

Masters Program in

**Kautilya Politics and Economics  
(MKPE)**

**Study Material**

(For Private Circulation only)

**Indian Political Economic and  
Sociological Thoughts  
(MK02)**

**Bhishma School of Indic Studies**

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## UNIT 1 : INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

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### 1.1 Introduction

Before thinking about the good governance; we must know what Indian traditional knowledge, facts in the history and the political history tells about the foundation and nature of the good governance. For this, we must keep in mind that in the entire world it is only India that has many texts written on Politics since ancient times. Nowhere in the entire world such ancient text on Political Science is found. Let us start knowing about it based on the well distinguished text called Mahabharata that has the most elaborated description about Political science.

It is clearly mentioned in Mahabharata that enforcement of the Governance is to Protect the Vedas and Dharma; and the propriety of the Governance is to protect the knowledge traditions and Dharma, i.e Sanatana Dharma.

In ShantiParva, Section 58, upon being asked by King Yudhishtir, Bhishma Pitamaha said that Brahma has composed Political Science to protect and Veda and to honor Dharma. The King who protects Dharma, is being protected by Bhagwan Vishnu.

Looking at India at present times - the present Indian State is a combination of Euro Christian and communists thoughts. These thoughts does not consider Indian State as representative of the society, but considers it as a saviour. Calling Sanatana Dharma as Superstitious, these Euro - Christian and communists thoughts became determined to change the society and portrayed as a saviour of the society from Superstitious Sanatana Dharma.

The British Queen on 1st November 1858 started ruling almost half of Indian Land with alliance and cooperation of the Hindu kings, Muslim Nawabs and Sikh rulers; then announced that," From Today onwards my Nephew will be the first Viceroy of British India and we will not interfere in any way in the territorial rule and Rules of Inheritance to the throne of the Indian Kings. And people of all Religions and Sects would be protected in the territory."

Because of this, under the British Rule in India till 1947, Indian Knowledge and Science was taught to some extent in Educational Institutions.

Rest of the Hindu Land accepted ideologies of the Rule of Royalty, but not everyone was following it.

But, this was completely contradictory to the Nature of British Rule in England because in England only Protestant Christians were protected and even today it remains the same.

Taking the inspiration by Soviet Union The Neharu Government made States as governing power, and the states became decision makers and strategy makers in Education, Communication, Business, Arts n Crafts etc. In all these areas, the High level Governing officers started being considered as experts. But such officials were actually busy in governance and Public services. These officials were not the subject matter experts so to cover up their failures they started following and implementing verbal, nuncupative orders and instructions by the Prime Minister and others. They started taking guidance from the Soviet Union, Western European countries and experts.

The same continues till date.

After the mysterious death of Lal Bahadur Shastriji, for some reasons India Gandhi became like a puppet in the hands of the Soviet Union, and the importance of Communists minded official was increased by appointing them as top officials in departments of Education and Communication etc. At the same time for obtaining votes some Indian scholars were given importance to some extent.

During the same period, the ill system of Licence and Quotas attained the Peaks. Thousands of people started standing in queues waiting for the entire day just to get the basic supplies of Kerosene, grains and groceries, sugar etc.

After the fall of Soviet Union, the government built strong diplomatic relations with America. And as directed by America, Rajivji declared liberalization and globalization of the trade policies, which proved to be an announcement of relief to the restrained society.

In fact, if the government does not protect the Vedas and Dharma, it is considered as bad governance from the Indian perspective, and it is nothing but the overpowering by a group of such people. This should be made clear.

It is just like judging just one part of the fact without considering the basis. For example - it is just like comparing human being with a pig and calling human being as a pig and vice a versa. Just because both have pair of eyes, both have mouth and nose, and skin. It will be wrong to say that a man is a pig and pig is a man. We need to keep in mind that the present way

of governance in India is not representing the ancient Indian tradition of knowledge and science, so it is governance by Adharma...

We cannot think forward without Keeping this basic thing in mind. How is it possible? Let us give it a thought - At present everybody at certain age has the voting right, which means everybody is free to select the representative of his/her choice. But there is a strange notion attached to it , - it is assumed that a man is born intelligent or he becomes intelligent when he attains certain age, and then he becomes totally independent.

Indian knowledge and science and the Modern Euro-American sciences, specially philosophy, Psychology, Education and Sciences bring it very clear that all that is read, listened, seen facts or thoughts have deep impact on person's intellect. And people usually express and agree only to such thinking which they have seen, read and heard inside and outside of his home, in the society, on social Media and in educational institutions.

In the Present Situation, the political leaderships in India are seen dividing the Indian community in Majority and Minority categories. The States have declared that - it is the duty of the state to protect the Religion or Sect of the minorities. In order to do so, financial grants that are sourced from the tax payer's money ( collected from the Majority community) generously given to the Minority community so that they can learn their Quran, Hadis or Bible or other texts of their Sects and thus they can make up their minds.

Ever since the period of Jawaharlal Nehru it is being told to Hindus that their scriptures and texts have become meaningless and outdated, and Hindus must develop some scientific temper to give up their Religious knowledge and thoughts and then Hindus would agree that thoughts of the leaderships are scientific. Such thoughts are spread through the Education departments, communication Media and political leaders, and this is how they become believers of science - I.e. "scientists". in this way a propaganda campaign is run by the political leaders to fool people of the majority community.

The Indian knowledge and texts say that Intellect is basically comes from very natural elements. Despite all the constant efforts by the government, Hindus read the religious texts to some extent. The government has made complete arrangements so that for the most of the common Hindus, the mind is full of worldly pleasures and material desires. It is been taken care that Hindus should not have any knowledge of common Hindu religion and do not have any awareness of the religion. For this arrangements are

done through government mediums through education centers and communication media.

The present governance system discriminates between the citizens. The present system considers it the duty to give religious education to the minority community. To fulfill that it considers that it is the government's duty to provide financial grants from the treasury for the education of religion.

But the Majority community which is mostly the Hindus who follow Sanatana Dharma are not allowed to teach Sanatana Dharma in such educational institutions that are operated by the government or where the grants are received from the government.

Thus, the state of India makes two types of citizens.

One - the class of citizens who have extensive knowledge about their Sect or Religion and these citizens have passion and loyalty towards it.

Second - on the other hand, the majority community in India are Hindus (who follow Sanatan Dharma) , who are not given any knowledge of Sanatan Dharma in schools. And on taking the knowledge of Sanatan Dharma in education, the government does not give any grant or funding to such education institutions.

Jawaharlal Nehru's Congress committed the misdeed of bringing this terrible unjust situation, This sinister structure was in accordance with following the footsteps of Soviet Union, the system was enclosing everything. Except of the few exceptions the whole Indian state came under this trap.

As a result was that due to the state influenced and-controlled education and influence of the media, all the newly educated Hindus that are being taught by the secular regime started accepting the things as the modern truth. They started assuming the same as the accepted truth all over the world. They also accepted that the state is the only expert authoritative system in the world. Not only in education and communication media, but also in business industry etc. And whatever such expert authoritative rulers and administrators do, it is for the welfare of the nation.

But in reality, the nation has been suffering because of all that. Most of the average educated Hindus of India do not even know that these beliefs and systems which were the basis of that unjust situation was actually once trampled by the awakened public opinion of the Soviet Union.

The fact to be noted specially is - Hindu religion in true sense is humane because it depicts the general religion to be followed by all human beings.

Whereas Islam and Christianity consider themselves as the best and the observance of their Sect and beliefs only. They consider others as beings worthy of going to hell.

But, Hinduism considers various forms of worship as the karma. And religion in Hindu Views has all values such as Truth, Non-violence, Abstinence, Self-control, not holding of excess collection, Purity, Contentment, Self-study, Devotion, The knowledge tradition, Earnings and Work. The worship in various forms which is done without causing harm or destruction to others. All these values are Hindu religious values.

The protection of this Religion and its exponents is Rajdharma.

That is the reason since ancient times, In India the scriptures of Rajdharma were composed like a very important part of religious scriptures.

The present government of India neither protects such knowledge and sciences, not it protects the Sanatana Dharma, therefore it is not to be called a good governance, it is to be called bad governance.

## **1.2 Indian Thought foundation of the Raj Dharma**

In the 60th chapter of Rajdharmanushasan Parva , Bhishma Pitamaha says: Offering my respect with Namaskar to God Shri Krishna, to all Brahmins and to Dharma, I hereby narrate the nature of Sanatana Dharma -The eternal Dharma as, " Staying calm and No anger, Speaking truth, Appropriate division of wealth (portfolio), Forgiveness, Purity, Not betraying anyone, It is the duty to take care of all those who are supposed to be taken care of, Not behaving crookedly (righteousness) and Begetting children from one's own wife , these are 9 universal principles of Dharma (Religion) and equally applicable to all (SarvaVarnik)

These have also been called common religion, human religion etc. This is commonly called as Sanatana Dharma. It is essential for every human being. To ensure the correct nature and implementation of the same is Rajdharma - the duty of the King.

It is the duty of a King - Rajdharma - to Punish any offenders or violators of the Religious rules or principles; that is why it is also called Punishment policy.



The Indian knowledge tradition nowhere says that accomplishing deeds and charitable deeds are the main functions of governance.

All these are functions of the society. That which is offered for Yajna is called Ishta, it includes considerations for all living beings, welcoming and respecting the guest, and charity with the aim to support the learning. These are the deeds in the best interest of the society.

The deeds that are done for fulfillment of the needs of the society are called charity.,for example - construction of public gardens, construction of temples, construction of Dharamshala, construction of wells, ponds, reservoirs etc. And it also includes service of the sorrowful, food to the hungry. Providing clothes to those who do not have clothes and Providing shelters who do not have shelter etc. – doing all these and giving donations continuously are accomplishing deeds, and virtuous deeds that keep on fulfilling the deficiencies or needs of the society. Traditionally Society has been doing all these works. Various strata of the society have been executing the works so that no burden of such work was ever put on the state in India.

The main function of the state is to see that all the sections of the society perform their duties without obstructing the duties of others. The state to ensure that all remain under the discipline of universal rules and protect the state from any kind of foreign interference and invasion.

This is the work of the state in India which is called Rajdharma.

To fulfill the duties of Rajadharma there is a system of collecting Tax by taking just a part of the income made by every section of the society so that the National treasury is formed. The state has the right to use it.

To be bright as Sun, To rule, To protect all and To punish unrighteousness is Rajdharma. All in the world should enjoy their own life without taking away the happiness of others, to ensure control on this the fear of punishment is essentials. (Manusmriti says Dandasya Hi Bhayat Sarvam Jagad Bhogaya Kalpate 7/22). - I.e People enjoy withing limits only because of the fear of Punishment.( ManuSmriti -7/22)

The society becomes corrupted If the Penal Policy has flaws. When communicating with the subjects the King should sound kind and Polite, but at heart he should be Majestic and Austere. For some reason if the King needs to talk politely with the enemy or Vicious person, he should do so, but as soon as the target is achieved, the enemy or the vicious person should be destroyed - this is Rajdharma. For an ordinary person/citizen this may sound deceitful and torturing.

It is clearly mentioned in the scriptures that the King should be very strict against unrighteous or wicked people.

Shathe Shatyam Samacharet I.e.Tit for Tat - such behaviour is prohibited for a common citizen but it is the Duty of the King to be such. This is Rajdharma.

In ShantiParv, instructions have been given for the King to follow the path of righteousness, honesty and being without guile. If a person with his misdeeds callings his near and dear people or the neighbour as "Shath", Punishing such person is also a part of Rajdharma. However to achieve the Swadharma or the dutiful task a King is allowed to behave deceitful or be decisive only up to a limited extent.

Following the path of Dharma, Taking care of the subjects as guided by the rules of Dharma, identifying and punishing the disturbing/destructive people in the society is called as the highest levels of Duties as per Rajdharma. These are the primary duties as per Rajdharma. Along with them are the Protection, Promotion and Management of Education and YadnyaKarmas.

To defeat the enemies of the State by war, deceit, diplomacy and Justice is Rajdharma. Punishing the wicked and the unrighteous, bringing in Justice is Rajdharma.

The Nation, State, Castle/Capital, Treasury, Ministers, Military forces along with the King are called as "Saptaang" - The seven aspects of the Kingdom. Protection, Promotion, betterment, and bringing prosperity to these seven aspects is called RajDharma.

Obtaining Indian Knowledge from the Vedas, education and religious traditions, Indian jurisprudence, Social sciences, and Penal policy is considered as the most important Rajdharma. Ministers, Members of Parliament, Political leaders must have knowledge of all these. Only then they can follow the Indian Rajdharma.

Education brings discipline in life without which ability is never gained to execute the Penal Policy. If aspects of the social sciences are not considered then the state will be destroyed. Knowledge about social sciences and its aspects will be derived only from knowing in details about Social Life and Culture, and knowledge traditions.

This is clearly propounded in the Ayodhya Kand of Valmiki Ramayana and Shanti Parva and Sabha Parva of Mahabharata. Aspects of Social Sciences are Agriculture, Commerce, Trade, Art and Crafts, Animal husbandry, Use of Mines and the entire Economic system. All these are emphasized in the Mahabharata, Manusmriti, Yajnavalkya Smriti and Chanakya's Arthashastra which is Rajshastra.

Doing impartial justice and punishing the criminal is one of the main functions of the state. Rajdharma is a just system to settle people's disputes. Manu has termed "the Rule by Justice" synonymous with "the Religion". Manu Says that in a state where the innocents are punished and the guilty are spared, the rulers of that state are sinners and will deserve the hell.

In both the Epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata state that the king has to ensure the system of fair Justice. That is why we have detailed thought process on having beneficiary positions.

There are four points based on which Final decision in any dispute is given , they are Religion, Conduct, Character and State Rule.

Similarly, the four pillars of Judicial System are Indictment, Response, Trial and Judgment The system including all of these; is a part of Rajdharma. Following the guidelines of Rajdharma is Good Governance.

Generally, thinking about Politics has been considered as western tradition; But Indian civilization, Culture and tradition which is more than 5000 years old has the illustrious thinking on Politics. As compared to the Western Political thoughts, Indian Political Philosophy is enriched with the wider concept of Religion and its nature is mainly Spiritual and Moral.

In the views of Manu, Koutilya, Shukra the Religion (Dharma), Philosophy, the World in which we all live, the Society, Human Life, the State union are co-related and interwoven as threads in a fabric.

In Modern Period, end of 18<sup>th</sup> Century is considered as the time when systematic study of Indian Philosophy and Culture began. In 1784 after the Asiatic Society was formed in Bengal, thoughts and Study of Politics got a new direction. No Doubt that the establishment of Asiatic Society had British Interests to study the Indian History and Culture in order to strengthen the British Rule in India. But because of the Asiatic Society, the Indian Politics started gaining importance. In the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> century many of the Indian philosophical and religious texts got translated in English and other European Languages.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy tried understanding reasons of failures of Indian Society while he Accepted the Western Rule, the English Culture, western Politics and Industrialism and its success.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati with his noble efforts paved the way for Sanatana Arya Dharma to bring back the glory of the Vedas, and Vedic Culture.

## **UNIT 2 : INDIAN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND WESTERN SCHOLARS**

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### **2.1 An Overview of Indian Knowledge and Euro-Centrality**

There has been a lot of misconceptions among western Thinkers and Scholars about Ancient Indian Political thoughts and its nature.

Their deep-rooted thoughts of Euro-centrality was the biggest hurdle in accepting the Superiority and pre-eminence of Indian Political Philosophy. Many Western Scholars have rejected the Indian Political Philosophy by saying that Indian Philosophers views are focused on Theology and Spiritualism. This clearly shows their Prejudices and superficial knowledge of Indian Political thoughts.

Max Muller, Bloomfield and Durning have said that Indian philosophy lacks political thought. These western scholars believed that the source of Indian philosophy is basically "The Hindu literature".

And on the basis of this, they formed an opinion that there is nothing but doubtful idealism, impractical and thoughts of supernatural nonsense in Indian literature. The Colonial British rule on India could have been the reason behind these misconceptions and delusional thoughts because they did not want to give any credit to the Indian Political Scholars.

This has been acknowledged by another western scholar named Chester Collins Maxey, in Maxey's words, "Western commentators have mistreated not only the political ideas of the Eastern scholars, but also the ancient Hindu political ideas. We have got our knowledge of Hindu political institutions and ideas from sources which cannot give an unbiased view of the political aspect of Indian life and character. The Indian diaspora was seen as completely unfit for political responsibility. In fact, Indian thinkers or political philosophers have been neglected either out of ignorance or intentionally."

The foundation of Indian Political Philosophy (RajDarshan) had been laid centuries before Plato and Aristotle's time; therefore, the delusional concepts and thoughts of western scholars about Indian political philosophy are proved to be baseless.

Not only this, but the history of Indian political philosophy is as old as its culture, civilization and religion etc.

The "Republic", "Statesman" and "Laws" - by Plato are considered to be important sources of ancient Greek political thought and Aristotle's work is considered to be "Politics".

But the Epics like Ramayana, Mahabharata, the Vedic literature, Jain and Buddhist literature, Kautilya Arthashastra, Nitisaar by Kamandaka and Shukraneeti by Shukracharya are the sources of Indian Political Philosophy. The Rigveda and the Atharvaveda contain many verses related to thoughts on Politics.

Not only the knowledge and science, but in the Politics too India was never less than any other country in the world.

Just as Greek scholars consider Aristotle's political ideas important, in the same way Aristotle's contemporary Indian political Scholar Kautilya is important in India.

In fact, Macchiavelli goes far to the extent to say that the political history of India is more ancient and pre-eminent than the history of Europe; also

R G Gettel accepts the importance of Political Philosophy in Indian literature and considers it as an extensive branch of knowledge.

### **Attempts to search separate texts on Politics ( Rajshastra)**

One of the main reasons for the confusion and perplexity of the Western scholars was; that they started searching for extensive texts on Politics (Rajshastra) in ancient Indian literature.

But in reality, it was part of the Universal and comprehensive Religion and was applicable to every individual, society and the state used to regulate all activities.

A fact has been proved after the publication of Kautilya's Arthashastra in the 20th century, that the study of governance by a king, Politics, diplomacy etc. was important as a special subject in ancient India.

From ancient times in India, the state was considered as a part of a large society.

Ancient Indian scholars considered human life and the world and accordingly regulated the scriptures and systems. This is the reason why extensive thinking and scriptures were originated in India. The Vedic literature, Puranas, Jain and Buddhist literature, theology, ethics, inscriptions, coins, etc. are the basic and foundation texts of Indian ideas related to Politics (Rajdharma).

## **Various names of Politics (Rajdharm)**

The western scholars get an opportunity to question the Indian political system because in ancient India the subject - Rajdharm (Politics) was known and understood by various names.

In Mahabharata Shantiparva, it is termed as Rajdharm, and in other texts it is mentioned by names such as Dandanithi, Niiteeshastra (Ethics) or Arthashastra etc.

In fact, the lawful rule of the King was more important in ancient India. Kings had their own rules, regulations and duties, and those were called Rajdharm. Even Today, the definitions and meaning of Rajshastra includes study of the state and governance, so it would be appropriate to consider Rajdharm as Rajshastra.

Another word 'Dandaneeti'- 'The Penal Policy' is found in texts of ancient India. It was also used in context of the systems and functions of the government. It was also called the 'Science of Administration'.

Kautilya believes that Dandaneeti is one of the four disciplines as described by Manu, Brihaspati and Shukracharya. Ancient Indian scholars believed that sovereignty is the foundation of the state; And for that reason, Indian scholars believed that the existence of any state is not possible without law and Penal Policy.

Manu, the proponent of Penal Policy states that 'when everyone is asleep, it is the Penal Policy that protects them. Out of fear of the Punishment, people follow the path of justice. The texts on governance written by Ushanas and Prajapati also are well-known by the name - 'Dandaneeti'.

Dr. Jaiswal names this Penal Policy as "Principles of Government".

In ancient India, economics is considered as a part of Rajshastra. For scholars, this has always been a reason for confusion.

At present, the word Arthashastra is commonly used for the Monetary and economics studies; while Kautilya believes that the word 'Artha' refers to the occupation and business of a man, and the land on which they live. The land that runs the business should also be addressed, and hence the means of acquiring and maintaining the land is also appropriate to be called economics.

There was another reason for economics to be considered as a part of Neetishastra - (ethics) or Dandaneeti - (The Penal Policy) because in

ancient India, the most famous book written on the subject of state and governance was called by the name of Arthashastra.

In Shukraneeti clearly mentioned that the field of economics is not only to discuss the methods of acquiring wealth, but also to establish the principles of governance.

Amarkosh too considers Arthashastra and The Penal Policy as synonyms. However, when we look at the first chapter of 'Arthashastra', it seems that Kautilya gives importance to 'Dandaneeti'- and wish to give it the same name.

## **2.2 Sources of Ancient Indian thoughts on Politics**

In ancient India, The Rishi Tradition had been a pioneer in rumination, contemplation and the pursuit of its scientific form. Although the views on politics were not propounded as a main subject. The Vedic mantras are considered to be ruminations in which various aspects of life have been contemplated.

Based on sustenance of these ideas, the systems of States, Nation and Governance were developed. Along with these systems Independent Acharya Tradition was developed too, which propounded contemporary ideas on political subjects.

However, there are a number of independent texts related to Rajadharma (Politics and Duties of the King). In the texts that are available, the composer/writer, pioneers and scholars have propounded political ideas with importance. These ideas have been mentioned in Vedic literature, Ramayana, Mahabharata etc.in reference with the story or situations.

With the first sentence of the great text named Arthashastra by The great scholar and teacher Kautilya ( Chanakya and Vishnugupta ), an introduction to the Ancient Indian Political thought is found, in which the thoughts of earlier teachers and scholars have been quoted. Among them to name a few are Bhardwaj, Vishalaksh , Parashar, Vishun, Kaundant, Vatvyadhi, Bahudantiputra, Kanidka, Katyayana, Ghotmukha, Digha Charayana, Vishunputra and Kinjalk. The views of these scholars are quoted to give examples; that prove the long history of ideas of Politics. It also proves that there were various school of thoughts in existence. The basis of their tradition has been the Guru-shishya tradition. Kautilya was a great political scholar of his era. In the Arthashastra, he has mentioned the opinions of many thinkers along with their schools of thought, such as Manvah,



Barhaspatyah, Aushansah, Parasharah, Ambhiyah etc. Along with these, Kautilya has also quoted the earlier opinions by using the words "Acharyah", "Apare", "Eke".

It clearly shows that political ideas have a history of their own in ancient times. In the great epic Mahabharata mentions of many names of (Political) Rajshastra thinkers and pioneers of this subject are found, such as Vishalaksh, Indra, Brihaspati, Anu, Shukra, Bharadwaj, Gaursira, Matarishva, Kashyap, Vaishnavana, Utadhya, Vamdev, Shambar, Kalavrikshiya, Vasuhom and Kamandak. Out of these, ten Acharyas are new and the names of six Acharyas have also been quoted by Kautilya. For example, there were ten thousand chapters in the Ethics of Vishalaksha, five thousand in the Ethics of Indra, and three thousand chapters in the Arthashastra of Brihaspati.

Also, in ShantiParva of Mahabharat description of political thinkers named Kirtiman, Kardam, Anang, Atival, Vainya, Purodha Kavya and Yogacharya is found. Apart from this, similar quotes are found in the shlokas composed by Rajshastra thinker Manu, Ushana, Marut and Prachetas.

Similarly, Kamandak has quoted ancient Indian Rajshastra thinkers in Nitisara. Although there are other predecessors except 'Maya' and 'Puloma'. Similarly, in Chandeshwar's 'Rajneeti Ratnakar', the views of many Acharyas and their books are evidently quoted. Many texts of scholars such as Vyas, Katyayan, Narada, Kullukbhatta are not available but their quotes are definitely available.

Manusmriti is an important book composed by eminent thinker Manu, in which thoughts on various social and political subjects are expressed. Vigyaneshwar, Brihatparashar, Aparark, Gotambarihaspati Narada, Angira and Katyayan are mentioned in 'Viramitrodaya' composed by Mitramishra. Similarly, Somdevasuri (Nitivakyamritam and Yashastilakchampu) was an important Thinker and Acharya in the medieval period. His specialty was that he knew about works of Acharya Kautilya and Kamandak, he was also familiar with the books of ancient Acharyas like Guru, Shukra, Vishalaksh, Parikshit, Parashar, Bhima, Bhishma, Bharadwaj etc. With these details it can be understood that in ancient India there was power of such Thinkers, Sages, Scholars and their schools of thought, who not only developed the scriptures of Rajdharma, Diplomacy, Politics, but they were also the important establishments of that school of thought.

There is a long list of the scholars and Thinkers of ancient Indian Political views. The forms of which are found in all Vedic, Jain, Buddhist thought traditions. But specifically, Kautilya, Manu, Yajnavalkya, Shukra and Kamandak. It has been named in the important thinkers and pioneers of

the tradition. Acharya Kautilya has criticized all the political ideas of his time in his book Arthashastra. It is a legal book for polity.

In Kautilya's view, in the light of Arthashastra, a person can perform works of propriety, austerity and beauty, Also, a person can leave inappropriate, wastefulness and ugly works.

The difference between natural and artificial scriptures, religion and unrighteousness, good and bad, right and wrong has been explained in it. Instead of focusing only on the contemporary texts of politics; While composing this book Acharya Kautilya has kept it dependent on his personal experience and knowledge, which was obtained even after studying the political situation and institutions of the then India. He was also familiar with the political ideologies of the western world.

The work done by this great scholar and Acharya of Takshashila University was a revolutionary step in the history of ancient Indian Political thought by making Pataliputra a center for national integration and good governance. The discovery of economics has brought to light the brilliant intellect of Acharya Chanakya.

It is now clear that India had long ago expressed those political ideas which are today attached to the names of Western thinkers like Plato, Aristotle.

The Maurya ruler - Chandragupta Maurya, Guru and Pradhan Amatya -Acharya Chanakya have given very subtle instructions on all aspects of Rajatva (The Kingship). Arthashastra - divided into a total of 15 tribunals and 150 chapters, the presents a picture of a counter-ideological approach to the problems of politics.

In Arthashashtra, political ideas have been mentioned at various places according to the context of the previous chapters. The adequate consideration has been given to the origin and Nature of the State, Types of States, Purpose of the State, King and the Kingship, Succession, Council of Ministers, Local Administration, Judicial System, The Penal Policy, Economic Policy, Diplomatic Relations, Intelligence System, International Relations, Religion and Morality etc. and the policies are directed.

In the order of the scholars, the main Smritikars like Manu and Yajnavalkya are mentioned as the Prominent Acharyas.

Manusmriti , the text of Manu (between 200 BC to AD 200) and Yajnavalkya's texts (between 150 to 200 BC) ' Yagyavalkya Smriti' is a collection of political ideas. In both the Smritis, a lot has been written on

Society, State, Governance, Judicial System, Tax System, Foreign Relations etc. The ideas related to State and Governance mentioned in these texts express the best form of Indian thinking system.

In the tradition of Kautilya's Arthashastra, Gupta texts named Kamandakiya Nitisar and Shukraneeti are important, which were composed by Acharya Kamandak and Shukra.

Although the scholars working on Rajshastra are not unanimous about the composition of these texts. Dr. Kashiprasad Jaiswal and

Dr. Ananthasadashiv Altekar accept its composition between the sixth-seventh century AD. Similarly, Shukrniti was composed by Dr. U.N. Ghoshal between 12th to 16th century AD and Dr. Lallanji Gopal considers 19th century. In these texts, adequate consideration has been given on Penal Policy, King, State, Governance, Justice, Treasury etc.

In addition to the texts written by the above-mentioned Acharyas focused on ideas related to kingship, some later texts such as Somdevsuri (Nitivakyamritam), Mitramishra (Veeramitrodaya), Chandeshwar (Rajneeti Ratnakar), Neelkanth (Nitimayukh), Bhojkrit (Yuktikalpataru) and Brihaspati Sutras.

Thus the ancient Indians provide ample material in the course of political thought. Apart from these, adequate information is available in the texts of Vedic tradition, Sanskrit literature, Jain and Buddhist literature, Panini's Ashtadhyayi and in inscriptions, copper plates, etc., The information received from these sources is regarding the scholars of the Political Philosophy in ancient India.

In the course of historical study of ancient Indian thought, with special reference to ideas related to Rajatva (Kingship) it would be appropriate to say that-

While composing the texts the Hindu political thinkers have thrown light on importance, organization and functioning by keeping political institutions at the center instead of the ideas only.

There are many such topics which are mentioned incidentally. That is the reason the topics have to be deliberated from different sources.

Giving practical instructions rather than writing in texts has also been the reason of non-availability of books of Acharyas.

However, in this context it can be said that there has been a great tradition of Political Thinkers in ancient India, which is still useful in present diplomatic contexts.

## 2.3 Fundamental features of Indian Political thoughts

The fundamental features of ancient Indian political thought are as follows-

### 1) Politics in ancient India had various names :

Politics ( Rajshastra) in ancient India had various names they are - 'Rajdharmā', 'Dandanīthi', 'Arthashastra' and 'Nitishastra' etc. It does not have a definite single name like in the western world.

**Rajdharmā** – In Mahabharata 'ShantiParva, politics has been called as "Rajdharmā". During those times Monarchy was the most prevalent in ancient India, hence the Study of State and Governance was considered as the religious duty of the King. In Rajdharmā included all the duties of the King and everything related to Governance.

**The Penal Policy** - It was considered as the "weapon of administration" in ancient India It was part of the the functions of Government or the Governance. According to Kautilya, no state can be maintained without the use of force or punishment. Regarding punishment Manu has said that when everyone is sleeping, it is the Penal Policy that protects them. Out of fear of punishment, people follow the path of justice.

**Economics** – In the present times, the word 'Economics' is often used for studies related to monetary subjects and wealth. And the subject matter of which is the study of the means of obtaining wealth and means of wealth and its use in the interest of man. On the contrary, the subject matter of political science is State and Governance. So, there is a big difference between the two.

But Kautilya says that - as the word 'Earth' refers to the occupation and business of a man, similarly the land on which that business is run should also be addressed, Thus the means to acquire the land, cultivate and gain earnings from the land should also be called economics. It is proper to call all such means as economics. Thus, it was also given the noun of economics.

**Ethics** - Ethics are the rules or guidelines that differentiates between good and evil and mentions right and wrong actions. This guidance can be applied in any area of human life. The word ethics was also used for the

guidance or rules mentioned in the political field. The compositions of Kamandak and Shukra related to the State and Governance have been named as ethics ( Shukraneeti , Kamandakiya ethics ) . At the time of Kamandak , the word Neeti - I.e 'policy' which was used in relation to the policy of the state, is now being used for general conduct.

## **2) Indian Political Philosophy ( Raj Darshan) is practical rather than idealistic :**

There is complete absence of imaginary ideas related to ideal state ( utopia ) in Indian Raj Darshan. Just as in the western world books such as Plato's 'Republic' and Sir Thomas Moore's 'Utopia', were not written by anyone in ancient India. On this basis, it would be appropriate to say that the approach of the compositions of ancient India was practical and not pure theoretical or imaginary.

A.K. Sen has written, "Hindu political thought is full of transcendental realism and barring a few political exceptions, Indian political thought is concerned not much with the theory and philosophy of the state as with the concrete problems of the state."

For Example - Saptang has been considered in a completely practical manner and Army, Kosha and Ally have also been described as parts of Saptang. About the mutual relations of different states, the idea of Mandal, the idea of Shadguna (treaty, idol etc.) has been done in a practical way. Most of the Indian theories related to politics can be traced from these practical ideas.

## **3) Importance of The Penal Policy**

Indian philosophy accepts the predominance of demonic tendencies in human life and for that reason they have given a lot of importance to the power of the Penal Policy. The importance of punishment in politics can be inferred from the fact that many thinkers, have kept all other disciplines under it and gave utmost importance to the penal policy, According to Manu, punishment is the rule.

## **4) Use of special terminology :**

Indian political science has its own theories and terminology. It is completely different from the terminology of western political ideas of the present day. For example, Saptanga theory of state, four measures of inter-state relations ( Sama , Dama , Danda and Bheda), three powers

( Satyagun , Rajogun and Tamogun ), Karmafal theory, Trigun theory, Ashram system etc.

### **5) Coordination in political and social subjects :**

Because of the unity of thoughts in ancient Indian texts, God ( Brahma ) is the creator of All, I.e. The State, King, Society, System, Institutions and Human beings.

The eternal ideas that are found common in both the social system and the political system are recognized as a) The divine principle of origin of State and the King, 2) attainment of Moksha (Liberation) as the goal of the state, 3) spiritual and moral conduct in worldly life and in the life hereafter and 4), Following the rules of the Dharmasastras in the society.

### **6) Close knitted relation between religion and politics :**

In ancient India development of political principles took place in the form of the advent of religion . Dharma is much broader term in Indian philosophy. And for the same reason, Political Philosophy and Religion were not separated by Hindu political scholars. Thus, in the scriptures the idea of the state has been named as 'Rajshastra', In the scriptures 1) the thoughts on religion of the king and his subjects, 2) the method of coronation, 3) various types of Yadnya (Holistic Ritual and offerings) organized by the king, 4) the appointment of the priest, 5) the rites of the princes, etc. are described. In these religious texts. Not only the Do's and Don't's for the King are told but also mentioned about what the Ministers, Priests, Generals Messengers and Judges should do. Description of the duties of the staff and soldiers mentioned too. Duty and religion are synonymous, and thus the idea of state is inspired by religion. For this reason, morality was included in the politics of ancient India and political science was called Ethics. Protection of religion was the main responsibility of the state. Religion and political ideas are interwoven. The traditional close link between Politics and Religion can be seen from the fact that the texts that are considered to be the main texts of ancient Indian politics are quite important from the religious point of view. Literary texts like Vedas, Upanishads, Smriti, Mahabharata, Ramayana, Purana etc. are considered more important from the Religious point of view than the Political Point of view..

### **7) Unity of Political Ideas in Indian Texts :**

There is Unity and integration in the ideas related to the state system in the texts of Indian Political Science. The differences, contradictions and criticism for each other's views that we find in the western political thoughts

and writers; we do not see such in the Indian political texts. Different texts render the same ideas, Salvation, Trigun Principle (The three virtues), Karmaphal Principle (Karma), Purusharth, Varnashram system, Ashram system etc.

There are definitely quantitative differences in views, but not the qualitative ones. About the Coronation, Daily routine and duties of the King, Origin of Statehood, Elements of State, Inter-state Relations etc. the similarity in all these Political ideas is found when we read in detail the texts of Koutilya, Yadnyawalkya, Manu.

### **8) Political system created by God :**

Ancient political ideas are believed to be created by God. It does not mean that the King, State, Penal Policy, Ethics and Politics are created by God. It does not mean that God himself came down on earth and created them, but it means that all these are beneficial for the society and whoever created them must have "the divine power" and must have got inspiration from the same.

### **9) State is a necessary and useful institution :**

Ancient political thinkers have supported the fact that the existence of state is very necessary and useful in social life. It is believed that without the existence of the State it is not possible to achieve the Three Goals of life i.e. Dharma, Artha and Kama.

In Indian Political Philosophy, while describing the importance of the state system it is believed that when the state system is destroyed, the society disintegrates and the Principle of law of fish spreads\*\* (\*\* known as "Matsya Nyaya"- Principle of Law of Fish is similar to the law of Jungle. The fundamental nature of the law state that the big fish will devour the smaller fish. ) i.e strong group of people start exploiting weaker group in society.

The state has kept the society bound together, that is why Rajdharma has been described as a part of the religious scriptures as well. In other words, it can be said that in ancient India there was absence of individualistic and anarchist thoughts. According to anarchists, the state is unnecessary and useless. Individualists consider the state as a 'necessary evil'. Contrary to them, the ancient Indian political scientists believed that the scope of the state is very wide, which has a lot in common with today's public welfare state.

**10) State is the basis for the Emancipation :**

One of the main features of the ancient Indian Political Philosophy is that it is inclined towards spirituality that the state has been considered as a means of attaining 'liberation'.

While making of the Political Principles and State system, it has been kept in mind that there should be happiness, peace and order everywhere in the state, because only in such environment the spiritual progress can take place. Shruti, Dharma sutra, Smriti, Itihas, Puranas, books of Ethics, Buddhist and Jain texts etc. All texts have described the attainment of liberation as the ultimate goal of human life. Keeping the same in mind, political principles were determined and composed. It is the state that implements such system in the society that leads a man towards liberation. This has also been said in Mahabharata ShantiParva, Shukraneeti and Kautilya Arthashastra. As described in State policies asking all sections of the society to follow the Religious Path, keeping some things out of the Taxation brackets such as the Yajnya (Religious Rituals, offerings and donations etc.), Worshiping, Religious functions and its related material etc, shows that the goal of the State was to achieve the emancipation.

**11) Unanimity about the objectives of the state :**

Western political philosophers have different views about the objectives of the state; whereas in the opinion of ancient Indian Political Philosophers, there is unanimity about the objectives of the state. All ancient thinkers believe that the first and the most important duty of the king is to follow Dharma. This includes all i.e his own religion, Varna religion and Ashram religion. According to Kautilya, it was an order for the king not to allow individuals to deviate from their respective dharma. According to all ancient thinkers the duty of the State is to administer justice and the state should protect its subjects. The king is often ordered to be as dutiful as a father towards his subjects. Unlike the western world, the differences of opinion did not arise in ancient India regarding scope of the State, and that is the result of the unanimity towards the goals of the state and governance .

**12) Predominance of Monarchy :**

Indian political thought is predominantly the idea of monarchy. All Indian Political texts consider the king as the focal point of the state system and think accordingly. Therefore, the king is described as the most prominent aspect of the seven aspects of the state. The idea of the origin of the state is also told in the form of The First Appointment of the King. Indian thought has a complete explanation from the point of view of monarchy. Unlike



Greece, the discussion on Republic and Oligarchy is almost not present in Indian texts. There is some explanation of these political systems by the name of 'Gana' or 'Sangha' in two chapters of Mahabharata and in one chapter of Kautilya Arthashastra and in Buddhist and Jain texts, but mainly there is description of monarchy only.

### **13) Highest position given to the king :**

Another feature of ancient Indian Political thought is that the the King is given the highest position. Almost all the scholars have considered the position of the King as divine and included the divine qualities of the King. In a way, the essence of the state was the King. Kautilya did not make any distinction between the King and the State. Kalidas has also said that "the creator himself has put the administration of the world on the shoulders of the king". If there are any deficiencies in the State, then the King is delinquent for that. The king has to work all the time, day and night. The important thing in this regard is that even after giving the King the highest position, he has not been given the permission for autocracy. The King is primarily controlled by religion and he is bound to take the advice of the Council of Ministers.

### **14) Small kingdoms existed in ancient India :**

Indian political thought assumes that the earth or Bharatavarsha is divided into many kingdoms. Therefore, in case of inter-state relations, the whole idea is based on Vijigishu (desirous of victory) as the center. The idea talks about being a King who while ruling a particular region will conduct politics in such a way that he may establish dominance over the whole of India or the earth. The description of Chakravartitva (Being King of the universal kingdom) explains this point of view. Also, when the Ashwamedha Yagya used to get performed, it made the King "Vijigishu" who will subdue other kings by defeating them with his power. The basis of Indian political thought is a state which is not very big but whose ruler is trying to subdue other kings and therefore Indian political thought is the idea of small states. In Indian political views due to the idea of many small states, the existence of a unitary state has not been told as the basis of unity.

### **15) Special emphasis on Institutions rather than Ideas :**

Many scholars have made Political Institutions as the focal point of study. The importance, organization and functions of these institutions have been described in detail.

## 2.4 Criticism of Indian Political Thought

The Western political critics have criticized ancient Indian Political thoughts on the basis of many things. Keeping in mind the wisdom of criticism, the prejudice of western critics is clearly visible in this context. The first objective of such critics has been only to refute the independent existence of Indian Rajshastra, and never to assess its importance.

Western scholar Dunning dismisses the ancient Indian Polity in these words, "The Indo-Aryans never freed their polity from the religious and spiritualistic environment in which it is still buried".

German scholar Max Müller says, "Indians did not know the feeling of nationalism. The only field in which the Indian mind found freedom to work, create and worship was the field of religion and philosophy."

In the context of ancient Indian kingship, the second allegation made by western critics states that there was only semi-autocratic rule in ancient India. Henry Maine's words state that - "The great empires of the East were mainly tax-collecting institutions. From time to time, for some purpose, the empires also used the force of violence on the subjects, but did not apply and administer the customary laws in a judicial manner."

Unfortunately, from the time of Maxmüller it became a misconception about ancient Indian politics that Hindu literature mainly deals with delusional idealism, impracticality, spiritualism and irrational things of the other world. The second reason is that the quotes picked up randomly without thinking from some ancient writers were accepted as the symbol of the entire ideas and views of Hindus. Accepting this fact Gettel sees the ancient Indian Rajshastra from independent view - "Hindu states were not theocracy. The state was independent of religious organizations and the priests did not interfere in administrative work... Political philosophy has been considered a separate branch of knowledge, it has a wide literature and its authors consider Rajshastra as the most important scripture."

Unlike some prejudiced Western scholars author of the 'Political Philosophy', - Maxi clearly accepts India's contribution in the field of political thought, "India's political history is more ancient than the history of Europe. In many centuries of its political independence The Indian subcontinent saw the rise and fall of almost all kinds of small and large kingdoms. India ranged from rural republics to the Maurya Empire under Chandragupta and Ashoka, which were the greatest states of the world of their times. They also had diplomatic relations with Egypt and Greece. It is difficult to believe that such

a long empire could not have given rise to political ideas.” Later, other scholars agreed Maxi’s logical view and took Indian politics seriously.

Politics had an important place in the cultural development of ancient India. Ancient Indian scholars were well acquainted with all the principles of politics. Ancient scholars have classified science and arts in different ways. According to one classification, the number of technical science streams were 32 and arts were 64. Among those 32 sciences was Arthashastra, which included both modern economics and Rajshastra.

Another question that Western critics have been raising about ancient Indian politics is that ancient Hindu authors were unfamiliar with the positive concept of law. This assumption cannot be accepted because all the thinkers in ancient India have unanimously supported the Penal policy. the Penal Policy, i.e Punishment was actually a part of the law itself. At one place in Shukraneeti it is mentioned that, certain laws should be implemented only by the King. According to scholars, positive law is that which is created and implemented by the dominant political authority; this perhaps may have led to a confusion.

Not only this, Sanskrit literature is full of important study material on the principles and practices of Rajshastra. If western scholars had done a thorough review of all these, then perhaps they would have found it easier to form an opinion about ancient Indian politics. And perhaps it was not accessible to them because most of the Sanskrit literature could not be translated into English at that time.

Throwing light on the political philosophy of Sanskrit literature, Binay Kumar Sarkar has written that, “Every branch of Sanskrit literature has articles on political principles and practices. as well as politics and public administration. But there are many special texts whose importance is more than the literature of European countries. But the problem is that most of them have not been translated into English.”

The main principles of Indian political ideology enumerated by Vinay Kumar Sarkar are as follows

- 1) It is the duty of the King to know the thoughts of the subjects.
- 2) It is the duty of the subjects to obey the King and the subjects are expected to cooperate with the administration and follow the laws.
- 3) Kings should take guidance from ministers and counselors, but in a controlled manner.

4) All such works of a King are appropriate which are useful according to social needs.

5) Kingship is a temporal institution on which constitutional limits and restrictions have been imposed by the ministers and the public.

6) As far as possible the war should be fought in a humane and heroic manner.

7) The governed have the right to oppose and overturn the tyrannical rule.

8) Attainment of Religion and Artha is possible only through the state.

To summarize, it can be said that in ancient India there existed four ideologies of Rajshastra which were divided into the groups of followers of Manu, Parashara, Brihaspati.

While there were generally seven great books on the art of governance, whose authors are considered to be Bharadwaj, Vishalaksha, Parashar, Narada, Bhishma, Vatvyadhi and Bahudanti.

In the end, it can be said that the monarchy in ancient India was not arbitrary but limited. At that time there was a practice of electing Kings and they used to rule only with the help of ministers and counselors.

In the Vedic period there were popular institutions like Sabha and Samiti Later in the Vedic period there was a system of republic.

## UNIT 3 : POLITICAL THEORY

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### 3.1 Introduction

The ancient Political philosophers of India have rendered the nature of the state by 'Saptang Siddhanta'. The concept behind Hindu society and Hindu state has been very organic, through which emphasis has been given on the organic unity in the concept of the state. In Dharmasastras, Arthashastras and Ethics the description is found of the seven parts of a State. All the Acharyas like Manu, Brihaspati, Bhishma, Kautilya, Shukra etc. have accepted the seven parts or components of a State. Kautilya while defining the state in the Arthashastra says, "The state is made up of seven parts or elements. And accordingly, the seven parts or elements are Swami, Amatya, Janapada, Durg, Kosh, Danda and Mitra.

Political philosophy or political theory is the philosophical study of government. It addresses questions about the nature, scope, and legitimacy of governmental functions, institutions and the relationship between them. This is the branch of ethics studies human social institutions, the nature of the people living in the society, their relation with the society, and how to organize the society in the best way. This includes thoughts on Politics, Freedom, Justice, Property, Rights, Norms and the enforcement of laws by authority, etc. These thoughts further reflect in some questions such as what are they, why are they needed, what makes a government 'legitimate', what rights and freedoms a government has a duty to protect, what is law, what are the duties of citizens towards a legitimate government, when is it legal to overthrow a government, etc.

Different aspects of politics are studied under political theory. Politics is related to the public life of humans. In the traditional study there was predominance of thought-oriented method in which all the elements are not inspected, but on the basis of reasoning power, all its possible aspects, interrelationships, effects and consequences are considered.

'Theory' means a body of knowledge accumulated and analyzed in a logical manner. Politics is concerned with many things, including the relationship between individuals and groups and between classes and the state and the institutions of the state such as the judiciary, bureaucracy etc.

What is the nature and purpose of the state?

How do we decide about the accomplishments, goals and methods of political organization?

What is the relationship between the state and the individual? And How it should be?

Political theory throughout its history has been answering these questions. It has been considered important because the fate of man depends on what kind of system is implemented by the rulers and the subjects, and as a result of the implemented system whether any collective efforts are taken for the common good or not.

Philosophy includes all the contemplation on any subject in search of the truth and the knowledge. When the search is on political subjects, then it is called political philosophy. Therefore, it is not necessary that any theory should be proposed in it and this is the difference between political philosophy and political theory. Thus, political theory is part of political philosophy, but political philosophy is often much broader concept and does not necessarily include any theory.

Thus we can say that political philosophy deals with questions related to state, government, politics, liberty, justice, property, rights, law and enforceability of legal code by any authority etc. The questions to give a thought are: what are they? Why they are needed? what makes a government legitimate? what rights and freedoms it should protect? What forms it should take? what are the laws? What are the reasons behind them? What are the citizen's duties towards a legitimate government? When will it be legal to oust a government? etc.

By the term 'political philosophy' we often mean a general approach to politics or a specific morality or belief or attitude in relation to it; and this does not necessarily fall within the entire technical discipline of philosophy.

Political philosophy is often concerned not with contemporary questions, but also with more universal questions of human political life. But the political thinker's view is mainly on contemporary political life. Although it is more into explaining the nature and purpose of the state and similar general questions, it is concerned with political behavior, the actual relationship between the state and the citizens, and society.

While studying political science, we feel that we should supplement political theory with the study of political philosophy, otherwise they seem desolate and irrelevant.

### **3.2 Political theory and political thought in Modern Ideology**

Political theory sometimes seen as synonymous to political thought, but it is important to understand that they do not necessarily mean the same thing. Political thought is a generalized phrase, which includes all thoughts, principles and values of an individual or a group of individuals or a community on questions related to the state and questions of the state.

When a person – whether he is a professor, journalist, writer, poet, novelist. Politician etc, expresses thoughts and questions that are related to our lives and about the state and governance then he is actually doing the political thinking. Theory may or may not be included in his thoughts. There will be no theory contained in those views if they do not contain any systematic and logical hypothesis presented to explain the historical and political organization related to the political law of state and governance etc.

In this way, political thought is always a general idea about politics of a person or group. Political theory is a complete and self-sufficient explanation, idea or theory that answers questions and explains history. It is an attempt made to make predictions about possible future events. Undoubtedly, This principle is always the creation of a thinker.

#### **Important questions for Political Theory in Modern Ideology**

The questions that are important in political theory have been changing with the passage of time. Classical and early political theory was concerned with the search for a morally flawless political system. It gave particular attention to questions about the nature and purpose of the state, basis for exercising the political power and problem of political disobedience. The rise of modern nation states, changes in economic structure and industrial revolution resulted in new priorities and focus on individualism. The freedom of individual and his relationship with the society and the state became important, and Rights, Duties, Liberty, Equality and Property became more important questions. Gradually, the interpretation of the relationship between various concepts, such as the relationship between liberty and equality, justice and liberty, or equality and property also became important. A new type of empirical political theory emerged after the Second World War. In this, an attempt was made to study the political behavior of man and draw theoretical conclusions on the basis of it. Scholars studying human behavior put forward new questions for study, and often borrowed questions from other branches of the discipline.

Some of these questions are as follows-

Political Culture and Legitimacy, Political System, Elite Groups, Political Parties, etc.

Over the past few decades, many other issues have emerged - such as Identity, Gender, Environmentalism , Ecology , Community, etc.

At the same time there has been a resurgence of value-based political theory, in which the questions of liberty, equality and justice have been emphasized in a new way.

### **Relevance of the Political Theory with modern Ideology**

Human beings as social animals live together in societies in which all share resources, jobs and rewards. At the same time, we are individuals too, in which capacity we need certain basic human rights. Therefore, the process of organization of the state and society becomes important in order to maximize harmony and happiness and to provide favorable conditions for individual self-actualization. As a result, political theory becomes important to pave the way for the unity and integrity of human societies or to meet the collective needs of society; because it tries to study problems and find their solutions in the process. The relevance of political theory to the nature and purpose of the state is that - It consists in developing different points of view regarding the basis of political power and the most appropriate form of government and the relationship between the state and the individual in terms of the fundamental rights of the individual. In addition, political theory also tries to establish ethical criteria for judging the ethical quality of the political state and to suggest alternative political management and practice.

In short, the relevance of political theory lies in the following points:

- To explain and describe political organization,
- To Help a community to choose the best political goals and actions
- To help lay down the basis for the vetting of morality.

It should also be remembered that at least for the present, the state is facing the challenges of poverty, corruption, overpopulation and ethnic and racial tensions, environmental pollution, etc. on an increasing scale. Apart from these, there is the problem of international differences etc. Political theory tries to study the present and future problems of the political life of the society and suggest solutions to those problems.



In this way, if we have to think about the form and purpose of the state and the problems of governance in a systematic manner, keeping in mind the socio-economic reality and ideals and political philosophy, then we have to adopt the path of theoretical study of the problem. Thus political theory is relevant. Also, by studying political theory at individual level, we get information about our rights and duties and helps in understanding the socio-economic realities and problems like poverty, violence, corruption etc. Political theories are important because on the basis of various political theories ways and directions are suggested to change the society and move forward, so that an ideal society can be established. If any political theory is correct then it can be communicated to the common people and then it can become a powerful force to take society and mankind on the path of progress.

### **3.3 The Seven Aspects of the State as stated by Kautilya**

**Swami ( The King), Amatya (The ministers), Janapada (States), Durg (Castle/fort/The Capital), Kosh (Treasury) , Danda (The Penal Policy) Mitra (Allies)**

According to Kautilya - The state, as in the form of a body has the above mentioned seven parts and together they maintain the political balance. The state can work in the well condition only when all these seven organs do their work properly and with mutual cooperation.

#### **Kautilya's Saptanga principle: -**

Kautilya has mentioned the seven aspects of the state in his Saptang Siddhanta , which are as follows -

#### **(1) Swami ( The King) :**

Kautilya has given the important place to ' Swami ' ( King) in the concept of the state . According to Kautilya; the king should be a person who is born in a high clan, interested in Religion, Visionary, Truthful, Ambitious, hardworking, Recognizing and Respecting the Meritorious people of the state, should have love for Education and he must have Capable Ministers. He should be the one who keeps and controls the feudal lords . According to Kautilya, the king has discretion and the ability to work by looking at the situation, and the ability to protect and nurture the subjects. The King should also have the ability to identify the friend and foe and the sycophants .

According to Kautilya , the king should be equipped with the qualities of military operation , Training of warfare and the army , treaty ,

vigraha ( breaking the ally or breach of the treaty) , ability to detect the weakness of the enemy and the visionary etc. He should be bright , self - controlled , he should control ambitions to have worldly pleasures, anger , greed etc. The King should be soft-spoken but should not get into the sweet talk of others and should not make mockery of others. According to Kautilya, the King must have knowledge about the State Management, The Penal Policy, Military Skills, and also about the sciences like Anthropology , History , Theology , Economics etc.

## **(2) Amatya (The Ministers) :**

According to Kautilya , the second important part of the state is Amatya or Mantri (the Ministers) , without which the governance by the King would not only become difficult but impossible. Since there are a lot of royal duties and the king cannot do all by himself , so he should get these duties done by the Amatya (Ministers).

Explaining the importance of Amatya , Kautilya has said that - The state is a chariot. Just as the chariot cannot move with one wheel, similarly the King cannot run the kingdom alone without help of the Ministers.

Regarding the appointment of Amatya, Kautilya has said that the king should appoint only capable and loyal persons to the post of a Minister.

King's Relatives, Classmates and Acquaintances if do not possess the qualification to commensurate with the post, should not be appointed to the post of a Minister. A prodigal, drunkard, Drug addict, arrogant and person who visits prostitutes should also not be appointed as the Minister, because such a person is not trustworthy and gets trapped in various temptations and reveals the confidential matters of the state, which proves harmful for both the state and the King. Kautilya has left the task to the king to decide the number of Ministers . He can appoint them as per the requirement of the state duties. But Kautilya suggests that the number of people to whom the King consults for state work should be limited, because there is a danger of breach of confidentiality if more number of people are consulted.

Kautilya also suggests that the king should consult the Ministers for the conduct of the state duties. If the King does not find the consultant's advice favorable in the interest of the state, then in such situation he is free to take a decision according to his discretion.

## **(3) Janapada ( District) :**

Kautilya has mentioned the third part of the state as district. A state cannot even be imagined without the districts being part of it.

Kautilya has included public and land while in Janapada. He says that the public should be loyal, Tax payers, and should be Prosperous. Regarding land, Kautilya says that it should have forests, Ponds, Mines, rivers, fertile soil, soldiers, forts, mountains, animals and birds.

Kautilya has described in detail the establishment of the district. In Kautilya's opinion the King should establish new Janapada either by calling people from other countries or by increasing the population of his kingdom. For better administration, the district should be divided into Local, Dronmukh, Khavartik and Sangrahana. Regarding the population of a village, Kautilya is of the opinion that there should be at least 100 and maximum 500 houses in a village.

#### **(4) Durga - Castle/Fort :**

Kautilya has said that forts are as necessary for the state as the people and the king. According to Kautilya, forts are necessary from the point of view of attacking the enemy and for the security of the state. The fort should be strong and secure, and there should be proper arrangement of food, water and ammunition.

Kautilya has mentioned the four types of forts - the forts that are necessary from the point of view of security.

Audak fort - Surrounded by natural water resources (river, pond etc.) and it looks like an island.

Parvat fort - Fort made of mountain caves or walls of big stones.

Dhanvan fort - Fort situated within desert, I.e fort on a land without water and grasslands.

Forest fort - a fort surrounded by marshy Lands or with thorny bushes all around.

#### **(5) Fund (Treasury) :**

Kautilya has mentioned treasury as an essential part of the state, because treasury is the foundation of all activities of the state. According to Kautilya, the king should keep adding to his treasury continuously. For this he should receive tax, in the form of one-sixth of the produce from the farmers, one-tenth of the business profit, one-fiftieth of the profit earned from animal trade and gold etc. Regarding the treasury, Kautilya instructs that the king should maintain the treasury religiously. Taxes should be imposed only to the extent that the public can easily pay them.

**(6) Danda (Power of Armed forces and the Penal Policy):**

Kautilya considers Danda as a remarkable speciality of the King. Danda means the Power used to execute governance. According to him Danda reflects the sovereignty of the state and Power of the king is manifested in Danda I.e. his Army, Intelligence department, Police force and Judicial System. In Kautilya's opinion the army has special importance for the security of the state. For the king who has a good military force, not only his friends remain friends but at the same time enemies also become friends. Soldiers should be skilled in use of the weapons, they should be brave, self-respecting and Patriotic. The soldiers should be paid good salary and should be given other facilities too, so that without any worries they are ready to serve the country.

**(7) Mitra (Allies) :**

In Saptanga theory, Kautilya has said that the king should make allies with his neighboring states, so that help from them can be obtained when needed. King's Friends or Allies must be reliable and benevolent and should have family tradition of serving the kingdom for generations, and they should consider the king and the kingdom as their own. But Kautilya has also said that before making friends or Allies, the king should test them so that they cannot cheat.

## UNIT 4 : STATE GOVERNANCE BY PRAJAPATI

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### 4.1 Nature of Governance

Many types of state governance Institutions existed during Vedic Period. Amongst them, governance by Prajapati was important. In this type of governance people had more rights. To appoint the state chief in place of a King, or to expel the existing King upon the unfair and unjust ways of governance by him, and further to appoint new King- were the Rights of the people of the state in those days; and people used to execute their Rights.

#### King and the Subjects

The King and the Subjects are two major concepts here. Between them which concept is the superior and which is less superior needs to be decided. In absense of the King, subjects or people of Kingdom may sustain, and it sustains too; but a King or Ruler or the state Chief will sustain only if people are there. Why an administrator is required if there are no people? So, people in the kingdom are apparent and the King is always dependent on his people. Anyone can know this fact. So, in the governance by Prajapati, the people of the state had more power, and that is appropriate.

#### Individual and Union

Knowing that the People of the state had more Rights, it is required to think about the Rights of an individual and Rights of the Union. It is known that the Union is stays for ever and individual is mortal. Hindu Society or the Arya Society are immortal, they existed before two thousand years, they exist today and they will exist in future too. But individuals in Hindu Society will surely have death. A person may live hundred or hundred and twenty five years, some may have more years of life but they cannot remain immortal. It is said -

*" Sambhootyaa Amrutamashnute" ( Va.ya.40|11, Isha0 11)*

Means-" With Unity, immortality is gained." - Individuality is named as extermination in this section of the text. Where Individuality is dominant and Unity is weak, that group of people sure to get ruined. Similarly, disintegrated and shattered society will be ruined too. So, society that keeps within the unity and integrity, will always prosper and stay forever.

Society needs unity and it needs to keep the unity alive and conscious. By keeping few people together the society will not become united, advanced

and conscious. The Vedas call such United, Advanced society as "Sambhootee". An institution is called "Sambhootee" when it comes together, become united, motivated to achieve same goals, wealth, and prosperity. Such institution stays immortal and conscious, it achieves prosperity and "Sambhootee" stays forever.

*" Jagatyaam Jagat" ( Va.ya.40|1 Isha 1)*

All moving creatures are called "Jagat". So a group of all moving creatures is called "Jagatee". "Jagat" and "Jagatee" are called Individual and Group, or Individual and Society respectively. An individual lives with the support of the society. Individual is dependent on Society. Man by birth is dependent on many things. He needs to be nurtured by others. At home a mother, father, brother, sister etc, take care of him. In case of no one at home, the society or the state takes care of the child. After being taken care for 15-20 years by the society when he becomes young, he achieves some freedom.

### **Serving the Society is Dharma**

Even after gaining the young age and some freedom an individual is still mortal being, and dependent on the society for many things. For that reason, the society is always above all individuals, always respectable and all should contribute offering services to the society. A reason why an individual is dependent on society, for the same reason an individual should wholeheartedly offer his services towards the society. The person who does not serve the society will deviate from his duties and his Dharma.

Every component has to devote the efforts for all components together, that is the rule. In our body, every body part works for the wellbeing of the entire body, because of which the body stays healthy. When eyes see something, it is for the entire body, when the mouth takes food, it should eat the food for the wellbeing of the entire body. In the same way, all other organs work in the best interest of the entire body. That makes the body remain healthy, strong and live long life. If the mouth eats bad food, or drinks poison or if the stomach does not digest the food, then the body will become ill and soon it will die. Till the time all parts and organs of the body put efforts towards wellbeing of the entire body; the body stays healthy and experience the happiness within. Thus, every component has to devote selflessly for the well-being of all components together. The way solidarity in a group of wicked people is present for the wicked intentions, similarly the wise people should bring solidarity among them for the betterment of the society.

An Individual is part of a society. So an individual should selflessly contribute his efforts towards welfare of the society to make the society

strong and united. Wise men with their knowledge, brave men with their power to protect, wealthy men with their wealth, businessmen through their fair dealings or farming, and working men with their work should try to achieve advancement of the state. They should devote their strengths to the state-God,( considering state as their God), because the society or the state has protected and nurtured them. The man is in debt to the society. To payback the debt, a man should pay his services to the society.

In this way duty of an individual is decided. The same way duty of the society is defined. The society should keep the individual safe, do welfare of the individual and in return the individual should offer his strengths for the welfare of the society. All principles of Humanity are encompassed in this. This is the Yajnya - The Holy fire, which keeps the society in good condition.

All strengths of an individual should be put for the welfare of the society whenever required, including wealth of an individual. An individual can keep the wealth with him, but he should maintain it as the treasury of the society. Whenever required he wealth to be utilized for the society, because the wealth belongs to the society or the state and not to the individual, so it should be offered to the society.

This is the Yajnya - the holy fire. That is the reason it is said that everybody's wealth is for the Yajnya. To make this happen a good governance is required, and the governance should be favorable to the society, and in the best interest of the society, and should be formed with the consent of the society. The Vedas praise such type of Governance as The **"Prajapati Sanstha" or The Prajapati Constitution**.

A certain time arrives in a society when all men are wise, learned, has abilities and strength to do many things and obedient. Such society is self disciplined. It will never tolerate unfair or wicked governance. Such society will form its own governance; so it is said that " It is the *Time* that creates the People and the **Prajapati** I.e It is " *the Time*" that creates the subjects and the King.

### **Creation of Prajapati by Time**

*"Kaaloh Sarvasyeshwaro yah Peetaseet Pajapatehe |*

*"Kaalah Prajaa Asrujata Kaalo Agre Parajapatim ||" (Atharva 19/53/8-10)*

It the time that decides the People (Prajaa), It is the time who decides the Prajapati or the Ruler of the People, thus the time is father of the caretaker and thus Time is the Ruler of All.

With time, the society advances, and once the society is developed it appoints the King and make him the caretaker of the society. Thus, "The Time" decides everything. When the society achieves knowledge and wisdom, it creates the "Prajapati Sanstha" – i.e. The Prajapati system of Governance for the King. The society further decides the way of governance, execute the governance and accordingly appoints the King or the Ruler. For each and every post of the officer in the governance system, right men are selected and they are given the respective governing powers.

*" Prajaa Adhiyanta Prajapatiradhipatiraseet | " (Va.ya. 14/28)*

Means- First the (Prajaa) society came into existence and then the (Prajapati) the King/Ruler. The society comes into existence and then realizes by experience that without governance it cannot run well, and then it tries to form the government. In this process many types of Governance are formed. For the smaller regions and societies various types of governance are formed and experienced. Rajya (Territory), Maharajya (State), Samrajya (Kingdom), JanaRajya (Sovereignty) and etc. such different forms of governance are formed, and The Prajapati system of Governance is formed. In this, for every authority the right men are selected and appointed, the following Mantra explains it -

### **The Unique Quality of the Caretaker - The PrajaPalak;**

*"Prajapate na Tvadetaanyanyo Vishva Jatani Pari Ta Babhoova |*

*Yatkamaaste Juhumastanno Astu Vayam Syama Patayo Raneeyaam ||"*

*"Prajapate na Tvadetaanyanyo Vishva Jatani Pari Ta Babhoova |"*

*(Rig 10.12.10, Atharva 7.80.3, Va.ya. 10.20, Vai.Sa. 1.8.14.2; 3.2.5.6, Tai.Br. 2.8.1.2; 3.5.7.1, Niru.10.43)*

"O King (Prajapate), there is no else like yourself who will (Tvatanyana) for this society ( Etani VishwaJatani) consider all together (Pari Babhoova). The wealth and prosperity that we expect by doing the Yajnya ( Yatkamaaste Juhum) May we succeed in that ( Tat Nah Astu) and we become wealthy ( Vayam Syama Patayo Raneeyaam) |"

Such should be the Prajapati appointed, that no one else should be more deserving and powerful than him. The one who receives respects from all the people of the state, should be the caretaker and King of the state. The one who has the strength of accommodating all should be appointed as the King. He should become chief of the state and bring prosperity to all.



“Vayam Syama Patayo Raneeyaam” - May we all become master of the wealth, The society always wish to prosper the means of making money, wealth and welfare. Everyone wish for wellbeing , happiness and peace. For that reason the Governance should be there. Objective of the Governance can never be to create sorrow or pain, It will be always to create happiness, wellbeing and peace.

For this reason ever authority of the state should be the one who is the best in his work. “ No one else is the perfect to do this particular work, so you are appointed to do this work - (Tvat Anya na), No other person, but you are the most appropriate for the work, and so we appoint you for this work.”

In the state, many people are required to work on positions like the State Chief (King/Ruler), Minister, Chief of the Army, Army Officer, Teacher, Soldier etc. Right person should be appointed to the right position. It is said “ Yatkamaha te juhumah tat a astu”.

The reason why we pay taxes to the government, may we get the welfare, happiness and peace and we become wealthy (“ Rayeenaam patayah Vayam syam”), Such should be the governance we wish to have, and we will work towards it.

How should be the person bearing any authority in such state is described in a Mantra as -

### **The person bearing the authority should be Truthful (Brahmachari)**

*“Acharyo Brahmachari Brahmachari Prajapatihi |*

*Prajapatirvirajati Viradindrobhavadwashee ||” (Atharva 11.5.16)*

The officers bearing Authorities of the state should be following the path of Brahmachari ( Being disciplined and Truthful). The Teachers ( Acharyah) should be the Brahmachari and governing officers serving the society should be Brahmachari too (Brahmachari - Being disciplined and Truthful). - Means Being disciplined and Truthful those who have learned from the Gurukul, those who are of good character and Trustworthy. Such officers are appreciated and acknowledged. While during the work and do the duties, when such officers have control on their behaviour they are called “Indra”, and they are considered most eligible to be in Power in the government.

Such is an ideal governance, that it mentions that both types of governing authorities, the one who educates and the one who protects should

be Brahmachari - i.e. disciplined and truthful. They should have earned their knowledge from Gurukul.

While practicing the Brahmacharya such men should be the appointed as authorities who also have virtues like Non- violence (Ahimsa), Truth (Satya), No stealing (Asteya), being disciplined and Truthful (Brahmacharya), Abstinence (Aparigraha), Purity of the Soul (Shuchita), Satisfaction (Santosh), Meditation (Tapa),

Self-cultivation (Swadhaya), and worshiping the God. When such men are appointed as authorities in the government, one can imagine how excellent will be the governance. The one who practices non-violence, be truthful, never steals, who have practiced brahmacharya before marriage and kept themselves away from the physical pleasures during the student phase, those after marriage enjoy all worldly and physical pleasures and perform all duties of being a family man, those who know how to be away from luring attractions, and keep themselves away from such things, those whose souls are pure about their behaviour, thoughts and speech, those who have contentment, those who follow the rules of Dharma and perform their duties, those who do the work perfectly and feel happy about it, those who worship the God. Thus men become authorities in government by achieving control on emotions and worldly pleasures, determination towards performing duties.

The appointed authorities in department of education, department of Judiciary, department of Military and department of warfare should have sobriety and should have tendency of violence and Brutality.

If such are the appointed authorities, then there will be ideal governance.

The following describes how the authorities should be -

## 4.2 The Virtues of the person in Governing Authority

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*"Dhata Mitrah Prajapatihi |" (Atharva 11.9.25)*

*"Ashwinobha Prajapatihi Prajaya Vardhayantu ||" (Atharva 14.2.13)*

*"Shan Prajapatihi |" (Atharva 19.9.6)*

---

The King or the Ruler (Prajapati) should behave like a friend and nurture the subjects like a father. The King or the Ruler (Prajapati) should do

welfare of the society. 'Ashwidev' means "the healer" and the King himself should increase the wealth of the state.

(Prajapati Prajaya) The Governing authorities should stay together with the people and be friendly with them, uniting people and nurturing the society, and this way the governance should be. There should be peace (Shan) amongst the people, and the systems should be well set so that antisocial minds will not cause any harm.

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*"Prajapatirnidhipatirnah ||" (Atharva 7.18.4)*

*"Satyadharma Prajapatihi ||" (Atharva 7.25.1)*

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"The should be the one who will walk the path of Truth, take care of his people and such King should protect our wealth (Nidhi Pati), the protector of our wealth should be the Truthful and should not be the untruthful. Here, two duties of the King/Ruler(Prajapati) are mentioned - 1) The King/Ruler should be Truthful and, 2) The king/Ruler should protect the wealth of the people.

Satya-Dharma means the governing authorities or officers who will obey the laws and rules of the governance, always speaking and following the truth, and never walk the wrong or unethical paths, Never do the wrong doings, never help the vandals. They should be the (Nidhi Pati) protector of the wealth of the people.

---

*"Prajapatihi Nidhipa Devah ||" (Va.ya 8.17)*

*"Prajapatirvrusha Ati ||" (Va.ya.8.10)*

---

The caretaker (Vrusha) of the people be strong, and be the protector of the wealth of the people". The protector (Vrusha) being strong and gallant means the one who governs should possess the enough strength required to protect and he should not fail in his duties, neither he should become weak. The person appointed in the place should be efficient in executing his work, any hindrances in his work if occur, the person should be able to manage them and complete the work effectively.

Only such Authorities /officers can protect the wealth very well. The weapons of the Protector should not be stolen - such is the meaning of the Mantra. The duties of the King/Ruler (Prajapati) are -

*"Indurindro Vrupaa Harihi Pavamanah Prajapatihi |" (Rig 9.5.1)*

The Prajapati or the King should bring Purity in himself (Pavaman) first and then should bring Purity everywhere.(Harihi Harati dukkham). The pain and sorrows of subjects should be finished and they should be offered happiness. (Vrusha) the King/Prajapati should be strong and should never be weak. He should increase his his strength and should keep the enemies away and make the people of the state fearless. ( Indrah In Shatrun Vidarayati). The King should destroy the enemies. (Induhu Unatti Kledayati). He should bring peace for his subjects, keep the subjects happy.

**1. Vrusha** - The King should become strong

**2. Indra** - Should be very Rich in wealth, should Keep the enemies away, and to destroy the enemy.

**3. Hari** - To keep at the bay the pain and sorrows of the people.

**4. Pavamana** - To bring Purity in himself first and take the subjects on the path of Purity.

**5. Indu** - To bring in peace and happiness among people.

**6. Prajapati** - To nurture the society and keep people happy and protected.

### **4.3 Praja Palak should possess the following qualities**

#### **Justice**

---

*"Drushwarupte Vyaakarot Satyanrute Prajapatihi |*

*Ashradhhamanrute dadhat Shradehham Satye Prajapatihi  
||" (Va.ya.19.77)*

---

"The Prajapalak observed the Truth and the untruth and then he took the decision. He did not trust the Untruth, and he trusted only the Truth. " - He took the side of the Truth and kept away the untruth, and declared the punishment.

Truth and the Untruth are the two sides, and between them there is always a conflict. Decision on this conflict should be done by the government. To judge the Truth and the Untruth the King appoints an expert in Laws and wise person as an authority. Truth and Untruth both sides are presented to

him. This Authority decides the Truth and Untruth. He trusts the Truth and never trust the Untruth. He then orders the exequatur in favour of the Truth and denies the Untruth. Thus, the justice is executed by the authority.

Now let us learn about the management of Treasury.

### **Chief Incharge of the Treasury**

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*"Upohashcha Samuhashcha Kshattarau Te Prajapate |*

*Taviha vahatam sphatim Bahu Bhumanamakshitam ||"*  
*(Atharva 3.24.7)*

---

"O King, (Prajapate), (Upoha Samuha cha ) The one who brings the Money and the one who accumulates the Money both are treasurers. These two ( Tau Idda) bring(Bahu Bhumanam) should here(Akshitam Sphati aavahatam) wealth in abundance".

"Upa-ooaha" the one who is thinking of bringing the Money, "San-ooaha" the one who accumulates the Money. One is to bring the Money and another is to collect it and accumulate the Money, both are officers/ authorities of the King/the ruler. Kshatta - means the skilled worker, carpenter, officer, guards, soldiers, charioteer, chariot owners, and the treasurer. The appointed treasurers / treasury officers may bring wealth and money in abundance in the Kingdom, and make the kingdom prosperous. The Kshatta is a Skilled person. The "Upoha" is the one who collects taxes from the society (the Collector), and "Samuha" is the one who keeps the collected money in the Treasury. May these Authorities increase the wealth of the Kingdom.

### **The King should increase the power of the nation**

*Prajapate Vrusha shushmam kshipasi Bhoomyamadhi (Atharva .1.10)*

As his duty the King should increase the power among the subjects of the nation There are many types of powers. Such as - Power of knowledge, Power of bravery, Money Power, Work Power, Agricultural Power, Power of wild plants, Mineral found in the earth, The force of substances, the force that results from the union of species, there are hundreds of such types of forces. All these powers must grow in people of the state.

The cloud in the sky is Prajapati, he showers water onto the earth. The earth holds it within itself and grows plants flowers and flowers using its own power, then becomes fruitful and gives joy to the subjects. Thus,

the ruler of the nation should give the power of his rule to the people and increase the power of the people. With the good governance People of the state become powerful.

### **People of the state should get the glory, success and food**

---

*Mayi Varcho Atho Yashotho Yadnyasya yatpatah |*

*Tanmayi Prajapatidrihi Dyamiva Druhantu || (Atharva  
6.69.3)*

---

Glory, fame and milk and food etc. obtained from Yajnya, may increase as the God increases light in the sky, similarly the King should increase the glory, success and food grains for me, so that I become bright, I become generous, I become successful and by donating food

I should perform Yajnya and increase the food for eating and drinking; This is my wish.

With the good governance of the kingdom May the king make such arrangements that this wish of mine will be successful.

### **To Make the Land more fertile**

---

*Tvamasyavapani Jananamaditi Kamadudha p Prathana |*

*Yatt Unam Tattata Apurayati Prajapatihi Prathamaja Rutasya  
|| (Atharva 12.1.61)*

---

O Motherland, you are capable of growing seeds of this nation, you successfully give food just as the Kamadhenu brings all wishes true, The king who obeys the path of truth will fulfill everything whatever is lacking behind.

Wherever there is less in the fertile power of the land, by giving it manure etc., the King increases the fertile power of the land by planning. There will be enough water for all the people living on the land.

Food should be grown in our own land only.

Such arrangements should be made by the King in the nation. The country should remain self-sufficient for food and drink.

### **People of the state should get the food grown on the state land**

---

*Yatee Annam Bhuchaspata Akshiyati PruthiviManu |*

*Tasya Nastvam Bhuvaspate Sa Prayacha Prajapate ||  
(Atharva10.5.45)*

---

O King, you are the guardian of the land and people, you rightfully distribute among us the the food that is grown on our land.

O King, you should by good governance manage the food grown on the land, you distribute the food to us first and then whatever is in excess you use it for right purpose. The food should not be exported before it is distributed among the people of the state. Just like, the child has right on his mother's milk. The same rule is applicable for foodgrains grwon on the homeland.

### **Food for the Thirty-Three authorities**

*Ekasmat wa Odanat Yatrastrishatam Lokan Niramimita Prajapati |*

From the food the Prajapati has created thirty three Authorities. Thinking of management of a State - Just as the people should be nourished by the food available in the nation, similarly the officers and national volunteers who are involved in the work of governance should also be nourished. If the nutrition of the officers is neglected, then the work of protecting the nation cannot be done properly. If the volunteers are neglected, then they will not be able to do their service properly. If this happens, there will be no protection of the nation and the sufferings of the people will increase. The officers appointed in the government work to have the ability to do the work should be nurtured properly . i.e. they should get adequate salary.

### **The Prajapati/King should build houses for People**

*Prajayai Chakre Tva Shale Parameshthi Prajapathii | (Atharva 9.3.11)*

The Prajapati/ King with good administration should build houses in the state for the subjects The rich who can build houses should build houses for themselves, but for people who cannot afford to build a house, the King should build houses for them.

Monks, preachers, Hermits, and other non-wealthy people cannot build houses for themselves. Houses should be built for such people by the government. No man in the nation should be homeless. All the citizens should get a house to live, this arrangement should be done by the government.

### **Provision for water for the Public**

---

*Apam Shukramapo Devirvacho Asmasu Dhatt |*

*Prajapaterva Dhanmasmai Lokaya Sadaya ||*  
*(Atharva10.5.7-14)*

---

Proclamations came out from the King and according to the rules laid down in it, districts were formed for the benefit of the people.

Such arrangements should be made by making wells, ponds, canals etc. and the water should be used by the people.

According to the order of the Prajapati/King, water should be managed properly in the nation. It is the medicine for all diseases. For this reason water has the power, May it be received by the people, and people should get good water as much as they want.

### **Make the Homeland Beautiful**

---

*Yasya Puro Devakrutaha Kshetre Yasya Vikurvate |*

*Prajapatihi Pruthivim Vishwagarbha Ashamasham Ranyam n*  
*Krunotu ||*

*(Atharva 12.1.43)*

---

Wherever the people go in the motherland,, they feel joy if the motherland is delightful. Let there be beauty all around. Let there be beautiful gardens around, the flower beds, the waterfalls etc.

Some kind of elegance should be made, looking at which people will become happy.



## Sufficient funds and interest in business dealings

---

*Yena Dhanena Prapanam Charami Ghanen Deva  
Dhanamichhamana |*

*Tanme Bhuyo Bhavatu ma Kaniyogne sataghno devan  
Havisha Nishedha*

*Tasmin ma Indro Ruchimadadhatu Prajaati Savita Somo  
Agni*

|| (Atharva 3.15.5)

---

O God, using your wealth I wish to earn more wealth, so I wish that I would get the adequate wealth to earn more out of it.

To increase the wealth of the nation, there should be small scale factories and businesses in the nation and should grow. The number of unemployed should not increase in the nation. Worthy price should be received in return. All this can happen when the business practices in the nation continue to run in the best manner.

Business works where the original money is invested in sufficient way. Is there any disturbance in the business? where have the perpetrators entered or what are they doing? Are they getting profit by selling and buying them properly?

It is necessary to investigate such questions from the ruling administration. With the efforts of the rulers and good governance arrangement are done where the workers increase wealth and happiness of the nation.

## Happiness in in being together

*Tanagre Pramumoktu Devaha Prajapatihi Prajaya Sanraranhah |*

The King/ Ruler should be the one who enjoys socializing with subjects

The ruler should not consider himself separate from the people, he should not enjoy being separate and away from the people. He should live with the subjects, meet them, know their happiness and sorrows and take pleasure in being with the subjects.

Udejatu Prajaparitvrusha Shukrena Vajina | (Atharva 4.4.2)

The King/Ruler uplifts the people with his power. Society and the nation also aim for Advancement. The work does not end only if advancement takes place. The word “Udejatu” (ut-ejatu) in the mantra is of special importance, the meaning of rising above is in it. To rise up

Abhyudaya and Vanshreyas have to be achieved. The King/ Ruler should live together with the subjects and see whether their tendency is to rise up or not, and to arrange that they rise above the right path.

### **Attention by Mutual understanding**

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*Prajapatireva tat Prajabhyaha Pradurbhavati |*

*Prajapatenuma ma vudhyaswa| Anwena Praja Anu  
Prajapatirbudhyate||*

*(Atharva 9.1.24)*

---

The King/Ruler comes and sits among the people, takes pleasure in living together with the people. Knowing the condition of the subjects the guardian should look at them with care and kindness, and every subject should look at the nation's guardian with love and affection. In this way, all subjects and the guardian/King the nation should live with mutual sympathy and listen attentively to each other.

### **Creation of the city by Prajapati/King**

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*Prajapatihi Prajabhirudrakramat Tam Puram Pranayami vah  
|*

*Tamavishat Tam Pravishat Sa Vah Shama ch Varma ch  
Yachhatu ||*

*(Atharva 19.19.11)*

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The President should build a new city, where security should be arranged, people should go and settle there and get peace and happiness. Cities should be defined by types. The city defense should be arranged in such a way that the attacks of the enemy do not happen easily. All entry doors should be secured. If the city is protected then the people inside can live happily inside and enjoy their prosperity.

## **Prajapati/King - The Key Role Player**

*Dharta Bhuvanasya Prajapatihi | ( Rig 4.53.2)*

The one who plays the key role is Prajapati/King. The one who is engaged in the work of public welfare. The King should play the key role in public welfare. The nation should be given support. The king should work for advancement of the nation. If there is opposition to the ruling power, then the work started gets spoiled and gets destroyed. The main "meaning" of role-playing is that nurturing the people living on the motherland, working for their advancement.

## **Prajapati is the one who carries out many tasks**

*Prajapati Vishwakarma Vimunchutu | (Va.ya 12.61)*

Prajapati/King (Vishwakarma) should be the one who does all the work for the progress of the people, he will free the people from their sufferings.

*Prajapati tapasa vavrudhanah | (Va.ya 29.11)*

Prajapati increases his power by perseverance and tenacity. When Prajapati takes the pain of doing the work of public welfare, it increases his potential and power.

Vishwakarma means the one who carries out all work. Prajapati's main function is to nurture and protect the people. All the work that will be necessary to nurture and protect people should be done.

"Vishwakarma" refers to the post. Prajapati should be the one who does all the work of nation-keeping relations. He should do all the rituals of upbringing and should also bear the sufferings in them.

## **Protection of People**

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*Yani Chakara Bhuvanasya Yaspatihi Prajapatirmatarishwa  
Prajabhyah |*

*Pradisho Yani Vasate Dishashch Tani Me Varmani Bahulani  
Santu ||*

*(Atharva 19.20.2)*

---

The protector of the Motherland, the King/Prajapati has created various ways of protection of his people, those various ways are spread in all directions, may we all get those ways of protection in many ways.

May those means of protection protect all of us from enemies, Be the people of the state protected and there be peace in the state.

The Prajapati should create many means to protect the subjects in his nation. He should build Forts like Bhudgub, Jaladgu, Girridgub, and Nagardgub, and put all the means to destroy the enemy on those. In addition to the forts there should be boat crew, air force, army, guard teams and all their means and weapons should be around. They should always be ready and smart. As soon as the enemy comes they must destroy or make them go away. All these resources should be always available for the protection work and there should not be the shortage.

### **Foundation of the Prajapati/King**

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*Yasmintsbdwa Prajapatirlokantsarvar adharayat |*

*Skambham tam bruhi katamah swidev sah || (Atharva  
10.7.7.)*

---

God is the principle. God is the pillar of all, The one who remains Pure and virtuous will get God's support, knowing this the Prajapati/King should remain pure and be virtuous. He should take care of the people sincerely, and don't nurture any sense of doing sin in them. He should not even think of harming or destroying other to achieve selfish goals. He should keep on doing his duties with the support of God.

### **Knowledge increases longevity by gaining strength and protection**

---

*Prajapatevruto Brahmna Varmanaham Kashyapasya  
Jyotisha Varchasa cha |*

*Jaradashtihi Krutaviryo Vihayaha Sahasrayuhu  
Sukrutashchareyam ||*

*(Atharva 17.1.7)*

---

With the good management by the Prajapati, the knowledge of the subjects increase and People achieve strength, Long life, stay in gratitude, does good karma, and they spread all over the world.

This mantra has shown how far the King should do his duties so that people can achieve progress.

### **We the People of our King**

*Prajapatehe Praja Abhooma | (Va.ya 9.21 18.29)*

The King who nurtures the people in the best way, we will become his people. The King who does not care for his people, he will not rule over us. It has been said in the very beginning of Yajurveda that -

*Ma vah Stena Eeshata Ma Aghashansah | (Va.ya 1.1)*

People should not be ruled by thieves and sinners.

May the kingdom of Good King be there. Good governance increases the life and health of the people and the power of the people.

May the power to do good increase, may the people do good deeds, may be free from sin, may the people be well-educated, well-protected

May all be bright and brilliant, may the people have the light of vision, None to be short-sighted. The governance should be like this.

People love such rulers, that is why the kingdom of such a ruler is successful.

### **Daughters of the King**

*Sabhacha ma Samitishchavatam Prajapaterduhitarau Samvidane |*

*Yena Sangachha Up ma Sa Shikshacharu Vadani Pitarah Sangateshu ||*

*(Atharva 7.13.1)*

Gramasabha and Rashtrasamiti are like daughters of the King. These keep the King informed. The King should protect them as his daughters. The Gramasabha and Rashtrasamity by giving true knowledge about the plans to the interest of the nation, protect the nation's King.

Gram Sabha should be organized in every village. The people of the village would elect the members of the Gram Sabha, the assembly of the

village. The work of the Gram Sabha should include education, protection, justice, health, etc. all the functions of the village

The right to do this remained with the Gram Sabha.

The members of the Gram Sabha would elect the members of the Rashtra Samiti or the National Parliament. This Rashtra Samiti governs the nation. The members of this Rashtra Samiti elect the cabinet. All the states continued to be ruled by this cabinet. The national committee elects Prajapati and he is the president of the nation.

In this way, it is the rule of the Prajapati dynasty. It starts from Gram Sabha and goes till the National Committee, the representatives of all the races work in these. The King is also elected by the subjects.

All the subjects appoint their officers for the purposes of authority.

### **Elimination of the Prajapati/King**

Rishis have done the elimination or assassination of the unworthy Prajapati /Kings. The Brahman Texts have references about it. (Aitareya Brahman 3/33) The references tell us that The King looked upon the Gram Sabha and Rashtriya Samiti with ill intentions, looking at such deeds of the King/Prajapati, Gods said that such no one had done such deeds before. The King must be killed for his ill deeds. Then they thought about who would do such act to eliminate the King. But they found no one who would eliminate the King.

After this, the Gods among the subjects gathered those who had strong body and told them to assassinate the Prajapati. They ran to that Prajapati and fired weapons at him. Prajapati/King got injured and fell on the ground. In this manner, the representatives of the subjects killed the evil-behaving Prajapati/King. After this, another King was made and coronated to ascend the throne of the Prajapati.

### **Story of the King Ven**

The Unfair, Unjust and evil behaving King was removed from the throne. In this regard, the story of Vena king is worth reading. Anga was the king. He was married to Yamakanya Sunitha. His son was famous by the name Vena. Upon the death of King Anga, the Sage placed Ven on the throne because he was the eldest son.

Ven was malefeasant since childhood. He didn't listen to anyone. In the childhood because of an influence of an atheist, he was encouraged to behave against the religion and from that time he started opposing the

religion. He stopped the Yajnya, Yaag in all the nations, stopped the Vedic method. He also stopped ruling the state as per the guidelines of Vedas. Started worshiping himself and started behaving arbitrarily.

Seeing this the Rishis got angry. All the Rishis together went to King Ven and spoke about performing the Yajnya Yaag. But Ven Raja said that the Yajnya Yaag would not be performed in his kingdom. The Rishis tried a lot to explain, but all those efforts were unsuccessful.

At the end Marichi Rishi and other Rishis got angry, and together they assassinated King Ven. References of this Tale are found in -

Harivansha 1/5, Vayu Puran 2/1, Bhagawat 4/14, VishnuDharma 1/108, Vishnu Puran 4/13, Bramhavaivarta Puran 4, Matsya Puran 10/1-10.

Padma Puran states that Rishis did not kill Ven King, but Ven King ran away looking at the Rishi's anger. In any ways the Tale states elimination of the malefeasant King and coronation of the new King.

Ven had two sons. The first son was as malefeasant as the King Ven, so his second son was made the next King, and the first son was exiled from the state.

#### **4.4 Guidelines of Prajapati Governance**

- 1) The people of the state are at the primary step, and the ruler lives on the basis of the people, the ruler gets his power after it is given by the people.
- 2) The individual is for the short time but the union, society or nation is immortal
- 3) A person stays on the support of the society, so the person should surrender for the service of the society.
- 4) Time creates the people, the union of the people and the ruler over it.
- 5) When the people are not united, there is a need for a ruler. There should be any rule on wretched persons
- 6) If a ruler has to appoint anyone on the authority of a government, then the one who is most qualified should be appointed. Seeing the qualification, only the qualified person should be given authority.
- 7) The teacher and the ruler both should have become learned by practicing celibacy. The one who does not have a good heart should not get the benefit of any authority

- 8) Government officials should be the ones who behave friendly with the people and nurture the people, ones who do welfare of the people in every way
- 9) Government officials should be truthful and they should protect the wealth of the people and they have to do their duty holding strength within
- 10) Government officers should remove the enemies of the people, remove the sorrows of the people, remain pure themselves and make it holy.
- 11) When a dispute arises, decide the right and wrong side and make the truth the subject of worship and make the false things go away
- 12) There should be two types of tax officers, one who collects the money by approaching everyone and the one who uses the money, and there should be a treasurer on them.
- 13) The ruling people should increase the numerical strength by consolidating the people in the nation.
- 14) With the good management and governance, and the glory of the people increases, they get fame and they also get plenty of food.
- 15) Rulers should make the land more fertile so that the subjects get food to eat
- 16) The food produced in the motherland should be given to the sons of that land. The ruler should ensure good management.
- 17) There should be 33 offices of the government, there should be 33 officers and their maintenance is done from the national treasury. May they be satisfied and do their job well.
- 18) Houses should be built by the government and the homeless should live in those houses. Thus, everyone should get a home to live in.
- 19) In the interest of the public welfare water arrangements through canals and ponds and lakes should be made by the state.
- 20) To create a beautiful view across the country, gardens should be made, etc.
- 21) Business dealings should be increased, Harmful factors should be kept away from state management



- 22) The Ruler should be happy being with his People and should know happiness and sorrows
- 23) The progress of the people continues with the state management.
- 24) The management of people and state is better with their mutual sympathy
- 25) New beautiful cities should be established by the state government, People should live there and achieve more progress
- 26) The state's business continues to nurture, protect and promote the people
- 27) Rulers should not have luxurious lifestyle, they should be ascetic and should do all the works for the progress of the people.
- 28) There should be the best arrangement to protect the people from the enemy throughout the nation and all the protectors of the nation should always stay fit.
- 29) Rulers should be believers in God, because God is their ideal ruler
- 30) With the smooth functioning of the state government, the people should live long, they should be free from sufferings, all the people should be knowledgeable, glorious and strong
- 31) Gram Sabha and National Committee/ Rashtriya Samiti should be organized by the state administration and these meetings do worthy work of national governance and also get the work done.
- 32) The disqualified officer should be removed from the place of authority and the qualified officer should occupy his place.
- 33) The main aim of the state administration should be to make means for the prosperity of people and not expecting any credit in return.

In this way these 33 sutras/Guidelines belong to the rule of state, which are revealed by the mantras describing the Prajapati Institution of governance.

The Vedas mention of many Prajapati. The Sky, the Fire, the Rains, the Parameshwar, the sun, The Wind etc, are described as Prajapati. The Mantras that describe these Prajapati, also describe about their way of governance.

## **UNIT 5 : POLITY AND GOVERNANCE AS DESCRIBED IN MANUSMRITI**

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### **5.1 Political system in ManuSmriti**

Manu gave a firm and ideal polity and Hindu political system. Manu says that when the king is unjust, he gets quickly destroyed along with his Allies. Manu's Rajlekha and Rajaniyam were in practice before being written down and it is quite possible that those were even older than the Greek administrators Solon and Lykara.

Manu's place has been considered very high in the history of ancient Indian statesmen. According to the Indian tradition, the ancient Indian Political Science (Rajshastra) is considered to be the pioneer of Political Science (Rajshastra) and Vishalaksh Mahendra, Shukracharya, Bhardwaj and Gauri Shira etc. have also been enumerated among the world famous Political Science Pioneers ( Rajshastra pioneers.)

Manu has told for the king that the Kshatriya (anointed king) who has obtained knowledge of the Vedas (with Upnayan Sanskar) should protect the people living in his kingdom in every way with justice.

For the protection of the entire world, the Lord incarnated the king by taking the eternal parts of the king's creation (Ishwar), Indra, Vayu, Yama, Surya, Agni, Varuna, Moon and Kuber, etc. Indra is the King of all the gods, therefore it (the king) saturates the eyes and mind of the beholders like the sun. Therefore no one on earth is able to see it. The king with his glory is the form of fire, form of air, form of sun, form of moon, form of Dharmaraja (Yama), form of Kuber and form of Mahendra . But thinking that he is a human being, No one should insult the king, because in the form of a king, a great deity (divine power) resides.

### **Meaning of the Management**

The origin of the word 'system' is to arrange the tasks and rules at a certain place after careful consideration. Organization or arrangement is the method of distribution of work among different persons. Organization means making such an arrangement of employees, so that by proper division of tasks and responsibilities, the set objective can be easily accomplished. In this way, to achieve set goals in the system, tasks can be divided and determined and coordination can be established. Therefore, it is natural to raise a question as

to how the division should be done and how the various units of work should be grouped. Aristotle has also given two ways of division of work - first, division of work according to categories of Men, second division of work according to service.

Similarly, the Smritikars created their system according to the functions and responsibilities as the basis of the entire Varna system and in the Mahabharata also, both Guna and Karma have been given a place in the division.

## 5.2 Religion and Manusmriti

Dharma-dominated governance is called the best governance, because religion has always been there in Indian culture, so the basic rules of Indian society is dependent on religion only. A rule with religion is never a violent rule and a rule without religion is a rule with violence. Therefore Indian culture is a culture with Vedas and religion, because Indian society has been multi-cultured and multi-caste and multi-ethnic. Similarly, Smritikars have also given the definition of religion. According to Jaimini, 'Dharma' is a recognized purpose which is directed by the Vedic injunctions. According to the Vaisheshika Sutra, religion is that, by which one attains Advancement (Abhyudaya) and renunciation (Nishreyas.)

Religion of Acharya Manu -

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*"Dhrutihi Kshama Damostaye Shouchamindriya Nigraha |*

*Dheervidya Satyamakrodho Dashakam Dharma Lakshanam  
||"*

---

Special emphasis on the aspect of religion has been given in this definition. From this point of view, the Mahabharata says that non-violence is the "ultimate religion", while Manu is of the view that the "ultimate religion" is the basis.

According to Indian beliefs, the word religion has two purposes -

1. Abhyudaya, - Advancement
2. Nishreyas - Renunciation

The first purpose of 'Dharma' where worldly pleasures indicates towards the attainment of happiness and prosperity. Shreyas is related to

ultimate achievements with feeling of liberation or Renunciation is attached to it, adding any kind of communal concept with this religion is a delusion. It is original. In this context, it can be said that Manu's concept of Dharma is closer to Plato's idea of Justice, because both lay more emphasis on justification.

### **5.3 Political system according to Karma**

It is told that a Brahmin should diligently protect the religious scriptures and teach them to the eligible disciples. Other castes have been prohibited for this work. It is mentioned that while Practicing or teaching the scriptures, the Brahmin who observes fasts, performs Yajnya rituals; does not get indulged in physical, vocal etc. defects and in the end purifies his descendants up to seven generations and is the most learned on this earth..

In this theology, the merits and demerits of the entire religion and karma are told. According to this theology, Sanatana Dharma was considered for the four Varna. Similarly, for the Kshatriya, duties like protecting the people, giving charity, performing Yajnya etc. were told and the Kshatriya should not be attached to any luring pleasures. A Kshatriya should be ready to take care of the people, the Kshatriya who does not see suffering of the people in his kingdom, that king has not been described as worthy of the love of the people. Thus, in the end he turns away from the attainment of salvation. Manu said that Vaishya has also been entrusted with the responsibility of performing his duty in the scriptures, for Vaishya he should be ready in protecting animals, Donations and charity, performing Yajnya, Education and business etc. If he turns away from all his duties, then he goes to hell. Similarly, the Shudra should serve the three Varnas while remaining indifferent. Serving the other three varnas is said to be the main task. In Manusmriti, such a statement is quoted through this verse. In the above verse, by telling all the Varnas about their respective duties and actions, Brahma in his further narration has told Man (Purush) being the best among species. Man has been described as the best among all the living beings. Thinking the universe in the form of a man, while describing the lower and upper of the entire body, it is said that the part above the navel of the man has been declared holy and all the classes born from the mouth of Brahma. So Brahmin is the master of the whole creation by being superior by imbibing the Vedas.

No one in all the three worlds is worshiped by the Brahmgyanis. They worship each other with tenacity and knowledge. This proves that nothing in this world is bigger than the Brahmgyanis. Similarly, it is said in Shrimad Bhagwat Gita-

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*"Niyatam Kuru Karma Tvam Jyayo Hyakarmanah |*

*Shareer Yaatrapi ch Te Na Prasiddhachedakarmanah ||"*

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Means - Shri Krishna tells Arjuna to do the work prescribed by the scriptures, because doing work is better than not doing work, and by not doing work, even your body's sustenance will not be proved.

## **5.4 Nature and Principles of Political Diplomacy**

Diplomatic agents are persons who reside in foreign countries as representatives of the state they belong to. They establish important links between the two countries, the country they represent and where they are sent. They do the diplomatic work of maintaining and completing political or legal transactions. In the present times, the institution of political representatives has become a system, by which reciprocity is established between the states. This practice of sending and accepting diplomatic agents is being followed since ancient times.

Even in ancient India, it was a practice to send messengers from one state to another. Whatever description is found in Manusmriti, it cannot be said with full confidence that what would have been the intention of Manu in reality. In this context, whatever evaluation material is available in Manav Dharmashastra it is subtle on the basis of this subject matter. It can only be said that Manu was actually familiar with the organic form and he supported this principle in Manav Dharmashastra. The description of the form of the state was included in the context.

'Kamandak' has also considered the seven-aspects of the state in his book 'Kamandakiya Nitisar'. He has also described the Saptanga state by addressing the seven aspects of the state by the names of Swami, Amanyas, Rashtra, Durg, Kosh, Bal and Suhrid.

Similarly, the Smritis have been accepted the state in the form of its constituting parts and they are as follows - 1. Swami or King, 2. Amatya, 3. 'Janapad' for nation or 'Pura' punishment for 'Jan' fort. There is also a mention of Bell at some places.

According to Manu, the first aspects of the state are more important than the rest of them. So at the time of delivering justice, the first aspects of the states should be given the priority. According to Manu, these seven aspects support each other in such a way, just as the three poles form a triangular shape to balance and hold itself on the ground. These seven

aspects are never inferior to each other when compared, but each aspect has its own important place.

## **5.5 Theory of Divine Origin of the King**

A detailed description is found in the Smriti texts regarding the divinity of the King. In the Smriti texts, the divine origin of the king and the state has been told. In the opinion of Manu and Brihaspati, God created the king from the essence of the eight deities Indra, Vayu, Yama, Surya, Agni, Varuna, Chandrama and Kuber. This quote elevates the King even above the deities, because the king has the special qualities of the eight deities, so he is superior even to these gods.

King is considered very sacred, the person occupying this position is considered as the Supreme God. Narad has described the King as having five types of forms - Agni, Indra, Soma, Yagya and Kuber, the king become form of Agni by pacifying the anger by glory, becomes like Indra by victory on attacking enemies, becomes form of Soma by speaking politely to the public, becomes form of Yama by doing injustice, and becomes like Kubera by giving things to the needy. According to the opinion of Shri Kashi Prasad Jaiswal, Vedic monarchy is organically present.

Manu says that even if the king is a child, he should not be insulted considering that he is a human being. Insulting such a king is considered an insult to the Supreme God. Therefore, the king is ordered to act according to his divinity.

Yajnavalkya has written in Vishvarupa that the deities told Prajapati (Brahma) that we the people will arrange a king in human form by taking importance, brightness, power, victory, generosity and control from Surya, Indra, Vishnu, Kuber, Yama respectively. Manu has concluded the word Raja by saying that the one who cares for the people is a King and his position is known as Rajpad.

The signs of this theory of the divine origin of the king are also found in other ancient texts. In the hymns of Rigveda, the king is addressed by the names of deities like Yama, Kubera, Varuna etc., while in Yajurveda, the king is called as Yama, Kubera, Varuna etc.

An indication of the divine origin of the king is also found in the Atharva Veda. In the Atharva Veda, the king is considered as a part of the deities Indra, Soma, Varuna, Mitra, Yama, Surya etc. It has also been told in Atharva Veda that the Rajpad I,e, Post of the King is equal to Vishnu's Post.

You are sitting on the post of Vishnu, in that Sukta the king has been established on the post of Vishnu. In this way, in all the three Vedas, Rigveda, Yajurveda, Atharva Veda, the creation of king and state has been rendered.

In this way, Manu has considered the post of king as very limited and divine and holy. According to Indian theory the king is a part of God but his divinity depends on his polite behaviour and high conduct. The qualities of God are present in him. The attainment of great personalities is very difficult for the common man and those he achieves through extreme tenacity and self-control etc. Thus, the divinity of the king is dependent on his divine qualities according to Manu. If he is unable to possess these qualities, he loses his right to be a king. The theory of the divine origin of the king described in Manusmriti considers the king as a god only because he possesses divine qualities, not that he has the right to rule freely against the wishes of the subjects by being the representative form of God on this earth.

The Kingship (Rajpad) mentioned in Manusmriti compels for Duties of a King (Rajdharma). It becomes legally entitled to be removed from the full responsibility of the king from the same Rajdharma. That's why according to the episode described in Manusmriti, the king should work for the welfare of the people.

The king is full of the qualities of the gods, so he should bring many qualities into the right conduct. Like Indra, the king should fulfill the wishes of saints and sages etc. And just like the Sun, the king should collect tax from people and protect them.

Like the virtue of Vayu he should do equal justice to the dear and the unloved person. Like Varuna he should restrain the sinners. If people are happy to see the minister and the king, then it is called Chandravrat. Like Agni the king should kill sinners and evil people. The king should observe all the subjects equally, that virtue is just like the virtue of the earth. In addition to this, the king should have the ability to be arhatva, masculine, brave, kind, charitable and have equal feelings in happiness and sorrow.

## **5.6 King and Rulership**

There are three main functions of the king - diplomatic (management or executive), justice related and legislation related work. Manu says that the effulgence of all the deities resides in the king, the rules which the king preaches in scriptures should not be violated. Megasthenes has written under political rules that festivals should be celebrated in the capital. Everyone should go to attend the wedding program at the minister's house.

According to Gautam, the king should make rules and regulations based on scriptures and Vedas, Dharmadhastra, Vedangas and Upanishads and Puranas.

Manu is of the opinion that the king should ban the export during the time of famine. If any merchant violates this, all his property should be confiscated. May the king protect the people in times of famine and calamity. Protect the subjects from thieves, attacks and dacoits.

Manu says that the king is the era. There are four ages according to the work of the king. If the king does not do any work due to laziness and ignorance then there is Kali Yuga, at that time the king is in a dormant state. When he is awake and does not work, then there is Dwapar Yug in his kingdom, when the king has to do Rajkarya, Sandhi-Vigraha etc. and governance-management then there is Treta Yug. When the king rules according to the Dharma specified by the scriptures, then there is Satya Yuga.

Manu states that people live in fear of punishment. Religious people are rare by nature and because of fear of punishment people of the whole world enjoy their respective things.

It is necessary to punish unrighteous humans. In relation to punishment Manu says that God has created punishment from Brahmatej, born from the soul, the savior of all living beings.

Manu explains the importance of the penal policy and Punishment. Punishment rules over all the subjects, protects everyone, it alone stays awake when all the creatures sleep, scholars have considered Punishment as in the interest of being bound by the duties and Dharma.

If the king uses punishment properly, then he is considered prosperous by Dharma and his work, on the contrary the King will be killed by Punishment awarded to him if he is lustful, angry and petty, With very harsh and cruel punishment the king destroys his relatives and gives trouble to fort dwellers and Anksharikshagami sages and gods.

Manu has prohibited the use of punishment by a helpless, foolish King who does not have scientific knowledge. In matters of money a king with a pure mind, a truthful pledge, one who behaves according to the scriptures, with good help and with wisdom, can use punishment. The king should punish according to justice in his kingdom and severe punishment in the enemy's country. Brahmins should be forgiving and should behave softly with friends.

The king should make arrangements in such a way that there remains peace everywhere in his kingdom. K. M. Panikkar says that keeping all those



rules in mind, later Hindu kings were inspired due to which they tried to revive Hindutva.

To maintain the security A Powerful King has to resort to the four measures: Sama, Daam, Dand Bheda. Law and the Penal Policy are the best for the prosperity of the state. Without fighting with the enemy first he should be subdued by three measures, upon the failure of the three measures, the enemy should be defeated by resorting to punishment.

### **Privileges of the Kings**

The king had the right over the property buried inside the ground. After receiving the property, the king had to inform the people by making announcement about it, then after three years, the king used to have full right it.

The Fort/Capital - Kulluk Bhatt is of the opinion that the capital should not be taken over by the enemy. If some part of the state is conquered by the enemy, then there is may not be any harm but if the enemy takes possession of the capital, then there is a serious crisis, because the food stock for the entire nation is stored there. The main element is - The military force remains safe and fort is the center of governance. According to Yajnavalkya the main aim of the state is to build a fort for the protection of People, the treasury and the King himself.

## **5.7 Position of the Cabinet Ministers**

If governance is considered as a vehicle, the cabinet is the axle of the vehicle. The governance cannot move without mind and brain, in the same way the best King/Ruler cannot pull the vehicle alone because of the order and rule of governance and administration are set by the cabinet. In the cabinet only the special people sit for discussion and most of the things in the board discussion are kept confidential. Rather they are directly converted into work. In this way only close and trusted characters of the state are made members in this committee. Be it is the current parliamentary rule or chapter rule or the monarchical rule. The cabinet has always remained an important part of the administrative unit.

In the Smritis, The Amatya or secretary at the second important post after the King shows need and importance of the position in the Saptanga description of the state. The importance of the secretary is also rendered in the history and Puranas. In Ramcharitmanas, Goswami Tulsidas has described it simply in his Sunderkand like -

*"Sachiv, Vaidya, Guru Teen Jau Priya Bolhi Bhay Aas |*

*Rajya, Dharma, Tan, Teen Kari Hohi Begahi Nas ||”*

*(Ramacharita Manas, Sundarakand Doha)*

From the above lines, we come to know that if the three I.e the secretary, the teacher and the doctor, give wrong advice on any policy due to the fear of governance, then there will be destruction. Therefore, in order to run the government smoothly, the secretary (minister) should take the decision on any policy fearlessly. Wrong decision or advice should not be given under pressure from anyone. The king should appoint a minister (secretary) in governance after training him in every way. The king who does not do this, cannot run his rule smoothly. A single person cannot complete a difficult task when the scope of the work is vast.

Highlighting the need of Amatya, Manu has said that the simple work may become difficult (dushkar) even for any simple person in the state. Likewise, the difficult task of governance of a wide state cannot be run systematically by the King alone. Therefore, for the well-organized operation of the state the ministers should be appointed. Apart from this, a single person cannot know everything. Various types of intelligence and splendor are seen in different men. It is not possible for the King to always know the reality from a single person in the subjects related to the state. For that the King needs experts from different subjects. He needs many people to consult on the problems related to the governance of the state. Mentions of assembly are found in Rigveda, that describes types of Council of Ministers. Other ancient texts have described Samiti, Sangati, Vidath, Parishad etc.

**Importance** - Manu has mentioned the word 'Secretary' and 'Minister' in Yajnavalkya Smriti. In these two Smritis, the appointment of the secretary has been described separately. For giving advice and assistance to the king related to governance and administration from time to time, Manu's cabinet position has been legislated. Manu was of the opinion that everything that is on this earth is Brahmin because Brahmin is firstborn and is counted among the eldest and best sons of Brahma. Manu has described the ministers as helpful and has advised to consult the King's ministers about human theology.

After examining intelligence of the ministers, the king should, according to their intelligence and discretion, distribute the work departments to them; and accordingly take advice related to their department. Only a proper minister can do the work of his department well and can run it properly. Thus, the King should mediate in the process of cabinet appointment and after examining the intelligence of each of the ministers, the best one should be appointed as his advisor.

## Composition of the Cabinet

Manu and Yajnavalkya Smriti do not mention the Council of Ministers. Instead, Manu used the word "secretary". In this the word secretary indicates "the cabinet", because both the governance and the administration exist. Thus, the word secretary by Manu matches with administration. So, where there is administration there must be governance, because they are mutual and complementary to each other. Manu has ordered the king to appoint ministers. If the king gets proper advice after the appointment of the ministers, then the all-round development of the state prosper and if the same minister or secretary gives inappropriate advice then the state growth will be declining. That is the reason the king should never take any advice by threatening a minister. The king acts according to the kind of association he has and according to the advice he gets. Due to the great importance of this section of the text, different principles have been rendered regarding the appointment of the cabinet in ancient texts and as well as in Puranas.

Regarding the number of members of the Council of Ministers, no scholar has told any fixed number and the same tradition is maintained in today's cabinet as well. Our constitutional experts have not told any fixed number for the cabinet while framing the Indian Constitution. While in our constitution, taking some parts from history, Puranas, Shastras, Smritis and Upanishads, Country and abroad, created such a huge constitution, there is no unanimity among the Rajshastra pioneers of ancient India regarding the number of members to the Council of Ministers. One of the reasons for this seems to be that, for the membership of the Council of Ministers different subjects should have different specialties. So, the number of council members should be large. But on the other hand, this could be the problem as the cabinet discussions should be kept secret for the welfare of the state, which is not possible in a large number of council of ministers. For this purpose, the number of members of the Council of Ministers should be minimum and it is necessary to control that number, therefore the pioneers of ancient India's political science have expressed different views in this matter.

Regarding the number of members of the Council of Ministers, Kautilya writes in his Arthashastra - "Manu in his Manusmriti has made arrangements to keep twelve members of the Council of Ministers. According to the followers of Brihaspati told the number to be sixteen and the followers of Shukracharya have told to be twenty members of the Council of Ministers. But Kautilya while expressing his opinion says -" According to my opinion, there should be members in the Council of Ministers as per time and requirement." According to Bhishma, it is appropriate to have thirty-seven members in the Council of Ministers. These members should be

representatives of all the four varnas. Ten members should be available in the council of ministers as per ShukraNeeti.

## **5.8 Nomination of the Ministers**

The nomination process is not a new tradition in the Indian Civil Code. Rather it was there even when it was a monarchy. The concept of Council Ministers was conceived to run the governance of the state in a legal and refined manner. Without the help of the Council of Ministers state alone cannot properly govern. So the cabinet emerged for the help and give advice to the King. If this institution (Cabinet) had not been created, then there would be failure in the work of governance and power. In different parts of the empire, the tradition of appointing Princes or Persons related to Royal Family as governors has been followed. Among the Puranas, the Vayu Purana states that Pushyamitra had appointed his sons as co-rulers in different regions of the empire. Malavikagnimitra reveals that his son Agnimitra was the sub-King of Vidisha. It is clear from the quote of Vasumitra that the prince used to conduct the army. There is mention of 'Amatya-Parishad' in Malvikagnimitra and 'Sabha' in Mahabhashya. The council of ministers of the Maurya period too was called as Sabha. It is clear that there was also a Council of Ministers to provide assistance in governance. Like Kautilya, Manu also stressed the need for a council of ministers and further wrote that even a simple task becomes difficult for a man, so how a state bearing great fruits can be run by a king alone?

### **Colonial Theory**

The membership of the Council of Ministers follows the traditional principle. Establishing this principle, Manu gives an order that the king's own council of ministers should appoint members from among the those who had been the servants by tradition.(Maul)

In this context, Kulluk Bhatt has written while making arrangements for the post of Maul that the meaning of the post of Maul is from the servants brought from the father-grandfather, I.e. men who are in Royal service from generations. In the Shanti Parva of Mahabharata, such men have been given place in the Council of Ministers, who belong to the traditional ministerial family. In this way Manu definitely establishes the traditional principle for the Council of Ministers.

### **Due Diligence**

In Manusmriti, the determination of the second qualification of the Council of Ministers has been kept scientific. In Manusmriti it has been established by using a post for it. In this system, while appointing the

members of the Council of Ministers the king should have full confidence about their subject expertise of the persons whom he is going to nominate and that the qualifying person's classical education is complete and the knowledge has been obtained methodically. In this way until the candidate for the membership of the Council of Ministers does not get the proper knowledge of the theology he will not be able to think about it and create new schemes and give them a constructive form for the welfare of the people. Manu by telling the need to get proper knowledge of the scriptures has set it as a mandatory qualification for the Council of Ministers. Manu has given a clear order that the minister cannot be successful in performing his duties just by having a simple knowledge of these scriptures. Only after making a serious study of these scriptures and acquiring their real knowledge accordingly a man becomes capable to perform the great duties of the Council of Ministers. Apart from this Manu has emphasized the merit of the bravery of the members of the cabinet, because a brave man does not deviate from his path even in distress. Yajnavalkya has given importance to the merits of patient men. Only people with determination can complete any creative work.

Before appointing a minister, Manu has told to examine thoroughly. The one who is the best by qualification should be appointed as a minister. Manu has directed the King that only verified persons should be made members in the Council of Ministers. Apart from these qualifications, it is said that it is necessary for the members of the cabinet to be proficient in the Shastra-Vidya (Training of the arms and weapons).

Yajnavalkya has asked to select ministers who come from the wise lineage and those who are patient and pious men. It is necessary for the ministers to have strong devotion towards the king. The members who behave best always may get disorientated or may deviate from their path. So Manu told that the one who behaves best soon becomes eligible for the trust of the king.

Ministers should not lose their character by being distracted by evils like lust, anger, greed, attachment, status, jealousy etc. It is considered essential to incorporate qualities related to character, intelligence, talent and devotion. Manu ordered the selection of seven to eight ministers who came from the family tradition, learned the scriptures, brave, skilled in weapons and born in the best clan.

### **Genealogy of high Clan**

The tradition of Lineage is a centuries-old tradition, it is not a new tradition and especially in ancient India. Special importance has been given to the influence of human blood and lineage. In those times, most of the

people had the belief that there is a possibility of good conduct from high family lineage or blood.

According to this principle, the members of the Council of Ministers who have been ordered to be appointed by Manu in Smriti, should be who are born in noble lineage. But this does not mean that only the highness of the clan has been considered as the basis for the membership of the Council of Ministers.

In Manusmriti, for the membership of the Council of Ministers, where the highness of the clan has been prescribed, the compulsion of intelligence, good conduct and expertise in other subjects has also been told.

## **5.9 Powers and Duties of the Ministers**

The work styles of the duties and authority of the ministers which were in Puranas, Upanishads and Smriti literature, we see those are still present.

During those days there was a Council of Ministers for the aid and advice of the king in the monarchy and the minister of each department used to report their departmental work, policies and all confidential or open reports related to their department to the king. By appointing a minister, the King used to conduct all the activities of governance smoothly. The same tradition is still described in the Indian Constitution. It is written that today's Chief Executive (President) will have a Council of Ministers for aid and advice, today the Head Authority keeps information about his jurisdiction only through his ministers.

In all the political texts the King is allowed to take the opinion of the ministers. Manu has asked the king to give advice to the ministers both collectively and individually. Due to the absence of different sentiments, the king should implement what is best known to him by knowing his intention. Yajnavalkya says that the king should think about his duty with the advice of his ministers.

Manu has said that the King himself should take the final decision. But elsewhere it is said that the King should hand over the entire work to a Brahmin minister. Thus, it is clear that the king takes his decision after consulting the ministers and then he should consult the Brahmin minister. Whenever the king thought in the interest of his people, he did not violate the advice of the ministers. The main objective of the Council of Ministers was to do welfare work for the king. Amatya used to run his departments well.

## **Epilogue**

The biggest gift of Manusmriti is the imagination of divinity in man, his consciousness and upliftment. Man is the center of consciousness, and not a 'material' or substance. His education and management work cannot be done only by general principles and rules, but its actual interpretation is required to an extent through philosophical system.

Both philosophy and social system are inspired by social purpose and which is reflected in the form of continuous series in human life. Thus, the system prescribed by Manusmriti is based on an intellectual, social philosophy and a scientific, social system.

The language style of Manusmriti is as per Panini's Sanskrit interpretation. Nowhere in this Sahitya Dharmashastra (Text on Political Science) any difficult vocabulary is chosen. All the elements mentioned in Manusmriti are religious elements prescribed by the Vedas, yet difficult Vedic words have hardly been found in Smriti literature.

## UNIT 6 : SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE IN VEDIC AGE

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The picture of the Vedic people that we get from the preceding chapter "The Veda as a History is that of very virile and enthusiastic people who loved to live a full life of hundred years. "This brilliant lusture which benefits the gods has revealed itself before us: let us be blessed to see the lusture for hundred years; let us breathe for a hundred winters (RV 7-66-16)" Theirs' was a life free from wants, free from poverty and slavery. It was in fact, brimming with secular pleasures coupled with complete spiritual harmony. They loved hard work to achieve their ends. They held the belief that god befriends those who work hard and sweat to their utmost capacity – *na ṛteśrāntasya sakhyāya devāḥ*. They regarded eating and drinking alone without any consideration for their family members as a sin-*na aryamāṇam puṣyati no sakhāyam kevalaghobhavati kevalādi* (RV 10-117-6). Their idea of family was to live together with great grandfathers and mothers, without the husbands and wives being separated from each other. For such a large family, to carry on its affairs smoothly and to the satisfaction of all, it was often necessary to come together. The norms of mutual behavior had, therefore, to be set in order to regulate the family life. The new bride had a place of pride in the family and she was to be the leader of the house. She is advised to be the supreme mistress (*samrājñi*) over all others including the elders. A teen-aged girl cannot be expected to assume the leadership role. This role was to be developed in the family with the help of elders. For she had to get herself acquainted with the family traditions and the characteristics of every other member of the family. This new leader is asked to govern the household with affection-not only for the members of the family but also for the cattle herds owned by the family. The curious advice to the new bride is to treat even her husband as her son after she begets a sufficient number of sons and daughters. This would indicate that she and her husband had to follow more abstemious and self-denying life so as to ensure a family within manageable limits.

In order to perform her role, to the satisfaction of all the members of her family, the female leader of the house-hold had to carry on constant consultations with other members of the family to arrive at a consensus. The basic objective of the family life was to maintain perfect harmony amongst all its members. She cannot achieve such unity of minds by being a dictator at all. The Vedic society delighted in maintaining perfect harmony in the family, in the society and in all social and political affairs as well.



## 6.1 Vedic People and Sabha

However, since the dawn of Vedic studies in the West in the last century, an inconclusive controversy has raged about the nature of the sabha. This is because the scholars have attempted to provide all the answers to the questions posed by modern notions. This has created a good deal of confusion. The scholars have studied this institution to suit their particular theory -religious or political. Most of the eminent scholars have taken the Sabha as an almost homogeneous constitutional body. The concept of the State as understood in modern times has no parallel in ancient Indian political development. The political function is not always readily distinguishable from other social functions. But many scholars in their preoccupation with the political ideas forget this and their interpretation of the Ancient India especially the Vedic - institutions become biased. They are wont not only to find parallels and even sanctions for our present systems, but also to find equivalents of the Western institutions in the most ancient of our texts. This tendency is offset by another to condemn whatever was Ancient Indian as barbarian. **When the ancient texts are approached with preconceived notions, "a student is apt to take isolated examples as rules, legends as historical facts, favourable evidence only to prove doubtful thesis."** Marxist interpreters on the other hand try to see the picture of primitive communism in almost all the institutions of Ancient India not excluding yajña and Vidatha (the sacrificial assembly where the leaked debates took place).

A study of the Vedic assemblies is necessary; for, the life of the Vedic people whether social, political or religious moves around these assemblies of different types. It would appear that the Vedic people believed in governing not only the State but every aspect of their life by discussion, which of necessity took place in the assemblies. The entire life of the Vedic man centred round yajna and yajna, whatever else it was, was undoubtedly a corporate activity, in which many participated. It would appear from the commentary of Sayana on RV. IV-2-5 that a yajna would not be worth the name if it was not accompanied by an assembly of spectators. Yajna would thus appear to be the genesis of assemblies.

### What is Sabha?

Sabha is the institution which has attracted the attention of the scholars more than any other. In name and in function in a very general sense Sabha has come down to this day through the past centuries.

*Jayarama* in his commentary on the *Parāśara Grhya Sūtra*, describes the nature of the sabha - assembly thus: "*saha dharmena sadbhirvā bhati iti sabhā* - an assembly of men shining together or shining with dharma. This is

stressed in the oft-quoted verse in the MBh "*na s̄a sabhā yatra na sañti vṛddhāb vṛddhā na te ye na vadanti dharmam* (Sabha parva). It is not a proper sabha where there are no elders and they are not elders worth the name, if they speak not dharma" *Taranath's Vacaspathyam* defines sabha in very apt and illustrative terms thus: "sabhā bhānti abhiṣṭaniścayārtham ekaṭra yatra gr̥he - the house where people shine together for deciding about the desired matters".

This word 'sabha' has been used about forty times in the Vedic literature. It is clear that the seers who sung and the people, who heard the hymns, readily understood the meaning of the word. In R.V. VI-28-6, cows are stated to have been praised in the assemblies for their capacity to make a thin person stout and a pale one with ruddy face. The cows that bellow auspiciously are said to make the singer's house auspicious. Their vast strength is, therefore, extolled in the Sabhas. This Sabha is certainly a Sabha of the learned singers, poets and priests.

In a predominantly sacrificial hymn (VIII, 4-9), a friend of Indra called 'Candra- giver of delight to all' is attending the sabhā a yajña sabha - a sacrificial assembly.

The term 'sabhya' occurs twice in the Rigveda at 1-91-20 as an epithet of a hero and at 2-74-13 as that of a 'vipra- a learned man'. In RV 1-9-20, Soma is said to give to a sacrifice, a son who is karmanya-skilled in worldly deeds, sadanya - good at the chores of the house, and *vidathya* and *sabheya* - a worthy of a *vidatha* and good in the sabha. Such a son makes his father famous. Here sabhya according to Sāyana, means, 'sabhāyām sabheya sakala sāstrabhijñām ityarthah - good at assembly i.e., knower of all the shastras (arts and sciences). Again this sabheya is the epithet of a Vīrā a hero. So this sabha-worthy hero must be a hero attending the assembly of the rājanyas i.e. valorous people.

In RV 2-24-13 the epithet *sabheya* is applied to *Vipra*. This 'worthy of the assembly of the Vipras' clearly means one who is good at the composition of hymns. Such an assembly must be a sacrificial assembly. In RV-IV-2-5 there is a prayer to god fire, that he makes the sacrifice possessed of cows (*gomān*), (*sabhāvān*) i.e. possessed of assembly. This shows that the sacrifice must be accompanied by a sabha.

In RV-1-167-3 the speech is said to remain in secret like the well attired wife who remains in women's apartments but shows herself sometimes, like hymn recited at the religious assemblies. The speech is the organ with everybody, but that *sabhāvat* speech is with a few. Those who can shine in an assembly by their speech are few and far between. The term

'sabhāsaha' one who conquers the sabha occurs in RVX-71-10. The verse describes how all the friends feel delighted with their friend who outshines others in the assembly of the learned.

In the Atharvaveda in V-31-6, the prayer is for hurling back the enemy spell put in various objects. One of them is Sabha Here it means assembly hall.

In introducing hymn AV-VII-39-4 in his commentary, Sayana says, "Having prayed to the herb for control over her husband a wife speaks to the husband" Sayana's paraphrase is: 'oh husband, when you approach me, then I alone shall speak, you should repeat what say (i.e. never speak against). Even at places and times where you are unaccompanied by me you may speak to your heart's content only in a sabha and nowhere else.

In a hymn to *Virāt* (AV.8-10), the evolution of some nebulous chaotic social condition into an organised society seems to be hinted at. *Virāt* is traditionally interpreted as 'people that have no king.' The first stage in the evolution of this *Virat* was 'gārhapatya-the organization of family. The second stage is the Sabha. The Viral then evolved into "Sabha of the nature of a *grāma* consisting of many families because its etymology is "where equal people shine." The other stages of this evolution are Samiti, Amantrana.

In AV-VII-13-1 the prayer is "May Sabha, and Samiti the two daughters of Prajapati being concordant, aid me. May he with whom may come into contact cooperate with me. O fathers may speak agreeably among those that have gathered". In the second verse the Sabha is directly addressed and an epithet *Narista* is specially given to it. A desire is expressed by the singer that the members of the Sabha may speak in agreement with him. Sayana's comment on this is very important. He interprets *Narista* as 'inviolable, untransgressable'. A statement made by one person may be accepted, may be rejected. But if many coming together should make one statement it is certainly not to be violated by others. So Sabha deserves the epithet *Narista* because its resolution is inviolable-*na-ristā-ahimsitā parair anabhibhāvya*. In the third verse, Indra is requested to make the singer fortunate in the assembly. This appears to be more a Vidvatsabha - assembly of the learned than any other variety.

Sabha occurs in the famous bhumisukta (A.V. 12-1). In this again, the prayer is for victory in the assembly.

The derivative words for the members of the Sabha have occurred in the Atharvaveda as Sabhasad - member of the assembly (A.V. 7-13-2 and 19-55-5), Sabhya (8-10-9 and 19-55-5) meaning 'worthy member of the Sabha.'

In literature, there is an expiatory formula, 'whatever sinful act we have committed in a village, in wilderness, in a Sabha or in the corporeal sense, may Gods pardon us for that.' (VS 3-45 etc.) According to Mahidhara, the sin committed in the assembly is of the 'nature of insult to great people - the Mahājanatiraskārādikam.'

In *Chandogya Upanishad* 5.3.6, the word 'Sabhāga' refers to a king going to the Sabha. There are references to 'Sabhāpati' in the Śātarudriya of the Yajurveda Vs. 16-24 etc., meaning 'Lord of the Sabha.' The word 'Sabhāpala' occurring in Taittiriya Brahman. 3-7-4-6 must mean 'The keeper of an assembly hall.' The Nīlarudra Upanisad refers to one more person - Sabhāpradin.'

There is only one reference throughout the range of the Vedic literature which clearly forbids the presence of women in Sabha - 'Men go to the Sabha, not women'. (M.S. 6-7-4), But it is a description and not an injunction.

### **Varied Functions of Sabhas**

From the foregoing, it should be clear that one Sabha did not perform different functions in different contexts; but different sabhas performed different functions according to the purpose for which they were constituted. For example, there was family Sabha to regulate and look after the family affairs. A 'gamblers' guild (sabha) did the same for the association of the gamblers. Similar Sabhas may be there to regulate the affairs of different professions and avocations.

We do not however find any conscious attempt to define or even to describe the term. The implication of this is that the term was understood by the people in each context without any difficulty.

In the context of these Sabhas, king is not mentioned. But later King's Council itself came to be called a Sabha. But these Sabhas appear to have performed very important regulatory functions in the context in which they were constituted.

The majority decision of these varieties of Sabhas was binding on all the members of the different Sabhas and it was implemented. It, therefore, appears that these Sabhas had either the social or State sanction behind them. Some punishments may have also been prescribed for violating the decisions of these Sabhas.

**Sabha, Samiti and Vidatha are the three institutions mentioned side by side. But Sabha is the one institution more common than**

**others. There appears to be a lot of misunderstanding about these institutions.**

a) Hillebrand opined that we cannot distinguish between the Sabha and the Samiti and the authors of the Vedic Index subscribe to his view. From the separate mention and need for an accord between the Sabha and the Samiti (AV 7-13-1) and from the successive evolution of the Vīrat into the Sabha and Samiti (A.V B-10-8-11), there is no doubt at all that they were different.

b) According to Ludwing, Sabha consisted not of all people, but of Brahmanas and Maghavans Le., rich donors. There certainly was a sabha of this type, but all Sabhas could not have been confined to this kind of membership. The dyūtasabhā, for example, must not only not have been attended by Brahmanas but on the other hand, they must have shunned these. Much confusion has arisen because of the attempt on the part of the scholars to understand Sabha as one single homogeneous institution. A product of this misconception is the view of Spellman. "It seems fairly clear that the Sabha in Vedic times at least, was a public assembly to which the king, learned men, gamblers and others went." True, there are references in the Vedic literature to these kinds of people attending the Sabha, but not at the same time, at the same session, the same kind of Sabha.

Spellman has finally asserted that the sabha must have been a building which provided a number of different functions-a type of club-house. He further gives as his considered opinion, "We think it probably started as a festive hall where people met for religious and social functions." So according to Spellman the sabha was a place of meeting and not a meeting, as is also clear from his allusion to the well-known meeting-hall in small village communities in South-East Asia. It is quite true that the sabha had acquired the sense of a meeting-place, nay it was also further particularised to a gambling house, but originally it must have meant more a meeting than a meeting-place as its express mentions along with the samiti show. Even Spellman says that, it is possible that it existed on both a village and higher level. Keith and Macdonell also held that the sabha was more a place of meeting than an assembly itself as their statement, "when sabha was not performing any public function, it was used as a gambling hall" shows.

c) At places Bloomfield has taken the Sabha as used in the sense of family. St. Petersburg dictionary also has taken it in connection with a house, and not any public assembly. If so, women would be associated with it. Then Mait S. prohibition of women attending some Sabhas would not apply to Sabhas in general. According to Hopkins, the Vedic Sabha was exclusively a political assembly. But the available evidence does not support such a view. Jayswal laying great store by the description of Sabha given by Jayaram

(referred to above), takes the members to be 'those entitled to a seat therein that were invested, so to say, with lustre'. In the village council (Sabha), according to Shama-Shastri", there was no restriction as regards membership. Old and young, educated and uneducated all seem to have had free admittance into the assembly whenever it was convened."

J.P.Sharma opines that there was some gradation among the categories of 'members of Sabha.' According to him, 'Sabhyas' were the ordinary councillors who were allowed to sit and deliberate. These 'Sabhasads' were the jury that administered justice and 'Sabhacaras' were connected with Dharma. There is also mention of 'Sabhapati' - the president of the assembly. As there were varieties of Sabhas and particularly as the dispersion of justice required some knowledge of the law and the customs then prevailing, it is just possible that while choosing members of some such may have been laid down. But there is no direct Sabhas, particular norms may evidence regarding the qualifications of the members of a particular type of Sabha. Each Sabha must have its usage and regulations on the basis of which the members were selected or elected. As the nature of the Sabha differed, so did that of the members: Similarly, the tenure of office of each member or president, must have been left to each Sabha and its usage.

It has been emphasized earlier that there is no direct evidence as to the constitution, tenure or the functions the Sabha performed. But it is clear that the Vedics were prone to debate and discuss the issues affecting the family, the village. the State as well as the avocations or professions they pursued. Satavalekar in his treatise 'Atharvavedācā Subodha Anuvāda' draws the picture of the functions of the village-Sabha thus: "This Sabha performs the tasks of the protection of the village, health services, education, in short, would control the village". The picture may well be true; otherwise what else would be the purpose of the constitution of the Sabha?

Shama Shastri enumerates war (A.V. 7-62), peace (Kr, Yaju 2-2-1). disputes about land (A.V. 6-117), recovery of debts (Y-118, 119), cheating at play (Kr. Yajus, 2-6-1), inheritance (A.V. 3-29), taxation (AV 5-17) abduction of women (A.V. 6-10), protection of men and cattle (RV 1-118). cattle stealing (A.V. 2-111), distribution of war spoils (Sat Br 12-7-2-13, 13-1-1-47), currency or coins of money such as *kṛṣṇāla*, *niskam*, and *śatamāna* (Tai Sam 3-1-2-1), trade and tolls (Vaj. Sam. 30-5) as functions of the Sabha. These were the general preoccupations of the Vedic people and may well have been regulated by the Sabha or the Samiti.

J.P.Sharma after considering the views of Jayaswal and others has made out a strong case in his 'Republics in Ancient India', for a system of Government which he has called the Sabha-ruled government Introducing

the topic of the non-monarchic governments in Ancient India, he says, "We shall attempt to show that some of the tribes or political communities were governed by the Sabha or an aristocratic oligarchy"

Sharma builds his thesis that the government in Ancient India was non-monarchical, mainly on the maxim propounded that "an agricultural population is the best material for democracy." The Vedic people being primarily agriculturists were in favour of democratic form of Government. If agricultural community is the best material for democracy then India and for that matter the whole world till the ushering in of the Industrial Revolution, should have had democratic forms of governments. But the establishment of monarchy almost throughout the world till the advent of the Industrial revolution, as the chief, if not the only form of government belies this theory.

If we remember that Sabha was a name applied to many kinds of gatherings convened for various purposes, this Sabha was not ONE supreme political body governing the affairs of the State. It was a name applied to many kinds of gatherings. It is possible that there were some democratic forms of governments and some kind of Sabha was at the head of the affairs of these governments. Simultaneously with the Sabha, there were other assemblies going under the name Samiti and Vidatha. Let us examine these.

## 6.2 Samiti

This institution is referred to six times in the Rigveda, thirteen times in the Atharvaveda, once in Chandogya Upanisad, once in Brhadaranyaka - altogether twenty-one times it appears to be a more broad-based institution than the Sabha.

The etymology of the word is simple. It is derived from 'Sam+ i' meaning to get together. So it means a gathering, an assembly of people, where people gathered together"

In a hymn to Agni where Agni is praised variously this term "Samiti" appears for the first time in the Rigveda (1-95-8). In this 'Samiti' means the gathering of the worshippers. It is just like a Sabha of worshippers.

In RV-IX-92-6 however purified soma flowing towards the pitchers is compared to a king (or a nobleman) who goes to the Samitis. It establishes the connection of a Rajan or a king or a nobleman with the Samiti. His worth as a rājan depended on his capacity to be useful to the Samiti. Just as the soma-juice flowing into the pitchers is useful as a drink, all other not so collected goes waste, similarly, a king who goes to the Samiti, attends its sessions, answers all the queries of the Samiti members, in short he acquits himself creditably in the Samiti. Such a king is worthy of the people over

whom he rules. Here the word 'Samiti' is in plural 'Samitis' So it indicates that the king has to attend all the sessions of the Samiti and partake in its discussion. Being the head of the government, he is answerable for all his actions in the deliberations of the Samiti.

In another hymn (X-11-8) to Agni, the Samiti is described as divine (*devi*) and sacred (*yajata*). In this hymn Agni is described as distributing treasures. The poet reminds the deity, not to forget his portion of the treasures. It is clear that this poet is the member of this Samiti and he wants his share of the powers of his Samiti to be protected by the deity.

We have; in RV-X-97-6 the *rājans* attending the Samiti. In I-95-8, a *rajanis* attending many sessions of the Samiti. Here the position is just the reverse. Many *rājans* here are starting the session of the Samiti. Here the word '*rājan*' cannot mean a king. It must mean a nobleman. For how can many kings the heads of the governments attend a session of a Samiti convened in the kingdom. Many noblemen, sort of district heads must be attending the session of the Samitis discussing affairs common to all the regions of the State.

The Samiti, therefore, appears to be a more representative assembly constituted of members representing different administrative units in a State. The Samiti appears to be a political assembly. This aspect comes to the fore in the avowedly '*Sapatnanāśana*' hymn (RV X-166). In this hymn a noble is expressing various desires with regard to his rivals. Among other desires there is one to master the minds of the rivals, their resolutions and their position in the Samiti. The next verse of the hymn expresses the desire to vanquish completely the political rival and establish complete domination of the Samiti.

From the Atharvaveda we gather that the Sabha was the first stage in the organisation of the people's power at the village level. It is clearly stated in A.V. 8-10-1 that the people's power evolved into Sabha and hence into Samiti. The next verse (No. 12) traces the further evolution. The Samiti gives away *Āmantrana*. Those who sit in this *Āmantrana* are called *Āmantraniya* members of the council of ministers of the kind. *Āmantrana* means to think by taking into account all aspects of a particular problem. The second stage was the Samiti (A.V. 8-10-11). By implication, the Samiti would be a development over the Sabha and must be a broad-based institution. It is not unlikely that the Samiti consisted of representatives coming from many villages. The only derivative from the word Samiti is Samitya- a member of the Samiti. This hymn No. A.V. 8-10 is very important as it traces the evolution of the people's power.



The Sabha and Samiti occur again in A.V. 7-13-1. Both these are termed the daughters of Prajāpatī. A desire is expressed by the poet that with whomsoever he may come in contact in such assemblies he may assist him and speak with him agreeably. It appears that one and the same person may be the member of both the Sabha and the Samiti.

In the Bhumisukta in the Atharveda the same desire to speak agreeably with each other in these assemblies is expressed.

In the Brāhmaṇa-gavī hymn (A.V. 5-19-15) curses are expressed against an oppressor of a Brahmana, especially one who robs him of his cow. Samiti does not look upon such a person with a kindly eye. The consequence of Samiti's disapproval of such a sinner led him to be boycotted by his friends. This would indicate that the **Samiti was invested with judicial functions.**

The Samiti when pleased made for the security of a king or a noble. A.V. 6-88-3 gives blessings to a noble. This hymn positively states the importance of the Samiti as A.V. 5-19-15 states negatively its powers.

There is a hymn (A.V. 18-2) which describes the power and career of a nobleman who has died. The descriptions in the hymn leave no doubt that the person who has died was an important member of the Samiti. As he lies dead, his royal insignia – danda, dhanus and kṣātra is taken away from him and passed on to his successor. The verse No. 56 in which Samiti occurs is addressed to the dead person. It says, "I yoke for you these two carriers to convey you to the other life, with them to Yama's seat, as the Samitis you do go." The dead nobleman goes to Yama's seat like going to an assembly; it implies the ease, the sense of importance and the splendour with which the nobles attended the sessions of the Samiti. This verse certainly reminds us of the Rigvedic "*rājā na satyaḥ samitiḥ īyānaḥ*" (R.V. 9-92-6)- the true king goes to the assembly"

In AV. 12-3, there are two references to the Samiti (verses 46-52). The prayer in verse 46 is that the treasures be not lost to the members of the Samiti and that these should not go to any other person. The reference is clearly to some office of importance in the Samiti and the prayer is for securing it. In verse 52, a member of the Samiti speaking falsehood through lust for gain is censured. It is possible that some member of the Samiti may try through unfair means to gain the position of power or pelf in the Samiti. The prayer is that such efforts be not endowed with success.

The Samiti or Pariṣad mentioned in Ch.Up. (5-3-1) or Br.Up. (6-2-1) are clearly the learned assemblies assisting the king in affairs of religion or

philosophy. There is a reference to such a scholar who is the frequenter of the Samitis – Samitinigamaḥ. This Samiti is an academy of scholars.

This survey of the source material of the Samiti, shows that Samiti is later in origin (A.V. 9-10) than the Sabha in the organisation of the society - a broader representative assembly. It was attended by rajans - the kings and or his nobles. At the district level the nobles may alone be attending these assemblies. These assemblies were opened with the worship of fire. As these Samities were performing important State functions and as the King and his nobles attended these, there was a natural struggle for power and the members vied with one another to establish their supremacy in this Samiti. Of course, the struggle had to be through fair means and the one resorting to falsehood or fraud was sure to meet with his ruin. Such a person would even be an object of social boycott.

The rājans exerted themselves always to be in the good books of the Samiti. Its censure or approval would mar or make the career of the rājān concerned.

The Brahmins being the custodians of knowledge and virtuousness wielded influence in these Samitis. Their oppressors met with displeasure of the Samiti. Here the Brahmin cannot be one belonging to the cast as is such. It is not the caste but the varna i.e., the person belonging to the particular group by virtue of his intellectual qualities and profession is Brahmin.

Sharma would see a non-monarchical form of Government mention of rājans attending the Samitis (RV 10-97-6). He also feels that the mention of the word rajan four times and the absence of Viś - the people, indicates the crystallisation of the Samiti from the Viś that chose the king. There were non-monarchical republican forms of governments. Sabha and Samiti which ruled in the Vedic age. But only from this hymn we cannot deduce that there were the communities where the Samiti and the nobles exercised the supreme power formed a special type of non-monarchical government.

That the king was not an absolute monarch and that he was controlled by the Samiti is crystal clear from the reference to the Samiti's displeasure meaning a sin and its approval spelling out strength to the long. The king or the noble who actually exercised administrative power had to bow to the wishes of the majority of the members of the Samiti. Otherwise, he stood the chance of being removed from his position of power.

K.P. Jayasval takes AV 5-19-15 to support the theory of election of the rajan. There is no doubt that the Samiti was a popular assembly and its approval or otherwise was a matter of great concern for the nobles. From this hymn as well as from RV X-173, we can deduce that there was some sort of

election procedure laid down for the selection of the king. But this procedure cannot be deduced from any of the Vedic passages.

In the epics the word 'Samiti' acquired the sense of 'battle.' In Mahabharata, the warriors are called Samitinjaya (victorious in battles). Its origin appears to be in the Vedic word 'Sam + iti' (coming together in confrontation) Sayana interprets 'Samiti' in A.V. 6-88-3 as defence-council. But in view of the third line of the verse, expressing a desire for the quarters to be like-minded and concordant, the Samiti suiting the king should mean that the assembly may be in agreement with him and not that the king or the noble is required to run away from it. There is no collision between them. This Samiti is for the stability of the King. In this sense, the Samiti may prove to be 'defence-council' for the king.

The emphasis is clearly on the control to be exercised over the king, so that he should not be an absolute monarch defying the wishes of his people. This principle is clearly laid down in RV 2. 41-5. It says, "Mitra and Varuna are the two kings of the gods. Their minds are not touched by jealousy or infatuation. They stay undisturbed in their thousand-pillared house." Here the word 'sadasī' means 'sabhāyām.' Because they have won the confidence of their sabha, they are secure in their seats of power. Uncontrolled monarchy is what the Vedics abhorred and shunned.

In AV. 15-90-1, 2, 3, the leader or king (*vratya*) is considered as moving towards the people. The Sabha, Samiti, Senā and Surā are said to follow this king. Here the word 'surā' cannot mean 'strong drink.' For there is no sense in saying that the Sabha (general assembly), the Samiti (the representative council), the Sena (the army) and surā -the strong drink, are following the king or the noble. Nighantu 1-12 gives the meaning of 'surā – udakam.' Surā means water. 'Sura-aśvārye' - sura is used for glory. So the king who exerts for the welfare, is applauded by the general assembly, as well as the council and the army. When this happens, can glory lag behind?

In AV. 19-55-5, an esteemed member of the Sabha is addressed thus: 'Oh learned man (*sabhya*) protect this assembly, all the members of this assembly (*sabhasadah*) who deserve to be such members, may also protect this assembly." The prayer is for the learned members of the assembly.

But some critics feel that too much should not be seen in the constitution of these bodies viz, the Sabha and the Samiti. For example, J.P. Sharma in his interpretation of AV 12-3-46 and 52 brings together the words 'Samiti, 'Nidhipa'- the controller of the stores' and 'Adhipati', - the king, states that the treasure-keepers (*Nidhipa*) "possibly guarded the grain, cattle and other property of the rulers collected as tax or maintenance allowance from

the people of the tribe for the services, which the nobles in the assembly rendered to the community". This would mean that there was very well-developed political organisation with the king at the head, but controlled by the Samiti. The king or the nobles received maintenance allowance for the services they rendered. The Samiti had the custody of the grain and the treasury requiring the appointment of special officers (Nidhipas). Whether we can read so much into this hymn AV 12-3-46 and 52 with 9 and 41 is rather doubtful. But the system of governance in the Vedic Age was not so nebulous as Spellman would have us believe. He states that Samiti "was an assembly to which people and sometimes kings went. It seems to have had sufficient importance to be an asset to the king. Discussions were held in the Samiti and it had some affinity to the Sabha." Evidence from the Vedas does not leave the matter so vague as Spellman suggests. Here the king is not an absolute monarch who creates the Samiti or the Sabha for his personal advantage. These are the instruments created by the people to exercise wholesome control over the head of the government.

It is a far cry from Hillebrandt's view that the Sabha or Samiti were indistinguishable to the theory of 'the government of the sabha and the samiti' propounded by J.P. Sharma.

According to that theory there were, in the Vedic age, political communities which had no king but had a Sabha and also a Samiti or a larger assembly which probably consisted of all the heads of families of a community. J.P. Sharma has suggested that the Samiti developed into an independent political institution distinct from the archaic Vedic *viś* which chose the king. As against this, there is the traditional view based on the *Virāt* hymn (8.10) of the Atharvaveda. It describes the development of these institutions. *Virātis* said to be the unorganised *prajāshakti*. It developed into the sabha first and then into samiti. There is a definite order intended here. The words Sabha and Samiti are interpreted by Satavalekar as *grāmsabhā* and *rāṣṭrasamit*. Other interpretations of *Virāt* are *rājārahita prajā* (vigatah *rājā* nah *yasyāh*). That *Virāt* first took the form of village and that of the sabha which is explained by Anantashastri Phadke as '*samānā janā bhāṛti yasyām* i.e., wherein people of equal status shine.' So sabha was the assembly of the grama originally a collection of some families, whether or not having a fixed habitat. Then this *Virāt* descended into Samiti (*sa udakrāmat as samitau nyakrāmat*)

In all the passages of the Atharvaveda where Sabha and Samiti occur together, Sabha comes first. In AV 15-9-1 to 3 not only the Sabha and Samiti are mentioned but also the Sena, giving us an inkling of their relative importance and composition. It looks that the Sabha, 'Samiti and the king had control over the sena, for it is fourth in the order - the king controlled by

sabha and samiti is followed by sena. According to J.P. Sharma, "Their respective numerical strength was probably in the following order. Firstly, all the able-bodied male members of the tribe composed the army. Secondly, the heads of families could attend the Samiti and had full rights of free citizens as in the *Vis*, archaic body of heads of families from which the Samiti probably developed. Thirdly, the sabha - "the composition and function of which we have already discussed at length.

J.P. Sharma lays great store by the non-mention of a king in this context and concludes that there existed political communities wherein there was no king but the administration was carried on by the Sabha and the Samiti.

The whole of the *Bhūmisūkta* is declared to be an ode to the Earth by a republican. The spirit of the *sūkta* is clearly expressive of a desire for a peaceful co-existence not only within a community but also with the neighbouring communities. So the verse which refers to the Samiti in this hymn becomes more important. It says, "Whatever villages, whatever forests, whatever sabhas are on the earth, whatever gatherings, assemblies - in them may we speak whatever is pleasant to you (Oh Earth)". There is not a single reference to Rajan in this hymn, thus supporting, perhaps, J.P. Sharma's theory of sabha-samiti ruled communities.

From an oft-quoted verse of Atharvaveda, J.P. Sharma has drawn various conclusions with regard to his theory. The verse is, 'Let the Sabha and the Samiti, the two daughters of Prajāpati, concordant, favour me, may he with whom I shall come together, desire to aid me, may I speak what is pleasant among those who have come together, Oh fathers."

It is a hymn meant for success in the assembly. The points relevant and significant for the Sabha-Samiti ruled political communities are:

- a) It unmistakably shows that Sabha and Samiti both existed in the same tribe.
- b) It shows that both had powers to deliberate on matters of importance, since both are called the daughters of Prajāpati, the Father of Gods.
- c) It suggests that sometimes both met together.
- d) It proves that a person who attended the sabha could also attend the samiti and naturally attended the joint sessions of the sabha and the samiti.

- e) The wish that both may be in accord points to the fact that there sometimes was disagreement between the two bodies.
- f) It shows that a speaker had to be polite and pleasant in order to win the favour of those who attended the meetings.
- g) The fact that the sabha precedes the samiti is also significant.

But the interpretation of this verse given by Satavalekar is noteworthy. According to him Prajāpati is the king i.e., the protector of the people and both the sabha and samiti are his daughters. And this fact decides their powers pretty well. A father is the progenitor of the daughter but he cannot enjoy her. The daughter comes under the power of somebody else, and does not remain under that of the father. The gramsabha and the Rāṣṭrasamiti come into existence by the order of the king. By king's consent are the rules regarding the membership and procedure in these assemblies framed. So is the king called the father of these assemblies. The king, however, brings these institutions in existence and only protects them. He cannot influence them as their master. The king thus, is the father of these in situations but not the lord or the ruler. The assembly of the people is not playing to the tune of the king. It is independent, outside the sphere of king's influence. In support of this, Satavalekar also adduces Yaska's etymology of the word *duhitā* viz, *dūre hitāi*.e., the one who is better kept away. So should the assembly of the people, being the daughter of the king, be away from his influence. The members of these bodies should be absolutely fearless. They should not be constrained to reckon with the king in their deliberations.

The views of Satavalekar and J.P. Sharma are thus diametrically opposed to each other, according to the former, these institutions functioned under monarchy, holding it in check, according to the latter the communities in which Sabha and Samiti ruled together did not know of any kings. In either case, however, the Samiti voiced the public opinion through the heads of families.

### 6.3 Vidatha

Besides these two institutions. (the Sabha and the Samiti) there was yet another one-Vidatha. The Sabha and the Samiti were mutually connected but Vidatha was not connected with either. It was an independent assembly. What was its function? The Sabha and Samiti discharged political functions While matters related to the Yajña were assigned to Vidatha. Yet Vidatha was a very important institution of the Vedic age.

Judging from its frequent references in the Rigveda and the Atharva veda, **Vidatha would appear to be a more important assembly than**

**the Sabha and Samiti.** It occurs 97 times in the RV and 20 times in the AV as against Sabha occurring 11 times in the RV and in about equal verses of the AV. Samiti occurs about 16 times in the RV, and about 13 times in the AV. The Vajasaneyi Samhita, the Samaveda, the Brahmanas and the Taittiriya Aranyaka also refer to the Vidatha. Vidatha is taken mainly to be a religious or even a sacrificial assembly and therefore, it is rather uncharitably disposed of by writers on Ancient Indian polity.

The tendency on the part of some scholars to trace one's preconceived notions in the Vedic institutions has led to widely divergent views with regard to the nature of the Vidatha. R.S. Sharma maintains that "the Vidatha was the earliest folk assembly of the Indo-Aryans attended both by men and women, performing all kinds of functions-economic, military, religious and social." On the other hand L. Renou knows nothing of Vidatha as a congregation. Views of others stand somewhere in between. Let us first see what Vidatha means. **Yaska at Nirukta 3-17-5 has enlisted Vidatha as a synonym of yajña sacrifice.** In most of the cases where the word Vidatha occurs, Sayana has paraphrased it as yajña. At places he has taken Vidatha to mean "knowledge-jñāna. At RV. 1-164-21, he comments, - Vidatha is the act of knowing, knowledge i.e., understanding that it should be done thus by us. In this verse it is stated that two birds with flaming wings carry to us the knowledge of immortality and how to achieve it. At RV. III-27-7, "Vidathas are *veditavyam karmam* i.e., the rites that deserve to be known." At RV. II-1-2, "vidatha are *jñānāni stotram* - Vidathas are knowledge or hymns". In RV. III-39-8, vidathas are the *veditāniyani sthānāni* the places worth knowing. These places are the Heaven, the Earth and the Mid-air In SV 1-459 (same as in RVI -130-1) Sayana takes vidatham as *yajñagṛham* sacrificial chamber. This SV passage is taken by Bhagavacārya to mean the place where a devotional sacrifice is performed. The adjective devotional carries no meaning here. Any worship is devotional and sacrifice is a form of collective worship and it is devotional in one place. Sayana has taken vidatha to mean the sacrificing singer. So Sayana has assigned to the word vidath' the meanings 1.Yajña 2. yāgā 3. Jñāna 3. stotra (hymn). 5. heaven and earth and mid-an, 6. grha, 7. sacrificial chamber and 8. stotā - a singer. It would be seen from these different shades of meaning that Vidatha is connected with sacrifice where hymns are sung and matters pertaining to higher knowledge are discussed.

In R.V. IV-27-2, a samrata king is called Vidathya i.e., a samratis fit to attend vidatha. The Sanskrit lexicons like Shabda Kalpadruma and Vacaspatya, point to the same conclusion. These derive the word 'vidatha' as *videh athah kit* meaning a learned man, a scholar, a vedic sacrifice or knowledge.

It is not intended to suggest that at each and every place the word vidatha is used, the meaning 'discussion by learned people at a sacrificial assembly' can be derived from each such passage. What is meant is that by and large, such a meaning is intended for the term 'vidatha.'

**Vidatha is a general congregation held at a sacrificial place where the learned display their debating skill or mastery over a particular topic in any of the branches of art or sciences and the warriors display their skill in archery or such other war-like pursuits and win general approbation from the learned masters assembled there at the sacrifice. In such vidathas even samrats used to be present to watch the performance of different combatants. To win praise here may be a passport to secure admission to the other political institutions such as Sabha, Samiti, or Sena. The vidatha in this sense appears to be both a training ground for the young and upcoming scholars and warriors. Apart from being such a forum, in vidatha, very important religious, social or political problems may have been brought before this assembly of the learned people, consensus arrived at in these debates may have acted as a guiding principle for decisions at the state-level institutions-Sabha or Samiti.**

There is no doubt at all that the Vidatha and yajña are very closely related. At RV-3-3-3 the Agni is praised for his primary function of being the means of glory to this sacrificial assembly (*vidathasya sadhanam*). In RV-3-4-5 the learned and brave are said to be recognised in the sacrificial assembly just as various deities present themselves at the sacrifice. In RV. 3-26-3, the people gathered in the vidatha appear to be arranged in some way, *vṛta-wise*, *gana-wise*. The combatants wanting to compete in the vidatha appear to have been arranged here according to the professions practised by each group. The arrangement also appears *gana-wise* i.e., according to the region from which they hailed, so that the different regional sabhas and samitis may draw their talents from the displays made at the vidatha. In RV 1-16-2, the Maruts are said to attend the sacrificial assembly sporting in their sportive way. They used to shower blessings on those who bow their heads before them. This would show that the heroes attending these assemblies cannot be boastful or arrogant. With humility at heart, but with strong self-confidence and complete mastery over their particular subject. They had to display their skills at the vidathas.

From RV 1-31-6, we gather that evil-minded persons are reformed at this sacrificial assembly. The presence of the learned and the pious exerts a powerful but indirect influence over such types of persons attending the assembly. In RV 3-54-11, the sun of golden hands and sweet tongue is said to be attending as the master at the sacrificial assemblies thrice a day. It



would strengthen our plea that at these assemblies, all acts were performed with perfect control over their minds by those attending them.

There are numerous places in the Rgveda where vidatha appears in connection with a prayer, a song or a hymn. But as emphasized earlier, vidatha is a sacrificial assembly where learned people attend in greater numbers. In RV 3-39-1 and 2, the poet says that his vigilant prayer, rising from the heart and carefully composed as a hymn goes to her lord when recited in a vidatha. Then he urges Indra to appreciate whatever is taking place there in his honour. Apparently, therefore, there must have been poetical contests in the Vidathas where poets aspired to get their compositions approved and appreciated. In RV. 7-93-3, the role of vidatha where poets merits were judged comes sharply to the forefront. The poet says, when the strong go to the vidatha and when the poets seek to secure the favour of Indra and Agni with their hymns, they are like heroes that went to the race course" H.D. Velankar's comment on this verse is very apt. He says, "Vid athas are sacrificial assemblies of priests and poets Hymns and sacred rites must find their commendation both among the priests and patrons."

R.V. 4-21-2 gives a clue to the function and position of the vidatha in the corporate life of the Vedic age."Indra is always said to be with his people. When he attends the sacrificial assembly, he is offered soma-drink which gives him energy and keeps him in good humour. Being valorous he is bound to be crowned with success - just as his valour is incomparable, similarly his favour on great fighters is boundless. His capacity to gain victory over the wicked and make his followers cross all the hurdles is tremendous. It is like a king emperor worthy of the vidatha exercising full control over all his subjects. Let such Indra be praised in this sacrifice."

**Vidatha is like a-king-Emperor. It exercised full control over all affairs concerning people. In this sense, it is superior to the Sabha and Samiti, which are political institutions invested with all administrative functions Vidatha does not appear to have any constitutional position. But by virtue of its composition, (it being constituted of learned and virtuous people), it had its own prestige. The emperors, kings and nobles were also its worthy members. After the sacrifice was completed, a general discussion on different problems agitating the minds of the people appears to have been held. The general consensus emerging after such deliberations may have been taken over by the Samiti and the Sabha for administrative implementation. Of course, there is no direct evidence in support of such a conclusion but the fact that this vidatha was a general sacrificial assembly attended by the learned people and the king-**

**emperor, is incontrovertible. Again, very competent youngsters and others vied with each other to gain recognition of vidatha. These facts go to indicate its supreme importance in the society of the Vedic age. It is thus a supra-religious, supra-social and supra-political body-sort of a supreme court in religious, social, political and intellectual life of the society, without any executive authority. But the presence of kings and nobles in it appear to ensure the implementation of the recommendations made by it.**

In the RV there is a direct reference to the vital status vidatha enjoyed in those days. In RV 7-93-5, we get the information of two armies engaged in a great fight. The prayer is to the gods Indra and Agni to kill the godless enemy and befriend the singers who are present in the sacrificial assembly - the vidatha. Here the prayer is to give enough strength to the warriors to enable them to subdue these godless enemies. It is clear that the actual fight could not have been fought at the sacrificial assembly. But discussion as to the preparation and conduct of the war must have been held at such an assembly and conclusions reached.

In the same context may be seen the RV. I-153-2 and 3. Here the priests worship the gods Mitra and Varuna in vidatha. The prince is said to worship the gods for blessing. It is further stated that whoever worships the deities in the Vidatha moves them as the priests do and make the gods do their bidding. Here, the blessing for victory in war may also have been sought. In RV. III-66-10, the gods Mitra and Varuna are specially praised for their "surprising capacity to direct the three great gatherings with their thoughts." Here the three great gatherings are the three assemblies - sabha, samiti and vidatha. They also stand for the three worlds: heaven, earth and mid-air.

Agni in R.V. 3-14-1. is said to be the delightful priest, who has mastered the vidathas the unfailing wisest disposer and worshipper. It is Agni's special task to actuate the sacrifices and the vidathas. In R.V. 3-27-7, Agni, the immortal and divine priest is said to go forward urging the vidathas to activity by his supernatural wisdom. Agni is the sovereign ruler in the vidathas. In RV. 4-6-2, Agni is the unerring priest, the wise and is always welcome in the vidathas. The vidatha is also described as specially belonging to Agni. Agni is the flag of vidatha (RV. 1-60-1). Agni is also heaven gaining Vidatha (AV.17-1-15). From the description of Agni in rapturous terms and vidathas complete identification with Agni, vidatha's peculiar but very important place in the Vedic corporate life is forcefully brought out.

In RV I-167-6, the Maruts are said to have set upon their car, the maiden (*Rodasi*-lightning) wedded to glory. It would indicate that young and bright (intelligent) brides (here of the Maruts) attended the vidatha and gave

performance of their acquired skills in the debates of the vidatha. The women it appears, were not frequenting the sabha or the samiti, but vidathas were not a taboo to them. Perhaps the sabha-samiti's functions were considered more rigorous, purely mundane and routine. The women as they were more concerned with the maintenance of their homes and bringing up their children as worthy citizens of the state, had ordinarily no time to look after the daily routine affairs of the state. But attending and participating in this higher gathering, if they so desired, was open to them. The whole atmosphere at the vidathas was more sportive and friendly (RV I-166-2 and VII 57-2). No display of high tempers or use of strong language was seen or experienced in this enlightened gathering of talented men and women, where all including the common folk had a place in the audience.

## 6.4 Election

The question of election to the Vidatha does not arise as it is a gathering of all those who would like to attend it. But the participants were especially skilled persons and experts in different branches of arts and sciences. Those who pronounced their opinions on different matters which were the subject of deliberations, were acknowledged masters in their respective fields. They acquired the invitee status by virtue of their standing amongst the learned and socially acknowledged leaders, their dominant quality being humility and piety.

Although there is no direct evidence about election, there are clear indications in Vedic literature that some sort of election-method was in operation, so far as Sabha, Samiti and other assemblies were concerned.

There is ample evidence in the Samhitas to show that the Vedic people passed through many a phase of political development from a kingless condition, they developed into a monarchical state and there too they kept enough check upon the power of the monarch. The famous story from the Taittiriya Brahmana of the conflict between gods and asuras, of the defeat of gods, of their attributing this defeat to their kingless condition, and an agreement to elect a king points to the earliest form of election of a king.

Here all the political preconditions and paraphernalia of formal election are not presented, but there definitely is an election in a very different form than at present. An election, according to Spellman is a process in which

- (a) A candidate is named.
- (b) A candidate is voted upon by the group of people he represents.
- (c) The group itself must choose the candidate.

- (d) He must not be thrust upon them.
- (e) The group should be in a position to reject him, if necessary.
- (f) Other candidates should be entitled to stand i.e., the qualification must not be so rigid as to exclude all except one.
- (g) The group or the representatives thereof should be entitled to vote
- (h) Probably exceptions for the qualifications for candidature must be reasonable and obvious e.g. insanity, idiocy, infancy.

But before this stage, there was no distinction between the Devas and the Asuras, both of whom lived together in the SaptaSindhu Pradesh. If at thus earlier stage, kingship was prevalent, it was also elective one. So whether there was a king or not, the head of the government was installed with the consent of the people. Came into being because of the pressing circumstances of war, we must not forget that the consent of the people was the basis of its constitution and establishment.

Like Spellman J.P. Sharma opines that "no reference to anything like an electoral contest is to be found anywhere in the Vedic literature" He accepts that people or rather the heads of the families chose the king. But he adds, "If they approved a king unanimously, presumably by acclamation, this would hardly be an election in the modern sense". We must concede that there was not perhaps the election in the modern sense. But approval was there all the same. Now how was this 'approval determined? We must presuppose that it was decided by a discussion. The discussion in this matter could not even be mooted before the rivals have put forth their claims. The candidates must have certain qualification before they staked their claims, their qualifications must have become known to the assembly. The assembly would decide whether a person can or cannot stand for the office. Thus the assembly considered the claims of the rivals, eliminating some, and ultimately arriving at a 'choice' or a 'solution' or an approval or an appointment. So the whole procedure in spirit fulfils all the conditions of an election. The *sine qua non* of an 'election recent in the modern sense, is voting. Only this aspect was absent then. We must however, ever, remember that the method of selection by voting is of very recent origin. In ancient India 'dharma' or the righteous conduct was the very basis of this selection and it, in itself was sufficient to ensure fairness in election.

The election hymn RV. 10-173 runs as follows:

"O King, we have chosen you and brought you before the people here. Be with us steadfast and immovable. May all the people desire you; let not your kingship fall away." (Verse 1)

The stability and immovability of an elected monarch depends very much on the pleasure of the people, his electors. So the prayer is for the continuance of their pleasure. The monarch once elected continues in his post till his death. So he should strive hard for the welfare and protection of his people. He should always remember that he derives his authority from the people and should look for his happiness in the happiness of the people. This is what Arya Chanakya has also stated in later days. His exhortation to the king is "*prajāśukhe sukham rājñah*"-"*prajānām ca hite hitam*". "In the happiness of the people lies the king's happiness. In the welfare of his subjects lies his welfare."

"Be firmly here. Don't swerve from your duty. Be like a mountain unmoved. Stand steadfast here like Indra, and protect and stabilize the State"(Verse 2.)

The fears of insecurity and the desire for stability are further emphasized here. His kingship is not self-dependent. It depends upon the pleasure of the people and the priest desires that the king should establish himself firmly like Indra in heaven. It reminds the elected king of his duties, viz., that he is to uphold dharma, enjoining upon all their own duties.

In the third verse there is an invocation to deities to make the elector king stable. The next two verses continue the prayer for stability of the newly elected king. The last verse contains a particular prayer, viz, that Indra should make the subjects pay taxes to this elected king alone.

The last prayer makes it clear beyond any doubts that the king is an elected one. Had he been hereditary, the subjects had no option but to pay their taxes to the king. But here the prayer is that just as the king has to perform his duties towards his subjects, similarly the people owe it to themselves to show perfect loyalty to the king by paying taxes, to him alone.

The next hymn R.V. 174 is a fervent prayer to make the elected king's position quite stable by eliminating all his rivals and those opposed to him or jealous of him. Here the word 'sapatna' is used to mean 'political rival in spite of the existence of many words connoting the sense of enemy in RV and AV a special term 'sapatna' has been coined. In RV. 10-166-1, the three words *samāna*, *sapatna*, *Śatru* are used and the prayer is for supremacy amongst the 'samanas' the equals, and getting better of sapatnas-political rivals' by being able to suppress them completely and killing the enemies. So *samānas* are those who are on the same level as the contender for the king's post; yet

he is not inimical to the elected king. He wants to win in the contest but would concede a victory to the other, if he finds that the other has certainly an edge over him. But sapatna is a political rival who is inimical towards him. Those who were only equal in status but were friendly to an aspirant for kingship were the samānas, whereas those who were equal in status, but opposed the contender for kingship, being themselves desirous of that post, were the sapatnas. Śatru' is an enemy totally opposed to the contender, bent on destroying him by whatever means possible.

AV 8-4 is a prayer at the election of a king. Verse 2 unequivocally states that the people of all the quarters had a say in the 'appointment' of a king and we must assume some *modus operandi* by which the choice was indicated by the people. After people have expressed their choice does the king rise to the pinnacle of royalty. Then only can he assume the role of the distributor of the goods. After his appointment or choice the king is desired to be stern and distribute the wealth equitably. It runs thus:

"You the clans, these regions, goddesses five, shall choose for empire. Root yourself up to the height, O king, the pinnacle of royalty. Then do you, mighty, distribute goods among us."

In the next verse, the kinsmen are said to acclaim the king. After being elected, the king should become stern. Then only can he hope to collect sample tributes and strictly distribute them amongst people. In Verse 4, all the important gods are invoked to acquiesce in the kingship of the elected person. From verse 5, we get the information that the electors had to proclaim their choice and to call the elected person before all. He was asked to take an elevated position, so that all gathered could see who was elected. If Varuna is taken as 'chooser' 'rājā varuṇaḥ' in singular must be a nobleman among the selectors-perhaps the spokesman of the electorate. Anyway, the title 'rājā' shows that he was not just a purohita performing the coronation, but one that was declaring the result of the election.

Verse 6 of AV 8-4 enjoins upon the king consultation with the electors even after his election, and agreement with them in his most primary duties of worshipping gods and managing i.e. protecting the people. According to the next verse, all those gathered (*visah*) have come to a unanimous decision to declare the election of a king. A unanimous decision commanded high respect in the assembly, especially for electing chiefs. The election of the chief must be by the Samiti -the representative assembly of the people. The king once elected continued till his death, ("Rule here, O mighty benevolent king up to the tenth decade of your life.") unless of course, he was deposed by the will of the people. The real security i.e., continuance till the end lay in the pleasure of the Samiti. (AV. 6-88-3)- "Here, may the Samiti be for your

security -*dhruvāyate samitiḥ kalpatām*. So a special prayer for Samiti to be favourably disposed towards the king is made. For the Samiti has made him king and it alone can unmake him.

The relatives of equal birth (*sajatas*) play a very important role in the elections as well for the security of his position once he is elected a king. Their unanimity and joining hands with the ruler were necessary for his rule to continue. AV6-73-2 shows how some '*sajatas*' only assume the role of '*sapatnas*'. They develop a hostile attitude and have evil designs. The king hopes to annul the effects of those with sacrifice-through which the priests and the people are influenced to be favourably disposed to the king. He also tries to see that he cared for them and for his peers (verse 3). He makes special efforts to keep them satisfied and in good humour. If they are going away from him discontented, special efforts are made to call them back and win them over to his side.

According to Satavalekar the one who is selected or elected by the people is as if 'created' or 'made' by them and so the people are like parents to the king and hence elsewhere in the A.V. (7-12-1.2), the king addresses the members of Sabha and Samiti as Fathers.

## 6.5 Harmony in Assemblies

Social harmony was an ideal that the Vedic seers were always preoccupied with. Ideologically it was derived from the cosmic harmony governed by *ṛta* and each individual was supposed to discover himself in the social frame-work so that he could be in consonance with the cosmic order. But the seers were not oblivious of the hard realities of life. Harmony was an ideal but discord was a fact of life. So they expostulate with the people to struggle towards that ideal.

The Kausika Sutra enumerates seven hymns of the AV grouping them under the general name '*saṁmanasyāni*'. Out of these, AV 6-64 is the same as RV. X. 191-2 to 4. The prayer is, "May your minds understand one another-*saṁ vo manamisi jānatam*. This is *saṁmanasyā* the state of being of one mind. The deity of the RV. X. 191 is '*saṁ-jkanā*'. In its derivative sense '*saṁjñānā*' is understanding things together, a common understanding, seeing eye to eye with one another-the same as *saṁmanasyā*.

These hymns are mainly meant for bringing about concord among the people especially when they meet in assemblies, like the Sabha or the Samiti. Kausika Sutra in explaining the ritual, which the charms accompany, calls them just throngs. We need not take these charms as pious platitudes for which the practical poets of the Atharvaveda had little use, but that they

answered the real need of the times. As seen earlier, the religious, social and political life of the Vedic people was largely governed by assemblies of one type or the other. They met in assemblies often enough and there naturally arose disagreements, discords, differences of opinion and even disputes equally often to have merited the attention of the leaders and thinkers who devised the use of charms to allay these discords. Even the elders always stressed the importance of concord or harmony among the members of the family. We find a systematic attempt to build up *saṁ - hṛdaya*, literally meaning concord, the union of hearts and *saṁ - jñānam*, unity through common understanding, at all social levels.

This endeavour to achieve full concord started at the time of marriage. The man and wife prayed that their hearts be united and be bound together. A further step toward concord is mentioned in the Atharvaveda where the poet extends *sa-hṛdayam*-unity of heart, *saṁ-manasyam* unity of minds and wanted the man and wife to be *samyancah*, united together, with the members of the family. Even if we ignore the ritual there is a sincere prayer for securing harmony among the members of the family mainly and generally among all the people. The poet assures the quarrelling throng that he would procure for them unity of heart, unity of mind and freedom from hatred. He urges the members of a family to take delight in one another, as a cow in her (newborn) call. He paints an ideal picture of family concord. The son shall be devoted to his father, be of the same mind with his mother, the wife shall speak honeyed, sweet words to her husband. The brother shall not hate the brother and the sister not the sister. Harmonious, devoted to the same purpose, may they speak words in a kindly spirit. Even a step beyond love thy neighbour was taken by the Atharvaveda when the poet prayed for *saṁ-jñāna*, unity through understanding, this love and concord to be practised in relation not only to one's own people but also to foreign people. So the poet prays in the Atharvaveda 7.52, "Let us have concord with our own people and concord with people who are strangers to us, *Aśvins*: create between us and the strangers a unity of hearts.

All these prayers for unity and love were made with full knowledge of inherent inequality, disparity, and diversity. It is necessary to note that the Vedic people were aware of the inherent inequality between man and man. The Rigveda 10.117.9 has noted, 'Two hands are alike but their work is not alike, Two sister cows do not give milk alike, of the two twins the powers are not similar, And two kinsmen are not equally convinced of the unity and universality of life. They stressed the underlying unity and equality of all. RV. V. 60.5 declares: None is superior or inferior by birth. All are brothers. May all strive for welfare and prosperity. Rudra, the eternal youth and protector, is father and the Earth, the bestower of all objects of enjoyment, is the mother of all.



The elements of disparity and disagreement must have become more pronounced when individuals met individuals, groups met groups, nobles met the commoners in assemblies to deliberate on business of all kinds executive, judicial, military. Thus, the Vedic thinkers realised that nature has created difference between man and man; but at the same time, humanity must live under a common tradition, belief and ideal so that the world may not run into chaos. Therefore, they always prayed for concord.

Tempers and voices rose high as is seen in the epithet '*nadi*' applied to the *sabha* in the *Parāśara-Gṛhya sūtra*. There was vehemence in the arguments and consequent anger. So we find entire hymns in the Atharvaveda for the appeasement of wrath. We shall take up one for illustration.

1. This darbha-grass removes the anger of both kinsman and of stranger. And this remover of wrath, 'appeaser of wrath' it is called.
2. This darbha-grass of many roots reaches down into the ocean having risen from the earth, 'appeaser of wrath' it is called.
3. Away we take the offensiveness that is in your jaw, away (offensive ness) in your mouth, so that bereft of will, you shall not speak, shall come up to my wish.

Though Kausika Sutra has taken it under "women's rites" (striakarmāni), the text of the hymn reveals no such specific purpose" and it is felt that it is used to alley tempers that rose high in families, markets, and in the assemblies, where there was a greater possibility of people meeting and disagreeing with one another.

The first hymn of the same-manushya gana according to the Kausika sutra apart from seeking concord in the family, as noted above, contains other elements of collective, harmonious life. The hymn urges the people to follow their leader and, being of the same mind they are urged not to hold themselves apart. They are asked to come, co-operate, along the same wagon-pole, speak agreeably to one another. He seeks to render them of the same aim, of the same mind. Here the team-spirit with which people have to work at a common job is picturesquely stressed by analogy of pulling at the same wagon. In order to bring about this accord and keep it, it was necessary that they all must be accorded equal treatment in respect of food, drink, and other essentials of life. The poet says that they would yoke people together in the same traces. In their worship of Agni also people are urged to join together like the spokes of a wheel around its hub. The poet renders the people of the same aim of the same mind so that they may pay deference to

one person, their leader. It is desired that the leader also be well disposed towards the people.

Further the scene shifts from family to society in general and, perhaps some assembly in particular as we read the hymn through. The common meeting grounds for the disagreeing people were social - with a common water-store and food-share, and religious with a common worship at Agnihotra. In verse 4 of the hymn there is a reference to the divine concord Bloomfield opines that gods are frequently endowed with human foibles The point that the poet wants to make out is that a charm as efficacious as to bring about harmony among gods by preventing bickering among them would certainly produce harmony among men. Perhaps an allusion to the resolution of conflicts among gods is made for man to emulate their example, because the concept of there being one Reality spoken of differently by the sages is as old as Rigveda. The whole concept is quite in keeping with the republican spirit which is so evident in many an Atharvanic hymn.

Similar is the charm incorporated in AV. 6. 73 undertaken by the patriarchal head of the community to bring about concord in the community. *Pusan*, the guardian of the distant ways and *Vāstospati*, the genius of home are prayed here to cooperate with a person who is desiring to put a stop to mutual dissension and disintegration. The poet desires the divinities like Varuna, Soma, Agni, Brhaspat and Vasus to gather and then invites the kinsmen, similarly to rally round their leader. The poet then refers to the spirit of ill-will and dissension among the kinsmen. He wishes that the king would forget the fire and scheme and bend to the view of the singer. A person who is about to go away disgruntled is urged not to go away from his people. *Puṣan* may thwart his progress and *Vacaspati* may call him back urgently.

At AV. 6.74 *Brahmanaspati* and *Bhaga* are invoked to bring about concord, with a desire that the bodies, minds and purposes of the dissenting people be united. The speaker desires to procure harmony of mind and heart. With the good offices of Bhaga, he seeks to cause the people to agree. The poet desires that the Adityas be united with the *Vasus*, *Rudras* with *Maruts*. Then the Agni should render the warring people of the same mind. Here all the deities from the groups are mentioned, except Agni. The hymn refers to the coming together of the groups and not of individuals. They may indicate the warring factions in society among whom concord is sought to be established.

A prayer (AV. 7.52) to the twin divinity – *Aśvins*, symbolising perfect harmony, is all the more significant in this context as the concord is here sought to be brought about not within a people but among peoples.

We come to the idea of concord in the assembly in the oft-repeated hymn of harmony whose deity, as already noted, is *saṃjñāna*, common understanding. The deity of the first verse of the Rgvedic hymn is Agni and A.C Bose takes verses 2-4 as Agni's reply to the worshippers, showing the path towards the treasures (*vasuni*) prayed for- here in the form of united happy life. The idea of unity in diversity among gods also recurs here, setting forth the ideals for humans to emulate. The prayer is; in general, for an integrated social life with the political aspect emphasised by the mention of Samiti, let their samiti be common literally is nothing more than a pious platitude. But as a part of general prayer for an integrated life, the adjective *saṃāni* should give manifold meanings. It must mean, let the rights of all in the assembly be equal, let the rules be equally applicable to all, and in your deliberations and resolutions, let the hearts of all be filled with the same thoughts, feelings, and intentions. The second verse of the AV hymn prays for common counsel (*mantra*), aim (*vrata*), thought (*citta*), oblation (*havis*), plan (*cetas*). RV 10.191 3d is the same as AV 6.64-2C, but RV 10-191 3C corresponding to AV 6-64-2d differs from it. AV line says, "the 'same' oblation do sacrifice for you' whereas the RV line has. 'A common purpose do I lay before you'. This gives a clear picture of a corporate life. At first, they met in an assembly where all were equal, they arrived at a decision that was acceptable to all, a plan (or purpose) was laid out before all, with the same mind, heart, thoughts they set out to fulfil that, suffering (as it were) the same oblation, with the same intention (as in the verse that follows) so that the goal of the corporate life was achieved; they lived happily together.

Again AV 6-94 is a charm to bend other people's minds to the will of the speaker. AV 2-27 is a very interesting and important hymn because it embodies a prayer for victory in the debate. The last and the most important of such hymns is AV 7-12. It is the most important because only in it we have the names of Sabha and Samiti. Satavalekar has taken this hymn as one to be recited by an elected king, addressed to the members of the sabha and samiti to whom he is responsible. He addresses them as Pitarah, the elders. It would mean that the security of the king depended upon the pleasure of the members of Sabha and Samiti. Thus only can we understand the speaker's assurance to the elders that (verse 1d) he would speak agreeably to them in the assembly. It is an assurance and a reminder to himself that he must speak agreeably to those who are not only the elders (in figurative sense) but are his very creators, because it was they who have elected or selected or chosen him as the chief.

The interpretation of the term '*Narista*' has already been discussed under sabha, so it may not detain us here any longer but what is germane to the issue on hand is the extreme anxiety on the part of the king that 'all those that sit assembled in the sabha may utter speech in harmony with him. This

anxiety on the part of the king shows how he dreaded disagreement and displeasure of those bodies. The king derived his power (*varcas*) and wisdom from those that sat together in the assembly (V.3). The power of the king depended upon the collective, inviolable counsel and advice that he received from the members.

There is a part of hymn AV. 3-8-5,6, which in spirit is the same as the "*sammanasyāni hymns*." It may be concluded that the activities of the popular assemblies were important enough for the community that an array of hymns has come down to us aiming to bring about harmony among their members.

## 6.6 Other Institutions

### Samvadadhvam

From the preceding sections it is clear that assemblies played a very dominant role in the life of the Vedic people. They regulated all aspects of life literary, religious, social, political. There are many other groups or gatherings of people, not so frequently referred to as the sabha, samiti and vidatha, but showing the predilection of the Vedic man towards corporate life. The information available in the Vedic literature about these other gatherings, which may not be elevated to the position of an 'assembly, is not sufficient to warrant their treatment separately. Nevertheless, to get a clear idea of the corporate life of the Vedic age, it is necessary to refer to them at least briefly.

The ideal co-operative, collective living was not an empty platitude for the Vedic people. It was a guiding principle that permeated all walks of life. "The Veda inculcates the ethics of collective living through mutual love and concord. The prolix Sam (Greek sam [sym]. Latin cum and English Com with its variants con as in con-cord, etc.) is used to express this. Sam has its variants in sa and *sabha*. We find a systematic attempt to build *samhrdaya* (or *sahrdaya*), i.e. concord, union of hearts, and sam-jñāna-unity through common understanding at all social levels."

These remarks are fully justified by a brief survey of some of the principal institutions: Gana, Grama. *Sangrama*, *Vra*, *Vrata*, *Parisat*, *Samana*, *Yajna*.

### Gana

There is little doubt that in the Post-Vedic and Buddhist times the word *gana* stood for a certain type of state sharply distinguished from the monarchical. There are numerous literary and archaeological evidences for this. Unfortunately the word *gana* and the non monarchical type of state remain very hazy in the Vedic literature. In the Rigveda the word occurs more

than twenty times, and in the Atharvaveda more than ten times. It also occurs in the Brahmanas. The *gana* appears mostly in association with the Maruts and the tendency among scholars is to translate the word as 'horde' or 'host' or 'army'. From the references in the Vedic literature, also, *gana* appears to be (1) a group. (2) a congregation, (3) a division of an army, (4) a section of the vidatha. In this literature there is no indication to connect '*gana*' with any constitutional or political institution.

The Mahābhārata, the Astādhyayī of Panini and many Buddhist and Jaina works refer to '*ganas*' as a form of government. Another term cognate with *gana* is *saṅgha* and it denotes the same sense."

### **Grāma**

The word has come to mean a village, a definite settlement in the geographical sense, but in the early Vedic terms it was just a collective unit with no geographical location. Families following a leader even in their wanderings were designated as grāma. So it definitely was a 'body of men.' The '*Satapatha Brahmana*' refers to *Saryatamanava*, who wandered about with his grāma. In later times grāma became the smallest administrative unit. Then grāmanī became the officer in charge of a village. Even in the Atharvaveda, *grāmaī* had acquired the sense of grāmasvāmin.

Indian villages have been described as 'little republics' and from the predominance of public assemblies at least in internal administrative matters, this description is fully justified.

### **Saṅgrāma**

*Saṅgrāma* appears together with Samiti in AV 12-1-56 and like the other body must have meant an assembly that met at the time of war or peace. It means a group of families, a host of people; saṅgrāma could mean an assembly of many such grāmas joining together.

### **Vra, Vrata**

The word may be used in masculine and feminine genders. There is little doubt that it stands for a group. No constitutional meaning can be ascribed to it. Vrata is also a group like vra.

### **Parisat**

In the Upanisadic times, *Samiti* became king's privy council and the *parisat* was its synonym. It also stood for an assembly of thinkers, philosophers. The assembly of pāñcalas is called both a *samiti* and a *pariṣat*.

How *Parisat* came into being is a matter of guess. According to J.P. Sharma, as the 'chief noble' (of the republican forms of government) in due course acquired too much power, rising far above his equals, the *Samiti* shrank to a smaller size and began to be called a *parisat*. In *GobhilaGṛhya Sūtra* a teacher with his *parisat* is mentioned. In the still later period, *Parisat* became the assembly that dealt with law. According to Gautama a *parisat* should consist of four students of the four Vedas, one person from each of the first three ashrams and three men who know different branches of law. Even though the word is not found in the old literature, Keith and Macdonnell opine that institutions similar to the ones mentioned in later literature must have existed earlier in their infant forms.

### **Samāna**

There is no doubt that this word meant a social gathering, a sort of a festival. In some places Roth has taken it to mean a battle. But at others it definitely means a common festival where many kinds of people gather.

In RV I-124-8, *Uṣas* is described as decorating herself like a woman going to a *samāna*. In RV IV. 58-8, the streams of ghee reaching Agni are compared to beautiful smiling women at a *samāna*. RV. II. 75-4, VII. 2-5, X.86-10. X.168-2, as also the AV also connect young woman with *samana*. At RV 6.75.4 the ends of the bowstring are compared to two women at a gathering. At RV 7.2.5 the *Adhvaryus* decorate the doors of the sacrificial pandal like maidens at a *samāna*. At RV 10-86-10 a *nāri* is said to attend a *samāna*. In RV 10.168-2 the waters are said to hurry along the traces of Vayu and go to him as dames go to a *samāna*. From these passages it is quite clear that young women attended the *samāna*, they decorated themselves, they laughed and made merry. The Atharvaveda connects young women with *samāna*. At AV. 6.602 God *Aryaman* is told that a maid has become wearied of going to the *samanas* of others and God is requested to see that now other women will attend her *samāna*. This is a charm for securing a husband and so the *samāna* must be a feast connected with a wedding. Or *samāna* being a place of meeting for young women and men, it is just described as so-and-so's *samāna* if that person obtained a marriage partner there. In a marriage hymn of the Atharvaveda (2.36) a maiden is desired to obtain happiness through a husband- a maiden who is agreeable to suitors and charming at *samānas*.

In RV II. 16-7, *Samana* is taken to be a war by Griffith, but Keith and Macdonnell see in this a reference to poets who went to *samanas* for gaining fame. In an RV. IX. 97-47, Soma is said to go about singing like a priest to the *samānas*, the assemblies are looked upon as providing opportunities to poets, to recite their compositions and gain approval.

In RV. VI. 7-5, the bow-string is described as whispering in the ear of an archer and preserving the *samāna*. It thus appears to be an occasion where archery contests were held.

In RV. IX. 96-9 Indra is said to go to the *samāna* like a horse. In RV. VI. 92-2 reference to a horse that is being prepared for a race at a *samāna*, is made. Keith and Macdonell also give the duration of this festival. According to them, 'This festival continued up to morning or until such time as the fire burning for the whole night scared the revellers away'. According to them, young women found husbands at the *samāna*, dancing girls earned some money. All in all, this was like a festival where young women met strangers freely.

### **Saṅgama**

Saṅgama appears to be a gathering at a sacrifice when the institution (of sacrifice) had developed into a somewhat elaborate chain of ceremonies requiring the offices of numerous priests. (RV. X-107, X. 131-8).

### **Yajña**

The institution of sacrifice originated and developed essentially as a socio-religious phenomenon. It satisfied the craving of the Vedic man for a corporate life and it paved the way for various social, religious and even political institutions, not to mention its philosophical elevation in the Bhagavadgita. The idea and practice of the sacrifice can be visualised as leaving their impress on the growth of the ideas in the other spheres of life of the Aryans and moulding them into an organic whole, which can be designated as the foundation of the Aryan culture and civilization. For the Vedic peoples, the sacrifice was the pivot around which the entire world revolves. It is small wonder, therefore, that there should be a 'sacrificial theory' of state as there is of the Varna system. The theory is propounded by J.W. Spellman in the following words. "The State exists as a sacrifice itself and as the agent in securing mokṣa or salvation for the people." In other ancient states, kings did have some superior position in the religious superstructures. "In India the king was more than merely this. He was the foundation upon which all religious activities rested. Through him it was possible to attain the world of gods. Of all those who sacrificed in the land, he was the chief. Just as the priest regulated the details of a sacrifice, the king regulated the duties of the people. Thus the State itself may be considered as a sacrifice. Each part of the State has its particular function and duties in this sacrifice, the purpose of which is a better life".

The Satapatha Brahmana compares the State and society to a sacrifice in connection with the laying of the bricks of the sacrificial altar. As duties are

assigned to various participants in a sacrifice, such as priests-official, invoking, singing and so on and patrons, so in the working of a Vedic society and State duties were assigned to the classes. The performance of these duties contributed to the fulfilment of the entire sacrifice. So the supreme duty of the king was to create such conditions as would conduce to the discharge of svadharma for each individual; thus bringing the secular and the spiritual benefits to all concerned.

Sacrifice was nothing if not attended to by people, starting from the household sacrifice of the Rigvedic times and developing into the sectional (*satra*) and royal and imperial sacrifices *Rājasūya*, *Asvamedha*, *Vājapeya* - in the Brahmana and Sutra periods. Household sacrifices must have assemblies at all levels.

The household was the first seat of sacrifice, the *durona*, dhāman, sadana, sadma, pada of rta, the eternal order. People gathered not only for the performance of a sacrifice when instituted by an individual, minor patrons even came together in certain sacrificial sessions, thus enlarging the field of co-operation through sacrifice. The sacrifice was certainly a gathering of highborn well-bred people as is indicated at RV 7.1.4, *yatra narāḥ samāsate sujātāḥ* (where men of high birth sit down together), or at 7.1.15 *sujātasah paricaranti virah* (where heroes of noble lineage lend Agni). So sacrifice proper was attended by people of some cultural attainments. Alongside of the sacrifices, must have been held sacrificial assemblies at big sacrifices, presumably attended by a variety of people. We can imagine that in such big assemblies there must have arisen differences of opinion, as regards details of a rite or the very existence and supremacy of Indra and so on. Necessitated by such circumstances, there must have been many prayers for accord in the assemblies, sacrificial or otherwise. On the whole, however, an atmosphere of goodwill and jubilation must have prevailed (as indicated at 9.88.2) where all the people rejoined. The sacrificial assembly is said to be resplendent, like the Dawn's dwelling-place, by the presence of mighty men, rich in food. In this assembly, the rich men strove to share the praises of the singers. Whatever the etymological and mythological explanation of the rise of double divinities, groups of deities and ultimately *Visvadevas*, sacrifice, they must have been devised to fuse the differences at the performances, and to forge social amenity. In fact, the system of sacrifice marks the early stages of the co-operative experiment that had been set up by the intelligentsia in the social structure of the time, though co-operation on a smaller scale and in a limited sphere of activity must have been known earlier. To sum up, Yajña was the central institution of the Vedic society. All social, religious and cultural activities were inspired by it. It was social institution par excellence in which participated people of all classes and profession. All social activities are conducted in the arena or the pandal or the assembly hall of the sacrifice thus invested Yajna with all possible significance."



## **UNIT 7 : GOVERNANCE SYSTEM DURING RAMAYANA**

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Monarchy was the rule in Ramayana. This monarchy was based on the Saptang system. The king was the centre of kingdom. Governance in Ramayana seems to be a developed form of Vedic period governance. During Vedic period there was practice of Samrajya, Vairajya, Bhaujya, Rajya, Parameshtya, Maharajya and Adhirajya types of rule.

During Ramayana period only monarchical form of government was prevalent in India. The monarchical rule mentioned in the Ramayana only Raja, Amatya, Kosha, and Danda aspects of kingdoms have been considered.

King - the word Raja has derived from Rajan, Raj means to Rule, and with suffix kanin becomes the word Raja means a leader or a ruler. From the Indian political ideology, 'Prakriti Ranjanat' Raja- is the king, who keeps the subjects happy. As described in Raghuvash and the Epic Mahabharata. The king is described as Lokaranjan - The one who keeps the subjects happy.

### **7.1 Origin of the King**

There are many stories about the origin of the king in ancient Indian literature. In Aitareya Brahman it is mentioned that there was a war between the deities and the Asuras. The deities were defeated. The deities discussed and concluded that the reason for their defeat was the absence of the king. They thought of electing a king and everyone agreed.

The legend of the origin of the king is also mentioned in the Valmiki Ramayana. It is mentioned that humans were without a king. The people went to Brahma and prayed to make someone as their king. Taking part of effulgence from Lokpals Brahma created a man and named him Kshupa. Brahma made Kshupa the ruler of the people and made him the King. In fact, the origin of the king must have been due to the chaos arising in the society. As mentioned in the Ramayana that in a state without a king, there is no prosperity, women and property are not safe and everywhere the unrest prevails.

#### **1) Kingship by the Hereditary tradition**

The hereditary tradition of kingship started from the Vedic period itself. Although in the Vedic period there are some mention of election of the King. But at the same time, the rule of kingship in the Vedic period was also hereditary.

Examples are found. In Tatsu the sons ascend the throne of the father for more than four generations. In the story of King Drishtru Posayan of the Sanjays, there is mention of the kingdom inherited a from 10 generations and at the time of the coronation in the announcement, the new king is called the son of the Old King. The heredity of kingship became prevalent in Ramayana Period. However, the ministries for the appointment of the successor it was the necessity of taking the support of the Praja or the subjects. King Dasharatha with the desire to make Rama the king, took the support of the ministers and the people. King Dasaratha's proposal was supported by the brahmins, generals and priests and gave their approval to make Rama the king.

Similarly, Bharata also requested Rama to become the king before the priestly and citizens etc. King Nrug had requested the minister and councilors to give the kingship to his son. Sugriva too received the consent of the ministers in getting the Rajpada/Throne. Thus, in the Ramayana period, the kingship was hereditary but along with it, support of the ministers, people and assembly was also expected for it.

## **2) Right of the Eldest Son to the Throne**

According to the Ramayana, only the eldest son of the king was entitled to the throne. The statement of Kaikayi that only the eldest son has been the king in the Ikshvaku dynasty confirms this view. Same goes for Bharat in this context. Bharat had told Ram that the younger brother could not be the ruler, when the elder brother is present. Vashishtha also supported the idea of making the elder son of the Ikshvaku dynasty as the King.

In order to avoid anarchy in case of emergency, in the absence of the eldest son, another son was considered to make a king. The decision of the coronation of Bharata was taken when Rama went for Vanavasa.

If the elder son becomes disqualified, he was deprived of the right to the throne. King Sagar's son 'Asamanja' was expelled from the kingdom for his stupidity.

Even among Vaanar, only the eldest son was the ruler. Bali being the eldest son of his father ascended the Throne. On the death of the elder brother, the younger brother used to be the regent. On the death of Bali, Sugriv became the king.

Even among the Rakshasa, there was a tradition of making the eldest son the king. Ravan being the eldest son of his father became the King.

The authority was not limited to the son. After conquering Sudhanva , Janak made his younger brother Kushadwaaj the king of Sankashya. The same thing would have been clear in Uttarkand as well. Only the elder son was not the regent, but his younger brothers and sons were also had the throne. Rama had divided the kingdom among all his brothers and their sons.

### **3) Qualified Person Right of Office**

The last and important thing for getting the Kingship was that the successor should be capable and virtuous. According to Ramayana, only deserving people were entitled to get the royal position.

*'Na Chai Rajya Vigunayadeyam'*

If the elder son of the king was unfit and without any qualities, then neither his name was nominated for Kingship nor he had support of the subjects. King Dasharatha nominated Ram for the throne only because of his qualities and his ability. The people also praised Rama and after careful consideration, unanimously supported the proposal of King Dasharatha. Ajitendriya (A person who does not have control on himself) was considered unfit for the throne. It was necessary to have the ability to look after the subjects and to have the sense for the kingdom. According to Ram the 'king' should have the ability to do Dharma, Artha and Kama on time. In the opinion of Narad, the king should be serious, patient, mighty, beautiful, strong just like the Sea, Himalayas, Vishnu, Moon, Fierce Earth and Dharma. The king must have forgiving and steadfast qualities. In this way, only the eligible will occupy the post in Ramayana

## **7.2 Personality of a King**

In the Ramayana, the king has been described as having a versatile personality, I.e the Chaturmukh - personality with four virtues. He should be very intelligent and should have knowledge of all the sciences, a mighty conqueror and with moral qualities. Personality of the king according to Ramayana can be explained in four ways

**1) Attractive and Good Looking** - Valmiki has described the king as very attractive from the point of view of physical beauty. Raja Ram from the point of view of good looking personality was called unique. With broad-shoulders, Strong Hands, Pointed Chin, Big eyes, Strong chest, broad forehead and wheatish complexion. The Vanara king was also Attractive . Sugriv was bright and radiant. The Rakshas king Raavan too said to have a face like the most brilliant and full moon.

**2) Wise and Intelligent** - In Ramayana, all the kings have been called intelligent and learned. Raja Ram Ved Vedang Philosopher, had Knowledge of all sciences, Non Negligent and Steadfast. King Bali was also clever in handling the governance. Sugriv is also called knowledgeable and present minded. Similarly the Rakshas Kings had intelligence and knowledge too.

**3) Brave** - In Ramayana, all the kings have been called Victorious. Raja Ram Brave and valiant similar to Vishnu. King was titled with heroic words like Mighty, and brave. Raja Bali was known as Brave, Victorious, and Malahabli. Raja Ravan was called as Samitinjaya (King of the Ministers), Ajeya (Invincible), and shoora (Brave).

**4) Strategist** - In the Ramayana, the King has been described as a ideal of moral qualities and of excellent character. The kings were believers of religion. They had the virtues like charity, penance, sacrifice, friendship, defecation, longevity, pride, forgiveness, suppression, renunciation and truthful speech.

The King was associated with qualities like righteousness, agricultural expertise, and love for the gods. King Dasharatha was called as Religious and follower of the path of Religion. Ram is said to be religious, Satyasanga, Sadhu, Forgiving, Dharmyavir, Jitendranath, Krishashti, Mrid, Steady-minded, Anusuyak, Kapriyadi, Satyawadi, Hehi, Sheelan etc. The Vanara king was also a religious King. Sugriv is said to be humble and Truthful. The Rakshas kings were definitely devoid of moral qualities and they destroyed religion from the root. In the Ramayana, the Rakshas King Yajñadharmajaya is cruel, Killer of Brahmins, vicious, fierce, merciless and careless about welfare of the People.

Thus, In the Ramayana, the personality of the king was glorious. Except the Rakshas kings, the character of other kings is exemplary.

### **Title and /royal Symbols of the King**

During the Ramayana Period there existed many Kingdoms ruled by different rulers. They all were titled as Raja (The King) or Maharaja (The Great King).

### **Royal Symbols**

It is clear from the coronation written in Ramayana that at that time there were different royal symbols for the king. Among the royal symbols, the throne, crown, The Royal Umbrella, Jeweled crown, scepter were prominent. The throne with Chhatra (The royal roof/umbrella) had special significance

## **King's Oath**

The king's Oath is not mentioned in the Ramayana as the kingship was hereditary. In Vedic literature at the time of coronation, there is a mention of the promise/Oath of the king. Despite not being mentioned of the king's promise/ Oath in the Ramayana the king was bound to follow the Religion and behave according to the rules for the welfare of the subjects. King Dasharatha ruled the kingdom according to the Dharma.

The tradition of Vedic Yajnya related to coronation had also disappeared at that time; but after assuming the throne, Ram had performed Paundrik, Ashwamedha, Rajpeya and various other Yagnyas. King Dasaratha had also performed many Yagnyas during his reign. King Dasaratha is said to be the author of Rajasuya and Ashwamedha Yagnyas.

## **Control over the King**

According to tradition, the king could not be autocratic and arbitrary. There were many controls on him. First, he was committed to religion, and Secondly he had control on him by priests, ministers, public, rules, conduct, thoughts etc. They used to do and give proper guidance and advice to the King. If the king used to violate religion and cause pain to his subjects then People used to dismiss him. King Sagar expelled his son Asmanjas from the country because of his enmity.

Even King Ravan refrained from giving death sentence to Hanuman after Vibhishan made him aware of the principles of Dharmasastra.. The exile given to Ram by King Dashrath was also told by the subjects as unfair. King Dasharatha was afraid that his subjects would protest against this act saying it was unfair that Dasharatha doing it only on a wish of his wife.

King Ravan had appropriate restrictions to avoid autocracy, but he was autocratic. To achieve his desired, he instructed Marich to forcefully persuade his point. He used to take advice from ministers, brothers etc., but because of his selfishness, he used to ignore the right advice.

In fact in Ramayana to control the king, formulation is set; that of proper education and good manners along with the limitations by priests and ministries, assembly and subjects, religion etc.

These restraints were sufficient to protect the King from misconduct

### 7.3 Duties of the King

In the Ramayana, there are specific instructions for the kings to perform their duties. In Ramayana, the duties of kings are discussed on many levels and at many instances like Dasaratha's advice to Rama at the time of his coronation, Rama's instruction to Bharata, Rama's religious speech, Supanikha's anger towards Ravan and Marich's warning to Ravan.

In the Ramayana, the duties of the King are related to the seven aspects of the state. The king's duty towards himself - to behave royally, The duty towards the nation was to protect the nation from external and internal obstacles, The Duty towards the subjects was of protection and welfare in its best interest and duty towards the Ministers included to pay attention to their activities and take their advice in the works of the government, The duty towards the force or the army was to build strong Forts, Other duties included to make proper arrangement and make punishment according to the crime, to fund social cause and duty towards Allies was keeping the ministerial interlocutor with him

In this way, the king used to inspect all the activities of the government and for the welfare of the state he used to perform duties

#### **Duties of the King towards himself**

The kings were aware of the malefic results of their sinful deeds. Hence, they had to become a person who is without any anger and Jitendriya (Winning the will power to control mental and physical wishes).

Kings were cautioned to give up addictions arising out of attachment to worldly pleasures. Kings were always to avoid restlessness and carelessness and to have the qualities of being calm, courageous, forgiving, religious and also with perseverance, truth, bravery etc.

The king was required to overcome atheism, untruth, anger, delusion, promiscuity and abandonment of child, voluptuousness and Staying away from autocracy, always avoiding royal faults-anger and work faults etc. All these were the duties of the king towards himself. The king had to be free from the egoistic sense of his authority. He should consider himself as a normal human being. The ideal of abstain from sin, do not indulge in Long sleep hours and should wake up on time, avoid stubbornness, he should be giving and live the lordship. In the same way, the King should not be careless in any work and to keep himself restrained, such is the duty of the king towards himself. The king who is careless about the tasks and does not do the duties by himself, is said to destroy the state.

## **Duties of the King towards Subjects**

King's duty towards himself, modesty, good conduct, awareness etc. used to inspire him to become dutiful towards his subjects. For this reason, he was able to avoid the delusion of deviating from his duty towards the subjects.

According to Ramayana, the main duty of the king towards the subjects is to protect the subjects as carefully as possible. The King should always wish for the welfare of the subjects and should keep everyone happy in his kingdom. The king who nurtures the earth while keeping the people happy was destined to get a place in heaven.

In the Ramayana, the appointment of the king for his respective tasks for the four Varnas (Four strata of in the society). There are instructions to act in the welfare of people of all four Varnas. The king had to protect his subjects from physical, divine and Natural troubles.

His duty was to engage the subjects to follow the path of religion. By being diligently alert, protect his subjects at times even endangering his own life.

King has work in the interest of his people every day. Those who used to do this duty received respect from the subjects. Such kings used to be liked by the subjects. It was necessary to work day and night. The king who did not do justice to the officials was said to be a partaker of sin. The king was eager to know the thoughts of his subjects, so that he can forestall the prevailing exceptions and can maintain them according to the wishes of the people and satisfaction of the people. It was the duty of the king to give up his favorite thing for welfare and happiness of his subjects. Ram had left his beloved wife Sita for the satisfaction of his subjects because of the rumour spread among the people. King Sagar too had to expel his son Asmanjas from the country. The protection of the subjects to the king is his utmost priority. King Dasharatha sent his beloved son Rama to protect Vishwamatra's Yadnya even though he didn't want to send his young son away. According to the Ramayana, the cause of the disaster on the subjects was due to the king's failure to follow the path of religion or failure in his duties. Due to receiving one-sixth part of the subject's income, the king was bound to protect the subjects. It is the duty of the king to protect not only the people of the city but also the people living in the forests belonging to his nation. After collecting one sixth of the Subject's income, the king who is unable to protect the people has been called Maha-Adhami - the great sinner.

Thus, According to Ramayana, according to Manas, vacha, Kama and religion, the lives of the subjects are equal to the lives of the king's sons. It

was the duty of the king to protect and improve the moral and physical condition of the subjects.

### **Duties of the King towards ministers and officers**

The king had a protective duty towards the state. All actions of were justifiable by the king.

He could go outside the state only after ensuring the of the state's security and other arrangements in his absense. When King Bhagiratha (The tale of Gangavataran) went for the religious austerity, he handed over the management of the state to the ministers. King Ram instructed Bhrata and Lakshmana to manage the affairs of the kingdom before he went in search of Shambhu. It was the duty of the king towards the state that he should know the history related to the state and should be aware of the incidents and act accordingly.

The king had various duties towards the Ministers, he should appoint the best ministers. He should consult the ministers for decisions. The king was assisted by the ministers in the matters of war and administration.

The King had to run the kingdom with help of the Ministries. The king should not leave the rule to his own ministries, but to give personal attention that the set rules are being followed. To pay attention and to keep the ministers happy was also the duty of the king. The king's duties were also related to other officials. To make appointments, to select wise officers, to keep getting information about various officials, to be alert towards the enemies, to be kind towards the officers and not to insult them etc.

### **King as a divine entity**

There was no sense of divinity of the king in the Vedic literature. In that period the position of the king was purely secular. According to Ramayana, divinity was accepted in the king. It is mentioned in the Ramayana that the king is a deity on earth. He is the one who assumes the form of five deities.



## **UNIT 8 : POLITICAL THOUGHTS IN SHANTIPARVA OF MAHABHARATA**

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The ShantiParva of the Mahabharata is very important in the history of ancient Indian political thought. It is a collection of answers given by Bhishma Pitamaha when lying on a death bed , and who was a prominent member of the Kuru dynasty. The answers are given mainly after the Mahabharata war.

The largest systematic and comprehensive repository of political thought in ancient Indian literature is in the different chapters of ShantiParva.

After the Mahabharata war Yudhishtir asked VedVyas about the duties of the King and the four Varna.VedVyas advised Yudhishtir to put these questions before the all-knowing Bhishma on his deathbed. Bhishma made his last political speech in front of the King and Sages present there under the leadership of Yudhishtir. God Krishna presented his well wishes and with this prophecy said that Bhishma's political philosophy will remain on earth forever like The Vedas . In the political answers of Bhishma the most unique and fundamental are the principle of state religion and penal policy.

### **8.1 Origin of the Kingdom**

Yudhishtir put his first question to Bhishma about Rajdharma. 56th chapter of ShantiParv. According to Rajdharma Polity is the means of controlling the world in the same way as a horse is controlled by the reins and an elephant is controlled by the stick. Rajdharma removes all the bad consequences of the world, dispels all bad things just as the rising sun dispels the darkness of unrighteousness. This is a comprehensive expression in which the duties and contracts of political and administrative contexts have been included.

According to Bhishma, there did not exist the institution called king in Kritkala or the primary stage. After the creation of society for a long period of time man lived peacefully with happiness and harmony, lived without any form of governing power because of his inner virtue. But in course of time man turned away from morality and became under the influence of selfishness, greed and lust. As a result of the knowledge of agriculture man started producing food grains more than his requirement. And started storing the products in a separate house. But man, forcefully squandered this

accumulated wealth, started snatching. Due to the end of the knowledge of duty and Ethics in humans, Vedas are destroyed and the dharma and karma started disappearing. Man in his unrighteous and sinful state spread in the world. He was not able to enjoy the happiness of his wife, animal farm and home.

Religion in ShantiParv means family, wealth and social life based on Dharma. In order to get relief from such a situation, people took shelter of Brahma and demanded a power that could protect their property, family and religion.

On this demand of the People, Brahma ordered Manu to become the king on earth. In the beginning Manu rejected to be a King, because ruling among false humans would be too difficult a task for him. It seemed then that a group of people assured him that they would give him their cattle and will provide one-fifth of gold and one-tenth of grain from the 67th chapter of ShantiParv. It turns out that there was an agreement between People and the first king, according to which some part of the wealth will be given as tax and beautiful women from among themselves will be given to him, as wives. Those who commit a sin will bear the fruits of it and the king will not incur any sin by punishing the criminals.

Thus, in the natural state for the purpose of protecting religion, property, family and human the need for a king was felt as a result of which the state was born. From the above description it is clear that the origin of the peaceful state is based on the principles of divine origin and social contract.

Manu assumed the position of king with a huge army and set out to expand the kingdom. People started following religion out of fear of the king

## **8.2 Rajdharma and Dandaneeti**

According to the ShantiParva of the Mahabharata, the main duty of the king is the protection of dharma and the welfare of the people. The main aim of life is the attainment of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Therefore, the work of the state is in the hands of the people and to cooperate in achieving the objectives. While discussing the importance of the king's influence Bhishma said to the king to give up your likes and dislikes. It is only through the Penal Policy that the king can easily do all human related works by following the path of religion.

Bhishma in the context of the conversation between king SVasuman and Vamadevin the 93rd chapter of ShantiParv said that the state prospers through five means -

- a) Protection of forts
- b) Waging of battles
- c) The protection of the subjects according to the norms and criteria of justice
- d) Policy of deliberations
- e) Care for the welfare of the people

The king should be charitable, humble and of pure thoughts and should fulfill his duties towards the subjects, should always be followed. In the political system, the ultimate duty of the person occupying the state power is the protection of the public from external threats and all kinds of internal enemies. This means that only after fulfilling the primary duty, the king can focus on agriculture and other beauty related works. According to the Mahabharata, the state is not the ultimate objective, but it is the welfare of the population. The king is very important and, in many places, he is also called 'Yuga Nimaata'. The Karyapalika is made from King, the Ministers and officers. People in good governance are fearless and they sleep peacefully. Great emphasis was placed on the need for good ministers in ShantiParva. In the absence of dutiful and qualified ministers, the king is unable to run the government properly. So, Bhishma advises the king to have intelligent and wise ministers. In chapter 81 of ShantiParva, Bhishma discusses the federation of two types of kingdoms. small union was formed by the union of the two kingdoms of Andhak and Vrushni. Great Federation of Five Republics was made of - Andhak, Vrushni, Yadav, Kukura and Bhoja. Krishna had a major role in the formation of this Sangha - the Group of Republic and he was responsible for the emergence of all these member states of the union headed by their monarch.

Sangha meant a community of several democratic units together and it is different from Gana which had a sense of units. The Assembly of the Union was a sovereign body and consisted of members of the various republics of the Union. The representative members arrived at a decision on political questions through debate. The president of the assembly was given the title of Raja and the vice-president was called Upa-Raja. Every assembly wanted to place its leader on the post of the President. The dispute reached so far between the Andhak Vristhna Sangha that even Krishna needed to approach Devvarshi Narad.

Bhishma considers the political system based on the rule of law to be the best. According to him There are four sources of law-

1) Dev Sammat (Law which is consented by the Gods) i.e., the methods created by Brahma which aim at the welfare of man.

2) Laws that are made and consented by Saints and Sages. the laws that are made according to the region, time and social situations to control human behaviour.

3) Lok sammat i.e., methods adopted by the people – During the times of Mahabharata Matsya Nyay i.e. the primary principle of - Big fish eating smaller fish was in practise and the public used to live with great difficulty in such a situation. To get out of situations, people together created methods whose purpose was severe punishment to keep people under control.

4) Customs and Traditions i.e., the customs and methods created by the cultures of the period such as- Kuldharm, Jatidharma, Deshdharma etc. According to Bhishma, the methods of control were obtained by the king from these four sources of law. Adherence to the state laws brings prosperity in the same way as the observance of the rules of the four ashrams.

According to Adhyay 60 of ShantiParva, disobeying the king considering him to be a common human being is totally unfair to do because he is a form of a deity on earth for the welfare of the human beings.

The king is a form of Fire (Agni) because of destroying the sins of man on earth. The King is a form of Sun (Bhaskara) because with the help of the spies he finds out sufferings of his people and do the work for the welfare of his people. The King is a form of Yama - the God of Death because he punishes all the sinners and protects the Saints and people of his Kingdom. The King is a form of Vaishravana deity because he takes care by using wealth and money, by giving rewards and donations for the welfare of his subjects. It is the king who provides the benefits of mental development, harmony, respect and ultimate happiness to the subjects because he is always engaged in the welfare of the people just different deities.

The importance of the process of peaceful judicial governance has been recognized as one of the most important aspects of the political system.

The interaction between Gandhat and Vasuhom brings to light the importance of the Penal Policy in order to removes all kinds of maladies and misconduct.

According to ShantiParva, The Penal policy - Dandaneeti is the only protector and controller of Dharma.

Similar to Manusmriti, even in ShantiParva, it has been said to give a specific structure to the penal policy. The punishment is considered to be of darker tone. In the first form, ShantiParva talks about Bharti-pratyay punishment which Inspects factual evidence to resolve disputes. As a second type of control Dharma-pratyay or Vedapratyay has been discussed. Legalization of Punishment Political and Judicial Analysis presents an example of inter-transmission of theology and theology.

A story is described that of Discord and disunity in the state by taking the form of punishment by Lord Shiva in ShantiParva. Devi Saraswati, who in Indian tradition is represented as the ArdhaDevi river, sometimes as the daughter of Brahma, and sometimes as Goddess of Education and Knowledge Vidya is also seen as the Goddess of Dandaneeti.

Dandaneeti - the penal policy is seen as a source of help in times of distress and It is believed to bring about universal goodness, well-being, prosperity and fearlessness.

Bhishma has compared Dandaneeti to parents and according to him man in its absence of Dandaneeti - penal policy, there will be no law code governing the behaviour of human beings.

The principle of welfare has been the basis of the penal policy. Therefore, in ShantiParva, it is considered for public welfare.

In the 71st chapter of ShantiParva, it is said that if the king acts carelessly, then he has to bear the consequences of his mistakes and has to suffer for a thousand years. On the other hand, if he protects his subjects with devotion even for a day, then he will get its good returns for ten thousand years to come. Regarding the importance of Dandaneeti, Bhishma says that if Dandaneeti ends, then all the three Vedas (except Arthveda) will become extinct and the duties of all the four Varna will become entangled and complex. Due to the destruction of Dandaneeti and the instability of Rajdharma, all people will suffer the evils.

Therefore, it is absolutely necessary for a King that he should have complete knowledge of Dandaneeti. The penal policy protects people and bring awareness in people. For this reason, penal policy is also called 'Dhama'.

People in fear of punishment donot commit sins. People do not kill each other out of fear of Punishment. If the penal policy is not followed then everything will sink into darkness. Despite the Dharma, ethics and Rule of law, Bhishma do not discuss about governance based on equality in ShantiParv. The four Varna were punished based on their social status. In the

entire Mahabharata, through many sermons, stories and fables, the privileges of Brahmins have been discussed in chapter 234. A list can be found of kings who presented very valuable things to Brahmins. According to chapter 56, the physical Punishment like whipping is not to be given to Brahmins. A criminal Brahmin as serious as sedition or treason is given punishment of exile from the state. It is clear from the observation of the 23rd chapter of ShantiParva that in ancient times the practice of punishing was extremely cruel and without mercy. Once a hermit named Likhita stole a fruit from his elder brother Samkhya's ashram, even after confessing the crime the King gave him punishment of cutting his hands. In ShantiParva Bhishma has described four types of Punishment -

- 1) Condemnation
- 2) Scolding
- 3) Fine
- 4) Death Sentence

Judges who were corrupt and people who participated in rebellion against the supreme power were sentenced to death. One of the main duties of the king is to protect his people from disturbances and anti-national forces. He is expected to follow social customs, and to form systems monitor that the duties of all four Varna are being followed. Description is found in the Mahabharata about provision to be given from the state's resources only for essential expenses. Never provisions are made in economic schemes for luxury items.

According to Mahabharata the priests acted as advisors to the king and in religious matters they used to be the superiors. They did not play any active role in the exercise of power, but as a minister they used to inform the king about ethically correct options and upon considering those options the King used to reach a final decision. The ministers used to come from all four Varna, but from the environmental, social, economic and cultural point of view, it appears that the Brahmin and Kshatriya ministers of the states were responsible for gathering information and they used to discuss on local measures and techniques, brainstorming in solving many political problems.

. From this it is clear that the Mahabharata is not the type of theocracy but only the religious cooperation in the government structure.

According to Bhishma, there are four goals of human life-Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Dharma is Satya and Ethics. Artha is various means of attaining worldly prosperity and wealth. On one side it means the

attainment of the goal of life and on the other side it is means of achieving fulfillment of human desires. Kama refers to the fulfillment of all worldly desire of human beings. Moksha is the highest goal of life. It paves the way for the development of the soul. Bhishma explains the fundamental importance of the king from point of view of the Justice and Penal Policy. According to him people are happy only when they live peacefully within the legal guidelines.

According to the revolution, the ordinary laws of the state should be suspended in times of emergency. If people are in distress, the king should help them with his wealth. When in doubt due to various reasons, then the king should resort to financial control measures. It is his duty to give complete information to his subjects about the reasons for imposing additional tax in the period. He has the right to make peace pact with his enemy for the sake of his life. Treasury and military government and State has its roots. In both of these, the importance of fund is more. That's why the king always must keep trying to increase funds.

According to Bhishma, the king should exercise state powers with the help of ministers who have intellectual and morally virtuous. In the 85th chapter of ShantiParv, in order to run the state work smoothly number of ministries has been fixed to thirty-seven. Among them are four Brahmins who know all the subjects and they will be ministers of pure nature. There will be eight Kshatriya ministers who must have attained mastery in the use of weapons. Twenty-one Vaishya who possess immense wealth and three pure-hearted Shudra ministers. Apart from all these a person with knowledge of religious subjects, full of moral qualities should also be appointed as a minister. In ShantiParva the Ministers are expected to exercise self-restraint and work on formulation of policies taking into account the information provided by other ministers and secretaries. And once the policies are formulated, they should be kept strictly confidential.

Opinions by People of the state used to act as a traditional control on the behavior of the kings. According to ShantiParva, the oath taken at the time of the coronation of the king also control his arbitrary behavior. Actually, the King for his irresponsible behaviour used to be answerable to the Ministers, Priests and Public. The despotic king was sometimes even given the death penalty for his extreme behavior.

### 8.3 The treasury

In ShantiParva fund for the reform operation of political and financial system, is considered very important. According to Bhishma, the king has three sources of revenue -

- A) Bali - Revenue arriving out of 1/16<sup>th</sup> of the crops in the field.
- B) Shulka - Taxes collected from Import and Export trade
- C) Dand - Fine collected from the criminals

All these taxes were paid by the subjects in exchange for the protection given to them by the King.

According to ShantiParva if the king out of greed applied the policy that exploits the public and forcefully collects the taxes then he destroys the very foundation of his existence. The King should be like a calf who drinks just the enough milk to satisfy his hunger without causing any harm to his mother cow. If the calf drinks all the milk and causes harm to the cow, the cow will not give him milk in future. Similarly, if excessive revenue from public is collected then in the absence of economic power, the poor people will not be able to bear the burden of tax. Therefore, the king should not adopt the policy of economic exploitation. The king should show his favor to the subjects with promptness and truthfulness because by doing this he will have faith of the people towards him. But if he follows the policy of wealth accumulation, he will become subject to of people's hatred. It is said that the King should work like a bee who delicately collects nectar from the flower without harming the flower.

Tax should be collected gradually and in small amounts. The tax policy should be fair and according to the productivity. The economic policy of the king towards the workers should be compatible with the factors of production and their real economic situation. In other words, there should not be the burden of taxes that their business will get ruined.

**The principles of economic system established in the ShantiParva are summarized as follows -**

1) The king should make full recovery of taxes and dues from agricultural producers and worker. But this work should be done in a judicious manner so that no adverse effects imposed on their industries, and as a consequence of which the economic system of the state may collapse.



2) For workers, the Tax policy should be made carefully, so that the goods used in the production will not have an adverse effect on the industries. Because it will have direct impact on the economy of the state.

3) The state employees engaged in tax collection from the merchant class should consider the cost of production in determination of taxes. The work should be done keeping in mind the entire expenditure incurred in the work

4) The king should stay away from violent methods and take the moderate path.

5) During the economic crisis more stringent policies can be adopted as compared to the normal times, but it should be only for a very limited time. Even in such circumstances Brahmins and Sanyasi (hermits) should be exempted.

6) People who do not live according to the state laws and traditional practices. Bhishma advises the king to confiscate their wealth.

7) During the time of Crisis and war, in order to maintain the state system, Bhishma also allows violence.

The Mahabharata also mentions the accountants and writers who kept records of income and expenditure.

## **8.4 Communication**

Communication has its own important importance in physical, mechanical and social system. In the 27th chapter of ShantiParva, appointment of the chiefs of villages is mentioned. These appointed chiefs will be focal point for communication. There would be one chief per one, ten, twenty, hundred and thousand villages. They should give information of their work to the senior chief above them. Like, a village chief should report to the chief of ten villages, and thus the hierarchy in sequence will continue to move forward. In the end, the chief of Thousand Cities (Sahasrapati) will report further to his senior. Thus, the order of exchange of information will continue. The King was the center of communication system.

## **8.5 Policy of War and Interstate Relations**

The 95th chapter of ShantiParv describes the adoption of the policy of religious conquest by Swayambhu Manu. If the King tries to achieve victory by adopting the path of unrighteousness, then by doing so he will destroy himself. The path of unfair war is adopted by unrighteous and sinful men.

People with pure heart and by adopting the path of religion, can definitely defeat the man of miscreant and vile nature.

The result of unrighteousness is complete destruction. The support of the Varna system is immense in the Mahabharata and it is evident. It is formally stated that only Kshatriya can raise arms on the King.

In case if fight or dispute between two groups and if some Vedic Brahmin wants to mediate in order to establish the peace, then both parties should give up the fight.

According to the 100th chapter of ShantiParva, the most suitable two months for the army to be mobile are Chaitra and Agrahanya, because food is available in abundance in these days. Moreover, the days are not too hot nor too cold. According to Bhishma, enemy in vulnerable state can be attacked. ShantiParva also mentions about taking advice from astrology. The description found in ShantiParva states that. The presence of Saptarshi (Great Bear) in the sky backing the army is considered to be good. (I.e. the army forwarding with Saptarshi in sky behind it.). In the same chapter, Sun is considered more favourable than Venus, and Vayu is considered more favourable than the Sun for the forward movement of the troops. According to Bhishma, People from south are expert in Khadga Yuddha - Sword Fight, and People of East are expert in Gaja Yuddha - Elephant warfare and Gupta are expert in Diplomacy.

Lying on the death bed, the great Kuru Pitamaha gives the example of a bamboo, and says that just as the bamboo cannot be straightened without heating it on a fire, in the same way forgiving the enemy without complete suppression leads him back to the path of enmity.

**Bhishma says in the 80th chapter of ShantiParva that there are four types of Allies/Friends**

a) Sahartha - The Friends or Allies who accept before the King that they will fight the enemy together and divide the state among themselves.

b) Bhajaman - Blood relatives from Father's side

c) Sahaj - relations from the mother's side

d) Krutrim - People who become friends by accepting friendship as a gift of life.

Out of all of these, only a wise and spontaneous friend is the best. Always be suspicious of factitious friends. The king should never be careless

in protecting friends. Believing in humans of unstable nature destroys Dharma and Atha.

**In ShantiParva Bhishma describes about 6 types of Forts/Castle**

- 1) Fort in Desert Land
- 2) Fort on Land
- 3) Fort on Hills and Mountains
- 4) Manmade Forts
- 5) Forts made of Soil
- 6) Forts in forests

According to the 69th chapter of Shantapaiva, when there is a direct attack on the king, In order to save his kingdom, it should be ensured that all the bridges over the rivers are destroyed, and that water cannot be extracted from the wells by adding poison to it. Thus, in order to protect and for the self-defence cruelty is allowed in ShantiParva. Different weapons of Indra are discussed. His most important weapon is Vajra. It was made from the bones of Dadhichi Rishi. Indra had his own Bow and the War Drum.

Yudhishtir put his two questions before Bhishma on matters related to war and treaty; first, if a king attacks a powerless king, how should he deal with this situation? And second, with whom should the king make a treaty and with whom should he fight? Bhishma answered both these questions: It is said that it is appropriate to make a treaty with the enemy to save life. In order to protect the wealth of the state those who form alliance with the enemy and at times Oppose Friends if needed will bear good fruits. Friends who are very fearful and with unstable mental state should be protected. No one in this world is a friend or a foe without any reason.

The truth is that in self-interest enemies and friends become together. Self-interest is so important that because of its enemies become friends and friends may become enemies.

## **UNIT 9 : POLITICAL IDEAS DESCRIBED IN MATSYA PURANA**

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### **9.1 Description of Rajdharma**

The description of 'Rajkriya' and 'Rajdharma' of Matsya Purana is especially important. In this, not only mention has been made of looking after people and charity, but especially practical knowledge of this subject has been given. Although these things have changed a lot in the present scientific era. Instead of fighting with swords and arrows, the time has come to rain bombs from air-planes and to fight with rockets, even then till two to four hundred years ago, these rules and methods of governance and governance were in use for Indian kings. Used to come in ancient times, the entire existence of the state lived on only one king. If he was destroyed by any means, then the whole political system would have been broken into pieces. Therefore, among other things, the king had to always be alert for his own safety. The following description of 'Matsya Purana' is visible in this regard.

"A king should always be free from doubts like a crow. The king should never eat or sleep without examining. Similarly, clothes, flowers, ornaments and other things should be used after examining beforehand. Never be in a crowd. One should not enter or descend into an unknown reservoir, all of which should be first tested by men of faith. It is proper for the king that he should never ride on an unknown elephant or horse and should not come in contact with an unknown woman. He should not reside in the place of Devotsav. He should appoint spies in his own state and in other states as well, who are well-known, intelligent, tolerant of suffering and not afraid of trouble, who should keep informing him about all kinds of secrets. Still, the king should not believe the statement of a single spy. When that thing is supported by the report of two-four spies, then the King should trust it.

There is nothing to surprise or disbelieve in this description. The situation of the rulers who are fighting for other people and stealing the essence of others remains in such danger. Leave the old things, even in the present time, Germany's dictator Hitler had to keep many people in his residence, matching his appearance and similar dress and complexion, for his protection, so that one could not soon recognize the real Hitler and couldn't attack.

Similar security arrangements were maintained by many other rulers of the Balkan region, where there was more emphasis on conspirators and

secret killers. Even now different kinds of cleverness are used to kill such great rulers. To kill the Czar of Russia, the conspirators had prepared a big clock, inside which the dreaded Dynamite bomb was hidden. This clock was secretly installed in a room of the Rajmahal (Vishtar Palace).

At a fixed time, when its bell rang, the bomb exploded and a part of the palace was blown away. When such incidents are possible in this era of public awareness, then it has to be accepted that how much the autocratic rulers of ancient times needed to be careful.

## 9.2 Ancient military system

This is the description of king's physical protection. Now more preparations have to be done for the protection of the state. According to 'Matsya-Purana' there are six types of forts - Dhanudurg, Mahidurg, Nardurg, Vadurg, Jaldurg and Giridurg.

According to circumstances, one type of fort should be built and all types of materials for defense should be collected in it. In this regard, from the list of weapons and other material given by the Puranakar, we can infer a lot about the nature of the wars of ancient times.

"It is necessary to collect all types of weapons in the fort. For this, the king should have bow, arrows, sword, tomar, armor, lath, farsa, parigh, stone, mugdar, trishul, pattish, ax, life, spear, power, chakra It is necessary to collect leather, etc. There should also be arrangements for spade, kshur, bait, grass and fire. There should be a complete collection of fuel and oil.

During the war, food for the army and collection of medicines for the treatment of the injured is also necessary. Describing this, it has been said – "All types of food grains like barley, wheat, moong, urad, rice etc. should be collected. Sun, moonj, lac, iron, gold, silver, gems, clothes etc. all the necessary things, and those not mentioned in this list should be collected by the king.

All kinds of plants and medicines like-Jivkarshan, Kakol, Amalaki, Shaalparni, Mugdarparni, Mashparni, Sariya, Bala, Dhara, Nispronti, Vrishya, Vahti, Kantkarika, Shringi, Shringatki, Droni, Varshabhu, Darm, Renuka, Madhuparni, Vidarikand, Mahakshira, Mahatapa, Sahdei, Katuk, Erand, Parni, Shatavari, Falgu, Sarjaryaashtika, Shukrati Shukraka, Ashmari, Chhatrati Chhatraka, Veerana, Ikshu, Ikshuvikar (Vinegar), Singhi Ashwarodhak, Madhuka, Shatapushpa, Madhulika, Madhuka, Peepal, Tal, Atmagupta, Katufala, Darwina, Rajashirshi, Rajarshap (Mustard), Dhanyaka, Utkata, Kalashak, Padmbeej, Goballi, Madhuvallika, Shitpakini, Kuberakshi, Kakjihva, Urupushpika, Trayusha, Gunjataka, Punarnava, Kaseru, Karu Kashmiri,

Valya, Shaluk, Kesar, Sabatush Dhanya, Shamidhanya, Ksheer, Kshodra, Takra, Oil, Basa, Marrow, Ghrita, Neem, Arishtik, Sura, Asava, Madha, Manda etc. should all be collected.

This list is huge - about four-five times that. Only a few names have been selected, so that the reader may infer that even at that time the physicians had sufficient knowledge of herbs. Even today, big hospitals are kept along with the armies in the battlefield. In which hundreds of doctors and nurses work.

### **9.3 Selection of Qualified State Employees**

But more important than all these things is the selection of qualified state officials and employees. In the very beginning of this episode, it has been said that "even a small work, but it is very difficult to be completed by a single person. Then the state government is a very big and important work. Therefore, Nripati, One should himself select such elite assistants who are brave, of good caste, strong and wealthy. In this regard, the king should keep in mind that he should be a helpful person and a gentleman with good qualities, forgiving, tolerant, enthusiastic, knowledgeable in religion and speaking lovely words.

"The commander is the supreme helper of the king. He is noble, free from chastity, great connoisseur of archery, skilled in the education of elephants and horses, connoisseur of omens, knowledgeable in medicine, grateful, hardworking, tolerant, truthful Be a knower of the law of esoteric elements A person with such special qualities should be made the army chief. The messenger of the king should be such a person who can properly understand the feelings of others. The one who correctly reveals the meaning of his master's statement, the scholar of the language of the country courageous and understanding the situation of the country and time, the king's bodyguard should be ready, brave, firm royal devotee and patient in every way. The Adhikaran (Foreign Secretary) who decides the sandhi and Vighraha should be a scholar of ethics, a scholar of national languages, a knower of virtues and extremely efficient. The head of the Income and Expenditure Department should be a person who is well acquainted with the produce of the country. The head of the kitchen should be a complete connoisseur of culinary science as well as medicine.

The description of the king's duties and state system in 'Matsyapuran' shows that even in the olden times, the life of the kings was not as pleasant and luxurious as the ignorant ordinary people imagine. Undoubtedly, there was a jeweled crown on his head, he used to sit on a golden throne and there

were twenty queens and hundreds of maids in his palace, but he was always in danger of life.

The kings who used to ignore these duties and indulged in misrule by drowning themselves in lust, they often got destroyed and corrupted by the attacks of other kings. Therefore, at that time, the rulers had to take care of public welfare and justice-free behavior, if not for the sake of their own security, so that their position remains strong and they can successfully combat external attacks.

## 9.4 Primacy of Effort

Purankar has also confirmed our above opinion in another way. He has raised the question in a chapter in the context of 'Raj-Dharma' that "Who is greater in Daiva and Purushartha?" In answer to this, Matsya Bhagwan has said that "The fruit that is received by the name of God is also the result of one's previous actions, therefore in the opinion of the scholars, Purusharth is the most important. Even if the fate is unfavorable, it can be defeated by the man.

Those who have the best conduct and are always striving for upliftment, change the adverse fate with effort. It is true that in some instances many people get good results and good fortune without any effort, which is considered to be the magnitude of destiny of previous births.

But if efforts and good deeds are not done even in the present, then that situation usually remains for a short time. That's why we can say that God, Purusharth and Kaal (circumstances) all these together give fruit to man. But in these too, effort should be considered as the main thing, because it has been said–

*Nalas Prapnavantyarthan na ch Daiva Parayan*

*Tasmat Sarvaprayatnen Achareddharmamuttamam //*

"Those who are lazy or those who rely only on divine (fate), they cannot be successful in earning money. That's why one should always follow the best religion (Purusharth) with effort." Those who think that the people of India have been made 'fatalists' by making luck the main thing in the old religious books, they should learn from the above statement of 'Matsya Purana'.

## **UNIT 10 : POLITICAL THOUGHTS DESCRIBED IN MARKANDEYA PURAN**

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### **10.1 The King and the Kingdom**

#### **The Seven Constituents of the Kingdom**

Not adequate commentaries are found related to Politics in Markandeya Puran except a few. Markandeya Puran has more of the social and philosophical significance because It describes mainly about the social and philosophical views rather than the Political views.

However, based on descriptions in some anecdotes; commentaries on Politics are found in 4<sup>th</sup> section of the Markandeya Puran.

As per the mentions, the seven Constituents of the kingdom are -

- 1) The Lord/King 2) The Ministers 3) The Realms 4) The Capital and the Castle
- 5) The treasury 6) The Army / Coercive Power 7) The allies

Kautilya while describing these seven constituents states that if these seven factors are Virtuous, they become asset for the kingdom. These seven constituents become vital organs for each other.

#### **The King :**

According to Markandeya Puran, The King was Kshatriya Linage, but some mentions are found about the The non-Aryan Kings too.( i.e. Kings that belonging to inferior lineage). During this era too, the King belonged to the superior dynasty. In Markandeya Puran the King hold the superior position. He was the Guardian of his subjects and the kingdom, he was of religious inclinations , also the king should possess the Strength.

Religious Kings when became impatient during the wars they used to receive help of the supernatural powers as it was received by Balaashwa -

Whenever the King used to win over the enemies, he became famous with various named awarded to him.

Just like The King Balaashwa became famous by the name "Karandham". Markandeya Puran states about the guardianship of subjects by the king up to seven thousand years. Means The kings ruled the Kingdoms



for long years. The kings once descend the Throne, never again ascend the same.

### **The Coronation :**

Only after the Coronation ceremony , a Kshatriya was announced as "The King". Without the Coronation ceremony he was never called as "The King." Everyone in the kingdom was involved in the Coronation Ceremony. Not only the Gandharvas, Apsaras, native people the kingdom but also the Rivers, The Ocean, Sumeru Mountain and all the Animals and Birds used to bring the required material for the King's Coronation Ceremony and do the Coronation of the King.

### **The First round of the Coronation Ceremony :**

The first round of the Coronation to the King was done by his close relatives and well wishers. Bhagwan Dattatreya (who was known as embodiment of God Vishnu) was the first one to Coronate Kartaveerya Arjun, followed by coronation by the Ocean, Sages and Subjects of the Kingdom to their King.

### **Announcement of the Kings Name :**

After the Coronation ceremony is completed, Name of the King was announced in the entire Kingdom.

"Aghoshayamaasa tada Sthito rajye sa Haihaya" - "And it is announced that; he stays ( as a King) in Haihaya Kingdom,".

Once the king ascends the Throne he realizes his Duties towards his countrymen. He used to make announcements for the welfare of the People, so that all should feel safe and secured in his Kingdom. Just as Arjun declares that other than himself, no one of his subjects shall possess any weapon. He himself will finish the iniquity and protect the Dharma.

### **Education :**

The Kshatriya Prince always obtained Training from a pertinent and qualified teacher. The King used to send the Prince to a learned teacher. Learning Vedas was the first and most integral part in the learning process and Later training about Dhanurved and use of various weapons to be done.

During his learning years, Marut obtained knowledge from the teacher, and he obtained the training about different weapons from sage Bhargava of the Bhrugu Linage.

*Tato Astraani sa Jagraah Bhargavaad BhruguSambhavaaat |*

*Vinayaavanato Vipra Guro Preetiparayana||*

King Dama received training of weapons and destruction from the Great Giant Dundumi, and He learned about Vedas from Sage Shakti and obtained training of Yoga from Ashtishena.

## **10.2 Virtues of a King**

“Shadgunyaviditatmana” is the word used for a King in Markandeya Puran. Means a King must possess the following six qualities -

- 1) Sandhi - Treaty
- 2) Vighraha -break a treaty and start a war,
- 3) Yaan - Mobilization of troops
- 4) Asan - Positioning the forces near the enemy
- 5) Dwaidheebhaav - Dual Policy
- 6) Samabhaav - joining hands with those who have similar aim.

It is only with these qualities the glory of the king grows ; because increasing wealth and gaining prosperity in the dominion is known as a sign of an efficient and successful King.

### **Being Truthful:**

Being Truthful is a great virtue of a King. In Markandeya Puran we get the story of the King Harishchandra in details, which is an important example of a Truthful King.

### **Being Learned:**

A king had knowledge of all four Vedas, he knew all the sciences. The King was capable of performing SahasraYadnya and donations to Brahmins. All these are Virtues of a wealthy and well qualified King.

### **Being Kind:**

A King should be Kind. A king should be kind towards the Old, children and needy people, If not he is merely a demon not a Human.

### **Yogi:**

A king should be a Yogi. Without the power of being a Yogi, the King cannot perform his duties. Raja Kartaveerya Arjun advises to ascend the throne only after obtaining the Yogitva.

### **Strategic:**

A king should possess adequate knowledge of Politics. The King should consult his ministers while taking any strategic decisions.

*PraagaatmaMantrinashchaiva Tato Bhrootvaa Mahibrutaa |*

*Dnyeyashchananatara pouraa virudheta tatoribhi ||*

The King should win his own heart first. Then of his ministers and servants, and relatives. Only after winning the confidence of his people He should face the enemy, or else his defeat is sure to happen.

## **10.3 Duties of a King**

It is the Kings duty to work in the best interest of his people. If anyone flawed in his duty, It is the king to punish such a person even if it is his own Son. If required he would fight with his Son to to control the repression.

The defeated King would treat the conqueror King with respect by offering him worship and the " Arghya" ( offerings of certain types to show the respect); just as King VishalRaj worshiped King Karandham and offered him "Arghya". If the King is not able to fulfill his duties he becomes and sinful defaulter in his Kingdom.

In Markandeya Puran, In his discourse on politics related to his kingdom, King Madalasa explains to his Son the well defined concepts of rights and Duties of the King.

King Madalasa told his Son Alark the importance of Politics, religious Teaching ( Dharma )and duties of a King.

### **Recreation and Interest :**

As said in Markandeya Puran it is the King's first duty to keep everyone happy. A king has equal perspective towards enemies and friends, his Sons and the Subjects. It is considered appropriate for the king to be dire and frightful like Yama (Yama- God of Death) towards the enemies and pleasant and calming like Moon towards Gentlemen and Noble minded.

As the Sun and the Moon look at the Earth from above, the King should look at the welfare of his subjects. The King should be as fiery as Sun and as calming as Moon.

### **Agglomerative :**

Just like an ant the king should be Agglomerative. As the time goes on the king should collect and accumulate essential materials . The King has to be extensive and cumulative too. Madalasa states the example of a Shalmalee tree seed ( Bombax Tree) for being extensive and cumulative.

### **Sacrifice of the Addictions :**

Madalasa explained to his Son Alark, about the seven habits a king must stay away from. Following are the seven addictions the King must avoid - use of Bitterly Language, Harsh Punishments, wasting wealth, Alcoholism, uncontrolled desires, wasting Time in Hunting and Gambling.

### **Character building :**

A King Should learn Character building from all the birds and animals too.

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*Kaak Kokil Brunganam Baka Vyaal Shikhandinam |*

*Hansa Kukkut Lohanam Shikshet Charit Nrupa||*

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A king should Learn from the following Animals and Birds - the Crow is never Lazy. A Cuckoo gets the work done from others. As the bee selects nectar from the flowers the King should select only good things. King should be as agile as a deer. A Swan can distinguish between water and milk, similarly the king should have rational thinking. A King must wake up early morning just as a cockerel. As the Peacock spread his beautiful feathers, The king should spread his wealth. King should be as strong as Iron.

### **Conduct :**

As stated by Madalasa, A king is protector of the earth and he should be inspired by the following Five Gods for good Conduct and behaviour. -

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*ShakraarkYamaSomana Tadwadamahirpati|*

*Rupaani Panch Kurveet Mahipaalana Karmaani ||*

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God Indra Inspires king to do monetary and non monetary donations. The Sun inspires for fair collection of taxes. God Yama Inspires to have perspective of equality. Moon inspires king to have peaceful relations. Wind inspires king to keep an eye on behaviour of his close relatives and friends.

### **Seeking blessings for welfare of his subjects :**

In order to be responsible and dutiful about welfare of his subjects, A king must seek boon and blessings from Saints and Sages.

To get blessings from Saints and Sages, A King must worship them.

King Kartyaveerya worshiped Dattatreya and received blessings to become a noble King.

### **Promulgation of the Dharma :**

A king must allow every person in the kingdom; the freedom to follow his religious practices. Everyone should respect each other's religion and consult the Wise and the Intellectuals when required.

### **The State :**

The King has the defined territory. All sections of the state/ territory had the ultimate governance by the King. King Kartaveerya Arjun did not allow anyone else to possess any weapon, He protected all - the Towns, People, Shepherds, Guards, Saints and Brahmins and all the Kings.

### **Updates of losses and Profits :**

The King should know about incurring losses In the state. The King should be aware of losses if any in agriculture, education and Land. Similarly The King should be aware of the profits arising out of these too. The King must make sure that no enemy state is taking advantages of the growth and prosperity in his territory.

### **Protecting the Aggrieved :**

It is the duty of the king to protect the aggrieved people. If the king is fails to do so, he loses the worldly and non-worldly pleasures. He loses

the benefits he earned out of The good Karma of donations, Meditation and Yajnya ( Yajnya - Performing the Holy rituals in sacrificial fire).

### **Protecting the Refugees :**

It is the duty of the King to Protect refugees and those who seek forgiveness. King Avikshit protected all the Nagas who came seeking protection.

*Sharanaagataastav Vayam Prasaad Kriyataa Nrup|*

It is the duty of the king to protect the Refugees who come seeking protection and shelter. Even if the enemy King seeks protection and becomes refugee, The King must protect him else, he becomes subject to criticism and rebuke.

### **Attitude towards the enemies :**

A king should behave like an Owl when it comes to his enemies. An Owl kills all his enemies without any affectedness.

### **Collection of Taxes :**

The King used to collect taxes based on income of people.

Expenditure of the state and remuneration of the King was considered on the collected taxes. For example, The Vaishyas used to pay the 1/12<sup>th</sup> part of their income as Tax, so that they can get protection from the soldiers for their businesses against thieves and looters. The shepherds used to sell Milk and Milk products and used to pay 1/6<sup>th</sup> part of their income as Tax. Farmers used to sell their agricultural products and pay the king, the 1/6<sup>th</sup> of their income as Tax.

The king never collected taxes from the Cows and Brahmins. The king used to spend 1/6<sup>th</sup> of the collected taxes for Yajnya Rituals. If the king collects excess taxes from people's income, he was considered as defaulter or thief. The King considered destined to hell if he fails to protect his people after collecting taxes from them.

### **Remuneration of the King:**

The noblemen would decide remuneration of the King. 1/6<sup>th</sup> of the total collected taxes would be given to king as his remuneration.

Any amount in excess, apart from his remuneration he was not allowed to spend.

### **Announcements :**

Any important messages or notices to be conveyed, the king gave orders for making Announcements. Such announcements are named as "Ghosh".

### **Justified Legal Systems :**

Even towards an idiot and unwise, the King must be kind.

A stupid and uneducated person will be better than the King; if the King without knowing the crime or mistakes punishes a wise and learned man.

Anyone who become obstruction in the welfare of the society, were considered deserving death sentence by the King; even if such anti social persons be his Friends, relatives, father and Teachers.

## **10.4 Security**

### **Army :**

To keep the enemies cornered, and to protect the kingdom; the Kings always maintained Military forces. In Markandeya Puran four types of Military forces are described. ( Chaturani Sena) Troops of warfare trained elephants, horses and Armed Soldiers were part of the military forces.

### **Security Guards :**

The Security guards protected the travelling businessmen, commuters, and other travellers from thieves and looters. Their salaries were fixed and paid by the King.

### **War :**

Following reasons of war are found in Markandeya Puran. The King would fight a war if his kingdom is attacked by the enemy. If a king loses control over his kingdom, the Neighbouring King would acquire such territory. Most of the wars happened to take revenge.

Fight with Birds and Rakshas is mentioned in Markandeya Puran.

To avenge the death of his brother, a Bird named Kandhar fought with Vidhyup Rakshas. Adibak war is also mentioned in Markandeya Puran.

Apart from these, wars between Gods and Demons are mentioned too.

There was a war fought among Sons of Aditi and Sons of Diti. Descriptions of use of various weapons, and Military forces is found in Markandeya Puran.

Delusive tricks or Magic tricks (Maya) were used in wars. The demons (Rakshas) were known to be expert in use of such tricks.

More to these examples - in the further sections of the Markandeya Puran, detailed description is given of a war between Goddess Devi and the demon named Mahishasur.

### **Weapons (Astra) :**

Many types of Weapons are described in Markandeya Puran. Some are related to wars and some are divine weapons. Before the usage, the weapons were worshiped with rituals using scents, garlands, dhoop deep etc. Weapons were kept in the innermost section of the Palace.

### **Prachandastra :**

A Special type of divine Astra is described in Markandeya Puran, named as Prachandastra. Manorama gave Prachandastra with Nivantran Mantra to Swarochi. Prachandastra was used to destroy the evil spirits.

### **Agneya Astra :**

Agneyastra is a weapon described in Markandeya Puran is having cosmic power of Fire. Krujumbh was killed using Agneyastra.

### **Samvartak Astra :**

King Marut used Samvartak Astra on Nagas, to eliminate the entire NagaKul ( Naga Clan).

### **Kalastra :**

To counter attack the Samvartak Astra and to Protect the NagaKul Marut's Father Avikshit used this weapon on Marut. A weapon named Kalastra was an arrow to be mounted on Sambhavat bow.

### **Mushal :**



This huge weapon was made by vishwakarma. This Mushal was also called as Saunanda. The weapon would loose its powers if any woman touches it, and next day the Mushal would regain the powers.

Mentions about a special Garden named Vetaspatra is found in Markandeya Puran.

In addition to Mushal, various weapons are mentioned too, like - Nistrish, Shakti, Shool, Farasha, Baan, Khadga, Dhanush, Godha, Asi Gada, Dhaal, Talawar, Danda, Mala, Shara, Mudgara and Rushti.

## UNIT 11 : SHUKRANEETI

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Shukraneeti is a very important contribution after Kautilya Arthashastra. It is the most notable scripture of two thousand verses written on Hindu governance after Somdev Suri. It has also been taken from predecessors like Mahabharata, Manu and Kamandak and also indirectly from Kautilya Arthashastra. The author has described it as a summary of the ethics created by Brahma for the benefit of mankind.

### **Dandaneeti (Policy for Punishment) :**

Shukra has also accepted the importance of research, trilogy, dialogue and punishment policy. In Anvikshiki there are Nyayashastra and Vedanta etc., in the (Veda) Trilogy there are Dharma, Adharma, Kamana and Moksha, Artha and Anartha are in dialogue and justice and injustice come in punishment policy. The suppression of the wicked is called punishment, that is why the king is the form of punishment and the policy of the king is called punishment, because justice is called policy. In the words of Dr. Beni Prasad, 'Shukra conceives politics (ethics) as the art of statecraft, the definite object of which is the promotion of general happiness.

### **Social System :**

Shukra has also recognized the Varna and Ashram system. But instead of taking birth as its basis, it has considered qualities and deeds. This was indicative of his progressive outlook.

### **State :**

Shukra has also considered 'Rajya' as Saavayav or Saptanga and has described it like a tree. The king is the root of the state tree and the ministers are the branches (smardhas). The leader of the army is the branch, the army is the leaf, the people are the flower and the work of the earth is the fruit, the land is the seed.'

### **King :**

In the opinion of Shukra, the importance of the king is the highest among all the parts of the state. He is the head of the body in the form of state and the root of the tree in the form of state. The king is the reason for the growth of this world (kingdom) and is acceptable to the elders, he gives pleasure to the eyes like the moon to the ocean. If there is no good and righteous king, then the people will be destroyed like 'a boat in the sea without a sailor'.

According to Shukra, according to the three qualities of nature (Sat, Raja and Tam), there are also three types of kings. The king who has a lot of Tamas guna, that king cannot be considered as God. He will be considered demonic. The king who is Rajogun dominant can also not get the place of God, he will be considered as human. But the king in whom good quality is predominant, only that king will attain divinity.

A king who has the seven qualities of father, mother, teacher, brothers, Kubera, Yama etc. is a king, not others. The kings who are devoted to Dharma are part of the gods and other kings are part of the demons, who destroy Dharma and cause pain to the subjects.

Shukra has told eight types of conduct of kings - Punishment of the wicked, maintenance of subjects, performance of sacrifices like Rajasuya etc., increase of treasury by justice, making kings tax payers, killing of enemies, giving charity and increasing the expansion of land.

The kings who did not increase the army and did not make other kings tax payers and did not look after the people properly, those kings are like an unfruitful mole. Shukra, like Kautilya, has presented a detailed form of the routine and security of the king. Even in succession etc., Shukra has recognized the traditional principle only.

### **Council of Ministers:**

Shukra has also explained the importance of ministers to the king. According to Shukraniti there should be eight ministers – Sumantra, Pandit, Mantri, Pradhan, Sachiv, Amatya, Prangivak and Pratinidhi who have been described as the eight natures of the king. Shukra has declared the priest above these eight. After this, the place of the messenger has been told. In fact, Shukra has accepted the ten natures of the king, namely - the eight ministers, priests and messengers.

Shukra has explained the qualifications of the ministers, their duties, the system of advice etc. according to Kautilya. Although there is a description of various chief officers of the king in Shukra Niti, there is no clear mention of the Council of Ministers. Shukra has given a detailed description of the structure and arrangement of the royal court.

Ultimately, the essence of Shukra's thoughts about the king is as follows - 'The king is a servant of the subjects in a way and the tax collected from the subjects is his salary.' Shukra has given special emphasis on the principle of consultation and consultation among ministers and councilors. The members represent public opinion in a sense.

**Tax Method :**

According to Kautilya, Shukra has also accepted penalty, land and fees as sources of income. Regarding the expenditure of that tax income, Dr. Beni Prasad writes Shukra's opinion - 'Half of the income should be deposited in the fund, half of the remaining i.e., 1/4 of the total income should be spent on the army. 1/12th of the total income should be spent on the salary of the chaudharis of the villages. The rest should be divided in equal parts i.e. 1/28 of the total income and spent on charity, public entertainment, salaries of officers and personal expenses of the king.'

**Local Administration :**

Shukra has a concise rendering of local administration. According to him, the officer of ten villages is called Nayak, the ruler of hundred villages, Samant. The tax officer of ten thousand villages has been called Ashapala or Swarashtra. The institutions of Paur (city) and Paur are also mentioned in Shukra Niti. The construction, planning and administration of the city has been discussed in detail.

**Jurisdiction :**

According to Shukra, the sources of state laws are Dharmashastras, practices of castes, regions and categories and orders of the king. Shukra has based the punishment system on the seriousness of the crimes, the character of the humans who commit the crimes and the different types of punishments.

The description of judicial process is almost according to Kautilya's Arthashastra. In brief, the judicial system of Shukra can be written in this way-

- (1) The hearing of the case should not be held in private but in the open.
- (2) The king alone should not pronounce his decision.
- (3) In the trial of the cases, decent people, lawyers, witnesses and evidence should be used.
- (4) The judicial officer called Pranvivak has an important part in the judicial process. Shukra has given the details of this - the deceitful letters written by the witnesses and the prayer of the plaintiff defendants for the newly presented behavior or fabricated behavior, their rational reasoning and reasoning to the essence of reasoning, inference, comparison, folk and scriptures in the assembly. The officer named Samya should think by being stable.

He should also see how many past times officer named Samya have dealt with such a subject. The one who puts such things in front of the king is Pranvivak.

(5) The pandit, who according to Shukra is the king's law minister, advises the king about laws.

(6) In the different levels of justice, the clans come first, then the categories, then the gunas, then the officers of the king, then the presidents, and finally the king himself.'

### **Interstate Relations :**

Like Kamandak and Kautilya, Shukra has adopted diplomatic measures like Rajmandal, Shadgunya Siddhanta, Sama, Dand, Bheda etc. Shukra has also described the kings as enemies, friends, moderate and neutral.

The special thing is about the attitude of Shukra to interstate relations. Dr. Ghoshal writes - 'Venus justifies the sacrifice of morality for the fulfillment of political objectives. Following the reigning perspective of the Arthashastra, Shukra teaches the king to follow a policy of distrust towards all others and justifies it on the basis of the greedy nature of man.

Shukra supports a policy of war towards the enemy, the basis of which is deception and tyranny. The summary is that, while Shukra generally believes in the primacy of ethics over politics, it has in practice helped to perpetuate the long-standing Arthashastra tradition according to which politics is more or less separate from ethics.'

## UNIT 12 : POLITICAL SCIENCE IN CLASSICAL LITERATURE

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### 12.1 Definition of Politics

Politics is state related policy. There are two terms in politics – state and policy. The term 'state', from Rajan + Yat It is consistent. Its literal meaning is (area) of the king. Thus state refers to the territory or union of the king. The word neevat is formed from the root 'ni' (to give instructions or to display magav) by adding the suffix ktiin. The meaning of policy is 'Higher instruction' Thus the word meaning of politics is 'state-related instruction'

Four elements of political state - The system of land, public, government and sovereignty is the policy. It facilitates the mandate of the state and its functions. It is a directive to conduct properly. It is a knowledge of what is right or wrong in matters related to the state. When the policy is inappropriate, the state is destroyed and when it is appropriate the existence of the state remains firm. Hence it is the act of controlling and dominating the power of the state.

Politics affects every aspect of the state i.e. the society, Social behavior, governance and the foreign policy. The Policy completely covers the entire state and also the adjoining regions Therefore its territory is not only limited to the land, population, government and sovereignty of the concerned state but it extends to the other states too.

Ethics, Truth, Honesty, Obligation, Charity, Protecting, Developing, Protection and generating a sense of responsibility etc. are the qualities of the Politics.

The four basic elements of politics are -

- (1) Religious and ethical foundation.
- (2) Establishing the relationship between the individual and the society.
- (3) To maintain the freedom of all.
- (4) Maintaining the democratic method.

Politics in ancient India was based on the Saptangs of the state. It included all the virtues like morality etc. It had four parts – Sama, Dama, Bheda, and Danda to carry out every function of the State. Whether the governance is internal or external the combination of all these four is inevitable. The King/ruler has to manage every work of the state. For a successful governance the King/Ruler first should manage with Sama (by the peaceful way), if not then he should get the desired result by paying the price (by giving something in exchange/Money). If the desired result still not done then he should apply the Divide and Rule strategy, the last thing he should apply is the Danda or Punishment to get the work done. With the use of these strategic ways, there remains no fear of anarchy in the state. Due to the strength of the state other states too do not dare to raise attacks on it.

'Politics' is related to policy and religion. In fact, policy, politics and religion are of the same religion, except the region. The scope of policy is limited to the individual. The policy says that the citizen should be 'ideal'. Politics has scope to the entire region. Politics creates an ideal state. Scope of the Religion is greater than the Policy and Region. 'Dharma' aims at the ideal state of the whole society including the individual and the state. In fact, the nature or quality of all three is the same. The aim of all three is the same. Ethics is the Primary concept in all three.

It is clear from the word Politics that it is closely related to 'policy' or 'morality'. Prabhu Ram insisted Bharat to adhere strictly to the Policy while governing the state work. Politics is closely related to the Dharma. In the Valmiki Ramayana the importance of the relation between Dharma and politics is mentioned on many occasions. It is specified in the Ayodhya Kand that the ruling King who follows the Principles of Dharma while taking care of his subjects, receives place in heaven.

'Politics' is the policy of the state related to ethics and religion. Its purpose is to spread morality in the state, to Protect it and making people of the state as ideal citizens; and by doing so establish an Ideal State.

### **Various names of Politics**

Many names have been used for politics. Kaukilya has called it Dandaneeti. In Ramayana, the term 'Rajdharma' is used for this. The 'Rajdharma' used in Manusmriti is also another word used for politics. Mahabharata used names "Rajdharma" and "Rajyashastra" for politics. Bhartruhaari used the word Nrupaneeti. Thus, politics is known by different name.

## Importance of Politics

Along with the creation of states, politics must have emerged. Basis of the Politics is responsibility of the state. According to Kautilya, this is the principle of Yoga-Kshem of all the disciplines. It is considered as Provider of whatever is missing, Protector of the Gains, Increasing the Saved and converter of the misused into good opportunities. It is also the basis of the success of social behaviour (Lok-Yatra). Having said this, It is clear that the knowledge of politics is essential for the achievement of the state, its protection and its progress. Good social behaviour based on this (Lok Yatra) increases its importance even more. This is the reason why the disciples of Shukracharya consider "Dandaneeti" as Politics. According to them Politics includes all disciplines of social sciences (Aanvikshaki, Trayi and Varta), because when the state systems run smoothly, all the knowledge streams work positively.

However, advanced the religion may be, the religion, and all knowledge will decline with the decline in Politics. Keeping in view the importance of politics, the Mahabharata specifies that all forms of self-sacrifice can be seen in politics, all learning merges in politics, all knowledge is included in politics and all the world is focused on politics.

In fact, politics is the base pillar of the state. If his policy is not determined in the state, then the state becomes non-existent. Determination of politics is indispensable for the operation of the state and the law of the state. Politics is important to make the nation, its development and prosperity and for the creation of an ideal state.

## 12.2 Brief outline of the function of politics in Sanskrit literature

### Political Elements in the Vedas

From the very beginning of the creation of literature, the work related to politics has earned its place in the literature. Vedas are considered to be the oldest texts of our culture and literature. We see that even in Vedic literature detailed description of state regulations are found. Rigveda is considered to be the most ancient of the Vedas. Political thoughts are also visible in the presented book.

Two Sukta of the Rigveda (10.173, 174) are important from the point of view of political ideas. In these the appointment of King by election process by the subjects is described. Sukta of the Atharvaveda (7.87-88) also deals with concluding of the Kingship by the King. There is a detailed discussion of the reincarnation of the king and the conclusion by the subjects in two verses.



(3.3 and 3.4) of the Atharwaveda. There is also an indication of political organization in the form of Sabha and Samiti. Thus, many references are present in Vedic Texts on Political thoughts and ideas.

### **Politics in Brahman Texts**

There is a detailed discussion of political elements in the Brahmin texts as well. Descriptions of the coronation of the king and mention of his Pledge/vows, Rajasuya and Ashvamedha Yajnya as the king's responsibility, the king, his fighters, priests etc. mention of eleven 'Ratna' (11 Gems of the Kingdom), officers, and many ruling types such as 'Bhojya, Swarajya, Empire, and State are important from the point of view of political ideas. Political elements have also been discussed in Taittiriya and PanchaVisha Brahmin texts. It is clear that the Vedic Literature has clear mentions of political thoughts and ideas.

### **Political Thought in Ramayana and Mahabharata**

Political ideas are also found in the Epics Ramayana and Mahabharata, which are called the ancient poetic texts of Classical Sanskrit literature. Ramayana has descriptions indicating the seven parts of the state and details about parts of the state. Political ideas have been elaborately discussed in the Mahabharata. The Shanti Parva is important from the point of view of interpretation of Political views. In this there is excellent explanation of Rajdharma. In addition to this the Sabha Parva in Chapter 5 has ideologies of the governance, Adi Parva in Chapter 142 has descriptions of the weapons, Sabha Parva in Chapter 32 and Vana Parva in Chapter 25,32,33,150 has thoughts on strategies of disaster Management and contingency planning. All the descriptions related to the subject are through the medium of stories.

## **12.3 Freelance work on politics**

It is said in the Mahabharata that more than one lakh verses are composed by Bramha on Principles of Politics. These compositions were edited successfully by Vishalaksha (Shiv), Mahendra, Brihaspati and Kavya (Shukra). Names of the Pioneers of Political Science such as Manu, Prachetas, Bharadwaj and Gaurjshira etc. and the scriptures like Vaishalaksha, Vahadantak, Barhvaspatya etc. are also specified in the Mahabharata. Scriptures of the above mentioned Pioneers are not available today but still it is clear that the origin and conceptualization of the Political thoughts initiated in India.

Manusmriti, YajnyawalkyaSmriti, ParasharSmriti, ShukraNeeti etc are important texts on Politics.

The collection of detailed and important views on the decisions of politics, are found in Kautilya's Arthashastra. The seven aspects (Saptanga) of the state is the basis of the Kautilya Arthashastra. It is written clearly that the body in the form of a state becomes well-functioning and perfect when all the seven aspects or parts of the state work together. In his book he acknowledged and criticized the views by other scholars like – Bharadwaja (Drona), Vishalaksha (Shiv), Pishan (Narad), Kaunakadanta (Bhishma), Vatavyadhi (Udhdhav), Bahadantiputra (Indra) and Parashar. Kautilya's political ideas are very advanced. Apart from his thoughts, new elements were not included in the subject texts in later times. After the works of Kautilya text on economics named Kamandakiya Neetisar came to light. Which is the abbreviated form of Kautilya's work. Panchatantra was composed by VishnuSharma with political ideas. This book is also the essence of economics, as we see it in the text today.

Later the Jain thinker Somadevasuri's (660 AD) "Neetivakyamrut" is also an abridgement of earlier political ideas. "Shukraneeti" is the next text on Politics. It has the special importance from the point of view of governance related ideas. It deals with foreign policy, war, justice, while discussing the duties of the king, ministers and other officials. Another text on Politics is "Barhaspatya Arthashastra", which also interprets the previous ideas.

Substantial mentions of Political thoughts and ideas are found in Puranas too. AgniPurana, GarudaPurana, MatsyaPurana, MarkandeyaPurana etc. has stories mentioning political thoughts.

Many books on life and religion were written. Political ideas are also found in these texts. The important contemporary texts on Political Science are,

- a) "Someswar's Abhilashitartha Chintamani" - (First four Sections),
- b) Bhoj's "YuktiKalpataru"
- c) Laxmidhar's "RajaneetiKalpataru"
- d) AnnaBhatta's "Neetichandrika"
- e) DevanBhatta's "Rajaneetikand"
- f) Chandeshwar's "RajaneetirRatnakar"
- g) Neelakanth's "NeetiMayukh" and,
- i) Mitramishra's "RajaneetiPrakash" .

In all these, there is more mention of thoughts related to God than politics, But still the description of thoughts related to king, minister, Fort, treasury and home and foreign policy etc. important from the point of view of Politics.

There is discussion of political ideas in texts like DharmaSutra and Smriti as well, though these texts are written from religious point of view but there is a detailed description of the activities related to the state and the king.

## **12.4 Politics in Sanskrit Poetry and Drama**

Sanskrit poems, compositions and dramas also contain political ideas. "PratidnyaYougandharayan" by Bhas, " RaghuVansh and Malavikagnimitra" by Kalidas, "Hitopadesh" by Narayan Pandit, "Kadambari and Harshacharitam" by Banabhatta, "Dashakumaracharita" by Dandi, "Rajatarangini" by Kalhan, "Kiratarjuniya" by Bharavi, "ShishupalVadh" by Magh etc. have mentions about Political thoughts.

Apart from Sanskrit, Literature in Pali, Prakrut and Apabhhransh languages also have expressed political thoughts. " AcharangSutra" written in Prakrut Language, "DeerghNikaya, ChullaVagg, DivyaVadan and Jatak" in Pali Language have description about Indian Political thoughts.

## **12.5 Politics in Inscriptions and Coins**

The copper plates and inscriptions of ancient India have also earned importance and fame by mentioning political decisions. They express views about the functions of the state, some instructions about international relations are mentioned too.

Ancient seals and coins also mention about ancient Indian politics. Evidence of existence of the Republics of Shivi, Malav, Arjunayan, Kuned, Yodheya etc. is clear with the inscriptions on seals and coins.

In this way political ideas were elaborated independently through literature in Sanskrit literature and inscriptions.

## **12.6 Work of Critics on Politics**

Apart from the original work on politics, much of the critical work related to it is also available. This work is now happening at a faster pace.

Based on the original Sanskrit literature related to the political ideas mentioned in the texts such as Vedas, Brahmanas, Epics, Smritis, Puranas,

poems and dramatists etc. scholars have written the critics, and this work has been done by Indian and foreign scholars.

Eastern scholars were of the view that Indians lacked political ideas. Without knowing the facts famous scholars have pointed out this deficiency in Indians. Prof. Dunning in his work 'A History of Political Theories, Ancient and Medieval', In the foreword he has written that the eastern Aryans have followed their politics in the atmosphere of spiritual science and divine science and metaphysics in which it is today buried has never been freed from it. Similarly in 1856 MaxMullar has written in his "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature (page 30,31) - "Indians never knew the feeling of nationalism; the country of Hindus was the country of philosophers". Similarly Grown accusing Indian Politics wrote that," The eastern states were primarily responsible for collecting taxes." Senart has called Indians devoid of thoughts of state or homeland. In their opinion the ideas of Indians could not expand the political constitution. This conclusion from the views of the above scholars turns out that the Indian people have no say in political decisions, but these thoughts are baseless. These ideas emerged Due to the lack of study of Indian scriptures by ancient scholars. The statements of these scholars became warning to the burning consciousness of the Indians and the Indian scholars and their attention turned to political work. In the last three decades of the 19th century Bhagwan Lal Indraji, R.G. Bhandarkar, R. L. Mitra and B. G. Tilak expounded and rejected the statements of the above scholars. These scholars have studied the past history of their country through research in many forms, of their time, of their country tried to create a forceful position for political and social progress. At the same time Indian research started in the subject of the past and History.

In 1864 P.N. Singh clarified in an article that people have misconceptions about the methods of governance in ancient India due to ignorance. Regarding this fact, A. C. Das expressed his views in an article said, 'Local self-government was better in ancient India than the British rule.'

in 1902 AD As a result of the discovery of economics by Kautilya and in 1906 after being published by Sama Shastri, the search for ancient Manuscripts started. As a result, the descriptive and critical contribution of ancient Indian politics started.

At the same time by P. Jaiswal the most important work of ancient Indian politics was done. and on Indian politics in 1924 an important book named 'Hindu Polity' came out. In this book the democratic system in ancient India its trend and importance were highlighted.

From 1916 AD to 1925 AD important research works were done on ancient Indian politics. Many articles and books were written on Indian political thought. In 1916, P.N. Banerjee's book 'Public Administration in Ancient India' was published. In this the ancient Indian system of governance was called constitutional. During the same time K.V. Rangaswamy Iyengar's 'Some Aspects of Ancient Indian Polity' came into light. In 1918, R. C. Majumdar in his work 'Corporate Life in Ancient India' explains that political culture was in an advanced stage in ancient India. In the year 1920, N. N. La's 'Inter State Relations in Ancient India' came into light. In 1921, N. N. La in his second classic book, 'Aspects of Ancient Indian Polity', discusses in detail the form of religion in ancient Hindu polity. In the year 1922 B. K. Sarkar's 'Political Institutions and Theories of the Hindus' published. In this book, the author explained the influence of religion on politics and made it clear that the Hindu state were operated as per 'Dharma'. In 1923 AD, U. N. Dhodal's 'History of Hindu Philosophical Theories' was published. Dhodal refuted the misleading views of foreign writers on Indian politics. In 1925 AD, D.R. Bhandarkar in his lectures, 'Some Aspects of Ancient Hindu Polity' quoted the opinions of Dunning, Max Mueller and Bloomfield and refuted them. He said that Dunning has no knowledge about eastern countries. These lectures of Bhandarkar came in the form of a book in 1926.

Thereafter B. R. R. Dixitar completed and published his research work 'Hindu Administrative Institutions' in 1927. He made it clear that there was no lack of nationalism and patriotism in ancient India, "Digvijay" the victories have proven it.

In the same way, scholars have also discussed about local self-governance and international rules in ancient India. The submitted critical work of R. K. Mukarjee, 'Local government in Ancient India', 'The political activities related to the Rural and central government', came to light. Similarly, P. N. Banerjee's 'International Law and Custom in Ancient India' was also published. According to him the ancient Indians had knowledge of the international rules and regulations. In 1925, S. B. Vishwanath's 'International Law in Ancient India' makes it clear that ancient Indians were aware of the rules of war.

During the year 1925 AD And between 1930 AD, there was a lot of research work done on ancient Indian politics. N. C. Bandyopadhyay's two books 'Discourse of Hindu Polity and Political Theories' and 'Kautilya' were published. In the first book he made it clear that tyrannical power was not known in ancient India. In the book 'Kautilya' he mentioned that Kautilya used to dream of a true nationalist king. In 1928 AD Beni Prasad's 'State in Ancient India' and 'Government in Ancient India', these two books were published.

In 1931 S. K. Iyyengar in his 'Evolution of Hindu Administrative Institutions in South India' discussed the principles of governance in India. In 1926, an important work 'Contributions to the History of Hindu Revenue System' by U. N. Dhodhal published and it threw light on the theories about the ancient tax system.

In the same way, critical work on Indian politics continued in the year 1932. B. R. R. Dikshitar's 'Mauryan Polity' was published. In the year 1938, H.N. Sinha's work 'Sovereignty in Ancient Indian Polity' published and in the year 1941 P. C. Dhama's 'Ramayana Polity' was published. Thus, work has now started on each and every aspect of Indian politics. In the year 1941, K.K. A. Neelkanth Shastri's 'The Place of Arthashastra in the History of Indian Polity' was published. In 1944 AD Jagdishlal Shastri's 'Political thought in Puranas' in the year 1932 AD. Studies of Neelkanth Shastri's 'Studies in Chola History and Administration' and 'The Theory of Pre Muslim Indian Polity', in 1934 AD, R. D. Banerjee's 'International Law and Custom in Ancient India', In 1937, P. C. Ramaswamy's 'Indian Political Theories' in 1946 by S. S. Altekar's 'State and Government in Ancient India', In the year 1952 B. R. R. Dikshitar's 'The Gupta Polity' in 1653 AD, M.B. Krishna Rao's 'Studies In Kautilya', in 1650 AD H. C. Chowdhary's 'Political History of Ancient India', in 1958 AD H.L. Chatterjee's 'International Law and Interstate Relations in Ancient India', In 1656 AD R. S. Shama's 'Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India', In 1963 AD, Bhaskar Saletore's 'Ancient Indian Political thought and Institutions', in 1965 AD B. B. Mishra's 'Polity in AgniPurana', in 1965 AD Harihar Nath KTripathi's 'State and Judiciary in Ancient India. In 1971, Dr. Ramashray Sharma's, 'A Socio-Political Studies of the Valmiki Ramayan etc came to light. Similarly, a large amount of work on political science and history were published.

Similarly, a large amount of political work is being published and it becomes clear from the observation of this critical work on politics that Indians were aware of political ideas from the very beginning and they had enough political knowledge.

## **12.7 Politics and Valmiki Ramayana**

Poetry is capable to give knowledge of various elements related to the society through a story. Through Ram Katha thoughts are expressed in Valmiki Ramayana about the topics of contemporary Indian culture, religion, philosophy, politics, etc., This work mainly deals with the activities of the kings. The basis of the activities of the Kings is Politics. Therefore, political views are mentioned extensively in the text. In Ramayana the king, the officials, the lords, the subjects and even the Saints and the Sages were affected by the influence of politics. Political ideas are seen scattered

throughout the work. In this from the point of view of the Politics the following are important -

- 1) Political Advice by Ram to Bharat
- 2) Shurpanakha's statement to Ravan for being careless in knowing the status of subjects
- 3) Maricha's narration to Ravan Presenting the true form of politics,
- 4) Statement by Hanuman to Ravan
- 5) Statement by Bhibhishan to Ravan and Statement by Malyawan to Ravan
- 6) Kumbhakarn's discussion with Ravan
- 7) Instructions by Bhibhishan to Prahasta and Ministers

Apart from these, some references are found in UttaraKand that are important from the point of view of Politics.

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