THE INDRA CULT AS IDEOLOGY: A CLUE TO POWER STRUGGLE IN AN ANCIENT SOCIETY

(including a discussion of the semantics of Rgvedic ari and its socio-political background)

MAHINDA PALIHAWADANA

PART ONE

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ABBREVIATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY
(The abbreviated forms are those used in the Notes)

ABORI : Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona

Añjali : Añjali : Papers on Indology and Buddhism, A Felicitation Volume presented to
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Atharva Veda; The Atharva Veda Saṁhitā
Bṛhad Devatā : Bṛhad-Devatā, (attributed to Cauṇaka) ... ed. A. A. Macdonell, Harvard
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vatī Viśāra Series, vol. 31)

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graph Series, 11)
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Kunhan Raja : C. Kunhan Raja Commemoration Volume........................

KZ: Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung auf dem Gebiete der indogermanischen Sprachen. Begründet von A. Kuhn

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Mahābhāṣya : Mahābhāṣya, Nirṇaya - sāgar Press, Bombay 1951

Mahīdhara : See V. S.

Manu (smṛti) : The Manusmṛti, with the Commentary......of Kullūka. Nirṇaya-sāgar Press Bombay, 1946 (10th ed.)

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V.S.: Śukla - yajurveda - saṁhitā (........Vājasaneyi, Mādhyanīna) with the ....bhāṣya

of........Uvata and......Mahīdhara, Nirṇaya - Sāgar Press, Bombay, 1912


Mahinda Palihawadana

I What Lies Behind Rgvedic ari?

Some years ago the present writer took up a project of writing a dissertation on the secular leadership in the Rgveda period. In the process of this work he found his attention constantly drawn to that peculiar Rgvedic word ari with its characteristically ambiguous sense.\(^1\) The word occurred in numerous contexts which seemed distinctly connected with the subject with which the writer was then concerned.

The problematic nature of the word was already reflected in the oldest Indian commentarial work, the Nirukta of Yāśka. This work renders ari as (a) an unfriendly person and (b) a potentate (i.e., foe and lord).\(^2\)

In rendering the word ari, modern translators have also found it impossible to be consistent. Thus Geldner frequently uses the German equivalents of nobleman, rich patron, great lord, possessor of power and so on to translate ari; but at other times he uses rival, mighty foe, miser, etc. — thus bringing out the double character of the meaning of the word.\(^3\)

In 1938 Paul Thieme, the respected German Indologist, published his famous monograph Der Fremdling im Rgveda in which he attempted the task of unravelling the meanings of this word.\(^4\) He argued that if the ‘prevailing’ senses of the word are so divergent (as e.g., is reflected in the Nirukta comment), then its original significance could not have been either of these widely different meanings but something else from which these meanings should have developed in the course of time. In Thieme’s view, that original meaning was stranger.\(^5\)

Pondering on the contexts in which ari was used, from the point of view of one studying the problems associated with leadership, the present writer became convinced that all was not yet right with the interpretation of this crucial term.

The semantic common denominator for most uses of ari in the RV is that of association with wealth.\(^6\) And the regular pattern of the statements regarding the ari can best be summed up in the form of a “norm and exception”.

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1. F. pp. 5ff. esp. 8-10.
2. Nirukta 5.7. Yāśka’s explanatory words are amitra and īśvara, in that order. Yāśka was not commenting on the history of the semantics of ari; so the order he followed is not material to our discussion. (Nirukta 5.7 Sarup = 5.2.2 of Calcutta ed., p.500)
3. F. pp.8 ff.
4. F. and M.A.
5. F., p.10
Norm: The ari has riches (:the source of glory).
    They are to be won from him. Help our sūris to win them.\textsuperscript{7}
The sūri is the good worshipper and the generous giver, not the ari.\textsuperscript{8}
The ari's worship is below par.\textsuperscript{9}
Accept our worship, bypassing the ari's.\textsuperscript{10}
The ari gives us trouble and pain, denies us our due.
Give us aid to stand up to these.\textsuperscript{11}

References to the ari are normally found in statements like the above ones,
in invocations addressed to the Vedic gods, especially Indra.

Exception: The few statements that associate the ari with conditions contrary
to those evident in the above statements constitute the exception.\textsuperscript{12} Notably
such exceptional statements depict the ari as a generous donor or an acceptable
worshipper or one who promotes the sūri and encourages his liberal ways,\textsuperscript{13}
but again always as a wealthy man, a possessor of duitte.

To one who reflects on these statements, it would appear that the basic
premise on which Thieme built his argument is open to question. After all,
if the word carries the meanings foe and lord, the latter could well have been
the original sense. If the chief (:lord) turns out to be hostile for some reason
or other, then in the very position of chief he may become the object of one's
displeasure and opposition. The one sense (:lord) would be the word's denotation,
while the other (: foe) would be one of its significant connotations.

One does not have to go very far to look for similar words in other
languages. Take, for example, a word like capitalist. Its denotative signif-
icance is the same to all, i.e., owner of capital. But its connotations would
be distinctly different to communists or socialists on the one hand and to those
with another political outlook on the other. To understand the distinction
satisfactorily, one has to have an acquaintance with the facts of an ideological
situation.

It would seem that ari too was such a word - whose true meaning lies hidden
in the mist of our ignorance of its "social-political" context: the early tribal
chieftaincy pattern and the stresses to which it must have been exposed in the
first few centuries of the Aryan presence in India.

\textsuperscript{7} See Ch. VII. 3, below.
\textsuperscript{8} Chh. VI, VII, VIII. below.
\textsuperscript{9} Chh. VII. below.
\textsuperscript{10} Ch. VIII. 6.
\textsuperscript{11} 2.23.12, 4.50.11, 6.59.8, 8.48.8, 9.79.3 etc.
\textsuperscript{12} Chh. IX below.
\textsuperscript{13} E.g.1.9.10. 1.126.5, 1.150.1, 4.38.2, 8.1.22.
Mahinda Palihawardana

After all, one of the first creative sociological events in Aryan history in India must have been the change from migratory tribe to the settled tribal state. This could by no means have been such a trifling event, involving as it must have done vast changes in habit, ritual and values. The adaptations called for might not have been palatable to all alike. In the stresses and strains of such a situation, the tribal leadership might have been exposed to certain kinds of opposition.

Thus, if the word *ari* meant 'lord', as the Nirukta would have it, then it would not be surprising that we may have to answer the question, "Did the chief turn out to be a foe, and if so how?" in order to unravel the further complexities of its semantics.

To put our problem in its true perspective, and in order not to overlook or under-estimate its extreme complexity, it is necessary to remember that it is from *ari* that the ethnic designation *ārya* (: Aryan) is derived. This makes it doubly difficult to think that 'stranger' was the original meaning of the word.

And also, we cannot forget the other derivatives of *ari* : *arya* (explained by the Indian grammatical tradition as meaning *master* and *vaiśya*15), and *aryaśan*, a deity of the Ādiyā group.

When one studies the usages of *ari, ārya, aśra* and *aryaśan* from the perspective of the evolution of leadership, it seems likely that *ari* was an ancient designation for the tribal chief and holder of wealth and that, due to reasons that remain to be clarified, the chief at some point of time became an object of dislike to some among the Aryans themselves.16 It this was so, it would satisfactorily explain much of the complexity of the semantics of the word.

If we take the meanings given by Yāska as representing the denotative and connotative senses of *ari* as recorded in a tradition worthy of our respect, we could explain the semantic development of the cluster of words concerned somewhat as follows:

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15. Pāṇini III.1.103

16. These include most of the well known families of Vedic ṛṣis. Cf. 1.4.6 (Maducchandās Vañāvāmitra); 1.33.3 (Hiranyastūpa Āṅgirasa); 1.70.1, 1.71.3, 1.73.5 (Parāśara Śāktya; 1.81.6/9 (Gotama Rāhūgaṇa); 1.84.1 (Agastya Maitrāvaruni); 2.8.2, 2.12.4/5, 2.23.13 (Gṛtsamada Āṅgirasa); 4.2.12, 4.46, 4.16.19 (Vāmadeva Gotama); 5.2.12 (Kuṭāra Ātreya); 6.13.5, 6.16.27, 6.25.7, 6.47.9 (Bṛhaspatya Bṛhadvāja); 7.21.9, 7.34.18, 7.56 22, 7.83.5, 7.92.4, 7.97.9 (Maitrāvaruni Vasīṭha); 8.21.16 (Sobhāri Kāṇva); 8.24.22 (Viśvamānī Vaiyāsa); 8.39.2 (Nābāka Kāṇva); 8.48.8 (Pragātha Ghaura Kāṇva); 9.23.3 (Kāśyapa/Asita Devala).
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ari: chief (as holder of wealth and power.)

aryā: (a) pertaining to an ari; having power; chieflike; noble; hospitable.
     (b) pertaining to an ari; having wealth; vaiśya.

ūrya: (a) of the community of tribes whose chiefs were aris.
     (b) chieflike; noble; elderly.

aryaman: god of chieflikeness (whence, of hospitality.)

The second, and in the RV commoner, connotation of ari as 'opponent'
'foe', should have evolved long after the above senses were established and
should be reflecting later developments in the social, political and religious
life of the Aryans which ultimately led to the passage of power from the hands
of old-style tribal chiefs to other authorities.

Such changes did take place in fact, as we can conclude from the disuse of
significant sociological terms like vispāti, vidatta etc. And we must always
remember that such changes necessarily betoken a turmoil of ideologies and
religious views.

But what could the prevalence of both senses, favourable and unfavourable,
indicate?

It would seem that this can indicate several things:

1) The original meaning of ari was not only denotative but also carried
   connotations of respect and admiration.

2) The changes in tribal life due to which the word gathered unfavour-
   able connotations did not take place at once over all the Vedic tribes.

3) The favourable references reflect a period of old institutions lingering
   on until new ones were firmly established.

And a further point to be considered would be whether the 'opponent'
sense of ari does not signify some of the functions of an old Aryan tribal chief:
an aggressive culture may have evolved institutions in which the chief by func-
tioning as an opponent could aid the rise of a strong leadership in the respective
tribes.

There thus seems to be a clear case for re-opening the investigation of
the meaning of Ṛgvedic ari. It appears that the major point of 'attack' should
be an investigation of the political-social implication, which in other words
is an inquiry into the evidence of 'ideology' in the Ṛgveda Samhitā.
Mahinda Palthawadana

In the very nature of our documents, this evidence is likely to remain concealed in a mythological garb. As an example we may cite what is said about Indra's leadership of the gods when they were threatened by the prospect of Vṛtra's rise to power: the gods conceded to Indra the rights of rulership (ksattra), through him to thwart the Dragon's challenge.17 This seems to mythologize a historical experience of power passing into the hands of 'warlords' from other wielders of power: a shift from a patriarchal to a non-patriarchal arrangement. The mythologizing can be regarded as an attempt to legitimize the shift; in other words it may be viewed as an ideological act.

But since these trends may have arisen more early among some Aryan tribes than among others, it is desirable that we review the Rāgvedic evidence on the major tribes and the conflicts and strains to which they were exposed. We must take particular note of the use of āri in the allusions to these conflicts, as also of any comments or hints on the religious (ideological) views of adversaries found in these allusions. In this way we can open an investigation of the political and ideological situations depicted in the Samhitā. Such studies could lead us on to other interesting vistas of inquiry from which perhaps an approach for resolving the āri problem may eventually be envisaged.

II. The Bharatas and their Opponents

(1)

The RV refers to a large number of Aryan tribes or janas, but of these only three are mentioned frequently. These are the Bharatas, the Pūrus and the Turvaṇas. Naturally, they are also the three that are most important from the historical point of view.

The evidence of the RV shows that there was a series of conflicts between the Bharatas (and/or their allies) with other tribes, including the Turvaṇas and the Pūrus (who even made common cause with non-Aryans in order to fight the Bharatas). But ultimately the complex of Aryan janas that were active in the region between the rivers Paravati and Deśadvatī during this period so integrated themselves that the later Rāgvedic hymns would refer to them as the Ārya varṇa (literally, “the Aryan colour”).

By carefully combining the evidence that is found scattered in various hymns of the RV, it is possible to construct a genealogy of the leading figures of the Bharata tribe that are mentioned in the Samhitā, beginning with Devavātā and Devaśravas of RV 3.23. If we link the evidence found in RV 3.23, 4.15, 6.47, we get the following genealogy:

17. Ch. II. 7 below.
Some of the most famous Bharata figures are however not included in this genealogy. Among these is Sudās the Bharata (7.33.3-6 with 7.83.6), descendant of Pijavana (7.18.22/23) and of Divodāsa (7.18.25) and of Devavant (7.18.22). Another scion of this line is Vadhrayaśva, the father of Divodāsa (6.61.1). On the basis of the evidence of their relationships, it has been shown\(^\text{18}\) that the genealogy of these Bharata chiefs can be thus arranged:

Devavant
Vadhrayaśva
Divodāsa
Pijavana
Sudās

On the strength of the contemporaneity of Prastoka of the first group with Divodāsa of the second — clearly evident from RV 6.47 \(^\text{19}\) — it is possible to correlate these two genealogies as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bharata I</th>
<th>Bharata II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Devavāta / Devāśravas</td>
<td>Devavant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sṛṇijaya</td>
<td>Vadhryaśva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prastoka / Aśvatha</td>
<td>Divodāsa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahadeva</td>
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<td>Somaka</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Let us briefly review the careers of these five generations of Bharata chiefs with a view to gaining some insights relevant to the interpretation of the ari passages of the RV.

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19. 6.47, 21-25; stz. 22 refers to the gifts given by Prastoka and Divodāsa at the end of the battle against Sambara (and 24 those given by Aśvatha) to the Bharadvāja priests.
(a) Devavāta and Devavant

The similarity of the names Devavāta and Devavant is striking, but there is no way to determine their relationship or whether they refer to one and the same person.

The Bharatas at this time were living near the rivers Āpayā, Sarasvati and Dravadvā. In RV 3.23 which mentions Devavāta,20 the emphasis is entirely on the fire ritual conducted near these “holy rivers” (as the later tradition refers to them), and there is nothing to suggest the martial milieu of the entrance phase of Aryan prehistory, or that of the time of later Bharata leaders such as Śrījaya, Divodāsa and Sudās. The few notices regarding this period of time do not contain any references to the āri.

(b) Śrījaya and Vadhrayāśva

From our correlated Bharata genealogy it would appear that Śrījaya and Vadhrayāśva should have been contemporaneous, and it is noteworthy that separate references to them show that they were both placed in essentially a similar state of affairs, namely Bharatas being locked in battle with Ārya as well as Dāsa opponents. These opponents are referred to under various names and in various ways: Panis (6.61.1), Pārāvatas (which sounds like a nickname meaning “newcomers from a distant land”21) (6.61.2); “Dāsa and Ārya foes”22 (10.69.6) and more interestingly, in the words of 10.69.12, “(enemies) who are unrelated and who are false relations”.23 RV. 6.27 refers to the enemies under their tribal as well as family or individual names (:Turvaśa, Vṛśvant, Varāśika24 and probably Pārthava); hence it is difficult to determine whether several tribal groups are indicated here.

From the point of view of the study of the word āri, it is important to recognize that almost from the start Bharata or pro-Bharata groups in Vedic India appear to have been facing hostility from other Aryan groups. The historicity of these hostilities is also occasionally attested to in later literature25; thus, for example, the Varāśikha clan is considered to be only nominal kṣatriyas, in the Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa, because they did not conform to the ideology of the Brahmanistic elite:26 this agrees with the fact that it was the Śrījaya (-Bharata) group that is favoured by the ṛṣis in 6.27, as against the Varāśikhas.

20. amanṭhipāṃ bharatvā revad agñīn | devaṇavā devavātaḥ sudakṣem // 3.23.2 ab.
21. See Vedic Index, s.v. Pārāvata (2).
22. dāsā vṛṣṭaṇy āryā - 10.69.6b.
23. ajāmilāh uta vāvijāmin... (sādhataḥ) - 10.69.12 od.
24. 6.27.4-7.
25. See Vedic Index, s.v. Vṛśvant, referring to Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa, XXI 12.8.
26. Bhad Devatā V. 126.
The war between Śṛṇjayā (son of Devāvata) and the Turvaśas etc., mentioned in 6.27 took place near Hariyūpiyā and is one of the two best known military events referred to in the RV. The Turvaśas certainly were an Aryan tribe.

At the end of the war, the priests who supported the Śṛṇjayā group, namely the Bharadvājas, are richly rewarded, obviously with captured booty as is usual after a battle (cf. 6.47.22). Since we learn from one of the stanzas of the hymn (stz. 5)\(^{27}\) that only a part of the enemy ranks was destroyed, it is natural to expect that the remaining part would try to regain the captured wealth. That this however was impossible owing to the strength of the Śṛṇjayas, or of the precautions adopted by them, seems to be the meaning of the statement: “Inaccessible is this gift to the Pārthavas” (6.27.8).\(^{28}\)

This interpretation of RV 6.27.8 has to be emphasized. According to this, the Pārthavas were the enemies, or at least were among the enemies, of the (Bharata-) Śṛṇjayā group. The only other persons who may be linked with the name Pārthava in the RV are Pṛthi/Pṛthu Vena and Vena Pṛthavāna. The former is referred to as an ari at 10.148.3,\(^{29}\) while the latter is mentioned in 10.93 in association with one who is called Rāma, the asura.\(^{30}\)

It seems probable then that the opponents of the (Bharata-) Śṛṇjayas of 6.27 were Aryans who may be associated with leaders designated as ari and asura elsewhere in the Samhitā, Aryans who for some reason were disagreeable to a strong section of the ṛṣi authors of the RV hymns. The adverse reference to Vena in the Manusmṛti\(^{31}\) and other late works is an indication of this early opposition, which is otherwise unrecorded explicitly.

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27. *kan pūrve ardhe, bhiyaua 'paro dard* - 6.27.5d

28. *dōnāsāyam dākṣiṇā pārthavānām* - 6.27.8d To translate the line to mean that the gift was of the Pārthavas does not seem to make sense (Cf. Geldner : Raum zu erreichen ist diese Schenkung der Pārthava's).

29. 10.148.3a refers to the ari's songs (\_: aryo girah\_) and stz. 5, (lines ab), goes on to give a more specific expression to the same, ("Listen, O Indra, to the call of Pṛthi...you will be lauded with Venya's songs": *śrudhī āhavan ātra...pṛtyahāh...stavase venya-gārkaḥ*. In treating *aro gīr\_*, 10.148.3a = *pṛthīhā hav a and venyaṣya arka \_*., 10.148.5ab, we are in agreement with Geldner).

30. *prā tad pṛthavānā venā prā rāme vocam asura* -10.93.14 ab. The same Pṛthavānā Vena is referred to as a Pārthya at 10.93.15 \_: *sadyo didiṣṭa pṛthīhā*.

31. Manus Smṛti VII, 41 and IX, 66-67. This and other later sources regard Vena with disfavour but (his son) Venya with favour. See Manus VII. 42, Viṣṇu Purāṇa 1.13.14. See also Dowson, under PRITHI and VENA and Gonda, Numen 31, p.50 and fn 114.
Turning our attention to Vadhyāśva, we note that the hymn which refers to him, RV 6.61, shows that he and his people were living near the river Sarasvati, but with a noticeable sense of insecurity, owing to the presence of many adversaries.32

(c) Prastoka, Aśvatha and Divodāsa

The Ēyvedic evidence on Divodāsa clearly establishes the complex nature of the hostilities that prevailed among the various ethnic and tribal groups of this time. On the one hand we have the clear evidence of RV 6.47 (stanzas 21-25) which speaks of the storming and destruction of the Dāsa stronghold of Śambhara by Divodāsa, with the aid of Prastoka and Aśvatha. On the other hand, there is also evidence of hostility between Divodāsa and other Aryans.33

A close analysis of RV 6.47 in this respect reveals some interesting facts. 6.47 is the hymn which celebrates Divodāsa’s famous victory over Śambhara, the Dasyu chief. That the Bharata-s were at this time hard-pressed is obvious from stanza 20: “To a pastureless dwelling have we come, O gods! Constricted has the earth become, wide though she be!”34 (And this becomes all the more meaningful when we remember that Divodāsa’s father was represented as imploring the Sarasvati, ‘killer of them that come from the far distance’,35 not to let the Bharata-s depart from her side to unknown dwellings.36 Obviously he too was feeling the threat of new enemies close at hand.) In 6.47, the poet’s deep trepidation comes to light when he declares: “May not the ari’s wealth overpower us!”37

Can this reference to the ari be to Divodāsa’s Dasyu opponents? Or was there also an Aryan foe with whom he had to contend in the struggle that 6.47 highlights - as may conceivably be expected in view of Bharata-Ārya hostilities of the previous generation, and also of the succeeding generations, as we shall soon see?

32. 6.61 is addressed to Sarasvati, who is said to have granted Divodāsa to Vadhyāśva as a ‘redeemer of his debt’. Sarasvati helps, or her help is sought, in crushing Pañis, Pārivas, insulters of gods (devanidh) and haters (divisit) : stz 1,2,3,10.
33. Stz. 11 says: “May we not depart from thee to unaccustomed lands” : mā teat kṣetrāṇy anāṇato ganaha.
34. 1.53.10, 2.14.7, 6.18.13, 8.53.2 : Divodāsa against Turvayaśa; 7.19.8, 9.61.2 : D against Yaddu-Turvāsa. See also Vedic Index, under Turvayaśa.
35. 34. agaryati kṣetram ṣaṇyam daṇa / urvi sati bhāmira anahāpa bhūt - 6.47.20ab.
36. pārivaṭaghni - 6.61.2c. It is interesting to note that the Yadu / Turvāsa, whom Divodāsa opposed, arrived from parivat - 6.45.1 ab.
37. See n. 32 above.
38. mā nae tārin...rāgo aryah - 6.47.9d. The best way to render this line seems to us to be: “Let it not prevail over us - the ari’s treasures”, being then a case of anacolusion, as Geldner rightly observes. Contrast Thieme, F p. 37.
Indeed, one stanza of 6.47 makes this seem extremely likely. This is stanza 19 which asks Indra, the Vedic god of war: "Who will for ever stay on the foeman's side, the more so as (our) heroic princes sit in sacrificial session (to honour the gods)")38 - which seems to imply that the god's favours were indeed at one time with the foes of the Bharata-s (i.e. they were winning at the latter's expense), but now their sacrificial rites could possibly not be ignored. It is unthinkable that the poet is suggesting here that Indra's favours were won by the Dasyu-s at any time. To us it appears that the poet in 6.47 is not thinking of a Dāsa opponent when he speaks of the ari in stz. 9; rather, he is referring to a specific Aryan foe of one of the tribes the Bharata-s had to reckon with from the moment of their appearance in the region around the Sarasvati.

The hostility between these Aryan groups and Divodāsa is referred to in even less ambiguous form in other allusions. Thus there are references to Divodāsa's discomfiture at the hands of Tūrvayāna. The latter is identified by Macdonell and Keith39 (on the basis of RV 10.61.1 f.) as a prince of the Pakha-s, whose Aryan identity is not in doubt. Besides this, there is also the important evidence of 7.19.8 which says that Indra, rendering aid to Divodāsa, struck down Yadu and Turvaśa,40 tribes of the Ārya-s as is quite well known. It is no doubt the same tradition of Bharata-Turvaśa hostility that 9.61.1 and 2 reflect when they say that Indra shattered 99 forts when aiding Divodāsa, and that he destroyed Śambara, Turvaśa and Yadu as well.41 Indeed it is quite possible to see such statements as references to Dāsa-Ārya collusion against the Bharata-s: this would cause us no surprise if we ponder on what happened in the War of Ten Kings just two generations subsequent to these events. The 3rd and 7th books of the RV clearly indicate the continued harassment of the Bharata-s by Dāsa and Ārya foes, so much so that the tribe became decimated and had thinned "like staves that drove kine"42, in spite of the victories of Divodāsa.

38. ko viśvāhā dviguṣṭaḥ pakṣa āsata / utāśineṣu sūriṣu / 6.47.19cd.
39. Vedic Index, under Tūrvayāna.
40. ni turvaśam ni yādivam sūryā / atithīgya śaṁśeṣam kariṣeṇ 7.19.8cd.
41. avāhan navatir nava -- purah... / dividāśya śambaram /...turaśam yadum // 9.61.1c and 2. Sāyaṇa adds evaṁ ānyeṣ ca to complete the sense. Goldner's rendering of 9.61.2 is to be rejected in favour of Sāyaṇa's. That Turvaśa, when mentioned with Yadu, is always Indra's protegé (Goldner, note to 9.61.2c) is not correct, as even Goldner's own translation of 7.19.8 shows.
42. daṇḍā ived gojanāsah - 7.33.6a.
(d) Somaka and Pijavana

That Divodasa's victory over Sambara did not stabilize the Bharata-s' position for a very long time is also proved by the comparative insignificance of the Bharata princes of the generation that immediately followed. The paucity of references to these princes and especially the lack of evidence of their patroncy of celebrated priestly clans gives added significance to what we have already mentioned: the Bharata tribe was steadily growing thin 'like staves that drove kine'.

(e) Sudas

And so at the beginning of his career, we find Sudas, the next Bharata prince, as a nomadic plunderer leading a life of incursions and forays aided by an Indra-worshipping rishi who takes him across rivers far to the west of what was once the favourite habitat of the Bharata tribe. In other words, the reference to Sudas' early wanderings shows that Vadhrya's worst fears for the Bharata tribe had indeed been confirmed: they have been forced out of the hospitable lands around the Sarasvati.

But Sudas appears to have chosen a new purohita in place of the Indra-worshipping rishi of far-flung fame. This in itself must have been a crucial decision and its significance is worth pondering over - both to Sudas and to Vasishta, the new purohita. Says the text: "Vasishta became the (king's new) purohita, and then did the Tptsu tribe spread (far and wide)." The Bharata-s, whose movements had so far been obstructed now gain "free space". Obviously the short epics of Vasishta's chaplaincy lay much store on Sudas' wise decision to use the services of so able a priest (and, as it turned out, of so able a strategist, we may say.) Vasishta himself has not the slightest doubt that it was his chaplaincy that turned the tide for the Bharata tribe. At 7.18.15 he declares that the tribe, "vitalized by Indra, poured forth like released waters" - a simile that draws heavily on the experiences from the Aryans' riverine life and is suggestive of victorious freedom gained after the frustrations of obstructed living. These descriptions which seem to depict the victory of the Bharata-s as an unexpected miracle help us to understand 7.18.17 which says that (in this war) "Indra killed a lioness by means of a ram".

43. 3.33 refers to Visvamitra taking the Bharatas across Vipasa-Sutudri. 3.33.9 shows that the event is to be related to Sudas' time. So also Gellner, preamble to translation of 3.33. See also Ch. IV 3 below.
44. abhavac ca puraeta vaisishta / ad it tteusnam viso aprabanta - 7.33. 6ed.
45. urum... ulokam - 7.33.5d.
46. i.e. 7.18, 7.33, 7.83.
47. indreya vevisana apo na epi... - 7.18.15 ab.
48. sinhyam oui petvena jaghana - 7.18.17b.
Let us now turn our attention to some of the important aspects of the Ten Kings' War in which Sudās emerged as the victor, and which is the highlight of the career of this Bharata prince, one of the few secular chiefs whose fame outlived the Rgvedic age.

An important aspect of the War of Ten Kings according to RV 7.18 is the clearly unequal distribution of forces in the war. On one side there is the single Trõtu (=Bharata) group, while against them stand on the other side the following: Śīmyu, Turvaśa, Yakṣu, Matsyas, Bṛgu, Druhyu, Paktha, Bhālana, Alina, Viśānic, Prśnigū, Anu, Pāru, Aja and Śigru. There are also Vaikarna, Kavasa and Bheda which appear to be personal names. It is indeed impossible to know exactly how many tribal groups are here involved and so there is no way to say who are the major ‘Ten’ on account of whom the war gained its famous name.

Why did so many tribes feel impelled to array themselves on one side in opposition to Sudās and the Bharata-s? We must certainly learn the answer to this query if we are to make sense of much that we find obscure in regard to early Vedic tribal life and the struggles that must have prevailed therein.

Whatever that answer is, it is obvious that the Bharata isolation was in great measure due to their violent and plundering habits of which a hint is found in the way they are described in RV 3.33: “cattle-hunters moving in hordes”, “whose source of strength was Indra” 49 - expressions which gain in meaning only when we place them in the context of the views of the Indra cult.50

In any case, the Bharata-s found themselves badly ‘besieged’ and “they looked to heaven, like thirsting men, distressed” 51. Sudās was ‘obstructed’ 52 and ‘surrounded’ 53. The chaplain complains: “the ill-will of (other Aryan?) peoples has arisen against me”.54

Another significant feature of the war is the characterization of the enemies of the Bharata-s as opponents of (the sacrificial) cult or as men whose fidelity to that cult was suspect. One of the best instances of such depictions

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49. gauyaṇa grāmaḥ... iṣṭa indrajñataḥ - 3.33.11b. As to what “Indra and his devotees” did to their opponents, see below Ch. IV. 6. Other references to Indra’s character (cf. e.g., parīpānāthī-1,108.6c; muṣṭiyan-10,99.5d, muṣṭi 8.34.7a) throw a flood of light on how his devotees would have treated their adversaries.

50. See Ch. IV below.
51. ud dyām āveta śṛṇājo nāthilāsaḥ - 7.33.5a.
52. bābhītaḥ - 7.83.6d
53. pariyātta - 7.83.8c.
54. aṣṭuṛ jaṇāṁ upa māṁ arātayaḥ - 7.83.3c.
Mahinda Paliwadana

is 7.83.7 where the enemies of Sudās are called “ten kings who do not perform sacrificial rites”.55 Another is 7.18.16 where they are described as “the party that is without Indra, that drinks the cooked libation” (i.e. who are not Soma drinkers=Soma offerers).56

These expressions help us somewhat in understanding the remarkable statement at 7.18.19 which says that (the river) Yamunā and the Tṛṣṇu-s (=Bharata-s) rendered aid (in this war) to Indra57 which seems to be an inversion of the usual Vedic assertion that it is Indra who gives aid and protection to his devotees in war. It looks as though the poet’s feeling was that on this occasion the very worship of Indra was at stake, that the river and the god’s devotees insured the defeat of those at whose hands there was actually a threat to the faith.

These unequivocal indications of non-(or slender) adherence of the foes of Sudās to the Indra cult are supported by several other references in these hymns which depict them as distinctly of an unacceptable condition in matters of cult and worship. Thus the Pūrū chief at 7.18.13 is described as one “who uses mis-spoken (?) utterances in the vidatha”.58 It would seem that it is at least this very quality of ritual ineffectiveness that other expressions of a similar nature in 7.18 highlight (e.g. “vain utterances”......“evil thoughts”......“futile words” - in stanzas 5, 8, and 9).59 A not insignificant epithet in 7.18, applied to a foe of Sudās, is “measuring out meanly”60 in stanza 15 - one that seems to emphasize the enemies’ rejection of the ethic of liberality: always a cherished quality in a true prince who follows the dictates of the cult as portrayed by the Vedic seers.

But it must be emphasized that the hymns in question do not portray the enemies of Sudās as irrevocably outside the boundaries of Vedic worship, in spite of their being called non-sacrificers in 7.83. This subtle distinction seems to us to be of vital significance. The evidence is that this distinction was indeed intended. We get this impression basically through the strange but unequivocal statement found at RV 6.83.6 where Vasiṣṭha says that when the gods aided Sudās who was besieged by the ten kings, “men of both sides” invoked the aid of Indra and Varuṇa.61 We view this of course in conjunction with the other statements discussed above. What those other statements say may actually be not that the enemies of Sudās did not perform sacrifice, but that in the eyes of Vasiṣṭha their ritual for some reason was not acceptable.

55. daśa rājānāḥ...ayaśyateḥ - 7.83.7a.
56. ardham...ṣaptam aṇāḍraṃ - 7.18.16a.
57. āsād indraṃ yamunā śṛṇuvā ca - 7.18.19a.
58. vidatthe nyādram viśvācaḥ - 7.18.13d. Patañjali insists that one should pronounce one’s words exactly in ritual acts (Mahābhāṣya, p.28). From Śatapatha Br. 3.2.1.13 we learn that the Auras did not do just this, and Śatapatha 6.8.1.14 calls the Pūrūs āsura-ralagās.
59. adastiḥ - 7.18.5d ; durāhyah 8a ; vadhrīvācaḥ - 9d.
60. prakalavin mīndānāḥ - 7.18.15e, on which cf. Goldner’s translation: “die kleinlich zumessen” and his note thereto: “D.h. die gegen Götter und Sänger geziig sind”.
61. yuvām havanta unbhayātah...yatra...sdāsam āvatam - 7.83.6ab.

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as a true form of worship of the gods. These aspects of the minutiae of religious differences discernible in these statements should properly be the subject of a study in themselves. At this juncture they only serve to highlight to us that a large segment of the adversaries of the Bharata-s were Aryans of a religious persuasion that was dissimilar yet not wholly different from that which the great Ṛṣi-s espoused: it may be that other factors (political? sociological?) tended to show up these differences in an exaggerated form.

That Sudā's foes were both Ārya and Dāsa is explicitly declared. RV 7.83.1 says: “Slay the Ārya foes and also the Dāsa; aid Sudās, O Indra, Varuṇa!”62 And at 7.18.7 the treasuries of the Tṛṣṇa-s (=Bharata-s) won are said to be the Ārya's (possessions): “He who is our companion at the Soma draught brought the Ārya's (possessions) of cattle to the Tṛṣṇa-s. With war has he come unto men.”63

It would seem that it is just such an Ārya foe, an Ārya chief, that is referred to at 7.83.5 under the term āri: “The evils of the āri torment me and the malice of his followers”64. And in this respect this reference to the āri is similar to other such references in 6.16, 6.47 and 9.61: they all refer to Aryan enemies of Bharata or pro-Bharata tribes.

(2) Turvaśa-s

We found that one of the earliest Aryan opponents of the Bharata-s was the Turvaśa tribe. It is noteworthy that the Turvaśa-s in the RV are almost inseparably linked with the Yadu-s. (Of 25 references to the Turvaśa-s and Yadu-s, 17 mention the two groups together.)65

It is interesting that the earliest parts of the RV have only a few references to the Turvaśa-Yadu tribes. 17 out of 25 references are in the 1st, 8th and 10th books of the Sāṁhitā. Conspicuously the opposite was the case in respect of the Bharata-s, who figure prominently only in the 3rd, 6th and 7th books. It must be stressed that this is a very noteworthy fact.

We found that the RV connects the Turvaśa-s with the following events:

(i) Engagement against Śṛṅja Saivavāta66
(ii) Engagement against Divodāsa Ātithiṣva67
(iii) Engagement against Sudās Pajavana68

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62. dāśa ca vytrā hatam āryāni ca | sudāsam indrāvarunā 'vasa vatam - 7.83.1cd.
63. a yo nayat sadhamā' rasya | gavyā tṛṇabhya ajagan yuddha nṛn - 7.18.7cd.
64. abhy ā tapanti mā | 'ghany aryo vanwām arātayaḥ - 7.83.5 ab.
65. Turvaśa and Yadus : I.36.18, 64.6, 108.8, 174.9; IV.30.17; V.31.8; VI.20.12, 45.1; VII 19.8; VIII 4.7, 7.18, 9.14, 10.5, 45.27; IX.61.2; X.49.8, 62.10. Turvaśas : 1.47.7 VI.27.7 VII.18.6, VIII.41, 4.19; Yadus : VIII.1.31; 6.46, 6.48.
66. 6.27.7
67. 7.19.8, 9.61.2
68. 7.18.8
Mahinda Paliyawadana

It would be useful to find out what other group beside the Yadu the Turvaśa-s are associated with. RV 1.108.8 refers to Anu, Pūru and Druhyu with the Yadu-Turvaśa-s, 8.4.1/2 to Anu and others and 8.10.5 to Anu and Druhyu. In 7.18 we find all of these - Anu, Pūru, Druhyu, Turvaśa and Yadu ranged against the Bharata tribe in the Ten Kings' War.

We have no evidence of any early hostility between the Turvaśa-s and the Dāsa-s. The 9.61.2 reference to them must be understood as meaning that Divodāsa defeated them as well as Śambara the Dāsa chief (and not as meaning that Indra defeated Śambara for Divodāsa and aided the Yadu-Turvaśa-s, as Geldner assumes.) On the other hand, that the Turvaśa-s, like the Pūru-s and others, collaborated with non-Aryans in the Ten Kings' War is a well-established fact. The description "non-sacrificers" applied to the opponents of Sudās by Vasiṣṭha reflects that rāj's attitude towards the Turvaśa-s as well. But, and this is quite instructive, the later portions of the RV consistently portray the Turvaśa-s as regular adherents of the sacrificial cult, often under the guidance of Kāṇva priests. This contrasts so strikingly with the absence of even a single hymn that bears the stamp of having been composed to intercede on behalf of the Turvaśa antagonists of Śrįnava, (Vadhryaśva), Divodāsa and Sudās. It would seem that there lies behind this at least a conversion of attitudes if not of faith.

(3) Pūru-s

Although it looks as if the Turvaśa-s were the earliest Aryan tribe to come into conflict with the Bharata-s, it is the Pūru tribe that really vies with the latter for pre-eminence in Rgvedic Īndia.

The distribution of allusions to the Pūru-s is strikingly like that to the Turvaśa-s. The earliest books either ignore them or betray no knowledge of them, and the largest number of references to them is in the latest books. It is also interesting, that, as in the case of the Turvaśa-s, a distinctly hostile attitude to the Pūru-s is betrayed in the pro-Bharata references such as 7.8.4 and 7.18.13

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69. See note 41 above
70. 1.47.7, 108.8; VIII.4.1, 9.14, 10.5, 45.27
71. 1.59.6, 63.7, 108.8, 112.7/14, 129.5, 139.7, 131.4, 174.2; IV.21.10, 38.1-3, 89.2, 42.8/9 V.17.1, 27.1-3, 33.8; VI.20.10, 46.8; VII.5.3, 8.4, 18.13, 19.3, 96.2; VIII.8.21, 19. 32/36, 22.7, 36.7, 37.7, 49.10, 64.10, 65.12; X.4.1, 32.9, 33.4/6/7, 48.5, 150.5.
More, however, about individual leaders of the Pāru tribe is known than is the case with the Turvaśa-s. The genealogy of Pāru chiefs of the RV is as follows:—

1. Durgaha
2. Purukutsa
3. Trasadasyu
4. Trivṣan Trksi Mitrāśithi
5. Tryaruna Kuruśravaṇa
6. Upamāśrava

Significant from our point of view is the Ṛgvedic treatment of the Pāru chiefs, particularly the unnamed Pāru of the Ten Kings' War, as well as Durgaha, Purukutsa and Trasadasyu. Let us pay some attention to this treatment.

The Pāru chief in the Ten Kings' War is depicted as of unworthy speech (in worship) and, by implication, a non-sacrificer and one not entitled to Indra's aid. He fights against the Bharata-s in the company of Dasyu-s.

Durgaha is almost a veiled and shadowy figure. We can surmise that he existed, only by virtue of the use of his name when referring to his descendants.

There is no evidence of these Pāru chiefs having had the support of any of the Vedic priests of repute.

Coming to Purukutsa, we see that he is not mentioned as a contemporary chief in any of the Vedic hymns. We do not find any hymns that plead to the gods on his behalf. Yet obviously he was not a leader of minor standing. Later hymns speak of him as a powerful opponent of the Dasyu-s, a breaker of their forts. In one of the hymns describing the birth of Trasadasyu (his famous son), we are told that Purukutsa's wife prayed to Indra and Varuna and obtained from them that heroic son as a very special favour to the Pāru tribe. And Trasadasyu is said to have been born while Purukutsa was in captivity.

72. Cf. CHI 1.74. Ludwig, Der RV III.174, 182.
73. References to Purukutsa by name: I.63.7, 112.7, 174.2; VI.20.10. Other allusions to P.: I. 130.7, 131.4; VII.5.3. References to P. as father of Trasadasyu: 4.42.8/9; 5.33.8: 7.19.3; 8.19.36.
74. 1.63.7, 174.2
75. 4.42.8/9
76. daurgahe badhyamāne: 4.42.8b.
Mahinda Palihowadana

Trasadayu, unlike these earlier Pūru chiefs, is a favourite with the Vedic ṛṣis. He is depicted as an implacable foe of the Dasyu-s and a munificent benefactor of the ṛṣi-s of the Gautama, Atri and Kanya clans.\textsuperscript{77} The ṛṣi-s shower the highest praises on him and speak of him as a man who was known to them at first hand.\textsuperscript{78}

Now this treatment of the Pūru-s contrasts sharply with that accorded to the Bharata chiefs, \textit{all} of whom from the start are referred to in contemporaneous and intercessory hymns e.g. 3.23 for Devavāta, 6.27 for Śṛṇjaya, 10.69 for Vadhryaśva, 6.47 and 6.61 for Divodāsa and 7.18 for Sudās. (Sudās is also celebrated in 3.33, 7.33, and 7.83). On the other hand the treatment accorded to the Pūru-s is (a) hostile or indifferent at the start, (b) ambiguous in the case of Purukutsa and (c) favourable after Purukutsa.

This intriguing treatment of the Pūru-s raises several important questions:

Why did the Pūru-s, having fought with the Dāsa-s against Sudās, turn against them subsequently?

Why do the ṛṣi-s refer to Purukutsa’s role as an opponent of the Dāsa-s only posthumously?

How did the attitude of the ṛṣi-s change so profoundly as to allow a descendant of a “non-sacrificer” to be hailed as a demi-god in RV 4.42, as a hero granted by Indra and Vaiṣṇava to the Pūru tribe?

These questions are naturally linked with others no less important: What happened to Sudās after the Ten Kings’ War? Was the Pūru participant in that war killed by Sudās? And what was the over-all position of the Aryans in relation to the Dāsa-s at the end of this war?

The war could well have assumed an internecine character for the Aryans. Many of their tribal chiefs are said to have been drowned or killed. A close scrutiny of the statements made in respect of each person\textsuperscript{79} involved shows however that the Pūru chief was “sought” by the Bharatas “to be subdued”\textsuperscript{80} it is not said that he was subdued, killed or defeated. And for some strange reason what we hear about him in this war is the last that is known of Sudās the Bharata in the RV Samhitā. He apparently ceases to be an effective force, while the Aryan conflict with the Dāsa-s assumes a new character in that the Pūru-s become involved in it against the Dāsa-s. We may surmise that the

\textsuperscript{77} Gautama: 4.38, 4.42; Atri: 5.33; Kanya: 8.19.
\textsuperscript{78} Cf. e.g. sūra trasadayur...vahantu mā daśa śvetāsah (5.33.8); adān me... paṁcāśatam trasadayur vadhānām (8.19.36).
\textsuperscript{79} These are found in 7.18, stż 5-6, 7-9, 10-14, 18-19.
\textsuperscript{80} jēṣā pūrūr vīdate mṛdhraśācam 7.18,19.
Dāsa-s utilized the weakened position of the Aryans to take on all comers, or that the Pūru-s, like all participants in tripartite conflicts turned on their erstwhile collaborators soon after the war.

In any case, the all-important fact is that after the Ten Kings’ War, the Bharata-s no longer occupy the paramount position that we would have expected them to occupy. In this situation it is easy to understand why the pīśi-proclaim Trasadasyu as a gift of Indra and Varuṇa to the Aryans, a demi-god comparable with Indra himself, as the text portrays. It looks so like an attempt to rally the Aryans behind him, with no exceptions whatsoever. He justified the Aryans’ profoundest hopes and became such a vanquisher of foes that the pīśi-s fondly espoused his cause. Certainly he belongs to an age when the Pūru-s, and not the Bharata-s, were the hope of the Aryans.

But not so Purukutsa. His position in the Samhitā is very anomalous. He wears neither the veil that Durgaha does, nor the halo that Trasadasyu does. He is certainly not ignored, but he is also not contemporaneously praised and supported by the pīśi-s. It is as a legendary character that his praises are sung. That his wife is shown to have prayed to Indra and Varuṇa and obtained a son while he was held in captivity is clearly an attempt to portray that son in glowing colours. The posthumous glorification of Purukutsa appears to us as a reflection on the one hand of an attempt to glorify Trasadasyu and on the other of an opposition to Purukutsa on the part of the pīśi-s while he was yet alive.

This inclines us to think that Purukutsa himself might have been the Pūru that figured in the Ten Kings’ War. The Pūru of that war could definitely not have been Trasadasyu to whom epithets such as “non-sacrifier” and “user of misspoken words” would scarcely apply. Therefore that Pūru should have been either Durgaha or Purukutsa. The strangely anomalous way in which the latter is depicted and the fact of his becoming an opponent of the Dāsa-s make us think that he fought against Sudās, escaped death and lived to see the demise of the Bharata-s and to lead the Aryan forces against the Dāsa-s, who probably were then trying to take advantage of the weakened position of these new-comers to their land.

If we assume that Purukutsa was the Pūru referred to in 7.13 and that he survived the Ten Kings’ War, we may ask ourselves whether the RV offers any evidence howsoever indirect on his subsequent activities.

If we accept Ludwig’s suggestion that the text of RV 1.637 c is faulty and that sudāse there should really read sudāsam, it would appear that Purukutsa not only survived the war, but that the victor in that war was himself

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81. See below, nn. 96,97
82. Der RV II.174, V.22. See also Vedic Index under Sudās, fn.8 and Geldner fn to 1.63.7.
subsequently conquered by Purukutsa. Translated in accordance with Ludwig’s suggestion, RV 1.63.7 should read somewhat as follows:— "You O Indra, then shattered the seven forts, fighting for Purukutsa’s sake. When you effortlessly ‘squeezed’ Sudās, like barhis grass, then did you bring freedom from confinement to the Pārū (chief)."  

This emendation of text raises an important issue. If Sudās fell in this fashion engaged against the Pārū chief, why is the RV silent on this point, except for this isolated stanza, which too yields this sense only with this deliberate change of the traditional text?

That is not so big a problem as appears at first sight. The Vedic priesthood had already taken a strong stand against the Pārū chief in the Ten Kings’ War and it was their considered view that his position in matters of cult and worship was quite unacceptable. Of course there must have been more to this than we can as yet understand. Later Vedic singers, however, were patronized by this early Pārū’s descendants and they had good reason to please and glorify these patrons by referring to the might of their ancestors. In this way the body of Šaevic poetry may have come to contain several references to the heroic deeds of Purukutsa in respect of the Dāsa-s and only one to his heroism in respect of his Bharata foe, Sudās. It may be because some strong influences in the circles of Vedic orthodoxy were uneasy at this reference to the overthrow of the prince of the Bharata-s that the single stanza that referred to Purukutsa’s conquest of Sudās suffered for its outspokenness by the early mutilation of its original text.

Moreover, we cannot ignore the significance of the fact there are no hymns in the RV that mention (leave alone support) any son or descendant of Sudās the Bharata. As far as the evidence of the RV goes, with Sudās the greatness of the Bharata-s came to an end. If Sudās died with the tribe at the zenith of its power after the gains in the Ten Kings’ War, this would be almost inexplicable.

It is interesting to note that the later Vedic tradition mentions that the descendants of Sudās did not see eye to eye with the Vasistha-s who saved the Bharata-s in the War. And a very late, but nevertheless surprising, piece of evidence suggests that Sudās came by an unhappy end. This is Manusmṛti VII. 41 which says that Sudās the son of Pjavana lost restraint and was destroyed in consequence thereof.  

83. 

84. 

83. tvam ha tyad indra naṣṭa yudhyan/puro ...purukutsāya dardah | barhir na yat sudās vṛtha varga | anha ... varvah pūrave kaḥ / 1.63.7 (anhaḥ : sus Not - Geldner)

84. vinaṣṭa... sudāh paṇjavanaḥ - Manu. VII.41.
All this favours the adoption of the textual emendation proposed by Ludwig. And there is also a further argument in support of a reappraisal of the accuracy of the accepted text in this instance: this is that the text as it stands is almost completely incapable of yielding any coherent sense.

Nor is this all. We must also ponder on the meaning of ‘confinement’ (aṃhasa = constriction, state of siege etc.) found in RV 1.63.7. A clear instance of the Pūru chief coming by a state of affairs that can be so designated is provided in the situation depicted in the description of the Ten Kings’ War. Sudās was looking for the Pūru in order to vanquish him. The result of Sudās thus pursuing the Pūru would easily amount to a state of siege or confinement for the latter. And if, as 1.63.7 seems to say, the Pūru chief obtained release from this state, that could well mean the destruction of Sudās his oppressor. (Is 4.21.10: “You brought freedom to Pūru”85 a further echo of these events?)

It then does not seem very unreasonable to assume with Ludwig that RV 1.63.7. depicts Purukutsa as defeating Sudās - thus pointing at the contemporaneity of the two leaders and the identity of the Pūru mentioned in 7.18.

Trasadasyu

Trasadasyu is not only the first known Pūru king to have patronized the regular Vedic priesthood, he is also the only leader about whom any close personal information is supplied by the RV Saṃhitā. (Cf. 4.42: his parentage and birth; 4.38: his great standing with the Pūru-s; his war-horse Dadhikrāvan; 5.33: his gifts to Saṃvarana; 8.19: gifts to Sbhārī Kāṃva) "His praises are sung by Gautama, Atri, Kaṇva and Vasiṣṭha: a fact which eloquently reflects the high regard in which the ṛṣi-s held him.

Trasadasyu’s very name implies that it was on account of his subjugation of the Dasyu-s that he earned his fame. In the consecutive series of leaders figuring in the destruction of the Dasyu-s, he appears to be the last significant member. Among the later kings whose relative position can be established, the name of Dasyave Vṛka may suggest hostilities with the Dasyu-s, but he appears to be a leader of comparatively minor stature. References to Dasyu-s in some of the late Ṛgvedic hymns indicate their peaceful subordination as opposed to their earlier spirit of resistance. In all probability therefore Trasadasyu the Pūru almost completed the Aryans’ task of dāsahatya and this earned him the acknowledgement of most of the wellknown families of Vedic ṛṣi-s.

Of great interest to us is the occurrence of the words ari and aryə in some of the hymns dealing with events of Trasadasyu’s time.

85. vairvah purava kah. 4.21.10.
Among these hymns is RV 4.38. This hymn bespeaks the tremendous importance that Trasadasu’s war-horse and car implied to the “five peoples” (among whom the Pūru-s were a particularly important group and) who according to RV 4.38.10 were brought under the unified rule of Trasadasu86 an event which must be regarded as a landmark in the history of Vedic tribes. In this hymn the warhorse Dadhikrā earns a special measure of praise. He is a gift of the gods to the Pūru-s87, a delight to each and every member of the tribe,88 and he is “worthy of the ari’s praise as is a heroic prince”.89 One wonders if ari here refers to Trasadasu himself, for in this context we can think of him only as having the standing that confers the ability to compliment another prince.

The word ari occurs three times in 5.33. It is our belief that the scene which formed the background of this hymn is a festival of ritual contests whose instigator is referred to as ari. Trasadasu appears as one of the contesting princes in this hymn, which is sung on behalf of these contestants.90 We would render the relevant passages of 5.33 containing the words ari/arya as follows:

5.33.2 Advance, subdue the ari’s men.91

5.33.6 I shall praise the gift of him who is more liberal than the ari.92

5.33.9 Cyavatāna, the arya, giving me thousands, sang the anūka as though for glory’s sake.93

Apparently, ari here refers to a tribal chief of a group closely linked or related to the (Pūru) princes mentioned by name, one of whom appears to be indicated by the derivative form of ari viz. arya. These statements about the ari can become fully comprehensible only with a knowledge of the salient features of

86. a...sāvād paśca kṛṣṭī...tatāna - 4.38.10ab. The subject of the verb is dadhikrā, as befitting the hymn which is to glorify this renowned war-horse of Trasadasu.
87. pūrubhaya...dadathuḥ - 4.38.1bc.
88. viśvāḥ pūrur madati harṣamāṇah - 4.38.3b.
89. carkryatam aryo-nṛpatiḥ na śūram - 4.38.2e.
90. They are referred to in 6.33.5 thus: vayaṃ tu ta indra ye ca narah ī sartho jajñānā yātāḥ ... ā asmān jagamyāt...: “We, O Indra, and these heroes who, forming into a group, have come (to the ritual festival: viśvātī) ... Do you come toward us (i.e. arrive here to aid us) the prizes offered”. These heroes and the gifts they gave after obtaining victory, are individually referred to later in the hymn as Trasadasu, the sūri (stz 9), Vidatha Mārutāvā (9ab), Cyavatāna (9c) and Dhvanya Lakṣmaṇa (10ab).
91. vakṣa abhi prāryah sakṣi janānā - 33.2d. On sakṣi, cf., Sāyana: parābhava; Goldner: “Wede mit ... fertig”; Gonda, Aorist, p 72: “get even with ...”
92. prāryah etuṣe tvamaghaṇya dānam - 5.33.6d.
93. sahasraś ca me cyavatāno dadāna / ānūkaṃ aryo vapiṣe nārcat - 5.33.9ed.
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the competitive festivals which seem to have occupied a prominent position in the cultural life of the early Aryan tribes. We shall be dealing with that aspect of our problem at a later stage.

In RV 8.19 *arya* occurs again. It may be that here too Trasadasya appears on the scene as a young prince, rather than as the formal chief of the tribe. In any case, the line which contains the word may be rendered as follows:

8. 19. 36 (Trasadasyu)......the most liberal *arya*, the chief of the(ritual-) house..........94

It is noteworthy that all five references in these three hymns yield a consistently unitary sense when we assume that *ari* and *arya* mentioned therein are (1) a tribal chief and (2) a scion of a family of such a chief. The contexts help us to decide that the families concerned are of the Pāru tribe and/or tribes closely linked to them. And we found above that in the pro-Bharata hymns too, the word *ari* seemed to have been used to refer to the antagonists of the Bharata chiefs who significantly were of Pāru and pro-Pāru tribal groups.

We might observe that the result of the application of Thieme's hypothesis to these passages was conspicuously different.95

Legend of Trasadasyu’s Birth

Most interesting to a student of the history of the Vedic tribes are the allusions to the birth of Trasadasyu in RV 4.42. The events mentioned there are as follows:

(a) Dauryaha was in captivity (lit. “being held in bondage”).

(b) The seven great ṛṣi-s won Trasadasyu by sacrifice, a conqueror of *vṛtrās* like Indra, a demigod,96

(c) Purukutsa’s wife made offerings to Indra and Varuṇa and then the two gods gave her Trasadasyu, the rājan, a killer of *vṛtra-s,* a demigod.97

95. F., pp. 21, 76, 82, 85. Thieme’s renderings do not yield a unitary sense and he has almost abandoned the hope of rendering 3.33.2 and 9 in conclusive way.
96. *supta ṛṣaya...ā yajanta trasadasyum...indram na vṛtratvam ardhādevam / 4.42.8bed
97. *purukutsaṁ ha vāṁ adāsaddh / havyebhir indrāvaruṇā...aṁ ṛjānam trasadasyum asya / vṛtrahnam dadathur ardhādevam / 4.42.9

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We must connect these sayings with what is said in 4.38 about Trasadasyu: “He showered many gifts upon the Pūru-s. Indra and Varuna had granted (them) (this) striker of the Dasyu-s.” His fierce opposition to the Dasyu-s is certainly the chief reason for his popularity with the ṛṣi-s, just as it also gave him his name: “the terror of the Dasyu-s.” At the time of his appearance, the Dasyu-s obviously were the overpowering menace to the Vedic Aryans.

We can therefore agree with Norman Brown when he expresses the opinion that it was perhaps the Dasyu-s that held Trasadasyu’s father in captivity. According to him the official (this should mean “sanctioned and proclaimed by the ṛṣi-s”) version of the birth of Trasadasyu during the captivity of Purukutsa was that he was partly of divine parentage - i.e., son of Indra and Varuṇa and of Purukutsa’s wife. In keeping with this version, Norman Brown interprets stanza 3 of 4.42 as a “self-praise” by Trasadasyu: “Indra am I, and Varuṇa.” This appears to be a very much better interpretation of this stanza than any hitherto offered.

Why was it prudent on the part of the ṛṣi-s to ascribe partial divinity (cf. ardha-devam...... 4.42.8/9) to Trasadasyu and why was he so uniquely likened to Indra (“a vytrahan like Indra” :4.42.8)? Not merely because his birth had somehow to be explained, surely? Rather, it must have been to confer a unique position to him, perhaps to rally all the Aryan tribes under his leadership-whence possibly the explanation of his appearance among the Pūru-s as a gift of both Indra and Varuṇa, in many respects the two gods who are most distant each from the other in the RV, as generally assumed. Here we should also bear in mind what Rv 4.38.10 says: ‘With his might he overspread the five peoples’, which we understand as saying that he brought them under a single rulership.

After the events of the Ten King’s War, the annihilation of the Dasyu-s and bringing the various tribes under one rule should have appeared to the ṛṣi-s as the most difficult and yet most desirable goal for the Aryans to achieve.

Descendants of Trasadasyu

We shall deal with only those descendants of Trasadasyu who are of any significance from the point of view of understanding the ari references.

One among such descendants of Trasadasyu is Kuruśrava referred to in 10.32 and 10.33. Both hymns are attributed to Kavaśa Ailūṣa.

98. dātṛa santi pūrva | yā pūrubhyas trasadasyur nitote | ... dadathur ghanam dasyubhyāh 4.38.1.
99B aham indro varuṇaḥ... - 4.42.3a.

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10. 33 describes how at Kururśravāṇa’s death his purohita fell into neglect. He had been a successful bard, but now (at the death of Kururśravāṇa) the cry at the court is “An evil speaker has come!”100 In the lines that follow, the poet describes his patron’s generosity101 and expresses his profound loyalty to the prince whom he calls his ‘companion’.102 The hymn provides us with a glimpse of the extent of patronage the Puru-s extended to their panegyrists and priests and of the intimacy of the relationship between the prince and his court priests.

Kavaṣa, the bard of Kururśravāṇa cannot be for obvious reasons the same as the “the famous old Kavaṣa” referred to in 7.18.103 If the authorship of a Kavaṣa is right, as it may be, then this Kavaṣa could be a descendant of that old Kavaṣa (from whom the period of this prince is removed by at least 3 generations). It is interesting to note that the original Kavaṣa was among the opponents of the Bharata-s. That a priest who probably was a descendant of him is turned away from a latter-day Puru’s court and is called an “utterer of evil” (-reminiscent of derogatory epithets with nuances of cult-hostility such as mydhravic, dudhi etc.) suggests the long-continued nature of the dissensions centred round religious differences that seem to lie concealed in many veiled references in the RV.

Kururśravāṇa’s name is also important. It means “the glory of Kuru-s” and is considerably similar to Kurupga and Kauravya in two other late hymns.104 These names, which connect several earlier tribal groups with the Kuru-s, lend support to the view that the latter were an (Aryan) amalgam of Puru-s, Bharata-s and others105 that lived and moved around the Sarasvatī and nearby river lands of what came to be known as Kurukṣetra in later times. That such a name came into vogue, rising in importance above the original tribal names such as Bharata and Puru, is in keeping with the forging of a pan - Aryan ethos after the War of Ten Kings.

Tryaruna

Tryaruna is mentioned in RV 5.27. However the hymn is not intended to be a panegyric of him or to be intercessory for him. The singer’s real patron is a prince named Aśvamedha.106 This is a very interesting fact that helps us considerably to understand the features of a Vedic ritual festival.

100. dhubāner āgād iti ghoṣa āsita 10.33.1 (See Gelder’s introductory note to translation of 10.33).
101. māntīrśravī vāghatām - 10.33.1c.
102. guru - 10.33.9c.
103. srutam kavaṣaṃ urdham - 7.18.12a.
104. Kurupga: 8.4.19b; Kauravya: 8.3.21b.
105. See Vedic Index under Kuru.
106. Cf. 5.27.4ab: me...āśvamedhāya... sūraye.
Tryaruna however is a keen admirer of the Vedic ritual practices. One stanza of 5.27 refers to his appreciation of the ritual song. As a token of his appreciation he seems to make a special donation to the singer of Aśvamedha.\textsuperscript{107}

At the beginning of this hymn, Tryaruna is described in a significant manner. He is called "the mighty lord, (asura) more distinguished than the munificent one."\textsuperscript{108} The epithet asura is applied to men only in a few other instances in the RV, such as at 1.126.2 and 10.93.14. In 1.126 the person mentioned is also directly called an arī (stz.5), while in 10.93 he is closely associated with another who, or a close relative of whom, is called an arī in another hymn.\textsuperscript{109} And so, the fact that Tryaruna who is called an asura in 5.27 hails from a line of princes of whom certainly several were already indicated by the word arī seems to us to be a matter of considerable significance.

III - Diversity of Religious Views

(1)

A curious feature in the description of the War of Ten Kings was that the enemies of Sudās the Bharata were called "kings who do not perform sacrificial rites" and "the party that is without Indra". And yet, almost in the same breath, it was said that the very same kings invoked the aid of Indra in the battles they fought.

Indra in fact is often said to have been invoked by contending forces. RV 4.24.3 insists (as does 4.39.5) that it is (emphatically) he that is so invoked.\textsuperscript{110} On the face of it, this may indicate nothing more than that

(a) Indra was the Vedic war-god whose aid every Aryan fighter sought, and

(b) there were frequent clashes among the ancient Indo-Aryan tribes.

\textsuperscript{107} yo me giráḥ...yuktena abhi gṛṇāti - 5.27.3cd. Cf. Goldner's translation. On the interpretation of 5.27, see discussion in Part II of this work.\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{108} cetiṣṭho asuro mahānāḥ - 5.27.1bc.

\textsuperscript{109} The prince who is called an asura at 10.93.14 is Rāma, who is mentioned alongside Prthivāna Vena. The latter is surely to be linked with Prthi Vena of 10.148.3 who in the same hymn is indicated as an arī. See Ch. II, 1b, and notes 29, 30 above.

\textsuperscript{110} tam in naro vihayante samīke - 4.24.3a (: "Nur ihn rufen die Männer in der Schlacht von beiden Seiten" - Goldner): indram ived ubhayam vi kṣayante | 4.39.5a, referring to the almost mythical Dadhikrā.

65
To assume that that is all this kind of statement indicates is an over-simplification. It does not take into account the extraordinary significance of an epithet such as ayaqyu (not observing sacrificial rites, or, more properly, not observing the true ritual), or of an epithet such as unindra (not with Indra — not worshipping him properly and not eligible for his aid). The overwhelming dedication of the Vedic Aryans to the sacrificial religion is a factor we should never underestimate. Given that factor, to call a man a ‘non-sacrificer’ seems to us to be the ultimate style of repudiating his acceptability.

To revert to the subject of the Ten Kings’ War. Here indeed is no mere tribal clash, but the most crucial event in the whole of the Vedic Aryan pre-history. And here Ṛsi Vasiṣṭha refers to the opponents of Śudāś, among whom are the Pūru, Turvaśa and Anu tribes, distinctly as though they were cultural inferiors if not cultural aliens. How are we to account for this?

(2)

Let us keep in mind the slight clues the references to the Ten Kings’ War provide.

“They summon Indra and yet they do not qualify for his aid. They are truly not to be regarded as sacrificers”—Vasiṣṭha seems to say of his adversaries. And of course the adversaries included the Pūru-s, the tribe from whom is derived the great Paurava clan of later times.

It certainly is a matter of much importance to be able to identify the group whom the Ṛsi denounces and whom he supports. But in this section let us primarily face the question: Is there any other evidence to support the clues that RV 7.18 and 7.83 provide? Were there in fact any variations of view among the Aryan tribes in regard to sacrifice and the worship of Indra?

Such questions of course immediately remind us of statements in the RV Sāmhitā such as e. g. the following in 8. 100: “There is no Indra, so some declare; who has seen him? Whom shall we be praising (in praising him)?” 111 It is worth reflecting on the significance of so startling a statement.

What is the idea behind the words? We cannot forget that the poet is thinking in the framework of conceptual categories that were very familiar to him. He is speaking of a particular kind of person who seems to be at least baffled by the cult activities centred around the concept of Indra,

111. nendro astīti nema u tev āha / ka ṛṣi dādarā śaṃkabhi śāvāma - 8.100.3ed.
The root √stu- which the poet uses here is the same that gives us important cult terms such as stotra, stava and stoma. To eulogize is eminently a cult function, a sacrificial act. So the question means: “In singing a stoma for Indra what are we doing? Is this cult-act really meaningful?”

The men who are bewildered thus cannot surely be outsiders? They cannot be non-Aryans, but Aryans who seriously asked questions about the significance of at least this cult-activity associated with Aryan religious life. It seems obvious that the poet is thinking of men of his race holding a different stance from his own in matters of worship and faith.

Let us also consider for a moment a statement like the one in RV 2.12.5. The entire Indra epic of which this stanza is a part addresses itself to the members of an Aryan jana. The refrain proves that conclusively. Says the stanza in question:

Of whom, the terrible, they ask: where is he?
or of whom they say: he is not........
have faith in him, he O men is Indra.

An even more telling reference to the kind of situation we are discussing seems to be found in RV 1.4:

“Of Indra, the quick un-conquered one, go ask the wise priest - who is worthier than your friends. And let our detractors say: ‘Depart to another place, you who offer worship pre-eminently to Indra’.* “Or let the ari and (his?) people describe us as well-off men. In Indra’s refuge we would (yet) remain.”

(1.4.4-6)114

It is hard to subscribe to Thieme’s views115 on the interpretation of this extremely interesting passage, which we have discussed briefly elsewhere.116 The difference in his approach is understandable, since he was looking at it in isolation from the tribal and religious situation which we are trying to elucidate.

112. sa janāsa indraḥ - 2.12 refrain.
113. yam smā prachānti kuha sa iti ghoram | uhem āhur naśo astity enam... ērad asmai dhatta, sa janāsa indraḥ - 2.12. 5
  * (The validity of this interpretation is borne out by RV 8.1.1, where we see the ēri himself saying to his colleagues: ‘Do not recite anything else, Friends, do not make blunders. Praise only Indra at the Soma ritual ...... mā cid anyudd vi sameta / sakāgyo mā vipanyata / indram it stotam... sute...’ | See also Geldner’s translation.)
114. parekh viṣram asṭīram | in drīmaṃ prachāṃ vipaścitam | yas te sakthiḥ kṣa varam // uta brvantvam no nidoj nir anyataḥ cid ārata | dudhāno indra id duvaḥ // uta nāb subhāgān arir | vocēyr dasma kṣhṣṭayah | syeyed indraśya sarmanī | 1.4.4-6.
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What does this remarkable passage communicate?

Geldner, who, it seems to us, has interpreted these stanzas more accurately than Thieme, points out the priest of Indra has here in mind the institutor of a sacrificial rite. That, in the opinion of that priest, this patron needed (i.e. lacked) knowledge of the unconquerable Indra and that priest had to contend with detractors (notice the many Rāyvedic references to devanidāḥ, brahmadvīṣaḥ etc.) who scoffed at the pre-eminent (if not exclusive) place that was given to this god is the least that this context reveals.

Not only does this passage bring up the question of the identity of the āri who, along with others, seems to object to the ṛṣi’s preponderant worship of Indra and wishes to prevent him from receiving gifts - on the ground of his wealthiness - a viewpoint that could earn for the āri such a description as that found in RV 8.51: “a treasure-guarding (nigard)” - but also it puzzles us by reference to the āri’s friends and his people. In spite of the fact that the whole scene is situated in Aryan ritual environs - and indeed this is the fact not to be overlooked - one is tempted to think that the āri and his friends must have been somewhat different in their attitude to Indra-worship than was the ṛṣi who composed this hymn.

One is struck by the resemblance of the implication of this reference to that of several other highly interesting passages in the RV.

As an example of this latter we may cite RV 4. 24. 3 ff. Here it is said of two warring groups that they both call on Indra’s aid. But some seek Indra’s aid in the very sight of battle (ābhīke): When locked in battle they pray for the Indra-might (or, following Geldner, make offerings to the Indra-name). And then, we are told further, the cooked (oblation) shall surpass the purolāśa (den Reiskuchen - Geldner). What the distinction is is not completely clear, but the repetition of the idea in verse 7 makes it obvious that the offerer of “cooked oblation” and of roasted grains is the one that is favoured by Indra with “the stallion’s vigour”. And also stanzas 5 - 7 make it quite clear that it is the Soma-offerer who gains the alliance of Indra (6,7); indeed Soma will clearly set the non-presser apart (stanza 5). And all of this provides for us the background that is needed for the understanding of the highly interesting stanzas 8-9 which incidentally contain an important reference to the āri once again.

117. Ādiṣṭa, p. 94, nn. 28-30
118. deveśadhipāḥ - 8.51.9b. See note 221 below and the relevant text.
119. tam it narī vi hṛyangante santiḥ / ... ād idā hā nama indriyam yajante / ād it paktī puruṣānaṁ vīcyāt / ād it soma vi papṛcyāt aumvīn // ya śīthendrāya somam... sunotī / tam it sathāyaṁ kṛṣṇe somatē / indrāya somam... sunotī / ... tam it sathāyaṁ kṛṣṇe somatē // ya indrāya samavat somam adya / pacāt paktīr uta bhṛjyāti dhanāṁ // ... tasmiṃ dadhad vṛṣṇam śūnman indrāḥ // from 4.24.3-7
We shall not attempt to dwell at length on this reference at this stage as we will be discussing it in another context later on.\(^{120}\) It is however pertinent to point out what the two stanzas say in essence: the encounter has been severe, the ari's contest a long affair; when she has seen that, the (ari's) wife invokes the aid of Indra, who, however, by this time has been regaled to a feast of Soma by the offerers of that libation; hearing her call, Indra muses or says: he (the ari) has indulged in low trading for a thing of value, but (the other) has relinquished "not a little thing" for a thing of high value.\(^{121}\)

Obviously then, what the poet says is that Soma is the great thing by which alone one may hope to win the favour of Indra. And he who does not worship Indra in the form, with the substances and at the times that are appropriate to that worship, will not gain that god’s sustaining aid: in other words, they are anindra or "without Indra's aid". So it seems to us that the order of ideas is not different in RV 4.24 from that in RV 7.18: Aryan divisions having an important religious dimension.

\(^{(3)}\)

In a sense, the specific manifestation of the hieratic thought of Vedic India is the concept of Brahmaṇaṇaspati (= Bṛhaspati), even more than Indra. He, the Lord of Brahmā, is a creation and reflection of the priestly genius of the Vedic rṣī-s. It is interesting, in view of this, that there are nonetheless traces in the RV Sāṁhitā of a prevalence of some kind of unfriendly attitude to the cult of Bṛhaspati.

Evidence for this is found in RV 1.190. Stanza 5 of this hymn charges some "powerful ones" with having considered Bṛhaspati as an usrika,\(^{122}\) which normally would have to be rendered as a "little calf". It is a risky thing to try to evaluate the significance of such comparisons, especially when we remember that Indra is often called a vṛṣan (bull). But the diminitive form cannot be without significance and, in any case, the rest of the verse makes it quite clear that the poet here has no kindly thoughts about the ritual acceptability of the worship that these "powerful ones" offer to Bṛhaspati. For here they are portrayed as "evil men depending on the noble one for their living"\(^{123}\) and

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120. In Ch. VI of this work.
121. yatā samarṣyant eva ca eva vajā | dirghaṃ yad ājīṃ abhy akhyad aryah / acikradād vṛṣanam patny acaḥ / ituro a niśīṃ samasūdhīḥ || ... bhūyagā vamam acarad kanīyo / sa bhūyasā kanīyo nātireći, / 4. 24. 8 & 9
122. ye tvā devorikuṇa mianamāṇah - 1.190. 5a.
123. pāpā bhadrum upajivanti pañjāḥ ..... - 1.190. 5b.
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this is followed by a request to Bṛhaspati not to bestow blessings on “him, of evil intent” 124 and we must here remind ourselves of the nuances of the original Vedic term employed in the context i.e. dāḍhī. It is typically a word of denunciation for a man whose priestly functions (dāhī - in fact indicates one paramountly important aspect of these) were unacceptable in the rṣi-s’ eyes.

The prevalence in Vedic society of a divergent attitude towards Bṛhaspati, the arch-deity of Brahmanism, is brought out again in RV 2.23 addressed to this god. This hymn refers in sharp terms to ill-intentioned revilers of gods from whom the singer wishes the highest good to be held away. Particularly instructive is stanza 16: “Give us not away to thieves who, hanging on to the ‘footprint’ of falsehood, are greedy for viertas, the cheats that they are. In their hearts they reduce the strength of gods. They, O Bṛhaspati, know nothing above the sūman (chant).” 125

“Know nothing above the sūman (chant)” - what does this signify? And, “reduce in their hearts the strength of the gods”? It would be really interesting to understand exactly what these remarkable statements were meant to convey, in this passionate diatribe directed against “revilers of gods” and “haters of brahman” and “false reciters” 126. One is entitled to ask: could they possibly refer to religious approaches other than the Brahmanical one, approaches which in the eyes of this rṣi were tantamount to insulting the gods? Could the rṣi be having in mind any tendencies which admitted as active rites no more than the sūman chant? To ask this question is not to suggest that the answer should be ‘yes’; but yet it would not do to suppress that question which naturally presents itself.

The question is all the more pertinent when taken in conjunction with what some other Rigvedic passages declare. Let us take for example 10.105.8: “Through rṣ - recital let us put down the men who do not recite rṣ. No sacrifice without brahman (ritual eulogy) will succeed or make pleasure in you.” 127

Or 7.26.1: “No unpressed soma pleases Indra, nor (even) the pressed sap, that (comes) not with brahman” 128

124. dāḍhī - 1. 190. 5c.
125. mā nas steṇeṇhyo ye abhi dṛhṣaspade | nirāminśī vipavo' nneṣu jāṛīkuḥ | ā devānāṃ ohate vi vṛaya kṛdā | bṛhṣaspate na paraḥ sāmno viduh | 2. 23.16
126. brahmadvīpaḥ - 2. 23.4c ; devanidāḥ 8c ; duḥāmsaḥ 10c.
127. rṣā vanemāṇroah | nābrahmā yajña rādh yojati teṣaḥ | 10. 105. 8bc
Mahinda Palihawadana

What do these passages hint at, while laying a very self-conscious emphasis on the active aspects of the ritual, such as the pressing of *soma* and the recital of *re* verses? A pointer as to what the answer should be, it seems to us, is RV 6.52.1-2. Here a Bhāradvāja priest speaks of a person who purported to perform what was ‘more than a sacrifice’ (*atiyāja* - with perhaps sarcastic overtones). Not only does this man ‘think himself above us’, but he also would ‘wish to pour scorn on the ritual that is being expressed in action’129. The subsequent stanza asks why the god looks on while his singer and his party are insulted and requests that a burning missile be hurled on (this) hater of *brahman*.130 Could these words in some way be an anticipation of the debate between the proponents and opponents of the ‘way of works’ of later time?

Here we are also reminded of RV 4.2.12 which incidentally contains another important reference to the *ari*. Geldner, it seems to us, is basically right in the way he renders this stanza into German and explains its purport in the notes attached to his translation - except for the (not insignificant) error of equating *ari* with *sūri* (- a problem which we hope to discuss at length in the pages to follow). From old, the stanza in effect says, the ritual fire, symbolizing the god Agni, has been entrusted to Āyu i.e., the Vedic priesthood. From Āyu’s dwelling, Agni could unmistakably see his intentions which are clear by virtue of the visible rites that are done with (? hands and ) feet. On the other hand, the *ari*’s secret intentions the god could see only through his active dispositions.131 The visible rites of Āyu and the hidden intentions of the *ari* : this is not an insignificant contrast when taken in conjunction with the other things that are repeatedly said in the RV about the *ari*’s cultural distance from the ideals of Vedic *ṛṣi*-s.

In any case, it seems clear that in the RV there already are some signs of the prevalence, among the Aryans themselves, of religious trends that did not emphasize those aspects of their worship that the *ṛṣi*-s usually emphasized.

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129. *atiyājasya yaṣṭā / ati vā yo ... manyate no / brahma vā yaḥ kriyāmanāṁ nisīśat / 6.52.1d 2ab.
130. *kim ātya naḥ paśyosi nindyaṃdān / brahmadvīpe tapuśiṃ hetim āya / 6.52.3ed.
131 (kavijī ṣāśāṇaḥ kavayo adabdhāṇiḥdārasyanto duryāve ṛṇoḥ/) atas teṣāḥ drītyāmn agna etān / padāḥ paṭīr der abhūtāṁ āra evaḥ - 4.2.12. On the interpretation of this stt. see Geldner’s notes to his translation of it.
Statements that seem to be out of step with the main Rigvedic line of thinking are rather exceptional in the Samhita, but a few are occasionally met with, particularly in its later portions. Such an unusual statement is found in RV 10.82. The 7th stanza of this hymn says: “Covered in mist and prattle do the utterers of hymns wander, delighting in (the taking of) life”\(^{132}\) —which, as Geldner rightly observes, is an obvious objection to the slaughter of animals in sacrifice.

Ritual slaughter and the offering of soma were practices that were predominantly associated with the cult of Indra, the god of war. This is particularly well illustrated by RV 10.27. Here the singer, in his part of a samvāda dialogue, makes a promise to Indra of cooking a vigorous bullock for him and pouring a sharp libation of Soma for 15 days.\(^{133}\) And Indra replies that he knows of no one who speaks thus after victory has been achieved; it is on perceiving the fierce impending battle that they promise him a pair of bulls!\(^{134}\) (It is interesting to note that the idea of the right offerings* is an important element in 10.27 as well: ritual offerings of beef and Soma in stanza 2;\(^{135}\) condemnatory allusion to “those without Indra, the drinkers of āṣṭa”\(^{136}\) as opposed to Soma, hence those who do not offer Soma, who “insult the ally”\(^{137}\) in stanza 6. These references clearly follow the same order of ideas as in 7.18 and 4.24 which we discussed above).

It does seem then (a) that there was some criticism of the ritual slaughter of animals on the one hand and (b) that on the other there was explicit voicing of the idea that to obtain Indra’s aid as the god of war one necessarily had to offer Soma and the animal sacrifice and that not merely when war was at hand. Not to do so was an insult to him and a departure from the cult. What was deplorable was that some sought his aid while rejecting these rites or performing them only at the sight of war. (4.24 and 10.27)

\(^{132}\) vihārena prāṛtā jāpyā cā / 'surprā ukthaśaśa carantā - 10.82.7cd.

\(^{133}\) amā te tumraṁ vṛṣabhāṁ paćāni / tīrvaṁ sutam pañcaśādāṁ ni śiṁcam /10.27.2cd.

\(^{134}\) nāham tāṁ veda ya iti brāvitya / adevayin-t-samaraṇe jāgharanān / yaddā vākhyat samaraṇaṁ ṭhāvad / ād iddha me vṛṣabhā pra bhuṃanti // 10.27.3.

\(^{135}\) Perhaps more accurately, right offerings made at the right time. That some are reminded of Indra and think of offering him “bull-sacrifice” only when the din of war is heard is what the ṛṣi scornfully says in 4.24 (at 4d, 5a, 5b and 5c) and in 8.21 (14d) and 10.27 (3d). In all six cases the temporal phrase used is ād it whose actual force would be best brought out if we translate it as “and only after that”.

\(^{136}\) tumraṁ vṛṣabhām..... tīrvaṁ sutam of 10.27.2cd.

\(^{137}\) ye nīniduḥ sakāyām - 10.27.6c.
Let us reflect a little more on the significance of Soma offering and Soma drinking in the Rigvedic period - a time that was marked by the dominance of the Indra cult, by a conscious advocacy of it by the elite of the Vedic rśi-s whose compositions have come down to us in the RV Samhitā.

We may consider a reference like the one in 8.21 which informs us of men who preferred surā (a strong drink other than Soma) and scoffed at Indra but who felt impelled to seek his aid when plunged into war, like little ones longing for fatherly support:

"Never a rich man will you find fit for alliance (with you). They, sharpened by surā, scoff at you. (But) when you raise the cry of war and bring (contenders) into confrontation, then you are invoked like a father." (8.21.14)

Why the reference to surā?

It is extremely doubtful if the high priests of Indraism regarded surā as a respectable drink or a fit substitute for Soma. It is true that RV 1.116.7 refers to the Aśvins' gift of 1000 jars of surā to the singer Kakṣiṇvant as if it were a valued gift - but there is some reason to think Kakṣiṇvant did not enjoy a very great respect among the priesthood we are here thinking of. The Aśvins themselves do not originally seem to have belonged to the circle of gods who were honoured with the Soma libation. The Yajurveda describes them as not entitled to the Soma drink. The later Vedic literature preserves some valuable evidence which suggests that the followers of the Indra cult viewed the worship of the Aśvins with disfavour.

In the later ritual of the sautrāmaṇi, surā is mingled with Soma but this very ritual seems to reflect the original unacceptability of surā. In the old story connected with this ritual, it seems that Indra appears as poisoned by Namuci (= Vṛtra) by means of a mixture of Soma and surā. The mingled Soma could

138. na kī revantaṃ sukhyāya vindase / pīyanti te surkīwāḥ / yadda kṛpoṣi nidadum

139. Cf. Hillebrandt, VM I pp. 244ff. esp.p. 250: surā as the drink of Aryans living
    unbrahmanistically; and p. 253: opposition between drinkers of soma and surā. See
    also Vedic Index: surā

140A śataṃ kumbhāṁ asinīcatam surāyāḥ - 1.116.7d. However, 1.117.6 refers to the gift
    as śataṃ kumbhāṁ...madhauḥm.

140B Cf the statement of 1.190.5 pāpa...pajrāh which Geldner regards as a reference to
    the "Rivalität zwischen den Māṇideṇ und den Pajra's", Pajra was "the name of the
    family from which Kakṣiṇvant sprang": Vedic Index, under Pajra (referring to 1.117,
    10, 1.122.7—9, 1.126.4—5).

141. Aśvins were originally asomapa : M.S.IV.6.1.

142. Jain.Br. iii. 121-128. See also Vedic index under Cyavana.

143. Hillebrandt, RL p.159 f.; Geldner on 10.131.4 a; Vedic Index, fn 72 under Soma.
be made drinkable by means of a vipāna ("drinking separately") - dexterously extracting the desired component of the mixture). The original sāutrīmāṇi was a purificatory ritual instituted in memory of this. Therefore it was to be particularly celebrated by an enthroned king and by one with whom the Soma drink did not agree. The whole point that emerges from this is that although in course of time the priesthood changed its position with regard to the ritual acceptability of surā, originally only the Soma was regarded as fit and acceptable and respectable for the sūri to consume. The evidence of RV 10.89.5 is a valuable pointer in this direction:

"Soma (is) the draught of wrath, whose first fresh drink is sharp (?), (the stuff) that shakes, the impetuous holder of darts, prepared from ṛjīṣa-. All substitute shrubs and plants deceive not Indra hitherward."\(^{144}\)

It was a part of the early Vedic ritual that both the yajamāṇa and the priest partook of the sacred sap. At RV 10.167.4, (Indra as) the first sūri speaks of coming after a victorious contest to his (purohita) priests Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni and taking a (ritual) drink of Soma\(^{145}\). From other references, we gather that Indra here speaks of the typical conduct of a sūri and that the privilege of the draught extended to the yajamāṇa as well. Thus 9.99.3 says "We cleanse this gladdening drink of his, that which kine took into their mouths of old, and princes take it now."\(^{146}\)

The hymn 9.98 also gives definite evidence on this point. Stanza 8 of this hymn addresses the Soma drinkers and says that the sap is "a means to strength" and that it "gives high renown to sūri-s". Stanza 10 describes the sap as being extracted in order to be drunk by Indra as well as the "man that offers the daksīṇā"\(^{147}\).

In 8.68 stanza 14 refers to princes Indrota Śrutarvan and Pātakratu approaching (their purohita) priest "in the stimulation of Soma."\(^{148}\)

As to priests drinking the Soma draught the RV provides ample testimony. To quote just a few instances:

\(^{144}\) āpātamanyus īḍpalaprabharmā / dhuniḥ śimīnāḥ charumāṇī ṛjīṣi / soma vidvāny atadā vanāni / nāredy indraṁ pratimāṇi dehubh // 10.89.5

\(^{145}\) See n. 284 below and relevant text.

\(^{146}\) tam asya marjayāmaśi / ... yam gavya ṛṣabhirdadhuḥ / parā nūnaṁ ca sūryaḥ // 999.3aed. Translation quoted is Griffin’s.

\(^{147}\) pāntah : soma-drinkers; daksāśdhanam (9.98.8b); yaḥ...sūriṣu kṛvaḥ bṛhad dadhe ...(8cd); indrīya pāthave ... nare ca daksīṇāvate (9.98.10 ac).

\(^{148}\) somasya haryāḥ - 8.68.14b.
3.53.10: "Ye Kuśika-s, drink up the Soma’s savoury meath."

8.32.1: "Kānya-s tell forth with song (the deeds) of Indra..., wrought in Soma’s wild delight."

8.48.3: "The Soma we have drunk, immortal have become, to the light gone, the gods discovered."

When we appreciate this ancient ritual significance attached to the Soma draught, by prince and priest alike, it is easy to understand the harsh characterization by the Vedic priests of all those who rejected the Soma rite and also who apparently took objection to its use among themselves. (Cf. "drinkers of śṛta" in 7.18 and 10.27.)

So he who did not conform to the Soma ritual was roundly condemned in the Rgveda and the commonest way of doing this was to call such a person a 'non-preserver' (: asunvant-). The term has been coupled with others like "brahma-hating", "not given to generosity" and "unapproachable", which are all words that described those who did not comply with the life-style favoured by the ṛṣis.

Not to be a Soma offerer: this was a high offence in the eyes of the Vedic ṛṣi-s. Not only that, it was also a high offence not to be a Soma-drinker.

Thus the over-riding position of the Soma ceremonial in the early Indra cult is an unquestionable fact. Yet signs are not wanting in the RV itself that circumstances had tended to weaken the power of this ritual (- either the presence of Aryan groups who had adopted other practices, or the growing irrelevance of the ritualistic modes of a militaristic cult; the two may in fact be not unrelated to each other). Thus e.g. RV 1.122.9 refers to the dishonest man who cunningly prepares the Soma sap (as thin) as water and 2.30.7 voices the priest’s desire that he (even he!) should not tire of the Soma rites: "Let it not exhaust me nor tire me. Let us not say, ‘press no Soma’."
Is this situation of conflicting positions on matters of cult a characteristic of Vedic India only, or do we also have any comparable features in ancient Iran?

The question about Iran is inevitable since we know that in later times Zarathustra denounced certain aspects of earlier Iranian religious life which cultivated the very practices that the protagonists of the Indra cult seem at times (defensively?) to advocate.

Let us in this connection read what R.C. Zaeber says in "The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism":

"Yima's crime would seem to have been not so much that he had introduced meat eating among his people as that he had slaughtered cattle in sacrifice to the ancient gods. This sacrifice would appear to have been associated... with ritual intoxication... it would seem clear that Zoroaster is attacking a traditional cult in which a bull was slaughtered... in honour of the daevas: this rite was accompanied by another in which the juice of the Haoma plant was extracted and ritually consumed."156

Zaeber observes elsewhere in the same work: "The Haoma cult goes back to Indo-Iranian times...... We cannot avoid the conclusion that originally the Haoma rite must have been more typical of the daevas than it was of the ahuras. In all probability no clear distinction was made between the two until shortly before the birth of the prophet... we can only say that the Haoma cult was practised both by the followers of the daevas and by those of the ahuras at the time the prophet saw the light of day."

If this was the case, it might appear intriguing why the prophet was regarded as taking any stand at all in regard to this cult: In answer to this Zaeber continues: "The daevic cult was no doubt orgiastic, violent and cruel... Whatever Zoroaster himself may have thought, the later tradition did not interpret his words as meaning that he condemned anything but drunkenness in connection with the Haoma rite or that he condemned animal sacrifices as such, but only the cruelty associated with it and the lack of moderation in the use that was made of it."157

The least that the Iranian evidence boils down to is then this: that the ahuric view of the cult tended to be less in favour of the orgiastic and more in favour of the non-violent; the daevic tendency on the other hand was more impetuous and aggressive: corresponding roughly to the two ends of the spectrum of religious practice widely evident almost everywhere. In short the two cults seem to express and typify the dichotomy of men's attitudes: dynamic and orgiastic at times and austere and non-violent at others. But it is impossible to speak of the two in terms of mutual exclusion.

156. Zaeber, p.38
The similarity of the religious situation in Rigvedic India to what Zaechner surmises as the position in pre-Zoroastrian Iran is indeed remarkable. In India, to all appearances, the deva par excellence was Indra, while Varuna seems to have been rather more typical of the asuric trend. But those whom the ṛṣi-s would describe as “without Indra”, as men who scoff at Indra, and as “(kings) who do not sacrifice” to the deva-s, nevertheless call on his aid when face to face with war. “Insulters” call a Viśvamitra singer an extremist devotee of Indra, but the Viśvamitra-s have obviously acknowledged the divinity of Varuṇa (although they have not devoted entire hymns to eulogize him in their maṇḍala of the RV Saṁhitā). In other words, there is no question of an exclusive asura (or Varuṇa) religion or of an exclusive deva (or Indra) religion in India, any more than in Iran. It was perhaps because the early Aryans in India had to encounter stiffer and prolonged resistance to their advance in the new land that early Vedism tended to remain an Indra-centred cult with a predilection for the “orgiastic, violent and cruel” traits that Zaechner ascribes to early daevism in Iran. And it was, we would surmise, because of the evidence of a softer attitude emerging among some Aryans towards the non-Aryan “resisters” (= ṛtra-s), that the Indra-centred elements reviled them as if they were also foes and aliens - thus throwing a smoke-screen through which it is rather hard to see the outlines of the tribal and religious situation that seems to have prevailed in early Indo-Aryan times.

(7)

When on the subject the deva - asura distinction, a very instructive hymn of the RV is 10.124. We read it in the light of the ideas expressed by Lüders and others on Rigvedic cosmology. The hymn appears to be in line with the late Rigvedic representation of the celestial waters, the sources of light and fire and the heavenly Soma, as having their abode and resting place in the highest heaven. The creative powers of the universe according to this view have to constantly maintain these celestial waters (and all the treasures contained therein) free from the grip of Ṛtra. What is especially interesting about RV 10.124 is that it seems to portray Ṛtra as Father Asura, and to refer to his enclosing or inclusion of Agni, Varuṇa and Soma within his domain. Ṛtra’s imprisonment of these powers cannot be regarded as an unusual idea in view of their close association with the heavenly waters, but what is remarkable is the suggestion of their asuric extraction: the hymn seems to reflect a view that there was a time when Agni, Varuṇa and Soma were asuric. It says that in this condition Agni was not fit to receive the sacrifice. Indra as the dynamic, creative force now appears and calls Agni out of the dark, to come to the immortal, the sacrificial. Agni follows, but with an aching conscience (without friendliness, I leave him who was friendly... choosing Indra, I abandon the Father...... 10.124.2/4). Varuṇa and Soma follow suit. With this the
lordship of the Asura-s comes to an end. And then Indra offers Varuṇa co-rulership in the new kingdom and enlists Soma’s support to kill Vṛtra. The hymn ends showing the world re-established and the waters freed. They stand away with disgust from the fallen power (Vṛtra), like tribesmen opting for a rājan. (See translation of RV 19.124 attached to the end of this chapter).

An echo of these important ideas is found in another hymn, i.e., RV 6.59. Here, stanza 1 addresses Indra-Agni and declares:

Killed are your elders (literally, fathers), the god-foes. You two, Indra, Agni are alive.

Apparently, some at least among the ṭīrṇ-s were keen on spreading the notion that the chief gods had, at some point in the history of the celestial powers, rebelled against their elders (the elders came to have the gods as foes: deśāvästravah) and done them to their death - or something of that sort. Says 4.18.12, addressing Indra:

"Who has made your mother a widow? Who sought to kill you, as you were lying (still), (or) as you were moving (about)? What god was gracious toward you when you seized the father by (his) feet and destroyed (him)?

To us these sayings appear to be informative not only on aspects of a continuing development of religious views, but also of social institutions and practices and on the passing of tribal authority from elderly chiefs to a ‘chosen’ (ritually installed) ruler, the rājan, the kṣatriya.

On the basis of what we discussed above, we may justifiably say that in Vedic worship the shift from the asura to the deva trend seems to be reflected differently in three detectable conditions of the cult:

(a) Cult regards Indra as fit for invocation (in the way characteristically associated with this god) in times of war, but not pre-eminently in any other sense.

(b) Cult rejects orgiastic and violent traits and is sceptical about the very existence of Indra.

(c) Cult gives unvarying emphasis to Indra and rejects asura-s altogether, but assimilates Varuṇa.

158. hatāso vām pitāra devaśatravā jindrāgni jivatho yuvam/ 6.59.1ed
159. kas te maṭurāṃ vidhavā acakracchayum kau tvām ajighāsasac carantam/kas te devo adhi māṇḍika āśiḥ yat prakṣiṇāḥ pitāram pādaḥṣhrīya/4.18.12
It would seem that what ultimately came to occupy the position of the ‘official’ cult of the Rigvedic Aryans was a version of (c) which gave a clear and unambiguous position to powers that at first sight might seem to be asuric in character. In other words, the RV Samhitā represents to a great extent a conscious development of a religious viewpoint and a cult system paying due regard to a variety of preexisting aspects of a common worship which can be subsumed in the single concept yajña: sacrifice. In social terms the RV reveals the participatory role of an elite priesthood consciously advancing the thrust of an ethic-cultural expansion, emphasizing and synthesizing the various items of this ‘variety of aspects’ as and when that expansion required.

It the Samhitā represents the synthesizing of a variety of pre-existing aspects of a common worship (as viewed from our distance from the document), it becomes clear that the story of Vedic cultural and political development cannot be reconstructed as a ‘historical’ narration unless we succeed in unravelling a tangled skein: the lines of demarcation that must have at one time existed between those various aspects of the sacrificial cult. This is well nigh a hopeless task, but a slender prospect of arriving at some reasonable hypothesis seems to exist. And that is to investigate the deva cult as possibly enshrining a vision with implications of a distinctively political and social kind.

RV 10.124: Appendix to Ch. III

Indra: Come to this sacrifice of ours O Agni. You will be the carrier of oblation and the chief of ritual. Too long already have you lain in darkness (1)

Agni: Secretly departing from the deva, as (a) deva do I come forth, the (prospect of) immortality seeing. When I, without friendliness, leave him who was friendly, I go from my own friendly realm for an unknown lineage. (2)

...I speak a kindly word to Father Asura: “Exclusion from the sacrifice I leave, to participation therein.” (3)

100. RV 10.124: imaṁ no agna upa yajñam ehi...aso kavyanāl uta naḥ purogājīyog eva dirghaṃ tamaḥ āśayiṣṭihāḥ| (1) adevaḥ devaḥ praccatā guhā yaniprapakṣyamāno anmṛtaṃ emi śivam yat santam aśivo jahāṃśravāt sakhyād aranyām nābhūm emi| (2) ... sāṃsāmī pitre asurāya śivam / ayajyād yajñīyaṃ bhāgam emi | (3) bahuḥ suṇā akaram antar aśmīn/ indrāṃ vṛṣṇaḥ pitarāṃ jahāṃjagrihī somo varuṇas te eyavante/ paryāvad rāṣṭram tad avāmā āyani/ (4) nirmīyā u tye asurā abhāven/ tvam ca mā varaṇa kīmaḥāśe/ ptena rājanam anṛtaṃ viviścān/ mama rāṣṭrasyādhipatīyaṃ ehi/ (5) ... handva vṛṣṇaṃ nir ehi soma/ ... (6) kaviḥ kavitaṁ divi rūpam āśajadd / aprabhutā vṛṣṇo nir apah vṛṣiḥ/ (7) tā asta jagathaām indriyaṃ saacate/ tā im ā keśī svadhāyā mdantīh / tā īm viso na rājānem vṛṣṇā / bhikṣateva upa vṛtraḥ atiṣ than // (8)
The Indra Cult as Ideology: a Clue to Power Struggle in an Ancient Society

Many a year was I active within him. (Now) choosing Indra, I abandon the Father. They, Agni, Soma, Varuna leave. Rulership has changed. Coming, I favour it. (4)

*Indra*: The Asura-s have lost their *māyā* power. If you would like me, O Varuna, (then) to the sovereignty of my kingdom come, distinguishing *ṛta* from what is not *ṛṭa.* (5)

Come out, O Soma, let us two destroy Vṛtra............................... (6)
The *kavi* with his *kavi*-like quality has fixed his form in the sky. Devoid of might, Varuna released the waters. (7)

They (the waters) follow his loftiest Indra-might. They linger by him, revelling in their inherent strength. Abhorring, they stood apart from Vṛtra, like folks (when) choosing the *rājan.* (8)

IV Significance of Indra Cult: An Impetus to Power

(1)

It is but apt that this chapter should commence with some words in explanation of its title.

The depiction of Indra in the RV has a character of its own. At the same time we have no evidence to think that there was a distinct "Indra Religion." The Indra cult is part of the larger religion of the *yajña* that we find depicted in all the scriptures of the Veda. Within the confines of that larger system however, Indraism carries with it an element of self-consciousness, certain individual features which seem to us to be deliberate and not merely incidental or accidental. This historically interesting aspect of the Indra cult seems to us to reflect a well-thought out response to actual earthly realities on the part of a segment of the *ṛṣi* elite of the Vedic age, or perhaps a response whose origins may well go beyond the Vedic age.

A word of caution however has to be added, mainly to set the limits of the view which we seek to expound. It is not being argued that the Vedic religiousness is merely a response to a given challenge, that it is, so to say, a creature of circumstance. The Vedic religiousness, as every form of human religiousness, is emphatically a more profound phenomenon on whose nature no new opinion is here expressed. On the other hand, it appears that the developed Indra cult is quite a distinctive phenomenon whose purpose seems to have been to direct the energies of a culture that was nurtured on this religiousness to a particular goal, a goal which today we would visualize as an expansion of power. In that sense the Indra cult has distinct political overtones, though in an idiom that may sound strange as a political expression.

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Let us examine some prominent delineations of this trend in the hymns of the RV Samhita.

In the first place this kind of motivation of the cult is most often expressed mythologically. Thus it is part of the Indra myth that he aided Manu (= the Aryan) against the Dasa, and in the contest in which he characteristically figures as the hero, he slays an opponent who is all to obviously Dasa-like.

Before we go to examine some striking expressions of this legendary material, let us remind ourselves that myth and legend in the Vedic system as elsewhere were never merely narrative in purpose. A myth or a legend about those whom one venerated and worshipped is always a commendation of a given course of conduct and a recommendation of it to the worshipper. In short it is an emphatic call to those of the present age to do what the gods and heroes did of old.

In the Manu legend, Manu clearly represents the Aryan standing in opposition to the Dasa. Let us quote some examples of this characterization.

1.130.8 Indra helped the sacrificing Aryan in battles...he made the dark skin subject to Manu. 161

2.20.6/7: (Indra) rose for Manu's sake, carried away...the head of Dasa Arasana; he shatters the Dasa (strongholds) open, with the dark men in their wombs. 162

8.98.6: Indra is the breaker of forts, a slayer of the Dasyu, favourer of Manu. 163

10.43.8: (Indra), who makes the waters to have an Aryan lord, finds light for Manu, the presser (of Soma), the offerer of oblations. 164

What is stated here of Indra (and in numerous other passages of the same type) is said about other gods in some other contexts, but this appears to us to be not so much a part of the deva depiction as such, but a projection to other gods of a function that is strictly ascribed to Indra among those Aryans in whose cult-practices Indra occupied a paramount place.

161. indraḥ samatev yajamanam āryam/ pravat...manavo/ tvacanam kṛṣṇām orandhayat/ 1.130.8

162. tūrīhe bhūvan manoṣe...arāsānaṇya...śīra bharad dāsasya...kṛṣṇayoniḥ dāsir aṁrayād vi... from 2.20.6-7

163. indro dartā purān...hantā dasyor manor vṛdhaḥ / -8.98.6

164. yo aryaṣpatir akṛṇod imā āpaḥ / ea sunvate ...avindaj jyotir manavo haviṣmate// 10.43.8 bed.
Thus in the sixth book of the RV (ascribed to the Bhāraddvāja family) the gods are characterized as "they who made Manu superior to the Dāsa"\(^{165}\) and in the tenth it is said that the gods brought up Purūravas in order that the Dasyus be destroyed.\(^{166}\)

In the tenth book again, it is said of the divinized Soma drops that "their countenance, shining with might, found for Manu the sun, the Aryan light"\(^{167}\) "Winning the sun" in the RV is a characteristic term for sacrifice as well as war; and, when what is won in the course of that is described as the Aryan light gained for Manu's sake, the statement simply means that Soma wins for the Aryan his light: Manu here as elsewhere in the RV stands for the Aryan as opposed to the Dāsa.

In several references to Indra's fight against the Dragon or Vṛtra, the latter is depicted as a Dāsa or as symbolizing Dāsa power. Thus 1.32.11 says the serpent (= Vṛtra) guarded the waters and so the latter are "in Dāsa subjugation"; Indra slays Vṛtra and uncovers the waterhole.\(^{168}\) In this context, as Sāyana the commentator observes, it is Vṛtra that is depicted as the Dāsa. Our point is that such a depiction is extraordinarily meaningful.

Indra is said to have been born to slay Vṛtra\(^{169}\); this notion illumines the context of such a saying as the following: "At his very birth, he conquered all the waters that were under Dāsa subjection".\(^{170}\) Here too it is all too clear that Vṛtra = Dāsa.

Another of the famous exploits of Indra is his subjugation of Śuṣṇa. It is important to note that in many references to this myth Śuṣṇa is described in identical terms as are applied to the Dāsa - Dasyu. Thus Śuṣṇa is the Dāsa for whom Indra "will make the earth a pillow"\(^{171}\); he is the Dasyu "full of evil power" and "devoid of the sacred word"\(^{172}\), "the Dasyu" on whom Indra's bolt is to be hurled,\(^{173}\) "who does not practise sacrificial rites and is devoted to other practices."\(^{174}\)

\(^{165}\) ye manuḥ ca kṛur uparam dasāya -6.21.11
\(^{166}\) puruṣaś ca rādhya dasahatyaḥ -10.95.7
\(^{167}\) eṣām anikṣaṇ śavāśa davidyutat / vidat evam manave jyotir āryam // 10.43.4 cd
\(^{168}\) dāsarcatnuh ahiṣṭaṃ aṭīṣṭhan [...] āpah [...] apāṃ bilam [...] vṛtraṃ jaghanvān apə tad vāvṛa// 1.32.11. Cf. with this the co-occurrence of Śuṣṇa, Piṅg, Śambhara and Vṛtra-ṇavas in 1.103.8 : śuṣṇaṃ piṅguṇ kṛuceṣṭaṃ vṛtrāṃ indra// yadāvacādhi ví puraḥ kambha rasya /
\(^{169}\) jātyathā vṛtrahatyaḥ -8.89.5ab = 1.51.6 (n.196)
\(^{170}\) yat-ajanyāḥ kāḥ / tvaś ca apo ajaśad dāsarpatiḥ/ 5.30.5 (Cf. tvam apo ajayo dāsarpatiḥ/ (1.96.18d).
\(^{171}\) kāṃ dāśyopakibhartiḥ kāḥ -1.174.7b. See Geldner's comments on 1.174.7 ab.
\(^{172}\) maṇḍava vikrama-dasyuḥ /4.16.9b. See Geldner on 4.16.9
\(^{173}\) śuṣṇa-... / vajraṃ jaghanthār dasyaṃ/ 8.6.14.ab
\(^{174}\) akarmā dasyuḥ... (amantr) anuvrataḥ ... 10.22.8ab. See Geldner on 10.22.7—10.

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Elsewhere, Śūṣṇa as well as his supporters are characterized as Dasyu-s (plural)\textsuperscript{175}. They are further described approximately as “Dasyu-s of improper speech, that are not in possession of (the sacred) word” (anāso dasyān mrdhravacāh)\textsuperscript{176} - a typical description of the Dasyu-s as the characteristic cult-opponents of the Vedic Aryans. (anās - occurring only here is analysed by Sāyaṇa as an-ās, lit ‘mouthless’, which Geldner would render as approximating to dūmb. To us it appears surprisingly close to abrahman, amantu and avāc appearing at 4.16.9 and 10.22.8 respectively).

Śūṣṇa’s hideouts again are referred to exactly in the same terms as are the strongholds of the Dasyu-s (: fortifications, forts etc.),\textsuperscript{177} and Śūṣṇa is characteristically mentioned alongside such well-known Dāsa chiefs whom Indra is said to have slain as Śambara, Pipru and Ilībiṣa\textsuperscript{178}.

In statements such as those which refer to legendary figures like Manu, Vṛtra and Śūṣṇa, Indra is depicted as the real maker of Dāsa defeat (or the defeat of the Dāsa-like). But the notion of Indra’s initiative in subjugating Dāsa power and extending Aryan sovereignty also finds numerous other expressions, in which he is the bringer of Aryan triumph and the model for the Aryan warlords to emulate.

An interesting idea expressed in the hymns to Indra is that it is he who personally leads (or should lead) the fighting hosts of the Aryan chiefs. He “leads troops and stands at the head of the heroic men”\textsuperscript{179}; he is “the wide shield and the pioneer fighter”\textsuperscript{180} and the one that will “stand at the fore front.”\textsuperscript{181} “In his command are the horses and cattle, the mobile groups and all the cars.”\textsuperscript{182}

\textsuperscript{175} dasyān : 4.16.12e, 5.29. 10c, 5.31.7d.
\textsuperscript{176} 5.29.10cd.
\textsuperscript{177} e.g. śūpaṇaya ṅṛṣyadvā : 1.51.11d; śuṣṭaka pūrṇaḥ: 4.30.13 ae; vṛtraḥ...śuṣṭam indraḥ pūrṇaṃ evaṁ tānāvāya śayathāya ... 6.18.8cd.
\textsuperscript{178} Cf e.g. 1.33.12 (Ilībiṣa and Śambara) 1.101.2 (Śambara, Pipru and Śuṣṇa) ; 1.102.8 (Śuṣ., Pip. and Śamb.) ; 2.14.5 (Śuṣ. and Pip.); 2.19.6 (Śuṣ., Kuyava, Śamb.) ; 6.18.8 (Śuṣ., Pip., Śamb.)
\textsuperscript{179} Cf 7.20.5c : pra yah senānir adha nyāḥya asti/\textsuperscript{180} tvanaṃ vāraṇaiḥ saprathāḥ — puroyodha ca vṛtrarha— 7.31.6ab.
\textsuperscript{179} sa na vājeṣu ... pūrṇaṣhadā — maṃhavā vṛtrarha bhūvat— 8.46.13
\textsuperscript{180} yasyādeṣaḥ pradikṣi yasya gāvọyasya grāmāḥ yasya viśe ṛathāṣaḥ/2.12.7ab
This last quotation seems to refer to the separate constituents involved in early Aryan fighting. It reminds us of RV 1.100.10 a which describes Indra as gaining triumph by means of grāma-s (= mobile hosts) and (battle-) cars.\textsuperscript{183} Wilhelm Rau has clearly shown the significance of the reference to ‘mobile groups’ or grāma-s in the later Vedic texts.\textsuperscript{184} As in those texts, here too grāma-s certainly do not mean, “villages” (the standard meaning in Classical Sanskrit). Another clear example is RV 3.33 which refers to the Bharata hordes crossing the Vipāś and Śrutadri as “a grāma looking out for cattle”.\textsuperscript{185} In the light of what Rau has said, we assume that here a whole tribe was on the move and in this mobile state they were liable to come into conflict with others whom they met and whose goods they would attempt forcibly to take. Our interpretation of the condition of the Bharata-s as reflected in RV 3.33 was based on this assumption. (above, Ch II. i.e)

It is interesting to note that another word by which the “commoners” of such a group were indicated is sajātāḥ. They would form the bulk of the fighters of the tribe.\textsuperscript{186}

It is in the strident call to the sajāta-s to “be heroes in the style of Indra” found in RV 10.103 that one can perhaps find the best example of the ṛṣi-s depicting Indra with what can be regarded as deliberate “political - militaristic motivation”. The song addresses Bṛhaspati and Indra first and then these ‘kinsmen of the clan’ (= sajātāḥ, following the etymology of the word; in reality it meant “commoners”). We quote the relevant part of this battle-song:

“Bṛhaspati, fly round with your car, killing the rākṣas, driving foes away, breaking up armies, crushing, winning through battle. Be the helper of our cars. Indra - to be known through strength, hero pre-eminent, powerful, triumphant, exercising might, above every hero, above every fighter, born in might - mount the winning car, finding cows! Him, cleaving cow-opens open, finding cattle with bolt in arm, winning the race and rushing forth with vigour - be heroes like him, O kinsmen of the clan! Hold fast to him, O comrades! Plunging with prowess into cowpens, Indra the uncompromising hero, of wrath hundredfold, subduer of troops, hard to be fought with - may he in battles be our aid!”\textsuperscript{187}
And it is worthy of note that here Indra in person is called upon to mount the battle cars of these troops as they set out in their campaigns for booty and for power.

The image of Indra’s physical ‘participation’ in the martial under-taking of the Aryan warlord is conceived of in many ways. The feeling of Indra’s divine alliance with him is often expressed by words like yuj- and sakhyya (participation, comradeship). “Through alliance with Indra we will crush the foe” (7.48.2). “For alliance” the priests would invoke Indra (1.101.1-7). As Schmidt observes, “Indra and his comrades in war are friends”.  

What all this amounts to obviously is this: that in vanquishing the Dāsa-s and other resisters (vṛtra-s) the Aryan warlords execute Indra’s work. In other words, the rṣis represent the sūri (= the Aryan hero) as the instrument of Indra’s divine might.

In fact this is quite explicitly stated. Thus in one instance, whose background is clearly an impending raid or contest or military engagement, it is hoped that Indra “would win the sun by means of our heroes”. “Win the sun” would no doubt sound queer to modern ears. It certainly is an unusual way of expressing the idea of gaining victory. In the Rgvedic setting, it emphasizes the ritual significance of war. Indra triumphs over the Dāsa-like Vṛtra and ensures the freedom of the heavenly waters and the powers of light: so his triumph is a winning of those waters and the sun. On earth the warlord’s triumph over his foes is not only a ritual re-enactment of Indra’s feat, it is actually a performance of one of his tasks.

A later stanza of the hymn from which we quoted the above line makes it clear that Indra’s ‘winning the sun’ there means an earthly triumph: Indra “shall slay the Dasyu-s and the Śimyu-s and with spear stretch them upon the earth. With his fair (-skinned) companions, he shall win the land, shall win the sun and win the waters”.

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188. indreṇa yujā taruṣema vṛtram/ 7.48.2. Note the word vṛtram which probably might have been better translated as ‘resister’.
191. asmākebhīr nyebhiḥ sūryam sanat/ 1.100.6
192. dasyuḥ chimyūṁ ca.../ havā vythiyā sarva ni barhit / sanat kṣetraṁ sakhibhiḥ svit- nyebhiḥ/ sanat sūryam sanad apaµ / 1.100. 18. Cf also 1.100.6ced : May Indra be this day our succour : asminn aha... no bhavatu indra uti.
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The same idea one finds expressed elsewhere too. Thus "through fighters and heroes of ours" Indra will achieve his heroic deeds, "through our men win the sun", "His sovereign might would he extend: through kings he slays the foes".

Indra thus is the real dasyu-han (killer of Dasyu-s) and it is for the killing of them that he is born. He subjugates them that have deviated from (Aryan) vows and crushes opponents "through the agency of followers".

In one interesting stanza Indra is depicted as claiming credit for a victory which elsewhere is simply stated to be the triumph of a Bharata prince: "I have invigorated Atithiga for the benefit of the Gūṇu-s. I established (that) slayer of foes among (his) people - their strength as it were - as I spread (my?) fame on the occasion of the killing of Parṇaya, or in the great battle, the destruction of Karaṇja".

(5)

If the earthly warrior's battle is a re-enactment of the heavenly contest of Indra, we should expect to see a similarity of depiction of the two. This is indeed the case.

The classic battles of Indra in heaven are those against Vṛtra and Vala. It has been shown that vrtra (neuter) means 'resistance' or obstruction. "Vṛtra is the arch demon of the RV and he and his cohorts represent evil" he is the very opposite of the divine and it is Indra's task to resist the emergence of his power. "When the adeva ('anti-god' = Vṛtra) raised himself above the gods, then did they choose Indra, in (the contest of) winning the sun."
The two (Indra and Vṛtra) then are locked in contest to win this treasure, the sun. (Often the object is represented as the sun and/or the waters. The sun is in case involved, as the heavenly waters are said to contain the sun.) “As long as Vṛtra ruled, the world was dark, and it was Indra’s triumph that brought the light.”  

And the objective is the same in the Vala myth, which has been shown to be a priestly version of the more popular Vṛtra myth. “The two myths bear features so similar to each other...that the singers occasionally mix up the two.”

The cosmological meanings attached to these myths have been well explained by Lüders in his monumental work on Varuṇa. Says he: “For the Vedic Indians, or at least the Vedic poets, the point of issue of rain is not the cloud... in the aerial spaces, but the flood of waters in the heavens... which (flood) is more often called the samudra... It is from the heavens the gods send rain. The heavenly sea in which are found the waters, Soma and the celestial luminaries is enclosed in a rock, a stony container. So Indra in the Vṛtra myth always struggles against ‘the rock’. It is the stony enclosure of heavenly waters that Vṛtra has devoured. The very same rock is the Vala out of which the dawns are released... Several times the waters are called svarvatī... ‘consisting of the sun’. Everywhere the reference is to the winning of these waters... The svarvatī waters are everywhere the waters in which the sun sojourns and whose winning is striven for even by human beings, because in the last analysis the rain issues out of them.”

The goal of Indra’s contests, an enclosure full of valued objects guarded by a hostile power, is the exact likeness of the target of a Vedic warlord’s attack: the enclosure of cows and horses in the protection of another chief and his men. (Instructive in this regard is Rau’s disclosure of how a Vedic grāma encamped when it reached a hospitable area: the tents pitched round a central enclosure giving it protection all round. They would live there as long as the district provided grass and water for the animals.)

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202. Geldner, note on 1.51.4d.
203. Lüders, p.193
204. " p.116
205. " p.118
206. " p.118
207. " p.174
208. " p.295
209. Cfr. e.g. 8.32.5: (addressing Indra) gor akṣaya vi vṛjaṁ paṇaṁ na... darsati/ “You will break open, like a fortress, the cattle-and-horse enclosure”; 3.43.7d : apa gotrā vavartha; 4.20.8 : vṛjaṁ apavartā ‘i gondām ; 6.45.24 : vṛjaṁ gomantam .. apa vartā: With these may be compared 6.62.8, said of sūri aided by Māruts : sa vṛjaṁ dārā.
210. Rau, 36 (p.54)
As the goal, so the mode of setting about the onslaught. Indra goes to
war secure in the knowledge that he as a warrior is not a solitary force. His
might is his leadership, but such a struggle essentially requires the cooperation
of other forces: the spiritual power which the (heavenly) yajñīs and Bṛhas-
pati, their chief, represent, as well as the sheer physical force which the common
fighters (i.e. in this case the Maruts) bring. It is with such co-operation of
forces that Indra triumphs.

It is with the aid of sacred power that Indra breaks up the Vala rock
(2.24.3)212; the Aṅgiras (representing priestly power) help him with sacred
songs, with their (mighty) ‘roar’ (1.71.2),213 the Usījs with ritual and
incantation (2.21.5),214 It is with Bṛhaspati as ally that Indra overpowers
the “godless tribes” that come up against him (8.96.15)215 - where clearly
Indra represents the rājan and Bṛhaspati the purohita, the priestly coun-
ssellor and strategist.216 And, more emphatically, “it is the sacrifice that
protects Indra’s thunderbolt in the destruction of the dragon” (3.32.12)217.

This last sentence needs to be emphasized. Indra as the chief in the
celestial war needs the sacrifice, needs his purohita and his priests. And the
celestial priests obtain their ritual rewards no less than the terrestrial. The
Usījs obtain “treasures and cows” under Indra (2.21.5)218. It is when
(Bṛhaspati) the divine purohita carries away the booty that Indra’s victory
is complete and the sun is able to shine (2.24.9)219. So Indra’s functions are
to be “the slayer of Vṛtra, the winner of booty and the giver of gifts”, in that
order (4.17.8).220

The whole position is neatly expressed in one memorable stanza: “The
chief of vipra-s (i.e. Bṛhaspati), came offering his alliance. The rock yielded
in ripeness its ‘foetus’ to the great actor (i.e. Indra). The youthful hero won,
with the young (warriors’) aid, demonstrating the quality of his leadership
(or of his generosity). Forthwith the Aṅgiras became the singer of praise.”
(3.31.7)221

211. Cf.2.21.5,3.34.4, etc.: Usīja render priestly aid to Indra; 1.71.2, 1.62.5: The
Aṅgiras aid Indra; 2.24.3/9, 6.73.3, 10.67.5, 10.68.9: Bṛhaspati plays a major role
in Indra’s triumphs. See also note 216 below. 3.47.4, 5.30.6: Maruts help Indra;
8.30.2: Viṣṇu allies himself with Indra.
212. 2.24.3 abhinand brahmaṇa valam
213. ukthath ... ravaṇa : 1.71.2
214. 2.21.5 : See n. 267 below.
215. viśe adevīr abhyāca raṁtri/ bṛhaspatimā yujendraṁ sādha / 8.96.15
216. Bṛhaspati as Indra’s purohita accompanies him to war: Geldner, in note to 10.103.4
217. 3.32.12 : yajñas te vajram ahiṁya dvat.
218. 2.21.5 : See n. 267 below.
219. sa purohitāḥ ... yad vajram bharate...ād it sūryas tapati -2.24.9
220. kāntā ... vṛtraṁ, santiā ... vṛjan, dātā maṭhāṇi -4.17.8
221. agacchad u vipratanaḥ sakhīyamnā/ asūdayat sukṣte garbhām adhiḥ / sasāna māryo
guhabhir mabhāyamṇa/ akñābhavād angirāḥ sadyo arcan// 3.31.7
Here the god’s mythical act is an exact replica of the tribal warlord’s conquest of booty with a purohita’s ritual aid, and the common warriors’ physical aid. ‘And the act is rounded off with the chief’s show of liberality and the priests’ celebration in song of the warlord’s might and munificence (:dāna-stuti).

In passing we must not fail to notice the extremely significant stress that we find laid here on Indra’s youthfulness. That emphasis can also be detected elsewhere, as for example at 4.19.2 which says that as Indra assumed control (in anticipation of the war with Vṛtra), the other gods fell back “like old men”. 222 We must bear in mind the possibility that Indra’s protegés (: the sūrī-s), like Indra himself, may be youthful heroes contrasted with old tribal chiefs.

Let us now turn our attention to another fact of the nature of the depiction of Indra in the RV Sanskrit which we discussed above. This is the fact that most of the time the opponent that Indra is beseeched to fight against, or is indicated to be fighting against, is portrayed as a “cultural alien.” Hence these opponents are quite often characterized as ‘godless’, ‘not sacrificing’, ‘not pressing Soma’, ‘not being liberal’ and so forth; and in contrast those who receive his support are portrayed as devout sacrificers and offerers of the Soma libation. The alienness of the opponent is somehow or other stressed, positively with (the above or other similar) offending epithets or negatively by instantly underlining the sūris’, own devotion to the Indra and Soma cults.

Such statements are extremely numerous: “He forcibly collects the Paṇi’s (means of) sustenance, that he may plunder it, and he bestows splendid treasure upon the worshipper.” 223 The Paṇi is “the rich irreverent man who makes no offerings” to Indra, “who neglects the practice of generosity”. 224 “With the Paṇi who presses no Soma Indra makes no alliance. He takes away his property and strikes him nude. Solely for the presser of Soma is he available, for him who cooks offerings (to him)”. 225 “He is (the gatherer) of the property of the irreverent (man), and the giver of wealth to him who makes a splendid libation of Soma.” 226

222. avīdārjanta jīvaya na devāḥ - 4.19.2a. Indra as a youth also at 1.11.4a, 2.20.3a, 3.46.1b, 6.45.1c, 7.20.1c, 8.21.2b, 8.45.1-3c 8.46.7a etc. (In these references as yuṣm). Indra’s associates, the Maruts, as a yuṣm goṇaḥ at 1.87.4a, 8.61.13 etc.
223. som ṣe paṇiṣoṣaḥ bhajati sūnaram mune / vi dāṣyaḥ bhajati sūnaram yasau // 5.34.7
224. yas te rvanā adāsūriḥ / pramamaṁrā maṅghatyay // 8.45.15
225. na rvanā paṇiṣoṣaḥ sakhyam indro...asunāt...som grivāḥ / d’ṣya vedaḥ khitati hanti nagnām / vi suṣyaṁ paktaye kṣevelo bhūḥ // 4.25.7
226 adāṣya guruṣya / prajantāḥ śī......suṣvīrādya vedaḥ // 7.10.1
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So goes the strident call to Indra in the RV hymns. “Destroy the non-pressers and root out the non-givers!” 227 Strike him at once, (him) who presses no Soma, the unapproachable one that is not to you a pleasure; and on us bestow his wealth!” 228 “Be a refuge to the generous donors......when you put the overbearing ones to rout. May we divide (among us) the wealth of him who is slain by you. Bring us the property of the unapproachable one!” 229

Clearly thus “he who honours the gods shall prevail over the godless; he who is zealous shall battle (even) him that is hard to subdue. The sacrificer shall appropriate the non-sacrificer’s sustenance. 230 And Indra, “like a bold plunderer on the highways, goes deliberately distributing the property of the man who sacrifices not.” 231

And if Indra himself is not always the actual killer of all such cult opponents, he is at least to invigorate his devotees to perform that task themselves: “Stimulate the generous patrons in the conquest of foes (Vytra-s)– (patrons) who offer gifts that please!” 232

It seems reasonable to conclude that in the usage of Vytra in such contexts as this, it means not merely ‘enemy’ but essentially also ‘cult opponent’. The noteworthy statement that Indra with heroes destroys these resisters in (i.e. through) the sacrifice (7.19.4) 233 suggests that the Vytra-s are of necessity inimical to the sacrificial system, or, more accurately, to the particular development of that system as the Indra cult.

(7)

Indra’s function as the symbol most characteristically invoked for promoting Aryan aggrandisement at the expense of the dasyus is sometimes pithily expressed in the form of a straightforward request to him, as for example in RV 1.103.3 cd: “Throw (your) missile on the dasyus, augment Aryan authority and glory!”. 234 That Indra was the god to whom it was most apt to make such a request is the best evidence for this chapter’s theme: the cult of Indra signifies an impetus to power.

227. jahy asubhī pra vyādhratatham // 6. 44. 11
228. 1.176.4 see n. 400 below.
229. bharā varāham .. maghonām / yat samajāśi iardhataḥ / vi tvāhataya vedanām bhajemahu ā dūpādā bharā gayam // 7.32.7
230 devaṇām id adevaṇāntam abhyasat / suṣrṇār id vanavaṭ prītau duṣṭaram / yaiva iṣayor vi bhajāti bhajanam / 1.103.6.
231. ya ādṛtyā parampanthvā āśro / 'ya jayano vibhajānān eti bhoganaṃ / 1.103.6
232. maghonāḥ sma vyādhaṭeṣu codaya / ye dadaī priyā varā / 7.32.15ab
233. tvam nrbhir......devaṇī / bhūrīni vytra ......hāsyī / 7.19.4
234. dasyaye hetim asyaṁ ṛṇaḥ saho vardhaya dyumnam...... / 1.103. 3cd
Depicting the sūris as the instrument of Indra's might, as they whom the divine warrior in person aids, the ṛṣis surely have attempted to represent Aryan expansion as a divine mission, as a religious undertaking. This is clearly an attempt to provide what must be called an ideological basis for Aryan expansion: and of course it was the only ideological basis possible in terms of the thinking of those times.

It would indeed be hard to find a cult more closely oriented to the aggrandizement of temporal power than is the Vedic Indra cult. Yet in fairness to the ṛṣis we must emphasize that it was for them a genuinely divine imperative that the power of the devotees of Indra must assert itself and not go under Dasyu onslaught or be debased by adulteration with other cults.

(8)

Before we conclude this chapter we must also pay attention to a significant statement often made about Indra in the RV - a statement which seems to us to be revelatory in regard to the shift of authoritative power in the Vedic tribes. The statement in question, worded in diverse ways, is to the effect that Indra's supremacy among the gods is the result of a deliberate transfer of sovereignty or lordship or power or might to him by the other gods when they were confronted by a 'military situation' i.e. when they had to fight against the Dragon or Vṛtra. It is said that he was accepted as their head by the other gods, that the right to the Soma draught was conceded to him or the vajra was committed to his hands. The vajra was the "most essential symbol of kingship and delegated power".234a

Let us briefly note some instances of this noteworthy idea:

kṣattra conceded to Indra: 4.17.1 ; 7.21.7 ; 6.25.8 (The last says that it was absolute power that was granted to Indra). 4.19.1 and 6.25.8 say that this was when the gods had to destroy Vṛtra.235

āsurya conceded: 6.20.2, 7.21.7. cf. also 6.36.1. According to the last two, as Indra bore this power among the gods, he became the distributor of booty.236

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234B Coomarasawamy. p.3.
235. tubhyam anu kṣatṛam manyate / 4. 17 . 1 ; devaś cit te asuryāya pūrve / 'nu kṣatrīya mamire sahāmei / 7. 21.7ab ; anu te dāyi maha indriyāya / satrā te viśvam anu vṛtrahatyte / anu kṣatram anu saha yatre / 'indra devēhōr anu te vṛtrahyte / / 6.25.8 ; teśāṃ . . . . . .devānāḥ . . . . ekam id viśvate vṛtrahatyte / 4.19.1
236. tubhyam anu... asuryam devēhōr dāiyā viśvam... yad vṛtram han / 6.20 .2 ; vājānām abhavo vibbhatē gad deveṣu dhārayathā asuryam / 6. 36.1 ; indra maṅgānī dāyate vi sahya / 7. 21.7c
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virya / tavya conceded: 1.80.7; 2.20.8; 3.31.13 (Dhiṣaṇā ordained him to pierce him who waxed strong, and all powers were conceded to him.)...

Indra placed at head of gods: 1.131.1; 6.17.8 (in order to fight, when the adeva raised himself above the deva-s) 8.12.22/25 (to kill Vṛtra, in the battle)

Indra chosen as sole chief: 4.19.1 ((: All gods...chose solely the exalted Indra...in the killing of Vṛtra.)

Right to Soma conceded: 5.29.5

vajra entrusted to Indra: 2.11.4; 2.20.8; 10.52.5

In the last mentioned reference, Agni as the divine viṣṇu and purohita declares: "I have placed the vajra in Indra's hands. Now shall he win these battles at all" So this is a depiction and an exaltation of the (ritual) confirmation by the priestly class of the warlord's right to head people, over and above other (tribal) authorities: a concept of conferred power as opposed to other forms of authority.

V. Indra Cult. (Cont'd): Links Forged Between Priest and Prince

(1)

In classical India the Brahmanical counsellor of the king (i.e. the purohita) was the most influential minister in his employ. The institution has its roots in Rgvedic times. So intimate was the relationship between the brahman and the rāja that it has been compared to the 'marriage bond'.

If we go by the genealogical evidence of the RV, the first purohitas who assisted the rāja-s in battles should have been those of the Bhāradvāja stock, (6.27 and 6.47) and in one of the hymns of the family book of the Bhāradvāja-s the praises are sung of "our many sūri-s who have placed us ahead (of themselves)", The other celebrated purohiti service in war in the RV was that of Vasiṣṭha to Sudās (7.18, 7.33, 7.83).

237. ubhīgam..... anutattam viryam / 1. 80.7; tasmai tavasyam anu dāgi...devehiḥ / 2. 20.8;

238. indraṃ viśe devāso dadhire purah/ 1 . 131. 1 ; viśe purah......devā / ekam tavasam
dadhire bhardya/ ......adevo yad abhyauksiṣṭa devān/ vṛṣastā indram atra / 6, 17.8:

239. See n.235 above,

240. uṣṭhānam devā anu viśe adadhūḥ somapayām / 5.29.5

241. vajram bāhvar dadhānāḥ - 2.11.4; asya vajram bāhvar dhvah / 2.20.8; ā bāhvar vajram

242. Heesterman, p. 56. Cf also op. cit., p. 75. f. and Gonda, Numen, 3. 2 pp. 150 ff.

243. 6. 25. 7ed : See n. 294 below.
In other contests too, the priest who aided the sūri (- a term for the secular lord that pre-eminently reflects priestly admiration and intimacy) had undoubtedly a purohita -like function. The theory of the fundamental need of a purohita to a rāja is lucidly expressed already in the RV. Thus 4.50.8 says: “The king under whom the brahman has precedence - he dwells in peace and comfort in his house; to him for ever holy food flows freely and to him do people in free will pay homage.”

As usual this is a reflection in embryonic of the overall (political) structure that was eventually to emerge in Aryan India. The classic strategem of the brahman class to make the limbs of that structure cohere with mandatory effectiveness was to portray its celestial parallel with vivid emphasis.

We saw how Indra’s wars had all the common aspects of a rāja’s military encounters. One of these aspects was Indra’s indebtedness to the celestial counterpart of the āśi - now Brāhaspati, now Agni, now the Angiras. The whole position is forcefully stated at RV 8.100.1 where Agni as priest says to Indra: “I in person go before thee….and if thou givest me (my) share then shalt thou through me perform heroic deeds.” And we have already referred to 10.52.5 where again Agni says, in a succinct statement of the link that was desired to be forged between these two groups of the Vedic elite: “I have placed the vajra in Indra’s hands. Now shall he win these battles all!”

(2)

The intimacy of the sūri-s and the priests is indeed remarkable. Let us consider, for example, such statements as the following:

Mighty beings who give us the sun
- with cattle, horses, wealth and gold -

Ever may the sūri-s win in wars, O Indra, Vāyu,
with fast steeds and with heroic sons!

(7.90.6)

Or the following:

Bring, O Uṣas, generous one,
brilliance and lofty fame,
for them who made us share
their gifts of horses, cows
- the sūri-s (here).

(5.79.7)

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244. sa ut kṣetri sudhita okasi ove / tasmaṇa śīśa / pīrṇate viśvaddhānāy / tasmai viśaḥ svayam eva
namante / yasmin brahmā rājaṁi puṁsa eı / i 4, 50, 8

245. ayaṁ ta eva tanaṁ purastād / ......mahyaṁ dīhher bhāgam...... / ād in mayā kṛṣṇavo
vīrāṇi / i 8, 100, 1 (Translation after Coomaraswamy).

246. See n, 241 above,

247. ivaṁ śo ye dādhaṁ svar no / go批判 aśeṣebhir vanaḥhir hiranyaiḥ/ indravāyāṁ sūrayo eśvaṁ
āyur / apratibhir vīraṁ pṛthandau saṁyak / j 7, 90, 6

248. teśyoc dyumnam bhūrad yasa / vyo maṁsiṇi sūrīṣu / ye no rādhāmeṣu aśeṣaḥ- j gavā
bhajanta sūrayaṁ / i 5, 78, 7 (Almost the same notion in 5, 78, 6).
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At once we see the earnest wish of the priest to foster the success of the sūri-s; and we see that the sūri is clearly the priest’s benefactor.

And how does the sūri profit from this relationship? Let us look at the text for the answer:

Augment their living treasure, nutriment,
O Agni, of our sūri-s here!
Through song have they, the heroic men
come by their bounteous wealth. (5.10.3)

Thus they do not triumph singly: for this they need the singer’s song,
the priest’s ritual act. Their victories are really shared achievements.

Come now to us, O Agni,
praised, do bring us treasured gift.
We here, and the sūri-s,
together we’d good luck gain.
So be with us in contests — that we may thrive! (5.16.5)

So the priests and the sūri are comrades in war and contest:

We (here) and you, the sūri-s,
as comrades let us win
that fore-effulgent (wealth),
which brings a chariot-load of gain,
a houseful of gain! (9.98.12)

It is in one single achievement that the two parties win their hearts’ desire:

To the sūri-s immortal fame and wellbeing,
and to us — winnings rich with cattle! (7.81.6)

On occasion the singer seems to betray a different inner sentiment, that he really is the dominant actor, that it is his rivals that the prince has to subjugate, as though the whole exercise is for his sake (and won through his intervention):

249. tvam no agna eqām | gayam puṣṭiṁ ca vardhaya / ye stomebhīḥ pra sūrayo / naro māgahāṁ ānāśub // 5.10.3
250. nā na ehi vāyam | agna grāṃma ā bhara / ye vāyam ye ca sūrayah / svasti dhāmhe raco / taidhi pṛṣau no vr̥ihe / 5. 16. 5
251. taṃ sakhāyāḥ pururucām | gayam vāyam ca sūrayah / aṣṭāṁ vāja-gandhyam / sanemā vāja-pusthayam / 9. 98. 12. Cf. also 6.44. 18 : “Provide us in these battles with great free space, a handsome path: and make the sūri a party to the winning of waters” āsu smā naḥ . . . . pṛṣau/ aṣmahhyam mahī variehaḥ sūrām kah/ apām...jeṣṭa . . . . sūrīn kṛṣṇiḥ smā no ardham/!
252. śravah sūrībhya amṛtam vasutevanāḥ/ vājāṁ aṣmahhyam gomataḥ / 7.81.6ab.
We with our heroic lords
shall dare our challengers,
vanquish our assailants! (8.40.7)\textsuperscript{253}

Naturally the poets’ words reveal that they regard the sūri-s’ triumph not only as a means for their own welfare, but also as an achievement of power over men and over tribes:

O Agni, well invited, dear be to you the sūri-s
- who dominate men -
and many a cow-pen have they given
- the generous ones! (7.16.7)\textsuperscript{254}

One may detect the same idea in such a verse as the following:

Even the tribe that thinks
itself as blessed with power,
deliver even that tribe
to these heroic men
among whom I am,
O wielder of the bolt! (6.19.12)\textsuperscript{255}

The sūri-s’ search for power and wealth aided by the priests is well expressed when the sinüers implore the war-god to “win the sun by means of their heroic men”:

When, Indra, each after his thoughts
men diversely seek your aid,
then win the sun
here with our heroic men! (8.15.12)\textsuperscript{256}

And again the same idea in the following lines:

With our valiant heroes, Hero great,
achieve those heroic tasks
that are thine to be done! (2.30.10)\textsuperscript{257}

\textsuperscript{253} asmākebhīr nṛbhir vayām | sāsahyāma pṛtanyato | vanuyāma vanuyyataḥ | 8. 40.7cde.

\textsuperscript{254} tve agne svāhuta | priyāsah santu sūrayāh | yantu ye magha vāno janaṇām | ārvān dayanta gonoṃ | 7.16. 7

\textsuperscript{255} janaṇ vajrin mahi cin manyamānam | obhya nṛbhya randhaya yeṣu asmi | 6 19. 12ab.

\textsuperscript{256} yad īndra manmaṇas teṇā | nānā havanta ātaye | asmākebhīr nṛbhīr/aṭrā | evar jaya/8.15.12. “Sun” and “wealth” are associated notions, as e.g., at 5. 79. 8 : uṇa no go-
matir īṣah | ā vaha ....../... sākṣaṁ sūryāya raṁvibhiḥ/

\textsuperscript{257} asmākebhīh satvabhīh śūra śūrāḥ / viryā krāhi yāni te kartvāni 2.30. 10 ab.
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(3)

Let us inquire briefly into some of the qualities of the sūri, the prince that the RV idealizes. We may see these qualities mentioned in the verses which speak of the ideal prince as a gift of the gods. Such an instance is Rv 5.6.2-3:

As excellent who is praised - that is Agni -
around him the cows gather,
around him the swift - running steeds,
around him the sūri-s, nobly born..............
A victor Agni grants the tribe ............
dextrous for winning wealth.............
For choice treasure he gladly runs...............

"The nobles gather round Agni": so though the prince is above all a warrior, eager for any opportunity to capture booty, that is but one of his many desirable qualities.

Says 6.14.4: "Agni grants a hero, lord of the sadas, one who wins waters, who withstands attack triumphantly and in whose sight foes tremble with fear for his might": A military hero, violent in his very looks, and also a satpati ("lord of the sadas")

This last description calls for some comments.

satpati occurs many times, as for instance at 5.25.6: "Agni grants a 'lord of the sadas, who by war gains triumph through his men'); Agni a swift running horse, a winner unconquered.".

"Lord of the session", like many epithets applied to the hero, is pre-eminently expressive of a function or position ascribed to Indra the god of war. Of 45 uses of this term cited by Grassmann, 26 are clearly applied to him (2 being to Indra and Agni together).

258. so agnir yo vasyur grupe / sam yam āyantī dhanavah/avuto raghurdruvaḥ/ sam sujātaḥ
vārayah/... agnir hi vaśīnaḥ viśe dadāti...... rāye svabhavam / sa prīto yāti vāryam/...
5.6, 2-3.

259. agnir āpām pīṣāhā / vīraṁ dadāti satpatim / yasya trasanti savaṇaḥ / samcaṣṭi

260. agnir dadāti satpatäm / sasāha yo yudhā nṛtṛhīḥ / agnir utyaṁ rāghuṣyadam / jētāram
apardātām// 3.25.6

261. The breakdown is as follows: Indra: 24 times; Indra and Agni: 2; Agni: 4; Mitra / Varuṇa, Soma, Ādityas, Rudra, Savitar: once each (i.e. 5 times); unspecified persons: 6; Kings named (i.e. Trasadācyu, Tryaruna, Asamāti): 3; Sutambhara (Indra?): 1. See Grassmann, Wtb s.v. satpati

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Roots meaning ‘to sit’ are used repeatedly in the RV to indicate a variety of cult occasions. Thus the nobles are described as sitting round the ritual fire and in an atmosphere associated with war they are depicted as sitting at the ritual for the purpose of winning over the gods. Indra is to sit on the sacred grass at the Soma sacrifice “like a prince”. The nobles light the sacred fire at “the ritual session of great men” (i.e. princes and priests). Indra arrives at the sacrifice, “the ritual session of (great) men” of heaven and earth.” By means of sacrificial session and ritual song the Uṣij priests have won treasures and cows under Indra.

It thus seems that in calling the hero a “lord of the session”, the Ṛgvedic poet ascribes to him a characteristic (which is also otherwise projected of him) that indicates his unwavering loyalty to cult practices, to patronage of the Vedic priests. No priest can be a successful officiant unless he has his counterpart and supporter in a ‘sun winning’ prince - which is what is explicitly said when describing Agni (the prince-like cum priest-like god par excellence) at 1.18.6. Here we are told that the rṣi “has come to the marvellous ‘lord of the session’, the dear friend of Indra, but for whom the ritual succeeds not, not even of a master well-versed in conjuration”. Here Agni has indeed an Indra-like quality - and Agni himself in any case is a ‘lordly’ god, being a viśpati and a gṛhapati.

Indra’s own characteristic of being a “lord of the session” makes him distinctly comparable with the prince. A notable depiction of this is found at 1.130.1: “Come to us from the far distance……as a ‘lord of the session’ to the vidathā-s, as a king comes to the vidathā-s, a king who is a lord of the session”. The vidatha was decidedly an occasion with ritual associations and also an occasion where a king or a prince had a characteristic part to play.

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262. 7.1.4: See 498 below.
263. 6.47.19: See n.38 above.
264. rājeva dasma ni śado’dhi barhiṣṭa - 10.43.2
265. nṛṣadane... arhantaś cid yam invāhate - 5.7.2
266. ...yajñē dīva, nṛṣadane pṛthivyāḥ - 7.97.1
267. abhiṣevarā nīradā gāh indre...draviṇāh ādāta - 2.21.5
267B The āśi’s alternate designation, yaJamāna, is itself the most striking testimony to this fact.
268. sadasanepratim adbhutan/ priyam indraṣya kāmyam/ ...ayāśīṣam/ yaṁmād rte na vidhātā/ yaśño vipalēsita cana/...1.18.6-7. See Coomaraswamy p. 5f.
269. d yāhy upa naḥ parishvā/ vidadhānīca satpatiḥ/...rājeva satpatiḥ/ 1.130.1
270. Cf the following: (a) vidatha closely associated with hero/leader/king: 1.130.1; see n. 296 above; 3.1.18: rājī saśā kavātā vidāthaśā sādhan; 5.55.7/5.56.5: vidatheṣu samrāṭ; 3.38.5: vidatathaṣya dhībhiḥḥ...keśaṃ rājānā... pradivo dhāthāvai; 4.21.2; yasya kṛttvā vidatthaḥ na samrāṭ abhyastō kṛṣṇāḥ; 7.36.8: vidatθamā na śīrām;
(b) vidatha an occasion when eulogies are sung: 1.159.1: stute vidatheṣu; 1.162.1: decajūtāgo... prā tukyāto vidatheṣu śīrṣāni; 1.166.7: vidatheṣu suṣṭutāh... 2.27.12; sandhyāya vidatheṣu pradaṣṭāḥ; 0.24.2: viśīṣto vidathe dāti rōjām. (c) vidatha - a sacrificial occasion: 2.4.8: tṛṭya vidathe; 2.39.1: brāhmāyā śeva vidathe ukthaśānā. A notable contribution to the understanding of the word vidatha is in Thieme’s Untersuchungen ... pp. 35-49.
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We thus see that the prince, like Indra, is emphatically portrayed as a patron of the cult, of ritual occasions. That is clearly what the epithet *satpati* indicates.

The *sūri* above all is a man conscious of his duty and obligation, that is to say, his *vrata*. And wherein lies his *vrata*, and in relation to whom?

“Let the *sūri* satisfy, and hasten like the wind. He takes the booty to give away, like one truthful to (his) *vrata*”271 says 1.180.6. So the prince’s generosity was not something that depended on his whims and fancies. It was his *‘bond*, his obligation, duty. Hence one of the most conspicuous characteristics of the *sūri* devoted to his *vrata* is that he is a lavish giver. Thus according to 1.125.7 “the *sūris*…who freely give” are “devoted to the *vrata*”272; contrastively, 5.42.9 speaks of “them that do not give,…… that are without the *vrata*”. 273 How characteristic it was thought to be for the prince loyal to the *vrata* to patronize the Vedic ritual is forcefully brought out by another verse: “You have entered into the (ritual) songs, like a king well devoted to the *vrata*” (9.20.5) 274

So it is the *vrata* to be lavish to priests and to observe the practices of the cult. The portrayal of Indra serves to emphasize, and to render mandatory, the relationship between *sūri* and priest which this implies.

Thus, it was Indra “who first found cows for the *brahman*” (1.101.5) 275; he “opened the cow-pen to aid the Aṅgiras (priests)” (1.51.3) 276. (In the Soma rites), “at each exhalation” he, “bestows herds of cattle on us”. (1.81.7) 277 He gains triumphs and then distributes rewards (7.21.7) 278. He sets the priests’ gift in motion; he is “the most active among donors” (6.37.4) 279. “He has shattering the slanderers” (i.e., the detractors of the *ṛṣis*) “setting munificence in action” (5.30.7) 280. He is “the victor, the unique distributor of rewards” (7.26.4)281. It was through his acts of generosity that he earned the name *maghavan* and became the slayer of adversaries (10.23.2)282. Indeed, as Dandekar observes, “Indra almost monopolized the proud epithet *maghavan* in the RV283. This was his most *sūri*-like quality and this was to be the *sūris’* most Indra-like quality, namely that they win with priestly aid and in turn follow the duty of rewarding the priests in ample measure.

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271. *preṣad veṣad vāṇa na sūrīř/ ā make dade suvrat na vājam - 1.180.6*
272. *ppantaḥ... sūrayah... suvṛatāḥ... 1.125.7*
273. *appantaḥ... aprantarāṇ - 5.42.9*
274. *tvam vāṇevam suvratāj gīraḥ somā viveśiḥa i 9.20.5*
275. *go brahmāne prathamā gā aśvīnāt i 1.101.5b*
276. *gotram aṅgirabhyā tvām apya i 1.51.3*
277. *made made hi no dāsiř/ yūḥd gavlām ... 1.81.7*
278. *7.21.7e : See n. 236 above.*
279. *dakṣiṇām tvā... maghonaṁ tuviśūrmastah - 6.37.4ab*
280. *vi gā maṛtha... dānaṁ śr mastered 5.30.7, See Geldner's translation of this stanza.*
281. *ekā vibhuṭā tarapīr maghatām ... 7.20.4*
282. *indro maghār maghāvā vṛtṛhā bhuvat - 10.23.2*
The myths of Vṛtra and Vala are narratives that highlight a specific aspect of Indra's activities as the celestial war-lord. As we saw he first found cows for brahman (1.101.3) in this legendary exploit, and opened the cowpen for the benefit of the Angiras, the priests of the ancient sacred times. (1. 51. 3, 1.132.4).

This operation is depicted true to style: a Soma sacrifice with hero and followers partaking; the actual onslaught; return to ritual point of commencement with (the trophies of ?) the victory won; a ritual draught and an eulogy for the victor (in honour of his munificence).

"When I have returned to you with winnings, in the (ritual) house ...... at the Soma session, and (am) (ritually) quickened, I have done the partaking (of the ritual draught) in the vessel (set before me) ; then as the foremost sūrī this eulogy I receive." (10.167.4)

This in our opinion is the model the ṛṣi-s set before their beloved patrons the sūrī-s to follow in all their contests. It spells out for them the nature of the prince's vrata. And their praise of the sūrī-'s gift (: dānastuti, praśasti etc.) was a regular desideratum for the prince's glory: this is but a repetition of what the first priests did for the first sūrī.

"That deed of yours, O Indra, have the āyu-s extolled - they who fain would burst the stall of cows open, who fain would milk the lofty one...... (the cow )of a thousand streams" (10.74.4)

It is as āyu-s that RV 10.74.4 refers to the priests.

Many are the names and epithets by which the princes and priests are introduced in the RV.

sūrī-s, maγhavan-s (: generous ones), heroes, heroic men, devotees of gods, Soma sacrificers - these are some of the commonest words used to designate or characterize the princes. And the priests are commonly referred to as ṛṣi-s, vipra-s, vipaścit-s, brahman-s, stotr-s, (: eulogists), kāru-s(bards), āyu-s etc.

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284. prasūto bhakṣam akaram carav apiḥ stomam cemaṁ prathamaḥ sūrīr unmejेइ/ sute sādāna yady āgamaḥ vām/ prati...dāme // 10.167.4

285. ā tat ta īndraγuvaḥ pananta' bhī ya īruvam gomantaṁ tiṣṭeint/...sahasradhāraṁ bha- tiṁ... dudukṣan// 10.74.4aabd.
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Some confusion can be caused by āyu, because Āyu is also in early Indian mythology the name of a famous ancestor of the Aryans. Geldner notes this fact in a comment on RV 1.31.5: “Āyu is a preeminent Aryan stock as well as its ancestor, and the word appears used so as to be almost synonymous with ‘the Aryans’.”286

And yet, the word is also very frequently used to denote the Vedic priests—which Geldner too has noted under 5.43.14. In fact it is emphatically in this usage that the word is generally found in the RV Samhitā. This fact deserves special attention as one of the key contexts for the elucidation of the significance of the word ari refers to Vedic priests as “the Āyu-s”. The reference is found at 6.14.3 which depicts the Ayu-s as “competing for the ari’s wealth”.287

(7)

The sūri-s, the priests and the ari are referred to conjointly in a number of highly interesting allusions in the Samhitā. The references to the priests in these may be explicit, but often it is only implicit.

Compare, for example, statements such as the following:

“Coming from the ari to (these) chants (of ours), may the Dawns rejoice in us both (sūri-s and priests). (1.122.14 cd).288

“Today (and also) the next day, we would invoke you two, as Dawn illumines - I as hotar with eulogies, wherever you be, O Nāsatya-s, sons of heaven, for the benefit of him who is a greater giver than the ari”(1.184.1).289

“With these generous men devoted to you, O Indra, maghavan, (do I invoke) you in every contest. Becoming pre-eminent with the ari’s splendours, we shall like heaven revel through many a night and many an autumn” (4.16.19).290

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286. Geldner, note to 1.31.5
287. spardhante ráyo aryah... áyavah -6.14.3. In translating this sentence, we take ráyo as standing for ráyā. It seems to us that the nom., plur. form has been substituted here by “attraction” of the plur. verb spardhante. It was clearly the ari’s wealth for which many a contest was held. Cf.e.g. 1.73.5 : sanema rājam samāhēṣu aryah; 1.81.9: aryo vedah ...naḥ ā bhava;1.121.15: ā no bhaja ...gopy arah; 6.20.1 ...aryaḥ ...rayiḥ taṁ naḥ ... daddhi; 6.47.9: mā nas tarit... ráyo aryah (see n.37 above), and above all 7.34.18: pra ráye yanti śardhanto aryaḥ, (Grussmann, übers, has translated ráyah of 6.14.3 as “nach Schützen”). On áyu, see appendix at end of Part II of this work.
288. aryo girah sadya ā jagmuśītārām cākantābhāyeṣu asme -1.112.14
289. tā vām adya tav aparāṇa huvemā/ uccantāyāṁ uṣasi vahniḥ ukśhaiḥ/ nāsatya kuha cīt santāv hym/ dīvo nāpātā sudāstrāya// 1.184.1
290. ebhir nṛthir indra tvāśyuhūṣvā/ maghauddhir maghavan viśva ásau/dyāvo na dyumnair/ abhi santo aryah/ kṣapo madema śaradaś ca pūrelḥ// 4.16.19. See also n.327.
Crushing the ari’s obstructors,
with sūris would we fain be;
with heroes subduing foes by war
—(sūris) who to Vāyu (offerings make ?)
and who to Indra are a joy,
the lavish ones, devout to gods! (7.92.4)\(^{291}\)

Such statements quite often emphasize the sūri-s’ role as givers of dakṣiṇā
or as respecters of the institution of priestly purohitī, as we may see vividly
in numerous examples.

“May the generous donors partake of nourishing wealth, the sūri-s who
for ever give (us gifts). In contests may we win the prize from the ari, offer-
ing before the gods their share for sake of fame!” 1.73.5\(^{292}\)

“Let all, at the ari’s, (hear) this (word) of ours: the bards ever praise
Bṛhu, the noblest giver of thousands, the sūri who is the noblest winner of
thousands.” 6.45.33\(^{293}\)

“Then when your peoples would start moving, O Indra, be the helper
and protector (of these) sūri-s of ours, who are more heroic than the ari, who
have put us at (their) fore-front”. (6.25.7)\(^{294}\).

On the face of it, it would appear that all these allusions refer to some
kind of military engagements and the word ari indicates the foe against whom
the sūri-s fight. The priests would then figure in these allusions as the men
who invoke divine blessings on the princes they support. In some cases it may
well be that there is nothing beyond this in these references. But the triang-
ular reference to prince, priest and ari cannot always be easily explained away.

Let us consider, for example, the following:

“Gaining precedence, with agreeable mind do I laud Agni, your dear
guest (O gods), with eulogies, - so that Varuṇa may remain in great glory
among us and the sūri, praised by the ari, may grant (us) vivifying riches!
(1,186.3)\(^{295}\)

\(^{291}\) ye vāyavā indramādanāsā/ ādevāsā nītojanāso ayaḥ/ ghantā vṛtrāṇi sūribhiḥ syāma/
sāsvānā yuddhā nṛbhīr amitrān// 7.92.4

\(^{292}\) vi pṛkṣo agne maḥāvāno aṣyur/ viśūrayo dadhato viśvam āyuḥ/ sanema vājaṁ sami-
thēṣe ayaḥ/ bhāgām deveṣāvā śravase dadhāṇāh// 1.73.5

\(^{293}\) tat su no viśve aya ā/ sādā gṛnantī kāravah/ bṛhuṁ sahasradātamah/ sūriṁ sahas-
rasātaman// 6.45.33

\(^{294}\) adhaśmā te caryanto yaḥ ējan/ indra trātāla bhavā varūtā/ asmākāsā ye nṛtamaśa
arya / indra śūrayo dadhīre puro naḥ// 6.25.7

\(^{295}\) preśham vo atīthīṁ graṁste/ āgniṁ saeśibhiḥ turanīṁ sajōṣiḥ/ anad yathā no varuṇah
svakṣirī/ āya ca garadd arigraṁṭāḥ sūrīḥ// 1.186.3
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Or the following:

"Glorified by all, praised by the ṛaj (as well), to the Soma-presser (i.e. the sūri) he gives gifts, and to the eulogist." (8.1.22)

Surely the ṛaj here cannot mean an adversary or a foe?

It surprises us very much that the clear and unvarying distinction between ṛaj and sūri in the RV has not gained due recognition. It seems to us that an adequate appreciation of this distinction is vitally necessary for the proper interpretation of the ṛaj references. And in every case where this distinction is made explicit, it is the sūri that the priests support.

But we must hasten to add a much needed word of caution. The distinction drawn between ṛaj and sūri is not the only factor to be taken into account. The ṛaj tangle does not indeed admit of any such easy solution.

Another significant fact is, as even the above quotations would have revealed, that is not in every instance that the ṛaj is portrayed as an implacable opponent. In the last two references, for example, we can see him praising the sūri and also praising Indra. In other words, whereas in some allusions the ṛaj is distinct from the sūri and appears as an adversary, in others he appears to be distinct from the sūri by virtue of a special role that he seems to have played, perhaps as the owner or protector of wealth. In the pages to follow, it is our hope to explore the evidence bearing on these two kinds of distinction which we visualize as

(a) cultural, religious and political and

(b) functional.

But straightway let us draw attention to a basic fact: in either of the above two cases, the ṛaj almost always appears to be portrayed as "some one for the sūri to contend with" aided by the Vedic priests as elite counsellors or purohita-s and as practitioners of a pervasive cult.

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296. sa sunvate ca stuvate ca rāṣate / viśvagūrī arisṭulaḥ/ 8.1.22

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VI: Ari and Sūri - The Cultural Distinction

(1)

“They have lapsed from the pressing (of Soma), they have not revered Indra as a god - there where......... Vṛṣākapī found enjoyment in the ari’s nourishing riches”, says 10.86.1. To put the idea expressed in this verse in another way, Vṛṣākapī, in the process of seeking refuge in the ari, has become a person who is “averse to Soma” and “averse to Indra” - a condition that elsewhere in the RV is indicated by the pejorative adjectives asunvant and anindra.

It seems to us that this is in line with the accusations often brought against the man called the ari in the RV.

Take for example RV 4.24 which we discussed in Ch. III. In the opening verses of the hymn, i.e. verses 1 - 7, Indra is depicted as the god to be invoked in martial contests. And yet it is made obvious here that he is not treated alike by every one. There is on the one hand the man who zealously offers Soma and also cooked and roasted foods. On the other there is the “non-presser” and the offerer of purośāka (rice cake).

These opening verses provide a prologue which is an organic part of RV 4.24, essential to the proper understanding of the second part of the hymn. In this second part we are told how the ari’s wife, when she sees that the contest has become long and severe, invokes the manly Indra, who by this time has been ‘sharpened’ by copious draughts of Soma by those who offer that libation to him (i.e. by the opponents of the ari). Then Indra is pictured as speaking or thinking to himself about the conduct of the two parties, the ari’s and the Soma offerer’s:

(a) He has indulged in low trading for a thing of (high) value.
(b) It is not a little thing that he has exchanged for a thing of high value.

To us this appears as a direct continuation of the ideas earlier expressed: that calling for Indra’s aid in the thick of battle only and not offering him Soma and pakti (the cooked offering) do not pay. It is by the Soma libation and the right kind of cooked offerings that the sūri-s gain Indra’s alliance which is obviously the thing of high value the verses refer to. In other words the

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297. vi hi sotor asrīkātā / nendraṃ devam amaṃsata / yatramadad vṛṣākapī/aryāḥ puṣṭeṣu (mateakha) 10. 86.1
298. sa vṛtrahatye havyah - 4.24.2
299. paktiḥ and somaḥ of 4.24.5-be
300. purośāka and asunvant of 4.24.5b/c
301. 4.24.8: See n. 121
302. 4.24.9ac: See n. 121
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Ṛṣi here pictures Indra as saying: They have not succeeded in winning me over because they offered the wrong offerings and at the wrong time. The offerer of Soma it is that has gained my alliance - a result already forecast in the first part of the hymn.

Thus 4.24 can, it seems to us, be regarded as supplying a very important clue - a clue which was less directly supplied by 10.86 - namely, that in the particular sense in which the words are used in the RV, the ari’s party could be described as anindra and asunvant.

Yet another context that supports this conclusion is RV 10.42. The same sequence of ideas as in 4.24 obtains here, though less colourfully expressed. The prime target is made explicit right at the start: “Subdue with song the ari’s song, O vipras!” Thus the contest is with the ari who also seeks the aid of the powers above. But only he who sacrifices rightly can aspire to triumph: “Men call on you diversely for aid...(but) it is the giver of haviṣ who gains the (divine) ally. Not with the asunvant does the valiant one wish to ally himself” (stz. 4). The grounds on which the ṛṣi’s party (of sāris, called rājans in stz. 10 of the hymn) hopes to gain triumph are that they sacrifice the right way, in their contest with the ari: the opponent is asunvant, ipso facto anindra, and cannot win. Thus here too the epithet asunvant (and automatically the epithet anindra) is applicable to, or at least associative with, the ari.303

Another important hymn of the RV that helps us understand the depiction of ari is 2.23. This hymn denounces without any mincing of words the “hater of brahman” (stz.4)304, the “reviler of gods” (8)305, the “evil reciter” (10), etc., etc. These preliminary references prepare our minds to receive the ṛṣi’s final verbal onslaught in which he alludes to the ari’s wrath and his wealth and power (which he does not deserve):

“Who with ungodly mind seeks to inflict harm and seeks to slay, regarding himself as mighty among overlords - let not his deadly blow reach us, O Bṛhaspati! May we nullify the wrath of the ill-intentioned presumptuous man .........Like (battle-) cars has Bṛhaspati torn asunder all the deceitful wiles of the ari.”307 (2.23.12-13)

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303. The relevant portions of 10.42 are as follows: vācā viprās tārata vācām ariyāḥ (1c) o tevām jānā mamāsatiyeva indraḥ/saṁ tathānā vi havaṇte saṁiṣe// atrā jayaṁ kṛṣṇe yo haviṣmān / nāsuvatā saṁkhyām vaṁśi śūṣkāḥ || (4) ; vavyaṁ rājahhiḥ prathamā dhanaṁ / aśmāken ā virjanājanā jayemā / (1bed).
304. brahmadṛṣis (2.23.4c);
305. devanidāḥ - 2.23.8c;
306. duḥkams - 2.23.10c.
307. adeva maneṣa yo viprasyati / śāśām ugra manyonaḥo jīghaṁnatī/brhaspati mā praṇak tasya no vadiḥ / ni karmā manyonaḥ durevaṃ saṁkhyāḥ||...... viśvā śa aryo abhiradipito mṛdho / brhaspatir vi sarvāhā rathāṁ eva // 2.23.12-13

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“Burn up the rakṣas with fiercely flaming brand - they who have scorned (even) you whose power is patent......... Set at nought the speakers of evil. That wealth which shines with might among the tribes and which (our stūri- shall deserve more than the ari... ...... give us that effulgent wealth!” (2.23.14-15).308

So here again the ari is associated, without ambiguity, with the taint of being “averse to gods”, “averse to the cult and its pactitioners”.

(2)

In a few instances in the RV Saṃhitā we come across unequivocal references, in the body of the same verse, to the distinction between the ari and the stūri in matters of allegiance to the cult (or, that form of it that seems to have been favoured by the ṛṣi-s).

Let us take RV 1.81 for example. This hymn contains two references to the ari. The first part of the hymn describes Indra’s character as god of war. He is the sacrificer’s helper in battles. Stanza 6 goes on: “May Indra help us - Indra who takes away the ari’s man-sustaining food for (his) devotee’s sake. Distribute, for much wealth is yours! I would gladly partake of your gift.”309

Stanza 9 refers again to the ari as contrasted with the men who are devoted to Indra. The latter cause all that is desirable to thrive. Having said this the verse goes on: “You have closely seen the ari’s possessions and (those) of the irreverent men (: the ari’s men). Bring their wealth for us!”310

In these two verses we see the positive qualification applied to the sacrificers and the negative to the ari’s party. Both serve the same purpose: they give a strong reason for Indra’s intervention in the capture of the ari’s wealth.

Comparable, though not exactly of the same type, is the statement at RV 2.8.2, where too the ari stands contrasted with the devotee. Here the poet describes Agni thus: “unageing, he brings decay to the ari, to the devotee gives an excellent lead.”311 (Incidentally, a reference to the inadequacy of the leadership of the ari, who apparently was usually well past his youth?)

308. teṣaḥśayā tapanī rakṣasā tapa / ye tvā nide dadhiḥre dṛṣṭaviryaṁ/ ...... vi pariṇāpo ardya// ......aṭi yad arya arhād / dyumad vibhāti kratuṣaj jāneṣu tad aṃgale draviṇaṁ dhāhi cītram / 2.23.14-15
309. yo arya mārtabhojanam / parā dadāti dāśuṣe / indro aṃśabhyam śākṣatu / vi bhajā bhūri te vasu / bhakṣya tvam rādhasaḥ // 1.81.6
310. antar hi khyo janāṇaṁ / aryo veda adāniyām / teṣāṁ no veda ā bhara // 1.81.9 ode
311. yāḥ sunītho dāśuṣe / ajurya jarayāṃ arim // 2.8.2ab
While here the *ari* stands contrasted with the devout followers of the gods (which we take as really a partisan way of depicting the *ari*’s position religiously), at 9.23.3 a similar effect is achieved by characterizing the *ari* as himself lacking in devoutness: “Bring us, O Soma, the possessions of the irreverent *ari*” is about roughly what this stanza says.312

At 8.24.22 too this contrast seems to be brought out quite clearly: Indra bestows the *ari*’s property to the devotee of his cult.313

Viewed against the background of this depiction of the *ari* as somehow lacking in devoutness, as being less worthy than Indra’s devotees (i.e. the *sūri* s), it is easy to understand the reference at 8.21.16 which calls on Indra to “grasp and fetch even the firmly enclosed (treasures) of the *ari*, for Indra’s (gifts are not to be set at nought”.314 The implication seems to be that the singer’s party may win the *ari*’s wealth - i.e. be the recipient of Indra’s aid - but yet the *ari* can be expected to attempt to negate this god-given luck.

The usefulness of RV 8.21 to the elucidation of the meaning of *ari* does not end here.

The reference to the *ari* in 8.21.16 is preceded by the interesting statement in stanza 14 which is as follows: “No wealthy man will you find fit to be your friend. They scorn you, quickened by surā. But when you raise the cry of war) and bring (contenders into) confrontation, then are you invoked like a father”.315

We have discussed some aspects of the significance of this statement in another context: only ‘true adherence’ entitles one to Indra’s aid (Ch.III).

The immediacy of this statement to the emphatic denunciation of the *ari* in stanza 16 makes us think that here too the *ari*’s party is depicted not only as prosperous but also as *anindra* and *asunvant* (i.e. averse to Indra and the offering of Soma in the sense understood by the ṛṣi-s). That the *ari* in contrast to the *sūri* is constantly viewed with disfavour for his insufficient commitment to cult seems in view of these statements to be the actual position in the RV Saṃhitā. One may then ask, was he less prone to rush to attack the Aryan foes and so was lukewarm in his ardour for the god of Aryan triumph?

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312. ā pavamāna no bharā / ‘ryo adāṣyo gayam // 9.23.3ab
313. ‘argo gayam manahamanam vi dānaye // 8.24.22c.
314. deṣṭa vid aryaḥ pra myāḥ bhy ā bharā / na te dāmāna ādābe // 8.21.16
315. na ki renanatam sahkhāya vināsate / piyantī te surāvah / yadā kṛṇosi nāmam samū.
   hany / ād it piteva hūyase // 8.21.14

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A fact of considerable significance is that several foes or obstructors (vṛtra-s) that Indra is said to have defeated are not Dasyus but Aryans. We are familiar with the call to Indra to vanquish the enemies of Sudās - among whom were many Aryans. RV 7.83.1 mentions all these foes together as "Dāsa vṛtra-s and Ārya vṛtra-s".316 But this is not the only place where this kind of statement is found. The same turn of phrase occurs at 6.22.10, 6.33.3 6.60.6 and 10.69.6.317

And even this is not all.

10.83.1 wishes that 'Wrath' would extend its assistance to the sacrificers so that they may subjugate the Dāsa as well as the Aryan.318 10.102.3 wishes that Indra would hold aloof the Dāsa's weapon, and also the Aryan's.319 In these cases, however, the powerful epithet of cultural rejection, vṛtra, has not been employed.

That theme, viz. the idea that the Aryans whom the singers condemn are culturally despicable, appear with undisguised emphasis at 10.38.3 and 8.51.9.

Says the former: "Whatever godless man intends to fight us, O Indra, ...whether he is a Dāsa or an Aryan - may (all) such foes be easily subdued by you through us. With you let us suppress them in the contest!" So an Aryan could not only be bracketed with the Dāsa-s, he could also be labelled as adeva: godless or "averse to the deva-s".320

And in just that kind of light is the ari seen in 8.51.9, bracketed with the Dāsa and shown as culturally unacceptable for breaking an important vṛata of the Vedic system of notions, the duty of being lavishly generous to the priests. We would render this important reference to the ari as follows:

"This everyone of his (is) Aryan; (but) a Dāsa (is) the wealth-guarding ari".321

316. dāsā ca vṛtrā hatam āryāṇi ca / 7.83.1c. (That the reference is to events of the dāsa-rājaka period is indicated by line d: sudāsam indravāriniyūv avasā' vātam).
317. dāsāṇy āryāṇi vṛtrā - 6.22.10c; ubhayāṁ amitrān = dāsā vṛtrāṇy āryā ca 6.33.3ab; vṛtrāṇy āryā ... dāsāṇi - 6.60.6ab; dāsā vṛtrāṇy āryā 10.69.6b.
318. sāhyāma dāsām āryāṃ tvayā vajā - 10.83.1c
319. dāsāya vā maṅgavanāḥ āryasya vā/ ......yavaya vadhām - 10.102.3od.
320. yo no dāsa ārya vā...... / adeva indra yuvudhe ciketati / amabhiṣe sūpabhāḥ samu āstravasu / tvayā vayam tān vanavāma samgane // 10.38.3
321. yasāyaṃ vidvā ārya / dāsaḥ sevādhiṣṭā ariḥ / ... 8.51.9ab.
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It is not necessary to contort so simple a statement, as almost every translator has done up to now. When we understand the true significance of the anindra association with which the ari often appears tainted, we immediately see what is meant: It is the Indra-like person that is truly Aryan, not the one who has departed from Indra-like ways and 'hoards' cattle and grain. The latter has adopted a Dāsa-like conduct. There is here no implication whereby ari has to be taken as referring to the Dāsa ethnically, i.e. as meaning a foe in the ethnic sense. It is probably not even meant that every ari is to be condemned. Most of the ari chiefs, like the Dāsas, do not favour the Indra-style, the exuberant lavishness. But, as maghavan par excellence, it is of the earthly maghavans that Indra is a friend, not of niggardly chiefs; the hoarding of wealth is not the style to be favoured by him.

We take it then that 8.51.9 reflects the view that in conserving wealth, the ari has adopted a Dāsa-like quality, a view which seems to us also to be evident in the references to "foes related and unrelated". There are several references of this kind, but two of them interest us particularly because they are embedded in contexts which reflect the attitude of cultural hostility which we discussed above. These two allusions are in the hymns 6.44 and 4.4 of the RV Samhita.

"Hero, slay our foemen" says 6.44.17 to Indra and goes on to specify these men: "the unfriendly, be they related or unrelated". The objectionable elements of the conduct of 'the unfriendly' were more specifically spelled out earlier in the hymn where the singer requests Indra to "destroy the non-givers, root out those averse to Soma". (Interesting to note is the fact that the original for 'the unfriendly' in this context is the same as that by which the Nirukta defines ari). 6.44

6.44 thus is also an instance where the rsi stresses the un-wrata-like conduct of "the unfriendly" (relations), namely niggardliness and aversion to a traditional form of worship. And also, in their entirety 6.44.17 and 11 are very similar to 7.83.1 and 7: "Dāsa foes and Aryan.....kings who do not observe sacrificial rites".

Basically similar, yet even more interesting, are the references to unfriendly relatives in RV 4.4.5-6. Here again, the early stanzas (3 and 4) reveal the singer's strong animus when he speaks of the "evil speaker" and the "unfriendly men" (using the same word as in 6.44.17). Then he urges

322. jahi jūra šatráh / jāmin aśāmin.....amitrān / 6.44.17
323. 6.44.11 : See n. 227 above
324. ari = śeva / amitra. See n. 2 above
325. aghāsme. amitra., aśāmin : 4.4 3-4

108
Agni to rise and display his celestial power and "slacken the taut (weapons) of them that are spurred by yāṭu (i.e. magical practices outside the sacrificial system); shatter the foemen be they related or unrelated!"\textsuperscript{326}

This most interesting reference to 'relatives' who are said to have depended on yāṭu rather than yajña (sacrifice) captures our attention all the more when the singer follows it up with strikingly contrastive allusions to the sūri in relation to an ari:

"He knows your favourable disposition (O Agni), who has set the way for a ritual-song such as this. To him may you illumine the bright days, the treasures and the splendours of the ari". (4.4.6)\textsuperscript{327} - this, of course, is the singer's way of imploring that the ari's wealth be made available to the sūri who utilizes the singer's priestly services. Whereas the ari (the unfriendly relation) was spurred on by yāṭu magic, the sūri "set the way" for a sacred song.

Almost identical is the situation that 10.116 depicts. Here stanza 5 urges Indra to "make their sharp pikes blunt" and "slacken the taut (weapons) of the men that are spurred on by yāṭu".\textsuperscript{328} And again, we are provided with a clue as to these men in the subsequent part of the hymn. It is the ari (and his men): "scatter the ari's fame away (and) his might, like the firm onsloughts of (his) bow." (10.116.6)\textsuperscript{329}

The same kind of revealing contrasts is reflected in 7.21.5. Here the first two lines are emphatic in the assertion that "no yāṭu men have spurred us on".\textsuperscript{330} This seems to mean that the yāṭu magic which the Vedic priests despised (whatever it was), was not the spiritual aid on which the singer's men would ever depend. A forceful word indeed is 'spurred on' in this context, (Here the source from which the 'spurring on' comes is said to be emphatically not the powers of yāṭu; elsewhere it is said to be Indra, Agni, brahma, vipra and and damsu-\textsuperscript{331}). This emphatic denial is followed by the following contrastive reference to the ari: "May this one triumph over the ari of the adverse jantu (: people, folk or tribe). May no sīṇa-deva-s (:who follow unacceptable forms of worship) approach our sacred work!"\textsuperscript{332}

\textsuperscript{326} aṣa āṭhira tanuhi yāṭujānām / jāṃmim ajāmiṃ pra mṛṇī ti satrān/ 4.4.5
\textsuperscript{327} sa te jāṇāti sumatiṃ yavīṭha / sa āvate brahmasya gāṭum aiṣat / viśvāmy amai sudī nāsi ráyo / dyummāny aryo vi durō abhi dyoṣat // 4.4.6. aryaḥ ...... dyaṃma- above at 9.61.11, 4.16.19 (n,290)
\textsuperscript{328} ni tīṃmāni bhrāsyaṃ bhrāṣṭyaṛi / aṣa āṭhira tanuhi yāṭujānām - 10.116.5ab.
\textsuperscript{329} vi arya indra tanuhi ērvāmasy / ojaḥ sthira vahare vahare 'bhīmāśiḥ / 10.116.6ab.
\textsuperscript{330} na āṭhra indra jūsmaur nāḥ / 7.21.6a.
\textsuperscript{331} Cf. indrajāta : 1.118.0, 3.33.11 ; yam agne pṛṣe mṛtyam junāḥ / (= agnijūtaḥ) as yantā bhaveṣvāv śabā / 1.27.7 ; brahmajāta : 3.34.1, 7.10.11 ; damsajāta : 1.122.10, viprajāta : 1.3.5.
\textsuperscript{332} sa sārdhad aryo viṣṇuṣaya jantar / mā sīṇadevaḥ api gur gṛtam nāḥ / 7.21.6ed.
The Indra Cult as Ideology: a Clue to Power Struggle in an Ancient Society

What does the singer mean, packing as he does many loaded words into this verse?

It seems to us that first the singer disclaims connections with any kind of cult that could have been held in disregard by the high priests of the deva worship. In the sequel he requests Indra not to allow the āri and his people who are adverse (to the cult as spelled out by the rṣi-s) ever to prevail. In the end he desires that practitioners of despised cults be kept far away from his sacred rites.

The singer of course is the sūri’s man. But who are the āri’s men and who are the practitioners of low cults that should not be allowed to vitiate the singer’s rites? And what does this last request in its entirety imply?

These queries take us deeper into the question of the cults and men that “spurred on” the āri, the “unfriendly relative” and so on.

That strong men there were who sought magical and spiritual support (“spurring on”) from various quarters seems quite likely. We have seen the allusions to yātu cults above. And there are also allusions to men who looked even to the Dasyu-s for this kind of support. The best example of this kind of reference is RV 6.24.8, along with which we should also take into account 6.24.5.

Indra, says 6.24.8, does not bend (even) to the strong man who is “(magically) spurred on by the Dasyu”. 333

The word Dasyu in the RV essentially carries connotations of cult hostility, of being non-Vedic culturally and religiously (as opposed to Dāsa which carries connotations more ethnic and more ‘political’). The word is often associated with other words denotative of differences of religious views and practices (e.g. avrata, aśraddha, ukratu, ayaju, adevayu, akarma, amantu, anyavrata etc.) 334

To us the phrase “strong man who is spurred on by the Dasyu” does not seem to refer to one Dasyu supported by another. It appears more likely that the reference is to an Aryan chief. In this view we are fortified by the reference to an āri in stanza 5 of the hymn. This says that Mitra, Varuṇa and Pūṣan act as “a subjugator of the āri’s will” 335.

334. See appendix 2 at the end of this work.
335. mitro no atra varuṇaḥ ca pūṣā / aryo vasavya paryetā ātri / 6.24.5cd.
Mahinda Palihawadana

Thus RV 7.83, 6.44, 4.4, 7.21, 10.116 and 6.24 are basically alike. They refer to chiefs who had to some extent turned away from the spirit of the sacrificial cult (as understood by the elite priesthood who gained an authoritative position in the RV period), and moved towards a position of dialogue with other cults including that (or those) of the Dasyu-s. In five of these hymns an ari is specifically referred to. In each too there is some clue that suggests that the condemned chief must be an Aryan. Thus

7.83; Dāsa and Ārya foes...ari,...kings averse to sacrifice
6.44: Related and unrelated foes,...non-givers,...averse to Soma
4.4 : "", "", "", "", spurred by yātu...ari
7.21 : ari and his adverse jantus...spurred by yātu
10.116 : ari ... spurred by yātu
6.24 : ari ... spurred by the Dasyu.

Thieme has referred to the association of the ari with an attitude which the RV denotes as arāti. We can agree with him that arāti certainly is a term with a very positive sense. We would also add that the term is at the same time connotative of hostility to Vedism in that it implies departure from the vrata, in this case denial of what is due to Vedic priests.

Thus at 1.43.8 the arāti-natured men are the opponents of the Soma cult. In the hymn 2.23, where incidentally all opponents are cult opponents, they are "double dealers". At 8.11.3 they are described as "godless foes" and at 1.47.4 the arāti-natured one is "the non-giver who harms us with duplicity."

8.39.2 contains a request to strike down all forms of arāti, of the ari and of the arāvan. It is interesting to note the way the untranslated word of this context, which appears here in association with ari, is defined in the Tāṇḍya Mahā Brāhmaṇa (6.10.7): the arāvān are those who praise that which is not (or that which is opposed to) the rta. The rta is of course the truth, the sacrifice as well as the cult in a broad sense. Thus the reference at 8.39.2 distinctly associates the ari with the religiously unacceptable. The abusive and arāvan-like speech of the ari of 7.31.5 must in view of all this be regarded as signifying ritual unfitness (much as the vidāte mrđhravācam reference to the Pūru in the Ten Kings’ War signifies ritual unacceptability in RV 7.18.13).

336. F. pp. 43ff.
337. mā nāh somaparibādha mā' rātayā jukuranta - 1.43.8
338. na tam..., arātayeśa tītirur, na dvayādvinah - 2.23, 5 (tam = bhāspatim).
339. sa tvam asemad aspa deṣa / yuvodhi jātavedah / adevir agne arātih // 8.11.3.
340. yo no agne aravīśāṁ aghāyur / arātivā marcayati dvayena / 1.47.4.
341. ny arātir arāvānām / viśvā arya arātir / tva yuchantu...... 8.39.2.
342. arāno yev'ṇtam abhiśamsanti - Tāṇḍya Mahā Br. 6.10.7. On rta cf. Śatapatha Br. 1.3.4.16, Tait. Br. 3.8.3.4, etc.
343. mā no nide ca vaktave / ryo randhir arāvane / 7.31.5ab.
At 4.50.11 (which is repeated at 7.97.9) and also at 7.83.5, the singer mentions the arāti of (the ari or) the ari’s men. The ari’s own unambiguous arāti is mentioned at 6.16.27, 6.48.16, 6.59.8, 8.39.2 and 9.79.3.

The last mentioned reference is especially worthy of attention:

“And (give us protection in the face) of our own arāti; that is the ari; and (also in the face) of the external arāti : that is the wolf.”

To Thieme the significance of the mention of “one’s own” and “external” is that in their entirety they convey the significance of ‘all’. But the more one thinks of the statement at 9.79.3, the more it becomes hard to believe that ari means ‘stranger’. On the contrary this seems to make it so much more likely that the ari is one whose blood relationship to the Aryan priest is beyond doubt.

The precise quality of the arāti that was feared of the ari is, according to this reference, comparable with the harm that came from the wolf: it threatened the priests’ possessions of cattle, more particularly the cows won as the priestly fee for services to the sūrī-s which for some reason seem to have been endangered by the ari’s conduct and attitudes. If the ari was one’s own and yet this was the case, we could visualize the situation as one in which the ari was the original possessor of these cows. Though won by the sūrī and given to the priests, the ari seems to be entertaining the idea of denying them to their new possessors: obviously a cardinal sin from the point of view of the Vedic ethic.

It must have been galling to the ṛṣi-s that Aryan tribal chiefs should have behaved in such a way, for to tamper with the dakṣiṇā, or to deny it at all should be what a chief ought never to do. The (possibly later) coinages kavāri (the mean ari) and kadarya (miserliness - the quality of a mean ari) reflect this deep concern and indeed it is pithily expressed at 10.107.3: “A divine fulfillment is the dakṣiṇā, a thing that is (part) of the sacrifice to gods. It is not (to be hoped for) from the kavāris; they indeed do not give........”

And the divine giver Indra, is specifically the opposite of the kavāri. Says 3.47.5 (= 6.19.11): “No mean ari (is) the divine ordainer!”

\[\text{344.} jajastam aryo unosśām arātayah / 4.50.11 / 7.97.9d / 7.83.5: see n. 64 above.\]
\[\text{345.} tarantos aryo arātī / vanamanto aryo arātīḥ / 6.16.27; aghā aryo arātayah / 6.48.16, 6.59.8 / 8.39.2 (above n. 341): 9.79.3 (below, n. 346).\]
\[\text{346.} uta evaśā arātyā / ariv hi sa / ukṣaṇasyā arātyā / vṛko hi saḥ / 9.79.3\]
\[\text{347.} F. p. 45.\]
\[\text{348.} dhāvivā pūrīr dakṣiṇā devayājyā / na kavāriḥko na hi te tyājyā / 10.107.3\]
\[\text{349.} akavārīṁ divyaṁ dāsaṁ indram / 3.47.5, 6.19.11b.\]