

Impact of Bhaṭṭanāyaka on Abhinavagupta

S.C. PANDE

Āchārya Bhaṭṭanāyaka is a great name in Sanskrit Poetics. He occupies a unique place in the history of Indian aesthetics. He had a remarkable insight into the nature of poetic experience and the analysis of beauty in poetry. He was an anti-*Dhvani* theorist. Though his only known work *Hṛdayadarpaṇa* is now lost, some of the fragments of its contents are found in Abhinavagupta's commentaries on the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and *Dhvanyāloka*. *Hṛdayadarpaṇa* was not available to even Mahimabhaṭṭa as he says in his *Vyaktiviveka*:

अदृष्टदर्पणा ममधीः¹

So Bhaṭṭanāyaka must have flourished sometime between Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta. Kalhaṇa in his *Rājataranginī* has given a detailed discription of the reign of Śankaravarma the son and successor of Avantivarma. Śankaravarma after the conquest of various countries in all directions established a town named Sankarapura and constructed there a Śiva temple in his name and in the name of his wife, Sugandha, and appointed a very learned Brahmana named Nāyaka to look after its administration.

द्विजस्तयोर्नायकाख्यो गौरीशसुरसन्नोः।
चातुर्विधः कृतस्तेन वाग्देवीकुलमन्दिरम्॥²

Śankaravarma belongs to the last quarter of the 9th century a.d. The Nāyaka referred to in the above *śloka* of the *Rājataranginī* is none other than Bhaṭṭanāyaka because he has

been mentioned by this name (Nāyaka) in the commentary of Bhaṭṭagopala on the *Kāvya prakāśa-*

उद्भटेनापि नग्रेण नायकेनोपलालितः।
हृद्यो भाम इव स्त्रीणामल्मारम्मोऽपि भामहः॥

So the time of Bhaṭṭanāyaka is between the last quarter of the 9th century and the first half of the 10th century. As Bhaṭṭatauta, the teacher of Abhinavagupta has nowhere referred to the theory of Bhaṭṭanāyaka and has refuted the *Rasa* theory of Hollata and Śrīśārikuka, it appears, that Bhaṭṭanāyaka must have been either unknown to Bhaṭṭatauta or that Bhaṭṭatauta must not have found any fault in the theories of Bhaṭṭanāyaka.

It is only Abhinavagupta who refutes the *Rasa* theories of earlier commentators of *Rasasūtra* of Bhārata. He after discarding the *Bhoga* theory of Bhaṭṭanāyaka admits with all humility that actually he has not refuted or found fault with the theories of his predecessors but has only improved upon them or has modified them:

तस्मात् सतामत्र न दूषितानि मतानि
तान्येव तु शोधितानि।
पूर्वप्रतिष्ठापितयोजनासु मूलप्रतिष्ठाफलमामनन्ति॥³

This humility of Abhinavagupta is because of the fact that in his heart of hearts he holds Bhaṭṭanāyaka in high esteem though being a *Dhvanivādi* he is at loggerheads with Bhaṭṭanāyaka who was an anti-*Dhvani* theorist. Though Abhinavagupta disagrees with Bhaṭṭanāyaka on many

issues, he also agrees with him at many places in his *Locana* commentary in support of his interpretations of the text of the *Dhvanyāloka*. In the commentary of the opening *śloka* of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* Abhinavagupta quotes him and endorses his interpretation in the context of the Divine origin of the *Nāṭya*.

भट्टनायकस्तु ब्रह्मणा परमात्मना यदुदाहृतम्
अविद्याविरचित निस्सारभेदग्रहे
यदुदाहरणीकृतं तन्नाटयम्।
तद्वक्ष्यामि यथाहि कल्पनाशतसहस्रसहं
स्वप्नादिविलक्षणमपि सुष्ठुतरां हृदयग्रहनिदानम्
अत्यक्तस्वभावलम्बनब्रह्मकल्पनटोपरचितं
रामरावणादिचेष्टितम् असत्त्वं
कुतोऽप्यद्भुताद्भुतवृत्त्याभाति।
तथा भासमानमपि च पुमर्थोपायतामेति। तथा
तादृगेव विश्वमिदमसत्यनामरूपप्रपञ्चात्मकम्,
अथ च श्रवणमननादिवशेन परमपुमर्थप्रापकमिति
लोकोत्तर-परमपुरुषार्थसूचनेन शान्तरसाक्षेपोऽयं
भविष्यति-स्वं स्वं निमित्तमासाद्य शान्तादुत्पद्यते रसः।
इति तदनेन पारमार्थिकं प्रयोजनमुक्तम् इति
व्याख्यानं सहृदयदर्पणे पर्यग्रहीत्।
यदाह-नमस्त्रैलोक्यनिर्माणकवये शम्भवे यतः।
प्रतिक्षणं जगन्नाट्यप्रयोगरसिको जनः॥ इति ।⁴

Now, an attempt is being made to show as to how Bhaṭṭa-nāyaka has directly or indirectly influenced Abhinavagupta in the context of the definition of poetry and in the insightful presentation of the theory of aesthetic experience. According to Bhaṭṭanāyaka, poetry unlike the Veda or *Ākhyāna*, is function-dominated and not meaning-dominated. He, as quoted by Abhinavagupta says:

शब्दप्राधान्यमाश्रित्य तत्र शास्त्रं पृथग्विदु
रर्थतत्त्वेन युक्तं तु वदन्त्याख्यानमेतयोः ।
द्वयोर्युगलत्वे व्यापारप्राधान्ये काव्यधीर्भवेत् ॥⁵

He is a staunch supporter of *Rasa* in *Kāvya* and not *Alamkāra*. In poetry *Rasa* realization is the only attraction for reader.

काव्ये रसयिता सर्वो न बोद्धा न नियोगभाक् ।⁶

As the *Rasa* experience is only in the form of रसनव्यापार and not an experience of something accomplished hence Bhaṭṭanāyaka defines poetry as व्यापारप्रधान. In this way, he gave an entirely new dimension to the definition of poetry. This new definition had a great impact on Abhinavagupta and later rhetoricians like Mammaṭa and others. It appears that Bhaṭṭanāyaka took the cue from Anandavardhana's following lines. –

या व्यापारवती रसान् रसयितुं काचित् कवीनां नवा
दृष्टिर्या परिनिष्ठितार्थविषयोन्मेषा च वैपश्चिती ।⁷

The following lines of *Abhinavabhāratī* clearly indicate the influence of Bhaṭṭanāyaka's theory of व्यापारप्रधानता on Abhinavagupta:

सा चैकचित्रवृत्तिः स्वकीयपरकीयमिति...
निर्विधनस्वसंवेदनात्मक-विश्रान्तिलक्षणेन
रसनापरपर्यायेण व्यापारेण गृह्यमाणत्वात्
रसशब्देनाभिधीयते ।⁸

चर्व्यमाणतैकसारो न तु सिद्धस्वभावः
तात्कालिक एव न तु चर्वणातिरिक्तकालावलम्बी
स्थायिविलक्षण एव रसः ।⁹

यस्तु चर्वणाव्यापाररसनीयरूपो रसः स
काव्यव्यापारैकगोचरो रसध्वनिः ।¹⁰

In historical writings, *Ākhyānas* and *Sāstras*, other than the Veda, the word loses its utility after conveying its sense, but in poetry (*Kāvya*) it is not so, because the word of *Kāvya* always retains its importance and utility as it is read and understood again and again by the aesthete. Abhinavagupta says:

काव्यात्मकशब्दनिष्पीडनेनैव तच्चर्वणा दृश्यते।
दृश्यते हि तदेव काव्यं पुनः पुनः पठन्

चर्व्यमाणश्च सहृदयो लोकः।
न तु काव्यस्य तत्र रूपादायापि ये हेया-
इतिन्यायेन कृतप्रतीकस्यानुपयोग एव ।¹¹

This view of Abhinavagupta indirectly supports the stand of Bhaṭṭanāyaka that *Kāvya* is function-dominated व्यापार प्रधान. The influence of Bhaṭṭanāyaka over Mammaṭa appears to be more glaring. Mammaṭa while distinguishing *Kāvya* from other forms of literature like Veda, *Itihāsa* and *Purāṇa* writes that in *Kāvya* both word and sense play a subsidiary role, whereas the function is the main factor:

प्रभुसंमितवेदादिशास्त्रेभ्यः
सुहृत्संमितार्थतात्पर्यवत्पुराणा-
दीतिहासेभ्यश्च शब्दार्थयोर्युगलभावेन
रसाङ्गभूतव्यापार-प्रवणतया विलक्षणं यत्
काव्यं लोकोत्तरवर्णनानिपुणकर्म . . . ।¹²

In the context of the process of *Rasa* realization: Mammaṭa while presenting the *Rasa* theory of Abhinavagupta puts all the adjectives of *Rasa* as शतृप्रत्ययान्त; meaning thereby the व्यापाररूपता of *Rasa*:

पुर इव परिस्फुरन्, हृदयमिव प्रविशन्,
सर्वाङ्गीणमिवालिङ्गन्, अन्यत्सर्वमिव
तिरोदधत्, ब्रह्मस्वादिमिवानुभावयन्,
अलौकिकचमत्कारकारी सृङ्गारादिको रसः ।¹³

Vidyādhara, the author of *Ekāvalī*, though a supporter of *Dhvani* theory having been impressed with Bhaṭṭanāyaka's definition of *Kāvya* remarks:

शब्दप्रधानं वेदाख्यं प्रभुसंमितमुच्यते।
ईषत्पाठान्यथापाठे प्रत्यवायस्य दर्शनात्॥
इतिहासादिकं शास्त्रं मित्रसंमितमुच्यते।
अर्थार्थवादरूपत्वात् कथ्यतेऽर्धप्रधानता॥
ध्वनिप्रधानं काव्यं तु कान्तासंमितमीरितम्।
शब्दार्थो गुणतां नीत्वा व्यञ्जनप्रवणं यतः॥¹⁴

Bhaṭṭanāyaka's well thoughtout ideas were so much impressive that Abhinavagupta at many points could not refute them convincingly. Take for example the following lines of

Bhaṭṭanāyaka as quoted by Abhinavagupta in his *Locana* commentary:

ध्वनिर्नामापरो योऽयं व्यापारो व्यञ्जनात्मकः।
तस्य सिद्धेऽपि भेदे स्यात् काव्येशत्वं न रूपता॥¹⁵

Bhaṭṭanāyaka being व्यापारवादी आचार्य sees the essence of *Kāvya* in the form of व्यापार. So here also he says by तुष्यतुदुर्जनन्याय that *Dhvani* can at best be an accessory element of *Kāvya* but never a complete *Kāvya*. Abhinava while refuting this view of Bhaṭṭanāyaka says that perhaps it has been said only in relation to *Vastu* and *Alamkāra Dhvani* and so far as *Rasadhvani* is concerned he himself stands committed that *Rasa* is the sole object of enjoyment in *Kāvya*. “काव्ये रसयिता सर्वो न बोद्धा न नियोगभाक्” Here Abhinavagupta also admits that *Vastu* and *Alamkāra Dhvanis* are only parts of *Kāvya* and not the complete *Kāvya* because ultimately the *Vastu* and *Alamkāra Dhvanis* terminate in *Rasadhvani*.

यदूचे भट्टनायेकेन रूअंशत्वं न रूपताङ्घति
तद्वस्त्वलंकारध्वन्योरेव यदि नामोपालम्भः,
रसध्वनिस्तु तेनैवात्मतया अङ्गीकृतः
रसचर्वणात्मनस्तृतीयांशस्याभिधाभावनांशद्वयोत्तीर्णत्वेन
निर्णयात्, वस्त्वलंकारध्वन्यो रसपर्यन्तत्वमेवेति
वयमेव वक्ष्यामस्तत्र तत्रेत्यास्तां तावत् ।¹⁶

Here Abhinavagupta is advancing very clumsy arguments in his and Anandavardhana's defence. He has almost surrendered the *Vastu* and *Alamkāra Dhvanis* in order to compromise with Bhaṭṭanāyaka in accepting the *Rasadhvani*. By this argument of Abhinavagupta the *Vastu* and *Alamkāra Dhvanis* have fallen from grace and lost their dominance. For Anandavardhana *Vastu*, *Alamkāra* and *Rasa Dhvanis* are on equal footing so far as their ध्वनिरूपता is concerned. Like *Rasadhvani*, *Vastu* and *Alamkāra dhvanis* also make first rate poetry because all the three

Dhvanis are वाच्यसामर्थ्याक्षिप्त. Bhaṭṭānāyaka while commenting on the following *gāthā*:

भमधम्मिअ वीसत्थो सो सुणओए अज्जमारिओ देण।
गोलाणईकच्छकुडङ्गवासिणा दरिअसीहेण॥ 17

argues that here the prohibitive sense (निषेधार्थ) is understood by the force of *Bhayānaka Rasa* on account of the use of दृप्तसिंह (विभाव) and धार्मिक (आश्रय) and not by the force of suggestion (व्यञ्जना) as explained by ध्वनिकारण. In this context, Abhinavagupta after explaining the viewpoint of Ānandavardhana should have convinced us to the effect that it is the case of *Vastudhvani* alone and not that of *Rasadhvani*. Instead he again made a compromise with the stand of Bhaṭṭānāyaka and concluded by saying that let both the *Dhvanis* (*Vastu* and *Rasa*) be accepted here. What is the harm?

यत्तु भट्टनायकेनोक्तम् इह दृप्तसिंहादिपदप्रयोगे
धार्मिकपदप्रयोगे च भयानकरसावेशकृतैव
निषेधावगतिः तदीयभीरुवीरत्वप्रकृतिनियमा-
वगममन्तरेणैकान्ततो निषेधावगत्यभावादिति
तत्र केवलार्थसामर्थ्यं निषेधावगतेर्निमित्तमिति।
तत्रोच्यते. . . . भयानकरसावेशश्च न निवार्यते,
तस्य भयमात्रोत्पत्त्यभ्युपगमात्. . . . किञ्चवस्तुध्वनिं
दूषयता रसध्वनिस्तदनुग्राहकः समर्थते इति
सुष्ठुतरां ध्वनिध्वंसोऽयम्. . . . अथ
वस्तुमात्रध्वनेरुदाहरणं न युक्तमित्युच्यते तथापि
काव्योदाहरणत्वात् द्वावपि ध्वनी स्तः, को दोषः। 18

In this way Abhinavagupta could not give sound arguments in his defence for establishing only *Vastudhvani* in the above-mentioned *gāthā* as it was given as an illustration of *Vastudhvani* and not *Rasadhvani* by Ānandavardhana. Being a faithful commentator of Ānandavardhana, Abhinavagupta should not have accepted *Bhayānaka Rasa* or *Srngāra Rasa* in this context. This shows that Abhinavagupta is so obsessed with the views of Bhaṭṭānāyaka's theory that he outrightly chooses to make compromise with

him.

Abhinavagupta is candid enough, to quote him (Bhaṭṭānāyaka) in his support at many places. Commenting on the following *Kārika* of the *Dhvanyāloka*

काव्यस्यात्मा स एवार्थस्तथा चादिकवेः पुरा।
क्रौञ्चद्वन्द्ववियोगोत्थः शोकः श्लोकत्वमागतः॥ 19

Abhinavagupta says:

एवं रसचर्वणोचितशोकरथायिभावात्मक
करुणरससमुच्चलन-स्वभावात् स एव काव्यस्यात्मा
सारभूतस्वभावोऽपरशाब्दवैलक्षण्य-कारकः। 20
एतदेवोक्तं हृदयदर्पणे-

Bhaṭṭānāyaka's view is that the poet does not express in the form of poetry till he is not completely filled with the *Rasa* experience. So the poetry, according to Bhaṭṭānāyaka is the spontaneous expression of the overflowing emotion of the poet. Abhinavagupta accepts this view without any reservation and says in the *Abhinavabhāratī*:

तदेवं मूलबीजस्थानीयः कविगतो रसः।
कविर्हि सामाजिकतुल्य एव।
अतएवोक्तम्-शृङ्गारी चेत् कविः. . . .
इत्यादि आनन्दवर्धनाचार्येण। 21

Commenting on Ānandavardhana's *Kārika*:

गरध्वती स्वादु तदर्थवस्तु
निःष्यन्दमाना महतां कवीनाम्।
अलोकसामान्यमभिव्यनक्ति
परिस्फुरन्तं प्रतिभाविशेषम्॥ 22

Abhinavagupta says that the divine blissful *Rasa* flows spontaneously from the speech of the great and gifted poets दिव्यमानन्दरसं स्वयमेव प्रस्तुवाना and quotes the following lines of Bhaṭṭānāyaka in support of his theory:

यदाह भट्टनायकः

वाग्धेनुर्दुग्ध एतं हि रसं यद्बालतृष्णया।
तेन नास्य समः स स्याद् योगिभिर्दुह्यते हि यः॥ 23

In these lines Bhaṭṭānāyaka has distinguished between योगानन्द and

काव्यानन्द. The pleasure of yoga is achieved only by practicing abstract meditation with great effort, whereas the aesthetic pleasure needs no deliberate effort. Abhinavagupta taking the cue from this view of Bhaṭṭānāyaka explains meticulously the distinction between the experience of *Kāvya Rasa* and that of yoga. In yoga there is विषयावेशवैवश्य इदं तदस्थपरसंविद्धि which hinders the feeling of beauty (सौन्दर्य) whereas in the aesthete there is no तादस्थ्य and विषयावेशवैवश्य hence there is delight (आह्लाद).

The major contribution of Bhaṭṭānāyaka which had a lasting impact on all the later rhetoricians is that he introduced the concept of *Sādhārāṇīkarana* for explaining the psychology of *Rasa* experience. The principle of this generalization (साधारणीकरण) is more or less a type of aesthetic contemplation by which the object of art (विभावादि) and the subject (प्राप्ताता) both transcend their limitations. In this process the subject or the enjoyer gets completely object immersed (तन्मयीभाव) and enjoys the sentiment (स्थायी) which also loses its limitations.

Thus, it is Bhaṭṭānāyaka who revolutionized the concept of *Rasa* realization by explaining it on purely philosophical plain and equating it with संविद्धिश्रान्ति and ब्रह्मास्वाद. For realizing this highest form of aesthetic pleasure the विभावादि which are the means to such realization have to be absolutely impersonalised and hence universalized. This theory of साधारणीकरण of the object and the subject has been accepted without any reservation by all the later Āchāryas as has been said by Āchārya Govind Chandra Pande in his सौन्दर्यदर्शनविमर्श and in the following verse:

साधारणीकृतिर्नाट्यं लोकाद् भेदयतीति यत्।
भट्टनायकपादोक्तं तत्रायः सर्वसम्मतम्॥ 24

Abhinavagupta taking the cue from this theory of universalization speaks of हृदयसंवाद तन्मयीभाव and as the prerequisite for *Rasa* realization. Bhaṭṭanāyaka emphasized the subjectivity of art experience and consequently raised the level of *Rasa* realization to the experience similar to the bliss of Brahman. His *Rasa* experience as quoted by Abhinavagupta in his *Locana* commentary is as follows:

भावते च रसे तस्य भेगः योऽनुभवस्मरणप्रतीतिभ्यो
विलक्षणः एव द्रुतिविस्तरविकासत्मा
रजस्तमोवैचित्र्यानुविद्धसत्त्वमय
निजचित्त्वभावनिर्वृतिविश्रान्तिलक्षणः
परब्रह्मास्वादसविधः।²⁵

However, some of the modern thinkers like Dr. Krishna Chandra Bhattacharya do not agree to mingle spirituality in the domain of art experience. He in the context of 'conception of *Rasa*' writes:

"We have taken aesthetic

enjoyment as not merely a feeling among feelings but as the feeling par-excellence. The concept of *Rasa* or the aesthetic experience may thus be interpreted entirely in terms of feeling without any reference to the intellectual idea or the spiritual ideal."²⁶

Deeply influenced by Bhaṭṭanāyaka's thinking Abhinavagupta took the psychology and the spiritual background of the *Rasa* theory presented by Bhaṭṭanāyaka to its logical end by putting it into the framework of *Vyañjanā* and *Pratyabhijñā Darśana* and discarded the *Bhoga* theory by equating *Bhukti* with *Abhivyakti*

REFERENCES

1. *Vyaktivevika* I
2. *Rājatarāṅginī* V. 159
3. *Abhinavabharatī* on *Nāṭyaśāstra* VI. 31

4. *Abhinavabharatī* on *Nāṭyaśāstra* I.1
5. *Locana* on *Dhvanyāloka* 1.5 p. 87 (Chowkhamba Edn. 1940)
6. *Dhvanyāloka* III p. 508
7. *Locana* p. 87
8. *Abhinavabharatī* on *Nāṭyaśāstra* VI. 15
9. *Abhinavabharatī* on *Nāṭyaśāstra*
10. *Locana* on *Dhvanyāloka* 1.4
11. *Locana* on *Dhavanyāloka* 1.18 p. 15a
12. *Kāvya prakāśa* 1.2
13. *Kāvya prakāśa* IV
14. *Ekāvalī* 1.4-6
15. *Locana* on *Dhvanyāloka* 1.1 p. 39
16. *Locna* on *Dhvanyāloka* 1.4
17. *Dhvanyāloka* 1.4 p. 52
18. *Locana* on *Dhvanyāloka* 1.4 pp. 68-69
19. *Dhvanyāloka* 1.5
20. *Locana* on *DL* 1.5 p. 87
21. *Abhinavabharatī* on *Nāṭyaśāstra* VI.7
22. *Dhvanyāloka* 1.6
23. *Locana* on *Dhvanyāloka* 1.6 p. 91
24. *Soundaryadarśanavimarśah* p. 95
25. *Locana* on *DL* 1.4 p. 183
26. *Studies in Philosophy* Vol 1 p. 353

Latest from the IIAS

Interdisciplinary Studies in Science, Society, Value and Civilizational Dialogue

by D.P. CHATTOPADHYAYA

The essays of this book are addressed to some basic issues of science, society and value. Discounting the autonomy claim of science Chattopadhyaya tries to trace its social roots and discover its historical background. Also he discounts the value-neutrality claim of science—of both social science and natural science. All forms of knowledge, scientific and social, are basically rooted in the human nature and influenced by its cognitive capacity and limits. According to Chattopadhyaya, freedom underpins human inspiration and aspirations which explains the integral character of facts, ideas and values. He finds no dichotomy between fact and value, between naturalism and humanism, or between subjectivity and objectivity.

A substantial part of the book is concerned with the nature of scientific knowledge. It is argued that because of its humanistic roots science cannot be absolutely objective. Objectivity is nothing but inter-subjectivity, sharability of knowledge by suitably qualified people. From this thesis of inter-subjectivity the author argues back to the *unity* of human nature and *community* of human interests and intentions. From the analysis of the concepts of unity and community he extracts the larger perspectives of the human unity, democracy and justice. All these elements are claimed to be inputs of much needed civilizational dialogue in a world torn by strife and inequitable levels of development.

ISBN 81-7986-030-2

Rs. 500