

## Chapter - 8

### Critical Study of Utsrṣṭikāṅka

**00. Introduction** - The west has a long tradition of drama originated from the Greece. The dramatic tradition started before the fifth century B.C. In that period, tragedy was the only form of drama and it was performed in the city of Dionysian. These dramas were based on either mythology or history. According to Greek and Roman, drama means tragedy and it cannot be thought of without tragedy. The drama consists of tragic plot, an exalted hero, who brings tragedy in the story and who is extra-ordinary and a spectacular human being. Greek and Roman believed hero brings the real pathetic. It could be said as the psycho-pathetic.

G. K. Bhat (1985, Sanskrit Drama, pp.54-55) states as follows: ‘The western tragedy is a story of an exalted character. He is remarkable in a number of ways and is thereby above the label of common humanity. He, however, adopts a course of action, which puts him into terrible conflict with an established order of political-social life, or with cosmic forces, which do not brook any wrong being done. The entire story moves round such a conflict and ends with the death of the hero. One of the qualities that the hero possesses is the firmness of his own stand. He defies the forces of opposition. He does not deviate from the course of his action even if it brings him untold misery and agony. Sometimes he realizes the error of his action; sometimes not and occasionally the realization comes too late, almost at the moment of dying. Yet he courageously marches towards the end and faces death heroically. It also happens that the characters are victims of an adverse destiny. Nemesis takes hold of them, though they may not have done any real wrong. Such a spectacle rouses a variety of emotions. There is naturally ‘pity’ or sympathy for the agonies the hero suffers; there is also ‘terror’ or awe at the trail of waste, blood, disaster and death that the story leaves; there is at the same time deep admiration for the uncommon courage that the hero continuously shows in meeting

disaster, in his suffering and in finally accepting death. There is sublimity that the hero reaches which lifts the spectator also on a higher level of humanity.’

Some examples of such type of dramas are Aeschylus’s ‘The Persians’, ‘Oresteia trilogy’; Sophocles’ ‘Antigone’, ‘Electra’; Shakespeare’s ‘Hamlet,’ ‘Othello;’ Euripides’s Andromache and Daughters of Troy. Euripides’s dramas are also the best examples of the ‘Utsrṣṭikānka’ type.

However, in the Indian tradition of Sanskrit drama, tragedy occurs naturally, without needing any effort. The Ūrubhaṅga of Bhāsa is the best example of Utsrṣṭikānka, which is quite close to Aristotle’s theory of tragedy. In the Indian tradition of Sanskrit drama, Utsrṣṭikānka is a one-act drama based on tragedy. Here basically, weeping of women happens because of the loss of their beloved ones.

Utsrṣṭikānka is the sequel to a Samavakāra, Ihāmrga, Ḍima and Vyāyoga and mostly resembles Bhāṅa. Here the hero and the plot are mostly well known and the story is based on pathetic. Abhinavabhāratī states that it depicts the death of the subject and that is why it is called Utsrṣṭikānka (*utkramaṇīyā sṛṣṭirjīvitam prāṇā yāsām tā utsrṣṭikāḥ śocantyaḥ striyastābhiraṅkita iti tathoktāḥ* – Abhinavabhāratī, XVIII.96).

Utsrṣṭikānka does not have any divine character, because it is based on pathetic sentiment. If there were furious, odious or terrible sentiment as the main sentiment, then it could have had the divine character (*iha ca karuṇarasabāhulyādeva devairviyogaḥ raudrabībhatsabhayānakasāmbandho divyayoge na bhavatyapi tu karuṇayogaḥ* - Abhinavabhāratī, XVIII.96). It does not have any action except verbal action and hence it contains verbal style (*bhāratīvṛtti*). Utsrṣṭikānka is a natural type of (*lokadharmī*) drama like Prakaraṇa, Bhāṅa and Prahāsana and which represents worldly behaviour. It depicts common behavior, normal action and wide spread story.

Utsrṣṭikānka survived because of the Ūrubhaṅga, which has followed almost all the rules of the Nāṭyaśāstra. Bharata Gupta (1994, Dramatic concepts Greek and Indian, p. 216) states that ‘if an Utsrṣṭikānka had managed to survive guessing from its attributes (*lakṣaṇas*) as given in the Nāṭyaśāstra, it would have had plenty of such tragic wails and

complaints (*nirveditabhāṣitaḥ*). One must also notice that the aim of tragedy was to be achieved by the agency of mutability. Death of the hero was not essential. However, because of Aristotle's 'prejudice', 'Oedipus Rex,' need not be taken as the best tragedy and the only point of reference'.

Even the Nāṭyaśāstra states that there is no rule that all dramas will get successful conclusion. However, result-wise, the arrangement of the plot is made and that result arises from various actions (*samutkarṣāt phalasya ca* – Nāṭyaśāstra.XXI.5). The Ūrubhaṅga is justified to be an Utsrṣṭikāṅka, as the same contains the seed and a miserable ending.

**0. Aim of the Article:** - The present article on the Utsrṣṭikāṅka with special reference to the Ūrubhaṅga, by Bhāsa, is meant to explain as to how it follows the rules of Bharata and Dhanañjaya. Further, the article shall justify as to how the Ūrubhaṅga is an Utsrṣṭikāṅka.

**05. The Author of the Ūrubhaṅga:** - Bhāsa, the author of the Ūrubhaṅga, has not mentioned anything about himself, in his plays. A. D. Pusalkar (1940, Bhāsa A Study, pp.68, 105) states that 'Bhāsa is a *gotra*, in Haimodaka division of Agastyagotra and Bhāsa is a corrupt form. He was an orthodox Brahmin, follower of the caste system and jealous worshipper of Viṣṇu and a firm believer in the practice, utility and efficacy of sacrifices etc. His descriptions of various matters in his works are the evidences that prove the fact that he was a Brahmin from the northern part of India.

Again tentatively, the date of Bhāsa can be fixed as fourth century B.C., because he has mentioned that the author of Arthaśāstra is Bṛhaspati and not Kauṭilya, which places him before Mauryan period. Even the Buddhism and the Jainism do not seem to have obtained a sway over the public when these plays were written. It might be so because the Brāhmaṇical system, glorification of sacrifices and hate towards Buddhist and Jain were still prevalent. Thus, the most considerable date of Bhāsa is 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. He was referred to by the poets like Kālidāsa, Bhoja, Śāradātanaya, Abhinava, Bāṇa, Daṇḍi, Rājaśekhara.

**06. Summary of the Ūrubhaṅga:** - Bhāsa has written the plays for the sake of people, in which he has depicted the sentiments and characters of the people very naturally. The Ūrubhaṅga is one of his works, which is an Utsrṣṭikāṅka type of drama. It has followed almost all the rules of the Nāṭyaśāstra. The summary of the Ūrubhaṅga has been given below.

The story of the drama is the smashing of the thighs of Duryodhana in the club fight. Three warriors enter the stage after the stage-manager finishes his preliminaries and they, between themselves, give a detailed description of the battlefield on the eighteenth day of the great Kuru-Pāṇḍava war. According to them, whole battleground was full of corpses, jackals and vultures gathered to eat flesh from the dead bodies. In the mean time, some noise is heard behind the curtain which is identified later on as that produced by the terrible mace-fight between Bhīma and Duryodhana. The warriors turn their faces to the place where the club fight was going on in the presence of Vyāsa, Vidura, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. They then describe the fight very realistically. In the opinion of the second warrior, Bhīma was physically stronger while Duryodhana was more adept in the club fight. In the fight, later on Bhīma gets a terrible blow on his head and falls down which plunges the Pāṇḍava supporters into anxieties and gladdens Balarāma at the victory of his disciple. Duryodhana then taunts Bhīma, by telling him not to be afraid as he was not going to kill him, though his life was at his (Duryodhana's) mercy. Seeing this, Kṛṣṇa makes a secret sign to Bhīma by striking on his own thighs. This infuses a new spirit in Bhīma and he rises up energetically quite fresh for fighting again after a loud thundering shout. After fighting for some time, Bhīma hurls his mace with both hands on the thighs of Duryodhana violating the rules of club-fight as suggested by Kṛṣṇa. Duryodhana's thighs are broken and bleed profusely and he falls to the ground. At his fall, Vyāsa sets out to fly to the heaven and Balarāma becomes enraged at the unjust treatment accorded to Duryodhana but on Vyāsa's advice, Bhīma is led elsewhere by the Pāṇḍavas with the help of Kṛṣṇa. Balarāma opens the next scene, shouting loudly that he is going to kill Bhīma and asking Duryodhana to hold on a

little longer. Hearing this, Duryodhana crawled with great effort, as his thighs are broken and tries to pacify Balarāma by saying, “Let who offer of funeral oblations live and let strife and enmities end.”

However, instead Balarāma becomes even more enraged and talks of killing all the Pāṇḍavas. Duryodhana, however, shows saintly resignation saying that it was no use fighting in the then circumstances and that it was not Bhīma but the great lord Kṛṣṇa who had entered, as it were, Bhīma’s mace and made present of his (Duryodhana’s) life to the god of death.

Then enter Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhārī, the queens of Duryodhana and his son Durjaya, all bewailing his sad end and searching for him on the battlefield. All this pains Duryodhana to the most, more poignant than his physical injuries. The sight of his queens crying aloud, walking on bare foot and bare-headed, without their usual veils, strikes a serious blow to Duryodhana.

More is yet to come. At the approach of his parents and at the express desire of his father to salute him, Duryodhana tries to get up to fall at the feet of his father but falls down again.

The scene between Duryodhana and Durjaya is the most pathetic and the most touching, in the whole range of Sanskrit literature and no apology is needed to quote the whole scene extensively owing to its bringing out the inner traits of Duryodhana, which is really heart-rending. His inability to offer his lap as a resting place for his beloved son is the unkindest cut of all to Duryodhana. The sorry plight of Duryodhana reminds Dhṛtarāṣṭra of the deaths of his hundred sons and the old man falls down unconscious. Duryodhana requests him to console his mother by telling her that her son died in the war without showing his back and that he is dying in the same dignity in which he was born. His love for his mother is brilliantly shown by his prayer to be her son in all his future lives if there were any slight merit to his credit.

His message to his queens also is not to lament for him as he is meeting with the hero’s death, having performed in all earnest his duties of the kingly office and he is

dying heroically. His parting advice to his son also is worthy of the great hero; he preaches reconciliations, his enmity with the Pāṇḍavas constitutes a sort of representation and purification of the soul; also Aśvatthāmā then enters the stage, making a big sound with his bow, all wrathful at the news of the condition of Duryodhana. To his query, Duryodhana replies that his condition is due to his discontent but Aśvatthāmā declares his intention of slaying the Pāṇḍavas and Kṛṣṇa and Duryodhana tries to dissuade him saying that it is now of no use after the loss of his brothers, Karṇa and others, in his present condition to revive enmity. Aśvatthāmā however, tells him that it appears as if his dignity has been killed along with his thighs; but Duryodhana silences him by saying that honour (*māna*) is the life of the king and it was for *māna* alone that he fought. The evils wrought by the Pāṇḍavas are nothing as compared to his treatment of the Pāṇḍavas. All this fails to convince and satisfy Aśvatthāmā who takes a vow, with Balarāma as a witness, to fight with the Pāṇḍavas and crown Durjaya as the emperor. Duryodhana feels satisfied at this and then gets a vision of his ancestors at his death. His body is covered with a piece of cloth after his death. Then Dhṛtarāṣṭra in his grief declares his intention of going to the forest for the penance and Aśvatthāmā starts to kill the Pāṇḍavas in their sleep with upraised weapon. The general praise by all for the protection of the earth by 'our king' after destroying his enemies ends the drama. (The summary has been taken from 'Bhāsa A Study' of A. D. Pusalkar, 1940, pp.195-99).

**07. Rules of the Nāṭyaśāstra:** - 1) The Nāṭyaśāstra (XX.91-98) states that the plot of Utsṛṣṭikāṅka should be well known (*prakhyāta*), but sometimes poet is allowed to use the plot of his own imagination (*utpādyā*). The poet should not use any divine (*divya*) character and the characters should only be the mortals. 2) The pathetic (*karuṇa*) sentiment should be the principle sentiment. The haughty types of characters should be shown as engaged in fighting and altercations. There should be scenes of lamentation of women and speech of disgust and despair. 3) The poet always should compose Utsṛṣṭikāṅka with different actions and stir up perplexity but it should have style (*vṛtti*)

called verbal style (*bhāratāvṛtti*). It should not involve any violent style (*ārabhaṭāvṛtti*), grand style (*sāttvaāvṛtti*) and gay style (*kaiśikāvṛtti*). 4) Utsṛṣṭikāṅka should always have two junctures (*sandhi*) called opening (*mukha*) and concluding (*nirvahaṇa*).

**08. Rules of Daśarūpaka:** - 1) The Daśarūpaka (III.70a-72a) states that Utsṛṣṭikāṅka should have a well known (*prakhyāta*) plot by means of knowledge. 2) The pathetic (*karuṇa*) should be principle sentiment and the heroes should be ordinary and common men. It resembles Bhāṇa by junctures (*sandhi*), styles (*vṛtti*) and acts and it should have the lamentation of women. 3) There should be a speech of war and accordingly victory and defeat.

**09. Difference between the rules of the Nāṭyaśāstra and those of the Daśarūpaka:** - 1) Bharata states that Utsṛṣṭikāṅka should have well known plot or imagined plot, whereas Dhanañjaya states that poet can change the plot from well-known to imaginative provided he likes. 2) Unlike Dhanañjaya, Bharata does not state that Utsṛṣṭikāṅka should resemble styles (*vṛtti*), junctures (*sandhi*) and act like Bhāṇa. 3) Dhanañjaya states that its hero should be a common person whereas Bharata states that he should be mortal. 4) Bharata states that there should be a violent fighting of the haughty altercations. However, Dhanañjaya states that the war should occur here by means of speeches and likewise the win and defeat occur.

**10. The Rules followed by the Ūrubhaṅga** – 1) According to both Bharata and Dhanañjaya, the plot of Utsṛṣṭikāṅka should be well known (*prakhyāta*) or imaginary (*utpādya*), by means of certain changes in the plot. The Ūrubhaṅga of Bhāsa has a well-known plot taken from the great epic Mahābhārata. Bhāsa has changed the story a little bit. At the end, Duryodhana's character is seen in different nature. Bharata states that there should not be any divine (*divya*) character in Utsṛṣṭikāṅka and the Ūrubhaṅga of Bhāsa does not also contain any divine (*divya*) character. 2) Bharata and Dhanañjaya, both prescribe that Utsṛṣṭikāṅka should have the principal sentiment as pathetic (*karuṇa*) and there should be haughty type of characters engaged in fierce fight and altercations. Again, according to both, the Utsṛṣṭikāṅka should consist of the

lamentation of women and the speech of disgust and despair. In the Ūrubhaṅga, though the other sentiments like furious (*raudra*), heroic (*vīra*) and odious (*bībhatsa*) are reflected, the pathetic (*karuṇa*) sentiment dominates the drama. Hence, the pathetic (*karuṇa*) is called the principal sentiment and others are subordinates. These subordinate sentiments are basically applied for the back-ground events. However, it should be noted that in the Ūrubhaṅga, the lamentation of women has not affected the overall sentiment, which should be the principal cause of the pathetic (*karuṇa*) in the plot. The pathetic (*karuṇa*) sentiment arises here mainly through the conversation of Duryodhana and Durjaya, the father and son duo. The Ūrubhaṅga contains some haughty characters like Duryodhana, Bhīma, Balarāma and Aśvatthāmā. However, Bharata states that the plot of Utsrṣṭikāṅka should be full of action. The Ūrubhaṅga is full of actions like the war scene between both the sides, the fighting between Bhīma and Duryodhana and anger of Balarāma and Aśvatthāmā; the cheating of Duryodhana by Kṛṣṇa and the Great War between the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas. 3) Both Bharata and Dhanañjaya, do not state directly that Utsrṣṭikāṅka should consist of only one act. Dhanañjaya only states that Utsrṣṭikāṅka should be constructed like Bhāṇa by junctures (*sandhi*), styles (*vṛtti*) and act. Bharata states that Utsrṣṭikāṅka should be constructed with two junctures (*sandhi*), i.e. opening (*mukha*) and concluding (*nirvahaṇa*) and the style (*vṛtti*) should be the verbal (*bhāratī*) one. The Ūrubhaṅga of Bhāsa is a one-act drama and has verbal style (*bhāratīvṛtti*) and two junctures (*sandhi*). Generally, verbal style (*bhāratīvṛtti*) is employed when the plot consists of the pathetic (*karuṇa*) and the furious (*raudra*) scenes, which are seen in the Ūrubhaṅga of Bhāsa.

**11. Characters in the Ūrubhaṅga:** - In the Ūrubhaṅga, the characters are represented in two ways. Some characters like Duryodhana, Baladeva, Aśvatthāmā, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhārī, Durjaya, Pauravī and Mālavī are shown as present directly on the stage; and Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma, Arjuna, Yudhiṣṭhira, Vyāsa, Vidura and other Pāṇḍavas are described as present behind the curtain. Some of the important characters will be discussed below:

**Kṛṣṇa** – The Mahābhārata would be difficult to imagine without the role of Kṛṣṇa. Because of Kṛṣṇa, the Pāṇḍavas win the Great War. In the case of the Ūrubhaṅga, he supports the Pāṇḍavas by all means. At the end of the great Kuru-war, the club-fight goes on between Bhīma and Duryodhana. Kṛṣṇa and the Pāṇḍavas were present with Vyāsa, Vidura and Balarāma. The fight was horrific, because Bhīma was stronger than Duryodhana; but Duryodhana was a trained club-fighter. Hence, Bhīma gets a terrible blow on his head and falls down. Seeing this, Kṛṣṇa makes a secret-sign to Bhīma by striking on his own thigh. Getting the intended idea, Bhīma gets up with a thundering sound and fights with Duryodhana. In this situation, Kṛṣṇa helps Bhīma. He makes secret sign to Bhīma to strike his mace on Duryodhana's thigh, because Kṛṣṇa knew that in lawful warfare, the powerful opponent could not be killed. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa is the actual hero of the epic. After the war, Kṛṣṇa congratulates the king Yudhiṣṭhira for regaining the lost kingdom. He criticizes Duryodhana. Duryodhana abuses Kṛṣṇa for his cunning act. Kṛṣṇa also answers in the same way to Duryodhana. Then he goes to Hastināpura to console Gāndhārī. In the drama, all these activities of Kṛṣṇa take place behind the curtain only.

**Balarāma** – Balarāma is the teacher of Duryodhana in the art of mace fighting. He is also the on looker of the war. He is the only person who sees the secret sign that Kṛṣṇa gives to Bhīma, when Bhīma smashes Duryodhana's thigh. Balarāma does not tolerate this. He blames Bhīma for breaking the law of fighting. He becomes angry, so Kṛṣṇa tries to convince him, but he is not convinced. He praises Duryodhana and promises to kill Pāṇḍavas. However, Duryodhana prohibits him by his indifference. Durjaya, the son of Duryodhana, in the mean time, is declared as the successor of the kingdom. Balarāma becomes the witness when Durjaya is declared as the king of the state.

**Duryodhana** – Duryodhana, the king of Hastināpura is one of the leading characters of the drama. For the kingdom, he fights with the Pāṇḍavas and loses all the hundred brothers in the battlefield. His ego is destroyed by everything. For revenge, Bhīma fights with him. Bhīma defeats him in the club fighting, though he was a trained mace-fighter.

Balarāma was his teacher. He is the real fighter who would almost defeat Bhīma but Kṛṣṇa cheats him by making a secret sign to hit by the mace on the thighs. Duryodhana falls down with a broken thigh and bleeds profusely. Seeing this, Balarāma becomes angry for breaking of the rule of the war. When Duryodhana comes to know that it was the plan of Kṛṣṇa, he abuses him. However, he understands that it is useless and so he requests Balarāma to calm down from his aggressive mood to kill all the Pāṇḍavas. He is also not interested in informing the situation to his family members, by which they would be shocked. However, Kṛṣṇa informs the unfortunate event by going to Hastināpura. When he sees the family members, he could not control himself. He is unable to salute Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī by rising up. He consoles the queens, father and mother. He advises the son Durjaya to behave properly with the Pāṇḍavas and Draupadī. He wants Gāndhārī again as his mother in the next birth. He is satisfied that he has finished his duty. He leaves the world; his body is covered with a piece of cloth. He is proud because he could keep his dignity.

**Bhīma** – The second leading character in the drama is Bhīma. He fights with Duryodhana to take revenge for his past deed. Bhīma is physically strong and fights by his mace, but Duryodhana is a clever and trained fighter. He follows the rules of the war. Without cheating, no one could defeat him. At the end of the great Kuru-Pāṇḍava war, Bhīma fights with Duryodhana. The terrible mace fighting goes on in the presence of Vyāsa, Vidura, Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa, Yudhiṣṭhira and others. In between, Bhīma gets a heard-blow on his head and falls down, which worries Pāṇḍava supporters. Balarāma is the only person, who becomes happy in the victory of his pupil. Then Duryodhana taunts Bhīma that his death is in his hand. It bothers Kṛṣṇa no end. Hence, he makes a secret sign indicating that Bhīma should strike on Duryodhana's thigh. Getting the sign from Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma recovers and fights fearlessly. After a few moments, he strikes on both the thighs of Duryodhana. Duryodhana falls down and bleeds profusely. Balarāma objects to it on the ground that the rules are broken. He gets very angry and rushes to Duryodhana. Kṛṣṇa sends away Bhīma immediately according to Vyāsa's advice, so that the further

harm could be avoided. Then the altercation takes place between Kṛṣṇa and Duryodhana wherein the latter accuses the former of cheating. It should be noted here that Duryodhana could be defeated only due to the help of Kṛṣṇa, as Duryodhana was a trained fighter. This concludes the Great War and brings victory to the Pāṇdavas.

**Durjaya** – Durjaya, the son of Duryodhana, is very young to understand the politics. He enters with the other family members, when Bhīma defeats Duryodhana. Seeing Durjaya and other members, Duryodhana could not control himself. Durjaya does not understand, as to why he is not able sit on the lap of his father. He wants to sit on the lap, but Duryodhana could not offer him his lap and tells him to sit anywhere he wants to and also that from today onwards he cannot sit on his lap. Durjaya asks his father as to where he is going. In tearful condition, Duryodhana replies that he is going to the place where his hundred brothers have already gone. Then Durjaya says that he also wants to go with him. Such conversation between the father and the son creates the real pathetic. As a son, Durjaya tries to understand the situation and wants to take his father to other family members. However, Duryodhana expresses his inability and tells that he loves his father and so he does not want to leave him. The situation is insignificant for a child but it is pathetic for a grown up like Duryodhana.

**12. Styles (Vṛttis):** - According to the Nāṭyaśāstra, Utsṛṣṭikāṅka contains verbal style (*bhāratīvṛtti*), which is employed in relation to the sentiments like odious (*bībhatsa*) and pathetic (*karuṇa*). The Ūrubhaṅga of Bhāsa contains pathetic (*karuṇa*) as the main sentiment and other sentiments like odious (*bībhatsa*), heroic (*vīra*) and furious (*raudra*) and others mentioned in the drama are the subordinate sentiments. The drama employs the grand style (*sāttvatīvṛtti*) and to some extent the violent style (*ārabhaṭīvṛtti*) for the background events, which allows the sentiments like heroic (*vīra*) and furious (*raudra*). However, the verbal style (*bhāratīvṛtti*) dominates the drama and this is also agreed by Dhanañjaya. Further, according to Bharata, every drama should employ verbal style (*bhāratīvṛtti*) in its prologue (*prastāvanā*), because prologue is one of the four accessories (*prarocanā, āmukha, vīthī* and *prahasana*) of the verbal style (*bhāratīvṛtti*).

Both propitiation (*prarocanā*) and preface (*āmukha*) are the parts of the prologue. Then other two elements, i.e. garland or ancillaries of *vīthī* (*vīthī*) and farce (*prahasana*) are generally used in the laughter (*hāsya*) and erotic (*śṛṅgāra*) sentiments. Since, the Ūrubhaṅga consists of the pathetic (*karuṇa*) sentiment, there is no use of *prahasana* and the ancillaries of *vīthī* in the drama. However, at least one of the five divisions (*udghātyaka*, *kathodghāta*, *prayogātīśaya*, *avalagita* and *pravṛttaka*) of preface (*āmukha*) needs to be included in the prologue (*prastāvanā*) of every drama. In the Ūrubhaṅga, the excess of representation (*prayogātīśaya*) is applied in the prologue. The Nāṭyaśāstra rule states that after the end of the prologue, the character should enter the stage under the observation of the stage-manager (Sūtradhāra). In the Ūrubhaṅga, the stage-manager declares to his assistant that the war has almost ended and Duryodhana is the only survivor in the side of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Then three soldiers enter and describe the horrific scenes of the battleground.

**13. Sentiments in the Ūrubhaṅga:** - Though the Ūrubhaṅga contains the pathetic (*karuṇa*) as its principal sentiment and heroic (*vīra*) as the subordinate sentiment, the other sentiments like furious (*raudra*), tranquility (*śānta*) and odious (*bībhatsa*) are also applied in the drama.

**Pathetic (Karuṇa)** – The Ūrubhaṅga is totally different type of drama. Only the last part of the drama contains the pathetic (*karuṇa*) sentiment and the same is manifested only after Duryodhana’s thighs are broken by Bhīma and Durjaya, the son of Duryodhana, meets his father. The scene involving conversation of Duryodhana and Durjaya is really pathetic and heart rending. Durjaya wants to sit on the lap of Duryodhana, but Duryodhana is unable to offer his lap to him and tells him to sit anywhere else he wants to sit except his lap (*tyaktvā paricitam putra! yatra tatra tvayāsyatām, adyaprabhṛti nāstīdam purvabhūktam tavāsanam* – verse.44). Duryodhana’s love for his son touches great high (*duḥkhānāmanabhijñeyo mamāṅkaśayanocitaḥ, nirjītam durjayo dṛṣṭvā kinnu māmabhidhāsyati* - verse.42).

**Heroic (Vīra)** – The drama is full of heroic sentiment and it plays an important role in

the drama. The war between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas is really a heroic deed. The best example of heroic (*vīra*) sentiment is the fighting between Bhīma and Duryodhana. Bhīma fights with great power but Duryodhana fights cleverly, because he is well trained in the art of fighting (*samśikṣito narapatirbalavānstu bhīmaḥ* - verse.9).

**Odious (Bībhatsa)** – The other sentiment, which is employed in the play, is odious sentiment. The odious sentiment is very natural to the drama, involving descriptions of horrific scenes, when the war comes to an end. The dead bodies of kings, soldiers, charioteers are spread everywhere. Elephants, horses fall down like huge boulders. Warriors fall down as the victims and their roaring is heart rending. The birds, with bloodstained beaks, loosen the ornaments from the bodies of the kings. Everywhere bows, arrows, skins, umbrellas, chowries, javelins, spears, maces, hammers and swords are scattered. Jackals and vultures drag the dead bodies of the warriors. Their huge long wings out-spread in the sky like fans, with bits of flesh. It has been described, as if someone had witnessed the spectacle of the war. Bhāsa describes the war as if he was present near the battleground. The scene is described in seven verses (fifth to eleventh).

**Furious (Raudra)** – Since the drama contains heroic sentiment, the furious sentiment comes naturally. Anger, altercation, fight are the results of furious sentiment. The furious sentiment is employed, when Bhīma strikes on the thighs of Duryodhana by mace, getting secret sign from Kṛṣṇa. Balarāma gets angry because Bhīma trounced Duryodhana. Thus, Balarāma wants to kill Pāṇḍavas by his plough (*ākṣiptalāṅgūlamukhollikhitaiḥ .....pāṇḍuputrān* – verse.32). Balarāma loses his control watching the favouritism of Kṛṣṇa. The violation of the law of the battle worries him (*raṇagatamatisandhim mām ca nāvekṣya darpāt* – verse.27).

**Tranquility (Śānta)** – Duryodhana is a powerful, rude and proud king. He does not want to bow his head in front of anyone. However, after the break of his thighs by Bhīma, he becomes a changed man. He tells Balarāma that he should not get angry. He consoles Balarāma saying that he has fulfilled his vow. His brothers have gone to the heaven and therefore he should follow now their path (*mā mā bhavānevam,*

*pratijñāvasite bhīme gate bhrātr̥ṣate divam, mayi caivam gate rāma vigrahaḥ kim kariṣyati* – verse.33). The last part of the play, up to the death of Duryodhana, contains tranquility sentiment. Duryodhana’s conversations with his son Durjaya, father Dhṛtarāṣṭra, mother Gāndhārī and queens Mālavī and Pauravī are calm and quite. He advises his son to behave properly with Pāṇḍavas (*ahamiva pāṇḍavāḥ .....draupadī cobhe mātr̥vat pūjayitavye* – Ūrubhaṅga, T. Ganapati Shastri, p.109).

**14. Application of the Junctures:** - The Ūrubhaṅga is a one-act play called Aṅka, has only two junctures, i.e. opening (*mukha*) and concluding (*nirvahaṇa*).

**Opening Juncture (Mukhasandhi)** – The opening juncture is produced from the seed (*bīja*) having various purposes and sentiments. The juncture is created by the combination of the beginning (*ārambha*), which is eagerness to get the result and the seed (*bīja*) which continues up to result. In the Ūrubhaṅga, though the stage-manager declares that the fight between Duryodhana and Bhīma is going to happen, still the real information or the seed comes from the three warriors, at the end of the opening juncture (*draupadīkeśadharsaṇāvamarṣitasya.....pravṛttam gadāyuddham* – Ūrubhaṅga, T. Ganapati Shastri, p.92). Therefore, the first juncture covers up to the conversation after the fifteenth verse.

**Concluding Juncture (Nirvahaṇasandhi)** – The concluding juncture brings out the result, inherent seed. The juncture is produced from the combination of denouement (*kārya*) and attainment of the result (*phalāgama*). In the Ūrubhaṅga, the concluding juncture is manifest when Kṛṣṇa indicates to Bhīma, through a secret sign striking on his own thigh and Bhīma hurls the mace on Duryodhana’s thigh and Duryodhana falls down (*rudhirapatānadyotitāṅgam nipatantam kururājam* – Ūrubhaṅga, T. Ganapati Shastri, p.95). The juncture continues up to the end of the play, where Duryodhana dies after a long battle.

**15. The Technical Aspects:** - Bhāsa has used techniques in his plays, which are invented by himself. He has not followed any restrictions prescribed by the Nāṭyaśāstra. In the Ūrubhaṅga, he has employed very few technical things like prologue (*sthāpanā*),

intimation scene (*nepathya*), interlude scene (*viṣkambhaka*) and epilogue (*bharatavākya*).

**Prologue (Sthāpanā)** – As in every drama, in the Ūrubhaṅga also the author has not used any benedictory verse before the prologue. He has used his unique technique that is direct entrance ‘*nāndyante tataḥ praviśati sūtradhāraḥ*’. His prologue is called Sthāpanā and not Prastāvanā, as done by other authors. In Sthāpanā, Sūtradhāra recites the benedictory verse (*bhīṣmadroṇataṭām.....bhagavānastu plavaḥ keśavaḥ* - verse.1). The Prologue or Sthāpanā is conducted by the stage manager and his assistant (*pāripārśvika*). Sūtradhāra introduces the story in short.

**Intimation Scene (Nepathya)** – The Nepathya or intimation scene is also called *cūlikā*. It is used commonly in all dramas to inform some important matters from behind the curtain by any character. The same technical term is used in the Ūrubhaṅga in some places. This is one of the five kinds of intermediate scenes (*arthopakṣepaka*).

**Interlude Scene (Viṣkambhaka)** – The Interlude scene is applied just after the prologue. According to the Nāṭyaśāstra, it is of two types, i.e. pure and low. In the pure type of interlude, two middle characters should be introduced. They should speak in Sanskrit. The low type of interlude has two characters. One of them is middle and the other is low. The low type character speaks in Prakrit and the middle one speaks in Sanskrit. In the Ūrubhaṅga, the author has employed pure type of interlude scene where the characters are speaking in Sanskrit.

**Epilogue (Bharatavākya)** – Every drama ends with an auspicious verse called the epilogue, which is the concluding stanza. It is the well-being of the nation and its people, expressed by any actor present on the stage. In the Ūrubhaṅga, the epilogue is recited by Aśvatthāmā. It states that the king should destroy all enemies and protect the earth (*pātu no narapatiḥ śamitāripakṣaḥ*).

**16. The Society:** - The scholar like A. D. Pusalkar (1940, Bhāsa A Study) hold that Bhāsa is a poet of the Pre-Mauryan or Mauryan period. According to them, his plays describing the sociological conditions are the reflection of the Mauryan age. Even the

epilogue of the ‘Bālacarita’ mentions the name of ‘Rājasimha’ (*mahīmekātapatrāṅkām rājasimhaḥ praśāstu naḥ*), which indicates Bhāsa was the court poet of the king Ugrasena Mahāpadma. It may be the glorious period in the ancient history. However, the epilogue of the Ūrubhaṅga indicates that the king is disturbed by the foreign intruders (*gām pātu no narapatiḥ śamitāripakśaḥ*). The people were living with the fear of the attacks from the other kings.

In the administration, the king used to be all in all. He used to have a daily round of heavy duties. He was the head of all the types of state-affairs. The sacrifice (*yajña*), truth (*satya*), donation (*dāna*) and alliance (*prakaraṇa*) were his principal duties. In any situation, he used to consult his councilors. He was chief of Army, though there was a post of commanders-in-chief. He used to respect the poets, artists and musicians.

There were four castes, viz. the Brahmin, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra which were based on birth, in those days. Brahmins were the highest ones and par excellence. They were recognized by the sacred thread and were respected by the society. Their duty was teaching and officiating in sacrifice.

The Kṣatriyas were next to Brahmins. Their duty was to protect the people. They were expert in all types of arms. Their greatness comes through the charities, sacrifices. The Kṣatriyas respect the Brahmin by all means. For Kṣatriyas, battleground was equivalent to the sacrificial ground or hermitage. Thus, for them the battle was like sacrifice, which was the pride of their life (*vairasyākvathanam.....raṇasaṁjñamāśramapadam rājñām nabhaḥ- saṅkramam – Ūrubhaṅga, verse.4*). In the war, they used to employ arms like arrows, bows, maces, javelins, swords, hammers. (*vikṣipta.....śarakuntakavaca.....śūlamusalamudgara – Ūrubhaṅga, T. Ganapati Shastri, p.90*). To store the arms, the state had to have royal arsenal (*nṛpāyudhāgāramivāvasīdati – verse.8*).

The Vaiśyas were the traders of jewel, iron, gold and other things. They were also working as florists, painters, washer men, shampooers.

The Śūdras were untouchables and rarely engaged in religious activities. They were not allowed to read scriptures. They worship gods without chanting mantras.

The Cāṇḍālas used to live outside the permitted area, mostly near the cremation ground, because their sight polluted people of other caste.

The people used to live in both rural and urban areas. Though urban life was sophisticated, rural life was peaceful. People used to live religiously. They were cultivating rice, sugar, molasses and other things. Their dress consisted of two pieces of cloth. For travel, they were using to use horse, elephant, bull, donkey, chariot. (*raṇahatagajāsvanarendrayaudham* – verse.3). These vehicles were also used in the wartime.

For protection from the sunshine, people were using the umbrella made of palm-leaf that was common; they used it even in the chariot (*vikṣiptavarmacarmātapatracāmara* – Ūrubhaṅga, T. Ganapati Shastri, p.90).

The Ūrubhaṅga deals with the story of a delicate relation between father and son. The conversation between Duryodhana and his son Durjaya is really heart rending. Duryodhana is worried that he cannot offer his lap to Durjaya. He cannot salute even his father's feet. He realizes that he is going to die because of the Pāṇḍavas; however, Duryodhana advises his son Durjaya that he should not create enmity with his uncles (Pāṇḍavas) and he should love and respect them (*ahamiva pāṇḍavāḥ śuśruṣayitavyāḥ.....draupadī cobhe mātrvat pūjayitavye* – Ūrubhaṅga, T. Ganapati Shastri, p.109).

**17. The Status of Woman:** The girl child used to get the same kind of respect as a son. In those days, people used to live in the joint family. The women do their housework, serve food to their in-laws, husband. They were allowed to study and pass time with friends in their young age. However, they learnt only music and dance. For women the husband was the lord and protector. The wife follows the husband's path under all circumstances. She used to always cover her face with the veil. In the Ūrubhaṅga, when Duryodhana was lying on the battleground, the family members come

to see him. Both the queens (Mālavī and Pauravī) had not covered their face with the veil. Seeing them, Duryodhana becomes surprised (*yanme prakāśīkṛtamūrdhajāni raṇam praviṣṭānyavarodhanāni* – verse.38). The queens always think of the welfare and happiness of their husband. In religious activities, both husband and wife give feasts and donations together. They perform fasts and penances. Widows were denied from performing auspicious activities. Their dress was different from the married woman. However, sometimes they were allowed to remarry.

The regular (*anuloma*) marriages were allowed but the marriages contrary to caste (*pratiloma*) were strictly prohibited. The marriage used to be celebrated in the house of bride. There was no child marriage system in those days.

From the Ūrubhaṅga, we come to know as to how women were loyal to their husbands and mothers loved their children, regardless of being good or bad. Gāndhārī's heart is overcome with grief, getting news of the fall of Duryodhana. She is eager to see her son. For her, Duryodhana represented the hundred sons and he constituted the golden pillar of the sacrifice (*vīryākaraḥ sutaśatapravibhakta cakṣuḥ.....timirāñjalitāditākṣaḥ* - verse.36). The relationship of mother and son is never lost, even after the death. Gāndhārī agreed to the request of Duryodhana, that she should be his mother again in the next birth (*jātyām me tvameva jananī bhava*) and she complimented Duryodhana that he expressed only her wish (*mama manorathaḥ khalu tvayā bhaṇitaḥ* - Ūrubhaṅga, T. Gaṇapati Śāstrī, p.108). The queens could not control themselves watching their husband's ill fate. They were crying non-stop, because they knew that they were going to lose their husband. When Duryodhana tells the queen Mālavī, that the warrior's lady should not cry, Mālavī replies that she may be a warrior's wife, but she is a woman and his wife first and so she should cry (*bālā eṣā sahadharmacāriṇī rodimi* – Ūrubhaṅga, T. Gaṇapati Śāstrī, p.108). However, the Ūrubhaṅga informs about also the self-immolation (*satīdāha*) of some of the queens. The system was accepted by the society in those days also. In the Ūrubhaṅga, the other queen says that she would not cry but she would like to sacrifice herself in the funeral pyre (*ekakṛtapraveśaniścayā na rodimi* – Ūrubhaṅga, T. Gaṇapati Śāstrī, p.109). Hence, it can be observed that women in

those days sacrificed themselves in the funeral pyre of their husbands.

**18. Conclusion:** Bhāsa, the author of the Ūrubhaṅga, is a well established poet and hence it is not necessary to describe his credentials. However, it is a fact that the Ūrubhaṅga, like all other plays of Bhāsa, does not provide any information about the author. The information regarding the author Bhāsa, is from the secondary sources and hence the information is only a guess-work of scholars.

The Ūrubhaṅga is a perfect plot for Utsṛṣṭikāṅka and he has made changes which are necessary and justified cleverly in the plot. His description of war is authentic and natural and it produces strong images of war in the minds of the audience. He describes the events that occurred on the battlefield very accurately. His comparison of the battleground to the sacrificial ground is very appropriate. He has avoided violent scenes on the stage and described them tactfully behind the curtain, because Utsṛṣṭikāṅka involves pathetic sentiment. It is purely a tragic drama, which has a well-known (*prakhyāta*) plot, taken from the Mahābhārata and justifies the status of being an Utsṛṣṭikāṅka.

The Ūrubhaṅga does not follow all the rules of Aṅka prescribed by Bharata and Dhanañjaya. The Ūrubhaṅga looks special. Sometimes Bhāsa seems to follow the rules prescribed by himself.

Except for some stage restrictions, which are imposed by Bharata, most of other rules of Bharata are not followed. For instance, Bharata has ruled that the death of the hero should not be shown on the stage; however, the death has been shown in the Ūrubhaṅga. Duryodhana dies on the stage, in front of all the characters. The war events have been described in the interlude scene (*viṣkambhaka*), which is appropriate, because it cannot be described either in introductory scene (*praveśaka*) or in anticipatory scene (*aṅka*). Again, in the second part of the drama, eight characters continue to remain up to the end and no one exits. However, this event violates Bharata's rule that in an act only four characters should be present on the stage.

It should be observed here that Bhāsa has used nineteen characters altogether

including Sūtradhāra and Pāripāśvika in the Ūrubhaṅga. Out of them, thirteen characters (Sūtradhāra and Pāripāśvika, three Bhaṭas, Duryodhana, Baladeva, Aśvatthāmā, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhārī, Durjaya, Pauravī and Mālavī) appear on the stage and the other six characters (Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma, Arjuna, Vyāsa, Vidura and Yudhiṣṭhira) remain behind the curtain. Arjuna, Vyāsa, Vidura and Yudhiṣṭhira are mere on-looking characters. They do not have any importance in the drama. Kṛṣṇa is the game changer, without him, Pāṇḍavas would not have won the war. Even for Bhīma, to fight with Duryodhana was difficult. Baladeva, the teacher of Duryodhana, is the first person who saw Kṛṣṇa is cunning. Therefore, he gets angry and decides to teach a lesson to Kṛṣṇa by finishing off the Pāṇḍavas. However, Duryodhana refuses to do so. Therefore, the character of Duryodhana is saint like. Duryodhana gets all the honors and respect for his act. He is a loving and obedient son of his parents, affectionate to his little son and dear to his wives. Thus, the tragedy of the Ūrubhaṅga touches a great high. Dhṛtarāṣṭra loves the act of his son. He addresses him as the champion. He is in grief, because he loses his hundred sons. Gāndhārī could not believe that her son is in such a pathetic situation. Still she is proud of having such a fearless son. She agrees to become the mother to Duryodhana once again in the next birth. Both the queens do not agree to leave Duryodhana, in the field alone, they want to end their lives with their husband in the funeral pyre. Durjaya cannot understand what happened to his father. He is a very small child. Anyhow, he accepts all the advices of his father. Aśvatthāmā is angry with the Pāṇḍavas. He decides to kill all the Pāṇḍavas. Duryodhana councils him but he does not listen. In this way, all the characters are employed perfectly.

It should also be noted that Bhāsa has perfectly used the verbal style (*bhāratīvr̥tti*) as the violent scenes are absent on the stage, which are contrary to the characteristics of the verbal style (*bhāratīvr̥tti*). Further, the war descriptions create the odious (*bībhatsa*) sentiment, which is the part of the Bhāratīvr̥tti. Again, the odious (*bībhatsa*) sentiment produces the pathetic (*karuṇa*) sentiment. Therefore, Bhāsa can be credited to have perfectly used the Bhāratīvr̥tti. Again, Bhāsa has employed pathetic

(*karuṇa*) sentiment as the dominant one; but it comes alive only in the second part of the drama, when the death scene of Duryodhana is described. The pathetic (*karuṇa*) sentiment is depicted in the conversation between Duryodhana and his son Durjaya. Again, the crying of both the queens and Gāndhārī, is really heart rending. The other sentiments like furious (*bībhatsa*), odious (*raudra*) and heroic (*vīra*) are used as the subordinate sentiments.

The drama has followed the rules of juncture (*sandhi*). Both opening (*mukha*) and concluding junctures (*nirvahaṇa*) are also employed properly. Thus, it has shown the elements like seed (*bīja*) and denouement (*kārya*); and actions like beginning (*ārambha*) and the result (*phalāgama*). The drama starts with the war and after the war, Bhīma smashes the thigh of Duryodhana, which happens at the end. It must be noted here that the opening juncture (*mukhasandhi*) occurs with the scenes behind the curtain or off stage and concluding juncture is shown on the stage, as Bhīma smashes the thigh of Duryodhana.

It must be noted that Bhāsa has used very few technical aspects like prologue (*sthāpanā*), intimation scene (*nepathya*), interlude scene (*viṣkambhaka*) and epilogue (*bharatavākya*). Unlike many other dramas, Bhāsa's *Urubhaṅga* does not begin with any benedictory verse (*nāndī*). The drama begins directly with the prologue (*sthāpanā*), 'nāndyante tataḥ praviśati sūtradhāraḥ'. In the prologue, Sūtradhāra recites the benedictory (*nāndī*) verse. Just after the prologue (*sthāpanā*), the interlude scene (*viṣkambhaka*), starts and runs for almost half of the drama. When the main actors enter on the stage, the drama actually starts. The warriors in the interlude scene narrate the actual events that happen in the war. It appears like on the Television screen we are watching the live cricket match and three commentators comment on the ongoing events of the match. The warriors describe the horrific scenes of the war. They do so chronologically and all the incidents appear one after another. In some cases, all the three warriors recite the verses together. However, the epilogue (*bharatavākya*) states that there is some disturbance, which probably indicates the exiting of characters. Bhāsa

also states that the king should protect the people by defeating the enemies; however, he does not specify the particular king.

Bhāsa has commented number of times about the society of that period. The society was disturbed by the fear of war, but had faith in the king. Bhāsa has not commented on the common people; however, the changed behavior of Duryodhana towards his cousin brothers indicates the kind and loving nature of people. His love for son shows the good relation between father and son. His wives are devoted to him, which indicates the relation between husband and wife. Thus, the *Īrubhaṅga* describes the high cultured society of that period. Again, in the society, women were respected as equal to men. As wives, they were '*sahadharminīs*' of the husbands. They were ready to die for their husbands anytime and this fact becomes clear from the words of Pauravī, who wants to immolate herself with her husband (*ekakṛta praveśaniścayā na rodimi*). These things indicate the fact that women were greatly devoted to their husbands.

In fine, it must be observed here that the *Īrubhaṅga* is a fantastic drama of Bhāsa. Since the *Īrubhaṅga* is based on pathetic (*karuṇa*) sentiment, many scenes evoke pity and compassion. Further, the end of the drama is heart rending and touches a great poetic high.

**Table of Comparison:**

Details	Source Book	Añka type of	Source Book	Añka type of	Deviations
	(1)	Play	(2)	Play	
	Nāṭyaśāstra	Ūrubhaṅga	Daśarūpaka	Ūrubhaṅga	
Plot	Imaginary well-known plot	✓	Mixed well-known plot	✓	The pathetic sentiment does not come through the lamentation of women, but comes through the conversation of father Duryodhana and son Durjaya. The death of the hero (Duryodhana) is shown on the stage, which is
Character	Only haughty mortal or common men, no divine character	✓	Common and ordinary men	✓	
Sentiment	Pathetic as the main sentiment because of the lamentation of woman	✓	Pathetic	✓	
Style	Verbal style without grand and gay styles	✓	Verbal style	✓	

Juncture	Opening and concluding	✓	Opening and concluding	✓	prohibited by Bharata (XX.18). Royal women characters are coming into the battle field and in bare foot.
Act	---	One act	One act as Bhāṇa	✓	
Other features	Haughty characters engaged in fighting and altercation, lamentation of woman	✓	Lamentation of woman, speech of war	✓	

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