AMATYA, MANTRIN AND SACHIVA
The terms generally used for the ministers in ancient Indian literature are Amatya, Sachiva and Mantrin. There is a great controversy among the scholars regarding the exact technical meaning of these terms.

The term Amatya is the oldest and its origin can be traced from the Rigveda itself. The word Amatya occurs in the Rigveda where it is used as an adjective meaning 'our own', and 'abiding in our house'. In the Baudhāyana Pitṛ Medhasūtra the word Amatya is used in the sense of 'near male relations in the house'. The word Amatya occurs in the sense of minister for the first time in the Āpastamba Dharmasūtra. It is stated that the king should not live better than his gurus and his ministers.

The word Sachiva occurs in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa wherein it is stated that Indra considered the Maruta as his Sachivas (helpers and Comrades).

The Ramayana uses all the three terms for the ministers. In the Ramayana Sumantra is called Amatya and best of Mantrin. In the same work the Amatya and Mantrin appears to be different functionaries. The same source styles Sumantra as Amatya, Mantrin and Sachiva. Similarly, Hanumān is also styled
as Amātva, 10 Sachiva 11 and Mantria 12. The six ministers accompanying Rāvana in his digvijaya are also called Sachivas, Amātvas and Mantrinas. 13 The differentiation between the Amātva and the Mantrin is clearly indicated in the Ramayana. Valmiki, while describing the ministry of king Dasaratha, divides the Ministers in two groups. In the first group he includes Vriht, Jayanta, Vijaya, Siddhārtha Arthasādhaka, Asoka, Dharmapāla and Sumantra who are styled as Amātvas. 14 In the second group he refers to the names of Vasistha and Vāmadeva and others who are described as Mantrinas. 15 Beni Prasad, on the basis of a reference from the yuddhakanda, concludes that the ministers were divided into two classes Sachivas and Mantrinas and that the term Amātva was a general one including both. 16

The Mahābhārata does not differentiate these terms from each other and uses them in the sense of a minister. We are informed that the Sachivas of the Kaliṅga king are referred to as Amātvas with whose consultation policies were formulated. 17 Again, we find that the same Amātva is styled as Mantrin who had killed his master. Moreover, the Amātvas in Amātva Parisad of King Somaka are also referred to as Mantrin. 18 In the Mahābhārata the king has been ordained to place Amātvas incharge of mines, self producing areas, land and sea customs, forests and elephants. 19 At another place it is stated that an Amātva may be engaged in counsel and in war. 20
On the evidence of Pali texts R.S. Sharma opined that the Āsātyas in the pre-Mauryan times were officers of a general category; in the beginning they were the king's friends, companions and courtiers; but gradually, they were appointed in large numbers as supervisors of sale transactions, judges, guides in worldly and spiritual matters, surveyors, village headmen etc.21

Kautilya clearly differentiates the Āsātya from the Mantrins. He says that having taken into consideration the time, place or work they have to do in the first instance people may be appointed as Āsātya and not Mantrins.22 He adds that the king should employ three or four Mantrins but the number of the Āsātyas should depend upon the capacity to employ them. He lays down higher qualifications for the Mantrins than those of the Āsātyas. According to Kautilya the Āsātyas are to be employed, if found honest, after every one of the tests by the Upadhaśas. But the Mantrins were to be employed only if their honesty and loyalty was proved by all the tests combined.23 Kautilya considers Mantrins higher in rank than the Āsātyas and the salaries of these two were also different. A Mantrin had a salary of 48000 panaś a year but the Āsātya received only 12000 panaś a year. Kautilya classifies the Āsātyas into best, middling and inferior category.
On the basis of the available reference from the Arthasastra, P. Kangle is of the opinion that *Amatva* (from *Amā* together, by the side of) was originally the ruler's personal companion and was not formally connected with state administration, though in importance next only to the king. He adds that the *Mantri* seems to have been primarily a counsellor (from *Mantra*, counsel) who because of his training and knowledge, could give expert advice on state affairs.\(^{24}\)

The differentiation between the *Amātva* and *Mantri* is also corroborated by the testimony of Greek Writers who call *Amātva* as counsellors and assessors and add that all the high officials were appointed from them.

\(^{25}\) Manu considers *Sachiva* and *Amātva* as synonymous. The *Amarakōśa* lays down that the *Amātva* who is *Vhissachiva* is called a *Mantri*, while the *Amātva* other than *Mantri* are called *Karmasachiva*.\(^{26}\)

A critical analysis of Junāgadh\(^{27}\) inscription of Rudradāman I whose great enterprise to repair the Sudarśana lake was disapproved by his *Matisachiva* and *Karmasachiva* and who were all endowed with the qualities required in an *Amātva* and yet who were averse to the project and had no enthusiasm for it, since the breach
to be repaired was very great, leads us to point out that the same are divided into two classes, those who give advice and those who execute the business decided upon. In this the word Sachiva appears to be a synonym of Amātya. R.S. Sharma opined that 'in post Mauryan times Amātya were more commonly known as Sachivas'.

Kāmandaka like Kautilya differentiates the Amātya from Mantrin and attaches great importance to Mantrin in comparison to Amātya. Kāmandaka states that the king living in his capital, equipped with treasury and army should think of the welfare of his kingdom together with the Mantrin and Amātya. Kāmandaka does not differentiates the Sachivas from the Mantrins. This shows that they were the same officers. He says that it was the duty of the Mantrin to think over, decide and report to the king on the use of four means i.e. peace, corruption, dissection and force. He was also required to pay attention to the time, place and circumstances of the action as well as to their results.

The Agni Purāṇa speaks of Amātya Sachivādīṁscha, Mantrāmātyānmasādikah and Amātya-mantripastatha, but it does not uses the word Sachiva along with the Mantrin to differentiate their position. The Agni Purāṇa describes the
qualifications of the Sachiya and Mantrin separately. The Nitipraakāsikā also differentiates the Sachiya and Mantrin which while putting the number of the Sachiyas as seven or eight suggests the appointment of two or three Mantrins.33

The Abhilasitārtha-chintāmanī uses all the three terms viz. Amātya, Sachiya and Mantrin side by side. It enjoins upon the Amātyas, the Sachiyas and the Mantrins to take their respective seats in the court allotted by the king,34 and to occupy their residence in different quarters of the city.35 The Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa states that only Amātyas, chief of guilds, rich merchants, and the people should be introduced to the king but makes no mention of the Sachiyas.36

The Suksmañītigara regards Sachiya,37 Amātya38 and Mantrin39 as Army Minister, Revenue Minister and the Chief councillor. The Nātyavākya-ārtha also discusses the Amātyas and the Mantrins in two different sections. It also indicates the higher positions of Mantrins than the Amātyas.

Thus on the basis of the above mentioned references we can say that all the three terms were used by the ancient Indian authorities on polity. We tend to agree with R.S. Sharma that the Amātyas cannot be taken to constitute a class of knights as wrongly suggested by R.N. Mehta.40 There is overwhelming evidence both
of the Buddhists and the Brāhmanical works to suggest that they were officers of the general nature.⁴¹

In fact the word Amātya is generic in nature and compares the whole of the civil services in ancient India. It is to be noted that when Kautilya puts the limit of minister as three or four he clearly distinguishes them from the Amātyas whose number according to him should depend upon the capacity to employ them. With the passage of time the word Sachiva during the post Mauryan times also came to denote original cadre of officers from amongst whom the high functionaries of the state were recruited. Such a state of affairs become evident from Junāgadh inscription of Rudradāman I which refers to the Matic Sāchiva and Karmasachiva.

The epigraphical records of the Gupta and the post-Gupta periods also bear the testimony that Amātya was not used in the sense of a minister but a royal functionary. From the Khos copper plate inscription of Mahārāja Hastin (A.D. 476) we learn that the Charter is written by Sūryadatta the great grandson of the Amātya Vakra. The Kariṭalai copper plate charter of Mahārāja Jayanatha (A.D. 494) again is written by the Bhogika Cunjakirtti the grandson of Bhogika and Amātya Rājila. The Alina copper plate charter of Śīlāditya VII (A.D. 767)
is written by the high born Amātya Guha, the son of Hambata. In this connection we can say that the mention of Amātya with Bhogika shows that Amātya was a royal functionary and not a minister.

Kāśyapakāla and the Āsanī Purāṇa refer to a new type of ministers known as Nāmasachiva. He appears to be very powerful due to his close association with the king. Kāśyapakāla advises the royal servants not to speak harshly to the Nāmasachiva. In order to ascertain the duties and position of this type of minister we should try to know the meaning of the terms Narma and Syūsāra. In the Mahābhārata the term is used to mean jokes and laughter. Monier-Williams translates Narma as pastime and amusements; Syūsāra, according to him, mean dress, pastimes and love affairs. The influence wielded by the Nāmasachiva over a king engrossed in passions and amusements and harsh words for the Nāmasachiva used by royal servants indicate his low position in their eyes. The mean nature of his work, which includes cheap jokes and jesting evoked such an attitude, but still we find some indications of his importance. In the Gupta time the Nāmasachiva was also called Nāhasayachiva who used to help the king in all sorts of enjoyments.
From the Karmadanda inscription of the time of Kumāragupta I we learn that Sīkharāsvamī and his son Prthvisena were kumārāṃśātya and belonged to the Brāhmaṇa caste. In this connection Kumārāṃśātya should be considered as a technical official title which had nothing to do with the kumāra or āśātya. The Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta also describes Harīśena as kumārāṃśātya. From another inscription we learn that a gift was made by a Maṇtrī Kumārāṃśātya, who afterwards became Belādhikṛpta and who was the son of Maṇtrī Kumārāṃśātya of Chandragupta II.

On the basis of the above discussions it appears that the kumārāṃśātya was a royal functionary and not a counsellor of the crown prince. We may say that the Kumārāṃśātya was a cadre of officers out of whom were selected the high officers of the state.

During the reign of Kumāragupta I (A.D. 460) uparikamahārāja Jayadatta governed the province of Puṇḍravardhana and the Kumārāṃśātya Vetravarman, who was a viṣayapati, appointed by him administered the office of the district head quarters of Koṭivarsa viṣaya. The records belonging to the period of Budhagupta and Bhāmagupta show that in their times, while Puṇḍravardhana was governed by the uparikamahārāja the administration of Koṭivarsa Viṣaya was run by
viṣayapati and āyuṣṭaka. This shows that in the province of north Bengal the Kumārāṃśaṭya carried on those functions which were later on performed by the viṣayapati.

The Basarh seals informs us that in the province of Tirabhumti the Kumārāṃśaṭya was interested with the viṣaya administration.

The Basarh seals No. 4, 5 and 7 refer to yuvarāja pādīṭva kumārāṃśaṭva adhikaraṇa and seal Nos. 6 and 7 mention Śrīyuvarāja ṇhaṭṭāraka pādīṭva kumārāṃśaṭva adhikaraṇas. In the seal No. 8 we find Parasabhāṭṭāraka pādīṭva kumārāṃśaṭva adhikaraṇa. R.D. Banerji considers pada to mean ‘equal to’ and Yuvarāja ṇhaṭṭāraka to signify the real heir apparent. We may classify the ranks of Kumārāṃśas as under:

1. **Kumārāṃśaṭva** - First rank of the title.
2. Yuvarāja pādīṭva kumārāṃśaṭva adhikaraṇa - equal to the rank of prince.
3. Śrīyuvarāja - ṇhaṭṭāraka pādīṭva kumārāṃśaṭva adhikaraṇas - equal to the rank of illustrious heir apparent.
4. Parasabhāṭṭāraka pādīṭva kumārāṃśaṭva adhikaraṇa - equal to the rank to his majesty.
A seal discovered by Marshal from Bhita reads **Mahāśvapati Mahadandaṇāveka viśmukṣita padāmuḥvāta kumārāṃśāya adhikarāṃśya**. The term **padāmuḥvāta** is used to indicate the relations between a paramount sovereign and his feudatory chieftain, official or relations between parents and their children or relations between elder and younger brother. The **Kumārāṃśāya** was the son of Viśmukṣita and it is probable that he preferred to be known in his official capacity by his relationship to his father.

We find that the term **kumārāṃśāya** is mentioned in the **Madhubana** copper plate inscription, the **Banskhera** plate inscription of Harṣa and in two Valabhī grants of Dharasena II.

The Mahākumārāṃśāyas who were appointed under the Palas used to exercise a general control over the Kumārāṃśāyas.
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