The earlier chapters of our study reveal that the Vedic society was highly developed though some scholars hold their view to the contrary. Vedic language was a very developed language which could be a means of communication in a developed society alone. The development of language is one of the barometers of the development of the society. The period was highly developed in economic, social, religious and cultural aspects. In fact the socio-economic picture of India remained the same till the modern times.

In this land of 'Santasindhavah', as some scholars designate it, there resided the Devas, Panis, Rakṣasas, Sarpaś, and so many other tribes side by side. They were different in complexions, practising different religions and speaking different languages. These communities in general, the Devas and the Panis in particular, were at war with each other on account of their differences in religious and cultural beliefs. The causes of their bickerings were trivial such as the aquisition of land, irrigation and lifting of cattle. Yet they had marital as well as business relations. Saci, the daughter of Puloma, was the wife of Indra. Puloma was a Panī. Trisirās Viśvarūpa was son of Tvāṣṭr from a Panī wife. Kaṇva, the son of Ghora Āṅgirasa, was married to an

1 VINS.,2.424 cf.,Rg.,VIII.24.27; Pusalkar,VA.,P.243.
2 Fair complexioned - 'Sūrya-tvaca' - Rg.,VII.59.11; dark complexioned - 'tvacama asīhām' - Rg.,IX.73.5; 'āryam-varpa' - Rg.,III.34.9; 'dāsma varpa' - Rg.,II.12.4.
3 'tisro vāca' - Rg.,VII.101,1; 'janam bahuda vīvāçasam' - Ath., XII.1.45.
4 Rg.,X.142.4.
5 Bh.P.,VI.6.30-31.
6 SB.,I.6.3.17.
asura girl. Udamaya Atreyya performed the coronation ceremony of Aṅga, son of Virocana. Kaliṅga, the King of Aṅga adopted Kāśīvat, the son of Dīrghatamas, as his own son. Devas very often borrowed money from the Panis.

The distinction of Ārya and Dāsa was more of status than of race. Arṇā and Citraratha began to call themselves as Āryas – the noble ones (See Ch.III P.16). Actually Ārya meant master10 from the base Ṣṝya and 'dasyu' meant a slave. The slave could belong to any community, Panis or devas11. Actually, the constant wars caused this distinction of status which made the victor Ārya (master or noble) and the vanquished dāsa, a slave. It was a distinction of the victor and the vanquished.

(Part I)

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

The Vedas count five Varnas as the expressions 'pancakrṣṭi'12 and 'pancajānya'13 denote. The four Varnas were Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Sudra14. Sāyana counts Niṣādas as the fifth15. The occurrence of the words 'brahma' 'kṣatra' and 'viṣa' in the consecutive mantras or same mantras of the Vedas16 denote that the Varnas as such existed. The concept of low birth was also there as

7 JB.,III.72.
8 Ait.Br.,VIII.22.
9 Sayana on Rg.,I.51.13.
10 Rd.,X.86.3; X.115.5.
12 Rd.,IV.38.10; Ath.,III.24.3.
13 Rd.,I.117.3.
14 Vaiš.,XXX.5.
15 Rd.,I.176.3.
16 Rd.,VIII.35.16-18; Vaiš.,XXXVIII.14,19.
the word 'naicājākham' signify. The Rgveda in Puruṣa Sūkta symbolically describes that the Brahmans took birth from the mouth of Virāta Puruṣa Brahman, Kṣatriyas from his arms, Vaiśyas from his thighs and the Sudras from his feet. According to most of the scholars the hymn being admittedly late, its evidence is not cogent for the bulk of the Rgveda. Zimmer combated the view that Rgveda was produced in a society that knew the caste system. Muir said that the term 'varṇa' covers the three highest castes of later times, and is only contrasted with 'dāsa'. He added that 'Brahmaṇa' was mentioned rarely in the Rgveda, 'Kṣatriya and Rājanya' only in the Puruṣa Sūkta, where too only, Vaiśya and Sudra were found. Oldenberg and Geldner thought that Brahmaṇa was a separate class different from the warrior and the agriculturist castes in the Vedic times.

The system was not rigid. The heredity was not considered important in the adoption of a profession. A father could be a priest and his son a king. For example, Abhyāvartin Cāyasmāna was a king, his father Abhīvarta was a priest. (See Ch.XIII P.181). Similarly, the son of a king could become a priest. Agastya and Vasiṣṭha, the sons of Varuṇa, were not kings but priests though Varuṇa was a king (See Ch.IV). Indra himself, though a king, taught Madhu Vidyā (the spiritual science) to Dadhyaṇ (See Ch.IV P.67). His sons Vimada, Jaya, Vasukra, Laba, Sarvahari and Apratiratha were not kings. Devāpi's brother Santanu was a king, Devāpi himself and his descendants became priests (See Ch.X Pp.130-132). Videgha Māthava, the king and progenitor of Videhas, was such.

17 Rg.,III.53.14.
18 Rg. X.90.
19 VINS, 2.248 cf.,Maxmuller, Sanskrit Literature,570 et seq.; Weber,Indische Studien,9,3 et seq.
20 VINS, 2.248 cf.,Altindisches Leben,185-203.
21 OST.,12,239 et seq., and 258.
22 VINS.,2.81 cf.,Vedische Studien,2,146.n.1.
a great spiritualist that even Yājñavalkya paid obeisance to him. The ṛṣis could become rulers, and rulers could become ṛṣis. Viśvāmitra was a king but acted as a priest too (See Ch.XIV P.189). ṛṣis, performed Yajñas and obtained sacrificial meeds in the form of coins, clothes, ornaments, animals and maidens. But Nabhaṇediṣṭha, son of Manu, accepted thousands of cows from the Aṅgirasas when he completed their Yajña (See Ch.VI P.96).

The seers of Ṛgveda belonged to all stratum of life. ṛṣis accompanied kings in wars and aroused their feelings and sense of heroism by singing hymns in their praise. A Brahmana alone did not enjoy the privilege of being a seer. The kings also were the authors of hymns. Kakṣīvat and Kavāsa the sons of slave girls Uṣik and Iluṣa respectively and Kadru - the queen of sarpas, were seers of the Vedas. However, Kavāsa had to face many difficulties on account of being the son of a slave woman. Similarly Vatsa had to establish his nobility by a fire ordeal.

Most probably there were two types of people in the beginning 'those who performed the Yajñas' and the others 'who hosted the yajñas i.e., the Yajamanas'. Later more differentiation took place when some of the yajamanas began to rule and adopted fighting as profession. They became the Kṣatriyas. The rest came to be known as the common people i.e., the 'praja' or 'visāsa'. They were known as Vaiśyas in later days. This belief is confirmed by the definition of a kṣatriya given in the Ṛgveda that - a kṣatriya is he who performed the Yajñas and enjoyed the state of ṛṇa - the
supreme bliss.

Brāhmaṇas were known to be the custodians of knowledge. Their position was sacred in the society. It was considered a sin to hurt a Brāhmaṇa. They used to receive donations. Vaiśyas were the back bone of Āryan society. Rgveda mentions 'viṣo...ārya' and 'viṣo...dāsi'. It appears that 'ārya viṣa' or 'viṣa' the common people came to be known as 'Bīsā Aggarwals' in the modern times and the Panis or Dasyus the 'dāsiḥ viṣaḥ' as 'Dassā Aggarwals'. Those who ruled and fought in wars were Kṣatriyas.

Sūdra as a caste did not exist. They were the people who were vanquished and enslaved in the wars. They could belong to any community. They were contemptuously called 'kṣudra'- the ignoble ones and were assigned the tasks of serving their masters. Marriage relations, or even illicit sex relations with the ēudras were barred. The barbers, washermen, scavengers and the like constituted this class of society. But they were not serfs. Domestic slavery was a luxury among the wealthy but the use of slavery in economic production was not the prevalent system.

Nisādas were the fifth of the Pañcajanas—'cātvāra varṇah nisādapanācamah pañcajanah'. They were the people who lived outside the cities and villages i.e., in forests i.e., 'Hrvaṣya'- hunter, 'dhāivara' and 'sāuskal'—fisherman, 'dāryahāra'—

30 Rg.,X.66.8.
31 Vaj.S.,VII.46.
32 Ath.,V.18.
33 Ath.XIII.4.48.
34 Rg.,X.11.4.
35 Rg.,IV.29.4; VI.25.2.
36 Rg.,III.43.5; X.109.3.
39 Sayana commenting on Rg.,I.176.3.
gatherer of wood or wood cutters etc.

The students used to go to far off places to receive education* from capable teachers. At the Gurukula the Upanayana Samsakāra was performed. A student used to wear a Mekhalā, a thread round his waist as a mark of discipline*7. He remained with the teacher for several years. He worked hard and performed odd jobs like fetching the wood for the sacrificial-fire of his preceptor. He practiced austerities and begged alms for living*8. That the teacher should be a Brahmana, was not necessary. Indra got instructions from Prajapati Savitṛ who was his brother (See ch V .74). Panis also used to go for studies. Virocanā, an asura, the son of Prahalāda, and the king of Aṅga (See Ch.III App.II P.46) was the class-mate of Indra*9. Āruṇi Uddālaka went to receive knowledge from Paravāhana Jaivala - a Pāṇcāla king*10.

The famous rṣis like Asvapati of Kekeya, Āruṇa and his son Uddālaka, Śvetaketu and his pupil Yājñavalkya happened to exist in this period (See Ch XIII). Āruṇa and his son Uddālaka, were the most prominent teachers of the Vedic period. Yājñavalkya was the author of Yajurveda and also a discoursel on Brahman in the court of Videgha Māthava/Janaka.

Generally the boys and girls of sixteen years got married*1. They believed that the first sixty years of life were there to enjoy and amass wealth and the next sixty years were meant for meditation*2. Concept of happy life, as given by rṣi Viśvāmitra,

46 Ath.,XI.5.1-5.
47 Ath.,VI.133.1.
50 Brd.Up.,VI.2.4.
51 Vaj.S.,VIII.33.
52 Ath.,XII.3.41.
was to have a beautiful wife, a chariot to drive and wine to
drink.\footnote{3}

**FAMILY**

The family was the unit of society and it was patriarchal in
structure. The father was the head of the family. Agastya rṣi says
that the father should always be obeyed by his sons.\footnote{4} The children
were generally named after the name of the father though sometimes
they were also known after their mothers. For example the Ādityas
were known after the name of their mother Aditi. The joint family
system was in practice. In the Atharvaveda Atharvan rṣi has
portrayed a beautiful picture of the family members sitting
together. A daughter-in-law is depicted serving 'her in laws'.\footnote{5}
Vasukra's wife bemoaned the absence of her father-in-law, Indra,
in a ceremonial function (See Ch.III P.34).

Polyandry\footnote{6} and Polygamy\footnote{7} were common and accepted norms of
society. Many sisters were married to a single husband.\footnote{8} Uṣas
married two husbands, the Āśvins.\footnote{9} Dīṅghatamas was the son of two
brothers Brhaspati and Ucatha (See Ch.XIII Pp166-67). Vasiṣṭha and
Agastya were the progenies of both Mitra and Varuna (See Ch.IV
P.52). Marriages amongst near and close relatives were common.
According to Bhargava\footnote{10} the marriage of near cousins in male
descent was forbidden even in the Rgvedic period. But Rgveda gives
evidence contrary to this. Tvaṣṭr's one daughter Saranyu, was

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53 Rg.,III.53.6.
54 Vaj.S.,XXXIV.7.
55 Ath.,I.14.1,2.
56 Rapson (CHOI., P.79) and P.L.Bhargava (IIIVA., P.243) did
not believe in the existence of Polyandry.
57 In P.L.Bhargava's opinion society was mainly monogamic,
though polygamy was not unknown, especially in the
princely class(IIIVA., P. 243).
58 Rg.,IX.65.1.
59 Rg.,VIII.29.8 See Fn.32 Ch.VI.
60 IIIVA.,P.244.
married to his brother Vivasvat\textsuperscript{61} while the other daughter was married to Asvins, who were his nephews, i.e., the sons of Saranyu and Vivasvat\textsuperscript{62}. Even the father could indulge in sex with the daughter\textsuperscript{63}. But sex relations between real brother and sister were prohibited\textsuperscript{64}.

The parents were responsible for the up-bringing of the children\textsuperscript{65}. The father provided protection to his son through thick and thin of life\textsuperscript{66}. To look after the parents was thought to be the most pious duty of the son\textsuperscript{67}. The Family was the most pious institution of the society. Kutsa rsi told Vivasvat that in a family, husband and wife perform their duties loyally, and give birth to a son with the hope that he would look after them in the old age - 'Vivasvānānādityaiṣa te somāpīthastasmin matsava/ śradasmai naro vacase dhātana yadasīrdā dampati vāmamainutah/ pumān putro jāyate vindate vasvadā viśvaharapaedhate grhe'\textsuperscript{68}.

A husband was stated as the 'hariyajana'\textsuperscript{69} driver (leader) of the family. The woman was considered as the symbol of home\textsuperscript{70}. Sūryā Rṣikā said that the woman was the queen of the house, the queen among her in-laws\textsuperscript{71}. Husband provided her with all the facilities\textsuperscript{72}. But she obeyed her husband\textsuperscript{73}. She earned half the merits and demerits of meritorious deeds and sins of her husband\textsuperscript{74}.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{61} Rg., X.17.1.
  \item \textsuperscript{62} Rg., X.85.9.
  \item \textsuperscript{63} Rg., I.164.33 Though no such example is met with in the Vedas yet the idea existed as in the above quoted mantra. See Ch.V.
  \item \textsuperscript{64} Rg., X.10.2.
  \item \textsuperscript{65} Rg., X.39.6; Vaj.S., VI.36.
  \item \textsuperscript{66} Rg., X.48.1; Vaj.S., XXXV.17.
  \item \textsuperscript{67} Vaj.S., VI.34.36.
  \item \textsuperscript{68} Rg., III.53.4-6.
  \item \textsuperscript{69} Rg., X.95.46.
  \item \textsuperscript{70} Rg., V.78.4.
  \item \textsuperscript{71} Rg., X.95.26.
  \item \textsuperscript{72} Ath., XII.3,4,7,52.
\end{itemize}
The qualities of a good wife were 'aghorsaka' i.e., having beautiful and amiable looks 'aparigrah' i.e., never injuring the feelings of husband either in words or her deeds. She was 'svas' - giver of happiness and comfort, 'kadma' - expert in household works, 'suteva' - beautiful in shape and looks, 'suyama' - having full control over the senses 'virasuh' - giver of birth to heroic sons, and 'sumanah' - always remaining happy and making others happy. She would worship gods 'deva kama', be kind to animals, sweet tempered with pleasing manners and always helpful to the husband. The husband respected her and treated her as equal but did not tolerate disloyalty. Brhaspati deserted his wife on suspicion of adultery (See Ch.IV P.51). Similarly women were suspicious and jealous of co-wives. Indra's wife Saci's feelings are depicted in her hymns (See Ch.III P.20).

A son was supposed to be a warrior who defeated the enemies and earned wealth. Other qualities of a son were that he should be active, civilized, performer of yajnas, capable of participating in the assemblies and obedient to the father. People worshipped deity Indra to give them offsprings equal in qualities to him. It was believed that a son had to pay off the debts of his forefathers. A daughter was not given share in the property after her marriage. But if she was brotherless she could inherit father's property. The father could adopt her son. Only the sons were given the rights to perform the last rites of their parents.
The Vedic rsis like Visvāmitra and Kaśyapa prayed for several children and a big family. Niyoga (The practice of getting children by mating with rsis) and adoption were quite common.

Panigrahaṇa and Saptapadi were practiced during marriage. The husband and wife promised in front of sacred fire to fulfill the terms of marriage. They sought the blessings of God to provide them with children and a union lasting for hundred years. The marriages were celebrated with great pomp and show. Tvastr invited a large number of people in the marriage of Saranyu. The description of Sūryā’s marriage in Rgveda gives us the glimpse of the customs of those days most of which are prevalent among the Hindus even now. It says that the beautiful bride, applied collyrium 'anjana' to eyes and covered herself with a cloth 'vadhūya' - (ladies ceremonial nuptial costume), and put on ornaments. The friends of the bride sang songs. The dowry included the pillows, quilts etc. The marriage procession returned in palanquin and bullock yoked chariots. The bridegroom led the bride to his home (See Ch.V Pp 77-78 for details). Bridegrooms were also adorned with ornaments. Similarly, the description of marriage procession of Kaśīvat in the Rgveda illustrated the customs of those days.

Svayamvaras were also arranged for marriages of princesses. For example Asvins had to win a race to wed Ujas (See Ch.V). Sundhyu the daughter of Purumitra was won by Vimada in a Svayamvara
(See Ch.III). Sometimes, the husband or wife was bought by paying the price. Marriage with brother-in-law was also common.

POSITION OF WOMEN

The women had respectable position in the society. They were educated. Aditi, Saci, Kadru, Ātreya Apālā, Lopāmudra and Sūrya were the seers of the Vedas. They were proficient in fighting and driving the chariots. Viṣpalā, wife of king Khela, lost her leg in a battle. Indrasenā, the wife of Mudgala, held the reins of the chariot when her husband fought the dasyus who had stolen his cattle. Woman was compared with Sarasvatī, and Sinīvāḷā.

The women drank Soma frequently. Free sex, though not a taboo, was not the accepted norm of society. The women who had sex relations with friends were not respected in the society, still such practices were quite common. The terms 'pumascali' and 'mahāgni' meaning 'harlot', are indicative of the practice. The word 'īśra' meaning paramour ('yāra' in common language), was common in the Vedas. Even the widows had sex relations with their brothers-in-law. Doing away of an illegitimate child is also referred to.

The women of Gandharvas were known as Apsaras 'tābhya gandharvapatiṇībhya, apsarabhya'. They were also known as 'samudriyā', i.e., dwelling in seas or waters. Sayana called them

93 Rg.,I.109.2.
94 Rg.,X.40.2.
95 Rg.,I.116.15.
96 Rg.,X.102.2.
97 Ath.,XIV.2.15.
98 Rg.,I.22.9-12; IV.37.4.
99 Ath.,XV.2.5.
100 Ath.,X.1.36; XX.136.5.
101 Rg.,VII.10.1; VII.76.3. The word of course has other connotations too.
102 Rg.,X.40.2.
103 Rg.,II.29.1.
104 Ath.,II.2.5.
105 Rg.,IX.78.3.
'deva'śya'\textsuperscript{106} and gave the meaning of Apsaras as 'apām sārayitri apṣu kriyātham sarantī va'\textsuperscript{107}. Atharva Veda calls them 'śādhu devinī'\textsuperscript{108} (good ladies). The famous Apsaras\textsuperscript{109} known in the Vedic times were Puñjikasthalā, Kratusthalā, Menakā, Sahajanyā, Pramlocanti, Anumlocanti, Viśvāci, Gahtāci and Pūrvarṣchittih. Prostitution did existed in the Vedic times. Brotherless girls were frequently drawn to prostitution\textsuperscript{110}. The condition of slave girls was very bad. They were given in charity to rṣis. Purukutsa gave fifty maidens to Bobhari Kāṇva\textsuperscript{111}.

**DRESS AND ORNAMENTS**

People were well dressed. They wore beautiful silken 'tārpya'\textsuperscript{112} and cotton clothes 'bhadrā vastra tanvate'\textsuperscript{113}. The clothes were woven by weavers 'vāya'\textsuperscript{114} on loom 'vēman'\textsuperscript{115} and sewn by tailors\textsuperscript{116} to the fitting 'su-rabhim'\textsuperscript{117}. The women wore colourful Phulkari type of cloth. Yajurveda\textsuperscript{118} describes a woman, wearing a 'pragā'—spotted cloth, while cooking food and milking the cows. There were dyers 'rajavitri'\textsuperscript{119}, washermen 'malaqa'\textsuperscript{120} and 'vāsāḥ—palpuli'\textsuperscript{121} the herbs to disinfect the clothes. Men wore the sacred thread, 'Praśīnavita'\textsuperscript{122} (Janeu) They wore turbans.

\textsuperscript{106} Rg.,IX.95.7.
\textsuperscript{107} Rg.,X.123.5.
\textsuperscript{108} Ath.,V.29.1.
\textsuperscript{109} Vaj.,S.,XV.15-19.
\textsuperscript{110} Rg.,I.124.7; IV.5.5.
\textsuperscript{111} Rg.,VIII.19.36.
\textsuperscript{112} Ath.,XVII.4.31.
\textsuperscript{113} Rg.,I.134.4.
\textsuperscript{114} Rg.,X.26.6; Ath.,XIV.2.51.
\textsuperscript{115} Vaj.,S.,XIX.83.
\textsuperscript{116} Ath.,B.2.16.
\textsuperscript{117} Rg.,VI.29.3; X.123.7 According to Vedic index this word may possibly indicate that early Vedic dress was fitted like the Minoan style of dress(VINS.,2.292). cf.,Lang,The word of Homer,60 et seq.).
\textsuperscript{118} Vaj.,S.,XII.15.
\textsuperscript{119} Vaj.,S.,XXX.12.
\textsuperscript{120} Ath.,XII.3.21.
\textsuperscript{121} Vaj.,S.,XXX.12.
\textsuperscript{122} Taitt.,S.,II.5.11.1.
having two parts one at the top and second at the back, similar to that worn by the people in North Western Province of Pakistan. They wore 'vāras' \(^{124}\) — probably the lower garments and 'adhivārasam' \(^{127}\) — the upper garments. Women wore 'nīva' \(^{128}\) the under garment. They also wore a mantle or a cloak called 'Atka' or 'Urāpi' \(^{129}\). They used woolen garments — 'vāsula' \(^{130}\), blankets or woolen bedsheets (namada) — 'ūrnamrada' \(^{131}\) or skins \(^{132}\) to protect themselves from cold.

Golden ornaments were quite common. They wore bangles 'khāđihastam' \(^{133}\), ear-rings and necklaces 'hiranya karṇam saṅgrivam' \(^{134}\), 'Nekhalaz' \(^{135}\) waist band, and 'Maṇi'(gems and beads) \(^{136}\). Men also used to wear ornaments. Rgveda describes in details the dress of Maruts, the war troopers of Indra (See Ch.III App.I Pp 37-38). They used to weave and spin in the houses \(^{137}\). Ladies used combs—'krtrimah kantakah satadan' \(^{138}\) perfumes \(^{139}\) and applied collyrium 'āṇjana' in the eyes \(^{140}\). They also used footwear 'Upā — nah' \(^{141}\). There were lady barbers who acted as beauticians \(^{142}\). Men got their beards shaved and their hair cut from

\(^{123}\) Vaj.S.,XXXVIII.3; Kath.S.,XIII.10.  
\(^{124}\) Vaj.S.,VII.39.  
\(^{125}\) Vaj.S.,XXXVIII.3; Ath.,IV.37.4.  
\(^{126}\) Rg.,I.34.1.  
\(^{127}\) Rg.,I.140.9; 162.16; X.5.4.  
\(^{128}\) Ath.,VIII.2.16; XIV.2.50.  
\(^{129}\) Rg.,V.55.6; I.25.13.  
\(^{130}\) Rg.,X.85.29.  
\(^{131}\) Rg.,V.5.4.  
\(^{132}\) Rg.,I.129.3.  
\(^{133}\) Rg.,V.58.2.  
\(^{134}\) Rg.,I.122.14; VIII.78.3.  
\(^{135}\) Ath.,VI.133.  
\(^{136}\) Rg.,I.122.14.  
\(^{137}\) Ath.,XIV.1.45.  
\(^{138}\) Ath.,XIV.2.68.  
\(^{139}\) Ath.,XIV.2.44  
\(^{140}\) Rg.,X.85.7.  
\(^{141}\) Taitt.S.,IV.4.4.4 ; 6.6.1.  
\(^{142}\) Vaj.S.,XXXth Ch.
the barbers. The phrases like 'caturkaparda' and 'ukaparda' throws light on the fashioning of the hair and braids. They sometimes tucked Cowrie shells in the locks of their hair.

FOOD AND DRINKS

Their food was very rich consisting of puda 'agūpa' and 'paronthā' of north and 'dosā' of south—'purodāsa' and meat of ram, ox 'ukzana', goat and buffalo. Roasted rice—'dhāna' and cooked rice—'pañcaudan' were their staple food. They took 'saktu'—'sattu' and granular rice too. They ate cookies 'pākva', Milk pudding (khira) 'kīra pāka' and took plenty of honey—'madhu', butter—'sarpis', curds—'dadhi', curds-milk—'manthā' and ghee—'ghrta'. Some and sura were their favourite beverages.

RECREATIONS AND PASTIMES

Gambling and hunting were their favourite pastimes. But gambling was considered bad. Savitr advised them to refrain

143 Rg., X.114.3; Vaj.S., XI.56 They may denote use of cowrie shells also.
144 Rg., VII.33.1.
145 Rg., X.45.9.
146 Rg., III.52.4.
147 Rg., X.27.17.
148 Rg., X.86.14.
149 Ath., IX.5.20.
150 Rg., VI.17.11.
151 Rg., X.28.1; III.52.5, 6.
152 Ath., IV.14.7; IX.5.8, 37.
153 Rg., X.71.2; Vaj.S.VIII.57.
154 Ibid.
155 Rg., X.116.7.
156 Rg., VIII.77.10.
157 Vaj.S., XVIII.4.22.
158 Vaj.S., X.67.32.
159 Rg., Vaj.S., XVIII.4.17.
160 Ath., XVIII.4.16, 22.
162 Rg., IX.11.5, 8.
163 Rg., VII.86.6.
164 Rg., VII.109.1-7; Ath., VII.109.5.
165 Rg., X.51.4; 86.20.
166 Rg., X.51.6; 86.20; Ath., VII.109.5.
167 Rg., X.34.13; Vaj.S., XVI.27; Ath., IX.1.26.
from gambling (See P.74). They organized bull fights\(^1\)\(^{168}\), races of horses\(^1\)\(^{169}\) and chariots with adorned bullocks\(^1\)\(^{170}\). They had festivities on the occasion of the birth of a son\(^1\)\(^{171}\), first hair cutting 'muni\danda'\(^1\)\(^{172}\) and nuptial ceremonies.

Music and dance were quite in vogue. Indra was a great dancer-'nrt\a'\(^1\)\(^{173}\). The musical instruments like the lutes-'bhram\a'\(^1\)\(^{174}\', 'kson\a', 'kark\a'\(^1\)\(^{175}\) flute-'nadi'\(^1\)\(^{176}\), 'Gar\a'\(^1\)\(^{177}\) 'Godha'\(^1\)\(^{178}\)', 'V\a\a'\(^1\)\(^{179}\), and 'Vi\a'\(^1\)\(^{180}\) are also mentioned. R\a\veda\(^1\)\(^{181}\) refers to seven notes —'dh\a\u' of 'V\a\a', 'A\a\h\a\i\a'\(^1\)\(^{182}\) — (Ka\\d\a\v\i\a — a flute of bamboo) was used with dancing. References to 'Sail\a\u'— clown and 'V\a\p\a\n\a\p\a\r\a\t\i\n' the acrobat also occur in Yajurveda.\(^1\)\(^{183}\)

**DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD**

The dead were Disposed in several ways. The body was either cremated\(^1\)\(^{184}\) or buried in soil\(^1\)\(^{185}\) or exposed to air\(^1\)\(^{186}\). Women wept beating their chests on the death of a relative\(^1\)\(^{187}\).

**COMMON BELIEFS AND SUPERSTITIONS**

They believed in the miraculous powers of hymns and prayers. They had the faith that a god could incarnate with the help of

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\(^{168}\) Rg., X.43.8.
\(^{169}\) Rg., IV.39.6.
\(^{170}\) Rg., IV.39.6.
\(^{171}\) Kutsa celebrated the occasion of his son's birth.
\(^{172}\) Vaj.S., VIII.5.
\(^{173}\) Ath., VI.68.1-3.
\(^{174}\) Rg., VIII.24.9.
\(^{175}\) Rg., XI.34.1.
\(^{176}\) Rg., VIII.69.9.
\(^{177}\) Rg., I.85.10; X.32.4.
\(^{178}\) Taitt.S., VI.1.4.1.
\(^{179}\) Rg., X.32.4.
\(^{180}\) Rg., X.146.2.
\(^{181}\) Vaj.S., XXXth Chapter.
\(^{182}\) Rg., X.15.14; Vaj.S., 40.15.
\(^{183}\) Rg., X.18.10-12.
\(^{184}\) Rg., VIII.51.2.
\(^{185}\) Ath., XII.3(6), 47; XI.9.7.
prayers. Vaikuntha Indra, Savya Āṅgirasa, Kundāpāyya Śrṅgavēśa and many others were supposed to be the incarnations of deity Indra (See Ch.X App.II; XIII P.185 respectively.).

They believed in superstitions, foretelling of bad dreams, curse, oath, ghosts and Kṛtyā. They believed that an ill eye could have a bad effect. Hawk and crow were among the bad omens and the sight of pigeon was considered auspicious. If a child cut the upper teeth earlier than the lower teeth it was considered a bad omen for the parents. But they were straightforward and bold. They disliked the crooked and cunning ways of life.

The thieves 'śtena' and sorcerers 'Yāṭudhānas' were considered anti-social.

MEDICINE, SURGERY AND SCIENCE

They possessed the knowledge of Medicine and Surgery. Indra joined the severed head to the original body before it began to bleed without an adhesive material (See Ch.III Fn.51). Āsvins attached an iron leg to Vīśpalā, wife of king Khela when her leg was smitten in a war. Indra and Āsvins cured many a person of physical disabilities such as deafness, dumbness, limping, infertility and old age. The legend of Cyavana is well known (See Ch.III Pp.19-20 and Ch.VI Pp.89-90). Zimmer agrees that Vedic Indians had surgical skills but seems improbable to the authors of

186 Rg.,VIII.17.13.
187 Rg.,VIII.47.17.
188 Ath.,IV.17.2-3.
189 Vaj.S.,VI.22; XII.90.
190 Ath.,II.9.1.
191 Ath.,IV.17.4.
192 Ath.,XIX.35.3.
193 Ath.,VII.64.1; VI.29.2.
194 Ath. VI.140.1.
195 Rg.,VI.48.10; X.55.7.
196 Rg.,I.35.10; II.23.14; 28.10.
Vedic Index. There are references in the Rgveda to a medicine man - 'bhūjak' which implies that practice of medicine was a profession. The Vedas enumerate external as well as internal parts of body. Raus talked of the arteries - 'hīrā', the veins - 'dhamani'. They talked of connecting bones to bones, joints to joints, muscles to muscles and skin to skin which indicate that their knowledge of surgery was not primitive. But they also talked of curing diseases with the spell of mantras.

They knew mathematics. Counting, tables, division, multiplication and fractions. In Rgveda and Sāmaveda there is an indication of three numbers, three genders and eight cases of Sanskrit. Knowledge of Etymology also existed.

They used time scales. They counted two types of years 'Samvatsara' and 'Parivatsara'. They counted dates in lunar as well as solar months. Their month consisted of thirty days and year 360 days and twelve months. They knew about the intercalary, the thirteenth month.

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198 Ibid.
199 Rg.,IX.112.3.
201 Ath.,I.17.3; VII.35.2.
202 Ath.,IV.12.
203 Ath.,V.16.
204 Ath.,V.15.1-12.
205 Rg.,X.90.3.4.
206 Rg.,X.90.15; Vaj.S.,XXVII.33.
207 Rg.,X.90.3-4.
208 I.164.24.
209 Sam.,990.
210 Ath.,III.13
211 Vaj.S.,XXX.15.
212 Rg.,I.164.19.
213 Rg.,VI.59.6.
214 Rg.,I.164.48.
215 Rg.,VII.103.9.
216 Rg.,I.25.8; 164.15; Ath.,XII.3.8; V.6.4.
They practised many faiths. They had much developed sense of religion and philosophy. Rapson extolling the religion of the Vedic Indian says, “The Rigveda does not present us with any naïve outpouring of the primitive religious consciousness, but with a state of belief which must have been the product of much priestly effort, and the outcome of wholesale syncretism”.

The Vedic rṣis believed in the existence of one Supreme God—the ‘Virāṭ Puruṣa’ who held this universe, the earth and the skies. He is the ‘Hiranya Garbha’, the ‘ekapada-sajo’ ‘pārabrahman’ or ‘Ukṣap’. He is the ‘Ka’ prajapati in the Veda or ‘K’ (the sun) of ancient Sumera. Though they believed in polytheism but the concept that all the gods and goddesses were different incarnations of the ‘One’ is also given in the Veda.

There are eleven main ‘gods’ counted in the Vedas. Though rṣis like Gāthi and Dhanaka Luṣa named several gods as prominent yet Probably Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, Viṣṇu, Vivasvat, Savitṛ/Tvaṣṭṛ, Aryaman, Brhmaṇaspati, Vāyu, Agni and Rudra appear to be these eleven. These eleven multiplied thrice as eleven each belonged to the skies, the space and the earth making a total of

1 Ath.,XII.1.49.
2 CHOI.,P.92.
3 Rg.,X.121.5.
4 Rg.,X.121.1-10.
5 Rg.,X.65.13.
6 Rg.,X.31.8, 122.4.
7 Rg.,I.121.1-9; VIII.36.1; IX.49.4.
8 Rg.,X.121.8.
9 Rg.,VIII.35.3; 39.9.
10 Rg.,III.20.5.
11 Rg.,X.36.1.
12 Rg.,V.51.5.
13 Rg.,VI.52.6.
14 Rg.,III.8.8.
thirty three\textsuperscript{15}. Besides these, there were several divine and semi-divine entities like Asvins\textsuperscript{16}, Ribhus\textsuperscript{17} and Vasus\textsuperscript{18}.

**ONE SUPREME REALITY**

In the opinion of Dandekar\textsuperscript{19} a critical study of the Rgveda shows that originally, the Indra religion and the Pusan religion were two independent religious cults and that a special effort was made to bring them together. He further says that the major portion of the Rgveda clearly indicates that the Varuna religion was being pushed into the background and Indra religion was aggressively coming to the forefront. He classified the deities on the basis of frequency of mention of their names. Similarly Perry\textsuperscript{20} says that the hymn exhibits the transference of supremacy from Varuna to Indra in a very peculiar light. E.J. Thomas\textsuperscript{21} referring to the view of Barnett, says that Visnu represents the deification of the fundamental essence of the Vedic ritual. It is thus implied that Visnu, the priestly god, and Indra, the war like god, were later made to collaborate with each other. N.N. Ghose\textsuperscript{22} suggested that Visnu and Indra were the gods of two different tribes. According to him Visnu was the god of grass-land nomads. But we believe that Indra, Varuna and other gods were the incarnations of one Supreme Reality— the 'Brahman'. Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, Yama and Matarishvan were different names of one Supreme Reality— 'Indra'.

\textit{Mitram Varunam Agnim āhuratho divyah sa suparno Garutman, ekam sadviprā bahudhā vadanti Agnim Yamam Mātariśvanam āhuh}\textsuperscript{23}. This

\begin{itemize}
\item[15] Rg.,VI.52.15.
\item[16] Rg.,IV.44.2.
\item[17] Rg.,I.161.
\item[18] Rg.,II.7.1; III.20.5.
\item[19] VMT.,P.92, 118, 179.
\item[21] VMT.,P.72 cf., 'Vedic Hymns', 42.
\item[22] 'Aryan Trail in India and Iran'. Calcutta,1937.P.62.
\item[23] Rg.,I.164.46.
\end{itemize}
view is vividly expressed in the Upaniṣads. Devas worshipped ‘Agni’ as the creator, the sustainer or the Supreme Deity. They invoked Agni for their welfare and victory in the war. Agni was of three types – 1. belonging to the earth, 2. belonging to the skies and 3. belonging to the space. Fire god was symbolized as a fast running horse i.e., ‘Dadhikra’ and ‘Samita’.

They compared this whole universe to a ‘Vajña-Vedi’ where the sun’s rays were burning like ‘samidhās’ woods in the fire. The sun, was considered to be the source of nourishment of the universe, the posaka – ‘Pusan deva’ or ‘Viṣṇu’, the sun god. The sun or Viṣṇu was that which travelled the three lokas in three steps. This phenomenon was simplified as a fish travelling in the sea of Rta which led to the concept of ‘Matsyaḥta’ of the later period. The sun god was variously known as Savitṛ, Mitra, Aryaman, Viṣṇu, Vivasvat, Varuṇa, Māntanda and Indra. The description of Savitṛ given in the Vedas resemble very much to that of sun-god of Egypt.

The naturalists interpret the ‘gods’ as representative of natural phenomena. The fire god was also present in the storm and flash of lightning. This form was designated as Indra, the rain giving god ‘Parjanya’ or ‘Vrsabha’. Thus Indra represented Sun-

24 Rg., VII.7.5; X.53.6.
25 Rg., VII.9.1; Vaj.S., XIII.19.
26 Vaj.S., XII.34.
27 Rg., I.149.3; X.45.1-3; Vaj.S., XII.18; IXXX.14.
28 Rg., III.20.5.
29 Rg., X.110.10.
30 Ath., XIII.1.55.
31 Rg., I.154.2.
32 Rg., II.11.4; V.3, 81.4-5; These deities must not be confused with the historical personalities Indra, Vivasvat and others as there was a trend to name the sons after the deity worshipped for getting the son.
34 Rg., VI.49.6.
35 Rg., VI.44.21.
god as well as the god of rains and storms i.e., 'Vāyu'. This form of Indra was worshipped in Sumeria as En-lil. Vāyu represented the benevolent aspect of the Fire-god, the destructive aspect was found in the Rudra. Rudra was the same as Siva or 'Bhara-Svarā'. In Yajurveda Vasisthāraśi has drawn a sketch of Rudra or Siva wearing animal-skin, drawing a bow. An illustration of 'Paśupati Siva' is also there. 'Ganapati' was also worshipped and a mouse was associated with him.

The creative power of Agni was worshipped as 'Brahman' occasionally.

Since some regarded the active energy of the Universe as feminine, they worshipped the energy as Mother-goddess 'Aditi'. The Veda says that Aditi is earth, skies and space, the mother, the father, the son, all gods and Pañcajanas. Aditi is also worshipped as 'Dvārā Prthivi' i.e., mother earth and heavens or 'Prsnī ga' spottet cow. Sometimes Aditi is represented by the triad of goddesses i.e., Iḍā, Sarasvatī and Bhāratī who independently were expressed as goddesses of earth and wealth. Goddesses of knowledge were 'vāk' and 'dhiṣṇa'. Sometimes the number is increased to five - 'paṇca devi' without enumerating

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36 Rg.,II.11.14.
38 Rg.,II.1.6; X.3.1. Ath.,VII.87.1.
39 Ath.,XV.5.
40 Vaj.S.,III.61.
41 Ath.,II.34.1.
42 Vaj.S.,23.19.
43 Vaj.S.,III.57.
44 Rg.,VII.7.5.
45 Rg.,IV.1.20.
46 Rg.,I.89.10.
47 Rg.,I.35.9; 160.5.
48 Rg.,I.112.7; VII.18.10; X.189.1.
49 Rg.,III.4.8.
50 Ath.,XIX.31.10.
51 Rg.,III.33.15-16.
52 Rg.,I.109.4.
53 Ath.,III.4.2.
the names. They also worshipped 'Diti'\(^1\) along with Āditi. Mother goddess was also worshipped as Ambā, Ambikā, Ambālika, suhadrīka and kāmpilavāsini\(^2\). They adored night as the wife of Sun-god\(^3\) and named her as goddess 'rātri, Rākā or Kuhu'\(^4\). Rākā represented the full-moon night\(^5\) or 'Pūrṇamāsi'\(^6\). 'Kuhu' represented 'Amāvasyā'\(^7\) - the dark fifteenth night of the month and the goddess of dawn was Uṣas\(^8\).

Goddess 'Lakṣmī' or 'Śrī'\(^9\) was also worshipped. She might have been the Śīnīvalī, the wife of Viṣṇu\(^10\). Goddess of wealth was 'Śaṁrū'\(^11\). They worshipped the goddess of water as 'Āpo devi'\(^12\), goddess of forests as 'Aranyakī'\(^13\), goddess of vegetation - 'Ikṣrī मātā'\(^14\), goddess of power - 'Arundhatī'\(^15\), goddesses of welfare - 'Śvaṣṭī'\(^16\) and 'sustuti'\(^17\), goddesses of death - 'Nirṛti' and Asūnī'\(^18\) and 'Āprā'\(^19\) was the goddess of sin.

They saw the divinity behind each and every, animate and inanimate thing. They worshipped 'Vastopati'\(^20\) as god of the dwelling. They worshipped the chariot\(^21\), the pole of the flag\(^22\), the rug on which they sat\(^23\). All the rivers were goddesses the

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54 Rg.,VII.15.12.
55 Vaj.S.,XXIII.18.
56 Ath.,XIX.49.
57 Rg.,I.35.1; II.32.8.
58 Rg.,II.32.4.
59 Ath.,VII.60.1-4.
60 Ath.,VII.79.3.
61 Rg.,VI.65.3.
62 Vaj.S.,XXXI.22.
63 Ath.,VII.46.3.
64 Rg.,X.141.2.
65 Rg.,VII.49.2; Ath.,XIX.49.
66 Rg.,X.146.
67 Rg.,X.97.9.
68 Ath.,VI.59.
69 Rg.,IV.55.3.
70 Rg.,IV.43.1.
71 Rg.,X.59.4-5.
72 Rg.,X.103.12.
73 Rg.,VIII.17.14.
74 Rg.,VI.47.26-28.
75 Rg.,III.8.8.
76 Rg.,I.13.5.
Sarasvati—'naddamā devitāmā'77, the Sindhu (Indus)78, the Ganga (Ganges), the Yamuna, the Sutudri (Satlej), the Vipāṭ79 and others. Kavaśa Ailūśa had a living faith in them. He invited them to his sacrifice. He said, "friends, accepting my invitation, they have come to attend the Yajña. kindly seat them properly"80. Trees81, especially 'Aśvattha'82, and animals like cow83 and snakes84 were also worshipped. But in the opinion of Rapson85 no direct worship of the snake attributable to its deadliness occurs.

Dīrghatama said that he was the man behind the sun86. Vasukra, the son of Indra said that he was the Supreme Reality—'Brahman' and animals and human beings all were his incarnations87. The philosophical treatises which we call Upaniṣads were taking shape. The Vedic rṣis were the people who composed the vedic hymns in their spiritual ecstasy and at the same time indulged in speculations at the intellectual level when explaining things to their discipies.

**MYSTIC SYMBOLISM**

The spiritual realization of rṣis led to a sort of vedic mysticism. To express their mystic experiences they used a symbolic language. The Supreme deity was very often symbolized as Vṛṣabha88, Kakudman/ Kakutpati89 (the humped bull), 'īśqāṣaṅga' — single-

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77 Rg.,II.41.16.
78 Rg.,IV.55.3.
79 Rg.,X.75.5-7.
80 Rg.,X.31.7.
81 Rg.,X.97.4.
82 Rg.,X.97.5; Ath.,III.6.1-8.
83 Ath.,V.18.1.
84 Vaj.S.,Ch.XIII.6.
85 CHOI.,P.94.
86 Vaj.S.,40.17.
87 Rg.,X.27.9.
88 Rg.,I.140.10; Ath.,X.28.
89 Rg.,X.8.2; 102.7; Vaj.S.,XIII.14.
horned bull\textsuperscript{90}, '\textit{dhenu}'— cow\textsuperscript{91}, '\textit{Mahi\dot{a}}'\textsuperscript{92}— buffalo, '\textit{hamsa}'— swan\textsuperscript{93}, thousand horned bull— '\textit{sahasya śringo vajabha}'\textsuperscript{94} and '\textit{skambha}'\textsuperscript{95} or stambha— the pole.

The Supreme deity has been symbolized as Agni who lives in the heart\textsuperscript{96} or being born of waters which form a sea or the ocean of Rta\textsuperscript{97}. From this sea of Rta emanate seven rivers\textsuperscript{98}, which have also been represented as sisters or mothers\textsuperscript{99}. Sometimes they become seven nurses of a child i.e., Agni or the Supreme Entity\textsuperscript{100}. These mothers were sometimes referred as two in number, equivalent to Gaṅgā and Yamunā of the later literature\textsuperscript{101}. The source of these seven rivers i.e., ocean of Rta is also described as a seat of Viṣṇu i.e., 'Vīṇṇah Pade parame madhvaḥ utsah'\textsuperscript{102}— the ocean of Madhu or spiritual joy. At other place this Supreme deity was symbolized as a cow which is being suckled by a calf and the milk of the cow is honey or nectar\textsuperscript{103}.

\textbf{YAJṆA}

They had great faith in the efficacy of 'Yajña'. They believed that destruction leads to construction. The idea took its shape in Yajña. They believed that Yajña could give them wealth, prosperity\textsuperscript{104}, happiness and rains\textsuperscript{105}. They offered everything to fire for its multiplication. The yajña in which fried rice, ghee,
butter, honey, purodāsa and aprūpa i.e., vegetarian offerings were made was known as 'Adhvāra'. 'kratu' was a non-vegetarian Yajña. In it the sacrifice of horse or ox took place. The Yajña was performed 'three times a day. Five types of the Yajñas were performed. Of these two were more important for kings, 'chhaeah puro aśvēṇa vājīnā' - Asvamedha and 'Rājasūya'. They were performed when they wanted to conquer other territories.

**SOMA**

Soma, an intoxicating and exhilarating drink, was prepared as a libation at the time of Yajña. Vedic people gave much importance to Soma. Whole of the ninth book of the Rgveda is devoted to it. The drink was prepared by pounding the plant with stone – 'grāvāṁ' or 'adri' the mortar and 'ugukhal' or 'mujala'–the pestle. It was then sieved. The juice was then mixed with milk – 'gavāśīr' curds milk – 'dadhyāśīr' or grains of barley – 'yavāśīr' and crystal sugar (Misri) – 'āśīlataaṣā' and honey. It was pressed thrice a day. Some places were famous for the preparation of Soma like Ārjikīyā in Kurukṣetra, Pastavyant probably modern Patiala

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106 Rg.,III.53.1-2.  
107 Rg.,I.162.3-4.  
108 Rg.,III.53.4-6.  
109 Rg.,III.4.2.  
110 X.182.2.  
111 Rg.,I.162.3.  
112 Ath.,IX.33.1.  
113 Rg.,IX.11.5.8.  
114 Rg.,I.83.6; 135.7.  
115 Rg.,I.130.2; 135.5.  
116 Rg.,I.28.5-6.  
117 Rg.,IX.71.3.  
118 Rg.,I.187.9.  
119 Rg.,IX.63.15.  
120 Rg.,I.187.9.  
121 Rg.,VI.29.4.  
122 Rg.,IX.103.3.  
123 Rg.,IX.71.7.  
124 Rg.,IX.113.2.  
125 Rg.,VIII.7.29; IX.63.23.  
Kṛtvasu/Kṛtvānah probably modern Khadvaṇa near Kalavat between Mataur and Vakasakhari in Haryana and Paravat (see Ch.VI app.1).

Soma, after Yajña was distributed amongst the attendants of Yajña. Its share was considered auspicious and a mark of respect. Asvins were considered demi gods. To begin with they were not the recipients of Yajña share, but Cyavana told them the method to deserve the same and offered it to them in the Yajña of Saryāta (See Ch.IV P.68). Similarly when Indra was deprived of his share he got furious and offended Tvasṭr (See Ch. III P.27).

AIMS of LIFE

Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Moksa - were considered to be the four aims of life128 Kaśyapa rṣi on the one hand prayed for immortality129 and on the other, wished for a large number of children130. Similarly Bhṛgu though a great spiritualist131 suffered from the agony of sex132. 'Brahmacarya' or celibacy was practised133 but sex was not a taboo. Rṣis lived a married life and produced children. Brahmacarya, meant student life134.

CHARITY

The importance of charity is much extolled in the Vedas. The donation of cow135, milk, butter, honey, meat136, cooked rice of five type- ‘pāncaudana’137 in charity was in practice as a meritorious deed ‘punya’.

PHALLUS WORSHIP

They hated phallus - worship. Perhaps the practice was
prevalent amongst Panis. They worshipped many gods in the dual
forms i.e., Puruṣa and Prakṛti. That is why the gods too have
their counterparts in female forms—Indra and Indrāni', Varuṇa
and Varunāṇī', Rudra and Rudrāṇī', and Sarasvān' with
Sarasvatī. This probably led to the concept of 'Ardha -
Narasvarā' in later period.

Puruṣa was represented by 'liṅga'—phallus and Prakṛti by
'Yoni'—womb. This gave birth to the practice of Tantra in those
days too.

YOGA

The practice of Yoga for attainment of spiritual powers,
'siddhis' was also prevalent. Vasukra, the son of Indra attained
many supernatural powers such as piercing the mountain with a log
of wood and ability to turn a rabbit so strong and powerful that it
could fight an elephant. Vāṭaraṇāś also had supernatural
powers like walking with the speed of air, or flying in the
sky.

PUNARJANMA and KARMA

They believed in rebirth and resurrection. 'Ihaloka and
Paraloka', heaven and hell existed for them. Pilgrimage to
sacred places and sacred baths for expiating the sins were
undertaken. There is a casual reference to 'karmacakra' or
Bhagyavāda. They worshipped the pītris. They respected the

138 Rg.,X.99.3.
139 Rg.,I.164.52.
140 Vaj.S.,XXXVIII.12.
141 Rg.,X.28.4-9.
142 Rg.,X.136.
143 Rg.,II.6.7. Vaj.S.,XII.36.
144 Rg.,X.58.
145 Rg.,VI.23.7; Vaj.S.,XXI.31; Ath.,XII.3.3.
146 Rg.,IX.113.8-9; Ath.,XII.4.36.
147 Rg.,X.31.3.
148 Rg.,I.23.22-23.
149 Rg.,VII.33.9.
150 Rg.,X.16.10.
guests. They loved to be truthful and hated falsehood.

Thus the Vedic people were spiritualists as well as materialists. The negation of one or the other was not to their taste.

NĀSTIKA-VĀDA and ĀSTIKA-VĀDA

There were two schools of thought about the existence of God in the Vedic period. One believed in the existence of God while the other negated it.

JAINISM

The Panis or asuras and 'Rākṣasas' had no faith in the Vedic religion. They did not subscribe to their religious beliefs as were called "asanyamānah", 'avajñan' and 'akratūn'. Rgveda also uses the word 'vagham' for them. Probably they were the followers of a religion which resembled Digambara Jain sect. Indra is said to have assaulted the Yatis. Jain monks were also known as 'Yatis'. Dr. Hiralal Jain believed that Jain Sramanās existed in the Vedic times and that the Vātarasnas of the Vedas were the believers of Jain sect. His statement is confirmed by the statement in the Purāñas also that Rṣabha deva son of Nābhi was one among the Vātarasnas. The description of the Vātarāsanā munis of the Rgveda, whose leader was Kesin, resembles that of Jain munis i.e., they wore dirty clothes, kept silent and thus were different from Vedic rṣis. They had a seat at Arbud mountain (Modern mount

151 Rg., VI.2.7.
153 Rg., VII.6.3.
154 Rg., IV.25.7.
155 Taitt.S., II.4.9.2; VI.2.7.5; Kathaka.S., VIII.5; XI.10; XXV.6; XXXVI.7; PB., VIII.1.4.
157 Bh.P., V.7.20.
158 X.136.
159 Vala, the chieftain of Panis was a resident of Arbuda mountain and was killed there. Rg., II.11.20.
Abu). Even today Jains are in abundance in Rajasthan and mount Abu is their sacred place.

There was a difference of opinion amongst the vegetarians and the non-vegetarians (See Ch.V P.75). The eating of flesh was considered sin by some. The devas were always at war with the Pānis and Rākṣasas. The Pānis also worshipped deities. Nodhas rāi eulogizing Agni said that there were both types of believers - 1. those who performed Yajñas and 2. those who did not, but simply loved God and obeyed his dictate - "asya jāsur ubhayasah sacante havismanta uṣījo ye ca martaḥ". Thus the Vedic society was a mixed society of different faiths, creeds and practices.

160 Ath,.VI.70.1.  
161 Rg,.I.60.2.