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**Two Timelines, One Mastermind: The Genius of *Chanakya's Chant* by Ashwin Sanghi**

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**P. Dhana Gowre<sup>1</sup>.**Ph.D Scholar, Department of English, Sri GVG Visalakshi college for women, Udumalpet,  
Affiliated to Bharathiar University.**Dr. D. Sujatha<sup>2</sup>.**Associate Professor & Head, Department of English. Sri G. V. G Visalakshi College for  
Women, Udumalpet

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**Abstract:**

In a person's life, politics is a very noticeable and powerful factor. Its ultimate goal is to gain power, regardless of whether doing so comes at the expense of morals or group interests. Since ancient times, people from all walks of life have been fascinated with power games. Survival has always been central to humanity; the one who makes it until the end is the victor, the leader, and the one with the ability to establish new standards. By influencing all of the crucial choices and abilities in the lives of the other characters, the great sage Chanakya and his contemporary counterpart Pandit Gangasagar Mishra, determine their fate. In order to mediate between the assumed identity and the real identity, this essay consults the literature. It also depicts the political scheming of the novel's two masterminds in two distinct historical periods. It clarifies the idea of the formation of identity and the elements that contribute to people's identities being formed and shaped by social and political pressures. The entire book is a perfect illustration of how politics and power can combine to create a destructive force that shapes the destiny of ordinary people against their will.

**Keywords:** Chanakya's Chant, power struggles, political affinity, identity construction, and the value of power.

**Introduction:**

With particular reference to Ashwin Sanghi's novel *Chanakya's Chant*, this article examines the complex function of power in politics. Every day, a person's encounters with the outside world develop their social identity. Politics plays a part in this process since identity is not fixed but rather a discourse mediated by our relationships with others. The real purpose of politics is to create power dynamics

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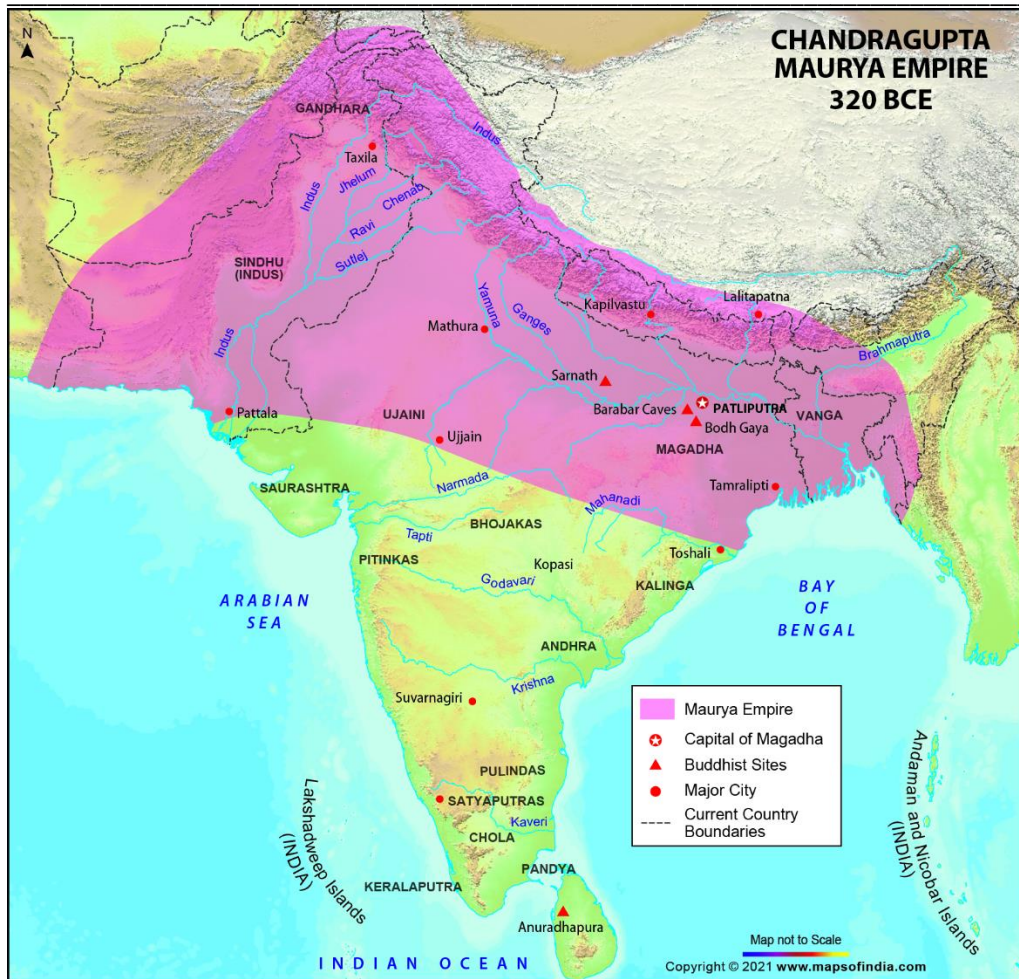
between various social classes and disseminate information from the elite to the general public. One of Indian author Ashwin Sanghi's best-selling and most-read books is Chanakya's Chant (2010). The book is essentially a dual-timeline historical fiction work. Acharya Chanakya, the renowned sage and kingmaker, is the subject of one story, while Pandit Gangasagar Mishra, his current incarnation, is the subject of the other. Sanghi has compared the two well-known politicians with remarkable skill: Gangasagar uses his clever political abilities to maintain a respectable position in Cawnpore politics, just as Chanakya used them to shake the throne of Dhanananda, the corrupt and lecherous king of Magadha, in retaliation for his father's cold-blooded murder.

He makes use of a lot of people and opportunities to achieve his goal. All of his plans come to fruition when, after much effort and cunning on the side of Gangasagar, his hand-picked soldier Chandini, a regular girl from the slums, is appointed Prime Minister of India. The Politics has a completely self-serving and covert influence on people's lives. Politicians will stop at nothing to achieve their goals. They play blood games without hesitation. For them, achieving their objective is their sole dharma; everyone else is just a heartless crowd. Although not much study has been published on the subject, this story is about power games and king-making that operate covertly to achieve desired outcomes. Scholars' attention has been drawn to this text because of its presentation and storyline, or because of the author's compelling characterisation. The characters in this article will be constructed in accordance with the different powers and political nexuses that drive the primary narrative. It takes a multifaceted approach to talk about Chanakya's Chant's potent and political influence. All of the main and supporting characters in the book are surrounded by the aura of politics and power, regardless matter whether they are from Chanakya's period in India (more than two millennia ago) or contemporary Indian culture.

In addition to having a contemporary timeline, the novel's second narrative is jam-packed with intrigues and devious tactics. The protagonist of this tale is Pandit Gangasagar Mishra, whose father was a poor Brahmin. He earned his livelihood by teaching at a local government-supported school. Gangasagar, two daughters, and three children were born to him. One of his wealthiest clients, Agrawalji, would invite his father to lunch during the Shraadh period. Gangasagar begins working at Agrawalji's company when his father passes away, leaving the fifteen-year-old Ganga to support the family of four without any money. Since Agrawalji is a crafty businessman with just one goal in life—to increase his wealth—this marks a turning point in his life. Gangasagar gradually learns his strategies. After learning from Agrawalji to become fairly astute and crafty, he quits his job to provide him political support so that they may increase their income together, not to sever their relationship.

Understanding the role of power in the lives of regular people is not simple. Political support in every given community is entwined with this intricate phenomenon. People are always marginalized when politics dominates society. The kingmakers and influential members of society abuse identity. They establish a completely adaptable and ideal setting that serves their interests on both fronts, and the people succumb to these predetermined settings, viewing it as their destiny. Because they are bound by their predetermined fate, they are referred to as subjects. All social, religious, and economic norms are subsumed by political authority, and the results are only the product of a future that has already been predetermined. Politics and power are constantly imposed on the lives of regular people by those who are surrounded by it but are ignorant of it. Character, characteristics, behaviors, and social identity are all shaped by this force. On the other hand, a person is not always the same as what society portrays them to be.

The time that was previously absorbed by Chanakya's mind, chant, and time will truly be obtained by him at the same location in his future time. After hearing him say it a few times, he finds the inscription. The kingmaker's historical chant serves as motivation for Chanakya's lover Suvasini's yearning to be granted in the scenario created by Chandinigupta as contemporary Suvasini. It's the ultimate acknowledgement of female strength, according to Gangasagar's instructor, who is translating the chant. Under the direction of Acharya Pundarikaksha and the admission director, Chanakya was accepted to Takshila University. By continuously spraying a section of dried kush grass with the white liquid, Chanakya was able to eradicate the plant and stated that an adversary should be eliminated until there was no more trace. Since the texts, customs, culture, prayers, and gods are shared by Magadha, Gandhar, Kashi, Kuru, Kosala, Mallayrajya, or Panchala, they may all be grouped together under the name Bharat.



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Because of his qualifications and abilities, Chanakya was promoted to the post of upacharya, teaching assistant in economics, political science, and his favorite topics. Dandayan and Yogi both admired Chanakya's strong opinions on all significant issues. Alexander the Great, not Dhanananda, is Chanakya's adversary, he taught him. Chanakya's teaching specialty is asking pupils quick questions and providing them with succinct, effective answers. He adheres to the following values. Making the law respectable is the first step towards fostering a culture of respect for it. A leader must declare themselves to be the people's servant. One cannot

demonstrate dishonesty in a good speech. Freedom is not as important to a starving man as a few pieces of food. War is just politics with bloodshed, and politics is a war without bloodshed. Principles are the foundation of government, yet principles never behave in that way. As he was dying, Dean requested Chanakya to transfer his mother to Takshila so that she might be cared for, and he also gave Chanakya his house, his manuscripts, and his devoted manservant. One of Chanakya's favorite pupils, Sinharan, the son of Mallayrajya's governor who had been deposed by infidelity, The smartest Brahmin kid at the institution, Sharangrao, and Mehir, a Persian student who arrived as a result of the Macedonian invasion, suggested that Sinharan check out the haughty Ambhi, the crown prince of Gandhar. He visited Suvasini, the daughter of Prime Minister Shaktar, who is currently in prison, as well as his mother and childhood friend and love interest.

After ten years, Chanakya encountered Katyayan, who wished him well using Hindu or Vedic rites and rituals and mentioned that he wanted to accompany his mother to Takshila. Around six or seven years ago, Chanakya learned that his mother had stopped eating and died at Kusumpur, an ancestral house close to Pataliputra. He also learned about Shaktar, who died a thousand deaths every day and whose existence is a terrible misery in Nanda's inferno after Dhanananda slaughtered his family. The existence of his daughter Suvasini is worse than death. Rakshas allowed her to survive at the expense of her mistress. Rakshas, a brahmin, persuaded Dhanananda to provide additional awards to scholarly brahmins while keeping him surrounded by ladies and liquor. For the remainder of his life, Chanakya was obliged to Katyayanji, to whom he expressed gratitude for his survival. Chanakya saw that resources like cash, labor, and materials might be used to overthrow Dhanananda. Chanakya made cautious to stay disguised as he attended the Magadha court sessions. However, after recognizing him, Rakshas declared that Magadha is fortunate to have Chanakya, a respected professor at the esteemed Takshila University, visiting.

Rakshas questioned the learned instructor Chanakya about how society may cooperate for the advancement of the realm. Knowing the king, Chanakya retorted as shudra that the responsibilities of brahmins are to study, educate, and pray to the gods on behalf of humanity. The purpose of the Kshatriyas is to safeguard the populace. The purpose of the vaishyas is to manufacture, trade, and create riches. The three upper varnas are intended to be served by the shudras. Chanakya stated right away that his counsel is intended for people with the innate ability to absorb. Rakshas informed his monarch that Chanakya is Chanak's son. In order to overthrow the monarch and his corrupted dynasty, Chanakya told the king that an adversary should always be eliminated to the last trace. A monkey shell always stays a monkey, the monarch said, and immediately gave his royal guards orders to capture Chanakya and send him to Nanda's torment. On his parents' ashes, Chanakya swore that he would not knot his Shikha again until he had driven Dhanananda and the Macedonian invaders out of his nation and brought it together under a capable leader.

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Chanakya offered the crown of Magadha to Paurus. Meanwhile, Indradutt, the Prime Minister of Kaikey, persuaded his noble king to form an alliance with Chanakya, especially since a disagreement had arisen between Chanakya and Chandragupta. Around the same time, Cornelia expressed her wish to marry Chandragupta, and he consented. They solemnized their union through a private *Gandharva* marriage, simply exchanging garlands around each other's necks in a brief yet symbolic ceremony. Later, Chanakya and Chandragupta set out with a contingent of mercenary soldiers to meet Abhaya, the intelligence chief of Paurus. This meeting was part of a calculated and orchestrated high-level confrontation. Abhaya confirmed that Chanakya had indeed planned to meet Paurus, which is why he had arrived with Chandragupta. In his meeting with Paurus, Chanakya offered him the throne of Magadha. He also introduced him to Sinharan, who pledged his loyalty to Paurus and sought his blessings, promising a strong alliance. Chanakya made it clear that he preferred Paurus to rule Magadha over those who lacked respect for their teachers. Paurus, aligning himself with Chanakya's vision, accepted his plan—whether it meant ruling Magadha or attaining spiritual greatness.

Although Sasigupta led the Ashvakans, Kalapini was their main source of power. Before telling Sasigupta his idea, Chandragupta waited. Indo-Aryans known as Ashvakans, or Afghans, were experts in horse breeding and training. They fought wars and rode horses with great skill. Sasigupta, a powerful representation of masculine beauty, helped Alexander obtain Pir-Sar fort and supplied the Macedonian army with thousands of cavalrymen. Chandragupta advised Sasigupta to inquire about Phillipos from his deity Kalapini. Phillipos was scared and naked when his tent caught fire. Asvakans caught Phillipos and Kalapini running out naked, tied his hands behind his back, and blindfolded him. Kalapini was shielded by a blanket and thrown into the arms of a horseman who rode off. Phillipos made an effort to clarify that he and Kalapini were particularly in love with one other. Phillipos was freed by Sasigupta, but not before he coughed up blood due to a javelin piercing his lungs from behind. Already, Macedonian troops had been slain and many quarters were on fire. Sasigupta was not pleased with the event that had occurred. Chandragupta comforted Sasigupta by stating that he was defending his queen's honor. Phillipos' death was caused by Chandragupta's archer.

The President of India extended an invitation to Major Bedi, the former Defence Minister and current chairman of the newly formed alliance. He was supported by Pandit Gangasagar Mishra, the leader of the ABNS and the primary ally of the ruling party. Chandni has been given a role in the new administration. When she entered national politics, the post of Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh was awarded to Ram Shankar Dwivedi, despite Ikrambhai also being in the race. Rungta is currently in search of an additional minister to support Somani, alongside the Prime Minister. Gangasagar is advocating for Chandni to be appointed as the Minister of External Affairs to enhance her global exposure. For now, however, she holds a

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ministerial position without an assigned portfolio, pending further arrangements. Gangasagar is also eager to place his associates in key positions across various government institutions, not just within the cabinet but also in influential roles such as the Director of the Intelligence Bureau, Governor of the Reserve Bank, Chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes, and similar posts. During visits to several government departments, Gangasagar and Chandni uncovered four financial scandals linked to the finance minister. They plan to demand the Finance Minister's resignation based on one of these scandals while keeping the remaining ones in reserve for strategic use in the future.

*Chanakya's Chant* weaves together two parallel narratives—one rooted in ancient Bharat and the other set in modern-day India. The first storyline follows the brilliant scholar, teacher, and strategist Chanakya, whose influence drives a young Chandragupta Maurya to claim the throne of Magadh, the most dominant kingdom of that era. The second narrative mirrors this journey in the present day, where Gangasagar Mishra, modeled after Chanakya, rises as a master political strategist and kingmaker in contemporary Indian politics, drawing strength from Chanakya's legacy. A sacred chant—“Adi Shakti, Namoh Namah; Sarab Shakti, Namoh Namah; Prithum Bhagvati, Namoh Namah; Kundalini Mata Shakti; Mata Shakti, Namoh Namah”—serves as a spiritual link that bridges the 2300-year gap between the two stories. This powerful mantra, passed from Chanakya to Gangasagar, encapsulates the novel's core message. Throughout the narrative, Gangasagar employs every imaginable—often implausible—tactic under the doctrine that the ends justify the means. His actions are bound by one unwavering principle: achieving victory for the greater good of society.

Gangasagar only wanted political and intellectual supremacy, but Chanakya wanted to exact revenge for his father's passing and terminate Dhananda's reign in the Magadha kingdom. Retaliation, Chanakya's desire for a united Bharat in the past, and Gangasagar's equally committed goal of installing Chandni as Prime Minister of Independent India were all expressed in the novel. Readers eventually become perplexed as to whether the protagonist is the hero or the villain, but they ultimately believe that he is only the chess player and that the other characters are only the pieces. The kingmaker's historical chant serves as motivation for Chandni Gupta's modern Suvasini, the ultimate acknowledgement of female authority, to achieve Suvasini's request within the current framework. As he developed the plot, Sanghi touched on a number of topics, including religious conflict and corruption in contemporary India, and built suspense around the deaths of Geoffrey, Chandni Gupta's son Harry Richardson, and Shankar, her personal assistant. The story opens with Paurus' murder against the backdrop of the Mauryan empire. In contemporary India, the “divide and rule” approach is still in place since individuals are separated according to their economic standing, caste, religion, and community.

The four strategies of *saam*, *daam*, *dand*, and *bhed* represent methods of influence: persuasion through intellect, manipulation using wealth, intimidation via threats or punishment, and division through social discrimination, respectively. These tactics are often employed to consolidate power and exert control over people. Suvasini, who once shared a deep bond with Chanakya, ultimately holds him accountable for his downfall and denounces his political strategies. She asserts that his ideas will remain ineffective and misguided unless they are directed toward the empowerment of women. This turning point paves the way for Chandni's rise, as she emerges as a national icon and forges a highly successful career in politics.

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