

IDSA Monograph Series
No. 20 July 2013

One Hundred Years of Kautilya's *Arthashastra*

P. K. Gautam

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INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
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P.K.Gautam



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ISBN: 978-93-82169-20-8

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First Published: July 2013

Price: Rs. 299/-

Published by: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses
No.1, Development Enclave, Rao Tula Ram Marg,
Delhi Cantt., New Delhi - 110 010
Tel. (91-11) 2671-7983 Fax.(91-11) 2615 4191
E-mail: contactus@idsa.in
Website: <http://www.idsa.in>

Cover &

Layout by: Geeta Kumari

Printed at: M/S A. M. Offsetters
A-57, Sector-10, Noida-201 301 (U.P.)
Mob: 09810888667
E-mail: amoffsetters@gmail.com

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To begin with, I thank Dr Jagannath Panda who introduced me to Mr Michael Liebig from Frankfurt University in Germany. Mr Michael had come to India in 2012 in connection with his research on Kautilya, the author of the ancient Indian political treatise called the *Arthashastra*. As I was in regular touch with Michael by e-mail I developed an interest in the *Arthashastra*. I learned more about the work when I chaired Michael Liebig's presentation at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA). It was Michael who 'introduced' me to Kautilya and thus initiated my enduring involvement with Kautilya.

I received tremendous support from the library staff of IDSA who set-up a world class reference desk on Kautilya in English, which was the pivot of the whole project. A group of volunteer scholars from IDSA and from other think tanks got informally networked in the project. I owe an intellectual debt to all the members of the informal Kautilya study group of which Tarun Kumar of Delhi University, Dr Kalyan Raman and Saurabh Mishra of the IDSA, and Sqn Ldr RTS Chhina (Retd) of the United Service Institution of India need a special mention.

I am grateful to Professor Rajendra Prasad of Gorakhpur University for his valuable inputs. I need to thank Sanjeev Kumar Shrivastav, Nupur Brahma and Akash Goud who shared their ideas, books and articles with me. Thanks to the participants and the external discussants at my fellows seminar on *Arthashastra* – Amb. K.P Fabian, Dr Navnita Chadha Behera and Colonel V.M.B. Krishnan. I am also grateful to the two anonymous referees whose valuable comments have enhanced my work.

I take this opportunity to thank Dr Arvind Gupta, Director General IDSA, who approved of my idea of an institutional project on indigenous historical knowledge beginning with

Kautilya. Dr Gupta gave whole-hearted support to my individual work as well as the national workshop on Kautilya held in October 2012. His encouragement and active participation provided the right atmosphere for placing Kautilya on a higher pedestal. All the participants of the national workshop on Kautilya also helped me immensely in the understanding of Kautilya and I thank all of them.

I

INTRODUCTION

Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, composed around 321 BCE, is the oldest and most exhaustive treatise on statecraft and on issues of diplomacy, war, peace, intelligence, security, and political economy.¹ This indigenous political theory was discovered in full text form in 1905, and it stands out in the corpus of the rich but under-explored ancient history of India. Yet, this work on statecraft, defence and diplomacy is not well-researched upon or taught suitably to students and practitioners of international relations and security managers. This is not the case with the ancient works of Greek and Latin literature or with the work of Machiavelli and later theorists. Their works are widely studied in textbooks as they are related to political science in the 20th and 21st century. The reasons for this differential treatment are covered later in the paper. Suffice to say that there is a need to do more research on Kautilya's *Arthashastra* for policy studies in a wider and deeper framework.

Relevance

Johann Jakob Meyer, the German Indologist and translator of the *Arthashastra* from Sanskrit to German language in 1927,² said

¹ Kautilya is also known as Chanakya or Vishnugupta. I will spell him as Kautilya (and not Kautalya) and his work as *Arthashastra* (and not *Arthashastra*). Spellings from quotes and titles from reference will appear as they are. All references to the *Arthashastra* are based on R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part II, Translation with Critical and Explanatory Notes*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Second Edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010. Dates for the work vary according to historians from end 4th century BC to 3 AD. There is also an unresolved debate on authorship. This paper will not go into these debates except inviting attention to it. Literature on this exists and is well-documented and articulated.

² Johan Jakob Meyers, *Ueber das Wesen der altindischen Rechtsschriften und ihr Verhältniß zu einander und zu Kautilya*, Buch vom Welt- und Staatenleben, Leipzig, Harrassowitz, 1927.

that the *Arthashastra* was not a book but a library of ancient India.³ But, any work in policy field must have relevance. For Kautilya's treatise ideas on relevance abound. Masashi Okuyama, Senior Researcher, International Peace Association, Japan has mentioned that geopolitics and its practice has been always present throughout history and one earliest example of this is Kautilya's *Arthashastra*.⁴

L.N. Rangarajan, a diplomat whose work on the *Arthashastra* is now well-received and widely read, has argued that in so far as the nature of human beings remained the same and states behaved in the manner as they always have done, Kautilya was relevant.⁵ The enthusiasm of India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, for Chanakya (Kautilya) was phenomenal. He devoted six pages to Chanakya in his *Discovery of India* first published in 1946, one year before independence.⁶ As a symbol Nehru had the diplomatic enclave in New Delhi named after him as Chanakypuri.⁷

Historian and diplomat KM Panikkar writes that Hindu kings, to the last, followed the organisation of Mauryan Empire in its three essential aspects – the revenue system, the bureaucracy and the police system. Kautilya's doctrines were still in force

³ B.K. Sarkar, "The German Translation of the Kautilyan *Arthashastra*: Meyer's Humanism", in P. Mittal and Geeta Dua compiled, *Kautilya Arthashastra: Collection of Articles from the Indian Historical Quarterly, Indian Antiquary, Indian Culture, and Calcutta Review*, in Two Volumes, Delhi, Originals, 2010, Volume I, p.261.

⁴ Masashi Okuyama, "Geopolitical Theory and its Application to East Asia", *Journal of Indian Ocean Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 1, April 2012, pp. 26-37.

⁵ L.N. Rangarajan, *The Arthashastra*, New Delhi, First Published by Penguin Books India, 1992, Introduction, p.25. The latest paperback version of 2012 does not indicate the edition. The first edition of 1992 vintage (paperback) had a larger font. Thus page number will vary amongst the versions. Here I quote from the version being sold in 2012 where the page number is 25.

⁶ I am thankful to Mr Michael Liebig in drawing attention to Nehru's work. See Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1990, Third Impression, 1990, pp.122-25, 141 and 163.

⁷ Charles Allen, *Ashoka*, London, Little Brown, 2012, p.309.

during the Muslim rule and during the British rule in India.⁸ In his lectures on Kautiliya, at the Delhi School of Economics, Panikkar highlighted the relevance of Kautilya's rules of conduct in diplomatic relations and his doctrine of *Sama-dana-behda-danda* (conciliation, gifts, rupture and force).

Some of Kautilya's classical and enduring aphorisms are: "What produces unfavourable results is bad policy: that is a policy to be judged by the results it produces, and diplomacy is not concerned with ideals but with achieving practical results for the state".⁹ Another quotation by Kautilya which has a universal appeal is, "When the advantages to be derived from peace and war are equal one should prefer peace for disadvantages such as loss of power and wealth are ever attendant upon war. Similarly, if the advantage to be derived from neutrality and war are equal, one should prefer neutrality".¹⁰ Interestingly, *The Human Security Report 2005* notes that one of the factors that account for the diminution in the incidences of war since 1980 is decline in economic utility of war.¹¹

In relation to world politics and foreign policy, Professor R.P. Kangle argues for the relevance of *Arthashastra* by giving examples such as: "that same distrust of one nation by another, the same pursuit of its own interests by every nation tempered only by

⁸ K.M. Panikkar, *A Survey of Indian History*, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1947, Reprint 1960, third edition, p.29. From my discussion with students of ancient Indian history this view of K.M. Panikkar has been disputed by some historians. I thank Nupur Brahma in pointing this out to me.

⁹ K.M. Panikkar, *The Principles and Practice of Diplomacy*, Occasional Paper No.6, Delhi School of Economics, Delhi, Rajit Printers and Publishers, 1952, p.7.

¹⁰ Ibid, p.25. Although Panikkar did not refer to the sutra, he meant 7.2.1-2. As R.P. Kangle's work was yet to be published, Panikkar probably refers to *sutra* 267 of R. Shamasastri's initial translation, p.296. There is a very minor variation on the translation when compared to Kangles' version. Essence or dictum remains unchanged.

¹¹ "Introduction", Vaughan Lowe, Adam Roberts, Jennifer Welsh, and Dominik Zaum (eds.), *The United Nations Security Council and War and Practices Since 1945*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008, pp.45-48.

consideration of expediency, the same efforts to secure alliances with the same cynical disregard of them in self-interest, the same kind of intelligence service maintained by one nation in the territory of another”.¹² Kangle’s study states that the *Arthashastra* may have lost much of its validity with establishment of Mughal Empire and partial advent of British rule. But, he qualifies this by alluding to the fact that it must not be forgotten that *Nitisara* and other works based on Kautilya did not pass into oblivion even then.¹³ Adam Watson hails the *Arthashastra* for being a “major theoretical analysis of international relations as an integral part of the problems of statecraft, a fusion unparalleled in any extant literature”.¹⁴ Since kingship in the *Arthashastra* was not concerned with divinity, the power to wage war was released from the logic of *dharma* and the attended duties of the virtuous king.¹⁵ As it relates to happiness, Watson writes, “It is curious that from the *Arthashastra* to the American Declaration of Independence (which opposes imperial rule) no other text puts the pursuit of happiness quite so high.”¹⁶

On the significance of the teaching of the *Arthashastra* as related to internal dimensions, R.P. Kangle points out that its views about state servants, their qualifications and appointments, their corruptibility and ways of keeping them in check are not quite irrelevant. Its recommendations about the secret service keeping a watch over the state servants or over the political activities of

¹² R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Second Edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010, p.283.

¹³ *Ibid*, p.280.

¹⁴ Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society: A Comparative Historical Analysis*, London, Routledge, 1992, p.79. As pointed out by Jayashree Vivekanandan, *Interrogating International Relations: India’s Strategic Practice and the Return of History*, New Delhi, Routledge, 2011, pp.88-89.

¹⁵ Jayashree Vivekanandan, *Interrogating International Relations: India’s Strategic Practice and the Return of History*, New Delhi, Routledge, 2011, p.89.

¹⁶ Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society: A Comparative Historical Analysis*, London, Routledge, 1992, p.83 as quoted by Jayashree Vivekanandan, *Interrogating International Relations: India’s Strategic Practice and the Return of History*, New Delhi, Routledge, 2011, p.89.

the subjects or for purpose of criminal investigation have a bearing even on modern conditions. Its teaching on the investigation of crime sound almost modern.¹⁷

Historian Romila Thapar, in a recent interview,¹⁸ when asked about the current crisis arising due to corruption as a historical phenomenon responded by quoting Kautilya (2.9.32-33).¹⁹ On the subject of speech and expression, unlike Plato's *Republic* which banished poets altogether from the ideal republic, the *Arthashastra* granted the *Kusilavas* (bards, minstrels, singers, mime actors) freedom, which is now a fundamental right.²⁰ Sutra 4.1.61 of the *Arthashastra* states, "They may, at will, entertain by making fun of the (customs of) countries, castes, families, schools and love affairs."

Muthiah Alagappa, argues that contemporary international politics in South Asia is not very different from that articulated in the *Arthashastra*. The Indic system seems more congruent with the contemporary anarchic system than does the historic Sinic system. The Indian system is of intellectual interest, and its study can sensitize the students of international politics to an early Asian counterpart of Western political realism.²¹

¹⁷ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Second edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010, p.282.

¹⁸ "Many Voices of History", *The Hindu*, April 4, 2012.

¹⁹ "Just as it is impossible not to taste honey or poison if placed on the tongue, similarly it is difficult for a government servant not to eat up, at least, a bit of ruler's revenue" and "Just as it not possible to know when the fish moving under water drinks water, similarly, it is difficult to find out when government servant employed in the work misappropriates money". Kautilya then expects the king not to let this happen by proper selection, checks and administrative procedures. This phenomenon is universal and corrupt behaviour should spring no surprise. Corruption is a priority security issue today.

²⁰ Lawrence Liang, "Chilling Effects and Frozen Words", *The Hindu*, April 30, 2012. The work of Sibaji Bandopadhyay is quoted as to the reading of the rules on *Kusilavas* and allowing poetic licence.

²¹ Muthiah Alagappa, "International Politics in Asia: The Historical Context", in Muthiah Alagappa (ed.), *Asian Security Practice : Material and Ideational Influences*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1998, pp.74-75.

Commenting on the global financial crisis, Sanjay Baru the economist in a commentary reminds that management of economy and treasuries have been vital aspects of statecraft from time immemorial in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*.²² The Press Council of India Chairman, Justice Markandey Katju, in a press conference in March 2012 displayed copies of *Chanakyaniti* and advised the newly-elected young Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh to read it.²³ Ambassador K.P. Fabian writes that to do better in diplomacy requires introspection, which entails a deeper understanding of Chanakya and the relevance of his realism to our times.²⁴

From my own study, Kautilya's prescriptions for control over senses are wisdom fit for a manual of leadership and command for the military as well as for all leadership roles in the society.²⁵ As I show in Appendix C, Kautilya's work is undoubtedly a classic military manual of ideas and aphorisms which are applicable across time and nations.

As a political scientist and strategist, Kautilya's work is still enduring and relevant. However, his ideas have not been employed confidently by Indian scholars on security studies.²⁶

²² Sanjay Baru, "Geopolitical Implications of the Current Global Financial Crisis", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 33, No.2, March 2009, pp.163-168.

²³ Atiq Khan, "Justice Katju says Anna Hazare's Lokpal is unworkable", *The Hindu*, March 28, 2012.

²⁴ KP Fabian, *Diplomacy: Indian Style*, New Delhi, Har-Anand, 2012, p.11.

²⁵ See Book 1 Concerning the Topic of Training, Chapter 5 section 2 on Association with Elders on discipline, section 3 (i) on control over the senses like lust, anger, greed, pride, arrogance and foolhardiness and Section 3 (ii) of execution of the control by cultivating intellect etc.

²⁶ Work by Indian scholars on jurisprudence is of high order. See V.K Gupta, *Kautilyan Jurisprudence*, published by B.D. Gupta, Delhi, 1987. There is good work on Kautilya for modern conditions in fields of management and corporate/business matters. See Balakrishnan Muniapan, "Kautilya's Arthashastra and Perspectives on Organizational Management" *Asian Social Science*, Vol. 4, No. 1, January 2008, pp.30-34 and Radhakrishnan Pillai, *Corporate Chanakya: Successful Management the Chanakya Way*, Jaico Publishing House, 2012. In accounting too Kautilyan ideas and theories continue to be influential. See Manjula Shyam and Shyam Sunder, "Appraising Accounting and Business Concepts in Kautilya's Arthashastra", *Congress Proceedings Volume I*, 12th World Congress of Accounting Historians, Istanbul, Turkey, July 20-24, 2008.

R. Venkataraman mentions that in India although the *Arthashastra* may be known as a work of political economy, the Arabs knew it as a bible on 'Administration of War'.²⁷ Kautilya, today at most gets a vague mention in speeches and articles by Indian strategic thinkers. For instance, the National Security Advisor (NSA), in one of his speeches, alludes to a mix of political rationalism by pointing out Gandhi's expression of ideas and political rationalism rooted back to India's ancient history, to Kautilya and Askoka.²⁸ Strategic affairs journalist C. Raja Mohan argues that internal balancing, alliances, asymmetric approaches are as old as statecraft. They are not inventions of the modern strategic thought from Europe, but date back to the era of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* and Vishnu Sharma's *Panchatantra*. He writes, unless Delhi is willing to grapple with the basics of statecraft and reconnect with its own traditions of strategy, India will find it increasingly hard to deal with the unprecedented challenges arising from the rise of China.²⁹

Even the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) probationers inform that they have not been exposed to any proper lecture or module on Kautilya. Kautilya is not taught in any military institute or defence college.³⁰ Some part of Kautilya's work is now prescribed reading material for the military history paper for staff college aspirants,

²⁷ Wing Commander R. Venkataraman, *India's Higher Defence: Organisation and Management*, New Delhi, Knowledge World/ Centre for Air Power Studies, 2011, pp.14-15. The reference to the source from Arabia is not mentioned by the author.

²⁸ Shivshankar Menon, "K. Subrahmanyam and India's Strategic Culture", *Air Power Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Spring 2012, p.5.

²⁹ C. Raja Mohan, "Rising Power and Enduring Paradox: India's China Challenge", *USI Journal*, January-March 2012, p.29.

³⁰ One rare case for military training has come to my notice. Professor Radhakrishnan Pillai, from Bombay University and author of *Corporate Chanakya: Successful Management the Chanakya Way*, Jaico Publishing House, 2012 has been invited to give guest lectures by the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, South India since 2011. Lecture for 2012 was titled "Chanakya on Military Leadership". According to Wg Cdr G. Adityakiran, short capsules on *Arthashastra* are now being included in the curriculum at Staff College.

but this is not sufficient. One may find his quotes adorning the walls of institutes and colleges and occasional articles on him in a military journal of the United Service Institution of India.³¹

It is clear intuitively that Kautilya is relevant even today. But to establish the relevance we need to understand and study Kautilya to explain the contemporary world events. Such explanation with a vocabulary from Kautilya's *Arthashastra* will no doubt qualify if it is properly studied in context. However, it is observed that Kautilya is referred to in speeches alone. Efforts thus need to be made to bring Kautilya's work into the mainstream of analysis. His treatise can serve as the backbone of all political study. A lot of work needs to be done. There is a near-total absence of knowledge and understanding of Kautilya in any structured curriculum of the Indian education system and in the resources available for strategic policy-making, academia and think tanks of the country. Appendices B and C carry two examples, which show how one can now understand Kautilya and show his relevance in comparative analysis. The first (Appendix B) is an example of his work on perception, power and communications. The second (Appendix C) example deals with some military issues that are relevant even today.

³¹ In recent times the journal which represents the serving and retired military community featured two articles, one by S.G. Inamdar and the other by Satish Talwar and one letter to the editor by Ashok Joshi. See Air Marshall S.G. Inamdar, PVSM, VSM, (Retd), "Kautilya to Chandragupta on the Mauryan Soldier", *The Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, Vol.CXL, No.579, January to March 2010, pp.105-109. Excerpts in bits and pieces from Kautilya's *Arthashastra* of the article were sought by the author S.G. Inamdar from an unnamed Sanskrit scholar from Banaras Hindu University. These were submitted in a memorandum to the Sixth Pay Commission to impress how valued the soldier was in the Mauryan times. Also see Lt Gen Satish Talwar, (Retd), "The Enemy Within", *The Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, Vol.CXL, No.578, October-December 2009, pp.508-512 and letter to the editor in response by Major General Ashok Joshi VSM (Retd), "The Enemy Within", *The Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, Vol.CXL, No.579, January to March 2010, pp.105-109. An article in the annual journal of the Defence Services Staff College also featured in 2011 comparing Kautilya to Sun Tzu. See Colonel V.M.B. Krishnan, "Comparative Analysis of Teaching of Kautilya and Sun Tzu", *Trishul*, Vol. XXIII, No.2, Spring 2011, pp.81-92. During the process of publication of this monograph, more articles have featured in *USI Journal* and *Trishul*.

India's Rich Cultural Past

The European Romantic Movement was influenced by translations of Sanskrit classics into English. These classics were available from the Asiatic Society of Bengal established by Sir William Jones in 1784. In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, these translations of Indian literature stimulated interest in Sanskrit language in both France and Germany. In 1814 a Chair of Sanskrit was established in Paris. In 1818 similar Chairs were set up in several German universities.³² German scholarship has sustained this tradition of understanding Sanskrit. There is no doubt that one important strand of European scholarship recognises Kautilya as a part of world knowledge of political philosophy.³³ Current scholarships from Europe show mostly Indologists in Europe know Kautilya. Other social science departments like political science and sociology have not made use of his rich writings.³⁴ Some scholars believe that India is a

³² Maureen L.P. Patterson, "Institutional Base for the Study of South Asia in the United States and the Role of the American Institute of Indian Studies", in Joseph W. Elder, Edward C. Dimock, Jr. and Ainslie T. Embree (eds.), *India's Worlds and U.S. Scholars 1947-1997*, New Delhi, American Institute of Indian Studies, Manohar Publishers, 1998, p.20.

³³ Event Report April 19, 2011, presentation by Mr Michael Liebig, "Endogenous Politico-Cultural Resources: Kautilya's Arthashastra and India's Strategic Culture" at <http://idsa.in/event/KautilyasArthashastraandIndiasStrategicCulture>

³⁴ In July 2012 visiting fellows at IDSA Mr Frossard Adrien from France and Ms Muska Dastageer from Denmark admitted that they had never heard of Kautilya. Ms Dnyanada Palkar from a Canadian University, a former intern at IDSA, found that her proposal to work on Kautilya had no takers as *Arthashastra* and Kautilya were unknown to the professors of political science and IR departments in Canada. In December 2012, visiting fellow to the IDSA, Professor Joanna Spear from the Elliot School of International Affairs, George Washington University, USA had not heard of Kautilya but agreed to see the reference desk on Kautilya in the IDSA library for future study.

Rajiv Bhatia while reviewing in *The Hindu*, December 3, 2012, the biography of *George F. Kenan: An American Life* by John Lewis Gaddis notices the absence of Chanakya and inclusion of Sun Tzu, Machiavelli and Clasenwitz in the book. He then suggests "The list of realists should have included Chanakya". Surely, John Lewis Gaddis did not mention Chanakya on purpose but due to ignorance. I argue that it was not mentioned as it is neither taught in India nor has any effort been done to get Kautilya's *Arthashastra* recognized and mainstreamed.

land of cohesiveness in diversity, which has not been achieved for instance in Europe. Kautilya or Chanakya must re-emerge and take his rightful place in the social science discourse of international studies. If one observes the initiative taken by China in opening Confucian centres all over the world, India apparently lacks the zeal for spreading Kautilya's ideology.³⁵

English poetry has been described as a small body of verse almost completely surrounded by scholars. The case is just the reverse in case of Sanskrit, Tibetan, Pali and Prakrit literature - here we have a large body of literature frequented by pitifully few scholars.³⁶ This may explain the dearth of research on *Arthashastra*. Interestingly, most of the current and limited work on Kautilya related to strategic and security issues, in reputed international journals and books, is not by Indians but by foreigners.³⁷

One fundamental reason why indigenous Indian historical knowledge is not prominent enough or recognised is the politics of academic and policy work. Barry Buzan and Lene Hansen show that developments in the field of international relations (IR) have been informed more by disciplinary trends in political

³⁵ This is the observation (to which I concur) of German Scholar Michael Liebig. See Event Report April 19, 2021, presentation by Mr Michael Liebig, "Endogenous Politico-Cultural Resources: Kautilya's Arthashastra and India's Strategic Culture" at <http://idsa.in/event/KautilyasArthashastraandIndiasStrategicCulture>

³⁶ Ramkrishan Bhattacharya, "Preparing and Publishing Sanskrit Texts: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow", *Journal of Asiatic Society*, Vol. LI, No.4, 2009, pp.1-12.

³⁷ Torkel Brekke, "Wielding the Rod of Punishment – War and Violence in the Political Science of Kautilya", *Journal of Military Ethics* (2004), 3(1):40-52 and Rashed Uz Zaman, "Kautilya: The Indian Strategic Thinker and Indian Strategic Culture", *Comparative Strategy*, 25:231-147, 2006. Torkel Brekke is from Institute of Culture Studies, University of Oslo and Rashed Uz Zaman is from University of Dhaka. As work in progress, the German scholar Michael Liebig from Frankfurt University is pursuing his PhD on "Endogenous Politico- Cultural Resources: Kautilya's Arthashastra and India's Strategic Culture." Mr Jean Langlois who is pursuing his master's thesis on Kautilya at EHESS Grande Ecole (French National School of Advanced Studies) is interning at IDSA in 2013. He finds that French Indologists are on the decline.

science and by the character of the American University than by the events in international politics.³⁸ Thus, most IR ideas, aspects of security and statecraft are overwhelmingly dominated by US and European thinkers and their works. Even in other fields of humanities such as religious studies this trend is visible. It has been pointed out that India provides facts to the western scholars, but the West furnishes the theory. Western scholars have tended to eschew Indian thought – at least classical Indian thought – as a source of theoretical insight.³⁹

Intellectually, Indian academics are under undue weight of foreign academic hegemony. Today, the policy community at Delhi needs Kautilya's classical wisdom as an alternative, but his ideas reside more in oral tradition of Sanskrit.⁴⁰ Sanskrit scholars of various hues probably are well-versed in his *sutras*⁴¹, but they are not in the academic industry of high-profile think tanks. They may also be lying unsung and unknown.

Sanskrit is neglected in India due to lack of jobs, sponsorship and patronage. Sanskrit/Indology departments in prestigious

³⁸ Barry Buzan and Lene Hansen, *The Evolution of International Security Studies*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p.44.

³⁹ Jose Ignacio Cabezon, "Religious Studies: Theories of Comparison" in Joseph W. Elder, Edward C. Dimock, Jr and Ainslie T. Embree (eds.), *India's Worlds and U.S. Scholars 1947-1997*, New Delhi, American Institute of Indian Studies, Manohar Publishers, 1998, p.477.

⁴⁰ For BA and MA in political science in Rajasthan state universities Kautilya is taught via medium of text books in Hindi. Kautilya is covered in the political science stream in Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Delhi University, IR department of Jadhvpur University at BA level and in the syllabus of department of defence and security studies at Gorakhpur university. Kautilya is taught in Bombay University under author and Professor Radhakrishnan Pillai Director of Chanakya Institute of Public Leadership, Department of Philosophy, Bombay University. Chanakya's ideas have been reinterpreted for business and management. See Professor Radhakrishnan Pillai *Corporate Chanakya: Successful Management the Chanakya Way*, Jaico Publishing House, 2012.

⁴¹ Sutras are half-sentences and similar to the aphorism which has roots from the Greek language – a short, concise statement of principle or a maxim or adage.

European universities are closing down.⁴² High-caliber Indologists in Europe are disappearing.⁴³ The American Sanskritist Robert P. Goldman, from University of California Berkeley, says that the most daunting and irremediable problem that Sanskrit language is facing today is the waning of the *sastraparampara*, the indigenous traditions of Sanskrit learning that have made this language one of the world's great intellectual and cultural treasures. Reason being that the political, economic, and social conditions that have sustained Sanskrit learning in India since ancient times no longer exists.⁴⁴ In other words, there is a brain drain or a cultural and intellectual drought. As a result, we are witnessing an extinction of our ancient language and knowledge while, paradoxically the world is looking up to India. Thucydides, Sun Tzu, Confucius, Machiavelli, Karl Marx, Antoni Gramsci, Morgenthau, Kenneth Waltz, Michael Foucault, Karl Popper et al need to be studied and their ideas applied where required. But, Chanakya suffers from the unfair label of “nativism”.

China is a good example of a state utilizing her native knowledge. The Chinese are galloping ahead with Confucius Centres. In their attempt to go beyond European history in theorizing IR, the Chinese have launched the *Chinese Journal of International Politics* where they debate freely with Western scholars like Bary Buzan

⁴² The Sanskrit Department at the Cambridge University and the Berlin Institute of Indology have closed down. See N.S. Rajaram, “Indology Must Change With the Times,” *The Hindu*, January 1, 2007.

⁴³ The death of Madeleine Biardeau (who in 1969 succeeded Louis Dumont as the Head for the Centre for Indian and South Asian Studies at the *Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales* of France) in 2010 marks the complete disappearance of a whole generation of French scholars who profoundly redefined the intellectual understanding of (classical Hindu) India in the second half of the 20th century. See Roland Lardinois, “Influential Indologist”, *The Hindu*, February 28, 2010.

⁴⁴ Robert P. Goldman, “Sanskrit”, in Joseph W. Elder, Edward C. Dimock, Jr and Ainslie T. Embree (eds), *India's Worlds and U.S. Scholars 1947-1997*, New Delhi, Manohar Publishers, 1998, pp. 515-516.

etc. In a scathing criticism of the 'understanding conception of the international system' in mainstream IR theories, Barry Buzan and Richard Little argue that conceptualisation of the international system has been bedeviled by presentism, ahistoricism, Eurocentrism, anarchophilia and state-centrism.⁴⁵ It is argued that it is imperative to develop greater historical and cultural sensitivity to evolution of international order and their transformation in world history.⁴⁶

Till mid-1980s the Government of India publications such as *The Gazetteer of India*⁴⁷ and works from the Indian History Congress and Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan on *Arthashastra* and Kautilya were of a very high quality. *The Gazetteer of India* acknowledges that Kautilya's *Arthashastra* provides invaluable geographic and statistical information about India in the Mauryan age.⁴⁸ The Indian History Congress series of *A Comprehensive History of India* has separate volumes for the Mauryas where in its introduction it says:

The genius of Kautilya, a master in the field of political theory and action, build up a new system of imperial administration at

⁴⁵ Barry Buzan and Richard Little, *International Society in World History*, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp.18-22 as quoted in Zhang Yongjin and Barry Buzan, "The Tributary System as International Society in Theory and Practice", *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol.5, No.1, Spring 2012, pp.3-36.

⁴⁶ Zhang Yongjin and Barry Buzan, "The Tributary System as International Society in Theory and Practice", *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol.5, No.1, Spring 2012, pp.3-36.

⁴⁷ *The Gazetteer of India*, Volume Two, History and Culture, Gazetteers Unit, Department of Culture, Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, Publication Division, Government of India, 1973, Chapter II.

⁴⁸ *The Gazetteer of India: Indian Union*, Volume One, Country and People, The Central Gazetteers Unit, Government of India, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 15 August, 1965, p.i. According to K.M. Panikkar, the only great writers who show an adequate geographic knowledge are Kautilya, Vatsyayana and Kalidas. Kautilya in dealing with gems and other products mentions area in which they are found - Tamraparni, Pandya Kavata and the Churni River in Kerala country. See K.M. Panikkar, *Geographical Factors in Indian History*, Bombay, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, 1955, pp.17-18.

one bureaucratic and paternal, efficient and adequate to the growing needs of the rapidly changing conditions of life.⁴⁹

The Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan has volumes devoted to the history and culture of the period.⁵⁰ It is important to realise that it was in 1837 and later that the *Brahmi* and *Kharoshti* scripts of Ashokan pillars were discovered and deciphered. Finally, based on this discovery and on the works of archeologists like Alexander Cunningham, John Marshall and others, the existence of the Ashokan Empire was confirmed in 1915.⁵¹ But, who discovered Chanakya or Kautilya or Vishnugupta? Although the Puranas, Buddhist and Jain scriptures do mention the *Arthashastra*, there is no written compilation of the work for the lay public.⁵² The credit of compiling this treatise must go to the great Sanskrit

⁴⁹ Professor K.A.N. Sastri, "Introduction", in K.A. Nilakanta Sastri (ed.), *A Comprehensive History of India*, Volume II, The Mauryan and Satavahans, 325 BC – AD 300, published under auspices of The Indian History Congress and The Bhartiya Itihas Parishad, New Delhi, People's Publishing House, 1957, Second Imprint, 1987, p.xvii. The volume has a chapter on foundation of Maurya Empire. See Dr R.K. Mookerji, Chapter 1, "The Foundation of the Maurya Empire", p.1-19. The Volume III covers period AD300 to 985 in two parts. Part I is on Political History and Organisation less Gupta Age and Part II on Social, Economic, Religious and Cultural Conditions. See R.C Majumdar (Ed), K.K. Dasgupta (joint editor), *A Comprehensive History of India*, The Indian History Congress, New Delhi, People's Publishing House, Part I December 1981 and Part II December 1982.

⁵⁰ R.C. Majumdar (General Editor), *The History and Culture of the Indian People, The Vedic Age*, Bombay, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, first published 1951, fifth impression 1971 and *The History and Culture of the Indian People, The Age of Imperial Unity*, Bombay, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, 4th edition, 1968, Chapter XVII.

⁵¹ For the rediscovery of India's lost Ashokan history see Charles Allen, *Ashoka*, London, Little Brown, 2012. Many Indian archaeologists have not been given their due and also need to be acknowledged such as Robert Bruce Foot, Luigi Pio Tessitori, Hazarimal Banthia, Haranandan Pandey etc. See Nayanjot Lahiri, "Buried Over Time", *The Hindustan Times*, June 19, 2012.

⁵² The account of the Mauryan kingdom by the Greek ambassador Megasthenes are also mostly lost or in fragments. There is no mention of Kautilya in the accounts, an issue which animates dueling Indologists and ancient historians. See R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Second edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010, pp.66-74.

scholar and Curator, Government Oriental Library Mysore, Dr R. Shamasastry. Dr J.F. Fleet, the civil servant and Indologist who had worked in the Epigraphical Survey to meet the growing demand of deciphering and interpreting the inscriptions, as Government Epigraphist⁵³ in the introductory note to Shamasastry's (first) English translation of 1915 titled *Kautilya's Arthasastra* mentions that an unnamed pandit of Tanjore district handed over the manuscript with a commentary by one Bhattasvamin to Mysore Government Oriental Library. From this manuscript Shamasastry translated the work. Later, more manuscripts were discovered and Indian scholars such as T. Ganapati Sastri and other Indologists from Europe kept adding on to the compilation and interpretation of the *Arthasastra*.⁵⁴ Table I in chapter 2 is a compilation of this data.

If early 20th century witnessed the discovery of Chanakya's manuscripts and commentaries during the freedom struggle, 21st century may be regarded as the second freedom struggle to re-discover him and cleanse him of all the loose and unjust interpretations of his work in comparative analysis with other great minds. J.N. Dixit, former National Security Adviser noted that Chanakya's teachings on statecraft could have taught Machiavelli a lesson or two.⁵⁵ It is not surprising that Amitav Acharya argues that the dominant Western source of thinking

⁵³ Fleet extensively surveyed and brought to light many new inscriptions and also solved the problem related to Gupta era and he set up a new pattern and standard for the publication process of inscriptions which is followed even today. See http://asi.nic.in/asi_aboutus_history.asp

⁵⁴ R. Shamasastry, *Kautilya's Arthasastra*, Mysore, Mysore Printing and Publishing House, 1967, Eighth Edition, 1967. See Introductory note by Dr J.F. Fleet, PhD, C.I.E, I.C.S, pp.v-vi, and R. Shamasastry's preface to the second edition (1923) p.xxiii and preface to Third Edition (1929), pp.xxv- xxxiii.

⁵⁵ J.N. Dixit, *Across Borders: Fifty Years of India's Foreign Policy*, New Delhi, Picus Books, 1998, p.25. Later he wrote a chapter on Subhash Chandra Bose and Vallabhai Patel titled as Modern-Day Chanakyas. See J.N. Dixit, *Makers of India's Foreign Policy: Raja Ram Mohan Roy to Yashwant Sinha*, New Delhi, HarperCollins, 2004, chapter 3.

about IR concepts and theories is not just Westphalian, but also the classical Mediterranean. Most ideas used in IR come from Greek and Roman sources. Amitav Acharya further notes that, “we are yet to see such grand theorizing from Sumerian, Egyptian, Chinese or Indian pasts, stuck as we are with the idea of Kautilya being an Indian Machiavelli, rather than Machiavelli being a Euro- Mediterranean Kautilya”.⁵⁶

The conclusion from this brief introduction is that all our current public knowledge of Ashoka and Mauryan period is just over 100 years old. And that of Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* not even a century old. In a civilization of over 4,000 to 6,000 years, a century or two is too small a time.⁵⁷ The national and international discovery of Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* in public domain- as the title of this paper suggest- is about a 100 years or so. Much, as we shall see, has happened on the interpretation, use, misuse or neglect of his work as will be shown. Scholarship on the work must now come to the second stage of re-discovery. The need is to introduce the study of Kautilya for policy-related work as it pertains to foreign policy, intelligence, war, internal security and administration.⁵⁸ For this to succeed and develop and grow, this idea from think tanks needs to migrate and be taken up by academics and university system for sustainability.

⁵⁶ Amitav Acharya, “Dialogue and Discovery: In Search of International Relations Theories Beyond the West”, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol.39. No.3, May 2011, pp.619-637.

⁵⁷ So is the knowledge of Chinese classics such as “Sun Tzu and The Art of War” to the English speaking and understanding world. The first French edition appeared in 1772 and in 1910, the first English version. See “Foreword”, Lo Shun-Te (ed.), *Sun Tzu: The Art of War*, Taipei, Li Ming Cultural Enterprise Co. Ltd, 1991, p. 45. I thank Commander S.S. Parmar, Indian Navy my colleague at the IDSA for lending me this rare masterpiece published from Taiwan or Republic of China (ROC).

⁵⁸ Towards this aim, the IDSA organised a national workshop on Kautilya on October 18, 2012 (See <http://idsa.in/event/Kautilya>). It is hoped that the universities may similarly begin cross disciplinary work on our historical heritage.

The layout of this monograph is as follows: Chapter 1 provides three Appendices based on the text of the *Arthashastra* on the contents (Appendix A), perception, power and communication (Appendix B) and military issues that are relevant today (Appendix C). Chapter 2 is about the scholarly controversies so common with ancient Indian history on matters of authorship, date and location of original manuscripts and commentaries. Chapter 3 is an attempt to capture the philosophy and concepts. It has an example of an orderly break-up of his logic which can be used by scholars and analysts to give a framework to issues in world politics as it relates to foreign and security policy. Chapter 4 enumerates reasons for Kautilya not being studied and taught in an integrated manner. If reasons for neglect are understood and then got rid of, much work can be accomplished. This is followed by Chapter 5 which compares Kautilya's work with other thinkers and the criticism that is unfairly heaped on him. Chapter 6 deals with some incorrect and misinformed interpretations of his work and some extant controversies to be deliberated upon. In Chapter 7 avenues for further research and opportunities are suggested. Chapter 8 contains policy suggestions for incorporating the concepts in security studies and making the study of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* an enduring and sustainable endeavour.

APPENDIX A

A BRIEF NOTE ON THE CONTENTS OF *ARTHASASTRA*

The best and comprehensive account is to be found in three volumes of R.P. Kangle's *The Kautilyan Arthashastra*, Part II: Translation with Critical and Explanatory Notes, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, Second Edition, Bombay University, 1972, 7th Reprint, 2010. Professor R.P. Kangle was a Professor of Sanskrit and published the work in three parts (Part 1 is Sanskrit and Part 3 is Study) between 1961 and 1965 under Bombay University. Kangle admits that *The Arthashastra* is a complex work of 15 books called *adbikarans*. Each book has chapters. Chapters have sections which comprise of verse(s) called *sutra(s)*. The reference to the work has a universal norm. For example Book Two, Chapter One, *sutra* 6 will be written as 2.1.6. Similarly 10.6.51 will correspond to Book Ten, Chapter 6, *sutra* 51.

Artha is the sustenance or livelihood (*vr̥ttih*) of men; in other words, it means 'the earth inhabited by men'. *Arthashastra* is the science which provides the means of acquisition and protection of the earth. *Artha* has been regarded as one of the *trivarga* or three goals of human existence, the other two being *dharmā* and *kama*. *Arthashastra* has a two-fold aim. Firstly, it seeks to show how the ruler should protect his territory. This protection (*palana*) refers principally to the administration of the State. Secondly, it shows how territory should be acquired. This acquisition (*labha*) refers principally to the conquest of territory from others. *Arthashastra* is the science of dealing with state affairs in the internal as well as external sphere or in other words it is the science of statecraft or politics and administration. For Kautilya *Artha* is the most important of the three goals.

The breakdown of the *Arthashastra* is given below with some *sutras* highlighted for contemporary relevance:

1. *Book One - Concerning the Topic of Training:* First *sutra* or 1.1.1 mentions that “This single (treatise on the) Science of Politics has been prepared mostly bringing together (the teaching of) as many treatises on the Science of Politics as have been composed by ancient teachers for the acquisition and protection of the earth”. In book fifteen on The Method of the Sciences this is repeated at 15.1.5. Book One deals mainly with the training of the prince for arduous duties of rulership. It also discusses the question of the appointment of ministers and other officers necessary for the administration of a state. This prepares the ground for the establishment of a benevolent monarchy. *Sutras* 1.16.1-35 are the rules of the envoy. Diplomats today will connect with these *sutras* as they relate to the qualities expected of them during their assignments. However, the main *sutra* is 1.19.34, which states: “In the happiness of the subjects lies the happiness of the king and in what is beneficial to the subjects his own benefit. What is dear to himself is not beneficial to the king, but what is dear to the subjects is beneficial (to him)”.
2. *Book Two - The Activity of the Heads of Departments:* This deals with the activity of various state departments and internal administration of a state. *Sutra* 2.10.47 is on four *upayas* on foreign policy (*sam, dan bheda* and *danda*). *Sutra* 2.24.1-33 on agriculture has ideas that sound as true even today such as in rain-fed agriculture with various types of crops, sharecropping, sowing season and irrigation charges. Later in 5.2.2 *sutra* one-third or one-fourth of grain which is not dependent on rain is demanded (like tax) for the replenishment of treasury. 2.36.26 *sutra* deals with the fine levied for throwing dirt on the road. This *sutra* can put most urban motorists of 21st century India to shame (those who fling waste such as plastic bottles and wrappers on the public roads). Singapore, for example, is disciplined in

this respect as it deters littering of roads and makes use of Kautilya's 2.36.26 *sutra* (probably, the country is not even aware that this discipline was in vogue in India thousands of years ago).

3. *Book Three - Concerning Judges:* This book deals with the administration of justice and lays down the duties of judges and law. Laws were based on the Aryan system of administration. Today, the book is of academic interest alone as it relates to caste system and terms foreigners as *mlecchas*. British author Mark Tully has cheerfully evoked for himself the term *mleccha*. *Sutras* 26 to 30 of Chapter 3 (3.19.26-30) deal with the ecological system and levies fines for hurting animals, cutting trees, etc. This *sutra* can be utilized by our Indian Constitution even today for its environmental laws.
4. *Book Four - The Suppression of Criminals:* This deals with the maintenance of law and order and punishments for various criminal offences. *Sutra* 4.1.15-25 contains fines for washermen and tailors who wear their customers' clothes on the sly. The acts for the suppression of criminal tendencies appear harsh from today's discourse on crime and punishment.
5. *Book Five - Secret Conduct:* The secret conduct described in this Book is that of the king and servants.
6. *Book Six - The Circle (of Kings) as the Basis:* This deals with the circle of kings (*mandala*) and its seven constituents/*prakrits* (the king, the minister, the country, the fortified city, the treasury, the army and the ally). The description of the *mandala* in this Book serves as the introduction to the Book Seven which deals with *sadgunya*.
7. *Book Seven - The Six Measures of Foreign Policy:* This deals with the use of the six measures that can be adopted by a state in its relations with foreign states (peace/treaty, war/injury, staying quiet/remaining indifferent, marching/augmenting of power, seeking shelter/submitting to

another and dual policy/restoring to peace (with one) and war (with another). *Guna* has the technical sense of a measure to be adopted as a policy. To clearly show the top priority of diplomacy based on sound intellect the book concludes with 7.18.44 by stating “ He who sees the six measures of policy as being interdependent in this manner, plays, as he pleases, with kings tied by the chain of his intellect”.

8. *Book Eight – Concerning Topic of Calamities of the Constituent Elements:* This book deals with the calamities that affect the various constituents (*prakrits*) of the state. It is necessary to take precautions against those before one can start on an expedition of conquest described in following Books.
9. *Book Nine - The Activity of the King about to March:* The book deals with preparation to be made before starting an expedition and the precautions that have to be taken at the time. The geographic area is also well-defined and provides clues as to why India has never projected power abroad. The *vijigishu* in the text is expected to “conquer the world” which implies the conquest of the whole of India, designated as *cakravartiksetra* (9.1.17-18) – northwards between Himavat and the sea, one thousand *yojnas*⁵⁹ in extent across. The book also covers the idea of campaigning season.
10. *Book Ten – Concerning War:* Deals with aspects of military matters. The last *sutra* (10.6.51) is probably the most popular idea which clearly shows mind over matter: “An arrow, discharged by an archer, may kill one person or may not kill (even one); but intellect operated by a wise man would kill even children in the womb.”

⁵⁹ Yojana varies between 5 to 9 miles. General Alexander Cunningham the British engineer in his book *The Ancient Geography of India* (1871) records a yojna as 6 3/4 miles and with compensation for the zig zag routes of carts as 7 1/2 to 8 miles.

11. *Book Eleven - Policy towards Oligarchies: Samgha* (oligarchy) is a form of rule evolved from clan rule. Fairly big states were formed with council of elders to rule over them. The only chapter of the book clearly shows that a *samgha* had more than one chief or *mukhiya*. In some *samghas*, the chiefs styled themselves *rajan* or king. It seems to be assumed that the *vijigisu* (would be conqueror) has or proposes to have suzerainty over the *samgha*. The chapter shows how he should maintain strict control over them.
12. *Book Twelve - Concerning the Weaker King*: The book expands ideas already found elsewhere, particularly in 7.14-17 above.
13. *Book Thirteen - Means of Taking a Fort*: The capture of enemy forts is recommended mostly through stratagems. Chapter 5 is devoted to pacification of the conquered territory.
14. *Book Fourteen - Concerning Secret Practices*: This Book describes various secret remedies and occult practices intended for the destruction of the enemy. A great deal of magic and other lore is incorporated here.
15. *Book Fifteen - The Method of Science*: This single chapter explains and illustrates the various stylistic devices to elucidate a scientific subject. *Tantra* means science. The last *sutra* 73 states: “This science has been composed by him, who in resentment, quickly regenerated the science and the weapon and the earth that was under control of the Nanda kings”. Under the *sutra* is written: “Seeing the manifold errors of the writers of commentaries on scientific treatises, Vishnugupta himself composed the *sutra* as well as the *bhasya*”.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Bhasya corresponds to commentary.

PERCEPTION, POWER AND COMMUNICATIONS

Perception (Book One)

In matters of consultation and policy issues, which are applicable even today, Kautilya divides perception of top policy-makers into three categories – directly perceived, unperceived and inferred. This simple matter of training and education demands that ministers and advisers need to be truthful. Today, the kings, ministers and top civil servants work from spacious and air-conditioned offices in five star surroundings and move around in cars and aircrafts. They are far from the grassroots. They need to understand the people's expectations before laying down the policies for administration.

Power of State (Book Nine)

According to the *Arthashastra*, three powers or *saktis* operate in a State. They are *utsahasakti* (the personal energy and drive of the ruler), *prabhavasakti* (the power of army and treasury), and *mantrasakti* (the power of counsel and diplomacy). Kautilya maintains that *prabhavasakti* is more important than *utsahasakti* and that *mantrasakti* is the most important one. This priority is like music to foreign policy-makers and scholars in today's international system where policy recommendations or council and diplomacy are considered the best methods of managing all problems.

Communication and Writing Skills (Book Two)

Of interest in research methodology and excellence in writing or *lekhasampad* are *arthakrama* (proper order of presentation of a matter), *sambandha* (maintaining a connection from beginning to end), *paripurnata* (completeness), so that the meaning of the

written text is clear by stating reasons and by giving examples and illustrations, *madhurya* (sweetness) consisting of words conveying their meaning with ease, *audarya* (elevatedness) or absence of vulgar expressions and *spastatva* (clearness). Absence of charm, incorrect (use of) word, and confusion are to be avoided in writing. *Lekhadosa* or the principle defects are *vyaghata* (contradictions), *punarukta* (repetitions), and *apasabda* (the use of words and constructions not sanctioned by grammar).

MILITARY ISSUES THAT ARE RELEVANT TODAY

There are two ways of extracting relevant military-related issues that span the entire work of Kautilya. One way is to discuss a theme or a topic. The other way is to proceed with book by book examples. Two examples of leadership qualities and composition of the army as explained by Kautilya are given below. This is followed by examples of military issues from the contents of the *Arthashastra*.

Theme-Based Examples

Leadership Qualities: Kautilya's prescriptions for control over senses are wisdom fit for a manual of leadership and command not only for the military but for all leadership roles in the society.⁶¹ Self-discipline is emphasized in his treatise. Discipline is acquired and inborn. The intellect needs to have the following qualities - desire to learn, listen, retain, thoroughly understand, reflect and reject (false views). Chapter 6, section 3(i) states that control over the senses should be secured by giving up lust, anger, greed, pride, arrogance and foolhardiness. Chapter 6 Section 3(ii) deals with the execution of the control by cultivating intellect etc.

Composition of the Army in a Multicultural Country: Kautilya's explanation of troop composition of various classes and peculiarities like *maulabala* (standing army), *bhrtabala* (recruited locally for particular occasion), *srenibala* (band of soldiers from guilds, mercenaries), *mitrabala* (troops of the ally), *amitrabala* (enemy troops) and *ataribala* (forest tribes such as Sabaras,

⁶¹ See Book 1 Concerning the Topic of Training, Chapter 5 section 2 on Association with Elders on discipline.

Pulindas and others)⁶² has much in common with the composition of the Indian Army of today on the one class, fixed and mixed units of the arms, territorial army, home and hearth battalions, use of foreign troops such as Gorkhas, para-military forces and joint operations with Mukti Bahini in liberation of Bangladesh in 1971. Kautilya's suggestions on placing of best and weak troops in the conduct of battle are nuanced.⁶³

Similar ideas (without the knowledge of the existence of the *Arthashastra*) in a different context were given by Machiavelli in *The Prince* as mercenaries and private military organisations. The Italian Wars (1494-1559) are the gateway to the modern world of power politics. Fought by the kings of France and Spain for mastery over Italy, these wars raised questions that took political discussion to new levels, as seen in Machiavelli's notions of sovereignty and *raison d'état* (reason for the state). One major difference in the troop composition was that the Italian Wars were fought for the most part by volunteers and mercenaries.⁶⁴ Thus, Machiavelli on the basis of his experience of fragmented Italy comprising of city states called the mercenaries and the auxiliaries as useless and dangerous.⁶⁵ In the 21st century wars private security firms/contractors, bloated and more in strength than regular troops, as those of the US in the middle-east and

⁶² Book Nine, The Activity of the King About to March, Chapter Two Sections 137, 138 and 139. Here employment of heredity, the hired, the banded, the ally's, the alien and forest troops are mentioned. Also see R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Second edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010, pp.245-246.

⁶³ *Sutra* 10.5.41-52.

⁶⁴ See Book Review by Lauro Martines of *Italian Wars, 1494-1559: War, State and Society in Early Modern Europe*, Pearson. Paperback authored by Michael Mallett and Christine Shaw, *Time Literary Supplement* (ILS), August 10, 2012.

⁶⁵ See Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, translated by W.K. Marriot with an introduction by Dominic Baker-Smith, London, Everyman's Library, 1908, reprint 1992, Chapter Twelfth, p.55.

Afghanistan are a “force” by themselves. Machiavelli’s understanding may have some relevance to current wars of occupation which is worth a research.

Examples from Books

Book One: It deals with the topic of training and contains rules for waging war, stratagems and compulsory military training for the king. It has *sutras* on what is expected from a professional soldier, inspection of the military by the king on a regular basis, qualities of character, intelligence, and personal security cover. Good intelligence is also about credibility of source and reliability of information. Selection of persons was thoroughly done for credibility of the source or human intelligence. Regarding reliability of information Kautilya mentions in *sutra* 1.12-15-16 that “when there is agreement in the reports of three (spies), credence should be given”. This is similar to the instructions that any good instructor in military intelligence schools across the world would drill into the minds of his students.

Book Two: This book details the activities of the Heads of Departments and has chapters on construction of forts and obstacles and provisions for the army. It instructs the superintendent of armoury and the superintendent of horses regarding their duties and carries instruction for maintaining chariots and cavalry with similar chapters on war elephants including breeding and training. Chapter 33 is for chariots, foot soldiers and commandant of army and military training.

Book Five: The secret conduct in chapter three mentions the salaries of state servants including all ranks which are similar to the current Pay Commission. The most sophisticated and nuanced issues of strategy and higher direction of war are in Book Six - The Circle (of Kings) as the basis and Book Seven - The Six Measures of Foreign Policy. These six measures that a state can adopt in its relations with foreign states are peace/treaty, war/injury, staying quiet/remaining indifferent, marching/augmenting of power, seeking shelter/submitting to another and dual policy/restoring to peace (with one) and war

(with another). Book Nine - The Activity of the King about to March deals with preparation to be made before starting a military expedition and the precautions that have to be taken at the time. It also covers the idea of campaigning season. *Margasirsa* (November- December) is the month for starting on a campaign of long duration. *Chaitra* (March-April) for a campaign of medium duration and *Jyeshtha* (May-June) for short campaigns. The idea was to avoid monsoon months and to get a chance of seizing the un-harvested crops of the enemy.⁶⁶ During the Second World War, the German General Guderian gave the aphorism that a tank should not attack a tank but the soft infantry. Similarly, Kautilya in *sutra* 9.1.29 says: “For, a dog on land drags a crocodile, a crocodile in water drags a dog”.

The explanation of troop composition of various classes and peculiarities, employment of heredity, the hired, the banded, the allies, the alien and forest troops was based on a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic environment which exists even today in India. Book Ten – Concerning War deals with aspects of camps, marching, protection of troops, types/mode of fighting, morale, functions of the four arms (infantry, the cavalry, the chariot and elephants), battle arrays, and related matters.

Book Twelve: Concerning the weaker king, this book deals with what is today termed as asymmetric warfare or how a weak state can take on a powerful one. Book Thirteen – Means of Taking a Fort recommends not direct assault but stratagems. Sun Tzu also mentions similar dictums to beat an enemy without a fight. Even today, the heavy cost of direct assault on built-up area and urban centres is well-known to sensible military planners

⁶⁶ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Second Edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010, p.257. The Indian calendar, seasons and lunar months are given in A.L. Basham, *The Wonder that Was India*, London, Picador, Third Revised Edition with forward dated 2004 by Thomas R. Trautmann, 2004, Appendix III The Calendar, p.492. *Margasirsa* is also called *Agrahyana* which translates into campaigning season.

(as demonstrated in bypassing with town/city fighting for the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971). Chapter 5 is devoted to pacification of the conquered territory which is similar to what Michael Howard argues for - the two conditions for the use of military force to be decisive are: a) The defeated people must accept the fact of defeat and b) the defeated people need to reconcile to their defeat by being treated as partners in international order.⁶⁷

There is also fair play in battle. It is laid down in the *Arthashastra* (13.4.52) that when attacking the enemy in open battlefield or when storming a fort, care should be taken to see that the following categories of persons are not attacked by his troops: (1) *patita*, those who have fallen down, (2) *paranmukha*, those who have turned their back on the fight, (3) *abhipanna*, those who surrender, (4) *muktakesa*, those whose hair are untied (as a mark of submission), (5) *muktasatra*, those who have abandoned their weapons, (6) *bhayavirupa*, those whose appearance is changed through fear, and (7) *ayudhyamana*, those who are taking no part in the fight.⁶⁸ These dictums about the fair treatment of captured troops and people predates the European origins of International Humanitarian Law and the Law of Armed Conflict and may make the International Red Cross and Crescent proud.

Perhaps the most original contribution is on the big idea about the underlying philosophy on the types of conquest and war. Conquests are of three types: *dharmavijay* (just war), *lobbhavijay* (war of greed) and *asurvijay* (conquest like a demon). Who can deny that the conquests of Genghis Khan were not *asurvijay* and the brutal actions by the Germans and Soviet against each

⁶⁷ Michael Howard, "When are Wars Decisive?", *Survival*, Vol.41, No.1, Spring, 1999, pp.126-135.

⁶⁸ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Second Edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010, pp.259-260. Kangle rightly rejects A.L.Basham's contention that there was no fair play.

other was not demonic during Operation Barbarossa during World War II. Continental expansion of Europeans by military means and spread of diseases to indigenous people were just not resource war or colonization but they fit well in the idea of *lobbhavijay* (war of greed) bordering *asuravijay*.

According to Kautilya, *yuddh* or war was also of three kinds - *Prakash-yuddha*, (open fight) in place and time indicated, *Kuta-yuddha* (concealed fighting) involving use of tactics in battlefield and *Tusnim-yuddha* (silent fighting) implying the use of secret agents for enticing enemy officers or killing them.⁶⁹ Today, open fight or *Prakash-yuddha*, no longer exists even in space and cyber war. Book Fourteen - Concerning Secret Practices has four chapters consisting of secret practices for destruction of enemy troops, deception by occult practices, and counter – measures against injuries to own troops. The present issues of biological warfare and political assassination in the world of intelligence and counter intelligence has not gone away. Biological defence and military medicine need to learn from this. Unlike issues of foreign policy and theory of war, this book has not been studied and commented comprehensively by scholars. In the field of modern cyber warfare and strategic perception management including morphing (to mislead the people having a propensity for unscientific belief in occult practices) the concept of *Tusnim-Yuddha* is employed on the weak links of the adversery.

⁶⁹ R.P. Kangle, *ibid*, p.258.

II

SCHOLARLY CONTROVERSIES

Ever since the publication of the *Kautilya Arthashastra* by R. Shama Sastry in 1909, the question of its authorship and date has been the subject of a rather heated controversy. In his study R.P. Kangle even had a separate chapter on author and date.⁷⁰ A number of scholarly controversies continue in both public and scholarly imagination. First is on its age and the second about the author. But before that can be resolved the one big hurdle is absence of the of maps which needs to be discussed first.

Cartographic Gaps

Absence of maps is one major gap in geopolitical analysis of the *Arthashastra*. Only L.N. Rangarajan has made a hypothetical map 3 of the Kautilyan state and schematic diagrams to show relationship of the circle of kings. The makers of the *Historical Atlas of South Asia* note that as it relates to the Mauryan period all but a relatively small number of peoples, places, and the products cited are also known from other sources, and ascribing then by the publishers of the atlas to Mauryan period poses no insurmountable problem. Of particular interest is the fact that Kautilya extends geographical knowledge to the extremities of the subcontinent; westward to Vanayu (Arabia or Persia) and perhaps to Egypt, possibly signified by “Alakanda” (Alexandria); and eastward to Suvarnabhumi (Southeast Asia) and parts of China.⁷¹ The makers of the *Historical Atlas of South Asia* also

⁷⁰ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Second Edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010, Chapter Four, pp.59-115.

⁷¹ Joseph E. Schwartzberg, *A Historical Atlas of South Asia*, New York/ Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992, p.168.

note that despite its comprehensiveness, the *Arthashastra* yields only meager mappable data on political and economic conditions.⁷² In 2012, however, while working from text to map in a newly created atlas historians Irfan Habib and Faiz Habib have used the *Arthashastra* as a source of a map of economic geography from AD 1-300.⁷³

State and Progression of Maps

Arthashastra of Kautilya has no original maps. Till recently most books on ancient Indian history carried two maps of that era (Maps 1 and 2) derived mostly from Buddhist literature. Map 1 shows the 16 maha-janapds. It is clear from this map that Magadh was only in present-day South Bihar and the region, thus it was a small country. Map 2 is the later period of post Mauryan and Gupta period. Rangarajan, in his work specific to Kautilya inserted a full map of India shown as Map 3 of that period. Finally, the best effort is by Habib and Habib in 2012. Using the names of the places is Map 4 of India in 600- 320 BCE. In all maps a band of 500 years plus and minus has to be accepted in source documents to make the maps. This has to be seen in relation to the controversy of the date of *Arthashastra*. Maps 1 to 4 give an updated idea on the regions and the kings (states of that time) and the progression in map-making in recent times. It is unlikely that any better maps can now be made as most of the evidence has been used to prepare them (as quoted in source literature).

Date and Authorship

It is not unusual to have different views on authorship of ancient works. There are two views regarding the authorship of the

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Irfan Habib and Faiz Habib, *Atlas of Ancient Indian History*, Oxford University Press, 2012, Map9 and Book review by Gautam Chikermane, *Hindustan Times*, June 16, 2012.

Arthashastra. The first view is that Kautilya was a single person who wrote the treatise. The other view is that the *Arthashastra* is a compiled work by authors under the rubric of Kautilya.

The date and authorship of Kautilya and even his existence have been debated by scholars. Some doubt Kautilya's authorship on the ground that in the book Kautilya speaks in the third person. But this was a common practice. Kautilya's date is more controversial. Historians such as J. Jolly, Winternitz, Keith, R. Schmidt place him in the 3rd century AD. One of the reasons advanced by them for not accepting Kautilya as a minister of Chandragupta is that Megasthenese and Patanjali refer to the Mauryas and Chandragupta, but do not mention Kautilya. On the other hand Shamasastri, Ganapati Sastri, Kashi Prasad Jayaswal and several others regard him as Chandragupta Maurya's minister and counselor who wrote the political treatise *Arthashastra* in the 4th century BC.⁷⁴ According to Nilima Chakravarty, there is more evidence to prove that Kautilya lived around 4th century BC. For example, Kamandaka in his book on polity - *Nitisara* (which borrows from Kautilya), the Sanskrit writer Dandin in his *Dasakumar Carita*, Bana, and the author of Panchatantra state that Visnugupta composed the *Arthashastra*.⁷⁵

Dates for the *Arthashastra* vary according to historians from end 4th century BC to 3 AD. About its age even Indian scholars such as D.D. Kosambi and R.G. Bhandarkar placed the work in 3 AD. The conclusion of a workshop organized by the Indian Council of Historical Research was that the *Arthashastra* was a compilation made by a scholar Kautilya in 150 AD.⁷⁶ According

⁷⁴ Nilima Chakravarty, "Chapter VI Kautilya", *Indian Philosophy: The Pathfinders and the System Builders* (700 B.C. to 100 A.D.), New Delhi, Allied Publishers, 1992, p.166.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ L.N. Rangaraj gives reference of MLBD Newsletter, Vol. XI, No.10, October 1989, p.8; Motilal Banarasi Das, Delhi. See Rangarajan L.N., *The Arthashastra*, New Delhi, First published by Penguin Books India, 1992, p.6, note 10.

to Upinder Singh, the Mauryas (c.324-187 BCE) established an empire that extended over almost the entire sub-continent and even beyond it in the north-west.⁷⁷ The period in question is 600 to 312 BCE beginning with Bimbisara, Ajatasatru and Shishunag where the Magadh emerged victorious over the kingdoms/republic of Kashi, Kosal and Vrijis. The kingdom then gave way to usurper Mahapadma Nanda who inaugurated a short-lived dynasty till 321 BC. In 321 BC Chandargupta Maurya, a protégé of Kautilya who was his guide and mentor acquired the throne. Earlier he had successfully wrested the north-west India to exploit the power vacuum created by Alexander's departure.⁷⁸

On the popularity of the *Arthashastra*, not all seem very enthusiastic. D.D. Kosambi as a Marxist historian found that, “*Arthashastra* was never popular in any sense of the word, being at first a special treatise for princes and their high councilors, and later a rare book studied only by the most erudite, e.g, Dandin, Bana, and Rajasekhara.”⁷⁹ Indologist and author of *The Wonder That Was India*, A.L. Basham, in his foreword to Som Nath Dhar's work treats the *Arthashastra* as a compilation which is post-Mauryan. He gives his reason that it does not use the standard Mauryan official terminology. Further, the absence of Gupta terminology shows that the material was brought together

⁷⁷ Upinder Singh, *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2008, p.321.

⁷⁸ R.K. Mookerji, Chapter 1, “The Foundation of the Maurya Empire” in K.A. Nilakanta Sastri (ed.), *A Comprehensive History of India* Volume II, *The Mauryas and Satavahnas 325 BC – AD 300*, New Delhi, People's Publishing House, 1957, Second Imprint 1987, pp.1-19 and D.N. Jha, *Ancient India: An Introductory Outline*, New Delhi, People's Publishing House, 1977, pp.55-71.

⁷⁹ D.D. Kosambi, “The Text of the Arthashastra”, *Journal of the American Society*, Vol.78 (1958), in Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, compiled, edited, and introduced, *D.D. Kosambi: Combined Methods in Indology and Other Writings*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2002, pp.169-173.

and edited as a single text before the Gupta period. Basham's view is that some scholars have overemphasized the importance of *Arthashastra*. It has survived only in few manuscripts and nearly all of them have been discovered in South India. In this context it contrasts strikingly with *Kamandaka-nitisara* and certain other texts mainly religious in nature which contain instructions on kingship and the state, notably the seventh book of *Manava-dharmashastra* and parts of the *santi-parvan* of the Mahabharata.⁸⁰ It is not a work of political philosophy, like Plato's *Republic*, and is not a manual for the guidance of ministers and officials. Rather it is a book of practical advice to kings, on the best methods of governing and building up of their power.⁸¹

However, there is no denial for the value of the contents of the *Arthashastra* as a political treatise. U.N. Ghosal argues that the *Panchtantara* (AD100-400) – a manual of instruction for kings, composed by a learned Brahmin for the education of some ignorant princes at their father's request, is based on the idea of *Arthashastra*. The author begins his work with salutation to six makers of kingly science (*nripashastra*) namely Manu, Brihaspati, Sukra, Parasara, Vyas and Chanakya. The work of poet Bhasa, predecessor of Kalidas contains a number of references to political ideas which indicate a profound influence of *Arthashastra-Smritis* tradition.⁸²

Thomas R Trautmann in his *Kautilya and Arthashastra* (1971) conducted a computer-aided statistical analysis of the

⁸⁰ A.L. Basham, Foreword in Som Nath Dhar, *Kautilya and the Arthashastra*, New Delhi, Marwah Publications, 1981, pp.ix-xi.

⁸¹ A.L. Basham, Foreword in Som Nath Dhar, *Kautilya and the Arthashastra*, New Delhi, Marwah Publications, 1981, pp.ix-xi.

⁸² U.N. Ghosal, *A History of Indian Political Ideas*, London, Oxford University Press, 1959, p.270.

Arthashastra, focusing on the differences in the frequencies of ordinary, frequently occurring word such as *cha* (and) and *va* (or) in different books of the work and assumed that different word frequencies point to different authors. Professor Upinder Singh of Delhi University takes a middle path and concludes:

Although the *Arthashastra* does have a certain element of unity, it is very likely that there were later interpolations and remouldings. The crux of the problem is: In view of debate over its age and authorship and its normative nature, how is this text to be used as a source of history? There do not yet seem to be sufficient grounds to abandon the idea that *some* part of the text was composed in the Mauryan period by a person named Kautilya, allowing for later interpolations stretching into the early centuries CE. Since it has some moorings in the Mauryan period, the *Arthashastra* can be used as a source for certain aspects of the period. At the same, we have to be careful not to read the book as a description of Mauryan state or society.⁸³

Sutras 1.1.1 and 15.1.5 mention this single (treatise) on the Science of Politics has been prepared mostly bringing together (teachings of) as many treatises on the Science of Politics as have been composed by ancient teachers for the acquisition and protection of the earth. Sutra 15.1.73 ends with: “Seeing the manifold errors of the writers of commentaries on scientific treatises, Vishnugupta himself composed the *sutra* as well as the *bhasya*”. In sum, Kautilya admits that it is a compilation of all previous knowledge, and it is done by him. No one challenges the quality and depth of the masterpiece which is of a very high standard. The focus should be on the essence of the work rather than on issues of date or authorship.

⁸³ Upinder Singh, *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2008, p.324.

Leaving the authorship and date problem to be solved by historians, the next is the sources of manuscript. Before the discovery in 1905, it was thought that the text was lost. Vincent Smith in *Early History of India* which was published in 1904 claimed to have incorporated all sources. In his book the chapter on Mauryan dynasty relied on incomplete Greek and Roman sources. There was a thrill in January 1905 when an article by Shamasastri appeared in the *Indian Antiquary* published from Bombay.⁸⁴ Table 1 gives the status of manuscript and original commentaries on the *Arthashastra*.⁸⁵ It needs to be mentioned that palm leaf manuscript probably had a shelf life of 300 to 700 years and scribes had to copy the text over and over again. Even today libraries often treat a book as rare when it is 30 years old. It begins to wear out and thus reprints are the norm. Thus there is nothing unusual in Shamasastri mentioning that the manuscript may have been a century-and-half old.

⁸⁴ Devendra Swarup, "Introduction", in P. Mittal and Geeta Dua compiled, *Kautilya Arthashastra: Collection of Articles from the Indian Historical Quarterly, Indian Antiquary, Indian Culture, and Calcutta Review*, in Two Volumes, Delhi, Originals, 2010, Volume I, p.2.

⁸⁵ Dr Arvind Gupta, DG IDSA while in UK in October 2012 found the following 19th century work listed in the British Library including some before the 'discovery' by Shamasastri in 1905/06 as under:

- (a) Capn N. Chiefaie, *Kautilya*, Rome, 1825
- (b) *Laghucanikoraja Nitisara*, Gujarat India, Samvat 1924 (1867)
- (c) *Cunakya ... Kautilya*, Paris, 1887, Par E. Monsieur
- (d) *Morals of Chanakya*— Ramachandra Ghosh, Vidyavinoda, pp.12, S. Bhattacharya, Calcutta, 1891
- (e) *Brahat Chanakya*, Cuttack, Arunonody Press, 1911

It is presumed that Indologists and Sanskritists are already aware of the above works and if not these need to be procured by centres of Indology and Sanskrit.

Table 1: Key Sources of Manuscripts and Commentaries for English Translation of Kautilya's *Arthashastra*

Serial	Book Reference	Status
1	(a) Dr R. Shamastry, <i>Kautilya's Arthashastra</i> , first edition, Mysore, Mysore Printing and Publishing House, 1915 (book now in last, i.e., eighth edition, 1967)	<p>Introductory Notes by Dr J.F. Fleet of 1915: A manuscript of the text, and with it one of commentary on a small part of the it written by a writer named Bhattachasvamin, was handed over by a Pandit (1) of the Tanjore District to the Mysore Government Orient Library (2) (p.vi).</p> <p>Notes</p> <p>(1) Name of the person not mentioned by author or found so far in any known work.</p> <p>(2) Now it is called Orient Research Institute (ORI) as part of University of Mysore.</p>
	(b) Same book as above, preface to second edition, 1923	<p>Preface by author: A second edition of the text, based on two more manuscripts secured from the Oriental Manuscript Library at Madras, has been published. Two more commentaries on the work discovered:</p> <p>(a) <i>Nayachandrika</i> by Madhavayajvan.</p> <p>(b) A translation, or rather paraphrase, by a unknown author, in a mixture of Tamil and Malayalam language. Shamastry mentions that it will be a great boon if Mahamahopadhyaya T. Ganpati Sastri, Curator of Oriental Library Trivandrum, publishes the long advertised Sanskrit commentary, which he is said to be writing, p.(xxiii)(3).</p> <p>Notes</p> <p>(3) According to L.N. Rangarajan, there is an edition of the text with a complete Sanskrit commentary by T. Ganpati Sastri. See L.N. Rangarajan, <i>The Arthashastra</i>, New Delhi, Penguin Books, 1992, p.21. The book has been since written. For English version,</p>

Serial	Book Reference	Status
		<p>see the translation of the text by Dr. N.P. Unni, Part 1 and 2 (Adhikaranas), <i>The Arthasastra of Kautilya</i>, with the commentary of “Srimula” of Mahamahopadhyaya T. Ganpati Sastri, Delhi, New Bhartiya Book Corporation, 2006. On the inner cover, the blurb mentions that the work is an edited text in Trivandrum Sanskrit series between 1924 and 25 with his own complete Sanskrit commentary styled “Srimulam” (in three volumes) using all fragments of ancient Sanskrit commentaries as well as old Malayalam commentary (though incomplete) of 12th century AD. In all, in the English translation by Dr N.P. Unni seven commentaries are alluded to (six in Sanskrit and one in Malayalam) that is: 1) <i>Pratipadacandrika</i> by Bhattasvami whose text Shamasastri fixed in 1909(written on palm leave using <i>Grantha</i> script suggesting a Kerala origin), 2) <i>Nayacandrika</i> attributed to Vadikavicudamani Mahopadhyaya Sri Madhavayajavamisra from Kerala, 3) <i>Jayamangla</i>, 4) <i>Canakyaatika</i>, 5) <i>Nitinirniti</i> by Jain scholar Ararya Yogghama alias Mugdhavilasa, 6) <i>Bhasa Kautilyam</i> in Malayalam and 7) <i>Srimulam</i> from Trivandrum Sanskrit series by Ganapati Sastri (where many errors in Shamasastri’s work have been pointed out).</p>
2	<p>R.P. Kangle, <i>The Kautilya Arthasastra</i>, Parts 1, 2 and 3, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Part 1, 1st edition, 1960, second edition 1969</p>	<p>Manuscripts mentioned by author in Introduction:</p> <p>(a) D- Fragment of palm leave in Devanagiri characters in Jain Bhandar at Patan, North Gujarat discovered by Muni Jinavijayaji</p> <p>(b) G1- Palm leaves in <i>Grantha</i> character now in Mysore Government Oriental Library, No. 3240. Originally belonging to unnamed Pandit in Tanjore District and now acquired from him, along with a fragment of the <i>Pratipadapancika</i>, a Sanskrit commentary by</p>

Serial	Book Reference	Status
		<p>Bhattasvamin (link with serial 1(a) above in this table). Kangle mentions that Shamasastri thinks that it is not more than a century or two old.</p> <p>(c) G 2- Transcript in Devanagri made in 1907 from <i>Grantha</i> manuscript belonging to Oriental College Library, Madras</p> <p>(d) M1- Palm leaf manuscript in Malayalam characters originally belonging to Raja of Edappalli in former Travancore State, now in University Mss. Library, Trivandrum. No. C.O.2537. Basis of edition of <i>Arthasastra</i> by T. Ganapati Sastri in Trivandrum Sanskrit series.</p> <p>(e) M2-Transcription in Devanagri character made from Malayalam manuscript in 1905. It is No. D15608 of Government Oriental Mss. Library, Madras made from M1 above.</p> <p>(f) M3- Palm leaf manuscript in Malayalam characters originally belonging to Swamiar Mathan at Thiruvappu in Travancore State and now at University Mss Library Trivandrum, No.12771.</p> <p>(g) T – Government Oriental Mss Library, Madras, No. D 15454, transcript in Telegu characters made in 1906. Commentaries mentioned by Kangle are:</p> <p>(a) Cb- <i>Bhasavyakhyana</i>, commentary in Malayalam</p> <p>(b) Cj – fragmentary Sanskrit in Madras Oriental Mss Library (No. R.5208)</p> <p>(c) Cn – <i>Nayacandrika</i> in Sanskrit by Madhavayajvan- Punjab edition</p> <p>(d) Cnn – <i>Nitiniruti</i> by Yogghama</p> <p>(e) Cp - Sanskrit <i>Pratipadapancika</i> by Bhattasvamin</p> <p>(f) Cs – <i>Srimula</i>, Sanskrit commentary by T. Ganapati Sastri, Trivandrum Sanskrit Series</p>

III

GETTING KAUTILYA RIGHT

Key Concepts

Nilima Chakravarty, Professor of Philosophy, describes Kautilya in philosophical terms as a realist, a materialist who does not discuss the problem of ultimate reality, and accepts the material world as real. Like Kanada and Jamini, Kautilya does not mention intuition.⁸⁶

However, to proceed from the known to unknown, as in modern IR it is said that in conditions of anarchy at international level and absence of world governments the structure compels nations to converge towards a balance of power. Here anarchy can be related to the ancient Indian concept of *Matsya Nyaya* - big fish swallowing up the smaller ones. Kautilya maintains that before the rise of State, there prevailed a condition of “might is right”. The strong oppress the weak, as big fish swallows up the small ones. As characterised by the Contract Theory of the Origin of the State and Kingship, the people elected a king to put an end to the state of anarchy. They agreed to pay to the royal person taxes in return for order. Kautilya’s Contract Theory differs from the *Santi Parva*. According to Kautilya, the people chose the king, while in the *Santi Parva* the king was installed by some divine agency.⁸⁷ The king was given absolute authority of coercion and for awarding punishment to the wicked. But, Kautilya holds that unlimited coercive authority would defeat its very purpose and lead once again to *Matsya Nyaya*.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Nilima Chakravarty, “Conclusion Chapter XV”, *Indian Philosophy: The Pathfinders and the System Builders* (700 B.C. to 100 A.D.), New Delhi, Allied Publishers, 1992, p.333.

⁸⁷ Ibid, pp.183.-184.

⁸⁸ Ibid, pp.184.

In the theory of expansion and war, kings have a natural desire for expansion. The people look for security and peace, which Kautilya says, is possible under one leadership. These factors lead to conflict between different states. The king or swami sets out to conquer first as a *Chakravarti* and culminating in the concept of *Sarvabhauma*. Professor Nilima Chakravarty describes *Chakravarti* as the sovereign who rules over the entire circle (*mandala*) of dependent kingdoms and *Sarvabhauma* (Lord over *Sarvabhumi*)- literally the whole area.⁸⁹ Benoy Kumar Sarkar writing in the *American Political Science Review* in 1919 perhaps pioneered the “Hindu Theory of International Relation” basing on extant Hindu text including that of the newly-discovered *Arthashastra* by Shamasastri. He clearly spelt out that the doctrine of *mandala* underlines the idea of “balance of power”, pervades the entire speculation on the subject of international relations. The doctrine of *mandala* is essentially the doctrine of the *vijigesu* or *Siegfried*.⁹⁰ The theory of State in Sarkar’s understanding is thus reared on two diametrically opposite conceptions and dilemma:

1. The doctrine of *danda*, which puts an end to *Matsya Nyaya* among the *praja* or members of a single state.
2. The doctrine of *mandala*, which maintains an international *Matsya Nyaya* or the civil war of races in the human family.⁹¹

The State thus emerges from anarchy to plunge headlong into another. The doctrine of *mandala* as centrifugal force was counteracted by the centripetal tendencies of the doctrine of *sarva-bhauma* (the rule over the whole earth).⁹² With the rise of the *sarva-bhauma*, the *mandala* necessarily disappears.⁹³ In *sarva-*

⁸⁹ Ibid, p.210, note 198.

⁹⁰ Benoy Kumar Sarkar, “Hindu Theory of International Relations”, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 13, No.3, August 1919, pp.400-414. I thank Dr Navnita Chadha Behera in drawing my attention to this path breaking article.

⁹¹ Ibid, p.408.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

bhauma the king has all the other rulers related to him not as to the *vijigisu* of *mandala* i.e, not as to the ambitious storm-centre of an international sphere, but bound as to a *raja-raja* (king of kings) to whom allegiance is due as overlord. The doctrine of unity and concord is the final contribution of *nitisastras* to the philosophy of the state.⁹⁴

Philosophy and Ethics of War and Peace

Some recent work makes this study on Indian philosophy of war during various periods of history very exciting. B.N.S. Yadava's hypothesis is that the tradition of chivalry existed in ancient times as seen in two great epics the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Later, in the *Arthasastra* enthusiasm and valour were subordinated to diplomacy. In the post-Gupta period certain petty states indulged in constant fights for their defence and expansion. These fights together with parochial tendencies led to the rise of the Rajput clans. In the Middle Ages *kutayuddha* disappeared along with military tactics and diplomacy due to arrogant chivalry.⁹⁵ Professor Torkel Breeke from the Institute of Cultural Studies and Oriental Languages at the University of Oslo in Norway does not agree. Using text and logic as found in the Jain literature of Somadeva and others, he shows that Yadava's thesis is incorrect. What is of interest is that Torkel makes the use of the work of Somadeva Suri, a teacher belonging to Jainism. Regarding Jainism Torkel tells his readers, that this religious tradition of India is generally held to be the most peace-loving of all.⁹⁶ Torkel observes that two strands of thinking on

⁹⁴ Nilima Chakravarty, "Chapter VI Kautilya", *Indian Philosophy: The Pathfinders and the System Builders* (700 B.C. to 100 A.D.), New Delhi, Allied Publishers, 1992, p. 199.

⁹⁵ B.N.S. Yadava, "Chivalry and Warfare" in Jos J.L. Gommans and Dirk H.A. Kolff (eds.), *Warfare and Weaponry in South Asia, 1000-1800*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2001, pp.66-98.

⁹⁶ Torkel Brekke, "Between Prudence and Heroism: Ethics of War in Hindu Tradition", in Torkel Brekke, (ed.), *The Ethics of War in Asian Civilizations*, Abingdon, Oxon, 2006, p.131.

the ethics of war and warfare existed in the pre-Muslim India, namely, the deontological and the consequentialist tradition. “The deontological tradition is famously espoused in the *Bhagavadgita*. It asserts the right acts are goals in themselves quite apart from their results, as long as they are carried with the right intention. The consequentialist tradition is clearly formulated by Kautilya. It asserts that acts are good or bad only in respect of their results”.⁹⁷ “It seems”, Torkel argues, “safe to conclude that Indian tradition of consequentiality and prudent statecraft did not disappear during the Middle Ages. The thesis that all thought of *raison d’etat*, restrain in war, tactics and military cunning were overtaken by heroic chivalry celebrating death on battlefield is untenable in the light of Somadeva’s rational approach to the subject of war and the tradition that his writing presupposes.”⁹⁸ One may conclude that, “one tradition sees *dharma* as the fundamental part of human existence, whereas the other sees *artha* as the goal of all activity. One sees the war as an end and the other sees war as a mean”. This philosophy gives rise to many ideas for research in contemporary times like just war, and use or non-use of force.

This clearly shows that there is a fundamental difference in the philosophy of *Mahabharata* (deontological) and that in the *Arthashastra* (consequentialist). However, this aspect is not taught or discussed in great detail in the education system in India. Therefore, I find that many scholars and academics I meet and converse with (who are focused on security studies) vaguely combine the two philosophies to be the one and the same. Amitabh Matto, the President of the Indian Association of International Studies, in his presidential address in December 2012 argued that, “If all the books on war and peace were to *suddenly disappear from the world, and only the Mahabharata* remained, it would be good enough to capture almost all the possible

⁹⁷ Ibid, p.132.

⁹⁸ Ibid, pp.113-144.

debates on order, justice, force and the moral dilemma associated with choices that are made on these issues within the realm of international politics.⁹⁹ I disagree with Shri Mattoo in this regard. I feel the *Arthashastra* provides another facet to the philosophy of war and peace. Rather another book that would need to be added is the *Arthashastra*.

While the philosophy and moral would continue to be debated, what is essential is to simultaneously understand the text of the *Arthashastra*. To begin with I give below one example on foreign policy.

An Example to Understand Kautilyan Logic

One suggested way of understanding the text on foreign policy and conflict aspect of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* is by proceeding step-by-step to grasp the broad idea. The first concept that requires to be understood is that of the *Vijigishu* (would be conqueror). The defence of a state is the responsibility of the ruler. Kangle, clearly explains that the problem of the defence of a state is intimately bound up with its foreign relations. The state needs to be defended against foreign states. Foreign relations in the text are mainly discussed from the standpoint of the *vijigishu*. In other words, it seeks to show how a state, desirous of extending its influence and expanding its territory, should conduct its relations with foreign states.¹⁰⁰ As an example, I offer a mnemonic device in the form of an acronym or code UPSRVY with numbers 4-7-6-12-3-3. This is nothing but a glossary that is worth memorising for understanding one portion of the *Arthashastra* and then for its application to strategic issues in world politics. As crisply put by Professor Ranabir Chakravarti of the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU),

⁹⁹ Amitabh Mattoo, "An Indian Grammar for International Studies", *The Hindu*, December 11, 2012.

¹⁰⁰ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1986, pp.248-249.

it is the: “The Kautilyan concept of power (*Mandala*), centring around the would-be conqueror (*Vijigishu*) who uses six fold policy (*sadgunya*) to assume the position of a universal ruler (*Chakravarti*)”.¹⁰¹

1.”U”- Four Upayas (4)¹⁰²

The four *upayas* or approaches, expedient, device, ways of realising aim or object of diplomacy exist since the period of the epics and *Dharmasastra*.¹⁰³ The *upayas* are *sama-dana-bheda-danda* meaning conciliation, gifts, rupture and force. Means of overcoming opposition is based on overlapping in four *upayas* and six *gunas*. R.P. Kangle simplifies it when he says that *gunas* are concerned with foreign policy alone (see the paragraph 3 on *Sadgunya* given below), but *upayas* have a wider application, being useful in securing the submission of anyone. Interestingly, without any reference to Kautilya, the 20th century pioneer of Power Politics theory Hans J. Morgenthau in the chapter of different methods of balance of power mentions that, “The balance of power can be carried on either by diminishing the weight of the heavier scale or by increasing the weight of the lighter one”. His chapter has sections on divide and rule, compensation, armaments and alliances. The four sections are very close to *bheda* (divide and rule), *dana* (compensation), *danda* (armaments) and *sama* (alliance) of the *Arthashastra*.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Correspondence with author July 2012.

¹⁰² *Sutra* 7.14.11

¹⁰³ R. Bhaskaran, “The Four Upayas of Hindu Diplomacy”, in Charles Henry Alexandrowicz (ed.), *The Indian Year Book of International Affairs*, Vol.III, 1954, Madras, The Indian Study Group of International Affairs/ University of Madras, pp.126-130. Dikshitar notes that the *Purans* and later *niti* work like Kamadakiya add three more – *upekha*, *maya* and *indrajala*. *Maya* is an aspect of *danda* and *upekha* and *indrajala* aspects of *bheda*. See V.R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *War in Ancient India*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1944, reprint 1987, p.326 and p.335. In the monograph, to avoid complexities, I prefer to stick to the basic four.

¹⁰⁴ See Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, Calcutta, Scientific Book Agency, 3rd Indian edition, 1966, pp.178-203.

2. “P” Seven Prakrits or Constituent Elements (7)¹⁰⁵

Kautilya’s greatest contribution was to conceptualise the state as a set of functions. These functions require not merely an explanation of the government but a fuller definition of what constituted the state. This is first expressed in the Kautilya *Arthasastra*.¹⁰⁶ The seven constituent elements or *prakrits* are - *svamin* (king or ruler), *amatya* (body of ministers and structure of administration), *janapada/rastra* (territory being agriculturally fertile with mines, forest and pastures, water resources and communication system for trade), *durga/pura* (fort), *kesa* (treasury), *danda/bala* (army) and *mitra* (ally).¹⁰⁷

3. “S” Formula of Sadgunya or the Six Measures of Foreign Policy (6)¹⁰⁸

The formula of *Sadgunya* which sums up foreign policy consists of six *gunas* or policies. 1) *Samdhi*, making a treaty containing conditions or terms, that is, the policy of peace, 2) *Vigraha*, the policy of hostility, 3) *Asana*, the policy of remaining quiet (and not planning to march on an expedition), 4) *Yana*, marching on

¹⁰⁵ *Sutra* 6.1.1.

¹⁰⁶ Romila Thapar, *From Lineage to State in History and Beyond*, comprising *Interpreting Early India, Time as a Metaphor of History, Cultural Transactions and Early India* and *From Lineage to State*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp.121-122.

¹⁰⁷ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthasastra, Part 2: An English Translation with Critical and Explanatory Notes*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 2010, Book Six: The Circle of Kings, Chapter 1 - Excellence of Constituent Elements, Section 96, p.314. Initially for simplicity the number of 7 *prakrits* is sufficient for this mnemonic exercise. For a deeper dive into this, the permutation and combination of *prakrits* and 12 types of kingdoms of the *rajmandala* gives a total of 72. In *Arthasastra* (6.2.28) at page 320 of Vol.2 and page 250 of Vol 3 of Kangle it is further explained that as it relates to “P” or 7 *Prakrits* in sutras 28: “There are twelve constituents who are kings, sixty material constituents, total of seventy-two in all”. Sutra 29 then explains: “Each of these has its own peculiar excellence”. Kangle in his study or Vol.3 explains this in English: “Each of the twelve states has, besides the ruler, the other five *prakrits*, *amatya*, *janapada*, *durga*, *kesa* and *danda*, which are called *dravyaprakritis*, that is, seventy-two *prakrits* in all (6.2.28). Such is the theory.”

¹⁰⁸ *Sutra* 7.1.1-6.

an expedition, 5) *Samsraya*, seeking shelter with another king or in a fort, and 6) *Dvaidhibhava*, the double policy of *Samdhi* with one king and *Vigraha* with another at the same time.¹⁰⁹ The general rule is that when one is weaker than the enemy, *samdhi* is the policy to be followed; if stronger than him, then *vigraha*. If both are equal in power, *asana* is the right policy, but if one is very strong, *yana* should be resorted to. When one is very weak *samsraya* is necessary, while *dvaidhibhava* is the double policy of *Samdhi* with one king and *Vigraha* with another at the same time.¹¹⁰ This idea from *Arthashastra* continued in popular literature and stories such as in *Panchtantra*. In Book III concerning the war of crows and owls six options of *Sadgunya* (peace, war, change of base, entrenchment, alliance and duplicity) are demonstrated.¹¹¹

4. “R” - *Rajmandala* (12)¹¹²

The *rajmandala* (also alluded to as *mandala* theory) is perhaps the most misunderstood and loosely used concept of the *Arthashastra*. L.N. Rangarajan in his work on *Kautilya: The Arthashastra* in the preface mentions:

Most people know little of what Kautilya actually said in the *Arthashastra*. The only thing they can recall is the ‘*mandala*’ theory, based on the principles: ‘Every neighbouring state is an enemy and the enemy’s enemy is a friend.’¹¹³

The formula of *Sadgunya* or the six concepts of foreign policy (paragraph 3 above) is associated with, though it does not necessarily presuppose, the theory of *rajmandala* or circle of kings.

¹⁰⁹ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1986, p.251.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p.251.

¹¹¹ *Panchtantra*, translated from Sanskrit by Arthur W. Ryder, New Delhi, Jaico Publications, 1949, 34th edition 2011, p.234.

¹¹² *Sutra* 6.2.13-29.

¹¹³ L.N. Rangarajan, *The Arthashastra*, New Delhi, Penguin Books, 1992, Preface, p.viii.

This *mandala* is said to consist of twelve kings or states. The twelve kings are: (1) *vijigisu* (the would be conqueror); (2) *ari* (the enemy); (3) *mitra* (the *vijigisu*'s ally); (4) *arimitra* (ally of enemy); (5) *mitramitra* (friend of ally); (6) *arimitramitra* (ally of enemy's friend); (7) *parasnigraba* (enemy in the rear of the *vijigisu*), (8) *akeranda* (*vijigisu*'s ally in the rear), (9) *parasnigrabasara* (ally of *parasnigraba*), (10) *akerandasara* (ally of *akeranda*), (11) *madhyama* (middle king bordering both *vijigisu* and the *ari*) and (12) *udasina* (lying outside, indifferent / neutral, more powerful than *vijigisu*, *ari* and *madhyama*).¹¹⁴

According to an alternative view there are four principle states-*vijigisu*, *ari*, *madhyama* and *udasina*. Each has a *mitra* (ally) and *mitramitra* (ally's ally) thus making it twelve kings. The first view is implied. However it is clarified that number 12 does not imply that so many states are absolutely necessary for a *mandala*; it refers rather to the number of possible relationships that may arise when a state tries to establish its supremacy over a number of neighbouring states. Kangle (2010) refers to W.Rubin in the article "Inter-State Relations in Ancient India and Kautilya's *Arthasastra*" in *Indian Year-Book of International Affairs*, Vol. IV (Madras, 1955) and argues that this view is obviously due to misunderstanding of the text. According to Rubin the doctrine of *mandala* was, in its origin, related to the growth of the power of Magadha. According to M.V. Krishna Rao in *Studies in Kautilya* (1958), Kamandaka the great follower of Kautilyan school of diplomacy likens the *mandala* to the outer rim of the wheel connecting to the spokes radiating from the axle.

It needs to be pointed out that because of an incorrect understanding of the text of the *Arthasastra* even today, it has been almost assumed by some (like a law) that every neighbouring state is an enemy and the enemy's enemy is a

¹¹⁴ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthasastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Second edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010, p. 248.

friend. In 1952 K.A. Nilankata Sastri the leading historian of independent India had to point out that the problem lies in this tedious theorising of scholars as there is little reference to reality of interstate relations.¹¹⁵ Now this needs to be corrected and R.P. Kangle's study of 1960s has succeeded in doing that. Kangle refers to Book 7, Chapter 18 and sutra 29:¹¹⁶

The neighbouring princes, *samantas*, may normally be supposed to be hostile. But it is possible that some may have a friendly feeling towards the *vijigishu*, while others may even be subservient to him. Neighbouring states thus fall in three categories, *aribhavin*, *mitrabhavin* and *bhrytyabhavin*.¹¹⁷

Therefore, scholars now need to take note of this and revisit and revise the wrong notion of all neighbours as enemies.

5. “V” Vijay or Conquest (3)¹¹⁸ and “Y” Yuddha or War (3)¹¹⁹

Conquest is of three types: *dharmavijay* (righteous), *lobbhavijay* (greedy) and *asuravijay* (demoniacal).¹²⁰ The term *dharmavijay* was an innovation in Kautilya's time. A *dharmavijay* is a just conqueror who is satisfied with mere obeisance.¹²¹

¹¹⁵ K.A. Nilankanta Sastri, “International Law and Relations in Ancient India”, in Charles Henry Alexandrowicz (ed.), *The Indian Year Book of International Affairs*, The India Study Group of Interantional Affairs, University of Madras, Madras, 1952, pp.97-109

¹¹⁶ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 2: An English Translation With Critical and Explanatory Notes*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1986, p.382.

¹¹⁷ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1986, p.250. *Aribhavin* (of hostile disposition), *mitrabhavin* (of friendly disposition and *bhrytyabhavin* (of brotherly disposition).

¹¹⁸ *Sutra* 12.1.10.

¹¹⁹ *Sutra* 7.6.40-41 and 10.3.1-2.

¹²⁰ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 2: An English Translation With Critical and Explanatory Notes*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1986, Book Twelve, Chapter One, Sutar 10, p.460.

¹²¹ Nilima Chakravarty, “Chapter VI Kautilya”, *Indian Philosophy: The Pathfinders and the System Builders* (700 B.C. to 100 A.D.), New Delhi, Allied Publishers, 1992, p.197.

Yuddha or war is also of three kinds: *Prakash-yuddha*, 'open fight' at a place and time indicated; *Kuta-yuddha* 'concealed warfare' involving use of tactics in battlefield and *Tusnim-yuddha* 'silent fighting' implying the use of secret agents for enticing enemy officers or killing them.¹²² It is stated that when the *vijigisu* is superior in strength, and the season and terrain are favourable, he should resort to open warfare. If the *vijigisu* is not superior to enemy, and the terrain and season are unfavourable *kuta yuddha* is recommended. Examples are attacking when the enemy is vulnerable; feigning retreat and drawing him into battle or night attack. Kangle highlights that it is clear that *Kuta-Yuddha* refers to the commonly recognised tactics of battlefield and no objection can be taken to it from the military point of view.¹²³

I have demonstrated one simple way of reviving the use of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* for conceptualising knowledge as it relates to foreign policy. This method once mastered can also be applied for understanding contemporary issues of world politics and international relations with modification.. In brief the step-wise process is that after understanding the idea of *vijigisu* (would be conqueror), the first step or ideas such as 4 *Upayas*, 7 *Prakritis*, 6 *Sadgunyas*, 12 *Rajmandalas*, 3 *Vijays* and 3 *Yuddhas* need to be internalised using the mnemonic acronym of UPSRVY (4-7-6-12-3-3). The mnemonic method so discussed may provide one simple way of using the text. But that is only possible if various institutions, pedagogical skills, acceptance of his work for study in academic curricula including training of civil servants/military officers etc are organised with care.

The next step is to try and apply the concepts to events. It will be seen that most answers emerge as common sense, which the mnemonic acronym will facilitate. Steadily other aspects of the *Arthashastra* can be mastered by such mind games. Care needs to

¹²² R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1986, p.258.

¹²³ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1986, pp.258-259.

be taken to constantly refer to the original *sutra*. This could be used to advantage for contingency planning with scenarios and variables.

Applications of Kautilyan Logic to Explain World Events

In 1919, when American and European IR had not taken roots and this field was new, Binoy Kumar Sarkar explained world events in the grammar and logic of *Arthashastra*. Some examples:

- (a) According to the Kautilyan doctrine of *mandala*, the “natural enemies” of France engaged in studying the *modus operandi* for “the next war” would be Spain, England and Germany, and her “natural allies” Portugal, Scotland, Ireland and Russia.
- (b) A French *vijigisu*, e.g. a Napoleon, embarking on a war with Germany, should begin by taking steps to keep his “rear safe”. With this object he should have Spain attacked by Portugal, and manage to play off anti-English forces in Ireland and Scotland in such a manner that England may be preoccupied at home and unable to attack France in support of Germany.

Of course history tells us that events leading to the Second World War did not unfold the way explained, but Sarkar was not predicting but explaining the concept.

Kangle’s study gives the example of how C.W Gurner has shown the “fortress policy” recommended in Chapter 7.15 of the *Arthashastra* was actually pursued by Great Britain during the Second World War, when it turned itself into an island fortress and successfully withstood the onslaught of the more powerful Germans, making efforts meanwhile to gain strength and obtain new allies.¹²⁴ In his essay published in 1987 K.P. Mishra argues

¹²⁴ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1986, p.264.

that, “China (in dealing with its South East Asian neighbours), it seems, has learnt some lessons from *Kautilya*”. But no explanation is provided by K.P. Mishra as to why he has referred to Kautilya. He assumes that readers will connect and understand the reference to Kautilya.¹²⁵

As the *Arthasastra* and Kautilya do not even reside in a standard English dictionary the way Machiavelli and Hobbes do, it is clear that the most difficult part may be to explain contemporary events in Kautilyan way. Rather, there can never be a “secret” way of success in world politics. No philosopher or political theorist can ever provide a silver bullet or an assassin’s maze. Only sound principles of statecraft are identified. Some Indian authors have made valiant attempts but these are not convincing as either they are a counterfactual analysis of past events¹²⁶ or they explain a strategic phenomenon or conflict with a very broad brush.¹²⁷ The one reason may be that there is no study of Indology and the *Arthasastra* in India in a scientific manner. In a workshop on Kautilya held in October 2012 this aspect was rightly pointed out by Professor Santosh Kumar Shukla from Special Centre for Sanskrit Studies, JNU. He argued that the absence of the study of the text (leaving aside Sanskritists) by political scientists and security experts is one main reason for the work still laying mostly unknown and understudied in the academic and policy world at both national and international level.¹²⁸ It is for this reason that the rare work on *Arthasastra* hardly finds a mention in the *New York Review of Books* or the *Times Literary Supplement*.

¹²⁵ K.P. Mishra, “Indo-China, ASEAN and Big Powers” in T.N. Kaul (ed.), *India and Indochina: Perspectives of Cooperation*, New Delhi, Patript Publishers, 1987, pp.52-77.

¹²⁶ K.P. Fabian, *Diplomacy: Indian Style*, New Delhi, Har-Anand, 2012.

¹²⁷ Brigadier Chandra B. Khanduri, “Chapter 1 – Kautilya, The Great Visionary: His Contribution to Art of War and It’s Relevance”, *Generals and Strategists*, New Delhi, Patriot Publishers, 1992, pp.3-17.

¹²⁸ See YOUTUBE presentation at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMmQrn58BnA&list=PLrR2OTOrNPriTv3m5lhkIOzTAXtqrFMk&index=16>

The Kautilyan ideas have been used well to explain aspects of internal security. Lt Gen V.K. Ahluwalia (Retd) a former Army Commander, Central Command in his study of the Left Wing Extremism or Naxal or Maoists insurgency in Central India quotes Kautilya thus: “A strong enemy can be overcome by the union of large numbers, just as grass through its collectiveness wards off erosion caused by heavy rainfall.”¹²⁹ Ahluwalia argues that the Maoists besides being influenced by the penetrating insights of Mao Tse-Tung have also been influenced by Kautilyan formulation.¹³⁰ It is clear that metaphors, aphorism and sayings from traditional literature do give a good idea of a problem. Kautilyan vocabulary has to be studied thoroughly in order to understand the contemporary world events.

Kautilyan Vocabulary

Some current events on conflict which can be spoken in Kautilyan logic and grammar may be: 1. Geopolitical power struggle between regional *vijigishus* (would be regional power) like Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Egypt with the US as *madhyamika* and many countries as *Udasina*. 2. Similarly, how in BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) grouping on climate change negotiations the four countries are allied against the developed countries and trying to stall the *vijigishu* attitude of the industrial countries (Annex I) of perpetuating economic imperialism by not cutting emission for worthwhile mitigation. 3. How the concept of *chakravarti* as it relates to the Arctic region is developing between the Arctic Five countries - the US, Canada, the Netherlands (Greenland), Norway and the Russian Federation (all neighbours and likely competitors if not *aris*). 4.

¹²⁹ V.K. Ahluwalia, “Strategy and Tactics of the Indian Maoists: An Analysis”, *Strategic Analysis*, Vol.36, No.5, September-October 2012, p.725. Ahluwalia has not referred to any root sutra of the *Arthashastra*, but in his end note 7 has used a resource from the net: Ajaytaos’ - E Book – Great Masters\Chanakya. It was not possible to access the source on the net. It would have been better if the author had clarified whether the saying is a commentary and then the context with referring to the exact book and chapter of the *Arthashastra*.

¹³⁰ V.K. Ahluwalia, *ibid*, p.725.

The idea of strategic autonomy does not appear to be sound. All countries need an ally. Thus in the *Prakrits*, or the seven constituent elements of the state the seventh element is an ally. 5. Just War/*Dharm Yudh* and Liberation of Bangladesh in 1971. With excellent diplomatic methods and negotiations India overcame a number of hurdles in the politics of the UN system during all stages. After the surrender of Pakistani troops India did not allow UN's role to be thrust upon it. India favoured direct negotiations with Pakistan and Bangladesh. It needs to be remembered that India never took undue advantage of over 90,000 Pakistani prisoners of war including civilians who were repatriated unilaterally after the Simla Agreement in 1972. According to the Indian tradition the war was a *dharmavijay* (just war). In other words, it was *jus ad bellum* (the Justice of Resort to War) and its conduct *jus in bello* (the justice of the conduct of war).

It is important to follow how ideas and concepts spread out from India in all directions in ancient times which are briefly explained below.

Spread to East and West

It needs to be emphasized and highlighted that the spread of ideas based on *Arthashastra* from India across the ancient world is well-established to south-east Asia and the West.

Influence in South-East Asia

Here it also needs to be appreciated that concepts such as *mandala* and other related ideas had traveled to South-east Asia. Between 200 BC and 500 AD in south-east Asia people first settled in large nucleated communities and organized themselves into small warring polities. *Mandala* to be sure means alliance based spheres of influence.¹³¹ In Thailand the concept of

¹³¹ Miriam T. Stark, "Pre-Angkorian and Angkorian Cambodia," in Ian Glover and Peter Bellwood (ed.), *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, London/New York, Routledge, 2004, p.96.

Chakravartin indicates that *chakra* or wheel (a symbol of sovereignty) of state chariot rolls everywhere without obstruction. It is believed that the Mauryas developed the concept of *Chakravartin*, which was incorporated into the Buddhist tradition.¹³² Early Indonesian societies which adopted either Buddhism or Hinduism shared fundamental assumption about ideal political structure. Inscriptions refer to kingdoms as *mandalas*, a Sanskrit word with a wide range of meaning. Its simplest connotation is a circle.¹³³ One founding inscription engraved at Palembang by the ruler of Srivijaya in the 680s, refers to the outlying polities called *mandala* that he claimed to have brought under his control.¹³⁴ In Alan Chong's explanation, "Prior to European colonisation of south-east Asia, political authority was founded upon concertina-like patterns of religiously derived centres of virtues and majesty. Hindu and Buddhist beliefs partly explained maritime empires such as Srivijaya and Mataram based on large swaths of present-day Malaysia and Indonesia"¹³⁵

Spreading of Indian Ideas to the West

Herbert H. Gowen in 1929, two decades after the 'discovery' of the text, traced how *niti* of the old Indian rulers as embodied in such treatises, became in course of time a system coveted and adopted by foreign potentates. It was exported chiefly in

¹³² Phasook Indrawooth, "The Archaeology of Early Buddhist Kingdom of Thailand" in Ian Glover and Peter Bellwood (eds.), *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, London/New York, Routledge, 2004, p.137.

¹³³ John N. Miksic, "The Classical Cultures of Indonesia" in Ian Glover and Peter Bellwood (ed.), *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, London/New York, Routledge, 2004, p.239.

¹³⁴ Pierre-Yves Manguin, "The Archaeology of Early Maritime Polities of Southeast Asia," in Ian Glover and Peter Bellwood (ed.), *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, London/New York, Routledge, 2004, p.304.

¹³⁵ Alan Chong, "A Society of the Weak, the Medium and the Great: Southeast Asia's Lessons in Building Soft Community among States", in Alexander Astrov (ed.), *The Great Power (mis) Management: The Russian- Georgia War and its Implications for Global Political Order*, Surrey, Ashgate, 2011, p.140.

the form of *Beast Fables* which after the decline of Buddhism became a manual par excellence of statecraft for lands outside as well as within the bounds of the peninsula. As Buddhism waned, the collection became *nitishastra*, instead of *jatakas*, and such books as the *Panchatantra* and the *Hitopadesha* were compiled not as *sutras* or as literature of entertainment, but books of instructions for the princes.¹³⁶ Great Sassanid Ruler Khosru Nushirwan's Ambassador was unable to get possession of this age-old wisdom. He conceived the plan of learning them tale by tale, and so transmitted to Persia what was regarded as the very quintessence of political wisdom. This Persian collection, known as *Qalila* and *Dimnah*, passed on to Arabia and later with the spread of Islam to North Africa, Spain and Provence.¹³⁷ In a chapter devoted to India's relations with the Arab world former Minister of State for External Affairs, Shashi Tharoor, points out: "Over centuries, stories from the Hindu classic the *Panchatantra* have been re-told across the Arab and Greek world, blending with the Fables of Aesop and stories from *Alf Laila wa Laila* or *Arabian Nights*."¹³⁸

If the *Arthashastra* was so rich in content and a classical work, why is it not in the mainstream? The next chapter gives reasons that will throw some light on this matter.

¹³⁶ Herbert H. Gowen, "The Indian Machiavelli or Political Theory in India Two Thousand Years Ago", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol.44, No.2, June, 1929, pp.173-192.

¹³⁷ Ibid. In pages of Wikipedia scholars have noted the strong similarity between a few of the stories in *The Panchatantra* and *Aesop's Fables*.

¹³⁸ Shashi Tharoor, *Pax Indica: India and the World of the 21st Century*, New Delhi, Allen Lane/Pengjun, 2012, p.161.

IV REASONS RESPONSIBLE FOR NEGLECT OF THE STUDY OF KAUTILYA

Although rich in ideas and wide in coverage, the study and use of the knowledge of *Arthashastra* in the land of its origin is extremely underdeveloped. What could be the reason for this state of affairs? Some reasons for the neglect of the study of Kautilya and its implications are given below:

A-Historic Nature of the Indian Civilization and Oral Tradition

Sources of pre-colonial history in India lie scattered in several archives in many archaic languages and disparate data is available from many (often uncertain) sources and from various disciplines such as religion, philology, linguistics, literature, art, folklore, archaeology, numismatics, epigraphy and metallurgy.¹³⁹ Sanskrit word *itibas* is explained as *iti ha asa* (so indeed it was). According to Sayana, *itibas* consists of stories of gods and demons while *purans* refers to stories of origin and creation of the world. It is necessary to remember that the word *itibasa* found in Vedic texts should not be translated as “history” in the modern sense. The word is better translated as “tale” or “legend”.¹⁴⁰ If this is one fundamental conception it is no surprise that there is little purely historical information about Chanakya or for that matter any proper battle accounts.

¹³⁹ David Ludden, “History (Pre-Colonial)”, in Joseph W. Elder, Edward C. Dimock, Jr and Ainslie T. Embree (eds.), *India's Worlds and U.S. Scholars 1947-1997*, New Delhi, American Institute of Indian Studies, Manohar Publishers, 1998, pp.265-282.

¹⁴⁰ Maitreyee Deshpande, “Concept of History in Vedic Ritual”, *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Pune (ABORI), Vol XC, 2009, pp.171-176.

Nirad C. Chaudhuri in his last book published in 1997 saw the current state of affairs as a social and cultural decadence. During the periods of the Hindu and Muslim rule political regimes in India had no organic relationship with the general life of the people:

Thus the historic political regimes of ancient Hindu India left no trace or memory of their existence among the people. Before the European Orientalists discovered the historical ancient India, the Indian people knew nothing of Chandragupta and Asoka and the Maurya dynasty, of Chandragupta, Samudragupta and the Gupta dynasty, of Harsha, of Palas of Bengal, the Pratiharas of upper India, and the Rashtrakutas of the Deccan. The entire historic Hindu rule left only two names, Vikramaditya and Bhoja-Raja, to be applied to any great ruler. For the rest, the legends embodied in two epics, the Ramayana and Mahabharata became the only source of political life of ancient Hindus. Rama's rule was the Hindu Pax Britannica, and conflict between the Kurus and the Pandavs the civil war par-excellence.¹⁴¹

Thomas R Trautmann has identified four distinct accounts of the ancient Chankya- Chandragupta *katha* (legend) accounts: Buddhist version *Mahavamsa*¹⁴² and its commentary in Pali language, Jain version in *Vamsatthappakasini*, found in *Parisistaparvan* by Hemachandra, Kashmir version *Kathasaritasagara* by Somadeva, *Brihat- Katha-Manjari* by Ksemendra and Vishakhadatta's version in the Sanskrit play *Mudrarakshasa*.¹⁴³ Elements common to these legends are i) The

¹⁴¹ Nirad C. Chaudhuri, *Three Horsemen of the New Apocalypse*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1997, p.118.

¹⁴² Historicity of the work is established by the fact that Chandragupta's councilor Chanaka (Chanakya) is also known. See entry against "The Mahavamsa" authored by Mahanama in N.K. Singh and B. Barua (eds.), *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Pali Literature* in Two Volumes, Delhi, Global Vision Publishing House, 2003, Volume I, p.309.

¹⁴³ Wikipedia's page on Chanakya at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chanakya?oldid=0>

King Dhana Nanda insults Chanakya, prompting Chanakya to swear revenge and destroy the Nanda Empire, ii) Chanakya searches for one worthy successor to the Nanda and finds young Chandargupta Maurya and iii) With help of some allies, Chanakya and Chadargupta bring down Nanda empire, often using manipulative and secret means.¹⁴⁴

Regarding the debates by Indologists on whether the *Arthasastra* is of mid 3rd century BC or of a later date of 3rd century AD, Shamasastri laments that it is a painful truth that Indian writers cared more for logic than for history.¹⁴⁵

The oral tradition which was mastered by Brahmins led to the concept of guru shishya *parampara* (tradition) and begot the need to learn by rote. While this paper is not an analysis of the system of learning, it is simply to indicate that due to this a-historicity, even in 21st century, the periods are not very clear. American scholar Francis Fukuyama argues that the Brahmanism's commitment to oral transmission of the Vedas reinforced their own social supremacy. The Brahmins strongly resisted the introduction of writing and technology related to it. Chinese travelers to India in fifth and seventh AD looking for sources of Buddhist tradition were hard-pressed to find any written document. Long after both the Chinese and Europeans had switched to writing on parchment, Indians were the slowest and the last ones to adopt paper when the technology became available in eleventh century. In contrast the Shang Dynasty onward, Chinese rulers used the written word to communicate orders, record laws, keep accounts, and write detailed political histories.¹⁴⁶ As one important digression, however here much

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ R. Shamasastri, *Kantilya's Arthasastra*, Mysore, Mysore Printing and Publishing House, 1967, Preface to Third Edition (1929), p.xxxi.

¹⁴⁶ Francis Fukuyama, *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution*, London, Profile books, 2011, pp.171-172. Some Indian historians give the 13th century as the period when Indians adopted paper printing technology. I thank Nupur Brahma in bringing this to my notice.

care needs to be taken in attacking the guru-shishya tradition. American authors in the positivist mould are quick to jump to conclusion and then Indians ape them without inquiry. A careful reading of white American scholars in America itself it is clear that Sanskrit scholars such as W. Norman Brown and Daniel H.H. Ingalls realized the importance of this guru-shishya tradition and set examples by spending years in India studying daily at the feet of *pandits* and *sastrins* at many of the centres for Sanskrit learning.¹⁴⁷

Then where is the continued or extant strength of ancient Indian wisdom if such is the a-historic nature of the people in first order issues such as foreign policy? The answer is from psychology. According to JN Dixit, impact of Chanakyan thought on India's foreign policy is at the subconscious level.¹⁴⁸ This subconscious part is also borne out with my personal observations in attending various seminars in India and most of them at the IDSA. It is my observation that in the second decade of 21st century the Indian strategic thinkers often quote the *Arthashastra*. For them Indian strategic thinking is highly informed by the *Arthashastra* and *Panchtantra*. This trend is a sharp contrast to the strategic thinking of the last decade and early periods of 21st century when it was fashionable to refer to Tanham's work (Tanham, 1996). Tanham's specious discourse on lack of strategic thinking in Indians "pierced the whole notion of strategic culture at its heart".¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Robert P. Goldman, "Sanskrit", in Joseph W. Elder, Edward C. Dimock, Jr and Ainslie T. Embree (eds.), *India's Worlds and U.S. Scholars 1947-1997*, New Delhi, Manohar Publishers, 1998, pp. 505-506.

¹⁴⁸ J. N. Dixit, *Makers of India's Foreign Policy: Raja Ram Mohan Roy to Yashwant Sinha*, New Delhi, HarperCollins, 2004, p.39.

¹⁴⁹ Sociologist need to do more research on this herd mentality in most Indian academics, scholars and officials from the government. Initially, ad nauseam Samuel Huntington the American neocon's hypothesis of "Clash of Civilizations" was taken as gospel truth. Similarly, the impact like that of Tanham continues as in 'magnetic hysteresis' (from an example from physics).

B-No Proper Battle Accounts Available from Indian Sources and Over-Reliance on Greek and Graeco-Roman Sources

One of the worst disadvantages that Indian ancient historiography suffers in chronicling about its warfare is absence of historical record and maps. For instance, all accounts of the famous Sikandar-Porus encounters or Alexander's battle with Porus on the banks of the River Hydaspes (Jhelum River) in 326 BC are to be found in non-Indian sources.¹⁵⁰ Accordingly, scholars then take that as final evidence and base their arguments on the only literature they can lay their hands on and then infer.¹⁵¹ For example, in his research on the war between Alexander and Porus, Rosen focuses on caste-divide and attributes it to paint a picture of Porus' defeat. In contrast Sir Jadunath Sarkar does not mention caste-divide as a reason for Porus' defeat, but acknowledges superior battle tactics and military effectiveness of Alexander. Nor do Arrrian, Q. Curtius, Diodoros, Plutarch and Justin mention the caste system of the army of Porus in the battle.¹⁵² Both Rosen and Sarkar use the same Greek sources but show marked differences in their conclusions. This sort of work shows a clear bias in the writings of certain historians and the readers need to be cautioned about the bias.

¹⁵⁰ Jadunath Sarkar, "Chapter II- Alexander and Poros", *Military History of India*, New Delhi, Oriental Longman, 1960, Second Impression, 1969, p.6.

¹⁵¹ See Greek accounts: Arrian, *The Campaigns of Alexander*, trans. Aubrey de Selignort, London, Penguin, 1971; J.W. M'Crindle, *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great as Described by Arrrian, Q Curtius, Diodoros, Plutarch and Justin*, first published 1896 followed by undated second edition, reproduced, New Delhi, Cosmo Publications, 1983; and Plutarch, *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, trans. John Dryden, New York, Modern Library. n.d. All three books are source documents for the story of the battles in Stephen Peter Rosen, *India and Its Armies: Societies and Military Power*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, pp.79-81.

¹⁵² J.W. M'Crindle, *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great as Described by Arrrian, Q Curtius, Diodoros, Plutarch and Justin*, first published 1896 followed by undated second edition, reproduced, New Delhi, Cosmo Publications, 1983.

Post the conquest of Alexander no battle accounts are to be found of how Chandragupta Maurya consolidated the frontier and then defeated the Nandas by capturing the capital city Patliputra. So much is this “grey area” in battle history even of later periods that even though the historian Michael S. Neiberg pays a compliment to state that one historian called Samudra Gupta (ruled 330-375) like Napoleon of India,¹⁵³ yet no proper book has been found based on historical records that could verify this praise.

Finally, although Indians have no proper sources, the Greek sources are one-sided. One fact which is not well-known in public domain is that the accounts of the Greek Megasthenes who was an Ambassador in the court of Sandrcotos or Chadragupta Maurya are lost. His *Indica* has not survived, but fragments are preserved in later Greek and Latin works, the earliest and most important of which are those of Diodoros, Strabo, Arrian and Pliny.¹⁵⁴ Scholars also need to be conscious that Greek accounts may be influenced by their propensity for exaggeration. M’Crimdile in his introduction begins by a quote from Professor Freeman’s *Historical Essay* where barring Arrian, who according to Professor Freeman has discreet judgment, the others are described as: Diodoros - honest and stupid, Plutarch - does not write history, lives on anecdotes, Justin - feeble and a careless epitomizer and, Curtis - a romance writer.¹⁵⁵ One of our own modern historian now points out that, “The

¹⁵³ Michael S. Neiberg, *Warfare in World History*, London/New York, Routledge, 2001, p.13. I thank Dr Chander Sundaram the military historian in recommending this book to me.

¹⁵⁴ Upinder Singh, *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2008, pp.324-326.

¹⁵⁵ J.W. M’Crimdile, *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great as Described by Arrian, Q Curtius, Diodoros, Plutarch and Justin*, first published 1896 followed by undated second edition, reproduced, New Delhi, Cosmo Publications, 1983, p.1.

Greek references to Megasthenes' *Indica* represent India seen through a double filter – the first is Megasthenes's interpretation of what he saw or heard; the second is later Graeco- Roman writers' interpretation of Megasthenes account. The citation from *Indica* seems to tell us more about ancient Greek perspective on India than about the history of the subcontinent in the 4th century BCE".¹⁵⁶

It is clear that proper scholarship from Indian sources and by Indian scholars is lacking. Historians need to share some blame rather than justifying dearth of Indian sources as an excuse. Now in this new vigour of the "second coming" there is a growing realisation to understand that whole phase of the past by taking cognisance of archaeology, epigraphy and numismatic evidence.¹⁵⁷

C-No Holistic Teaching and Education and Domination of a Western Discourse

Kautilya lived during the time when the country's security was being threatened internally due to maladministration and externally by the threat of the Greek invasion. The *Arthashastra* shows that Kautilya was a keen student of history and he advocated the teaching of political science with illustrations taken from ancient history.¹⁵⁸

One needs to be exposed to the study of a subject to apply it. In general this lack of education on Kautilya's *Arthashastra* is a major reason for treating the work of Kautilya as an aside or secondary

¹⁵⁶ Upinder Singh, *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2008, p.326.

¹⁵⁷ I thank Tarun Kumar, PhD scholar from department of History of Delhi University in updating me on the Indian source aspects and recommending new work by historian such as H.P. Ray, *The Archaeology of Seafaring in Ancient South Asia*, 2003 and H.P. Ray and Daniel T. Potts (eds.) *Memory as History: The Legacy of Alexander in Asia*, 2007.

¹⁵⁸ A. Appadorai, *Indian Political Thinking Through The Ages*, New Delhi, Khama Publishers, 1992, p.24.

work to be pursued as a hobby at the most. It is observed that barring exceptions (those who write novels like Pavan Varma, Navtej Sarna and Upamanyu Chatterjee), most government officials keen in security studies like civil services and police or military officers undertake serious study post-retirement that is - using ancient ideas of stages in a life - when they near the stage of *vanprastha*. The rules of business and official secret act could be one reason. In the case of military officers, books have to be cleared by Military Intelligence Directorate, hardly occupied by those with a scholarly bent of mind, where conception of national security is quite different to those who need a wider and transparent debate. But, this should not be taken as an excuse as the civil society and academics have a larger role to play. Security studies can not be the birth right of former officials although they carry immense knowledge, experience and wisdom *ex cathedra*.

Navnita Behera notes that IR by its Western nature has acquired Gramscian hegemony over the epistemological foundations of IR and has maintained disciplinary gate-keeping practices. Navnita Behera rightly shows that the intellectual dependency of Indian international relation theory does not acknowledge India's own history and philosophical traditions (e.g. Kautilya) as a source of Indian IR theory.¹⁵⁹ Similarly, Claude Alvares in an important essay in the *Economic and Political Weekly* points out that political imperialism may find fierce resistance today (Iran, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Egypt), but academic imperialism has not probably because it is almost invisible. He gives evidence on how university departments and faculties in almost all universities pay obeisance to the objectives and methodologies of social science generation prevailing in western academic

¹⁵⁹ Navnita Chadha Behera, "Re-imagining IR in India", *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol.7, No.3, 2007, p.341-368. Also quoted in "Preface – Setting the Scene" in David Scott (ed.), *Handbook of India's International Relations*, London/New York, Routledge, 2011, p.xxii.

circles. What he finds surprising as hardly anyone would deny that non-white societies have had strong political traditions such that of *Arthashastra* of Kautilya. However, political science students are fed solely a diet based on importance of Niccolo Machiavelli's *The Prince*.¹⁶⁰ K.P. Fabian reports that even in India, students of political science do not pay adequate attention to Kautilya, one of the greatest masters of all time. Fabian discovered through his private conversation with some of the university teachers that they had insufficient knowledge about Chanakya. They knew more about Hobbes than about Chanakya. The syllabus for Masters in IR in the University of Delhi has no reference to Chanakya. The Foreign Service Institute in New Delhi under the Ministry of External Affairs could give more attention to Chanakya.¹⁶¹ Even the text book of international relations in two volumes issued as reading material by the prestigious distance learning Indira Gandhi Open University have no mention of *Arthashastra*. What went on in the West got transferred to developing countries as the in thing. It is surprising that in the syllabus for MA in Conflict Analysis and Peace Building (III Semester) 2011-2012 of Jamia Milia Islamiya University New Delhi under Indian Strategic Thought, for further reading book of Peter Rosen has been listed with that of George Tanham, whereas no Indian author worth a study is listed. This sort of biased work as reading diet will have an enduring one-sided impact on young minds as they will base their ideas on the limited reading material.

One case of the neglect of Sanskrit is pointed out by American Sanskritist Robert P. Goldman. He shows that just as scholars realised the importance of the traditional methods, the positivist

¹⁶⁰ Claude Alvares, "A Critique of Eurocentric Social Science and the Question of Alternatives", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.XLVI, No.22, May 28, 2011, pp.72-81 and "Steeped in Eurocentrism", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.XLVI, No.42, October 15, 2011, pp.77-79.

¹⁶¹ K.P Fabian, *Diplomacy: Indian Style*, New Delhi, Har-Anand, 2012, pp.46-47.

schools of ethnology, anthropology, religious studies, and literary criticism were being convulsed by the onslaught of radically new approaches that attacked the very foundation of older disciplines, approaches such as those inspired by structuralism and post-structuralism, deconstructionism, feminism, women's and gender studies, subaltern historiography and the like, many had their roots in the nineteenth century radicalism of theorists such as Marx and Freud.¹⁶² Even today, rather than trying to revisit Kautilya, it is more important to know new theories and schools that originate in the West. Thus to explain South Asian problem the scholars are forced to use a menu from theories derived in alien setting and research on the ideas provided by Foucault, Gramsci and Derrida. New and elegant theories of structuralism are in vogue with critical theory thrown in. To survive and 'show' ones worth in the world of academics the software thus is already written. To deflate the dogma imposed by long post-Enlightenment hegemony over the western intellectual outlook and to put an end for this craze for new theories, Alan Sokal, Professor of Physics at New York University wrote an article intentionally so that any competent physicist or mathematician would realise that it is a spoof. Evidently, the editors of *Social Text* without consulting published it and once the truth was known, they were not amused.¹⁶³

In this competitive industry of academic writing and proving who has time for Kautilya? Even the high-profile IR departments in Delhi such as the JNU do not include any comprehensive study of Kautilya. Rather, it is learnt informally that they dismiss him for Western political thought is considered superior and

¹⁶² Robert P. Goldman, "Sanskrit", in Joseph W. Elder, Edward C. Dimock, Jr and Ainslie T. Embree (eds.), *India's Worlds and U.S. Scholars 1947-1997*, New Delhi, Manohar Publishers, 1998, p.506.

¹⁶³ The article "Transgressing the Boundaries: Towards a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity", was published in the *Social Text*, Spring/Summer 1996. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sokal_Affair

relevant. Only good news for policy hungry and demanding national capital region is that Delhi University has included Kautilya in MA political science course as Indian Traditions in IR.¹⁶⁴ As yet, no IR professor of current generation, in an Indian university, to the best of my knowledge has made efforts in public domain to have him re-discovered and placed at par with ancient Greek or modern Western scholars.¹⁶⁵ Thus his teachings lie scattered.

D-Kautilya Suspended between Schools of Nationalists and Marxists

In India, historians are from two different schools - nationalists and Marxist. Upinder Singh explains the existence of these different schools of thought. While they challenge the idea of oriental despotism, the nationalists continue the periodisation of India's past into Hindu, Muslim and British.¹⁶⁶ Their search for Golden Age coalesced with communal tendency to valorize the "Hindu" period and to project the advent of Turks and Islam as a calamity and tragedy.¹⁶⁷ On the other hand, Marxists focused on delineation of social and economic structure and processes like class stratification and agrarian relations. Religion and culture were often sidelined or mechanically presented as reflections of socio-economic structure.¹⁶⁸ It appears that this has led to "either

¹⁶⁴ E mail correspondence with Navnita Chadha Behera of August 4, 2012. See Annx III, University of Delhi, MA (Political Science) Rules, Regulations and Course Contents 2011-2012 page 15, Paper 401, paragraph 2, Realism b) Indian Tradition: Kautilya's Realpotique.

¹⁶⁵ The only one which had made a good case with a brief explanation for inclusion of *Arthasatira* I could locate through search from international refereed journals is Navnita Chadha Behera. See Navnita Chadha Behera, "Re-imagining IR in India", *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol.7, No.3, 2007, pp.341-368.

¹⁶⁶ Similar is periodisation of Pakistan's history by Pakistani historians.

¹⁶⁷ Upinder Singh, *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2008, pp.7-8.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

with them or with us” thinking. Result is that in South Asia and India, it is ironic that Kautilya is not sufficiently studied in a multi-disciplinary mode.¹⁶⁹ One reason for this could be the politicization of such work. Chanakya belongs to the 4th Century BC, from an empire that covered areas in present-day India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Pakistan (practically the entire Indian sub-continent). Kautilya’s thought and philosophy needs to be studied in a contextual yet rigorous, scientific, and a-religious manner, and not on the initiative of the religious right wing. This can be compared to the communalization of the Urdu language pre and post-Partition (by linking it primarily to Islam) and its decay in northern India, whereas as shown by Tariq Rahman in his *From Hindi to Urdu: A Social and Political History* (2011), Urdu’s oldest name is Hindi and to call it a military language is ignorance. It has roots in Khariboli of Delhi and Rekhta which we understand as Hindustani.

No Hindu-Muslim divide is raked up over Hindustani classical music, qawalis, Punjabi folk, sufain kalam, Rabindra sangeet or folk music spanning borders of neighbouring Pakistan and Bangladesh. Yet, in political theory, some writers have indicated that a Hindu-Muslim divide existed before the Christ-era.

The Centre for Studies in Civilizations in Delhi has good published work in this genre and that could be one way of proceeding, though much more work is to be done in regional languages.¹⁷⁰ One thing is clear that conception of history now needs to adapt to better ways for the changed times. As explained

¹⁶⁹ No one quarrels on any lines/schools where issues of Indian origins such as concept of zero or algebra are concerned (transmitted to Europe by Arabian and Central Asian scholars as *efjabr*).

¹⁷⁰ The project is funded by Ministry of Human Resources and Development. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_of_History_of_Indian_Science,_Philosophy_and_Culture

by D.P. Chattopadhyaya in ancient Indian tradition *Itibas* etymologically means what really happened. Indian tradition of *puranas* (legends, myths, tales), *gatha* (ballad), *itivrtta* (description of past event), *akhyayika* (short narratives) and *vamsa- carita* (genealogy) have been consciously accorded a very important place. The change was then brought about with Islamic culture with moorings and influence of Semitic and Greco- Roman culture particular on facts, figures and dates. This was further influenced by impact of Newtonian revolution.¹⁷¹

E-Lack of Policy Focus and Absence of Serious Study in Think Tanks

There was never an urge to study Kautilya into policy focus except mentioning his quotes and *sutras* without proper references. Policy-makers probably assumed that something may emerge from the academic community and universities. That has not happened so far in any major way.

The IDSA has not focused on the topic of Kautilya as well. K.Subrahmanyam, former Director at the IDSA, in his *Shedding Shibboleths: India's Evolving Strategic Outlook*, mentions Chanakya only once on page 7. In early 1990s American scholar George Tanham gave a presentation on his thesis on lack of strategic culture in India. During the presentation at IDSA, majority of the participants contested his thesis. Did not India have Chanakya as a strategic thinker? They asked. Subrahmanyam's comment closed the case thus: "True indeed, Chanakya lived some twenty-three centuries ago. What of the centuries after him?"¹⁷² This was a closed chapter till another indirect work of

¹⁷¹ D.P. Chattopadhyaya, "General Introduction", in D.P. Chattopadhyaya, General Editor, *History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization*, Manoj Kumar Pal, Old Wisdom and New Horizon, Vol.XV, Part 5, New Delhi, Centre for Studies in Civilizations, Viva Books, 2008, p.xxiii.

¹⁷² K. Subrahmanyam, *Shedding Shibboleths: India's Evolving Strategic Outlook*, Delhi, Wordsmith, 2005.

comparative analysis with Sun Tzu was produced at the IDSA in 1999 in a chapter of an occasional paper.¹⁷³

But, Kautilya is still found in sprinkles on Subrahmanyam. In a book on essays on K. Subrahmanyam, Kautilya features in the index of two essays and without any reference to the original text.¹⁷⁴ In the first essay, one paragraph is inserted on page 52 to show that war and conflict was also centrepiece of traditional Indian political and social thought as represented by Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. In another paragraph in the same essay on page 60 it is mentioned that Vajpayee, former Indian Prime Minister, was a realist and a practitioner, who understood the importance of criteria of success and thus was in tune with the ancient principles of Indian statecraft (as discussed in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*) and with the actual patterns of Indian military and political history, right from the ancient times to Mughal period down to the period of the British colonial rule.¹⁷⁵ In the second essay it is argued that both China and India have a long, rich strategic tradition: Sun Zi's treatise on *The Art of War* in China and Kautilya's *Arthashastra* in India were written over 2,000 years ago. The traditional Chinese concept of international relations was based upon concentric circles from the imperial capital outwards through variously dependent states to the barbarians on the outside. It bears remarkable resemblance to the Indian concept of *mandala* or circles outlined in *Arthashastra*, which postulated that a king's neighbour is his natural enemy, while the king beyond

¹⁷³ K.N. Ramachandran, "Sun Zi and Kautilya – Towards a Comparative Analysis", in K.N. Ramachandran, M.V.Rappai, Swaran Singh and Srikant Kondapalli, *Occasional Paper Series, Sun Zi and China's Strategic Culture*, New Delhi, IDSA, September 1999, chapter 4, pp.46-78.

¹⁷⁴ P.R. Kumaraswamy (ed.), *Security Beyond Survival: Essays for K. Subrahmanyam*, New Delhi, Sage Publications, 2004, pp.52, 60 and 130.

¹⁷⁵ Ashok Kapur, "Eclipsed Moon to Rising Sun", in P.R. Kumaraswamy (ed.), *Security Beyond Survival: Essays for K. Subrahmanyam*, New Delhi, Sage Publications, 2004, pp.52-82.

his neighbour is his natural ally. The Chinese dynasties had followed a similar policy of encirclement and attacking nearby neighbours and maintaining friendly relations with more distant kingdom (*yuan jiao jin gong*). Much like imperial China, the rightful fruit of victory in ancient India was tribute, homage, subservience, and *not* annexation.¹⁷⁶ However, these arguments in no way qualify for any wholesome treatment and research of Kautilya's *Arthasasatra*. One major weakness is that no reference to any *sutra* is given by the authors.

The trend now has reversed. Often, more of Chanakya is being alluded to by top security and policy-makers and journalists in lectures like in the first memorial lecture on late K. Subramanyam by NSA Shivshankar Menon in 2011 and the Fifteenth Colonel Pyara Lal Memorial Lecture-2011 by Dr C. Raj Mohan.¹⁷⁷

F-Lack of Language Skills and Preservation of Texts

In 1880 Gustav Oppert, Professor of Sanskrit and Telegu translator to Governor while commenting on the poor quality of a book on Mongols by an author who had no knowledge of that language cautioned that for a writer on oriental history linguistic attainment is a *condition sine qua non*.¹⁷⁸

As it relates to the Rig Veda which is in Sanskrit, Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty in her introduction explains that "In many places, a difficult idea is couched in simple language; in others, a simple

¹⁷⁶ J. Mohan Malik, "India and China: Bound to Collide", P.R. Kumaraswamy (ed.), *Security Beyond Survival: Essays for K. Subrahmanyam*, New Delhi, Sage Publications, 2004, pp.127-165.

¹⁷⁷ Shivshankar Menon, "K. Subrahmanyam and India's Strategic Culture", *Air Power Journal*, Vol.7, No1, Spring 2012, and C. Raja Mohan, "Rising Power and Enduring Paradox: India's China Challenge", *USI Journal*, January-March 2012.

¹⁷⁸ Gustav Oppert, *On the Weapons, Army Organisation, and Political Maxims of Ancient Hindus, with Special Reference to Gunpowder and Firearms*, Ahmedabad, the New Order Book Co., 1967, p.2.

idea is obscured by difficult language”.¹⁷⁹ Elaborating further Wendy Doniger asks the question and then answers it thus:

“How can we understand the words if we do not understand the meaning behind them? Here one is reminded of Samuel Johnson’s criticism of a colleague: ‘He has too little Latin; he takes the Latin from the meaning, not the meaning from the Latin’.”¹⁸⁰

This may also be true for Kautilya’s work as it relates to words like *rajya* and *rashtra* corresponding to nation and state respectively, yet there seems to be no end to the academic debates whether India is a nation, state, or nation-state. Likewise there is a clear relationship with the modern idea of hegemony with that of *vijigishu* understood in present context. Lack of knowledge of texts makes scholars shy to use it. This shows one area where Indian “theory has yet to catch up with the rich historic praxis”.¹⁸¹

During the colonial period all discoveries were done by persons well-versed in Sanskrit and other languages. Today the situation is different. The state of decay of Sanskrit is at its worst. According to Ananya Vajpeyi, author Gurcharan Das was disturbed about having to go to American universities to study or refresh his Sanskrit in preparation for writing his book, *The Difficulty of Being Good* (2009).¹⁸² Gurcharan Das in his prelude to his book mentions that “I wanted to learn about that past

¹⁷⁹ *The Rig Veda: An Anthology*, One Hundred and Eighth Hymns, Selected, Translated and Annotated by Wendy Doniger O’Flaherty, New Delhi, Penguin Books India, 1994, pp.14-15.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Shivashankar Menon, National Security Advisor, “Speaking Notes at Workshop on Kautiyya - Kautilya Today”, IDSA, October 18, 2012 at http://idsa.in/keyspeeches/ShivshankarMenon_KautilyaToday

¹⁸² Ananya Vajpeyi, “Crisis in the Classics: A Need for a Classical Survey”, Center for the Advanced Study of India (CASI), University of Pennsylvania at <http://casi.ssc.upenn.edu/iit/vajpeyi> (accessed on July 27, 2012).

with full consciousness of the present and also to learn something about the present in encountering the past”. His exasperation is clear when he feels that “Sanskrit pandits in Benares seemed to me impossibly rigid and they would have not approved of my desire to ‘interrogate’ the text”.¹⁸³ It seems that it is not just the issues of Sanskrit language but the tendency of inward looking scholars probably insecure to get fresh interpretations of the ancient work. How far the observation of Gurcharan Das is correct is difficult to comment, though it seems that like the *Mahabharata*, the *Arthashastra* also has not been revisited in detail. It also shows how disconnected are Indian Sanskrit scholars and social scientists in integrating, revising and updating texts in Sanskrit such as the *Arthashastra*. However, negative growth rate in Sanskrit may be the most serious problem which needs to be addressed. Exiled Tibetans are helping in restoring this lost heritage. Tibetan version of Indian literature, chiefly Buddhist have been preserved in two great collections - similar to *Sruti* and *Smriti* of ancient India called *Kanjur* (*bka’ gyur* - the commandments of Buddha) and *Tanjur* (*bstan’gyur* - doctrinal teaching given by subsequent teachers). The Indian *Nitisastras* in Tibetan version have been preserved in *Tanjur* collection. Most ancient text including the *sutras* of *Arthashastra* and other works are in Sanskrit. Many lost Buddhist works from India were preserved in Tibet including Chanakya.¹⁸⁴ Some of these works are in the process of being re-translated back into Sanskrit from Tibetan at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies at Sarnath. The Rare Buddhist Texts Research Unit at Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Saranath, Varanasi is now making good progress in this project. Unfortunately not many Indian scholars have interest and competence in Tibetan, Newari, and Buddhist Sanskrit. Scholars have urged through the medium of journals that Indian universities should make good provision

¹⁸³ Gurcharan Das, *The Difficulty of Being Good: On the Subtle Art of Dharma*, New Delhi, Allen Lane/Penguin Books, 2009, p.xxxix.

¹⁸⁴ Suniti Kumar Pathak, *The Indian Nitisastras in Tibet*, Delhi, Motilal Banarasidas, 1974.

for Buddhist Studies including the study of languages like Pali, Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese.¹⁸⁵

However, lack of knowledge of Sanskrit should not be a major barrier any longer. Today, concepts and idea from ancient Greek and Latin literature abound without most scholars having no knowledge of the both. Similarly, good translation of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* now exists in all major languages including in English. More than language, the greater challenge may be to contextualise the idea to a historic period with matching maps to see who is who and where and then developing a strategic vocabulary and thought. However as has been alluded to, absence of maps and historical accounts will continue to be one great challenge for scholars and thus multiple interpretations will continue and with it commentaries or *bhasyas*.

G-Kautilya is Not a Soldier like Sun Tzu et al, Clausewitz, Jomini or Liddell Hart

Some military officers mention that Kautilya was a civilian and he had no combat experience or wore any war medals. He was a fantastic strategist on issues of intelligence and foreign policy but was not a battle hardened soldier such as Sun Tzu,¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ See S.S. Bahulkar, "Contribution of Indian Scholars to Buddhist Tantric Studies", *Dhik, Journal of Rare Buddhist Texts Research Unit*, No.45, 2008, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Saranath, Varanasi pp.17-38.

¹⁸⁶ Ralph D. Sawyer, translated by, *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*, Colorado, Westview Press, 1993. Besides Sun Tzu's *Art of War* the other Chinese classics are: 1. T'ai Kung's Six Secrets Teachings, 2. The Methods of the Su-ma, 3. Military thoughts of Wu-tzu (Wu ch'i) and, 4. Wei-Liao-Tzu, 5. Three Strategies of Huang Shih-kung and 6. Questions and Replies between T'ang Tai-tsung and Li Wei-Kung. Christopher Coker has shown that what distinguishes China from West is that China has never had a strong warrior tradition. All the seven military classics were collected and made canonical in the Sung dynasty (960-1279), and all seven became required reading for those who wished to pursue a military career. While they were neglected in the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) they were rescued from oblivion by nationalists and taught in military academies in 1920s. All cadets were required to study Sun Tzu, as they are today. See Christopher Coker, *Waging War Without Warriors: The Changing Culture of Military Conflict*, London/ Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002, p.125.

Machiavelli,¹⁸⁷ Clausewitz,¹⁸⁸ Jomini¹⁸⁹ or Liddell Hart¹⁹⁰ who have written masterpieces and classics on military strategy and the fog and friction of war. At best he was like a contemporary academically-oriented bureaucrat or civil servant, at the most a good civilian academic or professor. Thus, his work may be of use on foreign policy, internal security and administration, but not in theorizing the business of nature or character of war. Christopher Coker likewise thinks that the *Arthasastra* is not any great work when compared, for example, to the classics of Chinese military thought. It is essentially a political manual for aspiring rulers.¹⁹¹

These impressions are not backed by evidence. The military aspects are much more than those found in Niccolo Machiavelli's *The Art of War*. As shown earlier, in a total absence of proper battle accounts including history of that era to expect the military to study is unrealistic. But just battle account is not the fare of military history.

U.P. Thapliyal, former head of the History Division of the Ministry of Defence, has provided insights to the Kautilyan concept in great detail. He has authored a book on warfare in

¹⁸⁷ Machiavelli served both as an official/bureaucrat and in the military. See Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince and The Art of War* with an afterword by Oliver Francis, New York, Barnes & Noble Books, 2004; *The Prince*, translated by W.K. Marriott, with an introduction by Domic Baker-Smith, London, Everyman's Library, 1908, reprint 1992 and Felix Gilbert, "Machiavelli", in Peter Paret (ed.) with collaboration of Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert, *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1986, pp.11-31.

¹⁸⁸ Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret and introductory essays by Peter Paret, Michael Howard and Bernard Brodie, London, Everyman's Library, 1993.

¹⁸⁹ Baron Antoine Hendri de Jomini, *The Art of War*, with a new introduction by Charles Messenger, London, Greenhill Books, 1996.

¹⁹⁰ B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy: The Indirect Approach*, London, Faber & Faber, 1954.

¹⁹¹ See Christopher Coker, *Waging War Without Warriors: The Changing Culture of Military Conflict*, London/ Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002, pp.135-136.

ancient India which has chapters on strategic and tactical concepts in the *Arthashastra*.¹⁹² CB Khanduri's work is also relevant as an introduction to the subject.¹⁹³ A serious study of the *Arthashastra* shows that many enduring military issues are mentioned.¹⁹⁴ Appendix C of Chapter 1 is a preliminary extraction from the *Arthashastra* which has a universal relevance to the art of war.

H-Narrow Mindedness

The recent banning of essays by A.K. Ramanujan on various interpretations of the Ramayan is a text book case of this tendency of narrow-mindedness in academic work. Probably for this reason non-Hindu and non-Brahmin academics hesitate on researching on "Hindu" and "Brahmin" Chanakya in such an atmosphere. The next point attempts to get rid of this bias. Interestingly, there is no problem over scholarship over pre-Christian Greek and Roman scholars, or Machiavelli and Clausewitz the Christians or Sun Tzu the Chinese (*art*).

¹⁹² U.P. Thapliyal, "War in Ancient India – Concepts", in S.N. Prasad (ed.), *Historic Perspective of Warfare in India: Some Morale and Material Determinants*, General Editor D.P. Chattopadhyaya, *History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization*, Vol.X, Part 3, New Delhi, Centre for Studies in Civilizations, 2002, pp.45-67 and *Warfare in Ancient India: Organizational and Operational Dimensions*, New Delhi, Manohar Publishers, 2010.

¹⁹³ Brigadier B.C. Khanduri, "Chapter 1 – Kautilya, The Great Visionary: His Contribution to Art of War and It's Relevance", *Generals and Strategists*, New Delhi, Patriot Publishers, 1992, pp.3-17.

¹⁹⁴ Chandargupta is also a board game designed in 2008 as part of *Great Battles of History* [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chandargupta_\(board_game\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chandargupta_(board_game)). In its battle scenarios it has Chandragupta's attempt to overthrow the Nandas under leadership of Chanakya, which failed in its first attempt as it was brashly planned to take the capital without having consolidated power base among "hereditary" (*Manla*) military class. After re-grouping of his forces Chandragupta succeeds in his second attempt. One scenario also has battle story from the play *Mudraraksasha* in which having won power with help of independent tribes and principalities, Chandargupta evades the pre-war promises. Betrayed, the tribal revolt is led by the son of Parvatika, named Malayaketu with his allies etc. How authentic is the storyline is a job that institutes such as the Indian National Defence University with historians from other universities will need to find out.

I-Misunderstanding Brahmin Scholars and Over Exaggeration of Brahmanism

S. Radhakrishnan clearly explains that the Hindu thinkers distinguished between the less evolved in whom the powers of self-analysis and self-direction have not arisen, and the more evolved or the twice-born who were graded into three classes of Brahmin, Ksatriya and Vaisya. The different castes represent members at different stages on the road to self-realization. However lowly a man may be, he can raise himself sooner or later by the normal process of evolution. Radhakrishnan then shows how the distinction soon began to be made among different occupations, and privileges and restrictions caused the degradation of some groups. Radhakrishnan refers to quotes of *Santi* from Mahabharata, to forcefully argue that in the early days of human race, it is said there were non-class distinctions, since all were born of the Supreme (“*sarvam Brahman idam jagat*”, *Santi*, p.186). He elaborates that one becomes a Brahmin by his deeds not by his family or birth; even a Candala is a Brahmin if he is of pure character. Some of the great *rsis* worshipped by Brahmins are half-castes and hybrids. Vasistha was born of a prostitute, Vyas of a fisher-woman, Parasara of a Candala girl. According to Radhakrishnan, the conduct of a person counts and his birth does not count to determine his status in the society.¹⁹⁵ While this work is not a discourse on the *varnas* and caste system, surely the normative goal of what S. Radhakrishnan argues is yet to be achieved in Indian society. Many interpretations exist on the meaning of Brahmin. When *Arthashastra* was discovered and offered to the world, it was usual for Western Indologists to mention the word Brahmin meaning a leaned scholarly person.

¹⁹⁵ Radhakrishnan, *The Hindu View of Life*, New Delhi, HarperCollins, first published 1927, Third Impression 1996, p.97.

Two kinds of Brahmins are distinguished in the text - the *srotrija* (the very learned ones, experts in the Vedas) and the others. *Srotrija* was entitled to great respect and privileges.¹⁹⁶ Western Indologists only qualified and magnified the “Hindu Brahmin” tab on Kautilya in the 20th century repeatedly with justification.¹⁹⁷ So powerful an imagery exists in scholarly imagination including that of Clausewitz that no less than Maj Gen J.F.C. Fuller in his study points out that Clausewitz “scoffs at the old idea of ‘war without spilling blood’, calls it ‘a real business for Brahmins’”.¹⁹⁸ Later, Fuller’s penetrating insights show that Clausewitz never meant that exactly and yet many of Clausewitz’s followers were completely flummoxed and fell victims to his apotheosis of violence.

Problem creeps in when scholars often do not mention this important difference when they allude to scholarly work by Brahmins. The worst disservice to Brahmins of Oudh and Indo Gangetic plains was done by the British when they ruled India. In the caste handbook for the Indian Army which was based on survey of the literature and their understanding, Brahmin’s gift of intellect and fitness for political administration was recognised

¹⁹⁶ L.N. Rangarajan, *The Arthashastra*, New Delhi, First published by Penguin Books India, 1992, 2012 version, p.30.

¹⁹⁷ The idea of Brahmin was very powerful and spread even to the US in the 19th century as ‘Boston Brahmins’. It applied to the old, upper crust New England families of British Protestant origin that were extremely influential in the development and leadership of arts, culture, science, politics, trade, and academia. The term was certainly applied partly in jest to characterise the often erudite and pretentious nature of the New England gentry to outsiders. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boston_Brahmin

¹⁹⁸ Major General J.F.C. Fuller, *The Conduct of War 1798-1961: A Study of French, Industrial, and Russian Revolution on War and Its Conduct*, New Delhi, first published 1961, First India Edition, 2003, pp.61-62. Fuller refers to volumes and pages of the English edition of *On War*, revised by Colonel F.N. Maude, and published in 1908. Fuller’s penetrating insights show that Clausewitz never meant that exactly and yet many of Clausewitz’s followers were completely flummoxed and fell victims to his apotheosis of violence. While this monograph is not on Clausewitz but suffice to say that even Clausewitz’s work was never completed (unlike that of Kautilya) and his ideas are accepted wrongly as gospel truths by many scholars.

and their gallantry for soldiering and high discipline was accepted. But under the head of characteristics it was marred by remarks such as: “that they are the most conservative of all the natives of India. His intelligence is superior to that of any other class, but his great advantage is neutralised by his love of intrigue, and his unwillingness to deviate from traditions and customs.”¹⁹⁹ In another observation which may be true is what some note as Indian arrogance which is linked to Brahmanism. In a recent work on diplomatic practice, Steven Hoffmann mentions an American diplomat describing Indian interlocutors being capable of subjecting an American listener to a lecture on Indian history who identifies a strand of intellectual Indian Brahminical arrogance.²⁰⁰ The perception may be that to be arrogant is also to be a Brahmin. The universal and blanket use of term “Brahman” for Kautilya the *Strotiya* without care or qualification may have also offended the non-Brahmins and thus obstructed the secular study of Kautilya. The artist’s imagination in portraying a bare-chested, handsome and muscular Kautilya sporting a pony tail and *janew* (holy thread across torso worn by the *dwija* or twice born) on a well-rounded shaven head with piercing eyes and his soap TV serialization with incessant lecturing may have done more harm than good.

In sum, such attitude may seem to justify the Brahmanic Hinduism, *varna* and *jati* system and thus uttering of the word “Kautilya the Brahmin” may lead to mental blocks by an imagery of a stereotype of intellectual and religious arrogance. Here it needs to be highlighted that Kautilya was not sparing the Brahmins too who he argued made poor soldiers as by prostrating,

¹⁹⁹ Capt A.H. Bingley and Capt A. Nicholls, *Caste Handbooks of the Indian Army: Brahmins*, Compiled in the Intelligence Branch of the Office of the Quarter Master General, Simla, 1887, p.7 and p.43.

²⁰⁰ Steven Hoffmann, *Change in India – US Diplomatic Practices- An Interim Report*, IDSA Occasional Paper No.10, September 2012, pp.18-19.

an enemy may win over Brahmin troops.²⁰¹ Traditional Kshatriyas, Vaisya and Sudras were the preferred option for a standing army.²⁰² Thiruvalluvar's *Thirukurals* which were written much later have drawn a lot on Kautilya's *Arthasastra* and mention Kautilya as belonging to low caste. Yet, in the discourse his cast is seldom mentioned when his work is quoted.

Above are some reasons which may be responsible for neglect of Kautilya. Now after listing and explaining some reasons as obstacles to a comprehensive study of Kautilya, the matter of Kautilya's comparison and criticism also needs to be placed on the table of this dialogue. This is done in the next chapter.

²⁰¹ Being critical I can now say 'No' to Kautilya in his own style. Brahmins not making good soldiers is not true any longer as borne out by the excellent battle tested and proved performance of the five north Indian Brahmin based one class artillery regiments of the Indian Army (71 Medium Regiment being one example). See P.K. Gautam, *Composition and Regimental System of the Indian Army: Continuity and Change*, Delhi, Shipra, 2008, p. 39. Units of the 9 Gorkha Rifles are also composed of 20 to 30 per cent Brahmins and so do many soldiers in various units of the army. Brahmins have won many gallantry awards. In Indian mythology cum history a number of Brahmin Sages became warriors like Parsuram a kshatriya basher, Dronacharya, Asrathama and Kripacharya. It is no surprise that the war cry of the Brahmin Artillery units is "Parusharam ki Jai".

²⁰² R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthasastra, Part 2: An English Translation With Critical and Explanatory Notes*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1986, Book nine, Chapter two, Section 137, 138 and 139, sutra 23, p.412 and R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthasastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1986, p.245. For politics of identity see Gilles Chuyen, *Who is a Brahmin: The Politics of Identity in India*, New Delhi, Manohar, 2004. Anthropologist Chris J. Fuller shows that Tamil Brahmins from conservative landowning rural elite have transformed to a migratory urbanised transnational community. See "Tracing a Changing Graph", *The Hindu*, Metroplus, February 2, 2012.

V

COMPARING AND CRITICIZING KAUTILYA

Two comparative essays find similarities between Sun Zi and Kautilya in delineating strategic and tactical issues relating to war and peace. Similarities are found in the wisdom of the two on the approach to war, peace, intelligence and foreign policy.²⁰³

But when thinkers from European civilization are brought in this comparison has problems. Half a century ago, M.V. Krishna Rao noted that there are certain mis-conceptions about Kautilya and his statecraft. As a result of certitude he argued that it makes men so confident and they feel that only their views are right and that they assume that other views are wrong. One such certitude has been to look upon Kautilya as a Machiavelli as though Aristotle, Machiavelli and other European thinkers constitute the yard-stick for political genius manifested in other parts of the world. This habit of certitude prevents the student of Kautilya from getting a correct picture of Kautilya's genius and the nature of his *Arthashastra*.²⁰⁴

This observation of certitude has survived even after 50 years. As realism had emerged as a dominant paradigm in IR in the 20th century, there is tendency to see the past from the present

²⁰³ K.N. Ramachandran, "Sun Zi and Kautilya – Towards a Comparative Analysis", in K.N. Ramachandran, M.V.Rappai, Swaran Singh and Srikant Kondapalli, *Occasional Paper Series, Sun Zi and China's Strategic Culture*, New Delhi, IDSA, September 1999, chapter 4, pp.46-78 and Colonel V.M.B. Krishnan, "Comparative Analysis of Teaching of Kautilya and Sun Tzu", *Trishul*, Vol. XXIII, No.2, Spring 2011, pp.81-92

²⁰⁴ M.V. Krishna Rao, *Studies in Kautilya*, Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal, 1958, Third Revised edition 1979, Preface, p.vii. This work also compares Kautilya with both Aristotle and Machiavelli.

or back-casting.²⁰⁵ Based on this new-found idea of realism, authors then try and fit in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. Liebig criticised the work of Roger Boesche, *The First Great Political Realist: Kautilya and His Arthashastra* (2002) as ignoring the comprehensive, holistic character of Kautilya's work. Instead, Boesche selectively picks up quotes to argue that Kautilya stands for "realism", thus missing the "eigenvalue"—in Weberian terms—of the Kautilya *Arthashastra*. When comparing Kautilya to Machiavelli, the latter was narrower in his focus, for example, leaving out the question of the economy. He wanted to unify Italy and keep foreign powers out of Italy, whereas in the case of Kautilya it was the concept of a conqueror (*vijigeshu*) consolidating an empire in the whole Indian sub-continent up to present-day Afghanistan.²⁰⁶

At the other end of the spectrum of comparison, political scientists have pet theories and puzzles to solve. This leads to a one-sided interpretation. Writing basically for Western audience, Peter Stephen Rosen basing his evidence on Kautilyan ideas on intelligence, counter-intelligence and secret service imagines a very fractious society. Rosen then argues that in comparison, Machiavelli hoped that the ruthlessly intelligent use of power might end the state of constant domestic factional disputes. Kautilya hoped that the ruthlessly intelligent use of power might simply help his king survive in a society that would be perpetually intriguing against him.²⁰⁷ It is surprising that Rosen quotes Kangle

²⁰⁵ I would also compare it to what the military is very familiar with: situating the appreciation.

²⁰⁶ Event Report April 19, 2021, presentation by Mr Michael Liebig "Endogenous Politico-Cultural Resources: Kautilya's Arthashastra and India's Strategic Culture" at <http://idsa.in/event/KautilyasArthashastraandIndiasStrategicCulture>

²⁰⁷ Stephen Peter Rosen, *India and Its Armies: Societies and Military Power*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, pp.71-72. Jayashree Vivekanandan shows that Rosen has an excessively deterministic view of Indian strategic practice. See Jayashree Vivekanandan, *Interrogating International Relations: India's Strategic Practice and the Return of History*, New Delhi, Routledge, 2011, p.94.

selectively, but ignores Kangles' comparative study of Machiavelli and Kautilya. Kangle found great similarity between the two political thinkers despite differences between the political conditions pre-supposed in their works and between the methods of their treatment.²⁰⁸ While space does not permit providing the entire substance of the debate, one important difference is the method of treatment of two works as studied by Kangle on comparative methodology. Machiavelli's method is historical which makes him turn to history for confirmation of the conclusions drawn by him from his own observations. The *Arthashastra*, on the other hand, practically ignores history and contents itself with imagining all possible political situations at any time.²⁰⁹ This methodological division as between Machiavelli (the historian) and Kautilya (the political scientist) continues to exist even today.

Comparison has its limits. Rangarajan finds comparison of Kautilya with Bismarck the most ridiculous and the sobriquet "Indian Machiavelli" is unfair to both. The reason is that people can only compare the unknown with the known; most foreigners know something of Machiavelli and precious little of Kautilya.²¹⁰

Condemnation of Kautilya as an unethical teacher, according to Rangarajan, is due to ignorance of his work. His views are sane, moderate and balanced. One stereotypical image of Chanakya that has emerged is that of a cunning person – he is the "crooked"²¹¹. Some hold that Kautilya is only a pseudonym, the word being derived from kutila meaning crafty or crooked

²⁰⁸ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Second edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010, p.272.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 273.

²¹⁰ L.N. Rangarajan, *The Arthashastra*, New Delhi, Penguin Books, 1992, p.22.

²¹¹ Wendy Doniger, *The Hindus: An Alternative History*, New Delhi, Penguin/Vikings, 2009, p.202.

and thus Kautilya is depicted “Kutilla”- i.e., crooked.²¹² Further, Wendy Doniger (not known if in humour or sarcasm or compliment) terms the *Arthashastra* as a “compendium of advice for a king, and though it is often to be Machiavellian, Kautilya makes Machiavelli look like Mother Teresa”.²¹³

Kautilya’s Work as Immoral?

A.L. Basham points out that Bana in early 7th century decries the *Arthashastra* as an immoral work.²¹⁴ R.P Kangle does not agree with the theory that the scarcity of manuscripts of *Arthashastra* is proof that its teaching was repudiated by Indians (Buddhists, Jains and Brahmins) because of the cruel and immoral practices recommended in it as argued by K. Nag.²¹⁵ Kangle argues that Buddhist *Lankavatara sutra* refers to Kautilya as *rsi* and Aryasura, the author of *Jatakamala*, “parades his knowledge of *Arthashastra*” as also Jain scholar Somadeva refers to Kautilya as *nayavid*, respectfully.²¹⁶ Kangle further notes, “His intellectual honesty about political dishonesty is repugnant to idealists”. But for its relevance, Kangle argues that what condemnation has fallen to the lot of the *Arthashastra* and its author Kautilya is mostly in

²¹² Nilima Chakravarty, *Indian Philosophy: The Pathfinders and the System Builders* (700 B.C. to 100 A.D.), New Delhi, Allied Publishers, 1992, p.166 and note 9, p.204.

²¹³ Wendy Doniger, *The Hindus: An Alternative History*, New Delhi, Penguin/Vikings, 2009, p.202.

²¹⁴ A.L. Basham, Foreword in Som Nath Dhar, *Kautilya and the Arthashastra*, New Delhi, Marwah Publications, 1981, pp.ix-xi. Similar was the reaction of the church on the *Prince* of Niccolo Machiavelli. Its name was amongst the first to appear in the Catholic Church’s Index of Prohibited Books in 1559. This is not to say that he was without admirers. Francis Bacon (1561-1626) wrote a critical appreciation of the Prince. See Afterword by Oliver Francis, *Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince and The Art of War*, New York, Barnes & Noble Books, 2004, pp.429-439.

²¹⁵ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Second edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010, p.279. He quotes K. Nag, *Les Theories diplomatiques de l’Inde ancienne et l’Arthashastra* Paris, 1928.

²¹⁶ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Second edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010, p.279.

modern times at hands of those who have drunk deeply at the fountain of Western idealism in one form or another.²¹⁷ What had led to this impression doubting Kautilya? One major reason is the imagination of playwrights.

Mudrarakshaka - Play of Ancient Past by Visakhadatta

Stories about Kautilya reside in *Purans*, Buddhist and Jain texts. According to R.K. Mookerji, Buddhist texts and traditions and work of Greek historians give some details of the early life of Kautilya.²¹⁸ But the greatest impact has been via theatre. Post the Mauryan Age in the Gupta period Sanskrit literature flourished. The greatest literary figure of the times was Kalidas a contemporary of Chandragupta II Vikramaditya whose drama like *Shakuntala* and lyrical poems like *Meghaduta* in Sanskrit are well-known. Other literary figures of that age were Banbhata, the author of *Harsh-charita* (biography of king Harshvardhan) and *Kadambari* (a political play).²¹⁹ But central to understanding stories related to Kautilya is the work of imaginative playwright Vishakhadatta of the 5th century who penned the drama *Mudrarakshaka*.²²⁰

²¹⁷ Ibid, p.272.

²¹⁸ Dr R.K. Mookerji, “The Foundation of the Maurya Empire”, in K.A. Nilakanta Sastri (ed.), *A Comprehensive History of India*, Volume II, The Mauryan and Satavahans, 325 BC – AD 300, published under auspices of The Indian History Congress and The Bhartiya Itihas Parishad, New Delhi, People’s Publishing House, 1957, Second Imprint, 1987, p.2.

²¹⁹ N.K. Sinha and Nisith R. Roy, *A History of India*, , New Delhi, Orient Longman, 1973, pp.76, 115, and 175-177.

²²⁰ Another play by Vishakhadatta is *Devi-Candragupta* which is about the successor of Samdragupta with a complicated plot. According to R.S. Walimbe writing in 1948, the play was recently discovered in fragments. Except *Devi-Candragupta* no other play in Sanskrit is having a political theme from history. See R.S. Walimbe, *Visakhadatta Mudrakas: With a Critical Introduction, Complete Text and English Translation, Exhaustive notes, Appendices and Indices*, Poona, The Royal Book Stall, 1948 p.10. I thank library staff of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune in making this rare book available to me in August 2012.

Mudraraksbaka “The Minister’s Signet Ring”²²¹ is a play of political intrigue and secret agents, in which famous minister Chanakya destroys the enemies of Chandragupta Maurya after the death of Nanda. Chanakya wins over Rakshasa, the best man among the Nanda’s ministers, to the new king’s cause.²²² Charles Allen briefly narrates that the play tells the story of two rival ministers, Rakshasa and Chanakya, both serving King Nanda, ruler of Magadh. King Nanda became a tyrant in old age, leading Chanakya to accede to the plan of the ambitious prince Chandragupta into exile, together with eight friends.

In this Sanskrit play Kautilya is depicted “kutila”- i.e. crooked.²²³ According to R.S. Walimbe the reason why playwright Vishakhadatta so belittled Chandragupta could be that the author wanted to heighten the glory of his own patron Chandragupta II (whose prowess he so graphically depicts in his drama *Devichandragupta*), by suggesting a contrast with Chandragupta Maurya who is made to appear disinterested in state-affairs and a tool in the hands of Chanakya.²²⁴ In the prologue of *Mudraraksbaka* we are told that the drama was written by Vishakhadatta, the son of Maharaja Bhaskaradatta and the grandson of Samanta Vatesvaradatta. From Bhartatavakya of the same drama we know that Vishakhadatta was a contemporary of king Chandargupta (either Chandargupta II of Gupta dynasty or other kings of 6 or 7th century AD).²²⁵

²²¹ The play was translated into English by Sir William Jones. See Charles Allen, *Ashoka*, London, Little Brown, 2012, p.101.

²²² A.L. Basham, “Introduction”, in A.L. Basham (ed), *Cultural History of India*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998, pp.1-7, B.G. Gokhale, *Indian Thought Through the Ages*, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1961.

²²³ See note 9, Nilima Chakravarty, Chapter VI Kautilya, *Indian Philosophy: The Pathfinders and the System Builders* (700 B.C. to 100 A.D.), New Delhi, Allied Publishers, 1992, p.204.

²²⁴ R.S. Walimbe, *Visakhadatta Mudraksas: With a Critical Introduction, Complete Text and English Translation, Exhaustive notes, Appendices and Indices*, Poona, The Royal Book Stall, 1948, p.18.

²²⁵ Majumdar, R.C (ed.), K.K. Dasgupta (joint editor), *A Comprehensive History of India*, Volume III, Part I (AD 300-985), Political History and Organisation less Gupta Age, The Indian History Congress, New Delhi, People’s Publishing House, December 1981, p.297.

Chandragupta finds sanctuary with lord of Himalayas, Parvateswar, who allies among the Yavans (Greeks), Sacas (Scythians), Cambojans (Gandhara) and Ciratas (Kashmiris). Parvateswar provides Chandragupta and his friends with money and troops in return for half the empire of King Nanda. They advance on king Nanda's capital of Patliputra, which falls after a brief battle. Chandragupta kills all his half-brothers and he and Parvateswar divide Nanda's kingdom between them. Parvateswar is then poisoned by Nanda's daughter and is succeeded by his son Malayaketu, who with advice of Nanda's former Minister Rakshasa attacks Chandragupta at Patliputra. However, Chandragupta fortifies the city with Greek allies, while Chanakya uses his guile to bring Rakshasa over to Chandragupta's camp. Malayaketu's coalition collapses and Chandragupta goes on to rein over Magadha "for many years, with justice and equity, and adorned by his subjects".²²⁶ William Jones the Indologist who was reconstructing the history of the era from other sources and who already knew the bare bones of the story from his reading of the *Puranas* found that the real value of the play was that it was based on real historical events.²²⁷ Thomas Trautmann says that the greater part of the play is "invention".²²⁸ Kangle argues that Vishakhadatta appears to have high appreciation of its teachings. If Ban appears to condemn it, it should be remembered that that part is played by idealised minister

²²⁶ Charles Allen, *Ashoka*, London, Little Brown, 2012, pp.66-67.

²²⁷ Charles Allen, *Ashoka*, London, Little Brown, 2012, p.66. Allen in piecing together the puzzle also links the story tallying with that of Jain text *Parisibataparvan (The Lives of Jain Elders)* - written by 12th century polymath Acharya Hemachandra - which was collected by Mackenzie. Ibid, p.83.

²²⁸ Thomas R. Trautmann, *Kautilya and the Arthashastra: A Statistical Investigation of Authorship and Evolution of the Text*, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1971, pp.xviii, 227, as quoted in Book Review, by J.W. Spellmann, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, August 1972, Vol.31, Issue 04, pp.966-967.

Sukanasa.²²⁹ M.R. Kale argues that in the play fraud is not used to justify a selfish end.²³⁰

While researching for this monograph in my interaction with colleagues the mention of Chanakya drew a reference to *Vishkanya* (poisonous lady). Kautilya we are told had brought up and trained one such lady who could kill opponents by her snake-like capability to bite/sting and poison. However, nowhere this was found in the English translation of the text. It is obvious that the episode is the one dramatized from the play *Mudrarakshaka* and is most popular in public imagination. Such a branding of crookedness to the author of a work of hard politics is not confined to India alone. Similar was the fate of Machiavelli. Shakespeare's most notorious character, the hunchback and crook, the future Richard III: "I can add colour to the chameleon; Change shapes with Proteus for advantages; And set the murderous Machiavel to school"- Henry VI, part 3.²³¹

In recent times another harmful genre in this category is popular fiction such as Ashwin Sanghi's *Chanakya Chant*, Westland Publishes, 2011. The story of a re-born Kautilya in modern times on the internet for sale of the book highlights that "Can this wily pandit who preys on greed, venality and sexual deviance bring about another miracle of a united India". Such books are best avoided by serious students. However, it must be admitted

²²⁹ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Second edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010,p.280.

²³⁰ M.R. Kale, *The Mudrarakshasa of Visakhadatta with the Commentary of Dhundiraja: With English Translation, Critical and Exploratory Notes, Introduction and Various Readings*, Bombay, The Oriental Publishing Company, 1st edition 1911, reprint 1916. I thank library staff of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI), Pune in making this rare book available to me in August 2012.

²³¹ See Afterword by Oliver Francis, Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince and The Art of War*, New York, Barnes & Noble Books, 2004, pp.429-439 and *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, "Third Part of King Henry VI, Act III, Scene II", London, Odhams Press 1923,p.656.

that such stuff also becomes bestsellers for the tweeting Indian urban middle class fed on a diet only of commercial movies and hungry for such books which may be sold at airports. Serious scholars, who may like to embark on study of the *Arthashastra* need to avoid such books of fiction.

Even in similar light today, mainstream commercial Hindi pictures and TV soaps which have substituted theatre of the past portray historical themes unimaginatively and incorrectly are taken to be real by the polity at large, notwithstanding their total misrepresentation. This misrepresentation and distortion is covered next in Chapter 6.

VI RE-VISITING IDEAS OF *MANDALA*, MISREPRESENTATION AND DISTORTION OF KAUTILYA'S *ARTHASASTRA*

Mis-representation

Kautilya is mis-represented in many ways. This chapter has three sections. Section 1 is on mandala theory. Section 2 is on some important commentaries on *Arthashastra* assumed to be based on the original text and section 3 is about the twisting and distorting of his work.

Section 1: Mandala Theory

The various ideas on mandala theory are in need of immediate treatment to cure them of biases which are not based on text and its serious interpretations. There are two views on the historical influence of the mandala theory. A.L. Basham in his masterpiece *The Wonder that Was India* (1954) found that inter-state relations were of the most Machiavellian character as a result of doctrines of the “circles” (*mandala*) with the 12 kings. He then argued that the main purport of this enumeration is clear- a king’s neighbour is his natural enemy, while the king beyond his neighbour is his natural ally. The working of this principle can be seen throughout the history of Hindu India in the temporary alliances of two kingdoms to accomplish the encirclement and destruction of the kingdoms between them.²³² This understanding now needs to be revised.

²³² A.L. Basham, *The Wonder that Was India*, London, Picador, 2004, p.128.

Indian Authors

It needs to be pointed out that by incorrect understanding of the text of the *Arthashastra* even today, in some quarters it has been assumed (like a law) that every neighbouring state is an enemy and the enemy's enemy is a friend. Bhakri goes to the extent of calling *matsya nyaya* and doctrine of *mandala* theory as twin evils.²³³ According to P.C. Chakravarti, the doctrine of *mandala*, which epitomizes the Hindu conception of inter-statal relations, is essentially a doctrine of strife and struggle and a source of war when seen from the position of a *vijigishu*.²³⁴ In 1952 K.A. Nilankata Sastri the leading historian of independent India had to point out that the problem lies in this tedious theorizing by scholars as there is little reference to facts of interstate relations.²³⁵ In one recent (21st century) article representative of the Indian military's academic community it has been said that, "Kautiya's teaching led to an inflexible stance in our thinking".²³⁶ Major General Ashok Joshi, in his article, countered this argument by stating: "the statal circle concept has to be understood in its entirety before such an inference is drawn."²³⁷ I tend to agree with Ashok Joshi as often many military officers with a scholarly bent now realise that "your

²³³ S.K. Bhakri, *Indian Warfare: An Appraisal of Strategy and Tactics of War in Early Medieval Period*, New Delhi, Munshiram Manoharla Publishers, 1981, p.207.

²³⁴ P.C. Chakravarti, *The Art of War in Ancient India*, Delhi, Karan Publishers, 1987, p.181.

²³⁵ K.A. Nilankanta Sastri, "International Law and Relations in Ancient India", in Charles Henry Alexandrowicz (ed.), *The Indian Year Book of International Affairs* 1952, The India Study Group of International Affairs, University of Madras, Madras, 1952, pp.97-109.

²³⁶ Lt Gen Satish Talwar, (Retd), "The Enemy Within", *The Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, Vol.CXL, No.578, October- December 2009, pp.508-512.

²³⁷ Major General Ashok Joshi, VSM (Retd), "The Enemy Within", *The Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, Vol.CXL, No.579, January to March 2010, pp.122-123. For this idea of "hub and spoke" Maj Gen Joshi in his end note refers to Alyssa Ayres and C. Raja Mohan, *Power Realignment in Asia: China, India and the United States*, Sage Publication, 2009.

neighbour being your enemy and neighbour's neighbours your friend" is an imprudent thought as it leads to perpetual enmity with our neighbours and friendship with the next circle of extended neighbours. Surely Kautilyan scenarios were conceptual tools in context at that time in history. To that end more work for re-interpretation of his ideas for modern times needs to be studied. With this logic all SAARC countries less Afghanistan would be India's enemies. However, I disagree with Ashok Joshi who associates the "hub and spokes" idea with Kautilya without giving proper referencing to the text or source.²³⁸ Even David Shambaugh when he refers to the alliance system being followed by the US as the "hub and spokes" model does not attribute it to Kautilya.²³⁹ Overall what I urge is that calling any such interpretation of hub and spoke as Kautilyan is inaccurate and unscholarly. It shows that without going to the root sutra, vague ideas have been picked up. What may be a better way is to clarify ideas such as hub and spoke in contemporary events first using text followed by a commentary or a *bhasya*.

Probably, as has been argued earlier, mis-representation of neighbour being a perpetual enemy could be attributable to not reading the original and entire text of the *Arthashastra*. This needs a correction. R.P. Kangle's study of 1960s has cleared this fog. Kangle refers to Book 7, Chapter 18 and sutra 29:²⁴⁰

The neighbouring princes, *samatas*, may normally be supposed to be hostile. But it is possible that some may have a friendly feeling towards the *vijigishu*, while others may even be subservient

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ David Shambaugh, "The Evolving Security Order in Asia: Implications for US-India Relations, in Alyssa Ayres and C Raja Mohan (eds.), *Power Realignment in Asia: China, India and the United States*, Sage Publication, 2009, p.138.

²⁴⁰ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 2: An English Translation With Critical and Explanatory Notes*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 2010, p.382.

to him. Neighbouring states thus fall in three categories, *aribhavin*, *mitrabhavin* and *bhrytyabhavin*.²⁴¹

Therefore, current energies of scholars need to relate this and deconstruct an incorrect herd mentality of treating all neighbours as enemies. While the above debates whether a *mandala* perpetuates war or does it need to be understood by an understanding through text for contemporary politics is well-articulated, the misuse of the term *mandala* has made matters worse as shown below.

Blanket Use of Mandala as a Jargon

Mandala is the most abused word. Quotes and idea of circles or *mandala* theory in some articles and books are often implicitly Chanakyan (in the author's mind) but the theoretical basis is missing. This is because there is no proper teaching of his work. With pedagogical pillars missing, authors assume a standard of minimum knowledge and then use the jargon in abandon.

George Tanham found that the favoured security strategy by many Indians was a series of circles or rings (*mandala*). Tanham vaguely says, "The mandala concept is based on Kautilya's mandala, but applied more broadly here. According to the concept, a nation's contagious neighbours are always seen as enemies and their outer neighbours as friends in a series of circles."²⁴² But, it is unfortunate that Tanham never properly defined the concept with interplay of *gunas* or *upayas*. Thus, with the absence of an understanding of India as known to devoted Indologists from the West, Tanham's perfunctory study on

²⁴¹ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Second edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010, p.250. *Aribhavin* (of hostile disposition), *mitrabhavin* (of friendly disposition and *bhrytyabhavin* (of brotherly disposition).

²⁴² George Tanham, "Indian Strategic Thought", in Kanti Bajpai and Amitabh Matto (eds.), *Securing India: Strategic Thought and Practice*, New Delhi, Manohar, 1996, p.47 and end note 36, p. 104.

Kautilya is highly superficial and adds to the confusion and is a disservice. Only two scholars have come to notice who challenge these notions of caricatures and stereotypes. Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu in the edited work of Kanti Bajpai and Amitabh Matto has checked Tanham in interpreting the *Arthashastra* narrowly and wrongly.²⁴³ Jayashree Vivekanandan finds, while referring to same edited book in which Sidhu's lone essay stands, "both interesting and disturbing is that these cultural caricatures of India go unchallenged".²⁴⁴

Examples abound in the use of concentric circles or *mandala* as a jargon. David Scott as editor to Routledge's *Handbook of India's International Relations* has centred the work on what he calls India's own description of its foreign policy as operating in concentric circles. In 2002, the Bhartiya Janta Party's (BJP) External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha said, "Just as Kautilya talked of the Circle of States, a useful conceptual framework for the consideration of India's foreign policy would be to view it as consisting of three concentric circles around a central axis - the first of our immediate region, the second of the larger world and the third of over arching global issues".²⁴⁵ A recent invention is of a maritime *mandala* doctrine. First there is the immediate mandala (China and Pakistan), followed by intermediate mandala comprising East Africa, the Persian Gulf and Central Asia and Southeast Asia. The outer mandala comprises Japan, Russia and the USA.²⁴⁶

²⁴³ Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu, "Of Oral Traditions and Ethnocentric Judgments", in Kanti Bajpai and Amitabh Matto (eds.), *Securing India: Strategic Thought and Practice*, New Delhi, Manohar, 1996, pp.174-190.

²⁴⁴ Jayashree Vivekanandan, *Interrogating International Relations: India's Strategic Practice and the Return of History*, New Delhi, Routledge, 2011, p.96.

²⁴⁵ Ministry of External Affairs at www.mea.gov.in, October 30, 2002 as quoted in "Preface – Setting the Scene", David Scott (ed.), *Handbook of India's International Relations*, London/ New York, Routledge, 2011, p.xix.

²⁴⁶ Vijay Sakhuja, *Asian Maritime Power in 21st Century: Strategic Transactions China, India and Southeast Asia*, New Delhi, Pentagon Press, 2011, pp.280-284.

One explanation for this poetic and overpowering insertion of *mandala* by authors is that Kautilya's work ignores history and concerns itself with imaging all possible situations and indicating ways to meet them. Like a true political scientist of the realist school of parsimonious IR today, Kautilya is highly theoretical and thus it is common for commentators to make statements using his glossary to convey meanings which possibly can not be given with a historic example of that time.

Section 2- Correcting Misrepresentations

As it relates to misrepresentation, there are two aspects to the work of Kautilya. The straightforward one is the work on original sutras and its interpretations. Thus, most historian and Sanskritists do this and are comfortable with it. But for wider application, Kautilya is too serious a business to be left to linguists or historians alone. Unfortunately, as in theology, most scholars do not read the scriptures but keenly quote about it or mention what some commentator had said superficially. Most work on Kautilya is in this category. So this second (and the difficult) aspect is problem of interpretations by scholars who quote by picking up a point and then situating it in Kautilyan mould without even having read the original sutras in any language. I give an example.

On conceptualization of threats, Lt Gen S.S. Mehta mentions Kautilya's *Arthashastra* eloquently to explain the types of threats to a nation:

Kautilya warned of the four threats that can beset any nation. First, an external threat externally abetted; second, an external threat internally abetted; third, an internal threat externally abetted; and fourth, an internal threat internally abetted. Of these the fourth is most dangerous. If faced with the challenge of all, the last should be the first to be tackled. Prophetic words indeed!²⁴⁷

²⁴⁷ S.S. Mehta, "Concept of National Security in the 21st Century" in Gurmeet Kanwal and Samarjit Ghosh (eds.), *Future Wars: Changing Nature of Conflict*, Centre for Land Warfare Studies, New Delhi, Matrix, 2011, p.47.

R.P. Kangle explains that in Book 9 chapter 3 a very important consideration is the possibility of an insurrection in the kingdom while the king is away on the expedition and Kautilya provides advice to both the king and interestingly even to the officers who may be thinking of rising in revolt, telling them with whom to conspire and when.²⁴⁸ S.S. Mehta basing his above quote on same book, chapter and sutra does nothing of this sort – a practice very exhausting to trace it to the root sutras - given any reference of the sutra or whether it is his own interpretations or a commentary by some learned pundit. It is obvious now that probably he has based his formulations on Book Nine The Activity of the Kings About to March, Chapter Three Section 140, “Consideration of Revolt in Rear” and Section 141 “Counter-Measure Against Rising of Constituents in the Outer Region and in Interior”. This Ninth book deals with preparations to be made before starting on an expedition and the precautions that have to be taken at the time. Kangle, at footnote page 413 of volume 2, accepts that two sections are very closely related and it is difficult to find demarcation line between two. Sutra 1 and then Sutra 11 repeat that a revolt in the interior is a greater evil than a rising in outer regions. Sutra 6 qualifies that in case of revolt in the rear, he should make use of conciliation, gifts, dissension and force.²⁴⁹ Mehta has made a cogent matrix of threats and it sounds almost to be true today. This example attribute wholly to Kautilya using a four quadrant explanation is also quoted at the top of a chapter in the open access Indian Army doctrine.²⁵⁰ But surely it is not truly Kautilyan, but an adaptation which he fails to mention or the Indian Army doctrine

²⁴⁸ R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 3: A Study*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Second edition, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, 2010, p.257.

²⁴⁹ See R.P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra, Part 2: Translation with Critical and Explanatory Notes*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 7th Reprint, 2010, pp.413-417.

²⁵⁰ Section 2: Environment and Threat, *Indian Army Doctrine Part –I*, First Edition, HQ Army Training Command, Shimla, October 2004, p.5.

does not indicate. But, surely prioritizing internal threat as mentioned by Kautilya may not be correct today. A tighter Kautilyan way could be using the sutra as base, followed by this variation to suit contemporary explanations of threats from external and internal enemies.

While here authors only use general ideas and may make some minor technical error in not relating to a sutra, the worst malice, which goes unchallenged is the propaganda type of work on the concept. This false caricaturing is noticed both in India and abroad. Writers twist and distort his work to serve current political agenda of animosity or incorrect stereotyping. This is a flaw which must be set right. This is now explained in section 3.

Section 3 - Correcting the Twisted and Distorted Kautilya

In another variation in its worst form is the issue of (mis)quotation of Kautilya out of context in various instances which I grade as “twisting” and “distorting”. This is a negative misrepresentation and does more harm than good as he is misunderstood (sometimes unintentionally and some times on purpose). Few examples demonstrate this:

- (a) **Use of terms as simplistic jargon:** The historian Kaushik Roy concludes that in its counter-insurgency strategy, India employs Kautilyan *bhedneta* (divide and rule) where it employs Hindus and Christian Nagas from Nagaland to crush Muslim Kashmiri insurgents.²⁵¹ This information is false and the analysis is based on flawed logic placing it in artificially manufactured Kautilyan framework based on incorrect or partial/superficial understanding. Manufacturing divide and rule and attributing it to Kautilya

²⁵¹ Kaushik Roy, “Just and Unjust War in Hindu Philosophy”, *Journal of Military Ethics*, Vol.6, No.3, 2007, pp. 232-245.

is totally false. The Indian military posts units to peace and field areas on rotation, *never* on caste or communal lines. The challenge for future scholars and scholarship (scholar 'warriors') is also to become aware of such spoilers and obstacles and conduct a proper study of Kautilya and his philosophy. What is now happening is that the word Kautilya is used by western and Indian scholars very loosely denoting treachery, cunningness, and divide and rule. Norwegian scholar Ashild Kolas in her article on selective peace talks with various insurgents by Indian negotiators in Assam (what she means to say is divide and rule or *bhedaniti*) writes, "it is obvious that Kautilyan tactics remain popular with India's security establishment".²⁵²

There are some more examples which must be explained. The amusing aspect is how the simple principle of the four approaches or *upayas* of *sama-dana-bheda-danda* has been made to look like some exotic Indian witchcraft. Some Western scholars are very enamoured to use selectively borrowed secondary ideas of some Indian authors. A book written by a former intelligence officer Asoka Raina titled *Inside RAW: The Story of India's Secret Service* (1981) has been assumed to be the gold standard. In the book as is usual in academic writing, Raina alludes to ancient Indian scriptures, The Laws of Manu and Kautilya on intelligence. Bertil Lintner in his journalistic account of Sino-Indian rivalry²⁵³ picks up from Raina's work and a similar work by former BBC correspondent Subir Bhaumik's *Troubled Periphery: Crisis of India's North East* (2009) who again parrots *sama-dana-bheda-danda* being employed as an evil strategy by the Indian State in the north-east. These authors ignore the post-colonial nation-building experience. Nor are the highly

²⁵² Ashild Kolas, "Whats up With Territorial Council?" *Assam: Unstable Peace*, Seminar 640, December 2012, pp.41-46. Kautilyan example is at page 44.

²⁵³ Bertil Lintner, *Great Game East: India, China and the Struggle for Asia's Most Volatile Frontier*, New Delhi, HarperCollins Publishers India, 2012, pp.197, 206-207.

professional and ruthless intelligence organs of countries such as the US, the UK, the Russian Federation, Iran, Pakistan, Bangladesh, China or Israel ever mentioned in passing, thus attempting to construct some esoteric Indian way. It is no wonder that vague accounts based on superficial reading of secondary sources flourish in most of the writings by Western authors on Kautilya (barring some Indologists). This wishy washy way is best exemplified by the work of Terry Crowley who assumes that fiction of *Vishvakanyas* as to be true, whereas in fact it is based, as alluded to, on the play *Mudrarakshaka*.²⁵⁴

- (b) **Example of Pakistani Scholars:** Unlike the arguments in this monograph for the need to study Chanakya as a universal political theorist, interestingly, some Pakistani scholars argue that Indians are using *Arthashastra* deftly in contemporary times. Such articles indicate the fact of a very popular stereotypical idea of Indians in Pakistan exist which can not be wished away easily and need much more international academic work. Whether this is to be treated as a compliment or tongue-in-cheek remark is left to the reader. Two examples will suffice. Group Captain S.M. Hali in the Pakistani *Defence Journal* in his article on the Indian Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) or the external intelligence agency argues that it is nothing but *Chankeyaniti* that informs the crafty Indian intelligence.²⁵⁵ In another

²⁵⁴ Terry Crowley, *The Enemy Within: A History of Spies, Spymasters and Espionage*, New York, Osprey Publishing Limited, 2006, pp.27-29.

²⁵⁵ Gp Cpt S.M. Hali, "Raw at War- Genesis of Secret agencies in Ancient India", Part I and Part II "Raw at War", *Defence Journal*, Vol.3, Nos 2 and 3, 1999, pp.50-53 and pp.54-58, respectively. Paradoxically, a first of its kind IDSA Task Force on Intelligence has no mention of Kautilya. See IDSA Task Force Report, *A Case for Intelligence Reforms in India*, 2012. Jawaharlal Nehru once told B.N Mullik, the former chief of the Intelligence Bureau that in spite of such rich tradition of intelligence from *Arthashastra*, there was a lack of intelligence. See B.N. Mullik, *My Years with Nehru 1948-64*, Bombay, Allied Publishers, 1972, p.25. I thank Sqn Ldr RTS Chhina (Retd) for drawing my attention to the book.

recent article - posted on the web and unlikely to have featured in any international peer reviewed journal of repute - attempts have been made to relate the six-fold policy of peace, war, neutrality, marching, alliance and double policy with examples. India sought peace with China post-1962 as India was weak, Indian II strike corps has been shown as tools of a superior king to wage war on Pakistan, open, secret and undeclared war behaviour by India is with events such as India's assistance in Afghanistan, help to Baluchi insurgents, Cold Start doctrine, support for the Liberation Tigers of the Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka, Maoists in Nepal, Shanti Bahini in Chittagong hills is taken as evidence to fit this one fit all theory. In alliance it quotes the Indo-US nuclear deal and Russian arms import. In double policy it relates Indian CBM with China and at the same time undermines Pakistan on water, Sir Creek or Kashmir. It then repeats the idea of an immediate neighbour is an enemy and neighbour's neighbour is a friend.²⁵⁶

The reason for these extreme and superficial interpretations of India in Pakistan is not far to seek. Stephen Cohen found the weakest elements in the entire chain of training of military officers from the academy to the Command and Staff College. Indian strategic objectives are presented as a fixed doctrine rooted in communal attitudes, inaccurate and without any debate. In an extract from Command and Staff College, Quetta mimeograph on intentions of a nuclear India, it is shown how a mixture of suspicion, awe and contempt emerges as the pamphlet warns: "The instinctive Pakistani reaction to it (the Indian intention of develop nuclear technology only for energy), is

²⁵⁶ Masood Ur. Rehman Khattak, "Indian Strategic Thinking: A Reflection of Kautilya's Six- Fold Policy", *Eurasia Review and Analysis* at <http://www.eurasiareview.com/29032011-indian-strategic-thinking-a-reflection-of-kautilyas-six-fold-policy-analysis/> (accessed June 26, 2012).

shaped by centuries of close association with the Hindu mind from Chanakya and Kautilya to Panikkar and Subrahmanyam.”²⁵⁷ Based on this stereotypical caricature of the South Indian strategic thinkers, in my informal discussion with some military officers in India, I find that they even go to the extent of hypothesizing that the military in Pakistan is conscious of the extraordinary alert sharp strategic brains of South Indians (where they presume evidently Kautilya’s Brahmin origin lies) difficult to grasp. On the other hand Pakistanis assume to understand the minds of north Indians like Punjabis and Sikhs as they have a similar bent of mind as the Pakistanis.

The tendency to draw parallels as a pseudo literary style in strategic writing is very common. One often finds that in some Western literature it is mentioned that the Chinese today are behaving as of the warring kings period or the Chinese naval expansion is Mahanian and the land-based pipeline to China are Mackinderian. Even in India one example which is stereotypical is caricaturing all the nuclear and Islamic behaviour of Pakistan based on a book *The Quranic Concept of War* by Brigadier S.K. Malik.²⁵⁸ This craft of the academics to first conceptualize a nation by its historic or religious culture and then fit the arguments to suit a doctored theory may appear elegant on paper or rhetoric, but it has nothing unique except propaganda value. Rather, as it is learnt informally that Kautilya is now taught in Pakistan military institutions. It needs to be recalled that Kautilya

²⁵⁷ Stephen P. Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*, Karachi, Oxford University Press, 1984, p.78. Stephen Cohen reports that his book was promptly banned in Pakistan under the military dictator Zia ul Haq who himself commissioned Cohen to write the book. The book was roundly condemned in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* by a serving Pakistani official responsible for the ban. See Stephen P. Cohen, “Approaching India’s Military and Security Policy, with a Detour through Disaster Studies, *India Review*, Vol.7, No.4, October- December, 2008, p.311 and note 35.

²⁵⁸ Brigadier S.K. Malik, *The Quranic Concept of War*, Lahore, Pakistan, Associated Printers, 1979.

was educated at Taxila University of that period which is now in Pakistan. Thus the people of south Asia share this “gene” when the only religions or traditions known were *Sanatam Dharma* or *Vedic Brahminism* (later called the Hindus by Islamic invaders being derived from the Indus River), Jainism, Ajivikas and Buddhism. Surely seeing it from ancient history and a-religious point of view, Pakistan needs to claim him and his political theory like any South Asian civilization.²⁵⁹

This above exposure and wrongly attributing all evils to Kautilya as given in section 3 will take a lot of painstaking effort for remedial treatment. It is hoped that some more work is now done by academics to get the wrong notion corrected.

²⁵⁹ The Indus Valley/Harappan civilization similarly is across India and Pakistan. Both countries with Afghanistan own it. Likewise even Padmasambhav who spread Buddhism to Tibet was from Swat, thus he too deserves to be claimed by Pakistan.

VII

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES ON RESEARCHING

Too many research questions and no single puzzle

Scholars well-groomed in western IR always look for puzzles, while historians do not seek to solve puzzles or test theories. What are the research puzzles that come to mind? It could be said that in the one hundred years of *Arthasastra* there could be a hundred research questions and no puzzle. As an issue is discussed, its explanation is provided. Like a work of history, let the facts speak for themselves in the Rankean mode. As is covered in chapter 3, the idea of waging war differs from Mahabharata to that of *Arthasastra*. “One sees the war as an end, the other sees war as a mean” gives rise to many ideas for research in contemporary times like just war, and use or non use of force. The most challenging research puzzle this example demonstrates may be to study the many religious traditions for secular work like statecraft. Thus this work will not attempt any solution of a puzzle. However, some more puzzles that come to mind on which more work is needed are at Appendix D. Opportunities for deeper work are now ripe and the playing fields are level.

A Level Playing Field Not Only for Historians

Researching on *Arthasastra* is a level playing field. Unlike modern war studies or diplomatic histories, there are no classified documents or files to be consulted and unearthed to shed some new light.²⁶⁰ While no professor of history would grant a

²⁶⁰ There is now more hope on current diplomatic history to get a fillip. The present period there is a growing realisation of the need for diplomatic history. The Cold War International History Project now has reached Indian shores. See Special Address at the IDSA of October 10, 2012 by Dr Christian Ostermann, Co- Director Nuclear

doctorate on a work on modern war history without use of state or private archives like letters and reports and official files; in the case of ancient history there seems to be no such problem. This makes the field level for all. The challenge of course is clear. Knowledge lies scattered in the domain of archeology, philosophy, linguistics, history and political science and in the texts of religious traditions. Public perception too is based on folk lore, mythology and limited reading and understanding. Indian academics are thus in an advantageous position. In nearly 100 years of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* now in public domain much has happened. When the text was first published for the world in English language, India was under British colonial rule with most discoveries done by leadership of the European Indologists. If they were lovers and admirers of ancient Indian heritage well and good. Some were not being alien rulers and shrugged aside and ignored the rich past. Today, about a century later, there is freedom with globalisation of ideas and knowledge. Division of historians in India into Nationalists or Marxists is also hopefully past. Even if deep divisions do exist, Kautilya is too serious a business to be left to the tenured professors of history alone. Kautilya straddles across both humanities and social sciences. The challenge is about epistemology and methodology. Simple common sense of the *Arthashastra* no longer needs to be made esoteric. The Kautilya moment has now arrived. The science of politics and statecraft of the *Arthashastra* needs to be preserved and practiced the way Indian classical music has survived and thrived.

Gandhi and *Arthashastra*

Mahatma Gandhi's direct reference to Kautilya is hard to locate in his writings. However, commentators have found the gene.

Proliferation International History Project at <http://idsa.in/speech/ChristianOstermannAdialogueonNuclearHistoricities>. The Ministry of External Affairs has begun the long overdue of declassification of files. See "MEA to declassify More Files", *The Hindu*, October 11, 2012.

M.V. Krishna Rao shows that, “the use of the expedient of *Upeksha* in Kautilyan diplomacy is remarkably modern and is reminiscent of the great gospel of *Upeksha* that the Father of the Nation adapted during the second decade of this century” (20th century). Krishan Rao goes on to elaborate, “It was discovered during the time of Kautilya that an inferior power which could not confront a stringer power in open warfare, had to resort to *Upeksha* an attitude of complete indifference towards its separate and superior powers in neighbourhood.²⁶¹ Probably the peace research community will benefit if negative and violent tendencies and attitudes in state behaviour are well understood to deploy preventative diplomacy.

²⁶¹ MV Krishna Rao, *Studies in Kautilya*, Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal, 1958, p.101.

RESEARCH PUZZLES

1. What was the comparative change in discourse on political theory post translation of the *Arthasastra* for the English-speaking world? Is the idea of Westphalian State system responsible for the lukewarm rejection of the concepts of *mandala* and *vijigishu* and its variation as found in the *Arthasastra*?
2. Is the low impact of *Arthasastra* due to what some scholars perceive and observe as the Indian “genius” being philosophical and theoretical rather than “war-wise” – solving of problems of weight and national consequences. Is it because Indians are good in analyzing and hence the diversionary trend in the Indian’s nature.
3. Is the low impact factor of Kautliyan theory as a result of the Indian education system in independent India?
4. Is the policy of Gandhi and Nehru based on non-violent freedom struggle responsible for neglect of Kautilya?
5. What was the continuity and change in tangible form, if at all, given that the essence of *Arthasastra* was operating at sub-conscious level?
6. Did the Brahmanical system and tradition of spoken word and its internalization help in preservation of the traditional knowledge during foreign invasion and conquest? Or was it its opposite, that is, did it lead to the dissipation and loss of this knowledge.
7. If Kamandka could base his work *Nitisara* on the nectar of the *Arthasastra* after 1,000 years, why has its 21st century edition not been attempted so far?

8. What is the contribution of language on the continuity of the *Arthasastra*?
9. Is there any relationship with economic growth and the study of *Arthasastra* in India?

VIII POLICY SUGGESTIONS

There is a need for value-addition (in business language) by identifying the opportunities and gaps in knowledge which now require a new multidisciplinary impetus of research. Kautilya's contribution to political thought and theory needs to be placed at a high pedestal using his work which encompasses disciplines of linguistics, political science and theory, military science, international relations, philosophy and history. All nations and specially countries of the subcontinent need to claim him. However Kautilya is not the end, but the means to understanding and improving political theory. Each century and millennium the work needs to be refreshed and updated. During a discussion of an earlier draft of this work in a fellow's seminar on September 21, 2012 it was mentioned that Kautilya's work should not be taken as the Bible and we should read Chanakya not only because we aspire to become a great power, but also because world would be a more peaceful place by understanding him. The following are my policy suggestions.

- (a) Relevance has been alluded to in the Introduction. There is a need to initiate the study, internalization, spread and consolidation of Chanakya's *Arthasastara* in a sustainable way. More work needs to be done in this regard. The first step is to increase the width and depth of research. There is an unending search for Asian values and security architecture. Ancient works based on the post *Arthasastra* such as *Panchatantra* which is a *niti-shastra* or text book of *niti* (the wise conduct of life) have devices of the framing story best-known to Europeans being that of the *Arabian Nights*.²⁶² The *Panchatantara* in varied forms has traveled in

²⁶² Translator's Introduction of July 1925, *Panchatantra*, Translated from the Sanskrit by Arthur W. Ryder, Mumbai, Jaico Publishers 2011, pp.3-10.

translation, and translations of translations, through Persia, Arabia, Syria and the civilized countries. Scholars of Persian and Arabic languages may need to do more research to find the roots in *Qalila* and *Dimnah*, Arabian Nights and even Aesop's Fables. Similarly, one area ripe for further research may be to see the reference to and influence/impact of Chanakya's *Arthashastra* in Chinese and Japanese literature.

- b. A paradoxical question comes to mind. Why there is no study of Indology in India? Only the present department of Ancient Indian History Culture and Archaeology of Banaras Hindu University (BHU) was earlier called the Department of Indology. The top authority on attempts to decipher the Indus script is the Finnish Indologist Asko Parpola (whose specialization includes Sanskrit, Vedic Sanskrit, Indus script and translation of Tamil classic of Tirukkural into Finnish). One may recall how James Prinsep of East India Company deciphered Brahmi script in which Asokan edicts were engraved. This was followed by archaeological finds of Alexander Cunningham, Marshall and Mortimer Wheeler to unearth Indus Valley civilization from mounds of Mohanjodaro and Harappa (now in Pakistan). Even in the field of strategic culture as an important field of contemporary international relations, the tendency is to await some scholarly work on India from the west. In order to maintain Indian cultural heritage, one field that is vital is to encourage the study of Sanskrit. For a start there is a need for renewed vigour on reworking on Sanskrit texts like that of Chanakya or on Buddhism in a holistic manner. This needs state sponsorship and finance. It is only by providing jobs to young university entrants it will be possible for students to study via Sanskrit and then expand to field of history, philosophy, Buddhist/Jain studies and political science. This will also encourage school going children to opt for Sanskrit till Class XII (CBSE) for its usefulness in future in various disciplines. To begin study of aspects of Indology in India by Indians

should no longer be a paradox. In budgetary terms the project will not be very costly. We approximate about Rs 100 crores per year. Holistic centres to rediscover ancient text based on Sanskrit covering linguistics, philosophy, history and political science can be coordination at UGC level with inputs from National Security Council Secretariat (as a tool of soft power).

- c. **Project on Indigenous Historical Knowledge:** As I have shown, that majority of policy-makers and political scientists who serve the security discourse are not well-versed with Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. As the preliminary initiative, the IDSA organized a workshop on Kautilya on October 18, 2012. Professors and military officers, who had knowledge of the sutra as well as of their discipline, from across India participated in the workshop.²⁶³ Live video of the workshop are available on YouTube.²⁶⁴ The aim of the project is to initiate the study, internalization, spread and consolidation of Chanakya's *Arthashastra* in a sustainable way. The four themes for focus being foreign policy, intelligence, war and internal security as it relates to contemporary times. Issues related to what is being taught about Kautilya in the universities, location and conditions of archives and knowledge (oral and written) will also feature. The outreach thus will be in the form of a monograph, freely available on the IDSA website as well as sufficient hard copies, covering Kautilya's philosophy and the four themes as they relate to contemporary times. It has been suggested that the recommendations that will follow need to focus on:

- (i) Justification for renewed focus on Chanakya in a holistic manner for contemporary times.

²⁶³ <http://idsa.in/event/Kautilya>. Book of the workshop is forthcoming.

²⁶⁴ <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLrR2OTOrNPrh7Tv3m5lhklOzTAXtqrFMk>

- (ii) Need for apolitical state patronage, sponsorship and finance.
- (iii) Providing jobs/opportunities to young university entrants so that they opt for studying Kautilya through Sanskrit, History, Philosophy and Political Science streams.
- (iv) Project on writing textbooks for the civil service institutes (for IFS, IAS and IPS) and military training establishments. These could also be used by the public at large. The National Book Trust could also undertake the project for the lay readers and society. The text must be a-political. Translation of the work must also be done in Hindi, Bengali, Urdu and Sanskrit.
- (v) Placing the knowledge for the world as a contribution to International Studies (IS) from India.
- (vi) Any other issue which gets identified during the workshop, or by study group or the public at large within the theme so identified.

Thus to be relevant work must be done on specific themes like internal security, foreign policy-making, intelligence studies, military training and education, laws/ethics of wars. What is important that proper reference to sutra from accepted work such as that of Kangle be a pre-requisite. Mix up of the original text with scholar's own commentary and opinion must not happen. Authors need to have very clear demarcations and crystal clarity will be an important issue. Due to the project on indigenous knowledge and networking of scholars as on October 2012, Tarun Kumar has written an IDSA issue brief on "Corruption in Administration: Evaluating the Kautilyan Antecedents".²⁶⁵ This work by young academics is a good sign,

²⁶⁵ http://idsa.in/issuebrief_CorruptioninAdministrationEvaluatingtheKautilyanAntecedents_TarunKumar_121012. This could be one model for other scholars as there is no mix up with the original sutra and the author's commentary or bhasya.

which was also borne out by active participation by students perusing M Phil or PhD from the new South Asian University, DU and JNU as there is no departments, structure and knowledgeable faculty for them to be guided and mentored on the *Arthasastra* as a part of IR or IS. As on 2012 few self-taught and self-motivated military officers attending prestigious course such as Higher Defence Management Course at College of Defence Management and the Staff College at Wellington are perusing dissertations on foreign policy and war strategy, and conflict resolution.²⁶⁶

Perhaps the most challenging and rewarding work may be have the subject studies in India as “ Historical Sociology” and debating and creating ideas based on issues such as state sovereignty, anarchy and its control. ²⁶⁷

- d. The Indian Army has introduced for the first time operational art in the military history syllabus for the annual Staff College competitive examination: BH. Liddell Hart’s *Strategy: The Indirect Approach* for 2012, Von Clausewitz’s *On War* for 2013, *Arthasastra* by Chanakya (only chapters IX, X, and XI of the Book²⁶⁸) for 2014 and, Sun Tzu’s *Art of War* for 2015. However, the prescribed reading material and text for *Arthasastra* is without the name of the translator or commentator. It is strongly suggested that R.P. Kangle’s work (part 2 and 3) needs to be prescribed. But just by study of three books (9, 10 and 11) will miss out the vital foreign policy and diplomacy parts of Book 6 and also Books 12 and 13 which deal with stratagem of taking a fort and strategy by the weak or asymmetric warfare. Those who read this monograph will realize that subjects lie across

²⁶⁶ E Mail correspondences with student officers of author October/November 2012.

²⁶⁷ I thank Dr Navnita Chadha Behera in suggesting, in her remarks as a discussant to a previous draft, the need to study the neglected subject of Historical Sociology.

²⁶⁸ Probably it is meant books 9, 10 and 11 of the *Arthasastra*.

books and chapters. The Army Training Command with the Military Training Directorate needs to rethink the syllabus and also search for proper books as text. If proper selection and checking is not done then, wild ideas may be taken as the norms as has been explained in the case of *mandala* theory. Also great care needs to be taken to reconstruct accurately the political history and battle accounts for deriving lessons and issues of operational art of that period of history. It is hoped that the initiatives being taken by the IDSA in organizing workshops will also lead to slimmer volumes where both the text is clear and the relationship and commentary updated to present times.

- e. The fourth policy suggestion is on taking a leaf out from theory of computer hardware, software and logic. It is clear that a 'record' is both physical and logical. While the logical or virtual part is conceptual device lodged in memory and in now many translation of the *Arthasastra*, the physical part or the manuscripts (like hard disks or chips) are in need of a national effort for preservation. A *Times of India* news of November 19, 2011 shows that lack of funds with ORI are reason for neglect of preservation. Issues are the manuscript peeling off, absence of locker for safe upkeep, absence of security and fireproof chambers, non functional fumigation machine donated by Ford Foundation etc. A cultural specialist from US consulate in Chennai had visited the ORI and promised funds.²⁶⁹ According to Mysore Newsletter of February 3, 2012 US State Department handed over US \$ 50,000 as grant to digitize documents and create microfilms of manuscripts.²⁷⁰ If these two news reports are correct then it indicates that our care for preservation of our heritage is poor. Getting

²⁶⁹ http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-11-19/mysore/30419179_1_manuscripts-oriental-library-oriental-research-institute (accessed July 2012).

²⁷⁰ <http://www.edu-leaders.com/content/ori-mysore-university-receives-grant-us> (accessed July 2012).

money from a foreign country for our heritage is worst than getting grains as in the PL 480 of 1960s and 1970s. The US State department will now claim implicit credit and we may owe a future debt to them for providing this fund. It probably would have given them a very poor impression of India which boasts of a civilization of over 4,000 years with the US not even 400 years old. From policy angle one big hurdle which needs to be negotiated is our national attitude to archives. It needs to be made clear that the National Archives of India (NAI) are not the repository of any non-government text such as the *Arthashastra*. The NAI holds records of the ministries and organs of the state/central government from the British period. Cultural, literary, historic and religious archives including those of maritime history lie scattered and presumably unrecorded all over the country and probably also abroad in UK, Tibet, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Some are still not traceable like the manuscripts on palm-leaf or paper such as 5th century *Agastya Samhita* in Daniel Smith's Catalogue of *Pancaratra Samhitas*, though printed books exist in Hindi, Bengali and Kannada press.²⁷¹ No elegant research work or articles in media appear to be effective to make worthwhile impact. But what is more serious is poor record keeping of existing material. It appears that poor record keeping is a systematic and national characteristic. The archives and libraries are in a state of ruin. Many historians and students of archive management have tried to bring this national problem to light such as faulty archival education and separation of archives as a practical discipline from archives as a topic of epistemological and discursive deliberations, and

²⁷¹ N.B. Patil "Agastya Samhita", *Journal of the Anantacharya Indological Research Institute*, Vol. IX, 2009-2010, pp.63-65.

neglect and respect of the professional archivist.²⁷² This attitude surely is the worst form of a- historicity. The justification and arguments by some academics to show that India had a great tradition of history appear to be hollow in the light of the evidence on how we keep records of history. It is only if the political leadership takes interests that the situation may improve. As in getting into grips with loss of biodiversity, the process will be slow and long. It may not be possible for the state alone to raise the funds. A scheme could be initiated so that we generate funds by donations of concerted citizens. The project and mission needs to be a purely national team work. A beginning needs to be made. One way (the way of *Artha*) is to ask for voluntary contributions by the ministry of culture from Indian citizens including the diaspora which besides being rich also shows keenness in historical heritage. Importantly the money so spent needs to be transparent and not eaten way by corruption as explained in the *Arthashastra*.

- f. **Other topics in the IDSA: Project on Indigenous Historical Knowledge:** The process now must gradually include revival, consolidation, familiarisation of the rich indigenous knowledge that lies buried in India. The next work may well be on South India on the *Kural*s of Tiruvalluvar. The most challenging research may be to study the many religious traditions for secular work like statecraft. This will demand work on revisiting secular issue from the Buddhist traditions such as the philosophy of Nagarjuna and its relevance.²⁷³ Here academics have to

²⁷² Dinyar Patel, "Our Past is being moth-eaten", *The Hindu*, April 19, 2021, Sarath S. Pillai, "It's off the records", *Hindustan Times*, April 18, 2011 and "Archives and Archival Consciousness: A Post Colonial Predicament", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol XLVII, No.22, June 2, 2012, pp.32-34 and Shilpi Rajpal, "Experiencing the Indian Archives", *Economic and Political Weekly*, VolXLVII, No.16, April 21, 2012, pp.19-21.

²⁷³ Suggestion for studies of Buddhism in the Himalayan belt and Tibet are given in IDSA Task Force Report *Tibet and India's Security: Himalayan Region, Refugees and Sino- India Relations*, May 2012.

think of innovative means to extract and record secular literature from various periods, traditions and languages conscious of the fact that time has come that anything with religion should not be consigned by librarian to theology. Rich non-religious knowledge lies in Jain and Buddhist traditions. The Gupta period is one important time and period for study. 8th century BCE *Nitisara* of Kamandaki which is about 1000 years after Kautilya also is understudied to show how the concepts and idea were carried forward. *Kurals* of Tiruvalluvar is a topic already alluded to. Philosophy of Nagarjuna and its relevance and comparison with that of Hegel is also worth attempting. For a beginning, secular Jain literature such as that of Somadeva Suri also needs to be understood, compared and made popular.

While South Indian traditions are rich and well-documented (though not well-researched and available in open domain to be prescribed as text books for higher education), East Indian literature/traditions need more preliminary work. After ancient period next step may be the medieval period. The Mughal period is well-recorded but awaits more translation and study which leads on to the Sikh history and many bhakti cults which may have commented on *niti* and sociology. Regional studies such as of Shivaji, Ranjit Singh and Tipu Sultan and so on could be also developed. There is enough research material available on Shivaji and Ranjit Singh.²⁷⁴ Kashmiri tradition such as work of Kalhana

²⁷⁴ Language skills need greater emphasis. In my informal discussion with librarian at Bhandarkar Orient Institute, Pune in 2012 I was given to understand that Marathi language of 17-19th centuries is different from current one and very few scholars know the old language in which the records/archives are kept. The old script is called *Modi*. The Maratha History Museum-cum-Archives of the Deccan College in Pune contains important historical records of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, useful for a student of Maratha history. There are more than 200 original manuscripts in Marathi, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and English in the museum collection. These manuscripts include Marathi bakhars, Pothis, chronologies, Persian and Arabic translations of old Sanskrit works, astrological writings, diaries and poetic works. See http://www.deccancollegepune.ac.in/museum_maratha_history.asp

can be taken up in an integrated way with the cultural evolution of Kashmir and regions to its north.

Finally care needs to be taken that in such discourse as revisting and reviving ancient indigenous knowledge is not taken as a militaristic rise of India akin to the cliché like rise of China (peaceful or not). In common understanding, basing it on Western IR theory which is dominant, a rising power has propensity for waging war. The *vijigisu* in the text is expected to “conquer the world” which implies historically was only the conquest of the whole of India, designated as *Chakravartiksetra* (9.1.17-18) – northwards between Himavat and the sea, one thousand *yojnas* in extent across. From the times of *Arthashastra* the need to undertake any expansion never arose. Indigenous religion spread to north, south and east as soft power. History shows India never undertook expeditions for conquest outside the Indian subcontinent. Only exception is Chola expansion with hard and soft power to south east Asia. This enduring concept must not get distorted by importing discourse from the West which has over 200 years of colonisation emanating from Europe over all the inhabited continents (Americas, Africa, Asia and Australia). This in no way should give a wrong signal that India will now apply the idea of *vijigisu* and rely on *dandaniti* as it develops, rises and grows. This may be the most difficult task. Even without alluding to Kautilya there is a perception that all neighbours see India suspiciously as a big brother. While the term “hegemony” has benign connotations and exists in all regions, in the case of India there is the spice added of Kautilya. Bangladeshi scholar Imtiaz Ahmed demonstrating a deep reading of IR literature and using positivist western thinking shows how India behaves not in the pacific mode as propounded by Gandhi and his *charkha*, but the *chakras* of Asoka - which although is claimed to be a Asokan Buddhist symbol - is also a symbol of *kutaniti* or hegemonic ambition.²⁷⁵ This recurring idea of *matsya nyaya* and a *vijigisu* who has to understand the *mandalas* by assuming that every neighbour is an enemy has become a force of habit and as a law of Newton. Rather, the aim is to appreciate

this excellent scholarship on statecraft and place Kautilya in the constellation of great contributors and thinker in the emerging International Studies discourse. More than just Indian, his work is universal.

In the case of China, Yan Xuetong of Tsinghua University elegantly has made it clear that the one political reason as to why Chinese scholars have not given birth to IR theory is that China is not as strong as the US. Thus, Chinese IR concepts and ideas are unable to garner the same attention from the rest of the world. The three possible academic reasons for non availability of Chinese IR theory suggested are – Chinese scholars lack basic methodological training to develop systematic explanations for international phenomenon, lack of training in traditional Chinese political thought and, too few theoretical debates amongst Chinese scholars.²⁷⁶ Yaqing Qin also has deliberated on the same topic under the new Asian current of the need for non-western IR theories. The three phases of theory making are identified as: Pre-theory, theory learning and theory building. Yaqing Qin feels that China is presently at theory learning phase.²⁷⁷ India is similarly handicapped temporarily, and the second “freedom movement” will repair it. But for that the ratio of universities perusing IR in China to that of India is about 40:4. Surely, with just half a dozen IR departments with few in political science departments having just individual professor of IR is insufficient. This expansion is a necessary step which the universities must now carry forward.

²⁷⁵ Imtiaz Ahmed, Chapter 8, “The International Dimensions of the Indian State”, *State and Foreign Policy: India's Role in South Asia*, New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, 1993, pp. 215- 235.

²⁷⁶ Yan Xuetong, “Appendix 3 – Why Is There No Chinese School of International Relation Theory” in *Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Power*, Edited by A. Bell and Sun Zhe, translated by Edmund Ryden, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2011, pp.252-259.

²⁷⁷ Yaqing Qin, “Why is there no Chinese International Relation Theory?” in Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan (eds.), *Non – Western International Relations Theory: Perspective on and beyond Asia*, Oxon, Routledge, 2010, pp.26-50.

But a beginning has to be made as the arguments and explanations suggest. Deep currents of IR theory already exist in the ocean of indigenous knowledge. As Indian sages explain: “Should you not find the pearl after one or two diving, do not blame the ocean. Blame your diving; you are not going deep enough”. What is argued and urged is to discover and re-discover and not invent or re-invent.

IX

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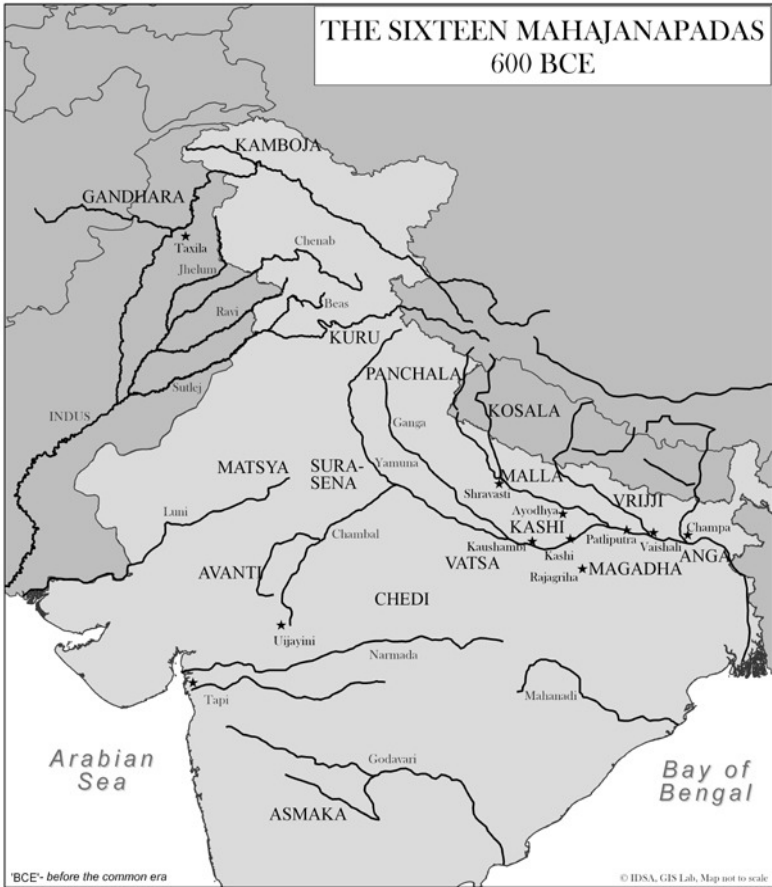
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MAP 1



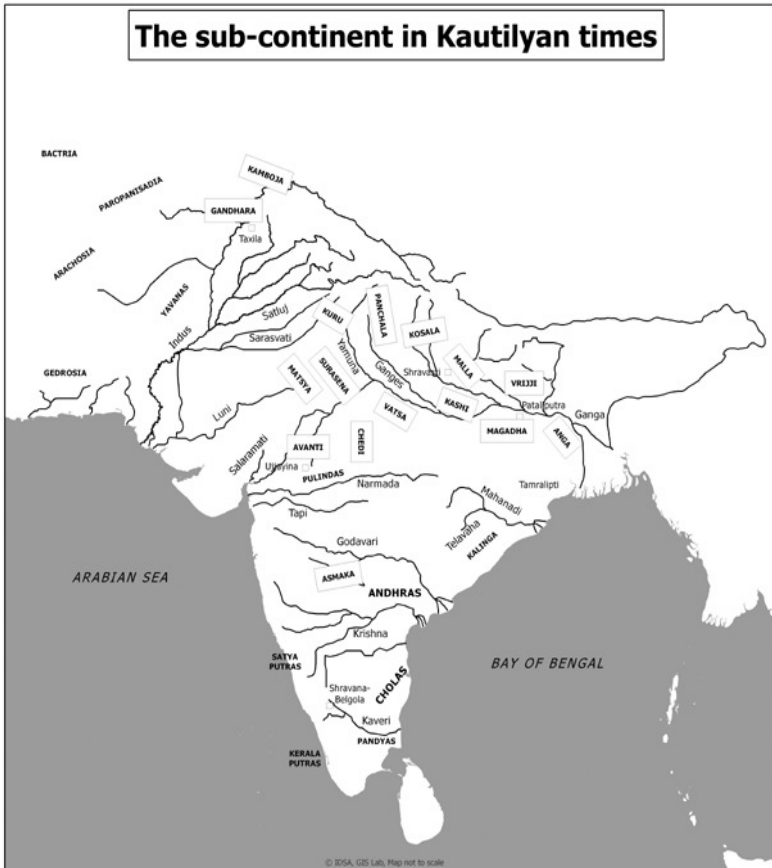
(Source: D.N. Jha, *Ancient India: An Introductory Outline*, New Delhi, People's Publishing House, 1977)

MAP 2



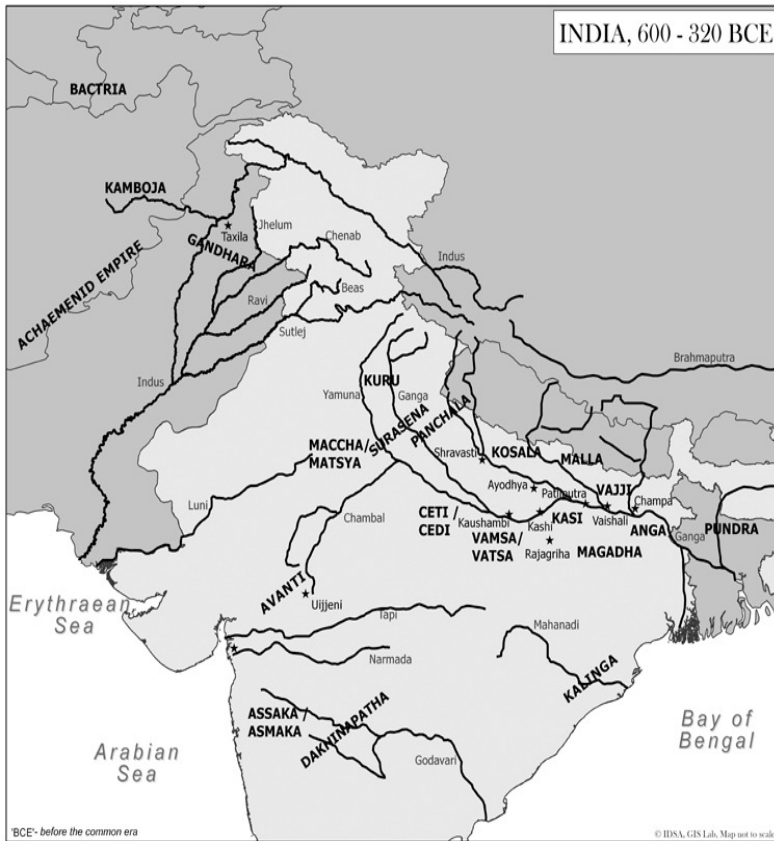
(Source: D.N. Jha, *Ancient India: An Introductory Outline*, New Delhi, People's Publishing House, 1977. Modern cities of Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta have been shown for reference)

MAP 3



(Source: Rangarajan L.N., *The Arthashastra*, New Delhi, first published by Penguin Books India, 1992)

MAP 4



(*Source:* Territorial and place names based on Map 6, India 600-320 BC, Irfan Habib and Faiz Habib, *Atlas of Ancient Indian History*, Oxford University Press, 2012)

This work establishes the need for relevance of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* to contemporary security studies. It shows why not much progress has been made by identifying reasons for its neglect. The paper provides an overview and an update of various academic and scholarly controversies on its age and authorship, and also on the misperceptions which abound on Kautilya himself. Overall, Kautilya has been treated unfairly in the disciplinary fields of political science, realpolitik, geopolitics and statecraft. It is not that Kautilya invented human behaviour, which was never idealistic, but he only observed truths that still survive or even thrive today in the enduring principles of statecraft and diplomacy.

Since independence, political leaders, policy makers and academics have acknowledged his ideas and have argued for the revival of his work for contemporary times at par with thinkers from other civilizations. The work also makes a case for scholars and policy makers to revisit Kautilya in an a-political manner. There is a need for value addition by identifying the opportunities and gaps in knowledge. This will facilitate reinterpretation of his work for contemporary times. This demands a new multidisciplinary impetus of research. Kautilya's contribution to political thought and theory needs to be placed at a high pedestal. This is possible now using his work which encompasses disciplines of linguistics, political science and theory, history, military science, defence and security, international relations, internal security, intelligence studies, management and leadership, to name a few. All nations and especially countries of the Asian subcontinent sharing ancient civilisational traditions need to claim him.

About the Author

The author joined IDSA in 2005. He has been researching on non traditional security, Tibet and military issues with a number of publications. He is at present researching on indigenous historical knowledge with focus on "Strategic Vocabulary on the Art of War : An Interpretation of Kautilya's *Arthashastra*". His other work on Kautilya includes "Relevance of Kautilya's *Arthashastra*", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol.37, No.1, January-February 2013 and "Understanding Kautilya's *Arthashastra*: In Praise of Rote", *World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues*, Vol.17, No.1, Spring (January-March 2013).

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