

CHAPTER 2

A. THE ORIGIN OF NATYA

Natyashastra has been described as the fifth Veda, and according to the Natyashastra, this fifth Veda was also composed by Brahma, taking materials from the rest of the Vedas. In the thirtieth chapter of the Vajasaneyi Samhita of the Shukla Yajurveda, the Purushvedh Prakaran offers a description of how to employ the right person for a given task. The sixth Kandika in that episode provides the following mantra:

नृताय सूतं गीताय शैलुषं धर्माय सभाचरन्नरिष्टायै
भीमलन्नर्माय रेभं हसाय कारिमानन्दाय स्त्रीषखम्प्रमदे
कुमारिपुत्रम्मेधायै रथकारन्धैर्याय तक्षाणम् ॥ *

“For dance (to tala and laya), the Suta; for songs, the actor; to tell matters of religion, the articulate orator; to make everyone sit in order, a tall and robust young man; for humour, the witty guy; for matters related to Shringaar (personal adornment), the artist; for pleasure, the eunuch; to while away time, the son of an unmarried woman; for clever jobs, the chariot-maker and for patient work, the carpenter should be employed.”

This means that even thousands of years ago, the art of Drama was well instituted in our country.

Bharat has mentioned the following in the very first chapter of his Natyashastra:

* Purushmegh 6th Kandika in the 30th chapter of the Shukla Yajurved Vajasaneyi Samhita

“One day, Bharatji, the knower of the core of Drama, was having a respite, surrounded by his grandchildren, after having completed the daily ablutions. That very day, Aatreya and other ascetics and members of the intelligentsia came to him to ask: 'O Brahman! Why and for whom have you intended the work you have compiled on Drama in conformance to the Vedas? How many parts does it have? What does it prove and how is it used?' In his answer, the great sage replied, 'In the closing of the Kaliyug of the Swayambhuva Manu and the onset of the Tretayug of the Vaivaswat Manu, there came about such disorganisation that all people began doing evil and lived a mixed life tied up in sex, anger, greed, temptation, jealousy and so on. Then, this Jambu Dweepa, which was well ruled over by its kings, was attacked and taken over by the Devas, Danavaas, Gandharvas, Yakshas and Mahoragas. In those days, Indra and the other gods went to Brahma and said to him, 'We wish for a game that can be heard as well as seen. Therefore, kindly create a fifth Veda that all the Varnas may participate in, since the Shudras are unable to enjoy the Vedic festivals.' Brahma accepted this proposal and bidding Indra farewell, Brahma – the all-knowing one – entered a state of deep, spiritual concentration on the four Vedas and decided that he would create a history-laden Veda named Naatya, which would enable one to attain religion, wealth and success, which would be full of valuable teachings, and enable showing all future events using imitation, be full of principles from all the shastras and which would enable showcasing all the crafts. With these words, he took from the Rig Veda the part about speech, from Sam Veda the part containing song, from Yajur Veda the art of acting and personal adornment from Atharva Veda. In this manner, Brahma created Natya, which was related to the Vedas and sub-Vedas, and was full of all kinds of beauty.

In his treatise on Hindu dramaturgy, 'Dasharupaka', Dhananjay has enumerated the other contributors to the completion of the Natya Veda while laying down its importance:

‘After obtaining an extract from all the Vedas, Brahma created it, Bharat employed it, Mahadev added to it the Tandava dance and Goddess Parvati the gentle, graceful dance. Who could possibly tell all the salient features of such a work?’

Shardatanay’s 11th century work, Bhavprakashan, in the context of the rise of music, tells about the emergence of Natya Veda and offers a new take on its development in its tenth article:

In an extremely ancient age, Swayambhuva Manu asked his father, the Sun god, for a means of recreation. At this, the Sun god informed him that Brahma, having completed the task of creation, had asked Mahavishnu this same question. Mahavishnu then sent him to Shiva. Shiva had already taught the Gandharva Vidya to his subject, Nandi. Therefore he instructed Nandi to tell Brahma of all the constituents of the Gandharva Veda. On learning it, Brahma conceived a ‘Nata’ (actor). Immediately, a sage appeared there along with five disciples, whom Brahma thoroughly taught the Natya Veda. The sage and his disciples, having learnt the Natya Veda, showed Brahma plays that were full of song and *rasas*, which Brahma was extremely pleased to witness. Hence, Brahma granted them a boon – you will be known in all the three worlds as Bharat and the Natya Veda will be named ‘Bhaarat’ after you. On hearing this, Swayambhuva Manu asked the Bhartas to go to ‘Bhaaratvarsha’ to propagate the Natya Veda created by Brahma. They went to Ayodhya and enacted many plays and promoted the Natyashastra in the diverse regions of India.

This description gives us the following important essential points:

1. Natak (drama) is meant for both viewing and listening, not reading.
2. It is enacted before an audience that can comprise people belonging to any Varna who enjoy it equally.

3. Tales from history are used in it.
4. It can be a means of attaining religion, wealth and success in life.
5. It can be a means of providing great teachings.
6. It can be used to depict not just the past but also the works of the present and future through imagination and imitation.
7. It can be used to describe all scriptures and display all the various crafts.
8. It has four main parts — Text, Lyrics, Acting and Rasa (the Essences of Art)
9. Later on, it also included the Tandava and Aesthetic Dances.
10. In the beginning, only the gents played all the parts.

Even if we were to dismiss the above narration as imaginary, there is no doubting the fact that Natya has been performed in our country since time immemorial and that it has never died out. In addition to the Vedas, the first primeval poet Valmiki himself described Ayodhya as being full of courtesans and drama companies and at the time of Ram's coronation he says, "Actors, Dancers and Singers were singing and uttering pleasing words that the populace were listening to."

In the Harivansh Parva of the Mahabharat, there's a wonderful description of the plays Ramayan and Kauber-Rambhabhisar in slaying of Vajranabha and Pradyumna's marriage in chapters 91 to 97. Shri Krishna has used his maya to create an actor called Bhadra and sent some Bhimvanshi Yadavas as actors with him to Vajranabha's Vajrapur. Here, Pradyumna was the hero, Samba Yadav the jester and Gada a supporting actor. Other Yadavas took up other

roles and started enacting the Ramayana. Actors played out parts such as Dashrath, Rishyashringa, Shanta, Ram, Laxman, Bharat and Shatrughna exceedingly well. All of the demons were impressed. On hearing their praise, Vajranabh invited the troupe to perform at his place, where they enacted the play 'Rambhabhisar'. That play was performed so well that the demons and their wives gave away even the ornaments they wore.

Panini has mentioned in his Ashtadhyayi the Shilali and Krushashava's Nata-Sutras, but those aren't referred to anywhere. In his Kamasutra, Vatsyayan has written about 'Ghataanibandham' (fairs) in the Nagrakvritta Prakaran as follows – 'On a particular day or occasion of the fortnight or month, the actors employed by the king would perform at the temple of Saraswati or in schools.' In the same book, in the 'Dhoopvilepan-Ghata' episode, he says – 'Actors coming from outside should perform before the Naagars first, and should stay back for the next day's performance. If the people should still want to enjoy their performance, they should properly organise the performance, or bid the actors farewell. During calamities or festivals, these actors should be treated in the same manner as are the actors employed by the king.'

In Kautilya's 'Arthashastra' also, in the 27th chapter, it's written – 'An actor, dancer, singer, storyteller, dancer-singer, acrobat, juggler, and bard and adulterous women should be treated in the same way as prescribed for courtesans. If the actors etc come from outside to present a play or a show, they should pay the king a tax worth five wagers for every single performance.'

Over and above this, for teaching acting and other arts, the Arthashastra also prescribes provisions a king must make: 'A king should employ a teacher to teach courtesans, maids and actresses the arts of singing, playing instruments, dancing, acting, writing, painting, playing veena, flute, and mridang, appreciation of paintings, making perfume and garlands, massaging, managing decor, and the sixty-four arts and so on, and use the income from cities and

villages for the purpose.'

These descriptions make it amply clear that in the 3rd century B.C., during Chanakya's time, royal patronage was available to the art of Drama in our country, there were provisions made for teaching it, performances were staged extensively, the people were interested in it, drama companies roamed and gave performances, the king used to protect them, women had also begun participating in such plays, there were no fixed buildings for Drama but on occasion the space required was available and many teachers had written formulae for acting.

In the Jain work 'Rayapseniya Sutta', there is a story: 'When Bhagwan Mahavir sat on a large rock under an Asoka tree in the Ambasaal grove of the Aamalkappa city, Suryopadev came there and sang, played and danced for the initial prayer and then performed 32 kinds of histrionic plays that included acting the parts of ocean waves, moonrise, sunrise, an elephant's gait, and script.' This means that the Jains had a tradition of performing before great men in order to honour them. Approximately two or two-and-a-quarter centuries after Mahavir Swami, Bhadrabahu Swami says the following in reference to the Jadvritti sadhus: A sadhu had stopped on the way to watch a performance by actors. When he was informed that he should not be watching the actors' performance, he began watching that of the actresses! This means that in the 4th century B.C., there were separate drama companies of male and female actors, which performed at various places.

Drama has had a respectable status among the Buddhists as well. In the palace once, in Buddhadeva's presence, his chief disciples, Maudgalayan and Upatishya had given an acting performance. Thereafter, we have access to Bhasa's drama structure from his plays and the full tradition of their enactment in writing. The great commentator Patanjali has mentioned in his work, Mahabhasya, the enactment of plays such as Kans Vadh and Bali Vadh.

Kautilya's Arthashastra (in the Shaadgunya-Adhikaran) describes ways to secure the release of the prince held captive by the enemy. It recommends going to the enemy's capital in the guise of an actor and establishing contact with the captive prince. In the Yogvrutta-Adhikaran, it also talks about providing sustenance and compensation to actors. The Adhyaksha-Prachaar-Adhikaran clearly states that no buildings should be built within the towns and villages for the purpose of entertainment or training of actors, so that actors do not disturb the townsfolk in their work with their shows.

A.1. Theories on the Origin of Natya (Drama)

Many European scholars have propounded several theories on the origin of drama. Macdonell has treated the dialogues and hymns between Sarma and Pani, Yam and Yami and Pururava and Urvashi in the Rig Veda as an ancient form of Indian dramatic Literature. A.B. Keith treats them as legend; and Windish and Oldenburg have held up that theory, which was also supported by Pischel and Geldener saying that: "The dialogues were probably and essentially in the form of story in verse, and the stories that contained face-to-face took the form of dialogues." Finally, Oldenberg reached the conclusion that on account of being handed down orally, the poetic part was passed on over generations but the prose part was forgotten. Max Mueller propounded that Natya began with the Vedic Karma Kand, which was held up by Silva Levi. He has even said that the dialogues found in the Rig Veda are not merely the imagination of the poets or rishis but that they may have personally heard these dialogues spoken in a Vedic yagnas. Leopold von Schroeder and Johannes Hartel have also seconded this theory. Schroeder said with reference to the Manduk-Sukta of the seventh Mandal of the Rig Veda that, as in two Greek plays by Aristophanes, standing in a water body filled with many Brahmin frogs they would have been singing Suktas. They have even considered that Sukta (9 | 112) in the Rig Veda a play in which a Brahmin

who extracts intoxicants seeks protection for fulfilling his wishes. In that festival, the Forest Gods also secretly sing and play instruments. Therefore, in their opinion, even in the remotest ancient times, song and instruments went together. Hence, influenced by that, the rishis of the Rig Veda had started acting along with the singing and dancing to the Vedic dialogues. However, that acting used to be in the context of the yagna, and therefore did not contain any obscenity as there was in the songs of Greece and Mexico. Hartel said that the Suktas of the Vedic dialogues used to be sung as well. Therefore the Vedic dialogues and their rituals certainly contained the seed of Natya and the entire chapter in the Rig Veda this seed is developed, which is copied in the Bengali 'yatra' of today. Keith has criticised this saying that these are not dramatic dialogues, they are ritualistic dialogues comparable to those that are still in vogue in Christian churches. Winternitz considers these Suktas not the substitute of Natak but a different form of Natak.

Abhinav-Bharat opines that both these theories are misleading because Natya is itself a 'chaakshup' yagna and its shastra is a fifth Veda, which commands a domain all its own. It is also mentioned in the beginning of the Natyashastra that Natya was formulated with four elements from the four Vedas. Therefore the Vedas can be considered the original source of Natya but viewing Vedic rituals or their dialogues as Natya is a misconception.

Macdonnell has shown that the words Nat (actor) and Natak have been derived from the metal called Nat, which is a Prakrit form of the Sanskrit Nrut (to dance). This dance is probably an antecedent of Indian Drama, which probably included the facial expression along with the body movements, and to which was added song, later on. In the same manner, the Puranic inventor of Natak was also probably named 'Bharat', which means Nat. Even today, the Nat is known as 'Bharot' in Gujarati. However, Macdonnell's opinion is misleading. In Sanskrit, नट , नृत्त , and णट are all metals that led to the advent of the

words 'Natya', 'Nrutya' and 'Nrutt' one after the other, and the meanings of these words are also different.

‘Creating rasa through expressing the meaning of an entire sentence is known as **Natya**.’

‘Merely enacting the meaning of a word and expressing its sense is known as **Nrutya**.’

‘The movement of the hands and feet to the tala and laya is known as **Nrutya**.’

The above three words should not be thought of as substitutes for one another.

In Pischel's opinion, “The origins of the Hindu plays were in the dance of puppets. These puppets, in ancient India, were made of wool, sticks, buffalo horn and ivory. Even talking puppets were also used on the stage, which are described in 'Bal Ramayan' by Rajashekhar. The puppets were controlled by means of string and the person who controlled them was known as the 'Sutradhaar'. Therefore, the incidence of the word 'Sutradhaar' in the beginning of plays is itself evidence that puppet dance was the origin of Natak.” Pandurang Pandit has corroborated this view of Pischel's. However, Ridgeway has criticised this view saying that puppet plays and shadow plays are but cheap, imitations of the real play. Bharat, in his *Natyashastra*'s 35th chapter titled 'Bhumika Patra Vikalpa' provides a description of the Sutradhaar saying that - “The one who uses sweet sentences endowed with blessings and who is praised by the people for his good conduct is known as Naandi. The one who knows song, instruments and character equally well and uses them as prescribed in the shastras is known as the 'Sutradhaar'.” The word 'Sutra' doesn't exclusively mean 'twine'. Sutra is defined as follows:

स्वल्पाक्षरामसंदिग्धं सार्वद्विश्ततोमुखम्।

अस्तोभमानवयं च विदुः॥ ¹

{That which contains few and specific letters and a universal theory, that which has a clear meaning and is without flaws, such speech is known as the 'Sutra' by true knowers.} Therefore, it will be a grave mistake to think of the Sutradhaar as a puppeteer. The creator of Nanjaraj Yashobhushan, 'Abhinav Kalidas' has also described the characteristics of the Sutradhaar as follows: 'The one who is clever at describing the characteristics of the hero and the poet's work in a Sutra and is adept at decorating the stage is known as the Sutradhaar.'

आसूत्रयन् गुणान्नेतुः कवेरपि च वस्तुनः।

रन्गप्रसाधनप्रौढः सूत्रधार इतीरितः॥ ¹

Dr. Pischel is also of the opinion that the regions where shadow plays have been popular, including Malaya, Cambodia, Siam, China, Burma, Japan, Arabia, Asia Minor and North Africa, are where plays have originated. Luanders and Dr. Kono have corroborated this as well. However, there's no description of shadow plays in the Sanskrit works on the characteristics of Natya. In Sanskrit Literature, there is a description of 7 shadow plays of which 'Dutaangad' is the most ancient. Wilson imagines that shadow plays were probably outlines of plays. Prof. Levi has also accepted this with much reluctance and Pischel has also later on thought of shadow plays as being half plays. However, in another article, he has said that the pure meaning of 'shadow play' is staging a play by means of shadows. Nilkanth, while

1 In the 35th chapter of the Bharat Natyashastra, titled Bhumika-Paatra-Vikalp

1 From 'Nanjaraj Yashobhushan' by Kalidas

critiquing the Mahabharata, has defined 'Rupopjivanam' and mentioned a dramatic performance that is known as 'Jalmandapika' in the south. This involves hanging a fine cloth and using leather cutouts behind to depict kings, ministers and so on. However, for the lack of evidence, this opinion has no value.

Dr. Ridgeway has dismissed all theories about the origin of Natya and devised a theory of the origin of Sanskrit drama, Ram Leela, Raas Leela and the religious yatra celebrations. He says that it was to commemorate the exploits of the brave and their labour and to keep their memory intact within the society that their stories were given a dramatic form. Although Dr. Ridgeway had formed this opinion in the context of the Greek tragedies, he later on applied that theory to the emergence of Indian drama as well and kept giving examples from Indian Literature to show that all dramatic activities were intended to honour the brave personages. This opinion is also misleading because even if the role of history has been acknowledged in drama there are many other forms of drama such as imaginary and legendary. Hence, it won't be appropriate to consider only honoring the brave as an origin of Natya (drama).

In criticising the above opinion of Ridgeway, Keith has made a strange suggestion. He says that plays emerged with the intention of showing the transitional phases in Nature such as winter, summer, monsoon and so on and to show the superiority of one season over the other. In his definition of the play Kansa Vadh in the Mahabhashya, he has shown that summer in the form of Krishna wins against early winter represented by Kansa, which symbolises the allegoric awakening of verdant Nature. However, Keith himself nullified this interpretation later on. Some scholars saw the Indradhwaj Festival of the state of Nepal and formulated the theory that just as the maypole dance of Europe gave rise to Greek drama, the Indradhwaj Festival gave rise to Indian drama. Natyashastra, in fact, contains a story that says that a play was performed on

the occasion of the Mahendra Dhvajotsav. However, this merely suggests an occasion for the performance of the play, not the reason for it.

B. THE PLAYWRIGHT AND PRINCIPLES OF DRAMA CREATION

Bharata says in the chapter 'Bhumika-Patra-Vikalp' in his Natyashastra that

यस्माद्यथोपदिष्टान् तांश्च भावान्श्च सात्त्वसंयुक्तान् ।
भूमी-विकल्पो नयति च नाट्यकार संज्ञि तस्त्स्मात् ॥ ¹

{The person who enriches the character with the core emotions enumerated in the shastras is known as the playwright.}

B.1. The Qualities of a Playwright

It has already been said that all the systems of all the three worlds can be imitated in Natya, which means that Natya lies in properly presenting all the joys and sorrows in the world. All of these joys and sorrows are the core emotions of living beings. A playwright is one who infuses these core emotions into the characters. This means that a playwright must have the right knowledge of all human emotions. He should also know what kind of and which person, in ordinary or extraordinary circumstances, conducted, conducts and will conduct himself or should conduct himself. From this perspective, it is necessary for the playwright to have essential knowledge of past and present social mores of diverse countries. This knowledge can be acquired only through pursuing the study of the Puranas and history and supervising the social conduct in the present time. This knowledge also includes the scriptures, crafts and knowledge of those societies. Therefore the playwright should be a thorough pundit of history, society and psychology.

1 From the 35th chapter of the Bharat Natyashastra, titled Bhumika-Paatra-Vikalp

But the qualifications of a playwright are not limited to that alone. He should also be qualified to infuse into characters the core emotions. This means that the playwright should infuse characters with such core emotions as will carry the purpose of the play and its rasa. This is possible only when the playwright is familiar with all the regulations relevant to the stage and understands well people's attitudes and knows which event should be presented with what kind of characters in what style so as to impress the audience. Under the scope of the proscenium ethics and regulations acting - skills, color, backstage work and music etc are all affiliate businesses. As long as he does not know these things, the dramatist cannot infuse his characters with the core emotions. Therefore the characteristics of a true dramatist include expert knowledge of past and present society or that of Puraanaas or history, present-day social conduct, pedagogy, craft and skills as well as color composition.

B.2. Four Kinds of Dramatists

By nature, the dramatist can be classified into four kinds: Idealistic, Optimistic, Materialistic and Fatalistic.

B.2.1. Realist Dramatists

The realist dramatists believe in facts. They believe that the world is so full of sin and misery that seasoned folks don't perceive them as such. Therefore, they will be able to perceive sin and misery for what they are only when they see them on the stage and they will attempt to retire from both. These dramatists believe that a section of the society have secured for themselves the best facilities and left all others to suffer. If the society's decree is changed, all those miseries could be eliminated, which are taken to be God-given or as fate. These realist dramatists believe in accepting only those real facts and things that can be understood by the intellect by means of logic.

B.2.2. Idealist Dramatists

The idealist dramatist gives his main characters only the virtues. Some of these dramatists look for ideal heroes and ideal consequences according to the ancient culture of his country. Some create ideal characters to suit the contemporary times. Some look for only utility value, i.e. they infuse only those virtues into their characters that will be socially useful. And some create only such ideal characters as will embody the desire to please people and benefit living beings.

B.2.3. Fictional Dramatists (सम्भावनावादी नाटककार)

According to the fictional dramatists, nothing is impossible in the world. They feel that to create the dramatic effect it is necessary to make use of possibility because ordinarily men are unable to do what they wish to do on account of social regulations, royal decree, physical weakness etc. However, if he has the freedom necessary, he can do anything. Such dramatists believe that in order to make the play dramatic, it is necessary to create only such grand scenes as are extraordinary yet seem possible and inevitable. The spectator should feel that if he were in the character's situation, he would do exactly what the character did. These dramatists consider coincidental fortune a dire necessity for drama wherein something is not even remotely possible yet it suddenly happens, as in people suddenly meet long-separated friends or suddenly find a lost object. These dramatists feel that the resultant feeling of satisfaction on fulfillment of a desire provides a unique experience to the spectators.

B.2.4. Fatalist Dramatists

The fatalist dramatists believe that all men and animals in the world are controlled by another. Some unearthly power for a specific period with

special purpose sends us to this world and once the period is over, kills them off. All creation works on the same principle. These people believe in the consequences of karma. Some of them even consider this birth as a result of the last birth and karma. Some believe that in our lives there are as many reactions as there are actions and these actions and reactions are fortuitous. The third kind of fatalist dramatists are those who coordinate fate and masculinity and believe that fate is more powerful than masculinity.

Actually, the best playwright is the one who — instead of holding on to an -ism — takes the support of folk humour and spreads the message of sublime ideals.

B.2.5. A Playwright by Nature

There are two kinds of playwrights by nature: serious and non-serious. Among the serious playwrights, some obtain the material for their plays from instances of great men, important events and sublime chronicles. Some other playwrights are discontent with the sin, corruption and injustice rampant in the society and use that to expose tyrants and unjust persons and show their downfall. The non-serious playwrights are, for one, those who are by nature cheerful, buoyant and humour-loving. Such playwrights write humorous skits. There are also certain non-serious playwrights who lack derivative intelligence or knowledge of multiple subjects, whose study is limited and who keep the company of men of an inferior quality. Such playwrights mock the weaknesses of men and display their shallowness and try to show them in poor light to the society. It is such persons that create satirical or condemnatory plays. There are some methodical and talented playwrights as well, who create such skits in addition to their sublime and serious plays. In reality, it is such versatile playwrights that are become known as great poets and acharyas of Natya.

B.2.6. Kinds of Plays Based on Playwrights' Nature

Arastu tells of two kinds of poetry — serious and funny — and has said, 'Depending on the nature of the poets, we have two directions in which poetry is proceeding. Those with a serious nature presented the exploits and conduct of the best among men while the ordinary writers described those of a lower level of people. The other kind of poets created humorous poetry and the serious ones created poems in praise of Gods and famous men. But the true playwright is one who has all kinds of experience, because only with such broad experience can he use it in his plays.

B.2.7. Characterisation

While creating characters in a play, the playwright has to keep in mind that there should be few characters and only as many as absolutely essential. Their lineage, class, country, attitudes, body, gender, state of mind, social status, health, condition, company, tradition and culture should be sacrificed and they should be created so that in different dramatic situations they act in conformance to the given age with appropriate conduct, doing possible and trustworthy acts and carry forward the business of drama. A character's talk and his work should not in any way seem unnatural, impossible or untrustworthy.

The high priests of drama in Europe have propounded four principles in this regard:

1. Portray the cruel as being terrible and the good as being god-like.
2. Behaviour in given situations should be portrayed as it usually is.
3. Portray the beauty, ugliness will automatically disappear.
4. Show the human flaws; the audience will correct those in themselves.

Of these, the first and the third principle is acceptable because you cannot

allege kindness in a cruel person. The third also sounds appropriate – ugliness will disappear in the presence of beauty. The second and fourth principles aren't appropriate, however, because there is a possibility that on seeing the flaws portrayed the audience might imitate those.

B.2.8 Un-Enactable Plays

Those writers who have no experience of the stage but have the capacity to compose poetry will initially create plays that cannot be enacted or will fail if staged. That is why, in the 4th century BC, a Greek playwright called Kheremon was labelled a reading tragedian by the people because his plays could not be acted out and had more of poetry. There are many such playwrights in Hindi as well, and they have made a name only because their plays are prescribed reading for certain exams, for some reason. Such plays contain sentimental, mysterious, and characteristic language with philosophical content. This is the reason why in Hindi drama and dramatic literature haven't developed.

B.2.9 The Three Principles of Characterisation

In the selection of characters and portraying them, three principles are well-known: what is, what can be and what should be. Showing something as it is will be realism. Showing what can be is deism. Showing what should be will be idealism. The playwright should rise above all of these and create such characters that will come across as natural to the audiences and will at once entertain them and influence their sentiments.

B.2.10 Proven Characterisation Options

Theater-company playwrights have before them seasoned actors performing

biographical roles. So, based on the familiar biographies, he creates innovative drama. Accomplished actors' natural acting helps make the poetry spectacular and creates interest. Abhinav-Bharat wrote such plays in his auditorium at Kashi and enacted them and this is the reason why all them were very successful.

Many playwrights provide more vocal and livelier scope for the main hero or heroine and very little for other actors. This policy is not right. The playwright should take care that all the characters chosen for the play should have a specialty in the play, their own importance and need in the play. Everyone should have equal opportunity to prove their acting potential. The playwright should follow this principle regularly and not have any useless characters.

C. LIMITATIONS OF THE STAGE

All the elements of a dramatic story cannot be shown on the stage. Therefore, the vyapaar-yojana should be done on the basis of nature, needs, social setting of the story and the boundary of the stage. Only those events and actions should be depicted that can be successfully enacted. Possibility, need, and social relevance should be factors that decide what should be enacted. The rest can be suggested by the actors, as in Sanskrit plays where the devices such as praveshak, vishkambhak, ankaasya, ankaavataar and chulika etc are employed. For these reasons, Indian scholars removed scenes of national revolution and war, kissing, embracing, dining, slaying, and other vulgarity. The playwright should also bear in mind that no elements outside the locale used should be included, for example, the use of Shehnai in Ram's wedding.

C.1. Geographical Instructions (स्थान योजना)

The playwright should provide such instructions as befit the magnitude of the

stage, possibility of presentation, availability of materials and so on, which can be provided for by the organiser. Instructions for creating a war-scene in mid-air, a shipwreck in the sea or a busy street cannot be used on-stage.

C.2. The Nature of Dialogues

In the dialogues, as per the mental state, condition and qualifications of the characters they should be given the dialogues suitable to their status, but their language, pronunciation, etc should also reflect their culture. This brings a natural touch to the play and makes it enjoyable. But rural or regional language should not be used to an extent that it sounds vulgar or unclear.

C.3. The Nature of Instructions

The various instructions provided by the playwright should be sharp and useful. Today many playwrights provide such long instructions that the organiser is unable to use them. Only as many instructions should be provided as will suffice for acting, flow of the plot, rasa and sentiment in it. Such instructions are those that help create the required effect, setting, and the physical, spoken and philosophical environment for the play. For the on-stage set, music and lighting too, the instructions should be in an extremely simple language with detailed instructions that allow the organisers the freedom to enrich the dramatic exchange.

D. THE FORM OF THE PLAY

The playwright must be aware of the nature of the structure of the play. The play should complete in a maximum of 3 hours. The characters should be few, so that their assembly, make-up, property requirements etc should be possible in short time. The scenes should be only as many as can be easily, comfortably executed. The play should contain not only dialogues, but also provide the

scope for acting. There should be only a single main plot, the end should be happy and no scenes that are vulgar, fear-generating or inciting should be included. The dialogues should be in prose. Dialogues and events should be natural, possible and credible. They should be interspersed with humour as well to provide comic relief. All dialogues should be fit to be listened to by all. In the play, the song, dance and background music should be provided and the music should be according to the occasion or event in the play. The play should be so absorbing that the one who comes and sits in the audience should not leave till the play ends and he should be always interested in what comes next. The play should humour the audience, their sentiments should be corroborated and they should be satisfied with the effect the play has on them.

E. DEFINITION OF DRAMA

Bharat has in his Natyasastra given the definition of Drama. In the 21st chapter he says:

यस्मात्स्वभावम् संहृत्य साङ्गोपाङ्गतिक्रमैः ।

अभिनीयते गम्यते च तस्माद्वै नाटकम् स्मृतम् ।¹

{ Because in a play all parts, sub-parts and paces are ordered and acted, which means that it is all taken to the audience, it is known as a NaTak. } In the 17th chapter, he has given the full definition and the salient features of a play:

मृदुलललितपदार्थं गूढशब्दार्थहीनं ।

बुधजनसुखयोग्यं बुद्धिम्बुत्तुयोग्यम् ।

बहुरसकृतमर्गं संधिसन्धानयुवतं ।

1 Bharat Natyashastra, chapter 21

भवति जगति योग्यं नाटकं प्रेक्षकाणाम् ॥²

{That which has komal and lalit padas and meaning, does not have obscure wording, which can please the scholarly, which can be played with by the intellectual, which allows for many rasas to be exhibited, which is very well put together, that is the best play for enactment.}

This means that Bharat considers easy dialogues, pleasing plot, actors, rasa and creative skill essential to a play. Abhinav-Bharat has also given in his Abhinav-Natyashastra the following ideal and complete definition of a play:

“Based on a popular or imaginary story, according to the structure of the playwright's creation, when actors taught by the Natya-Prayokta (Director) perform in front of the audience and use acting, dialogues and music etc to induce rasa into the minds of the audience and make them attentive, humour them and provide a message via the humour and peace of mind, that full performance takes the form of the Nataka (play).”

E.1. The Two Sides of Nataka

There are two sides to a play – poesy and performance. The goal is to create rasa, the instruments are acting, dialogues and music &c, the pretext is the actor, the user is the audience, the support is provided by the story, and those who put all of these together are the dramatists and director. The dramatists create the constitution of the play, dialogues and music compositions and provides instructions regarding acting. The director uses the creation of the dramatist, arranges for the set, teaches the actors acting, dialogues and music and presents a show before the audience. Therefore Nataka has two sides – 1. Creation and 2. Performance.

2 At the end of chapter 17 of the Bharat Natyashastra

E.2. Purvaranga

The prelude that involves the worship/invocation of God varies from country to country and depends on personal beliefs. In the Parsi auditoriums of India too, there was a practice of worshipping God and singing his praises at the beginning of a performance. In China and Japan too, there is a tradition of such worship. In Greece too, there used to be such a religious practice, because there the performances were always in honour of Dionysus. There, they would properly worship the God and offer sacrifice to him, especially for the God of Barm, Barbus. We have several other rites in the prelude as well.

E.3. Introduction

Giving an introduction to the play and the poet is also an ancient tradition. Earlier Sanskrit playwrights have given three introductions: 1. of the playwright 2. the play itself and 3. the occasion for the performance. Sometimes, the playwright also provided an introduction to his kul and gotra. And by whose order the performance is being presented. This satisfies curiosity and it facilitates the work of the reporters and critics. A play is presented for the very reason that people take an interest in it and such interest is created only when the people are able to well understand its plot/story. That is why a play should always have an introduction and it should be done by the director or the sutradhaar alone. If the story can be understood without an introduction, the latter is not necessary. Sometimes plays without an introduction are easily understood by the audience, but it is important that the introduction should be only about the playwright or the gist of the play, its story or the result should not be revealed or the audience's curiosity is satisfied beforehand and the interest in it is ruined.

E.4. Sutradhaar-Nati

The introduction can be given by the 'sutradhaar' (stage manager) or an actress or the director or organiser, but the following five points should be always remembered:

1. The actors have enough scope to showcase their talent but the sutradhaar does not get such an opportunity.
2. Only the sutradhaar is familiar with every bit of the play and its subtle secrets. He is the true connoisseur of the play since he knows about all of the play and is alone qualified to approve of the playwright and the play.
3. While performing, the actors are busy in their own preparations. None has the time to come to the stage and do an introduction and also play his/her part. Therefore only the sutradhaar (stage manager) has the time to do it.
4. At the beginning of a play, the actors may get delayed in their preparations. There should be someone in this situation who can entertain the audience and use the time as well. Therefore the actress should sing about the season or dance to entertain the audience and allow the actors to get ready.
5. The main thing is that audiences aren't smart enough to be able to immediately grasp the story. Therefore, there should be an introduction that helps them understand the story.

F. NAANDI, PURVARANGA AND INTRODUCTION

The Purvaranga is a concern of the Sutradhar or the Director. The Bhavprakashan-kaar has mentioned the provision in the prelude that the Nandi reciters should at the beginning of the play and after bowing to the audience

by moving in the four directions. In this context, he has said that Mahadev's vehicle, Nandi, used imagination to obtain color through dancing at the beginning of the Creation. Therefore, in that context, the salutations offered to the Gods at the beginning of a play are known as Naandi. Thereafter there is the Introduction which makes the audience pay attention by talking about the popular, sublime story, which is known as Prarochana; the Sutradhar, actor and the Pariparshvik's interlocution is known as the Trigat. The external song provision is known as Geet. Speech and bodily acting are known as the Rangadwaar. In all, 22 other parts are comprised in the Purvaranga or Prelude. The praise sung of God by the Sutradhaar is known as Naandi. It praises the God in whose honour the performance is held or the king or brahmin are bowed to. After the Nandi is over, the Rangdwaar is begun wherein the beginning of the play is heralded. The Sutradhaar then reads out shlokas and bows to the flag of Indra. After praising Parvati and the bhutas, the Vidushak and Sutradhar talk with each other and give an idea about the plot of the play. Then the Sutradhar and the Vidushak leave the stage.

According to Bharat, after this, the Sthapak arrives dressed in the same fashion as the sutradhar and communicates with his attire whether the play's subject has to do with the Gods or men. He praises the Gods in lovely verse and tells about the subject of the play, the name, and the virtues of the playwright and describes a suitable season, starts off the play.

The playwrights coming after Bharat made these actions very brief and started off the play after the Naandi recitation itself, wherein there is a praising of the gods, brahmins and king and a description of the Shankha, Chandra, Chakravaak, and Kumud, which are auspicious things and the play is started. This description is in 8 or 10 lines. Actually, this praise should be known as Rangadwaar, because it already provides a portal for the play. Therefore it should not be known as Naandi, because the Naandi only includes the Mangal Paath and a gist of the play is given, as in Mudrarakshas, the Naandi includes

the guile and in that for Maltimadhav the Shringaar rasa are suggested. The Rangadwaar starts only after the Naandi, wherein the Sthapak comes to the stage and establishes the poesy. If it was about the divinity, in the form of a God, or in the form of a man if it was not about divinity and if it was mixed, the Sthapak appears in the form of one of the two and tells of the story, boja, amukh or information about the characters. Later on, the Sutradhar himself started doing this work.

According to the Natyashastra, the Indian outlook should be adopted in these acts, so as to properly attract the audience. The Indian outlook (Vritti) is said to have four parts: Prarochana, Vithi, Prahasan and Aamukh. Praise is used to make the audience eager, which is known as Prarochana. Praise of the land and times is known as Achetanashraya and that of the hero, poet, member or actors is called Chetanashraya. The poet can use four kinds of Prarochana. A sublime poet uses the pride in his mind, if he is arrogant he hurls abuse at other poets, if he is mature poet he uses a trick or clearly states his importance and he is a humble poet, he humbly refers to his apkarsha.

Similarly, there are two kinds of audience: Prarthit – for whom the organisers are very eager, and who are invited and then those that are themselves eager to watch the play. The Parochanas are elaborate in some plays and short in others. In the Aamukh, the Sutradhar talks in ridiculous statements with the Vidushak or the Nati and starts off the play. The Aamukh has two parts: 1. Prastavana and 2. Sthapana. In plays of the Shringaar rasa, there is the Aamukh, in plays on bravery and the unprecedented there is Prastavana and in humourous or bizarre plays there is the Sthapana. This is done in three kinds of ways: 1. Kathodghat – where an actor starts the play with a comment on the Sutradhar's sentiment or words, 2. Pravrutlak – where the Sutradhar talks of a season and introduces an actor, and 3. Prayogatishay – where the Sutradhar calls to an actor and draws his attention to either some property or to a person.

Sahityadarpan identifies five kinds of Introduction (Prastavana): Udghataak, where verses that do not communicate the desired meaning are conjoined to verses that can communicate it, as in Mudraarakshas, Chanakya enters uttering the words, “Who can forcefully cover the moon while I am alive.”

The characteristics of the Kathodghat and Pravartak are the same as given above. Sahityadarpankaar has identified the following as the telling characteristic of Prayogaatishay: 'Where one Prayog starts in another and is used for the entry of a character, as for example, in Kundmala, just as the Sutradhar goes to call the Nati, he heard the cries, 'Arye, here, here' from the wings, and then he can say, 'Who is helping me by calling out to Aaryaa', looking in the direction of the wings, read a shloka and announced the entry of Lakshman and Sita.

When a character's entry is announced using the incidence of a similarity of some kind, it is known as Avagalit; for example, in Abhigyanshakuntalam, the Sutradhar's shloka:

तवास्मि गीतरागेण हारिणा प्रसभं हतः ।

एष राजेव दुष्यन्तः सारङ्गेणातिरंहसा ॥ ¹

What this means is that the 'Prayogatishay' of Dashrupak is that which is Sahityadarpan's 'Avagalit'. The only difference between Kathodghatak and Udghatak is that in one the Sutradhar's or the poet's words are used for the entry of a character while in the other the Sutradhar's words are interpreted by the character in his own way to make an entry.

Nakhakutta says that using the backdrop/set or a voice from heaven, he could have actors enter on their intent. The idea is that the play can be started using

1 From *Abhigyanshakuntal*

millions of kinds of skills of the playwright.

F.1. The Use of Song

The use of music is accompanied by song in drama, and therefore the playwright should bear in mind while composing the song the occasion it is for, the number of beats, its pace, raga and time of day it is meant for. For that, he needs to have the knowledge necessary to be able to understand the time, condition (of the singing actor), sentiment and the raga and taal for the song. These days, background music is used to create a dramatic effect, therefore the playwright should also know at what time, with what instrument, what song, in what raga, in what time would it be appropriate to use the background music.

F.2. The Occasions of Poetry

In Sanskrit, playwrights have very generously had their characters utter shlokas along with prose and these shlokas appear in all kinds of plays, however, at the very outset, this practice has been declared unnatural and unacceptable. Still, in some places, poetry can be used in plays, such as while -

1. Quoting a poet
2. Using a poet's words to approve of something or some event
3. Nurturing a special sentiment
4. Comparing poets mentioned in the playwright
5. Filling in missing phrases, in puzzles or during Antakshari
6. Praising God or king
7. Quoting a poet in a fit of madness
8. Expressing love
9. Praising a God on account of some fear
10. Charging up men on the battlefield

11. Reciting a poet's work on occasion

On the occasions mentioned above, poetry may be used quite naturally. In some of these, the poetry of known poets and elsewhere the playwright's own compositions may be used. In using the poetry, it is important to keep tabs on its appropriateness and occasion because in the absence of such judgement, the poetry would have no application or importance. The poetry should certainly be such that everyone understands it, which means that it should not be so full of characteristics that the audience do not understand it at all.

F.3. Bharat-Vakya or Phal-Kathan

In Sanskrit plays there is a tradition of saying a Bharat-Vakya at the end of the play to express the desire for everything to be well with the people. In Europe too, there was the tradition of asking for forgiveness, telling the moral, giving a hint of consequences it was hoped that the audience would watch the play with sympathy, analyse it and forgive the shortcomings. These days, before the final act, there is a self-address, prayer for forgiveness, and a request for cooperation by the audience and expression of the hope that they would join in for a future play. This work is done either by the organiser or the Sutradhar or by the hero himself in the hero's attire. Sometimes, the set is used to do this. Earlier, the playwrights did not write such a request. But the epilogues written in Europe were written by the playwrights themselves and they were also just as much a part of the play as was the Bharat-Vakya in India. Today, most plays do not use this feature.

Playwright's art cannot be really taught with sets of rules. Imagining situations where there is natural curiosity depends on the playwright's imagination, talent and experience. Experience is the playwright's best teacher. With that, he sits in his room and sees with his mind's eye the scenes he wants enacted – with

specific costume, specific characters come onto the stage, some engage in humour, some say their dialogues, and the audience listen to them and see them and offer a specific reaction. The poet who lacks such vision cannot be a playwright and the vision is achieved through personal experience of theatre.

G. MUSIC DIRECTION

Sangeetdarpan offers the following definition of Music:

“गीतं, वाद्यं नर्तनं च, त्रयं संगीतमुच्यते ।”¹

This means that singing, playing instruments and dancing – all put together are known as Sangeet (Music). Some believe that while others believe each to be Music, but actually Music is the combination of all three. Dance depends on instruments and instruments depend on the song, therefore, singing is the chief among them.

Sangeetdarpankaar has divided Sangeet into two parts: Marg and Deshi. The Sangeet that Bharat exhibited before Mahadev on Brahma's instance and which can provide Moksha, that is the Marg Sangeet and that which is composed in different nations for the entertainment of different people is known as the Deshi Sangeet.

The Udgatas (priests who sing Sam Veda) would sing at the time of yagnas. Its sub-Veda is also known as Gandharva Veda, wherein Sangeet has been described fully. In the other Vedas too there is proof of dancing and song composition and that tradition has been going on till date. In the Ramayan,

1 From the book 'Sangeet Darpan'

Mahabharat and Puranas, music terms and professionals such as geet, nrutya, natak, shailush, nartak, nat, kushilav, magadh, naandipeetha, vandi, gayak, saukhyasakshik, vaitalik, kathak, granthik, gaathi and soota are mentioned. There is also the reference that in assemblies of the Gods, the Gandharvas and Apsaras perform dance, sing and perform plays to entertain the Gods.

In his Natyashastra, Bharat has provided the following laws of tone in Sangeet:

1. स्वर-संज्ञाए
2. वादी, संवादी, अनुवादी, विवादी के रूप में चतुर्विध स्वर या उनके चतुर्विध सम्बन्ध
3. वादी, संवादी का लक्षण
4. मध्यम ग्राम में पंचम-ऋषभ तथा षड्ज ग्राम में षड्ज-पंचम के पारस्परिक संवाद को प्रतिपादित करने वाला श्लोक
5. विवादी एवं अनुवादी का लक्षण एवं कुछ उदाहरण
6. वादी, संवादी, अनुवादी एवं विवादी संज्ञाओं की अनिवार्यता
7. षड्ज ग्राम के स्वरों की स्थापना का ज्ञान कराने वाला श्लोक, जिसमें षड्ज ग्राम में श्रुति-निदर्शन बताया गया है और जिसके रहस्य से परिचित होने पर मध्यम ग्राम के स्वरों का भी ज्ञान हो जाता है

8. षड्ज ग्राम एवं मध्यम ग्राम से परिचित व्यक्ति के लिए एक स्थान में श्रुतिसंख्या एवं श्रुति-परिमाणों की प्राप्ति का उपाय-चतुःसारणा

9. दोनों ग्रामों में स्वरों की संख्या का स्मरण रखने के लिए संग्रह-श्लोक, जिनमें 'चतुःसारणा' का निष्कर्ष पद्यबद्ध है

G.1. Swaras

Shadj, Rushabh, Gandhar, Madhyam, Pancham, Dhaivat and Nishad are the notes we know as Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, Sa. Shadj and Pancham are steady, i.e. there is no change of form in them, but Re, Ga, Dha, Ni are also Komal in form and Madhyam can also be Tivra. Between the seven notes, there are 22 Shrutis. There is a shloka in the Natyashastra about Shrutis:

तिस्रो द्वे च चतस्रश्च चतस्रस्तिस्त्र एव च ।

द्वे चतस्रश्च षड्जाख्ये ग्रामे श्रुतिनिदर्शनम् ॥ ¹

This shloka means that the sthiti of the Shrutis in the Shadj Gram are: 3, 2, 4, 4, 3, 2, 4. According to Ahobal, Shadj has four Shrutis – Teevra, Kumudvati, Manda, and Chhandovati; Rushabh has Dayavati, Ranjani, and Raktika; Gandhar has Raudri and Krodha; Madhyam has Vajrika, Prasaarini, Preeti and Marjani; Pancham has Shiti, Rakta, Sandipini, and Alapini; Dhaivat has Madanti, Rohini and Ramya; and Nishad has Ugra and Kshobhini.

Dantil has also considered a sound to be Shadj and thereafter Rushabh, Gandhar, Madhyam, Pancham, Dhaivat, Nishaad and thereafter instructed on

1 Bharat Natyashastra Swaradhyay

the Shrutis for Shadj. Each appears in the following order:

गृहीत सा रे ग म प ध नि

१, २, ३, ४, ५, ६, ७, ८, ९, १०, ११, १२, १३, १४, १५, १६, १७, १८, १९, २०, २१, २२

Dantil has provided the following names for the Shrutis:

नान्दी चालनिका रसा च सुमुखी चित्रा विचित्रा घना

मातंगी सरसा भरता मधुकरी मैत्री शिवा माधवी ।

बाला शाङ्गर्वी कला कलरवा माला विशाला जया

मात्रेती श्रुतयः पुराणकविभिर्द्वाविंशतिः कीर्तिताः ॥ ²

According to some acharyas, there are 4 Shrutis in Shadj, 3 in Rushabh, 2 in Gandhar, 4 in Madhyam, 4 in Pancham, 2 in Dhaivat, and 2 in Nishad. However, this order is different from that in the Natyashastra, and these days there is such controversy over the Shrutis that research is required. Actually, Shrutis were used in Margi Sangeet only, but since Margi Sangeet is now completely extinct, the purpose of the Shrutis is also to no avail.

G.2. Song

In Sangeet, the Song is chief and the song is sung based on a poem using a raga. Sangeetdarpankaar has explained the definition of Raga as follows:

योऽयं ध्वनिविशेषस्तु स्वरवर्णविभूषितः ।

2 Names of the Shrutis by Pt. Dantil

रंजकों जनचित्तानां सा रागः कथितो बुधैः ॥
यैस्तु चेतांसि रज्यन्ते जगत्त्रितयवर्तिनाम् ।
ते रागा इति कथ्यन्ते मुनिभिर्भरतादिभिः ॥
यस्य श्रवणमात्रेण रज्यन्ते सकलाः प्रजाः ।
सर्वानुरन्जनाद्धेतोस्तेन राग इति स्मृतः ॥ (संगीतदर्पण ८५) ¹

The special sound adorned with Swar and Varna that propitiates the people's minds is known as a raga, or that which infuses affection into the minds of even ordinary folk is known as a raga. From the philosophical viewpoint too, according to Patanjali's Yoga Sutra, the instrument that creates thirst is called a raga. The point of the matter is that when a man sings in such a way that everyone is engrossed in rapt attention to his singing, it is considered a raga.

In the context of the origin of ragas, Sangeetdamodar has written that the ragas in which the 16 thousand Gopis sang before Shri Krishna led to the origin of the 16 thousand ragas, of which 36 are popular.

G.3. Varna

It has been mentioned above that sound adorned with Swar and Varna is known as raga. Shuddha, Komal and Teevra notes have also been described above. Specific groups of notes taken from these that are sung as prescribed are known as Varna. There are four Varnas – Sthayi, Aarohi, Avrohi and Sanchaari.

The initial portion of a song that contains a note that is pronounced again and again in a raga, or the note in which the raga stops for a while, is known as

¹ Sangeet Darpan, 85th shloka

Sthayi.

Singing the notes in the ascending order is known as Aarohi, as in Shadj, Rushabh, Gandhar, Madhyam, Pancham, Dhaivat, Nishad.

Singing the notes in the descending order is known as Avrohi, as in Nishad, Dhaivat, Pancham, Madhyam, Gandhar, Rushabh, and Shadj.

Using Sthayi, Aarohi and Avrohi together in singing the notes is known as Sanchaari.

On the basis of their use in the ragas, the notes have been categorised into three types: Graha, Nyaas and Ansh. The note that is established in the beginning of the raga itself is known as the Graha. The note that marks the end of the beginning of the song is known as Nyaas. The note that is used more prominently in a raga, or one without which the form of the raga would not be clear, is known as the Ansh or Jaam.

G.4. Anga

There are four Angas of ragas: Ragang, Bhashang, Triyang and Upang. Merely copying the shadow of a raga is called Ragang. Only seeking refuge in the shadow of language is known as Bhashang. Showing enthusiasm in singing ragas is known as Triyansh, and ordinary copy of all the three – Ragang, Bhashang and Triyang – is known as Upang.

G.5. Kandaarlaa

When an extremely high note is sung while singing a raga, when quickly and expertly the singer produces vibration in the notes to adorn the raga, it is known as Kandaarlaa.

* Rf. Bhartiya tatha Pashchatya Rangamanch by Pt. Sitaram Chaturvedi