

Puro-vāta, the 'east wind,' is mentioned in the later Samhitās and the Brāhmaṇas.¹ Geldner² thinks it merely means the wind preceding the rains.

¹ Taittiriya Samhitā, i. 6, 11, 3; ii. 4, 7, 1; iv. 3. 3, 1; 4, 6, 1; Maitrāyaṇi Samhitā, iii. 1, 5; Śatapatha Brāh-

maṇa, i. 5, 2, 18; Chāndogya Upaniṣad, ii. 3, 1, etc.

² *Vedische Studien*, 3, 120, n. 2.

Puro-hita ('placed in front,' 'appointed') is the name of a priest in the Rigveda¹ and later.² The office of Purohita is called Purohiti³ and **Purodhā**. It is clear that the primary function of the Purohita was that of 'domestic priest' of a king, or perhaps a great noble; his quite exceptional position is shown by the fact that only one Purohita seems ever to be mentioned in Vedic literature.⁴ Examples of Purohitas in the Rigveda are Viśvāmitra⁵ or Vasiṣṭha⁶ in the service of the Bharata king; Sudās, of the Trtsu family; the Purohita of Kurusravana;⁷ and Devāpi, the Purohita of Śantanu.⁸ The Purohita was in all religious matters the *alter ego* of the king. In the ritual⁹ it is laid down that a king must have a Purohita, else the gods will not accept his offerings. He ensures the king's safety and victory in battle by his prayers;¹⁰ he procures

¹ i. 1, 1; 44, 10, 12; ii. 24, 9; iii. 2, 8; 3, 2; v. 11, 2; vi. 70, 4, etc.

² Av. viii. 5, 5; Vājasaneyi Samhitā, ix. 23; xi. 81; xxxi. 20; Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, viii. 24, etc.; Nirukta, ii. 12; vii. 15.

³ Rv. vii. 60, 12; 83, 4.

⁴ Geldner, *Vedische Studien*, 2, 144, thinks that several Purohitas were possible, quoting Sāyaṇa, on Rv. x. 57, 1, who gives the tale of the Gaupāyanaṣ and King Asamāti from the Sātyāyana, and comparing the case of Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra as Purohitas, probably contemporaneously, of Sudās. But that the two were contemporaneous is most unlikely, especially if we adopt the very probable view of Hopkins (*Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 15, 260 et seq.) that Viśvāmitra was with the ten kings (Rv. vii. 18) when they unsuccessfully attacked Sudās.

The other narrative has, as Oldenberg, *Religion des Veda*, 375, n. 3, observes, a markedly fictitious character; while every other passage that mentions a Purohita speaks of him in the singular, and as there was only one Brahman priest at the sacrifice, so the Purohita acted as Brahman.

⁵ iii. 33, 53. Cf. vii. 18.

⁶ Rv. vii. 18, 83.

⁷ Rv. x. 33. See Geldner, *Vedische Studien*, 2, 150, 184.

⁸ Rv. x. 98.

⁹ Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, viii. 24.

¹⁰ See Av. iii. 19; Rv. vii. 18, 13, from which Geldner, *op. cit.*, 2, 135, n. 3, concludes that the priest prayed in the **Sabhā**, 'house of assembly,' while the king fought on the field of battle. See Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra, iii. 12, 19, 20. Cf. *Pūru*, n. 2.