

it did not return without killing the enemy, it might kill, if used without circumspection, even one who did not deserve to be killed 7. 166. 46-47; (2) Mode of release : To use it, Aśvatthāman touched water and produced the divine missile (*tathoktvā droṇaputro 'pi tadopaspr̥ṣya bhārata | prāduścakāra tad divyam astraṁ nārāyaṇaṁ tadā*) 7. 166. 60; (3) Restrictions : It could be used only once, and it could not be withdrawn; hence Aśvatthāman unable to employ it again when requested by Duryodhana to do so; if withdrawn the *astra* would kill the user 7. 171. 24, 27, 28, 30. D. Effects : When employed, the missile released powerful arrows (? *kṛśāśvatanayāḥ*), as also sharp arrows which would fill the directions 7. 166. 38; it let loose many heavenly weapons (*divyāni śastravarṣāni*) and the employer (Aśvatthāman) shone with lustre 7. 166. 50; the arrows released from it would hit the enemies as desired by the employer (Aśvatthāman); it would release rocks at will and iron-tipped arrows which would put the enemy to flight 7. 166. 53-54; when Aśvatthāman produced the missile, thunderous winds carrying water-drops blew in cloud-less sky, the earth shook, and the ocean was agitated; rivers started flowing in the opposite direction; peaks of mountains were shattered; sun became turbid (*kaluṣa*), and the gods, the demons, and the Gandharvas were frightened 7. 167. 1-5; arrows with shining tips appeared in thousands to cover the army of the enemy and fill the directions; (hot) iron balls (*kārṣṇāya-samayā guḍāḥ*) shining like celestial bodies, *śataghñīs* ('hundred-killers'), fire-arms (? *hutāśadāḥ*), and disks with sharp ends (*cakrāni kṣurāntāni*), all these were produced by the Nārāyaṇāstra (7. 170. 16-19); as the

Pāṇḍava warriors tried to resist the missile, it grew in strength 7. 170. 21; as a result, the Pāṇḍava army was burnt and destroyed 7. 170. 22-23; to combat it successfully Kṛṣṇa advised the warriors to lay down arms and get down from their chariots and mounts 7. 170. 38-42; when all followed his instruction, Bhīma wanted to resist the missile with arrows, mace, and the strength of his arms; as a consequence, the Nārāyaṇāstra grew in strength; since other warriors had laid down their arms the missile descended on Bhīma with all its strength 7. 170. 45-46, 50-51, 57-60; seeing Bhīma surrounded by the Nārāyaṇāstra, Arjuna tried to protect him from the missile by using Vāruṇāstra; since this was of no avail, Arjuna and Vāsudeva left from their chariot, ran to Bhīma, and entered through the cover of lustre produced by the *astra*; since they had no weapons, the *astra* did not affect them (and also because of the effect of the Vāruṇāstra and the prowess of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna); Bhīma was forced down by Nara (Arjuna) and Nārāyaṇa (Kṛṣṇa) from his chariot and forced to give up weapons; the Nārāyaṇāstra was then pacified; the quarters became clear and gentle winds blew; the birds and the animals felt assured 7. 171. 1, 3, 6, 10-14, 20-22; if Vāsudeva had not shown the way to combat the Nārāyaṇāstra it would have meant death for the enemy (of the Kauravas) 7. 171. 28; but the missile was rendered ineffective and the Pāṇḍavas freed from it 7. 171. 33; 8. 1. 42. E. The means to pacify the Nārāyaṇāstra : When released, the missile must kill the enemy and only then it would subside; the other ways of pacifying it were to run away from it, to lay down the arms, to beg for life, and ask refuge (*vadhaḥ saṁkhye*