

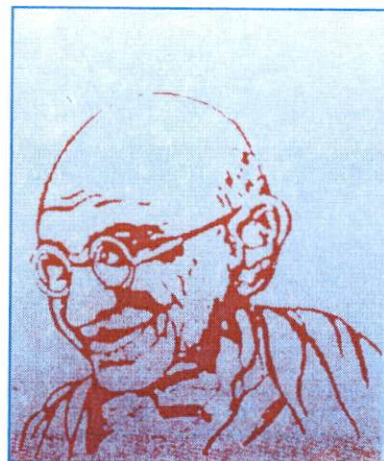


**POLITICAL SCIENCE
MA [PREVIOUS]**

2157

Course II

Paper - Indian Political Thought



KARNATAKA STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY

Manasagangothri, Mysore - 570 006

Block - 2

ಉನ್ನತ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಇರುವ ಅವಕಾಶಗಳನ್ನು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಮತ್ತು ಶಿಕ್ಷಣವನ್ನು ಪ್ರಜಾತಂತ್ರೀಕರಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಮುಕ್ತ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾನಿಲಯ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಯನ್ನು ಆರಂಭಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

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ಡಾ. ಕುಳಂದೈಸ್ವಾಮಿ

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Dr. Kulandai Swamy

ವಿಶ್ವಮಾನವ ಸಂದೇಶ

ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಮಗುವು ಹುಟ್ಟುತ್ತಲೇ - ವಿಶ್ವಮಾನವ. ಬೆಳೆಯುತ್ತಾ ನಾವು ಅದನ್ನು 'ಅಲ್ಪ ಮಾನವ'ನನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮಾಡುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಮತ್ತೆ ಅದನ್ನು 'ವಿಶ್ವಮಾನವ'ನನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮಾಡುವುದೇ ವಿದ್ಯೆಯ ಕರ್ತವ್ಯವಾಗಬೇಕು.

ಮನುಜ ಮತ, ವಿಶ್ವ ಪಥ, ಸರ್ವೋದಯ, ಸಮನ್ವಯ, ಪೂರ್ಣದೃಷ್ಟಿ ಈ ಪಂಚಮಂತ್ರ ಇನ್ನು ಮುಂದಿನ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಾಗಬೇಕಾಗಿದೆ. ಅಂದರೆ, ನಮಗೆ ಇನ್ನು ಬೇಕಾದುದು ಆ ಮತ ಈ ಮತ ಅಲ್ಲ; ಮನುಜ ಮತ. ಆ ಪಥ ಈ ಪಥ ಅಲ್ಲ; ವಿಶ್ವ ಪಥ. ಆ ಒಬ್ಬರ ಉದಯ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ; ಸರ್ವರ ಸರ್ವಸ್ವರದ ಉದಯ. ಪರಸ್ಪರ ವಿಮುಖವಾಗಿ ಸಿಡಿದು ಹೋಗುವುದಲ್ಲ; ಸಮನ್ವಯಗೊಳ್ಳುವುದು. ಸಂಕುಚಿತ ಮತದ ಆಂಶಿಕ ದೃಷ್ಟಿ ಅಲ್ಲ; ಭೌತಿಕ ಪಾರಮಾರ್ಥಿಕ ಎಂಬ ಭಿನ್ನದೃಷ್ಟಿ ಅಲ್ಲ; ಎಲ್ಲವನ್ನು ಭಗವದ್ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಂದ ಕಾಣುವ ಪೂರ್ಣದೃಷ್ಟಿ.

ಕುವೆಂಪು

Gospel of Universal Man

Every Child, at birth, is the universal man. But, as it grows, we turn it into "a petty man". It should be the function of education to turn it again into the enlightened "universal man".

The Religion of Humanity, the Universal Path, the Welfare of All. Reconciliation, the Integral Vision- these *five mantras* should become View of the Future. In other words, what we want henceforth is not this religion or that religion, but the Religion of Humanity ; not this path or that path, but the Universal Path ; not the well-being of this individual or that individual, but the Welfare of All ; not turning away and breaking off from one another, but reconciling and uniting in concord and harmony ; and, above all, not the partial view of a narrow creed, not the dual outlook of the material and the spiritual, but the Integral Vision of seeing all things with the eye of the Divine.

Kuvempu



**Karnataka State
Open University**

**Political Science
Course II**

Block

2

Introduction

Unit 4

State-Origin-Types-Nature-Organization and Functions

1 to 16

Unit 5

Kingship-Origin-Nature-Organization-Functions

17 to 32

Unit 6

Republic - Meaning, Sources, Constitutional and Administrative Machinery. Demerits and decline

33 to 45

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Karnataka State Open University, 2003,

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Further information on the Karnataka State Open University Programmes may obtained from the University's office at Manasagangotri, Mysore-6
Printed and Published on behalf of Karnataka State Open University.

Mysore - 6 by **Sri V. Ramanna** Registrar (Administration).

Block - 2 Introduction

Block - 2 consists of 3 units, from 4 to 6. Unit - 4 explains the State-Origin, Types, Nature, Organization and Functions. Unit - 5 explains Kingship -Origin - Nature -Organization - Functions. Unit - 6 explains Republics - Meaning - Sources - Constitutional and Administrative Machinery Demerits and decline.

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Unit – 4 State - Origin, Types, Nature, Organization and Functions.

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Origin of the State
- 4.3 Types of the State
- 4.4 Nature of the State
- 4.5 Functions of the state
- 4.6 Let us sum up
- 4.7 Key words
- 4.8 Some useful Books
- 4.9 Answer to check your progress

4.0 Objectives :

The objective of this unit is to explain The State in Ancient India. After going through this unit, you will be able to know:

- The State in Ancient India
- Origin of the State
- Types of the State
- Nature of the State
- Function of the State

4.1 Introduction :

Origin of State is considered as the dawn of civilization. It is presumed that with the coming of the King people began to live a disciplined life and mankind began to progress rapidly. Without state there was neither any effort nor possibility of collective progress and that human civilization would have been only stagnant.

4.2 Origin of the State :

In the earliest stages of life the institution of family was not in existence. This was true of the Krita age. The Shanthiparva specifically mentions that the marriage did not exist in the land of Uttarakurus. The Shantiparva clarifies that in the state of Nature, the institution of State did not exist. According to Kautilya in certain lands called Vairajya there was no kingly office, and the people therefore had no sense of thine and mine. This implies that the absence of the ruler coincided with the absence of private property.

There was so many classical works and anthropological evidence that make us to conclude that there prevailed a golden age of harmony and happiness among people. They live peaceful life on account of their innate virtuous disposition though no Government existed to see that the laws of Nature were respected and followed.

But this harmonious life was destroyed by the discovery of the art of Agriculture which enabled people to produce more than

they could consume. For the first time they established houses and divided the fields with boundaries naming them as individual properties. But people began to quarrel themselves over property matter and this led to search for some authority to protect their fields and properties. 'Mahavastu' tells us that this led to the creation of the office of the 'Mahakhattiya' or 'protection of the field'.

'Shanthiparva' speculates that people went in search of a King in order to protect their property, family and varnas. They were also prepared to give him certain share of their own property. Under such circumstances Manu finally accepted Kingship to protect property family and Varnas. The puranas also support this view.

Most of the Sanskrit works frequently quote that an individual should first secure a king, then a wife and then wealth for in the absence of a State or King there would be no safety for either wife or property. 'Shanthiparva' states that in the absence of the King, intermixture of castes would take place. Bhandarker argues that the Kingly office came into existence only to protect the weak against the strong. Almost all important Sanskrit works reveal that the duty of the King was to uphold dharma and Varna system R.S. Sharma views in regard to the origin of the state says that if the violation of the laws of property and family are considered as the innate natural weakness of man then it follows that the states should be created as a necessity to restrain these evils.

We can conclude that the conditions existing in the state of nature, the necessity to uphold Dharma, protection of property, family and Varna System by the King might have resulted in the creation of the state.

References to the contract theory of the origin of the state are to be found in the Brahmanas, the Dighnikaya, the Arthasastra of Kautilya and the Shanthiparva.

The two Brahmanas, which refer to the origin which refers to the origin of Kingship through election among the Gods on account of the compelling necessity of carrying on successful war against asuras. In the Brahmanas there is a reference to the coronation ceremony of the King. It is stated that under the leadership of Prajapathi the gods discussed among themselves and decided to install Indra as King.

Kautilya refers to the origin of the state only incidentally during a discussion of spies among themselves. One party there argues that government came into existence to counteract the Law of the jungle that prevailed in society. People themselves selected 'Manu' as their King and agreed to pay him the necessary taxes. It shall thus be seen that in his philosophy burden shifted from the subjects to the King who began to be looked upon as the champion of their rights and defender of their lives and property.

There are two theories about the origin of the state in Shantiparva of Mahabharata and both of them support the idea of social contract.

The 59th Chapter deals with 'danda' and 'dandaniti'. It states that God helped humanity to escape from the law of the jungle by giving it a King named Vena, but when he became tyrant the sages destroyed him with their super natural powers and asked 'Prithu' to swear to rule according to the principles of Dandaniti. The sages asked Prithu particularly to consider the Brahmins above punishment and save the world from inter mixture of castes. It shows that contract does not take place with the people but with the brahmins, who claim special privileges and protection from the King.

Chapter 67 of Shanthiparva specifically deals with the contract theory of origin of the state. It is stated that when anarchy was the order of the day, people entered into a mutual contract to banish from society persons guilty of unsocial acts like misappropriation and adultery.

The next stage in the rise of the state is indicated by the formulation of a political compact. It tells us that people were unhappy, probably because there was no King to enforce the contract. They then approached the creator with a request to appoint a King who should be worthy of reverence and should be able to protect the people. The Creator straight away appointed Manu as the King. The people promised to pay him 1/50 the cattle, 1/50 of Gold and 1/10 grain to enrich the King.

Origin of the State is still shrouded in mystery and no specific date and time can be given about the origin of the important institution. There is also difference of opinion about the circumstance in which the contract was executed.

Check Your Progress - 1

- Note:* 1) Use the space given below for your answer.
2) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1. Discuss the theories regarding the origin of the State as advocated by political thinkers of ancient India.

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4.3 Types of the state

In ancient India different types of state were in existence which varied both in nature and character. There are very many fallacies about ancient Indian states in this regard and for an ordinary observer ancient India knew only monarchy and no other form of Government.

But this appears to be mistaken notion. Ancient India perhaps knew of many few forms of Government, if not as many as are known to us today.

4.3.1 The Monarchy:

During primitive stages of development monarchy was the only form of Government all over the world. Usual title of the Monarch were the Swamin, Samrat, Maharaj, Maharajadhiraj and so on. There were also feudatory states under these Kings which were required to give due obedience to the Victor and also supposed to pay some ransom to the King. Usually, however under monarchies feudatory states were given due respect and a defeated Monarch was not dethroned and we can see many references about Monarchy both in Vedic and Brahmin Literature.

Dorajja or Dvirajaka :

This is the form of state where two kings ruled a state at one and the same time. It usually happened when a state was passed on to two legitimate successors, who instead of dividing the territory, agreed to rule together in harmony.

'Pathala' in Sind is mentioned as one such state by Greek writers. But it appears that it was not a common form of state because there are no frequent references about it.

4.3.2 Gana or Republic:

It was another quite popular form of state in ancient India. Kautilya in his 'Arthashastra' mentioned about the flourishing republics including Licchavi Republic. There are frequent references about republics in Mahabharata. Buddhist Literature also mentions about the existence of this type of state. Normally, however the Republics discussed their affairs in their Assemblies and thus their greatest weakness was that Secrecy could not be maintained. There was

sufficiently developed legal systems in these republics. The beauty of the system was that the people were patriots and for them love of their land was above everything else.

'Kula Sangha' We also find this form of state in ancient India. Sovereign power in such a state was vested in the whole Kula instead of one single individual. It is observed that Sisunaga and Nanda dynasties ruled Magadha before ChandraGupta Maurya came to power.

4.3.3 The city states:

City states were quite well known to the Greek people and Greek political thinkers Plato and Aristotle have not only praised but discussed in detail their administration. Mahabharatha's reference to Gramas is also about these city states.

4.3.4 The Oligarchies

Oligarchy is usually described as a form of government in which real power is vested in the nobles of the state who are ultimately a decisive factor in the running of administration and even in electing a head of state for themselves. It appears that this type of state continued to exist in North Eastern India.

4.3.5 Composite state or confederation:

In this type of state we observe that some states combine together to implement an agreed programme and thus form a confederation or a composite state. It was found in many parts of ancient India. The confederations however usually did not work well and lasted for a very short period.

Check Your Progress - 2

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Check your progress with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1. Discuss different types of states in ancient India.

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4.4 Nature of State

While discussing the origin of the state we observe that ancient Indians regarded state as essentially a beneficent institution evolved in pre-historic times for the efficient protection of human life and for the better realisation of its higher ideals. The idea that it was a necessary evil to be tolerated, as there was no other alternative, was not subscribed to by any ancient Indian thinkers.

According to Solectore, it is necessary to examine some fallacious theories advanced by some western thinkers in order to understand the nature of ancient Indian State.

Sir Henry Maine maintained the ancient Indian state was nothing but an irresponsible tax collecting machinery.

Prof. Rangaswamy Aiyangar rejected the views of Western thinkers, as they are erroneous so far as ancient India is concerned. Aiyangar rightly observed the Indian States in particular, was partly the result of an incomplete, superficial, and biased study of the ancient

forts, and partly of the confused political condition in the latter half of the 18th century in India, when the exigencies of the times threatened to submerge the ancient ideals of government in some parts of India.

Western thinkers advanced another fallacious theory without any foundation, that the ancient Indian State was sacerdotal in nature. This theory considers the ancient state as being entirely under the influence of priests and of their writings. Superficially it may seem that we have to give credence to this theory when it is realised that religion in India, as elsewhere in contemporary world played a vital part in the lives of the ancient people.

The Brahmins as custodians of learning and as interpreters of Dharmasastras, necessarily wielded great influence over the monarchs and they even enjoyed certain immunities as described in this Manusmriti. While it is true that the priests were the custodians and interpreters of the Dharmasastras, they were not promulgators of laws.

Moreover, the Brahmins were not completely exempted from punishment as it is proved both by Manu and Kautilya, There is another important factor that the Kshatriyas and Vaisyas were also given important positions and were revered in the society along with the Brahmins. There is ample evidence in the Manusmriti to prove their importance. The Brahmins were along with the King, subject to the Dharmasastras which were higher than the King himself. Therefore, the sacerdotal theory of the nature of the ancient Indian state is much one sided as it is unhistorical.

The Indian historians have advocated four versions of the nature of the ancient Indian state.

1. Dr.N.C. Bandopadhyaya refers to the existence in Vedic literature of tradition relating to Manu and Prithu Vainya, and to the recognition of the earliest King as the greatest benefactor, and

to his evolution from military Chieftain (B.A.Saletore) There is no evidence to substantiate the other statement relating to the evolution of the King from a successful military Chieftain.

2. Prof. Radhkumud Mukherjee advocated this. (See on Version of Theory.) He says that, "Hindu thought counts Dharma as the true sovereign of the state, as the rule of Law. The King is the executive called Danda, to uphold and ensure the decrees of the Dharma as a spiritual sovereign.

In this way democracy descends to the village. Thus ancient Hindu Monarchy was a limited monarchy under the very constitution of the State. This theory is not only confusing but also misleading. This can be rejected on various grounds as it will not fit in any modern definitions.

3. The third theory was maintained by Dr.Jayaswal. According to him the Kingship originated under the stress of war, and the idea of Kingship was borrowed by the Aryans from the Dravidians. This theory was also rejected by Dr.Ghoshal, expounded his own theory. According to him the origin of Kingship was due to the will of the supreme Deity as substantiated by a passage from the commentary on the Yajnavalkyasmriti by Visvarupa. The Gods and men failed to bring the people under their control through benevolence. Then Gods disappeared. When Prajapathi. enquired as to who should protect the people, the gods replied, "We shall arrange for a King human form by taking from the Moon, Sun, Indra, Vishnu, Vaisravara and Yama respectively" majesty, brilliance, Valour, victoriousness, liberality and control. The King thus formed, asked the gods to give him Dharma as his friend and then he would protect the people. The gods then made Dharma his friend - This theory is also rejected by many thinkers.

4. The fourth theory, which is equally fallacious is supported by Manusmriti and Arthashastra. It is based on the assumption that, since the King is compared to a father (Piteva) especially in the sphere of protection, it necessarily follows that he(King) was nothing for more than a patriarch who, like a benevolent head of a family merely dicated and guided his subjects, and the latter like children carrying out his behesty.

Various theories which have been expounded about the nature of state are all based on imagination. There is, however, remarkable similarity between the theories put forth by ancient Indian and modern thinkers.

Check Your Progress - 3

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

(2) Check your answer with model answer given at the end of this unit.

1. Explain the nature of the state in ancient India

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4.5 Functions of the State

The political thinkers usually divide function of the state in ancient India into two categories constituent and ministrant.

Constituent functions of the state

4.5.1 Protection:

The state in ancient India confined itself only to the constituent functions. The Vedic state protected citizens from foreign aggression. It also maintained internal order by enforcing respect for the traditional law.

4.5.2 Maintenance of law:

The next functions of the State was the maintenance of common law as embodied in the ancient customs and usage of the land.

4.5.3 Social order:

The activity of the state, as envisaged by the Mahabharata and the Arthashastra, relates to *all* the aspects of human life, social, economic and religious. The state was not regarded as a necessary evil, whose coercive activities were reduced to maintain only law and order

4.5.4 Levying the Taxes:

Sound finances are absolutely necessary for a stable and prosperous state. The ancient writers have included prosperous treasury and ample reserve funds among the essential constituents of the state and have declared that any deterioration in this connection would be one of the most serious national calamities (Mahabharata)

The Vedic prayers suggest that people were not accustomed to paying regular taxes to the State as a matter of normal liability. In the later vedic literature the King is described as the eater of his subjects (Visamatta)

In the Brahmanic literature the term 'atta' is used in the sense of 'enjoyer'. for instance in one place the husband is described as the Aatta' (enjoyer) and the wife is 'adya'. The object of enjoyment. According to some other writers the taxation was to be reasonable and equitable. The King was never to forget that nothing exposed

him to greater hatred than oppressive taxation (Mahabharata).

In the case of trade and industry the taxation was to be on net profits not on earnings. An article was to be taxed only once not twice. If increase in taxation becomes inevitable it should be graded and not sudden.

Military villagers, the dumb, deaf and blind persons, students studying at 'Gurukulas' hermits practising penance in forests were exempted from taxation. Women in early times could hold only a negligible amount of property and were therefore recommended for exemption from taxation. Smritis recommended that learned Brahmin should be exempted from taxation.

The Smritis did lay down no uniform rate of taxation. According to Manu the Land taxation should be either 8 or 12 or 16 percent, on the basis of quality of land. Kautilya recommended 8 to 33 percent of land tax. Mauryan state charged 25 percent tax on agricultural incomes. The land tax was usually paid in kind.

4.5.5 Promulgation of law and maintaining the judiciary

The machinery of the judiciary was very important function of the state. In Vedic literature nowhere refers to the King as a judge either in civil or criminal cases offences like murder, theft, and adultery are mentioned, but there is nothing to indicate that they were tried by the King or an officer authorised by him.

The Dharmasastras and the Arthashastra reveal to us a full-fledged and well developed judiciary. The King was regarded as the fountain of all justice. The King was expected to be strictly impartial in deciding the cases according to *law*, otherwise he would be held guilty.

Brihadaranyaka, Upanishad points out that he was the king of the king. King or the Chief Justice were assisted by a panel of Jurors (Sabhyas) The King, exercised his privilege in deciding the case, where

the Jurors could not take any definite decision.

Kautilya had gone far beyond the concept of law as given by Manu by adding man made law to the body of ancient traditional law. He says that whenever the sacred law is in conflict with rational law, then, reason shall be held authoritative.

4.5.6 Welfare of the people:

Kautilya rightly said that in the happiness of his subjects lies his welfare(kings). Kautilya stresses on the supreme importance of this function. While the state was to possess power, its sole object was to promote the happiness of its subjects. Sukra described the King both as a master and a servant of to the people.

The ancient state was to improve not only social order but also to encourage learning, education. And it was to establish and maintain rest houses, charity halls and hospitals. It was to enrich the resources of the constructing dams and canals in order to make agriculture independent of rain as far as possible. The principle of decentralisation in Administration level and state carried on its welfare activities with the active cooperation of these popular bodies.

A.S. Altekar points out that individual liberty did not appreciably suffer inconsequence primarily because the state discharged its multifarious functions not exclusively through its own buerocracy. The state carried on its socialistic activities through its popular bodies. So there was hardly any encroachment on the individual liberty.

The concept of sovereignty was not fully developed. In Arthasaatra the word 'Swamithva' may be partly approaching its meaning. In the vedic period sovereignty was probably vested jointly in the King and Sarmithi. In the Republican states it was vested in the central executive, where aristocracy was usually represented. One school held that the King was not-above the law of dharma. But

dharma constituted the essence of Kingship. According to Sapata Brahmana, Dharma was the sovereign over the sovereign and it may therefore be said that sovereignty vested in it. But though the King was subordinate to Dharma, the ancient Indian polity provided no constitutional means or checks on the King, if he transgressed the law.

Check Your Progress - 4

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Check your progress with the model answer given at the end of the unit.

1. Describe the functions of the state in ancient India.

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4.6 Let us sum up

Origin of the state is still shrouded in mystery and no specific date and time can be given about the origin of this important institution. There is also difference of opinion about the circumstances in which the contract was executed. Various theories which have been expounded about the origin of state are all based on imagination. There is, however, remarkable similarity between the theories put forth by ancient Indian and modern thinkers. End and purpose of state were, and still continue to be, a controversial problem. But the problem was not so complex in ancient India, as it is today because life was not very complicated.

4.7 Key words

Monarchy	-	King - Queen, emperor or empress
Piteva	-	Father
Majesty	-	The title used in speaking about or to a King or queen.
Oligarchy	-	Minority ruling Government
Republic	-	a country ruled by an elected President and Government

4.8 Some Useful Books

A.S. Altekar	-	State and Government in Ancient India
Beni Prasad	-	Theory of Government in Ancient India
B.P.Sinha	-	Kautilya Arthasastra
J.W. Spellman	-	Political theory of Ancient India
K.M. Panikar	-	Origin and Development of Kingship in Ancient India
S.Vijayaraghavan	}	Political thought
		R.Jayaram
H.R.Mukhi	-	Ancient Indian political thought and Institutions.

4.9 Answer to check your progress

Check your progress - 1

1) See section - 2

Check your progress - 2

1) See section - 3

Check your progress - 3

1) See section - 4

Check your progress - 4

1) See section - 5

**Unit - 5 Kingship - origin - Nature - Organization
- Functions**

Structure

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Origin of the Kingship
- 5.3 Nature of the Kingship
- 5.4 Organization of the Kingship
- 5.5 Functions of the Kingship
- 5.6 Let us sum up
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5.0 Objectives

The objectives of this Unit is to explain the Kingship in ancient India, after going through this Unit you should be able to know:

- Origin of the Kingship
- Nature of the Kingship
- Functions of the Kingship

5.1 Introduction:

In ancient India King was not considered as the representative of God on earth. He was either the trustee of a responsible trust or defender of his subjects. It was considered that taxes were wages paid for a King for discharging extra responsibilities.

5.2 Origin of the Kingship :

Kingship in India is a very ancient institution. Kingship evolved in India as elsewhere through different stages and was influenced by a number of factors such as war, religion, Kingship, needs of social life and imitations. As such Evolution could not be uniform in all ages and regions. It was modified to suit the requirements or genius of the age or the people in different countries or territories. Monarchical tradition survived in most of the countries recently. The earliest allusion to Kingship in Hindu literature is in the Vedas. Vedic Kingship was generally elective in character and was for the purpose of leadership 'against the aboriginals.

Even in the time of Brahmanas the idea of Kingship was elective. The Kingship arose out of military necessity, as there was war between Devas and Asuras. Devas have no King and-elected Indra as their King because he was most strong and most valiant and carried out best any work. Ancient Indian theory holds that the institution of Kingship originated as a response to hostile pressures.

Buddhist literature also indicates elective kingship and King was chosen by the whole people and he was called as Mahasammata

(the great elect) Because he was the lord of the field he was called Kshatriya and because he deligated others by establishing law he was called Rajan.

These conception are elective and contractual. The Epic period show a change in idea. The Kingship had become hereditary by the time of Mahabharatha and the Vedic Kings had assumed Majesty and power. Manu theory makes us believe that the Kingship was a necessity and created to save the people from destruction. He has therefore attached great significance to Kingship saying that King is a great deity in human form. Another theory expounded in Mahabharatha is known as Prithu theory in which King is required to take oath to maintain law and order and never to transgress limitations imposed on him by the society. This theory makes us believe that the King was elected by the people, and people consented to obey and pay taxes.

The Hindus, unlike the ancient Greeks did not view political authority as the natural consequence of the interdependence of man. The state was rationalized in terms suggesting a contract or was said to have been established by the intervention of the Gods. The contractual idea of origin of Sovereign authority was common among the early thinkers. The social contract theory also became historically important only when Rousseau derived from it the Sovereignty of the General will. Even Hindu theory also regarded Kingship as contractual. But it will be wrong to see in it the whole constitutional theory of the modern democratic state.

Thus it is clear that though originally in the Vedic period the Hindu Monarchy was elective, in EPIC times it had definitely become hereditary.

Since very early times 'coronation' ceremony was performed at the time of accession of the King. This ceremony was very important not only because it was a dedication to the service but

also an affirmation of the covenant between the people and the ruler and creation of a mystic union between the land and its lord. It is the political significance of this ceremony, which is more important than its Ritualistic details.

It consisted of three different types of ceremonials. The first set identified the king with the land over which he was to rule. The king and the land he rules are united in a mystic bond. The Next is Anointment ceremony with different liquids from four sides.

All the four main groups into which the Aryan society was divided took part in this ceremony establishes the indissoluble connection between the king and different class of his subjects. The other set of religious ceremony invokes the grace of God and the ruler places himself under the divine guidance and protection. Before coronation the King is to take an oath. The coronation oath emphasises not only the duty of the King to his people, but also the dedication of his life to the service of the state. The coronation is diksha, a dedication. The crowned and anointed King is one whose life has become a Vrata. It is to a life of duty that the King is anointed with the injunctions that if either in hours of waking or in hours of sleeping he forgets his duty to the people, may the wrath of god fall on him.

The Doctrine of Divinity of the King, which became popular later in India was unknown during the vedic period. Kingship was purely a secular institution at that time. The growing influence of religion during the period of Brahmanas was more favourable to the Notion of the divinity of the King. Some Smrithis and puranas claim divinity for the King. But some ancient Hindu writers never seriously believed in the divinity of King is proved beyond doubt by their writings which,

1. prescribe on elaborate system of education and training for the prince.

2. Bind the King by Oath
3. Regulate his conduct and functions.
4. Limit his arbitrariness and finally reserve the people the right to tyrannicide.

Any attempt to read into the divine theory of Kingship in ancient Indian texts is found to be futile. They could never imagine a theory of the right divine to govern wrong. Sukra clearly states that a good king is a part of gods but a bad one is a part of demons. He says that the King is only a servant of people. The concept of King's divinity was never intended to justify irresponsible rule, it served as a means of promoting difference of authority.

Check Your Progress - 1

Note: (1) Use the space given below to your answer

(2) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of the Unit.

1. Discuss the theories regarding the origin of the Kingship.

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5.3 Nature of the Kingship

Nature of Kingship in ancient India is certainly one of the most interesting features of our polity. There are different and divergent opinions about Nature, origin and powers of ancient Indian monarch.

Manu makes us believe that Kingship was of divine origin and Kautilya wanted to put King on a high pedestal with dignity, honor and prestige, while Buddhist literature touches the other extreme.

Usually, however, it was considered that commands of the King should be obeyed to enable him to perform the most important duty of protecting the subjects from external aggression and maintaining Law and order. In order to help him in discharging his most important constitutional functions, it was expected that all citizens should pay taxes without any hesitation and even should not grudge paying extra taxes. But all the more the King was considered responsible for promotion of dharma, which did not mean religion and thus not a theocracy, but stood for moral uplift and material prosperity.

The King was however required to work under certain constitutional checks. Sabha, and Samithi were, for a considerably long time, effective checks on his authority and so were Paura-Janapadas. Then, the King required to listen to his Mantrin and respect social customs and conventions which had been deeply rooted in our social fabric. In ancient India functions of Pope and King i.e. spiritual and political authority were never combined together and ancient India did not face the situation which medieval Europe had to face. If at any stage the King tried to combine the functions of King with those of the priest that was not ordinary but extra-ordinary situation.

Not only in India, but throughout the world a new King assumes office with certain ceremonies which have their own significance. In ancient India an elaborate ceremonial system prevailed which was required to be performed before a new king ascended the throne. While coming to the throne, the King was required to pledge himself to prosperity of the people. In the early stages of development of state the King was required to depend on the wishes of the village heads or gramins, the members of Sabha and Samithi, Paura-Janapadas and similar other institutions which claimed to have representative character. The King respected their sentiments and wishes. One thing, however is simply clear that throughout Hindu

period oath-taking ceremony was not merely a ritual but had great constitutional significance which decreased only near about 8th century A.D.

Check Your Progress - 2

Note: (1) Use the space given below to your answer

(2) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of the unit.

1. Explain the Nature of the Kingship.

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5.4 Organization of the Kingship

It is now fully well established that Hindu India at no stage the King was left alone with out his advisors. Thereby providing him an opportunity to become absolute.

In Atharva Veda there was mention of 'rajkrits' subsequently known as Ratnin. It was known as parishad in Arthasastra as well as Brihadaranyaka and Jatakas, such an institution as Parisa. In Ramayana the members of the Mantriparishad called 'King makers'. Its members, for some time, were called 'Ratnin' which according to some of the Vedas consisted of the relatives of the King, his countrys and heads of various departments. It is however, generally accepted that the form Mantrin or Mantri Parishad had come to be used later and in the early vedic or pre Vedic days it was not specifically used as such.

In ancient India there used to be a Council of Ministers to assist as well as check the King from becoming absolute. There also

used to be an inner cabinet to perform day-to-day work.

This council was not subordinate organ of the King. In Vedic age there used to be few Ministers and queens and princes were also included in the Council. These number of Ministers, however, varied from time to time.

During early Vedic age one of the members of the King's Council used to be purohita and the others included the Senani, Suta, Bhagaduk, Gramini. It is also believed that it included even the queens and crown princes.

The Shanti parva of Mahabharata provides for a council of ministers consisting of 7 ministers. These were, Commander of forces, Commander of citadels, probhita, Minister of Justice, Physician, Yuvarajan and Astrologer.

Sukra has however, fixed the strength of Council of Ministers at ten and has given in some details the function of each minister who usually controlled on department. According to him the Council of Ministers consisted of Pratinidi, Mantrin, Purohita, Dutta, Pradhana, Sachiva, Sumarta, Amatya, Pradviraka, and Panditamatya.

Sukra has also given in some detail the functions performed by each Minister all of them enjoyed a respectable position. Pratinidhi usually looked after State affairs when the king was ill. Gradually this minister became very powerful and important. Mantrin was the Prime Minister and this first among the Ministers. Purohita was religious and spiritual minister. Dutta was the minister for foreign affairs_ He was required to keep fullest information about neighbouring states. Pradhana co-ordinated the working of all ministers and was no less than the Prime Minister. Sachiva was the Defence Minister of the country and required to see that the forts were well fortified and guarded. Amatya was the Revenue Minister and thus responsible for bringing maximum land under cultivation. Sumantra was the Finance Minister of the country and primarily

responsible for financial stability of the country. Pradviraka and Pandit Amatya were two other Ministers who were responsible for giving Justice to the subjects.

Check Your Progress - 3

- Note:* 1) Use the space given below for your answer.
2) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1. Examine the organisation of the Kingship.

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5.5 Functions of the Kingship

5.5.1 Protection of the people :

The fundamental duty of the king is the protection of the people, to give them security of life, property and belief, for the purpose of the protection and for that only the King was given almost absolute powers. The purpose of that protection is that people may not laps into anarchy. It is not merely protection from external aggression, it is protection from injustice from social anarchy. It is also the protection of social order and the dharma laid down as the basic of social organisation.

5.5.2 The Maintenance of justice and the punishment of offenders:

The Hindu view of society was almost Hobbesion in its belief that a natural state all men are at war with one another. It is only by

punishment, by danda, which more appropriately translated means perhaps justitia that civilised life exists at all. The upholding of Justice as the counter part of external protection is considered the Supreme duty of Kings.

According to Hindu conception the King is not the fountain of justice though he administers it Justice is divine and its social forms are these which are laid down in Smritis, the meaning and nature of justice was brought out in two important facts by Mahabharata. Firstly, Justice is what binds society together and is great protective principle. And secondly, economic prosperity and moral welfare and cultural advancement are dependent on Justice. Justice is the basis on which society exist and evolves. Manu emphasises the majesty and all pervading character of justice. Justice keeps awake while all are asleep. The wise know penal justice to be dharma. The people are made happy only by the proper administration of justice. The King in the administration of justice was no autocrat, dispensing rough and ready justice. He was the arm of the law the fountain of equity, and the ultimate defender of society through justice.

5.5.3 The welfare of the people :

The happiness and welfare of the people is the object of protection as well as of all other royal activity. It is the active pursuit of such welfare that is laid down as the duty of the King.

Kautilya emphasises the dynamic character of sovereign duty by stating that the happiness of the people is the happiness of the King and their good his good.

The Hindu political texts stress the secular aspect of this duty of the King. Bhisma says that activity in the welfare of the people is greater than service to God, greater than direct achievement of religious good. The performance of Yajnas and other religious ceremonies. In deciding what is good of the people, the King must follow not his own will but the will of his subjects.

5.5.4 The Maintenance of Social order :

The King as the Maker of the age was to correct abuses, modify customs and set in motion tendencies which would lead to the better establishment of social justice. This conception of the King being the maker of the age is one of the most important in Hindu political thought.

Mahabharatha declares whether it is the King that makes the age or the age that makes the King is a question on which there is no room for doubt. Sukra correctly interpreted this idea when he said that the King is the maker of the age as the promulgator of customs. The King again is the cause of setting in motion the customs, usages, and movements and hence is the cause and maker of the time. The Hindu theory therefore, places on the King, the responsibility of moulding society, of correcting usages of interpreting tradition and of purging the abuses of social life within the frame-work of the sacred law. The King has the right of modifying, or even abrogating the usages which he considers as being against the spirit of age.

The King in Indian thoughts has a dual role. He is the conservator of social order. The discipline which binds society is to be maintained. But it is the essential part of the King's duty to ensure that customs and practices, which had lost their meaning and had merely become dead weight on social progress should be eliminated.

5.5.5 Moral welfare of the people :

The King is made responsible for the evils, for Bad social customs for the decay and degeneracy of the nation. It is the primary duty to rule in such a manner as would not only protect the people afford them justice, and ensure their economic prosperity, but also correct wrong tendencies in social developments, and look after their moral welfare.

5.5.6 Encourage Trade and Industries :

Not only the King is enjoined to look after the moral welfare of the people, but their economic prosperity, was also made his labours. It was his duty to encourage trade. Trade and industries specially to look after cultivation and secure for each the fruits of his labours. The secular views of kingly duties helped to emphasise this point. But Kautilya does not consider a King as in a way fulfilling his functions satisfactorily if he does not encourage economic prosperity.

5.5.7 King as a Public Servant :

The King should himself as a public servant. The idea which is emphasised by all writers from the earliest times to Sukra is that taxes in a state were the wages paid to the King by the people for his services. The Mahabharatha, Manu and all others writers lay this down as an axiom. Sukra expresses the idea in most explicit terms as follows - "The ruler has been made by Brahma a servant of the people getting his revenue as his remuneration. His sovereignty is only for his protection".

Kingship was considered as a trust in ancient India. The King was particularly enjoined to note that the treasury was *not* his private or personal property. It was public trust to be utilised for purposes. The King was supposed to regard his own happiness as indissolubly connected with his subjects. In relation with the people the King should consider the people like his own children. The idea set before the King is that of paternalistic rule. A characteristic of paternalism is the belief that the people are unable to manage their own affairs.

Yet the Hindu thinkers did conceive of Kings authority as that of a father less to emphasise the despotic aspect of fathers role than to symbolize his duty to sacrifice for the well being of those dependent on his protection.

Thus the Ancient Indian thinkers regarded the ruler as the ideal

King. But it did not live upto his ideas and may become tyrannical. The Hindu thinkers have not devised any constitutional check in the modern sense of the word. It is likely that Samithi or the popular assembly of the Vedic age functioned as a constitutional check upon the King. There is evidence to show that the King could hardly maintain his position, if this assembly was not in agreement with him.

In ancient India religious and spiritual sanctions were very powerful. The education and training were expected to impress on him that it was in his own interest to make use of power with judiciousness. The fact that he would be brought up to regard the vedic way of life as sacred and the performance of his own duties in accordance with that scheme of life – as means of achieving spiritual ends would also serve to make him behave with moderation. This preparation included rigorous character training and discipline. Ancient writers have prescribed a very exacting time table for the King which clearly left him any leisure. Even with all these safe-guards a ruler with tyrannical disposition may become oppressive. In this situation the Hindu writers want the people to take action but they do not give any systematic exposition of philosophy of resistance indicating clearly the limits beyond which the King would not go and defining the circumstances that alone would justify the resistance on the part of the people. If the Ruler becomes oppressive and immoral they should threaten the tyrant that they would migrate to another country. If this does not produce the desirable result to dethrone him enthrone another suitable person from the dynasty. If there is no other remedy the Hindu thinkers recognise the subjects right to tyrannicide. The recognition of subjects to dispose or kill a tyrant shows that sovereignty ultimately resided in the people. In ancient India there was extensive de-centralization of governmental powers and functions. These powers were exercised by the village councils, town committees and district committees. The King could exercise his

power only through these bodies. These bodies were entrusted with the task of realising taxes, discharging judicial functions etc. These bodies resembled small republics where the voice of the people prevailed. The activities of a tyrannical king, therefore, were not usually very effective beyond his capital. The extensive decentralization brought about in ancient India was thus the most effective and practical check upon the King's powers.

5.5.8 Executive or the Ministry :

It was a fundamental principle of the Hindu polity that the King should never act without consulting his ministers. The council formed an integral part of the state machinery starting from the Vedic period. Regarding the strength of the Ministry there was no one opinion. More important than its strength is the question of its composition. It seems that in ancient India it is a general practice to include in the council of Ministers persons belonging to all Varnas, roughly in proportion to their numerical strength in the community.

The Ministers were appointed by the King. It may be noted that ministers had no fixed tenure, they held office during the pleasure of the King. The fundamental point to bear in mind is that the Ministers were the King's servants and were responsible to him and to him alone.

Regarding the functioning of the Council of Ministers or cabinet, usual practice was for the ministry to act as a body and its decisions were joint. Occasionally the King could consult the ministers separately. Regarding the attitude of the King, everyone's view was that the King should accept the decision of the council and act upon it, though he could adopt a different course and act as he thought best. From the evidences available it is clear that the decisions were highly respected and accepted by the King.

The work of the Council of Ministers concerned the whole

range of administration. It enunciated policies and looked after their successful implementation. The responsibility of keeping good foreign relations was also the function of the cabinet. Thus the King in ancient India was not an autocrat, but was subject to checks and restraints. He was bound to consult the Ministerial Council. All decisions of the Council of Ministers were in writing and the Kings endorsement of them was also in writing. Whenever the King differed from the decision of the Ministers, he had to refer the matter to the members of the General Assembly of the state which was known as the Samithi or the Janapada. The King could over ride the opinion of his ministers only if he had the support of the Janapada. He is helpless if the decision of the ministers had the approval of the Janapada.

Check Your Progress - 4

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1. Examine the functions of the Kingship.

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5.6 Let us sum up

From the above it can be concluded that the King could not act in opposition to the views of his ministers so long as the latter enjoyed the confidence of the General Assembly. A King would have seriously jeopardized his position if he had acted in opposition to the combined judgment of the Ministers officials and the members of the general Assembly. This shows that ancient King were no autocrats

but functioned under many restraints. Some inscriptions contain reference to the role played by the General Assembly or Janapada which could be regarded “as the supreme or sovereign authority.

5.7 Key Words

Senani	-Commander-in-Chief
Suta	- Commander of the Chariot Corps.
Bhagadhuk	- Royal tax collector
Gramani	- Representative of the
Village Ratnin	- Jewels
Dutta	- Minister of foreign Affairs
Pratinidi	- (Minister) representing the people.

5.8 Some Useful Books

- A.S. Altekar : State and Government in Ancient India
K.M. Panikar : Origin and Development of Kingship in Ancient India
H.R. Mukhi. : Ancient Indian Political thought and Institutions.
Beniprasad : Theory of Govt. in Ancient India
{ S.Vijayaraghavan : Political thought.
R. Jayaram

5.9 Answer to check your progress

Check your progress – 1

See section 5.2

Check your progress - 2

See section 5.3

Check your progress - 3

See section 5.4

Check your progress - 4

See section 5.5

Unit - 6 Republics - Meaning - Sources - Constitutional and Administrative Machinery Demerits and decline.

Structure

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Meaning of the Republics
- 6.3 Sources of the Republics
- 6.4 Constitutional and Administrative Machineries
- 6.5 Demerits of the Republics
- 6.6 Declines of the Republics
- 6.7 Let us Sum up
- 6.8 Some useful Books
- 6.9 Answer for check your progress.

6.0 Objectives

The objective of this unit is to explain the Republics in ancient India. After going through this Unit you will be able to know:

- Meaning of the Republics
- Characteristics of the Republics
- Constitutional Administration Machinery
- Merits and Demerits
- and its Disappear

6.1 Introduction

It is usually believed that only Hereditary Monarchy was known to the people of Ancient. But it is now fully well and beyond all doubt established that in Ancient India there were Big and small Republics headed by a President who was elected by the people on democratic basis. Not only this but there was separate executive, legislature, and Judiciary and that elected members were required to have certain basic qualifications before they could offer themselves as candidate. There were also con federations of various small or big republics which worked unitedly and for common welfare of the people residing therein. From all accounts it becomes now amply clear that the Republics flourished well and the people there enjoyed better economic status had a better social and cultural life as compared with their contemporaries living in Monarchies.

6.2 Meaning of the Republic:

It is fully well and beyond doubt that in Ancient India there were Big and Small Republics headed by a President who was elected by the people on democratic basis. But from our records of Ancient India it appears that both the Monarchy as well as Republics flourished side by side on the principle of co-operation and co-existence. Both Mahabharatha, Vedas and the writings of Greek traveler Megasthanese support in principle the idea that republics

came long after the Monarchy.

There are various terms, which have been used for "Republics in Ancient Indian literature. One such name is 'Gana' the other being 'Sangha'. Gana is understood as member and Ganarajya therefore can safely mean a state which was being ruled not by one but by a number of persons. According to Altekar It can be proved beyond all doubt that Gana indicated a certain type of state sharply distinguished from Monarchy. Jain and Buddhist works also bear evidence to the existence of the Gana".

As regard Sangha, it was another name which was chosen for Gana and both these are more or less synonymous to each other. Whereas Gana signifies the form of Government, Sangha signifies the state and was a united body.

'Gana' means number therefore Ganarajya means rule of numbers. i.e. the rule of many. Gana also meant assembly or Parliament. So called because of the 'number' of members present Ganarajya consequently denoted government by assembly or parliament or Senate and as republics were governed by them gana came to mean republic it self.

Check Your Progress - 1

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1. Define the term of Republic.

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6.3 Sources of Republics

The important source of information on republics are Buddhist literature. The Mahabharatha, the Arthashastra, the Greek Notes and old coins and inscriptions.

There is an argument that describing states as Republic or democracies is hardly justifiable because power in these states is vested in a small aristocratic class and not in the whole body of citizens. In the 'Yaudheya' republic it is vested in the Aristocratic class of 5000 persons and in the Sakya and Koliya republics also the matters of peace and war are decided by Sakya and Koliya aristocrats. The definition given by standard works on political science is that Republic is a state where the sovereign power vests not in a single person as in a Monarchy but in a group or college of persons more or less numerous. Ancient Gana states can be called republics in this sense. Sovereignty is vested not in one individual nor in a small number of persons but fairly numerous class.

The Rise of Republics is probably found in the decay of the Monarchic principle in certain areas. Another probable factor leading to the rise of nonmonarchical constitution is hinted in the traditional story of the Sakyas. From this we can infer that scions of Monarchical families sometimes migrated to Neighbouring areas and became founders of non-monarchical states.

In the beginning the governing class in these states consisted of only the descents of Kshatriya families who had colonised the *land*, brought it under cultivation and established a State. The original Kshatriya settlers were known as Rajanyas, while the other Kshatriya were known as Rajans. The Kshatriya settlers had inherited Monarchical traditions. The leaders of the colonising families claimed and enjoyed the privilege of Royal Coronation and Royal title. Kautilya call this Republics as 'Rajasabdopajivi in Sangha.

However political power did not continue to remain in the hands of only the original Kshatriya families. Political power came (to be broad-based. Amarkosha indicates this by distinguishing between two types of Republics- Rajanyaka Gana where political power was vested in the hands of descendents of original Kshatriya families and 'Rajaka-Gana' where political power was vested in all Kshatriya families.

According to Arthasastra in some Republics both Military and trading class shared political power. Thus the governing class in Gana states was fairly a large one. Therefore the ancient Gana states can be described as republics in the sense in which the ancient states of Athens, Sparta or Venice are described as Republics. They had a clan origin. Political power was mostly concentrated in the hands of Kshatriyas.

There is no strong proof of the existence of republican state during the Vedic periods. During the Historic times there were a number of republics in the North-east zone and North-west zone. Greek Historian mention the existence of many republics one of the very important of them is Youdheya Republic which was an extensive state. It was a confederation of three Republics.

The Republic of Kashas which is mentioned by Alexanders historians seems to be identical with the Republic of Malvas in Central Punjab during 4th century. A.D. The Malvas and Kshudrakas Republics are among those which offered very stiff resistance to Alexander. In the Neighbourhood of the Kshudrakas was another Republic that of Ambastas. 'Panini' the greatest grammarian of Ancient India has given a good description of Republics. In his grammar he has used certain terms which belonged to the field of Republics. Panini has described two types of Sangha. - Ayudhajivi Sanghas and other Sanghas. According to Panini Ayudhajivi Sanghas were very good in the art of fighting. The Rulers of these Sanghas

belonged to the warrior class. He mentions three such Sanghas they are Virka, Damini and Tri-garth Shastra. This was a league of six different republics and these Republics situated in the Vahika Pradesh, it means the country of Rivers and it comprised of Sindh Valley and Punjab. Other Republics mentioned by Panini are Madras, Vrili, Rajanya, The Andak - Vrishni, Maharaja and Bharga.

We find a good deal of description of the Sanghas in the Buddhist literature. It describes the existence of large number of republics in Bihar. They include Bhaggas, the Bulis, the Koliyas and the Moriyas which were very small and the Sakyas, the Mallas, the Lichchavis and the Videhas which were relatively larger. Sakyas had a Gana state. Sakyas had an assembly Hall where all of them used to meet and decide important questions of peace, war and alliance.

Kautilya also mentions certain Republics in his Arthashastra. He classifies Republics into two Categories. The first is Martial Sanghas or Ayudhajivi Sanghas.' In the other type of Sanghas the consuls bore the title of Raja or King and therefore they were called as Rajasabdopajivin Sangha.

Check Your Progress - 2

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1. Discuss the various sources of the Republics.

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6.4 Constitutional and Administrative Machinery

The constitutional Machinery of small states like Moriyas, Koliyas and the Sakhyas must have been different from that of big states like Yaudheyas and Malavās. Most of the members of the central Assembly lived in the Capital and they frequently meet in the Assembly Hall (Santhogara) to transact the business. Each member was known as Raja and his son Uparaja. Besides the governing class, the population consists of farmers, artisans, servants and Serfs. They did not have much voice in the decisions of the central government in matters of war, peace etc.

There were number of small towns and villages which had their own Assembly meeting in Assembly Halls. and it is likely that non-privileged classes also had equal voice in local affairs.

The constitutional machinery in Big states was different. First they were divided into provinces each under a Governor who was probably recruited from the governing class. of cities constituted separate autonomous government the villages had their own councils.

Sovereignty in these Republics was vested in the Central Assembly. Its Membership was very high. Yaudheyas had 5000 members and Licchavis 7707 members. These 5,000 and 7707 probably consisted of the descendants of founding members of the Aristocracy. Membership of the central Assembly depended upon belonging to the privileged order. The principle of representation was not known. Dr. K.P.Jayaswal is of the opinion that there were two houses in some states. But it seems improbable because the members were so jealous of their status and would have hardly tolerated an upper house.

The central Assemblies exercised many important power. Firstly they elected the members of the Executive and also the military leaders. Secondly, they controlled foreign affairs, entertained

ambassadors and foreign princes considered their proposals and decided important matters of peace and war. On very grave situation this was entrusted to a smaller body.

The danger involved in discussing the matters of peace and war in large assemblies was that it was difficult to ensure secrecy so necessary for the success of foreign policy. One of the weaknesses of the Gana states was their incapacity to preserve political secrets.

Thirdly the executive was under the complete control of Central Assembly. Arthashastra of Kautilya says that if the Sanghamukhya or members of the executive Council is found guilty, they could be dismissed and punished by state tribunals. Probably the Central Assemblies appointed members of the State services and governors of provinces.

Fourthly, they discharged certain social and religious functions also. At times social and religious matters were also discussed by the Assemblies.

Like the modern parliaments the assemblies were torn by party factions. Buddhist literature, Mahabharatha, Arthashastra point out that family quarrels, party factions, lure of corruption internal dissensions and mutual recrimination among the members of the Assembly were the weaknesses of the Gana states. The causes for faction were personal rivalry and greed for power. Bhishma frequently emphasises that the dangers from internal quarrel were more serious than external aggression.

Normally the Republican Government was party Government. The members took their seats according to the parties. Parties were built around personalities and were usually named after their leaders. Vargya, Grihya and Pakshya were the technical terms used to denote party members.

About the procedure of the working of the Assembly there was high probability that there were the same procedure as were

adopted by Buddhist Sangha. There was quorum and the person whose attendance completed the quorum was called as Ganathitha. The person who acted as a 'whip' to secure the quorum was described as Ganapuraka. The Sangha-mukhya or President of the state prescribed over the assembly and regulated the debate. The Resolutions were formally moved by its mover and then the debate followed. In the Buddhist Sangha those who favoured the proposal kept silent, those who were against gave vent to their dissent. A motion was thrice proposed and passed. In the case of difference of opinion voting was restored to and the majority view prevailed. In the Buddhist Sangha three methods of voting prevailed. Secret method, whispering method and open method. Chanda which meant free choice was the technical term used for voting. Complicated matters were referred to the committees and if they were unable to come to any decision the matter was referred back to the Assembly.

So far as the Central executive is concerned, its membership varied with the size and tradition of each state. Patanjali refers to a Sangha as Panchaka or Dasaka or Vimshaka. If this has any reference to the Executive, then it would mean that it was composed of five or ten or twenty people. The Central Assembly must have elected the members of the executive council. But gradually in course of time the posts of Councillors became more or less hereditary though a formal election was probably necessary before the son could succeed father. The Gana states were famous for their Military tradition. Therefore the qualities of the members were Martial qualities. The President of the Executive Council was probably the President of the Assembly also. He was to supervise the general administration. Foreign affairs constituted the portfolio of one member, treasury under another, Justice under the third, Police and Revenue under the fourth and fifth. Trade and Industry were two other members. The different departments had 'their own officers of different grades. They worked

under the orders of their Ministers. In small states they reported incidents directly to the supreme authorities, while in Bigger through proper channels.

The Big Republics had a number of cities which had full internal autonomy. All classes of people were represented on these bodies. The villages in the Gana states must have had their own panchayats and there is no reason to believe that their powers were less than those of the Panchayaths or Monarchies. The membership in the Panchayats not confined to the privileged classes alone.

Check Your Progress - 3

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1. Explain the Constitutions and Administrative preachings

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6.5 Merits and Demerits

The Republican states were fairly efficient and prosperous. Patriotism and appreciation of liberty were stronger among them than among the Monarchical states. They were known for their trade and Industry also. Freedom of thought was encouraged and consequently there was philosophical progress.

The Gana states had some weak points also. Internal rivalry and jealousy, Large number of membership and their small sizes were the main defects of Republics.

Most of the Republics had clan origin. The members of the ruling aristocracy believed that they belonged to one stock. There seemed to be no clash of interest between the members of the privileged order and the Rest.

Because of the clan spirit their political horizon and influence could not extend to territories where their clan was not in ascendancy. They sometimes formed confederations to resist a common enemy, but they could not merge themselves into a big and strong state as a bulk work against foreign invasion.

6.6 Disappeared of the Republics

Republics disappeared from the political scene by 400 A.D. One reason probably for their destruction was foreign invasion. Many Republics in the North east were to face persian and Greek invasions, which destroyed them. According to Altekar the gradual passing of leadership into hereditary families was another cause for their disappearance. When the leadership of the republic passed into the hands of hereditary presidents who were Military leaders and Royal titles, They could no longer be distinguished from Monarchs. The growing tendency of this period to regard Monarchy as divine may have induced the republics to accept the leadership of hereditary Presidents, styled as Maharaja. Probably it was felt that the Unitary leader facilitated by Kingship was a better protection against the invasion than offered by the group leadership possible in Republic. No mention is made of them in history after 500 A.D. Puranas and Dharmasutras do not mention them. Things have come to such a stage that it is difficult to believe, even on the face of evidence, that they flourished in Ancient India.

Check Your Progress - 4

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1. Mention the causes for disappearance of the Republics.

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6.7 Let us sum up

Monarchy was the prevailing form of government in ancient India. However there were also non-monarchical states variously known as aristocracies or democracies and Republics.

The Republican states were efficient and prosperous. They offered much more strong resistance to Alexander the great than that put forth by the contemporary monarchies.

Republics disappeared from the Political Scene by 400 A.D. One reason probably for their destruction was foreign invasion.

6.8 Key Words

Confederation : United

Gana : Number's - Assembly or Parliament

Ganarajya : Rule of Numbers - Ganarajya consequently denoted government by assembly or parliament or Senate.

Testimony : evidence

6.9 Some useful Books

A.S. Altekar : State and Government in Ancient India

K.M. Panikar : Origin and Development of Kingship in Ancient
India

H.R. Mukhi : Ancient Indian Political thought and Institutions.

Beni Prasad : Theory of Government in Ancient India.

{ S. Viharaghavan

{ R. Jayaram Political thought

6.10 Answer to check your progress

Check your progress - 1

See section 6.2

Check your progress - 2

See section 6.3

Check your progress - 3

See section 6.4

Check your progress - 4

See section 6.6

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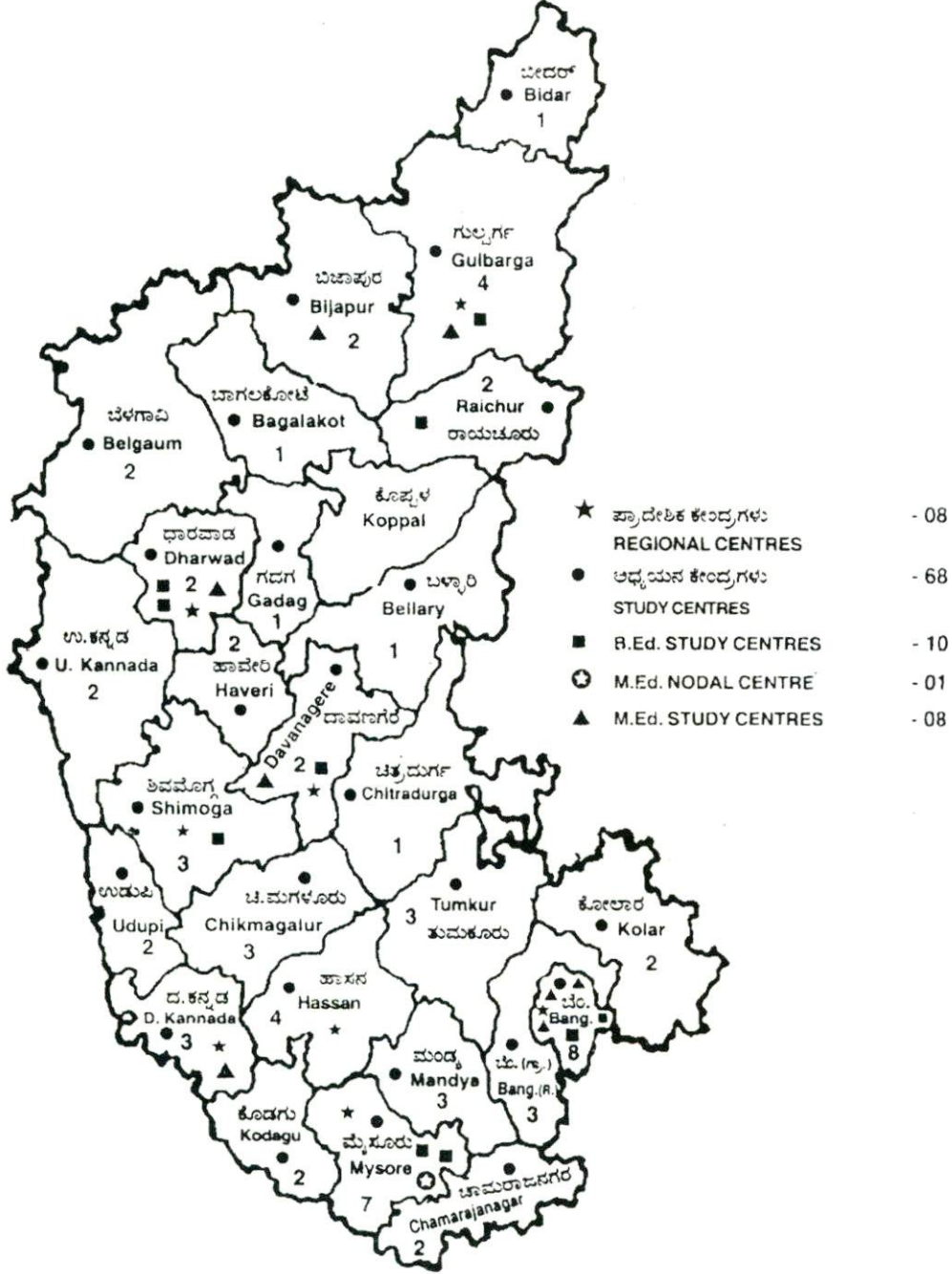
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(ಸಮೂಹಿಸಿರುವ ಅಂಕಿ - ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಒಟ್ಟು ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಕೇಂದ್ರಗಳ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.)
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