Kautilya and Machiavelli: Realists in their views

The most conspicuous feature of the political philosophy of Kautilya and Machiavelli is that they treated politics by divesting it from religion. It has been pointed out in the previous chapters that with the gradual expansion and consequent vastness in the size of the realm under the later Aryan, religion began to lose the hold with which it had worked during the preceding centuries. It cannot be denied that during that period religion had played a very dominant role both in the organisation of society and in the working of the State in India. The priests who were the spokesmen for religion had overwhelming influence over the general mass of the people by virtue of their association with divine activities and, over the king (Kshatriya), on the strength of their being from the superior caste. Further, in ancient India, the Brāhmīns formed the class of intellectual giants. As a consequence, in any matter, religious, political, legal or constitutional the voice of the priest was binding over all. Ancient Indian literature presents numerous instances before us to infer that the command or order of a priest used to be very genuinely complied with even by the ruling monarch. However, the influence of the
theologians upon the ruler began to decline steadily from the fourth century B.C.2 The hold of the priest over the king received a shattering blow with the propagation of the teachings of the Buddha. Indeed, the Buddha’s teachings paved the way for the appearance of absolute monarchy by destroying the importance of the priests and other classes of nobles.

That kingship was assuming a purely temporal character by gradually severing its subjection to the spiritual and religious authority is amply manifest in Ch.I of Bk. III of the Arthasastra. However, the king who himself from the grip of the priests was still expected to rule in accordance with the sacred law with which however, Kautilya could not agree. He opines that as soon as the sacred law happens to be in conflict with the rational law (dharma = King’s law) the king is to abide by his own law.3 The Kautilyan king is not bound to observe the injunctions of the sacred law. For dealing with the subjects he must equip himself with knowledge from all valuable sources. Thus he will arm himself for this purpose with the knowledge of the Dharmasastras and the Arthasastra; shall know the age-old usages of the land and, lastly he shall depend on his own wisdom.4 The king must know the āstras (Dharmasastra and Arthasastra) but more than that he must also know how to form his own judgment from the experience of the past occurrences that is, from history. He is to depend more on facts than theories.5 Thus Kautilya says that, of the sacred law (dharma), evidence (vyāvahāra); custom (charitra) and edicts of the king (rājasāsana),
the later is superior to the one previously mentioned.

It is clear that the edict will depend upon the mental cast of the king as moulded by his knowledge of various śāstras and history. What is being argued is that the king's mentality was so shaped by proper education that he could not normally act as an unbridled despot, although, if he so desired there was no check upon that. Curiously enough, in the very next sentences, Kautilya, in seeming contrast to his early enumeration, where Arthasastra and history rank higher in his view compared to Dharmaśāstra — says that when the king is in troubles his view is to be governed by the latter i.e. by the sacred law. The error is, however, rectified in the very next few sentences where he specifically says that the king is to be led by his own views if he finds it expedient not to be governed by the sacred law. Thus while Kautilya advises the king to depend in his business more on facts than theories the latter is advised also to conform to the views of the sacred law. The king was advised to do so to hoodwink the people who sympathized with the sacred law and whose prejudice was thereby not hit. It was just an attempt to show to the religious class that the king honoured the sacred law. The king would, however, know in his mind as to what would help him in forming his judgment. If the judgment the king wished to pass was found to be vouched for by the sacred law, well and good; otherwise, the king was at liberty to use his own wisdom on which the religious class,
seemingly, no longer had any control. Such a view on the part of Kautilya has distinguished him from the other ancient Indian teachers who held the reverse opinion.\(^7\)

\[\text{Kautilya : a stem realist}\]

Unlike most teachers he was not a man of the type of the traditionalists who seldom dare to step outside the trodden track. He was a stem realist who even in such ancient days could think and speak so rationally that, in effect, nullified the hold of the dharma\(\text{s}\)\(\text{s}stra\)s. In fact, it is this realistic attitude in the study of political philosophy which reserves for him a separate platform from that of the other ancient Hindu political theorists. Unlike the authors of the Pur\(\text{n}\)as, Kautilya did not, moreover, ascribe a divine character to the office of the king thereby trying to make him immune from the consequences of his misdeeds.\(^8\)

If Buddhism in its early days was responsible for reducing the influence of orthodox Hinduism in its interference in state business and for the appearance of a man like Kautilya the Italian Renaissance appearing before Machiavelli was certainly responsible for curbing the influence of the Church. As Bertrand Russel has pointed out, "it is typical of the Renaissance that Christ is not mentioned".\(^9\) The new spirit spreading from Italy caused "a revival of letters, an efflorescence of the arts, a softening of manners" in almost the whole of Europe which in turn brought about a revolution in the human mind causing a sharp change in their outlook. The old age gave way to the new.\(^10\)
To what extent Machiavelli was influenced by the spirit of the Renaissance is a matter of conjecture but, being a child of his times, he is expected to have been inspired by the Renaissance, and this is manifest in his attempt to deny the locus standi of the Church in political affairs of the State. The tragic end of Savonarola profoundly bestirred Machiavelli and forced him to utter "all armed prophets have conquered and unarmed ones failed." The men falling in the former class, for instance, Moses, Cyrus, Theseus and Romulus i.e., those who were armed were all successful in their enterprise. Evidently, he was not speaking of the religious prophets for, religion, purely for the sake of religion, was honestly avoided by him as he had nothing to do with what, in his opinion, fell avowedly outside the scope of politics and this is why the name of Muhammad was dropped. Similarly, it may as well be said that like the Renaissance views Machiavelli had a philosophy bereft of a religious context and that is why he did not mention Christ too in the list of his "prophets". Obviously, 'the Son of God' would find his name in the rank of the "unarmed prophets" about whom Machiavelli had little interest.

It is, however, generally admitted to the credit of Machiavelli that in the context of the role of religion in political activities he is more clear and definite than Kautilya. We must remember, however, that Kautilya lived eighteen hundred
years before Machiavelli and that he lived in a country which always treated religion as an inseparable element of human life without which no one could expect to achieve spiritual salvation. The Indians hankered after material prosperity but what concerned them more in all ages was somehow to escape the black-side of material life i.e., the fruits of Karman (deed) and that was largely responsible for their individualistic bent of mind. Also Kautilya lived in the land that just had seen the activities of one of greatest teachers of religion the importance and significance of which the author of the Arthasastra, although he detested the new religion, could hardly afford to ignore. Kautilya did not deny the influence of religion in the way Machiavelli did in The Prince and also he did not deny the existence of life in this and another world. In this context he resembles Aquina who says that man has two ends to pursue and there are two laws guiding him in this respect. One is the Human law which will help man to secure his well-being in this world and the other is the Divine Law which will show him the way of the attainment of happiness in the next.  

Machiavelli was a true materialist and so what would happen in the next world and how one should regulate his activities in this world for that purpose did not draw his attention at all. The medieval political theory recognised the existence of the aforesaid two laws according to which the temporal ruler was at the apex of affairs pertaining to this world while the
custodian of human interest pertaining to the next was the Church. The superiority of the Church over the temporal ruler was firmly established in the early medieval days which is clearly understood from the letter of Pope Gelasius to Emperor Anastasius:

"There are two systems under which this world is governed, the sacred authority of the priests and the royal power. Of these the greatest weight is with the priests in so far as they will answer to the Lord even for kings in the last judgment."

It is thus seen that the temporal power had no scope of remaining independent of the spiritual authority in the medieval age while "the Combination of spiritual and secular authority in the same hands" which was "typically a pagan institution" was also by then an obsolete idea. It was "unlawful for the same man to be at once king and priest" and hence it was incumbent upon the Christian Emperors to look to "bishops for the sake of eternal life, and bishops made use of imperial regulations to order the course of temporal affairs". The extent up to which the Church could go to exercise its superior power over temporal rulers is manifest in the attitude of Pope Gregory VII against Henry IV of Germany.

Before Machiavelli, Marsiglio of Padua attempted at a theoretical separation of the two powers but it is Machiavelli
who for the first time showed the courage of admitting the 
distinction between the two, criticizing alongside the claim of 
the Church that it had right to exercise power over temporal 
rulers and speaking for the independence of the State. This 
Machiavelli could do because he did not believe in the cardinal 
doctrine of Christianity which upholds that man is destined to 
a super-natural end. To him success for a king means material 
success. Spiritualism has no place in Machiavelli's doctrine. 
A temporal head should know full well what should be his stand 
if he wants to be a successful king in the eyes of the people 
who are by nature evil creatures. He should be intelligent and 
shrewd enough to comprehend the state of things and able enough 
to tackle problems most tactfully to ensure success. Unlike 
M.K. Gandhi of India Machiavelli believed in the dictum "end 
justifies the means". Nothing is bad in a Machiavellian 
king's view if it brings in success for him. It is unnecessary 
for him to know that the step he takes for discharging his royal 
duty may appear irreligious or immoral. He has no special regard 
for religion and morality in political affairs. Machiavelli is 
aptly understood when it is said that he is not irreligious or 
immoral but is rather unreligious and unmoral in his political 
philosophy.

Machiavelli's The Prince gave the threshold energy to 
western political thought in its revolutionary journey from 
medieval to the secular world. The hold of the Pope and the
clergy on politics was, for the first time, severely attacked by a man who was not only a political speculator but at the same time a diplomat as well. And wherefrom thundered the criticism on the supremacy of the Roman Church in temporal matters? It is indeed a pity for the Church that its activities were attacked by a son of the soil. An astute observer as he was, Machiavelli could clearly see that the Church had sapped the vitality of the king's office — the king being transformed into a mere tool in the hands of the Church. "He (Machiavelli)" therefore, "sets himself up as the anti-Pope of the universe, the true Satan, the master of the world and of the Nations ... impelled by the petulance of his genius he creates a political necromancy which distributes crowns at will among the elect of human reason".

In contrast to Machiavelli's Italy in Kautilya's India, the priestly domination over the regal office was one of long standing. Kautilya, the prime minister, was himself a Brahmin. But whatever hold the priests as a class had now exercised over the monarchs was as counsellors most of whom were presumably Brahmins. However, the most remarkable difference between the state of things in the lands of Machiavelli and Kautilya was that while the Roman Church stood as the supreme law-giver in a European kingdom, Kautilya's India knew no such single and distinct "ecclesiastical authority" which wielded the supreme power in the discharge of the king's public duties. The
Church in Catholic Europe maintained a kind of homogeneity in its hold over the kings. But the situation in India was much different. The priesthood had, no doubt, some hold over the royal office in some form or the other. To be precise, when they ceased to exercise political hold over the king which they had done in Vedic India they began to enjoy a moral right in the palace circle. But yet, India, in those days, even when there was a Rājakaśvārtin, was not ruled by one single king and naturally, each king had his own priest-staff. There being as such no single and supreme ecclesiastical authority to guide the kings' duties, the priests of one king opposed the dogmas of those of other potentates. Except in rare cases, however, the priests not holding by themselves any royal-cum-temporal assignment involving political business hardly indulged as diehards in their opposition to the King's politics. The Indian priesthood came to recognise a borderline which they rarely crossed. As a consequence, the relation between an ancient Indian king and his priest was more sober and enduring than it was in medieval Europe.

To know the views of Kautilya on the role of religion in political affairs we shall have to depend upon the role of the priest in the business of the state. Any attempt to trace Aristotelean or Machiavellian elements in this regard in the treatise of Kautilya will be futile if the Arthashastra is not read in true spirit. As has been said already, India, as a
country, could not and cannot deny the place of religion in political activities. Even Aśoka, the greatest monarch that India could produce, though he gave up what might be called the State-religion, could not afford to ignore the conspicuous undercurrent of religion under which Indians learnt to live for centuries. As such it cannot be expected that Kautilya could have treated politics bereft of religion in the manner Machiavelli did. An Indian cannot afford to ignore ‘religion’ as easily as a western can do. Even M.K. Gandhi, the father of the nation of modern India, who is regarded as the most successful politician (if the determinant in this case is believed to be the hold one can have over the people’s mind) says that politics bereft of religion is a death trap which kills the human soul. The reference to Gandhi is just to show that even in modern age an Indian can hardly afford to ignore religion though no Hindu political figure down from Aśoka to Gandhi ever believed in the spectarian character of religion. From birth to death the aim of an Indian was to work for his own salvation and thus Kautilya got little scope to think of politics or other things devoid of religion. To be precise, he thought of other things but could not forget religion. Hence it will be futile to attempt at a discovery of ‘Aristotelean elements’ in the writings of a Kautilya as Varma has tried. Religion and politics were never thought of in India as being in two water-tight compartments and consequently, it can be said that though Kautilya and Machiavelli arrived at the same
conclusion their approach did not always happen to be similar. Thus while Machiavelli is very eloquent on the negative role of religion and morality in politics Kautilya's views in this regard are, though strong, have not become widely visible. Hence to understand Kautilya's views on religion we must examine the importance associated with the office of the priest in pre-Kautilyan India and then during Kautilya's period.

The office of the purohita (priest) is as old as the Ṛg Vedic period when it used to discharge both spiritual and temporal functions. In the Vedic period he was essentially the king's chaplain who not only looked after the performance of the royal sacrifices but presumably exercised certain powers over the affairs of the kingdom. Being versed in all the sciences of spiritualism and materialism a Brāhmaṇ (priest or Brāhman or purohita) was obviously at a very advantageous position who could make forecast of events and could even prescribe against providential calamities and these were acknowledged in the Arthaśāstra too. The simple and religious minded Indians looked with wonder at the miraculous power of the Brāhmins who were described by a monarch of the standard of Aśoka as living deities on the earth. In fact, the importance and necessity of the purohita which, as per evidence, was recognised in the Vedic period was never forgotten and was emphatically stressed in almost each and every Hindu text. Though most
of those texts were written by the priests themselves it will be wrong to suppose that their claim to power of exercising influence was mere Brahmanical pretension rather than actual historical realities. As has been observed, they, in reality, enjoyed a superior status even in the days of the 'Buddhist Aśoka'. Such was the importance associated with the priestly office that the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa opines that whatever a king does who is without a Brāhmin succeeds not. This was true of the king's spiritual as well as temporal activities. Even in the Arthasastra, we find the purohitī accompanying the king on his march against the enemy and encouraging the troops at the time of fighting by reciting from the appropriate texts. In spiritual activities he was required to provide against human and divine calamities by performing the rites prescribed in the Atharvaveda. It was through these duties, both religious and secular, that a tie between the priest and the monarch was knit tight. Both the Dharmaśastras and the early Arthasastras equally contemplate the purohitī as guiding the king's policy. Kauṭūlya also observes that the king must follow the advice of the 'high priest' as a student does of his teacher, a son of his father and a servant of his master. But this advice was surely not of a political nature. Kauṭūlya's creation of the office of the high priest seems to be after the manner of the Rg Vedic period when the king usually had only one priest in office.
Religious India did not witness a theocracy. It never established a theocracy in India. A theocracy can be thought of "only in case of a priestly group getting monarchical power or a king exercising also priestly functions and administering the kingdom in accordance with the dictates of canon law." Such a thing was never seen in ancient India. The Brahmans as a class never enjoyed supreme political power and inspite of their having enjoyed a superior social status, generally they maintained good relation with the king and willingly submitted to the wills of the monarch which enabled the latter to exercise a general political control over them.

Indeed, as has been stated already the relation between the monarch and the priest was based on good faith and mutual respect for each other's domain and further, it was one of amity and friendliness, not of hostility and treachery.

However, the priest did not cause to occupy a conspicuous position by virtue of his being a religious head. His importance was lessened in the political but not in the socio-religious field. In deed, the importance of the Brahmans in the history of India is difficult to ignore. Jayaswal opines: "Nobody can pretend to understand Hindu history without realizing the true social value of the teaching, studying, thinking and sacrificing Brahmans. With a culture of intellect ever developing..."
from generation to generation, he had grown into a leviathan of brain ... It is difficult to speak with any degree of certainty as to what had barred the Brahmans from getting into power specially when by education and wisdom add even by military prowess they were not inferior to the Kshatriyas. Hunter opined that in very ancient India the leaders of the Brahmin caste realised that if they were to maintain their spiritual supremacy they must have renounced earthly pomp. As a class of the educated they seem to have felt a sort of aversion (with certain exceptions) to the use of swords which alone could ensure continued holding of power in those days. They were tempted to sacrifice lust for temporal supremacy to the attainment of "an imperishable intellectual existence rooted in independence of spirit and consciousness of virtuous superiority". Hence they came to an honourable coalition with the Kshatriyas. They surrendered all temporal authority to the Kshatriyas and retained for them supremacy in the spiritual sphere. The priest's tacit hold in temporal activities was however, guaranteed by the dictum that the priest was "the half of the self of the Kshatriya".

We shall now examine whether Kautilya allowed the Brahmin the right of interference in State-affairs or provided against it. If the latter is proved then we can safely assert that he really spoke against religion in
politics for, we must remember that the *Arthaśāstra* does not contain any independent section on religion and politics.

For our present purpose it will not be very much relevant to deal with in detail the various functions which the priest was to perform in the Kautilyan State. Kautilya says that what is dharma (righteous) and what is adharma (unrighteous) are learnt from the three Vedas. In the same tone he affirms that what is expedient and what is inexpedient (dharma-adharmayau) are known from *dandaniti* i.e., the science of government. Kautilya does not desire that a king well-conversant with the triple Vedas (Trayi) shall rule in accordance with the teachings of the Vedas. Rather, he expects that he shall act according to expediency. Knowledge in the three Vedas is helpful only for the conditioning of the prince's mind but he is to be led essentially by the spirit of *dandaniti*. In Ch. III of Bk. I Kautilya has specifically observed on the duty of the Brāhmin which gives us an invaluable scope for an understanding of the hold of religion over the business of the Kautilyan State. Certainly he was not speaking here of the high priest about whom he wrote in a subsequent chapter. However, by pointing out the general occupation of the class he made it amply clear that the Brāhmīns, as a class, would look after religious matters and that, as a class, they had no scope to exercise any authority in the activities of the king. The Brāhmīns were considered by Kautilya as being destined to apply themselves in others'
sacrificial performance and in giving and receiving of gifts. The occupation of the Brāhmīnas involved no danger to life to which the Kṣatriyas were subject and if the class which was entrusted with the task of protection of (citizens') lives produced the king, what at best could emerge from the class of the ritualists was a high priest who being of a renowned family, proficient in the Vedas, the six Angas and well versed in the science of government was appointed by the king. Such a priest had no political game to play but his knowledge in different branches was respected by the king and besides his benediction and duty to encourage the troops by addressing them at the time of battle his service was also accepted by the patron king at the time of selection of the ministers and during the hearing of the suits of learned men and ascetics at the audience hall.

The use of the priest as a spy to test the character of the amātyās (ministerial officers) is a proof that the relation between the king and his priest was one of trust and faith. This is one rare field where the king employed his priest in such an ignominious work as of the spy. But what does it imply? Is it not a sufficient proof that the priest had to live at the mercy of the king? They were appointed by the king and hence were mere servants who could be banished or imprisoned. Is it not a convincing proof of the fact that the king's authority was to be obeyed by all sections of people including even the usually
venerated Brāhmīns? Interestingly, the priest who was outwardly so widely believed by the king was himself subject to secret watch by other spies. But this must have been the case for, when Kautilya believed in the maxim ‘kingship knows no kinship’. It was impossible for him to keep the priest outside the vigilant eyes of the king’s secret agents.

Notice should also be taken of the fact that the priest did not occupy in Kautilya’s work, as in ancient India, any ministerial post, ex-officio. Whether his (the priest’s) influence had owed its origin to any assembly or ‘secret council’ and whether members of the assembly were afraid of contradicting him because of his being a skilled logician and orator is difficult to ascertain but there is no doubt that in Kautilya’s work, in the prestige of the priest, there remained no ostensible vestige of that quality. It would be wrong to conclude that the priest ceased to work as a counsellor but certainly he did not work in the capacity of a priest-minister and has been clearly distinguished by Kautilya from the ministers.

Further, it was quite impossible for the ‘high priest’ to perform the dual duties of spiritual and political characters simply because limitation in the capacity of a human being guaranteed against his being too much involved in political affairs although, he was an important official of the State and ranked only after the mantrīṃ in the list of the eighteen tīrthas. That Kautilya realised that the priest’s domain was...
the religious field and that he had nothing to do with matters temporal is further corroborated by his views in the Saptânga theory where he dropped the priest. It is no little curious to notice that while Kâmandaka, Kauṭilya's follower, in a way, includes the chief priest in the seven elements of the State; Kauṭilya is reticent on the point. It is, indeed, this denial to the priest of any importance in the Saptânga theory the elements of which are all associated with temporal subjects that has largely contributed to the belief that Kauṭilya deliberately wanted to keep the priest and his religion away from the affairs of the State. Ghoshal has considered it as a distinct service of Kauṭilya to the cause of political theory.

Our endeavour to show that Kauṭilya was not upholding religio-politics is half successful with the establishment of the truth that the priest was not considered by the king to be seriously needed in political matters. In Ch. IX of Bk. I, where Kauṭilya discussed the creation of councillors and priests this point was made further clear by him. The ministers are appointed for discharging temporal duties while the priest is appointed to look after the religious activities of the kingdom.

Kauṭilya on religion and morality:

It has been observed in the above discussion that theology had no place in the administration of the Kauṭilyan State. We have examined Kauṭilya's views on the priest. We shall now
examine his views on morality and religion as well. Before Kautilya it continued to be believed that "canonical authority and human reason were the joint standards for the rules of human conduct". Kautilya has, however, no confusion as to the jurisdiction of each and "frequently recommends without pretence of an apology the exploitation of religion for political ends". Religious formalities should not stand as a bar to the acquisition of wealth. This is clear from his observation that some of "the obstructions to making profit (acquisition of wealth) are, desire for the other world, adherence to virtuous life, and faith in the auspiciousness of days and stars." What is the benefit of depending on stars (astrologers)? Kautilya asks. Kautilya regards his conduct as childish who wants wealth but depends on stars. Wealth is the star for wealth, what other stars will do? Kautilya again asks. When the king is financially embarrassed the superintendent of temples is to be directed to exploit the popular superstition for replenishing the royal treasury. Even the Brahmanical temples were not to be spared and could be plundered by the officers of the king on flimsy pretexts. Religion in another way also, is a potent weapon in the arsenal of the king: Kautilya does not sanction performance of sacrifice by the king's opponent and instigates for his being murdered by spies. He also speaks for confiscation of the whole property of the seditious persons by alluring them to step into the trap of the King laid by the agency of spies. In fact, he believes that a seditious person has no right to perform religious sacrifice.
and directs the king to utilize religious engagements by such person as a suitable opportunity for punishing him.

In internal policy Kautilya further utilises the scope of religion. Thus while he cared for temples and gods exhibiting thereby a kind of preferential treatment for the priests he manifested an attitude of antipathy towards the Pāṇḍaras who included the Buddhist monks. They were not only required to live on the border of burial grounds but were subject to constant vigilance of the spies. But this intolerant policy of the state did not amount to 'rank persecution' and in many cases Kautilya made no distinction between the Pāṇḍaras and other sections of people and maintained that the Pāṇḍaras could make their settlement along with the four other castes in large areas provided they did not create troubles for others. Probably as a believer in Brāhmaṇical mode of social life Kautilya disliked the activities of the Pāṇḍaras whom he suspected of being associated with such anti-State activities as would sap the vitality of the caste-system which Kautilya so zealously advocated to uphold. Religion, in political life, was looked upon as a tool in the hands of the monarch who could make use of it for the attainment of chosen political goal. The loyalty of the officials was to be to the head of the State, not to any religious class and those amātyas who proved themselves above religious allurement only deserved to be appointed as judges. At the same time, the king was not
subject to any rule of religion and even if he punished an innocent he could exonerate himself by making sacrifices to Varuna. It should be noted here that the king was not made amenable for his act to any religious authority — who could be banished or imprisoned — but only to an unseen god. This fortified only the King's position by making him free to act according to his will.

It is interesting to note that Kautilya's attitude toward religion is more manifest in the internal policy of the king while his attitude toward morality got the clearest expression in the external policy. The latter policy had a 'dual character' which advising a king to surrender in precarious circumstances directs him to keep treachery at heart. When the king will go on making conquest after conquest thereby enlarging his dominion continuously by fighting all kinds of battle, fair as well as treacherous, he will have to show respect to the religious practices and susceptibilities of the conquered people evidently for the sake of his own interest. When he is strong enough and has sufficient forces at his command he may engage himself in an honourable fight; otherwise he must always think of fighting treacherously.

"Intrigue, spies, winning over the enemy's people, siege and assault are the five means to capture a fort", says Kautilya. The spies occupy a novel position, in Kautilya's views, not in internal administration only; they can also be very nicely used
in new acquisitions and conquests. This extensive use of the spies presents before us an evidence that Kautilya's King relied more on secret agents than on honourable means in both internal and external policies. Such conspicuous was the role of the spy in war against the enemy that Kautilya did not hesitate to say "the arrow shot by an archer may or may not kill a single man, but skilful intrigue devised by wise men can kill even those who are in the womb." These spies will not only help the vijigisu in successfully carrying out his designs but may even themselves take the responsibility of killing the enemy-king. The king's attitude to morality is further understood when it is seen that he is not hesitating from using poison and indeed uses "vegetable, mineral as well as organic preparations" causing instantaneous or widespread death, blindness, deafness, and dumbness, madness and other diseases and also uses those causing the poisoning of fodder, fuel and water. Thus according to Kautilya, "might, expediency and self-aggrandisement are the chief objects for consideration and religion, morality and agreements of peace are of secondary or of no consideration." The king may enter into pact with the enemy only to violate the terms as soon as possible. Beni Prasad's observation on the attitude of the vijigisu in inter-state relations is worthy of being mentioned here:

"In inter-state relationships, diplomacy knew no morality. Neither unprovoked aggression, nor the violation of the neutrality of other States, caused any surprise. Spies and
secret agents revelled in falsehood and immorality, and freely resorted to poison or to treachery. The justifying of all this was sought in the imperative necessity of unifying the country. A strong power was expressly enjoined to embark on a career of conquest, subdue state after state, and stand forth as the one all-embracing sovereign.  

Like Machiavelli who had before him the example of Marsiglio of Padua who has been described by some as the pioneer in the field of studying politics by divesting it from religion  

Kautilya had also before him, particularly, Bhāradvāja who seems to have shown him the way. But Kautilya is more sober and intelligible. Unlike his predecessors, he bridged the gulf between religion and politics while at the same time he advocated for separate domains for them.  

Like Machiavelli in the Discourses where he upheld the dignity of religion Kautilya could not deny outright the importance of religion because the predominantly religious character of the Hindu society would allow no Indian to "completely disentangle the State from the thraldom of religion". However, his king was required to pay attention to religion in social and religious matters only. In political matters where the priest's service was called for that also seems to have been to meet the psychological demand of the ordinary people. Kautilya seems prone to exploit the ignorance and superstition of the people and after Kautilya's unequivocal declaration that the king's laws would prevail over the three...
other legs of law viz., sacred law, evidence and custom we are not in a position to deny that he really emancipated himself from the bondage of religion. We may, in fact, infer that Kautilya was writing on both sociology and politics in the **Arthasastra** and that while he was speaking of the society he could not afford to ignore religion but while he was writing on politics he was always clear-sighted and could courageously declare "religion, morality and agreements of peace are of secondary or of no consideration". Gautama, Apastamba, Bodhayana etc. could not recognise the king as the source of law; Manu (VIII, 336) even said that a king was liable to be fined, like any other citizen, if he transgressed the established law. But the **Arthasastra** said that the king could make new laws. The bold statement of Kautilya shows that he did not regard politics as ancillary to religion. "As all other footsteps vanish in the footprints of the elephants, so all other dharma disappear in the rajasmera (the royal law)."

In view of the above discussion we can not afford to defy the observations of Ghoshal, Saletore and others that Kautilya treats politics by itself i.e., separates politics from religion though scholar like V.P. Verma fails to agree with the view. The observation of R.S. Sharma seems to be very interesting in this connection:

"The ... analysis of the influence of religion on the
policy of the State, according to Kautilya, leaves no doubt that on many points, ... the policy of the State can hardly be conceived independently of religious considerations. But the relation between the two expresses itself in two contradictory ways. The Kautilyan State upholds the *brahmanical* mode of life in so far as it is in consonance with its main objective, i.e., the maintenance of *varnāsrama dharma*, but discards the religious practices which stand in the way of the expansion of the State.¹

**Machiavelli on religion and morality:**

Felice Alderisio and Leslie J. Walker⁹² regard Machiavelli a sincere Catholic.

G. Prazzolini⁹³ and H. Haydn⁹⁴ regard *The Prince* as an anti-Christian piece. George Sabine⁹⁵ views him as an anti-metaphysical empiricist, free from theological preconceptions. To the Elizabethan dramatists and scholars⁹⁶ Machiavelli is a man inspired by the Devil to lead good men to their doom, the great subverter, 'the teacher of evil', 'murderous Machiavel'. "Machiavelli's doctrine", wrote Friedric Meinecke,⁹⁷ "was a sword thrust in the body politic of Western humanity, causing it to cry out and to struggle against itself". On the other hand, Isaiah Berlin⁹⁸ very emphatically declares: "It is important to realise that Machiavelli does not wish to deny that what Christians call good is, in fact, good, that what they call virtue and vice are in fact virtue and vice ... it is in fact
impossible to combine Christian virtues, for example meekness on the search for spiritual salvation, with a satisfactory, stable, vigorous, strong society on earth. Consequently a man must choose. To choose to lead a Christian life is to condemn oneself to political impotence: to being used and crushed by powerful, ambitious, clever, unscrupulous men; if one wishes to build a glorious community like those of Athens or Rome at their best, then one must abandon Christian education and substitute one better suited to the purpose."

Let us now discuss in details. It is by discussing the relationship between politics and ethics that Machiavelli earns the greatest part of his reputation or condemnation. Notwithstanding the fact that an analogue of his separation of political expedience from morality is discernible to a certain extent in Aristotle's politics and, in Marsiglio's Defensor Pacis who wrote two centuries before him, Machiavelli does not seem to have been seriously influenced by the writings of any of the two. Rather, his ideas took shape from his observations upon the rulers whom he himself knew and, from the study of history. The consequence was a sharp breach in the trend of mediaeval political thought of the West for, no philosopher, ancient or mediaeval, could afford to ignore the grave importance of religion in political The law of nature in which the ancient and mediaeval philosophers sought light for drawing conclusions and the law of God which is available to the human being through direct revelation are both kept away from the domain of his
thought obviously because Machiavelli was not merely theorising but was writing something based on facts.

Machiavelli's principal innovation was his divorce of politics from ethics. Aristotle was aware of the division between the two but he never flatly proclaimed the separation of one from the other. He rather held that the latter always conditioned the former. Machiavelli, it is said, reacted sharply to this Aristotelean tradition which had dominated the medieval political thought. His inspiration owes to the vicious atmosphere of Italy. It may be recalled that Florence was the most civilized city in the world but her life was replete with "luxury and gambling and lechery and sodomy" which came to be termed, as has been said already, as the Florentine vice. It was a city where "piety and impiety constantly mingled". The Italians were not concerned with morals and religion though Renaissance gave regeneration in many spheres of the national life. Interesting contributions of the Renaissance seem to be the emancipation of the individual's outlook from traditional obsession and simultaneous substitution of the authority of the Church by the ancients. It is in the perspective of the Renaissance and of contemporary politically vicious atmosphere of Italy that we should examine Machiavelli for his attitude toward morality and religion. In his political attack on the Church of Rome, Machiavelli might have found enthusiastic allies in the Reformation. He was born and brought up in an environment that offered him a natural advantage making it
easy for him to cross the barrier of the world of ethics and to keep foot in the world of political vices.

With this natural capacity to look at things with serenity and calmness was associated a disgust, a scorn and an antipathy for the Church. The reason is not far to seek. In the words of Machiavelli: "owing to the bad example set by the court of Rome Italy has lost all devotion and religion". The Church was partly responsible for Italy's ruin. "It is the Church that has kept and keeps Italy divided. Now of a truth no country has ever been united and happy unless the whole of it has been under the jurisdiction of one republic or one prince, as has happened to France and Spain. And the reason why Italy is not in the same position, i.e., why there is not one republic or one prince ruling there, is due entirely to the Church. For, though the Church had its headquarters in Italy and has temporal power, neither its power nor its virtue has been sufficiently great for it to be able to subjugate Italian tyrants and to make itself their prince; nor yet, on the other hand, has it been so weak that it could not, when afraid of losing its dominion over things temporal, call upon one of the powers to defend it against an Italian State that had become too powerful ..."

"The Church, then, has neither been able to occupy the whole of Italy, nor has it allowed anyone else to occupy it. ..."
Consequently it has been the cause why Italy has never come under one head, but has been under many princes and signori, by whom such disunion and such weakness has been brought about, that it has now become the prey, not only of the barbarian potentates, but of anyone who attacks it. For which our Italians have to thank the Church, and nobody else...  

Similar was the observation also of Guicciardini, the diplomatist, administrator, statesman and historian and a contemporary of Machiavelli:

"No men in more disgusted than I am with the ambition, the avarice, and the profligacy of the priests, not only because each of these vices is hateful in itself, but because each and all of them are most unbecoming in those who declare themselves to be men in special relations with God, and also because they are vices so opposed to one another, that they can co-exist in very singular natures. Nevertheless, my position at the court of several popes, forced me to desire their greatness for the sake of my own interest. But, had it not been for this, I should have loved Martin Luther as myself, not in order to free myself from the laws which Christianity, as generally understood and explained, lays upon us, but in order to see this swarm of scoundrels put back into their proper place so that they may be forced to live either without vices or without power."  

It is thus seen that the great Italians of the sixteenth
century were aware of the vices and rottenness of the Church though they were not always in a position to defy and protest against its role. While Guicciardini could not come out openly because of his being under the employ of the Church Machiavelli was also not so eloquent in The Prince on this point because The Prince was being written for a Medici and a Medici had just become the Pope. Naturally, he was not in a position to offend the prince and his family by directly attacking the Church and hence we are mainly to depend upon the Discourses for his actual opinion in this regard. However, it is to be kept in mind that Machiavelli's attitude toward morality and religion involves two things: denial of the authority of the Church in political matters and the prince's opportunistic concept of ethics. Thus, though Machiavelli did not severely attack the Church in The Prince which he did in the Discourses he did not forget to arm the prince with all the weapons that would make him the very man who would violate the dictates of religion if those stood as obstacles to his path. The two main causes behind the deplorable condition of Italy were, in Machiavelli's opinion, its divided state and the decline of military discipline. The responsibility of the Church for the divided state has been shown above. But, it was furthermore responsible because the religion which it upheld lost the ferocity and ardour which alone could make good soldiers.
However, the old religion which had played such a great role in the affairs of the ancient Roman army111 was long dead could not be summoned in the post-Renaissance Italy. The church was a moribund force in the eyes of almost all Italians: "The People of that country had observed the whole machinery of the church, its saints and the miracles, its lofty pretensions and its splendid ceremonial, its worthless blessings and harmless curses, too long and too closely to be duped. They stood behind the scenes on which others were gazing with childish awe and interest. They witnessed the arrangements of the pulleys, and the manufacture of the thunders. They saw the natural faces and heard the natural voices of the actors. Distant nations looked on the Pope as the vice-regent of the Almighty, the oracle of the All-wise, the Umpire from whose decisions, in the disputes of either of theologians or of kings, no Christian ought to appeal ... Those spiritual arms which carried terror into the palaces and camps of the proudest sovereign excited only contempt in the immediate neighbourhood of the Vatican.112 Machiavelli saw how vigorously the Pope, instead of performing spiritual functions, was engaged in strengthening his temporal power by means of money and armed force.113 Alexander VI, though a Pope, was more interested in material power and for that purpose worked to deceive the people and he was always successful because he was a past master in the art.114 Machiavelli saw all these things and as an Italian he had now far stronger grounds to argue for using crime, tyranny and other
such related things in political games for, if the Pope could himself use these things there is no reason why Machiavelli should be denounced if he advocates for the use of his Virtu.\textsuperscript{115}

It is to be noted however, that Machiavelli could not praise Alexander VI and his son, Caesar Borgia, although he had great admiration for their skill. Caesar was not his hero as has been supposed by some but definitely he had offered to Machiavelli an example he needed. "Admiration of skill, and of the actions that lead to fame, was very great at the time of the Renaissance" and it was this feeling of admiration that prompted Machiavelli to suggest Caesar "as an example for the imitation of all such as by the favour of fortune or the help of other princes are got into the saddle".\textsuperscript{116a} A pope was not looked upon by him as the saviour of Italy and consequently his attack on the Church instigated Paul IV and the council of Trent later to impose a ban on his works that has largely contributed to his ill-reputation.\textsuperscript{116b}

\textbf{Christian morality Versus pagan morality:}

We have already seen that Machiavelli is a writer about government and he is mainly interested in public affairs; in security, independence, success, glory, strength, vigour, felicity on earth, not in heaven; in the real world, not an imaginary one;\textsuperscript{117} and therefore the code of morality preached by the Christian Church will not do for him. Still, as E.W. Cochrane observes, Machiavelli "did not deny the validity of Christian morality,\textsuperscript{118}"
and he did not pretend that a crime required by political necessity was any less a crime. Rather he discovered ... that this morality simply did not hold in political affairs and that any policy based on the assumption that it did, would end in disaster." Machiavelli discovered the necessity and the autonomy of politics and politics has its own laws which is beyond moral good and evil. In Machiavelli's works there is no conflict between morality and politics, but a conflict between two moralities, Christian and pagan. "He is indeed rejecting", in the words of Isaiah Berlin, "One morality - the Christian - but not in favour of something that cannot be described as a morality at all. ... He is indeed rejecting Christian ethics, but in favour of another system, another moral universe - the world of Pericles or of Scipio, or even of the Duke Valentino, a society geared to ends just as ultimate as the Christian faith, a society in which men fight and are ready to die for (public) ends which they pursue for their own sakes. They are choosing not a realm of means (called politics) as opposed to a realm of ends (called morals), but opt for a rival (Roman or classical) morality, an alternative realm of ends. ... Like Aristotle's or Cicero's, Machiavelli's morality was social and not individual ... Machiavelli is not specially concerned with the opportunism of ambitious individuals; the ideal before his eyes is a shining vision of Florence or of Italy; in this respect he is a typically impassioned humanist of the Renaissance."
Hans Baron quotes some of the passionately patriotic, republican passages in the *Discourses* in which the (moral) qualities of the citizens were properly emphasized.

In fact, there is no sinister Satanism either in Kautilya or in Machiavelli, nothing of Dostoevsky's great sinner, pursuing evil for evil's sake. Both Kautilya and Machiavelli have often been represented as too Machiavellian; but to suppose that the claims of God and of Caesar are reconcilable is to reduce their theses to absurdity.

**Scientific detachment?**

Once it is established that Machiavelli had no respect for the authority of the Church it remains to be seen what was his opinion as regards the relationship between politics and religion and between politics and morality. It is not because of his opposition to the authority of the Church but for the step which he enjoined upon his prince to adopt — and that often could not avoid becoming connected with the question of morality and religion — that Machiavelli has been described as irreligious and immoral. It is in this context that he has been described by some as having made a scientific detachment also. Machiavelli's denunciation as an upholder of political immorality has continued to the present day but if his thought regarding the relationship between ethics and politics is examined in true spirit much of the fear, contributing to his ill-reputation, will disappear. He treated politics by divesting
It from ethics only in the sense that every science must be separated from ethics if it is to be really called a science. Machiavelli did nothing more. He well realised that like scientific theories which must be supported by facts (experiments) political science also should uphold theories based on concrete evidences and not upon certain supposed ethical codes. It was indeed a courageous step on the part of Machiavelli for, though the path was not absolutely new none before him had dared to expose the separation of one from the other so openly. Machiavelli partially owes for this ingenuity to the contemporary Italian ideology which "taught that everything ought to be considered with a view to its usefulness" and "surmounted all religious and moral limitations ...". He concentrated all his attention in what he called virtù. He was not a mere political speculator but had definite goals before him. He believed that politics had its own domain, its own ethics and politics had its own domain by any ethical code. "The allegiance to objective truth, is itself a moral idea". Ethics was conceived by him not in the sense of social ethics but in the sense of virtù. It would be wrong to suppose that he had any disregard for the good things such as morality and religion. He never questioned the excellence of moral virtues but refused to admit that these had anything to do in political activities. These things are "entirely individual and personal matters; the art of governing, commanding, ruling, was not opposed, but
entirely independent of them.\textsuperscript{126} It must be remembered that Machiavelli was led by the conviction "end justifies the means" and hence regarded all measures, even if they were bereft of the usual standards of conduct, indispensable provided they bred success. Success and nothing else that always haunted his mind.\textsuperscript{127}

The Florentine advocates for the use of violence, bad faith, cruelty and all other vices in politics. He says that politics bereft of morality while it is most praiseworthy for a prince to be good, nevertheless one who wishes to maintain his authority, must know how to lay aside his goodness and trick men with cunning in time of emergency.\textsuperscript{128} Machiavelli was certainly writing for a new prince who would come to power under emergency conditions.\textsuperscript{129} Keeping faith is, no doubt, praiseworthy, but for the sake of maintaining political power deceit and hypocrisy are indispensable. It is not always sufficient for a prince to move in accordance with the spirit of law; he is perforce to depend on force.\textsuperscript{130} Machiavelli realised that if all men were good this hypocrisy would not have been needed "but because they are bad and will not keep faith with you, you too are not bound to observe it with them".\textsuperscript{131} The advocacy for using religion for deceiving the common people openly — is indeed another thing which is also responsible for the ill-reputation of Machiavelli. He just takes the advantage of the foolish nature of the common people who can be easily deceived. But does he really think that the common people are
so foolish? The answer seems to be 'no' because, in the previous chapter he affirms that men are prone to abandon their ruler in time of his danger. It appears that Machiavelli is confirmed of the sceptic and opportunistic nature of the human beings who, if they judge the king's activities by their eyes, shall judge their own interest also by the same organ and as soon as, in their opinion, they shall feel that their interest is at stake they will not hesitate to desert the ruler. This opportunistic characteristic of the human being is responsible for the eloquence of Machiavelli on the point of morality. If the people can act as opportunists why should not the king? Is he not writing for the new prince who will appear to liberate Italy from the yoke of the barbarians? If it is so, should he not caution the new prince against being moral especially when he knows that the people are ready to leave him at the first available opportunity? Immorality can be fought by immorality alone. This was Machiavelli's realisation. Here Machiavelli shares opinion with Kautilya who also says that spies of the enemy should be tackled by men of like profession. In other words it is like saying that a wicked man should be paid in his own coin. "If by honourable and merciful conduct you encourage rapine and anarchy", says Machiavelli, "in no real sense are you honourable or merciful, since your conduct injures a whole universality." Machiavelli saw with his own eyes the cruelty of Caesare Borgia who successfully restored order in Romagna which made him declare: Caesar's treachery and ruthlessness were not evil but good as they
were attended with success.

**Question of means and end:**

To both Kautilya and Machiavelli, the end justifies the means. Romulus could not have founded Rome without killing Remus. Brutus was right to kill his sons; he saved Rome and the Republic. Savonarola perished as he failed to realise that an unarmed prophet will always go to the gallows. Moses, Theseus, Romulus, Cyrus and the liberators of Athens had to destroy in order to build and all the classical historians and even the Bible admired their actions. Machiavelli is their admirer and faithful spokesman.

The fact that the wicked are seen to flourish on immoral courses appear to pay has never been very remote from the consciousness of mankind. *The Bible, Herodotus, Thucydides, Plato, Aristotle*, in the words of Isaiah Berlin, *to take only some of the fundamental works of western culture — the characters of Jacob or Joshua or David, Samuel's advice to Saul, Thucydides' Melian dialogue or his account of at least one ferocious but rescinded Athenian resolution, the philosophies of Thrasymachus and Callicles, Aristotle's advice to tyrants in the *Politics*, Carneades' speeches to the Roman Senate as described by Cicero, Augustine's view of the secular state from one vantage point, and Marsilio's from another — all these had cast enough light on political realities to shock the credulous out of uncritical idealism.*
To return to the point, Machiavelli speaks for the use of religion in politics but not in the Gandhian sense. Gandhi was trying to inject religion into politics, Machiavelli was trying to eject it out from politics. Religion may be used in politics, Machiavelli argues, not for the sake of religion but for the furtherance of political ends. His separation of politics from religion is scientific inasmuch as he holds that religion should not be mingled with state-policies. "... the show of religion is helpful to the politician, but the reality of it hurtful and pernicious." 138

The logical conclusion seems to be that Machiavelli's mind was profoundly depressed by the miseries of Italy — her very existence being at stake in the face of foreign invasions — and as such his ardent patriotism forced him to profess the extremist's view — be it religious or irreligious, moral or immoral. He declares "when the safety of our country is absolutely at stake there need be no question of what is just or unjust, merciful or cruel, praiseworthy or disgraceful; but all other considerations set aside, that course alone is to be taken which may save our country and maintain its liberty." 139 If this be the attitude of 'Machiavelli's Republic', what should be his Prince's attitude in similar circumstances? Should he abstain from taking the expedient course on the fear that that will earn infamy for him? 140 In fact, "he will find that some of the things that appear to be virtuous will, if he practises them, ruin him, and some of the things that appear to be wicked
will bring him security and prosperity".\textsuperscript{141} This disregard of all other virtues and an open advocacy for the adoption of immoral means by the sovereign under emergency condition for the common good is a step on the way to Machiavellism.\textsuperscript{142}

It is very interesting to note that throughout the whole length of The Prince Machiavelli was insisting on the efficacy of the wicked measures: Obviously, he was aware that success could not be otherwise had. The manner in which men live and in which they ought to live are so widely different that he who does not know to become a realist invites his own ruin.\textsuperscript{143} Machiavelli's political speculation owes its origin to the actual state of things in Italy where "cruelty and murder had become the normal agencies of government; good faith and truthfulness had become childish scruples".\textsuperscript{144} This things made him convinced — for which he had before him examples of Caesar, Sforza, Alexander VI, Ferdinand of Aragon and others — that Italy's future depended in unscrupulous ruthlessness.\textsuperscript{145}

\textbf{Attitude of the two Authors compared:}

It is seen in the above discussion that unlike Kautilya, Machiavelli did not speak on pure religion in his 'Little Castle'. The reason is easy to discover, Kautilya did not write on politics only a very great portion of his work being concerned with social and related matters. But he resembles Machiavelli when the latter speaks against the authority of the church or priests in temporal matters. As an important component of the society,
Kautilya's king can seek for their association and advice but he himself is the final authority to decide. Likewise it will be totally wrong to suppose that Machiavelli had no respect for morality and the true religion. Rather, he "revered religion as a noble thing and loved it as a part of Italy." In the Discourses (I, XI), Machiavelli categorically stated: "I conclude that the religion introduced by Numa (Pompilius) into Rome was one of the chief causes of the prosperity of that city; for this religion gave rise to good laws, and good laws bring good fortune, and from good fortune results happy success in all enterprises. And as the observance of divine institutions is the cause of the greatness of a Republic, so the disregard of them produces their ruin; for where fear of God is wanting, there the country will come to ruin." Even in the most notorious chapter of The Prince (Ch.18) which justifies the breach of contract and declares that a prince can act without any regard to loyalty, mercy, humanity and religion he maintains that so long it is possible the prince should not leave the path of morality. It thus appears that he advocates for the use of these vicious means only in case of extreme emergency such as when the country's existence is at stake. Do we not discover a parallel between Kautilya and Machiavelli? Kautilya opines for the application of the extreme measures in the last resort only and so long it is possible, he advises the king, to be guided by the customary laws. Both had the same end in view.

While Kautilya's king was concerned with the welfare of the
society and all his measures were directed towards that end. Machiavelli's immoral means could be adopted if these guaranteed or promoted the general welfare of the society. The measure which brings in success does not long remain evil but becomes good eventually.

Machiavelli did not concern himself with the moral quality of the ruler and in this he differs from Kautilya. Kautilya is very conservative about his 'wisdom of the king'; more disturbing is Machiavelli's open advice in Ch. 18 of The Prince that the prince need not possess all the good qualities but he must always appear to have them. Kautilya is not such a hypocrite and believes sincerely that the king must possess all the good qualities. If Kautilya is criticised for being influenced by the Brahmical way of thinking the inspiration behind Machiavelli's attaching too much importance to the 'ethics of murder and treachery' may be discovered as having come from contemporary Italian life. These are human limitations but these are the things which have made them great. Inspite of his Brahmical mode of believing Kautilya could speak for the sovereign power of the monarch who could, in the final resort, derive laws from his ownself and thereby disregard the religious injunctions while Machiavelli, though writing for Italy, produced something that stands true for all countries under similar circumstances. In the context of 'politics for politics' sake' or the autonomy of politics it is true that Kautilya did not speak in the same clear tone.
of Machiavelli but for this his greatness is not affected a little if it is kept in mind that writing in a predominantly religious land and four centuries before the birth of Christ—when Machiavelli's was still far from being a cultured land—Kautilya gave the blue-print of India's future political development. Immediately after Kautilya Asoka, the Great, adopted the path shown by Kautilya: religion is to be admired and practised for self-salvation but is not to be mingled with State-politics. Kautilya is to be further credited for, himself being a priest he treated politics by separating it from religion and this he did when religion, in one way or the other, held sway over the minds of the people. On the contrary, Machiavelli's spiritual narrowness in political discourses was nothing novel in a land whose citizens were already devoid of the good attributes of human nature.

While broadly then, the authors agree in their views on the autonomy of politics there are some points on which they partially agree and partially disagree. Both the authors speak for the use of immoral means in statecraft. Machiavelli's immediate scope for their use is for guiding the relation between the ruler and the ruled while Kautilya's insistence on the use of immoral means is in regard to the alien king and alien lands mainly. Kautilya anticipates Francis Bacon: "The increase of any state must be upon the foreigner". He was writing for the vijigalyu who would never stop from making new conquests and he was, moreover, an established king. Obviously he had little
scope to be immoral against his own subjects. On the other hand, Machiavelli's prince, far from being able to make new conquests, was to first establish himself firmly in a land of deceit. And this he could do only by using all the weapons of his arsenal, moral and immoral. What is apparent in the above analysis is that both Kautilya and Machiavelli were against the interference of religion in statecraft but while Machiavelli depended on the immoral practices both in internal and external affairs Kautilya generally depended on the specific laws in his king's treatment toward the subjects and immoral practices against the enemy kingdoms. Special and serious treatment would be given as and when it was felt necessary. Beni Prasad's view is worth quoting to have an idea of the Indian scene of those days.

"The State had reached maturity. The priestly governess was dismissed. The State became a law unto itself, and emancipated itself from the restraints of morality as well. The existence of a number of States side by side, and the frequency of war, lead, almost of necessity, to a decline in inter-state morality. Necessity knows no law; and reason of state becomes the overmastering principle of conduct. As in medieval Italy, so in Ancient India, diplomacy too often became synonymous with fraud; while unprovoked aggression ceased to excite public disapproval. The cancer spread to the internal affairs of the State and politics acquired unpleasant association which have never disappeared. Behind it all lies an essentially low view
of human nature. Almost at the beginning of creation. Menu had protested that the principal difficulty of government arose from human deceitfulness. Those who deemed man generally incapable of noble behaviour prescribed force and fraud. Bhāradvāja held that disaffected princes should be secretly punished. Vātavyādhi outraged decency and morality alike by counselling sensual indulgence as the sovereign remedy for keeping princes from sedition and revolt.

Kautilya knew all these theses of his predecessors; yet he decently maintained a balanced sense of judgment and did neither stain after the manner of Vātavyādhi, the sanctity of the palace nor did he follow the track of Bhāradvāja also. Yet his eloquence on the point of pursuing immoral courses is superb.

It is not for nothing that Kautilya would, as J.J. Reyer remarks, have agreed with Mark Twain's Pudd'nhead Wilson: "In Statesmanship get the formalities right and never mind the moralities". It has now become a custom to describe the attitude of Kautilya and Machiavelli regarding conscience as King Richard III expresses it in Shakespeare's play:

"Conscience is but a word that cowards use, Devised at first to keep the strong in awe".

**Authority of the king and the people's right in Arthasastra**

The Indian people polite and peaceful by nature rarely organized any rebellion against a reigning king. Change in the
occupant of the throne meant nothing to the Indian folk. 
Even when a benevolent king was unjustly deprived of his 
dominion his subjects did not, of their own accord, organize 
any revolt in favour of the deposed king although, however, 
they made open manifestation of the bleeding of their hearts. 
Throughout the entire length of the Epics we hardly find any 
instance where the king had to proceed against recalcitrant 
subjects. Not to speak of the ordinary people, even Visma and 
Drona, who were highly esteemed by the people for their extra-
ordinary character, did not come with material support for the 
benevolent Pāṇḍavas although they disliked the king Duryodhana.

People inherited this attitude towards their ruler as. 

to

a legacy and more or less upheld the tradition. Coming to

the historic age we however, notice a revolt 

which was probably the first organized 

rebellion of the native people to overthrow an alien yoke. It 

was the rebellion of the people of the Punjab and Sind who 

revolted in the year 317 B.C. as a result of which the Greek 

rulers of those provinces were forced to evacuate and retire 

nearer home. The border kingdoms of India had already learnt 

to live under foreign domination and the Persians had long ago 

established their suzerainty over the Punjab only to be snatched 

away by the Macedonian conqueror. Not only that, the people of 

India had adopted customs and ceremonials too of the Persians 
during their long stay under the Persian rule. So the 

popular rising against the Greek was not a rebellion against
rulers due to their foreign and alien character. It was a rebellion against wrong-doers who did not honour the people's natural rights. But still then, it cannot be called purely a people's rebellion. The atmosphere was surcharged with violence and the soil was ready. Yet the rebellion did not break out until a young leader supposedly of royal blood. Chandragupta Maurya, came forward to assume the leadership. What indication, it gives? Wrong-doers should be eliminated from power but for that, one of royal blood must assume the leadership. The throne should never remain vacant. So strong was the tradition of people's regard for the throne.

Chandragupta Maurya organised another rebellion by which he could establish himself as the most powerful king of India. Details as to how he defeated the mighty Ekrat king whom even Alexander had to spare are lacking. All that is known is that he collected some recruits from the Punjab and under his famous guide Chanakya (Kautilya) invaded the Magadha kingdom. But the giving way of the mighty Magadhan army before the small force of Chandragupta Maurya shows that there must have been some underhand games played by persons holding key-position in Nanda's empire or, else, the whole population had risen up in arms against the reigning king under the leadership of the valiant Maurya.

Thus even if the people participated in activities against the king they did not do that of their own accord.
Kingship arose, as Kautilya has pointed out, by the will of the people who, suffering under anarchy, elected or selected Menu as their king who provided for their protection, safety and security in exchange for certain taxes to be paid by them. It was, indeed, a cardinal tenet of the ancient Indian political theorists to be concerned more with the obligation of the king than with the rights of the citizens. True, there are a few elements in the writings of some of them that may be construed as certain rights of the subjects against the erring king. One such element involved threatening on the part of the citizens to migrate into another land so that the King's revenues suffered. We find in Menu that "the king who through folly rashly oppresses his kingdom, (will), together with his relatives ere long be deprived of his life and of his kingdom. As the lives of living creatures are destroyed by tormenting their bodies, even so the lives of the Kings are destroyed by their oppressing their kingdoms". However, whether or not the king practised tyrannicide is a matter falling under history but politically what was envisaged by Kautilya was that the king could not be opposed as he himself was the giver of punishment (Yama) and was as such unpunishable by any human being. To repeat, it is because the ancient Indian theorists were obsessed by the thought over the king's duties rather than the subjects' that a "truly philosophical theory of the king's relation to his subjects is wanting in Kautilya's work". In an age when expansion of territory was unscrupulously sought it
It was little strange that no political theory authorising the citizens to revolt against their tyrant ruler could emerge.\textsuperscript{166}

Kautilya's State involves a condition that it should be inhabited by loyal and obedient (su\textit{ci}) people.\textsuperscript{167} If there happens to be any disloyal people against the king, the king must adopt sufficient measures to guard his kingdom from them.\textsuperscript{168} The king "can not be opposed even when he is powerless; he is the symbol of the State."\textsuperscript{169} Nay, he is the State himself: \textit{ra} \textit{ja\ r\textit{a}j\v{y}em = iti prak\textit{r}\textit{\i} prak\textit{r}\textit{\i} ti S\textit{am}k\textit{s}\textit{he}\textit{p}h, meaning 'the king is the State' (Bk. VIII, Ch. II). It is as if Kautilya saw in his king the image of Louis XIV who proudly uttered 'I, etat c\textit{i} est moi' — 'I am the State'. In Bk. IV entitled 'The extirpation of thorns' (\textit{Kantaka\textit{\o}d\textit{a}h\textit{a})}, Kautilya dwells on the law of treason and provides for capital punishment of the offenders. The author seems to have given here his views as regards the people's right. They seem to have no right at all. Politically, the erring subjects will be punished by the king. And then there is God who will punish them with providential calamities.\textsuperscript{170} The king shall employ spies who will roam about to know the people's feeling and if they are found to be displeased they will be brought within the king's grip either "by conciliation, by gifts, or by sowing dissension or by punishment".\textsuperscript{171} The thing is that the king will not allow disobedience on the part of his people and if they dare to show any signs of arrogance they will be effectively silenced by "the weapons of the king".
"... kings shall never be despised" ... and "treacherous opponents of sovereignty shall be silenced" are the sentences in which we find the unequivocal and clear-cut view of Kautilya.172

**Conclusion:**

What comes out in the final analysis is that Kautilya does not hold the king liable to any temporal authority. Whether Dhana Nanda was overthrown after a decisive battle or whether he was deposed by a popular rebellion and whether Kautilya had a hand in that game is not definitely known. But whatever be the truth in the practical field, Kautilya did not incorporate it in his theories. We should not wonder why Kautilya did not authorise the people to revolt against the erring king. He was not writing on civil right. He was writing the treatise for a specific purpose i.e., for his Narendra and so the incorporation of such a thing would have put him in unnecessary troubles. From the sentences, "a king has no personal likes; it is the likes of the subjects" etc.; it can be safely said that Kautilya thought that a king believing in this ideal could not err. The rigorous time-table he prescribed for the king shows how sincerely was the king occupied with his duties to the people. If the king sincerely discharges his duties where is the scope to revolt against him? Kautilya knew very well that if the king was led by evil principles he would "fall a prey to the fury of his own subjects"173 and would perish.
On the other hand so long he remains wise and energetic he will impart his quality unto his subjects and will have nothing to fear from them. But as soon as he becomes reckless "the subjects will not only be reckless likewise, but also eat into his works." Thus the king and his people were looked upon by Kautilya, like Machiavelli, as a single entity, the lesser part of which would become corrupt only if the superior part would turn so and a 'corrupt king' who would disregard 'his duties' was scrupulously kept by Kautilya outside the purview of his work.

Machiavelli on the prince's rights and the rights of people:

As has been pointed out, much of Machiavelli's denunciation is due to the impression that he gave 'carte blanche' in the hands of the prince in respect of the power to be exercised against the subjects. Writers who have discovered in his prince the image of a ghost using power without the least scrupule are responsible for creating this impression. However, to describe him as an upholder of tyranny will be erroneous. He was merely discovering the facts and putting them in a systematic style. He did not write anything that had no real existence and hence to denounce him for having shown the way to the oppressors and tyrants is nothing but making him a scapegoat for the political offenders' sin.

Throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Italian political fortune was governed by the tyrants. In his own day Machiavelli was observing that success attended the
enterprises of those who were cool, calculating and ambitious and knew how to deceive the people or opponents at the right moment. Not the sense of obligation but force and craft that count in reality, says Machiavelli.\textsuperscript{175} So long the security of the State is not at stake the prince is at liberty to deal with the people in the manner that pleases them. "The prince must appear all sincerity, all uprightness, all humanity, all religion" but he must have his mind so disciplined that, when it is necessary to save the state he can act regardless of these. Preservation and maintenance of the State override all other considerations and the king is authorised to adopt unjust, cruel and even shameful measures to guarantee this. Contemptible measures, if breed success, will be judged in the long run as honourable and will be universally praised, says Machiavelli.\textsuperscript{176} He is silent, however, as to how he will characterize those measures if they do not give the prince the desired results. Machiavelli was indeed so perturbed by the political rottenness of Italy that he believed it sincerely that there was no course left for the Italian prince save that involving treachery and violence.\textsuperscript{177} Hence he seems to have wiped out the idea that the prince had any obligation to the people or conversely, that the people had any right against the 'erring prince'. Sense of obligation invariably involves that of morality\textsuperscript{178} for which Machiavelli had no headache. Machiavelli admired republican rule and found rejoice in the reminiscence of the glories of ancient Rome but
at the same time realised that the past could not be revived. This view is corroborated by the fact that having grown up under a republican regime and having the greatest admiration for people's rule he could swing to the other extreme so as to exhort a prince to liberate Italy. All 'unarmed prophets have come to grief' ...; "the populace is by nature fickle ... therefore one must urgently arrange matters so that when they no longer believe they can be made to believe by force". These are the views of Machiavelli. If the people of Italy led a pure life Machiavelli would have perhaps exhorted the republicans to liberate the country. But such was not the case. Hence he was cautious to the extreme.

The ethical and political philosophers generally happen to be the same people.179 But Machiavelli was out and out a realist and set up a double standard of morals: one, for the ruler — the moral here involving no "morals" and the other, for private citizens who would apply them in their private life. The latter were not authorised by Machiavelli to fight against the ruler with the weapon of morality (If the Italians had possessed it at all!) simply because it had no place in politics. "Morality is concerned with personal relations" while "politics is concerned with the State and with our relations to the State".180 Obviously, Machiavelli was not laying any importance on the rights of the people for, that would sap the strength and vitality of the new prince "who epitomised in himself the life of the whole State".181 About the merits and
rights of the common people Machiavelli has scope to discuss elsewhere that is, in the Discourses, but they are in contrast\textsuperscript{182} to the views held by him in 'The Prince' and hence may be ignored here.

Thus we see that both Kautilya and Machiavelli did not keep any scope for the people to challenge the rule and authority of the monarch. The points of similarities are that both Kautilya and Machiavelli considered it a primary condition that a good State should be inhabited by loyal and obedient people. If the people show any arrogance they are to be effectively silenced; if needed, by force.\textsuperscript{183} While Kautilya insists on the use of danda for ensuring the security and safety of the State (in the broad sense) Machiavelli opines that a prince need not worry if he incurs reproach for cruelty so long his subjects remain united and loyal.\textsuperscript{184} The right of the citizens is a sine qua non of modern democratic political philosophy which did not attract the attention of Kautilya and Machiavelli. They were true monarchists and were not concerned with theoretical political science. Their precepts had solid practical background. It is interesting to note that Kautilya had in his mind the image of a wise while Machiavelli that of an 'evil' king but both believed that they were speaking of the ideal king. Such a king would look after the interests of the people of his own accord. The people had no say in this. To be precise, of the rights against the erring king the authors knew nothing.\textsuperscript{185}
Notes and References

3. Arth., Bk. III, Ch.I.
   The King employed even spies to ascertain facts when two rival parties appeared before him for justice.
5. Ibid., Bk.III, Ch.I.
6. Ibid., Bk.III, Ch.I.
7. According to older teachers Dharmaśāstra is more authoritative than Arthaśāstra. See Yāgīṣvalkya and Nārada in Arth., Shamasāstrī's trans., p.171, f.n.
12. The Prince, Ch.VI. "Further, men have interpreted our religion (Christianity) according to the promptings of indolence rather than those of virtue".— Machiavelli, quoted from Hale, J.R., op.cit., p.134.


21. In fact, most of the Rājchakravartins ruled Northern India. The Vindhya, as usual, stood as a barrier to their aspirations in the South. By the term Rājchakravartin is to be meant here, however, a powerful monarch having a large territory under his hold whether or not he really had assumed the title of the Rājchakravartin.

22. In *Vedic* India we see the Brāhmins enjoining their followers to consult and follow the books and customs of the *Brahmarshidesha* and not of *Madhyadesha*. The king of the former land in that age, being more pure, had a political advantage over that of the latter.

23. Kautilya, the priest, it may be presumed without error, opposed not only the Nanda king but his priests also. In still more ancient India we see Brihaspati and Sukracharya leading the two traditional enemy camps viz., of the Devas and the *Asuras*.

24. Even in recent times, the priests exercised influences:


29. *Arth.* Bk. IV, ch.III.


32. *Arth.* Bk. IX, Ch.III.

33. *Arth.* Bk. I, Ch.IX.


35. *Arth.* Bk. I, Ch.IX.

36. Quoted from Law, N.N., *op.cit.*, p.44; Also see, critically, Yogiraj Basu, *Vedel Parichay* (in Bengali), Cal., 3rd Reprint, 1980, pp.120-1.


38. For opposite opinion, see *Vedic India* in Law, N.N., *op.cit.*, p.40, f.n.

39. Law, N.N., *op.cit.*, p.42. The Post-Maurya Sunga Kings were an exception. The rulers were themselves Brâhmîns.


43. Quoted from Law, N.N., op.cit., p.46.

44. Hindu Polity, p.273.


46. *Arth. Bk.I, Ch.II.*

47. *Ibid, Bk.I, Ch.IX.*

48. *Ibid, Bk.I, Ch.III.*

49. Supra.


52. *Ibid, Bk.I, Ch.X.*

52. *Ibid, Bk.I, Ch.XIX.*

53. *Ibid, Bk.I, Ch.IX.* Monks and nuns were also used as spies, See *Arth.*, Kangle's trans., *Part II*, p.19 & pp.21-22.

54. *Ibid, Bk.IX, ch.III.*

55. *Ibid, Bk.I, ch.XII.*

56. *Ibid, Bk.I, ch.XVIII & ch.XIX.* The spirit of the maxim is perceptible in these two chapters.

57. Law, N.N., *op.cit.*, p.49.


59. *Arth. Bk.I, Ch.IX.*

60. *Arth., Bk.I, Ch.XIX* also see Law, N.N., *op.cit.*, ch.vii.


63. *Arth., Bk.I, Ch. IX.*
65. *Arth.* Bk.IX, Ch.IV.
67. *Arth.* Bk.V, Ch.II.
68. *Loc. cit.*
70. *Ibid*, Bk.II, Ch.IV.
71. *Ibid*, Bk.II, Ch.XXXVI.
72. *Ibid*, Bk.III, Ch.XVI.
73. *Ibid*, Bk.I, Ch.IV.
75. *Arth.* Bk.IV, Ch.XIII.
77. Sharma, R.S., op.cit., p.144.
78. *Arth.* Bk.X, Ch.III, Supra, Ch.IV.
79. *Ibid*, Bk.XIII, Ch.IV.
80. *Ibid*, Bk.X, Ch.VI.
81. *Ibid*, Bk.XII, Ch.IV. & Ch.V.
87. Ibid, p.158.
89. Saleore, B.A., op.cit., pp.53-54.
90. Varma, V.P., op.cit., Appendix II.
98. Berlin, Isaiah, Against the Current, OUP, paperback, 1961, pp.46-47
100. Burnham, J. The Machiavellians, 1943, Part II.
108. Quoted from J.Burckhardt, J., op.cit, p.286.
113. The Prince, Bull's trans., p.75.
114. Ibid., p.100.
115. 'Virtu' is a word, in Machiavelli's Language, that has no English equivalent. It includes in its meaning part of what we refer to "ambition", "drive", "spirit", in the sense of Plato's "will to power". — Quoted from The Machiavellians by Burnham, J., op.cit., Part II, III.
116a. The Prince, Ch.VII; Also Allen, J.W., op.cit., p.473.
121. Sabine, G.H., op.cit., p.341.
124. See Allen, J.W., op.cit., p.472 for a clear understanding of the point.
128. Ibid, ch. XVIII.
130. The Prince, Ch. XVIII.
131. Ibid, Marriott’s trans., p.96.
133. Arth., p.22.
136. Loc. cit.
137. See Panter Brick, S., Gandhi against Machiavellism, APH, 1966, p.233. The author has seen in Gandhi the image of Machiavelli. He thus says “whether he (Gandhi) is counsellor or dictator, the leader exercises an ascendency and powers characterised by absolutism, ...” Again “This power he owes only to his own nature and to the grace of God” (Machiavelli’s favour of fortune?). “This power makes him a Prince, a Prince by divine right.”
138. The Prince, Marriott’s trans., Notes and References, p.211.
139. Discourses quoted from Allen, J.W., op.cit., p.474. This was said in reference to the Florentine Republic.
140. The Prince, Bull’s trans., p.95.
141. Ibid, p.92.
143. The Prince, ch.XV.
144. The Cynical maxims of The Prince are merely the explicit statement of the habitual practice of Renaissance Italy, Morrall, J.B., op.cit., p.135.

145. Ridolfi, R., op.cit., ch.I.

146. As to the motives of Machiavelli on this point Allen feels that one cannot arrive at a very clear decision. Allen, J.W., op.cit., p.474.

147. A king has no personal likes, it is the likes of the subjects, Arth. Bk.I, Ch.XVII, Jayaswal, K.P., op.cit., p.340.


149. Ibid, p.474.

150. F. Chabod, F., op.cit., p.140.

151. Ibid, p.93.

152. Arth., Bk.III, Ch.I.


154. E.g. Rama and Yudhisthira.

155. Altekar, A.S., op.cit., p.101, True, Nahusa and some other kings lost their lives to the people but these were realities and were not used in theories by later workers.


160. Arth., Bk.I, Ch.XIII.

163. Supra.
164. The king could exonerate himself from the effects of sin
by offering presents of God Varuna, *Arth.* Bk.IV,
Ch.XIII, Supra.
167. *Arth.*, Bk.VI, Ch.I, Supra.
168. Ibid, Bk.I, Ch.XIII. The spies shall keep a constant
watch over the citizens as well over the people of
the countryside.
169. *Arth.*, Bk.V, Ch.VI.
170. Ibid, Bk.I., Ch.XIII.
173. *Arth.*, Bk.VI, Ch.I.
174. Ibid, Bk.I, Ch.XIX.
180. Ibid, p.76.
p.20.

184. *Artb.*, Bk. I, Ch. IV; *The Prince*, Bull's trans., p. 95.
Supra.

185. Allen, op. cit., p. 465; *Artb.*, Bk. I, Ch. XIII. The people are only to be governed; if they create anarchy (matsyayāya) they will be destroyed by the king. The implication is that the king will not brook insubordination on the part of the citizens.