

DISCUSSIONS ABOUT RASA THEORY – AN OVER VIEW

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Abstract : This study has been undertaken to investigate the discussions about Rasa theory of Bharata. Bharata is the founder of Rasa School. In the sixth chapter of Natyasastra in the context of dramatic representation, Bharata explained the theory of Rasa thus- Vibhavanubhava Vyabharisamyogat Rasanispattih. Bhattalollata, Srisankuka, Bhattanayaka and Abhinavaguptha make famous interpretations.

IndexTerms – Sthayi, Rasa, Nishpathi

Introduction

Bharata is the founder of Rasa School. In the sixth chapter of Natyasastra in the context of dramatic representation, Bharata explained the theory of Rasa thus-

“Vibhavanubhava Vyabharisamyogat Rasanispattih.”

As referred above, the whole rasa system revolves around the passage. Two matters have been noted in relation to the sutra. The word *sthayi* does not occur in it and it is somewhat vague particularly the meaning of two words viz. *samyogat* and *nishpathi*. Bharata has not explained his sutra. So later authors have explained the sutra according to their own viewpoints. They selected the two phrases *samyoga* and *nishpathi* for exercise of their inventive intellect upon which they have put their own contributions.

Utpattivada of Bhattalollata

However, Rasagangadhara says that there are eight varying interpretations of the *Rasasutra*, four interpretations are mainly known to us. Bhattalollata, Srisankuka, Bhattanayaka and Abhinavaguptha make these interpretations. Lollata's work is not available; Abhinavabharati is the main source to know Lollata's interpretation on Rasa Sutra. According to Lollata Rasa primarily belongs to the hero. The spectator ascribes their Rasa to the actor because of the actor's clever acting. Thus, the spectator's knowledge about Rama's love for Sita gives him pleasure. The *sthayi* that is brought to its full form by Vibhavas, Anubhavas and Sancharibhavas becomes Rasa. It is called *sthayi* in its undeveloped form. Here real Rasa is produced in Rasa and therefore this view is called Utpattivada. This does not treat of Rasa as a matter of the spectator's aesthetic appreciation of the inner meaning of the representation.

Anumithivada of Sri Sankuka

Sankuka thinks that Rasa is a matter of inference. The actor skilfully initiates the actions of the hero to whom a certain *sthayi* is inferred to be belonging to the actor because of the Vibhavas etc., which are very skilfully presented. The *sthayi* is specially called Rasa on account of its being an imitated one. Rasa is no doubt spoken of in relation to the spectator; but it is said to be a matter of inference due to clever imitation. The basic emotion is not mentioned in the Rasa sutra because it is not in question, does not occur in this situation. Only its imitation is there and that is mentioned and called Rasa. To the audience, its presence is implied through the power of its middle terms or *lingas* viz. the causes and effects of emotions and the transients. Thus, it is a theory that the audience infer the Rasa by a logical process.

Bhuktivada of Bhattanayaka

Bhattanayaka criticised the theories of Lollata and Sankuka. According to this audience world actually experience emotions, including unpleasant emotions. Rasa is in the highest degree enjoyable and is generalised

different from individual experience. The aesthetic experience is developed by a certain activity called Bhavana or Bhavakatava and realised or enjoyed by another activity Bhojakatva. Thus according to him besides Abhidha there are two more powers of the word viz. Bhavakatavyapara and Bhojaktvavyapara.

Thus, the main contributions of Bhattanayaka to aesthetics are his doctrine of Sadharanikarana of Vibhavas. The concept of Rasa as a subjective experience in the mind of reader or spectator.

Abhivyakthivada of Abhinavagupta

Abhinavagupta rejected the views of Lollata, Sankuka and Bhattanayaka. He pointed out that the theory Dhvani can itself explain the aesthetic experience. He rejects Bhavakatvavyapara and Bhojakatvavyapara proposed by Bhattanayaka. Rasa can be manifested in tense of Dhvanana. Therefore, there is no need of postulating a process of enjoyment through Bhojakatvavyapara. Rasa exist only in experience and enjoyments. Hence speaking about its experience as different from its essence is not correct. Thus, Abhinavagupta shows that rasa is Abhivyaktah by vyanjana and one has rasa realisation, which can be analysed and described.

Mammata and others

Mammata following the view of Abhinavagupta, Mammata remarked that love and other moods, which are present in the minds of spectators, are roused by the vibhavas etc. and reach the state of Rasa.

Bharata's view that Rasa is the soul of poetry was accepted by Rudrabhatta in the Srngaratilaka and Rajasekhara in his Kavyamimamsa. Saundhodhani says that Rasa is the soul of poetry.

Dhanika and Dhananjaya can also be considered as the exponents of Rasa School. Dhanika seems to have held views somewhat similar to Bhattanayaka.

Bhoja describes 12 Rasas, he propounds that srngara identified with Abhimana and Ahankara is the only Rasa in the higher sense.

Viswanatha is a strong exponent of Rasa Scholl, according to him Rasa is soul of poetry.

Jagannatha Pandita also contributed to Rasa School.

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