



FACULTY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES

COURSE: B.A.LL.B. 1st Semester

SUBJECT: HISTORY - I

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Lecture-19



Administrative apparatus in Vedic Age

The main source of the information for the study of early Vedic people is the Rigveda. Rig Vedic society was semi-nomadic tribal society with pastoral economy. Reiterating, the first change so observed in the political milieu was the transformation of the **Rig Vedic Jana** (meaning, people or tribe) into the **Janapada** (meaning, the area where the tribe settled).

Society of Vedic period

Society was patriarchal and the eldest male of the Kutumba was the head of the family. In the **Rig Vedic society comprises of four varnas** which was based on the **occupation of individuals**. But in the later Vedic period, the society became differentiated on the **basis of Varna** (Varna came to be birth based rather than profession based). The proliferation of profession gave rise to **Jatis**. The nature of kingship was transformed and rituals like **Rajasuya** (Royal coronation) assumed significance in the later Vedic period.

Polity of Early and Later Vedic Period

Early Vedic Period

The polity of the Early Vedic period was basically a tribal polity with the tribal chief in the centre. The tribe was called **Jana** and the tribal chief was called **Rajana**. Rajana looked after the affairs of the tribe with the help of other tribal members and two tribal assemblies i.e. **Sabha and Samiti**. Sabha is consisted of elder members of the tribe, whereas the Samiti which mainly dealt with policy decisions and political business.

Women are allowed to participate in the proceedings of **Sabha and Vidhata**. In day to day administration the king was assisted by the two types of Purohita i.e. **Vasishtha and Vishwamitra**. The King did not maintain any regular army as there was no Kingdom as such. In fact Rig Vedic King did not rule over the kingdom, but over tribe.

Later Vedic Period

The Political system of the later Vedic period was shifted towards **Monarchy**. Now, the King ruled over an area of land called **Janapada**. The King started maintaining an army and the Bureaucracy also got developed. The **Kingship was being given the status of**

the divine character and also this period witnesses the emergence of the **concept of King of Kings**.

The Rig Vedic popular assemblies lost their importance and royal power increased at their cost. The **Vidhata** completely disappeared. The **Sabha and Sarnia** continued to hold the ground, but their character changed.

The **Sabha** became more important than the **Sarnia**. They came to be dominated by the chiefs and the rich nobles. Women were not allowed to attend the Sabha which was now dominated by the nobles and the Brahmana's.

Transformation of political character from Early to later Vedic Period

1. The term "**Rashtra**", which means territory, first appeared in later Vedic period.
2. The **Rajanyas of the Rig Vedic** age later became the **Kshatriyas**, who held power over the territories. The very reason of the wars (earlier, cattle) also underwent a change, with the acquisition of land now becoming an important element.
3. **Consecratory rituals** assumed special significance in later Vedic period for the ruling elite, which now became crucial to assert their authority. Sacrifices were especially significant and were perceived to lend religious legitimacy to the power of the rulers in the later Vedic period.
4. It was the beginning of administrative machinery. The king had to maintain a **council of advisors** known as the **Ratnis**.
5. A rudimentary taxation system began with **Sangrihitri**, as treasurer of taxes and **Bhagadugha as the tax collector**. **Bali and Bhaga** now became regular tributes and taxes.
6. The **formation of bigger kingdoms** made the chief or the king more powerful. Princes or chiefs ruled tribes, but the dominant tribe gave their names to the territories, which might be inhabited by tribes other than their own. In the beginning, each area was named after the tribe which settled there first. At first, Panchala was the name of the people and then, it became the name of a region.

MCQ

1. Who among the following scholar declared that 'Sapt Saidhava' region was the homeland of Aryans?

- A. Dr. A C Das
- B. Prof. Maxmuller
- C. Prof. Penka
- D. Dr. K.K Sharma

2. Which of the following was the basic unit of Vedic Society?

- A. Jana
- B. Vidath
- C. Parivar
- D. Sangh

3. Who among the following was not the god of atmosphere during Vedic period?

- A. Indra
- B. Marut
- C. Rudra
- D. Dyans

4. Which river is not mention in Rigveda?

- A. Narmada
- B. Sindhu
- C. Ganga
- D. Yamuna

5. Who does Vedic people call Potter?

- A. Vidath
- B. Kulal
- C. Ayas
- D. Langal

