

An Introduction to Indian Literary Theory

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Lecture- 15

Uparupakas

Hello everyone! In the previous video lecture, we have been primarily dealing with ten forms of rūpakas. In this lecture, we are going to focus on uparūpakas. Bharata, in his Nāṭyaśāstra was primarily concerned with ten rūpakas. In other words, Bharata was focusing only on the forms and styles that were then dominant in the art-tradition of his time, especially those that had the potential to exhibit the four modes of abhinayas. So, Bharata completely avoided the minor forms of the drama or uparūpakas from the ambit of his discussion. But as time went by, there emerged newer forms of nāṭya which included one or a few forms of abhinayas in their representations, instead of employing all the devices and abhinayas that Bharata insisted in dramatic representations. These were called uparupakas or minor dramatic representations. Although they are called uparūpakas or the subordinate forms of dramatic representation, they later became extremely popular and often functioned as the substratum of many of the classical art forms we are familiar with now. Dr. Raghavan in his article "Uparupakas and Nṛityaprabandhas" opines that "The uparūpaka is the link or common ground where the classic met the popular, and the sophisticated took up the folk-form". He continues to say that "The name uparupaka signifies an effort to codify these lesser and popular forms, and assigns them a place in the framework of the theory."

The primary factor that distinguishes the rūpakas from the uparūpakas is the observation that while the rūpakas present a full rasa with other minor rasas as accessories or subordinate

aesthetic emotions, the uprūpaka could only present a bhava or many bhavas. So, a rūpaka was also called vakyabhinaya and the uparupaka was referred to as padārthābhinaya. Dr. Raghavan's observation is handy in this context. He observes that "In the rupaka a full story was presented through all the dramatic requirements and resources fully employed, but in the uparūpaka only a fragment was depicted and even when a full theme was handled, all the complements of the stage were not present; the uparupaka lacked one or other or more of the four abhinayas.

We have seen that Bharata says nothing about uparupakas. Now, how early do we hear about these subordinate forms of dramatic representations? The earliest reference to the uparupakas is found in the Kamasutra of Vātsyāyana where we hear of the men and women of taste witnessing and taking part in hallisaka, natyarasaka and preksanaka. These are the uparūpakās mentioned later by theoreticians. Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin also mention some uparūpakas or the subordinate dramatic forms that are to be seen. It is important to note that they do not use the term uparūpaka. These uparūpakas that they mention include dvipadi, samyā, rāsaka and skandha. Bhāmaha does not elaborate on these forms primarily because the poetry that are to be read is his primary concern, and secondly it has been described by others. The great mīmāṃsā scholar Kumārila in his Tantravārttika also speaks about the minor dramatic representations like *rāsaka* and dvipadi. Kālidāsa in his Harivamsa refers to the dramatic representation called Calikya that has to be learned by the heroine Mālavikā. Kohala, who Abhinavagupta, in his commentary on Bharata's Nāṭyasāstra mentions, is considered the first theoretician to talk about the dramatic forms outside *daśarūpaka*. However, as per the available historical evidence, Abhinavagupta's Abhinavabhāratī can be considered the first literary theoretician to talk about the idea of uparūpakas in detail. The uparūpakas mentioned by

Abhinavagupta in his *Abhinavabhāratī* include trotaka, dombika, prasthāna, silpaka, bhanaka, bhānika, rāgakāvya, preraṇa, rāmakrīda, rāsaka and hallisaka.

Among the authors of the later period, Bhoja, Sāradātanaya and Vsvanātha dealt at length with the Uparūpakas. Bhoja in his *Srngāraprakāsa* discusses twelve types of Uparupakas; Sāradātanaya in his *Bhāvaprakāśa* describes twenty-one forms of uparūpakas and also provides a gist of several definitions as given by the previous authorities ; and, Viśvanātha in his *Sāhityadarpaṇa* discusses in detail eighteen types of uparupakas, with examples. In this lecture, we will be seeing the uparūpakas mentioned by Viśvanātha in his *Sāhityadarpaṇa*.

These uparūpakās mentioned by Viśvanātha are eighteen in number. They include natika, trotaka, gosthi, sattaka, nātyarāsaka, prasthānaka, ullāpya, kāvya, premkhana, rāsaka, samlāpaka, srīgadīta, silpaka, vilāsika, durmallika, hallisaka, bhānika, prakaranika. First let us take a look at nāṭika.

Nāṭika

Nāṭika is a subdivision of nāṭaka. It is a small play that deals with a small story in four ankas. The hero of the nāṭika will always be noble and courageous, and he will be well-known to the readers. The heroine of the nāṭika will be a beautiful woman who has newly fallen in love. She will invariably belong to a noble family. It is mostly composed in kaisiki-vrtti.

It should be based on an incident relating to music or affairs of the harem. And it contains an abundance of female characters. It will involve many dances, songs and recitations. Love's enjoyment is its chief feature. In nāṭika, all the sandhis other than the vimarsa sandhi will be used. Kālidasa's *Mālavīkāgnimitra* and Srīharsa's *Ratnāvali* are considered the examples of the nāṭika

Trotaka

A trotaka will have either five or seven or nine ankas. And it can have as its characters either human beings or gods. There will be a vidūsaka or a jester in every anka. Srngāra will be the dominant rasa of a trotaka. According to Viśvanātha, a troṭaka has srngāra as its dominant rasa primarily because of the presence of the vidūsaka. Now a question may arise. How can a vidūṣaka who indulges in activities related to the hāsya rasa can invoke srngara rasa? Viśvanātha says that by way of helping the hero in his activities that can induce srngara rasa, the jester or vidushaka invokes srngāra rasa in the trotaka. Kālidasa's *Vikromorvaśiyam* is an example of a troṭaka that has five ankas.

Goṣṭhi

In a goṣṭhi there will be nine to ten unsophisticated male characters and five to six female characters. The goṣṭhi will be bereft of noble speech and is composed usually in kaisikī vr̥tti. It has only three sandhis namely mukha, pratimukha and nirvahana. It has only one anka and the dominant rasa will be srngāra.

Saṭṭaka

Saṭṭaka is a play which is composed completely in the prākṛt language. According to Sahityadarpana, sattaka is composed in Prakrit language from the beginning to the end, unlike the Sanskrit plays in which only some characters speak Prakrit language. It has atbhuta rasa or the aesthetic emotion of wonder as its dominant rasa. It will be bereft of pravesaka and viskambhaka. All the ankāś are named javanika. It is somewhat similar to nāṭika. Rājaśekhara's Kārpūramañjarī written in Maharāstri Prākṛt is an example of Saṭṭaka. Usually saṭṭaka is named after the heroine.

Nāṭyarāsaka

This has to be composed in one aṅka. Hāsya or the aesthetic emotion of the comic, mixed with śṛṅgāra rasa or the aesthetic emotion of the erotic, is the dominant rasa of this uparūpaka. A sycophant will be the secondary hero of nātyarāsaka. Vāsakasajjā or a woman who is ready to receive her husband is the heroine of nātyarāsaka. This requires only two sandhis namely mukha and nirvahaṇa, although some argue that all the sandhis other than pratimukha sandhi can be used here.

Prasthānaka

The hero of the prasthānaka will be a dāsa or a servant and the secondary hero would be a character belonging to the inferior category. The heroine would also be a servant like the hero. It has got only two aṅkās which are divided into four scenes. It mainly uses delicate movements such as the gait of an elephant, with occasional vigorous passages. It involves journeying abroad. The exit after each scene is named as an Apasara.

The performance enlivens itself towards the end through the introduction of the heroic sentiment or vīra rasa on the triumphant return of the hero and the description of his exploits. It also involves the vipralambha srngāra or the love in separation. Thus the Prasthānaka is often composed in kaiśiki vṛtti. It has two acts, divided into four scenes. It mainly uses delicate movements, with occasional vigorous passages, such as the gait of an elephant, which stands for the idea of journeying abroad. *Śṛṅgāratilaka* of Kālidasa is an example of prasthānaka.

Ullāpya

Hāsya, śṛṅgāra and karuṇa are the three dominant emotions of ullāpya. It usually involves battle, fight, wailing and bloodshed. There will be four heroines in ullāpya.

Kāvya

Kāvya in the category of uparūpakas should not to be confused with type of poetry we come across in alaṅkāraśāstra. The kavya here refers to a whole story composed in songs to be danced. *Rāghavavijaya* and the *Mārichavadha* are the two examples of kāvya that Abhinavagupta cites in his *Abhinavabharatī*. Abhinavagupta also calls it *rāgakāvya*. If the whole song-poem is in one raga, it is just the kavya. According to Bhoja, if it is in a variety of ragas, it is called *citrakāvya*. As an example of what Bhoja calls *citrakāvya*, Abhinavagupta quotes the poet Kohala's verse describing the story of Tripuradaha.

Any vṛttis other than ārabhaṭi can be used to compose the kāvya. This has only one aṅka and has three sandhis namely mukha, pratimukha and nirvahaṇa. Hāsya will be the predominant rasa or aesthetic emotion of this uparūpaka. In kāvya, both the nāyaka and the nāyikā belong to the noble category.

Premkhana

Premkhaṇa has only two sandhis namely mukha, pratimukha and nirvahaṇa. It requires only one aṅka and the hero of premkhaṇa will always be an inferior person. This uparūpaka involves fighting and conflict and can make use of all the four vṛttis.

Rāsaka

Rāsaka which has only one aṅka has only two sandhis namely mukha and nirvahaṇa. It will have five characters and it is usually composed in bhārati and kaiśiki vṛttis. It does not need a sūtradhāra or a stage manager. It has a lazy hero and a famous heroine. As the story develops, it attains nobility. According to Abhinavagupta, there are three kinds of rāsaka, namely tala-rasaka, danda-rasaka and mandala-rasaka. Tālarasaka, as the name suggests is a dance done to the accompaniment of the hands marking the time. In daṇḍarasaka, the performers dance to the

rhythmic beat of sticks which they carry in their hands. The maṇḍalarāsaka is a circular group dance in which both men and women participate.

Samlāpaka

A samlāpaka has three or four aṅkas. A samlāpaka can have all the rasas other than śṛṅgāra and karuṇa. A samlāpaka will involve a treacherous battle, fearsome incidents, the attack on cities, etc. Kaśiki and bhārati vṛttis cannot be employed here.

Śrīgadita

The śrīgadita depicts the vīpralambha type of srngara or love in separation. The hero of śrīgadita should be noble and famous. It needs to have only three sandhis, namely mukha, pratimukha and nirvahaṇa. Śrīgadita, which is mostly composed in bhāratī vṛtti will have the abundant use of śrī sound. It is a song rendered by a virtuous woman, describing to her friend, the virtues of her lover. Bhoja explains that it is called Srigadita; because the heroine here describes her Lord's qualities, just as the Goddess Śrī describes her Lord Nārāyaṇa. Bhoja states that it is through such songs and recitations, the state of separation or viraha is depicted. That said it does not mean that the heroine does not complain about her husband who is responsible for her viraha. The nayika in separation in śrīgadhita relates to her friend, her husband's bad conduct and perverse behaviour. Here we may at once recognise the similarity of this theme with that of the recurring theme of Bharata Natya songs, particularly varnas.

Śilpaka and vilāsika

A śilpaka has four aṅkas and all the four vṛttis can be used in the composition of śilpaka. The hero of a śilpaka will be a brahmin. The secondary hero will be an inferior character. Vilāsika is a single act drama which includes characters like viduṣaka or jestor, pithmarda or impudent

person, etc. This form of rūpaka is dominated by śṛṅgāra rasa. And the hero of this form of drama will always be an inferior character. It has got three sandhis namely mukha, pratimukha and nirvahaṇa. It deals with a small event.

Durmallika

This uparūpaka has four aṅkas and all the four sandhis except for the garbha sandhi. It needs to be composed in kaiśiki and bhārati. It contains nāgarikas or the city dwellers as its primary characters. The events in the first aṅka should happen within a span of three hours. It focuses on the activities of a libertine. The events in the second aṅka should get completed in five hours. In this aṅka, the focus will be primarily on the activities of the vidūṣaka or the stage manager. The aṅka three will deal with events that happen in a span of six hours. This aṅka will deal with a dancing master who teaches courtesans. The last aṅka which portrays events spanning over a period of ten hours will portray the activities of the city dweller.

Hallisaka

The Halliśaka is a type of group dance with rhythmic movements. It is basically, a nr̥tta, in which eight or sixteen dancers participate, and there is not much scope for Abhinaya in such type of dance. It has got only two sandhis, namely mukha and nirvahaṇa. It employs noble speech and has only one male character. Abhinavagupta describes Hallisaka as a dance; and, places it under the category of minor musical or dance dramas.

Bhāṇa

Like halliśa, bhāṇa has also one aṅka and has only two sandhis, namely mukha and nirvahaṇa. Kaiśiki and bhārati vṛttis are employed to compose this form of drama. It has got seven aṅgās namely upanyāsa, vinyāsa, vibodha, sādhvāsa, samarpana, nivṛtti, and samhāra. It involves

animals as the characters and is mostly didactic in nature. Regarding the plot of the bhanika, it is concerned mostly with the pious Hari-charitra or the lore of krsna. It has got a variant form which is called bhāṇika where the subject of the stotra is God Vishnu.

Prakaraṇika

Prakaraṇika is very much similar to nāṭika. Both the hero and the heroine of prakaraṇika will belong to the noble family. Viśvanātha, in his Sāhityadarpaṇa, opines that it is hard to find examples for prakaraṇika. It is clear from this observation that it was not popular during that time.

These are the eighteen uparupakas mentioned by Visvanatha in his Sahityadarpana. As I told you before, the intention of the lecture is to introduce you to the major forms of subordinate dramatic representations. You may find definitions of the same uparupaka with slight modifications and changes in the works of other literary theoreticians. This is primarily because their form must have changed as time went by, or there could be regional variations. Whatever the case may be, the definitions of the eighteen uparupakas I mentioned will give you an overview of these art forms. Soon you will see an appendix where I will quote the actual verses from Sahityadarpana that describes these eighteen forms. I hope you have understood this lesson. Thank you!