

VEDIC ARYAN SOCIETY AND PATTERN OF PRODUCTION SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

History is the sequential chain of the social structure of human beings. The Vedic Aryan society represents ancient human society. The main objective of this article is to find out the production system of livelihoods and the source of the means of production adopted by the Vedic Aryans. Based on historical facts of ancient civilization obtained through secondary sources, which have been analyzed through historical content analysis method. An attempt has been made in this article to find out the method of production of livelihoods and the source of production adopted by the Vedic Aryans. Men to be more involved in the expansion of resources and livestock and agricultural land, and as women were managing domestic work, the ownership of men over resources increased. Due to the process of state-building, regarding the ownership of resources, it appears that the resources were in the collective right of the family and couldn't be sold or bought without the permission of the head of the family. We concluded that Mentioned facts are analog to the theory of production system of Karl Marx

Keywords: Aryan, Livestock, Ownership, Production, Property.

ABSTRAK

Sejarah adalah rantai sekuensial dari struktur sosial manusia. Masyarakat Arya Weda mewakili masyarakat manusia purba. Tujuan utama artikel ini adalah untuk mengetahui sistem produksi mata pencaharian dan sumber alat produksi yang diadopsi oleh Arya Weda. Berdasarkan fakta sejarah peradaban kuno diperoleh melalui sumber-sumber sekunder yang dianalisis melalui metode analisis isi sejarah. Sebuah upaya telah dilakukan dalam artikel ini untuk mengetahui metode produksi mata pencaharian dan sumber produksi yang diadopsi oleh para Arya Weda. Laki-laki untuk lebih terlibat dalam perluasan sumber daya dan ternak serta lahan pertanian, dan ketika perempuan mengelola pekerjaan rumah tangga, kepemilikan laki-laki atas sumber daya meningkat. Dalam proses pembangunan negara, mengenai kepemilikan sumber daya, tampak bahwa sumber daya tersebut merupakan hak kolektif keluarga dan tidak dapat dijual atau dibeli tanpa izin kepala keluarga. Kami menyimpulkan bahwa fakta yang disebutkan adalah analog dengan teori sistem produksi Karl Marx

Kata Kunci: Arya, Peternakan, Kepemilikan, Produksi, Properti.



INTRODUCTION

Due to the lack of authentic witnesses, lack of mention of date in ancient Vedic texts, objection to the Vedas, the ambiguity of astrology and geographical references, differences in the views of Indian and Western scholars. It is impossible to say that the composition of the Vedas is precisely the time. Therefore, scholars have different opinions on the design of the Vedas. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, the innovator of the Arya Samaj, states that the origin of the Vedas coincided with the beginning of the creation by God. He says that the Rig-Veda from the fire, the Yajur-Veda from the air, and the Sam-Veda from the sun had appeared. Raghunandan Sharma has also supported this view of Dayanand (Dwivedi, 2008).

Avinash Chandra Das considers the composition of the Rig Veda 3,000 years B.C., based on the geography and geological testimony of the Rig Veda. The Saraswati river was described in the mantra of the Rig Veda (1-3-5-5), which originated from the Himalayas and merged into the sea. According to archeological calculations, this sea was in Rajasthan. The Saraswati river and the sea of Rajasthan disappeared. This event occurred more than 3,000 years ago. Therefore, the Rig Veda was made around 3,000 B.C. (Dwivedi, 2008).

According to the calculation of astrology, Balagangadhar Tilak agreed that the creation period of the Rig Veda dates was around 3,000 B.C. to 3,000 A.D. He has determined this date based on the spring constellation of the various constellations. He has divided the Vedic period into four parts by dividing the Aditikal, Mirageashirakal, Krittika period, and Sutra period into different parts of diverse Vedic literature. German Vedic scholar Yakovi also discusses the Vedic period as the basis of astrology. Based on Dhruva Tara, he assumed Rig-vedic time is before 4500 B.C. (Dwivedi, 2008).

Altekar (1993) mentioned that the time of the Vedic Aryan Society had been considered from the Rig-Veda period to the Atharva-Veda period. Rig-Veda,

which was around 1500 B.C. and Atharva-Veda, which was around 800 BC, despite the disagreement over the time of both periods, there seems to be proximity. According to this, the period of the Vedic age is found to be of about 800 years. So many things have changed during these 800 years, including the lifestyle, technology, needs of the people, etc. Due to an ancient society, the pace of change was not like the present society, though quantitatively, there were many changes. Therefore, there are so many economic differences between the early stages of the Vedic civilization and the later Vedic society.

The economic system of the later Vedic stage must have been evolving differently. Most of the historians have defined Vedic society differently as early Vedic (Rig-Vedic) and later Vedic period. We can find so many references for agricultural practices in the Vedic hymn. Therefore, many historians agree that Aryans were the leading creators of Vedic society.

In terms of this context, this paper is going to analyze the production system, means of production of Aryan culture in the Vedic period. The main objective of this article is to find out the production system. Similarly, this is focused on identifying the source and the means of production adopted by the Vedic Aryans.

RESEARCH METHODS

This article is based on the qualitative research method thoroughly. The historical facts have been collected as the secondary data, which are reflected from the Vedas, and ancient Indian history to achieve the stated objective. The contents analysis method has been used to analyze the historical facts. This research uses the historical method and Marxist theory approach to analyze the productivity of Aryan society. Ritzer (1996), quoted to Marx, has stated that the structure of the social system is constructed based on the framework of the production system. According to Marxist theory, history has been considered as the result of human efforts or production systems to the conquering process of natural

forces. History is a continuous series of changes in the social order. The entire development of human relations is linked to the operation of the production system. The economic institution serves as the unit of “base structure” and other political and ideological institutions are tie-up as the unit of “superstructure.” The nature of the production system determines the heart of the ideas and desires, ideals, etc. When the production system is transformed, the nature and forms of beliefs, desires, etc. change as well. The nature of culture, religion, tradition, philosophy, law, literature, art, thought, and education is determined by the production system in the state which exists within the society. According to Marx, when men link-up his life into the social production system, it produces particular kinds of relationships in which relationships are also inevitable. The consciousness of human beings is always determined by his social existence, and it is produced by the production system of social structure. The relationships between sources of production and the power of production under the pattern of the production system have been described by Karl Marx (Coser, 1996).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History of Aryan

Who were Aryans? The Aryans are a human group, but is that group social or linguistic, or is it a social group of a particular region? On these issues, there are different views of the scholars. The Aryans are known as the creator of Veda, so the scholars are curious about the Aryan's origin, identity, and creations.

Looking up the meaning of the word Aryan in dictionaries, it seems like the best and the highest (Apte, 2010). The dictionary interpreted the word Aryan as a symbol of social status. Similarly, in the Vedas, Aryan appears to have been used as the upper status of a human group. Thus, Thapar (2008 A) has argued that Aryan should be understood as a group of people who speak a certain kind of (Sanskrit) language, rather than a particular human group. She added that Aryan

was a cultural group of the specific ecological area which ties up in the same language (they may be of different racial or ethnic identity which used to speak the same Sanskrit (Aryan) language).

Thus, Thapar (2008a) and Sankritayan (2007) discuss the Aryans as the Hindu Aryans and the Vedic Aryans. It suggests that Aryan also has different sub-groups. Did they all have one language? Again another question arises. If there was only one linguistic source, why didn't the still read Aryans' script in the Sindh region? The fact that the Aryans entered *Sindh* in the area before the start of Vedic civilization can be found in various contexts.

It is not possible to discuss all of this. But in essence, Aryan is a human group. There is a lot of controversy as to whether it is a native of Sindh or entering from outside. However, Mishra(1972) mentioned that Aryans are the originators of Vedic civilization wherever they came. In the process of expansions of Vedic culture, the Aryans were mixed up to non-Aryan groups with social mobility. To preserve the pure identity of Aryan group (ethnic or linguistic or cultural), they constructed the norms, values, and practices of ritual under the Vedas

Composition of the Vedas

The Aryan settlement had expanded into Kubha (Kawul) Suvast (Swat) Krumu of Rig (Kurem) and Gomati river(Gomal) of Afghanistan. Saraswati river is frequently discussed in Rig-Veda, which was more famous as the habitation. The *Aja*, the *Shigeru*, and the *Yakshu* and the *Krivi* human groups are mentioned in the famous *Dasranya* war of Rig-Veda. These social groups are believed to be residents of Ganga, Yamuna, and Doa (Jha & Shrimali, 2009). According to Rig-Veda, the hair of a Vashisht Rishi was black like that of a human being of Central Asian. As the Archaeologists, Aleksandr Velinsky and Mikitor have found many archaeological materials related to the Rig-Veda in southern Turkmenistan. Mayur mentioned that copper, bronze, cow, sheep, barley, and

wheat, which are discussed in Rig-Veda, had been found in the south part of Asia (Dixit, 2065).

According to Maxmuller, Weaver, Mayur, the Rig -Veda Samhita was constructed in the area of Panjab. Scholars Hopkins and Keith mentioned that Rig-veda is edited in the southern province of Ambala near the Saraswati River. According to Brunhofer, Hertel, Hassing, etc., the Rig- Veda is believed to have been composed in Afghanistan and Iran (Gyani, 1997). Dr. Sampurnanda, A.C. Das, Vishwanath Reu, Rahul Sankrantyan, and P.L. Bhargava scholars have stated that the area of Saptasindha, Vitasta, Asikini, Parushni, Bipasha, Satudri and Saraswati is included in the geography of Rig-Veda. Mountains and rivers, as well as seas, are mentioned in Rig-Vedic hymn. Saraswati province is called Devyani in Vedic literature (Duwe, 2009). The land which is discussed in the *Prithvi Sukta of Atharv-Veda* is known as the land of *Saptasndha* (Vidyalankar,2007).

There appear to be various views about the geographical area of the Vedas. In most respects, the geography of the Vedic period is related to the coastal region of the *Sapta Sindha* (seven Indus), the area of Saraswati, and the Ganges-Yamuna river. Saptasindha is mentioned as the habitation of the Aryan in Rig-veda. There seems disagreement among scholars regarding the identity of the seven rivers under the Sapt Sindh. In the present geographical position, it appears that many have been convinced that Punjab and its more extensive tracts, which are part of India and Pakistan, are mentioned in the Rig Veda.

The Aryan Production system

Animal husbandry is the primary source of livelihood of the Aryan society. In the various Stanzas of Rig-veda, prayers have been done for the acquisition of cows and horses. In the Rigveda, the dialogue between *Sarma* and *Pani* exists the expansion of cows. Likewise, for the greed of 100 cows, there is the context of the sale of a son by *Azigarth*. In many other contexts as

well, cattle, sheep, goats, and animals are discussed in the Vedas. Besides, Indian historians including Romila Thapar, Rahul Sankrantyan, Vachupati Garola, Dwivedi, Dubey have also mentioned in various articles and books that the medium of livelihood of the Vedic Aryans was livestock and gradually coming to the Gangetic area from the Indus region there are references to start of trends in agricultural production.

Vedic Aryan's economic life was related to animal grazing and animal husbandry. In the earliest mantras of the Rig Veda, the importance of animals is found to be greater than that of agricultural land (Pandey, 2010). 10.555 mantras are mentioned in the Rig Veda, but agriculture is discussed only in a total of 24 mantras, while the number of mantras related to livestock is more than hundreds. One of the mantras of the Rig Veda appears to be about the discussion of making the land useful for agriculture. In contrast, the debate about animal husbandry is mentioned in hundreds of mantras. The number of pets was an indicator of economic prosperity. The owner of the cattle was called '*Gomat*'. The word 'cow' is found in many linguistic expressions of the Rig Veda. The cow keeper and chief were called '*Gaupati*'. The tribe who lived with its cows was considered as '*Sahagotra*.' Aryan, who milked the cows, was called *duhita*. In the Aryan system, bulls were widely used. The bulls were used to drive the plow, the bullock cart. The Aryans used the horse equally. Horses were used extensively for vehicles and war. The chariot of the horse was considered very useful for fighting. At this time, cows, horses, goats, sheep, donkeys, dogs, and other animals were also raised. Animals were the significant assets of the Aryans. Animal assets were the once to be robbed during wars. Kings also used to give livestock to their priests. Among cattle, cows were also a significant source of exchange for Rig-Vedic economic life (Duwe, 2009).

Dwivedi (2008) mentions that in the Vedic Aryan society, 'cow husbandry' was a form of animal husbandry. We can

found the context of the creation of a 'gaushala' for the management of cattle husbandry with complete arrangement for raising and nurturing of animals within the herd. In the Vedas, cows are mentioned as an indicator of good fortune (Dwivedi, 2008). Gairola (2004) states that in the Rig Veda, the animals are divided into three parts. According to him, the animals were divided into three groups, living in the atmosphere, living in forests, and domesticated. Gyani (1997) mentions that in the Vedic society, sheep, goats, horses, cows, etc. were reared as livestock. According to him, animal husbandry was influential in the economic system of the Vedic age, and it also had a special place for cows, cattle, horses, goats, etc.

Means of the Production system and ownership

The society at that time was based on livestock farming, so it seems that plow, oxen were used mainly for cultivation. The lands were prepared for cultivation by plowing with the help of oxen and with the use of 'cow dung' in the field for fertilizing the land. The practices of private ownership of resources already started in the Vedic society before the evolving forms of livestock farming and agriculture. But historians of India do not seem to explicitly mention whether the individual property was or not in Vedic society. Dubey (2009) notes that all the members of the tribe were entitled to land (both grassland and agricultural production) as the source of production. He also said that the agricultural land was separated on the basis of the family. Likewise, Jain (2000) mentions that the land was under the collective rights in the Vedic period.

Sharma (2005) states that in the Rig-Veda period, as people live in village groups, they had collective ownership of the land. Since the cattle of the village were collectively grazed, pasture land was collectively owned. The forest was not considered a person's property. It could have belonged to anyone who used it. Hopkins states during the Vedas, the king

owned the land. Only the king was entitled to the harvest. It was customary to give 1/16 portion of the production to the king. The villagers collected revenue. Temples, rest houses, pastureland, forests, etc. had collective rights. The right of sale was in the hands of the people (Sahaya, 2004). In the Vedic period, agricultural land is termed as 'Fertile' area. Gairola (2004) states that fertilizers and irrigation on agricultural land were used to increase agricultural production.

Dwivedi (2008) mentions that the role of land is divided into three types: Fertilized (Fertile), Irine (Usher), and Shashya (pasture). Thapar (2010) states Gana owned the land. She argues that there is no reference to the sale of land in the Vedas. Dwivedi (2008) mentions that 'cow herding' was the primary aspect of animal husbandry at that time. There is mention of the creation of a 'gaushala' for the management of cattle husbandry within which entirely arranged for raising and nurturing the cattle existed. In the Vedas, cows are mentioned as an indicator of good fortune. In the Rig Veda, the animals are divided into three parts (Gairola, 2004). He said that animals could be divided into three groups, i.e., living in the atmosphere, living in forests, and pets. Gyani (1997) mentions that sheep, goats, horses, cows, etc. were reared as livestock in the Vedic society. According to him, livestock played a vital role in the economic system of the Vedic age, and cows, cattle, horses, goats, etc. had a special role as well.

Dwivedi (2008) states that cereals, including paddy, barley, sesame, gram, millet, and wheat, were produced in the Vedic society. Gyani (1997) mentions that rice was created as a prominent grain. Dikshit (2065) states Rigveda has given special emphasis on agricultural work and agricultural development. However, the use of iron as a metal started in India only after 1100 BC, even though agriculture does not seem to have been fully developed in that era. Women began the labor of grain production, weaving, and clay making. Even Indra made an immense

contribution to irrigation in agriculture by killing 'Vritra,' but also agriculture was not sufficiently developed.

In Vedic society, there is a reference to the use of irrigation in agricultural land. Gyani (1997) states Rig Veda has mentioned the use of 'canal,' 'well' for irrigation. Similarly, Dwivedi (2008) said that rainwater, canal, drainage, rivers, and wells were used for irrigation. Dikshit (2065) says that the development achieved by agricultural irrigation can be experienced in the Rig Vedic period stating irrigation equipment (*dhekul*), which consisted of bags made of skin were tied with rope and were submerged in the well with the help of long wood or bamboo. The rope was pulled to irrigate the field to enhance agricultural production.

Expansion of Production

In Vedic society, animal husbandry was regarded not only as a means of livelihood but also as a mark of honor, prestige, and reputation. Livestock seems to be used not only for livelihoods but also for commercial purposes. In the Rig Veda, the fact that Pani (Arya other merchants) used Sarma as an envoy to bring the cows under their control. Ajigarth sells his son for one hundred cows, willing to sacrifice the son to get extra hundred cows, readiness to part the sacrificed meat to getting the other 100 cows. It implies that cows were not only used for subsistence. Cows were also used extensively for livestock breeding and commercially. The cows and other livestock were the primary commodities to be plundered during the war. It can be considered that livestock was a prestigious practice at that time. Cows were used as a means of exchange, so they were considered in need of enlargement. Men had been gone to war to grab the grassland for livestock expansion. They had been tried to plunder the cows and land after the war

Already has been discussed; the primary means of livelihood was initially animal husbandry and crop production, respectively, in the Vedic society. Men were more involved in increasing the number of livestock required for livestock farming and expanding the grassland. Due to the patriarchal social structure, the men were more engaged in outdoor work. Women were limited to In-house care, but raising the table and livestock, they were also used to fight with other parties. There was a lot of involvement of men in combat and conflict operations. Because of this, men were more likely to engage in the task of expansion of resources. Men were more involved in outdoor activities such as expanding herds and expanding grassland. It was not easy. The group had to fight. So men were more active while women were more involved in the household maintenance of collected animal wealth, cooking of household products, milking cows,' states Dubey (2009).

According to Gyani (1997), trading activities were very high in Vedic society because of the high-quality horses and chariots. The production of different crops and the manufacture of various textiles, cloths, and other items were expanding in Sindh province because of the fertile soil in Punjab. He has described the business of the Vedic period as internal and external. Internal trade was customary for cattle, horses, camels, dogs, buffaloes, and donkeys to carry and sell goods from one place to another. According to Gyani (1997), during the Vedic period, even the deities, including Indra, used to sell and buy idols. In the external trade, during the Rigvedic period, the Aryans were thoroughly acquainted with the sea. They used the sea to trade abroad. Gyani (1997) mentions that they used to engage in various business activities by sailing on ships to different islands to earn money. Gairaula (2004) states, wool textile, leather in-

dustry, cotton textile industry, metal industry, charioteer, and woodworking business have been developed in the Vedic society. Gyani (1997) mentions that people were divided into various departments and different sectors in the Vedic economic system: (1) *Manikar, Hiranyakar, Charioteer*, elephant rider/*Mahouts* and Horseman, (2) *Gopal, Gwali, Taksha, Sagittarius, Ipukar, Jyakar, Vishak (Vaidya)* and *Karmar (Kami)*, (3) *Yarn, shailush, kailal* (potter), *avipal*, parsley and ginger (winemaking), (4) *Ranju*-surge, deer, and hunter (hunter-dog). Ray (1978) states that the development of textile and lumbering business was not only a monopoly of men, but women were also involved in the Vedic period.

Means of exchange

In Vedic society, various means were used for the buying and selling of goods. Gyani (1997) states that it was customary to use a coin named *mana*. In the Rigveda, there is a reference to '*Mana*', and gradually in ancient Greece, '*Mana*' was included in the money system. '*Mana*' was constructed with gold and silver. In addition to '*Mana*,' '*cows*' have also been used as a means of exchange.

Altekar (1993) mentions that cows were used as a means of exchange. Word '*nisk*' is used in the Rig-Veda, which means 'gold coin.' But in the Vedic society, '*nisk*' term was used for gold jewelry. At that time, there is no reference made for copper coins and silver coins. Yagya served as an economic institution but not only as a socio-religious institution in the Vedic period. It served as a collection, distribution, and exchange center. Different products were collected by the villagers to perform Yagya. Collected products, kingdoms used to give donations to the priest. Those collected products were distributed to tribes and villages as well.

Succession of property

References to ownership and rights of ancestral property inherent in male offspring appear to be expressed by various stanzas of the Vedas. As the inheritance is interde-

pendent with the right to the traditional stuff, the legacy of the hereditary property also appears to be implied to males.

In the second stanza of the thirty-first Sukta of the Rig Veda, Vishwamitra Gathin Rishi does not give her sister an inheritance. Still, her husband qualified to start a new household. Parents give birth to son and daughter in a similar way. One of them being son accomplishes his paternal obligations, and the other being a daughter is honored and adored. This sentiment has given the fact that brothers do not share an ancestral property with their sisters. By this, the rights of traditional property are understood to be vested in the brother and male offspring. It is also implied that a son fulfills all his paternal obligations. This sentiment also means that the male offspring should perform ancestral activities related to the death rituals. It is learned from the stanza that a daughter's status is to remain honorable and respected.

Similarly, as a daughter living with her parents demand them for sustenance, in the seventh stanza of the twenty-seventh Sukta of the second division of the Rig Veda. Gritsmad, Bhargava, Shaunak Rishi seems to have demanded God for Glory. In this sense, the reference to a daughter living with her parents demanding sustenance indicates that it was customary for unmarried daughters to ask for the paternal property during the Vedas.

CONCLUSION

Aryans are the originators of Vedic civilization wherever they came. In the process of expansions of Vedic civilization, the Aryans were mixed up to non-Aryan groups with social mobility. The non-Aryans, who were slaves of the Aryans, were skilled in farming before the Aryans, and the Aryans learned from them. This need was also created by population expansion. Due to the contacts of Aryans and non-Aryans in each other, it seems changed from slave owner relations to marriage and cultural integration, and they began farming and grain production. The geography of the Vedic period is relat-

ed to the coastal region of the *Sapta Sindha* (seven Indus), the area of Saraswati, and the Ganges-Yamuna river. The Aryans either in the Vedic land or entering Sindh used livestock as their livelihood. They raised cattle, horses, and animals. The villagers lived in grassy areas. Scholars have mentioned that people used to move to places wherever the grassland was found. Most of the mantras of Rigveda also have given references to cow farming rather than agriculture. Cows and livestock were considered to be a major commodity to be plundered in war, so cattle and livestock were believed to be a commodity for pride and prestige. So men to be more involved in the expansion of resources and livestock and agricultural land, and as women were managing domestic work, the ownership of men over resources increased. Due to the process of state-building, regarding the ownership of resources, it appears that the resources were in the collective ownership of the family and couldn't be sold or bought without the permission of the head of the family. We concluded that Mentioned facts are analog to the theory of production system of Karl Marx, which is explained in the para of theoretical insight.

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