In Memoriam
Prof. J. W. de Jong*

The Death of the Hero

Minoru Hara

As is well-known, the Smrti-literature prescribes for the ancient Indian Kṣatriya-caste the protection of their subjects (prajā-pālana, prajā-rakṣaṇa) as their prime duty (sva-dharma). This duty, however, involves exposing their lives to danger, when their country is devastated by aggressive enemy (ātatāyin), for in such a case it becomes their sublime duty to fight with the invader unflinchingly (aparāń-mukha) or selflessly (nirahamkāra) even without regard for their own life (tyakta-jīvita-yodhin). Their fight with aggressive invaders for the protection of people in general and of Brahmins in particular is called "the righteous fight" (dharmya yuddha). This categorical imperative for Kṣatriyas of the serious pursuit of their duty, that is selfless engagement in battle, inevitably implies the possibility of their bodies being seriously wounded, or even themselves being killed in a battle. Then, how were the wounds and death of the Kṣatriya in battle considered in ancient India?

It is out of great respect to Professor J. W. de Jong, who devoted his whole life to South-asian and Buddhist Studies, and met a heroic death as a scholar, that here the present writer collects material from the Epic and classical Sanskrit literature and discusses the relevant problems in memory of this great scholar.
I Wounds in Battle

(1-1) Wounds that one incurs from one’s adversary on a battle field are considered as a bodily ornament of the heroic warrior. Thus, people do not hold in high esteem the warrior who returns woundless from the battle-field.

\[ \text{avikṣatena dehena samarād yo nivartate} \]
\[ \text{kṣatriyo nāsyā tat karma praśaṁsanti purāvidaḥ} \] (MBh.12.60.16)
“Those acquainted with the traditional lore do not praise his act, when a Kṣatriya returns from battle with his body unwounded.”

Similarly, it is not praise-worthy for a Kṣatriya to die with his body woundless. A variation of the above passage reads as follows,

\[ \text{avikṣatena dehena pralayaṁ yo ’dhigacchati} \]
\[ \text{kṣatriyo nāsyā tat karma praśaṁsanti purāvidaḥ} \] (MBh.12.98.24)
“Those acquainted with the traditional lore do not praise the act of a Kṣatriya who dies with his body unwounded.”

(1-2) The blame of a warrior who returns woundless from the battle-field is tantamount to the praise of a soldier who is wounded by the enemy’s weapon. Here the wound is further endowed with a religious significance.

\[ \text{tasya yāvanti śastraṇi tvacat bhindanti saṁyuge} \]
\[ \text{tāvataḥ so ’śnute lokān sarva-kāmaduho ’kṣayān} \] (12)
\[ \text{na tasya rudhīram gātrād āvedhebhyaḥ pravartate} \]
sa ha tenaiva raktena sarva-pāpaiḥ pramucyate (13)
yāni duḥkhāṇī sahate vraṇānāṁ abhitāpane
na tato 'sti tapo bhūya iti dharmavidō viduḥ (MBh.12.98.14)

"As many weapons break his skin in battle, so many worlds does
he enjoy, the worlds which are imperishable and capable of granting
every wish.

The blood does not flow (vainly) from the pierced portions of his
body. By this (blood) he is indeed delivered from all sorts of sins.
Those who are conversant with dharma know that there is no
asceticism (tapas) superior to the pains that he endures in the aff­
liction of his wounds."

The blood (rudhira, rakta), gushing out of his wounds, purifies the
heroic warrior from all the sins (pāpa) he has committed in the past, and it is termed the highest asceticism (tapas) for him to endure the
pains caused by his wounds.

II Death in Battle

The same weapon (śastra) which causes wounds on the warrior’s
body (śastrāṇī tvacat bhindanti; MBh.12.98.12 above) may slay the
warrior himself. Then, how were those who die a glorious death in a
battle considered in ancient India?

(2-1) As is suggested in the previous passages, it was a warrior’s
ideal that, being seriously wounded by the enemy’s weapons, he finally
breathes his last on the battle-field. Thus, we read in Bhiṣma’s discourse
to Yudhiṣṭhira as follows.

raṇeṣu kadanāṁ kṛtvā jñātibhiḥ parivāritaḥ
tīkṣṇaiḥ śastraiḥ suvikliṣṭaṁ kṣatriyo mṛtyum arhati

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Having performed slaughter in a number of battles, surrounded by relatives, and being afflicted by sharp weapons, the warrior should die.

It was considered as his highest duty (dharma) to die in battle.

"We read in scripture that it is the top-most duty of a warrior that he lies slain on the battle-field, honoured by the nobles."

Two passages of the Śruti-literature promise for those heroic warriors the attainment of heaven. First, they are expected to do their best on the battle field.

"Those kings who, seeking to slay each other in battle, fight with the utmost exertion and do not turn back, go to heaven” (Bühler)

Heaven is promised for them if they are killed in battle, as long as they fight bravely.

"Those (kings) who are slain by the fraudless weapons, (fighting) for the sake of territory without turning back, proceed to heaven as yogins do.”
When it took place in Kurukṣetra, it was considered particularly rewarding.

\[\text{tasmi} \ \text{mahā-puṇyatame} \ \text{trailokyasya} \ \text{sanātane} \]
\[\text{samgrāme} \ \text{nidhanaṁ} \ \text{prāpya}^9 \ \text{dhruvaṁ} \ \text{svargo} \ \text{bhaviṣyati} \]

(M Bh. 9. 54. 6)

“He, who dies in battle on that most meritorious and eternal spot in the three worlds, is sure to obtain heaven\(^{10}\).”

In a battle, it was believed that there is nothing futile (nāsti nisphaḷatā raṇe), because if one wins the battle, one gains the enemy’s territory and if he loses it, the slain warrior is promised the attainment of heaven\(^{11}\).

(2-2) Warriors who are slain by the enemy’s weapon are also termed as sastra-pūta (purified by a weapon). Being sanctified by a weapon, they are entitled to obtain heaven.

Seeing Yudhiṣṭhira, grieving for dead soldiers, Kṛṣṇa says,

\[\text{sarve} \ \text{tyaktvātmanah} \ \text{prānān} \ \text{yuddhvā} \ \text{vīrā} \ \text{mahāhave} \]
\[\text{sastra-pūtā} \ \text{divāṁ} \ \text{prāptā} \ \text{na} \ \text{tāṁ} \ \text{śocitum} \ \text{arhasi} \]

(M Bh. 12. 29. 11)

“All these heroes, having cast off their life-breath, fighting in a great battle and being sanctified by weapons, proceeded to heaven. You need not grieve for them”.

The word div\(^{10}\) is occasionally replaced by parā gati (the highest destination).

\[\text{mā} \ \text{tvam} \ \text{evaṁ-gate} \ \text{kiṁcit} \ \text{kṣatriyarśabha} \ \text{śocithāḥ} \]
gatās te kṣatra-dharmena śastra-pūtāḥ parām gatim
(MBh.12.22.14)

"Do not grieve even a little in this situation, o bull among warriors, for they went to the highest destination, being sanctified by a weapon in accordance with the rules prescribed for the warrior-caste."  

The destination gati itself is also termed "cleansed by a weapon."

gatās te kṣatrādhrmēna śastra-pūtaṁ gatim śubhām
yathā dṛṣṭās tvaya putrā yathā-kāma-vihārināḥ (MBh.15.44.9)

"As you have seen, (all) these sons of yours went in accordance with the rules prescribed for the warrior-caste to the highest destination which is sanctified by a weapon, and now behave themselves as they like."

(2-3) In contrast, we have the compound aśastra-pūta maraṇa in Duryodhana’s statement.

jaitraṁ me ratham upakalpaya tāvat / yāvad aham api tasya
pragālbhasya pāṇḍavasya jayadratha-parirakṣaṇena mithyā-prati-
jñā-vaiḍukṣya-sampāditam aśastra-pūtaṁ maraṇam upadiśāmi
(Veṇīṣamhāra 2.27.1-3)

"Make ready at once my triumphal car, so that by my act of protecting Jayadratha I may teach that boastful Pāṇḍava how to die not being sanctified by a weapon, but in the agony of the shame of his vow which turned out only false!"

(2-4) If a weapon sanctifies a warrior, it is endowed with religious significance. That is to say, the weapon annihilates not only the body
of the warrior, but also his spiritual defilements. Hence the compound *deha-papma-pranāśana* and the like (destroying the body as well as evils), which illustrate a battle (*yuddha, niyuddha, suyuddha, saṃ-prahāra, samgrāma*).

śṛṇu rājan yathā-vṛttam saṃgrāmaṁ bruvaṁt mama
virānāṁ satrubhiḥ sārdham deha-pāpma-pranāśanam
(MBh.8.12.2)
“O king, hear from my mouth the encounter between the heroes and their adversaries as it took place, that annihilates one’s body as well as evils.”

In the following passage, *pranāśana* is replaced by *vināśana*.

kacā-kaci babhau yuddhaṁ dantā-danti nakhā-nakhi
muṣṭi-yuddhaṁ niyuddhaṁ ca deha-pāpma-vināśanam
(MBh.8.33.60)
“There took place fighting, hair to hair, teeth to teeth, nail to nail, fist-fighting, that destroys body as well as evils.”

The compound *dehasu-pāpma-kṣapaṇa* also appears.

teṣāṁ ca pārthasya mahat tadāsid
dehasu-pāpma-kṣapaṇaṁ suyuddham
trailokya-hetor asurair yathāsid
devasya viṣṇor jayatāṁ varasya (MBh.8.55.5)
“There took place a great battle between Arjuna and them, which destroyed body, life-breath and evils. It was like that between the god Viṣṇu, the best of victors, and demons for the sake of (the sovereignty of) the three worlds.”
III Death-bed

(3) But if a warrior is expected to die in battle, what sort of bed (śayā, śayana) would it be upon which he may most suitably lie down? Often, it is called vīra-śayana (the bed of a hero).

(3-1) When Duryodhana died a glorious death in battle, his mother Gandhāri addressed Kṛṣṇa as follows.

\[\text{amarśanam yudhām śreṣṭham kṛtástraṃ yuddha-durmadam} \]
\[\text{śayānam vīra-śayane paśya mādhava me sutam (MBh.11.17.9)} \]
\[\text{“Behold, o Mādhava, the best of warriors, trained in the science of arms, that impetuous son of mine, who is ferocious in battle, now lying on the hero’s bed.”} \]

She continued,

\[\text{tam paśya kadanaṃ kṛtvā śatrūṇam madhusūdana} \]
\[\text{śayānam vīra-śayane rudhireṇa smukṣitam (MBh.11.22.2)} \]
\[\text{“O Madhusūdana, behold him, having destroyed his enemies, now lying on the hero’s bed, sprinkled with blood.”} \]

Similarly, Bhīṣma in the same situation is described as follows,

\[\text{tam vīra-śayane vīraṃ śayānam kuru-sattamam} \]
\[\text{abhivādyopastathur vai kṣatriyāḥ kṣatriyarṣabham (MBh.6.116.2)} \]
\[\text{“(All the) Kṣatriyas stood around the hero, saluting respectfully the best of Kurus, the bull among the Kṣatriyas, now lying on the hero’s bed”} \].
Occasionally, \( \textit{vīra-śayana} \) is paraphrased by \( \textit{vīra-sevīta śayana} \) and the like.

\[
dhruvam \ dhuryodhano \ vīro \ gatiṃ \ nasulabhāṃ \ gataḥ \text{ tathā hy abhimukhaḥ śete śayane vīra-sevīte (MBh.11.17.11)}
\]
“Certainly, the hero Duryodhana went to the region not easily attained (that is, heaven), for he, turning his face only to the front, lies on the bed resorted to by heroes.”

(3-2) Next, we may ask, of what material is this \( \textit{vīra-śayana} \) composed? The oft-recurring compound \( \textit{sara-talpa} \) answers this question, indicating that it is composed of arrows. The same Gāndhārī addresses Kṛṣṇa, pointing out the hero Bhīṣma as follows.

\[
\textit{sara-talpa-gatam} \ vīraṃ \ dharme \ devāpinā samam \ śayānaṃ \ vīra-śayane \ paśya \ śūra-niśevite (MBh.11.23.17)
\]
“Behold that hero, equal to Devāpi in his act of righteousness, on a bed of arrows, now lying on the bed of a hero (\( \textit{vīra-śayana} \)) which is resorted to only by brave men (\( \textit{śūra} \)).”

The same Bhīṣma is described in the actual war-book as follows,

\[
sa \ śete \ sara-talpa-stho \ medinīm \ asprśaṃs \ tada \ bhīṣmo \ rathāt \ prapatitaḥ \ pracyuto \ dharāṇī-ṭale (MBh.6.115.8)
\]
“At that time, Bhīṣma lies on the arrow-bed without touching the ground, fallen down from his chariot upon the surface of the earth.”

Occasionally, \( \textit{sara-talpa} \) is replaced by another compound of the same meaning, \( \textit{sara-śyā}. \) Though scorched and pained by arrows
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(śarābhītapta-kāya...śara-saṃtāpa-mūrchipa), the same Bhīṣma refused to accept any object of human enjoyment, waiting for the proper hour of his death.

nāḍya tāta mayā śakyaṁ bhogān kāṁś cana mānuśān (12cd)
upabhoktuṁ manusyebhyaḥ śara-śayā-gato hy aham
(MBh.6.116.13ab) 21)

"O sire, now I am not able to take any object of human enjoyment from human beings, staying on the bed of arrows."

One can multiply the number of examples of śara-talpa from Epic literature, for the war-books are replete with these expressions22).

This arrow-bed is often modified by auspicious adjectives of various sorts. The same Bhīṣma on the śara-talpa which is called śubha is greeted respectfully by both the Kuru and Pāṇḍava lords.

upagamyā mahātmānaṁ śayānaṁ sayane śubhe
te 'bhivādyā tato bhīṣmaṁ kṛtvā cābhipradakṣiṇam
(MBh.6.116.58)

"Approaching the great Bhīṣma lying in the auspicious bed, and greeting him with the respectful circumambulation from left to right... 23)"

(3-3) At this point, mention might be made of the hero’s pillow (upadhāna). That is to say, it was not only the bed of a hero, but also his pillow (upadhāna) that is composed of arrows. When Bhīṣma was seriously wounded, staying on the arrow bed (śara-talpa) with his head hanging down, he asked the people around to be provided with a pillow.

abhinandya sa tān evaṁ śirasā lambatābravit
śiro me lambate 'tyartham upadhānaṁ pradīyatām
(MBh.6.115.32)
“Having greeted, he said to them with his head hanging: ‘My head is hanging down extremely. Give me a pillow.’”

At this request they brought fine (tanu) and soft (mrdu) pillows of the best quality (mukhyā)(33), but he rejected these pillows with a laugh (prahasan) and said,

naitāni vīra-śayyāsu yuktā-rūpāṇi pārthivāḥ (MBh.6.115.34cd)
“O kings, these (pillows) are not suitable for the hero’s bed (vīra-śayyā)!”

He summoned Arjuna, acquainted with the kṣattra-dharma, and requested him to prepare suitable pillow. Then, Arjuna, holding the bow Gāndiva and taking three sharp arrows, sanctified with a mantra (āmantrya), made a pillow for him.

anumānya mahātmānaṁ bharatānāṁ amadhyamanṁ tribhis tīkṣṇair mahāvegair udagrīc chiraḥ śaraiḥ
(MBh.6.115.42cd)
“Begging permission of the great man, the illustrious (amadhyama?) among the Bharata race, he (Arjuna) raised his (Bhīṣma’s) head (=provided a pillow) by means of three arrows which were sharp and of great speed.”

Bhīṣma was highly gratified, saying that this was indeed a pillow suitable (anurūpa) to him, lying on the hero’s bed (45a).
IV Home Death

Toward the end of the sixth book, Bhīṣma, waiting on his arrow-bed for the time when the sun turns to the northern solstice, requested Duryodhana to dismiss the physicians who were well-trained (kusala, suśikṣita) and skilled in plucking out arrows (salyoddharaṇa-kovida), saying,

\[
datta-deyā visṛjyatāṁ pūjayitvā cikitsakāḥ (52cd)\]
\[
evaṁ-gate na hiddāṁ vaidyaiḥ kāryam ihāsti me \]
\[
kṣatra-dharma-prāśastāṁ hi prāpto 'smi paramāṁ gatim (53)\]
\[
naiṣa dharmo mahīpaḷāḥ śara-talpa-gatasya me \]
\[
etair eva śaraś cāham dagdhavyo 'nte narādhipāḥ (MBh.6.115.54)\]

"Let these physicians be dismissed, having given suitable gifts and paid due respect to them. Now, in this situation there is no need for me of these physicians, for I have attained the highest state ordained in the Kṣatra-dharma. It is not the right thing (dharma) for me staying on the arrow-bed. O kings, I should be scorched by these arrows till the end."

As is evident in Bhīṣma's statement, the heroic warrior made up his mind to remain on the battle-field, staying on the arrow-bed and enduring the pains caused by his wounds. He refused the surgeons' treatment and declined to be taken home. Now, the hero's bed (vīra-śayana) which is made of arrows (śara-talpa) stands in sharp contrast to an ordinary bed at home.

(4-1) As it is praise-worthy for a warrior to die in battle, so it is condemned for him to die at home (grhe maraṇa).
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"It is not praised for Kṣatriyas to die at home. It is unheroic (act) of the heroes and is the unrighteous and miserable (behaviour of them)."

(4-2) Dying at home is further specified as meeting natural death from illness (vyādhī-maraṇa) at home. At the opening of the great Bharata war, Bhiṣma addressed all the soldiers as follows,

\[
\text{adharmaḥ kṣatriyasyaiśa yad vyādhī-maraṇam grhe yad ājau nidhānaṁ yāti so 'syā dharmaḥ sanātanaḥ}
\]

(MBh.6.17.11)

"It is an unjust act (adharma) for a Kṣatriya to die at home of illness. It is his eternal duty (dharma) to meet his death in battle."

Glorious death in battle-field is thus contrasted to ignoble death at home.

(4-3) Death by disease (vyādhī-maraṇa) is replaced by death on the bed (śayyā-maraṇa). The same Bhiṣma expatiates upon the point to Yudhiṣṭhira as follows.

\[
\text{adharmaḥ kṣatriyasyaiśa yac chayyā-maraṇam bhavet visṛjāṁ śleṣma-pittāṁ kṛpāṇaṁ paridevayan}
\]

(23)

\[
\text{idāṁ duḥkhham aho kaśṭaṁ pāpiya iti niṣṭānaṁ pratidhvasta-mukhaḥ pūtir amātyāṁ bahu śocayan}
\]

(26)

\[
\text{arogānāṁ sprhaye muhur mṛtyum apīcchati viro dṛpto 'bhimāṁ ca nedṛśam mṛtyum arhati}
\]

(27)

"It is an unjust act for a warrior that he should die on his bed,
while ejecting phlegm and bile, and lamenting miserably, uttering (such words as) 'it is unpleasant, painful, and it now becomes worse!' and with his face down-cast and stinking, lamenting much to his relatives (amātya). He envies healthy people and even desires instant death. The heroic warrior with pride and self-respect must not meet such a sort of death.”

A contamination of śayyā-marāṇa and grhe maraṇa is found in a dialogue between Duryodhana and Krpa.

grhe yat kṣatriyasyāpi nidhanam tad vīgarhitam
adharmaḥ sumahān eṣa yac chayyā-marāṇam grhe (30)
araṇye yo vimūnceta samgrāme vā tanaṁ narah
kratūn aḥṛtya mahato mahimānaṁ sa gacchati (31)
krpaṇam vilappann ārto jarayābhhipariputah
mriyate rudatāṁ madhye jātīnāṁ na sa pūrṣaḥ (MBh.9.4.32)

"It is censured for a Kṣatriya to meet death at home. It is a seriously unjust for him to die on his bed at home. The man who would cast away his body, either in a forest or in battle, after having performed great sacrifices, obtains glory. Such a person, who dies in the midst of crying kinsmen, lamenting miserably, sick and overwhelmed by old age, is not a man (in the strict sense of the term) (puruṣa)35).

These condemnations expressed by such compounds as grhe nidhana, grhe maraṇa, vyādhi-marāṇa and śayyā-marāṇa eloquently speak about the ideal form of death for Kṣatriyas, that is death on the battlefield (ājau nidhana, samgrāme nidhana).
We may conclude this modest contribution by proposing an interpretation of a passage of the Pratimā-nāṭaka ascribed to Bhāsa.

When Bharata was summoned to the capital city of Ayodhyā by his mother Kaikeyī, he was surprised to discover the family and city in a disgraceful situation due to his mother’s intrigue. He reproached Kaikeyī as follows,

\[
vayam ayaśasā, cīrenāryo, nyapo grha-mṛtyunā
pratata-ruditaiḥ kṛtnāyodhyā, mṛgaiḥ saha lakṣmaṇaiḥ
dayita-tanayaiḥ śrokenāmbaiḥ snuṣādhvai-parikramair
dhig iti vacasa cogreṇātmā tvaya nanu yojitaiḥ
\]

(Pratimā-nāṭaka 3.17)

Sarup and Woolner translated this verse as follows,

“Thou hast covered me with infamy, and my elder brother with bark. Thou hast brought the king to his death too soon, and all Ayodhyā to endless lamentation. Thou hast sent Lakṣmaṇa to dwell with beasts, and mothers doting on their sons to dwell with sorrow. Thou hast laden thy daughter in law with the toils of travel, and thyself with harsh words of reproach.”

The same translators further gave the following comment on the compound \textit{grha-mṛtyu} (house-death):

“death while still a householder and not arrived at the later stages\textsuperscript{30}.”
Despite a minute semantic difference between maraṇa and mṛtyu, we may take this compound grha-mṛtyu of the Pratimā-nāṭaka in the sense of grha-maraṇa, as we have seen above. Though the word mṛtyu scarcely appears in connection with saṃgrāma in the Epics, we have a compound saṃgrāma-mṛtyu in the Devi-māhātmya 4.18 (= Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa 81.18), which may be contrasted to grha-mṛtyu in the Pratimā-nāṭaka.

No matter whether it is grha-mṛtyu or grha-maraṇa, it is a disgraceful act for a honourable Kṣatriya to breathe his last at home (grha) instead of on a battle-field (saṃgrāma). One may wonder that such an old king as Daśaratha might be allowed to breathe his last on an ordinary bed at home (grha-mṛtyu), but we must remember the following two passages, the one in the MBh. as we have seen above (araṇye yo vimuṇceta saṃgrāme vā tanum naraḥ :MBh.9.4.31ab) and the other in the Manusmṛti, which prescribes for the ruling class to die in battle even after retirement in their old age,

\[\text{dattvā dhanaṁ tu viprebyah sarva-danda-samutthitam putre rājyaṁ samāśṛhya kurvita prayānam raṇe} \quad \text{(MS 9.323)}\]

"But (a king who feels his end drawing nigh) shall bestow all his wealth accumulated from fines on Brahmans, make over his kingdom to his son, and then seek death in battle." (Bühler)

According to Medhātithi, if the king cannot die in battle, he may burn or drown himself (yadi kathāṃcid antyāvasthāyāṁ raṇaṁ nopalabheta tadāṇy-udakādīna śariraṁ jahyāt), and Kullūka says that he may kill himself by starvation (āsanna-mṛtyuh phalātiśaya-prāptaye saṃgrāme prāṇa-tyāgaṁ kuryāt/saṃgrāmāsambhaye tv anāsanādīnāpi).
In view of these strict prescriptions of the mode of death for the honourable warrior, the readers of Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa 2.57-59\textsuperscript{(a)} will be fully convinced of the fact that, though under the curse of an ascetic, the old king Daśaratha died indeed a miserable and disgraceful death, which is never expected for a warrior. The bed suitable for the honourable hero at the last moment (rājāṃ pāścima-kāla-vīra-śayana Urubhaṅga 4c) is always to be found on the battle-field, no matter whether he be young or old.
Notes

1) Cf.

āśāṁ prajānāṁ paripālanena svam kṣatra-dharmaṁ paripālayāmi
(MBh.1.3.183ab)
sarva-bhūta-parirāṇaṁ kṣatra-dharma ihocayate
(MBh.12.347.6ab)
kṣatriyasya smṛto dharmaḥ prajā-pālanam āditaḥ (47ab)
prajāḥ pālayate yo hi dharmeṇa manujādhipaḥ
tasya dharmārjītāḥ lokaḥ prajā-pālana-saṅcitāḥ
(MBh.13.128.48)
kṣatriyasya paro dharmaḥ prajānāṁ eva pālanam
nirdiśta-phala-bhoktā hi rāja dharmeṇa yujyate
(MS.7.144)
pradhānaṁ kṣatriye karma prajānāṁ paripālanam
(YS.1.119ab)
vedābhyaśo brāhmaṇasya kṣatriyasya ca rakṣaṇam
vārtā-karmaiva vaiśasya viśiṣṭāni svakarmaśu
(MS.10.80)
brāhmaṇasya tapo jñānaṁ tapāḥ kṣātrasya rakṣaṇaṁ
vaiśasya tu tapo vārtā tapāḥ śūdramya sevanam
(MS.11.235)

Cf. also MS.8.302-310, 10.118 and YS.1.334-6.

2) Kane p.57-58

3) Cf. MBh.3.51.16b

4) Cf. MBh.6.117.32a

5) Cf. MBh.3.51.15d

6) Cf. my paper to be published in Ingalls’ Gedenkschrift.


8) Blood of women’s menstruation has a similar effect of purification.

Cf. Meyer 1971 pp.219-220 and Gonda p.208,

mṛt-toyaiḥ śudhyate śodhyam nadi vegenā śudhyati
rajasā strī mano-duṣṭā saṁnyāsena dvijottamaḥ
(MS.5.108=VS.22.91)
vyabhicārād ṛtau śuddhir garbhe tyāgo vidhiyate
garbha-bhātya-vadhādau ca tathā mahati pātaka (YS.1.72)

For further references, see G. J. Meulenbeld, pp. 91-106. I owe this reference to H. Scharfe JAOS 119.4 (1999) p.616 note 57.

9) For the phrase saṃgrāme nidhanam prāpya and the like, cf.
kṣatriyāṇāṃ mahārāja saṃgrāme nidhanam smṛtam
viśiṣṭaṁ bahubhir yajñāḥ kṣatradharmam anusmara (3)
brāhmaṇāṇāṃ tapas tyāgaḥ pretya-dharma-vidhiḥ smṛtaḥ
kṣatriyāṇāṃ ca vihitāṁ saṃgrāme nidhanam vibho (4)
kṣatra-dharmo mahāraudraḥ śastra-nitya iti smṛtaḥ
vadhaś ca bharata-śreṣṭha kāle śastrena saṃyuge (MBh.12.22.5)
mā śucō na hi socyās te saṃgrāme nidhanam gataḥ (MBh.11.15.19cd)
go-brāhmaṇārthe vikrāntaḥ saṃgrāme nidhanam gataḥ
aśvamedhajitāṁl lokāṁ prāṇpnoti tridivālaye (MBh.13.128.52c-f)

Cf. also, Kane p.58, Meyer 1926 p. 870-871, Hopkins 1972 p.131,137. Scharfe p.177. [He (the king) is above all a warrior whose most splendid end is to die in battle (VS 3.44, Gaut X.16, MS.7.87-9 YS.1.322-3)] Lingat, p.223. Occasionally, we meet another compound saṃgrāma-mṛtyu. Cf Devi-māhātmya 4.18.

10) There is no alternative but to slay the enemy, that is victory (jaya) or to be slain (vadha) by the enemy in a battle.

jayo vāstu vadho veti kṛta-buddhir mahārathaḥ (MBh.9.15.15ab)
avaśyāṁ yudhi virāṇāṁ vadho vā vijayo 'tha vā
(Abhiseka-nāṭaka 3.9ab)


11) For this, see my article to be published in Gedenkschrift D.H.H. Ingalls. Cf.also

hato 'pi labhate svargaṁ jītvā tu labhate yaśaḥ
ubhe bahumate loke nāsti niṣṭhalatā raṇe (Karṇabhāra 12)
The Death of the Hero (Hara)

tatraiva yotsye vairāṭe nāsti yuddhaṁ nirāmiśam (MBh.4.48.12cd)
raṇa-sīrasi gavārthe nāsti moghaḥ prayatno
nidhanam api yaśāḥ syān mokṣayitvā tu dharmah (Pañcarātra 2.5cd)

12) dhṛtarāṣṭrātmajāḥ sarve yātudhānā balotkaṭāḥ

13) The destination is further termed as svarga (MBh.12.2.4) and nirjita loka in the plural.

14) Cf.MBh.14.60.23.

15) I refer to Wezler p. 98 note 10: [Man beachte, dass maraṇa, wenn es explizit oder implizit in Opposition zu mṛtyu steht, den Vorgang des "Sterbens" bezeichnet].

16) Cf.

tato gajā rathāś cāsvāḥ pattayāś ca mahāhave
saṃprahāraṁ paraṁ cakrur deha-pāpma-praṇāśanam (MBh.8.8.2)
teśāṁ antakaraṇaḥ yuddhaṁ deha-pāpma-praṇāśanam
śūdra-vit-kṣatra-virūṇāṁ dharmaṁ svargyaṁ yaśaskaram
(MBH.8.32.18)

17) The Epic literature is never short of examples, which describe various heroes (vīra) lying on vīra-sāyanā.

tam vīra-sāyanā vīraṁ śayānāṁ puruṣarṣabham
bhīśmam ādhirathir drṣṭā bharaṭānāṁ amadhyaṁ (MBh.7.3.7)
śayānāṁ vīra-sāyanā vīram ākṛnaṇa-sārīnam
āvantyaṁ abhito nāriyo rudatyāḥ paryupāsate (MBh.11.22.4)
śalyaṁ saraṇadaṁ śūraṁ paśyaināṁ ratha-sattamam
śayānāṁ vīra-sāyanā śaraṁ viśakali-kṛtam (MBh.11.23.9)
yam purā paryupāsinā ramayanti vara-striyāḥ
tam vīra-sāyanā suptaṁ ramayanty aśivāḥ śivāḥ (MBh.11.51, * p.64)
śayāne vīra-sāyanā bhīśme śaṁtanu-nandane
gāṅgeye puruṣa-vyāghre pāṇḍavaṁ paryupasthitē (MBh.12.55.2)
The Death of the Hero (Hara)  

sayānaṁ viṁa-sayane kālākāṁkṣiṇam acyutam
ājagmur bhūrata-sreṣṭhaṁ draṣṭu-kāmā mahārṣayaḥ (MBh.13.27.3)
sayānaṁ viṁa-sayane dadaṁśa nṛpatis tataḥ
tato rathād avārohad bhṛtrbhiḥ saha dharmarāṭ (MBh.13.153.15)  

Cf. also,
rājñāṁ paścima-kāla-viṁa-sayana ... raṇa-saṁjñāṁ āśrama-padam
(Ūrubhaṅga 4)  
“We have arrived at the penance-grove called battle ... the hero’s bed
[suitable] for the last moment for kings”.

18) Cf.
MBh.11.23.17 (viṁa-sayane....śūrā-niśevite).

19) For this idea of not touching the ground, cf. Hara, 1993, pp.4-5.

20) Cf.

iti sma śaṇa-talpa-stham bhūratānāṁ amadhyamam
ṛṣayaḥ paryadhāvanta sahitāḥ siddha-cāraṇaiḥ (MBh.5.115.14)
śaṇa-talpa-gate bhīṣme kauravaṁśa dhuraṁdhare
ājagmur ṛṣayaḥ siddhā nārada-pramukhā nṛpa (MBh.12.54.4)

Cf. also,
śaṇaṁḥ śaṇa-talpe 'smin sva-śopita-pariplutah
śaṇa-jālaiṣ cito bhāti bhāskaro 'stam iva vrajan (R.6.39.15)


22) Cf.6.115.54, 7.122.15, 6.117.3, 11.23.17, 12.47.7, 12.50.5, 12.153.24, 7.124.23,
6.14.4, 5.125.16, 12.54.1, 8.6.24, 6.115. 46, 12.54.4, 12.46.11, 12.160.9, 14.59.12,
13.115.1, 6.114.91, 8.51.37, 9.55.31, 7.3.1, 9.32.40, 6.114.85, 12.47.1, 12.53.27, 8.
5.49.

23) Cf. MBh.1.100.3, 12.200.10 (śubha), 3.194.14 (dvīva) and 10.9.13 (dharma).


25) A contaminated form of MBh.9.4.30cd and 6.17.11cd is met with in the
Udyoga-parvan.
adharmaḥ sumahān eṣa yac chayā-maraṇaṁ grhe
yad ājau nidhanaṁ yāti so 'sy a dharmaḥ sanātanaḥ (MBh.5.579*, p. 606)

26) Woolner and Sarup, p.177.
27) Wezler loc. cit.
28) We have sanagrāme nidhana instead. Cf. note 9 above.
29) ebhir hatair jagad upaiti sukhaṁ tathaite kurvantu nāma narakāya
cirāya pāpam saṅgrāma-mṛtyum adhigamyā divaṁ prayāntu matvet
i nūnām ahitānvinihāṃsi devi (Mārkanaḍeya Purāṇa 81.18)

[Abbreviations]
IT : Indologica Taurinensia (Torino)
MBh. : The Mahābhārata (Poona Critical Edition)
MS. : Manu-smṛti (Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay 1946)
R. : The Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa (Baroda Critical Edition)
YS. : Yājñavalkya-smṛti (Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay 1949)

[Original Texts]
Abhiṣeka-nāṭaka : Bhāsa-nāṭaka-cakram (Poona Oriental Series 54, Poona 1951)
Karṇabhāra : "
Pañcarātra : "
Pratimā-nāṭaka : "

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Urubhaṅga: The Venkateshwar Press (Bombay)

[Secondary Literature]


Gonda: J. Gonda, Aspects of Early Viṣṇuism (Utrecht 1954)


1924: E. W. Hopkins, Ethics of India (New Haven 1924)

Kane: P. V. Kane, History of Dharma-śāstra III (2nd ed., Poona 1973)

Lingat: R. Lingat, The Classical Law of India, Translated from the French, with additions by J. Duncan M.
The Death of the Hero (Hara)

Derrett (New Delhi 1993)


Woolner and Sarup: Thirteen Plays of Bhāsa, translated into English by A. C. Woolner and L. Sarup (Lahore 1929)
*Post Script.*

It was in 1956, when my teacher at Harvard, the late Professor Daniel H.H. Ingalls, recommended my small article, entitled Nakulisha-paśupata-darśanam, to the Indo-iranian Journal, that I received my first letter from Professor de Jong. From that time onward, for the next 44 years, he never failed to help me in supporting my academical activities.

Early in the 1960s, a group of young Indologists in Japan who had been trained in the West soon after the Second World War, Kitagawa, Ojihara, Hattori and Kajiyama, were ambitious enough to make our Japanese Indology in its infancy acceptable to that of the West which had an age-honoured long tradition behind it since the 18th century, and I joined this group from Tokyo as its youngest member. Despite the economic situation at that time, we tried to do our best by various means, inviting scholars of eminence from abroad, pushing ourselves to attend International Conferences, sending students abroad and so forth.

It was around that time when scholars like Professors de Jong and Brough kindly accepted our invitations, and enlightened us with a series of inspiring lectures. Thus, Professor de Jong came to Tokyo in the spring of 1963 and we met each other in person for the first time. Later he was kind enough to invite me to Canberra (1972 and 1973) and to introduce me to the international circle of western Indologists by requesting me to join the editorial board of the Indo-iranian Journal in 1975. Meanwhile, he repeated his journeys to Japan (1973, 1983, 1993) and we had the honour to have him as the first Guest Professor in our College in 1996. It was his last visit to our country. During all these years, we were always in close contact through correspondence and he was also kind enough to accept and train several of my pupils in
Without the thoughtful cooperation of my senior colleagues in Japan and the constant encouragement of these teachers and friends abroad, I can scarcely imagine how I have been able to continue my academical activities for the past fifty years. Reflecting on those years, I renew my gratitude to those teachers and friends abroad for their kindness, and among them I feel particularly indebted to Professor de Jong. His contribution to the development of Japanese Indology in general and Buddhist Studies in particular is immense, and we would like to commemorate it for ever in the history of Japanese Indology.

It was in his letter dated 25 October 1999 that he confidentially told me about his major operation, which, however, did not remove the cause which had been bothering him since January 1998. In his last letter dated 10 November, he said that his life span was now limited, but he begged not to tell anybody else because he did not like to receive letters of sympathy! Early in February 2000, when I read Mrs de Jong’s letter which described the last days of Professor de Jong that indolently, (in a painfree moment) he was discussing a problem in Sanskrit with me (probably the Lalitavistara), I was once again impressed by his friendship.

Since 21 January 2000, when he passed away to our great regret, I have thought of contributing a modest paper to his Gedenkschrift, but I have not so far heard of such a project being prepared. In view of the approaching first anniversary of his death, I have decided to publish here a draft of a paper in his memory, which, I hope, will be revised in the future in the light of suggestions made by my respected colleagues.

Tokyo, 21 January 2001