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## Social and Political Philosophy Indian Kamandaka's Nitisara

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[Social and Political Philosophy: Indian Kamandaka's Nitisara \(Philosophy\)](#)

### **Kamandaka's Nitisara**

- Niti-sara or Niti-satra means the elements of polity, it is a work of literature by Kamandaka (also written as Kamandaki) .
- It deals with general maxims of Niti.
- It is a work which comprises of didactic maxims and it is influenced by Kautilya's Arthashastra.
- The major premise of the book highlights the importance of the king and the qualities a king must possess in-order to run the state in prosperity.
- It accepts some of Arthasastras theories for example, the seven elements of the state, etc.
- There are some differences between the two also, for instance, where Artha-sastra focuses on the deliverance of Kingly duties, Niti-sara focuses on the valour and the military qualities a ruler must possess.

### **Varna System**

- Varnashrama is a fundamental concept of Hinduism.
- Etymologically speaking Varna means colour or the social standings of the people of the society.
- There are four Varnas, namely, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras.
- Brahmins is the top most level of the varnashrama system. The people belonging to this Varna perform the functions of learning and teaching.
- Kshatriyas are regarded as the marital class. They perform the actives of the military defence and also perform the administrative activities or functions of the people and the society.

- Vaishyas belong to the third Varna; they are regarded as the productive class of the society. Their functions include trading and business. They also deal with the work of cultivation of land, growing of crops, breeding of cattle, etc.
- Lastly, Shudras, they are considered to belong to the lower most varna. They are believed to serve the other classes. They are the artisan class, they do the occupations of agriculture and mining.

## Ashram-Dharma

- The concept of Ashram dharma is a fundamental concept of Hinduism. According to Hinduism, ashram means the stages of life, in which twice born Hindu males are expected to perform activities in accordance with their dharma.
- Under the concept of Ashram-dharma, life is divided into four stages or ashrams, namely, Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprashtha and Sanyasa.

## Brahmacharya

- Brahmacharya is the first stage of life, the time span given to this ashram is starting from 0 to 25 years. It is regarded to be the stage of academic learning. Basically, it is the student life. It deals with dharma alone.

## Grihastha

- Grihastha is the second stage of life, the time span given to this ashram is starting from 25 to 50 years. This is known to be the household life; it is where people are involved in running a family and earning a livelihood for the welfare of the family. It deals with artha, Kama and dharma.

## Vanaprashtha

- Vanaprashtha is the third stage of life, the time span given to this ashram is starting from 50 to 75 years. This stage primarily focuses on one's dharma and moksha. It is also known as the retirement stage. The main aim of this stage is to learn the art of detachment and practice it in one's life.

## Sanyasa

- Sanyasa is the fourth and the final stage of one's life. The time span given to this ashram is from 75 to 100 years. This stage primarily focuses on renouncing the world all together and people in this stage detach themselves from their family relations too. Moksha is the only aim of people belonging to this stage.
- Kamandaka in Niti-sara accepts the Varna system and the Ashram-dharma concept of Traditional Indian philosophy. In other words, he accepts these two systems of social order.
- Apart from these two social orders, according to him, there are some common duties for men of all castes. They are;

- Non-violence
- Purification (both, internal and external)
- Truthfulness
- Excellence of speech
- Mercy and forgiveness

## **Prakriti-Sampat**

- According to Kamandaka, *prakriti-sampat* means the seven elements of the state.
- The theory is also known as *saptangam rajyam*, seven limbs of the state.
- It is important to note that all these elements are inter-dependent on each other; none of the elements are of independent nature.
- Therefore, they are all equally important. The seven elements are;
  - Swamin — the King
  - Amatya — the Minister
  - Janapada — the Land, and the People
  - Durga — the Fortress
  - Kosha — the Treasury
  - Danda or Bala — the Army (for protection against the enemy or alien state)
  - Surhit or mitra — the Allies.

## **The Concept of Upayas**

- Upayas or approaches are the ways according to Kamandaka from which an object can be realised. He accepts seven such Upayas. They are;
  - Sama or conciliation
  - Dana or gifts
  - Bheda or rupture
  - Danda or force
  - Maya or the display of deceitful tactics (magic)
  - Upeksha or diplomatic intelligence
  - Indrajala or conjuring tricks (magic)
- Kautilya accepts only four such approaches via which an object can be realised. His four upayas are;

- Sama or conciliation
- Dana or gifts
- Bheda or rupture
- Danda or force

## Questions

1. Niti-sara is the work of

- A. Kautilya
- B. Kamandaka
- C. Vishnu Gupta
- D. None of these

Answer: B

2. Kamandaka lists \_\_\_\_\_ virtues/duties which are to be followed by people of all castes

- A. Three
- B. Four
- C. Five
- D. Six

Answer: C

3. Kamandaka accepts \_\_\_\_\_ system of social order

- A. Varna system
- B. Ashrama system
- C. both A and B
- D. Sovereignty

Answer: C

4. The concept of Prakriti-sampat deals with \_\_\_\_\_ elements of the state

- A. Three
- B. Four
- C. Six
- D. Seven

Answer: D

5. \_\_\_\_\_ text focuses on the valour and the military qualities a ruler must possess.

A. Niti-sara

B. Artha-sastra

C. Kautilya-sastra

D. All of these

Answer: A

#Nitisara

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-Manishika

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