

Kautilya : Saptanga, Dharma, And Mandala

CHITTARANJAN ROY

Introduction

(Kautilya's *Arthashastra* is singularly the most important text in ancient Indian political thought. It was discovered in 1904 and was translated into German by Jacobi in 1909. Later, Jolly translated it into English which was followed by R. Shamasastri's translation.¹ T. Ganapati Sastri² who discovered yet another text edited and translated it into English with critical notes and a thought-provoking introduction. Kangle³ studied all the available manuscripts and brought out a critical edition in his three-volume project. All these endeavours by eminent Indologists aroused much interest in the history of ancient Indian political thought.

(*Arthashastra* contains 32 paragraphical divisions. It has 15 *adhikaranas* (sections) with 180 *prakaranas* (sub-sections).) Book I to Book XV deal with the discipline, training and duties of the King, principles for the exercise of *danda*, qualifications of the ministers, spies, bureaucratic set-up of the administrative organisation of the state, duties and responsibilities of the officials, planning of forts and fortified towns, the revenue system, industrial establishments including state monopoly centres, the regulation and promotion of trade and commerce, civil laws, administration and justice, criminal law and suppression of anti-social elements, action against sedition and treason, measures


peasants to gather the harvests annually. The cultivators comprised the most numerous class in the society, on account of agricultural prosperity and as the continuation of traditional socio-economic factors. Most of the houses in the cities were situated on the banks of the rivers or on the sea-coast, were built of wood, as these were meant to be temporarily being liable to the ravages of floods and rains. There were palaces, workshops, store-houses, arsenals, temples, shrines, prisons and other structures. Civic precaution against fire with vessels in their thousands were kept at the ready. Arson, says Kautilya, was punishable by the burning alive of the culprit. Security of life and property was fully maintained in urban and rural areas by the proper administration of Chandragupta Maurya. Theft was a rare occurrence, houses were generally left unlocked and unguarded.

Almost all parts of India were knit together by active links of business and commerce. The best possible use, to further trade and commerce, was made of navigable rivers. Boats laden with cotton and silk goods, spices, indigo, sandalwood, were exported to Syria, Egypt and other countries via plying up from Ganga to Champa to Varanasi, and further to Sahajati. Likewise, the boat traffic up the Yamuna reached up to Kausambi and thence joined the land route to Sind and Sauvira. Octroi was charged at the gates of the cities. The country-produce was also subject to octroi upon entry. The prices of everyday commodities were declared and checked daily. All weights and measures were subject to inspection, routine as well as surprise checks. There was brisk trade activity all over the kingdom. Wood-work, ivory-carving, stone-cutting, hard-stone polishing, pearl and diamond setting attained high level of perfection in the Mauryan period.

The economic conditions and status of the working classes, particularly the labourers, were definitely better in the Kautilyan society. As a *brahmana*, Kautilya regarded and recognised the institution of *varnashramadharma* (sanctifying the division of ancient society into four *varnas*), but he laid down liberal rules that assured the lower classes an equitable place in

to combat a financial crisis, essential characteristics of the state, the six-fold political expedients in the field of diplomacy in inter-state circles, measures against calamities, natural disasters, dangers and catastrophies, military campaigns and ancillary problems, economic guilds and political corporations—measures for their control, methods of intrigue and the employment of secret agencies against aggressive enemies, secret recipes for the destruction of enemies, and others designed to remedy afflictions caused by enemy action, and finally, the glossary of thirty-two technical and political terms and verbal contractions used in the text.⁴

(Kautilya's masterly treatment of political and economic ideologies makes it abundantly clear that the science of statecraft must have developed over a long period; the subject must have been assiduously studied even before Kautilya's time. Also, Kautilya does not take the credit of being a pioneer in evolving the science of polity; rather, he is frank enough to make an unequivocal admission of having collected and compiled the then prevalent theories of earlier masters, presenting at the same time his own views on them from the standpoint of political and social ^{advantages} expediciencies.) Compared with the preceding period of invasion and turmoil, the Mauryan era, commencing with the reign of Chandragupta Maurya, was distinguished by affluence, with the social life richer in content, and diversified, as shown in the interests of the nobility and the people. The common people, hardly affected by the fatalism and pessimism aired in the religious literature of the time, evinced a pronounced liking for the good things of life. Both men and women loved finery in dress, expensive costumes, and jewellery. A robust zest for life was reflected in the architecture and literature of the period. We gather from the *Arthashastra* that peace and prosperity prevailed throughout the empire of Chandragupta Maurya is fully testified by the contemporary accounts of Megasthenes and other Greek writers. The affluence was due primarily to the fertility of the land and its great mineral wealth. Due to the profusion of river-streams it consequently resulted into the growth of various kinds of cereals and plants useful for food. The double rainfall enabled the



originated when people got ^{weary} of the law of the fish (*matsyanyaya*). They selected Manu to be their king. It was settled that the king should receive one-sixth of the grain and one-tenth of the merchandise and of gold as his due share. This revenue enabled the king to ensure the security and well-being of the subjects.)

Kautilya nowhere exactly defines the state, but frankly adopts the time-honoured seven elements of the state in the Indian tradition. Like human body, the body-politic is supposed to possess various limbs (*angas*). Every element is supposed to be at par in importance with others; but their importance depends upon the achievements obtained by them. It is evident from Kautilya's account of the state that (the king exercised political authority; the officials advised him on matters of administration; the king ruled over his territory from a fortified capital; the treasury and the army ensured stability and security of his rule; and the allies helped him keep the kingdom safe) The fact that deserves mention is that at another place in *Arthashastra*, Kautilya, as he discusses the troubles of the king, reduces the seven elements of state to two primary elements—the king and his kingdom. (For him, the king symbolizes sovereignty and the kingdom constituted the most important elements of state.⁵)

(The most important function of the state, according to Kautilya, is the protection of the *dharma* and the territory of the state. It was to maintain internal social peace and protection against foreign invasion.⁶)

(The state supported the poor, the orphans, the aged, the helpless, the infirm, the pregnant women and the newly born babies.⁷ It even looked into and prescribed the conditions of divorce, separation and second marriage. To take care of the physical and moral health of society, it controlled public entertainment, including gambling and regulated sanitation and hygiene of the city and the countryside.⁸ The villages and the cities were to be built according to plan. Every house was to have a dunghill and an outlet for sewerage. Market quarters and quarters for different professional classes were demarcated in the city. Throwing of garbage on the roads was an offence. Dumping of carcass or

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society. While conceding the social precedence of the *brahmanas*, Kautilya was conscious of the fundamental rights of the *shudras*. Following the canons of the Buddhist legislators, Kautilya subjected even *brahmanas* to capital punishment and raised the social and legal status of the *shudras* in the society by allowing them to testify in the courts. Kautilya also, had laid down strict rules to protect the skilled artisans and workmen to allow talent grow and flourish in the country. He also promulgated regulations to protect the children of slaves. It was his clear pronouncement that never shall an Aryan be subjected to slavery.

Thus there is no doubt that the *Arthashastra's* reflection of reality is fairly complex, as the *shastras* primarily give us an idea how Indians themselves viewed their society and the state; it is only from this standpoint that one can assess the features of social and political relations in ancient India. The traditions reflected in the legal chapters of the treatise show us a unity and consistency of the themes and evidently recreate a more detailed and truthful general picture of life in ancient Indian polity. *Arthashastra's* legal chapters are no code of laws, but a generalisation of common law and its presentation in the spirit of a definite political doctrine, probably with an eye to the practices of royal legal administration. Details of the *Arthashastra's* legal regulations are possibly of little consequence today; what is important is the principles of ancient Indian legal thought. A study of the terminology and contents of the appropriate chapters helps define the socio-legal structure in ancient India and, in certain measure, the socio-economic structure, too.

The essence of Kautilya's teaching was the promotion of a more scientific statecraft, best illustrated in his pronouncements on diplomacy and inter-state relations, which have a historical value till today.)

State In Kautilya's Arthashastra

On the origin of the state, Kautilya has not said anything explicitly. But incidentally he makes a remark suggesting that he accepts the social contract theory. In the course of a dialogue he says that the state

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originated when people got ^{weary} of the law of the fish (matsyanyaya). They selected Manu to be their king. It was settled that the king should receive one-sixth of the grain and one-tenth of the merchandise and of gold as his due share. This revenue enabled the king to ensure the security and well-being of the subjects.)

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dead bodies on roads was a grave offence. Special routes were prescribed for carrying away a dead body. Regular scavenging was provided. To safeguard the health of the citizens it was provided that "adulteration of grains, oils, alkalies, salt, medicines and scents was to be punished with a fine of 12 panas."⁹ The physicians were there in the city and countryside to control spread of diseases and to treat patients. They were to report about any patient suffering from serious sores, and doctors were punished, if because of their neglect, patient suffered death or any loss of a limb due to defective surgical operation.¹⁰

The state ran a few important industries such as those which manufactured weapons. Forests were developed and managed by a state agency. The elephant forest was a state monopoly and dairy farming also was a state enterprise. The state, however, need not be mistaken for a socialist state, for it allowed a fairly large scope to private enterprise and many industries were run by private industrialists also.¹¹ Thus, the state and private enterprise ran side by side, and the economy could be called a mixed one. However, (the state interfered in the working of enterprises with a view to preventing loss of production, increasing production and safeguarding the interests of the consumers. It goes without saying that, because of its ownership of industries and farms, the state became a big employer. It intervened to protect the work against the guilty labourers. The state also regulated the trade keeping in view the welfare of the country. To promote trade, the state established market towns, and fixed the market hours.)

Kautilya accepted the best form of social insurance in the joint-family system and enforced the law that the head of the family was to look after the dependents. He was equally mindful of the health of the citizens, and his social insurance scheme covered the physical health of the subjects.¹³

(The ends of the state, according to Kautilya, are not merely maintenance of peace and order or protection of the people, but to enable the individual to attain highest self-development. The state partakes practically

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the nature of a welfare state of today.¹⁴ According to Kautilya, the most important function of the state is promotion of the welfare of the people.) Kautilya emphasizes this function in a *sutra* which reads : "In the happiness of the subjects lies the happiness of the king and what is beneficial to the subjects is his own benefit."¹⁵ In order to establish the primacy of this function, Kautilya even compares it with the performance of a religious sacrifice. In a later context in the *Arthashastra*, he further stresses the supreme importance of this function, (stating that "strength is power, and happiness is the end."¹⁶ Kautilya thus brought into relief the functions of a welfare state.)

Saptanga Theory Of State

(The organic theory of state—the stock-in-trade of political theorists in the West—also finds a place in the *Arthashastra*. (The seven constituent elements, limbs or *prakritis* were known to political writers in ancient India) Since these constituents were regarded more as limbs, (the theory concerning these was designated as the *saptanga* theory of state. The two epics—the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* as also *Manu-smriti*, *Yajnavalkya-smriti*, *Kamandaka-smriti*, *Sukraniti*—have all discussed the *saptanga* theory accordingly. But talking about *sapta prakriti*, i. e., the seven elements of the state, viz., swami, amatya, janapada, durga, kosha, danda and mitra Kautilya has explained in depth, with details of relative importance of all.) He holds the state is not a loose assemblage of parts, each has its own interests and moves at its own will and is characterised by an organic unity.

In Kautilya's analysis, swami occupies a very exalted position in the entire classification of the state. (An ideal *swami* is a native of the territory and a noble by birth; he inspires confidence in others, and is easily approachable, truthful and pious, has a sharp intellect, and possesses such other qualities as bravery, quickness of decision and strength of mind.¹⁷) Crudely, the ruler can be said to be the sovereign but in a limited sense. The ruler is a person superior to others (Being a personal element of the state, the *swami* is the most important

element. He is some kind of a living entity of all the elements of the state.) The rise and fall of the *prakritis* very much depended on the King as they were all guided and moulded by him. The king is the root of the tree of state; the ministry is the trunk, the military chiefs are branches, the army are the leaves and the subjects are its flowers; prosperity of the country its fruits; and the whole country, the final seed. (The *swami* appointed ministers, departmental heads, different officials, dispelled the cloud of misfortune befalling the *prakritis*, helped them in calamities and solved their difficulties by taking them to the path of progress. Kautilya emphasizes time and again that the *swami* should protect the people, save the weak) from being exploited by the strong, extend treatment to *brahmanas*, *kshatriyas*, *vaishyas* and *shudras* as per *dharma*; (must have the knowledge of war, politics and diplomacy) should unfailingly uphold the *dharma* or law; in all cases must defend and guard the state against hostile forces; should definitely enforce the *dandaniti* to curb the anti-social elements and law-violators; (must rightfully appoint the honest, dedicated and faithful ministers;) should prudently and gradually increase the resources of the state; must take care of his *durgas* or forts, *nagaras*, *janapadas* and *rashtra* (and above all should do all other things for all round progress of the people as well as the state. A very special duty of the *swami* was to keep his *samantas* under control) and Kautilya counts it as one of the parts of *abhi-gāṃika* virtue of the King. (According to him, the *swami* should live in such a territory, where the *samanta* chiefs have been subjugated.) *Swami* had to suppress the hostile *samantas* (*dusta samanta*); and it was his solemn oath of ordeal (*āgneyavrata*) that *samantas* had to obey *swami's* orders, though they enjoyed considerable amount of freedom in the management of a territory's internal affairs.

(To sum up, *swami* had to run the administration of the state according to the prescribed *dandaniti* and prevailing customs and traditions. He had to take care of all the *prakritis* (constituents) of the state by framing rules separately for each one of them.)

(The second of seven *prakritis* is *amatya*. Kautilya states that a ruler, however, competent or powerful, cannot run the administration all alone. So in order to be successful, a king has to employ ministers and listen to their opinions. The term *amatya* appears to stand for all high officers whether they are councillors or executive heads.) But at some places in the *Arthashastra*, the term *amatya* appears to be chiefly restricted to the chief minister who is in-charge of the entire administration and is, in fact, in a position to be the king-maker. ¹⁸ Such an *amatya* is evidently the same as *mantrin* who is the second highest dignitary in the state. The importance of *amatya* to the *swami* had been widely acknowledged not only by Kautilya but by many other political theorists like *Manu*, *Yājñyavalkya*, *Shukra*, *Bhārdvaja*, *Bhishma* in the *Mahabharata*, etc.) Kautilya draws a simile saying that as a carriage with one wheel cannot move, in the same way (without the services of the competent councillors and ministers the king also cannot conduct the state affairs.) The assistants employed by the *swami* were called the *sāhayāk*, who shared the burden of the *swami* in protecting his subjects.) One of them was the prime minister, known as the *pradhānāmātya* or *mahāmātya* or *amātya-mukhya*, who was appointed to look after the people. (He was supposed to be noble, learned and well-versed in *dharmashastra*. Those, who were found wise, brave, diplomatic, enthusiastic, efficient, honest, tolerant, farsighted, loyal and faithful to the king and the state, were appointed as ministers.) They were also supposed to enjoy the confidence of the *paura-janapada*. (One of their essential virtues was to maintain secrecy about war and politics and internal affairs of the state.) It was also expected of them to be worthy of offering secret advice to the *swami*. (The safety of the state, raising of army, suppression of hostile forces, maintenance of income and expenditure, protection of princes and their coronation, etc, entirely depended on them.) If they deviated from the right path or in case they let themselves down, the state had to face the danger. (The *mātyas* thus have been called the heart and soul of the king.) Kautilya admits and lays down that (everything

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depends on *amātyas*. All the works relating to the agriculture and forts, king and the state, establishment of the colonies and their progress, punishment of the ~~culprits~~, collection of state taxes, the growth of the *janapada*, etc., are performed by the *amātyas*.)

Kautilya has divided the *amātyas* or *mantrins* into three categories according to their qualities. Firstly, those who were of indigenous origin, noble family, firm determination and retentive memory, and artistes, economists, wise, clever, orator, powerful, debator, enthusiastic, impressive, charming, tolerant, loyal to the king, gentle, capable, healthy, steadfast, etc., were considered worthy of being the prime-minister. Secondly, those who possessed either one-fourth or half of these qualities were taken as ministers of middle or lower grade. The talents, loyalty, integrity and credibility of both the ministers and *amātyas* were tested, but methods employed were different. The *swami* used to test the former by himself as well as through his colleagues and neighbours (The *swami* employed various secret means with the help of his *mantrins* and *purohitas* to test the conduct of the latter after being appointed. They had to undergo different kinds of tests. Those who passed the test in *dharma* or law, were appointed to look after *dharmasthaniya* (civil court) and *kantakas'odhana* (criminal court). Those who passed the test in economics, were appointed as *samāharta* (tax-collector) and *sannidhāta* (treasurer). Those who were tested in the affairs of *kāma* (sex) were placed at *viharas* (place for enjoyment) and at *harem*. (Those who were found fearless were appointed as bodyguard of the king.) It is really remarkable to note that only those *amātyas* who passed all these tests were appointed as ministers. And thirdly, (those who failed in all the tests were made incharge of different mines, forests, and elephant force, etc.)

Kautilya has provided the following list of 18 different officials who were incharge of different departments: (1) *mantrin* (i.e., adviser), who occupied supreme position among the ministers, (2) *purohita*, (the priestly class or the clergy), (3) *senapati* (minister in charge of the army), (4) *yuvaraja* (the prince) the king's son holding the rank of the minister, (5) *dauvarika* or

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the chief officer functioning as a door-keeper of the palace, (6) *antarvams'ika* or the chief officer to look after the domestic affairs, (7) *pras'astri* or the minister in-charge of prison, (8) *samāharta* or the minister of revenue, (9) *sannidhātri* or the minister of treasury, (10) *pradesta* or in-charge of issuing royal proclamation, (11) *Nāyaka* or the chief army officer, (12) *paura* or the chief administrator of capital cities, (13) *vyāvahārika* or the judge or the chief justice, (14) *kārmāntika* or the officer in-charge of the mines and the factories, (15) *mantri-parishada-adhyaksha* or the president of the council, (16) *danda-pāla* or the minister in-charge of the maintenance of the army, (17) *durga-pāla* or the minister in-charge of *durgas* or forts or officer in-charge of defending the state against the enemies, and (18) *anta-pāla* or minister in-charge of frontiers. The *rājaduta* also found place in the council of ministers. The protection of state also depended on the activities of the spies or officers engaged in the espionage department.

(One of the most significant functions of the ministers was to give secret advice to the king. A very high importance has been attached to this aspect of the subject concerned. The good as well as the secret advice of the ministers not only constituted the basic foundation of the *rashtra* or state of the king, but also paved the way for its growth. It was the duty of the *swami* as well as of his ministers to maintain secrecy about the planning, programme and contemplated action, war and peace, etc., which were decided by them through mutual consultations. The advice of the *amātyas* was like an armour for the *swami*. It was the essence of the statecraft.)

3 (The third prakriti is *janapada*, which literally means population and land. Kautilya points out that the territory of the state should be devoid of rocky, saline, uneven and thorny tracts and be free from wilderness, tigers and wild beasts and abound in fertile lands, timber and elephant forests.¹⁹ It has been suggested by the ancient Indian political writers that the land should be watered by rivers and there should be suitable places for establishing villages and cities and they should be provided with all means of

communication. The people should be industrious and followers of *dharma*.

Kautilya announces that the king has to protect both land and the people from external aggressions. He should make all possible efforts to promote the economic prosperity of the state. The territory inhabited by worthy people and marching towards material prosperity helps to strengthen the position of the king. (Kautilya mentions that the existence of forts, treasury and army absolutely depends on the *janapada*. He considers *janapada* more important than forts.) He, however, does not deny that the existence of one depends on the other : Kautilya has categorically stated that a king either by inviting the people from other countries (*desha* or *rashtra*) or by increasing the population of his own country should revive old *janapada* or create a new one. Each *janapada* should consist of villages with minimum 100 and maximum 500 houses and should be inhabited mostly by the *shudras* and farmers. The distance of one village from the other should not be more than either one or two *krosa* (i.e., 2 or 4 miles), so that they may help each other in necessity. The boundary of a well-settled village should be fixed by planting trees or by rivers, mountains, forests, etc.) Kautilya has further pointed out that it was the duty of *samāharta* to divide the whole *janapada* into four parts, to put it into three categories, i.e., higher, middle and lower and to record their number, production, geographical situation, etc. into his register (He had also to record the details about the villages which were put into three categories, i.e., (a) villages not paying any tax at all, (b) villages from where armed forces were regularly recruited and, (c) villages which paid taxes or tribute in the form of corns, animals, gold, silver, manual labour, etc.) According to Kautilya, forts were erected at the frontiers of *janapadas* under the guidance of *antapāla* for providing security to *rashtra*. Besides, some of the forest tribes like the *sabaras*, *pulindas* and *chāndālas* were assigned the duties of guarding the frontiers of *janapadas*. (The defence of the *rashtra* was a subject of utmost importance for the king not only for his own survival, but also for the well-being of his subjects and for the

prosperity of the whole state. It has been very beautifully remarked by Kautilya that the king, whose *janapada* or *pura* is rich and prosperous and well equipped with happy and contented subjects and faithful ministers, can be called *prithvipati*—the ruler of the whole universe.)

(M) (*Durga* is the fourth element of the state in Kautilya's list and it means a fortress.) In *Manusmriti* this term is called *pura*, a synonym of *durga* or capital. Kautilya, in fact, provides two terms, *durgavidana* and *durganivesa*, for it. (It represents the military establishment to protect the people from natural calamities. Even more, *durga* was a kind of arsenal, a storage of military artilleries and ammunition. During times of war, *durga* served the purpose of defence installation. Kautilya elaborately refers to the construction of fortress) and in *durganivesa* he discusses the planning and layout of the capital.²⁰ In order to build a *nagara* or capital for his own habitation, (the king had to choose a site which was located in beautiful natural surroundings, gifted with natural wealth, suitable for fortifications, inhabited more by *vaishyas*, *shudras*, artisans and craftsmen than the *brāhmanas* and not conquerable by enemies) and where there were impregnable forts and whose inhabitants were dependable and invincible. (So, it was advisable on the part of the king to construct a fort of his choice and to build his capital within its circumference.) Kautilya has referred to only four types of *durgas*; they are as under: (1) *audaka-durga* (surrounded by water on all four sides looking like a delta), (2) *parvata-durga* (made on the mountains or made of rocks), (3) *dhānvana-durga* (on the plain surrounded by desert), and (4) *vana-durga* (near thick and dense forest). The first two types of *durgas* were useful for protecting *janapada* in case of emergency and the following two types of *durgas* provided shelters to the king and others in the event of any emergency.) It has also been said that on the frontiers of *janapada* on all four sides the king should get such natural forts erected, which may be suitable particularly from the defensive point of view. Kautilya has provided an elaborate description of *nagaras*. In his view, the site for building *nagaras* should be selected in

accordance with the advice of an expert on architectural engineering. He has also referred to *nagaras* built on the banks of ponds on reservoirs and on the confluence of rivers, the commercial towns and *sthāniya nagaras* (headquarters of 800 villages), the land and river routes, the trading centres, ditches, the walls made of stones and bricks, big houses with stairs, houses with separate apartments for women, separate places for armed forces, tunnels, a separate place for taking shelter, wall with holes (*niskuhdvāra*) for taking aim at enemies, a strong door-gate consisting of six posts on a terrace near forts, different gates (*nagardvāra*), six roads divided into three each from east to west and from north to south, small streets, state palace, *harem*, houses of *purohitas*, ministers, *yajnashala*, store-house, markets and shops, armoury, residential complexes for chief mason, *kshatriyas*, *nagarā-dhyaksa* (chief officer of the capital), *dhanyādhyaksa* (in-charge of treasury), *vyāpārādhyaksa* (officer in-charge of trade and commerce), inspectors of factories and army commander, temples of gods and goddesses, etc. (The methods of constructing forts in *nagaras* corresponded to that applied for *durgas* on the frontiers of *janapādas*. He has also pin-pointed that the king should not allow those people to settle in *nagaras* who may be instrumental in bringing the moral, religious, and national standard of *nagaras* and *rashtra* down. Such people should be made to settle on the frontiers and state tax be collected from them.)

(K) (*Kosha* is described as the fifth most important element in the *Arthashastra* as well as in other sources. According to Kautilya, all the activities of state depend on finance and, therefore, foremost attention should be given to the treasury.) He identifies the various causes that can contribute to the growth or diminution of the treasury. (The treasury should be lawfully acquired by the king's ancestors or by the king himself and it should be filled with gold, silver, precious jewels and gems. In his opinion, the treasury should be rich enough to withstand the calamity when the state has no income for a long time.²¹ The protection of *durgas* solely depends on *kosha*. Any crisis confronting the *janapādas* and *mitras* can be averted and the defeat of *aris* (enemies)

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can also be ensured with its help.) The kings of other states can also be persuaded on its strength to render the assistance sought for. (The use of armed forces also depends on *kosha*.) In case of emergency the treasury can be shifted from one place to another, but the same cannot be done in case of *durgas*. Kautilya, while admitting its importance, (has also emphasized the fact that in absence of *kosha*, the army cannot do anything, rather they can go against their own king and join the hostile forces.) Judged from this context, Kautilya apprises that *kosha* and army both are equally important but army protects only *kosha* whereas *kosha* protects both army and the *durgas* as well.

(The king generally used to collect one-sixth of the income or produce of his subjects as tax. but in case of emergency, particularly in the event of war, the king was at liberty to collect heavy taxes from his subjects.) But before doing so, the people had to be informed about the nature of emergency and the necessity of collecting taxes from them. It was the duty of the king to take his subjects into confidence about the collection of extra taxes from them. (He had to declare that in order to protect the state and people from enemy, there is necessity of collecting taxes.) The king had also to convince them that for averting the national crisis the taxes will be collected according to their capacity and they will not be subjected to any harassment.) Thereafter, an officer was deputed and instructed to collect emergency taxes from them without exploiting them. In case of an economic crisis also, the king had to collect the extra taxes from the people. One-third or one-fourth of the total produce of big, medium and small *janapadas* was collected as taxes. But the *janapadas* situated on the frontiers or with little produce or useful for economic and commercial purposes were not supposed to pay state tax. One-fourth of the land produce and one-sixth of the forest produce were also taken as taxes. One-fiftieth of the total cost on the commercial products like gold, silver, diamond, pearls, etc., one-fortieth of cotton clothes, metals, herbs, etc., one-thirtieth of crops like wheat and oil, ghee, iron, etc., one-twentieth of income from big merchants and artisans and one-tenth of

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income from small artisans, and one-fifth of woods, bamboos, stones, earthenware, etc., were collected as state taxes. But it was collected only once and not twice. (Taxes were collected annually. The treatment meted out to the people was generally good. Subjects were not put to any torture.) The king used to collect one-twentieth of saleable commodities as tax. But, while determining the tax structure, particularly in respect of imported goods the king had to take into account the total cost of the items, the total profits of the traders, and the cost of damage, if any. This kind of tax was nowhere more than one-twentieth of the total goods. The king had to collect one-sixth or one-eighth of the income of those traders who evaded payment of taxes or custom duties. Generally, one-fifth or one-sixth part of most of the items was collected as tax.

Kautilya makes mention of *sannidhāta* (*koshādhyaksha*), whose duty was to set up 'koshagriha or treasury-house. (In order to increase the resources, the king was supposed to augment the wealth of the whole *rāshtra*, to encourage all kinds of production, to promote trade and commerce, to collect taxes in time, etc.) The *koshādhyaksha* was not supposed to violate the rules regarding the collection of state taxes. He (was not supposed to make any mistake regarding the handling of state taxes, and for any mischief or mistake, bribes or fraud, he was severely punished.)

(The chief sources of income of the state were the king's share of the land produce, customs duties and the amount collected as fines.) The main tax-payers were the farmers, traders and artisans.) Generally, the king used to collect one-sixth, one-eighth or one-twelfth of the land produce. The goods brought either by land or sea-routes were subjected to tax. The fines were imposed on defaulters or culprits. The king was entitled to take one-fourth (in normal case) and one-eighth (in case of an emergency) of the income of the *vaishyas*, and one-twentieth of gold and silver as taxes. He was not supposed to collect taxes from the *shudras*, carpenters and others, who offered their services to the state as labour. The treasury fully replenished with different field produce, gold, silver and precious gems, (and

providing protection to all the subjects in emergency was called *rajakosha*.)

(6) *Danda* is mentioned by Kautilya as the sixth element. It consists of hereditary and hired soldiers comprising the infantry, the cavalry and the chariot riders. The concept of *danda* represents the concept of force as well as the policy of the state carried out by the *swami*. According to Kautilya, *kshatriyas* (the class of brave and chivalrous warriors) are an excellent material for the army, as they are most suitable for the job of fighting. The soldiers should be skilled, patient, and should act according to the king's desire. The soldiers recruited in the army must belong to the following seven categories : (1) *maula* (recruited on hereditary ground as a permanent wing, maintained by the state whose duty was to defend the capital), (2) *bhrtaka* or *bhrta* (paid), (3) *shreni* (a well-organised group of soldiers well-trained in the art of war), (4) *mitra* (soldiers of friendly kings), (5) *amitra* (soldiers of hostile kings or of conquered countries and recruited like slaves), and (6) *ātavi* or *ātavika* (tribal soldiers consisting of *nissadas*, *mlecchas*, and other mountain tribes), and (7) *autsāhika* (living in different countries, without any leader and invaders). They used to attack other countries with or without the consent of the king. Out of the above seven categories of soldiers the first three have been considered dependable. The soldiers were recruited according to the needs of each department of the army and for the purpose of suppressing the hostile forces. The soldiers should be recruited on the hereditary ground and on the permanent basis. In the event of war they may be alert and well-equipped with all necessary things and they should fight bravely and crush the enemies. And for that purpose, the *kshatriyas* are best as soldiers, *vaishyas* and *shudras* can be lured away and *brahmanas* can be easily won with prostrating before their feet or bowing down. The *senāpati* (commander-in-chief of the army) generally belonged to the *kshatriya* caste. but (the king had the option to appoint the *senāpati* even from amongst the *brāhmanas*. The *senāpati* was the head of *danda* consisting of all the four wings, i.e., infantry, cavalry,

(The military department was also under the supervision of one *amātya* and the ambassador of king was responsible for peace and war.) The opinions of experts on *dandashastra* show that he, who possessed adequate knowledge of all the six elements of state polity and war strategy, was endowed with commanding power and leadership qualities and had enough experience of fighting in the war was generally appointed as the chief of the army. (Each wing of the army was placed in the charge of suitable persons. The in-charge of weapons was designated as *astracharya*. The armoury, stable, the army cantonments, elephants, trench, etc., were kept in a secret place. The state without *bala* (the army) was not in a position to provide security to the people and to maintain its own existence.) Thus, [the army was deployed on the frontiers of the state, in villages, *nagaras*, *puras*, and near state-palace.] Apart from infantry and other wings of the army, the people from intelligence department also used to render very useful services to the state. The intelligence people were kept in *pura*, *janapadas*, and near the territory ruled by *samantas*. The markets, public places, official residences, public roads, state assembly, etc., were kept under strict vigilance to watch the activities of enemies.

(In view of Kautilya, it was the bounden duty of the king to crush the hostile forces. The king generally used to attack those states whose kings were very weak. But, on the other hand, he liked to enter into treaty of friendship with those who happened to be stronger than him. It was the duty of the king first to avert the possibility of war in the interest of the state.) But in case of war, all the soldiers had to take part in it. The chief officers of the army were sent to all secret and inaccessible places to collect the relevant information. A game was also played by the people living adjacent to the frontiers of the state to join the hands of friendship with hostile king and to expel the enemy from their country with the help of his army. The soldiers had to fight under the command of *senāpati*. The victorious army was also rewarded by the king. The war and diplomacy were the two chief political instruments for the king to keep his adversaries always under check.

(Kautilya has pointed out that on the strength of a well organised army not only a friend of the king continues to be a friend but even an enemy is converted into a friend.) The army and friends have been considered very helpful organs for the king and his kingdom.

① The last element mentioned by Kautilya is mitra which is also known as suhrid in several other texts. (He says that the ally should be true so that there is no possibility of rupture and he offers help whenever the occasion demands.²³) Besides, he should be hereditary to ensure a continuity of friendship with him. Only a man of virtue can be a *mitra*, for according to Kautilya, a neighbouring king who is greedy, unjust and an evil-doer is most likely to be an enemy.) Kautilya's concept of *mitra* is, however, not based only on political and military expediencies but on ethical principles as well. It affirms that the state is not purely an instrument of self-aggrandisement in the hands of the king but partakes of socio-ethical principles also.²⁴ (The mention of allies as a **limb** of the state is highly significant in pointing out not only the existence but also the importance of inter-state relations and hence the prevalence of some sort of international law. This presages the existence of the concept of the political nation-state as it exists today.²⁵) (The king with land and gold cannot make as much progress as he can with the help of dependable friends. The land, gold and friendship are considered to be the products of war and diplomacy respectively.) (It was indispensable for a king to make friends and to enjoy the confidence of allies for taking all kinds of help and advice from them, so as to achieve the goal, that was the prosperity of his state.) (The king without friends can easily fall prey to enemies' attack. Hence, he should keep ministers and friends, by which he can overcome all the problems and subdue his enemies.) (In absence of treasury and friends, the king can sustain an irreparable loss.)

(Kautilya has described six types of friends in connection with the *saptānga* theory : (1) traditional, (2) permanent, (3) who could exercise restraint upon himself, (4) who is not of hostile attitude, (5) who is endowed with courage and ability to offer worthy advice, and (6) those, who could help in need. A friend

equipped with all these qualities was, indeed, a real friend.)

Kautilya enjoins the king to keep his friends not only in his own *rashtra*, but also in other's *rashtra* as well, in the *nagaras* of *māṇḍalika*, *feudatories* or *samanta raja*, in the forest areas, etc. The wellwishers and the most faithful among the friends are said to be employed by the king to inspect the salt and gold mines and the markets and other trading centres. They had to perform manifold duties for the king. One of their primary duties was to advise the king regarding his political relations with the kings of neighbouring states. The king used to consult them before entering into any alliance on concluding a treaty of friendship with a more powerful king than himself. In case of any trouble created by other powerful king he had also to seek their advice for his self-defence. (It has also been mentioned that the allies should protect each other from destruction on the basis of their mutual co-operation.) The allies had to play an important role in the spheres of mutual relations of kings by strictly adhering to the principle of checks and balances. Enemies were divided into three categories, i.e. (1) ancestral (*kulya*), (2) immediate neighbour (*anantara*), and (3) acquired (*krtrima*). Each one of them, were treated comparatively more dangerous than the succeeding one. Allies were to keep their eyes on the enemies in the order of their precedence. An important theoretical contribution made by Kautilya in connection with the seven elements of state is his exposition of the nature of calamities affecting the *prakritis*. Kautilya upholds the view of an anonymous teacher in whose opinion the calamity affecting the elements mentioned earlier in the list has greater consequence for the polity than that which befalls those that are mentioned later. The calamity affecting *swami* is more important than that affecting the *amatya*, the one affecting the *janapada*, and so on. This established the relative importance of the various elements of state. Besides this, Kautilya's exposition of the weaknesses of the various elements of state also throws light on the inter-relationship of these organs, a relationship which no other ancient thinker has worked out in detail.²⁶ Kautilya puts the *swami* at

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the head of the list of elements of state to ensure that his theory applies to both the republics as well as the monarchies. He considers the *swami* as the sovereign power and the most important constituent of the state. In this, he demarcates himself from other schools, each of which holds out this or that element of state as the most important. However, even Kautilya is aware that on different occasions different elements may acquire prominence, depending upon the circumstances. He is a pragmatist in his approach. But he does commit himself to ranking the factors, although there is no general agreement among the scholars of the *Arthashastra* on the relative disadvantage which would result from the injury or destruction of this or that element of the seven-fold theory.

Kautilya, thus, in his *saptanga* theory, attempted to analyse and explain the polity that had replaced its tribal counterpart. In all, he mentions seven elements which constitute a sovereign state. However, a doubt is cast that the *saptanga* conception of state does not really amount to an organic theory of state. In fact, the theory of state in the *Arthashastra* is little more than an analysis of the elements essential for an efficient operation of the political organisation.²⁷ But according to Kautilya, the duty of maintaining *dharma* and social order was of fundamental importance. The fact is that, the central place in the theory of state was reserved to *dharma*. A state was good or bad, according to the degree in which it succeeded in making *dharma* flourish. Although there is no clear mention of the aims or ends of the state in the *vedic literature*, yet from the ideas scattered here and there, one can deduce that in ancient India the basic aims of the state were: observance of *dharma*, maintenance of peace and order, security and justice.

Dharma And Politics

In the *Arthashastra* the word *dharma* is used in various senses. To understand this political thought, it is quite essential to comprehend them. At least three meanings of *dharma* can be distinguished :

(a) *dharma* in the sense of social duty;

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- (b) *dharmā* as moral law based on truth; and
- (c) *dharmā* as civil law.

(According to Kautilya, an accomplished king must be devoted to *dharmā*. He is called the promulgator of *dharmā*.) Even if mendicants and ascetics engage in improper proceeding, the punishment by the king is there to restrain them. Because if *dharmā* is transgressed, then it redounds to the evil of the ruler. (All the actions and functions of the king should be carried out in accordance with *dharmā*.²⁸)

(Kautilya argues that when all *dharma*s perish, the king becomes the promulgator of *dharmā* for the establishment of the four-fold *varna* system and the protection of the morality. Hence, in concrete terms, the king's maintenance of *dharmā* signified nothing but the defence of the social order based on family, property, and *varna*.) The dominant ideal that moved the kings in ancient India was the attainment of *dharmā*, *artha* and *kama*. (The chief duty of the king was the upholding and implementation of *dharmā* making it as the constitution of the state. (So far as the elucidation of the concept of *dharmā* was concerned, he had accepted the views of the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads* that *dharmā* was the source of law and more specifically of moral and civil law.) Kautilya believes that there are four sources for settling a legal controversy. The first is *dharmā*. The second is *vyavahara* or evidence. The third is *charitra* or history and conduct of reputed persons. The fourth is the *rajashasana*.) But out of all these, *dharmā* is the outstanding source which settles all legal and institutional conflicts. Kautilya makes it clear that *dharmā* is fixed in truth, *vyavahara* in witness, *charitra* in judicial precedents, and *rajashasana* in the edicts of the king.²⁹) The *Arthashastra* begins with the examination of the end of societies in order to determine the place of *trayi* (theology), *anvikshiki* (philosophy), *varta* (economics) and *dandaniti* (science of politics) in the scheme of human existence, as these are the light of all knowledge and an easy means for accomplishment of great acts, and the sources of a life of virtue. Distinction is made between natural and artificial disciplines.

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between *dharma* and *adharma*, *nyaya* and *anyaya*, expedient and inexpedient.

(Kautilya is a staunch champion of the *varnashrama-dharma*). In fact, *varnashrama* is elaborated as the foundation of the social order, and duties common to all are prescribed, like the practice of harmlessness, truthfulness, purity, absence from cruelty, tolerance and forgiveness; for the observance of one's duty leads one to *svarga* and infinite bliss, *anantya*. Kautilya believes that the *swami* who is well-educated and disciplined, and devoted to good government of his subjects, will likewise enjoy the earth unopposed. (It is this philosophy of kingship, to ensure observance of *varnashrama-dharma* and to contribute to the increase of virtues essential to all, which explains and also justifies the ever-increasing role of the king in the lives of men.) Some of the lapses or violations of the *varnashrama-dharma* were certainly justiciable, and could be punished in the court of law. (Kautilya prohibited inter-*varna* marriage and interchange of occupation among different *varna*). He recommended punishment for those who took to asceticism prematurely (giving up householder's life) without making due provision for his dependents.

(According to Kautilya, the sources of law are *dharma* (*dharmashastras*), *vyavahara* (judicial precedents), *sannistha* (customs) and *nyaya* (equity). The last should not be understood to mean the edict of the king for which Kautilya has another term—*rajashasana*. But Kautilya does not include *rajashasana* as a source of positive law. As a matter of fact, according to traditions *dharm* (law was independent and even anterior to king and *dandaniti*) was given to the king to enforce, and the latter had not created it.³⁰)

Apad-Dharma

कृपा, दान, अर्थ

~~1st duty~~ Apad-dharma implies the conduct of the king in the times of emergency or calamity like flood, famines, droughts, poverty, food-scarcity, typhoons or hurricanes, epidemics and many such natural calamities or disasters. In such times of exigencies, the king should open out his *durga* or *pura* to accommodate a great substantial number of people under its shelter and

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generously bear the expenses of lives and livings of his citizens from his royal treasury (*kosha*). (To meet the challenges of any kind of catastrophe the king, according to Kautilya, must perform the *apad-dharma* the duty of the exigent times, without fear or favour, since he is the *dharma-pravartaka*—an enunciation of duties.)

The king functioning under the canons of *apad-dharma* must not ignore the principal minister or the coteries of ministers, other advisers, friends and the family priest. (He must call all the citizens of his state to come forward and seek refuge in his fort. The king must open up his royal treasury for the welfare of the people at large) more so, when his economy is worsely hit by a shooting inflation by any unforeseen factors. (He should be generous in distributing wealth from his treasury as it is preserved for such emergencies only.)

(The king is to extend an equal treatment to all for maintaining the existence of the state under an emergency.) (On the other hand, the people, taking the king as their supreme sovereign and guardian of the republic, had to take all proper care of him, because in absence of a king it was not possible to ensure safety of their belongings. And in return, the king aspiring to have the state had to protect his people in great adversity by providing food, cloths, money, shelter and security to his subjects. It was his most onerously sacred duty called as the *āpād-dharma*.)

(The state was meant for all and, hence, (it was absolutely necessary for the king to defend, safeguard and protect it by all means.) In spite of all adverse circumstances, it was religiously obligatory on the part of the king to do everything possible for his subjects. (Kautilya warns the king, not to deviate from the path of welfare measures for the subjects under any kind of natural or super-natural stress or trial.)

Raja-Dharma / Duties of the King

(The word *raja* means a king. It is a very common word in ancient political literature and is found from the *vedas* onwards. *Dharma-sutras* prescribed a list of duties for the king which are supposed to have *vedic* sanction.) The king was to wield the sceptre of

punishment and if there was any miscarriage of justice or the culprit escaped, the king was not only to compensate for the loss but perform penance as well. This involves the notion of extra-political sanctions on the king for violation of his duties. (The concept of *raja-dharma* is the analysis of the *dharma* of the king, as referred to in the *dharma-sutras*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Manu Smriti* and above all in the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya.)

(The notion of *dharma* as a social duty is central in *dharma-sutras*; they emphasize the practice of *dharma* on the part of every individual for his material, moral, and spiritual edification and happiness.) They presume the existence of the *varna* system and its division into four *varnas* and four *ashramas*. They also believe in the doctrine of *karma* which is the cornerstone of Hindu religion and philosophy. As such man is instructed by *dharma-sutras* to do his prescribed duties according to his *varna* and *ashrama*, of which some are obligatory and of high disciplinary value. (Man is directed to do *sattvika dharma* (honest and pure duties) and penance even to control his passions and to attain the mental power of concentration and meditation.³¹)

The *Mahabharata* glorified the state of non-violence and compassion following its view of *dharma*. It referred to a period of human existence when there was no coercion and no king. People were guided by *dharma* and the prevalence of *dharma* led to a completely stable existence. (Manu exalts *dharma* to the status of the supreme principle of human life. If *dharma* is maintained it preserves the person who maintains it, but if it is violated it ruins the violator. Kautilya also holds the same opinion about *dharma*.) In fact, according to Kautilya, wielding the sceptre of punishment, preparing the scheme of education, the recruitment and selection of the ministers, constituting the ministerial council, pursuing the policy of security, the of the royal coercive authority—civil and criminal law, maintaining the characteristics of the state's structure, combating the calamities, epidemics and other serious disasters, pursuing with farsight the policies of the inter-state relations, in particular, those of attacking the

enemy, waging offensive and defensive wars, and application of different sub-types of treaties, more or less fairly and largely constitute the duties of a king—the *rajadharma*. The *dharmasutras* prescribed a long list of duties for the king which are supposed to have *vedic* sanction. The king was always expected to hold the iron rod of *danda*, in his own august hands.)

(There is much emphasis in *raja-dharma* on the idea of the protection of the four-fold social order. (The *Mahabharata* conceives of the personification of *dharma* as a God and identifies the king with that. The *raja-dharma* is definitely monarchical in its orientation.) The attempt to comprehend the political spectrum under the kingly *dharma* shows that the latter is to be equated with the totality of all social and political as well as individual duties, obligations and functions of the king. The *Shanti Parvan* ordains : Whatever is not conducive to social welfare and what you are likely to be ashamed of doing, never do.³² (The royal advisers in the Epic did not hesitate to upbraid or reprove the king when he went wrong. The king had also to defer to the wishes of the *brahmanas*, the *shreni-mukhyas*—elders of corporations—and the people whose opinion could not always be ignored. The connection between the king and his people was based on a theory of mutual advantage. (The king was to protect the people and do what was pleasing to them in return for the taxes that he received. For the efficient discharge of his duties he had to learn the *vedas* and the *shastras* and practice self-control.³³)

(For the purposes of self-defence and the defeat of his enemies the king had to maintain a standing army with a *s'enā-pati* at its head.) The army was subdivided into regiments and battalions. The fighting forces consisted not only of chariots, elephants, horses, and infantry, but also, according to some passages of the *Shanti Parvan*, of a navy, labourers, spies and local guides. (Standards and flags were used significantly in the battles. Among weapons, the most interesting are the *yantra* (machine) and the *shataghni* (hundred-killer), which were often used as projectiles. The laws of war were humane, though they were not always observed in

practice when feelings ran high.) The army seems to have been recruited from all *varnas*, though the *ksatriyas* naturally formed the predominant element. (There are references not only to *brahmana* generals but also to *vaishya* and *shudra* warriors, along with those belonging to the *kshatriya varna*; for the great battle destructive of life, body, and sins, brought on religious merit, heaven, and fame for all the *kshatriya*, *vaishya*, and *shudra* heroes that engaged in it.³⁴

(The *Shanti Parvan*, which devotes more than one hundred chapters to *rāja-dharma* or the duties and responsibilities of kings likewise mentions certain ancient authors on *rāja-shastra*, or the science of politics, like *Brhaspati*, *Viśālākṣa*, *Kāvyā* (Us'anas), *Indra*, *Prācetasa*, *Manu*, *Bhāradvāja*, and *Gauras'iras*,³⁵ and refers also to ancient treatises on *niṭi-shastra*, *dandanīti*, like *Vais'ālākṣa*, *Bāhudantaka*, *Bārhaspatya* and that composed by *Kāvyā* (Us'anas).³⁶) The similarities in the names of ancient authorities mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya points to a common tradition which presupposes a long period of development of the *Arthashastra* literature in early classical Sanskrit. (The *Shanti Parvan* and the *Arthashastra* both mention *vārta* and *dandanīti* together, the one referring to agriculture, the rearing of animals, and commerce, as explained in Kautilya,³⁷ and the other to the science of government which henceforth becomes an important branch of study.)

Dharma And Dandaniti

(*Dandanīti* as a perfect principle of political governance in the *Arthashastra* receives a treatment in a comparative way. (*Dandanīti* constitutes the very basis of political rulership of a king, because it is the backbone of the political jurisprudence.) The *Arthashastra* leaves no room for doubt that the great strength of Mauryan administrative system was derived from the judicial system of the time. (It was the judicial system which enabled the government to enforce the rule of behaviour and punish those who by sheer brute force denied the right to live honourably to the weak. Protection of the weak was impossible without the exercise of *danda*, the

arm of the state.) This is precisely the reason why Kautilya says that there cannot be a state without *danda*. In the absence of *danda* there prevailed anarchy, chaos and the law of the jungle. Obviously, in that state, brute force triumphed and prospered. *Danda* became righteousness and justice. (In other words, in a state the king armed with its laws and the power to punish, became the custodian of *dharma*.) Thus, according to Kautilya, law was a human creation, and the promotion of law and justice was closely connected with the prevailing social and political organisations. In ancient India, law experienced a gradual growth, but the framework of law was more or less fixed.

(Kautilya believes that law is a royal command enforced by sanction.) He believes that such a command supported by *danda* is indispensable for the maintenance of worldly life, growth of science, and pursuit of philosophy, economy and the *vedas*.³⁸ However, like a wise statesman, he advises the king to use his power to chastise justly, neither too harshly nor too mildly. A king severe with the rod, Kautilya further argues, becomes a source of terror to his subjects and the king mild with the rod is despised. In fact, a king just with rod is honoured.³⁹ By applying *dandaniti* only, the king's foremost duty is to see that people follow their *dharma* and do not transgress it. In fact, Kautilya is one of those thinkers who believe in the instinctive wickedness of human nature or impulses which he believes can be controlled only by the *danda* of the king which is his supreme political arrow inside the sheath of administration. (Kautilya further observes that *danda* or punishment should be dispensed after due consideration which must be in proportion to the gravity of the offence.)

Political ethics in ancient India was administered in the name of the king and he was at the apex of the judicial administration. (To speed up decision-making and to bring efficiency the administration of justice was decentralised by the king.) Summons and warrants were issued and executed in the king's name and the decree was given under the seal of the king's court. (Kautilya gives the king the final power in determining what needs

the sanction of law in governing social relations. He makes the king's edict the supreme authority whenever it comes in conflict with other types of law.) But *dandaniti* remains at the top of all principles of political governance.

(To Kautilya, *dandaniti* is also more than a political method adopted for the techniques of statecraft. It includes within its purview, the army-organisation, methods and principles of war, diplomacy, socio-economic and religious activities, civil and judicial administration and so on.) In fact, they are more a problem of politics than economy in nature, which is found to be in a subordinate place in the scheme of investigation and discussion in the *Arthashastra*. More precisely, the *Arthashastra* discusses exhaustively the practical aspect of government and of relations between states. Its primary concern is with matters of practical administration. Everything depends on kingship which is the cardinal principle of Kautilya. His whole outlook, tone, and trend of thoughts are monarchical justifying the need of a strong sovereign. And Kautilya explains to him the maxims of efficient ruling with the significant principle of *dandaniti* as a device of governance.

(No doubt the restrictions imposed on the king were not formal. Kautilya contends that they were the result of the king's obligation to uphold custom and sacred law and to fulfil the requirements of *rajadharma*. Nevertheless, they were very powerful and a king who was arbitrary or incompetent ceased to be a king.) On the other hand, within the parameters of classical Indian political theory, the significance of political function and the need for discretion of the king are always acknowledged. (The ruler may be forced to depart from the law in order to preserve it. For this reason, *rajadharma* is often defined in flexible terms.)

(Kautilya while commenting on the art of ruling explains *dandaniti* as a classic example of one of the four expedients recognised for the implementation of the six forms of foreign policy, i.e., *sama*, *dana*, *bheda*, and *danda*. There he asserts that *danda* is the force which the king can use to achieve his goals in international affairs, if the first three methods fail.) In

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fact, the *danda* is more a diplomatic war and less an armed conflict, for it is the last resort before the actual commencement of fighting. There are, says Kautilya, different modes of *danda* that a king can employ against his enemy, namely, capturing the enemy in an open fight subduing him by resorting to treacherous warfare, striking him by planning a secret conspiracy, and capturing him during the confusion caused by the fall of fortress.⁴⁰ (Effective ways of putting pressure on the enemy—physical, economic or moral—are also termed as *danda* by Kautilya.)

While giving the first possible maxims on the techniques of statecraft, (Kautilya advises the king to surround himself with men who were wise and of impeachable character. He advises the king to consult his ministers on matters of policy and the latter are supposed to have approved the decision of the king before policies were executed.) Never do the ancient Indian political commentaries lose sight of the need to unite power with wisdom and law with moral sanction. The king's authority was rooted in custom and only crises could justify a departure from custom and sacred tradition.

(The king was himself restrained by the power of *danda*. Should he neglect his duties and go against the precepts of *dharma*, he would be struck down by *danda*.) Though there is constitutional restraint on him, the *dharmic* code itself served as a powerful check on his conduct in office (He rules but only in accordance with the sacred laws and traditions which constitute the basis of his governance.) The ruler is expected and obligated to respect and encourage the various customs and rules of the family, *varna* and association if they are consistent with the *dharmic* code. (In the *Arthashastra*, while administering the political functions, the main duties of the king are the protection and welfare of the citizens, hence, the king's happiness lies in the happiness and prosperity of his subjects.)

Inter-State Relations And Diplomacy

(The art of diplomacy—the system of developing and preserving contacts between states—was fairly advanced in ancient India. Some of the principles of the

diplomacy as then practised were excellent, even by modern standards.

Genesis Of Mandala

Despite lack of reference to *rajamandala* or, simply, *mandala* (the circle of states) in the *Rig Veda*, there are some indirect references that reveal that the *vedic* Aryans were acquainted with some elementary principles of diplomacy. However, (the concept of *mandala* was laid down for the first time by Manu, the celebrated law-maker—and it was destined to become the foundation of the foreign policy of the state in ancient India. There is also little evidence, both in the *Ramayana* or in the *Mahabharata* as well, to support the view that the kings attached any importance to the *mandala* theory in their inter-state relations.) That war was an unavoidable, recurring contingency, was well realised by the ancient Indian writers on polity, and they endeavoured to keep it in check by suggesting an expedient balance of power among the number of states. The *mandala* theory of the *smriti* and *nit* writers was based on this premise.

(A total and comprehensive picture of the *mandala* theory than that of Manu and its relative importance for the security and survival of the state—was presented for the first time by Kautilya.) Candidly and realistically stated according to the needs of his day, (Kautilya's theory of inter-state relations was perfected to such an extent that it became applicable subsequently to his later ages also.)

(Elucidating the basic premise, Kautilya observes that the *vijigishu* (conqueror), his and his friend's friend, are the three primary kings constituting a circle of states. As each of these three kings possesses the five elements of sovereignty, such as the minister, the country, the fort, the treasury and the army,) a circle of states consists of eighteen elements. The three circles of states having the enemy (of the conqueror), the *madhyama* king or the neutral king, at the centre of each of the three circles, are separate from that of the conqueror. (Thus, there are four primary circles of states with 12 kings.)

The rather terse statement may thus be analysed for easy understanding:

(Circle I : Comprising the *vijigishu* (the conqueror), his friend and his friend's friend - (three rulers).

Circle II : Consisting of the enemy, his friend and his friend's friend - (three rulers)

Circle III : Comprises the *madhyama* king, his friend and his friend's friend - (three rulers)

Circle IV : Consisting of the *udāsina* king (the neutral king), his friend and his friend's friend - (three rulers)

ग्राह्य, मित्र, मित्र के मित्र

The *vijigishu*, as an aspirant to absolute sovereignty is enjoined by Kautilya to embark on a career of conquest, subdue the surrounding states, and shine forth as the supreme, undisputed monarch. Striking at the right moment, the conqueror attains his objectives and at the same time sees to it that the balance of power is maintained amongst the kings of a circle. He has to take note of the fact that he is himself encircled, as it were, by a variety of relationships, ranging from absolute indifference to friendly alliance or set hostility.

सादर
कारुण्य
भारत
कर्म

(Describing the objective of all state policy, Kautilya observes : strength is power and happiness is the end.⁴¹ The main thrust of the *mandala* theory was to acquire power and wealth for the conqueror.) Kautilya, however, analyses the concept of strength, and categorises it into three kinds. The first is the power of deliberating which he characterises as intellectual strength. The second kind of strength consists of the possession of a prosperous treasury. The third comprises a powerful army (denoting the basic strength of sovereignty) plus material power in terms of physical strength. To Kautilya, the military genius that he was, it is axiomatic that the possession of power and happiness in a greater measure makes a king superior to another—and, in a less degree, inferior and in equal degree, equal. Hence, king is enjoined to endeavour to increase his power and elevate his happiness.)

विचारपूर्वक
साधना से
किंग्स
निश्चय

Upayas And Gunas

The *mandala* concept has its counterpart in the category of six types of foreign policies—*gunas*. It reflects the schematic grouping of states after the pattern of inter-state relations, whereas *gunas* express the wide range of those relations. The list of six *gunas* comprises of the items as under—peace (*sandhi*), war (*vigraha*).

⊗ marching against the enemy (*yana*), neutrality (*asana*), seeking protection from a powerful king (*samsraya*), and the dual policy (*dvaividhibhava*). These expedients were resorted to only when out of the fourfold methods (*upayas*) of diplomacy *sama* (negotiation and treaty), *dāna* (gift or charity), *bheda* (sowing dissension), had failed and only *danda* (coercion or punishment) has been left in hand. However, it appears that, by and large, (Kautilya attached the greatest importance to the circle of states (or *mandala*) theory, among the three major concepts of the theory of foreign relations. The six-fold policies (*gunas*) actually grew out of the *mandala* concept. Following the six-fold policy thereafter when a king deals carefully or doubtfully or carelessly with these expedients, he attains the condition of augmentation (*vrddhi*), stagnation (*sthāna*) or deterioration (*ksyaya*) of his dominion.

मन्त्र, दान, भेद, दण्ड

Vijigishu's Policies

(Kautilya shows how six-fold policy (*guna*) produces the efforts for "achieving a work" (*vyayama*) and for securing the result (*sāma*) while it bears fruit in the shape of progress of the state. Explaining the constituent elements (*prakritis*) of the state system, (Kautilya mentions the three powers (*shaktis*) which consist of the elements, called the power of (the king's) counsel (*mantrashakti*), that (of the king's) material sources (*prabhushakti*) and that (of the king's) energy (*utsahashakti*); these are paraphrased, respectively, to mean the strength of knowledge, that of the revenue and the army, and that of prowess. (The test of a strong, a weak, and an equal king, Kautilya continues, is the possession of the mentioned powers and successes in the greater or less or equal measure.

⊗ The objective of the conqueror—absolute attainment of power and success or at least the denial of the same to his enemy—is developed as an important principle. The *vijigishu* (conqueror or aggressor) should conclude peace when he finds himself to be weaker than the enemy, wage war when he finds himself to be stronger, take to neutrality when there is a stalemate, attack when he is very strong, take refuge when he is

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weak, and adopt the dual policy in a situation when he finds that he is in need of extraneous help. Kautilya explains the conditions justifying severally⁴² the application of the six types of foreign policy towards the attainment of progress. Taking an original stand, Kautilya recommends that the king whose subjects are oppressed should be attacked rather than the one whose people are impecunious and avaricious, for the latter remain loyal to their king and remain unaffected by the intrigues of the enemy. Thereafter, Kautilya graduates to the eventuality when two kings are vulnerable to the aggressor's advance; the latter should attack the powerful but unjust ruler and not the weak but just ruler. The reason for the preference was that the former would receive no help from his subjects. Thus, Kautilya indirectly served the warning to the king not to ill-treat his people lest they become impoverished, greedy or disaffected—and, for him progressively dangerous. Kautilya has a reassuring word for the weak king,⁴³ whose age-old problem of standing up to the powerful aggressor is treated from a refreshing angle. Kautilya enjoins the weak ruler to seek refuge with a still more powerful ruler, or he should combine with various such kings who are equal in power and resources to his enemy king. If such kings are not available, he should continue with a number of inferior but enthusiastic kings. At the worst, he should take shelter in a fort that is invincible. To determine the proper time and place for making an attack on the enemy, Kautilya observes that when a king finds that his enemy is enmeshed in such a troublesome situation like epidemic or any natural calamity that cannot be remedied, or his enemy's subjects are oppressed and impoverished, then he should march after proclaiming war. The *vijigishu* desirous of expanding his territory should keep engaged his neighbouring enemy and should march against a third enemy. After having conquered that enemy of equal power, he should take possession of his territory. It is quite remarkable that Kautilya did not subscribe to the earlier practice of making captives and enslaving the sons and wives of the defeated kings. He took a humane and realistic view, asking the *vijigishu* to instal the fallen

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dynasty on the throne and treat the defeated princes with honour and kindness.)

(The doctrine of mandala was the natural outgrowth,) with the consequent directions to the concerned king as to the kind of diplomacy they had to follow. That a state would somehow come into conflict with its neighbours was manifest, for it would be difficult to march troops through foreign territory. Hence, (the security and expansion of the state was the most important goal of foreign policy of the conqueror, and, in pursuit of this objective, Kautilya advocated all methods of warfare, fair or foul.) The latter modes were specially prescribed by Kautilya when the potential conqueror did not possess absolute superiority over his enemy. Otherwise, he was asked to follow the chivalrous code known as dharma yuddha. (The major theme, however, was the dependence of peace upon power. The dynamic concept of mandala was Kautilya's unique contribution to the theory of diplomacy.)

Envoys राजदूत , राज्यतिथिपर , a messenger

(In Kautilyan times, it was quite natural that diplomatic service—the official apparatus to regulate relations between independent states by the process of negotiations—should grow in importance as the art of diplomacy gradually became more complex. Thus, a diplomatic agent was selected with utmost judicious care. (It was imperative that he should be a man of high moral character and belong to a noble family. The ambassador, called duta, which literally means a messenger, who was deputed to foreign courts with a special mission—played the most significant role in the implementation of the objectives of the six-fold policy of the state in the field of foreign affairs.)

Kautilya puts it simply that whoever has succeeded as a councillor is an envoy, presumably because the selection and training of high government officials was rigorous and their good performance was guaranteed by continuous scrutiny. In any case, the assignment of an ambassador was an onerous one and he did not have an elaborately graded staff at his disposal as the modern counterpart has. (The very best men were

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selected for the post of the envoys. Hailing from a noble family, well-versed in all the sciences, the ambassador possessed an excellent memory that would stand him in good stead in reproducing actual conversations that he had with V.I.P.s. He had to possess tact in an abundant degree to time his words and deeds and he must easily comprehend the meaning of facial gestures and expressions.)

(Kautilya is more specific when he classifies the envoys into four categories. The first category he calls *category 'A'* which included *duta* having the rank and qualifications of a minister.) The office, it is stated, should be entrusted to one who had succeeded in discharging his duties in the council of ministers. He resembles the ambassador of modern times. (The second office, *category 'B'*, known as '*nisristartha*', should be given to one who possessed the qualifications of an ordinary minister.) The next class, that is *category 'C'* widely known as *parimitarthah*, having the almost same qualifications but less by one-fourth.) As his name implies, he should be entrusted with a definite mission. (Finally, the *sasanabara*, belonging to the fourth class, *category 'D'* was an inferior kind of envoy who only carried royal writs from court to court.) The powers of the envoys matched the class to which they belonged. The ambassador of 'A' category was invested with full powers of negotiations, but the 'B' and 'C' category envoys were only entrusted with definite missions and could not exceed the briefs given to them. The envoy of the last category was a mere privileged messenger who had only to pass on the message of the king (or other royal writ) and fetch the reply.) That there were no permanent embassies of the present-day type in those days does not adversely affect the categorisation by Kautilya. *Duta*, the envoy of category 'A', did, more often than not, stay in the country of his accreditation for a long duration of time, for his mission usually was to settle the balance of power in his master's favour. (In other words, by his continued presence, the envoy would prepare the ground for his king's ultimate success.) The second and third types of ambassador did similar chores, though in a lower key. The last category, as already mentioned, was a privileged messenger.



Duties Of Envoys

Kautilya's description of the duties of an ambassador may be succinctly summarised as follows: Transmission of missions or the views of his state; maintenance of treaties; issues of ultimatums; gaining of friends; creating intrigues; sowing dissension among friends; fetching secret force; carrying away the force, relatives and gems; gathering information about the movement of spies; breaking of the treaties of peace; winning over the favour of the envoy and government officers of the enemy.⁴⁴

The envoy, added Kautilya, shall additionally cultivate friendship with the officers such as those in charge of wild tracts, border areas of cities and countryside. He shall also contrast the military stations, economic strength and strongholds of the country (to which he is accredited) with those of his master. He shall ascertain the size and area of forts—their assailable points—as well as the location of special treasuries containing valuable things. He had to report all information to the king in a cipher code—gudhalekha. This was so for the embassy, as it was to be the control centre of espionage in the assigned state. The envoy remained there to supervise the work of the spies, to win over the discordant elements, extend help secretly to the 'fifth column' activists, and thus impair the internal security of the state.⁴⁵ These instructions are as valid today as when they were written in the fourth century B.C., says K. M. Panikkar, probably the doyen among the diplomat-writers of the Nehru era.⁴⁶

Whatever the rank of the envoy, he played a very important part in formulation and execution of foreign policy with its ramifications looming large on the whole range of inter-state relations. The king was advised by Kautilya to be very careful about the reports sent by the envoy. To enable the envoy to function freely, his diplomatic immunity, obtaining already under a well-established inter-state convention, was continued in Kautilya's time. An ambassador's person was held inviolable. He could not be put to death or imprisoned because his person was traditionally inviolable so long as he discharged his duties properly. He was enjoined to deliver his master's message (to the king of the country

of his assignation) even at the risk of his life. There is no disagreement among ancient political writers on this issue. But R. Shamasastri's study of the *Arthashastra* reveals that in the Mauryan era an ambassador could be arrested and even awarded death penalty for grossly transgressing his privileged functions.⁴⁷

The functions of an envoy in the Kautilyan state and those of an ambassador in the modern state are much the same. Safeguarding the territorial, political and economic integrity of the state was then the prime function of the envoy, as it is now. By the use of means, peaceful or otherwise, the ambassador was to ensure the safety and security of the state.

Role Of Spies

Espionage was highly developed in the Mauryan times and figured prominently in inter-state relations. The utility of spies in the foreign service sometimes exceeded that of the envoys, and spying was the most important activity in the war period. Kautilya describes a complex, well-knit, and well-organised system of espionage, systematically used for maintenance of internal security and for foreign relations. Its genesis going back to the Vedic period, espionage⁴⁸ had reached the apogee of its perfection by Kautilya's time and he, adding his own meaningful, frequent observations, reflected the excellence that it had reached.

A big department of spies correlated and collated the reports received from the spies at home and abroad. The department scrutinised the activities of the spies and directed them, as well as the spies who spied on the spies. The correctness of a spy's report was validated by checks through other sources. Spies adopted all forms of garbs to carry on their activities. There were women spies under the garb of wives. Others posed as "ascetics with shaved heads of braided hair" and operated in enemy territory performing all manner of trickeries to entice the king and countries to their fold.

Spies pretended to be "the gods of fire", using different contrivances, which included "delusive contrivances"—their preparations duly spelled out by Kautilya.⁴⁹ Likewise, poisons used by spies are described

in detail. Women, including prostitutes, were used as spies, the strategems pandering to known weaknesses of the enemy. (They would strike down the enemy king wherever he was known to be unguarded. Thus, in external spying or, for that matter, in diplomacy, there was no morality.) Little surprise was occasioned by unprovoked aggression or violation of the neutrality of other states. (Treachery and falsehoods compounded by stark immorality comprised the *modus operandi* of spies and diplomacy too often was equated with deceit and fraudulent activities.)⁵⁰ (The enemy lulled by spies into a false sense of security, was attacked, taken by surprise and vanquished.)

Kautilya And Aristotle

(Tradition mentions Kautilya as the preceptor of Chandragupta Maurya, just as Aristotle was the teacher of Alexander at Macedon, before the latter set out on his campaign of conquest.) In comparative terms, there is much commonality between Kautilya and Aristotle in regard to their contemporaneity, their close association to the great conquerors—Chandragupta Maurya and Alexander the Great—and their attitude towards the republican forms of government which were in a state of decay.)

Just as Kautilya never refers to the conquests of Chandragupta Maurya, Aristotle, too, makes no reference to the campaigns and conquests of his great pupil, presumably because he had little sympathy with the conquered. The *Politics*, like Aristotle's other works, takes the form of a treatise, not a dialogue, and its style is quite different from that of Plato's *Dialogues*.

(Aristotle in his book *Politics* stated what has been designated as the organic theory of the state. It has been so called because it conceives of the state as a kind of organism. According to this theory, the political society is not a mere collection of individuals but has an organic unity of its own. Exactly the same narration one finds in Kautilya's *Arthashastra* where he discusses the *saptanga* theory of state, discussing every organ of the state as the most relevantly significant towards the working of the government, integrally relating every part of the state with the organs of the human body.⁵¹)

To Aristotle, the state was undistinguishable from society. In this context, one of the most important safeguards against the bad forms of government was respect for impersonal law. Society under the king was an organism to Kautilya also. Hence, the *Arthashastra*, aimed at reconstituting a decaying social order, turned out to be a handbook for princes, which was not the case with the *Politics*, though it demonstrated Aristotle's greatness as a philosopher, who, notwithstanding the very different political and social environment of ancient Greece, formulated the principles which are accepted, on all hands, as the moral bases of democratic government in the present day.

(Aristotelean concepts to a great extent equal with Kautilya's keenness to establish *rajadharma* as a science that has permanent validity. To Aristotle, as to Kautilya, a state may be exalted to the principle of power and greatness by the mighty efforts of a king, who learns the precious lessons from historical examples. Hence, time and again, Kautilya gives examples of the great monarchs of India's past, and keeps on stressing the imperative need to arrive at general laws from the data furnished by history.⁵²)

(There are other affinities between Aristotle and Kautilya. Like Aristotle, Kautilya felt that to hold aloof from office and political activity, and to spend one's life in pure contemplation is not the only course worthy of a philosopher, nor does inactive life behove him. Kautilya recommended that heavy fines should be imposed on the people who embraced asceticism without making sufficient provision for their families. In fact, he discouraged the so called pseudo-ascetism⁵³ as that would devitalise society and militate against strict observance of the *ashramas* stages of the ordered life of the individual, which were so important in the fulfilment of the highest ends of the state. He even attached great importance to *vedic* sacrifices and their potency in warding off evils that might otherwise adversely affect the society or the state.⁵⁴)

(The *Arthashastra* is, on many counts, more Aristotelean. Like Aristotle, Kautilya was a keen student of the contemporary and earlier republican governments:

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dwairājya, *vairājya*, *arājya* and other *sangha* forms of government. The governments of *sanghas*, as known to Kautilya, conformed to a general type which had been described for the first time in the West by Aristotle.

Kautilya's work deals with the king's policy towards the *sanghas* and their reciprocal policy towards him. He holds that the acquisitions of *sanghas* can become the king's greatest political and military assets. As such, he prescribes a double-edged policy for the king vis-s-vis the *sanghas*, how he should sow dissension among the officers and the people, through his spies. *Sanghas* apart, Aristotle had his preference for the select elite. The state, according to Aristotle, has to be so organised as to foster within it a class of gifted, virtuous men and philosophers, who will assert the supremacy of reason, both in the state and in the heart of the individual.⁵⁵

The essence of Kautilya's teaching (though his manner throughout was less didactic than that of the Greek philosophers) was the promotion of a more scientific statecraft. In the manner of Aristotle, Kautilya stressed the importance of the individual and the value of human endeavour in securing the best in this life, and that too, within the state, under the rulership of a definite king.⁵⁶

Kautilya And Machiavelli

Kautilya's *Arthashastra* has much that is common with the content and tenor of *Prince*—a manual written by Niccolo Machiavelli for the guidance of rulers based upon the principles set forth by him in *The Discourses*. The two books are perhaps the world's most famous treatises on the art of kingship. And, both the writers realistically analyse the methods by which a king may rise to supreme power and maintain it against all odds. As a matter of fact, Kautilya lived and wrote at least a thousand of years before Machiavelli. In that way, Kautilya undoubtedly was Machiavelli's predecessor, in theory and reality, both. It is indeed a matter for interesting speculation whether Machiavelli found his inspiration and model in Kautilya. Maybe, some European had brought back an Arabic or other translation of the *Arthashastra* which Machiavelli drew upon but never acknowledged.⁵⁷

Mature, long experience and off-the cuff assessments, springing from the soil, as it were, constitute, according to Kautilya, indispensable guides to political action. Among the postulates of victory for a king is that he conforms to set political principles and rules sanctified by *rajadharma*. Therefore, both Kautilya and Machiavelli commend to statesmen considered, set policies that are expedient and practical. Their in-depth analyses of given historical events demonstrate facets of universal validity which can be applied in comparable situations. Their writings were in fact down to earth, whereas Kautilya's *Arthashastra* reads like the meticulous notes of an official with an all-round experience based on practical knowledge, the Prince is concerned with the practical question of the precise methods which a prince or monarch must employ to govern society effectively.⁵⁸

Just as Machiavelli deplored the loss of power and prestige of the empire and the papacy, Kautilya juxtaposed the great achievements of the past of the country with the penurious, unstable conditions that prevailed in the wake of Alexander's invasion. Machiavelli wrote the *Prince* with the professed object of indicating the methods by which Lorenzo de Medici could make himself master of all Italy, just as Kautilya had in mind the expansion of the Mauryan Empire under the aegis of Chandragupta Maurya. Machiavelli's ruminating over the plight of Italy in the beginning of the 15th century was paralleled much earlier by Kautilya, who was seized of the sad fact how India in the second half of the 4th century B.C. had succumbed to foreign domination. This subjugation to aliens acted like a catalytic agent and provided a keen incentive to political analysis and historical inquiry, pregnant with the seeds of critical self-analysis. The two political philosophers nurtured a conviction in the definite superiority of the political and other institutions of the ancient world as so many infallible guides to their own and later times. Both of them held the belief that through a proper, critical study of history, one could deduce not only the causes of maladies of society but the cures also.⁵⁹ One of the signal lessons of history is that in any particular

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situation, alternative courses of action are open to the statesman or the monarch, though the choice offered may be limited. Accordingly, Kautilya introduced as Machiavelli did later, the formulae of elasticity in political action. Endowed with an uncanny insight into the unforeseen and unpredictable complexities and turns of history, Kautilya found that political tactics have to be flexible in a fast-changing fluid world. Machiavelli approached the problem of politics as a scientific investigator, and the outstanding characteristic of the *Prince* was the complete absence of moral principle in its main argument. He lays down the general principles by which a state can be most effectively unified and strengthened.⁶⁰ Kautilya evinces the same proclivities. and hence; to different scholars, he stands for different things, just as Machiavelli was variously understood by different people. To some, Kautilya is the evil-minded adviser of tyrant kings, to others he is the eminent, disinterested spokesman of natural liberties who upholds freedom from alien domination at any cost, and reiterates the constant avoidance of internal subversion and misrule.

The attitude of Kautilya and Machiavelli to history reveals interesting resemblances and contrasts while both of them wrote for rulers rather than for ruled ones. Kautilya's strategems for warriors and statesmen as given in the *Arthashastra* rested on his deep learning, knowledge of human nature and a sound discernment of the mosaic of motivations that inspired people for all times and climes, high and low, Machiavelli's maxims had a pessimistic view of the world.

The realist that Kautilya was, he did not attribute the degeneration to an impish destiny or divinely ordained misfortune but he perceived it as the direct consequence of lethargy, misgovernance and improvidence. Thus, he evolved, and expatiated on, principles of political conduct that would cover all such contingencies. He was convinced that the *swami* and his ministers acting in concert could strengthen the fabric of the state to such an extent that it could withstand any whim of time or fate.⁶¹ The nature and different kinds of sovereignty—how these are acquired,

maintained and lost—are discussed threadbare in the *Arthashastra*. A state, guided by the foresight of its ruler, and armed to the teeth, is equipped thereby not to be buffeted by every change of fortune. (Not merely content with simply theorising about the postulates of statehood and society, Kautilya saw to it that *rājadharma* of the country became an object of immediate concern to the *swami* and his ministers.)

(There is the persistent core of a serene atmosphere in the *Arthashastra* where intellectual liberty and spiritual freedom are guaranteed for the people through a state practising *dharma* by its ruler.)

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