CHAPTER I

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FIGURES OF SPEECH IN POETICS

Speech or vāk holds an important position in the Hindu Philosophy. In fact speech is at the root of all worldly affairs.

So says Bharata — vāgghī sarvasya kāraṇam. 1 Bhartrhari in the first chapter of his Vākyapādiya states —

na so'ṣti pratyāto loke yah śabdānugamādṛte
anuviddhamāvajñānaṁ sarvāḥ śabdena bhāsante. 2

All these expressions sufficiently testify to the greatness and importance of vāk or speech. It is through this vāk that the worldly affairs have been rolling on

(vācuṇeva Praśādena lokāyatra pravartate). 3

All the activities of the world would have remained suspended in the absence of this vāk or speech. This is stated by Dandin in the first chapter of his Kavyādarsa —

idamandaṁ tamah kṛtanaṁ jāyate bhuvanatrayaṁ
yadi śabdānvayaṁ jyotirāsāmasāraṁ na dīpyate. 4

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1 Vāṁśayānīha śāstrāṇi vāniśṭhāni tathāiva ca
    tasmādvācch param nāsti vāgghī sarvasya kāraṇam
2 Vākyapādiya of Bhartrhari. Chap. 1 Kār - 124.
3 Kavyādarsa of Dandin. Chap. 1 Kār - 3.
According to Bhartṛhari this sabdatatva is identical to Brahma

_ānādinidhānam Brahma sabdatatvam yadaksaram etc._

This vānmayā has two parts - sāstra and Kāvyā.

Rājaśekhara in his Kāvyamimāṃsā clearly states -

_iha hi vānmayamubhayathā sāstram kāvyam ca_.

It is stated elsewhere by Bhāṭṭottā -

dve vartmanī gīrō devyāḥ sāstrāṇāca kavikarāṇa ca

prajñopajñānam tayorādyāṃ pratibhodbhavamāntam

Now these two types of vak, sāstravāk and kāvyavāk differ from each other on this point that there is strikingness or vaicitrya in kāvyavāk which is lacking in sāstravāk. This strikingness of expression may come by alāṃkāra, rīti, guna, rasa etc. In fact different schools of Poetics viz. alāṃkāra school, rīti school, rasadhvani school etc. have been propounded on the basis of this difference of opinion as to what is practically the cause of strikingness of expression. So says Dr. Gaurinath Sastri -

With the progress of years there arose four main schools of poetics which maintain different views with regard to the essential characteristics of Poetry. Thus from time to time alāṃkāra, rīti, rasa and dhvani have been declared to be the essential factors of poetry. According to some rhetoricians

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5 _ānādinidhānam Brahma sabdatatvam yadaksaram
vivartate'ṛthabhāvena prakriyā jagato yataḥ
Vākyapadiya of Bhartṛhari. Chap. 1 kār._


7 A Concise History of Classical Sanskrit
by Dr. Gaurinath Sastri. Chap. XIV. Page 150.
figures of speech bring the charm of poetry. Bhūmaḥa, Udbhata etc. belong to this alamkāra school. Dr. Ramranjana Mukherjee states the extract of the alamkāra theory so clearly and concisely in his work Rasasamikṣa — the particular mode of expression which converts a common statement to a poetic expression is alamkāra.

( ye vicitra bhaṅga śabdāraṇ prakāsaka kāvyik prakāśe rūpāntarita kare — laukik śabdārthaśāhityaśe kāvyik śabdārthaśāhitve parinata kare tāhāf alamkāra ).

Whatever it may be, figures of speech or alamkāra are at the root of charm according to the rhetoricians of this school.

The etymological meaning of the word 'alamkāra' is embellishment i.e. the factor by which something is embellished (ālamkritye anoma ityālamkāraḥ ). The lexical meaning of the word 'ālam' is 'bhusana', 'paryāpti' etc. (ālaḥ bhūṣanaḥ paryāpti etc ).

In the Vedic texts also we find the words ālamkāra or ālamkṛta (or arāmkṛta ) —

Vāyavyāhi darsata ime soma arāmkṛta etc.

There Sayana explains the word ālamkāra as —

abhinavādiśaṃśakāro'alamkāraḥ.

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8 Rasasamikṣa by Dr. Ramranjana Mukherjee Chap. 1 Page - 3.
9 Alam bhūṣanaparyāptiśaktvāraṇaṇavācakaṃ. 
   Amarakosa. Chap. 3 Pankti - 2839
10 Vāyavyāhi darsatene soma arāmkṛtaḥ 
    teṣām pāhi āruḍhi havam — Upiyedasasmihātā - 1.2.1.
11 Sayana Phāṇya on the Mantra No. 1.2.1.
Here alamkāra means though not embellishment, but modification or purification or in other words paryōtī.

In classical Sanskrit however, the word alamkāra means merely embellishment. When used in connection to human beings it means the factors which adorn the body viz. bangle, earrings etc. (kaṭakakundalādivat). Thus, used in the case of poetry, alamkāra means the factor which embellish sound and sense (śākta and artha) that comprise poetry. But alamkāra is generally used in the sense of the figures of speech in poetics. This alamkāra or figure of speech has become an important factor in poetics. Though in the long period of the development of Sanskrit poetics, different schools like the alamkāra school of Bhāmaha, guna school of Dandin, rāti school of Vāmanā, vakrokti school of Kuntaka, dhvani school of Ānandavardhana etc. have flourished still the figures of speech have been holding an important position at all the time.

Bharata, who is mentioned to be the first available rhetorician, however mentions only four figures of speech - upama, rūpaka, dīpaka and yamaka

( upama dīpakaṃ cuiva rūpakam yamakaṃ tathā
kāvyasyaite hyalamkārāscatvāraḥ parikīrtiteḥ )
and these with less importance. In fact the Nātyasāstra is practically a work on dramanurgy as the name itself indicates.

12 Nātyasāstra of Bharata. Chap. 16 Kūr - 40.
So it is quite natural that here the discussions on the figures of speech will not get so much importance. The question of figures of speech arises here only in the context of 'vācika abhinaya. This is the reason why Bharata does not pay so much attention to the figure of speech.

Though the first trace of alāmākāra is found in the Nātyasastra of Bharata, Bhāmaha, the author of Kavyālaṃkāra is generally called the father of Sanskrit Poetics. Bhāmaha is the propounder of the alāmākāra school. According to him figure(s) of speech is the indispensable part of poetic beauty. Poetry is not relishable without the proper application of the figures of speech, just as the face of a damsel however charming it may be, does not shine without ornaments. So in the Kavyālaṃkāra of Bhāmaha figures of speech are discussed with utmost importance. Though in the first chapter and also in a few verses of the second chapter Bhāmaha deals with various classifications of Kāvya, riti, doṣa, and gūṇa, still in these cases the treatments are so concise but in the case of the figures of speech Bhāmaha makes elaborate discussions with definitions and suitable illustrations of each.

14 The verses – 16 to 29 of the first chap. deals with Kāvyabheda.
The verses – 37 to 49 deals with doṣa.
The verses – 1 to 3 deals with gūṇa (of the second chapter.)
Alamkara. As the main topic of discussion of Bhama is alamkara, so the work is named as Kavyalamkara. The alamkara theory of Bhama exerted its influence on a few scholars of later period. Thus Udbhata, the author of Kavyalambkarasarasamgraha shows enough evidence that he was highly influenced by the alamkara theory of Bhama. So he can be included in the alamkara school.

In fact the whole realm of Sanskrit rhetorical works can be divided mainly into two schools - alamkara school and rasadhvani school. The other so-called schools viz. guna school of Dandin, the riti school of Vamana, the Vakrokti school of Kuntaka etc. cannot be called school in the proper sense of the term as these scholars could not create a set of followers (sampradaya) of the respective theories. But the alamkara school is a full-fledged school and the other minor schools can be somehow or other included in the alamkara school. That the supporters of these schools accept the importance of alamkara is clear from the name of their works as Kavyalamkarasutra of Vamana, Kavyalambkarasarasamgraha of Udbhata etc.

Dandin, the author of the Kavyadarsa, is generally held to be the pioneer of riti school based on guna. But of the three chapters of Kavyadarsa, Dandin devotes two vast chapters to the treatment of the figures of speech. In the concluding portion of the first chapter also Dandin mentions a few sabdalamkaras viz. anuprasa and yamaka. It is true that Dandin here does not discuss the figures of speech, but while discussing the poetic merit
and in the context of "vāča rasasthitih", he discusses the figure of speech anuprāsa. The figure yamaka is also mentioned here but Dandin does not enter into detailed discussion of it in the first chapter as it is not so relishable

But it is interesting enough that this very 'yamaka' is discussed so elaborately with the minute details by Dandin in the third chapter of Kavyādāraśa. In the second chapter Dandin deals with thirty five arthālaṃkāras with definitions and appropriate illustrations in each case. Thus it is found that Dandin who is generally held to be the founder of rāti school which is later modified by Vāmana, can not neglect the importance of the figures of speech and discusses them in details.

Vāmana who is held to be the actual propounder of rāti school can not ignore the importance of the figures of speech. It is true that in comparison to Bhāmaśa and Dandin the variety of aTānakāra is few in the work of Vāmana and the discussions are concise, still of the five 'adhikaranaś' of his work the fourth one is "aTānakārika" where in three chapters the figures of speech are discussed so systematically and scientifically. That Vāmana gives his full attention to the discussion of the figures of speech is evident from the fact that the treatment and arrangement of the

16 Ibid. Kār - 61.
Alamkaras bear the mark of originality. Bhasaaha, Bundin and Udbhata arrange the figures half-hazardly. No particular principle or system is to be found in the arrangement of alamkaras in the works of these rhetoricians. But it is Vamana who for the first time arranges the figures of speech systematically. The figures of speech are discussed one by one each coming in context of the former one. In the definitions of the alamkaras also Vamana shows originality.

Kuntaka, the author of Vakroktijivita is the founder of a so-called school viz. Vakrokti school. He also admits the importance of the figures of speech though in a separate process of thinking. According to Kuntaka strikingness is the soul of poetry and there can no doubt that the figures of speech in the proper sense of the term are nothing but strikingness of expression. Kuntaka himself mentions - sālamkārasya kāvyatā. He states different types of Vakrokti or strikingness of which alamkāra is a particular type.

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17 So says Dr. S.K. Dey - Thus a new turn was given to the alamkara system of Bhasaaha; or rather, what was implicit or naively expressed in it was developed to its logical consequence by Kuntaka's systematic analysis of its implications ... the Vakrokti system of Kuntaka may properly be regarded as an off-shoot of the older Alamkara system.

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18 According to Kuntaka alamkara itself is in fact vakrokti. So he states - ubhāvetāvalamkārtya tayoh purnalakr̥t̥iḥ vakroktireva vaidagdhyabhandhibhanitrucyate - Vakroktijivita. Umasa - 1. Kār - 10.
Kṣemendra, the supporter of aucitya theory also cannot neglect the figures of speech. According to him property is the soul of poetry ( aucityam kavyajivam ). The alamkāras guna etc. add to the beauty of poetry only when they are introduced in proper places - it is then and then only that the alamkāras can be called alamkāras in the proper sense of the term ( ucitasthānavinyāsād alamkārārālamkāritih ).

Just as in the case of a human body, ornaments placed in improper places can not adorn the limbs, so the alamkāras etc. improperly introduced do not enhance the grace of the poem. Thus it is found that the aucitya theory of Kṣemendra is not a new one opposed to the alamkāra theory - it only throws new light on the conception of the alamkāras etc.

The dhvani school of Anandavardhana is perhaps the most important school in the realm of Sanskrit Poetics. As opposed to the theory of the previous school vis. alamkāra, where figures of speech are held to be the main criterion of poetry, Dhvanikāra establishes that dhvani or vyānjanā is the soul of poetry ( kavyasyātmā dhvanih ). Riti guna and alamkāra are ultimately
subordinated to dhvani or rasa. For this reason Anandavardhana in his Dhvanyāloka discusses dhvani with utmost importance and other factors as riti, gundā etc. have become insignificant in his text. The figures of speech also are discussed here as subordinate to dhvani or rasa:

( dhvanyātmabhūte śṛṅgāre saṁśaya vinivēsitaṁ
rupakādīrālaṁkāravarāga eti yathārthataṁ )

Still Anandavardhana pays full attention to the figures of speech and discusses them one by one to show how they are subordinate to the pratiyamāna sense. Thus beginning with the figure samāsokti, paryayokta, upamā, śleṣa etc. are discussed respectively. But it is to be noted that Anandavardhana gives no definition of the figures of speech. He gives example of each alamkāra to show how it subscribes to the enjoyment of rasa. Though Anandavardhana does not give the definition of any alamkāra still he reveals the exact nature of the alamkāra in order to show how it is subordinate to dhvani or rasa.

Eammata in his Kavyaprabhāśā expresses this idea of Dhvanikāra so clearly -

upakurvanti tāṁ santam ye'ṅgadvāren jātucit

bṛādīvadānaṁ kārāte'ṇuprāsopamadāyaḥ -

Chap. 8 Sūtra. - 68 Kar. - 67. In the Vyūti he explains it as ye vācaka vācyalekṣaṁgaṅgatīśayamukhena mukhyāṁ rasaṁ

sambhavinaṁ upakurvanti te kathādyānāṃ mutkartāhānadvārenā

saririno'pi upakārakāḥ bṛādīaya ivālaṁkārāṁ.

Mammta, the author of Kavyaprakasa is undoubtedly a follower of dhvani school. In the third, and fifth chapter of the Kavyaprakasa, Mammta devotes all his attention to establish dhvani or vyasa. Still Mammta also can not neglect the importance of the figures of speech. In the very definition of poetry he admits the importance of alamkara though he does not accept it as the essential factor of poetry. If the Karika and Vrttika of Kavyaprakasa be the same poison then it appears that Mammta clarifies the expression "analaamkrti punah kvap" as sarvatra aalamkara su sputalaamkara virahepi na Kavyatvahuni.26

So it comes that Mammta regards the presence of alamkara directly or indirectly as essential in poetry. He devotes two vast chapters of Kavyaprakasa to the discussion of alamkara. In the ninth chapter he deals with the sabdaalamkaras in details and it is in the Kavyaprakasa that we meet for the first time with so elaborate and systematic treatment of the figures of speech based on sound. Except the familiar figures like yamaka, anuprasa etc, Mammta defines and illustrates 'citrakavya' viz. 'murajabandha', 'kharabandha' etc. In the case of the arthaalamkaras also Mammta pays so much importance to the treatment. The variety of arthaalamkaras mentioned by him is noteworthy. In the case of a few

25 Tadadoasu sabdairthau saguarnaalamkrti punah kvapi – 
Kavyaprakasa. Chap. 1 Sutra. – 1
26 Vrtti on Kavyaprakasa on the sutra No. 1 Page 17.
figures like Upamā, rūpaka, śleṣa etc. he makes elaborate discussions.

So it is found that though a follower of dhvani theory, Yemmeṭa pays so much importance to the figures of speech.

Visvanātha is also a supporter of rasadhvani theory. According to him rasa is the soul of poetry (vākyam rasātmakā kāvyam). So it is evident that riti, guṇa and alamkāra are according to him subordinate to rasa. The definition of alamkāra given by him is

sabdarthyorasthīra ya dharmāḥ so bhūtiśayināḥ rasādīnpakurvento'lamkārāste' nādādīvat.

So Visvanātha does not think the figures of speech as the indispensable factor of poetry, but according to him they are the ‘asthīra dharmāḥ’ contributing to the beauty of poetry of which rasa is the soul. Still Visvanātha discusses the figures of speech in details. Among the Sanskrit rhetoricians it is he, who after Appayya Dīkṣīta mentions the largest number of the figures of speech. The discussions in the case of a few figures like Upamā, śleṣa, samāsokti etc. made by Visvanātha are really valuable.

27 Sāhityadarpana of Visvanātha. Chap. 1 Kār - 3.


29 Sāhityadarpana of Visvanātha. Chap. 10 Kār - 1
So it is found that all the rhetoricians of former or later period admit the importance of the alamkāra. What to speak of the supporters of alamkāra school, the followers of the rasadhvani school also make detailed discussions about the figures of speech. Thus the whole discipline is named as alamkārasastra. Though it is true that in almost all the texts of this discipline, there are discussions on, riti, gunā, varieties of kāvyā etc. still the discussions on the figures of speech receive perhaps the utmost importance.