

CHAPTER-IV

Socio-Political Condition as Reflected in the Veṅīsamhāra

Social behaviour evolves and grows from age to age. Literature reckons with all those developments silently. Every literary piece is a precious document which sheds light on social – political and cultural life of the contemporary society apart from its primary objective to give its readers an aesthetic charm. Even the thematic or historical plots tend to be sources of picturesque clues of the socio-political culture of the time of their composition. The *Veṅīsamhāra* of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* is also not an exception. Deliberately or otherwise *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* depicts the kind of social behaviour which is evidently vogue.

The significant points of social behaviour and prevailing cultural aspects may be categorically classified into ten different headings. These are– 1) *Viṣṇu* cult 2) Greeting to elderly people, 3) Believing in the effects of dreams and omens, 4) Caste–system, 5) Ritualistic culture, 6) Dressing, 7) Infrastructure, 8) Rites associated to death, 9) Suicidal deaths 10) Family bond and compatibility.

Visnu cult –

The drama emerges to be a glaring example of glorification of *Bhakti*, specially devotion to *Viṣṇu* or *Kṛṣṇa*. *Kṛṣṇa* is a constituent character of the drama and none the less considered as the supreme divinity. More over the cult of devotion exhibited in the drama reminds one to *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*, where the Lord asks *Arjuna* to be a mere nominal cause of the death of valourous warriors of *Kaurava* side.¹ In the very first act of the drama, *Bhīmasena* expresses extreme dissatisfaction over the heinous act of derogating Lord *Kṛṣṇa* by *Kauravas*. According to him the very act of playing with the dignity of the Lord will eventually be the reason of their vanishment and the wreath of *Pāṇḍavas* will merely be the nominal reason.² Following *Bhīmasena*, *Sahadeva* also wonders about the stupidity of *Duryodhana* for being ignorant about the holy spirit of his Lordship *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*.³

The sixth act of the drama also exhibits similar kind of devotion to *Kṛṣṇa* or *Viṣṇu*. *Yudhiṣṭhira*, whose coronation is about to take place after the great war of *Kurukṣetra* simply eulogies the Lord. *Yudhiṣṭhira* feels that

¹ Cf. *mayavaite nihataḥ pūrvameva nimittamātram bhava savyasācin – Smbhg – 11th ch,sl-33*

² .cf. *āh durātmankurukulapāmsana evamatikrāntamaryāde tvayi nimittamātreṇa pāṇḍavakrodhena bhavitavyam. V.S by M.R.Kale, 1st Act ,p-23*

³ .cf. *kimasau durātmā suyodhano vāsudevamapi bhagavantam svena rūpeṇa na jānāti. Ibid.*

there is nothing material or otherwise, that the Lotus– eyed Lord does not grant when pleased.⁴ In the same context, *Yudhiṣṭhira* says that all sorts of blemishes and sorrows vanish at the very sight of the hardly perceivable Lord.⁵ Moreover, *Yudhiṣṭhira* considers that it is only the grace of Lord *Kṛṣṇa* that helped the five *Pāṇḍava* brothers. Survive after the great destructive war of *Kurukṣetra*, where all the enemies have been vanquished.⁶ It is evident from *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s expression that *bhakti* to Lord *Viṣṇu* is greatly valued and the contemporary people have the belief that by the blessings of the Lord people in general live happily without being affected by diseases and the state machinery behaves properly appreciating the merits of scholars and knowledgable persons.⁷

Greeting to elderly people:

It is evident from the second and the fifth Act of the drama that during the period it was customary to greet the elderly persons of the family in the

⁴ .cf. *evam puṇḍarīkākṣa na kiñcinna dadāti bhagavānprasannaḥ* | V.S, by M.R.Kale , ch-vi, p-168

⁵ .cf. *kṛtagurumahadādikṣobhasambhūtamūrtim guṇinamudayanāśasthānahetuṃ prajānām* | *ajamamaramacintyīm cintayitvāpi na tvām bhavati jagati dukhī kiṃ punardeva drṣṭvā..* V.S ,by M.R.Kale, ch-vi, sl-43 p-167

⁶ .cf. *krodhāndhaiḥ sakalaṃ hataṃ ripukulaṃ pañcākṣatāste vayam* | *pāñcālyā mama durnayopajanitastīrṇo nikārārṇavaḥ* | *tvām devaḥ puruṣottamaḥ sukṛtinaṃ māmāhato bhāṣase*

kiṃ nāmānyadataḥ paraṃ bhagavato yāce prasannādahaṃ || V.S, by M.R.Kale, ch-vi, sl-45, p-168

⁷ .cf. *akṛpaṇamarukuśrāntaṃ jīvyājjanaḥ puruṣāyusaṃ bhavatu bhagavanbhaktirdvaittaṃ vinā* | *puruṣottame* |

dayitabhuvano vidvadbhurguṇeṣu viśeṣavitsatatasukṛtī bhūyādbhūpaḥ prasādhitamāṇḍalaḥ || V.S by M.R.Kale, sl-46, ch-vi, p-169

early hours of the day. *Duryodhana* finds it unusual on the part of his wife *Bhānumatī* to step out of the room without proper morning greeting.⁸ Parents in law used to receive salutations from their daughters-in-law early in the morning.⁹ Despite being afflicted by conflicts among blood relations, etiquette seems to be maintained. In the very first Act *Draupadī*'s maid speaks about her mistresses offering salutations to Gāndhārī along with Subhadrā and all.¹⁰

The etiquette, shown by *Draupadī* to *Duryodhana*'s parents is appreciated by *Bhīmasena* in the following words – *yuktametata. vandyāḥ khalu guravaḥ*.¹¹ In a similar context in the fifth Act also *Bhīmasena* remarks– *mūḍha anullanghanīyaḥ sadācārah. na yuktamanabhivādya gurun gantum*.¹²

Dreams and Omens:

Superstition is evidently vogue social behaviour. After the dream episode *Bhānumatī* becomes so apprehensive that she goes out with her maids in quest of pacification of bad effects of the dream. Her maid finds

⁸ .cf.vinayandhara adya khalu bhānumatī yathāpūrvaṁ māmanāmantrya vāsabhavanāprātareva niṣkrānteti vyākṣiptaṁ me manaḥ | tadādeśasya tamuddeśaṁ yatrasthā bhānumatī. V.S , by M.R.Kale ,2nd Act ,p-32

⁹ .cf.vihaṅgike api śvaśrūjanapādavandanam kṛtvā pratinivṛttā bhānumatī. V.S,M.R.Kale, 2nd Act, p-29

¹⁰ .cf.adya khalu devī ambāsaḥitā subhadrāpramukheṇa sapatnīvargeṇa parivṛtā aryāyā gāndhāryāḥ pādavandanam kartum gatāsīt. V.S ,M.R.Kale, 1st Act, p-19

¹¹ .cf.ibid.

¹² .cf V.S, M.R.Kale ,5th Act ,p-123

everything inauspicious in seeing a mongoose and the killing of hundred serpents by the same.¹³ Even the very rational *Duryodhana* also becomes perturbed momentarily apprehending about the ill – effects of the dream.¹⁴ Soon after hearing secretly the dream episode of *Bhānumatī*, *Duryodhana* realizes throbbing in his left eye. Throbbing of left eye of a man is believed to have evil omen even at the present era and the same was vogue at the time of composition of the drama. In the third Act again *Aśvatthāmā* realizes throbbing of left eye. Eventually *Aśvatthāmā* has to confront the news of the death of his father. However, the fact of the matter is that even confident and manly warriors like *Duryodhana* and *Aśvatthāmā* have passed through perturbed feelings after realizing eye throbbing apprehending evil omen.¹⁵ With the change of the side of the throbbing organ the evil omen turns to a good omen and gives a happy feeling to the person who realizes it , e.g., in the sixth Act of the drama *Yudhiṣṭhira* feels a kind of throbbing in his right eye and feels very happy

¹³ .cf.na khalu daṁṣṭṛṇo nakulasya vā darśanamahiśatavadhaṁ ca svapne praśaṁsanti vicakṣaṇāḥ| V.S, M.R.Kale, 2nd Act ,p-39

¹⁴ .cf.nakulena pannagaśatavadhaḥ stanāṁśukāpaharaṇaṁ ca niyatamariṣṭodarkaṁ tarkayāmi. - ibid.

¹⁵ .cf.(vāmākṣispandanam sūcayivā) āḥ mamāpi nāma duryodhanasyānimittāni hr̥dayakṣobhamāvedayanti. V.S, M.R.Kale, 2nd Act p-40

Cf.(parikramya . vāmākṣispandanam sūcayivā) āḥ kathaṁ mamāpi nāmāśvatthāmaḥ samaramahotsavapramodanirbharasya tātavikramadarśanalālasasya animittāni samaragamanaviḡnamutpādayanti. V.S, M.R.Kale, 3rd Act, p-59

and starts believing that *Bhīmasena* must be alive.¹⁶ The drama reminds us of an era in which much of astronomical and astrological developments took place. It speaks of an era in which people have the strong believe that movements of the heavenly bodies exercise influence over the lives of human beings. This is evident in an expression of *Duryodhana* in the second Act of the drama.¹⁷ However, it is also evident that a school of thinkers has sprung up that time. The thinkers seem to be too rational to be superstitious. This school thinks that there is no truth in the suggestive characters on the movements of heavenly bodies, dreams and omen. Even if some omens eventually result accordingly that fruit must be considered fortuitous.¹⁸

Caste system:

Strong prevalence of caste – system is observed in the *Veṅṅisamhāra*. *Brāhmaṇas* seem to enjoy great honour. *Cārvāka* who appears before Yudhiṣṭhira in the guise of a *Brāhmaṇa* enjoys warm reception and worship like hospitality. In the third act of the drama *Rudhirapriya* cautions his wife not to drink the blood of *Brāhmaṇas*.¹⁹ Every Indian abstains from harming

¹⁶ .cf.(*dakṣiṇākṣispandanam sūcayitvā*) *pāñcāli nimittāni me kathayanti sambhāvayīṣyasi vṛkodaramiti*. V.S ,M.R.Kale ,6th Act ,p-158

¹⁷ .cf.*grahānām caritaṃ svapno 'nimittanyupayācitaṃ*.

phalanṭi kākatālīyaṃ tevyah prājñā na bibhyati.. V.S ,M.R.Kale, sl-14, 2nd Act ,p-40

¹⁸ .cf. *ibid*.

¹⁹ .cf.(*sabhayaṃ*) *vasāgandhe brāhmaṇaśoṇitaṃ khalvetadgalaṃ dahaddahatpraviṣati*. V.S, M.R.Kale, 3rd Act ,p-58

a *Brāhmaṇa*. Physically assaulting a *Brāhmaṇa* to his death is the worst ever sin that one can commit. In a context of avertion of evil omen of dream it is said that everything is pacified through offering oblation to the fire got and blessings of *Brāhmaṇas*.²⁰ The prevailing difference of superiority or inferiority of one's birth or caste difference and of course taking pride of one's superior birth are very well exhibited in *Aśvatthāmās* emotion driven comments which go like this— *jāto'ham stutivamśakirtanavidām kim sārathīnām kule*.²¹ Again there seems to be instances of success stories from people of lower strata. There seems to be examples, where people of lower birth take pride of their success which have been acknowledged. The same is evident from the statement— *daivāyattaṁ, kule janma madāyattaṁ tu pauruṣam*.²² The above stated arguments show that there is caste difference but extreme rigidity does not seem to be prevalent. *Cārvāka*, in *Brāhmaṇa*'s guise does not seem to have objection to take water from the chamberlain of *Yudhiṣṭhira*, who is a *Kṣatriya*.²³

²⁰.cf. *bhagavatām brāhmaṇānāmapyāśiṣā āhutihutena prajvalitena bhagavatā hutāśanena ca naśyatu*. V.S ,M.R.Kale, 2nd Act p-38

²¹ .cf. V.S, 3rd Act ,sl-35, p-75 ,by-M.R.Kale

²².cf. sl-37 ,ibid

²³ .cf.jalapradānenasambhāvayatu mām V.S ,M.R.Kale, 6th Act, p-141

cf. śiśirasurabhililasampūṛṇo 'yam bhṛṅgāraḥ pānabhājanam cedam. ibid

Apart from the Aryan races there seems to be the presence of a considerable amount of non-aryan people which are mentioned as the race of *rākṣasas* in the drama.

Ritualistic Culture:

The principal prevailing ritualistic culture seems to be that of performance of sacrifice. Sacrificial ritual seems to enjoy its glory and grandeur. This is evident from the dialogue between second *Pāṇḍava Bhīmasena* and *Draupadī*. There *Bhīmasena* compares the warfare to a sacrifice.²⁴ Beheading animals also seems to be a regular part of sacrificial ritual. This is evident from the verse –

catvāro vayamṛtvijah sa bhagavānkarmopadeṣṭāḥ hariḥ.
saṁgrāmādhvaradīkṣhito narapatiḥ patnī grhītavratā|
kauravyāḥ paśavaḥ priyāparibhvakleśopaśāntiḥ phalaṁ
rājanyopanimantraṇāya rasati sphītaṁ yaśodundubhiḥ||²⁵

Besides the sacrificial ritualistic culture, there are occasional conditional offering of prayers to different deities. While offering prayers

²⁴ .cf. *bhīmasenaḥ-devi kimanyat. yajñāḥ pravarttate.*
draupadī-(savismayaṁ) ka eṣa yajñāḥ.

bhīmasenaḥ-raṇayajñāḥ. V.S.,M.R.Kale, 1st Act p-25

²⁵ .cf. *sl-25,ibid*

cf. āryaputra parihāryatāmetadnimittāṁ prasannabrāhmaṇavedānughosṣeṇa homena ca. V.S ,M.R.Kale,
2nd Act
p-48.

also one notices strong influence of *Gītā*, e.g. offering of flowers to please the intended deity as noticed in the second act of the drama.²⁶ Muttering the names of different deities as of now is also greatly value as an act of religious importance.²⁷ With a view to achieving some desired object certain vows are also observed. It is observed that the supposed beneficiary is not always expected to observe the vows. Somebody, On his/her behalf may observe the austerities of the vows as is evident in the second act of *Veṅīsamhāra*. It is found there that *Bhānumatī*, the beloved wife of *Duryodhana* observes certain rituals, intending victory and safe survival of *Duryodhana* after the completion of the great war. Gift to *Brāhmaṇas* is also considered as an act of pacification and religious merit.²⁸

Dressing:

The very title of the drama reminds one about hair – dressing. Throughout the drama specially from the second Act, it is widely observed that a married woman pampers herself with various kinds of decorations

²⁶.cf. *patraṃ puṣpaṃ phalaṃ toyaṃ yo me bhaktyā prayaccati tadahaṃ bhaktyupahṛtamaśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ* . *S.M.B.G, ch-ix ,sl-26*
hañje taralike upanaya me kusumāni aparāsāmapī devatānām saparyām nivartayāmi. *V.S, M.R.Kale 2nd Act p-41*

²⁷ .cf. *yenāvāmapī pratiṣṭhāpayantau dharmaprasāmsayā devatāsankīrtanena dūrvādi parigraheṇa ca parihaṛiṣyāvah*. *V.S.,M.R.Kale ,2nd Act ,p-30*

²⁸.cf. *taddevatanām praṇāmena dvijātijanapratigraheṇa cāntaryatām*. *V.S.,M.R.Kale, 2nd Act ,p- 39*

specially arranging their hair in ornamental fashions. While the widows seem to keep their hair loosely on their back. In fact letting the hair loose is an indication of widowhood.²⁹ Tonsure of widows is something seemed to be introduced as a custom later. In the second Act itself, in the context of the dream, a sort of indication about dressing of women is given. Removal of upper garment of a lady is shown to be an indication of widowhood³⁰ which signifies a decent kind of dressing on the part of an unmarried girl and a married woman.

It is interesting to note that no reference of wearing exclusive white garments by widows is notice.

Infrastructure:

The house – buildings seem to have been built in widespread lands. Beside the buildings there are open areas in all directions. There is the reference of one *Bālogyāna*, where morning offerings to the sun God are made at the dawn,³¹ that indicates that the *Bālogyāna* is situated in the front-

²⁹ .cf. *ayi bhānumatī ,yuṣmākamukteṣu keṣeṣu kathamasmākaṁ devyāḥ kesah saṁyamanta iti. V.S by M.R.Kale, 1st Act , p-21*

³⁰ .cf. *nakulena pannagaśatabadhah stanāmsukāpaharaṇaṁ ca niyatamariṣṭodarkaṁ tarkayāmi. V.S ,M.R.Kale, 2nd Act ,p-39*

³¹ .cf. *ettattuhinakaṇaśīśirasamīraṇodvellitabandhanacyutaśefālikāvīracitakusumaprakaraṁ īśadālohitamuḡdhavadhūkapolapāṭalalodhrapasūnavijitaśyāmalatāsaubhāgyamṁ unmīlitabakulakundakusumasurabhisitalaṁ prabhātakālaramaṇiyamagrataste bālogyānaṁ. V.S.,M.R.Kale, 2nd Act,p -32-33*

yard. Likewise, the specific term *Bālogyāna* also points to different other *Udyānas* used for different purposes. The roads seem to be in good condition. Sands and pebbles are spread on them.³² Abundant use of gold seems to be normal affair.³³ Sufficient water bodies, natural or man-made seem to exist. The very reference of practising and acquirement of *Salila Stambhanīvidyā* by *Duryodhana* affirms the same.³⁴

Rites Associated with death:

Cremation is the only mode of funeral rite referred to in the *Veṅṭsamhāra* disposal of dead-bodies.³⁵ Repeat references of *Citā* made in the sixth Act of the drama also affirms the same.³⁶ As a part of the funeral rite water oblation is offered to four immediate dead ancestors.³⁷ Woman the wife of the person

³² .cf. pathiṣu viṭapinām skandhakāṣaiḥ sadhūmah. V.S., M.R. Kale, sl-28, p-44

³³ .cf. reṅurbādham vidhatte tanurapi mahatīm netrayoraāyatavā-
dutkampo 'lpo 'pi pīnastanabharitamurāḥ kṣiptahāram dunoti. V.S., M.R. Kale, sl-21, 2nd Act, p-46

³⁴ .cf. bho vīra vrkodara jānāti kila suyodhanāḥ salilastambhanīm vidyām. V.S., M.R. Kale, 6th Act, p-134

³⁵ .cf. kurvantvāptā hatānām raṇasīrasi janā vanhisāddehabhārā-
nasrūnmiśram kathamcciddadatu jalamamī bāndhavā bāndhavebhyāḥ.
mārgantām jñātidēhānhatanaragahane khaṇḍitāngṛdhrakankai-
rastam bhāsvānprayātaḥ saharipubhirayam saṁhṛiyantām balāni. V.S., M.R. Kale, 5th Act, sl-36, p-126

³⁶ .cf. kañcukī- devi pāṇḍusnuṣe uttiṣṭha. saṁprati jhaṭiti cittāpraveśa eva śreyān.

draupadī-(sahasotthāya) katham na saṁbhāvayāmyadyāpi citāsamīpam.
Yudhiṣṭhiraḥ- kaḥ ko 'tra bhoḥ. saniṣaṅgaṅ dhanurupanaya. katham na kaścitparijanaḥ. bhavatu.
bāhuyuddhenaiva durātmānam gādam ālingya jvalanamabhipātayāmi. (parikaram badhnāti)
kañcukī- devi pāṇḍusnuṣe saṁyamamyantāmidānīm nayanoparodhino duḥsāsanavakṛṣṭā mūrdhajāḥ.
astamitā saṁprati pratīkārāsā. citāsamīpameva drutataram saṁbhavaya. V.S., M.R. Kale, 6th Act, p-162

³⁷ .cf. eṣa tāvatsalilānjaliṅgāṅgeyāya bhīṣmāya gurave. ayam prapitāmahāya śāntanave. ayamapi
pitāmahāya vicitravīryāya. (sāsram) tatasyādhunāvasaraḥ. ayamapi tatrābhavate sugṛhītanāmne pitre
pāṇḍave. V.S., M.R. Kale, 6th Act, p-156

who offers oblation takes part in the ritual.³⁸ It is interesting to note that some kind of impurity (*mṛtaśauca*) is imposed on the family in which a dear relative dies. When such *mṛtaśaucas* occur, people outside the family resist even drinking of water there. *Cārvāka*'s denial to take water from *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s chamberlain affirms the same.³⁹

Suicidal Deaths:

The system of sati, which labelled a big question mark to India's concern for humanitarian values in medieval and British ruled era, does not seem to be a regular practice in *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*'s time. Though a section of wicked people with their wicked intentions purposefully glorify the apparently virtuous but in human act.⁴⁰ It is to be mentioned here that out of love, with a feeling of destitute and loosing all interest from life the near relatives, not merely the wife make suicide attempts after the death of a dearest family member. This is evident from the burning to death of a

³⁸.cf. *kṛṣṇe tvamapi dehi salilāñjalim*. V.S.,M.R.Kale, 6th Act, p-157

³⁹.cf. *sulabhaśca svajanavināsaḥ samgrāmeṣu pratidinamato nādeyaṁ bhavadbhayo jalādikaṁ*. V.S.,M.R.Kale,6th Act, p-141-142.

⁴⁰.cf. *rākṣasa-sadṛśamidaṁ bharatakulabadhūnām patyanumaranaṁ*. V.S ,by *Kālipadadarśanācārya*,6th Act,p-356

this very dialogue of *cārvāka* occur in the Bengal Edition.

mother and a wife in the crematory fire of a soldier as describe by *Sundaraka* in the fourth Act of the drama.⁴¹

The same is also evident from the arrangement of crematory fire by *Yudhiṣṭhira* and *Draupadī* in the sixth Act of the drama. After hearing the false news of death of *Bhīma* and *Arjuna*.⁴²

Family bond and compatibility:

Veṅṅisamhāra represents a society which is committed to family relations. It depicts a form of organized family and society, where elders always enjoy respect, employers enjoy loyalty, younger ones enjoy love and care. Women seen the household chore with utmost sincerity and enviable management skills.⁴³ Though the position of woman is subdued to men, women are highly appreciated when superior moral standards are exhibited by them.⁴⁴

⁴¹.cf.hā atikaruṇaṃ khalvatra vartate. eṣā vīramātāsamaravinihataṃ putrakam śrutvā raktāṃśukanivasanayā samagrabhūṣaṇayā vadhvā sahānumriyate. V.S.,M.R.Kale , 4th Act, p-88

⁴².cf.draupadī-ārya kuru dārusaṃcayam. prajvalyatām citā. tvarate me hrdayam nātham prekṣitum.(sarvatovalokya) katham na ko 'pi mahārājasya vacanam karoti. yudhiṣṭhirah- maharse na kascicchṛṇoti tāvadāvayorvacanam tadinhana pradanena prasādaḥ kriyatām. V.S.,M.R.Kale,6th Act, p-150-151

⁴³.cf.halā buddhimatike bhana mama vacanena priyasakhīm subhadram. adya vatsāyā uttarāyāścathurtho māsaḥ pratipannasya garbhasya tvamevaitam kulapratiṣṭhāpakam savadhanam rakṣa kadāpītaḥ paralokagatasya śvaśurakulasyasmākamapi salilabindudo bhaviṣyati iti. V.S.,M.R.Kale, 6th Act , p- 153

⁴⁴.cf.sādhu pativrate sādhu strībhāve 'pi vartamānā varam bhavati na punarmahārajah yo 'yamudyateṣu balavatsvabalavatsu vā vāsudevasahayeṣu pāṇḍuputresvarisvadyāpyantaḥpuravihāramanubhavati. V.S.,M.R.Kale, 2nd Act, p- 29

Veṅṅsāmhāra is a drama which deals with a big political crisis of inheritance of those by two legitimate parties and which eventually ends up in a war for a permanent settlement and hence the drama unfolds many chapters of political culture of the then India and the contemporary society of its composition.

The *Veṅṅsāmhāra* represents purely a monarchical form of Government. In contrary to the *Mahābhārata*, *Suyodhana* (*Duryodhana*) is portrayed as the ruling king, the *rājā*.⁴⁵ The same king *Suyodhana* or *Duryodhana* is referred in the two different mentioned names.⁴⁶ That shows a kind of political culture which is very aggressive and has zero tolerance for the opposition.⁴⁷

The kind of kingship which *Duryodhana* represents addresses military necessity. In the prevailing system, a king is expected to be a capable general whose leadership is acknowledged by all.⁴⁸ *Duryodhana* is the

⁴⁵.cf. *rājā- ārya vinayandhara gaccha tvaṁ sāmgrāmikam me rathamupakalpayitum. V.S.,M.R.Kale , 2nd Act, p- 34*

⁴⁶.cf.*suyodhana- avasāne 'ṅgarājasya yoddhavyam bhavatā kila.*

mamāpyantaṁ pratīkṣasva kaḥ karṇaḥ kaḥ suyodhanaḥ.. V.S.,M.R.Kale, 5th Act, sl- 39, p- 128

cf. duryodhana – āh mamāpi nāma duryodhanasya śāṅkāsthānaṁ pāṅḍavāḥ. V.S.,M.R.Kale, 2nd Act, p- 50

⁴⁷.cf. *mathnāmi kauravaśataṁ samare na kopadduḥśāsanasya rūdhiram na pibāmyurastaḥ.*

samcūrṇayāmi gadayā na suyodhanoru sandhiṁ karotu bhavatām nrpatiḥ paṇena.. V.S, by M.R.Kale, 1st

Act, sl-15, p-16, cf.vatsa duryodhana evaṁ vimukheṣu bhāgadheyeṣu tvayi cāmuñcati sahaJam mānamariṣu

tvadekaśeṣajīvitālanbaneyam tapasvinī gāndhārī kamavalambatām śaraṇamaham ca. V.S,by M.R.Kale, 5th Act, p-114

⁴⁸.cf.*Atlekar, A.S,The state and Government in Ancient India, p-75, Delhi,2001.*

chosen king of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* because in the *Kaurava*'s side he possesses strength, vigour, wisdom and energy and his qualities him to ably lead his side. He inherited kingship or mere authority to rule from his father *Dhrtarastra* and eventually attains the title *raja* by virtue of becoming the person who actually rules over the kingdom. As a king he takes keen interest in all affairs and does not intend to remain merely the centre of state and rule from the palace. He likes to monitor the affairs personally.⁴⁹

General subjects and relatives seek solace from the king in distress. It is evident from the visit of *Jayadratha*'s mother and *Duḥsalā* to *Duryodhana*.⁵⁰ The king or the ruler always enjoys the loyalty of officials and attendants.⁵¹ Despite having their un-approval to certain actions of their rulers they never think of cheating on the king.⁵² In a context in the second act of the drama, *Duryodhana* utters something sleep of tongue and the chamberlain immediately` rectifies it.⁵³ Such an act is appreciated again. In the sixth Act again, the desired qualities of a good king are accounted. There it is said

49 .cf. *kaḥ ko'tra bho. jaitraṃ me rathamupakalpaya tāvat. yāvadahamapi tasya, pragalbhapāṇḍavasya jayadrathaparirakṣaṇenaiva mīthyāpratījñāvailakṣyasampādītamaśastrapūtaṃ maraṇamupadīsāmi. V.S, by M.R.Kale, 2nd Act, p- 51*

50 .cf. *amba kṛtaṃ viśādena. vatsē duḥśale alamaśrupātena. kutaścāyam tasya dhananājyasya prabhāvo duryodhanabāhuparigharakṣitasya mahārathajayadrathasya vipattimutpādayituṃ. V.S,by M.R.Kale, 2nd Act ,p-49*

51 .cf. *vasāgandhe adya khalvahaṃ svaminyā hiḍimbādevyā sabahumānaṃ śabdāyā ajñaptāḥ yathā adya rudhirapriya adyaprabhṛti tvayā āryaputrasya bhīmasenasya pṛṣṭhato 'nupṛṣṭhaṃ samara āhiṇḍitavyamiti. V.S,by M.R.Kale, 3rd Act, p- 56*

52 .cf. *kiṃtu śamanārthamasyānimittasya vijñāpayitavyo deva iti svāmibhaktirmām mukharayati. V.S, by M.R.Kale, 2nd Act, p- 48*

53 .cf. *rājā- evamidam. sahabhṛtyagaṇaṃ sabandhavaṃ sahamitraṃ sasutam sahānujam.svabalena nihanti saṃyuge na cirātpāṇḍusutaḥ suyodhanam.. V.S,by M.R.Kale, 2nd Act, sl-5, p-32*

kañcukī- (karṇau pidhāya sabhayaṃ) śāntaṃ pāpaṃ. pratihatamaṅgalam. ibid

that a good ruler always appreciates the learned folk and encourages and acknowledges special merit.⁵⁴

The political culture, revealed from the drama speaks of aggressive politics and warfare where ethics enjoy very limited value, where it comes to revenge.⁵⁵

The kings deploy spies to know the movements of other kings. The spies seem to be highly skilled and are of sharp intellect. Sometimes the ministers of incumbent loosing kings change their side and give information to the other side with a promise of reward in form of wealth in return. There are clear mentions of all these in the sixth act of the drama.⁵⁶ Success or failure in polity depends mostly on snoops. The *Kirātārjunīyam* of *Bhāravī* also apprises the importance of secret agents in the words--

⁵⁴ .cf. *avanimavanipālāḥ pāntu vṛṣṭīm vidhattām jagati jaladharālī śasyapūrṇāstu bhūmiḥ. tvayi muranarakārau bhaktiradvaitayogādbhavatu mama sudīrgham havyamaśnantu devāḥ.* V.S,by M.R.Kale, 6th Act, sl-47, p-169

⁵⁵ .cf. *hare jarati gāṅgeye puraskṛtya śikhaṇḍinam.*

yā slāghā pāṇḍuputrāṇām saivāsmākam bhaviṣyati. V.S,by M.R.Kale, 2nd Act ,sl- 4, p- 32

⁵⁶ .cf. *kruddhasya vṛkodarasyāparyusitadāruṇām pratijñāmupalabhya pranaṣṭasya māninaḥ kauravarājasya padavīmanveṣṭumatiniḥpunamatayasteṣu teṣu sthāneṣu paramārthābhijñāscarāḥ susacivasca bhaktimantah patupataharavavyaktaḥosanah suyodhanasamcaravedinah pratiśruṭādhanapūjāpratyupakriyāscarantu samantātsamantapañcakam.* V.S,by M.R.Kale, 6th Act ,p- 130

*cāracakṣuṣo na vañcanīyāḥ prabhavo 'nujīvibhiḥ.*⁵⁷

Veñśamhāra represents a political culture in which woman dares to intrude into state affairs. *Hiḍimbā* is shown as the successful ruler of her own little kingdom.⁵⁸ *Bhānumatī* takes keen interest in all political developments so also *Draupadī*.⁵⁹ *Bhānumatī* even invites and exchanges hot arguments about the political developments taking place.⁶⁰ *Gāndhārī*, in the fifth Act of the drama suggests the king to go for a peace argument with the opponent king.⁶¹ *Bhānumatī*'s observation of vows for her husbands victory also hints to her aspiration of power by virtue of being the wife of the king.⁶²

Apart from all this the drama represents a stable political picturesque where the king is love bound to his friends, near- relatives and subjects in general .

⁵⁷ .cf. K.A, 1st canto, v-4, p-5, Ed, by Srimat A.N. Pāṇḍe, Vārānasī.

⁵⁸ .cf. svāmīnyā hiḍimbādevyāḥ saṁvidhānena ca pranaṣṭam me janmadāridryam. V.S, by M.R. Kale, 3rd Act, p-56

⁵⁹ .cf. mahārāja kinmīmittam punarnāthabhīmasenena sa durācāro bhaṇitaḥ- pañcānāmapyasmākam madhye yena te rocate tena saha te saṁgrāmo bhavatu iti. yadī māḍṣutayorekatareṇa saha saṁgrāmastena prārthito bhavettato 'tyāhitaṁ bhavet. V.S, by M.R. Kale, 6th Act, p-139

⁶⁰ .cf. ayi yājñaseni pañcagrāmāḥ prārthynta iti śrūyate. tatkasmādidaniūmapī te keśā na saṁyamyante. V.S, by M.R. Kale, 1st Act, p-20

⁶¹ .cf. jāta upapattiyuktaṁ pratipadyasva piturvacanaṁ. V.S, by M.R. Kale, 5th Act, p- 113

⁶² .cf. āryaputra na khalu kimapī me śaṅkākāraṇam yuṣmāsu sannihiteṣu. kiṁ tvāryaputrasyaiva manorathasaṁpattimabhinandāmi. V.S, by M.R. Kale, 2nd Act, p- 43

The drama depicts a large number of characters which are the work force of the royal palaces. These characters are as good as shadows of their respective masters and mistresses. The maid of *Draupadī* gives a sharp reply to *Bhānumatī*, when she teases *Draupadī* to braid her hair.⁶³ These maids are sometimes best-friends and soul mates as in the cases of *Bhānumatī* and *Draupadī*.⁶⁴ *Duryodhana*'s Chamberlain even rectifies his master's clumsy words.⁶⁵ It speaks of a society where not only the *Kṣatriyas* rather *Brāhmaṇas* and people of inferior birth put in mind political aspiration.⁶⁶

Political success is very after aspired through foul- playing. The king happens to be the pivotal head of State- affairs, playing with emotions of the king political gains are achieved by the people of vested interests.⁶⁷ The reason of big political crisis and ultimate fall – out of the great emperor *Duryodhana* is very well descried in the fourth Act of the drama. *Sundaraka* says that the political crisis has its seed in the words of censured *Vidura*,

⁶³ .cf. *ayi bhānumatī yusmākamamukteṣu keṣeṣu kathamasmākaṁ devyāḥ keśāḥ saṁyamanta iti*. V.S, by M.R.Kale, 1st Act, p- 21

⁶⁴ .cf. *ceṭī- kumāra yadi parijanahīnā bhavettadā devī bhaṇati*. V.S by M.R.Kale ,1st Act, p-20

⁶⁵ .cf. *kañcukī- sahabhṛtyagaṇaṁ ... pāṇḍusutaṁ suyodhanaḥ.. iti paṭhati. etadvipāritamabhihitaṁ devena*. V.S,by M.R.Kale, 2nd Act , p-32

⁶⁶ .cf. *karṇaḥ-evaṁ kilāsyābhiprāyo yathā aśvatthāmā mayā pṛthivīrājye abhiṣektavya iti. tasyābhāvādvṛddhasya me brāhmaṇasya vṛtha śastragrahaṇamiti tathā kṛtavān*. V.S, by M.R.Kale, 3rd Act, p-71

c.f. *sūto vā sūtaputro vā yo vā ko vā bhavāmyaham*.

daivāyattaṁ kule janma madayattaṁ tu pauraṣam..V.S, by M.R.Kale, 3rd Act, sl-37 ,p- 75

⁶⁷ .cf. Introduction of the character and his foul-playing, i.e. *rākṣasaḥ- (ātmagataṁ) eso 'smi cārvāko nāma rākṣasaḥ suyodhanasya mitraṁ pāṇḍavānvañcayituṁ bhramāmi. (prakāsaṁ) tṛṣṭito 'smi. sambhāvayatu mām kascijjalacchāyā pradānena* . V.S,by M.R.Kale, 6th Act, p - 141

who is never properly hidden or listened to.⁶⁸ The advices given by the grandfather *Bhiṣma* are the sprouts.⁶⁹ The root is there in the instigations of maternal uncle *Śakuni*.⁷⁰

The above mentioned circumstances lead one to think that in polity and good governance certain things are to be avoided. First, the future power centre or the king is to be brought up in a healthy atmosphere with all positivity around. He should not be made apprehended or perplexed by awkward theoretical injunctions. To a very apprehensive fellow even the good advices of elders seem to be purposeful censurer. Finally the negative elements which always instigate one to follow wrong path are highly destructive. This is the case, happened to *Duryodhana* resulting to a devastating end. Positivity and negativity together make things worse and clumsier and state-affairs should be kept out of such clumsy situations.

In battlefields the *Mahārathas* or great warriors of kingly genre use chariots with flags on them. Others use elephants and horses as well. It is seemed that another large section appear in battlefield on foot.

⁶⁸ .cf. *nirbhartsita vidura vacana bijasya*. V.S, by K.P.D.Acarya, 4th Act, p- 222

⁶⁹ .cf. *paribhūtapitāmahahitopadeśāṅkurasya*. V.S, by K.P.D.Acarya, 4th Act, p- 222

⁷⁰ .cf. *śakunihutakaprotsāhanādivirudamulasya*. *ibid*