Republics in
Panini
Asthadhyayi
5. Republics in Panini's Astadhyayi

Panini gives valuable information about Hindu Republics. He was a great grammarian and citizen of north-western part of India. His view to deferent from the classical writers.

Panini refers to a monarchial state as Rajya\(^1\) (derived from Rajan) and the republics as a samgha and gana.\(^2\) He points out most clearly that the technical world ‘samgha’ or he calls it gana or republics. He does not know the religious samgha as we shall presently see was a copy of political samgha. The existence of democratic forms of government during post-vedic period is abundantly proved by a number of testimonies. The earliest in time is Panini celebrated treatise of grammar which contain clear traces of the existence of political corporations. Thus the sutra samgha chanoutra-dhareye\(^3\) shows that the nature of corporation was fully understood in those days; for here corporation’ is sharply distinguished form mere collection of group, clearly indicating thereby that the former was definite organization bound by laws and regulations.

According to Prof. D.R. Bhandker\(^4\) the word Samgha does not signify a new collection of word ‘samghata’ does not but word gana i.e. a special kind of collection or cooperate collection or republic. Further Dr.K.P. Jayaswal has drawn attention to “a rule lay by Panini viz.Sangha=anka-lak-shaneshv =an –yan =an” the meaning of which is that “a suffix takes place in no ending in the case of (i.e. to denote) anks and lakshanis of sagha.\(^5\)” This is not only testify the existence of samgha but also shows that a samgha had its anka or lakghana, which Dr.Jayaswal would identify with lanchchana or heraldic crest of later Sanskrit.\(^6\) In later sutras Panini refers to distinct kind of corporation under the name of puga\(^7\), varta\(^8\) and
The meaning of first has already been discussed. It is difficult to determine the real meaning of Varta, and as far as I know no satisfactory explained has given. The first qualifying phrase distinguishes it from social and second from industrial corporations. The third phrase, I would take to mean "living by means of slaughter or killing". According to interpretation Varta would mean a corporation of robbers like 'Thuggies' of later days. This view is collaborated by passage of Katyana\textsuperscript{11} Nanayudha Varta Mumvetestun Kritita.\textsuperscript{12} The ayudhajivi samgha means military man. It is quoted in Panini.\textsuperscript{13} Panini refers the following samghas or republics by name---

1. The Vrika\textsuperscript{14}

2. The Damini (and others)\textsuperscript{15}

3 to 8 The Trigartta-Shashtha\textsuperscript{16} or the league of the six Trigarttas whose names are given in Kasika on the authority of Ancient verse as follows\textsuperscript{17}

a- the kaundoparatha

b- the Dandaki
c- the Kaushtaki
d- the Jalamani
e- the Brahmagupta

f- the Janaki (or jalaki)

9. The Yaudheya and others\textsuperscript{18} and

10. The Parsva and others.\textsuperscript{19}

(1).\textbf{The Vrika}: - An individual member of samgha was called varkenya and the entire samgha vrika, Dr. V.S. Agarwal holds that need not be associated with the Vahikas but may be identified with varakana, the old Persian form in the Behistan inscription of Derius mentioned along with
the Prathyva or Parthians.20 Their country seems to be identical with Hycrania lying to the north of Parthia and on the eastern side of the Caspian sea. The Persian named the Verakas and other northern war like people as “Secas.21"

(2). The Damini22: - According to Dr. V. S. Agarwal the Damini is strong resemblance between the name of this samgha and powerful war like tribe still known as Damini and settled in northern-west region of the Baluchistan known as Chagai lying tom the south of the Chagai Hills.23

(3). The Trigartta Samgha24: - It was the combination of the league of six Trigarita. Trigarata stands for three valleys viz. Those of river Ravi, Beas and Sutluj.25 Cunningham identified Trigarata country with Kangara.26 Some scholars explain as the country of three strong holds.27 Trigarata country has been identified with the modern hill state of Kotoch which is still called ‘Trigarata Mulk.28 It is also identified with north canara.29 They were closely connected with Yaudheyas.30 The Mahabharata31 and Brihatsamhita32 mention with the Yaudheyas, ‘Sibis, Rajya and other gana and Janpada of the Punjab. They were defeated by Arjuna before the Rajasuya of Yudhistira when the Pandava price proceeded to subjugate the states lying in the northern direction.33 Nakula is said to have defeated them in course of western campaign. They paid homage to Yudhistra.35 The Trigarata could not forget their defeat at the hands of Pandava prince. In the great Bharata war they fought for Duryodhna along with Yaudheyas and others. Some of them become Samsaptakas (with a vow to kill Arjuna or die).36 The Kasika commentary gives the following the following manners of six Trigartta on the authority of an ancient war;

(1) Kaundoparatha

(2) Dandaki

(3) Krushtaki
Jalamani

Brahmagupta

Janaki or Jalaki

The Brahmagupta may be identified with Bharamor. The Mahabharata mentioned Janaki or Jalaki as helpmates of king Susarma of Trigarata.\(^{37}\) In Puranas, they are described as mountains (parvatasrayinah) along with Niharas, Darvas, Karna-Pravarnas etc.\(^{38}\) Hem Chandra’s *Abhidhanchitamani* locates Jalandhara.\(^{39}\) They are mentioned in Brishatstsamhita\(^{40}\), Rajatragini and Dasakumaracharitam.\(^{41}\) Epigraphic evidence connects Jalandhara with Trigarata country.\(^{42}\) Coins bearing the legend ‘Trakatajanapadasa’ and Khatapajanpadasa have been ascribed to them. These also ascribes by 2\(^{nd}\) century B.C. By Allan.\(^{42}\) Helocertes them in Jalandhara region.\(^{43}\) Dr.A.S. Alteker locates them in the doab of Jalandhara. His opinion is that the Trigarata were the unitary under Kuninda. Whose coins have been in no. of majority in this region? This evidence is based on epigraphic evidence.\(^{44}\)

**The Yaudheyas:** - The name itself derived from Yaudha means warrior. This military nation or republic in arms is among one of those forgotten people of India who kept the glowing flame of freedom burning with their blood as a fuel, through the storms of many centuries. The flame was as bright as the vicissitudes of centuries. They survived the onslaughts of Maurayan impartialism and closed their ranks in the face of Machiavellian Maghas state craft.

In Mahabharata mentioned that in Rajasuya of Yudhistira, Nakula goes to western direction to subjugate them.\(^{45}\) They bought tribute and presents in Rajya Sabha of Yudhistira\(^{46}\), but in the Great War they aligned themselves with Duryodhana along with Trigarta, Malavas etc and fought Arjuna\(^{46}\) and Yudhisthira.\(^{48}\) Yaudheyas is also the name of son of Yudhisthira. On the basis of evidence, Dr. D.C.Sirkar thinks that it is not improbable that the Yaudheyas people
claimed descent from the Pandava king but we have above seen that they fought against Arjuna and Yudhisthira in great Bharata was Dr. A.B. L. Avathi rightly challenges on the connection of Dr. Sircar on this ground.

Their country is called 'Baudhanyaka' and their capital was Rohitika in the Mahabharata. In Asthadhyayi they are mentioned along with Ayudhajivi samgha e.g. the Trigarata etc. The classical writers do not mention them by the name, but Jayaswal and Alteker identify then with the unnamed trans-Beas aristocratic republic of virile heroes whose reputation of bravery and rich resources dishearten the Macedonian army, so much so, that it refused to move and inch-further, despite the eloquent appeal of their leader what with the super-human attributes of the desperate conqueror. Panini calls them samghas Ayudhajivi. Kautilya has in its place Sastropjivins. The first impression will be to interpret it 'those who live by the profession of arms', as Dr.K.P. Jayaswal itself in the 'Modern Review' the Arhasastra contracts the Sastropjivins samghas with Rajyosabdopjivinah samghas which means according to Kautilya is further discussion the samghas whose rulers assume the title (sabda) of Rajan. We know from inscription coins and literature that elected or appointed rulers in some Indian republics assume the title. Now, here Upajivinah can not meant 'living by' as a republic can not live the title of Raja. The meanings which suit both classes of Kautilya's republics are other known meaning of the verb 'upajivinah' 'to observe in Manu where a Brahmin is asked to upajivinah the six duties which include making gifts. Upajivinah in that sense would mean that the samghas called 'Sastropjivins' observed the practice of arms or military art, and that the samghas called 'Rajyosabdopjivins' observed the practice of assuming the title of Rajan'.

The Macedonian writers describes many of those republics, two of which are the 'grammarians' 'military' (ayudhajivi) or Sastropjivins samghas; the Kshudrakas and the
Malavas; their territories and population was so large. They were very rich and have number of cities. In Greek description it given they sovereign states. Panini describes another type of republics situated in Vahika country. Dr. K.P.Jayswal says that this type of republics are mentioned in Mahabharata were in the Punjab. The word Vahika means the country of rivers, and such, the Vahika-land would comprise the Sind-valley and the Punjab. These are exactly the limit give in Mahabharata; (the Vahika) that live in the valley of five rivers and the Sindhu in the six. From the known history Vahika is the land included with Sindh. For intense the Kshudrakas and the Malavas were partially in Sindh. The Vahika land was 'away form Himalayas' i.e. it did not include to maintain districts. (The six Trigarata were at the foot of Himalaya in the Punjab about Jammu or Kangara). Except these material republics Panini gives us the name of six other communities which form independent sources are known to have been republican about that period;

(1) The Madra
(2) The Virji
(3) The Maharaja
(4) The Andhak-Vrishni
(5) The Rajayana
(6) The Bharga

Panini Andhak-Vrishnis samghas have to note separately. They in the Puranas are identical with the Satvat, according to the Aitareya Brahmana had a Bhoujyan constitution and their rulers to be called Bhojas and subdivision of the Yadavas itself a latterly called Bhojas. This is a fact there is no raja in Vrishnis constitution, is expressed in folk fare and legend in that they had been cursed not be crowned kings. In Mahabharata of Santipravan says that the
Dasaners (Vrishnis) were kingless, that they were a samgha is attested by Kautilya who mentions the Vrishnis samgha as having came to grief by offending Dvaipayana in olden days. The Mahabharata gives the ‘ancient’ discourse on Andhak- Vrishnis samgha. There is no Rajan is proved by their coin script of first century B.C. is struck in the name of their Gana. The Bhargas are called here ‘Easterners’. According to the Mahabharata they were between the Vatsa territory and the Mallas, who were not from the Videhas. Panini finds them a political community like the Yaudheyas with whom he groups them. The Buddhist record mentions the Bhargas in the republican group extending from Kosala and Kaushambi eastwards and the place the Bhargas next to Vatsa on their location. The other Bhargas whom Panini not were amongst the Trigarata.

Panini approves that there are two type of Rajayana amongst the Andhak-Vrishni. He gives a special rule to mention. The Kasika commenting on says that the rule does not apply of the Andhak-Vrishnis as such, but to their Rajayana only ‘Rajayana being the leaders of the families constructed to ruler ship’. The names of several of these ‘dual’ groups of rulers are preserved in literature; the Rajayana of group of Sivi and Vasudeva, Svapalka and Chaitraka are called in the Kasika. The party (varga) of Akrura and the parties of Vasudeva are alluded by Katayana. Vasudeva and Ugrasena Babru are mentioned their parties in the Mahabharata apparently, the Vrishnis-Andhak had a federal constitution where the executive power was vested in two Rajayana with their respective Vargas, represently each division; and probably in the Rajayana of Amara. The party (verga) of Akrura and the party of Vasudeva undoubtly draws on old literature Akrura was the leader of Andhaka; it seems that at one time he was one of the two presidents of the federal council. This explains Krishna’s saying in the Mahabharata that he holds the authority or Aisvarya to the extent of one half only (ardhabhokta). In the
tradition quoted in the Mahabharata the party of Akrura is better complained against Krishna. Probably, it is to a constitution like that of the Anhak-Vrishnis that the sutra refers as the rule of opposing parties.\textsuperscript{85}

Changing dual group Vasudeva and Ugrasena, Akrura and Vasudeva Sivi and Vasudeva suggest that the Andhak Rajayana and Vrishni.Rajayana were elected rulers. The coins were struck in the name of Rajayana and the name of gana jointly.

\textbf{Notes and References}

1- Panini VI 2.130.
2- Ibid III 3.8.6
3- Rgveda III 3.42
4- Panini III 3.36 of Dr. D.R.Bhandakar :Carmichael lecture, First series Page, 141-142.
6- Ibid
7- Vishnusamhita 3.112.
8- Ibid 3.113.
10-“Varta is a corporation (of people) ,belonging to different castes, having no definite means of livelihood by means of slaughter or killing”.

54
11- Quoted in Virmitrodaya, Page 426.

12- 'Vrata is said to be an assembly of people having various weapons in their hands' As utsedha also means 'body'; it is just possible that Utsejvinah denoted a corporation of day-labourer of various description.

13- Panini V 3.117.

14- तुक्तेःपणं 5.3.114. The connection of this sutra is with the previous one, which is already quoted above.

15- दामन्यादिविमित्तराः 5.3.116

16- आहुस्त्रिमार्तकाः कोण्टादस्तदाण्डकाः।

Page 456 on their probable coins see J.B.O.R.S. XX 289. Bhattoji Dikshit reads Jalaki.

17- पाशवंदियेबंदियादियाण्ण। 5.3.116. (as read by Kasika) The Kasika after this sutra says that with 117, the Ayudhjivi-samgha description ends. By IV 1.178 (to be read with sutra 168, supra) Panini called the Yaudheyas a Janpada, a nation or country i.e. political community.

18- Ibid.

19- The Parsvas of Panini were Vahika (see Page 47-48) and there were Brahmins and Rajayas amongst them the Parvas are mentioned in the Veda also VI 1. Page 504-505.

20- Behistun Inscription Col.II.I.16.

21- Persepolis Tomb Inscription of Buddha Prakash: Political and Social Movement in Ancient Punjab, Page 101 ff.

22- Panini V.3.116.
24- Panini V.3.116.
27- Johnson, selections from the Mahabharta Page 64 footnote .8.
28- Ibid
30- Panini IV 1.178.
31- Mahabharata Sabha Parvan ch. XXVII, Page 18 (Bl.R).
33- Mahabharta Sabha parvan ch.XXVII, Page18 (Bl.R).
34- Ibid XXXII, Page 6-7.
35- Ibid XXXVII, Page 7-12 ;LVII,18.
36- Mahabharta Drona Parvan XVII, 16; Udyog parvan LVII,18,CLV
9,Bhisma parvan XX 10,12;
LXXXI3;LXXXII13,LXXXII7,XCVI17,CII22;CIV (Bl.R).
37- Ibid; Adi parvan LIX 17,Udyog parvan IV 17.(Bl.R.)
38- Markendya Purana, Page 57; Matsya Purana page 114,56; Brahma Purana,
Page 14,56.
39- Abidhanchintamani IV,24.
40- Brihatsamhita XIV,25;XVI 20.
41- Rajatrangini V144.
43. Allan: Catalogue of coins in the British Museum, Page CXL.
44. Alteker A.S.: State and Government in Ancient India, Page 118.
45. Mahabharta Sabha parvan, Page 32.5 (Bl.R.)
46. Ibid, Page 52-53, 114 (Bl.R.)
47. Mahabharata Drona parvan 19.16 (Bl.R.)
51. Mahabharta Sabha parvan, Page 32.5.
52. Panini V 3.117.
54. राजशास्त्रिकथितां वारथसांरा XIX, Page 377.
56. द्राक्षणा ब्रह्मयोनिस्था ये स्वकर्मण्यवस्थितः
      ते सम्मुद्गजवेश्वः पद्मकर्मणि द्वधकर्मम् ||74||
      अध्यायपरमयं बजं बजं तद्यथा।
      दन नात्रधार्शकैव पद्मकर्मण्यज्ञानम् ||75|| Manu X.
      Kullika उपजीतेऽऽतुरुस्तेऽऽतुरुरुः
57. Jayaswal K.P.: Hindu Polity ch.VIII Hindu Republics in Greek Writers;
      Page
59. From the verb 'vah'=to flow cf. 'vahini'=a river.
60. फल्गायां सिन्धुसागारं परदिनां वेधनराशिः || Karna parva, XLIV.7.
Nagesa pradipodyota on Panini, एड़ प्राच्या देशे,1.1.75.

"शतद्विनिमाणशाली वितरणं चन्द्रभागं तित्तं सिंहुः।
पद्मस्तमायदेशो वाहिक इति तद्वा वा याव्याश्यातार्।"

The whole of the Punjab according to the Mahabharata was under one ruler, who was Sakala, and the people had become hetrodox. This indicates the time of Menander & layer.


62. वाहीकुः य आयुधर्जीविवंबधं पत्तंहलित्ः..........................कौण्डी बृहस्पति। कृतिदर्शिणि।

मालवा Page , 455-456.

63- The Mahabharta describes the ‘Vahika’country away from Himalaya(karma parvan XL IV 6)Panini also treats the mountains as distinct (IV 3.91).

64- Subsequent chapters for the account of republics named here.

65. मद्रावृज्ञर केन। 4.2.53.

66- Ibid.

67. महाराजाधिकार। 4.3.67.

68. राजन्य वहुवचन हन्द्यासा क्षण्णिष्ठ। 6.2.34

69. राजन्याक्षियो वृत्त। 4.2.53

Also the Ganapata on this for names of some other communities which are known as republican.

70. न प्राच्यमणि– योधेयादिनं। 4.1.179.

The Bhorges are called here ‘Easterners’: According to the Mahabharata (sabha parvan XXX 10.14), They were between the Vatsa territory and
the Southern Mallas, who were not from the Videhas. Panini finds them
apolitical community like the Yudhaeyes with whom he groups them. (IV
1.168-178). The Buddhist record mention the Bhargas in the republican
groups extending from Kosala and Kaushambi eastwards and place the
Bhargas next to the Vatsa. (Buddhist India, Page 22; Jatakā III 157) see,
Page 44 On their location. The other Bhargas whom whom Panini not
were amongst the Trigarata. (मा मल्लेभत्ते तिथि 1.111)

71- Ibid

72- Mahabharata Sabha Pravan ch.XIV; Shanti parvan ch.1.XXXI.


74- Mahabharata Shanti parvan Ch. XXXVII -5

75- AS.I.6.3. Page 11.

76- Shanti parvan ch.81

This is the whole discourse translated in Appendix - A of Dr. Jayaswal

77- Cunningham: Coins of Ancient India, Page 70 pt IV; J.A.R.S. 1900, Page
416,420,424 (Rapson).

78- Mahabharata Sabha parvan XXX 10.4.


80- राजन्य वहुस्वा या भास्कर श्रीमा 6.2.34

81- Panini VI 2.34.

82- Kasika, राजन्याधिकां बहुस्वायात्तुता यथा श्लोकः श्रीमा 8.2.34
प्रतिपादित्यं भवति। प्राथिक्यत्रे भवति। यथालक्षणे श्रीमा 8.2.34
अन्वेषणय एते न तु
83- Kasika, Page 546 Chaitraka –Yodhaka was probably the ful name. The Kasika treat it as such, Dikshita omits rodhaka as does the Kasika later on.

84- On Panini IV ,2.104: अकृत्वार्यः | अकृत्वार्गीयः | वासुरेतवर्गीणः | on the word ‘verga’ see discussion below the Janpada ch.XXVII. It really means an assembly or council. Brihaspati (Vivaha-Ratnakar, Page 569) calls gana, puga (guild) and similar ‘vargas’ Mitra Mishra explains a vergin body as a gana. (Virmitrodaya, Page 12);Nilkantha Mayukha ,I; On ‘Verga’ as a corporate body on Panini (V 1.60) in the sense of Kshatriya is called Rajanyaka and a council of kings. Rajaka by Amara (II.8.4) , Page 27 & above.

85-Acharangsutra II.3.10; Virudha-rajya.