



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Kauṭilya's Maṇḍala theory, and it's relevance in India-Pakistan relation and Sino-India relation

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Introduction

Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra recorded one of the most influential compendia on political philosophies and treatise in the Indian Subcontinent. *Kauṭilya* (370–283 BC) was a professor of Indian political tradition and economics at Taxila University, now in Pakistan. He was the chief advisor of the first Mauryan emperor Chandragupta, who was the king of the largest empire, the Indian subcontinent has ever witnessed. *Kauṭilya* wrote his famous work between 321- 300 B.C.¹ And a Sanskrit scholar, also a librarian at Mysore Oriental Library, Dr. R. Shamasastri discovered *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra* within the piles of ancient Indian manuscripts in 1905. He published the manuscript of the *Arthaśāstra* in 1909.² He also published the english translated version in 1915.³ In the introduction, he quoted *Viṣṇupurāna* IV, 24, and stated that the author of the treatise was a Brahmin scholar named *Kauṭilya*.⁴ Indian scholars usually acknowledge him as the father of Indian Political science. He wrote his masterpiece of treatise in a uniform style with logical analysis and constancy in the use of arithmetical calculation. *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra* tells about how to administer the internal as well as external affairs of a state. He endorsed imperialism and advised the way to conquer another state. *Kauṭilya* was a well versed with foreign diplomacy he theorized the concept of interstate relationship and its implications in a very unprecedented way.⁵

In ancient India, the ultimate objectives of a state were to secure peace, to bring justice, and to provide security for its subject. As per *chāndogyopaniṣad*, a kingdom should be free from thieves and drunkards; and its subjects should be literate.⁶ The state, however, was responsible for the material well-being of the

¹Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, R. Shamasastri, Mysore Printing Publishing House, Mysore, 1960. P- Introductory note V.

²Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, R. Shamasastri, Mysore Printing Publishing House, Mysore, 1960. P- Introductory note VI; , and Ashoka: The Search for India's Lost Emperor, Charles Allen, London: Hachette UK. ISBN 9781408703885.

³The First Great Political Realist: *Kauṭilya and His Arthashastra* (2002), Roger Boesche, Lanham: Lexington Books, ISBN 0-7391-0401-2, p. 8

⁴*Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya*, N.P.Unni,(Part-1), New Bharatiya Corporation, Delhi, 2006, P- XXIII

⁵ Rajeev, Interstate relation in *KauṭilyanArthaśāstra*, Journal of Advances and Scholarly Researches in Allied Education, Vol. II, Issue II, October-2011, ISSN 2230-7540.

⁶नकदर्येश्दातासतिविभवे । नमद्यपोद्विजोत्तमः सन् । नानाहिताग्निः

शतगुः । नाविद्वानधिकारानुरूपम् । नस्वैरीपरदारेषुगन्ता । अतएवस्वैरिणीकुतोदुष्टचारिणीनसंभवतीत्यर्थः । (5/11/5), *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, Sankarbhasya (Tr, hindi), Gita press, Gorokhpur, 2072 smbt., P-502

citizen and was bound to promote moral values and ethics in society. *Kauṭilya* believed in expansionism, and he advised the king to conquer the territories of others to take care of the welfare of his state. A state, as a unit of the international system, cannot remain isolated from each other. George Modelski described the definition of foreign policy in his book “*A Theory of foreign policy*” as “the system of activities evolved by communities for changing the behavior of other states and for adjusting their own activities to the international environment.”⁷ Foreign policy is well-thought-out to be a series of directives for a state to decision-making that would influence people, places, and things beyond the boundaries of the state.⁸ The primary goals of a foreign policy of a state are to strengthen national security and power, to advance the economy, to establish an international prestige, and to promote the welfare of its citizens.⁹

The relevance of *Kauṭilya*'s diplomacy of foreign policy prevails through ages. The essence and the vast conglomeration of kingdoms that prospered in the Indian sub-continent during Mauryas give an example of exceptional diplomacy. During the Mauryas, the great power was centralized at the capital *Pāṭaliputra*, the largest city of the Indian subcontinent, around 300 B.C.¹⁰ *Kauṭilya* proposed the *Maṇḍala* theory, the theory of world conquest, to deal with foreign affairs of a state. In other words, it is a theory of world conquest. *Kauṭilya* advocated that the system of maintaining peace, waging war, and having healthy relationships with other states can be governed through the theory of *Maṇḍala* (circle of states). In *Arthaśāstra*, *Kauṭilya* advised the king to consider circle theory, six-fold theory, and four-fold theory as the basic principles to maintain inter-state relations with his neighboring states. We focus more on the circle theory about the relationship of India with foreign countries. Circle theory forms the basis of the foreign policy of a nation. This theory generally administers today's diplomacy with some modifications. Before we deal with *Kauṭilya*'s circle theory of the state, we need to understand the concept of state in terms of the idea of *Kauṭilya*.

***Kauṭilya*'s concept of state**

Kauṭilya identifies seven elements of sovereignty as the king, the council of the minister and high officer of the state, the territory inhabiting population of the state, the fortified cities, the country's treasury, the state's forces and army, and the allies.¹¹ *Kauṭilya* identifies the ideal qualities and relative importance of each element of the state. The diagram below depicts the seven constituent elements of the state.

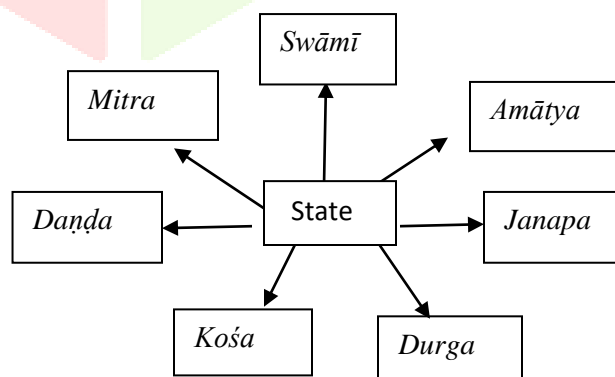


Fig. 1. The constituent elements of a state as per *Kauṭilya*'s *Arthaśāstra*.

⁷ Ghosh. Peu, *International relations*, Phi learning private limited, Delhi, 2015, P-98

⁸ Russett, Bruce and Harvey Starr, *World Politics: The menu for choice*, W.H. Freeman and company, New work, 1996, P- 162

⁹ Ibid P- 98-99

¹⁰ Bronkhorst, Johannes, *Candragupta Maurya and his importance for Indian history*, *Indological Taurinsia*, VI-37, 2011.

¹¹ स्वाम्यमात्यजनपददुर्गकोशदण्डमित्राणिप्रकृतयः (6.1.1), *KautiliyamArthaśāstram*, ManabenduBandyopadhyay, P- 156

Scholars used different terms to describe the seven elements mentioned above. Kauṭilya's sovereign state consists of seven limb-like constituents which are subordinate to the king. Shamastry used the seven elements with the word prakṛti and included an eighth element that is enemy.¹² Kangle identified the Prakṛti as a constituent element of the state.¹³ The king is the essential element of the state. The enemy is an unfavorable element of the state that affects the sovereignty of the state.¹⁴ Kauṭilya warns the king to safeguard against calamities, which could weaken the seven elements. Kauṭilya's concept of state element is analogous to the contemporary concept of national power.

Let us understand Kautiyan diplomacy through his theories of policies and strategic methods. Then, we will try to discuss the relevance of Kauṭilya's diplomatic strategies in the current foreign policies of India.

Kauṭilya's Maṇḍala theory of states

Maṇḍala is a Sanskrit word for circle. *Kauṭilya* stresses more on the territorial integrity of the state. *Maṇḍala* theory of foreign policy takes the geographical boundaries on its account. *Kauṭilya* classified the relationship between the wise king and the other states as those are enemies, a friend of *Vijigishu*, a friend of the enemy, a friend of the *vijigishu's* friend, and a friend of the enemy's friend. Towards the geographical rear of the conqueror are the rearward enemy, rearward friend, a friend of the enemy in the rear, and friend of the friend in the rear. The middle king and the neutral king complete this circle of the state.¹⁵

1. **Vijigīṣu:** The aspirant who wants to conquer for more power. The conquer king is the most crucial factor in the circle theory. The king, who is the abode of sound policy, is the would-beconquer.¹⁶
2. **Mitra** (The friend): The territory of an ally of *vijigishu* that lies past to the territory of the enemy, the ally is considered as *mitra*.¹⁷ *Kauṭilya* has described three types of allies, i.e., a natural ally, an ally by birth, the made ally.¹⁸
3. **Ari** (The enemy): The one who lies somewhere in the periphery of the region of the aspirant. The conquering king (*vijigishu*) and the enemy (*ari*) have a common boundary.¹⁹

Kauṭilya has described three kinds of enemies.²⁰ They are as follow:

- i. **Prakṛti Ari:** The immediate enemy of the conquering king is known as a natural enemy.
- ii. **Sahaja Ari:** The king, who is the same family or equality of high birth as conquering king, is an enemy by birth. This type of enemy is called Sahaja Ari.
- iii. **Kṛtrima Ari:**

¹²Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra, R. Shamastry, part II, P-511

¹³ Kumar, Abhishek, The Arthaśāstra: Assessing the contemporary relevance of an ancient Indian treaties on statecraft, U.S Army Command and General Staff College, 2006. P-25

¹⁴ Ibid, Page- 26

¹⁵Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra, Manabendu Bandyopadhyay, 6/1/3-5

¹⁶राजाआत्मद्रव्यप्रकृतिसम्पन्नोनयस्याधिष्ठानविजिषुः (6.2.8) Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra, R. Shamastry, P- 516

¹⁷तथैवभूम्येकान्तरामित्रप्रकृतिः। (6.2.2), Kautilyam Arthaśāstram, Manabendu Bandyopadhyay, P-168

¹⁸भूम्येकान्तरप्रकृतिमित्रमातृपितृसम्बन्धसहजं धनजीवितहेतोरश्रितकृत्रिममिति ।।Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra, R. Shamastry, P- 517

¹⁹स्यसमन्ततोमण्डलीभूताभूम्यन्तरापरिप्रकृतिः (6.2.8), Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra, R. Shamastry, P- 516

²⁰भूम्यन्तरः प्रकृत्यमित्रः तुल्याभिजनः सहजः ।विरुद्धोविरोधयितावाकृत्रिमः ।(6.2.11), Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra, R. Shamastry, P- 517

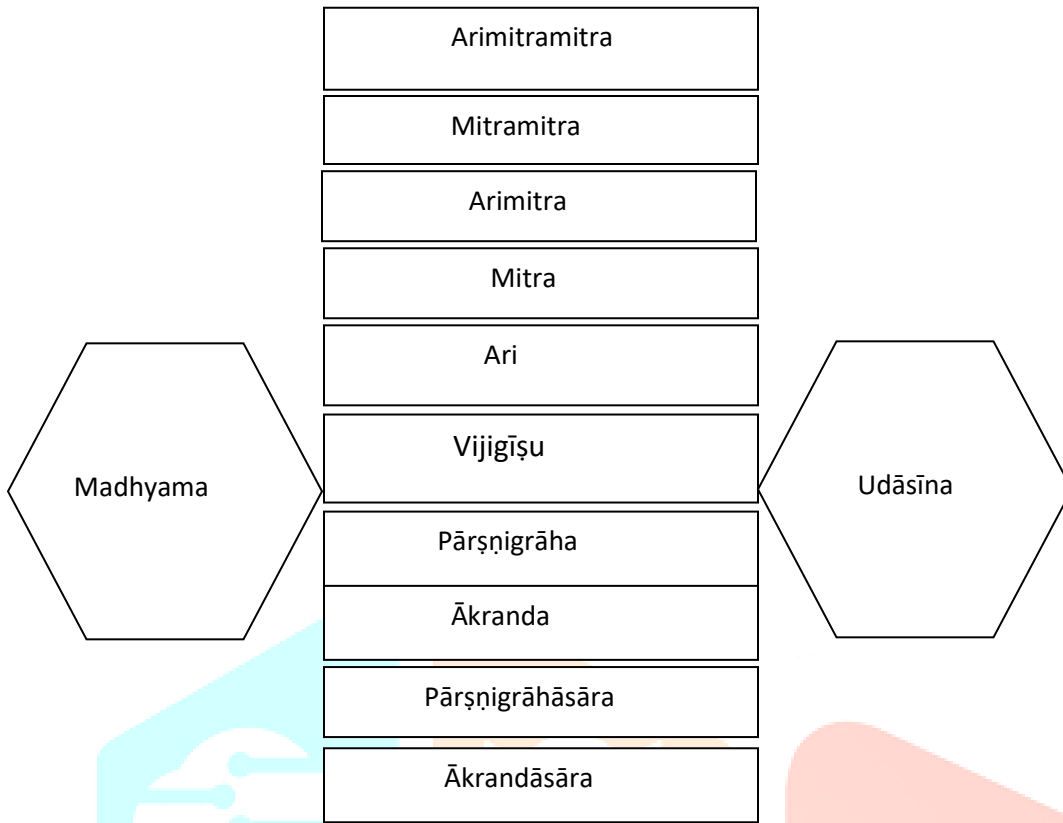


Fig. 2. Representation of elements of Circle's theory.

In this circle of twelve kings, the conquering king is in the center point of this circle. To enlarge his kingdom and dominion, *Kauṭilya* advised the conquering king to take the help of a six-fold policy. By using this policy, he can make himself more powerful.

*Śamavyāyāmauyogakṣemayoryoniḥ //samavyāyāmayoryoniḥṣādaguṇyam*³⁰

Every king has a circle of allies. There are four circles in *mandala* theory. The conquering king and his enemy, the middle king, and all independent actors who are the neutral king. The *prakiti* is the conquering king and his friend and the friends of a friend.³¹ They make eighteen circles collaborating with the council, territory, fort, treasury, and the army. As an example: conquering king, his ministry, territory, fort, treasury, and the army are six in the count; the friend of the conquering king, his ministry, territory, etc. are also six, the friend of friends of the conquer king also has six elements. Thus, there are a total of eighteen circles in the *mandala* theory.³²

Here, in this way, he has described four Raja Mandala very shortly. Four primary circles of the states, twelve types of kings, sixty elements of sovereignty, and in short, all of them together constitute seventy-two. The

³⁰(6.2.1), *Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*, Manabendu Bandyopadhyay, voll-II, Page no- 163

³¹विजिगीषुर्मित्रमित्रमित्रंवाशस्यप्रकृतयस्तिः । (6/2/5) *Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*, Manabendu Bandyopadhyay, voll-II, Page no- 173

³²विजिगीषुर्मित्रमित्रमित्रंवाशस्यप्रकृतयस्तिः । ता : पञ्चभिरमात्यजनपददुर्गकोशद

दण्डप्रकृतिभिरैकैकशः संयुक्तामण्डलमष्टादशकं भवति । अनेन मण्डलपृथक्त्वं व्याख्यातम् अरिमध्यमोदासीनानाम् । (6.2.5) *Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*, Manabendu Bandyopadhyay, voll-II, Page no- 173

total number of pure *Raja prakriti*s twelve. This *Raja prakriti* called *raybaprakiti*, when the council, territory, and other elements would be added with twelve *Rajaprakriti*. So, the total is $(12 + (12 * 5)) = 72$.³³

1. *Vijigīṣu Maṇḍala*: *Vijigīṣu Maṇḍala* has *Mitra*, *Mitramitra*, and their five elements. Thus the total number is eighteen.
2. *Ari Maṇḍala*: As same as *vijigīṣu Maṇḍala*, here also has *mitra*, *mitramitra*, and their five elements and the total number is eighteen.
3. *Madhyam Maṇḍala*: It also has five elements. The total number is eighteen.
4. *Udāsīna Maṇḍala*: *Mitra*, *mitramitra*, and their five elements also belong to this circle. The total numbers of elements are eighteen.

The *Maṇḍala* theory is primarily concerned with foreign policy and security. The basic needs of a state are to make good relationships with numerous other states, with the presence of a wise ambitious conqueror king, who is anxious to establish his supremacy power over them. Benoy Kumar Sarkar wrote in this article that, “*the doctrine of maṇḍala, underlying as it does the Hindu idea of the ‘Balance of Power,’ pervades the entire speculation on the subject of international relations.*”³⁴

Three śakti

Kauṭilya has described three types of power as follow:

1. *Utsāhaśakti*: This power is the personal energy and drive of the ruler himself.³⁵
2. *Prabhuśakti*: Power of treasury and the active army. A king can protect his state by using the treasury and military.³⁶
3. *Mantraśakti*: It refers to the power of intellectuality. A king can maintain his power and dominance among other states with assistance intellectual and wise counsel of ministers and other administrative officers since they can create a robust foreign policy and good diplomacy.³⁷

A king can achieve what he aspires for by optimum use of these three *śakti*. *Kauṭilya* also advocates for weaker king how to defend himself. The strategies that a king can use to establish him as a prestigious king are as follow:

1. **Sandhi**: The kings pursue to come at a specific agreement without using belligerent means. These *Sandhis* could be transitory or long-lasting. The statesmen across the globe have applied the various types of *sandhi* mentioned in *Arthashastra*. For example, Bismarck had maintained *Karmasandhi* with Austria, and now Britain has signed *Anavasitasandhi* with America to collaborate for mutual assistance of military strategies.³⁸
2. **Vigraha**: The hostile situation created by a king to another state is called *vigraha*. *Kauṭilya* advised the king to create hostile circumstances for the states having equal power or relatively lower power to gain territory.³⁹

³³ एवंचतुर्माण्डलमसङ्केपः । द्वादशराजप्रकृतयः , षष्टिर्द्रव्यप्रकृतयः, सङ्केपेण द्विसप्ततिः । तासां यथास्वं सम्पदः । *Arthasāstra of Kauṭilya*, Voll-II, N.P.Unni, P-677

³⁴ Sarkar, Benoy Kumar, *Hindu theory of International Relations*, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 13, 1919, PP- 400-414, Published by: American Science Association. Available in Jstore.org

³⁵ विक्रमवलमुत्साहशक्तिः (6.2.6), *Kauṭilya Arthasāstra*, Manabendu Bandyopadhyay, Vol. II, Page no- 174

³⁶ कोषदण्डवलंप्रभुशक्तिः (6.2.6), *Kauṭilya Arthasāstra*, Manabendu Bandyopadhyay, Vol. II, Page no- 174

³⁷ ज्ञानवलंमन्त्रशक्तिः (6.2.6), *Kauṭilya Arthasāstra*, Manabendu Bandyopadhyay, Vol. II, Page no- 174

³⁸ .*Kauṭilya Arthasāstra*, Manabendu Bandyopadhyay, Vol. II, Page no- 178

³⁹ Ibid , P- 179

3. **Asana:** Showing reluctant behavior in a war against another state is termed as *asana*. This strategy works well when two states are equal in power.⁴⁰
4. **Dvaidhibhava:** It refers to dual policy, advised to the kings who have an active military. Henry Kissinger, the former US secretary of state, formed an alliance with China so that Russia and China remain apart in ties from each other. *Kautilya's* concept of this kind of strategy is mentioned in his *Mandala* theory.⁴¹
5. **Samsarya:** The policy of seeking protection from a superior king is called *samsarya*. *Kautilya* advocates that this strategy should be applied to defend against the potential enemy by seeking protection from an ally. Weak nations of Africa and Asia started to take shelter from European powers as per this policy, which led to colonization.⁴²
6. **Yaana:** The straight expression of *vigraha* refers to *yaana*. The conquering king should crush his enemy by marching and strengthen his army and the fort.⁴³

India's circle of state

Within India's hypothetical circle of state, Pakistan is positioned as India's primary enemy, Russia is the middle state and US as the powerful neutral state. In terms of allies, Japan stands out as India's rearward ally. On the other hand, India shares strong bonds with Afghanistan. Since China acts as India's rearward enemy, therefore it lies in Pakistan's circle of allies.

The role of the US and Russia has always been significant in balancing power in South Asia. Before 2001, if the US was tilted more towards Pakistan, Russia was in India's favor, thus maintaining the balance of power. India, as a rising powerful economic state, could use her development strategy as a foreign policy tool and could align the significant power in her favor. India should vehemently use this opportunity to arm-twist Pakistan to shun its state-sponsored terrorism against India.

The main issue that does not let India and Pakistan relationship get de-frozen is terrorism. PM Narendra Modi had explicitly propounded that talks and terrorism cannot go hand in hand. However, the case is clear that India cannot fight a conventional war. Pakistani establishment does not show any sign of budge on its support to their so-called "good terrorism," which is nothing but state-sponsored terrorism against India. It is here that India should preempt the aggressive behavior of the Pakistani establishment by using offensive diplomatic warfare and concealed warfare to force the Pakistani establishment to accept peace. In the current economic and geopolitical environment, India should counter Pakistan diplomatically while simultaneously launching a covert cyber warfare campaign. India must use the highly negative sentiments against terrorism all over the world as a converging point of global powers and could form a broader coalition against Pakistan. India could incite dissension in the Pakistani establishment by promoting democracy and defection against the ill.

⁴⁰ Ibid, P-179

⁴¹ Ibid, P179

⁴² Ibid, P-179

⁴³ Ibid, P-179

and if the state lost its control due to unstable internal affairs and terrorism, then it is a failed state. Fragile States Index, developed by a non-governmental organization called Fund for Peace, helps to estimate the level of state failure in establishing and sustaining a democracy through the four-fold ranking system, tables, and color-coded map. We need to understand the contemporary security environment by applying Kautilyan theories.

Indo-Pak relation through the lenses of Kautilya's Arthashastra

In August 1947, Britishers left former India and partitioned it into an Islamic state, Pakistan, and a secular state, India. Hari Singh, Maharaja of Kashmir, sensed the threat of Pakistani invasion through tribal militia, which happened in October 1947; and thus, Kashmir acceded to India after Maharaja of Kashmir state signed an Instrument of Accession, which led to first Kashmir War (War of 1947-1948 between India and Pakistan). However, Kautilya's Maṇḍala theory of states affirms that the neighboring state is a natural enemy. This instrument of accession can be termed as *samsaryaa*s per the Kautilya's idea of diplomacy. On 1st January 1949, India and Pakistan agreed on a formal ceasefire, which created a Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) region. The Indian Army could not march ahead due to the hostile climate of the PoK zone, and the guerrilla warfare of Pakistan prevented the further march of the Indian Army from taking further actions. Kautilya suggested that a state should not march into a hostile or an ungovernable territory, and the state should agree on *Bhumisandhi* and *Vyasana*.

Kautilya advocated that the weaker state should align with a superior state to strengthen its power. Pakistan established a bilateral relationship with the superior power, the USA, in October 1947. Moreover, the USA provided financial and military assistance to Pakistan. The US-sponsored military alliance with Pakistan, such as the SEATO (1954), the Baghdad pact (1955-58), and CENTO (1958-79), were some significant factors that troubled India in the past. The US-backed Pakistan became the exporter of terrorism in India. Pakistan began to tie with China after the Indo-China War of 1962, which derailed the Indo-China relationship. The Kashmir Issue is the primary irritant that embitters the relationship between the two.

In 1985, both countries pledged not to attack each other's nuclear installations. The Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visited Islamabad and signed three agreements about restraining themselves from attacking nuclear installations and facilities in 1988 after the restoration of democracy in Pakistan.⁴⁵ The Pakistani terrorists hijacked an Indian aircraft and took it to Kandahar in 1999, and demanded to free three Pakistani terrorists in the exchange of the passengers and the crew aboard the aircraft.⁴⁶ Pakistani terrorists attacked the Indian Parliament in December 2001.⁴⁷ Again in 2006, Pakistani terrorists bombed a train in Mumbai, that killed 207 people, and injured around 700 people.⁴⁸ The 26/12 terror attacks in Mumbai, the Pathankot attack, and the Pune blasts are the few terrorists' attacks linked to Pakistani Intelligence, ISI.⁴⁹ The relationship between the two countries worsened after the demolition of Babri Masjid on December 7, 1992.⁵⁰ India did its successful nuclear test in May 1998, and Pakistan followed afterward in the same month. The period from 1999 to 2002 witnessed a high degree of restlessness and tension between these

⁴⁵ Ghosh. Peu, International relations, Phi learning private limited, Delhi, 2015. P-

⁴⁶ [https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/5469/Prime+Minister+Shri+Atal+Bihari+](https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/5469/Prime+Minister+Shri+Atal+Bihari)

⁴⁷ IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI Criminal Appeal No. 811 of 2007,

(file:///C:/Users/toshiba/Downloads/Mohd.%20Afzal%20Kumhar%20and%20Anr.%20v.%20State%20-%20Decision%20of%2013.04.09.pdf)

⁴⁸ www.parliamentlibrary.com (http://164.100.47.193/Ebooks/Writereaddate/49_2017.pdf)

⁴⁹ <https://www.thehindu.com/news>

⁵⁰ www.timesofindia.com

two countries.⁵¹ The relationship between the two countries worsened to a great extent after the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks, 2008. Even after that, Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Indian Prime Minister, met Pakistan's Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani during the 15th NAM summit, 2009, and both strove to make serious efforts towards improvement in Indo-Pak relations despite several glitches.

Modi, the Prime Minister of India, invited his contemporary counterpart, Nawaz Sharif, from Pakistan to start afresh, and the heads of other South Asian countries for his swearing ceremony on May 26, 2014. On May 23, 2014, a terrorist group, linked to Pakistan, attacked the Indian consulate in Herat province of Afghanistan. The Prime Minister of India did not cancel a meeting with Pakistan's Prime Minister a day after the attack. This posture of the Indian Prime Minister displays a diplomatic maturity. A deliberate terrorist attack on India usually precedes a summit meeting between India and Pakistan, which impedes the dialogue between the two countries and creates a mood of bellicose jingoism within the two. The establishment of peace and continuation of dialogue would deal a strong blow to the terrorists. India should pressurize Pakistan to deal hard on the terror groups lying within Pakistan's boundaries using International Forums through its foreign diplomacy.

Seventy-two years after independence, the people on both sides of the border want to establish a sense of permanent peace and healthy relationship for both countries. We need a fresh approach to avoid conflict and confrontation as soon as possible. Our policies should be more focused on the creation of employment and opportunities to deal with modern-day problems as the vast majority in the South Asian regions are facing financial hardship and mental peace. The fresh start will open the door to trade, travel, and prosperity.

Indo-China relationship through the lenses of *Kautilya's Arthaśāstra*

The Indo-China conflict of 1962 resolved through a ceasefire in Arunachal; the Chinese Army retreated due to the unwelcoming attitude of the people of Arunachal Pradesh. This matter can also be looked like the approach of *Bhomisandhi* by China since the area was ungovernable.⁵² India should deter and prevent conflict by offering peace to an aggressive state or by allying with a superior power as per the Kautilyan doctrine. The US, being the only superpower, limits India's choices for bandwagoning. In this case, India, as a weaker conquer, can adopt *Kautilya's* advice and adopt a proactive policy to delay or deter the US from entering into a conflict with India using the four instruments of ploy such as appeasement, offering gifts (irregular economic welfares), instigating dissension, and application of force. China has maintained excellent relationships with the countries in India's entire neighborhood. To counter the Chinese influence in the neighborhood, India must look at the neighborhood and try to maintain stronger relationships by providing economic welfare and cultural exchange. Since Modi came to power, he is continuously putting efforts to boost the partnership with the USA through Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) and that with Japan, a natural ally with aligned interests. Since the US is also interested in checking China's advancement, Kautilya refers to such diplomatic maneuvers as *mantrayudha*, i.e., war by counsel.⁵³

India should act as a *vijigishu* and should maneuver the dual policy (*Dvaidebhava*) to counter the Chinese threat. Adopting the policy of *vigraha* in the case of China is not a plausible option; instead, India should endorse the Belt and Road Initiative of the Chinese Government. India should offer China a membership for SAARC while strengthening its regional cooperation with other neighbors such as Bangladesh-China-

⁵¹<https://adst.org/2014/07/india-and-pakistan-on-the-brink-the-1998-nuclear-tests/>

⁵² Singh, Pavenjit, International relations, McGraw Hill private limitation, Chennai, 2018, P-126

⁵³<https://thediplomat.com/2017/04/confronting-china-lessons-from-an-ancient-indian-text/>

India–Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM-EC), and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC).⁵⁴ India should not disregard the agreements and projects with its stronger allies, such as the USA, Japan, and Australia, because they would play a key role in countering the enforcement of Chinese supremacy in South Asia. Thus India can maintain the equilibrium of the power dynamics in South Asia through the methodological approach of the dual policy of cooperating with both enemy and allies simultaneously, and its pluralistic approach can establish a new normal of international relations.

Conclusion:

Kautilya's Maṇḍala theory of foreign policies and interstate relationships holds relevance in the modern world though it can not be applied in every aspect of the current scenario. However, most of his concept stands as the idea of constant marching to gain power and territory. Thus, it frays the notion of integrity. But the *Kautilyan* diplomacy for dealing with the internal and the external affairs of the state dominates in regional and international relations. His warfare techniques, even in the present day, help a lot to gain power and supremacy among the countries of the world. We can trace its relevance in foreign policies of the US and China. This article explains the concept of state and its constituent elements. The article focuses on the relevance of *Maṇḍala* theory and the foreign diplomacy of *Kautilya* in the modern era. India's relationship with its natural enemy, Pakistan, and the neighbor, China, has been well demonstrated through the instrument of the *Kautilyan* diplomacy and his *Maṇḍala* theory of states.

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