



Celestial Weapons Of The Mahabharata War

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ABSTRACT

In the Mahabharata War which took place in Dvapara Yuga between two branches of a family- Kauravas and Pandavas. They both belongs to Kuru. It is believed that this war was fought for 18 days and in this war around 1680 million warriors were died. In this epical war, we find the references of different forms of Chakravyus, various forms of Celestial weapons, which were used by both sides- Kauravas and Pandavas to won this war. Most of the weapons are of divine origins and caused for mass destruction. These weapons were given by the Gods and Semi Gods to some warriors, latterly become Guru's(teachers) and then they were given these to their students by them. These weapons were invoked by Mantras. Detailed descriptions of these weapons are mentioned in Hindu text- Dhanurveda Samhita.

Keywords: Dvapara Yuga, Jana, Celestial, Chakravyu, Vahana, Vajra, Dadhichi,

Introduction

In Indian mythology four Yugas are mentioned- Treta Yuga, Dvapara Yuga, Sati Yuga and Kali Yuga. Mahabharata (earlier known as Jaisahita) is an Indian epic which talks about a dispute occurred between two families of Kuru's (According to Rigveda there were five Aryan Jana's and five Non-Aryan Jana's, when the descendant of Bharat had a matrimonial alliance with the descendant of Puru, then their sons were known as Kuru). This dispute was not solved by conversations and escalated into a massive war of 18 days known as Mahabharata War. This war was fought in the battleground of Kurukshetra (modern day Haryana). Almost every kingdom of Aryavarta (modern day India) participated in this war, existence of few these kingdoms such as Panchal (modern....), Magadha (modern Bihar), Gandhara (modern) etc are historically proven. According to the Stri Parva of Mahabharata, around 1380 million warriors were died from each side in this war. After this war only 8 members, 6 from pandavas, including Yudhisthir, Arjun, Bhim, Nakul, Sahdev and the son of Abhimanyu- Parikshit and 2 from kaurawas, including Kripacharya and Ashwatthama.

Celestial Weapons

The term celestial refers to construe things that have to do with the heaven (Swarg) such as Apsara (Celestial Nymphs), Yaksh, Gandharva, Gods etc. On the other hand, weapons describe different kinds of Arms. In Sanskrit, word Divyastra is used to denote celestial weapons. Principally all the divyastras are comes from any God or Semi god, these astras were manufactured by them from superpowers. Most of the powerful weapons got their names from the god who is the creator of the astra, such as- Brahmastra is created by Lord Brahma, Pashupatastra create by Lord Shiva etc. Although, few astras were created by Saints as well, such as- Bhargawastra by Sage Parshuram and by Semi Gods, such as- Garudastra by Garuda (basically an Eagle, referred as the vahana of lord Vishnu) and Sannohanastra by Gandharva lord Kamadev as well. Most powerful weapons of mass destruction in Mahabharata war are-

1. Brahmadastra- It was one of the deadliest weapons which was created by lord Brahma. It is believed that the use of this weapon can destroy the entire universe. There is no description of use of this weapon by any warrior in any yuga.

2. Brahmashirastra- This weapon contain ten times more destruction capacity than Brahmastra. Only one description of using this weapon was there in Bhagwat Purana by Ashwatthama and countered by Arjun but than turned back by Arjun and taken back by lord Brahma itself used by Ashwatthama.

3. Brahmastra- This was one of the most powerful weapons used by many warriors in different yugas such as lord Ram, Laxman, Raavan, Meghnath (commonly known as Indrajeet) in Treta Yuga and by Bhishma, Arjuna, Karna and Ashwatthama etc in Dvapara Yuga. It is believed that lord Brahma was seated himself on this weapon.

4. Narayanastra- It belongs to lord Vishnu as he also known as Narayan. This was used by Ashwatthama for the first time in Mahabharata War against pandavas and latterly by Karna against Arjun. Both of the times, lord Krishna saved their life from this weapon.

5. Pashupatastra- Pashupatastra is created by lord Shiva (as lord shiva called as Pashupati). This can stop the force/destruction of any other celestial weapon. Given by lord Shiva to Arjun before the Mahabharata war.

6. Shamavastra- This weapon is also belonged to lord Shiva. It was used by Karna against the Vajra of Indira while he was fighting with him.

These are considered as weapons of mass destruction and created by supreme gods. Weapons created by Vedic gods and Semi gods are as follows-

Weapons by Vedic Gods

1. Amogha Shakti- This was created by Indra. When Indra taken the celestial breastplate and ear-rings (Divya Kavach & Kundal provided by his father Sun) of Karna, in return he gave this weapon to him that you can use it for one time only.

2. Vajra- It was prepared by Indra and Vishwakarma with help of a Sage Dadhichi. One demon named Vratasura defeted Indra than he asked to Dadhichi that from your bones Vishwakarma prepared a celestial weapon by which vratasura will be killed. So, this weapon named as Vajra latterly. The information about this weapon can easily find not only in Hindu mythology but in Buddhist mythology as well.

3. Agni Astra- This weapon is of a Vedic god named Agni. It used to create fire by which the opposite army can be hit.

Weapons by Semi Gods

These weapons are created by Semi Gods such as Garuda, Naga King Vasuki, God of love and pleasure Kamadev etc., used for different objectives.

1. Garudastra- This was created by vahana (vehicle of lord Vishnu) used to defeated Nagastra (from which lot of snakes come out).

2. Nagastra- There were two major astras created by Naga king Vasuki (King of Snakes)- Nagapasha (Celestial Thread of Snakes) used by Meghanath on Rama and Lakshman and another one is Nagastra from which thousands of snakes comes out to bite the opposite army.

3. Sammohanastra- This weapon creates illusion among the army of enemy, from the effect of this weapon they saw the face of enemy king and killed each other thinking of that they are killing the king. This was used by lord Ram against the army Khar and Dhushan (brothers of Raavan).

Weapons created by Saints or with the help of saints, are following-

1. Bhargawastra- This was created by the descent of Sage Bhrigu named Bhargav Parshuram. This was given to Karna by Parshuram when he cursed him.

2. Vajra- This was created from the bones of Sage Dadhichi to killed a demon name Vratasura. Then occupied by Indra.

Bows and Uses of Celestial Weapons

To Invoke the celestial weapons, a divine bow was always requires, who has the capacity to handle the power of it. According to the Indian mythology, there were four divine bows were existed in Treta Yuga and Dvapara Yuga named- 1Saranag (belongs to lord Vishnu),2. Pinak (belongs to lord Shiva), 3. Gandiv (belongs to Agni) and 4. Vijay (belongs to lord Shiva). Sarang, Pinak and Vijay were created by Vishwakarma (Architect of Gods) and Gandiv was created by lord Brahma.

In Dvapara Yuga, Gandiv (divine bow with 108 celestial strings and with the power of one lakh bows) was given to Arjuna by Varuna Dev who got this from Agni. Vijay (Sanskrit term means Victory, one who had this bow become virtually invincible) was given to Karna by his teacher Parshuram (given to Parshuram by lord Shiva as he was his student).

In Dhanurveda Samhita, descriptions about how to practice archery, rules of use of archery and hymns/mantras to invoke the weapons can be finding easily. Few mantras about how to practice archery to become perfect in it are given below-

धनुर्वेदः प्राचीनस्य भारतीयविज्ञानस्यैका सुदृढा सुप्रसिद्धा च शाखा-
ऽस्ति । इदानीमस्याः शाखायाः ग्रन्था लुप्तप्रायाः सन्ति । द्वित्रान् कल्पितान्
ग्रन्थान् विहाय अन्यस्याः प्रतेः दर्शनमपि पुस्तकालयेषु दुर्लभमस्ति । अस्याः
विद्यायाः लोपे सति देशस्य महती क्षतिः सञ्जाता । अद्य न कोऽपि
दृश्यतेऽर्जुनसदृशो धनुर्धरः यस्य वाणाघातेन भीष्मपितामहेनापि कथितम्
महाभारते—

कुन्तन्ति मम गात्राणि माघमासे गवामिव ।
अर्जुनस्य इमे वाणाः नेमे वाणाः शिखण्डिनः ॥¹

प्रथमं वामहस्तेन यः श्रमं कुरुते नरः ।
तस्य चापक्रियासिद्धिरचिरादेव जायते ॥१॥

धनुर्वेदस्यविषयः

धनुर्वेदे चत्वारः पादाः सन्ति । प्रथमे पादे धनुर्विद्यायाः दीक्षा, द्वितीये
पादेः धनुर्विद्यायाः अभ्यासविधिः, तृतीये पादे नुः प्रक्षेपणविधिः, चतुर्थे
पादे प्रयोगविधयश्च वर्णिताः सन्ति । धनुर्वेदे ब्राह्मण एव गृह्यतिरुक्तम् ।
दुष्टदस्युचोरादिभ्यः साधुसंरक्षणं, धर्मतः प्रजापालनञ्चेति धनुर्वेदस्य
प्रयोजनमस्ति ।

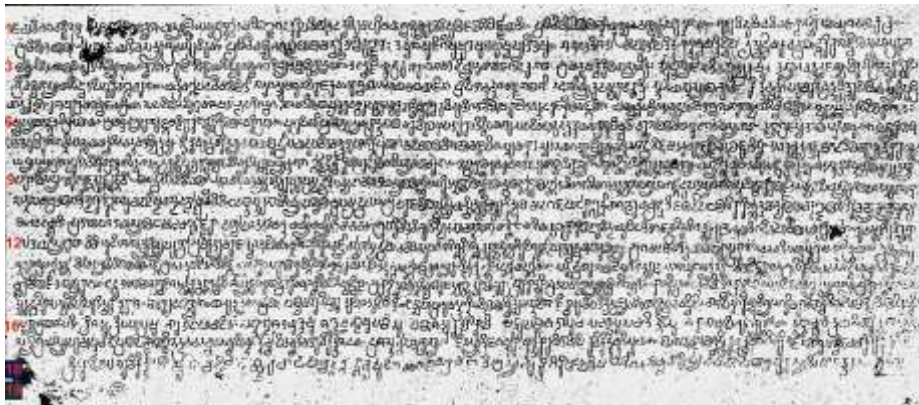
युद्धानि

धनुर्वेदं कुन्तयुद्धं खड्गयुद्धं छुरिकायुद्धं गदायुद्धं बाहुयुद्धञ्चेति युद्धानि
सप्तधा भवन्ति । एषु सप्तसु युद्धेषु निष्णातः आचार्यपदमलङ्करोति ।

Mahabharata: Sources of Information

Mahabharata is one of the two major Sanskrit Epics of ancient India another epic is Ramayana. It is the longest epic poem known, it has over one lakh slokas or over two lakhs verse lines. This text includes philosophical and devotional material and a rich source of historical information.

List of names of kings, historical facts by which historians can easily trace the historicity of them. According to the Aihole Inscription of Pulakeshin II, dated to Saka 556=634CE, claims that 3735 years have elapsed since the Bharta battle, which putting the date of Mahabharata War at 3137BCE.



Aihole Inscription of Pulakeshin II

Most of the times this epic is considered as an imaginary text but finding of Sinauli (Bhagpat,U.P.), Varnavrata (U.P.) provides cogent evidences which proved that this text is not an imagination only.

As per the information described in this text- Parshuram, Bhishma, Drona, Krishna, Arjuna, Karna, Ashwatthama were the warriors who have these celestial weapons provided by their teachers or by God itself (Pashupatastra was given to Arjuna by lord Shiva and Brahmastra was given to Karna by Parshuram).

Conclusion

Mahabharata is a great source of information for historians and the scholars of history. The information provided by this text, sometimes required more archaeological evidences so that it can be prove that it is not imagination as most of the people believe. Although the findings of Sinauli is a good going in this direction. Presence of swords, bows and arrows and most importantly Chariot, shows that this war was actually happened. Historians suggests that the evidences of Sinauli can be goes to the Mahabharat period. We have to change our preconceived motion of viewing the history only than we can define our past appropriately.

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