

## Chapter II

### *Vakrokti Siddhanta*

The word '*vakrokti*' is comprised of two words '*vakra*' and '*ukti*'. The former component means indirect, crooked or unique and the later component means poetic expression or speech. Thereby the literal meaning of '*vakrokti*' is indirect or crooked speech; arch or evasive speech. In the context of poetics, it is a distinctive utterance, exceeding the common modes of speech and is integrated with fascination, beauty and charm.

The Indian aesthetic theory of '*vakrokti*' has been used in literature from times immemorial and its origin can be traced back to the critical speculation of Bhamaha who is followed, with divergence of conception and treatment, by Dandin, Vamana, Rudrata, Kuntaka, Abhinavagupta and Bhoja. But the concept of *vakrokti* took a new height and significance as all-pervading poetic concept in Kuntaka's opus '*Vakroktijivitam*'. In order to understand Kuntaka's theory, it is obligatory to find out the roots of *vakrokti* concept in earlier and later Sanskrit poetics.

In Indian Sanskrit poetics, Bhamaha was the first *acarya* who described the term *vakrokti* as a fundamental aspect of poetry. He was the first rhetorician who used the term in its wide connotation sense. He thought as to what marks poetic expression distinct from scientific treatise (*sastra*) as well as the general speech (*varta*). Then he states that it is the figurative mode of communication that makes a difference between the *sastra* and *varta* which is technically called *vakrokti* or *atisayokti*. He said that it is the cradle of all poetic figures or *alankaras* which is the supreme element aim in poetry. Though Bhamaha did not explain *vakrokti*, his idea of *vakrokti* can be understood by his statements. Bhamaha says that *alankaras* are the inseparable elements in

poetry as they distinguish poetic expression from the ordinary way of speech and it is *vakrokti* or the extraordinary way of expression which is the fundamental principle underlying at the root of all figures of speech. Bhamaha states that *vakrokti* is everywhere. It is *vakrokti* that makes sense or content more charming and attractive. No meaning of an *alankara* without *vakrokti*. Bhamaha says that the *vakrokti* enshrines poetic sense. According to him, adornments of speech are strikingness in word and in its meaning. In this way, *vakrokti* is the harmonious amalgam of words and meanings. Hence, Bhamaha says that *vakrokti* must be present in the different form of poetic composition like *katha*, *nataka*, *mahakavya* and so on. In this way *vakrokti* is described by Bhamaha as the essential aesthetic principle of all figurative expression.

Moreover, Bhamaha *vakrokti* term somehow resemblances with the term *laksana* which was propounded by Bharatamuni. Abhinavagupta, a learned commentator of Bharatamuni's '*Natyasastra*' equates Bharatamuni's *laksana* with the concept of *vakrokti*. In the sixteenth chapter of *Natyasastra*, Bharatamuni provides a list of thirty-six *laksanas* and explains each of them in detail but in the *Natyasastra*, Bharatamuni is unable to provide an exact idea on the concept of *laksana*. At this, Abhinavagupta, a commentator of the *Natyasastra*, tries to unearth the concept of *laksana*. He states that *laksanas* constitute the body of *Kavya* i.e. poetic expression which is embellished by poetic figures on the equivalence of human body. The concept of *laksana* is on elastic poetic principle rather than a poetic element. Hence, Kuntaka may be said as being indebted to Bharatamuni in the concept of his *vakrokti*. Dr. K. C. Pandey rightly observes:

*Vakrokti* is not a production of the originality of Bhamaha. According to the information available from the existing literature, he is indebted to Bharata. In fact, the manner in which he talks of *vakrokti* clearly shows that he regarded it to be a very well-known concept. He does not care even to define it. Had he thought it to be his kwon

contribution or something that was not known to and accepted by all, he would have certainly tried to define it clearly and would have tried to justify it as Anandavardhana has done in the case of *Dhavni* (Hegde 20).

After Bhamaha, Dandin was the critic who defined *vakrokti*. He defines the term as a collective designation for all poetic figures except *svabhavokti*. The term *vakrokti* is used only once by Dandin in his explanation, yet anyone can comprehend his opinions on it through the sense of his correlated statements. Dandin was the first *acarya* who separated the whole empire of poetic composition into two distinct classes' viz., *svabhavokti* and *vakrokti*. *Savbhavokti* is considered as basic and fundamental figure of speech. According to Dandin, it is *savbhavokti* that defines the genuine forms of diverse conditions of the objects and it only is the supreme in the field of science and is desired even in poetry but *vakrokti* is different from *svabhavokti*. In *vakrokti* all the figures like *upama* etc. are comprised in its wide scope. Thus, *vakrokti* is the extraordinary way of speech often consisting charm from paronomasia.

The next phase of *vakrokti* leads us down to Vamana who defines the term *vakrokti* in a different sense. He is the first Indian aesthetician to apply it to designate a distinct poetic figure. He explains the figure based on indication or *laksana*. Vamana does not ignore *vakrokti* in its wide sense. The particularity (*visista padaracana*) in his description of *riti* is not different from the concept of *vakrokti*. And the various qualities of word and meaning considered by him include the idea of *vakrokti*. He conceives it as a peculiar mode of metaphorical expression based on similarity.

Rudrata limits the field of *vakrokti* to a specific verbal poetic figure. Rudrata treats *vakrokti* as *sabdalamkara* (verbal figure) in which the characterizing feature rests upon the words. It was Rudrata who treated *vakrokti* as a verbal figure based on intonation or paronomasia. He divided *vakrokti* into two kinds. The first is *slesa-vakrokti* and the second one is *kaku-vakrokti*.

Anandavardhana is considered to be one of the doyens of Indian aestheticians. He is remembered for his opus *Dhvanyaloka* which is an epoch-making piece in the history of *Alankarasastra*. He does not discuss *vakrokti* discretely. While discussing the *gunibhuta-vyangya-kavya* in the third chapter of *Dhvanyaloka*, he states that prominence in meaning can be realized in all poetic figures and this *atisayukti* or *vakrokti* is prevalent in every figure of speech. For Anandavardhana *vakrokti* and *atisayukti* are indistinguishable and beauty of *vakrokti* is instigated from poet's genius and the priority of the content that dominates it. Anandavardhana also practices the term *ukti-vaicitrya* that is well described in Kuntaka's concept of *vakrokti*. He says that *ukti-vaicitrya* or variation in the manner of presentation is nothing but another way of expression which is able of expressing the intended sense. In this way the manner and matter are inseparable. Thus the concept of *vakrokti* was taken up for a detailed discussion by Anandavardhana.

After Anandavardhana, Abhinavagupta deals with *vakrokti*. Abhinavagupta discusses the idea of *vakrokti* at three different levels. First, he compares *vakrokti* with a 'consummate composition' or *sanghatana* and claims that its lack is equivalent to absence of qualities, both of sense and sound. Secondly, while observing on Bhamaha's definition of *atisayukti* as *vakrokti*, he explains: there is the strikingness in word and meaning. This quality constitutes poetic figures and it is the extraordinary way of expression peculiar to poetic expression. Thirdly, while discussing different views on *rasa* theory, he says that *natydharmi* and *lokadharmi* in drama are *vakrokti* and *svabhavukti* in poetry.

Rajasekhra also supports *vakrokti* in poetry. Instead of *vakrokti*, he used the term *ukti* and *bhaniti* which resemble to the concept of *vakrokti*. In the prologue of his treatise *karpuramanjari*, Rajasekhra explains poetry as *ukti-visesa* or distinct poetic mode of expression. According to him, neither the idea nor the words are vital but the manner in which the idea is expressed is the point

that makes poetry. Thus, Rajasekhra defined the idea of *vakrokti* in concepts of *bhaniti* and *ukti*. His description of *ukti* is wide enough to represent the poetic expression as whole. Therefore, the concept of *ukti* can be alike with *bandha*, *bhaniti* and *kavi-vyapara*, which are the parallel of *vakrokti*.

Bhoja explains *vakrokti* according to his own terms and modifications. It was generally accepted that poetic expression is different from scientific expression as well as usual way of expression. But the question arises as to what are the elements which distinguish the poetic from non-poetic expression? At this, Bhoja replied, it is nothing more than *vakrata* or poetic beauty. He opines that poetry is the amalgam of *rasa* and *dhavni*. This view shows that Bhoja is in favor of *dhavni* and considers it as holding a supreme place in poetry but it does not mean that he doesn't pay attention to *vakrata*. Bhoja defines the entire realm of poetic expression according to three categories viz. *svabhavokti*, *rasokti* and *vakrokti*. *Vakrokti* is found where the figures like *upma* etc. are prevailing while *svabhavokti* appears where *gunas* get prominence and the *rasokti* finds its place where *rasa* is originated. Of three, according to Bhoja, *rasokti* is the supreme. Thus he uses the term *vakrokti* in a wide as well as in a restricted sense. Bhoja defines the term *ukti* according to his own terms. He treated *ukti* as *guna*. The *ukti* of *sabdaguna* is defined as a peculiar and graceful turn of expression while *ukti* is *arthguna* which is explained as an idea found in artistic terms.

Mammata defines *vakrokti* as *sabdalanakara* in his treatise *kavyaprakasa*. He describes that "when a statement said in one sense is interpreted differently by another person; either through pun or intonation is known as *vakrokti*" (Hegde 49). This definition shows that Mammata was greatly influenced by Rudrata's treatment of *vakrokti*. Mammata treats *vakrokti* as the basic principle of some *alankaras* also. Here, like Bhamaha, Mammata maintains *atisayokti* or *vakrokti*

as the fundamental principle of *alankaras*. Ruyyaka is one of the major writers in the history of the concept of *vakrokti*. In his treatise *Alanakara-sarvasva*, Ruyyaka treats *vakrokti* as *arthalankara*. He accepts Mammata's definition of *vakrokti*, though in a different manner. He considers it as an *arthalankara*.

Mankhaka is the only *acarya* who accepts Kuntaka's divisions of *vakrokti*. He was well familiarized about Kuntaka's *Vakrotijivita*. In his treatise *Sahityamimamsa* he states that *gunas* and *alankaras* acquire charmness by introducing *vakrokti*. *Sahityamimamsa* is an important work in the history of the concept of *vakrokti*. In this way, in Indian Sanskrit poetics, the theory of *vakrokti* shows an amazing divergence of conception and treatment. The chapter of *vakrokti* is the one of the most confusing chapters in the book of *Alankarasastra*.

It was Kuntaka who discussed *vakrokti* at a great length, elaborated the term and carried this concept to such a length that he was able to develop it into a unique theory of literary criticism. He is known for his literary receptivity, profound insights and inventive thoughts. His opus '*Vakrotijivita*' is memorable work in the history of the concept of *vakrokti*. Earlier poetics touched the general and non-technical aspect of the term, but Kuntaka dedicated his complete work for the dealing of *vakrokti*. He does not only explain but also discovers the different aspects of *vakrokti*. Before Kuntaka many other works were available regarding *vakrokti* but Kuntaka declares himself the propounder of *vakrokti*. The main goal of his new treatise was to set up the idea of *vaicitrya* or strikingness which could impart extraordinary charm. It is clearly visible here that Kuntaka was not completely satisfied with the theories of predecessors. Kuntaka finds faults with Anandavardhana regarding the restricted applications of *alankaras*. At the time of Rudrata, *alankara* had lost its aesthetic value and nobody made any attempt to reinterpret the particular *alankaras*. At this time Kuntaka stepped forward in order to define each and every *alankararom*

aesthetic purview and poetic imagination. Kuntaka also refutes the definition of *rasavadalankara* of earlier writers. He denied the dual position of *rasa* as synthesized by *dhavni* theorists. According to Kuntaka, *rasa* is always of chief importance and cannot subsidiary to anything else. In this way Kuntaka attempts to make new synthesis of all phases of poetic expression under the comprehensive concept of *vakrokti*. Kuntaka analyses poetry from the perspective of poetic creativity. He says that poetry is nothing more than the creation of poet. According to Kuntaka it is *vakrata* who separates poetry from the other form of expression. *Vakrokti* consists of the peculiar form given to any expression due to the skill of the poet, and consequently test of the poet's activity, which may be defined as an act of imagination on the part of the poet. Thus, *vakrokti* is totally depends on poet's creativity. But on the other hand, Kuntaka advocates that mere *vakrata* does not make poetry. It must provide aesthetic delight to the heart and mind of the reader who is responsive to the true beauty of poetry. He says that the real test of *vakrokti* is its contribution to *camatkara* or aesthetic enjoyment experienced by the reader. Kuntaka defined *vakrokti* as an artistic turn of speech. His definition of *vakrokti* is- "both words and meanings marked by artistic turn of speech" (Kapoor 25). It is a striking mode of speech coupled with creative imagination of the poet which lends it strikingness. Therefore, the ultimate emphasis is laid on *kavi-kausala* or poet's creative genius.

The ultimate aim of *vakrokti* is aesthetic appeal. That's why *vakrokti* is used in the sense of beauty also. Kuntaka uses other terms like *vicchitti vaicitrya*, *carutva*, *camatkara* as synonymously or interchangeable terms for *vakrokti*. *Vakrokti* mainly carries the following implications:

It is deviated or distinct from the established mode of scientific speech as well as common expression.

*Vakrokti* is the artistic turn of speech having beauty due to *pratibha* of the poet.

It must have capability of producing the aesthetic delight in the mind of *sahridayas* or men of taste.

It is an indispensable element in the texture of poetry.

It is the product of a talented poet or in other words it depends upon the poetic function of a poet.

It is also recognized as the embellishment of the word and its meaning, the physical constituent of poetry.

Every charming feature of poetry must be recognized as *vakrokti* (Sharma 3).

In this way, Kuntaka's *vakrokti* theory emerges as a viable theory of language of poetry.

The expression has to exhibit the primary requisite of an all-pervading beauty which alone makes poetic expression distinct. Without this primary beauty or *vakrata*, poetry will be merely mundane.

Kuntaka's *vakrokti siddhanta* analyses the use of poetic expression at six levels: phonetic, lexical, grammatical, sentential, episodic and compositional which corresponds to *varnavinyasa-vakrata*, *pada-purvarddha-vakrata*, *pada-pararddha-vakrata*, *vakya-vakrata*, *prakarana-vakrata* and *prabandhan-vakrata*.

### **1. *Varna-Vinyasa-Vakrata* (Phonetic Obliquity):**

Every language is made of limited unique sound units called *varna* or phonemes. These are the smallest sound system of a language which are used to differentiate the meanings. The attractive arrangements of phonemes are the base of poetry. This charming and attractive arrangement of phonemes is what Kuntaka calls *varna-vinyasw-vakrata* or phonetic obliquity. In his opus '*Vakroktijivitam*' Kuntaka explains all possible arrangements of phonemes or consonants in order to capture the charming effects. The first type of arrangement is the arrangement of free and



unequal recurrence of similar or identical phonemes or consonants at different intervals and because of this type of arrangement expression beauty is provided by the poet. Further it is divided into three sub kinds-recurrence of one phoneme, reappearance of two phonemes and repetition of more than two phonemes. Kuntaka also describes the third type of phonetic obliquity where the arrangements of consonants or phonemes are employed without any interval by the poet for a high poetic charm. The fourth sub-variety of phonetic obliquity is the repetition of new consonants or phonemes. He also says that a discontinuance of earlier recurrence of phonemes and choice of new ones also convey beauty to the expression. According to Kuntaka chime also comes under it. He advocates that chime should be introduced without any extra effort; it should be adorned with syllables which are not harsh; it should be in consonance with feelings conveyed and lastly it should be according to the propriety. In this way all above mentioned types of phonetic obliquity impart charming effects to the poetry. Kuntaka warns here that the arrangement of phonemes should not violate propriety and should be in consonance with the feelings. Kuntaka is fully aware of these limitations. He says that all these types of phonetic obliquity should be employed without any extra effort. These should be selected very carefully and should not be tarnished by unattractive phonemes.

The above description of the phonetic obliquity focuses on the role of charming arrangements of consonants in English poetry also. Many writers employ the repetition of similar or identical phonemes or consonants in different combinations. They follow all the norms described by Kuntaka whether it is the use of one, two or more than two phonemes or consonants. They are also aware of the limitation of the variety of obliquity. They employ the phonemes or consonants according to sense and never violate the propriety.

## **2. Pada-Puvrvarddha-vakrata (Lexical Obliquity):**

Without word nothing exists. Words are the base of any language as well as poetry. Because, the main purpose of expression is conveyed through the words. In the same way the choice of words has been involved in the art of writing poetry. There is no difference between the vocabulary of poetry or generally spoken language but it is the choice and selection of the words that matter in the art of poetry. The arrangement of words in a poem is the axis of the poetry. Coleridge also stated that poetry is the best order of words. The order of words in a poem is based on selection and choice, choice that is prime by the peculiarity, evocativeness and newness of words. Words impart uniqueness and freshness to a poet's utterance. There are words which make poetry extraordinary and unusual. There are words which provide uniqueness and newness to a poet's utterance. There are other types of words which assist in making of poetry full of aesthetic pleasure by their use of plainness and commonness. Such words are the soul of the poetry. Selection of word depends on the poet's divine instinct that enables a poet to choose the appropriate words. In this way according to Kuntaka where attractiveness and charmness are produced through the selection and choice of words there would be *pada-purvarddha-vakrata* (lexical obliquity). He says that lexical obliquity is found in the basal forms of words. Kuntaka defines that when the words of common usage are attributed with the associate meaning other than the primary meanings, we have *pada-purvarddha-vakrata* (lexical obliquity). *Pada-purvarddh –vakrata* includes eight types of sub-varieties:

**(i) *Rudhi-vaicitrya-vakrata* or Obliquity of usage:**

*Rudhi-vaicitraya-vakrata* (obliquity of usage) is the first type of sub-variety of *pada-purvarddha-vakrata*. Words are vital not only for what they denote or express, but also for what they suggest. According to Kuntaka, when a conventional denotation of words owes connotation of improbable meaning or comprises exaggeration of an attribute in poet's endeavor to express supreme

exaltation of the object, we have *rudhi-vaicitrya-vakrata*. This type of sub-variety is totally based on poet's versatility. Poet employs the simple usage in such a way that it gives a new meaning which may be exaggerated or extraordinary. The obliquity of usage depends on the alteration of the traditional meaning. In this transformation, the connotation of improbable meaning is levied upon the words which are no longer in use, dead or of the common usage. In this sub-variety the connotation is the soul or essence of poetry. The source of freshness is the use of common words with new meanings. In this way, through lexical obliquity the poet provides charm and freshness to the poetry.

**(ii) *Paryaya-vakrata* or Obliquity of synonym:**

The second sub-variety of *pada-purvarddha-vakrata* is *paryaya-vakrata* or obliquity of synonym. Each language has many words conveying the identical or similar meaning, though they have diverse implications and sense. These types of words are called synonyms. Kuntaka opines that the practice of synonyms occur in different ways. Kuntaka says that every synonym is different from one-another in one or second way. There is a particular sense or situation for each synonym. Kuntaka says that the poet must be aware of different shades of meaning in them and should use them with a great care and accuracy. Each word has its own importance, spirit, sense or music. According to Kuntaka it is the poet who is more responsive and sensitive rather than other writers. It is the poet who unearths the internal vibration of words and uses them in such a way so as to elevate the beauty of the expression. Poet employs synonyms or chain of images so that the described objects become vividly clear to the reader. This art of using synonyms in poetry is called *paryaya-vakrata*.

**(iii) *Upacara-vakrata* or Obliquity of transference:**

Third sub-variety of *pada-purvarddha-vakrata* is *upacara-vakrata* (obliquity of transference). In this sub-variety, word is used in its implied and secondary sense to describe an object with which

it is not straightly associated. Kuntaka described it that when the stated and the implied word have a common attribute, imparting charm and delight, we have *upacara-vakrata* (obliquity of transference). One thing must be noted here that there is difference between the stated object and implied object according their basic natures and properties. If one is material, other is abstract; if one is compact, other is liquid. In this way, transference is an imaginative knowledge, depends on the basis of the stated.

**(iv) *Visesana-vakrata* or Obliquity of adjective:**

Next sub-variety of *pada-purvarddha-vakrata* (lexical obliquity) is *visesana-vakrata* or obliquity of adjective. When the brilliance of adjective is used to heighten the beauty of a verb or case, in that situation we have *visesana-vakrata*. For Kuntaka, it is inseparable part of poetry because it provides freshness and picturesqueness to the poetic language. It is the magic of adjective that *rasa* is able to touch the peak but for this adjectives should be in tune with reference. It should be supporting to *rasa* or emotion. R.S. Thomas rightly observes: “The true test of a poet is to be seen in his use of adjectives as adjectives are those words which can easily be altered in polishing a poem”(Sharma 89). The language becomes dull and incapable of connecting new poetic content, if the poet fails to identify the purpose of the devices like obliquity of adjective.

**(v) *Samvrti-vakrata* or Obliquity of concealment:**

The fifth sub-variety of *pada-purvarddha-vakrata* (lexical obliquity) is *samvrti-vakrata* (obliquity of concealment). It works when the subject of explanation is curtailed by the use of pronoun and so on, in order to accomplish excellence of expression. Nouns are straightforward and are unable to impart profound beauty to object. On the other side, pronouns are of the implicit nature pointing out the screened position of the object. The quality of pronouns makes the expression graceful, delightful and charming. This type of obliquity helps the poet in many ways. When words are not

able to explain the natural beauty of an object which has received its excellence, the pronouns enhance the beauty of expression by their device of concealment. There are many objects experienced through sense and inexplicable by words, and those are expressed with the help of this device.

**(vi) *Vrtti-vakrata* or Obliquity of indeclinable:**

Kuntaka discussed indeclinable in the context of compound words and suffixes which form such derivatives and participles and so on. The obliquity based on this type is called *vrtti-vakrata* (obliquity of indeclinable). Compound words are the soul of this obliquity. Compound words provide a base to obliquity. Dr. Negendra defines it in the following words:

What is the form of obliquity of compound words? We may have two answers to this question. First answer may denote the selection of all striking words. Probably ever good poet forms a new striking word combining two words together.... Second answer may be the beauty which lies in the structure of this new unit. Vamana has analyzed exhaustively. Here richness of beauty mainly lies in the structure of compound word and has nothing special to do with its meaning (Sharma 105).

The secondary derivatives also come under the obliquity of indeclinable. These are formed by suffixes. In the words of Kuntaka, the obliquity of indeclinable means a formation of new structure like compound words, secondary derivatives, participles and slangs which communicate beauty to the expression.

**(vii) *Purusa-vakrata* or Obliquity of gender:**

*Purusa-vakrata* (obliquity of gender) is another type of sub-variety of *pada-purvarddha-vakrata* (lexical obliquity). In this type gender is used in such a way that enhances the beauty of expression or communication. It functions at three levels. First, when words belonging to two heterogeneous

genders are used together and are used without difference in a comprehensive way; second, when the feminine gender is used, avoiding the other possible gender for the sake of excellence and brilliance in the expression and third, when keeping in view the meaning of expression, the existence of the gender, described, is avoided and a particular word is used to increase the beauty. The last level of this obliquity is the most difficult to employ. A talented or skilled poet can employ this technique. It enhances the effectiveness of the meaning and deeds in association with figures of speech like, simile, personification etc.

**(viii) *Kryavaicitrya-vakrata* or Obliquity of verb:**

The last type of sub-variety is related to the verb. The artistic use of root verbs can produce a unique beauty. It has five types. These forms consist of obliquity which is seen when there is a unity of the subject with the verb; when another subject achieves brilliance in relation to the similar verb; when the adverbials go to qualify it; when metaphorical superimposition enhances the beauty of the verb-form and when the direct object gets attractive communicated. According to Kuntaka, poets should coin new expressions by exploiting these forms in their different combinations which construct various images in their poetry.

**3. *Pada-Pararddha-Vakrata* (Grammatical Obliquity):**

Kuntaka upholds special particle, suffix, person, number, prefix, and voice in a poetic composition. He says that a poet must be guided in all these varieties. Kuntaka accomplishes his discussion by upholding that when various forms of literary turns take place together in such a way as to increase the beauty of one another, they create artistic charm and beauty. This charm can be called as *pada-pararddha-vakrata* or grammatical obliquity. This type of obliquity comprises various grammatical devices which form its sub-varieties in the following types:

**(i) *Kala-vaicitraya-vakrata* or Obliquity of tense:**

Kuntaka says that when expression gets brilliance and excellence due to the striking practice of a tense in distinguish context and the reader realizes transported, it is called *kala-vaicitrya-vakrata* (Obliquity of tense). In this type, poet expresses himself in the other tense, not in required tense. A talented and genius poet, by anticipating the past or future action into the present, creates charm and beauty in his expression. Poets are very genius and are very sensible of time and place. According to the sense and requirements poet can transform past and future into the present. They do so this for two reasons: first, their yearning for the past provides them an escape from the joyful experiences and corroding worries of the world; secondly, it soothes their passion for the unusual and the strange. They find in the past enough beauty and pleasure to feed the dim flame of their soul.

**(ii) *Karaka-vakrata* or Obliquity of case:**

According to Kuntaka, when a usual case is ascribed as a main case or vice-versa then we have *haskarka-vakrata* (obliquity of case). The strikingness or beauty, created with the help of this obliquity, rests mainly on the transposition of the case which aims at heightening the expression. According to him, this transposition of case, alives symbolically the objective case by proposing superior human faculty in them.

**(iii) *Samkhya-vakrata* or Obliquity of number:**

In this type of obliquity, the poet transforms the numbers- plural number is changed into singular numbers and singular numbers are changed into plural numbers. This type of interchange of two contrary numbers provides charm and beauty to the poetic expression and subsequently the meaning gets its heightened form.

**(iv) *Purusa-vakrata* or Obliquity of person:**

This type of obliquity somehow resemblances with the last one but where the difference lies is in the interchange of persons. In order to get sublimity in the expression, poet uses third person at the place of the first or second person. This type of expression is called *purusa-vakrata* or obliquity of person. This obliquity plays an important role in the composition of poetry.

**(v) *Upagraha-vakrata* or Obliquity of voice:**

There are two modes or voices -active and passive. Active mode shows that the action rests upon the subject, while passive voice express that the action depends upon subject or some other faculty. Both of modes are essential for the composition of poetry. He is of the views that it depends upon the poet which modes he uses for the increasing of beauty and charm of his writing. This special use of a particular voice, according to Kuntaka, is *upagraha-vakrata* (obliquity of voice).

**(vi) *Upasarga-vakrata* or Obliquity of prefix:**

When a particle adds to the beginning of root words then a new word is formed with a distinguish meaning, it is called prefix. It has no importance in isolation. But it is useful in the association of other words. In the words of Kuntaka, the amalgamation of particle and word which enhances the beauty of expression is called *upasarga-vakrata* (obliquity of prefix).

**(vii) *Pratyaya-vakrata* or Obliquity of suffix:**

When a particle adds to the end of a root word then a new word is coined with a particular meaning, it is called a suffix. Like prefix, it too remains sluggish so long as it is alone but in the combination of a word, it provides beauty and strikingness. In the simple words, it intensifies meaning and suffuses it with charm. Kuntaka includes it in the sub-varieties of *pada-paraddha-vakrata* (grammatical obliquity)

**(viii) *Nipata-vakrata* or Obliquity of particle:**



A particle is a free component and has no grammatical boundation with words. It is an exclamatory sound, thrown into expression to signify some deep emotions and feelings. It does not have a definite denotative meaning. Through the help of particle a talented poet creates strikingness and charm in his poetry. This oblique use of particle is called *nipata-vakrata* (obliquity of particle).

#### **4. *Vakya-Vakrata* (Sentential Obliquity):**

The *vakya-vakrata* (sentential obliquity) functions at the level of sentence or *vakya* to deal with contents or *vastu*. Kuntaka says that when the subject matter explained for the charming words then we have ‘*vakya*’ or ‘*vastu-vakrata*’ (obliquity of sentence and contents). *Vakya-vakrata* (obliquity of sentence) and *vastu-vakrata* (obliquity of contents) are same. On the basis of subject-matter, it can be divided into two sub-varieties:

##### **(i) *Sahaja-vakrata* or Natural obliquity:**

When the *vastu* (subject-matter) is used without heavy embellishment, it has *sahaja-vakarata* (natural obliquity). A poet can allure the reader with the natural power of contemplating the natural objects lively. Kuntaka explains that objects which are to be explained must be conducive to exquisiteness by virtue of their own natural attractive charm. In the other words, they should have an appeal to heart by their own natural beauty. But on the other hand it is a poet who with the power of his imagination and contemplation makes these objects more attractive and beautiful. This means that the natural charm of the object still requires the labor of the poet’s function.

##### **(ii) *Aharya-vakrata* or Imposed obliquity:**

When the description achieved heightened beauty because of technical art of the poet, then there is *aharya-vakrata* or imposed obliquity. Poet with his talent and imagination imparts beauty to the common words. It should be considered here that the subject-matter is not wholly an imaginative matter; rather it owes its power in itself. The poet, by his power, conceives a divine beauty in it

and its character becomes effective and prominent, exhibiting a new form of beauty. Thus the subject-matter and the poet's art are complementary to each other.

### **5. *Prakarna-vakrata* (Episodic Obliquity):**

Kuntaka opines that when the desired object is capable of enduring doubt all along and is the creation of the exceptional, endless poetic skill underlying it then we have *prakarana-vakrata* (episodic obliquity). Here Kuntaka means that the poet produces a gorgeous charm in the subject-matter. It is sub-divided into eight categories:

#### **(i) *Bhavapurna sthiti vakrata* or Obliquity of emotional states:**

This sub-variety of *prakarana-vakrata* (episodic obliquity) is a state of the poet's mind and heart which is related to the emotional power of poets. When the poet is filled with a kind of delirium then he provides an enthralling strikingness and charm. It tends to loftiness of speech and so it is an essential device used in a good composition. Kuntaka says that the incidents or episodes are like a desert. It is the emotions that suffuse music of life in it. It is the talented poet who crafts such emotional states in the events of his arrangement.

#### **(ii) *Utapadya lavanya vakrata* or Obliquity of modified source story:**

What the poet represents in his creation is not real but far from the originality, actually is rendered in words. It is the magic of poet who with the power of his imagination represents the events in such a way that they seem real or original. It is the game of imagination that plays an essential role in transforming the source material of the composition. In this we can say that this type of sub-variety is completely based upon the poet's imagination. With the help of it he could change the fundamental and source story. With the help of imagination he invents something new and fussed it into the source story in order to create charm and beauty in his work.

#### **(iii) *Prakarana upakarya-upakaraka bhava vakrata* or Obliquity of episodic relationship:**

In this sub-variety, Kuntaka advocates that events should be complementary to one-another in the composition of work. They must support one another jointly in achieving the desired end. The incidents do not have their value in isolation in the composition. Rather, they exist meaningfully by the relationship of mutual assistance.

**(iv) *Visista prakarna vakrata* or Obliquity of particular event and episode:**

When a meaning is repeated again and again, inflated with new kind of adornments each time, in the episodes of a poetic composition, creates a striking beauty then we have this sub-variety of *prakarana-vakrata* (episodic obliquity)

**(v) *Angirasa nisyandanikasa vakrata* or Obliquity of principal *rasa*:**

“When a particular episode contributes to the consummation of *angirasa* (principal emotion) in such a way as has not been manifested by any other episode of either of the parts—former and latter-of the poetic composition, we have this sub-variety of *prakarna-vakrata*” (Sharma 222). In simple words, it is the consummation of *angirasa* (principal emotion).

**(vi) *Apradhana prasanga vakrata* or Obliquity of secondary episodes:**

“When *apradhana prasanga* (secondary episode) is arranged integrally within an episode to serve the purpose of the composition then we have this sub-variety of *prakarana-vakrata*” (Sharma 226).

The brilliant poet invests a charming small reference or event within an episode for the sake of achieving the primary aim.

This obliquity also includes references, consciously or unconsciously, to a passage in a composition. Its function is to thicken the meaning of certain details. Much allusion is unconscious, but it should not on that account pass unnoticed. A poet might welcome the obliquity, which his creating brain fashioned too quickly for his conscious mind to follow.

**(vii) *Prakaranantara vakrata* or Obliquity of play within play:**

Kuntaka upholds of play within play device in order to find out a particular meaning. Favoring this device, Kuntaka opines that the brilliant poet applies *prakaranantara vakrata* (device of play within play) for a particular purpose. For the successful of this device, a set of actors other than the already employed is presented in the composition. This new set of actors uses the audience as the source material for their play. Kuntaka emphasizing upon this device as it helps in getting the desired end.

**(viii) *Sandhi vinivesa vakrata* or Obliquity of juncture or organic unity:**

*Sandhi* (juncture) is defined as amalgamation of diverse phases of main action with its divisions. We may say that it marks the division of the dramatic actions. Kuntaka says that the poet should not have excessive craze for observing rules even when the junctures are included for the beauty and attractiveness of composition.

**6. *Prabandha-vakrata* (Compositional Obliquity):**

The last type of *vakrokti* which is discussed by Kuntaka in his opus *Vakroktijivtam* is *prabandha-vakrata* (compositional obliquity). This type of is the amalgamation of the five varieties which has already been discussed and owes its beauty because of combination of the all five varieties. It can be sub-divided in the following categories:

**(i) *Rasantara-vakrata* or Obliquity of changing the *rasa*:**

It is the heart of the complete composition. Episodes of the plot are shaped in accordance with the primary *rasa* or emotion and, equally, the whole story is fabricated. Kuntaka opines that when a poet, evades the determined *rasa* and employs another *rasa* in order to make his work charming then we have this type of sub-variety of *prabandha-vakrata* (compositional obliquity).

**(ii) *Samapana-vakrata* or Obliquity of winding up the story:**

In this type, a poet ends the story with a distinguish episode of the basic story in order to avoid the dullness of the latter part. Then it is called of *prabandha-vakrata* (compositional obliquity). This type is employed when all the parts of basic story are not pleasurable or when preceding part is more attractive and charming than the former and vice-versa. When this type of situation is happened a genius poet omitting the dull part of the story, selects the pleasurable part and enlarge it for his composition. In it, he focuses at demarcates of the protagonist's excellence. When a protagonist achieves excellence, poet concludes the story.

**(iii) *Katha-viccheda-vakrata* or Obliquity of intending end:**

This sub-variety provides beauty and charm to the composition. For this, the poet divides the natural development of the basic story and achieves his desired end in the middle of the basic story. This charisma of the unpredicted achievement of the desired purpose has been called by Kuntaka, the third sub-variety of *prabandha-vakrata* (compositional obliquity). Kuntaka says that when an event, hiding the relation of the main story, yields an unrestricted flow of *rasa* (emotion) and achieves the desired aim, there in the middle only, we have this sub-variety of *prabandah-vakrata* (compositional obliquity).

**(iv) *Anusangika-phal-vakrata* or Obliquity of contingent objective:**

The poet starts his story or work with a purpose, but the protagonist acquires extra results as his contingent objectives which are not exist in the source story. The attainment of such objectives increases the brilliance of both the word and the hero. Kuntaka explains it that when the protagonist, during his course of action for the desired result, is made to attain different results of the same worth, we have the sub-variety of *prabandah-vakrata* (compositional obliquity).

**(v) *Namakarana-vakrata* or Obliquity of title:**

According to Kuntaka, title is also the important aspect of the creation.. He opines that sometimes even a symbolic name of the basic story produces a noteworthy beauty. The title of the work captures the reader due to its outstanding meaning. Hence, the renowned poets entitled their works in such a way that it may possess attractiveness. The aim of a good title is to unearth and underline the essence of the work; it enables the reader to know the main idea.

**(vi) *Tulya-katha-vakrata* or Obliquity of identical subject:**

Kuntak says that the whole work may be oblique, with new instructions and ways of success. He holds that even when great poets compose different literary works, based on an identical theme, each on them possesses infinite individual beauty. The reason is that the poets have their own approaches to and view of looking at an identical subject and because of their individuality; they give entirely a new design. Thus the manifestation of this sub-variety of *prabandha-vakrata* (compositional obliquity) is born out of innate and natural state of the writer's mind and art.

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