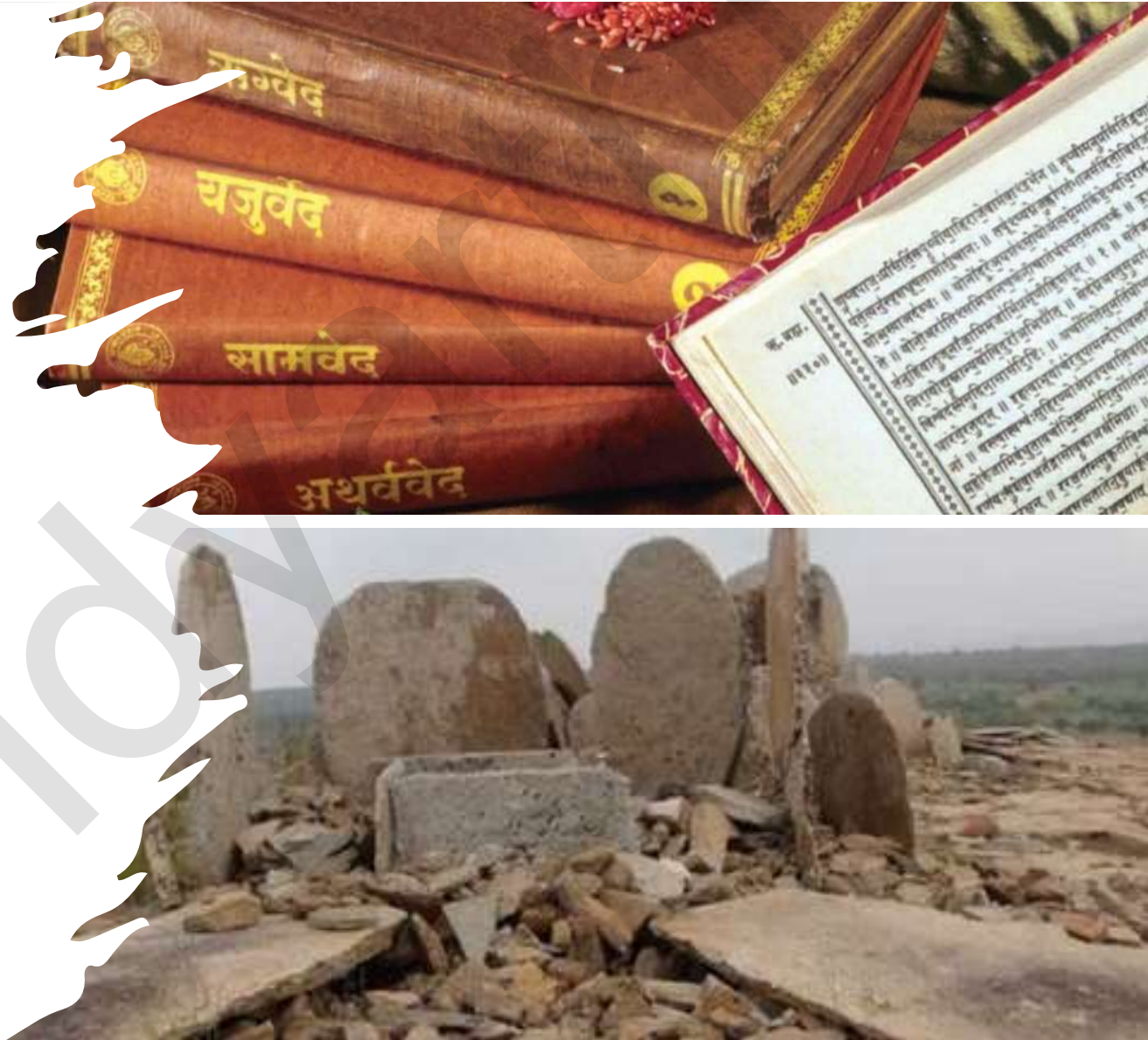


CLASS VI

WHAT BOOKS AND BURIALS TELL US

CHAPTER - 4

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One of the oldest books in the world



How historians study the Rig-Veda



Cattle, horses and chariots



Words to describe people



Silent sentinels - the story of the megaliths



Finding out about social differences



Were some burial spots meant for certain families?



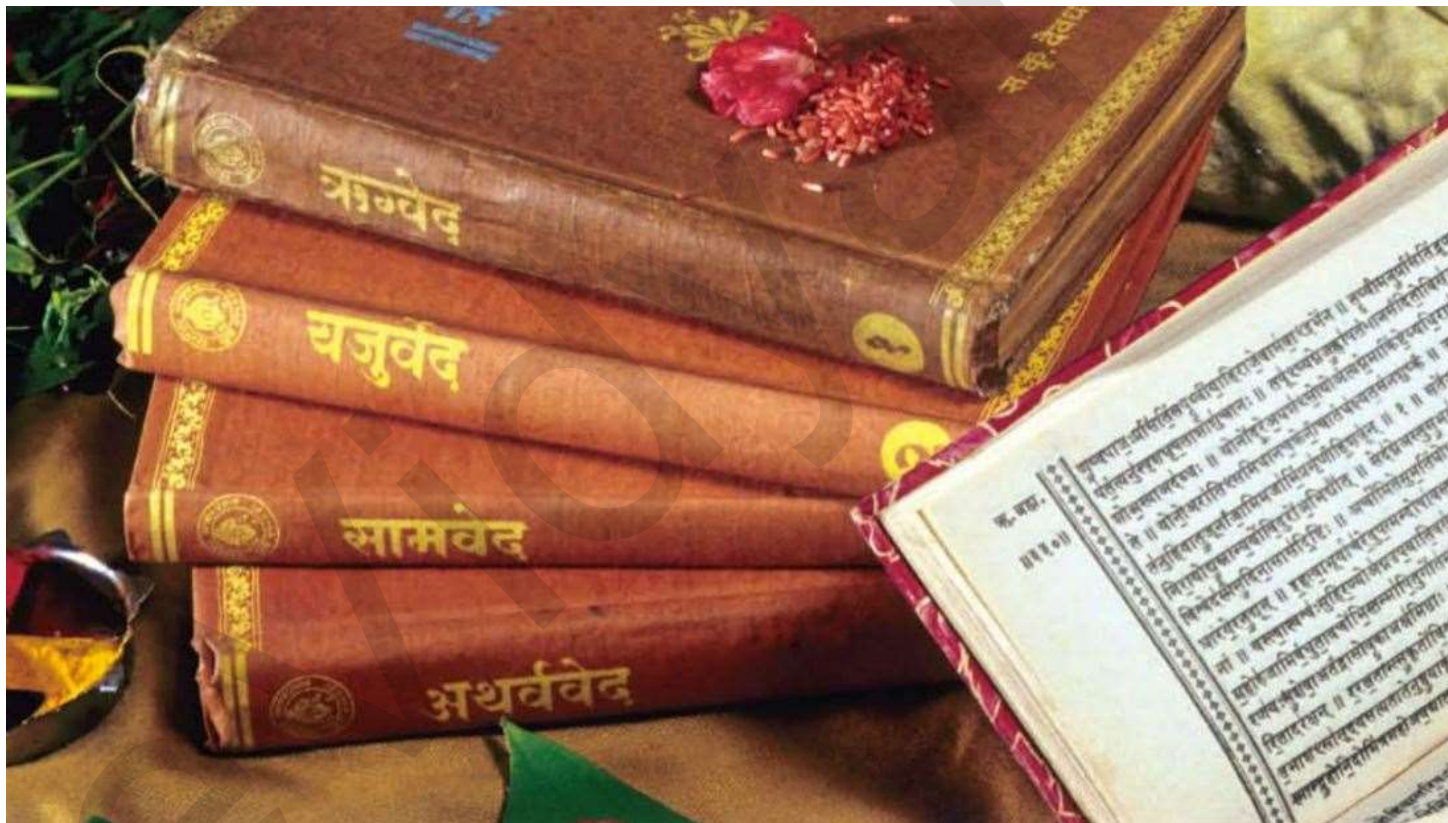
A special burial at Inamgaon

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❖ One of the oldest books in the world



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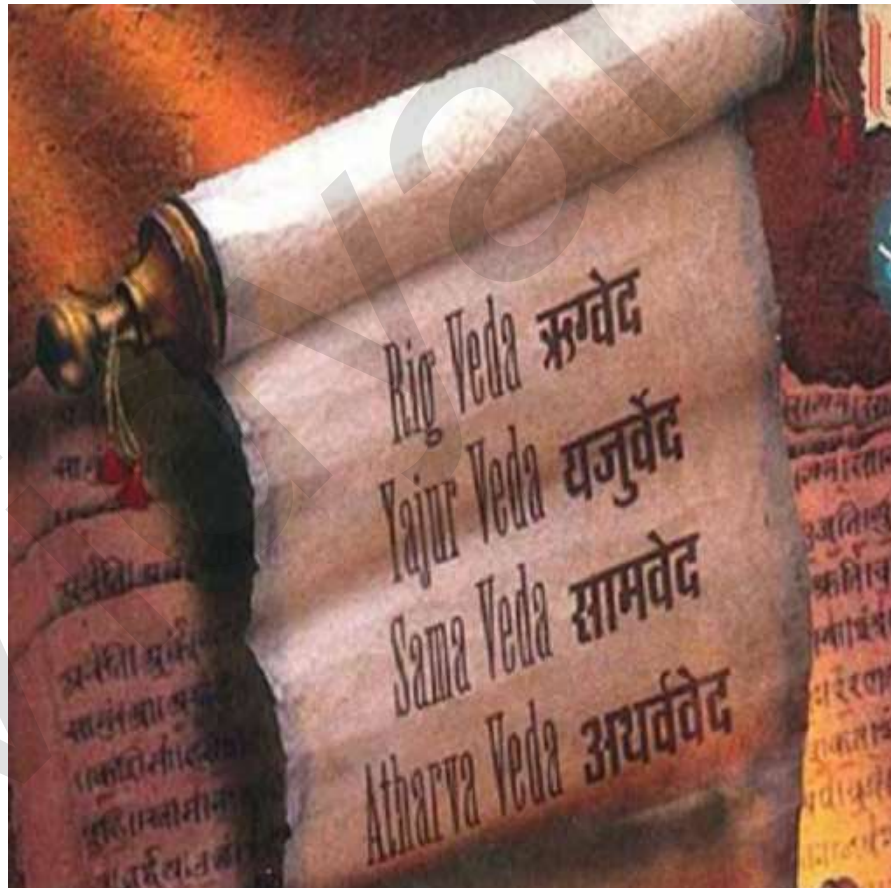
❖ One of the oldest books in the world

- The oldest book known everywhere throughout the world should be that of the Vedas.
- They were written around 3,000 years back and are the earliest literary source available.

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➤ The Vedas



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➤ The Vedas

- The word, Veda means Knowledge. There are four Vedas: Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda and Atharvaveda.
- The Rigveda is the oldest Veda. It was created around 3,500 years back.
- The Rigveda includes more than a thousand hymns, called sukta or “well-said”. These hymns are in praise of various gods and goddesses.

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- The hymns have been composed by sages. Most of the hymns were composed, taught and learnt by men.
- These hymns are in acclaim of various divine beings, for example, Indra (the lord of warrior), Agni (the divine force of flame), Varun (the lord of sky) and numerous others.

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- The Rigveda is in old or Vedic Sanskrit, which is different from the Sanskrit you learn in school these days.

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❖ How historians study the Rig-Veda



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❖ How historians study the Rig-Veda

- While learning about the past, historians examined written sources.
- They examined the Rig-Veda. A large portion of the psalms in Rig-Veda were as exchanges.
- Historians study these exchanges to arrive at conclusions.

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❖ Cattle, horses and chariots



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❖ Cattle, horses and chariots

- Most prayers in the Rig-Veda are for cows, kids and steeds.
- Horses were burdened to chariots and utilized as a part of fights.
- Battles planned to catch dairy cattle, field, water and individuals.

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- Some battles were fought for water, and to capture people.
- A part of the riches was utilized for performing Yajnas or sacrifices in which offerings were put into flame, for divine beings including ghee, grains and uncommon creatures.

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❖ Words to Describe People

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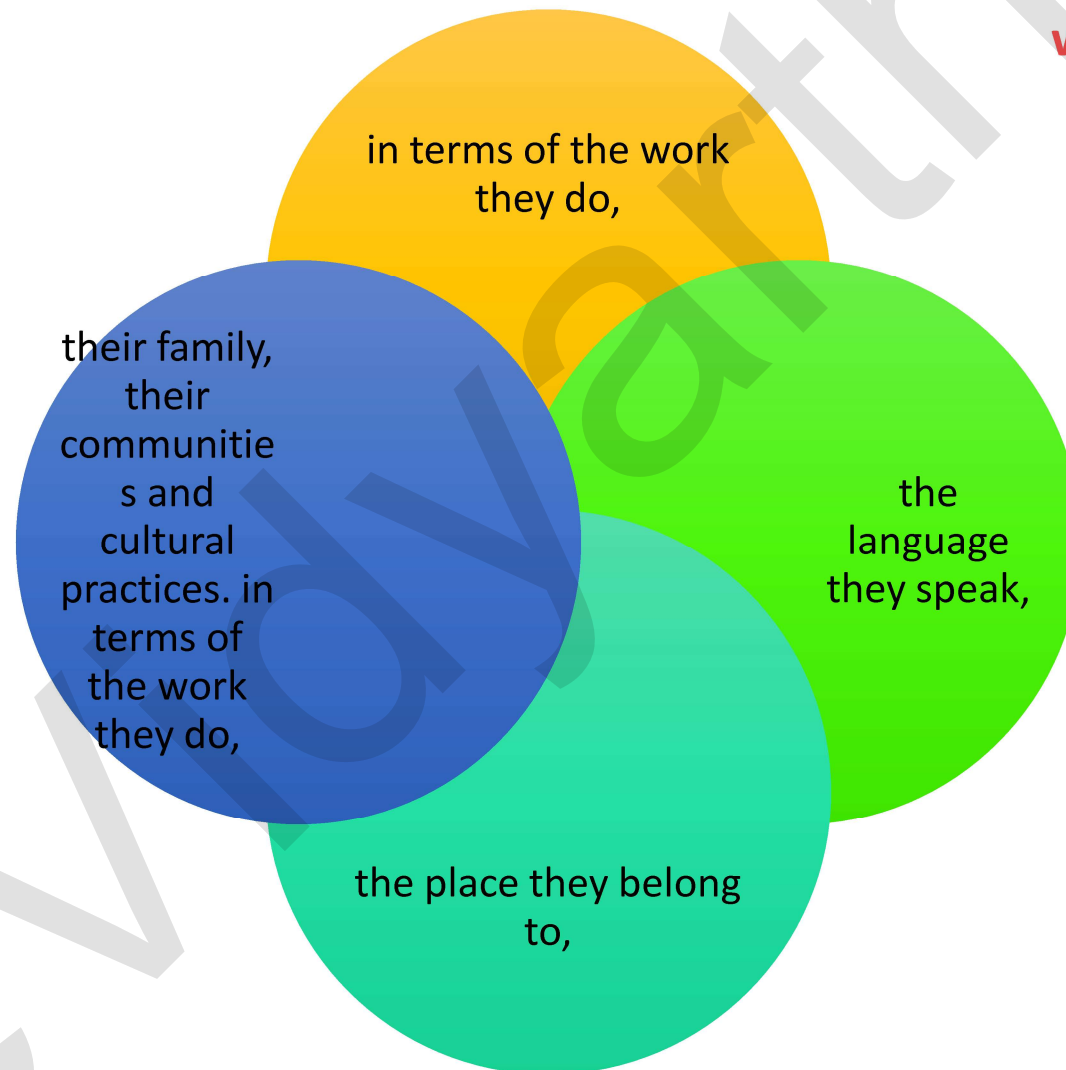
❖ Words to Describe People

There are several ways of describing people —

- in terms of the work they do,
- the language they speak,
- the place they belong to,
- their family, their communities and cultural practices.

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There are two groups who are described in terms of their work —

1. The priests, sometimes called brahmins, who performed various rituals, and
2. The rajas-They did not have capital cities, palaces or armies, nor did they collect taxes.

Two words were used to describe the people or the community as a whole. One was the word jana, which we still use in Hindi and other languages. The other was vish. The word vaishya comes from vish.

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✓ Dasas/ Dasyus

While Aryans created Vedas, another gathering of individuals restricted to Vedas which were called Dasas or Dasyus or slaves.

✓ Occupations

Agriculture, cattle-rearing, chariot-production, ceramics, jewelry-production tanning and metal-work were the primary occupations.

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❖ Silent sentinels - the story of the megaliths



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❖ Silent sentinels - the story of the megaliths

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- The stone boulders are known as megaliths.
 - ✓ carefully arranged
 - ✓ used to mark burial sites
 - ✓ some megaliths can be seen on the surface, other megalithic burials are often underground.
- The practice of erecting megaliths began about 3000 years ago.

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- Megalithic sites in India
 - i. the Deccan,
 - ii. south India,
 - iii. in the north-east and Kashmir.
- Burials have some common features.
- the dead were buried with distinctive pots, which are called Black and Red Ware.
- Also found are tools and weapons of iron and sometimes, skeletons of horses, horse equipment and ornaments of stone and gold

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➤ Finding out about social differences

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➤ Finding out about social differences

- Archaeologists expect that items found with a skeleton belonged to the dead person.
- In Brahmagiri, a skeleton was covered with 33 gold dots, 2 stone globules, and one conch shell though other skeleton just had a pot.
- This shows the distinction in status, among the general population who were covered. Some were rich while other were poor.

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➤ Were some burial spots meant for certain families?



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➤ Were some burial spots meant for certain families?

- Sometimes, stone monuments have more than one skeleton. It demonstrates that individuals having a place with a similar family were covered at same place though not at the same time.
- Stone circles or boulders placed on the surface probably served as signposts to find the burial site, so that people could return to the same place whenever they wanted to.

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❖ A special burial at Inamgaon



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❖ A special burial at Inamgaon

- Special burials occurred at Inamgaon.
- It was occupied between 3600 and 2700 years ago.
- Here, adults were generally buried in the ground, laid out straight, with the head towards the north.
- Vessels that probably contained food and water were placed with the dead

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- One man was found buried in a large, four legged clay jar in the courtyard of a five-roomed house (one of the largest houses at the site), in the centre of the settlement.
- This house also had a granary.
- The body was placed in a crosslegged position.

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➤ Occupations at Inamgaon



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➤ Occupations at Inamgaon

- Archaeologists have found seeds of wheat, barley, rice, pulses, millets, peas and sesame.
- Bones of a number of animals, many bearing cut marks that show they may have been used as food, have also been found.

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✓ These include cattle, buffalo, goat, sheep, dog, horse, ass, pig, sambhar, spotted deer, blackbuck, antelope, hare, and mongoose, besides birds, crocodile, turtle, crab and fish.

T

- We have evidence that fruits such as ber, amla, jamun, dates and a variety of berries were collected.