



Kautilya as a realist thinker

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Abstract

Kautilya was the first realist thinker who evolved the theory of international system. Kautilya is the greatest person with knowledge and wisdom. His foresight and wide knowledge combined with political economy expediency helped to found Mauryan Empire. Kautilya was a great Indian thinker who has been respected and accepted as a brilliant person not only by Indian scholars but also western scholars too. Today's era we found my problems at national and international level. So there is a need to look and relook at the ancient literatures and to provide intelligent interpretation and reinterpretation to apply effectively in the content of modern international system. Centuries have passed but these ideas covered by kautilya are still relevant and applicable in the modern world.

Keywords: kautilya as a realist thinker, kautilya arthashastra, saptanga theory, mandala theory, shadgunya concept, kautilya intelligence theory

Introduction

Kautilya is Arthashastra remains with us as an impressive monument to man's ability to reason clearly. If abspectly, about the most compiler problems of social and international affairs.

George Modelski

Kautilya was the first realist thinker who evolved the theory of international system, balance of power and power of politics. He had written Arthashastra in 300 B.C. much before various western thinkers like Machiavelli, Hobbes and Thucydides had written about Realism Kautilya's realism is different from the western realism. In the contemporary world our dimension of security is transforming, we need to revisit Kautilya's theory of statecraft, diplomacy and war.

He is a historical milestone in the making of India. Kautilya is the greatest person with wisdom and knowledge. He is considered to be the pioneer in the field of economics. His foresight and wide knowledge combined with political economics expediency helped found Mauryan Empire. Kautilya was chief architect of Mauryan Empire. Kautilya may be the only one personality or thinker who has been respected and accepted as a brilliant person not only by Indian Scholars but also western scholar too.

We have been described kautilya as a great teacher, shrewd statesman, elevated patriot, deep thinker, ruthless administrator, master strategist, selfless ascetic, ideal philosopher and true saint. He was well versed in politics, economics warfare commerce, Vedas and most of the subject.

Kautilya's Arthashastra

Kautilya's Arthashastra is a book of political realism, a book analyzed how the political world does work and not very often stating how it ought to work. Arthashastra written 2300 years ago. The Arthashastra is a timeless and

comprehensive treatise on all facts of statecraft:- Politics, Law, economy management of war and peace, intelligence foreign policy and diplomacy.

'Artha' means 'the earth inhabited by men' and Arthashastra is the science which is the means of acquisition and protection of the earth. Kautilya contains fifteen adhikarnas and books ^[1]. First five books deals with the internal administration of the state, next eight with its relationships with neighboring states and last two are miscellaneous in character. These fifteen adhikarnas has 150 Chapters, 180 Section and 6000 slokas ^[2]. Arthashastra is interpreted differently by various scholars:- Kangle called it 'Science of politics', preferred Basham calling it a 'Treatise on Polity' Kosambi called it ' Science of Material gain' Boesche named it 'Science of political economy' and Dutt call it ' Science of practical life' ^[3].

Contemporary Analysis of Kautilya's Theory on state Saptanga Theory

Kautilya had the idea of 'National Power' 2300 years ago with the saphthanga Theory: The seven State factors (Prakriti) constitute (State power), The seven constituent elements of the state (Kangle) ^[4]. are:-

1. Swamin - The Rular
2. Amatya - The Minister (Govt. and Administration)
3. Janapada - The people (In the countryside)
4. Durya - The fortress (Capital)
5. Kosa - The treasury (economy)
6. Danda - The armed might
7. Mitra - The ally (in foreign Policy)

The power of the state is determines by the totality and connectivity of the seven prakritis. However Kautilya theory means that power in no longer abstract relational magnitude, but on aggregate of material and non-material variables. Simultaneously the state power can be operationalized by breaking down its components ^[5]. As mentioned earlier

Kautilya's concept of state, power as the aggregate of seven state, power as the aggregate of seven state factors is homologous with Morgenthau's concept of 'National Power', Whose components are population size, agriculture, armed forces, raw material, industrial protection of a state Morgenthau also include non-material factors of state in national power, that is national character, national morality and the quality of government and diplomacy [6]. The seven Prakritis are logically and practically inter related in itself. Kautilyan statecraft requires that in ruler must judge soberly and self critically his own performance, particularly with foreign policy. The saptanga theory provides the benchmark for the correlation of force between rival states.

Mandala Theory

Kautilya vision of international relations as expressed in Arthashastra revolves around the concept of 'balance of power' between circle of states. Many ideas of Kautilyan applied such as kautilya vision of Mandala (Gautam 2013) Kautilya have realist understanding so the labeling states as enemy or friend. According to geographical determinism kautilyan found mentally viewed a neighbor as an enemy and the neighbors enemy as a friend [7].

According to the conception of Mandala a King was to regard one's own Kingdom as the centre of twelve concentric circle, the order circle representing the Kingdom situated away from one's own. The Mandala consists of four sub-circle, each of them consists of four sub circle each of which is constituted by three states as follows:-

1. The state at the Centre of the Mandala, the friend and the friend's friend (3 states).
2. The enemy his friend and his friend's friend (3 states).
3. Natural state its friend and it's friend's friend. (3 states)
4. Intermediary state, it's friend and it's friend's friend (3 states)

According to the epic A Mandala consists of seventy two elements⁸. Kautilya is most famous for outlining the so called Mandala Theory of foreign policy in which immediate neighbors are considered as enemies. In this excellent discussion of Kautilya's Mandala Theory of foreign policy. Singh also continuous of stating this is ancient India's most notable contribution to political theory [9]. In the twentieth century international relations theorists have defended the doctrine of the balance of power because equally armed nations will supposed deter each other and therefore there will be no war. This argument occasionally found in Kuatilya:- In case the gains (of two allies of equal strength) are equal, there should be peace, if unequal fight [10]. The conqueror should march if superior in strength, otherwise stay quiet [11]. According to Kautilya there is no question of morality here, He advised the king that, when he is superior in troops, when secret instigations are made, when precautions are taken about the season, when land is suitable to himself, he should engage in an open fight [12]. If a king can win, then he should go for war, As Kangla says, the Arthashastra 'Preaches an ideal of conquest [13]. According to Kautilya treaties were agreements between Kingdoms of roughly equal power, agreements a King should break if they are no longer advantageous. Treaty will provides a wall of protection against a strong enemy. As kautilya compared with SUN-TZU and Machiavelli's writings. Machiavelli wanted fame but SUN-TZU and Kautilya did not care a unit for glory and fame. All wanted

to win at any cost and to keep causalities on both sides a minimum. SUN-TZU said 'For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill to subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.'¹⁴ Kautilya also believed same as SUN-TZU.

Kautilya's Shadgunya Concept

Kautilya's Shadgunya cluster offers a great reservoir of ideas and concepts for International relations theory as well as intelligence analysis theory. Kautilya core goal to adopt this strategic concept is the political unification of the Indian subcontinent. In a given situation a state must choose between six not less or more.

Foreign policy options:-

1. Sandhi, for peace - if the rival state is stronger
2. Vighraha, for War - The rival is inferior in Power.
3. Asana, neutrality - The correlation of forces is balanced.
4. Yana, War preparation, diplomacy- one's own power is rising vis-à-vis the rival state
5. Samshtya, alliance building - The rival states's power is rising father.
6. Dvadhivha, diplomatic double game -The constellation among rivals and allies¹⁵.

Shadgunya theory is connected with saptanga theory. The circle of constituent elements is the basis of the six measures of foreign policy (Shadgunya) [16], Kautilya politically unified India and Machiavelli Italy. In Modern era, Kautilya foreign policy is 'revisionist' with to the subcontinent beyond India's geo cultural boundaries. Kautilya also incorporates the power of ethics or morality while making alliance. Mark Mc Clish argues that sandhi essentially signifies non-aggression pacts and partnership [17]. Dikshitar explain that upayes can be used single or in combinations [18].

A new term called Maritime Mandala also introduced to describe strategic transitions in Southeast Asia has appeared recently [19]. It tells us about India's three maritime Mandalas first, The immediate Mandala (China and Pakistan) and second, Mandala by intermediate Mandala compressing East Africa, the Persian Gulf, central Asia and southeast Asia and the outer Mandala compressing Japan, Russia and the U.S. This is a big invention, the reflection of Kautilya though in strategy discourse cannot be ignored [20].

Kautilya's Intelligence epistemology

If we correlate kautilya's Saptanga theory and the Shadgunya theory with Kautilya theory of intelligence, we found a solid conception foundation of grand strategy has been laid indeed an extraordinary intellectual feat, Today geopolitical, diplomatic, technological, economic, infrastructural, epidemiological or climate issues are also covered by intelligence Kautilya rejects astrologers or magicians as a contributory factor to state craft and demands reality based information about the capabilities and intention of political, actors and leaders, and the methodological, scientific assessment data. The scientific methodologic quality of intelligence, which nowadays predominant, is conceptionally anticipated by kautilya. So Kautilya's contribution to intelligence epistemology remains thought stimulating for the contemporary intelligence studies discourse [21].

The picture drawn of Kautilya and his intelligence activities in a classical Indian play 'Mudrarashkas' by Vishakhadatta (17th Century) which has been very popular in India at present. Kautilya intelligence services compared with the intelligence services of the Republic of Venice and Republic of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) in 12th and 18th centuries and Sir Francis Walsingham's services in Tudor England [22].

The term 'Grand strategy' was coined by B.H. Liddell Hart [20]. This approach is taken by Kautilya's Arthashastra. The concept of grand strategy is near to Kautilya's holistic and synoptic idea of statecraft. This concept is the analysis and assessment of one's own resources and capabilities on the one side and the capabilities of external actor on the other side. Kautilya's Arthashastra compared with Chinese Sun-Tzu and his 'The Art of War' unquestionably the other genuine ancient classic dealing with intelligence [23].

Conclusion

In conclusion, we can say that Kautilya's Arthashastra is a timeless masterpiece in the field of International Relations and deserves to be restored to its rightful place in history. Kautilya's theory of Prakritis as foundation of Mandala, Power of Mitra/allies and holistic interpretation of Shadgunya theory in foreign policy and grand strategy cannot be ignored for long. Kautilya was not only a theorist but also a practitioner who mentored the biggest empire in the Indian subcontinent. His masterpiece, which correctly interpreted, can be useful in the International world. As Brown argues that Kautilya's work is extraordinary practical character, logical, headlines of adventitious moral, religious standards, unique combination of features [24]. His ideas can be compared with Aristotle, Machiavelli, Bismarck. Amitav Acharya argues that the source of International thinking is just found in western sources but also exposed theorizing from Sumerian, Egyptian, Chinese and Indian posts [25]. Many Modern international concepts are found to be more sophisticatedly organized in the 2300 year old text of Kautilya's Arthashastra.

The use of prakritis, Shadgunyas, the four upayas modal are found in Morgenthau's suggested theory of balance of power. We also found his ideas in India's contemporary strategic thought too. Many articles establish about Kautilya's Arthashastra are not only in spirit but also in practice. Great power of world can not become powers across the globe without having mitra's in the contemporary world. Professor Subrata K. Mitra argued that state and politics in India are the result of a seamless evolution from the pre-modern past [26, 1].

Michael Liebig believed that Kautilya's thoughts might have influence - via trans temporal and trans cultural. 'Idea Migration' and hybridization of occidental theorizing on interstate relations [26, 2].

According to Col (Retd.) P.K. Gautam many core ideas in Arthashastra have stood the test of time and due to their universal and enduring nature have helped explain extant state behavior [26, 3].

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