

Materials for a Critical Edition of Bharata's Natyasastra

BY

Dr. Shripad Krishna Belvalkar, M. A., Ph. D.

Professor of Sanskrit, Deccan College, Poona

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*By Dr. Shripad Krishna Belvalkar, M. A., Ph. D.,
Professor of Sanskrit, Deccan College, Poona.*

In a paper I read before the one hundred and twenty-sixth meeting of the American Oriental Society (16, April 1914) I made the announcement that I had taken on hand a critical edition of Bharata's Nāṭya-śāstra to be published under the auspices of the Harvard Oriental Series. Until 1865, when Fitzedward Hall (as an appendix to his edition of the Daśarūpa) published the 18th, 19th, 20th and 34th chapters of the Nāṭya-śāstra, this important treatise on dramaturgy was believed to have been lost for ever. Hall based his edition on two paper mss., one of them incomplete. These were the only mss. then known to exist. Since then a number of other mss. have come to light. Grosset and Regnaud, two noted French Sanskritists, after editing and publishing several stray chapters from the Nāṭya-śāstra, undertook in 1898 to publish what would have been an *editio princeps* of the entire work. But unhappily, the task was never completed. And in the meanwhile the learned and industrious editors of the Kāvya-mālā—Messrs. Śivadatta and Parab—published the entire work (1894, Kāvya-mālā no. 42). This edition, however, was confessedly uncritical, being based on just two mss. which contained many lacunæ in common and so were probably derived from the same original. A third attempt (which was, in fact, earlier than either of the two last mentioned, but which is not very widely known) was made by Mr. Annasaheb Gharpure of Poona, who, in a magazine called the Saṅgita Mīmāṃsaka, published (1886) the first three chapters only and a part of the fourth, the magazine having come to a sudden close in the second year of its existence. Mr. Gharpure had only one ms. to go by, but this gave some very good

readings and had, therefore, a value independent of the mss. used for the *Kāvya-mālā* edition.

It will thus be seen that while many have so far attempted to edit Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra*, a really critical edition of that work is still, as M. Sylvain Lévi observes in his letter to me on the subject, 'an urging need of our studies.' There is enough available ms. material to constitute a reliable text ; but it is such a vast undertaking and covers so many different branches of study, e. g., origin of Indian drama, stage-building and stage-properties, acting, dancing, prosody, *Prākritis*, figures of speech, dramaturgy proper—including the ten *rūpakas*—music instrumental and vocal, etc., and in each of these branches there is so much of pioneering work to do that to have anything like an adequate justice done to them all would be an exclusive occupation for years. I do not expect to finish it in less than six years.

Here for the present I merely wish to put together a list of the mss. that have so far come to my knowledge, of the text editions that have been already published, as also of other critical papers and pamphlets that have appeared from time to time in the various journals and other publications,—all in the hope that scholars will bring to my notice any omissions in the lists and furnish me with such other information and suggestion as is likely to help me in a work which is as much my own as of the world of Orientalists generally. At the end, I wish also to indicate briefly the nature and scope of the projected edition and the way I wish to go about it.

I. TEXT EDITIONS

1865—Fitzedward Hall: chapters 18, 19, 20, 34 (published as an appendix to his edition of *Daśarūpa* in the *Bibliotheca Indica* Series of Calcutta).

1878—Jibanand Vidyasagar : Chapters 18, 19, 20, and 34 (being a mere reprint of the above, included in

his edition of the Daśarūpa printed at the Sarasvatī Press, Calcutta). For critical purposes this is altogether valueless, as I found it when I collated it with Hall's edition at the British Museum.

1880--P. Regnaud: chapter 17 (published in *Annales du Musée Guimet*, 1 (1880), pp. 85-99).

1881--P. Regnaud: end of chapter 15, and chapter 16 complete (published in *Annales du Musée Guimet*, 2 (1881), pp. 63-130).

1884--P. Regnaud: chapters 6 and 7 (published in his *Rhétorique Sanskrite*, Paris, 1884, pt. 2, pp. 1-42).

1886--Annasaheb Gharpure: Chapters 1, 2 and 3, and 79 stanzas of chapter 4 (published in the *Saṅgita-Mīmāṃsaka* vol. i, no. 12, Aryabhushan Press, Poona).

1888--T. Grosset: chapter 28 (published in *Bibliothèque de la Faculté des Lettres de Lyon*, vol. 6, Paris, 1888, pp. 91).

1894--Śivadatta and Parab: the complete work but with many lacunæ and queries and conjectural emendations (published in the *Kāvya-mālā*, no. 42, Bombay, pp. 3 + 447).

1898--J. Grosset and P. Regnaud: first part of the first volume of the critical edition (published in *Annales de l'université de Lyon*, fasc. 40, Paris, 1898, pp. 12 + 27 + 296). The edition was never completed. It covers less than a third of the entire work.

2. MANUSCRIPTS

1 and 2--The Fitzedward Hall mss.—Most of Hall's manuscripts were handed over by him to the Harvard University Library. I examined all of them but did not find amongst them the two Nāṭyaśāstra manuscripts. Fortunately, however, Professor

Lanman has been able to trace them. They are now with T. Grosset, and I expect soon to obtain a loan of them for my use.

- 3—The ms. used by Annasaheb Gharpure.—I made inquiries of him but learn that the ms. is missing. It was a valuable ms. but is now available for collation only through the published portions of it in the *Saṅgīta Mīmāṃsaka*.
- 4—A copy of a Nepal ms. made at Katmandu for Professor Sylvain Lévi.—Professor Lévi has very kindly consented to place it at my disposal at the Deccan College Library through the India Office.
- 5—Another ms. from Nepal belonging to the Nepal Durbar Library.—This is in *Nevārī* characters and the Harvard College Library has kindly obtained, through Professor Macdonell of Oxford, a photographic reproduction of it for my use. Unfortunately, the manuscript is not complete, breaking off abruptly towards the middle.
- 6 and 7—The two Deccan College manuscripts nos. 68, 69 of 1873-74.—These are modern copies and their originals are in the Library of H. H. the Maharaja of Bikaner.
- 8 and 9—These are the originals of 6 and 7.—In Rajendralal Mitra's Bikaner Catalogue they are numbered 1092 A and B. I have not yet started inquiries about these, but I anticipate little difficulty in getting access to them.
- 10—A palm-leaf ms. of the work now in the possession of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.—The Secretary of the Society has kindly consented to obtain a loan of it for my use at the Deccan College Library.
- 11 to 21—The Government Oriental Manuscripts Library at Madras is reported to have some 11 ms. of the

Nāṭya-śāstra, five of them followed by a Telugu commentary.—The mss. are all fragmentary, containing stray portions from the Nāṭya-śāstra, and in two cases at least, the work given by the ms. is different from Bharata's Nāṭya-śāstra, being, like the India Office ms. noted below, the work of Kohalāchārya. I owe all these details to Mr. S. Kuppusvami shastri, M. A., the Curator of the Library, through whose kind offices I hope to obtain copies of all these mss.

22—Pandit Haraprasād Shāstri of Calcutta in his Report for the search of Sanskrit mss. (1895-1900) mentions on page 10 a ms. of the Nāṭyā-śāstra which extends to chapter 22 only.—I have not yet opened negotiations about this.

23, 24, and 25—The Palace Library of H. H. the Maharaja of Trivandrum contains two mss. of the Nāṭya-śāstra (one containing chapters 29 only and the other described as incomplete).—Both of them are in Kerala characters. The library also contains a unique but fragmentary (19 chapters with many lacunæ,) ms. of Āchārya Abhinavagupta's commentary on the Nāṭya-śāstra called the Nāṭya-veda-vivṛiti. Through the courtesy of T. Gaṇapatiśāstri, I have been able to procure Devanāgarī copy of a part of this important commentary, as also of a few chapters from the Nāṭya-śāstra mss. The remaining portions are also being copied for me, and later I might obtain photographic reproductions of the mss., or examine them personally.

26—A manuscript of the work belonging to the Mysore Oriental Library.—This manuscript purports to be by the Ādibharata, though it does not differ materially from the others.

27—The late Dr. H. H. Dhruva in his article on the Nāṭya-śāstra (*Asiatic Quarterly Review*, 2 (1896)

pp. 349-359) speaks of a manuscript of the work which he obtained from Gujarat.—Dr. Dhruva had used the ms. himself, and I thought that he might have placed it at the disposal of the editors of the *Kāvya-mālā* for their edition of the work. I have not so far been able to obtain any trace of this manuscript.

Aufrecht's *Catalogus Catalogorum* mentions, on p. 284*b* and 396*b* of Part I, certain other mss. of the *Nāṭya-śāstra*, but their existence is more or less problematical. Some of the mss. (e. g., that in the India office, Mack. 116) were wrongly described as mss. of the *Nāṭya-śāstra* of Bharata. For the present then the above list includes all the genuinely accredited mss. of the work that are known to me.

3. PAPERS AND PAMPHLETS

- 1874—Heymann: 'Ueber Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstram*, in the *Nachrichten der K. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*, 1874. This article gives a list of the *Nāṭya-śāstra* mss. and other materials available for an edition of the work upto 1874.
- 1882—E. Windisch: 'Der griechische Einfluss im indischen Drama', a paper originally read before the fifth International Congress of Orientalists (1881) and later published separately, Berlin, pp. 3-106.
- 1890—Sylvain Lévi: 'Le Théâtre indien', Paris, 1890 pp. 15 + 432 + 125. This is a standard work on Sanskrit drama, though now rather antiquated.
- 1896—H. H. Dhruva: '*Nāṭya-śāstra* or the Indian dramatics'. Published in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* 2 (1896), pp. 349-359.
- 1898—P. Regnaud's preface and J. Grosset's introduction to their (incomplete) edition of the *Nāṭya-śāstra*. Here an attempt is made to divide the then known mss. of the work into families.

- 1909—Haraprasād Shāstri: Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (N. S.), vol. 5, no. 9, October 1909. In this paper Mr. Haraprasād Shāstri tries to put Bharata in the second century before Christ.
- 1912—P. R. Bhandarkar: Indian Antiquary, Vol. XI. pp. 157-164, 185-195, and 254-265. In this valuable paper (not completed) on Ancient Hindu Music the later or musical chapters of the Nāṭya-śāstra are from internal evidence assigned to the fourth century A. D.

A number of works on general criticism of the Indian drama are listed in Schuyler's Bibliography of the Sanskrit Drama pp. 18-23, but not all of them are likely to be of equal use in our projected edition. But it is a valuable compilation and I am trying to keep it up-to-date, and would be grateful to any one suggesting names not already included there. I shall now, in conclusion, indicate very briefly the nature of the projected edition and the way I propose to go about it.

The first and the foremost task would be of course the constitution of the Text on strictly scientific principles. For this I am going to use as critical apparatus not only the mss. and the text-editions above listed (so far as they are available) but the various commentaries both on works like the Daśarūpa or the Sāhityadarpaṇa, as well as on the more important Sanskrit plays. These commentaries usually give large extracts from Bharata's Nāṭya-śāstra often with significant variant readings ; and there is no reason why this source should be ignored or remain unexplored. The Text with a critical account of the critical apparatus and the variants and the collectania (printed at the bottom of the Text) would form a volume by itself. At its close would be given an index of Śloka-pratīkas (wherein every line of the Anuṣṭubh would be

separately indicated) and a glossary of technical terms with their approximate English equivalents.

The second volume would contain principally the English translation. As before observed Bharata's Nāṭya-śāstra touches upon a number of subjects each of which can be made the object of an independent study and have a volume devoted to itself. Sanskrit Rhetoric or Alaṅkāra-śāstra and Sanskrit Music (both vocal and instrumental) suggest, both of them, a number of questions as to genesis and chronological development—questions which have not been so far even proposed as problems, much less attempted to be set at rest. Bharata's Nāṭya-śāstra can be from this point of view divided into a number of separate parts, each part occupying from one to six or more chapters. Now, I intend to give an Introduction at the beginning of the translation of every one of these parts, where I wish to give a bibliography and a critical history of that particular branch of study. The chapters dealing with dramatics proper would for instance be preceded by a discussion as to the origin of the Hindu drama and a consideration of the alleged influence of Greek Theatre upon it. The chapters on Music would give among other things a comparative study of the Indian and the European systems of music. And so on for the rest. At the end there would be of course a general Index.

I fully realise the vastness of the undertaking, but with the sympathy and co-operation of Oriental scholars generally I hope to make out of it at least something better than disastrous failure. And I therefore invite all persons interested in the work to favour me with any ideas and suggestions that they may have in the matter, together with any information as to mss., text editions, critical papers, etc. that they have and that they think would be of any use to me. I have already started the work in earnest, but it grows upon me in magnitude almost every day. Truly has the poet said—

Works in moments of inspiration willed
Through years of toil have to be fulfilled.