

# KAUTILYA'S *ARTHASASTRA*

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# The Empire of the Mauryas in India

- 322- 185 BCE
- Began with Chandragupta Maurya.
- Grandson of Chandragupta= Ashoka.
- Empire came to an end 50 years after Ashoka.

# Chandragupta Maurya

- Ancestry uncertain
- Liberated Punjab and Sindh from the Greeks.
- Overthrew the Nandas, aided by Kautilya.
- Gained power from Dhana Nanda around 322 BC
- War with Seleucus I Nicator. Seleucus wanted to regain territory in India. In 305 BC he waged war with Chandragupta and was defeated.
  - Peace treaty concluded.
  - Matrimonial alliance
  - Ambassador Megasthenes sent to Chandragupta's court.

# Chandragupta Maurya

- Occupied Saurashtra.
- Annexed Malwa and made Ujjain its capital.
- Occupied the Konkan region of Maharashtra.
- Conquered parts of South India up to Tamil Nadu.
- Administration:
  - The King
  - The Council of Ministers
  - Municipal Administration
  - Military Administration
  - Revenue System
  - Judicial System

# Administration: The King

- The King's duty was to unify the empire and maintain the integrity.
- He had to respect the laws of the land/no misuse of power.
- Subjects were compared to children.
- Happiness of the subjects was important to the King.
- Had to lead the armies in battle.
- Head of justice- maintained law and order.
- Appointed ministers

# Administration: The Council of Ministers

- Mentioned in Arthashastra.
- Advice and help the King.
- Four high ministers and fourteen junior ministers.
- High ministers:
  - Mahamantri (Prime Minister)
  - Purohita (Chief Priest)
  - Senapati (Commander in Chief)
  - Yuvraja (Crown Prince)

# Council of Ministers

- 14 junior ministers:
  - Dauvarika (Chamberlain)
  - Antarveshika (Chief of the Harem)
  - Prasastri (Prison Head)
  - Samaharta (Collector)
  - Pradeshastri (Divisional Commissioner)
  - Nayaka (Custodian of the City)
  - Paura (Governor of Capital)
  - Vyavaharika (Chief Judge)
  - Karmantika (Mine head)
  - Sannidhata (Treasurer)
  - Dandapala (Police Chief)
  - Antapala (Frontier Chief)
  - Mantri Parishada Adhyakshya (Council President)

# Kautilya's *Arthashastra*

- Study of political science and administration.
- Dated to about 4<sup>th</sup> century BC
- Divided into 15 parts.
- Instructional in nature.
- Four principles of diplomacy:
  - *Sam* (conciliation)
  - *Dam* (paying money)
  - *Danda* (enemy forced to surrender)
  - *Bheda* (disagreement in enemy's camp)
- King's duties- keep away from greed, vanity, anger, lust, etc.



# Kautilya's *Arthashastra*

- Defines a highly organised bureaucratic administration:
  - How the state is to be controlled
  - Organisation of national economy
  - Conduct of war

# Kautilya's *Arthashastra*

- Lays down monetary, fiscal policies, war strategies, welfare, international affairs.
- Duties of the King laid out- includes appointing ministers.
- *Amatyas* mentioned- assist King in public affairs.
- Mentions *Sanghas*- political, economic, military corporations that were autonomous in certain issues.
- Foreigners were to be treated well.

# Ashoka's *Dhamma*

- *Dharma (Dhamma)* was a result of his change of heart and his reform.
- *Dhamma* describes 'righteousness.' It is morality, piety.
- Used this for internal governance.
- In order to make its principles accessible to all, edits/inscriptions were placed across the empire.
- Messengers of dhamma were sent outside the empire.
- A set of universal, moral, ethical codes.
- In his rock edits, he says that "all men are my children".

# Ashoka's *Dhamma*

- **Dharma Mahamatras** were established- these being a group of people who were to look after the spiritual needs of people.
- Welfare state: consideration towards slaves; obedience to elders, generosity.
- Policy of *ahimsa* (non-violence) and tolerance. Renouncing of war.
- Ashoka had trees planted and well dug across the empire.
- Prohibition of killing of animals. Spread of vegetarianism.

# Ashoka and Buddhism

- Spread Buddhism across India and the world.
- Used Pali for propagation of Buddhism.
- Monasteries or *viharas* were built.
- Buddhism declared state religion.
- Convened the *Third Buddhist Council* at Pataliputra in 251 BC to resolve differences among Buddha's followers.