

KOUTILYA'S ARTHASASTRA: SOME OBSERVATIONS

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The Arthashastra refers to a practice of political diplomacy that arose in India, and is epitomized by the written material on position, policy and military strategy written by Kautilya. Kautilya was an academician at Taxila University and later the Prime Minister of the Mauryan Empire. He is referred to as the *Indian Machiavelli* as a result of his undisputed and shrewd techniques and policies, which mirror a "realist" approach to politics, diplomacy and warfare. His Arthashastra text recommended that no means were on the far side scope of a ruler to expand his territory or obtain power as well as the unscrupulous ethics of permitting torture, trickery, deceit, and spying as legitimate suggests, to realize territory, wealth and power.

Arthashastra deals thoroughly with the qualities and disciplines needed for a king to rule his subjects more expeditiously.

According to Kautilya, a kKing is one who:

- Has self-control, having conquered the unfriendly temptations of the senses
- Cultivates the intellect by consulting with elders
- Keeps his eyes open and stays updated through spies

- Is always active in promoting the protection and welfare of the folks
- Ensures the speculation of the themes of their Dharma by authority and example
- Improves his own discipline by enhancing his learning in all branches of knowledge; and
- Endears himself to his subjects by enriching them

Quarrels among individuals may be resolved by winning over the leaders or by removing the reason for the quarrel - individuals fighting among people themselves facilitate the king by competing with each other. Conflicts (for power) within the royalty, on the other hand, bring about harassment and destruction to the people and double the effort that is needed to finish such conflicts.

The Code of Conduct for a Prince according to Kautilya with enriching his self-discipline, he should keep company with learned elders, for in them alone discipline has its firm roots. For a trained intellect pursues yoga because from yoga comes self-control. Only a king, who is smart, disciplined, dedicated to a just governing of the subjects & aware of the welfare of all beings, can get pleasure from the world unopposed.

The ancient Sanskrit text opens, in chapter 2 of Book 1 (the first chapter is table of contents), by acknowledging that there are a number of extant schools with different theories on proper and necessary number of fields of knowledge, and asserts they all agree that the science of government is one of those fields. It lists the school of *Brihaspati*, the school of *Usanas*, the school of *Manu* and itself as the school of *Kautilya* as examples.