CHAPTER- I

Introduction

A Study on War and Warcraft in Ancient India
[With Special Reference to the Arthasastra of Kautilya and the Śiśupālavadha of Māghapaṇḍita]
CHAPTER- I

Introduction

I

War generally implies hostilities and armed conflicts between nations or states, or between parties within the same state or country. War leads to perpetration of cruel acts involving wanton destruction of human and animal lives, disturbing social and ecological balance, and thus causing enormous damage to the state’s economy. Hence, war is considered as the most reprehensible act of man. Yet, war is an unavoidable concomitant of man’s political activities, which takes place either in response to self preservation or self expansion, the two basic instincts that lie deep down in the nature of all living beings including mankind. Men are found to have fought among themselves in response to one or the other of these two basic instincts. This fighting habit of human beings continued through the ages since its origination, resulting in an endless series of battles, wars and revolutions. Thus, it is seen that war, though considered as most reprehensible act of man, is accepted as a necessary evil in all ages of human history.
Scope:

Since war evolves out of the political activities of man, it involves state policy, and thus constitutes to be an integral part of the state administration. In the circumstances, warcraft forms an integral part of the statecraft. The science of statecraft is one of the most popular subjects of study in ancient India and was cultivated since time immemorial. (Here the term ‘ancient’ is taken to imply the period of Indian history commencing roughly from about the sixth or fifth century B.C. down to 12th century A.D.)

India was studded with a conglomeration of kingdoms/states, big or small,—monarchical, oligarchical or republican,—and the rulers were naturally expected to discuss the problems of the state administration with their advisers, who were normally sages and scholars of mature judgement and were considered to be the think-tanks; and this process of deliberations, perhaps, led to the growth of the science of statecraft. This branch of knowledge is known differently as Rājadharmā¹, Daṇḍanītī², Rājanītī³ etc., while the works dealing with the subject are known

1. *MS. VII.1; Mbh. XII.58.1.*
2. Daṇḍanītī is defined as: 
   
   \textit{daṇḍena ntyate cedāṁ daṇḍaṁ nayati vā punah/daṇḍanītīritikhyātātrilokānabhuśāvantate // –Mbh. XII. 59.79.}
variously as Dandāṇītisāra or Dandāṇiśāstra, Rājaśāstra⁴ or Rājanītisāstra, Arthaśāstra or simply Nītisātra. Kauṭilya calls his work on the subject ‘Arthaśāstra’, while Kāmandaka termed his ‘Nītisāra’. So also Oṣānā (Śukra) calls his work Nītisāra. Vaiśampāyana’s work is called Nītiprakāśikā, so on and so forth.

It is to be noted here that the statecraft as discussed above, concerns warfare also, inasmuch as it involves both the defence and security of one’s country or nation as well as the desire for conquest and expansion.

Warfare implies the art and science of war as envisaged by the ancient Indian thinkers on statecraft. Inter-state war being found inevitable in ancient India, which comprised of a conglomeration of independent kingdoms, big or small, ruled by too many power hungry, ambitious rulers, each anxiously looking for a chance to grab the other’s kingdom. The expeditions of conquest also could not be tabooed, and was never tabooed, in the face of the ideal of universal conquest set before an aspiring king (vijigēṣu). In the circumstances, the ancient Indian thinkers on statecraft accepted war as a fact of life.

⁴. *Mbh.*, XII. 58. 3.
Since conquest is the principal objective of waging war, the authorities on statecraft have postulated theories on warcraft, and evolved, as guidelines to the aspiring kings concerned, various principles of war strategy and tactics, expedients and ethics etc. in the conduct of warfare. An aspiring king (viśigīṣu), before launching a campaign of conquest is required to take into account some important factors, such as the organisation and training of army, appropriate time and place, as well as methods to be followed while on the march, the expedients to be tried, the deployment of troops, the strategems in the conduct of the battle, arms to be used, the codes of ethics to be observed in the battle-field while fighting, the treatment to be metted out to the vanquished army, attitude towards the conquered king and his subjects, espionage and counter espionage etc. Thus, the study of war and warcraft, as an integral part of statecraft, was a very popular subject among the intelligentia and many a treatise on the subject were written throwing light on the various aspects of war, both positive and negative.

In this respect the Arthasastra of Kauṭilya is regarded as the most popular and authoritative one among the śāstras\textsuperscript{5} written

\textsuperscript{5} It is significant that the treatises on statecraft were called śāstras, thus giving the status of sacred scriptures.
on the subject. Kautilya, also known as Cānakeya and Viṣṇugupta, claims that his work is the compendium of all the treatises dealing with Rājanīti or Daṇḍanīti produced by his predecessors, like Brhaspati, Uṣanā, so on and so forth, whose works on statecraft were discussed and their views were preserved with due honour. Kautilya himself admits this in the very beginning of his work, when he says that this single treatise on the science of politics has been prepared mostly by bringing together the teachings of as many treatises on the science of politics as have been composed by earlier teachers for the acquisition and protection of the earth. Thus, this makes the culmination of a long period of speculation on statecraft in ancient India. But the works of the earlier authorities referred to by Kautilya seem to have been lost beyond recovery. Presently, Kautilya’s Arthaśāstra is the earliest work on statecraft so far available to us.

Apart from the Arthaśāstra by Kautilya, other works dealing solely with the subject on statecraft are — the Nītiśāstra of

Kāmandaka, the *Nītīvyākyāmṛta* of Somadeva Surī, the *Nītiprakāśikā* of Vaiśampāyana, the *Śukranītisāra* of Ośanā, the *Mānasollāsa* or *Abhilāsitārthacintāmaṇi* of Someśvara, the *Yuktikalpataru* of Bhojarāja, so on and so forth. Besides these independant works on the art of statecraft, the subject is dealt with in the Dharmāśāstras (Samhītās) as in the *Manusamhitā*, the *Yājñavalkya-smṛti*, etc.; the two great epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, and the Purāṇas also occasionally dilate on the principles and practice of statecraft.

The earlier authorities mentioned by Kautilya are Manu (Prācetasa), Brhaspati, Uśanasa (Śukra), Vātavyāḍhi, Bharadvāja, Viśālākṣa etc, In the *Mahābhārata* tradition, some other names of progenitors of statecraft are added.7

The *Nītiprakāśikā* of Vaiśampāyana mentions the names of Brahmā, Maheśvara, Skanda, Indra, Prācetasa Manu, Brhaspati, Śukra, Bharadvāja,, Vedavyāsa, Gaurāśirāmuni as the authors of Rājaśāstra. cf.8

\[\text{brahmā maheśvaras-skandaścendrah prācetaso manuh} /\]
\[\text{brhaspatiśca śukraśca bhāradvājo mahātapāḥ} \] //

7. cf. Viśālākṣaśca bhagavān kāvyāsaiva mahātapaḥ /
    sahasrākṣo mahendraśca tathā prācetaso manuh //
    bhāradvājaśca bhagavān tathā gaurāśirā muniḥ /
    rājaśāstrapraṇetāro brahmānā brahmavādinaḥ // -Mbh. XII.58.2-3.
Interestingly enough, the author of the *Nītiprakāśikā*, enumerated the number of chapters of the works on Rājaśāstras composed by the above mentioned authors, respectively, as 1,00,000; 50,000; 12,000; 6,000; 3,000; 1,000; 700; 500 and 300.9

II

A. The *Arthaśāstra* of Kautilya:

The *Kautiliya Arthaśāstra*, as the name implies, is a treatise on statecraft. *Arthaśāstra* is defined as ‘the science which is the means of acquisition and protection of earth’ (*tasyāḥ prthivyā lābhāpālanopāyah śāstramarthaśāstramiti*).10 It further states that ‘*artha* is the sustenance or livelihood (*vṛttiḥ*) of men; in other


10. *Aś. XV.1.2.*
words, it means the earth inhabited by men. (*manuṣyāṇāṁ vṛttirarthaḥ, manuṣyavrtaḥ bhūmirityarthaḥ*).\(^1\)

*Artha* is regarded as one of the three goals (*trivarga*) of human existence, the other two being *dharma* and *kāma*. Here *artha* is understood in the sense of material gain as well as the means of securing such gain, particularly wealth whether movable or immovable. It primarily concerns individuals. The individual is to pursue *artha* as one of the goals of human life. Kauṭilya holds that of the three goals of life, *artha* is the primary and most important, and the other two are dependent on it.\(^2\)

On the other hand, *artha* is understood also in the sense of the earth where man live and pursue material well-being as against, in the narrower sense, the pursuits of the individuals. Thus, *Arthasastra* is concerned with the state activity, because the state alone can make the general well-being of the earth. In this sense, the *Arthasastra* is the science of statecraft dealing with the politics, administration and matters of practical life.

The *Kauṭiliya Arthasastra*, in the present form, contains fifteen *adhikarana* (Books), of which the first five deal with the

\(^{11}\) *ibid*. XV.1.1.  
\(^{12}\) *artha eva pradhāna iti kauṭilyaḥ arthamūlo hi dharmakāmāviti* / *ibid*. I. VII. 6-7.
internal administration of the state (called tantra), while the next eight deal with the state’s relations with the neighbouring states; the subject dealt with in the final two chapters are of miscellaneous character.

The very first chapter of this treatise furnishes a detailed table of contents and enumerates the prakaraṇa in each adhikaraṇa. We are also told that the work contains fifteen Books, one hundred fifty chapters, one hundred eighty prakaraṇas (sections)13 and six thousand ślokas. (śāstrasamuddeśaḥ pañcadaś-ādhikaraṇāni sāsīti prakaraṇa-śatam sapāñāsad-adhyāya-śatam śat ślokasahasṛṇīti). But the reference to six thousand ślokas is a point of controversy. On this point Kangle holds that “on the usual basis of 32 prose syllables constituting a śloka, we get not 6,000 but less than 5,000 ślokas in the present text.”14

The text of the now available Kauṭiliya Arthaśāstra was first published in 1909 as Vol. 37 of the Biblioteca Sanskrita of Mysore and was edited by Dr. R. Sharma-shastry, based on a lone manuscript with commentary on a small part of it. He also

13. It may be noted here that ‘prakaraṇa’ is not indicated in while quoting the references from the Aś (i.e. only the Book, Chapter and śloka concerned are cited).
gave a tentative English translation of it in the pages of *Indian Antiquity* in 1905 and following years. Thus, Sharmashasstry’s complete translation got published in 1915, and its eighth edition in 1967.

In 1972, R. P. Kangle took pains to publish the text and its translation depending on the text edited by T. Ganapati Shāstry, with a complete Sanskrit commentary authored by the editor himself. Dr Kangle claims to have made necessary emendations and additions based on a few more manuscripts discovered later on. Now, these two translation works fulfill the needs of the researchers as well as common readers.

The work ascribes itself in unambiguous terms to the famous Brāhmaṇa, Kauṭilya, who, according to tradition, overthrew the last king of the Nanda dynasty, and instead installed the Maurya Chandragupta on the throne of Magadha. The two concluding verses of the work state that it was written by Viṣṇugupta, who being weary of, and thus becoming intolerent of the misrule of the Nandas, rescued the scriptures, the science of weapons and the earth which had passed to the Nanda king, and that he wrote it because he had seen many a discrepancy on the part of
commentators preceding him. cf.\textsuperscript{15}

\begin{verbatim}
yena śāstram ca śāstram ca nandarājagatā ca bhūḥ / 
amarṣeṇoddhṛtānyāśu tena śāstramidāṁ kṛtam //...........
svayameva viṣṇuguptaścakāra sūtram ca bhāsyām ca //
\end{verbatim}

The work is written in the form of \textit{sūtra} and \textit{bhāsyā} as claimed in the above quoted statement of the author himself.

The \textit{Arthaśāstra} includes politics, economics, statistics, several other subjects connected with administration and practical life, principles of morality and ethics, so on and so forth.

So far as the date of composition of the text is concerned, A. B. Keith is of the opinion that the \textit{Arthaśāstra} may not be earlier than c. 400 A.D. or even later. It is also said that Kauṭilya (Cāṇakya, Viṣṇugupta) was not a contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya, who is said to have been installed after destroying the Nanda family, since the name of that monarch and the state are not mentioned in the work. But this view of Keith is not supported by facts, and hence rightly rejected by scholars.

It appears that Kauṭilya’s proper name was Viṣṇugupta. He was the son of Cāṇaka, hence he was called Cāṇakya, and for

\textsuperscript{15}: \textit{As.} XV. I. 73. & Colophon: \textit{dṛṣṭvā vipratipattiḥ bahudhā sāstresu bhāsyakārāniṁ / svayameva viṣṇuguptaścakāra sūtraṁ ca bhāsyām ca //}
his crooked politics (*kūtīla nīti*) he is called Kautilya.

That Kautilya is the author of the *Arthaśāstra*, is corroborated, besides what has been said by the author himself in the last two *slokas* of the treatise, by other internal and external evidences. The work has unity of plan and structure, a carefully drawn table of contents divided into books, sections and chapters, and contains no contradictory views, — all of which point to a single authorship. External evidences may be drawn from Daṇḍī, Bāṇabhaṭṭa, etc. To quote Daṇḍin:\(^{16}\)

\[\text{adhīśva tāvad daṇḍanītim/ iyam idānīmācāryaviśuṇuguptena mauryārthe śādBhiḥ ślokasahasraiḥ saṁśiptā/} \]

—This implies that the science of politics was abridged into six thousand verses by Viṣṇugupta for the sake of the Maurya king.

The author of the *Pañcatantra* also ascribes the authorship of the *Arthaśāstra* to Cāṇakya. He says in the introduction to his work: “*tato dharmāstraṇī manvādīni, arthāstraṇī cāṇakyādīni, kāmastraṇī vātsāyanādīni.*”

From the foregoing paragraphs, it becomes clear that Kautilya was a contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya, and that

\(^{16}\) *Daśakumāra*, Pt. II. VIII. p. 191. (MR Kale edn.)
he wrote this work sometime between B.C. 321 and 296 B.C. Its archaic style and the technical terms, as well as certain institutions which are common with Aśokan edicts, corroborate the view that it belonged to the Mauryan period. Kautilya is famous not only as political adviser, but also for being the greatest exponent of the art of government, the duties of kings and officials, and the method of diplomacy. His work deals with the administration of the state, internal and external, civil, military, commercial, fiscal, judicial and so on. There are sections dealing with the training to be given to the princes, the council of ministers, the importance of spies, the work of ambassadors, law, offense, justice, penalty, taxation, six expedients of a king, vices of kings, priests and bards. The king is said to be only a wage earner and a servant of the state.

The *Arthaśāstra* appears to be a treatise on practical politics or “a manual of imperial polity”, as stated by Kangle. “It (Kauṭilya’s *Arthaśāstra*)” as observed by A. L. Basam, “gives very detailed instructions on the control of the state, the

17. As P. C. Chakravarty observes - “we may assign the military ideas and institutions of Kauṭilya’s work roughly to the period from 300 B.C to 100 A.D.”

18. *As.* Part III. p. 263.
organisation of the national economy and the conduct of war, and is a most precious source book for many aspects of ancient Indian life.”

It may be noted here that almost all the later writers on statecraft were greatly influenced by the *Arthaśāstra*. Among the authors of *Nītiśāstra*, Kāmandaka admits his indebtedness to Kauṭilya’s *Arthaśāstra*; he states that his *Nītisāra* is based on the *Nītiśāstra* of Viṣṇugupta who had taken out the nectar in the form of *Nītiśāstra* from the ocean of *Arthaśāstras*.

The subject of statecraft and warcraft found favour with some of the immortal court poetry of the post-epic period also. Among literary luminaries who dilate on the subject of statecraft and warcraft, mention may be made of Kālīdāsa, Bhāravī, Bhaṭṭi, Māgha, etc.

Among the aesthetic literary works, our discussion mainly concerns with the *Śīśupālavadha*, a court-epic by Māghapaṇḍita. While going through the text of this *kāvya*-work, one may be surprised to find that the concept of warcraft formulated by the authorities on statecraft, more particularly

Kautilya in his *Arthaśāstra*, is appropriately utilised by Māgha in his great work.

B. The Śiśupālavadhā:

The Śiśupālavadhā of Māghapaṇḍita is a *mahākāvyya*, one of the five well known great poetical works for that matter, with twenty cantos. This *mahākāvyya* is counted in the category of *vadhakāvyya*. Flourished in the decadant post-Gupta period of Sanskrit classical literature, Māgha has composed this *mahākāvyya* to the height of his talent and scholarship.

It being a *vadhakāvyya*, the events are depicted in a fanciful manner, no doubt, but the combat between Kṛṣṇa and Śiśupāla, and their auxilaries was depicted more vividly. Not only the principal combat, but also the policies and principles, military ethics, strategies etc. in general are depicted in a very lucid and effective manner. The kernel of the story of this *mahākāvyya*, i.e., relating to the annihilation of Śiśupāla (*cedipati*, the king of Cedi) by Kṛṣṇa, is found in the *Mahābhārata*.

The cause of the battle (*vīja*) is stated in canto I where Nārada describes the anticidents and the previous births of Śiśupāla as well as his enmity against Hari in each of his previous births. Nārada also conveyed the message from Indra that
Sisupāla should be annihilated. Kṛṣṇa accepted the proposal of Indra. By the time, a messenger from Yudhisṭhīra came with an invitation for the Rājasūya sacrifice to be performed by the Pāṇḍavas. Kṛṣṇa was in a state of dilemma and confusion as regards the preference to be given to the two proposals at hand. Therefore, he sought counsel from Balarāma, his elder brother, and Uddhava, his minister. He opened the discussion stating that Sisupāla should be killed, not because that he annoyed Kṛṣṇa, but because he has subdued the three worlds. Yudhisṭhīra’s sacrifice could be performed without His help, Kṛṣṇa argued. On this, Balarāma advised Kṛṣṇa to take steps on Sisupāla immediately. But Uddhava advised Kṛṣṇa to take the action in a diplomatic manner. Mentioning the general principles to be adopted in such a situation, Uddhava reminds Kṛṣṇa about Sisupāla’s position amidst the rājamandala and warns Him that Sisupāla is as good as the tuberculosis, a constituent of several diseases. Moreover, Uddhava reminded Kṛṣṇa of His promise to tolerate and forgive Sisupāla upto one hundred crimes he committed. On the other hand, Yudhisṭhīra sought Kṛṣṇa’s help in performing the sacrifice, and Yudhisṭhīra is not only a relative, but also a true friend. Moreover, the gods will be pleased more
by eating *havis* than getting the news of Śiśupāla’s annihilation. Yet, Uddhava suggested that Kṛṣṇa should not remain indifferent in this matter, but should employ spies on Śiśupāla who could enter into the deep ocean of the enemy by taking shelter of the eighteen *tirthas*. He advocated the espionage, emissary etc. prior to the actual combat. Finally, he advised Kṛṣṇa to accept the invitation for the sacrifice first, but move to Hastināpura with proper arrangement for the battle. At the place of sacrifice the enemy of Kṛṣṇa would come to surface and thus he would be able to recognise them.

From canto III onwards, Māgha depicts the march of Kṛṣṇa towards Hastināpura along with his ratinue. As Kṛṣṇa was ready for the march, his weapons, viz., the Kaumudakī-*gadā* (mace), the Sudarśana-*cakra*, the Nandaka-*khadga*, the Śāraṅga-*dhanu*, the Pāñcajanya-*śaṅkha* and his chariot Puṣya with the banner marked with Garuḍa approached Him. As Kṛṣṇa proceeds, the Raivataka (the mountain) meets Kṛṣṇa and requests Him to rest for a while in his kingdom.

The poet vividly depicts, in this juncture, the six seasons, sunrise and moonrise, watersports, drinking and other romantic moments of the Yādava army-personnels and their consorts.
These descriptions cover nine cantos, i.e. from four to twelve.

In canto XIII, picture of warm welcome to the Yadavas by the Pândavas is drawn.

In canto XIV, the performance of Rājasūya is depicted with minutest details, where Kṛṣṇa was given agrapūjā. This enraged Śiśupāla and his allies.

In canto XV, our poet describes how Śiśupāla started abusing Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīṣma and other Pândavas. He started abusing Kṛṣṇa with so many words that these are counted by Kṛṣṇa as crimes. Bhīṣma stood fast to his own decision regarding the worship of Kṛṣṇa with arghya and challenged the kings who opposed to his decision. Taking the challenge, Śiśupāla and his allies left the venue of the sacrifice (yajña-sthāli) and got ready for the battle.

In canto XVI, Śiśupāla expressed his strong urge for fight through his ambassador who came to the court of the Yadavas, and which were appropriately replied by Sātyaki. As a result both the parties got ready for a proper battle.

In canto XVII, different armours like kavaca etc., different types of weapons, and variety of battle format, e.g., nāga, ratha etc. are depicted.
In canto XVIII a description of the fight between equally strong contenders are found. Daṇḍayuddha is also described here.

In canto XIX battle arrays are depicted; the critical nature of these arrays are compared to kāvyas composed in complicated bandhas. In this context, he has composed verses on sarvatobhadrabandha, murajabandha, cakrabandha, ardhabhramaka etc. which can be judged as the battle arrays discussed in the Arthaśāstra, Kāmandakīya Nītisāra, and was applied in the Kurukṣetra war also.

It appears from the Śiśupalavadha that Māghapaṇḍita was highly influenced by the works of Kautilya on statecraft and war policies. He makes mention about the six-fold policies (śādgunya). The author held that non-application of the gunas appropriately amounts to the destruction of the administration.

22. bandha usually comes under Yamaka Alarikāra, a figure of speech of words (Śabdālarikāra). Ācārya Daṇḍī has discussed Yamaka elaborately in his Kāvyādarśa showing three categories of it, viz., sukara, duṣkara and atiduṣkara. bandha or citrabandha are regarded as atiduṣkara type of Yamaka which can be formed by using words readable from any side desired by the poet. It is a short of word juglary.

23. viṣamam sarvatobhadracakragomūtrikāḍibhiḥ / ślokairiva mahākāvyam vyūhaistadabhavadbalarin // -Śiśu. XIX. 41.

24. śādgunyamupayunāśaśātyapeksī rasāyanaṁ / bhavantyasyaivaśamānītāṁ sthāṇuṁ balavanti ca // -ibid. II. 93.

25. guṇaṁ mahāyathātathāyādarthā viplavayanti ye / amātyavyayinā rājñāṁ duṣyāste śatrusamāṇītāḥ // -ibid. 56.
He has brought forth a discussion on statecraft and warcraft in the form of speeches made by Balarāma and Uddhava. While doing so, Māgha has used the terms and expressions on warcraft as formulated by Kauṭilya in his *Arthasastra*. For example, he used terms like śādgunya, śakti (triśakti), vijigīṣu (the king) mandala,26 pārśnigrāha etc. The concept of the rājamanḍala, i.e. the circle of kings amidst which the vijigīṣu is the centre point is found in Māgha’s work.27

The foregoing paragraphs show that statecraft which includes warcraft in its wider parameter found favour with a band of great political thinkers and the authors of outstanding literary works as reflected in their writings. This, perhaps, will make it clear that there is extensive literary works in Sanskrit, on militarism and these naturally constitute the source of information for our present study, which envisages an inquiry and review of the recommendations of the authorities on the subject relating to warcraft in ancient India. Here in our present study our endeavour is to analyse the thoughts and ideals of these great thinkers and their application into paractice with

26. According to the mandala concept, one's neighbour (i.e., the bordering state) is considered, in relation to the vijigīṣu, an adversary.
27. tarntrāvāpavidā yogairmandalānyadhitiṣṭhatā /
    sunigrāhā narendrenā phaṇindrā iva śatravāḥ // -Śiśu. II. 88.
supporting evidence wherever possible in the following pages
divided into eight chapters.

There is no doubt, that of all the works on statecraft and
warcraft which have come down to us so far, the earliest and
yet the most comprehensive one is the *Arthasastra* of Kauṭilya.
It stands as the progenitor and, in certain respects, the model of
numerous later works. Scholars and poets of contemporary times
were also greatly influenced by the work of Kauṭilya, which is
very much evident in the works of the great poets like Bhāravi
and Māgha in their immortal works, *viz.*, the *Kirätārjuniya*
and the *Śiśupālavadha*, respectively.

In the following pages, endeavours will be made to discuss
and analyse the materials at our command, on the impact of
Kauṭilya and its influence specially on Mahākavi Māgha’s work,
*viz.*, the *Śiśupālavadha*.

III

Ancient India, as indicated elsewhere, was studded with
too many kingdoms, big or small, ruled by too many ambitious
rulers, who were constantly at war with each other,— either for
self-preservation or for expansion, thereby to enhance their power
of authority and status. In the prevailing atmosphere, as observed
by Altekar, the ancient Indian thinkers on statecraft realised that “war could not be altogether tabooed, and therefore they tried to minimise its chances by advocating a judicious balance of power among the different states with which the country was studded.” To meet this end, they evolved the theory of *mandala* (*rājamaṇḍala*, i.e. the circle of kings) consisting of 12 kings with the *vijigīṣu* (the aspiring king) at the centre. The theory was fully developed by Kautilya, and a full-fledged discussion is presented in his *Arthaśāstra*. Out of the fifteen *adhikarana*s (*Books*) of the *Arthaśāstra*, eight *adhikarana*s, i.e. from Bk. VI to XIII are devoted by Kautilya for providing elaborate discussion on interstate relations, and other topics related to it, such as the qualities of seven *prakṛti*s or the constituents (*aṅga*) of an ideal state and the *rājamaṇḍala* or the circle of kings, the six elements of foreign policy (*śādgunya*), the preparation for the war and the various kinds of troops to be mobilised, the appropriate time for launching campaigns, so on and so forth.

Kautilya, in Book VI of the *Arthaśāstra*, has discussed the concept of ‘the circle of kings’ (*rājamaṇḍala*) where the interstate relations, with the *vijigīṣu* at the center stage, are determined.

It is to be mentioned here that this rājamandala concept, among others, is noticed in the Āsramavāsaprāvan of the Mahābhārata also. Likewise, the employment of spy (cāra/dūta) in foreign countries, more particularly in the kingdoms of the adversaries, preceding the actual war to be fought is treated by Māghapāṇḍita also.29 Kauṭilya deals with, in great details, the subject of espionage and ambassadors in Book. VII of his Arthaśāstra. He regards the fort (dūrga) and the army (bala) as two important elements among the seven prakṛtis (constituent elements) of the state.30 According to Kauṭilya, a state should have a fortified city, the capital or royal residence garrisoned by the four-fold army, viz., chariot, elephant, cavalry and infantry forces under more than one chief. Māgha also referred to the caturaṅgabala, i.e., four-fold army in connection with Kṛṣṇa’s proceeding to the field of war against Śiśupāla. There is mention of caturaṅga-vāhini in canto XVII and XIX (v. 20-61; 10-13) with which both Kṛṣṇa and Śiśupāla faced each other.

The subject of militarism is discussed in the Arthaśāstra in details. As it appears from the text of the Arthaśāstra, militarism is concerned with both the protection and defence of the state,

29. Śīṣu. II. 82, 113-114; XVI. 1-85.
30. Aś. VI. 1.1.
and the foreign policy of the state is related to it. The protection of the state can be done through the fort (dūrga) and the army (danda). In Chapter V of our present study, we endeavour to deal with the subject, under the sub-title ‘Fortification and Siegecraft’. Danda or bala is the most prominent and indispensable organ (aṅga) of the state organism since status of a state, even its very existence depends on the strength of the armed forces, and, thus, is given due weight by the political thinkers of all ages. Kautilya in Book X of his work has discussed the topic in greater detail. He has discussed the special functions of each arm of the four-fold army (caturaṅga-bala,- senā) in war and its different modes of fighting. In our present study, Chapter III, concerns with the very subject ‘Organisation of Army’.

The Nītiprakāśika of Vaiśampāyana is wellknown as a work on the art of war. Of its eight chapters or cantos, chap. II, III, IV, & V deal with the classification and description of various kinds of arms and weapons; chapt. VI & VII are devoted to the composition and constitution of the army, military arrays, rules regarding marching and camping etc. Similarly, the Nītisāra of Śukra is regarded as an inestimable source of information in
respect of the Hindu ideas on politics, sociology and war.

From very early times, people longed to set up a common political organisation for the whole country. This longing perhaps gave birth to the concept of a cakravartin or sārvabhauma (paramount sovereign). Most of the great warlords of ancient India seem to have acted in pursuance of this ideal. The motive force behind the endless campaigns and expeditions, for example, of the Mauryas and the Guptas, of the Gurjjara-Pratihāras, the Pālas and the Rāštrakūṭas seem to be their urge to bring the whole of the country under one single hegemony. Moreover, it was a fact that every king had his immediate neighbour(s) as his enemy(ies) and the neighbour’s enemy as his ally.

As already stated, Kauṭilya has discussed in Book VI of his work about the concept of the circle of kings (rājamanḍala), where the inter-state relations are determined. In our present study, the concept of rājamanḍala, sādgunya, upāya etc. have been elaborately discussed under subtitle ‘Strategy of War’(Chapter VI).

In the Arthaśāstra, one may find four chapters on the matter of espionage and ambassadors where special emphasis is laid on the loyalty of the troops, and hence it is recommended that
they should be under the constant surveillance of spies, prostitutes, artisans, actors and singers in secret service, besides being under the cautious eye of senior army officers. In our present study, Chapter VII, is devoted for elaborating this subject 'Espionage and Counter-Espionage'.

Ancient relics or antiquities show that the weapons of war and of the chase are among the numerous objects of interest. The army of a state should be equipped with arms and armours. Kautilya as well as Magha in their writings have mentioned different kinds of weapons. Alongwith the uses of arms, the ancient writers give importance in the use of various types of armours also. An elaborate discussion on the arms and armours is made in our present study, Chapter IV.

Moreover, in Chapter VIII discussion is held on army on the march, battle formation (vyūha) and other strategems.

Ancient military opinion appears to have attached great importance on the army to the position, to the military strategy, time for marching, order of march etc. in the theatre of war. It has been discussed in our study how Kautilya gives stress on the fact that the primary consideration should weigh with a General in selecting a position which must be suitable to the
character and composition of his forces. Here a discussion is held on the principles of encampment also. In the Mahābhārata, there are descriptions depicting how different commanders arranged their troops in different arrays so as to make different vyūha for fighting efficiently in the epic war. Abhimanyu is described to have been killed in a cakra-vyūha. It is found that Kauṭilya in his Arthaśāstra gives an exhaustive description of how to arrange the forces for a set-piece battle, starting with positioning of reinforcements made up of the best forces at about a kilometre behind the battle ground. An inquiry is also made to find out how Māgha in his Śiśupālavadha followed Kauṭilya in depicting the various forms of vyūhas etc. It may be noticed that Māgha mentioned various battle formations called bandhas, like murajabandha, gomūṭkābandha etc. In our study, use of music and musical instruments in military affairs in general as well as in war between Kṛṣṇa and Śiśupāla have been noticed and discussion is made on the subject also.

Endeavours are being made in our study to analyse the factors and evaluate the art and science of war as postulated by the authorities in ancient India and its impact on the culture and civilization of the Indian people and the society at large; we are
also making attempts to point out their strong and weak points that have persisted through the ages. After shifting and analysing the materials at our command, the project is being organised broadly into the following chapters:

Chapter I : Introduction

Chapter II : War in General

In this chapter endeavours are being made to analyse such aspects as the extent of war, the causes of war, the types of war, place of astronomy and astrology in warcraft, the prejudices, the attitude towards war, the principles and the ethics of war, the *trisakti* etc.

Chapter III : Organisation of Army

This chapter deals with the four-fold (*caturāṅga*) and the six-fold (*sadaṅga*) divisions of the army, the method of recruitment and training of the personnel, rules etc. connected with the maintenance of discipline in the army, the importance of drill and exercises during the training period of the army personnel etc. Discussion is also held on the position of army (*bala/danda*) in the state-organism. By the by, endeavours have also been made to trace the tradition of four/six-fold army to the vedic period, and also the constituents of the *caturāṅga-bala* in the context of the
recommendations by Kautilya and its treatment in the Sisupalavadha. Herein the spheres of action of each of the four/six-fold divisions, the guidelines to be followed by the Superintendents etc. are also discussed.

Chapter IV : Arms and Armours

The chapter is devoted to discussing about arms and armours, the various kinds of arms and weapons of warfare, the classification and divisions of arms and weapons in the light of the discussion in the Arthasastra and the Sisupalavadha with parallel reference in other works of the time; there are two kinds of weapons as there are two types of fighting, viz., offensive and defensive.

Chapter V : Fortification and Siegecraft

The chapter is devoted for dealing with the measures taken in respect both of defence and offence purposes. While fortification safeguards a state from the invaders, siegecraft makes a king stronger and flourishing. In this chapter, the importance of fortification that were designed systematically, is discussed elaborately. It appears that as a source of great defence, fortifications were considered a valuable factor in ancient India.

Chapter VI : Strategy of War

In this chapter we are dealing with the various expedients,
viz. the six-fold foreign policy (sādgunya), the four expedients (upāya), the concept of the circle of kings (rājamanḍala), etc. as measures to avoid war as far as practicable. The vijigīṣu is advised to resort to strategical diplomacy and enter into any type of alliance before going for a war. In this respect, Kauṭilya, followed by others, recommends the four expedients (upāya), viz. sāma (peaceful negotiations), dāna (gift), bheda (showing seeds of dissension among the various organs of administration to weaken the adversary), and danda (resorting to war, regarded as the last resort). Kāmandaka adds three more to the above four strategems, viz. māyā, upeksā and indrajāla. Then there is the six-fold policy (sādgunya), the instruments of diplomacy and strategy, viz., sandhi, vigraha, yāna, āsana, dvaidhi-bhāva and samśraya.

Māgha successfully utilises these principles and strategies postulated by Kauṭilya and others in his Śiśupālavadha.

Chapter VII : Diplomacy, Espionage and Counter Espionage

In this chapter discussion on diplomacy is made. While dealing with the subject of external affairs, the authorities on statecraft in ancient India, speak about the deployment of ambassadors, spies, etc. in the interest of protection and expansion of one’s dominion; the Arthaśāstra speaks of three kinds of dūta
(ambassador and spies), viz., (i) nisṛṣṭārtha, ambassador with full power of negotiations, (ii) parimitārtha, who could not deviate from the instructions he got, and (iii) sāsanahara, who is entitled to deliver the message and take back the reply; he has no power of negotiation.

Chapter VIII: The Combat:

In this chapter discussion is held on the army on the march, battle formations or battle arrays (vyūhas) while fighting, and other strategems, the code to be followed, the various use of musical instruments etc.

Chapter IX: Conclusion

In this chapter the summery of the above mentioned eight chapters has been given along with our observations. It is found that the aim of the Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra appears to be practical guide to the rulers as to show how a state should be ruled. Moreover, it is also seen that without studying the Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya any discussion on war and warcraft in ancient India would remain incomplete.