The Spectre of "Amoral Realism" in International Relations

A Classical Indian Overview

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As per the conventional wisdom on international relations (IR), it is presumed that the pursuit of Political Realism or realpolitik calls for a rational political action which is "amoral"—either "immoral" (opposed to moralpolitik) or "neither immoral nor moral" (apathetic to moralpolitik). Also, it is held that all Asian philosophical traditions are amoral as they project a form of awareness that is inconsistent with any notions of morality or moralpolitik. However, this chapter shows how the classical Indian text of Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* uses an amoral framework—supported by the eclectic philosophical substructures of *Sāṃkhya, Yoga,* and *Lokāyata* (literally meaning "numbers," "aggregate," and "worldly ones" respectively)—to not only temper apparently immoral methods, but also attain concrete moral goals in IR. In this sense, Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* deviates from both Eurocentric and Chinese Political Realism. The chapter illustrates how Kautilya's Amoral Realism can be resourcefully mobilized to bridge the gulf between realpolitik and moralpolitik in contemporary global politics.

THE AMORAL ROOTS OF POLITICAL REALISM IN EUROCENTRIC IR

The idea of amoralism in Eurocentric IR oscillates between "immoralism" and "moral relativism." A few scholars assert that Amoral Realism involves "rational strategic actions" (Loriaux 1992) that have "no room for moral considerations" (Frankel 2013) and, thus, they are "not subject to calculations of morality" (Antunes and Camisão 2018); the cynical view of Amoral Realism "rationalizes immoral conducts with high-minded talk about state interests and international realities" (Brilmayer 1999). Other scholars argue that "amorality is not immorality"

(Hom 2018), and Amoral Realism is "neither driven by morality nor especially immoral" (Kissane 2013); it is, rather, an evolving theory that relates to specific circumstances, and its relevance is judged in terms of its ability to make prudent political decisions (Morgenthau 1962). Even if Realism is pushed as an amoral approach, it does not translate into an immoral foreign policy (Conces 2009). And despite the claim that the human mind is amoral, as it does not have innate conceptions of (im)moral and is prone to certain instincts that are necessary for survival (Al-Rodhan 2015), Realists use their own moral convictions. As Realists use their own moral convictions to suggest how states can best survive, their theories retain an "amoral character" by remaining silent on whether the survival of a particular state/government is morally desirable (Walt 2010).

In Eurocentric IR, Amoral Realism creates an uncomfortable, if not unfeasible, relation between realpolitik and moralpolitik: moralpolitik prefers to look for "abstract/ideal notions of morality," whereas realpolitik sees more merit in "rational/prudent approach to reality" which can protect the "self" (own state) against the potential/actual use of violence by "other/s" (other states). This concept of realpolitik has developed within the boundaries of Classical Realism (Morgenthau) and Neorealism (Waltz) among others.[1] Unlike Waltz, who excludes the subjective questions of morality to work as a pure "scientist," Morgenthau shows greater moral sensitivity in confessing a dynamic link between two concepts of power: "empirical" (power as domination/*pouvoir*) and "normative" (power as human capabilities/*puissance*) (Rösch 2015). For Morgenthau, the normative power is an "end" that reestablishes a value-system that has the potential to confine empirical power (Frei 2001). But until and unless that value-system is reestablished, Morgenthau seems skeptical about the use of normative power (as a "means," not as an "end") along with empirical power, thereby verifying those studies that problematize Morgenthau as a champion of realpolitik, yet label him as an "uneasy Realist" (Scheuerman 2009).

Classical Realism and Neorealism—as major variants of Amoral Realism in Eurocentric IR—sanction a dualistic reality characterized by the struggle-of-power between "self" and "other/s." To causally arrive at the centrality of this struggle-for-power, Morgenthau's Classical Realism arouses the assumed aggression in "human nature" (*animus dominandi*), and Waltz's Neorealism awakens the supposed "anarchy" in world's political structure (*absence of a world government*). Against the competitive pretext set by this struggle-for-power (which turns into a perennial security-dilemma for "self"), the probability of self-help arises only if the "self" goes for maximization-of-power and adjusts itself with ever-shifting balance-of-power among "other/s." Morgenthau (1986) observes this maximization-of-power as "superiority (not equality) of power" vis-à-vis "other/s," and defensive realists like Waltz (1979) warn that this maximization-of-power vis-à-vis "other/s" must not be limitless because the state that acquires too much of a share in zero-sum power[2] is likely to be damaged by antagonistic coalition among "other/s."

Furthermore, offensive Realists suggest that it makes a good strategic sense for each state to possess as much zero-sum power as possible and, if the situation is right, to pursue hegemony over "other/s" (Mearsheimer 2001).

Despite an emphasis upon human lust for power, Morgenthau does not intend to repress morality in political life. He opines that the universal moral principles cannot be applied to the acts of the states in their abstract formulation; they must be filtered through concrete circumstances; the states must imagine the political consequences of a seemingly moral action (Eisikovits 2016). For Morgenthau, the sphere of IR is "autonomous"; the states in this autonomous sphere cannot subordinate their acts to the abstract universal ideals manageable in individual/domestic sphere (Karpowicz and Julian 2018); the abstract universal ideals do not supply the "political restraints" that bring successful consequences in IR (Williams 2005). Conversely, Waltz laments that the pinning of political evil on human nature occurs in the nonscientific thinking of Augustine, Spinoza, Niebuhr, and Morgenthau (Voina-Motoc 1999). Waltz adopts a "scientific" outlook in treating the anarchical structural conditions as a stimulus behind the functional similarity of the states: all states follow the moral principle of survival. But this moral principle of survival makes sense only in anarchical structural conditions ridden with violence: even for Waltz, the abstract universal ideals beyond relations of violence become untenable/undesirable (Lundborg 2018).

Analogous to the apprehensions of R. Aron (1966) and E. H. Carr (2001),[3] Morgenthau's Classical Realism and Waltz's Neorealism undercut the abstract universal ideals as a feasible option in IR. Hence, moral reflections in Classical Realism and Neorealism get compressed into a single core principle—the principle of realpolitik whereby rational/prudent exercise of power protects the "self" against the potential/actual use of violence by "other/s," thereby enabling the "self" to secure survival and, in some cases, hegemony. Classical Realism and Neorealism marginalize the abstract/ideal exercise of power that can attain extra–Political Realist goals: the extra–Political Realist goals (as in moralpolitik) that surpass the concerns of survival/hegemony for "self," and attempt to secure all that brings benefit to both "self" and "other/s." From a comparative perspective, Kautilya's Arthaśāstra digresses from Eurocentric Political Realism in two respects: (i) it does not anticipate "rational/prudent" and "abstract/ideal" as mutually opposed; and (ii) it is not restricted to realpolitik, but consistently embraces moralpolitik.

KAUTILYA'S *ARTHAŚĀSTRA*: A CLASSICAL INDIAN ACCOUNT OF AMORAL REALISM

It is alleged that all Asian philosophies are amoral as they imbibe a logic which is incompatible with morality (Zelinski 2003). Arguably, the amoralism of Daoism (which finds extension in Han Fei's Legalism) prompts Chinese IR, and the amoralism of Kautilya stimulates Indian IR. So, they say, Kautilya's amoralism not only

depicts reality "as it is," not "as it ought to be" (Boesche 2003), but also presents a "statement of the immoral practices of kings/ministers" (Sarkar 1985). M. Winternitz (1923) laments that one should look in vain for anything that could be called "law" in *Arthaśāstra* as Kautilya is ready to not only make treaties but also break them in appropriate conditions, thereby showing no preference for peace. But J. Jolly (1913) contends that Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* is a branch of "Dharmaśāstra"—a text that contains a few rules that fall within the domain of "law proper" (Kangle 1997). At one point, one wonders as to what was the (im)moral impulse behind the law proper in Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra*. Tracing the controversy around Kautilya's (im)morality, U. Thakkar (1999: 2) narrates:

> This controversy arises because of the fact that two distinct lines of thought are evident in Kautilya . . . namely the theological . . . and the political . . . if Kautilya upholds the high authority of the Brāhmanical [theological] canon, he allows himself to make religion the instrument of statecraft, or in other words, to sacrifice Theology at the altar of Politics.

But does Kautilya really sacrifice theology at the altar of politics? R. Shamasastry (1915: 8–9) translates an intuitive extract from this treatise:

> [i] *Anvikshaki* ["philosophy of science"] [ii] the triple *Védas* ["religious scriptures"], [iii] *Várta* ["economics"], and [iv] *Danda-niti* ["political science"] are the four sciences . . . it is from these sciences that all that concerns righteousness and wealth is learnt . . . *Anvikshaki* comprises *Samkhya, Yoga,* and *Lokayata* . . . Light to all kinds of knowledge, easy means to accomplish all kinds of acts . . . is the science of *anvikshaki*.

The science of Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* emanates from the (ir)religious philosophical substructures of *Sāṃkhya, Yoga,* and *Lokāyata*, which, in turn, convey a meticulous approach to the dilemmas of morality in life. So, what are the central propositions of *Sāṃkhya, Yoga,* and *Lokāyata?* How do these propositions surpass Eurocentric Political Realism, thereby emitting extra–Political Realist elements? And how do these extra–Political Realist elements blend realpolitik and moralpolitik? The classical Indian philosophies are divided into two clusters: "orthodox" (that approve the infallibility of God/*Védas*); and "unorthodox" (that disapprove the infallibility of God/*Védas*). *Sāṃkhya* and *Yoga* subscribe to orthodox cluster,[4] but *Lokāyata* belongs to unorthodox cluster. Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* plans an eclectic mix of both the clusters, thereby combining *Sāṃkhya, Yoga* and *Lokāyata* as its integrated philosophical base. P. Olivelle (1998: 21) comments:

> *Sāṃkhya* posits a primal matter, called *prakrti* . . . This primal matter, originally unmanifest, contains three qualities: goodness, energy, and darkness. The visible and manifest universe has proceeded from the original primal matter; the three qualities are distributed in different proportions within the various constituents of the universe.

Sāṃkhya confirms a "dualistic reality" wherein the primordial equilibrium of *prakrti* (matter) gets disturbed when it is modified by *purusa* (spirit)—an incident that marks the beginning of the evolution of the world! R. W. Perrett (2007: 150–51) elaborates:

> First, the pure contentless consciousness of the *purusa* becomes focused on the *prakrti* and out of the delimitation evolves intelligence . . . then evolves the ego consciousness which leads to the misidentification of the true self with the ego. From [it], evolves the mind; [then] the five sensory organs and the five motor organs; then the five subtle elements (sound, touch, form, taste and smell) and the five gross elements (ether, air, fire, water and earth) . . . *Yoga* broadly accepts this *Sāṃkhya* ontology. [Remembering this evolutionary process], the *Sāṃkhya-Yoga*[5] ethics . . . mentions five . . . moral precepts or "restraints": non-injury, truthfulness, non-stealing, chastity, and greedlessness.

These "restraints" coupled with some "observances" (e.g., contentment, self-study etc.) facilitate the knowledge of manifest world. The knowledge of manifest world is acquired through the methods of "perception," "inference," and "valid testimony" (Radhakrishnan and Moore 1967). *Lokāyata*, unlike *Sāṃkhya-Yoga*, sponsors "perception" as the sole means to know "this-world." D. P. Niles (2017: 178) observes:

> *Lokāyata* teaching is that all aspects of matter, including humanity, are particular combinations of the four basic elements, earth, water, fire and air . . . Matter can think . . . consciousness arises from matter . . . the soul is nothing but the conscious body. Enjoyment is the only end of human life. Death alone is liberation. At death all matter reverts to its constitutive elements.

In Indian history, *Lokāyata* progressed as a dissent against the "elite" enthusiasts of those texts that contained *Sāṃkhya-Yoga:* the elite enthusiasts formed the dominant social group called brahmin, whereas *Lokāyata* grew as a creed of the "mass." This elite-mass conflict fuels the conjecture that *Lokāyata* is irreconcilable to *Sāṃkhya-Yoga*. But a closer scrutiny unfurls some overlaps: *Lokāyata* discards unmanifest primordial nature/*prakrti*, but it supports the study of manifest world as experienced by the bodily-self/*purusa*. For the study of manifest world, *Lokāyata* uses a few methods of *Sāṃkhya-Yoga:* it rejects inference and valid testimony, but accepts perception as a mode of inquiry; it rejects ether, but accepts air, fire, water, and earth as parts of holistic reality. The hedonistic ethics of *Lokāyata* abandons the rituals meant to protect future life, and elevates the joy of bodily-self (Sharma 2000), but it does not do so at the expense of the soul-oriented-self; it, rather, defends the "identity of body and soul" (Joshi 1987)—*Lokāyata* allows sexual rituals, but it does not cancel out the spiritual values of noninjury, truthfulness, nonstealing, and greedlessness when it comes to protect the interests of bodily-self.

The joint propositions of *Sāṃkhya-Yoga* and *Lokāyata*, which underpin Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra*, are as follows: the device to navigate and cope up with the reality of this-world is "perception"; the bodily-self (as it uses perception to navigate and cope up with the reality of this-world) wishes to defend the "identity of body and soul": that is, the interests of the body (material enjoyment/*artha* and physical pleasure/*kāma*) and the interests of the soul (righteousness/*dharma* and self-liberation/*moksha*) are not mutually exclusive. Moreover, the identity of body and soul can be defended by implementing some moral principles: noninjury, truthfulness, nonstealing, and greedlessness. Assigning the ideal rule of a "saintly-king" who is ought to act in accordance with these moral principles, Kautilya commands:

> [A saintly-king] . . . shall keep away from hurting the women and property of others [follow noninjury and nonstealing]; avoid . . . falsehood [follow truthfulness]; Not violating righteousness [*dharma*] and economy [*artha*], he shall enjoy his desires [*kāma*]. He may enjoy in an equal degree the three pursuits of life, charity, wealth, and desire, which are inter-dependent upon each other. Any one of these three, when enjoyed to an excess, hurts not only the other two, but also itself [i.e. follow greedlessness]. (Shamasastry 1915: 17)

In spite of the vision of dualistic reality (akin to Eurocentric Political Realism),[6] the Realism of *Sāṃkhya-Yoga* and *Lokāyata* makes the rational/prudent quest for material enjoyment/*artha* and physical pleasure/*kāma* dependent upon the abstract/ideal apparatus of righteousness/*dharma*, i.e., morality-ethics (Gray 2014). R. W. Perrett (1998: 52) illustrates:

> One view . . . holds *dharma* ["righteousness"] to be an instrumental value . . . which leads inevitably to the good of prosperity conceived in both this-worldly [rational/prudent] and other-worldly [abstract/ideal] terms . . . [*dharma*'s] superiority over *artha* and *kāma* is its unfailing reliability in affecting this good.[7]

Accordingly, Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* monitors both rational/prudent and abstract/ideal concerns while exercising power for achieving extra–Political Realist goals: these extra–Political Realist goals exceed realpolitik as they outdo the need to secure survival/hegemony, and pave the way for occasional pursuance of moralpolitik. An instance of occasional pursuance of moralpolitik is found when Kautilya asks the conqueror state to boost not only its own power, but also the enemy's power. Kautilya directs:

> Power is of three kinds . . . Intellectual strength provides the power of good counsel; a prosperous treasury and a strong army provide physical power, and valour is the basis for morale and energetic action. The success resulting from each one is, correspondingly, intellectual, physical and psychological . . . the conqueror shall . . . add to his own power . . . [But] he may in situations wish power . . . even to his enemy. If a powerful enemy is likely to antagonize his subjects by harming them . . . it will be easy to overpower him. (Rangarajan 1992: 525–26)

Kautilya asks the conqueror state to boost its power by crushing an unjust enemy state. But he also asks the conqueror state to win the subjects of that unjust enemy state: the conqueror state must not terrorize those subjects for self-glory and do what was beneficial to them, thereby behaving as if the conqueror state belonged to them (Chande 1998)—an instance that suspends self-other distinction! These acts are guided by Political Realist goals of "protection/survival" (*yogakshema*), and extra–Political Realist goals of "benefit for all" (*lokasamgraha*) (Jai 1999). These extra–Political Realist goals cross those barriers of realpolitik that prefer rational/prudent quest for survival/hegemony: the will to promote the abstract universal ideals of "benefit for all," that aim to discover the world's potential for virtue and to derive happiness therefrom for "self" and "other/s" (Iyer 2000), positions Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* between realpolitik and moralpolitik. It is pertinent to see how Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra*—as an Asian model of Amoral Realism that tempers immoral methods to attain moral goals—differs from Chinese Political Realism, especially, Han Fei's Legalism.

KAUTILYA VERSUS HAN FEI

What are the traits of Kautilya's Amoral Realism that set it apart from other Asian models, such as the Amoral Realism behind Han Fei's Legalism? Like Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra*, Han Fei's text, *Han Feizi*, is a classical work of "eclecticism" (Ivanhoe 2011). As a precursor to Han syncretism (Goldin 2013), *Han Feizi* borrows insights from many sources, such as Daoism, Confucianism, and Legalism (or Realism). A. Waley (1939: 202–3) informs:

> With Daoism, Realism has a very close connection. Both doctrines reject "the way of the Former Kings", upon which the whole curriculum of the Confucians was based . . . even the mystical doctrine of *wu-wei*, the Non-activity of the ruler by which everything is activated, finds a non-mystical counterpart in Realism. When every requirement of the ruler has been embodied in law and the penalities for disobedience have been made so heavy that no one dares to incur them, the Realist ruler can . . . enjoy himself; "everything" (just as in Daoism) "will happen of its own accord."

"Just as in the [D]aoist and Confucian interpretations of *wu wei*, in the Han Fei[zi's Legalism], there is an attempt to correlate the operation of the cosmos and the proper functioning of the political state. Characteristics attributed to the [cosmic D]ao are projected onto the ideal ruler . . . *wu wei* [i.e., nonactivity] and the related techniques of rulership [a]re intended to prevent any insight into the ruler's personality which might interfere with the operation of the governmental machinary" (Ames 1983: 51–53). By mixing *wu-wei* with Legalist polity, Han Fei resembles Kautilya's all-encompassing methodological skills that simultaneously deals with the metaphysical, epistemological, practical, ethical, and aesthetical aspects of reality. But Han Fei differs from Kautilya with regard to the appraisal

of the "ruler's action": while Kautliya sees the ruler's action as a form of power, Han Fei gives ample weightage to the ruler's nonactivity. Quoting *Han Feizi*, R. N. Bellah (2011: 457–58) writes:

> Do not let your power be seen, be blank and actionless. Government reaches to the four quarters, but its source is the centre. The sage[-king] holds to the source, and the four quarters come to serve him . . . Do not be the first to move . . . If you show delight, your troubles will multiply; if you show hatred, resentment will be born. Therefore discard both delight and hatred, and with an empty mind, become the abode of the Way.[8]

Even *Sāṃkhya-Yoga* agrees that the primordial eqilibrium of nature/*prakriti* (comparable to "the Way") gets disturbed in the evolutionary process activated by the human spirit/*purusa*. But the propositions of *Sāṃkhya-Yoga-Lokayata* in Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* never endorse nonactivity: rather, they envision the ruler's moral-energetic action as a source of "psychological power." Kautilya states:

> Of a king, the religious vow is his readiness to action [here, readiness to action testifies to the ruler's morality/energy, whereas inaction indicates the ruler's immorality/lethargy; in times of crises, the ruler's action, not inaction, boosts the psychological power of the state, including the subjects]. The king who [acts] in accordance with sacred law, evidence, history, and edicts of kings . . . will be able to conquer the whole world bounded by the four quarters. (Shamasastry 1915: 52, 215)

Contrary to Han Fei's "sage-king," who is asked to sit at the center of the governmental structure and judge the efficiency of his ministers, but refrain from any active personal intervention in the administrative affairs, Kautilya's saintly-king, as he occupies the center of the states-system, is asked to use his personal qualities to enrich the other elements of his state, especially when they are less than perfect: these elements include ministers, population, fort, treasury, army, and ally. Kautilya states: "whatever character the king has, the other elements also come to have the same" (Sihag 2004: 146). Dissimilar to the king's "impersonal" conduct styled after *wu-wei* by Han Fei (Winston 2005), Kautilya counts on the king's "personal" qualities. But this does not mean that Kautilya ignores the importance of detachment. As Han Fei praises the king's detachment from delight/hatred, Kautilya lauds the king's "active engagement with" yet "conscious detachment from" the immediate moments of success and failure in politics (Ganeri 2003). The detachment of Kautilya's saintly-king aims to achieve "protection/survival" and "benefit for all," whereas the detachment of Han Fei's sage-king intends to preserve "order."

Though Han Fei's Legalist "order" is measured as the single necessary condition for a decent life (Flanagan and Hu 2011), it runs the risk of manufacturing an "entrapped sovereign" whose "God-like omnipotence" is submerged by the system he ostensibly runs (Pines 2018). This system, sooner or later, transforms into a de facto "bureaucratic Legalism" (Schneider 2018), wherein it is the ministers who do the real ruling (Graham 1989), the ministers whom Han Fei himself identifies as the king's "most dangerous foes" (Graziani 2015). In theory, the sage-king

aspires to materialize a "social engineering" (Pines 2016) by using his impersonal power/*shu* to change laws/rules/techniques/*shi* in accordance with the change in circumstances. In practice, this social engineering is expected to satiate the egocentric human nature whose morality is distorted in times of economic deprivations. Nonetheless, this social engineering rests upon an "award and punishment mechanism" (*hsing-ming*) whereby the sage-king not only tallies "names" (or offical-positions) with "performances" (or work-proposals) for separating solid talent from idle chatter (Witzel 2012), but also confers harsh punishment upon an ever-increasing population for the purpose of aligning individual interest with public interest (*fa*) (Craig 1998). B. Watson (1964: 98–99) quotes a passage from *Han Feizi*:

> Though his penalities may be severe, this is not because he is cruel, he simply follows the custom appropriate to the time. Circumstances change according to the age, and ways of dealing with them changes with the circumstances.

Bellah (2011: 458) continues: "In ancient times, people were few and resources plentiful; today people are many and resources few. What required little government then requires harsh punishment today." Slowly, Han Fei's "bureaucratic Legalism" turns into "authoritarian Daoism" (Hansen 2000) wherein one is rewarded and punished in accordance with the "positive laws": even a moral deed is severely punished if it violates the positive laws (Chen 2016). Although this authoritarian Daoism says nothing against Daoism *per se*, it maintains a distance from Daoist spiritual-abstract forms (Moody 2008). At last, what links Daoism and Legalism is an opposition to moralism; "the danger is that together they reject morality" (Bellah 2011: 458). Han Fei rebuffs Daoist spiritual-abstract forms of benevolence, righteousness, love and kindness as useless political virtues (Vogelsang 2016), thereby allowing immorality to preserve "order." Even Kautilya, who is motivated by the goals of "protection/survival" and "benefit for all," is not averse to the temporary use of immoral means (e.g., assasination, etc.), but he firmly upholds the spiritual-abstract forms of morality when he addresses the king:

> In the happiness of his subjects lies his happiness; in their welfare his welfare; whatever pleases himself he shall not consider as good, but whatever pleases his subjects he shall consider as good . . . satisfactory discharge of [his] duties is his performance of sacrifice (Shamasatry 1915: 52).

It is appealing to inquire if these premodern ideas of Kautilya could be put into practice in today's (post)modern global politics.

PREMODERN KAUTILYA AND POST(MODERN) GLOBAL POLITICS

Today's global politics neither justifies a separation of "moral-domestic-order" from "amoral-international-anarchy" (Ashley 1987), nor awaits an import of moral-ethical-principles from "outside" (the sphere of international) to "inside"

(the sphere of domestic) (Walker 1993). Rather, the present international community, which gives a crucial role to morality in the determination of global order (Kapstein and Rosenthal 2009), grapples with the crisis of "plurality of values" (Amstutz 2018)—any single moral-value subsists with plural moral-values represented at diverse local-global levels (Nancy 2000). Amid the anxiety that this "chaotic condition of moral conceptions and beliefs" (Dewey 1923) might be a harbinger of "messy morality" (Coady 2008), there is little disagreement about the need for a "moral theory of international law" (Buchanan 2003) which could collaborate scholars and practitioners at all levels of governance (Garofalo 2008), thereby connecting "public opinion" and "foreign policy" via moral sentiments (Kertzer et al. 2014). As this moral theory of international law follows the "golden rule of humanity," it demands a fresh global politics centered upon not only rights, but also duties (Kung, 1998), and one of the duties is the avoidance of "double standards": that is, "one [set of moral-values] for other people, and a different and more permissive one for oneself" (Harries 2005). Here, the idea is to condemn the use of violence for 'securing one group of citizens by placing others in danger" (Burke 2004) and prioritize the ethics of care for "self" and "other/s" in a globalized world with greater international interdependence (Held 2011).

So, how can Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* encourage the moral agenda of contemporary global politics? Nowadays, global politics sees the inside-outside-demarcation (or fixed borders of Westphalian states-system) as a moral hurdle (Ling 2017). Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* seems promising as it does not instill a demarcation between domestic politics (inside) and international politics (outside) (Acharya and Buzan 2009). As this demarcation cultivates a self-other dualism that hampers the ethics of international responsibility, the absence of this demarcation in Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* permits many alternative forms of self-other relationship to grow, e.g., the self-other relationship wherein the subjects of own state stay connected to the subjects of other states for many reasons (e.g., for expressing discontent with certain policies), thereby mirroring the transnational realities of current global politics: recent studies show how anti-government protests worldwide have brought together dissatisfied individuals/groups that were assumed unlikely to unite for a common cause due to ideological differences (Axford, Gulmez, and Gulmez 2018); and how popular dissatisfaction with governance frameworks is resulting in new transnational sites of authority built around new coalitions of actors/interests (Breslin and Nesadurai 2018). Because the subjects of different states stay connected, the just exercise of power becomes a fundamental international responsibility. Quoting *Arthaśāstra*, R. P. Kangle (1997: 120) writes:

> An unjust or improper use of . . . power by the ruler might lead to serious consequences, the most serious being a revolt of the subjects against the ruler . . . large number of acts on the part of the ruler . . . are likely to make the subjects disaffected with his rule . . . if the subjects become disaffected [at the domestic level], they may join hands with the ruler's enemies [at the international level] . . . [This] threat . . . is

expected to serve as a check on the wanton use of coercive power by the ruler. This shows at the same time how the ruler's authority is, in the last analysis, dependent on the contentment of the subjects.

Since the subjects' contentment, as a vital aspect of public opinion, decides the ruler's authority, Kautilya announces that the ruler's authority is harmed if s/he does not pay what ought to be paid, or if s/he does exact what ought not to be taken (Shamasastry 1915: 386–87): these acts damage the economic prospects of the subjects of own state and/or other state/s. Kautilya further suggests that a conqueror state is prudent if it is just toward the subjects because the subjects, when impoverished, become greedy; when greedy, they become disaffected; when disaffected, they either go over to the enemy state or themselves kill the unjust ruler (Kangle 1997: 120). Therefore, the conqueror state should not allow these causes of decline, greed, and disaffection among the subjects to arise, or, if arisen, should instantaneously counteract them (Deb 1938). Also, Kautilya cautions that the ruler's authority is harmed if s/he attacks a state that has a virtuous ruler (who takes good care of the subjects) or a prevalence of loyal subjects (who put up a resilient fight for their ruler) (Olivelle 2013: 275). Even when the ruler attacks an unjust state where a morally diseased king is likely to bring harm to his subjects, the ruler's authority is enforced if s/he saves the "value-systems" of the subjects of that unjust state. Kautilya preaches:

> Having acquired a new territory (after defeating a morally-diseased enemy), he should cover the enemy's vices with his own virtues, and the enemy's virtues by doubling his own virtues . . . he should follow the friends and leaders of the people . . . he should adopt the same mode of life, the same dress, language, and customs as those of the people. He should follow the people in their faith with which they celebrate their national, religious and congregational festivals. (Shamasastry 1915: 581–82)

The urge to keep the plurality of values shows the known connection between "public opinion" and "foreign policy" in Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra*. Because of this connection, Kautilya allows a minimal use of organized violence in foreign policy (that could badly affect the public opinion): to begin with, Kautilya prioritizes the "skills for intrigue" (understood as ingenious application of the "science of polity") for achieving intended goals, not enthusiasm or physical power that often lead to organized violence, such as war. But in case the war becomes a necessity, then Kautliya advises the conqueror state to declare war against an unjust state with disaffected subjects who would not put up a resilient fight for their ruler, thereby minimizing the scale of violence in war. Kautilya broadly classifies three types of war: "open war" fought with preset place-time and stipulated rules; "concealed war" fought with an element of surprise; and "silent war" similar to modern guerrilla war. The moral legitimacy of war is contingent on the state's relative power: the states with evenly matched militaries should use open war, and the states that are weaker than their opponents, or that are not sure about their relative power,

should use concealed/silent war. Kautilya can be seen as a forerunner of "just war traditions" (Morkevičius 2018) because he engages with the ideas of *jus ad bellum* (conditions that justify participation in war), *jus in bello* (rules about how war should be fought once it has started), and *jus post bellum* (instructions on how war should be ended).

Besides, Kautilya denounces the use of organized violence to torture those who, after being defeated in war, have reached a psychological terrain whereby they are ready to lay down their lives. Kautilya cautions: "the vehemence of someone who reenters a battle without regard for his life becomes irrepressible," thus, it is not only morally sound, but also rationally proper to not "harass a man who has been crushed" (Olivelle 2013: 380). One can draw parallels between the irrationality inherent in the torture of crushed individuals in Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* and the ongoing research on moral psychology and torture in existing IR (Wisnewski 2010). Far from torture, Kautilya exhibits an empathy toward "rights" (Chandrasekaran 2006): e.g., he attaches a huge importance to the compassionate treatment of invaded rulers/ministers. Kautilya also puts an accent on duties/responsibilities. J. Chemburkar (1999: 65) explains:

> [Kautilya] classifies duties as *viśesa dharma* and *sāmānya dharma* . . . *sāmānya dharma* includes duties . . . which are common to all irrespective of any distinction such as class, caste, creed, sex, time-space [e.g., the spiritual-value of "forgiveness" is *sāmānya dharma* (Shamasastry 1915: 11)]. [But] there are certain duties which are . . . determined by the role one is playing . . . [these peculiar duties are called *viśesa dharma* which] differ from individual to individual . . . *viśesa dharma* is determined by an individual's relation with other fellow beings . . . e.g. the king is bound by *rajadharma* [i.e., the king's peculiar duty to obtain material prosperity for the subjects (Kangle 1997: 131)] as he is . . . related to the whole social fabric in a specific way.

As the ruler is related to the whole social fabric in a specific way, s/he shoulders the duty to derive material well-being. But when the ruler acts to derive material well-being, these acts should not become a hurdle in the path of spiritual well-being: here, the duty toward utilitarian material well-being is to be reconciled with an obligation toward altruistic spiritual well-being. R. P. Kangle (1997: 2) clarifies:

> With *artha* understood, by implication, in the sense of the earth where men live and seek their material well-being, it ceases to be a goal pursued by individuals and appears as the means of ensuring the well-being of men in general. And since state activity alone can make such general well-being possible, the protection of earth [becomes] an essential part of state activity. [*Arthaśāstra*] is thus defined as the . . . [knowledge] which shows how this activity of the . . . protection of the earth should be carried out.

R. Eckersley (2004) echoes a Kautilyan sentiment when she goes against the grain of much current IR thinking to argue that the state is still the preeminent institution for tackling environmental issues on earth. Kautilya focuses upon moralpolitik

(i.e., abstract universal ideals of protecting the earth, minimizing the organized violence, nurturing the plural values, defending the subjects' contentment, and practicing the value of forgiveness) as a necessary condition for realpolitik (i.e., rational/prudent struggle for maximization-of-power). As Kautilya focuses upon moralpolitik as a necessary condition for realpolitik, he dilutes some of the basic dichotomies that haunt the conventional study of global politics (Abbott, 2004)—namely, "self vs. other/s," "material vs. ideational," "spiritual vs. sensual," and so on. Indeed, it is this theoretical-practical temper of Kautilya—which amorally mediates between the spiritual and sensual aspects of life (Shahi 2018)—that stands to upgrade the customary ways of handling the persisting challenges of global politics, such as climate change, pandemic, economic crisis, humanitarian intervention, and war on terror.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

"Realism between realpolitik and moralpolitik" is the hallmark of Kautilya's Amoral Realism. Against the Eurocentric idea of a zero-sum world (wherein rational/prudent, not abstract/ideal, hunt for power by "self" can deplete the power of "other/s"), Kautilya's Amoral Realism complements the image of a zero-sum-world with a "variable-sum world": Kautilya agrees that different states must seek to augment their power (in order to retain growth, or to make progress from decline to stability, and then, from stability to growth); but when different states seek to augment their power, they must know that they do not always share a competitive relationship with each other; at different points in time in dealing with different states, the growth in power of own state ("self") requires not only depletion in power of "other/s" (zero-sum view), but also coordinated growth in power of "other/s" (variable-sum view). To attain this coordinated growth in power of "self" and "other/s," Kautilya's Amoral Realism, unlike Han Fei's Amoral Realism, prescribes a proactive (not nonactive) upkeep of the abstract-spiritual bureaucratic-legal forms. As Kautilya's Amoral Realism tracks coordinated growth in power of "self" and "other/s," it unleashs a robust vision of global politics that strives to reconcile the seemingly disjointed spheres of "the domestic" and "the international."

GLOSSARY

artha: material well-being; **kāma:** physical pleasure; **dharma:** righteousness; **yogakshema:** protection/survival; **lokasamgraha:** benefit for all

NOTES

1. Neoclassical Realism (Fareed Zakaria) emerged as the "logical extension" of Neorealism. But some IR scholars claim that Neoclassical Realism undermines the core of Neorealism (Legro and Moravcsik 1999).

2. The notion of zero-sum power holds that the gain of power by "self" leads to an equivalent loss of power by "other/s." By contrast, the variable-sum view on power—which is infrequently described in Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra*—assumes that it is possible to have mutual gains of power not offset by equivalent losses somewhere else (positive-sum), and mutual losses of power not offset by equivalent gains somewhere else (negative-sum).

3. R. Aron (1966) admits the "morality of struggle" and "morality of law," but recommends what he calls the "morality of prudence," thereby conveying that the morality in IR is equivocal. Likewise, E. H. Carr (2001) considers the coexistence of "utopia" and "reality" as two irreconcilable forces in IR.

4. Since *Sāṃkhya* does not consider God as the creator of the world (Larson 1969), it is seen as an "atheistic" (not religious) philosophy. Nevertheless, a few scholars suggest that *Sāṃkhya* is not an atheistic philosophy as it does not falsify the existence of God, but only denies the role of God as the sole creator of the world (Bronkhorst 1983). *Yoga* considers the belief in God as the "first teacher" (Dickstein 2015).

5. As *Sāṃkhya* (Sāṃkhyakārikā, 350–450 CE) lends support to *Yoga* (Yogasūtra, 200–300 CE) (Perrett 1998), *Sāṃkhya* and *Yoga* are often jointly referred to as "*Sāṃkhya-Yoga*."

6. The dualistic reality of *Sāmkhya-Yoga* assumes the separate existence of *prakrti*/matter and *purusa*/spirit. *Lokāyata* proposes a more nuanced picture of this dualistic reality when it argues that "spiritual-consciousness" originates from "material-body" (Bhattacharya 2011). Though *Lokāyata* ranks the material-body over and above the spiritual-consciousness, it does not refute the separate ontological existence of these two kinds of reality.

7. Is Kautilya equally motivated by *dharma, artha*, and *kāma*? N. P. Sil (1985: 125–26) writes: "One major problem in determining the extent of Kautilya's moral susceptibility is that he is seldom consistent in his contentions . . . He might occasionally appear . . . amoral, though, on closer scrutiny, his fundamental moralism becomes obvious. For instance, he observes that . . . material well-being[/*artha*] alone is supreme, for, spiritual good[/*dharma*] and sensual pleasures[/*kāma*] depend on material well-being . . . Yet, on another occasion, Kautilya comments that a king must preserve his body, not wealth; for, what regret can there be for wealth that is impermanent?" S. Gray (2014: 640) asserts: "Kautilya . . . does not argue for *artha*'s superiority but rather for its harmonious integration with the other goals of human life . . . *dharma* [righteousness], *kāma* (desire, including the sphere of physical, sensual delights), and *moksha* (liberation from the cycle of birth and death) all depend upon *artha* [material well-being] to flourish in a codependent fashion . . . Kautilya's claim concerns material dependence, not qualitative superiority." Even for K. J. Shah (1982), Kautilya does not negate, at least in theory, that *artha* has to be pursued in accordance with *dharma*.

8. "Dao" (or "The Way") denotes an absolute entity which is the source of the universe. However, cosmic Dao is not a transcendent source beyond the physical world; rather, it is something which is "always present" / "always emerging": as such, it is creative but is not a supreme creator God. Since it continually creates multiple things in manifest world, it gives birth to "complementary polarities" (*yin/yang*). Human beings—whose sociocultural presence is marked by artifice and restraints—can only strive to attune themselves to the mysterious fluctuations of cosmic Dao. It is said that the cosmic Dao is no special lover of humanity. For a study on how the Dao of inner saint and outer king are linked, see Shan (2012).

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