

by Yudhiṣṭhira, Kuvalāśva, Bṛhatkṣatra, Pradyumna, Rāma (Dāśarathi), and Lakṣmaṇa see below section F]. C. Description : heavenly (*divya*) 3. 271. 16; 7. 101. 12; 7. 160. 5; 7. 165. 22, 105; 8. 29. 27; 9. 61. 13, (19); great missile (*mahāstra*) 3. 163. 33; 7. 165. 23; 8. 65. 23; (*paramāstram*) 8. 66. 52; (*paramāstra*) 5. 185. 15; best (*uttama*) 5. 185. 16; unrivalled (*apratima*) 8. 29. 27; dreadful (*ghora*) 3. 274. 27, (*māhāghora*) 8. 5. 67; fierce (*ugra*) 8. 65. 23; unbearable (*asahya*) 8. 65. 24; of unmatched strength (*apratimaujas*) 3. 274. 27; invincible even in thought (*manasā tad dhyajayyam*) 8. 29. 27; highly respected (*paramasānimata*) 1. 154. 13; to be employed mentally (*manasā samviddheyam*) 8. 65. 24; cannot be withstood even by Indra 9. 61. 27. D. Teaching of the *astra* : The use of the missile was to be taught in full (*kṛtsnam*), i. e. together with the mode of its withdrawal; this is how Rāma Jāmadagnya taught it to Karna after performing due rites (*tasmai sa vidhivat kṛtsnam brahmāstraṁ sanivartanam / provāca*) 12. 3. 2; Droṇa learnt from Rāma Jāmadagnya both—the mode of its employment (*prayoga*) and withdrawal (*samhāra*) 1. 154. 11; when Karna expressed his desire to learn it from Droṇa he wanted to know it with its secrets and the mode of its withdrawal (*sarahasyanivartanam*) 12. 2. 10; Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Kṛpa, Karna and Aśvatthāman reputed for their knowledge of the employment of the *astra* and its remedy (i. e. withdrawal) (*saprayogacikitsitam*) 3. 38. 5; it could be taught only to a Brāhmaṇa who had duly observed the prescribed vow (*yathāvat caritavratatḥ*), or a Kṣatriya who had practised austerities (*tapasvī*), but to none else 12. 2. 13; hence Karna told a

lie to Rāma Jāmadagnya about his lineage while declaring that he was a Bhārgava Brāhmaṇa 12. 2. 15; 12. 3. 26–30. E. Use and withdrawal : At the time of its employment, *mantras* related to Brahmāstra were recited on an arrow to use it as a charged missile (*bāṇavaryam ... brahmāstreṇābhi-mantritam*) 3. 274. 24–25; (*brahmāstra-parimantritaiḥ sāyakaiḥ*) 3. 167. 17; (*saṁmantrya*) 8. 66. 52; these *mantras* used to charge the arrow with the Brāhma (and the other *astras*) were supposed to serve as the ritual *mantras* for the 'sacrifice to be performed with weapons' (*śastrayajña*, i. e. in the war) 5. 139. 31; it was necessary to support the bow and the arrow with great might (*balenātha sa saṁstabhya brahmāstraṁ samudairayat*) 8. 66. 48; at the time of withdrawing the Brahmāstra (Iṣikā) employed by Aśvatthāman, Kṛṣṇa touched water (*upasprśya*) 14. 68. 16, 14. 69. 1, and also made a *satyakriyā* 14. 68. 19–23. F. Uses : (1) In the epic war : (i) by Droṇa — (a) against Arjuna in order to cut down the *bhalla* arrows 7. 67. 9 (*samudīraya-*); 7. 163. 43 (*prāduṣkṛ-*); 9. 61. 27; (b) against Yudhiṣṭhira to burn his *śakti* to ashes 7. 81. 32–33 (*prāduṣkṛ-*); 7. 132. 33 (*udīraya-*); (c) against Bṛhatkṣatra of the Kekayas 7. 101. 12 (*prāduṣkṛ-*); (d) against the Pāṇcālas, killing twenty thousand chariot-fighters, besides many elephants and horses 7. 164. 79–83 (*prāduṣkṛ-*); in addition, Droṇa killed ten *ayutas* of the Pāṇcāla soldiers with Brāhma *astra* as if to destroy all the Kṣatriyas (*kṣatriyāṇām abhāvāya brāhmanam ātmānam āsthitatḥ*) 7. 165. 14–15; (e) against the armies of the Pāṇḍavas, the Kekayas, the Matsyas, specially of the Pāṇcālas killing by