

ĀRUNI II. A cobra born in the family of the serpent, Dhṛtarāṣṭra. This cobra fell dead at the Sarpasatra of Janamejaya. (Śloka 19, Chapter 57, Ādi Parva, M.B.).

ĀRUNI III. A son born to Kaśyapa of his wife Vinatā. (Śloka 40, Chapter 65, Ādi Parva, M.B.).

ĀRUNI IV. A soldier of the Kaurava army. He fought against Arjuna along with Śakuni. (Śloka 122, Chapter 156, Droṇa Parva, M.B.).

ĀRUNI V. One of the one hundred and eight Upaniṣads. ĀRUṢĪ, A daughter of Manu. Cyavana Mahārṣi married her. They got a son named Aurva. The child was taken from the thigh of Āruṣī. Rciḱa was the son of this Aurva. Rciḱa was the father of Jamadagni, father of Paraśurāma. Even from childhood Aurva was a bold, bright and good boy. (Ślokas 47 and 48, Chapter 66, Ādi Parva, M.B.).

ĀRYAS. The R̥gveda gives us most of the information regarding the Āryas who came to the north of India during the times of the Vedas through the passes on that north-western side of Bhārata. Sirdar K.M. Panikar writing in his preface to the 'R̥gveda-samhitā' by Poet Vallathol summarises the information available in the R̥gveda about Āryan culture and says: "When the Āryans first entered India they were rich in cattle. They used to breed goats, dogs, donkeys, and horses. The elephant was unknown to them. In the Vedas the vehicle of Ind is a horse and not an elephant. When hailing Indra they shout 'come, come on your horse-back'. The Veda does not say anything about how Indra got the elephant, Airāvata, as his vehicle. Sing to the glory of Indra against whom in his chariot driven by two horses no enemy would dare to face.

The R̥gveda gives great importance to agriculture. Areas under cultivation were called Urvara and 'Kṣetra'. Fields were ploughed by attaching six, eight and even twelve bullocks to the plough. Water was taken from hṛdas and Kulyakas (ponds and tanks) for the purpose of irrigation. Agriculture was a very familiar art to them. They used to cultivate all sorts of grains and grams including yava. They conducted trade by the exchange of goods generally. There is a reference in one place of the use of a coin 'Niṣka'.

The Āryas were clever in the art of leather work, wood-work and metallurgy. They were well versed in medicine also. In a sūkta of the ninth maṇḍala it is stated that the father of a ṛṣi was a medical practitioner. There are references to many industries also. Weaving was a very important industry at that time. Cotton cloth and woollen blankets were made by them on a large scale. Iron was used by them with great skill. The manufacture of armours and the descriptions about them in R̥gveda are ample evidence of the proficiency of the Āryas in ironmongery and blacksmithy. Sea voyage was not familiar to them. References to traders cruising in boats in the Sindhu river do not give much importance to the cruising. In food rice and ghee were important. Meat was also relished. Ṛṣis wore animal skins but others wore dhotis and shawls.

During the R̥gvedic times their social structure was divided into four stages: Grāma was a colony of families and was the nucleus of the society. A number of gramas formed into a place called Viśaya. A number of Viśayas became what was known as 'Janam'. The importance of Janas can be understood by the state-

ments made about Pañcajanas and the existence of special Janas like Yādava Jana and Bhārata Jana.

There is no wonder why the Āryas who had to live among enemies accepted kingship. The R̥gveda narrates the difficulties people would have to encounter if they were left to fight their enemies without a proper leader and so advocates Kingship and gives it an exalted position in their social structure. Sūkta 22, Anuvāka 12 of Maṇḍala 10 describes the coronation of a King thus: "I do hereby crown you as King. Come to our midst. Rule us with courage and an unwavering mind. Let all your subjects love you. Let thy kingdom remain with you for ever". The next mantra is also of the same idea. A King is above punishment. The veda speaks about many famous kings of which the following are worth mentioning. Divodāsa, Sudās, Ambariṣa, Nahuṣa and Purūravas.

The chief priest was always the political advisor also. Viśvāmitra and Vasiṣṭha were two great priests of the Bharata dynasty. There were other priests also. Mention is there about a Rājasaḅhā though nothing is said about their powers or functions. It can be surmised that the Sabhā was constituted of only men of character and learning.

It is interesting to note the type of domestic life in vogue then. A father had the right, to sell his children. To cite an example is the story of Śunaśṣepha who was made into a cow and sold to Viśvāmitra who looked after him well. The father had the right to make his children lose all rights over his properties. Viśvāmitra sent out from his family fifty sons who refused to obey him. Dowry was current then. Sūkta 11, Anuvāka 3, Maṇḍala 10 ordains that the bride should go to the house of her husband after the marriage. Polygamy was not objected to. There is a mantra to harass the co-wife and its purpose is to make the husband more attached to her who hates the co-wife. The originator of this mantra was Indrāṇī, the queen of Indra. Indra had many wives. Marriage was considered as a necessary duty. Widow marriage was allowed.

The R̥gveda gives the picture of a society of people who were always at war with each other. "We are surrounded by mighty enemies. Help us". This is the slogan that rings out from the R̥gveda.

The R̥gveda is a history of the Āryas. The march from Kubhātaṭa (Kubul) to the banks of Yamunā is depicted there. It was at Kubhātaṭa that the mantras were first made. When they reach the banks of the Gaṅgā the period of R̥gveda ends. The crossing of each of the five rivers of Pañcanada is treated as a big event by the ṛṣis. When they saw the huge and deep river, Sindhu, they were amazed. The wonder is reflected in a lovely mantra. It was after crossing Sindhu that they had to oppose the 'Dasyus'. The R̥gveda itself records that the Dasyus were more cultured than the Āryas. Śambara, a Dasyu King, was the ruler of a hundred cities. Their fortresses were strong. They have been described in the R̥gveda as Aśvamayī, Āyasi and Śatabhuji.

The chief opponents of the Āryas were a tribe of people called Paṇis. From the Nirukta of Yāska we are given to understand that the Paṇis were mainly engaged in trade. The R̥gveda names many Dasyu kings of which the following few were more daring and brave and the Āryas acknowledged their superior strength and courage: Dhuni, Cumuri, Vipru, Varcis and Śambara. Among