

Intertextuality in Nāṭya Literature: Un-wrapping the Riddle of Historical Imagery and Literary Citations in Śūdraka's *Mṛcchakaṭīkam*

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Abstract

Intertextuality is widely used in the production of various genres of literature in India. It is most widely used in *smṛti* literature. The present article explores intertextuality in *Mṛcchakaṭīkam*, which is one of the important *nāṭya* literatures of the Gupta period. In this play, Intertextuality is expressed in direct and indirect ways in the adoption of plots, subplots, characters, incidents, etc. Stories, fictions, mythologies, histories, texts, authors, characters all feed on intertextuality. The author of the play knew the basic historical and literary information that he invoked in his plays as references, quotations, allusions, examples etc. to authenticate his writings.

Keywords: intertextuality, *Mṛcchakaṭīkam*, interdiscursivity, interdisciplinarity, intermediality

I would like to take you into early India through a narrow window that is a text called *Mṛcchakaṭīkam*. Why I have chosen the topic for my paper, there are at least three reasons. First, it's an attempt to experience an historical perspective on the literary landscape that I am trying to learn these days. Second, the same narrow path is supposed to lead to a greater path elsewhere in future. Third, the same methodology could be implied to study other texts as well. I will use this text as a model to interpret a hypothesis that a literary text can be utilized as a hidden source of history wherein doors are closed but windows are widely open. In this study, I am looking at one of my source Śūdraka's *Mṛcchakaṭīkam* in connection with other texts, narratives, histories etc. *Mṛcchakaṭīkam* is a relatively less explored text from a historical as well as an intertextual perspective. The author is of the play is widely admired, celebrated and criticized but more or less surrounded by mystery. Indian tradition attributes the drama to Śūdraka. *Prastāvanā* of the play gives some curious and scrappy details about the author. The name Śūdraka is also surfaced in the titles of three inaccessible works- 1. *Vikrantśūdraka*, a drama by an unknown author. 2.

Śūdrakvadha, is a Parikathā referred to by Rāyamukuṭa and 3. *Shudrakcharita*, by an author named Pañcaśikha.

The first word of the title, ‘*Mr̥cchakaṭikam*’, is the Sanskrit word *mrd* which has been altered for reasons of euphoric combination and which means clay while the second word, before euphoric combination, is *Sakatika*, which means a small cart or a child’s cart or a toy cart; argues Stephan Hillyer Levitt.

ⁱ The title means ‘the little toy cart’ or the ‘clay cart’ or ‘little clay cart.’ⁱⁱ The play is named after the little toy cart made of the earth for Rohasena, the little son of Cārudatta that is mentioned in act 6th of the play. Each of its ten acts conveys a distinct message. The plot is part historical and part-fictional, with no mythological characters . It is a drama in ten acts, but every action has its individuality . It’s a romantic drama based on the love of Vasantasenā, a beautiful courtesan (Gaṇikā) and poor Brahman Cārudatta. The play contains everything love, romance, emotion, violence, class conflicts, political revolution and in the end a happy ending.

Before the discovery of Cārudatta of Bhāsa, *Mr̥cchakaṭikam* was considered the original play of Śūdraka. When Arthur William Ryder published his translation of the text , he guessed that *Mr̥cchakaṭikam* have material for two plays .ⁱⁱⁱ But after the Cārudatta of Bhāsa, it became a matter of debate among scholars which one is the original and older than whom . On the relationship between Cārudatta and *Mr̥cchakaṭi kam*, V.S.Sukthankar says that there are only two logical possibilities: either, one of the plays has formed directly the basis of the other, or else both of them are to be traced to a common source^{iv}. He used intertextual variations under four headings: 1. Techniques, 2. Prakrit, 3. Versification and 4. Dramatic incidents and concluded that *Mr̥cchakaṭikam* evolved from Cārudatta, not vice versa.^v The relationship of Śūdraka and Bhāsa is extremely close, says A. K. Warder. He further says that despite Śūdraka’s innovations of scale and more

ⁱ Stephan Hillyer Levitt, Why are Sanskrit play titles Strange? in *Indologica Taurinensia*, Vol-31, 2005.p.196.

ⁱⁱ Arthur William Ryder in his 1905 translation calls it ‘the little clay cart’, p. Lal calls it the toy cart, and in his recent translation M.R.Kale also prefers to call it ‘the little clay cart’.

ⁱⁱⁱ Arthur William Ryder, *The Little Clay Cart (Mr̥cchakaṭika)*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1905. p. XIX.

^{iv} V. S, Sukthankar, Studies in Bhāsa, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol 42, 1922. p. 60.

^v Ibid. p.74.

carefully realistic details, he took up Bhāsa's Cārudatta improvised it enlarged it and completed it.^{vi} Now it's clear that *Mṛcchakaṭikam* was a re-inscribed form of Cārudatta with additional plots and characters with a different title. It is interesting to examine the relationship between two authors in terms of their intertextual relationship. In this case, it will be a significant study for understanding how intertextuality operates between the original text and incarnated one. But before going for unwrapping the folds of a text, it is important to know what intertextuality means here.

Intertextuality evolved from the concept that every text quotes, alludes, revises, parodies, and echoes other texts. Intertextuality names a text's relations to other texts in the larger mosaic of cultural practices and their expressions, argues Mary Orr^{vii}. To some extent, the term intertextuality is related to the term 'reference' or 'allusion' or 'echo' but it has much wider connotations. In her work on the Russian critic and theorist Mikhail Bakhtin and Julia Kristeva described and named the concept of intertextuality in a series of essays between 1966 and 1968^{viii}. Julia Kristeva coined the term intertextuality to designate a special form of textual relations: the way variety of texts – not just work of literature but also meaningful social phenomena^{ix}. Intertextuality refers to various sorts of intertextual relationship: the relationship between authors and their precursors as well as the relationship between the texts and the reigning semiotic practice of a given historical moment, argues Gregory Machacek^x. For Gregory, intertextuality in the broader way refers to all possible forms of textual interrelations, diachronic or synchronic. He refers to two forms of intertextual relations- synchronic and diachronic.

Later on Ronald Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Phillippe Sollers and Michel Foucault all variously inflected and reshaped Kristeva's intertextuality by focusing on its core idea, the notion that there is nothing outside of language and hence of the text.^{xi} With the coming of

^{vi} A.K.Warder., *Indian Kāvya Literature*, vols I-IV, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1989. p. 20.

^{vii} Mary Orr, 'Intertextuality' in (Michael Ryan eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Literary and Cultural Theory*, Wiley Blackwell, United Kingdom, 2014.p.641.

^{viii} Ibid.p.641.

^{ix} Machacek, Gregory. "Allusion." *Published by Modern Language Association*, vol. 122, no. 2, 2007, pp. 523.

^x Ibid, p.524.

^{xi} Mary Orr, 'Intertextuality' in (Michael Ryan eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Literary and Cultural Theory*, Wiley Blackwell, United Kingdom, 2014. p .641.

electronic media and resources, the term not only became very popular in American academia but was also challenged by many. During the 1990s, ‘interdiscursivity’, ‘interdisciplinarity’, and ‘intermediality’ were offered as an alternative umbrella term for intertextuality.

Intertextuality is widely used in the production of various genres of literature in India which is a matter of research. It is most widely used in *smṛti* literature. In plays, Intertextuality is expressed in the adoption of plots, subplots, characters, incidents, etc. Citations are direct intertextuality but there are indirect as well. Stories, fictions, mythologies, histories, texts, authors, characters all feed on intertextuality. All dramatists were aware of basic historical and literary information that they invoked in their plays as references, quotations, allusions, examples etc. to authenticate his writings. V. Venkatachalam calls it an established practice of the dramatists of the world that they prefer to erect the edifices of their plays on the foundation of well know stories, current among the people; rather than weaves an altogether new fabric, all their own, as writers of fiction do.^{xii} There could be three reasons behind this. First, it’s easy to create a dramatic version of any available story. Second, the chances of acceptance by the public are much brighter to these plays and third, Bharat the father of dramaturgy also recognizes plots drawn from history or other well -known texts. Bhāsa also used intertextuality not only to produce different texts but also different genre like nāṭya . Out of thirteen plays that have been ascribed to Bhāsa, plots of six plays are taken from Mahabharata, two from Ramayana, one from Krishna legend and probably four from *Bṛhatkathā*. For Indian drama, C. R. Devadhar says that recurrences and parallelisms are very likely not peculiarities, but the result of a conventional way of thinking.^{xiii} He also focuses on the employment of common imagery across the texts without using the term intertextuality. The confusion regarding the originality of Cārudatta persists but logically *Mṛcchakaṭikam* is natural amplification of Cārudatta of Bhāsa. *Mṛcchakaṭikam* shows a good example of intertextual continuity; Śūdraka starts from where Bhāsa stops. But Śūdraka went far behind the Cārudatta of Bhāsa and invoked and incorporated materials from many texts. When G.V.Devasthali was translating the text in 1950 she could not think beyond two sources of Śūdraka- *Bṛhatkathā* and Cārudatta of Bhāsa. She writes that Śūdraka may have

^{xii} V. Venkatachalam, *Bhasa*, Sahitya Academy, New Delhi, 2017.p.27.

^{xiii} C. R. Devadhar, *The Plays Ascribed to Bhasa, their Authenticity and Merits*.

derived several details of his story from *briharkatha*.^{xiv} Bhāsa himself drew from *Bṛhatkathā*. The main plot of *Mṛcchakaṭikam* is borrowed from *Cārudatta* but what about other plots and imaginations. If Bhāsa's plays were readily available to Śūdraka, then why did he bother to copy from *Bṛhatkathā*. Śūdraka introduced a political sub-plot to the background of the main play, which is a very significant addition. This subplot is absent in Bhāsa's *Cārudatta*. It might be possible that the story is not known to the author of *Cārudatta*. Devadhara says that Śūdraka, in his elaboration of *Cārudatta*, foisted the story of the political revolution, possibly within the living memory when he wrote, on the main theme of the love of *Vasantasenā* and *Cārudatta*. Here intertextuality is playing an important role. The characters of *Pālaka* and *Gopālaka* are not taken from elsewhere but from Bhāsa's *Svapnavāsavadattam* and *Pratijnāyaugandharāyaṇa* respectively. Bhāsa might have taken the two characters from the larger narratives of *Bṛhatkathā* from which later on incorporated in the *Mṛcchakaṭikam* by Śūdraka. The imageries of the subplot with political revolution captures and killings, battles and skirmishes, disguises and espionage, hunting expeditions, strategic moves, challenges and counterchallenges constitute the main fabric of the plot of *Pratijnāyaugandharāyaṇa*. The same fabric got implanted in the name of *Āryaka* and king *Pālaka*. In the background of the sub-plot where an undercurrent political revolution is being carried out by *Āryaka*, a śūdra rival who finally succeeds in dethroning the king *Pālaka* of *Ujjayinī*. These two characters and incidents also have historical connections. *Harivamsa*, a Jaina text of 4th century B.C.E. mentions *Pālaka* and *Āryaka*. King *Palaka* ruled in the 6th century B.C. dethroned by a political upheaval just after the death of *Gautam Buddha*. History also provided an important feed for intertextuality. However, the sourcebook for the sub-plot cannot be determined properly whether it was *Harivamsa* or *Bṛhatkathā* or any other oral source currently available to Śūdraka

Another example of intertextuality is the use of imagery of union and separations that constitute the main plot of *Svapnavāsavadatta*. The same allusion echoes in the union and separation of *Vasantasenā* and *Cārudatta* in *Mṛcchakaṭikam*. Apart from plots and subplots, some incidents are also common and resonate with other texts as well.

“for the release of my friend (*Āryaka*), just as *yaugandharāyaṇa*. did for the release of king *Udayana*”- act four verse 26 of *Mṛcchakaṭikam*.

^{xiv} G. V. Devasthali. p 101.

For sure, this example of rescue in *Mṛcchakaṭikam* is borrowed not from the distant narrative but Bhāsa's *Pratijnāyaugandharāyaṇa*. The imagination of the city at night is well depicted in Bhāsa's *Avimāraka*. In the third act, the hero Avimāraka enters the city in the disguise of a thief at midnight to meet his beloved Kuranji and describes the city at large. The same imagery was used by Sūdraka in act three of *Mṛcchakaṭikam* when a Brahman thief Śarvilaka uses to describe the city. On one hand, Śūdraka tried to hide his fictionality by referring to various historical and literary characters and events. On the other hand, his references to intertextuality do not contradict but validate the authenticity of the story. Bhāsa in Śūdraka's *Mṛcchakaṭikam* is a secondary figure, not the first one who comes and goes in Śūdraka's *Mṛcchakaṭikam* like hiding and seek play. Bhāsa's Cārudatta is just an introduction; the body and conclusion are entirely different from the introduction. In that case, this intertextual over-determination fails to determine that both texts belonged to one person. The intertextuality was not accidental but intended by Śūdraka, the plot move from one text to another through intertextuality. Not only Cārudatta but also *Pratijnāyaugandharāyaṇa Svapnavāsavadattam and Avimāraka* became the sourcebook for Śūdraka.

Mṛcchakaṭikam, Manusmṛti and Intertextuality

Mṛcchakaṭikam provides an explicit reference to another text namely *Manusmṛti*. The internal evidence indicates that the author of the *Mṛcchakaṭikam* is much aware of *Manusmṛti* while dealing with the judicial proceedings. Patrick Olivelle says that *Mṛcchakaṭikam* is the early classical literature that provides the clearest reference to *Manusmṛti*. *Manusmṛti* is a widely read text on ancient laws of Hindus among all *Dharmaśāstric* kinds of literature since its first English translation was published by Sir William Jones in 1794. Act nine of *Mṛcchakaṭikam* is devoted to a murder trial. In this murder trial, the learned judge is aware of the laws of the land as prescribed in *Manusmṛti*. Despite being Brahmin, Cārudatta the accused was granted capital or corporal punishment by king Pālaka. The judgment is not only shown a great departure from what is prescribed in *Manusmṛti* but also challenge the dominant Śāstric idea of justice based on the normative text like *Manusmṛti*. The text like *Manusmṛti* was challenged within the literary tradition. In a larger context, it is a pertinent question to investigate whether the judicial system was based on normative texts like *Manusmṛti* or not and how far early Indian states accepted the laws prescribed in these texts. The study of the text from a legal perspective can open a new avenue of research. It could lead to examination and the extent of

dissemination of the laws of Manu in the judicial administration at the time of Śūdraka of Mṛcchakaṭikam. The play depicts judicial proceedings at great length, which can be studied not only to explore new dimensions in the field of early legal studies but also to present a case of intertextuality. It is a model suit that could prove or disprove the working of early laws based on *Dharmaśāstric* literature.

Like any other classical works of Sanskrit, the date and authorship of Manu are unsettled. Patrick Olivelle tells us that what may be called the sutra period of the legal tradition ended around the beginning of the Common Era. The age of *smṛti* ended probably in the second half of the first millennium CE^{xv}. The First English translation of Manu was brought by Sir William Jones which continued for almost one century when in 1886 Buhler published his translation in the series of the sacred book of east edited by Max Muller. Buhler suggests a time bracket 200B.C. to 200A.D. for Manu. Based on some of the internal shreds of evidence and epigraphic examination of contents, R. S. Sharma revised the time bracket, between 200 A.D. to 400 A.D. for Manu. But in his recent translation, Patrick Olivelle puts the date between 3rd CE to 5th CE^{xvi}. Traditionally it is thought that the composition of *Manusmṛti* was a gradual process at the hands of anonymous and successive compilers and editors lasting for several centuries. But against this hypothesis, Buhler proposed the unitary authorship for Manu in 1886 and objected to the gradual textual evolution. Based on the embedded structure inside the text, Olivelle also supports the hypothesis of unitary authorship.^{xvii}

Several texts divide legal procedures into various categories. Davis says that Hindu legal procedure consists of four stages of a trial- plaint, reply, evidence and decision. This is a processual division of *vyavahara* or court. This division includes extensive discussions of the qualification and examination of the witness, modes of evidence from a witness, documents and possess to oaths and ordeals^{xviii}. But here in the Mṛcchakaṭikam, Śūdraka divides complaints into two categories- one depending on arguments (oral or statements) and the other on facts. He says that the one which depends on arguments is to be settled by the plaintiff and the defendant by arguing against each other. And what depends on facts is

^{xv} Patrick Olivelle, *Dharmaśāstra*, Motilal Banarasidas, Delhi, 2000. P.3.

^{xvi} Patrick Olivelle, *Manu's Code of Law*, OUP, 2005. p.6-7.

^{xvii} Ibid. pp.6-13.

^{xviii} Ronald R. Davis, *The Spirit of Hindu Law*, CUP, 2010. p.110.

to be decided by the judge with the help of his wisdom.^{xix} Here Śūdraka gives a very simplistic division of complaints in the law which does not correspond to the laws of Manu. Instead, Manu prescribes eighteen kinds of litigation.^{xx}

Like Manu, *Mṛcchakaṭikam* also describes the organizations of the court. Manu says when the king is going to try a case; he should enter the court modestly accompanied by Brahmins and counsellors who are experts in the policy. When the king does not try a case personally, however, he should appoint a learned Brahmin to do so. Entering the main court itself accompanied by three assessors, he should try the case brought before the king, either seated or standing.^{xxi} Manu uses the term *dharmastha* or *pradvika* for a judge. He prescribes that a judge should infer the truthfulness of litigants and witnesses by their external demeanour, find out special laws of the region, caste, and family of the litigants, never initiate a law *suo moto* and try to suppress an action brought before him, apply correct judicial reasoning and stick to the norms recognized by the cultured elite but only if they are not in conflict with those of particular regions, castes and families.^{xxii} Śūdraka frequently uses *vyavharmandpam* for the court, *adhikaranmandapam* for the court of justice or courtroom or justice chamber and *adhikarnik* for the judge.^{xxiii} By the order of the officers of the law court, Sodhanaka, the beadle prepares the court after sweeping and arranging the seats.^{xxiv} Later Sakara comes to the court to lodge a written complaint about strangling and murdering of Vasantasenā.^{xxv} Then enters a judge accompanied by a *Sreshthin*, a *Kāyastha* and others. On contrary to Manu who recommends that a judge must be accompanied by three assessors, Śūdraka provides two assessors in the form of a *Sreshthin* and a *Kāyastha*.^{xxvi} Śūdraka also prescribes some qualities for a judge. According to him, "a judge should be learned in the law; expert in tracing frauds; eloquent; never losing the temper; equally impartial towards friends, strangers and relatives; giving the decisions only after investigating the facts; a protector of the weak; a terror to the

^{xix} M. R. Kale, *The Mrichchhakatika of Sudraka*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 2015. p. 319

^{xx} Patrick Olivelle. *The Laws of Manu*, OUP. 2005. p. 167.

^{xxi} *ibid.* p.168.

^{xxii} *Ibid.* 56.

^{xxiii} M.R.Kale, *The Mrichchhakatika of Sudraka*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 2015.p.306-7.

^{xxiv} *Ibid.* p.307.

^{xxv} *Ibid.*

^{xxvi} *Ibid.* p.311

rogues; righteous; free from greed even when the means exist for him; sincerely bent in the mind on the real truth and able to avert the anger of the king”(9.5).^{xxvii} Judge himself says that ‘nothing but odium is commonly is to be got by a judge, appreciation but seldom.^{xxviii} Blame is very easy for a judge to get and applause is far removed from him.’^{xxix} These words indicate the toughness of the job of a judge. They were consistently working the pressure of the ruling kings and were not supposed to anger or incur the blame the king by a failure of justice.

The organization of the court mentioned by Śūdraka is much larger than that of Manu. It not only comprises human elements but also animals. Elephants and horses are very much part of the organization. Interestingly he comes with a hierarchy in the judicial organization- ministers, envoys, spies, elephants and horses, litigants, and Kāyastha. Kāyastha, who is one of the main assessors of the judge, is placed at the bottom of the hierarchy. This could be because of their lower social origin.

Despite knowing that all points of laws or proofs are very clear and well-connected and pointing towards Cārudatta, the judge finds difficulty in preceding the case but when he finds the ornaments belonging to Vasantasenā from the possession of Maître (a close associate of Cārudatta), he orders to arrest Cārudatta. Sakara suggests capital punishment for Cārudatta but the judge defers the judgment to the king. Judge convicts Cārudatta guilty in the case and pronounces his decision-"he is a sinner. But Manu has led down that a Brāhmaṇa is not to be killed; he might be banished from the country together with all his properly intact". Against the judge's recommendation; king Pālaka grants a death sentence to Cārudatta.

When it comes to punishing someone, Manu says that 'punishment can only be administered by someone honest and true to his words, who act in conformity with the treaties, who has good assistants, who is wise within his realm, he should act by the rules; upon his enemies, he should impose harsh punishment, towards his friends and lovers, he should behave without guile and to Brahmin, he should show compassion. When we carefully examine the trial we find that judge is not only acting according to the laws and reasoning but also showing compassion towards Cārudatta who is Brahmin by caste.

^{xxvii} M.R.Kale, *The Mrichhakatika of Sudraka*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 2015. 319

^{xxviii} Ibid.

^{xxix} Ibid.

Punishment takes two forms- *danda* and *prayaschita*. *Danda* refers to the punishment meted out by legal authority' usually by a ruler, for criminal and civil offences. *Prayaschita* denotes self-imposed penance or expiations. Manu prescribes four forms of *dandas* - warnings, censures, fines and corporal punishment. In the case of Brahmin offenders, persons of good families or those who diligently perform religious rites, corporal punishment can be commuted to fines.^{xxx}

Laws regarding corporal punishment to a Brahmin are static in sutras and śāstric works of literature. *Apastamba* and *Bodhayan* clearly say that a Brahmin is not subject to capital punishment for any crime. In this world, there are only two persons who are exempted from accusation and punishment- the Brahmin and the king prescribes laws of *Narada*^{xxx}. Manu exempts Brahmins from capital punishment for every sort of crime; instead, he prescribes shaving of the head as the death penalty. He further prohibits the king not only from killing a Brahmin but also from thinking of killing a Brahmin (379-381).^{xxxii}

On contrary, Manu also defines who is not a Brahmin. On the qualification of being a Brahmin, Manu says Brahmans who are not learned, who do not teach or who do not maintain the sacred fires become equal to Śūdras.^{xxxiii} Taking into consideration the qualification of a Brahmin as prescribed by Manu, the capital punishment given to Cārudatta by king Pālaka could be justified. When the judge repeatedly asks Cārudatta to tell the truth, he is silent on many occasions. He does not tell the court about the escape of Āryaka and how he helped him save escape by lending him a carriage. By keeping himself silent he hides his treason against the king or state by helping rival rebels. He is also silent on the exchange of ornaments with Vasantasenā which proves the motif of the murder. On the other hand, the mother of Vasantasenā informs the court about the background of Cārudatta. She says that Cārudatta is the grandson of Vinaydatta and son of Sagaradatta and he dwells in merchant's quarters.^{xxxiv} Cārudatta ancestral profession as a trader disqualifies him as a true Brahmin by the laws of Manu. Neither he is teaching nor maintaining sacred fires so he is also disqualified as a Brahmin. In case of his

^{xxx} Donald R.Davis, *The Spirit of Hindu Law*, CUP, 2010, pp231-332.

^{xxx} Cited in. Donald R.Davis, *The Spirit of Hindu Law*, CUP, 2010, p.45.

^{xxxii} Patrick Olivelle. *The Laws of Manu*, OUP. 2005, p.187

^{xxxiii} Patrick Olivelle, *Dharmaśāstra*, Motilal Banarasidas, Delhi, 2000, p.36.

^{xxxiv} M.R.Kale, *The Mrichchhakatika of Sudraka*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 2015. p.321.

disqualifications, he gets treated as Sudra and granted capital punishment for the murder of Vasantasenā.

Summing Up

The concluding argument of the paper is that various references, imageries, citations, allusions from different texts and authors are found throughout the *Mṛcchakaṭikam*. Some references are direct while others are indirect but serve the same purpose of intertextuality. From the perspective of intertextuality, *Mṛcchakaṭikam* is not the 'only drama of invention' as it was thought by Arthur William Ryder.^{xxxv} Cārudatta of Bhāsa might have provided the beginning of the text but other sources contributed equally in the evolution of *Mṛcchakaṭikam*. It might possible that apart from Cārudatta, other plays of Bhāsa were available to Śūdraka which provide readymade feed for the text. It is possible that Śūdraka was more relying on Bhāsa' plays rather than any distant source like Bṛhatkathā . Śūdraka sources are much more diverse than Bhāsa. The use of Manusmṛti, not only adds historicity to the text but also solves many puzzles such as code practice relationships and opens an avenue for research in the early Indian legal system. *Mṛcchakaṭikam* presents a success story of intertextuality not only of incorporations but also departures. Śūdraka refusal to the Manu code of conduct is a very significant departure that represents diachronic intertextuality. But from a different vantage point, it seems that references from Manusmṛti represent the synchronic type of intertextuality as well, whereas judgment given by the king is not a departure but synchronized with the laws of Manu. The complex network of intertextuality that was used by the author requires more and more reading of the text.

^{xxxv} Arthur William Ryder, *The Little Clay Cart (Mṛcchakaṭika)*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1905.p.XIX.