CHAPTER - II

THE SURVEY OF POLITICAL IDEAS FROM VEDA TO RĀMĀYĀNA

Political ideas in the Vedas:

The oldest work of our sacred literature, namely, the Rgveda Samhita with its collection of hymns and prayers, and the Atharvaveda-Samhita with its content of prayers, charms and incantations, contain a few ideas relating to the political organization of the people.

Samiti (The Sovereign Assembly of Vedic times):

The oldest literature of the race, the Vedas that, national life and activities in the earliest times on record were expressed through popular assemblies and institutions. The greatest institutions of this nature was the samati of our Vedic forefathers. The word ‘samiti’ (समिति) means ‘meeting together’, i.e., an assembly. The samiti was the national assembly of the whole people. ‘The whole people’ or samiti, in the alternative, electing and re-electing the Rājan (राजा) or ‘King’. The whole people were supposed to be present in the assembly.

1. विशेषतः सर्वा वास्तमः; R.V. X. 173.1., A.V. VI. 87-1.
शुचिः ते समिति कल्पितमः; A.V. VI. 88.3.; त्वा विश्व पृथिवी राज्यम्; A.V.III. 4.2.
(Also A.V. III 345).
The function of the Samiti:

The most important function of the samiti is to electing the Rājan. It could also re-elect a king who had been banished. They were thus a sovereign body from the constitutional point of view. In the Atharvaveda, which is a prayer-hymn for union and concord, and also in the Rgveda, we have a prayer for a ‘common samiti’ and ‘common policy of state’, a ‘common aim and a common mind’. This indicates that matters of a state were discussed in the samiti.

Constitution of the Samiti:-

It is clear that the whole people were considered to be present in the samiti. But when, for instance, Śvetaketu goes to the samiti of the Pāñchālas where philosophers and statesmen were sitting, it would be hardly probable that the whole nation, without any principle of representation, would be actually present. From a passage in the ‘Hymn of the land’ of the Atharvaveda, where the samitis of the whole land are referred to, it seems that, those who were assembled (Samgramah) were the ‘villages together’ (Saṁgrama). The village, as a collective unit, is well known; Śaryata manava ‘wandered about’ with his grama. In later times law-books, ‘the village’ fights out legal dispute; ‘the village is even fined’. The Gramani was the key-stone of the village constitution. The village even took to themselves

2. Cf. नास्ते समितिः कल्पते; A.V. V. 19.15.
3. समानो मन्नानम् समितिः समानी; A.V. VI.64.; समानेन इति सह चिलमेयान्; R.V. X. 191.3.
4. ये ग्राम यदर्थं या सम्य अधि पूर्याय।
   ये संग्रामां सतिपर्यत्रु चारू वदेम ते II A.V. XII 1.56.
the name of their leader (Gramani).\textsuperscript{6} We have the ‘village together’ meeting (Samgrama) ‘desirous of agreement’ in the Taittiriya-Samhita.\textsuperscript{7} It seems that the village formed the basis of the constitution of the samiti, if not originally, certainly, in later times.

**The King and Samiti:**

The king attended the samiti, and it was thought necessary that he should do so. The Rgveda has, like a true king going to the samiti.\textsuperscript{8} The inference is that it was the king’s duty to attend the samiti, and that if he did not attend it, he would be considered ‘untrue’. The practice of the king presenting himself before the samiti continued probably as long as the samiti existed. The Chāndogya Upaniṣad, relating the visit of Śvetaketu Aruneya Gautama to the samiti of the Pāṇchālas, mentions the king (Pravahana Jaivala) as present in the samiti.\textsuperscript{9}

**The Sabha:**

There was another noteworthy constitutional organism in the Vedic age and later. It was the Sabha. It is described as a sister of samiti, one of the two daughters of Prajāpati.\textsuperscript{10} This also was a popular body. Prayer for

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6. Kasika on P. V. 3.112. ‘देवदत्तो ग्रामणियां त इमे देवदत्तकाः’
9. शेतकंदतुर्वमणेऽत्पावालो सन्धिरित्यवः तं ह प्रावासः जैविलिन्यवः - - - - - छा. उप. 5-3-1
10. सभा च या सन्धिरित्यवः प्राणपतुतदिनिहि संसवदाने।

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co-operation in the sabha shows that discord in the Sabha assembly was as much disliked and dreaded as in the samiti. The Sabha called Nariṣṭa which Śaṅkara explains as a resolution of ‘many’ that cannot be broken or violated.\textsuperscript{11} ‘Hence, from the inviolability the name is derived’. Free discussion was thus held in a Sabha, and the resolution of the Sabha was considered binding on all and inviolable. Evidently, the Sabha was almost as important as the samiti.

\textbf{Composition of the Sabha:}

It was certainly related to the samiti, but its exact relationship is not deducible from the data available. Probably it was a standing and stationary body of selected men working under the authority of the samiti. Sabha, means, ‘a body of men shining together’.\textsuperscript{12} Those entitled to a seat there in were invested, so to say, with lustre. They are pointedly alluded to.\textsuperscript{13} They were objects of special respect. The Sabha had its president, called Sabhapati.\textsuperscript{14} It seems there were ‘Elders’ in the Sabha. We meet with ‘Elders’

\begin{itemize}
\item [\textsuperscript{11}]JayaRama, \textit{Sayana Bhasya}.
\item [\textsuperscript{12}]Cf. Jayarama; \textit{Parakara Grihya. III. 13.1.}
\item [\textsuperscript{13}]A. V. VII. 12. Sukla Yajurveda. XVI. 28.
\item [\textsuperscript{14}]Cf. Sukla Yajurveda XVI 24. नमः समास्य समापतिसन्थः
\end{itemize}
and ‘Fathers’ of councils in other ancient bodies holding executive authority. Reference to the ‘Fathers’ in the above quoted hymn is probably to the Fathers or Elders in the Sabha, a view which Sayana alternatively puts forward.

हे पितापलकाः ° ° ° पितृभूताः वा हे सम्बायसो जनाः।

Judicial function of the Sabha:

The Sabha acted as a national Judicature. The sabha is called ‘Trouble’ and ‘Vehemence’ in the Paraskar-Grhya. As ‘Trouble’ and ‘Vehemence’ were is store there for the culprit the Sabha seems to have acquired those names, like the present-day appellation ‘criminal’ of our criminal courts.

Vidatha and Sena:

The Samiti and Sabha were not the only popular institutions of the Vedic times. The religious life was organized through the ‘Vidatha’ assembly, which had existed even earlier than the samiti. Its seems to have been the parent folk-assembly from which the Sabha, samiti and sena differentiated, for the Vidatha associated with civil, military and religious functions. The Sena or the army, which was in early times the nation-in-arms, was regarded as a body by itself and evidently as a constitutional unit.

तं सभा च समितिध्वं सेना च ।

15. Ibid. VI.
16. Par. Grihya. III. 13. नादिर्नासि स्विपिनर्नासि।
18. R.V. I. 60 (Where fire is called the flag (Ketu) of Vidatha)
19. विददर्य व्रोऽस्मि: क्षण राजनां प्रिदिद्धो दधायेद; R.V. III. 38.5; II. 1.4; III. 26.6. Also Macdonnel & Keith. V. I on Vidatha.
Vedic Polity:

The R̄gvedic kingship was primarily a tribal institution. The king or the Rājan is repeatedly connected with the tribe. Basically he rules over his people or jana and is therefore called their protector, gopa janasya or gopati janasya. The terms gopa or gopati signify that human headship over the herds of cattle was gradually extended over the tribe or the people.

The R̄gvedic king was one of the equals whose hereditary position was not beyond question. Several passages suggest that the king owed his office to the choice of his people. A passage from the tenth book of the R̄gveda uses the simile "like subjects choosing their king". The coronation hymn from the same book suggests the acceptance of the king by all the tribe (Visah). Most references to the election of the king by the tribesmen are found in the Atharvaveda, but it is obvious that the practice must have begun much earlier. The fact of formal sanction implied by the hymn shows that at the earlier stage the tribe elected its chief.

On the other hand some references suggest that kingship of chiefship was confined to certain families. Trasadasyu inherited the kingship of his tribe from his grandfather, his father having lost his throne through an enemy attack. The family of Sudas had enjoyed chiefly authority for three generations. Thus actual examples do not confirm the practice of royal succession in one family more than three generations.

Military:

The term 'Sena' is mentioned twenty times in the R̄gveda, but it seems to have been an adhoc institution mobilized out of the tribesmen whenever
occasion demanded it. Military functions were the main concern of the vedic assemblies, attended by members of the tribe. Evidently tribal people were generally armed and mustered in times of need. Some of them who possessed chariots and possibly bronze weapons were better armed, but otherwise the distinction was not sharp. Those engaged in comparatively peaceful occupations such as Vrajapati, head of the pasture ground, and Kulapa, head of family, appear as military functionaries; the former led the latter to battle. The gramani also carried out a similar responsibility. The state therefore did not have permanent military officials to meet its military needs. Perhaps, Purpatis, commanders of mud forts or strongholds, would have some permanent responsibility for defence, otherwise the military organization would be very simple.

Rgvedic Polity: The word of Rastra is mentioned in the Rgveda. Rashtra means a kingdom or a state. It is an union of villages and towns. The word Rashtra is several times mentioned in the Rgveda. Shows that the region occupied by the Rgvedic people was divided into a number of kingdoms (Rashtra), and each Rashtra was ruled by a king (Rajan). The following Rgvedic mantras gives an idea of the Rashtra.

"Where light is perpetua, in the world in which the sun is placed in that immortal imperishable world peace me Pavamana; flow, Indu, for Indra.

20. R.V. IV - 42 - 1; VII - 34 - 11; 84-2; X - 109-3; 124-4 etc.
21. RV. III - 43-5 ; V - 54-7 etc.
22. यत्र ज्योतिर्जातं यथिन्द्रलोकोऽविहितम्।
   तत्सम मेघि पवानागमुने लोके अक्षित इत्रायेन्द्रो परि खच।।
   यत्रराजा ऐसो यत्त्रारेवनं दिव।।
   यत्रामूर्त्वेणश्चतिरस्माश्रयं मामनुमुत कृत्यायेन्द्रो परि खच।। Rv.IX-113-7,8
Where Vaivasvata’s son is king, where the inner chamber of the sun is, where these great waters are, there make me immortal; flow, Indu, for Indra."

Thus, the Rgvedic seers give a clear idea of the Rāṣṭra.

The Vedic thinkers had a correct idea of Rāṣṭra, as a political unit is most convincingly conveyed by an interesting reference to it by Yaska in his Nirukta. He explains that men individually are many, but as Rastra, they are one. He clearly states that Rāṣṭra is created by two factors:

1) Sastanaikatsa-Unity born of residing in the same region.

2) Sambhogaikatva-the community of interests and enjoyments.

The Rājan was the symbol of harmony of all the people and the elements and interesting of the state. The term Rajan is repeatedly occurring in the Rgveda. He is entrusted with the responsibility of protecting the state and of enhancing its prosperity. The word Rājan, used so often in the Rgveda, means sometimes a noble and generally a king.

The two characteristic features, wealth and liberality specifically mentioned are here t denote the monarch. Further, the king is distinguished from the emperor or universal ruler, by terms sāmrāja, ekarāja, adhirāja, and the phrase, Viśvasya bhuvanasya rāja (the ruler of the phrase, Visvasya bhuvanasya rāja (the ruler of the wide universe). The meaning of these terms

24. RV. III - 43 -5; V - 54-7.
27. RV. VIII - 37 - 3.
are clear in the Atharvaveda—"May you shine forth as the sole ruler (ekarāja)"\textsuperscript{29} and "May he shine as the overlord of kings (adhirāja)."\textsuperscript{30} In the śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,\textsuperscript{31} the distinction between a king and an emperor is clearly made; 'By offering the Rājasuya he becomes a king and by offering Vājapeya he becomes an emperor; the office of the king is lower and that of the emperor is higher'. Besides, 'Sārvabhauma' and 'cakravartin' are the other two terms used for emperor.

\textbf{Rājadharma—according to Dharma-sūtra:-}

It is propose to discuss this topic under the following broad heads:

1) King's revenue

2) Duties of the King, his personal qualities, vices to be avoided by him.

3) Kings residence

4) Rural administration

5) Departments of the State

6) Political expedients to be used by the King

7) Rules relating to conquered territories.

\textbf{King's revenue and royal duties:}

Goutama-dharmasutra prescribes one sixth of the income of subjects as the King's due. The careful protection of all the beings (bhutanam) in

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{29} A.V. III - 4- 1.
  \item \textsuperscript{30} A.V. VI - 98 - 1.
  \item \textsuperscript{31} S.B. V - 1 - 1- 13.
\end{itemize}
the Kingdom is enjoined by all the works as the bounden duty of the King. It is Viṣṇu-smṛti that dwells on this topic in greater details. The following are the rules that a King is to observe:

Besides the general duty of protecting the subjects, the King should see that the people observe the rules of their respective castes (Varna) and stages of life (āśrama). The King is forbidden to indulge in the vices of hunting, playing at dice, enjoyment of women, drinking and extravagance. The King accompanied by learned Brāhmaṇas, should supervise legal transactions. Among the duties of the King, the following are particularly mentioned:

Patronage of learning, honouring Brāhmaṇas and granting lands to them, faith in astrologers and infliction of just punishment on wrong-doers. In connection with the grant of lands, it is interesting to note the kind of document used for the purpose. The document is to be written on a piece of cloth (Pata) or copper plate (tamra-patta). Marked with his own seal, the document should contain the names of three immediate ancestors of the donee, the extent of the land and an imprecation against him who misappropriate the donation.

Among the personal qualities of the King, stress has been laid on his having a charming look, smiling face before everyone and absence of frown even to a criminal sentenced to death. As a measure of personal safety, the King is advised to be conversant with incantations dispelling the effect of poison. He is also asked not to taste anything without previous examination.

The King is required to appoint spies both in his own kingdom as well as in that of his enemy. Finally the usefulness of punishment and the necessity of properly wielding it have been stressed by Viṣṇu-smṛti.
King’s residence:

The King should reside at a place inhabited by Vaisyas and Sudras, which abounds in open plains (jangala) and grains, and is fit of cattle. There he should live in one of the following kinds of forts: dhanva, nr, mahi, vari, vrksa, giri.32

According to Āpasthambha-dharmasūtra,33 the capital city as well as the palace should have their gates to the south. In front of the palace there should be the hall called ‘avasatha or āmantrana’. Hardatta interprets the word as ‘asthana- mandappa’ which generally means an assembly-hall or a hall of audience. But in a subsequent sutra (II.25.8) goes on to say that the guests should be accommodated in this hall. To the south of the capital city should be built the Sabha which, according to Hardatta, means gambling hall. This hall should have doors both in the South and in the North; such a device, as Hardatta points out is necessary so that what happens inside and outside the hall can be seen.

Rural Administration:

In Viṣṇu-smṛti we get certain rules which correspond, to a certain extent, to the system of local self-government of today. The King will appoint a chief over each village. He will divide the villages into units each comprising a hundred villages. Each such unit is to be further divided into ten sub-

32. For a clear description of these forts, according to manu, see Kalluka on Mani VII. 70.

33. Apasthambha - Dharmasutra II. 25. 2.4.
units, each comprising ten villages. Over the unit of hundred villages there shall be one chief. Again one chief will govern each sub-unit of ten villages. For the whole district there will be one chief. When a chief is unable to take proper steps against wrong-doers, he shall take the help of the next higher authority.

The chief of villages and towns, according to Āpastambha, should be noble, truthful and pure. The employees of such chiefs should also have these qualities.

State Departments:

The following appear to have been the principal departments under the King: Mines, Taxes, Customs, Elephants, Forests.

The King should appoint a trustworthy person to be in charge of each of the above departments. Besides, for various other kinds of work he shall appoint persons suitable for each particular work. It is interesting to note that in-charge of woman he is to appoint eunuchs.

The King should realize one-sixth of the total produce of the following things as his revenue for a year: paddy and other corns, flesh, honey, ghee, herbs, skins, earthen pots, stone vessels and anything made of split bamboo.

One-fiftieth of the cattle is payable annually by those who live by cattle breeding; the same rate is prescribed for income derived by money lenders of marketable commodities, sold in the country, the King shall take one-tenth as his due, and of those, sold in a foreign land, he shall take one-twentieth.

34. Apastambha Dharmasutra. II. 26.4.
According to Baudhāyan-dharmasūtra, of the merchandise, obtained by maritime trade, the king shall take one-tenth besides appropriating the best jewel etc. out of it.

Goutam dharmasūtra lays down that artisans and craftsmen, day labourers, boatmen and coachmen should each do a piece of work for the King every month; this work will be treated as tax payable by them.

According to Baudhāyan dharmasūtra and Vasiṣṭa dharmasūtra, the following persons are exempted from taxes: Brāhmaṇas versed in the Vedas, women of all castes, boys who have not yet grown beard etc., students, those ascetics who perform austerities without any motive, sudras who earn their living by washing the feet of the members of the three higher castes, the blind, dumb, deaf, those who are afflicted with disease, those medicants who are forbidden to accept gifts from others, orphans, king’s employees (rāja-puman) and virgin girls.

To the above list Vasiṣṭa dharmasūtra adds those who earn their livelihood from rivers, hills and burning forests.

The King shall put to death those persons who try to subvert (dusaka) the elements of the State, viz. the King himself, his council, his fortress, his treasure, his army, his realm and his ally.

38. Vasiṣṭa - Dharmasutra. See. । (Aere the meaning of क्रम is not clear. It may mean a forest of dead trees, dry wood or dry grass)
Political expedients:

The four expedients for the King’s obtaining success at different times, according to the exigencies of the situation, as follows:

Sāma (negotiation)

Dāna (gift)

Bheda (dissension)

Daṇḍa (force of arms).

The six measures to be adopted by the King, when occasions arise are:

Sandhi (alliance),

Vigraha (war),

Yāna (march),

Āsana (sitting encamped),

Dvaidhibhāva (distribution of forces)

Samsraya (seeking the protection of a powerful king).

Rules relating to conquered territories:

The King is advised not to violate the law of an enemy’s territory after conquering it. Another piece of highly practical advice with regard to such a territory is that the victorious king should invest with royal dignity a prince of the royal race of that country.

Rājadharmā according to Manusmṛti

*Manusmṛti* is well known about collection of laws. It is the oldest and most sacred Sanskrit work after the Vedas and its Sutras. *Manusmṛti*
is a record of national ordinances and institutions and ultimately it worked its way to acceptance with the entire Hindu community and finally it not only secured high place for itself in popular estimation but also became the chief authority as a basis of Hindu jurisprudence.

A large portion of the Manusmṛti is devoted to the definition of the duties of Kṣatriyas, as it is they who support the Brāhmaṇas. A Kṣatriya cannot thrive without a Brāhmaṇa nor a Brāhmaṇa without a Kṣatriya. The Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya when associated together prosper in this world and the hereafter.

ना ब्राह्म क्षत्रयमन्यति क्षत्र ब्राह्म वर्धते।
ब्राह्म क्षत्र च संपृवतमिह चामुन वर्धते। 39

The treatment of the subjects like civil and penal laws and rules of evidence have been revealed in Manusmṛti only in the second half of the work and is chiefly comprised in one quarter of it viz., the seventh, eighth and ninth chapters.

The State of society depicted in the first six chapters is of a simple and primitive character recognizing only four principle divisions of the people. Hence, the only form of government prescribed in the seventh chapter is of a paternal and patriarchal description. The king is to rule by divine right and though a despot, has to act like a father towards his subjects.40

39. Manusmṛti, IX, 322
40. सांवल्लरिक मातृशय ग्राह्मदाःहायश ||
   स्याच्याद्यायपरी लोको वर्तत विन्यथास || Manusmṛti VII.80
Manusmṛti speaks about the divine origin of king. It states that when men were without a king and dispersed through fear in all directions, the lord created a king for the protection of all of them and that essence of the Dikpālas was used for King’s creation.41

Defining a Kṣatriya, Manusmṛti quotes that he is one who is devoted to the political life of the group, either in the civil government or in the army. His duties are the protection of the people, charity, sacrifice, study of the Vedas and non-attachment to objects of the senses.42

Further, a Kṣatriya should be guided by the principle such as spirit of service, efficiency which comes out of study and personal discipline, and freedom from corrupting influences of office, as he shoulders the responsible task of protecting and serving the people. He should actually be like the hermit but only engaged in the active life of politics. If he need he should be prepared to lay down his office in the service of the group.

The state as conceived by (in) Manusmṛti. There are two constituent elements of the state, namely, the physical basis and the political basis. The former comprises the King’s living place. Manusmṛti states that the king should settle in a country which is open and has a dry climate, supplied with grain, inhabited by Aryans, is not subject to epidemics, is

41. अराजके हि लोकोत्तिनु विदुते सर्वतो भयात् ।
राज्यार्धस्य सर्वस्य राजानमस्य सूक्त: ॥
इन्द्रायनमाक्षणामनेश्व वरुणस्य च ।
चन्द्रविषाश्वक भगवान निहव्य शांत: ॥ Manusmṛti VII.3.4.

42. प्रजामां रक्षण दानमित्यात्य धर्मनेष्व च ।
विषयव्यपस्तितश्च शर्तियस्य समादित: ॥ Manusmṛti I.89
delightful, where vassals are obedient, and where the people can find their livelihood.  

The political basis consists of the government, the agency for the expression of the collective will. This is composed of three parts, namely, the executive, the judiciary and the legislature.

The executive again is three fold there as the head of the state, who may be a king or a president, the cabinet and the civil service.

Duties of the king according to Manusmrti are, the king should emulate the energetic action of *Indra*, of the *Sun*, of the *Wind*, of *Yama*, of *Varuṇa*, of the *Moon*, of Fire and of the Earth. He should study the Vedas, serve the Brahmanas and the aged, he humble in demeanour, study the science of government, of dialectics, and of the inner life, endeavour to control his senses, give up hunting, gambling, over-sleeping, wine and dancing. He should always avoid take bearing, violence, treachery, envy, slander seizure of the property of the people.

The king (ruler) should observe strict discipline so that he may be given the vision to carry on the nation’s affairs. In order that the performance of his duties becomes easier, he should be spiritually regenerated everyday by meditation and study of the Vedas.

The king’s mode of life and the distribution of his time are carefully regulated. He is to rise in the last watch of the night, then to hold a court,
then to assemble his council and deliberate on the affairs of his kingdom and all the eight fold business of kings; after that to engage in manly exercises, then to dine, taking care that his food is not poisoned and then to regulate his family; after that he is allowed some relaxation; then he is to review his troops; then to perform religious exercises; being himself well armed, to receive the report of his spies; and lastly he is to conclude the day a frugal meal and musical recreations and to go to bed early.

Cabinet according to Manusmṛti:

In the cabinet which comes under the executive branch of government, the king should have assistants to help him to rule; he cannot perform the work of administering the state without support of the honest and loyal ministers.

The king may appoint seven or eight ministers who are learned in the science, heroes skilled in the use of arms, descended from noble families and well trained. It is impossible for one man to discharge even an easy duty singly and much less the duties relating to kingship. King should also

44. उत्ताय पवित्रमेव यामेन कृतानीच भस्माः हुनातिविदान्तक्षालय प्रविषेश्य गुणभाय समाहृत। कृतन्त काल्यविंद कर्म पवित्रयों च तत्तत। अनुरागारपी च प्रवारं गण्डलस्य च। \| Manusmṛti VII.145,154

45. तत्त्रान्नूतेः कल्पृहार्यं परिचारणे। पुपाति स्वमप्राप्तभ भास्तथान्तमपरापहं परिचारिं कर्म पवित्रविभावतु। \| Manusmṛti VII.217,218

46. सत्यं चोपायाय गृह्यावदन्तो दशायाय शस्मि। रहस्याखयायिनं चेत प्रणिधानं च चेष्टितमृ। \| Manusmṛti VII.223
appoint as many other officers as may be needed for the due transaction of business and see that they are honest, wise, firm etc.\textsuperscript{47} The king is directed to consult each minister first and then collectively as a kind of council. His prime minister is to be a Brāhmana and in him he is to place implicit confidence.\textsuperscript{48} He is to have a standing army, commander-in-chief and an ambassador of great knowledge and abilities.

It emerges from this that the cabinet should be a small, compact body consisting of men who can guide the affairs of the nation justly.

Civil Service

Civil service is the third part of the executive. It is made up of officials who are directly connected with the execution of government’s orders. They should be men of integrity, wise, firm, honest enough to collect the taxes of the state. They should be skillful, clever, alert brave, high-born and honest.\textsuperscript{49} The civil servants who are the subordinates in a good government should be free from all corrupting influences of office. In any cases of corruption,
the king should confiscate their whole property and banish them from his kingdom. The king should personally visit the different parts of his state by turns, and also keep a close watch on his subordinate officials by means of spies. The work of such an executive is bound to contribute to the welfare of the people.

**Judiciary is the second department**

A branch of administration that protects the individual liberties and upholds the law-spiritual and secular. The king who is the head of the judicial system should appoint a Brahmana well versed in law who should assist him in the administration of justice. That Brāhmaṇa together with three other Brāhmaṇas constitutes the full bench.

**Crime and punishment according to Manusmrīti**

In all matters of justice *Manusmrīti* maintains that various factors are to be taken into consideration. Time, place, circumstances, the evolution of the individual who commits the crime - these and other factors should be duly considered. In the first place, punishment should be a warning; the second public censure; the third a fine; the fourth, corporal punishment. If none of these work out they should be combined. Punishments depend on the psychological make up of the individual. The higher one is in the

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51. यस्मिन्देशि नियोददन्ति विद्रम्वेदविद्ययिः।
    राजाश्चितृतो विद्रम्क्रमात्तर सम्भविद्। || Manusmrīti VII.11

52. तं देशकाली शक्तिं च विद्रां चाचेवक्ष तत्वतः।
    यथाहतं सम्ब्राह्मदेशैर्यवतिषैः। || Manusmrīti VII.16

53. द्रुतं प्रथम कुपश्चिद्वेददेश तदनन्तरम्।
    तृतीयं धनदेशं तु वर्धदेशस्तं परं। || Manusmrīti VIII.129
scale of evolution, the more he must realize his responsibility. The Brāhmaṇa, who is a model for men of the world to follow, should pay heavily for his crime, a Kṣatriya twice as much as the Vaiśya. Punishment should not be a vengeance wreaked by society. After the criminal has served his sentence, he should be considered as having been purged of the crime. The society must forgive him.

Legislature, the law-making body is the third branch of government. Its chief aim is to interpret the law and initiate new legislation. Manusmṛti discusses the composition of the legislature at length. It feels that quick action is possible in a small group of body. Democracy is only ‘idolatry of numbers’. Legal assembly is constituted of three persons, each knowing Veda, an interpreter, a reciter of the Mimāmsa, of Nirukta and of the Dharmaśāstra and three men from the three leading professions.54

Revenue

Another important subject is revenue, which the monarch is to obtain from the following sources - (i) Taxes on the produce of land, which was probably held in common by village communities; though occasional grants may have been made to individuals. The king is only absolute proprietor of the soil.55

54. तैंविधो हेतुकसत्त्री नैवक्तो धर्माठकः।
त्रयवाच्चारणिण्ड पूवः परिष्ठारशारा || Manusmrti XII.111
55. निष्क्रियाम्बु तु उपरणां धातुन्त्वेव च क्रियाम्।
अर्थाश्चारणां भूमिभिप्रेतिः सदा || Manusmrti VIII.39
The king derives not only one sixth of the tax in grain but also of the righteousness and unrighteousness of his subjects.\(^{56}\)

(ii) Taxes must be levied in kind so that the state gets a good share when the people are prosperous; A fiftieth part of increment on stock and gold may be taken by the state, and a sixth, eighth and twelfth part of the crops. The state may take a sixth part of the trees, meat, honey, butter, perfumes, herbs, flavors, foods, flowers, fruits, cane-materials, skins, earthen wares and stone articles.\(^{57}\)

Further, the state should endow education. Encouragement given to the Brāhmaṇas cannot be lost. A gift to a Brāhmin who knows the Vedas will produce good without end. The state should levy no taxes from the. A pregnant woman, a hermit, an ascetic, and a Brāhmaṇa who is a student of the Vedas, should not be charged ferry taxes. Similarly, it should take care of the childless woman, of the widows and of the sick woman.

A blind man, an idiot, a cripple, an old man in the service of a Brāhmaṇa, should not be made to pay taxes.\(^{58}\) Physicians who treat their patients wrongly should be made to pay fines.\(^{59}\)

\(^{56}\) Manusmṛtu - VIII - 304.

\(^{57}\) Manusmṛtu - VII - 130-132.

\(^{58}\) Manusmṛtu - VIII - 394.

\(^{59}\) Manusmṛtu - IX - 284.
There are other sources of revenue for the state. These are customs and export duties, state highways and mines etc.

Regarding foreign relations Manusmrti; discusses such subjects as alliances, military tactics, attack, division of forces, retreat, offence and strategy. The state must punish those who take bribes, who are cheats and rouges, gamblers, hypocrites, fortune tellers and harlots. These persons and others who behave, like non-Āryans should be considered as thorns in the body of the state.

War is permissible when the sovereignty of a state is threatened by another. When victory has been gained, the vanquished should be assured of protection, peace and safety. The victor should worship the gods and honour the wise men of the vanquished party, grant exemptions from penalties, and give promise of protection. He should ascertain the views of the people and appoint one of his relatives as their ruler. He should accept their customs and honour the new king and his ministers.

With regard to peace time relations the states should exchange ambassadors and maintain diplomatic relations.

The ambassador should be an observant person, a keen student of human psychology. He should understand hints, impressions of the face, gestures etc. He should be honest skillful and of noble family.  

Above mentioned points are (in short) the Manusmrti’s conception of the good government. In such a state alone a man can seek his highest self and attain spiritual progress.

60. दूतं चैव प्रकृत्वेत सर्वशास्त्रविश्वादम्।
इद्द्वितानांचेतसं शुचि दर्षं कुलोद्भत्तम्।।
Manusmrti - VII - 63.
Political ideas in *Yajnavalkya Smrti*

After *Manusmrti*, *Yajnavalkyasmrți* occupies a very important place in the smṛti literature. It contains nearly 1010 verses and is more systematic than *Manusmrți*. *Yajnavalkyasmrți* is divided into three chapters, namely, Ācāradhyaya, Vyavaharādhyaya and Prāyascittadhyāya. The last prakaraṇa in Acāradhyaya is Rājadharma prakaraṇa, which deals with the nature of Rājadharma.

**The Institution of Rājadharma in Yajnavalkya Smrti.**

In the field of polity and king, the views of Yajnavalkya are unique and significant and he visualized the state and the king as the main instruments for achieving security, peace, happiness and progress of the people. Any single individual cannot achieve the difficult task of administration. So he felt that the state should have seven angas.

i. The King  
ii. Ministers  
iii. State (people)  
iv. Fort  
v. Treasury  
vi. Army and  
vii. Friends.  

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61. स्वाम्यमालय जनो दुर्ग कोशो दण्डस्तैःव च।  
भिन्त्राण्येऽव प्रकृत्यो राज्यं समाधुमुख्यते।  
Y.S.I. - 353.

Even among them, the friends are given greater importance as he felt that the benefits that accrue from gold field are not equal to them because, good friends always guide him in the right path by telling him what is good and what is bad.

I. The King

According to Yajnavalkyasmrți also, the king is of divine origin and the need of the king arose to meet the exigencies of wars and stability in society.

The qualities of a King: In ancient India, the King was the central figure around whom the whole administrative machinery revolved. Hence, the smṛti writers like Yajnavalkya has clearly stated the qualities which a king should possess. He said “a king should have great energy, should be generous, mindful of past events done by others, dependent on those who are advanced in austerities, knowledge and experience, possessed of a disciplined mind, endowed with an even temper, born of a noble family, truthful, pure prompt in action, of strong memory, not mean minded, not harsh, observant of the rules of dharma, free from vices, talented, brave, clever in concealing secrets, guarding the weak points of his state, well taught as regards logic, the science of government, the science of wealth and the three vedas. Further, he should be forbearing towards

62. हिरण्यभूमिलाभेथ्यो मित्रलब्धियति यत्।
   अतो यतेत तद्वायं श्रेयसत्वं समाहित।।
   “Ibid. I - 352.

63. महोतात्स्तु बुद्धलवक्षः कृतज्ञो बुद्धसेवकः।
   विनीतः सत्त्वसम्पद्वः कुलीनः सत्यवाकः शुचिः।।
   अदीयसूत्रः स्मृतिमानस्तुव्रोपपृष्टया।
   धर्मनकोन्यस्मातेव प्राणः शूरो रहस्यविता।।
   स्वत्त्वस्मातास्वमित्यक्ष्यां रणः नामां तथैव \।
   विनीतस्तत्त्वयांत्यां श्रयं चैव नराधिपः।।
   Ibid. I - 309-311.
Brāhmaṇas, straight forward to his friends, wrathful towards his enemies and should be kind like a father towards his servants and subjects.⁶⁴

Daily routine of a King (Dinacarya): According to the Yajnavalkyasmṛti, a king should wake up early in the morning, recite and contemplate on sastras and actions and seek the blessings of ṛtviks, purohitas and great teachers⁶⁵. He should be aware of the movement of grahas (stars) from pandits of jyotisa and his health from doctors. He should donate cows, gold, land and residential houses for brāhmaṇas⁶⁶. After this he must examine the income and expenditure, complaints and then go for bath and meals⁶⁷. King should collect the gold from the people concerned and deposit it in the treasury. He should consult the spies and then with ministers and should have to send the spies outside to collect information⁶⁸. In the third quarter of the day, he has to go for vihara alone or with his ministers and thus refresh. Then he should meet the army officials and should listen their problems. After this, he should perform Sandhyāvandana and get the information from spies and rejoice with songs and dances, have to finish his

⁶⁴. द्राढ्याः प्रसङ्गैः स्मितोपेर्यथाजितसः कोषाणवंशिनिः।
स्याक्रतां भूतवर्तेऽप्रजातुं च यथा पिता।।
Ibid. I - 334.

⁶⁵. प्रेयेर्यथा तत्त्वास्तवेद्येष्िेषु च सदारात्।
ऋतिक्षुपोहिताचायं राजामितिभिन्नदितः।।
Ibid. I - 332.

⁶⁶. दृष्टव्यं ज्योतिर्विविदं वैधान्वधातं काज्ञवं महंषं।
नैवेशिकनिं च ततः श्रीनिवेश्यू गृहाणी च।।
Ibid. I - 333.

⁶⁷. कुर्तक्षुं समुदायं पश्येदायव्या च स्यन्त्र।
व्यवहारांस्तो दृष्टव्यं स्नात्ता भूज्जीत कामः।।
Ibid. I - 327.

⁶⁸. सत्याश्मपस्य श्रुतायाब्दाराणां गृहभवित्म।
गीतानृवेश्च भूज्जीत पतेदायत्वेव च।।
Ibid. I - 330.
meals and readings and finally go to sleep or will be awake listening to the sound of musical instruments.  

Duties of a King: Yājnavalkyāsmṛti states that the materialization of the King’s efforts depends on divine grace and human efforts but is not out of luck. Just like a chariot cannot move with a single wheel, so also without concrete efforts and participation in the actions, nothing would happen. So, the King being ever vigilant and responsible should provide security to the people and any dereliction from his duty would cause a great sin to him. King should encourage those who do good works and punish the wrong doers. If the good are not rewarded and guilty punished, people would lose confidence in the rulers. So, the primary duty of a king is to strengthen the judiciary to render proper justice. Yājnavalkyāsmṛti emphatically says “the king should collect the information from spies about the actions of the people employed for the protection of the state and reward the people who perform their duties well and punish those who exhibit laxity in their duties floating all rules and regulations”. The people who encourage corruption should be driven away from the state after confiscating their properties. The King should honour the learned pandits and srotriyas with donations and providing residence to them in his Kingdom. He should severely punish

69. संविशेषत तुर्योपयोगः प्रतिवृद्धिपीठः  
   शास्त्रायणिष्ठान्तपदार्थः सर्वकार्यत्वातिस्तथा।।  
Ibid. I - 331.  

70. यथा चेकः चकः रथः न गतिभिवः  
   एवं पुरुषकारणं विना देवं न सिद्धयति।।  
Ibid. I - 351.  

71. ये राजाधिकारायां चारिणि चतुर्विधितम्  
   साधूम्समानयेवान्गा विपरीतांश्च राज्येत।।  
Ibid. I - 338.  

72. उक्तोच्छजीविनो इत्यहृतान्तर्विधिम्  
   सदामानसलकारणं श्रेणियान्त्रायाःक्याः।।  
Ibid. I - 339.
the officials who amass wealth by exploiting the people and thus end the
corruption and the officials would not indulge in such corrupt practices
fearing severe punishment. If any King collects money by coercion from
the people in an unjust manner and fills his treasury, he would lose his
wealth and face destruction along with his relatives.\textsuperscript{73} The flames of torturing
the people would end only after the destruction of the race, splendor and
life of the King. The ancient scholars of political science prescribed strict
discipline and rules in such a way that it would be difficult for any ruler to
deviate from the noble path of rendering service to the people. In this
manner, was the political system designed. If the King becomes autocratic,
and detrimental to society, our ancient thinkers to remove him and his
misdeeds by resorting to agitational methods also suggested ways and means.

Yājnavalkya advocated utmost secrecy of the Kings plans and
actions till they materialized in the form of desired results. He opines, “for
the well established administration, secrecy is the basis and this secrecy
should be maintained by using all tacts. A man of intellect should not
divulge the secret plans till they attained the form of results”.\textsuperscript{74} These secret
plans have vital importance in running the administration machinery and
they should be confined to people of high confidence and secret plans.

\textsuperscript{73} अन्यायेन नृपो राजात्वकोशं यो भिवर्धित्वं ।
सोंचिरागितहीरीको नाशेति सवान्ध्वः ।
प्राणपूर्वानसन्तापातामुदूतो हुताशनः ।
राजः कुल धीयं प्राणाश्याम्बध्या न निवर्तति ।
\textsuperscript{74} मन्नमूलं दंतोर्जयं तस्मान्नत्ते सुरक्षितम् ।
कुयाधास्य न विदुः कर्मणामाफलोदयात् ।
\textsuperscript{Ibid. I - 340-341.}
\textsuperscript{Ibid. I - 344.}
The King’s proficiency in moral policy: A person to be called a good King should enlist the co-operation of three persons namely those existing outside the borders, friends and neutrals. He should employ the four expediently viz. Sāma, Dāna, Bheda and Daṇḍa. A King to be a good ruler and an efficient administrator, should always channelise his energies and intellect for a good rule and thus, achieves happiness and progress among the people. A King who efficiently employs these four means is called an expert in state policy and achieves best results in his works. The word Sāma means accomplishing works with friends and enemies by indulging in sweet conversations. Dāna is giving huge presents to accomplish works in his favour, when these two fails, the third Bheda is used which involves the creation of rift between two Kingdoms etc. Daṇḍa involves confiscation of wealth, occupying the other Kingdoms and ultimately killing. Thus the four expedients are very much useful in running the affairs of the state. Yajnavalkyasmrti also says that a King should employ the above four means and Śadgūnya namely, Sandhi, Vīgraḥa, Yana, Asana, Samśraya and dvaidhibhāva to accomplish the difficult task of administration.

King’s efforts for the welfare of the people: The King should try to extend the land and explore the gold till now unexplored. He should make all efforts to protect the territory already available. He had to donate the

75. उपायाः साम दानं च भेदो दण्डस्तथैव च।
सम्प्रभुक्ताः सिध्धेयुद्देश्यत्त्वावृत्ति गतिः।।
Ibid. I - 346.

76. सन्धिं च विग्रहं यानमासं संघर्षं तथा।
छेदीभावं गुणानेताम्यथावतयथेनकार्यं।।
Ibid. I - 347.
wealth; land additionally acquired to the describing people. In this way a King must make all efforts for the maintenance and welfare of the people. The people also would become vigilant on seeing such a duty minded King. Yājnavalkyasamṛṭi advocates protection to the subjects from cheats, thieves and men of bad livelihood and violent deeds. It also adds that the subjects should be specially protected from Kayasthas or the revenue officials. It says that a person who adulterates drug, or oily commodities or salt or perfumes a paddy or sugar or other salable articles shall be fined sixteen panas. It condemns all cheating in selling any kind of product. The King was expected to regulate all prices and prohibit arbitrary and unreasonable price. The King should fix the price in such a manner that it might help both the purchaser and the seller, making allowance for the cost of the article together with other charges relating to the commodity. Merchants were allowed neither to sell the commodities at a price lower than the prescribed one nor at a higher price. The amount of profit was also fixed by the state. Yājnavalkyasamṛṭi states that the King regulated the price in sale and purchase and the difference was declared to be the dealer's profit. It is obvious that all the provisions mentioned above were meant to put a check upon merchants and traders who were prone to cheating the consumers in every way. The King should punish the takers of bribes after having deprived them of their

77. श्रीतस्मां श्रीयाबहतोपपुरुषयादेव चरितजः ।
यज्ञांश्चेष प्रकृत्यां वृत्तचुत्ररिद्धिक्षाणान् ।
भोगाश्च ददातु विद्यन्यथो वृगृनिविविधानि च ।
अक्षयों विधिर राजाः यहिन्द्रपूपापावितम् ।
Ibid. I - 314-315.

78. चाटकस्मकरूपूरतमाहासाभिष्काभिविभिः ।
पौषणयमानाः प्रजारक्ष्यायंक्रियश्च विशेषतः ।
Ibid. I - 336.
wealth. It is the duty of the King to know the thefts and to return the goods to the owners after confiscation from the thieves.

Yājnavalkyasmṛti says that a King however expert in Vedas, moral policy and worldly affairs, he himself should not deliver judgements at his own discretion because sometimes he might become wrong in his judgements. So he should take the advice of the scholarly Brāhmaṇas leaving his own anger, greed and interests. 79

II Ministers:

This is the second important organ of the state called amāṭya or saciva. A King cannot discharge all the functions of the state by himself. He should take the assistance and suggestions of ministers. Yājnavalkya says, “King should employ such persons in the position of ministers who are experts in dharma and artha and who would not undertake any other works, intelligent and shrewd in their works and active participants in income and expenditure”. 80 Then only the King would be able to run the administration in a better way. The members of the ministry would be either seven or eight.

Yājnavalkya says the necessity of a purohita; he felt that a King should appoint a purohita who is well versed in astrology and in all other sastras and an expert in Arthasastra, peace and Atharvangirasa. 81

79. व्यवहारानूः नृपः पश्चेष्टिदिखित्वाध्यायणा ेः सह।
धर्मशास्त्रानुसारेण कोष्ठलोभविचरित्त।।
Ibid. II - 1.

80. तत्र तत्र च निष्णातान्ध्यशास्त्रकुशललोकस्थिति
प्रकृत्यादयकम् तववकार्यप्रचु चोधतानु।।
Ibid. I - 322.

81. पुरोहितं प्रकृत्यात् देवकालोकितिरु म| दण्डनीयाः च कुशलपथवांविरसे तता।।
Ibid. I - 313.
III. The State (People) or Rastra:

The presence of the King depends upon the progress of the state and its people. So a King should select the fertile and convenient land, which is the source of food, minerals, business, eatable articles, animal, husbandry, abundant water, cultured people, who is beautiful, having jungles, elephants, and water routes. The country should not depend solely on rainy water.

IV. Fort:

Yajnavalkyasmita emphasized that depending upon the viable forts, the safety of the King, people and treasury, would be maintained properly.

V. Treasury:

Treasury occupies an important position in the state. The King would face a lot of problems without money. Money is required to pay salaries to employees in time, to maintain military, construct forts and for security purposes. If the treasury is empty, the King becomes weak. So, King should try to maintain a balance in the treasury to win the favour of the people. Yajnavalkyasmita revealed this fact that “in the interest of the state and himself, King should himself write the statement of income and expenditure and after that devote himself to other affairs, then only he should go to bath, meditation and finally for meals”. Further, he should deposit...
the gold etc. in the treasury, which is brought by the people, concerned. The treasury is to be filled by collecting taxes. The money in the treasury should be utilized for security, peace and prosperity of the people. This ultimately depends on the wealth available in the treasury. So Yājnavalkya is for a moderate taxation and for a pragmatic and judicious use of the resources for the benefit of the subjects.

VI. Military (Sena or Daṇḍa):

The military is essential for the security, and peace in the country and to guard against external threats. So it is must for a King to give importance for the maintenance of a powerful army. The people who are serving in the military deserve total encouragement of the state. Yājnavalkyasmrī emphasizes this fact. The soldiers who fight in the battles and get killed by weapons go to heaven just like yogis.

VII. Friends (Mitra):

The friends are the strength of the King. So Yājnavalkya advised the King to acquire more friends. He says, “The acquisition of friends is greater than the gold fields. So a King should even endeavor to attain more friends and thereby protect truth with utmost attention”.

Political Ideas in the Rāmāyaṇa

Th Rāmāyaṇa is regarded as the Adikavya of classical sanskrit. The entire Indian literature is highly indebted to Vālmiki, for in the Rāmāyaṇa he created a kāvya which, besides providing perennial joy to all lover of poetry has served as an immortal and exhaustible source of inspiration to poets through thee ages. Rāmāyaṇa narrates the story of Rāma, and it also
deals with many social and political aspects. The political ideas, which revealed in Rāmāyāṇa are summarized here.

Rāmāyāṇa deals with state concept, like, origin of the state; states of territorial character; only monarchical states; constituents of the state; state and the citizen; state a beneficent institution; functions of the state; state theocratic to a certain extent; dharma above the king; position of dharma in the state.

About the constituents of the state, Rāmāyāṇa refers to the same, which Arthaśāstra and Yājñavalkya Smṛti are mentioned. There are various passages in the Rāmāyāṇa in which these different limbs of the body politic are mentioned. Thus in a passage of the Kiskindha Khanda with the exception of the amatyas all the elements referred to above are collectively mentioned; and that the amatyas, too, were an indispensable limb of the state is indisputably proved by various other references in the epic.

Ramayana deals with inter-state relationship. It mentions Mandala theory, mitra (ally), Amitra, the four fold policies and the six-fold policies. The Rāmāyāṇa, does not elaborate the Mandala theory, but here in is distinctly present the nucleus of this theory. Thus the term vijigisu, mitra, amitra, madhyastha and udäsina occur in the Rāmāyāṇa.

The Rāmāyāṇa displays familiarity with six fold policy. The six policiees enumerated under Śādguṇya are Samdhi, Vīgraaha, āsana, yāna,

85. यस्य दण्डशः कोशश्च मित्राण्याला पुरुष जनः ||
पुरुषान्त्यतानि सब्रीषि राज्यपलकशुल्ते ||
V.R. IV. 22/11.
86. पाइगुप्येऽय पद्मु वेला नीतिकर्ता च शष्णः ||
V.R. VII. 61/22.
samśraya and dvaidhibhāva. Āsana in the sense of ‘staying in siege’ has been mentioned in the Kiskindha Kāṇḍa. About the last policy dvaidhibhava there is no information in the epic.

Rāmāyaṇa mentioned about the kingship. Here we can see the matters origin of kingship; caste of a king; Divinity of Kingship; Duties of the king - prajnanuranjan, Rakṣana and Dharmavyavastha; About the coronation; coronation among Vanaras; coronation among Rakṣasas.

We need not consider here the question of the caste of the vedic king. But by the time of Rāmāyaṇa period, the varna vyavastha and become so deeply rooted in India that ksatriyas alone were considered fit to become rulers.87

As the epics as well as ancient Indian law books emphasis the need of the minister’s counsel and co-operation, so that Vālmiki also emphasis the same. He brought out the importance of ministers for the king, very well as he calls them the king’s sahāya and suhrt. For the ministers Vālmiki employs the words amatya, sacivas and mantrins. But the distinction was recognised between the counselors (known as mantrins) and the executive officers (known as amatyas or sacivas) by the Vālmiki at the time of the description of Daśaratha’s ministry. Qualifications of ministers and their appointment; Relationship between minister and the king are also well instructed in the epic.

We can get the ideas and information’s about revenue and judicial administration, local administration, importance of Finances for progress and security of the state, the art of war and military organisation in the epic Rāmāyaṇa.