Where the arrows fall like the heads of children shorn of hair". From this verse it is inferred that the ceremony of tonsure existed in the early Vedic age also which gained celebrity and richness of details in the later Vedic age. In the Brs. we do not find any details of this ceremony except the bare reference to children shorn of their hair. After wetting the child’s hair bunches of Darbha grass are placed on his head. A razor is made of the wood of a holy fig tree and with that razor the father touches the hair first on the right side, then the back and lastly the left side. Following this the barber does the actual shaving in the same manner. The shaven hair is dumped in cowdung along with the Darbha bunch. When the barber proceeds to shave the child the priest utters a Vedic verse appealing to the razor not to injure the child; ‘Svadhite, mainaṁ hiṃṣīḥ’ ‘O razor’ do not hurt the child.

(3) Upanayana and studentship:

Investiture with the holy thread and initiation into Sāvitri hymn takes place in the eighth year from the time of conception in the case of a Brahmin boy, in the eleventh year for a Kṣatriya boy and twelfth year for a boy of the Vaiśya community. The maximum age limit for this important sacrament is fixed up as the sixteenth, twenty-second and twenty-fourth years for boys of Brahmin, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya family respectively. Beyond this limit a boy forfeits his right to investiture and initiation and as a result the sacred lore remains a sealed book to him and he has no access to sacrifice. Different garments, girdles and staves are prescribed for different castes. A garment made of the hide of black antelope (ajina) is meant for a Brāhmaṇa, that of a Rūrū.

3. 6-35-17—‘Yatra-vāṇāḥ sampatanti kumārā viśkhā iva.’
deer is prescribed for a Kṣatriya and for a Vaiśya is prescribed the hide of a sheep or a goat. The girdle and holy thread of a Brahmin boy should be made of Muñjā and cotton, respectively, those of a Kṣatriya should be made of Murbara (girdle) and hemp (holy thread) and in case of a Vaiśya they should be made of hemp (girdle) and wool of the sheep (holy thread). The staff of the Brahmin is made of Palāśa or Vilva wood, that of a Kṣatriya of bāniyan or Acacia Catechu (khadira) wood and in case of a Vaiśya of Pilu or holy fig tree. The preceptor makes the pupil stand on a slab of stone to secure firmness; he puts on his new garment made of silk or wool or thread as stated above, his girdle (mekhalā), the sacred thread and lastly the animal hide. Other rites follow the details of which are not given in the Brs. but are met with in the Grhyasūtras and Śmrī texts. The period of student life is termed Brahmacarya and is an inseparable sequel to the initiation ceremony. The preceptor in whose residential institution the initiated student resides and undergoes academic training may perform his initiation ceremony (upanayana). This was the general practice in ancient India and this is why Manu defines Ācārya as a preceptor who initiates the student with the holy thread and Śāvitri, and imparts learning to him in his institution in the Vedic lore along with the accessories (Vedāṅgas) and Upaniṣads.4 Instances of departure from this convention are also met with in the Upaniṣads where the Ācārya of the school is different from the Ācārya of the initiation ceremony. The initiation was regarded as the second birth or spiritual birth of the student where Ācārya is the father and Śāvitri is the mother. The physical birth derived from parents is subject to death but this spiritual birth grants the student immortality and spiritual vigour. The ceremony of receiving the student, the spiritual tie between the teacher and the taught, the vows and duties of student life, the mandates and taboos (Vidhis and niṣedhas), the courses of study, both the man-making and brain-making side of ancient Indian

4. 2-140—'Upaniya tu yaḥ śīṣyaṃ vedamadhyāpayed dvijaḥ.
Sakalpaṃ sarahasyaṃ ca tamācāryaṃ pracaṅkṣate.'
education and the like items of student life have been thoroughly discussed under the caption ‘Education’ in Book I.

Be it mentioned here that in the Vedic age the women of higher three castes were also invested with the holy thread and were allowed to utter the Sāvitrī verse, to study the Vedas and to take part in the sacrifice with their husbands. This practice was in vogue since the days of ṚK Saṃhitā down to the age of the Sūtra literature. Some authors of Smṛti texts bear testimony to this ancient custom. Yama, the author of Yama-smṛti says—‘The maidens were entitled to the investiture with the holy thread or Upanayana sāṃskāra in the days of yore; they studied the Vedas and uttered the Sāvitrī mantra.’ Another author of Smṛtiśāstra, Hārita also records this self-same sloka with the only variation of ‘Purā Kalpe tu nārīṇām’ in place of ‘Kumārīṇām’. He makes the following observation also:—There are two kinds of women, viz., Brahmavādinīs and Sadyovadhūs. Amongst these the Brahmavādinīs were entitled to upanayana; they tended the holy fire, studied the Vedas and begged alms in their own homes. The other type, viz., Sadyovadhūs were given away in marriage after a brisk ceremony of investiture with the holy thread. From this memorable observation it is crystal clear that females of the Dvija or three higher castes were invested with the holy thread like the boys in Vedic India. This was a compulsory feature. Though this custom has become obsolete in the Indo-Aryan branch of the Aryan family it still persists in the Indo-Iranian branch of the Aryan family. The girls of the Pārsī or Zoroastrian community are invested with the sacred thread till to this day, i.e., they undergo the Upanayana ceremony

5. ‘Purākalpe kumārīṇām maunijśvandhanamisyate.’
   Adhyāpanaśca vedānām sāvitrīvacanaṃ tathā.’

6. ‘Dvividhā vai striyo brahmavādīnyah sadyovadīh vāca. Tatra
   brahmavādinām upanayanam āgnīndhānam vedādhyayanaṃ svaghe
   bhikṣācaryā ca; sadyovadhūnām tūpashite vivāhe kathācit upana-
   yanaṃ kṛtvā vivāhaḥ kāryaḥ.’
which is termed ‘Navazot’ ceremony in the Zoroastrian religion. Just as Upanayana is regarded as the second birth, i.e., the spiritual birth (Dvija) of the initiate likewise the term ‘Navazot’ of the Avesta also means new birth. Of the two classes of females enumerated by Hirita the Brahmavadinis did not marry; they observed a vow of perpetual virginity like the naishtika male brahmacarins. whereas the Sadyovadhus may be compared with the Upakurvaṇa Brahmacarins who on completion of their academic career came back to their paternal home and got married. This ancient custom of Upanayana of women persisted in the age of Sutra literature. Gobhila, the renowned author of Gobhila-gṛhyasūtra observes—"The bridegroom should catch hold of the hand of the bride who has been invested with the holy thread, and utter the vedic verse ‘somo dadat Gandharvāya etc.’" Even in the epic age stray instances of this custom are met with. In the Vanaparvan of the Mahābhārata it is recorded that a Brahmin invested Kunti, the mother of the Pāndavas with the sacred thread and taught her the Sāvitrī hymn recorded in the Atharva-Śiras of the Veda. It seems the custom persisted in some parts of India even in the 7th century A. D., because Bāṇabhatta the noted author of Kādamvari refers to a maiden ‘whose person has been sanctified with the sacred thread’. (‘brahmasūtrēṇa pavitrikṛtyām’). Smṛticandrikā, Nirṇayasindhu of Kamalākara and the like authoritative works on Hindu law bear testimony to this ancient practice which became almost obsolete when Manu was compiling his code. Manu seems to be thoroughly conversant

7. ‘Prāvṛttaṃ yajñopavitinimabhyudānayan japet somo dadad Gandharvāyati.’

8. 305-20—'Tatastāmanavadyyāṅgūṃ grāhāyāmīsa sa dvijaḥ. Mantrasrāmanāḥ tadā rāśīnatharvaśirasā śrutam.'
with this age-old custom. Observes P. V. Kane—'Manu seems to be aware of this usage as prevalent in ancient time if not his own—in the day of the Manu-smṛti, Upanayana for women had gone out of practice, though there were faint glimmerings of its performance for women in former days.'

(4) Marriage;

Marriage was looked upon as a sacrament and not a mere companionate union or contract. The problem of marriage in all its aspects—the question of child marriage, Svayamvara system, prohibition of marriage between agnates and cognates, intercaste marriages of the Anuloma and Pratiloma types, indissolubility of the marriage tie, the relation between the husband and wife, the noble end of wedlock, the duties of the wife, various practices prevalent in the later Vedic age relating to married life, the question of polygamy and polyandry, the position of the wife and allied topics have been discussed under the caption 'Women and Marriage' in Book I. The paraphernalia of rituals connected with the nuptial ceremony mentioned in the various Gṛhyasūtras are not met with in the Brs.

Disposal of the dead:

In the Vedic age the dead bodies were either cremated or buried or thrown into water; sometimes the bodies were also left exposed in open place; this last custom is still prevalent amongst the followers of the Zoroastrian religion. The different processes of the disposal of the dead are mentioned in the following verse of the Atharvaveda:

'Ye nikhātā ye paretā ye dagdāh ye cajjhitāh,
Sarvāstān Agna āvaha pitṛn haviṣe attave.' (18-2-34)

'Bring thou O Agni, the fathers (manes) one and all, the buried, the cast away, those that are burnt and those exposed, to eat the sacrificial oblation. H. G. Wells in his 'Outline History of the World' observes—'The Aryans burnt the dead but their predecessors the Iberians buried their dead'. The verse of the A. V. quoted above gives the lie to Well's assertion. The said verse clearly proves that the dead bodies were either burnt or buried or thrown away in the Vedic age. Half-burnt bodies were sometimes thrown into water. We meet with passages like 'cremation ground abounding in burning sticks', 'firewood where-with bodies are cremated', etc. The A. B. records the procedure to be followed in cremating the body of a sacrificer or yajamâna who has already placed his household fire known as Gârhapatya Agni. In case the dead body of such a sacrificer could not be traced the following procedure was adopted for cremation. The imaginary body of the deceased was fashioned with 360 (three hundred and sixty) stalks of Pâlâśa tree of which 150 went to the fashioning of the main body i.e., the trunk, seventy to each leg and twenty-five to each thigh; the remaining twenty stalks were placed over the head. Then this substitute body was cremated after it was touched with the three sacrificial fires.

Mention is made in the S. B. of sepulchral mounds or earthen tombs raised in memory of the deceased. The whole of the S. B. 13-8-1 deals with this topic. The sepulchral mound should be erected either in the season of autumn or summer or in the month of Mâgha. The shape of the tomb should be four-cornered. 'The people who are of godly character make their funeral places four-cornered whereas those who

---

1. A.S. 4-17-4—'Citaśahamuktham.'
2. A.S. 6-32-1
3. A.B. 6-32-1—'Yadi śārirâññ na vidyera pariṣṭharaṇaḥ saśṭikāśpaṇi ca satānayāḥṛtya teṣām puruṣārtyāpamāna kṛtvā.........................
..............................................................dvipaṇcāṣe ca viṁśe caiva dvipaṇ-
caviṁśe śeṣaṁ tu śirasupari daṇḍhyāt.'
are of the Asura nature, the Easterners, and others make them round. As regards the choice of ground it is enjoined that ‘The mound should be raised on a patch of ground inclining towards the north, for north is the region of men; he thus gives the deceased a share in the world of men; and in that respect, indeed, the Fathers share in the world of men that they have offspring, and the deceased person’s offspring will, indeed, be more prosperous.’ If the ground be made inclining towards the south, the offspring of the dead person will soon follow in his wake, hence the ground inclining towards the south should not be chosen. The measurement of the mound or tomb differed in the case of different castes and sexes. ‘For a Kṣatriya he may make it as high as a man with upstretched arms, for a Brāhmaṇa reaching up to the mouth, for a woman up to the hips, for a Vaiṣya up to the thighs, for a Śūdra up to the knee; for suchlike is their vigour.

From a passage of the S. B. viz., 13-8-3-2, it is clear that on burning the dead body the calcined bones of the charred body were carefully collected and preserved in an earthen vessel. This custom of the Vedic Aryans may be compared with the practice of the ancient Greeks who preserved the bones and ashes of the dead in urns made of stone or earth.

4. S. B. 13-8-1-5—‘Yā daivyāḥ prajāśeṣatvahsraktīni tāḥ śmaśānāni kurvate................parimāṇḍalāni.’

5. S. B. 13-8-1-6—‘Uḍḍyacarpaṇa karotyudhī vai manuṣyaṇaṁ dīk tadenam manuṣyaṇaloka.............yadeṣāṁ prajā bhavati prajā hāṣya śreyasya bhavati.’

6. S. B. 13-8-3-11—‘Yāvān udvāhuh puruṣastavātksaṭyasya kurvati, makhadaghnaṁ Brāhmaṇasya, upasthadaghnaṁ striyā, ārudaṅghnaṁ vaisyaṣṭiṣṭavadaghnaṁ śudrasya evam vīryā hyet iti.’

7. S. B. 13-8-3-2—‘Athaitannivatī. Iyāṁ vai, pṛthivī pratiṣṭhāsyāmevalnametat pratiṣṭhāyāṁ pratiṣṭhāpayati.’
The practice of raising sepulchral mounds or tombs over the burning ground as memorial of the dead also obtained in ancient Persia among the Zoroastrians. The custom of throwing the dead bodies over towers of silence to be eaten up by the birds of prey observed by the present-day followers of Zoroastrians developed much later. The tombs of Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes and the like Zoroastrian monarchs of ancient Persia of name and fame go to prove that the custom of throwing the dead on towers of silence was not in vogue when those emperors ruled in Persia. The custom of preserving calcined bones in stone or earthen urns also existed in ancient Persia. Many such urns have been discovered and they were called Astodan by the Zoroastrians. The term ‘Asto’ is akin to Sanskrit Asthi.

In the Samhitā literature certain practices are met with that preceded the burning of the dead. A few moments before his expiry the man was placed on the ground which is sanctified with cowdung and strewn with grass, near his sacred domestic fire. After expiry the body was washed and anointed; the hair and beard of the dead were closely cropped and the nails pared. Following this the body was garlanded and covered with a new garment. The female members of the family burst into wild lamentation surrounding the deceased person tearing their hair and smiting their breasts and thighs. The body was carried to the crematorium either by men or on a car. The female mourners accompanied the funeral procession with their hair dishevelled. During the journey to the burning ground verses were recited speeding the departed soul on his lonely journey to meet the Fathers and Yama. Incantations were uttered to ban evil spirits so that they may not harm the spirit of the departed or stand a bar to his union with the Fathers (Pitṛs). After the burning ceremony the mourners left the crematorium, washed themselves and changed their garments. They offered libations of water for the welfare of the dead; they passed under a yoke made of branches of a sacred tree and entering the house touch
things possessing sanctifying power such as water, fire, cowdung, mustard grains and barley grains.

**Five Great Daily Sacrifices:**

The five great sacrifices known as Pañca-mahayajñas enunciated in the Gṛhyasūtras and the Śruti-texts in details trace their origin in the S. B. The germ is only found in this Br. shorn of the details and rituals that gathered round the germ in the age of the Gṛhyasūtras. The five great sacrifices are enjoined to be performed daily; they consist of the sacrifice to beings, the sacrifice to the men, the sacrifice to the Fathers, the sacrifice to the gods and the sacrifice to the Veda termed Bhūtayajña, Manuṣyayajña, Pitrāyajña, Devayajña and Brahmayajña respectively. The whole of the S. B. 11-5-6-1 is taken up with the discussion of these five great daily sacrifices. The rites connected with these sacrifices were short and simple in the age of the Brs. which grew complicated and gathered details in the later age in the Sūtra literature connected with the domestic rituals. The śrauta rituals differ greatly from the domestic ones. The simple form of the śrauta variety of these five sacrifices is evident from the enumeration in the S. B. as follows:—“There are five great sacrifices; they indeed are great sessional sacrifices viz,—the sacrifice to beings, the sacrifice to men, the sacrifice to the Fathers, the sacrifice to the gods, and the sacrifice to the Brahman (Veda). Day by day one should offer an oblation to beings: thus he performs the sacrifice to beings. Daily should he offer from a vessel full of water; thus he performs the sacrifice to human beings. Day by day one should offer with the words Svadhā from a vessel filled with water; thereby he performs the sacrifice to Fathers. Day by day one should perform with the word Svāhā with a log of wood (faggot), thereby he performs the sacrifice to the gods.”

The Br. texts mainly deal with the Brahmayajña or the sacrifice to the Brahman or Veda which is generally termed Svādhyāya.

---

1. S.B. 11-5-6-1—"Pañcaiva mahāyajñāḥ..........tathāitam devayajñāṃ samāpratī."
The Brs. do not dilate on the other types of five great sacrifices. The S. B. compares every item of the Vedic study to the different parts and holy vessels of the sacrifice. *The sacrifice to the Brahman is one’s own (daily) study of the Veda*. The juhu-spoon of this sacrifice is speech, upabhṛt is the mind, Dhruvā the eye, its Sruva mental vigour, truth stands for the purificatory bath and heaven is its goal; an imperishable immortal world does the sacrificer (the student) gain. The Ṛk-verse are the milk-offerings, the Yajuṣ texts the butter oblations, the sāman chants the Soma libations and other accessory studies are offerings of honey to the gods. This topic of Svādhyāya or Vedic study has been discussed under ‘Education’ in Book I. The whole of S. B. 11-5-7-1 is a glowing eulogy of the study of the Veda and the results thereof.

The term Manuṣya-yajñā came to mean the rites of hospitality in the later age and many passages are met with in the Brs. exhorting the people to render hospitality to the guests praising the merits thereof. In the Soma sacrifice king Soma is hailed as a guest and the rites of hospitality are shown to him by the priests. These rites constitute what is known as ‘Ātithyeṣṭi’. This matter has been discussed under ‘Forms of Sacrifice’. The rites of hospitality mentioned in the Brs. in connection with this ceremony amply prove how hospitality was practised and praised as a noble virtue by the Vedic Aryans. The S. B. (3-4-1-2) enjoins that a great ox or a big goat should be slaughtered and the meat should be offered to a king or a Brahmin when he comes as a guest. The A. B. lays down that a guest should be fed to his fill, i.e., to say, his hunger should be fully appeased. For this reason a guest is called ‘Āpīṇa’, inflated, because his stomach swells up when he eats his fill. Commenting on this text Sāyaṇa observes: “The guest becomes bloated as it were as his stomach is completely filled up. Hence it is that the term ‘Āpyāyasva’ should be used to welcome and entertain

2. S.B. 11-5-6-1—*‘Svādhyāyo vai brahmayajñāḥ.............aśayyaṁ ya evaṁ vidvānaharaḥ svādhyāyaṁadhīte’.*

3. 1-3-6—*‘Yadā vātithiṁ pariveṣayitvā pīṇa iva vai sa tarhi bhavati.’*
a guest as the said term signifies swelling." A guest should never be denied hospitality but should always be entertained no matter at what hour he comes to the house. A guest should never be repulsed in the evening in particular under any circumstance. Applying this principle of courtesy and hospitality to the Agnihotra sacrifice the A. B. (5-25-5) states that the Sungod comes as a guest and stays in the house of the sacrificer in the evening; hence if a sacrificer does not offer the evening oblations of the Agnihotra ceremony he thereby turns out the divine guest from his house in the evening which he should never do. Thus the Manuṣyayajña came to mean offering of hospitality to guests, Brahmins, beggars etc. Hospitality is regarded as one of the great virtues of a householder. Hence on the day of leaving his residential institution after graduation along with other words of profound wisdom and advice the preceptor exhorted the student to treat his father, his mother and the guests as veritable gods. This injunction was a part of the convocation address of the universities of ancient India as recorded in the T. U.

In the aphoristic literature on domestic rites these five great sacrifices underwent reorientation and took new shape as stated in the following lines. The Devayajña consists in offering oblations to the gods in the fire morning and evening, when the meal is ready. The offerings to beings called Bhūtayajña or Bhūtabali consists of various offerings placed on the ground for all sorts of beings. According to the Gobhilaghyasūtra (1-3-16), the offerings to beings are to be made in the following manner; the first offering is meant for mother earth, the second for the god of wind, the third for the All-gods (Viśve-devāḥ), the fourth for Prajāpati; the fifth is offered in the water container or big pitcher of water called ‘Manikā’ for the god of waters, the sixth at the middle posts for herbs, plants and trees, the seventh is offered at the entrance door of the house for the ether and the eighth in the bed for the

4. ‘Atithṛāpni śvadāretaprayā yṛddhiṃ prāpta bhavatyeva tasmād yṛddhivācakā-pyāyasyaveti sābhaḥ atithiśakṣakah.’
5. A. B. 5-25-5—’Na sāyamatithirparudhāḥ.’
god of love (kāma) whereas the last oblation is offered in the dustbin for the hobgoblins and evil spirits. Some more names of evil spirits follow including various serpents. The third great sacrifice viz, the sacrifice to the Fathers consists in offering the rest of the oblation sprinkled with water to the Fathers. The fourth, the Brahmayajña, as in the later Vedic age, means recitation of some part of the Veda. The fifth called Manuṣyayajña is entertainment of guests, Brahmins and beggars.

Four Orders Of Life:

Human life has been divided into four orders or four Āśramas in Hindu scripture. These four orders go by the technical name of Caturāśrama. Student life, domestic life, retirement from domestic life into the forest and the life of a recluse go to constitute the four orders known as Brahmacarya, Gārhasthya, Vānaprastha and Sannyāsa or Bhikṣu respectively. The period of student life as we have seen is called Brahmacarya. After the Upanayana ceremony a boy had to live twelve years in the residential institution of the preceptor where he received both brain-making and man-making education. This period is called Brahmacarya due to the moral codes, the discipline of thought, speech and conduct, absolute continence and allied training the student has to undergo during this period. The problem of student life has been thoroughly discussed under 'Education' in Book I and we need not repeat the discussion here. On completion of his academic career the student takes the last purificatory bath (snāna) in the residential institution and is called a Snātaka which is equivalent to graduation. Then he returns to his paternal home and gets married or enters into the second order of life termed Gārhasthya. His coming back to the paternal home is technically known as Samāvartana. On the day of his leaving the institution the preceptor addresses him words of wisdom and advice for his practical guidance in life so that he may be an ideal member of the society. The address of the preceptor on the day of parting is like a convocation address. This parting message which can never be overestimated and should
be the watchword of student life is recorded in the Taittiriya Upaniṣad. Hence it is that convocation address is translated as Sanāvartana-utsaba. There are some pupils who do not come back to their paternal home. Charged with a spirit of renunciation and service they remain in the preceptor’s house for good. They are called Naiṣṭhika Brahmacārins whereas the former class is termed Upakurvāṇa as they are to pay a fee (dakṣīṇā) to the teacher on the day of parting. The fee helps the teacher (Upakaroti), hence the said designation. The Upakurvāṇa snātakas bring along with them a burning stick picked up from the sacrificial holy firepit of the preceptor. With that fire culled from the preceptor’s fire they generate their Gārhapatya fire which is preserved in the fire sanctuary. This placing of the Gārhapatya fire is known as Agnyādhnāna ceremony and a man who performs this rite is called an Āhitāgni i.e., one who has placed or established his domestic fire. Throughout his life whenever he will perform any sacrifice the fire will have to be culled from this fire and the offerings of his own marriage ceremony will be made in this fire. When he will expire his body will be burnt in the crematorium culling fire from his domestic fire.

After his demise his Gārhapatya fire may be extinguished. From marriage starts the second order of life, the life of a householder. Crossing the age of fifty a man is to retire to the forest with his wife leaving his house and worldly belongings to his children. This forest life is called Vānaprastha i.e., retirement (prasthāna) into the forest (vana). He is enjoined to lead a rigorous life in the forest. From Vānaprastha he enters into the fourth and last order of life called Bhikṣu or Paribṛjaka or Sannyāsa, a life of complete renunciation, a ‘God-intoxicated life’ where he is to leave behind his wife also and lead a life of astute austerity, complete resignation to God, a life of reflection, renunciation and perfect self-control. The Naiṣṭhika students who do not come back to their paternal home but remain permanent celibates are allowed to adopt the fourth order of life, sannyāsa, the life of an anchorite from the stage of Brahmacarya. Hence, for them two orders alone exist—Brahmacarya and sannyāsa.
In the Samhitā and the Brs. we do not find explicit mention of the third and fourth orders, viz., forest life and the life of a recluse. The remaining two orders, viz., studentship or brahmacārya and the domestic life, gārhastraḥya have been mentioned in clear terms. The details of the first order or the period of student life are met with in two of the Brs. in particular, the S. B. and the G. B. Our findings regarding these details have been recorded under ‘Education’ in Book I. Similarly the references of the Brs. to marriage and conjugal life relating to the second order will be met with under the caption ‘Woman and Marriage’ in Book I.

Though the third and the fourth orders of life are not explicitly stated in the Brs. there are stray passages from which one may infer the stage of inception of those two āśramas. In the A. B. in the famous story of Sūnaḥśeṣa sage Nārada thus stresses the importance of having a son while indulging in a glowing eulogy of male progeny—‘What good will you derive from filth (mala), hide of black antelope (ajina), beards (śmaśrū) and penance (tapaḥ)? O Brahmāns! you should long for the birth of a son; the son is the highest heaven that is beyond censure’. The four terms used in this couplet, viz., mala (filth), ajina (skin of the black antelope), śmaśrū (beards) and tapaḥ (penance) have been taken by the commentator Sāyaṇācārya and all Vedic scholars of the east and the west to allude to the four orders of life—domestic life, studentship, forest life and the hermit life respectively. The order is here a bit changed—domestic life being placed first and student life second in order of succession. The life of a householder is termed ‘mala’ because it is not clean in many respects compared to the ideals of the other three orders of life. There are many imperfections and impurities in this order. A student or brahmacārin has to put on the garment made of the skin of black antelope which is called ‘ajina’; hence the term ‘ajina’ clearly refers to that order of life. In the third order of life a man is not allowed to shave or crop his beards; hence the term śmaśrū (beards) signify the third order, and tapaḥ or

---

1. 7-33-1—’Kīṁ nu khalu malaṁ kīṁjinaṁ kīṁ śmaśrūṁ kīṁ tapaḥ.’

Putraṁ Brahmaṁ ścchādhvam sa vai lokāḥ avadāvadāḥ.'
pence evidently bespeaks the fourth order, the āśrama of sannyāsa. The first and the second āśramas were established facts in the age of the Brs. and the third and fourth, that of Vānaprastha and Bhikṣu were in the making which became accepted and established in the Upaniṣadic era when the path of renunciation, ‘sannyāsa’ was highly commended and proved to be superior to the other three stages of life. Upaniṣads proclaim with all the emphasis at their command the importance of knowledge and renunciation which are indispensable to tide over the toils and turmoils of worldly life, to elude the clutches of death and throes of rebirth, and to the realisation of the Supreme Self.
BOOK III
CHAPTER VII

Cosmogony:

In our discussion on 'The theory of sacrifice' the creation of the world out of the first sacrifice performed by the Puruṣa, the Primal Being has been thoroughly dealt with. The cosmogony of the Brs. has also been treated in connection with the mystic interpretation of the fire-altar under the same head. How the creation springs from the sacrifice, the self-sacrifice of Puruṣa or Prajāpati, how the creation goes back to the source of its being, the identity of the sacrifice, sacrificer, Agni, Prajāpati, and the ultimate union of the sacrificer and the deity in the world of heaven have been clearly explained.

So far as the other aspects of the doctrine of creation is concerned several passages are met with in the Brs. in general and the S.B. in particular. In the Brahmanical speculations on cosmogony the metaphysical aspect is often jumbled up with explanations of sacrifice or legends. Besides the Puruṣa-sūkta, the famous Nāsadiya sūkta of the R.V. (X-129) merits importance in connection with the Rgvedic cosmogony. According to this hymn creation proceeds from the undifferentiated non-descript Supreme Being. The metaphysical outlook is monistic. 'In the beginning there was neither the 'Non-Existing' (Asat) nor the 'Existing' (Sat). Something can never come out of nothing. Out of nothing, nothing comes. 'Ex nihilo nihil fit?' Hence the final cause of creation can never be 'asat' or non-existence. Again what is termed 'sat' or 'existing' in this world is visible and subject to change and decay. That type of 'sat' or 'existence' also cannot be
the source of creation. The Supreme Spirit is the source of creation. He can never be termed 'Non-Existence' as His existence is the fountain-head of all existence. Again His existence is a far cry from the phenomenal existence. The definition of worldly existence does not apply to him. The Supreme One existed all alone; there was no death then, nor immortality. As there was no death, its antithesis immortality cannot come into existence. There was no light, no distinction of day and night. This pre-creation state eludes all attempts at description and defies definition. Thus, the Supreme One is the Absolute which is neither the self nor the not-self but comprises both as the great synthesis. Both mind-stuff and matter, nature and spirit have proceeded from this Absolute One. Thus this hymn embodies the principle of monism, the highest philosophical truth.

As stated above, the cosmogony of the Brs. is a curious blending of legends, explanations of rituals and metaphysical thought. The Puruṣa of the R.V. has assumed the form of Prajāpati in the Brs. Most of the Brs. ascribe the source of creation to the austere penance (tapaḥ) of Prajāpati. He practised severe penance and the whole creation along with gods, Vedas, metres, sacrifice etc., was born of that penance. Partially following the trend of the Nāsadiya sūkta the S.B. describes the process of creation in the following manner.¹ In the beginning the universe was neither existent, nor non-existent; there existed only one entity viz, the Mind. That Mind practised penance longing for a body. The Mind created speech which, in its turn, created the Breath. The Eye was produced by the Breath and the Ear by the Eye. The Ear created action (karma) which generated the Fire which is essential and indispensable to the performance of all sacrificial rites. This Fire is identical with the Fire-altar and the sacrifice. In another chapter, the same Br. records the process of creation in a different manner.² There was nothing in the beginning: by Death was this (universe) covered and Death means Hunger. Desiring to have a soul he

---

¹ 10-5-3-1 to 10-5-3-12 (Twelve Brāhmaṇas).
² 10-6-5-1 (whole of the first Br.)
created this mind for himself. He propitiated and out of his propitiation (arcă) the waters were produced. ‘The cream (froth) that was on the surface of the waters condensed and that hard crust became this earth’.\(^3\) He made himself threefold—Agni, Āditya and Vāyu each of them being one-third of his self. He desired to have a second self and achieved union with speech through his mind. To make his body sacrificially pure he desired to sacrifice by means of another sacrifice. Out of this desire the horse was produced which, therefore, became a sacred (medhya) animal fit to be offered as a victim in the sacrifice. Thus the famous Āsvamedha or horse-sacrifice originated.

The evolution of the world from the cosmic waters which produced the golden egg described in the Smṛiti texts\(^4\) and Purāṇas is also recorded in the S.B.\(^5\), which seems to be the source of this cosmogonic legend. Verily, in the beginning the universe was water, nothing but an illimitable expanse of water. Out of this cosmic water a gold egg was produced which floated ‘on the face of the deep’ for a whole year. Within the term of a year the Primal Being Prajāpati was produced therefrom rendering asunder the shell of the gold egg. There being no resting place he was carried in the shell of the egg which floated for another year. At the end of that year Prajāpati ‘uttered’ ‘bhuḥ’ and this word assumed the form of this earth; he uttered ‘bhuvaḥ’ which became the air and the word ‘Svah’ uttered by him assumed the form of the sky.\(^6\) The three words uttered by him comprise five syllables which produced the five seasons. By his vital breath he created the gods. By breathing upwards he created the gods and by his downward breath the Asuras were created. Just as the cosmic water is regarded as the source of creation in this chapter, space or sky (ākāśa, dyouḥ) is also mentioned as the first product of creation that gave birth to other elements in another passage of the S.B.

\(^3\) 10-6-5-2—'Tad yaḍapāṁ śara ḍaśī tthat samahanyata sa pṛthivy abhavat.'
\(^4\) Vide Manusāṃhitā, Canto I.
\(^5\) 11-1-6 ; the whole of the sixth Brāhmaṇa.
\(^6\) 11-1-6-2—'Sa bhūriti vyāharat seyaṁ pṛthivyabhavat, bhuva iti taddidamantarikṣamabhavat svariti sāsau dyourabhavat.'
connected with the horse sacrifice. In the horse sacrifice a debate called ‘brahmodya’ takes place between the Hotṛ and the Adhvaryu and another between the Brahman priest and the Udgātr. This debate consists in questioning and witty repartee. The Hotṛ priest asks the Adhvaryu, ‘What was the first conception?’ The Adhvaryu replies, ‘The sky (space) was the first conception.’ The Upaniṣads also endorse the view that the first element that emanated from the Supreme Being Brahman—was the Ākāsa or Space. ‘From this Ātman the space was created; the space gave birth to Vāyu (wind), the wind generated the heat (Agni) which produced the water and the earth sprang from the water’, observes the T.U. 2-1-3. ‘It is Ākāsa (space) that makes possible the creation of names and forms’, i.e., the phenomenal world, observes the C.U. This observation of the Brs. and Upaniṣad that space is the first created element without which the creation of the universe is impossible is also supported by the findings of modern science which describes space as ‘the pre-condition of creation’.

Another version of the genesis of the universe occurs in the eleventh kāṇḍa of the S.B. The final cause of the universe is termed Brahman (neuter). Verily, in the beginning the Brahman existed; it created the gods and made them ascend the worlds. The terrestrial world was allotted to Agni, the welkin region to the Wind-god Vāyu and the sky to the Sūrya, the Sun-god. After the creation and allocation of the gods Brahman went up to the sphere beyond and again descended into the three worlds by means of Form (Rūpa) and Name (nāman). The universe cannot exist without these two; as far as the universe extends, so far also do extend Name and Form. These two are the great forces of the Brahman—two great manifestations of the Ultimate Reality which is invisible and supersensuous. Of these two ‘Form is greater than Name; for whatever is Name, is indeed Form.’ That is to say, anything that has a name must

---

7. 13-5-2-17—‘Dyourāśīt pūrvacittiriti.’
8. ‘Ākāśo vai nāma-rūpayornirvahitā.’
9. 11-2-3.
10. 11-2-3-5—‘Tayoranyatarajjyāyo rūpameva yaddhyapi nāma rūpameva tat.’
have a form; the form comes first, then the name. The form is the product of the Mind and the name is produced by Vāk (speech).

The metaphysical aspect of cosmogony is thus mixed up with legends and explanations of sacrificial rituals. Sometimes the metaphysical element is lost sight of in the meshes of legends spun round it and made much of. A fundamental principle of creation has been faintly hinted in the dissertation of names and forms in the text of the S.B. referred to above. Here we find the germ of the Upaniṣadic doctrine that the Final Reality, the Absolute Principle behind the world-show expresses itself through name and form. Name and form together go to the making of the appearance of the phenomenal world whereas the Absolute encased in names and forms constitutes the reality, the substance of the world-show. Names and forms are evanescent whereas the all-abiding ultimate substratum, the Supreme Being is everlasting.

Eschatology:

In the discussion of ‘The theory of sacrifice’ and ‘The spirit transcending the form’ of sacrifice certain aspects of the eschatology of the Brs. have been broadly hinted at. Man is born thrice; the first birth takes place when he is delivered from the mother’s womb; he is born for the second time when he is initiated for the purpose of sacrificial rites; after his physical death he is born in heaven in his astral form. These three births are stated in clear terms in the S.B. 11-2-1-1. Thus one’s death here is regarded as his birth in the other world, either in the heaven or hell according to the acts of piety or sin committed during his lifetime. Another passage of the same Br. observes—‘Those who perform that act (of piety) are reborn after death; in this rebirth they attain immortality.’ This passage clearly refers to the abode of the immortals as the place of the third birth of man, provided he performs pious deeds in general and the sacrifice in particular during his life on earth.

11. S.B. 10-4-3-10—'Ye vai tat karma kuryate mṛtvā punaḥ sambhavanti te sambhavanta evaṁ mṛtvatvamabhisambhavanti.'
In the heavenly world he attains union with the gods whom he propitiated and pleased during his earthly life. This union with the gods is his term of immortality or life divine. Almost all the Brs. mention three sorts of union with the gods achieved by the sacrificer, viz., Sālokya or attainment of the same region, Sārūpya i.e., attaining the same form and Sāyujya attaining union. The sacrifice ‘causes the sacrificer to attain Sāyujya, Sārūpya and Sālokya with the gods’, observes the A.B. All the Brs. mention these three sorts of union with the gods as the ultimate result of the sacrifice. The word ‘Sālokya’ comes from the term ‘loka’ or region. Every god is allotted a particular region in the celestial abode; e.g., the abode of Viṣṇu is termed Viṣṇuloka, that of Prajāpati, Prajāpatiloka, that of Varuṇa, Varuṇaloka etc. Attainment of this region is called Sālokya. The term Sārūpya comes from the word ‘rūpa’ meaning form. Every deity has a particular form and the departed soul of the pious man attains that form of the deity. The remaining term ‘Sāyujya’ means union, i.e., union with the spirit of the gods. The three terms are graded in sense according to the nature of the union. ‘Sālokya’ refers to the region of the immortals only and is thus of a lower grade than the other two terms. Sārūpya is union with the form whereas Sāyujya is subtler in sense signifying union with the spirit of the deity. The Brs. do not pursue this aspect of eschatology further. They simply mention the terms. In the post-Vedic age these three terms were taken over by the schools of Vaiṣṇava religion and philosophy and were widely used to denote the three types of union a devotee may achieve with Viṣṇu, the Supreme Godhead. The term “Punarmṛtyu” ‘redeath’ occurs several times in the Brs. and from the contexts it is evident that this second death applies to the heavenly life of man in the other world and does not apply to the life on earth. It is the antithesis of ‘Amṛtatva’ or immortality. The first death takes place in this world when a man

12. 2-8-6—‘Devatānāṃ yajamānaṃ sāyujyaṃ sarūpataṃ salokatāṃ garmayati.’
13. Vide S.B. 11-9-2-2 ; T.B. 3-10-9-11 ; S.B. 2-6-4-8, 11-4-4-2, etc.
expires. On expiry he is born in heaven and begins a new chapter of life that may be termed immortal life or divine life. This period of immortality is not a perennial one but will terminate one day. Its duration is commensurate with the acts of piety done on earth. The cessation of this immortal life is called second death which is equivalent to rebirth. Thus death here means birth hereafter and death hereafter in heaven means birth in this world. 'After death a man is born again and again.' This observation is a clear statement of the doctrine of rebirth. The observation of the Brs. that a man’s life in the heavenly abode is not eternal but terminates one day finds expression in the Bhagavadgītā—'After enjoying the heavenly world they are again born in this world when their piety is exhausted.' From the above it is clear that man is judged according to acts of piety or sin of his earthly life and is sent to heaven or hell respectively. In the age of the Brs. this piety or sin meant the correctness or otherwise of the rituals connected with the sacrifice. Under the head ‘The theory of sacrifice’ the great emphasis laid by the Brs. on the correctness of rituals has been made abundantly clear with illustrations. The priests, the sacrificer, nay, even the gods have to pay dearly for omissions and commissions. The success of the sacrifice depends on the flawless performance. After his expiry a man is weighed in the balance (tulā) for ascertaining his piety and sin, merits and demerits. If his piety outweighs he enters the world of heaven and shares the immortality of the gods. If his sin outweighs he is resigned to the damnation of the hell. The S. B. clearly refers to this weighing of merit and sin in the balance while praising the performance of the sacrifice known as Darṣapaurṇamāsa. 'Verily, they place him on the balance in yonder world, i.e., the other world; and whichever
of the two will rise (speak in his favour) he will follow, whether it be the good or the evil. He who knows this mounts the balance even in this world, and escapes the weighing on the balance in the other world because his acts of piety outweigh, not his evil deeds.\textsuperscript{16} This weighing of the merit and demerit of the departed soul on the scale in the next world is a very ancient belief common to both the Vedic religion and Zoroastrianism. In the Zend Avesta also this balance and the weighing of the virtue and sin of the departed have been colourfully described. There also the departed spirit is sent to heaven or consigned to hell according to his merit or sin weighed on the scale. The incarnation of the moral order of the universe Nemesis passes judgment on the departed spirit.

The episode of Bhrigu, son of Varuṇa, narrated in the S.B.\textsuperscript{17} and the J.B.\textsuperscript{18} presents us with a graphic description of the gruesome harrowings of the hell as also of the blissful atmosphere of the heaven. The slight difference between the two Brs. in the narration of the story is negligible.

The episode according to the S.B. runs thus. Bhrigu, the son of Varuṇa is inflated with pride and deems himself superior to his father. Varuṇa gets scent of this fact and to put him on the right track causes Bhrigu's spirit to come out under the spell of a temporary trance and visit the different quarters. Bhrigu thus sped on by the father visits the four cardinal points and the intermediate space. He sees five visions in all of which the same vision visits him in the eastern and southern direction. Hence actually there take place four visions. The first four visions bespeak the harrowings of the hell whereas the fifth and last one bespeaks the effect of reverence and correct procedure of rituals. In the eastern and southern quarters he finds men chopping off the limbs of men one by one

\textsuperscript{16} 11-2-7-33—"Tulāyāṃ ha vāmuṣmin loka ādadhāti yataraṇyasyati taṇanveṣyati yadi sādhuh vā āsādhuh vetyatha ya evaṃ vedāṃśin haiva loke tulāyāṃraḥhayatuḥmumśmin loke tulādhānamucyate sādhukṛtyā haivāsyā yaḥcaḥa na pāpakṛtyā."

\textsuperscript{17} 11-6-1.

\textsuperscript{18} 1-42-4.
ruthlessly. In the western direction a still more gruesome and hideous spectacle awaits him where he finds men devouring human beings. In his northward journey he meets with the same vision he has seen in the western quarter with the difference that while the tortured men are sitting still in the west, here they are giving out shrill cries of agony. In the intermediate quarter he meets two women; one beautiful, another superbly beautiful; in their midst stands a black man with yellow eyes holding a staff in his hand. Bhṛgu returns to his father and seeks clarification of his visions. Varuṇa explains the visions to him. The tortured man whose limbs are being dismembered and those whose flesh is being eaten by the tormentors committed grave sins during their life on earth. The last vision is an allegory. The beautiful damsel symbolises Belief and the over-beautiful one Unbelief. 'When one offers the first libation of the Agnihotra he subdues Belief, and conquers Belief; when he offers the second libation, he subdues Unbelief, and conquers Unbelief.' The black man with yellow eyes represents Wrath; when having poured water into the spoon, one offers the libation into the fire, he subdues Wrath. In the J.B. in the fifth vision Bhṛgu sees a beautiful vision where the panorama of the earth and sky, the land and water bespeaks heavenly bliss and profound serenity. He finds five rivers where thousands of white and blue lotuses are blooming merrily, amidst sparkling waves of honey, where the heavenly nymphs disport themselves and the whole atmosphere is charged with the sweet aroma that is constantly wafted from the lotuses and with the sound of music and dance that regale the ears. This is a graphic description of the paradise painted in glowing colours. These five rivers represent the world of god Varuṇa.

Two distinct phases may be traced in the eschatology of the Brs. so far as the union with the gods is concerned. The early Brs. such as the A.B., K.B., etc., always mean the personal gods when they speak of the union of the sacrificer with the gods. The gods are mentioned by name along with their characteristic features and regions. Thus the union with Prajāpati, with Agni, Āditya, Viṣṇu, Varuṇa etc., are mentioned. In the case of this phase of the union with the personal deities in the other world, one sacrifices
in themselves. In the latter Brs., particularly in the S.B. the Impersonal Absolute Godhead termed Brahman is met with, and with the dawning of this conception of the Absolute the doctrine of metempsychosis also undergoes reorientation and assumes subtler form. The union with the personal gods is no longer recognised as an end in itself but as means to a farther end, viz., union with the Impersonal Absolute or Brahman. In this second phase of the theory of transmigration the worshipper first achieves union with the personal deity through the sacrifice and ultimately with the Absolute Godhead through the union with the personal deity. Thus gods act as a medium, as a means to an end and are no more ends in themselves. The Great Brahman is Imperishable (aksāra) and One; all gods and all created beings are ultimately absorbed in this Imperishable All-Soul', observes the S.B.\(^{19}\) The different gods are described as different doors leading to Brahman in a memorable chapter of the S.B.\(^{20}\) Thus the gods Agni, Vāyu, Apa (water), Candra (moon), Vidyut (lightning), Āditya have been described as so many doors (Dvāra) leading to the chamber of Brahman. The fact that the gods are reduced from the position of ends to means to a farther end is clear from this passage of the S.B. This absorption of the individual soul into the Absolute self called Brahman or Ātman constitutes the doctrine of salvation or final emancipation termed Mokṣa, Mukti, Apavarga or Parama-puruṣārtha in the Upaniṣads. The conception of the Upaniṣadic salvation is in the making in the later Brs. ‘Through knowledge alone’, observes the S.B., ‘that state of supreme bliss is attainable; desires cannot reach it; sacrifices gifts, acts of piety or the penance of the ignorant cannot attain that supreme state.’\(^{21}\) In this important passage, the S.B.

---

\(^{19}\) 10-4-1-9—‘Mahad vai brāhmaikamākṣaram................. etat hyevāksaram sarve devāḥ sarvāḥ bhūtānyahbisampaḍāyante.’

\(^{20}\) 11-4-4.

\(^{21}\) 10-5-4-16—‘Vidyayā tadārohanti yatra kāmāḥ parāgataḥ
Na tatra daksīṇā yanti nāvidvāmaastapassvina iti.
Na haiva taṁ lokāṁ daksīṇābhırna tapasā anevaṣp-viḍaśnuta evapvidāṁ haiva sa lokaḥ.’

Germ of Vedantic Mokṣa and path of knowledge.
not only refers to the state of final beatitude which approximates to the Vedantic conception of final emancipation but also attaches importance to the path of knowledge than to the path of action. S.B. 10-4-3-9 is another passage in point. 'No one shall be immortal with the body; he who is to become immortal either through knowledge or through holy work, shall become immortal after leaving this body.' Thus the germ of the way of knowledge, Jñāna-mārga may be traced in the S.B.

The nature of the Absolute, the Impersonal Brahman has been clearly stated in the S.B. and the identity of Brahman and Ātman, the Absolute and the self has been mentioned in both the S.B. and the T.B. which will be taken up in our next topic for discussion, viz, 'Theology'.

Theology:

In our discussions relating to 'The theory of sacrifice', 'The spirit underlying the form of the sacrifice', as also to 'Cosmogony' it has been clearly shown how Puruṣa, Prajāpati, Viṣṇu, Rudra etc., came to prominence in successive phases of the Vedic age. Under the 'Emergence of popular religious creeds' the origin and evolution of the Viṣṇu-cult and Rudra-cult has been dealt with. We have shown how the Puruṣa of the R.V. yielded to Prajāpati of the early Brs. who, in his turn, yielded to Rudra in the later Vedic age who ultimately became Śiva. The creation of the universe has been ascribed to various deities such as the Puruṣa, Prajāpati, Cosmic waters, Cosmic Mind and ultimately to Brahman the Absolute Godhead. These topics have been discussed threadbare in the foregoing pages and need no repetition here.

Under the present topic our main endeavour will be to show whether the conception of the Impersonal Godhead, the unqualified Absolute All-Soul termed Brahman and identified with Ātman in the Upaniṣads is traceable in the Brs.

All the gods described in the Śaṁhitā and the Brs. are personal gods having anthropomorphic attributes; they represent different aspects of the natural phenomena; this conception has been
explained and illustrated in this book under ‘Emergence of popular religious creeds’ quoting the views of Yāska, Kātyāyana etc. There it has been clearly shown how the different gods, Viṣṇu, Rudra etc., represent the different aspects of the Sun-god. This is the view of Kātyāyana, the author of Sarvānukramaṇī and is amply borne out by the descriptions of different deities met with in the R.V., V.S., A.V. and the T.S. But this Sun-god is also a personal god having personal attributes and not the Impersonal Absolute which is shorn of all attributes and limitations. Yāska, the celebrated author of the Nirukta observes, ‘All gods are but the limbs of one Supreme Soul.’

Thus Yāska goes a step farther than Kātyāyana and considers the Impersonal Atman to be the source of all the gods. The R.V. also, states in unmistakable language—"The wise name, the One Existing Reality (Ekaṃ Sat) variously, viz, Indra, Yama, Mātariśvan etc." Hence the monotheistic tendency traces its origin in the R.V. and culminates in the Absolute monism of the Upaniṣads.

Two divergent views are held by the western scholars regarding the conception of the Impersonal Godhead—Brahman as recorded in the Brāhmaṇas. Scholars headed by Max Müller, Deussen etc., maintain that the conception of the unqualified Absolute Reality is met with in the R.V., A.V. and the Brāhmaṇas whereas the opposite camp led by Oldenberg, Hertel and the like deny the same. The latter group lays the charge at the door of the Brāhmaṇas that the Absolute as an Impersonal unqualified Supreme Spirit was not known to the authors of the Brāhmaṇas. This charge falls to the ground as will be borne out by the following discussion. We agree, so far as the early Brāhmaṇas like the A.B., K.B. etc., are concerned, the Impersonal Absolute Brahman is not met with. But the later Brāhmaṇas, the S.B. and the T.B. in...
particular, mention the Brahman and Ātman as the Impersonal Supreme Godhead in clear and unambiguous terms.

The term Brahman admits of many meanings in Sanskrit such as prayer, Veda, speech, the Supreme Godhead etc. It is used in the sense of prayer, Veda and speech in all the Brs. Thus the lord of prayer also is meant by 'Brahman' and the term is equated with Brhaspati who is the lord of speech as well. Thus 'Brahman is Brhaspati'\textsuperscript{25}, 'Brahman is the Brhaspati of the gods.'\textsuperscript{26} In course of time Brahman surpassed Brhaspati also and becomes the greatest amongst all the gods. 'Brahman is the greatest of all the gods.'\textsuperscript{27} Not only among the gods, 'Brahman is the greatest among all the created beings; who can vie with Him?'\textsuperscript{28} From this Brahman is still upgraded and conceived of as 'the creator of all the gods,'\textsuperscript{29} Death can never touch him. Its essence is immortality itself.\textsuperscript{30} The conception rises higher and higher in the metaphysical hierarchy in the S.B. and the T.B. The S.B. regards Brahman as the creator not only of gods but also of the whole universe. 'The heaven and earth are held up by Brahman,'\textsuperscript{31} that is to say, the whole phenomenal world of names and forms function regularly due to His governance. He is the Great Principle behind the world-show, the fountain-head of creation. His existence pervades and permeates the whole universe through and through. Every object of creation draws its sustenance from that inexhaustible perennial fountain. Hence nothing can be minused from Him;

\textsuperscript{25} J.B. (U)—1-25-10,—'Brahma vai Brhaspatiḥ'; identical statements in K.B. 7-10, A.B. 1-13-, S.B. 3-1-4-15.
\textsuperscript{26} G.B.(U)—6-7—'Brahma vai devānām Brhaspatiḥ.'
\textsuperscript{27} S.B. 8-4-1-3—'Brahmaiva devānāṃ āreṣṭham.'
\textsuperscript{28} T.B. 2-8-8-10—'Brahmaiva bhūtānāṃ īyeṣṭhasaṃ temā ko'ṛhati spardhitum.'
\textsuperscript{29} T.S. 2-8-8-9—'Brahma devānajanayat.'
\textsuperscript{30} J.B.(U)—1-25-10—'Yaḥ Brahma tadamṛtam'.
\textsuperscript{31} S.B. 8-4-1-3—'Brahmaṃ dhīvāyāpṛthivi viṣṭabdhē.'
that will mean separating the stream from its source without which the stream will run dry in no time. Thus everything, all existence, is rooted in Him. ‘Everything is Brahman.’

The conception of Brahman as the Imperishable (aśāra) Absolute appears in the S.B. ‘The Great Brahman is One and Imperishable; . . . . verily, all gods, all beings finally pass into that Imperishable Supreme Being.’

Brahman, the soul of the universe, the pulse of creation is also the soul of individuals; in other words Brahman is also the Ātman; the Universal soul and the individual soul are one in essence. This identification of Ātman or Self with Brahman the highest principle of the universe is clearly stated in the T.B. ‘One ignorant of the Veda can never conceive of Brahman, who as the Ātman is the witness of the whole universe.’

‘The whole creation is Ātman’ in essence. A passage of the S.B. merits highest importance as it gives us a detailed description of the nature of Ātman, the Supreme Self and identifies Ātman with Brahman and Truth. ‘Let him meditate upon Brahman the Truth, . . . . Let him meditate on the Self, Ātman, which is made of intelligence, and endowed with a body of spirit, with a form of light, and with an ethereal nature, which changes its shape at will, is swift as thought, of true resolve, and true purpose, which consists of all sweet colours and tastes, which holds sway over all the regions and pervades this whole creation, which is speechless and indifferent—even as a grain of rice, or a grain of barley, or a grain of millet or the smallest granule of millet, so is this golden Puruṣa in the

32. G.B.(P)—5-25—‘Brahmaiva sarvam.’

33. S.B. 10-4-1-9—‘Mahad vai Brahmaikamakṣaram; etat hyevākṣaraṁ sarve devaḥ sarvāṇi bhūtānyabhishampadyante.’

34. T.B. 3-1-12-7—‘Nāvedavimmanute tāṁ vr̥hantāṁ sarvaṁ sarvaṁabhūmātmāṃ.’

35. S.B. 4-2-2-1—‘Sarvanā hyayamātmā.’
heart; even as a smokeless steady column of light, it is greater
than the sky, greater than the ether, greater than all existing
things; that self of the spirit is my self: on passing away from
this world I shall obtain that self. Here the identification of
Brahman, Ātman, the Soul of man and the soul of the universe,
Truth, with one another is complete. The Impersonal Supreme
Spirit is at once the spirit of man and the spirit of the universe;
He is both immanent and transcendent simultaneously. He is
the source of creation and pervades creation in his qualified
form while he transcends it in his impersonal unqualified (Nirguṇa) character. That Absolute All-Soul is not attainable through the sacrifice, sacrificial fees or mechanical penance of one steeped in ignorance. 'It can be attained through knowledge (vidyā) alone,' observes the S.B.

After death, the spirit is released from the trammels of the flesh but if desire and nescience persist the spirit fails to attain final emancipation, i.e., complete absorption into the Universal soul. When the individual soul shakes itself free from all desires and ignorance, then alone it can attain final emancipation or Mokṣa. The difference between these two types of people is clearly stated in the T.B. "Some passing away from this world thus realise the self; 'I am this Self', some (due to ignorance) fail to realise the 'Self.' Thus both the S.B. and T.B. stress the importance of knowledge for the purpose of Self-realisation and clearly state that mere performance of rituals bereft of knowledge, par excellence, cannot attain the Supreme Godhead; at best it helps the performer to achieve union with personal gods. The path of knowledge is thus eulogised.

Praṇava or Onkāra, the eternal verbum and the holy syllable is regarded as the symbol of the Supreme Spirit Brahman.

36. S.B. 10-6-3—'Satyaṁ brahma] ityōṣita..............ātmānaṁ
pretyābhisambhavīyamītī.'
37. 10-5-4-16—'Vidyayā tadārohanti yatra kāmāḥ parāgatāḥ
Na tatra daśṣipta yanti nāvīdvāṇaastaptasvināḥ.'
38. 3-10-11-1—'Kaścit ha va asāṁlokaṁ pretyātmānaṁ vedāya-
mahamasmiti.
   Kaścit svāṁ lokaṁ na pratiprajānāti.'
"Praṇava is the eternal imperishable verbal expression of the Absolute". It includes all beings, pervades the past, present and future and transcends them as well. This Upanisadic teaching is also met with in the Brs. The K.B. regards the holy syllable Praṇava as the holy of holies, as complete in itself and flawless, as the expression of the Absolute Impersonal Spirit. 'Verily, Brahman is Praṇava.' This statement occurs in the G.B. also with slight variation. Thus we find that the identification of Brahman, Ātman, Satyan (Truth) and Praṇava the Holy Syllable with one another is complete in the Brs. The knowledge, par excellence, enables one to realise the Supreme Self which is impersonal and unqualified, eternal and uncaused. It transcends the universe, transcends the limitations of time and space and exists in an eternal now. It is not subject to birth, change, decay or death. It is the final reality, the ultimate cause from which proceeds this phantasmasoria of names and forms. It is causeless, the 'Causa Sui', self-revealed and the never-changing One in the ever-changing many.

The S.B. and the T.B. advocate the path of knowledge in clear terms for attaining Salvation which is absorption of the individual self in the Supreme Self. The T.B. states that one devoid of the Supreme Knowledge can never realise the Supreme Brahman at the time of his expiry in his onward journey to the next world. Quoting a Śrutí passage the same Br. observes—This is the eternal greatness and glory of the Supreme Brahman that good deeds cannot

39. Māṇḍūkya, U.—1—'Oṃmityetadakṣaraṃ sarvam............
   Bhūtaṃ bhavad bhaviṣyaditi sarvamahā-
   kāra eva, yaccañyastrikālātītaṃ tadap-
   yoṅkāra eva.'

40. K.B. 11-4.—'Brahma vai praṇavaḥ.'
41. G.S. (U)—3-11.—'Brahma ha praṇavaḥ.'
42. 3-12-9-7—'Nāvedavinmanute taṃ vṛhantam.
   Sarvāṇubhūṁātmānaṃ sanparāya.'
magnify it, (i.e., further its greatness), nor can evil deeds drag it down. Realising this Supreme Godhead an enlightened individual becomes its very soul; (i.e., becomes one with the Supreme Brahman). Sinful acts can no more taint him.\textsuperscript{43} Such an enlightened seeker is released for good from the worldly bondage. The statement that such an individual illumined with the light of Supreme Knowledge becomes the very Self of the Supreme Self, i.e., becomes one with Brahman finds corroboration and clear exposition in such Upaniṣadic passages as, ‘Verily, he who knows the Brahman, becomes Brahman’.\textsuperscript{44}

Beginnings Of Philosophical Systems:

The beginnings of different philosophical systems may be traced in the Brs. just as the nucleus thereof is met with in the RK-saṃhitā. In the foregoing pages under ‘Cosmogony’, ‘Eschatology’ and ‘Theology’ it has been clearly proved that the Vedantic conception of Absolute Impersonal Supreme Spirit and the Vedantic doctrine of final emancipation or Mokṣa are foreshadowed in the Brs. The S.B. and T.B. are the precursors of these Upanisadic doctrines and recommend the path of knowledge as the means to attain the Supreme Self. The cosmology of the Upanisads also traces its beginnings in the Brs. as shown under ‘Cosmogony’. The Brs. like the Upaniṣads conceive the space (Ākāśa) as the first visible manifestation of the invisible Brahman, and names and forms as the warp and woof wherewith the universe is created.

Though the germ of the Upanisadic or Vedānta philosophy is met with in the Brs. the latter do not uphold the illusory nature

\textsuperscript{43} 3-12-9-7—‘Ṛṣa nityo mahīmā brāhmaṇasya na karmanā vardhate no kanfyān Tasyaivātmā padavittar viditvā— na karmanā līpyate pāpakena.’ Brahmanda Vadh Brahmaiva bhavati

\textsuperscript{44} ‘Sa yo ha vai tat paramaḥ Brahma veda sa Brahmaiva bhavati.’
(māyā-vāda) of the world-show which the Vedānta characterises as neither real nor unreal but as indescribable (anirvacaniya). The Brs. maintain that the world is real, creation is a reality. Thus the realistic systems like Sānkhya, Yoga etc., are foreshadowed in the Brs. The Sānkhya doctrine of the Cosmic mind and its first product is hinted at in the S.B. The discipline of student life narrated in the G.B. and the S.B. mark the beginnings of the physical aspect of the Yoga-philosophy. The doctrine of causation of the Brs. so far as the phenomenal world is concerned smacks of the realism (satkārya-vāda) of the Sānkhya. The term Māyā with the Vedantic import is never met with in the Brs.

Under 'Education' in Book I the syllabus of the then education has been enumerated in details. Debates, metaphysical discourses and theological dissertations formed important items of the syllabus and were a common feature of the cultural life of the later Vedic age. The particular item of study known as 'Vākovākyam' consisted in intelligent questionings and witty repartees. Scholars both eastern and western have rightly arrived at the conclusion that this Vākovākyam is the germ of Indian logic or Nyāya-darśana or Tarka-śāstra as it encourages ratiocination, intellectual logic-chopping and verbal jugglery. So far as the doctrine of causality is concerned the Brs. do not subscribe to the Asatkārya-vāda of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school, but uphold the Satkārya-vāda of the Sānkhya-Yoga school.

In the introduction to this work, the Brs. have been shown to be the sheet-anchor of the Pūrva-mīmāṃśā system of Indian philosophy just as the Upanisads are the bedrock of Vedānta philosophy. The apparently contradictory statements of the Brs. have been discussed and solved in this system of philosophy. As the Brs. embody the vast and varied paraphernalia of the sacrificial machinery and as the Pūrva-mīmāṃśā is based on them, this school of Indian philosophy also goes by the name of Karma-mīmāṃśā or Dharma-mīmāṃśā. Sage Jaimini recorded his solutions and findings relating to Brahmanical texts in the form of aphorisms in this
system just as sage Vadarāyaṇa recorded his views on the Upanisadic tenets in aphoristic form in the Vedānta system or Uttara-mīmāṃsā. As the Pūrva-mīmāṃsā looks up to the Vedas for its source and sustenance it is but natural that it sings the glory of the Vedas and upholds the eternity and authority of the Vedas.

Thus the beginnings of the Vedānta, Sānkhya, Yoga, Nyāya and Pūrva-mīmāṃsā systems of Indian philosophy are met with in the Brs.

Summary Of Book III

Sacrificial practice constitutes the main religion of the Brs. The Vedic Aryans are agricultural people and have to rely on the natural phenomena for successful farming. Hence they look upon the different aspects of natural phenomena as so many deities and try their best to propitiate them. Every man is born with three debts one of which is a debt to the gods which he pays off by performing sacrifices. Sacrifice is the medium for attaining both material prosperity and heavenly rewards. Heavenly bliss is the real and final goal of a sacrifice, the worldly gains being auxiliary to it. Vedic Aryans are not wholly other-worldly in their outlook, they long for both heavenly joy and material prosperity in every form. There are various sacrifices serving different ends; some are obligatory whereas others are occasional. Wish-yielding sacrifices are also occasional and their results range from the birth of a son, bringing down rain etc., to the attainment of union with the deity. Sacrifice is the connecting link among the sacrifice, sacrificer, priests, gods and heaven. Initiation into sacrifice is regarded as a new (spiritual) birth of the sacrificer and his attainment of heaven through sacrifice as another birth. Death here means birth in heaven and cessation of the tenure of heavenly life means birth on earth. The sacrificer achieves three types of union with the gods of the sacrifice in heaven after shuffling off his mortal coil, viz, attainment of the same region, same form and union with the deity called sālokya, sārūpya and sāyujya respectively.

The sacrifice is the source of creation. The Primal Being called Puruṣa offers himself as the victim in the first sacrifice performed.
by him. Thus he is both the sacrificer and the victim. Out of his self-sacrifice springs up the whole universe with the four Vedas, four castes, animals, both domestic and wild, the sun and the moon, the firmament, quarters, fire, air etc. Thus the one Puruṣa who was without a second before creation becomes many through the sacrifice which is, in reality, his self-sacrifice. The germs of Upanisadic speculations such as—"The supreme spirit mused, 'I shall become many', 'His one form has assumed the diverse names and forms'," etc., may be traced in this cosmic sacrifice.

The correctness of rituals is strictly enjoined and any bungling or carelessness brings severe repercussions on the priests and even on the gods. Sacrifice is a far cry from magic or the black art of necromancy.

The mystic interpretation of the fire-altar recorded in the S.B. and discussed under 'The theory of sacrifice' merits great importance as it is symbolic of creation and effects complete identification of the Prajāpati, sacrificer, sacrifice, fire, altar, the Sun-god, year and the performing priests with one another. The beginnings of image-worship may be traced in the goldman symbolic of the Sun-god, creator Prajāpati and Agni jointly. The structure of the Fire-altar with ten thousand eight hundred bricks is a standing testimony to the architecture of the later Vedic age.

Some sacrifices have a political bearing such as the Rājasūya, the Vājapeya, Aśvamedha etc.; they are connected with the consecration ceremony, imperialism and paramount sovereignty etc.

The priests play the most important role in a sacrifice. Their duty is onerous and they enjoy a highly esteemed position in society. In the age of the R.V. the rituals were simple and called forth for a small number of priests. As ages rolled on, the rituals became more and more complicated and grand sacrifices came into existence. Originally there were only five priests in the early Vedic age, viz, Hotṛ, Adhvaryu, Agnídhra, Grāvastut and Pratipasthāṭ. In the later Vedic age the number swells to sixteen and including the sacrificer or the sadasya it comes up to seventeen. There are four Rgvedic, four Yajurvedic, four Sāma-vedic priests and four Superintending priests called Brahman. None could do without priests—not even the king as the royal consecration,
upgrading of the status of a monarch, victory in war etc., are also connected with sacrifices. The priests begin to lose their hold on the king and the people when sacrifices come to be underrated and greater importance is attached to the path of knowledge than to the path of action.

The form and the spirit of the sacrifice developed side by side. The charge often laid at the door of the Brs. that they make much of the form and lose sight of the essence of sacrifice is unfounded. Various passages in the A.B., S.B. and the T.B. uphold the importance of reverence, truth and knowledge necessary for the proper performance of sacrificial rituals. Without reverence and belief the rituals fail to produce the desired effect. In the absence of material oblations a sacrificer is enjoined to offer reverence or Śraddhā as the oblation in the Agnihotra rites. The sceptical attitude towards the externals of sacrifice is also met with. People doubt and question the efficacy of sacrifices. In the S.B. and T.B. we find greater stress laid on the spirit underlying the form of the sacrifice and on the path of knowledge. Thus these two Brs. clearly mark the phase of transition from the Br. to the Āranyaka and the Upaniṣad where sacrifice is underrated and the path of knowledge is recommended.

The evolution of the Bhakti-cult and the emergence of popular religious creeds is traced in the Brs. The Viṣṇu-cult and the Rudra-Śiva-cult evolve and assume definite shape during the age of the Brs. The emergence of the Rudra-cult forms an interesting study. The gradual stages of its evolution from the R.V. to the S.B., the dialectic process of its growth and the final synthesis in the all-comprehensive form of Rudra, how the terrific Rudra becomes the benign Śiva have been clearly delineated under ‘Emergence of popular religious cults’. It has been clearly shown how the conception of Rudra-Śiva solves the dialectics of the social structure.

Perhaps the first reference to places of pilgrimage (tirtha) occurs in the Rudrādhyāya of the V.S. where god Rudra is described as visiting the places of pilgrimage. These popular religious cults with their emphasis on the path of devotion appeal to the mass mind which fails to realise the significance of sacrifices. To the common people the grand sacrifices appear to be a festivity on account of the horse-race, chariot-race, gambling, beating of drums, sounds of various musical instruments and vocal music
connected with them. The horse races, chariot races and the music accompanying them present the picture of a national Olympic game. Thus the spiritual effect of sacrifice is lost on the commoner. While some enlightened persons realise the efficacy of sacrifice others underrate the externals of sacrifice and attach greater importance to its spirit. The common people resort to the popular religious creeds like the Viṣṇu-cult, Rudra-cult etc., and the more enlightened ones take to the path of knowledge.

The influence of non-Aryan religion and primitive faith is discernible in certain crude rites that shock our sense of decency and decorum, e.g., the rites performed by the chief queen in the horse sacrifice and some sexual acts performed in the sacrifices known as Mahāvrata and Gosava. The Rudra-cult appears to be a primitive one prevalent among the aboriginal people that was taken over and reoriented by the Aryans.

Among the sacraments, the natal ceremony, tonsure, investiture with the holy thread (upanayana) and studentship, marriage, disposal of the dead and the śrādh ceremony are met with in the Brs. Of the five great daily sacrifices the study of the Veda and hospitality in particular are dealt with in the Brs. The hospitable spirit of the Vedic Aryans is clearly proved by the passages concerned.

So far as the four orders of life are concerned explicit mention and detailed treatment of two orders alone, viz, the order of Brahmacarya and Gārhaṇṭhya is found in the Brs. Explicit mention of the third and the fourth orders called Vānaprastha and Bhikṣu respectively is not met with though the existence of those two orders may be inferred from stray references. The S.B. and the G.B. present a clear picture of the student life of the later Vedic age. The orders of Vānaprastha and Sannyāsa which are in the making in the age of the Brs. take definite shape and gain in importance in the age of the Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads.

The doctrine of creation adumbrated in the Brs. is mixed up with legends and explanations of sacrificial rituals. Sometimes the metaphysical element is lost sight of in the meshes of legends spun round it and made much of. The theory of sacrifice and the mystic interpretation of the fire-altar stated above embody two aspects of the cosmogony of the Brs. Different causes are stated in different texts of the Brs. as the cause of creation. The
sacrifice, the penance of the Primal Being, Cosmic waters, the space (Ākāśa), the Cosmic Mind, etc., are regarded as different sources of creation. The S.B. mentions Brahman (neuter), the Supreme Absolute as the final cause of the universe. Sometimes the term ‘Ātman’, Supreme Self, is also used to signify this final cause and the identification of the Ātman and Brahman, as stated in the following lines, is complete in the S.B. and T.B. Names and forms are the warp and the woof with which the Supreme spirit weaves the texture of the universe.

The theology of the Brs. includes both personal gods and the Impersonal Unqualified Absolute. In the early Brs. the conception of the Impersonal Godhead, Unqualified Supreme Spirit is not met with. We come across personal god with anthropomorphic attributes representing different aspects of natural phenomena such as god Viṣṇu, Prajāpati, Agni, Rudra, Varuṇa etc. All the gods are but different aspects of the Sun-god. The conception of Vedic pantheon is not polytheistic like the Greek pantheon. It is monotheistic and also, in the words of Max Müller, kathenotheistic or henotheistic; i.e., whenever a deity is worshipped he or she is worshipped as the Supreme God. The charge that the Impersonal Unqualified Absolute is not traceable in the Brs. is unfounded. The early Brs. like the A.B., K.B. etc., do not refer to the Impersonal Godhead but the S.B. and the T.B. clearly mention the Impersonal Absolute Spirit termed Brahman in the neuter gender. The terms Brahman, Ātman and Satyam (Truth) have been identified with one another and the eternal verbum, the holy syllable Om is regarded as the verbal expression of the Imperishable Impersonal Absolute which defies expression and eludes definition. Brahman is the creator of all the gods, all sentient and insentient beings and the whole universe. It transcends the limitations of time, space, sound and death. Truth, immortality, self-luminosity, infinity are some of its characteristics. The S.B. gives a detailed description of the Self. In the early Brs. union with a personal god through the medium of sacrifice is the goal of the sacrificer; the sacrifice is the means and union with a personal god is the end; but in the later Brs. union with the All-soul or Impersonal Godhead is the end and the personal gods to whom the sacrifice is offered are but means to this end. All existence is rooted in Brahman.
Every object of creation draws its sustenance from that inexhaustible perennial fountain. All beings finally pass into that imperishable Absolute which is at once the universal soul and the individual soul. One ignorant of the Veda can never conceive of Brahman. Both the S.B. and T.B. observe that it is attainable through knowledge. “Some passing away from this world thus realise the Self—‘I am this Self, some due to ignorance fail to realise the Self” (T.B.). Thus both the S.B. and T.B. stress the importance of knowledge for the purpose of self-realisation and clearly state that mere performance of rituals bereft of knowledge, par excellence, cannot attain the Supreme Godhead. Thus the later Brs. anticipate the Upaniṣads which decry mere rituals shorn of knowledge, eulogise the path of knowledge, describe the Absolute Spirit Brahman as impersonal and unqualified eternal Being and identify the Self, Supreme Spirit and Truth with one another.

The summary of the discussion on the theology of the Brs. given above throws some light on the eschatology of the Brs. Some achieve union with the personal gods after passing away from this planet of ours while others purged of all desires and sins, and purified by knowledge attain union with the Supreme Spirit. The former class enjoys the heavenly world for a limited period on termination of which they are reborn in this world. The latter elude the clutches of birth and death for ever by attaining final emancipation which means complete absorption into the All-soul. The S.B. and the T.B. embody the doctrine of final emancipation called Mokṣa in clear terms. The attainment of heaven or hell after death according to acts of piety or sin done during the life on earth is stated in the Brs. Man is weighed in a balance after death and is consigned to heaven or hell according as the scale speaks in favour of his merits or demerits. This weighing of the merit and demerit of the departed soul on a scale in the next world is an ancient belief common to both the Vedic religion and Zoroastrianism. The S.B. and the J.B. paint the tortures of the hell as also the idyllic picture of the paradise in glowing colours. These descriptions of the heaven and hell of the S.B. and the J.B. anticipate similar descriptions of the Paradise and the hades given in the Purāṇas and the Koran, as also of the pictures of the Paradise and the Inferno painted by Dante in his
‘La Divina Comedia’. The Brs. state the doctrine of transmigration and metempsychosis in unambiguous language.

Beginnings of several important systems of Indian philosophy are traceable in the Brs. The observations of the S.B. and the T.B. on the unqualified Supreme Absolute clearly foreshadow the Absolute monism of the Advaita Vedānta philosophy. The Brāhmaṇas, as stated in the introduction to this work, form the basis of the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā system which attempts to solve the apparently contradictory statements of the Brs. and uphold the authority of the Veda. The debates, and witty repartees implied by the particular literary form known as ‘Vākovākyam’ are precursors of the Nyāya-darśana or the Indian logic. The doctrine of creation adumbrated in the Brs. and dealt with in Book III under “Cosmogony” embodies the realistic outlook of the Sāṅkhya system. The universe is not treated as an illusion or Māyā but as a reality.
BOOK III

MISCELLANEOUS

CHAPTER I

FLORA & FAUNA

The Flora:

The Brs. mention a large number of trees. The fact that plants have life and consciousness was known to the authors of Brāhmaṇas. That portion of a plant which was withered and bereft of sap was regarded as dead. 'That part of a tree which is fresh and uninjured is living' says S.B. The term 'Vanaspati' was applied to all trees in general in that age and not in the particular sense of trees which bear fruit without putting forth flowers.

In the Vedic literature the vegetable world is broadly divided into two classes, Oṣadhi or Virudh plants, shrubs, and Vṛkṣa, tree. The term Vṛkṣa also goes by the name of Vaṇa which, in reality, is its collective aspect. The V.S. (22-28) and the T.S. (7-3-20-1) give a list of the different parts of which a plant is made up. The list comprises the root (mūla), the panicle (tūla), the stem (kāṇḍa), the twig (valśa), the flower (puṣpa), and the fruit (phala); in addition to these parts trees possess a corona (skandha), branches (śākhā) and leaves (parṇa).

The A.V. (8-7-4) classifies the plants under the following heads; those that expand (prastīṇatiḥ), those that are bushy (stambiniḥ), have only one sheath (eka-suṅgāḥ), those that creep (pratanvatiḥ), have many stalks (aṃśumatiḥ), are knotty or jointed (kāṇḍiniḥ) or those that have spreading branches (viśākhāḥ).

1. 9-2-2-3—'Etad vai vanaspatināmanārtam jīvaṁ yadārdram'.
THE FLORA

All the three Bros. the A.B., S.B. and T.B. mention Pitu Dāru Pinus Deodora i.e., Pine-tree, Palāśa (Butea monosperma), Nyagrodha (Ficus indica), Plakṣa (Ficus indica), Āsvattha (Ficus religiosa), Udamvara i.e., Ficusglomerata, Vilva or Aegle marmelos, and Khadira (Acacia catechu). The banyan tree or Nyagrodha was considered as a Kṣatriya, the Āsvattha as the sovereign, and Palāśa as the Brahmin amongst trees. ‘The banyan tree is Kṣatriya or king among the trees.’

‘Āsvattha is the emperor of trees’ and the Palāśa is the Brahmin in the vegetable kingdom. Thus we find a gradual hierarchy, a veritable feudal system existing in the vegetable world. Palāśa holds the spiritual away being Brahmin, Nyagrodha is the lord or king of trees but subordinate to Āsvattha which is the overlord or samrāt; other trees are subjects or Viṣa. The Plakṣa tree or Ficus indica is also regarded as a monarch representing Śvārājya and Vairājya types of suzerainty amongst trees. These types of sovereignty have been discussed in the political aspect of this book.

The characteristics of some trees are recorded in the Brāhmaṇas. Repeatedly it is mentioned in the S.B. that banyan trees (Nyagrodha) never grow straight; they are slightly inclined to one side. The tree that grows tallest in the vegetable kingdom is Sālmali or Cotton tree termed ‘Salmalia malabarica’ in Botany.

It is also called ‘Bombax malabaricum’ in some books. The tree called Śami, the Vedic people believed, contained fire within it. The two sticks called Arāṇi which were rubbed against each other to produce fire in the Vedic age were made of Śami wood. This process of ignition or producing fire was termed Agnimanthana which literally means ‘churning of fire’. Botanically Śami is called ‘Prosopis spicigera’.

2. A.B. 7-35-5—‘Kṣatraṇa va etad vanaspatitam yannyagrodhaḥ.’
3. A.B. 7-35-6—‘Yadaśvatthaḥ sāmrājyaḥ va etad vanaspatitam.’
4. S.B. 1-1-1-4 13-8-4-1—‘Bṛhma vaś palāśaḥ.’
5. A.B. 7-35-6—‘Yat plakṣaḥ svārājyaḥ cā ha va etad vairājyaṃ cā vanaspatitam.’
6. S.B. 13-2-7-3—‘Nyānca nyagrodha rohanti.’
7. S.B. 13-2-7-4—‘Sālmalīrvanaspatitam vārāṣṭhāṃ vardhate.’
Udumvara, Khadira, Vilva and Palāśa were regarded as sacred trees and hence their branches, twigs, wood and stalks were widely used in various sacraments and rites. Fire-wood or samidh, the throne or Āsandī of the monarch in coronation or consecration ceremony, the razor in certain holy rites were made of Udumvara wood. Once during titanomachia or the fight between the gods and demons (Asuras) all the trees deserted the Devas or gods and sided with the Asuras or demons; the Udumvara tree alone sided with the gods, hence it was a great favourite of the gods and hence it was widely used in holy rites and rituals connected with gods. The Khadira tree or Acacia catechu was used for sacrificial purpose. The Yūpa or stake for animal-slaughter in sacrifice was made of Khadira wood. The branches and wood of Palāśa and Vilva trees were required in sacraments connected with the priestly class or Brāhmaṇa community in particular. Thus, during the investiture with the holy thread or Upanayana ceremony the staff or Daṇḍa of the Brāhmaṇa boy was made of either Palāśa or Vilva tree.

Besides the above-mentioned trees S.B. also mentions Kārṣmarī Gmelina arborea, Vikankata or Flacourtia sapida, plants which are full-berried or which yield berries (6-4-3-2), Jujube or plum trees of different classes (5-5-4-10), Arka or Calotropis gigantes, Uśana, Vāraṇa or Crataeva Roxburghii, Vibhītaka or Terminalia bellerica or Belleric myrobalan etc. Trees that were used for sacrificial purpose were regarded as sacred. S.B. (1-3-3-10) calls such trees yajñīya vrkṣa (sacrificial tree) and gives a list of such trees which comprises Palāśa, Vikankata, Karṣmarya, Vilva, Khadira and Udumbara. The name of Udumbara, ‘Ficus glomerata’ does not occur in the R.V. but occurs frequently in the A.V., V.S., T.S., and the Brs. The sweetness of its ripe fruit is mentioned in the A.B. where the taste of its ripe fruits is compared with that of honey. The tree, says the A.B., bears fruit three times a year. The P.B. (16-6-4) mentions a forest of Udumvara trees.

Amongst scented plants the A.B. mentions Guggulũ or Bdellium (1-5-2) and scented grass, commonly known as khas-

8. Vide S.B. 6-5-3-2.
khas in Indian vernacular (1-5-2). To this list the S.B. adds Sugandhi Tejanam or Scented red grass (3-5-2-17) and Viriṇa (13-8-1-15) a kind of fragrant grass called venā in Indian vernacular and verbena in English. The roots of Viriṇa or Verbena are fragrant.

Among shrubs and herbs are mentioned sugar-cane, vetas or cane plant, Bhūmi-pāsa or reeds, Aloes, Muṣijā from the fibres of which silk-like threads were produced, Avakā called Blyxa Octandra, a grassy plant growing in marshy land, kuṣa, the holy sacrificial grass, Durbā grass and the like. Durbā grass is called 'king of herbs'. Shrubs, herbs, creepers, medicinal plants and plants that die after yielding fruits—all these are termed Oṣadhi in the Brāhmaṇa texts. Aśvagandhā, Arka, Apāmārga or Achyranthes Aspera, etc., are mentioned amongst medicinal plants. A shrub with speckled or dappled leaves was called Pṛśni-parṇī, a telltale name indeed (S.B. 13-8-1-16). The S.B. mentions a tree named Rajjudāla from the bark of which rope was produced; its botanical name is Cordia myxa (13-4-4-5).

Among flowers lotus alone is mentioned several times in the S.B. Lotus flower, lotus leaf, lotus seeds, lotus lake are met with.

Flowers. The J.B. mentions white and blue lotuses that bloom in the river of paradise in the Varuṇaloka mentioned in Book III under 'Eschatology'.

The Fauna:

We have already discussed some of the domestic animals under the caption, 'Agriculture and Pasturage'. Domestic beasts are called 'Grāmyā Paśavaḥ' as distinct from wild beasts—'Āraṇyāḥ Paśavaḥ'. From the point of reverence and utility the cow was looked upon as the most sacred animal but from the point of grace, vigour, majesty, speed etc., the horse was held in the highest esteem by the Aryans of the Vedic age. 'The horse is the most fortunate and favoured of all animals'.

Bulology of horse.

The S.B. contains several passages which are glowing eulogies of the horse. 'The horse is

9. A.B. 8-37-4—'Kṣatram vā etadoṣadhinām yad dūrvā.'
10. S.B. 6-3-3-13—'Aśvaḥ paśünām bhagitamaḥ.'
the most vigorous of all animals, most powerful, most blessed and most famous of all animals.\textsuperscript{11} The dignity and stateliness of the steed is all the more heightened when with the bridle on it lifts its neck in regal majesty. Hence the Vedic bard observes, "When curbed by reins the horse looks most beautiful."\textsuperscript{12} The horse represents the nobility amongst animals.\textsuperscript{13} Animals have been classed under two heads—those having one row of teeth and those having double rows of teeth. This observation of the Brāhmaṇas traces its origin in the Hymn of creation or Puruṣa-sūkta of Rgveda where it is said—"From that primal sacrifice were born horses and all animals having two rows of teeth."\textsuperscript{14} Besides cow and horse, sheep, goats, ass and mules are mentioned amongst domesticated animals. The mule was regarded as the fastest running beast. Like horse-race mule-races were also held.

Various varieties of the deer are mentioned. The stag or deer is often mentioned as a symbol of strength due to its speed. The black antelope called Kṛṣṇa-mṛga or Kṛṣṇa-sāra was regarded as a sacred animal; Brahmācārins, ascetics used to put on its skin as their garment known as Kṛṣṇājina. Even female ascetics used to put on this dress as an external mark of asceticism.

From the Rāmāyaṇa we come to learn that this custom prevailed in the epic age as well. Šabarī, the female hermit has been described in the Rāmāyaṇa as 'a renowned ascetic with her hair matted wearing a garment made of the skin of black antelope'\textsuperscript{15} Regarding the sanctity of he-goats, ewes and cows or bulls the S.B. remarks—"He-goats are sacred to the Aśvins, ewes to Saraswati and cows and bulls to Indra."\textsuperscript{16} The order of merit amongst

\textsuperscript{11} S.B. 'Aśvaḥ paśaṁ nāmi viryavattamaḥ' (13-1-2-5).
'Aśvaḥ paśaṁ iśmojasvitaṁ' (13-1-2-6).
'Aśvaḥ paśaṁ nāmārāṣṭhaḥ' (13-1-2-7).
'Aśvaḥ paśaṁ yasasvitaṁ' (13-1-2-8).

\textsuperscript{12} S.B. 13-2-7-9—'Aśvaḥ raśmiva pratihṛto bhūyaśthaṁ rocate.'

\textsuperscript{13} S.B. 12-2-9-17—'Atho kṣatraṁ vāśvaṁ.'

\textsuperscript{14} R.V. X-90—'Tasmādaśvā ajāyanta ye ke cobbhayaṁdataḥ.'

\textsuperscript{15} Rāmāyaṇa—'Cirakaṁśu-jināṁbaradharā jatiśā Siddhā tāpasi.'

\textsuperscript{16} 12-7-2-7—'Aśvinfrasā, sārasvatfravīḥ, aindrīrgāvaḥ.'
domestic animals ranging from man to goat is thus arranged—man, horse, cow, ram and goat. Mule is a product of mating of horse and ass but mules cannot procreate. This biological factor was known to the people of the Vedic age. An ass was called Rāsabha because it used to bray. The root Ras means to bray. The S.B. mentions camels (uṣṭra) (1-2-39), porcupine (śalyaka) (2-6-4-5), wolf (vṛka) (5-1-5-22), Dragon called Jambhayantaḥ Ahiḥ, (5-1-5-22), elephant (3-1-3-4), tortoise (kūrma, (6-1-1-12, 7-5-1-1), lion (5-5-4-10), lioness (3-5-1, 3-5-25, also A.B. (6-30-9), bitch and mare (6-5-2-19) etc. The elephant was fashioned out of human flesh, hence it is enjoined that elephant should not be accepted as a gift. Sarabha, a fabulous animal with eight legs is also mentioned (S.B. 1-2-3-9 and A.B. 2-6-8). Both S.B. and A.B. mention an animal called Gavaya or Gomṛga which is translated as wild cow. Eggeling translates it as a buffalo. The tiger is called the Kṣatriya among the beasts, i.e., 'King of beasts' whereas the lion is termed, 'ruler of wild beasts' in S.B. (12-7-1-8). A.B. refers to white stallion (6-30-9) and cat (6-29-1). The cat is sparingly or very rarely mentioned in the Vedic literature. In the text of A.B. referred to, it is called 'Okaḥsāri'. Okas means house and because the cat moves from house to house it is so called. The frog (maṇḍūka) and the mouse or mole (ākhu) are met with in S.B. The T.B. also mentions mouse (ākhu). Both S.B. and A.B. mention an animal called Sālabṛka meaning wild dogs or hyenas which were regarded as most treacherous and ferocious animals. Hence the heavenly nymph Urvāṣī says to king Pururavā—'Indeed, there can be no friendship with women for their hearts are like hyenas.' Wild beasts of prey often created

8. S.B. 6-2-1-18—'Puruṣo hi prathamaḥ paśūnāmmathāśvanau puruṣoḥ
hi anvasvo'tha gāmaśvaḥ hi anugauḥ,............. Avishhi anvajah.'

9. S.B. 6-1-1-11—'Yadarasadiva sa rāsavo'bhavat.'

10. S.B. 3-1-3-4—'Tasya (Puruṣasya) yāni maṃśāni samkṛtya
asūnuśustate hasti samabhavat taṃmādhurma hastinaṃ pratigrīṇīyāt.'

11. S.B. 12-7-1-8—'Vyāghra āraptānāṃ paśūnāṃ rāja, simha
dāranyānāṃ paśūnamāhā.'

12. S.B. 11-5-1-9—'Na vai straiṇāni sakhyaṇāni saṃti sālabṛkānāṃ
ārdayāni te.'
havoc in the villages. The S.B. refers to sacrificial ‘cow being killed by a tiger’.\(^13\) We have seen that the tiger is termed king (rājā) of beasts whereas the lion is called lord (Iṣaḥ) of beasts. This proves the superiority of the lion to the tiger as if the lion is the paramount sovereign whereas the tiger is the king under the former. In point of nobility also the lion is superior to the tiger. The tiger is a symbol of cruelty and rapacity; it is veritable death. The T.B. compares the tiger with Death. ‘The tiger is the expression of Death.’\(^14\)

Just as animals are classified under two heads—those having single row of teeth and those having double rows, likewise they are also classified as one-hoofed species and cleft-hoofed species.

Both the Brāhmaṇas A.B. and S.B. mention various types of serpents and reptiles. A.B. 3-13-2 mentions NirdamŚī snakes devoid of the power of biting, svaja or double-headed snake, Manthāvala or snakes residing in trees and dangling from the branches, Andha sarpa or blind snake and Gaṅḍūpada which is explained by Śāyaṇa to be a reptile resembling a serpent.

A.B. 3-14-5 refers to a peculiar variety of snake called Śākala ‘which moves about catching its tail by its mouth thereby forming a complete circle or ring so that one fails to distinguish its head from the tail’.\(^15\) The S.B. also mentions several varieties of snake. Terrific huge serpent with eyes resembling livid embers of fire and yawning jaw is called Jambhayantaḥ Ahiḥ which Eggeling translates as ‘dragon’ (5-1-5-22); 11-5-5-8 mentions huge snakes (Mahā-ahī) residing in lakes, i.e., aquatic snakes of immense sizes; 7-4-1-29 offers homage to all sorts of snakes and serpent residing in trees, forests, water—both the biting and the non-biting varieties. The V.S. (24-35) and the P.B. (9-2-14) mention the ‘Godhā’ which means an iguana. The name also occurs in the J.B. (1-221). Ludwig, Zimmer and Roth take it to be a big lizard. An iguana is indeed a macrocosm of the lizard. Kṛkalāsa or chameleon has

---

\(^{13}\) 11-8-4-1—‘Sammād-dukhāṇā sārdulo jaghāṇa.’

\(^{14}\) T.B. 1-7-8-1—‘Mṛtyীrvā eṣa varṣaḥ yacchārdālaḥ.’

\(^{15}\) ‘Śākalanāmā ahivitaḥ; sa ca sarpaṇakāle mukhena pucchasya daṃśanaṃ kṛtvā valasyākāro bhavati tatra kim mukhaṇī kim vā puccha-miti na jāśyate.’ (Śāyaṇa).
INFLUENCE OF NON-ARYAN RELIGION

been mentioned in both the T.S. and the V.S. as one of the victims at the horse sacrifice. The J.B. (1-221) mentions a Kṛkalāsi or she-chameleon.

Now we come to the discussion of the winged creation, ‘the fowls of the air’ as the Bible calls them. Bird is variously termed in the Br. texts—each designation having a bearing on one or other of its characteristic marks. It is called Birds. ‘Pakṣi’ as it possesses wings. ‘Vihaṅga as it flies in the sky, Suparṇa because of its graceful flight, etc. The ancients took interest in the natural sciences like botany and zoology. They observed the characteristics of the vegetable kingdom and manners of animals. As to how birds fly the S.B., remarks—‘Birds can only fly up when they contract their wings and spread out their feathers.’ Eagle or falcon is called the king of birds. The S.B. mentions Haṃsa or swan (6-7-3-11), Kalaviṅka or sparrow (1-6-3-4), Tittiri or partridge (1-6-3-5), Vāja or eagle, and kapiṅjala called Hazel cockatoo or francoline partridge (1-6-33, also 13-5-1-13). Both the A.B. and S.B. mention Śyena or falcon, and refer to the birds as a class by such terms as Suparṇa, Śakuni etc., Kṛkavāku, one of the several Sanskrit synonyms of the cock occurs in the A.V. (5-31-2) and the V.S. (24-35). While commenting on the term in the V.S. Mahīdhara calls the bird ‘tāmracūḍa’ i.e., red-crested. In the Nirukta (12-3) Yāska classes the term Kṛkavāku with the onomatopoetic words where sound echoes the sense. Indeed ‘Kṛ-ka-vā-ku’ bears a close affinity to the crowing of the cock like the English word ‘cock-a-doodle-doo’.

Among insects mention is made of bees and ants in the S.B. Ant is called Upajīhvikā (6-6-3-6); both red ants and white ants are mentioned. In the forest schools, in the villages bordering on forests the bees and beehives were a common sight that met everyone’s eyes in that age. Hence we often find instructions are offered drawing analogy from the

16. 10-2-1-1—‘Vayāṃsi yadaiu pakṣā upasamūhante yadā patrāṇi visṛjante’thot-patitum śaknuvanti.’

17. S.B. 12-7-1-6—‘Śyeno vayasaṁ ṛaḷā.’
bees in the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads as well. In the famous
metaphysical discourses on the nature of the
supreme Reality delivered by sage Āruṇi to
Śvetaketu, in the sixth chapter of Chāndogya Upaniṣad one
discourse is based on the simile of bees and beehives. The S.B.
mentions bees by way of simile. ‘Just as bees reach honey, so
the sacrificers reach sacrifice.’

18. 3.4-3.14—‘Yathā maḍhu maḍhukṛta śpayāyaye yuṣṭe eva vaitad
yajāmaṁpyā-yānti (ṛtvijāḥ).’
BOOK IV
CHAPTER II

Calendar:

In the Brāhmaṇas we find the details of the Aryan calendar that was observed in the later Vedic age. The number of days, months and half-months of the year, the seasons and their effects, the commencement and termination of the year, even the total number of Muhūrtas of the year are met with in these texts. The sacrifice is often compared with the year with reference to its number of days, months and weeks. The expression ‘sacrifice is the same thing as year’ (yajño vai saṁvatsaraḥ) occurs repeatedly in the Br. texts. The performance of the longest sessional sacrifice or satra known as Gavāmayana covered 361 days or a complete year. The rites performed in the first 180 days were performed in the reverse order in the last 180 days. Thus the first 180 days covered six months and the last ones covered another term of six months. The Viṣuva day intervened between these pair of six months. Every six days completed one rite called śAṣāha which literally means a collection of six days. Thus each śAṣāha stood for a week and five śAṣāhas made up thirty days or a complete month. Hence sacrifices served two purposes—viz, the ritualistic or liturgical purpose and maintaining the calendar. Observes the S.B.—‘The sacrifice is of equal measure with the year; he offers five libations for sacrifice in commensurate with the year and there are five seasons in a year.’¹ Six seasons are mentioned in the Br. texts viz, summer, rains, autumn, Hemanta or the dewy season, winter and spring. But often it is said, ‘there are five seasons’ ‘Hemanta and winter are considered as one season when the number of seasons is given as five’, says Śāyaṇa.²

¹ S.B. 3-1-3-17—‘Saṁvatsara sammito vai yajñaḥ; paśca va ṛtavaḥ saṁvatsarasya tat paścābhīrāno tasmāt paśca kṛtvā ānakti.’
² ‘Paśca ṛtavo hemanta-aśirayōḥsamāsenā.’
The year or annual calendar consisted of 360 days. "There are 360 days in a year." There were twelve months in a year but sometimes the year is referred to as consisting of thirteen months. On the surface this statement of thirteen months may seem to be a contradiction but on sifting the statement becomes clear. The reason is not far to seek. The year consisted of 360 days and not 365 days; thus each year fell short of five days which accumulated in six years to an intercalary month of 35 days. Thus every sixth year, the annual calendar had an additional month or intercalary month of 35 days making thirteen months in all. "The year consists of 360 days; and what thirty-five there are they are the (intercalary) thirteenth month." Except six years' period of intercalation, a year, as usual, consisted of twelve months.

"The satarudriya sacrifice consists of 360 formulas, and other 30, and 35. Of these 360 corresponds to the 360 days of the year, 30 corresponds to the thirty nights of a month, and 35 refers to the thirteenth (intercalary) month", says the S.B.

The intercalary month is sometimes said to consist of 35 days, sometimes of 36 days. Not only the days of a sacrifice but also the bricks of the fire-altar are compared to the days of the year and the month. Thus in the construction of the fire-altar, observes S.B. 10-4-3—"there are 360 yajusmati' bricks, and 36 to be laid thereunto corresponding to the 360 days of the year and 36 days of the intercalary month'.

There are thirty nights in a month and fifteen nights in a half-

---

3. A.B. 2-7-7—"Trīpi ca vai satāni şaṭīsca saṃvatsarasayāhāni.'
   S.B. 1-3-5-9—"Trīpi ca satāni şaṭīsca saṃvatsarasayāhāni.'
4. S.B. 9-3-3-18—"Saṃvatsara satāni tāvanti saṃvatsarasayāhāni; yāni pañcatṛipāsat sa trayodaśo māsāḥ.
5. S.B. 1-3-5-10—"Dvāḍaśa vai māsāḥ saṃvatsarasya.'
6. S.B. 9-1-1-43—"Saṭīsca ha vai trīpi ca satānyetat satarudriyamatha...........tadubhayāni saṃvatsarasayāhorātrānyāpnoti.'
7. A.B. 3-14-3—"Trīpiṣat māsasya rātrayāl.'
month and twenty-four half months in a year. Even the days and nights of a month have been enumerated in S.B.; ‘there are sixty days and nights taken together in a month; i.e., there are thirty days and thirty nights in a month. The total number of full moons and new moons that recur within a term of fifteen years are also recorded. ‘In fifteen years there are 360 full moons and new moons.’ Not to speak of months, weeks, days and nights, even the total number of Muhūrtas has been recorded in S.B. 10-4-3-20 which reads as follows—‘There are ten thousand and eight hundred Muhūrtas in a year.’ Ten thousand and eight hundred bricks of the fire-altar have been compared to these Muhūrtas.

The clock-like regularity in which the years, months, days, seasons and astral bodies revolve and function attracted the attention of the Vedic Aryans. The day and night are conceived as the two wheels of the year which goes on like a chariot. Says the A.B.—‘The day and night—these two are the two wheels of the chariot-like year because on these two the year revolves.’

The S.B. goes a step farther and states, ‘The year, in fact, is nothing but days and nights since these two revolving produce it.’ ‘The days and nights of the year revolve in an uninterrupted unbroken continuity.’ Again, the sun is mainly responsible for

8. S.B. 1-3-5-8—‘Pañcadaśa vā ardhamāsasya rātrayaḥ.’
9. S.B. 3-4-4-20; 8-3-3-11; 2-2-2-5—‘Caturvīṇḍati vai saṃvatsarasya ardhamāsāḥ.’
10. 10-2-6-1—‘Saṣṭirmāsasyāhorāṭraṁ.’
11. S.B. 11-1-2-10—‘Pañcadaśānāṁ varṣānāṁ tripi ca śatāni saṣṭiśca paurṇmāsasyaśca amāvasyaśca.’
12. ‘Daśa ca sahaśrāpi aṣṭau ca śatāni bhavanti etāvanto hi saṃvatsarasya mūhūrtāḥ.’
13. 5-25-5—‘Ete ha vai saṃvatsarasya cakre yaḍahorātre tābhyaṁ eva tatsaṃvatsarameti.’
14. 3-2-2-4—‘Ahorātre vai saṃvatsaraḥ ete hyenaḥ pariplavamāne kurutaḥ.’
15. S.B. 1-3-5-16—‘Saṃvatsarasayāhorāṭraṁ santatāni avyava-rinchanni pariplavante.’
the creation of days and nights. The apparent rising of the sun marks the day and its apparent setting marks the evening. 'The sun knits together the days and nights; hence he is called close-knit.'

The moon is the creator of months and half-months. The two fortnights of a month are due to the gradual waning and waxing of the lunar digit. 'The moon waxes during fifteen days and wanes during fifteen days.' The complete disappearance of the moon is called Amāvasyā, and the night when the moon shines with all her digits complete is known as Paurṇamāsī or full-moon; the first appearance of the moon after Amāvasyā is called new moon. 'The moon', says, the A.B., 'enters into the sun during Amāvasyā and hence disappears completely'.

In the Soma-yāga the Soma creeper had to be pressed thrice daily for the three libations of Soma-juice to be offered in the morning, at midday, and at dusk. Thus the juice of the Soma creeper was thrice extracted daily and these three pressings, extractions, were termed Prātaḥsavāna or morning extraction, Mādhayandina savāna or midday pressing and Tr̄ṭiya savāna respectively. These three extractions marked 'the beginning, hey-day and termination of the day as well' known as Tri-sandhyā or three junctures of the day.

Now we shall take up the discussion of seasons as stated in the Brāhmaṇas concerned. There are six seasons and they come down to five when the dewy season, Hemanta and the winter, śita or śīśira are taken together. 'Two months make one season.' The names of the six seasons are as follows—Grīṣma, Varṣā, Śarat, Hemanta,

16. S.B. 9-4-1-8—'Asau vādityaḥ saṁhitā, eṣa hi ahorātre sandhāti.'
17. S.B. 8-4-1-10—'Candramā . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . pañcadasāhāni apūryate, pañcadasāpakṣṭyate.'
18. A.B. 8-40-5—'Candramā vāmāvasyāṣyaṁdityam anupraviśati, so'ntardhāyate.'
19. S.B. 8-4-2-14—'Dvau hi māsau ṛtuḥ.'
Śiśira and Vasanta. Each season comprises two months and the names of each pair of months corresponding to each season have been thus enumerated in the S.B.\textsuperscript{20}; Madhu and Mādhava are the two months of the spring season (Vasanta); śukra and śuci are the two months of the summer season; Nabha and Nabhasya are the two rainy months; Isā and Īrja are the two Autumn months; Hemanta comprises the two months of Saha and Sahasya; the Winter season or Śiśira comprises the two months of Tapaḥ and Tapasya. Due to its heat the summer is compared with the vigour of the Kṣatriya, and on account of its congenial atmosphere the spring is compared to the benign influence of the Brāhmaṇa. Hence 'the summer is called the season of the Kṣatriya,'\textsuperscript{21} and 'the spring is called the season of the Brāhmaṇa.'\textsuperscript{22} The rainy season is said to comprise all the seasons with its different aspects of natural phenomena such as gale, thunder, lightning, shower and cessation of shower. 'The rainy season comprises all the seasons. When it blows from the east, it characterizes the spring; when it thunders, it bespeaks summer; when it rains it characterizes the rainy season; its lightning is a mark of the autumn and when it ceases to rain, it bespeaks winter.'\textsuperscript{23} While enumerating the seasons the spring or Vasanta is always mentioned first and correspondingly in the list of months the Madhu or Phālguna comes first in the S.B. and A.B. It is evident from this enumeration or order of succession that in the later Vedic age the year commenced with the spring season and the month of Phālguna. In the month of Phālguna the moon is in conjunction with the nakṣatra of the Uttara-phālguni. Hence the full moon of the Phālguna marked the commencement of the year whereas the first Phālguna marked the termination of the year; hence the K.B. calls the former the month and the latter the tail of the year. The S.B. also

\textsuperscript{20} Vide S.B. 4-3-1-13 to 4-3-1-19.

\textsuperscript{21} S.B. 13-4-1-2—'Griśmo vai Kṣatriyasyartuḥ.'

\textsuperscript{22} S.B. 13-4-1-3—'Vasanto vai Brāhmaṇasyartuḥ.'

\textsuperscript{23} S.B. 2-2-3-8—'Vārsā vai sarva ṛtavāḥ. Yad eva purastāt vāti tad vasantasya rūpaṇī yad stanyatī tat Griśmasya, yad varṣaḥ tad varṣāṇam, yad vidyotate tat Saradah, . . . . . . . yad vṛṣṭvogṛhnāti tad hemantasyetī.'
-observes—‘The full moon of Phālguna, that is the second one is the first night of the year; and that (first) one is the last (night of the year). The T.B. and the K.B. also confirm the statement of the S.B. that the full moon of the Phālguna marks the commence-
ment of the year. The G.B. also states, ‘The Uttarā and Pūrvā Phālguni are respectively the beginning and the end of the year; just as the two ends of a thing meet together so these two ends of the year meet together.

Astronomy:

A perusal of Brs. prove beyond doubt that the Vedic Aryans knew the fact that the earth is round and the movement of the sun is only apparent, not true; the sun is stationary. The following Br. texts will bear out this contention. ‘This universe is round’, observes the S.B. The term ‘Parimaṇḍala’ means ‘round’ and ‘Lokaḥ’ means the earth.

Several Brs. state in clear and unmistakable terms that the sun never rises and never sets; he is like a great eye in the blue firmament that keeps watch for ever, and never blinks. Observes the A.B.—‘This Āditya (the sun) never sets and never rises. When one thinks him to have set, actually he creates night in that part and day in the other part (of the globe) at that time. When in the morning one regards the sun to have risen, in reality he terminates the night and creates day in that part; the other part being enveloped in night at that time. This sun never sets’.

25. T.B. 1-1-2-8—Eṣā vai jaghanyā rātrirḥ saṃvatsarasasya yat pūrve phālguniṃ; eṣā vai prathamā rātrirḥ saṃvatsarasasya yaduttare phālguniṃ.
26. K.B. 4-4—Mukhaṁ vṛttaḥ saṃvatsarasasya yat phālguniṃ paurnamāśi.
28. 7-1-1-37—Parimaṇḍala u vā ayaṁ lokaḥ.
29. 3-14—Sa vā eṣa (Ādityah) na kadācanāstameti nodeti tām yadastameti manyate’hna eva…………………abhavādhaṣṭat kuruṣe, rātrirṣ parastāt sa vā eṣa na kadācana nimrocati.'
The G.B. also makes the selfsame observation with slight variation of words. These passages clearly prove that the Aryans were conversant with the astronomical truth that the earth revolves whereas the sun remains stationary, that the movement of the sun is only apparent and not true and the revolution of the earth causes day and night. The sun does never set, nor does it rise. This stationary character of the sun shining alone and for ever is all the more emphasised in the Chāndogya Brāhmaṇa which reads as follows;—The sun never rises; never sets; he stays all alone in the middle. This śloka is heard in this connection viz,—the sun does never set nor rise. Here the term ‘Sthāṭā’ has been used to signify the stationary character of the sun. The word is derived from the root ‘Sthā’ which means ‘cessation of physical movement.’ Referring to this perennial watchfulness of the sun that knows no setting or rest the A.B. remarks—‘See the greatness of the sun-god who is ever vigilant and never sleeps while discharging his duty.’

The Vedic Aryans were conversant with the fact that there are many worlds in this vast universe like the solar region, the lunar world and the worlds belonging to different planets such as Jupiter, Mars etc. They came to the conclusion that the terrestrial world or the earth is the smallest in size in comparison with the other worlds. ‘Worlds above are graded according to their vastness and expanse and our earth is the smallest of all worlds’, observes the A.B.

---

29. 2-4-10—‘Sā vā eṣa na kāḍācanāstamayati, nodayayati. Tad yade-nam purastāt…………udayatītī manyante, rātrereva tadantaṃ gatvā…………na ha vai kāḍācana nimrocati.’

30. 5-31-1, 2, 3—‘Nalvodetā nāstametā, ekala eva madhye sthāṭā. Tadeṣa ślokaḥ’—
   Na ha vai tatra nimlocati nodiyāya kāḍācana.’
   Na ha vā asmā udeṭi, nimlocati.

31. ‘Śṭhā gatimivṛttau.’

32. 7-33-3—‘Sūryasya paśya śremānaḥ yo na tandrayate caran.’

33. 1-4-8—‘Parovarvāyāṣaḥ vā ime lokā arvāk amāityaḥ saḥ paras-tādarvācīrupasadah.’
Stars:

The Saṁhitās and the Brs. mention the Nakṣatras in the sense of 'stars' or stellar bodies. The sun, the moon and the nakṣatras are often mentioned together. The term 'Nakṣatra' is sometimes used in the sense of 'lunar mansion' as well as the conjunction of the moon and the star (nakṣatra) is described in terms of wedlock. The lunar mansion is termed 'Raśi' in Indian Astronomy. The T.B. mentions 24 (twenty-four) nakṣatras viz.—Kṛttikās, Invakās, Bāhū (dual number), Tiṣya, Āśleṣās, Maghās, Pūrve Phālgunī, Hasta, Citrā, Niṣṭyā, Viśākhe, Anurādhās, Rohinī, Mūlabarahaṇī, Pūrvā Aṣāḍhās, Uttarā Aṣāḍhās, Śroṇā, Śravīṣṭhās, Śatabhiṣaj, Pūrve Proṣṭhapadās, Uttare Proṣṭhapadās, Revatī, Aśvayujan, Apabharaṇīs. This list swells to 30 (thirty) in the 3-1-4 of the same Br. including the full moon and the new moon. Thus an attempt is made to harmonize the Nakṣatra or lunar month with the Śāvana or solar month of thirty days. The T.S., the M.S. and the K.S. each mentions 28 nakṣatras with slight variation in terminology.
BOOK IV
CHAPTER III

The Language & Literature Of the Brāhmaṇas:

The language of the Brs. is the first instance of Indo-European prose. The language is simple, lucid and unadorned; often it assumes a popular conversational tone. In the early Brs. such as the A.B., K.B., P.B., etc., the diction is simple and not so developed but there is an easy flow and spontaneity that takes the reader into confidence. In the later Brs., particularly in the S.B. and the J.B. a fully developed literary style is met with which reaches culmination in the mellifluous rhythmic prose of Upaniṣads. The language of the Brs. in general is characterised by an even rhythm and has a beauty of its own. It is, in the words of Eggeling, a reputed western Indologist, 'the only genuine prose works which the Sanskrit as a popular language, has produced.'1 The Brs. present a rich literature whose importance can never be overestimated. Apart from their contents the contribution of the Brs. to the field of Sanskrit literature and linguistics is vast, varied and worth its weight in gold. Besides their own language and literature the Brs. record important observations on speech and refer to various types of literature which form an interesting item of study and will be taken up in our next two topics for discussion—'Observations of the Brs. on speech' and 'Types of literature referred to in the Brs.'

In the following lines we shall make certain observations regarding some linguistic peculiarities of the Brs. As a rule, the language of the Brs. is systematic and homogeneous. Every Brs. has its minute linguistic peculiarities.

(i) All the Brs. except the S.B. and the T.B. are characterised by the absence of accent. There are only two accents in the S.B.

1. 'The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa', part XII, page XXV.
viz, the acute (Udātta) and grave (Anudātta) whereas the T.B. possesses all the three accents.

(ii) The language of all the Brs. teems with such particles as ha, vā, vai, vāva, u, eva etc. : Sometimes four or five such particles follow one another in an unbroken chain without any intervening word. This linguistic factor persists in the Upaniṣads as well.

(iii) The Instrumental plural form of stems ending in ‘a’, e.g., ‘stomebhiḥ’ for ‘stomaḥ’ (A.B. 4-15-1). In another form of the Instrumental, the stem remains unchanged, e.g., Jagat-Kāmyā (A.B. 6-15). The P.B. has the peculiar instrumental form ‘aharbis’ in place of the regular form ‘ahobhis’.

(iv) The ablative and genitive forms of stems ending in ‘ā’, are found to end in both the normal ‘āḥ’ as also in ‘ai’, e.g., in the genitive ‘apūtāyaḥ’ (A.B. 7-27), and ‘Pathyāyāḥ’ (A.B. 1-9). In the ablative we have such forms as ‘jīrṇāyaḥ’ (K.B. 38-7), ‘vidyāyaḥ’ (K.B. 6-10).

(v) The ‘an’ stems very often occur without any ending in the locative singular in the R.V. e.g., ‘Parame Vyoman’ etc., and also in the A.V. but not so in the Brs. except the two words ‘Ātman’ and ‘Ahan’ which do not change their form. The usual regular forms ‘dhāmani’, ‘samani’, ‘añi’, ‘ahani’ are also met with in the Brs.

(vi) The stems ending in ‘is’ and ‘us’ show transitions to stems in ‘i’ and ‘u’ and in ‘isa’ and ‘usaha’. From ‘janus’ is once made the nominative singular ‘janus’, after the manner of ‘as’—stem in the R.V. The S.B. has the form ‘janūrvāsas’.

(vii) First traces of gerunds in ‘am’ are already met with in the R.V., but they are quite common in the Brs.

(viii) The suffix ‘uka’ with the sense of a present participle is a marked characteristic of the language of the Brs. e.g. — ‘Rājā bāhuvall bhāvukaḥ’ (S.B. 13-2-2-5), ‘Rūpinī jāyā priyā bhavukā’ etc.

(ix) Use of imperative ‘Lot’—endings ; Use of ‘tāt’ as an imperative ending of the second person, e.g., Nidhattāt, gamayatāt, anvasijatāt, kṛnutāt, etc., in the A.B. form ‘kṛnutāt is frequently met with in connection with the dissection of the slaughtered animal’s body. In the second person plural we have the form ‘śrṇotana’ in the A.B. 7-18-5.
(x) In the classical Sanskrit the use of perfect (Lit) is barred in the first person by Pāṇini's rule, 'Parokṣe Lit', but in the Brs. we have examples of the Perfect tense (Lit) used in the first person as well, e.g., Śuśrūma (A.B. 7-15).

(xi) Peculiar Aorist forms such as 'akarta' (A.B. 7-18-5) and 'adanśuḥ' (A.B. 7-17-3) are met with.

(xii) The use of 'rūpaṁ kṛ' in the sense of 'to become' is a peculiar feature of Br. Syntax. It means, 'to assume a changed form'. The original meaning of 'rūpa' was 'assumed form'. This usage is also met with in the T.S., e.g., 'kṛṣṇo rūpaṁ kṛtva' taking on a black form', i.e., assuming a shape for himself as one that is black.

With these observations on the literature and language of the Brs. we shall now pass on to the more important topic, 'Observations of the Brs. on speech' and 'Types of Literature referred to in the Brs.' Originality may be claimed for both these topics.
BOOK IV

MISCELLANEOUS

CHAPTER III

Observations of the Brs. on Speech:

The Brs. have classified speech (Vāk) into three varieties, viz, the divine, the human and the demoniac. The divine is termed Daivi Vāk, the human Manuṣi Vāk and demoniac the Rākṣasi Vāk. The divine or Daivi Vāk is met with in the sacred lore, i.e., the Veda. The gods also speak in this language. ‘Vāk or speech is expressed in three ways, the Rākṣa verses, the Yajuṣ texts and the Sāmaṇ hymns.’¹ Differentiating the divine speech from the human speech the S.B. observes that the Vedic verses uttered in the sacrifice represent the divine speech whereas the words other than Vedic terms exchanged between the priests represent the human speech, Mānūṣi Vāk. Thus the words uttered by the priest such as, ‘Do ye this! do that!’ etc., are human speech.² The language of an excited person or a lunatic is an illustration of the Rākṣasi Vak.³ The human speech is characterised by flawlessness and unaltering accents. Hence faltering speech is differentiated from the human speech. ‘He speaks the faltering speech and not the unaltering even human speech.’⁴

1. S.B. 6-5-3-4—’Tṛedhā vimitā hi vāk ṛco yajāṃṣi sāmāṇi.’
S.B. 10-5-1-2—’Sā vā eṣa vāk tṛedhā vihitā, ṛco yajāṃṣi sāmāṇi.’
2. 10-5-1-1—’Vācā hi clyate ṛca yajuṣā sāmneti nu daivyāthā yanmanusya vācā-hetidaṃ kuruta idaṃ kuruteti.’
3. A.B. 2-1-7—’Yāṁ vai dpiṭo vadati, yāmunmattat, sa vai rāk-śasi vāk.’
4. S.B. 3-2-2-27—’Parihvālaṃ vācaṃ vadati, na manuṣṭam prasṛtām.’
In a noteworthy passage of the S.B., articulate human speech is distinguished from inarticulate sound of beasts, birds and reptiles. The articulate sound of human beings is called 'Niruktam' and the inarticulate sound of beasts, 'Aniruktam.'

Vāk has been identified with Sarasvati in almost all the Brs. 'Vāk is Sarasvati,' says the S.B. 'Verily, Vāk is Sarasvati, declare the A.B., K.B., and P.B. Pathyā Svasti is another name of Vāk. Hence the terms Vāk, Sarasvati and Pathyā Svasti are identical in sense. The speech of the Northern India, particularly of the region known as Kurupañcāla has been eulogised as the best speech and hence that region is described as the resort of Pathyā Svasti. Observes the S.B.—'Pure speech (Pathyā Svasti) discerned the northern direction; hence the peoples of Kurupañcālas speak the pure language.' The K.B. remarks, —'Pathyā Svasti (Vāk) discerned the northern quarters; hence speech is uttered with wisdom and discretion in the northern region; this is why people go to that region to learn pure speech and he who comes back therefrom is honoured; people hearken to him.'

The Brs. mention the intimate relation that exists between the mind and speech. The authors of the Brs. correctly realise the fact that the mind is the essential factor that guides the other sense-organs, that speech is impossible without the co-operation of the mind. 'Speech is preceded by the mind because, speech expresses what is comprehended by the mind,' observes the

5. 4-1-3-16—'Vāco niruktaṃ yanmanuoṣyā vadanti............... aniruktaṃ yat paśavo vadanti, aniruktaṃ yad vayāṃśi vadanti........... aniruktaṃ yaddaṃ kṣudraṃ sarīrpaṃ vadati.'

6. 7-5-1-31—'Vāk Sarasvati.'
7. A.B. 3-3-13 ; K.B. 5-2 ; P.B. 6-7-7—'Vāg vai Sarasvati.'
8. K.B. 7-6 ; S.B. 3-2-3-8—'Vāg vai Pathyā Svasti.'
9. 3-2-3-15—'Udāṃśe vina daśm. Pathyā Svastya prajānāṃstas-mādatottaraḥ hi vāg vadiṣṭi kurupañcālarā.'
10. 7-6—'Sā (Pathyā Svastiḥ) udāṃśa daśmā prajānāt, tasmāduddhaye śām daśi praṣṭatārā vāgūdyata; udayaḥ u eva yanti vācaṃ śikṣātaḥ yo vā tata ṛgacchanti tasya vā śuṣrūṣanta iti.'
P.B. The sphere of speech or language is smaller than that of the mind. 'Mind is, as it were, unlimited, speech is limited.' Hence 'speech is less comprehensive than mind.' Mind, again, has no power of verbal expression of its own; it expresses itself through the medium of speech. Thus, speech is the channel through which mind finds an outlet. This is why the speech (Vāk) is described as 'the canal of the mind.' The close and inseparable relation between the mind and sound is a well-established psychological truth with which the Vedic Aryans were conversant.

Speech has been compared with a wish-yielding milch cow (Kāmadhenu) that gives milk at any hour of the day and night whenever she is milked; that is to say, any quantity of milk can be obtained from her. Likewise any number of words can be framed from the letters or alphabets, and any number of phrases and sentences from the words. Thus, 'Speech is Śabali, i.e., wish-yielding milch cow.'

The A.B. likens truth and falsehood, i.e., true and false statements to the two breasts of speech. Just as the breasts of a mother may simultaneously nurture both a good and a bad child, similarly, speech may feed both truth and falsehood; both true words and false words owe their existence to speech. 'Speech has two breasts; they are truth and falsehood.' Thus Vāk or speech may represent both the truth and untruth.

Speech is identified with Brahman in the senses of both the.

11. 1-1-1-3—'Mano ha pārvarṇ vāco yaddhi manasādīhīgacchati, tad vācā vadati.'
12. S.B. 1-4-4-7—'Aparimitataramiva hi manaḥ parimita-tareva hi vāk.'
13. S.B. ibid.—'Vāg vai manasāḥ hrasīyasi.'
14. J.B. (U) 1-58-3—'Tasya (manasah) eṣā kulyā yad vāk.'
15. P.B. 21-3-1, 'Vāg vai śavāt.'
16. A.B. 4-1-1—'Vāco vāva dvou stanau, satyānte vāva te.'
Veda and the Supreme Godhead. The Absolute Brahman finds expression in language; in that capacity Vâk is regarded as Eternal Verbum, the symbol of Godhead just as the holy syllable Om is regarded as the symbol of the Absolute Godhead. Like the Veda, the sacrifice is also identified with speech as it consists of sacrificial formulae, Sâma chants, mantras and injunctions of the different priests. Hence the S.B., A.B., P.B., etc., identify Vâk with the sacrifice, yajña. As the god Brhaspati is the lord of speech, Vâk is identified with this deity as well.

The variations of the same term caused by regional influences are also recorded in the Brs. The S.B. takes note of this linguistic truth and illustrates it with reference to the variations of the synonyms of the term ‘Agni’ according to different regions of the then India. ‘Agni’ is the deity; he has the following synonyms; the people of the eastern region call him by the term ‘Śarva’; the Bahikas (people of the Bahika region) term him ‘Bhaba’ etc.

Types Of Literature mentioned In The Brs.:

Various types of literature have been mentioned in the Brâhmaṇaṇas as follows:—

(i) Trayī Vidyā:

The three Vedas, viz, RK, Sāman and Yajus have been clearly mentioned in all the Brs. Sometimes the A.V. is also included in the import of this term ‘vidyā’ (knowledge) which is tripartite in form, viz, the RK verses, the Yajus formulae and the Sāma hymns.17 The gods salvaged the triple knowledge, par excellence, from the ocean of the mind by means of the shovel of speech.18 The S.B. 11-5-6 mentions the four Vedas, the R.V.,

---

17. S.B. 4-6-7-1—‘Trayī vaidyā yco yajūṣī śāmbāni.’
18. S.B. 7-5-2-52—‘Manaso vai samudrād vācābhṛayā devastraṁp vidyāṁ nirakhanan.’
The Y. V. and S. V. and A. V. as the sacred lore included in the syllabus of study and compares them with the milk-offerings, butter-offerings, soma-offerings and fat-offerings to the gods respectively connected with the sessional sacrifice, viz, the Vedic study termed Brahma-Yajña. In a noteworthy passage of the S.B., the number of syllables of each Veda has been recorded. According to this observation of the S.B. the Rgveda consists of 432,000 syllables, and the Y. V. and the S. V. jointly consist of 432,000 syllables. ‘Thus the three Vedas jointly consist of 864,000 syllables.’

The S.B. ascribes the origin of the R. V. to god Agni, the Y. V. to god Vāyu and the S. V. to the Sun-god. G. B. (P) 2-16 mentions the four Vedas, the R. V., the Y. V., S. V., and the Brahma-veda. By the term Brahma-veda the A. V. is meant. Greatness of Śāmasaveda. All the Brs. sing the glory of the Vedas and extol the efficacy derived from the study of the Vedas. The S.B. and the G.B. (U) make the identical observation, ‘The Śāman i.e., the S. V. is the essence, the flavour of all the Vedas.’ In the post-Vedic age Lord Kṛṣṇa declares in the Gītā, ‘I am the S. V. amongst the Vedas.’

The Brs. maintain that it is only through the Vedas that one can attain to the Supreme and suprasensuous knowledge. ‘One ignorant of the Veda can never comprehend the Supreme Godhead, the Absolute’, observes the T. B.

The G.B.(P) calls the ‘Śāvitri’ hymn the mother of all the Vedas. The S.B. regards the Vedas as the breathings of the Supreme

---

19. 10-4-2 (the whole of the Second Br.).
20. 10-4-2-25—‘Te sarve trayo vedāḥ, daśa ca sahasrānyāṣṭau ca satūnaśśītuṣnām abhavān’. (10800 × 80 = 864000).
21. 11-5-8-3—‘Agnirṛgvedo vāyoryajurvedaḥ, sūryād sāmasavedaḥ.’
22. S.B. 12-8-3-23 ; G.B. (U) 5-7—‘Sarveṣāṃ vā eṣa vedānāṃ raso yāt sāma.’
23. 10-22—‘Vedānāṃ sāmasavedo’smi.’
24. 3-12-9-7—‘Nāvedavammanute tasmā vṛhantam.’
25. 1-39—‘Etaṃ vedānāṃ mātaram Śāvitriṃ.’
Being. Just as the processes of respiration function involuntarily
the Vedas also spontaneously emanated from the Supreme Being.

(ii) Gāthā :—

Couplets praising past deeds and glory of kings, priests and
other human beings are called Gāthās and are met with in the Brs.
Gāthās are synchronous with the R.V. in age according to some
scholars. Some Gāthās occur in the eighth and ninth khaṇḍas
of the thirty-ninth chapter of the eight Paṇcikā of the A.B. The
T.B. thus recounts the origination of Gāthā. Gods removed the
unclean portion of the Veda ; ‘that unclean portion of the Veda
became Gāthā Nārāśampi.’"26 Sāyaṇa thus explains the term
‘Nārāśampi’ which is a qualifying adjective to Gāthā. ; ‘The eulogy
of kings, ministers etc., is called Nārāśampasa and the couplets
relating to such eulogy that can be put to tune are termed
Nārāśampi.’"27 The eulogy of famous kings who offered fabulous
sums and princely presents to their officiating priests are recounted
in the Gāthās contained in the A.B. referred to above.

(iii) Anuṣāsanāni.
(iv) Vidyā.
(v) Vākṣvākyam.
(vi) Itihāsa-purāṇam.
(vii) Anvākhyāna.

The S.B. mentions these types of literature along with Gāthā-
Nārāśampi as the items of study prescribed for the syllabus con-
cerning the study of the Veda. These terms have been explained
under the caption ‘Education’ in Book I. The S.B. compares
these items of Vedic study to sacrificial offerings, the study of the

26. T.B. 1.3.6—‘Yad brahmaṇaḥ śamalammāsit sā gāthā nārāśaṃsa-

bhavat.’

27. ‘Nārāṇam rājāmātyādīnāmāsamantāt praśaṃsanaṃ nārāśasam-
tadvāsyaśa gīnārāśampi.’
Veda being regarded as a lifelong satra or sacrificial session. These subjects of study are honey-offerings to the gods. Whosoever knowing this, studies daily the precepts (Anuśāsana), the sciences (Vidyā), the dialogue (Vākōvākyam), the traditional myths and legends (Itiḥāsa-purāṇa) and the Nārāsāṁśī songs, for his lesson, satisfies the gods with honey-offerings.²⁸

Śāyaṇa splits up the word ‘Itiḥāsa-purāṇa’ into two separate words. By the term ‘Itiḥāsa’ he understands cosmological myths or accounts. He takes the term ‘Purāṇa’ to mean legends, stories of antiquity, and cites the love-episode of king Pururavas and the heavenly damsel Urvaśī as an illustration. This story occurs in the R.V. (X-95). Regarding this dialogue Macdonell observes—‘A good deal of interest attaches to this myth, not only as the oldest Indo-European love-story, but as one which had a long history in Indian literature.’²⁹ The S.B. (11-5-9) has raised the fabric of this episode on the slender fibre of the Ṛgvedic story and has made it lively and of abiding interest. The tale of Duśyanta and Śakuntalā also makes its first appearance in the S.B. Thus the S.B. supplies the kernel of two famous plays of the immortal poet Kalidāsa, Vikramorvaśiyam and Abhijñāna-Śakuntalam. This Br. also recounts the tale of Manu and the fish connected with the great deluge. Manu once came across a small fish which requested him to rear it, and promised to save his life from the coming deluge that would inundate the whole universe. According to its suggestion Manu fashioned an ark and boarded the same with the onset of the deluge. The ark was finally guided to the Northern Mountain by the fish, to whose horn the ship was tied. Thus Manu’s life was saved and he became the progenitor of mankind. The S.B. is thus a veritable mine of informations and noteworthy narratives and legends.

The age-old story of Sunah-śepa known as Sunah-Śepā-

²⁸ 11-5-6-8—‘Mahāhutayo ha vā etā (devānām) . . . . . . . mahā- hutiḥbhir eva taddevāṣṭarpayati.’
²⁹ A History of Sanskrit Literature, page 119.
khyāna which has gained wide celebrity is narrated in the thirty-third chapter of the A.B. King Hariśchandra had hundred wives but no issue. He promised to sacrifice his son to Varuṇa if a son be born unto him with the god’s boon. A son Rohita by name, was born but the king played Varuṇa false by deferring the sacrifice of his son on lame excuses. His plea did not hold water and Varuṇa punished him with the fatal disease dropsy. Hariścandra purchased the son of a poor famished Brahmin Ajigarta by name in exchange for a hundred cows. ŚunahŚepa, the second son of Ajigarta was purchased to be the proxy of Rohita in the sacrifice. For another hundred cows Ajigarta tied his own son to the stake as a victim of the sacrifice. For another hundred cows he offered to slaughter his own son. ŚunahŚepa in order to escape death propitiated the gods Prajāpati, Agni, Savitṛ, Varuṇa, Viśvedevāḥ, Indra, Aśvinas and the goddess of dawn Uṣā respectively. As a result of his propitiation the thongs that held him fast to the stake became loose of their own accord and the victim was released. In the coronation ceremony of kings in the Rājasūya sacrifice the Hotṛ priest narrates the anecdote of ŚunahŚepa as a convention.

The ‘Anvākhyāna’ literally means a sequel to a story, an after-story. The word occurs in the S.B. and is used in two different senses. The subsequent portion of the book is sometimes termed Anvākhyāna ; sometimes it signifies a traditional story and partakes of the nature of Itiḥāsa partially.

(viii) Accessories to Vedic Study :—

The G.B. is the latest of all the Brs. and judged by its contents and language, appears to be synchronous with the Grhyasūtras and early Dharmasūtras. This Br. in a passage of its first part enumerates the list of accessories to the study and proper understanding of the Veda. The list includes Kalpas, Rahasyas, Brs., Upaniṣads, Itiḥāsas, Anvākhyānas, Purāṇas, Svaras, Saṃskāras.

30. G.B (P) 2-10—’Evamime sarve vedā nirmitāḥ sakalpāḥ saraḥsasyāḥ, sabrahmaṇāḥ sopaniṣatkiḥ setiḥāsāḥ śānvākhyānāḥ saparāṇāḥ sasvarāḥ saśasapākārāḥ saniruktāḥ sānuśāsanāḥ sānumārjanāḥ savākovaikhyāḥ.’
Nirukta, Anuśāsana, Anumārjana and Vāk.ovākya. The ‘Kalpas’ signify aphoristic literature dealing with rituals; they are veritable manuals of sacrificial rites. The Kalpasūtras are divided into two classes, the Śrauta-sūtras and Gṛhyasūtras, the former dealing with Vedic rites and the latter with domestic rites. The ‘Rahasyas’ mean those portions of the Vedic literature which deal with social, political or spiritual matters that were confidentially discussed. Some scholars take this term to mean Āraṇyakas. The terms Brāhmaṇa and Upaniṣat have been explained in the introduction to this work. The terms Itihāsa and Purāṇa as well as the terms Anuśāsana and Vāk.ovākyam have also been explained with illustrations in the foregoing pages. The Svaras refer to accents in particular and phonetics in general. The term ‘Saṃskāra’ has been explained as grammar by some as grammar chastens speech. Both the phonetics and grammar represent two Beginnings Vedāngas or accessories to the study of the Veda technically called, Śikṣā and Vyākaraṇa respectively. The Nirukta also is another Vedāṅga dealing mainly with etymology, linguistics and the Vedic pantheon as well. The Brs. mark the beginnings of etymological discussion which culminates in the Nirukta.

The Art of Debate:

Under ‘Education we have shown that debating was a compulsory feature of education and it was a part of some rites and sacrifices. The campus of grand sacrifices such as the horse sacrifice and royal courts of famous kings who were patrons of learning like the saint king Janaka of Videha became regular centres of learning and witnessed many debates, theological disputations and metaphysical discourses. There existed a spirit of emulation and intolerance in these matters. The northern part of India was celebrated for purity of speech, and Brāhmaṇas of that region thought it to be very humiliating if they were defeated by the Brahmins of other regions. Many debates are recorded in the Brs. and the Upaniṣads, particularly in the S.B. and the B.U. The term ‘Vāk.ovākyam’ originally meant Vāk.ovākyam, a form of debate; later on it came to mean debate which consists in dialogue and witty retorts.
The debate was called Brahmodya, Abhipraśna etc. In the post-Vedic age the terms Vidyā-vivāda, Vidyā-vicāra, Vitarka etc., meant debate. The Y.V. in general and the V.S. in particular mentions several technical terms signifying the prime mover, the opposer and the judge of a debating bout. Thus the term Praśnin means the prime mover, ‘Abhipraśnin’ means the opposer who puts counter questions, and the term ‘Praśna-vivāka’ stands for him who answers all the questions.

This system of debate and disputation is the nucleus of the Indian logic. Logic or reason is the dominating factor in debates and discourses. In the course of study known as ‘Vākovākyam’ we may trace the origin of the Tarkaśāstra, the science and art of reasoning.

**Maxims**:

Many good sayings, maxims lie scattered like sparkling gems in the Brs. A few utterances are stated below as illustrations in point. Pride goeth before a fall. ‘Too much pride is the cause of downfall’, observes the S.B.\(^{31}\) One should not take exception to the behaviour of a person favoured with divine grace; remarks the A.B.\(^{32}\)

Regarding the quantity of food fit for human consumption the S.B. makes a wise observation.; ‘Too much food harms the body while too little cannot sustain life; food which is proportionate to the body nourishes life.’\(^{33}\) Dilating on the utility of the wife, daughter and the son the A.B. remarks, ‘A wife is a friend (partner), a daughter is the cause of sorrow, and a son is (like) a veritable luminary in the highest heaven’\(^{34}\), i.e., to say, a son is the sun of life.

---

31. 11-1-8-1—‘Parābhavasya haitanmukham yadatimānaḥ.’
32. 5-24-3—‘Mā śriyo vai vādiśma.’
33. 10-4-1-14—‘Yadu vā ātmasammitaḥ tadavati tanna hinaṣṭi, yad bhūyo hinaṣṭi tad yat kanīyo na tadavati.’
34. 7-33-1—‘Sakha ha jāyaḥ, kipaṇaḥ hi duhitā jyotirhi putrāḥ parame vyoman.’
 Allegory:

The Brs. abound with beautiful allegories which may be regarded as the kernel of the morality plays or allegorical dramas that evolved in the post-Vedic age. Under 'Eschatology' in Book III we have referred to an allegorical passage describing the mystic vision of Bhṛgu, son of Varuṇa. In one of his visions relating to the other world he meets two women; one of them is beautiful while the other is superbly beautiful possessing bewitching charms. In the midst of these two graceful damsels stands a man of dark complexion with yellow eyes and repulsive features holding a staff in his hand. The beautiful maiden symbolises Belief and the damsel with captivating beauty and irresistible charms represents Unbelief. The black man with yellow eyes and foreboding features is a symbol of Wrath. By different rites connected with Agniḥotra a sacrifcer conquers belief, unbelief and wrath. This vision of Bhṛgu is recorded in the S.B. and the J.B. In his fifth vision as delineated in the J.B. Bhṛgu visits the region of the god Varuṇa where a beautiful vision awaits him. The panorama of the earth and sky, of the land and water bespeaks heavenly bliss and profound serenity. He finds five rivers where thousands of white and blue lotuses are blooming merrily amidst sparkling waves of honey, where the heavenly nymphs disport themselves and the whole atmosphere is charged with the sweet aroma that is constantly wafted from the lotuses and with the sound of music and dance that regale the ears and charm the eyes. This is an allegorical description of Varuṇaloka, a graphic pen-picture of the paradise. These flowers and rivers are symbolical. Besides these descriptions many symbolical rites connected with the sacrifice are allegorical in their import. The mystic fire-altar described in Book III under 'The Theory of Sacrifice' is highly allegorical; every lair of the fire-altar, each design has an allegorical meaning. The purchase of Soma, the beating of the Śūdra or non-Aryan, the carrying away of the calf which symbolises speech etc., are examples of allegory.

Thus the Brs. mark the beginnings of allegorical dramas and morality plays in Sanskrit literature.
Drama:

Besides allegorical plays, drama in general is also foreshadowed in the Brs. as also in the Samhitā literature. Under ‘The Forms of Sacrifice’ in Book III we have shown how certain sacrifices involve dialogues that are dramatic in character.

The dialogue hymns of the R.V. gather shape and become more dramatic in character in the Brs. The dialogue between king Pururavā and the celestial nymph Urvaśī recorded in the R.V. gains in bulk and clearly assumes a dramatic tone in the S.B.

From the above discussion we may safely conclude that the Brs. refer to multifarious forms of literature and it is a wonder that so many literary forms came into existence in the Vedic age which harks back to hoary antiquity.
BOOK IV
CHAPTER IV.

Crimes and Ordeals:

In Book III, Chapter V under ‘Emergence of popular religious cults’ several varieties of crimes and criminals have been mentioned in connection with the evolution of the Rudra-Śiva-cult. The Śatarudriya hymn of the V.S. mentioned therein enumerates various crimes that obtained in the society in the later Vedic age. The said hymn of the V.S. mentions cheats, pilferers, thieves, house-breakers, pickpockets, night-rangers, highwaymen, cutthroats, robbers armed with swords, marauders equipped with bows and arrows, swindlers and gangsters who move about with turbans on.\(^1\) The terms Kulūñca, Stena, Stāyu, Muñnat, Taskara used in this hymn signify different grades of theft. The terms Niṣaṅgina, Śṛkāyin, Īṣhānsad, Naktañcarat, Vikṛnta, Gircara, Uṣṇīsin and the like bespeak different grades of gangsterism. S.B. 13-2-4-2 mentions thieves, robbers and ogres. Besides the various kinds of thieves and robbers the same hymn of the V.S. mentions also other vices and criminals such as unchaste woman (Āyogu), harlot (Puṁścali), gambler (Kītava), adulterer (Jāra), paramour (Upapati), a female who practises love-spells (smara-kāri) etc. A highly licentious woman or a nymphomaniac who transgressed matrimonial bonds was called Aṭitvarī. The males of three higher castes often kept the females of the Śūdra caste as mistresses or concubines.

It was a common vice countenanced in the society. The A.B. narrates the unpardonable crime committed by god Prajāpati, viz, incest with his daughter. The gods severely condemned the heinous crime of Prajāpati and

---
\(^1\) Vide V. S. 16-21, 22.
created the dreaded god Rudra to punish him. Rudra killed Prajāpati.

As regards the ordeals the Brs. mention the ordeal of walking in burning fire. If the alleged culprit remains unscathed, if his body is not singed by fire he is declared not-guilty; he is declared guilty if his body gets scalded. The eighth Prapāṭhaka of the C.U. mentions the ordeal of holding the red-hot axe (‘Tapta-parāśu-grahaṇam’). If the alleged thief stood the ordeal all right he was acquitted. Standing the test of fire was a common ordeal prevalent in the Vedic and post-Vedic age. In the epic age Sitā’s Fire-ordeal as the acid test of chastity is reminiscent of this Vedic ordeal. Some ordeals await men in the purgatory of the hell after death for sins committed during their life on earth. Some such ordeals and harrowings of the hell have been described in connection with Bhrigu’s mystic trance, and visit to purgatory under ‘Eschatology’ in Book III of this work.
Summary Of Book IV

Book IV comprises miscellaneous topics such as flora, fauna, astronomy, calendar, language and literature etc., which have no logical connection with one another. Due to this want of homogeneity these topics have been classed under ‘Miscellaneous’. A gist of this book has been given in the introduction (pages...). Four topics in particular dealt with in this book merit importance viz., astronomy, calendar, observations of the Brs. on speech and types of literature mentioned in the Brs. So far as the discussion of astronomy is concerned the knowledge of solar science of the Vedic fathers is astonishing. The Brs. state in clear language that the sun does not rotate, the apparent movement of the sun is illusory, that it is the earth that rotates, that the sun neither rises nor sets. The sun is ever-vigilant. Those who are in the dark about this scientific observation of the Vedic literature credit the astronomer Bhāskarācārya with the discovery of this solar science. Bhāskarācārya flourished in the 4th century A.D. whereas many centuries before he was born or thought of, the authors of the Brs. discovered this truth by their personal observation. The A.B. one of the oldest Brs., makes this observation in categorical terms and the date of this Br. is fixed between 2000 B.C. and 1500 B.C. Thus the Vedic sages observed and recorded this natural phenomena long before the west discovered it. The observation of A.B. is corroborated by the K.B. and G.B. The discussion captioned ‘Calendar’ presents a correct picture of the then Aryan calendar comprising the seasons, months, fortnights, solar and lunar months, weeks, days of the year, intercalary month etc. The full moon of the month of Phālguna marked the commencement of the year. The sessional sacrifice Gavāmayana and some īṣṭis connected with different sacrifices clearly bespeak the then calendar.

The observations of the Brs. on speech is interesting and illuminating. The division of speech into inarticulate and
articulate, human and non-human, correct and faltering, the psychological relation and interdependence between mind and speech, regional variations etc., form an interesting study in the field of linguistics and acoustics. More interesting and astonishing than this topic is the survey of various types of literature recorded in the Brs. The emergence of so many varieties of literary form ranging from simple poetry and laudatory verses of human beings (Gāthā) to the art of reasoning and debate, philosophical observations, allegory and beginnings of drama in general, and morality plays and the like in hoary antiquity when the west was steeped in darkness surpass our imagination. These literary forms bear testimony to the creative activity of the age of the Brs. The language and literature of the early Saṃhitās attained remarkable development in the Brs. and found full expression in the wonderful language and literature of the Upaniṣads which bespeak perfect rhythm, perspicuity, lucidity, spontaneity, sublimity and sonority. Thus the literature of the Brs. is a transition from that of the Saṃhitā to the literature of the Upaniṣads.
CONCLUSION

Now we shall attempt to present an over-all picture of the work as a whole. The work embodies all the important aspects denoted by the terms culture and civilisation as revealed in the Br. literature in general and the four Brāhmaṇas concerned in particular; the social, economic, political, religious, philosophical, linguistic, literary and other miscellaneous aspects of the Brāhmaṇic age have been enumerated in the thesis. The relation of the Brāhmaṇical period with the early Vedic age on the one hand and with that of the Upaniṣadic age on the other has been clearly shown stating the points of similarity and departure in each aspect.

The transition from the early Vedic to the Brāhmaṇic or later Vedic age is a march from unstability to stability, unsettled life to settled life. During the period of the early Saṃhitās the States were still tribal having no territorial basis or fixed geographical boundary. Each clan used to move about with its chief from place to place; such states may be termed floating states. In the later Vedic age these floating states became territorial with clearly defined geographical boundaries. It was also a march from chieftaincy to monarchy. Though there were various grades in the hierarchy of kingship, imperialism in the strict sense of the term is unknown. An emperor ruling over a vast dominion without any subsidiary king under him is unheard of.

Both in the social and political sphere the Brāhmins enjoyed a supreme position. They acted as chief advisers to the king in matters both diplomatic and spiritual. The clan-life of the early Vedic age assumed the form of class-life or caste system in the Brāhmaṇic age. Though the clan-life culminated into the family life and class-life the formation of the race did not materialise even in the age of the Brs. Through intermarriage between four castes many mixed castes emerged and the social structure became more complicated. New professions and industries came into
existence to provide for the economic solvency of these new castes. Non-Aryans who submitted to the Aryan hegemony went to the making of the Śūdra community. During the age of the later Brs. the position of the Vaiśyas and Śūdras was upgraded. The non-Aryans who embraced the Aryan culture were no longer looked upon as enemies by the Aryan rulers. A political and cultural synthesis was attempted.

During the last phase of the Brāhmaṇic era the importance of sacrifice came to be underrated; consequently the priests began to lose their hold on the common people and rich patrons. Politically also the influence of the Brāhmin priests was on the decline; hence they began to lose their hold on the monarchs as well who were their main prop. This fact reached its culmination in the Upaniṣadic age when the Brāhminical power was definitely on the wane and sacrifice with its huge paraphernalia was denounced. Sacrifice could satisfy neither the enlightened people nor the mass. New popular religious cults such as the Viṣṇu-cult, Śiva-cult etc., came into existence which satisfied the common people whereas the cultured mind resorted to the path of knowledge. The later Brs. state the superiority of knowledge to the observance of Vedic rituals or karma. This tendency finds full expression in the Upaniṣads which sing the glory of knowledge, par excellence, and recommend it for the realisation of the Supreme Self. Thus the eulogy of knowledge in the later Brs., the emergence of popular religious cults and the beginnings of Bhakti-cult heralded a new era; from this perspective the Brs. can be called precursors of both the Upaniṣads and the Purāṇas—of the Upaniṣads so far as the doctrine of knowledge, recognition of spiritual merit and the underrating of sacrifices are concerned; and of the Purāṇas so far as the popular religious creeds and practices, Bhakti-cult and the germ of image-worship and places of pilgrimage are concerned. The rigidity of caste-system and class-bar gradually relaxed in this age and intellectual attainment or spiritual merit was given due recognition. Non-Brahmins, even Śūdras appear as authors of Br. text (the A.B.) and Vedic hymns. As a gesture of goodwill and mark of compromise many non-Aryan practices and primitive religion were taken over by the Aryan society; some sacrificial rites and popular religious cults amply bespeak this
impact as stated in Book III under ‘Influence of non-Aryan religion and primitive faith’.

In the domain of philosophy the doctrine of Karma, the problem of soul, transmigration and metempsychosis, the cosmogony and theology of the Brs. are a far cry from those of the early Samhitās. In the later Brs. such as the S.B. and T.B. not only the personal deities but the Impersonal Unqualified Supreme Godhead termed Brahman also is stated in clear and unambiguous terms, and the Vedantic doctrine of Mokṣa or final liberation has been hinted at. The identification of the Supreme Soul Brahman, individual Soul Ātman and Truth with one another is complete in the Brs. The beginnings of the Vedānta, Sāṅkhya, Nyāya and Puruṣa-mimāṁsā systems of Indian philosophy are clearly traceable in the Brs.

The language of the Brs. marks the first appearance of Sanskrit prose in a popular form which is gradually developed in the later Brs., the S.B. in particular, and culminates in the wonderful poetic prose of the Upaniṣads. So far as literary forms are concerned we meet with various types of literature referred to in the Brs. such as the Mantra texts, the Gāthā Nārāśaṁsi or laudatory verses in honour of human beings, Itihāsa-Purāṇa, Anuśāsana, Anvākhyaṇa, Vākovākyam, drama, allegory, maxims, art of debate, morality plays and accessories to the Vedic study. Our mind overflows with admiration for the creative genius of the Vedic fathers manifested in so many astonishing varieties of literary form that obtained in hoary antiquity. Thus in the field of language and literature as well the Brs. mark the period of transition from the Samhitā to the Upaniṣads.

From the above discussion it is clear that the age of Brs. mark the period of transition from the early Vedic age to the last phase of the Vedic age or the Upaniṣadic age from all aspects—social, economic, political, religious, philosophical, linguistic and literary. From the social aspect it was a march from clan-life to family life and class-life, from nomadic state to settled village life and urban life; it is also a transition from simple social structure to complicated structure. Politically this era was a transition from clan-chieftaincy to monarchy, from floating
tribal states to states with territorial basis, from simple kingship to hierarchy of monarchy. The Brāhmaṇa-Kṣatriya-rule was firmly established in the early Brāhmanic era but in the later Brāhmanic era the Brāhmaṇa or priestly power was on the decline and Kṣatriyas became supreme; the priestly class yielded to the military class. Though the society was religio-centric in the early Brāhmanic era, in the later phase of this age religion began to lose its hold on politics as an inevitable result of the dwindling of priestly power. In the Upaniṣadic age the Kṣatriyas came to pre-eminence in the field of politics and scholarship as well. From the standpoint of religion the Br. period is a march from the mechanical sacerdotalism to the underrating of sacrifice and realisation of the spirit underlying the form of sacrifice, from the path of action to the path of knowledge, and from external rituals to inner purity and illumination, a march from outward to inward. From the perspective of philosophy it was an era of transition from Karmavāda to the way of knowledge, par excellence, from personal gods to the Impersonal Unqualified Supreme Godhead, from the attainment of heaven to the attainment of All-soul termed Mokṣa or final liberation. Thus it foreshadows the philosophy of the Upaniṣads. From the literary point of view the age of the Brs. is a march from the simple literature of the early Samhitās to the developed literary style, to the emergence of popular prose and astonishing varieties of literary form.

Hence from all aspects and all angles of vision the ancient Indian civilisation revealed in the Brs. may be called a half-way house between the early Vedic civilisation and the civilisation of the Upaniṣadic age.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Original Sources:

1. Rgveda.
2. Yajurveda.
3. Vājasaneyi-Saṁhitā or Śukla-yajurveda.
   (Nirnaysagar Press).
4. Taıttrirīya-Saṁhitā or Kṛṣṇa-yajurveda.
5. Sāma-veda.
6. Atharva-veda.
7. Maitrāyani-Saṁhitā.
10. Taıttrirīya-brāhmaṇa (""") 1934.
11. Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa (Acyutagranthamālā, Book-XI,
    Banaras).
12. Pañcavimśa-brāhmaṇa (Kāshi-Sanskrit-Series)
    No. 105, Banaras, 1936.
14. Gopatha-brāhmaṇa (Bibliotheca Indica:
    Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1872).
16. Brhadāraṇyakopaniṣat. """"
17. Taıttrirīyopaniṣat. """"
18. Kaṭhopaniṣat. """"
19. Muṇḍakopaniṣat. """"
20. Māṇḍūkyopaniṣat. """"
21. Śvetaśvataratopaniṣat. """"
22. Aitareyāraṇyaka.
23. Taıttrirīyāraṇyaka.
24. Śāṅkhya-yāvanāraṇyaka.
25. Śādvimśa-brāhmaṇa.
26. Āśvalāyāna-śrauta-sūtra.
27. Śāṅkhya-yāna-śrauta-sūtra.
29. Lātyāyana-śrauta-sūtra.
30. Āpastamba-śrauta-sūtra.
32. Bṛhaddevatā.
33. Pūrvamimāṃsā-sūtra.
34. Pāṇini : Aṣṭāḍhyāyī.
35. Sāyanaścārya’s commentaries on all the Bṛs.
36. Śavarasvāmin’s commentary on the P.M.S.
37. Commentaries of Uvata and Mahidhara on the V.S.
38. Kātyāyana : Sarvānukramaṇī.
40. Hārita-smṛti.
41. Yama-smṛti.
42. Yajñavalkya-smṛti.
43. Āpastamba-dharma-sūtra.
44. Gobhila-grhyasūtra.
45. Mahāvarata (Chitraśālā Press, Poona).
46. Rāmāyaṇa (Basumati edition).
47. Bhagavadgītā.
49. Kūrma-purāṇa.
50. Viṣṇu-purāṇa.
51. Patañjali : Mahāvasyam.
52. Zend Avesta (edited by Dr. I. J. S. Taraporevala).

3. Other Works :

12. B. G. Tilak: The Orion or Researches into the antiquity of the Veda.
14. " " " " : The Beginnings of Indian Historiography & Other Essays.
16. " " " " : Studies in Indian History & Culture.
17. Dr. R. K. Mookerjee: Hindu Civilisation.
20. Rapson: Ancient India.
21. Basham: The Wonder That was India.
27. C. F. Oldham: The Sun & The Serpent.
32. Louis Renu: Vedic India.