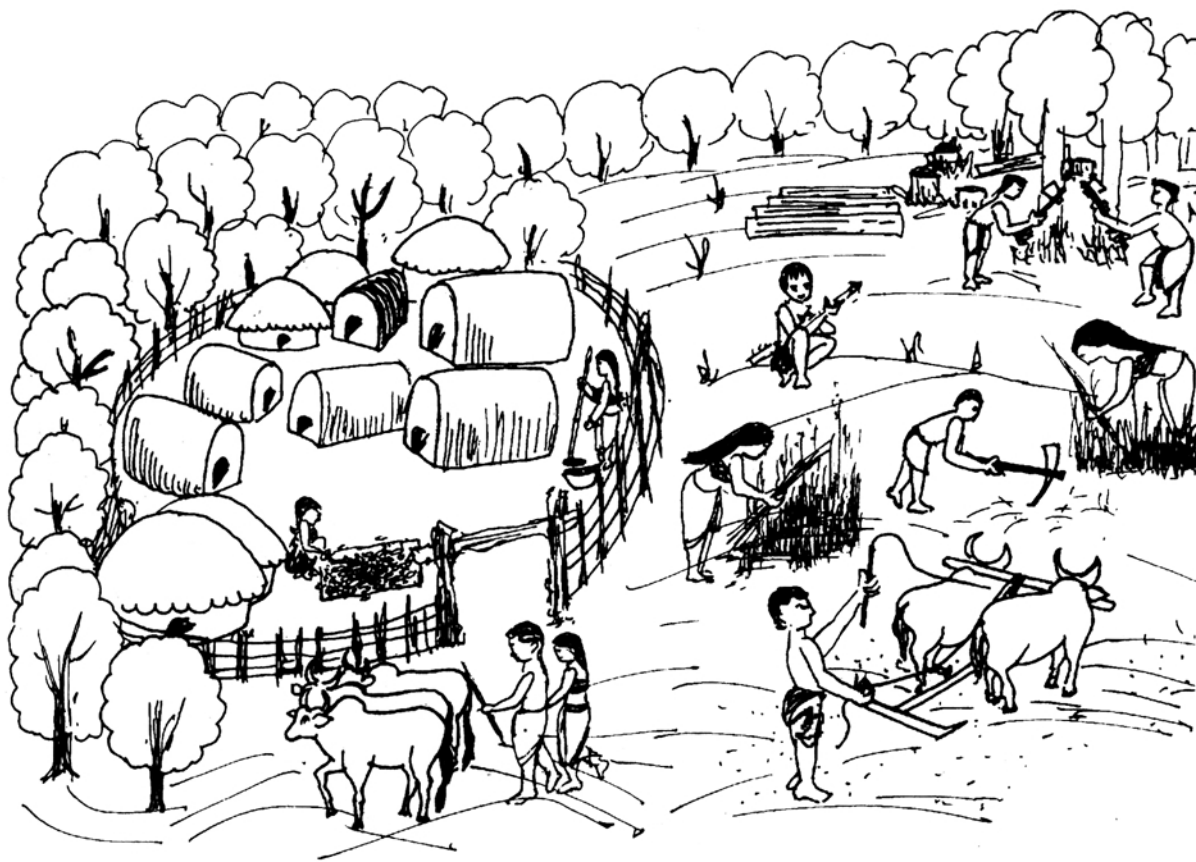


THE EMERGENCE OF SMALL JANAPADAS



In this chapter we will read about a time when many new things started. Read the sub-titles of the chapter and locate at least three words which you are reading for the first time in this book. Discuss what could be the meaning of these words.

A River Dries Up

The pastoral Aryans lived on the banks of the Indus and the Saraswati. Slowly, with the passing of time, after about five hundred years, the river Saraswati began to dry up. Gradually, the whole river dried and in its place only sand remained. The people who lived on the banks of the Saraswati started migrating to other places. The Aryan *janas* too moved on, in search of pasture for their cattle.

On the banks of which rivers did people settle down? Find out from Map 3.

There were already some small settlements

on the banks of these rivers. The people in these settlements were engaged in agriculture. The people who came from the banks of the Saraswati settled down among these people. Over time, the Aryans and these agriculturists started interacting with each other.

Agriculture Gains Importance Over Animal Husbandry

Earlier, the pastoral Aryans grew only barley, but on the banks of the Ganga and Yamuna, they began to grow wheat, rice, pulses and oilseeds. Their lives now became more dependent on agriculture. They still

reared cattle, but these were fewer in number. Earlier, their whole life had depended on animals, but now agriculture became more important to them.

- *Think of a few changes in the life of the Aryans which could have come about after they took to agriculture.*

At this time three other Vedas were composed in Sanskrit. They were the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the Atharvaveda. In these Vedas, along with *yagnas* and *mantras*, we also get to read about agriculture. There are prayers for good rains and sunshine so that their crops would grow well. Many kinds of crops are mentioned, for example - rice, wheat, oilseeds and pulses. From this, we know that agriculture had become important to these people.

- *Why did people start moving away from the banks of the Saraswati?*
- *What did the people who originally lived on the banks of the Ganga and Yamuna do for their living?*
- *What changes took place in the lives of the Aryans once they began to live on the banks of the Ganga and Yamuna?*
- *Which Vedas were composed at this time?*

The Janapadas

At that time many *janas* had started agriculture on the plains of the Ganga and Yamuna. Usually, the people of one *jana* settled down for agriculture in one region and set up villages there. In this way, each region became the *janapada* of one particular tribe. 'Janapada' literally means 'the place where people placed their feet'.

The Aryans and the other people living in the *janapada*, learnt each other's language and even began to worship each other's gods.

At times, there were wars between the *janapadas*. Like earlier times, the people of the *jana* fought under the leadership of their chiefs (*rajas*) and the *rajanyas*. They fought because the people of one *janapada* tried to

cultivate the fields of another *janapada*, and tried to set up their villages there.

Many a time, the people of one *janapada* made off with the harvest of another, and this also caused wars. The *rajas* were no longer just leaders in times of war. They had by now become the chiefs of the *janas*.

- *Did people fight for the same reasons when they were pastoralists? Do you find any difference?*
- *The important janapadas of those times have been shown on the map. Look at the map and fill in the blanks-*
 - *The _____ janapada was settled on both banks of the Yamuna.*
 - *The Panchala janapada was settled on both banks of the river _____.*
 - *The _____ janapada was situated on the western side of the Surasena Janapada. The _____ janapada was on the extreme north.*
- *A famous religious epic tells us about many of these janapadas. Find out about it.*

LIFE IN THE JANAPADAS - A STORY

Read this story to find out how the lives of the common people, the *rajas*, the *rajanyas* and the brahmins were changing. Imagine you are in a village of the Kuru *janapada*.

The Grihapati and the Rajanya

In a village on the banks of the Ganga, there were houses of about twenty farmers. These farmers were called 'Grihapatis'. They had started agriculture several years ago.

Out of these twenty houses, one belonged to a grihapati called Sumant. Sumant was the head of the village. He had his own fields where his family worked and grew many crops.

One day, four guests came to Sumant's house. They were rajanyas, related to the chief (raja) of the Kurus. The chief lived in Hastinapur. He had asked the rajanyas to go to every village on a special mission.

The rajanyas had visited this village a few months back. They had then asked for tribute (bali) for the chief. The pastoral Aryans used to voluntarily pay tribute to the chief. Now things were changing. Now the rajas and rajanyas of the small janapadas often demanded tributes. The last time, when the rajanyas had come to ask for tributes, the grihapatis of the village had refused. Sumant began to wonder why the rajanyas had come this time.



Grihapati Sumant welcomed the rajanyas

village.

All the grihapatis said, "No, we cannot give so much. Only two months ago, the people of the Matsya janapada took away our

harvest and our cows. You did not come to protect us then. Now there is nothing left to give as tribute."

The rajanyas said, "You have to give something for the yagna" It was finally decided that 50 cows, 30 sacks of rice and 20 sacks of dal would be given from the village.

One rajanya told Sumant, "Call a meeting of all the grihapatis in the evening. We have brought a message from the raja."

Invitation for the Rajasuya Yagna and Demand for Tribute

The meeting started in the evening. All the grihapatis of the village came. One rajanya said, "O Kuru grihapatis! We have come to invite you. On the next full moon day our raja will perform the Rajasuya yagna in Hastinapur. All of you are invited. The Rajasuya yagna is a big sacrifice. It will please the gods and make the raja very powerful. The raja will become famous."

Sumant said, "The Rajasuya yagna will be very expensive! Hundreds of animals will have to be sacrificed! The brahmins have to be given thousands of cows, horses and plenty of gold for performing such a big sacrifice. All the people of the jana will come. Food has to be prepared for all of them. Does our raja have enough resources for all of this?"

The rajanya said, "Where do the rajas and the rajanyas get their resources from? They come from whatever you grihapatis give us. What you give as tribute will be used for this yagna."

One grihapati said, "So you have come to ask for tribute for the Rajasuya yagna?"

The rajanya said, "Yes, we want 100 cows, 50 sacks of rice and 50 sacks of dal from this

- Who sent the rajanyas to the village and why?

- What things were needed for the Rajasuya yagna?

- What did the grihapatis agree to give for the yagna? Why did the grihapatis not give all that the chief wanted?

- Do you remember when and how the tribute was paid in the days of the pastoral Aryans?

- Match the following :

Rajasuya- One whose family did agriculture

Grihapati- Tribe

Jana - The name of a jana

Rajanya- Where the people of a jana settled down

Janapada- The gifts which the people gave to the tribe's chief

Bali - Relatives of the chief

Kuru- The name of a big yagna

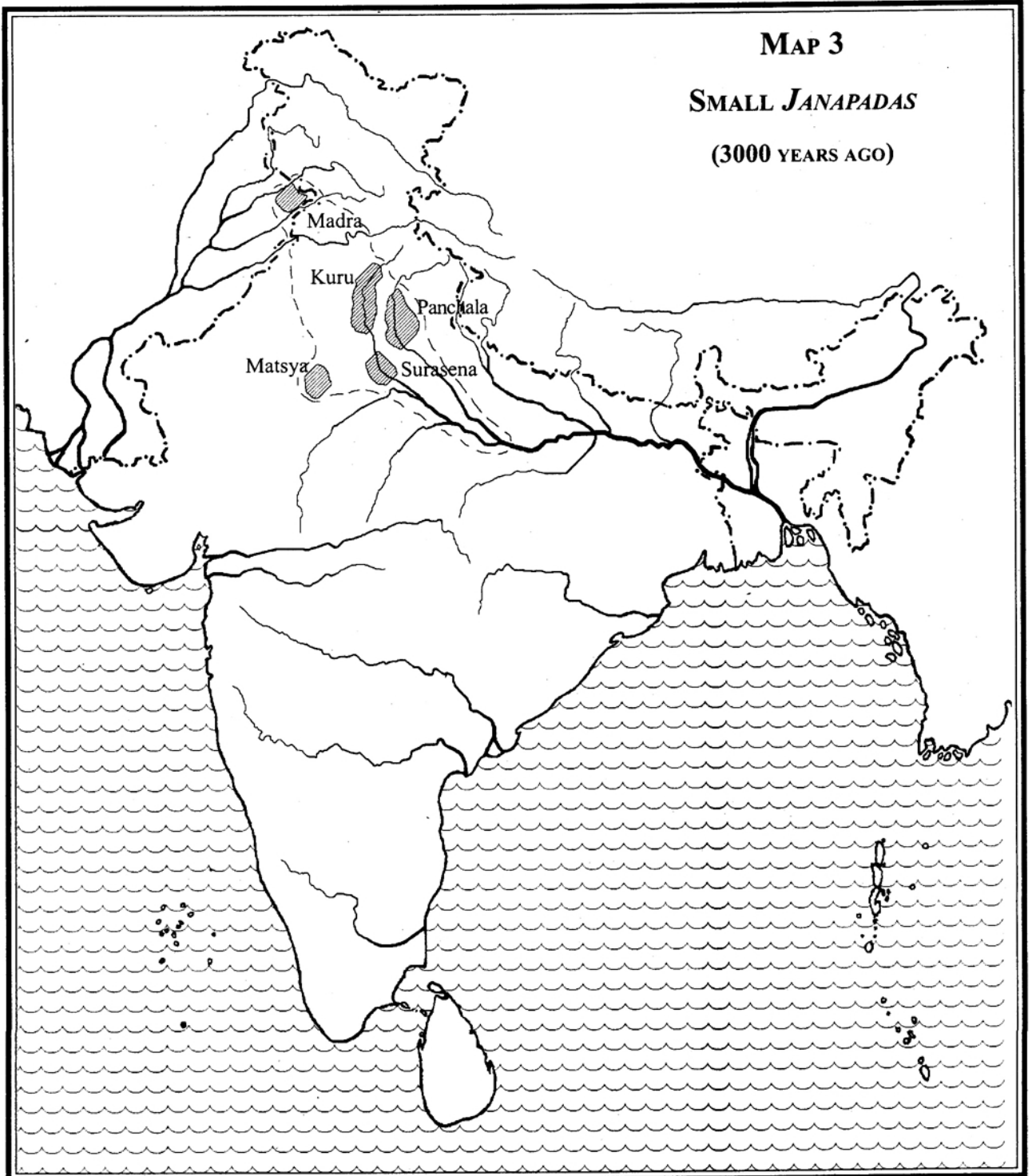
The Servants of the Grihapatis

A few days after the rajanyas left, preparations for the Rajasuya yagna started. The servants of the grihapatis cleaned the grains and packed it in sacks. They bathed the cows and painted their horns. These servants were

MAP 3

SMALL JANAPADAS

(3000 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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The *Janapada* areas



The region where the Aryans had settled
down

not Kurus. They used to live in the forests nearby and had come to live in this village in search of food. The grihapatis had employed these people to help them in their household work.

Nelli and Shambhu worked in Sumant's house. Before setting off for the Rajasuya yagna, Sumant sent Nelli and Shambhu to Hastinapur along with the cows. Their daughter Rangi went with them. She was looking forward to going to Hastinapur, seeing the Rajasuya yagna and eating good food.



• **Choose the correct answer :**

i. The servants of the grihapatis _____ (belonged / did not belong) to their jana.

ii. The servants worked _____ in the (houses / fields) of the grihapatis.

grihapatis don't pay their tributes properly. They do not follow my instructions. They do not pay the amount of tribute I want, but give according to their own convenience. I distribute part of the tribute among the rajanyas. If I do not give the rajanyas their share, they will remove me and choose another raja. How can I then become a powerful raja?"

The Chief, Tributes and Yagnas

As we have seen, the chiefs and the rajanyas had started taking more tribute from the people and now they even demanded it. They had also started performing bigger yagnas. Why was all this happening ?

The rajas and the rajanyas saw it as an opportunity to increase their power. By accumulating grains given as tribute, they could become wealthy. They could get more and more horses, weapons and ornaments. They could keep a number of servants and live in comfort. The rajas performed big yagnas also to show their greatness.

The Chief's Anxieties

The chief of the Kurus was performing such a yagna. There was a festive mood in Hastinapur. Everyone was busy preparing for the yagna. Even then, the chief was worried. He was discussing his problems with the priest. The priest was the brahmin who was performing the yagna for the chief.

The chief said to the priest, "O priest, the

We have seen how the grihapatis were unwilling to pay the tribute that the chief wanted. In those days the people did not easily obey the chief. The chief had to persuade the people and therefore felt the need to show his power.

The priest answered the chief, "O Raja! Through the Rajasuya yagna, we priests will give you boundless strength. The yagna will please the gods and they will help you. Then no one will be able to disobey you."

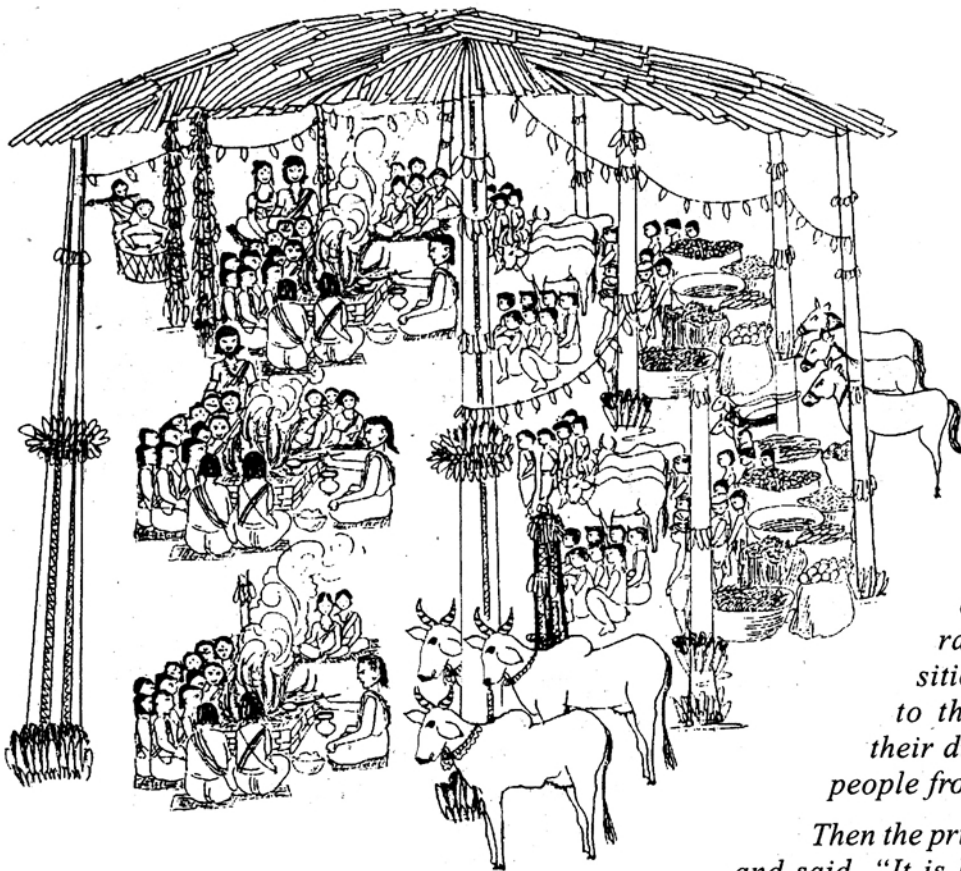
• **Complete the sentences -**

i. The chief was performing the Rajasuya yagna because

ii. In the days of the pastoral Aryans, yagnas were performed because

Rajasuya Yagna

In the times of the pastoral Aryans, small yagnas were performed for victory in war as well as the welfare of the tribe. However chiefs of small janapadas started performing big and expensive yagnas. They wanted yagnas to give more power to the chiefs and rajanyas.



but we lost. Neither you nor the rajanyas came to help us. Now, what can we give you as tribute? Why should we give?"

The Varnas and their Duties

This answer made the chief very angry. When he was about to express his anger, the priest stopped him and said, "Rajan, each one of us should perform his duty. The raja and the rajanyas have a special position in society. They belong to the Kshatriya Varna. It is their duty to rule and protect the people from enemies."

Then the priest looked at the grihapatis and said, "It is however, the duty of these peasants to pay tribute to the raja. The peasants belong to the Vaishya Varna. Their function is to grow crops and give a share to the rajas and the rajanyas as bali (tribute) and to the brahmins as dakshina. The grihapatis of these five villages have committed a mistake by not giving bali to the raja."

The grihapatis of those five villages who had not paid tribute said, "We do not have anything to give, yet we are being told that it is our duty to pay tribute. This has never happened before. We do not want to live in this janapada. We will go elsewhere and carry on cultivation." Saying this, they left the assembly. Some people tried to persuade them not to do so; but they did not heed them.

When they left, the people present were troubled. They began to shout and ask whether it was right of the raja to demand tribute, or whether it was right of the grihapatis to refuse to pay.

The Rajasuya yagna went on for five months in the Kuru janapada. Hundreds of goats, bulls and cows were slaughtered. Numerous sacks of grains, besides ghee, gold and silver, were also offered in the yagna. The chief became very famous.

At the end of the yagna, all the Kuru grihapatis and rajanyas came. The rajanyas sat near the raja, and the grihapatis like Sumant sat a little away from the altar. Rangi's wish was not fulfilled. She and other servants had to stay outside the city. They could not come near the altar of the yagna.

Why Pay Tribute?

At the end of the yagna, it was time to pay tribute (bali) to the chief. The grihapatis offered sacks full of grains and pulses. The chief was pleased to see all this. He distributed the tribute among the rajanyas and brahmins. The brahmins were given hundreds of cows, lots of gold and grains and many slaves.

However, the chief realised that the grihapatis of five villages had not paid any tribute. When he asked the reason, they replied, "Rajan, sometime back the people of another janapada attacked us and stole our animals and crops. The whole village fought

- What facts about the Rajasuya yagna made you feel that it was a big yagna?
- Can you recognise the chief, the rajanyas and the grihapatis in the picture? How many yagna altars can you see in the picture?

- **Put a tick mark on the right answer-**
- The grihapatis of the 5 villages did not pay tribute because -**
- a. **They did not have anything to offer.**
- b. **They had already paid tribute.**
- c. **They were angry with the chief and the Rajanyas.**
- d. **Their fields had not yielded any crops.**
- **Fill in the blanks -**
- The priest said that it is the duty of the _____ to protect the people and the duty of the _____ to pay tribute. (Kshatriya/Vaishya/Brahmin)**
- **What did the grihapatis of the 5 villages do in the end ?**

THE VARNA SYSTEM AND DISTINCTION BETWEEN HIGH AND LOW

In the days of the small *janapadas*, the brahmins had started saying that only by performing big *yagnas* would the chief be able to gain strength. Crops in the field too would only grow with the help of big *yagnas*, they claimed. These *yagnas* could be performed only by brahmins. This is why brahmins were becoming very important in society.

Now the brahmins started telling whose position in society was low, and whose was high, and what each one's duties were.

The brahmins started saying that there were four *varnas* in society- brahmin, kshatriya,

vaishya and shudra.

Out of these *varnas*, the brahmin was considered to be the highest. It was their duty to perform *yagnas* to please the gods.

After the brahmins came the kshatriyas, that is, the chiefs (*rajas*) and the *rajanyas*. You have already read about their functions.

After the kshatriyas came the vaishyas. They were the *grihapatis* who engaged in agriculture. The brahmins and kshatriyas thought that they were superior to the vaishyas. Therefore they did not mix with the vaishyas even during the *yagna*.

Even lower than these were the shudras. Servants like Nelli and Shambhu belonged to this *varna*. It was their duty to serve others. They were not allowed to practice their own agriculture, or take part in the *yagna*.

This arrangement of the *varnas* was formulated at that time, but it has had a deep influence for a very long time. The feeling of high and low status among the *varnas* is found in our society even today.

- **What has been described in this part of the chapter-**
- a. **How wars should be fought.**
- b. **How yagnas should be performed.**
- c. **What work should people perform.**
- d. **How people should be related to one another.**
- e. **What the chief wanted.**

EXERCISES

- I Two hymns are given here. Which of these belongs to the time of the pastoral Aryans and which was composed during the period of the small *janapadas* ?
 - a. 'O Indra, give us plenty of wealth, fulfil our wishes by granting us hundreds of cows.'
 - b. 'Pulses, oilseeds, wheat, rice, all grow because of the *yagna*.'
- II How many sections does this chapter have ? What are the sub-titles of these sections?
 - a. In which section is the *Rajasuya yagna* discussed?
 - b. Explain in 6-7 lines why the *Rajasuya yagna* was performed, how it was performed, and how the chief collected resources for it.
- III Choose the right answer -
 - To collect tribute from the *grihapatis*, the chief -

- a. Used to give orders
 - b. Used to send *rajanyas* to convince *grihapatis*
 - c. Used to forcibly take grain from the homes of *grihapatis*.
5. Explain in 4-5 lines the work of each of the following, and each one's ambitions and problems -
 - a. The chief or the *raja*
 - b. *Rajanyas*
 - c. *Grihapatis*
 - d. Brahmins
 - e. Servant, Slaves
 6. a. What were the rules relating to the four varnas?
 b. How were the chiefs and the brahmins trying to introduce these new rules? Choose the right answer-
 They were punishing the people/ they were saying to the people that to follow the rule was a moral duty.
 7. a. The areas in which small *janapadas* emerged lie in which states of India today?
 Maharashtra/ Punjab/ West Bengal/ U.P./ Rajasthan/ M.P.
 b. Compare Map 2 and Map 3 and say whether the following statements are correct -
 - Both the maps show India.
 - Both the maps belong to the same period.
 - There is no difference in what the two maps show.
 8. What difference do you find between the time of the pastoral Aryans and that of the small *janapadas*? Fill in the columns given below -

	The time of the pastoral Aryans	The time of the small <i>janapadas</i>
a. The main work of the people b. Who gave tribute c. What was given as tribute d. When did people pay tribute e. How the tribute was used f. Why wars were fought g. Why <i>yagnas</i> were performed		

9. An interesting comparison :

You have read about different people and their food habits. Food is very important for human beings. In the various food items that we eat, there are many things that perish fast and many others which last long. The latter things can be stored in large quantities.

*Compare the food of the hunter-gatherers, the pastoral Aryans and the people of the small *janapadas*. Find out which of these people had more kinds of food that could be stored. Make a list of food items eaten by each of these people and compare them.*



The pictures in these chapters on history have been drawn by us. The people of those days did not leave behind any pictures. We added our imagination to whatever information we could get about those people, and drew these pictures. For example, we know that they used chariots. But did their chariots look like the ones we have drawn in these pictures? Nobody can answer such questions. These pictures do not always show things as they really were.