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## *R̥gvedic Bharata: A Survival from Aryan Prehistory*

OF all the terms understood as designating Aryan tribes during the period of the composition of the R̥gveda-saṃhitā none is perhaps of greater significance for the later history of Indian civilization than the celebrated name *Bharata*. The part played by the Bharatas or Bhāratas in consolidating Aryan rule in Vedic times and in the succeeding centuries till about the rise of Buddhism constitutes on any account an important chapter in the social and political history of ancient India. Many are the opinions<sup>1</sup> that have been held by previous Vedic scholars regarding their ethnic identity and place among the Vedic tribes, but the mystery that surrounds this ancient name and people remains hitherto unravelled. In this paper an attempt will be made to analyse the socio-semantic content of the term as found in its several contexts in the R̥gveda, which, it is hoped, will throw considerable light on the obscurity that as yet shrouds this archaic name.

In the R̥gveda the word occurs both in the singular as some remote (proper?) name and in the plural as implying a people, race or tribe, apart from the incidence of the derivative form *bhārata*. The etymological sense of the word itself has not been settled beyond doubt, and this perplexity has arisen from the fact that in the R̥gveda the root *bhr* has several senses or shades of meaning. This has led to a variety of interpretations so far as the term *bharata* is concerned, and it is only by defining the primitive sense of it with some degree of certainty that any headway could be made in understanding its social implications. Most writers and translators seem to have accepted the general sense of *bharata* as given by the standard lexicons, to wit, 'to be sustained, nourished'—the construction offered by Böhtlingk and Roth in

1. Ludwig, *Der R̥gveda*, III, 175 ff.; Pischel, Geldner, *Vedische Studien*, I, 55, II, 136; Oldenberg, *Buddha* (Eng.), 405 ff.; Muir, *Old Sanskrit Texts*, I, 354; Ragozin, *Vedic India*, 319 ff.; Mookerji, *Hindu Civilization*, 68-71; Kennedy, JRAS. 1919; Pargiter, JRAS. 1908; CHI. Vol. I; Cal. Rev. 1923, 1924; JAOS. XV, 259, XVI, 41-2; Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum R̥gveda*, s. *bharata*, *bhārata*; Böhtlingk and Roth, *Sanskrit Wörterbuch* (Pt. V), s. *bharata*, *bhārata*, *bhar*; Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dict.*, s. *bhr*, *bharata*, *bhārata*.

the fifth part of the famous Petersburg Lexicon (*Sanskrit Wörterbuch*) dated 1868. It may be seen that this rendering depends on two considerations: first, that the root *bhr̥* here means *to maintain, sustain, nourish*, and second, that the grammatical structure of the form conveys a *gerundive* sense. This 'gerundive sense' is attributed to the form inasmuch as the majority of formations having the primary suffix *-ata* in the Vedic dialect are observed to possess such a significance, and, perhaps, because the existence of Avestan *yazata*, corresponding to the very common Vedic *yajata* whose analogy has greatly influenced scholars in this matter, apparently takes back this implication of the suffix to Indo-Iranian times. Thus Whitney explains: "A small number of adjectives in the older language ending in *ata* are not to be separated from the participial words in *ta*, although their specific meaning is in part gerundive. They are *pacatá*, 'cooked', *darśatá* and *paśyatá*, 'seen, to be seen, worth seeing'; and so *yajatá*, *haryatá*, *bharatá*. The *y* of *paśyata* and *haryata* indicates pretty plainly that the *a* also is that of a present tense-stem. *Rajatá*, 'silvery', is of more obscure relation to *raj* 'colour'".<sup>2</sup> Of these the only forms occurring in the Ṛgveda are *pacata*, *yajata*, *rajata*, *darśata* and *bharata*, and if Grassmann (WR. 1701) is to be followed, also *vrata* and its numerous compounds. But it must be emphasized that although generally the meaning of *-ata* is taken as *gerundive*, i.e., 'to be . . . worthy of . . .' it is neither necessary, nor, as a matter of fact, possible, in all the instances. For instance, in *rajata*, which is, according to O. Schrader<sup>3</sup>, "clearly (from *raj*) like *darśata* 'visible' from the root *darś* and *yajata* 'venerable' from the root *yaj*", and corresponds to Avestan *erezata*, Armenian *artatic* and Latin *argentum*, and which occurs only once (8.25.22) in the Ṛgveda and that in the sense of 'white, shining' (*rajatam sci. aśvam*), the gerundive sense is hardly applicable. Its original sense must be 'shin-ing' from the root *raj* going back to an I.E. base *\*rāg* from a root *\*rǵ* or *\*rǵ̃* with a suffix *-ntō* as explained by Schrader (*ib.*). It is further to be noted that this suffix *-ata* is not to be separated from the participial primary suffix *-ta*, as already seen from Whitney's remark, and it is significant that the forms cited by him such as *sū-ta*, 'charioteer', *mar-ta*, 'mortal' (i.e., dying, liable to die), *vā-ta*, 'wind' (i.e., blowing), and probably also *gar-ta*, 'car-seat' (prob. swallower) and *has-ta*, 'hand' (prob. seiz-er) have more or less an *agent* sense, as pointed out by Macdonell (*Ved. Gr.* §145) who puts under the same category forms like *kīs-ta*, 'singer' and *bas-ta* 'he goat'. A similar adjectival use of *-ta* is also seen in *dvita*, *trita*, *muhūrta*, and apparently also *avata*, cited by Whitney (§1245. c.). That *-ata* or *-ta* could have both the *active* (agent) and *passive* (gerundive) senses may be admitted from the analogy of other suffixes like *-ti*, *-tu*, *-tna* etc. as described by Macdonell (§§ 113 *et. seq.*).

2. *Sanskrit Grammar*, §1176(e).

3. *Prehistoric Antiquities of the Aryan Peoples*, pp. 180-1.

Thus there is no categorical reason why the form *bharata* should of necessity be construed as ' *bhar-ata* ' and given a *gerundival* sense ; it may as well be taken as possessing an *agent* sense, and this hypothesis gains in probability by the analogy of *rajata*, *sūta* etc. But exactly what out of these possible senses it may signify in the R̥gveda must be decided from other evidence than the merely grammatical, and it is precisely here that the analysis of the socio-semantic content of the root *bhr* and its derivatives *bhara* etc., as elucidated from actual occurrences in the R̥gveda, may be regarded as definitive.

Thus, at the very outset, a discussion of the semantic evolution of *bhr* in its verbal forms seems imperative. Since the root is found in most of the known I.E. dialects with the general sense of ' bear, carry ' one must admit this to be its primitive sense as current at the period of unity. Thus we have Skt. *bhar*-(ati); Avest. *bar*(aiti); Gk. *pher*-(o); Lat. *fer*-(o); Slav. *bra*-(ti); Goth. *bair*-(an); OHG. *ber*-(an); AS. *ber*-(an); OIr. *ber*-(im); Ger. (ge)*bür*-(en); Eng. bear, all having the primary sense of ' bear ', i.e. ' carry '. This in fact is also the basic sense of *bhar*- as found in the R̥gveda to judge from the contexts cited by Grassmann (WR. s. *bhr*). He gives altogether 22 shades of meaning for this root, of which the last two are merely the medial and intensive senses : 1. carry, bear (on or in); 2. hold ; 3. bear child ; 4. become pregnant ; 5. carry a child (on the breast); 6. bear, have (a name); 7. prop, hold erect ; 8. maintain, tend (the fire); 9. draw (wagon), lead, direct ; 10. fare, drive (in); 11. carry along with, have about (one); 12. carry off, bear away, seize, capture ; 13. bear strength or epithet ; 14. have aptitude, condition ; 15. bring towards ; 16. bring on, up (produce); 17. bring from ; 18. offer, sacrifice ; 19. raise (voice, sound); 20. carry off, get, obtain ; 21. be borne along ; 22. surge, heave (*intens.*). From these senses, about *five* more or less different meanings may be abstracted, thus : i. carry, bear, hold (1-6), possess, have (13-14), bring to, offer, sacrifice (15-18); ii. prop, support, shelter, maintain, sustain, (7-8); iii. draw, fare, convey (9-11); iv. bear off, seize, capture (12), get, obtain (20); v. lift up, raise. (voice, shout) (19). This division may be seen to agree in essentials with the one made by Monier-Williams (Diet., s. *bhr*).

Although the general sense of *bharata* has been taken by most writers as derived from the root-meaning (ii), namely ' he who is to be maintained, supported, tended ' (in particular, Agni), yet a study of the contexts under (iv) clearly indicates that the sense of ' carry off, bear away ' hence ' rob, plunder, raid, win (obtain) in fight or race ', has a significantly pronounced vogue in the R̥gveda. The significance of the following references is unmistakable :—

At R̥gveda 2.30.2 Indra is described as one " who was about to rob the prosperity of (*lit.* plunder booty against) Vṛtra (yaḥ vṛtrāya sinam atra abhariṣyat)<sup>4</sup>".

4. The words of the text are given separated, following the pada-pāṭha ; *sinam* occurs only here and at 3.62.1, and Whitney is certainly right in preferring to place *sina* under root *san* (*sā*), gain, *Sanskrit Roots*, *Verb-Forms*, p. 183 ; cp. Sāyaṇa : ' sinam annam '.

Again at 5.32.9 he is thus glorified: "Who may arrest his strength or check his vigour? Alone, resistless, he bears away all spoils (ekahaḥ dhanā bharāte apratītaḥ)", where Sāyaṇa himself does not hesitate to take 'dhanā' as spoils or booty (dhanā dhanāni śātrūṇāṃ vasūni, bharate bibharti harate vā), a sense clearly established by 'gantā vājeṣu sanitā dhanandhanam' (2.23.13). The following verse (9.79.2) not only shows the sense of 'plunder' for *bhar* but also pictures the kind of social context in which alone such activity could arise:

'pra naḥ dhanvantu indavaḥ madacyutaḥ—dhanā vā yebhiḥ arvataḥ  
junīmasi ;  
tiraḥ martasya kasya cit parihr̥tim—vayaṃ dhanāni viśvadhā  
bharemahī'.

'Let the drops meath-distilling cause us to rush forth to the spoils, for whose sake we urge the racers on. Beyond the trap of any mortal may we continually bear the spoils away'.<sup>5</sup> Emphasis must be laid here on the use of 'dhanvantu' from *dhanv*, run, rush, race, which is only a derivative base of *dhan*, move swiftly, whence is also derived 'dhana'. That this *rushing* is no other than the *swooping down* in raiding, foraging or pillaging, and that 'dhana' is the material object (food, cattle etc.) thus won as booty, is made patent not only by several Ṛgvedic contexts but also by the related derivatives *dhanus*<sup>6</sup> and *dhanvan*<sup>6</sup>, both meaning bow, and perhaps even by *dhanu* (f.), *dhanvan*, signifying 'barren land'<sup>7</sup>, which may easily refer to the steppeland wherein such nomadic raids first came into vogue, as will be explained in the course of this paper. The sense of 'bow' implies the concept of *instrument* and the meaning 'barren land' the notion of *locality* which may develop from the same verbal idea of '(nomadic) plunder, attack', as suggested by Monier-Williams (*op. cit.*), at least for the meaning of 'bow'. It is also significant that such incursions or forays were made *on horse-back* (arvataḥ junīmasi). That these involved actual fights and were not merely races undertaken in sport is seen from another passage (10.64.6) where such horses are referred to as racers (arvanto), vigorous (vājino), winners of thousands in the winning of nourishment (medha-sātau), who gather (jabhr̥ire) great booty in every encounter (samitheṣu)". This last word like *samiti* is found in the Ṛgveda in the sense of 'battle, encounter', meaning rather a clash than a competition<sup>8</sup>. And 'arvanto' obviously refers to the *swift horse* which the

5. 'pari-hṛti' from *hr̥*, be crooked, deceive, acc. to Mon.-Will. *Dict.*, s.v. Grassmann gives 'Nachstellung', i.e., 'trap'. But it may as well mean 'what surrounds' or 'rampart', particularly since it goes with *ati*.

6. Cp. Mon.-Will. *Dict.* s. *dhan*. for sense of 'attack'.

7. Cp. *Ibid.*, s.v.

8. 'samiti' nearly in every context refers to 'battle' or 'encounter'; cp. Grassmann (WR.), s.v. Sāyaṇa is clear: "saṃgrāma-nāma etat".

nomadic Aryan raiders are said to have tamed and employed in their booty-winning incursions, as will be shown below. In this connection 'medha-sāti' is also important for like its parallel 'vāja-sāti' it literally signifies a forage or winning of food. It actually occurs beside 'vāja-sāti' at 8.40.2 where Indra is implored to "come unto us with his swift horse (arvatā), for winning (strength-giving) food (vāja-sātaye) and for the winning of fatness (medha-sātaye)." Sāyaṇa's gloss on the last word is 'yajñabhajanāya' and it is not improbable that by 'yajña-' he implied sacrificial viands (cp. *bhaj-*, partake of). Grassman (WR., *s.v.*) relates the compound with *medha* in his second sense of 'nourishment' and Monier-Williams has no hesitation in taking it as 'juice of meat, nourishing or strengthening drink' (*Dict.*, *s.v.*). Historically, *medh* is undoubtedly the earlier form of the common root *med*, be fat, going back to a likely I.E. \**mesd(h)* as may be inferred from the existence of OHG. *mast*, fattening; Gk. *mé(d)zea*, *mestós*; AS. *mōs*; Goth. *mats*, eatables, etc., which are also related to Skt. *mad-* in the sense of 'drip, be full of liquid, fat', corresponding to Avestan *madh*. It becomes clear that these raids were, originally at least, made for the express purpose of winning forage, and 'vāja', the usual object of *bhar-* (2.24.9, 26.3; cp. 2.23.13; 3.37.6: *bharad-vāja*, *vājam-bhara*, etc.), is a word that, originally meaning '(strengthening) food, nourishment', became the most popular term for 'plundered food' or forage. There is no doubt that *vāja* comes from the root *vaj* meaning 'to be strong' (Whitney, *Sanskrit Roots*, *s.v.*), and since it was food that gave bodily strength it developed the sense of 'food, nourishment'. It is curious that this etymology seems to have escaped Max Müller in his semantic study of R̥gvedic *vāja*<sup>9</sup> in which he completely ignores the sense of *food*, although Sāyaṇa everywhere has taken it as 'anna'. In the above-cited contexts (2.24.9, 26.3 etc.) the winning of food or nourishment is said to result from the worship of Brahmaṇaspati (or Br̥haspati) and it is highly significant that he too, like Indra, is an Aryan culture-hero celebrated for his *forages* (2.23-26, in particular 2.23.13). Similarly, at 1.64.13, the Maruts, who are famous as the bellicose associates of Indra in his exploits, are said in exactly parallel terms to help their devotee to gain 'food with his racers and spoils with his men' (arvadbhīḥ vājam bharate dhanā nṛbhīḥ). This may be compared with the Indra-worshipper "gaining swiftly food and spoils with his men" (makṣū sa vājam bharate dhanā nṛbhīḥ) at 10.147.4. In the use of 'vājinam' as an epithet of Indra (*ib.* 3) one may therefore see the same sense of 'master of forage' (vāja + in) rather than the adjectival sense of 'strong' which is already denoted by *ugra* from the same root, another verse (5) of the same hymn showing clearly that the finding of food and fodder (pitvaḥ) was an important aspect of the Indra-worship. Similarly in the light of the above references to the indis-

9. *India—What can it teach us*, p. 164 ff.

pensability of the swift, racing horse for these raids or plundering expeditions it is not surprising to find that animal being specifically called 'booty-winner' (vājam-bhara : 4.12.14 (vājīn); 1.60.5 (āśum); 10.80.1 (saptim), and, that in all the cited contexts this horse is said to have sprung from Agni whose cult was typical of the religious practices of these Aryan nomadic raiders, as shown by anthropologists<sup>10</sup>. The sense of 'prize-winner' (at races)<sup>11</sup> that may be possible in a few instances for 'vājam bhara' must be regarded as a secondary development from the original, and culturally more primitive, idea of 'booty (i.e., forage)-winner', for it is well known that racing as a pastime evolved from the more primitive use of the horse in raids or fights, just as the chase as civilized sport arose out of the primitive habit of hunting for food.

From the foregoing facts it would be legitimate to draw the conclusion that the verb *bhar-* has in the R̥gveda the prominent sense of *foraging*, (*foraging*), that is to say, *finding food or fodder by ravage, plunder, which naturally involved raiding and looting*<sup>12</sup>. The use of *muṣ* in identical context referring to the raid-leader Indra (see *muṣe* at 5.34.7) leaves no room for doubt that this was a traditional Aryan occupation, for *muṣ* as shown by several contexts in the R̥gveda (WR.) and by its I.E. parallels means clearly *rob* or *plunder*, particularly, food. Thus it is no wonder that in several contexts of the R̥gveda *bhar-* too gives the precise meaning of 'stealing, robbing' (10.36.9, 87.16, 113.6; cp. AV. 8.3.16)<sup>13</sup>. That these senses of 'foraging, raiding, stealing' of the root *bhr̥* were current from a very early period, as seen from the fact that most citations are from Book II and other family books, is further indicated by the clear occurrence of the derivative noun *bhara* in exactly the same sense of *forage* that is to say, *food or fodder obtained by robbing, plundering, pillaging or raiding*, developing into the general idea of 'loot, booty' and hence 'spoils' of war. Grassmann gives the following *four* senses for *bhara* (masc.):—

(i) obtaining, gaining, what is obtained	( 4 references)
(ii) winning of booty, capturing	( 5 „ )
(iii) battle, as gathering of booty, spoils	(27 „ )
(iv) laud, shout	( 7 „ )

It is clear from the ratio of incidence as given within brackets that the most frequent occurrence of *bhara* in the R̥gveda is in the sense of *battle* as gathering

10. Cp. W. Schmidt, *The Origin and Growth of Religion*, p. 50 ff.

11. Grassmann, *WR.*, s.v.

12. See Skeat, *English Etymological Dict.*, s. *foray*, *forage*; cp. *The Oxford Dict.*

13. Cp. Latin *fur*, thief; *furtivus* from *furtum*, theft, giving Eng. *furtive*, Skeat, *op. cit.* p. 738. Cp. Ghose, *Aryan Trail in India and Iran*, p. 49: "The peace-loving nomads had to be robbers and plunderers before they would need a host-leader . . . of the character of Indra".

of booty (either forage, i.e., food, or spoils of war). What is even of greater significance is that ancient Indian tradition as preserved by Yāska ascribed to the term the very same sense, namely, 'battle' (*vide, Nirukta*, 4.24: " *Bhara* iti saṃgrāma-nāma, bharater vā harater vā"). Sāyaṇa himself accepts this meaning for a large number of contexts (e.g., on 1.100. 1,2, etc.). It will be seen that there is no real difference between the senses (ii) and (iii) as given by Grassmann, and the following list of references, all significantly pertaining to Indra, leaves hardly a shadow of doubt as to the validity of the meaning here suggested:

' I invoke that mighty Indra for the winning of food (vāja-sātaye), for the foray (bharāya)'—8.13.3; cp. 3.30.22.

' Yea, Indra, of yore (purā), all the gods installed thee as their one strong (champion) for the foray'—6.17.8.

' Since, when born, all the gods adorned thee (Indra) for the great foray'—3.51.8.

One may compare with the above use of 'bharāya' its occurrence at 9.97.6, 106.2 (cp. 6.23.9), where, although Griffith has translated 'for maintenance' or 'for support', the Petersburg Lexicon and Grassmann (*s.v.*) have seen the same sense of 'for the fight'.

' With homage to thee, Indra, have the Soma drops flowed, singing (the war-song)<sup>14</sup>, for the great foray'—9.16.5, cp. 1.112.1.

' Helped, O mighty Indra, by thee in the incursion of yore (pūrvye dhane), may we subdue those who fight against us . . . on this day at hand . . . at our (Soma) sacrifice, may we divide (vi cayema) what is made in the foray (bhare kṛtam), accumulating strength(-giving food) (vājayanto), what is made in the foray'—1.132.1; cp. (prayer to Soma) 'may we share (vi cinuyāma) what is made in the foray'—9.97.58; cp. 10.102.2.

' May the thunder-armed Indra uphold us in the foray (bhare)'—5.36.5.

' O Indra, thou art great when the booty is at hand (dhane hite), thou unshakeable in the foray'—6.45.13.

' Him I invoke with eulogy, the best of chieftains (jyeṣṭha-rājam), active (or efficient) in the foray (bhare), the lord of food (vājinam), for victories of glory'—8.16.3.

Indra Vaikuṇṭha says of himself: ' I have been victorious . . . in every foray (viśvasmim bhare)'—10.49.1; cp. 10.50.4.

With this idiom 'viśvasmim bhare' may be compared the constantly occurring phrase 'bhare bhare' meaning similarly 'in every foray' in which Indra is extolled as victorious, as at 1.100.2 (cp. 1.100.4; 7.32.24; 82.9;

14. 'kārin' from *kar* (*kīr*), songster, particularly, singer of battle-song; cp. Grassmann, *WR. s. 2*, *kāra*, *kāraṇa*, and *kārin*. A clear reference to war-song or rather 'war-cry' is found at 8.66.1 (*kāriṇam bharam*) as well as at 9.10.2 (*kāriṇām bharāsaḥ*).

10.67.9; cp. Heaven and Earth at 5.43.2). Indra's connection with these forays or fights, as well as Agni's, is further brought out clearly at 8.40.3 where they are said to be 'dwellers in the midst of forays' (bharāṇām madhye). It is important to bear in mind that this plural use of *bhara* as referring to Indra's and Agni's exploits of the past (see *purā*, *pūrveye*, above) and practically approximating to 'battles' shows that the original fights in raids and incursions had by this time developed into actual warfare between tribes or nations.

Similarly, the plural use of the locative 'bhareṣu' is indicative of the common occurrence of these fights as at 1.100.1, 109.8; 10.63.9, 107.11, where Indra is invoked for aid and succour, but the traditional sense is yet preserved as at 3.37.5 where Indra is invoked 'for Vṛtra's slaughter . . . to win us booty (vāja-sātaye) in the fights (bhareṣu).' Among other culture-heroes similarly invoked for prosperity in battles (bhareṣu) are Soma (9.47.5; cp. bhare u-jā, 1.91.21, bharāṇām madhye, 8.40.3), the Ṛbhus (1.111.5), or the *gods* in general (10.107.11; Vāl. 5.7). At 2.23.13 Bṛhaspati, whose connection with these raids has already been noted, is described as 'to be invoked in raids . . . the goer on forays, the winner of booty after booty (bhareṣu havyo . . . gantā vājeṣu sanitā dhanandhanam). At 4.38.5, the function of Dadhikrās who is no other than the mythicized and idolized Aryan war-horse, already referred to, is extolled in a graphic description alluding to the stealth and swiftness of such incursions or forays: 'loudly the (settled) folk (i.e., the victims of pillage) cry after him (Dadhikrās) in the forays (bhareṣu), as it were a thief stealing a garment, speeding at (their) wealth (śravas, *lit.* glory, or food; Sāy. 'annam kīrtim vā') or a herd of cattle, like a hungry falcon sweeping downward'. One cannot be far wrong in tracing back to this employment of the swift horse in such plundering expeditions its specific use in the institution of 'Dig-vijaya' (or 'dig-jaya') as practised by the Aryan monarchs of India (*vide*, *Mahābhārata*, ii. 983-1203; Raghuvamśa, etc.).

The occurrence of the same word *bhara* in the sense of 'war cry' or 'battle song' as at 10.44.5, and of the compound *bhara-hū(ti)* as at 1.117.18; 5.29.8; 8.66.1, etc. in the same sense, adds further support to the hypothesis that the *general* meaning of *bhara* in the Ṛgveda is 'raid, fight, battle'. Böhtlingk and Roth have already referred to the existence of Greek *khármē* with a similar meaning (Greek lexicons usually giving the sense of 'joy of battle, lust of battle' and later 'victories'), which may indicate that this kind of primitive warfare with shouting and exhibition of brute force arose at some remote time among the early Aryans. Here too must be sought the origin of the later application of the word 'bharata' or 'bhārata' as actor, singer, etc., for as the present writer has shown elsewhere<sup>15</sup> the origin of Hindu dance, drama, and perhaps even singing, can be historically traced to that kind of

15. *University of Ceylon Review*, Vol. V. No. 2, pp. 50 ff.

culture as reflected in the character of Indra, the Maruts and other fighter-heroes of Rgvedic mythology.

The foregoing discussion should have made it amply clear that at some period of their cultural evolution the Rgvedic Aryans had taken to raiding and pillaging, for food, fodder, booty or wealth, and that in the archaic Aryan speech such activity had come to be denoted by the verb \**bher-*. The idolizing of the swift horse used in such incursions into the lands of settled communities<sup>16</sup>, and the almost ritual connotation that the word *bhara* had come to acquire, along with the deification of the nomadic raid-leader, swashbuckling Indra, who is unashamedly referred to as the champion who 'drives forth to plunder (*lit.* rob) the food (bhojanam muṣe) of the niggard (paṇeḥ),<sup>17</sup> and distributes (that) excellent wealth among the pious (followers)' (5.34.7; cp. 1.33.3), show unmistakably that this institution had by the time of the composition of the text become merely a 'survival' from the archaic past (cp. pūrve dhane, 1.132.1, and purā, 6.17.8). Indra, who as we saw above was regarded as the 'best of chieftains' (jyeṣṭha-rājā), was no other than "a copy of the earthly princes", that is to say, of the nomadic Aryan chieftains who led their followers on raids and invasions which brought them immense wealth and regal glory, as so well described by Prof. V. Gordon Childe in his masterly treatise on *The Aryans* (*vide*, pp. 30, 193, etc.). In the light of this remark one can well understand the significance of the term 'vaṇik' (*lit.* trader, i.e. one who possessed enough wealth to barter) as applied to Indra at 5.45.6. Speaking of the tombs found in the northern slopes of the Caucasus of Aryan chieftains who had led their followers on plundering expeditions into Armenia, Cappadocia, and even Mesopotamia, this famous authority on Aryan culture and pre-history says: "Masses of gold and silver buried in the enormous barrows must partly be *loot* [*italics mine*] from the rich states south of the range . . . manifest in the gold and silver lions and bulls that decorated the canopy under which one prince was laid to rest . . . The *raids* that brought them north were prelude to invasions. We may suspect that the *ancestors of the Indians* and the Iranians discovered as *free-booters* the roads that eventually led them to the throne of Mitanni and to the Indus Valley . . . While some nomads were settling down in the valleys and others were constituting

16. It is significant that at 4.38.5, the victims of these raids are referred to as 'kṣitayaḥ' or 'settled colonies' (cp. Mon.—Will. *Dict. s. kṣi* 2); the allusion is no doubt to the settled agricultural communities in the fertile river valleys, like the Punjab area (cp. kṣṭayaḥ). See, V. Gordon Childe, *Man Makes Himself*, p. 133: "very early settlements . . . probably protected by some sort of ramparts [cp. parihvṛti]. Most probably these were defences against human foes . . . On the whole, warlike raids by nomadic or uprooted peoples have to be admitted. And if so, it is equally necessary to admit some degree of organized defence against such raiders on the part of the prosperous settled communities".

17. Cp. Sāyaṇa: "paṇer vaṇija iva lubdhakasya . . ."

principalities on the slopes of the Caucasus, the remainder left upon the steppe would be forced to find outlets for their increasing numbers and fresh pastures for their growing herds by means of *migration* . . . pastoralists do not spread slowly and regularly like [Danubian] cultivators but more rapidly by darts. Actual migration is preceded by exploratory expeditions in the summer, and such excursions reveal to the nomad other goals than mere *grazing grounds*—centres of *wealth to be plundered* and held to ransom. The enforced expansion from the steppe seems in fact to have been guided by some such ends” (pp. 194-6). Giving the ecological reasons for this theory of the enforced expansion of the nomads from Central Asia, Childe says: “the revelation of the cyclic desiccation of Inner Asia has provided a motive for the great exodus of the nomads, perhaps for their very nomadism. Such desiccation might have begun the process of expulsion and isolation which the incursion of the Mongols completed” (p. 96). Finally, it may be added that the same authority has shown that the *swift horse* was “a preeminently Aryan animal” (p. 156) . . . whose introduction in Hither Asia went indubitably with Indo-European speech (p. 78) . . . and whom the Aryan nomads were the first to tame (pp. 109, 190).

In the light of the above remarks there can be no doubt that the basic or historical sense of ‘*bhara-ta*’ in the Ṛgveda is ‘fighter’ or ‘warrior’<sup>18</sup> as a cultural development from the more primitive ‘raider’. This applies without exception to all the references given by Grassmann (WR.) for *bharata* (4) and *bhārata* (2), and *bharatāya* cited by him under sense (3) of ‘Stammvater’ (i.e., tribal progenitor) also should simply mean ‘to the warrior’ (yūyam arvantam bharatāya dhattha . . . 5.54.14), as Max Müller took it in his *Vedic Hymns* (Pt. I. p. 327). There is thus left only one single context ‘*bharatasya putrāḥ*’ (3.53.24) where the implication of tribal progenitor is valid, for the only other instance cited by Grassmann under (3), namely, ‘*Agniḥ bharatasya*’ at 7.8.4 clearly should belong to (4), if the meaning suggested in this paper is correct. By ‘*bharatasya*’ at 3.53.24 the reference made is undoubtedly to the founder of the Viśvāmītra family, more as a mythological than a genealogical personage. This should really be taken along with the only other similar reference ‘*bharatasya sūnavāḥ*’ (2.36.2) which Grassmann classifies as his sense (2), namely, ‘*Rudra*’, whose sons, the Maruts, are certainly implied. An analysis of Rudra’s character in the Ṛgveda shows that he is only the primitive Hunter deified (cp. Pali *ludda-ka* for ‘hunter’), and as we intend proving elsewhere the Maruts are also such hunters (*mar-ut*, orig. ‘kill-er’). This use of ‘*Bharata*’ is thus only a faint reminiscence of the evolution of the ‘warrior’ from the primitive hunter. As Childe has shown, at the end of the palaeolithic stage the Aryans were “a sparse popula-

18. Cp. the use of Old Nordish *börvar* for ‘son of a warrior’, as adduced by Ludwig, *Der Rgveda*, III. 175. Other I.E. parallels have been cited before leading to the same sense of ‘battle’ or ‘warrior’.

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tion of pre-neolithic hunters strung out indefinitely over the steppe" (*op. cit.*, p. 192), who roamed over these Central Asian waste lands for a long period before they acquired enough wealth and position by raiding and looting to develop into the military aristocracy that they became in course of time (*ib.*, 41, 126, 151-2). The other references of Grassmann (*s. bharata* (1) and *bhārata* (1) ) all are taken correctly as implying Agni, but as clear from the facts adduced in this paper the sense of 'to be maintained' (*der zu pflegen ist*) is not the original implication of this use. The key-context given by the Petersburg Lexicon for this meaning 'ūrjaḥ putram bharatam sapradānum . . .' (1.96.3) need in fact give no such sense at all! Nor is it warranted by Indian tradition: "bharatam haviṣo bhartāram yad vā prāṇarūpeṇa sarvāsām prajānām bhartāram" (Say.) which, if at all, may support the *agent*<sup>19</sup> construction of the form. This is the only place where *bharata* is used for Agni, the others all having the derived form *bhārata* as an epithet, and, it seems quite legitimate to suggest that the singular use could have developed from the constant use of the term *bhārata* as implying 'the dweller among the Bharatas' (1.33.45, 59.6, etc.).

O. H. DE A. WIJESKERA

19. Cp. the word 'bharant-' (part.) at Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa XVIII, 10.8, for 'warrior' almost synonymous with 'bharata'; see Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. II. p. 98.