CHAPTER – II

We shall try to discuss the plays of Bhāsa in respect of their story and general features. This chapter may be said to show the activities of the dramatist in executing the rules and procedure of dramaturgy.

1. AVIMĀRAKA:

The Avimāraka is based on the Brhatkathā and Kathāsarit Sāgara. It has described the romance of Avimāraka and princess Kurāṅgī, the daughter of king Kuntibhoja. The king Sauvīra lost his kingdom by the curse of the extremely wrathful sage Caṇḍabhārgava. The king Sauvīra in the disguise of a Caṇḍāla dwelling in the state of Kuntibhoja with his wife and his son (Avimāraka). The prince rescued the princess Kurāṅgī from being attacked by an elephant running amock. Both of them were attracted to each other in consequence of this incident and at last they were married. We find the following male characters in this drama –

Sūtradhāra, the king, Kauñcāyana, Jayasena, Bhaṭa, Bhutika, Avimāraka, Vidyādhara, Kuntibhoja, and Nārada. The dramatist introduces the following female characters – Naṭi, Devi, Ceti,
Dhātrī, Nalinikā, Kuraṅgī, Vilāsinī, Māgadhikā, Saudāminī, Vasumitrā and Sudarśaṇā.

**Type of Drama :** The Avimaraka is the nāṭaka\(^1\) variety of the rūpakas. It is a comedy. The Anguliyakakathā depicted in the drama is the secondary incident (paṭakā).

**Title :** The play gets its name from its hero who is called Avimāraka although his name was Viṣṇusena, because he is the killer (māraka) of the demon who had assumed the form of a goat (Avi).

**Story :** Though the story of the drama is brought from the Brhatkathā and the Kathāsarat Sāgara the dramatist has shown his dramatic acumen in developing the story of the drama.

The king Kuntibhoja was consulting with his queen about the marriage of his daughter Kuraṅgī in the state of Vairanta. There was a hue and cry outside and the queen was very anxious to know the well being of her daughter. Because the princess was in the garden. A mad elephant was rushing towards the chariot of the princess in which she was returning to the palace. At that time an unknown youth suddenly overpowered the elephant and rescued the princess. The minister Bhutika
knows on enquiry that the person who rescues the princess Kuramgi is a low-born youth. But he does not believe it. The divine splendour, sweet tongue, martial valour, delicacy and strength of the youth convinced Bhutika that the young man is not low-born. Bhutika informs the king that he learnt about the youth who is unmarried. The father of the youth is a noble and of regal family. The king discussed about the marriage of Kuraṅgī with that youth. They think that the son of Sauvīra is the best match for his daughter. But no messenger was sent by Sauvīra. Bhutika informs the king that Sauvīra and his son have been disappeared. The king orders further investigations for Sauvīra rāja and sent the messenger of Kāśīraja (Act – I).

We have seen that in the 2nd Act Avimāraka is cogitating alone about the princess. The princess also extremely distressed in the absence of Avimāraka. When Dīatrī and Nalinikā saw the love lorn state of the princess they decided to visit Avimāraka’s abode. They heard a divine voice on their way that the youth was of a high noble birth. They tell him about the pitiable condition of Kuramgi and requested to visit Kaṃyāpura in disguise at night. Avimāraka became pleased with this suggestion. He learns the details of the Kaṃyāpura and asked them to wait for him at midnight. At the fall of night he informs Vīduṣaka the whole affair and of
his appointment that night. Viduṣaka presses Avimāraka not to go alone but at last allows him to go (Act – II).

In the 3rd Act, Avimāraka in guise of a thief enters into Kaṇyāpura with the help of a rope and presents himself before Nalinikā. The princess is half asleep and Nalinikā go to awaken her but Avimāraka refrained her from doing so. Kurāṅgī in the drowsy state asks Nalinikā to embrace her. Nalinikā tells Avimāraka to embrace the princess. Avimāraka embraced the princess by her advice. The princess open her eyes and she is ashamed and frightened. Avimāraka pacifies her. The nurse then enter, asks Nalinikā to direct Avimāraka and Kurāṅgī to go inside (Act – III).

Avimāraka passed one year in Kaṇyāpura. The king came to know that some youth is in the palace of Kaṇyāpura. Avimāraka leave the palace. This separation makes the princess exceedingly disconsolate. She is withering like a helpless creeper. Avimāraka feels much exhausted through his exertions of heat and want of food and is unable to proceed. So he tries to commit suicide. A Vidyādhara couple named Meghnāda and Saudāminī appeared before him at that time. The Vidyādhara through his magical science comes to know about Avimāraka and they became friends. The Vidyādhara offers him a magic ring. By the power of this ring Avimāraka became invisible and he decides to go to Kaṇyāpura (Act – IV).
Kuraṁgi is very much aggrieved due to the separation from Avimaraka for a long time. The maids of Kuraṁgi try to pacify her grief and Kuraṁgi goes up to the terrace with Nalinikā to relieve her affliction and sits looking at the sky. Then Avimāraka enters with Viduṣaka. Kuraṁgi sends Nalinikā to prepare her bath. But Nalinikā does not wish to leave her alone. At that time Hariṇikā arrives and Nalinikā leaves that place. After sometimes Kuraṁgi sends Hariṇikā also on some pretext. Now she is alone. She desires to kill herself by fastening her upper garment tightly round her neck. Then she hears a terrible sound of thunder and cries out for help. Avimāraka puts the ring on his left finger and embraces Kuraṁgi. Nalinikā then arrives and finds the door in accordance with an order of Avimāraka. Avimāraka introduces her with Viduṣaka. Then some humorous dialogues took place between Viduṣaka and Nalinikā and Avimāraka tactfully sends them both away. When the rain begins the lovers enter inside the apartment for amorous sports (Act - V).

Kuntibhoja intended to give Kuraṁgi in marriage with Viśṇusena, the son of Sauvīraṇa. But Sauvīraṇa was to live like a Caṇḍāla for one year according to the curse of Caṇḍabhārgava. Kaśīraṇa sends a messenger on behalf of his son for the marriage of Kuraṁgi. At last Kuntibhoja decides to give Kuraṁgi to Kaśīraṇa’s son in marriage. At that
time, sage Nārada appears on that place. Nārada tells Sudarśanā, the mother of Jayavarmana, the son of Kāśīraja that Avimāraka at that time is staying in the same house with them and is already married Kurāṅgī. He explains that the love marriage is already celebrated according to the Gandharva form. But for the satisfaction of Kuntibhoja, it is decided to perform the ceremony in the presence of the sacred fire. Sage Nārada suggests that Kurāṅgī is already married to Avimāraka, and also that she would be rather older for Jayavarman. So her younger sister Sumitrā should be offered in marriage to Jayavarman. Then Avimāraka in his martial dress enters on the stage. All are very happy. He pays respects to all the elders and all bless him (Act – VI).

Sentiments: Śṛṅgāra and Hasya are the main sentiments. The Karuṇārasa is also employed occasionally (the description of Kurāṅgī and Avimāraka in separation; their attempt to commit suicide etc.). Adbhūta (meeting with Vidyādhara and getting the magic ring from him); Bhayānaka (various trails through which Avimāraka passes before his entry in to Kaṇṭāpura) is also seen in some places.

1. Innovations: It is already stated that the plot of the drama is brought from the Bṛhatkathā and the Kathāsarit Śāgara. We find that the
dramatist has affected some changes and added some of his own dramatic skill. The introduction of great sage Nārada, the starting of Avimāraka on his dangerous mission, the description of the city at night, the entry of Avimāraka in the guise of a thief in the palace of Kaṇṭyāpura and his subsequent fight from it etc. are important developments. The ring episode is of course another innovation of the poet, and it enables him to make a popular appeal by recourse to magic in which the public believed in those days. The character of Viduṣaka is exclusively a new device of Bhāsa, which mainly responsible for making the drama more appealing. It may perhaps be assumed that the author of the drama becomes successful to attract the applause of the audience.

The scene in Avimāraka between the heroine and her friends Nalinikā and Māgadhikā is imitated Kālidāsa’s Sakuntalā, the scene between Anusuyā and Priyambadā.

2. **ABHIȘEKA**: The story of the Abhisekanāṭaka is based on the KiṣKindhā, Sundara and Yuddha Kāṇḍas of the Rāmāyana. The play begins with the coronation of Sugrīva and ends with Rāma’s coronation.

We find the following male characters in this drama – Sūtradhāra, Pāripārvika, Rāma, Lākṣmaṇa, Sugrīva, Nīla, Vibhiṣana, Vāli, Aṅgada, Rāvaṇa, Hanumāṇa, Balādhyakṣa, Vidyutjihva, Kakubha, Śānkukarṇa,
Suka, Sāraṇa, Bilamukha, Kaṅcukīya – (i) Kaṅcukīya (ii) 1st, 2nd and 3rd
Vidyādharas, Agnideva and Varuṇadeva, Sītā, Tārā and Rāksasīs are important female characters.

**Type of the drama**: The Abhiseka is the nāṭaka type of the rūpakas. The plot is prakhyāta (well-known), the hero is of dhīrodhātta type and the main sentiment is vīra.

**The name of the drama**: Abhiseka means coronation. This play refers to three coronations in the drama. So the play gets its name Abhiseka.

**The story or the plot of the drama**: Though the plot of the drama is brought from the Rāmāyaṇa the poet has manifested his own poetic skill in developing the plot.

The Abhiseka begins in the state of Kiśkindhā. Rāvaṇa stole Sītā. Vāli the king of Kiśkindhā take the wealth and wife of Sugrīva and dethroned him from the kingdom. Rāma became the friend of Sugrīva and promised to help him and killed Vāli. Vāli offered his son Aṅgada to Sugrīva. Sugrīva feels aggrieved at the death of Vāli. Rāma orders Sugrīva to offer funeral obsequies to Vāli and asks Lakṣmaṇa to get ready for Sugrīva’s coronation. In the 2nd act Hanumān crosses the ocean and
enters Laṅkā. He consoles Sītā. In the 3rd act Rāvaṇa bound the monkey Hanumān and released him. In this act Vibhīṣaṇa advises Rāvaṇa to return Sītā but Rāvaṇa drives out him from Laṅkā. Then Vibhīṣaṇa takes shelter with Rāma. In the 4th act Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Sugrīva and Hanumān reached the shores of the ocean along with the Vānara army. In the 5th act Rāvaṇa tries to keep Sītā as captive. Sītā cursed Rāvaṇa and prays God for the victory of Rāma. The sixth act gives the description of fight between Rāma and Rāvaṇa. Rāvaṇa dies in the battle, and the coronations of Rāma is performed at Ayodhya and Vibhīṣaṇa’s at Laṅkā.

**Sentiments**: The main sentiment is Vīra (heroic). The wailings of Sugrīva, Aṅgada and Sītā’s miserable condition supply the Karuṇa rasa (pathetic). The appearance of Varuṇa and Agni and the description of Varuṇa and Agni and the description of the fire-ordeal belongs to Adbhūta (wonderful) rasa.

**Transmutation**: Bhāsa take the story from the Rāmāyaṇa but adds his own fantasy to make the drama more appealing. The poet introduces the story of Vālīvadha. He shows the meeting of Rāma with Hanumāna instead of Jatāyu. There is no ‘Setubandhana’ in the nāṭaka which is
found in the Rāmāyana. It appears that Bhāsa has applied his own fantasy in developing the drama.

Abhiṣeka is an incomparable drama. Bhāsa shows his dramatic excellence in depicting the scene of ‘Killing of Vāli’ in the first act of the drama. All the characters of the drama play their roles interestingly. The principal sentiment is Vīra. There is no Śṛṅgāra rasa. Bhāsa does not follow the rules of the Nātyaśāstra by showing the killing of Vāli which prohibited.

3. BALACARITA: The Bālacarita is also another drama composed by Bhāsa. It consists of five acts. This drama is based on the story of the Śrīmadbhāgavata, Viṣṇu purāṇa and Harivaṁśa. It may perhaps be called a paurāṇic play. The play narrates the early life of Kṛṣṇa culminating in the slaughter of the wicked Kaṁsa.

We find the following male characters in this drama. They are – Nārada, Vasudeva, Nandagopa, Ugrasena, Dāmodara, Sankarṣaṇa, Garuḍa, Cakra, Sāranga, Śankha, Nandaka, Kaṁsa, Cānura, Muṣṭika, Bhata, Kaṁcukīya, Āśapa, Sarve, Kuṇḍudhara, Sūla, Nīla, Manujava, Vṛddhagopālaka, Dāmaka, Ariṣṭaśabha and Kāliya. The female characters are – Devakī, Pratihārī, Dhātri, Kātyāyanī, the Gopagirls, Rājaśrī, Madhukarikā, Yasodharā and Kaumodakī.
Archetype of drama: Bālcarita is a Nāṭaka of the rūpakas, based on the prakhyāta plot. The hero is dhīrodatta. Sankarṣaṇa kathā is the secondary incident (patākā).

Appellation or the title: The play deals with the feats (carita) of the boy (bāla) Kṛṣṇa and hence the play gets its name Bālcarita.

The story in brief: The first act describes the birth of Kṛṣṇa, and Vasudeva is returning from the house of Nandagopa with a dead child.

In the 2nd act the goddess of wealth (Lakṣmī) leaves the house of Kaṁsa. It is announced that Devakī gives birth to a daughter Kaṁsa tries to kill the new born baby but the baby shows the appearance of Kātyāyanī.

The 3rd act shows the various childhood activities of Śrīkṛṣṇa like a child

The 4th act depicts the picture of the subjugation of Kāliya.

The fifth act describes the fight of Kaṁsa with Bālarama, Cānura and Muṣṭika. The death of Kaṁsa is also depicted and the coronation of Ugrasena is also described. The play ends with the praise of Śrīkṛṣṇa.
**Sentiment**: The principal rasa of the play is Vīra. The Adbhūta rasa is also found in various places viz. the appearance of numerous weapons and the supernatural feats of Kṛṣṇa. Karuṇa is also seen in the wailings of Devakī, Rudra and Bhayānaka rasas are also found in the Kaṁsa’s visions of terrible exploitsions etc. Śānta and Bhakti is also found in some places where devotion for Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu is described.

**Alteration**: The plot takes the story from the Bhāgavata, Harivarṁśa and added his poetic imagination in some places. The miracles of the light emanating from the child, the water rushing out from the ground, the feats of Kṛṣṇa which are not found in the Bhāgavata and Mahābhārata. These are new inventions.

The death of Kaṁsa in the Bālacarita on the stage, contravenes the prohibition of dramaturgy. Though the poet depicts some female characters there is no heroine in the drama.

4. **CĀRUDATTA**: Cārudatta is a legendary play consists of four acts. The plot may perhaps be adopted from the Brhatkathā and the Kathāsarit-Sāgara. It describes the virtues, economical conditions of the hero and the love of the heroine. The poet has depicted the following
male characters – Cārudatta, Viduṣaka, Śakāra, Viṭa, Sambāhaka, Ceta and Sajjalaka.

The female characters are – Gaṇikā (Vasantasenā), Naṭī, Radanikā, Madanikā, Vicchittikā and Caturikā.

**Type of Drama** : The Cārudatta is a drama of Prakaraṇa type of the rūpakas. The story may be supposed to have been the poet’s own invention. The characters are ordinary people of the society. The hero is a Brāhmin who is following the profession of a Vaṇika. The hero is of dhīralalita type and fallen on bad days. The heroine speaks the prākṛt language. A prakaraṇa type of drama is required to form five to ten acts but Cārudatta has only four acts. So the drama is incomplete. The drama may perhaps be termed as a social drama in Sanskrit.

**Epithet of the play** : The hero of this play is Cārudatta and so named after the hero.

**Story** : Though the story is based on a legend but the poet has added some new theme for developing the drama.

A virtuous brāhmaṇa lived in Ujjain. Vasantasenā an well to do prostitute in the city is deeply attached to Cārudatta. One day when
Vasantasenā was moving on the street, Viṭa and his attendant follow her. She decides to protect herself and enter into Cārudatta’s house. She deposited her ornaments to Cārudatta and returned to her house with the help of Maitra. In the next day Sambāhaka was defeated in gambling and entered Vasantasenā’s house and admired Cārudatta. Hearing Cārudatt’s eulogy Vasantasenā was so much enamoured to Cārudatta and she fell in love to him. The next day Sajjalaka, paramour of Madanikā enters the house of Cārudatta and stole Vasantasenā’s ornaments. Madanikā advised him to return the ornaments. She then asks him to wait for a short time. Meanwhile another maid enters and informs Vasantasenā of the arrival of a Brāhmin from Cārudatta. He (Brāhmin) delivers the pearl-necklace to Vasantasenā saying that Cārudatta had lost the ornaments pawned by her in gambling and in exchange had sent the necklace. She was moving unsteadily for a moment, but allow it asking Maitreya to inform Cārudatta accordingly. Maitreya then leaves. Madanikā enters and informs Vasantasenā that a forerunner from Cārudatta had arrived. The messenger gives the ornaments to Vasantasenā stating that Cārudatta returned them as his house was unsafe. Vasantasenā decorated Madanikā with her ornaments and places her hand in that of her lover, asking him to marry his beloved. And Vasantasenā then prepares to visit Cārudatta with the necklace and the play ends without any epilogue.
Rasa: The main sentiment of this drama is śṛngāra. The love-affair between Sajjalaka and Madanikā is serving as an Upakāthanaka. Other sentiments also occasionally occur. For instance, pathos (karuṇa) is furnished by the poverty of the hero, the condition of Vasantasenā at the hands of villain and her love-lorn state in separation from Cārudatta.

Deviation: The source of the drama is very difficult to ascertain. However the story of the drama may be said to be poet’s own invention. The poet has portrayed the common people of the society in the drama. This drama has similarity with the drama composed by Sudraka entitled Mṛcchakatikā. The prologue is in prākṛt and there is no Bharatavākya.

5. Dūtaghāṭotkaca: Dūtaghāṭotkaca is an one act play based on the Mahābhārata. After the tragic death of Abhimanyu, Arjuna promised to kill Jayadratha. Śrīkṛṣṇa sends Ghatotkaca the son of Bhīma, to the Kaurava-camp to intimate the Kurus about the promise of Arjuna. The most interesting part in the drama is the debate between Duryodhana and Ghaṭotkaca.
The poet depicts the following male characters in this drama. They are – Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Sakuni and Ghaṭotkaca. The female characters are – Gāndhārī, Duḥśālā and Pratihārī.

**Assortment of the drama**: Dūtaghaṭotkaca is a utsṛṣṭikāṅka variety of the rūpakas. The play is neither a comedy nor a tragedy and ends unconnectedly. The absence of the Bharatvākya suggests that the poet might have added something more towards the end which is now not available.

**Title**: Ghaṭotkaca is engaged by the Pāṇḍavas to carry the message of Śrīkṛṣṇa to the Kauravas as a messenger. So the play gets its name Dūtaghaṭotkaca.

**The story in brief**: Kaurava unjustly killed Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna in the battlefield. Arjuna promised to kill Jayadratha in the battle of the next day. Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhārī and Duḥśālā mourned the death of Abhimanyu. Duḥśālā is afflicted by thinking about Jayadratha’s future death. But Duryodhana tries to pacify her. Ghaṭotkaca came as messenger about the promise of Arjuna. Then an argument took place between Ghaṭotkaca and Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Ghaṭotkaca explains the nobility of Śrīkṛṣṇa.
Then Dhṛtarāṣṭra pacifies Ghaṭotkaca. Before returning Ghaṭotkaca explains to all the speech of Śrīkṛṣṇa.

**Sentiments**: The main sentiment is pathos (karaṇa) which is evident from the speeches of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhāri and Duḥśalā. Ghaṭotkaca's entrance supply the heroic (vīra) but the tragic note is felt everywhere.

**Change in the development of the story**: Sending of Ghaṭotkaca as a messenger carrying the message of Śrīkṛṣṇa is poet's own invention. This episode is not found in the Mahābhārata.

There is no Bharatavākyya.

6. **DūTTAVĀKYA**: Dūtavākyya is based on the Mahābhārata udyogaparva. It is one act play. This play refers to the Mission of Śrīkṛṣṇa for peace between the kauravas and the pāṇḍavas so that the dispute is amicably settled and the tragedy of a war is avoided. The debate between Kṛṣṇa and Duryodhana is depicted here in the drama. Duryodhana has tried to capture Kṛṣṇa but Kṛṣṇa showed his mite by holding the entire universe. At that time Dhṛtarāṣṭra praised Kṛṣṇa and satisfied him. Śrīkṛṣṇa failed in his mission and returned to the Pāṇḍava's camp.
We find the following male characters in the drama. They are Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Duryodhana, Vasudeva, Sudarśana, Sutradhāra and Kaṁcukīya.

**Archetype of the drama**: Dūtavākya is a vyayoga class of the rūpakas. The story of the vyāyoga should be a well known one. The hero is arrogant and renowned. There is no real fight in this drama.

**Title**: The play deals with the advice (Vākys) of Kṛṣṇa as an emissary (dūta) to Duryodhana for peace between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas. So the play gets its name “Dūtavākya”.

**The story**: Though the plot is based on the Mahābhārata yet the poet has added some new actions for the development of the drama.

Duryodhana wanted to consult the princes in the assembly with regard to the selection and appointment of the chief leader of the Kaurava troops in the war. All the articles for a war is ready. When the elders and the princes are assembled and have taken their seats, Duryodhana asks the question as to who should lead the Kauravas and on the suggestion of Śakuni, it is decided to crown the experienced Bhīṣma as the leader. At that accurate time the chamberlain announces that Nārāyaṇa has arrived
as a messenger from the Pāṇḍavas but Duryodhana cautions the assembly not to pay any respect to Kṛṣṇa. Duryodhana finds a way to insult Kṛṣṇa by engaging himself in looking at a picture suffered portraying the indignity by Drupadi by snatching her hair and dress. At the entry of Kṛṣṇa, all the assembly rises to honour him and Duryodhana himself being confused falls from his throne. The picture-scroll is then taken away at the suggestion of Kṛṣṇa. When Kṛṣṇa tells Duryodhana about the message from the Pāṇḍavas as to their share in the kingdom, the latter criticizes severely and Kṛṣṇa and Duryodhana both engage in debate. Duryodhana order his brother, Śakuni and other kings assembled to put Kṛṣṇa under arrest but none ventured to obey him. So Duryodhana himself tries to bind Kṛṣṇa, but when on Kṛṣṇa assuming cosmic forms all his efforts prove futile and he walks away. Kṛṣṇa calls his chief missile Sudarśana to destroy the Kauravas. Sudarśana appears on the stage in human form, pays homage to his Lord and sets out to kill Duryodhana. But remembering the great divine cause of killing a host of sinners and oppressors and to lighten the burden of the earth to be served by Kṛṣṇa. He pacified and asked Sudarśana to go to his abode. Meanwhile all other weapons, viz. Śāranga (his bow), pañcajanya (his crouchell), Kaumodakī (his mace) and nandaka (his sword) also appear on the stage. Sudarśana told them to return to their places as Kṛṣṇa was
no longer wrathful and there was no necessity for the manifestation of their valour. After their departure, Garuḍa appears on the stage, but returns on being told of the pacification of Kṛṣṇa’s anger. Sudarsana also follows Garuḍa. After Sudarsana has gone, Kṛṣṇa also sets out to go but the old king Dhṛtarāṣṭra falls to his feet and honours the Lord. The play ends with an epilogue.

**Sentiment**: Vīra is the main sentiment. Adbhuta (the wonderful) is found at the appearance of the divine weapons towards the end.

**Change in the story**: Duryodhana has been depicted as a villain monarch in this drama. But in the original epic Dhṛtarāṣṭra was the king. In the Mahābhārata we find Śrīkṛṣṇa was in the house of Vidura. Duryodhana is presented in the drama as a mighty warrior, a dignified emperor and quite in contrast in the epic, where as he is merely a wicked man in the drama. The picture-scroll and appearance of various divine weapons in human form is a speciality of Bhāsa.

The peculiar feature of the drama is that there is no heroine nor any female character. No prākṛt is used in the drama.
7. **KARṇABHĀRA**: Karṇabhāra is an one act play. The story is based on the Mahābhārata. In this drama Karṇa has given his celestial amulet to Indra who came in disguise of a Brāhmaṇa. We find in this drama the influential description of Karṇa’s bright character and his bounty.

The male characters in this drama are – the Sūtradhāra, Karṇa, Śalya, Indra, Devadūta and Bhata. There is no female character in this drama.

**Type of drama**: The play may be classed under utsṛṣṭikāṅka. In a utsṛṣṭikāṅka there is no wailings of woman and in Karṇabhāra also there is no any female and there is no wailings of women.

**Title**: Karṇa’s task or responsibility refers to the generalship of Karṇa in the great Kuru war or his Kuṇḍalas were felt as a burden (bhāra) to his ears (Karṇa) so the play gets its name Karṇabhāra.

**Plot**: Though the plot of the drama has been brought from the Mahābhārata, the poet has changed the main story for developing the plot.
When Karṇa is going out for battle a Brāhmin appears there who speaks pṛākṛt begs a big gift from Karṇa. Karṇa offers him the cows, horses, elephants, the whole earth, the fruit of Agniṣṭoma and even his person. But the Brāhmin refuses all and begged the super natural amulet. But in return Devaduta sends a Sakti through his servant to Karṇa and Karṇa accepts it because it proceeds from a Brāhmaṇa. Then Karṇa ascents his chariot and asks Ṣalya to drive it to the battle-field.

Rasa: Pathos (Karuṇa) is pervading in the whole play. The poet has used pṛākṛt in the mouth of a Brāhmaṇa to relieve the calm atmosphere and the Hāṣya appeares.

Development: Karṇa details the story of his obtaining the weapon from Paraśurāma, which occurs in the Karṇaparva, Adhyāya 42 and SāntiparvaAdhāyaya 2-3. Bhāsa has changed the incident occurring in the forest to the battle field. We find the dissimilarity of Ṣalya in the Mahābhārata and with that in the Nāṭaka. Bhāsa has depicted Ṣalya as soft-spoken, well-wisher and the helper of Karṇa. But in the epic Ṣalya is crooked, unkind and unfavourable to Karṇa. He discouraged Karṇa with his bitter remarks. A wonderful and curious theme in the drama is that Indra in the garb of a Brāhmaṇa speaks pṛākṛt instead of Sanskrit.
Generally in Sanskrit drama the low caste and the female only speak the prākṛt language. A Brāhmaṇa who is well-versed in scriptures never uses prākṛt. In the Mahābhārata Sūrya made Karna aware of his armour. But Bhāsa introduces this incident. Bhāsa has changed the character of Karna and Śalya making them more noble and saintly than in the epic.

This is the shortest play of Bhāsa. It has no female character and as such it does not come to our purview of study.

8. **MADHYAMAVYĀYOGA** : Madhyamavyāyoga is also an one act play. The story is based on the Mahābhārata. Bhāsa wrote his Madhyamavyāyoga by taking the story of the re-union of Bhīma and Hiḍimbā. Bhīma rescued the son of a Brāhmaṇa from Ghaṭotkaca while dwelling in the forest.

We find the following male characters in this drama – Sūtradhāra, Vṛddha, Prathama, Dvīfiya, Tritiya, Ghaṭotkaca and Bhīmasena.

There are only two female characters in this drama. Viz., are – Hiḍimbā and Brāhmaṇī.

**Type of drama**: Madhyamavyāyoga is a vyāyoga variety of the rūpakas.

The characteristics of a vyāyoga is given here.

"Khyātetivṛtto vyāyogah svalpastrijanasanyutah."
The story: The poet has adopted the characters from the epic and very skillfully composed the drama Madhyamavyāyoga.

Hidimba command his son to bring a person for her dinner. Ghatotkaca decides to carry out the command of his mother. The Brähmaṇa family discuss among themselves about whom to be offered to Ghatotkaca. At that time the middle Pāṇḍava Bhīma appears there. The old Brähmaṇa requested Bhīma to protect his son. Bhīma orders Ghatotkaca to release the Brähmaṇa and offers himself to Ghatotkaca instead of the Brähmaṇa’s son. They go to Hidimba’s residence. Hidimba recognizes her husband and asks her son to fall at the feet of his father. Actually the main theme of the drama is the re-union of Bhīma and Hidimba.

Designation of the drama: Usually a drama named after the hero, on the heroine or an important incident described in the play. Bhūmsena is generally considered as the hero of the play and since the word “Madhyama” is repeatedly used in this play as referring to him, though it
is used with reference to the second son of the Brāhmin also, it can be said that the play is named after the hero Madhyama. The word Vyāyoga is added, which is given to one type of play among the ten types of rūpakas. Thus the title of the play becomes “Madhyamavyāyoga”.

**Sentiment**: The main sentiment is vīra (heroic). Bhayānaka is seen in the meeting of the Brāhmaṇa with Ghaṭotkaca. When each member offers his life for the sake of the whole family then Karuṇa is effected. Vātsalya is seen in the scene between Bhīma and Ghaṭotkaca. Mugdha-śṛṅgāra is found with the meeting of Bhīma and Hiḍimbā.

**Alternation and development**: This drama the plot of which is taken from the Ādiparva of the Mahābhārata. The whole story is practically the poet’s own invention. The poet takes only the story but builds a superstructure of his own. Bhīma killed the demon Hiḍimbā the brother of Hiḍimbā. The union of Bhīma and Hiḍimbā, their love affair and marriage, and the birth of Ghatotkaca etc. are described in the Mahābhārata. The fight of Bhīma with Ghaṭotkaca, and the re-union of Hiḍimbā and Bhīma are the stream of event not found in the Mahābhārata. It is mentioned in the Droṇaparva of the Mahābhārata that
Ghaṭotkaca was extreme malicious of yajña and Brāhmaṇa. Such changes are the poet’s own invention for the dramatic purposes.

The play lays down many rules of conduct according to Bhāsa that the mother’s order is to be obeyed by Ghaṭotkaca, who feels no compunction in harassing the Brāhmaṇa though sacred. This drama is also suggests that in a conflict between the orders of one’s parents, the order proceeding from one’s mother out-weighs that of the father. The ideal of self-sacrifice is beautifully expressed in the speeches of the Brāhmaṇa and his sons. The play is bound to impress on the observer the importance of Matrābhakti, Brāhmaṇabhakti and of the principles of self-sacrifice.

9. **PAŃCARĀTRA**: Paṅcarātra is a drama containing three acts. The story is based on the Mahābhārata, (virāta parvan). In this drama we find Duryodhana performed a sacrifice. After the sacrifice Duryodhana to offer dakṣinā to Droṇa. But Droṇācarya asks for a share in the kingdom for the Pāṇḍavas. Duryodhana agrees on this condition that if he brings the news of Pāṇḍavas within five nights then he would be ready to part with half of his kingdom. In the meanwhile Kaurava reached the Virāta for robbing Virāta’s cows. Prince Uttara helps Kaurava and they conquered them. At this time Pāṇḍavas have reached and Droṇa
approaches Duryodhana and remind the fulfillment of his promise to part
with half of the kingdom for the sake of the Pāṇḍavas and Duryodhana
agrees to give half of the kingdom for the sake of the Pāṇḍavas.

We find the following male characters in this drama. They are —
Duryodhana, Bhīma, Droṇa, Karṇa, Śakuni, Gopālaka, Gomitraka,
Bhagavān, Bhīmasena, Brahmānalla, King Uttara, Suta, Kaṅcukīya, Bhata
and Śūtradhāra.

**Type of drama** : The drama paṇcarātra is samavakāra of the rūpakas.

Type of drama: The drama paṇcarātra is samavakāra of the rūpakas.

The characteristics of a samavakāra should be given here.

"vṛttan samavakāre tu khyātaḥ devasūraśrayam.
sandhyo nirvimarsāstu trayo’nkastatra cādime.
sandhi dvāvantyostadavadeka eko bhavetpunah.
nāyakā dvādasōddattāḥ prakhyāta devamānavaḥ.
phalaḥ pṛathak pṛathak teṣāṁ vīramukhyot khilo rasah.
vṛttayo mandakausikyo nātravindu-praveśakau.
vīthyangāni ca tatra sūryathālaḥbhaṁ trayodasa.” (SD. VI)

**Epithet of the drama** : In this drama Duryodhana performed a sacrifice.

Epithet of the drama: In this drama Duryodhana performed a sacrifice.

After the sacrifice he wishs to offer daksīṇā to Droṇācārya. Droṇa
requested Duryodhana to give the share of the half of his kingdom to
Pāṇḍava and said this his prayer and dakṣinā. But Duryodhana agrees on the condition that if Droṇa brings the news of Pāṇḍavas within “five nights” then he would give the share of the kingdom. According to Droṇa’s stipulation the play get its name “Paṇcarātra”.

**Story of the drama**: Though the sources of the drama is taken from the Mahābhārata the poet has manifested his own poetic skill in developing the plot.

Duryodhana arranged a big sacrifice. Three Brāhmaṇas perform his sacrifice. After the yajna the Brāhmaṇas announced the entry of Bhīṣma and Droṇa followed by Śakuni, Karṇa and Duryodhana. For the success of the sacrifice Karṇa and Śakuni congratulate Duryodhana. Duryodhana also feels self-satisfied. Bhīṣma and Droṇa became satisfied on seeing Duryodhana’s religious mindness. When the sacrifice finished Duryodhana wanted to offer dakṣinā to Droṇa. But Droṇa refused his gift. Droṇa advised to give his gift to Bhīṣma. Bhīṣma described Droṇa as a Brāhmaṇa and elder and advised him (Duryodhana) to give his sacrificial offer to Droṇa. At the request of Bhīṣma, Droṇa agrees to receive his offer and tells Duryodhana that he would be satisfied if he gives the share of the half of his kingdom to the Pāṇḍavas. Śakuni objects to such gift and says that it is a deceit to Dharma. But by the advice of Bhīṣma,
Duryodhana agrees to keep his promise. Sakuni proposes that if Droṇa brings the news of Pāṇḍavas within "five nights" Duryodhana would be ready to give half of his kingdom.

At that time a messenger gave the message that one hundred Kicakas was dead by an unknown and unarmed person so virata could not attend the sacrifice. Bhīṣma suspected Bhīma as the agent of Kicaka's death. Bhīṣma sees in his active power that Pāṇḍavas were residing in the Virāṭa Nagara. At the suggestion of Bhīṣma, Droṇa accepts the condition of five days. Bhīṣma then declares his private feud with Virāṭa and proposes a cattle-raid. All agree to that and make the movement of soldier against the Virāṭa.

In the beginning of the 2nd act we find that the cowherds were busy in talking and learn the Kaurava have reached the Virāṭa Nagara for robbing cattle. On hearing that news Bṛhannalā had gone as prince Uttara's charioteer. The Kauravas were defeated in the battle-field and the cows were rescued. Bhīma known that Abhimanyu had been captured by the hand from his own chariot by the unarmed cook serving in the royal kitchen. Virāṭa orders Abhimanyu to be properly honoured and Bṛhannalā is asked to bring him in. Bhīma carried Abhimanyu and Bṛhannalā meets them both. Abhimanyu does not recognize his father and uncle. Their conversation creates a very humorous scene. Abhimanyu is
presented before Virāta. Abhimanyu's proud, wrathful and truly royal behaviour pleased Virāta. Suddenly enters Uttara and reveals the identity of the Pāṇḍavas. The King Virāta feels much concerned as to the stay of Bṛhannalā (Arjuna in disguise) in his harem and offers Uttarā in marriage to Arjuna. Arjuna accepts Uttarā as the bride for his son Abhimanyu. King Virāta is pleased and he agrees to the marriage and decided to celebrate that very day.

Comparatively the 3rd act is very short. The Kauravas were wondered that Abhimanyu was captured by the Virāta soldier. The charioteer of Abhimanyu brings the news that a foot-soldier takes away Abhimanyu from the chariot. In this way when their conversation was going on then Uttara came with the proposal of Uttarā’s marriage with Abhimanyu and invites them. The wedding ceremony was celebrated at Virāta Nagara Droṇa approaches Duryodhana and claims the fulfillment of his promise. Duryodhana in accordance with his promise agrees to give half of the kingdom for the sake of the Pāṇḍavas. This makes Droṇa and all other quite happy. In this way the drama has a happy conclusion.

Sentiment : The main sentiment is vīra in its various aspects, such as Dharmavīra in Duryodhana, Dayāvīra in Droṇacārya and yuddhavīra in all the characters.
Comparison of the stories between the Mahābhārata and the drama:

The main story of the pancaratra is based on the Mahābhārata (virātaparvan). Abhimanyu, Bhīma, Arjuna, Yudhiṣṭhira, Duryodhana, Bhīśma, Droṇa, Karṇa, Śakuni, Virāṭa, Uttara—all these characters are found in Mahābhārata. But in the play we find only three Pāṇḍavas.

The story of Duryodhana’s prosperity of the sacrifice, cattle-raid etc. are not found in the Mahābhārata. In accordance with the Mahābhārata Duryodhana does not perform any sacrifice. He does not go for a cattle-raid. All these are poet’s own creation. In this drama Duryodhana agrees to give half of his kingdom to the Pāṇḍavas but in the epic he never agrees to give half of his kingdom to the Pāṇḍavas. In the main epic Duryodhana said that he can not give a very small part of the kingdom to the Pāṇḍava without fight (sucyāgram naiva dāsyāmi vīṇā yuddhena kesava). Duryodhana’s agreement with Droṇa, Abhimanyu’s siding with the Kauravas, the scene between Bhīma, Abhimanyu and Bṛhannalā all these are poet’s own invention for the development of the plot.

According to the epic at the time of cattle-raid King Virāṭa was not at his capital. At that time, he was busy in fighting with the king named
Trigarta. His son Uttara goes to fight with the Kauravas along with Brhannala and Brhannala became the charioteer of Uttara.

In the Mahābhārata the Pāṇḍavas are revealed themselves. But in the drama Yudhiṣṭhira tells himself in Virāṭa’s council that his promise have been completed. The poet tries to state Duryodhana’s character as noble.

10. **PRATIJṆĀYAUGANDHARĀYANA**: Pratijnāyaugandharāyaṇa is a legendary play of four acts. Pradyuta the king of Ujjain wanted to give marriage, his daughter Vāsavadattā to Udayana, the king of the Vatsas.

One day when Udayana was going out for hunting, then the army of Pradyuta captured Udayana by fraud. Pradyuta appointed Udayana to teach music to his daughter Vāsavadattā. Both Udayana and Vāsavadattā fell in love. On the other hand Udayana’s minister Yaugandharāyaṇa promises to bring back his king to Kausambī. In course of time Yaugandharāyaṇa acknowledged his own captivity with Pradyuta and bring Udayana with Vāsavadattā to Vatsa. The play Pratijnāyaugandharāyaṇa receives its name from the solemn vow of Udayana’s minister Yaugandharāyaṇa.
In this drama we find the following male characters – Yaugandharāyaṇa (hero). Rumāṇvān, Viduṣaka, Haṅgsaka, Sālaka, Nirmunḍaka, Brāhmaṇa, Bhaṭa, Gaṭrāsevaka, Pradyuta, Bharatrohaka, Bādarāyaṇa and Sādhārana. There are only two female characters depicted in this drama. They are Vijaya and Amgāravatī.

Archetype of the play: The drama Pratijnāyaugandharāyaṇa belongs to the Prakaraṇa type of the rūpakas. The definition of a Prakaraṇa is given thus – its plot to be imaginary (Kavikalpita) and again there should be no Udātta hero. The drama Pratijnāyaugandharāyaṇa is an imaginary one and the hero is a brāhmaṇa, a minister. So the plot is classed under prakaraṇa type. The characteristics of a Prakaraṇa should be –

“bhavet prakarane vr̥ttam laukikam kavikalpitaṁ.
śṛngāro’ṃgī nāyakastu vipro’ṃtyo’thavāvanik
śaṃpyadharmakāṁr̥thaparo dhīraprasāntakaḥ.
nāyikā kulajā kvāpi, vesyākvāpi, dvayaṁ kvacit.” (SD. VI)

Designation of the play: The drama Pratijnāyaugandharāyaṇa is so named on account of the vow of the hero of the play. The Vow of the hero (Yaugandharāyaṇa) plays a prominent part and the drama gets its name Pratijnāyaugandharāyaṇa.
**Plot**: The poet has brought the plot from the *Brhatkathā* but he has introduced several innovations of his own to develop of the plot.

At the beginning of the first act, Yaugandharāyaṇa tells Sālaka about Pradyota’s deception. In course of their talking they came to know that King Udayana would go for a hunting near Venuvana. Pradyota also placed a large blue artificial elephant at Nāgavana. Yaugandharayana wanted to send Sālaka as his King’s safeguard. But the king Udayana goes with Haṁsaka. So Yaugandharāyaṇa anxiously waits for Haṁsaka as it was an indication of danger to Vatsarāja. Haṁsaka tells him with detailed particulars of the capture of Vatsarāja. He tells that Pradyota has placed a large blue artificial elephant under the Sāla and Mallikā trees and kept surrounding his body-guard. When Vatsarāja goes to capture the elephant then Pradyota’s army arrest him and carried him to Ujjayini. Haṁsaka also informs Yaugandharāyaṇa that Sālankāyaṇa, the chief commander of Pradyota had sent a message to him (Yaugandharāyaṇa) of the whole matter, and the king Udayana has asked him (Haṁsaka) to go and see Yaugandharāyaṇa. Hearing these from Haṁsaka Yaugandharāyaṇa feels delighted and thought how he can rescue his master. He sends this message to the harem through Pratihārī. After sometime the female door-keeper enters with the message from the
queen-mother narrating that Yaugandharāyaṇa also is her son and he should go out to free her other son Udayana. Yaugandharāyaṇa is settled and in his enthusiasm pronounces his vow – “If I do not release my king, I am not Yaugandharāyaṇa”.

In the 2nd Act of the drama we find Pradyota consults with his minister and his queen about her daughter’s marriage. He said that several kings came from different state to marry his daughter. Pradyota also asks his queen who is the suitable for his daughter. In this way when their conversation is going on then the chamberlain enters with the words “Vatsarāja”. Pradyota refuses to believe the news of the capture of Vatsarāja but is overjoyed he exclaims “kim vatsarāja”. He orders the prisoner to be treated in a right royal fashion. The queen hearing Vatsarāja’s noble qualities from Pradyota and demands a bridegroom.

After sometime the chamberlain enters and delivers the lute Ghoṣavatī which is the emblem of victory. The royal couple decides to make a present of that lute to Vāsavadattā. Pradyota further orders Vatsarāja’s removal to more suitable at Jewel-house. He replies queen’s question that nothing definit was settled about marriage. Then the queen leaves the inner apartment, and departs to soothe, humour, and comfort Vatsarāja.
In the 3rd Act Yaugandharāyaṇa plans to release Vatsarāja without war. Yaugandharāyaṇa, Vasantaka and Rumanvān stay in Ujjayinī in disguise and deserted fire shrine in their meeting place. Vasantaka’s task is to see the king and to carry the proper message of Udayana. The first part of the act is beginning with the entry of the Viduṣaka disguised as a mendicant worrying over the loss of his sugar-balls. Yaugandharāyaṇa enters in the guise of madman and Rumanvān disguised as a Buddhist monk. In the meantime both Udayana and Vāsavadattā meet and they love each other. Udayana informs Vasantaka his unwillingness to give up the prison-house. Therefore, they can do nothing in the matter of Udayana’s release without his consent. So Yaugandharāyaṇa modifies his original plan and decides to carry away Vatsarāja along with Vāsavadattā. He makes a second vow that “if I can not abduct Ghoṣavāri, Vāsavadattā and Udayana to Kausambi then I am not Yaugandharāyaṇa”. All the three leave the fire-shrine by different doors.

In the 4th Act Yaugandharāyaṇa has madden the elephant by fraud. Udayana was free to control the Nalagiri. In this opportunity Vatsarāja running away with Vāsavadattā. The army of Pradyota captured Yaugandharāyaṇa along with his attendants. His sword was cut to two pieces and sends him in the prison-house. Bharatrohaka meets him in the prison and the quarrel began between Bharatrohaka and
Yaugandharāyaṇa. Bharatrohaka said thus – it was not proper for Vatsarāja to steal away his desciple. But Yaugandharāyaṇa replies that it was nothing less than a marriage between the two. Bharatrohaka also remarks that Vatasarāja's action when Pradyota freed him from the prison was not commendable. But Yaugandharāyaṇa replies that his master could easily have captured even Pradyota; but he generously let him off. Bharatrohaka asks Yaugandharāyaṇa what his plans were about returning to Kausambi after thus insulting Mahāsena. Yaugandharāyaṇa laughs at his questions. Mahāsena appreciated his cleverness and praise his loyalty. He (Mahāsena) send a gold chalice to Yaugandharāyaṇa through the Chamberlain. Then Chamberlain enters and gave him (Yaugandharāyaṇa) Mahāsena's gift. Yaugandharāyaṇa accepts Mahāsena's gift and the marriage ceremony of the lovers is performed. In this way Yaugandharayana fulfils his promise.

After the epilogue the drama is ends happily.

**Rasa** : The main sentiment is the Vīra (heroic). The Adbhūta and Raudra are seen in the first act, Hāṣya in the 3rd and 4th acts. Vīra and Śṛṅgāra are seen a harmonious blending by Yaugandharāyaṇa's supporting the love affair of his master.
Innovation: It is difficult to find any definite source of Bhāsa’s Udayana legend. Some references are found in Buddhist and Jain works as also in the Kautilaya’s Arthaśāstra, Patanjali’s Mahābhāṣya and Gūṇādhya’s Brhatkathā. There is no historical truth behind Udayana’s love for Vāsavadattā. The poet has based his drama Pratijñāyaugandharāyaṇa on the oral accounts in Udayana legend.

The poet took the records from the ancient history and change the whole story and create it in a new form by his own. For example, the stories about the teaching of the science of taming elephants through a curtain by a so-called leper to a lame maiden. There is a difference of opinion among the scholars as to whether Pradyota was the king of Avanti or of Magadha and whether Pradyota and Mahāsena were the names of the same person, owing to contradictory statements in the various accounts of legend. But Bhāsa alone speaks of the identity of the kings. Bhāsa differs in the genealogy of Udayana, makes Udayana quite indifferent in the beginning with regards to his marriage with Vāsavadattā. The soldiers appear to have been concealed in the thicket nearby instead of in the body of the mechanical elephant. He also introduced some minor characters for dramatic effect, such as the madman’s apparel, the meeting of the two rival ministers, to the proposal
to celebrate the marriage of the pictures of the two lovers etc. are Bhāsa’s own creation.

In this drama, Bhāsa anticipates Viśakhādatta’s brilliant play (Mudrārākṣasa) of intrigue which has Cāṇakya (Kautilya) as the hero.

11. PRATIMĀNĀTAKAM: This drama is based on the Rāmāyaṇa and consists of seven acts. In this drama the poet has shortly described the story of Rāma’s exile, his coronation and the destruction of the demonchief Rāvana.

King Daśaratha feeling very old and weak decided to install Rāma on the throne. All preparations for the coronation are made and while the ceremony is being performed, it is suddenly stopped on account of Kaikeyī, who demanded from the King that Rāma should be sent to exile, as a fulfillment of a promise made to her on previous occasion. Rāma is very glad that he is not burdened with the responsibilities of ruling over a kingdom and that his father is still King. Sītā is also very happy that her father-in-law is still a King. Rāma cheerfully puts on bark-garments and is ready to go to the forest. Sītā maintains her right of sharing her husbands life as his Sahadharmacārīnī. Laksmana importunes Rāma to let him accompany them. Thus all the three go to the forest and dwell there.
In the meanwhile the King is deeply grieved at the departure of Rāma. Separation from Rāma is unbearable to him and in course of time the King grows distracted and mad with grief and at last dies of a broken-heart. The statue of Daśaratha was placed in the statue house along with his three ancestors. Bharata son of Kaikeyī who comes from the court of his maternal uncle at the urgent call from Ayodhyā and is resting for a while outside the city. He entered the statue house and found the statue of his father and learns that his father was dead.

We find in this drama the following male characters – Sūtradhāra, Kaśícukīya, Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata, Suta, Devakulika and Satrughna.

The female characters are – Nāṭi, Pratihārī, Sītā, Avadatīkā, Ceti, Kausalyā, Kaikeyī, Sumitṛa, Vijaya, Nandinīkā and Tāpaśī.

**Type of drama**: The Pratimānāṭaka is the nāṭaka variety of the rūpakas. The hero is of Dhīrodātta type. The secondary incident (Patakā) of Bhāratakathā is skillfully depicted in the main plot.

**Appellation of the drama**: The drama receives the title Pratimā owing to the statue or Pratimā of Daśaratha, which was seen by Bharata in the statue house. The statue played an important part, so the play is called Pratimānāṭaka.
The story in brief: The plot of the Pratimā is mainly based on the Ayodhyākāṇḍa and the Aranyakāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa. The poet has deviated from the original story for the development of the plot to make it appealing.

The first act describes Rāma’s exile after his fruitless coronation. The second act describes Daśaratha’s death. In the 3rd act Bharata returns to Ayodhyā and in the way he is resting for a while outside the city. He entered the statue house and found the statue of his father and learns in details of the tragic and cruel death of his father.

The 4th act describes the pathetic meeting between Rāma and Bharata in the forest. He entreats Rāma to let him live with him in the forest, for Rāma’s name is sufficient to protect the Kingdom. But Rāma explains him how he came to the forest in obedience to the command of his father and how he must fulfill the vow. So Bharata should go back and rule the kingdom. Bharata agrees provided Rāma gives his sandals and allows him to rule as their representative and receives back the kingdom as a deposit returned to the owner at the end of the period. In the 5th act Rāvaṇa tactfully carries Sītā.

In the 6th act Rāvaṇa killed Jatāyu with his sharp weapon. The two hermits proceed to communicate the news to Rāma. Bharata being deeply
aggrieved by the news of Śiṅga’s abduction. Bharata arrives with a large army to fight with Rāvaṇa.

In the 7th act Rāma killed Rāvaṇa and arrived at Janasthāna. Bharata comes here with his mothers. Kaikeyī desires the coronation ceremony to be performed again in Ayodhyā. All proceed to Ayodhyā that very day and Bharata returned the Kingdom to Rāma.

**Sentiment**: The main sentiment of the drama is pathos (Karuṇa). The tragic death of Daśaratha supplies Karuṇa rasa.

**Joining novelty and changes of the drama**: Out of the Rāmāyana plays, the Pratimānāṭaka draws its inspiration from the second and the 3rd books of the Rāmāyaṇa. The poet takes only the story but builds a superstructure of his own. We find some changes are introduced by the poet in the story of the epic. The Valkala incident in the first act and the presence of Śatrughna at the coronation are poet’s own invention. In the second act, we find the beautiful description of Daśaratha’s plight at the separation of Rāma contributes for the development of the pathetic sentiment (Karuṇarasa) which begins towards the end of Act I and continues as a subordinate rasa till about the middle of Act VI. The stage direction “Kaṇcukīyu yavanikāstaraṁ karoti” suggests the death of
Daśaratha on the stage which is not allowed by Bharatmuni. The 3rd act dealing with the statue house is exclusively the creation of our poet, as also the novel method of abduction by bringing Rāma and Rāvaṇa together and making the golden deer necessary for the sraddha ceremony of Daśaratha, Lakṣmaṇa has been kept out. Sumantra is again made to visit Daṇḍaka after Sītā’s abduction and the scene between Bharata and Kaikeyī after hearing the news, and her slight mistake in speaking “years” instead of “days”, Bharata’s preparing for an expedition with a large army to vanquish Ravana are the inventions in the 6th act. The coronation of Rama in the forest where Bharata, his mothers and the citizens from Ayodhya attended as also Bibhīṣaṇa, Sugrīva, Hanumān etc. and Rāma’s assuming the reins of government, and the journey of the whole assembly to Ayodhyā in the puṣpaka chariot for celebrating the ceremony on a grand scale – are the inventions in the last act. There are similar changes in characterization also. The poet has further presented Rāma, Sītā, Daśaratha, Bharata, Kaikeyī etc. to a level higher than that is found in the epic.

The drama Pratimā is one of the most excellent dramas among the 13 plays of Bhāsa. Bhāsa shows his excellent dramatic technique in this drama. Although the source of the drama is taken from the Rāmāyaṇa yet
the dramatist shows his originality. It can be said as a successful drama of Bhāsa.

This drama has similarity with Bhavabhuti’s Uttara Rāmacarita.

12. **SVAPNAVĀSAVADATTAM**: The drama Svapnavāsavadattam consists of six acts and based on historical legend. Here the poet is depicting a pleasant picture of fruitful love. The minister Yaugandharāyaṇa by his own judgement and divinity recover the lost kingdom of Udayana. He spread the report that Vāsavadatā was burnt by fire and planned to perform the marriage of Udayana with Padmāvaṭī. As a result with the help of Magadha king recovers the Kingdom.

In the Svapnavāsavadatta we find the following male characters – King (Udayana), Yaugandharāyaṇa (minister), Vasantaka, Brahmacārī, Kaṅcukīya (i) (the servant of the king of Magadha) Kaṅcukīya, (ii) the servant of the king of Ujjain, Sambāhaka, Bhata and Sūtradhāra.

The female characters are – Vāsavadatta (Āvantikā). Padmāvaṭī, Angaravaṭī, Tāpaśī, Madhukarikā, Padminikā, Dhātrī, Vasundhāra and Vijayā.

**Type of the drama**: The SvapnavĀsavadattā is a nāṭaka variety of the rūpakas. The hero being a king of dhīralalita type. There is a bye-plot
Title: The drama receives its name from the dream-scene in the fifth act where the king in his semi-drowsy state sees Vāsavadattā, so the drama gets the title Svapnavāsavadattam (Vāsavadattā as vision).

The story in brief: Udayana the king of Vatsa, being addicted to elephant hunting etc. neglected his duties and his kingdom was captured by powerful enemy named Āruṇi. Yaugandharāyaṇa the minister of Udayana realized the situation and felt the necessity of entering into matrimonial alliance with the king of Magadha with whose assistance he would be able to recover the lost kingdom. But the king was devotedly attached to his queen Vāsavadattā and the king of Magadha would not agree to give his daughter in marriage to one who was already with a wife. The minister, therefore, forms a plan and induces Vāsavadattā to help him in it. During the king’s absence of hunting expedition, the
minister spreads a report that he and Vāsavadattā have been expired in the
fire that consumed the village of Lāvāṇaka. When the report reached the
king he became restless with grief.

In the meantime Yaugandharāyaṇa assumed the form of a Brāhmin
mendicant and accompanied by Vāsavadattā who appeared to be his
sister, went to a penance grove where Padmāvaṭī, the princess of
Magadha came to see her mother. He managed to place Vāsavadattā
under the charge of Padmāvaṭī under the name of Āvantikā in till the
arrival of her husband who was living abroad. Vāsavadattā recounted the
various qualities of Udayana to Padmāvaṭī and she became gradually
devoted to Udayana. The marriage was proposed by her brother Darśaka
and Udayana was persuaded to accept the proposal. The marriage was
performed at Rājagṛha, the capital of Magadha. Vāsavadattā all along
hide herself from the eyes of Udayana. Padmāvaṭī also saw to that in
consideration of Vāsavadattā’s high lineage which was apparent from her
dealings.

Padmāvaṭī was suffering from a head-ache and a bed was prepared
for her in the “Samudra-grha”. The king went there to see her but found
the bed was empty. He lies on that bed and was taking rest for sometime
but falls asleep. In the meantime Vāsavadattā came there and wait for
Padmāvaṭī, and sat by the side of the king whom in the dim light she
naturally mistook for Padmāvati. When she realized her mistake she hurried to leave the place but not before raising up the king’s arm which was hanging down from the bedstead. The king recognized the touch and half-asleep saw Vāsavadattā as a vision. This accounts for the title of the play “Svapnavāsavadattā”.

After his sleep the king received the happy news from the people of Darśaka that his rival Āruṣi had been defeated by his minister Rumāvān and was asked to hurry up for completing the victory. He returned to his capital. A messenger carried congratulations from Mahāsena and his queen together with a portrait of their beloved and departed daughter Vāsavadattā, from which he was asked to have some consolation. Udayana and Padmāvaṭī together receive the messenger of Mahāsena and his queen. Padmāvaṭī told the king there was a striking similarity between the portrait and the figure of Āvantikā. In the meantime Yaugandharāyaṇa made his appearance and explained everything to the utter joy and wonder of all present. The noble Padmāvaṭī is all the more glad to know that Vāsavadattā is alive and begs her pardon for treating her as a mere companion. The purpose of Yaugandharāyaṇa in keeping Vāsavadattā under the care of Padmāvaṭī is fulfilled. The king praises Yaugandharāyaṇa for all that he has done for him and the drama is brought to a happy end.
Innovations and their importance: Bhasa has made many great changes from the legends in the plot of Svapnavasavadattam. The most important change is in the motive of Yaugandharāyaṇa concealing Vāsavadattā proclaiming her death in the fire of Lāvāṇa and bringing about the marriage of Udayana with Padmavati. In the legend, the motive of minister was to make Udayana the emperor of the world, and no decent audience would approve such acts of the minister for just satisfying his ambition. Bhasa with his profound knowledge of human nature, gave a twist to that story, and made Yaugandharāyaṇa do these horrible acts, causing infinite suffering and sorrow to Udayana and Vāsavadattā and not for the sake of making Udayana the emperor of the world. But as he said, simply for saving Kausambī and Vatsa country from Āruni. No one condemn Yaugandharāyaṇa for doing these acts from such a motive. He becomes a lovable and admirable personality in the drama labouring hard to reinstate his king. The sacrifice of Vāsavadattā and the suffering of Udayana acquire greater significance here.

In the legends, Gopālaka, the brother of Vāsavadattā is also an active supporter of the minister's schemes and he is made a party to the supersession of his own sister by another woman. The dramatist has
wisely avoided Gopalaka from being associated with any of the acts of Yaugandharāyaṇa.

Bhāsa has made Yaugandharāyaṇa and not Vasantaka as the man who have been burnt along with Vāsavadatta and he is made to rejoin the king only at the very end. This has a great dramatic effect and it elevates the character of Yaugandharāyaṇa. Again in the drama, Udayana is made to believe, with no doubt whatever that Vāsavadatta is dead and this makes his lamentations really pathetic. The strong love and keen anguish seen in the king’s wailing would not have their effect if he is known to have believed that his beloved was alive and that he would be reunited with her. The fascinating dream scene in the samudra-grha also would lose more than half its charm and force in that case. The “Vision of Vāsavadatta, would have become only the” Sight of Vāsavadatta. The dream scene, the most thrilling scene in the drama, is Bhāsa’s own creation.

In the folk-lore story Vāsavadatta is restored to Udayana immediately after the marriage with Padmāvati and the reunion which takes place is not quite natural. But in the drama, the events move slowly and naturally for the revelation of Vāsavadatta’s true identity through the introduction of the lute Ghoṣavaṭī and the portraits.
In the story Pradyota is stated to be the name of the Magadha King and Padmāvatī in his daughter. Vāsavadattā is in disguise is represented as the daughter of Yaugandharāyaṇa. But in the drama Vāsavadattā is represented in disguise as the sister of Yaugandharāyaṇa. All these changes are calculated to improve the dramatic effect, highten the sentiment, make the plot realistic and the sequence of events more natural and also to improve the character of prominent persons in the play.

The hermitage scene of this drama is the model of the hermitage scene in Kalidāsa’s Sakuntala.

13. URUBHAMGA: This is an one act play and based on the Mahābhārata. In the club-fight between Duryodhana and Bhīma, Bhīma broke the thighs of Duryodhana. When the thigh was broken Bhāsa created Karuṇa rasa. The conversation between Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Duryodhana’s two wives and Durjaya supply us Karuṇa rasa.

In this drama Bhāsa depicts the following male characters — Sutradhāra, Durjaya, Pāripārvika, Bhata, Baladeva, Duryodhana, Dḥṛtarāṣṭra and Asvatṭhamāṇi.

The female characters are — Gāndhārī, Pauravī and Mālavī.

Type of drama: The Urūbhaṅga is a vyāyoga variety of the rūpakas.
Title of the drama : The smashing (bharīga) of the thighs (urū) of Duryodhana in the club-fight is described in this drama and hence the play receives its name “Urūbhaṅga”.

The story : Though the plot has been brought from the Mahābhārata the poet has added some new themes for developing the plot.

   The plot has two divisions Bīskambhaka and the main plot. In the Bīskambhaka the soldiers describes how Duryodhana’s thigh was broken by Bhīma after the terrific fight between Bhīma and Duryodhana. In the main plot Balarāma came to visit Duryodhana. Then Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gandhārī, the queens of Duryodhana and Durjaya arrived in the battlefield to see Duryodhana. At first Duryodhana tells about the peace and friendship (śānti-maitri). But Aśvatthāmā promised that he would kill the Pāṇḍavas and crown Durjaya as the emperor. At last Duryodhana died.

Sentiment : The main sentiment in this drama is pathos (karuṇa). Vīra is brought when describing the fight between Duryodhana and Bhīma.

Transmutation : The poet has changed the whole conception of Duryodhana’s character. Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gandhārī, the queens of
Duryodhana and Durjaya his son, who were miles away at Hastināpura are brought in the battlefield to enhance the pathos and for dramatic effect. Balarāma was not present at the club-fight according to the epic, and Arjuna made the secret sign to Bhīma. The coronation of Durjaya is also an invention of the poet.

Bhāsa shows the death of Duryodhana on the stage which is against the rules of the Nātyaśāstra.

It may be stated that from the above discussion that Bhāsas works are the first specimen of Sanskrit drama. Hence we should not expect them to be the finished products of a expert hand, being the work of a pioneer Sanskrit dramatist.

There is no doubt that Bhāsa flourished at a time when the rules of dramaturgy as well as the rules of Pāñini were not yet observed very rigorously. For instances :

(i) All these plays begin with the stage direction nāndyante tatah pravisati sutradhār but the classical dramas beginwith the nāndi verse.

(ii) The prologue is called sthapana instead of usual classical term prastavanā. Only the Karpabhāra employes the term prastāvanā.

(iii) The name of the dramatist is not mentioned in these plays but in the classical plays the name of dramatist and his family are given.
(iv) The epilogues are almost the same imām sāgaraparyantyam is reaped with a slight variation in many plays.

The Cārudatta and Dūtaghaṭotkaca have no Bharatavākya.

Some plays shows the death on the stage which will never occur in classical dramas, such are –

Death on the stage of Daśaratha in the prat, Act II, vālin in the Abh, Act I and Duryodhana in the urū, slaughter of Cānura, Muṣṭika and Arista and the death of the demon Kaṁsa in the Bāl, Act V, sleep Act V in the Svapna etc.

All these plays disregarding the rules of Nātyaśāstra are present in Bhāsa’s plays.

After critically analyzing the unique techniques and characteristics of the play, it may be observed that Bhāsa’s drama is earlier. It may also be observed that our poet play-wright by blending his style and technique seems to have made an attempt to bring about a change in the rules of Sanskrit dramaturgy.

Foot Note:

1. “Nātakam khyātaśāstra syātpaṁcasandhisamanвитam
   vilāsaddharyādiguṇavaduktan nānāvibhutibhih.
   sukhaduhkkhasamudbhuti nānārasanirantarām.
prakhyātavānśo rajārsidhiḥrodàtthāh pratapavān.

dvivo’tha divyadivyo va guṇavanno’yaḥ kato mataḥ.” (SD. VI chapt.)

2. – do –

3. – do –


srngāro’ṛngī nāyakastu viṃroṇātyo’thavā vaṇīk.

sāpāyadharmakāmārthaprayo dhūrapraśāntakāh.

nāyikā kula jā kvāpi, veṣyā kvāpi, dvayaṁ kvacīt.” (SD. VI)

5. Niscinto mṛduraniśān kalāparo dhīralalitaḥ syāt. (SD. III)


divyapuruṣairvīyaktaḥ sesairanyairbhaveṣṭeṣuṃbhīḥ.

karuṇārasaprayākṛto nirvīrttayuddhodhathapraḥāraśca.

strīparidevanbahulo nivedibhāṣitasvaiva.

nānāvyākula jāṣṭhāḥ sātvatyāra bharīkaiśikahinaḥ
gyavyo abhyudayāntastalnarsrṣṭikāṅkastu.” (Nātyāśāstra of Bharata)


hīna garbhavimarsābhyaṁ dīptāḥ syurdimavadrasāḥ.

astrīnimitasaṅgrāmo jamadagnaṁyaye yathā.” (Daśārupaka – III)

raso’tra karuṇah sthāyī bahūstrīparidevitaṁ.” (SD. – VI)

śṛṅgaro’mgī nāyakastu vipro’mātyoathavāvaṇīk.” (SD. – VI)

vilāsāddharyādigunavaduktaṁ nānāvibhutibhiḥ.
sukhaduhkhasamudbhuti nānā rasa nirantarm. (SD. – VI)
pañcādikā dasāparāstatrāṅkāṁ parikirtīḥ.” (SD. – VII)

hiṇo garbhavimarsābhyaṁ naraśrībahubhirāśrītaḥ.
ekāṅkṣa bhavedstrīnimittasamarodayaḥ.
kiṣikievṛttirahitaḥ prakhyātastra nāyakaḥ.” (SD. – VI)