CHAPTER- II

[ The Extent of war ]

Lexicographically, war means an armed conflict among political groups involving hostilities of considerable duration and magnitude. In the usage of social science, certain characteristics are added to qualify any armed conflict a 'war'. Sociologists usually apply the term 'war' to such conflicts only if they are initiated and conducted in accordance with socially recognised forms. They treat war as an institution recognised in custom or in law. Military writers usually confine the term 'war' to hostilities in which the contending groups are sufficiently equal in power to render the outcome uncertain for a time. It is to be noted here that the armed conflicts of powerful states with primitive peoples are usually called 'pacifications', military expeditions, or explorations; with small states they are called interventions or reprisals; and with internal groups rebellions or insurrections. Such incidents, if the resistance is sufficiently strong or protracted, may achieve a magnitude that entitles them to the name 'war'. From the above mentioned viewpoints we can say that war is a state of disturbed

peace taking the shape of declared or undeclared hostility between two or more countries.

I. Extent of War:

So far as the extent of war in ancient India is concerned, it appears that the affect of war was mainly on the war department of the state and the warriors involved in it. The civilians, in general, were not disturbed. So, the vitals of the social structure was never effected, as it does today. During the days of the Mahābhārata, war was found to be geographically limited. It was operated only in the agreed specified location. The civilian areas were not touched. Moreover, the war appeared to be continued till the king of the enemy was killed or captured. Thus, the great Mahābhārata war fought at Kurukṣetra between the two formidable families, that of the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas and, as stated in the Mahābhārata, continued for eighteen days,— indeed a fight to the finish, as it were, with the final victory going in favour of the Pāṇḍavas,— is an example of it. In this war of great magnitude, the warriors alone were the targets, and that too, while fighting during the specified time and the agreed locality; at other times, that is, when there was no fighting, the warriors did never attack their opponents. Similarly, the very description of the battle between Kṛṣṇa and Śiśupāla,— dealt with in cantos XVII-XX of the Śiśupālavadha,—
is found to be confined in a particular locality, where civil population are seemed to have been absent. The warriors alone fought with each other. There is hardly any instance to be cited from the very kāvya of Māgha that during the period of war, civilians were ever disturbed in their day to day life.

Kautilya, in his Arthaśāstra, recommends open warfare as the most righteous one, and suggests that in order to be strictly in accordance with dharma, the place and time of battle must be specified beforehand.² So far as the location of the battlefield is concerned, Māgha has not mentioned the name of any particular place or time. However, from the very first and second sloka of canto XVIII of the Śiśupālavadha, it appears that the caturāṅgasena of both the sides, i.e. of Kṛṣṇa and Śiśupāla met each other in the open air.³ Kauṭilya, as do other authorities in statecraft, hold that in the happiness of his subjects, lies the king’s happiness, in their welfare his welfare; he shall not consider as good only that which pleases him, but treat as beneficial to him whatever pleases his subjects.⁴ With such high moral and ethical principles in the

4. Āś. I. 19. 34.
background, it would be natural that the *Arthaśāstra* would never give preference to any kind of involvement of the entire population or nation in the warfare. Thus, as stated above, the meeting of the *caturāṅgasena* in the open air battle-field shows that, Māgha follows the principles laid down by Kauṭilya in the *Arthaśāstra*.

Compared to this, the wars of modern time, on the other hand, found to be total wars, extending from the battle-fields to the kitchen of each and every individual citizen of the state. The concept of the involvement of the entire nation in war seem to have occured probably from the time of the famous French Emperor, Napoleon Bonaparte.

II. Causes of War:

The causes of war may be many and varied. The modern writers on militarism enumerates and classify the causes of war into the following categories: (i) political, (ii) ideological, (iii) psychological, (iv) emotional (v) socio-economic etc.

(i) The ambition of any particular ruler or state authority for establishing political supremacy over others falls under political category of causes of war. In early times, wars were fought for establishing one's political hegemony or socio-economic superiority. Performance of *āsvamedha-yajña*, *rajasūya-yajña* etc. in the Indian context during the days of
the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, indicate the motive of any particular king, or his urge which bound him to perform such yajñās, was nothing but to bring the whole of India under his single overlordship. This longing to set up a common political organisation gave birth to the concept of cakravartin or sārbabhauma ruler(s). We may notice in the Arthaśāstra about cakravartin, wherein Kauṭilya stated, “Place means the earth. In that, the region of the sovereign ruler extends northwards between the Himavat and the sea, one thousand yojana in extent across.”

In the Śiśupālavadha, also, there is a description of the performance of Rājasūya-yajña by Yudhiṣṭhira, wherein Kṛṣṇa was invited specially.

Undoubtedly, the motive behind performing Rājasūya-yajña by Yudhiṣṭhira was nothing but bringing the whole Bharatavarṣa under the hegemony of Hastināpura, implying thereby the expansion of his kingdom. In the modern context, the first world war started due to the policy of expansion taken up by K. William of Gemany. Thus, it appears that the urge for expansion of one’s territory or kingdom plays a vital

5. (Kangle p. 407) “desah prthivī / tasyāṁ
himavatsamudrāntaramudicīnaḥ yojana-sahasraparimāṇah tiryak
cakravartikṣe-trāni” / -ibid. 9.1.17-18.

6. “yiyaksamāṇaḥūṭah pārthenāṭha dvīṣanmuraṇ” -Śiśu. II. 1. Śrīkṛṣṇa, invited by prthāputra Yudhiṣṭhīrī, who was willing to perform yajñās.
role and ignites military activism.

(ii) Urge to expand political ideologies to others by any means also leads to armed conflicts. There are political powers or countries who make endeavour to extend their ideologies to another country either through diplomatic process or through other possible means, not excluding war. These types of war can be called ideological. As for examples, the joining of the communist country of China with that of North Korea against the combined forces of South Korea and USA can be cited as a point.

(iii) Psychology plays a major role in causing war. Strong aversion or dislike, i.e., for any political authority or people may sometimes lead to war. Arrogance and haughtiness as well as jealousy may be regarded as the psychological factors which caused most of the ancient wars. In this connection we may cite the example of Śiśupāla who behaved perversely in the Rājasūya-yajña performed by Yudhiṣṭhira. Krṣṇa was one of the main invitees amongst the wise and learned ones to that yajña. Considering the superiority of Krṣṇa amongst the invitees, Bhīṣma advised Yudhiṣṭhira to offer the first arghya to Him, and it was done accordingly. But Śiśupāla could not tolerate it and expressed his anger and bravery as in the
following manner,—“now the brave and fearless Cedi king started speaking with harsh words like a thundering cloud.”\(^7\)

Śiṣupāla, at first, expressed his anger with his unruly body language, that his mind was without fear; later on his utterances created such a situation which forebode the occurrence of a war in the near future with Kṛṣṇa.\(^8\)

(iv) Sometimes emotions come to join hands with psychology, and here countries or clans join hands with some other warring country or clan mainly on emotional grounds or on grounds of values. Bhīṣma declared in the very site of the Rājasūya-yajña: “I am offering my worship to Kṛṣṇa in this very assembly. Those who cannot tolerate this can take bow and I keep my foot over the head of all those kings.”\(^9\) At this, the supporters of Śiṣupāla, then and there, became very much emotional, and thus got agitated. These emotions affected

\(^7\) dhvanayan sabhāmatha sanīraghanaravagabhihvacamavadatiroṣavaśādatinīṣṭhorasphütatarākṣarāmasau //Śiṣu. XV. 13.

\(^8\) “prathamāṁ śāriṇajāvikaṁ kṛtamukulabandhamavyathiṁ / bhāvikalahapalayogamasau vacanena kopakusumāṁ vyacikasat/”

-ibid. 12.

\(^9\) “vihitaṁ mayādyasadasidamaṁśiṁṣitamacyutārcaṁ/
ayasā namayatva sa cāpamayaṁ caranəḥ kṛtaḥ śirasi sarvabhūḥbhṛtaṁ/”

-Śiṣū. XV. 46.

compare also:

paśuvad ghatanaṁ vā me dahanam va katāgniṁ /
kriyatāṁ murdhni vo nyastam mayedam śakalam padam //

-Mbh. Sabha. 43. 40.
the psychology of those kings and, thus, king Bāṇa, Druma, Veṇudārī, Uttamajā, Dantavakra, Rukmī, Subal, Āhuki, Kālayavana, Vasu and others stood in support of Śiśupāla and prepared themselves to fight cruelly against Kṛṣṇa (canto XV). On the other hand, psychological factors have great impact in the battle-field, which may influence the results of the war, also. A break of psychological balance of the leader of the enemy forces, may invite defeat. In the Kurukṣetra war, various methods were applied to break the enemy’s morale.

(v) Another cause of war is socio-economic. Where countries wage war on others to establish socio-economic superiority over others or to derive more socio-economic benefits from the defeated nations, are described as socio-economic cause of war.

The above enumeration and classification, however, are of general nature, common to all times and climes as far as militarism is concerned. But so far as the ancient world is concerned, the conditions are somewhat different, and this is more apparent in ancient Indian perspective. Ancient India was divided into and studded with an unspecified number of principalities, big or small, often without natural boundaries to mark them off into distinct
geo-political (territorial) units, and were constantly at war with each other. In the circumstances, it is quite natural that the military strength of a particular kingdom is the only guarantee for its continuity. Thus, with ambitious and war-mongering rulers around, it is quite natural that frequent armed conflicts took place with variant results. The factors leading to such frequent armed conflicts, as summarised by Kāmandaka, are varied, sometimes even of very trivial character. To quote the Kāmandakīya: “Usurpation of the kingdom, abduction of women, seizure of provinces and portions of territory, carrying away of vehicles and treasures, arrogance, morbid sense of honour, molestation of dominions, extinction of learning, destruction of property, violation of laws, prostration of the regal powers, influence of evil destiny, necessity of helping friends and allies, disrespectfull demeanour, destruction of friends, want of compassion on creatures, disaffection of the prakṛti-
maṇḍala, and common eagerness for possession of the same object—these and many such others have been said to be the sources of war, vigraha-yonayāḥ.”¹⁰ But in spite of all these, the concept of sārvabhauma or cakravartin is the most potent cause of war.

¹⁰ Kāmandakīya. X. 2-5.
III. The Types of War:

The ancient Indian thinkers on statecraft describes two types of war, viz., (i) prakāśa-yuddha, i.e., open warfare and (ii) kūṭayuddha, i.e., secret or unethical warfare. prakāśa-yuddha or open battle, also called dharmayuddha, is one where there is no secret or concealed tactics applied while fighting, where there is no application of stratagem (deception) or artifice in the operation of the war. In fact, the fight that is fought between the parties at the predetermined place and time, and according to the strict codes of ethics and chivalry (ksatradharmma) is considered righteous, i.e. dharmistha, and, thus, is termed prakāśa(-yuddha) or dharmayuddha. Kautilya stated that “prakāśa-yuddha or open war is the fighting at the place and time indicated.”

Thus, the king who fights a righteous battle is called dharmmavijayin, Righteous Conqueror. Raghu’s digvijaya is described as dharmavijaya, because in his carrier of conquest Raghu is reported to have defeated the king of Mahendra mountain, and reinstated him soon after, without doing any harm to the vanquished king’s person. cf.

grhīta pratimuktasya sa dharmmavijayarī nṛpaḥ /

śriyāṁ mahendranāthasya jahāra na tu mediniṁ // (Raghu, IV. 43)

The Allahabad Stone Pillar Inscription glorifies the achievements of Samudragupta, c. 4th cen. A.D., wherein the king is described by Harîśena, the author of the record, to have adopted the policy of *grahaṇa-mokṣaṇa*, i.e., to capture and release in his campaign in the southern region.\(^{12}\)

*Kūṭayuddha*, on the other hand, is unrighteous war. It is the negation of the laws of war. It is a crafty fight carried on in secret. Sometimes it is effected by the use of *mantras* (incantation) and of charms and spells. Sometimes it goes by the name of *mantra-yuddha*, permissible only for purposes of defence, and, that too, only as a last resort. When facing a more powerful, greedy and cunning opponent, the *viṣiṣṭa* may resort to *kūṭayuddha*, i.e., concealed fighting, involving the use of any tactics, fair or foul, on the principle that ‘nothing was unfair in war’, only the ‘end should justify the means’, —the end being complete victory in the battle-field. In the *kūṭayuddha*, the enemy can be attacked at any time under all circumstances,— day or night, or while sleeping or eating, etc. Kautšilya, while dealing with the subject gives detailed illustration of *kūṭa-yuddha*.\(^{13}\) The *Mānasollāsa*\(^{14}\) refers to several


\(^{13}\). As. 10. 3. 2-25.

\(^{14}\). C. 1140 A.D. Vide, Altekar, p. 298 f.
kinds of *kūṭa-yuddha*, such as *deśanāsaka* (where villages were burnt down), *janāṅgachedaka* (mutilation of enemy subjects), *gogrāha* (carrying away of cattle), *dhānyaharaṇa* (plundering of corn), *bandigrāha* (imprisonment of traders and wealthy persons), *sthānadāḥa* (burning of residence and palaces) etc. In the *Arthaśāstra*, elaborate discussion on *kūṭa-yuddha* are found, in Book XII. 2, more particularly, the method of diplomacy underlay the *kūṭayuddha*. Kautilya also introduces a third type of war, called *tūṣnīṁ-yuddha* (silent fighting), implying, thereby, the use of secret agents for enticing enemy officers or killing them secretly.\(^{15}\)

In the *Śiśupālavadha*, one may notice that Māghpandita has used the expression ‘*kṛtānekaṃyā*’.\(^{16}\) It is also seen that Śiśupāla wanted to use illusory powers to win over Kṛṣṇa, and, accordingly, in the battle *svāpana astra*\(^{17}\) was used. Against this, Kṛṣṇa used his *kaustabhamani*, which had the power of dispelling darkness and bringing light.\(^{18}\) Then Śiśupāla used *nāgāstra*, as a result of which a large number of big and frightening serpents came out to

\(^{15}\) vikramasya prakāśayuddhāṁ kūṭayuddhāṁ tūṣnīṁyuddhāṁ / -As. 7.6.17. also, yogagūḍhopāparthāḥ tūṣnīṁyuddhāsyā lañṣāṇām / -ibid. 41.

\(^{16}\) yā babhāra kṛtānekaṁyaḥ senā sasāratāṁ / dhānunḥ sa kārṣan rahitāmayāsenaśasāra tārī / -Śiśu. XIX. 15.

\(^{17}\) svāpana astra creates darkness and makes the warriors feel sleepy, cf. -ibid. XX. 33-35.

\(^{18}\) ibid. XX. 37-38.
the battle field. Kṛṣṇa, to counter this menace, took the help of Garuḍa, who had the power to bring an end to the calamities created by those ferocious serpents. Śiśupāla then resorted to applying the āgneyāstra, against which Kṛṣṇa called for the varuṇāstra, which had the power to obstruct the force of āgneyāstra.

In this war whenever Śiśupāla tried to hoodwink the opposite forces by taking recourse to the expedient of māyā, i.e. illusion, Kṛṣṇa also with his vast knowledge and experience applied all kinds of tactics and destroyed the stratagems of cunning Śiśupāla.

Thus, it is apparent that Māgha considered the above expedients as one sort of diplomacy; and the application of the expedient of māyā, perhaps could not but cunning intrigue. Certainly, this was considered by Māgha as one of the methods of danda as prescribed by Kauṭilya.

Normally, both the saints and soldiers used to hate the kūṭayuddha, and those who participated in it. What is more, the participants of the kūṭayuddha were considered by others as cowards and despicable as immoral (Mahābhārata: Salya-parva). However, in the Kurukṣetra war, it has been found that both Pāṇḍavas and

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19. *ibid.* XX. 41-44.
20. *ibid.* XX. 52.
22. *ibid.* XX. 76.
Kauravas occasionally resorted to the *kūṭayuddha*. For example, killing of Abhimanyu by seven great warriors of the Kauravas attacking him at a time, killing of sons of Draupadī violating the ethics of war may be cited as proof. Similarly, in the final stage of the great war, the Pāṇḍavas could win the Kurukṣetra war only through *kūṭayuddha*.

History of many civilised countries is full of *kūṭayuddha*. Modern wars are normally fought in the manner applicable only in the *kūṭayuddha*, in spite of the Geneva convention.²³

IV. Astronomy, Astrology and Superstition:

Astronomy, astrology and prejudices also play important role during the period of war. It is to be recalled that *jyotiṣa* is one of the subsidiary studies (*vedāṅga*) in the vedic lore. It is also noteworthy that *jyotiṣa* is primitive astronomy designed mainly for the purpose of setting the dates and times at which periodical sacrifices were to be perfomed. The kings and the *senāpatis* of the war were generally influenced by astronomy. It is the position of stars, planets and other astronomical bodies that guided them to

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²³ The Geneva convention was held in 1864 A.D and the Principle that 'enemy injured in the battle should either be returned to the enemy's camp or brought to own camp for treatment; in the latter case the enemy should be repatriated with full honours after complete recovery,' as enunntiated by Bhiṣma in the Śāntiparvan of *Mahābhārata* has been accepted by 12 nations. The provisions of the Geneva convention, however, was amended in 1906, 1929 and 1949.
read and find out the result in advance of the battle. In the days of the *Mahābhārata* most of the great warriors are found to be guided by the results of calculation of the stars etc. On the eve of the Kurukṣetra war, when Kṛṣṇa was trying to dissuade Karna from the on coming Kurukṣetra war, Karna told Kṛṣṇa that the positions of Saturn, Mars, Moon, Sun, Rāhu etc. were clearly indicative of the Kaurava’s defeat. In Vedic times, also, the Indians had high esteems for astronomy. It was adopted mainly for the purposes of prognostication.

Kauṭilya, it appears, was opposed to the reliance on the guidance of stars. “Wealth”, he says, “will pass away from that childish man who constantly consults the stars. The only guiding star of wealth is itself.” Though Kauṭilya mocks the belief in stars as a means of obtaining wealth, he recommends that the Purohita be also learned in reading omens (I.9.9). The soothsayer, reader of omens and the astrologers were paid employees of the court. Astrologers accompanies the king on military expeditions and were used to encourage their own troops and frighten the enemy’s on the eve of battle (X.3.44). The list of such professionals, as it appears from *Arthasastra* include; *kārtāntika* (soothsayer),

25. “नक्षत्रांति प्रचंतां सृजनात भालमार्थों तिवरतेत / अर्थो ह्यार्थस्या नक्षत्रान्ति किरिं कारिष्यांति तारकां”// -As. IX. 4. 26.
naimittika (reader of omens), mauhūrtika (astrologer) and iksanika (intutions). (XIII.1.7). However, while discussing about setting up of the camp concerning war, Kautilya stated that on a site, approved by the experts in the science of building, the commandant, carpenters and astrologers should cause the camp to be set up,—circular, rectangular, or square or in conformity with the nature of the gorund, with four gates, six roads and nine divisions endowed with a moat, a rampart, a parapet, gates and towers, when there is danger and when the army has to halt.26

Some superstititious beliefs guided the kings, the commanders and others in the battle field so far as the victory or loss in the war being fought. If a deer is found to be crossing by the right side of the advancing army, the soldiers thought the victory was sure in favour of them. In one place in the Udyogaparva, Karṇa told Kṛṣṇa that he had a dream in which he saw a deer passing by the right side of the Pāṇḍavas while on the march, thereby indicating their victory.27 Birds, like peacock, duck, lyrebird, stork etc. were considered to be good omens, while vultures, eagles, crows, honeybees were taken as evils. Jackel-cries were considered to be signals of dangers.

27. prahrśtaṁ vāhanaṁ kṛṣṇa pāṇḍavānāṁ pracakṣate /
pradakṣinā mrgaśeiva tat teṣāṁ jayalakṣaṇam //
-Mbh. Udyoga. 143. 16.
Astronomers and astrologers had distinguished positions in the courts of Hindu kings of ancient India. When an expedition was decided upon, astrologers were consulted to ascertain the most lucky moment for the formal departure of the army. We may draw instances from the *Mahābhārata*: “That king,” says Bhīṣma, “who sets out under a proper consultation and on auspicious lunation, always succeeds in winning victory.” Bāṇa, in his *Harsacarita*, informs us that king Harṣa consulted “a troop of astronomers numbering hundreds on the eve of his *digvijaya* campaign.” In the *Arthaśāstra*, however, it appears that Kautilya keeps himself away from such types of superstitious feelings or beliefs. While the author has no compunction about exploiting the gullibility of the people, he himself had no belief in magic or occult. Most of his phenomena are tricks which he tells as a teacher of practical statecraft. In the *Śiśupālavadha*, Māgha seems to have shown no sort of weakness for astronomy, astrology or superstitious beliefs and prejudices in connection with war.

V. Attitude Towards War:

War is always viewed as the most despicable act of man.

29. cf. “*atha vyatīteṣu ca keśuciddivaseṣu mauhūrtikamandaṇdaṇeṣaḥ sataṣaḥ sugaṇite supraśasteḥ hani datte catasṭmāmapidīśāṁ viṣayāgyo ye daṇḍayātrālagnena...........*”. *Harsacarita* VII.p.53.
The Indian thinkers on statecraft were wholly aware of the evil effects of war on the society. War leads to the wastage of human life, the enormous damage to the state economy and the perpetuation of cruel acts on man and animals, etc. Hence the ambitious kings (vijigīṣu) are advised to prefer peace to war. They held that there were other ways rather than war for gaining power, which was the ambition of an aspiring king. The king is, therefore, advised to resort to strategical diplomacy and enter into any type of alliance. In this Kauṭilya, followed by others, recommends the four expedients (upāyas), viz., sāma (negotiation), dāna (gift), bheda (sowing seeds of dissension in the enemy camp) and danda (resorting to arms). The Indian thinkers held that sāma, i.e., pacific relations established through negotiations is the best and that danda i.e., scoring settlement by resorting to arms should be the last resort when the first three strategems fail. Dāna (gift) implies alliance gained by gifts and offering monetary help at the time of need. But bheda is intrigue, treachery that is to make the enemy camp weak by applying various means of intrigue with the help of spies, such as sowing seeds of dissension among the rulers, courtiers and the generals, thereby creating an atmosphere of disbelief and uncertainty. Manu strongly supports the above stated viewpoints.30

30. MS. VIII. 198.
Magha held that *sāma* is not applicable to an enemy who could be won over by resorting to arms alone. In such a case, the principle of ‘*svedastu svedane dharma*’ (*Viśva.*) is applicable, thereby implying that a wicked enemy should be subdued by the application of the fourth *upāya*, *daṇḍa*, i.e., by war. Magha opines that angry and wicked Śiśupāla should be destroyed by the application of *daṇḍa* alone, because *sāma* might increase his anger.

Even if such were the attitude of the thinkers on statecraft, there is another side of the picture.

In early times, fighting was considered the duty (*dharma*) of a *kṣatriya*, and one dying while fighting was regarded as attaining martyrdom, i.e., sacrificing his life for the sake of his *dharma* (duty). *Manu* asserts that the kings fighting with utmost exertion

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31. *Śiśu.* II. 54-55.
32. cf. *ahaveṣu mitho’nyonyam jighāṅsanto mahīkṣitaḥ* / *yudhyamānāḥ param ākṣyā svargāṁ yāntyaparāṁูกांḥ* //  
-MS. VII. 89.
to slay each other in battle not turn back, go to heaven if got killed fighting, in the process. But it was not so that everybody liked war. Wisemen always counselled for avoiding it. Moreover, victory achieved through sama-niti, i.e., by negotiations etc. was treated as the best, the one that is achieved through dāna-niti, i.e., treaties was better; victory gained through bheda-niti, i.e., by foul means, i.e., by causing dissension in the enemy’s camp, was good; and victory achieved through war (yuddha) was of the lowest grade.

In other words, waging war should be resorted to only when all the three other methods of negotiation and diplomacy fail. In the Udyogaparva (Chap.1 & 2) of the Mahābhārata, it may be seen that on the eve of the Kurukṣetra war, Kṛṣṇa advised the Pāṇḍavas and their allies to put in efforts for achieving the objective through sandhi, i.e. treaty. Balarāma went further and stated that the wealth earned through treaty, though less than expected, was much better than the vast wealth obtained through war.

Probably nowhere in the history of India, one may find any instance of annexation of territories through shooting war without having made prior efforts through negotiations, or other peaceful methods. Kauṭilya in his Arthaśāstra recommends the application of the sama-niti, i.e., the diplomatic approches towards the conquered king, so that the latter may remain loyal. He recommends
the policy of dāna, i.e., gifts to inferior kings. This policy was put into operation if the straight method of conciliation, i.e., sāma did not produce the desired effect. According to him, the policy of bheda is an effective weapon to bring even a strong king to his knees. The Arthaśāstra mentioned different ways of sowing seeds of dissension, such as instigating any one of the neighbouring kings, a wild chief, a scion of the enemy’s family, or an important prince against the ruler.33 Kauṭilya prefers the policy of danda to be followed in the case of stronger powers only. It is the last mode of policy of diplomatic utility. In modern times also recourse to shooting war is taken by the sensible nations only when all other methods fail.

Thus, it may be said that the attitude to or status of the shooting war has still remained unchanged in India from the days of the Mahābhārata.

VI. Principles and ethics of war:

(A) Principles:

The ancient Indian thinkers on statecraft like Bṛhaspati, Śukrācāryya, Manu, Kṛṣṇa and others as well as the military leaders like Bhīṣma, Aśvatthāmā, etc. set before the vijigīśu certain principles to be followed while launching any campaign of conquest.

33. Āś. VII. 16.
These may be classified in three groups, viz., (i) General principles, which deal with seasons, topography, etc.; (ii) Tactical, which deals with the deployment of forces, the methods of attack and defence; (iii) Knave, meaning deceitful when necessary, which includes the principles enunciated by Kṛṣṇa, Śukrācāryya and Aśvatthāmā. Bhīṣma’s recommendations relate to the appropriate time or season for launching any expedition as well as the placement of the forces while in the march. A great military leader as he happened to be, Bhīṣma suggests that in launching an expedition for war, the king (vijigīṣu) should start between the months of Agrahāyaṇa (Nov. - Dec.) to Caitra (March-April), as during these months plenty of drinking water and foodstuff remain available. At the same time, weather is neither too hot nor too cold. However, he suggests that the adversary can be attacked at any time of the year, if the victory over the enemy seems to be certain, or if the enemy is on deep troubles. (*Mbh.* Śāntiparvan, 100, 11-12)

Manu also expressed a similar view. In this regard, Kauṭilya stated that the king should march against the enemy, or on an expedition in Mārgaśīrṣa, with a view to destroy his (enemy’s) monsoon crops and winter sowings; he should march in Caitra, with a view to destroying the enemy’s winter crops and spring

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34. *MS.* VII. 181-183.
sowings; he should march on an expedition in Jyaiśṭha against the 
enemy, whose stores of grass, timber and water are exhausted, 
and whose fort is unrepaired, with a view to destroy his spring 
crops and monsoon sowings. Kautilya also suggested that the king 
should march on an expedition of long duration between Mārgaśīrṣa 
and Pauṣa full-moon days, on one of medium duration between 
Caitra and Vaiśākha full-moon days, on one of short duration 
between Jyaiśṭha and Āśādha full-moon days.35

As regards placement of the forces, Bhīṣma suggested that 
chariots and cavalry should be used more during the non-rainy 
seasons, while during the rains the foot-soldiers and elephantry 
are more useful.

In this connection, Kautilya holds that at a time when excessive 
heat is over, the vijīgīṣu should march with elephant division, and 
in the reverse case, king should march with troops consisting mostly 
of donkeys, camels and horses in a region with little rain and 
mud; in a region mostly desert, he should march with the four-
fold army when it is raining.36

On the other hand, the views of Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of 
the gods, are concerned with the conservation of manpower and

35. As. IX. I. 34-36, 40-41.
36. ibid. 45-50.
economy of efforts. From this it follows that, according to Bṛhaspati, the enemy should be attacked only when one’s own strength is considerably superior to that of the enemy.

In this connection, Kautilya is of the opinion that after ascertaining the strength or weakness of powers, place, time, seasons for marching, time for raising armies, revolts in the rear, losses, expenses, gains and troubles of himself and of the enemy, the vijigīṣu should march if superior in strength, otherwise stay quiet. 37

Kṛṣṇa, during the Kurukṣetra war, often advised the Pāṇḍavas on various principles of war. The basic motive of Kṛṣṇa was to ensure victory for the Pāṇḍavas in all situations. Therefore, sometimes it appears that the principles stand completely opposed to the ethics of war, although assures the annihilation of the enemy.

Kautilya also believed that the enemy should be vanquished even by clandestine methods; or he could be defeated in battle and be killed. He suggested that after being victorious, the territory of the vanquished enemy could be absorbed and he (vanquished one) could be made a vassal in a different part of the enlarged kingdom. Various options have been fully analysed in Book X. It is to be mentioned here that the notoriety which Kautilya acquired as an

37. ibid. 1.1.
advocate of immoral and unethical means is not justified; because he always adds qualifications when he recommends such policies. These were either required because the interests of the state demanded it, or because the persons against whom these were directed were enemies of the state.\textsuperscript{38}

Whatsoever, it is to be noted that the tactical and knave principles have persisted through the ages and are equally applicable in modern warfare with or without modifications.

(B) Ethics of war:

The waging of war without any regard to moral standards degraded the science of warfare into mere animal ferocity. Hence, there came into being the ethical codes as well as the codes of the lawgivers, i.e., the authors of the Dharmśāstras and the Dharmaśūtras. A king desirous of dharmavijaya should comply with the code of ethics enjoined upon warriors.

There are some established ethics of war in the days of the Mahābhārata. The ethics as well as principles regulating the two kinds of warfare are found to be elaborately described in the Dharmasūtras and Dharmaśāstras, the epics and the purāṇas, besides the Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya, the treatises of Kāmandaka and Śukra.

Now let us turn to the laws governing righteous warfare. A

\textsuperscript{38} \textit{ibid.} V. 2.69.
king desirous of victory (vijigīṣu) should always take the side of dharmma, i.e., the truth and honesty; he should not attack any one who is not in his armour; a person benumbed in war or trusting his enemy that he would not be attacked; battles should be fought between the equals, i.e., a charioteer should fight a charioteer, a cavalry man with another cavalry man, foot-soldier with another foot-soldier; arrow, smeared with poison should not be used, because only dishonest persons resort to this type of heinous method; the battle should continue during day time only, and at the sunset would ring down the curtain till the next day, i.e., sunrise.

These ethical ideas seem to have originated in India from the Vedic days. Indian soldiers in all the periods were imbued with these ideas. Even in our times, these ideas persist in most of the Jawans of the modern Indian Army.

In the Śiśupālavadha, Māgha stands out as an ardent follower of the ethical war (nyāya-yuddha). In one place he said: ‘nītirāpadi yadgamyah parastānminino hrye...’(II. 61) — the existing principle that warrior should attack his enemy while the latter is in distress is not acceptable. It is held to be shameful for an honourable brave hero to do such unethical attack. To attack an enemy of equal strength is considered an act of honour. Moreover, through the advice given by Uddhava to Kṛṣṇa, on the matter of giving
preference to either on attending Rājasūya-yajña or attacking Śiśupāla, Māgha expressed himself as an adherent of nītiśāstra (II. 71-118). It appears from his observation, “pattih pattim vāhameyāya vājī nāgamā nāgaḥ syandanaṣṭho rathasthāṁ...”, i.e. the infantry towards infantry, the cavalry towards cavalry, the elephantry towards elephantry and chariots forwarded towards chariots (XVIII. 2), that Māgha follows the ethics of war strictly and sincerely.

From the Arthaśāstra, one will find that Kauṭilya’s practical advice was rooted in dharma. He does not advocate that all those who stand in the conqueror’s way should be attacked indiscriminately. ‘The king who attack a righteous ruler will be hated by his own people as well as others. Conversely, one who attacks an unrighteous ruler will be liked by all’ (VII.3.12). Kauṭilya advises that the unjust king should be attacked even though he was a stronger adversary; for, ‘the subjects of the just king will not only came to his help ... but follow him till death.’ (VII. 5. 16-18). Thus, from the above discussion we may have an idea of Kauṭilya’s views on the ethics of war.

VII. Trīśakti :

Kauṭilya holds that peace, war, staying quiet, marching, seeking shelter and dual policy (dvaidhi-bhāva) are six measures
(guṇas) which are to be adopted to meet different situations. All these six methods are comprehended. The conditions that determine the course of action are daīva (providential) and mānuṣa (human). The former is either naya or anaya (favourable or otherwise), while the latter naya or apānaya (equitable or otherwise). These circumstances must be weighed in the balance of kṣaya (low ebb), sthāna (inactivity) and vṛddhi (high tide), before a course of action is determined upon (VI.2). It is enjoined that the invading king (vijigīśu) must influence the movements of Madhyama and Udāsīna kings by any of the four expedients (upāyas) of statecraft, such as sāma, dāna, bheda and daṇḍa, or by using all of them simultaneously. Of the six expedients (śādguna) to be pursued in foreign policy by a conquerer, the third method is āsana, by which some aspects of neutrality are implied. āsana is of ten kinds: these are svasthāna (to hold one’s own place), upeksā (indifference), mārgarodha (blocking canals and channels), durgasādhyā (possession of a fort), rāstravikarana (bringing the enemy under control), ramanīya (to maintain a post pleasantly), nikatāsana (defeating the enemy at a place near his own), dūramārga (selecting choice-sites and owning them), prolopaśana (stabilising his power in the conquered country), and parādhīna (by taking refuge with a superior king). The king who observed the state of āsana generally
possessed the three saktis and hence he gained a spirit of mastery. The three saktis are, —prabhu-sakti, utsāha-sakti and mantra-sakti.\(^\text{39}\)

When an expedition of conquest is planned, certain precautionary measures are to be taken by the vijjigīṣu; these are:
(i) the vijjigīṣu should see that none of his seven limbs, including mitra suffers from any vyasana or calamity; (ii) before starting an expedition, the vijjigīṣu should also see that he is superior in all respects, including to the enemy against whom he proposes to march; (iii) he should also see that all the three saktis, viz., utsāha-sakti (the energy, bravery and personal drive of the king himself), prabhu-sakti (material resources consisting of the treasury and the army) and mantra-sakti (good counsel and diplomacy) are intact; (iv) the vijjigīṣu, should also take into consideration the time and space where the war is to take place.

Māgha in his Śiśupālavadha mentioned “śaktayastisrah siddhaya” in verse 26 of the second canto. In verse 76 of the same canto also he mentioned “prajñyotsahavataḥ svāmī yatetā-dhātumātmani / tau hi mūlamudeśyantyā jīgīṣorātmasarāṃpadaḥ //” ‘Therefore, O Lord, please try to get the energy, bravery and

\(^{39}\) cf. ‘śaktistrividhā -jñānabalam mantraśaktiḥ, kośadaṇḍabalam prabhuśaktiḥ, vikramabalamutsāhaśaktiḥ / ’ Thus Kautilya stated that power is three-fold. The power of knowledge is the power of counsel, the power of the treasury and the army is the power of might, the power of valour is the power of energy. -Āṣ. VI. 2. 33.
personality in yourself and at the same time good counsel and diplomacy also are to be created by yourself. Because both of these are the main factors for future prosperity of the *vījigīṣu*.

About the favourable condition for war, Māgha referred to the differing views of the experts on statecraft and says,—

\[ \text{guṇānāmāyathātathādarthāṃ viplāvayanti ye / amātyavyaṅjanā rajīnām dūṣyāste satrusamjnitāh /} \]

"Those who do not follow the rules of *sandhi*, *vigraha*, etc. properly and thus cause great loss to the objects, they are enemies in the guise of *amātya*; therefore, the kings should avoid them all the time."

Some experts on statecraft suggested that when the *prabhuśakti* is in excellent form, only then the *vījigīṣu* should march against the enemy, otherwise not, while in the opinion of others, when the enemy is in the state of weakness, the *vījigīṣu* should immediately fall upon the enemy.\(^{41}\)

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\(^{40}\) Sisu. II. 56.

\(^{41}\) ibid. 57-60.