

Lessons in Foreign Policy from Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*

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Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra is the oldest available treatise devoted exclusively to statecraft and governance anywhere in the world. This case study puts together a short exposition on what Arthaśāstra has to say on foreign policy in a simplified manner, without going into detailed interpretations and critiques. It explains briefly the four principal frameworks related to foreign policy that are explained in Arthaśāstra, i.e., saptāṅga (the seven elements of a sovereign state), maṇḍala siddhānta (the doctrine of concentric states), śhāḍḡṇya siddhānta (the sixfold doctrine), and four upāyās (the four stratagems). It then concludes with a discussion on the applicability of these in the modern context, particularly in relation to issues related to India's foreign policy. It is hoped that this document could serve as a basic resource material to learn about this topic, and also inspire further study and application of this subject.
