UNIT 6   INDIAN POLITICAL TRADITIONS

Structure

6.0   OBJECTIVES

This unit deals with the evolution of political thought in early India. After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the nature of Indian political thought;

- explain the meaning and significance of the concepts of Dharma and Danda as basic concepts of Indian political tradition;

- understand the contributions of Buddhism to Indian political tradition; and

- appreciate the Islamic contribution to Indian political thought.

6.1   INTRODUCTION

The beginning of the systematic study of ancient Indian political thought can be traced back to the nationalist movement. Most of the important works on Indian

political thought were written during this period in response to the criticism that ancient India made no contribution to political thought and political science was not a separate and distinct science in India. The widely held belief among the scholars was that the Hindu science of political was, infact, a part of Hindu Philosophy or Hindu religion. This opinion, though incorrect, seems to have been created on the account of the different names given to the concepts like 'politics', 'political science', and 'state'. Many scholars face this problem as they make an attempt to study the development of political thought within the framework of analysis provided by the West. Given an entirely different historical setting and socio-cultural contexts of India, it is a futile attempt to discover in it the same concepts and categories, which are the characteristics of European thought. We must understand that social and political thought is intimately related to social and political milieu in which it originates.

A study of ancient Indian political ideas must, therefore, be undertaken keeping in mind ancient Indians' view of life, the system of social organisation that prevailed and the characteristics of Indian monarchy etc.

6.2 NATURE OF EARLY INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

6.2.1 Introduction

Till recently, many scholars were of the opinion that India did not contribute anything to the evolution of political thought. It was believed that political thought in ancient India, if there was any, was at best a part of Hindu philosophy or Hindu religion. In other words, it was thought that the Hindu science of polity did not have a separate identity. But if we look at the notion of political in various available sources, it is clear that ancient Indian thinkers did have a notion of political distinct from either philosophy or religion. This erroneous conclusion that some scholars came to was because of the fact tht they have fixed notions of politics and political science derived mainly from the West. If we can define 'politics' as the "affairs of a territorially organised community held together by allegiance to a common authority", one can hardly agree with those who believed that there was no systematic development of political thought in ancient India.

6.2.2 Problem of Nomenclature

The confusion arises because of the large number of parallel terms used in ancient India for politics. There were several names, they were: *Rajadharma*, which means duties of the ruler, *Kshatravidya,* the knowledge that the ruler should have, *Rajyasastra* meaning staecraft or the science of state, *Dandaniti,* the ethics of awarding punishment, *Nitisastra*, science of ethics regulating the lives of both the ruler and the ruled and *Arthasastra*, the art of acquisition and maintenance of land.

6.2.3 Concept of Matsyanyaya

In ancient India, we have a term equivalent to the western concept of the state of nature. It is called *Matsyanyaya,* the state of big fish devouring the small. In ancient Indian political thought, we come across the term *Matsyanyaya* which explains the state of affairs in the absence of force or danda. Force is held to be the ultimate sanction behind the state. At the same time, it is emphasised that force cannot be used arbitrarily and various checks have been introduced to see that the person who is entrusted with authority to rule cannot use force at his will.

6.2.4 Dharma and Danda

For Bhikhu Parekh, Hindu political thinkers conceptualised political life in terms of two central concepts namely, dharma and danda. Both are dependent on each other.

The term danda means discipline, force, restraint, constraint or punishment. Dharma is that which holds society together. It is derived from the Sanskrit root 'dhr' meaning to hold. Society could be held togather when each individual and groups does his or its specific duties. This was sought to be achieved by following the varnashrama dharma. *Varnadharma* or adhering to one's duties as member of a group to which one belongs, i.e., caste in Indian context. It was, therefore, the duty of the king to maintain varnadharma. Varnasamkara i.e. mixture of different varnas, is to be avoided at any cost. There is a vivid description of what happens if members belonging to different varnas do not adhere to their respective varnas as given in dharmashastras, *Arthashastra* and *Mahabharata*.

The dharmashastra writers concentrated on exploring the dharma of individuals and social groups, including the government. They, however, did not attempt to provide *political dharma* as a distinct and autonomous subject of investigation. What they did was to provide a code of conduct covering the entire human life. Politics was incidental to this main concern.

In contrast to the approach of the dharmasastras, the authors of arthasastras were interested in the organisation and mechanaics of danda. The Arthasastra of Kautilya gives us a detailed account of the nature and organsation of government, the nature and method of exercising coercieve power, how power could be acquired, strategies and mechanics of retaining power, the possible threat to the varnas, prakritis or the elements of state and the best way to deal with them. The works of the authors of arthasastra were specifically political.

The two approaches of dharmasastras and arthasastra differed mainly in their subject matter. One choosing to explore political life from the stand point of dharma, the other from that of danda. The dharmasastras were legalistic and a religious in orientation, whereas the arthasastras concentrated on institutions and politics and were secular in orientation. Neither approach was complete by itself, nor this is fully appreciated by its followers. The two together constitute the Hindu traditions of political thought.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) What are the various nomenclatures used for the term 'politics' in early India?

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2) Describe briefly the concept of Matsyanyaya.

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3) Explain the concepts of Dharma and Danda.

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6.3 INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT: SOURCES

As has already been pointed out, politics in India was not considered an independent and autonomous discipline. One has to dig out the conceptions of politics from the host of sources, which deal about the larger questions of human life, mainly religious and philosophical in nature. There is no one text which deals mainly with politics. The important sources for the studies of politics are:

- Vedic literature

- Dharmasutras and Smritis

- Epics and Puranas

- Arthasastras

- Buddhist and Jain literature

- Coins and Inscriptions

- Greek and Chineese accounts

- Other literature sources and Epigraphy

6.3.1 Drawbacks and Limitations

Most of the above mentioned sources being religious in nature, it is very difficult to isolate facts of politics from it. Dharmasutras give an idealised picture of society and politics which hardly reflect the reality. Most of the scholars who have Indian political thought have taken the authority of these sources for granted although its time, place and authenticity are riddled with uncertainties.

Yet another difficulty is that most of the works on Indian political traditions were written during the nationalist movement with a purpose to counter the imperialist ideology of the Western scholars. The imperialist ideology was developed by some Western scholars who made an attempt to study the ancient Indian history. Their understanding of Indian history was based to assumptions. They are:

a) The main intellectual preoccupation of ancient Indians was philosophy and it lacked in political or material speculations.

b) The Indians never knew the feeling of nationality.

The practical implications of these conclusions were dangerous to the demand of self-rule in India. They implied that the Indians were incapable of maintaining their material world and therefore, the British should manage it for them. The second implication was that since Indians had no sense of nationhood, it was in keeping with their traditions that they should be subjected to autocratic rule.

Indian nationalist historians churned out a host of literature to counter the imperialist ideology. Bhagavan lal Inderjit, Bhandarkar, R.L. Mitra, B.G. Tilak and Later K.P. Jayaswal, R.K. Majumdar, B.K. Sarkar came out with their own interpretation of Indian history to prove the falsification of imperialist ideology. They strongly argued that what was prevalent in ancient India was not autocratic rule, but limited monarchy. K.P. Jayaswal in his *Hindu Polity* argued that the ancient Indian polity was partly like the republics of ancient Greece and party like the constitutional monarchies such as that of Great Britain. He concluded: "The constitutional progress made by the Hindus as probably not been equaled, much less surpassed by any policy of antiquity".

While appreciating the contributions of nationalist scholars to inculcate a feeling of self-confidence among the people during the nationalist movement, one must properly understand the limitations of this approach. R. S. Sharma, an eminent historian, has pointed out four important limitations of this nationalist and revivalist approach to the study of Indian political thought. They are:

First, by a fulsome adoration of ancient Hindu institutions, it tended to alienate the Muslims.

Second, the approach gives a false sense of past values. It glossed over the fact that, whether it was monarchy or republic, the two upper varnas dominated the two lower varnas who were generally excluded from all political offices.

Third, many Indians fought shy of the religious aspects of ancient Indian polity and, as if to cover a sense of guilt, took too much pains to prove the secular character of the ancient Indian state. They little realised that even in the Western world, theocracy existed till the first half of the 18th century.

Fourth, in its zeal to prove itself a superior civilisation, it hardly showed any interest in studying the ancient institutions in the light of the evolution of primitive tribes as known from anthropology

One has to keep in mind the above mentioned limitations in studying the early Indian political thought.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i)   Use the space below for your answer.

      ii)   See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1)   Mention briefly the important sources for the study of Indian political thought.

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2)   What are the drawbacks and limitations of the sources?

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6.4   CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

6.4.1   Political Life conceived within the framework of Dharma

One cannot find in ancient India any classes exclusively dealing with political and social life, which is comparable to the 'Republic' and the 'Politics' of Plato and Aristotle. A supernatural element is present in all the writings. The divine is ominipotent and is visible in the formation of society and government; the divine purpose is to be enforced by the king, divine punishment reinforces earthly punishment and sometimes supplants it. This is what we find in almost all the texts that deal with the life of the people. But one should not be led to believe the reality. There was a wide gap between the 'sastras', traditions and the actual lives of human beings. The brahminical religion, which is commonly taken as the Hindu religion, was not all-pervasive. There were non-Brahminical traditions, which were materialistic in nature and which played an important role in guiding the activities of ordinary people. Buddhist contribution is significant in this respect. We will discuss about this later.

6.4.2   Influence of Ethics

The social thought in ancient India not only assures certain fundamental principle of morality, but it always seeks to direct the material life as well. The king must consciously stimulate virtue and act as a guide to the moral life, morality as stipulated in the dharmasastras. The state figures considerably in the communal life and the theory of life proceeds to resolve itself into a theory of morality. In short, political science becomes the ethics of the whole society, a science of the duty of man found in the complex set of relations in society.

But when it comes to international relations, one can see the ethical meanings coming to terms with the hard reality. Dealing about diplomacy, Kautilya for example, becomes realistic in a manner similar to Machiavelli. One may notice a sudden fall from ethical heights to the rankest realism in the same writer.

6.4.3   The Influence of Caste based Social Structure on Politics

Caste occupied a prominent place in all social speculation during the later Vedic period and had a direct bearing on the theory of government. Varnashramadharama in the society was fixed on the basis of caste. Each varna was assigned specific functions. It was the foremost duty of the king to see that every individual confined himself to performing functions of the varna to which he was born. Caste was an ascribed status. The individual was not to seek his own interest or expression; he was not to determine his own ambition or ends. Varnashramadharma exalted the society at the cost of human values. Much that was personal gave way to collective elements. Not all castes or varnas were equally privileged in their enjoyment of rights and duties assigned to them. The super varnas – Brahmanas and Kshatriyas – were the

ruling class. The duty of an individual was social. Since the varnas were related to each other in such a fashion that together they constituted the social order, if an individual transgressed his duty, he not only violated the order, he, infact, became anti-social. It was in this way that the Hindu theory would overcome the anti-thesis of man vs state or society.

6.4.4 Government as a Partnership of the Upper Varnas

In ancient India, the Kshatriyas, Brahmanas and later the Vaisyas together formed the ruling class. The Shudras were the serving class. 'Kshatra' – the temporal power derived its strength and authority from 'Brahma' - the spiritual power. The Vaisya engaged in such occupations as agriculture and trade provided the economic basis of the state. The priest held the highest status. He was identified with the God 'Brihaspathy' instead of the temporal power 'India'. His function was to interpret dharma and preside over the rituals.

Coronation by the priest was a necessary pre-requisite to the exercise of royal power. Symbolically, it meant that the Kshatriya derived his power from the Brahman.

The priest was the chief adviser to the king. Interestingly, unlike in Europe, priesthood in India did not contend for temporal power, a phenomenon that raged in Europe for a considerably long period. The influence exercised by the priestly class was of a peculiar kind. They had the monopoly of education and were the sole interpreters of dharma. No one, not even the king could go beyond their prescription. With its intellectual leadership of the community and religious control, there was no need for the priestly class to organise itself into a church or any such spiritual organisation.

6.4.5 No Clear Distinction between State and Society

The governmental organisation and politics were looked at as a part of the larger whole called society. In other words, society was at once religious, political, economical and military. It was generally viewed in a comprehensive manner. The habit of looking at society from a political angle was not cultivated. As a result, there was no clear conception of either the state or the government. Both were interchangeable terms.

6.4.6 Monarchy was the normal form of Government

Since the four fold division of society entrusted the ruling power with the Kshatriya caste, monarchy was the natural outcome. There were also non-monarchical forms of government. Kautilya's Arthasastra for example, mentions 'dvairajya' (rule by two kings) 'vyrajya' (state without a king) etc., There were also 'ganasanghas' which according to K. P. Jayaswal are comparable to modern republics. But still monarchy was the normal form of government. Though there were non-monarchical forms, they were more of an exception rather than a rule.

6.4.7 The Government was not Sovereign

From its very nature of existence, the government in ancient India could not be regarded as sovereign in the Austinian sense of the term. It did not impart validity to the orders: rather, it shared in its validity. On the contrary, the government had no independent existence of its own. The sustenance of the social order was merely its function. Sovereignty was, infact, ultimately sourced in the divine will. On the part of the individual, there was no unified allegiance, no single loyalty except to society as a whole. Only the pluralistic theory of sovereignty can grasp the Indian phenomenon.

6.4.8 Other Distinguishing Features

Apart from the above mentioned characteristics, Professor Bhikhu Parekh mentions some other distinguishing features of the Hindu political traditions. They are :

First, the Hindu tradition is basically in-egalitarian. Although it developed the idea of the moral equality of all men, it never developed the social, legal and political groups.

Second, the Hindu tradition of political thought is pluralistic in orientation. The Hindu political writers from the very beginning recognised the autonomy of social groups.

Third, political thought in early India was largely uncritical and apologetic of the established social order. Most Hindu writes justified the caste system as the caste based conception of dharma, the largely fatalist concept of karma, the degradation of the Shudras and the slaves, the extensive moral interference of the state and so on. It ignored the whole are a of social conflict.

Fourth, many Hindu writers wrote mainly for the attention of the rulers. Their works are largely manuals of ethics or administration, hence, it is largely didactic and practical.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: i)   Use the space below for your answer.

ii)   See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1)   List the important characteristics of Indian political thought.

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2)   What according to Professor Bhikhu Parekh are the distinguishing features of Hindu political thought?

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6.5   BUDDHISTS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO INDIAN POLITICAL TRADITIONS

6.5.1   Origin of Kingship

In contrast to Brahminical literature, we have a different version of the origin of kingship in Buddhist literature. The divine origin theory is not accepted. We have innumerable instances in the *Jatakas* of elections for the royal office. Some Jatakas

contain description of the king – elect being chosen by the purohita or the elders according to his qualities or his *Mahajana-Sammata*, meaning one who is accepted by all. Generally Kshatriyas of good family were chosen, but caste was not a bar to this election to royal office. In atleast two Jatakas, we find Brahmans elected to the royal office. In another Jataka, we find a low caste man being chosen as a king. If he proved tyrannical, the remedy was naturally a popular revolt of which we have innumerable examples. These revolts were justified on the grounds that

1)   the king-ship arose out of a contract between the subjects and the one chosen by them.

2)   the sovereign rights of the king were limited to the protection of subjects and punishment of wrong-doers and he was bound by the law.

The people, according to Jataka evidence, maintained their rights and privileges for a long time. They derived their importance partly from their numbers and partly from their organisations.

6.5.2   Democratic Nature of the Buddhist Sangha

Prof. Rhys Davids is of the opinion that the Buddhist Sangha was founded upon democratic principles. According to him, the Buddhist Sangha "was a kind of republic in which all proceedings were settled by resolutions agreed upon in regular meetings of its members which were held subject to the observance of certain established regulations and the use of certain form of words. These forms and resolutions passed were called as Kamma Vacas".

The democratic nature of the Buddhist order is further illustrated by the fact that in addition to the rules and resolutions, we further learn from the *Mahavagga* and the *Culavagga*, that

1)   The Buddhist Sangha had a body of rules regarding the form of resolutions to be moved in the Assembly

2)   There was a rule of quorum

3)   In cases of difference of opinion it was decided by the votes of the majority

4)   Complicated matters were referred to the decision of committees

5)   Definite rules seem to have existed regarding such matters as the votes of the absentees.

However, there is nothing to prove that the procedure in the Buddhist Sangha which was basically a religious order was reflected in the 'Ganasangha', which was a political sangha. But in any case, the political ideas envisaged by the Buddhists were a distinct one and differed greatly from the political thought of either the Dharmasastras or the Arthsastras. It is evident in the Buddhist theory of the origin of the state.

6.5.3   Theory of the Origin of the State

The theory of the origin of the state is found in the *Dighanikaya*. According to it, there prevailed a golden age of harmony and happiness on earth and people being virtuous, led a happy and peaceful life. But after a long period, people became greedy and selfish. Other evils also crept in subsequently. This ideal state passed away. Then, the people approached the best man amongst them and entered into an agreement with him. He was to punish the wrongdoers and in return, they promised to give him a proportion of their harvest. Chosen by the people, he was known as the Maha Sammata or the 'Great Elect'. Thus, the Dighanikaya challenges the vedic dogma of divine creation of the social order.

The necessity of the rulers' authority was felt because people became corrupt; consequently, the state came into existence. But even then the criminals and the law-breakers continued to operate. In the *Angutta Ranikaya*, Lord Buddha stressed the importance of the fear of severe punishment by the ruler as a deterrent to crimes.

The salient features of the Buddhist theory of social evolution are that it is the continuous moral and physical decline which necessiated a social and political order. A direct consequence of this progressive fall of man was the rise of the institutions of property, the state and society in a successive sequence. It was the further fall of man that led to the institution of kingship that came into existence as a result of the contract between the community and the most distinguished individual. The rise of the social class is explained, in contrast to Brahminical theory, by a rational principle of voluntary selection of occupations. In this social order, the Kshatriyas take precedence over the Brahmanas. It is always virtue and knowledge that determined superiority. Since the Buddhists did not believe in the caste system, they denied that one of the duties of the king was to maintain Varnashramadharma. They further denied the restriction of kingship to the kshatriya varna. They did not believe in the sanctity that surrounded the person of the king.

6.5.4   The Principle of Righteousness

In the Buddhist literature, danda does not have a central role. Dharma is to be upheld in more positive ways. The principle of righteousness is different from the Brahminical conception of dharma. It is closer to the Western conception of virtue. According to Brahminical literature, there is a different set of ethical principles for the king. What is adharma to the ordinary people becomes a dharma to the king, when he is engaged in protecting the social order. This is called *Rajadharma*. Both the *Bhagavadgita* and the *Mahabharata* give detailed accounts of the concept of Rajadharma as distinct from dharma to be practiced by the ordinary citizens. Buddhists too consider the primary purpose of the state to safeguard the social order. But this order is understood more in moral terms and dharma must be the standard for all the king's activities. Righteousness is an ethical doctrine as well as a mental discipline. In Buddhism, there is a total application of the principle of righteousness in guiding both internal as well as foreign polices. Righeousness is the king to righeous king. The king is bound by same set of ethical principles as are his subjects. The king, by example causes the happiness or misery of his people. Political righteousness, thus conceived, rises almost to the level of a cosmic principle of creation. It might appear to be an exaggerated version, but one cannot deny that the conduct of the king influences the behaviour of his subjects considerably. The principle of political righteousness is extended to include the concept of world ruler or *chakravartin*. The attributes of this ruler comprise not only the universal supremacy and successful administration at home and abroad, but also and above all righteousness. With regard to internal administration, righteousness connotes reciprocal love and affection between the ruler and his subjects. In the sphere of foreign relations, the chakravarti's conquest of the kingdom is achieved not by force but by righteousness. The principles of righteousness means; right views, right intention, right speech, right actions, right livelihood, right effort, right mindedness etc.

Check Your Progress 4

Note: i)   Use the space below for your answer.

   ii)   See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1)   Why is the king in Buddhist literature called Mahajanasammata?

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2)   Give a brief account of the nature of the working of Buddhist sanghas.

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3)   Explain the concepts of righteousness.

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6.6   CONTRIBUTION OF MUSLIM RULE TO INDIAN POLITICAL TRADITIONS

Islamic contribution to Indian political thought can be seen during the medieval period. Though the Muslim rulers derived legitimacy for their authority from the Kalipha, they had to come to terms with the local reality in which all the diktat of a theocratic state could not be practiced. Here again, like the Hindu political thought, there is no text exclusively on politics. However, two important works written in the medieval ages throw some light on the political ideas of Muslim rulers. Among them are *Tarik-I-Firoz* of Ziauddin Barni and these works can be discussed under three heads, namely, nature of sate, divinity of kingship and the duties of the king.

6.6.1   Nature of State

It can safely be said that the atleast in theory, the state was theocratic in nature. The ruler adopted dual policy one for his co-religious subjects and another for the non-Muslim. It was the duty of the state to protect the life and property of the Muslims but the non-Muslims had to pay special tax called 'Jizya' to ensure their safety in the sate. Another important characteristics of the state during were that the state was identified with royalty.

According to Abul Fazal "no dignity is higher in the eyes of the God than royalty". A king was considered as the origin of stability and possession. If royalty did not exist, the storm of strife would never subside, nor would selfish ambition disappear. People do not obey the laws of the state if there is no king, and his presence makes the people abstain from violence for fear of being punished.

6.6.2 Divinity of the King

Ain-I-Akbari describes the king as the light emanating from God, and a ray from the sun, the illuminator of the universe. It is the divine light which communicates from God to the kings without the intermediate assistance of anyone. Many excellent qualities flow from the possession of this light. They are:

1) A paternal love towards subjects

2) A large heart

3) Increasing trust in god

4) Prayer and devotion

6.6.3 Duties of the King

The important duties of the king are:

a) To ensure the safety and security of the life and properties of subjects

b) Punishing those who violate norms of the state

c) Impart justice to all without favour

d) Protect the state from external aggression

e) The king has to lead the people by personal example. Upon his conduct depends the efficacy of any course of action.

f) The king should abstain from four things; excessive devotion to hunting, incessant play, inebriety night and day, and constant intercourse with women.

g) The king should avoid falsehood as, it is improper in all men, and most unseemly in monarchs.

h) The king should be ever intent on conquest, otherwise his neighbours rise in arms against him.

i) The king should always keep his army on its toes, lest from want of training they become self-indulgent.

Abul Fazal's *Ain-I-Akbari* distinguishes between two types of king; the true king and the selfish king. It is said that both have in common, treasury, army, servants, obedient subjects, wise men and multitude of skilful workmen. Under the reign of the true king, these things are lasting. He does not attach himself to these things, as his goal is to remove oppression and truth, faithfulness and sincerity everywhere. On the contrary, a selfish king attaches too much importance to external forms of royal power; hence, everywhere there is insecurity, lack of faith, oppression and robbery.

Check Your Progress 5

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) Check your answer with that given at the end of the unit.

1) Explain the nature of the state in Indian Islamic literature.

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2) Discuss in brief the nature and duties of the king found in medieval literature.

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6.7 LET US SUM UP

To sum up, the study of the evolution of Indian political thought was neglected for a long time. Many were of the opinion that early India did not contribute anything to the development of political thought. However, Indian political thought has its own distinguishing features. It is closely linked to religion, social structure, ethics so much so that it becomes extremely difficult to distinguish the political from others spheres of thought. Though Indian political thought is often equated with Hindu political thought, there were other non-Brahminical traditions which contributed to the evolution of political thought in India. Buddhists, Jains and later Muslims came out with their own notions of good government, its duties and obligations etc. It is true that early Indian thinkers did not develop political philosophy as an autonomous discipline. To answer the question as to why they did not develop a systematic tradition of philosophy requires a critical examination of the Indian social structure and a comparison with the social structure of classical Athens where the tradition of political philosophy made its first appearance.

6.8 KEY WORDS

Nationalist Historians : Indian Historians who wrote about Indian history with a presumption that India as a nation existed since the ancient period

Varna : Society in ancient India was devided into four categories of Varnas. They were Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras

Ashrama : Four stages in the life of an individual, especially the members of the upper varna. They are: *Brahmacharya* (practice of celibacy) *Grihastha* (married life) *Vanaprastha* (withdrawing from married life) and *Sanyasa* (complete detachment from worldly life)

Varnasharmadharma	:	Duties prescribed for four varnas and the four ashramas
Monarchy	:	Rule by a single king
Ganasamgha	:	Assembly of people. Basically, Buddhist socio-religious organisations which have been described by many historians as a form of government equivalent to republics
Vedic literature	:	It means the four Vedas Rig. Sama, Yazur and Atharva
Dharmastras	:	Codes of conduct to be practiced by the people. Men of authority on the basis of Sruti, which means revelation, write them
Arthasastra	:	Branch of knowledge, which deals with the acquisition and maintenance of earth. It is also the title of the work of Kautilya
Matsyanyaya	:	Law of the fish in which big fish swallow the smaller ones
Mahajanasammata	:	Literally means one who is accepted by all. The Buddhist king was called Mahajanasammata
Jatakas	:	Texts on Buddhist philosophy written in the form of stories.

6.9 SOME USEFUL REFERENCES

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6.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

1) See sub-section 6.2.2

2) See sub-section 6.2.3

3) See sub-section 6.2.4

Check Your Progress 2

1)   See sub-section 6.3

2)   See sub-section 6.3.1

Check Your Progress 3

1)   See sub-section 6.4.1 to 6.4.7

2)   See sub-section 6.4.8

Check Your Progress 4

1)   See sub-section 6.5

2)   See sub-section 6.5.1

Check Your Progress 5

1)   See sub-section 6.6.1

2)   See sub-section 6.6.2