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**BRIEF INTRODUCTION OF
NATYASHASTRA***Notes*

On the basis of Vedic literature, Itihasa-Puranas, theatrical texts and historical evidence, it is clearly said that the art of theater in India had attained its developed form many years before Christ. This theatrical art was written down in the form of a scripture and given a scientific form by Bharata Muni. There is no such knowledge, science or art which has not been included by Bharata Muni in this scripture. This encyclopedia of all arts is referred to as 'Natyashastra'. Natyashastra is the oldest available text of Sanskrit poetry, which has been called the 'Fifth Veda' by pioneer Bharat. In this lesson, by getting information about the major text of drama, the clarification of drama and its important elements and other literary components will be discussed.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

After studying this lesson, you-

- know the period of Natyashastra;
- understand the introduction of theatre; and
- know the major topics discussed in Natyashastra.

2.1 PERIOD OF NATYASHASTRA

Regarding the dating of Natyashastra, different opinions were presented by many scholars in which diversity is seen. First of all, it seems rare that this book was praised by any one person. In the Indian knowledge tradition, Natyashastra is considered to be the creation of Bharata Muni, but the mention of many Bharatas at different times in

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the entire literature creates a problem in determining the period of Natyashastra and its author, the authentic solution of which is not found even in the present time. In this chapter, an attempt is being made to determine the period of composition of Natyashastra on the basis of the opinions of Indian and Western scholars and internal and external evidences.

The Period of Creation of Natyashastra on the Basis of Indian and Western Scholars

Many opinions have been propounded by scholars regarding the creation of Natyashastra. The first editors of chapters one to fourteen of Natyashastra were the French scholar P. Regno and his disciple J. Grasse has accepted Natyashastra to be of the second century BC. P.V. Kane is of the opinion that Harprasad Shastri has also considered it to be a composition of the second century BC.

Pro. Sylva Levi used the addressee used in Junagadh inscription and Natyashastra- On the basis of similarity of words like Swamin, Sugrihitnaman and Bhadramukh etc., the time of Natyashastra has been accepted as the reign of Kshatrapas in the second century. But according to Kane, this opinion is not valid because the period of the book cannot be determined by using the same word.

Apart from this, according to Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sarkar, the mention of the words 'Nepal' and 'Maharashtra' used in Natyashastra clearly indicates that the date of its creation is after the second century because the words Nepal and Maharashtra were first used in the fourth century BC. They are mentioned in Samudra Gupta's Prayag Prashasti and Mahavamsa and Aihole inscriptions in the first half of 12th century. According to Mr. Kane, 200 B.C. The word Maharashtri (Maharathi) is also used in the 'Nanaghat' inscription. Apart from this, the use of Maharashtri Prakrit in the Setubandh poetry written by Pravarsen makes it possible to estimate the existence of Marathi district centuries before the inscriptions. According to the above views, Kane accepts the period of creation of Natyashastra before the second century. Colonel Jacob and A. B. By Keith, Natyashastra has been dated to the third century. Dr. Manmohan Ghosh has accepted the date of Natyashastra between 100 BC and 200 AD on the basis of linguistic facts, rhymes, figure of speech, mythological stories, geographical facts etc. In this way, various Indian and western scholars have propounded discussions regarding the period of creation of Natyashastra.

Evidence from the Text of Natyashastra

Many subjects have been presented in Natyashastra, in the context of which the author has mentioned many previous masters and their texts. On the basis of these internal evidences, the period of creation of Natyashastra is being determined -



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i) **Purvacharya and Ancient Texts Mentioned in Natyashastra**

There is mention of the famous architect Vishwakarma in the field of Natyashastra, Acharya Brihaspati in relation to Economics, Narada in relation to Dhruva and Gandharva, and Bharat's Guru Tandu in relation to Anghar. Here Tandu is presented in the theater as the user of Tandava dance, as a laxative and the first exponent of dance acts. Apart from this, there is also a description of 'Kamatantra' in the book which is different from 'Kamasutra' of Acharya Vatsyayana. It is clear from the names of these ancient Acharyas and texts that Natyashastra was composed later than them.

ii) **Mahagramani**

There is mention of the word 'Mahagramani' in Natyashastra which is considered to be the form of village deity. The meaning of this word has been considered by Acharya Abhinavagupta as 'Ganapati' but Manmohan Ghosh does not support the opinion of Acharya Abhinavagupta. The absence of mention of Ganapati as a deity proves that Natyashastra must have been composed at a time when the concept of Ganesha as a deity would not have been fulfilled because Ganesha became famous as a deity in the mythological period.

iii) **Ancient Castes and Janapadas**

Under Natyashastra, various castes and classes are depicted which have different rules regarding body colour. Here, the provision of Asit Varna for Dakshinatya classes like Kirat, Varvar, Andhra, Dramil (Dravid), Kashi etc. reflects the possibility that at the time of composition of Natyashastra, some part of Andhra and Dravidian districts might not have been fully civilized. This time can only be before BC.

iv) **Language Style (Sanskrit and Prakrit)**

The form of Sanskrit and Prakrit language found in Natyashastra seems to be more advanced and developed as compared to the language used in Ashvaghosha's poems. On the basis of this fact, Natyashastra should be considered a text before the fourth century and after the first century, but on the basis of the nature of the Sanskrit language used in various contexts of this text, Mr. Reynolds accepts it as being of the early period of the first century AD.

v) **Outline of Ancient Poetics in Natyashastra**

Its period can also be estimated by analyzing the poetic elements like Alamkara, Chhanda, Guna and Doshas etc. in Natyashastra -

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Alamkara - In Natyashastra, Acharya Bharata has discussed these four figures of speech - Upma, Rupak, Deepak and Yamak. By the time of Acharya Bhamah and Dandi, their number reached forty. In this way, the mention of only four Alamkaras indicates the antiquity of theatre.

Chhanda (Figure of Speech)- In dramaturgy, there is a detailed discussion of Chhandas as compared to Alamkaras. The Chhandas described in the famous texts of Chhandashastra appear to be more ancient than the Chhandas of Natyashastar. The paucity of figures of speech in Natyashastra on the one hand and abundance of Chhandas on the other hand prove that Natyashastra is the creation of a period when only four figures of speech were prevalent.

External Evidence- On the basis of internal evidence of Natyashastra, the upper limit of the period of composition of the book can be estimated and on the basis of the works and other texts of famous playwrights like Bhasa, Ashvaghosha, Kalidas etc., the lower limit of the period of composition of Natyashastra can be estimated. Which are counted in external evidence -

i) **Natyashastra: Plays of Ashvaghosha and Bhasa**

Ashvaghosha was a Buddhist poet who composed the famous drama Shariputrprakaran. The clear influence of the metaphorical distinction called Prakarana depicted in dramaturgy is reflected in this text. The time of Ashvaghosha is considered to be the first century of Christ, hence it would be appropriate to consider Natyashastra as earlier than this.

Playwright Bhasa has disregarded the rules propounded in Natyashastra in his thirteen plays. But this influence is visible everywhere in his works. Therefore, based on the possibility of influence of Natyashastra on Bhasa, the time of Natyashastra may definitely be before the second century.

ii) **Natyashastra and Kalidas**

In Vikramorvashiya, the great poet Kalidas has called Bharat the founder of theatre, the exponent of the eight rasas and the practitioner of acting in front of the gods and has clearly mentioned the dependence of drama on the Ashtarasas. Apart from this, the clear influence of Natyashastra is also visible in Raghuvansh and Kumarasambhava. Hence, Natyashstra was introduced long before Kalidas.

iii) **Natyashastra and Gatha Saptashati**

In the recent Gatha Saptashati, Upaguhya Shringara Abhinaya has been compared

to the earlier stage of Natya. This incident has been discussed in the fifth chapter of Natyashastra. Gatha Saptashati is believed to be composed between 200 to 400 AD, hence the composition of Natyashastra must undoubtedly be before this.

iv) Natyashastra and Memoirs

There is a clear mention of Acharya Bharat in Yajnavalkya Smriti. In this, seven types of non-Vedic songs are described according to Natyashastra. On this basis, the period of Natyashastra can be considered to be after the first or second century of Christ.

v) Natyashastra and Agnipurana

There is a similarity between the poetic and dramatic subjects described in Agnipurana and the subjects propounded in Natyashastra. Although some Acharyas have presented the opinion that Bharat created Natyashastra by adapting Agnipurana, but in opposition to this opinion, Mr. P.V. Kane has said that Natyashastra was before Agnipurana i.e. of the second century.

vi) Natyashastra and Vishnudharmaottarapurana

There is a clear influence of Natyashastra on Vishnudharmaottarapurana. Therefore, the period of creation of Natyashastra should be considered to be much before Vishnudharmaottarapurana. Since the time of composition of Vishnu Dharmottara is considered to be between 400 to 500 AD, it seems logical to consider the date of Natyashastra as the second century before that.

On the basis of the above evidence, it is clear that the period of Natyashastra was before Bhasa, Ashvaghosha, Kalidas, Smritigranth and Agnipuran. The present form of Natyashastra is found in the first century. Thus, the period of creation of Natyashastra can be considered to be between the fifth century BC to the first century AD.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.1**

- 1) Quote the name of the first French editor of the book and present his opinion regarding the period of creation of Natyashastra.
- 2) Which period does Prof. Silva Levi accept Natyashastra?
- 3) Names of which areas are mentioned in Samudragupta's Prayag Prashasti and Aihole inscription?

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- 4) To which period have Jacob and Keith described Natyashastra?
- 5) Name the previous Acharyas mentioned in Natyashastra.
- 6) What is the meaning of the word 'Mahagramani' taken by Abhinavagupta?
- 7) Which castes are mentioned in Natyashastra?
- 8) Explain the languages used in Natyashastra.
- 9) Which Alamakaras have been discussed by Acharya Bharat in Natyashastra?
- 10) In which playwright's thirteen plays have the rules of Natyashastra been disregarded?
- 11) Bharat is clearly mentioned in which Smriti book?
- 12) What has Kalidas said about Bharat in Vikramorvasiya?
- 13) What is considered to be the time of composition of Vishnudharmaottara Purana?

2.2 BRIEF INTRODUCTION OF NATYASHASTRA

Natyashastra has been a revolutionary text in the Indian literary tradition. In this book, a comprehensive discussion of various genres of drama is available. According to Bharatmuni, when this happy and sad nature of the people is presented through Angadi Abhinayas, it is called 'Natyā' and the science of drama became famous by the name of 'Natyashastra'.

In Natyashastra, the meaning of Natya is 'Bharat' and his assistants are also described as 'Bharat' and the scripture of Bharatas was called Bharatshastra or Natyashastra. Apart from this, the actor or dancer was called 'Bharat' due to his ability to adopt the language, characters, instruments, various costumes, age, actions and movements etc. In this way, the name of the book that provides a solution to the Shastra rule of Bharats i.e. 'Natyashastra' - ***Bharatan Natanam Shastram Shasnopayam Grantham***. According to encyclopedia and grammar also, the meaning of the word Bharat came to be called 'nut'.

Natasutra, Bharatasutra, Bharatshastra, Natshastra, Natyashastra and Natyaveda by Acharya Abhinavagupta - all these are additional names of Natyashastra. In ancient texts, there is mention of two codes of Natyashastra – one is Dwadashasahasri Samhita and the other is Shatsahasri Samhita. According to poet Prof. Ramakrishna, Dwadashasahasri Samhita was composed by Vriddhabharata and its abbreviated form Natyashastra Shatsahasri was presented by Bharatmuni. Quotations from both the

Samhitas are also found in the commentary of Kalidasa's *Abhijnanashakuntal*. It seems clear from this that in ancient times, a large form of Dwadashasahasri Natyashastra definitely existed, the short form of which is the present Natyashastra of six thousand verses (Shatsahasri). *Abhinavbharati* commentary has been written on this by Abhinavagupta. According to the introduction of *Abhinav Bharati Tika* and the description found in the first part, there were a total of thirty-six (36) chapters of Natyashastra.

There are variations in the number of chapters, number of verses and their sequence in the printed editions of Natyashastra. There are thirty-six chapters in the Kashi version of Natyashastra and thirty-seven chapters in the Kavyamala version. The Gaekwad edition published with Abhinavagupta *Abhinavbharti* also has thirty-seven chapters.

On the basis of the topics presented in Natyashastra, it can be considered a collection of books. In this, the thoughts and principles of many actors, Bharatas and Natyacharyas have been collected. According to scholar Shardatanaya, this is probably a collection of the principles of the five Bharatas. In the dictionaries, Bharat has been considered synonymous with Nat, according to which Bharat means Nut and Bharat is the author of *Natsutra*. Subsequently the theater artist also came to be known as Nat or Bharat. It is possible that in that period, the actors (Bharatas) were counted among the lower class of the society and the author of Natyashastra included religious and spiritual elements along with the subject matter to establish the art of theater on a respectable position. The first five chapters of Natyashastra point towards this vision.

In the first chapter of Natyashastra, along with the description of the origin of drama, the nature and importance of drama has also been discussed. In the second chapter, the method of construction of Natya Mandap or theater and its parts like *Nepthyagrah*, *Rangpith*, *Rangashirsha*, *Mattavaarani*, *Stambh*, *Darukarma* etc. have been described in detail. The third chapter presents the description of praise of God, worship method and obtaining blessings for the protection of *Natyamandap*. In the fourth chapter, *Karanas*, *Angharas* and *Rechakas* have been described in detail along with the description of the *Tandava* dance used by *Tandu*. Here the origin and form of *Tandava* and the dance and its use have been described. In this chapter, the method of using songs and musical instruments has been discussed in detail. In the fifth chapter, a preliminary description of *Purvaranga Vidhan* is given. Here *Nandi*, *Prelude*, *Dhruva* and *Chitrapurvarang-Vidhi* have also been described. From the point of view of dance science, the fourth chapter and the fifth chapter are very important from the point of view of drama experiment and composition. In the sixth chapter, *Rasa-Tatva* has been scientifically discussed. In this, a description of the five questions asked by the sages



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and a detailed discussion regarding the naming of Rasas, collection, form of Karika and Nirukta, Natyasangraha, Rasa Nishpatti, number of Rasas and their permanent nature have been presented. In the seventh chapter of this series, the feelings have been presented from a classical point of view, which holds a special place in literature.

The eighth chapter is related to acting. Apart from describing the four types of acting here, the application of appendages like head, eyes, eyebrows, cheeks, lips, mouth, nose, neck etc. has also been discussed. In the ninth chapter, there is a detailed description of dance hand gestures along with joint and non-joint hand gestures under Hastabhinaya. In the tenth chapter, the acts performed using the tree, side, waist, thigh, and legs have been described. In the eleventh chapter, under the description of Chari, the places have been presented along with the description of Akashchari and Bhaumchari. In the Twelfth Chapter, there is also a description of the characteristics, types and uses of the mandalas created by the combination of charis. In the Trayodash chapter, there is a description of the motion-propaganda, under which various types of motion of the characters are discussed. In the fourth chapter, there is a description of folk and theatrical genres along with presentation of class division and trend consonants. Panchadash to Ekonvinsh i.e. chapters fifteen to nineteenth and all aspects of verbal acting have been presented in detail. In the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters, the grammatical topics and rhymes useful for vachika acting have been systematically discussed. In the seventeenth chapter, the poetic characteristics, figures of speech, dosha, guna etc. have been systematically described under the subject of vachik acting. In the eighteenth chapter, there is a detailed description of the four types of languages and seven types of dialects.

In the nineteenth chapter, a detailed study of Kaku, Swara, their types and the Gunas and Doshas of the text etc. has been given.

In the twentieth chapter, along with the detailed explanation of ten Rupakas, ten Lasyangas have also been presented. In the twenty-first chapter, there has been a detailed and coherent discussion of Itivrita-vidhan, Panch Sandhi, Panch Avasthas, Artha Prakriti and Arthopekshepakas. In the twenty-second chapter, under Aharya Abhinay, Nepathya-vidhan, Nepathya-bhed and other related topics have been described. In the twenty-third and twenty-fourth chapters there is a comprehensive discussion of general acting. In this, under Satvik Abhinaya, the subjects like Swabhavaja and Alyaja Alamkaras of women, body expressions etc., body acting according to the feelings of interest, ten stages of Kamas, Dooti Prakshan and heroine-distinction etc. have been described in detail. In the twenty-fifth chapter, there is a detailed discussion on the qualities of Vaishika men, the activities of women like his friends and messengers,

the four stages of puberty of women, types of lovers, etc. In the twenty-sixth chapter, a systematic discussion of Chitrabhinaya is found. The twenty-seventh chapter presents a detailed description of the qualities and qualifications of the judges, examiners, observers etc. of the drama along with the description of divine and human achievements.

From the twenty-eighth chapter to the thirty-fourth chapter, there has been a detailed discussion on the subject of musicology. In the twenty-eighth chapter, four types of instruments, seven notes and their four types, gram, murchchhana, shrutis and castes have been described. In the nineteenth chapter, the Rasa-dependent use of the castes related to musical instruments, the four types of varnas and the thirty three Alamkaras dependent on them, the differences in veena playing and the types of external songs have been explained in detail.

In the thirtieth chapter, wind instruments have been systematically discussed. Under the thirty-first chapter, a detailed description of song genres like Asarit, Vardhaman etc. has been given along with the description of taala and rhythm. In the thirty-second chapter, the association of the Dhruvas has been described. The thirty-third chapter presents views on the merits, demerits and abilities of singers and musicians etc. In the thirty-fourth chapter, the Avandha instruments like Mridang etc. and their differences, methods and the presiding deities of the instruments have been duly described. In the thirty-fifth chapter, the three natures of men and women, four types of heroes and the family members of the harem have been described. The roles of the characters have been discussed in detail. The story of Natyavataran is described in the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh chapters. In this way, drama and other related arts have been discussed in detail in Natyashastra. In terms of diversity, comprehensiveness, importance and clarity of the subjects presented, it is considered to be a great text unique in world theater literature.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.2

- 1) Write the other names of Natyashastra.
- 2) What is the meaning of the word 'Bharat'?
- 3) Name two Samhitas (codes) of Natyashastra.
- 4) How many chapters are there in Natyashastra?
- 5) What are the famous versions of Natyashastra?
- 6) In which chapter of Natyashastra is the description of Natyotpati?



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- 7) Name the parts of Natyamandap as propounded in Natyashastra.
- 8) Where is the classical explanation of Rasa element first found?
- 9) Which parts of Angika Abhinaya have been discussed in Natyashastra?
- 10) Discuss the subject matter of the twenty-first chapter of Natyashastra.
- 11) In which chapters is the discussion of musicology found?
- 12) Where is the role of the characters described in the drama?

2.3 MAJOR TOPICS MENTIONED IN NATYASHASTRA

Natyashastra is a unique book of world literature in terms of breadth of subject matter, diversity of style and form and different stages of development. As a result of these characteristics, Natyashastra has been remembered as 'Natyaveda' and theater pioneer Bharat as 'Muni' by the later Acharyas and scholars. There are approximately six thousand verses in total thirty-six chapters in Natyashastra. In which mainly theatrical principles and experiments, dance, music, acting and poetic elements have been systematically discussed. In Natyashastra, on one hand, there is a provision for Natya Mandap related to the art and science of building construction, on the other hand, a detailed description of Chhandas, Alamkaras, rasa and various acting postures etc. has also been presented, through which the inner feelings of a person are revealed. Apart from this, independent forms of arts like music, dance etc. have also been presented here. In Bharat's view, drama is the result of the beauty and joy of human life. Therefore, a classical text on a broad element like drama has also been presented in an equally detailed and investigative form. Now the main topics of Natyashastra are being considered here –

i) **Natyamandapam / Prekshagraha (Theater / Auditorium)**

Natyamandapam has been discussed in detail in the second chapter of Natyashastra written by Bharata. According to Acharya Bharata, three types of auditoriums have been made for acting in terms of size – Vikrishta, Chaturasra and Trayasra. Vishrishta Natyamandap is rectangular, Chaturasra is square and Triasra is triangular. These three types of Natya Mandap are divided into nine types namely senior, middle and lower i.e. Vikrishta Natya Mandap is divided into nine types namely Senior, Madhyam and lower, Chaturasra Natya Mandap is divided into nine types. These theater halls are measured with the help of atom, raj, hand-stick etc., whose value has been duly determined by Bharatamuni. He has presented the description of only three types of theater halls.

The largest of these, the Natyamandap, is for the deities and its length is one hundred and eight (108) cubits (hands). Madhyam Natyamandap is of sixty-four cubits (hands) and is designed for human beings. The lower Natya Mandapam is triangular in shape and has thirty-two cubits (Hands). The middle theater is for the kings and the lower auditorium is for the common people. Bharat has considered medium sized auditoriums to be the best among the above three types of auditoriums, because dialogues, songs etc. are heard clearly in medium auditoriums.

Apart from Natyamandap, some of its parts have been described in Natyashastra-

- a) **Rangpeeth and Rangashirsha (Stage):** Rangashirsha has been established in the context of description of various parts of the auditorium by Bharatamuni. Here Rangashirsha and Rangpith are considered synonymous. Although Abhinavagupta and his follower Acharyas have presented views in support of the separation of Rangpeeth and Rangashirsha. Due to the ranga, being the top of the stage, it is called Rangashirsha. According to Abhinavbharti Tika, the back part of the Rangashirsha or stage should be decorated with Shaddaruka and the part decorated with wooden blocks on top of it is called Rangashirsha.
- b) **Shaddaruka:** In Natyashastra, the method of placing six special wooden blocks in the Rangashirsha has been called 'Shaddaruka'. In Abhinavagupta's Abhinavbharati, three interpretations have been presented regarding Shaddaruka. Ooha, Pratyuha, Niryuha, Vyuha (Sanjvana), Samvyuha (Contract) and Vuhara - these six types of darukarma have been called Shaddaruk. These Shaddaruk decorations are meant to enhance the beauty of the theatre.
- c) **Darukarma:** According to Bharatmuni, after the construction of Natmandap, Darukarma i.e. wood work should be started. According to Natyashastra, the theater is decorated with pillars, doors, windows etc. and the beauty of the theater is enhanced.
- d) **Mattavaarni:** Mattavaarani means verandah. The word 'mattavarani' is found in dictionaries and literary texts which means 'varanda'. A row of elephants is painted on a wall one and a half feet high in front of the stage, this is called Mattavarani. This opinion is not universally accepted because it is different from the interpretation of Bharata and Abhinavagupta. According to Abhinavagupta, on both sides of the stage and outside the



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Natyamandap, there is a Samchaturasra Mattavaarani, eight hands long and eight hands wide, with four pillars. According to another interpretation, there is a provision for Mattavaarani next to both the Rangpeetha and Rangashirsha.

- e) **Yavanika or Javanika:** There is a yavanika behind the stage. The text of Javanika is also found in some versions of Natyashastra. When a character enters the stage, the curtain is removed, this is called Yavanika. Abhinavagupta has prescribed Yavanika between Rangpith and Rangashirsha.

Other parts of the Natyamandap, the backstage, the gate, the pillars, the garlands etc., have also been discussed in detail in Natyashastra. Construction of a theater or auditorium is essential for the successful performance of drama and to provide a pleasant experience to all sections of people.

2) **Itivritta (Kathavastu)**

There are three main elements in drama – Vastu, Neta and Rasa. The kathavastu itself has been denoted by words like story, plot, chronicle, character etc. Itivritta has been called the body of drama and Rasa has been called its soul. There are two types of Itivritta in drama – Adhikarika and Prasangika. The main story is called Adhikarika. This Itivritta pervades the entire arrangement and is result-oriented. Its constituent Itivrittis are called Prasangika. It is helpful to the main story, that is, it helps in the accomplishment of the main hero. There are two types of Prasangika story - Pataka and Prakari. Here, under the Adhikarika story Ramayana, there is the story of Ram-Sita's love affair and the relevant story is about Sugriva. In this, the long-running Prasangika story is called Pataka. Like the story of Sugriva. Whereas Ekadestha i.e. the circle running for a short time is called 'Prakari', like - Shabari's story.

There are five stages of complete development of the drama's story - Aarambh, Prayatna, Pratyasha, Niyatapti, Phalagama. In this series, there are five elements of the drama body form Itivritta – Beeja, Bindu, Pataka, Prakari and Karya. Five stages and five sandhis are created. These five sandhis are – Mukha, Pratimukha, Garbha, Vimarsha and Nirvahana. All these elements are integral parts of the drama body in the form of Itivritta. Under the context of the Itivritta, Bharatamuni has also mentioned five Arthopekshakas through which the narrative becomes sequential. These are - Vishkambhaka, Praveshaka, Chulika,

Ankavatara and Ankamukh. In this way, a detailed discussion has been presented about the subject matter in Natyashastra -

3) Characters

Characters have special importance in drama. The story develops in the background of the characters' morals, conduct, thoughts, behaviour, variety and diversity of nature. Such as – hero, heroine, anti-hero, clown, Chet, Shakaar, Wit, Kanchuki, Pratihari, messenger etc. On the basis of human nature, four types of heroes have been described - Dheera Lalit, Dheer Prashanta, Dheerodatta and Dheerodatta. Similarly, the heroine, who is the lifeblood of drama, also has three types – Swakiya, Parakiya and Samanya.

4) Rasa-Tattva

Apart from this being an important subject of Indian literature, Acharya Bharata has conceptualized the characteristics, Gunas, Doshas and Alamkaras etc. in the drama only for the sake of understanding the Rasa. Acharya Bharata has been considered the founder of Rasa, but in the theater itself, there is a clear indication of the Acharyas of the Rasa tradition who preceded Bharata. According to Natyashastra, Rasa is so important for theater that without it no poetic meaning can be achieved. In drama, Rasa has been considered a form of pleasure (Anandatmaka) different from pleasant (Sukhatmaka) or sad (Dukhatmaka). There is Rasa-Nishpatti presented by Bharata in Kavyashastra, this is the principle of Rasa Nishpatti cited in Natyashastra. The permanent feeling acquired through division, experience etc. is expressed in the form of Rasa, by receiving which Sahridaya attain happiness. This Rasa itself is Natyarasa. Bharatamuni has considered a total of eight Rasas in which Abhinavagupta has included a ninth Rasa - Shringaara, Veera, Karuna, Raudra, Adabhuta, Bhayanaka, Vibhatsa, Hasya and Shanta.

5) Bhava (Emotion)

The word 'bhava' specifically refers to the state of mind, which has been scientifically explained by Bharatamuni in Natyashastra. This is the Sadhya (Objective) of drama and the feelings are its means (Sadhana). In fact, because they are situated in the heart of every human being in the form of mental attitude, these are called 'emotions'. Apart from this, it conveys the poetic meanings having Vachika, Angika and sattvika feelings, this has been explained in Acharya Abhinavkrit Abhinavbharti. The word emotion is comprehensive and in the context of drama, it is pervasive in all three – the poet, the user and the observer.



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It devotes devotion to the passions associated with various types of performances, which give a feeling of joy to the society. It is full of feelings (Bhavas), emotions (Vibhavas) and other feelings (Anubhavas). In Natyashastra, there has been a detailed discussion on Vibhava, Anubhava, Vyabhicharibhava and Satvik Bhava.

6) **Enactment (Abhinaya)**

The word Abhinaya is derived from the root 'Ni' with the prefix 'Abhi' and the suffix 'Ach' which means to perform in front of the audience in the sense of theatrical experiment. Imitation of the state in which the actor imitates the states of Ram etc. Abhinaya through body, mind and speech is called 'Acting'. The actor presents the natural object on the stage with art and skill by imitating the acting person, due to which the society experiences reality. Under Natyashastra, four types of enactment have been mentioned - Aangika, Vachika Aharyaa and Sattvika.

7) **Dance**

In Natyashastra, dance has been described as Sangopaang. By its very nature it is joyous and auspicious, which adds to the beauty of the drama. The activities that are performed under the art of dance are Sthana, Charikarana, Anghaara and Rechaka. Two types of dances have been described in Natyashastra – Tandava and Lasya. Tandava is believed to be related to Shiva and Lasya is believed to be related to Parvati. In Natyashastra, the male-oriented delicate dance performed by Tandu has been called 'Tandava' and the female-oriented delicate dance performed by Parvati has been called 'Lasya'. Tandava is considered to be Veer-Rasa dominant dance and Lasya Shringaara-Rasa dominant dance.

8) **Songs and Instruments**

According to Acharya Bharat, the use and knowledge of songs and musical instruments is very important for the success of theatre. In Natyashastra, song has been considered as one of the main parts of drama and music and dance have been described as its followers. The balanced use of song, dance and instruments in drama is the uniqueness of Indian theatrical art, the changed form of which can also be seen in the movies and plays of the present times. Abhinavagupta has described the song as the lifeblood of theater in which there is coordination of elements like Naada (sound), Grama, Swara-varnalankara, Raga, TaalA, Laya, Yeti etc. In Natyashastra, four types of padashrita songs

are described - Magadhi, Ardhamaagadhi, Sambhavita and Mridula and five types of Swaraashrita songs are described - Shuddha, Bhinna, Gaudi, Vesara and Sadharani. Apart from this, Dhruvagana and its five types have also been presented in Natyashastra.

Instrumental music is also an important discipline which is used in drama. According to Natyashastra, there are four types of instruments – Tat, Sushira, Avanaddha and Ghana. Among these, stringed ‘stringed instruments’ are called Tat (veena etc.), blown flutes etc. are called Sushira, leather covered mridang etc. are called Avanaddha and musical instruments made from metals like bronze etc. are called Ghana. All these instruments are used in their respective places in theatre.

In this way, some important topics of drama have been discussed here. Apart from these elements, Natya Vritti (Bharti, Sattvati, Kaishiki and Aarabhati), Pravritti (Dakshinatya, Avantika, Audramagadhi and Panchalamadhyama), Lokadharmi-Natyadharmi etc. have been discussed in detail in Natyashastra. The art of theater is considered perfect and meaningful only by the combination of all the above mentioned elements.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.3

- 1) Approximately how many verses are considered in Natyashastra?
- 2) How many types of theaters have been considered by Bharatamuni? Write the names.
- 3) Which auditorium is designated for the Gods?
- 4) Which is the best theater accepted by Bharatamuni?
- 5) Name the main parts of Natya Mandap.
- 6) What are the differences between a story or a chronicle (Ittivritta)?
- 7) How many types of heroes are there? Write the names.
- 8) What is the principle of Rasa-Nishpatti? By whom was this given for the first time?
- 9) How many Rsas are there? Mention the name.



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- 10) What are Tandava and Lasya dances? Who are they considered to be related to?
- 11) How many types of musical instruments are there? Write their names.

**WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT**

- There is difference of opinion among scholars regarding the dating of Natyashastra.
- French scholar P. Regno and his disciple J. Grasse has considered the period of Natyashastra to be the second century BC.
- Pro. Silva Levi accepts it as being of the second century on the basis of similarity of address words used in Junagadh inscription and Natyashastra.
- Colonel Jacob and A.B. Natyashastra has been considered by Keith to be a creation of the third century.
- Previous masters like Vishwakarma, Brihaspati, Narada, Tandu etc. have been mentioned in Natyashastra.
- Sanskrit and Prakrit languages have been used in Natyashastra.
- In Natyashastra, four figures of speech, Upama, Yamaka, Rupaka and Deepaka have been discussed.
- Clear mention of Bharat and Natyashastra can be seen in Kalidas, Ashwaghosha, Hal (Gatha-Saptashati), Yajnavalkya Smriti, Agnipuran and Vishnudharmottarapuram.
- Natasutra, Bharatasutra, Bharatshastra, Natshastra, Natashastra, Natyaveda etc. are additional names of Natyashastra.
- There are two Samhitas of Natyashastra – Dwadasahasri Samhita and Shatsahasri Samhita.
- Acharya Abhinavgupta's Abhinavbharati commentary is found only on the Shatsahasri Samhita of six thousand verses.
- There are thirty-six chapters in the Kashi version of Natyashastra and thirty-seven chapters in the Kavyamala version.

- In Natyashastra, there is a provision of three theaters in terms of size – Vikrishta, Chaturasra and Tryas. These are again divided into senior, middle and lower.
- The eldest Natya Mandapam is designated for the deities and is 108 cubits (hands) long.
- The middle Natyamandap is considered to be used for the kings, whose length is 64 hands.
- The lower Natya Mandapam is considered to be used for the common people, which is 32 cubits (hands) long.
- Rangpith (Rangshirsha), Bahudaaruk, Daskarma, Mattavarani, Yavanika etc. are the parts of Rangamandap (Theatre House).
- There are two types of Itivrittas – Adhikarika and Prasangika. Again, there are two types of Prasangika - Pataka and Prakari.
- There are five Arthaprakriti, five Awasthas and five Sandhis in the story.
- Under the Itivritta, five Artho-Arthopekshars are also specified - Vishkambhaka, Praveshak, Chulika, Ankavatar and Ankamukh.
- In drama, there is a specific provision of characters like hero, heroine, anti-hero, clown, shakaar, cheat, wit, messenger, Kanchuki etc.
- The combination of vibhava, anubhava and vyabhicharibhava results in rasanihpti, this is the rasa sutra quoted by Bharat.
- Bharatmuni has considered a total of eight Rasas in which the ninth Rasa in Shanta form has been included by Abhinavagupta.
- Imitation of state is 'acting'. It is of four types – Vachika, Angika, Aharya and Sattvika.
- Tandava dance is Veer Rasa based dance related to Shiva and Lasya Shringaara dance related to Parvati is based on Veer Rasa based dance.
- Dance, song and musical instruments have a very important contribution in drama.





Notes



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

2.1

- 1) The first French editor of drama was P. Regno. He, along with his disciple J. Grasse, accepted Natyashastra in the second century BC.
- 2) 2nd century AD
- 3) The names of 'Nepal' and 'Maharashtra' regions are mentioned in Samudragupta's Prayag Prashasti and Aihole inscription.
- 4) 3rd century AD
- 5) There is mention of earlier Acharyas like Vishwakarma, Brihaspati, Narad and Tandu etc.
- 6) Ganpati
- 7) There is mention of Dakshinatya castes like Kitar, Varvar, Andhra, Dramil (Dravid), Kashi etc.
- 8) Sanskrit and Prakrit languages
- 9) Upama, Rupaka, Deepaka and Yamaka
- 10) Playwright Bhasa
- 11) Yajnavalkya Smriti
- 12) In Vikramorvasi, Kalidas has clearly mentioned the Ashtar-dependence of drama by calling India the originator of theatre, exponent of the eight rasas and the user of acting in front of the gods.
- 13) The time of composition of Vishnu Dharmottara Purana is believed to be between 400 to 500 AD.

2.2

- 1) Natasutra, Bharatasutra, Bharatshastra, Natshastra, Natyaveda etc.
- 2) 'nata'
- 3) Dwadashsahasri Samhita and Shatsahasri Samhita



Notes

- 4) There are thirty-six chapters.
- 5) Kashi edition (36 chapters), Kavyamala edition (37 chapters), Gaikwad edition
- 6) First chapter
- 7) The parts of Natya Mandap are – Rangpith, Rangashirsha, Nethyagriha, Mattavaarani, Darukarma, Pillar etc.
- 8) In the sixth chapter of Natyashastra
- 9) Appendages like head, eyes, eyebrows, cheeks, lips, mouth, nostrils, cervix etc.
- 10) In the twenty-first chapter, detailed description of Itivrita-vidhan, five treaties, five stages, arthaprakriti and connotations has been given.
- 11) Musicology has been discussed from the twenty-eighth chapter to the thirty-fourth chapter of Natyashastra.
- 12) The roles of the characters are described in the thirty-fifth chapter of Natyashastra.

2.3

- 1) About six thousand verses.
- 2) 3 types of theater halls – Vikrishta (rectangular), Chaturasra (square) and Triyas (triangular). These theater halls are again divided into the categories of senior, middle and inferior.
- 3) Jyeshtha Natyamandap
- 4) Medium sized auditoriums are considered the best.
- 5) Major parts of Natyamandap – Rangpith (Rangashirsha), Shaddaruka, Darukarma, Mattavaarani, Yavanika, Npathyagriha, Pillar etc.
- 6) There are two types of content – official and relevant. Again there are two types of relevant stories – Pataka and Prakari.
- 7) There are four types of heroes – Dhirodatta, Dhirlalit, Dhirprashant and Dhiroddhat.

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- 8) Rasa-nishpti occurs due to the combination of Vibhava, Anubhav and adulterous feelings. It was first presented by Acharya Bharat.
- 9) Rasas are considered to be nine in total. These are - Shringaara, Veera, Karuna, Roudra, Adbhuta, Bhayanaka, Vibhatsa, Hasya and Shanta.
- 10) Tandava is the male-oriented dance taught by Acharya Tandu and the female-oriented dance taught by Parvati is called Lasya. Tandava is related to Shiva and Lasya is related to Parvati.
- 11) There are four types of instruments - Tat (veena etc.) Sushira (flute etc.) Avandha (Mridang etc.) and Ghana (Kartal etc.).