



Intelligence Culture in South Asia

MA Seminar: SS 2017

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Course description:

That early formative texts addressing statecraft and (military) strategy, along with collective historical experiences and conscious/semiconscious memories, have a lasting and tangible influence on the politico-strategic patterns of thinking and behavior (or 'habits') in the geo-cultural space of their origination, has become an accepted proposition in political science.¹ An expression of this recognition, are the widely used terms 'political culture' and 'strategic culture'.² More recently, the term 'national intelligence culture' has been introduced. (cf. Davies/Gustafson 2013). Already, in the 1980s, Adda Bozeman had noted that, while all states do intelligence, there are marked differences among them how they do it and how they situate intelligence within their institutional practices. (cf. Bozeman 1992).

The core functions of intelligence, notably the intelligence cycle, are quite similar in all (state) intelligence organizations, however, the self-conceptions, thought-patterns and practices of intelligence actors of different states are not isomorphic. "[I]n the deep cultural origins of nation-states and peoples, we find the roots of particular state behaviors, and particularly in intelligence." (Davies/Gustafson 2013, 9)

In particular, the intelligence cultures of the 'Anglosphere' differ substantially from those of states that can draw on deep-rooted endogenous resources of political, strategic and intelligence thought – like China, India or Pakistan. In the case of India, Kautilya's Arthashastra with its extensive treatment of intelligence is of evident relevance for its intelligence culture.³ But also the ancient epics Mahabharata and Ramayana -- up to the present enormously popular in India -- feature multiple narratives pertaining to intelligence. Kautilya's Arthashastra is singular in that it is the only pre-modern text on statecraft to address intelligence in a scholarly fashion as opposed to episodic narratives. On the lasting impact of Kautilyan thought on the intelligence culture(s) in South Asia, Philip Davies of Brunel University's Department of Intelligence Studies notes:

¹ Cf. Johnston 1995; Jones 2006, Narlikar/Narlikar 2014

² Cf. Pye 1968, Berg-Schlosser 2010, Welch 2013, Booth/Trood 1999, Howlett 2006

³ Cf. Davies/Gustafson 2013

The theoretical frame for exploring India's intelligence culture is Intelligence Studies, drawing on comparative politics, comparative political theory and IR theory.

The seminar will tackle the following subject areas:

- What is Intelligence Studies as a sub-discipline of Political Science
- Political Culture, Strategic Culture and Intelligence Culture
- Intelligence Culture in South Asia, focus on Indian Intelligence Culture
- Kautilya's Arthashastra – a foundational text for theorizing intelligence
- Kautilyan intelligence in the institutional perspective
- Kautilyan intelligence and internal security
- Kautilyan intelligence and foreign policy
- Counter-thesis: intelligence in South Asia is mostly an import from the colonial and post-colonial West
- The intelligence structures in contemporary India: IB & R&AW
- Glimpses of the Indian intelligence community: The National Security Advisers Shivshankar Menon and Ajit Doval
- The footprints of intelligence in India's foreign policy conduct
- The contours of India's intelligence culture

Calendar:

April 27: Approaching Intelligence Studies, Strategic Culture & Intelligence Culture

May 4: Approaching Intelligence Culture in South Asia

May 11: Intelligence in South Asia -- Kautilya's Arthashastra as a Foundational Text: The Place of Intelligence in Statecraft & the organization of Intelligence

May 18: Intelligence in South Asia -- Kautilya's Arthashastra as a Foundational Text: Domestic Surveillance & Internal Security

June 1: Intelligence in South Asia: Kautilya's Arthashastra as a Foundational Text: Foreign Intelligence and Covert Ops

June 8: Intelligence in South Asia: Intelligence Structures and Processes at the time of the Mughal Empire, East India Company & British Colonial Rule

June 22: Post-1947 India: the Intelligence Bureau (Internal Security)

June 29: Post-1947 India: the Research & Analysis Wing (Foreign Intelligence)

July 6: Intelligence Structures & Processes in Pakistan & Bangladesh

July 13: The Contours of South Asia's Intelligence Culture(s) and its 'Resonances' in Terms of Political Actors and Policies I

July 20: The Contours of South Asia's Intelligence Culture and its 'Resonances' in Terms of Political Actors and Policies II

Session for discussion of term paper papers (date to be fixed)

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