Interrogating 'Hyphenated Cultures'
India's Strategic Culture and its Intelligence Culture

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In the late 1950s, the concept of 'political culture' was first developed. Towards the end of the Cold War, scholars in International Relations (IR) theory and security studies developed the concept of 'strategic culture'. Over a period, state bureaucracies were thematised by scholars of comparative politics leading to the concept of 'bureaucratic culture'. Lastly, in the second decade of the twenty-first century, a comparative turn in intelligence studies began to emerge with the concept of (national) 'intelligence culture'. Some of these concepts have not yet been in much use, nor have they been thoroughly theorised—some even less so empirically operationalised. This paper discusses the 'hyphenated' inter-relationship of these cultures and even explores the historical origins of India's intelligence culture, particularly in Kautilya's Arthashastra.

Keywords: *Strategic Culture, Intelligence Culture, India's Strategic Culture*

The focus of my recent research work has been 'intelligence culture', specifically Indian intelligence culture. The intelligence culture of a state, however, is intrinsically linked to its strategic culture; and this is equally true for the connectivity with a state's political culture and its bureaucratic culture (that is, of its state bureaucracy). These 'cultures'

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(situated within the realm of the political) can be called 'hyphenated cultures'—and they are remarkably productive, even indispensable, tools of political science. However, neither the concepts of political culture, strategic culture, intelligence culture and bureaucratic culture nor the underlying concept of 'culture' itself are self-explanatory.

Therefore, I think, a basic theoretical and meta-theoretical interrogation of the whole set of 'hyphenated cultures' is required before leaping hastily into attempts of their operationalisation in the Indian context. In doing that, my focus is strategic culture, because research on strategic culture is the most extensive compared to the other 'hyphenated cultures' and the 'family resemblance' between strategic culture and intelligence culture is particularly marked since both are concerned with national security.

Let me begin with some basic considerations on intelligence culture in general, and specifically Indian intelligence culture. I think this is necessary because in contrast to strategic culture, the concept of intelligence culture (and that of bureaucratic culture) has not yet been in much use, nor has it been thoroughly theorised—and even less so empirically operationalised.[1] First, what do we mean by 'intelligence'? Let me quote here definitions by Adda Bozeman and Sherman Kent, who have written seminal texts on intelligence theory:

> Successful statecraft is always and everywhere dependent on good intelligence…Intelligence in its derivative political sense is a component of statecraft that centers upon the need of one politically unified community to have reliable information, knowledge, or 'intelligence' about other societies in its environment.[2]
>
> Intelligence is a simple and self-evident thing. As an activity, it is the pursuit of a certain kind of knowledge; as a phenomenon, it is the resultant knowledge…And strategic intelligence, we might call knowledge upon which our nation's foreign relations, in war and peace, must rest.[3]

Thus, the term 'intelligence' refers to:

1. The process of generating knowledge by collecting and analysing open and secret information deemed relevant for the internal and external security of the state. This operational and cognitive process takes the form of an 'intelligence cycle': tasking > collection > analysis > estimates > dissemination.
2. The products of these activities, that is, assessments and estimates (inferences) based on analysed data/information. Intelligence

products are (can or should be) key inputs for the political leadership's decision making.

3. The institutions/organisations which collect and process information deemed relevant for the security of the state.

The term 'intelligence community' refers to a section of the state bureaucracy, not just the 'intelligence services' as such, which collects and processes information that is relevant, that is, 'actionable', for the state's domestic and external security. As part of the state bureaucracy, the culture (or 'habitus'[4]) prevailing in the intelligence community can significantly influence India's state capacity with respect to its internal and external security.

When exploring India's intelligence culture, the following questions come up:

1. Is there a characteristic and predominant 'mindset' or 'habitus' of the Indian intelligence community?

2. Is there an endogenous ideational lineage of intelligence theorising and practices that may directly or semi-consciously impact the mindset or habitus of the Indian intelligence community?

3. What is the 'mix' and relative weight of past endogenous experiences, ideas and norms *vis-à-vis* contemporary inputs and experiences, both endogenous and exogenous, in the thinking and acting of the Indian intelligence community?

4. Since the intelligence community is part of the state bureaucracy, how does its mindset/habitus influence India's state capacity with respect to internal and external security?

5. What would be the contours of Indian intelligence culture?

I will try and answer these questions towards the end of this article. However, a caveat is necessary here. Valid answers depend both on thorough analysis of endogenous historical source materials on intelligence and on strenuous empirical research on intelligence practices in the contemporary Indian context.

A Theoretical/Meta-theoretical View on 'Hyphenated Cultures' in the Political Science Context

In a meta-theoretical perspective, political culture, strategic culture, intelligence culture and bureaucratic culture are 'ideal-type' conceptualisations of socio-ideational phenomena that have historically evolved and thus are empirically grounded, but not as such empirically

representable. Yet, as 'ideal-type' socio-ideational phenomena, these 'hyphenated cultures' are accessible to 'interpretive understanding' and 'causal explanation' in terms of political science, as Max Weber would put it.

For Weber, the state (pre-modern or modern), first and foremost, is a political entity which efficaciously exercises the 'monopoly of legitimate violence in a given territory', and thus is capable to provide internal and external security for the people within that territory. Coercive power is exercised by the state's political leadership, be that a patrimonial ruler, a modern authoritarian regime or a democratically elected government. Political leadership is the second feature of the state. Weber sees the state bureaucracy as the third constitutive feature of the state. The state bureaucracy may be called the state's 'steel frame', for sure it is its 'bone frame', and no state can do without it. These three basic features of the (pre-modern and modern) state might be called political, strategic and bureaucratic. Although mostly overlooked, the state's indispensable intelligence capability feeds into these three basic features.

Next comes the quite basic recognition that the inherent logic of politics, strategy, intelligence and state bureaucracy, constituting the state, is a 'necessary, but not sufficient condition' for understanding the actual behaviour of actors and collectives engaging in politics, strategy, intelligence or public administration. Politics, strategy, intelligence and bureaucratic administration are pursued by all states. Indeed, there are apparently universally valid 'control mechanisms'—anthropological constants, systemic constraints and rational choices—that feature in the political, strategic, intelligence and bureaucratic conduct of all states.

However, the ways in which the states conduct politics, strategy, intelligence or public administration are evidently not uniform. States have different 'orientations' in processing experiences[5] and different 'attitudes'—preferences and disinclinations—in their political, strategic, intelligence and administrative conduct. The recognition of this rather evident non-uniformity comes with another one: the diverse attitudes of political actors and collectives in these fields appear to be not random, arbitrary or erratic.

Here comes the hyphenation of strategic, political, intelligence or bureaucratic conduct with 'culture' that conditions 'orientations' and attitudes. Beginning in the late 1950s, political scientists turned to 'culture'. First, the concept of 'political culture' was developed.[6] Then, state bureaucracies were thematised by scholars of comparative politics.[7]

The comparative approach, however, did not lead to explicitly developing a concept of 'bureaucratic culture', for which Max Weber had already provided the basis in the early twentieth century.[8] Next, towards the end of the Cold War, scholars in International Relations (IR) theory and security studies developed the concept of 'strategic culture'. Lastly, in the second decade of the twenty-first century, a comparative turn in intelligence studies began to emerge with the concept of (national) 'intelligence culture'.[9]

The choice of the term 'culture' in combination with politics, strategy, intelligence and bureaucracy has significant theoretical implications. Rashed Uz Zaman has rightly noted:

> The concept of strategic culture is as dangerous as an unmarked minefield on a dark night. One of the difficulties of understanding culture stems from the fact that culture is difficult to define and has been the subject of intense debate. In fact, so difficult has the debate been that some have gone so far as to suggest that scholars must abandon it altogether or 'write against it'.[10]

The great French historian Fernand Braudel also observed that his equally great and prolific British colleague, Arnold Toynbee, seemed not to have ever felt the need to provide a clarification of what 'culture' means for him. Braudel was referring to the American anthropologists, Kroeber and Kluckhohn, who had come up with 163 different definitions of culture.[11] While we might speak of one 'civilisation' (with universal features and standards), culture exists only in plurality. Cultures are distinguished by different languages, ecological contexts, collective experiences and memories.[12] Thus, each culture constitutes 'sphere of familiarity' for those who belong to it, as opposed to other, 'unfamiliar' cultures.

Among the multitude of meanings of culture, two aspects are essential for us:

1. *The anthropological dimension of culture:* The unique human capacity to transform or 'cultivate' nature and, in doing so, generate material and ideational artifacts that range from tools, weapons, agriculture, religion and art to science and technology. This creative human capacity of 'culture-making' is an anthropological potential that, in principle, knows no limits.[13]
2. *The historical dimension of culture:* The human transformation of nature occurs always in a social and intellectual context which

has been formed by antecedent human beings, that is, languages, socio-economic and political formations, customs and thought-traditions. Culture is eo ipso multi-generational, thus providing 'orientations' which enable individuals and collectives to process their experiences. Thus, past human existence—history—is inextricably linked with culture and 'culture-making'.[14]

The symbiosis of the anthropological and historical dimensions of culture provides the basis for its theoretical understanding: the central characteristic of all cultures is continuity in historical change. At the same time, culture is an expression of the (in principle) unlimited creative potentiality of man—and thus the catalyst of historical change. Again, turning to Braudel, we can say that culture exists in the 'temporalité' or 'time structure' of longue durée which covers not some years or decades, but centuries or even millennia:

As realities of enormously long duration, cultures—with a virtually infinite adaptability to their fate—exceed all other collective realities in longevity, they literally survive them all.... In other words, cultures survive political, social, economic, and even ideological upheavals—actually, at least in part, they covertly dominate them.[15]

Thus, Braudel's concept of the longue durée history as a mode of existence of culture sets forth that cultures can have an immense staying power and their 'time structure' differs decisively from that of contemporary history. Cultures are uniquely resilient and adaptive structures. Braudel tells us that cultural continuity is a reality—the efficacy of which is as profound as it appears opaque in conventional perspectives of social science.

Jawaharlal Nehru, not really a dedicated scholar in history or cultural studies, had a remarkable understanding of cultural continuity in South Asia. He wrote:

I read her [India's] history and read also a part of her abundant ancient literature, and was powerfully impressed by the vigor of thought, the clarity of language, and the richness of mind that lay behind it...There seemed to me something unique about the continuity of cultural tradition through five thousand years of history, of invasion and upheaval, a tradition which was widespread among the masses and powerfully influenced them…Like some ancient palimpsest on which layer upon layer of thought and reverie had been inscribed, and yet no succeeding layer had completely hidden or erased what

had been written previously. All of these existed in our conscious and subconscious selves, though we may not have been aware of them.[16]

However, as Harry Eckstein emphasises[17], cultures are not quasi-crystalline ideational formations that remain fixed across time. They do change, either in an evolutionary or an entropic mode. Cultures can die due to internal atrophy and/or contextual impact. In the evolutionary mode, cultures change gradually over lengthy periods of time. Such change would be primarily morphological and express itself in the emergence of 'subcultures' besides the mainstream. The relative weight of such subcultures increases over time. It seems that the longevity of cultures depends on their inner elasticity and latitude for diversity. Indian culture, with its 'cohesion through plurality', would be a case in point.

From the aforementioned, we can conclude that when we use the term 'culture' and when we hyphenate it with politics, strategy, intelligence and bureaucracy, we must factor in the outstanding significance of:

1. the diversity of collective experiences;
2. longue durée cultural continuity; and
3. efficacy of the past experiences and ideas upon the present.

The longue durée continuity of hyphenated cultures does not mean that they cannot change as consequence of contextual changes. Socio-economic development (or breakdown) and political ruptures (or prolonged stability) will have an impact. The change of hyphenated cultures, however, will most likely be what Eckstein has called 'pattern-maintaining change'.[18] The changes in hyphenated cultures are real and substantial, yet there is continuity of basic patterns of thinking and acting in these changes.

INTERROGATING STRATEGIC CULTURE—AS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND INTELLIGENCE CULTURE[19]

I hope the previous section has shown that hyphenated cultures—political, strategic, bureaucratic and intelligence—do share constitutive features. This applies, in particular, for the 'family resemblance' between strategic culture and intelligence culture since both of these hyphenated cultures are vectored on the state's security. Therefore, most of what is stated here about strategic culture does equally apply to intelligence culture.

While geographical and ecological factors do have a significant impact, strategic culture must necessarily be embedded in the longue durée history and culture of a given political entity. Also, strategic cultures are not immutable, hence changes will likely occur in a pattern-maintaining mode. These propositions may appear rather obvious and plausible, but they would likely be opposed by two schools of thought.

Constructivist and 'post-modern' scholars may argue that culture and history are not 'objectively existing phenomena', but contingent 'constructions'. For them, a political space has no history, but 'multiple pasts', and no culture, but 'multiple cultures' that have been projected backwards by actors according to their respective power and/or ideological interests.[20] I do not share such neo-Sophist views. I think that the history and the culture of a political space are both real and efficacious; and they do condition the strategic culture and influence the foreign and security policies of a state. Consequently, I do not think that a strategic culture can be constructed or decreed at will. However, political actors in power might pursue policies that radically deviate from an ingrained strategic culture—at least for a limited period.

On the other hand, the affirmation that cultural and historical factors do significantly affect the security policy of a state has been vigorously disputed in the political science sub-disciplines of IR and security studies—first of all, 'structural realism'. Culture and history, 'at the unit level', are often considered to be negligible factors of influence in the 'system' of inter-state relations. Instead, it is claimed that all actors in the field of foreign and security policy follow the same, universal logic of systemic constraints and rational choice. Consequently, there is no room for the concept of strategic culture (or intelligence culture), that is, diversity in strategic thinking and acting among states. A closer look, however, would rather diagnose that the assumption of strategic isomorphism is based on 'ethnocentric universalism', which projects the patterns of perception, thought and behaviour in security policy prevailing in the hegemonic state or political space onto actors in the security field of other states with very different cultural backgrounds and historical experiences.

In a first approximation, we can say that strategic culture refers to historically evolved perceptions, ideas and behavioural patterns with respect to the internal and external security of a (particular) state. These ideational and behavioural patterns are based upon collective experiences,

collective memories and, as we shall see later, 'collective subconscious',[21] all of which go way back into the past.

While strategic cultures are not isomorphs, each strategic culture as such is not uniform either. The same is equally true for intelligence cultures. My colleague, Bernhard Beitelmair-Berini, has emphasised: 'Any strategic culture is a hybrid in terms of its constituting elements.'[22] He argues against 'monolithic' and 'essentialist' concepts of strategic culture and stresses the 'cleavages' between the subcultures within a strategic culture. I will address later on the quality and relative weight of ideational inputs into a strategic culture, with respect to India. However, I would like to argue that within each strategic culture, there is always a predominant strategic paradigm.

As noted earlier, the state and security are intrinsically intertwined concepts. The capacity to apply violence constitutes the essence of the sovereign state and is the basis of its internal and external security. For each state, its security has a 'strategic' quality precisely because it relates to the threat of use of force or the actual use of force, thus bearing upon the most fundamental and lasting of state interests, namely, self-preservation. When it comes to threats to the internal and external security of the state, or equally important, perceptions thereof, we enter the field where the actual use of force is most likely and, in fact, does occur most often.

Beyond the fundamental state interest of self-preservation, security is not an objectively definable category, but is determined by the 'subjective' perceptions and dispositions of actors; and that applies equally to external as well as internal security. The respective 'subjective' perception of the state's security, and threats to it, is shaped by attitudes and ideas which, in turn, have significantly been influenced, if not conditioned, by the culture and history of that state. Here, I am speaking of 'influence' and 'conditioning', not of 'determining'. Beyond the fundamental interest of self-preservation, states do have choices in defining their interests and consequent policies under given circumstances. Thus, within a state's strategic culture, there is 'manoeuvring room' for what Rahul Mukherji has called 'strategic constructivism',[23] which means that actors can modify and redefine state interests and goals, and consequently their foreign and security policies. However, such changes rarely break out of the elastic frame that strategic culture establishes, at least not over any considerable period of time; and the same applies to intelligence culture.

Since I am from Germany, let us have a short look at German strategic culture, even if that might appear like a digression. It has been argued

that Germany's strategic culture was 'aggressive-militarist' in the first half of the twentieth century, but has turned 'pacifist' and 'anti-militarist' thereafter.[24] I would like to argue that a strategic culture cannot be made or unmade within a few decades. Therefore, to understand German strategic culture, one has to go back at least a millennium.

Germany is located in the middle of Europe and is surrounded by more neighbouring states than any other state globally. During the period *c.* AD 1000–1500, Germany enjoyed relative peace, stability and prosperity; read what Machiavelli wrote about Germany in *The Prince*. This was followed by the traumatic experience of the Thirty Years' War, with its enormous demographic devastation and utter political fragmentation. Then, at the end of the eighteenth century came the Napoleonic Wars, which lasted for over 25 years. In the book, *On War*[25] (first published in 1832), Carl Clausewitz has drawn conclusions from this: military preparedness (draft, *auftragstaktik*, general staff) and farsighted, prudent statecraft are the preconditions for security. Under Bismarck, there were the German Unification Wars from 1864 to 1871. In my judgement, the Prussian-led German Empire was not exactly aggressive-militaristic, but rather *saturiert* (status-quoist), exercising restraint and counting on its scientific, technological and economic strength.[26] That said, an emergent aggressive-militaristic subculture also nested in German strategic culture based on the perception of 'encirclement' by 'resentful' powers.

World War I was a European-wide 'joint venture' in strategic shortsightedness and miscalculation. Germany lost World War I (because the United States [US] backed Britain and France) and was then declared the sole perpetrator of the war at Versailles. It was this fact, together with the 1923 hyperinflation and the post-1929 economic depression in Weimar Germany, that made Hitler's seizure of power possible. The ideologically charged-up Nazi leadership was able to draw upon the latent aggressive-militaristic strategic subculture and pushed through a radical break with the hitherto dominant tradition of a defensive strategic posture. The Nazi leadership did pursue aggressive-militarist expansionism with the aim to create a continental empire. This radical break-out from strategic tradition lasted for six years and ended in complete disaster for Germany, as well as all of Europe, as world politics became dominated by the Soviet–American superpower dualism.

Did post-World War II Germany turn pacifist and anti-militarist? I don't think so. While emphasising foreign policy restraint and multilateralism, West Germany built up sizable and well-equipped

armed forces and even tried to acquire nuclear weapons. Communist East Germany was a highly militarised state. After the end of the Cold War, a reunified Germany was not eager to get involved in the West's expeditionary wars in the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. That has been, in my view, a prudent stance of restraint, not 'pacifism'. I would like to argue that post-War Germany is back on the track of a strategic culture paradigm which features strategic stability, restraint and military preparedness, in combination with the effective diplomatic use of economic power. Also, let me add, European integration without any European Union (EU) member state gaining hegemony is in Germany's fundamental national interest.

Most scholars of strategic culture seem to have a proclivity for spending their mental energies on writing texts telling us how their theoretical field has evolved through several 'generations' of bitter controversies—mostly among themselves. Staying away from all that, I simply consider here the largely conformable definitions of strategic culture of Alastair Iain Johnston (1998), Ben Booth and Russell Trood (1999) and Darryl Howlett (2006). The three definitions can claim a certain representativeness within the discipline of security studies and are conducive for examining Indian strategic culture:

> Strategic Culture is an integrated system of symbols (i.e. argumentation structures, languages, analogies, metaphors, etc.) that acts to establish pervasive and long-lasting grand strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in inter-state political affairs, and by clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the strategic preferences seem uniquely realistic and efficacious…A strategic culture exists and persists if preference rankings are consistent across objects of analysis from deeply historical, formative periods up to the period of examination.[27]
>
> Strategic Culture is a distinctive and lasting set of beliefs, values and habits regarding the threat and use of force, which have their roots in such fundamental influences as geopolitical setting, history and political culture. These beliefs, values and habits constitute a strategic culture which persists over time, and exerts some influence on the formation and execution of strategy.[28]
>
> [Strategic culture is an ensemble of] shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behavior, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective

identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives.[29]

In these largely consonant definitions, strategic culture is characterised by durability and inertia. Further, it is emphasised that strategic culture does not 'determine' the patterns of perception, thought and action with respect to the internal and external security of a state. Rather, strategic culture refers to specific dispositions and preferences, and rankings thereof, in a state's security policy. Thus, it is a specific set of dispositions and a specific ranking of preferences that characterise the strategic culture of a state.

In the strategic culture of state X, the disposition for risk avoidance may be predominant, while in the strategic culture of state Y, the readiness to take risks in conflict situations may prevail. There may be a disposition for threatening military action early on or conversely, for diplomatic conflict resolution. The preference may be for using the intelligence service for covert operations or for relying on economic sanctions for exerting pressure on other states. The concept of strategic culture presupposes that such dispositions and preferences are not merely the product of situational 'pragmatism', but are conditioned by the respective state's culture and history.

When undertaking the empirical analysis of a state's strategic culture, the difficulty of operationalising the concept of strategic culture becomes apparent. Therefore, as noted earlier, a large proportion of the literature on strategic culture is self-referential and introspective, that is, mainly consisting of intra-disciplinary disputes over theoretical and methodological issues. Johnston has blisteringly criticised his academic colleagues for their supposed lack of methodological and theoretical rigour with respect to strategic culture. On his part, Johnston has developed a methodological approach for identifying a state's strategic culture that is very valuable. He begins by asking the right questions: 'To what sources does one look as repositories or representations of strategic culture? From which time periods should these sources be taken? Why are certain historical periods considered formative sources of strategic culture and others not? How is strategic culture transmitted through time?'[30]

Johnston's answer to these questions is: search the history of the respective state for early, endogenous and formative texts dealing with strategic issues. These texts are then examined for patterns of strategic dispositions and preferences: 'It is important, therefore, that the analysis

of strategic-cultural objects begins at the earliest accessible point in history, where strategic-cultural preference rankings may reasonably be expected to have emerged...From this point one moves systematically forward.'[31]

Key features, extracted from of politico-strategic texts of early periods of history, are then compared with those of such texts and practices in later historical periods—down to the present day. If a substantive congruence of strategic dispositions and preferences across time can be ascertained, a continuity of strategic thinking and acting, and thus the existence of a strategic culture, can be assumed:

> [A] strategic culture can be said to exist and to persist if one finds consistency in preference rankings across objects of analysis from formative historical periods up to the period under examination... The longer the period across which this congruence stretches, the more powerful and persistent the strategic culture.[32]

In summary, I would like to emphasise that Johnston's approach to identify the strategic culture of a country via endogenous, historically early and formative texts dealing with politico-strategic affairs is a very fruitful research avenue. It seems natural that this approach should apply also to the strategic culture of India—and that means taking Kautilya's *Arthashastra* as the starting point for ascertaining its basic features. This view is also shared by Howlett:

> Many analysts regard key texts as important in informing actors of appropriate strategic thought and action. Traditional analyses of peace and conflict have long pointed to the influence of such texts throughout history and in different cultural settings. This may follow a historical trajectory from Sun Tzu, who was considered to have written the Art of War during the time of the warring states in ancient China, through the writings of Kautilya in ancient India, and into western understanding as a result of Thucydides' commentary on the Peloponnesian Wars and Clausewitz's writings on the nature of war as a result of observations of the Napoleonic period.[33]

It may be noted here that, analogously, Kautilya's *Arthashastra* is a foundational text of theorising intelligence and the starting point of a lineage of intelligence theorising and practices on the Indian subcontinent that has persisted up to the present.

The Semi-conscious Dimension of Strategic Culture: The 'Habitus'

Before addressing the ideational input of Kautilyan thought in Indian strategic (and intelligence) culture more closely, there is a need to examine the subconscious or semi-conscious dimension of strategic culture. Evidently, human perception, thinking and acting, individually and collectively, are also influenced by subconscious or semi-conscious experiences and memories.[34] Therefore, if a state's strategic culture is a culturally and historically conditioned framework of dispositions and preferences with respect to its security, it would be natural to apply Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of 'habitus' and 'field' to the concept of strategic culture. Bourdieu's characterisation of habitus as the 'system of dispositions—a present past that tends to perpetuate itself into the future by reactivation in similarly structured practices',[35] does apply to strategic culture.

The strength of Bourdieu's habitus concept is that it transcends the exclusivity of the conscious 're-use of the past',[36] that is, the deliberate reference to past ideas and experiences, as the exclusive way of impacting present thinking and behaviour. Following Bourdieu, one would argue that a Chinese involved in the security field can be efficaciously influenced by the idea-contents of Sun-Tzu's *The Art of War*, or other Chinese 'military classics', without having necessarily studied these works. Similarly, an Indian concerned with security matters can be efficaciously influenced by the idea-contents of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* or Kamandaki's *Nitisara*, without having engaged in a thorough study of these works or having been lectured about them in educational contexts.

In my view, it is a serious conceptual deficit that Bourdieu's habitus concept has, so far, not been integrated into the theorising of strategic culture. Due to this deficit, the vast subconscious and semi-conscious legacy of past ideas and experiences is missed when conceptualising strategic culture. The habitus is the repository of latent, but efficacious ideas and experiences that cannot be adequately apprehended otherwise. The latency of its idea-contents—precisely because they are perceived as 'common sense' or 'taken for granted'—is a central feature of the habitus. Without the subconscious latency of its idea-contents, the habitus would be no habitus, but intentional, consciously calculating thinking and behaviour.

The absorption of idea-contents into the habitus occurs in a mainly subconscious mode. Also, their influence on a person's (or group's)

thinking and behaviour remains predominantly subconscious. However, via the habitus, we can conceptually access subconscious ideas and values that influence or steer unconsciously thinking and behaviour. Within the conceptual framework of the habitus, the latency of its idea-contents gains 'materiality'. Bourdieu speaks of the 'materialization of collective memory'.[37] The (field-specific) habitus is thus the 'repository' or the 'carrier' of (field-specific) ideas, thought-patterns and values which, thus, 'keep them in activity, continuously pulling them from the state of dead letters, reviving the sense deposited in them, but at the same time imposing the revisions and transformations that reactivation entails'.[38] The 'substantive latency' of the idea-contents of the habitus is not an oxymoron, because the habitus 'forgets' as well as 'preserves' its idea-contents. In simpler words, in the habitus, forgotten ideas and values are not really forgotten but remain subconsciously efficacious.[39]

Even if, so far, the enormous significance of the habitus has been missed for theorising strategic culture, practitioners of foreign and security policy have succinctly pointed to the efficacy of latent ideas from the past on contemporary thinking and acting in their field. Here are two examples from India. The former Foreign Secretary and National Security Advisor (NSA), late J.N. Dixit, wrote:

> Two contradictory trends have impacted on the wellsprings of India's foreign policy at the subconscious level. One trend is rooted in the school of thought led by Chanakya, the great chief minister and advisor to emperor Chandragupta Maurya...The second trend influencing the collective subconscious also ironically originated in the thought processes and political impulses generated by another Mauryan emperor, Ashoka the Great, who was influenced by the teachings of Lord Buddha.[40]

Shivshankar Menon, India's NSA from 2010 to 2014, also addressed the latent presence of Kautilyan thought in contemporary India, both in the strategic community as well as among the Indian people in general. In his speech at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) on 8 October 2013, Menon said: '[T]here is no gainsaying the fundamental importance of the *Arthashastra* in our thinking...Much of this is unselfconscious and instinctive today.'[41]

The habitus concept enables us to address the latent, subconscious idea-contents of the Indian strategic community, and thus in Indian strategic culture. However, even hard-core positivists would raise the question: how can idea-contents of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* intrude

subconsciously into the habitus of members of the Indian strategic community and remain efficacious even if they never studied this ancient work?

On precisely this question, I did quite a bit of fieldwork, mostly via expert interviews in the Indian strategic community. The answer is surprisingly simple. The interviews showed that, during their childhood, most interviewees were heavily exposed to Indian literary classics, in particular the epics, Mahabharata and Ramayana, and *Panchatantra* fables. The interviewees used certain formulations confirming this, like having 'grown up with the epics' or having internalised them 'like mother's milk'. What matters here is the fact that Mahabharata, Ramayana and *Panchatantra* are texts that extensively treat not only philosophical but also political and strategic issues. Let me quote here the Indologist Alfred Hillebrandt:

> In particular, it is said Book 12 [of the Mahabharata] which provides an outline of the main features of ancient Indian political wisdom. It does so vividly, psychologically truthful and without undue detail—and in substantial congruence with Kautilya...To the exiled king Yudhisthira, Bhisma gives a series of lectures about the nature of politics and the role of the king which cover all areas of statesmanlike thought and action. Yudhisthira asks, Bhisma answers, and the latter does so in such an elaborated manner that one could speak of lessons that are saturated with experience and a profound understanding of politics; it is a kind of political propaedeutics. ...[Also] the author of the Ramayana exhibits complete familiarity with the nature of politics. His political psychology that is featured especially in the 6th book, is no less valuable than that of Bhisma's lectures.[42]

Hillebrandt's view of the conceptual coherence between the epics and Kautilya's *Arthashastra* on the topic of statecraft and strategy also applies to the *Panchatantra*, about which the American political scientist Adda Bozeman writes: 'It [Kautilya's *Arthashastra*] restates in the language of a systematic political philosophy the cold wisdom that India has traditionally rendered in its celebrated beast fables.'[43] Indologist Betty Heimann also writes that in spite of its literary format, the *Panchatantra* 'is seen and used as a full-fledged scientific textbook of statecraft'.[44]

An interesting example of the direct encounter with Kautilyan thought in childhood is Rabindranath Tagore. In his memoirs, Tagore has written: '[M]y introduction to literature began, by way of the books

which were popular in the realm of the servants [at his family home]. The most important ones were a Bengalese translation of Chanakya's aphorisms and the [epic] *Ramayana*.'[45]

These examples may suffice to show that in the kindergarten age, Indian children are introduced to a world of thought that has close affinity to the idea-contents of the *Arthashastra*. The absorption of quasi-Kautilyan thought-figures and thought-patterns occurs not as a purposeful learning effort, but in a playful manner. That is the way in which ideas and values are assimilated into the habitus. Thus, the habitus of the Indian strategic community is the repository of latent Kautilyan idea-contents, even if strategic experts—'on top of it'—do discursively, that is, consciously and deliberately, refer Kautilya. As we shall see later, the same is true for the Indian intelligence community.

Against this background, I think, we can understand Kautilya's latent ideational presence in the Indian strategic (intelligence) community and in Indian strategic (intelligence) culture. Kanti Bajpai seems to refer to such latent influence when he speaks of 'Kautilyan echoes' in the Indian strategic discourse.[46] Arndt Michael, who has examined Kautilya's impact on India's foreign policy stance towards the South Asia region, cites a senior Indian strategic expert, saying: 'Kautilya is the DNA of India's foreign policy.'[47]

The following example illustrates the latent influence of Kautilyan thought in the Indian strategic community. On 11 September 2010, Jayant Prasad, then Special Secretary in the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, gave a lecture on India's security policy at a conference of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in Geneva.[48] In his lecture, Prasad did not mention Kautilya by name, but used an important thought-figure of Kautilya, the *mandala* scheme, that is, the concentric constellation of states grouped around the state in the hub.

> India's interaction with the world begins in concentric circles around India, beginning with the countries of South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), including Afghanistan, and China. The next circle extends to much of the Indian Ocean Littoral: from the West to East, it stretches from Aden to Singapore; from Iran, the Central Asian Republics and the Gulf countries to the countries of ASEAN. It stretches, in the North, from Russia, as a Eurasian power, to Seychelles, Mauritius and Indonesia in the South. The next circle encompasses Turkey, the countries of the East African seaboard, stretching from the Horn of Africa to

South Africa, the Koreas, Japan and Australia. The United States is a significant, de facto, Asian player present in our neighborhood. Finally, together with other major Asian countries, India has maintained its traditional traction with Europe and a growing one with Africa and Latin America.[49]

While Kautilya nor his *mandala* scheme are referenced in Prasad's speech, anyone familiar with Kautilya's *Arthashastra* will instantly recognise that Prasad uses the Kautilyan thought-figure of *mandala* to depict India's current foreign policy situation. He describes India's strategic environment in the form of three concentric circles of states. In addition, outside of the three circles of states, but very much involved in their affairs, is the powerful US—*udasina* in Kautilyan terms. Also, there are three other outside power centres of lesser weight: Europe, Africa and Latin America. Thus, Prasad's IISS lecture is a case in point that the proposition of the latent presence of Kautilyan thought-figures in India's foreign and strategic posture can be verified.

I thought it necessary to emphasise the latent, but efficacious presence of Kautilyan thought in India's strategic culture because the latent influence of ideas, values and behavioural patterns from the pre-modern past on strategic culture tends to be vastly underrated, if not ignored, in the discourse on strategic culture.

Indian Strategic Culture and 'Kautilyan Realism'

As mentioned earlier, Indian strategic culture is hybrid. It encompasses a plurality of ideational lineages which are both consciously and subconsciously efficacious. In this article, I have highlighted the Kautilyan lineage because I think that 'Kautilyan realism' is the predominant endogenous ideational feature of Indian strategic culture relative to endogenous 'idealist' and/or exogenous ideational inputs.

There is an 'idealist' lineage of politico-strategic thought that can be associated with 'Ashokan statecraft' of prioritising the non-violent policies, peaceful coexistence and diplomacy. Yet, the Mauryan state of Ashoka possessed enormous power in political, economic, demographic and administrative terms. Ashoka, however, did not dispense with the armed forces, nor the intelligence apparatus, even with this outstanding non-military power leverage. In India, there is, in my view, also a Persian-Muslim tradition of politico-strategic thought that got hybridised with endogenous traditions during the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal era.[50] In addition, there is a latent and manifest British input in Indian strategic

culture, notably with respect to maritime strategy. All in all, I would argue that the endogenous lineage of Kautilyan realism is the most significant factor of latent and manifest influence in Indian strategic culture.

The scholarly literature on Indian strategic culture is of a rather modest size. Also, there have been some among the Indian strategic community, and beyond, who have even denied that an Indian strategic culture exists at all. I will not address this so-called 'Tanham debate' because it was, in my view, a rather surrealistic occurrence, which in any case is obsolete today.[51] Among the scholars who have addressed Indian strategic culture, there seems to exist the predominant view that there are diverse ideational inputs in India which are mainly endogenous and go way back to the pre-modern past. Mostly, the Kautilyan realist lineage and the idealist lineage of Buddha–Ashoka–Gandhi are highlighted. The relative weight of the influence of these two strands for Indian strategic culture differs among the scholars. In a critical review of Tanham's paper, W.P. Singh Sidhu has written that along with the idealist Ashokan tradition:

> Another obvious strand of Indian strategic thought, which has remained constant since the time of Chandragupta Maurya, through even Gandhi's non-violence era and right till the present day (but has been mentioned only in passing in the [Tanham's] essay under review), is the concept of realism. Clearly, it was not described as 'realism' by Kautilya, the official strategist for the Mauryan Empire, as for that matter by Gandhi or Nehru. Yet it is something more than evident in their writings and in their actions.[52]

In 2006, some 14 years after Tanham's study, the US Department of Defense commissioned another study on Indian strategic culture. Its author, Rodney W. Jones, came to conclusions that were diametrically opposed to Tanham's:

> India's strategic culture is not monolithic, rather is mosaic-like, but as a composite is more distinct and coherent than that of most contemporary nation-states. This is due to its substantial continuity with the symbolism of pre-modern Indian state systems and threads of Hindu or Vedic civilization dating back several millennia…It [Indian strategic culture] therefore draws on Chanakya's (Kautilya's) secular treatise, the *Arthashastra*, which closely parallels Niccolo Machiavelli's *The Prince*, as an exposition of monarchical statecraft, realpolitik in inter-state balances of power, and the practices of war and peace.[53]

Late J.N. Dixit wrote:

> India's foreign policy was governed perhaps by two schools of thought down the centuries going back almost to the 4th century BC. One school of thought (or orientation) was articulated in legendary terms by Shakuni (a character in the epic *Mahabharata* known for his expertise with dice) and in terms of recorded history by Chanakya, the great political mentor of, and minister during the reign of Emperor Chandragupta Maurya. Using power as an instrumentality to further one's objectives and to resort to stratagems and conspiratorial measures to further one's political interests was considered a necessity by these historical figures... Our militant and aggressive nationalism of the late 19th and early 20th centuries descended from the Chanakyan school of thought, whereas the moderate, rational and non-violent orientation of Indian nationalism and the Indian freedom struggle originated in the teachings of Buddha and his successors—like Emperor Ashoka. It is very important to note however the moderate and rational approach to politics and inter-state relations in each stage of the evolution of Indian history as an independent political entity followed a process of political consolidation which required the application of concepts and prescriptions of Chanakya who pre-dated Machiavelli nearly 2000 years. (Chanakya's teachings in statecraft could have taught a lesson or two Machiavelli).[54]

In the 2004 edited volume, *Neorealism versus Strategic Culture*, Marcus Kim submitted an analysis of Indian strategic culture, in which he wrote:

> If Kautilya contributed the bases of political rationalism to the dynamics of modern Indian politics, Gandhi reinforced the moral logic that has existed for centuries...The Kautilyan and Gandhian ideas are 'strategic' in the sense that they have existed and influenced, through oral tradition and texts, Indian politics for almost three millennia. In this respect, these ideas have become integral part of the cultural context of Indian political and strategic thinking...[T]he Kautilyan sense of power and interest for both the glory and well-being of the nation has also been reflected in the policies adopted. Indian strategic culture thus entails a degree of flexibility in the sense that by nature and over time it is adaptable to new ideas and circumstances...This conflict of ideas still exists between the Gandhian and Kautilyan traditions.[55]

Teaching at the University of Dhaka, Zaman examined Kautilya's significance for the strategic culture of India in an essay:

> Indian strategic culture has manifold influences and one such is the thinker Kautilya...[H]is ideas are important for the understanding of Indian strategic culture...We propose that, amongst other influencing factors, Indian strategic culture is influenced by the ideas of Kautilya codified in his book *Arthashastra*.[56]

A German political scientist also wrote: 'Kautilya and the *Arthashastra* are inextricably linked with India's foreign policy culture. The *Arthashastra* has served as a manual of statecraft which influenced generations of Indian thinkers and politicians...The ancient "Kautilyan realism" forms an important pillar of India's foreign policy culture.'[57]

In the discourse on Indian strategic culture, we can thus see a consensus that Indian strategic culture is grounded in endogenous, pre-modern politico-strategic thought and that Kautilyan ideas are a major ideational input.

However, there are divergent views as well. The most articulate—and puzzling—exception from that consensus is Kanti Bajpai, who asserts that: (i) India does not have pre-modern politico-strategic traditions that would be comparable to that of China or Europe; (ii) Kautilya cannot measure up to either Sun-Tzu nor Machiavelli; (iii) Kautilya is effectively irrelevant for India's strategic culture; and (iv) Indian strategic culture is based exclusively in contemporary ideational inputs which are primarily adopted from the West.

> Indians have not recorded their strategic thinking in written texts, the only exception being the ancient classic, Arthasastra...[In India] there are no established canonical texts except for the Arthasastra... As for the Arthasastra, it does not have the status of the Western or Chinese military classics. It would be hard to show, for instance, that its tenets were widely known historically.[58]
>
> Perhaps the most often cited as relevant to discussions of strategic thought is Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. The problem here is that it is almost impossible to show that these various texts have any valence amongst those who think about national strategy. Although the epics are transmitted orally amongst Hindus and therefore have the quality of influential, 'living' texts, it is hard to claim this for any of the others. Very few Indians of any social, religious, or caste background are familiar with these other texts: such as the

Arthashastra. It is doubtful that elite Indians also know much about them.[59]

It is worth saying a word on some obvious omissions in the volume. A fairly glaring one is Kautilya and his *Arthashastra*, the great Indian book on statecraft. Kautilya's work is often cited as a key instance of Indian strategic thinking that ranks with Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Whether it has that status is an open question. Our sense is that it does not do so. While there are certainly some maxims from it that have almost canonical status, it is a text that has largely been caricatured. Understanding of the text is not deep in India. It is most likely taught in the military academies of India, but there is little Indian reflection on it, and the text does not seem to have been deeply internalized by Indian leaders, officials and military officers.[60]

For Bajpai, Indian strategic culture is constituted by three ideational components: Nehruvianism; neoliberalism; and hyperrealism. While the first may be characterised as endogenous, the latter two are ideational 'imports' from the West, but all three schools of strategic thought are essentially contemporary phenomena. Thus, Bajpai rejects the very idea of strategic culture as historically evolved and puts forth what one may call ideational 'presentism' as the only permissible frame for Indian strategic culture.

Bajpai's position notwithstanding, it can be stated that the discourse on Indian strategic culture expounds the consensus view that Kautilyan thought is an essential ideational component of India's strategic culture. Most scholars see a duality of endogenous realistic and idealistic tendencies, but assign to realism of the Kautilyan tradition the predominant role in Indian strategic culture. I share this position and argue that Indian strategic culture is a hybrid of predominantly endogenous resources. Among them, Kautilyan realism is the most significant and efficacious. To a lesser extent, exogenous strategic thought is also a factor of influence, but the latter input certainly does not establish the case for predominantly 'importing' or 'reverse engineering' the ideational contents of the strategic culture(s) of the colonial or contemporary West.

Sketching the Contours of Indian Strategic Culture

The scholarly discourse on strategic culture in general, and Indian strategic culture in particular, reveals the great difficulties in operationalising the concept in a given context, that is, for a specific state. In my view, a

promising approach to operationalising Indian strategic culture has been made by Manjeet Pardesi.[61] He does not explicitly address the concept of strategic culture, and instead uses the concept of 'Grand Strategy', but this seems to me more a question of terminology than substance. Similar to Pardesi's approach, but explicitly centred on the concept of strategic culture, is Shrikant Paranjpe's exposition of Indian strategic culture. He gives due attention to the internal security dimension of Indian strategic culture, unlike most other authors.[62] Pardesi conducts a comparative analysis of the pan-Indian states during the past 2,300 year period:

1. Mauryan Empire;
2. Gupta Empire;
3. Mughal Empire;
4. British Raj; and
5. post-1947 India.

His finding is that structural homologies exist in the 'Grand Strategies' of these polities, the vast time horizon notwithstanding. In other words, there are constants or 'lasting patterns' in the strategic posture and behaviour of these pan-Indian states, even though the political regimes have greatly differed. Among the constants in the strategic posture and behaviour, Pardesi lists the following:

1. *Moral realism:* Power maximisation, including the use of force if deemed necessary, under a veneer of morality, and insistence on strategic autonomy.
2. *Regional hegemony:* A consistent drive to overcome political fragmentation of the subcontinent and establish pan-Indian state structures. This includes dedicated efforts to prevent meddling of outside powers into the political affairs of the subcontinent. Equally important is the prioritising of internal security to preserve the integrity and cohesion of pan-Indian polity.
3. *Politico-military behaviour:* Indian statecraft has always been multidimensional. The use of force, if deemed necessary, goes along with cooperative diplomacy, coercive diplomacy and covert intelligence operations.
4. *Defensive strategic orientation:* Pan-Indian states have consistently aimed at deterring and repulsing outside power, but not pursued aggressive–expansionist policies against them.

5. *Adaptability:* Pan-Indian states have slowly, but effectively adapted to changes in geopolitical constellations, military technology and warfighting and economic affairs.

Pardesi stresses that India's ability to adapt to changing circumstances, however, has not impinged upon the continuity of the four other constants in strategic posture and behaviour. His stance may be overtly critical of post-1947 India strategic behaviour, which is sometimes visible in his choice of terminology. However, when it comes to sketching the contours of India's strategic culture, Pardesi's historically grounded comparative analysis provides a valuable contribution for further research. Indeed, his essay affirms the proposition that Indian strategic culture is a case of 'pattern-maintaining change'.

Here, I would like to add that promising new research is underway with respect to Indian strategic culture. Two aspects of Dr Kajari Kamal's research are particularly important:

1. The in-depth and comprehensive understanding and exposition of the core concepts of the *Arthashastra* is the logical precondition for analysing their relevance in contemporary strategic practices.
2. Analytically correlating these (well-understood) Kautilyan core concepts with sufficient empirical data materials on contemporary India's foreign and security postures and practices.

One might think that such dual research approach would be quite natural but, unfortunately, it is not so. On both accounts, most of the existing literature on Indian strategic culture has been badly deficient.

In Conclusion: A Sketch of Indian Intelligence Culture

At the start of this article, I had raised the following questions: is there a characteristic and predominant 'mindset' or 'habitus' of the Indian intelligence community, which would provide the grounding for an Indian intelligence culture?; and can we draw an analogy between Indian strategic culture and Indian intelligence culture? I argue that the answer to both these questions is in the affirmative.

Due to the fact that both the Indian strategic community and the intelligence community are directly concerned with national security, there are substantial homologies or 'family resemblance' between the two. Consequently, since there is a clearly identifiable Indian strategic culture which has historically evolved, a family resemblance should also

exist between India's strategic culture and the prevalent culture in the intelligence community. One may say that India's intelligence culture is embedded in the prevalent 'Kautilyan realist' paradigm of Indian strategic culture.

However, one may argue that such family resemblance comes down to subsuming intelligence culture under the strategic culture. In other words, is intelligence culture merely a 'subculture' of strategic culture? I do not think so. Just as strategic culture is no 'subculture' of political (or bureaucratic) culture, intelligence culture is not a mere 'subculture' of strategic culture. The family resemblance between these hyphenated cultures do not offset their distinctions. Why?

India has a distinct intelligence culture because there is an endogenous lineage of intelligence theorising and practices over the past 2,500 years or even longer. Preliminary historical and empirical research data indicate that, across the ages, intelligence practices on the Indian subcontinent show a remarkable continuity. This goes for Mauryan Empire, Gupta Empire, Mughal Empire, British Raj and post-independence India. Since a fair number of historical texts and sources show an endogenous lineage of intelligence theorising and practices in South Asia going back to pre-modern times, endogenous ideational and historical continuity is central for conceptionalising the intelligence culture in contemporary India. Therefore, it appears that India's intelligence culture, like its strategic culture, is not a case of predominantly 'importing' the intelligence culture(s) of the colonial or post-colonial West.

With respect to the endogenous lineage of intelligence theorising, inevitably Kautilya's *Arthashastra* comes up. His work is not only a foundational text of statecraft and politico-strategic theorising but also a foundational text of theorising intelligence. The *Arthashastra* is the first-ever scholarly and comprehensive treatment of domestic and foreign intelligence—in contrast to Sun-Tzu's *The Art of War* or the episodic narratives on intelligence in the epics, Mahabharata or Ramayana. With respect to the analysis and exposition of the 'intelligence doctrine' conveyed in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, I would like to refer here to two essays written by my Israeli colleague, Dr Dany Shoham, and myself.[63]

As an endogenous ideational resource, Kautilya's *Arthashastra* has been the point of departure for the lineage of intelligence practices on the Indian subcontinent that has persisted up to the present.[64] Thus, the proposition that Indian intelligence culture is tangibly influenced by Kautilyan ideas on intelligence appears not only plausible but also valid.

This view is shared by the British intelligence scholar Philip Davies, who writes:

> In many respects, however, the intelligence agencies of the subcontinent, appear to have returned to the Sanskrit pattern of espionage. India's agencies, especially the domestic IB and external R&AW, have reputations for what might be termed 'action orientation', apres Douglas Porch discussing French agencies. Much the same might also be said of the Pakistani intelligence apparatus... Even though it passed into obscurity for a substantial interval, the *Arthashastra*'s legacy and influence have been substantial throughout the evolution of politics, strategy, statecraft, and intelligence on the Indian subcontinent, and they remain so today.[65]

In written and published accounts, as well as in confidential expert interviews, multiple Indian police and intelligence practitioners have affirmed the lasting impact of Kautilyan thought on intelligence practices up to the present. The books of two former Directors of the Intelligence Bureau (IB), B.N. Mullik (1950–64) and D.C. Pathak (1994–97), give testimony of the lasting—direct and indirect—impact of the Kautilyan intelligence doctrine on the attitudes, thinking and practices in the Indian intelligence community;[66] and having interviewed him, I know this to be the case also for the former Director of the IB, Ajit Doval (2004–05).[67]

Therefore, it can be stated that the habitus of the Indian intelligence community serves as the repository of latent Kautilyan idea-contents, even if its members do consciously and deliberately refer to Kautilya. Thus, Indian intelligence culture would be an ideational hybrid, that is, a complex, multifaceted ideational milieu in which conflates:

1. deep-seated, often subconscious 'habits';
2. the conscious 're-use' of ideas of the past;
3. practical–pragmatic considerations;
4. borrowed exogenous 'state-of-the-art' concepts; and
5. untested–innovative ideas.

In the Indian intelligence community, both its engrained semi-conscious 'habits' and the conscious 're-use' of ideas of the past have Kautilyan concepts of intelligence as a significant ideational point of reference.

A sketch of the contours of India's intelligence culture should pay sufficient attention to the high degree of autonomy, not insulation, that

the Indian intelligence community has *vis-à-vis* party politics, civil society and other societal inputs, like economic or ideological pressure groups. This autonomy is due to the fact that the intelligence community is a part of the permanent state bureaucracy, yet has a singular, one may say elevated, positioning within the bureaucracy. As such, the Indian intelligence community seems dominated by a nexus of senior cadres of the Indian Police Service (IPS), with a distinct esprit de corps. The other major factor for keeping the intelligence community insulated is the regime of extreme secrecy in India pertaining to all intelligence matters (the colonial-era Official Secrets Act is still in force).

The intelligence community's central assignment is the protection of the internal and external security of the state. In that, domestic security seems clearly to be the primary focus of intelligence in India; and thus, prioritising of internal security seems to be a key feature of India's intelligence culture. The internal security service, IB, is evidently much larger in personnel and resources and seems to carry bigger bureaucratic clout than the external intelligence service, Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW). A major reason for that seems to be IB's close connectivity with state- and local-level police intelligence.

The focus of India's foreign intelligence appears to be mostly regional, that is, the neighbouring states in the subcontinent, notably, Pakistan and China. Even though India is ascending to a 'Great Power' status, Indian foreign intelligence seems not (yet) to have gained a multi-directional, global reach.

I conclude by emphasising, once again, that this rough sketch of the contours of India's intelligence culture is still preliminary, but the research avenue, including empirical operationalisation, looks quite promising. There are enough heuristic and theoretical concepts, as well as baseline empirical and historical materials, as to make the concept of Indian intelligence culture a sound proposition. One hopes that other social and political scientists may join the scholarly exploration of this rather uncharted research field.

NOTES

1. See Philip Davies and Kristian Gustafson (eds), *Intelligence Elsewhere: Spies and Espionage Outside the Anglosphere*, Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013; Robert Dover, Michael S. Goodman and Claudia Hillebrand (eds), *Routledge Companion to Intelligence Studies*, London: Routledge, 2014; and Christopher Bayly, *Empire and Information:*

Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780–1870, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

2. Adda B. Bozeman, *Strategic Intelligence & Statecraft: Selected Essays*, Washington: Brassey's, 1992, pp. vii, 1.

3. Sherman Kent, *Strategic Intelligence*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951, pp vii.

4. The concept of habitus goes back to Pierre Bourdieu and will be elaborated further on in this article.

5. See Harry Eckstein, 'A Culturalist Theory of Political Change', *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 82, No. 2. 1988, pp. 789–804.

6. The term 'political culture' has evolved from the term 'civic culture' that was developed in the United States (US) by Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba in the early 1960s. See G. Almond and S. Verba, *The Civic Culture*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963. In the late 1960s, Lucian Pye, 'Political Culture', in D.L. Sills (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, New York: Macmillan, 1968, provided a still valid definition for the concept of political culture:

   Political Culture is the set of attitudes, beliefs, and sentiments which give order and meaning to a political process and which provide the underlying assumptions and rules that govern behavior in the political system. It encompasses both the political ideals and the operating norms of a polity. Political culture is thus the manifestation in aggregate form of the psychological and subjective dimensions of politics. A political culture is the product of both the collective history of a political system and the life histories of the members of that system, and thus it is rooted equally in public events and private experiences.

   As for the staying power of the concept of political culture, more than four decades after Pye's definition, another scholar wrote: 'In spite of many criticisms and varying emphasis, the concept of political culture is here to stay. It highlights the "subjective" dimension of politics and can integrate the macro-, meso-, and micro-levels in sensitive and subtle but yet intersubjectively transmissible (and falsifiable) ways.' See Dirk Berg-Schlosser, 'Political Culture at a Crossroads', in S.K. Mitra, M. Pehl and C. Spiess (eds), *Political Sociology*, Opladen: Budrich, 2010, p. 48.

7. See Ferrel Heady, *Public Administration: A Comparative Perspective*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966.

8. Weber gives due attention to the 'cultural' framing of the state bureaucracy: entry depending on higher education; administrative and specialised training; rationality; professionalism; discipline; and dedication to the (perceived) common good. Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1968, pp. 1042–62.

9. See Davies and Gustafson, *Intelligence Elsewhere*, n. 1; and Dover et al., *Routledge Companion to Intelligence Studies*, n. 1.

10. Rashed Uz Zaman, 'Kautilya: The Indian Strategic Thinker and Indian Strategic Culture', *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 25, No. 3, 2006,

11. Fernand Braudel, *Schriften zur Geschichte: Gesellschaften und Zeitstrukturen*, Stuttgart: Klett-Kotta, 1992, pp. 248 ff.

12. See Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fear of the Barbarians*, Cambridge: Polity, 2011.

13. Helmuth Plessner, *Macht und Menschliche Natur*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003(1929).

14. One can think here of the famous phrase of Karl Marx in *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte:* 'Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past.' Karl Marx, *Marx-Engels-Werke*, Vol. 8, Berlin: Dietz, 1969, p. 115.

15. Braudel, *Schriften zur Geschichte*, n. 11, p. 283.

16. Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, Delhi: Indian Council for Cultural Relations, 1981, pp. 50, 52, 59.

17. Eckstein, 'A Culturalist Theory of Political Change', n. 5, p. 794.

18. Ibid.

19. This section draws on S.K. Mitra and M. Liebig, 'Indian Strategic Culture', in *Kautilya's Arthashastra: An Intellectual Portrait—The Classical Roots of Modern Politics in India*, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2016, pp. 282–316.

20. See G.C. Bond and A. Gilliam (eds), *Social Construction of the Past: Representation as Power*, London: Routledge, 1994; Tobias Engelmeier, *Nation-building and Foreign Policy in India*, Delhi: Cambridge University Press India, 2009; and J. Vivekanandan, Interrogating International Relations, London: Routledge, 2011.

21. The term 'collective subconscious' originates with Emile Durkheim:

    In each of us, in differing degrees, is contained the person we were yesterday, and indeed, *in the nature of things it is even true that our past personae predominate in us*, since the present is necessarily insignificant when compared with the long period of our past because of which we have emerged in the form we have today. *It is just that we don't directly feel the influence of these past selves precisely because they are so deeply rooted within us. They constitute the unconscious part of ourselves.* Consequently, we have a strong tendency not to recognize their existence and to ignore their legitimate demands. By contrast, with the most recent acquisitions of civilization we are vividly aware of them just because they are recent and consequently have not had the time to be assimilated into our *collective unconscious.*

Cited in Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1990, p. 56; emphasis added.

22. Bernhard Beitelmair-Berini, 'Theorising Indian Strategic Culture(s)', in M. Hansel, R. Khan and M. Levaillant (eds), *Theorizing Indian Foreign Policy*, London: Routledge, 2017.

23. Rahul Mukherji, *Globalization and Deregulation: Ideas, Interests, and Institutional Change in India*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014.

24. See Thomas Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996.

25. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1976.

26. Compare that to the series of wars of Britain in the period 1870–1914: Afghan War (1878–80); Zulu War (1879); Sudan Wars (1881–99); Burma War (1885); Boer War (1899–1902); plus a number of 'local' wars in Africa and South Asia.

27. Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998, pp. 36, 38.

28. Ken Booth and Russell Trood (eds), *Strategic Culture in the Asia-Pacific Region*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999, p. 8.

29. Darryl Howlett, 'The Future of Strategic Culture', Advanced Systems and Concepts Office, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, the US, 2006, available at https://fas.org/irp/agency/dod/dtra/stratcult-future.pdf, accessed on 2 September 2017.

30. Alastair Iain Johnston, 'Thinking about Strategic Culture', *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 4, 1995, pp. 32, 39.

31. Ibid., p. 50.

32. Ibid., p. 48 f.

33. Darryl Howlett, 'Strategic Culture: Reviewing Recent Literature', *Strategic Insights*, Vol. 4, No. 10, 2005, available at https://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/11212/howlettOct05.pdf?sequence=1, accessed on 2 September 2017.

34. See note 21 on 'collective subconscious'.

35. Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, p. 54 f.

36. See Subrata K. Mitra, *Politics in India: Structure, Process and Policy*, London: Routledge, 2011.

37. Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, p. 54.

38. Ibid., p. 57.

39. The Hegelian term *aufhebung* has precisely this paradoxical double meaning: undoing and preservation.

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