

KINGDOMS, KINGS AND AN EARLY REPUBLIC

CLASS-6

HISTORY

Module:1/2

Key Points

- ✓ How some men became rulers.
- ✓ The Ashvamedha
- ✓ The Raja and Priests.
- ✓ Varna System
- ✓ Imp features
- ✓ Opposition
- ✓ Janapadas
- ✓ Mahajanapadas



Choosing leaders by voting in the modern
Democracy

How did men become rulers in the
past ? Any idea....

HOW RAJAS WERE CHOSEN AROUND 3000 YEARS AGO.

- By performing very big Sacrifices.
- The ashvamedha or horse sacrifice was one such ritual.

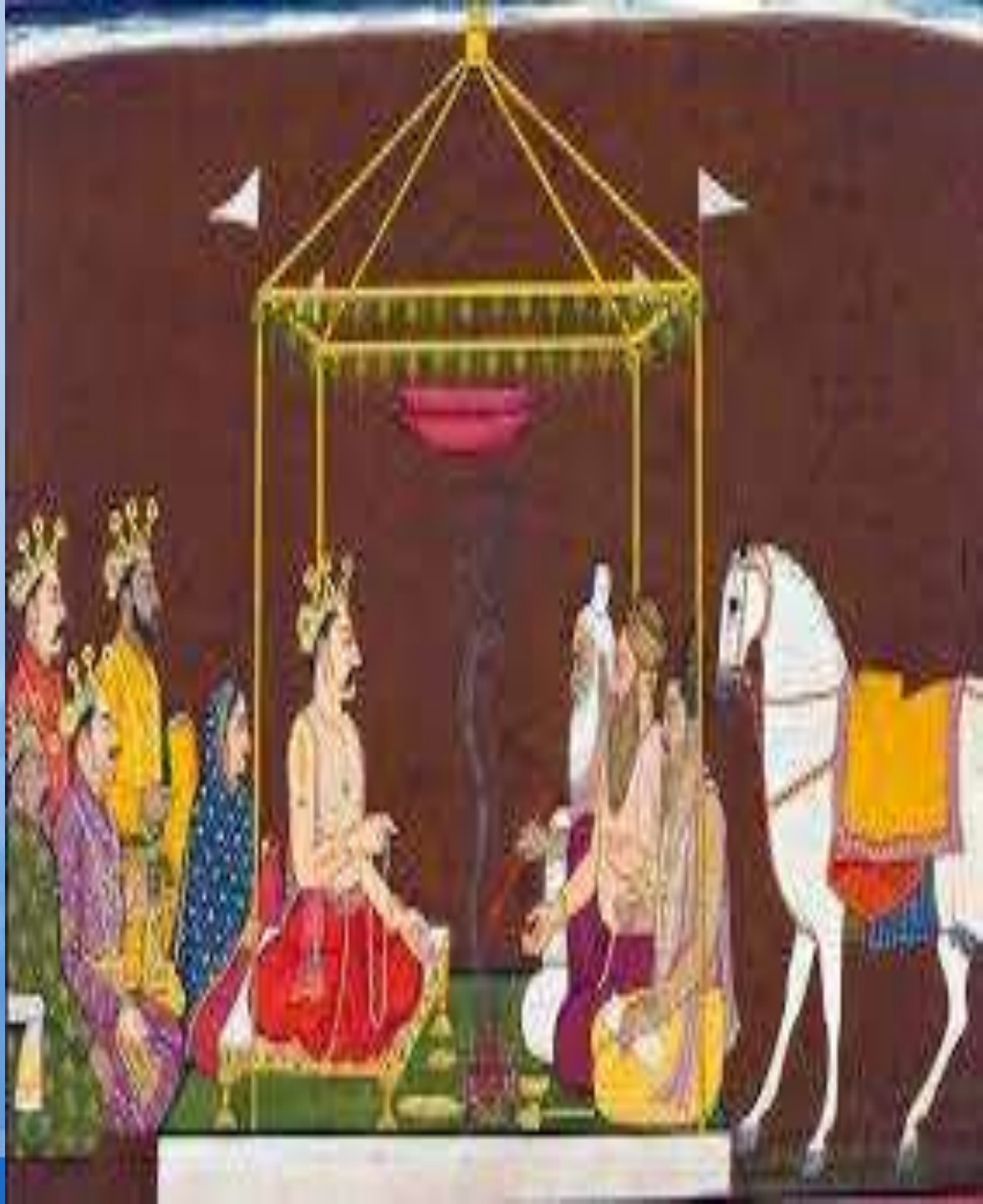
Ashvamedha



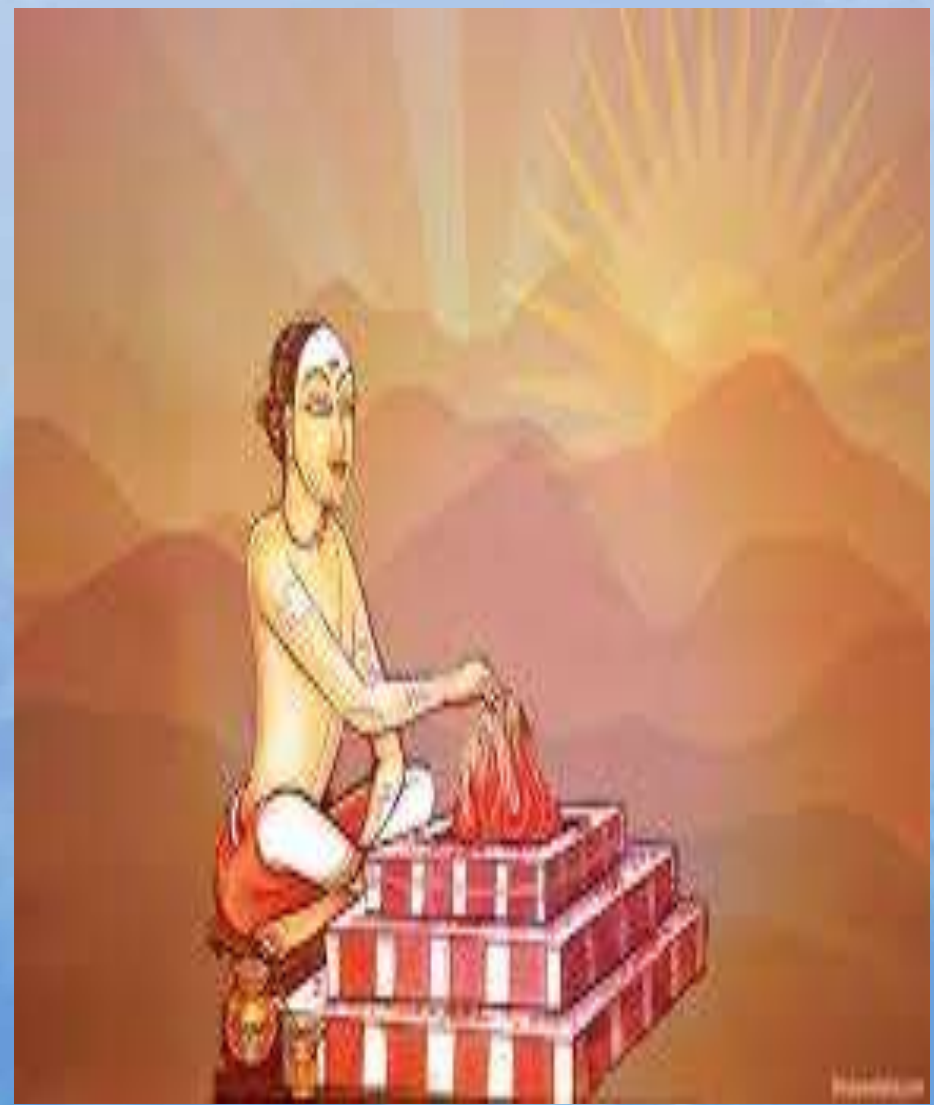
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The Ashvamedha

- ✓ It was used by the ancient Indian rulers to prove their sovereignty.
- ✓ A horse was let loose to wander freely.
- ✓ It was guarded by the raja's men.
- ✓ If the horse wandered into the kingdoms of other rajas and stopped by them....
- ✓ They had to fight.
- ✓ If they allowed, they accepted that the raja who wanted to perform the sacrifice was powerful than them
- ✓ The raja who organised the sacrifice was recognised as very powerful.



The Raja and Priest



The Raja

- Central figure in the rituals.
- Had a throne or a tiger skin.
- Had a charioteer, who was his companion in the battle field and witnessed his exploits, chanted tales of his glory.
- His wives and sons had to perform a variety of minor rituals.
- Priests perform the rituals.

Varna System

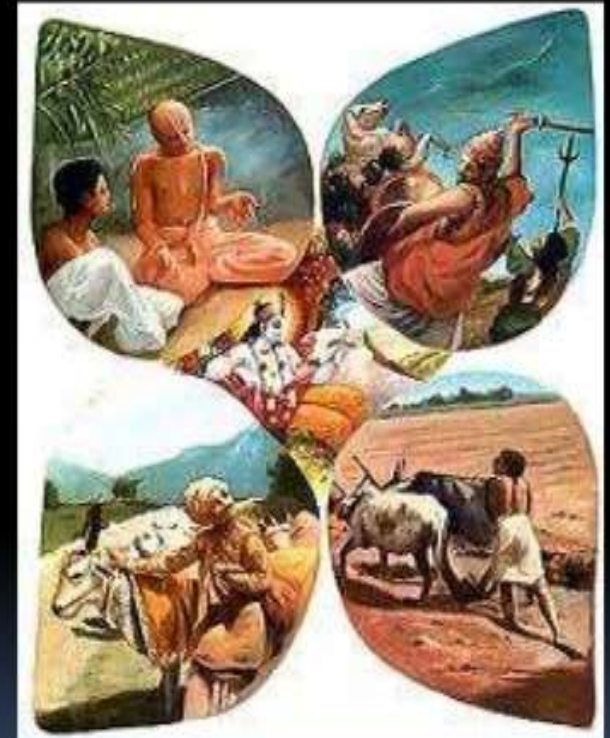
- There were several different groups in society at that time.
- Example- priests, warriors, farmers, traders....
- The priests divided people into four groups called varnas. Those four groups were
 - The Brahmin
 - The rulers or Kshatriyas
 - The Vaishyas
 - The Shudras
- Each varna had a different set of functions.

The Varna System

S.No	Varna	Role
1	The Brahmin	Study the Vedas, perform sacrifices
2	The Kshatriyas	To fight battles and protect people
3	The Vaishyas	To be farmers,herders and traders.
4	The Shudras	To serve the other three groups.

The four classes of Varna

1. Brahmin
2. Kshatriyas
3. Vaishya
4. Shudra



Imp features of Varna system

- This system was based on the basis of birth.
- Women were not allowed to study the Vedas.
- Classified some people as untouchable.
- These included craft persons, hunters and gatherers and people who perform burials and cremations.

The Varna System-opposition

- **Many people did not accept the system of Varna.**
- **They felt that birth could not be a basis for deciding Varna.**
- **Some kings thought that they were superior to the priests.**
- **Some people felt that there should be no differences based on occupation.**
- **Some people condemned the practice of untouchability.**

Janapadas

- **The word Janapada is a combination of two words-**
- **Jana means people**
- **Pada means foot**
- **Means the land where the people set their foot.**
- **The Rajas who performed big sacrifices were now recognised as rajas of janapadas.**

Janapada

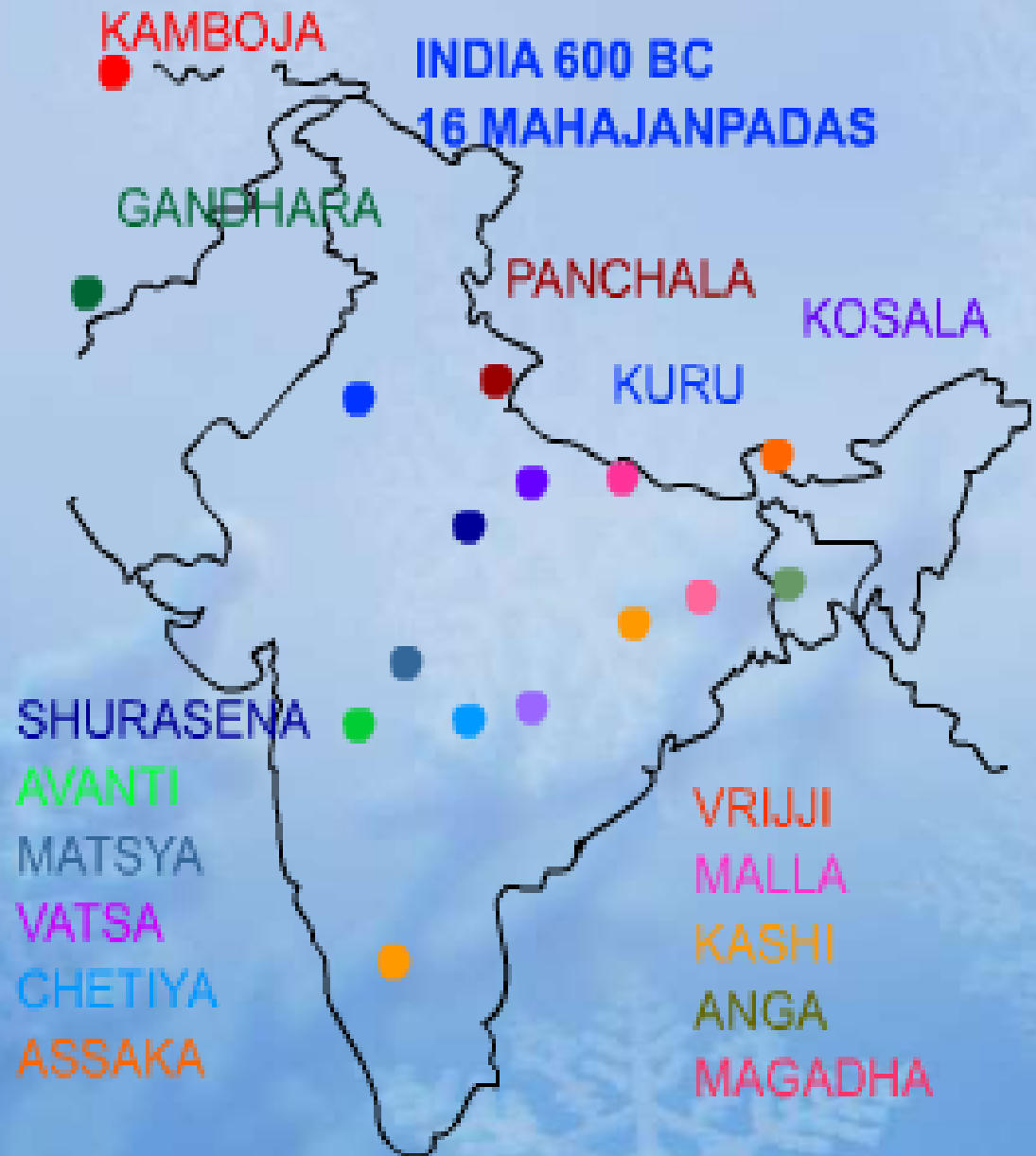


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Mahajanapadas

- ✓ About 2500 years ago, some janapadas became larger and more powerful than others.
- ✓ These were known as Mahajanapadas.
- ✓ Most mahajanapadas had
 - Capital City
 - Huge walls of wood, brick or stone
 - Fortified.





THANK YOU