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DHVANYALOKA AND VAKROKTOJIVITA- AN OBSERVATION

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Poetry has been a very precious possession of the mankind from a very primitive period. Sanskrit *kavyas* were composed from as early a period as that of the Ramayana which marked the beginning of a more illustrations literary traditions. Even *Rgveda*, the earliest of all the extant literary compositions of the world, had a good amount of poetic element and even now claims a good degree of poetic appeal.ⁱ

Bharata was the profounder of rasa school. The most important factor in the *dhvani* theory is the *vyanjana* function of the words and meanings of the poetry. Bharata called the phenomenon of the suggestion of the *Sthayibhava* developing into a rasa is *vyanjana*. It is to be noted here that while Bharata used the term *vyanjana* only with reference to the suggestion of the sentiments (rasa), Anandavardhana had also matters of fact (*vastu*) and imaginary ideas (*alamkaras*) as suggested (*vyanjita*) by the words and primary meaning in poetry.

Kuntaka, like Anandavardhana, is aware of the great importance of rasa in poetry, but like all other poetic concepts he includes rasa also in the varieties of vakratas, mainly in vakyavakrata, prakaranavakrata and prabandhavakrata. Kuntaka admits the view of Anandavardhana that if rasavad is not admitted in inanimate objects, the vast portion good poetry will include in nirasakavya. He divided rasa into three categories: -Mukhya cetanavinyasa like gods, human beings etc., amukhya cetanavinyasa like animals, birds etc. and acetanavinyasa or relating to inanimate objects. The uddipana vibhavas, by their minute description, become subordinate to rasas according to kuntaka. Thus he admits the importance of rasa in poetry but treats it objectively as vastu. Unlike Anandavardhana who treats it subjectively as the soul of poetry.

Endowed as Kuntaka was with a refined taste for poetry and a sound sense of values, he found that Anandavardhana's analysis of dhvani, and elaboration of rasa- aucitya were perfectly justified. According to Kuntaka, dhvani in itself could not be an adequate explanation of poetry since it invariably had to take the assistance of the other elements. Kuntaka is not a slavish follower of either the ancient alankara school or the new dhvani school; at the same time, he is also not an unsparing critic of either school. Kuntaka , therefore, may be regarded as an eclectic writer who incorporates into his work the merits of both the schools. But whereas his criticism of the ancients more pointed and frequent, it may be said that he hardly criticized the dhvani theory and he is second to none in his admiration for Anandavardhana since he always quotes from the latter with approval.

It will be seen that the other four varieties of vakrata as also some vakyavakrata do not related either to alankaras or gunas or ritis. They all include only the various aspects of dhvani. Dhvani is general is identified with vakroktivaicitrya itself. The major classification of dhvani into three varieties are vastu, alankara and rasa is implicitly accepted by Kuntaka. Even sabdasakti muladhvani, a variety based on a different classification, is explicitly brought under paryayavakrata, another sub-class of padapurvardha vakrata. Rasa is said to be at the root of all vakrokti and its particular manifestation in relation to pada, vakya, prakarana and prabandha etc. considered under either the sub classes of padapurvardha vakrata such as visesa vakrata, samvritivakrata, vrittivakrata and bhavavakrata or under independent major varieties of vakrata such as prabandha vakrata, vakyavakrata, padavakrata and prakaranavakrata. And in third chapter of Vakroktijivita, Kuntaka illustrates alankaradhvani under vakyavakrata. Finally, Anandavardhana's atyanta tiraskrtavacyadhvani is brought under upacaravakrata, a subclass of pada purvardhavakrata.

All these facts prove that Kuntaka was fully alive to the importance of rasa and the doctrine of dhvani as preached by Anandavardhana and that he was more opposed to the narrow view of alankaras held by the ancient writers. It is only the expression vakrokti which he borrows from the ancient in its general sense and even he invests it with a richer connotation than the ancients had done. Kuntaka does not follow the ancient traditions; he follows Anandavardhana's tradition.

Kuntaka realized that if he was to include forms of dhvani in his forms of vakrokti, he had to adopt the same principles of classification. We know that when considering poetry from the view point of vyanjaka Anandavardhana had followed the scheme of varna, pratyaya, pada, vakya, prakarana and prabandha. In fact, these are the very varieties of vakrata or vakrokti also accepted broadly by kuntaka. But while Anandavardhana's scheme of vyanjakas is circumscribed by his triple vyangyas viz. vastu, alankara and rasadi, Kuntaka's scheme is not. It is so comprehensively illustrated that it can include all sabdalankaras under

varnavinyasa vakrata, all beauty of grammatical affixes, terminations etc. under padapurvardha vakrata and all arthalankaras, margas, gunas and rasadi under vakyavakrata; all beauty of plot and description original innovations, characterization and propriety of rasa, sandhis and sandhyangas under prakaranavakrata and the beauty of the whole work and dominant rasa under prabandhavakrata.

Kavya becomes lively in association with *vakrokti*. *Vakrokti* is otherwise called 'Kaviviyaparavakratva' or 'vakrakaviviyapara'. *Vakrokti* is defined as 'vaidagdhyabhangibhaniti'.ⁱⁱ It is recognized as the *alamkriti* i.e., embellishment of *sabda* and *artha*, the physical constituents of a *kavya*. Kuntaka, author of the *Vakroktijivita*, was the founder of this school.

To constitute a *kavya* words and meanings occur in a composition which is a source of an indescribable delight to the man of taste. The capacity of *kavya* to delight, causes a natural elevation or consummation of *rasa*. Whatever renders the poetry charming must be recognized as an *alankara*. By the term *Vakrokti*, Kuntaka designates all the charming elements of *kavya* like *guna* and *dhvani* and not only the already well known *alankaras* like *upama* and *rupaka*. The *alankara* that he discusses in his work, unlike the well-known *alankaras*, it is bringing an indescribable charm to the *kavya*.

Possibly the *Vakroktijivita* would be the best example to show how far-reaching the influence of *Dhvanyaloka* was. Kuntaka does not adversely criticize the *dhvani* theory but it is clear that in *Vakroktijivita* he wants to present a parallel theory and not a rival one. Kuntaka recognizes the *vyanjana vyapara* and refers his readers to the *Dhvanikara* himself in respect of the same. Kuntaka never had the occasion to refute the idea of *dhvani*. On the contrary, he equated some of the varieties of *vakrokti* with some sort of *dhvani*. Anandavardhana recognized the suggestive capacity of the words, syllables, sentences and the *prabandhas* etc. and Kuntaka also recognized *vakrata* in the different aspects of the composition. Kuntaka's attitude towards *rasa* was also almost the same as that of Anandavardhana. The major point of difference between the two theories is that the *Vakrokti* theory recognizes *vakrokti* as the life of poetry while *Dhvani* theory recognizes *dhvani* as the soul of poetry. But in final analysis we observe that both the theories demand that in *kavya* there must be a *lokottaravaicitrya*.

The upshot of the above discussion is that Kuntaka does not repudiate the *dhvani* theory. That he deserves a place here at all admit the critics is because he is neither a devoted follower of the *dhvani* theory exclusively since his view of *vakrokti* is more comprehensive than *dhvani*. It is clear that he was not completely satisfied with Anandavardhana's exclusive consideration of *dhvani*. There is a shift in the emphasis on the importance of *dhvani*. Anandavardhana held that *kavipratibha* works only through the medium of *dhvani* and hence *dhvani* is the soul of poetry. Kuntaka would not put it differently *dhvani* very frequently

indicates kavipratibha. But the activity of pratibha is more comprehensive and it is not chained to dhvani only. It may derive half from alankaras, gunas, ritis and dhvani. Hence kavipratibha is more important and its activity is vakrokti noticeable in a thousand and one ways though the major ways are of dhvani. While Anandavardhana thinks that alankaras, gunas etc. are all related to dhvani, Kuntaka holds that they are related to vakrokti.

ⁱ Page no. 7, Bharatiyakavyasastra of Dr. T. Bhaskaran

ⁱⁱ Page no. 78, Bharatiyakavyasastra of Dr. T. Bhaskaran

