



**CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN
BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS**

VOLUME - 1

EDITED BY

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CHAPTER II

INDUSTRIAL MANAGEMENT IN THE KAUTILYAN STATE

Dr. Diptimayee Mishra

Abstract

The economic administration of a political domain, with any of the forms of government. The wealth of the state depends on the management of economic sources, without which the present prosperity along with the future gain meet destruction. Artha, standing for material prosperity, ensures the means for securing such prosperity. This is also known by the term *vṛtti* (livelihood) since the essential conditions of material prosperity is governed by the security of human livelihood through agriculture, cattle-rearing, and trade as they yield grains, cattle, money, forest produce, and labors. This brings under control the party of the king as well as the enemies: *Kṛṣipāśupālye vāñijyā ca vārtā, dhānya-paśu-hiraṇya-kupya-viṣṭi-pradānā- daupakārikī. Tayā svapakṣam parapakṣam ca vaśīkaroti kośadaṇḍābhyām.* Further it is noted that wealth is the source of livelihood of men and in other words, the earth inhabited by men.

Key Words: economic administration, *kṛṣipāśupālye*, artha, trade, agriculture, livelihood

Introduction

Kauṭilya was a master of politics. He was the key advisor to the Indian King Chandragupta Maurya (C.317-0293 B.C.E). Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra was a science of politics intendeds to teach a wise king how to govern. According to R. Sāmaśāstry, Kauṭilya also known as Cānakya or Viṣnugupta and he destroyed the Nandas and placed Candragupta Maurya on the throne of Magadha is the author of the Arthaśāstra. The time of Kautilya's Arthaśāstra is accepted as the fourth century B.C. (Kangle, III, 59).

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According to Ganapatiśāstry Kauṭilya's *gotra* was 'Kutila' so he is known as Kauṭilya.

"Kauṭilyaiti gotranīvaṇḍhanā viṣṇuguptasya saṃgya"

Some of the principles of *Arthasastra* were envisioned by the teachers prior to Kauṭilya which may be observed from the lines as follows: *Prṥhivyaṁ lābhe pālāne ca yāvanyartha śāstraṇi pūrvācaryah prasthāpitāni prāyaśāstrāni smṛtyekamidimrthasāstram kṛtam.* (Kangle, II.1.1.1)

This *Arthasāstra* is made as a compendium of almost all the *Arthasāstras*, which, in view of acquisition and maintenance of the earth, have been composed by ancient teachers.

Thus the first five *Adhikaraṇas* (books) of the *Kauṭilya Arthasāstra*, known as *tantra*, are divided into ninety four subsections (*Prakaraṇas*) and the other nine books known as *āvāpa* are divided into eighty four *Prakaraṇas*. The fifteenth Book consisting of a single *prakaraṇa* presents the plan of the work of thirty two methodological principles and remains outside the divisions of both *tantra* and *āvāpa*. Since the text deals mostly with the art of government the subject of the text covers administration, law, order, and justice; taxation, revenue, expenditure, and commercial management; both interstate and foreign trade; foreign policy; defense and war. In the realization of three objectives (*trivarga*) the promotions of the welfare of the people leads to acquisitions of wealth, which in turn enables the ruler to enlarge the territory by conquest. Therefore the *artha* is believed to be supreme in the triad (*trivarga*) as *dharma* (spiritual good) and *kāma* (sensual pleasure) depend on material prosperity (*artha*) (KA, 1.7.6-7) which leads the state to the parasol of good governance.

The *Arthasāstra* is one of the world's largest treatise on the economic administration of a state. Agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade are the main types of economic activities. According to Kauṭilya agriculture is better than mines, because mines fill only the treasury while agricultural production fills both the treasury and the storehouse. The king should protect agriculture from fines, laborers and taxes (KA, 2.1.37). During the period the director of agriculture consulted experts for water divining and the science of rearing plants. He collected seeds of all kinds of grains, flowers, fruits, flax and cottons. It is the duty of

the agriculture officer to decide the suitable land for showing the seeds for the crops like- wet crops, winter crops, or summer crops. It is recommended to sow *śāli*-rice, *vr̥hi*-rice, *kodrava*, *sesamum*, *priyaṅgu*, *udāraka* and *varaka* at the beginning of the season. The middle sowing crops are *mudga*, *māṣa* and *śaimbya*. The sunflower, lentils, *kulattha*, barley, wheat, *kalāya*, linseed and mustard crops to be sown later in the season. The director of agriculture was conversant with the practice of agriculture, water-divining and the science of rearing plants. (*Gourela, 195*)

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 good governance 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. Besides the distinct contribution of *Arthaśāstra* to good administration in a system of democracy has not been emphatically dealt with. Whether Kautilya devolves the economic strength of the people? What was the role of Industry and how it develops Livelihood? Whether Kautilian ideals of administration are original or influenced by the previous social thinkers of India?

Industry

According to Kautilya the mines were the sourced of wealth and war material. The power of government comes from wealth because the earth is acquired by the treasury and the army. The mines where there in remote places and the discontented official were posted to the mines (*KA, Vol.II, 1.13.21*). Kautilya mentions various metals such as gold, silver, copper, lead, tin, iron and *vaikrantaka*. He also mentioned alloys

of copper such as brass, bronze and bell metal. As a part of mining industry precious stones, diamonds, quartz and mica as well as marine products like pearls and coral were also considered by him as valuables. These industries were controlled by the Chief Controller of Mining and metallurgy. Kautilya divided the duties among the different superintendents. For precious stones the chief superintendent of mines and the chief superintendent of metals were appointed and for minting coins the chief mint master was appointed. The Coin examiner and the Chief Salt Commissioner were also appointed by the king. The crown workshops and his subordinates were controlled by the chief superintendent of precious metals and jewelry. The jewelers were supervised by the controller of gold and silver smiths. Kautilya described four categories of manufacturing industries such as: state monopolies making weapons or brewing liquor, textiles as the state-controlled industries, salt and jewelry, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, weavers and dyers, and unregulated craftsmen like potters, basket makers. He also described about other industries such as the construction industry for ship and boat-building, and the manufacture of carts and chariots. The women carried out works in the spinning of yarns. The weaving was decentralized both by contracting the work out to weavers on a piece-rate which was carried out under state supervision. They specially built weaving sheds for special types of cloth, ropes, straps, thong and similar equipment for animals. The weavers also made yarns of different qualities like-coarse, medium and fine, and there were spun from, cotton, wool, silk cotton, hemp, flax, silk and wool. They also prepared bed sheets and covers with protective wear like quilted armour. (*Rangarajan, 64- 66*)

The superintendent of yarn and textiles appointed people to carry out the work in yarns, armours, cloth and ropes through expert workers. At that time wool, bark fibers, cotton, silk-cotton, hemp and flax yarn were sewed through widows, crippled women, maidens, and women who had left their homes. The oil and myrobalan were provided freely to women for better work and good productivity. The king gifted deserving on special festive days. The superintendent closely contacted the workers to gratify them with perfumes and flowers when a weaving mill started for the public. The text notes:

“Weavers should increase yarn to the extent of eleven pales from ten. The wage of weaving should be equal to the value of yarn, one and a half times in the case of *kṣauma* and *kauṣeya*, double in the case of *patrorṇā*, blankets and *dukūla*. An allowance of five pales was allowed for loss of wool in carding” (KA, Vol.II, 2.4.1.8, 10, 13)

The Chief Controller of Mining

The chief controller was to be conversant with the geology of metal-bearing ores, the techniques of smelting different metals with identification of gems. He supervised the work of the chief superintendent of mines, the chief superintendent of metals, the chief superintendent of mint, the examiner of coins and the chief salt commissioner.

The chief superintendent of mines had to run factories for recovery of mother-of-pearl, diamonds, gems, pearls, coral, quartz and mic. He also supervised trade for the above products. The chief superintendent of metals established factories for recovery of metals such as copper, lead tin, iron and *vaikrantaka* and supervised trade in metals. The director of mines was to be conversant with the science of metal veins in the earth. He was expected to know the art of smelting and the art of coloring gems. At that time he established the factories for copper, steel, lead, tin and iron and made trading provisions for metal-ware.

The Chief Master of the Mint

The chief master of the mint was responsible for the minting of silver coins, made up of alloy consisting of 11/16th part silver. 1/4th part copper and 1/6th part hardening metal such as iron, tin, lead or antimony in the following denominations one *pana* ½ *pana*, ¼ *pana* and 1/8 *pana*. (KA, Vol.II 2.12.24) The examiner of coins certified the coins used in trade and commerce as well as those used for making payments into the treasury.

The Chief Superintendent of Metals and Jewelry

The chief superintendent of metals and jewelry was to be expert in the qualities of different types of gold, silver and touchstones. He had

to learn the methods of purification, hardening and softening of precious metals, testing gold of different carats, the different ways of making jewelry such as setting or stringing precious stones, making solid or hollow articles making of beads, the gold plating, and the making of white silver. He could know the precious stones and the quantities of precious metals required for making different articles. (KA, Vol.II 2.2.13)

The chief superintendent of jeweler established the office and workshops of the controller of goldsmiths and silversmiths in the middle of the market street in the fortified towns and major townships in the countryside. He had to build a workshop for the manufacture of jeweler and articles of gold and silver which shall have only one entry. Four rooms were built without interconnecting around an inner courtyard. The chief superintendent was responsible for testing the quality of gold. He could added to pure gold in proportion 1/64, 2/64 up to 16/64 in order to produce sixteen other standards. Now people get 916 Hallmark jeweler which is pure and the Prime Minister has announced that no jeweler shop can sell gold without Hallmarks for consumer protection. This a Kauṭilyan influence which prescribed control over workshops. At that time also goldsmiths used one-quarter copper with silver or one-quarter silver with gold which was not visible. (KA, Vol.II 2.13.42)

The Controller of Goldsmiths and Silversmiths

The controller of goldsmiths and silversmiths was a person of high pedigree and high conduct. He was very skillful in his own profession and was conversant with the characteristics of gold and the method of manufacture of various articles. He was aware of the method which is adopted by goldsmiths to cheat the public by stealing the precious metals. Kauṭilya divided every part of economics for good government system. He suggested the king for the appointment of different officers for different works. Their works were regularly supervised and for any mistake they were also made responsible.

It is stated that the king should follow the course of conduct that is recommend by the majority which is capable of leading to the achievement of the object. The royal goldsmith was known as

sauvarṇikah. He prepared gold articles of the citizens to be manufactured by workmen. The *sauvarṇikah* did not mint coins. A gold coin is not mentioned anywhere in the text. There is reference to silver and copper coins and *rūpyasuvarṇa* could not mean a gold coin. The *Samāhartṛ* could open a subscription list for some specific work (*samāhartā kāryam apadiśya paurajānapadān bhikṣeta*). Secret agents had to put a high figure of contribution against their own names (*yogapuruśaṣ ca pūrvam atimātram dadyuh*). The king asked for corresponding contributions from the citizens and the country people who were rich and prosperous. (*etena pradeśana rājā paurajānapaddān bhikṣeta*). There was no provision for approaching any assembly for sanction of increase in taxation or anything like that.

Kauṭilya broadly prescribed the responsibilities of the controller of goldsmiths and silversmiths who supervised the works of the other smiths working for the citizens of the towns and the countryside. At that time Kauṭilya highly recommended for consumer protection. His duties were most important as he inspected the finished new articles or repaired old articles for delivery to the customers. The customer was regarded as god and they were treated so carefully for business development. Kauṭilya described different punishments for stealing any metal. (*KA, Vol.II 2.14*) The king appointed the salt commissioner for collection of the share of salt as released after crystallization. The buyer of the imported salt was responsible for payment of the duty and it could be sold after the share and dues were paid. Here there was five percent surcharge for the inspection fee and manufacturing fee. The purchaser paid the duty and protective duty corresponding to it. Brahmins, who were learned in the Vedas, ascetics, and laborers could take salt freely for their food. (*KA, Vol.II 12.28-31*)

According to Kauṭilya the manufacture of alcoholic liquor was a state monopoly. The liquors were prepared in the countryside, in the city and the camps, in one place or as many places as required (*KA, Vol.II 2.2.25*). At that time different kinds of alcoholic drinks were prepared such as from rice *medaka* was made, *prasanna* was made from barley flour, from sugar cane juice *asana* was made, *maireya* was made from jaggery, *madhu* was made from grape juice and *arishtas* were made for medical purposes. At that time people also knew the grape-

wine. Many varieties of liquors were available but basic types were *sara* and *kinva*. Kauṭilya also described the list of all types of liquors along with recipes for making, and flavoring process like modern liquor processing. Either on a share basis or on payment of a fixed quantity of royalty, the salt pans were leased. The penalty was highest in case for adulterating the salt. Kauṭilya described two types of salt and also made distinction between edible salt and the salt which was not used for human consumption (*Rangarajan, 66*). It is mentioned that trade was the third pillar for economic activity. By improving the infrastructure apart from promoting trade, the state was required to keep trade routes free from harassment by couriers, state officials, thieves and frontier guards. (*KA, Vol.II, 2.1.38*). Four kinds of income came from the mines like (1) *Mūlya* (price), (2) *Bhāga* (share), (3) *Vyājī* (a sort of sales tax), (4) *Parigha* (the exact nature of which is not clear). (*KA, Vol.III, 183*)

Conclusion

There was top merit selection in the appointment of higher officers like directors and administrators. They had to come through a very critical process of selection. But at the same time the ruler was very kind to give direct appointment or engagement to widows and distressed fellows in the spinning of yarns and in other desirable services for living a livelihood. No tax was levied on the materials meant for rituals. Agricultural land was allotted to the peasants, especially to the people of the *śudra* caste. On festival occasions no tax was levied on the liquors for consumption and equipment by the public. There was provision of free supply of salt to the Brahmins, seers, and scholars in *Vedas*. In the trade route there was provision for full protection to the traders. Besides, in the trade-provisions Kauṭilya promoted the consumer protection and especially for gold ornaments recommended hall-mark system. The above ideas of the royal administration have contributed to the modern democratic ideals that promote the vision of the rulers for a welfare and prosperous state.

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