VĀCIKĀBHINAYA ACCORDING TO THE NĀṬYAŚĀSTRA

RELEVANCE OF VĀCIKĀBHINAYA

"Speech is the vocal presentation of words and is the basic structure for building up a drama. So, it is essential that this branch of expression should be very carefully exploited. Āṅgika, Āhārya and Sātvika abhinayas interpret the speech. All śāstras or sciences are given form in words and are controlled by them. So, all knowledge is gained through word and speech. Therefore, there is nothing that is superior to speech and it is the basis of all activity."

Bharata began the explanation of vācikabhinaya with these sentences.35 Speech has been described as the main structure of drama since it affords the canvas for expressing all emotions; the basis for the instrumental and vocal music itself is an independent branch of historionic expression. The various branches of vācikābhinaya are as follows:


35. वाचि यत्ततु करत्वयो नाथवये तनु स्मृता।
   अहैवपवत्सत्वानि वागार्य स्वप्यविनि हि।
   वाकसम्यानिः शाब्दाणि वाक्तिन्द्रानि तथैव च।
   तस्मादाय: परं नासिति वाचिद सर्वेऽकारणम्। NS XV 2-3
characters) 10. Kākusvaravañjana (modulation in voice) and 11. Virāma (pause). It is essential that both the author and the actor should have clear concepts of the form and nature of the above mentioned branches of voice.

The language used in drama is divided into four categories- Atibhāṣā (the language of the superhuman), Āryabhāṣā (the language of the commoner) and Yonyantarībhāṣā (the language of the animals and birds). The language spoken by a character is specified by regional variation, accent, intonation and dialect. Bharata has elaborately explained these aspects.

According to AG, knowledge of grammar is necessary to understand the beauty of the word and to clearly express its meaning in its pure form, particularly in the case of drama, where nepathyā or speech (the text proper) occupies an important place. The main languages used in drama are Sanskrit and Prākrit. Speech, in these two languages occupies a prominent place in the NS.

The combination of letters results in the creation of words and knowledge of the identity and value of words is to know about the following words or parts of speech - Nāma (noun), Ākhyāta (verb), Nipāta (adverb), Upasarga (preposition), Pratyaya (terminal syllable, especially in Indian languages), Taddhita (nominal affix), Vibhakti (case), Liṅga (gender), Sandhi (conjunction of words) and Samasa (grouping of words or compound words)
All poetry follows prosody. Therefore Bharata has stated that there is no word that does not fit into prosody and there is no prosody without words. And it is this union of word and prosody into poetry that embellishes drama. Words are of two kinds, nibaddha and cūrṇa, pertaining to poetry and prose respectively.

Thirty-six types of lakṣaṇas or embellishments are found in creative works in literature. The embellishments are based on the emotions, the determinants the consequents and the transitory emotions. These are considered to be as highly ornate to drama as ornaments to a woman. Propriety with reference to rasa has to be observed in providing these embellishments - bhūṣana (ornament) akṣaraśaṅghāta (brevity) etc. - and defined each one of them.

What valour is to a man and beauty is to a woman, so is an alankāra (figure of speech) to a kavya. It adorns the kāvyā. There are three main types of figures of speech - those based on sense, those based on sound and those combining both. While an embellishment is natural to kavya, a figure of speech is highly aesthetic in function and depends upon the creative genius of the author. Just as wearing appropriate ornaments enhances the looks of a beautiful woman, the values of the embellishments in a kāvyā shine more brilliantly by using appropriate figures of speech.

It is an acknowledged fact that a kāvyā should be devoid of all demerits. Bharata has stated that it matters little or nothing if one does not write poetry, but writing bad poetry is tantamount to homicide; broadly speaking, all improprieties come under demerits and should be avoided.

It is not enough if a kāvyā is devoid of demerits but should also incorporate merits. The merits enumerated by Bharata are ten-1. Śleṣa (double meaning) 2. Prasāda (obviousness) 3. Samatā (balance) 4. Samādhi (terseness) 5. Mādhurya (sweetness) 6. Ojau (grandeur) 7. Saukumārya (delicacy) 8. Arthāvyakti (directness) 9. Udāratā (exaltedness) and 10. Kānti (brilliance).

Sambuddhidhāna pertains to the forms of address in which the superior, medium and the inferior characters address each other in a play. Where it is not etiquette bound to address a character by name, certain standard forms of addressing have been evolved. Eg. great sages, saints and other respected persons are to be addressed as Bhagavan ("Holly one"!)


When a story is based on the classics, the names that are given to the characters should correspond to those pertaining to the respective classics. There is no necessity in such cases to introduce new names, where as in cases of original themes, the names that are given to the respective characters should indicate the nature of such characters. Here, the author has full liberty to create characters and name them. However, Bharata has given examples of naming such characters.

VOICE

KĀKUSVARAVYAÑJANA (MODULATION IN VOICE)

When the text has been fully learnt, it is absolutely necessary to render it on the stage with proper kākusvara (modulation in voice). Modulation is qualified by six characteristics –


1. Svaras (Musical notes)

There are seven fundamental musical notes that correspond to the diatonic scale as follows: -

\[ \text{Sa} \quad ri \quad ga \quad ma \quad pa \quad da \quad ni \quad sa \]

\[
C \quad D \quad E \quad F \quad G \quad A \quad B \quad c
\]
The seven notes, along with the upper c, corresponding to higher ‘sa’, form the fundamental octave.

In speech, these notes have to be used in consonance with the rasa that has to be created. In creating śṛngāra and hāsya rasas, ma and pa predominate; in creating vīra, raudra and adbhuta rasas sa and ri predominate and in creating karuṇa rasa ga and ni and in creating bībhatas and bhayānaka rasas, da predominate.

2. Sthānas (The anatomical parts of the origin of sounds): -

There are three main anatomical parts of origin from where the impulse starts to create a particular sound - the chest, the throat and the head. These three parts are common to both human voice as well as the classical Indian instrument; the viṇṇā and the inflexions of voice and speech originate from these three parts. There are three pitches in which sounds are produced - Mandra (the low), Madhya (the medium) and Tara (the high), which may be defined as the lower C, G and upper c respectively. In the delivery of speech, it is good to start with mandrasvara generating from the chest, brighten it with tārasvara generating from the throat. This ensures an accurate rendering of the text.

3. Varṇas (The modes of intonation): -

There are four fundamental variations in intonating speech - Udātta (the bold), Anudātta (the normal), Svarita (the circumflex) and Kampita (the vibrating). In hāsya and srngara rasas, svarita and udātta;
in vīra, raudra and adbhuta rasas, udātta and kampita; in bibhatsa and bhayānaka rasas, anudātta, and kampita modes of intonation predominate in rendering the text.

4. Kākus (The variations in inflexion):-

Kāku is of two kinds - Nirākāṅkṣa and Sākāṅkṣa. A sentence or a word has an obvious meaning. But, this may be rendered by inflexions in voice to give a completely different or implied meaning. The former, i.e. obvious meaning is called nirākāṅkṣakāku (the plain inflexion) and the latter is called sākāṅkṣakāku (the implied inflexion). In the sākāṅkṣakāku, the modes of intonation and enunciation are incomplete. It starts with a high pitch and ends in low pitch. The motivating impulses start in the throat and the chest. The process does not confine itself to the obvious meaning but gives a completely different or implied meaning. In nirākāṅkṣakāku intonation and enunciation are complete starting in the lower pitch and ending in the higher pitch, the impulses originating from the head. It renders the fully intended meaning of the text.

5. Alaṅkāras (The modes of enunciation): -

The modes of enunciation are of six kinds - Ucca (the high), Dipta (the bright), Mandra (the base), Nīca (the low), and Druta (the fast) and Vilambita (the dilated). Bharata has described in great detail the uses of these six kinds of enunciation.
6. Āṅgas (The modes of rendering): -

There are six processes in which speech is rendered - Viccheda (the punctuated) Arpana (the pleasant), Visrāga (the disinterested), Anubandha (the continuous), Dipana (the brilliant) and Praśamana (flowing).

7. Virāma (Pause): -

Pauses are very significant accessories in the proper rendering of speech. Pause, when properly used, conveys the full import of a word or a group of words in a sentence. In addition, when poetical passages are being rendered pause occupies a very high place. For, a wrong pause may completely distort the import. Further, a pause must be very judiciously used in rendering a textual content.

SVARAS

The svaras may be discussed in detail now. In the ancient texts on music, the individual svara is characterised in a way which is similar to how our philosophers often speak of the ultimate: - स्वप्रकाश seems to close to स्वप्रक्षाम. Even from the new point of practice, a svara is at least as important as the unit of an aesthetic pace or mātrā.

The single svara can be looked at from the following different points of view.

1. Its grammatical identity.
2. Its aesthetic 'look'.
3. Its relation to the singer himself.
The first two of these are concerned with both the singer and the rasika.

Now the definition of svara may be revised - स्वमेव राजते that which reigns (or satisfies or looks beautiful) by itself. The name that we give to a svara, or its grammatical identity is based on a relation. A svara is madhyama, if it is at the right interval from ga and pa; it is kōmaḷa as against śuddha; and vice-versa. So in all such talk we do not really speak of the svara by itself or alone. And yet where a svara is well sung it alone may seem to sway the listener's attention. In other words, our acknowledged definition of svara relates to the note's own (aesthetic) look, not to the way we identify it for the sake of understanding. It is not its being a rṣabha or gāndhāra but its appearing or as an accent of intrinsic beauty that our definition is about. The aesthetic and the merely grammatical approaches to svara are truly indifferent.

Many are the factors on which the 'look' of a single svara depends. A svara's relation to its setting is however not merely a source of charm. If we reflect to it, it can also be made to heighten two ways of looking at a svara, from the viewpoint of grammar and from that of aesthetic experience. Take the case of a vivādisvara, grammatically its relation to other notes in a rāga is more or less negative. It is a svara, which is not ordinarily taken in a particular rāga, though its use here is not expressly forbidden either. In the singing of maestro, on the other
hand, such a note - or even an utter outcaste, so to say - may well come to find a place without seeming to obtrude on the fabric of the rāga to which it is alien.

A key feature of a raga is the mutual agreement (consonance) of two svaras. This relation of accord is however aesthetic, like two colours seeming to complement each other, it is clearly not a relation of meaning, and so not a matter of theoretical consistency. So, when the very basis of a raga is what in fact seems agreeable to the ear, one cannot roundly object to the inclusion of a vivādisvara on the ground that once we have fixed and accepted the scheme of a rāga, it would be theoretically inconsistent to let in an alien note.

A rāga's svaras however, do not only relate to one another. It is the musician who puts life into them. The essential function of the opening svara/svaras in relation to the singer is to take his mind away from the every day world to that of the rāga he chooses to sing, and to settle it there. A warm-up or attunement of the voice may also take place.

VĀCIKĀBHINAYA IN ‘KERALA THEATRE’

It is well known that vācikābhinaya plays an important role in Indian classical theatre. In the Kerala theatre, Kūṭiyāṭṭom follows the tradition of classical theatre and the NS. Vācikābhinaya in Kūṭiyāṭṭom is unique. In Kūṭiyāṭṭom the svaras have different aspect of usage and
dimension. They are following the tradition of Sāmaveda. There are about twenty-four svaras in Kūṭiyāṭṭom. The svaras in Kūṭiyāṭṭom may be discussed in detail.

The vācika in Kūṭiyāṭṭom, be it prose or verse, is presented in a particular cadence. The characters in Kūṭiyāṭṭom express their emotions by imitating the mode of speech in real life. On the other hand, the musical style in Kūṭiyāṭṭom enhances the rasabhinaya of the actor through the medium of vācika, with the powerful exploitation of the technique of suggestion. Several svaras are used to suit different characters, rasas, and the corresponding time. These are also sometimes referred to as rāgas. The following are the svaras (rāgas) used in Kūṭiyāṭṭom.

वेलाधूलिबाटीतोटोटियात्तकृत्याक्रमाविनायः
तान्त्रांतर्यत्वात्तां कामरोपुत श्रीकण्ठतकाढ़वः।
गान्धारद्राकृतिकृतिब्रमविमला मुद्राभिधा कैशिकी
हिन्द्वोदयपञ्चमविनतयुतो गुण्डिय नाधौ स्मृतः॥

It is said that Kūṭiyāṭṭom has only twenty-four mudrās and an equal number of important rāgas. But only twenty-one rāgas have been identified. Since there are slokas to determine the application of the twenty-one rāgas, they can be understood easily. The names of the rāgas mentioned in the śloka quoted above, are as follows.
(though there are three Antaries (8-10) the definitions of only two of
them are available. The application for the third is not clear) 11. Kāmara
(Śrikāmara) 12. Tarka 13 Vīratarka (12-13 तर्काःतयोः) 14. Gāndhāra
(Dukkhaṁdhāra) 15. Kurolkkuriṇji (Korakkuriṇji) 16. Vimalā
(application) not identified) 17. Muḍḍha 18. Kaisika (Kaisiki) 19. Indāḷa
Paṇcamatrayam) 24. Śrīkanthī.

From the above, the two rāgas Varāṭi and Vimalā are not clear.
Similarly the name of Antari is also not known. The basis for their
application has not been found. It is not clear whether they can be of use
in items like akkita. In the kramadīpika of Āscaryacūḍāmaṇi, K.P.
Nārāyaṇa Piṣāroṭi mentions twenty-three rāgas. Māṇi Mādhava Cākyar
in Nāṭyakalpadrumam asserts: “Pattum pattumatāyiṭum” (ten plus ten-
i.e. twenty). One thing is certain - in plays like Aṅgulīyāṇka, twenty one
rāgas are still being used.

The prescriptive rules for the application of the rāgas may
now be examined. The ślokas containing the definition of each rāga
(svara), along with its explanation, are given below.
1. Indaṇa

For noble heroes (and heroines) in ordinary situations i.e. when they are not under the spell of emotions like love, anger etc. Indaṇa is used Examples follow:

(i) In Nāgānanda, Act I, Jīmūtavāhana’s śloka beginning with ‘रागवयासदलितामृतम महि में ध्वनीति न प्रवेयः....’

(ii) In Āscaryacūdāmaṇi, Act I: Śrī Rāma’s portion beginning with the cūrṇikā ‘देवि नरगमधिवासात विवेशेष इव वनाधिवासो मे प्रतिभाति’

(iii) Āscaryacūdāmaṇi, Act II: Sri Rama’s portion beginning with the cūrṇikā ‘बैदेहि विदूरे सर्व विस्मयनीयतया श्रूयते’

(iv) For noble heroines, Śītā’s part in Śūrpaṇakhāṇka: ‘अव्यक्ति अतिममविको दुहलम्....’

(v) In Bālacakṛita: For sūtradhāra, and in benedictions, ‘शाह्करवुपु.....’

(vi) In Āscaryacūdāmaṇi: ‘वीरस्थाने सहस्र....’

(vii) In Mattaṛilāsa: ‘भाषावेष...’ and मध्यमां तु पात्रां व्यचित्रित्वेऽव हि। चेत्तेप्रत्यथ्रङ्गश्च व्यचित्रित्तुष्टयर्थेतुथः’
On certain occasions, even some middling characters have Indala. For example:-

(i) In Pratimāṇāṭaka, Act II: Bharata’s words beginning with suta
   (Rāmāyaṇam kramadīpikā 8-45 line-3)

(ii) In Mantrāṅka: Yaugandharāyaṇa’s śloka, beginning with ‘स्नातय सप्य समुपतित…..’

But middling characters usually have the rāga Cetīpaṇcama

2. Cetīpaṇcama

nectānānampi pātrāṇaṁ balakāṇaṁ tathēv cha

chēddīpūḍamānaṁ: śyānrete te drśyate vairhiṇa ||

For evil characters and for children, Cetīpaṇcama is employed in ordinary situations. For example, for evil characters:

(i) Pratimāṇāṭaka, Act II, the soldier’s words: ‘बुद्ध विनिकितं एतकये…..’

(ii) Abhiṣeka Act III: the words of Raṇabhiru: ‘वद्वजसत्वेन…’

(iii) Example for children:
   Śākuntala, Act VII:

   Sarvadamana’s words:

   ‘मुल्य मा भाव ……………..’
3. Korakkuriṇji

Monkeys in ordinary situations have Korakkuriṇji rāga. On other occasions, Tarka, Vīrataraka, Dāṇa, Dukkhagāndhāra etc. may be used. For example:

(i) In Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi Act VI:
Hanūmān’s cūṇikā:
‘संप्रति हि लङ्का प्राप्तसि’...
And the śloka ‘मैयाक नागनन्या’...

(ii) Abhiṣeka, Act I: Sugrīva’s śloka, beginning with ‘मुक्तो देव’...

(iii) Abhiṣeka, Act I: Hanūmān’s śloka beginning with ‘नृपत्व’...

Instances of rāgas used for monkeys on other occasions,

(i) Abhiṣeka, Bālivadhānka: Sugrīva recites
(a) ‘संप्राप्ता हरिवर्धाहु’...’ in Tarka.
(b) ‘अपराधमनुद्विश्य’...’ in Veḷādhūli
(c) ‘करिकरसदृश्यो’...’ in Dukkhagāndhāra

4. Antari

While enacting in avasthā Antari rāga is used. Here avasthā means the enactment of a story where the character deviates from his real nature. This rāga is usually employed in nirvahaṇa ślokas. For e.g. the nirvahaṇa śloka in Aṅgulīyānka
is recited in Antari. The earlier sloka deals with Šūrpaṇakha’s tempting of Śrī Rāma by adopting the disguise of Laṅitā. This is done in the bhava of Šūrpaṇakha. This situation is given in the äṭṭaprakāra thus: “Then Šūrpaṇakha goes to Śrī Rāma and salutes him in kamalaparivartana and stands in strībhāva. And then pulling down the edge of her skirt she acts in this avasthā. Šūrpaṇakha, the sister of Rāvaṇa, goes to Śrī Rāma under the spell of love, like a female serpent oppressed by heat reaching the shade of a Sandal tree. But according to the kramadīpikā of Abhiṣekanāṭaka, in “Samudraratnakara”, on one occasion Varuṇa makes use of this rāga.

5. Veḷādhūḷi

Another version is also seen in the NKD of Māṇi Mādhava Cākyār. It is

Therefore it can be said that Veḷādhūḷi rāga is used in excitement and fright, as well as calling out from a distance.
(i) Example for excitement:
Nāgānanda, Act II, When the hero comes to know that the heroine
wants to commit suicide, the ślōka ‘न खलु न खलु मुग्धे... ’

(ii) Example for fright: Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi Act II, Śrī Rāma on seeing
Śūrpaṇakha discards her disguise, and come to him as a rākṣasi,
the ślōka
‘श्रीमददृष्टमण्डोध्वे...’

(iii) Example for calling out from a distance:

(a) Svapnavāsavadatta, the nirvahaṇa ślōka
‘विष्णुभयंत्रमबुज्जप्ति वृक्षान...’ and

(b) Abhiṣekanāṭaka, Bālivadhāṅka Act I:
Sugrīva’s challenge: ‘अपराधमनुदिश्य...’

6. Śrīkāmara

अतिरिक्तप्रमोदे तु रागः श्रीकामरे मत्व: ।

Śrīkāmara is used in unexpected happiness.

Eg: (i) Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi, Act V: Rāvaṇa mistakes the moon for the sun,
and finds to his great joy that it is the moon itself:
‘न भानुरेष मया दत्ताच्यवधन्द्रम’

(ii) Subhadradhanaṅjaya, Act I: a) the hero’s ślōka ‘अथवा अवाच्छित
eवाहममुना...’ and (b) ‘व्यालोलहारमुरसा तरसा....’
7. Ārta

On almost all occasions of śṛṅgāra, Ārta is used. The word 'prāya' indicates other occasion also. That would be discussed later.

Eg. (i) Nāgānanda, Act II. The śloka

‘व्यावर्थम् वसितासिलक्षणरूपा...’

(ii) Dhanañjaya Act I, the ślokas ‘चलकुवलय...’ and ‘सौन्दर्य सुकुमारता...’

8. Paurāṇī

‘पौराणी विप्रलभाष्यश्रुद्धारस्य तु मूच्छने।’

Paurāṇī is used at the height of vipralambha

Eg. (i) Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi, Aśokavanikānka: When Rāvana goes to meet Sīta in Aśokavanikā, he describes the garden and the beauty of Sītā and is overcome by the impact of love, the śloka, ‘जनतामोक्षसहकारमङ्गे...’

(ii) Aṅgulīyāṅka: Hanūmān while describing Śrī Rāma’s excess love

‘आपद्य भक्षिशयन...’

(iii) Dhanañjaya, Act III Arjuna’s ślokas in vipralambha:

‘चकितचकिति’ and ‘चन्द्रालोकान्...’

9. Muḍḍha

रक्षसाणात्तु श्रुद्धारस्य मुज्ज्व लिङ्गदत्तेऽ।

Eg: (i) Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi, Act III ‘मस्तकतेऽते मन्दाकिन्या मद्धुनिसादिनिः...’

Also in sambhogasṛṅgāra:

(ii) Rākṣasotpatti nirvahaṇa;

‘पिवन् मद्धुसुखं चुम्बन्’
10. Muralindala

तेषान् विप्रलम्भस्य मूर्द्धने मुरलीदलम्।
श्रीरमस्य तु सम्भोगशृङ्ख्लेरे मुरलीदलम्।

rākṣasa’s viprlambhaśṛṅgāra and Śrī Rāma’s sambhogāśṛṅgāra

are in Muralindala. Examples.

(i) Āscaryacudāmaṇi, Act VI:
‘कूलनगर्जनकाचि क्ष्य गता.....’
(ii) Āscaryacudāmaṇi, Act VI:
The slōka ‘आयातः मामपरिचितया.....’
is in Paurāṇī because it is vipralambha, while in Āscaryacudāmaṇi, Act II:
‘चरणनलिनसाध्यं यान.....’ is in Muralindala

11. Kaiśiki

रसयोः कौशिकीं प्राप्तिः स्यविभाष्यभवत्सयोऽधिष्ठित

In hāsya and bibhatsa rasas, Kaiśiki is used:

Eg: (i) for hāsya: Mattavilāsa, Kapāli’s slōka
‘भस्माल्लावीरशंशिकुचुकुमजङ्ग....’
(ii) for bibhatsa: Aṅgulīyānka, nirvahaṇa:
‘पायं पायमसुइम्मं स्वादं स्वादं च मस्तकातुं....’

12. Tarka

क्रोधस्तु तृदस्य चापि तर्कराग उदाहरतः।

In krōdha and raudra rasas, Tarka is used.

Eg: (i) For krōdha: Abhiṣeka Act III: Ravana’s anger about Hanuman: ‘आह कथं कथं निर्जन्मति....’
(ii). For *raudra*: Āscaryacūḍāmaṇi, Act II: Śrī Rāma seeing Śūrpaṇakha soaked in blood, ‘सन्ध्यारुषेणसससिलपलयपरमेव ’ At the height of *krōḍha*, an extreme level of *tarka* is used.

(iii) Āscaryacūḍāmaṇi, Act V: Rāvaṇa suddenly getting up from his prostrate position: ‘किं किं हृतमुष्मुत्य…. ’ (This may be seen from the āṭṭapakāra of Aśokavanikāṅka).

13. Vīratarka

वीरनामिन रसे रसो वीरतर्कः स्वततो बुधः।

Vīratarka is used in *vīrarasas*

Eg (i) Āscaryacūḍāmaṇi, Act V Rāvaṇa’s *śloka*

‘अहिभवनपिधानान्यायुषीकृत्य ’

(ii) Āscaryacūḍāmaṇi Act VI Pārṇāśālāṅka ‘क्वेद न… ’

(iii) Āscaryacūḍāmaṇi, Act II: Māyāśitāṅka ‘अपि वासववारणस्य ’

(iv) Āscaryacūḍāmaṇi, Act II: Śrī Rāma’s *śloka* ‘त्रिभुवनसिद्धस्त्य रवण… ’

14 Vīrapaṅcama (According to the NKD)

अत्यन्तापसंरंभे वीरपञ्चम ईरितः।

Vīrapaṅcama is used in highly valiant actions.

Eg: (i) Āscaryacūḍāmaṇi, Aṅgulīyāṅka nirvahaṇa - Śrī Rāma’s reply to the challenge of *rākṣasas*: ‘कपोले जानक्या करिकल्प…. ’

(ii) Āscaryacūḍāmaṇi, Aṅgulīyāṅka Kapila Vasudeva’s *śloka* on seeing that the sixty thousand sons of Sagara approach to kill him.

‘तान् पाण्यांकृपापकामुक्तगदां…’
15 Dukkhagāndhāra

\[ \text{This rāga is used in dukkha (grief) and karuṇa (pathos)} \]

Eg. (i) for dukkha

Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi, Act II: Śrī Rāma’s śloka

‘धियांह मानुष जन्म वसुधामात्रागस्वरं...’

(ii) for karuṇa:

Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi, Act III: Lakṣṇa’s śloka

‘सत्यवादिनि धर्मिष्टे पुत्रि...’

16. Dāṇa

\[ \text{Dāṇa rāga is used in abhutarasa, and sometimes in bhayānaka.} \]

The word ‘sometimes’ is used in the sloka because usually Veḷādhūḷi is used in bhayānaka.

E.g.s for abhuta:

(i) Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi, Act III: Rāvaṇa while seeing Sītā for the first time:

‘इन्द्राणीमहमसरेभिरयनम्...’

(ii) Dhanañjaya, Act I: when Arjuna describes the hermitage.

‘अहो महानुभावत.....’ and ‘शिकिनिश्चलभो...’
17. Ghaṭṭantari

Ghaṭṭantari is used on occasions of reporting the death of evil persons.

E.g.: Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi, Act III: Lākṣmaṇa’s śloka and Aṅgulīyāṇka, nirvahaṇa:

‘श्रत्यकणिकापातात् सन्ध्येन.’

Though according to the textual practice, this is the sloka for Ghaṭṭantari, in Mantrāṇa, it is supposed to be used in some instances. But no evidence for this has been found.

18. Toṇṭu

Toṇṭu is used in śāntarasa and bhakti.

E.g.: (i) for śānta: Mattavilāsa nirvahaṇa:

‘मनो नवद्विनिषिद्वृति....’

(ii) for bhakti

(a) Abhiṣeka Act IV:

‘नारायणस्य नस्तमुनास्तित्य....’

(b) Balivadha nirvahaṇa:

‘दशरथसुतारम....’

19. Bhinnapaṅcama (According to the NKD)

The rāga Bhinnapaṅcama is used in excessive joy.
Egs: (i) Nāgānanda, Act II

‘सखे वश्य पश्य अक्ला शोभा अधरस्य ...’.

(ii) Nāgānanda, Act III

‘सितालपणोदगमोसयं ते दृश्यतेऽधरपल्लवे....’

20. Puranīru

पुरस्नेराख्यागस्तु वर्षाकालस्य वर्णने ।
प्रभातवर्णनायाम्य गीतजेतुगीयते ॥

Puranīru is used in the description of rainy reason, and in the description of morning.

Eg. (i) For description of rainy season:

‘केकया च शिखिना मुदुपूतकेतकी...'  

(ii) for description of morning:

Pratijñayaugandharāyana, nirvaha of Mantrānka

‘श्रीवेदवारिष्ठि वले शयने प्रसुप्त....’

21. Śrīkanṭhī

अद्वासाने श्रीकण्ठी दुष्टानां हिंसनेऽपि च ।
सन्ध्यावर्णनवेलायां मध्याह्नस्य च वर्णने ॥
भक्तिभावे च विद्विष: कथये गीतिपारे :॥

Śrīkanṭhī is used at the end of an act, at the killing of evil persons, in the description of noon and dusk time, and in bhaktibhāva.
E.g. (i) for the end of an act: Āścaryacūḍāmaṇī Act VI
‘ख़ोबधात् विरतकर्म विसूर्य चार... ’

(ii) For description of dusk time: Dhanañjaya Act II
‘अपरगिरि निश्चिन वासरं वासरसः... ’

(iii) description of noon: Āścaryacūḍāmaṇī, Act I
‘तापात् तत्क्षणगृहस्थनं... ’

(iv) for killing an evil person:
Bālacarita: ‘सन्ध्याकाले सभाडारे... ’

(v) for bhakti the invocation beginning with ‘फलोधनमधवसिदु... ’ in Rāmāyaṇam Prabandha

THE ROLE OF RAGAS IN THE EXPOSITION OF SENTIMENTS

It is very difficult to identify the rāgas (svaras) in Kūṭiyāṭṭom. The training is not given by teaching the names of the svaras or their applications. The practice is that each śloka is recited in a particular manner. When it is tallied with the prescriptive rule of the svara it is usually found to be correct.

While describing about the svaras in Kutiyattom the NKD says: “Svaranāmaṇāṇaḷiṇaṇam pattum pattumatāyitum”. But it has already been found that there are twenty-four rāgas in Kūṭiyāṭṭom with definition of twenty-one of them.

In Pañcamatraya, Māṇi Mādhava Cākyār mentions only two: Čeṭīpāncama and Bhinnapaṇcama. In kramadīpakā of Āścaryacūḍāmaṇī, K.P. Nārāyaṇa Piṣāroty even raises the question whether there are more
than three Pañcamas. Whatever is the case, Vīrapañcama cannot be omitted. This is used in many places in Aṅgulīyāṅka. The rule goes: 

‘अत्यन्तवीरसःसः वीरपञ्चम इति’। Eg: In Anguliyanka, when rākṣasas like Khara challenge Rāma to fight with them, the situation of Rāma is described in the nirvahanaśloka beginning with ‘कपोले जानकया: करिकलभदन्ततिः...’ Aṅgulīyāṅka, Sagarotpatti- the ślokas- ‘तान पाषाणकृष्णकालाकुंडमा...’ and ‘अम्बोध्यं प्रभावत् वा...’

These ślokas are recited in Vīrapañcama. Some deviations from Nātyakalpadruma are mentioned below:

1. The NKD says that in śṛngāra (and rati), Indaḷa is also used. In Kūṭiyāṭṭom, character is supposed to use Indalam for śṛngāra. But it is established that this rāga is used for heroes in normal situations (samāvasthā). Now, the example provided for Indala in śṛngāra ‘न खलु न खलु मुधे....’ is not used in Indala, but in Velādhūḷi, on the stage. There is a reason for this: seeing that the heroine is going to hang herself, the maid shouts for help and Jīmūtavāhana rushes to the scene. The kriya is ‘Satvaramupasṛtya latāpāśamākṣipan’. Here the occasion is one of alarm, and according to rule, Velādhūḷi is used, There is not even the depiction of mudrā for this śloka; the hero just goes and unties the noose around the heroine’s neck. This scene is not śṛngāra oriented, nor it is sung in Indaḷa.
2. The śloka cited in the NKD as an example of Muralīndalā beginning with ‘शैलायामभिरमुव्राहिनिवहच्छायि...’ should be sung in Indala. In Śurpaṇakhaṇḍa, though Rama sets off, accompanied by Sītā, the sthāyī is not śṛṅgāra but vīra. The reason is that, in the purappādu, neither keśadipāda nor pañcāṅga is enacted here. Without the ālambana and uddipana, śṛṅgāras is nowhere enacted in Kūṭiyāṭṭom. The conventions for describing śṛṅgāra are describing pañcāṅga (description of the five organs of the heroine) kāmaśara (suffering the effect of the five arrows of Kāma), swooning and getting revived by the soft breeze. Without these, śṛṅgāra cannot be enacted in Kūṭiyāṭṭom. But in Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi, Act I, on the occasion when Laksmana sees Śurpaṇakha for the first time, pañcāṅga is enacted.

Similarly in Bālivadhāṅka when the enraged Bālī slowly changes from raudra and vīra to śṛṅgāra, the śloka ‘अनिन्दितानि...’ should be recited in Ārta, followed by pañcāṅga and kāmaśara. Earlier, in anger, the same śloka is recited in Tarka. This is supreme example to illustrate the change of ragas according to moods.

3. In kramadīpikā of Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi in Śrī Rāma’s purappādu it is clearly stated that Indala is used. ‘बैदेहि...' The ślokas ‘शैलायामभि...’ etc. are used for accentuating Indala. According to the NKD, the śloka from Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi, Act VI, beginning with ‘आयत्म्मतिविदि...’ signifying separation (virāha) should be sung in Muralīndalā, but practice it is recited in Ārta.
4. The argument that Muralidāla should represent the height of vipralambha in rākṣasas is also not convincing. No precept has been established in the NKD to establish this point. Because the rule is ‘श्रीमान्यतुसम्भोगश्रृंखलेमुर्लिन्दलम्’

This rāga is restricted to the depiction of sambhogaśṛṅgāra in the case of Rāma. Even for Rāma, in vipralambha, other rāgas like Ārta and Paurāṇī are used.

5. The statement in the NKD that ‘श्रीकामार्ख्यक्ष्यांतुविप्रलम्बया मूच्छिने’ does not seem to be correct. The śloka beginning with ‘गन्धविद्यत्...’ cited in the NKD as an example, is given in Aṣokakāntaka Aṭṭaprapārā as rendered in Muḍḍha. In Rāvana’s vipralambha, according to Aṣokakāntaka Aṭṭaprapārā the śloka ‘जनतामशोकशहकार...’ is in Paurāṇī rāga, but it does not say that there is no rule for Rāvana to render it in Śrīkāmar. But as said earlier, ‘अतकितयमेवतुतुर:श्रीकामनयुतातः’ it is because Rāvana felt unexpected joy. The example has been provided earlier.

6. In the NKD Bhinnapāṇḍma is cited by giving the example of

‘चरणनलिनसाध्यंयानमाहायस्माधिः,
शयनमविनिपृष्टं, मण्डलं स्तानमात्रम,
तव तरिणं, तथापि त्यं श्रीया चक्षुषी मे
हरसि पुरस्योघ्यामावसन्तीव चिन्त्रम्।’

The end of the śloka has the word citram, but apart from that, no wonder is depicted here. On the other hand, the subject matter is sambhogaśṛṅgāra and the rāga is Muralīndala. This is highlighted in Rāmāyaṇam kramadīpikā.
7 The śloka ‘वर्णम्यो हृतमुपभुज्य..’ cited in the NKD as example for raudra is not correct. As in the line ‘रावण: संपत सहसोत्थाय...’ the emphasis is on krōḍha. Aśokavanikāṅka āṭṭapraṅkāra prescribes that this śloka is to be recited in Kaisiki; the bhava as one could gather from the meaning also corroborates the same.

8. The Kāpalī named Satyasōma smeared sacred ash all over his body and wearing only a loin cloth (kaupīna) dances, plays on the drum called ādamaru, takes liquor from his kapāla, gives it to his wife, drinks it himself, shouts loudly and approaches with Devasōma, with faltering, slipping steps. This verse is hāsyarasa-oriented, the play is in the dramatic category of Prahasana; the entry is of Kapālī, the main character; the embodiment of humour. In some texts of Mattavilasa āṭṭapraṅkāra there is a clear record that this āḷāmaślöka is recited by humming and singing it twice in Kaisikī. Any way it is clear that the humming and singing of this śloka is done only in Kaisiki.

9. In the NKD, the observation that the śloka ‘अम्बास्तन्यमहाभिषेक.. ’ which is an example of Indāḷa is also not correct. The first part is recited in Indāḷa and the second part in Āṛta. There is a reason for this. When the curtain is removed, Arjuna examines his bow and arrow, thinks, leaves a sigh, describes the beauty of Subhadrā - the sister of Kṛṣṇa - and is overcome by the arrows of Kāma. Then śṛṅgāra is relevant here. In the second part, ‘कृष्णायाष्च कटाश्वबीशाणसुख..’ - is recited in Āṛta, while the first part is in Indāḷa.
10. The rule cited in the NKD regarding Veḷādhūḷi rāga does not give the usual version in the lines. A line ‘क्वचिदवज्ञाया’ is added. In none of existing Kūṭiyāṭṭom-plays of today can we find Veḷādhūḷi for hāsyā (redicule) and avajñā (contempt); nor have the gurus passed this on. Therefore there is no basis for this statement; either in the prescribed rules or in practical training.

The examples of this given in the NKD are the ślōkas from Prabandhas. These ślōkas (from Prabandhas) are usually not provided with svāras. The statement ‘अमी रागाभद्र नायके स्मुता...’- makes it clear that these rāgas are used only in Kūṭiyāṭṭom, Which is dominated by abhinaya. In Prabandha, which gives emphasis to oral rendition, each actor recites the gadya (prose) and padya (poetry) according to his own style; it can be assumed that, there is no universal standard for their recitation.

11. The definition given in the NKD ‘विष्णुपल्लवमान: स्वात् श्रीरामस्याः जल्लते क्वचित् ’- cannot be taken as a dictum. The kramadīpika of Rāmāyaṇa-, which combines the three plays, Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi, Abhiṣeka and Pratimā - does not mention anywhere that Sri Rama is instructed to use a svāra like this in his ślōkas.

12. No one is known to have heard the araṅgutaliślōka in rāga. Rather it is not clear if there is a tradition of rendering it in any specified rāga.

In the discussion on the svāras in Kūṭiyāṭṭom, nothing can be the last word. Some are assumptions while others are norms. One assumption can become a norm through constant practice. Therefore the aforesaid is only a highlight about the svāras.