

Poetical Beauty: A Focus On Śūdraka's *Mṛcchakaṭika*

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Structured Abstract:

Purpose: Classical Sanskrit literature is full of aesthetic enjoyment. The creation of Śūdraka, *Mṛcchakaṭika* is regarded as a *ḍṛśyakāvya* (*prakaraṇa*) in *Alīṃkāraśāstra* is also full of aesthetic enjoyment. Going through this *prakaraṇa*, *Mṛcchakaṭika*, we may get the various kind of information about the system of administration, religion, philosophy of life, education; economical activities etc. which bear the morality of our life. So the *Mṛcchakaṭika* is an exceptional creation of Sanskrit literature. For that the poetical beauties of this drama become very attractive to the connoisseurs.

Methodology: Some data, study materials are collected from various kind of books, journals, and also internet website besides studying for presenting the paper. Considering of these aspects constitute this methodology.

Findings: *Mṛcchakaṭika* is the amalgamation of poet's imaginary power and materialistic thought. The poet presented it as a *kāvya* with full of beauty to the connoisseurs. The presence of beauty is in his talent of writing poetry, style of writing, sense about society and the description of various characters. Analysing *alīṃkāra*, *chanda*, *rīti*, *guṇa*, *rasa* etc. in the description of *Mṛcchakaṭika*, it may be said that it is a successful aesthetical poetry.

Value: The poet composed this drama with pleasant of his mind. It may be understood that the poet is a real worshiper of beauty. *Mṛcchakaṭika* also departs from traditions enumerated in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* that specify that dramas should focus on the lives of nobility.

Key words: *Mṛcchakaṭika*, *prakaraṇa*, *soundarya*, *alīṃkāra*, beauty.

Paper Type: Theoretical Research Paper.

Introduction

Every poet is the worshiper of the Beauty. They express their cordial beauty through their poetic description. Their power of imagination is great in the context of the sense of beauty. The description of beauty may be in various ways. The excellence of beauty has been expressed from *vyanjanā*. At first Vāmana quoted the word beauty i.e. *soundarya*, and said—

‘काव्यंग्राह्यमलंकारात्’, ‘सौन्दर्यमलंकारः’¹(Kā Sū 1.2.1)

The 'Beauty' can be enjoyed. It can be also described. But it is impossible to give the proper definition of beauty. There is also no place in the universe without 'beauty'. That's why it can be tasted, but it cannot be plundered.

Only the connoisseur can feel the real taste of beauty. The things of beauty can be presented in various ways to the men. For that a man must be needed an artistic eye to feel the beauty. It may be said in the language of Kavīguru Rabindranath Tagore –

“āmāri cetanār range pānnā holo sabuj

cuni uthala rāngā haye

āmi chokh mellum ākāśe jwale uthlo ālo

pūbe paśchime-----”²

The western poet P.B. Shelley said about the poetic beauty—“Poetry turns all things to loveliness; it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful and it adds beauty to that which is most deformed...”³

— *kāvya* turns the beauty to all things. These examples have reconciled with Śūdraka's *Mṛcchakaṭīka*.

Among the Sanskrit rhetoricians, Vāmana first accomplished the drama as the greatest creation of poetry. That's why the drama compares with the picture—

‘सन्दर्भेषु दशरूपकं श्रेयः तद्धिचित्रं चित्रपटवत्’⁴ । (Kā Sū 1.3.30).

The poet creates the beauty in the sentence which makes poetry to a sentence and this is the difference between general sentence and the sentence which is used by the poet. According to Bhāmaha a beautiful face of a girl doesn't look pleasant without ornaments, that's like the beauty of *kāvya* does not express properly without *alṃkāra*—

“रूपकादिरलंकारस्तस्यान्यैर्वहु वोदितः।

न कान्तमपि निर्भूषविभाति वणितामुखम्”॥

Later, *alṃkāra* became important in the *kāvya*. Many rhetoricians said that *guṇa*, *riti*, *dhvani*, *rasa* is the integral part of beauty. Mammata said—

“उपकुर्वन्तिसन्तयेन्गद्वारेणजातुचित्।

हारादिवदलंकारास्तेनुप्रासोऽपमादयः” ॥

Being the adversary of the rasa, the sentence with *almkāra* cannot be said the *kāvya*, in the language of Viśvanātha—‘रसस्यपरिपन्थीत्वात्नालंकारःप्रहेलिका’. The excellence of rasa is the general indication of *almkāra*. This is first uttered by Ānandavardhana—

“रसक्षिप्ततयायस्यवन्धःशक्यक्रियोभवेत्।

अपृथक्प्रयत्ननिवर्त्यःसोऽलंकारध्वनोमतः” ॥

The beauty of *kāvya* is raised by using of varieties of *rectories*. Much rhetoric has been placed in this *prakaraṇa* which makes beautiful to this *kāvya* such as *upamā*, *utprekṣa*, *rūpaka*, *nidarśanā* etc. The cheerfulness of poet’s mind is expressed by dangling of metre and which please our mind that is metre.

At the time of accent the dangling of latter (*laghu guru*) reveals the thinking of poet and in the other hand, it helps to the joyous feelings to the connoisseurs.

Ācārya Bharata said about universal connection between the words and metres. He also said that the drama can be expressed by this connection—

“नानावृत्तविनिष्पन्नंशब्दमूलंतुतस्मृतम्

च्छन्दोहीनोऽनशब्दोऽस्तिनच्छन्दःशब्दवर्जितः।

तस्मास्तुभयेसंयुक्तेनाट्यस्योद्योतकेऽस्मृते’// (Nā Śa-15/41.42)

The beauty of *kāvya* is raised by using of varieties of *almkāra*. Many rhetoric’s have been placed in the *kāvya*, which makes beautiful to this *kāvya* such as *upamā*, *utprekṣa*, *rūpaka*, *nidarśanā* etc. The cheerfulness of poet’s mind is expressed by dangling of metre and which please our mind that is metre.

The poet shows the pictures through *Mṛcchakaṭīka* which are too beautiful. It seems that he paints the pictures one by one with his pen in this *prakaraṇa*.

Review of literature:

Some early researchers are highlighted to search the aesthetical beauty of Indian literature to present this paper:

- Kumar (1980), in his article 'Aesthetics and Sanskrit literature', explained that Sanskrit literature is full of aesthetic enjoyment. According to him *rasa guṇa riti alaṃkāra, dhvani* etc. are the main source of aesthetical beauty.
- In this book, Pandit (2008) has described beauty as a sense of a man. Beauty is a perfect coordination, a perfect proportion of everything that is involved.
- Goswami & Chattapadhyay (2005), *Technical terms in Sanskrit literary criticism and aesthetics*- in this project, they have taken into account all definitions (various Sanskrit literary terms) and explanations available and referred to what seem to them the best one.
- In his article, titled 'Mṛcchakaṭīka of Śūdraka (A Critical & Cultural Study)' Sharma (2005) conducted a comparative analysis taking into account the critical study of Dr. G.V. Devasthali and introduction to *Mṛcchakaṭīka* by M. R.Kale. The critical study also encompasses a brief portrait of the dramatist Śūdraka. The cultural study gives a brief description of philosophical flora, fauna and other aspects of the play.

There are so many research works have been developed on Indian aesthetics. This paper is also to be presented by searching the poetical beauty of *Mṛcchakaṭīka* in this regards.

Object of the study

In fact this world is filled with everything. Our Sanskrit literature also fills with multicoloured gems. There is no subject, which is not described in Sanskrit literature. In *Agnipurāṇa* the rhetoricians said-

“अपारे काव्यसंसारे कविरेव प्रजापति ।

यथास्मै रोचते विश्वं तथेदं परिवर्तते” ॥

Thus, Śūdraka drew the beauty of his mind in his subtle craftsmanship through the creation of this *prakaraṇa, Mṛcchakaṭīka*.

It may feel the balance of poetic work through the language. The creed of unconscious and conscious, sometimes conscious and unconscious reveals in this creation of poet. Therefore the *dhvanikāra* Ānandavardhana said about the poet—

“भावानचेतनानपिचेतनवत्चेतनान्चेतनवत्।

स्मभावयति यथेष्टं सुकविः काव्ये स्वतन्त्रतया”⁵।

The poet, Śūdraka showed the pictures through *Mṛcchakaṭīka* which are too beautiful. It seems that he painted the pictures one by one with his pen in this *prakaraṇa*. The beauty of *kāvya* is raised by using of varieties of *almkāra*. Much rhetoric has been placed in this *prakaraṇa* which makes beautiful to this *kāvya* such as *upamā*, *utprekṣa*, *rūpaka*, *nidarśanā* etc. The cheerfulness of poet's mind is expressed by dangling of metre and which please our mind that is metre.

In the technique of *Mṛcchakaṭīka* we may see that Śūdraka is successful to make a balance of feeling with the help of language. The poet showed his great craftsmanship in the title of *prakaraṇa*, *Mṛcchakaṭīka*. The word *mṛt* means soil and the word *śakaṭikā* means small car. The *prakaraṇa* is written about an earthen small car and it is a poetic beauty in the *prakaraṇa* and it shows the deepest meaning which will reveal in the act 6th of this *prakaraṇa*.

The poverty has revealed in this *prakaraṇa*. This poverty has stolen all the wealth the hero Cārudatta. He has accepted the beauty of poverty. This exceptional flow of beauty is truly indescribable. The subject matter is about the love story of *Gaṇikā* Vasantasenā and the Brahman Cārudatta. It may be observed the poetic beauty of Śūdraka's creation is unique. In the act 5th, the description of Vasantasenā is really beautiful—

“अपद्माश्रीरेसषाप्रहरणमनडगास्यललितम्।

कुलस्त्रीणांशोकोमदनवरवृक्षस्यकुसुमम्।

सलीलंगच्छन्तीरतिसमयलज्जाप्रणयिनी।

रतिक्षेत्रेण्डगेप्रियपाथिकसार्थरनुगता”॥ (Mṛ k 5.12)

The poet described about the rainy season in conversation way among the characters which is astonished to all. At the very beginning of the act –v, the hero, Cārudatta compared to the rainy season with mythical character in his dialogue, and it is really beautiful. Cārudatta described to rain drop as the tears of sky in digester of the moon—

“पतन्तिचन्द्रव्यसनाद्विमुक्तादिवोश्रुद्गाराइववारिधाराः” (Mṛ K 5.44)।

The poet described about a moony night in subtle artistic way. The hero Cārudatta took bath in shining moon. The description of the *rājpath* was glowing with the shining moon that was very beautiful—

“उदयतिहिसशान्कःकामिनीगण्ड-पाण्डुः

ग्रह-गण-परिवारोराज-मार्ग-प्रदीपः।

तिमिर-निकर-मध्येरश्मयोयस्यगोराः

सुतजलइवपन्केक्षीरधाराः” (Mṛ K 1.57)

The scenery of the hottest day of the summer season is very beautiful—

“छयासुप्रतिमुक्तशष्पकवलंनिद्रायतेगोकुलं

तृष्णार्तेश्चनिपीयतेवनमृगैरुष्णंपयहसारसम्

सन्तपदतिशङ्कितैर्नगरीमार्गोनरैःसेव्यते

तप्तांभूमिमपास्यचप्रवहणंमन्येक्वचित्संस्थितम्” (Mṛ K 8.11). Thus the poet

expressed his power of imagination to draw the natural beauty.

Discussion

It can be said that a poet can create his imaginative world as his desire. So his creation is fully independent and full of joy and happiness. Hence, from the view point of aesthetic enjoyment a poet may be regarded greater than the Supreme Creator. The great rhetorician Mammaṭa said—

“नियतिकृतनियमरहितां हलादैकमयीमनन्यपरतन्त्रम्।

नवरसरुचिरां निर्मितिमादधती भारती कवेर्जयति”⁶॥

Aesthetic experience evidently involves participation of two parties. On the one side, there is the artist who creates art objects by the application of his imagination and skill. On the other side, the connoisseur appreciates it. On his part also a certain amount of sympathy and sensitivity is an essential prerequisite for the right type of appreciation to trigger off the aesthetic experience proper.

Literature is the mirror of society. The rhetorician said to this drama as an imitation of public activities which is the part of the system of society. The *prakaraṇa*, *Mṛcchakaṭika* is a social *kāvya*. The men concerning of higher or lower sphere are much given importance in this play. The poet presented the general ideals in very technical way that we may know from

Mṛcchakaṭīka. The reality is the truth and the truth is beauty. This real truth is reflected in *Mṛcchakaṭīka*. The western poet, John Keats also expressed—“Beauty is Truth; Truth Beauty”⁷. So, there are so many poetical beauties in the drama, *Mṛcchakaṭīka*.

Conclusion

Beauty is mainly a positive feeling of a man. Being satisfy with literature, the connoisseur felt integrated or tagged with it. Then he becomes appreciative to the sentiment (*rasa*) sprung within the literature and simultaneously he feels the extreme joy which can be stated as *Brahmāsvādasahodara* (the realisation of the supreme power that is Brahma). The sense of beauty is expressed from it. Thus the poetic mind was flying with its colourful wings, far and far away to collect the beauty. Sometimes he takes bath in the sea of beauty. In this way the expression of beauty, the sense of craftsmanship had expressed in the *Mṛcchakaṭīka* of the poet Śūdraka.

Every *śloka* of this *prakaraṇa* charmed the connoisseurs. *Rasa* is expressed here. It is describe in brief about the *alaṅkāra* and *rasa* which are used in *Mṛcchakaṭīka*. So, the power of description of Śūdraka is incomparable. The multi-coloured beauty expressed in the poetical description of Śūdraka which is appreciable to the connoisseurs who can enjoy the nectar like reenlistment of beauty immersing in the ocean of beauty in the literature like *Mṛcchakaṭīka*.

Notes and References

- ¹) Anil Chandra. Basu *Kāvyaalaṅkārasūtravṛtti* (1.2.1). P- 58
- ²) Rabindranath tagore, *Sancayitā(Āmi)*.p-653
- ³)Percy Byshe Shelley, *A Defence of poetry* (1821) essay on the poetic theory.
- ⁴) *ibid.*,(1.3.30). p-99
- ⁵) Bimalakanta Mukhopadhyay. *Dhvyānyāloka*, p-407
- ⁶) *Kāvyaṅkārāśāstra* (1st ullāsa), p-1
- ⁷)John Keats, *Ode on a Grecian Urn*. L. No.29: To Bailey, 22 Nov.1817.

List of Abbreviations

Kā Sū	<i>Kāvyaalaṅkārasūtravṛtti</i>
Mṛ K	<i>Mṛcchakaṭīka</i>
Nā Śā	<i>Nāṭyaśāstra</i>

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