

and being stolen. The marking of the ears of cattle was repeatedly adopted, no doubt, to indicate ownership.¹¹

Large herds of cattle were well-known, as is shown by the *Dānastutis*, or 'praises of gifts,' in the *Rigveda*,¹² even when allowances are made for the exaggeration of priestly gratitude. The importance attached to the possession of cattle is shown¹³ by the numerous passages in which the gods are asked to prosper them, and by the repeated prayers¹⁴ for wealth in kine. Hence, too, forays for cattle (*Gaviṣṭi*) were well known; the Bharata host is called the 'horde desiring cows' (*gavyan grāmah*) in the *Rigveda*;¹⁵ and a verbal root *gūḥ*,¹⁶ 'to protect,' was evolved as early as the *Rigveda* from the denominative *go-ṇāya*, 'to guard cows.' The Vedic poets¹⁷ do not hesitate to compare their songs with the lowing of cows, or to liken the choir of the singing Apsarases to cows.¹⁸

The cattle of the Vedic period were of many colours: red (*rohita*), light (*śukra*), dappled (*prśni*), even black (*kṛṣṇa*).¹⁹ Zimmer²⁰ sees a reference to cows with blazes on the face in one passage of the *Rigveda*,²¹ but this is uncertain.

Oxen were regularly used for ploughing or for drawing wagons (*anaḍvāh*), in which case they were, it seems, usually castrated.²² Cows were not properly used for drawing carts, though they at times did so.²³ The flesh of both cows and bulls was sometimes eaten (*Māmsa*). Cattle were certainly the

¹¹ Rv. vi. 28, 3; *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā*, iv. 2, 9, and cf. *Aṣṭakarṇī* and *Svadhiti*.

¹² Rv. viii. 5, 37, etc. Cf. *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa*, xvii. 14, 2; *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, viii. 21, 23; *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, xiii. 5, 4, 8 *et seq.*

¹³ Rv. i. 43, 2; 162, 22; v. 4, 11; ix. 9, 9, etc.; Av. i. 31, 4; ii. 26, 4; v. 29, 2; vi. 68, 3; viii. 7, 11; x. 1, 17, 29; xi. 2, 9, 21, etc.; *Taittirīya Saṃhitā*, iii. 2, 3, 1; v. 5, 5, 1; vi. 5, 10, 1; *Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā*, iii. 59.

¹⁴ Rv. i. 83, 1; iv. 32, 17; v. 4, 11; viii. 89, 2, etc.

¹⁵ iii. 33, 11.

¹⁶ Rv. vii. 103, 9; Av. x. 9, 7, 8; xix. 27, 9, 10. Cf. Macdonell, *Vedic Grammar*, p. 358, n. 13

¹⁷ Rv. vii. 32, 22; viii. 95, 1; 106, 1; ix. 12, 2, etc.

¹⁸ Rv. x. 95, 6. It is, however, uncertain whether the names of Apsarases are meant in this passage. Cf. Ludwig, *Translation of the Rigveda*, 5, 517.

¹⁹ Rv. i. 62, 9. Various other colours are mentioned in the lists of animals at the *Aśvamedha*, or human sacrifice, in the *Yajurveda*, but apparently as exceptional.

²⁰ *Altindisches Leben*, 226.

²¹ i. 87, 1. It is also rendered as 'the heavens with stars.'

²² Av. iii. 9, 2; vi. 138, 2; *Taittirīya Saṃhitā*, i. 8, 9, 1; Weber, *Indische Studien*, 13, 151, n. See *Mahānirāṣa*.

²³ *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, v. 2, 4, 13.