



STRUCTURE OF KAUTILYA'S ARTHASHASTRA

Dr. Sunita Devi

Assistant Professor in Economics

Government College Mohna, Faridabad, India

ABSTRACT

Arthashastra is an ocean of real-life knowledge. It is a book of political economy to teach the kings how to run a territory. The main purpose of this paper is to discuss the chapter plan and topics covered in *Arthashastra* in brief, so that everyone can go through its structure. It contains useful information about various aspects of life.

Keywords: Kautilya, *Arthashastra*

INTRODUCTION

Arthashastra is a famous treatise on political economy. It is written by the great Indian ancient economist Kautilya. Kautilya was the guide of King Chandragupta Maurya. Kautilya is also known by the names of Chanakya and Vishnugupta. He was not only a *Rajguru* but also a Guru of the common man and *Praja*. In his *Arthashastra*, he mentioned how to run a territory efficiently. He wrote not only about a king but also about the welfare of the people of a country. *Arthashastra* is a scripture of knowledge. It contains knowledge of almost every sphere of life.

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this paper are as follows:

To know the outlook of Kautilya's *Arthashastra*.

To know the concepts covered in every chapter of *Arthashastra* in brief.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research paper is based on a qualitative research methodology called Hermeneutics. The Hermeneutic analysis is a special type of Content Analysis where it is tried to interpret the subjective meaning of a given text within its socio-historic context.

Kautilya mentioned at various places in *Arthashastra* that it was composed by him. It is depicted in the following *slokas*:

सुखग्रहणविज्ञेयमत्त्वार्थपदनिश्चितम्।

कौटिल्येन कृतमशास्त्रम्विमुक्तग्रन्थविस्तरम्॥

(*Sukhgrahanvigneyam tatvarthpadnishchitam.*

Kautilyen kritam shastram vimuktgranthvistaram.)

{1.1.19}

The *sloka* states that-

“Easy to learn and understand, precise in doctrine, sense and word, free from prolixity of text, thus has this Science has been composed by Kautilya.”

येन शास्त्रमचशास्त्रमच नन्दराजगता च भूः ।

अमर्षेणोद्धृतान्याशु तेनशास्त्रमिदमकृतम्॥

(*Yen shastram ch shastram ch nandarajgata ch bhoo.*

Amrsenoddhritanyasu ten shastramidam kritam.)

{15.1.73}

The *sloka* states that-

“This science has been composed by him, who in resentment quickly regenerated the science and the weapon and the earth that was under the control of the Nanda kings.”

At the end of his *Arthashastra* Kautilya again writes:

एतावता कौटिलीयस्यार्थशास्त्रस्य तन्त्रयुक्तिः पंचदशमधिकरणमसमाप्तम्।

(*Etavata Kautileeyasyarthashastrasya tantrayuktih panchdashamadhikaranam smaptam.*)

The *sloka* states that-

“Herewith ends the Fifteenth Book of the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya ‘The Method of the Science’.

समाप्तमिदमकौटिलीयमर्थशास्त्रम्।

(*Samaptamidam Kautileeyamrthashastram.*)

The *sloka* states that-

“Herewith ends the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya”.

Kautilya disclosed the plan of his *Arthashastra* in the first book to give the reader a comprehensive idea of the contents. This plan is prescribed in the following *sloka*:

शास्त्रसमुद्देशः पंचदशाधिकरणानि साशीति प्रकरणशतमसंपंचाशदध्यायशतमष्टश्लोकसहस्राणीति।

(*Shastrasamuddeshah panchdashadhikarnani sasheeti prakaranashatam sapanchasaddhyayshatam sat shlokasahastraneeti.*)

{1.1.18}

The *sloka* states that-

“The enumeration of the Science amounts to fifteen Books, one hundred and fifty Chapters, one hundred and eighty Sections and six thousand *slokas*.”

This *sloka* depicts the whole structure of *Arthashastra*, i.e.

Books	15
Chapters	150
Sections	180
<i>Slokas</i>	6000

From the above *sloka*, everyone comes to know that the whole *Arthashastra* is divided into fifteen books in which knowledge of different sectors and areas of life is given. The detailed descriptions of these books are given as follows:

Book	Name of Book
1.	Concerning the Topic of Training (<i>Vinayadhikarikam</i>)
2.	The Activity of the Head of Departments (<i>Adhyakshaprachara</i>)
3.	Concerning Judges (<i>Dharmasthiyam</i>)
4.	The Suppression of Criminals (<i>Kantakasodhanam</i>)
5.	Secret Conduct (<i>Yogavrttam</i>)
6.	The Circle of Kings as the Basis (<i>Mandalayonih</i>)
7.	The Six Measures of Foreign Policy (<i>Shadgunyam</i>)
8.	Concerning the Topic of Calamities (<i>Vyasanadhikarikam</i>)
9.	The Activity of the King about to March (<i>Abhiyasyatkarma</i>)
10.	Concerning War (<i>Sangramikam</i>)
11.	Policy towards Oligarchies (<i>Sanghavrttam</i>)
12.	Concerning the Weaker King (<i>Abaliyasam</i>)
13.	Means of Taking a Fort (<i>Durgalambhopayah</i>)
14.	Concerning Secret Practices (<i>Aupanishadikam</i>)
15.	The Method of the Science (<i>Tantrayuktih</i>)

1. Concerning the Topic of Training (*Vinayadhikarikam*):

It is the first book of Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. It contains twenty-one chapters which are distributed among eighteen sections. Kautilya starts his treatise with a salutation to his two gurus, Shukra and Brihaspati :

ओम नमः शुक्रबृहस्पतिभ्याम्।

(*Om namah shukrabrihaspatibhyam.*)

The *sloka* states that-

“Om, salutation to Shukra and Brhaspati.”

The first chapter of this book is related to the enumeration of the Sections and Books. In the second chapter enumeration of the sciences has been done. Here Kautilya accepts that there are four sciences namely, Philosophy, the three Vedas, Economics, and the science of Politics. In the third and fourth chapters a detailed description of these sciences has been given. It contains the subject related to Enumeration of the Sections and Books, Enumeration of the Sciences, Association with Elders, Control over the Senses, Appointment of Ministers, Appointment of Councilors and Chaplain, Ascertainment of the Integrity of Ministers using Secret Tests, Appointment of Persons in Secret Service, Rules for Secret Servants, Keeping a Watch over One's Seducible and Non-Seducible Parties, Winning over the Enemy's Seducible and Non-Seducible Parties, The Topic of Counsel, Rules of Envoy, Guarding against Princes, Conduct of the Prince in Disfavour, Behaviour towards a Prince in Disfavour, Rules for the King, Regulations for the Royal Residence, Protection of the King's Person.

2. The Activity of the Head of Departments (*Adhyakshaprachara*)

The second book includes the knowledge of various activities of Heads of Departments. It includes settlement of the countryside, disposal of non-agricultural land, construction of forts, lay-out of the fortified city, the work of storekeeping by the Director of Stores, the setting up of the revenue by the administrator, the topic of accounts in the records and audit office, recovery of revenue misappropriated by state employees, inspection of the work of officers, the topic of edicts, examination of the precious articles to be received into the treasury, the starting of mines and factories, the superintendent of gold in the workshop, the activity of the goldsmith in the market highway, the superintendent of the magazine, the director of trade, the director of forest-produce, the superintendent of the armoury, standardization of weights and measures, measures of space and time, the collector of customs and tolls, the superintendent of yarns, the director of agriculture, the controller of spirituous liquors, the supervisor of slaughter, the superintendent of courtesans, the controller of shipping, the superintendent of cattle, the superintendent of horses, the superintendent of elephants, the superintendent of chariots, the superintendent of foot-soldiers, the activity of the commandant of the army, the superintendent of the passports, the superintendent of pasture-lands, the activity of the administrator, secret agents in the disguise of householders, traders and ascetics, and rules for city superintendent.

3. Concerning Judges (*Dharmasthiyam*)

The constituents of the third book of *Arthashastra* are the determination of valid and invalid transactions, filing of law-suits, concerning marriage, partition of inheritance, concerning immovable property, non-observance of conventions, non-payment of debts, concerning deposits, the law concerning slaves and labourers, undertakings in partnership, rescission of sale and purchase, non-conveyance of gifts, sale without ownership, the relation of ownership, forcible seizure, verbal injury, physical injury, gambling and betting, and miscellaneous. In this way, there are twenty chapters in the third book.

4. The Suppression of Criminals (*Kantakasodhanam*)

There are thirteen chapters in the fourth book of *Arthashastra*. These include information related to keeping a watch over artisans, keeping a watch over traders, remedial measures during calamities, guarding against persons with secret means of income, detection of criminals through secret agents in the disguise of holy men, arrested on suspicion, with the stolen article and by indication of the act, inquest on sudden deaths, investigation through interrogation and torture, keeping a watch over all departments, redemption from the cutting of individual limbs, the law of capital punishment, simple and with torture, violation of maidens, and punishment for transgression are covered in the fourth book.

5. Secret Conduct (*Yogavrttam*)

The fifth book includes information related to the infliction of punishment, replenishment of the treasury, concerning the salaries of state servants, the conduct of a dependent, proper behaviour for a courtier, the continuance of the kingdom, and continuous sovereignty. This book includes a total of six chapters.

6. The Circle of Kings as the Basis (*Mandalayonih*)

The sixth book is divided into two chapters. Excellences of the constituent elements, concerning peace and activity, these topics are covered in the sixth book.

7. The Six Measures of Foreign Policy (*Shadgunyam*)

Enumeration of the six measures of the foreign policy, determination of measures in decline, stable condition and advancement, conduct when seeking shelter, adherence of policies by the equal, the weaker and the stronger king, peace treaties by the weaker king, staying quite after making war, staying quite after making peace, marching after making war, marching after making peace, marching together with other kings, considerations regarding an attack on a vulnerable king and the natural enemy, causes leading to decline, greed and disaffection among the subjects, reflection on confederated allies, concerning the march of two kings who have entered into a treaty of alliance, treaties with stipulations, without stipulations and with deserters, peace and war connected with the duel policy, conduct for the king about to be attacked, the different kinds of allies fit to be helped, pacts for securing an

ally, money, land and an undertaking, considerations regarding the king attacking in the rear, recoument of powers that have become weak, reasons for entrenching oneself in a fort after making war with a powerful king, conduct for the king surrendering with his troops, conduct for the king subjugating other kings by force, the making of peace, liberation of the hostage, conduct towards the middle king, conduct towards the middle king, conduct towards the neutral king, conduct towards the circle of kings,- these constitute the seventh book. This includes eighteen chapters overall.

8. Concerning the Topic of Calamities (*Vyasanadhikarikam*)

The group of calamities of the constituent elements, considerations regarding calamities of the king and kingship, the group of vices of man, the group of afflictions, the group of hindrances, the group of stoppages of payment to the treasury, the group of calamities of the army, the group of calamities of the ally,- these five chapters are the consists of the eighth book.

9. The Activity of the King about to March (*Abhiyatkarma*)

This book includes seven chapters that are related to the activity of the king about to march. Ascertainment of the relative strength or weakness of power, place and time, seasons for marching on an expedition, occasions for the employment of different kinds of troops, merits of equipping the different kinds of troops for war, the work of employing suitable troops against enemy troops, consideration of revolts in the rear, counter-measures against rising of constituents in the outer regions and the interior, consideration of the losses, expenses, and gains, dangers from the outer regions and the interior, dangers connected with traitors and enemies, dangers associated with advantage, disadvantage, and uncertainty, overcoming these by the use of the different means,- these constitute the ninth book.

10. Concerning War (*Sangramikam*)

Setting up the camp, marching from the camp, guarding troops during the calamities of the army and at the time of the attack, various types of covert fighting, encouraging one's troops, disposition of one's troops to counter-act enemy troops, ground suitable for fighting, functions of the infantry, the cavalry, the chariots and the elephants, arrangement of battle-arrays in wings, flanks, and front by the strength of troops, distribution of strong and weak troops, modes of fighting of the infantry, the cavalry, the chariots and the elephants, arrangement of the staff, the snake, the circle and the diffuse arrays, arranging counter-arrays against them,- these six chapters constitute the tenth book.

11. Policy towards Oligarchies (*Sanghavrttam*)

This book includes only one chapter, which is further divided into two sections. Ways of resorting to the policy of sowing dissensions, forms of secret punishment,- these constitute the eleventh book.

12. Concerning the Weaker King (*Abaliyasam*)

The mission of the envoy, fight with diplomacy, assassination of the army chiefs, stir up the circle of kings, secret use of weapons, fire and poison, destroy of enemy's supplies, reinforcements and foraging raids, over-reaching the enemy by trickery, over-reaching the enemy by force, victory of the single king,- these five chapters constitute the twelfth book of *Arthashastra*.

13. Means of Taking a Fort (*Durgalambhopayah*)

Instigation of sedition, drawing out the enemy using stratagems, employment of secret agents, the work of laying siege to a fort, storming a fort, and pacification of the conquered territory,- these are the five chapters of the thirteenth book.

14. Concerning Secret Practices (*Aupanishadikam*)

This book contains four chapters and four sections. These are Secret practices for the destruction of enemy troops, deceiving, and counter-measures against injuries to one's troops.

15. The Method of the Science (*Tantrayuktih*)

This is the last book of *Arthashastra* which includes only one chapter and one section, namely 'Devices used in the science'.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

To conclude, it can be said that Kautilya gave a deep insight into every sphere of life, whether it is related to the smooth running of a territory or the all-round development of society. It wholly guides a ruler on how to behave and make decisions in critical situations. It contains information related to the duties of various heads of departments, property rights, women's empowerment, trade and services, war, social and economic welfare, agricultural development, sustainable development, and many such other topics. One can select his area of research and go deeply through that topic. In this way, Kautilya is a great ancient Indian economist who knew different types of problems that come with the development process. Along with that, he also provides solutions to the problems and hurdles in his *Arthashastra*.

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