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The Significant Elements of Dasarupaka: Vastu, Neta and Rasa

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Abstract:

The term Rupaka refers to the different kinds of dramatic works. In Natyashastra, Bharatamuni characterizes these into ten types, which is also known as Dasarupaka- vidhan. The Framework of each Rupaka elaborately described in the Natyashastra. The primary objective of these Rupaka is to encapsulate rasa in the audience or Sahridaya because there is no natya or drama without rasa. This study explores the contribution of ten rupaka evoking rasa in the audience. The objective is also to describe how different vastu (plot) and neta (protagonist) helps to make the formation or structure of dramatic themes in various rupaka. To understand this, the study goes through the detail process of Dasarupaka Vidhan explained by Bharatamuni. This study explained the each rupaka briefly and understand the association of rasa with each one.

Keywords: Natyashsastra, Dasarupaka, Rasa, Vastu, Neta.

Introduction:

The term Rupaka refers to the different kinds of dramatic works. In Natyashastra, Bharatamuni characterizes these into ten types, which is also known as Dasarupaka- vidhan. The Framework of each Rupaka elaborately described in the Natyashastra. The primary objective of these Rupaka is to encapsulate rasa in the audience or Sahridaya because there is no natya or drama without rasa. This study explores the contribution of ten rupaka evoking rasa in the audience. The objective is also to describe how different vastu (plot) and neta (protagonist) helps to make the formation or structure of dramatic themes in various rupaka.

Sage Bharata Muni was a prominent figure in the history of Indian cultural, mainly identified as the author or complier of the Natyashastra which is also known as Pancham Veda. The Natyashastra described all the art forms such as music, dance and drama etc. It is the first text book where elaborately described the essence of the Rasa. The manual written around the 2 BE to 2 CE and it has 36 chapters (Garhwal 2020).

In Natyashastra, the term Rupaka refers to the idea of play or theatrical representation of the performance. Bharatamuni categorizes drama into ten distinct types in chapter twenty of the Natyashastra. Collectively this unit known as Dasarupka. In Natyashastra, rupaka is defined as the foundational concept that resonant the essence of drama as a form of visual representation of storytelling and classified into ten types that give various emotional purposes. It discusses the narratives through acting and staging, conveying emotions of different characters according to their background and status. Different Rupaka has its own features with respect to plot (vastu), protagonist (neta) and emotional sentiments (rasa) (Srinivas 2014).

In Natyashastra, Bharatamuni mentioned ten types of plays- Nataka, Prakarana, Samavakara, Ihamrga, Dima, Vyayoga, Anka, Prahasana, Bhana and Vithi. On further study, these plays fall into two different categories first the heroic and second the social. Natak, Vyayoga, Samavakara, Dima, Ihamrga and Anka associated with heroic drama where protagonist has to confronted the challenges of significant events or moral dilemmas. On the other hands Prakarana, Prahasana, Bhana and Vithi explore the social value to the characters and their sufferings (Raghavan).

Nataka: The Nataka is an essential part of rupaka mentioned in the Natyashastra. It is identified by its magnificent themes and exaggerated form. It consists of three to five acts, exploring gradual development of the story and characters. The central theme acquires from epic or mythological narratives and historical events, emphasizing on the lives and struggles of divine and heroic characters. Adya Rangacharya wrote on his book 'The Natyashastra', 'that which has as its s theme a well-known hero of exalted nature, which concerns the story of a royal sage and his family, in which there are superhuman (divya) elements, which speaks of the various aspects of glory, grandeur and success of love-affairs and which has acts and prologues is a Nataka. In a Nataka there is the story of kings, various rasa-s and emotions and sorrow and pleasures' (Rangacharya 2019). The historical source of plot makes Nataka rupaka distinct and its characters selection based on mythological characters. The act must be divided into various parts of the day such as ksana, yama and muhurta and if the events failed to show the course of the day, it should repeat in the interludes. Interlude deals many objectives, it explores change in time, developing of action, starting of new events and some justification of previous events which established the connection between earlier and current events.

This particular type of rupaka explores wide range of rasas, it includes sringara, vira and others. In a nataka, the events must be like in high stakes, the major and high emotions should emerge at the end. Abhigyan Shakuntalam and Uttararamacarita are two nataka in Sanskrit drama.

Prakarana: Prakarana is one kind of rupaka mentioned in the Natyashastra. The genre refers to original story and realistic themes. The plot divided into five acts, which elaborately explores original plots wrote by the playwright. According to Adya Rangyacharya, 'In prakarana, the various deeds of a Brahmin, a trader, an officer, a purohit, a minister or a merchant are the themes. In Prakarana, there are no deeds of a noble hero, no divine (or superhero) actions, no love-story of a king. The characters should be from outside (the palace) i.e. from ordinary common life of the (outside) word' (Rangacharya 2019).The central concept of the plot revolves around contemporary problem and moral issues. The protagonist in Prakarana rupaka are often common and

noble people. Prakarana rupaka explored various rasas, though it focuses sentiments such as sringara rasa and vira rasa.

The plot structured of the prakarana rupaka is consist basic five avasthas or stages:

i. Beginning (Prarambha)
ii. Effort (Prayatna)
iii. Chances of achievement (Prapti-sambhava)
iv. Surety of achievement (Niyatapti)
v. Achievement (Phalaprapti)

Prakarana rupaka contributes an important role in Sanskrit drama, its theme, characters and explorations of social plots allows various rasas in the audience. Mrcchakatika is one of the Prakarana in Sanskrit drama written by Shudraka.

Samavakara: Samavakara is one kind of rupaka mentioned in the Natyashastra. The story of this style involves gods and demons and other celestial characters. It consists of three acts and the storyline revolves around the significant challenges and struggles between celestial beings. The story or plot always show elements of hypocrisy and moral lessons. Amrit Manthan is known as Samavakara type of rupaka.

The three types of disaster or excitement are:

i. Disaster due to war or battle or natural disaster like flood (lit. water) etc.
ii. Disaster due to heavy rain or storm (lit. wind), fire and big elephant.
iii. Disaster due to the restriction of a state.

The three types of deception, it creates joy and sorrow in the audience:

i. Through the course of action.
ii. Through the destiny or accident.
iii. Through the enemy.

The three types of love to be presented through various actions are:

i. Love that emerging as part of dharma or duty.
ii. Love that stimulated by material gain (artha)
iii. Love that stimulated by passion (kama)

Dharma-Sringara kind of love is defined by action that attach to one's duties and responsibilities. It also focuses the well-being of others which is achieved by commitment to vows and austerities.

Artha- sringara kind of love is defined by the acquire of material wealth and personal gain rather than one's emotional attachment. This kind of love shows transactional flavour where affection and intimacy may be emerged for financial benefit or materialistic demands.

Kama- sringara kind of love is defined by one's physical desire passionately loving a woman. This kind of love includes physical attraction or lust and seduction, emphasising a more sensual way of love.

Ihamrga: Ihamrga is one kind of rupaka described by Bharatamuni in Natyashastra. According to Manmohan Ghosh, 'it is to abound in vehement (uddhata) heroes and to have its construction dependent on feminine anger which is to give rise to commotion (samkobha), excitement (vidrava) and angry conflict (sampheta)' (Ghosh 1951). This type of rupaka mainly characterized by its distinct topic such as struggles of noble hero or protagonists and the conflict of the story revolves around the divine women. Ihmarga rupaka are arranged into four acts, each act emphasizes on important scene or action which build climax and lead to resolution. The central idea of the story include- love, rivalry, anger and moral conflicts between the characters. The theme is based on the war for the divine woman. Sringara rasa is the prime emotion explored in the Ihamrga rupaka, it is evoked due to dispute among women, abduction and dreadful experience of women. There should have justification in the plot to stop the fight between two characters when they about to kill each other.

Dima: Dina is one kind of rupaka mentioned in the Natyashastra. This style is characterized various elements such as earthquake, eclipse of the moon and sun, supernatural characters- Asura, Raksas, Bhuta, Yaksa and Naga etc, other than this falling of meteors, fight between powerful weapons and numbers of deceit. It should have sixteen characters (Ghosh 1951). Dima mainly consists of four acts and is focus around a well-known story. This story extracted from the epic or mythology like Mahabharata and Ramayana. The drama always based on the story of dignified heroes, such as celestial beings and kings, who enriched with noble features and confronted with moral and physical challenges. It should have all the six rasas except Hasya and Sringara. This type of rupaka explores the possibilities of various rasas, the intense emotions and physical confrontation among the characters made the performance attractive to audience. Tripura Dahana is famous example of Dima rupaka.

Vyayoga: Vyayoga is a one-act play mentioned in the Natyashastra. The word Vyayoga focuses on the concept of separation and conflict between protagonists, the story mainly revolves around the hero and heroine personals subject which is caused by distance, misunderstanding and obstacles in their relationship. The plot should consider the battle and war, personal combat and anger which depicts the intense human emotions and performance (Rangacharya 2019).

The main character should be royal sage and it fall into the category of Dhiroddhatta and Dhirodatta type of character. The primary rasa of Vyayoga rupaka are Vira, Raudra, adhbhuta, Karuna, Bibhatsa and Bhayanaka except for Hasya and Sringara.

The famous example of vyayoga form of drama is Madhyamvyayoga (the story of Ghatotkach) of Bhasa.

Anka: Anka is also known as Utsrstikanka, it is one of the ten types of rupaka mentioned in the Natyashastra. According to Adya Rangacharya, 'it should have the Karuna as the predominant rasa, no battles and fight and plenty of lamentation by women; despairing speeches and distressful movements' (Rangacharya 2019). The story of the play mainly revolves around a male protagonist who is not a divine hero. The narrative generally take place within a one day and the story explore experience of normal people rather than mythological characters. The performance of the female actors should have exaggerated and expressive. It should have misery

and hopelessness in the dialogues and movements of the performer. The prominent rasa is Karuna and the hero must be Dhiralalita, normal kind of hero. The Urubhanga written by Bhasa is famous example of Anka type of rupaka (Singh 2021).

Prahasana: Prahasana is a comic genre of one act play of drama mentioned in the Natyashastra. It is mainly characterized by its comic dialogue, satirical elements and explores the story of everyday life and social issues. Prahasana divided into two types (1) Suddha (pure) and (2) Sankirna (mixed).

According to Adya Rangacharya, 'the pure (suddha) Prahasana, is a satire on (so-called) gurus, ascetics, Buddhist monks, learned Brahmins, etc. by ridiculing (atihasa) them. (This ridiculing is done by) the low characters and their 'comic dialogue' is in everyday language and dress and in words that are particularly humorous. The theme, movements, etc are natural'(Rangacharya 2019). So, generally story and theme based on the life of sages or ascetics which conveying moral lesson and targeted on social issues through comedy.

Adya Rangacharya quote in his book, 'The mixed (or) Sankirna type is one in which courtesans, menial servants, eunuchs, rogues and the gallants (vita) appear in immodest dress and make openly (obscene?) gestures'(Rangacharya 2019). The in the case of mixed prahasana the main characters belong to the class of courtesan and menial servants etc. These characters are specifically performed loud and sophisticated manners, it also evokes laughter and entertain while often targeting societal values through comedy and satire.

The famous examples of Prahasana rupaka are Bhagavadajjukam of Bodhayanakavi and Mattavilasa of Mahendravarman.

Bhana: The Bhana is a unique type of rupaka among all the rupaka mentioned in the Natyashastra. It is primarily a one act play, performed by a single actor. It is also known as monologue performance, where actor narrates either his own or others experience and autobiography in a dramatic style. The central concept of the Bhana performance depends upon the various incidents that depict characters cleverness and charm. the storyline of the Bhana has not fixed. The story is usually improvised, gives actor space for creativity and spontaneity in performance. The primary rasa of Bhana is Shringara (erotic love) and Veera (heroism), the dialogue is delivered in powerful styles which focuses on expressive language and engaging storytelling (Rangacharya 2019). This style enhances the dramatic representation of the performance and impact on the characters personal sufferings and dilemma. The narratives specifically convey romance, fortune in love and heroic exploits. The essential character of the Bhana is Vita, who performs as a narrator and messenger between courtesan (ganika) and her lover (nagarik). The most famous examples of Bhana rupaka are Ubhaya abhisarika of Vararuchi, Padma rabhrthaka Shudraka, Dhurtavita samvada of Isvaradatta and Pada-taditaka of Syamalika.

Vithi: The Vithi is a one kind of Sanakrit drama which is mentioned in the Natyashastra. It is designed as a one-act play, mainly involving two to three characters such as Nayaka (hero), Nayika (heroine) and Sakhi (friend). These characters types generally show various social status – superior, middling and inferior. The central theme of the story is love which depict different essence of emotions like joy, sorrow and tension (Rangacharya 2019).

Bharatamuni mentioned thirteen distinguishing features of Vithi:

i. Udghatya (accidental interpretation): it is defined as if meaning of one word explained by other or simpler word is known as accidental interpretation.

ii. Avalagita (transference): this vithi is refers to made the specific desire fulfilled but to provide a whole different purpose.

iii. Avaspa(-sya)ndita (ominous significance): the conversation is made for cleverly linked to some act with the purpose of doing bad or good.

iv. Asatpralapa (incoherent chatter): when a character asked irrelevant question and he gets irrelevant answer in reply or when wise man has conversation with fool and fool doesn't know the sense of conversation.

v. Prapanca (compliment): Laughter rise in the conversation due to untrue and unnecessary praise is known as Prapanca.

vi. Nalika (enigma): Laughter rises in the conversation due to riddle is known as Nalika.

vii. Vakkeli (repartee): this vithi refers to the conversation which involves repartee and clever exchange of dialogue through this comic scenario arise in the performance.

viii. Adhibala (outvying): this vithi emphasis on the intensity and strength of the speech, in this when overstatement in a conversation is reply back with even bigger statement.

ix. Chala (chala): this vithi refers to when praising speech in the conversation exchanges into discomfort.

x. Vyahara (declaration): In the context of Vyahara vithi, when main protagonist of the story is present in the scene and there something happens without notifying the action (suspicion).

xi. Mrdava (crushing): Mrdava vithi refers to when any faults and misconduct turns to good fortune and vice versa.

xii. Trigata (three men's talk): this vithi involves humorous discussion and conversations between three characters. This type of humorous conversation always leads the play into multiple interpretation.

xiii. Ganda (undue combination of words): it refers to the kind of speech or word that is sudden, confusion and excitement, frequently related to the main theme of the story but convey different situation (Ghosh 1951).

The famous example of Vithi rupaka isLilavati Vithi of Ramapaṇivada.

Conclusion:

In the conclusion, the Dasarupaka which is described in Natyashastra by Bharatmuni, dealt with essential understanding of various forms of drama to create and enhance the narratives and performance. Dasarupaka concludes with moral execution of drama, presenting the essential framework for Sanskrit drama. It also emphasis on how play should not be only way of entertain the audience but also propagate ethical or moral lessons. Rasa is the aesthetic experience of drama derived from an amalgamation of stimuli on the other hand rupaka is the creative process involved in arising these emotions. Together, they figure out how performance create intense emotional essence that connect deeply with spectator. It is mentioned in the Natyashastra that successful evoking of rasa-abhivyakti is only done by correct use of rupaka in dramatic representation. The three elements Vastu (plot), Neta (character) and Rasa (aesthetic experience), these are the integral part of Dasarupaka. Together, these elements successfully contribute in the presentation of play.

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