



Indian Warfare: An Appraisal of Strategy and Tactics of War in Early Medieval Period

By Surinder Kumar Bhakari

Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, 1981. Hardcover. Condition: New. First. 242pp. India has one of the largest standing professional armies in the world. Yet, the study of warfare in ancient and medieval periods of Indian history had so far never been made from purely professional angle and by a professional. Major (Dr.) S.K. Bhakari presents an altogether new text and theoretical work in the history of warfare in India. Much of the material in this book has been derived from the original sources, sifted and organised to present a panoramic view of the development of strategy and tactics of warfare as known to the Indian soldiers and their mighty contemporaries from the West and the North-West. The work brings out the forces and factors that determine strategy and tactics of warfare, organisation and composition of forces, administration in the battlefield, including organisation of Intelligence and secret services, employment of different arms and armour, construction of forts and fortifications and special features of the siege-craft as practised in the early medieval period. The book is an in-depth study of the strands of strategy involved in moving huge armies to the battlefield, principles of conducting different operations of war such...



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War was the chief means by which territory was annexed or rulers defeated in ancient India, which was divided into multiple kingdoms, republics and empires... Throughout the ancient period, many of the most notable emperors, kings, warriors and even individual soldiers continued to be devout Jains. Remove Ads. Forts held a key position in ancient Indian warfare. They were required not only for the security of the populace that lived in its vicinity, but the kingdom as a whole as it provided shelter to the king and his armies against enemies and checked the invaders from advancing further into the kingdom. Capturing forts was necessary as most often, enemy capitals were usually fortified and no invader could proclaim victory till he had captured these strategic strongholds. Historic Period Warfare. Warfare affected the lives of Georgia's Indians in many significant ways. All Indian men considered themselves warriors and trained to use the bow and war club. Chiefs and warriors possessed ceremonial forms of war clubs that incorporated symbols of the Sun and Thunder deities and served as markers of their ceremonial status. These were made entirely from stone that had been chipped or ground into the desired shape, or alternatively, were tomahawks that had copper heads affixed to wooden handles. The Indians adopted new military tactics, including larger armies to fight some pitched battles and guerrilla-style maneuvers. In some cases Indian communities erected forts styled after those of the whites. The earliest known application of war elephants dates to this period; the animals are mentioned in several Vedic Sanskrit hymns.[7]. The two great epics of India, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, center on conflicts between the emerging Mahajanapadas and refer to military formations, theories of warfare and esoteric weaponry. They discuss standing armies that used in war chariots, war elephants and even mythical flying machines. The Ramayana describes in great detail the fortifications of Ayodhya. Samudragupta seized the kingdoms of Ahichchhatra and Padmavati early in his reign. Later, he took the Kota kingdom and attacked the tribes in Malvas, the Yaudheyas, the Arjunayanas, the Maduras and the Abhiras. He also subjugated the remnants of the Kushan Empire. True, there exist a few valuable works on Indian Warfare, none has exclusively dealt with the art of war in medieval period during the millennium from the 8th to the 18th century. Hence The Art of War in Medieval India is a pioneer work on the field, being comparative and analytical survey of Rajput, Turko-Afghan, Mughal, Maratha, Sikh and ahom systems of war on the basis of critical studies of all relevant sources, Indian and Islamic and in the background of the military classics of ancient China and of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, of Clausewitz and Jomini. The author has skilfully shown that many principles of war strategy and operational tactics known in Europe were also not unknown in Indian. War or no war, the army was to be maintained, to meet any unexpected contingency. This gave rise to the Ksatriya or warrior caste, and the ksatram dharman came to mean the primary duty of war. To serve the country by participating in war became the svadharma or this warrior community. In the Puranic period the great Kartavirya Arjuna of the Haihaya clan spread his arms throughout the ancient Indian continent and earned the title of Samrat. The same principle of glory and distinction underlay the performance of the sacrifice, Asvamedha and Rajasuya, which were intended only for the members of the Ksatriya community. Weapons of War as Gathered from Literature.