

## CHAPTER XI

POLITICAL STRUCTURE  
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Indians belong to the category of peoples who have left their impress upon the pages of history as the founders of original systems of political thought.<sup>1</sup> The R̥v. and Av. contain a few ideas regarding the political organisation of the people. The political ideas of Purāṇas lie scattered through their section on cosmology, on the genealogical accounts of ancient patriarches and their royal successors, of the duties of castes and orders and so forth. Of the Purāṇas and upapurāṇas, Matsya, Agni, Mārkaṇḍeya, Garuḍa, Kālikā and Viṣṇudharmottara are important from the point of

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1 Ghoshal U.N., A History of Indian Political ideas, P. 3.

view of political thought.<sup>2</sup> They discuss mainly the king's assistants, his servants, his duties, the protection of king, the king and his divinity, the king's daily time-table, protection of the crown-prince, the fort and the store of medicinal herbs, the paraphernalia as a ward against demons, poison etc.; the policy of conciliation, divide and rule, gift, chastisement, coronation ceremony, rules of conduct and the methods of ~~war~~ warfare. The Br. P. being mainly a vaiṣṇava Purāṇa has little to say on the political thought, still, however, in the following pages an attempt has been made to represent the political structure as obtained from a study of the Brahma-Purāṇa.

The first question that arises is regarding the origin of the state, about which various theories have been expounded.<sup>3</sup> The researches of the scholars have established that in vedic times kingship was generally elective in character. Even in the times of the Brāhmanas, the kingship was elective. The Aitereya-Brāhmaṇa purports to record a discussion among the

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2 Jagdish Lal Sastri, Political thought in Purāṇas, Beni Prasad, The Theory of Government in Ancient India, PP.185-201; Narayana Candra Bandopadhyaya, Development of Hindu Policy and Political ~~theories~~ theories, PP. 359-366; Kantawala S.G., Matrya Purāṇa, a cultural study, a thesis submitted to the M.S.University, Baroda, 1959, Ch.III, Ghoshal U.N., Hindu Political theories, Bhandarkar D.R., Some aspects of Ancient Hindu Polity, PP. 126-168.

3 Appadori, A. - The Substance of Politics, PP. 28 ff.

gods about the causes of their defeat by the Asuras, and they came to the conclusion that it was due to their having no king.<sup>4</sup> This parable shows that kingship arose out of a military necessity.<sup>5</sup> The Rv.<sup>6</sup> also describes the weaknesses of a society without a king but in all these works the monarchical idea seems to be in a fluid state. The Epic period shows a changing idea. By the time of the Mahābhārata kingship had become hereditary and the vedic leaders had assumed majesty and power.

The Brahma Purāna endorses the view that kingship came into existence to avert the evils of the kingless state. Vena, son of the Patriarch Vīga, was unrighteous and self-indulgent and he rejected the vedas and adopted unrighteousness. No sacrifices were to be performed and no offerings were to be made to the sacred fire, such was the fierce resolve of this doomed king, on the contrary, the twice-born classes were to perform sacrifices, and the offerings were to be made to the sacred fire in his own name. The great sages addressed him a remonstrance, reminding him that his act was contrary to the eternal dharma, and that he had formally undertaken to protect the people. To this the tyrant made a haughty reply that he was the root of the whole world and especially of the sacred

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4 I. 4

5 Kantwala S.G., Op. Cit.

6 X. 124.8

law, and that he excelled all others in knowledge and character as well as in might. Failing to bring him to reason, the great sages wrung his right arm out of which came forth Pṛthu in full armour: the rivers and seas brought forth from all sides jewels and water for his consecration, while Brahmā himself with the gods came to consecrate him to supreme lordship. At the prayer of the subjects Pṛthu went through the process of milching the earth so as to provide subsistence for them. He became known as Rājā as he pleased his subjects who had been alienated by his father's tyranny. He was the first king to be consecrated to the Rājasūya sacrifice. By his success in ruling he made himself the object of regard to all creatures.<sup>7</sup> Though, as Ghoshal suggests, the story is set forth in a context of narrative of genealogies of gods and sages and does not attempt to present a philosophical theory of the origin of kingship and the ruler's resulting relation with his subjects, nevertheless it is possible to glean from them the author's ideas relating to the two old complimentary principles of the authority and obligation of the temporal ruler.<sup>8</sup> From this it becomes clear that the

7 2.20-28, 4.28-121, cf. also Vāyu 62.104-93, Brahmāṇḍa 68.104-93, Viṣṇu, I.13.11-87; Bhāgavata IV.13.16-23, 39.

8 Ghoshal U.N., A History of Indian Political Ideas, P.334, Vide also Jayaswal K.P., Hindu Polity Part II, PP.183-185; The Ancient Indian works on Polity record the names of tyrants who lost their lives on account of their tyranny, vide Bhatt G.H., Rājyābhīṣeka Grantha, P.24.

Br. P. is aware of the evils of the chaotic state of a kingless society and endorses the view that kingship is a necessity to ward off the dreadful consequences of anarchy.

Theory of Divine Origin of King

Scholars have tried to trace the germs of this doctrine to the Rv. and it is believed that some Purāṇas propagate it as a full-fledged theory.<sup>9</sup> The Brahma-Purāṇa does not seem to put forth this theory. There are stray references to the kings having divine elements in them. It is said that the lustre of Nārāyaṇa entered the 60,000 sons of Sagara.<sup>10</sup> Gādhi, the son of Kusika, was Indra himself.<sup>11</sup> Dhanvantari, the son of king Dhanu, born as a result of severe penance, was considered to be a god himself born in a human form.<sup>12</sup> When Kuvalāśva, the son of king Brhadāsva, proceeded to annihilate Dhundhu, Lord Viṣṇu entered his body with all his lustre.<sup>13</sup> But the association of divine particles with the king here does not seem to suggest an exposition of the theory

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9 Kantawala S.G., Op.Cit., Kane P.V., History of Dh.S., Vol.III, P.32, Altekar A.S., State and Government in Ancient India, P.47.

10 8.72, missing in ms. 'ka'.

11 10.24

12 11.36

13 7.75, cf. Vāyu 88.49.

of the divine origin but it points out the duties of his position and the qualities which he should possess. It is an emphasis on the majesty of his kingship and not on the divinity of his person.

Indian monarchy may have been born in the pressure of war<sup>14</sup>, or devised to end internecine strife<sup>15</sup>, or resulted from an election sanctified by the blessings of gods<sup>16</sup>, or by the perpetuation of an original deification during sacrifices and the conversion of the Rex sacrorum into a permanent absolute ruler<sup>17</sup> but to the practical-minded thinker the need for the king arose from the sole necessity of a sole executive head for the state.<sup>18</sup> This is why later writers on Dharmasāstra, like Kāmandaka and Sukra, distinguish between the person and the office of the king and have no word to say against killing a king, even though they will not have the monarchy extinguished.<sup>19</sup>

#### Nature of Kingship

Scholars differ as to whether the kingship was elective in ancient India. There is no doubt that the kingship was elective in some cases in the early vedic period, but the

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14 Aitareya Br. I.14.

15 Dīghanikāya III.27.

16 Śatapatha Br. 5.1.1.12 & 5.3.1.

17 Ghoshal U.N., Hindu Political Theories, PP. 51,52.

18 Sukranīti I.64.

19 K.V.Rangaswami Aiyangar, Indian Cameralism, PP. 94 ff.

monarchy had become normally hereditary long before the later vedic period.<sup>20</sup> Apart from conquest and election in rare cases, monarchy was hereditary and generally descended by primogeniture.<sup>21</sup> The selection of the eldest son as a successor to the kingdom appears to have been the normal form of disposition. A review of the lists of kings of solar and lunar dynasties as given in the epics and Purāṇas shows that the eldest son as a rule succeeded his father as heir to the kingdom, while deviations are noticed in cases in which the eldest son became civilly dead or legally incapable through physical defects or gave up their right to inherit the kingdom.<sup>22</sup> The Brahma-Purāṇa states that among the six sons of king Nahuṣa, the second named Yayāti succeeded to the kingdom in place of the eldest Yati, who had turned an ascetic.<sup>23</sup> Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Devāpi were superceded under this rule on account of blindness and leprosy respectively when the succession became open. Rāma's case is also no deviation from the normal rule.<sup>24</sup>

Apart from the theory of primogeniture, instances are met with in which the kingdom is divided among all the

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20 Altekar A.S., Op.Cit., PP.50,52; Jayaswal K.P., Op.Cit., PP.187

21 Kane P.V., Op.Cit., P. 41.

22 Law Narendra, Aspects of Ancient Indian Polity, P. 51.

23 12.2,3; cf. also Harivaṃsa XXX.1-3.

24 Hopkins J.A., O.S., xiii, 139-44, Pandit Jagannatha Tarkapañcānana - Celebrooke's digest, i. 414-20.

sons.. The Brahma-Purāṇa mentions how lord Brahmā divided the whole world into different sections and assigned the duty of reigning to different authorities. After anointing the king Pṛthu, Lord Brahmā appointed Soma as the king of birds, Virudhas, nakṣatras, grahas and sacrifices, Varuṇa as the king of waters, Indra as the king of kings, Viṣṇu as that of Ādityas, Fire as that of the Vasus, Dakṣa as that of the Prajāpati's, Vasu as that of the Maruts, Prahrāda as that of the Yakṣas and Rākṣasas, Giriśa as that of the Bhūtas and Piśācas, Himavān as that of the mountains, ocean as that of the rivers, Citraratha as that of the Gandharvas, Vāsuki as that of the Nāgas, Takṣaka as that of the serpas, Airāvata as that of the elephants, Uccaiśravas as that of the horses, Garuḍa as that of the birds, Lion as that of the animals, the bull as that of the cows, Plakṣa as that of all the vegetables. After dividing the whole world in this way, he appointed the dikpālas. In the eastern direction was appointed Sudhanvā, the son of Vairāja Prajāpati; in the western, Ketumān, the son of Rajas; in the northern, Hiraṇyaroṃā, the son of Pṛajānya Prajāpati. By them even now the world is reigned (4.1-18). When Manu wanted to enter the sun, he divided his kingdom into ten parts and nine parts were allotted to his nine sons and as the tenth one, viz. Sudyumna was originally in the form of a daughter Ilā, he did not get his position, but on the advice of the sage Vasīṣṭha,



the city Pratiṣṭhāna was allotted to Purūravā, the son of Sudyumna or Ilā (7.20-22). This shows that women were not entitled to inherit the kingdom. Elsewhere it is said that Sudyumna divided his kingdom into three parts, Utkala got the kingdom of Utkala, Gaya that of the eastern division, the capital of which became famous as Gaya and Vinatāsva as that of the western division (7.18,19). The king Yayāti divided his kingdom into five parts for his five sons but as the first four sons disobeyed him, they were cursed that their kingdoms would be devoid of a king (12.12-32). Five kingdoms were known after the five sons of king Uśīnara, viz. Nrga, kṛmi, Nava, Suvrata and Śibi Auśīnara (13.12,13). The four Janapadas, viz. Kekayas, Madrakas, Vṛṣadarbhas and sāyīras were known after the names of the four sons of king Śibi Uśīnara (13.26,27). Similarly the five Janapadas Puṇḍra, Kalinga, Aṅga, Vaṅga and Suhma were known after the names of the five sons of king Bali (13.36,37). Again, the five Janapadas were collectively known as pañcālas after the names of the five sons, viz. Mudgala, Sṛñjaya, Bṛhasdiṣu, Yavīnara, Vikrānta and Kṛmilāsva after the five sons of king Bāhyāsva. Once it is stated that as Raivata or Kakudmi was the eldest son of king Raiva, he got the kingdom of Ānarta (7.30).

Again, the Br. P. provides instances when the king

was expelled from throne on account of various faults. The famous example of king Veṇa is already quoted. Indra was dethroned thrice as he committed Brahmin-murder and approached Ahalyā, the wife of the sage Gautama (122.50-56). Satya-vrata was abandoned by his father Trayyāruṇa as he violated the rules and carried away a maiden while her marriage-ceremony was being performed. His father asked him to leave the city and live with the Cāṇḍālas (7.98-103). As Asamañjas, the son of king Sagara, had a bad habit of throwing away the children of others in ponds, his father disinherited him and Aṃsumān, the son of Asamañjas, got the throne (78.40-45). As the king Janamejaya had committed the sin of brahmin-murder, he was abandoned by the citizens and had to perform an Aśvamedha to expiate himself (12.11-14)<sup>25</sup>. This shows the strength of people's voice in the matter of the succession to the throne. Similarly, it is said that when in his arrogance the king Soma abducted Tārā, the wife of the sage Bṛhaspati, his action was not approved of by the gods (A.9). King Rukmakavaca had five sons among whom Jyāmagha was driven away by his brothers and he conquered the countries and established his own kingdom (14.13-15). Similarly, Pulastya was driven away by his brothers and

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25 In the Brāhmana period also we see how the power of people was stronger in proportion to the greater insecurity of the sovereign. There are several cases of the latter being expelled from their dominions, and to their efforts to be reinstated to their former position. Dhuṣṭartu Paumsāyana, king of Srñjayas, was deposed by them from a principality that had existed for ten generations, but was restored by Paṭava cakra sthapati in spite of the resistance of Bāhlika Prātipya the king Kuru (Śatapatha Br. xii.9.3.1 ff. 8.1.17). Dīrghasravas was also banished from his kingdom (Pañcaviṃśa Br. xv.3.25), as also Sindhuksit, who had to remain in exile for a long time before he could be restored (ibid, xii, 12-6) - N. Law, Aspects of Ancient Indian Polity, pp. 8-12.

by praying lord Śiva, he obtained the lordship of treasures (A. 97).

### Forms of Government

India has seen many forms of Government but mainly the normal and prevailing form of government was monarchy. In the vedic times the normal form of government was monarchy but the AB 39.1 puts forth different grades of sovereignty, viz. Bhaujya, svarājya, etc. The Arthasāstra knows of a constitution in which the sovereign power is wielded by a combination of circumstances, and mentions many self-governing clans, viz. Licchavika, Vṛjjika, Mallaka, Madraka, Kukura, Kuru and Pañcāla as well as those of Kāmboja and Surāstra.<sup>26</sup> Some of these clans appear in the list of the sixteen independent peoples existing at or shortly before the time when Buddhism arose.<sup>27</sup> But monarchy was the ordinary form of government in vedic times. The Br. P. also joins the same train by citing the examples of various kings. In the titles assumed by the sovereigns and the epithets by which they are mentioned, it appears that there were several grades of rulers from the most ancient times. Samrāj is the epithet applied to a 'superior ruler' in the Rv.<sup>28</sup> as also in

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<sup>26</sup> Arthasāstra, I.xvii, P.35

<sup>27</sup> Rhys Davids, Buddhist India, P. 23.

<sup>28</sup> iii. 55-7, 56.5, iv. 21.2; vi. 27.8, viii. 19.32.

later works, expressing a greater degree of power than that of a Rājan.<sup>29</sup> The Br. P. states that the king Hariscandra performed a Rājasūya and was known as a samrāt.<sup>30</sup> King Kārtavīrya is known as the lord of the seven dvīpas (13.160). Adhirāja, frequently met with in the early Sanskrit literature, signifies an 'overlord' among kings or princes.<sup>31</sup> The Br. P. states that king Prthu was appointed on an adhirāja (4.56). Elsewhere it is stated that Rāma ruled the kingdom as an adhirāja after anointing his brothers (176.48). By performing a śrāddha in the Anurādhā nakṣatra, one obtained cakravartitā (220.38). The king Pramati is said to be sārvaḥauma (171.2). The idea of saurājya also was there. Diti thinks that the children of Aditi reigned over a kingdom which was full of fame, victory and splendour and which should be called saurājya (124.4). The Br.P. along with other Purāṇas mentions the following sovereigns Prthu (11.24; cf. also Agni cxix.50,51; Bhagavata iv.21.9-10, Brahmānda lxix.3; Śiva xxiv,65,66), Sagara (viii.32), Vāyu, Dharma Samhitā xxiv. 65,66; Viṣṇu iv.3; Bhāgavata ix.8.4; Padma, Pātāla Khaṇḍa iv.116), Bharata, son of Duṣyanta (Vāyu xcix.133; Viṣṇu iv.19.2;

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29 Śatapatha Br., v.1.1, 13, xii. 8,3.4, xiv. 1.3.8.

30 8-25, The Amarakośa gives three significations of samrāj: (1) The performer of Rājasūya (2) The monarch exercising his control over a maṇḍala consisting of twelve kings and (3) the monarch who can have his mandates obeyed by the kings under his supremacy.

31 Vedic Index, I. 320.

Agni cxix.56), Mādhātṛ (vii.92, Bhāgavata ix.6.34; Agni cxix.51), Yayāti (xii.18, Liṅga, Pūrva khaṇḍa lxvi.68; Padma, Pātāla khaṇḍa iv.116), Purūravas (x.9.10, Matsya xxiv.10.11, Agni cxix.51; Mārkaṇḍeya cxi.13; Haris'candra viii.25, Śiva, Dharma Saṃhitā lxi.21), Vijaya, the conqueror of the whole world (viii.27), Kārtavīrya (xiii.160, 166, 175; Vāyu xciv.9, Skanda, Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa xx.12; Mārkaṇḍeya xviii.9; Liṅga, Pūrvakhaṇḍa lxviii.9), Bhīma and Sāmīka (x.13, xiv.33).<sup>32</sup>

Along with the monarchical and oligarchical states, the Br. P. gives evidence that there existed republican governments in ancient India. The scholars have dealt at length on this subject.<sup>33</sup> The Br. P. states that the gaṇas of Tālajaṅghas, Śakas, Paknavas, Yavanas, Pāradas, and Kāmbojas helped the Haihayas in defeating the king Bāhu (8.35,36). Here the term 'gaṇa' seems to mean troop. Similarly, there is a reference to the Paura-Jaṇapadas who are said to have forsaken the king Janaméjaya (52.11).

The Brahma-Purāna is aware of the concept of Rāṣṭra

32 For more names, vide N.Law, Op.Cit., P. 20.

33 Jayaswal-K.P., Op.Cit., Ch.IV; Majumdar R.C., Corporate Life in Ancient India, Ch.III; Kane P.V., Op.Cit., Vol.III, PP.87 ff.; Majumdar R.C. and Pusalkar A.D. (ed.) the age of Imperial Unity, PP. 320., Altekar A.S., Op.Cit., Ch.VI.

and states that one should stay in that rāṣṭra where farmers are happy and all the herbs available (221.106).

### System of Administration

#### Monarchy - The King:

According to Hindu conceptions, the king and state were in no case to be identified. The Hindu state involves a definite territory, a swamin or supreme authority, an organisation for executive government, military power, foreign policy and sound public finance. The king was, therefore, only one of the constituent elements - no doubt a very important one - as the head of the state and as the authority in whom was vested the direction of affairs.<sup>34</sup>

The kingly office was not a bed of roses and in order to discharge his miscellaneous duties efficiently, a king was expected to acquaint himself with the sacred and secular lore. Thus it is said that the king Ila taught kṣatrarvidya and Dhanurveda to his son Purūravā (108.75). Parāsurāma is an expert in Dhanurveda and the sage Viśvāmitra is said to have taught the Māheśvarīvidyā, a great vidyā with the knowledge of Dhanurveda as a preceding requirement, Śāstravidyā, Astravidyā, Rathavidya, Hastavidyā, Aśvavidyā, Gadāvidyā and gave the knowledge of Mantras

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<sup>34</sup> Panikkar K.M.- Origin and evolution of kingship in India, PP.28...; also vide Yajnik M.M., Āpaṇu Prācīna Rajyatāntṛa (in Gujarati):

to be recited at the time of catching and releasing the śastras (123.97,98).

The Br. P. lays emphasis on the moral discipline of the king. A king has to rule righteously. The first and foremost duty of the king was considered to be the protection of the subject. The Br. P. also joins in the same view (104.62). The Br. Purāṇa further provides the description of kings which shows how highly the moral qualities were valued in a king. Thus it says that in kṛtayuga, a king Sveta ruled for a thousand years observing the worldly and laukika dharmas and performing vratas. He was very brave, intelligent, righteous and truthful (59.6,7,26). There was another king Indradyumna in the kṛtayuga who was very holy, clever, proficient in all the sastras, beautiful and sweet-speaking. He was terrible for the enemies and was as unbearable as the Sun. He performed many sacrifices and was proficient in Sāṅkhya, Yoga and Dharmurveda. He was a great Vaiṣṇava and established the idols of lord kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Subhadrā after constructing a temple in their honour at the Puruṣottamakṣetra. He protected the people as his own children. This shows what a high ideal the king placed before his subjects. He was an expert and his reign was very prosperous in holding all the weapons/(43.1-13), (44.1-8), and While eulogising Prthu, it is said that the mountains gave him the way and never broke the banner of his chariot. By mere thinking, he was able to produce the corn. In his honour the sūtas and the

Māgadhas were created. He milched the whole earth and maintained the people (A.4). Nikumbha, the son of king Haryaśva was always engrossed in the dharma proper for the kṣatriyas (7.88). King Ila is said to have performed the sacrifice in the Daṇḍaka forest together with his army, retinue and family (108.117,118). King Marut was given the title of Rājarṣi (15.7). In the absence of all the relatives, a king should perform the post-mortem ceremonies of the dead person as the king is the brother of all the people (220.80). By the performance of his duty and protecting the people, all his sacrifices are protected. A king who vanquishes bad people and protects good people gets the desired results.<sup>35</sup>

The prosperity of the king was calculated from the number of horses, elephants and jewels he possessed (111.29, 196.27). The king was considered to be all powerful and even though his act might be unjust he had the power to perform it (123.34). The king was given the sixth part of one's income.<sup>36</sup>

The kings were sometimes addicted to vices (108.22). The kingdom of king Bāhu who was addicted to vices was captured by the Haihayas, Tālajanghas, Pāradas and others though afterwards his son Sagara defeated them and regained his kingdom (8.35-43).

35 220.7; cf. Sukra, I.14; Atri verse 28; Viṣṇudharmottara III 323. 25-26.

36 223.44; vide Altekar A.S.; Op.Cit., P.91.



The Br. P. declares that in the Kaliyuga the standard of kings would deteriorate. In the Kaliyuga one who abounds in elephants, horses and chariots would become a king and he would not only not protect the subject but would take away their wealth (229.34,35). The kings would be from the non-kṣatriya class and would maintain themselves on the sūdras.<sup>37</sup> This shows that the king generally belonged to the kṣatriya class.

A king's wrath was highly feared. The Br. P. states that all the trees were burnt on account of the fire emanating from the mouths of the ten prācetasas, the progeny of king Prācīnabeśu -barhiṣ and Suvarnā, who practised severe penance for ten thousand years. As a result of this havoc, the wind did not blow for many years. Eventually, Soma went to them and pacified them by giving them his daughter Māriṣā (2.33).

It was considered to be the primary duty of the king to help the sages. The Br. P. relates how king Kuvalāśva sent his son Brhadās'va with his other hundred sons to kill the demon Dhundhu at the request of the sage Uttaraika (7.74). Many a times the sages helped the kings on many occasions. Thus it is said that the king Sagara obtained the Āgneyāstra from the sage

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37 230.5; missing in ms. 'ka'.

Aurva and defeated his enemies (8.31). King Sagara is further said to have performed hundred Asvamedhas (8.60,61). The king Purūravas was considered to be learned, Brahmavādin, invincible, the performer of Agnihotra, the lord of sacrifices, tranquil, knower of dharma, speaker of truth, and holy (10.1-5). The king Dhanvantari was considered to be a god himself born in a human form, as a result of the severe penance of his father Dhanu. He was an expert in curing the diseases and he learnt the Āyurveda from the sage Bharadvāja and divided it into eight parts and taught it to his eight pupils (11.35,38). Yati, the eldest son of king Nahuṣa was a yogin and finally attained Brahman (12.3). His younger brother Yayāti is eulogised because of his conquest of the world within twelve nights (12.6). King Bali was born with golden arrows and was a great yogin. Brahmā granted a boon to him that he would be a great yogin, his life would have the span of one kalpa, his strength would be uncomparable, he would be the knower of the essence of Dharma, victorious in battle, prominent in Dharma and the promulgator of the four varnas (13.29-32). This shows that the social responsibility was also attached to the king. King Kārtavīrya is praised at great length. It is said that he practised severe penance and worshipped Dattātreyā and obtained four boons, from him as a result of which he possessed thousand hands. He conquered the

whole world and ruled righteously. He was endowed with all the jewels and was called a samrāt cakravartin. He became the Paśupāla and the kṣetrapāla (13.160-174).

In short, the king has to rule in such a way that people are pleased with him, feel secure in his reign and he as a result gain prosperity and fame.

#### Coronation Ceremony

The coronation of a king was a very solemn and important ceremony.<sup>38</sup> The existence of coronation can be traced much earlier than the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa. The Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa gives its details as independent performance in three sections which are separate from those devoted to the Rājasūya. The Aitereya Brāhmaṇa deliniates the Aindramahābhīṣeka. The Agni-Purāṇa adds more rituals to the ceremony of coronation given in the Mahābhārata and makes it more elaborate.

The office of king becomes majestic in its true sense only with the coronation. Great importance, therefore, was attached to the ceremony of coronation, not only as it was a dedication to the service of people, but also as an affirmation of the covenant between the people and the ruler and the creation of a mystic union between the land and its lord.

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<sup>38</sup> Vide for details Kane P.V., Op.Cit., PP.73-82; Dharma P.C. The Rāmāyana Polity, PP. 16-18. Bhatt G.K., Rājyābhīṣeka Grantha (in G.U.).

It is important to remember in this connection that the Purānic historians always disposed of foreign kings by merely saying 'naiva mūrdhābhisikta' - not properly crowned and anointed.<sup>39</sup>

The Br. P. describes the coronation ceremony of king ~~Prthu~~ Prthu. All the beings and gods had come from different directions to celebrate it. All the rivers and oceans came there with their jewels and water. Some religious ceremonies were performed by those well-versed in Dharma (4.52-57).<sup>40</sup>

### Ministry

Ministry or a council of advisers has been regarded by ancient Indian political thinkers as a very vital organ of the body politic.<sup>41</sup> The terms indicative of this institution in olden days were the sabhā, samiti, saṅgati, vidātha, pariṣad etc. The description of the council is given in the Mahābhārata, Arthasāstra, smṛti and purāṇas. The Matsya-Purāṇa advises the king never to make a decision alone nor to consult many in

39 Sardar K.M. Panikkar, Op.Cit., PP. 28.ff.

40 The Rājadharmakāṇḍa (P.7) quotes from the Brahma-Purāṇa a long passage in which the mantras to be recited at the time of the coronation by the priest are stated to be as follows: Trayodaśa Mahāmantrān Tarpayet jātavedasi | Gaṇaṃ caivāprati-ratham satyadharmegaṇau tathā | Ayuṣyamabheyam caiva tathā svastyayanam param | Vaiṣṇavānatha mantrāṅśca tathā pauran-darānapi | Savitrabrahmaraudrāṅśca varuṇānatha sarvadā | But this passage is not found in the present Brahma-Purāṇa. Vide Kane P.V., Op.Cit., P.

41 Vide Altekar A.S., Op.Cit., PP. 151 ff.

regard to a matter of state<sup>42</sup>. The

The Br. P. states that the advice of minister was taken on important matters.<sup>43</sup> Many ministers were employed and sometimes a minister was asked to manage the affairs of the state on his sole authority. Thus the king Ila asked his ministers to protect his country, treasure, army, kingdom and family and expressed his desire to stay in the forest (108.4-8). The minister was expected to be intelligent, noble, having a good character, keenly interested in the welfare of the state and a knower of signs (111.27). ~~The Br. P.~~ A minister was surrounded by the sachivas (111.41). The Br. P. notes an instance that when king Bānāsura was unable to defeat Aniruddha, he captured him by the use of the Pannagāstra on the advice of his minister (206.7-9).

While the king was expected to confine his attention to the protective and defensive measure of the kingdom, it was the priest with whom the power to help the kings by the performance of necessary sacrifices and spells was believed to rest.<sup>44</sup> The Br. P. also states that in times of distress a Purohita

42 ccxx.37; cf. also Agni ccxv.18-20, Kālikā lxxxiv.104,105, Brhadhdharma uttarakhanda iii.3; vide also Kantawala S.G., Op.Cit.

43 47.2, 10, 12, 18, 35.

44 R.Shama Sastri, Evolution of India Polity, P.88.

advised the king.<sup>45</sup> As for the religious activities of the Purohita for kings, refer the section on 'sages' in the chapter VI on 'Mythology'.

The Br. P. describes the city Avanti from which an idea can be gathered as to how the people lived under the realm of a king. It states that the king Indradyumna ruled in Avanti. The city had strong palaces, and was protected by strong yantras. It was well-divided by four paths and had houses and gopuras. It was decorated by various palaces which in their turn were decorated by banners, elephants, chariots and padātiganas. It consisted of eighteen villages and the people inhabiting it were always engrossed in the performance of the sacrifices and the recitation of vedas.<sup>46</sup> This gives an idea of the peaceful life of people under the protective rule of a benevolent king.

Messengers were sent to convey important matters from one state to the other (47.13) and the rule that a royal messenger could not be killed was observed. It is stated that one who kills a Rājabhata falls in the taptakumbha hell.<sup>47</sup> The sacredness and inviolability of the person and property of an ambassador were recognised in ancient India as in the modern world.

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45 151.12, A.47.

46 43.22-35, 85-88.

47 22.10, cf. also MBH. Śānti, Rājadharmā, 85, 26.

War and Weapons

To different people war may have very different meanings. To some it is a plague which ought to be eliminated; to some, a mistake which should be avoided, to others, a crime which ought to be punished; and to still others, an anachronism which no longer serves any purpose. On the other hand, there are some who take a more receptive attitude towards war and regard it as an adventure which may be interesting, an instrument which may be useful, a procedure which may be legitimate and appropriate, or a condition of existence for which one must be prepared.<sup>48</sup>

The instinct of self-preservation so strong even among the lower animals, has been present in man ever since the dawn of human history. From the paleolithic times he has been fighting and defending himself against Nature and wild beasts, and with his steady march from barbarism to civilization and the gradual development of intellectual pursuits he has discovered weapons first to defend himself, then to defend his family and clan, and finally his own territory and nation.<sup>49</sup>

As in the matter of political speculation so regarding

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48 Wright Quincy, A Study of War, Vol. 1, P.3.

49 Majumdar B.K., The Military System in Ancient India, P.1,  
Vide also Cohen John, Nature, War and Society.

the art of warfare, the ancient Indians of the vedic and post-vedic periods have important and varied contributions. A distinct science called 'Dhanurveda' giving in detail the method of using the bow, arrow and other weapons developed in India long ago and the great kings are referred to as being proficient in it.<sup>50</sup>

The Br. P. notes several instances of wars between Devas and Asuras to gain suzerainty over each other. The battle between Brhaspati and Soma was the result of the abduction of Tārā. The war between lord kṛṣṇa and Narakāśura was in order to establish justice.

#### Ethics of War

War is generally a dangerous game; but below the tumult and roughness of it there is a calm undercurrent, which flows in the depth of the heart of all humanity. Howsoever selfish may be the general canons of diplomacy, its hardness is modified by the persuasive and sweet influence of the moral sense of mankind. The most aggressive states from primitive times to the present day felt this agreeable influence of this abstract moral sense which keeps nations bound together.<sup>51</sup>

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50 Vignu P., Wilson's Tr., VIII.67.

51 Date G.T., The Art of War in Ancient India, P.81, vide also stopford A. Brooke: A discourse on war (The Hibbert Journal, 1915-16, P. 674).



The Hindu science of warfare values both morality and valour and as religion governed the actual life of man from birth to death it was realised that the waging of war without regard to moral standards degraded the institution into mere animal ferocity.<sup>52</sup> The Br. P. also contributes to the ethics of warfare by its few episodes.

Indra wanted to kill the foetus in the womb of Diti. He took the weapon kulisa and got ready to strike it but the foetus in the uterus of Diti argued with him and the discourse throws light on the rules of warfare. It said that it was a sin to kill anyone in a place other than the battlefield. A man who has learnt the 'sastravidyā and who holds thunderbolt in his hand should not kill one who is not the knower of that vidyā and who does not wield the weapons. Further it states that there was no heroism in killing the embryo. If one had a real desire to fight, he should have courage enough to fight on a battlefield. But Indra did not hear it and pierced it into 49 pieces. Thereupon Agastya cursed Indra that he would have to show his back on the battlefield and added that no worse curse existed for a kṣatriya and Diti cursed him that he would be defeated by a woman which was considered to be stigma to the career of the kṣatriya (124.54-80).

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52 Raghuvamśa 17.47 68, See Mallinātha's Commentaries.

This shows how Dharmayuddha was highly valued and kūtayuddha was treated with a degree of contempt, as it aims to achieve its purpose by means of Machiavellian principles<sup>53</sup> and it also emphasises that a war should take place between equals. Elsewhere the Br. P. states that a ksatriya who either in the battle or out of the battle kills one (i) who runs away from the battlefield, or (ii) who throws off his weapons, or (iii) who confides in him, or (iv) who does not know that he was being killed, or (v) who says that he was afraid, get the sin of a brahmin-murder.<sup>54</sup> If the fight took place between non-equals, it was considered to be vyatikrama - a reverse case. Thus when kṛṣṇa and Balarāma went to Kamsa's assembly to fight with Caṇura and Mustika, people remarked at the difference of age and strength between kṛṣṇa and Balarāma on one side and Caṇura and Mustika on the other and wondered about the authenticity of judgment (193.47-49). Again, the policy of the famous four expedients, viz. Sāma, Dāna, Bheda and Danda was laid down for the warrior. Thus lord Kṛṣṇa used this policy against the attack of Jarāśandha and when occasion demanded he used the policy of 'running away' also.<sup>55</sup> According to Arthasāstra and the epics these are the recognised traditional expedients,

53 Date G.T., Op.Cit.

54 164. 30,31; cf. also MBH. Śāntiparva, 96.3; vide also Bandopadhyaya Prāmathanatha, International law and custom in ancient India, PP. 110-118.

55 195.17; the ms. 'ga' does not mention 'danda' and 'palāyanam'.

which are found only in germ in the vedic literature.<sup>56</sup> Sāma (conciliation) is utilized to win over the persons who are the scions of noble and great families and are by nature straightforward and religious-minded and lead a chaste life. Daṇa (gift) is considered to be the expedient par excellence as every one can be subdued with gift. Bheda (divide and rule) is recommended to conquer the persons who are mutually jealous of one another, are disrespected, are afraid of each other or are enraged with each other. The Danda (punishment) is to be used when the above three expedients are futile.<sup>57</sup>

#### Army

On account of her peculiar geographical features,<sup>58</sup> the ancient Indian state had to make an extensive use of mounted forces which comprised cavalry, chariots and elephants.<sup>59</sup> The Brahma-Purāna mentions the classical fourfold army constituting of chariots, elephants, horses and infantry, collectively known as the caturāṅgabala. The / Indradyumna was well-equipped with elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers (43.24). The armies of Kālayavana (196.7) and Rkmi (199.10) also constituted

56 Dikshitar V.R.R., War in Ancient India, P.326.

57 Kantawala S.G., Op.Cit.,Vide also Dikshitar, Op.Cit.,PP. 325-331.

58 For the influence of geography on the Indian wars, see Ray H.C.- Notes on war in ancient India, Journal of the Department of Letters, 1927.

59 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., P. 155.

of the same forces. The king Ila is said to have established a city with a caturāṅga army in the Dandaka-forest (108.117-118).

Chariots:- Chariots were used in the war from very remote times.<sup>60</sup> A chariot was an important apparatus of war, and it attracted the minds of warriors of all leading nations of the world. All the well-known warriors of ancient India, with few exceptions, were chariot fighters and belonged to the high military nobility, forming a distinct section of their own, apart from the rank and file.<sup>61</sup> The Br. P. also alludes to chariots many a times. Indra had given a chariot to Yayāti. It was very shining and divine horses were yoked to it. Yayāti conquered the whole world, gods and demons within six nights with the help of this chariot. The chariot was the cherished possession of the Pauravas till the time of Janamejaya who lost it, because of a curse of Gārgya to Vasu, the king of Cedi country. From ~~it~~ him it passed to Brhadratha and when Jarāsandha, a descendant of Brhadratha was killed by Bhīma, kṛṣṇa got it from him.<sup>62</sup> King Jyāmagha used a chariot in his victorious campaigns (15.14-17). Lord kṛṣṇa pursued king Satadhanvā in a chariot (17.12-17). Lord Parasurama pulled down Arjuna Kārtavīrya

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60 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., PP.157-166; Chakravarti, P.C., The art of war in Ancient India, PP. 22-32.

61 Date G.T., Op.Cit., P. 46.

62 12.6-24; vide also Patil D.R., Cultural History from the Vayu-Purāna, P. 102.

from his chariot and cut his thousand hands (213.116). This shining chariot of king Kārtavīrya had the lustre of Sun and with its help he had conquered the whole world (13.171-177). The chariots in the army of king Indradyumna were like aeroplanes and they were decorated by the banners (44.17). When Candra manifested from Atri, Brahmā carried him on his chariot and they travelled together round the whole earth for 21 times (9.4-14).

Elephants:- The next important force of war consisted of elephants. From very early times the elephant was used in peace as a vehicle and in war as a combatant.<sup>63</sup> Four-toothed elephants were considered to be excellent. Lord kr̥ṣṇa sent 6,000 four-toothed elephants to Dwār̥kā when he conquered Prāgyyotiṣpura (201.32). The Br. P. further describes elephants as those belonging to Himālaya, as big as mountains, being terrible and intoxicated and decorated with banners and bells. The Br. P. further alludes to persons who were experts in elephant fights (44.19,20).~~savak~~

Cavalry:- The third division of the army common to both east and west was cavalry. Horse-riding was known as early as the vedic age but there is no satisfactory record of the use of

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63 For details regarding elephants, vide Dikshitar, Op.Cit., PP. 166-174; Chakravati, Op. Cit., PP. 47-54, Date, Op.Cit., PP. 49-51.

cavalry in battles of that period.<sup>64</sup> The Br. P. frequently refers to horses. In the fight between Bhoja Satadhanvan and kṛṣṇa, the former was riding a mare capable of covering a hundred yojanas at a stretch. This mare had the name Hrdaya. The animal, however, died through fatigue. Kṛṣṇa who was pursuing Satadhanvan, came to know of the fate of the mare. He got down from the chariot, continued his pursuit and afterwards killed Satadhanvan.<sup>65</sup> The horses of Kāmboja and Gāndhāra (13.151) countries were considered to be excellent. Lord kṛṣṇa sent twenty one lakh horses of Kāmboja country to Dwārṅkā when he conquered the city Prāgjyotiṣpura (202.16-12). The Asuras used horses (213.91) and the horses of king Indradyumna were as swift as wind (44.18).

Infantry:- The next important division of the army was infantry. Originally chariots and elephants were mostly used for warfare but with the march of time, the nation came to be entertained that the more numerically strong the army, the greater were the possibilities of its success.<sup>66</sup> The Br. P. states that there were innumerable foot-soldiers in the army of king Indradyumna. They held bows, Paraśu and swords in their hands and were very brave and enthusiastic. They decorated

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65 17.12-17; Patil D.R., Op.Cit., P.101.

66 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., PP.179-204; Chakravarti, Op.Cit., PP.15-18.

themselves with garlands and fragrant ointments (44.10-12).

Besides the caturāṅga army, the Br. P. alludes to Akṣauhini army. According to the Udyogaparvan,<sup>67</sup> 500 elephants, 500 chariots, 1500 cavalry and 2500 foot soldiers constitute a senā and 10 senās = pṛtanā, 10 pṛtanās = 1 vāhinī, 10 vāhinīs = dhvajinī, 10 dhvajinīs = camū, 10 camūs = akṣauhini. The Br.P. states that king Jarāsandha had twenty three akṣauhini armies (195.3). When the earth was oppressed by the burden of many demons and their armies consisting of Akṣauhini, she approached lord Viṣṇu and asked him to take birth to relieve her (180.10-12) and lord kṛṣṇa freed her from her burden by killing the Akṣauhini armies (210.2).

#### Practice of Warfare

From the various descriptions of fights, battles and wars, general idea can be gathered regarding the practice of warfare as reflected in the Brahma-Purāṇa. It states that lord Nṛsiṃha came out of the pillar of the assembly-hall and killed Hiranyakasipu with his nails. He killed all the daityas who had taken various forms and who resided in various places like Rasātala, ocean, river, village, forests, sky and constellations

67 Cr.ed. 151.21-22; vide Kane P.V., for different tables from different Parvans, Op.Cit., PP.204-205.

68 For information vide Vajhe kṛsnaji vinayaka - Prācīna yuddhavidyā - (in Marāṭhī).

by whirling round his body (149.1-10). A terrible fight ensued between lord Nṛsimha and Āmbarya, lord of Dandaka. He was invincible and both of them showered śāstras and astras over each other. Finally, lord Nṛsimha killed him (149.10-12).

Lord kṛṣṇa threw Kamsa on the floor, jumped on him, pulled his hair and he was dead (192.72-75).

After the death of Kamsa, a terrible fight ensued between Jarāsandha, king of Magadha and father-in-law of Kamsa and lord kṛṣṇa. He had 23 akṣauhiniḥ armies and he circumambulated Mathurā from all the sides. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma came out with a small band of soldiers. Kṛṣṇa held his original weapons Sudarśana cakṛa, Śāraṅga bow, an inexhaustible quiver full of arrows and the Kaumodakī Gadaḥ whereas Balarāma held his favourite weapons Hala and Musala. Jarāsandha was defeated eighteen times (A.195).

On hearing about the strength of the yādavas from the sage Nārada, king Kālayavana of the south equipped his army with elephants, hṛṣes and chariots and proceeded for Mathurā together with an army of Mlecchas. When lord kṛṣṇa knew about his proceedings, he thought that seeing the opportunity Jarāsandha also might bring an attack from his side and the yādava army would not be able to cope up with both of them. So he constructed



the city Dwārakā with a fort and made such arrangements that even women could fight from inside. Kṛṣṇa went to Mathurā. Seeing him without weapons, Kālayavana followed him. Kṛṣṇa entered a cave and concealed himself. The king Mucakunda was sleeping there. Thinking him to be a lord kṛṣṇa, Kālayavana kicked him and was eventually burnt by fire emanating from the eyes of king Mucakunda (196.1-20) i.e. by a feat of diplomacy Shri kṛṣṇa managed to divert the wrath of the powerful Mucakunda against Kālayavana. In olden times, king Mucakunda had defeated many daityas (196.21).

King Bhīsmaka ruled the city Kundinapura of the country Vidarbha. Kṛṣṇa carried away his daughter Rukminī on the day previous to her marriage with king Śiśupāla. Balarāma and the other yādavas defeated the kings Paundra, Vidūratha, Dantavaktra, Śiśupāla, Jarāsandha and Śālva. Kṛṣṇa defeated Rukminī together with his caturāṅga army (199.1-10). This episode shows how rivalry for a bride led to war between two parties.

Pradyumna learnt all the Māyās from Māyāvati and destroyed the army of Śambara by the use of the seven Māyās and killed Śambara by the use of the eighth Māyā. This shows how besides the weapons, Māyās were used in a battle (200.18,19).

These may be strategies in war. The Br.P. provides

instances how a small thing lead to disaster. Balarāma got irritated with R̥kmī as he played dice fraudulently and killed him with the dice-pieces. As the king of Kalinga poked fun of Balarāma during the dice-play, Balarāma pressed him with all his strength and broke down his teeth. Balarāma then pulled out the golden pillar from the assembly hall and killed all the enemies from the side of R̥kmī (201.18-26).

Lord kṛṣṇa killed the daitya Mura and his 7,000 sons, Hayagrīva, Pañcajana and many other daityas of the army of the king Naraka after cutting the Pāsās which protected his city for hundred yojanas with his cakra. Finally, he killed Naraka by his cakra (202.16-21).

A graphic description of war is provided in the quarrel for the Parijata tree between Indra and kṛṣṇa. Indra arose with his thunderbolt and all the gods accompanied him with Parigha, gādā, śūla, khadga and other weapons. Lord kṛṣṇa blew his Pañcajana conch and started showering arrows. All the directions and the sky were covered with arrows. Lord kṛṣṇa cut all the weapons and Garuda pierced into pieces all the serpents. Lord kṛṣṇa powdered the daṇḍa of Yama into thousand pieces by his mace and the sibikā of Kubera also was pierced into pieces by his cakra. The Sun and Moon were deprived of their lustre, and the lustre of Agni was also shattered to pieces.

The eight Vasus also met death at the hands of kṛṣṇa. The front portions of the tridents of the eleven Rudras were cut by the edge of the cakra. The sādhyas, vis'vedevas, Maruts and Gandharvas were also afflicted by the arrows of the Śārṅga-holder kṛṣṇa. Then Indra and kṛṣṇa showered innumerable arrows over each other and a terrible g fight followed between Airāvata and Garuda. When all the astras and sastras were exhausted, Indra released his thunderbolt but lord kṛṣṇa held it in his hand. The thunderbolt lost its power. Garuda defeated Airāvata and both Indra and Airāvata ran away from the battle-field (203.46-60).

A battle was considered to be the most covetous thing for a ksatriya. Without a battle, the hands were useless, Bāṇāsura actually desired to fight in order to use his thousand hands. Therefore, when he know that Aniruddha, the grandson of lord kṛṣṇa, was enjoying with ~~xxx~~ his daughter Uṣā, he asked his servants to capture him but Aniruddha killed all of them with his Parigha. As Bāṇāsura was unable to defeat Aniruddha, he captivated him by the use of the Pannagāstra (206.2-9). Kṛṣṇa went to the city of Bāṇāsura with Balarāma and Pradyumna and fought with the pramathas. All the pramathas were killed. Then lord kṛṣṇa fought with Māheśvara jvara who had three heads and three feet. The jvara threw Bhasma over them which scorched them and Balarāma had to close his eyes. Kṛṣṇa then sent the

vaiṣṇava jvara after Māheśvara jvara and the latter was defeated. Lord kṛṣṇa then destroyed the five fires and the whole army of the dānavas. Lord Śiva and Kārtikeya came to the rescue of Bānāsura and the whole world was perturbed thinking that the time of pralaya had arrived. Lord kṛṣṇa released the jṛmbhanāstra and lord Śiva began to yawn. He had to give up fighting and sit on the backside of the chariot. Garuḍa and Pradyumna harassed Kārtikeya. When Bānāsura saw that Balarāma was striking his plough and Muśala and kṛṣṇa was throwing the arrows profusely, he fought terribly with all his might. Finally, lord kṛṣṇa released the cakṛa and cut the hands of Bāṇa and when kṛṣṇa was on the point of annihilating him, Bāṇa was saved by lord Śiva's request. In this fight, the mantras too were recited for the destruction of the enemy (206.9, 12-40).

A king Paundraka Vāsudeva believed himself to be lord kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva and he assumed all the signs of lord kṛṣṇa and challenged kṛṣṇa for a fight. The king of Kāśī came to help him but lord kṛṣṇa defeated both of them with their armies (207.23-25). The monkey Dvivida attacked Balarāma with a slab of stone and Balarāma killed him with his Muśala and fists (209.17-20). At the time of their final destruction, the yādavas fought with each other with weapons and erakā grass (211.45,46).

Lord Rāma killed Vāli and coronated Sugrīva on the throne of Kiśkindhā. Then he killed Lavana, the son of the

demon Madhu residing in the Madhuvana and the demons Marica, Subāhu, Virādha and Kabandha. Finally, he killed Rāvāna and the Gandharvas. The sage Visvāmītra had given him many weapons and he had broken a bow belonging to lord Siva in the assembly of king Janaka (213.135.143).

The demon Dhundhu was covered with water and fire. By his yogic power, the king Kuvalāsva drank the water, extinguished fire and killed the demon Dhundhu (7.83-84). King Rāji helped the gods and defeated the dānavas (11.1-10). Indra killed Namuci by foam. The fight shows how sometimes the evil practices were followed. A terrible fight ensued between Namuci, ~~king~~ the king of daityas, and Indra. Indra went out of the battlefield but Namuci followed him. Being afraid of him, Indra entered the ocean and covering thunderbolt with foam, he killed Namuci. Maya, the brother of Namuci, decided to take revenge. He learnt various types of māyās, practised penance and gave dāna to brahmins in order to gain victory over Indra. But Indra played a fraud, came in the guise of a brahmin and asked the friendship of Maya in dāna. Maya granted it. That one should attain one's end by whatever means was the policy adopted. Śukrācārya says that it is a folly to lose one's object and therefore a clever king should suffer insult and humiliation at the outset to secure ultimate victory.<sup>69</sup> Namuci

<sup>69</sup> Apamānam puraskṛtya mānaṃ kṛtvā tu prṣṭataḥ ।  
Svakāryam sādhaḥ prājñāḥ kāryadhvaṃso hi mūrkhataḥ ॥  
iv.vii.363.

then advised Indra to kill the issue in Diti's womb. Accordingly Indra at first served Diti and seeing the opportunity pierced the embryo cutting it into pieces(124.32-52).

Besides the types mentioned above the Br. P. provides an instance of muṣṭiyuddha. In the fight between lord kṛṣṇa and Jāmbavān, there is no reference to the use of weapons and it appears that this was an instance of first-fight which lasted for twenty one days.<sup>70</sup>

An idea of Mallayuddha can be gathered from the description of the one fought between kṛṣṇa and Balarāma on the one side and Caṇūra and Muṣṭika on the other side. They fought for a very long time and adopted kṣepaṇa, muṣṭi and strokes of feet. Then the lord kṛṣṇa held Caṇūra and whirled him round in the air and threw him on the floor and Caṇūra was dead. Balarāma struck Muṣṭika with his fists on his head and with knees on his chest. Then he threw him down on the floor and struck the fists with his left hand and thus killed him (193.53-66).

There is a reference of imprisonment of Rāvaṇa by king Sahasrārjuna but on being requested by Pulastya, Rāvaṇa was released (13.184-187). When kṛṣṇa killed Kāṃsa, he released Ugrasena, the father of Kāṃsa, from the prison and coronated

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70 16.39,40; vide also Patil D.R., Op.Cit., P.101.

him on the throne (194.9).

As regards the punishments of the enemies, the Br. P. provides an instance. The Haihayas had defeated king Bāhu with the help of Tālajaṅghas, Kāambojas, śakas and pāradas but Sagara, the son of king Bāhu, took a revenge and defeated them all but instead of annihilating them, on the advice of the sage Vasiṣṭha, he inflicted punishments on them. Thus he changed their dresses and destroyed their dharma. He ordered the śakas to shave their heads half, the yavanas and kāambojas to shave their heads full, the pāradas to loosen their hair and the paṅhavas to shave their beards(8.42-52).

Things obtained from the conquered region

According to Śukrācārya, the wealth seized in war should be presented to the king for examination and distribution (iv.7.386). According to law-givers like Menu<sup>71</sup>, Viṣṇu<sup>72</sup> and Gautama<sup>73</sup>, animals captured and a part of the treasure seized, generally went to the king. It is interesting to note the ruling of Brhaspati that one-sixth of the booty went to the king and the rest to his allies and soldiers.

The Br. P. also provides instances of the things seized from the conquered country. When lord kṛṣṇa killed the demon

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71 VII. 202

72 III. 30

73 X. 20-23.

Naraka and conquered the city Prāgjyotispura, he took away all the jewels and sent the 16,100 maidens, 6,000 four-toothed elephants and twenty-One lakh horses of Kāamboja country to Dwārṅkā (202.32,33) and afterwards he married all the maidens. There is another instance of king Śyāmagha who brought a maiden from a conquered country and when a son was born to him, he was married to her (15.14-17).

The enemies were always treated very severely. The Brahma-Purāna states that the enemies were always to be despised and no confidence was to be placed in them (106.16-18). One had the powers to coronate a king of his own liking after conquering the land (213.136).

### Fort

The ancient kings attached great importance to fortresses, for they served as the main base to defend the kingdom against the invasions of the enemy.<sup>74</sup> The Br. P. states that lord kṛṣṇa built the city Dwārṅkā with a fort surrounding it (196.11). The city Prāgjyotispura of the king Naraka was surrounded on all the sides by pāśas or iron bars for hundred yojanas. Lord kṛṣṇa cut away all the bars with his cakṛa (202.16).

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74 Dikshitar, Op.cit., P.249; vide also Chakravarti, Op.Cit., P. 127.



Flags

Though innocent in themselves, flags and banners have exercised a capital influence over the warriors throughout the whole course of history. It has always been a custom among the belligerents to attack the flag of their opponents to reduce the enthusiasm of the latter. The capture of the flag usually sounded the death-knell of the party that lost it.<sup>75</sup>

The Br. P. states that the cities were decorated with banners of different colours (43.22). Lord kṛṣṇa possessed a banner having the emblem of king of birds (59.75-6).

List of Weapons

Dhanurveda classifies the weapons of offence into four divisions. - the mukta, <sup>the amukta,</sup> the muktāmukta and the yantramukta.<sup>76</sup> On the other hand, the Nītiprakāśikā divides them into three broad classes, viz. the mukta (thrown), the amukta (not thrown), and the mantramukta (discharged by mantras)<sup>77</sup>, Kauṭilya<sup>78</sup> and

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75 Date G.T., Op.Cit., P.25; vide also Majumdar B.K., Op.Cit., P.52; Dikshitar, Op.Cit., PP. 369-378.

76 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., P.92

77 II. 11-13.

78 Arthasāstra, PP. 101, 410 ff.

Agni-Purāṇa<sup>79</sup> add more varieties.<sup>80</sup>

The Br. P. also mentions various types of weapons. The following is a list of weapons in an alphabetical order and an attempt has been made to identify as many of them as possible.

Ankuṣa:- The yamadūtas possessed it and the sinners were troubled in hell by its use (215.81). In the Dronaparva (28.17 ff.), an ankuṣa is described as sarvaghāti.

Asi:- The yamadūtas possessed it (215.52). The foot-soldiers in the army of king Indradyumna had swords in their hands (44.21).

From the very dawn of civilization, the sword was used as a war weapon. Both the long sword and the dagger were known to the vedic Aryans the former was known as Asi and the latter was known as kṛtī.<sup>81</sup> The esi is also known in Sanskrit literature by different other names - Nistriṃśā, Viśamana, Khadga, Tikṣṇadhāra, Durāsada, Śrīgarbha, Vijaya, and Dharmamūla, showing

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79 249.2

80 For information about the different weapons of war from different sources, vide Dikshitar V.R.R., Op.Cit., Ch.III, P.93 ff; Patil D.R., Op.Cit., PP.102 ff; 224 ff; Chakravarti P.C., The Art of war in ancient India, Ch.XIV, PP.150 f., Kane P.V., Op.Cit., Vol.III, PP.212 ff., Hopkins E.W. JAOS XIII, Oppert Gustave on the weapons, Army organisations and political maxims, Prof.Manikrao - Śrīpratāp Sastrāgāra (in Marathī), Kantawala S.G., Op.Cit.

81 Date, Op.Cit., P. 20.

the general characteristics of the sword. It was commonly worn on the left side and was associated with thirty two different movements. It measured fifty thumbs in length and four inches in width.<sup>82</sup>

Astra:- Various types of astras are mentioned in the Brahma-Purāna. When the gods attacked Soma, Soma threw at them a great astra called Brahmasiraḥ on account of which their fame was destroyed (9.22). Baṇāśura is said to have captured Aniruddha by the Pannagāstra (206.9). In the fight between lord kṛṣṇa and Śiva, lord kṛṣṇa released the jṛmbhaṇāstra by which lord Śiva started yawning (206.27). King Sagara defeated the Haihayas by the Āgneyāstra given to him by the sage Aurva (8.41,42). Ullāka released an āgneyāstra on kapota (125.11). Ullāka praised Yama and got Yāmya astra from him (125.9). Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva had the powers to have the whole store of the astras by just thinking about them (194.23). In the fight between the gods and the demons, there was a terrible shower of śastras and astras (32.44). It is mentioned in the Uttara Rāma carita.

Āyudha:- Lord kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were able to wield their weapons at their will (195.5). The demons had weapons of strange shape and they were shining and terrible in appearance

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82 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., P.116, Chakravarti, Op.Cit., PP.164-165.

(214.67). The Asuras used Āyudhas (213.91).

Bhindipāla:- Probably this was a heavy club which had a broad and bent-tail-end, measuring one cubit in length. It was to be used with the left foot of the warrior placed in front. Its various uses were cutting, hitting, striking and breaking. It was like kunta but with a big blade.<sup>83</sup> Date thinks it to be a heavy rod thrown against an enemy like a missile.<sup>84</sup>

The Br. P. states that the Asuras used this weapon (213.91) and in the Yamaloka, people were harassed by it (215.40), (214.84).

Cakra:- It is a circular disc with a small opening in the middle. It was of three kinds of eight, three and four spokes. It was used in five or six ways. The various uses of a disc were felling, whirling, rending, breaking, severing and cutting.<sup>85</sup>

The Br. P. often refers to the cakra. Lord kṛṣṇa held it in his hand while fighting with king Jarāsandha. As soon as lord kṛṣṇa desired to have it, it came to his hands from the sky

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83 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., P. 106.

84 Date, Op.Cit., P.22; JAOS. XIII, P.290, Oppert P.13.

85 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., P. 109.

(195.6). It destroyed the 'sibikā of Kuberā (203.54). Kṛṣṇa released the cakra over Bāṇāsura and cut his hands (206.37). Lord kṛṣṇa released it over Paṇḍraka Vāsudeva (207.23-25). Lord Janārdana holds the Sudarśana cakra which is terrible, and the main among all the weapons, in his right hand (68.45). Lord Viṣṇu cut the head of the demon Rāhu by his cakra (106.30). Lord Viṣṇu manifested his form to king Sveta by holding a Sudarśana cakra (59.75). The Asuras (213.90), (214.68) and the Yamadūtas used it (215.52). In the rites of worship, <sup>i.e.</sup> the naivedyamantra to be offered in honour of lord kṛṣṇa, his cakra was to be invoked on the left side (61.41).

Carma:- India was rich in defensive armaments from the earliest period of her history. The commonest names for armours were kavaca and varman. In course of time, leather was so profusely used in making armour that the word carma came to mean armour itself.<sup>86</sup>

The Br. P. states that king Kārtavīrya possessed a carma (13.172).

Danda:- The Br. P. mentions several kinds of Daṇḍas. The daṇḍa of Yama was destroyed by the mace of lord kṛṣṇa (203.53). The hands of Asuras are said to be as strong as

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<sup>86</sup> Date, Op.Cit., P.24; Chakravarti, Op.Cit., P.177, Dikshitar, Op.Cit., PP. 127.

daṇḍas (214.65). In Yamaloka (215.40) and hell (215.81) people are harassed by a daṇḍa made of iron. The people are troubled by daṇḍaka and Agnidāṇḍa too (217.81). The daṇḍa of Yama was destroyed by the gadā of lord kṛṣṇa (203.53).

Dhanus:- The bow and arrow attracted the imagination of all warriors of the world in the early stages of civilization. Throughout the course of ancient Indian history the bow was used as the main offensive weapon and the whole science of archery - Dhanurveda was named after it.<sup>87</sup> The Agni-Purāṇa provides the details regarding its make.<sup>88</sup>

The Br. P. mentions it often and also states its various types. Kṛṣṇa was able to hold his bow Sārṅga at his will (195.6). In his fight with Indra kṛṣṇa showered thousands of arrows over gods and the sādhyas, visvedevas, Maruts and Gandharvas were defeated by them (203.56). Lord kṛṣṇa released it over Pauṇḍraka Vāsudeva and killed him (207.23-25). Lord kṛṣṇa was known as Sārṅgadhara (16.38). In the left hand of lord Janārdana shines the Sārṅga having the lustre like Sun and shining arrows (68.49,50). When the Ābhīras attacked Arjuna, he lost the power of his bow Gāṇḍiva and the Ābhīras carried away the wives of lord kṛṣṇa (212.50). King Pṛthu was born with

87 Date, Op.Cit., P.11, vide also Chakravarti, Op.Cit., PP.151-159; also Dikshitar, Op.Cit., PP. 93-100.

88 245.5.6, 7-10.

Dhanus and kavaca (2.23). When king Pṛthu was born, there was a terrible resounding of the ajagava bow (4.48-51). When king Rāji went to help gods, he took his desired bow (11.10). When king Yayāti wanted to retire from life, he gave up his bows and arrows (12.22,23). With bows and arrows, king Jyāmagha conquered the cities Mekalā, Mṛttikāvati and the mountain Rkṣavān single-handed and got settled in the city Suktimatī (15.14-17). The gods wielded kāmuka and helped Indra in his fight with lord kṛṣṇa for the Pārijāta tree (207.19).

Gadā i.e. the mace:- Various ways of handling it with skill were bending, stooping low, springing forward, retreating ready to fly upon and so doing as to terrorise.<sup>89</sup>

The Br. P. refers to it many a time. The name of the mace of lord kṛṣṇa was Kaumodakī and he was able to hold it at his own will (195.5), (59.75,76). It was released over Paundreka Vāsudeva (207.32-25) and Yama (203.53) by lord kṛṣṇa. Lord Janārdana holds the Kaumodakī gadā which brings to an end all the bad deeds, which is terrible, which destroys the daityas and danavas and which burns like the flame of fire and is unbearable to the gods (68.48,49). In the Yamaloka, people are harassed by it (215.40). In the rites of worship, the Mahāgadā should be placed on the right side of lord kṛṣṇa (61.42). The gods

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89 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., P.113.

wielded gadā and helped Indra in his fight with lord kṛṣṇa for the Pārijāta tree (203.47).

Hala:- Hala i.e.plough was the favourite weapon of Balarāma and he was known as Haladhara. The Br. P. states that the plough sunanda came to Balarāma's hand at his will (195.5) and in his fight with Baṅāsura, Balarāma had attacked him with lāṅgala (206.30).

Jyā:- It is generally made up of Mūrvā grass. The cord is noosed at each end and consists of different strands, but bound together into one string. The sound of the bow-string twanging on the hand-guard of leather is often alluded to as one of the common noises of battle.<sup>90</sup>

Its twinkling is mentioned by the Br. P. (15.54).

Kārmuka:- See Dhanus.

Kavaca:- The kavaca appears to be a cuirass, composed of breast and back plates and perhaps resembling those worn in Europe during the middle ages.<sup>91</sup>

The Br. P. states that the arrows of Baṅāsura and lord kṛṣṇa were terrible and they pierced the armours. Here the word

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90 Dikshitar, Op.Cit.

91 Chakravarti, Op.Cit., P. 178.



for armour used is 'kâyatrána' (206.31). King Prthu was born with bow and armour (2.23), (4.48.51). King Rámakavaca killed hundred warriors wearing kavacaś (15.10).

Khadga:- The Br. P. states that king Kārtavīrya knew the use of khadga (13.172). In the worship of lord kṛṣṇa, khadga should be placed on his left side (62.43). On the way to Yamaloka, people are harassed by it (213.73), (214.73,89), (215.82,102) and one who prepares a khadga falls in viśaṅga hell. It seems that the occupation of the maker of a khadga was not considered to be very respectable (22.16).

Krakaca:- There is a hell called krakaca and in that and other hells, the sinners are troubled by them (215.81,121).

Kuliśa:- The axe is mentioned in the Rv., but mostly not as a weapon of war. In the Mbh. it is mentioned by several names as paraśu, paras'vadha, kuliśa and kuthāra.<sup>92</sup>

The Br. P. states that kuliśa is the best among all the weapons (69.26). Indra pierced the issue in the semon of Diti into 49 pieces by the use of the weapon kuliśa (69.26).

Laguda:- It was probably a cudgel or heavy staff with

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92 Chakravarti, Op. Cit., P. 170.

metallic feet. It was two cubits in length. It would be used in four different ways. It was sometimes put to the same use as a Bhindipāla. It was cased in a sheath of leather and was held either with both the hands or only with the right hand.<sup>93</sup>

The Br. P. states that the Ābhīras defeated Arjuna by using laguda (212.51).

Loṣṭa:- The Br. P. states that the Ābhīras defeated Arjuna by throwing loṣṭa at him. Loṣṭa here may mean big clods of earth (212.18).

Mudgara:- It was a staff in the shape of hammer three cubits in length and with a strong circular handle. It was used to break heavy stones and rocks. The Br. P. states that on the way to Yamaloka and in the hell, the people are harassed by it (214.54,73), (215.39,102), (217.81). The Asuras used it (213.92).

Muśala:- It was a pestle-like club, both the ends well-knit together. It was a pointed rod made of khadira. It belongs to the category of sūla or trident.<sup>94</sup>

The Br. P. states that it was the favourite weapon of

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93 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., P. 108.

94 Nīti V. 35-36,

Balarāma and therefore he was called musalā'yudha (198.12).

Balarāma fought with Jarāsandha (195.7), Bānāsura (206.30) and the monkey Dvividā with it (209.17-20). The Asuras used musāla and ulūkhal (213.90,91).

Nigada:- The Br. P. states that in the hell, people are bound by it (214.71). Monier Williams<sup>95</sup> gives the meaning as an iron chain for the feet, the heel chains for an elephant or a noose for catching the feet and throwing any animal down, any fetter or shackle.

Nistrinsa:- It is a kind of sword. The Br. P. stated that kṛṣṇa used this weapon in his fight with Paundraka Vāsudeva (207.19) and the gods used it while helping Indra in his fight with kṛṣṇa (203.47).

Parasū:- See kulīśa. It was used for cutting and rending. The six ways of manipulating it to one's advantage are raising aloft in a formidable manner, making it descend slowly or quickly, raising it rapidly, making it fixed, and making as if one had nothing in one's hand.<sup>96</sup> It is the battle axe attributed to Parasūrāma. Its blade was made of steel and it had a wooden handle.<sup>97</sup>

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95 Sanskrit-English Dictionary, P. 545.

96 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., P.111.

97 Raghuvamsa 12.23.

The Br. P. states that Parasurama cut the thousand arms of Arjuna Kārtavīrya by his parasu(213.116). People are harassed by it in the Yamaloka (215.40).

Parasvadha:- See kulisa. The Br. P. states that it was used by Asuras (213.91).

Parigha:- It was a wooden beam used for locking or shutting a gate, and was a battering arm. According to Vaisampāyana, it was made of wood and circular in shape. It was so heavy that a whole army of soldiers would be required to handle it.<sup>98</sup>

The Br. P. states that the gods wielded parigha and helped Indra in his fight with lord kṛṣṇa for the Pārijāta tree (203.47). Aniruddha killed all the servants of Bāṇa by the use of parigha. It was made up of iron (206.7). In the Yamaloka people were harassed by it (215.40). The hands of the demons were as long as parighas (214.65) and the Asuras used it (213.92).

Pāśa:- The noose was a great favourite of Aryan as well as non-Aryan tribes.<sup>99</sup> It is a noose killing the enemy at one stroke, of two or three ropes used as a weapon attributed to the god Varuṇa. It was triangular in shape and embellished

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98 Dikshitar, Ibid., P. 115.

99 Date, Op. Cit., P. 21.

with balls of lead.<sup>100</sup>

The Br. P. states that the pasa of king Varuṇa was destroyed by lord kṛṣṇa (203.52). The Asuras (213.92), (214.68) and the Yamadūtas possessed it (215.52) and people were harassed on their way to Yamaloka by the kālapāsās (214.71).

Pattisa:- It is a kind of spear with a keen edge made of copper or iron. Dikshitar differs from Dr. Oppert who considers it to be a battle-axe.<sup>101</sup>

The Br. P. states that the sinners are troubled with it in the Yamaloka (215.40,102).

Pināka:- It is the śūla of Śiva, usually translated as a trident. It had three prongs made of iron and the front is of brass. It measured four cubits. Śukrācārya speaks of it as Trisīras measuring three hastas. Its uses are striking, thrusting, rending, cutting to pieces, breaking and severing.<sup>102</sup>

The Br. P. frequently alludes to lord Śiva as Pināka-pāni.

Prāsa:- It measured four hastas and had a sharp face. Vaisampāyana speaks of it as made of bamboo with a metallic head.

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100 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., P.108.

101 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., P.114.

102 Ibid., P. 113.

It was handled in four ways and was seven cubits long.<sup>103</sup>

The Br. P. states that the foot-soldiers in the army of king Indradyumna held *prāsa* in their hands (44.18,21).

Śakti:- It is identified with spear. It is two cubits long and had an open and a broad mouth in shape like the leaf of a tree. Its ends resembled the udder of a cow and were four hastas in length. It required the use of both the hands. Its blade was of metal and the handle of wood.<sup>104</sup>

The Br. P. states that in his fight with the king Paundraka Vāsudeva, lord *kṛṣṇa* released the *śakti* over the army and defeated it (207.19). In Yamaloka, the sinners are troubled by its use (214.73), (215.40,52,81). The demons used it (214.68).

Śara:- Its length is three cubits. Two movements are peculiar to it. The *sātapatha Brāhmaṇa* relates how an arrow came to be designated *śara*.<sup>105</sup> When Indra threw his thunderbolt against *Vṛtra* it became separated into four parts. The first three were the wooden sword, post and the chariot. The last piece which was broken off by the blow fell on the ground as a *śara*. Because it was broken it was so designated.<sup>106</sup>

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103 Ibid., P.113.

104 Ibid., P.106.

105 1.2.4; VI. 5.2.10

106 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., P.98.

The making of arrow is described in the Agni Purana.<sup>107</sup>

The Br. P. states that king Prthu was born with arrows (4.48,51). King Kārtavīrya released five arrows and defeated Rāvana (13.184,172). Kṛṣṇa and Bāṇāsura threw arrows over each other (206.32). The hunter Jarā pierced the foot of lord Kṛṣṇa with an arrow made up of the remaining part of sāmba's musāla and eventually the death of lord kṛṣṇa resulted from that very tomara (221.5,6). The arrows of lord Rama were shining like the flame of fire and were lustrous like the lightning. They were as powerful as the vajra of Indra (213.141). The arrows should be kept on the right side in the worship of lord kṛṣṇa (61.43). People are harassed by the arrows in the Yamaloka (214.84), (215.40). One who prepared an arrow falls in vedhaka and viśasana hells (22.16).

Śataghni:- The word literally means a hundred killer. Halhead in his Cole of Gentoo laws interpreted it as a cannon<sup>108</sup> while Wilson<sup>109</sup> and Oppert<sup>110</sup>, relying on medieval commentators, constructed it as a rocket. After a critical examination of all the epic references, Hopkins showed that it was neither the one nor the other.<sup>111</sup> There is a difference of opinion regarding its nature among the scholars.<sup>112</sup>

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107 245.12.

108 Halhead, Cole of Gentoo, Laws, Intro. P. iii.

109 Works, IV. 302

110 Op.cit., P.22

111 J.A.O.S. XIII, 299 ff.

112 Chakravarti, P.C., Op.Cit., P.173, Dharma P.C., Op.Cit., PP. 72-73.

The Br. P. states that the Asuras used Śataghni (213.90).

Śāla:- The slabs of stone were used as weapons. The Br. P. states that the Asuras used it (213.92) and that the monkey Dvīda attacked Balarama with a slab of stone (209.17-20).

Śṛṅkhālā:- The Br. P. states that the demons used it (214.68) and on the way to the Yamaloka, the sinners were caught up by chains as strong as the thunderbolt (214.71).

Sūla:- It was practically a spear or javelin. This arm seems to have attained a place of great prominence from the epic period of Indian history.<sup>113</sup> See Pināka.

The Br. P. states that lord Śiva gave a sūla to Śeṣa and he defeated his enemies in the Rasātala by using it (115.10-16). On the way to Yamaloka, the sinners are harassed by it (214.73), (215.52,82). One who looks towards the wealth and wives of others with an evil intention is pierced by sūla in the hell (215.137). The Asuras used it (213.91,92).

Tomara:- It was a kind of dart with a wooden handle and having a hook at the end. Some think that it was a weapon

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113 Date, Op.Cit., P. 16.



with edges like a ploughshare and that it was not crooked.<sup>114</sup>

The Br. P. states that lord kṛṣṇa died due to Tomara, made up of the remaining part of the musala of Sāmba and which was released by a hunter (211.5,6). The soldiers in the army of king Indradyumna used it (44.18). The demons also used it (214.68) and in the Yamaloka, the sinners were harassed by it (214.40).

Tūna:- The Br. P. states that an inexhaustible quiver full of arrows came to lord kṛṣṇa's hand at the time of fighting with Jarāsandha (195.5). The Yamadūtas also possessed it (215.53).

Vajra:- The thunderbolt was identified with the trident, axe and spear. Vedic literature is vague with regard to its make. But it was regarded as the deadliest weapon by society, and the strongest objects were compared with it.<sup>115</sup> In the Tīrthayātrā portion of the Mbh., a mythological origin of this weapon ~~is~~ is given.<sup>116</sup> Its breadth and length were fifty and a hundred miles respectively. It had sharp points and a good handle. Four movements are attributed to it. Sometimes the ends of this weapon were whirled in such a way

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114 Date, Op.Cit., P.22, cf. also Dikshitar, Op.Cit.,P.107.

115 Date, Op.Cit., P.17 Vide also Majumdar N.G., Journal of the department of letters, Calcutta University, Vol. XI.

116 Vanaparva, 99.

as to hold a Bhīṅḍipāla in the middle.<sup>117</sup>

The Br. P. states that Indra wielded the thunderbolt and released it at kṛṣṇa in his fight with him, for the Pārijāta tree but lord kṛṣṇa held it in his hand and the thunderbolt lost its power (203.47), 60, 63). The arrows of lord Rāma were as powerful as the thunderbolt of Indra (203.135-143). The sinners are harassed in the Yamaloka by the vajradanda (215.53).

Yantra:- Yantra is a generic term often loosely used to denote a contrivance of almost any kind. They were also employed as military implements. Kauṭilya speaks of two varieties of yantras, viz. sthira and cala.<sup>118</sup>

The Br. P. states that the Asuras used it (213.91).

Yasti:- The sticks were used as offensive weapons. The Br. P. states that the Ābhīras used sticks in defeating Arjuna (212.18).

All the important deities of the vedas and the Hindu Pantheon are represented as having wielded weapons used by mortals. Siva's weapon is the trident, viṣṇu holds the discus and club, Balārāma holds the plough, paraśurāma has

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117 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., P.110.

118 Dikshitar, Op.Cit., 213.91.

the axe, Umā carries bow, discus, noose, sword and other weapons, Yama uses the daṇḍa; and Indra the bolt. Lesser deities use those or other ordinary weapons. But sometimes mortals are endowed with superhuman powers of destruction. They cast weapons backed by the power of a god. Thus there are as many weapons as there are gods, e.g. Pāsūpata, Brahmaśirasa, Āgneyāstra, Kuberāstram, Varuṇāstram, Rudrāstram, Gandharvāstram, Suryāstram, Māyāstram, Ādityahṛdaya, Brahmāstram, Nārājanāstram, Viṣṇucakra, etc.<sup>119</sup>

Lastly, it should be mentioned that the Br. P. states that the pañcajana conch belonged to Śrī kṛṣṇa, its sound was terrible and it was heavily garlanded (68.97), (59.75), (207.49) and that in the worship of lord kṛṣṇa, the conch should be placed on the right side (61.41).

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119 Date, Op.Cit., PP. 27-28.