CHAPTER I

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Part - I The Work and the author: - Mrcchakatikam is one of the early dramas in Sanskrit belonging to the type called Prakarana in which the plot is not drawn from history or the Purānas but is a fiction.

The author is a king by name Sudraka whose identity and time cannot be fixed definitely. Some scholars identify him with the founder of the Andhra Brāhhritya dynasty in South India and in that case he has to be assigned to the 2nd century B.C. Considering the nature of the society described in the work and the language used, others place this work in the second century A.D. In any case Sudraka is later than Bhāsa and not much removed either before or after Kālidāsa who belonged to the first century. Any how when we go through the opinions of different persons we can say that this Prakarana is written by Sudraka in about 56 B.C.

The love story of Carudatta and Vasantasena which is the main plot of Mrcchakatikam is not the original contribution of Sudraka. Bhāsa has made this story the plot of his play Carudattam, which ends abruptly at the end of Act IV. Sudraka took up this unfinished story and developed

1 Mrcchakatikam - Act I - 2.
it into a ful-fledged plot of a ten-act play, welding together a variety of exciting incidents and providing a love story that is full of vigour and adventure which sustain the reader's interest from the beginning to the end.

The title of Mṛcchakaṭikam is an example for its speciality. The title of a poetry or drama will be given on the basis of the character or important incidence or the theme of it. But the author had named this drama on the basis of a small incidence which occurs in the sixth act related to the play of the child of the hero. This is because it symbolises unsatisfaction. Most of the characters of this drama are not satisfied with their prevailing condition and we can find in this drama the glimpse of unsatisfaction. The poet has explained very nicely in this drama about the difficulties what a person gets in his life for not getting satisfaction within the things at his disposal. Therefore the title holds good to this drama on the above condition. At the same time the author has given more attention to the poverty of the hero. The poet has given more importance to the virtue of Vasantasena rather than to her richness. In the same way poverty of Āruḍatta gets importance rather than the richness of Vasantasena. So the title 'Mṛcchakaṭikam' holds good to the work.

We can understand that Sudraka was the follower of Vaidika Dharma by reading his drama 'Mṛcchakaṭikam'. He was a great devotee of Lord Śiva. He had a firm faith in
worshipping Gods and Goddesses. So he has made Carudatta to show the greatness of Pooja. He had faith in Varnaśrama Dharma also.

He was a great scholar. His intelligence was fourfold. He had the knowledge about Veda, Maths, Arts and elephants.

"स्त्राकृतां समावेशं गाणितिकं कन्दं शैलिकीं हेतु विलिश्वानं कीर्तिवसं शार्काः प्रसादावधायपमतिकिस्मे -चक्षुस्व चौपल्लवः।
राजानां वीरयं पुरुषं परशस्मुदयेनावश्येकं चौपल्लवं नवहवां गायूः। ृजादानदुर्यसीनों रुद्रकोणैनं प्रविष्टे॥"②

The words of Candanaka and the words of 'Adikaranika' show us that he had the knowledge of astrology.

"अनु तस्य अन्तःकील जीवो नवमस्तथैव सुरसुन्तु:।
जीवितिः -अन्तःकीलः कः स गौपालदुर्यसीन: हरसुः॥"③

"अर्जुनरथि विनाशेषे प्रक्षिप्तस्य बृहस्पते:।
गाहौरमयः पार्थं शूमकृतुविविधत:॥"④

It looks as if he was the Guru of dice and stealing. As he has explained about the business of the different groups of the people we can say that he was intelligent understood all the deficiencies of his workers and the officials, being engaged himself in the administration of the kingdom. He had understood what should be the nature of a judge being himself a king of justice.

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① Mārchenakārikam - Act I - 4
② Ibid - Act VI - 10
③ Ibid - Act IX - 33
He had the proper knowledge of literature. This work shows us that he had the proper knowledge of Sanskrit and Prākrit. This drama gets a great importance in the perview of the way of writing the drama. In this way it is clear that the author of Mṛcchakaṭiṇa was having the ideas of the different branches of knowledge.

Till now we have got only one work of Śūdraka. That is Mṛcchakaṭiṇa. Some scholars have told that the author was influenced by Abhijnāna Śākunatalā, Muddā Rākshasa, Daśā Kumāra Carita and Kathā Sarit Śāgara. But in the ocean of Sanskrit literature the importance is not given for such secondary or inferior opinions of those scholars. Some similarity is natural to find in this life. Therefore according to this similarities we cannot give importance to such opinions. In such a condition it is not fair to give such an opinion to a great personality like that of Śūdraka.

Part - II - A Critical Analysis of the Story

In the first act the author explains that Cārudatta and Vasantasena have fallen in love with each other ever since they met in the garden of Cupid's temple.

"पूर्ण गर्भं दृष्टं अमरं न च यथो मित्रं श्रद्धांजलि तद्यथा न चासनस्या दृष्टं न मी मात्र अन्यथेऽ

Cārudatta hesitates to continue his love but Vasantasena boldly continues and enters his house. Śakāra the kings
brother-in-law follows her in the company of ceta and vita to possess her

"किं माणिक्यनिरस्ततिः पताकशी नरसिंहक्षणी
वायुः प्रर्द्धी न मारिश्यायी विकः तावनः
कामेन यद्वी खलु मै दुर्गम तपस्विः
अझाराशिरपिनिमि मांसमाण्डम्।"

But she enters the house of Carudatta. She deposits her ornaments in his house. Carudatta was engaged in worship. The Pravakara bearing the smell of Jasmine flower is introduced to show the extent of love of Vasantasena to Carudatta. This chapter also throws some light on the character of the hero the heroine and the villain, and also on the friendship of Maitreya for Carudatta.

The second act is full of exciting incidents providing enough material to laugh. It gives a graphic picture of the life of gamblers who wielded great power and influence in Ujjaini in those days. The gambler Samvahaka who has lost everything in gambling and is unable to pay the ten coins he owes, is treated very badly by the keeper of gambling house Mathura. His efforts to escape was not successful

"कल्याणाय निर्वेचनकर्म वृत्त दृश्ये भवत्व
 टुकड़ा श्रवणे इनम भीतिप्रवृत्त प्रभृत्ति नमित्रं
 जो न कृतिलक्ष्यि सम्प्रदायकारिकपतत संगीतं कृत्यम्
 परम्पराये खलु कौकिलमधुरस कृतश्रवणे मनो हृदये।"

Darduraka's arguments with Mathura in support of Samvahaka and his throwing of dust into Mathura's eyes to give an

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Ibid

Ibid

Act - I - 6

Act - II - 18
opportunity for Samvāhaka to escape, are all full of humour. 

Then Samvāhaka enters the house of Vasantasena who repays the debt of Samvāhaka

"तन्न आयें! 'साधु से कर्णं पूजनं! लोचनं' इत्यत्बावनमाथै 
अणान्ते, प्रकृति क्रमन्मयं मेघालभागाने पराग इति 
उच्चर्थं प्रत्येके दीर्घं निः श्वस्यं प्रवाहस्य सम्पुष्पस्य अपीलं।" ⑧

The introduction of the rogue elephant and its control by Karnapūraka which resulted in the presentation of the 
'Prāvaraka' in appreciation of his heroism by Cārudatta.

"मात्र आयेः! 'साधु से कर्णं पूजनं! लोचनं' इत्यत्बावनमाथै 
अणान्ते, प्रकृति क्रमन्मयं मेघालभागाने पराग इति 
उच्छर्थं प्रत्येके दीर्घं निः श्वस्यं प्रवाहस्य सपूष्पस्य अपीलं।" ⑧

In third act Cārudatta and Maitreya return home late at night talking about the music recital of Rebila a merchant friend. Maitreya in his jokular way, he says why no thief in Ujjaini is stealing the ornament.

"किंमललोचनस्यं परीरोपोचि नाणिणि, म घनं दर्शयो: 
पुद्र निद्राचारं नापदस्ति।" ⑨

By an irony of fate, this remark becomes true. The very same night the ornaments are stolen by the daring Sarvilaka who makes a hole in the wall and enters the house. He is reminded of the noble family in which he was born and feels his act of stealing might spoil the reputation of that family and make him a great sinner.

"सत्त्वाद्यथं द्वाकाकुलं कुलं न जयान्ति मेघात्मं । अहे अहे अहे 
चतुर्वेदेकुद्ववेकाविषादकरं युज्यं ज्ञानस्यानं नाम ब्राह्मणां गणेनां चैव नायं अमर्मात्मसुविचारबं ।" ⑩

⑧ Mychakati Kam - Act II  
⑨ Ibid.  
⑩ Ibid.  
⑪ Ibid.
The chaste wife of Carudatta solves his problem by handing over her gem-necklace to be given to Vasantasena in lieu of her ornaments.

"अर्थं ज्ञानं गुरुपद्धिबंहितानं, करुः यथाविच्छन्नसारं
वाल्मीकी: प्रतिमा हरितम्। संयो न प्रतिग्रहितं, ततरं कले
प्रतीरथ्यम् रत्नमालिनिकाम्।" (२)

The incidents described in this act bring out some of the excellent traits in the character of Carudatta, Dūtā and Sarvilaka.

In fourth act, Vasantasena's love for Carudatta had developed to such an extent that she finds no interest in anything except in talking about him. She spurns the suggestion of her mother to accept the ornaments sent by Sakara and go with him. The arrival of Sarvilaka provides a very interesting scene. His meeting of Vasantasena with her own ornaments stolen by him from Carudatta's house under the pretext that he has been sent by Carudatta provides a good opportunity for Vasantasena to show her sense of humour and the jewel necklace lightens the interest of the story and throws further light on her sense of humour. Sarvilaka's departure to help his friend Aryaka to escape from the prison points out the first stage in the development of the under-plot.

"ताहीनवीतानं स्वभुजान्वितानं सर्वाधब्यन्तानं।
राजपालामुपिनङ्गम नूङ्गं शुद्धयानम्।
उल्लेखमारं मुद्दत: परिपोष्कं यायाम
स्वाध्यायणं इवोदयनं राघवं।" (३)

(२) Mr. Eechakatkam - Act - iii
(३) Ibid - Act - iv - 26
The fifth act is only a continuation of the previous one just to bring the mutual love of Čārudatta and Vasantasena to a happy consumation. Vasantasena comes to the house of Čārudatta with the jewel-necklace and the stolen ornaments and unfolds the mystery of the theft and recovery of the ornaments. This, along with the untimely rains and the dark night provides the necessary atmosphere for the consumation of Vasantasena's love for Čārudatta. The love story as conceived by Bhāsa in his Čārudatta ends here.

The sixth act is very important for more than one reason. The incident of filling up the clay-cart with gold ornaments gives the name to the work. These ornaments given by Vasantasena out of sympathy for the weeping child turn to be the final and conclusive evidence to prove the murder charge levelled against Čārudatta by the Villian Śakara.

"प्रियवनु प्रव्यवहारी! उसे शेषु तर्यासन्नपालकेया अर्न्नारो! अर्थार्थितः मानन्त्वते कोरणाशेषा मारेता ोषापादित्य य।" (५)

As a result of the strange turn of events brought about by fate, Vasantasena unwittingly mounts the carriage of Śakara and Āryaka who has escaped from the prison gets into the cart of Čārudatta. This exchange of the carts leads the story of love and humour to the most tragic situations. The two police officers, Candanaka and Viraka are told by

(५) Mācechākatikā - Act IX
Cārūdatta's cart driver that Vasantasena is inside the cart.

"दुःखमाणि प्रवणाः सर्वप्रवेणसि। इत्यत्र कुष्ठिनः-
नेव न चुरुपकरणूडः पीरणीयां क्रीडिनु चारुकुटस्य नीयते।" ॥

Candanaka on inspection, comes to know that Āryaka is inside the cart, but he does not allow the suspecting Viraka to see who is inside. The 'Karnātakalaha' deliberately planned and executed by Candanaka leaves Viraka angry and makes him rush to the court of justice where his evidence, though unsought, helps to prove the charge of Sakara against Cārūdatta.

"अस्माय चारुकुटस्य । वासन्तेऽसनादी चुरुपकरणूडः-
पीरणीयां क्रीडिनु नीयत इति प्रवेश वाहते।" ॥ ॥

In seventh act the consequences of the exchange of carts are described. Āryaka who got into Cārūdatta's cart meets Cārūdatta in the lonely garden. Cārūdatta helps him to escape by lending his cart.

"शैष्णम् ब्रज वानन्धवानं रसदियोकासि कुष्ठिनेन अभन।
तवं रक्षातू परि प्रमाणात्मानं स्वतःश्रवणिः परित्यागितासि।" ॥

Cārūdatta is happy because he could indirectly help an innocent man Āryaka, while the latter is full of gratitude to the former. After the departure of Āryaka, Cārūdatta is full of anxiety about Vasantasena and he returns home with his heart terribly upset.

The eighth act deals with the second result of the
exchange of carts which is directly concerned with the
development of the main story. Carudatta went out of the
Puspakarandaka gārden through one path to avoid the bad omen
of the 'Bhikṣu' coming towards him with wet garments,

"कथानान्तः मुख मनामुक्तिः अशुभास वेद्यनी ?
प्रार्थितवयस्मनेन पथाः। वस्थाः त्वां गतामः।"

while Sakāra enters through another path and quarrels with
the 'Bhikṣu'. Vasantasena comes to the garden in the cart
of Sakāra. At first viṭā suspects her motive but when she
tells the circumstances under which she unfortunately
mounted the cart of Sakāra by mistake, he sympathises with
her and tries to save her.

"अण्डानानात्! सत्त्वं राक्षसंपौबान प्रातीवलको। अर्थे युननं
घातप्रम्परया प्रभुमापैवन नमोऽतज्ञापीः प्रविष्टवालः।
पुर्वे कृते ओहायः। देविने धृत्यताः ये परिसिदः
प्रौढः नाहीं अवाश्यः।"

But Sakāra who till now appeared to be a fool, turns out to
be a crafty wicked person and manages to send away both viṭā
and ceta from that place under some pretext and makes his
advances to Vasantasena. She treats him like a straw and
boldly kicks him when he falls at her feet. The infuriated
Sakāra strangles her and she falls unconscious.

"मियानो गर्भदासी! मियानान। (नाट्यन सवे निप्रिष्ठमारं
गतिः)"

(8) Mr. Chekakitkam  Act VII
(9) Ibid  Act VIII
(20) Ibid.
Having committed a cold blooded murder he coolly tells Viṭā that he strangled her to death and takes pride in his heroic act. "इत्यादि मां नैचर्यनीति गारिणा सौभेज मथा भोकिता क्षणभूते पुष्पसंरक्षण इति सहस्र पाजोनात्रासिना। स का बाज़ेते शाना मथ पिना मातेन सा कौपकर मौडळी पद्मादेवी भेदूर्व ओयालिंग पुजनं शुरुतमात्॥"।

Viṭā finds it unsafe to remain with him and leaves the place to join the company of Āryaka, Šarvilaka and others.

In his hatred for Cārudatta whom he treated as his rival in love affairs, the cunning and scheming Sākāra decides to file a criminal suit in the court of justice to the effect that Cārudatta took Vasāntaśenā to the garden and killed her for her riches he being penniless.

"सामप्रीत्य आधीकरणं मात्रा ०यवशार्क नैव्यवाहिनी, मथा अर्थसं कान्तिःअर्थराहेष्ठा पावङ्ग इति जन्म सदौं दुह्लम् - करणं जीर्णं दांमं प्राधिकुष्य वसान्तसेना ओयापातिती।"

The revival of Vasāntaśenā from her unconscious state is noticed by the 'Bhiksu' who was formerly freed from the hands of the gambling - master by Vasāntaśenā for the reason that he was once a shampoor of Cārudatta. Full of gratitude, the 'Bhiksu' takes her to his abode for nursing her back to normal health.

This act throws light on the villanious nature of Sākāra who often talks and acts like a fool; the goodness of Viṭā who, unable to save Vasāntaśenā and fearing the cunning

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21 Mīchakālikam - viii - 37.
22 Ibid.
and cruel Sakāra might charge him with the crime of murdering Vasantasenā leaves the place; the deep and sincere love of Vasantasenā for Cārudatta and her courage even when threatened by Sakāra and the gratitude of the 'Bhiksu'.

The ninth act describes the trial of Cārudatta in the court of justice on a charge of killing Vasantasenā, for the sake of her wealth and it throws light on the administration of justice and proceedings in a court in ancient India. Sakāra exhibits extraordinary skill and wit in conducting his case and he is also helped by fate which brings Vīraka and also Maitreya with the ornaments of Vasantasenā to the court when the trial is proceeding. They proved evidence to prove Sakāra's contention that Vasantasenā was taken to the garden and was killed by Cārudatta for the sake of money. Cārudatta does not answer the questions of the judge clearly even when the judge has shown his regard for Cārudatta and says in the open court that he cannot believe that Cārudatta would commit such a crime. In spite of sympathy for Cārudatta and his contempt and hate for the wicked Sakāra, the judge is forced to decide the case in favour of Sakāra on the strength of the circumstantial evidence and the weakness of Cārudatta's defence. To the question of how the ornaments were separated from Vasantasenā, he does not say the truth that they were given by her to his child for making a golden play cart. First of all it is doubtful if his statement would be believed, and even if believed, that may lead to further
questions about the stay of Vasantasena in his house, the
time and mode of her departure etc., and that may finally
lead to the Āryaka episode. Čarudatta's guilt having been
proved beyond doubt, the judge had no other alternative
except to convict him. Though the death is the penalty
prescribed for murder, the judge recommends to the king the
banishment of Čarudatta with his whole wealth in tact
because he is a Brāhmaṇa who, according to Manu should not
be killed.

अर्ये है पातकी विद्रो हे न वहाँ भुजिन्।
राज्य इति विनाशो विशेषतः स्वे " ॥

But the king orders the execution of Čarudatta which order
makes him more unpopular and easy to be over-powered by the
revolutionaries.

In act X Čarudatta who has been condemned to death
is being led by two Cāndalas to the execution ground along
the main streets of the city. On the way, in fixed important spots the executioners announce the proclamation of the
king loudly after beating the drum. It is really a pathetic
sight wherein the noble, magnanimous, innocent and the
lovable Čarudatta is led by Cāndalas his body smeared with
red sandal paste and adorned with funeral garlands, and the
Cāndalas announcing the proclamation so painful to hear.

अर्ये बिशिष्टक्षेत्रशीलामानं स्फुरन्ते शूलं हृदयेयं शीघ्रं,
आधातमयं मन्दुप्रयति शामिग्रामार्कुभु शिवा एवदैवः॥

23 M. C. Chakrabarti - Act Ix - 39
24 Ibid Act x - 21
Now, events begin to turn favourable to Carudatta. Sthāvaraka who has been kept chained in the top floor of his house by Sakāra comes to the help of Carudatta, but Sakāra clearly manages to make the Candalas and the assembled citizens believe that Sthāvaraka is a thief and is uttering a lie.

“पुनर्वृत्तांस्मृतिः, मृदुः कारणमकाय बद्धम्। उ सदृशे स्वयं भाषितैरेति नियुक्तं स्वुर्जो चतुर्यन् मर्दिनस्ताविनः। तद्यथे न प्रत्येक वें नस्ता पृढः सबक्षयन्”

Then Vasantasena who has been restored her normal state of health comes there running escorted by the 'Bhiksu' who saved her. She is greeted by everyone in pleasant surprise and Carudatta is saved from the jaws of death. Sakāra runs to save himself but is pursued by the people.

“आइच्छस्येक्म, कैल गर्भं दासी जीवनं प्राप्ति !। सत्तमण्यम् मे प्राणाम। अबन्धु पलाविचलये। राजंद्रमारणं मेवालीवद्याय।”

By this time king Pālaka is killed, Āryaka is crowned as the king, Sarvilaka becomes his chief minister and he is sent by Āryaka to stop Carudatta’s execution.

“उत्क्रमं ते कुद्रापदमं दृष्यान्तः भौज्ज्वाये कृत्यान्त्रिक्षित्य शामिलं नम्र! नरशाहस्त्रर्मीचर्मिन्धरेण श्वेपं भौषणं एव वचस्यं नम्न! वा चार्याभ्यासं।”

Cārudatta gives pardon to Sakāra by his magnanimity. Dūta and Rohasena and others who were preparing to consign their bodies into the fire before hearing the news of Cārudatta’s execution are also saved just in time. Thus the tense

25 MṛcchakaṭiKum - Act 2
26 Ibid
27 Ibid
situation of a great tragedy is changed into one of wonder and joy. The sentiment of 'Karuna' is well developed and subordinated to the main sentiment of 'Sringara'.

**Part-III - Character Sketches:** Cārudatta is the hero of this drama. According to 'Sahitya Darpana' a hero should be a Brāhmaṇa or a minister or a merchant and he should be calm and steady. He should always be engaged in attaining 'Dharma', 'Artha' and 'Kama'. He should come across so many difficulties in his works. All these characters are there in Cārudatta. He was brave, handsome, young and energetic skilled in the work. He is a Brāhmaṇa by birth, he has got wisdom according to his wealth. This character is very rare to find in the rich persons. He sacrifices his wealth for the sake of the poor and who are in difficulty.

"प्राप्तमां प्राप्ति सहितं सवैदमस्मय नोऽशीलर्धीनिधिभिः परिवर्त्यान्ति।
सांख्यकमानुसारं गुड़स्तानिः सृष्टिभिः।
कालान्त्ये मधुमयिः मन्त्रिः रजसः।"

He is famous in protecting the persons who surrenders him. He is the follower of truth. If at all he tells any lie then it is only for the good of others. Totally we can say that he is the fruit yielding tree of the poor, model for educated. He is the man of wisdom.

"दीनानां कल्पनृक्षोऽवस्थानां सवैदमस्मय नोऽशीलर्धीनिधिभिः।
तत्समये नाममेतानुसारं पुरुषमूणि निधिदृष्टिकेच्छोद्यास्तो।
सत्त्र्यात् प्राप्तर्धिः स्वरुपसमाधिकारणात्मा जीवित्याधिकुर्वा॥"

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28. *Mṛćchakarṇa* - Act I - 12
29. *Ibid* - 48
Vasantasena is the heroine of this drama. Even though she is a courtesan by birth, she is interested to follow the family business. She wanted to lead a good life. So the poet has explained her virtues in this drama. Her heart is palatial like her wealth. Her heart is full of kindness. She gives protection for all the persons who surrenders her even though he is a stranger.

"अस्त्राद ते कामो विशेषता पशुकमन्त्री पशुभिन्न ईस्वलम्बत्र तत्त्वल्यां।
पौर्णमी: सततिकादुतानुसार्व, अरामां इह प्रतिपाद्यानेति, इहु देहना भवना त्वं देि॥"  (30)

She is a skilled artist, intelligent and learned woman. She has the sharpness of understanding even the symbolic words.

"कामे प्रकृतिसमयेन न दृष्ट्ये त्वं
सोदापीनी उन्दासुरसोदीनीना
तां भूताधिपति सु मान्यसमझोधां
गान्धर्वक श्रीव! सुकसार्वी च सुकसार्वी न हूदात्तन दुसर्वी, सान्यायी अपनायी।"  (31)

She is attracted towards wisdom and appearance of Āruḍatā. Her actions towards the wife of Āruḍatā is praise worthy and obedient.

"आइ ह श्रीचामकुरासमु गुजारीर्जिता दासी, तदा मुखरकमापि
तदेशाते तवेष अर्धाभरणां अभू रसालनी।"  (32)

Her love towards the son of Āruḍatā is so much that she is ready to remove all the ornaments and even to wear old cloths by giving all her ornaments to him in order to prepare a golden cart. She is very beautiful. So all the people are attracted towards her. Even Āruḍatā who is a Brāhmaṇa is also attracted towards her. He considers

30 Mṛcchakatikā - Act II
31 Ibid Act I-35
32 Ibid Act VI
himself fortunate to get her. Totally we can say that she is the Ocean of love, ornament of ornaments and she is the model for all the ladies of this world.

Sakāra is the villian of this drama, he is filled with bad characters like deceiving, foolish, cruelty etc. He is proud of himself because of his relation with the king. He is uneducated. He talks non-sense things.

"किं भीकसेनी अमरिकारुणि: कुन्तीकेतुवा दुःश्चिन्द्रो वा।" (4)

He has no firmness and belief with his own members. No one is having good regards on him. He is very cruel because of which he sends his followers away and tries to kill Vasantasena.

"हात! प्रभा नवाके अन्यने न भागिकरोऽनि। तदेकं रथकथास्पदे समे तापति मातोऽपि। पुष्प प्रलावः सर्वाय। ततंने गृहीत्वागाधिः भावः।" (5)

and he puts the blames on Čārudatta. Totally we can say that Sakāra is selfish, cruel, unkind hearted. He is not a human being but he is a demon.

Maitreya is a Brāhmaṇa. He is the good friend of Čārudatta, and he is not ready to lose the company of Čārudatta at any situation. He is always trying for the welfare of Čārudatta. He wants to separate Čārudatta from Vasantasenā because she is a courtesan by birth.

"सिद्धवचनोऽर्थस्माद् सागरीच्छ एव प्रलयान्तराकारादी।" (6)

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(4) Mṛcchakatikā - Act - I - 29
(5) Ibid - Act - VIII
(6) Ibid - Act - V
This shows his love towards his friend. He fights against Sakāra for the sake of Cārudatta. He is coward and always gets angry immediately. He is the man of having a little consciousness. When he is not greeted properly by Vasantasenā when he goes to give 'Raṇāvalī' he gets angry. Totally he is good well-wisher of others. He helps equally both times when there is the wealth and when it is not.

Sarvilaka is a Brāhmaṇa who is having courage and valour. He is well-versed in stealing. But he is not regular in it. He thinks stealing is not good. But because of poverty he does this work in order to marry Madanika the maid servant of Vasantasenā.

"दुर्गिरिलिपिः भूक्तिः तत्स्वेयोऽवगच्छति \।
अभि राजाः मघा अवगच्छति तबंदिः शाहस्य कृतम्।"

When he steals he considers good and bad. He kills Pālaka and coronates Āryaka as the king. He is very intelligent and a good friend. He is well-versed in different languages and to take different forms. Perhaps he is not the resident of Ujjaini. Eventhough he has some bad qualities it is sure that his good qualities are greater than those of bad qualities.

Dūta is the wife of Cārudatta. She is a loyal wife. She is following her husband both in his happiness and sadness equally. She did not get angry with her husband even after knowing that he is loving a courtesan. When the
ornaments of Vasantasena is stolen from the house of Carudatta, she gives her 'Ratnāvali' in turn.

"अर्थ मनोऽवलोकनात्। न मद्यभिवचननुसारे श्रामण्ण: प्रतिबंधान्तः। स न न प्रतिबंधित्वः। तस्मय कुः पृष्टीतः। ते रत्नमण्णिकाः।"

She decides to suicide herself when she comes to know about the death of her husband. She is not desirous of having too much ornaments like all the ladies. She is not ready to accept 'Ratnāvali' which is returned by Vasantasena telling that it is not good on her part to accept it as it is given to her by Carudatta. She considers Carudatta himself is her great ornament.

"आर्यपुष्पे युद्धार्तकं प्रा०कृत्तिः। न युद्धने मनोऽवलोकनात्। आर्यपुष्पे पृण महाभाष्यविशेष इति जोनोऽवलोकनात्।"

She is so virtuous lady that she is loving the courtesan Vasantasena like her own sister who is loved by her husband. So she is fortunate to have such loyalty towards her husband which is a model for all the Indian ladies.

Madanikā is the servant and friend of Vasantasena. Both of them are loving each other. She loves Sarvilaka secretly. She is very intelligent and clever lady. She advises Sarvilaka like a good housewife.

"शार्तिनम्। यद्य भोज बनने अशुभे, सदा तस्येव महाभाष्य प्रतिदिनित्वाः। तस्येव आर्यपुष्पे पुजनविही भृत्यंभवस्मात् सार्वक-मार्माय उपनयन।"

She is fit to be the wife of courageous Sarvilaka. She does

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\[37\] *Mārga Keśikā* - *Act. I*

\[38\] *Ibid* - *Act. VI*

\[39\] *Ibid* - *Act. IV*
not object the works of her husband. Even though she is a courtesan by birth, she is a good friend and a wife.

Bhiksu is a gambler by name Samvāhaka before he becomes Buddhist monk. He is the resident of Pataliputra. With the desire of seeing the country he comes to Ujjaini. He serves Čārudatta. Because of Čārudatta's poverty he starts gambling. Where he is defeated. So with that sadness he becomes a monk. He remembers the help given by Vasantasena and he returns it when he finds her in difficulty. He is a good monk and the follower of truth from the beginning itself.

Rohasena is the son of Čārudatta. He is following his father in appearance. He is a clever boy. He is not ready to accept Vasantasena as his mother as she is wearing the ornaments.

"रुद्रिन ह अलीका तम अणतरि; महरसान्नाथी अनती, तिक्के मध्य अलंकृता।" (४०)

He cries for the sake of a golden cart. He is ready to leave off his life for the sake of his father.

"अयापादिया माम, मुळे तपनान्।" (४१)

Darduraka is another gambler who is a confirmed rogue. He is a sympathetic person towards other gambler, so he rushes for the help of Samvāhaka. He is ready to quarrel with Sabhika in order to help other gamblers. Persons like

(४०) Mṛcchakaṭikam - Act. वि
(४१) Ibid - Act. ॥

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Darduraka are a queer mixture of good and bad and are generally fit for being revolutionaries that he ultimately has become.

"आर्थिकता गर्गोद्यानमः सहस्राष्ट्रं समाहितेऽर्थ अविद्यति। सर्वस्वास्त्राभियोजनः जन चतुमुखस्याति। तद् दृष्टमिति तत्समीपमेव आद्धुरामिः।" 

Radanika Cārudatta's maid is a faithful servant who would swallow anything for the sake of her master. She is not ready to reveal the difficulty which she gets from Sakara to Cārudatta.

"आर्य! मेध्यं दृष्टिकथा स्तन्वेः संयममुखः।" 

She looks after the son of Cārudatta nicely.

Of the two police officers one is soft minded who has deep regards to Cārudatta. The other in his duty would not regard even his father. First one is ready to quarrel with another in order to save the person who surrenders him. अद्भुतं चतुर्वेड्यं परिश्रमं चतुर्वेद्यं! उद्यन नः। महत्स्व श्रीमं भेद्ये फूले सुवर्तनानि पालनयथि, पादेन ताडात्यायनी म। The other goes to the court with a complaint against his companion. Both, however, are alike in their manner of speaking and abusing each other.

Of the two Cāṇḍalas differ one another in that one is soft-hearted while the other is not caring for anything.

(42) Mr. Keckātakam - Act II
(43) Ibid. Act I
(44) Ibid. Act VI
before his duty. One of them is having respect to Carudatta. One is ready to wait sometime to hang the culprit by following the words of his father.

"अवापि कौशल्य आधुनकर्न देवता वहं मोक्षार्थी। अवापि सावं युजो अन्यति, तैन दृष्टिहेतुहृदयन अधित्यां मोक्षार्थी अन्तर्भविति। अवापि हुद अन्यति स्वार्थमात्र, तैन दृष्टिहेतुहृदयन अधित्यां अन्तर्भविति।"

The Vita of Sakara is well accomplished and cultured in his manners, presenting a good contrast to his master. Though serving Sakara he is fully aware of his worth and has a very correct idea about him. He is all respect for Carudatta owing to his qualities.

"सौरसर्वत्रि देवतागताभिषेकार्यते प्रेमस्वतो न तेन कार्यति सदाशिवमानिति। निराकारकान्तिर्व तरोद्वेदार्थानि नुक्तां शुर्कहा।"

Vasantasena's vita is well-accomplished. He advices Vasantasenā, how she should act when she goes to the house of Carudatta.

"यथि भूष्णिः नोभासति रूपेन बाहुभवो वृत्त्व भाग्याः। कुष्ठा च नवक्षेत्र-वज्र क्षेत्र्य प्रसाघ्यं च महान।"

Sthāvaraka, Sakāra's ceta though low by status is yet a man of high thoughts and piety. Even on being beaten and inspite of tempting bribes he is not prepared to commit anything wrong or immoral.

"ताइयं अहं नारियं अहं, अवापि मोक्षार्थ करिवार्थी!"

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45 Mr. Chakravat - Act X
46 Mr. Chakravat - Act I - 46
48 Ibid - Act Vn
The judge is not very well disposed towards Sakāra and hence tries to put off his case if possible. But he is forced to yield to Sakāra's words, which will not blemish on the judge's character.

"सर्वस्य मुखस्य संभालयने । भव उश्यती । 'आजगर! दृष्टव्येव नल ओवातारे!'" ५८

for he has acquitted himself quite impartially and ably throughout the trial of Carudatta.

Vasantasenā's mother impresses us as a good old lady who has appreciated her daughter's choice.

सुनिश्चितं यशेना स्वनु दुरान्नायाः।" ५९

Her goodness become apparent when she sets aside her own sorrow and tries to save Carudatta.

"प्रसीदनु प्रसीदनथमायिसिस्मी । तत्सत्त्वं योपापाइता भव पूर्व कृत्यां योपापाइता । तीव्रम् मे तीव्रिः। अल्लाघः अर्थं पृथ्वीर्योऽधिकराः। अर्माधारीं । तत्त्वमस्य तत्त्वम्।" ६०

Pālaka is a despot king who is not introduced in the stage. He neglects the suggestion given by judge and gives death punishment to Carudatta a Brahmāna.

"धैनयं धैनयं वस्त्रवर्तकं काश्यु दसनसनेन योपापाइता, सं तन्यवाचरणां मुखिणे देवितां रक्षणाय सुभां भृकुटकं इव।" ६१

Aryaka a poor cow boy destined to be a king is a fugitive from Pālaka's prison, who on being enthroned...

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47 Mṛčchakātika: Act 18
48 Ibid
49 Ibid
50 Ibid
52 Ibid Act 19
remembers all that have helped him at their own risk and
amply rewards them through his friend Sarvilaka.

We have thus seen that Śūdraka has given us not only a very large number and a large variety of characters but has also shown great skill in depicting and developing them.

Part - IV - Society Depicted in the Drama:– The story of Mrçchakatika deals with the life of the common people of the city and not with the life of the kings and nobles or the gods and sages. The hero is one belonging to upper middle class while the heroine is a rich courtesan who does not follow her hereditary profession. All other characters introduced belong to the middle and the low class.

The caste system was fully recognised in those days. The Brāhmaṇas were generally respected by the people and they enjoy certain privileges. "पूजनीयों मे श्रामिक जन:।" ५४ "आर्यों सभ्यता भोजनं नमस्तनं च। आपं वधु दार्शनिकं ते भविषयति।" ५५

Brāhmaṇas took to the profession of trade and amassed riches and enjoyed a luxurious life. They also gambled and having

(५३) Mrçchakatika - Act Ⅱ
(५४) Ibid Act Ⅲ
(५५) Ibid Act Ⅱ
lost their wealth sometimes became reckless adventures like Sarvilaka who does not hesitate even to steal.

“कामे नीलमिति बक्सु मुल्ल पुरुषो तबं सि यद्यकर्मवर।
किकुन्यस्ये ये कथापीदिभवज्ञेषु न जोठेऽहि तेन।
सुवधीरङ्ग अन्तरिमोऽधिक गृहरं वर्ष बली न कैलाज्जये।-
सार्वो नैराधितस्यवधे पूर्व कृतो त्रिलेभ!” (५६)
The contemptuous reference to each other's low caste by Vīraka Candanaka shows how strong a hold the caste system had on the people.

“अरू, का समय च अन्द्रकालेण अन्यं दिशावेद्य आतीः।
पृथ्वीमानो मन्यन्यानस्तवस्मालानो आतीः न श्रमस्य।” (५७)
Buddhism was in a flourishing state and people generally respected the Buddhist mendicants, though their sight was considered inauspicious by some.

“कथामर्मस्यास्यामुद्दितिः अमृणान्त्यावेद्यः प्रविशिक्षलयमने
पथाय वनस्त्रयस्येव पथाय गरास्यः।” (५८)

Institution of courtesans is practiced. Even though it is considered as a low profession, it has a certain recognised status. Courtesans are not treated as social discards and rich people used to have connections with them though they would feel shy to admit the same in public. While the courtesans in general are greedy, and have no fixed love for a single person. Vasantasena is an exception and her love for the poor Brāhmaṇa is worth noting.
The courtesans have certain rules of conduct.

Gambling was another vice that is institutionalised in cities. There are gambling houses run by gambling masters who are very powerful and influential. There is the association of gamblers which has powers to detain and inflict punishment on the body of gamblers who do not pay their stake money.

"माधुरः सेवानाय घोड़ायि मुख्खरां दुःखति, सेवागां, सतहीतिं भूर्चुरि: नामयन श्रुमां पतान्.-61"

The treatment met out to Samvāhaka in the open highway is an example of the power wield by a gambling house-keeper. We also get a glimpse into the behaviour of gamblers and their quarrels.

Stealing is also prevailing in the society. Sarvilaka steals ornaments which are deposited by Vasantaśena in the house of Cārudatta in order to marry a courtesan, who is the servant of Vasantaśena is an example for this.

"ऐतिहासिकाः भ्रात्रेतेन चार्पृणांहारुक्तेन अव- अद्यां राजगिः ममा भूर्चु चबृंिवयें वद्यें साहसः कृतम्"-62

Slavery is common and slaves could bought and sold. They are completely at the mercy of their masters.

61 Māheśhakāśikām - Au. II
62 Ibid - Au. 1V - 5.
As a general rule their word has little value and as against their masters, though even for them they would not commit anything immoral.

“तद्राहसु महात्माः, मास्यसु महात्माः, अकार्यं न काविद्वागैर।
यैनामस्मि गंधार्दियास् विनियमितति भधावहृदृः।
आर्थिकं य न क्रीडाययामि स्तनाकार्यं पामेहसामि।”

Hinduism appears to comprise not only sacrifices and worship of dieties or idols but also offerings bali and upahara to different dieties or spirits at the thresholds of houses or on the cross roads.

“यस्य । कृते मम! अविदेवनाभ्यो बलिः। गृहं, रथापि अनुदवये नास्तृत्वो बलिमुपहर।”

Vratas and fasts are observed Sandhya adoration are practiced by Brähmanas.

“तपस्वा महेश्वरां वामि! व्रतीता बलिकमभिः।
तुष्यान्ति रहस्याः नित्यं दूबनाः किं विचारितं?
भवनु, तिच्छै, ताचै, अहं समाधिः निर्बिच्छेद्यामि।”

The doctrine of karman seems to have a strong hold on the society. It is believed that our condition in the present birth is the fruit of our actions in the previous birth.

Some popular notions and beliefs are noticed and

(62) I bid - Act - I
(63) I bid - 16.
pass a few remarks on the general standard of morality obtaining in the society of those days. Belief in omens good and bad was quite common.

“कपलस्य वाहिति वायस्कोन्यं
भालाय शुभयूः मुदितरद्वायणी।
सत्यं वो नैर्मुखी स्पुदश्री प्रशालम्
सामान्यिकस्यमण्यते स्तुद्यामुः।”

Prakāśanaris and Aprakāśanaris are the two kinds of ladies mentioned in Mṛcchakatika. The womens are well-respected in the society.

In this way Śūdraka has explained the society of that time very nicely.

Part - V - Political System as depicted in the drama:

Monarchy is the main system of administration. The kingship is hereditary. But they has to rule according to the wishes of the people. Otherwise the people revolt against the king. This can be understood by the situation which leads to kill Palaka and coronation of Āryaka as the king by the subjects.

“दत्ता ते कुन्तुपपः हि पालकं शै-
सर्वानं दुसर्माशिविव्य शार्यकं सम्।
तस्माद ज्ञां धर्मां निधाय शैवाश्वतं
स्वब्रह्मकं तथाय यथसनन्तं।”

Police system is prevailing in the society. When

64) Mṛcchakatikā - Act IX - 10
65) Ibid - Act II - 47
Aryaka escapes from the prison, the king orders immediately to check all the cart which is moving in the street.

"अपवारितं प्रत्यक्षं ब्रजति महाने साजस्थिति।
पत्नीवादेवपर्यं करस्य कुम प्रेषितं प्रत्यक्षगति।"

The people who are appointed by the king as a policeman check all the cart which are moving in the street.

In order to decide the cases the court is there in the society. Sakra killed Vasantasena, puts the blame on Carudatta and filed a petition in the court against Carudatta.

"सामप्रतमधिकरणं जयं वचनें लेस्याठि, घथा-
अथस्य कारणसार्थवाहक चारथस्में मधिर्यं
पुष्प कारणं जीर्णोदां प्रवैश्य वसनसेना अधिकतें।"

A trial is held in the court and the case is proved and Carudatta is sentenced to death. The judge was helped by two officers called Sresthin and Kayasta serving as assessors and court scribe respectively. The appointment of the judge (and hence the dismissed also) was in the hands of the king. So sometimes he had to act to the humor of the king or his favourites.

(66) Mucchaka Kātiḥ - Act - vi - 12
(67) Ibid - Act - viii
Trial was very speedy though attempt was made to swift all sorts of evidence from all possible sources. The proof of Vasantaśena’s murder which came against Cārudatta are

1) According to the words of Vardamanaka to the police officers that “पुब्दुष्टं आर्थ चाकृष्टस्य। ईश्वरस्य वासनसेनास्य कारणं कथितं क्रियते। चाकृष्टस्य नीयते।”

2) The death of a woman because of falling a tree “अथे, सार्या पुत्र पास्पषो नियातित। अर्नान नाना यज्ञान। रूपी 0मापाणि ताय।”

3) The ornament which was given by Vasantaśena to Rohasena the son of Cārudatta to prepare the golden cart.

Punishments were very strict and harsh. “प्रेमाध्यक्षत्वस्य कारणाःस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तас्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तस्तादुष्टि 0मापाणि ताय।”

The culprit sentenced to death was imprinted with red figure marks decked with garland of red flowers and had to carry the spike (on which he was to hung) on his shoulder and the article of offence on his person.

References:
68 Mr. Chakatikam - Act VI
69 Ibid - Act VIII
70 Ibid - Act IX
71 Ibid
There were executioners to carry out the orders of the king. Some of them were kind hearted, and would wait for sometime to kill the culprit.

"अरे अणितोक्षिपि पित्रा स्नम्य मांसम् गतेन, मथा - पुज तीर्थम्, आदि तव वृद्धयुपासिनी अर्थों, मा जनसा १८ अपरिक्ष - धारी वक्ष्यम्।" ७३

Revolution appears so had been not a very difficult matter. The imprisonment of Aryaka by king Pālaka according to the words of an astrologer,

"श्रेष्ठ साधनार्थीं कौपालादासी रजो भविष्यतीं सिद्धायिशय पुरुषयणुष्य पालकेर रजो घोषाधनानी धारी सन्ध्यागारे वर्षसः।" ७३

dead sentence to Ārūdatta a Brāhmaṇa just by the false evidences, the bad administration of Pālaka and foolish Sakāra were the main causes of the revolution. This revolution showed that the destruction and the prosperity of the Kingdom depends upon a good subject of that kingdom. The dissatisfied and the distressed persons of the society generally rallied round a prospective leader and a change of rule could be effected simply by assassinating, the reigning monarch and declaring the leader as king in his place.

७२ Mācchakātaka - Act x
७३ Ibid Act xiv
The ruling king would of course try with all his might to check all such persons, but has a little hope of success as long as he could not win the respect and sympathy of his subjects by his benevolent rule.