Chapter-IX

(i) Title of the play

It is an old practice that the titles of literary compositions, not to speak of dramas only, are so selected that they either contain the designation of the hero or heroine or both, or simply the main theme is indicated in the title. Very often the indication of the theme and the designation of the hero or heroine are combined to form the title. The matter perhaps was considered to be so simple and obvious that neither the NS. nor most of the later texts on dramaturgy give any direction regarding the naming of dramatic compositions. From the NS. we get titles of two plays, one is Amṛta-mān-thana, a Samavākāra; and the other is Tripura-daha, a Dima. Both these titles are indicative of themes. There is another reference to a dramatic representation in the NS. where no title of the play is given but only the theme has been alluded to. The Mahābhāṣya also seems to contain reference of subject matters of two plays. It thus appears that a brief statement of the subject-matter served the purpose of titles of plays in the primary stage of its development. But Asvaghoṣa names his play Śūriputra-prakāraṇā by mentioning the name of the leading character and this perhaps indicates the next stage.

1. NS. GUS. IV. 2-3, 10. The NS. altogether refers to three dramatic representations. The title of the first one is not given, it is referred to (I, 57) as, "Yathā daityāḥ surairjītāḥ". Ag. (Vol. I, P.26) says of it, "dīnasamavakāreḥamṛḍaṁ labhāṁ anyatamaṁ prayogāṁ".

Chronologically speaking, so far as the extant texts are concerned, Sgn. first refers to a principle regarding the naming of plays. The text of the NLLK clearly shows that Sgn. here quotes the view of some ancient authority, though the name of the source is not given. It is enjoined that the title of the dramatic composition is to refer either the 'Pradhāna' (hero) or the 'Vastu' (Plot). Titles of Nāṭakas like Rāmaṇanda, Jānakī-rāghava and that of the Prakarana 'Mālatī-mādhava have been cited as indicative of the 'Pradhāna' and those of the nāṭaka Kunda-nālā and the Prakarana Mṛcchakatikā have been taken as indicating the 'Vastu'.

It appears from this that by 'Pradhāna nirdeśa' and 'Vastu-nirdeśa', Sgn. simply means that the title of a drama is to contain either the designation of the hero or those of both the hero and heroine or a reference to the crucial incident of the plot. Śdt. means the same when he says, "tannāma nāṭakādyantar (nāyakādyantar ?) garbhitārthopasūcakam". The use of the word 'Garbhītārthu' (crucial incident) is undoubtly an improvement upon Sgn.'s 'Vastu-nirdeśa'.

The views expressed by Viśvanātha and Amṛtānanda in the 14th century are more elaborate. The latter says, "Sānjā tu nāṭakādyantarā māyaśekarataraṇa va/nāyikā-

3. NLLK. 11,363-367. Pradhāna-vastu-nirdeśād bhavati ki nāṭakādyantarā nāmāti/Pradhānasya nirdeśād vastu-nirdeśād va nāṭakādyantarā nāmā kartavyam/yatā rājanā- 
rāgavaṁ nāma nāṭakam/rāmanandā/vastu-nirdeśāt kunda-mālā nāma nāṭakam/prakaraṇam/ 
ap i mālatī-mādhavaṁ nāma/vastu-nirdeśān mṛcchakatikā nāmā prakaraṇam/ It may be noted that the title Rāmaṇanda neither refers purely to the 'Pradhāna' nor indicates the theme only. Here the name of the 'pradhāna' is associated with an indication to the plot.

4. Lhe. pra. p.209. 1.3. 'nāyakādi' seems to be the intended reading as the title Rāmaḥbhyudaya has been cited (1.4) for illustration which contains both the name of the hero and the chief motif of the theme.
nāyaka-vyākhyānāt saṁjñā prakaraṇādiśu/ nāṭika-satṭakādīrṇiḥ nāyikāhīn-viśeṣaṇaṃ./

This view gives much stress on the designations of the hero and heroine in naming a play but falls short to explain a title like Kunda-mūlā, inasmuch as it omits the principle that the title of a play may be formed by referring to the main incident of the plot. Viśvanātha makes an attempt to give a more clear-cut principle and states that the title of a Nāṭaka should be 'garbhitārtha-prakāśaka', the Prakaraṇas etc., are to be named after the names of the hero and heroine, whereas the name of the heroine alone may serve the purpose of naming Nāṭika, Saṭṭaka etc. This rigid principle of Viśvanātha lacks correspondence to the titles of ancient dramas. Neither the title of the Nāṭakas Kālaviṅkūnimitra and Jānaki-rāghabava may be said to be 'garbhitārtha-prakāśaka', nor the title tṛccha-kaṭika or Sāriputra-prakaraṇa is formed after the names of the hero and heroine. The broad principle of the ALBK. seems to be more suitable to explain the titles of Sanskrit plays.

It is interesting to note that Rucipati in this matter notes, "nāṭakasya ca yan-nāma garbha-nirdiśta-lakṣaṇam," and ascribes it to Bharata. Saṅkara in his Rasa-candrikā commentary of the Abhi-sāku gives a Letter generalisation regarding the naming of a drama. He says, "Vastunā Vastu-neitrāhyāṃ netrā nāyikayāpi vā/ dvābhyaḥ vā vastu-nārībhyaḥ 'āryā saṁjñā tu rūpake. The commentator is silent about the source of the verse but it is evident that this single verse can justify the title of any and every Sanskrit drama.

6. SD. VI. 142-143.
(ii) Title of the Anka

Excepting the NLRK, none of the existing works on Sanskrit dramaturgy including the NS'., tries to formulate any principle regarding the naming of individual Acts of dramas. Snrn. maintains that the Acts of a drama may also be named according to the same principle stated in connection with the naming of the drama. Thus, according to this view, individual Acts may be named by the designation of the character taking the leading part in the Act concerned, or by the main incident delineated therein. In the NLRK., there are citations from as many as fifty three individual Acts with titles.

Ag., Dhanika, Rāmacandra-Guṇacandra and Śīnabhpāla are not found to refer the Acts by their titles. Śāradātanaya and Viśvanātha in many cases have cited from different Acts with titles. But it is interesting to note that all the names of Acts, referred to in the Bhā. prā. and in the chapter VI of the SD., are found in the NLRK. Not only the names of Acts but the citations therefrom, as given by Śāradātanaya and Viśvanātha, occur in the NLRK. in similar contexts.

1. NLRK. Ṣr-387-388.

2. Vidyānātha also gives names to the Acts of his 'udāharaṇa-nātaka' PRYB.
in almost all cases. In this matter the indebtedness of Saradātānaya and Viśvanātha to Sgn. seems to be an undeniable fact.

Now, the naming of an Act becomes necessary only when its separate entity besides the part of a whole drama, is recognised for the representation on the stage, otherwise it appears to be quite useless to attach a title to an Act. Indian tradition recognises different types of one Act plays like Bhāna, Vyāyoga, Vīthī etc. There was also the practice of staging individual Acts in India and this becomes evident when we take into consideration the reason behind the naming of Acts. The title of a drama is required to be announced by the Sūtradhāra (or Sthāpaka) in the prelude. Similarly the name


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<tr>
<th>Drama</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gaurigrha (Act I of Nāgā)</td>
<td>P.219, 1.1</td>
<td>1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citraśālānāka (?)</td>
<td>P.250, 1.16</td>
<td>11,2810-2819</td>
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<td>Pumśavanānāka (from Chalitarāma)</td>
<td>P.250, 1.20</td>
<td>11,2820-2821</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kulapātyanāka (Act II of Udātta-rāghava)</td>
<td>P.279, 1.10</td>
<td>11,3111-3112</td>
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</tbody>
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Names of two other Acts, Aśvatthāmānāka (Act III of V. sam) and Cāitrāvalī (Act I of R.V.) referred to in the Bhā. pra. (Pp. 217, 237, 11, 17, 15) are also found in the NLJK, in different contexts than the former.

SD (with Lakṣmī ṭīkā)  

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<tr>
<th>Drama</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aśvatthāmānāka</td>
<td>PP.348,372,373</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gṛhavrksavāṭikā (Act I of Puṣpadūṣitaka)</td>
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<td>Kumbhānāka (Act V of Udātta-rāghava)</td>
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<td>Vībhīṣana-nirbhartanānāka, P., 421</td>
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<td>Anutāpanā (Act 9 of Chalitarāma)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundarānāk (Act IV of V. Sam)</td>
<td>P.425 ----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(For identification of Acts referred to in the NLJK, Cf. Dr. Raghavan's notes, NLJK, Eng. Tra. p. 71).
of an Act was also announced when it was staged. Many of our extant dramas contain Acts with names. It is very often argued, specially in connection with the one Act plays of Bhūsa, that the hereditary actors of Kerala, the Cakyars, use to stage selected Acts from renowned Sanskrit dramas. The Urukhāṅga of Bhūsa is generally taken to be such an Act of some lost lengthy Mahābhārata-drama. From our above discussion, it appears that the practice of staging selected Acts was not confined to Kerala only, more or less it was known to other parts of the country. In Kerala it was a regular practice, but in other parts of the country the practice does not appear to be a regular feature of representation. The silence of authorities like Ag., Dhananjaya etc., in the matter of either the principle of naming or referring to the names of individual Acts tends to support our contention. In this connection it may also be pointed out that a well-known commentator like Jagaddhara fails to understand the implication of the name Vakula-vīthī of the Act I of the Mālatī-mādhava. The grove itself and a garland of 'vakula' flowers play an important part in the Act and as such it is named Vakula-vīthī. But the commentator in explaining the name quotes a definition of the Vīthī, an one Act minor 'rupaka' and wrongly ascribes the definition to Bharata. This shows a confusion regarding the name of an Act.

From a perusal of the foregoing chapters it appears that almost a separate literature had developed through ages on the dramatic plot and its analysis and division from different viewpoints. An allegation is very often levelled

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4. Dr. G. Sastri, CHOSL, P. 97.
6. Mā. mā (with the Com. of Jagaddhara) P. 81.
against Indian theorists in the field of literary criticism, that they are overzealous in classification and elaboration. The validity of this allegation cannot be challenged but the reasons behind, should not be overlooked. The basically thoughtful and speculative Indian mind worked out through centuries an enormous Philosophical literature. The rapid and parallel development of different systems of Philosophy exerted its influence on literary criticism, not to speak of dramaturgy alone. A Philosophical precision and logical method of classification of all details were deemed essential in every field of knowledge.

From the very beginning, literary criticism in India was come to be recognised as a Śāstra, giving injunctions regarding Vidhis and Nishedhas and as a Śāstra it was expected to follow the Śāstric method of delineation. Moreover, a deep regard for the works of ancient seers and contemporary demands compelled the authors to twist the ancient sayings for bringing out their own desired import and this gave rise to different interpretations of any single verse.

The present NS undoubtedly presupposes a long tradition, well developed stage convention and also a full-fledged dramatic literature of which no trace has come down to us. Only a long process of observation, discrimination and experiment through centuries can give rise to such a comprehensive work as the NS is. But the literature that formed the basis of this monumental work is sunk into oblivion. After the NS, was codified it acquired a sanctity, almost religious in character for which the work itself was certainly well-deserving. With this NS as the foundation, an enormous literature grew up in course of time. In its development, it influenced and was also influenced by the prolific growth of dramatic literature, with but a fragment of which we are at present acquainted. This is the reason behind the host of theories on particular topic of dramaturgy while all the theorists owe their unswerving allegiance to the NS. An attempt has been
made in the preceding chapters to explain those controversial theories which come under our discussion and show that most of them had their origin in the sūtra-like composition of the NŚ. itself, amenable to several interpretations.

It has also been shown that a number of schools of thought developed long before Ag. and Sgn. and that these Schools maintained divergent opinions regarding the source, structure, analysis and division of the plot. The theories propounded by these schools in most cases, as has been shown, are undoubtly very significant effort in dramatic criticism.

About the NŚ. there are problems like the traditions of Śat-sahasrī, 1 Dvādaśa-Sahasrī, Ādi-bharata etc. It is generally admitted that there are two recensions of the NŚ. But in the preface of the Gūs. edition Mr. M.R. Kavi points out that no two out of forty manuscripts of the NŚ. agree completely. The same is the position regarding the printed versions of the text. The small portion of the text that comes under our subject of discourse shows enumerable variations in readings which have been noted in proper places whenever thought to be necessary. Moreover, in the works of commentators on dramas, like Rāghava-Lhaṭṭa, Jaṭaddhara, Rucipati, Saṅkara etc., some verses are found to be ascribed to Ḭharata which are not available in the present NŚ. Much weight cannot be attached to the words of these later commentators. But in cases where the ascriptions are supported by a text like the MLR, and are widely recognised, the quotations concerned can reasonably be taken as collected from some copy of the NŚ. In the foregoing chapters some such cases have been discussed, the most important of which are, the three ways of 'Līja-nyūśa', appearance of a god at the end of a play, restriction to the entrance of a character without prior indication, and the verse 'kuto pi svecchaya' etc., distinguishing a Viśkambhaka from a Praveśaka. 2

1. Līha. pra. P.287. 11.7-9; for the problem of Ādi-bharata see the Paper on the topic by Dr. S.K.De, Our Heritage, Vol. I Pt. II.
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