ruptibility and modesty. A seal of the Kuṇāṇa period, mentioning Amātya Hastabala, son of Amātya Bhadrika, probably attests the hereditary character of that office, a fact that stands supported by literary evidence as well.

The division of ministers into two broad classes, comprising counsellors (Matisacivas) and executive ministers (Karmasacivas), as found in literature, is maintained in the Junagadh rock inscription which helps us to ascertain the power and responsibility of these ministers and their relations with the king. The Sūdarṣana lake sustained a very huge breach in its dam by a rain storm and caused a high flood in the neighbouring rivers. The Matisacivas and Karmasacivas all vetoed the undertaking of repairs as they thought that such a measure would involve the wastage of a great deal of public money and time. But the king set aside their advice and without raising any money either in the shape of new taxes or benevolences, sanctioned a huge sum of money from the royal treasury and undertook the work of repairs, to the great relief of the people. The record illustrates how the will of the king triumphed over the unanimous decision of the Matisacivas and Karmasacivas and is thus in tune with the evidence of literature, investning the king with the right to annul the decisions of ministers.

VIII

The Ministers in the Gupta and Contemporary Periods

As we arrive at the Gupta period, we find ministers being classified into three broad divisions—Mantrins, Sacivas and Amātyas—in the Kāmandaṇiya Nītisāra. Whereas the Mantrins\(^{109}\) and Amātyas were primarily concerned with the sixfold policy and with the charge of territorial units and revenue, respectively, the Sacivas were placed in charge of the military department. In referring to the qualifications of the Sacivas, Kāmandaka\(^{110}\) lays down that they should possess high birth (kulīnāḥ), purity (śucayāḥ), prowess (śūṛāḥ), learning (śrutavanto), loyalty (anurāgīnaḥ) and training in practical politics (daṇḍa-nīteḥ prayoktāraḥ). A Mantron, according to Kāmandaka,\(^{111}\) is required to possess a retentive memory (smrtiḥ), application of the mind to works undertaken (tatparat=ārtheṣu), capacity for a thorough discussion (vitarko), power to arrive at a proper.
decision (jñāna-niścayāḥ), steadiness in work (drḍhatā) and preservation of state secrets (mantraguptīś = ca). Kāmandaka attaches great importance to the advice of the Mantrins but he, at the same time, does not undermine the importance of the king's authority. It is he with whom rests the final decision.

The Nītisāra refers to a minister, called Narmasaciva. The word narma is used in the Mahābhārata in the sense of jokes and Monier-Williams translates it to mean 'pastimes and amusements'. The Narmasaciva was, in all likelihood, the private secretary of the king whose work included, among others, cutting jokes and jesting. This minister, on account of the closeness of his association with the king, proved to be very powerful and might have influenced the latter's decisions. The Nītisāra would, however, create the impression that he was sometimes treated with scorn by royal servants.

The Yājñavalkya-Smṛti, which was also a product of the Gupta age, urges the king to appoint wise, righteous, noble and resolute persons as ministers and entreats him to consult them collectively (Sa mantriṇāḥ prakurvīta prājñān maulān sthirān śucin/ Taiḥ sārdhaṁ cintayed = rājyaṁ vireṇ = ētha tatah svayam//). The work further states that whatever the Mantrins decide has to be approved by the priest, thus implying that the advice of ministers without the approval of the royal chaplain would be ineffective. The commentator Vijnāneśvara, however, includes the Purohita in the list of ministers. If this was the case, it may be presumed that the royal chaplain enjoyed a special position as compared to other ministers. Yājñavalkya recommends the appointment of Brāhmaṇas as Mantrins who should be hereditary and of noble descent. The Matsya Purāṇa, likewise, alludes to the importance of the advice of the Mantrins.

Leaving aside the literary source, we may now turn to archaeological evidence and see how far the account of literature is corroborated by the testimony of archaeology. The existence of the Amātyas during this period, as alluded to by Kāmandaka, is proved beyond doubt by the discovery of a large number of seals, assignable to this period. A terracotta seal of about the fourth or fifth century A.D. from Bhita bears the legend, Amātya = Ėśvaracandrasya. 'Seal of Amātya Ėśvaracandra'. Another contemporary seal from the same
site contains the legend, _Amātya = Ėsvārānana_, ‘seal of Amātya Ėsvārānana’. Another Bhita seal of the Gupta period reads _Amātya-Dharmadevasya_, ‘seal of Amātya Dharmadeva’. A seal from Basarh reads _Amātya-Bhadrika-putrasya Amātya-Hastabalasya_, ‘seal of Amātya Hastabala, son of Amātya Bhadrika’. The Mathura Museum preserves a seal of _Amātya Upalihama_ (Amātyasya Upalihamasya). A large number of Rajghat seals of about the time of Samudragupta bear the name of _Amātya Janārdana_. Another seal from Rajghat, now preserved in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, reads _Amātya-pūra Kalabhakasya_ in early Gupta characters. Two other seals from the same place bear the legends, _Amātya-Kapilakasya_ and _Amātya-Āryaśarmā_, respectively, also in early Gupta characters.

It is rather unfortunate that although the seals, mentioned above, contain numerous references to _Amātyas_, they hardly provide us with any positive information in regard to the nature of the work they discharged. K.K. Thaplyal observes that the _Amātyas_ of these seals constituted a general class of officers, who were assigned numerous duties and offices. But Amarasiṃha, the famous Buddhist lexicographer of the Gupta age, mentions the _Mantrins_ and _Amātyas_ as belonging to the same class of officers, the only difference between them is that while the _Mantrins_ were counselling _Amātyas_, the latter were executive _Amātyas_. This would imply that the _Amātyas_ of the Gupta period were superior in rank to the general class of officers, thus lending support to our interpretation of the term _amātya_ in the sense of an executive minister.

Although seals leave us in the dark about the precise nature of the functions of ministers, the inscriptions of the contemporary period have proved to be very useful in this regard. Virasena, also known as Śāba, a foreign minister under Candragupta II Vikramāditya, is said in the Udayagiri cave inscription to have accompanied the king in the course of the latter’s campaign of conquests in Malwa and Gujarat (_kṛṣṇapṛthvī-jay = ārthena rājñ = aṁv = eha saḥ = āgataḥ_). This would imply that ministers, especially the foreign ministers, were required to perform military functions according to the exigency of circumstances. That military leadership was one of the important qualifications of a minister is also probably corroborated by the Allahabad pillar inscription which describes Hariṣeṇa, who
was a foreign minister under Samudragupta, as a Mahābalādhi-
kṛta, a term that has often been interpreted to mean a military
general.

Inscriptions also afford us an interesting glimpse into the
qualifications of these ministers. Śāba is expressly described as
well-grounded in the science of politics and poetics (śabdārtha-
nyāya-nītiṁāh kavi Pātaliputro māhā). Hariśena has, likewise,
demonstrated his skill in penmanship.

Inscriptions further bring to light the hereditary character of
ministership. The Allahabad pillar inscription shows that
Hariśena was a Mahādanādanayaka which post was also held by
his father Dhruvabhūti. The Udayagiri cave inscription speaks
of Śāba as having acquired the post of a minister by hereditary
descent (anvaya-prāpta-sācivyo). The Karamdanda inscription of
Kumāragupta I states that both Pṛthvīśena and his father
Śikharasvāmin served as Mantrins under Kumāragupta I and
Candragupta II, respectively. Sūryadatta was a foreign minister
under the Parivrājakas in A.D. 482 and his son Vibhudatta
was appointed to the post in A.D. 510. Under the
Ucchakalpas, Gallu was a foreign minister in A.D. 496, while
his brother Manoratha held the post in A.D. 512. We have,
however, no means to ascertain whether the transmission of
office in the same family was occasional or permanent. If it was
occasional, it was doubtless to the advantage of the government
but if it was made a permanent affair, it often proved to be a
liability, for, learning and ability do not descend for long in any
family in an undiminished quality and quantity. It is equally
uncertain whether all heads of departments under Gupta admi-
nistration were ministers. Attention may be invited in this con-
nection to the passage, occurring in the Karamdanda inscrip-
tion, Pṛthvīśeṇa mahārājāḥ-adhirāja-srī-Kumāraguptasya mantrī
Kumārāmātya-onantaraṇaḥ-ca mahā-balādhiprataḥ, which means
that Pṛthvīśena was first a minister but was afterwards made a
general of the army. This may imply that Pṛthvīśena was pro-
moted to the rank of a general which was superior to that of a
minister. Or, it may have been simply a changeover from one
department to another of an officer, without affecting his rank
or status. If the latter interpretation be accepted, it would
follow that the Mahābalādhiprata, like the Sāndhivigrāhika,
enjoyed the status of a minister.
Ministers enjoyed a prominent position in the contemporary Kadamba kingdom of Banabase in South India. Ministers were so powerful that without their approval even a king would not make any grant of land. King Śivavitta,\textsuperscript{127} for instance, is said to have made a grant with the consent of his ministers, including the chief amongst them. Again, when the same king agreed to found an agrahāra at the behest of his queen Kamalādevi, all the ministers, headed by the Purohita Śri-Vindhyavāsī-Bhaṭṭopādhyāya, discussed the matter afresh and notified their consent for the execution of the grant.\textsuperscript{128} This incident suggests that the priest was an important member of the ministry, a conclusion which receives confirmation from Yājñavalkya.

\section*{IX}

\textit{The Ministers in the Post-Gupta Period}

The \textit{Kādambarī}, composed by Bāṇa, affords us interesting glimpses into the office of a minister in the post-Gupta period. It speaks of a minister called Kumārapālīt\textsuperscript{a} who served under king Śūdraka of Ujjain. In the royal court the minister, who was aged, of noble birth, wise and well-grounded in politics, used to occupy a golden throne close to the king. Mention is also made in the \textit{Kādambarī} of a Brahmin minister of king Tārāpiḍa, named Śukanāśa, ‘the castle of constancy, the station of steadfastness, the bridge of bright truth, the guide to all goodness, the conductor in conduct, the ordainer of all ordered life’.\textsuperscript{130} He was thoroughly conversant with arts, \textit{Vedas}, \textit{Vedāṅgas} and other \textit{Śāstras}, loyal to the king and skilled in the precepts of the political science. As Bāṇa\textsuperscript{131} would make us believe, the quarters of Śukanāśa were frequented by a multitude of tributary kings at all times.

We learn from the \textit{Harṣacarita}, another work of Bāṇa, that in times of emergency, ministers often decided the question of succession to the throne. Thus ministers chose Harṣa as the king of Thanesar on the death of Prabhākaravardhana. A similar role was played by the Maulhari ministers when they offered the crown to Harṣa since king Grahavarman died without leaving any male heir to the throne. A special meeting was held for the purpose at which the chief minister first proposed the name of Harṣa for the throne and other ministers were asked to
give their opinion. When an agreement was reached, Harṣa was offered the crown. This would indicate that ministers wielded considerable power and authority in administration in some of the kingdoms during the first half of the seventh century A.D., especially when there was an interregnum. Hiuen Tsang refers to a minister of king Vikramāditya of Śrāvastī who had objected to the king’s order to distribute daily five lacs of gold coins as that would lead to the drainage of the resources of the state. In the account of Hiuen Tsang, mention is made of a minister of Aśoka who had declined to comply with the king’s desire to give away all his possessions in charity. The cause of the ministers’ refusal to endorse the order of the kings in these cases might be that they felt a sense of moral responsibility to the people or more probably they were acting in the interest of the kings, as a depleted treasury would have adversely affected their position. That the interest of the king and of the royal family was the main concern of a minister is further illustrated by a story in the Harṣacarita where ministers are represented as blaming themselves for the treacherous murder of Rājyavardhana at the hands of Śaśāṅka. In contemporary Tamil literature, ministers are called Amaiccas. The Periyapurāṇam speaks of the Amaiccas of the Pallava king Guṇabhara.

But when we turn to contemporary inscripional records, we find scanty information about ministers in them. The evidence of the Nalanda stone inscription of the reign of Yaśovarman is worth considering here, for it mentions a Mantrin, who is therein described as a Mārgapati, Udīcīpati and Praṭīta-Tikīna. The term mārgapati literally means the guardian of roads but here it probably means the guardian of the passes or frontier. The expression udīcīpati, which etymologically means the lord of the north, signifies the chief guardian of the passes of the north. The application of the designations Mārgapati and Udīcīpati to a Mantrin presupposes his skill in the art of warfare. The term tikīna, which is equivalent to Turkish tīgīn, tēgin or tāgin, means a prince and pratīta denotes ‘distinguished’. The applicability of the designation Praṭīta-Tikīna to a minister would show that the princes of the royal family were sometimes appointed to the ministerial post. The appointment of a prince to the post of a minister was, of course, very rare in ancient India. References to ministers are found in the Pallava inscriptions as well. The
Hirahadagalli plates of Šivaskandavarman mention an Anútya along with other dignitaries who were informed of the grant of a piece of land that the king had made from his capital. The Vaikuntha Perumal temple inscription of Nandivarman refers to the Mantri-maṇḍala, council of ministers, of the king. The Kasakudi plates\textsuperscript{134} bring to light the qualities of Brahmaśrīrāja, the chief minister of Nandivarman. We learn that friendliness, virtue, modesty, learning, firmness, valour and refinement were some of the qualities with which he was endowed. He is moreover described as the eldest priest.

X

The Ministers in the Pratihāra-Pāla-Rāṣṭrakūṭa Period

When we turn to the period of the Gurjara-Pratihāra, Pāla, Rāṣṭrakūṭa and other contemporary kings, we find abundant material about ministers in the contemporary literary documents. The Śīṣupālavadha,\textsuperscript{135} which was composed by Māgha in the eighth century A.D., refers to ministers and points out that the king should seek their opinion on all important matters. The king cannot correctly adopt the line of action without the assistance of ministers.

Medhātithi\textsuperscript{136} favours the appointment of seven or eight Mantrins and is opposed to a very large or a very small body of ministers. He says that it is sometimes difficult for a large body to arrive at unanimous decisions; furthermore, such a body is liable to be torn into pieces on account of mutual jealousies of its members. On the contrary, a single minister may turn to be an autocrat, and if there are two, they may form an alliance to harm the interest of the state. Medhātithi also refers to the tests of virtue, wealth, love and fear which ministers were required to undergo before their appointment.

In his Nitivākyāṁśita,\textsuperscript{137} Somadeva Sūri recommends the appointment of three, seven or eight Mantrins\textsuperscript{138} (Trayayak pañca sapta vā mantriṇah kāryāḥ). He further tells us that if one Mantrin is eminently suitable for carrying on properly the burden of the kingdom, more Mantrins need not be appointed. It is reasonable to presume that such a suggestion is hardly realistic for a big kingdom. Somadeva\textsuperscript{139} lays down that ministers should be recruited from the Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya commu-
nities. Regarding the qualifications of the Mantrins, he points out that they should be endowed with real character, noble descent, resourcefulness, courage and continence. Somadeva\textsuperscript{140} attaches great importance to the counsels of the Mantrins and expressly states that the king would cease to be king if he violated the dictates of his ministers (\textit{Mantra-pūrvah sav=opy-ārambhah kṣitipaśīnām/ Sa khalo no rājā yo mantriṇ=otikrama vyarteta/}). Somadeva\textsuperscript{141} also refers to executive ministers, Amāiyas, who were chiefly concerned with income, expenditure, royal safety and maintenance of order (\textit{Āya-vyayāḥ svāmi-rakṣa-mantra-poṣaṇām c=āmātyānām=adhikāraḥ}). Somadeva\textsuperscript{142} says that those who are quarrelsome, allies of a strong party, passionate, characterless, born of humble origin, disloyal, spendthrifts, foreigners and misers, should not be selected for the post of an Amāya (\textit{Tikṣṇāṁ balavad pakṣāṁ aśuciṁ ayyasaninam= aśuddh=ābhijanam= aśakya-pratyāvartanam = ativyaya-śilam= anya-deś=āyatam= aticikkanām c=āmātyāṁ na kuruīta}). The Kathāsaritsāgara, another literary work, composed by Somadeva, refers to some ministers as playing a key role in administration. It speaks of Yaugandharāyaṇa, the Mantrin of king Udayana of Vatsa, as being constantly consulted by the king on every matter, including his marriage to Vāsavadattā and Padmāvatī. He was often entrusted with the sole administration of the kingdom and the king was a mere passive figure. The Kathāsaritsāgara elsewhere refers to king Vikramaśakti who was offered the throne by the ministers of his father. Phalabhūti was, likewise, offered the crown by the ministers of king Ādityaprabha. But it is difficult to deduce any conclusion on the basis of these stories the historicity of which is not beyond dispute.

We meet with a thorough treatment of ministers, both counsellors and executive ministers, in the \textit{Agni Purāṇa}. It does not suggest the actual number of Mantrins but informs us that Daśaratha\textsuperscript{143} had eight Mantrins and Rāvana\textsuperscript{144} seven. It appears from the \textit{Agni Purāṇa}\textsuperscript{145} that ministers were recruited not only from the Brāhmaṇa community but also from the Kṣatriyas. The king is urged to seek the advice of the Mantrins separately.\textsuperscript{146} Joint deliberation with ministers is discouraged to eliminate the possibility of any concerted ministerial opposition. Prescribing the qualifications of the Mantrins, the \textit{Agni Purāṇa}
points out that they should be noble in descent, eloquent, modest, honest, sons of the soil, well-grounded in dañça-nīti, arts, crafts and other Śāstras, able to negotiate war and peace, well acquainted with secret counsels and preparations being made in neighbouring countries and should be free from vices like anger, greed, fear and falsehood. The accounts of the Agni Purāṇa in regard to the functions and qualifications of executive ministers, Amātyas and Sacivas, are almost exactly those that we find in the Nītivākyāṃṛta. Like the Kāmandakīya Nītisāra, the Agni Purāṇa147 refers to the Narmasaciva who, as has already been observed, was a minister in charge of the king’s pastimes (śṛṅgāre narma-sacivāḥ).

The evidence of literary documents on the importance of ministers is in agreement with the testimony of the epigraphic records of the period. The Badal pillar inscription of the reign of Nārāyaṇapāla attests the great power and influence that a Brahmin family of ministers exercised in the administration of the Pāla kingdom for several generations. This record speaks of Garga, the minister of king Dharmapāla, as being superior in knowledge to Brhaspati. His son Darbhāpanī, who was well-grounded in the fourfold knowledge, served as a minister under Devapāla and helped the latter through his diplomacy to exact tributes from the whole of North India from the Himalayas to the Vindhya mountains and from the eastern to the western seas (nītyā yasya bhuvanā cakāra karadām śrī-Devapālo nṛpaḥ). Darbhāpanī’s son Someśvara, who was very liberal and served under Devapāla as a minister, compared well with Dhanañjaya in point of prowess. His son Kedārāmiśra, who was a great donor and an erudite scholar, helped Devapāla to enjoy the sea-girt earth after having eradicated the race of the Utkalas, humbled the pride of the Hūṇas and destroyed the conceit of the Dravīḍa and Gurjara kings. His son was Gauravamiśra who was a minister under Nārāyaṇapāla and endowed with oratory and a thorough knowledge of the Āgamas, Vedas and astrology. The following facts emerge from the above account:

1. Ministers took a leading part in the formulation of the foreign policy of the state.
2. Under the Pālas, the hereditary principle was followed in the appointment of ministers.
3. The question of creed did not crop up at the time of the appointment of ministers. The Brahmānical family of Garga served under four successive Pāla kings who were Buddhists.

The Badal pillar inscription, however, does not clearly indicate whether Darbhapāni or Kedāramiśra had actually participated in wars or were endowed with military qualities but that ministers often led the royal army to quell an uprising or to repel foreign invasions is amply borne out by the Kamauli plate of Vaidyadeva. Vaidyadeva is described in his own record as the sharp-rayed sun into the lotuses of the assembly of Sacivas (Saciva samāja-saroja-tigma-bhānuḥ) of the Gauḍēśvara Kumārapāla who flourished at about the end of the twelfth century A.D. He won a victory in a naval battle in South Bengal and, being ordered by his master, put down the rebellion of Tiṃgyadeva in the east (tam=avanipatiṁ jītvā yuddhe). Vaidyadeva was afterwards appointed governor of Prāgjyotisā-bhukitī and Kāmarūpa-maṇḍala in place of Tiṃgyadeva. Some more facts about ministers under the Pālas and their contemporaries may be gleaned from other inscriptions of the period. The Bangarh inscription of Mahāpāla refers to Mantri Bhaṭṭa Vāmana as the Dūta of the grant. The Amagachi grant of Vigrāhapāla III also refers to a Mantri who acted as the messenger of the grant. The mention of a minister called Ādideva is made in the Bhubaneswar praśasti of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva where he is described as a Viśrāma-saciva. That Ādideva was a minister of no mean importance is clear from the fact that the inscription shows that he used to discuss with the king matters of statecraft in complete privacy. The Bhubaneswar praśasti, likewise, refers to a minister named Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva who is described as a Mantraśakti-saciva. The term mantraśakti may mean policy of war and peace; the Mantraśakti-saciva might have been a foreign minister, so intimately associated with war and peace. It is evident that the hereditary principle in the appointment of ministers was also followed by the Varman kings of East Bengal.

Inscriptions testify to the importance of ministers in the Kalacuri-Čedi administration. A senior minister is called Mahāpradhāna, Mahāmantrin and Mahāmātya in the Kalacuri-
Cedi inscriptions where the terms pradhāna, mantri and amātya are used as synonyms. The Karitalai\textsuperscript{160} inscription mentions a senior minister named Bhākamiśra and states that the kingdom of king Yuvarāja prospered immensely during his ministership. He was a Brāhmaṇa by caste, well-versed in the sacred lores and a great poet. Bhākamiśra’s son Someśvara\textsuperscript{161} acted as a senior minister during the reign of Lakṣmanarāja (Mantri-tilaka). That the hereditary principle was followed in the appointment of ministers in the Cedi kingdom is not only proved by the instances of Bhākamiśra and Someśvara but also by the fact that the Kāyastha or Śūdra family of Gollāka\textsuperscript{162} supplied ministers to the Kalacuri kings of Tripuri for several generations. Gaṅgādhara,\textsuperscript{163} the minister of the Cedi king Ratnadeva III, was a highly qualified person who was brave, courageous, kind, intelligent, upright and well-grounded in the science of polity and law. It was he who by dint of his wonderful ability made the kingdom of Ratnadeva III free from all foes and restored peace and prosperity. This statement, which is found in a Cedi record, is no doubt general in nature and exaggerated in import but it probably points to the importance of the role played by Gaṅgādhara in internal and external affairs of the Cedi kingdom during the reign of Ratnadeva III. The Jabalpur copper plate of the Cedi king Yaśaṅkaraṇadeva implies that ministers sometimes played the role of king-makers, for we are told that Kokalla II was placed on the throne by a minister (amātya-mukhya) of Yuvarāja II.\textsuperscript{154}

Like the Kalacuri-Cedi inscriptions, the Rāṣṭrakūṭa records also emphasise that ministers were expected to be vastly learned. In extolling the role of ministers in administration, a contemporary inscription says, ‘When Gaṅgadeva was the good premier, the nation flourished, subjects and allies were content, religion (i.e., virtue) increased, all aims were attained, the wise were happy and prosperity was visible everywhere.’\textsuperscript{165} The Salotgi inscription\textsuperscript{166} mentions Nārāyaṇa, the foreign minister under king Kṛṣṇa III, and compares him with the king’s right hand. The high status of ministers is further borne out by the fact that they were sometimes honoured with feudatory titles and entitled to the use of the Pañcamahāśabdas. Dalla,\textsuperscript{167} who was a foreign minister under king Dhruva, was invested with the title of Sāmanta and empowered to use the five great musical
instruments (Sam=adhi-gata pāñca-mahā-śabda-mahā-sandhi-vigrah=ādhi-kṛta-sāmanta-śrīmān=Dallen=eti). The Pathari inscription\(^{168}\) of Prabala suggests that some of the feudatories under the Rāṣṭrakūṭas enjoyed the service of ministers.

XI

The Ministers in the Post-Pāla-Pratīhāra Period

As we approach the age following, we find, to judge from the combined study of the contemporary literary and archaeological evidence, ministers constituting a very important limb of the government. The Rājatarangini\(^{169}\) takes note of ministers who were sometimes recruited from the members of the royal family. The selection of princes for ministerial offices was, however, rare in ancient India, and is not in tune with the recommendations of early Indian political thinkers King Harṣa\(^{160}\) is represented in the Rājatarangini as consulting his ministers jointly, whereas king Jayasimha\(^{161}\) is seen deliberating with only a few ministers. The system of joint consultation with ministers was in vogue but its rigid or modified application, no doubt, depended on the king himself. The Rājatarangini alludes to an effective role of ministers in the selection of a successor to the throne. Queen Sugandhā\(^{162}\) was forced to accept Pārtha as her successor in place of her own nominee Sūryavarman whose candidature was set aside by ministers. Kalhana also records a few cases of kings overruling their ministers and acting according to their own discretion. Such was the case with king Bījā\(^{163}\) who disobeyed his ministers and with king Pratāpāditya II\(^{164}\) whose ministers merely carried out the policy laid down by him.

Lakṣmīdhara in the section entitled Rājadharmakāṇḍa of the Kṛtyakalpataru, which he had composed at the command of the Gāhaḍavāla monarch Govindacandra, gives a graphic description of the ministerial qualifications which included, according to him, heroism, success, noble descent, coolness of mind and knowledge of the Śāstras, Nītis and Mantras. Lakṣmīdhara tells us that in the selection of ministers preference is to be given to the Brāhmaṇas and to those whose ancestors had served as ministers.\(^{165}\) The author of the Yuktikalpataru is more liberal than Lakṣmīdhara as he recommends the appointment
of people of low status for ministership in times of distress. The hereditary principle in the appointment of ministers is also upheld in the Rājanītiprakāśa.\textsuperscript{166}

The Mānasollāsa,\textsuperscript{167} which was composed in A.D. 1129 by king Someśvara III of the Western Cālukya dynasty, recommends the appointment of seven or eight ministers (Sācivān sapta c—āśtau vā kuruva mnatimāṃ nṛpaḥ) who should be versed in the Nītiśāstras, courageous, born of a high family, clever and free from diseases. It is worth mentioning in this connection that Śivājī, the founder of the Maratha empire, had a council of eight ministers, called Ashta-Pradhānas. The Mānasollāsa also refers to dishonest ministers who used to take recourse to repressive measures against the people and urges the king to protect them on such occasions. The Viṣṇudarmottara Purāṇa, likewise, refers to ministers who should be endowed with noble birth, modesty, honesty, loyalty, indigenous origin and knowledge of the Daṇḍanīti, arts, crafts and Śāstras. A minister is further said to be free from such vices as anger, greed, fear and untruthfulness. The Dvyāśraya, which was composed in the reign of the Cālukya kings of Gujarāt, brings out the importance of ministers in the Cālukya kingdom. Ministers were consulted on important occasions but the king was free to follow any course of action according to his own discretion. The Dvyāśraya\textsuperscript{168} speaks of a minister of king Arṇorāja who had advised the king not to wage war with Kumārapāla but the latter set aside his minister's counsel. The Hammīra Mahākāvyā\textsuperscript{169} of Nayacandrāsūri, likewise, speaks of the Cāhamāna king Vīra Nārāyaṇa, as setting aside his ministers' advice and concluding a treaty with Alāuddīn which brought about his end.

That the king was authorised to annul the decision of his ministers is further corroborated by the Prabandaṅcintāmanī\textsuperscript{170} which refers to the Paramāra king Muṇja, also called Vākpatirāja II, as having launched an expedition against the Cālukya king Tailapa II of Kalyāṇa in the teeth of opposition of his minister Rudrāditya. A passage of the Prabandaṅcintāmanī,\textsuperscript{171} which gives us an insight into the functions of ministers, is worth noticing here:

"That man is really a minister and full of wisdom, who without taxation accumulates treasure,"
Without killing defends the kingdom, and extends its territory without war."

The enrichment of the treasury, internal security and territorial expansion were thus three important functions of ministers. The Vasantavilāsa\textsuperscript{172} refers to one of Vīradhavala Baghela's minister, called Tejaḥpāla who is known to have installed Visaladeva Baghela on the throne and earned the title of Rāja-sthāpan = ācārya.

The Sacīva, Mantrī and Amātya figure in the Ģukranīti\textsuperscript{173} as three distinct office-bearers, being included in the ministry of ten members, comprising such other functionaries as the Puṇohita (priest), Yuvarāja (crown prince), Prādhāna (premier), Prādvivāka (judge), Paṇḍita (scholar), Sumantraka (finance minister) and Dūta (ambassador). That the Sacīva, Mantrī and Amātya, as well as other members of the ministry, do not claim the same rank and position is evident from Śukra's statement that the 'Priest, who is the mainstay of the king and kingdom, is superior to all. The Yuvarāja comes next, being followed in succession by the Premier, Sacīva, Mantrī, Justice, Scholar, Sumantra, Amātya and lastly the Dūta; all these officers are successively meritorious in order.'\textsuperscript{174}

Śukra points out that the Sacīva 'has to study the elephants, horses, chariots, foot-soldiers, camels, oxen, bandsmen, ensign-bearers, men who practise battle-arrays, men who are sent out eastward and westward (on missions), bearers of royal emblems, arms and weapons, attendants of superior, ordinary and inferior grades, and the various classes of ammunitions; he has to find out the groups that are complete in all their parts, how many of these are in active condition, how many are old and how many new, how many are unfit for work, how many troops are well equipped with arms, ordnance and gunpowder, and what is the amount of commissariat and other contingencies. Then he has to communicate the result of his studies to the king.'\textsuperscript{175} These are, no doubt, the functions and responsibilities of a war minister. The Mantrī 'has to study when, how and to whom the policies of Peace, Purchase, Partition and Penalty have to be adopted and the various effects of each, whether great, moderate or small; and having decided on the course of action to communicate that to the king'.\textsuperscript{176} The Mantrī thus appears to
be in charge of external affairs. While referring to the duties discharged by the Amātya, Śukra observes, ‘How many cities, villages and forests are there, the amount of land cultivated, who is the receiver of the rent, the amount of revenue realised, who receives the remainder after paying off the rent, how much land remains uncultivated, the amount of revenue realised through taxes and fines. The amount realised without cultivation (i.e., Nature’s gifts), how much accrues from forests, the amount realised through mines and jewels. How much is collected as unowned or unclaimed by anybody, got back from the thief, and the amount stored up—knowing these things the Amātya should inform the king.’ The Amātya was thus connected with various sources of revenue like rent from land (bhāga), duties (śulka), fines (daṇḍa), nature’s contribution (akṛṣṭapacyā), income from forests (arāṇya-saṁbhava), mineral wealth (ākara), deposits as in a bank (nidhi-prāpta), unowned property (asvāmīka) and articles recovered from thieves (taskar-āhṛta). The Amātya would thus favourably compare with the revenue minister of modern times. That the Amātya was in some way connected with the administration of justice is evident from Śukra’s statement that ‘the king should alternatively look after law-suits (vyavahāra) by freeing himself from anger and greed according to the dictates of Dharma Śāstras,—in the company of the Chief Justice, Amātya Brāhmaṇa and Priest.’ No person was allowed to hold the post of a Mantrī, Amātya or Saciva permanently, for Śukra clearly states that the king should never assign office for ever to anybody and everybody but is to appoint the Prakṛtis to each post by rotation.

References to ministers and their importance in Indian kingdoms are found in the contemporary inscriptions as well. The mention of ministers is to be met almost invariably in the records of the Gāhaḍavāla kings. The minister Vidyādhara is said to have been respected and propitiated by king Madana who was in all probability a Gāhaḍavāla feudatory. The fact that Vidyādhara’s grandfather Viṣṇuśiva was a minister under Madana’s father Gopāla illustrates that the practice of appointing hereditary ministers was in vogue in the Gāhaḍavāla kingdom.

The inscriptions of the Cauḷukya kings of Gurajat provide us with important information in regard to the functions of
ministers who were generally known as *Mantrins* and *Mahā-mātyas*. The term *mahāmātya*, as employed in the Caulukya inscriptions, should not be understood in the sense of the chief minister, for a finance minister is also called a *Mahāmātya*. It seems that under the Caulukyas ministers were often made governors of provinces. Thus the minister Udayana was placed in charge of Cambay during the reigns of Siddharāja, Jaya-sirīha and Kumārapāla, whereas another minister named Sāmanta was entrusted with the administration of Bālapadrapāṭaka in the reign of Kumārapāla. The drawing up of documents seems to have been another function of ministers. This is clear from the evidence of the Veraval inscription182 of king Arjuna which describes the *Mahāmātya* Māladeva as conducting all the business of the seal, including the marking of *śrī śrī* at the beginning of the document (*śrī-śrī-karaṇ = ādisamastamudrā-vyāpārān = paripanthayati*). In another inscription183 Māladeva is called *Mantri-mukhya* of king Arjunadeva.

The Paramāra inscriptions184 refer to *Mahāmantrins* and *Mahāpradhānas* but the exact difference between them is far from being known at present. The two terms, *mahāmantrin* and *mahāpradhāna* do not appear to have been used as synonyms for one Puruṣottamadeva is described as a *Mahāmantrin* and *Mahāpradhāna* of king Yaśovarman in a Paramāra inscription. The Godarpura inscription185 describes Ajayadeva, a minister under king Jayavarman II, as a Rājā. But it is difficult to suggest from this designation alone that ministers were often invested with a feudatory status. Whatever may have been the exact status of a minister in the Paramāra court, there is hardly any doubt that he was a highly qualified person. Rudra-rāja, the minister of king Naravarman, was well grounded in the *Śāstras*; Lālārka, the minister under king Jagadeva, was brave, truthful and pure-souled. A perusal of inscriptions would tend to suggest that the ministers of the Candella kingdom were not less qualified. Prabhāsa,186 who served as a minister under kings Dhaṅga and Gaṅda, possessed excellent qualities and was an expert in the science of politics. Ananta, the Brahmin minister under kings Kīrtivarman and Sallakṣaṇavarman, was adorned with sacred knowledge, bravery, efficiency, intelligence, eloquence, resoluteness, compassion, uprightness and practical knowledge of administration. Ananta187 was furthermore,
endowed with military skill as he is said to have been an expert in controlling elephants, horses and chariots, besides being a skilled archer. The minister Gadādhara who served under kings Prthvīvarman and Madanavarman, is stated to have surpassed Bṛhaspati in the power of understanding; Lāhaḍa, the minister of king Madanavarman, was well grounded in sacred texts and different arts; Gadādhara, the minister of peace and war of king Paramardi, was an excellent poet; Vatsarāja, the minister of king Kīrtivarman, was equal to Vācaspati in both counsel and action; Śivanāga, the minister of king Vidyādhara, was an expert in sacred knowledge and military art and Mahīpāla, the minister of king Vijayapāla, was truthful, intelligent and pious.

The system of appointing hereditary ministers was prevalent in the Candella kingdom. The Mau inscription of the time of king Madanavarman speaks of five generations of one family, represented by Prabhāsa, Śivanāga, Mahīpāla, Ananta and Gadādhara, serving as ministers under nine generations of the Candella dynasty, including Dhaṅga, Gaṇḍa, Vidyādhara, Vijayapāla, Devavarman, Kīrtivarman, Sallakṣaṇavarman, Prthvivarman and Jayavarman. Again, Lāhaḍa was a minister under Madanavarman and his descendants Sallakṣaṇa and Puruṣottama served under king Paramardideva. Of the functions of the ministers in the Candella kingdom, it may be stated that one of the chief concerns of some of these ministers was to guide the foreign policy of the state. This is clear from the fact that the minister Śivanāga is said to have secured for king Vidyādhara a paramount position in the circle of kings by means of his clever policy. They are also found to have played the role of military leaders. Thus the minister Jayasimha assisted his king Jājalla in his fight with adversaries; Vatsarāja is credited with the conquest of a territory by his counsel and valour. There are reasons to believe that there were occasions when ministers exercised great influence upon kings and functioned as guides. Kings Dhaṅga and Gaṇḍa obtained the three-fold object of life, comprising Dharma, Artha and Kāma, by following the advice of the minister Prabhāsa. The Baghari stone inscription tells us how king Paramardideva became, as it were, the lord of the earth with three eyes through the advice of his minister Sallakṣaṇa. The inscription would create the
impression that Sallakṣaṇa constituted the third eye of the king.

References to ministers are few and far between in the Cāhamāna records. A reference to a minister is found in a Cāhamāna inscription where the Mantrin Śrīdhara is said to have been consulted by king Vigrahāraṇa on the course of conduct in connection with an impending struggle. The designation Mahāpradhāna was applied to a minister in the Yajnapāla kingdom. The Buddha pillar inscription of king Gaṇapati mentions the Mahāpradhāna Dei or Deuva who was stationed at Kirtidurga, probably as the governor of the area. A Mahāpradhāna named Dejai, Deje or Dejā under king Gopāla is mentioned in the Bangla inscription where he is probably represented as the governor of the region around the Narwar fort. The inscription further tells us that the minister conducted all the business of the seal (gadani[-madani] vyāpara). It is worth noting here that the practice of appointing ministers as governors of provinces was also followed by Sultan Muhammad whose Kalyan inscription speaks of a minister as governing Mahārāṣtra-mandala in the Śaka year 1248. The India Office plate inscription of Lakṣmanasena refers to hundred ministers in the Sena kingdom in Bengal. During this period ministers were generally designated as Pātras and Mahāpātras in Orissa. The Tārikh-i-Fīrūz Shāhī of Shams-i-Sirāj tells us that in the country of Jajnagar (i.e., Orissa), the Mahtas (i.e., Mantrins) were called Pātras (i.e., Pātras), and the Gaṅga king Bhānudeva III (A.D. 1352-A.D. 1378) had a body of twenty such functionaries under whose advice he conducted the affairs of the kingdom. Pātra and Mahāpātra are still popular surnames in Orissa.

The inscriptions of the Śilāhāra kings of South India are specially important for the reason that they throw welcome light on the numerical strength of ministers. An inscription speaks of a ministry of five members, including the Sarvādhiḥkārin (either the chief minister or the minister in charge of all affairs), Sandhivigrāhin (minister for peace and war), Sandhivigrāhin in Kanara and Śrīkaraṇa (chief secretary). The list of ministers, as found in this inscription is, however, somewhat different from that found in another inscription where king Ananta Deva is said to have had a ministry of four members, consisting of the Mahāmātya, Mahāsandhivigrāhin (the great minister of peace
and war), Mahāpradhāna who was in charge of the treasury and Pradhāna who was also connected with the treasury. The following facts emerge from the above account:

First, the numerical strength of the council of ministers varied from time to time.

Second, the council of ministers was not composed of all heads of departments and sometimes the heads of important departments like the treasury were left out.

Third, there was hardly any uniformity in the designations of the heads of different departments in the same kingdom at different times.

The Western Cālukya king Someśvara I had a council of seven members, comprising the Manevergade (steward of the household), two Tantrapālas, Pradhāna, Aliya (probably the son-in-law of the king), Aḍapa (steward of the betel bag) and Tasutrada-senabova (secretary). Kālidāsa, the minister of king Jagadekamalla was entitled to the use of the Pañcamahāsabdaś. An inscription of A.D. 1024 speaks of a minister who had the title Mahāpracāṇḍadaṇḍanāyaka, proving thereby that the ministers under the Cālukyas were also good generals. It seems that under the Cālukyas a minister would sometimes hold two or more portfolios, as was the case with the Mahāpradhāna Brahmadevaya who served under king Bhūlokamalla as the Senādhipati and Sandhivigrahin and with Mahādevaya who was the Manevergade and Kannada Sandhivigrahin under king Vikramāditya VI.

The ministers of the Kākatīya kingdom may broadly be divided into two categories, Mahāpradhānas and Pradhānas, the former being superior in rank to the latter. The Mahāpradhānas were either guides in the formulation and execution of the policy of the state or were in charge of provinces. The Mahāpradhānas Vepeți Kammayaṅgāru, Gaṅgideva and Indulūri Gannaya guided the policy of the state; the Mahāpradhāna Muppiḍi Nāyaka governed Nellore-rājya which extended from Addaṅki in Guntur district to Kanchipuram in the south; Juttayaleṅka Reḍḍi governed several districts including Muliki-nāḍu, Sakili, Pottapi-nāḍu and Gaṇḍikoṭa, whereas the Mahāpradhāna Kolani Rudradeva was in charge of Veṅgi with its headquarters at Kolanu, modern Ellore in West Godavari district. The exact functions of the Pradhānas are not precisely known but one
such minister named Kāmaneni Boppaningāru was in charge of revenue. The view that the Pradhānas were mere administrative officers, as advanced by S. Sarma and N. Venkata-ramanayya,²¹² does not appear to be correct for one such Pradhāna is expressly described in an epigraph at Daksharaman as a Saciva and Mantri-cūḍāmaṇi. The prominence of ministers in the Yādava kingdom is proved by a record of king Kṛṣṇa which states that the minister was the very tongue and right hand of the king himself. Jaitrapāla,²¹³ the chief minister of king Billama V, was a great general and statesman. The minister Nāgarasa²¹⁴ was, likewise, a prominent general and scholar.

XII

Epilogue

As is evident from the foregoing discussion, ministers constituted an important limb of the government in ancient Indian kingdoms. Ministers were selected on merit, although the question of heredity was also seriously considered at the time of appointment. In those days the social institutions of castes and families were based on essential social functions being expected to be carried on, generation to generation, by men coming from specific families and castes. Individuals developed hereditarily meaningful traits and attributes. This explains why heredity came to be regarded as a principal factor in appointment to government offices. The people had no role to play in the selection of ministers which was exclusively a royal prerogative. In no sense did they appear to be the people’s representatives but were, in reality, royal servants (bhṛtya) who had always to work under threat of dismissal. The result was that they could seldom exercise any effective curb on the despotism of the king who had the power to annul the decision of his ministers and adopt any course of action according to his own discretion. Notwithstanding these limitations, some ministers, aided by their uncommon wisdom and strong personality, were destined to play a commanding role in the affairs of the kingdom but the number of such ministers was, no doubt, meagre.

²¹² Secondly, for appointment to ministerial posts, the candidates in ancient India were required to undergo some kind of Māest. The system was, however, different in ancient China where
ministerial appointments were made by holding competitive examinations.

Thirdly, in ancient India ministers were generally known as Mantrins, Amātyas, Sacivas, Pradhānas, etc., although there were special designations for special ministers, as was the case with the foreign minister who was known as Sandhivigrahin or Mahāsandhivigrahika.

Fourthly, there was no uniform rule in regard to the numerical strength of ministers in ancient Indian kingdoms, the number was determined by the requirements of the state and the will of the king.

Fifthly, the system of appointing ministers as governors of administrative units was fairly popular in ancient India.

Finally, the institution of ministers, so important an organ of administration in early Indian kingdoms, did not find favour with the kings of some well-known dynasties of the ancient world like the Achaemenids and Seleucids. But the institution gained its popularity in Persia under the Sassanians when ministers were commonly known as Divans. The functions of ministers included 'the office of the chancellery, and dispatches, appointments and honours, justice, war and finance'. At the head of the ministerial pyramid stood the grand vizier or prime minister who often deputized for the king during his absence, signed treaties and conventions and was given the high command of the army in the field.

References and Notes

1. I.7.9.
2. VIII.1.
3. Śāntiparvan, 81.1. Na rājyaṁ=anamātyena śakyaṁ śāstum=api trayam (106.11-12).
4. Ādiparvan, 5, 37.
5. Manusamhitā, VII.55.
6. I.5.
7. XIII, 25.
8. Nītivākyāmṛta, Chapter X.
10. I.7.3.
11. I.8.4.
12. 110.27-29.
13. 127.8-10.
15. VII.54 and 146.
16. 1.8.29.
18. 226.11; 235.8.
19. 218.31.
20. This work, which was also known as *Mānasollāsa*, was composed by the Western Čāluṣya king Someśvara III (*Cāluṣya-vaiṇa-sūlaś-kṛ- Someśvara-bhūpatīḥ/ Kurute Mānasollāsain śāstraṁ viśv-śopakāra-
śam/ Anukramaṇīkā, verse 9).
22. The Ratnās find mention in the *Samhitās of the Yajurveda* and the
Brāhmaṇa literature.
25. 1.40.3.
26. VI.4.9.
29. Chapter IX.
34. *Apligit*, p. 136.
39. From the use of the epithet sabbathaka, as applied to him in one of the
Jātakas (*Matte Vārāṇāsiyāṁ Brahmadatte rajjain kārento Bodhi-
satto tassā sabbathaka atthadhammānusāsaka-amacco ahosi/ Jātaka,
II, p. 30), it is sometimes suggested that the *Attha-dhammānusāsaka-
amacco* was the chief minister, Amātya-mukhya. This is wrong.
40. R.S. Sharma (*Apligit*, p. 16) observes that in the *Arthaśāstra*, the
Amātyas constitute a regular cadre of service from which all high
officers such as the chief priest, ministers, collectors, treasurers,
officers employed in civil and criminal administration, officers in
charge of harem, envoys and superintendents of various departments*
were recruited.
41. 1.5.34.
42. 1.5.35.
43. 1.5.36.
44. 1.5.37.
45. 1.5.41.
47. 1.10.1.
48. The term *sva-vagraha*, as applied to an *Amātya*, may also mean that he must himself be easily controllable and manageable.

49. VIII.1.

50. 1.15.47.

51. 1.15.48.

52. 1.15.49.

53. 1.15.50.


56. Page 371.

57. Page 407.


59. Ibid., p. 164.


62. It is interesting to note that Pataṇjtali in his *Mahābhāṣya* refers to Candragupta’s council as *Candragupta-sabhā*. The existence of a council of ministers under the Mauryas is thus proved by the combined evidence of the *Arthasastra*, *Mahābhāṣya*, Āśokan edicts and *Divyāvadāna* which refers to a council of 500 members (*mantriparipāsa*) under king Bindusāra. The last-named text refers to his minister Khallītaka who espoused the cause of Aśoka in his alleged contest for the throne.

63. 85, 11.

64. 7, 2.

65. The expression *traya-varah* which is used in this connection is explained by Nilaṇkṣita as ‘not less than three’.

66. The *Ayodhyākanda*, 100, 74.

67. 81, 21.

68. 83, 7-10.

69. 81, 8-9.


71. 83, 11.

72. The *Mahābhārata* does not mention the *vyasanas*, which, however, included, as is known from other sources, hunting, dicing, indulgence in sexual enjoyment, wine, cheating, abusing and destroying things of others.


74. Ibid., p. 370.

75. 100, 26.

76. 81, 20.

77. 81, 32.

78. 80, 64.


81. The Śāntiparvan, 81, 50.
82. The Dronaparvan, 67, 32.
83. The Kaṇḍaparvan, 3, 51.
84. 89, 29.
85. The Ādiparvan, 4, 5-7.
86. The Āranyakaparvan, 57, 19-20.
87. The Śāntiparvan, 85, 10.
88. VII, 56.
89. VII, 226.
90. VII, 57.
91. VII, 54. It is interesting to note that the Mānava school, as cited by Kauṭilya, is in favour of twelve ministers (I, 14).
92. The expression labdha-laksāṇ has been interpreted by Medhātithi, Govindarāja and Rucidatta as ‘those who do not fail in their undertakings’.
93. A variant reading suggests pārīkṣakāṇ in place of pārīkṣitān. The term would mean ‘who examine the state affairs’.
94. VII, 59.
95. VII, 60.
96. VII, 62.
97. Page 146.
98. Chapter II.
99. Chapter V.
100. TSELT, p. 594.
101. Ibid.
102. Ibid., p. 598.
103. Ibid., p. 600.
104. Ibid.
109. Śād-gunya-niścitam-atiguhyaṁ gūḍha-pracāravān/ Mantrayet = eha mantraṁ mantrajñaih saha mantrībhīḥ// XII, 1.
110. IV, 24.
111. IV, 30.
112. I, 312.
114. I, 310.
115. I, 312.
116. 215, 2.
117. *ASI, AR* (1911-12), p. 53, No. 36, Pl. XIX.
118. Ibid., p. 54, No. 41.
119. Ibid., p. 53, No. 37A, Pl. XIX.
120. *ASI, AR* (1913-14), p. 134, No. 210, Pl. XLVII.
123. No. 6371.
125. Ibid., p. 80.
130. Ibid., pp. 49-50.
131. Ibid., p. 217.
133. *EI*, XX, pp. 37ff.
135. II, 12.
137. Chapter X.
138. In his *Yaśastilaka* Somadeva recommends the appointment of five *Mantrins*.
139. Chapter XXV. Elsewhere Somadeva decries the appointment of Kṣatriyas as ministers for, those who live on arms, press for the adoption of their own views by force (X, 101-103).
141. Ibid., p. 185.
142. Ibid., p. 180.
143. 6.3.
144. 9.7.
145. 239.12.
146. 225.19; 225.18.
147. 339.39.
149. Ibid., XV, p. 298.
151. Ibid.
154. Ibid., XII, pp. 207 and 210.
156. *EI*, IV, p. 60.
157. Ibid., X, p. 89.
158. Ibid., IX, p. 254.
159. VII, 1043, 1145; VIII, 874, 3082-83.
160. VII, 1043, 1145.
161. VIII, 3082-83.
162. V, 253-55.
163. VII, 555.
164. IV, 51.
165. Laksṇjīdhara uses the term maulan and explains it as pitṛ-paitāmahān.
166. P. 176.
168. XVIII, 15-37.
171. Ibid., p. 156.
172. III, 69.
173. Purodhā ca pratinidhiḥ pradhānaḥ sacivas-tathāḥ/ Mantri ca prāḍivā-kāśaḥ-ca paṇḍitās-ca sumantrakāḥ/ Amātyo dūta ity-eitā rājanāḥ prakrtyo daśaḥ/ Sukraniti, II, vv. 69-70.
175. Ibid., p. 72.
176. Ibid., p. 72.
177. Ibid., Chapter II, lines 207-14.
178. Ibid., p. 183.
179. Ibid., p. 74.
180. EI, XXIV, p. 291.
181. IA, XVIII, pp. 62-64.
182. EI, XXXIV, pp. 141ff.
183. IA, VI, p. 191.
184. EI, XX, p. 79.
185. Ibid.
186. Ibid., I, p. 199.
187. Ibid., pp. 200 and 205.
188. Ibid., p. 206.
190. Ibid., p. 211.
191. Ibid., p. 203.
192. Ibid., pp. 195-97.
193. Ibid., p. 195.
194. Ibid., p. 199.
195. Ibid., pp. 208-11.
196. Ibid., p. 199.
197. IA, XVII, p. 35.
199. EI, I, pp. 207-14.
200. IA, XX, p. 211.
202. Ibid., XXXI, p. 331. D.C. Sircar (ibid., p. 164) is of opinion that the expression gadani(-madani) vydpāra is equivalent to mudrā-vydpāra.
203. EI, XXXII, p. 165.
204. Ibid., XXVI, p. 12.
205. Ibid., XXVIII, p. 65.
206. IA, V, p. 278.
207. Ibid., IX, pp. 35 and 38.
208. EI, XV, pp. 78-79.
209. IA, VI, p. 140.
211. EI, XIII, p. 57.
214. IA, XIV, p. 76.
The Sandhivigrahika

I

Definition of Śādgunyam

The Sandhivigrahika, also known as Sādhvigradhika, Sandhivigrahādikra, Sandhivigrahādikaraṇādikra and Sandhivigrāhin was a high-ranking officer of the state to whom were entrusted the important problems of peace (sandhi), war (vīrāha), neutrality (āsana), marching (yāna), seeking refuge (śamāśraya) and dual policy (dvādhibhāvah). In order to appreciate properly the duties and responsibilities which this officer was called upon to discharge, it is imperative to know beforehand the true implications of this sixfold measure, technically called śādgunyam by Indian writers on polity.

In defining sandhi, Kauṭilya observes, ‘Among them, entering into a treaty is peace’ (tatra pañ̄abandhāḥ sandhiḥ). He further points out that ‘Peace, treaty, hostage, these are one and the same thing. The creation of confidence among kings is (the purpose of) peace, treaty or hostage (Sāmāḥ sandhiḥ samādhir=ity=ek=orthāḥ/ rājñām viṣvās=opagamaḥ sāmāḥ sandhiḥ samādhir=īti)). It follows from the above definition that the treaty was an agreement concluded between two kings for mutual confidence. The commentator Kullāka defines a treaty as an agreement between two kings for mutual surrender or exchange of elephants, horses, troops and money (tatr=obhāy=ānugraḥārtham hasty=aśva-ratha-hirany=ādi nivandhānena=avābhyyām=anyonyasy=opakartavyam=īti). The obligations connected with such a treaty were generally considered immutable but ‘when conditions and circumstances changed requiring a ruler to repudiate a treaty, repudiation was permis-
sible, and probably advisable too. Kauṭilya has enumerated five kinds of alliances comprising the Mitra-sandhi, pact for acquisition of an ally, Hiranya-sandhi, treaty for money, Bhūmi-sandhi, alliance for acquisition of lands, Anavasita-sandhi, agreement for planting a colony in unsettled lands, and Karma-sandhi, alliance for an undertaking. The king is advised to conclude peace in view of the following circumstances:

To ruin the enemy’s undertakings by those of his own, bearing abundant fruits;
To enjoy the fruits of his own productive works or of those of his enemy;
To utilise the confidence derived from the treaty to ruin the enemy’s undertakings by the employment of secret remedies and occult practices;
To seduce the enemy’s skilled workers by offering them facilities or favours, exemptions and a higher remuneration;
To induce the enemy, in alliance with an extremely strong king, to ruin his own undertakings;
To prolong the enemy’s war with a king under whose pressure the enemy has made peace with himself;
To induce the enemy to harass another hostile king;
To annex the enemy’s territory, laid waste by his enemy;
To ensure the security of the kingdom from any possible attack from the enemy;
To achieve advancement in his own undertakings;
To detach the enemy from his circle of kings and win over the latter to his side; and lastly,
To create between the enemy and his circle hostility, culminating in the former’s destruction.

While defining vigraha, Kauṭilya observes: ‘Doing injury is war (apakāra vigrahaḥ). According to Šukra, ‘That is said to be vigraha or war by which the enemy is oppressed and subjugated.’ It would, therefore, follow that mere outbreak of hostilities could not make war unless it was backed by a desire to do harm. Kauṭilya advises the king to wage war in the following circumstances:

When his kingdom is rich in troops or is guarded by forts with one way of exit and is thus capable of warding off the enemy’s attack;
When he is able to ruin the enemy’s undertakings by taking shelter in an impregnable fort on the border of his kingdom;

When the enemy, being depressed by a calamity, has reached a time when his undertakings face ruin; and

When the enemy is fighting elsewhere.

Kauṭilya defines āsana as follows: ‘Remaining indifferent is staying quiet’\(^{16}\) (upekṣañam = āsanam). The commentator Kullūka\(^{18}\) has used the word nirapekṣya, impartiality, to explain the term āsana. Kṣīrasvāmī has interpreted āsana to mean abstention from war (āsanam vigrah = ādi-nivruttih). Šukra\(^{17}\) points out that ‘An āsana is said to be that from which one’s self can be protected and the enemy is destroyed.’ An āsana may accordingly be interpreted as an opportunistic neutrality which would prove beneficial to the king but ruinous for the enemy. The king is urged to adopt neutrality in the following circumstances:\(^{18}\)

When the king feels that neither he nor his enemy is capable of ruining the work of the other; and

When their mutual conflict would be like that of the hound and the boar.

In defining yāna, Kauṭilya points out that ‘Augmentation (of power) is marching’\(^{19}\) (abhyuccayo yānam). Yāna has been interpreted by Kullūka\(^{20}\) to mean an offensive march against the enemy (yānam ātrunā praṭigamanam). Šukra\(^{21}\) has used the term to mean an expedition for the furtherance of one’s own objects and destruction of the enemy’s interests. The king is advised to launch an attack against the enemy when he realises that the enemy’s work can be ruined only thereby and that the defence of his own works has been safeguarded.\(^{22}\)

Kauṭilya has defined śamśraya to mean ‘submitting to another’\(^{23}\) (par = ārpaṇāṁ śamśrayaḥ). Kullūka\(^{24}\) points out that seeking shelter means to take refuge with a stronger king when oppressed by the enemy (śatru-pīditasya pravaḷatara-raj = āntar = āśrayanāṁ śamśrayaḥ). Manu\(^{25}\) points out that śamśraya is of two kinds (dvividhaḥ śamśrayaḥ); a king, being oppressed by the enemy, may seek the protection of another, and secondly, a king, anticipating similar troubles in future, may seek the protection of another king. The king is advised to seek refuge when he feels that he is incapable of ruining the enemy’s undertakings nor is he able to avert the ruin of his own works.\(^{26}\)
In explaining *dvaidhībhāva* Kauṭilya\(^{27}\) points out that ‘Resorting to peace (with one) and war (with another) is dual policy’ (*sandhi-vigrah=opādānām dvaidhībhāvaha*). A similar interpretation has also been advanced by Kullūka\(^{28}\) (*kenacit sandhim kencid=vigrahām=ity=ādikam*). The king is advised to pursue this policy when he feels that he can promote his own undertakings by making a treaty with one king and ruin the enemy’s works by making war with him.\(^{29}\)

While evaluating the aforesaid six measures of foreign policy, Kauṭilya\(^{30}\) observes: ‘If there is equal advancement in peace or war, he should resort to peace. For, in war there are losses, expenses, marches away from home and hindrances. By that is explained (preference for) staying quiet, as between staying quiet and marching. As between dual policy and seeking shelter, he should resort to dual policy. For, he who resorts to the dual policy, giving prominence to his own undertakings, serves only his own interests, while he who takes shelter (with another) serves the interests of the other, not his own.’ ‘This extract,’ writes U.N. Ghosal,\(^{31}\) ‘involves the principle that while progress should be the fundamental objective of all types of foreign policy, the selection of the particular type should be made so as to ensure for the king his maximum advantage.’ But this arduous task could hardly be successfully discharged by the king unless he was aided by his wise counsellors. A special class of officers, called the *Sandhivigrapahikas*, was accordingly created to advise the monarch on inter-state relations.

II

*Evidence of the Manu-Samhītā*

Since early days, India was usually studded with a large number of states which had been maintaining intercourse among themselves in times of peace and war. But it is rather strange that we do not hear of any foreign minister in Indian kingdoms till we come to the age of Manu\(^{32}\) who urges the king to consult his Brāhmaṇa minister on matters relating to the sixfold measure of foreign policy (*Sarvesāṁ tu viśiṣṭena brāhmaṇena vipāścitā/ mantrayet paramam mantram rājā śādgurya-samyutam/†*). It seems that in the earlier period inter-state relations were the
joint responsibility of the ministry and that no special minister
was appointed to deal with them.

III

The Sandhivigrahika in Gupta and Other Contemporary Kingdoms

The earliest mention of the \textit{S\'andhivigrahika} seems to occur
in the famous Allahabad \textit{pra\'sasti} where Hari\'sena is said to have
been holding the same office during the reign of the emperor
Samudragupta\textsuperscript{33} (\textit{S\'andhivigrahika-kum\'ar\'am\'atya-mah\'ada\'ndan\'a-
yaka-Hari\'senasya}). The Udayagiri cave inscription of G.F. 82
speaks of Virasena \'Saba as the incumbent of the same post
under Candragupta II\textsuperscript{34} (\textit{anvaya-pr\'apta-s\'acivyo vy\'ap\'rita-sandhi-
vigraha\=ha}). It seems that military leadership was considered one
of the essential qualifications expected of a foreign minister.
Hari\'sena is described as a \textit{Mah\'ada\'ndan\'a\=yaka}, military general,
although the use of the term \textit{da\'nda} in the sense of ‘fine’ and
‘rod’ (of chastisement) is not unknown. \'Saba is also known to
have joined hands with the emperor in his campaign against the
\'Sakas of Western India\textsuperscript{35} (\textit{krisna-prthvi-jay\'arthena r\=a\=j\=i\=i-aiv-}
\textit{eha sah-\=agatah}). He is further described as being well grounded
in the science of politics and poetics\textsuperscript{36} (\textit{\'sabd-\=artha-ny\=aya-
niti\=j\=i\=ah kavi p\=a\=taliputrak\=ah}). It is, therefore, evident that
besides being proficient in the military art, the \textit{S\'andhivigrahika}
was expected to be well-versed in the cultivation of political
science as well. As the cases of Hari\'sena and \'Saba would
demonstrate, the \textit{S\'andhivigrahikas} were generally recruited from
amongst the members of those families which were holding the
ministerial posts for more than one generation. It cannot escape
notice that the \textit{S\'andhivigrahika} must have been the busiest
minister in the Gupta kingdom when Samudragupta and
Candragupta II were planning their campaigns in different
parts of India. It was the prerogative of his department to
decide which kingdoms were to be annexed, which were to be
allowed to remain as vassal states and which were to be left
undisturbed.

That the good service of the \textit{Sandhivigrahika} was often
utilised by several other states of contemporary India is conclu-
sively proved by a large number of inscriptions discovered
from different parts of the country. The Khoh copper plate
grant of Mahārāja Hastin of the year 163 mentions Sūryadatta as serving in the capacity of a foreign minister in the Parivṛṣa-jaka kingdom. It was he who composed the charter\(^{37}\) (likhitāni=ca . . . bhogika Ravidatta putreṇa mahāsāndhivigrahika-Sūryadattena). Sūryadatta’s son Vibhudatta occupied the office of the Mahāsāndhivigrahika under the same Mahārāja Hastin twenty-eight years later and was the writer of the Majhawan copper plate inscription of the year 191\(^{38}\) (likhitāni=ca Sūryadatta-putreṇa mahāsāndhivigrahika-Vibhudatten=eti). Gallu was the Sandhivigrahika under the Ucchakalpa in A.D. 496\(^{39}\) (bhogika-Phālgudatt=āmātya-naptā bhogika-Varāhadinna-putre-sāndhivigrahika-Gallunā) to be followed in the office by his younger brother Manoratha who is reputed to have composed the Khoṅ copper plate inscription in A.D. 512\(^{40}\) (likhitāṁ samvatsara-śate tri-navaty=uttare caitra-māsa-divase daśame bhogika-Phālgudatt=āmātya-naptā bhogika-Varāhadinna putreṇa mahāsāndhivigrahika-Manorathena). The title Mahāsāndhivigrahika, as applied to some royal officials in these records, would suggest that in the department of external affairs in those kingdoms, there were a few Sandhivigrahikas who worked as subordinate officers under the supreme officer of the department. As in the Gupta kingdom, in other states also we often find a tendency for the ministerial office to become hereditary, as is demonstrated by the cases of Sūryadatta and Gallu both of whom were succeeded to their office by their kinsmen.

IV

The Sandhivigrahika in the Post-Gupta Period

The references to the Sandhivigrahikas are not less numerous in the inscriptions of the post-Gupta period. The Palitana copper plates\(^{41}\) of Dharasena II, dated Gupta year 252, speak of a Sandhivigrahādhikṛta, named Skandabhaṭa who is known to have composed the edict\(^{42}\) (likhitāṁ sandhivigrahādhikṛta- Skandabhaṭena). It is of interest to note that Skandabhaṭa served both Dharasena II\(^{43}\) and his father and predecessor Guhasena.\(^{44}\) A Central Indian epigraph\(^{48}\) of A.D. 592 records that the Dūtaka of the document was Bhaḍḍaka who was the officer in charge of the department of peace and war\(^{46}\) (dūtako=tra-sandhivigrahādhikaraṇādhikṛta-Bhaḍḍakaḥ). The Sarsabani
copper plate grant of the Kalacuri monarch Buddharaaja, issued in A.D. 609-10, mentions a *Mahāsandhivigrāhādhihītā* named Śivarāja as the writer of the charter (likhitam = idam mahāsandhivigrāhādhihītā Śivarājen = eti). The Mallasarul copper plates mention a *Sāndhivigrāhika* named Bhogacandra as having drafted the grant (likhitam sāndhivigrāhika-Bhogacandrena). The Jayrampur copper plate grant of the same monarch Gopacandra, however, does not take any notice of any *Sāndhivigrāhika* and the task of composing the charter, as we are told in the inscription, was entrusted to a Kāyastha named Mānadatta (likhitam kāyastha-Mānadatten eti). The Chandeswar copper plates of the Śailodbhava king Mānabhīta Dharmarāja mention the *Sāndhivigrāhika* Bhogin Śāmanta as the writer of the charter (likhitam sāndhivigrāhika-bhogin-sāmanta). Thus while the *Sāndhivigrāhikas* generally figure in these inscriptions as writers of charters, a few of them are known to have acted as conveyors of the royal approval regarding land-grants. The load of these duties, which could have been successfully borne by some minor officers as well, must have adversely affected the energy and resourcefulness of a foreign minister whose main responsibility was to safeguard the security of the kingdom by a cautious handling of matters relating to peace and war.

Useful information about the office of the foreign minister during the post-Gupta period may further be obtained from contemporary literature as well. The office of the *Mahāsandhivigrāhādhihītā* was not unknown to Bāṇa who refers to Avanti as the incumbent of this post under king Harṣavardhana. He sat near the king in the assembly, and was dictated by the Puṣyabhūti king his proclamation of *dig-vijaya*. In making his decision of conquests, Harṣa hardly felt the need of consulting his supreme minister of peace and war but asked him to act in consonance with his instructions. Kalhaṇa’s *Rājaṭarāṅgiṇī*, which was, however, composed at a much later date, speaks of Mitraśarman, the *Sāndhivigrāhika* of Lālitaśitya, king of Kashmir, as being present at the time of drafting the treaty between Lālitaśitya and king Yaśovarman of Kanauj and as objecting to recording the latter’s name first in the treaty.
The Sandhivigrahika in Early Mediaeval Indian Kingdoms

Welcome light on the status and position of the Sandhivigrahikas in different early mediaeval Indian kingdoms is thrown by the inscriptions of the contemporary period. The Sandhivigrahika Mahindaka was the writer of the Haddala grant of the Gurjara Pratihara monarch Mahipala. A foreign minister named Thakkura Purusottama is mentioned in the Jubbalpore Kotwali copper plates of the Kalacuri king Jayasimhadeva, while another officer of the same department, Cahila, is known to have acted as the Dūtaka of the Sunaka plate of Karṇadeva. The Mandhata plates of the Paramāra king Devapāla speak of the Mahāsāndhivigrahika Bilhaṇa with whose approbation the grant was recorded by the king’s preceptor Madana (rācitam = idam = mahāsāndhivigrahika-paṇḍita-śrī-Bilhaṇa - saṃ- matena rāja-guruṇā Madanena). He is applauded as being blessed with learning. Bilhaṇa is likewise known from Arjunavarman’s grant where he is described as the minister of peace and war. The poet Āśājha in his Dharmāṃpta refers to the ‘learned Bilhaṇa, the lord of poets’ as the ‘Mahāsāndhivigrahika of the glorious Vindhyā’ (Vindhyabhūpati). Since this king Vindhyā has usually been identified with Arjunavarman’s grandfather Vindhyavarman, it may be reasonably held that Bilhaṇa enjoyed the confidence of no less than four successive kings of Mālava from Vindhyavarman to Devapāla. The description of the qualities of Bilhaṇa would remind us of a similar one of those of Vīrasena Śāba, as found in the Udaygiri cave inscription of the Gupta period. Gadādhara, the minister of peace and war of the Candella king Paramardi, is expressly described as an excellent poet. The Sandhivigrahika Khelāditya drafted the grant, as recorded in the Kiradu stone pillar inscription of the Caulukya king Kumārapāla. The Dūtaka of the Radhanpur plate of king Bhīma of the same dynasty was the Sandhivigrahika Candraśarman.

The Mahāsāndhivigrahin finds frequent mention in the inscriptions of the Somavāṃśi kings of Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. It is known from the Sonpur copper plates and the Nagpur Museum plates of Mahābhavagupta II Janamejaya that a Mahāksapatañjī named Alava was connected with (prati-
baddha) the Mahāsandhivigrahin. The testimony of these inscriptions suggests that the minister of peace and war was entitled to some sort of control over the department of accounts.\textsuperscript{65} One of the foreign ministers under the Somavamsīs was Malladatta who appears to have served in the same capacity for a long time, for he figures both in the Patna plates\textsuperscript{66} and the Cuttack grants\textsuperscript{67} of the 6th and the 31st years, respectively, of the reign of Mahābhāvagupta II Janamejaya. The Daspalla grant\textsuperscript{68} of the year 184 mentions the Sandhivigrahin Yaśodatta as having received the grant of a village at the hands of king Devānanda II. He is further described as belonging to the Kāyastha caste. The Orissa plates\textsuperscript{69} of Vidyādharabhaṇja mention that the grant, recorded in those plates, was written by Arkadeva (\textit{likhitāḥ=ca sāndhivigrahika-Arka devena}) who is described as the minister of peace and war. The Musunika grant\textsuperscript{70} of the Gaṅga king Devendravarman III mentions the Mahāsāndhivigrahika Sarvacandra as the scribe of the record. It is interesting to note that Sarvacandra is mentioned in the Chicacole plates, issued two years later, as a Sāmanṭa and in the Tekkali plates, which were issued at a still subsequent date, as a Rahasya, private secretary, of the king. It seems that the Gaṅgas hardly allowed their officers to remain associated with a particular office for long but transferred them, quite frequently, from one office to another.

The Sandhivigrahikas are prominently mentioned in the inscriptions from Bengal also. The Belwa copper plates\textsuperscript{71} of Mahīpāla I and those\textsuperscript{72} of Vīgrahapāla III mention the Mahāsāndhivigrahika in the list of officials who were requested by the king to protect their grant. The Manahali grant of Madanapāla mentions a Mahāsāndhivigrahika in the list of officials, being entrusted with the protection of the grant and a Sāndhivigrhika, named Bhīmadeva, who was appointed the messenger.\textsuperscript{73} The Bhubaneswar Praśasti\textsuperscript{74} of Bhāṭṭa Bhavadeva gives the account of a Brāhmaṇa family which produced some successive generations of the Sāndhivigrahikas. The earliest of them was Ādideva who served as foreign minister under a Candra king, described in the inscription as ruler of Vaṅga. 'He enjoyed the greatest confidence of his master,' writes B.C. Sen,\textsuperscript{75} commenting on the position of Ādideva in the government, 'as he was allowed, not in his private capacity, but as a Sacīva, to enjoy
the company of the king when he was free from all preoccupa-
tions; that is to say, matters of statecraft used to be discussed in complete privacy between these two persons.' An outstand-
ing personality, Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva, who flourished in a subse-
quent period, serving under Harivarmadeva, is described as
being well acquainted with the Vedaś, the Āgamas, the
Arthaśāstra, the science of medicine, the science relating to the
use of arms, Siddhānta, Tantra, Gaṇita and the Phalasarśhitā.
As B.C. Sen⁷⁸ points out, 'There seems to be no doubt that his
functions were the same as those of his ancestor Ādideva; he
was a Mantri and Saiva like him, his principal authority being
associated with Mantra-śakti which means the policy of war
and peace.' Harighoṣa served as a Sāndhivigrahika under
Valālaśena and performed the duties of a Dūtaka in connec-
tion with the grant recorded in the Naihati copper plates.⁷⁷
Lakṣmaṇasena’s Sāndhivigrahika was entrusted with the work
of a messenger in connection with his Tarpandighi,⁷⁸ Govinda-
pur⁷⁹ and Anuliś⁸⁰ grants. The Sāndhivigrahika Nāñisimha,
who served under the later Sena monarch Viśvarūpasena,
carried out similar functions in respect of the Sahitya Parisad
grant.⁸¹ In the Madanpada grant⁸² of Viśvarūpasena mention
is made of a Gaṇḍa-Sāndhivigrahika. B.C. Sen⁸³ is of opinion
that he was so called because he was serving under a Gaṇḍa
king. It is not unlikely that this foreign minister was appointed
to look after the affairs of Gaṇḍa which formed a part of his
master’s dominions. The Madanpur plate⁸⁴ of Śrīcandra men-
tions that the record was officially approved by the Mahāsān-
dhivigrahika, proving thereby that the minister of peace and
war was intimately connected with land grants also.

The frequent mention of the Mahāsandhivigrahika and the
Sandhivigrahika in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa records would tend to suggest
that several ministers were associated with the department of
peace and war. The Mahāsandhivigrahika was the superior
officer of the department, having under him several ordinary
Sandhivigrahikas to assist him in his work. This inference, sug-
gested by the formation of the two words, mohān and sandhivi-
grahika, is further confirmed by the Bhandup plates⁸⁵ of the
Śilāhāra king Cittarājadeva which speak of Sihapeya and śrī-
Kapardia as the principal Sandhivigrahika and the Karpāṭa-
Sandhivigrahika, respectively. It seems that under the Rāṣṭra-
kūṭas even feudatory kings were empowered to appoint foreign ministers for their own kingdoms. Karkarāja Suvarṇavarṣa, who was ruling over Southern Gujarat as a feudatory of his uncle, the Rāṣṭrakūṭa emperor Govinda III, had under him a foreign minister (Mahāsandhivigrahādhipati) named Nārāyaṇa who is reputed to have drafted the Surat plates. Nārāyaṇa happened to be the son of Durgabhaṭṭa who is also known to have held the important post of chief foreign minister. It may accordingly be suggested that succession to this important office was occasionally hereditary.

The importance of these foreign ministers in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa administration is revealed by an inscription which describes Nārāyaṇa, a foreign minister under Kṛṣṇa III, as another hand (pratihasta) of the king. The high position of these officers is further borne out by the fact that the status of a Sāmanta and the Pañcamahāśubdas were conferred upon them not unoft en. It may be noted in this connection that the meaning of the expression samśadhigata-pañca-mahāśabda was different for different parts of India. In most of North Indian records, the five titles appear as the five official designations, beginning with the word mahā, viz., the Mahāpratihāra, superintendent of the king’s chamber or of the gate and guards of the palace or capital city, the Mahāsandhivigrahika, the Mahaśvaśālādhiṅkṛta, superintendent of stables, the Mahābhāṇḍāgārika, treasurer, and the Mahāśādhaniṅika, commander of the forces. The expression seems to have been used in some West Indian records to mean the five titles, including the Mahārāja, Mahāsāmanta, Mahākārtāṅkṛti, Mahādanḍanāyaka and Mahāpartikāra. In South India, however, the title seems to refer to the privilege granted by the overlord to enjoy the sounds of five kinds of musical instruments, comprising the trumpet, tambour, conch-shell used as a horn, kettledrum and gong.

The Mahāsandhivigrahika is generally represented in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa records as being entrusted with the drafting of the copper plate charters. The connection of the office of the Sandhivigrahika with the drafting of land grants is likewise established by Smṛti literature. While commenting on a passage of Yājñavalkya, Vijñānesvara quotes the following anonymous verse.
sandhivigrahakārī tu bhavedyas=tasya lekhakah/
svayam rājā sam=ādiṣṭah sa likhed=rāja-sāsanam/]

'The drafter (of the copper plate charter) should be the person who is the foreign minister; he should draft the charter as instructed by the king himself.' Vijñāneshvara further says that the charter should be caused to be drafted by the foreign minister and by no one else (Sandhivigrahakārinā sāsanam kārayet n=ānyena kenacit). But the reasons why the right of drafting all the copper plate grants was vested in the Sandhivigrahika, instead of the revenue minister, are not precisely known. A land-grant, as a rule, contains an account of the genealogy of the donor as well as the details about the grantee and the village, to be granted. A.S. Altekar\(^2\) holds that the Sandhivigrahika drafted all such land-charters because in the archives of the foreign office were preserved the most reliable and up-to-date materials on the exploits of the donor, to be incorporated in the grants. But it is difficult to agree that none but the foreign minister had access to the materials preserved in the state archive. R.S. Sharma\(^3\) has advanced a new theory on this issue; he says, 'Since peacetime relations with the vassals consisted in stipulating tributes levied on grants of land or in confirming the jurisdiction of the vassal over the fiefs, he (i.e., the Sandhivigrahika) drafted all secular charters and even those relating to land grants to Brāhmaṇas and temples.' But the main defect of this theory lies in its assertion that no royal grant would be made without involving a feudal lord. It is not unlikely that the Sandhivigrahika was preferred to the rest as the writer of the royal charter because of his superior skill in penmanship, to which most of the early mediaeval Indian writers on polity would bear witness. This suggestion, it must be admitted, should only be regarded as one belonging to the realm of probability.

By the time of the Cāluksya kings of Kalyani, the foreign ministry, on the ground of its efficient functioning, came to be divided into two or three broad divisions, each being spearheaded by a separate minister. Epigraphs speak of the following foreign ministers of the Western Cāluksya kingdom:

1. Kannada-Sāndhivigrahika.\(^4\) He was in charge of the
Karṇāṭaka division which formed the southern half of the Cālukya kingdom.

2. Lāta-Sāndhivigrahika. He was entrusted with the affairs of the northern part of the kingdom which was styled Lāta or Lāṭa.

3. Heri Sāndhivigrahika. It is sometimes argued that Heri-Sāndhivigrahika was a minister in charge of the secret intelligence department of the foreign ministry. Such a hypothesis does not find favour with K.A. Nilkanta Sastri, who points out that the term heri 'merely implies the seniority of the particular officer above others doing similar work under him'. If this view be accepted, 'Heri-sāndhivigrahika may indeed well have been the Kannada form of the expression Mahā sāndhivigrahika which occurs in a record of A.D. 1066.'

It is of interest to note that the Kannada-Sāndhivigrahika and the Lāta Sāndhivigrahika, as is suggested by the etymology of the two words, were in charge of the two divisions of the Cālukya kingdom, and it is not clear how far they were connected with the maintenance of the relations of the state with foreign powers. It appears to be fairly certain that their duties were primarily connected with the relation of the suzerain power to the quasi-independent vassal chiefs within their respective jurisdictions. These feudal chiefs, as K.A. Nilkanta Sastri rightly points out, 'belonged to ancient ruling families, cherished memories of past glory and hopes of future independence, and maintained private armies of their own; their relation with the suzerain power must have always given rise to a number of delicate problems which could be handled successfully only by the employment of diplomatic methods.'

The Sanskrit text Mānasollāsa, which was composed during this period, while bringing to light some of the notable qualifications of a Sandhivigrahika, lays down that he should be intelligent as well as efficient, be thoroughly conversant with numerous languages and scripts, skilful in summoning and dismissing and in installing the various categories of feudatories like the Manḍalesaś, Sāmantas and Mānyakas, adept in the sixfold policy and an expert in finance.

The information about the office of the minister of peace and war, as gleaned from epigraphic evidence, is corroborated and supplemented by literary documents. The Agni Purāṇa.
for instance, insists on the appointment of a foreign minister who should be well grounded in the sixfold policy of the state (sândhivigrahiko kāryo śādgury=ādi-viśāradaḥ). The Matsya Purāṇa\textsuperscript{103} points out that proficiency in the sixfold policy, sound knowledge of languages and countries and diplomacy were some of the qualities of an efficient Sândhivigrhika (Śādguruya-vidhi-tatvajño desa-bhāṣā viśāradaḥ sândhivigrhikāḥ kāryo rājāḥ naya-viśāradaḥ//). A similar interesting account of the Sândhivigrhika is provided by the Viṣṇudarmottara Purāṇa\textsuperscript{104} which lays down that the foreign minister should be endowed with the knowledge of countries and their languages, statesmanship, beauty, youth, intelligence, firm loyalty and noble birth. He should keep himself abreast of the know-how of income and expenditure and be able to find out the loyalty and disaffection of the royal servants and capable of defending the country.

The evidence of the Yaśastilaka-campū, composed by Somadeva, in regard to the office of the Sândhivigrhika is of no mean importance. It is laid down that the foreign minister should be well-versed in grammar, logic, scripts, language, caste regulations, the laws (vyavahāra) and usages (sthitī). Endowed with great presence of mind, he should be able not only to analyse things but also to read and write fluently (Vācayati likhati kavate gamayati sarvālipīḥ=ca bhāṣāḥ=ca ātmāpara-sthitī-kuśalaḥ sapratibhaḥ sândhivigrhī kāryaḥ//). The Nītiākhyānta\textsuperscript{105} tells us that the Sândhivigrhika should possess the knowledge of grammar, logic, power of fluent talking, wisdom, discretionary power, be conversant with most of the languages and alphabet and be well-grounded in the knowledge of time, place and varṇāśrama. The requisite intelligence in rapid reading and writing was another essential quality, expected of this minister. Equally important is the testimony of the Kathākośa of Jinaśvara which speaks of a Sândhivigrhika as being sent by a king to one of his rebellious feudatories with the instruction that he should act as circumstances demanded. His duties in this case compare favourably with those of the Nīśṭārtha, as mentioned by Kauṭilya and other writers on polity.

The Sândhivigrhika finds mention in the Rājadharmanakāṇḍa section of the Kṛtyakalpataru where we find some interesting details of the qualifications expected of him. It is laid down that
he should be an adept in the sixfold policy, a judge of opportunity and a diplomat (Ṣāḍgūṇyavidhi-tatvajño deśa-kāla-viśāradaḥ| sāndhi-vigrahikaḥ kāryo rājñā naya-viśāradaḥ//). It is worth remembering that this description of the qualifications of a foreign minister has been provided by a man who himself was appointed to the high office of the Sāndhivigrahika during the reign of the Gāhaḍavāla king Govindacandra (śrīmad-Govindacandra-mahārāja-sandhivigrahika-śrī-Lakṣmidharabhāṭṭa). It may be noted that Lakṣmidhara refers to himself as a Mantrīśvāra, chief minister as well. This would prove that there were occasions when the two offices were combined in one person.

The foreign minister is called the Mantrī in the Śukranīti and not the Sandhivigrahika, as he was more popularly known in contemporary India. It was the duty of the Mantrī to study when, how and to whom (keṣu kada kattaṁ) the fourfold policy of sāma, dāma, daṇḍu and bheda was to be adopted (sāmaca bhedaś ca daṇḍaḥ) and the various effects of each of the policies whatsoever great, moderate or small they were (kartavyah kim phalam tebhya bahu madhyam tathālpakam). He decided on the course of action first and subsequently communicated the same to the king for approval (etat saṁcintyā niścītya mantrī sarvaṁ nivedayet). Śukra elsewhere points out that the Mantrī was one who was adept in diplomacy (Mantrī tu niśti-kuśalaḥ). The account of Śukra is interesting for two reasons. First, he had no control over military affairs which passed into the hands of the Saciva, war minister, and second, no decision of the Mantrī, unless it was approved by the king, would be reckoned as final. Even then the status of the Mantrī was of no mean significance; for, he was included, along with the Purodhā, Pratinidhi, Pradhāna, Saciva, Prāḍvivāka, Paṇḍita, Sumantra, Amātyā and Dīta, in the list of the ten principal officers (prakṛtyayo daśa) of the kingdom.

The Jaina work Prabandhacintāmaṇi refers to a Sāndhivigrahika as being sent by king Bhoja of Malava to the court of the Caulukya king Bhīma of Gujarat. Occasions were then not infrequent when these officers acted as emissaries to foreign courts to cement friendship between the two kings or to iron out differences that were likely to jeopardise their relations.
VI

Functions of the Mahāsāmantādhipati

In some of the inscriptions of later times, reference is made to an officer called Mahāsāmantādhipati who was very probably the minister in charge of the department dealing with feudal vassals. T.V. Mahalingam is of opinion that he took the place of the Sandhivigrāhika of earlier times.

References and Notes

1. VII, 6.
2. KA, p. 434.
5. IRAI, p. 68.
8. VII, 10.
10. VII, 12.
11. VII, 1, 32.
12. VII, 1, 7.
15. VII, 1, 8.
18. Arthaśāstra VII, 1, 34.
22. Arthaśāstra VII, 1, 35.
23. VII, 1, 10.
27. VII, 1, 11.
30. KA, p. 376; VII, 2, 1-5.
31. HIPI.
32. VII, 58.
33. SI, p. 268.
34. Ibid., p. 280.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. CII, III, p. 104.
38. Ibid., p. 108.
39. Ibid., p. 123.
40. SI, p. 393.
41. EI, XI, pp. 80ff.
42. Ibid., p. 84.
43. CII, III, p. 167.
44. IA, IV, p. 175; ibid., V, p. 207.
45. EI, XXX, pp. 163ff.
46. Ibid., p. 181.
47. Ibid., VI, p. 299.
49. Ibid., pp. 530ff.
50. Ibid., p. 571.
51. EI, XXX, pp. 269ff.
52. The Harṣacarita of Bāṇa. Translated by E.B. Cowell and F.W. Thomas, Delhi, 1961, p. 187.
53. IV, 137-38.
54. IA, XII, pp. 190-95.
55. EI, I, p. 317.
56. EI, IX, pp. 103ff.
57. Ibid., p. 113.
58. Ibid., p. 107.
60. PIA, p. 86.
61. EI, IX, pp. 63-65.
62. IA, VI, p. 193.
63. EI, XXIII, pp. 248ff.
64. Ibid., VIII, pp. 143ff.
65. The term akṣapaṭala has been variously rendered as ‘record office’, ‘court of rolls’, ‘court of justice’, ‘archive’ and ‘Accountant General’s Office’.
67. Ibid., Nos. 1562-64.
68. EI, XXIX, p. 186.
69. EI, IX, p. 272.
70. Ibid., XXX, pp. 23ff.
71. EI, XXIX, pp. 1ff.
72. Ibid., pp. 9ff.
73. JASB, LXIX, pp. 68ff; A.K. Maitreyi, Gauḍa-lekhakalā, pp. 147ff.
74. PIHC, Calcutta, 1939, pp. 313ff.
75. SHAIB, p. 545.
76. SHAIB, p. 546.
77. EI, XIV, pp. 156ff.
78. Ibid., XII, pp. 6ff.
79. IB, pp. 92ff.
80. Ibid., pp. 81ff.
81. IHQ, II, p. 77; IB, pp. 140ff.
82. EI, XXXIII, p. 315.
83. SHAIB, p. 553.
84. EI, XXVIII, pp. 51ff.
85. RT, p. 167.
86. EI, XXI, pp. 146ff.
87. Ibid., IV, p. 60.
88. JE, p. 342.
89. Ibid.
90. Ibid.
91. The Mitakṣara on Yājñavalkya I, 319-20.
92. RT, p. 166. A similar view has been advanced by V.V. Mirashi (CII, IV, pp. cxiii-iv) who observes: 'The Department of Peace and War was most likely to have an accurate information about the conquests of the king and his ancestors which were generally described in the initial part of such charters.' P.B. Udgaonkar (PIA, p. 98) holds the same view.
93. IF, p. 103.
94. SII, IX(i), 223.
95. SII, IX(i), 240.
96. EI, XVI, p. 45.
97. Ibid.
98. EHD, p. 389.
99. Ibid.
100. Ibid.
102. 220, 3.
103. 215, 16. The expression naya-viśāradah has been explained as naye nītāu viśārado vijñah/ nīti-śattrajñah.
104. 11, 24, 16-17.
107. Ibid., p. 212.
108. Ibid., p. 50.
109. II, 89, II, 95. In Śivājī’s cabinet, the foreign minister was called Mantrī.
110. In the vast majority of Indian texts, the four political expedients are referred to as conciliation, bribery, creating dissension and force. Kāmandaka and Bṛhaspati have added to these four primary expedients a supplementary list, comprising deceit (māyā), indifference (upekṣā) and creating illusion (indrajāla). In evaluating these expedi-
superior to the rest (Sām = ādīnām = upāyānāṁ caturṇām = api paṇḍi-
tāh / sāma-danḍau praśāṁsanti nityāṁ raśtrāḥ = ābhivṛddhayē/). While
commenting on the above passage of Manu, Kullūka points out that
conciliation is advantageous for the reason that it does not involve
any physical effort or loss of money and army, whereas, notwithstanding
the drainage of men and money, force is still praised for the
length of success it leads to (sāmī prayāsa ḍhana-vyaya-sainyakṣayā =
ādi-dvaś = ābhavāt, danḍe tu tatsadbhāve = pi kāryaśiddhyā = atiśayē/).
This view does not find favour with the author of the Mānasollāsa
as ‘Conciliation,’ he says, ‘is the best in bringing success without
injury to others and loss of substance, creating dissensions is mid-
dling as partaking of suspicion of those evil men who are thus
divided from their master, bribery is an evil as involving present loss
with success dependent upon destiny, and force is the worst as
victory, the kingdom and life itself are brought into jeopardy by war.
Conciliation should first be applied towards those who are high-born,
grateful, kind-hearted and good, and who seek some advantage for
themselves; the policy of dissension should be applied against those
enemies who in the intoxication of their pride cannot be won over
by conciliation; the king should apply the policy of bribery against
those ministers who are disaffected against their master for various
reasons and those who are the enemy’s support in war and in
counsel, as well as his own ministers and others who have no attach-
ment for himself; what cannot be accomplished by means of dissen-
sion can be accomplished by bribery; when the king is strong, he
should apply force against the enemy who cannot be reduced by
means of the three expedients’ (U.N. Ghosal, A History of Indian
Political Ideas, Bombay, 1959, p. 453).

111. II, 94-95.
112. II, 95.
113. II, 89.
114. II, 70.
115. P. 41.
116. SIP, p. 120.
The Ambassador

I

Importance of the Office of Ambassador

A large volume of evidence, both literary and archaeological, Indian as well as foreign, would indubitably disclose the prevalence of the office of ambassador in the early Indian kingdoms. But it is almost equally certain that such an office was far from being a permanent one, being created for a specific purpose. 'The system,' observes T.V. Mahalingam,¹ 'of accrediting ambassadors permanently from one court to another is of modern origin and was not known in medieval India.' Even then, the Indian ambassadors of those days wielded enormous power and shouldered no mean responsibilities. It is they on whom depended, in no small measure, the maintenance of friendly relations between kings, the outbreak of hostilities between kingdoms and the conclusion of peace between warring parties.

II

Ambassadors in Vedic Literature

The term dūta in the sense of an envoy occurs in the Rgveda² as a qualifying epithet of the god Agni who was urged to bring the gods to the sacrifice. The word is also once used in the Rgveda³ in its feminine form as an epithet of Sarama who was deputed by Indra to discover the treasure of the Panis. The later Vedic texts like the Atharvaveda⁴ and the Kauṣitaki Upaniṣad⁵ likewise use the term dūta in the sense of a messenger or envoy. But the information that the Vedic literature supplies in regard to these envoys or messengers is unfortunately meagre.
This would probably imply that the science of diplomacy was in its infancy in those days.

III

Ambassadors in Early Buddhist and Jaina Sources

We seldom come across any detailed information about Dūtas in the early Buddhist and Jaina sources. The Bhaddasala Jātaka⁶ refers to an envoy, being sent by the Kosalan monarch Prasenajit to the Śākyas who were urged to offer him one of their daughters in marriage. To provide the envoys from abroad with accommodation (tirojanapadehi āgatānam dūtanam nivesanatthānādini) was a matter of great concern with a king desirous of winning popularity at home.⁷ In the Teviṭṭa Sutta⁸ of the Dīgha Nikāya, some of the Śrotriya Brāhmaṇas are represented as discharging the functions of Dūtas. This and similar other Buddhist texts would create the impression that Dūtas were occasionally recruited from amongst the Śrotriya class of the Brāhmaṇas.⁹

The Dūtas are almost passed over in silence in Dharmasūtra literature. They are once referred to in the Gautama Dharmasūtra¹⁰ which advocates the inviolability of their person.

IV

Ambassadors in Classical Accounts

The accounts of Classical authors like Pliny, Arrian and Curtius throw positive light on the position of ambassadors in the pre-Mauryan epoch. Pliny’s Anabasis of Alexander IV, for example, shows that ambassadors were an important part of the government in Indian kingdoms in the fourth century B.C. When the Macedonian conqueror, in the course of his campaigns, reached Nysa, that lay at a distance of four to five miles west from Jalalabad, the Nysians sent out to him their president named Akouphis and thirty deputies as ambassadors, to ‘entreat him to spare the city for the sake of the God’. They duly reached the camp of Alexander and their leader Akouphis urged the invader to spare Nysa. The mission bore fruit. The city was left unmolested.¹¹ It is learnt from the narrative of Arrian that Abisar, king of Taxila, also despatched envoys to
Alexander with enormous presents. Another Indian king, the less consequential Porus, is believed to have tendered his submission to Alexander through the agency of envoys. Curtius speaks of the tribal ambassadors of the Mālavas and the Kṣudrakas, who met Alexander, consequent upon the defeat of their tribes at the hands of the foreign invader, as men of uncommon stature and dignified bearing, and as being clad in purple and gold. ‘From a close study,’ observes H.L. Chatterjee, of the services rendered by them and judging by their results, one can only conclude that these persons were saddled with responsibilities of a very delicate nature, fulfilment of which called for a good deal of statesmanship and foresight on the part of the persons performing them.’

V

Ambassadors in the Maurya Period

In the section entitled Dūta-praṇidhī of the Arthaśāstra, Kauṭilya has elaborately discussed the problem of Dūtas who are divided into the following three groups:

1. The Nisṛṣṭārthas, Plenipotentiaries. The word nisṛṣṭārtha literally means ‘to whom the matter has been entrusted (with full powers of negotiation)’. These officers who were endowed with ministerial qualifications (amātya-saṃpad = opeta) enjoyed full discretion to negotiate with the foreign ruler.

2. The Parimitārthas, Charges d’Affaires. To this group belonged officers who were deficient in respect of a quarter of the qualities expected of those belonging to the first group. They were granted limited freedom in making any negotiations with the foreign power (pāda-guṇa-hīnah parimitārthaḥ).

3. The Śasanaharas, Conveyers of royal writs. They possessed only half the qualifications of the officers of the first group and were, as the etymology seems to signify, the bearers of a message (ardha-guṇa-hīnah śasanaharaḥ).

Kauṭilya describes at length how an ambassador should start on his mission, enter the enemy’s capital, deliver his master’s message and observe the formalities of behaviour and conduct in a foreign state. An envoy would start only when there were excellent arrangements for carriage (yāna), conveyance (vāhana), servants (puruṣa) and subsistence (parivāpa).
He had to study carefully beforehand the message of his master and think over the replies to the possible queries of the enemy-king. As he moved through the enemy-kingdom, he would make friends with officers there such as those in charge of wild tracts, boundaries, cities and rural areas, assess the military resources and the vulnerable as well as the unassailable points of the enemy. Having obtained permission, he would enter the enemy’s capital, report the object of his mission as exactly as entrusted to him, even at the risk of his own life.

While defining the functions of a Dūta, Kauṭilya observes:

Presañāṁ sandhi-pālatvam pratāpo mitra-saṁgrahāḥ/
upajāpah suḥrd=bheda gūḍha-danḍ=ātisāraṇam||
Bandhu-ratn=āpaharaṇaṁ cāra-jñānam parākramaḥ/
samādhi mokṣo dūtasya karma yogasya c=āśrayah||
Sva-dūtaṁ kārayed=etad=para-dūtāniś=ca rakṣayet/
prati-dūt=āpasarpāḥbhūyāṁ dṛṣy=āḍṛṣyaiś=ca rakṣibhiḥ||

R. Shamasstry translates the above verse as follows: ‘Transmission of missions, maintenance of treaties, issue of ultimatum (pratāpa), gaining of friends, intrigue, sowing dissension among friends, fetching secret force; carrying away by stealth relatives and gems, gathering information about the movements of spies, bravery, breaking of treaties of peace, winning over the favour of the envoy and government officers of the enemy—these are the duties of an envoy (dūta). The king shall employ his own envoys to carry on works of the above description, and guard himself against (the mischief of) foreign envoys by employing counter envoys, spies and visible and invisible watchmen.’

As is evident from the above verses of the Arthaśāstra, the duties of a diplomatic envoy comprised the following:

(i) Transmission of the message of his own master to the head of the foreign state he was deputed to;
(ii) Safeguarding the terms of a treaty for the maintenance of cordial relations between states;
(iii) Delivery of an ultimatum to the head of the foreign country;
(iv) Winning of friends;
(v) Carrying on intrigues in the enemy’s territory;
(vi) Sowing of dissension among the friends of the enemy;
(vii) Carrying away by stealth relatives and gems;
(viii) Expulsion of the enemy’s secret agents and armymen;
(ix) Exhibiting the strength of his own master; and
(x) Kidnapping of the enemy’s kinsmen and treasures.

Referring to the other duties and responsibilities that a Dūta was expected to discharge, Kauṭiliya\(^27\) observes: ‘He should find out (about) the instigation of seducible parties, the employment of secret agents against non-seducible parties, the loyalty or disaffection (of the enemy’s subjects) towards their master and the weak points in the constituent elements (of the enemy’s realm) through spies appearing as ascetics or traders, or through their disciples or assistants or through agents in the pay of both appearing as physicians or heretics. In case conversation with them is not possible, he should find out secret information from the utterances of beggars, drunken persons, insane persons or persons in sleep, or, from pictures, writings or signs in holy places or temples of gods. When (such information is) found out, he should make use of instigation.’ The following facts emerge:

First, the Dūta was empowered to employ spies for eliciting secret information about the enemy’s strong and weak points. Second, he was expected to travel widely in the enemy’s territory to derive necessary information from the conversation of men from various walks of life as well as from paintings and secret writings.

A sharp controversy exists among Indologists on the question of Kauṭiliya’s view on diplomatic privileges and immunities. Scholars like B.A. Saletore\(^28\) are of opinion that Kauṭiliya did not acknowledge the inviolability of the person of ambassadors. But such an opinion cannot be upheld as Kauṭiliya\(^29\) explicitly states: ‘Kings indeed have envoys as their mouthpieces, you no less than others. Therefore, envoys speak out as they are told even when weapons are raised (against them). Of them even the lowest born are immune from killing; what to speak of Brahmins? These are the words of another. This is the duty of an envoy’ (Dūta-mukhā hi rājānaḥ tvaṁ ca—ānye ca/ tasmād—uḍyateṣṣv api śastreṣu yath=oktam vaktāro dūṭāḥ/ teṣām=anī=)
āvasāyin = opy = avadhyāṅ kim = aṅga punar = brāhmaṇāḥ / parasy = aitad vākyam / eṣa dūta-dharmāḥ iti). But there are in the Arthaśāstra some statements which imply that its author was aware of ambassadors being subjected to discourteous treatment and capital punishment at the hands of foreign kings.

It seems that Kauṭilya was not in favour of assigning any fixed salary to Dūtas. He says, ‘The average envoy should receive ten paṇas per yojana, a double wage beyond ten (yojanas) up to one hundred yojanas (daśa paṇiko yojane dūto madhyamaḥ, daś = ottare dviguna-vetana ā-yojana śatād = iti). S.C. Banerji argues that as Dūtas were not entitled to any fixed salary, there was no independent post of Dūtas such and that officers of different ranks were employed, as occasions arose, to perform the duties of envoys. This suggestion may not be correct. It is not unlikely that the real motive behind mileage being considered the sole determinant of their emolument was to make Dūtas feel sufficiently enthused to put in that extra bit of effort which would make all the difference between an indifferent official and a brilliant one. R.P. Kangle, on the other hand, thinks that the Dūta was entitled to his regular salary, and the rates given in the passage cited would cover his travelling expenses.

Furthermore, Dūtas were granted lands which were not transferable through sale or mortgage and they were also exempted from paying tolls while crossing rivers.

The meagre information hardly allows us to ascertain how far the Kauṭiliyan system of envoys was in actual operation in the kingdom of Candragupta Maurya in whose reign the Arthaśāstra was, in all probability, composed. But if the validity of the Greek accounts is indisputable, the illustrious Megasthenes, who was originally an officer in Arachosia, must have resided at the court of the Maurya emperor, in the capacity of an ambassador of Seleucus some time after the conclusion of a treaty between the Indian and Greek kings by c. B.C. 302. The actual object of this mission is unfortunately shrouded in obscurity. It might have been that Seleucus, on the strength of his diplomatic relations with Candragupta, secured help in the shape of mercenary troops in his encounter with his formidable antagonist Antigonus, but of this we do not possess any definite evidence. It is also likely that the furtherance of
commercial interests with India—a definite incentive for the Seleucid king—was the principal motive behind this Greek embassage. Equally imperfect is our knowledge about the duration of Megasthenes’ stay at the Maurya court, although V.A. Smith is inclined to hold that it was a prolonged one.

The diplomatic relations with the Maurya court were maintained by the next Seleucid king Antiochus Soter, evidently with the help of ambassadors. The Greek historian Athenaius informs us that once Bindusāra requested Antiochus to buy and send him sweet wine, dried figs and a sophist when the latter replied: ‘We shall send you the figs and the wine, but in Greece the laws forbid a sophist to be sold.’ It is evidently natural to presume, although the details are lacking, that there were occasional exchanges of embassies between the Seleucid and the Maurya kings.

It is known from Rock Edict XIII that Aśoka maintained Dūtas in frontier states like those of the Yonas, Kāmbojas, Gāndhāras, Nābhakas, Rṣṭikas, Bhojas, Andras and the Pārinda Pāradas, and in the courts of such foreign kings as Antiochus, Ptolemy, Antigonus, Megas and Alexander, as well as in the five independent territories of the Colas, Pāṇḍyas, Satiyaputras, Keralaputras and the Tāmraparṇyas. Aśoka’s Dūtas were primarily concerned with Dharma-vijaya, the conquest of the law of piety, interpreted by D.R. Bhandarkar to mean the spread of Buddhism, and the carrying out a programme of medical treatment in those territories. As pointed out by B.M. Barua, some of the Dharma-Mahāmātras were probably deputed as emissaries by Aśoka. Rhys Davids had challenged long ago Aśoka’s claim to have sent emissaries to distant countries, but the veracity of the inscriptive evidence remains irrefutable.

Foreign sources also attest the friendly intercourse and exchange of embassies between the Maurya and foreign kings during the reign of Aśoka. The Ceylonese chronicle Mahāvarṣa expressly states that Aśoka despatched an embassy, composed of his nephew Mahāariṭṭha, his Brahmin chaplain or councillor and a Vaiśya Treasurer, with coronation presents and happy wishes to his Ceylonese contemporary Tissa. It is further learnt from the narrative of Pliny that king Ptolemy Philadesphos of Egypt sent an envoy named Dionysius
to the court of Pātaliputra either during the reign of Aśoka or at the time of his father Bindusāra.⁴⁶

VI

Ambassadors in the Post-Maurya Period

It is in the post-Maurya period that one comes across the earliest epigraphic reference to ambassadors. The Besnagar Garuḍa Pillar inscription,⁴⁷ assignable to the last quarter of the second century B.C., speaks of a Greek ambassador (yonaḍīta) named Heliodorus who visited the court of king Bhāgabhadra at Vidiśā in his fourteenth regnal year as a representative of Mahārāja Aṁtalikita, identified with Antialcidas of the coins. Bhāgabhadra has been identified with Bhdraka,⁴⁸ the fifth Śuṅga king, as mentioned in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa. It may be presumed that the Bactrian Greeks cultivated friendly relations with their Śuṅga counterparts with the help of envoys. Although no reason is shown in the inscription for the visit of Heliodorus, it is not improbable that Antialcidas sought the friendship of the Indian king in his struggle for existence against the Euthydemian monarch Menander.⁴⁹

We may now turn to the evidence of the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata which reflects the condition of India during the period between the fourth century B.C. and the fourth century A.D. when the epics, in all probability, were finally composed. The Rāmāyana speaks of Dūtas as being sent out on important occasions to the enemy-kingdom for delivering their master’s message to others and reporting back their reaction or as carrying out a certain mission, as was the case with Hanumān who was sent by Sugrīva to find out Sītā who was leading a prisoner’s life in Rāvana’s kingdom. The Ayodhyākāṇḍa⁵₀ insists on the employment of such ambassadors as were citizens of the kingdom, capable of guessing the motive of others,⁵¹ possessed of sound judgement, eloquent and able to overcome their opponents in debate⁵² (Kaccij = jānapado vidvān = dakṣinah pratibhānāvān/ yath = oktavādī dūtas = te kṛto Bharata panditāḥ\|). In the Yuddhakāṇḍa⁵³ mention is made of the threefold category of envoys; those who accomplished an undesirable and arduous task with devotion and love were the best among men; those who performed their mission but were not guided by approba-
tion and affection were middling persons; and those who failed to discharge their duty satisfactorily were the lowest amongst men (Yo hi bhṛtyo niyuktaḥ san=bhartā karmanī duṣkareṇa kuryāt=taṇḍ=anurāgena tam=āhuḥ puruṣ=ottamamḥ\| Yo niyuktaḥ paraṁ kāryaṁ na kuryān=nṛpateḥ priyamḥ bhṛtyo yuktāḥ samarthaḥ=ca tam=āhuḥ-madhyamaṁ naram\| Niyukto nṛpateḥ kāryaṁ na kuryādyaḥ samāhitah\| bhṛtyo yuktāḥ samarthaḥ=ca tam=āhuḥ puruṣ=ādhamam\|). This division of envoys, as envisaged in the Rāmāyana, is in no way similar to the one referred to in the Arthaśāstra. There is, however, perfect agreement between the Rāmāyaṇa and Kautilya’s work in regard to the inviolability of the ambassador’s person. When Hanumān courted arrest and was ordered to be killed by Rāvaṇa, Vibhīṣaṇa saved the life of the envoy by reminding his brother of the Śāstric injunction with regard to the treatment of an ambassador. But in certain cases, specially in the event of any gross misbehaviour on their part, envoys were subjected to torture, as was done to Māruti by Rāvaṇa.55

The Mahābhārata seems to imply that there were no permanent ambassadors in the contemporary period; persons of eminence were temporarily called upon by the king to carry his message or to conduct negotiations, on his behalf with a foreign king. Dhaumya, Kṛṣṇa and Sañjaya were all urged to discharge their duty as ambassadors only on important occasions. As regards the qualifications of an envoy, the Śāṅtiparvan56 lays down that ‘he should be high-born, of a good family, eloquent, clever, sweet-speeched, faithful in delivering the message with which he is charged, and endowed with a good memory’ (Kulīnāḥ kula-sampanno vāgni dakṣaḥ priyāṁ vadaḥ yath=okta-vādi smṛtimān dūtāḥ syāt saptabhir=guṇaiḥ\|). The Udyogaparvan58 mentions that a Dūta would be courageous, swift in action, kind, amiable, free from diseases and endowed with a fine mode of speech; he would neither be stiff-necked, nor liable to be won over by others (Astadvham=akśīvam=adīrghasūtraṁ sānukrōśaniśālakśṣam=ahāryam=anvaiḥ arga jātiyam=udāra-vākyāṁ dūtaṁ vādantuṁ=aṣṭa-guṇ=opapannam\|). The Udyogaparvan59 elsewhere states that the Dūta could speak only what he had been ordered by his king to speak, and if he would transcend his jurisdiction, he was liable to be killed. But this injunction would apply only to ordinary ambassadors who were the mere-
conveyers of messages, as was the case with Ulûka, while there were others who enjoyed a greater degree of freedom, comparing favourably with the *Nirsṛṭarthas* of the *Arthasastra*. On the eve of the great battle at Kurukṣetra, Kṛṣṇa was sent to the Kaurava court as an ambassador of the Pāṇḍava brothers to do such things as he considered proper and fruitful. The person of the *Dūta* was sacred. ‘A king,’ as the *Śāntiparvan* says, ‘should never slay an envoy under any circumstances. That king who slays an envoy sinks into hell with all his ministers’ (Na tu hanyān=nrpo jātu dūtaṁ kasyaṅcid=āpadi/ dūtasya hantā nirayam=āviṣet sacivaiḥ sahā//). Hopkins is of opinion that the ambassadors mentioned in the epics were recruited from amongst the priestly and the military communities.

Manu, whose writings appear to reflect the condition of the country during the early centuries of the Christian era, is aware of the importance of the institution of ambassadors, for, as he rightly points out, it is they who bring about alliance or war (*dūte sandhi-viparyayau*). The government was accordingly very careful to select eminently suitable persons for these posts. These ambassadors were versed in all sciences, skilled in reading hints and expressions of the face and gestures, honest, intelligent, high-born, loyal, possessed of good memory, endowed with the knowledge of place and time, handsome, dauntless and eloquent (Dūtaṁ=c=aiva prakurvita sarva-sāstra-viśāradām/ iigit=ākāra cetṣajñam śucir= dakṣaṁ kul=odgatam/ Anuraktāḥ śucir=dakṣaḥ smṛtimān deśa-kāla-vid/ vapusmiṁ vitabhir=vāgni dūto rājñāḥ praṣasyate//). It was they who united the disunited (*dūta eva hi saṁdhatte*), and created divisions among the united (*bhinnate=eva ca saṁhatān*), no doubt, in consonance with the interest of their employers. They ascertained correctly the motives of other kings and kept their masters well-informed beforehand of their intentions, so that they might not be threatened with any trouble. Manu does not tell us whether these officers were permanently stationed in a foreign country or were deputed to foreign courts as occasion arose. Similarly, it is far from being known for certain whether there were at the time of Manu different gradations of ambassadors which his predecessor Kauṭilya bears witness to.

Bhāsa’s *Pratimānāṭakam* testifies to the envoys being generally received in a foreign court with honour and courtesy. King
Udayana is said to have respectfully received an envoy of king Mahāsena Pradyota.

The Tamil classics called Tolkāppiyam and the Kural preserve interesting information about ambassadors. Unfortunately, there is wide divergence of opinion among scholars on the chronology of these works but there is every likelihood that they reflect the condition of the Tamil countries in the early centuries of the Christian era. It appears from the testimony of the former text that Brāhmaṇas were generally appointed Dātas. But for fuller details about ambassadors, we may turn to the Kural where we have the following interesting account: ‘The characteristics of an ambassador (tūtu) are lovability, noble birth and other qualities which evoke the monarch’s respect. Love, wisdom, ability to talk with full knowledge are the three indispensable qualities of an ambassador. A skilful ambassador who wishes to gain his mission among other monarchs wielding the spear must be more learned than the learned. Only those who have wisdom, personality, and mature scholarship must be sent on a mission. A good ambassador is he who can talk cogently and sweetly, and who is not offensive even in saying (things) that are disagreeable. The envoy must be learned, fearless, persuasive and expedient. The qualifications of a true envoy are morality, loyalty to his monarch and courage. He who does not falter even when faced with personal danger is fit to deliver the king’s message. A true envoy delivers his message even at the risk of death.’

The above account of the Kural as regards the nature, qualifications and duties of ambassadors agrees so remarkably with that in the Arthaśāstra as to create the impression of its being probably modelled on Kautilya’s description. It is evident from the above account of the Kural that an ambassador often ran the risk of losing his life in discharging his duty. While distinguishing an ambassador from a spy, the Kural observes: ‘An ambassador may be a spy in some circumstances, but a spy cannot be an ambassador who must be of high birth, good manners and loving nature.’

As is evident from the contemporary indigenous sources, the institution of ambassadors was widely popular in the Indian kingdoms during the early centuries of the Christian era. A close study of foreign sources would lead to a similar conclusion. The Roman historians record the exchange of embassies
time and again between the Roman empire and the Indian kingdoms during this period. Pliny\(^\text{69}\) speaks of an embassy being sent to emperor Claudius from the kingdom of Taprobane which has been identified by some scholars with Ceylon, and located in South India by others. Again, the Roman emperor Trajan is said to have received an Indian embassy about A.D. 103\(^\text{70}\) and, if the opinion of Warmington\(^\text{71}\) is to be trusted, the embassy was sent out by the Kuśāṇa king Kaṇiṣṭha I to seek help against the Indians or the Chinese. The suggestion of B.A. Saleatore\(^\text{72}\) and V.A. Smith that the Indian embassy was sent by Kadphises II is beset with chronological difficulty. Emperor Hardian likewise received an embassy from an Indian king, although neither its date nor the identification of the Indian ruler by whom it was despatched is at present known. B.A. Saleatore\(^\text{73}\) identifies him with Kaṇiṣṭha I but this is not in agreement with the generally accepted chronology of the Kuśāṇa monarch. It would not be far from truth to surmise that these Indian embassies to the Roman court were like the modern missions of good will, offering presents to the heads of the governments concerned, and claiming some commercial concessions.

VII

*Ambassadors in the Gupta Period*

We now come to the age of the Guptas. It is interesting to note that the great poet Kālidāsa does not mention ambassadors at all in any of his works. This has given rise to the speculation that ‘Probably the work of these costly and comparatively useless and ornamental figureheads was more efficiently done by clever spies who were deputed to watch the activities of enemies in foreign territories.’\(^\text{74}\) No argument can at present be advanced to explain satisfactorily why Kālidāsa, who has provided us with such rich information about the government of his times, has passed over ambassadors in silence. The *Dūtas* are mentioned only once in the Yājñavalkya *Dharmaśāstra*\(^\text{75}\) where the king is urged to consult his ministers on the issue of despatching his ambassadors (*dūtān prerayen=mantri-samhyutaḥ*). The Chinese author Wang Huen-tse tells us that the king of Ceylon named Chi-mi-kia-po-mo, i.e., Śrī Meghavarṇa,
sent an embassy with presents to the Gupta emperor Samudragupta to secure his permission for the building at Bodh Gaya of a monastery for the use of Ceylonese pilgrims. The permission was at once granted.76

Notwithstanding the uncertainty about its chronology, the evidence of the Kāmandakīya Nitisāra is often utilised as reconstructing the history of the Gupta period. In the Dūta-pracāraprakaraṇam section of this work Dūtas appear as top-ranking officers of the state, being recruited from amongst those few ministers who were noted for their astuteness in the sixfold policy of alliance, war, etc.77 (Kṛtamatraḥ sumantrañjño mantri-nāṁ mantrisummātam/ yātavyāyaprahhīyāt dūtāṁ duty=ābhīmāninam/). Intelligence (pragalbhāḥ), strong memory (smṛtimāṇ), eloquence (vāgmi), skill in wielding arms (śāstre), learning (śāstre ca niśphitaḥ), and dexterity (abhyaśa-karmā) were some of the requisite qualifications that characterised a Dūta.78

Following in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor Kauṭilya, Kāmandaka has classified them into three divisions, namely, the Nisṛṣṭārthas, the Mitārthas and the Śāsanahārukas. In order to strengthen their master's position, they maintained cordial relations with frontier-guards and foresters79 (antapālamś=ca kurvīta mitrāny=āṭavikāṁs=tathā). They visited the capital and the court of the enemy at opportune moments and gathered all sort of information in regard to the strength and equipment of forts, official secrets, vulnerable points and financial as well as military resources80 (Sāravattāṁ ca rāṣṭrasya durgāṁ tad= guptim=eva ca/ chidrām ca śatror= jāniyāṁ kośa-mitra-balāni ca/). They were never reluctant to deliver their master's message to the enemy even when such an act might involve a threat to their life81 (udyateṣv=api śastreṣu yath=oktaṁ śāsanāṁ vadet). In order to guard themselves effectively against the unwilling revelation of secrets, they used to sleep alone and avoid women and drinks82 (Bhāvam=untargataṁ vyaktanāṁ supto māttas=ca bhāṣate/ tasmād=eκāḥ svapen-nītyam striyāṁ pāṇam ca varjayet/) They applauded the prowess of their master in the presence of enemies with a view to 'striking terror in his enemies whose aggressive designs might thus be curbed.83 They sowed seeds of dissension among friends and relations of the enemy (ripoh śatru-paricchedah suhṛd=bandhu-vibhedanāṁ), traced out the routes of escape for the army in an exigency84 (yuddh=āpasāra-bhā-
and kept their master alive to the machinations of a foreign envoy\(^{85}\) (svapakṣe ca vijāniyāt para-
dūta-viçeṣṭitam). In short, Kāmandaka’s account of ambassadors strikingly agrees with that furnished by Kauṭilya centuries earlier.

It is from about this period onwards that we find the word dūtaka being used time and again in both north and south Indian epigraphs. The term, which literally means ‘a messenger’, is a technical title of an officer who was employed in connection with formal grants. These Dūtakas, who carried not the actual charter itself but the king’s sanction and order to the local officials, whose duty it was to have the charter drawn up and delivered in favour of the recipients of land grants,\(^{86}\) were evidently different from Dūtas or envoys.

VIII

_Ambassadors in the Post-Gupta Period_

As we approach the seventh century A.D., we come across evidence which would testify to ambassadors being employed by Indian kings to cultivate diplomatic ties with foreign powers. Thus king Harṣavardhana of Thanesar is known to have sent a Brāhmaṇa envoy to Tai-Tsung, the Tang emperor of China, in A.D. 641,\(^{87}\) whereupon the latter reciprocated by sending a mission, carrying his reply to Harṣa’s dispatch. If V.A. Smith\(^{88}\) is right, the mission remained in India for a considerable period till A.D. 645. Again, in the early part of A.D. 648, the Chinese emperor sent an ambassador named Wang-heuen-tse to Harṣa, who had, however, passed away before the envoy arrived in India.\(^{89}\)

Besides Harṣavardhana, some other Indian kings of the seventh century A.D. are known to have maintained diplomatic relations with foreign powers. The Arab historian Ṭabari tells us that Khusrū II (Khusrū Parviz), king of Persia, received an embassy from an Indian king in the thirty-sixth year of his reign, i.e., A.D. 625-26. Ṭabari gives the name of the Indian ruler as Prmesha, i.e., Paramesā or Parameśvara which is known from epigraphic evidence to have been a second name of the illustrious Cālukya monarch Pulakeśin II (cf. _parameśvar-_ apanāmadheya). Some scholars surmise that a painting in one
of the Ajanta caves depicts the Persian embassy presenting Khusru’s reply to Pulakesin II but this is far from being certain. Later in A.D. 692 an embassy was sent to China from the Calukya court at Badami.

Among other Indian rulers to have maintained friendly relations with foreign courts, mention may be made of the Pallava king Narasimhavarman II who is known to have sent an embassy to the Chinese court. T.V. Mahalingam observes: ‘The Chinese Emperor received the Ambassador with all kindness and issued instructions to his officers that they must look after him with greatest care till his departure and act in such a way that his hopes might be fulfilled. When he left China, the Ambassador was given a robe of flowered silk, a golden girdle, a purse with an emblem in the form of a fish and the seven objects (?).’

Dutas were further employed by Indian kings to establish friendly relations among themselves. The Harṣacarita records that Bhāskaravarman, king of Kāmarūpa, dispatched an envoy to Harṣavardhana in order to conclude an alliance, presumably against Śaśāṅka, their common enemy and king of Bengal. Bāna’s narrative would indicate that ambassadors visited foreign courts with presents, were honourably treated and they delivered their commission in confidence.

In A.D. 731, as Chinese authorities would have us believe, a king of central India named I-cha-fo-n-mo dispatched the envoy Seng-po-ta to China. The central Indian ruler has been identified with Yaśovarman of Kanauj. The identification of the Indian ruler may not be incorrect but it is not possible in the present state of our knowledge to trace the circumstances in which the embassy was sent.

Inscriptions from Bengal of about the ninth and tenth centuries A.D. seem to prove the prevalence of the office of ambassadors in the Pāla kingdom, although the view, as held by B.B. Mishra, that they were permanent officers in the Pāla government, may be considered too exaggerated. These officers find mention in several epigraphs like the Pandukeswar copper plates of the ninth century A.D. and the Irda inscription of the Kamboja dynasty. As pointed out by B.C. Sen, the latter record probably indicates that the Dutas were helped in their work by a number of secret agents. The Nalanda copper
plate grant\textsuperscript{89} states that the Śailendra monarch Bālaputraideva, ruling in Java, Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula (Yavabhūmi-pālah) sent an ambassador to the Pāla king Devapāla. The object of this embassy was to secure a grant of five villages with which the Śailendra king proposed to endow a monastery he had built at Nalanda. A great patron of Buddhism, Devapāla granted the request of the Śailendra king.

An officer called Dūtapraśāṇika is mentioned in a large number of contemporary inscriptions, mostly from Bengal. The term literally means ‘one who sends out an envoy’ (dūtam peśayati iti). If the interpretation of the expression, as suggested above, be endorsed, it would follow that the Dūtapraśāṇika was a top-ranking officer who was authorised to supervise the work of envoys.

Similarly, a cloud of uncertainty hangs over the identification of a class of officers called Gamāgamika in epigraphic documents. Gamāgamika literally means ‘one who comes and goes’. The commentator Utpala\textsuperscript{100} has taken the term in the sense of an envoy. They might have been the officers ‘carrying out functions of an urgent character in connection with the diplomatic department of the state, requiring frequent visits to the neighbouring kingdoms or to the dominions of vassals’.

The Agni Purāṇa, which appears to have been composed at about the same period, repeats the age-old classification of ambassadors into three categories, viz., the Nisṛṭārthas, the Mitārthas and the Śūsanahārakas, each succeeding type being one fourth less in qualities than the preceding one.\textsuperscript{102} It is laid down that intelligence, retentive memory, ingenuity, proficiency in the art of war and scriptural knowledge and eloquence of speech were the essential qualifications that were expected of an ambassador.\textsuperscript{103} He had to be very careful in the execution of his duties. He would not enter the enemy’s house or seek an interview with him without proper verification. He had to wait patiently for the opportune moment to operate his action against the enemy. He was also required to know the loopholes, the financial resources and the strength of the army and allies of the enemies, as well as their personal likings and dislikings.\textsuperscript{104} The Agni Purāṇa further points out that ambassadors were open spies.\textsuperscript{105} This statement is a definite reflection on the secret nature of their duties which were evidently carried on
with the help of secret agents. But the Agni Purāṇa does not explain the status of these ambassadors or the caste barriers, if there were any, in the case of their appointment.

The Nitiśāstra-writers of about the same and the succeeding periods have made important observations on ambassadors who have been almost passed over in silence in the contemporary official documents. An outstanding author in this category is Somadeva who composed the Nitiśākyaṁṛta during the reign of the Rāṣṭrakūta king Kṛṣṇa III (c. A.D. 940-968). We are told in the Nitiśākyaṁṛta that an ambassador was expected to be loyal to the king, pure in character, wise, talented, able to read facial expressions and signs, honest, born of a high family, free from vices, endowed with the gift of the gab, compassionate and familiar with other people’s thoughts.106 Following in the footsteps of such early writers as Kauṭilya and Kāmandaka, Somadeva lays down: ‘An ambassador should not be put to death, even if he is a Caṇḍāla, not to speak of a Brāhmaṇa.’107 This statement would show that although ambassadors were mostly recruited from among the Brāhmaṇa community, Caṇḍāla envoys were not altogether unknown. Somadeva108 further testifies to the employment of lady messengers in dealing with women (strīnāṁ dautyāṁ strīya eva kuryuḥ). These ambassadors studied the ins and outs of the enemy’s kingdom and ascertained how far the officers in the enemy-state were devoted to the cause of their master.109 It was an offence on their part to accept any grant or tribute from the enemy.110

It is difficult at present to decide how far the recommendations of Somadeva and other Nitiśāstra-writers were accepted by the government in those days. There are, however, indications that the service of ambassadors was in great demand for maintaining friendly relations with foreign powers. The Cola king Rājarāja the great sent to China just before his death an embassy which reached there in A.D. 1015.111 Rājarāja cultivated cordial relations with Cūḷāmaṇi Varma, the Śrī Vijaya king of the Malay Peninsula, who commenced, apparently with the approval of his Indian counterpart, the construction of a Buddhist vihāra at Nāgapaṭṭīnām in Tanjavur district. Cūḷāmaṇi died soon after, leaving the vihāra to be completed by his son Śrī Māravijayottungiavarman who named it after his departed father. King Rājarāja made a grant of the village of
Ānaimangalam for the upkeep of this monastery in A.D. 1006. The construction of this monastery by these foreign kings in the dominions of an Indian ruler must have been preceded by the exchange of embassies between the two courts. Rājarāja’s son and successor Rājendra Cola sent an embassy to China in A.D. 1033. Kulottuṅga I is, likewise, known to have sent an embassy to China in A.D. 1077. The embassy consisted of seventy-two men who carried with them as tributes glass, camphor, brocades, rhinoceros’ horns, ivory, incense, rose water, borax, cloves, etc., each of the value of a dollar.

The Dūtas find mention in the Rājadharmaṅkaṇḍa section of the Kṛtyakalpataru, composed by Lakṣmīdhara who is known to have served the Gāhādavāla king Govindacandra as his minister of peace and war in the second quarter of the twelfth century A.D. In dealing with these officers Lakṣmīdhara does not make his own observation but merely cites a few well known quotations from Manu and the two epics. His citation from the Rāmāyaṇa shows that Dūtas could not be slain but, if caught in unfriendly acts, might be chastised or disfigured (dūtasya danḍo hi vadho na drśṭah).

The Śukraniti, which in its present form cannot probably be placed later than the fourteenth century A.D., includes the Dūta in the list of the ten principal officers of the king (Amātyo dūta ity= etā rājīnas prakṛtayo daśa). The reading of emotions and gestures, a good memory, a sound knowledge of time and space, oratory, courage and proficiency in the six-fold means of peace (sandhi), war (vigraha), march (yānam), neutrality (āsanam), dual policy (dvaidhībhāvanī) and seeking refuge (śamśraya) were some of the prerequisites of a Dūta (Ihīgīt=ākāra-cēṣṭajīṅha śṛṃṭimān deśa-kāla-vid/ śādgunya-maṇtra-vid=vāgni vītabhīr=dūta iṣyate/). It is evident from Śukra’s account that he was generally a Brāhmaṇa by caste, but sometimes a Kṣatriya or even a Vaiśya would have been tipped for the post.

The exchange of embassies between the South Indian and the Chinese courts gained momentum with the emergence of the Pāṇḍyas as the dominant power in the South in the thirteenth century A.D. T.V. Mahalingam briefly describes them as follows: ‘After the decline of the Cola power, the Pāṇḍya rulers maintained contact with the Chinese court.
Kulaśekhara Pāṇḍya, easily the greatest among the rulers of the second Pāṇḍya Empire, sent one Jamāl’ud-dīn to the Chinese Emperor in 1280 with valuable articles as tribute to him and sought his help against his enemies. The Chinese Emperor, who was himself anxious to induce the Pāṇḍya king to accept his overlordship, was very happy to receive the embassy. He sent his envoy Yang Ting-pi to Ma’bar. He stayed in South India for some time and returned to China in 1282. The king of Ma’bar sent two missions to China in 1283 and 1284 with presents which included pearls, rare jewels and light silks. In 1285 the Emperor sent a mission to Ma’bar which was followed by a return embassy to the Chinese court from the states in South India, namely, Ma’bar, Mangalore, Cranganore, Mani-fattan (a port on the Coromandel coast), Nellore, etc. Thereafter missions from Ma’bar to China became almost a regular annual feature. The Emperor was anxious to have products from South India as also South Indians learned in Sciences, interpreters of different languages, jugglers, etc. Missions were sent from South India in 1288, 1289 and 1290, while return missions were received from China in 1290, 1291, 1296 and 1297. Even in 1314 when there was political confusion in Ma’bar, a mission was sent to China.

A fourteenth-century writer on polity named Cāṇḍeśvara points out in the Rājanītiratnākara that the Dūta was required to be well-versed in all Śāstras, capable of understanding delicate situations, facial expressions and signs, pure in character, painstaking, born of a noble lineage, loyal to the king, possessed of a retentive memory, able to understand the proper time and place of delivering the king’s message, fearless, handsome and endowed with excellent expression. He would further need to have the capacity to unite the kings who had been separated and create divisions among the allied. He collected information about the activity of others, including the royal servants and other kings. A staunch advocate of the inviolability of the person of the Dūta, Cāṇḍeśvara lays down that even a Mleccha Dūta should not be killed, because he was merely a spokesman of his royal master. (Dūto mleccha = opy = avadhyah syād = rājā dūta-mukho yataḥ | udyateṣv = api śastreṣu dūto vadati n = ānyathāḥ!)

The Dūtas are mentioned in several other texts. It would
appear from the *Vasanta-vilāsa* that the *Dūtas* of the opposite camp were treated with honour. Vastupāla did not humiliate the envoy of Śāṅkha who spoke bitterly. The immunity of ambassadors from capital punishment is emphasised by the writer of the *Nītīprakāśa* who observes: 'Even if an ambassador is guilty of a grievous wrong, he cannot be put to death.' The Jaina work *Prabandhacintāmaṇi*, composed by Merutuṅga at the beginning of the fifteenth century A.D., highlights the functions of diplomatic agents who were clever in speech and skilled in penetrating others' minds. One such officer was Dāmara who was sent by the Caulukya king Bhīma I to the court of king Bhoja Paramāra with a view to dissuading him from launching an attack against Gujarāt. The *Prabandhacintāmaṇi* speaks of the three classes of ambassadors being sent in order, according as the foreign court was considered to be of low, medium or high rank. Sometimes the *Sāndhivigrahikas* were called upon to act as ambassadors.

IX

Epilogue

The above discussion would then indubitably establish that ambassadors constituted one of the main organs of the government of the early Indian kingdoms, and the post carried with it enormous power as well as a high degree of prestige. These officers were generally recruited from amongst those persons who were possessed of uncommon intelligence and diplomatic wisdom. These ambassadors were admittedly the heroes of diplomatic battles.

References and Notes

2. III, 3, 2; VI, 8, 4; VII, 3, 3; X, 14, 12.
4. VIII, 8, 10, etc.
5. II, I, etc.
7. Ibid, p. 132; *JDL*, XX, p. 54.
10. *Adhyāya X.*
12. 9, 8.
14. *Arthaśāstra,* 1, 16.
15. *KA,* p. 41.
16. *Arthaśāstra,* 1, 16, 2.
17. Ibid., 1, 16, 3.
18. Ibid., 1, 16, 4.
19. Ibid., 1, 16, 5.
20. R.P. Kangle (*KA,* p. 41) interprets the word *parivāpa* in the sense of a retinue of servants.
22. Ibid., 1, 16, 7-9.
23. Ibid., 1, 16, 10.
24. Ibid., 1, 16, 33-35.
25. *KA,* pp. 31-32.
26. R.G Basak takes *pratāpa* to mean prowess (*Kauṭiliya Arthaśāstra,* Part I, Calcutta, 1950, p. 36), whereas Meyer understands by it 'majesty, dignity', i.e., the maintenance of his master's prestige at the foreign court (R.P. Kangle, *op. cit.*, p. 43).
27. *KA,* p. 42; *Arthaśāstra,* 1, 16, 24-26.
28. *IDRW.*
29. *KA,* p. 42.
30. *Arthaśāstra,* 1, 16, 13-17.
31. Ibid., 1, 16, 10.
34. *AAIFSS,* p. 68.
37. Ibid., p. 143.
38. *IDRW,* p. 133.
39. Ibid., p. 132.
40. *EHI,* p. 120.
42. *CHI,* 11.
43. *AI,* p. 185.
44. Ibid., pp. 327ff.
47. *SI,* pp. 88ff.
48. Ibid., p. 88.
50. *Ayodhyakāṇḍa,* 100, 36.
51. The word *vidvān* is interpreted as *parābhirjyātāḥ.*
52. The expression *paṇḍitaḥ* is taken by the commentator as *paricēttaḥ.*

Paricēttaḥ hi paṇḍityam ity=uktāḥ.
53. **Yuddhakanda, I, 7-9.**

54. **Dūtāḥ na vadhyāḥ.**

55. Attention may be drawn to the following passage in the *Rāmāyaṇa*:
   ‘One does not assault an ambassador, O Kakutśha, therefore, send away these monkeys. He who withholds the message of his master and gives voice to that which he has not been authorized to utter, merits death’ (H P. Shastri, *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki*, London, 1959, *Yuddha Kāṇḍa*, p. 47).

56. 85, 28.


58. *Udyogaparvan*, 37, 27.

59. Ibid., 72, 7.


63. VII, 65.

64. VII, 63-64.

65. VII, 66.

66. VIII, 67-68.


68. *TSEL*, p. 599.


71. *Commerce between the Roman Empire and India*, Cambridge, 1928, p. 95.


75. I, 328. Jolly has assigned this work to the fourth century A.D., while P.V. Kane has fixed its date as A.D. 100-A.D. 300.

76. *JA*, 1900, pp. 316ff.

77. 13, 1.

78. 13, 2.

79. 13, 5.

80. 13 7.

81. 13, 9.

82. 13, 16.

83. 13, 15.

84. 13, 24.

85. 13, 25.

86. *CII*, III, p. 100.


88. Ibid., p. 352.

89. *HK*, p. 188.

90. *CA*, p. 240.


92. Ibid., p. 306.
98. *SHAIB*, p. 539.
100. Utpala on *Bṛhatānīhitā* 85, 34.
101. *PIA*, p. 120.
102. *Adhyāya* 241, 8.
103. *Adhyāya* 241, 7.
105. *Adhyāya* 241, 11.
107. Ibid., 13, 19.
108. 13, 22.
109. 13, 17.
110. 13, 15.
111. *ŚIP*, p. 306.
112. Ibid., p. 308.
113. Ibid., p. 307.
114. Ibid., p. 307.
116. II, 141-43.
117. While explaining the reason why a ‘sound knowledge of space and time was expected of a Dūta, B.K. Sarkar (*The Śukranitī*, Allahabad, 1914, p. 71) observes: ‘For unless he is well-grounded in the actual conditions of time and place and the special characteristics of the relations between persons he has to deal with, he is likely to misunderstand or misrepresent facts and thus bungle the state’s affairs.’
118. II, 859-61.
1-0. *ŚIP*, p. 307.
123. VII, 64.
125. Ibid., p. 44.
126. Ibid., p. 11.
The Judge

I

Introduction

Early Indian literature portrays the king as the fountainhead of justice and highest judge in civil and criminal matters. But it was well-nigh impossible for him to hear and decide single-handed all the cases in his kingdom.¹ There was accordingly a special body of officers devoted to the administration of justice. An attempt has been made in the following pages to present, on the basis of the sources at our disposal, a critical account of these officers who may be called judges.

II

The Judge in Vedic Literature

The Vedas provide us with meagre information about these officers. The Yajurveda² speaks of an officer called Grāmyavādin who appears to have been a village judge. His Sabhā, court, is mentioned in the Maitrāyani Samhitā.³ In referring to the administration of justice, as prevalent in the Vedic period, Macdonell and Keith⁴ observe, ‘There is no trace of organised criminal justice vested either in the king or in the people... there was some sort of judicial procedure in vogue in the later Vedic period.’

III

The Judge in Buddhist Literature

The judicial officers, however, find prominent mention in Jātaka literature. In the Jātakas, mention is made of an officer
called *Vinicchayāmacca* who, to judge from the etymology of the word as well as from the nature of his work, as envisaged in the *Jātakas*, may be identified, with a great deal of exactitude, with a judge. That he was an officer of the ministerial rank is evident from the expression *amaccā* which is often applied to him. The *Rathalatthi Jātaka* narrates a story about how king Brahmadatta originally pronounced a wrongful decision but was subsequently persuaded by the *Vinicchayāmacca* to reverse his erroneous judgement. But this solitary instance would hardly justify us in deducing the conclusion that the *Vinicchayāmacca* was authorised to annul the king's judgement. It may reasonably be suggested that he 'took part in the administration of justice, advised the king and in some cases had some influence upon his judgement'.

The evidence of the *Kurudhanma Jātaka* would show that the *Vinicchayāmaccas* not only discharged judicial functions, they were also empowered to advise the people on matters of morality. Once a young man gave away 1,000 gold coins to a prostitute and on assuring her of paying a visit to her house in the near future, he parted from her. The latter who promised that she would not receive the least farthing from any other persons, waited in vain for three years for him and was reduced to extreme poverty. She went to the court of the *Vinicchayāmacca* to seek his advice, whereupon she was permitted to return to her original profession.

Though not in the *Jātakas* proper, another class of judges finds mention in the *Mahāvagga*, a commentary on the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* and the *Cullavagga*. They are the *Vohārikamahāmuttas*. The *Mahāvagga* states that Bimbisāra approached these officers to know what punishment he deserved who initiated a hired soldier into a religious order. The *Vohārikas* were evidently judicial officers of ministerial rank.

What was the number of judges in a kingdom? That there were more than one justice can be surmised from the expression *vinicchhayāmahāmattā*, occurring in some of the *Jātakas*. One *Jātaka* gives the number as five (*Tassa paṇa rañño pañca*... *vinicchaye niyuttā*). It is reasonable to presume that the number of judges varied according to the dimension and need of a state.

Some remarkable light on the daily routine of a judge is.
thrown by one of the Jātakas which represents a king as advising a judge in the following words: 'It will be to the advantage of the people if you decide cases: henceforth you are to sit in judgement... you need not judge the whole day, but... go at early dawn to the place of judgement and decide four cases; then return... and partaking of food, decide four more cases.'

If this account is relied upon, it would follow that a judge was required to decide only eight cases per day and that the court sat in the morning and in the afternoon with a break for lunch at noon. R.N. Mehta observes that the court usually sat for the whole day from morning to sunset after which all business was to stop. In referring to the judicial system, as depicted in the Buddhist texts, R.N. Mehta observes, 'In the instances of cases that we noticed before, we nowhere see anything like legal proceedings, lawyers defending their clients and raising points against the opposite party. Nevertheless it does not seem proper to hold that there were absolutely no lawyers who could place and defend the cases of their clients before the court, and earn their livelihood from that profession. For there are some references to ‘Vohāra’ which, if consistent and correct in their application, would go to prove that some sort of legal practice was followed... Though we have no details of hearing suits, the instances... at least show that the complainant stated his case, and the accused made his statement in return, probably on oath. The court was attended by others than the parties to a suit, and applause was not suppressed, but on the contrary, considered with respect and due weight by the king. Witnesses (Sakhi) may be produced, though there is no clear indication for this.'

IV

The Judge in Dharmasūtra Literature

A judge is called Prāḍvivāka in the Dharmasūtra of Gautama. The term itself speaks of the duty of a judge. It consists of two parts, viz., prāḍ and vivāka. Prāḍ is derived from the root pracch and means 'one who puts questions (prcchati) to the parties and the witnesses in a dispute'. Vivāka, which originates from the verb vac, denotes 'one who speaks out or
analyses the truth'. We then see that the functions of the judge were twofold: he examined suitors and ascertained the truth.

Gautama says that a judge should not take up a case unless it is brought to his notice by the litigant. This, however, does not mean that the state did not consider itself injured by individual acts of crimes. It cannot escape notice that if the state takes the formal prosecution in its own hand, it would have to depend largely on the injured party for the successful conduct of the case. 'If in such a case there is a collusion between the offender and the injured, the state is generally helpless and there is every possibility that the former would evade punishment.'

As to the period of time that a judge required to wind up the trial, Gautama observes, 'If (the defendant) is unable to answer (the plaint) at once, (the judge) may wait for a year. But (in an action) concerning kine, draught-oxen, women, or procreation (of offspring), the defendant (shall answer) immediately, likewise in a case that will suffer by delay.' Gautama evidently does not fix the same time-limit for rounding off the trial of all cases. Sometimes the trial was to be concluded without delay and occasions were not rare when it continued for several months. As regards the sources of law, Gautama points out that the administration of justice should be regulated by the Vedas, Dharmaśāstras, Aṅgas, Upavedas and Purāṇas. The customs of countries, castes and families should also be regarded as authoritative (Tasya ca vyavahāro Veda Dharmaśāstrān = Aṅgān = Upavedāh Purāṇam / desa-jāti-kula-dharmaś = c = āmnair = avirud-dhāh pramāṇam ||). The disputes among the cultivators, merchants and foresters should be settled in accordance with the age-old customs of such people (karṣaka-vanīka-paśu-pāla-kusīdakā- ravah sve sve varge pramāṇam). Gautama lays down that in order to arrive at a decision a judge may seek the advice of those who are learned in the three Vedas.

As regards the qualifications of a judge, Āpastamba points out that he should be learned, aged, clever in reasoning, careful in fulfilling the duties of castes and orders and born of a good family. While trying a case he should ascertain the truth by inference, ordeals, cross-examinations, etc. This brief account of Āpastamba about judges may be regarded as supplementary to the information furnished to us by Gautama in two respects. First, Āpastamba lays down the qualifications of a judge and
furthermore he recommends ordeals as one of the approved means of ascertaining the truth.

Baudhāyana says that a judge should always guard himself against pronouncing any unjust decision, otherwise he will incur sin. He says, ‘Of injustice (in decisions) one quarter falls on the party in the cause, one quarter on his witnesses, one quarter on all the judges, and one quarter on the king. But where he who deserves condemnation is condemned, the king is guiltless and the judges free from blame; the guilt falls on the offender (alone).’

V

The Judge in the Kauṭiliya Arthaśāstra

When we come to the Maurya period, we have abundant material on the judge. Kauṭiliya mentions two kinds of judges, called Dharmasthas and Pradeśṭras. These judges are described as Amātyas (Dharmasthās = trayas = tray = omātyā) and were evidently top-ranking officers. The meaning of the expression tray = omātyāḥ in the passage Dharmasthās = trayas = tray = omātyāḥ, however, is not clear. Some scholars have taken it to mean ‘three ministers in addition to three judges’. But the expression should better be taken to mean that judges should possess the qualifications or status of an Amātya. A passage in Book II implies that judges were generally recruited from the Brāhmaṇas. The persons who proved loyal by the test of piety were appointed to such posts (Tatra dharm = opadhā-suddhān Dharmasthiya-kaṇṭakaśodhanaṃ sthāpayet). Kauṭiliya explains the test of piety in the following words: ‘The king should (seemingly) discard the chaplain on the ground that he showed resentment when appointed to officiate at the sacrifice of a person not entitled to the privilege of a sacrifice or to teach (such a person). He should (then) get each minister individually instigated, through secret agents, under oath (in this manner): ‘The king is impious: well let us set up another pious (king), either a claimant from his own family or a prince in disfavour or a member of the (royal) family or a person who is the one support of the kingdom or a neighbouring prince or a forest chieftain or a person suddenly risen to power; this is approved by all; what about you?’ If he repulses (the
suggestion), he is loyal. This is the test of piety. The above passage from the *Arthashastra* would clearly indicate that judges were required to tender their allegiance to the king even under adverse circumstances.

That the *Dharmastha* judges presided over the courts which were established in the frontier towns and posts (*jana-pada-sandhi*) and the chief cities of the *Sangrahana* (units of ten villages), *Dronamukha* (units of four hundred villages) and *Sthanaya* (units of eight hundred villages) is evident from the passage. *Dharmastha = trayas = tray = omatiya janapada-sandhi-sangrahana-dronamukha-sthaneya vyavaharik = arthana kur-yuh.* The repeated use of the word *trayah* in the passage would show that three *Dharmasthas* were to sit in each court. The passage, however, leaves us in the dark on many important issues. For example, we are not told anything as to whether there were different grades among judges in small and large towns, what steps were taken in the case of disagreement among judges or whether there were any provisions for making appeals from one court to another. The *Dharmastha* judges tried cases relating to the law of marriage, violation of women’s property, supersession of a wife as a result of a second marriage, marital duty, maintenance, cruelty, disaffection, misconduct, leaving home, going away with a man, short or prolonged absence from the husband’s home, order of inheritance, disputes regarding immovable property, non-observance of conventions, non-payment of debts, deposits, rules and regulations about slaves and labourers, non-conveyance of gifts, sale without ownership, forcible seizure, verbal injury, physical injury, gambling, betting and miscellaneous matters.

Book IV of the *Arthashastra*, which furnishes us with invaluable information regarding the *Pradeśīs*, begins with the statement, ‘Three *Pradeśīs*, all three (of the rank of) ministers, shall carry out the supervision of criminals.’ The *Dharmasthas* and the *Pradeśīs* thus appear to have belonged to the same rank. But what were the functions of the *Pradeśīs*? The artisan’s failure to keep his contract with his employer and *vice versa*, corruption on the part of the heads of departments and their subordinates, violation of maidens, use of fraud in the standard of weights and measures, treasonable conspiracy against the king, search for thieves, the death of a
patient in consequence of incompetence of a medical practitioner—all these and similar other items came under the purview of these judges. In a word, the Pradeśīrs were employed by the king to safeguard society against the anti-social activities of officers, private individuals and corporate bodies. They were authorised to employ spies to detect crimes and to torture the offenders to extort confessions.

How the functions of the Dharmasthas differed from those of the Pradeśīrs cannot be definitely known. Kane suggests that while the former tried cases brought before them by the parties themselves, the latter took up only such cases as were brought to their notice by the executive. But there is hardly any evidence in the Arthaśāstra which would warrant this contention. It has been held, on the other hand, that these two kinds of judges presided over the civil and criminal courts, respectively. But it may be pointed out that even a cursory glance at the heads of laws coming under the purview of these judges would show that the Dharmasthas also dealt with some of the criminal cases, while the Pradeśīrs disposed of civil suits also. It seems that in the days of Ka०tilya law-suits were haphazardly divided into two categories and the Dharmasthas were charged with the disposal of one, the Pradeśīrs with the other. The Pradeśīrs were moreover entrusted with some revenue functions. In Book II, Ka०tilya states, ‘In the headquarters of the revenue and divisional officers, the Pradeśīrs should carry out their duties and secure the recovery of dues.’ The Dharmasthas, however, had no such duty to perform. It is evident from the Arthaśāstra that the Pradeśīrs were placed under the supervision of the Samāhārīr but the Dharmasthas do not appear to have been subordinate to any such officer.

That judges were not themselves above punishment is evident from the following observations of Ka०tilya, ‘If the judge threatens, upbraids, drives away or browbeats a litigant, he shall impose the lowest fine for violence on him, double that in case of verbal injury. If he does not question one who ought to be questioned, questions one who ought not to be questioned, or after questioning dismisses (the statement), or instructs, reminds or prompts him, he shall impose the middle fine for violence on him. If he does not ask for evidence which ought to be submitted, asks for evidence that ought not to be submitted, proceeds
with the case without evidence, dismisses it under a pretext, carries away one tired with delays, throws out of context a statement which is in proper order, gives to witnesses help in their statements (or) takes up once again a case which is completed and in which judgement is pronounced, he shall impose the highest fine for violence on him. In case the offence is repeated, double (the fine) and removal from office (shall be the punishment)."

“If the judge or the magistrate imposes a money fine on one not deserving to be fined,” says Kauṭilya, “he shall impose on him double the fine imposed, or eight times the shortfall or excess (over the prescribed fine). If he imposes corporal punishment (wrongly), he shall himself suffer corporal punishment or pay double the (normal) redemption amount. Or, he shall pay eight times the just claim which he disallows or unjust claim which he allows.”

VI

The Judge in Aśokan Edicts

The Dharmasthas and the Pradeśīrs of Kauṭilya do not find mention in the edicts of Aśoka. On the other hand, the functions of the Rājūkas, as detailed in the edicts, would leave the impression that the executive officers carried on the administration of justice, in addition to their other works. The First Separate Kaliṅga Rock Edict, however, mentions the Nagalaviyohālakas. The root vyavahṛ in Sanskrit means ‘to carry on commerce, to trade, to deal in, and to conduct any judicial procedure, to judge’. Accordingly, we may be justified in identifying them with the city administrators of justice and, as suggested by Luders and H.C. Raychaudhuri, comparing them with the Paura-Vyavahārikas of the Arthaśāstra who were paid 12,000 pāpas. Shamsastry takes Paura and Vyavahārika as two separate designations and treats the first to signify ‘the officer in charge of the town’ and the second to mean ‘the superintendent of law and commerce’. But this is hardly in agreement with the text where Paura-Vyavahārika is employed in the singular and not in the dual form. As B.M. Barua observes, ‘The Aśokan use of the designation Nāgaraka as a variant of Nagara-Vyavahārika sets at rest all doubts as to Paura-Vyavahārika being the same designation as Nāgaraka. To be more
precise, the *Vyavahārika* is a general designation, while the designation of *Paura-vyavahārika* is applicable only to a *Nāgaraka* in charge of the capital city.' The First Separate Rock Edict tells us that the *Nāgarakas* were sometimes found guilty of taking recourse to high-handed and rash actions, sudden arrest, coercion and imprisonment. But the Maurya emperor took steps to stop them and threatened the officers with sending forth a *Mahāmātra* every five years to see that all his injunctions for the proper administration of justice were carried out. In the edicts of Aśoka, we then come across, in no uncertain manner, witness to the miscarriage of justice, perpetrated by the judiciary.

VII

*The Judge in the Rāmāyaṇa*

In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the judges are called *Dharmapālakas* who were chosen for their knowledge of law (*Vyavahāra-jñāna*) and politics. They were expected to be impartial and not to take bribes. The *Rāmāyaṇa* further brings to light that Rāma’s court of justice, which was presided over by Rāma himself, was composed of Vasiṣṭha, Brāhmaṇa sages, ministers, Kṣatriya counsellors, *Nītipā-śabhyaḥ*, leading merchants and royal princes. P.C. Dharma*

1. The ease with which justice could be had without any expenditure.
2. The absence of professional lawyers and stamp fees and a complicated machinery.
3. The personal administration of justice by the king.
4. The accessibility of the king.
5. Speedy trial and impartial judgement.
6. The small amount of litigation, as the people were terribly afraid of a stern impartial king administering speedy justice.
7. The care with which the king selected his colleagues for their profound learning in various branches of law.*
VIII

The Judge in Dharmaśāstra Literature

For our knowledge about judges during the post-Maurya and pre-Gupta periods, we may turn to the accounts of Manu. Manu\(^{36}\) states that learned Brāhmaṇas should be appointed to investigate suits. Manu\(^{37}\) elsewhere observes, 'Even an ordinary Brāhmaṇa may at the king's pleasure interpret the law to him, but never a Śūdra.' This passage forbids the employment of a Śūdra as a judge but approves the appointment of the Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas as judges in case of necessity. A judge is enjoined to discharge his duty properly. 'One quarter of (the guilt) of an unjust (decision),' as Manu\(^{38}\) says, 'falls on him who committed (the crime), one quarter on the (false) witness, one quarter on all the judges, one quarter on the king.' If a judge acts improperly in the discharge of his duty, then the king should reverse his decision and fine him, according to the nature of the case, 1000 pānas being the lowest punishment,\(^{39}\) and in some cases their property is liable to be confiscated. How great is the insistence on the impartial administration of justice is evidenced by the following statements of Manu: 'Where justice, wounded by injustice, approaches and the judges do not extract the dart, there (they also) are wounded (by that dart of injustice). Where justice is destroyed by injustice, or truth by falsehood, while the judges look on, there they shall also be destroyed. Justice, being violated, destroys; justice, being preserved, preserves; therefore, justice must not be violated, lest violated justice should destroy us.'\(^{40}\)

Manu classifies the cases under the following eighteen titles\(^{41}\) of law: (i) non-payment of debts, (ii) deposit and pledge, (iii) sale without ownership, (iv) concerns among partners, (v) resumption of gifts, (vi) non-payment of wages, (vii) non-performance of agreements, (viii) rescission of sale and purchase, (ix) disputes between the owner of cattle and his servants, (x) disputes regarding boundaries, (xi) assault, (xii) defamation, (xiii) theft, (xiv) robbery and violence, (xv) adultery, (xvi) duties of man and wife, (xvii) partition of inheritance, and (xviii) gambling and betting. Manu\(^{42}\) holds that the Vedas, the Smṛtis, the customs of holy men and one's own inclination\(^{43}\) are the four sources of law (Ved=okhilo dharma-mālam Smṛti-śile ca
He further points out that in the case of any conflict, the 
Śruti prevails over the Smṛti and that these are of superior 
validity as compared with the last two. He further maintains 
that the judge will try a suit with the help of three assessors, 
who are to be appointed by the king, and should be endowed 
with knowledge, both religious and secular, law and truthfulness.

We may now pause here for a while to see what the other 
jurists, though some of them belonged to a much later date, 
have said about the judges and their courts. According to 
Yājñavalkya a judge, called Prādvivāka, should preferably be 
a learned Brāhmaṇa (Apaśyatā kāryā=āvasād vyavahārān nṛpeṇa 
tu| Sabhyaiḥ saha niyoktavyo Brāhmaṇaḥ sarva-dharmavid\|). 
While trying a case, he should act in co-operation with the 
jurors who are to be not only impartial, but also well-versed in 
the law (Śruti=adhyayana-sampannā dharmajñāh satyavādinaḥ/ 
Rājā sahāsadaḥ kāryā ripau mitre ca ye samāḥ\|). Emphasising 
the rightful discharge of his duties, Yājñavalkya says, 'If 
the members of the judicial assembly pronounce any decision 
which is opposed to the Smṛtis and usage through affection, 
greed or fear, each of them will be fined twice the amount to be 
paid by the defeated party' (Rāgāl=lobhād=bhayād=api 
Smṛty=apet=aḍi-kāriṇāḥ/ Sabhyāḥ pṛthak pṛthak daṇḍyā vivādād 
dvigunām damām\|).

In referring to the sources of law, Yājñavalkya makes mention 
of the Smṛtis, the principles of equity as determined by popular 
usage, the Dharmaśāstras and the Arthaśāstras. The Smṛtis are 
given the foremost place. But if there is any conflict between 
the Smṛtis, the principles of equity are to prevail and in the 
case of any disparity between the Dharmaśāstras and the 
Arthaśāstras, the evidence of the former is to be upheld (Smṛtyor=virodhe nyāyas=tu balavān vyavahārataḥ/ Arthaśāstrat 
=tu balavād=Dharmaśāstram=iti sthitī\|). Yājñavalkya describes 
the four stages of Vyavahāra but does not refer to them by 
name (catuspaḍ-Vyavahāra=oyam). The plaint along with 
particulars about the year, the month, the day, the name, etc., 
of the parties has to be written first in the presence of the 
defendant. The reply of the defendant is to be put down in 
writing in the plaintiff's presence. The evidence offered by the