

Yoga and Kṣema : The Significance of Their Usage in the R̥gveda

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IN his monograph entitled 'Staat und Gesellschaft im alten Indien, Wilhelmh Rau makes the following observation in regard to the colonization of North India by the early Vedic tribes: "... a colonization of such a nature is certainly not to be regarded as a planned undertaking. Its tempo was first of all dependent on the increase in numbers of the community; and, so long as a stretch of territory provided the settlers with nourishment, it would not have been abandoned unnecessarily. In between periods of wandering therefore, there arose times of peaceful settlement".¹ From the references quoted by Rau, which are from the *Brāhmaṇas* and the early *Upaniṣads*, it becomes clear that the Aryans of this age themselves indicated these periods of settled living by means of terms such as *kṣema* (and other derivatives of $\sqrt{kṣi}$ —etc.) which signify 'dwelling', 'staying over' etc. The *Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā* indirectly explains the significance of this usage when it says the following: "One day one effects progress and the next day one stays over. This is the *yoga* and the *kṣema* of folks". ("anyedyuḥ prakrāmayaty anyedyur upatiṣṭhate. yogakṣemaṃ vā etat prajānām...")² As opposed to 'going forth' then, *kṣema* is the 'staying over': it signifies the condition, the time or the place of repose—depending on the context.

It is useful to note that the earlier Vedic literature also reflects this dual character of the life of the early Aryan tribes. In the *R̥gveda* (*RV*) the contrastive use of derivatives of $\sqrt{kṣi}$ —etc. on the one hand and derivatives of roots such as \sqrt{yudh} — \sqrt{yuj} —and $\sqrt{yā}$ (which are used to refer to war, movement etc.) on the other is such that it appears that tribal life was characteristically viewed as one of either *yoga* or *kṣema*—a fact which one has to bear in mind constantly when interpreting the R̥gvedic evidence on contemporary tribal life.

We thus find that at *RV* 7.82.4 when *yutsu prtanāsu* (=in armies in battles) is contrasted with *kṣemasya prasave* (= in the *prasava* of peace), an appreciation of the exact significance of *kṣema* is indispensable if we are not to misinterpret the word *prasava* which also occurs at several other important contexts such as *RV* 1.102.1, 1.102.9 and 5.42.9. (Without going into details we may note here that *prasava* of these contexts signifies a festival of regeneration,³ obviously held in the intervals of settled life referred to by the

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1. Wilhelm Rau, *Staat und Gesellschaft im alten Indien*, Wiesbaden, 1957, p. 14.
 2. *Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā*, ed. L. von Schroeder, Leipzig, 1881-86, 3.2.2.
 3. Cp. J. C. Heesterman, *The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration*—Gravenhage, 1957, p. 222.

term *kṣema*). Moreover, the nature of the Vedic Aryan's relations with his gods must also of necessity be depicted with appropriate differences depending on whether they were invoked in peace or war, (as is evident from 1.100.7 which contrasts *ūtayah śūrasātau*: 'helpmates in war' with *kṣemasya trām*: 'protection in peace'). It must be stated however, that 'peace' is scarcely an appropriate translation of the Sanskrit *kṣema* as used in these contexts, for *kṣema* here is essentially the dwelling in one locality, which to these tribesmen was possible only so long as they did not have to battle against either foemen or adverse conditions of nature and environment.

The condition of life signified by $\sqrt{kṣi}$ — (i.e. *kṣema*) is contrasted with war again at 4.25.8 *cd* "Men who seek *vāja* (=booty, prizes, vigour)⁴ invoke Indra, both they that dwell (in peace) as well as they that fight" (*indram kṣiyanta uta yuddhamānāḥ/indram naro vājayanto havante*). Much the same idea is expressed, though without recourse to the expressions under discussion, at 4.42.5 *ab*, where Indra, or king Trasadasyu as representing Indra,⁵ is made to say that those who seek *vāja*, equipped with splendid steeds (*svāśvā vājayantāḥ*) invoke his aid as do also those that are 'in war besieged' (*vrtāḥ samarane*). Line *c* of this stanza goes on to say: "I institute the *āji*" (*kṛṇomy ājīm*); and the *āji* was both war and the racing contest, which were equally the concern of heroic men (*naraḥ*: 4.42.5*a*) as well as of Indra, the hero-god. The references to the invoking of Indra's aid in war as well as in *kṣema* is an indication that the institution of ritualistic events with racing contests etc. was a characteristic feature of the periods of peace. If Indra is the god who causes war and its victories, he is no less, indeed he is therefore, the one most responsible for 'the dwelling in peace', as 3.46.2 indicates: "You make men fight and dwell (in security)" —*yodhayā ca kṣayayā ca janān*.

The more telling way of indicating the types of living referred to above is the contrastive use of *kṣema* and *yoga*. What *yoga* means in this usage is indicated at 4.24.4, where 'warring folks' are called *yudhmā viśaḥ* and it is said of them, that they show their resolve for *yoga*: *kratūyanti yoge*. *Yoga* here is clearly fighting, in the sense that in battle one yoked (\sqrt{yuj} —from which *yoga* is derived) one's horses to battle-cars to rush to the target of attack, this being a characteristic aspect of Aryan fighting.⁶ But it must be stressed that it would be incorrect to equate *yoga* to war; rather, as yoking or harnessing the horses, it signifies only an aspect of war. Having the horses yoked to the 'cars' was also a condition that one has to expect in the migratory movement of nomadic tribes. Obviously it must be this wider sense of *yoga* that e.g. *RV* 7.86.8*c* carries: "May there be *prosperity* to us in *kṣema* and also in *yoga*" (*śam naḥ kṣeme śam u yoge no astu*). To translate *kṣeme* . . . *yoge* of this context as 'in possession . . . in acquisition' (Macdonell, in the *Vedic Reader*, obviously following Sāyaṇa) or as 'im Frieden . . . auf der Kriegsfahrt' (Geldner in *Der R̥gveda . . . übersetzt*.) does not seem to bring out the full significance of this usage which clearly reflects the vagaries of the nomadic life that the Vedic tribes were used to lead.

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4. On *vāja*, cp. J. Gonda in *Numen*, iv. 2, pp. 134-35 and Heesterman, *op.cit.*, p. 133.
 5. On the interpretation of *RV* 4.42, see W. Norman Brown, "King Trasadasyu as a divine incarnation: a note on *RV* 4.42" in *C. Kunhan Raja Commemoration Volume*, p. 38 f.
 6. Cp. Stuart Piggott, *Prehistoric India*, Penguin Books, 1952, pp. 273 f; Thumb, A. and Hauschild, R., *Handbuch des Sanskrit* I/1, Heidelberg, 1958, p. 69.

Further examples of the contrastive use of $\sqrt{kṣi}$ —and \sqrt{yuj} —are found at 5.37.5 (“one may thrive in *kṣema* and conquer in *yoga*”: *puṣyāt kṣema abhi yoge bhavāti*), 10.89.10 (“Indra is to be invoked in both *yoga* and *kṣema*”: *indrah kṣeme yoge havya indrah*), 7.54.3 (“protect us . . . in both *yoga* and *kṣema*”: *pāhi kṣema uta yoge . . . nah*)⁷ and 8.37.5 (“you rule over both *kṣema* and *prayuj*”—i.e. *yoga* or the ‘yoking’: *kṣemasya ca prayujaś ca tiam iśi.e . . .*).

This contrast is also expressed in other ways in the *RV*, e.g. by means of the expressions *yānt*—and *avasita*, *yāman* and *ayāman*. The essential similarity between this usage and the contrastive use of \sqrt{yuj} —and $\sqrt{kṣi}$ becomes clear when we compare 8.83.6 (“we invoke you, o gods, both when we dwell and when we move”: *kṣiyanto yānto . . . devā . . . hūmahe*) with 10.89.10 quoted above.

4.25.8b characterizes the men that call on Indra’s aid as *yāntah* (they that move) and *avasitāsaḥ* (they that have settled, literally they that have ‘un-tied’ their horses, derived from *ava* $\sqrt{sā}$: to untie). 1.32.15 refers to Indra as the king of them that move and of them that have settled (*yāto avasitasya rājā*). In considering the significance of these sayings, we have to bear in mind the meaning of the word *avasāna* (derived from *ava* $\sqrt{sā}$ —as is *avasita* of these *RV* references) as found in the later Vedic texts. Here it means not only the place of rest of a moving *grāma* (a nomadic band or tribe),⁸ but also the dwelling that a land-taking prince bestowed on his *viś* (commoners who are his subordinates and helpers).⁹ It is thus in every way comparable with *kṣiti*, *kṣema* etc. of the *RV*, which too was the repose as well as the place that one acquired, though often a temporary acquisition, as a result of one’s *yoga*.

In the *vālakhilya* hymn 8.52, stanza 5 expresses the singer’s natural desire for sustenance during *ayāman*, i.e., when the tribe was not on the move for cattle-raids etc. It requests Indra to “give us kine and horse . . . when (we are) not on the move” (*ayāman . . . gor aśvasya pra dātu nah*). It is unnecessary, and it hardly makes the statement comprehensible, to regard the movement here as Indra’s, as Geldner does,¹⁰ for we find that the word *yāma* (= *yāman*) is used in much the same way to refer to the movement of a nomadic tribe in the later Vedic texts. (Cp. *Kāthaka Saṃhitā*, 19.12: *yāme anyāsām pra-jānāṃ manah, kṣeme anyāsām etc.*¹¹)

With the references cited above we may also compare *RV* 1.181.7. Here the *Aśvins*, the gods who typically come to one’s rescue when in danger, are requested to listen to the singer’s call both when he (and his patron and party) was on the move and when out of it: *yāmann ayāmañ chruṇutaṃ havaṃ me*.

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7. Interesting is the background of this stanza. The hymn 7.54 is addressed to *Vāstoṣpati*. Does the element *vāstu* in this name mean, like in *Kapila-vāstu* etc., locality of dwelling rather than house, land newly won or arrived at, as is *kṣetra/kṣiti* in the references cited above?
 8. On *grāma*, see Rau, *op.cit.*, pp. 51 f.
 9. Cp. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *The Rgveda as a Land nama Book*, Lusac, 1935, p. 16, quoting *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, vii. 1.1.1: “one settles (*ava-syati*) when he builds the *gārhapatya* and whoever are builders of fire altars are settled (*avasitāḥ*)” Also Rau, *op.cit.*, p. 16, citing, *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, vii. 1.1.4: “*yasmāi . . . kṣatriyoḥ . . . avasānaṃ dadāti, tuṣ sudattam*”.
 10. Geldner, K. F., *Der Rigveda. . . übersetzt*, H.O.S. vol. 33-35, 1951. See translation of 8.52.5.
 11. Rau, *op.cit.*, p. 14.

With these indications of R̥gvedic nomadism we must also take 7.56.24 which vividly reflects the search for *kṣiti* (= *kṣema*) by the tribe moving over water-ways under the leadership of an 'impetuous hero' (*suṣmī vīrah*), "with whom we would cross the waters to obtain a goodly dwelling" (*apo yena sukṣitaye tarema*). In this case the activity which ends in the acquisition of a *su-kṣiti* may be compared with the *yoga* of the passages cited above.

Comparable is also *RV* 10.99.8 which says that Indra finds a *gātu* (path?)¹² for the benefit of his devotees, in order that they may obtain *kṣaya* (= *kṣema*), (*kṣayāya gātuṃ vidan no asme*) which may be interpreted as saying that the tribe's movements have their logical finalé in *kṣema*.

Evidence of a related type, but referring to a historically attested tribe of Vedic Aryans, the Bharatas, is found at 6.61.14, 6.47.20 and 3.33.11.

At 6.61.14, the priest-singer of Vadhryaśva or his son Divodāsa Atithigva describes the river Sarasvatī, invoked as a deity here, as the killer of Pārāvatas (*pārāvataḡhnī*) and adds, "May we not have to go—to unknown dwellings away from you" (*mā tvat kṣetrāṇy arañāṇi ganma*). Apparently this is an indication of the alternative left to a tribe in the process of settling down if other groups that 'come from the far distance' (*parāvataḡ*—thus e.g. are the Yadus and Turvaśas said to come: 6.45.1) press on them. This alternative was departure, or getting back into *yoga*. Actually that the people led by Vadhryaśva and his son Divodāsa had to suffer this fate is proved in no uncertain terms by 6.47.20. This stanza describes the plight of the Bharatas of Divodāsa's days as follows: "To a pastureless dwelling have we come, o gods. Constricted has the earth become, wide though it be." (*agavyūti kṣetram āganma devā/urvī satī bhūmir amhūranā bhūt*). That the Bharatas had not come out of this state even in the early days of the rule of Divodāsa's grandson Sudās is proved by 3.33.11. Here the Bharatas are depicted as a cattle-seeking nomadic horde (*gavyan grāmah*), driven by Indra's divine might and attempting to cross the rivers Vipāś and Śutudrī under the guidance of R̥ṣi Viśvāmitra. That these Bharatas whom Viśvāmitra helped across the flooded rivers were not a section of the pioneer Aryan immigrants to the Punjab, but were the Bharata tribesmen of Sudās' days is proved by *RV* 3.53.9.¹³

The above evidence of the plight of the Bharatas is again basically in agreement with the information provided by the later literature, as we learn from what Rau observes: . . . " . . . individual groups of people were obliged to defend their land not only against the inroads of early inhabitants retreating to the east, but also against the attacks of members of their own race who were following in their wake".¹⁴ Thus the *kṣema* of these early Aryans was an uncertain one which was often bound to relapse into *yoga*.

12. See Mayrhofer, M., *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen*, Heidelberg, 1956—under *gātu*. The sense *sojourn*, which he gives would very well suit some of the *RV* contexts in which this word occurs.

13. See Geldner, *op.cit.*, notes to translation of 3.53. *Ibc* Cp. also, Thumb—Hauschild *op.cit.*, I/1, p. 70. The description in 3.33 can apply to the pioneer Aryan immigration only indirectly.

14. Rau, *op.cit.*, p. 14, citing *Śatapatha Br.*, 6.7.3.5: *yo vai parāṇ eva jayaty, anye vai tasya jīlam anvavasyanti; atha ya ubhayathā jayati tasya tatra kāmācarāṇam bhavati*.

It may be asked whether any of these references contain a possible suggestion of the co-existence of peaceable and warlike Aryans in the age of the *R V*. Do, for example, the contrasted nominatives (*kṣiyantaḥ/yāntaḥ* etc.), as against the locatives (*yoge . . kṣeme*), indicate the parallel existence of Aryan tribes of different attitudes and grades of social evolution? The evidence is not strong enough to warrant any conclusion either way. The evidence of the later Vedic literature on the other hand is clearly more positive. In this connection one may by way of illustration refer to the *Kāthaka Samhitā* passage quoted above or the *Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā* reference to two types of people—those who liked the settled life (*kṣemya*) and those who liked to venture forth (*yāyāvāra*)¹⁵. On the whole, we may regard that the Rgvedic Aryans were accustomed to a life of both *yoga* and *kṣema*, but where favourable circumstances allowed an individual tribal group to enjoy an extended *kṣema*, this should have tended to transform the attitudes and ways of living of such a group profoundly in course of time. Obviously such new attitudes should find expression in the literature of a latter day.

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යොග ක්‍ෂෙම යන පදය සංහිතා සාහිත්‍යයේ මෙන් ම පශ්චාත්‍යන වෛදික කෘතීන්හි ද යෙදෙන්නකි. මෙම ව්‍යවහාරය තන්කාලීන වෛදික ගෝත්‍රිකයන්ගේ සංචාරී ජීවිතයේ ස්වරූපය මද වශයෙන් හෝ විහිද දක්වන්නක් බැවින් වැදගත් වෙයි. මෙහි ක්‍ෂෙම යන්නෙන් (එක් තැනක, කලක්) නතර වීම ප්‍රකාශ වන අතර ඊට ප්‍රතිවිරුද්ධ අර්ථ සඳහා යොග යනු යෙදෙන බව බ්‍රාහ්මණ හා පූජිතම උපනිෂද් සාහිත්‍යයේ ඇතුළත් වූ යම් යම් පාඨයන් මගින් මහාවායූ විල්හෙල්ම් රාල විසින් පැහැදිලි කොට දී ඇත. යොග—ක්‍ෂෙම යන සමාස පදයෙන් සංචරණයන්, අනතුරුව යොග්‍ය ස්ථානයකට පැමිණ එහි (කලක්) රැඳී සිටීමත් යන ගෝත්‍රික දිවි පෙවෙන් දැවිවිධ සම්භාවය අනාවරණය වෙයි.

මේ දැවිවිධත්වය ප්‍රකට කරන වාග්ව්‍යවහාර සාග්වේදයෙහි ද දැකිය හැකි ය. විශේෂයෙන් ම $\sqrt{\text{ක්ෂි}}$ - (වෙසෙනු) ධාතුවෙන් නිපන් ක්‍ෂෙම වැනි පද හා සමග $\sqrt{\text{යුධ}}$ - , $\sqrt{\text{යුජ්}}$ - , $\sqrt{\text{යා}}$ - ආදී ධාතූන් ගෙන් නිපන් පද විරුද්ධාර්ථයෙන් යෙදීම මෙහි දී වැදගත් සේ සැලකිය හැකි ය.

යුධ — ක්‍ෂෙම (සා. වෙ. 7. 82. 4), ක්ෂියන්ත් — යුද්ධමාන (4. 25. 8), යොධය, ක්ෂයය (3. 46. 2), ශ්‍රරසාති — ක්‍ෂෙම (1. 100. 7) ආදී ස්ථානයන්හි $\sqrt{\text{ක්ෂි}}$ - ධාතුවෙන් නිපන් පද ‘යුධ’ අර්ථය දරන පදයන්ට විරුධාර්ථ දරමින් යෙදී ඇති සැටි පෙනේ. වෙනත් ස්ථානයන්හි මීට සම කළ හැකි අයුරින් යොග — ක්‍ෂෙම ව්‍යවහාරය දැකිය හැකි ය. (5. 37. 5: ප්‍රභාත ක්‍ෂෙමෙ..... අහි යොගෙ හවාති). යොග යන්නෙන් යුධ කාලයෙහි ලක්ෂණයක් පැවසෙන බව ‘යුධිමා වීග:ක්‍රතුයන්ති යොගෙ’ (4. 24. 8.) ආදියෙන් පෙනේ. යෙදීම යන මූලික අර්ථය ඇති යොග පදයෙන් සටනට යන විට රියට අසුන් බැඳීම අදහස් කරනු ලැබිය. අසුන් යෙදූ යුද්ධයෙන් සටන් කිරීම වෛදික ආයුධයන්ගේ සංග්‍රාම ක්‍රියාවන්හි වැදගත් ලක්ෂණයක් විය. එහෙත් යොග යන්න ‘යුධය’ යන අරුතට ම සීමා කළ නොහැක. අසුන් රියෙහි බැඳීම යුදෙහි මෙන් ම ගෝත්‍රික සංචරණ කාලයෙහි ද ප්‍රකට ලක්ෂණයක් විය. ඒ අනුව යොග යන්න ගෝත්‍රික සංචාරය සඳහා ද යෙදෙයි. 10. 89. 10, 7. 54. 3 හා 8. 37. 5 වැනි ස්ථානයන්හි යොග — ක්‍ෂෙම ව්‍යවහාරයේ යොග යනු යුධය හෝ සංචරණය යන දෙකින් කවරක් වුවද සඳහා ගත හැකි ය. 8. 83. 6, 4. 25. 8, 1. 32. 15 හා 1. 181. 7 යනාදී ස්ථානයන්හි ඉහත කී යොග පදයෙන් ප්‍රකාශිත අර්ථයට සමාන වූවක් යාන්ත් — යාමන් — යනාදියෙන් පැවසෙන අතර ක්‍ෂෙම පදයෙහි අර්ථය ක්ෂියන්ත් — අවසිත — අයාමන් යනාදියෙන් සුවිත ය. යොග යන්නෙන් (අසුන්) යෙදීම අදහස් කළාක් මෙන් ම අවසිත යන්නෙන් (අසුන්) ‘ලීභු’ යනු පැවසෙයි. (සටන

15. *Ibid.*

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හෝ ගමන) “නිම කළ” යනු එහි ව්‍යවහාර අර්ථය යි. අයාමන් යන පදය යෙදෙන 8. 52. 5 (“අයාමන්.....ගොරභවසා ප්‍ර දතු න:) පාඨය පැහැදිලි කරනු වස් කිව යුත්තේ “සංවරණයෙහි නොයෙදෙන කල්හි ද ගවයන් හා අශ්වයන් අප හට ලබා දුන් මැනවි” යන අරුත ඉන් පැවසෙන බව ය.

“අසෙම වීරො.....අසතු.....අපො යෙන සුකමිතයෙ තරෙම” (7. 56. 24) වැනි පාඨයන් මගින් කමිති, කෙම යනාදියෙන් අදහස් කළේ කවරක් දැයි පැහැදිලි ය. නදින් තරණය කරමින් සංවරණයෙහි යෙදුන වෛදික ගෝත්‍රිකයන් සුදුසු වාසභූමියක් (සු-කමිති) ලබා ගැනීම සඳහා වීරනායකයකු පැතු අන්දම ඉන් ප්‍රකට වෙයි.

සංවරණය ද බොහෝ කොට ම සටන් හා ප්‍රහාර සහිත වූ දෙයක් බව සා. වෙදයේ භරතයන් ගැන කියවෙන කරුණුවලින් පෙනේ. විශෙෂයෙන් 6. 61. 14, 6. 47. 20 හා 3. 33. 11 එක් කර ගත් විට ඒ බව පැහැදිලි වෙයි. මින් පළමුවැන්න (අමුතු ජනයා පැමිණීම නිසා) නුපුරුදු වාසභූමි සොයා යන්නට සිදු නොවේවා යි භරත ගෝත්‍රිකයන් වෙනුවෙන් කරන පැතුමකි. දෙවැන්න මේ අනභිප්‍රේත තත්ත්වය ළඟා වූ බව පෙන්වන්නකි. තෙවැන්න, තමන් ඇදහූ පරිදි ඉන්ද්‍ර දෙවියාගේ සරණ හා ප්‍රරණය යටතේ විපාශ් ශතද්රි ගංගා තීරයට පැමිණ භරතයන් පෙන්වුම් කරයි. ඔවුන් එහි පැමිණ ඇත්තේ “ගවයන් සොයමින් යන සංචාරි සමූහයක්” (“ගව්‍යන් ග්‍රාම:”) හැටියට ය. මෙහි ‘ගවයන් සෙවීම’ අවශ්‍යයෙන් ම සටනින් අනුන් සතු දේ උදුරා ගැනීම අදහස් කරන්නකි. කෘෂිකර්මය වැනි ඵලදායී වෘත්තියක නොයෙදුණ සංචාරක ගෝත්‍රිකයන්ගේ රණකාමීත්වය යම්කිසි තරමකට ආර්ථික අවශ්‍යතාවක් ද සපුරා ලූ බව මෙවැනි සාක්ෂ්‍ය මගින් එළිදරව් වෙයි.

ඉහත සඳහන් කළ යොග—කෙම ආදී පදයන් තුළින් හෙළි වන වෛදික ගෝත්‍රික ජීවිතයේ ද්විවිධත්වය පැහැදිලි ලෙස අවබෝධ කර ගැනීම “ප්‍රසව” ආදී ගෝත්‍රික සංස්ථාවන් ගැනත් යාගය හා දෙව ඇදහීම පිළිබඳ වත් කරුණු විමසන අවස්ථාවන්හි අතිශයින් ම අවශ්‍ය වන බව සඳහන් කළ යුතු ය.