



ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
Impact Factor: 5.2
IJAR 2018; 4(1): 628-630
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 08-11-2017
Accepted: 10-12-2017

Namdev K Mang
Assistant Professor,
Department of History, Govt.
First Grade College, Ainapur,
Belagavi, Karnataka, India

A critical examination of the governance during the gupta period

Namdev K Mang

Abstract

In contrast to the Mauryas, the Gupta administration was not centralised. This was the case even while the king retained complete authority over all aspects of government, but he also distributed authority to officials and regional rulers throughout India. The kingship was passed down through families, but there was no established primogeniture system, therefore the power of the royal family was constrained. In contrast to the Mauryas, the kings of the Gupta dynasty gave themselves pretentious names, such as Maharaja-Dhiraja, Parameshvara, and Paramabhataraka, to reflect the fact that they ruled over kings of less power. It would appear that the empire is composed of separate Bhuktis (province). After then, the Bhuktis were separated into Vishyas (districts). Gramika presided over the administrative affairs of the village. Their political structure has characteristics that are reminiscent of feudalism in several respects.

Keywords: Power, the Mauryas, the gupta and administration

Introduction

The rule of the Gupta family is considered to be the dividing line between the country's past and future traditions of polity and government. It is not an exaggeration to say that the Gupta administration served as the model for the fundamental administrative framework, both in theory and in reality, for the entirety of the early mediaeval period in the history of India. Gupta kings abandoned the humble title of Rajan in favour of the grand surrounding style that was popularised by the Kushanas. Gupta rulers also adopted the high surrounding style. The most prominent example of such a title was Maharajadhiraja, which also appeared in a number of different forms throughout history. In the historical records of North Bengal, the Gupta kings are given a trilogy of titles known as Paramadaivata Paramabhataraka Maharajadhiraja. This was then adopted as the characteristic designation of paramount monarchs in subsequent eras. In addition to this, the Guptas bestowed upon themselves other epithets, proclaiming that they possessed superhuman abilities that elevated them nearly to the status of gods. In point of fact, the inscription on the Allahabad Pillar describes Samudragupta as a divinity who inhabited our planet. Although they are in many ways a reformulation of the already prevalent notions, all of the smritis that were written during this time period place a continuous emphasis on one characteristic of royalty: its super-human status. The Guptas maintained the conventional apparatus of bureaucratic administration, using nomenclature that was for the most part copied or appropriated from earlier eras. It is clear that the mantri (also known as the high minister), whose office is mentioned in Kautilya's Arthashastra, presided over the administration of the civil government. Other senior imperial officers included the Mahabaladhikrta, who had the title of commander-in-chief, the Mahadandanayaka, who was a general, and the Mahapratihara, who was the highest ranking official (chief of the place guards). The Mahabaladhikrta, whose role probably corresponded to that of the Mahasenapati of the Satavahana kings, exercised command over a staff or subordinate officers, including the mahashvapati (head of cavalry), the Mahapilupati (officer in charge of elephants), the Senapati, and the Baladhikrta. In a similar vein, the office of the Mahadandanayaka can be traced all the way back to the period of the Kushana. Sandhivigrahika was a high-ranking officer who was mentioned for the first time in Gupta archives. Despite this, he was destined to have a long and successful career (the foreign minister).

Correspondence
Namdev K Mang
Assistant Professor,
Department of History, Govt.
First Grade College, Ainapur,
Belagavi, Karnataka, India

Officers such as the Kumaramatyas and Ayuktas were responsible for acting as a link between the central government and the administration of the provinces while the Guptas were in power. The Gupta army was led by Kumaramatyas, who was considered to be its most significant officer. They were most likely compensated in cash for their services, as the king had nominated them in their home province to serve in that capacity. In a similar fashion, the Ayuktas were given the responsibility of reestablishing the wealth of kings whose territories had been captured by the emperor, and they were also occasionally put in command of regions or metropolitan towns. The officers of the Ashokan empire known as Pradeshikas or the Uparikas, who were equivalent to princes of royal blood, were often in charge of the administration of the provinces known as bhuktis.

When the essential business in connection with the sale of government lands was sometimes carried out by Kumaramatyas or other officers of comparable rank in cooperation with the Municipal Board-Adhishthanadhikarana or the District Office-Vishayadhikarana or the Asthakuladhikarana — possibly the Rural Board — a careful examination of the inscriptions found in north Bengal reveals this information. According to the entire examples, the Municipal Board is supposed to be made up of four members: the guild president, named Nagarasresthi, the chief merchant, named Sarthavaha, the chief craftsman, named Prathamakulika, and the chief scribe, named Prathamakayastha. It is not known what the exact significance of the Rural Board is; but, according to one account, it was led by the village elders (also known as Mahattaras) and comprised both the village headman (also known as Ramika) and the householders (also known as Kutumbins). The tales of seals that were unearthed from the site of ancient Vaishali reveal that the District and Municipal Boards were also functioning in north Bihar while the Guptas were in power there.

The precise nature of this administrative structure that was established by the Guptas needs to be understood against the backdrop of the socio-economic organisation that existed during this time period. The Gupta age was a period of economic expansion that was supported by grants of land to ambitious Brahmins in the virgin regions in central India and the Deccan. This occurred despite the fact that the volume of international trade decreased during this time. Additionally, during this time period, there was a discernible increase in the amount of privately owned land that was acknowledged by the legal texts as well as attested by actual sales and purchases of land. The quantity of gold coins is an indication of the ruling class's affluence. [Citation needed] [Citation needed] The use of gold as money encouraged merchants and wealthy artisans, whose guilds played a major role in Gupta administration and the economy. The Guptas were forced to develop a specific system of relationship with the lesser governing houses that the Guptas had conquered since it was important for them to maintain control over the vast regions they had taken control of. These circumstances and the effects they had on the Gupta administration ultimately led to the decentralised structure of the Gupta government.

During the time of the Gupta, there was a substantial shift in how various responsibilities were carried out by the royal authority. The fact that lower rulers in the Gupta empire were given grandiose titles notwithstanding the Gupta

emperors' adoption of those names suggests that there were such kings. A few of the nations that the Guptas conquered were allowed to maintain a level of subordinate independence under their rule.

With the exception of north Bengal, Bihar, and UP, practically the rest of the empire was held by feudatories such as the Parivrajaka and Uccakalpa princes. These feudatories fulfilled their obligations to the emperor by simply offering homage, paying tributes, and presenting their daughters in marriage to him. North Bengal, Bihar, and UP were the exceptions to this rule. In later periods, the so-called Parivrajaka maharajas made it a practise to hand out their land concessions while the Gupta emperors were in the midst of enjoying their power. The major feudatories of the Guptas steadily gained influence as the empire declined, and they actually rose on the ashes of the empire in order to establish their separate kingdoms. The Guptas' ability to exercise their royal authority to its full potential was likely significantly hampered by the existence of these feudatories. On the other hand, one can hypothesise that a sizeable proportion of the Gupta army must have been comprised of the troops that were supplied by the feudatories. This is a reasonable assumption to make. The state was no longer able to maintain its monopoly on the ownership of horses and elephants, and these animals eventually found their way into the hands of private persons. Although land grants include quite a few officials, the number of officers connected with the fiscal and economic operations was not quite as vast as it was during the time of the Maurya. However, the most important feature of the Gupta bureaucracy was that, in contrast to its Mauryan equivalent, it was simpler and had a lower level of organisation. This made it possible for individuals to hold multiple offices at the same time and for positions to be passed down via families. The direct royal power over the administrative apparatus was naturally diminished as a result of the confluence of all of these elements.

The Satavahanas of the Deccan are credited with initiating the practise of granting fiscal and administrative immunities to priests and temples during the Gupta period. This was another key feudal development that occurred during this time period. However, what set out the land charters issued during the Gupta period was the administrative powers that were given to the recipients of the grants. They were free from interference of any kind, which is something that can be found in the Satavahana charters as well. In other words, they were granted the authority to exercise magisterial and police powers over the people who resided in the village that had been handed to them. In actuality, the beneficiaries were the only ones who were responsible for the administration of the lands that were allocated to them. Additionally, the beneficiaries exerted a stabilising influence over the rural communities by instructing them in the responsibilities associated with the various castes and penances. The Gupta monarchs did not require as many officials to run the empire as the Mauryan emperors did since a significant portion of imperial administration was administered by feudatories, beneficiaries, and other local components. As a result, the Guptas did not have a requirement for and did not have the capacity for an elaborate bureaucracy of the Mauryan type. In spite of the power of the Gupta Emperors, the institutional factors moving toward decentralisation were significantly more powerful during the time of the Guptas.

In general, the Gupta administration maintained a high level of organisational efficiency. The decentralisation of the administration, however, begins to show signs of weakness almost immediately after Chandragupta II passes away. The feudal lords or chiefs in each domain established their suzerainty, and as a direct consequence, they quickly gained control of the centre of power. In actuality, the history of the time after the Gupta dynasty is the history of feudal lords. The designation of Gupta officials remained even after the Gupta empire had been destroyed, which might be viewed as a good aspect of this phenomenon. The Gupta administrative system was recognised and adopted by the Early Kalacuriyas, the Chalukyas of Badami, the Rashtrakutas of Malkhed, and the Western Chalukyas of Kalyani.

References

1. Fleet JF. Inscriptions of the Early Gupta kings, London, 1888, chap. 2, 3.
2. Mazumdar RC, Altekar AS. The vakataka- Gupta Age, Banaras, 1954.
3. Goyal SR. The History of the Imperial Guptas, Allahabad, 1962.
4. Giles HA.(tr), The Travels of Fahien or records of Buddhistic kingdom, Cambridge, 1933.
5. Dikshitar VRR. The Gupta Polity, 1952.
6. Altekar AS. State and Government in Ancient India, Delhi, 1949.
7. Majumdar RC (ed). The Classical Age, Bombay, 1947.