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# Arthaśāstra-Seminar

## *I. What the seminar is about*

An author with the name Kauṭilya has written a manual on kingship, perhaps between 50 and 125 C.E.<sup>3</sup>. This textbook is known as the Arthaśāstra, i.e., teaching (*śāstra*) on *artha* (“purpose, wealth, power”). *Arthaśāstra* can be translated as “teachings on political economy”. This book deals with taxation, diplomacy, warfare, the management of spies, rescission, etc. etc. We will delve into selected issues, read the appropriate sections in Sanskrit, and discuss the old and oftentimes modern implications.

The Sanskrit text is Kangle (1969a). Translations are due to Kangle (1969b) and Olivelle (2013). We will focus on the latter. For general overviews, students are referred to Boesche (2002), Olivelle (2013, pp. 1–60), Scharfe (1993), and Trautmann (2012).

The seminar is open to advanced bachelor students, to master and PhD students. Participants are expected to take turns in translating the selected portions and in discussing the finer grammatical points. Two students prepare the first meeting, please.

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<sup>3</sup> See Olivelle (2013, p. 29)

## II. Topics

We cover the following topics:

- *pr̥thivyā lābhe pālāne ca*: Kauṭilya and the Arthaśāstra  
first and perhaps second meeting, with one or two students providing a bird's eye view  
**KAŚ 1.1.1, 1.2.1, 1.2.10-12, 1.3-4**
- *artha eva pradhānaḥ*: Theories of state  
Wiese in pdf: Indian State  
**KAŚ 6.1.1, 1.13.1-13, 1.7.1-6, 2.9.1-9**
- *Daṇḍa*: Punishing enemies, officers, subjects, and even the king
  - *viḥiḡṡu*: Foreign affairs in the context of the *maṇḍala* model  
Wiese (2016a) in pdf: mandala  
**KAŚ 6.2.6-15, KAŚ 7.1.1-19**
  - *asvāmivikraya* and *moṣa*: The king's duties  
**KAŚ 3.16.10-28, 4.13.7-12**
  - *daṇḍo varuṇāya pradātavyaḥ*: Varuṇa rule and punishments  
Wiese (2016b) in pdf: varuna\_pa  
**KAŚ 1.4 (repetition), 1.13.5-7 (repetition), 7.5.16-32, 4.13.42–43**
- *Vārtta*: Economics
  - *anuśaya*: Legal and illegal cancellations of contracts  
Wiese (2017) in pdf: IIJ\_wiese\_anuzaya  
**KAŚ 3.15, 3.9.1-9, 3.14**
  - *mūlyavṛddhi* and *śulka*: Markets organized by the *śulkādhyakṣa*  
Wiese (2014) in pdf: JAOS134  
**KAŚ 2.21-22**
- Further topics as suggested by participants

## III. Requirements for earning credits

Students are required to deal with a self-selected section of the Arthaśāstra (other than those covered in class), provide grammatical notes on difficult passages, discuss the manner in which this section fits in the overall frame of the Arthaśāstra, and offer additional sociological or economic remarks.

## ***IV. Publication bibliography***

- Boesche, Roger (2002): The first great political realist. Kautilya and his Arthashastra. Lanham (Maryland): Lexington Books.
- Kangle, R. P. (1969a): The Kautiliya Arthashastra. Part I: Sanskrit Text with a Glossary. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Bombay: Bombay University.
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- Olivelle, Patrick (2013): King, governance, and law in ancient India. Kautilya's Arthashastra. New York, NY: Oxford Univ. Press. Available online at <http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=41038>.
- Scharfe, Hartmut (1993): Investigations in Kautilya's Manual of Political Science. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Trautmann, Thomas R. (2012): Arthashastra. The science of wealth. Penguin Books: London (The story of Indian business).
- Wiese, Harald: Incentives in the context of the old Indian theories of the state.
- Wiese, Harald (2014): The Kautilyan market tax. In *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 134, pp. 699–708.
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