

# KAUTILYA

Prepared by, Mr. ,  
Thomas G.M.,  
Associate professor,  
Pompei college Aikala.

# Life and works:

- ▶ Kautilya is also known as Chanakya or Vishnuguptha who was the PM of Chandragupta Maurya.
  - ▶ His major work was “Arthashastra” which was translated into English by Dr. Shamashastry.
  - ▶ Kautilya speaks about “Trivarga” in human life – Dharma, Artha & Kama of which, to him, Artha is supreme in the world.
  - ▶ To him, to attain Dharma & Kama Artha is of supreme importance.
- 

# Life & works ....

- ▶ Kautilya's Arthashastra is considered as a treatise on state-craft.
- ▶ It dealt with a wide range of subjects such as coinage, commerce, accounts, army, agriculture, law, taxation, the art of warfare, Foreign policy, internal administration, etc.
- ▶ It was considered as a right guide for the statesmen, & administrators.
- ▶ His Arthashastra is also known as "Dandaniti".
- ▶ Danda literally means a stick or a staff.
- ▶ Danda also means "power of control & punishment – this power is given to the king.
- ▶ Therefore, Dandaniti is nothing but the study of the administration of the state and government.

# I. Kautilya's Ideas on State:

- a. **State is divinely ordained to end anarchy:** It means state is a divine creation. God appointed “Manu” as the first ruler. People made an agreement with Manu to end the law of jungle (Mastya–nyaya) in the State of Nature. In this agreement, people agreed to pay taxes to obey the laws of the king to end anarchy. He considered it the religious obligation of the people to honour their ruler. Thus Kautilya believed in the divine theory of the creation of the state.
- 

## II. Elements of the State:

- ▶ Kautilya recognized 7 elements of the state.  
They are –
    1. The King,
    2. The Council of Ministers,
    3. Janapada Nivesha,
    4. Fortress,
    5. Army,
    6. Treasury &
    7. Community of friends.
- 

# Elements of State ....

- ▶ These elements resembles the modern concept of the elements of the state, e.g. Janapada Nivesha means territory & population,
- ▶ king & council of ministers is the government
- ▶ and the forts, army & treasury indicates the supreme power of the state.

# III. Sources of the state Law:

- ▶ He referred to 4 important sources of the state law – viz,
  - a. The sacred cannon(Dharma),
  - b. The current law (Vyavahara),
  - c. Usage (Saistha) and
  - d. Reasoning (Nyaya).
- ▶ The king according to him should abrogate such customs as are harmful to his own interest or are contrary to righteousness.

# IV. The theory of Danda:

- ▶ The application of danda is justified on the ground that it is the safeguard of man's worldly existence & fulfillment of his complex interests.
  - ▶ According to him, a king who is severe in the application of danda afflicts all, one who is mild in its application is overpowered by them, while one who justly inflicts it is respected by all.
- 

# V. The theory of Government:

- ▶ The government according to him, includes the king, the officials & the mechanism of administration.
  - ▶ The king alone selects the whole body of assistants, he directs the heads of administrative departments, he remedies the calamities of the human and material elements of the state & strengthens them.
  - ▶ He has to honour the deserving & punish the wicked officials.
  - ▶ Thus king is the centre of the entire state and government.
  - ▶ The king should be a man of intellect & character & should be trained in the principles and policies of the government.
- 

# VI. Civil and Military Administration:

- ▶ Kautilya mentions a number of principles to be followed by the king relating to the civil and military administration.
- ▶ King has to put under his own control two important portfolios namely, the revenue & the army.
- ▶ King has to keep continuous vigil & supervision over his officials because human nature is fickle.
- ▶ Thirdly the army should be placed under a divided command to guard against treachery.

# VII. Principles of State Policy:

- ▶ To Kautilya, if the king is alert his servants also be alert & vice-versa.
  - ▶ According to Kautilya, the king should treat his subjects like a father treats his children & provide for the state relief during calamities.
- 

# KAUTILYA'S SAPTHANGA THEORY:

- ▶ In the first chapter of his VIth Book known as “**Mandal Yonih**” Kautilya recognizes seven elements of the state.
- ▶ **These elements he compares to different organs of the body.**
- ▶ These organs (Angas) of the body should be active and healthy for the smooth functioning of the body, in the same way the seven elements of the state should function.

# The seven Elements:

- ▶ The seven elements (Angas) are –
  1. The king,
  2. Council of ministers,
  3. Janapada Niveshana,
  4. Fortress,
  5. Army,
  6. Treasury &
  7. Community of friends.
- ▶ Of these 7 elements, Kautilya assigns the first place to the king, next place to the council of ministers, followed by Janapada, army, fortress and treasury.
- ▶ Kautilya considered all these elements as being interdependent. Harmony was essential to their own existence. They all can exist together– no independent existence.

# 1. The King (Swamin):

- ▶ To him, king occupies the central position – he is the one who brings about unity & harmony within the state.
- ▶ The highest executive authority is vested with the king –all powers connected with state like state protection, state expansion, etc.
- ▶ To him only the king is capable of realizing the objectives of the state, solving the difficult problems of the state.
- ▶ Welfare of the subjects, economic progress, ethical supremacy– all these are possible only through the king.
- ▶ According to Kautilya, the people have the right to remove a bad king if he fails to carry on his work(as there is a contract between the king & the people).

## 2. Council of Ministers (Amatya):

- ▶ In the hierarchical order, the council of ministers occupies the second important position.
  - ▶ Ministers are like the eyes of the king.
  - ▶ He has to consult the ministers before taking any major decisions.
  - ▶ He speaks about the inner circle of ministers like the prime minister, senapati, purohita or priest, yuvaraj or the crown prince, etc.
- 

# 3. Janapada Nivesha(settlements):

- ▶ Janapada means the territory and population.
- ▶ Without Janapada there is neither king nor kingship.
- ▶ Any law should lead to the welfare of the Janapada.
- ▶ In Kautilya's janapada there are four political departments–1. Gram sangrahana, 2. Karavatika, 3. Dronamukha &4. Sthaneeya.
- ▶ Similarly, Gram panchayats, educational institutions, workers unions, and many other social institutions also come under the jurisdiction of janapadas.
- ▶ These institutions should enjoy freedom and the king ensured it.

## 4. Fortress (Durga):

- ▶ A strong fort absolutely necessary for the protection of the state.
  - ▶ Kautilya has given details as to how the fortress may be constructed in water, desert, mountains, forests etc. like jaladurga, vanadurga, giridurga, so on.
  - ▶ The king should choose the strongest fort when there is danger of attack, to protect himself and also the janapada.
- 

## 5. Army (Bala):

- ▶ A strong army is also an important element or anga of Kautilya's conception of state.
  - ▶ A strong army is known for its discipline.
  - ▶ He has laid many rules that were to be followed by soldiers during the times of war.
  - ▶ He says weak people should not be tortured during the war.
  - ▶ Army should not destroy agriculture or industries in the war.
  - ▶ He wanted the army to be well prepared to face war at any moment.
- 

# 6. Treasury (Kosha):

- ▶ Finance is very important for the administration of the state.
- ▶ King should always ensure that the treasury never remains empty.
- ▶ Kautilya identified certain sources of revenue like land tax, fines, tax on export & import and so on.
- ▶ Kautilya in his Arthashastra mentioned how each portion of the revenue collected should be utilized different purposes.
- ▶ He has also mentioned the reasons for revenue depletes, e.g. deceit by king or his officers, corruption, non-payment of taxes, using public money for private purposes & so on.
- ▶ He wanted strong action to be taken against such individual.

## 7. Mithra (Ally) or community of friends:

- ▶ In the Arthashastra Kautilya has mentioned in detail how and when the king should establish peace, declare war and enter into treaties, etc.
  - ▶ The king should know with whom he should develop friendship & when should he remain neutral.
  - ▶ He also mentioned who are considered as community of friends.
- 

# Kautilya's views on International Relations:

- ▶ He discussed the inter-state relations objectively with great understanding & clarity.
- ▶ His views on international relations can be studied as follows –

# 1. Policy of a weak king towards a powerful aggressor:

- ▶ The weak king should take refuge with a more powerful ruler or seek shelter in an impregnable fort, in the event of an aggressor.
- ▶ Kautilya classified aggressors into 3 types –
  - ▶ a. Righteous,
  - ▶ b. Greedy,
  - ▶ c. Demoniatic.
- ▶ After peace is established, Kautilya suggests that the king should settle the peace treaty in such a way that it destroys his enemy.

## 2. Six-fold Policy:

- ▶ In Ch. VIII of his Arthashastra, Kautilya examines the six-fold policy to be adopted by the states in their interstate relationships.

They are –

1. Peace (Sandhi),
2. War (Vigraha),
3. Neutrality (Asana),
4. Marching (Yana),
5. Alliance (Samsraya) and
6. Making peace with one and waging war with another.

# Six-fold policy ....

1. Whoever is inferior to another shall make peace with him. Agreement with pledges is peace.
  2. Offensive operation is war, whoever superior in power shall wage war.
  3. Indifference is neutrality, whoever thinks, no enemy can hurt me, nor I am strong enough to destroy my enemy shall observe neutrality.
  4. Making preparation is marching, whoever is possessed of necessary means shall march against his enemy.
- 

# Six-fold policy ....

5. Seeking the protection of another is alliance; whoever is devoid of necessary strength to defend himself shall seek the protection of another.
6. Making peace with one and waging war with another is termed a double policy.
  - ▶ The above six-fold policy is available to a king in his relationship with other states.
  - ▶ The king by adopting the six-fold policy can endeavor to pass from deterioration to stagnation – to progress.

### 3. Role of the subjects attitude towards their ruler affecting the inter-state relations:

- ▶ Kautilya deals with 3 vulnerable type of kings, like –
  1. One who is plunged in a grave calamity but is a just ruler,
  2. One who is plunged in a minor calamity but is an unjust ruler, &
  3. One who has disaffected subjects.
- ▶ Out of these 3, Kautilya says that the third type of king is more vulnerable & could be defeated easily by his enemy.

# 4. Nature of alliance:

- ▶ Kautilya says that when the advantages derivable from peace and war are of equal character, one should prefer peace.
  - ▶ He favours making an alliance with a king who is stronger than one's neighbouring enemy.
  - ▶ A king who is situated between two powerful kings should seek protection from the stronger of the two.
- 

# Mandala Theory:

- ▶ This theory is closely connected to waging war with other countries.
  - ▶ This theory seeks to answer the question as to whom one has to attack first.
  - ▶ Kautilya believed that countries which share a common border were natural enemies.
  - ▶ He believed in the principle of “the enemy of my enemy is my friend”.
  - ▶ This idea is expressed in the form of a concentric circles, which make them look a bit like a ‘mandala’, so it is known as Mandala theory.
- 

# Mandala theory .....

- ▶ Kautilya said that diplomacy is a subtle act of war.
  - ▶ Kautilya's world was one of conquer rather than prepare for war, but hope for peace.
  - ▶ He advocated "prepare for war and plan to conquer".
  - ▶ In such an atmosphere diplomacy was just another weapon.
  - ▶ So foreign states should be classified as potential enemies, vulnerable enemies and enemies fit to be exterminated.
- 

# Mandala theory ....

- ▶ In this mandala theory Kautilya advocates the six-fold policy i.e. co-existence, neutrality, alliance, double policy, march and war.
  - ▶ To achieve this, he advised the king to resort to five tactics – conciliation, gift & bribery, deceit and pretence, open attack or war.
  - ▶ He says that a king should not hesitate to break any friendship or alliance that are later found to be disadvantageous.
  - ▶ In Kautilya's Arthashastra there is a fascinating discussion on war and diplomacy.
- 

# Mandala theory ....

- ▶ He wished the king to become a world conqueror and analyzed and which states are friends & inevitable enemies.
  - ▶ He approved of secret agents who killed enemy leaders and sowed discord among them.
  - ▶ His views of women as weapons of war, his use of religion and superstition to bolster his soldiers and demoralize the enemy troops.
- 

# Mandala theory ....

- ▶ He spoke of humane treatment of conquered soldiers and subjects & offered wide ranging techniques of war.
  - ▶ Geographical assumption of the Mandala theory is that the immediate neighbour state is a enemy state(real or potential) and a state next to it is likely to be one's friend - a friendly state has the next unfriendly state and so on.
  - ▶ However, Kautilya also recognized neutral and mediating states.
- 

# Evaluation:

1. Strategy is an important aspect of Mandala theory. But it may not be a part of warfare today. Kautilya made it a part of the state-craft.
  2. Kautilya was not a war-monger but a calculative and cautious statesman.
  3. Kautilya supported many deceptive ricks of state-craft based on “end justifies means”.
  4. He is criticized for supporting conflictual relationship with the neighboring states in order to build an empire.
- 