



## ‘Pratimanatakam’ Drama of Bhasa: An Evaluation

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### 1. Introduction

By the discovery of 13 drama of Bhasa about the year 1909 – 10, by the late shree Ganpati shastri of Trivendrum, it seemed that the lost treasure of the plays of the famous dramatist Bhasa was recovered and Bhasa ceased to be mere name. The dramas of these 13 plays:

1. Madhymvyayog,
2. Panchratra,
3. Dutvakya.
4. Dutghatokach,
5. Karnbhar,
6. Urubhang: These six dramas are based on Mahabharata.
7. Pratma
8. Abhishek: These two dramas are based on Ramayana.
9. Balcharit drama is based on Harivanmsha
10. Pratignayaugandharayan and
11. Swapnavasavdatta are on the stories of vatsaraja and vasvadatta, which were current in the time of Bhasa.

The sources of,

12. Avimarak and

13. Charudatta cannot be definitely traced. Most of scholars agree that all the thirteen plays are written by Bhasa.

### 2. An Evaluation of Pratimanatkam’

#### A. Title the Drama of Bhasa ‘Pratimanatam’

The name of the play is Pratimanatakam or Pratima, it is so named from the incident that bharata came to know quite unexpectedly about the death of his father on seeing his statue (pratima) in the statue-house, as mentioned in the third Act. The news of his father’s death and its cause filled him with grief and agree against his mother and he resolved to go to the forest directly from the statue-house.

#### B. The Main Historical Matter of the play ‘Pratimanatam’

The ‘Pratimanatakam’ drama is based on the principal incidents o Rama’s life as told in the Ayodhyakand and the Ramayana, with the additional incident of his return to Ayodhya after Sita’s resoue and his coronation as the king of the earth.

Bhasa has also introduced several innovations of his own in the development of the plot. It is thus a play based partly on historical matter and partly on the poet’s creative faculty. It is named ‘Pratma’ owing to the statue house and being informed of his father’s death and the exile of his brother Rama with Sita and Lashmana, he made up his mind straight to go to the forest where his brother was, rejecting the proposal of his coronation made by vasishtha and vamadeva and the citizens. It thus helps the development of the plot in some way.

Bhasa, however, is not very happy in inventing this scene for Bharata on reaching the edifice does not know what house it was, whether it was a temple of some deity. On entering it Bharata comes to know that it is the house containing the statues of the kings of the Ikshvaku race.

### C. Acts of the Drama of Bhasa 'Pratimanatam'

The Drama of Bhasa 'Pratimanatam' has total VII Acts.

**Act: I:** The action of the play covers a period 14 years. The time of action of the first Act is the morning of the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the bright half of the month of Chaitra on which the coronation of Rama, was to take place as is clear from words of Vashistha.

**Act: II:** An interval of days separates the second Act from the first Act, the action of which begins on the six<sup>th</sup> day. Bharata, states that Dashrath died at about the hour of midnight on the 6<sup>th</sup> day from the departure of Rama to the forest.

**Act: III:** The events of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Act begin about 15 days after those of the second. Bharata returned to Ayodhya after his father's death on the 1<sup>st</sup> or the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the bright half of Vaishakha - the day on which the constellation krutika was to end and Rohini to act in. It was about noon when Bharata arrived at the statue-house.

**Act: IV:** An interval of about two days must have passed between the events of the third and those of the fourth Act. Bharata declares his intention at the close of the 4<sup>th</sup> Act. Act to start see Rama without entering Ayodhya. Rama was residing at that time on the Chitrakuta mountain and the journey to it from Ayodhya required about two days. Bharata therefore must have reached Rama's penance-grove after a couple of days from the day he started for it. So, the events of the 4<sup>th</sup> Act take place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the bright half of Vaishakha.

**Act: V:** A period of about thirteen days must be allowed to pass between the events of the previous Act. Bharata while Rama is sitting with Sita in the beginning of this Act discussing the question about the way in which to perform the annual shraddha of his father falling on the next day. The events of this Act therefore take place on this day.

**Act: VI:** The Vishkambhak of the sixth Act follows close upon the kidnapping of Sita by Ravana. The events of the main Act, however, take place four months after those of the preceding Act. Sita was carried away by Ravana on the 8<sup>th</sup> of the dark half of Magha or Ashvina. A period of about four months, therefore, intervenes between the two Acts.

**Act: VII:** The seventh Act describes the return of Rama to Ayodhya. As Bharata had desired Rama to come immediately after the completion of the 14<sup>th</sup> year of his exile, he came to the hermitage of Bharadwaja on the fifth day of the dark half of Chaitra. So, there is an interval of about nine months between the sixth and the seven Acts.

### 3. Principal Characters of the Play 'Pratimanatam'

There are total five main characters of the play 'Pratimanatam' like: Rama, Sita, Bharata, Lashmana and Kaikeyi.

**Rama:** The character of Rama is the hero of the play 'Pratimanatam.' When he sees Sita clad in bark-garments, he expresses his desire to put on one of the bark-garments himself. This detracts from his dignity as the hero of the play. Again, he refuses to see his father before he departs for the forest, delivering himself of a sentiment which does not do credit to his filial piety. But some of Rama's noble qualities are well depicted by Bhasa. When his coronation was suddenly stopped Rama remained as calm and composed as ever. Not only that, but he felt relieved as though a heavy burden was lifted off his mind. Rama cheerfully puts on bark-garments and says that by means of them he will acquire such religious merit as was never attained by other kings. Rama's readiness to obey his father, his self-abnegation, his magnanimity and love for his brothers are well depicted in the drama 'Pratimanatam.'

**Sita:** Bhasa is more successful in depicting the character of Sita. Her simplicity, the sweetness of her disposition, her devotion to her husband, her deep reverence for her father-in-law, her cheerful submission to her lot, are delineated with skillful touches. Sita is a pure, holy and devoted wife of

Rama. In whatever Sita says or does she exhibit those tender, beautiful and noble qualities, which are the glory of womanhood.

**Bharata:** The character of Bharata is undoubtedly drawn with great skill by Bhasa in the play 'Pratimanatakcm.' Matchless are his love, reverence and loyalty towards his brother Rama. Bharata refuses to be crowned and at once starts for the forest where Rama has gone to dwell. He could not stay in of Ayodhya. Without Rama was no Ayodhya at all. Bharata is determined to dwell in the forest with Rama and serve him Bharata takes the sandals of Rama in order that he may be their representative till Rama has fulfilled his vow. Bharat's self-sacrifice and his touching devotion to his brother are depicted with delicate skill by the dramatist.

**Lakshmana:** Lakshmana's character is also very well in the drama. When Rama puts on bark-garments in order to be ready to go to the forest, Lakshmana begs of him to let him wear bark-garments so that he may accompany him to the forest. Lakshmana's touching appeal produces its desired effect and he accompanies Rama and Sita and lives with them in the forest. Lakshmana is as steadfast as he is joyful in serving his brother Rama.

**Kaikeyi:** in painting the character of Kaikeyi, Bhasa has deviated from the original as it is depicted in the Ramayana. Bhasa represents her as acting from pure motives in sending Rama into exile for fourteen years. Bhasa wants to show that Kaikeyi was not after all a wicked, selfish, woman, but Bhasa defense kaikeyi's conduct though ingenious is weak.

#### 4. Conclusion

The lost treasure of thirteen plays of the famous dramatist Bhasa was recovered and Bhasa ceased to be mere name. The name of the play is Pratimanatakcm or Pratima, it is so named from the incident that Bharata came to know quite unexpectedly about the death of his father on seeing his statue (pratima) in the statue-house, as mentioned in the third Act. The 'Pratimanatakcm' drama is based on the principal incidents of Rama's life as told in the Ayodhyakand and the Ramayana, with the additional incident of his return to Ayodhya after Sita's rescue and his coronation as the king of the earth. The Drama of Bhasa 'Pratimanatakcm' has total VII Acts. There are total five main characters of the play 'Pratimanatakcm' like: Rama, Sita, Bharata, Lakshmana and Kaikeyi. The character of Rama is the hero of the play 'Pratimanatakcm.' When he sees Sita clad in bark-garments, he expresses his desire to pat on one of the bark-garments himself. This detracts from his dignity as the hero of the play. Rama's readiness to obey his father, his self-abnegation, his magnanimity and love for his brothers are well depicted in the drama 'Pratimanatakcm.' Bhasa is more successful in depicting the character of Sita. Sita is a pure, holy and devoted wife of Rama. In whatever Sita says or does she exhibit those tender, beautiful and noble qualities, which are the glory of womanhood. The character of Bharata is undoubtedly drawn with great skill by Bhasa in the play 'Pratimanatakcm.' Matchless are his love, reverence and loyalty towards his brother Rama. Bharata refuses to be crowned and at once starts for the forest where Rama has gone to dwell. He could not stay in of Ayodhya. Without Rama was no Ayodhya at all. Lakshmana's character is also very well in the drama. When Rama puts on bark-garments in order to be ready to go to the forest. Lakshmana is as steadfast as he is joyful in serving his brother Rama. In painting the character of Kaikeyi, Bhasa has deviated from the original as it is depicted in the Ramayana. Bhasa represents her as acting from pure motives in sending Rama into exile for fourteen years.

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