



Electronic Journal of Social and Strategic Studies
(ISSN Online: 2582-9645)

Volume 5: Special Issue V
Indian Strategic Thought

Preface

The study of military science today draws its foundational concepts from classical works such as “On War” by Von Clausewitz and the studies on campaigns of great emperors like Alexander, Napoleon, Lord Wellington, etc. We find critical analysis of concepts through campaign studies which continue to yield both theoretical and practical insights into strategies and tactics that are relevant to contemporary contexts. While this is so in defence studies, strategic affairs spanning polity (governance), diplomacy, economy and such other relevant fields tend to be viewed as compartments that have applicability in strategy only in tandem, sometimes relevant and at others, unconnected.

Curiously, colonial era in the eastern hemisphere has rendered study of strategy exclusively within the confines of concepts that were authored in western contexts.

War and strategy are not exclusive to any hemisphere. Nor are they the products of the experience of any one society. Concepts on strategy are in fact the product of the cumulative wisdom of a society drawn from its lived experience historically.

In the East, historians record the rise of empires even before Alexander the Great in the West. Nanda, Maurya, Gupta, Kushan, Pandya, Satavahana, Chola and Chalukya, to name but a few, have been great empires in the subcontinent that ruled over vast regions and are noted for their administration and military exploits. Mahabharata for example, mentions seven kings on the side of Pandav and eleven kings on the side of Kaurav who fielded one *akshuni* (hundred thousand) soldiers in the war at Kurukshetra. Mahabharata further records 26 types of formations in the battle field to attack and counter enemy forces, as seen below:

1. Krauncha (Heron formation)
2. Makara (Crocodile)
3. Kurma (Tortoise)
4. Trishula (Trident)
5. Chakra (Discuss or Wheel)
6. Padma (Lotus)
7. Garuda (Eagle)
8. Oormi (Ocean)
9. Mandala (Galaxy or stacked)
10. Vajra (Diamond or Thunderbolt)

11. Shakata (Box)
12. Asura (Demon)
13. Deva (divine)
14. Soochi (Needle)
15. Sringataka (Horn)
16. Chandrakala (Crescent)
17. Mala (Garland)
18. Sarvatomukhi Dand (Multifaced lance)
19. Shyen (श्येन)
20. Sarvobhadra (Multifaceted)
21. Nakshatra mandala (Starry Sky)
22. Shakat (United)
23. Chakrashatak (Rolling Wheel)
24. Khaddag Sarp (Cobra with open hood)
25. Surya (Sun or Solar)
26. Mahish (Buffalo Horn)

While it may be surmised that Mahabharata itself is a poetical rendition of the lives of kings and events of an era that physically did not exist in entirety, the precision with which the formations and proceedings of the battle are described could not have occurred unless the civilization that rendered such stories possessed an exceptional intellect honed by practice. It is from this perspective that a need arises to explore Indian strategic thought in its multilayered dimensions.

India has a rich strategic thought that originate from its earliest scripture, the Vedas. The commentaries written by learned sages of yore reflect a deep understanding of kingship, need for strategies and tactics in war, responsible use of force on the enemy forces, concept of 'dharma' (righteousness) in military conduct, spy craft, forming of political and military alliances, and a host of other aspects that constitute the term strategy as it is understood today. Even a superficial examination of innumerable scriptures reveal that there are at least 14 works exclusively dedicated to the expound strategy. The brief list of these treatises is:

1. Shukra Neeti
2. Nitisara
3. Dhanur Veda
4. Vasishta's treatise on Dhanurveda, called Dhanurveda Samhita
5. Nitiprakashika by Vaisampayana
6. Asva Sastra, Asvacikitsa, Hastayurveda, and Matangalila
7. Treatises by Vishalaksha and Bharadwaja that deal with politics, state administration, warfare, military strategies, other essential aspects of war, etc
8. Ramayana
9. Mahabharata

10. Kamandakiya Nitishastra
11. Harihara Caturanga
12. Sangrama-Vijayodaya
13. Tirukkural by Tiruvalluvar
14. Pura Nanuru

Considering that some of the empires of the subcontinent extended to island territories and even reached out to the South China Sea (the Chola and the Pallava) and extensive trade with the rest of the world was a common economic enterprise by the Indian kingdoms, it is only appropriate to appreciate that governing such vast territories and collaborating or conquering the kingdoms that lay beyond their immediate geography have to be guided by a structured approach that combines political, economic and military strategy towards the interests of the kings that ruled these lands.

The colonial phase of India's history, as mentioned, gave rise to western education and therefore the preeminence of western thought in India's strategic thinking. While this is understandable, India's rising stature in the community of nations in contemporary times also brings in a reality – an examination of its ancient strategic thought to appraise whether those precepts can continue to guide India and help it to evolve strategies that draw from its rich thought culture.

It is also proper to recall that in recent times, India has embarked upon Atmanirbharta (self-determination and self-reliance). Both these are possible only when the thought culture, studies and research in India ably assist it in evolving concepts and strategies that are embedded in its rich culture but are refined in order to apply them to its present context as well as future needs.

Theme

Keeping these perspectives, EJSSS invited abstracts/papers to be published as a **Special Issue** focusing on **Indian Strategic Thought**. As implied, the academic study of the history and literature of the Indian subcontinent are the main theme for this special Issue. Sub-themes on which the journal is interested are (indicative, not exclusive):

1. History of warfare (including ancient) in the subcontinent. These could be further specific to political history, military history, economic history and such other relevant studies that will fall under strategic studies.
2. Conceptual studies that avail anthropological approach as to the development of thought including the study of Atharv Veda, Upveda like Dhanur Veda and such other scripts, including Indian epics.
3. Scriptural studies that look at the contribution of regional/national philosophers on strategies and techniques of war and strategy (like Vasishta, Kautilya, Tiruvalluvar, etc) including critiques on classical literature that are relevant to warfare, diplomacy, economy, etc.
4. Any other relevant fields.

About this Issue

The present **Volume 5 Special Issue V June 2024** is our 17th publication. It hosts **six research papers** pertaining to Ramadharna Doctrine, Kautilyan Realism and Indian Foreign Policy, Arthashastra and Hybrid Warfare, Mahabharata and the Theory of Just War, Project Udbhav and Modern Indian Military Pedagogy, Kautilya's diplomacy and Indian Foreign Policy, and, Strategic Thought and Military Maneuvers from the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Arthashastra.

We are happy to note that our authors are from amongst established academic institutions, researcher scholars, and academicians.

Editor's Note

Electronic Journal of Social and Strategic Studies (EJSSS) is an OA and Peer Reviewed journal. We are committed to publishing research content after following editorial review by a subject editor and a blind review by a qualified reviewer of all the submissions. We especially encourage young and emerging scholars across the world to publish their works through EJSSS.

We are delighted to say that our journal is indexed by Google Scholar and J-Gate, one of the most respected indexing & abstracting agencies in the world of journal publication. We are already a member of Crossref.

We have no Article Submission Fee. However, we have a nominal Article Processing Fee the details of which are available in our Author Guidelines Page.

Scholars and researchers interested in contributing to the journal are welcome to mail the Managing Editor at submission.ejss@gmail.com with their abstracts.

Copyrights and Plagiarism Policy

EJSSS believes in and practices Open Access policy. The copyright of the works published in our journal belongs to the contributing authors. They are welcome to use, reuse, distribute, modify or update their content published in this journal in any platform in any manner deemed appropriate towards dissemination of knowledge and further research. We only request that appropriate first publication credit be given to Electronic Journal of Social and Strategic Studies (ISSN Online:

2582-9645). Since all publications in our journal carry doi, giving such credit to us would be in keeping with our own policy of Open Access.

We are a not-for-profit journal and take reasonable efforts to have the works published by us checked for plagiarism. The responsibility and ownership of the content therefore rests with the authors. As publishers, we accept no liability for copyright related issues in our

publications. We emphasize upon the authors to make every endeavor to provide original and earlier unpublished content and giving appropriate citations for resources consulted in producing their work.

Coimbatore, India
30 June 2024

Dr R Srinivasan
Editor-in-Chief

CONTENTS

Articles

1. *The Rama-dharma Doctrine: Understanding India's Strategic Decision-Making through Lord Rama's 16 Virtues* 07-19

Abhishek Kadiyala
<https://doi.org/10.47362/EJSS.2024.5501>
2. *Relevance of Kautilya's Arthashastra concerning Contemporary Hybrid Warfare* 20-48

Avani Ajey Dhakras
<https://doi.org/10.47362/EJSS.2024.5503>
3. *Analysing Mahabharata through the Lens of Theory of Just War* 49-60

B K Bhuvasha
<https://doi.org/10.47362/EJSS.2024.5504>
4. *Kautilya's Ideas for Diplomacy and its reflection in India's Foreign Policy* 61-71

Sanchaly Bhattacharya
<https://doi.org/10.47362/EJSS.2024.5506>
5. *Lessons on Strategic Thought and Military Manoeuvres from the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Arthashastra* 72-98

Suraj Yadav and Dr. Manish Kumar Yadav
<https://doi.org/10.47362/EJSS.2024.5507>

6. *Project Udbhav: Integrating Ancient Wisdom with Modern Indian Military Pedagogy*

99-119

Madhu Kumari and Shubhangi Rathore

<https://doi.org/10.47362/EJSS.2024.5505>

Author Short Bio

Abhishek Kadiyala is pursuing his Master of Arts student majoring in International Relations and Security Studies at Rashtriya Raksha University, Gandhinagar, School of International Cooperation, Security and Strategic Languages (SICSSL).

Avani Ajey Dhakras holds an MA in Defence and Strategic Studies from Savitribai Phule Pune University, India.

BK Bhuvasha is a Postgraduate student in International Relations at Department of Geopolitics and International Relations, MAHE, India.

Sanchaly Bhattacharya is a Master's in Diplomacy, Law and Business Student at Jindal School of International Affairs (OPJGU), Sonapat, Haryana.

Suraj Yadav is a Final Semester MA (DLB) student at OP Jindal University, Sonapat, Haryana and **Dr. Manish Kumar Yadav** is a former Associate Professor at CBSS, Asmara University, Eritrea, Africa.

Madhu Kumari is an Assistant Professor and **Shubhangi Rathore** is an Undergraduate Student at the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Banasthali Vidyapith, Rajasthan, India.
