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***Premapīyūṣam*: An Analytical Study from a Dramatic-Theoretical Perspective**

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• Abstract:

Premapīyūṣam, written by Ācārya Rādhāvallabh Tripāthī, is a notable work in modern Sanskrit drama. Even though it is a modern play, it clearly reflects the influence of classical Sanskrit dramatic theory. The structure of the play follows important principles mentioned in *Bharata Muni's Nāṭyaśāstra* and *Dhanañjaya's Daśarūpaka*, especially the ideas of Arthaprakṛti (dramatic elements), the stages of action, and the five dramatic junctures (Sandhis). The plot centers on the love story of *Bhavabhūti* and Princess *Śaśiprabhā*. Their relationship develops gradually and reaches fulfillment in a natural and systematic way, beginning from the initial seed of love and ending in its successful completion. The hero is portrayed as a *Dhīrodātta* type—noble, calm, and dignified—while the heroine represents the ideal *Svakīyā nāyikā*. Love (*Śṛṅgāra Rasa*) is the main sentiment of the play, but other emotions such as sorrow, heroism, anger, and peace also appear at different moments. By describing love as 'Pīyūṣa' or nectar, the playwright expresses the moral and spiritual importance of pure love in human life. Through the effective use of poetic style and classical dramatic structure, the play shows that traditional Sanskrit aesthetics can still remain meaningful in modern times.

❖ **Keywords:** *Premapīyūṣam*, *Nāṭyaśāstra*; *Arthaprakṛti*, Sandhi, *Dhīrodātta* Hero, *Svakīyā* Heroine, *Śṛṅgāra Rasa*, *Alaṅkāra*.

▪ Introduction:

In the Indian literary tradition, drama is a special form of art in which life, emotions, philosophy, and social awareness are closely connected. Among all branches of poetry, drama is considered the most lively and powerful form. That is why the ancient scholars said, '*Kāvyeṣu nāṭakaṃ ramyam*' — among all types of poetry, drama is the most delightful. In a play, poetic beauty, character development, and events come together to create a direct and real experience in the minds of the audience.

The oldest and most authoritative text on dramatic theory is *Bharata Muni's Nāṭyaśāstra*. It does not discuss only the rules of writing a play, but also explains acting, music, rasa (aesthetic emotion), stage arrangement, and many other aspects in a systematic way. Bharata himself speaks about the all-inclusive nature of drama in these words—

**na tadjñānaṃ na tacchilpaṃ na sā vidyā na sā kalā.
nāsau yogo na tatkarma nāṭye'smin yanna dṛśyate¹.**

This means that there is no knowledge, art, learning, or action that is not shown in drama. Dhanañjaya, the author of *Daśarūpaka*, while explaining the structure of drama, says- *vastu netā rasasteṣāṃ bhedakaḥ*². This means that plot (story), hero, and rasa (emotion) are the three main elements of a play. On the basis of this theory, we can examine the play *Premapīyūṣam* (1971) written by Ācārya Rādhāvallabh Tripāthī. Though the play is written in a modern period, it maintains a deep connection with classical dramatic structure.

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1. Plot:

The play is divided into seven acts. The main story revolves around the love between the poet *Bhavabhūti* and Princess *Śaśiprabhā*. In the first act, *Bhavabhūti* appears in the court of King *Yaśovarman* and is insulted there. Princess *Śaśiprabhā* is deeply moved by his poetry and sends him a ring. This fills *Bhavabhūti*'s life with new hope. In the second act, they meet and talk in the royal garden. At the same time, political doubt arises in the royal court. Because of suspicion, the king sends *Bhavabhūti* into exile. In the third act, *Bhavabhūti* thinks about renouncing the world. At this moment, his teacher *Jñānanidhi* arrives, and the story takes a new turn. In the fourth act, during the Madana festival, *Śaśiprabhā*'s inner suffering is shown. She declares the greatness of love and sings- *piba re premapīyūṣam. amalaṃ madhuraṃ puṇyaṃ*. In the fifth act, they meet again in an *āśrama*. A dream scene is shown, and their relationship becomes stronger. In the sixth act, the defeated king comes to the *āśrama* and is surprised to hear about his daughter's marriage. In the seventh act, the final union takes place on the bank of the river *Godāvarī*. At last, with everyone's agreement, the play ends happily. At the end, the poet recites a blessing verse—

*satpātrayojitaṃ puṇyaṃ, ramaṇaṃ bahugūṇānvitam.
pibantu premapīyūṣam rasikā rasapeśalam*³.

Thus, the play presents love, emotion, and classical dramatic principles in a graceful and meaningful way.

2. Analysis of the Plot (*Kathāvastu samīkṣā*):

2.1. *Arthaprakṛti* (Elements of Plot Development):

2.1.1. *Bīja* (Seed): At the very beginning of the play, the seed of the story is planted. In the royal court, when *Bhavabhūti* is insulted, a *Kaṅkukī* comes to him with a ring given by Princess *Śaśiprabhā* and says- *bho kave. Kṣaṇaṃ vilambyatām. Eṣā sakalakalākāpakuśalā tatra bhavati rājadārikā śaśiprabhā rājasabhāyāṃ bhavato'vajñāma- valokya khinnā aṅgultiyakamidaṃ bhavate prasādīkaroti. tadetadaṅgīkṛtya nivr̥tīm bhavatu bhavān*⁴. The giving of this ring becomes the main seed of the story. Later, this seed fully develops through the marriage of *Bhavabhūti* and *Śaśiprabhā*.

2.1.2. *Bindu* (Drop): In the second act, King *Yaśovarman* banishes *Bhavabhūti* from the kingdom. At this point, the main story seems to break temporarily. But at the end of the fourth act, *Yaśovarman* says- *rājñi, bahavāścintā- kāraṇāni samāyānti rājakārye. kāśmīranareśo lalitādityo mahatā sainyena asmānabhiyātukāma ita evāgacchati. tatpratīkāraṃ cintayāmi*⁵. This statement reconnects the story and gives it a new direction. This is called the *Bindu*.

2.1.3. *Patākā* (Sub-plot): The episode of King *Lalitāditya* of Kashmir can be called the *Patākā*. His arrival and attack influence the main course of the story. However, his own

goal—defeating *Yaśovarman*—is achieved before the hero's main objective is fulfilled. In the fifth act, *Jñānanidhi* says- *jñāna. - sādhu. śrīyaśovarmanḥ rājyaṃ tu śatruṇā samā- krāntam ityadyaiva ekena grāmavāsinā me vijñāpitam*⁶. Thus, the episode of *Lalitāditya* functions as the *Patākā*.

2.1.4. *Prakarī* (Minor Episode): The story related to *Mahātma Jñānanidhi* is considered the *Prakarī*. His role appears in the third, fifth, sixth, and seventh acts. Though he is not the central figure of the main story, his role is important in moving the events forward.

2.1.5. *Kārya* (Main Action): The main actions of the play include:

- *Bhavabhūti*'s arrival in the royal court.
- His insult.
- The princess giving him the ring.
- The attack of *Lalitāditya*.
- *Bhavabhūti*'s welfare activities for the people.
- Finally, the marriage of *Bhavabhūti* and *Śaśiprabhā*.

These connected events together complete the *Kārya* (main action).

2.2. *Kāryāvasthā* (Stages of Action):

2.2.1. *Ārambha* (Beginning): The story begins in the first act with *Bhavabhūti*'s entrance into the royal court. This is the stage of beginning, which continues till the end of the first act.

2.2.2. *Prayatna* (Effort): When *Bhavabhūti* goes to the royal garden at *Śaśiprabhā*'s invitation, the stage of effort begins. This continues up to the fourth act.

2.2.3. *Prāptyāśā* (Hope of Attainment): In the fifth act, *Bhavabhūti* feels both hope and doubt about gaining *Śaśiprabhā*. This emotional struggle represents the stage of *Prāptyāśā*. He is hopeful, yet he feels that such a precious jewel is not easy to obtain.

2.2.4. *Niyataphalaprāpti* (Certainty of Result): *Śaśiprabhā* is chased by the *Śabarās* and comes into the forest, where she meets *Bhavabhūti* again. She is freed from danger. This reunion shows that success is now certain. This is the stage of *Niyataphalaprāpti*.

2.2.5. *Phalāgama* (Achievement of Result): In the sixth act, *Bhavabhūti* and *Śaśiprabhā* are married. In the seventh act, King *Yaśovarman* gives his approval. This final union marks the *Phalāgama*, the attainment of the final result.

2.3. *Sandhi* (Dramatic Structure):

2.3.1. *Mukhasandhi*: The first act contains the planting of the seed and the beginning stage. Therefore, it is the *Mukhasandhi*.

2.3.2. *Pratimukhasandhi*: In the second act, the stage of effort begins. So, this act represents the *Pratimukhasandhi*.

2.3.3. *Garbhasandhi*: In the third and fourth acts, the sub-plot develops and the stage of hope appears. Therefore, these acts form the *Garbhasandhi*.

2.2.4. Avamarśasandhi: In the fifth and sixth acts, the certainty of success is achieved. Hence, these acts represent the *Avamarśasandhi*.

2.3.5. Nirvahaṇasandhi: In the seventh act, all the separate threads of the story come together and lead to the final conclusion. *Yaśovarma* arrives at the hermitage, *Lalitāditya* is present, and *Bhavabhūti* and *Śaśiprabhā* appear. Thus, the drama reaches its complete resolution. This is the *Nirvahaṇasandhi*.

3. Hero (Nāyaka):

The character who stands at the center of the story and keeps the whole drama moving is called the hero. From the beginning to the end of the play, he plays an active role in the development of events. He is not only the main character but also represents high ideals through his noble qualities. In Sanskrit dramaturgy, the hero has a special place. Bharata Muni describes four types of heroes, and *Dhanañjaya* also supports this view- *Bhedaiścaturdhā lalitaśāntodāttoddhatairayam*⁷.

Among these four types, the hero of *Premapīyūṣam* belongs to the *Dhīrodātta* type. According to *Dhanañjaya*, the qualities of a *Dhīrodātta* hero are—

*mahāsattvo'ṅgambhīraḥ kṣamāvānavikatthanah.
sthiro nigūḍhāhankāro dhīrodātto dr̥dhavrataḥ*⁸.

This means he is brave, serious, forgiving, not self-praising, steady-minded, inwardly dignified, and firm in his vows. The hero of this play is *Bhavabhūti*, a gifted poet honored with the title 'Kavirāja'. His poetic excellence is recognized by the king, who says—

*rājā - sukave! sādhuḡrathitam.
aparaṃ kimapi kāvyam̄ prastūyatām*⁹.

This clearly shows his literary talent and wisdom.

• **A Loving Hero:** In the second act, while watching the Madan festival, *Bhavabhūti* is charmed by the beauty of the royal garden. When he sees *Śaśiprabhā*, his heart fills with emotion. He expresses his feelings poetically—

*śucisubhagavimugdhairdṣṭipātairiyam̄ hi
dhalabalaharamyām̄ dugdhakulyām̄ kṣarantī.
mama hi vikalacittam̄ plāvayanī prakāmaṃ
ciranavalapavitrām̄ dhūrayantī tanuṃ ca*¹⁰.

Here he compares her pure glance to a stream of white milk that floods his heart with emotion.

• **Self-Respect and Firmness:** When King *Yaśovarma* insults him, *Bhavabhūti* leaves the city. This shows his strong sense of self-respect. Even after his marriage, in the seventh act, he refuses to live in the royal palace. Though the king requests him, he remains firm in his principles. This quality perfectly matches the *Dhīrodātta* type of hero.

• **Devotion to the Guru:** In the third act, *Bhavabhūti* meets his teacher *Jñānanidhi*. This meeting changes his life. He goes to the hermitage and serves his guru and the people. By the guru's command, he marries *Śaśiprabhā*

and later takes responsibility for the hermitage. This shows his humility and devotion.

4. Heroine (Nāyikā):

Śaśiprabhā is the central female character of the play. According to dramaturgy, heroines are of three types- *svānyā sādharmastrīti tadguṇā nāyikā tridhā*¹¹. The *Svakṛyā* heroine is again divided into three- *mugdhā madhyā pragalbheti svīyā ślārjavādiyuk*¹².

Śaśiprabhā represents the ideal *Svakṛyā* heroine. She is modest, faithful, and devoted to her husband.

• **Sensitive and Emotional:** When *Bhavabhūti* is insulted, she feels deep pain. She sends him a ring through her friend, showing her sincere love.

• **In Separation:** When *Bhavabhūti* leaves the city, she does not take part in the Madan festival. She suffers from separation. In the fifth act, when soldiers attack in the forest, she appears helpless and distressed.

• **Ideal Wife:** In the seventh act, her character shines brightly. When asked to live in the royal palace, she clearly says- *śaśiprabhā - tāta! yatrāryaputro vasati tatraiva mayāpi vāsaḥ kāryaḥ. na me rocate antaḡpur-asyāvarodhamayaṃ jīvanam. atra nissīmāmaracch-āyā-yāmunmuktāham vicarāmi. idṛśamānandaṃ tu na mayā kvacidatyupalabdam̄ jātu tatra.....*¹³

Here she declares that she wishes to live wherever her husband lives. She does not like the restricted life of the palace. This shows her loyalty and independent spirit.

5. Rasa (Emotions in the Play):

Ācārya Tripāṭhī has beautifully included *Śṛṅgāra* (love), *Karuṇa* (pathos), *Vīra* (heroism), *Raudra* (anger), and *Śānta* (peace) in this play. Among them, *Śṛṅgāra* Rasa is presented in a gentle and refined way.

• **Śṛṅgāra Rasa:**

• **Sambhoga:** In the seventh act, when *Bhavabhūti* and *Śaśiprabhā* unite, love reaches its full expression. *Bhavabhūti* praises her beauty—

*idaṃ lāvanyaṃ te sutanu kila saṃvīkṣya sahasā
bhaveyugrlānyā hi glapitavadanāścandravadanāḥ.
śarīraṃ saundaryaṃ ciranavamaho darśayati te.
tathāpyetaccitam̄ kusumamiva te sundarataram*¹⁴.

He appreciates not only her outer beauty but also her pure heart.

• **Vipralambha:** In the fifth act, after waking from a dream and not finding *Śaśiprabhā*, *Bhavabhūti* expresses his sorrow—

*unmattaḥ kathamatra bhrāntavikalah̄ tvaṃ varttase'harnīsam.
premanāṃ hr̄dayāgnīśāmakamah̄o prāptuṃ bhṛṣam̄ vyākulaḥ.
pīyūṣapratimo'tidurlabhatamo labhyaḥ katham̄ sa tvayā.
yasyekah̄ khalu binduratra subhagaiḥ puṇyairnaraiḥ prā-
pyate*¹⁵.

Here love is compared to nectar, rare and precious. The pain of separation deepens the feeling of love.

• **Karuṇa Rasa:** In the third act, *Bhavabhūti* expresses his sorrow before his guru—

*idaṃ śokāvegād dalaṭi mama cittaṃ vibhavato
vidhirmarmacchedī praharati nikāmaṃ pratipalam.
kva me citte vidyeta karuṇakarūṇe harṣa kiraṇaḥ
viṣādo yatrāndhaṃ tama iva parivyāpta irane*¹⁶.

His heart is filled with grief, creating a strong sense of pathos.

• **Vīra Rasa:** In the first act, while describing the bravery of *Śrī Rāma*, heroic emotion appears—

*dorlīlāñcitacandraśekharadhanurdaṇḍāvabhaṅgodyata-
ṣṭaṅkārādhvanirāryabālacaritaprastāvanā-ḍiṇḍimāḥ.
drākparyastakapālasamputamitabrahmaṇḍabhāṅḍodara-
bhrāmyanpiṇḍitacaṇḍimā kathamahō nādyāpi viśram-
yati*¹⁷.

The strong sound and powerful imagery express heroism clearly.

• **Śānta Rasa:** *Śānta* Rasa brings calmness beyond joy and sorrow. In the fourth act, *Priyamvadā* speaks of love as nectar—

*piba re! premapīyūṣam.
amalaṃ madhuraṃ puṇyam.
pīyūṣamidaṃ śāntipradam
dūrīkaroti duritaṃ duḥkham.
śamayati tvaritaṃ bhavasantāpam.
piba re.....
jīrṇāranye jagati sakhi!
śāntiṃ labdhuṃ yadyabhilaṣasi.
piba santāpānāṃ śamanaṃ sukhadam.
piba re.....*¹⁸

Love is described as pure nectar that removes sorrow and brings peace.

6. Metres and Figures of Speech:

Different metres are used beautifully in the play, such as *Anuṣṭup*, *Śārdūlavikrīḍita*, *Śikhariṇī*, and *Mālinī*.

• **Anuṣṭup-**

*kasmai na rocate nūnaṃ, ruciraṃ rasikāya hi.
prastutaṃ svādaviḥṅāya pīyūṣaṃ paramaṃ madhu*¹⁹.

• **Śārdūlavikrīḍita-**

*advaitaṃ sukhaduḥkḥayormadhurilaṃ cānandanīṣyandanam
puṇyaṃ yanmanaso rasāyanamahō santarpanaṃ śāntīdam.
tacedaṃ bhuvane'khile'pi vipule santaptaśamsāriṇāṃ
sarveṣāṃ hṛdayapradeśamabhitāḥ premāmṛtaṃ siñcatu*²⁰.

• **Mālinī-**

*śucisubhagavimugdhairdṛṣṭipātairiyaṃ hi
dhalabahalaramyāṃ dugdhakulyāṃ kṣarantī.
mama hi vikalacittaṃ plāvayanī prakāmaṃ
ciranavalapavitrāṃ dhārayantī tanuṃ ca*²¹.

Figures of speech like simile, metaphor, imagination, and alliteration are used naturally to enhance poetic beauty.

Conclusion:

From beginning to end, *Premapīyūṣam* follows classical dramatic rules in a successful modern way. The plot develops smoothly from the seed to the final result. The structure of acts and emotional progress is well organized. The hero and heroine are portrayed with both ideal qualities and human emotions, which makes the play touching and meaningful. The rich use of different rasas—especially love in both union and separation—along with pathos, heroism, and peace, makes the drama complete and emotionally powerful. The variety of metres and poetic devices increases its literary beauty. Overall, *Premapīyūṣam* presents love as nectar and gives a message of moral values, devotion, and inner peace. It stands as an important contribution to modern Sanskrit drama.

References:

- ¹ *Nāṭyaśāstra*, 1/116
- ² *Daśarūpaka*, 1/16
- ³ *Premapīyūṣam*, Act.7, P. 48
- ⁴ *Ibid*, P. 9
- ⁵ *Ibid*, P.30
- ⁶ *Ibid*, P.37
- ⁷ *Nāṭyaśāstra*, 34/17
- ⁸ *Daśarūpaka*, 2/5
- ⁹ *Premapīyūṣam*, Act.1, P. 8
- ¹⁰ *Ibid*, Act. 2, P.13
- ¹¹ *Daśarūpakam*, 2/24
- ¹² *Ibid*, 2/25
- ¹³ *Premapīyūṣam*, P. 46
- ¹⁴ *Ibid*, 7/2
- ¹⁵ *Ibid*, 5/1
- ¹⁶ *Ibid*, 3/5
- ¹⁷ *Ibid*, 1/6
- ¹⁸ *Ibid*, 4/1
- ¹⁹ *Ibid*, 1/1
- ²⁰ *Ibid*, 1/2
- ²¹ *Ibid*, 2/7