

The Kurus had two branches, the northern and the southern. Uttarakuru or the country of the Northern Kurus, is supposed to be a region beyond the most northern range of the Himālaya mountains, and is described as a country of everlasting happiness.⁷¹¹ We have discussed in details, the Kurus, in the section on tribes. The *Bṛhatsaṁhitā*⁷¹² mentions it as a country situated in the North. In the later period the Uttarakurus had only a mythical or legendary existence.

4. *Vaṅga* (No. 20, L. I) :

In this inscription, king Candra, "on whose arm fame was inscribed by the sword, when in battle in *Vaṅga* countries, is stated to have kneaded back with his breast the enemies who, uniting together, came against him".⁷¹³ This is taken by scholars⁷¹⁴ to be the first epigraphic mention of *Vaṅga*. The *Vaṅgas* here mean the 'Vaṅga country' the eastern Bengal of modern times. Bajpai is of the opinion that the *Vaṅgas* of the Meharauli Pillar Inscription of Candra (No. 20) are the people living in the Makaran coast of Baluchistan.⁷¹⁵ But the *Vaṅgas* here denote country and not the people. Moreover, the victory of king Candra over the *Vaṅga* countries has no connection with his conquest of the *Vāhlikas*. Both are separately mentioned in his campaign. In Sanskrit the tribal name in the plural is regularly used to indicate the country inhabited by the tribe.⁷¹⁶ The *Vaṅga* countries are also referred to in the *Mahākūṭa* Pillar Inscription,⁷¹⁷ but in the inscriptions after the 9th century A.D. the word *Vaṅgāla* is usually mentioned.⁷¹⁸

The earliest mention of the *Vaṅgas* along with the *Magadhas* is in the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*.⁷¹⁹ The name is also found in the *Baudhāyana Dharma-Sūtra*⁷²⁰ where the *Vaṅgas* are mentioned as impure people.⁷²¹ But the Drama 'Pratijñā-Yaugandharāyaṇa' (Act II), ascribed to *Bhāsa* and probably not older than the 4th century A.D., suggests that the ruling families of Bengal were regarded as equals to those of Northern India for intermarriage with the royal family of *Mālava*.⁷²²

The people of *Vaṅga* are stated to have fought in the *Kuru-kshetra* war⁷²³ and, in course of his expedition *Bhīṣma* is said to have defeated *Samudrasena* of *Vaṅga*.⁷²⁴ The *Kāśikā* mentions *Vāṅgaka* to explain *Pāṇini's* sūtra (IV.3.100) denoting