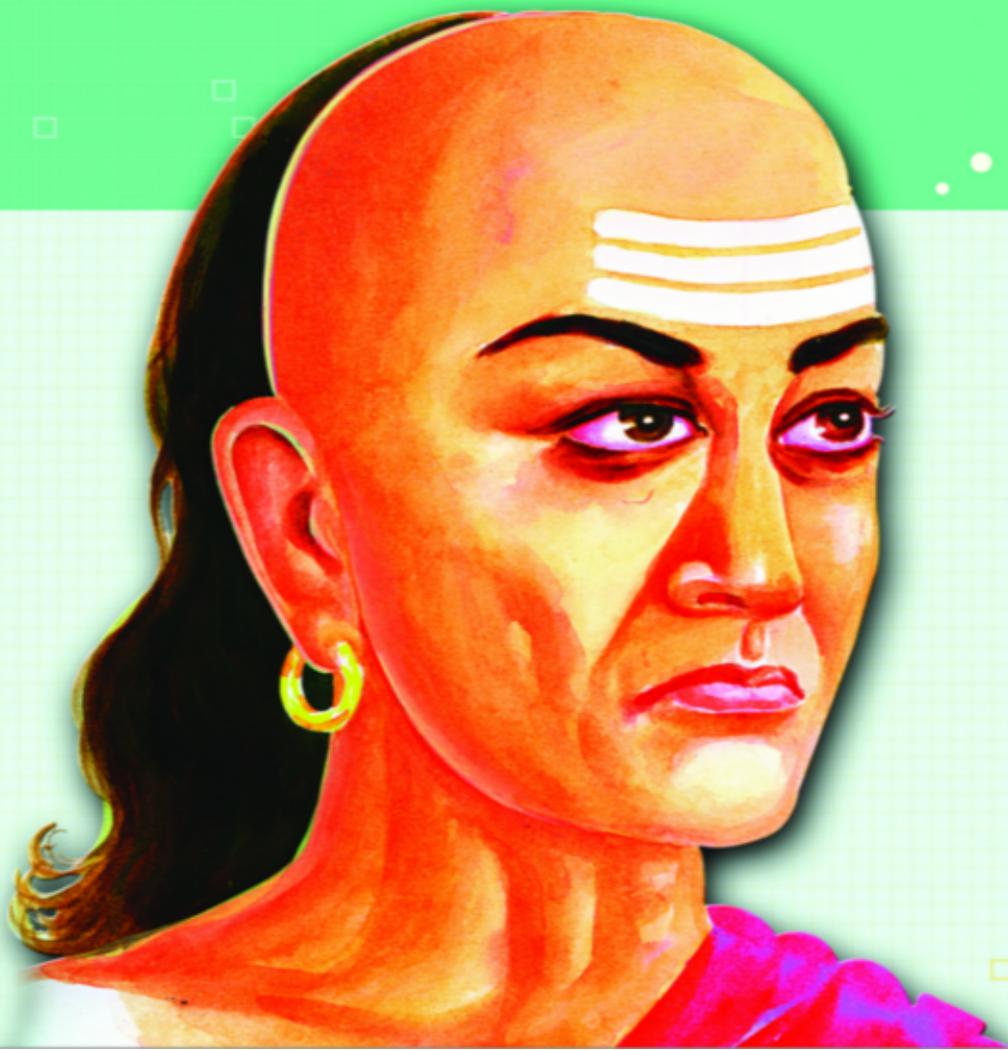


**GREAT INDIAN  
PERSONALITIES**

**CHANAKYA**



# CHANAKYA

Chanakya was one of the wisest and great statesmen of India.

He was an adviser and Prime Minister to the first Mauryan Emperor, Chandra Gupta (C. 340-293 B.C.) who was the chief architect of his rise to power. The ancient political treatise called the Arthashastra identifies its author with Chanakya. Chanakya has been considered as the pioneer of the field of economics, having first written about the subject a millennium and a half before. He has been called the Indian Machiavelli. Chanakya was a professor at Taxila University (Takshasila) and was responsible for the creation of the Mauryan empire, the first of its kind on the Indian sub-continent.

He is generally called Chanakya by virtue of being the son of CHANAK but in his capacity as the author of Arthashastra, is generally referred to as Kautilya derived from his gotra's name 'KOTIL'. (Kautilya means, 'of Kofil'.) He was the master of the shrewd act of diplomacy. He believed in four ways, namely, Treating with Equality, Intimidation, Sowing Dissension and punishment or war. The Arthashastra identifies its author by the name Kautilya,

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except for one verse which refers to him by name Vishnu Gupta. One of the earliest Sanskrit literature to explicitly identify Chanakya with Vishnu Gupta was Vishnu Sarma's Panchatantra, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.

Two books are attributed to Chanakya. Arthashastra and Neetisastra which is also known as Chanakya neeti. The Arthashastra discusses monetary and fiscal policies, welfare, international relations and war strategies in detail. Neeti Sastra is a treatise on the ideal way of life and shows Chanakya's in depth study of the Indian way of life. Chanakya also developed Neeti Sutras, (aphorism - pithy sentences) that tell people how they should behave. Of these well known 455 sutras about 266 refer to raaja-neeti. (the do's and don'ts for running a kingdom). Apparently, these sutras were used as training material by Chanakya to groom Chandra Gupta and other selected disciples in the art of ruling a kingdom.

The Sanskrit play, "Mudrarakshasa", by Viaskha Dutta, is one popular source of Chanakya lore (The play has been dated between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century of the Christian era.

He is believed to be the founding father for his doctrine of absolutism which has spread all over

the world. He is famous for his works Arthasastra and Nitisastra. Even at present scholars all over the world acknowledge his penetrating intellect.

Chanakya's Arthasastra gives us a view of the India he dreamt about. His Nitisastra is a code of conduct for the people and advises people to follow just ways of life that would be beneficial not only to them in person but also to the society and the nation at large. His views are more worldly and cannot be considered controversial. His ideologies on administration, politics and economy are worthy of implementation even at the present times and can be said to hold good even for the times to come. He was instrumental in changing the history of India and for bringing the different native kingdoms ruled by princes at war with each other for reasons of their own, under a unified authority and thus knitting the country into a unified whole.

With his wisdom he was able to enthrone Chandra Gupta as the Maurya king and later expand his kingdom into an empire. Chandra Gupta Maurya treated Chanakya as his preceptor (guru). His original name was Vishnu Gupta.

Chanakya was born around third century B.C. His father taught Vedas to Chanakya even in his

**End of Preview.**

**Rest of the book can be read @**  
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