

Examrace: Downloaded from examrace.com [<https://www.examrace.com/>]

For solved question bank visit [doorsteptutor.com](https://www.doorsteptutor.com) [<https://www.doorsteptutor.com>] and for free video lectures visit [Examrace YouTube Channel](https://youtube.com/c/Examrace/) [<https://youtube.com/c/Examrace/>]

Vedic Literature - Political System of Vedic Period

Glide to success with Doorsteptutor material for competitive exams : [get questions, notes, tests, video lectures and more](https://www.doorsteptutor.com/) [<https://www.doorsteptutor.com/>]- for all subjects of your exam.

Political System of Vedic Period:-

Political Conditions

- The term 'Rajya' has been mentioned once in the Rig Veda, but the Rig-Vedic political condition cannot be regarded as the condition of the
- state in real terms, the concept of territory was completely absent and war used to take place for cows i.e.. **Gavisti**.
- The kings were mainly in term of tribal chieftains.
- He was the holder of established order and moral rule called **Dhratavtara**.
- Rig Vedic political conditions were a kind of tribal chieftainship with some elements of democracy.
- The tribal heads used to adopt divine theory to legitimise their position
- In Rig Ved Puru king Tradasyu claimed himself as 'Indra' or 'Varuna' .
- Tribal head assisted by Purohit and Grarnini.
- King advised by Sabha and Samities.
- The king probably was bonded to accept these advices.
- Samiti could not do any work without the consent of the Sabha (Check and Balance formula of working)

Features of Kingship

- Hereditary succession;
- No election;
- Assisted by civil administration - to collect taxes for the army.
- Women were given equal status in this period because of less population.
- The Sabha and Samiti were the powerful institutions which considerably ended the sovereignty of the king.
- In Atharveda, Sabha and Samiti are referred to as the two daughters of 'Prajapati' .

- The Sabha was denoted as the Assembly Hall — used for serious political work, social ceremonies and debates women had equal rights to participate in the proceedings of the Sabha.
- In Rig Veda, a woman called 'Sabhapati' attended the Sabha.
- The sabha had great powers. It used to take its own decisions for performing social, political and administrative function.
- It also had the power to render justice.
- Samiti has appeared in those portions of Rig Veda, which are considered to be the latest.
- Samiti must have assumed importance only towards the end of Rig Vedic Period. Therefore, Samiti does not seem to be older than the Sabha.
- The distinction between the Sabha and Samiti cannot be made precisely.
- Only difference was that while Sabha performed judicial functions, the Samiti has no such power.

Vidhatha: Earliest Assembly - Kin Based Community

- In Rig Veda Sabha mentioned 8 times, Samiti mentioned 9 times and Vidatha mentioned 122 times.
- In Atharava Veda Sabha has been mentioned 17 times, samiti mentioned 13 times, Vidatha 22 times.
- Vidatha has been mentioned in Vajasaneyi Samhita 10 times, Brahmanas 21 times, Taittiriya Aranyaka once.
- The root word of Vidatha is vid, which means knowledge
- According to a passage of Rig Veda - members summoned in the Vidatha are instructed to be present on the occasion of distribution of whatever is produced daily by Savitr. Agni has been described as the liberal distributor of produces in the Vidatha.
- Vidhata may be regarded as a military institution.
- Vidhata was occupied a place in religion; according to **Sayana**, vidhata was a
- kind of Yajna (sacrifice) .

Gana

- In Rig Veda Gana have been mentioned 46 times and 9 times in Atharava Veda.
- The term Gana means Jana, which means count.
- Ganas are divided into Kulas or families, so also the commercial ganas are divided into Kulas, as are known from the seals discovered at Bhita and Basarh.
- **Videha** and **Vaisali** would appear as the two main examples of monarchies transformed into republics.
- In Vedic texts **Maruts** are mentioned as the Ganas. Maruts were sons of Rudra, numbering either 49 or 63 divided into seven groups each consisting of nine.

- The leader of Gana, at one place known as Ganasya Raja, is generally called Ganapati, Indra, Marut, Brhaspati and Brahmanaspati. At least in one reference in the Rig Veda, the leader of the Gana is given the title Raj an. In the Aitareya Brahmana the king is invoked as Gananampati. Brahm-anaspati, who at several places is called Ganapati.

Parishad

- Sayana explains the terms Gavyam Parisadantah as Gosangham, and so Griffith translates it as a “herd of cattle” .
- In Yajur Veda the epithet parisadya applied to Agni may point to his presence in the parisad.
- It has been shown that Ahirbudhnya, a form of Rudra, is called Parisadaya, but in the Mahabharata, Skanda, the son of Siva, is associated with the Parisadas at numerous places. Siva is also described as Gana-dhyaksa, it is also called Parisadpriya.
- The evidence that it functioned as a royal council is provided by Paraskara Grhyasutras, wherein; the parisad is represented as conducting debate under the chairmanship of its Isana (President) .