

50 140 DEVELOPMENT
OF
Hindu Polity and Political Theories

BY

NARAYAN CHANDRA BANDYOPADHYAYA, M.A., B.L., PH.D.

Lecturer in the Departments of History and Anthropology, Calcutta University.

*Author of the English Translation of Cāṇakya Sūtras, Kātyāyana-
mata-Saṅgraha, Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India,*

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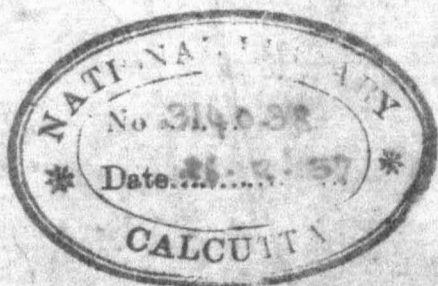
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To
THE SACRED MEMORY
OF

the heroes that have won immortality in their
battles for Hindu Social and Political regenera-
tion, whose glories will awaken future
generations to their sense of duty,
whose spirit will dispel fear and
bring hope for the future and
will guide all in the path of
justice, humanity and
progress.

PREFACE

Since joining the Post Graduate teaching staff, I have had to devote my time to the study of the constitutional history of Hindu India, a subject in which my interest was created by the late Prof. J. N. Das Gupta, B.A. (Oxon), who was our teacher in the M.A. classes of the Presidency College. Since then, I had to associate myself with the Carmichael Professor of Ancient Indian History, and had to work with him in connection with the first series of lectures he delivered. I had also the good fortune of making the acquaintance of Mr. K. P. Jayaswal of Patna whose lectures on Hindu Polity marked practically a new era in the study of the political evolution of Ancient India.

While lecturing to my students, I prepared the manuscript of this book by an elaboration of a synopsis of lectures prepared for their guidance, in which I proposed to give them a brief outline of the political evolution of India, marking the different phases of development, along with the causes and circumstances that contributed to them. A number of such phases of evolution are clearly discernible. The earliest of these was one in which tribal democracy prevailed, and this was pre-eminently so for the Vedic period. Later on, there was a distinct tendency towards centralisation of authority and the growth of regal power, accompanied by a corresponding decay of popular authority. This tendency became stronger every day till from the VIth Century B.C., a movement for the unification of India was inaugurated. The movement for unity culminated in the Maurya Empire which after a time underwent dismemberment owing to various causes. After centuries of disruption there was the rise of the Gupta Empire. Since its downfall, a spirit of local separatism counteracted any further attempt at union and the struggle for dominion continued for ages. After the fall of the Gurjara-pratihāras, this came to be reduced to mere squabbles for dynastic pretensions and ultimately, the period of chivalric anarchy ended with the Mahomedan conquest.

In constructing an account of all these I have started with a consideration of the primitive institutions of the Aryan race, and then passed to the age of the Brāhmaṇas and of the succeeding one immediately before the rise of the Maurya Empire. Next, I have discussed, the downfall of that Empire, together with the effects of the foreign inroads which disturbed the normal evolution of political life and brought along with it the germs of new ideals and institutions. The reaction which followed and resulted in the rise of the Gupta Empire has been next discussed and then the other succeeding changes and modifications, all these being brought up to the eve of the Moslem conquest of India. Subsequent to that, I have attempted to prove the survival of Hindu institutions during the age of Mussalman rule as well as their modification at the hands of the conquerors. Properly speaking, an account of Hindu political life ought to end here, but, as that will not be complete without an account of the struggles against the foreign conquerors which led to the subsequent resurrection of the Hindus, several chapters have been added with a view to give an account of the successive revivals, the nature of the Hindu-Moslem problem during the earlier age of Turko-Afghan rule, the ideals of the religious reformers like Nānak and Kavir, who looked to the problems of politics from the humanistic and universal point of view, and the dream of Chagatai Imperialism which manifested itself in the political principles of Akbar. This has been supplemented by a brief account of the policy of Aurungzeb and the subsequent revolt and revival of the Hindus, till their dream of restoring the Empire was shattered by a new foreign conqueror.

My original intention was to discuss the evolution of political theories quite separately from the account of successive phases of political life, but, as this stands in the way of realising the interrelation between political movements and theories fostered by them, and as it often makes us underrate the influence of one on the other, I have made it a point to discuss the lines of evolution during a particular period and to give an account of the political ideas of the period just after it. This, I hope, will be a better exposition and more helpful to all interested in the subject.

Both in connection with the survey of political development as well as that of political theories, I have laid emphasis on the evolutionary aspect of the subject matter. I have tried to make my own ideas clear by giving parallel illustrations from the history of other nations and these have been as a rule added at the end of chapters, separated from the general narrative. This has been done with the purpose that our ideas may not be confused by the analogy of developments elsewhere in which we find some elements of similarity but which owing to divergences of time, environment, or political instinct, never tally with one another. It is the more so in India where social and political development has been on lines quite different from those of the West and only a careful enquiry brings home to us the nature of this divergence,—so much so, that it is often difficult to render the ideas expressed by words of Indian vocabulary by using similar ones from the terminology of the West. The word *Polity*, for instance, never connotes the ideas contained in the word *Rāṣṭra* and it is doubtful whether the word *Rājya* can be safely rendered into English by the word *State*.

In regard to political theories—if we are permitted to use that word with reference to Indian speculations—our difficulties are even greater. We are liable not only to be misguided by the analogies of the West but suffer also from the error of rendering Indian words by common European equivalents. Western analogies often make us forget fundamental differences in our system and stand in the way of our representing ideas and concepts which gained ground in this country. As a result of this, it is very often difficult to be conscious of our own peculiarities and most Indian workers in this subject do nothing but read Western ideas into our history.

In undertaking the preparation of this work, I have had the advantage of being preceded by a number of previous workers. Prominent among the works which have already appeared on this subject must be mentioned Mr. Jayaswal's *Hindu Polity*, a similar work by Dr. Narendra Nath Law, and the *First Series of Carmichael Lectures* by Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar. Mr. Jayaswal's book is a pioneer work on the subject and a store-house of valuable information for future workers. On many points there is room for difference of

opinion, yet the work will hold its place for the amount of erudition displayed and the inspiring narrative of an idealistic historian. Dr. Law's book is also of great value, especially the chapters on Royalty and the fine retrospect appended towards the close. The *First Series of Carmichael Lectures*, will also be of great interest, for the sobriety of judgment displayed in it. In regard to Political Theories, we have the works of Mr. B. K. Sarkar and Dr. U. N. Ghosal, but it is unfortunate that I could not go through the more recent work by Dr. Hillebrandt on the subject.

For this publication, I am deeply indebted to my old friend Mr. P. C. Sen, M. Sc., who not only encouraged the idea of publishing it, but did everything possible to enable me to do the same. In spite of all this, however, the work has been delayed by the press and I regret to offer only the first part of it to my readers. The work had to meet with unforeseen difficulties and it will not be possible to offer the second part before the lapse of another six months. This part, which has already been taken in hand, will contain chapters on the Hindu concept of the state as well as on the principles of Indian social evolution and on Hindu political ideals. A number of chapters and footnotes will be added, discussing important points regarding ancient Indian chronology, the principles of public administration and other allied matters.

NARAYAN CHANDRA BANDYOPADHYAYA

July, 1927.

PREFACE TO PART II

Before offering the second part of Hindu Polity, to the public I must apologise to them for the rather unusual delay in its publication. Almost a decade has passed since the first part was issued. The fault is not wholly mine since a train of adverse circumstances retarded the progress of the book through the press. I had not only to contend with a failing health but also to face the repeated breakdown of the first two printing establishments which were entrusted with the printing of the work. At times the difficulties almost appeared insurmountable, and I was tempted to give up the idea of completing it at all. But the kind encouragement of Kumar Dr. Narendra Nath Law, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D. who has almost devoted his life to the cause of education and literary patronage, infused hope in me and enabled me to bring out the book before the public. Some other friends of mine have also rendered valuable assistance by giving me their suggestions and going through the proof-sheets and in this connection I must mention the names of professors Amiya Kumar Sen, M.A., Dr. Sukumar Sen, M.A., Ph.D. and Surendra Nath Goswami, M.A. all belonging to the post-graduate teaching staff. They have rendered me invaluable assistance and I cannot forget the help which I have received from them. I regret, however, that in spite of my best efforts there remain many typographical errors and for these I crave the forgiveness of my readers.

My difficulties in compiling the volume has been very great. The data and the material had to be gleaned partly from a large number of original inscriptions and partly from innumerable Sanskrit and Pali works while with regard to Southern India I had to rely on translations and the works of modern historians. In regard to certain topics like the different types of village community or the local administrative machinery of the different provinces and subdivisions of India, I am conscious that I have not been able to do full justice to the subject. The topics are very important and for their proper handling the collaboration of Indian scholars from diffe-

rent provinces is absolutely essential. Many authors and among them we find some of the greatest names—very often commit the blunder of making sweeping statements regarding India as a whole. They often neglect the time-scale and the space-scale and try to formulate theories, not always based on reliable data, but more often the product of their own imagination highly tintured with the ideas and ideals of their own country.

Conscious of my own limitations, I have made an effort to avoid all these and striven hard to come to a more rational interpretation of facts and phenomena. Though I have centred my attention upon the institutional aspect of things, I have made it a point to give an account of these with special reference to the innumerable political happenings and changes and from the chronological point of view as well. In each chapter, I have given a chronology of political events and then added a section devoted to political speculations and ideals. Having traced the causes of the political downfall of the Hindus, I have referred to the conflict between them and the Muslim conquerors and incidentally I have shown how the Muslims themselves came to be subjected to almost the same political forces which had influenced their predecessors in India. The Hindu-Muslim *rapprochement* in the midst of the Hindu struggle for the recovery of independence engages my attention next though I must confess that the subject has not received the attention which it deserves, more especially in an age when an acute though artificial tension exists between the followers of the two religions in India. I have then attempted to give a broad outline of the political history of India upto the period of the establishment of the British as the suzerain power.

Regarding the socio-political evolution of India I have emphasised the forces and factors which contributed to give it a peculiar stamp and I have tried to show that the *motif* was to bring harmony and social equilibrium in the midst of insuperable diversities. This interpretation, though not palatable to many writers, is well supported by the evidence of history. I have taken care not to be influenced by any patriotic bias nor by a desire to vindicate the social system as it now exists. Perhaps in course of time it will

change like all human institutions but with all its faults nobody can deny that it has contributed much to the peace and prosperity of the country. As to the future, I am not lacking in optimism but lament the present tendencies towards discord and disruption. But there are rays of hope and it is a sign of the times that the leaders of public opinion in India are doing their best to bring unity and harmony in the country while many of the Indian ruling princes like their Highnesses the Maharajas of Mysore, Baroda, Travancore and the Maharaja of Nepal are manifesting a keen desire for the uplift of the Indian people, for the removal of social abuses and for the regeneration of India's economic life. Let us hope that the combined efforts of the princes and peoples of India will succeed in creating that great common-wealth which had been the dream of the great rulers of India in the past and which in future will give her her true place in inter-national society. Be it so and be her destiny fulfilled.

NARAYAN CHANDRA BANDYOPADHYAYA

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Calcutta, 25th December, 1938.

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Rise and Fall of Nandas.

From the sixth century B.C., the chief interest in Indian History centres round the Imperialistic movement, of which we have discussed only the preliminaries. Bimbisāra of Magadha, who lived to a good old age, left an extensive dominion comprising Kāsi and Aṅga in addition to his Magadhan kingdom. Towards the close of his life, he was supplanted on the throne by his son Ajātaśatru, who according to monkish accounts starved his father to death.* According to Buddhist tradition, he defeated his uncle, the Kośala king, and forced him not only to confirm his possession of Kāsi, but made him give his daughter Vajirā in marriage to him.† Next, he waged war on the republicans of Vaiśālī, who had remained a thorn in the flesh of expanding Magadha. The war, of which the prelude only is narrated in the Mahā-parinibbāna Sutta, lasted for sixteen years. The Licchavis, who, according to the Nirayāvalī Sutta, were helped by the Gaṇa-rājas of Kāsi and Kosala, held out for a long time. But, ultimately, the victory lay with the Magadha king, whose

* According to Buddhist accounts, Ajātaśatru, even when in the womb, was actuated by lust and greed. It is said that, when in the womb, he used to gnaw the entrails of his mother, and the latter, too, owing to the presence of the devilish embryo, used to suck the blood of her husband. The name Ajātaśatru has been derived as meaning one who is an enemy even when unborn—"Ajāta eva śatruḥ".

† As to the war with Pasenadi of Kosala, it is described in the Saṃyutta-Nikāya, and in the preambles of the Bhaddasāla, Vaddhakissukara and the Haritīmāta Jātakas.

success was due to the use of new implements of war like the Mahāsīlakaṇṭaka, and Raha-musala (catapults and heavy battering rams?). The political importance of the Licchavis was broken and their prestige humbled.* (See Uvāsagadasao. App. pp. 7-60.).

According to the Purāṇas, Ajātaśatru was succeeded by four princes of his line e.g. Darśaka, Udāyin, Nandivardhana and Mahānandin. According to some, Udāyin succeeded Ajātaśatru and he in his turn was followed by Darśaka, who is identified by many with the despot Nāgadasaka of Ceylon tradition, deposed by his people. According to another Ceylonese Buddhist tradition, this prince was succeeded by Amātya Śiśunāga, of whose line, his ten sons and some princes e.g. Kākavarṇa, ruled according to the Purāṇas. This theory receives support from the evidence of the Harṣa-carita.

Leaving aside these disputes regarding the order or chronology of these princes, we find that their reigns witnessed great political events. Probably, it was during their time that the struggle with Avanti ended in favour of Magadha. The power and prestige of Avanti had been maintained for a time by some of the Pradyotas and probably they had absorbed the Vatsa kingdom. Śiśunāga or his immediate successors put an end to this kingdom and thus, practically, the whole of North India was brought under the sway of Magadha. The kingdom of Kośala had also declined with the accession of Praśenajit's son, Virudhaka who had exterminated the Śākyaas and probably, soon after his death

* As to the causes of the Vaiśālīan war, there is difference between Buddhist and Jain traditions. According to some Buddhist account, there was a dispute over a mine of precious gems. According to the Jains, the war was due to the Licchavis' harbouring Ajātaśatru's step-brother Vehalla, who, to escape from Ajātaśatru, had taken refuge with his maternal grandfather, Ceṭaka, along with some elephants and a pearl necklace which Ajātaśatru coveted.

Kośala came to form part of the Magadha Empire.* (Bud Ind. p. 11.)

The Saiśunāga dynasty was supplanted by the Nandas.
The Nandas.

Their founder, according to the Purāṇas, was Mahāpadma, son of the last king of the preceding dynasty by a Sūdra woman. According to the Mahābodhi-vaṃsa, his name was Ugrasena, while according to a Jain tradition, this man was a barber of comely appearance who won over the affections of the queen and then usurped the throne by murdering the king and the royal children. This tradition is supported by the historian Curtius who gives his name as Argammes. (V. Smith—Early His. p. 37).

The Purāṇas describe the founder of the Nandas as the exterminator of all Kṣatriyas, like a second Paraśurāma and the founder of lines of Sūdra kings. (महानन्दिसुतश्चापि शूद्रायां कलिकांशजः । उत्पत्स्यते महापद्मः सर्वत्रात्तको नृपः ॥ See Pargiter D.K.A. p. 25). According to the same books, he was to become the master of the world and its "sole ruler" (*ekarāt* and *ekacchatra*). This tradition of the low origin of the Nandas is not, however, confirmed by the Mudrā-rākṣasa account, which contrasts the high birth of the Nandas with the low origin of Candra-gupta.


The Nandas figure prominently in Indian and Ceylonese tradition and their name is surrounded by a mass of fables and legends. All accounts speak of their avariciousness and their hoarded wealth. If we believe in the Mahāvaṃsa tradition (Turnour, Mahāvaṃsa, *ṭīkā*. p. xxxix), this wealth was accumulated by a great fiscal rapacity and the imposition of new taxes on skins, gums, trees and

* Branded as a parricide almost equally with Ajātaśatru, he had signalised his vengeance on his maternal relations by massacring them to a man. The monkish accounts make his retribution proportional to his crime and attribute his end to a sudden lightning stroke. D. L. P. Aṭṭhakathā Vol. I. pt. 2.

stones. This may be taken to mean that the Nandas imposed their ownership on mines and forests which, as we have shown, were regarded previously as having been *res nullius*, enjoyable by all (cf. नदीवनशैलोपभोगाः निष्कराः स्युः—Vasīṣṭha. Dh. Sū.). They seem also to have regulated weights and measures.

According to the Purāṇas, Mahāpadma ruled for 88 years and was succeeded by his sons who ruled conjointly (see Cāṇakya-kathā, published by Dr. N. Law, v. 7.) One of these princes was annually selected by lot to act as the ruler while the sovereign authority was vested in all. This rule for two generations lasted according to the Purāṇas, for 100 years, but this has been rejected by European scholars as being too long.*

The Nanda Empire evidently comprised the whole of Northern India. The Nandas were very powerful rulers as would appear from the evidence of the Greeks who invaded the Punjab under Alexander. According to Curtius, their army (of Agrammes of Prasii and Gangaridae) consisted of 200,000 infantry, 20,000 cavalry, 2000 war-chariots and elephants the number of which varied from 3000 to 4000.

The closing years of the Nanda dynasty saw the invasion of Western India by Alexander. Details of the campaigns of this conqueror are not of so much importance for us as the information we derive from the Greeks about the monarchical and non-monarchical states which were as yet free from the influence of the Imperialistic movement in Northern India. The Greek accounts open to us a remarkable and glorious chapter of Indian history inasmuch as they supply us with reliable foreign testimony on the existence of a vigorous republican life in the north-western border. 

* The rejection of this hundred years' duration simply on the ground of being too long is rather unmerited. For, we have at least one instance in modern history where the reigns of two princes, father and son, extended over 100 years. e.g. Louis XIII and Louis XIV.—1610-1715—i.e. 105 years

Republican Life in the Western Border.

From the time of Alexander's advance on the borderland of India and his entrance into the upper Kabul valley to the end of his Indian campaigns, the Greeks found a large number of Indian frontier states both monarchical and non-monarchical. The following list of them gives us an insight into the political life of the border region which was as yet free from the influence of the Imperialistic movement: e. g.

- (1) The Aspasioi (the Ásvakas ?) in the valley of the Kunar.
Its king resisted but was routed with the loss of 40,000 prisoners and 250,000 cattle.
- (2) The Guraioi.
- (3) South of the Aspasioi was the small non-Indian (Greek ?) city-state of Nysa.
- (4) The kingdom of Assakenoi (Ásmaka ?) between the Swat and Panjkora rivers. Its capital was Massaga. Its king had an army of 50,000 horse and foot. His fortress was stormed and the garrison of Massaga put to the sword.¹⁾
- (5) To the south of the Assakenoi was the state of Peucolaites (Skt. Puskalāvati). Its king Astes (Hasti ?) resisted and was defeated and killed by Hephaistion

Then after their crossing of the Indus at Ohind or Und, 16 miles to the north of Attock, there were the

- (6) Kingdom of Taxila (Takṣasilā)—Its king readily joined the conqueror.
- (7) The kingdom of Abhisāres (Abhisāra). Its king joined Alexander after some hesitation. It lay to the north of Taxila and on the eastern side of the Indus.
- (8) The kingdom of Arsakes, identified with Urasā.
- (9) The kingdom of Poros (senior)—On the other side of the Jhelum and between that river and the Chenab. This king resisted Alexander but was defeated. His gallant conduct made the conqueror restore him his kingdom.
- (10) The Kathaioi—(Kaṭhas?)—Who were a confederacy of tribes and clans with headquarters at Sāngala. They were reputed to have been the most powerful in war. They defended but were defeated and Sāngala was razed to the ground.
- (11) The Glauganikoi—a non-monarchical tribe near the Kathaioi.
- (12) The Gandarioi—ruled by a Poros.
- (13) The Adraistai—on the east of the Ravi. Their capital was the city of Pimprama.
- (14) The kingdom of Sophytes—(Skt. Saubhūti). The strange customs about marriage and the killing of deformed children in this kingdom are mentioned by the Greeks. Some coins of the Sophytes have been found.
- (15) The kingdom of the Phegelas.

- (16) The Siboi—a race of rude warriors. (R.v. Śivas or Skt. Sibi.?)
- (17) The Agalassoi—whose force of 45000 horse and foot resisted Alexander. They were put to the sword or sold into slavery. In the central city, they cast their women and children in to fire and rushed to death. A few thousands only were saved.
- (18) The Oxydrakai—between the Sutlej and the Chenab, identified with the republican tribe of Kṣudrakas by the late Sir. R.G. Bhandarkar.
- (19) The Molloi—(Skt. Mālavas).—who were in close relations with the former. The confederacy had 90,000 foot, 10,000 cavalry and 900 chariots. They were defeated and their country ravaged. They were devoted to freedom and had fine very physique.
- (20) The Abastanoi—(or the Ambasthas ?)—whom we have already seen as a non-monarchical fighting tribe.
- (21) The Xathroi—(Kṣatriyas ?).
- (22) The Ossadioi—Cunningham identified them with the Yaudheyas, but St. Martin identified them with the Vasāti of the Mahābhārata (Sabha Ch. II. 15.) They are mentioned by Kātyāyana and Patañjali (for details, see, Jayaswal. H. Polity P. 75.)
- (23) The Sodrai (Sogdai ?)—May be identified with the Sūdras living on the Indus already mentioned in the Mahābhārata.(?)
- (24) The Massanoi occupying northern Sind.
- (25) The kingdom of Mousikanos—identified with the Mucukarna of the grammarians by Mr. Jayaswal (p. 76). Like the Spartans, they took their meals in common,

pursued the study of Medicine and employed youths in public service instead of slaves.

(26) The kingdom of Sambos, on the western side of the Indus.

(27) The kingdom of the Presti.

(28) The Brachmanoi or the settlement of Brāhmaṇas. (Arrian VI 16. Diodoros XVII. cii.) Mr. Jayaswal rightly identifies them with Patañjali's Brāhmaṇako nāma Janapada (II). In the Mahābhārata, we find Brāhmaṇa gaṇas like the Bātādhanas and Mādhyamakeyas. They gave much trouble to Alexander and incited others against him. They suffered much for their patriotism.

(29) The Principality of Oxykanos.

(30) The State of Paṭala.—According to the Greeks, this was situated at the head of the lower Indus delta. The people had a constitution like that of Sparta with dual kings.

In addition to these, there were other such states. For, Greek historians have left on record the existence of a great state on the other side of the Hapion or the Beas which was exceedingly fertile and peopled by men brave in war and living under an excellent internal government. The country was under an aristocratical form of government, "consisting of five thousand councillors each of whom furnished an elephant to the State." The story of this state (which was probably an aristocratic republic and which has been identified by Mr. Jayaswal with the Yaudheyas) and its great fighting force struck terror to the hearts of the followers of the Macedonian conqueror who were already too uneasy from the accounts of the military strength of the Nandas.

No more details are necessary for our purpose, since, what we have is more than sufficient to prove the existence of an organised republican life on the north-western frontier. But for the advent of the Greeks, this scanty account would have been lost, for, with the classical tradition of monarchy as the highest political ideal, nobody would have doubted or cared to put in record the existence of popular sovereignty and of pluralistic political discipline. Unfortunate as the Indians are, the Greek evidence was explained by earlier authorities on Indian history in a quite different way. Even Mr. Mc.Crindle, who had done so much in this respect, took them to mean Indian village-communities in that quarter. But gradually, they came to be properly explained. Some of the states and tribes were recognized and identified by European scholars who by their labours discovered their Sanskrit names.

Earlier indologists suggested some of the Sanskrit names of which the Greek forms were given. Jolly identified the Kathaioi with the Kāthas, while the late Sir R. G. Bhandarkar explained the Oxydrachoi and Molloi as meaning the Kṣudrakas and the Mālavas (Ind. Ant. Vol. I. p. 29). The Sophytes were identified by M. Sylvain Lévi (Journal Asiatique VIII. p. 237).

In more recent times, the subject of these Indian Republics has been taken up in right earnest by Mr. Jayaswal, whose articles on Hindu Polity published in the Modern Review (1913) marked practically a new era in the study of the history of Hindu political life. Since then, his work on Hindu Polity has been published and in it, the account of Indian Republics must be regarded as one of the best chapters on Indian History ever written by an Indian. We refer our more inquisitive readers to go through his great work.

When we come to analyse the political condition in the states, we find that—

- (a) the influence of the topography of the Punjab still kept the country divided into many states.
- (b) monarchy of the ordinary type had become established in some states which were very close to the Madhyadeśa e.g. in Taxila, the kingdoms of Poros senior and Poros younger, the kingdom of Saubhtuti, the kingdom of Abhisares and in those of Mousikanos and Sambos in the south.
- (c) in some states, e.g. those of the Kathaioi, Molloi, Oxydrachoi or Abastanoi, republican life was still in its full vigour.
- (d) in the state of Paṭala, a dual monarchy like that of Sparta was established, but, the kings who held command in war were controlled by the Council of Elders.

The constitutions of these states varied. Republics were not of the same type, but show rather different phases and types of evolution. Thus, the Kathaioi had an elected king. The Ambaṣṭhas had three elected generals and a Council of Elders, while the Molloi and Oxydrachoi (the Mālavas and Kṣudrakas) sent a hundred ambassadors showing that they had no King or Consul solely vested with executive authority. Lastly, in that unnamed republic, government was vested in a body so big as comprising five thousand Elders.

From all these accounts, it would appear that these states were survivals of older Vedic institutions in the outer fringe. In some of these, the original limited authority of the ruling tribe-leader had given rise to hereditary monarchy through a process similar to that

in the states of the Madhyadeśa. In other states, monarchy had been displaced and the principle of election had not only survived but the scope of election having been widened, a true republic had come into existence. The Dvairājya at Pātala probably arose out of the political union of two ruling tribes with different reigning houses and with the act of union, joint-rule by the two houses was established.

What the nature of these states was is not yet clearly known. There was undoubtedly territorial sovereignty, but probably, in some of these the ruling authority was vested in a class or caste. The mention of the Sudroi or the Brachmanoi points to the same conclusion. But, men of other castes were probably affiliated and were given civic rights.

What the result of the Greek invasion was, we do not exactly know. Some scholars have supposed that the republics ceased to exist. But this is not true, for, the names of many of these occur in inscriptions and monuments for a long time. The Ksudrakas and Mālavas existed for a long time, as is borne out by Patañjali and other grammarians. We shall discuss their later history in its proper place.

III

The Maurya Empire.

Hardly had the Conqueror left the Indian soil, when a great political change took place in Magadha. A dynastic revolution occurred at Pāṭaliputra and the throne of the Nandas passed to Candragupta Maurya, who founded a new line of princes bearing his surname. We have no detailed account of this event except the tradition in the Purāṇas, that the Nandas were uprooted by a Brāhmaṇa, Kauṭilya, and he placed Candragupta on the Imperial throne. Indian tradition regards this prince as a scion of the Nandas,* but Ceylonese accounts describe him as a prince of the Moriya clan of Pippalivana. In the face of almost unanimous Indian traditions, this latter story may be totally rejected. The evidence furnished by Indian tradition which regards Candragupta as a scion of the Nandas through a low-caste woman is also confirmed by the statement of Roman historians like Justin, who preserves the account that Sandrocottus was low-born and this goes a long way to explain the epithet Vṛṣala applied to him by Kauṭilya in the Mudrā-Rākṣasa. The Greek account gives us the story of his advent to the camp of Alexander to induce the conqueror to help him in winning the Magadha throne. Whether there is any truth in it we do not know, but if we believe in our own accounts, his elevation was due to the genius of Kauṭilya with whom he had allied with a view to the destruction of the Nandas, their common enemy. The story of Kauṭilya's anger and his

marvellous diplomacy which won over a number of hill-chiefs to the side of his *protege* is too well-known to be repeated here.

On the fall of the Nandas, Candragupta took their place. With the advice and help of his remarkable adviser, the traditions and governmental principles of his predecessors were not only maintained, but these formed the foundations of the greatest Imperial structure of the day. The process of conquest which had begun two centuries earlier now almost attained its completion.

To the mighty Nanda Empire, Candragupta added practically the whole of western India which had as yet maintained its separate political existence. The small hill-states and republican clans of the narrow Punjab-valleys or the inaccessible fastnesses came to form part of the great Empire. Candragupta's task in this quarter was made easy by the Macedonian invasion. Alexander's exploits did what it had already done in the Hellenic world. As in Greece, so in India, the death-knell of tribal independence and of republican city-life was sounded. The provinces of Asia Arachosia, Gedrosia and Paropanisadai (e.g. the districts of Herat, Kandahar and Kabul with the Mekran coastal region) which had passed to the hands of Seleucos came to be part of the Magadha Empire. Properly speaking, we have no account of the war which took place. The garbled versions of Greek historians which do not preserve the story of defeat of the Seleukidan forces simply tell us of a matrimonial alliance between Seleucos and Candragupta. Seleucos, we are told, married his daughter to the Hindu king and, in lieu of 500 elephants, handed over these provinces to the Maurya. ✓

In addition to these provinces, a large part of Western India including Guzerat-Kathiawad came to be a part of the Maurya Empire. This is proved beyond doubt by the Junāgaḍh Rock

inscription of Rudradāman executed in the second century A.D. In the East, Kalinga remained independent and in regard to Bengal proper, we have but little evidence. The extreme south probably retained its independence. There is no positive evidence of its conquest except certain Tamil traditions. (See Kṛṣṇasvāmy Ayengar—Beginnings of South Indian History. Ch. II.) According to the Greek accounts, the Pāṇḍyas and Andhras remained very powerful even in Megasthenes' time.

Candragupta ruled for twenty-four years according to the Purāṇas and was succeeded by his son Bindusāra (son of his queen Durdharā according to the Jains), more familiar to the Greek historians by his surname of Amitrachates* or Allitrachadas, which, rendered into Sanskrit, becomes Amitra-khāda or Amitrāghāta, "devourer of enemies." Of his reign, we have no authentic account except some traditions regarding his conquests (Jain Pariśiṣṭa-parvan, Jacobi p. 62; Indian Antiquary 1875, p. 364) or the story of a revolt in Taxila (Divyāvadāna, p. 371). The Greek accounts tell us something about his diplomatic relations with Greek princes of Egypt and Syria and we are informed that these two kings sent two ambassadors named Deimachos and Dionysias to the court of the Hindu Emperor.

After twenty-five or twenty-eight years of reign, Bindusāra was succeeded by his son Aśoka who ascended the throne about the year 273 B.C. (See V. Smith, *Aśoka*, p. 73). According to Indian traditions recorded in the Divyāvadāna and the Ceylonese chronicles, his accession was preceded by a sanguinary war of succession in which he killed almost all his brothers including the eldest Sushima as well as the minister

* Athenaios and Strabo. See. V. Smith. History of India—p. 183.

Rādhagupta. This story, though disbelieved by many European historians (V. Smith, *Early History*, pp. 155), is probably a sound one and shows how these succession disputes were one of the prominent sources of weakness to the Empire which was otherwise founded on a stronger basis. Aśoka did not venture to crown himself, probably, in view of possible rivals and of wars which probably went on, for the next four years. According to Mr. Jayaswal, this delay was due to his not attaining the twenty-fifth year which was the minimum age qualification for the royal office.

Eight years after his coronation, Aśoka who styles himself "*Devānām-priya*"* (a title assumed by his predecessors in imitation probably of Alexander who was regarded as the "favoured of the gods") conquered the powerful state of Kalinga which had maintained its independence and a strong army in spite of the rise of Magadha. In this sanguinary war, about a quarter of a million lost their lives. He also suppressed a revolt at Taxila, where probably the newly conquered tribes and princes continually strove to throw off the Magadhan yoke.

From this period of his life, a reaction set in. He repented of his past, his violence of conduct, his fratricidal wars, and his sanguinary conquests. He came under the influence of pacific teachings which made him look more to the welfare of humanity than any further aggrandisement or bloody conquest. The edicts which he issued for the mental and moral welfare of his subjects show his changed mentality. He became a religious devotee,

* Alexander became a god in the eyes of his followers and his divinity was recognized by the Greeks. The Egyptians regarded him as the son of Ammon. (See Bury, *History of Greece*, pp. 773, and 828.) A similar idea that the king was the friend of Indra, existed in India and is found in some of the Coronation Hymns. (See supra P. 97 A. V. IV. 22.) Probably, with the influence of the Greeks, these older ideas in the epithets *Indra-sakhā* and *Indra-priya*, were revived and gave rise to the title *Devānām Priya*.

an admirer of the pacific teachings of traditional Indian morality, and, according to monkish accounts, joined the Buddhist Order. There are great doubts as to whether he became a Buddhist out and out, but this much is certain that the flood-tide of repentance swept away his faith in the Imperial traditions of his forefathers. Henceforth, he came to devote his life to a new type of conquest, which he describes as *Dhamma-vijaya*, hazy ideas of which had floated in the minds of preceding generations. (See Kautilya *Arthaśāstra*—ch. on *Ābaliyasam*; Kautilya mentions three types of conquerors, e.g., *Dharma-vijayī*, *Asura-vijayi* and *Lobha-vijayī*.)

With *Dhammavijaya*, a new era dawned in politics. Repentance killed the Empire. Its meaning and purpose was forgotten and henceforth the vast resources at the disposal of the most powerful autocrat of that age came to be devoted to the cause of the moral regeneration of mankind. The claims of world-love predominated, and the political necessity of a vigorous policy at home and abroad was entirely forgotten. Political authority henceforth directed itself towards the furtherance of a cosmopolitan and humanistic ideal of happiness. The ideals of paternal despotism became pre-eminent and the other aspects of political existence were forgotten. The king posed as the father of his subjects and devoted his life to their moral elevation, interfered in their religion and spent the resources of the Empire in founding *Stūpas* and *Vihāras*, in dedicating caves and in raising monuments to the memory of great teachers.

All these entailed undoubtedly an expenditure of vast sums of money and thereby caused a curtailment of expenditure on other items. Probably, the army and the other branches of civil administration were neglected and thereby weakened the state. At the same time, many of his measures which aimed at the moral

as unpopular as stringent licensing acts or the prohibition of slave labour in the nineteenth century in Europe or as the stoppage of music, pilgrimage or religious fairs, under Aurungzeb. His extravagant patronage and veneration for the Buddhist monks might have also roused the jealousy of the priesthood or exasperated the royal ministers and advisers, if we are to believe in the traditional accounts.*

Whatever might have been the causes, the Empire certainly became weak and its greatness did not survive Aśoka. On his death, (232 B.C.) he was succeeded by a number of princes of the Maurya line.† Probably, the Empire was divided amongst his sons and this receives support from the *Rājatarāṅginī*, which mentions the accession of Jalauka in Kashmira. This spirit of division was probably also accentuated by the separatist tendencies in the more recent conquests of Candragupta or the conquered principality of Kalinga.‡ The western provinces with their

* In one of the legends, we find the account of Aśoka's gift of his empire to the Saṅgha which we may reject altogether. We find also the high-handed though justifiable action of the minister in stopping payments for the maintenance of idling monks. We have also the story of Aśoka's gift of an *āmala* when all his treasures were taken away.

† The proper order of succession after Aśoka's death is but little known. Aśoka had many sons some of whom acted as viceroys in the great provincial capitals. Prince Tivara's name occurs in the inscriptions while we find Kuṇāla or Suyasaḥ, and Jalauka mentioned in Indian literature. Another prince, Mahendra, and a princess, Saṅghamitrā, are named but in regard to the former it is difficult to ascertain whether he was a son or brother. According to Buddhist tradition, the two spread Buddhism in Ceylon.

The names of Aśoka's successors vary in the different purāṇas and in other accounts. According to the *Matsya*, the names are Daśaratha, Samprati, Śatadhanvan and Bhadratha, while according to the *Viṣṇu*, the kings were Suvaśaḥ, Daśaratha, Saṅgata, Śālisuka, Somaśarman Śatadhanvan and Bhadratha. The *Divyāvadāna* mentions Samprati, Bṛhaspati, Vṛsasena, Puṣyadharman and Puṣyamitra. The *Rājatarāṅginī* mentions Jalauka as king of Kashmira. Samprati is extolled by the Jains while only one King's name occurs in the inscriptions, e. g. Devānām-priya Daśaratha. (see. V. Smith's *History*, second edition pp. 179-83.)

‡ The extreme west with its centre at Taxila never became completely loyal to the Maḡadha Emperors. They looked upon the governors and officials of the Empire as intruders and the centralised administrative system was odious to them. The spirit of tribal independence was very strong. All this would appear from the evidence of the *Divyāvadāna*. We have stories of repeated revolts at Taxila both under Bindusāra and Aśoka.

ethnic and political differences provided a constant source of trouble to the Emperors. Probably, the West was separated from the Empire under a prince of the Maurya line and the princes of Kalinga raised their head. Ambitious provincial governors also might have raised standards of revolt. The Greeks on the Indian frontier began their inroads and the Empire became weaker every-day. In such a state of affairs, the last Maurya was murdered by his General Pusyamitra who founded a new line e.g. that of the Mitras or Suṅgas. (प्रज्ञादुर्बलं च बलदर्शनव्यपदेशदर्शिताशेषसैन्यः सेनानीरनार्या मौर्ये हृद्दृष्टं विप्रेष पुष्पमित्रः स्वामिनम्)*

Pusyamitra Suṅga,† who became king after murdering his master, did not most probably inherit the vast domains which Aśoka held. The west most probably passed into other hands and the limits of the Suṅga Empire did not pass beyond Jalandhara, if we believe Tārānātha. Yājñasena, probably another official of the last Maurya, raised the standard of revolt in Vidarbha‡ and Kalinga kings declared their independence, though as yet they did not attain that superiority as in the time of Khāravela Ceta. A number of scholars has made this king contemporary with Pusyamitra, but considerable doubts still exist. Furthermore, taking advantage of the weak condition of the Empire, the

* By an irony of fate, this prince bore the same name as that of the founder of the dynasty which inaugurated the policy of conquest, i.e. the Bārhadrathas.

† The origin of the Suṅgas is rather obscure. From the termination *Mitra* MM.H.P. Sāstri tried to prove that they were Iranians (J.A.S.B. 190), but a few months later he revised his opinion and tried to establish the fact that they were Brahmins. Their Brāhmanical origin has found favour with some other scholars (see H.C. Raichaudhuri P.H. 196). The Suṅgas and their descendants, the Saṅghāyanis were brahmin teachers undoubtedly but, there is grave doubt as to whether this princely line assumed merely the *Pravaras* of their spiritual teachers as was the custom among Kṣattriyas.

‡ This would appear from the account of the *Mālavikāgnimitra* which describes a war between the Suṅga king and the rebel leader at Vidarbha. See V. Smith's History. ch. VIII.

Yavanas on the Indian border began to make their inroads, and, if we believe Patañjali, they were bold enough to advance as far as Mādhyamika (Rajaputana) and farther east to Sāketa.*

This audacious leader of the Yavanas has been identified with Menander or Milinda, the hero of the *Milinda-pañha* or with Demitrios. We shall discuss the history of the Greeks later on, but this much appears certain that though they established themselves in Bactria and the western provinces, their inroads into Madhyadeśa were checked. Probably, it was to commemorate his victory over the Yavanas that Puṣyamitra performed an Aśvamedha ceremony.

After Puṣyamitra, who ruled for thirty-six years, nine of his successors ruled.† They had their capital at Pāṭaliputra and probably continued the Mauryan administrative system in those parts of the Empire that still remained under them. The last Śuṅga, Devabhūti, was murdered by his minister the Brāhmaṇa Vāsudeva Kāṇva, who usurped royal power. He with his four successors ruled for forty-five years at the end of which their power ended and the last vestiges of Imperial rule were swept away.‡ The chief interest in the subsequent political history of India

* This Yavana invasion mentioned in the *bhāṣya* of Patañjali was first pointed out by the late Dr. Goldstücker, perhaps the best and most erudite Sanskritist which the West has produced. In connection with Pāṇini's date, he had to investigate that of the author of the *Mahābhāṣya* and he fixed the date of the latter by showing that Patañjali was posterior to the Mauryas (P. 176 of his *Pāṇini*—where the *bhāṣya* on V. 3. 99 is quoted) and that the invasions of the Yavanas who advanced to Mādhyamika and Sāketa and besieged these places, took place in Patañjali's time (177-180). See also V. Smith's *History of India*, Ch. VIII. appendix.

† For the names of the successors of Puṣyamitra see Pargiter, PP. 70-71, also V. Smith's *Early History of India*, Ch. VIII. The kings in succession to the founder of the line were Agnimitra, whose name occurs in literature and also on coins, Vasujyestha, Vasumitra, Anādraka, Pulindaka, Ghosa, Vajramitra, Bhāgavata and Devabhūmi. Mitra coins have been found in many places in north India but the names do not always tally with those in the Purāṇas. Mr. Jayaswal has identified some of these. (J. B. O. R. S. 1917. P. 479.). One prince Bhāga-bhadra's reign saw a Greek embassy from king Antialcidas under Heliodorus sent to the Śuṅga king. (Besnagar Inscription).

‡ The chronology of the Śuṅgas and Kāṇvas is rather disputed. According to Sir R. G. Bhandarkar (E. H. Decan) the Śuṅgas were reduced to the condition of "Rois fainéants"

centres round the dynasties of invading foreigners who overran nearly the whole of the west and the rising power of the Andhra rulers who not only maintained their integrity in the South but checked the foreigners for a long time.

by the Brāhmin Kāṇvas who acted like the Peshwas in the 18th century. Hence, according to him, the 112 years assigned to the Sungas included the 45 years attributed to the latter. This view does not find favour with historians like V. Smith and they assign to the Kāṇvas the period from 73. to 28 B. C.

Political ideals and Administrative System of Empire.

The administrative system of the Empire which grew out of the process of conquest and unification was characterised by high centralisation. A detailed or systematic account of the Imperial administrative machinery is lacking, but this deficiency is made good by the informations furnished by authentic indigenous and foreign accounts of the period. The main sources of such information are the *Arthaśāstra* of Kaṭilya and the accounts of Megasthenes and other Greek visitors of which fragments have reached us. From the evidence obtained from both these sources, it is certain that a highly centralised Empire had arisen out of the process which had been going on. At the present time, we have no means of deciding as to who was the real founder of the system, but it is almost beyond doubt that centralisation came as the result of the process which had begun with the VIth cen. B.C. To this natural process, finishing touch was given by Mahāpadma, the founder of that powerful dynasty which held sway in the land of the Prasii when the bold Hellenic conqueror made his famous inroad into the Punjab. This Mahāpadma, if we are to believe in the Paurāṇic or Buddhistic tradition, pursued a consistent policy with the object of adding to his material resources and also to remove all the remnants of local Kṣattriya tribes or dynasties. This would receive confirmation from the statement of the Purāṇas that he exterminated the Kṣattriyas like a second Paraśurāma, and also from the almost unanimous

Indian tradition that he was avaricious and created new sources of taxation (See Mahāvamsa commentary—Turnour, already referred to). Circumstances also helped him in his objectives. Thus, conquest brought in wealth. The crown domains were augmented by the accession of the lands belonging to the uprooted dynasties as well as that of forest tracts or hill regions subsisting so long, as no man's land, between the boundaries of two independent states. Rivers, too, became sources of income, as well as the sea when the boundaries of the Empire extended to its borders. This vast income freed the rulers of the Imperial Dominions from all popular control, which also was reduced to a nullity in view of the vast extent of the Empire and its vast military resources.

The Emperor. The main responsibility of governing this vast Empire which in the days of Candragupta extended from the borders of the Persian gulf to the Bay of Bengal and included the whole of India with the exception of Kalinga and the states of the extreme south, devolved on the Emperor. He was, if we are to believe in the Arthaśāstra or the Greek accounts, the sole repository of all powers and political functions. He was the supreme executive head, the head of the armed forces and also the fountain head of justice (*dharma-pravartaka*). So far as the public administration was concerned, the sole authority rested in him. The officers of government took directions from him and communicated directly with him. For his own information he had spies employed throughout the country, not only to watch over the opinions of the people but to examine the conduct of all officers of the realm.

The Emperor, thus, was the pivot of the whole system. His life was hard and precarious. He had no moments to lose, no time to while away in enjoyment. Like Medieval monarchs of the type of Philip. II of Spain, or Aurungzeb of India, he was the hardest worked

man in his empire. The Emperor's daily routine of which we have a sample in the Arthaśāstra (See. Ch. on Rāja-pranidhi)* shows the hard discipline of regal life and the amount of labour and care the king had to spend for his own safety or the prosperity of the Empire. He rose early and having finished his ablutions, purifications or devotions to the gods, set to work, which absorbed the major part of the day except the few hours reserved for dinner, rest and sleep. Multifarious duties rested on his shoulder. He had to consider the business of all departments, attend to the army, consult ministers, receive information from spies, and last of all, hear the complaints of his subjects or decide cases in appeal brought to his *darbar*†. Hard-worked as he was, he had no opportunity for relaxation

His hard work or ease. Constant dangers awaited him. His life was always in peril. Assassins roved around, rebellious sons or concubines intrigued against him, his food was not secure from poisoning, nor was the house he rested in or the woman he confided in safe for him.‡. Constantly beset with dangers, with life always in risk, surrounded by armed troopers or female-guards, he had to devote his life to the cause of his subjects for the realisation

* तत्र पूर्वे दिवसस्वाष्टभागे रक्षाविधानमायव्ययौ च शृणुयात् । द्वितीये पौरजानपदानां कार्याणि पश्येत् । तृतीये स्नानभोजनं सेवेत । स्वाध्यायं च कुर्वीत । चतुर्थे हिरण्यप्रतिषह-
मय्यन्त्रांश्च कुर्वीत । पञ्चमे मन्त्रिपरिषदा पत्रसंप्रेषणेन मन्त्रयेत । चारुगुह्यबोधनीयानि च बुद्धयेत् ।
षष्ठे स्त्रीविहारं मन्त्रं वा सेवेत । सप्तमे हस्तशस्त्रयुधीषान् पश्येत् । अष्टमे सेनापतिसख्यो
विक्रमं चिन्तयेत् । Then for the night—प्रतिष्ठितेहनि सन्त्यात्पास्येत् । प्रथमे रात्रिभागे गूढप्रवृत्तान्
पश्येत् । द्वितीये स्नानभोजनं कुर्वीत स्वाध्यायं च । तृतीये तूर्यघोषेण संचिद्येत्, चतुर्थपञ्चमौ शय्येत् ।
षष्ठे तूर्यघोषेण प्रतिबुद्धः शास्त्रमतिकर्तव्यतां च चिन्तयेत् । सप्तमे मन्त्रमध्यास्येत् । गूढ-
प्रवृत्तान् प्रपश्येत् ॥

† उपस्थानगतः कार्याणि नामद्वारासङ्गं कारयेत् । इदं शौ हि राजा कार्याकार्य-
विपर्ययासमासप्तैः कायेत । तेन प्रकृतिक्रीपमरिवर्गं वा गच्छेत् ॥

‡ For precautions against these, see the chapter on निशान्तप्रविधिः,—or that relating to the control over the Harem and sons.

of the ideal which is so brilliantly expressed in the following lines of the Arthaśāstra :—

राज्ञो हि व्रतमुत्मानं यज्ञः कार्यानुशासनम् ।

दक्षिणा वृत्तिभार्य्यं च दीक्षितस्याभिप्रेचनम् ॥

प्रजासुखे सुखं राज्ञः प्रजानां च हिते हितम् ।

नात्मप्रियं हितं राज्ञः प्रजाणञ्च प्रियं हितम् ॥

The weight of these onerous duties rested on the shoulders of the benevolent despot whose hankering after universal sovereign rule made his life more miserable than that of the meanest of his subjects.

The Emperor's duties and responsibilities kept him ever active and busy, but, as the task was something beyond the powers of a single man, he had to take the help of his officials and servants* of various grades. These comprised the following :—

- (1) Members of the consultative body or the Mantri-parisat.
- (2) Trusted advisers of the king, enjoying his fullest confidence.
- (3) Members of the Central Executive and heads of departments.

(4) The provincial administrative officials and their subordinates who wielded the functions of the central government in relation to the smaller units of social and political life.

Mantri-parisat. For advice and guidance the king depended on two important sets of advisers. One body of responsible advisers openly deliberated on important affairs of state. It was known as the Mantri-parisat, which was practically the representative of the old Sabhā voicing the opinion of Elders and men of experience. The members represented (so far as it was possible in the absence of

* सहायवाथ्यं राजस्वं चक्षुमेकं न वर्तते ।

कुर्वीत सचिवांस्तस्मात्तेषां च शृणुयान्नतम् ॥—Kautilya. Text, P. 13.


an elected Chamber) public opinion, though, strictly speaking, it was not a representative body. They were recruited from a body of high officials known as the *Amātyas*, who had come to existence already, and who from the point of view of their duties and functions, may be fairly compared with the members of the present Indian Civil Service. The number of Advisers in the *Mantri-parīṣat* was not fixed, since we find *Kauṭilya* laying down the maxim that the number of counsellors must vary with the requirements. His predecessors whose views he quotes, tried to put a limit to the number* but *Kauṭilya* did not lay any hard and fast rule as to their numerical strength. But, he was certainly in favour of a large body as would appear from his statement that a king with a small Council was sure to decline.

While this large body deliberated in public, the king consulted at the same time his most trusted advisers, the *Mantriṇaḥ* who formed the highest rank of those *Amātyas* who had proved themselves above all temptations.† *Kauṭilya* engages in a long discussion as to the number of ministers to be consulted with, but for our purpose this is immaterial.

Deliberation with these bodies, according to *Kauṭilya*, was of vital importance to the king, and he even lays down the rule that absentee ministers should be consulted by means of letters. (आसन्नेः सह कार्याणि पश्येत् । अनासन्नेः सह पत्रसम्प्रवर्णेन मन्त्रयेत् ।) When consulting with ministers, the king generally followed the opinion of the majority and *Kauṭilya* naturally is in favour of following the same.

* मन्त्रिपरिषद् द्वादशमात्राणां कुर्वीत इति मानवाः । विद्महेति बार्हस्पत्याः । विंशतिं ब्रह्मर्षिगणैः । यथासामर्थ्यं इति कौटिल्यः । इन्द्रस्य हि मन्त्रिपरिषदधीना सद्मस्य तत्त्वादिनां यज्ञं सद्मसाक्षमाहुः ।

† सर्वोपधाशुदान् मन्त्रिणः कुर्वीत ।

This direction that the king should follow the opinion of the majority is, according to Kautilya, subject to the proviso that he should choose that course which leads best to success. This has given rise to a discussion relating to the constitutional position of the Ministers' Council. Mr. Jayaswal and, following him, some other learned authors on Hindu Polity, interpret the passage to mean that the opinion of the majority was legally binding on the king, and as such, the power of the king was constitutionally limited. This view which is pleasing to the patriotic historian, however, does not stand a critical examination. For, the passage* in question clearly enunciates the principle that generally the king should do well to follow the majority or he might choose that course which led best to success. The presence of the second alternative clearly takes away the binding force of the former. Furthermore, we must bear in mind that ministers in these days were nothing else than royal servants whose conduct was regulated by fear of royal displeasure and hope of favour, as is described in the chapter on *Samayācārīka*. Moreover, the king could, if he wished, remove any minister or change the whole personnel of the Mantri-parīṣat. Such ministers entirely depending on royal favour were not checks on regal authority and the law of majority is not always a test of political progress, though it is accepted as a rough index to the right course owing to the concurrence of expert opinion. 

Central Executive. Next to the advisory bodies, we pass on to the composition of the Central Executive body. This comprised

* आचार्यिके कार्ये मन्त्रिणो मन्त्रिपरिषदं चाह्वयन्त्यात् । तत्र बहुविधाः कार्यसिद्धिर्वा वा द्रव्यसत् कुर्यात् ॥

That the opinion of the majority was naturally the guiding principle in those days is also confirmed by Kautilya's discussion as to the number of Mantriṇah to be consulted. see the same chapter.

a number of high officials and heads of departments who formed the "eighteen lords or the Aṣṭādaśa-tirthas." The following were the chief officers in order of precedence and importance :—

(1) The Mantri or Mantrināḥ. It is difficult to determine whether there were several Mantrināḥ or one Mantri corresponding to our Prime Minister. In more than one place Kauṭilya speaks of the Mantrināḥ. Probably, out of several such of the same rank, one man stood highest. He enjoyed a salary of 48000 paṇas.

(2) The Purohita—His position was very high, though probably next to the Mantri. He was regarded as a preceptor and teacher and his person was sacred. Kauṭilya enjoins obedience to him (ch. on Mantri-purohitotpatih) and speaks of his immunity from capital punishment.

(3) The Senāpati—He was the Commander-in-chief or rather the Chief of the General Staff. His special care was the supervision of the war department. It is doubtful whether he led troops in battle.

(4) The Yuvarāja—or the Heir-apparent, selected from the royal children and kinsmen enjoyed a high place. He held a place of honour in the Regal Council.

(5) The Dvauvārika—or the officer in charge of the city-gate of the capital or fort, who owed a high position on account of the protection of the king being vested in him.

(6) The Antarvaṃśika—or the leader of the Harem-guards who enjoyed a high place owing to his important charge over the king's life and harem.

(7) The Praśāstā—This official combined in him magisterial powers along with the control of troops on the march.

(8) The Samāhartā—He was the Collector-general of revenue, who combined in his person also the superintendence over police and

civil administration. The levying of taxes, their realisation, the employment of spies, control over the police administration were all vested in him.

(9) The Sannidhātā—was the Treasurer-general, to whom all collections were forwarded. The state funds, as well as the building and care of important offices were entrusted to him.

(10) The Pradeṣṭā—The office of the pradeṣṭ combined in it the power of collecting bali, checking of accounts and some criminal jurisdiction. The pradeṣṭāraḥ were more than one in number.

(11) The Nāyaka—He was a military leader and commanded the vanguard in war. His other functions are not known.

(12) The Paura—was probably a city official—its ruling magistrate or judge. His office was not dissimilar to that of the Nagara-guptika of the Jātakas or the Nagara-viyohālaka of the Aśokan inscriptions.

(13) The Vyavahārika—Details about this office are not known. Probably, he was a judge.

(14) The Kārmāntikas—were many in number. They were in charge of the manufactories or workshops.

(15) The Mantri-pariṣadadhyakṣa—This compound is capable of a double interpretation. Either, it meant the members of the Pariṣat in addition to the various Adhyakṣas or merely the President of the Mantripariṣat. Probably, the second interpretation is a right one, since we have a large number of Adhyakṣas who were in charge of departments and are mentioned elsewhere.

(16) The Daṇḍapāla—This officer was in charge of troops and probably also inflicted punishments since the word Daṇḍa is capable of both interpretations.

(17) the Durgapāla—was in charge of forts. Probably, more than one Durgapāla existed.

(18) The Antapāla—The Antapāla or Antapālas were in charge of the boundaries.

From the above, it is clear that the word Aṣṭādaśa-tīrthāni designated the “eighteen grades or ranks of important officials”, since it is clear from a perusal of the Arthaśāstra, that a host of officials many times more numerous than the given number existed in the state. Moreover, the list of offices given above is not an exhaustive enumeration, for in the work we find the names of many other officials.

Under the central government were a large number of state departments, of which the more important were the following :—

- (1) The Department for Revenue-collection under the Samāhārtā.
- (2) The Department of Treasury under the Sannidhātā.
- (3) The Department of Records and Accounts under the Akṣapaṭalādhyakṣa.
- (4) The Department of Receipts of various descriptions under the Koṣādhyakṣa.
- (5) The Department of Mines under the Ākarādhyakṣa and his subordinate officers e.g. (a) Khanyadhyakṣa, in charge of ocean mines.
 - (b) Lavanādhyakṣa—in charge of the salt excise.
 - (c) Lohādhyakṣa—in charge of base metal extraction.
 - (d) Rūpadarśaka—in charge of the mint and coinage.
 - (e) Suvarṇādhyakṣa—in charge of department for gold extraction and the manufacture of gold articles.
- (6) The Department for the control of the manufacture of gold articles under the Sauvarṇika.
- (7) The Department for the receipt and preservation of raw materials under the Koṣṭhāgārādhyakṣa.

(8) The Department for the regulation of merchandise under the Panyādhyakṣa.

(9) The Department for raw materials and forest-produce under the Kūpyādhyakṣa.

(10) The Department of the armoury and weapons under the Āyudhāgārādhyakṣa.

(11) The Department for regulating weights and measures under the Pautavādhyakṣa.

(12) The Department for time-regulation under the Mānādhyakṣa.

(13) The Department for the collection of tolls under the Śulkādhyakṣa.

(14) The Department for manufacturing thread and cloth under the Sūtrādhyakṣa.

(15) The Department for the cultivation of crown lands under the Sītādhyakṣa.

(16) The Department for the control of liquor-traffic under the Surādhyakṣa.

(17) The Department for regulating the sale of meat under the Sūnādhyakṣa.

(18) The Department for controlling prostitutes under the Gaṇikādhyakṣa.

(18) The Department for maritime protection and police under the Nāvādhyakṣa.

(19) The Department for the royal cattle under the Go'dhyakṣa.

(20) The Department of royal cavalry and horses under the Aśvādhyakṣa.

(21) The Department of royal elephants under the Hastyādhyakṣa.

(22-24) Departments of the army for controlling chariots,

infantry and the general army departments under the Rathādhyakṣa, Pattiyādhyakṣa and the Senāpati.

(25) Department of the police for issuing passports under the Mudrādhyakṣa,

(26) Department of rural protection under the Vivitādhyakṣa.

(27) Department of waste lands under the Śūnya-pāla. ✓

By means of these departments and their numerous officials or emissaries, the intervention of the state in all matters concerning the administration, was carried to the highest pitch. With enormous resources at its disposal, the government not only took upon itself the task of protecting life and property by suppressing foreign and internal enemies, but by performing active duties for the maintenance of the lives of its subjects along with their material prosperity. The amount of benevolent activity may be gauged from the fact, that interference was carried into 'all spheres' of life. Even in that early age, the government regulated weights and measures, issued and regulated currency, regulated the sale of merchandise, the prices and profits of merchants, suppressed the sale of adulterated food-stuffs and meat, mediated in disputes relating to wages, regulated the remuneration of artisans and even fixed the fee of courtesans and public women. It will be beyond the scope of the present work to give details about all these and we must content ourselves with merely touching the more important of the above topics

The administrative machinery which had come into being, was, as we have said, a natural elaboration of the system which had gradually developed with the growing needs of the enlarging state and its increasing responsibilities. Not only new offices were created, new departments were organised, but, older institutions were absorbed to perfect the system and to ensure the linking

of the Central Executive body with the smallest units of political existence. Many of the offices which existed in the past were reorganised, the autonomous administrative system of the villages and townships was allowed to subsist, while a vast body of superintending officials gradually came into existence. In this respect, it is easy to see a continuity of development, from the earliest period to that of the empire, and the picture of life in the Buddhist Canon and the Jātakas forms but one of transition to the Imperial system.

Administrative System.—The smallest unit of the village retained its autonomous existence under the Grāmika and his assisting officials chosen from the village. The Grāmika had police and criminal powers, while local justice or the care of minors or the preservation of temples and public charities were entrusted to village-elders. Clusters of ten or twenty villages were placed under the Gopas. Clusters of a hundred or two hundred villages or more formed higher administrative units for police and judicial purposes. A quarter of the realm was under the Sthānika. Kharvatas, Sangrahaṇas Droṇamukhas and Sthanīyas were placed amongst them and these were the centres of activity on the part of higher administrative and judicial officers.

For purposes of police, the smallest unit, the village, was autonomous. But, beyond the village, the jurisdiction of the Vivitādhyakṣa comprised the non-rural and uninhabited areas. His duties were multifarious and comprised watching over the conduct of the lawless and the warning of villagers by beat of drums or through carrier-pigeons. His pickets with hunting dogs, checked the progress of wrong-doers and if necessary called in the aid of state troops. Moreover, these watched over all who dared to move without passports (See sections on Vivitādhyakṣa and

Mudrādhykṣa). The capture of thieves was entrusted to special officers known as the Cora-rajjukas. All these officials were burdened with the responsibility of making good the loss of subjects arising out of their neglect and it is curious to note that this liability extended up to the head of the state. (See Bk. IV sec. XIII; also Bk. III Ch. xvi चौरद्वैतमविद्यमानं स्वद्वैतैः प्रयच्छेत्)

Justice.—Next to these police regulations, the government took upon itself the duty of ensuring justice to all. The judicial machinery too was re-organised. The king arrogated to himself the highest judicial functions, and Kauṭilya describes him as the fountain-head of justice (*Dharma-pravartaka* Bk. III ch i). Local justice was left to the local bodies. Villages, families, and corporations all retained their lower criminal jurisdiction, while higher regal courts were established in the bigger centres like the Sangrahaṇas Sthānīyas or Droṇa-mukhas, presided over by three Amātyas and three Dharmasthas. Those courts in which the Dharmasthas (or those learned in the sacred law) presided, adjudicated in disputes arising out of breaches relating to the traditional branches of law and decided cases of agreement, marriage and sonship, conjugal rights, debt, inheritance, sale or division of household property, the rights of corporations, mortgage or deposit, labour and wages, joint enterprises, sale without ownership, violent crimes (*sāhasa*) slander (*Vākpāruṣya*), assault and injury (*Dandapāruṣya*) and of dice-play. Perhaps, with the jurists of those days, the eighteen titles of law were regulated and the Kauṭīliya contains the first attempt at codification.

Extra-ordinary Functions.—While, the above functions were generally entrusted to the head of the state, there were others which were arrogated by the king as the result of the growth of his

prerogative and the consolidation of regal authority. As we have already said, the three centuries or more which marked the struggle for political unification and administrative centralisation saw the vesting in the hands of the king a vast amount of authority. The king gradually became the sole pivot of political existence, and the logical elaboration of the ideas of the past entrusted to him the exercise of extra-ordinary powers and functions calculated to safeguard the self-realisation of the individual and the removal of the conflict of classes and sections. Partly with a view to realise this ideal of benevolent despotism and partly with the object of removing obstacles, the policy of interference was carried too far. No department of political and economic activity was freed from the intervention of the king.

With this object, regal ordinances were issued defining the rights of the crown and promulgating laws for the punishment of those who transgressed the royal commands. The enforcement of these laws was entrusted to a higher grade of Magistrates known as the Amātyas and Pradeṣṭārah who were placed over the various sections of the Kaṇṭakaśodhana department (*removal of thorns*). It would be out of place to go into the various details but we simply note down the various spheres of their activity. The main sections of the Kaṇṭakaśodhana dealt with the following :—e. g.

(a) regulated the guilds, and laid down their duties and profits. (see chapter on Kāru-rakṣanam). This was done with a view to check their high-handedness. In the Jātakas, we find the king interposing in settling the disputes of guilds.

(b) the regulated markets and the sale of merchandise. In addition to the Paṇyādhyakṣa, there was the Samsthādhyakṣa, who regulated the price and profits of merchants, stopped cornering and adulteration of articles of consumption, prevented attempts at

the lowering of the wages of artisans or the tendency to make stocks of goods without license.

(c) Took care to check famines, pestilences, floods or removed the depredation of wild animals, snakes and pests.

(d) detected youths with criminal tendencies or apprehended house-breakers, adulterers, makers of counterfeit coins, held *post-mortem* examinations in cases of sudden death, applied judicial torture to make suspects confess, and thoroughly watched over criminals.

(e) detected dishonest officials, clerks, judges and regulated jails and lock-ups.

(f) assessed and realised fines in lieu of corporal punishments in offences punishable with death or mutilation.

(g) administered the new laws punishing murder, treason, libels, breaking of dams, poisoning, or adultery on the part of women.

(h) judged various cases of violence to women including rape, adultery, unnatural intercourse (*Kanyāprakarma*).

(i) tried various other cases e.g. violation of a Brāhmana's purity, houses-breaking, delinquency on the part of officials, collision or injury to passers-by in streets, incests of the worst description, outrages on nuns, unnatural offences or violations of social order.

The above heads clearly show the extent of regal intervention in matters of social and economic life and the high efficiency of the administrative system which existed in India in the IVth century B.C. The king's position and safety was guarded by the law of Treason which bears a close resemblance to that which existed in England under the Plantagenets. The stringent game-laws or those of the forest equally show the extent of the regal prerogative. Interference was carried into other spheres of life i.e. the social and religious life of the people which had hitherto been free from any intermeddling on the

part of the king. Indeed, this arose not out of a desire to regulate religious belief, but with a view to check indiscriminate mendicancy which had been the immediate consequence of the monastic propaganda. As a result of the latter, society undoubtedly suffered from many ills and the state too suffered inasmuch as social life was jeopardised. Women with children were reduced to destitution owing to husbands leaving the home and their maintenance devolved on the king as *Parens patriae*. Family-life was similarly broken up by the wife becoming a nun; young girls were often led away from domestic life and in many cases strayed into the path of vice.

To check these evils, the political authority was compelled to intervene, as is proved by the regulations of the *Arthaśāstra*. We are expressly told that mendicancy on the part of a young man who left his home leaving his wife and children unprovided for was a punishable offence. According to the *Arthaśāstra* regulations, a man accused of such an offence was punished with the first amercement while a similar punishment was inflicted on any one who induced a woman to take to orders. (लुप्तस्यवायः प्रव्रजितावृत्त्या धर्मस्नान् ।

अन्यथा नियम्येत । पुत्रदारमप्रतिविधाय प्रव्रजतः पूर्वः साहसदण्डः । स्त्रियश्च प्रव्राजयतः) The officials of the police department especially of the *Nāvadhyakṣa* were empowered to arrest those who had just taken orders with a view to investigate the circumstances of their mendicancy. (सद्योगृहीतलिङ्गिनं अलिङ्गिनं वा प्रव्रजितं चोपग्राहयेत्)

The government also discouraged mendicancy on the part of the lower classes and forbade mendicants (except the Brāhmanical *Vānaprasthas*) to have any settlements or organisations in the newly-settled villages on the crown demesne. (वानप्रस्थादन्धः प्रव्रजितभावः सजातादन्य सङ्घः...नास्य जनपदमुपनिवेशित । न च तत्राश्रम-