



**CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN  
BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS**  
VOLUME – 2

EDITED BY

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*by: Chitsimran, Dr. Abhishek Pandey, Dr. Archana Sharma,  
Dr. Arpit Sidhu, Dr. Dilpreet Kaur, Dr Razia Sehdev, Ms Paras Mehak,  
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## CHAPTER 3

### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN THE KAUTILYAN SATATE

*Dr. Diptimayee Mishra*<sup>3</sup>

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#### ABSTRACT

The social ideals of Vedic and epic India influenced Kautilyan social life to a large degree. The *Kauṭīlīya Arthaśāstra* admits that the knowledge of the *Vedas* and *Vedāṅgas* contributes to the *dharma* (duties/righteous conduct) of different castes (*caturvarṇa*) and different stages of life (*caturāśrama*). It follows Brahminical religion, imparts instructions, and prescribes duties to call castes and stages of life. Such prescribed duties are known by the term *svadharma* or the righteous conduct pertaining to different castes and different stages of life. Four caste-divisions of the society were known by the terms *Brāhmaṇa*, *Kṣatriya*, *Vaiśya*, and *Śūdra*. The Brahmins adhered to the teaching and leaving and performed the prescribed rituals, officiated at the performance of the rituals of other castes, and participated in offering and accepting gifts. The *Kṣatriyas* with study and prescribed rituals lived by the profession of arms, and protected the border of the country along with the life and property of the citizens. The *vaiśyas* with study and prescribed rituals adopted agriculture, cattle rearing and trade. The *śūdras* rendered service to the above four *varṇas*, continued other economic activities, and accepted the profession of the artisans, actors and singers. *Svadharma* was also prescribed for four stages of life like *brahmacarya* (celibacy), *gārhasthya* (householder), *vānaprastha* (forest recluse) and *paribrājaka* (wandering ascetic). The *brahmacārī* (the celibate), with scriptural learning, practiced rituals, remained devoted to the teacher, his son, his follow students and lived on the alms. The *gārhasthya* pursued his own profession for livelihood.

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<sup>3</sup> Guest Lecture, Department of Sanskrit, Ramadevi Women's University, Bhubaneswar-751022, Odisha, India

**Key Words:** *Vedāngas, caturāśrama, Svadharma, paribrājaka, Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, Śūdra.*

## INTRODUCTION

**K**ośa is the most important *prakṛti* as all state activities depend first on the treasury. Therefore, the king devotes his best attention to it. Kauṭilya used the word treasury (*kośa*) in a broad as well as in a narrow sense. The treasury of the king should consist of gold, silver, precious gems and gold coins. The wealth of the state is acquired lawfully either by inheritance or by the king's own efforts. It could withstand a calamity in which there is no income or even for a long duration of time. These are the excellences of a treasury. The Director of stores should build a treasury, a ware-house, a magazine, a store for forest produce, an armory and a prison-house. A four-cornered treasury-house should be built having made free from water and dampness, the walls should be paved on both sides and big slabs of stones be used for the bottom. An underground cellar should be made with a framework of strong timber level with ground having various arrangements at three floors. The ground and upper floors having well-made surfaces with a single door stair-case and a mechanism should be provided. A stair-case should be made with a prohibition to enter on two sides with an entrance-hall, built on bricks, and surrounded by channels storing goods. He should cause a permanent treasure-house to be laid by persons condemned to death, which could serve as a provision against calamity on the border of the country. The text notes that the power of the Government (*danḍa*) comes from the wealth (*kośa*). The undertakings of the fort, the treasury, the army, water-works and the occupations for livelihood have their source in the country. *Piśuna* says that of calamities befalling the fort and the treasury, are very serious. It is suggested that the king should always keep the army and treasury under his control because treasury is the most important factor for state administration. The councilor had to take one of the precautions when an old king was dying. He was to collect together the treasury and the army under the charge of trusted people in one place (*Rangarajan, 223*). A tax payer was not allowed to settle in a tax exempt-village. It is suggested that the king should maintain distinction between tax payers and tax-exempt persons as well as tax-paying and tax-exempt villages. (*KA, 3.10.11*)

## **Methodology**

In this research paper I have adopted research methods such as:

- Investigation & discussion
- Textual analysis
- Textual interpretation
- Critical analysis of political literary theories.

## **Objectives of Research**

In the previous research works of the scholars the ideas of Financial Management and the ideals of democratic method of administration are found to remain scattered. We get the ideas in fragments which are also indistinct at certain points of attention for good governance. Whether Kautilya devolves the economic strength of the people? What was the role of Industry and how it develops Livelihood? Whether Kautilyan ideals of administration are original or influenced by the previous social thinkers of India?

The chief superintendent of the treasury was not only in charge of gold and precious objects but also of all types of produce. The *Arthaśāstra* describes the method of constructing a treasury building. The treasury can be raised by increasing agricultural production, promoting trade, keeping strict control over government employees. Avoidance of troubles and calamities, increasing cash income and contributions are well-trying and successful policies. The cause of reduction of wealth lies in the misuse of government property and false accounting by government servants. The parks and halls are meant for recreation. The fort, the country, mines, irrigation works, forests herds and trade-routes are attended by the administrators which are the main sources of revenue. The sources of income are from custom duties, fines, standardization of weights and measures, the city-superintendent, the mint master, the superintendent of passports, spirituous liquors, animal slaughter, yarn, oil, ghee, sugars, and the goldsmith. The market-establishment, prostitutes, gambling, the temple-superintendent and the collection from gates and outsiders also added to the revenue. The country improves with agricultural produce, share-tribute, tax, the trader, the river-guard, the ferry, ships, the port, pastures, road-access, land-survey and thief-catching. Besides that, the wealth of the country constitutes gold, silver, diamonds, gems, pearls, corals, conch-shells, metals, salt and ores derived from the earth, rocks and

liquids. Irrigation works constitute flower-gardens, fruit-orchards, vegetable gardens, wet crop fields, and sowing of roots. The forest constitutes deer-parks, forests for produce, and elephant forests. The domestic animals are cows and buffaloes, goats and sheep, donkeys and camels, horses and mules. The trading constituted at both land-routes and the water-routes. All such constitute the corpus of income. The heads of income constitutes price, share, surcharge, monopoly tax, fixed tax, manufacturing charge and penalty. (*KA, Vol.II, 2.6.2-10*)

The Director of Agriculture serves by bringing together various kinds of agricultural produce. The revenue from the countryside also constituted the one-sixth share of individual income. The aggregate tax for the army, and various kinds of tax are also described in the text. The collection of income comes under various heads in the case of all commodities like price from the mines, the share, the surcharge, the monopoly tax, penalty, duty, compensation, fine, inspection fee and manufacturing charges. The mines are the sources of the treasury. It is said that the earth is obtained with the treasury as its ornament (*KA, Vol.II, 2.12.35-37*). The text describes various kinds of taxes such as *pratikāra*, *parihāra*, *aakarada*, *ayudhiya* and *bali*. The *pratikāra* includes collection of taxes from grains, cattle, gold, forest produce and *vishti* (labor). *Parihāra* and *akarada* are used to describe authorized exemptions from payment of tax. By direct cultivation and by leasing out land to tenants the state raises revenue. The various kinds of grains grown on these lands (grains, beans, lentils, oilseeds, sugarcane, textile fibers etc.) were accounted separately for collection of the revenue. The director of agriculture personally observed the amount of grains if increased or decreased when pounded, rubbed, grounded or fried. (*KA, Vol.II, 2.15.24*)

### **Treasury Officials**

There were two officials, the chief superintendent of the treasury and the chief superintendent of the warehouses who remained for in charge of all stores. The treasury situated in the capital, was used to store precious metals, coins, jewelry and very high valued articles. The director of stores prepared a ware-house with pillars of baked bricks having many grounds and upper floors with four halls and with a secret passage for escape through hollow pillars. A store should be made in between many long halls and the

walls surrounded by rooms and an underground cellar should also be made with a similar structure. (*KA, Vol.II, 2.5.5*)

### **The Chief Superintendent of the Treasury**

The chief superintendent should be in charge of the treasury for gems, jewelry and precious metals, the storehouses for products of high value (*sara*), the warehouses for products of low value (*phalgu*) and the warehouse for forest produce. He should be conversant with the amount, price, characteristics, class and appearance, their storing, manufacture of new ones and repair of old ones, secret treatment, tools with their use according to place and time and remedies against things destructive to them. He should know how to store each item, any losses that may occur during storage and the means of preventing deterioration during storage. The chief superintendent should receive from the treasury or appropriate storehouse precious articles, commodities of high value, commodities of low value and forest produce. The panel of experts in each field were there to assist him in evaluation. He keeps a record of each item indicating class of item, form, description, quality, amount, price and place of storage. The chief superintendent was responsible for the repair and refurbishment of stored articles. The detailed description of the qualities and sources of the precious stones, diamonds, pearls, gems, like ruby and semi-precious stones and coral, perfumery articles sandalwood, aloe, incense, camphor and *kaleyaka*, manufactured jewelry, woolen cloth and blankets, silk and silk type fabrics and cotton fabrics are given in the Kautilyan text.

### **The Chief Superintendent of Ware-houses**

The chief superintendent of ware-houses remains in charge of granaries and warehouses for fats and oils, sugar and honey, salt, vinegars, fruit juices, sour liquids, dried fish, dried meat and vegetables, Also he keeps an account of all commodities received into the warehouses. He is brought in by the chief superintendent of crown lands (*sītā*). The chief superintendent should receive revenue from the countryside. The taxes (*piṇḍakārah*) paid in kind by villages as a whole were *saḍbhāga*, the one sixth share from leased lands, animal slaughter; *senābhaktham*-contributions from the people for the maintenance of the army; *bali*-special agriculture tax; *kara* the taxes paid by cash, *utsanghaḥ* presents from the people on

festive occasions, *pārsvam* surcharges, *pārinīṅikam* compensatory payments, *aupāyanikaṃ* presents gifts to the king and *kaushteyakaṃ* income from water reservoirs and parks. He received cash taxes, repayment of borrowings including interests, exchange on a barter basis. He kept half of the commodities in store for use in times of calamities and used only the other half for current needs. He replaced old stock with new. He observed the amount of increase or decrease in the grains personally when pounded, rubbed, ground or fried and when they are moistened, dried or cooked. He was responsible for the profitable use of products such as oilcake and bran for feeding bullocks, where one drone of *māṣa* or a *pulāka* of barley was added. He managed to cause charcoal and husks for plastering walls and running metal workshops and gave broken grains to slaves and laborers. He was in charge of all implements like standard weights and measures, grinding-stones, pestle and mortar, wooden mortars for dehusking and hulling, cane-basket, box and broom which were considered the implements. He remained in charge of sweepers, watchmen, measure, supervisor of measuring, supervisor of delivery, receiver of tallies, accountants and miscellaneous slaves and laborers. (KA, Vol.II, 2.15.62-63).

*Senāpati* was the commander-in-chief of all armed forces. *Dauvārika* and *Antarvamśika* were the chief of palace attendants and the chief of the king's guard respectively. They were not directly connected with state administration. During king's illness they carried out his daily routine. The *Purohita* took care of the conspiracy against the king. The text advises the king to keep the power of the treasury and the army in his own hands. The most important administrative officers were *Samāhartā* and *Sannidhātā*. The chief function of the *Samāhartrā* was the preparation of annual budget and the keeping of accounts. He attended the fort, the country, mines, irrigation works, forests, herds and trade-routes as the main sources of the revenue. The *samāhartā* appears to be the finance minister. Who was in administrative charge of the entire country side (*janapada*). Only the *durga* or the fortified capital was excluded from his jurisdiction. He represented the king in the country side during the latter's absence from the kingdom during expeditions. The *Samāhartā* had headquarters in the capital, called the *Samudayasthāna*. (KA, Vol.II, 2.3.3)

The *Samāhartā* divided the country into four divisions and in each division the officer in charge was called *sthānika*. The junior



officers were known as *gopas*, each in charge of five or ten villages. The *Samāhartā* collected information about the towns and villages and classified them as big, middling and small. He collected information about their wealth in grains, cattle, money and so on with the help of those officers. The *gopa* maintained a record of all agricultural and other holdings in the villages and took a census of every household, noted down the number of inhabitants with full details about their professions, the property, their income, expenditure and revenue received. This information was necessary for the *samāhartṛ* for preparing his budget. It may be assumed that the *gopas* would be forwarding their records to the *samāhartṛ* through their respective *sthānikas*.

The men in secret service were expected to do something. They reported to the *samāhartṛ* on new arrivals in towns and villages and departures from them, on the activity of unsocial elements, the movements of traders and the goods carried by them, the loyalty or otherwise of the subjects, the integrity or its absence among officers and on the activity of robbers and enemy-agents. The *samāhartṛ* was responsible for maintaining the law and order in the countryside. He received help from the *pradeṣṭṛs*, who were stationed at the headquarters of the *gopas* and the *sthānikas*. They had to check the progress of criminal activities. They investigated thefts and robberies with the help of the *gopas* and the *sthānikas*. The *samāhartṛ* functioned like the home minister in modern democracy. He usually impressed people with regard to the efficient administration. He was as good as a governor or administrator-general in the countryside. (KA, Vol. III, 196)

The *rāṣṭrīpāla* was one of his subordinates like *sthānika*, though his name does not appear in the chapter on salaries and wages. There is a reference to *grāmabhṛtaka*; but it is not clear if *gopas* are also to be understood by that term. This *grāmika* appears to be a kind of village headman. A *grāmika* could banish a villager and could fine twenty-four *paṇas*. This shows that he had the power of banishing people. The *grāmika* could also require a tenant to accompany him when he goes on some village work. That also shows some executive power. Again a wife ill-treated by her husband was allowed to seek shelter in the house of a *grāmika*. This shows that he occupied a position of respect and status in the village.

The *samāharṭṛ* was an administrative officer in charge of the stores. He could build the store-houses suited to different commodities to be stored in them. *Kosādhyakṣa* was in the charge of the *koṣagr̥ha*, where various kinds of gems and articles of high value are to be kept; *paṇyādhakṣa* was in the charge of the *paṇyāgr̥ha*, where grains and other edible goods were stored; *koṣṭhāgāra* was under *koṣṭhagārādhyakṣa*, where grains, sugar, salt, oils and other edibles are to be stored; *kupyagr̥ha* was under *kupyādhyakṣa*, where timber and other forest produce were stored; *āyudhāgāra* was the armoury-house under *āyudhāgārādhyakṣa*; and *bandhanāgāra*, the prison house was in the charge of the *bandhanāgārādhyakṣa*. The *samnidhātṛ* was expected to be conversant with everything connected with the stores. He had to keep the record of the amount of things received at various stores from different sources, and about the things delivered and available in the stores. (*KA, Vol.III, 200*)

The *akṣapaṭala* was the administrative officer in the charge of a special building of his own with many other halls and record rooms. He recorded the activity of the state departments, state factories, conditions governing production, prices, samples and standards of measuring instruments for various kinds of goods; laws, transactions, customs, and regulations in force in different regions, villages, castes families and corporations; salaries and other perquisites of state servants. He recorded the payments made to and amounts received from foreign princes, whether allies or foes. Besides, he recorded the communications to the king and the royal family. He regulated the workings of each of the state departments with their undertakings. It is from this office that the officers received assignments of specific undertakings with instructions about carrying them out. *Antapālas* were the special officers who were appointed to guard the frontier. Some kinds of forts were to be erected on the frontiers at four directions and at these frontier posts the *antapālas* were stationed. Thus they controlled the entry of men and goods in the country. They issued pass books to incoming traders, stamped their goods and after charging them a cess sent them on to the capital in the centre of the country. It is said that *antapāls* are likely to be more harmful to the state than the traders because they might tend to encourage robbers and to make excessive demands on traders. They could ensure the free flow of trade. The appointment of *antapāls* was also very important for the security of the country. (*KA, Vol.III, 201-202*)

There are five kinds of *saṁsthās*: the *kāpatika*, is an assistant, who reports to the king or the minister regarding harmful situation, if any; *vdāsthita* is a disguised monk in the intelligence network; the *grhapatikavyaṅjana*, a farmer rehabilitated by the state; the *vaidehakaulyaṅjana*, a merchant similarly rehabilitated with a number of intelligence agents under him; and the *tāpasavyaṅjana*, a bogus ascetic, imposing on the gullible as a great seer and thus becoming the centre of intelligence work. There are four types of *saṁcāra*: the *sattrin*, who is apparently an orphan specially trained by the state for this work also known as the secret agent par excellence. The *tīkṣṇa*, the desperado or bravo, who is useful for secretly liquidating enemies of the state and the *rasada*, the giver of poison were administering *upāśudanda* (secret punishment) or *tūṣṇīmdanda* (silent punishment). The *bhiksukī* or *parivrājikā* is a Brahmin nun who does the work of spying in the houses of high officers where she finds easy access because of the honour shown to her in the palace. Heretical nuns could also be similarly employed.

The *saṁsthās* work under the *samāhartṛ*. Who uses the *grhapatikavyaṅjana* and others to check the information collected by the *gopas*. He also uses them to find out, who among the subjects and state servants are loyal. That intelligence agent who works in foreign countries as well as in the state is called *ubhayavetana* (in the pay of both). He is in the secret service of one state with the ruler or some high officer in a foreign state. He could pass on valuable information secretly to his native state or could render useful service to it in some other way. A highly organised intelligence service is always needed for administration. It cannot be denied that its recommendations regarding the use of the *tīkṣṇa* and the *rasada* for what is called silent punishment cannot be justified on ethical grounds. It may be that they were engaged to save the state from trouble and expenditure by eliminating the threat to the rule without hue and cry. Secret ways were used only against the unrighteous and was never a general practice. (KA, Vol.III, 206-207)

The text gives us the idea that the king's role on earth is similar to that of the gods. The king is able to grant favours like *Indra* and to inflict punishment like *Yama*. Anyone disrespecting the king gets divine punishment as the duty of the ruler is to protect the subjects (KA, Vol.II, 1.13.7). The book describes the duties and the qualities of the ruler because the king is the backbone of the state. It remarkably displays the awareness of the necessity of moral values

in political life. Modern social life and politics are polluted by increasing immoral elements which may be improved with such ancient teachings.

## CONCLUSION

Kauṭilya also classified seven heads of state income such as city, country, mines, irrigation works, forests, cattle-herds and trade-routes (*KA, Vol.II 2.6.1-8*). *Āyaśarīra* (the body of income) was reclassified under seven heads. These are: (1) *Mūlya* the price of which was realized by the sale of state goods, (2) *Bhāga* share of goods produced by the subjects, (3) *Vyājī* was a tax imposed on all sales, (4) *Parigha* was a kind of protective duty for safe-guarding state goods, (5) *Klpta* was a fixed levy apparently the one charged at ports on river-banks, (6) *Rūpika* was a surcharge on manufactures, (7) *Atyaya* was known as penalties (*KA, Vol.II,2.2.6-10*). According to Kautilya three principal vocations provided men with the means of livelihood such as *kṛsi* (agriculture), *pāśupālya* (cattle-tending) and *vāñijya* (trade) which were also known by the term *vṛtti*. The state receives grains, cattle, money and various kinds of products from *vārtā* which sustains the treasury and the army. Also people earned their livelihood from arts, and crafts etc which were not included in the *vārtā*.

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