[2 uncorrected files, from Erdosy 1995]

Michael Witzel

4. Early Indian history: Linguistic and textual parametres

The Problem

During the last 60 years the writing of the early history of South Asia has suffered from several flaws; political, and large sections of social, history above all, remain to be adequately treated. To begin with, archaeological discoveries of the past few decades remain to be evaluated against the background of the texts composed in this period, i.e. the Vedic texts. The only exception to this trend has been W. Rau (1956, 1983), who systematically collected from the Vedic texts data on material culture that provide possible clues that might illuminate or adumbrate archaeological materials. Unfortunately, as his publications are in German, they have made little impact on the discussion of early South Asian history. Although his

work has been heavily drawn upon by Kulke (Kulke and Rothermund 1986), thereby making it somewhat more accessible to English audiences, I think that much can be added to the picture presented by both Rau and Kulke, which is one of the reasons for my contributions to the present volume.

A second reason is that, generally, historians have not taken notice of what has been going on in Vedic studies during the past few decades, even though Vedic texts represent the only contemporary literary sources for most of early Indian history. This may be explained by the perception that Vedic texts provide little concrete information. For example, Keith (1921), in his chapters in *The Cambridge History of India*, narrated a few disparate facts first collected in *The Vedic Index* (Mcdonell and Keith 1912), but thought that the data did not amount to much that could be used for a reconstruction of the history, especially political history, of the period. The other side of the coin, to mirror Keith's conservatism, is provided by the *History and Culture of the Indian People* (Majumdar and Pusalker 1951) composed under the auspices of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. Although its authors acknowledge the later date of the composition of the Purāṇas, and the much earlier date of the Ṛgveda, they use both, as well as the Mahābhārata, on an equal footing. This results in the use of totally disparate sources, spanning the period between the

late 2nd millennium B.C. and the late 1st millennium A.D., to describe events of the Vedic period.

Even the latest histories have little to offer to someone who knows the testimony of the older Sanskrit texts. For example, Thapar's (1965) history, frequently held up as a standard text, has merely excerpted data from *The Cambridge Ancient History*, and from Rhys Davids' *Buddhist India*, which were written near the turn of the century.[1] Only the recent history of the Subcontinent by Kulke and Rothermund (1986 - drawing heavily, for the Vedic period, on the work of W. Rau) takes up archaeological discoveries as well as recent advances in Vedic philology, and presents a more acceptable view of the period.

The use of Vedic texts by archaeologists forms another painful chapter. The heavy mutual, and uncritical, reliance of scholars of all disciplines (Erdosy, this volume) is here compounded by the fact that several important texts (e.g. JB, VādhB, PS)[2] have

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[1] Rhys Davids is, in fact, the inventor of the concept of 'Indian republics', which would be better characterized as oligarchies, operating in loosely organized tribes. Cf Sharma 1968.

[2] The following abbreviations have been employed in the text: for a list of editions and translations of the various texts consult Witzel 1989a. AA: Aitareya

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not been translated into English while others have

Āraṇyaka; AB: Aitareya Brāhmaṇa; AitU: Aitareya
Upaniṣad; ĀpŚS: Āpastamba Śrautasūtra; ĀŚS:
Āśvalāyana Śrautasūtra; AV: Atharvaveda Saṃhitā;
BaudhB: Brāhmaṇa portion of BŚS; BŚS:
Baudhāyana Śrautasūtra; BAUK: Bṛhadāraṇyaka
Upaniṣad (Kāṇva version); BAUM: Bṛhadāraṇyaka
Upaniṣad (Mādhyandina vers.); BhārŚS: Bhāradvāja
Śrautasūtra; ChU: Chāndogya Upaniṣad; GB:
Gopatha Brāhmaṇa; HirŚS: Hiraṇyakeśi Śrautasūtra;
JB: Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa; JŚS: Jaiminīya Śrautasūtra;
JUB: Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa; KA: Kauṣītaki
Āraṇyaka; KB: Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa; KpS: Kapiṣṭhala-
Kaṭha Saṃhitā; KS: Kaṭha Saṃhitā; KU: Kaṭha
Upaniṣad; KŚS: Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra; LŚS:
Lāṭyāyana Śrautasūtra; MS: Maitrāyaṇi Saṃhitā; PB:
Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa; PS: Paippalāda Saṃhitā; RV:
Ṛgveda Saṃhitā; ŚBK: Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (Kāṇva
version); ŚBM: Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (Mādhyandina
version); ŚS: Śaunaka Saṃhitā (vulgate of
Atharvaveda); ŚŚS: Śāṅkhyāyana Śrautasūtra; TA:
Taittirīya Āraṇyaka; TB: Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa; TS:
Taittirīya Saṃhitā; VādhB: Vādhūla Brāhmaṇa;
VādhŚS: Vādhūla Śrautasūtra; VaikhŚS: Vaikhānasa
Śrautasūtra; VSK: Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā (Kāṇva
version); VSM: Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā (Mādhyandina
version); YV: Yajurveda Saṃhitā.

been poorly rendered. The belief that the Ṛgveda mentions iron (Banerjee 1965), stemming from the (mis)translation of *ayas* (actually meaning 'copper' or perhaps 'bronze' - Pleiner 1971; Rau 1974) is perhaps the most glaring example of archaeologists' fatal dependence on work done in a (to them) largely alien field. Another is excessive reliance on a few translated texts such as the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (Eggeling 1882), and - to a lesser extent - the Ṛgveda Brāhmaṇas (Aitareya and Kauṣītaki - Keith 1920), the Atharvaveda (Whitney 1905) and the Yajurveda Saṃhitā (Taittirīya version - Keith 1914), which neglects an entire range of important evidence. Even here, unfamiliarity with Vedic - especially ritualistic - thought leads to the misinterpretation of even those few passages that are actually quoted.[3]

The main reason for the present dismal situation is, of course, that apart from archaeology our principal source for the early period must be the Ṛgveda, which is a notoriously difficult text. It has been translated only thrice this century: by Geldner (1951) into German in the 1920s, later (partially) by Renou (1968)

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[3] A typical example concerns the story of Videgha Māthava (ŚB 1.4.1.14ff-), which is frequently held up as proof of an 'Aryan conquest' of the eastern Gaṅgā Basin, whereas it deals with the spread of Kuru orthodoxy (i.e. the *śrauta* ritual, etc.)

into French and by Elizarenkova (1989) into Russian. The fact that there has not been a new English translation since Griffith's inadequate effort of the late-19th century (Griffith 1973) has particularly hindered research in South Asian and other English-speaking academic communities.

This is compounded by the generally held view that everything that can be gathered from a study of the text has already been said. The general attitude seems to be: the immigration of the Indo-Aryans is a fact that can frequently be noticed in the Ṛgveda; there are some rare glimpses of political history, with approximately 30 small tribes known from the text; a few names of kings can be discerned, such as Trasadasyu, Divodāsa or the famous Sudās of the 10 kings battle (RV 7.18), a sort of precursor to the Mahābhārata. But all of this is too sketchy to allow us much more than a glimpse at what actually happened in that period. One of the aims of this paper is to show that this impression is erroneous, and to give an idea of the wide range of information that can be extracted.

In light of this situation, the two papers contributed to the present volume aim to fill a significant gap in our knowledge of Vedic history. The first, dealing with linguistic and textual parametres offers an overview of the existing Vedic corpus: what is available, how it has been used hitherto, what was the original purpose of the Vedic hymns, how were they

composed and handed down; what is their internal stratification, geographical location and relative and absolute chronology? This will be followed by an overview of the linguistic evidence contained in Vedic hymns; evidence, in particular, for the presence of various languages in the Vedic period and for the interaction of their speakers through the study of loanwords and structural borrowing. Combined with a study of place names and hydronomy, such an analysis will shed light on the social and political changes accompanying the movement of Indo-Aryan speakers into South Asia and their rise to dominance once there. In conclusion, models of linguistic change (especially linguistic switch) will be evaluated, and general methodological notes on Vedic philology advanced. Such a detailed treatment of the methods of philology will be followed, in a separate paper, by detailed analysis of the historical content of the Ṛgveda, the earliest and - for the purposes of this volume - most important stratum of Vedic literature.

A survey of sources

I have already alluded to the comparative dearth of information on early South Asian history. In fact, our only sources are the following: 1) archaeological data, including, of course, the still undeciphered Indus

inscriptions (Fairservis 1992; Joshi and Parpola 1987; Shah and Parpola 1991), as well as prehistoric skeletal remains (Hemphill, Lukacs and Kennedy 1991; etc.); 2) linguistic evidence inside and outside of the Vedas; and 3) the earliest texts, i.e. the four Vedas.

In both contributions to this volume,[4] I shall only briefly discuss archaeology, focussing on linguistic and textual evidence from the Vedas. However, a few points may be noted: 1) archaeological evidence is as open to debate as particular passages in any text; 2) it has been, and to some extent still is, fashionable to connect every new ceramic style with the invasion of a new tribe or people. Fortunately, archaeologists are more cautious nowadays, and think rather in terms of changes in fashions or the diffusion of new techniques, etc.; 3) nevertheless, *radical changes*, such as the introduction of the horse and the chariot, *and* of the whole gamut of Indo-Iranian culture, may well be attributed to the actual immigration of foreign elements. I realize that there has been, recently, a strong reaction against the invocation of external agents of change, such as migration and diffusion. However, that such forces were operating in the past is clear from innumerable historical examples; rather than deny their existence, a sophisticated archaeology

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4   The second one being Chapter 14 - [ed.]@@

will specify exactly the processes involved, instead of relying on such vague concepts as 'tribal invasions'.

The Vedas and their interpretation

As I asserted at the beginning, Vedic literature has by no means been exhausted for a description of the early history of the Subcontinent. Indeed, apart from Rau (1956, 1983) noone has made a systematic correlation of archaeological and literary data, while there has been constant misuse of Vedic sources and some historical and pseudo-historical materials, not only by nationalist politicians, but also by archaeologists and historians. Most serious is the acceptance of much later materials as authoritative sources for the Vedic period, and although we have already alluded to this in the Introduction, it must be discussed at greater length before turning to the Vedic texts themselves.

Perhaps the most glaring examples of misuse have been made of the Mahābhārata, which is still taken by many as a factual account of events between 3000-1000 B.C. (depending on what dating scheme is accepted for the great battle; see Mirashi 1975-76). Although this text may ultimately reflect the battle of a large confederation of chieftains against the Kurus, or even against the Bharatas, at ca. 1200 B.C., the nucleus of the existing poetical text describing these events is of

Late Vedic origin at best (i.e. from the last few centuries B.C.). This nucleus became subsequently heavily inflated, as late as A.D. 500, so that it now has more than 100,000 verses, instead of the Late Vedic Bhārata text of c. 20,000. These additions - even in standard descriptions of people participating in the battle - mention Greeks (*Yavana*), Sakas (*Śaka*) and even the Huns (*Hūṇa*, *Harahūṇa*) who first made an impact on South Asia in the 5th century A.D..

The Mahābhārata thus reflects, not unlike the Iliad, a Late Bronze or Iron Age text that was finalized much later. Even the nuclear text, whose nature is almost impossible to determine (although see now Smith 1992), was not 'fixed' but evolved constantly due to the nature of bardic composition and transmission, which involved the recreation of the text by the individual bards, as has been studied by A. Lord and M. Parry. Data taken from this text have to be sifted and evaluated at every step; to simply compare them with the results of archaeology, in particular to identify certain archaeologically attested cultures with tribes and peoples listed in the Epic (as done by Thapar 1976 or Lal 1981), is to succumb to the last century's penchant for taking Homer literally, and using his list of ships as direct evidence for Greek history in the 12th century B.C.. This kind of procedure involves another commonly committed mistake, that of taking archaeologically attested

'cultures' as being identical with tribes, peoples or even linguistic groups. It would be better to adopt to the dictum of one of my teachers, K. Hoffmann that 'pots don't speak' - they certainly do not, as far as language is concerned. Archaeologists, however, can make them talk in other ways that we will investigate below.[5]

Worse still, has been the fate of the Purāṇas. They have been used by some (Pargiter 1922; Smith 1973) to establish genealogies of the dynasties of various parts of South Asia, dating back thousands of years. This comes close to the fictions surrounding the immigration into Latium, and settlement there, by Aeneas or, better still, to the efforts of some mediaeval

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[5]   Similarly, the story of the flood that destroyed Hastināpura would, on direct comparison with the archaeological evidence, lead to a date for the Mahābhārata around 400 B.C.: as that city was indeed devastated by a flood around then (Lal 1955 - although his dating of the flood level is to ca. 800 B.C., the radiocarbon dates (Possehl 1990) would suggest a much later dating). This fits with neither the traditional date of 3002 B.C., nor a revisionist one around 1400 or 1000 B.C.. It is, in fact, proof of the reliability of some of the data in the Epic, albeit reflecting a period of composition over many centuries, if not an entire millennium!

court writers who tried to secure for their princes an ancestry going back to the warriors who fought at Troy.[6] As is well known,[7] the Purāṇas were composed only in the 1st millennium A.D., or even later as in the case of the Kālikāpurāṇa. History has been completely redrawn in these texts. One may also mention that by the

6   Examples may be seen in inscriptions at Klagenfurth, South Austria. Likewise, in the Muslim world as regards Sayyid descendants of the Prophet, or even descendants of the Prophet's horse.

7   See Rocher 1986. One could add examples of the misuse of the Rāmāyaṇa whose material is even more mythical in character and at best reflects some aspects of @@Central and South India.

time of Megasthenes' visit around 300 B.C., the 'historians' of Pātaliputra could already claim a historical record of 6,000 years (Witzel 1991); interestingly, this neglected piece of evidence fits neither the traditional date of the beginning of the *Kāliyuga*, nor any other revisionist scheme of early dates for South Asian dynasties. A common mistake of all early kinglists is the arrangement of local dynasties in succession to one another, when they were, in fact, contemporary. The procedure is clearly discernible in Kalhana's Rājataraṅginī, or in the mediaeval Nepalese Gopālarājavaṃśāvalī (*Ibid*) and results in hundreds, or even thousands, of years of consecutive dynasties. The necessity of filling in gaps until the beginning of the *Kāliyuga* in 3002 B.C. has clearly furthered this trend.

Those (e.g. Pargiter 1922; Pillai 1959; or Smith 1973) who use Epic and Purānic data also overlook the little recognized fact that everything from known history up to the Mahābhārata war is filled in from *Vedic* sources (a tradition that is well visible in Kalhana and the *Vaṃśāvalīs*). One can easily show that groups of 2-3 kings were lifted intact from the Ṛgveda, the Brāhmaṇas, and so on, and inserted wherever they were thought to fit.[8] Further, one can read in the

8   Note also the complete separation in the Purāṇas of the Ikṣvāku dynasty from the Pūrus and the insertion of appropriate kings at a date *much before*, but

Purāṇas that Manu, clearly the mythical ancestor of mankind, was himself an ancient 'king' - governing himself and his few sons.

Finally, neither can the Mbh and the Purāṇas be treated as independent sources, as has been done in *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, whose authors expressly say that the Mbh might have been 'composed later', but that the Purāṇas go back to an 'original Purāṇa' dating to the Vedic period, and any agreement between them must attest to the accuracy of the tradition they preserve. The possibility, indeed certainty, that compilers simply excerpted materials from Vedic literature is nowhere mentioned, except by Ghurye who, in one short passage, calls the Purāṇas' technique a 'patchwork method'.[9] Early Buddhist sources of the Pāli Canon are treated in the same way.[10]

corresponding with the Pūrus, like the Bharata king Sudās. Such is the typical method of the Rājataraṅgiṇī and the Gopālarājavaṃśāvalī.

[9]   Cf the work of R. Söhnen (1984) who shows that the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa was the source of the Brahmapurāṇa, its Gautamīmāhātmya.

[10] Perhaps not surprisingly, the fact that Buddhist sources disagree quite often with our Vedic, Epic and Purāṇic materials, even for the period of the

The nature of Vedic texts.

Before a revision of the information content of the Vedas we must define the sort of texts we are dealing with, their transmission, structure and organization, interrelations, geographical position and (relative) date.

The Vedic texts have been composed orally; and, what is more, to this day are also largely transmitted in this fashion. The earliest manuscripts date to the 11th century A.D., and generally all manuscripts remain inferior to the orally transmitted version, which has been extremely faithful, contrary to the norm (as exhibited by the transmission of the Epics, for example). Right from the beginning, in Ṛgvedic times,[11] elaborate steps were taken to insure the exact reproduction of the words of the ancient poets. As a result, the Ṛgveda still has the exact same wording in such distant regions as Kashmir, Kerala and Orissa, and even the long-extinct musical accents have been

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Buddha(!), is brushed aside by the historians of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

[11] As evidenced in the *akkhalī kṛ* case (Thieme 1964: 62-63). See Goody 1968, 1987; also Staal 1983.

preserved.[12] Vedic transmission is thus superior to that of the Hebrew or Greek Bible, or the Greek, Latin and Chinese classics. We can actually regard present-day Ṛgveda-recitation as a *tape recording* of what was first composed and recited some 3000 years ago.[13]

In addition, unlike the constantly reformulated Epics and Purāṇas, the Vedic texts contain *contemporary* materials. They can serve as snapshots of the political and cultural situation of the particular period and area in which they were composed. Though largely composed by (and all too often *for*) Brahmins, they nevertheless contain much that allows us a glimpse of the political and social situation, of

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[12] Pitch accent disappeared from Sanskrit and was replaced by stress accent in the last few centuries B.C., as Patañjali shows: *ādy-udātta*. See Witzel 1989a.

[13] We have to distinguish, it is true, between the composition of a Vedic text, for example of the RV which was composed until c. 1200 B.C., and its redaction sometime in the Brāhmaṇa period (ca. 700 B.C.?). But the redaction only selected from already existing collections and was mainly responsible only for the present *phonetical* shape of the texts. The RV of late Brāhmaṇa times only differed from the one recited in Ṛgvedic times in minor details such as the pronunciation of *svar* instead of *suvar*, etc. The text remained the same.

customs and beliefs, and of the public and private lives of their authors and of other social groups.[14]

As they are contemporary, and faithfully preserved, these texts are equivalent to inscriptions. Naturally, they carry all the biases and, political aims (as in the case of the Battle of the 10 Kings) of their authors and their *milieu*; nevertheless, they are immediate and unchanged evidence, a sort of oral history - and sometimes autobiography - of the period, frequently fixed and 'taped' immediately after the event by poetic formulation. These aspects of the Vedas have never been sufficiently stressed, yet it is because of them that we can make much more use of these early texts than hitherto has been the case.

On the other hand, the texts at our disposal are not history books. We do not have chronicles or dynastic lists, only incidental references to tribes, clans, families, poets, priests, noblemen, chieftains ('kings' *rājan*) and their actions. It is our task to piece together the evidence from these disjointed remarks.

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[14] Books which detail such information are few and far between: for the Ṛgvedic period see Zimmer 1879; for the YV Saṃhitās and Brāhmaṇas: Rau 1956, 1983; for the Sūtras: Ram Gopal 1959. We need a new discussion of the Ṛgvedic and, especially, of the Mantra time period, which has never yet been attempted.

To compensate for this, the Vedas do not suffer from the particular type of bardic, oral transmission characterising the Mahābhārata and the still later Rāmāyaṇa, which in addition were composed and redacted much later in history than was the case in Greece.

Of all texts the Ṛgveda is the oldest, and the principal source used in this investigation. It contains hymns of praise and supplication addressed to the gods (and, occasionally, as *dānastuti* or 'praise of the gift', to a contemporary chieftain), or poetry of the ballad type. These hymns are difficult to understand not only because of their archaic language and complicated poetics, but also because of their very form: there is no 'logical' development describing successive actions or the story of a myth, only disjointed allusions to facts well known to contemporary listeners. In fact, the hymns were perhaps nothing but texts composed for and recited at the New Year ritual and the accompanying festival in the early, pre-1200 B.C. period. They were composed in the elaborate and complicated poetical style of the Indo-European and Indo-Iranian tradition that could only be appreciated properly by the more educated sections of a contemporary audience.

Thus, the myths, the ritual and certainly the contemporary history have be pieced together from stray references, and these, too, were addressed to

people who knew the events well. The hymns are not only very obscure to us, but are often intentionally vague and full of allusions and political puns in treating recent events (Schmidt 1980).

The later Vedic texts contain stanzas and prose *mantra* recited, sung or mumbled during the rituals of a later period or are concerned with the execution of the rituals. They are constituted of several layers, much larger in size than the Ṛgveda. But they are of a different kind, concentrating on the explanation of ritual on an expert level; composed by priests for priests, they justify why certain actions in ritual are done this way or that. Cultural and historical information appears occasionally, in secondary clauses and similes. But the corpus is so large that a complete picture of the period can indeed be composed, an accomplishment that has largely been brought about by Rau (1956) and Mylius (1971-1974), whose works - written likewise in German - have also gone largely unrecognized. Once again, we do not get a history of the period but have to reconstruct it by collecting the stray references in the texts; there are, however, a few (pseudo-)historical stories which seem to treat important political events, most notably the story of Videgha Māthava (ŚB 1.4.1.14 ff.) which is usually misinterpreted as an 'Indo-Aryan march towards the East', whereas it chronicles the spread of Kuru orthodoxy.

The bulk of the post-Ṛgvedic texts, thus, is constituted by 'theological explanations', by the expository prose of the Yajurveda Saṃhitās and all the Brāhmaṇas and by the descriptive prose of the Sūtras which actually describe the course of the rituals.

In other words, the Vedic texts are almost exclusively ritual; they are like the Psalms of David accompanied by a priestly explanation of the great Easter sacrifice at the temple of Jerusalem, and by a ritual manual for its priests. What would such a collection of texts tell us about the actual history of the Hebrews? Very little indeed, unless we used philological methods to extract historical and cultural information from incidental similes, asides and the few direct references to persons and their actions.

For the following period, that is the time of the Buddha, the emergence of the first larger kingdoms and the first South Asian empire, we have a large body of literature in the Pāli texts of early Buddhism. However, their internal stratification and dates are not really established and they represent, of course, only the Buddhist point of view, with cultural and historical evidence only from Bihar and surrounding areas of Eastern India. These texts are largely the sermons of the Buddha, delivered in an eastern colloquial dialect, 'translated' into a western dialect (and later into Sanskrit), transmitted by an, initially, oral tradition, collected and redacted one to two

hundred years later and brought to Sri Lanka and there written down only in the 1st century B.C..[15] For this period, however, there are also a few reports of Greek authors, of those accompanying Alexander and of travellers like Megasthenes (c. 300 B.C.), as well as the first (decipherable) evidence written in a South Asian language, namely the inscriptions of Aśoka in the mid-3rd century B.C..

To put all this scanty data into context we must now turn to the evidence available for dating and locating the texts of the period.

The stratigraphy of the texts: Localization

Since I have dealt with this topic extensively in an earlier paper (Witzel 1987), I shall merely summarize the results of that investigation here, as concerns the localization of the principal texts.

Ṛgveda: Panjab and surroundings. Maximum extension from the Kabul River to the Gaṅgā

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[15] In 89-77 B.C. by king Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya, at the council of Ālokavihāra (=Aluvehera) (Hinüber 1986: 36)

PS: Western northern India, up to Kāśī
               (Benares)

ŚS: Central northern India, up to Aṅga

YV-*mantras*:   Centred on Kurukṣetra: 'the rivers flow
               west and eastwards'

Caraka: An old, lost school, located probably
               between KS, MS, Vādh, and Vāj.
               territories

KS: Eastern Panjab/Kurukṣetra: 'the rivers
               flow westward'. Early eastward expansion
               (see KS 26.2: 123.17). Arrian (*Anabasis*
               5.21-22) places the @@*KathaŠoi* in the
               doāb of the Ravi and the Beas/Satlej.

KpS: Ditto. (Megasthenes/Arrian, *Indikē*, 4.8 at
               the confluence of the Ravi (and Chenab?))

MS: Kurukṣetra, with southward expansion.
               See MS 4.7.9:104.14

TS: Pañcāla country (Uttar Pradesh)

VSK: Kosala (E.U.P.), probably excluding the
               Vatsa country between the Gaṅgā and the
               Sarayu

VSM: Videha (N. Bihar), later also South of the
               Gaṅgā, on the Andomatis (Tons? South of
               Allahabad) - see Arrian, *Indikē* 4.4.

ABo = AB 1-5: Older part: East Panjab: 'the rivers flow
               westwards'.

ABn = AB 6-8: Later part: Videha. Knowledge of the whole of North India, even Aṅga, Kaliṅga, Andhra.

AA: Ditto

PB: Kuru country, near Kurukṣetra; later in the East? (recited with *bhāṣika* acc. until the time before Śabara).

KB: Pañcāla country (U.P.), co-operation with Baudhāyana (BŚS 2.5.)

KA: Already knows of a Magadhavāsin Brāhmaṇa.

TB/TA: Pañcāla country.

VādhB.:   Pañcāla country, on the Gaṅgā

BaudhB   Brāhmaṇa portions of BŚS in the Vatsa country between the Gaṅgā and the Sarayu

JB & JUB "Where the rivers flow northwards": the area between the Gaṅgā, Vindhya hills, Rajasthan desert and the sea: Matsya, the Baghelkhand and Malva. Eastern border unclear.

ŚBK   Kosala: W. boundary with the Kuru-Pañcālas is the Sadānīrā.

ŚBM 6-10   =ŚBK 7-12: Imported from the West (Śāṇḍilya country, U.P.?)[16]

ŚBM 11-13   = ŚBK: '7 rivers flow westwards, 2 rivers eastwards' (ŚBM 13.8.4.2)

ŚBM   Videha: Western boundary with Kosalas is the Sadānīrā. see VSM!

GB: Late compilation, Anubrāhmaṇa of the lost Paippalāda Brāhmaṇa = area of PS?

Upaniṣads: Same area as their schools; AitU, KU, JUB, ChU more to the east than PB: 'rivers flow eastwards and westwards'.

BAUK   = ŚBK

BAUM   = ŚBM

ĀŚS: Videha

ŚŚS: Pañcāla

LŚS: Probably in Lāṭī, South Gujarat.

JŚS: = JB area

BŚS: = BaudhB: in the Vatsa country between the Gaṅgā and the Sarayu

VādhŚS: = VādhB: Pañcāla country on the Gaṅgā.

BhārŚS: Pañcāla country on the Yamunā

ĀpŚS: Pañcāla country, opposite of the Matsya

HirŚS: Pañcāla country on the Gaṅgā.

VaikhŚS: A late text, possibly South Indian

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16 See Jaina texts on the Saṇḍilla country which J.C. Jain (1947) locates North of Kāśī.@@@mod. town of Śāṇḍila

Relative chronology

The four Vedas have been divided into four levels by Indian tradition: the Saṃhitās, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads. This is basically sound and reflects the gradual growth of the corpus. Internal evidence points to it as well. A Brāhmaṇa text usually quotes the earlier Saṃhitās, or the Upaniṣads and the Sūtras quote all preceding texts. However, we have to finetune this scheme by observing the actual historical levels in the development of the texts, and not only their traditional order given by Indian commentators. Various texts were, and still are, 'misclassified' that way, even by contemporary Vedic scholars.[17]

I mention the following cases: most Upaniṣads are technically in fact part of the Āraṇyakas of the schools that they are attributed to (Witzel 1977). TĀ is a composite text with the very young TĀ 1.[18] Such a

[17] Cf Gonda 1977: 471, 496; Minard 1956: 717 ff..

[18] Taken from the lost KaṭhB, another KaṭhB piece (TA 2), some older Mantra and Brāhmaṇa chapters (TA 3-6, among which 4-5 form the actual Taitt.Ar. treating the *pravargya* ritual), and finally the older Upaniṣads (TA 7-9 = TU 1-3) and the younger MahUp. (TA 10).

text can be classified neither as Brāhmaṇa nor as
Āraṇyaka, nor as Upaniṣad. Or, the VādhB
(Anvākhyāna) is still regarded as part of the VādhŚS[19]
while it is an additional Brāhmaṇa to TB.[20] MS 4.9
should be regarded as an Āraṇyaka, with parallels in
TA 4-5, ŚB 14.1-3 and KathĀ. VS 26-40 has various,
partly   Upaniṣad-like   additions,

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[19] In spite of Witzel 1975: 75 ff..

[20] To this category belong some parts of KathB (in
  fragments), the Brāhmaṇa portions of BŚS (18), ŚŚS
  (a parallel of AB 7), and GB (Anubrāhmaṇa of the
  lost Paippalāda Brāhmaṇa).

notably the ṣśa Up. in VS 40. Here we even find a YV Saṃhitā and its Upaniṣad in one 'book'.[21] Therefore, when speaking about such categories as Saṃhitās or Upaniṣads one has to be rather precise and should test whether certain sections of a particular text really fit the description of this category.

The internal chronology of the texts certainly helps to establish these historical levels, but an even more secure guide is the development of the Vedic language itself, which, like all languages, changed constantly and often imperceptibly. Its study allows the establishment of five levels (Narten 1968: 115, ann.13; Hoffmann 1975; Witzel 1989a). To pay close attention to these is of extreme importance for a study of the texts, just as correct and detailed stratigraphy is for archaeology. However, such attention to detail has been rare among even Vedic scholars. Even in recent histories of Vedic literature, for example, the distinct levels of YV Saṃhitā prose explaining the ritual, as well as the *mantras* used in the ritual as found in MS, KS, TS, and that of Brāhmaṇa prose such as found in AB, TB etc. are habitually confounded as one body of literature. Results based on this type of investigation are at best too general and at worst completely

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[21] Note that according to Caland (1932: 132; cf Witzel 1989a: n. 91) parts of VS are abstracted from ŚB.

obscure important developments.[22] The five levels
may be briefly summarized thus (cf also Witzel 1987,
1989 for details):

    Ṛgveda: The earliest attested stage of Vedic and
the most archaic; words that occur in the Ṛgveda often
have cognates or direct correspondances in Old
Iranian, especially Avestan, texts while they no longer
appear in post-Ṛgvedic texts. A chronology of the
Ṛgvedic books has been attempted by Wüst (1928)
and others[23] which agrees more or less with other

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[22] For example, even Gonda (1975) confounds levels
2-4 when speaking of YS and YB in one breath.
Likewise, Bodewitz (1976) treats the religion of these
texts as belonging to a single body of evidence.
Others, e.g. O'Flaherty (1985) simply attribute
idiosyncratic dates to the texts, such as 900 B.C. to
the JB.

[23] See, in general, Wackernagel 1896; Renou 1957;
Hoffmann 1967; Wüst 1928. The last two, in
particular agree more or less in their solutions, even
though these were based on different data:

  Wüst (see below, 5.4):@@1@@   9, 4 | 3, 5, 7 |
2, 6 | 8, 10

  Hoffmann (p. 36)   4-6-2-1-7-5-10-3-9-8

Arnold (1905, 16) has a somewhat different estimate
of the age of the books; this is based, however, on a

linguistic data. Not insignificantly, some colloquial forms of speech, such as that used by the wives of the gods, shows various social levels even in the Ṛgveda (Hoffmann 1975: 7).

Mantra language: Includes the *mantras* in verse and prose of the Atharvaveda (PS, ŚS), the Ṛgveda-Khila (RVKh), the Sāmaveda Saṃhitā (mostly taken from the Ṛgveda) and the Yajurveda Saṃhitās. All these texts form a new type of Vedic, largely unstudied and unrecognized as a distinct entity. They contain the oldest Indian prose.

Saṃhitā-prose: Distinct from the previous level due to several developments. The texts (MS, KS, KpS, TS) contain the first examples of expository prose, explaining the ritual:[24] to wit, Brāhmaṇa-style explanations and discussions (*not to be confused with the Brāhmaṇas proper, at level 4*).

Brāhmaṇa prose: It is only this level that comprises the Brāhmaṇas proper, of all the four Vedas. Even this group should be divided into two levels, of earlier and later Brāhmaṇas. It also includes the older Upaniṣads (BAU, ChU, JUB), the late additional

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development (partly supposed) of the Vedic metre only.

[24] See Hoffmann 1975: 509 ff. and cf. the contents of the lost Caraka-Saṃhitā (Witzel 1982), which predated MS, KS.

Brāhmaṇas (Vādhūla-Anvākhyānas, GB) and some of
the oldest Śrautasūtras, like BŚS, VādhŚS, and the
older portions of ŚŚS and JŚS. Some of the later
portions of the older Upaniṣads (e.g. ChU 6) show the
considerable influence of a more popular form of
spoken Sanskrit.[25] The exact classification of all these
texts remains a problem, one which has, once again,
gone largely unnoticed.

  Sūtra language: This level of Vedic comprises the
bulk of the Śrauta and Gṛhya Sūtras. They are not
reckoned among the Vedic texts proper by Indian
tradition and in some of them it is the content, rather
than the language, that is Vedic. The later Upaniṣads
(KaṭhU, Maitr.U, etc.) also belong here.[26]

  After this last level of Vedic, there is Epic speech,
Pāṇini's local (north-western) *bhāṣa*, as well as early
Classical Sanskrit. A link between these forms of post-
Vedic Sanskrit could be sought in the language of the
so-called *yajñā-gāthās* found in such texts as AB and ŚB

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[25] Tedesco 1943, 12 ff.: *smāryase > (ni.) bhālayase.*

[26] For the MuṇḍUp see Salomon 1981: 91ff., 1989. Cf
   also Epic forms like *vṛṇute < vṛṇoti* in later Upaniṣads
   (KU, MaṇḍU, ŚvetU - Narten 1968: 127) See also
   Vedic vs. post-Vedic features in four newly
   published Upaniṣads (Tsuji 1957). Late Upaniṣads of
   a sectarian origin have to be excluded since they are
   definitely post-Vedic.

(Horsch 1966; Renou 1954: 528ff., 1956: 38). Their content is frequently historical, relating deeds of kings who had offered the Aśvamedha sacrifice and so on. In this regard they look like the predecessors of the Epics, especially when they speak of the Pārikṣita dynasty.

In conclusion, following Mylius (1970), I divide the various texts into 3 broad layers: *Old Vedic*, (Ṛgveda), *Middle Vedic*, (Mantra texts, Yajurveda Saṃhitās, Brāhmaṇas, old Upaniṣads), and *Late Vedic* (Sūtras).

Absolute Dates

Although the internal stratification of the Vedic corpus is clear, absolute dates are difficult to establish (cf. Mylius 1970; Rau 1983). There is only external evidence, such as the Mitanni treaty of 1380 B.C., mentioning major Ṛgvedic

deities (Indra, Mitra-Varuṇa and the Nāsatyas); the archaeologically attested appearance of iron which forms a date *post quem* for the *mantra* portions of the Atharvaveda around 1150 B.C. (Witzel 1980: 122-124); and, the frequently discussed dates of the Buddha (in the 5th/4th, not the 6th/5th, centuries B.C.: Bechert 1982; v. Hinüber 1986: 6; Erdosy 1993), who should be later than the older Upaniṣads which presuppose, in turn, most of the Vedic texts. The grammarian Patañjali (securely dated to 150 B.C.) knows the bulk of Vedic literature, as did his predecessors Kātyāyana and Pāṇini (c. 5th century B.C.). The Pāli Canon likewise presupposes the existence of the Vedic corpus.

To these meagre data we may now add as a date *post quem*, the end of the urban phase (or Integration Era)[27] of the Indus Civilization around 1900 B.C., an event that must precede the Vedic texts which do not know of cities or towns but speak, instead, of ruined places where one might collect potsherds for ritual purposes (Burrow 1963). At the same time, since the Sarasvatī, which dries up progressively after the mid-2nd millennium B.C. (Erdosy 1989), is still described as a mighty stream in the Ṛgveda, the earliest hymns in the latter must have been composed by c. 1500 B.C..

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[27] The term is discussed in detail by Shaffer (Shaffer 1991; see also Shaffer and Lichtenstein in Chapter 5 of the present volume).

The Linguistic Map of Modern South Asia

In reviewing the linguistic data concerning South Asia we can start from the contemporary situation and trace it backwards. There are at least 5 linguistic families present today, with indications pointing to the remnants of others. These are, in decreasing order of importance, based on numbers of speakers:

1) **Indo-European**, which has been present in South Asia since at least the 2nd millennium B.C., with languages belonging to its Indo-Iranian branch: Iranian (*Pashto*, *Baluchi*) in the West and Northwest, Kāfīrī/Nūristānī in the extreme Northwest and the various IA languages: from archaic (Vedic) Sanskrit. to *Lahnda* and *Panjabi* in the Northwest, *Bengali* and *Assamese* in the East, *Kashmiri* and *Nepali* in the North, *Konkani* and *Sinhalese* in the South, and so on;

(2) **Dravidian**, which has been directly attested to in inscriptions since the beginnings of our Era, concentrated in the South, but with various remnants in the Central Indian mountains (*Gondī*) and in Baluchistan (*Brahui*);

(3) **Austro-Asiatic**, which has only been recorded in the past few centuries with *Muṇḍa* in Central and

Eastern India,[28] as well as with *Khasi* in the Assam hills;

(4) **Tibeto-Burmese** which has been recorded in various forms, notably *Tibetan* and *Newari*, all along the Himalayan belt, since the 4th century A.D., as preserved in names in the Licchavi inscriptions of the Kathmandu Valley;

(5) **Buruδaski**, which has been recorded only in the last century in Hunza, and is thus far unrelated to any known language in the world. There are indications that several other languages are in the same isolated position. *Kusunda* in the hills of Nepal is one such example, and the lowest substrate level of *Nahalī* in northern Maharashtra is likewise unrelated to other language families.

The Linguistic stiuation in Middle/Late Vedic times.
Linguistic Palaeontology.

Although the Middle/Late Vedic periods are the earliest for which we can reconstruct a linguistic map (based on Witzel 1989a), the situation even at the time of the Indus Civilization and certainly during the time

[28] The existence of both Austro-Asiatic and Dravidian languages is, of course, indirectly attested to from the earliest stratum of Indo-Aryan literature onwards.

of the earliest texts of the Ṛgveda, cannot have been very different. There are clear indications (Kuiper 1948, 1955, 1962, 1991) that the speakers of Ṛgvedic Sanskrit knew, and inter-acted with, Dravidian and Muṇḍa speakers. In later Vedic texts we even have some indications of Tibeto-Burmese influence, as in the name of the *janapada* of *Kosala*, and of the river *Kosi* (Witzel 1993, n.d.). The actual linguistic picture for the Middle/Late Vedic period may be summarized thus (cf. Witzel 1989):

Antiquated high/   Ṛ g v e d a
literary Sanskrit   M a n t r a   l a n g u a g e: AV, SV, ṚVKh, YV *mantras*

contemporary high/   Middle/Late V e d i c   d i a l e c t s
literary Sanskrit   (YV Saṃhitā prose / Brāhmaṇas / Upaniṣads / Early Sūtras)

Educated Sanskrit   Pānini's *bhāṣā*   C o l l o q u i a l Vedic of ChU & other dialogues
                                   (later Patañjali, Mahābhāṣya)

   NW: Panjab: Kurukṣetra: Pañcāla Eastern dialect:

Varnu dialects Peculiarities   Subdialects of the
Kurus   dialect   "Asurya speech'

   B a r d i c   S a n s k r i t   o f   (*yajña-*) G ā t h ā s
      B a r d i c   S a n s k r i t   o f   (pre-) e p i c[29]
popular speech   P r ā k ṛ t   d i a l e c t s

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non-IA   W: Iranian: N:
Kirāta lg's   SW: Kīkaṭa, Niṣāda   SE:
Muṇḍa
languages   Kamboja, YAv.   (early Tib.-Burm.?)
(cf. Nahalī substrates)   (Puṇḍra, Kaliṅga...)

   Now, it is well known that languages contain
'hidden histories' of their speakers, which may be
recovered by a method known as *linguistic
palaeontology*. For example, the presence of Indo-
European (Germanic) words for *snow, wolf, wheat,
barley, mead*, and *beer* in English, and the absence of
the same for *lion, tiger, elephant, tea, coffee, cocoa, rice*
and tropical rain forest (*jungle*), suggest that the

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29 The exact source(s) of 'Classical Sanskrit' remain(s)
an open question. It can be suspected that it is based
on the Bardic language, with influences from the
Colloquial/Educated Skt of Late Vedic, as it first
emerges in texts such as the grammatical
commentary of Patañjali, c. 150 B.C..

ancestral form of this language arose in a temperate climate (as it did, in NW Germany and western Denmark).

In South Asia an interesting example is furnished by the case of Nahalī, a small language spoken on the Tapti River, NW of Ellichpur in Madhya Pradesh. In it we find, at successively 'lower' levels, traces of Dravidian and Muṇḍa words below its present form, a dialect of Indo-Aryan. According to Kuiper (1962: 50, 1966) Nahali vocabulary has 36% of Kurku (Muṇḍa) and 9% of Dravidian words,[30] while the oldest substrate level is represented by some 24% of the words which do not have any cognates in India; they must be regarded as belonging to the oldest language traceable in South Asia.[31] Such a strong sub-strate is

[30] Kuiper (1966) pointed out that there is an older Austroasiatic level (Dhimal) in Nahalī; that Kurukh (i.e. Dravidian) words were borrowed at a later date; that this is preceded by a Kurku (Korku - i.e. Austroasiatic) level; that there is some Kolami/Naiki influence; and that there are uncertain connections with Tibeto-Burmese. K.H. Pinnow (1966) derives the Nahalī verbal system directly from Proto-Munda.

[31] It is unclear to which linguistic family this substrate might have belonged. Rather tentatively, Kuiper pointed out some superficial similarities with the

also known, for example, in Germanic languages, including such common words as *sheep*. A similar situation also occurs in Kusunda (Hodgson 1857; Toba 1971; Reinhard 1969, 1974), and perhaps with the substrates of the Tharu living in the Indian and Nepalese Tarai,[32] and of the Veḍḍa language in Sri Lanka. However, the language of the small tribe of the Rauṭe or Ban Rajas of Nepal, still a hunter and gatherer

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equally isolated Ainu language of N. Japan, e.g. Ku. *sita* 'dog', Ainu *sita* 'dog'; Nah. *āpo* 'fire', Ainu *apoi* 'fire'. Other possibilities include a comparison with Papuan or Australian.

[32]   For additional studies see the following: Bhattacharya 1957; Burrow 1958; v. Führer Haimendorf 1943, 1945, 1956; Koppers 1948; Mazumdar 1932; Shafer 1954, 1971.

One had supposed a Munda substratum in some Tibeto-Burmese languages of the Himalayas; see Konow 1905, refuted by Benedict 1972: 7, n. 23. Note, nevertheless, that Kusunda represents a stratum earlier than the Tib.-Burm. languages of the area and, also, that there seems to be a non-Tib.-Burm. substratum in Tharu. Finally, one would like to know a little more about the nomadic Rauṭe, who speak a Tib.-Burm. language (See Bista 1976; Reinhard 1974; Toba 1971).

group, seems to be Tibeto-Burmese.[33] Theoretically, all these languages - proto-Nahali, proto-Buruδaski, proto-Kusu-nda and proto-Tharu - could be candidates for the language of the Indus inscriptions, even if proto-Dravidian remains a more likely solution.

This sort of evidence suggests, just as in other parts of the world, successive levels of immigration by speakers of large language families and, at the same time, the successive adoption of their languages by a population that basically stayed in the same area. More on this later.[34]

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[33] See Bista 1976; Reinhard 1974. The Rauṭe may represent a regressive group such as the allegedly neolithic Austric Tasasay discovered in 1971 in S. Mindanao in the Philippines. The latter live at stone-age level, using crude stone scrapers of late palaeolithic type and do not even go hunting. However, their language is Malayo-Polynesian and it even contains some derivatives of Skt words (*divata* 'deity'), which shows early cultural contact with the rest of Indonesia in the 1st millennium B.C.. If indeed not a hoax, this is a case of regress rather than the survival of an old stone age culture.

[34] Cf., in general, Zimmer 1990a, b; and Kortland 1990.

Turning to Sanskrit, it is interesting, in light of the preceding brief discussion of English vocabulary, that 'tropical' words are likewise absent in it, which indicates that it was an immigrant into South Asia. Words for *lion, tiger, elephant* are either loanwords from local languages, or are new formations, such as *hastin* 'elephant; the one with a hand'. Further, some Indo-European signifiers have been transferred to species closely related to those native to the ancestral home of the migrants: e.g. *mṛga* (Av. *mərəga-*), which originally meant 'wild animal',[35] came to denote the antilope, especially the black gazelle. In most cases, however, a local name was taken over, as long ago pointed out by Henning (1965, 29 ff., 42 ff.) and Mayrhofer (1956) for the case of the proto-Asian words for lion (*siṃha*) mustard (*sarṣapa*) and tiger (*puṇḍarīka, pṛdāku*).[36] What is surprising, however, is the large number (some 300) of clearly non-Indo-European words even in the Ṛgveda (as shown by Kuiper), a highly hieratic text in traditional poetical language.

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[35] Including 'wild bird', a meaning still found in the RV (e.g. 1.182.7); the old meaning is common in Avestan (Y 10.10, Yt. 13.70, V. 5.1 etc.)

[36] While the Indo-Iranian and Palaeo-Asian word **parϑ has been forgotten. Cf Kuiper (1955: 7, 140; 1991).

Cultural loans

Through a study of cultural loan words in early Vedic Sanskrit texts, we can draw further conclusions on trends in early (pre-) Vedic civilization. The examples provided by the words for rice, wheat, sugar cane, sesame, as well as dog, cow, horse, chariot, brick, copper and iron are particularly instructive.

Rice is a newcomer to the home of the Ṛgveda, that is, to the NW of the Subcontinent. We know that the origin of domesticated rice is in Southeast Asia or southern China. Although recent work in the Vindhyan hills (Sharma et al. 1980) suggested South Asian domestication of rice by the 5th millennium B.C., the radiocarbon dates produced by the excavated sites do not, by and large, support this contention (Possehl 1990). In any case, even if the hypothesis were true, the earliest archaeologically attested presence of rice in the Northwest remains datable to the early 2nd millennium B.C. (at Pirak - Shaffer 1991), coinciding with the dissolution of the Harappan Civilization (Shaffer's Localization Era - Shaffer 1991; see also Chapters 5 and 10 of this volume).

In light of this information the absence of rice in the oldest strata of Ṛgvedic texts is not surprising. Unless the Ṛgvedic words (*brahma-*)*odana* and *puroḷāś*

mean a certain rice dish, as they do later on, cultivation and ritual use of rice first appear in the Atharvaveda (as in the word *vrīhi*, etc). Instead, the R̥gvedic Indo-Aryans relied mainly on pastoralism and the growing of some barley (but, typically, not wheat), which had been a staple of the Indus Civilization. To this day the traditional boundary between (predominantly) wheat- (and barley-) growing and rice-growing regions is in the central Gaṅgā Valley.

The Southeast Asian origin of rice is also indicated by its names in various languages. To begin with, Sanskrit *vrīhi* is clearly a loanword: it does not fit the Indo-European word structure. However, there is a wide range of related words in various Asian languages which have not been studied. Some of these are given by Mayrhofer (1956) such as Ved. *vrīhi* < pre-Indo-Aryan **vrijjhi-*, Ir. **brinj*, mod. Pers. *birinc*, Nūristānī *wric*,[37] Tamil *ari(ci)*, Greek *oruza*, etc.; to this must be added, however, Tib. *'bras*, Malay *bᵉras*, Jap. *uruchi*.

This indicates, just as in the history of tea (*tea*, *thé*, *chai*), at least two paths of dissemination of the plant and the word, and allows an approximate reconstruction of **vrijjhi/*bras*, something like ***ᵛ/br̥ⁱ/ₐ (n) ʲ/c i* or, perhaps, ***mrejⁱ*, apparently, an

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37 Fussmann (1977) reports that *yava* denotes 'rice' in the Kafir languages. However, this can only be a substitution.

old word of culture transmitted to all these language families from the home of rice cultivation, perhaps somewhere in Southeast Asia or Yunnan.[38] Similarly interesting words in S. Asian agriculture include Newārī *tu* 'sugar cane' cf. Filipino (Tagalog) *tu*.

By contrast, Western influence is seen in *godhūma* 'wheat', a derivative of Iranian *ganduma (Av. *gantuma*),[39] which can be traced back to such Near Eastern words as Hittite *kant*, Egypt. *xnd*, Semit.

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[38] Note that rice is found earlier and earlier now, in Japan, for example already in the Jōmon period and not just in the Yayoi period (<300 B.C.). Other sources indicate different origins: Chinese *mi*, Tibeto-Burmese *moy (cf. Jap. *kome*?) and Austroasiatic: Dhimal *ūnkhū*, Munda *r-unku*, Mon-Khmer *aṅkau*, Sue *r-aṅkao*, Sakai: Krau *uṅ-kuok/r-e-kua'*; cf. Kuiper 1966: 81 (again cf. Jap. *kome*? Is this a cross of E. Asia *mi/moy* and SE Asian **unku(k)*? The SE Asian/Yunnan word **vń/*b* *r* *i*/*a* *(n)* *j̇*/*c* *i* seems to occur in a wide belt between NE Asian *mi/moy* and something like SE Asian **unku(k)*.

[39] Avest. *gantuma*, Baluchi *dandīm* < *gandūma*; Brahui *xolum* < *golum*; Khot. Saka *ganaṃ* <**gan-@ama@@* could Avestan *gantuma*, Drav. (Kan.) *gōdi*, be connected with the name of the country of *Gandhāra*, which probably is due to a popular etymology as well (cf. Skt *gandha*, *Gandharva*)?

*ḫanṭim (pl.) (Mayrhofer 1956,I: 348; Berger 1959: 40 ff.). At the same time, Sanskrit *go-dhūma*, which

is based on a popular etymology ('cowsmoke') clearly has been influenced by Dravidian forms as well, e.g. Kannada *gōdi*, Tamil *kōti*.

The age of this loanword is not clear, due to the mixture of Iranian and Dravidian influence. Other words which may indicate an old Western substrate are *śaṇa*, *sarṣapa*, @@*śimśap* 'mustard'.[40] The words go back to untraceable pre-Indo-Iranian, perhaps to the same Bactrian-Margianan language that may have contributed words such as those for 'brick'. While bricks are not mentioned in the Ṛgveda, the word *iṣṭakā*- occurs since the early Yajurveda.[41] In Vedic India houses were built from wood, bamboo, strawmats, etc. (Rau 1983). Yet, as Staal (1983) notes, there is also Avestan *ištiiā*- (and Old Pers. *ištiš*, cf. northern Pers. *hišt*, and perhaps also Toch. *iścem* 'clay'). Obviously, the Vedic word was altered

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[40] Cf also Mayrhofer 1956 s.v. *siṃha* 'lion', *puṇḍarīka* 'tiger' (cf. *dvīpin*, Mayrhofer 1986). The words go back to untraceable pre-Indo-Iranian and pre-Tibeto-Burmese forms. Cf also Bask. words for 'apple' (Berger 1956, 1959), as well as Witzel (forthcoming) on *kamboja, śambu, Karkota, śarkoṭa*, etc. - Mayrhofer 1956,III: 292.

[41] MS, KS, KpS, TS., VS; mostly in prose only, but already in some *mantras* also: MS 2.7.15, 2.13.16; KS 16.16; TS 4.2.9.2.d; VS 17.2, 35.8, etc..

according to the past passive participle *iṣṭa-* 'offered'
(Wackernagel-Debrunner 1957,II,2: 143; Vishva
Bandhu 1935 *s.v.*) At any rate, this indicates the Indo-
Iranian age of the word, and as the words slightly differ
from each other in their suffixes, origin as a loan word
from some unknown pre-Aryan culture should be
considered. The Bactrian-Margiana Archaeological
Complex (BMAC - Sarianidi 1990; Hiebert in Chapter
8 of this volume), with its extensive use of bricks,
which existed until the early 2nd millennium B.C., is a
good candidate both for Indo-Aryan as well as for
Iranian.

As such, the word for 'brick' forms part of a larger
but unstudied group of words of culture, animals and
plants of the gerater Indo-Iranian-speaking area.
Words such as Vedic *bhiṣaj*/Avestan *baēsaz* (with its
unique *guṇa* formation) 'healer', etc. are to be added
here. Some words may even be traced back much
beyond this level, such as the accidental (?) identity of
the word for 'dog': Nahali *sita*, Ainu *sita*. These
seemingly random correspondances, which occur at a
very low, substratum level in areas that have been
overlaid by several other languages in the course of
history, should be investigated further.

To return to the names for plants and animals,
local species have non-Sanskritic (or coined) names,
just as almost everything connected with agriculture
(Kuiper 1991). Only a few Indo-European words

relating to agriculture survive in Sanskrit (*sītā* 'furrow', *kṛṣ* 'to plough', *kṛṣṭi* 'furrow', *bhaṅga* 'cannabis', *yava* 'barley'). That the authors of the Veda clearly relied on pastoralism, with a little agriculture on the side, is shown not only by the language but also by the contents of their literature. Much of the tedious work of cultivation (especially of rice which, as we have seen, first appears in the Atharvaveda), was

left to the local population; instead the authors of the Vedas concentrated their energies on rearing their cattle, an occupation which they regarded in the manner of the Masai as their own preserve: since God gave the cows to us, 'what is the use of cows with the Kīkaṭa?' (RV 3.53.14)

Place and tribal names

The same type of investigation can be carried out with regard to place names. To give an example of some English place names, successively introduced in the last 2-3 millennia: *-dunum*: London <*-lug-dunum* from Celtic; *-castrum*: Win-chester from Latin; *-ton*, *-ham*: Upping-ton/Down-ham from Old Anglo-Saxon; *-ay/ -vik*: Westr-ey, Ler-wick from Viking words; *-ville* from Norman French. In America we find, in addition to names transferred from Europe, many Indian names: Massachusetts, Wachusetts, Mississippi, Missouri, Chicago etc.

In South Asia, relatively few pre-Indo-Aryan place names survive in the North; however, many more in central and southern India. Indo-Aryan place names are generally not very old, since the towns themselves are relatively late. Examples: Indraprastha -> Delhi; Pāṭaliputra -> Patna; Rohītakakula -> Rohitaka -> Rohtak. Also, Himavant, Himālaya -> Nepali *Himal*,

@@Pancāl; etc. Tribal names shift perhaps even more frequently, and several disappear altogether: Kamboja (cf. Cambyses) -> transferred to SE Asia; Bharata -> Kuru -> Sūrasena -> Brāj etc. Shifts also occur in content: Nāga (demigods) -> tribal names (Chota Nāgpur, Nāgaland); Yavana 'Greek' -> Turks, Western Muslims, 'barbarians'; Turuṣka 'Turk' -> Muslim.

From a much older level, perhaps is the term for 'non-Sanskrit speaking outsider/foreigner': Mleccha, 'Indus people' -> foreigner, unable to speak Vedic Sanskrit (Cf. Pāli *Milakkhu*, Babylonian *Meluḥḥa*). Even the term *Yavana* must be old, perhaps a loan word via some language of Asia Minor and Iran, since *Iōn* <- *iaFōn-* is of the level of archaic Greek. All of this once again points to early Western contacts,[42] such as visible in the word for 'wheat'.

Hydronomy

A better case for the early linguistic and ethnic history of South Asia can be made by investigating the names of rivers. In Europe, river names were found to reflect the languages spoken before the influx of Indo-

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[42] For early contact see also *Babiru-* in the Jātakas and the word for 'monkey' (*qōph*) in Hebrew etc.; but see Mayrhofer 1956: Appendix and Mayrhofer 1986.

European speaking populations.[43] They are thus older than c. 4500-2500 B.C. (depending on the date of the spread of Indo-European languages in various parts of Europe). It would be fascinating to gain a similar vantage point for the prehistory of South Asia but apart from a few proposals such an attempt is yet to be made.[44]

Rivers often carry different names, sometimes more than two, along their courses. Even in a homogenous, monolingual country, such as Japan, this can be the case as names change as soon as the river passes through a major mountain range. In South Asia, to quote one well-known example, the *Bhāgīrathī* and the *Alaknandā* become the *Gaṅgā*.[45] This increases the probability of multiple names from various languages for one and the same river, of which only one may have survived in our sources. Furthermore, some of the typical designations of rivers, for example in Nepal (Witzel 1993), contain the local word for 'river' or 'stream' (*-khola/gāḍ, -di/ri,*

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[43] By Krahe and his school on Old European Hydronomy: Krahe 1962, 1964. But see also Schmid 1968.

[44] See Pinnow 1954; Witzel 1993. R. Shafer's (1954) identifications usually go too far.

[45] Cf. also *Kalindī*, the name of a tributary of the *Gaṅgā* (Rām. 2.55.4, 12, 13) and *Maṇḍākinī*.

-khu, -ku, -wa, -kuwa, etc.) A particular cluster generally agrees with the region of a particular tribe. The same can be seen in the name of the river *Gaṇḍak* (in northern India), or *Gaṇḍakī* (in Nepal), which reflects the Muṇḍa word for 'water', *gandak*. Interestingly, the same river seems to be called *Sadānīrā* 'always having water' in the Veda (ŚB), a term which appears coined, rather than a translated loanword.

However, in northern India rivers in general have early Sanskrit names from the Vedic period, and names derived from the daughter languages of Sanskrit later on. This trend is already quite clear in the Ṛgvedic hymn (10.75 - Stein 1917) in praise of rivers which mentions, among others, the *Kubhā* (Kabul), *Sindhu* (Indus), *Rasā*, *Krumu* (Kurram), *Mehatnu*, *Gomatī* (Gomal), *Vipās* (Beas), *Asiknī* (Chenab), *Śutudrī* (Satlej), *Sarasvatī* (Ghaggar-Hakra), *Dṛṣadvatī*, *Yamunā* and *Gaṅgā*. In later Vedic texts we find Sanskrit names also in the more eastern regions of northern India: *Sarayu, Gomatī, Sadānīrā* etc.

It is interesting to note, however, that some of these names are found in Iranian forms closer to the older, Ṛgvedic home of the Vedic tribes: the *Rasā* as the *Ranhā* (the mythical river of the Avesta), the *Sarayu* as the *Haroiiu* in the Herat area, the *Sarasvatī* as the *Harax^{v}aiti* ('the one with many ponds') in Sīstān/Helmand (<*Setumant* 'the one with dams'), the

Gomatī as the *Gomal* ('the one with cows'), and the *Sindhu* as the *Hindu/Həṇḍu* ('the border river'). It seems that the Iranians simply changed the old Indo-Iranian names into their respective Iranian forms when they moved into the area, while the Vedic, Indo-Aryan speakers took some of these names with them eastwards, up to Bihar, in the typical fashion of people on the move.[46]

River names in northern India are thus principally Sanskrit, with few indications of Dravidian, Muṇḍa or Tibeto-Burmese names. However, *Kosala*, with its uncharacteristic *-s-* after *-o-* may be Tibeto-Burmese (Sanskrit rules would demand **Koṣala* or *Kośala*, a corrected form that is indeed adopted in the Epics). This older form has been preserved as early as the Middle Vedic ŚB (c. 7th-6th centuries B.C.), designating the country to the east of Oudh, and thus the authenticity of the intervocalic *-s-* cannot be doubted[47] and we have to regard *Kosala* as a foreign word in Vedic Sanskrit. It may be explained as follows: there are several names of tribes or countries ending in

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[46] Cf.*New York, New London*, although the transfer of river names to N. America has been rare.

[47] As is well known, the transmission of Vedic texts has been so extraordinarily faithful that words, sounds, and even the tone (pitch) accents went unchanged for more than 2000 years.

-*la* (viz. -*ra*, almost an allophone form in early Vedic);[48] the word *kosa*- would then have to be explained as other Tibeto-Burmese river names.[49]

Newarī -*khu* occurs in many names of streams, and in eastern Nepal river names in -*khu, -ku, -gu* abound. It is likely that the Sanskrit word is based on an old Kirāta[50] (e.g. Rai) word *ko/ku*. Furthermore,

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[48] *Śākala* (AB), *Śākalya* (ŚB), *Kosala* (ŚB), -*Tosala* (AV-Par., Hariv.), *Valkala* (Mbh.), *Kuntala* (Mbh.), *Kauśala, Kerala* (Patañjali), *Utkala, Mithila, Prasthala, Mek(h)ala, Kayaṅgalā*; cf. also: *Pañcāla* (KS, MS+), *Nepāla* (AV-Par.). A Vedic form *Koṣila/Kosila* is unlikely as there are only a few words with the suffix -*ila* in early Skt (Wackernagel-Debrunner 1957,II: 362 ff.).

[49] The territorial name *Kosala* must be based on the name of a large stream such as the *Sarayu/ Gogra*, or the *Gaṇḍakī* (Note that in the Mahābhārata the Kosala people are called *Gaṇḍakāḥ*).

[50] We do not know much, of course, about the identity of these mountain tribes which one should rather place in Himachal Pradesh and perhaps also in Western Nepal, in the border areas of Vedic settlement. The Kirāta, however, are mentioned already in some of the earliest Vedic texts (AV, VS) as mountaineers and cave-dwellers: *Kirāta, Kilāta, Kailāta, Kairātika*; cf. also Prākṛt *Cilada*.

there are in Central and Eastern Nepal[51] a few words with the otherwise unattested supplement -si, such as Newarī *khu-si* 'streamlet',[52] Rai *hongku roksī* 'stream', and the river name *Ro-si* on the eastern slopes of the Kathmandu Valley, the place name *Junbe-si* in Eastern Nepal which is based on the river called *Beni*, and finally the great river *Ko-si* of Eastern Nepal.

The supplement -si found in *Kosi* must be old, indeed, as the river appears in Sanskrit literature as early as the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, under the form *Kauśikī*,[53] where -ś- is due to the pressure of Sanskrit phonetical rules which would otherwise require *Kauṣikā, *Koṣala*; cf. also the later forms with the normal development of *ś > s* or retention of the older -s-: Prākṛt *Kosiyā*, Pāli *Kosikī*, Hindi *Kosī,* and *Kośala*, Pāli *Kosala*.

To sum up, what does the evidence of hydronomy tell us? Clearly there has been an almost complete Indo-Aryanization in northern India; this has progressed much less in southern India and in the often inaccessible parts of central India. In the northwest there are only a few exceptions, such as the

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[51] In Western Nepal, there is the *Mu-si Kholā*, an eastern tributary of the upper Marsyandi.

[52] Cf. also Nepālī *kholsi/ci* 'river'.

[53] In a local history, the Gopālarājavaṃśāvalī, of c. 1390 AD. the river is called *Kośakī*.

names of the rivers *Gaṅgā, Śutudrī*, and perhaps *Kubhā* (Mayrhofer 1956-1976) In the north-east the situation is similar, although a few older names can be discerned: instead of the Vedic *Sadānīrā*, the mediaeval and modern names were *Kauśikā* and *Kosī*, viz. *Gaṇḍak(ī)*.

This leads to the conclusion that the Indo-Aryan influence, whether due to actual settlement, acculturation or, if one prefers, the substitution of Indo-Aryan names for local ones, was powerful enough from early on to replace local names, in spite of the well-known conservatism of river names. This is especially surprising in the area once occupied by the Indus Civilization where one would have expected the survival of older names, as has been the case in Europe and the Near East. At the least, one would expect a palimpsest, as found in New England with the name of the state of Massachussetts next to the Charles River, formerly called the Massachussetts River, and such new adaptations as Stony Brook, Muddy Creek, Red River, etc. next to the adaptations of Indian names such as the Mississippi and the Missouri. The failure to preserve old hydronomes even in the Indus Valley (with a few exceptions, noted above) indicates the extent of the social and political collapse experienced by the local population.

The South Asian Sprachbund

In an earlier section we have outlined a rough division
of labour, with the Vedic people monopolising cattle
rearing but leaving the bulk of cultivation to others.[54]
Such a social setup depends heavily on the daily
interaction of the dominant and subordinate classes,
and the resultant principles of social organization
soon appear with the emergence of the 'caste system'
in the late Ṛgveda, made up of the four classes of
Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas (=Rājanyas), Vaiśyas and
Śūdras.[55] In the main area of settlement of the
Ṛgvedic Indo-Aryans, in eastern Afghanistan and the
Panjab, as well as in areas they expanded to later, such
as Haryana and the Gaṅgā-Yamunā Doāb, the speakers
of Vedic must have, thus, been in close contact with
the (various) local populations.

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[54] The system is reminiscent of the kingdom of the
  Visigoths in Spain, which enacted laws dealing with
  the cattle of the Germanic Goths, but neglected to
  do so with regard to the land and property of the
  Celto-Iberic farmers - in spite of the fact that Spain
  had been one of the 'breadbaskets' of the Roman
  Empire.

[55] First outlined in RV 10.90, which P.Mus has called
  the 'constitution of India'.

In the Western Doāb (note the name *Gaṇḍakī*) and, apparently, even further west, early contact not only with Dravidian-speaking but also with Muṇḍa peoples is very likely to have taken place (Witzel n.d.). This is not the place to discuss the probable ancestral home(s?) of Dravidian languages, although the remnants of northern Dravidian such as Brahui in Baluchistan point to a settlement of Dravidian speakers far to the north of their present distribution. A contact zone in Sindh and beyond is likely, and has been proposed for Māhārāṣṭrī (Southworth 1990, this volume).

Such linguistic contacts have left their traces not only in vocabulary but also in other areas of the language; in contrast to its close relatives in Iran (Avestan, Old Persian) Vedic Sanskrit is already an *Indian* language. Indeed, all the languages that have been spoken in South Asia have, over the course of millennia, influenced each other so thoroughly that we can speak of a South Asian *Sprachbund* (cf. Emeneau 1956; Jakobson 1962; Masica 1976), imitating the Balkans where languages belonging to four or five families have been in close contact for millennia and consequently greatly influenced each

other by *calque*-type borrowing, which extends to grammatical features.[56]

F.B.J. Kuiper's work, including his latest book on loanwords in the Ṛgveda, indicates that the South Asian linguistic area seems to date back longer than we usually care to admit. In his long article on its genesis (Kuiper 1967) he traces the influence of the substratum in the use of *iti*,[57] in the two forms of the gerund which presupposes a long time of 'subliterary' usage[58] prior to acceptance into the high, poetical language, and in the spread of retroflex sounds such as

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[56] The very concept of the *Sprachbund* was developed in the Balkans. To quote but one example of mutual influence: Rumanian (a 'daughter' of Latin) and Bulgarian (a Slavic language with an old-Turkic, i.e. Bulgar adstrate) both have a postposited article, attached to the noun. For example, imperator-*ul* R o m a n i -*lor* 'the emperor of the Romans' in Rumanian and pərvi-*yat* 'the first' and drugi-*yat* 'the second' in Bulgarian

[57] A feature found here and there in Asia, incidentally, stretching from Hittite to Japanese. This quotation mark is ...*to* in Japanese, ...*bhanne* 'saying' in Nepali, etc.

[58] As the *tu*- stem is rather archaic even in the Ṛgveda.

ṭ, ḍ, ṇ, and ṣ.[59] In this respect, it should be mentioned that virtually every language that entered the Subcontinent from the west was influenced by the last feature, even Pashto[60] and Baluchi, whose speakers arrived only about a thousand years ago. To put it somewhat facetiously, only English escaped the trend, and in Indian pronunciation and transcription not even that (as shown by, for example, *tea = ṭī*). Consequently, Kuiper (1991) concludes that 'between the arrival of the Aryans ... and the formation of the oldest hymns of the Ṛgveda a much longer period must have elapsed than is normally thought'.

A rather long period of acculturation is also visible in the appearance of 'Aryan' kings with non-Indo-Aryan names, such as *Balbūtha* and *Bṛbu*.[61] in fact, this is just one of the many features which point, in spite of the constant warfare documented in the

[59] A fetaure stressed already in K. Hoffmann's (unpublished) doctoral dissertation dealing with words having medial -ṇḍ- in the RV (Munich 1941).

[60] Whose speakers can now be traced even in BŚS 18.44:397.9 as *Pārśavaḥ* which is linguistically identical with the name of the Persians (*Parśu* = Old Pers. *Pārsa*). Witzel 1989a: 235.

[61] On non-Indo-Aryan names among the Vedic 'kings' (rather, 'chieftains') and even among their poets see Kuiper 1991: 6 ff; Witzel 1989b: 1-4.

R̥gveda, to a rather close relationship between the incoming Indo-Aryans and local populations, with the result that the latter became gradually 'Aryanized'.[62] Not only the language, but also the culture of the newly arrived elite was appropriated , including the Vedic 'tank', the horse-drawn chariot. In the words of F. Southworth (1974), echoed by Kuiper (1991: 8), 'the equation of Indo-Aryan speakers with 'Aryans' (i.e. the original intruders and their direct descendants) is not supported by the historical evidence' and 'As a sociological term, 'Aryan' denotes all those who took part in the sacrifices and festivals' (Kuiper 1991: 96).

    To sum up, we can gather several facts from a linguistic analysis of loan-words, place names and areal features characterising the South Asian *Sprachbund*; above all, the presence of Dravidian, Muṇḍa, and apparently also of Tibeto-Burmese speakers in northern India, up to the borders of Bengal, at the time of the infiltration and spread of Indo-Aryan speakers. The multitude of animal and plant names, as well as terms for agriculture, point to the importance of the speakers of these languages to the social structure and economy of early India. These groups, however, were of a fairly low social position and were

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[62] Cf sentences such as RV 9.63.5 *indraṃ vardhanto apturaḥ kr̥ṇvanto viśvam āryam | apaghnanto arāvṇaḥ.*

not able - even to the extent that native North Americans were - to maintain their local place names, which were almost without exception taken over by new, Sanskrit ones. Further conclusions will be offered below, but not before a brief digression regarding the preceding, Indo-Iranian, period.

The Indo-Iranian period

This is a topic on which Asko Parpola, in particular, has writen extensively in recent years, attempting to reconcile historical and archaeological evidence.[63] Our starting point on linguistic grounds[64] must remain the presence of a branch of Indo-Aryans in Northern Mesopotamia before c. 1380 B.C., names of whose deities - *Varuṇa, Mitra, Indra* and *Nāsatya (Aśvin)* - have come down to us in a Mitanni-Hittite agreement. The terminology of horse care and horse racing as taught by the Mitanni Kikkuli to the Hittites

[63] See especially Parpola 1973, 1988; Ghirshman (1977) has offered a detailed and, perhaps, equally idiosyncratic scenario for Iran, suggesting the presence of Indo-Aryans in the Gorgan region of Northern Iran already by c. 3000 B.C..

[64] Cf Mayrhofer 1974. Note also the Kassites with S}uriiṚas] (Mayrhofer 1976: 496).

was Indo-Aryan as well, as shown by the Indian form of a^ika-^uartana (as opposed to Proto-Iranian $^*a^iu_a$-^uartana).

Other evidence, from Mitanni and Neo-Hittite sources, indicates that the names of Mitanni kings were traditionally Indo-Aryan, even though the Mitanni belonged to the Hurrian-speaking peoples. We therefore surmise that the Mitanni once lived close to an early Indo-Aryan group, that had perhaps taken a dominant position over the pre-Mitanni population, and then became quickly acculturated as Hurrian speakers.

The linguistic evidence in the Vedic texts themselves points, of course, to a close relationship with the Iranian speaking tribes. However, it is not entirely clear where the combined Indo-Iranians lived together before they left for Iran and India, when they went on their separate ways, by which routes, and in what order. Furthermore, as G. Morgenstierne (1975; cf. Hoffmann 1992: 828) has shown, the Kafirs or Nūristānīs constitute a third branch of the Indo-Iranians who were early on isolated in the impenetrable valleys of the Kunar and its tributaries. They have kept several archaic features of Indo-Iranian which in some cases[65] were lost already by the time that early Vedic and Iranian were composed and recorded. Some, newly discovered, evidence may point to still another, perhaps Western, Indo-European-

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65 Such as Kāfīrī *da‹‹‹c,* Vedic *daśa* :: Iranian *daha* from Indo-Iranian **daca.*

speaking immigrant group that has left traces in the high Himalayas.[66]

The hydronomic evidence mentioned above, however, points to an early Indo-Aryan settlement in Afghanistan, before the pre-Vedic names were Iranized (*Sarasvatī, Sarayu, Gomatī, Sindhu*, etc.), although there are, in the opinion of some scholars (Hoffmann 1975), some Iranian names in Ṛgveda (*Kaśu, Kanīta*, etc.)

An earlier Indo-Aryan settlement, or indirect influence even in northern Mesopotamia has already been mentioned. But there are also indications, for the most part listed by Parpola (1988) of reminiscences of the Vedic people of their stay in Central Asia or, at least, of old connections with people whom we know to have lived in there from old Iranian sources and classical authors. These include (see the second paper as well as Werner 1986) the rivers *Rasā* and *Sindhu*, the ethnic group called *Paṇi* as well as *Dasa/Dāsa/Dasyu* tribes. To this may be added, perhaps, a very faint recollection of the Rhipaean (Ural) mountains, if we want to believe the Russian author G. Bongard-Levin (1980).

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[66] In some levels of the Bangani dialect of Pahari; see Zoller 1987. The older levels of the Tibeto-Burmese language should also be investigated more closely. Cf. S.D. Sharma 1986.

Language takeover

The evidence assembled above from hydronomy, tribal names and older words of culture makes it unlikely that the Indo-Iranian or, more specifically, Indo-Aryan languages have 'simply' been taken over from some border tribes through 'extensive trade networks' and similar contacts as J. Shaffer extrapolates from just one among many factors of language dispersal and/or replacement.[67] There are diverse scenarios of language coexistence and superimposition, the effects of which vary widely.

(1) Certain situations do, indeed, favour the use of a trading language as *lingua franca*, and a prestigious language may thus be used widely for simple communication processes: Swahili in East Africa, Nepali in the Himalayas, English in South Asia,

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[67] Shaffer 1984; more zealously by Biswas (1990: 44): 'there is no earthly reason why the young students in India should be made to swallow the theory of the so-called Aryan intrusion into India and their minds be poisoned about a fictious Aryan-Dravidian bi-*racial* paradigm'. The ulterior, political motive of this 'scientific' piece is obvious. Cf. Choudhury 1993; Telagiri 1993, etc..

Pidgin English in Papua-New Guinea etc.. Usually, however, a trading language does *not* replace the various local languages and dialects. Although such an explanation may be attractive to archaeologists, given the relative ease with which trading patterns can be established, it is clearly inapplicable in the South Asian case.

(2) An entire class of explanations may be characterized (after Renfrew 1987) as depending on a model of 'elite dominance'. However, this process can have a variety of outcomes. A *lingua franca* **c a n** certainly become the dominant language if sustained by political power: for example, Vulgar Latin developed into the various Romance languages, Arabic emerged as the dominant language of North Africa, and many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa may also see the increasing adoption of a limited number of languages spoken by European colonizers (English, French, Spanish and Portuguese in particular). However, note even here the survival of Basque and various Celtic languages in Britain and France, of various Berber and Tuaregh languages in North Africa and of Swahili in East Africa.

In other cases, even with political backing the outcome is unpredictable: Aramaic was widely used throughout the Persian Empire and yet survived it only in some pockets of the Levant. Turkish, likewise, did not survive the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans

and we may now wonder about the fate of Russian in Central Asia. Even in cases where a dominant group tries to impose its language on a conquered population and retains control, the outcome is not certain: Norman French heavily influenced and nearly replaced Anglo-Saxon speech in the first few centuries after 1066 A.D., but, in the end, it did not succeed.

That said, there have been cases where dominant languages succeeded in replacing (almost) all the local languages: this happened particularly in South America where only a few resilient pockets of native American languages (Maya, Nahuatl, Quechua, Aymara and Guarani) survived the advance of Spanish and Portuguese.

To regard all these examples as cases of simple language takeover is a fallacy. Each case has its peculiarities: the Bolivian and Peruvian Indians may be Spanish-speaking Christians now, but a large part of them still speak native Queucha as well, and many native customs and tenets of the Inca religion survive, often in a Christian garb. Most North American Indian tribes took over the horse from the Spanish, but not their Christian mythology or language. By contrast, the speakers of the Romance languages are, for the greater part, Christian peoples of the Mediterranean with few reminders of their 'pagan' Celtic, etc. past. Clearly, languages do not spread in isolation, but along with religion, material culture and

political and social structures; however, the extent to which these cultural traits are adopted varies significantly from case to case.

What is relatively rare is the adoption of *complete* systems of belief, mythology and language from neighbouring peoples. In such historically documented cases additional factors such as missionary activity (Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Buddhism or, in modern times, the Cargo Cult in New Guinea or the Ghost Dance in the western USA) were at play. Economic reasons, such as proposed by Renfrew's 'demography-subsistence' model for Europe (Renfrew 1987) would have been insufficient: in any case, were his model correct, all of Europe would now speak a descendant of the non-Indo-European, pre-Hittite, Hattic language. The transmission of cultural traits and technological inventions would not suffice either. As mentioned above, most North American Indian tribes took over the horse with enthusiasm without adopting Christian beliefs or the Spanish language. In a similar vein the Tanabata myth travelled from China to Japan or tea, silk and paper from China to the West.

Yet, in South Asia we are dealing precisely with the absorption of not only new languages but also of an entire complex of material and spiritual culture, ranging from chariotry and horsemanship to Indo-Iranian poetry whose complicated conventions are

still actively used in the Ṛgveda. The old Indo-Iranian religion, centred on the opposition of *Devas* and *Asuras*, was also adopted, along with Indo-European systems of ancestor worship.[68] In dealing with this problem we must be careful to separate the adoption of language, technology and culture which may have been responses to different albeit related processes.

The complexity of the situation may, once again, be appreciated by examining the better documented case of the Norman conquest of 1066. If we did not know about the Norse origins of the Normans from written sources we would regard them as typical French knights[69] who almost succeded in imposing the French language in England. Instead, they eventually took over a - by now very much Romanized - Anglo-Saxon from their serfs. Apart from family names there are few remnants that might tell of

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[68] Only three ancestors out of the many generations still remembered are worshipped, and three *piṇḍas* are offered. Cf the Greek *tripatores*, the Russian custom of offering three *klyochki*, etc.

[69] Even their names can be taken as Franconian unless we proceed with a careful linguistic analysis which would reveal them as coming not from Western but from Northern Germanic. Incidentally, the case of the Normans offers interesting parallels with the Mitanni rulers.

this invasion: the importation of Norman (Norse) genetic traits, for example, has been negligible, if at all detectable among successive Celtic, Saxon, Jute and Viking migrants.[70]

Similarly, we may regard the 'importation' of Indo-Aryan into the Sub-continent as the outcome of the influx of a group of clans, tribes or people who spoke early Vedic and had an Indo-Iranian, or rather Indo-Aryan, civilization with exogamous groups of patrilineal descent, practiced pastoralism and fought with horse-drawn chariots. By the time they reached the Subcontinent they were already racially mixed: emerging from the lower Volga region, and passing through Central Asia, they may have had the typical somatic characteristics of the ancient populations of the Turanian/Iranian/Afghan areas,[71] and may not have looked very different from the modern inhabitants of the Indo-Iranian Borderlands. Their genetic impact would have been negligible and, as was

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[70] A historically and sociologically similar case is the one of Bulgaria, where Turkish invaders briefly superimposed their language on a Slavic speaking population which itself was superimposed on a Thracian substratum.

[71] Although, some European strains may also have been present; in *one* instance the Vedic texts speak of a 'gold-haired' (*hiraṇya-keśin*) person.

the case with the Normans in England, would have been 'lost' in a few generations in the much larger gene pool of the Indus people.[72] One should not, therefore, be surprized that 'Aryan bones' have not been found so far (Kennedy, this volume; Hemphill, Lukacs and Kennedy 1991). Indeed, the Ṛgveda refers to a certain amount of symbiosis from early on, evidenced by the non-Indo-Aryan names of *Bṛbu* and *Balbutha* (who is explicitly called a *Dāsa*).

There is the further possibility that Indo-Aryan speakers, even before their immigration into South Asia, completely 'Aryanized' a local population, for example in the highly developed Turkmenian-Bactrian area which yielded the BMAC, involving both their language and culture. This is only imaginable as the result of the complete acculturation of both groups. To an outside observer the local Bactrians would have appeared as a typically 'Vedic' people with a Vedic civilization.[73] Later on, (part of)

[72] Even the more visible case of African-Americans is not as hard and fast as one supposes, since due to intermarriage their genetic makeup is reported to be only about 30% African.

[73] Note that Bactria was not only a staging area for invasions into South Asia but also an area where relatively quick acculturation has always taken place. See the example of the Central Asian Yue Ji, the

this new people would have moved into the Panjab, assimilating ('Aryanising') the local population (at around the same time as the Kassites and the Mitanni - both neighbours of early Indo-Aryan speakers - made significant inroads into Mesopotamia).

In both scenarios the immigrant group was politically dominant because of its new military technology and tactics, especially the horse-drawn chariot which was quickly taken over by all major states in Egypt, Mesopotamia and China (Mair 1990: 44), although *without taking over the language of the chariot drivers*. The first appearance of thundering chariots must have stricken the local population with a terror[74] similar to that experienced by the Aztecs and Incas upon the arrival of the iron-clad, horse-riding Spaniards.

Kuṣāṇa, the Gurjara (?), the Turks of the Turkī Śāhi dynasty and the Turks and Mongols of Babur and Akbar, etc.

[74] Something of this fear of the horse and of the thundering chariot, the 'tank' of the 2nd millennium B.C., is transparent in the famous horse *Dadhikrā* of the Pūru king *Trasadasyu* ('tremble enemy!') in RV 4.38.8: 'And they fear the attack of the threatening (horses) like thunder from heaven. When thousands fought him, he was not to be stopped, when the terrible one runs in front'.

In addition, the Indo-Aryans arrived, as we will see, in the Panjab at a time when the Indus Civilization was already beyond its peak and was disintegrating into local village cultures, which may explain why the chariot was not adopted by it as it was in the Near Eastern states. The Vedic texts do not know of a single town prior to the second urbanization in the Gaṅgā Valley, but speak of 'ruined places' and even a 'big ruined palace' (*armaka*,[75] *mahāvailasthāna*). In later texts, such as the Brāhmaṇas, the Sarasvatī Valley is singled out as a place of potsherd-yielding ruins.[76] The situation resembles the arrival of the Spaniards in the Maya lowlands (though not in the Aztec and Inca realms).

In sum, we have to use a model different from that of the archaeologists who first discovered the Indus Civilization, such as the conquest theory of Wheeler (1946), and also different from the 'anti-linguistic' theories of more recent archaeologists such as Shaffer (1984, 1986, 1993). Indeed, Vedic specialists have for some time already been thinking of a gradual

[75] See Burrow 1963; Falk 1983; Rau 1977 and Rau 1981 for a range of opinions on this topic and on Vedic fortification.

[76] Given the high density of settlement in this area during the 4th-3rd millennia B.C. (Mughal 1990), this is hardly surprising.

trickling in, and subsequent rise to dominance, of Vedic tribes in the Panjab (Kuiper 1991). These 'Aryans' combined racial, linguistic and cultural characteristics (Kuiper 1991, Southworth 1974 etc.), which would have to be carefully separated. This model does not exclude, indeed it includes, those who imitated the Indo-Aryans: certain local leaders, chieftains, who have taken over the model of Vedic culture to support their own claims and who, in the process, became completely 'Aryanized'. Such a process may have evolved in the manner of the Mitanni (and, in a different context, much of Hittite) culture: initial domination by Indo-Aryan-speaking, somatically and to some extent culturally already 'Turanian' tribes in the Panjab, followed by quick acculturation. While in the Mitanni case the Indo-Aryan element was assimilated to the Hurrian one, it remained dominant in the Panjab, just as Hittite superseded, not without being heavily modified, the non-Indo-European Hattic.

Methodological Observations

In conclusion, one must examine the 'method' by which the present kind of investigation into the early history of South Asia may be carried out. Apart from research in linguistic history and 'linguistic

palaeontology', as briefly attempted above, we have to concentrate on textual data from the Vedas, as attempted in my second paper, and from the early Buddhist texts in Pāli. They can then be compared both with the linguistic data and with the findings of archaeology. The materials have to be collected from these texts by *philological methods*.

I cannot give a detailed exposition of these methods here. But since philology is frequently misunderstood and confused with other approaches in North America, I may quote the consensus of a recent brief but well attended conference at Harvard (1988) on the question: 'What is philology?' The participants readily agreed that 'philology is a *Kulturwissenschaft* based on texts'; the study of a civilization based on oral and written texts, in contradistinction to such subjects as linguistics, history, archaeology and sociology which also make use of other categories of evidence.

In the present case, to use philological methods means to painstakingly assemble a collection of often minute observations on a wide range of topics, from dialect features to differences of ritual or to the geographical spread of key ideas (Witzel 1989a, n.d.) A small dialect variant in a text may indicate, if taken together with other observations, an important economic or historical event. Such conclusions are

not, of course, unique to South Asia.[77] It is the analysis of a collection of such features that leads to important new discoveries.

In all investigations we must take into account the many difficulties of interpretation posed by Vedic texts, particularly the Ṛgveda, as well as their sketchy (in places still nonexistent) geographical and chronological framework. Only then can we proceed to an evaluation of all these minute and disparate facts, and finally make them applicable for a description and interpretation of ancient South Asian history. In many cases, our procedure will lead to a reinterpretation of commonly held opinions, especially of the archaeological remains; particularly in light of new work on the Vedic literature which has for too long been over-looked in favour of the flawed testimony of the Epics and Purāṇas.

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[77] The form of the Latin word for cattle (*bēs, bovis*) indicates a non-Roman, tribal origin and is due to trade with people outside the city. Or, the difference in the form of the European loan word for 'tea' indicates two routes of transmission from two parts of China: the northern one to Russia and India (*chai*), and the southern - overseas - one to western Europe (*tea, thé, Tee* etc.). The same development could be seen in the various terms for 'rice', examined above.

Obstacles of interpretation

Without the application of solid philological methods to our sources, the writing of the early history of South Asia runs into several obstacles. One is a certain western 'bias': not only the inherent problem of interpreting any historically or culturally distant text through the filter of one's own historical past, as well as present cultural partiality, but the application of various theories taken over from old but still influential books. Typical examples in archaeology include Wheeler's postulate of Aryan invasions and the resultant massacre of the native inhabitants, or the superimposition of linguistic features on evidence gathered from poorly translated Vedic texts or from limited (and poorly published) archaeological excavations. The equation of archaeological cultures with the speakers of Indo-Aryan, who are in turn equated with the 'Vedic people', is a particularly common failing, yet far-reaching conclusions have resulted from it.

Then, there is the confident reliance on a few, frequently poorly translated Vedic texts[78] and

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[78] See, for example the Allchins' (1982) adoption of Burrow's (1963) views on the nature of the Vedic

continuing use of Epic and Purāṇic texts, which have
already been repeatedly criticized in this paper. Lack of
cooperation with Vedic scholars is, of course, partially
responsible for this fiasco; it has engendered the view
that the field of Vedic studies has advanced little
recently. Yet, in addition to the detailed description of
Vedic society and material culture (Rau 1957, 1983),
the progress in localising and even dating Vedic texts
has been considerable and with the existence of a
nearly complete word index (Vishva Bandhu 1935-) a
thorough survey of the period is no longer a distant
prospect.

However, there are also pronounced and definite
South Asian biases to hold us back: in particular the
vision of an eternal, immutable Veda composed by
primordial sages thousands of years ago,[79] in a
'northern' - even Polar (Tilak 1903) - location, or the
contrary view that stresses the *Indian* home of the
Indo-Aryans. Even Indo-Iranians, not to mention all
Indo-Europeans(!), are increasingly located in South

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term *armaka*; the correct meaning of the term is still
under discussion, and Burrow's views are based
partly on a misinterpretation of some stanzas (due to
the use of an unreliable edition of the TB) of which
the archaeologists are clearly unaware.

[79] A view adopted by some western scholars as well:
e.g. Frawley 1986.

Asia whence they are held to have migrated westward, a clearly erroneous view[80] that has, nevertheless, found its way into even otherwise respectable scholarly publications (e.g. Biswas, quoted above, in Ray and Mukherjee 1990). There is, finally, the belief in an *old* Epic and an *old* Purāṇa, contemporary with the Veda, supposed to have been compiled by a person called Vyāsa ('redactor'!). Such speculations further cloud the scientific evaluation of textual sources, and can only be regarded as examples of modern Hindu exegetical or apologetic religious writing; even if they do not always come with the requisite label warning us of their real intentions.[81]

To conclude, one cannot stress strongly enough the need to abandon preconceived notions (Western as well as Indian) about early South Asian history. This will certainly come about more easily through the cooperation of archaeologists, linguists, historians and philologists, and it is to be hoped that the contributions to this volume have taken some important first steps in this direction.

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[80] Most recently propagated by Choudhury (1993), whose books also include *The Indian Origins of the Chinese Nation*, and Telagiri (1993).

[81] Cf the writings of B.B. Lal on archaeology and the epics (Lal 1981).

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Michael Witzel

14. Ṛgvedic history: poets, chieftains and polities

1. Introduction. The evidence for the earliest historical
period of South Asia

My aim here is to complement the earlier essay on
philological methods, by laying the groundwork for
dealing with historical data contained in the Ṛgveda. I
hope thereby to demonstrate the richness of the
available information, which has generally been
overlooked by both historians and archaeologists, and
to provide a primary source for Vedic history along
with other recent publications (Witzel 1987, 1989,
n.d.).

    Although I have already dealt with the nature of
Vedic texts, a few key points with regard to the Ṛgveda

may be reiterated here by way of an introduction. Above all, it cannot be stressed too strongly that the aim of the Ṛgvedic hymns was not the recording of history. Their authors were little interested in actually relating either contemporary politics or legends from the past; instead they dealt with myth and sacrificial ritual. Indeed, events of their own era were at times deliberately confused with myths about the deeds of gods or demons, especially Indra. Later texts are restricted to details of ritual and their explanation. It is difficult to extract any history from such materials.

In the case of the Ṛgveda, to which this paper is restricted, the task is further complicated by its archaic language, the structure of the text with several historical layers, its geographic and tribal divisions and the great mobility of its authors. Not since the sketchy description of *The Cambridge History of India* (Keith 1921) has the political and social history embedded in this text been at all investigated at length.

In order to lay a firm basis for such an investigation one has to establish, in addition to the features discussed in the previous paper, a few key parametres. In particular, we need the following grids of reference:

A) The structure of the Ṛgveda itself, with its relative order of hymns that are already divided into

'books', representing the collections of various clans as well as additional material. (See *Section 2a*)

B) The relationship of the various tribes and clans to the books of the Ṛgveda. (*Section 2b*)

C) The authors of the hymns: deduced from occasional identification of themselves, from the patterns of refrains which act as 'family seals', and from the traditional attribution of hymns to certain authors in the Anukramaṇī. (*Section 2c*)

D) Geographical features, especially rivers and mountains. (*Section 2d as well as Appendix A*)

E) This information can then be combined in a grid of places, poets and tribes. (*Section 2e*)

F) Finally, this grid can be combined with a chronological grid established on the strength of a few pedigrees of chiefs and poets available from the hymns. (*Section 2f as well as Appendix B*)

To all this may be added data from linguistic investigations (the various languages and dialects, as well as the evidence of personal names), as well as cultural data from the text on religion, ritual, material culture, local customs, etc. It is difficult enough, of course, to establish the individual grids, let alone combine them. Eventually, however, it should possible to construct a multiaxial grid with variables of time, space and social situation. Once that grid is plotted (and the various points support rather than contradict one another) we may begin the writing of

Ṛgvedic history (*Sections 3-5*). To my knowledge this has never been attempted in detail; nor is it the principal aim of this paper: rather, I shall try to lay the essential groundwork for the undertaking of this exercise and relate some initial results in conclusion.
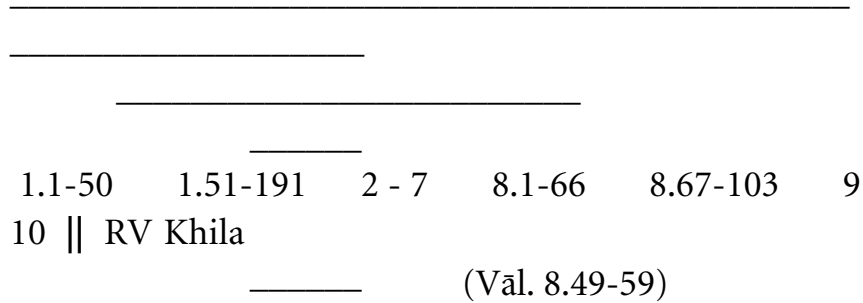
2. Requisites for a Ṛgvedic history

2a. Structure of the Ṛgveda

In order to make some informed judgements about the materials contained in the oldest Vedic text, the Ṛgveda, it is necessary to investigate its structure, the historical process of the accretion of various layers, and the eventual redaction of the text, which gave its final form. It has already been stressed that the Ṛgveda is not a text composed by a single person (in spite of one traditional school of thought), but a collection, whose individual hymns were composed over a long period of time and collected in stages by several, presently unknown, persons.

To my knowledge, it has never been asked who these collectors and arrangers were and what their motives may have been. We have yet to progress beyond general statements about priestly compilers of an oral tradition, transmitted by heart from

generation to generation in a limited number of narrow circles.[82] I shall pose the question later on. The structure of the text has been more extensively studied, already by Bergaigne (1878-83) and Oldenberg in the 19th century.[83] From the latter's *Prolegomena* (Oldenberg 1888), it appears that the Ṛgveda was composed and assembled in the following stages, beginning at 'the centre' with books 2-7:

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 1.1-50   1.51-191   2 - 7   8.1-66   8.67-103   9
10 ‖ RV Khila

                        _____   (Vāl. 8.49-59)

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82   For example, Hillebrandt (1987: 534) asks whether the collectors of the Ṛgveda 'searched all the land in or around, say Kurukṣetra, or whatever else their homeland might have been' in order to collect all old materials, 'in a sort of council', and whether these people then neglected or destroyed [not a particularly apt term for an oral tradition!] everything else that was not collected - a procedure that he finds unlikely.

83   Cf. also Arnold's *Vedic Metre* (1905) and Wüst (1928), from the early years of the 20th century.

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Oldenberg himself asked why the 10 books were arranged in such a way. The answer runs somewhat as follows:

1) The first point to be noticed is that books 2 to 7 (usually referred to as the 'family books') are, each, the collections of clans of poets. A general, and very important principle in their arrangement is that the *maṇḍalas* ('circles'), which we tend to call these 'books' have been ordered according to the *increasing* number of hymns per book,[84] while the hymns *within* a book follow a *descending* order by an arrangement that relies on the deity, the metre and the number of stanzas of each hymn. Thus, the hymns of a particular 'book' (*maṇḍala*) are first arranged in a number of collections, each dealing with a particular deity: Agni comes first, then Indra, then the other gods (depending on the num-ber of hymns per deity). *Within* each collection the hymns are then arranged according to the *decreasing* number of stanzas per hymn. In case the stanzas are of equal number, the

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84 First noted by Bergaigne; see also Oldenberg 1888: 254.

hymn which is composed in a metre requiring more syllables comes first. This clever system, perhaps the only effective one in a scriptless society, ensures that each hymn can be found immediately according to its author (the 'family'), deity and metre; indeed, the last three items have to be mentioned before recitation even today. Hymns that do not conform to this arrangement by length have been added to the original collection and arrangement of the Ṛgveda at the end of the Vedic period (see below).

2) In addition to these so-called family books there is a special collection of hymns (1.51-191) made by the same collectors and somewhat younger than the former. It is a small collection of 9 poets' groups, with the same internal arrangement as books 2-7.

3) With regard to the order of book 8 (Oldenberg 1888: 254-264) it is not the metre but the *authors* that are more important. There are two groups, the Kāṇva in hymns 1-66 and the Āṅgirasa in the rest. The various clans form a community not much different from those in books 2-7. Many common expressions are found throughout book 8, just as similar ones appear in books 2-7. However, some of the poets of book 8 also appear in later books; their hymns are collected here because they are composed in the same form as used by the bulk of the poets in book 8, the Kāṇvas: they all prefer the strophic hymn (*Pragāthā* or

Tṛca). Although exceptions exist, the trend is clear enough.

4) In hymns 1.1-50, too, the gods are ordered in the usual sequence, but other principles order each group thus established.

5) The hymns used in the Soma ritual have been collected together in one book (9), because of the prominence of the ritual and especially because of the nature of the Soma hymns: the book was useless for the reciters of the Ṛgvedic stanzas (*hotar*) as it was collected for the use of the singers of the *sāmans*. Oldenberg showed that book 9 did not exist separately before the collection of the family books 2-7 as a unit. It has the same authors as 2-7 (and even 8 and 10); it was only brought together - see RV 9.67.31: *ṛṣibhiḥ sambhṛto rasaḥ* - after the collation of books 2-7.

6) Book 10 is the great appendix to the Ṛgveda, a collection of hymns of various (traditional) authors, arranged in a fashion similar to the older books, except that after 10.95 follows the series of single hymns. Language, content and arrangement all show that it is late: the hymns were composed already in the knowledge of other books, even of their order. Note, for example, that group 10.20-26 starts with *Agnim īḻe*, in imitation of the very first verse of the Ṛgveda. However, book 10 is a well arranged unit of *older* additions, unlike incidental additions within the other

books which are clearly recognizable as they violate certain principles of arrangement.

It must be noted that the arrangement in these books does not *always* mean that a particular hymn is older or younger than some others. There are old hymns even in book 10 (the appendix). Also, as Hillebrandt (1987: 534) has observed with good reason, the 'younger form' of a hymn does not always signify its 'younger age'; some may have been composed early but entered the corpus at a comparatively late date, being transmitted with a lesser degree of care, typical for the Atharvaveda, SV and Yajurveda *mantras*. All we can say with confidence is that book 10, as such, is late but judgement must be exercised for every individual hymn. Some in book 8, sometimes even in books 1 and 10, can be as early as those in the 'family books'.

On the other hand, the method of arrangement (especially the decreasing number of stanzas per hymn in each group of hymns addressed to a particular deity) can easily be used to identify possible later additions. Several interesting hymns, e.g. Ṛgveda 3.53, belong in this category and have to be regarded as late summaries of historical facts by the poets' and priests' clan of the Viśvāmitras, Bhāradvājas and Vasiṣṭhas. For other examples the reader is referred to Oldenberg (1888) and Arnold (1905), who provide exhaustive analyses, although a list culled from Oldenberg may be

provided here of hymns which clearly violate the order of arrangement and thus stand out as later additions[85] or, at least, parts of which have been added after the collection and arrangement of the Ṛgveda:[86]

1.23.6, 1.91.19-23, 1.162?, 1.163?, 1.164?, 1.191
2.23.6-8, 2.42, 2.43
3.28, 3.29, 3.52, 3.53 (note that 3.23 and 3.52 belong together)
4.48?, 4.57.4-8, 4.58
5.27, 5.40.5-9, 5.51.11-15, 5.61, 5.78.5-9
6.47, 6.52.13-15, 6.74, 6.75
7.17, 7.33, 7.55, 7.59.7-8, 7.59.9-11, 7.59.12(Not divided in Padāpatha!), 7.103

[85] Especially, of course, the nymns which are not divided in Śākalya's Padapāṭha.
[86] Hymns which violate the order - usually by being too long - but can be subdivided into segments of three (*tṛca*, or some other subdivision), have been left out here as they have been artificially compounded into one hymn each; see Oldenberg 1888, or Geldner's subdivisions in his translation (Geldner 1951).

8.5, 8.66?, 8.87?, 8.89?, 8.91?, 8.93?, 8.96-101?, 8.101.13-15[87]

9.5, 9.61.22-30, 9.97.55-58, 9.101.16, 9.106.13-14?, 9.107.16, 9.109.22, 9.112-114.

10.87.22-25?, 10.95: 4 stanzas longer, 10.97: 11 stanzas longer, 10.103.12-13, 10.109: too few stanzas (7 instead of 11 (18) in the AV); 10.119: 4 stanzas longer, 10.121.10 (not divided in Padāpatha), 10.124: 1 stanzas longer, 10.128: 1 stanzas longer, 10.142.7-8, 10.162.6, 10.163.6, 10.173: 2 stanzas longer, 10.174: 1 stanzas longer, 10.187: 2 stanzas longer, 10.191: 1 stanzas longer.

In addition to those formal characteristics, other parametres have to be used as well. Arnold (1905) has contributed to this in his *Vedic Metre*. However, the outcome is once again meagre: he basically agrees with others that books 1 and 10 are late, and as far as his own theories go, one may agree with S. Migron (1976: 180) that they 'have not been independently corroborated yet; the table in Wüst's *Stilgeschichte* ... [Wüst 1928: 164-165] shows the wide divergence of scholars on this subject, although Maṇḍala X is agreed by all, and Maṇḍala I by some, of them to be generally

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[87] For the order of the various series in book 8, there is hardly a principle. Bergaigne (1878-83,2: 76 sqq) has one, to which Oldenberg (1888) objects.

later than the rest'. As far as metre is concerned, the new edition of the Ṛgveda by B. van Nooten and G. Holland (Harvard Oriental Series 50) serves as a ready aid to discerning the features of Ṛgvedic metre, which is generally much more regular than supposed, and thus a new start can be made.

Wüst (1928) has added some other facts to his scheme, though many of his criteria stem from the particular style of Ṛgvedic poetry. His (and Hoffmann's) statistics have already been treated elsewhere (Witzel 1989a); it is time, here, to take a few steps towards a new, comprehensive evaluation:

To begin with, it is surprising that sholars have persisted with formal characterisitcs which cannot be independently evaluated - unless we already know the distribution and mutual influence of Ṛgvedic dialects and poetic diction per book, clan and poet. This, however, remains to be done.[88]

While family adherence, metric observations and the relative stages of development of the Ṛgvedic language provide invaluable data for the evaluation of the age of the various books and hymns, there are additional data that have not been used, at least, not consistently, even though they are rather obvious. As

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[88] S. Insler (personal communication) states that he has identified some 700 items of dialect characteristics in the Ṛgveda. I defer to him.

summed up in the introduction, above, these include
several variables to be treated independently at first,
and combined subsequently, above all: 1) various
'royal' (noble) lines of descent, and similar data on the
poets, that are mentioned in the text itself. Once these
have been established, the mutual relationship
between these two groups, their adherence to or
connections with the various Ṛgvedic tribes, and, if
possible, the relation of entire tribes to the various
books and their history can be attempted. 2)
Geographical data for each hymn and book and 3)
their relationship to the poets, kings and tribes. The
resultant grids - geographical and historical - may shift
from to poet to poet (who are themselves on the
move). We have also to pay constant attention to
reminiscences in the family books, in hymns
summarising family history (such as 3.53, 5.33, 6.53,
7.53 etc.). Ideally, all this data could be combined with
independent information on the linguistic features of
various hymns, and on their arrangement within the
books on principles already stated.

As already described in the introduction, the
eventual result should be a multi-axial grid, which
would have certainly appealed to H. Grassmann, the
inventor of multidimensional geometry as well as the
author of the Ṛgvedic dictionary. Such a task,
however, is beyond the scope of the present paper;
what I shall attempt here is the presentation of a 'flat'

scheme with individual variables treated separately, though with comments on linkages between them. With these comments I shall now proceed to the presentation of the data itself.

2b. Books of the Ṛgveda and Ṛgvedic tribes

In the extant Ṛgveda we meet about 30 clans and tribes. As this is not the place for determining the precise nature of these social groups - extended families, clans, small tribes or larger confederations - I shall merely list them: Aja, Alina, <u>Anu</u>, Āyu, Bhajeratha, Bhalāna, Bharata, Bhṛgu, Cedi, Dhṛbhīka, <u>Druhyu</u>, Gandhāri, Guṅgu, Guṅgū, Ikṣvāku, Krivi, Kīkaṭa, Kṛtvan, Kuru, Kuruṅga, Kuru-śravaṇa, Mahīna, Matsya, Maujavant, Nahuṣa, Naicaśākha, Paktha, Pañca jana/ Pañca kṛṣṭi etc, Pārāvata, Parśu, Pārthava, Pṛśnigu, Pṛthu, <u>Pūru</u>, Ruśama, Sārasvata, Satvant, Śigru, Śimyu, Śiva, Śṛñjaya, Śvitna, Tṛtsu, <u>Turvaśa</u>, Uśīnara, Vaikarṇa, Vaśa, Vibindhu, Viṣānin, Vṛcīvant, <u>Yadu</u> (Yakṣu).

    Among these, the major tribes of the 'Five Peoples' (*pañca jana, kṛṣṭi* - underlined above) seem to be more closely connected to some of the 'family books' (2-7) than others.[89] Their designation means, literally, 'five furrows', which is strange for a pastoral people; what is intended seems to be the area in which these tribes dwell between the 'five furrows', viz. the division of the earth into five segments: the four

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[89] The term appears more frequently in books 6 (4 times), 7 (3 times), 8 (twice), 9 (3 times), 1 (4 times) and 10 (6 times) than in books 3 (twice), 5 (twice) and 4 (once).

quarters (N, E, S, W) with the fifth group - the *Pūrus* [90] - in the ceremonial centre, thus:

	Panjab		Iran[91]	
Yadu-Turvaśa	NE		NW	
Pūru	W		Centre	E
Anu-Druhyu	SE		SW	

The character of these 'Five peoples' or polities has remained unclear, although they may represent a religious, or rather caremonial, grouping with a common ritual. The *Inguaeones* and *Istuaeones*, reported by Tacitus among the Germanic tribes may provide a useful parallel: they claimed *Mannus* as their common ancestor, just as the Indo-Aryans designate *Manu* as such and regard all other humans as *a-manuṣa*. What is clear is that four of the tribes are

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[90] The scheme reminds one of Iran with the 7 *karšvars*. The actual distribution is open to question, but cannot be treated here; for a brief discussion see Macdonell and Keith (1912). The *Pūrus* seem to have lived in the Panjab at the time of Alexander's invasion, whose principal battle was fought against king *Poros*.

[91] See Witzel (forthcoming), *airyanam vaeja*.

regularly paired, Yadu with Turvaśa and Anu with
Druhyu, a practice common also later on (e.g. Kuru-
Pañcāla, Kosala-Videha etc.; cf. Kaurava-Paṇḍava from
the Mahābhārata). Further, these polities are not
stable, especially the Pūru, to whom (and to their
dominant successors, the Bharata) the Ṛgveda really
belongs.

2c. Authors

An investigation into the various poets' families,
according to the traditional list, the Ṛgveda
Anukramaṇī, results in the following genealogies:

BOOK 2:   GṚTSAMĀDA

Āṅgirasa Śunahotra ->   Gṛtsamāda   Āṅgirasa
Śaunahotra[92]
Bhārgava Śunaka   ->   Gṛtsamāda   Bhārgava
Śaunaka[93]

                      |

                  Somahūti = descendant of
Gṛtsamāda[94]

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[92] Pre-adoption poems: 2.18, 2.41.

[93]   Post-adoption poems: 2.19?, 2.39?, 2.41? though
   Gṛtsamāda...

[94] Calls himself (in 2.4.9) among the Gṛtsamādas.

Also: Kurma Gārtsamāda / Gṛtsamāda

BOOK 3:   VIŚVĀMITRA:

*Iṣīratha-> Kuśika Aiṣirathi = Kuṣika-> Gāthin-> Viśvāmitra-> Kata-> Utkīla

Descendant: Ṛṣabha V.[95]

BOOK4 :   VĀMADEVA:

                         -> Gotama ->
Vāmadeva

                                |

Aṅgiras -> Rahūgaṇa Āṅgirasa -> Gotama Rāhūguṇa -> Nodhas Gotama-> Eka-dyu Naudhasa[96]

BOOK 5:   ATRI / ĀTREYA

*Bhūma/i? -> Atri Bhauma -> Ātreya/ Ātreyi

BOOK 6:   BHĀRADVĀJA

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[95] Prajāpati V??/ P. Vācya?

[96]   Furthermore: see book 9: Gotama --> Nodhas Gautama --> Ekadyu Naudhasa.

Further: Purukutsa --> Chieftain and poet Trasadasyu Paurukutsa.

       Suhotra -->   Purumīḍha + Ajamīḍha.

Bṛhaspati   -> Śaṃyu
(Aṅgiras?)   -> Bharadvāja
    (6.35.5)
BOOK 7:   VASIṢṬHA[97]

(Note that he is an immigrant from across the Sindhu:
cf. Books 9, 10):

Vasiṣṭha   -> Vasukra Vāsiṣṭha   -> Vāsukra

_____

[97] Note: whole book by one person!! (should be
  checked by linguistic analysis). Cf also 10.66.14
  composed in his spirit. If this book is that of the
  victorious Bharatas, then consult the special praise of
  the Sarasvatī: 7.95-96.
  Tṛtsu = Vasiṣṭhas: 7.83.8 (reference to 10 kings'
  battle): '... waehrend die in weiss gehenden Tṛtsus ...
  Gottesdienst hielten.'   Also 7.33.1: 'Die
  weissgehenden mit der Haarschnecke auf der rechten
  Seite ... Meinen Vasiṣṭhas kann ich nicht aus der
  Ferne beistehen'. Hate of Viśvāmitra, protests against
  sorcery: 7.21.4, 7.34.8, 7.81.1a, 7.61.5, 7.104. Principal
  chieftain is Sudās who wins the battle of the 10 kings
  (7.18); Vasiṣṭha is his *purohita*: 7.83.4, ŚŚS 16.11.14; is
  the typical *purohita* in 10.150.5.

Vasiṣṭha   -> Śakti Vāsiṣṭha ->   G a u r i v ī t i Śāktya[98]

BOOK 8:   KAṆVA

         (Pras-?)Kaṇva / Kāṇva

              |

         Kāṇva Ghora

              |

         Pragātha Ghaura

              |

         Pragātha Kāṇva

        | |

    Bharga Pragātha   Kāli Pragātha Haryata

BOOK 9:   The soma book

Aṅgiras -> Rahūgaṇa Āṅgirasa -> Gotama Rāhūgaṇa
-> Nodhas Gotama -> Naudhasa

Marīci   -> Kaśyapa Mārīci   ->
Kāśyapa
Bhṛgu   -> Kavi Bhārgava ->Uśanas
Kāvya
Vasiṣṭha   -> Vasukra Vāsiṣṭha   ->
Vāsukra

---

[98] See books 5, 7 and 10.

Manu Sāṃvaraṇa   -> Nahuṣa Mānava   -
>Yayāti Nāhuṣa

BOOK 10:

Vasiṣṭha   -> Śakti Vāsiṣṭha - >   G a u r i v ī t i
Śāktya[99]

Although the Anukramaṇī is often (but not always) based on information in the texts themselves, it represents a genuine tradition as far as the relations are concerned, but is quite unreliable where the author of a particular hymn was not known to the collectors.
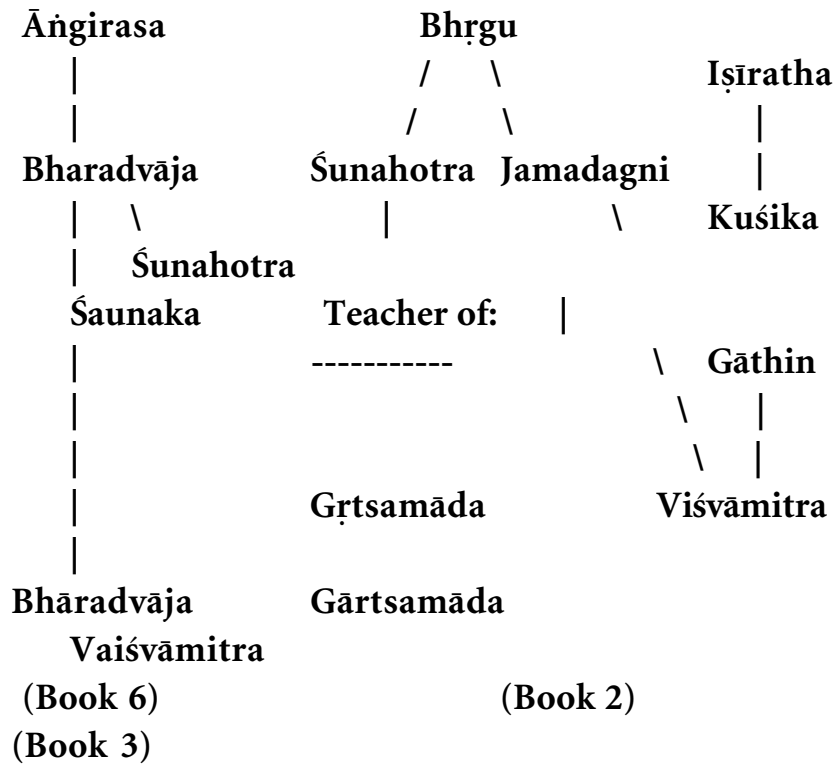
It can be seen that most of the poets are counted among the Aṅgiras; only the origin of the Kuśika - Gāthin - Viśvāmitra (Book 3) and of the Atri Bhauma (Book 5) remains unclear.[100]

Interesting, too, is the adoption scheme that is seen in several cases. This can be both a spiritual and a real adoption: an example of a spiritual adoption is the case of Viśvāmitra who learnt the lore of the Jamadagnis (Bhārgava) in 3.62.16-18; the political reason might be his fight with Vasiṣṭha, and Āṅgiras under Sudās (see below). Śunahotra is also adopted by the Bhṛgus > Bh. Śaunaka; the Bhṛgu clan is of great

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[99] See books 5, 7 and 10

[100] But check Kuśika in the general Pravara lists. Note also that the Atris were not regarded highly later on.

interest as they derive 'officially' from Varuṇa (a descent claimed occasionally by kings such as Trasadasyu):[101] e.g. 9.65 Bhṛgu Vāruṇi < Varuṇa. The teacher of Viśvāmitra, Jamadagni also belongs here according to the Anukramaṇī: 8.101., 9.62, 10.110: Jamadagni Bhārgava. As does the famous Uśanas (Bhṛgu --> Kavi Bhārgava --> Uśanas Kāvya) as well as Vena, a 'first king': 10.123: Vena Bhārgava, a descendant of Bhṛgu.

```
Āṅgirasa                 Bhṛgu
   |                      /   \           Iṣīratha
   |                     /     \             |
Bharadvāja        Śunahotra  Jamadagni      |
   |   \               |            \    Kuśika
   |    Śunahotra       |
Śaunaka          Teacher of:    |
   |             -----------        \   Gāthin
   |                                 \   |
   |                                  \  |
   |               Gṛtsamāda        Viśvāmitra
   |
Bhāradvāja       Gārtsamāda
   Vaiśvāmitra
 (Book 6)                    (Book 2)
 (Book 3)
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[101] Is this why Vasiṣṭha also has to claim this?

This adoption scheme is even more interesting as
Śunahotra originally was an Āṅgirasa.[102] (Probably, as
he was formally allied with the Yadu-Turvaśa, see
below, because of Sudās' change of *purohita* to
Vasiṣṭha).

2d. Geographical Links

It may be well to remind ourselves at this point that
the world of the Ṛgveda contains the Panjab and its
surroundings: eastern Afghanistan, the valley of the
Kabul (*Kubhā*, Gr. *Kophēn*), Kurram (*Krumu*), Gomal
(*Gomatī*), Swat (*Su-vāstu*) and - probably - Herat
(*Sarayu*, Avestan @@*Haroiiu*) rivers; also the valleys of
the rivers of Sistān: the Sarasvatī (*Harax^{v}aiti*/
Hara^{h}uvati) and the Helmand (*Setumant). In the east,
the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā are already mentioned; the
southern limit may be indicated by the *Bhalāna* tribe,
which may represent the *Bolān* area in modern
Baluchistan.

The detailed information presented in *Appendix
A* provides a clear indication of which books of the
Ṛgveda are aligned with which geographical areas of

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102 Theoretically, since Gārtsamāda Śaunaka is made a
  Bhārgava, he could be later than Book 6.

the Subcontinent and, beyond, in Afghanistan. It may be summed up as follows:

Book 2 is clearly concerned with the west and with Afghanistan.

Book 3 concentrates on the Panjab and the Kurukṣetra area (as we will see later, because it represents the time of king Sudās).

Book 4, again, concentrates on the west, even on the river *Sarayu* (which may, perhaps, be identified with the great *Haroiiu* of the Herat area), but also knows of the Panjab.

Book 5, similarly, knows of the west (*Krumu, Sarayu*) and of the Panjab, but also includes the east and even knows, in a hymn not suspected as an addition, of the *Yamunā*.[103]

Book 6, again, knows of the west (including the *Yavyāvatī*[104]) but once mentions even the *Gaṅgā* in an unsuspicious hymn (though in a *tṛca* section).

Book 7 mainly mentions the *Sarasvatī*, and in a late hymn retraces the entire process of immigration

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[103] Note that all these geographical notes belonging to diverse hymns are attributed to one and the same poet, *Syāvāśva*, which is indicative of the poet's travels - noteworthy also is the name *Gairikṣita* 'living in the mountains', later a name for the Yāskas.

[104] Which may be the *Zhob* River in N. Baluchistan? See Geldner *ad loc* and Hillebrandt 1913: 49 sqq.

across the Panjab, as well as the battles of the Bharatas
and their king Sudās, along with the poet Vasiṣṭha, the
author of many hymns in this book.

Book 8 concentrates on the whole of the west: cf.
camels, *mathra* horses, wool, sheep.[105] It frequently
mentions the *Sindhu*, but also the *Seven Streams*,
mountains and snow. At the same time some personal
names appear foreign (even Muṇḍa, see below).

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[105] These are all western traits: the best horses
traditionally come from Afghanistan (*Kamboja*) and
from the Indus area. Even the mention of dogs may
point to Iranian areas where they are of high repute,
rather than to Indian lands where they have been
treated only as scavengers.

Book 9, which has authors from all the preceding family books is much more difficult to locate. The same applies to *Book 10* and to the various collections assembled in *Book 1*.

Most important for an overview of Vedic geographical knowledge is the famous *nadīstuti* of the late book 10 (10.75), in which the major rivers of the Indus system are enumerated.[106] Their traditional number is three times seven. The enumeration starts, with the exception of the largest stream (*Sindhu*) in the East, treating all rivers as if they were eastern tributaries of the *Sindhu*. Many of the rivers can be identified: *Sindhu* = Indus; *Gaṅgā* = Ganges; *Yamunā* = Jamna; *Sarasvatī* = Sarsuti; Ghaggar-Hakra; *Śutudrī* = Śatadru, Satlej, *Paruṣṇī* = Irāvatī, Ravi; *Marudvṛdhā* with *Asiknī* = Chenab; *Vitastā* = Bihet, Jhelum; *Ārjikīya* with *Suṣomā* = Sohan (?). A second enumeration gives the western tributaries, starting apparently in the extreme north and moving southwards: *Tṛṣṭamā*, *Susartu*, *Rasā* = apparently a small tributary high in the Himalayas; *Śvetyā*, *Kubhā* = Kabul; *Gomatī* = Gomal; *Mehatnu*, *Krumu* = Kurram.

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106 The author is supposed to be Sindhukṣit Praiyamedha < cf. Priy. Āṅg. 8.2, 8.68-69, 8.87 > i.e. the descendant of Priyamedha 'who lives on the Indus'. Like many names, the poet's name may be apocryphal.

It is important to note that in this relatively late hymn the Ṛgvedic territory covers only the area between the Gaṅgā and SE Afghanistan (Gomal and Kurram Rivers), and between the Himalayas and the northern border of the modern province of Sind. Most of Afghanistan, including Bactria and Herat (Arachosia), is already out of sight.

2e. Summary of poets' clans and their location

Book 2: Gṛtsamāda clan   W/NW, Panjab
Book 3: Viśvāmitra clan   Panjab, Sarasvatī (the later *Kurukṣetra*)
Book 4: Vāmadeva clan   W/NW, Panjab
Book 5: Atri clan   W/NW,   Panjab,   --->
Yamunā
Book 6: Bharadvāja clan W/NW, Panjab, Sarasvatī
--> Gaṅgā
Book 7: Vasiṣṭha clan   Sarasvatī, (Sindhu/Panjab
--> Yamunā)
Book 8: Kaṇva, Āṅgirasa clans   W/NW,
Sindhu/Suvāstu, Panjab

2f. The family books and the 'kings' and tribes mentioned

If we now compare this geographical grid and its overlap with the individual poets (as far as they can be

discerned from the Anukramaṇī and the arrangement of the Ṛgveda itself) with the mentions of tribes and rulers, the grid presented in *Appendix B* can be set up. On the surface of it, this establishes the connection of tribes and kings with certain areas, although we must separate the late developments in additional hymns (listed in section *2a)*: these are marked by < > brackets. However, once the lines of royal descent are supplied, certain sections of the Ṛgveda will be marked as later by some generations than the rest. It is immediately apparent that few 'dynasties' emerge, and many individual rulers lacking pedigree are mentioned (especially in book 8, which also lists numerous tribes that were unknown to other books). As a first step it would be best to draw up a grid of royal succession for the two best known groups:

BHARATA	PúRU
(Bhoja/Sumitra?)	(Ikṣvāku?)
Pratṛd	
Atithigva	*durgaha??*
(Vadhryaśva)	-
(Devavat?)	**Girikṣit**
|	|
Divodāsa	**Purukutsa**

```
        (Kaśoju Paijavana)                    |
        |                                      |
Sudās --------- 1.63.7, 7.19.3 ---------
Trasadasyu
        |      (possible synchronism)
        (ardhadeva)
        |                              |
        |                            Tṛkṣi
Saudāsa (sons)                        -
        -                            -
        -                            Mitrātithi
        -
(Devavat? 7.18.22)
Kuruśravaṇa
Trāsadasyava
        |                              |
        |
        Upamaśravas
Devaśravas
        |
Devavāta
        |
Śṛñjaya Daivavāta? 6.27.7, 4.15.5 (cf. note
72)
```

Finally, we may take a look at each book again, having separated late hymns, or those which clearly look back to tribal or family history. This distilled

information is summarized in the following table of Ṛgvedic family books, tribal chiefs and geographical areas:

Book	Poet's clans	Areas	Last chiefs mentioned
II	Gṛtsamāda	NW, Panjab	Divodāsa
III	Viśvāmitra	Panjab, Sarasvatī	Sudās
IV	Vāmadeva	NW, Panjab	Trasadasyu, Divodāsa
V	Atri	NW --> Panjab --> Yamunā	Tṛkṣi
VI	Bharadvāja	NW, Panjab, Sarasvatī --> Gaṅgā	Tṛkṣi
VII	Vasiṣṭha	Panjab, Sarasvatī, Yamunā	Sudās
VIII	Kaṇva & Āṅgirasa	NW, Panjab	Tṛkṣi, etc.

This throws some light on the early history of Vedic composition. It is interesting to note that four of the 'Five Peoples', the Yadu-Turvaśa and Anu-Druhyu, do not figure much in the Ṛgveda. It is the newcomers, the Pūru and their subtribe the Bharata, who play a major role in most books. Only the Kaṇva

portion of Book 8 (8.1-67) mentions the older tribes
more frequently; it also deviates from the other family
books in its (strophic) metre. It may thus be deduced
that most of Ṛgveda was composed as the Pūru and
the Bharata were moving into the Panjab.[107] Portions
composed before the Pūru assumed a central role in
the Panjab (in about three generations) were
subsequently recast in their style. Books 3 and 7,
however, deal already with the ascendency of the
Bharata tribe at the time of Sudās; book 3 does not yet
mention his victory in the *daśarājña* battle on the
Paruṣṇī except for an additional late hymn, while
book 7 has this event as its main feature. With these
remarks, some aspects of Ṛgvedic history may finally
be tackled.

3. Ṛgvedic history - accounts of the Indo-Aryan immigration into the Panjab.

Taking a look at the data relating to the immigration
of Indo-Aryans into South Asia, one is struck by the
number of vague reminiscences of foreign localities

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[107] This may also, incidentally, explain the general
absence of true Eastern forms: e.g. *putre* instead of
putro/ putraḥ in the nom. sing., or gen. in *-as* as in
sūre duhitā.

and tribes in the Ṛgveda, in spite repeated assertions to the contrary in the secondary literature. Then, there is the following direct statement contained in (the admittedly much later) BŚS, 18.44: 397.9 sqq which has once again been overlooked, not having been translated yet: 'Ayu went eastwards. His (people) are the Kuru-Pañcāla and the Kāśī-Videha. This is the Āyava (migration). (His other people) stayed at home in the West. His people are the Gāndhārī, Parśu and Araṭṭa. This is the Amāvasava (group)' (Witzel 1989a: 235).[108]

Indirect references to the immigration of Indo-Aryan speakers include reminiscences of Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia. Thus, the mythical Indo-Iranian river *Rasā* corresponds to the Vedic *Rasā* (RV, JB), the East Iranian *Ranhā*, and the North Iranian *Rahā*, which is preserved in Greek as *Rhā*, where it designates the River Volga. This is a good example of the 'migration' of river names, a topic discussed in the previous paper. In the same category might fall the rather vague identification of Ṛgvedic *rip-* with the Rhipaean mountains, the modern Urals (Bongard-Levin 1980).

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108 *Prāṅ Ayuḥ pravavrāja. tasyaite Kuru-Pañcālāḥ Kāśi-Videhā ity. etad Āyavam. pratyan amāvasus tasyaite Gāndhārayas Parśavo 'raṭṭā ity. etad Āmāvasyam.*

A cosmological myth locates the primordial cows in a cave (*Vala*, cf. Iranian *Vara*) on an island in the *Rasā*, where they were guarded by a group of demons referred to as *Paṇis*, which reminds one of the North Iranian *Parna (found in Greek as *Parnoi*). Another North Iranian tribe occurs in Skt as *Dasa*; Iranian (Latin) *Dahae*, (Greek) *Daai*. A related form is *dasyu*, Iranian *dahyu, dainhu* 'foreign country, enemy' and Vedic *dāsa* 'slave', Iranian *dāha(ka)*, Mycaenean Greek *doero-*, Greek *doulos* 'slave'. Clearly, foreign territory was regarded as that of the enemy and captured enemies were enslaved.

More connections are indicated, for example, by Vedic *Sindhu*, with a possible Greek cognate *Sindoi*, designating a people along the Koban River in the Caucasus. Cf. also Iranian *Hindu*, as the name of the border river between Iran and India[109] which, of course came to designate the entire Subcontinent, and its dominant religion. Further hydronomic evidence, already referred to in the previous paper, also points to earlier Indo-Aryan settlements in Afghanistan: *Sarasvatī, Sarayu, Gomatī*, etc. The names, considered together, retain a vague memory of the route followed,

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[109] *Pace* Mayrhofer, Thieme 1971 on *Sindhu*.

and of enemies encountered,[110] by the migrating Indo-Aryan speaking tribes.

Several names, especially in books 6 and 8, show connections with Iran as they may be of (proto-)Iranian origin,[111] e.g. *Arśasāna* 'winning of men?' (2.20.7 - cf *an-arśani* 'not having men?' 8.32.2). The *Parśu* may be equated with the historical Pashtuns living in the Northwest Frontier and in Afghanistan.[112] The case of *Paktha* is more complicated, as the name occurs with *Adhrigu* and *Babhru* in 8.22.10: K. Hoffmann (1975) takes it to mean 'the fifth', although in other cases it looks like a name which could presage the modern Pakhtuns. *Dṛbhīka* (2.14.3) may be compared with the Iranian tribe of *Derbikes*, and the incoming *Uśij* (2.21.5) represent an ancient Iranian clan as well as an Indian one.

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[110] Who, in the intervening years have been elevated to semi-demonic status.

[111] See Hillebrandt (1913), Wüst (1928), Hoffmann (1975: 13-15) and Hopkins (1897: 23 sqq).

[112] However, the Pārthava Abhyāvartin Cāyamāna who defeated the Vāraśikha of the Vṛcīvats on the *Hariyūpīyā* in 6.27.5 has a proper Vedic name. Although the distance between Iranian and early Vedic may not be great, observe *early* E. Iranian *Bāxdi* with *Balhika* in the AV: Witzel 1980.

An Iranian connection is also clear when camels appear (8.5.37-39) together with the Iranian name *Kaśu* 'small' (Hoffmann 1975), or with the suspicious name *Tirindra*[113] and the *Parśu* (8.6.46). The combination of camels (8.46.21, 31), *mathra* horses (8.46.23) and wool, sheep and dogs (8.56.3) is also suggestive: the Borderlands (including Gandhāra) have been famous for wool and sheep, while dogs are treated well in Zoroastrian Iran but not in South Asia.

In addition, one may stress that both the Yadu-Turvaśa and the Bharata are aware that they have 'come from afar': 'Indra...brought Yadu and Turvaśa from far away' (6.45.1); 'Indra...carry Yadu and Turvaśa across (the waters)' (6.20.12=1.174.9). They have 'crossed many rivers',[114] and 'have gone through narrow passages',[115] which once again indicates the

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113 Which was supposed to be Iranian, although on the basis of the later name of *Tira* - see Bartholomae 1961: 65.

114 Cf. 2.12.13 (and 4.19.6): Turvīti and Vayya cross strems which Indra had stopped for them. 2.15.6: the Sindhu is crossed. 2.21.5: Uśij (cf Iranian Uśij-; Auśija in other books) crosses the waters. 2.20.7: land and water is created for Manu (i.e. the Indo-Aryans). 4.30.17: Yadu and Turvaśa cross the rivers.

115 As in the late hymn 6.47.20-21: 'we have come into a pathless country; the broad earth has become

mountainous terrain of Afghanistan. That they had to fight their way through some of these passages is suggested by numerous references to the storming of the mountain fortresses (*pur*) of Śambara (e.g. 2.19.6); echoed in later history by the campaigns of Alexander in Nuristan and Swat Kohistan.[116] The length of the campaign may be indicated by the statement that Śambara's forts were only stormed in the 40th year (2.12.11), although note the symbolic value of 40 (Witzel 1984). It should be pointed out, also, that several tribes on the Indo-Iranian Borderlands undergo this ordeal twice a year: they descend to the plains of the Panjab in the winter, only to return to the highlands of Afghanistan in the spring, in each case passing through hostile territory. A similar sentiment

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narrow ... we search for a way'; in the course of this move the Dāsa Śambara and Varcin (cf. Vṛcī-vat, Mūja-vat) were killed at Udavraja (cf. Daśa-vraja, Mūja-vat). All this, apparently, is said of the Indo-Aryan Śṛñjayas who were with the poet Bharadvāja at the time.

[116] Cf 2.13.8: 'Indra drove Nārmara with his treasures, in order to kill Pṛkṣa and Dāsaveśa, to the unmanned entry of úrjayantī' (which once again looks like a narrow mountain pass); also 4.30.14: 'You (Indra) brought down from the high mountain the Dāsa Śambara, son of Kulitara'.

is expressed in 6.24.8: 'mountains and flat lands are (both) accessible to Indra', i.e. passable only with divine help.

    As we shall explain below, the actual movement of Indo-Iranian speakers must have involved a succession of waves. The remnants of one early wave are the so-called Kāfīr (Nūristānī) people in northeast Afghanistan and the Chitral region (Robertson 1896; Edelberg and Jones 1979; Morgenstierne 1975; etc.) They retain forms of Indo-Aryan which had died out already in Vedic and early Iranian, thus by 1000 B.C. at the latest: e.g. Kāfīrī *dac>* :: Vedic *daśa*, Iranian *dasa* 'ten'. The speakers of Ṛgvedic and post-Ṛgvedic Skt, of Median and Persian, and of the various Avestan dialects are representatives of some of the *later* waves that entered the Indo-Iranian area. Their mutual relationship remains to be investigated in detail.[117] Grammatical and lexical features, for example, allow the placing of the speakers of Proto-Persian with those of the Vedic Indians at some distant point in the past,[118] while those of Old Avestan agree more with the Ṛgvedic, and those of Young Avestan with the later Vedic texts. This indicates a settlement at close

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[117] For some preliminary remarks see Witzel 1989a.

[118] Note also that the Persians (*Parsa*) have the same name as the *Parśu* (BŚS), the ancestors of the Pakhtuns. See for discussion below.

range, as well as extensive trade relations between the various tribes, which were disturbed, nay severed, by their migrations over various routes into Iran, Afghanistan and the Panjab. Secondary relations could have developed later in time, for example linguistic agreements between the West Iranian languages (Median and Persian) as opposed to East Iranian (various Bactrian, Arachosian and Kambojan[119] dialects).

It is important to stress the existence of several waves, as well as the process of a gradual trickling in of various clans, occasional larger groups organized into (temporary) polities, and even aggregations of tribes such as the *Pūrus*. The idea of a cataclismic invasion has, in fact, been given up long ago by Vedic scholars - the view that 'Aryan hordes' sacked the cities of the Harappans (Wheeler 1946 etc.), in particular, has found few takers lately. What is not yet clear is how the process of immigration actually took place.[120] As

[119] See Patañjali (150 BC) on *śavati* (Witzel 1980).

[120] Although the idea of two waves, one Inner and one Outer, has been popular since Hoernle's (1880) original formulation, it can easily be challenged. Outer band features can have their origin in the Middle Ages, even if preserving some archaic features. Likewise, the central (later Hindustani/Hindi/Urdu) area could have developed innovative, unifying

suggested in my previous paper (Chapter 4), even a limited number of Indo-Aryan speakers could have triggered a process of acculturation, especially if they enjoyed a dominant social position due to their superior (military) technology. By the time of their arrival the Indus Civilization had already disintegrated and this would have facilitated their movement.

In view of these facts, it would not be surprising if physical anthropologists failed to unearth any 'Aryan' skeletons - not only would the newcomers have been few in number but they would have already had mixed physiological characteristics due to their interaction with a variety of groups along their route of migration. However, lack of their physical presence is no argument against the existence of some migration in the past.[121] I believe that some information does exists on this subject even in the Ṛgveda, as outlined above, even if only as the occasional 'snapshot' of a long time period between the arrival of the Indo-Aryans and the emergence of Iron Age civilization after

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features that simply did not spread to the periphery. It would help, of course, to be able to date and situate the texts in their geographical milieu, something for which a beginning has now been made (Witzel 1989a).

[121] Note that the Huns have been unattested to archaeologically until recently.

c. 1200 B.C. (represented by such texts as the Atharvaveda, Sāmaveda and Yajurveda *mantras* of the so-called Mantra period, comprising the second oldest layer of the Vedic corpus). In view of recent attempts (Biswas 1990, Shaffer 1984) to deny that any movement of Indo-European into South Asia has occurred, such a summary of the evidence is particularly necessary.

4. Ṛgvedic history: the Indo-Aryans in the Panjab

Once they arrived on the plains of the Panjab, the Indo-Aryans had further battles to fight. The name of one chieftain, *dasyave vṛka* 'wolf for the Dasyus' (8.49.9, 55.1, 56.1-2) is indicative of their principal enemy. Further (2.11.18): 'for the *Ārya* you opened the light; the Dasyu was left behind, on the left (which can also mean 'to the North', and indicates once again that Vedic poets faced the east - their presumed goal - in contemplating the world.) Still in book 2: 'Indra destroyed the Dāsic forts which had Blacks in their laps; he created the land and waters for Manu' (2.20.7); 'Indra dispersed the 100,000 men of Varcin' (2.14.6)

Further references are found in another of the early family books: 'You (Indra) overcame for Ṛjiśvan, the son of Vidathin, the mighty Pipru Mṛgaya. You put down the 50,000 Blacks. You wore thin the forts

like a garment' (4.16.13); 'I (Indra) at once destroyed the 99 forts of Śambara ... when I helped Divodāsa Atithigva' (4.26.3); 'Indra destroyed 100 stone forts for the offering Divodāsa' (4.30.20); 'Indra put to sleep with his sorcery 30,000 Dāsa for Dabhīti' (4.30.31). Then, in book 6 we find that the Dāsa Namuci (a demon) was killed for Namī Sāpya (6.20.6); that the autumnal forts of the Dāsas were destroyed by the Pūrus under Purukutsa (6.20.10); or that the forts of Śambara were destroyed for Divodāsa who was with the poet Bharadvāja (6.31.4). Further references are also made to the initial entry into the Subcontinent, which have already been cited in the previous section.

Book 7, the latest of the family books, also contains some explicit descriptions of campaigns, in particular 7.5.3: 'Out of fear of you, the black tribes moved away, leaving their possessions behind, without a fight, when you Agni Vaiśvānara, shone, flaming for Pūru and breaking their forts'. See also 7.5.6: 'You, Agni, drove out the Dasyu from their home; creating wide light for the Aryas'. The march to the plains is also summed up in several stanzas, such as 1.130.7-8, 1.131.4-5, 3.31, 7.100.4 etc.

The actual identity of the enemies is not always easy to establish; they are often described, as even in

modern times,[122] through a clever mix of myth and reality. Demons and earthly enemies are particularly hard to distinguish, and such names as *Cumuri, Dhuni, Pipru, Śambara* and *Śuṣṇa* obviously represent composite identities even if in some cases human foes and their forts are clearly meant (e.g. 6.20.7). In general, the victory of the Indo-Aryans over their earthly enemies is likened to the winning of light from darkness, or to the extraction of water by the agency of Indra's mighty bolt. The prizes of battle are repeatedly listed: 'seed, water, and bodily progeny, the sun' (6.31.1); 'for own bodies, water and sun' (6.46.4); the light (2.11.8; 7.5.6 etc.)

The aboriginal tribes encountered usually have strange, non-Indo-Aryan names: *Cumuri, Dhuni, Pipru, Śambara, Śuṣṇa*, etc.. In many cases the combination -*ṇḍ*- is a dead give-away: *Śaṇḍika* (2.30.8 - but see *Śaṇḍa*, below). The name Varo Suṣāman (8.23.28, 24.28 - cf. 8.60.18) stands out by being half-Indo-Aryan and half wrong as far as *sandhi* is concerned (-*o*- should not stand before -*s*-). Sometimes a local name is explicitly identified as

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[122] Cf. the 'foreign devils' of the Chinese; the 'Great Satan' of the modern Middle East, etc. As in any mythmaking, one may assume that, in some cases, even demonic enemies were real human beings in the (not even always) remote past.

being Dāsa, as in the case of *Balbūtha Tarukṣa* (8.46.32)
which stands out on account both of the rare use of
-*b*- and of the structure of the word.[123] *Bṛsaya* is
likewise described as follows: '(The goddess) Sarasvatī
... put down the ones decrying the gods, the progeny
of the tricky *Bṛsaya*. You won for us the land' (6.61.3).
Another suspicious name is *Śṛbiṇḍa*,[124] which is
mentioned, interestingly, along with *Anarśani, Pipru,
Dāsa Ahīśu* (8.32.2) and *Arbuda* (8.32.3)

Sometimes, however, the enemies' names sound
Indo-Aryan, even if they are described as Dāsas or
'Blacks'[125] This may be explained by the frequent
conflation of mythical enemies, representing forces of

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[123] There is neither a root $\sqrt{balb}$, nor any suffix
  resembling -*ūtha*, in Sanskrit. Nor is any combi-
  nation be it *balbū-tha, bal-bū-tha*, etc possible.

[124] See Kuiper 1993 (forthcoming).

[125] The meaning of 'black' in the Ṛgveda represents a
  difficult problem; while it would be easy to assume
  reference to skin colour, this would go against the
  spirit of the hymns: for Vedic poets 'black' always
  signifies evil, and any other menaing would be
  secondary in these contexts. Skin color has, of course,
  played a significant role in Hindu society: cf. the
  term *varṇa* ('color') used for social groups even in
  the Ṛgveda. A glance at modern marriage
  advertisements will amply confirm this obsession.

darkness/evil with real adversaries.For example, the Dāsa Ahīśu (8.32.2) has a perfectly good Indo-Aryan name, meaning 'having quickness like a dragon'. The fact that the Indo-Aryans fought each other as often as they fought non-Indo-Aryans easily explains the apparent anomaly: cf. 4.30.18: 'You (Indra) also killed the two *Āryas*, Arṇa and Citraratha, on the other side of the *Sarayu*'; 6.26.5: Abhyāvartin Cāyamāna (a *Pārthava*) defeats the Vāraśikhas of the Vṛcīvats[126] on the *Hariyūpīyā*; also 6.27.6: '130 Vṛcīvats were killed by Daivavāta on the *Yavyāvatī* [=Zhob?]'; and 6.31.3: 'Indra, ... beat down Dāsa *and* Ārya enemies'.

The opposite is also at times true, for example in 6.63.9 where a typically Dāsa name (*Śaṇḍa*) is included in the list of Aryan offerers, or in 6.45.31-33 where *Bṛbu* is said to be 'high above the *Paṇis* on the *Gaṅgā*. *Araṭva Akṣa* in 8.46.27 is apparently a *Nahuṣa* presenting offerings. Such names testify to the process of acculturation, which gathered momentum after the immigration and initial conquest and to which reference has already been made in my previous chapter.

Finally, in view of the discussion of hydronomy and place names in the previous paper, it is also

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[126] The name is open to debate; cf. *Varcin*, or the -*vant* suffix in *Mūjavant* ('the mountain having *mūja*').

interesting that the Indo-Aryans could not, apparently, pronounce local names, just as non-Indo-Aryan speakers had difficulty speaking Vedic Sanskrit. A clear example is that of *kīsta/śīṣṭa* (8.53.4).[127] The survival of non-Indo-Aryan place names (though of few river names) in areas such as Mahārāṣṭra provides one support for the theory that the speakers of Dravidian and other languages had a much wider distribution in protohistoric times. Combined with the evidence of substratum influences on even Old Indo-Aryan it suggests that language replacement proceeded principally through acculturation, although also aided by the dominant social position of the speakers of the incoming language.

5. The principal tribes

5a. The 'Five Peoples'

It is interesting to note that this term (*pañca jana*) and its variants (*pañca kṛṣṭi/pañca kṣiti/pañca carṣaṇi/pañca*

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[127] Note that there are many more cases which show this variation, not necessarily attested to inside the Ṛgveda: names in *K/Ś* such as *Karkoṭa/Śarkoṭa* (PS), and the group *kambara/la/ Śambara, kambu/śambu, Kamboja*/Greek *ambautai*.

mānuṣa) - usually held to include the Yadu, Turvaśa, Anu, Druhyu and Pūru - occur only once in the old book 2, as well as in book 4, clearly in the context of the Aśvamedha ritual,[128] which even in the Ṛgveda seems to involve the establishment of supremacy over one's neighbouring tribes in all directions. Cf. 4.38.10: 'Dadhikrā has spread himself over the Five Peoples'. Dadhikrā appears to have been the personal horse of the Pūru king Trasadasyu, who is not a very early figure in the context of the Ṛgveda.

Even book 3 has the expression only once, books 5 and 8[129] twice; books 1, 7 and 9 thrice, book 6 four times and the late book 10 seven times. After recalculating the frequency of the term taking into account the size of the various books, one may conclude that it referred to people already settled on the plains of the Panjab. Newcomers (in books 3 and 7) or those settled on the Borderlands (books 2 and 4) do not seem to like using it. Instead, some speak of the 'Seven tribes',[130] such as the poet Nabhāka in 8.39.8 although he (8.40.7) also knows of the 'Five Peoples'. According to 8.41.2, Nabhāka lived at the confluence of the 7 rivers (of the Panjab). In one case the Five

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[128] See the Aśvamedha hymns 1.162-163.

[129] At 8.32.22 with the poet Medhātithi Kāṇva.

[130] This corresponds well to the Avestan concept of the 7 *Karevar*.

peoples even seem to be in conflict with Nabhāka's group; cf also the Āyu in 6.46.7, as well as Indra and the '3 times Nahuṣ' in 6.26.6. All of this is in need of further study.

By contrast, the Pūrus, who along with the Bharatas appeared on the scene later, began to use the designation 'Five Peoples' immediately: as discussed above, they probably regarded themselves as being located at the centre. In the later books the tribes mentioned include both the older 'Five Peoples' as well as the newcomers, namely the Pūrus and the Bharatas.

5b. The Yadu-Turvaśa

Although information on the membership of the 'Five Peoples' is thus sketchy, some data can be collected from the Ṛgveda. The Yadu-Turvaśa do not appear in book 2, probably because the latter focusses on the Northwest, in the mountains and in the passes leading into South Asia from Afghanistan, where the Bharata chiefs Divodāsa and Atithigva are fighting the local chiefs (e.g. Śambara), as well as other Indo-Aryan speaking tribes. Although Turvīti and Vayya may be connected with the Turvaśa, this is no more than conjecture: they crossed the Sindhu when the gods stopped it (or, generally, 'let the Sindhu flow northwards' - 2.13.12, 2.15.5-6?), and defeated the men

of Āyu, Kutsa and Atithigva (2.4.7) who belonged to the Pūru-Bharata alliance. In addition to the similarities in names, a connection (if not equivalance) between Turvaśa and Turvīti may be indicated by the following statement in 1.54.6: (Indra) you helped the manly Yadu and Turvaśa, you helped the Turvīti and Vayya.

In book 4, the Yadu-Turvaśa appear only once, in 4.30.17, where they are saved from drowning by Indra (an event also recounted in a standard phrase in 2.15.5 and 5.31.8). This book deals with the traditional heroes and enemies of the Indo-Aryans in the northwest (Śambara, Varcin, and Divodāsa) but also lists the rivers Sarayu and Vipāś, the latter being firmly identified with the Beas in the Panjab. In book 5, the abovementioned verse celebrating their rescue from drowning provides the only account of the Yadu-Turvaśa. In book 6, however, they are more prominent, being at times friends and at times enemies of the Pūru-Bharatas. Indeed, in many respects book 6 is a pro-Turvaśa and Yadu book. An important statement (quoted above) regarding their migrations from distant regions occurs here (6.20.12 =1.174.9), and they are frequently associated with the Anu, Druhyu and Pūru, thus making up the 'Five Peoples'.

The Kāṇva portion of book 8 is even more favourable to them. Thus, in 8.10.5, the Druhyu, Anu, Turvaśa and Yadu are compared with the Aśvins

staying in the east and west (poet Pragātha Kāṇva).
Indra's deeds are well known to them, as shown by
8.45.27 (poet Triśoka Kāṇva), and they are praised in
turn for their generous sacrificial gifts: 'we have
thought about the gift of 100 horses of Kuruṅga ...
among the presents of the Turvaśa' (8.4.19). In the
same hymn (8.4.7) they are remembered as important
tribes, and Indra is said to be among them (8.4.1) -
although he is also among the Ruśama (8.4.2), a tribe
later associated with the Bharatas.[131]

To conclude, the Yadu-Turvaśa (and the Anu-
Druhyu) are regarded as settled in the Panjab at the
time of the arrival of the Pūrus and Bharatas.[132] They

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[131] 8.4. appears to contain the reminiscences of Kāṇva
Devātithi, comprized some time after the
immigration of the Pūru-Bharata. Similarly, 1.18.8,
where the Yadu-Turvaśa, Anu-Druhyu and Pūru all
occur together.

[132] Their precise location is not well known: RV 8.10
lists them from W to E as Druhyu, Anu (no metrical
reason) and Turvaśa, Yadu (order dictated by metre).
The Anu live on the Paruṣṇī in 8.74.15 (*in a Kāṇva
book*). The Druhyu may be situated in the NW; the
Epics later place them in Gandhāra. The Turvaśa are
linked to the Pañcālas in ŚB 13.5.4.16. The Yadu are
identified with the Yakṣu of 7.18.14 by Schmidt

are prominent in books 8, 6 and 5 - which must be regarded as at least partly pro-Turvaśa and Yadu - but yield to the Pūrus and Bharatas in books 3 and 7 (as well as 1 and 10). However, remarkably few names of their chieftains survive in the Ṛgveda. Clearly, this corpus was composed primarily by the Pūrus and Bharatas and spans the story of their immigration: the initial stages (beginning with their stay still on the western side of the *Sindhu*) in books 4, 5, 6 and 8 and the final stage (including the defection of the Pūrus and the victory of the Bharatas in the battle of the 10 kings) in books 3 and 7. This story is to be elaborated next.

5c. The Pūru

The Pūru appear to be a broad conglomerate of tribes, to which at one time the Bharatas also belonged. They could boast, even in the Ṛgveda, of a long royal genealogy (see below) with a possible side-branch. Both they and the Bharatas seem to belong to the Āyu, whom the BŚS (quoted above) described as the ancestors of the Āyava[133] tribes: i.e. the ones (Kuru-Pañcāla, Kosala-Videha) who 'moved forward' [from

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(1980); they stay on the Yamunā with their chief Bheda at the conclusion of the batle of the 10 kings.

[133] Cf *Āyu = Nahuṣasya viśpati* in RV 1.31.11.

the northwest of South Asia into its heartland], instead of 'staying behind' as the Āmāvāsya tribes (Gandhāri, Araṭa, Parśu) did. As I have just related, they (along with the Bharatas) occupy centre-stage in much of the Ṛgveda, succeeding earlier groups of migrants such as the Turvaśa and the Yadu.

Although the old book 2 deals with the Pūru only in passing, in book 4 the principal chieftain is already Trasadasyu, the 'king' of the Pūru (especially in the Dadhikrā hymns 4.38-4.43, which give his ancestry). In 4.42 he is notably called Paurukutsya,[134] the son of Purukutsa. In 1.63.7 Purukutsa himself is clearly related to the Pūrus, not to mention the Bharatas:[135] 'You Indra broke seven forts for Purukutsa; as you Indra lay down the (enemies) for Sudās like offering grass, you created for Pūru liberation from distress'. Both seemed at one time to belong to the same tribe, and in book 6 were still clearly allies. In 6.18.13 Kutsa,

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[134] It is difficult to make sense of the frequently occurring appellation 'Kutsa'. Is he the famed son of Indra, in which case Trasadasyu would enjoy multiple divine ancestry as the son of Mitrā-varuṇa as well as the grandson of Indra - see Schmidt 1992)? Or is Kutsa a short form of Purukutsa? Note also 4.16 where Kutsa is the son of Arjuna, 4.26.1.

[135] *Pace* Geldner and his notes *ad* 1.174.2, 6.20.10 (4.21.10), 7.18.13.

Āyu and Atithigva were handed over to Tūrvayāṇa: i.e. (Puru)kutsa, the father of Trasadasyu and the 'king' of the Pūrus (cf 1.147.2-3) and his apparent contemporary, Atithigva the chief of the Bharatas, were both defeated by the otherwise little known chief Tūrvayāṇa (cf. 1.53.10, 1.147.2-3, 2.14.6) of the Turvaśas(?).[136] By book 7, of course, the situation has changed as the Pūrus and the Bharatas have parted ways. In the hymn celebrating the battle of the 10 kings the Pūrus are among the victims of Sudās (7.18.13; also the Turvaśa and Yadu in 7.18.14). Even the much later JB (3.238) preserves this tradition of enmity when it states that Bharata were hard pressed by the Ikṣvāku, a subtribe of the Pūru, on the western side of the Sindhu.

The testimony of the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa also confirms that both the Pūru king Trasadasyu and the Bharata king Divodāsa were still living on the western side of the *Sindhu* during the composition of Book 4. An exception is 4.38.10 where Dadhikrā is said to have spread his force all over the 'Five Peoples', although some these may themselves have lived on the west

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[136] For similar formations involving tribes and their chiefs cf: Kuru: Kaurayāṇa Pākasthāman 6.23.21; Bhṛgu: Bhṛgavāṇa 1.71.4; Pūru: Paura 8.3 (as well as, of course, Purukutsa); Kaurame > Kaurave (see Hoffmann 1975: 6-7).

bank of the Indus. This verse may have preserved the
initial incursion of the Pūru ruler Trasadasyu into the
land of the Seven Streams, celebrated in his
Aśvamedha ritual (4.38-43) where he moulded the
defeated Anu-Druhyu and Turvaśa-Yadu into the
'Five Peoples'.

Book 5 still presents the Pūru in a favourable light
- cf. 5.17.1: 'Pūru shall call Agni' - and even contains a
rudimentary genealogy, the only one of its kind in the
Ṛgveda:

    (*Durgaha)[137]   G r a n d s o n s :   *n a p ā t o
durgahasya* 8.65.12
       |
    Girikṣit   cf. 5.33.8: Gairikṣita
       |
    Purukutsa   5.33.8: Trasadasyu, son of
Purukutsa
        |
    Trasadasyu   5.27.3: Trasadasyu who for
the 9th

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[137] In all probability a horse, not a human being. See
   Schmidt 1992. But, consider his grandsons; cf.
   Geldner (1951) *ad loc.* and *ad* 4.42.8

Contemporary (for at time asks for your favour=Tṛyaruṇa?[138]
    least part of the book)

       |

      Tṛkṣi   10.22.7: Trasadasyu's son

Later kings:
      Trivṛṣan   5.27: (Trāsadasyava?)
      Tṛyaruṇa   5.27: (perhaps a descendant of Trasadasyu)
      Aśvamedha   5.27: his friend?

In book 6 (at least partially a pro-Yadu-Turvaśa book) the Pūru are already frequently mentioned together with the Druhyu, Yadu and Turvaśa, as in 6.46.7-8 where Tṛkṣi, known elsewhere as the son of Trasadasyu, is mentioned in the same breath as the wealth of the Pūru or of the Druhyu, the Nahuṣa tribes

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[138] This hymn has to be divided into two parts, and may refer to two different times and chiefs, Tṛyaruṇa and Trasadasyu. Cf. Geldner (1951) *ad loc.* Oldenberg (1888: 197) regards the hymn as violating the verse numbers at the end of a series: it has to be divided into *tṛcas* and may be a real addition.

and the 'Five Peoples'.[139] Some of their history is
further revealed by this book. Their earlier chieftain
had been Purukutsa, the father of Trasadasyu who is
no longer mentioned here, suggesting that it was a
post-Trasadasyu book, even if Purukutsa is still
remembered (in 6.20.11) as destroying 'autumnal forts'
in the Afghan mountains. The last contemporary ruler
mentioned in book 6 is Tṛkṣi. As already mentioned,
the Pūrus and the Bharatas are still allies at this stage
(cf. 6.18.13 discussed above).

Although book 7 is strongly pro-Bharata, it
provides several, conflicting glimpses of the Pūru.
Thus, a comparatively late hymn, 7.96.2,[140] places
them on the Sarasvatī. The author of this hymn was
descended from none other than Vasiṣṭha who had

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[139] Oldenberg (1888: 197 sqq.) regards this hymn,
also, as one that violates the order at the end of a
series, and as one to be divided into *pragāthas*.

[140] Once again to be divided into *pragāthas*, with
some additions (Oldenberg 1888: 106). The
testimony of this hymn corroborates 8.64: here, in
verse 10 the Pūrus are mentioned just prior to
Sāryanāvant, *Suṣoma* (= Soan?) and *Ārjikīya*,
prominent geographical features in the Eastern
Panjab, where a king *Poros* (named after his tribe as
usual - cf. Pāniṇi, etc.) was in historical times to defy
yet another invader's advance into South Asia.

been present at the battle of ten kings, where he prayed for the 'defeat of the Pūru who speak ill at the sacrifice' (7.18.13). In another hymn, 7.5.3, Vasiṣṭha himself praises Agni for vanquishing the 'black' enemies of the Pūrus[141] - this really ought to have been composed for the Bharatas, instead. Inconsistencies also appear in hymn 7.19.3 which looks back on the ten kings' battle but mentions Indra's help for both Sudās and Trasadasyu, the son of Purukutsa, and also refers to the Pūrus' winning of land (for another possible synchronism see 1.63.7). All this fits the picture of shifting alliances, to which Vasiṣṭha himself alludes in 7.18. At one time the Bharata were a subdivision of the Pūrus - even their king Divodāsa is called a Pūru in 1.130.7 - and split off only at an opportune moment to further their own ends. The 10 kings' battle marks the ultimate success of this policy.

After their defeat at the hands of the Bharatas, the Pūrus no longer play a central role in South Asian history. They are said to dwell on the Sarasvatī in 7.96.2 (once also on the Suṣoma = Soan (?) but by historical times have moved slightly to the West as Alexander encountered the local chief *Poros* on the Jhelum (Hydaspes). That *Poros* belongs to the Pūru is

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[141] Similar successes are recounted in 1.131.4, where the Pūrus crossed 5 streams, doubtless with divine aid.

suggested by the (in South Asia) frequently attested practice of naming princes (or even territories) after their clan: Pāṇini does it for the Kamboja (cf. Iranian *Kambujiya*).

5d. The Bharata conquest

All this brings us, conveniently, to the Bharatas, who had risen to a dominant position by the time the family books were put together. As already pointed out, in book 2 they were seen fighting their way through the NW mountain passes (under Divodāsa), opposed by enemies both Aryan (e.g. Arśasāna) and aboriginal (e.g. Śambara).[142] Their progress was clearly tortuous: in 2.14.7 (cf. 6.18.3, 1.53.9-10), after the slaughter of thousands of men Āyu, Kutsa and Atithigva were handed over by Indra to the (Turvaśa?) chief Turvayāṇa.[143] In general, book 2 is replete with

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[142] A reference to the goddess Sarasvatī in 2.3.8 probably also refers to an ancestral home in Afghanistan, being reminiscent of the Avestan river *Harax^{v}aiti*, rather than referring to the modern Ghaggar-Hakra in the Panjab.

[143] Further evidence of a Bharata connection with Āyu is provided by Bhṛgu's offer for Agni among the Āyu, the ancestor of the Bharata (2.4.2 also 2.36.2: 'drink sons of Bharata').

small tribes making inroads into the country of the Seven Streams (2.13.8, 2.14.6). Nevertheless, the Āyu tribes did move on, as shown by, for example, 1.131.5: 'The Uśij, we and the Āyu crossed stream after stream'; by 10.49.5, where the Āyu defeat the aboriginal chief Veśa; and by 7.5.6, where Agni drove the Dasyus from their homes.

All of this is well described by the poet Parucchepa Daivodāsa, whose name makes him at least a member of Divodāsa's tribe, but who is most likely his son.[144] His placement at 1.127-139 is of interest as it associates him with the Āṅgirasa (second) part of RV 1. Geldner (1951) notes that the poet is not mentioned in his hymns, but that he counts himself amongst the Divodāsa at 1.130.10, and among the Pūru at 1.131.4. Pūru is especially mentioned at 1.129.5; Pūru Divodāsa at 1.130.7.[145] All this attests once again to the close relationship of the Pūrus and Bharatas, at least in the initial stages of their move into the Subcontinent.

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[144] There are other *rājarṣis*, for example Devavāta/Devaśravas.

[145] Note also Bhāvya living on the *Sindhu*. Oldenberg (1888) notes that 1.133 is to be divided into 1-5 and 6-7; the first part is young but the order is correct as the last two stanzas are the last and shortest Indra hymn of the series. Hymn 1.135 is to be divided into *tṛcas*; 1.139 is doubtful.

It is Divodāsa, who finally brings the Bharatas succesfully over the passes into South Asia, having defeated the Dāsa chief Śambara in the 40th year of campaigns.[146] Śambara, who is named as the son of Kulitara, was probably an aboriginal tribal chief in the mountainous Borderland zone; although later elevated to the status of a demon, in the comparatively old book 4 he still appears human, and his father's name is at least half-Indo-Aryan.[147] Allusions to his hill-fortresses are numerous (e.g. his 99 forts in 6.47.2. Cf also 6.43.1, 6.61.1). All the same, book 4 still places the Bharatas on the far (western) shore of the *Sindhu*.

By book 5 the Bharatas have acquired prominence, but, as already related, they remain allied to the Pūrus.[148] In book 6, of the Bhāradvāja,[149] the

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[146] 2.12.11.   But, see Witzel 1984 for the mythical significance of the number 40. In 4.30.20 he is also aided by Indra in a similar exploit - that he is mentioned in the same hymn as Yadu and Turvaśa (4.30.17) is due to the *tṛca* character of the hymn. 4.27-41 (Vāmadeva) all have violations of order at the end of a series (Oldenberg 1888: 197 sqq); 4.30-32 are hymns to be divided into *tṛcas*.

[147] Cf also Bṛsaya, 6.61.3; the combination -*b*- + -*ṛ*- is interesting - see Kuiper 1991.

[148] E.g. 5.11.1: '(Agni) is shining for the Bharatas' and 5.54.14: 'You (Marut) bring a horse (*arvat*) for the

Bharatas and their king Divodāsa play a central role. The latter's allies - according to the late[150] hymn 6.47 - were Prastoka (6.47.22), Aśvattha (6.47.24) who gave gifts to the Atharvans, and Śṛñjaya's son who gave to the Bhāradvāja poets (6.47.25). The same hymn also notes the defeat of the Dāsa Varcin at Udavraja[151] in 6.47.21. Another important battle is related in 6.27. 5 and 8, where Cāyamāna and his son Abhyāvartin (also called Pārthava) defeated the progeny of Varaśikha on the *Hariyūpīyā*, as well as 130 armed Vṛcīvats on the *Yavyāvatī*.[152] These heroes fight together with Śṛñjaya

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Bharata', alongside 5.17.1: 'The Pūru shall call Agni'. On the assumption that the books were composed within the life-span of a few generations, the Pūru do not seem to be regarded as hostile here.

[149] Mentioned alongside Divodāsa in 6.16.5 & 6.31.4 (as past fact; 6.31 and 6.32 are composed by Suhotra Bhāradvāja).

[150] Due to violation of order at the end of a series: Oldenberg (1888: 197 sqq) regards this hymn - composed by Garga Bhāradvāja - as a real addition.

[151] Cf. *Daśa-vraja*, *Vṛcīvat* at 6.27.5-6; also the foreign name *Mūja-vat* with an Indo-Aryan suffix.

[152] The combination allows the location of both rivers in eastern Afghanistan on the premise (see Hillebrandt 1913: 49 sqq.) that the Yavyāvatī is the

Daivavāta who is reported to have defeated Turvaśa in the same hymn (6.27.7).

5e. Sudās and the Bharata rise to supremacy

Although it was Divodāsa who established a foothold in South Asia, Bharata preeminence in the Panjab was established by his grandson Sudās Paijavana. The early part of the movement is described mostly in book 3, a major Bharata book. Apart from Sudās, the Bharatas Devaśravas and Devavāta are also mentioned.[153] This book was composed by Viśvāmitra (and his clan), the *purohita* of Sudās until his ouster by Vasiṣṭha, the reputed author of much of book 7. It praises the dominant position of the Bharata in an area more or less corresponding with the later Kurukṣetra,[154]

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modern Zhob. The equation of Ṛgvedic *Hariyūpīyā* with the modern town of Harappa (suggested by Wheeler (1968: 27) as well as by Allchin and Allchin (1968: 155)) is totally without basis; -*p*- would have disappeared in the Prakrit and New Indo-Aryan stages of Panjābi.

[153] In hymn 3.23.2 and 3; Devavāta is probably the father of Śṛñjaya Daivavāta (4.15.4, 6.27.7), again indicating the link between Bharata and Śṛñjaya..

[154] Defined in the Ṛgveda (3.23.4) by the naming of the 3 rivers *Āpācyā*, *Dṛṣadvatī* and *Sarasvatī*.

culminating in an *aśvamedha* by Sudās to commemorate his triumphs in a late hymn.[155] He overcame foes in the north, east and west in establishing the Bharata realm. However, he had no enemies to the south, where the Khaṇḍava forest was located (see TA 5.1), being inhabited by despised aborigines called the *Kīkaṭa* (3.53.14), led by Pramaganda and Naicaśākha.[156]

   The principal event of Book 3, is the crossing of the Beas and the Sutlej (*Vipāś*, *Śutudrī*) with the help of Viśvāmitra in 3.33. Similar river crossings are mentioned occasionally elsewhere also (Kwella 1973),

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[155] I.e. 3.53.11-14. Another real addition according to Oldenberg (1888) along with 3.52. Note also that 3.23 and 3.52 belong together. 3.53.15-16 mentions the Jamadagnis and the teachers of Viśvāmitra. For similar family hymns see 6.47 and 7.33.

[156] It should be pointed out that the Kīkaṭa earned scorn for cultural reasons, namely their neglect of proper oblations: 'What is the use of cows among the Kīkaṭa if they do not make offerings with the milk they obtain'. They are still frequently misplaced in Magadha (McDonell and Keith 1912, Schwartzberg 1975), even though their territory is clearly described as being to the south of Kurukṣetra, in eastern Rajasthan or western Madhya Pradesh, and Magadha is beyond the geographical horizon of the Ṛgveda.

usually involving the temporary (accidental) damming of a river to hold back the waters. This put the Bharatas within reach of Kurukṣetra. Yet, their victory was not immediate, as other tribes began to unite against them, either due to the intrigues of the ousted Viśvāmitra, or simply because of intratribal resentment. This led to the famous battle of the ten kings which, however, is not mentioned by book 3, as Viśvāmitra (its author) had by then been replaced by Vasiṣṭha as the *purohita* of Sudās. There is even the possibility that it was Viśvāmitra who - in an act of revenge - forged the alliance against his former chief. Whatever the reason, however, the alliance failed and the Pūrus were completely ousted (7.8.4 etc) along with Viśvāmitra (= Bhṛgu, 7.18.6).[157] Although surviving as a power in the Panjab, they became peripheral to the subsequent course of events. As the battle is pivotal and, probably for that very reason, well documented, it is worth exploring in some detail below.

But first a few remarks about book 7 and its authors, Vasiṣṭha and his descendants who count themselves among the Aṅgiras (7.42.1, 7.52.3). Vasiṣṭha also claims divine ancestry having been procreated by Mitrāvaruṇa and Urvaśī (7.33.1); it is mentioned that

[157] Viśvāmitra is, via his teacher Gāthin, a Jamadagni, i.e., a Bhṛgu (see table above!).

he came from across the Sindhu, i.e. from eastern Iran (7.33.3). He was the leader of the priestly clan of the Tṛtsu: 'You Indra and Varuṇa sought to help Sudās ... while the Tṛtsu, walking about in white, composing poems, performed the sacrifice' (7.83.8); also 'The ones walking about in white, with the braid on the right side ... I cannot assist my Vasiṣṭhas from far away' (7.33.1 - an additional hymn).

As to the battle hymn (7.18), it has been given prominence in Vedic studies, and may have unduly coloured our understanding of the period. We see the opposition of the Bharatas and the 'Five Peoples' as typical, yet the alliance against Sudās was temporary, as was an earlier one of 20 chieftains (perhaps?) at the time of Atithigva (1.53), presaging the *dāśarājña*. The crucial point is the alleged change of sides by the Pūrus who were formerly allies of the Bharatas, as well as by a Bhṛgu, who was probably Viśvāmitra, a Bhṛgu pupil.[158] This event has only come down to us from a Bharata point of view (who were, after all, the victors!); it is more likely, in fact, that it was the Bharatas who

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[158] The mutual hatred of Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra is proverbial: for the former's protests against alleged sorcery see 7.21.4; 7.34.8; 7.61.5; 7.81.1a; 7.104. Cf also 10.66.14, composed in Vasiṣṭha's spirit (Geldner 1951).

severed the alliance and struck out on their own with a
new *purohita*, Vasiṣṭha.[159]

The geography of the battle hymn (and later
summaries as in 7.33) clearly reflects a look back at the
immigration of the Bharatas, composed - or rather,
assembled[160] - during the time of the chieftain Bheda
and of the grandsons of Devavat of the Sudās lineage
(7.18.22). The process began beyond the *Sindhu*,
which Vasiṣṭha crosses in 7.33.9. Then came the battle
of the ten kings on the Paruṣṇī (the modern Ravī in
Pakistan), near Māṇuṣa, a location 'in the back' (west)
of Kurukṣetra, which the Bharatas won by breaking a
(natural) dyke on the river. Their eventual arrival on
the Yamunā and the defeat of the local chief Bheda are
finally chronicled on 7.18.19. The whole process refers

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[159] Mentioned as Sudās' *purohita* not only in 7.83.4,
but also in ŚŚS 16.11.14; he appears as the typical
purohita in 10.150.5.

[160] It is interesting to note that later texts show
confusion about the participants in the battle,
notably JB 3.244, which speaks of Pratṛd instead of
his descendant Sudās. Such confusion is not
uncommon in bardic tradition; parallels may be seen
in the case of Theodoric and Ermanric in Gothic
history. The battle of twenty kings in RV 1.53 may
also point to such a shift in tradition.

to the origins of the Bharatas and Vasiṣṭha[161] in eastern Iran; their move into the Subcontinent is also reflected elsewhere in book 7 (7.5.3, 6)[162] and summed up in 7.33.3: 'thus he (Indra) transgressed with them (the Bharata) the Sindhu, thus he soon killed Bheda in (the Yamunā battle), thus he helped Sudās in the Ten Kings' Battle ...' Although they reached as far east as the Yamunā, however, their

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[161] Compare Avestan Vahišta with Vedic Vasiṣṭha. Also, in 7.33.9 it is not Manu but Yama who is regarded as the first man, which agrees with Yima's role in Iran; cf RV 10.13.4 and see also 1.83.5 (composed by Gotama Rāhugaṇa/Uśanas Kāvya).

[162] Here it appears as if the Pūru were still allies of the Bharatas: cf. 7.5.3, quoted above, where Agni 'shines for Pūru' in destroying non-Aryan opponents.

epicentre was in the area around the Sarasvatī,[163] previously occupied by the now defeated Pūru.[164]

The most detailed, and ingenious, reinterpretation of the battle hymn, RV 7.18,[165] was undertaken by H-P. Schmidt (1980). The hymn is clearly a late addition; although Oldenberg (1888: 197 sqq) regards it as a real addition. Even the Anukramaṇī says that it was composed by Vasiṣṭha (verses 1-9) and his sons (10-14). Be that as it may, along with an account of the battle of 20 kings and 60,099 warriors (1.53), it served as the prototype of the Mahābhārata

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[163] Prominent in book 7: it flows from the mountains to the sea (7.95.2) - which would put the battle of 10 kings prior to 1500 BC or so, due to the now well documented desiccation of the Sarasvatī (Yash Pal *et al.* 1984), it is the seventh river, her mother is the Sindhu (7.33.6), and so on. Two hymns (7.95-96) are composed solely in praise of the Sarasvatī. @@but RV 3.33 Beas + Sutlej.

[164] Which is probably why the later king, *Poros*, (named, no doubt after his tribe), was found by Alexander slightly to the west of Kurukṣetra, cf Arrianus, Indikē 5.8 etc., cf. 5.21.

[165] As alluded to previously, the battle is also treated in 7.33 (another addtional hymn, containing reminiscences by Vasiṣṭha's sons) and in 7.83 which partly quotes Vasiṣṭha's prayer during the battle.

battle of Epic fame.[166] The opposing forces may be summarized in the following table:

Principal protagonists:

	?(Trasadasyu? 7.19.3)[167]	Sudās Paijavana,
		son of Divodāsa
Priests / poets: /Vasiṣṭha[168]	Bhṛgu (= Viśvāmitra?)	Tṛtsu
	Note: 'old Kavaśa' and the chieftain of the Druhyu	
Allies:	- Turvaśa, Yakṣu (= Yadu?)	Bharata
	- Druhyu; Anu and Druhyu with 60060 men[169]	
	- Matsya, Paktha, Bhalāna,	

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[166] Note the shifting of the tradition already in the early YV Saṃhitās: MS 3:40.6, JB 3.244, PB 15.3.7 have substituted other names for Sudās and Vasiṣṭha

[167] Typically, the name of the principal opponent is not even mentioned - it is *not* Bheda, as Geldner (1951, *ad* 7.33.3) thinks.

[168] Helped by the Yamunā as well! - cf. verse 19.

[169] A standard figure: cf. 60069 men in 1.53.

Alina, Viṣāṇin, Śiva (= Śibi?)
- Pṛṣṇigu's; 2 Vaikarṇa[170]

Later, on the Yamunā: - Aja, Śigru,
Yakṣu,[171]
- Chief Bheda

Unfortunately, most tribal names occur only once, in this hymn, and thus they are difficult to identify. The following verses are the key to the hymn, and have been rendered by Schmidt (1980) as follows [along with my additions]:

5. Indra made even the floods, which had spread, into fords easily to be crossed for Sudās; he made the Śimyu who defied (our) new song, his imprecations the flotsam of the rivers
6. Turvaśa, the Yakṣu ('sacrificer')[172] was himself the fore-offering; also, as it were, the Matsyas ['fishes'], who were hooked on wealth (like fishes on bait). The Bhṛgus and Druhyus ['cheaters'] obeyed (followed suit); the companion crossed (overcame) the companion in the two (armies) headed in opposite directions.

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[170] Cf the *caturgaoša* in Avestan: V.1
[171] Who bring horseheads as tribute.
[172] 'Sacrificer' - a pun for Yadu.

7. The Pakthas, Bhalānas, Alinas, Viṣāṇins and Śivas called out: 'The feast-companion of the Ārya who led (us) here (previously), has (now) out of desire for cows, attacked the men (us) on behalf of the Tṛtsus'.

8. Evil-intentioned, making Aditi miscarry, the fools have divided the Paruṣṇī. With his greatness, he (Turvaśa) encompassed the earth, lording over it. As the animal victim, the wise (priest) [Bhṛgu/ Vasiṣṭha] lay down, receiving due respect.

9. They went to the Paruṣṇī, their doom, not their (intended) goal. Not even the swift one has reached home. Indra made the swiftly running, treatyless enemies, who were talking like castrates in the world of a man, succumb to Sudās.

10. They went from the pasture like cows without a herdsman, assembled for an alliance made on the spur of the moment;[173] the Pṛśnigus ['sent down by Pṛśni'] obeyed, teams and supply lines.

Hymn 7.19 also looks at this battle, but stanza 3 mentions Indra's help for both Sudās and Trasadasyu (the son of Purukutsa), and alludes to the Pūrus as winning land. This is the only clear mention of both chieftains in the same stanza (next to 1.63.7), but even then no clear synchronism is established. In stanza 8 the wish is expressed that Indra kill the Turvaśa (chief)

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[173] As seen from the point of view of the Bharata.

and the Yadu chief while helping (the Bharata chieftain) Atithigva.

The entire book 7 is thus a snapshot of history: the incursion of the Bharata into the Panjab from across the Sindhu, and their battle with the 'Five Peoples' and the Pūru. It celebrates the victory of Sudās in the Battle of the 10 Kings, which once and for all established Bharata supremacy in the Panjab, and set the stage for the formation of the first South Asian 'state' under the Kuru tribe.[174]

5f. The Bharata reforms

The final question remaining to be answered here takes us back to the nature of the Ṛgveda itself. Was there an early effort at collection of the materials by the Pūrus? More fundamentally, why were the hymns collected at all, and *how* could they be collected? They were, after all, the sole property of a few clans of poets and priests who were not willing to part with their ancestral and (more or less) secret knowledge.[175]

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[174] See Witzel (forthcoming).

[175] Note how certain refrains at the end of hymns act as 'family seals', laying down the claim of certain families to parts of the corpus. Most hymns were, of course, recited in public and a quick study could have memorized and taught them subsequently.

We know very little about the Pūru domination in the Panjab. It is only clear that they were the leaders in a coalition of Five Peoples, and some other tribes, against the Bharata chief Sudās in the *dāśarājña* battle. We know, indeed, much more about the latter, who settled his tribe down along the Sarasvatī and celebrated his victory with a horse sacrifice, which established his claim to rule over all regions.[176] Sudās could not have supervised the compilation of the family books, as the killing of his sons and the survival of his grandson at the time of Viśvāmitra's descendants are recorded in a late hymn (3.53) composed by the descendants of Viśvāmitra. Still, he may well have provided the initial impetus, with the addition of later verses after his time, for understandable reasons: like any newcomer he wished to enhance his status by including honoured old and new poets in a collection of hymns.

On balance, the Pūru and the Bharata are represented in roughly equal proportions in the corpus. Taking into account the theory of intermarriage between the two royal houses,[177] the family books might have been collected at the

[176] Except the South which was occupied by aboriginal peoples. See RV 3.53.11-14.

[177] See Witzel 1989b and Witzel (forthcoming) for further details.

establishment of the union, probably under
Kuruśravaṇa Trāsadsyava (or his father). The frame
with strophic books around the family books (i.e. 1.1-
50 and book 8) could have been effected by the same
dynasty, in order to include their favourite Kāṇva
poets in a prominent position. Actually, RV 1.51
begins with the hymns of Savya Pājra which include
(in 1.53.9) an interesting reference to Suśravas fighting
the battle of 20 kings.[178] This is in close connection
with a reference to Tūrvayāṇa fighting Āyu (the
mythical ancestor of the Bharatas), while in 1.54.6
Indra's help for Yadu and Turvaśa is lauded. All of this
seems a bit too pro-Pūru to be taken as the intention
of a Bharata chieftain.[179]

A fairly early collection of a core of hymns by
some groups/person(s) is indeed indicated by an *early*
Sāman collection now represented by the 'Soma

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[178] 1.53.9:   *tvə̄m etə̄ñ janarājño dvŠr dḶśābandhānā*
   suśrḶvasopajagmā̃ṣaḥ |

   ṣaṣṭŠm sahḶsrā navatŠm nḶva śrutʐ̃ nŠ
   cakréṇa rḶthyā duṣpḶdāvṛṇak ||

  1.53.10:   *tvḶm āvitha suśrḶvasaṃ tḶvotŠbhis tḶva*
   trāmabhir indra tūrvayāṇam ...

[179] But if the frame was due to later accretion or
   deliberate addition this could have been the work of
   later Kuru chieftains who added to the Bharatas'
   (Kuruśravaṇa's?) first collation of RV 2-7.

book'. Although the Sāmaveda collection we now have has been taken mainly from books 8 and 9 (note again the central role of the Kāṇvas), there is an earlier Sāmaveda collection; the Ṛgveda knows of it and respects it.[180] However this might have been, the assembly of the Ṛgveda continued even after the initial collection. This is especially clear in view of the later hymns (i.e. not the originally forgotten or excluded hymns - many probably of pro-Turvaśa-Yadu/Anu-Druhyu character - that were later collected in books 1 and 10).

In light of the preceding discussion it is little wonder that the collection is so unified; it represents the recasting of most early material in a Pūru and Bharata mould. This is reflected even in the language of the hymns: had the texts come down unchanged, they would have contained far more 'eastern' forms - such as nominative sing or genitive sing. *-e-*. However, only a few local, pre-Bharata characteristics survive, such as the occurrence - even predominance - of *-l-* in certain words and forms.

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[180] See Oldenberg 1888. On the other hand, as he himself points out (on p. 328), during the time when the Sāman, the older Yajuṣ and the Atharvan texts came to be fixed, the Ṛgveda text tradition had already been formed and fixed, with relatively few exceptions, in the form that we know it today.

6. Summing up

By the time of the composition of most Ṛgvedic hymns, the Yadu-Turvaśa and the Anu-Druhyu had already been well established in the Panjab. As suggested above, their locations have not been determined with certitude although the Anu may be tied to the river Paruṣṇī, the Druhyu to the Northwest and the Yadu with the Yamunā. They retain only the dimmest recollection of their move into South Asia: they were 'brought from afar' (6.45.1), 'crossed (were brought by Indra over) many waters' (1.174.9 = 6.20.12) as well as narrow passages (2.11.18), and defeated the Dasyu who are said to be situated to their left (i.e. North). Their previous home is, thus, clearly the mountainous country of Afghanistan to the west (especially along the *Harax^{v}aiti* - Helmand - and @@*Harōiiu* - Herat - rivers corresponding to Vedic *Sarasvatī and Sarayu*). The next wave is represented by the Pūru, although their movement into the Subcontinent had also become a done deed by the time most Vedic hymns were composed. The Pūru are thus included among the 'Five Peoples' whom they initially dominated. Finally, the Pūru contained a subtribe, the Bharatas, who were the latest intruders and who thoroughly disturbed the status quo.

The result of successive waves of migrations was frequent warfare and a pattern of shifting alliances. This is clearly seen in the most prominent historical event recorded in the Ṛgveda, the battle of the 10 kings, which followed the ouster of the Bharata *purohita*, Viśvāmitra (who was replaced by Vasiṣṭha), and the breaking away of the Bharata from their former Pūru allies.[181] Books 3 and - particularly - 7 detail the ultimate victory of the Bharatas over the other tribes (eventually including the Pūrus and their - probable - Ikṣvāku subtribe), and their settlement on the Sarasvatī, which became the heartland of South Asia well into the Vedic period. It is here that RV 3.53.11 places the centre of the world (*vara ā pṛthivyāḥ*), with subdued enemies in all directions (except to the South),[182] and here Sudās celebrates his victories with a horse sacrifice, which is clearly the precursor of the Śrauta rite. Considering that the area provided the only passage from the Panjab to the

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[181]The account of the battle of the ten kings formed the prototype of the Mahābhārata, whose nucleus of 20,000 verses already existed in the late Vedic period (see ŚGS for evidence).

[182]This forested area was under the control of aboriginal tribes, of whom the Kīkaṭas led by Pramaganda are prominent. Even later the the South was a place fit only for banishment (10.61.8)

newly emerging Gaṅgā Valley, between the mountains
to the north and the forests and deserts to the south,
its prominence is not surprising. Even in later times,
most prominent battles for control of the
Subcontinent were fought here (Panipat etc.)

The Ṛgveda thus represents, above all, the history
of two royal lineages (Pūru and Bharata) towards the
middle of the Ṛgvedic period. Unfortunately, later
tradition contains few accounts of this era. Although
we would expect something from the texts of the
mantra period, at least, as they follow on the heels of
the Ṛgveda, the nature of the texts retards us. The
contents of the *formulae* of the ritual clearly tell us no
more than a book of the Catholic mass would without
the Old and New Testament parts. Later, only a few
scraps of information exist: the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa
remembers the crossing of the Sindhu by the
incoming Bharatas and Ikṣvākus (most likely another
subtribe of the Pūrus), while BŚS (18.44: 397.7)
contains the most explicit statement of an
immigration into the Subcontinent (quoted above).
However, even these relatively early texts manage to
garble the evidence. Thus, the JB (ả205) calls Sudās
Kṣatra, while KS 21.10: 50.1 has Pratardana and MS
3.7.7 Pratardana Daivodāsi. Elsewhere, JB calls an
Ikṣvāku chieftain Sudās Paijavana even though in JB
(3.244 = ả204 = 3.237) the Bharatas (whose king Sudās
is) fight the Ikṣvakus. Then, JUB 4.6.1.2 describes

friendly relations between the Bharatas and Bhagīratha Aikṣvaka. In light of these problems one could hardly expect the later, heavily inflated, Epic and Purāṇic traditions to be of help. Clearly, Ṛgvedic history will have to be reconstructed principally from the Ṛgveda itself. It is hoped that the present paper has laid some of the essential groundwork for this, along with demonstrating the fruits of a new analysis of the text, making use of the various parametres of geography, chronology (as provided by the lineages), textual composition and so on.

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