



Political Thought in Ancient India: Emergence of the State, Evolution of Kingship and Inter-State Relations Based on the Saptanga Theory of State (Series: Reconstructing Indian History & Culture 2)

By G.P. Singh

D.K. Printworld (P) Ltd., New Delhi, 2005. Hardcover. Book Condition: New. 2nd edition. 15 x 23 cm. Ancient Indians were a highly organized polity, with a well-established worldview of the Rajya (the State). And also of its seven distinct organs: svamin (the king), amatyas (the ministers), janapada/rashtra (the territory and the people), durgas/pura (the forts/capital), kosha (the treasury), danda/bala (the army), and mitra तथा niti (the allies and inter-state relations). In their togetherness, these components of the state led political ideologues to advance the Theory of Saptanga : the `seven limbs` -- each of which admitted varying emphases with ancient scholars, according to the changing political situations or their own predilections. Besides traditional/semi-historical writings, the Saptanga Theory of State finds recurring allusions in Kautilya`s Arthashastra which, written sometime about the fourth century BC, remains the oldest surviving treatise of its kind on statecraft. Surprisingly, the Arthashastra itself, claims its author, is a compendium of the writings of as many as eighteen ancient teachers, like Manu, Brihaspati, Ushana, Bharadvaja, Vishalaksha, Prachetas, and Pishuna. With bit-by-bit analysis of an astonishing mass of original, indigenous sources: Vedic, puranic, epical, Buddhist, Jaina, and even non-Indian, Professor G.P. Singh tries to crystallize the political thought...

Reviews

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