

Citraturaga-Nyāyānusāriṇī Pratīti: An Innovative Theory of Sanskrit Poetics

Poulomi Saha*

Submitted: 25.05.2020.

Revised: 03.06.2020.

Accepted: 17.07.2020.

Abstract: Four great exponents named Bhaṭṭalollaṭa, Bhaṭṭasaṃkuka, Bhaṭṭanāyaka and Abhinavagupta and their respective theories named 'Utpattivāda', 'Anumitivāda', 'Bhuktivāda' and 'Abhivyaktivāda' on Bharata's rasasūtra have marked a unique field of academic interest by their valued expositions. The original doctrines of earlier interpreters could not be found till date, but they are introduced with their conclusions through various texts such as Abhinavabhārati, Kāvya prakāśa, Rasagangādhara, Dhvanyāloka-Locana etc. Most of the interpretations are reconstructed from the citations and discussion of Abhinavagupta's Abhinavabhārati and Dhvanyāloka-Locana. As Śaṃkuka is the well known scholar of Nyāya School so his theory is highly influenced by the epistemology of Nyāya- philosophy and he named it 'Anumitivāda' as this explanation finds affinity with the procedure of anumiti as depicted in the Nyāya philosophy. Secondly Śaṃkuka mentioned that the knowledge named 'citraturaga-nyāyānusāriṇī pratīti' of naṭa is different from the famous four types of knowledge, namely samyak-pratīti (pramā), mithyā-pratīti (viparyaya), saṃśaya-pratīti and sādṛśya-pratīti (upamāna-jñana). This idea is also influenced by the epistemology of Nyāya -Vaiśeṣika-philosophy.

Keywords: Citraturaga-nyāyānusāriṇī Pratīti, Samyak-Pratīti (pramā), Mithyā-pratīti (viparyaya), Saṃśaya-Pratīti, Sādṛśya-Pratīti (Upamāna-jñana).

* Assistant Professor, Dept. of Sanskrit, Barasat Government College, Kolkata.
e-mail: poulomi.piku@gmail.com

According to the Sanskrit rhetoricians *rasa* is the soul of *kāvya*. Words and interpretations of the *kāvya* are described as the body. The literary qualities of *kāvya* are its strength. They are like ornaments. *Rasa* therefore is the essential entity or the spirit of *kāvya*. The object of the poet or composer of *kāvya* is not only to narrate the plot and incidents connected with the plot. The principal object of *kāvya* is to convey the appreciation of *rasa* to the reader's mind. Through that relation the mind is lifted up to the region of supreme bliss and he enjoys unworldly pleasure.

According to the general sense *rasa* means taste or relish because it is relished and enjoyed. In the technical sense it means the well known prime human emotions. For example, at the time of eating a person relishes the flavour of the food to a great extent. Similarly, a perceiver whose mind is engrossed enjoys the presentation of various emotions and cherishes immense pleasure out of his experience. It can be explained as aesthetic delight.

The discussion on the theory of *rasa* is first found in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, written by Bharata. Bharata is of the opinion that *rasa* is referred to by the term *rasa* because it is relished and enjoyed by connoisseurs. *Rasa* has been taken to the embodiment of *Sarasvatī*, it is assumed that, Bharata has lighted up the lamp in order to adore this *Rasa-Sarasvatī*.

At the outset we would like to mention Bharata's famous *rasasūtra*, '*vibhāvānubhāva-vyabhicāri-samyogādrasaniṣpattiḥ*'.¹ In this connection, it may be pointed out that Bharata kept his silence about the exact meaning of the words '*niṣpattiḥ*' and '*samyoga*' mentioned in *rasasūtra* and even the relation among the factors *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *vyabhicāribhāva* and *sthāyibhāva*. This kind of silence on the part of Bharata, gave rise to various doctrines.

Four great exponents named Bhaṭṭalollaṭa, Bhaṭṭasāṅkuka, Bhaṭṭanāyaka and Abhinavagupta and their respective theories named '*Utpattivāda*', '*Anumitivāda*', '*Bhuktivāda*' and '*Abhivyaktivāda*' on Bharata's *rasasūtra* have marked a unique field of academic interest by their valued expositions flavoured with different perspectives. The original doctrines of earlier interpreters could not be found till date, but they are introduced with their conclusions through various texts such as *Abhinavabhārati*, *Kāvya prakāśa*, *Rasagangādharā*, *Dhvanyāloka-Locana* etc. Most of the interpretations are reconstructed from the citations and discussion of Abhinavagupta's *Abhinavabhārati* and *Dhvanyāloka-Locana*.

According to the research of P.V. Kane, K.C. Pande and other scholars, Śāṅkuka lived and worked during the period of 800 AD onwards (approximately). As Śāṅkuka is the well known scholar of Nyāya School so his theory is highly influenced by the epistemology of Nyāya-philosophy and he named it '*Anumitivāda*' as this explanation finds affinity with the procedure of *anumiti* as depicted in the Nyāya philosophy. The concept of *citraturaga-nyāyanusāriṇī pratīti* is envisaged by Śāṅkuka which was an innovative theory of mimesis. On the basis of this theory he interpreted the consequences of *rasopobhoga* or relish of aesthetic elements.

According to Śāṅkuka, in drama, all the aesthetic elements such as, *vibhāvas* (the causes known as the factors), *anubhāvas* (the effects consisting of the reactions) and *vyabhicāribhāvas* (the auxiliary causes namely transitory emotions) are totally dependent on the characters of the drama. Again the *sthāyibhāvas* (permanent moods) also lie within them. So a dramatic

persona is the possessor of *rasa* to come into being. But in reality these dramatic characters cannot come and perform on the stage themselves, so the spectators cannot perceive directly the exact emotional feelings lying in them. It is never ever possible that the spectator can relish the same feeling of the hero or heroine.

Thus it requires a suitable medium, who should be a normal person with some extraordinary quality. The quality is that he should have excellent acting skills. This person is known as the *naṭa* or *naṭī*. With all of the skills *naṭa* or *naṭī* emulate the dramatic character. The light, dress, make-up, sounds etc help them to portray his or her role in a lively and attractive manner. They give up their personal identity at the time of acting. The acting flourishes with the efficiency of *naṭa* or *naṭī*. Due to his perfect acting, the spectator feels that the *naṭa* or *naṭī* is not different from the dramatic character.

While apprehending any entity in general, cognisers reach out to one of four possible conclusions: such as ‘we have cognized the real entity’; ‘the entity the observer has cognized is proven to be false by some barrier knowledge’; ‘the cognition is uncertain’; or ‘we have only cognized something similar to known one’. This type of knowledge that a spectator gets from a dramatic performance is not included within the aforementioned four types of knowledge. While watching the drama, ‘This man is the real hero’—this kind of *samyak-pratīti* or real knowledge is not here. ‘This man is not the hero’—this kind of unreal knowledge is also not here. ‘This man may be the hero or may not be the hero’—this kind of doubtful knowledge is not there. ‘This man is identical with the hero’—this kind of knowledge of similarity is also not present. Thus Śaṅkuka proved that the knowledge which came out from the acting of *naṭa* is different from the famous classifications of knowledge. He named this knowledge as *citraturaga-nyāyānusāriṇī pratīti*. None of the aforementioned four types of apprehension pertains to aesthetic cognition.

Following Śaṅkuka the context may be explained. A painter paints a horse’s picture on paper with the help of colour and brushes. With his painting skills the picture of horse neither differs from a real horse nor can it be referred to as a real horse. In this case the spectators do not have the realisation that ‘this horse is the real horse’. ‘This is not the horse’- this type of false knowledge does not occur. ‘Is it a real horse or not?’ This type of doubt does not step in the spectator’s mind. ‘This painted horse is similar to the real horse’- this type of thinking is also not present there.

While watching the lively painting of a horse the spectators can simply acknowledge that it is a painting of a horse, but it is not different from a real horse. Spectator’s experience of the actor in a play is like the experience of apprehension of a painted figure of the horse. This is the key of the cognition established and defined by Śaṅkuka. Similarly while watching a play the spectators feel that the *naṭa* is not the real character, but he is not different from the character as portrayed in the drama. With this feeling the audience can totally concentrate their mind on the portrayal presented on the stage.

Śaṅkuka mentioned that the knowledge named ‘*citraturaga-nyāyānusāriṇī pratīti*’ of *naṭa* is different from the famous four types of knowledge namely *samyak-pratīti* (*pramā*) or

real knowledge, *mithyā-pratīti* (*viparyaya*) or false knowledge, *saṁśaya-pratīti* or doubtful knowledge and *sadr̥śya-pratīti* (*upamāna-jñāna*) or resembling knowledge - 'kimtu samyak-mithyā-saṁśaya-sadr̥śya-pratītibhyo vilakṣaṇa -citraturagādinyāyena jaḥ sukhī Rāmaḥ asāvayamiti pratītirastīti'.²

Citraturaga-nyāyānusāriṇī pratīti is not Samyak-Pratīti:

According to Nyāya philosophy *samyak-pratīti* means *yathārthānubhava* or *pramā* which is defined as in *Tarkasaṁgraha*- 'tadvati tatprakāraḥ anubhavaḥ yathārthaḥ / saiva pramā ityucyate'.³ Prof. V. N. Jha elucidated the idea as, 'A true experience is that which reflects the qualifier in its own locus'.⁴

Śaṅkuka mentioned it as 'ayameva Rāma' is *samyak-pratīti* or valid cognition, which is not applicable to know the actor who imitates the character named Rāma. The Rāma-hood has not appeared in *naṭa* because it is not its own locus (Rāma). So the 'naṭa is Rāmānukaraṇarūpa-vibhāvādibīṣṭa', cannot be stated as *yathārthānubhava* or *samyak-pratīti*.

Citraturaga-nyāyānusāriṇī pratīti is not Mithyā-pratīti:

According to Annambhaṭṭa the definition of error is 'mithyājñānam viparyayaḥ'.⁵ Dr. V. N. Jha elucidated the matter, 'When the property is seen occurring in a locus whereas in fact, there is absence of that property it becomes a case of error or mistake. It does not happen wilfully it simply happens due to a number of factors (either in the object of perception, or distance, or defects in the senses, or disturbance in the mind and so on.'. ⁶

'na cāpya'yam na sukhīti' is not a case of an invalid cognition as the *naṭa* would be cognised as 'jaḥ sukhī Rāmaḥ asāvayamiti', without any kind barrier knowledge.

Citraturaga-nyāyānusāriṇī pratīti is not Saṁśaya-pratīti:

According to *Tarkasaṁgraha*, the definition of doubt or *saṁśayajñāna* is-'ekasmin dharmiṇi virūddha-nānā -dharmavaiśiṣṭyavagahi-jñānam saṁśayaḥ, yatha sthaṇurva puruso vā iti'.⁷ Prof. V.N. Jha elucidated it as, 'When two contradictory properties appear to share one locus it becomes a case of doubt'.⁸

In doubtful knowledge the features (*koṭis*) Ramahood and *naṭa*hood would be the incompatible diverse characteristics. 'Naṭa as *mulacaritrānukaraṇarūpa-vibhāvādibīṣṭa*', this knowledge is not the *saṁśayātmikā pratīti*. The connoisseur does neither cater to the common features of Rāma nor does he conceive the common features of the *naṭa* who plays the character of Rāma.

Citraturaga-nyāyānusāriṇī pratīti is not Sadr̥śya-pratīti:

In *Tarkasaṁgraha* Annambhaṭṭa defines *Upamāna* as, 'upamiti-karaṇam upamānam' and then he clears the concept of *upamiti* as 'samjñā-samjñi-sambandhajñānam upamiti'.⁹

Upamāna is the knowledge of similarity which is the source of knowledge of relation either between a name (*samjñi*) and an object (*samjñā*) or between a word and its denotation. In this type of *sadr̥śyjñāna* the role of *atideśavākyārtha* is crucial as 'gosadr̥śo gavayaḥ'.

Gopinath Bhattacharya elucidated it as, "So much for the several means or conditions leading

to the emergence of the cognition known as 'Upamiti'. Can any of these several means be regarded as the 'special condition' or *karāṇa* for 'Upamiti'? Annambhaṭṭa replies in the affirmative and says in TS that 'knowledge of similarity' (*sādrśya-jñāna*) is *Upamana* or the 'special condition' for the emergence of the cognition known as 'Upamiti'. He does not, however, explain in his TSD what he intends to convey by the term 'knowledge' (*jñāna*) in this context."¹⁰

Here for the emergence of *sādrśyajñāna* the *atideśavākya* should be presented as 'naṭa is similar to Rāma.' But this type of *atideśavākya* is not available in the texts. Even the features of Rāma-hood and *naṭa*-hood would be incompatible diverse characteristics. So the spectator cannot have cognition that 'na *cāpi tatsadrśa iti*'.

S. K. De elucidated the idea of *citraturaga-nyāyānusāriṇī pratīti*, "This cognition or knowledge is characterised as being based on what is called *citra-turaga-nyāya* (or the analogy by which a horse in a picture is called a horse) and should be differentiated from the true ('he is Rāma'), the false ('he is Rāma 'with a following negation 'he is not Rāma'), the doubtful ('he may or may not be Rāma) knowledge, as well as from the knowledge of similarity ('he is like Rāma')".¹⁰

Here may arise one doubt. Though the spectators are taking the *naṭa* or *naṭī* as the real dramatic persona but practically the *rasa* belongs to the real dramatic character. Here it can be doubted that the inferences are drawn from the artificial *naṭa* or *naṭī* might lead to incorrect knowledge. So it may be treated somewhere as unreal cognizance. In that case the validity of *rasa* comes under doubt which might affect the whole interpretation. To solve this problem here Śaṅkuka has argued that even if there are fallacies in knowledge, but if it does not contradict the reality then it cannot be negated or rejected by anyone. Thus as materialistic results are concerned even if there are fallacies they can be considered as evidence in support of the argument. Śaṅkuka narrated though the knowledge may be unreal in terms of theory but if it gives the expected result in practical then it is validated.

In reality the needed things can happen over validity. In the case of drama though the cognizance is not very true at the primary stage as per as the *vibhāvas* (*naṭa* or *naṭī* etc.) are not real but by those artificial *hetus* the result of inference comes that gives a unusual happiness cherished by the spectators. As the result comes as expected then the knowledge is neither invalid nor unreal. It is not also the barrier of aesthetic pleasure so it is not invalid. The spectators come to the hall to cherish the *rasa*, to enjoy the aesthetic pleasure. It is the prior need of drama. To fulfil that need the consequence comes. With the help of the *citraturaga-nyāyānusāriṇī pratīti* the spectators infer the *sthāyivibhāva* in the *naṭa* or *naṭī*. The knowledge of *sthāyivibhāva* can be called as *rasa* when it is cherished.

Śaṅkuka has used an example to establish this argument. If one crystal and an earthen oil lamp are placed at a distance then the light emanates from both. If two separate persons believe both the sparkling objects to be crystal and run towards them from a distance then their intentions are the same. When they come nearer their illusions are removed. In this case, one of them gets the crystal and the other returns disheartened. In this case the person who acquires the real crystal is right as per the knowledge is concerned. Although both of them cognise non veridical knowledge, there is a difference regarding their real effects.

This example proves that even in the material world knowledge has necessary requirements in spite of a fallacy in its procedure of apprehension. Thus this kind of knowledge should be accepted. There may be a number of fallacies in the initial stage within the paradigm of theatre. The elements which are present in the dramatic characters are unreal and thus the inference driven from this might not lead to veridical knowledge. In spite of that this type of knowledge leads to pleasure in the minds of connoisseur. Thus *citraturaga-nyāyanusāriṇī pratīti* cannot be perceived to be false or flawed and it has taken a place as an innovative theory in the literary criticism of Sanskrit poetics.

References:

1. Nagar, Rabishankar, (1981). (Ed.). *Nāṭyaśāstram of Bharata*, (with Commentary of Abhinavagupta's Abhinavabhāratī). (Vol-1). Delhi: Parimal Publications, p. 271.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 271.
3. Jha, V.N. (2010). (Ed. with Eng Trans. And notes), *Tarkasamgrahaḥ of Annambhaṭṭa*. *Veliyanad Ernakulam*, Kerala: Chinmaya International Foundation Shodha Sansthan Adi Sankara Nilayam, p. 46.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 99.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 100.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 99.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 100.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 91.
10. Bhattacharya, Gopinath, (1983). (Ed. with Eng. Trans and notes) *Tarkasamgraha-Dīpikā: Annambhaṭṭa*, Calcutta: Progressive Publishers, Second Revised Edition, p. 271.
11. De, S. K. (1960). *History of Sanskrit Poetics*. (vol.1). Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, p. 120.