

## CONCEPT OF VAKROKTI ACCORDING TO KUNTAKA

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Kuntaka the Kashmirian critic who lived during the later part of 10th century and the early part of 11th century is the author of Vakroktijīvitā. This text follows the traditional way of other texts, describing the concepts connected with Sanskrit poetics. But he has difference in views regarding the most accepted concepts and his views on literature. Hence he wrote his text which he considers as an Apūrva text on poetics. He says himself that : 'काव्यस्यायमलङ्कारः कोप्यपूर्वो विधीयते' । Kuntaka is considered as a follower of Śaivism. Spanda and Trika concepts are accepted by this mode of Śaivist philosophy. The glimpses of his philosophic thoughts are found in Vakroktijīvitā. In the usual way, text begins with Maṅgaḷācaraṇa praising Śiva and Śakti. Then as the traditional method he discusses the topic, its relevance, for whom the text is written and the aim, famous in Sanskrit as Anubandha Catuṣṭaya (i.e. Viṣaya, Viṣayi, Saṃbandha & Adhikāri).

Here being a text on poetics, the aim of poetry, uses of study of poetry, definition of poetry, concept of poetic quality (guṇa), path or style of literature (mārga), according to the inborn nature of the poet. The text deals with all these matters in four chapters known as Unmeṣas. The definition of poetry is :

'शब्दार्थौ सहितौ वक्रकविव्यापारशालिनि ।

वन्द्ये व्यवस्थितौ काव्यं तद्विदाह्लादकारिणि ।।'

He discussed that poetry is that the word and sense together enshrined in a style revealing artistic creativities of poet and giving aesthetic delight to the man of taste. He explains each term of this definition. Then all these terms are taken for detailed consideration again. He says Sāmānya lakṣaṇa (a general definition) and Viśeṣalakṣaṇa (definition giving importance to particulars). While discussing the term Vakra-kavividyāpārasālini Kuntaka makes his commendable contribution to literary criticism namely the Vakra. Vakra in the creation of poet is Vakra-kavividyāpāra and Vakra is the Vaidagdhya Bhaṅgi Bhaṅiti; poetic beauty created by the expertise use of language. This poetic language is aimed at the aesthetic enjoyment of the reader. However, Kuntaka never loses sight of the fact that beauty is realized by the Sahṛdaya. He insists that anything striking should be capable of causing delight in the reader (tadvidānandakāri). Kālidāsa gives this idea in his Abhijñāna Śākuntala by Sūtradhāra : I do not consider my performance expertise as valid so long as it is not enjoyed by a learned assembly. Hence Kuntaka explains the different types of Vakra, from the smallest phoneme to the largest compositional structure in identifying the element of charm.

They (the poetic beauty) are six according to him Varṇavinyāsavakra (phonetic), Padapūrvārdhavakra (lexical), Pratyayāśrayavakra (grammatical), Vākyavakra (sentential) Prakaraṇavakra (contextual) and Prabandhavakra (compositional). This includes all components of a written text of literature.

Varṇavinyāsavakra is the beauty created in poetic language by the selected use of Varṇas (letters or syllabies). All the Śabdālaṅkāras like Anuprāsa and Yamaka are included in this phonetic level.

Eg:

ननन्दुः सप्रजा प्रजा (रघुवंशः ४-३)

न्यस्तं पुरस्तात् पुरशासनस्य

(कुमारसम्भवः ७-३)

सस्मारः स्मरशासनः (कुमारसम्भवः ६-३)

Padapūrvārdhavakra includes the beauty created in poetic lan-

guage by the stem portion of a verb or noun. Several varieties of lexical figurativeness are referred with few examples of Rūḍhi, Paryāya, Upacāra, Viśeṣaṇa.

Eg. for Rūḍhivakrata :

पादास्त एव शशिनः सुखयन्ति गात्रम्बाणास्त एव मदनस्य ममानुकूलाः  
(विक्रमोर्वशीयः ३-२०)

इदमन्यपरायणमन्यथा हृदयसन्निहिते हृदयं मम (अभिज्ञानशाकुन्तलम् - ३)  
श्रुतं श्रोतव्यं, अद्य नर्तयितास्मि (माळविकाग्निमित्रम् - ४)

Eg. for Paryāyavakrata :

द्वयं गतं संप्रति शोचनीयतां समागमः प्रार्थनया कपालिनः (कुमारसम्भवः ५-७१)  
भर्तुर्मित्रं प्रियमविधवे विद्धि मामम्बुवाहम् (मेघसन्देशः २-३९)  
विभूषणोद्भासि पिनद्धभोगि वा (कुमारसम्भवाः ५-७८)

Eg. for Upacāravakrata :

सूचिभेदैस्तमोभि (मेघसन्देशः १-४०)  
नूनमनपत्यता मां वत्सलयति (अभिज्ञान शाकुन्तलम् )

Eg. for Viśeṣaṇavakrata :

स त्वं मदियेन शरीरवृत्तिं देहेन निर्वर्तयितुं प्रसीद (रघुवंशः २-४५)

Rūḍhivaicitryavakrata is virtually the same as the Arthāntarasam Kramitavācyā-dhvani of Ānandavardhana. Pratyayāśrayavakrata includes the beauty created by selective use of suffixes, prefixes and indeclinable. This is also known as Padaparārdhavakrata. The usage of Kāraka, number, the choice of Ātmanepada and Parasmaipada all are included in this variety. They gave attention and due to the beauty caused by their extraordinariness. He conceives Vākyavakrata as the permeating presence that enters all other elements. Figures of speech recognized in literature are instances of it. Kuntaka maintains that Alaṅkāras are modes of expression. They remain as ancillaries of poetry and provide a particular luster to poetry. Prakaraṇavakrata usually signifies the beauty created by an episode, of the total work in which creative talent has showed its spark. Since the literature available at his time was mainly based on the famous plots of ep-

ics, the deviations taken by the poet from main story to change the emotion to avoid propriety, etc. are included here. Prabandhavakrata is the poetic charm of text as whole. Here name of a text - the change of sentiment of the whole topic etc. are included.

According to Kuntaka the charm of literature is created by this Vakrakavivyāpāra. Vakrata means the Vaidagdhya Bhaṅgi Bhaniti, the verbal expression beautified by the poetic genius. The poetic genius is inborn and our later studies, and experiences only polishes it. He does not mention about individual style of each poet. But classifies literature as three fold path in which each poet's path is 'decided according to his inborn nature'. Sukumāra (elegant), Vicitra (brilliant), and Madhyama (mixed) are these paths. Each of it is not lesser or better than any other. He takes Kālidāsa as the example of Sukumāra, Bāṇabhaṭṭa, Bhavabhūti etc. as examples of Vicitra and Mātrugupta, Mayūrarāja etc. as Madhyama. All these three types are created and enjoyed by different poets and Kāvyaṭṭavid.

Concept of Guṇa is an important topic in Sanskrit literary criticism. Kuntaka does not accept the 10 Guṇa concept of Daṇḍin and Vāmana or three Guṇa concept of Bharata etc. He mentioned about four Guṇas and they are Mādhurya, Prasāda, Lāvanya and Ābhijātya. He considers two inherent qualities which are essential for literature apart from this. They are Saubhāgya and Aucitya. He agrees with Ānandavardhana, Bharata etc. in accepting Aucitya as the essential quality of literature.

It is to be noted that Vakrokti is not a concept which was Kuntaka's new creation. From Bhāmaha itself the development of such concept can be traced. While discussing beauty of Alaṅkāra while defining of Alaṅkāra named Atiśayokti he says that -

सैषा सर्वैव वक्रोक्तिरनयार्थो विभाव्यते ।

यत्नोऽस्यां कविना कार्यः कोलङ्कारोनया विना ॥

Here the importance of an expression which Atiśaya - beyond the normal nature is intended. Vāmana even though considers Vakrokti one among many of figures of speech, his definition and the numerous examples given by him shows that the importance to it given by him. Ānanda-

vardhana gave more than once expresses importance in the expression of each word carefully. Uktivaicitrya and Praudhokti are the terms used by Ānandavardhana in this context. In many concepts Ānandavardhana and Kuntaka has similar views usually Kuntaka's concept is from the standpoint of poet, where Ānandavardhana's is that of a Sahṛdaya. It is remarkable that Kuntaka does not for once forget the fact that it is the creative imagination of the poet which fashions the merit of the poetic language. It is to the credit of Kuntaka that he exhaustively deals with problems of episodes, creative inventions made by the poet to the original plot, and the unity of a literary piece, even when he understands the different layers of meaning and accepts it. He does not accept the way of suggestion. According to him the Abhitā is the way which is capable to give all the meaning in literature. He considers that the Abhitā which is Viśiṣṭha and Vicitra in poetry. Later poets recognizes the importance of Uktivaicitrya, but the theory is not accepted.

Kuntak's Vakrokti is the very hallmark of poetry that distinguishes it from ordinary expressions. The modern stylistics has also the parallel thinking that the differentiation of the poetic language from the ordinary language. Kuntaka's many literary principles were adopted by modern stylistics. Now stylistics are broadened its scope to cover all aspects of language like phonology, lexicology etc. So it is concluded that Kuntaka's concept of Vakrokti helped many critics to identify and analyse the most salient features of the literary language in a scientific manner.

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Styles of hair and clothes do not make a man or the society perfect. Accepting the truth and rejecting the untruth and following the path of justice, without prejudice, are the real qualities that maketh a man and the society perfect.