

## Relevance of Kautilya's Arthashastra concerning Contemporary Hybrid Warfare

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### Abstract

The concept of hybrid warfare, known by the increasingly indistinct and blurred lines between conventional and unconventional tactics, has surfaced as a serious threat in the contemporary security landscape. Since the threats have been evolving rapidly, it becomes paramount for nations to have their countermeasures ready. This research investigates the ability of the ancient Indian treatise, Arthashastra, to suffice as a countermeasure to hybrid threats. This paper highlights not only the analysis of the articulation of warfare strategies but also the non-military strategies traced in the Arthashastra and tests its potential further in light of the 21st century's complexities and hybrid warfare. The analysis tries to contribute to the ongoing discourse on hybrid warfare by exploring a historical text and trying to establish a link between ancient wisdom and contemporary security challenges, offering insights to tackle the complexities of hybrid warfare.

**Keywords:** War, Hybrid Warfare, Arthashastra, Kautilya, conventional, unconventional, military, non-military, state, non-state, Russia-Crimea

### Introduction

Warfare has never been exclusively military. It has always involved domains of statecraft, diplomacy, information, economics, law, social engineering, etc.

States are modifying their warfighting doctrines to counter the multi-modal threat of hybrid warfare. In the last few years, the term "Hybrid Warfare" has sprung up and has become apparent not only in the military but also in academic and policy literature. The term has been frequently used to attempt to describe the complexity of conflict in the twenty-first century. Debates and discussions have emerged regarding hybrid warfare and the challenges it poses in

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modern times. Hybrid warfare has been used to conceptualize the blend of conventional as well as non-conventional strategies and tactics. These hybrid conflicts are being fought in a zone of ambiguity, which includes various dimensions like legal warfare, economic warfare, psychological/propaganda warfare, information warfare, diplomacy, etc. Battlespaces no longer remain just physical. The ambiguity of conflicts has made it difficult to make a distinction between perception and reality. Hybrid warfare is an extensive concept that goes beyond the military combat zones. It involves a wider array of techniques that employ different tactics. Adversaries can be state entities as well as non-state entities.

With all that said, hybrid warfare is not a new concept. Since ancient times, hybrid warfare has played a significant role in human history. However, as usual, the greatest tool for interpretation is knowledge of history. States can look back into history and get valuable lessons to formulate war policies and strategies to tackle this hybrid threat. In Indian literature, there are many ancient texts on warfare and statecraft. The Arthashastra by Kautilya is one of them. Kautilya was an Indian teacher, strategist, philosopher, and royal adviser. He authored the political treatise, Arthashastra. In his treatise, Kautilya explains his learnings and postulates regarding war, statecraft, foreign policy, covert operations, diplomatic capabilities, etc. Kautilya gives valuable inferences and elaborates on the different contours of warfare, which interestingly seem to be relevant and can be applied in today's contemporary and dynamic security environment. Incorporating these valuable insights from ancient literature into present doctrines can prove influential. When Chandragupta Maurya defeated the last king of the Nanda Dynasty, Dhana Nanda, it was under the guidance of Kautilya. The worlds in which Kautilya laboured and established the Mauryan Empire at its pinnacle of power seem comparable to the present world.

## **Aim**

This paper aims to examine and investigate the applicability of Kautilya's Arthashastra's fundamental teachings on warfare and statecraft and to analyse whether it is possible to draw a parallel comparison to the concept of hybrid warfare. This paper aims to study the lessons of Arthashastra, determine its relevance, and yield insights regarding hybrid warfare.

## **Methodology**

This study entirely relies on secondary method of data collection to gather information. A variety of academic sources were consulted including books, online articles from reputed websites, scholarly journals and published research papers. The study's reliance on secondary data collection methods ensures that the information presented is grounded in established knowledge and perspectives.

## **Background**

### **Understanding the paradigm of hybrid warfare**

War is a constituent element of history of mankind. It is a component of continuity in the matter of politics and human affairs. Sir Michael Howard, an English military historian, explains in his book *The Causes of War* that, the fact that war is ingrained in the very structure of state is difficult to deny (Howard, 1983). World politics is a struggle for dominance. There exists a power competition among states which results in war. According to the realist school of thought, considering the power competition in international politics, war and conflict are inherent attributes; they are the natural behaviour patterns of state actors. Machiavelli found it imperative that war should be explicitly defined because of the dynamics in international politics (Machiavelli, 2006). In this ever threatening situation where peace is preferable to war only so far as it bought time to recover from weak position, conflict is not just between states; it also consists of an outbreak of war between a state and a non-state actor. Non state actors are becoming increasingly sophisticated and brutal in their operations. This has contributed to expansion and change in the paradigm of warfare. A state's ability to gain accurate landscape analysis and to act upon it with conviction has become pertinent because of hybrid threats in warfighting. Multidimensional hybrid threats have always persisted. However, now they are strategically more rampant. Although hybrid threats are not novel, they are becoming distinct due to the changing character of warfare. Some of the reasons are the rapid rise in the use of cyber, legal, regular, psychological, informational, and economic means simultaneously used to ensure the national security goal. Conflicts have become a mix of regular and irregular warfare. The Indian Army 2018 Doctrine says (Col Basu, 2020):

... Wars will be hybrid in nature, a blend of conventional and unconventional, with the focus increasingly shifting to multi-domain warfare varying from contact to non-contact warfare.

This indicates that hybrid warfare implies the simultaneous application of conventional and unconventional approaches to war. The lines between conventional and unconventional war are becoming blurry with time, making the conflict zone turn grey. In order to build a strategy that can help tackle this multi-modal hybrid threat, it is imperative to recognise this grey zone of conflict. This grey zone implies the activities that are short of conventional warfare. It operates below the threshold of traditional warfare to achieve its objectives. Conventional warfare is an open confrontation on the battlefield involving armies and weapons, whereas all military and quasi-military operations outside of conventional combat are referred to as unconventional warfare. There is no one agreed definition of hybrid warfare, but many academicians and scholars have tried to conceptualize the term. Frank G. Hoffman has been said to have first proposed the term 'hybrid warfare'. His paper observes that the evolving character of conflict today is inclusive of different combat and non-combat methods. It is a convergence of physical war, psychological war, and other quasi-military strategies that are unconventional. He explains this as 'synergy from the simultaneous application of multiple modes of war'. He argued that military analysts are becoming increasingly concerned about the concept of hybrid warfare as it erases the defined lines of conflict and combat. (Hoffman, 2009). With this strategy, competitors and adversaries may target vulnerabilities by concurrently using distinctive types of war and tactics falling within the ambit of hybrid warfare. Such a wide spectrum of warfare poses a great challenge and requires a diverse strategy capable of addressing these hybrid threats. This paper seeks to place an analysis and inspect if Arthashastra provides a comprehensive approach to tackle this threat of hybrid warfare.

### **Contextualising Hybrid Warfare and its definition**

Conflict and war are essentially the result of non-cooperation within states and other actors. Security threats are ever-evolving in the landscape of warfare. The phenomenon at hand has undeniably and unequivocally become increasingly complex and dynamic. Nations will require the ability to understand various dimensions of competitions that can be a cause for conflicts. This competition has the potential to take many forms hence conflicts can no longer be looked

at from binary black-and-white perspectives. War has become a mix of different techniques and approaches. Putting aside a narrow focus on traditional warfare, a broadening range of war dynamics that cause disruptive and hybrid threats are becoming more prevalent. Entities are inclined to look past the conventional use of force and purposefully exploit the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of their adversary using irregular tactics. Instead of an extensive traditional all-out military battle, combining various old and new spectrums of warfare and using them simultaneously provides the recipe for hybrid warfare. The emphasis is on the use of non-military measures at all levels. This combined use to menace the enemy has brought in non-linear arrays in hybrid warfare. This dominant form of warfare uses technological advancements and other physical, psychological, political, and economic dimensions to enfeeble the enemy. It involves expanding the scope of war to encompass the different facets of culture, society, law, psychology, and morality in areas less significant to the military. With the passing of time, the idea of hybrid warfare has evolved from the original operational application of military tactics to the inclusion of the strategic use of non-military tactics in the grey zone

Formerly, the term hybrid warfare mostly described the use of irregular tactics, conventional weapons, terrorism, and criminal activity in tandem within the same battlespace. New meanings and interpretations, however, arose as the idea evolved. This suggests the heterogeneous character of hybrid mode of warfare which lacks symmetry. As per Hoffman (Hoffman, 2007):

...the blurring of modes of war, the blurring of who fights, and what technologies are brought to bear, produces a wide range of variety and complexity that we call Hybrid Warfare.

Hoffman suggests that states will need to attain tactical synchronization across many battlespaces. (Hoffman, 2007). This contextualization of hybrid warfare can be said to be a battle of information and a battle of perception. The interplay and fusion of conventional and non-conventional instruments of warfare is nothing but hybrid warfare. Hybrid warfare is not limited to a single form of warfare. It has taken the form of unrestrictive warfare. It encompasses contact and non-contact warfare, regular and irregular warfare, kinetic and non-kinetic warfare, and conventional, sub-conventional, and unconventional methods. The integrative application of these modes of warfare, along with technological breakthroughs,

curtails hybrid warfare. These hybrid approaches and techniques are performed at strategic, tactical and operational level. This indicates that the application of combination of techniques is essentially to be done on three levels of warfare. These aspects play a critical role in bridging the gap between the theoretical concepts and their practical application. In essence, it is imperative to note that the simultaneous application of the different forms warfare without embodying the elements of strategy, tactics and operations, hybrid warfare will remain inadequate. Various strategies, tactics and operations when applied to the blend of conventional and non-conventional measure categorizes as hybrid warfare. This attribute paves the way for understanding the technical know-how of hybrid warfare. Nations devise their plan of action in different ways depending on their individual strategic culture. The effective implementation of hybrid warfare strategies can be augmented by several elements, including technological advancements and mechanization, surprise assaults that exploit the element of surprise and catch the adversary off guard, the ability to leverage time during the planning phase, an understanding of frequency (pace at which events appear) to interfere with the adversary's operations, and so on. These elements are crucial for the success of hybrid warfare tactics, which depend on the fusion and interplay of conventional and unconventional methods to achieve their goal. By strategically using these elements at their disposal, states can outline a dynamic and effective approach to hybrid warfare that has the potential to be innovative and effective at the same time. (Ryan, 2022)

In hybrid wars, conflicting parties deliberately shift the focus of the conflict towards their opponent's disadvantages instead of recognizing and addressing their advantages. Lieutenant Colonel Michael Miller from the United States Air Force defines hybrid warfare (Miller, 2015):

...as the use of conventional and unconventional ways and means—by any combination of state and non-state actors—within the same battlespace.

Miller talks about tactics, operations, forces and weaponry as examples of ways and means in his paper. By applying contemporary technology and fostering a high level of coordination and cooperation between conventional and unconventional troops, the strategy for hybrid warfare. (Miller, 2015)

Ambiguity and attribution are crucial facets of hybrid warfare. The deliberate ambiguity caused by the perpetrators to impede attribution and response is a common feature of hybrid warfare.

As an outcome, the attacked state finds it challenging to frame appropriate policies and estimate countermeasures. The chaos over hybrid warfare is further aggravated by the employees of suspicious actors and media manipulation. Primarily, hybrid warfare is conducted by using military and non-military tactics and operations that involve collapsing the enemy internally as well as physically destroying them. This warfare is complex and long-term in nature. Highly decentralized, this includes cyberattacks, attacking the enemy's culture, disinformation campaigns to destabilize societies, using artificial intelligence, imposing economic sanctions, proxy wars, etc. Furthermore, a variety of sub-threshold actions combining a combination of violent and non-violent methods can be seen as hybrid warfare. This perspective emphasises how hybrid warfare is ambiguous and clandestine, utilising techniques and plans that are outside the bounds of regular combat. Lastly, employing nonviolent subversive actions to achieve political objectives can also be understood as a component of hybrid warfare. This strategy emphasises the use of non-kinetic techniques to weaken an opponent's position and sway judgement calls.

The complexity in the battlefields is rapidly increasing because of this phenomena of hybrid warfare. It has given rise to an element of surprise. Over time, aspects of war continue to change. The increasing prevalence of hybrid warfare is a compelling indication of the evolving nature of modern warfare.

### **Elements of Hybrid Warfare**

After the careful examination of the different definitions of hybrid warfare there are certain elements which seem to be commonly used in every definition. After analysing and drawing inferences based on the features discussed by Frank Hoffman (Hoffman, 2009), Col Shubhankar Basu (Col Basu, 2020), S.K Gadeock (Gadeock, 2023), Lt Col Michael Miller (Miller, 2015), Vikrant Deshpande (IDSA, 2018), James K Wither (Wither, 2016) it is possible to list some elements of hybrid warfare as follows:

- **Blurring lines of warfare:** The existence of a grey zone, the use of irregular forces and unconventional tactics, and other deceptive manoeuvres contribute to the blurring lines of warfare. The attribute or ambiguity surrounding hybrid warfare makes it difficult to make a distinction between the line of peace and conflict

- **A blend of conventional, sub-conventional and non-conventional tactics:** Employing a mix of these strategies gives an output to counter hybrid threats. A combination of traditional and modern operational tactics curtails this element.
- **Economic warfare:** This refers to the use of economic instruments to achieve strategic objectives in conflict. It is considered as a non-kinetic measure to exert pressure and to influence the behaviour of states.
- **Psychological warfare:** Unlike traditional military tactics, psychological warfare operates in the realm of ideas, perceptions, and information. Overt and covert efforts, propaganda, deception etc., and other such tools are used to destroy the enemy internally.
- **Subversive political acts:** The actions that seek to systematically sabotage or compromise the existing political framework or authority refer to subversive political acts. Demonstrations, protests, underground resistance movements to cause instability, etc. are some of the strategies to weaken the enemy.
- **Decentralized planning:** This refers to a military strategy where there is the transfer of decision-making and operational control to several other units rather than having it controlled by one central command. This helps to enhance responsiveness and in the face of unpredictable battlefield conditions.
- **Clandestine operations:** Gathering intelligence by using secret or hidden activities which are specifically designed to achieve objectives without the knowledge of targeted entity. These are covert in nature and include espionage to attain strategic autonomy over the enemy.
- **Asymmetric conflicts:** Asymmetrical conflicts are the antithesis of the traditional notion of military parity. In such conflicts, one side lacks equivalence with the other side in conventional terms like military capabilities, militaries, and resources, due to which they adopt unconventional methods to counterbalance.

As discussed in the introduction, hybrid warfare is not a new concept for India. This ambiguity in the context of warfare and strategy for the same has been described in many ancient texts and treatises. This paper focuses on how Arthashastra views and explains this hybrid warfare. The table below, Table 1, provides a comparative analysis of the concepts in Arthashastra and the contemporary elements in Hybrid Warfare demonstrating the congruence between the two.



**Table 1: A comparative analysis of various facets of Hybrid Warfare analogous to Arthashastra**

Arthashastra Concept	Description (Arthashastra)	Hybrid Warfare Equivalent
Continuous manoeuvring & secrecy during peace (Book 7, Ch. 13)	Ruler should make strategic moves & maintain secrecy even during negotiations.	Blurring lines of warfare
Asuravijayin (Book 7, Ch. 10)	Weakening enemy through economic means.	Economic warfare
Kuta Yuddha (Book 1, Ch. 4)	Fear, surprise attacks, exploiting vulnerabilities, and clandestine methods.	Psychological operations (PsyOps)
Bheda (Book 12, Ch. 1 & 2)	Using covert operatives to incite coups, rebellions, or assassinations.	Subversive political activities
Gudha Yuddha (Boesche, 2003)	Female operatives, poisoned wine, poisoned water sources, etc. for elimination.	Clandestine operations

Source: By author

The parameters mentioned in the table above will be discussed further in the paper.

### Philosophy of Arthashastra on warfare strategies

In world politics, when national security interests of one state collude with the interests of other state or non-state entity, it gives rise to conflict and war. In India, there have been talks about hybrid warfare, at least since the Kautilya period. Well-known as the science of statecraft, Arthashastra elucidates on diplomacy, deception, inter-state relations, espionage, war tactics, types of warfare, etc. He depicts war as an expression of foreign policy of a state. Even though he had conceived of the concept of means and ends over 2,000 years ago, Kautilya had a firm understanding of it. He was an expert in the science of war, strategy, and tactics. Moreover, Kautilya discussed how secret missions, covert operations, and diplomatic offensives can be

employed through state policy. All these concepts are still applicable and in use even in modern times. He argued that non-violent means of victory were preferable to violent bloodshed and the exorbitant cost of war. He also discussed using the full-spectrum of capabilities and authority available at the government's disposal to achieve the desired results.

Applying contributions from Radhakrishnan Pillai (Pillai, 2019) and R.P Kangle (Kangle, 2010) books and Dr Kajari Kamal's (Kamal, 2018) journal article on Arthashastra the following can be observed on philosophy of war as suggested by Kautilya.

प्रकाशयुद्धं निर्दिष्टे देदो काठे च विक्रमः । विभीषणमवस्कन्दः प्रमादव्यसनादेनम् ॥४०॥

एकत्र त्यागघातौ च क्रूटयुद्धस्य मादका । योगगूटोपजापाथं तूरष्णीयुद्धस्य खक्षणम् ॥ ४१ ॥

(Kangle, 2010)

Open war is fighting at the place and time indicated; creating fright, sudden assault, striking when there is error or a calamity, giving way and striking in one place, are types of concealed warfare; that which concerns secret practices and instigations through secret agents is the mark of silent war. (7.6.40-41) (Kangle, 2010)

तेपामन्यतममुत्तिष्ठमानं संधिना मन्त्रयुद्धेन द्त्युद्धेन वा प्रतिव्यूह्यत ॥१७॥ राचुपक्षमस्य सामदानाम्याम्, स्वप्चं भेददण्डाभ्याम् ॥१८॥ (Kangle, 2010)

When one of these is making ready to start, he should make a counter move through peace or diplomatic war or concealed warfare. (He should win over) the party inimical to him with conciliation and gifts, his own party through dissension and force. (Kangle, 2010)

सख चेत्संधौ नाचतिष्ठेत, नयादेनम् – “इमे शत्रुषड्वर्मबखगा राजानो विनष्टाः, तेषामनात्मवतां नाहसि मार्गमनुगन्तुम् ॥१॥ धर्ममथं चावेक्चस्र ॥२॥ मित्रमुखा ह्यभित्रास्वे ये त्वा साहसमघर्मसर्थातिक्रमं च आहयन्ति ॥३॥ ररैस्यक्ताभिः सह योद्धुं साहसम् , जनक्षयसुभयतः कलमधर्मः, टट्टमथं मित्रमदुष्टं च यक्तमर्थातिक्रमः ॥६॥ सिज्रवांश्च स राजा, मूयश्चेतेनार्थेन भिन्नाण्युदयोजयिष्यति यानि खा सर्वतो ऽभियस्यन्ति ॥५॥ न च मभ्यमोदासीनयोर्मण्डटस्य वा परियक्तः, म्वांस्तु पसियक्तः यत्त्वा ससुद्युक्तमुपमरक्षन्ते < भूयः क्षयव्ययाभ्यां युज्यताम्, भिन्नाच भियताम् , अथनं परियक्तमूरं सुखनोच्छेरस्यामः > इति ॥६॥ स मवान्नादति मित्रयुखानाम- मित्राणां

शओुतुम्, भित्ुरण्युद्रेजयितुममित्रांश्च श्रेयसा योक्तुम् , प्राणसंरायमनर्थं चोप- गन्तुम्” इति यच्छेत्  
॥७॥ (Kangle, 2010)

1 If he were not to accept a peace-treaty, he should say to him, ‘Such and such kings, under the influence of the group of six enemies, have perished; it does not behove you to follow in the foot-steps of those who were without self-control. 2 You should pay regard to spiritual and material wellbeing. 3 For, those are really enemies, wearing the mask of friends, who make you undertake a rash deed, an impious act and the forgoing of material good. 4 To fight with brave men who have given up all hope of life is a rash deed, to bring about the loss of men on both sides is an impious act, to give up a good in hand and to forsake a blameless ally is forgoing of material good. 5 And that king has allies and with this object he will raise more allies, who will attack you from all sides. 6 Nor is he forsaken by the middle and neutral kings or by the circle of kings; you, however, are forsaken (by them), since, while you are ready to fight, they are looking on with (with the idea), “Let him meet with further losses and expenses, let him be divided from his ally; then we shall easily exterminate him when he has left his kingdom”. 7 It does not behove you, therefore, to listen to enemies masquerading as friends, to frighten your allies and to confer good on your enemies and to face the risk of (losing your) life and meet with disaster; thus he should (try to) restrain him. (12.2.1-7) (Kangle, 2010)

The above seven sutras stipulate that in the event that a king declines to sign a peace treaty with adversaries, the attacking kind should be notified of potential repercussions of initiating a war. This communication must be conducted via diplomatic channels, employing an envoy. The attacking king must be apprised of the fact that widespread unrest among the civilian populace of both sides is likely to ensue in the event of an armed conflict. The attacking monarch should also be informed that their allies are supporting them for the purpose of utilizing them to overthrow the reigning monarch. However, if the attacker king emerges weakened after the confrontation, their allies will also turn against them. The attacking kind should be reminded that prevalence of peace is much more profitable than war. This is what the concept of war by counsel entails.

## Types of War

Kautilya mentions certain kinds of war in the text as:

**Mantra Yuddha:** ‘War by counsel’, employment of diplomacy by a weaker king or monarch who believes it would be unwise to engage in combat with a powerful adversary or foe. Mantra Yuddha is simply the use and exercise of diplomacy to win wars. This technique is used when the king is more vulnerable and weak, and going to war and fighting would not be prudent or advantageous. Mantrayuddha amounts to cajoling, warning, threatening etc., through an envoy. (Kangle, 2010). For Kautilya, all ambassadors were potential spies with diplomatic immunity (Boesche, 2003)

**Prakasha Yuddha:** Open warfare, regular warfare, is a conventional battle fought between two parties at a decided place and time. The combat operations are guided by a set of mutually agreed-upon guidelines. In this scenario, it is crucial to formulate a strategy that will help to win over the opponent.

**Kuta Yuddha:** Concealed warfare, referring to ‘upajapa’ which is psychological warfare including ambushes and raids in enemy territory. Kuta Yuddha resembles guerrilla warfare. This warfare goes beyond just the physical zone of conflict. It is conducted discreetly, and the adversary is taken by surprise. In concealed warfare, everything is explained through the fusion of the power of intellect and the might of weaponry. In modern conflict, this can be seen through the use of deception, where ambushes, feints, false information, and other deceptive manoeuvres are employed to demoralise, mislead, or confuse the opponent.

**Gudha Yuddha:** Clandestine war, also called silent war. Gudha yuddha involves striking the enemy in silence and stealth, which is in contrast to the method of open warfare. It is typically done to gradually diminish the enemy’s power. Spying, spreading misinformation, propaganda and espionage are big parts of the silent war, and military action is minimal in comparison to Kuta Yuddha. Understanding the psychology of the opponent is a key element in clandestine war. This will help to create an internal division in the adversary's camp to win a war. Roger Boesche analysed (Boesche, 2003),

It is a kind of warfare with another kingdom in which the king and his ministers- and unknowingly, the people-all act publicly as if they were at peace with opposing kingdom, but all while secret agents and spies are assassinating important leaders in the other kingdom, creating divisions among key ministers and classes, and spreading propaganda and disinformation.

Kautilya maintained that no opponent should be aware of the inner workings and procedures of one's state and that any dangers to national security must be destroyed at any cost to the state. Kautilya, however, suggested a vast network of spies and agents working both inside the state and in neighbouring and hostile governments in order to preserve security. (Pillai, 2019) These are the basic forms of warfare that Kautilya suggests, which run parallel to the concept of hybrid warfare. Compiling these strategies and guidelines together and blending them equips the state to defend its territory and protect its people from internal, external, and contemporary hybrid threats. This is a multi-pronged strategy toward national security similar to today's hybrid battlefield, which proves the farsightedness of the text as it is still relatable to the present-day character of hybrid warfare. Working in tandem with and blending these warfare strategies provides a good doctrine to tackle the threat of hybrid warfare.

### **Types of Conquests**

Despite changes in its character, it is evident that the primary purposes of conflict and warfare between states have continued to be conquest and exploitation of the adversary. Conquest is a subset of warfare strategy. It denotes war in the form of acquiring power through annexation of territories. Conquests tend to feature episodes of dissension and force. History is proof that states have always desired to conquer and expand their territories to gain a superior position in the international system. It is a common tendency of states to exhibit this desire. As we discussed above hybrid warfare is the simultaneous application of military and non-military tactics. It incentivizes use of all available domains, conventional and non-conventional at all levels. The reason behind this is the ambiguous nature of hybrid warfare. Therefore, it becomes crucial to take on board the dimension of conquests as recommended by Kautilya in Arthashastra. However, this involves gaining an understanding of the enemy and the threat it poses. The application of Arthashastra's wisdom lies herein. Kautilya explains the importance of possessing a competitive drive and the ability to conquer without the use of physical harm or violence. His emphasis is on the attitude with which a ruler should formulate a strategy to

conquer. This signifies maintaining ethical demeanour where rivals would reverently bend down. (Pillai, 2019).

As per Kautilya, in foreign policy one of the role of the ruler was expansion. He explains that the ruler should be a 'vijigishu', 'desirous of conquering', who was desirous of expanding their dominion over other territories. The vijigishu is expected to strategize and plan his conquests based on the prevailing conditions at the time. (Kangle, 2010) The end goal is ensuring security and protection of the state. In Arthashastra, Kautilya categorizes conquests into three types: (12.1.10-16)

चयो ऽभियोच्ये धर्मल्येमास्रविजयिन इति |१०| (Kangle, 2010)

There are three types of conquerors.

**Dharmavijayain:** Righteous conqueror, here a weaker king merely submits to other kings and the righteous conqueror makes conquests for the purpose of glory. As the term itself suggests, it is the righteous and ethical way of doing things. Here, submission to another king is not surrender. There is an acceptance of power in an ethical manner without any bloodshed and killings.

वलीयसाऽभियुत्ते दुवे सर्वत्रानुप्रणतो वेतसधर्मा तिष्ठेन् |1| (Kangle, 2010)

A weak king attacked by a stronger king, should everywhere remain submissive showing the characteristics of a reed. (Kangle, 2010)

तेषामभ्यवपत्या घर्म विजयी तुष्यति |११| (Kangle, 2010)

Of them, the righteous conqueror is satisfied with submission. (Kangle, 2010)

तसज्यवपयेत, परफासपि भयात् |१२| (Kangle, 2010)

He should submit to him also when there is danger from others. (Kangle, 2010)

**Lobhavijayain:** Greedy conqueror, one who conquers out of greed and seeks to acquire either money, or land, or both. To acquire land and goods is the primary motive of the greedy conqueror. He is out to reap economic benefits and are never satisfied. There is no end to this

conquest. The conqueror is not only interested in seizing land but also idols, antiques, ornaments etc.

सूमिद्रत्यद्रगणः खोभविजयी तुष्यति |१३| (Kangle, 2010)

The greedy conqueror is satisfied with seizure of land and goods. (Kangle, 2010)

तमर्थनाम्यवप्येत | (Kangle, 2010)

He should yield money to him. (Kangle, 2010)

**Asuravijayain:** Demonic conqueror, Asuravijaya is the demonic conquest. One who makes demon-like conquest stealing, money, land and the wives of the vanquished king while killing the adversary. This method justifies using every means possible to acquire total and absolute power. There are no rules of war in this conquest. The demonic conquest is not guided by emotions. The conquest will not stop until everything is acquired. This conquest is cruel, oppressive and cunning in nature which can be used as a last resort.

भूमिद्रव्यपुचदारप्राणहणेना- सुरविजयी |१५| (Kangle, 2010)

The demoniacal conqueror (is satisfied only) with the seizure of land, goods, sons, wives and life. (Kangle, 2010)

### **War Tactics or Six Gunas**

As discussed above in the paper, hybrid warfare involves the combination of conventional and unconventional tactics and policies to weaken the adversary. Foreign policy and war tactics are two of the many spectrums under the umbrella term of hybrid warfare. The role of these two policies is multifaceted and can have some significant implications for a nation's ability to navigate and respond effectively to these complex hybrid threats. It is therefore imperative to employ foreign policy and war tactics to diffuse threats emanating from outside national borders. Roger Boesche maintained in his paper (Boesche, 2003)

...Because foreign policy is just an extension of a nation's wars, the goal of foreign policy is not to end wars, but rather ward off defeats and to make sure one is successful in subsequent warfare.

There are several aspects of the relationship between hybrid warfare and these policies. The act of maintaining diplomatic silence provides the opportunity to exploit time, which is an important consideration in planning a surprise attack against the enemy. By demonstrating collective strength and a unified front against hybrid threats, foreign policy decisions about alliances, treaties and partnerships can aid in deterrence. From the point of view of the hybrid threat of information warfare and perception management, through foreign policy clear communication and strategic messaging can help counter disinformation campaigns and propaganda. Considering economic statecraft, tactics can be used to disable the adversary's economic undertakings or other economic measures can be tools to deter hybrid threats by limiting the capabilities of the adversary. Developing a well-crafted crisis response and conflict resolution mechanism to build deterrence is an essential element in countering hybrid warfare. The basic tenet of hybrid warfare is that tactics and policies should vary according to circumstances. Kautilya favours this six-fold classification for the same reason and also advises that these gunas can be simultaneously applied for successful results. All this can be seen reflected in the policy of 'Sādgunya' or six gunas in Arthashastra. The six gunas can also be called war tactics because of its resemblance of the art of organizing and employing fighting tactics in combat and non-combat zones. As per Kautilya, in a system of anarchy where multiple states coexist a vijigishu must adopt a six-fold policy to effectively manage relationships with various mitras (ally's) and aris (enemies). All these policies aim to outlast the enemy in the longer run. The classification of the six measures is as follows:

पाङ्गुण्यमेवेतद् अवस्थाभमेदादिति कौटिल्यः । ५। (Kangle, 2010)

These are really six measures because of differences in situations, says Kautilya. (7.1.5) (Kangle, 2010)

तत्र पणबन्धः संधिः । ६ । अपकाये विग्रहः । ७ । उपेक्षणमासनम् । ८ । अभ्युद्चयो यानम् । ९ । परार्पणं संश्रयः । १० । संधिविग्रहयोपादानं द्वैषीभावः । ११ इति षड्गुणाः } १२ । (Kangle, 2010)

6 Among them entering into a treaty is peace. 7 Doing injury is war. 8 Remaining indifferent is staying quiet. 9 Augmentation of (powers) is marching. 10 Submitting to another is seeking shelter. 11 Resorting to peace (with one) and war (with another) is dual policy. 12 These are the six gunas. (7.1.6-12) (Kangle, 2010)



प्रसमाद्धीयमानः संदधीत । १३ । अभ्युच्चीयमानो विगरह्नीयात् । १४ । (नमां पते नाहं परसमुपहन्तं शक्तः > इलयासीत । १५ । गुणातिरययुक्तो यायात् । १६ । शक्तिदीनः संश्रयेत ! १७ । सहायसाध्ये कार्ये द्वैधीभावं गच्छेत् । १८ । इति गुणा- वस्थापनम् । १९ । (Kangle, 2010)

13 When in decline as compared to the enemy, he should make peace. 14 When prospering, he should make war. 15 (When he thinks) ‘The enemy is not able to do harm to me, nor I to him,’ he should stay quiet. 16 When possessed of a preponderance of excellent qualities, he should march. 17 Depleted in power, he should seek shelter. 18 In a work that can be achieved with the help of an associate, he should resort to dual policy. 19 Thus are the measure established. (7.1.13-18) (Kangle, 2010)

तेषां यस्मिन् वा गुणे सितः पदयेत् “इहस्थः श्यामि दुगसेतुकमेवणिक्पथराल्यनिवेशखनिद्रव्यदस्तिवनकमंण्यात्मनः प्रवैयितुं, परस्य चैतानि कमोण्युपदन्तुम्” इति तमातिषठेत् । २० । (Kangle, 2010)

20 Of them he should follow that policy by resorting to which he may be able to see, ‘By resorting to this, I shall be able to promote my own undertakings concerning forts, water-works, trade-routes, settling on waste land, mines, material forests and elephant forests, and to injure these undertakings of the enemy.’ (7.1.20) (Kangle, 2010)

**Samdhi** (alliance): making a treaty containing conditions or terms, that is, the policy of peace; The samdhi policy is predicated on the idea that a state has to attempt to negotiate a peaceful agreement with a more powerful foe in order to survive. Samdhi is to be followed when vijigishu is weaker than the enemy. In the event that a monarch finds themselves compelled to enter into a treaty, it is recommended that they employ cunning tactics to circumvent their more powerful adversary while fulfilling the conditions of the agreement. Once the necessary time has elapsed and the monarch has grown in strength, they may then proceed to overthrow their once-dominant foe. The policy of samdhi, which involves the offering of concessions due to one’s relative weakness, is typically imposed in such situations. It is worth noting that such treaties may necessitate the surrender of troops or treasury or territory. Such treaties are called dandopanata-samdhi, kosopanata-samdhi and desopanata samdhi respectively. (7.3.22-35). A distinctive feature of this policy is the way in which it considers potential or hypothetical agreements between vijigishu and his opponents. Certain agreements such as those with (paripanita samdhi) or without (aparipanita samdhi) stipulations, aim to outsmart or deceive the enemy in order to allow vijigishu to gain power at the expense of the rival. When he has

weakened a neighbour, the king should violate the treaty (7.14.7) (Boesche, 2003). In addition to these there are more such speculative pacts where the aim is to outscore the opponent. In conclusion the purpose *sandhi* to deceive and camouflage the real intention by giving it the face of a friendly venture.

**Vigraha** (war): the policy of hostility; the *vigraha* policy has been found to be a useful tool for both defensive and offensive purposes when dealing with potential threats. *Vigraha* policy is recommended when counterattacks are considered to be effective. Furthermore, this policy can be implemented to disrupt the adversary's plan or capture their territory, specifically when they are fighting on multiple fronts. Organisations can accomplish their strategic objectives along with mitigating any potential threats through this policy. (7.1.33)

**Yāna** (military expedition): marching on an expedition; the *yāna* policy is an acknowledgment of the growing constituent elements of a state and the need to increase and deploy resources in preparation for war, considering the increase in capabilities. The policy recognizes the importance of strategic resource management, with the goal to ensure that the state can effectively safeguard its interests in times of conflict. The *yāna* policy underscores the need to proactively maintain and build a strong military infrastructure, along with the development of advanced weaponry and technologies. In order to meet the ever-changing requirements of dynamic modern warfare, this approach entails a coordinated and comprehensive effort towards deploying, acquiring, and identifying the most effective resources. Roger Boesche argues in his paper (Boesche, 2003),

Kautilya considered the treasury most valuable in raising an army, procuring equipment, and preparing for war.

**Asana** (halting): the policy of remaining quiet; The policy of *asana* is a strategic approach that entails withstanding the adversary in the anticipation that they will weaken or encounter difficulties in their operations. It is also characterized by a sense of optimism that one will eventually outmanoeuvre the opposition and acquire greater power for oneself. Typically, this policy is employed in conjunction with the *Sandhi* policy. However, it may also be combined with *vigraha* in specific situations, such as when the objective is to entice the enemy's subjects to become loyal to one's cause, or when it is expected that one will gain something at the enemy's expense in the immediate future. Moreover, this policy may be implemented when it

is believed that the adversary may weaken themselves in the interim by engaging in some venture. The ultimate goal of this policy is to gain a strategic advantage over the opposition and to secure one's interests.

**Samsraya** (seeking protection): seeking shelter with another king; Samsraya is a strategic approach that is adopted by several states with the objective of augmenting their manoeuvrability and strengthening their position by forming alliances with more influential states. This approach is typically employed by weaker monarchs who are faced with attacks or threats from a stronger adversary. The text, specifically Book 7, Chapter 2, Sutras 1 through 25, devotes an entire section to the conduct of the king while seeking refuge. Samsraya is a means for weaker states to become protégés of more powerful states, thereby ensuring their safety. The ultimate aim of this policy is to empower the king to become more independent and stronger.

**Dvaidhibhāva** (dual policy): the dual policy of *samdhi* with one king and *vigraha* with another at the same time; The policy of "Dvaidhibhāva" is not a novel concept. It refers to a situation where a king is concurrently at peace with one king while being at war with another. The ultimate goal of this policy is to acquire military or financial aid from one king to assist in the resolution of conflicts with other kings. It can be seen as playing one against another through the lens of modern conflict.

All policies advocated by Kautilya aim to acquire growth in power, usually at the expense of one's enemies. The primary purpose of gaining an edge over the opponent is to be realised by first increasing one's own power. It is said that the *vijigishu* can manipulate other monarchs as he pleases, as long as he uses the six stratagems appropriately, as they are essentially bound to him by his intellectual powers. The concept of hybrid warfare is closely linked to this matter as these *gunas* signify military and non-military methods that can be parallel in their application. These six measures are similar to war tactics that fall in the ambit of sub-conventional and unconventional strategies in hybrid warfare.

### **The four-fold strategy**

In hybrid warfare, there is a variation in levels of development across the different modes of warfare characterized by its multifaceted nature. As discussed in the paper above, asymmetric conflicts, blending and fusion of various forms of wars, blurring lines of warfare, subversive

acts etc. when aligned together provides an insight into the concept of hybrid warfare. These are essentially a combination of military and non-military tactics which keep changing depending upon the circumstances. Therefore, a rigid strategy or a fixed approach will not be effective enough. Different circumstances call for different responses. The ability to evaluate a situation considering all factors and arrive at a decision optimal for the success and security is a crucial element in the planning of a comprehensive strategy countering hybrid threats. The hallmark of hybrid warfare is its complexity, as it involves combining approaches to accomplish strategic goals. To overcome this complexity Kautilya advises the leader to develop 'vivek buddhi'. Vivek Buddhi necessitates an awareness of human nature in the context of statecraft and diplomacy, in interactions with external parties. This knowledge is essential for securing the interests of the state and achieving victory. It is an integral part of the decision-making process that enables a ruler to anticipate and respond appropriately to the diverse needs of countering hybrid threats.

The four-fold strategy involving the concepts of Sama, Dana, Danda and Bheda emphasize the value of an all-encompassing and flexible approach to combat and can be seen as precursors to the diverse tools and tactics employed in hybrid warfare. The four-fold strategy provides valuable insights into the intricate dynamics and tactics employed in modern-day conflicts characterized by hybrid warfare. The four upayas involve the use of diplomatic persuasion, financial incentives, coercive tactics and methods that involve sowing or creating division. The fourfold approach acknowledges the importance of non-military tactics and strategies and offers a comprehensive understanding of contemporary conflicts and their complex nature. By drawing inferences from Radhakrishnan Pillai (Pillai, 2019), R.P Kangle (Kangle, 2010) and Roger Boesche (Boesche, 2003) the classification can be aligned to hybrid warfare in the following ways:

राचः रङ्गितामाव्येषु सान्तं प्रयुक्तं दोषप्रयोगं निवर्तयति, दूष्यामात्येषु दानं, संघातेषु भेदः, शक्तिमत्सु दण्ड इति । ७२ । (Kangle, 2010)

Conciliation used in the case of ministers under suspicion of the enemy renders unnecessary the use of remaining (means), gifts used in the cause of treasonable ministers, dissension used in the cause of confederates, (and) force used in the case of the powerful. (Kangle, 2010)

The above sutra sets forth that the Arthashastra outlines several strategies for dealing with enemy states. Specifically, the text recommends the use of "Bheda" to break up confederacies, and "Danda" to deal with a strong enemy. When dealing with enemy officers suspected of treason, the text suggests using "Sama," while "Dana" is recommended for winning over seditious individuals. Book Eleven of the "Arthashastra" provides detailed instructions on how to effectively implement the strategy of Bheda to overcome the enmity of Samghas (oligarchical principalities). By applying the strategy of Bheda, it is possible to effectively break up confederacies, as outlined in the text.

**Sama** (conciliation): Sama highlights the use of conciliation through persuasive means to achieve one's objectives. This approach necessitates using diplomacy, negotiation, and the art of influencing perceptions without resorting to force. Concerning hybrid warfare, it is similar to using non-military tools like information warfare and political influence campaigns. In a broader framework, deception can also be viewed as a tactic through persuasion. This aspect suggests declaring something that is known to be false with the intent of being misleading. Deception acts as a conduit to manipulate and influence perceptions to conceal true intentions, shape narratives, lull opponents into a false sense of security or complacency, feign weakness, etc., all while preparing to attack. The use of cunning diplomacy can also be viewed within the realm of persuasion to gain a strategic advantage over the enemy. This may involve false promises, and deceptive negotiations to achieve favourable outcomes. Deceptive actors may exploit the advantage of their opponents' cognitive biases and weaknesses in decision-making by posing threats, decoys, or diversionary tactics, leading them astray to obtain the upper hand in war. This is a really subtle act of war which is always being planned for with the objective to conquer. It can be seen as an extension of warfare to build a foundation for conquest. By leveraging deception through persuasion, tactically and judiciously, the objective of winning over the enemy can be achieved.

**Dana** (gifts; economic angle): The concept that Dana alludes to involves the acquisition of favour or support from individuals or groups through the use of economic or material incentives. This practice may be associated with financial inducements, provision of financial assistance to proxies, or surreptitious financial operations within the context of hybrid warfare, all with the objective of influencing or destabilizing adversaries. Through the lens of hybrid warfare, Dana can be viewed as a tactic within debt trap diplomacy and economic warfare. Extending monetary assistance or loans at the risk of the borrower's sovereignty to obtain

strategic or economic autonomy is known as debt-trap diplomacy. This gives a chance to the lending country to impose conditionality's like granting access to natural resources, privatizing state owned enterprises thereby compromising borrowers' sovereignty and autonomy. The long term dependency caused by this makes the borrowers susceptible to external influence and manipulation. This debt trap diplomacy and economic coercion are forms of economic warfare. The purpose is to use this tactic as a strategic leverage to exert control over the economic decisions in order to weaken the enemy and acquire its economic assets (Boesche, 2003). These unconventional tools are used to undermine the economic resilience of adversaries and limit their strategic options.

**Danda** (force): Danda entails using coercion, punishment or force to achieve objectives. Danda is a strategy that involves the use of either coercion or force to attain one's objectives. This approach bears striking similarities to the military components of hybrid warfare, which may encompass the deployment of conventional military operations, Special Forces, or irregular forces aimed at destabilizing the situation or interfering with the enemy's operations. The use of Danda can provide effective means to achieve strategic objectives by exerting pressure on the opponent or leveraging their weaknesses. The Arthashastra employs the term danda to refer to the utilization of force or coercion to achieve strategic objectives. Such employment encompasses the use of military force, punitive measures, and the threat of punishment to thwart the threats from adversaries. Kautilya desired that his monarch arm the country in order to identify or create a weakness in the enemy and conquer (Boesche, 2003). Hence, based around the contemporary hybrid warfare, danda can be linked to deterrence. Deterrence involves the use of threats of dire consequences to discourage enemies from pursuing particular courses of action or policies. Danda uses force to deter actors by the threat of retaliation or punishment to dissuade adversaries from engaging in activities that can hamper the security interests of the deterrence holder. This deterrence can be coercive, military and hybrid in nature where various domains, military and punitive, can be employed to gain an edge over the opponent. In the modern world politics nuclear weapons are used as a deterrence to stop the enemy from challenging state's interests.

**Bheda** (division): Bheda focuses on creating divisions and discords among the adversaries. Bheda's primary objective is to sow dissension and division among adversaries. According to Kautilya's doctrine, it is prudent to launch an attack on a divided adversary (Boesche, 2003). In times of peace and negotiation, spies and secret agents can exploit internal divisions within

a nation, as suggested by Kautilya. It is best to attack an enemy that is disunited. (Boesche, 2003). Sutra 18 of chapter 11, book 7 says,

As between land with people disunited and one with people in bands, that with people disunited is preferable.

By fomenting unrest among the populace and exacerbating existing divisions, covert operatives can further deepen these differences and destabilize the situation. Hence, Kautilya's strategic concepts highlight the imperativeness of leveraging internal divisions to achieve strategic dominance in a conflict. These tactics involve exploiting social fragmentation to undermine the enemy, which can be achieved through various means. One such tactic includes extending support to internal dissidents, who can play a critical role in destabilizing the enemy's internal structure. This concept closely aligns with psychological warfare and proxy warfare, two key components of modern hybrid warfare. The primary aim of psychological warfare is to diminish the determination and resilience of enemy populations to external influence by generating confusion, demoralization, and divisiveness among them by using covert or clandestine operations. This is usually achieved by the dissemination of false narratives, instilling suspicion or fear, and undermining faith in leadership or institutions. Finally, Bheda involves exploiting vulnerabilities to destroy the enemy internally and externally. Bheda is a tactic that can be used to achieve strategic objectives without direct involvement or escalation. This tactic might be used to subtly incite conflict between the nation and a neighbouring country. It can take the form of proxy warfare, where support is covertly provided to terrorist groups, militias or insurgent groups within enemy territory. This allows hybrid players to destabilize the opposing government and foster unrest and instability while maintaining plausible deniability. By subverting governance, arming, financing or sheltering proxy groups, pressure is applied and goals are advanced without direct credit or escalation. It intends to target adversary's vulnerabilities and exploit them to create chaos and division, which can further weaken the adversary's resolve making them susceptible to defeat.

While the concept of hybrid warfare is a modern one that encompasses a range of military and non-military tactics, these parallels can be drawn between Kautilya's fourfold strategy and the elements of hybrid warfare. Arthashastra's timeless principles offer valuable insights into the complexities of modern conflict, providing a comprehensive framework that encompasses

unconventional and non-military methods of statecraft and warfare. Radhakrishnan Pillai opines (Pillai, 2019):

...the permutation and combination of these four words contain infinite possibilities.....they can make or break a kingdom.

By incorporating persuasion, coercion, bribery, and division this all-encompassing strategy highlights the multi-dimensional and multi-modal nature of hybrid warfare. This implies that an array of tools and tactics are applied across various domains to achieve strategic objectives. Understanding and applying Kautilya's strategic principles in the context of hybrid warfare can enhance our comprehension of contemporary conflicts, inform strategic decision-making, and contribute to the development of effective responses to the challenges of the 21st-century security landscape. Thus, integrating fourfold strategy into the study of hybrid warfare offers illuminating insights and perspectives that can deepen our understanding of the complexities and dynamics of hybrid conflict.

### **The Annexation of Crimea: A case study in Hybrid Warfare**

Taking the case study of Russian annexation of Crimea based on the analysis available through the works of Ostap Kushnir (Kushnir, 2017), James K Wither (Wither, 2016) and Kent DeBenedictis (DeBenedictis, 2021) following inferences can be drawn:

The annexation of Crimea by Russia marked a significant event in contemporary warfare, characterized by the strategic utilisation of hybrid warfare tactics. It showcased a novel approach – hybrid warfare – that blurred the lines between conventional military actions and non-kinetic instruments of power. In the case of Crimea, Russia employed a multifaceted approach that capitalized on a combination of military, political, and informational tactics to orchestrate the annexation while minimizing overt military intervention. This case study will delve into the multifaceted toolbox employed by Russia in Crimea, dissecting the key elements of hybrid warfare and their synergistic impact on the peninsula's takeover.

#### **i. Unconventional Troop Deployment: “Little Green Men” and Informational Denial**



At the outset, Russia's approach relied on the operation of unidentifiable military operatives, infamously known as “little green men.” By repudiating any association with the Russian military, Russia successfully generated uncertainty on the battlefield. Further, this strategy was bolstered by manipulating information through cyberattacks that disabled the Ukrainian government and media sites, fostering confusion and alarm within the Crimean populace.

## **ii. Exploiting Ethnic and Historical Tensions**

Russia wisely utilised the historical and ethnic composition of Crimea, where a substantial portion of the population identified as Russian. The pro-Russian sentiment was augmented by propaganda disseminated via state-controlled media and local allies. This narrative was successful in moulding public opinion in favour of annexation by portraying the intervention as a break from an antagonistic Ukrainian administration.

## **iii. Coercive Diplomacy and Economic Pressure**

Russia applied intense diplomatic pressure on Ukraine by threatening military escalation, all while compromising the legitimacy of the newly formed Ukrainian government. Moreover, Ukraine's stance and position were sabotaged by economic pressure, which was heavily dependent on Russia's control over the nation's energy sources in Crimea. The economic pressure was further intensified by Russia's control over a considerable portion of Ukraine's energy infrastructure, particularly the natural gas pipelines transiting Crimea. Russia's economic control in the energy industry over Ukraine was an effective tool for coercion. Ukraine was compelled to comply with Russian demands because of its heavy reliance on Russian sources, which hindered its ability to respond or counteract. By threatening to cut off or disrupt gas supplies to Ukraine and Europe, Russia exerted a considerable amount of economic pressure on Ukraine, which acted as a deterrent to any potential Western military intervention.

## **iv. Orchestrated Referendum and Rapid Military Mobilization**

A referendum was hastily held amidst allegations of irregularities in an attempt to legitimise the annexation of Crimea. The presence of the Russian military hovering over the proceedings made the situation worse. Concurrently, Russia mobilised a sizeable conventional military campaign within Crimea, effectively thwarting any attempts at Ukrainian intervention.

In summary, Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 is a prime instance of the intentional application of hybrid warfare tactics to accomplish geopolitical goals without resorting to conventional military actions. While preserving plausible deniability and reducing international backlash, Russia was able to orchestrate the annexation of Crimea by employing a multifaceted approach. The employment of hybrid warfare in Crimea highlights the dynamism and evolving nature of modern conflicts and the importance of inculcating diplomatic, economic, and strategic aspects while devising a comprehensive response.

**Aligning the case study to the concepts in Arthashastra**

The Table 2, presented below, demonstrates the parallel comparison of the Russian Annexation of Crimea to the tenets of the hybrid warfare. It showcases that there is a close similarity and equivalence between the tenets on the philosophy of war in Arthashastra and the hybrid strategies used by Russia to annex Crimea in 2014. The relevant data for a comprehensive comparison is provided in the table given below.

**Table 2: Arthashastra Concepts and Russia's Strategy in Crimea**

<b>Concept</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example in Crimean Conflict</b>
<b>Gudha Yuddha</b> (Secret Warfare)	Use of covert methods to achieve military objectives	Unmarked troops ("little green men"), information manipulation, cyberattacks
<b>Dvaidhibhava</b> (Playing One Against Another)	Maintaining a facade of peace while using covert actions for secret advantage	Publicly denying involvement while using unmarked troops and manipulating information
<b>Bheda</b> (Sowing Discord)	Creating confusion and distrust among the enemy	Disrupting communication channels, amplifying ethnic/historical tensions
<b>Danda</b> (Force)	Using military might or the threat of force to achieve political goals	Use of unmarked troops as a veiled threat

<b>Kuta Yuddha</b> (Deceptive Warfare)	Using psychological warfare and exploiting divisions within the enemy	Propaganda to exploit ethnic/historical ties, creating a hasty referendum
<b>Mantrayuddha</b> (Diplomacy)	Negotiation and statecraft, but can have underlying threats	Undermining Ukrainian government legitimacy through propaganda and diplomacy
<b>Sama</b> (Persuasion)	Negotiation and compromise	Peaceful negotiations coupled with threats of military action
<b>Dana</b> (Economic Coercion)	Using economic pressure to achieve political objectives	Threatening to cut off energy supplies or manipulate prices
<b>Lobhavijayin</b> (Economic exploitation)	Taking advantage of an enemy's economic dependence	Exploiting Ukraine's economic dependence on energy after political turmoil
<b>Yana</b> (Military Movement)	Strategic movement of forces to assert control or intimidate	Rapid military mobilization in Crimea to deter Ukrainian resistance
<b>Vigraha</b> (Warfare)	Direct military engagement with adversaries	Deployment of substantial military force in Crimea to signal willingness to use force

Source: By author

## Conclusion

Over the past generation millions of pages have been written and documented in the annals of war. The Hybrid war has brought about power shift at various levels in warfare. The military prowess will mean mastery in the seemingly complex mechanism of Hybrid warfare. Hybrid Warfare has unleashed powerful cross currents, gaining momentum and changing the character of warfare.

This study initially looked at different interpretations of hybrid warfare to gain a full understanding of this evolving threat. After careful analysis, it identified the key components of hybrid warfare: the strategic combination of conventional and unconventional methods to achieve specific goals. Further research focused on understanding the precepts of war as

elucidated in Arthashastra. This examination revealed significant similarities between Kautilya's strategies and the characteristics of modern hybrid warfare.

The case study of Annexation of Crimea demonstrating the use of hybrid tactics, is reflective of the tenets in Arthashastra demonstrating that the ancient text written over two millennia ago continues to be extremely relevant in present times. By gaining an analytical understanding of the different aspects of hybrid war in relation to the philosophy of war as outlined in Arthashastra, the research established a strong connection between the two. It is possible to inculcate the Arthashastra's postulates on warfare as a counter strategy to the complex threat of hybrid warfare. In conclusion, this research makes a credible case for the continued relevance of Arthashastra that withstands the test of time and provides one grand strategy to mitigate the challenges of hybrid warfare.

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