

Good Governance An Ancient Indian Perspective

Dr. Rajani Jairam¹, Dr. Geetha Madhusudan²

¹Professor in Sanskrit and Dean (Student Affairs), JAIN (Deemed to be university),
rajani.jairam@jainuniversity.ac.in

²Professor in Sanskrit, JAIN (Deemed to be university)

Abstract: The paper makes an attempt to understand the concept of good governance through the study of ancient texts like Manusmriti, Shukra, Kamandakinitisara, Kautilya's Arthashastra and Kalhana's Rajatarangini. The structure of Manu's laws can be considered an indirect policy. Let (action) be the force that maintains this relationship with the society that is (action) the guardian. The constant change that can lead to the constant storm that brings humanity out of this flood reflects the idea of constant evolution. A lucky streak ensures humanity's survival through space exploration. First, he is the primary deity, sent to earth by the supreme deity, who takes a position in the three different spheres of creation, law and wisdom, trying to balance and equalize the Hindu social order in case the king requests their special place. Manusmriti is also part of a certain ritual that can lead to a "grand strategy" of social organization. Shukracharya, also known as Shukra or Asuracharya, is a Hindu sage and the guru of the asuras (demons). He is the son of sage Bhrigu and Kavyamata. Shukracharya was a learned mentor who guided the asuras in their quest to overpower the devas (gods). He was also the deity of Venus. Shukracharya was a devotee of Shiva, who granted him the Sanjeevini Vidhya mantra. This mantra gave him the power to revive the dead. He was also considered to be more intelligent than his guru's son, Brihaspati. Shukracharya's teachings and actions shaped the balance between good and evil. He also wrote Shukra-Niti, a treatise on government that instructed how to use political theory to uphold morality. Kamandakinitisara is a very popular text in the island Bali. Concise rules and flashing proverbs, maxims, concise formulae. Numerous political similes and metaphors are the hallmark of his writing. Many illustrations and imageries form the poetic way to explore science of polity. The legend Kautilya in his renowned work 'Arthashastra' has dealt with various contemporary subjects which formed the basis of Chandragupta Maurya's rule and victories, in fact there is a general view that Kautilya's Arthashastra deals only with matters of foreign policy and economy. It is seldom realised that a great portion of this book does in fact, deal extensively with matters of military, he indeed consolidated all the prevailing grand strategy and tactics of those times and gave his expert opinion on the subjects, which ultimately led to victories of Chandragupta Maurya, who never lost a single campaign. It thus emerges that the brilliance of Kautilya was not only in diplomacy but also in warfare, but the fact that strikes out is that he was able to lay down methods to organise and manage the armed forces in a vast empire. The Rajatarangini is an epic poem in Sanskrit running into nearly 8000 verses that are spread over eight books or sections. It was composed in Kashmir, India. The poet, Kalhana, was a member of the ancient Indian learned class of brahmins. The Rajatarangini is an account of the many royal dynasties that ruled the ancient kingdom of Kashmir from its mythical origins down till the poet's own time.

Key words: Manu, Shukra, Kamandaki, Kautilya, Kalhana

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF MANU'S OPINION ON STATECRAFT AND DEFENCE

The ethics of war and the humane principles, related to the treatment of the vanquished, of the Vedic period, is buried under the debris of time. With the constant building up of war ideologies and power play pervading the minds of many in the current international system, it becomes a necessity to regress a little and understand if the war was an unsaid norm or last option during the ancient period. In this context, it is also primal to analyse the extent to which the concepts in Hinduism have helped in the development of international humanitarian laws, the focus is to limit the suffering caused by war.

The rule of international humanitarian law not to attack civilians during warfare is similar to that in the Manusmriti. Manu lays down that one who surrenders or is without arms or is sleeping or is naked, or with hair united or an onlooker must never be killed irrespective of whether the opponent was a believer or an arya or a yavana (alien non-believer) or whether he was fighting a just war or not. It can be well perceived from this rule that the civilians, prisoners of war, and the warriors who are not prepared can be covered under this rule and cannot be killed.

Furthermore, Manu laid down certain principles that should be followed by both warring parties such as combat between equals, prohibition of collective attacks against a single soldier, and the forbiddance of slaying a warrior who was temporarily at a disadvantage during battle. According to the Manusmriti, a conqueror must grant remissions on taxes and not loot the conquered territory. He must also not be vengeful but should offer an amnesty to those who surrender.

Sanathana Dharma recognizes the concept of humanitarian law in an indirect manner but with clarity. It restricts the means and the methods of warfare without causing harm to civilians or the protected persons. It indicates towards the forever demand of such regulation for the control of the armed race. The best example is the concept of Dharmayuddha which gives a humanitarian touch to warfare. It equally and sufficiently clears that, in terms of the ideals of humanitarianism of ancient India, the laws of war were more progressive.

Manus also looks into the matter of local government and the army, which is the means of controlling the subjects as well as the boundaries of the kingdom or state. His format for local administration consists of a number of officials at various levels in charge of single and larger units of villages with a minister of the king to regularly scrutinize their work. The primary unit of local administration is the village with a headman. The successively higher levels of local government were formed by groups of ten, twenty, hundred and a thousand villages. He also insisted on a superintendent of all affairs with an army of spies to assist him in 'exploring the behaviour of the people'. Local government as a whole should be placed under a minister at the headquarters. A company of soldiers must be stationed in the midst of two, three, five or hundreds of villages for the protection of the kingdom.

Principles of Government

Manu also talks about the principles and policies of the government, which can be classified under two heads:

1. Public security
2. Interstate relations

Public security: Under the policy of public security, the king was required to detect two classes of thieves with the help of the spies. The first class of thieves called 'open thieves' were those who took bribes and lived by fraudulent sale of commodities. This class included gamblers, fortune tellers, cheats, rouges, and officials and physicians guilty of improper conduct. The second class of thieves was called the 'secret thieves. They include burglars, robbers, dacoits and so forth.

Manu also mentions methods and techniques to be employed by the king for the detection and punishment of both these classes of culprits. The king was to decide about the offence or crime committed by them, and mete out punishment accordingly. Different punishments were prescribed for different kinds of crimes that included dishonest behavior of tradesmen like goldsmiths, etc. Manu also was of the opinion that royal officers and vassals who do not discharge their duties honestly and remain indifferent at the time of the crime being committed should also be punished. Members of the public who do not resist when a village was plundered, or a dyke damaged or a highway robbery committed were also to be punished for their actions or inactions. Confiscation of the property of the rich indulging in crime or dishonesty, imposing a heavy fine on ministers and judges were also permissible and were to be used by the king to punish the erring.

Finance was important even in that era and Manu knew that no government could work without finance. He supported the idea of taxation to be imposed by the king. He listed seven different kinds of taxes, viz., (i) land revenue, (ii) fees, (iii) fines, (iv) taxes for the use of water in a river and plying of boats, (v) taxes on animals, (vi) taxes on artisans and various other professions and, lastly, (vii) sales tax.

Interstate relations: Manu also showed that the delicate art of diplomacy required six elements or gunas. These were:

-
1. Sandhi: treaty or peace or alliance
 2. Vighraha: war
 3. Asane: neutrality
 4. Yana: making preparation for attack without actually declaring war

5. Samsraya: seeking the protection of another

6. Dvaidhibhava: making peace with one, and waging war against another

Manu favoured a king agreeing to make peace when he was sure of superiority in future and of his loss at the present. He prescribed that the king shall wage war only when he knew that he was strong enough to defeat the enemy and that his own army was well disposed towards him. The king, said Manu, shall not engage in war when he is weak in chariots and troops. He shall divide his forces when his enemy is stronger and take refuge with a rich and powerful king when he is easily assailable by the enemy's forces. Finally, while determining his war policy, the king shall take into consideration the future as well as the immediate present, along with the positive and negative aspects of all past actions before coming to any final decision. Manu also advised his king that to follow Kshatriya dharma is to obtain victory in war and not to retreat from battle.

Manu has prescribed detailed rules for strategies for kings facing an attack. The king should march during the season favourable for the army and should provide necessary weapons to the troops for the occasion. Under exceptional circumstances the king may march if he is sure of his victory or if the enemy is in distress.

After the battle, came the next stage of signing treaties. Manu talks of three objectives of treaties. The first was the acquisition of an ally or mitra, second came money or hiranya and, lastly, acquiring land or bhumi. He observes that the king prospers not so much by the acquisition of money and land, as by acquiring a royal ally, who, though weak at the present, may turn into a powerful one in the future. The king is even advised by Manu to abandon without hesitation even rich and fertile lands if it is in conflict with his personal safety and security.

Manu and Kautilya have divergent views on the subject of diplomacy. Manu does not believe in expansionism or territorial annexation while the latter advocates it. He also interprets the six gunas or principles of diplomacy differently. Manu stresses more on the balance of power, because he believes the strength of a king cannot be demonstrated only by waging war. His approach to diplomacy is more ethical in nature than political.

Manu on the Origin of State:

Manu on Kingship:

According to Manu, it was God, who created an entity called king to save the people of a region. Thus, kingship is of divine origin and it is this position held by the king that made the people express their obedience to him. Manu stated that though king appears in a human form, he possesses the qualities of God. The king, according to Manu, had certain qualities of Hindu Gods like Indra (God of War), Vaayu (God of Wind), Yama (God of Death), Ravi (God of Sun), Agni (God of Fire), Chandra or Moon, and Wealth. Thus, the king was described as an embodiment of eight guardians of the earth. The king, therefore, was a divine creation to promote social harmony, peace and welfare.

Qualities of a King:

Manu was of the opinion that king is next best to God and he must have complete control over himself and his senses. A king was expected to control his anger, satisfy the people and govern the state with their consent rather than the use of force. The king must exhibit those qualities that naturally make citizens obey him, and he must function through pleasing manners and intelligence.

He must overcome the six vices or the Arishadwargas, viz.; Kama (Lust), Krodha (Anger), Lobha (Greed), Moha (infatuation), Mada (Pride) and Matsarya (Jealousy). If these six evils or vices are kept under control, the welfare of society, according to Manu, is certain.

Council of Ministers:

Manu was of the opinion that the council of ministers are like the arms, eyes and ears of the king. He stated that a king without the council of ministers is like driving a chariot without wheels. He was of the opinion that an ideal number of council of ministers should not be more than seven to eight who collectively and individually assist and advise the king in the daily discharge of his duties. Apart from mere creation, Manu also emphasized that the council of ministers must have certain qualities.

The ministers were expected to have high learning skills, men from high caste by birth, good warriors with a sharp understanding of various techniques of warfare and proper comprehension of the state system and the like. A minister must prove to be an honest broker between the king and his subjects without causing any displeasure to the king.

Manu was of the opinion that the selection of the ministers must be through hereditary principle, but the skills and qualities of a contender must also be tested. Or the king must seek the advice of his trusted friends and relatives while appointing ministers or may appoint his own friends or relatives. However, Manu cautioned that persons of noble character must be appointed to occupy

Kamandaka and nitisara:

The nitisara is divided into 19 sargas and into 36 chapters. It has Commentary named Jayamangala written by Shankararya, Upadhyayanirapeksha

It is a very popular text in the island Bali. It consists of Concise rules and flashing proverbs, maxims, concise formulae, Numerous political similes and metaphors, Many illustrations and imageries. It is indeed a Poetic way to explore science of polity. Kamandaka is freely quoted in Hitopadesha..It covers various aspects like the king, his training, duties, Seven constituents of kingdom, Duties of master and subordinates. It describes Modes of warfare, Arrangement of troops, Embassies and Spies, Vyasanas and remedies, Military expedition. The sargas explain with lucidity ., Indriyajaya -training of king. Vidyavibhaga-knowledge of the king , determination of duties, Saptanga, Kantakashodhanam-searching thorns of the government, Protection of Self and kings, Construction and characteristics of a mandala, Dissertation on peace, Dissertation on counsels, War, Counsels with his minister for a good government, Embassies and spies, Vyasanas and remedies, Seven kind of vyasanas, Military expedition, System of encamping, Employing various expedients, Modes of warfare, Arrangement of troops, Benedictory stanzas, Eulogy of king and Preceptor, Salutation to Mahipati by whose influence, people follow the right path

Kamandaka explores Rajavidya in nutshell. He gives Short and significant lessons to the kings Considers views of experts in this science, explains the Need of King. King is the cause of growth and prosperity. If there is No king / no worthy king Subjects will be directionless like a boat tossed in ocean without leader. King is the support of people like rain. King, minister, kingdom, castle, treasury, army, allies are known to form the seven constituents of government.

His formula for good leadership insisted on understanding What makes a leader . Is he Discharging duties according to the rules of polity. Does he acquire three purusharthas for self and Subjects. He had to undergo rigorous training in Naya- knowledge of the science of polity Vikrama- valour Vinaya- winning over sense. The fourfold duties of a king were Earn, Protect, Increase, Give to worthy. Self-development is an important part of training which leads to prosperity. A good king was endowed with Knowledge, Intellectual capacity, Strength, Alertness, Maturity, Forbearance, Vigour, Communication skills, Firmness, power of mastering, purity, friendliness, abandonment, truth and gratitude. Training of Self, Ministers, Subordinates, Sons, Subjects

Chanakya Kautilya as a strategist: A close analysis of Organisational structure propounded by Kautilya in his Arthashastra is a sterling resemblance of what is followed in Indian Army with slight modifications. And it is clearly evident that the basic finer intricacies of the organisation remained the same though the gross structure underwent a change keeping latest technological development in mind. Kautilya was way ahead in his times with clear vision and military thinking thus created an organisational structure catering for civil supremacy and ensured effective coordination between various components of the army which is still relevant at large. Chandra Gupta Maurya had a large standing army to manage similar to that of Indian Army and without a sound organisational structure it would have been virtually impossible to achieve victories which he had set for himself.

Kautilya had clearly categorised his army into various corps i.e. Cavalry, Elephants, Infantry, Chariots etc with a clear division of roles in war, which is very much akin to our present system of various line directorates in our armies. He had also formed clear command and control structure with minimum scope for ambiguity. He had emphasised on Hierarchical system Command and control in armed forces some 2300 years ago which is still relevant in today's times.

The organisation of the Maruan army was little different than the one followed in our army today. Though a striking similarity is the presence of the adyakshas that can be related to our line directorate which are too led by a Lieutenant General. The rank structure is not restricted to any arm but common throughout the army. To elaborate, the pattika was a rank not belonging to a particular arm but he commanded elements of all the arms. This helped in better command and control. This also ensured of a clear demarcation of command structure which was irrespective of the arm, this practice is still followed.

When coming to appointment of heads of departments, Kautilya had ensured that they had requisite degree of qualifications for tenantry that kind of appointment and had a clear defined standards and roles for all of them, which is still largely relevant in our armies where selection processes ensure that the said officer had undergone necessary courses and has a requisite skills suitable for tenantry that kind of appointment.

Kautilya had imposed various degrees of confidence in terms of loyalty and integrity depending upon the community of troops, probably a relevant thing in those times, but in present times it is debatable whether it is relevant or not as for some community specific armies it may hold good but in Indian context, though the Indian army still have pure regiments based on caste system but the pedestal of loyalty and integrity attributed to each community is the same thus this particular thing is not relevant to Indian Army of present times.

Kautilya proposed to have a standing core army consisting of officials down to the Pattika and the regular soldiers to be recruited for the period of war. Specialists like elephant riders archers etc were also recommended to be retained as permanent soldiers. Though India has a large standing army which is used both for protection of its borders and for launching offensive. There is no differentiation in the kind of troops used for both the tasks as envisaged by Kautilya. Probably We can have smaller standing army which can be well trained and equipped with the best of the equipment. On the other hand we can have a larger component of Territorial Army that can be mobilized before an operation. The defensive formation can have Territorial Army and some of the regular troops where as the strike formations can be composed of regular troops. This will help in reducing the defence expenditure and the money saved could be better used for equipping and training of the regular troops.

Kalhana,s rajatarangini:

The Rajatarangini (literally, River of Kings) is an epic poem (mahakavya/prabandha) composed in the classical language, Sanskrit, in 114850 in Kashmir (part of the modern state of Jammu and Kashmir, India). It was composed by a Kashmiri Pundit, or member of the ancient Indian learned class, named Kalhana. He is said to have been the son of a former minister by the name of Campaka in the court of a Kashmiri king, Harsha. Kalhana himself, however, does not seem to have worked for any king. Rajatarangini describes the royal dynasties that ruled the kingdom of Kashmir from its origins to the poet's own time. It narrates nearly two millennia of the ancient and early medieval history of the Valley. One of the outstanding features of the Rajatarangini is that it is Self reflexive. It begins with a prolegomena clearly stating its purpose (prayojana), its method, and its vision or philosophy of history. To begin with, it tells us that it was certainly not the first such work of Kashmiri history to have been written. Indeed, the Rajatarangini based itself on consultation and emendation of at least eleven similar Sanskrit texts composed before itself. Though only one of these older texts (Nilamata Purana, 8th century) has survived and only the author of another (Kshemendra 11 th century) is historically well known, this indicates a long and well established premodern tradition of writing history. Moreover, in shaping its contents and message, the Rajatarangini also draws extensively on other, pan Indian Sanskrit literature like shastra (prescriptive treatises on statecraft and law), niti (political and moral parables), and itihasa (narratives on the past), even as the basic fact of chronicling dynasties king by king is in the vamshavali (genealogy) tradition. Indeed, the Rajatarangini may be seen to migrate among these genres and kavya (highly aesthetic poetry and prose), making it a composite text. A strong intertextuality at work in this Kashmiri epic which seems to have brought together a number of Sanskrit

literary and philosophical traditions rather than departed from them. This is important to note, given that the historiographical suggestions convey the intense scholarship of the work. Epigraphy has played a very

important role in ascertaining the authenticity of the text interesting palimpsest of sources, giving insight into the materials that went into the making of the text that is today itself considered a source material of history. Kanhana used these epigraphs to record the large number of donations made by kings, queens, ministers and generals to religious institutions of different affiliations, like Buddhist, Shaiva (worshippers of Shiva), Vaishnava (worshippers of Vishnu), and Saura (solar worship). Regarding the philosophy of history writing, Rajatarangini gives a continuous chronology for the region, using traditional Indian calendars or eras, such as kaliyuga and shaka samvat, the text also documents some more local but nonetheless powerful Kashmiri kings chief among whom was Lalitaditya Muktapida (8 th century) who reportedly undertook extensive conquests and raids, reaching into eastern India on the one hand, and central and western Asia (Sinkiang, Iran), on the other. We also hear of King Avantivarman (9th century), famous for undertaking effective measures to control floods in the Valley, and Didda (10th century), one of the few strong female rulers we get in the ancient world. history. In the main, it is for three reasons, namely the text's deference to chronology, causation, and (alleged) objectivity, that European Orientalist scholars who studied the text from the early 19th century onwards, called the Rajatarangini the first and only work of history proper to emerge from ancient India. They believed that this late work was a unique exception in three thousand years of Sanskrit literary culture, which they accused of otherwise completely lacking a sense of history even as it abounded in scripture and mythology. Rajatarangini made a path breaking effort to relive classical literature through ornate poetry with a sense of correctness and authenticity. It may not be out of context to say that these ancient texts give a holistic perspective of Kingship, Indian leadership thoughts, strategy for protection of kingdom which are relevant even today and sustainable.

SOURCES AND REFERENCES:

1. BASHAM Arthur Lewellyn, 1961, "The Kashmir Chronicle" in PHILLIPS Cyril H. (ed.), *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, Oxford University Press, London, p. 5765, 552 p. [9780197135204]
2. LAWRENCE McCrea, 2013, "Śānta rasa in the Rājatarāṅgiṇī: History, epic, and moral decay", *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol. 50, issue 2, p. 17999.
3. MAJUMDAR Rameh Chandra, 1961, "Ideas of History in Sanskrit Literature" in PHILLIPS Cyril H. (ed.), *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, Oxford University Press, London, p. 1321, 552 p. [9780197135204]
4. THAPAR Romila, 1983, "Kanhana", in MOHIBBUL Hasan (ed.), *Historians of Medieval India*, Meenakshi Prakashan, Delhi, p. 5262.
5. KAUL Shonaleeka, 2014, "'Seeing' the Past: Text and Questions of History in Kanhana's Rajatarangini", *History and Theory*, vol 53, Issue 2, p. 194211.
6. The Art of War in Ancient India By P.C. Chakravarti, this book was originally published in 1941 and reprinted in 2020 .
7. Military System in Ancient India Bimal Kanti Majumdar, this book was originally published in 1955 and reprinted in 2020
8. Ancient Indian Warfare with Special Reference to Vedic Period
9. S.D. Singh, this book was published in 1965
10. Wars and War-Tactics in Ancient India
11. Uma Prasad Thapliyal, this book is available on Amazon
12. India and Historic Battles: From Alexander the Great to Kargil
13. Kaushik Roy, this book was originally published in 2004 and reprinted in 2020
14. Wars and War-Tactics in Ancient India by Uma Prasad Thapliyal