

Research Article



GENERAL OUTLINE OF WAR IN VÉRASARVASVAM

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War, since the dawn of human civilization, has stood as one of the most formidable and tragic manifestations of human ambition, power, and political rivalry. It is not merely a clash of weapons upon the battlefield, but a tempest of passions, ideologies, and aspirations that engulfs nations and reshapes the destiny of mankind.¹ Throughout history, empires have risen through the thunder of war drums and fallen amid the ashes of devastation. War is an organized and prolonged conflict conducted by states or non-state actors, marked by unparalleled violence, social upheaval, human agony, and economic ruin.² It represents a deliberate and widespread armed struggle between political communities, thereby constituting a potent form of political intervention and coercion. The art and science through which such conflicts are executed are collectively known as warfare, while the absence of armed hostility is celebrated as peace—the cherished aspiration of humanity. The eminent military philosopher Carl von Clausewitz profoundly observed, “War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will.”³ His timeless definition encapsulates the grim essence of war as an instrument of domination, authority, and political determination. In the *Vérasarvasvam*, it has been mentioned:

*“paraspāreēa bhattayo marjyādāyei jighāṣatō
jigēṇa yānta vyāpāro yo yuddhā tat prakēttitā.”*⁴

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-49

He who observes and by knowing about the conflicting attitude and the ideological difference between the soldiers of both the sides, involves in violent activities and words is called as war.

*“dvandēnu kūte kūōite vākya yuddhe yug yuddhe vā saḍkulevā va haōhebhā
rudrā samyag vā spuspāijalēbhi pūjā kātva yuddhya çāstrā vravēmi”*⁵

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-50

In *Yug yuddha* (*Yukta yuddha*) or *Saikuṣya yuddha* or *Haōōha yuddha*, the author in folded hand and by worshiping Lord *Rudra* with handful flower describes about the *Yuddhaçāstra*.

*“yasya vijīānamātreēa durbalopi jayatyarēn
srauttāropi prahasyanti strēyo kāpuruñāpi”*⁶

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-51

Just by knowing about this *çästra* a weak person also can win over his enemies. The coward and weak women also by knowing about the *çästra* laughs at the enemies or think their enemies as less powerful.

While some scholars see warfare as an inescapable and integral aspect of human culture, others argue that it is only inevitable under certain socio-cultural or ecological circumstances. Some scholars argue that the practice of war is not linked to any single type of political organization or society. Rather, as discussed by John Keegan in his *History of Warfare*, war is a universal phenomenon whose form and scope is defined by the society that wages it.⁷ Another argument suggests that since there are human societies in which warfare does not exist, humans may not be naturally disposed for warfare, which emerges under particular circumstances.⁸ The ever changing technologies and potentials of war extend along a historical continuum. At the one end lie the endemic warfare of the Paleolithic with its stones and clubs, and the naturally limited loss of life associated with the use of such weapons. Found at the other end of this continuum is nuclear warfare, along with the recently developed possible outcome of its use, namely the potential risk of the complete extinction of the human species. The value and importance of the army were realized very early in the history of India, and this led to the maintenance of a permanent militia to put down dissent within and arrest aggression from without. This gave rise to the *kñätreyä* (warrior caste), and the *kñätträ dharmä* came to mean the primary duty of war. To serve the country by participating in war became the *svadharmä* of this warrior community.

Value and importance of the Army

The value and importance of the army were realized very early in the history of India, and this led in course of time to the maintenance of a permanent militia to put down dissensions. War or no war, the army was to be maintained, to meet any unexpected contingency. This gave rise to the *kñätreyä* or warrior caste, and the *kñätträ dharmän* came to mean the primary duty of war. To serve the country by participating in war became the *svadharmä* or this warrior community. The necessary education, drill and discipline to cultivate militarism were confined to the members of one community, the *kñätreyäs*. This prevented the military attitude of other communities and kept the whole social structure unaffected by actual war and war institutions.

The *Atharva Veda* says: "May we revel, living a hundred winters, rich in heroes." The whole country looked upon the members of the *kñätreyä* community as defenders of their country and consequently did not grudge the high influence and power wielded by the *kñätreyäs*, who were assigned a social rank next in importance to the intellectual and spiritual needs of the society. The ancient Hindus were a sensitive people, and their heroes were instructed that they were defending the noble cause of God, Crown and Country. Viewed in this light, war departments were 'defense' departments and military expenditure were included in the cost of defense. In this, as in many cases, ancient India was ahead of modern ideas.

Chivalry, individual heroism, qualities of mercy and nobility of outlook even in the grimmest of struggles were not unknown to the soldiers of ancient India. Thus among the laws of war, we find that (1) a warrior (*kñätreyä*) in armor must not fight with one not so clad (2) one should fight only one enemy and cease fighting if the opponent is disabled, (3) aged men, women and children, the retreating, or one who held a straw in his lips as a sign of unconditional surrender should not be killed. It is of topical interest to note that one of the laws enjoins the army to leave the fruit and flower gardens, temples and other places of public worship unmolested. Terence Duke, author of *The Boddhisattva Warriors: The Origin, Inner Philosophy, History and Symbolism of the Buddhist*

Martial Art within India and China have mentioned that martial arts went from India to China. Fighting without weapons was a specialty of the ancient *Kñatréya* warriors of India.

Different Types of War

*“yuddhaà caturvidhaà tatca daivaà gāndharva-māsuraà
mānuñāà ceti tadvedāu pratyekaà saptasaptadhā”⁹*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-52

This war is of four types namely *Daiva*, *Āsura*, *Gāndharva* and *Mānuñā* (Human). Each of the war is again divided into seven parts. In this way, the wars are of seven types (1) *Dāg Yuddhaà*, (2) *Bāk Yuddhaà*, (3) *Dvanda Yuddhaà*, (4) *Vyūhita Yuddhaà*, (5) *Tumuḃa Yuddhaà*, (6) *Kūōa Yuddhaà*, (7) *Haōōha Yuddhaà*.

*“daivaà deva kātaà jīeyaà gāndharvaà tat kātaà matat
āsuraà cāsura kātaà mānusaà mānuseiū kātaà
atteiñāà saptavidyaà :-
dāk yuddhaà cātha vāg yuddhaà dvanda yuddhaà tataū paraà
vyūhitaà tumulaà kūōaà haōōha yuddhaà miti kramāt”¹⁰*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-53

The war between the god's is called as *Daiva*, the war between the *Gāndharvas* is known as *Gāndharva*, the war between the demons or *Āsuras* is called as *Āsura* war and the war between the human being is called as *Mānuñā* or human war.

*“tatra dāg yuddhaà yathā :-
kāra dāñōō mityā vairé varjaye yat pradarçanaà
dāg yuddhaà tanmataà çalya karēayoū kāñēayo yathā”¹¹*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-54

Regarding the seven parts of the war, the author of the *Vérasarvasvam* has mentioned about the *Dāg Yuddha* or war through frown look. The war which occurs between two persons through frown eye to eye contact in a worst manner is called as *Dāg Yuddha*. This type of war was fought between Karna and Salya along with Kāñēa in the *Mahābhārata* war.

*“tad yathā :-
avidhyāt pundarékākñāū çalyaà nayanāsāyakeiū
sacāpi pundarékākñāà tatheivābhi saseikñāta
tatrā jayad vāsudevaū çalyaà nayanāsāyakeiū
karēāà cāpya jayad dāñyā kuntéputro dhanaijayaū”¹²*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-55

Çrékāñna had thrown the eye arrow to Salya. On the other hand, Salya had also thrown eye arrow to Kāñna. In that eye war Kāñna had won the war. Like that Arjun had also won the eye war from Karēa in the *Mahābhārata*.

*“vag yuddhaà yathā :-
atyuca karkaça girā yaccha marmaspāçā vāsaà
vairēō vāsanaà tad yad vāg yuddhaà rāmayoyathā
tattu rāmāyaēe jīeyaà rāmayoū pathigachhatoū
jayattā rāmacandreēa jāmadagnyā parājitaū”¹³*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-56

Regarding the speech war, the author has mentioned that this kind of war occurs between the two enemies through rough type of speech. This type of war had occurred between the two

Ramas-Rama and Parsurama. This war was fought between the two (Rama and Parsurama) while they were on the way. In this war Rama had won the war and Parsurama had got defeated.

*“dvandayuddhaà yathä :-
tulya yänä yuddha vyüha yäta vidyā mahattayou
yad yuddhaà dvanda mityāhu vahulaà tat kāpeëa ca
vidyā darçana velāyāà serñaryou pāarthakarēayou
dvanda yuddhasya maryādā kāpeëa kalitā kila
tathāhi - yayorātmasamaà vittaà jayoratmasamaà valaà
jayavidyā dāmeitrica uttamādhamayou kvacit
yathä - padabhi padātià rathinaà rathya sturangasādéturangādhi güdhaà
yantä gajasyāvvyupatað gajasthaà tulyaà pratidvandaja babhüva yuddhaà”¹⁴*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-57

The war which happens between the two sides with equal weapons, vehicle, equal creation of array along with intellect and diplomacy is called as *Dvanda Yuddha* or duel. This type of combat between the two warriors had occurred in the battle of *Mahābhārata*. It was created by the knowledge given to Arjuna by Kṛpacarya and out of jealousy between the two for which the duel was fought between Karna and Arjuna. It was also guessed by Kṛpacarya. The author also mentions that the war should be fought based on equal footing like the infantry should fight with the infantry, the charioteer should fight with the charioteer, the cavalry should fight with the cavalry and the elephantry should fight with the elephantry. This type of war can be rightly said as a war based on equal footing.

*“vyühitaà yathä :-
purvoktaà vyüha saàsthaneì yad yuddhaà vairinomitha
tað yuddhaà vyühitaà jïeyaà kuru pandavayoyathä.”¹⁵*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-58

As mentioned earlier that the war fought between the two enemies through the creation of arrays is called as *Vyühita Yuddha*. This kind of *Vyühita Yuddha* or *Vyüha Yuddha* (**Pl. No. XI**) was fought between the Kauravas and Pandavas.

*“tatra sanjaybākayā :-
paresāà durvidaà dāñtvā vyühaà vajrārvyamagrataù
asmākaà garuðà vyüha viñenaive vinirmitaù.”¹⁶*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-60

Description of War

In the *Mahābhārata* war, Sanjay could see the *Vajra Vyüha* (an impregnable array) created by the *Senāpati* (commander) of the Pandavas and said to the Kauravas not to worry about this matter. It is because the *Garuðà Vyüha* created by the *Senāpati* (commander) Bhisma is better than the Pandavas.

*“tumulaà yathä :-
maryādārahitaà yuddhaà tumulaà parikértittaà
yatreakaà vahavo ghnanti varānaghnati varābhayaù
yathä tatreiva :-
pādātén rathino jaghnuù sādinaçca padātayaù
evaà su sakulaà yuddhaà mamaryāda mavarttarta.”¹⁷*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-61

The war without dignity is called as *Tumuḃa Yuddha*. In this war, a great fighter can kill one or many disobeying rules and regulations of war. To disobey the rules and regulations of war is against the religion. But in some cases, the law disobeying persons are seen. In the *Tumuḃa Yuddha*, this kind of deviations are seen. In the war, a warrior should kill a warrior and an infantry should kill an infantry. But it is seen that the charioteer kill the infantry. This type of unusual war is called as worthless war.

*“kūta yuddhaà yathā :-
rātri yuddhaà tu kutaà syāt jīāpti ke tat pradarcitaà
kecit yuddha prahāraà ta bāyṛāghavaryayathā
tatreiva - puriklānte ca dēree ca bhaktānne cāpi sarvartra
prasthāneca prabeḃeca prahatavyaà ripovalaà
vinnayodhaà valaà yacca dvidhā yuktaà ca yad bhavet.”¹⁸*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-62

The war which is fought in the night is called as *Kūōa Yuddha*. In *Sārthaka Bhakti* it has been shown. In some cases the war is occurred through beating. This type of war was fought between Bali and Rama Candra. The soldiers should be either beaten or the army should be divided when the enemy soldiers are taking rest in the fort after being tired in the war, when they are terrified, when they are taking food, when they are returning, when at sleep or awaken, at mid-night, when the charioteer is absent, at the time of division of time, even in all the time whenever it is possible, the enemy soldiers should be either punished or beaten.

*Haōha yuddhaà
mayābhi haōha yuddhaà syāt mayāpi-ca caturvidhā
deva gāndharva daiveya mānusiyaū krameēataū .¹⁹*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-63

*yathā-bhārate :-
caturbidhāsu māyāñu prasaktākūtayodhinaū
yuddhyeñu raparān vérān haōhayante vijayo dhābaū
caturēā sāptavidhyena tyañōāviāḃatyathoditaà
saābhūya yuddhaà caitadbhu niruktaà brahmayāmaḃe
yuddhaà hi kñātrēasyāhuū paraà nirvāēa kāranaà
na svādhyāyona yajīā di nijiāna na tapastathā .²⁰*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-64

*tathāhi- kñētriyāēēā mahārāja saāgrāme nidhanaāmataà
visiḃōā bahubhiū yajīēiū kñātra dhameñu tiñthatā.²¹*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-65

*kim cha:-
brāhmanānām tapastyāgāt pretya dharma vidhiū smātaū
kñātriyānāā hi nidhanaā saāgrāme vihitaà prabho.²²*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-66

*kñātriyāū ḃastramarano yadāsyāt saāsmāta stadā
atrārthe ḃātiratyāhu pramānaà tat pradarsayet.²³*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-67

*dvābimau puruñau loke suryamaēōalabhedinau
paribrāyo pa yuktaḃca raēē cābhimukho hatah.²⁴*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-68

*āhabeṇu mitho nānyaà jighāsantomahékñetaù
yuddhyamānā paraà çaktyā svargaà yāntyaparāmmukhāù
eṇo nupasāta prokto yo dharmāù sa sanātanaù
tasmād dharmā nnacyovate kñatriyoghnan raēe ripūn.²⁵*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-69

*sant yokta tu samerasvātātāē çatrei chinno dasubhi vidhyamānaù
asvagrēbaù karmoçélo mahātmā saāsudhātmā modate svargaloke.
nanu yudheṇu maranaà tulyaà sarbatra sarbadā
kathaà nu phalavaiñamyāà çāyate çāstrotaùpāthak.²⁶*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-70

*iti cet çāēu siddhāntaà mana utsāhabhedataù
sarbartra yuddha maraēe phala vaiñamyā mastihi
yastu sampuritostāhé jébanāçāna pekñakaù
tasyeba yuddhya maraēān mokñāù sūryārdimārgataù
utsāha nūynatonyesāà phalaà nynaà samunnyo
stri prabēnyāha tadrāije dhātarāñōrañya puchite.²⁷*

Vérasarvasvam, Çloka-71

Haōōha Yuddha is performed with the help of magic. This magic is of four types like *Deva*, *Gāndharva*, *Daiveya* and *Mānuña* and these four types of magic have been described serially. Among the four magic or illusion, the *Kūōa* warriors or the diplomatic warriors are the best. The other warriors who are desirous for war follows the *Haōōha Yuddha* or the war with magic or illusion. It has been mentioned in different *Çāstras* that the wise and clever persons use it in 7x28 types. This kind of war has been mentioned in *Nirukta Çāstra* or *Brahma Jāmaṃya* in which it is described that war is definitely for the *Kñātréya Varēas*. The war is the chief or the most desirous aim of the *Kñātréyas* which lead them towards salvation. For getting this salvation or *Nirvāēa* or *Mukti*, the *Kñātréyas* need not to do any kind of *Svādhyā* (reading *Veda*), *Yajia* (*Jiāna*, *Tapa*, *Yoga*, *Pitā*, *Nā*, etc) or *Tapasyā*. The war fulfills their dream of getting salvation.

It has been mentioned in the *Çāstras* that a soldier gets the same path by performing the *Kñātréya* religion and dies in the war as a *Cakravarté* king which he gets the path by performing many special *Yajias*. The *Preta Dharma* is completed for a *Brāhmaēa* who performs his duty through dedication and meditation and for a *Kñātréya* who performs is died while fighting in the battlefield. These are their *Kūōa Yuddha*. In the *Veda*, it has been mentioned that if a *Kñātréya* is killed by a weapon while fighting in the battlefield then automatically, his *Kūōa Yuddha* are completed. By performing their duty perfectly, the *Kñātréya* and the *Brāhmaēa* after their death, gets salvation by entering into the *Suryamaēōaṃya*. It means these two are able to get salvation without performing the *Pretakarma*.

A king who in the face to face war, eager to kill his enemies out of jealousy and in order to prove his prowess, does not goes back gets the salvation. The religion behind this is always eternal or it is always a religious work for a *Kñātréya* to fight in the battlefield. So, by killing the enemies in the battlefield, the religion or Dharma of the king is not destroyed. The warriors who fall from the horse back or seats on the horse back, keeping weapons in the hands, being wounded in the weapons of the enemy etc., are great persons indeed and they get salvation after the death.

In the grand chronicle of human history, war emerges as both the architect of empires and the harbinger of immeasurable sorrow. Its blazing fury has altered the destinies of nations, shattered civilizations, and tested the resilience of humanity across the ages. Though clothed in the language of power, glory, and conquest, war ultimately unveils the fragile condition of human

existence and the ceaseless struggle for authority and survival. The clash of armies and the roar of battlefields are not merely echoes of violence, but reflections of political ambition, ideological conflict, and human aspiration. Yet, amidst the smoke of destruction and the lamentation of suffering, mankind continues to seek the radiant ideal of peace, harmony, and coexistence. Thus, the study of war and warfare is not solely an inquiry into battles and bloodshed, but a profound exploration of human nature, political destiny, and the eternal quest to balance power with justice and civilization.

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