

VIF

Certificate Programme

Introduction to Indian Strategic Thinking and its Determinants

Relevance of Kautilya in Contemporary Strategic Thought

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August 7, **2019** (Wednesday) 1215h to 1300h.

Structure

- **Why Kautilya ?**
- **Relevance and Concepts**
- **Discussion**

Indic cultural traditions reside in subconscious minds

"There is no gainsaying the fundamental importance of the *Arthashastra* in our thinking... *Much of this is unselfconscious and instinctive today.*"

(Speech at IDSA on October 8, 2013 by Shivshankar Menon, India's NSA 2010-14 published in edited chapter)

Subjects of Interest

('Library of India' according J.J. Myer, Translator into German in 1930s)

Vast range of topics and disciplines beyond Sanskrit :

Statecraft, warcraft ,diplomacy, self-control, leadership, management, critical thinking/ science of reasoning (*anvikshiki*), intelligence studies, counter-insurgency, humanitarian laws of war, political science, international relations, economics, public administration, good governance and so on.

Chakravarti/Swarabhaum

The *vijigisu* in the text is expected to 'conquer the world' which implies the conquest of the whole of Indian subcontinent ,designated as *chakravartikshetra* (9.1.17-18) – northwards between Himavat and the sea, one thousand *yojnas* (Yojana varies between 5 to 9 miles) in extent across.

***Trivarga* Dharma(morals/ethics), Artha (Economics and comprehensive national power) and Kama (Desire/wants/expectations)**

- *Arthashastra* is the science of dealing with state affairs in the internal(*tantra*) as well as external sphere(*avap*) or in other words it is the science of statecraft or politics and administration.
- In 9.7.60 it says ‘ Material gain, spiritual good and pleasure : this is the triad of gain’.
- All three are necessary. But both artha and kama have to be regulated by dharma.

No *Matsyanyaya* in a Nation

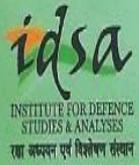
For internal governance, it is to be ensured that an anarchical state of *matsyanyaya* or **law of the fish** (the strong eating the weak) is eliminated by the rule of law, and if necessary, by *danda* (punishment) legitimated by political virtue (*dharma*).

End State is Yogakshema (1.4.3-4)

‘...the the acquisition of (things) not possessed,
the preservation of (things) possessed,
the augmentation of (things) preserved, and
bestowal of (things) augmented on a worthy
recipient.

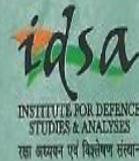
On it dependent the orderly maintenance of
worldly life.’

Relevance : Essential Reading



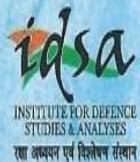
The *Arthaśāstra* in a Transcultural Perspective

Liebig • Mishra (Eds.)



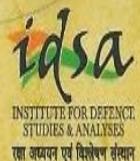
Indigenous Historical Knowledge
Kautilya and His Vocabulary
(VOLUME III)

Gautam • Mishra • Gupta (Eds.)



Indigenous Historical Knowledge
Kautilya and His Vocabulary
(VOLUME II)

Gautam • Mishra • Gupta (Eds.)

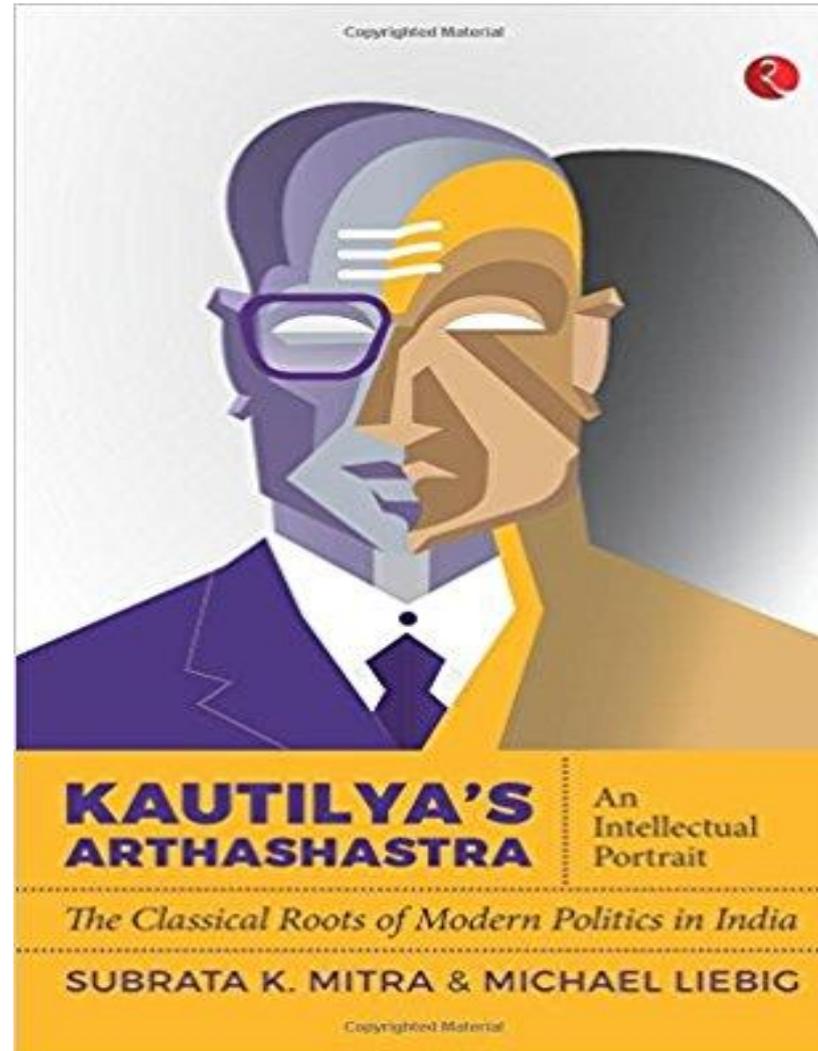


Indigenous Historical Knowledge
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Mitra and Liebig, Rupa /Indian edition



**Five Components of Counsel and An Endeavour as Found in
Kautilya's *Arthashastra*(1.15.42), Kamandaka's *Nitishastra* and
Hitopadesa (The Wholesome Advice) by Narayana**

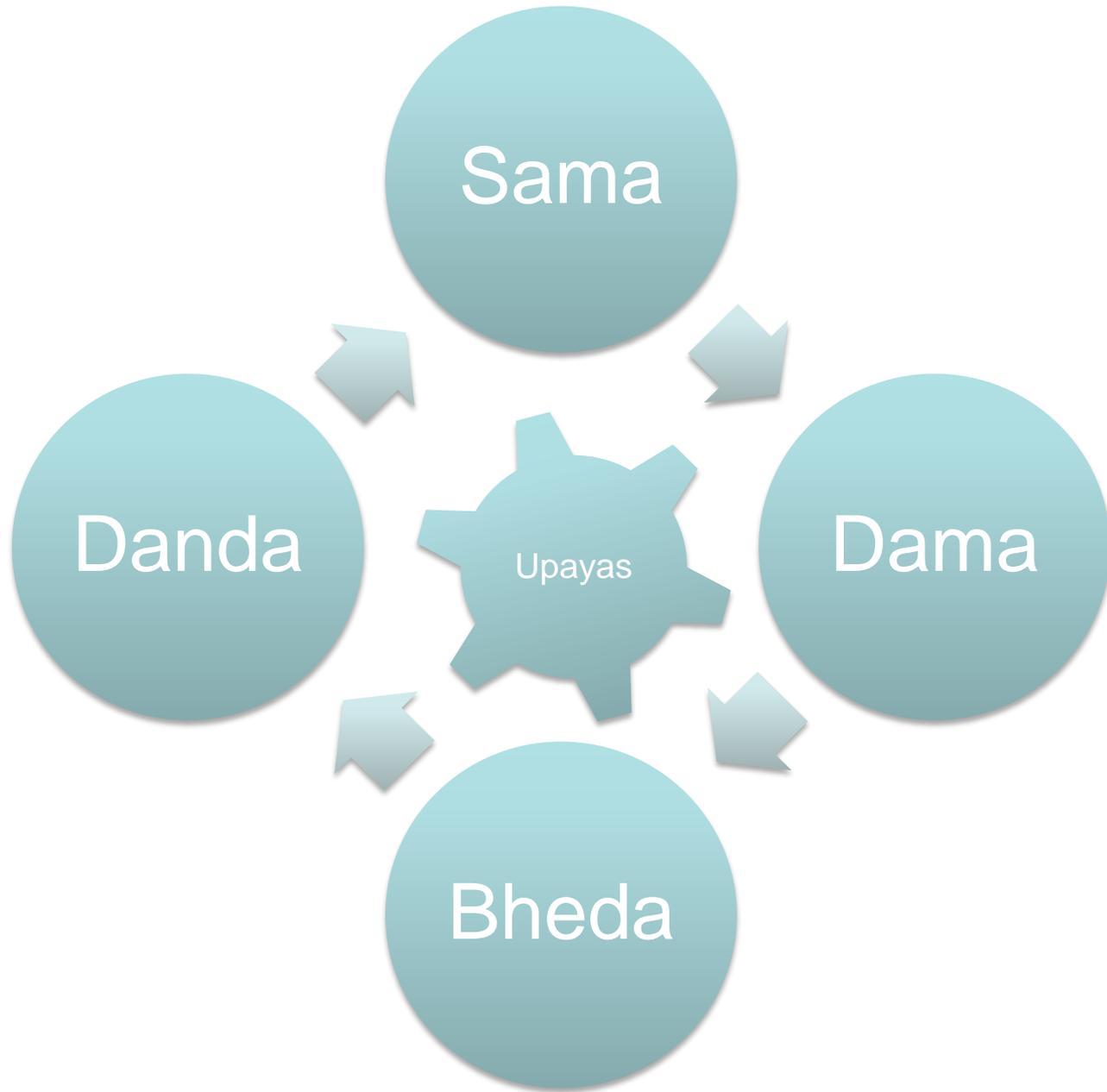
1. Strategy for initiating the undertaking,
2. Men and material of exemplary quality,
3. Allocation of place and time,
4. Precautions against failure, and
5. Bringing the undertaking to a successful conclusion.

Understanding Concepts

1. “U”- Four *Upayas* (4)
2. “P” Seven *Prakrits, Saptanga* or Constituent Elements (7)
3. “S” Formula of *Sadgunya* or the Six Constituents of Foreign Policy (6)
4. “ R” - *Rajmandala* (12)
5. “ V” *Vijay* or Conquest(3)
6. “ Y” *Yuddha* or War (4)
7. “S” *Shakti* or Power (3)

1. “U”- Four *Upayas* (4)

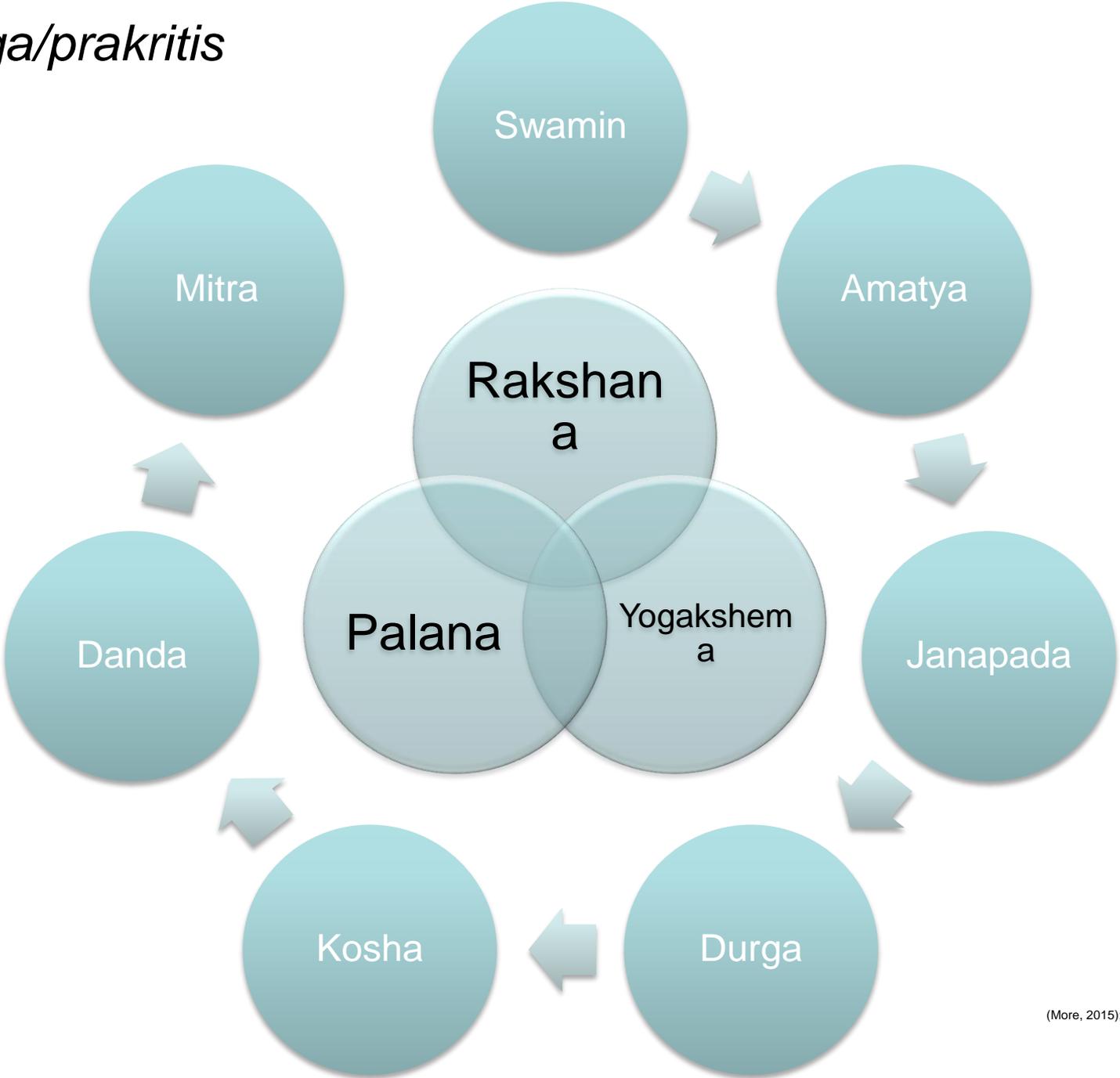
1. *sama- dana- bheda- danda* : conciliation,
gifts, rupture and force
(force is last resort)



2. “P” Seven *Prakrtis* or Constituent Elements of a State/ Saptanga Theory (Book VI)

1. *svamin*(king or ruler)
2. *amatya*(body of ministers and structure of administration)
3. *janapada/rastra*(territory being agriculturally fertile with mines, forest and pastures, water resources and communication system for trade, people)
4. *durga/pura*(fort)
5. *kosa*(treasury)
6. *danda/bala* (army)
7. *mitra* (ally)

saptāṅga/prakritis



Book 8 : To Be Aware of Calamities (*Vyasanas*) that may Affect Seven Constituent Elements of Book 6

‘It is necessary to take precautions against these before one can start on an expedition of conquests’- Kautilya .

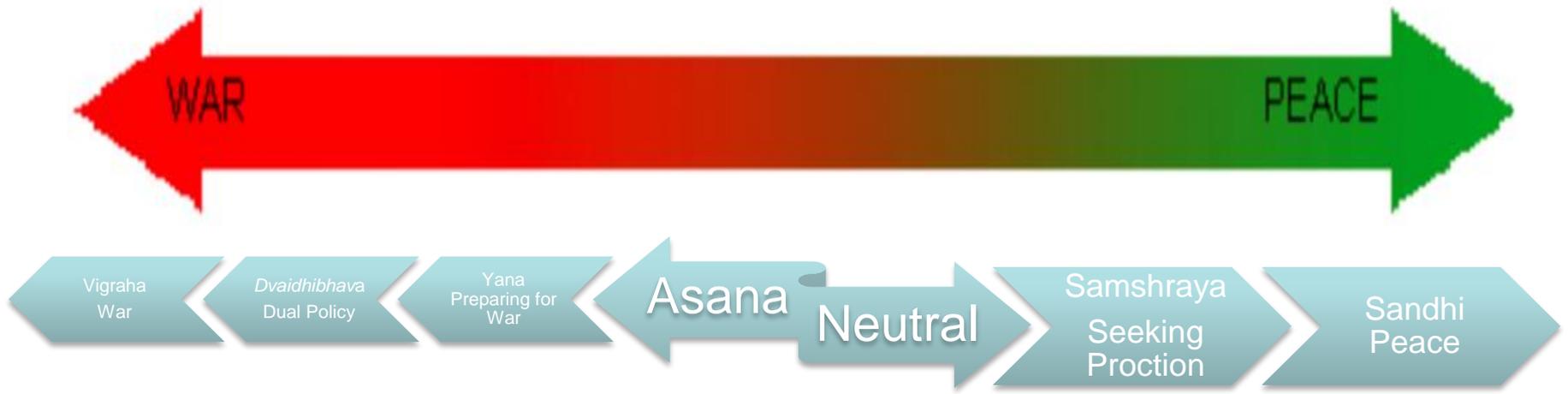
This matches with Chapter 3 (Attack by Stratagem) of Sun Tzu’s *Art of War* which is about intelligence and knowledge. It counsels :

‘ Hence the saying: If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles.’

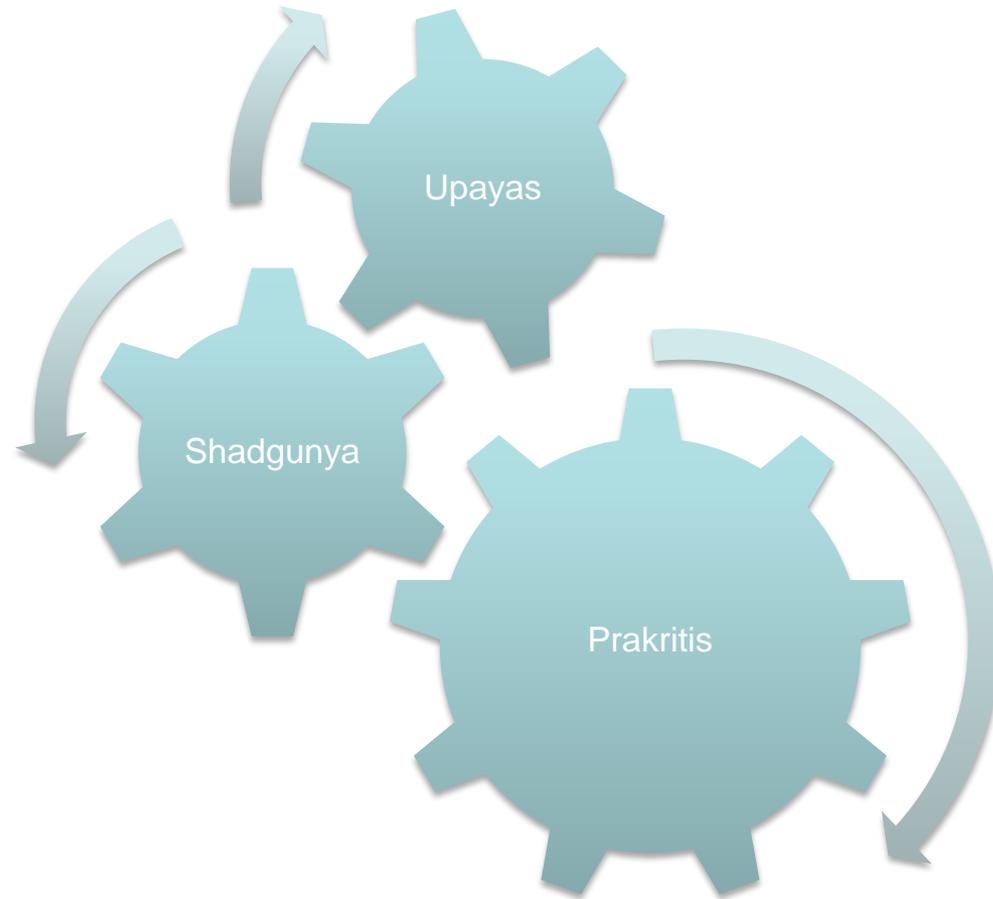
3. “S” Formula of *Sadgunya* or the Six Constituents of Foreign Policy (6)

1. *Sandhi*, 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 an expedition.
5. *Samsraya*, seeking shelter with another king or in a fort.
6. *Dvaidhibhava*, the double policy of *Sandhi* with one king and *Vigraha* with another at the same time.

Shadgunyas/ Gunas (the choice of foreign policy)



The inter-linkages of various models



4. “ R” - *Rajmandala* (12)

- It is theory with no historical example. Best scenario planning tool in combination with other concepts.
- *Mandala* is said to consist of **twelve kings** or states.

5 each of Blue and Red and 2 others (Finally One Successful Victor out of 12)

- **Vijigisu**
- *Mitra*
- *Mitramitra*
- *akranda*

(ally in the rear)

- *Ari*
- *Arimitra*
- *Arimitramitra*
- *Parsnigraha*

(enemy in the rear of the *vijigisu*, rearward enemy or heel catcher)

- *akrandasara*
(ally or asara of *akranda*)

- *Parsnigrahasara*
(ally or asara of *parsnigraha*)

11. *Madhyama* (middle king bordering both *vijigisu* and the *ari*)

12. *Udasina* (lying outside, indifferent /neutral, more powerful than *vijigisu*, *ari* and *madhyama*)

Amplification of *Mandala* (Not necessary neighbour is enemy)

Neighbouring states fall in three categories:

1. *aribhavin* (of hostile disposition) ,
2. *mitrabhavin* (of friendly disposition),
3. *bhrytyabhavin* (of dependent disposition)

5. “ V ” Vijay or Conquest(3)

1. *Dharmavijay* (*Dharmavijayai* ,
the righteous conqueror)

2. *Lobbhavijay* (*Lobbhavijayai*,
the greedy conqueror)

3. *Asuravijay* (*Asuravijayai*, the
demoniacal conqueror)

6. “ Y” *Yuddha or War (4)*

1. *Prakash-yuddha*, ‘open fight’ at a place and time indicated with standard military tactics based on a sound military appreciation are to be employed.
2. *Kuta-yuddha* ‘concealed warfare’ involving use of tactics in battlefield.
3. *Tusnim- yuddha* ‘silent fighting’.
4. *Mantra Yuddha* (Diplomatic Warfare)

Note : Today the international buzz words are hybrid war. According to Gen. Gerasimov of Russia, ‘ non- military measures are occurring at a ration of 4 :1 over military operations’ - **this concept exists in the Artha text.**

***Shakti* or Power is three-fold (Books VI and IX of Kautilya and in *Nitisara* by Kamandaka)**

- Priority 1 – **Mantra-shakti** or **Mantri-Shakti** (power of counsel and diplomacy/**intellectual**)
- Priority 2- **Prabhav - shakti** (power of treasury and army/**physical**)
- Priority 3 – **Uttsah-shakti**(power of personal energy, moral and energetic action, **psychological**)

War is Last Resort

Sensibly, in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, war is the very last resort which can be found in Book 7 on foreign policy :

‘ If there is equal advancement in peace or war, he should resort to peace. For , in war there are losses, expenses, marches away from home and hindrances.’

([7.2.1-2], R.P. Kangle, *The Kautiliya Arthashastra, Part 2: An English Translation With Critical and Explanatory Notes*, Bombay University, 7th Reprint, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 2010, p.325.)

Humanitarian Laws of War based on Ethics (Dharma)

- When attacking the enemy in open battlefield, or when storming a fort safety is granted to non-combatants. Special care is to be taken for enemy combatants who surrender which is much like the Geneva Conventions .
- For the consolidation of an empire and pacification of the conquered territory, Kautilya gives a good set of rules as to how the conquered people are to be assimilated and treated with dignity and care.

Relevance :
**Indian Heritage of *Dharmavijay* to Shape
Global Discourse**

Application of force or *danda* has to be legitimate and in contemporary understanding, it cannot be outsourced to artificial intelligence and robots.

Counter Insurgency

Counter Insurgency(Book 9, Chapter 6) Section 144 (Dangers) Connected with Traitors and Enemies

9.6.2-3 ‘.....against the citizens and the country people the (various) means are sama, dana and bheda, excepting force (danda). For, force cannot be used against a multitude of people. Even if used , it might not achieve its object and at the same time bring on another disaster.’

Two Conditions Must be Met to Apply and Reinterpret Kautilya

1. Must have domain knowledge.
2. Must have working knowledge of Kautilya's *Arthashastra*

(Do not rely on so called 'floating wisdom' as in Chanakya–Neeti).

Outreach and Relevance in Education

Thought, speech
and action

Discussion