

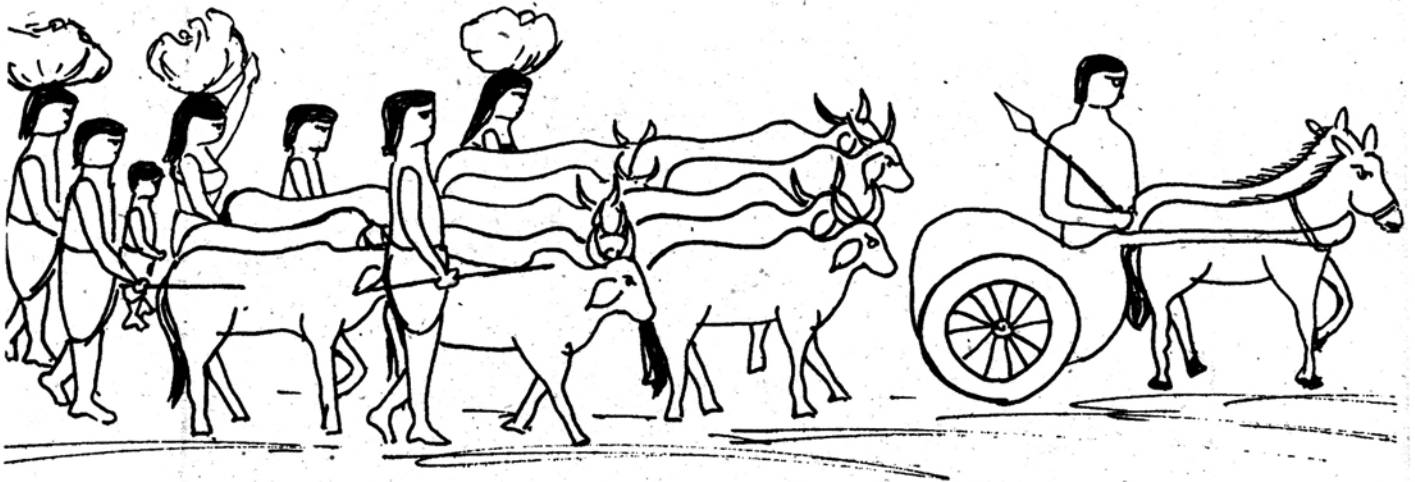
CHAPTER 5

THE PASTORAL ARYANS



Look at all the pictures in this chapter and discuss them. What do you get to know about the pastoral Aryans from these pictures?

What else would you like to know about them from this chapter? Make a list of the questions that come to your mind. Then read the chapter.



After the Fall of the Cities

This was the period when the cities of the Indus Valley had declined. The houses in these cities had collapsed and were buried underground. However, the villages remained. In these villages, the peasants still ploughed the fields, potters made mud vessels and other artisans made things out of bronze and copper. During this period, some other people came and settled near these villages. They called themselves the Aryans.

The Aryans reared animals like cows, sheep, oxen and goats. They had thousands of animals. The most important work for the Aryans was to look after these animals. They practised very little cultivation. Their lives, therefore, were very different from those of the farmers in the village.

The Aryans spoke a different language,

which was an older form of Sanskrit. Their gods and goddesses, customs and way of life were very different from those of the villagers. They also brought with them a swift animal - the horse. They rode chariots driven by horses.

In Search of Pasture and Water

Since the Aryans reared thousands of animals, they lived in places where it was easy to find fodder. However, one single place could not provide fodder for so many animals forever. Sometimes, fodder in one place got finished, or was not sufficient. Then some of the people of the group took their animals and went in search of new pastures. After some years, when the fodder of this place too fell short, they moved further. In this way, the Aryans, along with their animals, moved from place to place.

Thousands of years ago, the ancestors of

SARAMA'S TRIBE - A STORY

the Aryans lived in the land between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. From there they moved and spread out to other places. Over hundreds of years, the Aryans slowly settled on the banks of the Indus, the Sutlej, the Beas and the Saraswati.

- **Look at the map of Asia and locate the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea.**
- **In which direction would you have to go from there to reach the river Indus?**
- **On Map 2 locate the area where the Aryans settled down.**

Parts of this area come under present day India, mainly Punjab and Haryana, and large parts of it are now in present day Pakistan.

- **Have you seen people who travel with large herds of animals even today?**
- **Where do they come from? Do they come to your place? What can you learn about the life of pastoralists by observing them?**
- **Fill in the Blanks -**
 - The Aryans domesticated animals and did not do much _____.**
 - They moved around in search of _____.**
 - They spoke in _____ language.**
 - They harnessed _____ to chariots.**
- **Choose the right answer -**

When the Aryans settled down on the banks of the Indus,

 - there were cities there.**
 - cities had not yet been built.**
 - cities had been built and fallen in ruins.**
- **How was the life of the Aryans different from the life of the people of the villages?**

Let us look at the lives of these people more closely. Imagine that we have arrived at an Aryan settlement.

A Settlement of Pastoral Aryans

On the banks of the Saraswati, there was a settlement of several big and small houses. Apart from houses made of grass, wood and mud, there were many cow-sheds too. People belonging to the Puru tribe lived here. Other people of the same tribe lived in other settlements nearby. There were many tribes among the Aryans. The Purus were one of them.

In this settlement lived a girl called Sarama. That day, like all other days, Sarama got up at sunrise. She cleaned the cow-shed with her mother, father, sisters and brothers. She milked the cows and brought water from the river.

Aryans and Panis

Sarama wanted to go to the forest with her father and brother to graze the cows. So she quickly went to the river for a bath and ran back to have her meal.

Sarama's mother served the meal. She handed out rotis made of barley, along with butter, meat and buttermilk.

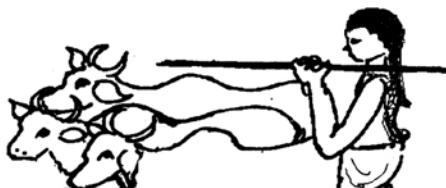
Chewing her food, Sarama said, "Mother, I feel like eating rotis made of wheat."

Her mother said, "We do not have wheat. Wheat is grown in the villages of the Panis. When the Panis take milk from us, they give wheat in exchange. I wonder why they have not come for so many days."

Sarama's brother had just come to have his meal. When he heard his mother he said, "Don't you know, Mother? Some time back, the people of the Anu jana attacked the village of the Panis. The Anus destroyed their fort, broke the dam on the river and took away their wheat and gold jewellery."

Sarama said, "So that's why the Panis have not come here with their wheat."

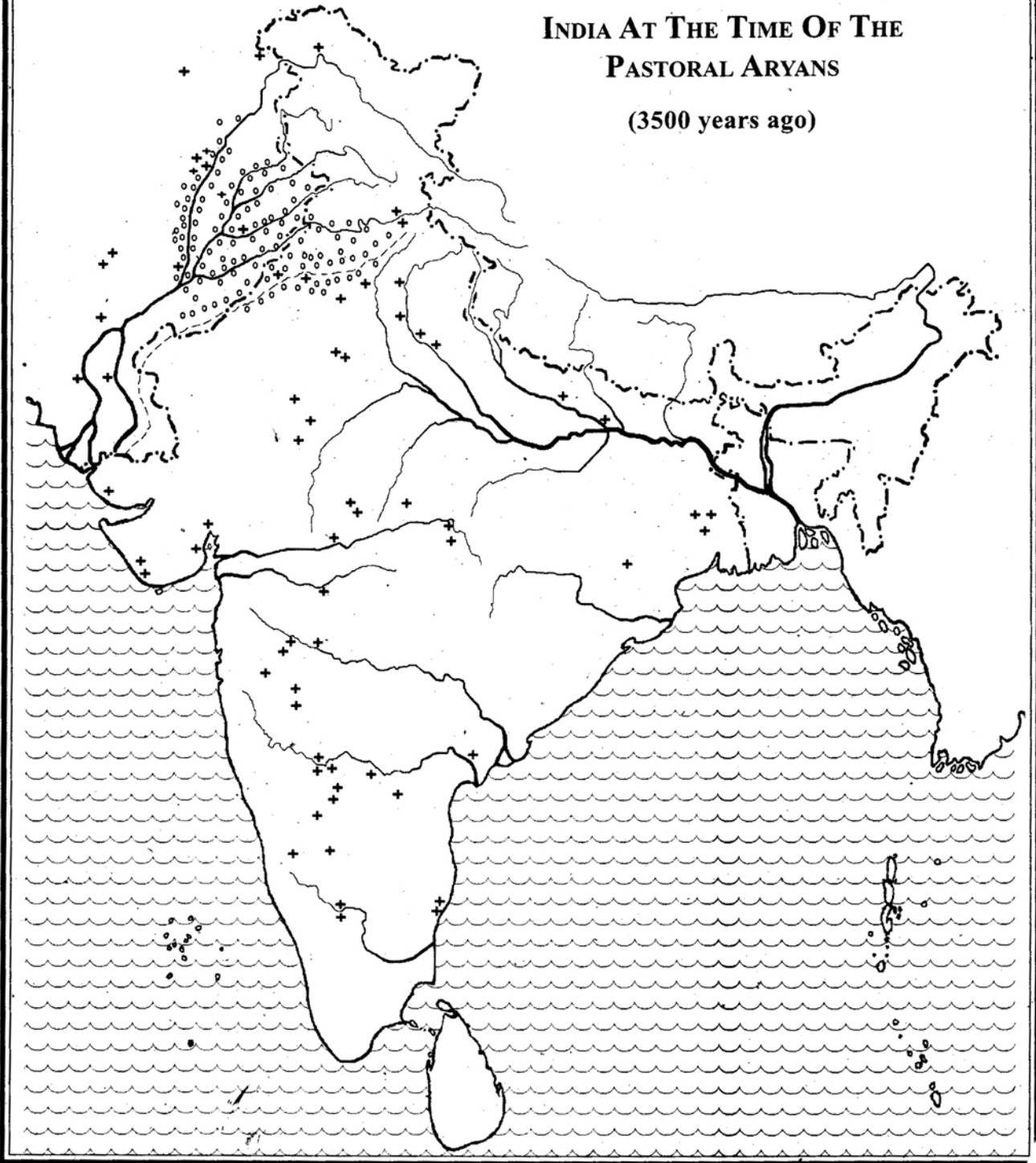
You must have understood that the Aryans called the agriculturists in the villages, 'Panis'. The Aryans and the Panis often fought with



MAP 2

INDIA AT THE TIME OF THE PASTORAL ARYANS

(3500 years ago)



Based upon Survey of India outline map printed in 1987.
The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.

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Sea	~~~~~
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each other. However, they slowly started exchanging goods also. They had started learning each other's language. In the story given above, we have seen that there was an exchange of goods between the Aryan Puru tribe and the Panis. Anu was another Aryan tribe. In this story we have seen that the Panis and the Anus were fighting.

In the story, Sarama's mother gives her *rotis* made of barley. The Aryans grew barley. Barley grows easily and quickly. That is why, even while tending to thousands of animals, they were able to grow some barley.

• **Complete the sentences -**

- i. _____ were called **Pani** by the Aryans.
- ii. The Aryans fought with the Panis for _____.
- iii. In this story you have read about Aryan tribes called _____ and _____.
- iv. The Aryans took _____ from the Panis and gave _____ in exchange.
- v. The Aryans grew very few crops because _____.
- vi. The Aryans ate _____.
- vii. The houses of the Aryans were made of _____.

Loss of the Cows

Sarama went with her father and brother to graze the cattle. Each family in their settlement had dozens of cows and sheep. They grazed them on the banks of the river. Something terrible happened that day. Sarama's brother and father were bathing the

cows in the river. Suddenly, there was a flash flood. Her father and brother managed to swim out with great difficulty.

All the people helped, but about thirty to forty cows were swept away in the river. Cows were their main source of livelihood! Since more than half their cows died, Sarama's family was in trouble.

- **What could they do at a difficult time like this? Think and explain.**
- **When someone in your place is in need of money, what kind of efforts does he or she make?**

The Jana

Sarama's father put his problem before the assembly of the settlement. All the people in the village belonged to the same tribe. They were therefore related to each other. All the people of the same tribe together were called the 'Jana' by the Aryans. For example, all the members of the Puru tribe taken together were called the Puru jana.

The assembly of the Puru jana listened to Sarama's father's problem. There were about 70 to 80 people in the assembly. Out of these, five or six were on a special seat. Others were sitting on mats spread on the ground. Those on the higher seats were the leading people of the jana. They had more cows and horses than the others. They also had wooden chariots. They were the important members of the tribe. The Aryans called these distinguished people 'Rajanya'. The others were called 'Vish'.

Sarama's father explained his problem and then went back to sit on the mat. A rajanya said, "This man is facing a big problem. Those who can spare some cows, please give them to help him. I will give five of my own. Now the rest of you may also offer help." After this,





many people of the jana helped Sarama's family by giving some of their cows.

- **How did Sarama's family lose the cows?**
- **Who helped Sarama's family, and how?**
- **Fill in the blanks -**
 - i. **The (important/old/brave) _____ people of the jana were called rajanya.**
 - ii. **Only the rajanyas had _____ (chariots/cows/sheep).**
 - iii. **(One person/some people/everyone) _____ in the jana were called rajanya.**
 - iv. **The common people of the jana were called _____ (rajanya / vish / Pani).**
- **Are all the people in your town/village related to each other?**

War and the Leader

The lives of Aryans in those days were heavily dependent on cows. Therefore they wanted their tribe or *jana* to have many good cows. This was the main cause of conflict between the different Aryan tribes. The people of one tribe attacked another and took away their cows.

Sometimes, the fodder found in the area occupied by a particular tribe would finish. If at that time, some other tribe was occupying a lush-green region, the two tribes or *janas* fought over that particular grazing ground.

One day the rajanyas of Puru *jana* sat together to think over their problem. One

Rajanya said, "The people in our *jana* do not have enough cows. We must do something about this soon." The second rajanya said, "The people of the Anu *jana* have many cows and good horses. The Anu have become very powerful. Some time ago they had attacked the Panis. Why don't we raid the Anu *jana*? After attacking them, we can take away some of their cows and horses. This way we will also weaken them."

All the rajanyas agreed to this. They sat and planned out the campaign. They also took the advice of the older rajanyas. After this, they called a meeting of the common people (*vish*) and said, "Day after tomorrow, we will all attack the Anu *Jana*. Be prepared with your weapons. We are informing the people of the neighbouring villages and asking all the people of the Puru *jana* to join us in raid. The Anu *jana* is powerful. It will not be easy to defeat them, but we have such a good plan that we will surely win."

Sarama's father too prepared for the raid. He strung his bow and sharpened his arrows. He didn't have horses and chariots. Like other common people, he went to fight on foot.

Actually, the pastoral Aryans did not have a separate army. All the people of the tribe fought in the wars.

The rajanyas met on the following day. The question was, who would be the leader of the Purus? Then began the search for the bravest of the rajanyas, the most skilled in warfare. After a discussion, the rajanyas chose one young man from among themselves. Everyone called him the 'Raja'. This is how the Aryan tribes chose their *rajas*, who led them in raids.

- **What caused wars between the Aryan tribes?**
- **Why did the Aryans choose a raja?**
- **Correct the wrong sentences -**
 - i. **The common people and the rajanyas sat together to make plans for the raid.**
 - ii. **The rajanyas fought with the help of an army.**
 - iii. **The common people did not have chariots.**
 - iv. **The rajanyas chose one man from among them to be the raja.**

Yagna and Veda

The next day, all the people of the Puru jana - men, women and children, assembled to perform a yagna (sacrifice). The Aryans performed yagnas to their gods from time to time.

For the yagna they lit a fire. They made offerings of milk, ghee, curd and meat to the fire. The Aryans worshipped fire as god. They believed that whatever they offered to the fire reached the other gods. Pleased with these offerings, the gods would then fulfil the wishes of those who performed the yagna.

There were many kinds of priests who helped in performing the yagnas. Some of them were called Brahmins. Apart from making offerings, the priests sang many hymns in praise of the gods :

"O Indra, please come and accept our offerings

*Just as the hunter moves in search of prey,
We too are going to war in search of wealth.*

O Indra, please help us to win the war.

O Indra, give us limitless wealth.

*Fulfil our wishes by granting us hundreds
of cows.*

*O Indra, Lord of the cows, open the gates
of the cowpens of our enemies, so that
we can take away their cows."*

In this way the priests sang hymns and poured ghee into the fire. The collection of these hymns in old Sanskrit is called the Rigveda. These songs were not written down for a very long time. They were repeated and memorised and taught orally. They were written down several hundred years later. Today, we can know a lot about the lives of the Aryans by reading these hymns from the Rigveda.

- *What did the Aryans call their god, Indra ?*
- *What did the Aryans want from Indra, and what did they do to please him?*
- *Nowadays, what do people pray to gods for? How do they pray?*



Tributes to the Chief

After the yagna, the Purus called a meeting of all the tribesmen. In the assembly, everybody congratulated the raja. The people of the jana were happy about selecting a raja. They all brought some gifts for him. Some brought ghee, some gave cows, some brought beautiful gold ornaments. This is how the leader received so many gifts. This was called 'bali', or tribute. The leader then distributed this bali among the priests, poets and Rajanyas.

War

That evening, all the Puru men set out on the expedition. In the middle of the night they attacked the Anu jana. Three or four men went in stealthily, opened the doors of the cowsheds and stables of the Anu jana and started driving the animals towards their own settlement. The sound woke up the Anu jana, but they had no preparations for a fight. Their horses too had been taken away. The rajanyas of the Puru jana were on their chariots, waiting to face them.

The people of the Anu jana fought for some time but they were badly defeated. The Purus took away the valuables of the Anu jana and even captured many people.



The next day there was joyous celebration of the victory in the Puru settlement. Someone said, "We have won five thousand cows!" Another said, "We have also got a hundred horses and many gold ornaments!"

The Assembly

Another meeting of the assembly was called in the evening. The cows, horses, chariots, weapons, gold and slaves won in the war were distributed among the people by the raja of the Purus. The leader kept the biggest share for himself. Then the rajanyas and brahmins received their respective shares. Some cows, sheep, goats, grains and other things were distributed among the common people too. Sarama's father received 20 cows. Thus, the problems of that family were solved. The rajanyas now possessed more cows, horses, gold and slaves and they became more powerful than before.



- Who gave tributes/offerings to the raja, and why?

- What did the raja do with these offerings?
- What did the Purus get in booty from the war ?
- Discuss why the booty from the war was distributed by the leader among -
 - a. The priests
 - b. The rajanyas
 - c. The common people.

EXERCISES

1. The pastoral Aryans and the hunter-gatherers were different from each other in many ways. Given below is a table of the differences between them. In this table, some items have been put in the wrong column. Put them into the correct column.

	The Hunter-gatherers	The Pastoral Aryans
Food	Collecting fruits from the forest	Milk and meat from cattle, and barley from fields
Home	Hunting	Huts made of grass, wood and mud
Work	Rearing animals, Caves	when fodder was scarce some people migrated
Movements	When game was scarce they migrated	

2. What were the differences between the rajanyas and the common people and what did they do for each other? (Read pages 33-36 and answer.)
3. What work did the raja of the Aryans do?
4. Compare a war between the Aryan janas with a war between two modern countries.
5. Explain in two lines what is meant by 'bali' or tribute.
6. Given below are some facts from this chapter, but they are not given in the right order. Arrange them in the right order. What happened first and what happened later?
 - a. The Aryans gave gifts or tribute to the leader.
 - b. All the men of the jana fought with another jana.
 - c. The leading men of the jana selected a leader from among themselves.
 - d. The raja distributed the booty of war among the people of the jana.
 - e. The Aryans performed *yagna* to ensure victory in the war.