CHAPTER VI

THE SOCIETY

1. SOCIETY AND ITS ANTIQUITY

In ancient times the state and society were interdependent on each other for harmonious way of life.

Indian society from the age of Rigveda has been based on the Varna/rama system. It has worked as an indispensible and inseparable corner-stone of the great and magnificent edifice of Hindu social order. But one has to realise that in the initial stages the Varna system was not like a water tight compartment and one's Varna was basically determined by one's deeds and way of life. There is a famous example of the sage Visvamitra, who was a Ksatriya by birth lent by his devotion to learning and scholarship he was designated as "Brahmashri" by his equally great contemporary Vasistha.

But unfortunately, in course of time, it was the birth that began to determine one's Varna. Be that as it may, the Varna/rama/ramavyavastha continued through the ages. As it was felt as a cementing bond in the society the State took proper care for its harmonious
growth and development.

2. **THE STATE AND THE VARNĀSRAMA DHARMA**

For the fulfilment of the above mentioned objectives of the life it was considered necessary that people should abide by their social duties and obligations. The distribution of these duties was two fold. First, it was according to vocations and secondly, it was according to the birth, growth and maturity of an individual. This distribution was made in the orders of Varnas and Āśramas respectively which developed as great and indispensable social institutions in themselves. The theory of Varna deals with a person as a member of Aryan society and it laid down his rights, functions, privileges, responsibilities, duties and obligations as a member of the society.¹

The theory of Āśrama addressed itself to the individual. It tells him that his spiritual goal is to order his whole life and make all necessary preparations required to attain that goal of life.²

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1. Acharya P.K., Glories of India, p. 142.
The protection, preservation and advancement of 'Varnāśrama dharma' was the foremost duty of the ancient Indian State and the kings were given the title as upholder of the varṇāśramavāyavastha. The attainment of the ends of life was based solely on observance of the social rules of the order of Varna and Āśrama. These were the objects of king's perpetual attention and protection. Mahamahopadhyaya P.V. Kane remarks; "What the king was to do was to see that the dharmas of Varna and Āśrama were observed by the people and if they did not observe them it was his duty to bring them back by punishment."\(^3\) The Viṣṇusmṛti tells that the duty of the king is to keep the four castes and the four varṇas in order of practising their respective duties.\(^4\) The Viṣṇudharmottara states that there is no duty for kings equal to losing one's life in battle; those who meet death in protecting a cow, a Brāhmana, a king, a friend, their own wealth and their wives, enter heaven as also those who meet death in preventing intermingling of varṇas.\(^5\)

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4. Viṣṇusmṛti, Ill, 3 Cf. Ibid. Ill. 46.

5. Viṣṇudharmottara. 44-46.
duty of a king as a protector of the Varna and Srâma orders finds mention in the Râmâyana (IV.4.6), the Mahâbhârata (Santiparva 57.776), Manu Smriti (VII.17), Matsya Purâna (215–63), Raghuvamsa (I.17, V.19, XI V 67, 95, XV. 48 and XVII.12) and Abhijnãna Sakuntala (V.10). Dr. Mahalingam records that Vijayanagar kings assumed the title of "the maintainer of the Varna' They appointed 'Samayachâryas' who saw to it that the people maintained their own religion (Svadharma) of the respective castes and communities. 6

Another important aim of the State was the suppression of the wicked and cruel and growth of the noble people. This does not require and elaboration or clarification as everyone knows that the evil doers might bring untold miseries and sufferings to the people and the State as a whole whereas the growth of nobles increases the prosperity of the people and State in all its spheres. The need for bringing the wicked to books and punishing them and protecting and encouraging the nobles was emphasised repeatedly in various works on society and polity. Ëukra advises even the ostracisation

or ex-communica[tion] of such anti-social elements who obstruct the ways of an ideal State. This socio-political aspect of the aims and ideals of the State also received proper cognizance and we come across innumerable references in this respect in ancient Indian Literature. A few of these may be seen in the Rāmāyana (II.1.14,100.48), the Mahābhārata (Sabhāparva, 5.88,90, 93, Santiparva 57. 788) Arti (V.28) Manu (VII.14.34;VIII 302-303, 310-11,343-347,IX 252,293,312); Śukra (I.14,IV. 70,524,525), Yajnavalkya (I.337), Kamandaka (VII.58), Matsyapurāṇa (Ch.215 vide Sabdakalpadruma, part IV p. 119), Padma Purāṇa (Ch.20 vide Sabdakalpadruma part IV p. 120), Agnipurāṇa (222-10), Vīshudharmottara (III.323, 25-26), Vīshnusmrī (III.36-37), Panchatantra (Mitrabheda, 240-41, Suhrabheda, 374), Mahāvīracharita (III.22), Raghuvasa (XV.5), Abhijnāna Sakuntala (I.21) and the Nitivakyamrta (V.2). In Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Lord Kṛṣṇa, verily as the God, tells Arjuna that he incarnates himself from age to age for the protection of the virtuous and for the destruction of the evil-doers.

7. Śukra, IV. 93.

8. Śrīmadbhagavadgītā. IV. 8.
PROTECTION OF DHARMA

Lastly, but not the least, the state existed for the protection of dharma. The word 'dharma', as used in ancient India, had a very wide sphere including religious and ritualistic law and the rules of social behaviour, morality and prudence. The dharma in ancient India was not merely a code coming out from legislative enactment but it was a self-evolved code of conduct and various usages and noble traditions approved by the society. Briefly speaking the dharma was the code of righteousness. Even the king was not above the dharma and he observed the dharma as it was the sovereign over the sovereign. The Mahabharata maintains that the very existence of the king is for the advancement of the dharma. It further tells that he is verily the king who is possessed of the dharma. The Raghuvamsa and Sūkra also spell king as a protector of the dharma.

The preservation, protection and advancement of dharma was such an ideal before the State in ancient

10. Mahābhārata, Śāntiparva., 90.2.
11. Ibid., 90.14.
India which contributed the most to the ideal goal of the State. If all the people follow the dharma or the righteous course of life, the burden of the state is considerably reduced and the conserved power may be used for other constructive programmes for the welfare of the people. So, it was the first and foremost duty of the state to see that people abide by their dharma which might be 'varṇāśramadharma', 'jātidharma' (caste rules), 'śrenīdharma' (guild rules) and 'janapadadharma' (local customs) and 'kuladharma' (family customs). Kautilya says that the king should not allow people to swerve from their righteous conduct or to fail in their dharma; for whoever holds fast by his dharma, observes the rules laid down for the Āryans and those of the four Varnas and asramas, would be happy in this world and the next.  

If people deviated from the dharma, the state enforced it by using its coercive power to follow the dharma. The Ramayana states that as the vision guides the body, likewise the king guides the country on the path of righteousness, truthfulness and dharma.


15. Ramayana, II. 67.33.
It is because of this active interest of the king in protecting and preserving the dharma that he was called 'Dharmaprabhārbandha'. Aśoka, who was a great protector of dharma styles himself 'Dharmarāja'. In the Mahābhārata Yudhiṣṭhira bears the same epithet 'Dharmarāja'. Dīghanikāya describes Bimbisāra as 'Dharmikam Dhammarājan'.

There are many other epithets like 'Dharmapati' and other used for a king in ancient India. The fact, that it was one of the principal duties and ideals of the state to protect and preserve the dharma, is so well known that it does not call for citation of any more reference in this concern. The reference to this effect are innumerable and appear in most of the ancient Indian works on social sciences and polity as well as numerous epigraphs of ancient Indian and medie-

cval rulers.


THE STATE AND SOCIETY: THEIR INTER-DEPENDENCE

The ancient Indian social set-up the state played a major role in shaping and determining the social values and enactment of laws and legal institutions. It functioned as a necessary institution for the proper maintenance of law and order and for material and moral progress of the people. A sense of political and social security was primarily essential for the welfare of the people. The agency which could provide adequate social and legal protection to the people was the state. I propose to elaborate as to why the state functioned to achieve these varied goals and objectives.

The Aitareya Brāhmana states that the gods elected their king because they felt that they were worsted by their enemies in battles for want of a king.¹ The Ramāyaṇa says that "in a territory without a ruler, clouds pour down hail-storms with lightning and thunder; the seeds are not grown, sons do not remain in the control of their parents, nor a wife is in control of her husband; wealth is lost; women desert their husbands and homes and they give up their virtues. There are no assem-

¹. Aitareya Brāhmana, I.14.
blies; people do not visit pleasure parks and gardens, nor they build temples and rest houses; the self-restraining twice-born (dvijas) offer no sacrifices; nor do those of pious vows that assist them in rituals; the Brāhmaṇas do not receive their sacrificial share; neither actors nor dancers find pleasure; the holy festivals and pilgrimages, promoting the prosperity of the land, are not celebrated; those telling the traditional stories do not satisfy the people with favourite tales; maidens adorned with ornaments do not frequent the gardens in the evening; the devotees of pleasure do not ride to forests in the company of their pretty consorts on swift chariots; the wealthy people are not safe; the husbandmen do not sleep with doors open; the magnificent elephants of sixty years do not move on highway adorned with tinkling bells; the twanging of archer's bow is not heard even for a rescue; the arrows do not come out of quiver; the merchants do not travel far with their goods in safety; the restraining ascetic, contemplating his identity with the all-pervading spirit, receives no hospitality at the fall of night; wealth is not unassailable; armies do not match the enemy; no man is seen driving a decorated chariot with swift steeds; wreaths, sweetmeats and alms are not offered by worshippers at sacrifices; princesses do not
appear like blossoming spring with the use of sandal and perfumeries. A kingdom without a sovereign is like a river without water, a forest without vegetation or a cow without a cowherd -- no man loves his own people in a rulerless land, but each devours the other daily like fishes; atheists assume predominance over others breaking down their own limits in the absence of a sceptre to chastise them. 2

The Mahabharata warns that in an anarchy, sinful derives pleasure by plundering the wealth of others. When, however, his ill-gotten wealth is snatched away by others, he wishes that there should be a king.

It is evident, therefore, that in times of anarchy the very wicked can not be happy. The wealth of one is snatched away by another. That of these two is snatched away by many acting together. He who is not a slave is made slave. Women are forcibly abducted. If there were no kings on earth for wielding the rod of chastisement, the strong would have preyed on the weak in the manner the fishes do in the water. 3

2. Ramāyāna, II., Ch. 67, 9-37.
3. Mahabharata, Santiparva, Ch. 67, 13-16 and 15-30.
Manu says that if the king did not, without any lethargy, inflict punishment on those deserving it, the stronger would roast the weaker like a fish on a spit; the crow would eat the sacrificial cake and the dog would lick the sacrificial offerings and ownership of property would not remain with anyone, the lower ones would usurp the place of the higher ones. 4

Kauṭilya writes that when the law of punishment is kept in abeyance, it gives rise to such disorder as in implied in the proverb of fishes, for, in the absence of a magistrate, the strong will swallow the weak; but under his protection, the weak will resist the strong. 5 The favourite simile of 'Matsya-nyāya' is traceable even in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa 6 mentioning the seizure of weaker by the stronger. The Kāmandaka, 7 Matsya Purāṇa, 8 Manasollasa 9 and the Lakhimapur copper-plate of Dharmapāla 10

5. Kauṭilya, Bk. I. Ch. 4 and 13.
dwell upon this theme referring to the conditions of the people in the state of anarchy.

The indispensability of a king is pronounced in the Buddhist literature also. The Jātakas tell that a country without government cannot exist. A man needs a king and warriors for protection. An episode of people assembling together at the palace door and asking the king as to why did he not have any issue, obviously, refers to the concern of people for royal succession. A condition of kinglessness or more accurately Statelessness was always deemed to be full of horrible consequences with total political lawlessness and social disorder.

So it becomes clear that the State which held the Danda or sceptre or chastising-rod symbolic of the power of punishment was necessary for maintaining the law and order in the society and the land. Manu says that the creator created the king for the protection of this world when everything ran through fear hither and thither, as there was then no ruler in the world and the Creator

created Danda for the sake of the king.  

Sukra also holds similar view. Gautama considers the word 'danda' to be a derivative from the root 'dam' (to control) and advises that the king should control by means of danda those who observe no restrain. This statement also finds favour with the Matsya Purāṇa, and Agni Purāṇa, and the Mahābhārata which maintain that danda suppresses the non-restrained and punishes imprudent or ungentleman like behaviour. Danda rules over all people; it protects all of them; danda is awake even when the guardians of law have gone to sleep. Manu and the Mahābhārata hold that since it is difficult to find a man of pure nature, the whole world comes under the heel of danda. The conception of danda rests on the idea of obedience in the people to law and the injunctions of morality due to dread of force or punishment from the

14. Manu, VII. 3.
15. Sukra, I. 71.
17. Matsya Purāṇa, 225.17.
18. Agni Purāṇa, 226.16.
20. Manu, VII. 18; Matsya Purana, 225.14-15; Mahābhārata, Santiparva, 15.2.
22. Mahābhārata, Santiparva, 15.34.
coercive power of the state and it directs the people and the nation to right path.

Similar views are held by modern western political thinkers and social scientists. The Indian term 'danda' which may be equated with force, attracted the attention of modern western political thinkers. Salmond writes:

"man is, by nature, a fighting animal; and force is the basic step not only of all kings but also of entire mankind." 23 Geremy Taylor writes: "a herd of wolves is quieter and more at one than so many men unless they all had one reason in them or have one power over them." 24 The similar views are held by Machiavelli also. He says:

"Those, who have discussed the problems of civic life, demonstrate and history is full of examples to confirm the fact that whoever organizes a state and arranges laws for the government of it, must presuppose that all men are wicked, and that they will not fail to show their natural depravity whenever they have a clear opportunity, though possibly it may be concealed for a

while. 25

Mac Iver observes that the force being the main cause of the origin of the state, the incontrovertible fact remains that to the state alone, admitting that it is only one, and the most powerful of all the social institutions within society, belongs the exclusive right of force; that this power is over the life and property of all the other associations and persons within the society; that the State settles by force all disputes, including political, between the members and associations which comprise the society; that the visible expressions and embodiments of force in the state are the armed forces, the police, the legislative authority, and various other coercive agencies which it brings into existence; and that the state uses all these and similar facets of force for the maintenance of the community of purpose and social good through an array of corresponding institutions within the limits of society. 26

The foregoing paragraphs establish that the existence of the State or the Sovereignty of the Ruler

was the most appropriate answer to the basic problem of protection confronting the maintenance and material welfare of the people in the society. Gidding was right when he says that the state was the mightiest creation of the human mind and the noblest expression of human purpose. 27

Thus we can safely conclude that the society and its multi-dimensional welfare was the corner-stone of the great edifice known as the State. Modern writers on the science of polity conclude that the problem of the origin of the state was linked with welfare of the society.

The most important theory of the origin of the State is the theory of social contract. It is based on the basic principle of the general good of the society. It can be traced to the times of ancient Greek city states. The idea behind this theory was first analysed and developed by Hobbes. It was further advanced by Locke and Rousseau. 28

The application of this theory in ancient Indian literature is considered mainly on the basis of references, frequently dwelt upon by ancient Indian writers. They opine that the king is a servant of the people getting his share of the produce from the people as the wages for the protection offered to them. 29

The social welfare aspect of this theory of social contract is implicit in the very fact that it is a contract and, the people in the society being a party to it, have accepted the existence of the State and the state was created to offer the welfare of the people. This fact is corroborated by the Nītīvākyāmṛta which tells that only that king takes his 'one-sixth' share righteous-ously who maintains his people. 30 Sukra says that the king, though master in appearance, is the servant of the people, getting his wages (sustenance) in form taxes for the purpose of their continuous protection and growth. 31 Yajnavalkya maintains them judiciously. 32 The Atharvaveda 33 and the Rāmāyāna 34 also contain references which

30. Nītīvākyāmṛta, Ch.VI, 20-23.
33. Atharvaveda., III. 4.2.
34. Rāmāyāna., III. 6.11.
conclusively prove that the contractual origin of the State was mainly considered necessary for the good of the good of the people in the society.

Similarly the theory of the divine origin is also based on the good of the people. It's origin and the references to divinity in the king are positively traceable to the times Rigveda. But the earliest elaborate reference to the State originating on account of divine action is available in the Taittiriya Upanisada. The idea of Divine origin of the State appealed so much to the ancient Indian social scientists and codifiers that most of them expound it in their respective works on Indian polity and society.

The social welfare aspects of the divine origin theory are evident in the fact that anything might be divine only when it tantamounts to the welfare of the people by its very nature.

Some scholars believe that the state originated through a process of gradual evolution as a result of

35. Rigveda., IV. 42.
36. Taittiriya Upanisada, I. 5.
enormous expansion of the patriarchal joint family system and their confederations. This theory has been also traced in ancient Indian traditions.\textsuperscript{37}

The social welfare aspect of the Theory of Evolution in respect of the origin of the State is self-evident. Since the Sovereign himself was the benevolent patriarch, he himself endowed all the good to his people and did everything for their welfare in the same manner as the head of a family does for his kiths and kin. The basic nature of the State in ancient India was so developed that ancient Indians regarded the State as an essentially benevolent institution gradually evolved and developed in pre-historic times for the efficient protection and welfare of the people and for the better realisation of its human values and higher moral ideals. The western political thought that the State was a necessary evil and was to be tolerated, as there was no other alternative to it as held by several individualists and anarchist political thinkers, was never subscribed to by any ancient Indian political thinker or social scientist. (On the other hand, the State was considered as the

\textsuperscript{37} Altekar, A.S.: State and Government in Ancient India, Ch.II, pp. 34-36.
benevolent guardian of the people.

Ancient Indian political thinkers and social scientists do not desire that the 'danda' should be activated frequently. They always felt that an ideal State was one which after willingness on the part of the people to accept the scheme of righteous life and conduct determined by the social morality. It was mutually binding alike on both the ruler and the ruled or the people and the kind and both were equally liable for punishment on defiance of the code of social and moral conduct. Thus the Dharma was the ultimate sovereign in social and political set-up in ancient India.

Some modern western social scientists and political thinkers, who do not know the basic principles of Indian way of life, have tried to criticise the concept of ancient Indian state. Maine writes that the ancient Indian state was nothing but an irresponsible tax collecting machinery. Green further expanded this idea. He says:

"The great empires of the East were, in the main,

tax collecting institutions. They exercised coercive force on their subjects of the most violent kind, for certain purposes, and at certain times, but they did not impose laws as distinct from particular and occasional commands. Nor did they judiciously administered and enforced customary laws. In a certain sense the subjects rendered them habitual obedience, that is, they habitually submitted when the agents of the empire descended on them for taxes and recruits, but the general tenor of their lives, their actions, and forebearances were regulated by authorities with which the empire never interfered, with which it probably could not interfere without destroying itself. These authorities could scarcely be said to reside in any determinate person or persons, but so far as they did, they resided mixedly in priests as exponents of customary religion in heads of families acting within the family, and in some village councils acting beyond the limits of the family. 39

This view Green appears to have been based on the basis of incomplete knowledge and biased outlook. Any of his observations or references are neither corroborated—

ted by the writings of ancient Indian codifiers and thinkers nor are they available in Indian historical accounts nor the records left by foreign travellers. The fallacious theory of Green deserves contemptuous in difference. Aiyangar has rightly observed that it possesses obvious inconsistencies which do not need serious refutation. 40

The assumption that the ancient Indian state was a benevolent and beneficent civil authority and not the military junta or police state may be further corroborated by scores of references from ancient texts. The Aitareya Brahmana contains an obligatory oath that a king was required to take at the time of his coronation and that oath itself contains the word that if the ruler oppressed his people, he was deprived of his life and progeny. He might have lost the merits and fruits of whatever good he might have done during his life time. 41

The Mahabharata records that the king should not do what is pleasing to him, but he should do what would be conducive to the good of the people as a pregnant woman does


41. Aitareya Brahmana, VII. 15.
for the sake of her child in her womb. The ancient law makes provision for a king that he should keep the subjects happy and contented. It further maintains that the duty of a king is to please the people, protect the truth and promulgate good conduct. Similarly Kautilya maintains that having acquired the new territory, he (the king) should cover enemy's vices with his own virtues, by doubling his own virtues, but strick observance of his own duties, by attending to his welfare functions by bestowing rewards, by remitting taxes, by giving gifts and by bestowing favours and honours. Kalidasa, while describing the exploits of a king, tells that he should collect taxes from his subjects only to promote their prosperity like the sun who draws water only to replease it back thousand fold. The Panchatantra tells that the king should constantly work for the maintenance of the people and provide them food. He should increase merits by chastising the immoral who might harm be the righteous course. The king should collect the taxes for the maintenance of subjects and

42. Mahabharata, Santiparva, 56. 45-46.
43. Ibid., Santiparva, 51. 72.
44. Kautilya, Bk. xiii, Ch. 5.
45. Raghuvamsa, I. 18.
administer justice, by an by as the cowherd milks the cow. The Padma Purāṇa tells that a king, desirous of prosperity, should look to the welfare of his people with four eyes. The Matsya Purāṇa goes a step further and advises the king that he should arrange the maintenance of the evils also with a purpose of common good to all. The Mahabharata contains a discourse where the king is being asked if he was protecting the conquered people like his sons and states that the war should be fought only with the enemy. Kautilya recommends that in the conquered country the king should adopt the same mode of life, the same dress, language and customs as those of the conquered people. He should allow and join the people in respecting their faith with which they celebrate their national, religious and congregational festivals and amusements. He should please them by giving them gifts, remitting their taxes and providing adequate efforts for their security. He should always

46. Panchatantra, Mitrabheda 240.41.
47. Padma Purāṇa, Ch.20 vide Sabdakalpadrum, Vol.IV p.120.
49. Mahabharata, Sabhaparva, 5.45.
hold religious life in high esteem. Learned persons, orators, philanthropists and brave persons should be favoured with gift of land and money and with remission of taxes. He should release all the prisoners and afford help to the poor, needy, helpless and diseased persons. 50

This kind of civil aspect of the state in ancient India is conspicuously noticed by Jayaswal who concludes "the Hindu Monarchical State was essentially a civil state. Standing armies appear as early as the sixth century B.C. and probably had existed before it for some centuries. At certain periods very large armies, three-quarters of a million strong, were maintained. 51 But the state never lapsed into a military polity. The governors of the provinces were civil officers. All the known orders in inscriptions are addressed to civil functionaries. The Commander-in-Chief and all other military chiefs were appointed by the Council of State where the Commander-in-Chief had no place. We do not find the army making and unmaking kings. All the traditions of depo-

iations, e.g., that of Nṛga-Darśaka, of Pālaka or the early

50. Kautilya, Bk. XIII. Ch.5.

51. During the times of Chandragupta Mourya, the standing Army was very large. Plutarch gives the figure of six lakhs.
Vena, relate to dethronement brought about by the citizens of the capital and other constituents of the civil population, not by the army. The king among his several titles—Narapati (Protector of the People), Bhūpati (Protector of the Country), Bhattāraka (Lord), Great king and others—has not got an epithet indicating an official military character, although his personal heroism is often extoll ed. He, as the head of the executive, was undoubtedly the head of the army, and in practice he very often led the army and fought; but that was a personal matter. There is no theory which gives him a military halo. He was not the generalissimo of the army by inherent right; that office was quite distinct from that of kingship from Vedic times. Likewise, war was to be avoided as far as it was possible, and especially so, for conquest. This was more or less a settled principle of Hindu politics. Militarism as a feature is everywhere absent.

52. Manu, III. 199; Mahābhārata, 69, 23: "Bṛhaspati has laid down that a wise king should always avoid war for acquisition of territory." fn. 4, f. 342.

All these references cited above, prove that the character of the state in ancient India and that the implicit contents in them amplify that its duty was not only to run the administration but was also the promotion of welfare of the people. Many more such references occur throughout vast literature.

Thus we can conclude that the State in ancient India had welfare functions to perform in order to promote the intercate of the people and the ruler or the monaren was ultimately responsible for effective accomplishment of this aim of the State. We find that king was the root of all the State affairs. He is the symbol of the State since royal sovereignty is the symbol of the State and this sovereignty remains embodied in the king. The Satapatha Brahmanas contains the declaration that nothing is above the power of the king. "The sovereign, who is chosen by nobles or people (rājakṣa) as protector of the people (Gopajanasya), is the lord of the people (Viśpāti)."  

Kautilya states that the briefest exposition of the elements of the State is to say that the king is the State.  

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54. Acharya, P.K., Glories of India, p.111.
55. Kautilya, Bk.VII. Ch.2.
telling that it is the king who appoints ministers, servants and superintendents who take measures of relief against calamities, and make efforts to all kinds of prosperity. Kautilya\textsuperscript{56} and Manu\textsuperscript{57} accord the first place to a sovereign in the seven limbs of the State expressing that when calamities befall or deterioration sets in each of the seven elements, those that befall each preceding one, are more serious for the State than those of each succeeding one. \textsuperscript{58} Sukra, comparing the seven constituents of the State with the limbs of a human being, similiarises the king with the head. Undoubtedly, king is the head of the State and as the head of the State, as well, and it is very important for the development and progress of the State, that he discharges his duties and responsibilities. Therefore, the proper and righteous discharge of the duties and responsibilities by the king is particularly important in view of the fact that people emulate him. He is, really, the upholder of his age and Dharma. Sukra observe that all tendencies of righteousness and evilness grow

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., Bk. VIII. Ch. 1.
\textsuperscript{57} Manu, II. 295.
\textsuperscript{58} Sukra, I. 61-62.
from the king. 59 Manu states that the king himself is the creator of his age and he alone can usher a golden age or an age of strife and misery for the country. 60

59. Sukra., IV. 60.
60. Manu. IX. 301.
THE STATE AS AN UP HOLDER OF SOCIAL LAW AND JUSTICE

In its earlier stage the state in India was basically tribal. Dr. Altekar observed:

"The available evidences show that the state in the early Vedic period was tribal. The Yadus, the Turuvasas and the Bharatas who played a prominent role in the Vedic history, had, for a long time, no permanent territorial basis for their state and they moved along-with the peoples of their tribes and had thus only a tribal nomadic society. In the later Vedic period, however, the state became territorial. We have clear references to the different tribes settling down in the different parts of the country, and so kings becoming masters both of their people as well as their country (rastra). In the later Vedic period the emperor is described as one who rules over the earth bounded by the oceans. The different stages, however, by which the state gradually became territorial, cannot be clearly visualised from the scanty evidence available to us at present."

Since we are not aware of the exact periods of different stages of evolution of the state, we may only

1. Altekar, A.S., State and Government in Ancient India, Ch. III, p.43.
support the view that for a long time the state in ancient India confined itself to the constituent functions. These were confined to the peace, order, justice and security. These were mainly the chief aims and objective of the state during the early period. It may not be concluded by this statement that the state altogether neglected the welfare functions and activities, but in a tribal society it was quite natural that the state could not have found an adequate scope for these welfare activities, as it was highly pre-occupied with the problems of peace, law, order, justice and security. The functions of an early state were to be only those for which the state originated and nothing more could be expected from it when it was not properly developed and stabilised on firm grounds. At first, the political functions of the king seem to have been limited to collection of revenue and maintenance of a standing army to put down disorder and drive out enemies and robbers. The Atharva-veda records: "The kings and makers of kings, troop leaders, masters of the horses, make all the men on every side, Parna, obedient to my will. Thou, Parna art my body-guard, man kin by birth to me, a man with splendour

2. Ibid., Ch.II, p.58.
of the circling year I bind thee on me." 3  Āpastamba 4 and Yājnavalkya 5 also refer to these primary functions of the state separately, apparently in the context of an earlier state.

During the period of the later Saṃhitās and Brāhmaṇas the size of the state began to increase considerably. 6 By now it had been established solid grounds and could devoted itself to the task of being instrumental in the achievement of ideals of life by its people. Altekar remarks: "When the literature on politics proper began to be developed, we find that the promotion of dharma, artha and kama are usually mentioned as the aims of the state. The state was to promote dharma, not be championing any particular sect or religion, but by fostering a feeling of compassion, piety and religiousness, by encouraging human virtues and morality by extending help to the foundations and establishments belonging to all religious and sects, by maintaining free hospitals and feeding houses for the poor and the needy and, last but not least, by

3. Atharvaveda., 3.5. 7-8.
5. Yājnavalkya., 1. 337.
6. Altekar A.S., State and Govt. in Ancient India, Ch. XV p.312.
extending patronage to art, literature and sciences. The promotion of artha was to be procured by encouraging trade, commerce, industry and agriculture, by developing national resources, by bringing fresh land under cultivation, by building dams and canals to make agriculture independent of rain, any by encouraging extensive and systematic working of mines. The State was to promote kama by ensuring peace and order, so that each individual may enjoy life undisturbed, and by offering encouragement to fine arts like music, dancing, painting, sculpture and architecture in order to promote aesthetic culture. The state was thus expected to maintain peace and order and promote moral, material and aesthetic progress of society. Our writers have thus practically recognised the ideal of perfect development of the individual to the full development of the society, when they laid down that it was the business of the state to promote Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksa; only they have not used the modern terminology. The ideal of sarvabhutahita, which is emphasised in several places, refers not only to the spiritual but also to the mundane sphere.7 The ultimate end of life was Moksa and it depended on the earnest fulfilment and accomplishment

7. Altekar A.S., Ch. III, pp. 48-49.
of other three ends—Dharma, Artha and Kāma. The king, therefore, strived at attainment of these ends for himself and his people. The Bṛhaspatya-sūtra says that the fruit of state polity was the attainment of Dharma, artha and kāma. The Nītivākyāmṛta tells us that the king was to promote Trivarga (Dharmarthakama) and says that the state yielded the three fruits of dharma, artha and kāma. The necessity of state helping the people in the attainment of Trivarga is advocated in various works polity and social insti and to avoid repetition it might be said that it was elaborated in the Rāmāyana (II.100.63), the Mahābhārata (Sabhāparva 5.87,91; Śāntiparva 59.886.85.2), Kāmādana Nītisara (I.13,IV.77) Manu Smṛti (VII.26), Śūkra Nītisāra (1.67), Mārkandeya Purāṇa 27.29–30), Raghuvamśa (XVII.50) and several other a polity, law and social and legal institutions.

SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF TRIVARGA

The social significance of Trivarga has been elaborated in many texts codified by the ancient social

8. Bṛhaspatya-Sūtra., II. 43.
scientists and thinkers. According to Chāṇakya Nītisāra dharma is performed with the help of dhana (artha) and wealthy people become honourable on account of their wealth. There is not even the slightest reference of Kāma without the help of wealth. Therefore, artha is the root of Trivarga. In a dialogue between Arjuna and Yudhishthira in the Mahābhārata the former insists on to prove that artha was ultimate means of Dharma and consequently ultimate realisation of Kāma (enjoyment).

Kāma has never been disregarded in the sphere of social or political thoughts in ancient India. On the other hand it occupies the central place in the aims or ends of human life. According to some smritis, it is impossible to exist in this world even a minute without proper fulfilment of Kāma. So, it is wrong to suppose that in ancient Indian political or social ideas, there is no place for enjoyment. It has been prescribed that the 'Kāma' should be enjoyed with due respect to 'dharma' and 'artha'. Wealth has not been considered as an end in itself. It is for an enjoyment of life, so Kāma should be enjoyed with the help of Artha in accordance with

dharma. This is the synthetic view of way of life in ancient India. However, there was a school which regarded the absolute value to Kāma. Some thinkers in West believed in the pleasures of life being the absolute truth and consequently they advanced the slogan of 'eat, drink and be marry'. In ancient India the banner of this philosophy was upheld by the 'Lokāyatas or the school of 'Chārvaka' who believed in complete enjoyment of life. Etymologically, the word chārvaka itself is a derivative from the root 'charv' which means to eat. So the followers of this school emphasised eating. Unfortunately the original writings of 'charvak' have disappeared and we are informed of their philosophy from 'Sarvadarsana-graha' of Mādhyā. Chārvakas held that ultimate substance in the world was matter and not the soul; body itself was soul, the end of life was enjoyment and mokṣa or consummation was the freedom from restraints on sex and food.

This view did not receive wide social and moral recognition and the majority of ancient Indian writers believed in a judicious synthesis of all the three ends—Dharma, Artha, and Kāma. 12

11. Dr. Baldeo Upadhyya, Bharatiya Darshan, p.117.
12. Manu, II. 24 Cr.; Kauṭilya, Bk. I Ch. 7; Kūmandaka, VI.6.
SOCIAL, MORAL AND MATERIAL WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE

The creation of congenial conditions and proper atmosphere by the State for the accomplishment of the above mentioned three ends of life resulted in social, moral and material welfare of the people. The State took it as a serious social and moral duty to promote the social, moral and material welfare of the people, Raghuvamsa says about the king that he collected revenue and taxes from his subjects only to promote their prosperity.\(^1\) Kautilya maintains that the king should endeavour himself to promote the interests of people by bringing them in contact with wealth and doing good to them.\(^2\) The exertion of Asoka for the moral and material well-being of his subjects is a bright example of the state activity in this direction and we have already quoted earlier the relevant extract from his Rock Edict VI, which records how much the king cared for the promotion of social moral and material welfare of the people. This aspect of the state functions is also vindicated in the Rāmāyana (II.1.14, 38, 67, 34, 100, 46), the Mahābhārata (Sabhāparva 5.70), Agni Purāṇa

\(^1\) Raghuvamsa, I.28.

\(^2\) Kautilya, Bk. I. Ch.7.
(225.14), the Padma Purāṇa (Ch.20 vide Sābdakalpadruma part 4. p.120), Matsya Purana (Ch.215 vide Sabdakalpadruma, Sakuntalā (V.4-5, VI.34) and Mālavikāgnimitra. In this context the views of the late Shri Prassana Kumar Acharya comparing the modern state with the ancient one in this respect are noteworthy. He says:

"In the most developed condition of the society the greatest good of the largest number is aimed at. Hindu thinkers considered metaphysical problems concerning moral man and immortal soul i.e. human good not only in this life but also to the next. But the modern materialistic states do not care to consider the fate of human existence after the end of this life."  

THE STATE AND EDUCATION

Citizens are the most invaluable asset of any State. But they should be so considered only when they possessed of elements and social norms of good citizenship. It has been, therefore, asserted that only that country is to be preferred, the principal men in which are not foolish nor vicious.  

4. Kane, P.V., History of Dharmasāstra, Vol.III, Ch.5.133.
SOCIETY EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Normally the good citizenship is understood to mean the observance of social discipline, to abide by the State laws, rules, regulations and orders of State, to maintain general peace, to follow maxims of social etiquette in personal conduct, to uphold a good behaviour and character and to promote the spirit of harmony and helping others as well as the state in every possible way, when there be any need.

Such behaviour can be expected from only those persons who understand their social duties and public responsibilities and possess the necessary consciousness to discharge their obligation involving these duties and obligations. This is only possible when people are sensible and can realise the impact and repercussions of their general behaviour, the inseparability of their well being with that of others in the society and of state and recognize their definite status in the state and the society. If they are able to feel to the fullest consciousness of their hearts that any anti-social activity of any step that is contrary to interest of the State, would not only render them liable for the punishment but also bring down in the eyes of others holding them in high
estees and they would hardly dare to deviate from virtuous course of good citizenship and would remain duly cautious to keep away from all kinds of ill practices. This is possible only through good education.

THE SOCIAL CONCEPT OF EDUCATION

The presence of social sensibility, conducive to harmony and understanding the scope and limitations of good citizenship, is possible only in socially sound and intellectually developed mind attainable through education. Education is thus the basement or cornerstone for a lofty edifice of good citizenship in a harmonious society and benevolent state.

These general characteristics of good education were fully realised by the State in Ancient India. Importance of education for a state reflects in the concept, aims and ideals of education.

In ancient India, the concept of education was understood in its wider sense. Wider cannotation was that the education is a process of multidimensional development of one's personality and accomplished achievements and improvement continuing till the end of
life. A man was considered as a student or learner throughout his life. But commonly education was held in its narrower sense and it was a training for the development of body and mind to prepare one to enter the world. It was a course designed to wash away the illusions, perplexity and ambiguities of one's mind in order to fill it up with a clear vision, insight, foresight and sharpness of memory and intellect and thereby to increase one's capacity and efficiency for the fullest attainments of the higher values of life. The General qualities of education, which change and refine the entire personality of a man, have fascinated a large number of ancient Indian thinkers.

It is said to be fulfilling all that a man can wish to attain in this life. It brings happiness and gives humility which endow ability bringing in wealth which is the source of all meritorious deeds bestowing happiness. The Mahabharata says that nothing gives an insight like education.\(^5\) Education is benefactor of superiority among fellow beings possessing the same eyes and hands.\(^6\)

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6. Rgveda. X. 717.
Bhartrhari says that one without education is a beast.\textsuperscript{7} The life is said to be useless without education. It is pronounced that by birth every man is a Sudra; he is called twice-born after undergoing the sacraments.

AIMS AND IDEALS OF EDUCATION IN ANCIENT INDIA

For the fullest attainments of life education was to be shaped in the most yielding way with some basic guiding factors aimed at procuring efficiency in various fields so that one may not only become worthy to avail opportunities himself but also to come out as a good citizen whom the State and the Country may adore. Various injunctions have been propounded in this concern which have been epitomised and enshrined in six precise aims.\textsuperscript{8} They are: the infusion of a spirit of piety and religiousness; formation of character; development of personality; inculcation of civic and social duties; promotion of social efficiency and preservation and spread of national culture.

With these high ideals ends aims one was definitely to become amply capable in repayment of the three great

\textsuperscript{7} Nitistaka, 16.

\textsuperscript{8} Altekar, A.S., Education in Ancient India, Ch.I, p. 8.
debts. The repayment of debt to gods (Devarina), be it more likely make sacrificial performance and necessary rituals with the help of knowledge and wealth he acquired through education. Debt to sages (Rishirana), of all times, is said to be repayed by preserving and enlarging their heritage and, in due course, handing it over to coming generations. The last of the great debts was to ancestors and it could be discharged by bringing up progeny properly.

Because of these aims were predominant there was no discrimination of any kind in imparting education to the people. All inmates and seekers to knowledge were equal. Since there was a pervading recognition to the need of education to a man it was desirable to keep it open to all and provide everyone with all the opportunities to acquire it. The State and society in ancient did so. Education was available to everyone according to ability, eligibility for and suitability for different branches of learning in these times. It was not denied to women also. There are innumerable references in ancient Indian literature which amply testifying to female education and describe several achievements of various ladies as reputed scholars in several branches
education was considered a necessity for women, is evident from injunction that a man could perform sacrifices only when his wife was with him. Panini explaining the term 'Patni' says that she is one who is a co-partner in sacrifice. This ceremonial participation was possible only when the wife was well educated as in certain ceremonies she had also to recite a number of hymns. Besides, there were some sacrifices and propitiation which were meant for only women. It is interesting to note that composition of many hymns of the Rgveda, which is considered the earliest of literary works not only in India but in the whole world, is ascribed to twenty poetesses. The Ramayana explicitly states that Kausalya, and Tara were well-versed in Mantras (Mantravid). Sita is described performing evening rituals. The Mahabharata mentions Kunti as well-versed in hymns of the Atharvaveda. An equal privilege of education to girls is further confirmed.

11. Ramayana. II. 20. 15.
12. Ibid., IV. 16.12.
13. Ibid., V. 15.48.
by prescription of the thread sacrament (Upanayana), which was symbolic of their admittance to education. The Atharvaveda refers to maidens observing discipline of studentship before getting married.\textsuperscript{15} Yama recalls the prevalence of thread sacrament of females during the ancient times.\textsuperscript{16} The Malatimadhava discloses that Kamandaki had received her education in an institution.\textsuperscript{17}

Another remarkable point in education was the emphasis on perfection. This led to remarkable degree of specialisation for which individual care of every student was required to bring about an unbiased proficiency. There was no obstruction of any kind to every one for culminating his genius to humanly possible level.

\textbf{THE STATE AND THE ORGANISATION OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.}

The popularity of education, as we have seen above, called for an efficient system of educational organisation. In the beginning it started with individual

\textsuperscript{15} Atharvaveda. XI. 5.18.

\textsuperscript{16} Yama

\textsuperscript{17} Malatimadhava. Act I.
teachers at different places imparting instructions to students. In the Vedic period there were literary organisations named 'Charanas' which themselves engaged in academic activities regarding their particular anga or branch of the Veda. This practice of taking education from an individual teacher continued for a very long time down to the fifth Century B.C. when corporate educational institutions started functioning in Ancient India. These individual teachers, who were learned Brahmanas, provided instructions at their residences which were situated either in forests or on outskirts of cities and towns, away from the disturbing noises and crowds. In fact, these residences or hermitages were the centres of education and served successive generations for many centuries. We understand from the sacred texts that every Brahmana was to devote himself to the cause of teaching and learning in his individual capacity. Dr. Altekar rightly remarks that each learned Brahmana was thus an educational institution by himself. These hermitages worked on 'Gurukula' system necessitating students to stay either at home of the teacher or in a nearby hostel provided for them. Such institutions, identical to these 'Guru-

18. Altekar, A.S., Education in Ancient India, Ch.IV, p.74.
kulas', also existed in Europe; but they imparted instructions and training only to those destined to become missionaries whereas the 'Gurukulas' in India served common students. 19

These 'Gurukulas' admitted students from all classes of society without any kind of social distinction. Even the sons of kings and monarchs were studying with those who came from poorest of the poor class and received their education along with them as good friends. The deep personal friendship of Krishna and Sudama, who were the class-mates at the 'Gurukula' of Sandipana, has gone into proverbial use and is considered as the ideal of friendship.

These individual institutions of ancient India contributed innumerable outstanding names in different spheres of society and the state. Kings received their instruction in statecraft in these institutions only before wearing a crown. Mookerji rightly observes:

"These ancient schools were not isolated buildings of bricks and mortar like modern schools; but they were

19. Ibid., Ch.II, p. 34.
colonies in which centre the talent, the piety, the culture of the community, from which they radiated in all directions. In them was represented the highest level of life marking the high watermark of the nation's progress, from which it gradually filtered down to the lower planes of society. The secret of the success of these schools in spreading the learning and culture entrusted to their custody lay in the principle of decentralization, the principle akin to that underlying the domestic system of industrial organisation and as distinguished from the factory system.  

The 'Gurukulas' signified that in ancient Indian system of education the teacher was more important than institution and they offered more personal attention to students than the corporate institutions. They provided a closer intellectual, mental and emotional intercourse between the teacher and the taught.

THE STATE AND THE CORPORATE INSTITUTIONS OF EDUCATION

Besides these gurukulas or hermitages several corporate educational institutions also grew up in India

with the rise of Buddhism. The Buddha himself had stressed upon the systematic instructions to novices, so that the monasteries were transformed into centres of learning and education. In the beginning they kept on training only the monks and the nuns, but, eventually they took up the work of imparting instructions to masses realising that the best way to get novices properly trained and extending religious discourses to masses was to be taken up through education. In due course, these monastic educational centres were converted into the centres of education or the universities of Buddhist studies. Hindu 'Gurukulas', functioning independently so far, were now at a loss in the competition with these Buddhist centres. In order to meet this new challenge the Hindu temples were made the centres of Hindu learning and education. These centres continued to serve as institutions of education even during the medieval times.

THE STATE AND EDUCATIONAL FINANCES

Since education was never considered as a commercial undertaking yielding monetary receipts, problems of educational finances, necessary for its successful functioning confronted the organisers.

The problems of finances appeared more acutely to
the individual 'Gurukulas'. The preceptor had to arrange not only for the subsistence of himself and his family but also for providing facilities of lodging and boarding to his gurukula students. The sources of 'Gurukula' were meagre in view of the requirements. Speaking truely there was no source of any regular income and the 'Gurukulas' maintained themselves with individual charity and endowments.

The first item of income that can be considered was of the tuition fees; but we learn from the ancient literary works that there was no fixed fee for education. It was almost free. There was no fee and an admission could not be denied to any deserving candidate who was unable to pay the fee. Any teacher insisting on fee did not enjoy respect in society and his action debarred him from conducting the priesthood in religious ceremonies.

It was enjoined that one who was competent to teach had to impart instructions as a course of social and religious duty irrespective of monetary considerations.

The preceptor of 'Gurukula' had to remain content
with whatever was offered to him; he could accept voluntary gifts from guardians of their pupils, although the honorarium of a teacher was payable at the completion of education by way of gurudaksina. We get an interesting episode in Yajnavalkya Smriti refusing acceptance of fee from Janaka because the education was not complete. 21 This fee was paid often in advance by those who could afford it. The Mahabharata records that Bhisma had paid the fee before actual beginning of education of the Kuru princes. 22 A number of reference in Jatakas also testify to this kind of advance payment of tuition fees to preceptors by wealthy persons. 23 Any evasion in the payment of this fee, called 'Gurudaksina', was looked down in the society. It is said that nothing on earth was enough to discharge or repay the debt of a teacher who taught even a single letter of the alphabet. 24 It is why the students, who were too poor to pay, used to collect alms or subscriptions for the payment of the Gurudaksina. 25 We find an interesting example of a graduate who approached the

22. Mahabharata. 1. 142.
24. Laghu-harita quoted in Madhava's commentary on Parasara Smriti.
king Uttanka for ear-rings of the queen which his teacher wanted in 'Gurudaksina' in order to fulfil the wishes of his wife.

Another source of income to 'Gurukulas' was the collection of food by students who were required to go for begging at midday. Even the poorest family was expected to give a morsel of food to a student standing at the door for alms and this had become a well established social convention. Refusal to give alms was considered to result sin to the householders.26 The latter also inviting students and preceptors on various occasions for feasts on account of religious ceremonies and performance of sacraments which included the monthly Sraddha. On such occasions the residents of 'Gurukulas' including the preceptors used to get presents in cash and kinds.

Prosperous citizens helped 'Gurukulas' by frequent presents of food grains and gifts in cash and kinds. Sometimes, they contributed a major part of the expenses of the 'Gurukulas'. They often established free boardings for the gurukulas students and constructed educa-

tional institutions. They were also making land endowments for the expenses of the educational institutions. In order to help poor students, they engaged students for copying of sacred books. This was an important work in those days. The books, so copied on palm leaves, were usually meant for presentation to educational institutions. They also contributed the amounts of 'Gurudaksina' to students who had to pay it to the teacher on completion of their education.

'Gurukulas' were receiving similar help from the village communities, trade guilds and other organisation whose liberal donations in cash and kind strengthened the finances of the educational institutions.

STATE AID TO EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Besides individual donations and public endowments from the society there was the regular help from the State. It offered scholarships to worthy students and gave liberal donations. It also endowed lands and villages for meeting the expenditure of the educational institutions. Revenues out of these endowments was

directed to educational institutions. Several inscriptions record such endowments and donations and scores of copper-plates are there to corroborate this fact.

AGRAHARA

The villages endowed for educational institution were known as 'Agrahara' villages. The State official looking after these villages was called 'Agraharika'. 'Agrahara' villages were exempted from the state taxes and they enjoyed perfect guarantee of protection. They were not required to give any share of flowers, milk, hidden treasures and deposits to the State.28

The corporate educational institutions like temples, monastic colleges and Universities were also getting help from the society and the State for augmenting their finances in the same manner as the 'Gurukulas'. There are several evidences which show that these institutions provided not only free education but also free lodging, boarding, clothing and medical aid to students. This was, evidently, impossible unless they had sufficient recurring funds which could be got only from plentiful endow-

ments. Capacity to offer these large endowments was apparent only in the State.

Besides, the State granted several concessions and remissions in payment of taxes to educational institutions, teachers and students. These measures saved institutions from expenses on the respective items at one hand and from botheration of observing certain formalities connected with them at the other.

THE STATE AND THE FREEDOM TO EDUCATION

The State in ancient India did not endeavour to interfere in the affairs of education and learning. It kept itself confined in this sphere only to extend help and patronage. The State considered it the sole business to meet the requirements of education and left the entire work of formulating education policy to persons actually engaged in organisation of education. The grants from the State did not lay down any condition. Since help or patronage was always unconditional, there was no question to withdraw it under any pretext. This assertion finds corroboration in numerous records of endowments, none of which incorporates any condition, restriction or regulation to the aid. Institutions of varied sects and reli-
gions worked side by side with liberty to practice and profess their respective curricula without the least interruption from the State.

It became indisputably clear that the state created a favourable and healthy climate for education despite absence of a separate department for organisation and running of educational activities. It championed the cause of not only free education but it also extended full of freedom in education.

THE MAIN CENTRES OF LEARNING AND EDUCATION

The effect of such a policy of the State towards education led to a very high degree of promotion in the field of education and learning. 'Gurukulas' covered the entire country and some of them became so widely acknowledged that students from distant places and even from abroad flocked to seek admission in them. Beside these individual 'Gurukulas', there grew up some centres of learning where reputed scholars of different disciplines or branches of learning congregated retaining their private entity and imparted instructions on different branches of learning. Reason for these congregations was the assurance of state-help in times of emergency and
likelihood of perpetual patronage in addition to abundant amenities of the places. Generally, such centres sprang up in the state capitals or the places of pilgrimage where subsidies in cash and kind used to be a major attraction. It was natural that a teacher excelled others in a particular branch of learning and so students, desireous of learning that particular branch, preferred to get instructions from him. This way, these centres gradually developed as places of specialised studies.

In these corporate institutions in some branches of learning and sometimes this occurred even in the very nomenclature of the institute. The institutions known as Grammer School\textsuperscript{29} or Sanskrit College\textsuperscript{30} bear testimony of this fact.

According to traditions there were some eighty four thousand primary schools during the period of Asoka the Great.\textsuperscript{31} There might have been primary schools in other periods of ancient India also in almost equally large number although they do not find any mention in

\textsuperscript{29} Madras, Ep. Report, 1912-13, p. 110.
\textsuperscript{30} Ep. Ind., Vol. IV, pp. 117-119.
\textsuperscript{31} Barua, S., Buddhapatha, p. IX.
literary works and records that have come to light so far. The institution of secondary level were functioning at almost every important town. Among these the secondary institution at Boudh-Gaya, Sanchi, Bharahuta, Sravasti, Ennayiram, Tiruvorraiyyur, Nadia, Salotgi, Ujjayini, Kausambi, Sarnath, Mathura, Nasika, Amravati, Nagarjuni Konda, Jagayyapetta, Kanchipuram, Kaveripeta, Madura, Tirumuk-Kudel, Malkapuram, Anabilapattana etc. were quite large. Also there appears to have been big secondary institutions at Ahichchhatra, Vengi, Champa, Chittore, Dhankataka, Falna, Ghatika, Asandivanta, Ayodhya, Mamallapuram, Mithila, Pilasina, Prayaga, Purvasila, Rajagrha, Sakala, Talgunda, Vaisali, Dhara, Purusapura, Kalyani, Kannauj, Pataliputra and a number of capital or commercial towns.

In centres of advanced learning Taksila, Nalanda, Valabhi, Vikramasila, Jagaddala, Mithila, Nadia, Varanasi and Kashmir were notable and deserve a brief survey.

TAKSILA

The most pioneer seat amongst the centres of advanced learning was Taksila with its history as an educational centre going back to times immemorial. By
the seventh Century BC it emerged as the renowned centre of higher education with conglomeration of teachers of worldwide fame.

Teachers at this centre were running their one-teacher-institutions and there was neither a body affiliating them or a corporate institution employing teachers, nor any central organisation prescribing courses of study. A teacher, who was by all means all-in-all of his institution, admitted the number of students at his sweet will and taught whatever they wanted to learn. There were no examination and hence no degrees or diplomas. Any student could terminate his studies whenever he so desired.

Important subjects of specialisation were the Vedas, grammar, philosophy, medicine, surgery, archery and art of warfare, astronomy, astrology, divination, accountancy, commerce, agriculture, law, magic, snake-charming, treasure-perceiving, music, dancing and painting. A student could offer any of the subjects irrespective of his caste. However, there appears to have been no admission of chandalas. 32

Takṣila continued as an unique centre of higher education till early centuries of the Christian Era,

though little is known about its working in the later period. It appears that the centre rolled down the ramp of decline during inefficient and disorderly rule of the later Kusanas and was finally shattered by the Huna inroads in the fifth century AD.

Taksila educated and trained numerous statesmen and scholars in its long history. Students from far off places like Rajagraham, Varanasi, Mathura and Ujjayini received their education here and some of them, on returning, established educational centres at their respective places. Heir-apparrents of nearly all important kingdoms, during this long period, used to distinguish themselves by having their education at this centres. Chandragupta Maurya, the first emporor of first great Indian empire, received his education at Taksila, Panini, the Grammarian was also, perhaps, a student of Taksila. Jivaka, the outstanding physician and Kautilya, the composer of treatise 'Arthasastra' were other notable alumni of this great educational centre.

VARANASI

We learn from the Jatakas that Varanasi was a famous centre of education where many scholars of repute imparted instructions. Teachers of Varanasi, who figure
in Jatakas, have been the alumni of Taksila.\textsuperscript{33} Subjects of specialisation at this centre were the same as at Taksila. It came into prominence as early as the seventh century BC and retained its position, time and again. Bernier who visited Indian in the seventeenth century says; "Banaras is a kind of University, but it has no college or regular classes as in our Universities; but it resembles rather the school of the ancients, the masters being spread over the different parts of the town in private houses."	extsuperscript{34} Prophecy in the Bhavisya Purana said that Banaras would be a famous centre of scholarship.\textsuperscript{35} In the vicinity of Varanasi was the famous monastery of Sarnath which got imperial patronage from Asoka on account of its being the place of the first sermon of the Buddha and in due course became a centre of Buddhist learning where 1500 monk students used to receive their training at a time. It remained a centre of education at least till twelfth century AD when Kusumadevi, the Buddhist wife of Gahadawala king Govinda-chandra, made an endowment to it.

\textsuperscript{33} Jataka No. 80 & 150.
\textsuperscript{34} Bernier, Travels in India, p. 341.
\textsuperscript{35} Bhavisya Purana, Brahmakhanda, Ch. 51. 2.3.
KASMIK

As a centre of both Hindu and Buddhist learning, Kasmir earned a name since the beginning of the Christian era. It abounded in temple colleges and monasteries. Yuan Chwang states to have seen hundreds of monasteries. We learn that the famous Buddhist scholar Kumrajiva was educated at Kasmir where kings had established and expanded many centres of learning with liberal endowments. These centres enjoyed inviolability and one of them Jayandra Vihara, where Yuan Chwang studies for a year, suffered the course of this privilege when king ksemagupta destructed it as his enemy Damara Singram had taken shelter in it. 36 Muktipada Vihara in Huskapura was another famous centre of learning in Kasmir where a Chinese scholar O'kong had came for education. 37 The famous Buddhist scholar of Kasmir Gunavarman visited Ceylon and Java for propagating Buddhism and, on an invitation from the Chinese emperor, settled in his country for the remainder of his life. He is credited with admitting the Chinese women to the order of nuns.

36. Rajatarangini, VI. 1711.
37. Stein, Itinerary of O'kong p.5.
With the advent of Muslim rule in Punjab in early eleventh century, Kashmir had a mass immigration of scholars. Learned teachers of Kashmir continued the convention of imparting free education and even Buhler, who visited the state in late nineteenth century, was delighted to see that a large number of teachers were still adhering to it, each of them giving free education to ten to twelve students.

NALANDA

In corporate educational institutions of ancient India Nalanda, which grew up in the shape of the residential university in fifth century AD, with initiative and endowments of the later Gupta emperors, near Pataliputra, was the foremost. We learn that numerous donors made liberal endowments and presented gifts to this University which was mainly imparting instructions in Buddhist studies.

Nalanda was a big University with about ten thousand students on its rolls at a time and nearly one thousand and five hundred teachers. It was extended in an area of more than a mile long and half a mile broad, as the excavations carried out at the site reveal. These facts the structures were constructed in a well laid out plan, the
central college had seven auditoria and three hundred class rooms. The buildings were multistoried as Hwu Li, the biographer of Huan Chwang, has written. There were ponds with blue lotuses which ornamented the establishments and supplied water and flowers. The precinct had a gate in the south where admission-seekers were first examined.

The University had a high standard of piety and scholarship. There were great teachers and scholars. Dharmapala, Chandrapala, Jnanmitra, Silabhadra, Gunamati and Sthiramati enriched the list of those who guided students for showing high qualities in learning and conduct.

The University was providing free instructions and, in addition, there were arrangements for free lodging, boarding and medical aid.

Since it was a Buddhist University, naturally, the stress was on Buddhist studies. It also imparted instructions in studies concerning Hindu religion, philosophy, grammar, logic, sacred law, astronomy and astrology,

Medical science was also being taught at the University.

The fame of the University as a centre of advanced learning of high standard, was so widespread that even those who pretended to be students of Nalanda won respect everywhere. University displayed the names of its meritorious scholars with outstanding achievements prominently on the gate.

There was also a section of library building inside the University premises called 'Dharmaganja' where manuscripts and copies thereof were housed in these multi-storied buildings named Ratna-Sagara, Ratna bodhi and Ratna ranjaka.

It was no wonder that the University attracted students not from all over the country only but also from distant countries like China, Korea, Tibet and Tokhara. The competition for admission was stiff and only twenty to thirty percent of the admission-seekers succeeded.

For administration of various departments of the University and dealing with academic matters, there were two councils, one administrative and the other academic, which assisted the abbot-principal who was in
overall charge of general administration.

The University received endowments from different kings. An interesting endowment of five villages from the king of Java and Sumatra, through the ruler of Bengal has also come to light. 39

The scholars of Nalanda, took conspicuous part in extending Buddhism to Tibet. Scores of works of Chandragomin, a Nalanda Monk, were translated into Tibetan. Another monk and scholar of Nalanda Sangharaksita was the apostle of the religion in Tibet, who had gone there on the invitation of king Khrigron-den-tsan for propagating the new order. The first monastery in Tibet was built under his instructions. He received considerable assistance in his task from another Nalanda scholar Padma samghava.

The University maintained glorious traditions till the twelfth century when the new University of Vikramasila began to grow. The lion's share in the royal aid and patronage shifted to the new University. Moreover, the adoption of Tantric practices in the Buddhism as a part of Vajrayana, the new vehicle of religion, also torpedoed the

cause of serious education and Nalanda was derogated. Soon after, in the early thirteenth century, the Muslim invader Bakhtiyar Khalji plundered the territory and put an end to the greatest Buddhist University of all times by setting on fire the establishments and massacring the population. 40

VI KRAMASILA

The University of Vikramasila was founded by king Chārmakāla of Bengal with liberal endowments in late eighth century. Its composition was similar to that of Nalanda and was, perhaps, influenced by its traditions.

The University was located in modern Bhagalpur district of Bihar. The University had a central auditorium and six colleges, each of them having 108 teachers. The central hall had six gates, four in the four directions and two in centre, each opening to a college under the superintendence of a Dvara-Pandita. This was an arrangements, perhaps, to restrict and control the admissions.

40. Elliot and Dowson, History of India, Vol.II, p. 306.
The strength of the University consisted of three thousand monk scholars in the twelfth century. It had also a splendid library.

The administration of the University was under a board of eminent teachers which supervised Nalanda also. Academic matters were dealt by the council of Dwara-Panditas under the chairmanship of chief Abbot.

Curricula of this University was the same as of Taxila. However it had advanced courses in Metaphysics, Tantra and Ritualism also. This University was awarding degrees and diplomas. 41

Among the distinguished scholars of this institution were Jananapada, Vairochana, Jetari, Prajnakaramati, Ratnakara, Jnanasri, Ratnavajra, Vagisvara, Dipankara, Vagisvara, Dipankara, Sri Jnana or popularly known as Atisa, Viryasimha, Abhayakaragupta, Tathagata Raksita, Ratnakirti, Manjusri, Dharmakirti and Sakya Sri Bhadra. These scholars composed and translated, mainly in Tibetan, hundreds of works, Atisa had gone to Tibet during his old age relinquishing the charge of Chief Abbot of University

41. Bose, Indian Teachers, pp. 47 & 61.
at an invitation from the king of Tibet for reformation of Buddhism in that country. He is credited for establishing the New Order of Lamaism, the hierarchy which continued till the middle of present century when Tibet was merged with China. Vikramila also met its end at the hands Bakhtiyar Khilji. 42

**VALABHI**

*In the western part of India, the University of Valabhi was founded by a royal grant from Princes Dudda, the daughter of the sister of Dhruva I, towards the end of the fifth century at Valabhi, the Maitraaka capital in Gujrat.*

The University had six thousand students. It specialised in higher education of the Hinayana or the little vehicle of the Buddhism apart from Dharma, Niti, Vartta and Medical Science. The centre trained students in and offered courses of various aspects of administration also as I-tsing records that the students of this University after completing their education presented themselves before the king for exhibition of their talents

and employment. 43

A reference in Kathasaritasagara records that a Brahmana Vasudatta had sent his son Visnudatta for getting education at Valabhi from his village Antarvedi in Gangetic plain. 44 The indifference of Vasudatta to the University of Nalanda in his neighbourhood speaks volumes for Valabhi as a centre of learning.

The University had a well equipped library which was receiving frequent grants from the kings. 45

The University of Valabhi suffered a setback in the year 775 AD when Arab invaders plundered the place and the reigning dynasty fell down. However, with the return of normalcy, the centre was revived and continued to enjoy prominence of a reputed University till the twelfth century AD, attracting students even from place as distant as Bengal. 46 Nothing is known about its history afterwards.

43. I.A. VII. 67 f.
44. Kathasarit sagara, Ch. XXXII, pp. 42-43.
45. I.A. VII. 67 f.
46. Altekar, A.S., Education in Ancient India, Ch. V. 127.
JAGADDALA

The University of Jagaddala was found by Ramapala, the king of Bengal, who reigned between 1084 and 1130 AD, along with a new city Ramavati on the banks of the Ganges and Karatoya in Varendra. The University could not work for more than a century and it met its end in 1203 AD on account of Muslim invasion. In the short duration of its life, it became famous because of substantial contribution to learning by its famous scholars Mahapandita Vibhutichandra, who was a scholar of Tibetan and translated many Sanskrit works into that language, Danasila, who translated fifty-four works of Sanskrit into Tibetan, Subhakara and Moksakaragupta who composed works in Sanskrit which were translated into Tibetan.

UDANTAPURI

Much is not known about the University of Odantapuri which existed long before the rise of Pala kings who endowed the centre with a library of Brahmanical and Buddhist works. We learn that during the time of Abhaya-kargupta there were one thousand students and also that its monastery served the prototype for the first Tibetan Buddhist Monastery, built in 749 AD under the instructions
of Santaraksita by the king of Tibet.

Other famous centres of learning were Chinapati and Jallandar monasteries in Punjab, Matipur Monastery in modern Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh, Tirumukkudal temple college, 47 temple colleges of Belgamwe, Hebbal (Mysore), Bijapur, Managoli, Nagi (Andhra), Punnawayil (Madras and the 'Agrahara' institutions at Kadiyur, Sarvajnapura (Mysore). Banur near Pondicherry had also come up as a centre of higher education in ancient India.

THE STATE PATRONAGE TO EDUCATION AND LEARNING

As we have already noticed above in our brief survey of the prominent centres of learning and education in ancient India that State played an important role in their establishment and efficient functioning. The State did not confine its duty towards education to only above mentioned activities. It always showed an inclination to help the cause of education, in whatever way it could, and adopted measures catalysing the expansion of education.

The State exempted learned Brahmans as well as

47. Ep. Ind., XXI No. 220.
students from the payment of State taxes. 48

The learned Brahmanas, hermits, and teachers were regarded as inviolable and enjoyed immunity from capital punishment. It was stated that king punishing these goes to hell. 49

The learned and educated persons received honours from the State and were held in high esteem. It is said that the king should always respect the learned Brahmanas and should not nourish any ill will against them. 50 It was maintained that Brahmana acted against all ominous occurrences and protect everything, he could ensure the interest of the king, sovereignty and his subjects and ward off all kinds of evils with his meritorious performances, 52 and also that the kingdom in which learned Brahmanas in the Vedic scriptures reside, flourishes free from calamities. Hence, the king should accommodate such people with proper charities, hospitality and reverence. 53

49. Matsya Purana, Ch. 225. 5.6.
51. Kausika Sutra. 94. 2-4 and 166.2.
52. Atharvaveda. Appendices. 2-4.
53. Raghuvamsa. 1.29.
Regarding the respectability of Brahmana it was held that Brahma created him, indeed, by a combination of great elements of nature. That is why all his qualities were solely calculated to bring about the benefit of others. However, the respect was given only to the learned Brahmana as he was considered superior on the basis of knowledge. 54

The State provided accommodation to learned. Innumerable references are available to the grant of accommodation. Kautilya prescribes that Brahmanas shall be provided with forests for religious learning. 55

The Mahabharata records Bhismā directing Yudhis-thira to employ servants for the construction of houses for those who are receiving education. 56 Yajnavalkya holds that having made suitable houses in his town, the king should invite Brahmana to settle there. 57 Kalhana 54 Manu. Ch. II. 155.
55 Kautilya, Bk. II. Ch. 1.
56 Mahabharata. Anusasanparva. Ch. 60.
57 Yajnavalkya. II. 188.
informs that king Jayasimha built houses for men of learning, which raised their terraces to such a height that the seven rṣis came to see them as they were towering above their heads. It was a well-established convention to settle the learned in an important part of the town and such settlements were called 'Brahmapuri'.

But the State was not content only with the provision of accommodation to the learned people. It had also to solve the problem of their livelihood. For this purpose it used to grant lands to Brahmanas and also appointed the learned people in State services. The lands granted to the Brahmanas were called 'Bhattacharyā' which meant for their maintenance or subsistence. These lands, also called 'Brahmādeya' were free from State taxes. Kautilya, recommending the grant of such lands to learned in the Vedas, enjoins that the lands should be yielding sufficient produce and exempted from taxes and fines. An epigraphic evidence records that there were provisions of land earmarked for grant to professors and teachers. It has been rightly remarked that the

59. Kautilya. Bk. II. Ch. I.
'Brahmadeya' lands appear to have been given to learned Brahmanas also in order to enable them to live peacefully in order to enable them to impart education to their pupils. These lands were never withdrawn from them. Gaetore observed; "But even in this contingency, the king could not lay his hands on the certain categories of lands of people, who were exempted from these unusual lives." 

The State was also arranging the subsistence of learned people through their employment. State required an enormous number of personnel for running its various departments and those learned could perform their functions more efficiently than others. We have already seen how the students of Valabhi used to appear before the king on completion of their education, for the employment. The obligation devolving upon the State in this concern could not be ignored. Dr. Bharwanadas observes:

"The Raja, the ruler, the State, has a duty to those who have completed their education, is declared expressly by Manu and Vyasa. Those who have finished

their studies and returned from the teacher's home should be welcomed and honoured by the 'Nṛpa', the 'protector of the people', the ruler and helped with or to means of living, (either directly, by himself in the executive, public services subordinate to him, or indirectly, by through the various guilds, according to the vocational fitness (of the graduates)... The Graduate-'Snātaka'—who is out of proper employment and is suffering from want, has the right to demand help from the ruler, the raja, the pleaser and server of the people, if a Brahmana, he may seek for the needed help from his accustomed family-clients, Yajña, or his student 'Antavasi'.—but he can not get it from them, then it becomes the duty of the ruler to see that he receives sufficient maintenance.

"... If any person dies of starvation in his country, the ruler incurs dire sin. Heavy shame and infamy shall be upon the king in whose State-Rastra'—anyone perishes from lack of food. Especially does the country in which the educated suffer starvation, experience stagnation in all departments of the national life, and then anarchy or foreign invasion because of the internal helpless—
ness and discontent." 63

The State provided the learned with financial help and other amenities of life. References of scholarships to students and help in payment of 'Gurudaksina' we have already noticed. Yajnavalkya recommends stipends for learning the three Vedas. 64 He further maintains that charities to Brahmanas is the highest duty of a king. 65 The Svapnavasavadattam contains an interesting discourse between Padmavati and Kanchuki where the former urges upon the latter to fulfil the requirements of ascetics and the latter assures for the same. 66 The Mahabharata states that the gift of dresses should be given to students. 67 The Matsya Purana not only calls for the provision of amenities to hermits but urges upon the king himself fetching these and going to hermits to handover them. 68

64. Yajnavalkya. II. 188.
65. Ibid., XIII. 222.
67. Mahabharata Anusasanaparva. 60.
68. Matsya Purana Ch. 215. 64-65.
It becomes quite clear that the State left no stone unturned in seeing that the teacher and taught experience no difficulty in prosecuting their work without any anxiety or concern for anything and got care-free circumstances to devote and concentrate to their objects. The states even condoned and relaxed the law of Limitations in favour of students studying away from their homes. 69

In appointment of the high officials education always remained a criterion and the State satisfied that they were of high calibre. This had a special weightage in connection with the appointment of Ministers and more so in case of the Prime Minister and the Purushita. We learn that the poet Harisena, who composed the eloquent eulogy of Samundragupta, was the Minister of war and peace. 70 The eulogy also mentions that Samundragupta gave shelter and support to the learned. 71 The king, who himself was learned, 72 except in a few cases,

70. Pandey, R.B. Hist. & Lit. Ins. Ch. IV, p. 76.
71. Ibid., p. 72.
appointed as his courtiers. Traditions record that Kalidasa was the laurette and one of the nine gems of king Bhoja of Dhara, which is discrepant to history since we know from the Aihole Inscription of Pulakesin II that Kalidasa had lived definitely before the composition of this eulogy and was still considered a poet par-excellence as its composer Ravihiti proudly states that he equalises the fame of Kalidasa and Bharavi in poetic skill. 73 Bhoja, of course, had nine gems but Kalidasa was in the court of Vikramaditya whose court was also adorned with nine gems. 74 In later times Akbar, the Great Mogul, too, in following the tradition, had assembled nine gems as his courtiers. In this matter, the name of King Janaka, who had a grand assembly of scholars in his court, is remembered even to day.

Beside the appointment of learned, the State was keen to convene the conferences of the learned and had their contests. Janaka, the Videha, was the foremost in kings arranging such conferences and we know that the assembly, he convened, was attended by the exponents

73. Ibid., p. 149.
74.
and founders of eight different schools of Philosophy. The convention started during the Vedic period only when learned people assembled for the meeting of the 'Saba' or 'Samiti' or for religious performances discussed the matters of academic interest. The 'Sangitis' of Buddhism were not different from such academic assemblies. In fact, they continued throughout the ancient period. The great periodical fairs of Harsa included such learned conferences. Rajasekhara calls upon the king to hold assemblies of poets and learned men, to arrange for their examination and to distribute favours to them in the manner of such ancient kings as Vasudeva, Satavahana, Sudraka etc. The statement itself speaks that literary contests were frequent and the winners of or those who showed skill were receiving prizes and gifts.

The function of the State in connection with the patronage of education was to protect the learned from disturbances and the wickeds.

75. Mookerji, K.K., Ancient India, p. 83.
76. Rgveda. X. 71. 2,3,5.
The Mahaviracharitam has a discourse in which the king orders that no body can trod the land of Asrama. Asramasas were apparently the centres of education and the king was responsible to avert all sorts of nuisance. The Raghuvamśa, mentions the king entering in such a way that there might be no disturbance into hermitage. Bhāṣa advises that insolence should not be applied on residents of the hermitage and cautions that the rude behaviour of guards will bring infamy to the king, and the work, in context of the nature of a princess, tells that who loves religion will not, indeed, desire oppression of virtues among the hermits. Kalidāsa states that one should enter the 'asrama' well in submission and that penance groves are to be protected by the kings. In one of his plays the hero challenges those practising rudeness towards the resident of Asrama telling that who was doing so while a descendent of Puru (he himself), the chastiser of ill-behaved, governs the earth. Concealing his

82. Ibid.
83. Ibid. Act I. 23.
identity he says, "Lady, here I who, as appointed by the king, the descendant of Puru to the office of the superintendent of religion have arrived at this penance forest to ascertain if your rites are free from obstacles. We also shall so endeavour that no trouble will happen to the hermitage."\textsuperscript{84} The passage throws light on protection that the king used to extend to places of education and also explicitly informs that the state appointed or deputed an officer to look after the welfare of hermitages. Kalidasa further maintains that the Brahmana is worthy of protection.\textsuperscript{85} He portrays in a verse how magically the protection to learned and ascetics fill in the capacity and energy in a king and says, "Beholding the rite of ascetics with their obstacles removed and, therefore, pleasing you will understand how efficiently your arm, marked with the scar of bow-string defends them.\textsuperscript{86}

Viewing the patronage that the education received from the State, I feel the truth in boasting in various eulogies that the king established harmony by ending

\textsuperscript{84} Abhijnana Sakuntala Act I. 23.

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid. 6.28.

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., Act I. 13.
animosity between the perpetual antagonists 'Sri', the goddess of prosperity and 'Sarasvati', the goddess of learning, whose co-existence is supposed to be an improbability because of difference in their very nature as the former is fickle minded and the latter tranquil, and brought about them in unison. Had the state been ignoring education any way, there had been no legacy at all. The vast literature of the ancient and, in fact, the history itself could come down to us only because State was conscious towards the education and did not allow any laxity in its promotion, development and expansion. The kings were, undoubtedly, the great patrons of letters and no wonder that someone on hearing rumour of the demise of king Bhoja of Dhara had a mournful bursting:

"The city of Dhara has lost its base to-day, the goddess of learning is without an upholder, all the learned are deformed; king Bhoja is no more on this earth."

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87. Raghuvamsa, VI. 29.
Allahabad Pillar Ins. of Samudragupta see.