

**THE PHILOSOPHY OF AESTHETIC
EXPERIENCE WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO ABHINAVAGUPTA
- *A Critical Study***

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Arts)
of the University of North Bengal,
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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that the thesis entitled 'The Philosophy of Aesthetic Experience with special reference to Abhinavagupta : A Critical Study' prepared by Ashis Tarafder for the Ph.D.degree of the University of North Bengal, is the result of his intensive study on Indian Poetics in general and Abhinavagupta in particular. The thesis contains some originality in approach as Sri Tarafder deals with some philosophical problems in this field. Hence, I recommend its submission for the Ph.D.degree. So far as I know, Sri Tarafder in habit and character is a fit and worthy person for the Ph.D.degree.

Raghunath Ghosh
05.03.99

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DEDICATED TO MY YOUNGER BROTHER,
LATE ASHIM TARAFDER

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University of North Bengal.

15th March, 1999

Asbis Tarafder
(Asbis Tarafder)

INTRODUCTION

The present project is a humble attempt to give an analysis of the philosophy of Aesthetic experience with special reference to Abhinavagupta. There is controversy regarding the question whether aesthetic experience depends on subjective attitudes or objective factors? In this connection this problem is discussed and an effort has been made to give an emphasis on the subjective attitude though the importance of objective elements is not totally denied. In this respect we consider views of Abhinavagupta and also some western philosophers' views viz. Kant, Bullough and Stolnitz. All of them believe in the theory of aesthetic attitude. Where subjectivity is the main factor for aesthetic enjoyment. In Abhinavagupta we find both subjective and objective element though much importance is laid on the subjectivity. When we talk about *sahṛdayatva*, *rasāvesatva*, we admit the subjectivity of aesthetic experience but at the same time the role of *Dhvani* which is described as the soul of poetry cannot be neglected. While considering Abhinavagupta's view a few philosophical problems which are not clearly raised so far come to the way of understanding his philosophy. The answer of the problems are found within the system. Hence, it is an endeavour to suggest the solutions of the problems concerning aesthetic experience in the light of Abhinavagupta's philosophy.

The project begins with a brief history of Indian poetics which is parallel to the history of Indian aesthetics to highlight the historical situation under which Abhinavagupta appeared. Here we consider the views of Bharata expressed in his *Nāṭya-sāstra* where we find his famous *rasa-sūtra*. Here we deal with the views of Bhāmaha, Kuntaka, Daṇḍin etc.

Second chapter is concentrated on explaining some key terms which are necessary for the understanding Abhinavagupta's concept of *rasa*. This chapter deals with *rasa* in details. Some western philosophers' views have been taken into consideration in this context. Kant's concept of "disinterestedness", Bullough's concept of "Psychical distance' etc. are also discussed in details.

That language serves as a means to aesthetic experience or is invariable for attaining aesthetic experience is focussed in chapter III. Here a distinction is made between poetic language and ordinary language.

In the concluding chapter an effort has been made to throw some light on some important philosophical problems and their probable solutions following the line of thinking of Abhinavagupta.

CHAPTER-I

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIAN AESTHETICS

At the very outset it is relevant to give a brief history of Indian aesthetics, which is almost parallel to the history of Indian poetics, in order to locate the place of Abhinavagupta in the historical development of Indian aesthetics.

In India, the study of aesthetics which was in the beginning restricted to the study of *Nāṭya*(drama) - draws into origin from motives of a purely empirical order but not from any obstruct or disinterested desire for knowledge. The earliest text in this subject which has come down to us is the Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*. Indian aestheticians are not certain about the time of this work. "Macdouells assigns it to the 6th century A.D. and M.M.Haraprasād Sāstri to the 2nd century B.C. and Le'vi to the Ksatrapa period. The fact that Kalidasa in his *Vikramorvasi* refers to the Bharata as a Muni, only shows that he was much earlier than Kālidāsa. This would place the lower limit of Bharata to the 3rd or 4th century B.C. From the reference in Kālidāsa we are compelled to say that Dr. De's view that the lower limit of Bharata in the 8th century A.D., seems quite untenable. In any case, there is but little evidence that the present

Nāṭya-Śāstra was written earlier than the commencement of Christian era.”¹

Nāṭya-Śāstra is an elaborate work conveying the whole ground concerned with drama. It deals with the theatre, the religious rites to be performed in every representation, the dress and equipments of actors, dance, the music, movements and gestures of actors, the different classes of drama. *Nāṭya-Śāstra* is the first work where we find discussions about the nature of ‘*rasa*’ in an elaborate way and it also enumerates eight sentiments.

Bharata’s *Nāṭya-Śāstra* is a work of deep psychological insight. Drama is a powerful medium of aesthetic pleasure as it appeals to the sight and hearing at the same time and is then considers the highest form of art. Both sight and hearing collaborate in arousing in the viewer, more forcibly and more easily than any other medium of aesthetic pleasure or any other forms of art, a state of consciousness unique, conceived intuitively and concretely as a juice or flavour, called ‘*rasa*’.

The primary aim of *Nāṭya-Śāstra* is to give the necessary direction to actors so as to enable them creditably admit themselves in acting out their arts and also it aims at giving necessary direction to the dramatists, who are possessed of the power of poetic vision, to enable them to write dramas which are more attractive to the viewers. It also aims at helping

the aesthete who is eager to enjoy the beautiful and is afraid of the study of *Vedas* and the *Purānas*. It shows the ways to the realisation of the main objective of human life, by supplying the technique of the production of drama, from which he can learn the said ways automatically while enjoying the dramatic performance.

The Primary aim of dramatic presentation is to generate aesthetic pleasure in the audience. But the aesthetic pleasure is the realisation of the basic emotion, affecting a soul that is completely universalised. The de-individualisation or universalisation is a slow process, it presupposes self-forgetfulness which is brought about by the music in the preliminary scene of the drama; identification with the hero; assumption of another personality, viewing everything through the eyes of the hero; being in touch with the entire situation and getting emotionally affected as in the hero, forgetting the assumed personality. Thus, aesthetic experience in the experience of the completely deindividualised or universalised self, having no other affection than that of the universalised basic emotion, which is described by Abhinavagupta as *Sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*.

Regarding creating of art we can say that it is not the work of an amateur but of an expert, of one who has mastered all knowledge and understood the mystery and meaning of life. He is called *Kavi* because he can see behind and beyond the sensible world.

Nāṭya which is produced by a *Nāṭyakār* will prove a source of singular delight to one and all. Various questions were put forward by the pupils of Bharata to him. Following are the questions raised by them. (1) what were the circumstances, which lead to the creation of fifth *Veda*; and for whom it was created ? (2) Into how many parts is the *Nāṭya-Veda* divided ? Are there so many parts that it can not be fully grasped ? (3) What are the various arts necessary for the presentation of drama ? Of how many parts is drama made ? Is it an organic whole or merely a jumble ? (4) What are the various way of knowing the different parts of drama ? And if drama is an organic whole and not a mere jumble, is there any special means of knowing (*Baṛṇanā*) the interconnection of parts ? And if so what is it ? Because if the existence of any knowable entity (*Prameya*) presupposes some means of knowing (*Pramāna*). (5) How are the different parts of drama to be presented ?

Above are allied questions Bharata attempts in his *Nāṭya-śāstra*. The answer to the 1st question may be put forward in the following ways:

The circumstances, which led to the creation of dramaturgy, were the products of time. During *Tretā-Yuga* ; when *Vaivaśvata Manvantara* was running, the I headed by Indra, approached Brahmā with a request to create a play-thing, which may be pleasing to both eye and ear and lead people automatically to follow the path of duty, without the need of any

external compulsion, such as the order of king. The reason why there arose the necessity of such a plaything in the *Tretā-Yuga* was domineered by *rajas*, the quality of action prompted by desires and emotions, and therefore the common experience in the mixture of pleasure and pain, during the *Yuga*. The need for the plaything arises only among those, whose experience is a mixture of pleasure and pain, the latter being proportionally more than the former. For, plaything is for diversion and it is the means to divert the mind only from what is painful.

Such a division was necessary for humanity. For humanity, being under the influence of *Rajas* was deviating from the right path, pointed out by the vedas and was ignoring the rites due to *gods*. They, therefore, felt the necessity of bringing humanity to the right path. This could not be achieved through vedic instruction because the *śūdras* were not permitted to study the *Vedas*. The I, therefore, wanted an instrument of instruction such as could be utilised for instructing all, irrespective of caste and such would be different in form from that of categorical imperative, would not be a mere command, which is unpleasand ~~and~~ to hear and equally unpleasand to carry out, but same thing may be delightfully instructed through the medium of *Nāṭya* where the teachings may be presented by pleasant sight and sounds. It can appeal to all sections of society in a simple way. This may be compared with the situation that a bitter medicine may be taken with sweet milk.

So, these thinkings lead to the creation of fifth Veda by Brahmā at the request of gods. It was created for those, who do not readily follow the path, pointed out by the *Vedas*, or the *Śūdras*, who were debarred from reading and hearing vedas.

The reply to the second question is that, primarily there are four parts of *Nāṭya-Veda*. These parts dealing with the following topics : (1) Art of effective speech or recitation (*Vāchikābhinaya*), (2) Art of music, (3) Art of acting and (4) *Rasas*. And reply to the third question is that drama, with the science or theory of which the *Nāṭya-veda* is concerned, primarily presents *Rasa*, and the three arts are the means of its effective presentation. Thus, it is an organic whole.

The reply to the fourth question is that it is apprehended directly through eyes and ears. And reply to the 5th question cover the entire *nāṭya-śāstra*.² Through the reply of the above five questions various problems raised in aesthetics are partly solved. We find the solution of the problem of aesthetic senses. What are the aesthetic senses? Bharata's answer is that they are two viz. eyes and ears. For him end of dramatic art is instruction, not directly, but indirectly through presentation of what is pleasing to eyes and ears.

Another important problem is that, what is the end of dramatic art? And the reply is that end of dramatic art is instruction, not directly, but rather indirectly through the presentation of what is pleasing to eyes and ears. It does not directly command, but it makes the viewer experience the goodness of various path, through the identification with the focus of the dramatic situation.

Bharata holds the view that drama is simply a play or play-thing, which can be able to divert the mind of the viewer from situations or factors which worries or troubles him.

Bharata also mentions that the most essential subjective condition for aesthetic experience is that the mind of the viewer should not be occupied with excessive personal pleasure or pain.

In Bharata's *Nāṭya-Śāstra* there are four main topics viz. acting, dance, music and *rasa*. The first three topics are the primary or secondary means of presentation of *rasa*. All topics of his book have a direct or indirect bearing on *rasa*. "Most of the things that Bharata talks of, are only the means of presenting *rasa*. *Rasa*, therefore, being the final end of all that he talks about, is the most important thing from his point of view."³

Rasa is essentially a product of dramatic art and is not to be found in the creations of nature. It is not pure unity, but unity in multiplicity.

Bharata has laid much importance on ten *guṇas* and *rūpaka*, *upamā*, *dīpaka*, *gamaka* these four *alaṃkāras*. *Nāṭya-śāstra* also mentions those *dosas* which are to be avoided in the poetic creation or *Kāvya-racanā*. Many *alaṃkāra śāstra* writers, like Harsa, Utvata, Sankuka, Matrigupta, Bhattanayaka etc., has written commentaries on *Nāṭya-śāstra*.

How *Kāvya* be made excellent ? and which special element makes a *Kāvya* which is adorned with aesthetic beauty? Aestheticians of different periods had reacted differently regarding these questions. As a result of this difference various schools of aesthetics have been emerged. Among these schools the following four are major :

- i. *Alaṃkāra* (figure)
- ii. *Rīti* (style)
- iii. *Rasa* (aesthetic pleasure)
- iv. *Dhvani* (suggestion)

Four more schools should also be mentioned in this regard viz.

- (i) *Vaṅkrokti* (ii) *Guṇa* (iii) *Anumāna* and (iv) *Aucitya*.

Alaṃkāra School : According to this school, *alaṃkāra* is the originator of *Kāvya-mādhurya*. Though *rasa* takes an important place yet it is secondary *Alaṃkāra* is of two types , viz. *Sabdālaṃkāra* and *arthālaṃkāra*.

Viśvanātha the author of *Sāhityadarpaṇa* is the chief founder of *alaṃkāra* school. For him poetry consists of a sentence full of *rasa* or aesthetic sentiment. *Rasa* which is the soul of poetry is manifested primarily through *alaṃkāra*. He flourished in the first half of the fourteenth century A.D.

Bhāmaha is famous among ancient *alaṃkārikas*, he belongs to the seventh century A.D. His *Kāvyaṃkāra*, which is divided into six sections is the earliest work on *alaṃkāra* that has come down to us. The book contains 398 verses.

First chapter of the book which contains sixty verses deals with the qualities of *Kāvya* as prose and poetry, and as work in Sanskrit prose of *apabhraṃsa*, as epic poetry, drama, *ākhyāyikā* and *anubandha*, and also treats of the some literary defects. In the second chapter he deals with three *guṇas*, viz. *Mādhurya*, *Prasāda* and *Ojas*, and takes up the subject of *alaṃkāra* which he continues through the third chapter, the *alaṃkāras* of which he speaks are to kinds of *anuprāsa*, five kinds of *gamaka*, *rūpaka*, *dīpaka*, *upamā* with its seven defects. He denies the status of *Hetu*, *Suksma*, *Leśa* and *Vartta* as they contain no *vakrokti*. These were counted as *alaṃkāra* by some of the predecessors of *Bhāmaha*. In the fourth chapter, he deals with eleven kinds of defects of *Kāvya* and defines and illustrates them.

In the fifth chapter he deals with logic and treats of the defects of *Kāvya* as arising from logical hiatus. In the 6th chapter he gives some practical hints to poets for observing grammatical purity, as Bhāmaha also did.⁴

Being separated from Bhāmaha and Udbhata, Rudrata has discussed on *alaṃkāra*. He is the writer of a famous work *Kāvyaalaṃkāra*, which contains 16 sections and 734 *kārikās*, and comprehends almost all the topics of poetics.⁵

Bhāmaha's conception of poetry is subsequently the same as that of Daṇḍin though it is formulated in a little different way. According to Bhāmaha words and meanings together form the body of poetry. But this definition seems to be too wide as the definition can equally be applied to all linguistic productions. He, therefore, after enumerating the various kinds of poetic production, maintains that the mode of presentation of ideas in words, which gives aesthetic pleasure to those who are possessed of aesthetic susceptibility. It is technically called *vakrokti*, which is considered as the essential element of poetry. For him a poetic composition which is without *vakrokti* is not poetry, though there is the presence of good style and it also possesses qualities like sweetness, clearness etc. "Thus, according to Bhāmaha embellishment (*alaṃkāra*) is

the most essential element of poetry and it consists in the striking manner of putting a striking idea in equally striking words.⁶

According to him, *vakrokti* is the chief characteristics of poetry. Poetic qualities, which are only three viz. *Mādhurya*, *Ojas* and *Prasāda*, are not essential in the poetic production.

Daṇḍin who is the founder of *Rītivādi* school is regarded as the author of the books *Kāvyaḍarsa* and *Dasakumāra – Carita*. His *Kavyāḍarsa* is a famous book on *alaṃkāra śāstra* having three different sections. First section deals with the definition and division of *Kāvya* and two margas viz. *Vaidharbha* and *Gauḍa*; and ten *guṇas* viz. (I) *Śleṣa* (ii) *Prasāda* (iii) *Samatā* (iv) *Mādhurya* or elegance, (v) *Sukumārata* (6) *Artha-Vyakti* (vii) *Udāratā* (viii) *Ojas* (ix) *Kānti*, and (x) *Samādhī*.⁷

This section also deals with other sections that are essential requirements of a good poet. His second section deals with the definition of *alaṃkāra*, enumeration and description of 35 *arthālaṃkāras* including *sabdālaṃkāras*. His work defines the body of *Kāvya* as number of works conveying the internal sense. “*Śarāīam tāvadiṣṭārthavyavae chinnā padāvalī*”. The soul of *Kāvya* composed in the *vaidharbha* style, is stated to be the ten *guṇas*. Daṇḍin himself has followed *vaidharbha rīti*.

Daṇḍin has mentioned in his *Kāvyaḍarsa* that *guṇa* forms the essence of poetry but nowhere he mentions that every specific

alaṃkāra is a *guṇa*. "His general definition of poetry, or rather its body or framework, as *iṣṭārtha-vyavacchinnā padāvali* - a series of words characterized by an agreeable sense or idea naturally leads him to consider, first of all, the question of appropriate expression of appropriate ideas or in other words, to discuss the suitable arrangement of sound and sense for the purpose of producing poetic effect which is technically denoted by the term *mārga* or *rīti*."⁸

Not only Daṇḍin but also a large number of writers on poetics holding that beauty in *Kāvya* lies in charmingness of expression, so far as it is compatible with compactness of form and intelligibility. This tenor of literary appraisal could well take its rise in and suit an analytic language like Sanskrit, where an inherent favouritism for compounds has had to fight a tough fight with a desire for disintegration in expression through the use of word-units – a desire that became growingly manifest in particular periods and localities along with the rise of *Prākṛita* literature, which swept the bounds of stiffness and elocution and loosened, softened, and sweetened the language.

The '*Gouḍa*' consists in compactness of structure as evidence by long compounds in the use of rather unfamiliar, often harsh words, brilliance through richness of words novel and charming expression as well as the prominence of *Rasas*.

Daṇḍin also from the rhetorical point of view, seems to hold an identical position with reference to the topic of *Rasas*. He also tries to incorporate *rasa*, *bhāva*, etc. under such figure as *rasavat*, *preyas* etc.

If we compare Daṇḍin with Bhāmaha then we find that Daṇḍin seems to have give more importance to *rasa*. This is seen in his treatment of the figures such as *rasavat*, *preyas*, etc.

While describing the characteristics of a *mahākāvya* Daṇḍin, like Bhāmaha, mentions that a *mahākāvya* should be full of *rasa* and *bhāvas* and should also have well defined *sandhis*.

“Although Daṇḍin would employ the term *alaṃkāra* as the essential poetic attribute of *śabda* and *artha* and the beautifying principle of poetic expression, he would not take the individual *alaṃkāras* as the soul or essential means of the beautifying principle. He elaborates a theory of two modes (*mārg*) or kinds of poetic diction, which he calls *vaidarbha* and *Gauḍa*, and find the so-called excellence (*guṇa* like sweetness or lucidity) from their essence. Daṇḍin, therefore, employs the generic term *alaṃkāra*, meaning poetic embellishment, to designate both the *guṇas*, on the one hand, and the specific *alaṃkāras* (poetic figures), on the other.”⁹

Chronologically Vāmana comes after Daṇḍin. Vāmana's work is more systematic than Daṇḍin. So Vāmana may be regarded as the best

representative of the *rīti* system. He is the first writer who gave us a well thought out and carefully outlined scheme of poetics. His conception of poetry is a great advance on Bhāmaha. He is the first aesthetician in the history of sanskrit poetics who talks about the soul of poetry as distinct from the body. Regarding the conception of the body of poetry his view is like that of Bhāmaha. But in presenting *rīti* a soul of poetry he maintains not only *vakrokti* but reason also to be an essential element of poetry.

Rīti according to him is a particular style or mode of linguistic possession of the following qualities or distinctive features which are technically called *guṇas* like *ojas*, *prāsāda* etc.

These qualities are common to both the word and the meaning (*sabda* and *artha*). According to him, the poetry which possess all these qualities is called first rate poetry. As he laid much importance to all the ten *guṇas*, he may be regarded as the follower of *vaidharbhi* style. He rejects other two styles i.e. *Gouḍa* and *Pāncāli*.

'*Rīti*' which, according to him, is the soul of poetry. He clearly states, '*Rītiātmā Kāvyaśya*', the '*Rīti*' is the soul of poetry.¹⁰ He defines *rīti* as '*viśiṣṭapada-racanā*' or particular arrangement of words. The particularity (*vaiśiṣṭya*) of arrangement, again rests upon certain definite combinations of the different *guṇas* or some beautiful composition.¹¹

After considering *guṇas* Vāmana deals with poetic figures or *alaṃkāra* as elements of subsidiary importance. So a clear differentiation of *alaṃkāra* from *guṇa* we find for the first time in Vāmana's writings. At the outset Vāmana states, no doubt, that poetry is admissible as such if it associated with embellishment (*alaṃkāra*) ; but he is careful to explain embellishment, not in the narrow sense of poetic figure, but is the broad and primary sense of beauty or charm. (*Kāvyaṃ grāhyam alaṃkārat saundaryam alaṃkāraḥ*). Anything which creates beauty may be taken as *alaṃkāra*. He also points out the term *alaṃkāra* or embellishment is applied to simple and other poetic figures in the secondary sense.

"The *guṇas* being essential to the *Riti*, are defined as those characteristics which create the charm of poetry (*kāvya-śobhāyāḥ kartāro dharmāḥ*) – a function which is assigned to both *Guṇas* and *Alaṃkāras* by Daṇḍin – but *Alaṃkāras* are such ornaments as served to enhance the charm already so produced (*tad-atisaya-hetavaḥ*). The *Guṇas* are said to be *nitya* (permanent), implying that the *Alaṃkāras* are *anitya* (*punar alaṃkāra anitya iti gamyate eva*) for there can be charm of poetry without the *Alaṃkāras* but no charm without the *Guṇas* (*tairvinā kāvya-śobhānupapatteḥ*). In other words, the *guṇa* stands to poetry in the *samavāya-relation*, while the *Alaṃkāra* in *saṃyoga-relation*, *saṃyoga* being explained as mere conjunction and *samavāya* implying inseparable connexion or inherence."¹²

Dhvani School is headed by Ānandavardhana (9th century) and Abhinavagupta. *Dhvani* is represented for us by the metrical *kārikās* preserved in the *Dhvanyāloka* of Ānandavardhana of Kāshmir with its super-commentary by Abhinavagupta, *Locan*.¹³

The theory of *Dhvani* finds its origin in the analysis of language and meaning word expresses meaning. The power of expressing meaning is of three types-(1) *Abhidhā* (primary meaning, (ii) *Lakṣaṇā* (secondary meaning), (iii) *Vyañjanā* (suggested meaning). The primary meaning is expressed through *abhidhāśakti*, the secondary meaning is expressed through *Lakṣaṇā* e.g. the phrase, a milkman's colony on the Ganges, is obviously not meaningful as it looks absurd; when the denotation (*abhidhā*) gives no sense, we oblige to find a transferred sense (*Lakṣaṇā*) which gives us the sense of a colony on the bank of the Ganges. This shows the incompatibility of the literal sense as one factor, and possibility of giving an implicative meaning as another.

When anyone utters any word then it evokes a meaning through its *abhidhāśakti* and at the same time it also evokes a different meaning. At that time, we accept the power of suggested meaning. The name of this power is '*Dhvani*'. According to the *Dhvani* school, *dhvani* is the soul of poetry. The school has divided *kāvya* into three kinds considering how much importance is given to *dhvani*. These three types of *kāvya* are (I)

Dhvani-kāvya (ii) *Guṇibhuta kāvya* and (iii) *Citra kāvya*. In *dhvanikāvya* *dhvani* is primary, in *guṇibhuta kāvya* *dhvani* is secondary and in *citra kāvya* *dhvani* is totally absent.

Abhinavagupta, a believer of Kāshmiri Saivism, unified the scattered voices of earlier aesthetic philosophers into a meaningful synthesis, embracing philosophical speculation and mysticism as well as aesthetics. Before entering about the discussion about Abhinavagupta's philosophy of aesthetic experience in details it is necessary to go back to the famous Ānandavardhana. Ānandavardhana had arrived at certain conclusions which were accepted by later rhetoricians though some rare exceptions are also there. In his *Dhvanyāloka* he has given more importance to those words which are not merely symbols denoting some fact but bearing some power to evoke aesthetic emotion. In these words there is not the outward formal construction that leads to beauty, but there is an inexpressible quality in it which can suggest something else. The inexplicable suggestive quality is called *Dhvani* which can not be analysed scientifically nor can it be explained in psychological term. Regarding poetic meaning he says that given meaning is not understood by those who have an insight into the true essence of poetry. The rare word and the meaning expressed through it must be studied carefully by those who wish to become true poets. Just as a man interested in perceiving objects (in the dark) directs his efforts towards securing the

flame of lamp since this is a means to realise his end, so also does one who is ultimately interested in the poetic meaning first evince interest in the conventional meaning . Just as the purport of the sentence is grasped only through the sense of individual words, the knowledge of poetic sense is attained only through the medium of the literal sense. Though by its own power the word-import conveys the sentence import, just as it escapes notice once its purpose is served, so also does that poetic meaning revealed suddenly in the truth-perceiving minds of cultured *critics*, when they are indifferent towards the conventional meaning. To conclude, the connoisseurs give the name of “resonance” (*Dhvani*) to the particular sort of poetry in which both conventional meaning and conventional words are subordinate.¹⁴

A truly poetic word or expression is that which cannot be replaced by other words, without losing its value. Poetry knows no synonyms.

Ānandabardhana further says that just as the loveliness of women is something over and above their limbs so in the words of the great poets we find an exquisite charm which is over and above the words and their meanings. *Lāvanyamiva anganāsu*, and this is *dhvani*. The *rasa* is also communicated by *dhvani*.

Let us take an example ;

Holy father, go thou fearless thine way,
 The dog that barked at thee lies dead
 quite near the bay Manled by the lion
 that on the banks of the Godā does
 rove
 And loves to loiter in that shady
 grove.¹⁵

A lady had a place of meeting with his beloved in a particular garden which is full of flowers, but a religious man used to disturb the solitude of the place and takes the beautiful flowers from the place. The lady in order to frightened the holy man started a cock-and-bull story that a lion was seen in that particular place and it had killed a dog. But the lady addressed the holy man in quite different manner. Her idea comes to this : A lion is loitering about in the garden and you may now walk about the place just as you please. Her words are, "go though fearless thine way". The meaning of this expression is that a man may walk as he pleases. The primary meaning has not been barred by the context and therefore there cannot be any indicatory meaning (*Lakṣaṇā*) by the extension of the primary. Yet we understand from the sentence very clearly that the holy man had been very politely warned. This significant

suggestion comes only by the implication of *dhvani*, for this meaning is completely different from the primary meaning.

Abhinavagupta has accepted the *dhvani* theory of Ānandavardhana and his fundamental work *Locana*, a commentary on *Dhvanyāloka*. For his *rasa* is manifested through *dhvani* which also serves the medium of communication between the creator, appreciator and performer. Among these three, there must be *sahṛdayatva* which is the key concept in Abhinavagupta's philosophy, which will be elaborated later on. His contribution to the theory of *dhvani* consists in offering psycho-physical explanation.

One may ask the question what *dhvani* is? It reply it can be said that it is an exclusively poetic feature concerned with exploiting the beauty of every element in the medium of language like *alaṅkāra*, *guṇa*, *rīti*, serve the ultimate artistic end of *rasa*. *Dhvani* is that meaning of poetry which is appreciated by the *critic* as most beautiful, knowingly or unknowingly.

Apart from the above discussed schools there is a school which propogates *vakrokti* as an essential characteristics of poetry. Kuntaka, the founder of this school, opines that charming mode of expression or *vakrokti* is the essence of poetry in his *Vakroktijīvitā*. For the *vakrokti*, is taken as *vicitra-abhidhā* so that the *vakratva* or *vakra-bhāva* underlying it

becomes synonymous with *Vaicitrya* or *vicitra-bhāva*. Indeed Kuntaka does not appear to make any distinction between them but uses them as interchangeable terms. The *vakratva* or *vaicitra* consists of a strikingness of expression which is different from the established or current mode of, speech, such as we find in the *sūtras* and the like. It is thus a division from the matter of fact, manner of treatment established in the sciences and the scripture; or more widely, for established uses in general.¹⁶

Kuntaka holds the view that *vakrokti* constitutes the only possible embellishment or *alaṃkāra* of poetry. His position appears to be that embellished word and sense constitute poetry, and it is not proper to say that *alaṃkāra* belong to *kāvya*, for this statement would suggest that *kāvya* may exist without them. Indeed, *vakrokti* as a mode of expression being essential in poetry, it underlies and forms the substance of all poetic figures so called. In a sense, therefore, Kuntaka (like Daṇḍin) uses the term *vakrokti* as almost coextensive with the generic term *alaṃkāra*. As such, therefore, the *vakrokti* is as Kuntaka holds, the only *alaṃkāriti* possible to *sabda* and *artha* and all so called poetic figures are but different aspects of *vakrokti*. As a matter of fact Kuntaka includes the *alaṃkāra* in the province of *vākya* – *vakratā*.¹⁷

Kuntaka's opinion is that *vakrokti* is the only *alaṃkāra* admissible, all other poetic figures or *alaṃkāras* can be properly included in its

comprehensive scope. *Vakrokti* in its nature is indefinable; yet one can distinguish and classify its function into six different spheres.

Kuntaka starts with the creative imagination of the poet. He considers creative imagination of the poet to be the source of the characteristic charm of poetic expression. Poetry is for him embellished sound and sense, the embellishment being chiefly the figurative device known as *alaṃkāra* in the narrow sense, and as this is the only ornament possible and essential, he repudiates the view of those who considers figurative expression as accidental and non-essential. Kuntaka also uses the term *alaṃkāra* also in the larger sense of poetic beauty, not only as the fundamental principle of figurative expression generally. To this he gives the name of *vakrokti*, and comprehending under it all forms of poetic expression, he attempts a fresh interpretation of the problem by rethinking and rearranging under this conception the accepted ideas of *Rīti*, *Guṇa*, *Rasa* and *Alaṃkāra*.¹⁸

Kuntaka maintains that a form or mode of expression becomes a poetic figure or *alaṃkāra* if the fertile imagination of the poet lends a peculiar charm to it.

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CHAPTER II

ABHINAVAGUPTA'S CONCEPT OF RASA

Abhinavagupta, a great Indian aesthetician is famous for his commentaries called *Locana* on *Dhvanyāloka* and *Abhinava-bhāratī* on *Nāṭya-śāstra* among his various works. These two are the pioneer works of him though he is also famous for his works on *Kāshmiri śaivism*. But he proved himself as a reputed writers on poetics due to his two commentaries mentioned above. He was very much interested in dramaturgic work of Bharata. Due to his interest Indian aesthetics was enriched with his encyclopaedic text in which he elaborated various views of Bharata on dramaturgy. Here we find that he became interested in the various theories about the origin and function of *Rasa*, though Bharata was concerned only with drama. But Abhinavagupta not only interested with *rasa* in respect of drama but also in poetry. While expressing his view on the concept of *rasa*, he tried to explain clearly how *vyakti* or *vyañjanā* of the *dhvani* theorists could be applied to the case of manifestation of *rasa*, and thus correlating the *rasa* theory with the *Dhvani* theory. He defined the concept of *rasa* and its place in poetic theory and to him aesthetic sentiment or *rasā* is brought out through the application of some words or sentences having suggestive meaning

(*Dhvani*). This *Dhvani* functions as an instrument to the production of *rasa* (*rasaniṣpattiḥ*).

Abhinavagupta refuted the imitation theory. For him the effect of imitation is in fact laughter and mockery and has no connection with the aesthetic experience.

Rasa literally means a kind of juice and signifies flavour one gets from testing this liquid. In respect of literary works it signifies the peculiar experience that we get from poetry.

The view that *rasa* is the essence of poetry starts from Bharata. He holds the view that, no composition can be done without the feeling of *rasa*. He also holds the opinion that *rasa* is realisation of one's own consciousness as coloured by emotion. *Rasa* and emotion cannot be expressed directly through words, their essence being immediate experience, so they can only be suggested by words.

So in Indian aesthetics *rasa* is regarded as a state of consciousness which is unique, conceived intuitively and concretely as a juice or flavour when a spectator or appreciator relishes this *rasa*, he is pervaded by enchantment of this. Therefore, according to Indian thinkers, aesthetic experience is the act of testing this *rasa*. At the time of testing this *rasa* the contemplator forgets everything of the world and he concentrates to enjoy the work. Let us try to elaborate this point. Let us

suppose if a person goes to enjoy a drama and in the hall he thinks about what is happening in his house, then certainly he will not be able to enjoy the play properly. Again, if some happenings in the drama coincide with the life of the spectator and in that time the spectator identifies himself with the heros of the drama and looses distance from real life, the spectator certainly will not be able to enjoy the drama properly. For proper enjoyment spectator needs to identify himself in the performance and exclude all else.

So *rasa* is realised when an emotion is awakened in the mind in such a manner that it has none of its usual conative tendencies and is experienced in an impersonal , contemplative mood. An emotion in this peculiar manner is caused by representations in art of those objects which excite it in nature, such as natural situation, persons of known characters their actions. These representations, through words in case of literary works and through both words and concrete presentation by the performer in the case of drama, are generalized and so idealized aspects of objects masquerading as particular. They are significant neither cognitively nor conatively, for they belong to a different world. The representations have only emotive significance and the emotions appearing through them are not suffered in the ordinary blind and passive manner but enjoyed actively with a clear self awareness and knowledge of them. The main thing which lies behind this extraordinary mode of expressing emotion in

the dissolution of the practical and egoistic side of our self in the poetic attitude and consequent appearance of the universal contemplative self. Emotions are latent in the self in their generalized form as dispositions connected with their general not particular, associations. So, when generalized objects and situations are presented in poetry, they awaken the generalized emotions which are felt in an impersonal and contemplative manner. They are not related with any specific individual object. But the dissolution of the practical self is necessary. If in a poetic work there is too much naturalism and too little of impersonality than the response of the reader will be naturalistic. Again if the reader seeks information or instruction or sensation from poetic work then even if the work is rich and full of idealization yet the reader is unable to suspend his practical realistic attitude.

Rasa is realized when the self losses its egoistic, pragmatic aspect and assumes an impersonal contemplative attitude. *Rasa*, thus is a realization of the impersonal contemplative aspect of the self which is usually valid in life by the appreciative part of it. A contemplative mind or self is free from all craving, striving and external necessity, it is blissful.

Rasa may be distinguished from ordinary delight or satisfaction. Ordinary delight depends on personal inclination, interest, desire to possess it etc. For example a film producer may become delighted by

earning more and more money by marketing the film he produces. But if the film does not give the producer the expected money then this may make him unhappy. Here the delight is based on selfish consideration. But the aesthetic delight or *rasa* does not depend on any personal interest or inclination, desire to possess it. For example, if someone observes a stage performance and feels delighted by the play, the viewer does not think about any personal interests viz. whether the events shown are real or not.

Another interesting point about the distinction between ordinary and aesthetic enjoyment is that, ordinary pleasure or delight is purely subjective and is not sharable by others. But aesthetic delight though subjective yet sharable e.g. the delight which the play producer finds by earning money is his personal subjective delight and is not sharable. But the delight which enjoys through the presentation of the drama is sharable whoever views the drama by excluding all egoistic considerations, pragmatic aspects and by assuming an impersonal contemplative attitude will get the same delight or satisfaction. This is called non-pathological pleasure (*Lokottara ānanda*).

Though there is a temporal, cultural and historical gap between western and Indian tradition, Abhinavagupta is much earlier than Kant and Bullough, yet a bridge may be constructed between these two traditions

and consequently a dialogue may be opened between these two traditions.

“Abhinavagupta till today remains the most important and characteristic Indian aesthetician. His basic conception of art as an independent spiritual activity freed from all egoistic taints, an attitude rather than a quality has been since the time of Kant the main postulate of western aesthetics as well. Many of his findings though developed in a totally different time and context, find an echo in modern theories. Clive Bell's significant form provokes a state of mind which is not very much unlike the *rasa* experience.”

Let us now consider some western view about aesthetic experience which are very much akin to that of Abhinavagupta which we think will make our understanding of Abhinavagupta's philosophy of aesthetic experience easy and in fact it is our main task to make the understanding of Abhinavagupta's philosophy of aesthetic experience easy.

There is such a thing as aesthetic experience has been granted by many a philosopher even though the claims to define such experience have met with *criticism* in recent times. However, one question that has often been raised in this context with regard to how such experience becomes possible ? (a) Is there some objective quality or aspect of it by

responding to which one has aesthetic experience? (b) or, is there some special way of looking at things that make such experience possible? If the question at (a) is answered in the affirmative then it would follow that there are some special kinds of objects by coming in contact with which one experiences an aesthetic delight. One possible way of defending such a view is to distinguish all the works of art from other things on the basis that only the former can give us aesthetic experience because there is something special about these objects. But, are we not often struck by something common place or even positively ugly?

Much of art in recent times has been inspired by the common place or the ugly. As Stolnitz puts it: "If we confine ourselves to the art of the last 150 years, we find an enormous amount of art devoted to the two sorts of objects which common sense considers intrinsically unaesthetic, viz., dull, common place objects and ugly or grotesque thing and events."²

On the other hand, one might argue that a distinction between works of art and that those are not is extremely difficult to make if it is not immediately shown as spurious. The defender of such a view would argue that, there is a circularity involved in the assumption that only works of art are capable of giving us aesthetic delight. Those who answer the question (b) affirmatively do so on the ground that even the so called ordinary object or situations when responded to in a *special way* are

capable of affording us aesthetic enjoyment. The terms “beautiful” , “aesthetic” are not confined merely to works of art. In other words it is not the object but the way we attend to it or look at it that gives us a special kind of delight. The use of these terms is based on a special kind of *delight* that one may experience rather than some objective quality of the work.

In western tradition, the two important names that stand out clearly in support of this kind of view are Kant and Bullough. Kant’s theory of beautiful emphatically negates beauty as an *objective* quality. Far from there being any objective ground or criteria, the determining ground of the judgement, “This is beautiful”, is no other than subjective. The significance of such a theory is that even though the judgement is made by an individual on the ground of his having experienced a special kind of delight or satisfaction the judgement is claimed as universal and necessary in character. Interestingly Kant’s theory of aesthetic judgement which is his main concern in *Critique of Judgement* does not make any special reference to works of art as a class of special kind of objects. One can clearly trace the beginning of the theory of aesthetic attitude to the views of Kant on the beautiful – in which the key concept is “disinterested satisfaction.”

Melvin Rader in his introductory comments in chapter ten of the anthology ‘*A Modern Book of Aesthetics*’ has the following to say :

"The relevance of Kant's theory to the continuing discussion of 'the aesthetic attitude' in this century is beyond question. One evidence of this influence is the theory of 'psychical distance' akin to Kant's 'disinterestedness', as expounded by the distinguished British Psychologist Edward Bullough".³

Bullough's theory of "psychical distance" assumes that one can *actively* distance oneself from any object or event in a way so as to cut oneself off from the *practical* mode and its attended consequences. Theory of aesthetic attitude which is developed here in terms of "psychical distance" enables Bullough to account for the experience of delight one has, say, at the sight of fog at sea. The event which is immense concern to passengers aboard the ship can be so distanced as to become the source of delight to the beholder. In more recent times thinkers such as J.A.Stolnitz, R.W.Lind and S.K.Saxena have all contributed to the defence of the theory of aesthetic attitude.

Let us now discuss in details Kant's view. Kant's views on the beautiful can rightly claimed as the precursor of the attitude theory in aesthetics. According to him, beauty is not an *objective* property like the colour yellow which may belong to an object though the judgement "This is beautiful" represents the same logical form as the judgement "This is yellow." One of the main concerns in his book *The Critique of*

Judgement is to show the universal and necessary character of the judgement "This is beautiful", the ground for making which is no other than subjective feeling of satisfaction which is characterised by him as "disinterested" in nature. It is to be noted that "disinterestedness" in this context is used in a special sense which is quite different from its sense in common usage.

When we judge an object as beautiful, this judgement is not a logical judgement nor is it a moral judgement rather this judgement is aesthetic. According to Kant, a logical judgement is made as the faculty of imagination gathers together the manifold of sense perception and the same is subjected to the faculties of understanding. This type of logical judgement is regarded as an objective judgement because it is always about some object. For example, in the judgement, "This pen is white" the quality of whiteness belong to the object "pen". The existence of this quality depends on the existence of the object pen.

Kant's formulation of the problem of aesthetic judgement in terms of his main point of enquiry as to how is aesthetic judgement possible? Here for our present purpose we are mainly concerned only with his first moment where he states that, "Taste is the power of an object or of a way of representing it through an entirely disinterested satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The object of such satisfaction is called beautiful."⁴

For Kant aesthetic judgements are judgement of taste and the distinguishing feature of this judgement is that the satisfaction it reports is "disinterested." Let us now clear what Kant means by "interest". By interest Kant seems to mean consideration of the question relating to the existence or the reality of the thing. In other words, when the satisfaction we get from an object is bound up with the desire to possess it, such satisfaction is characterised by "interest". From Kant's view it follows that by "disinterestedness" he refers to an *attitude* which requires the onlooker to remain indifferent to question of reality and existence of the object.

Moral judgement, as Kant would say, claims a suggestion of oughtness which implies that an action which is morally judged is *repeatable*, and an action which is morally good ought to be done by everyone else. Moral judgements are made on objective grounds.

Now, for Kant aesthetic judgement is "reflective" or "contemplative" and not cognitive, logical or determinant. Kant defines reflective judgements as "A capacity for reflecting on a given representation according to a certain principle, to produce a possible concept."⁵ He refers aesthetic judgements to the faculty of feeling. In this case, the representation is related to the subjective faculty of feeling. Thus, for Kant the determining ground of aesthetic judgement is purely "subjective". In this case, there is free play of the faculties i.e. the free play of the faculty

of imagination and the faculty of understanding. The representation is referred to the subject. It refers to the feeling of pleasure and pain by the imagination. Pleasure and pain are not objective qualities or the properties but rather they are subjective in nature. These are the ways in which the object affects.

Kant describes aesthetic delight as "disinterested satisfaction". Let us make clear this view of "disinterested satisfaction". We may state here Kant's distinction between aesthetic delight or satisfaction from ordinary delight or satisfaction. Ordinary delight depends on personal inclination, interest, desire to possess it etc. Here the delight is based on selfish consideration. But aesthetic delight which Kant characterises as "disinterested" "does not depend on any personal inclination, desire to possess it, or any selfish interests. For example, if someone views a film and feels delighted by the film, the viewer does not think about any personal interest.

Another interesting point about the distinction between ordinary pleasure or delight and aesthetic delight is that ordinary pleasure is purely subjective and not sharable by others. But the aesthetic pleasure though subjective yet sharable. In Kant's words, the beautiful is "What pleases because it can also please others."⁶ e.g. the delight which the film producer finds by earning money is his personal subjective delight and

is not sharable. But the delight which one finds by viewing the film is sharable because whoever views the film by taking a *disinterested attitude will get the same delight or satisfaction*. Kant's own explanation would be that since it is not based on any interest or inclination, the disinterested nature of aesthetic satisfaction can claim to be the common condition for the possibility of aesthetic delight.

So it seems from this point that Kant is maintaining that aesthetic delight is a matter of *attitude*. Aesthetic delight requires adopting an attitude, which Kant calls disinterested attitude, without which no such delight is possible. Now the question is what does it mean to say that, the contemplator of a work of art must adopt a disinterested attitude? This question may be answered by asking the following set of questions : when one views a painting and sees a three dimensional figure on a plain surface he may ask : (i) Does this space really exist there ? (ii) Does he necessarily want to buy, possess or acquire it ? (iii) Does our sense of appreciation of a painting decline even when we are told that the painting is not a faithful copy of the real existent object, individual ? If we follow Kant's thesis then the answer of all the above questions will be negative.

So from Kant's view it is clear that the beauty of an object is not based on considerations whether it is real or existent. These metaphysical

and ontological questions have no bearing on the satisfaction which we find from the beautiful.

For Kant the delight in the agreeable and the good is determined not merely by the "representation of the object", but rather by the "represented connection between the subject and the existence of this (object).⁷ Here it is not the object but the fact of the existence of the object that pleases. As Paul Guyer points out, "Kant suggest, two ways in which pleasure in beauty may be taken in mere representation rather than actual existence. Pleasure may be felt apart from knowledge of actuality by causal laws – though this does not mean that its object is in any way nonactual – and it may be felt without reference to the effects an objects may have beyond mere perception or contemplation."⁸

Let us briefly put the matter thus 'Kant's ideal aesthetic pleasure is a *disinterested* kind. Aesthetic appreciation does not depend on "interest", though by interest Kant does not mean what we mean by it normally.

"An interest is always a concept of an object or action which has a relation to the faculty of desire : it is a cognitive representation which is an incentive for that faculty. Second, an interest is always connected to the existence of the object for an incentive of the will is always an incentive to will the existence of something. Third, interest is always

connected with delight, for an incentive to will something is either a promise or pleasure in its existence or the conformity of the object of the will to the moral law, the consciousness of which produces a feeling of or like pleasure. Delight either is promised in the real existence of something, and thus a reason for willing, or is consequent of willing."⁹

The main thrust here is that, interest is connected on the one hand to desire and on the other to some object that exist or can exist our desire to possess or make us of an object can be fulfilled if only the concept of such object is *actualized*. In other words, the pleasure we get from the fulfillment of the desire is one which is not independent of a concept. Most of our daily amenities and high technological devices that give us pleasure, in our daily life fall in this class. But according to Kant the beautiful is without any concept as the judgement, "This is beautiful" is based on a sense of satisfaction which though subjective is *sharable*. It must clearly be understood that aesthetic delight being independent of an *objective* quality or aspects is related to the common condition of mind which is sharable by all. Our everyday desire for this or that particular qualities and aspects are influenced by subjective conditions such as prejudices, inclinations etc. which are purely private and ununiversalizable. On the other hand, aesthetic delight being ununiversalizable on the ground that *common sense* which comes about through the free play of faculties does not depend on any personal factor.

Thus the term "interest" it has been made clear, is bound with our desire for something. If such desire is fulfilled we obviously get some pleasure out of it. Examples of this type of pleasure in our everyday life is countless. Suppose I desire for a fellowship for doing my Ph.D. degree and apply to some authority for it. If I am given such an opportunity then this will surely make me happy or feel delighted, on the other hand, if such an opportunity does not come my way then certainly this will make me unhappy. In short, if we get what we want or desire we derive pleasure out of it. So, perhaps Kant is suggesting that an object of art or beauty is not merely an object of desire. But why does Kant think it is necessary to stress this point.

It seems to us that an important implication between the pleasure based on interest and disinterested pleasure is that interested pleasures are purely individualistic and *private* for that matter. There is no general principle by which it can be claimed that one ought to desire such and thus. For example, if I desire for a new private car, then it is meaningless to say that another person also ought to desire a new car. Even one's own interest may undergo changes. If I desire for a new car today there is no knowing that I will feel this desire all my life. As a matter of fact such desire have been fulfilled we generally do not desire for the same thing. The implication of all these would be that what is pleasurable today may

not be pleasurable tomorrow. Pleasures which are based on egoistic desire cannot claim any *universal* validity.

In recent times some thinkers have talked about the aesthetic point of view for example F.J.Coleman in his introduction to the anthology, *Contemporary studies in Aesthetics*, under the heading, what is aesthetic point of view? Maintains that, "It appears that at certain judgements in our discourse the aesthetic and the moral point of view converge.... There is surely no reason to insist that the point of view in such cases is either aesthetic or moral and not both"¹⁰ According to Coleman the term "aesthetic" is used for a variety of different characteristics though one may possibly draw a distinction between the aesthetic point of view and non aesthetic point of view. Thus, for him, the question, is there an aesthetic point of view. Is an idle question because the answer is no. But one can meaningfully talk about the aesthetic point of view in the same sense in which it can be characterized by certain *criteria*. Coleman argues that, the use of the term "aesthetic" or "beautiful" is not based on any single particular characteristic but it is possible to identify some general criteria or characteristics for the same. In our view such a thesis is in sharp contrast to the views held by Kant. As has been outlined before, for Kant the use of the term "beautiful" is not based on any concept, rule or criteria relating to the object. On the other hand, his use of the term beautiful is grounded on a special sense of delight that is a special condition of the mind.

It is interesting to note that Coleman in order to delimit the aesthetic and to characterize in general point of view argues "that there are four distinguishing marks and these marks can be used as a *criteria* for the correct use of the term aesthetic".¹¹

The point of it is that, Coleman like many other philosophers in recent times believes that it is possible and meaningful to talk about *some criteria* on the basis of which the term *some criteria* on the basis of which the term "beautiful", "aesthetic" etc. are used though to look for any one single criteria for the same would be an idle search. The four criteria the Coleman indicates are pleasurefulness which is based on one's experience of discrimination and intelligence, disinterestedness, universalizability, and a sense of praise and recommendation to other persons. At first sight there would seem to be some similarity in the use of words that Coleman makes to those of Kant, especially the last three marks viz. disinterestedness, universalizability, recommending nature. But it must be immediately pointed out that unlike Kant Coleman emphasises that there are some *objective aspects* which makes possible the discrimination of some special kind of pleasure without which we cannot talk about the aesthetic point of view. In other words the aesthetic point of view is based on the concept of criteria which are linked to certain aspects of the object.

Let us explain the point at length. Under the head "Pleasureful" Coleman refers to several kinds of pleasure and classifies them into lower and higher class of pleasures though not in the moral sense. For example pleasure like "titillating", "invigorating", "relaxing" etc. can be felt by everybody and not require any intelligence or discriminating powers. But the feeling of "Poignancy" belong to the higher class of pleasure and is based on ones sense of intelligence and discrimination. The higher pleasure of the kind "Poignancy" belongs to the class of aesthetic pleasure, according to Coleman, and are discriminable to anyone who can respond to certain social aspect of an object or the work of art. From this Coleman argues, that anyone who has or acquires a sense of intelligence and discrimination is capable of experiencing the higher pleasure such as poignancy and hence it must be disinterested, universalizable and must contain a recommendation to others.

In our view the theory of the aesthetic point of view differs substantially from that of aesthetic attitude. When Kant's characterization of "disinterested satisfaction" is taken as a mark of aesthetic attitude it is not related to any objective aspect or criteria. As S.K.Saxena puts the matter :

"The aesthetic point of view is also to be distinguished from the aesthetic attitude. An attitude is the way in which a person is disposed

towards the object. A view point on the other hand, is a particular angle from which the object is considered. An attitude is in way closer to the subject than a view point. Thus we speak of a sympathetic attitude, not view point. On the other hand, the seven view point of the Jaina are objective positions from which a thing may be judged.¹²

For Kant the universalizable nature of aesthetic judgement "This is beautiful" is based on the common condition of the mind – common sense, which is marked by the free play of the faculties. Such attitude can be turned upon any object or situation regardless of whether it is work of art or not. Coleman's outline of the thesis of the aesthetic point of view assumes that as in the moral so in the case of aesthetic there are such an objective criteria, standard, norms etc. on the basis of which the judgement is passed. For him the question, why is it beautiful or aesthetically delightful? Is quite meaningful because one can always give reason for it. On the other hand, Kant's view of disinterested pleasure" or "satisfaction" is not confined to the work of art but is extendable to *any object* regardless of the objective qualities or features.

In the history of aesthetics there are two groups of Aestheticians, of which one group holds the view that aesthetic contemplation does not need any special way of attending, the other group holds the view that aesthetic contemplation requires a special way of attending. One major

supporter of the latter view is Edwar Bullough. For him, aesthetic appreciation requires a special way of looking at aesthetic object. Bullough formulated his thesis of "*Psychical distance*" in the context of aesthetic contemplation.

Turning, now, to Bullough's interpretation of the principle of "Psychical distance", his use of the term "Distance" in the context of aesthetic experience is quite different from its use in ordinary language. In ordinary language "distance" is used for measuring the space between two points or places, it means *spatial* distance. This ordinary use of the term distance is known to all of us as *Physical* distance. This distance is measurable and variable. But this is not the sense in which Bullough uses it in the context of aesthetic contemplation. He uses the term distance in a special sense, which he calls *psychical distance*.

Let us now cite here Bullough's famous example of "a for at sea" in order to make the concept of psychical distance clear. A fog at sea is generally unpleasant. If anyone thinks of it from the practical standpoint it has consequences which can be unpleasant and dangerous. The storm gives the passangers who are in a ship a strange feeling which is a combination of fear, suspense, anxiety, helplessness etc. And this strange experience of the sea fog makes one feels the occasion with a sense of fear.

But a sea fog may be a source of great delight if one exclude from the experience of the sea fog all its dangers and unpleasant elements and only contemplates the qualities which are objectively given. Here the observer is not personally involved in the situation, for example he is not concerned with the fate of the travelling passengers and what might happen to the ship and the crew. In other words, he distances himself from the scene or situation in a way that his egoistic considerations are not allowed to operate. The mere appearance of the thing and not what lies behind them is the object of immediate experience. This is what Bullough terms a *Psychical distance*.

Because of distancing the sea fog around the ship may appear to us as milky. We may also be able to notice the curious creamy smoothness of the water, the fog may appear to us as a white mountain made up of milk etc.

Let us now develop the point more clearly. The delight which is gained from the aesthetic experience or, as it is done in the above case by due distancing, is not in relation to any personal gain, motivation etc. Here the temporary suspension of everyday attitude not only makes possible our close attention but this type of heightened awareness also disclosed much new material.

Imagine now another situation in which a person whose kith and kin are among the travelling passengers sights the situation from the sea shore. Then he becomes personally involved in the situation. He might go through several emotions such as sorrow, suspense, hope and perhaps, finally, relief when the fog leaves and the weather condition improves. Such relief might give the observer a sense of great delight but not of the same kind that one feels when the situation is viewed by adopting *psychical distance*.

This point is developed with an example by Hospers in the following way :

“When a man is actually involved in a shipwreck, he just does whatever he can to save himself. He cannot here lavish attention on the details of the sinking. When, on the other hand, a man watches about it at some later date he may give it very close attention, and even feel fascinated by the turbulent waters and the ship’s final lurch. Now, it is obvious, he does not have to do anything to save himself. However, much(he) may identify with the sufferers (he is) not (now) personally involved in any sense that is geared to action.”¹⁴

the point that emerges from Bullough’s concept of distancing in the case of aesthetic appreciation may be explained as follows. In aesthetic experience the individual does not allow personal factors to affect his

perception. In other words, the same event or situation when viewed within the framework of "psychical distance" is capable of giving us delight. When personal considerations are allowed to operate it affects the person by evoking in him one or a series of personal emotions. It would be worthwhile to argue here that the emotion felt in aesthetic experience is not based on personal desires, wishes. It would seem that such delight may be characterized as "disinterested".¹⁵

Here the similarity of ideas conveyed by the terms "disinterested" and "Psychical distance" may merit some serious attention. Kant in his first moment states that, "Taste is the power of judging of an object or of a way of representing it through an entirely disinterested satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The object of such satisfaction is called beautiful."¹⁶

Kant's use of the term "disinterestedness" is based on its distinction from interested pleasure which does not depend on any ulterior purpose or motive. By "interest" Kant seems to mean considerations of the question relating to the existence or the reality of the thing. It follows that by "disinterestedness" he refers to an attitude which remains indifferent to such questions. Thus, Kant's distinction between two types of pleasure, the pleasure that is bound with interest and the pleasure that is not concerned with certain metaphysical or ontological questions. It is a

key to our understanding of aesthetic attitude. The latter is the case of aesthetic pleasure.

According to Bullough, in order to aesthetically contemplate the sea fog we have to keep it at a distance. This distance here does not mean spatial distance but rather it means in Bullough's word, what "..... is obtained by separating the object and its appeal from one's own self, by putting it out of gear with practical needs and ends...."¹⁷ In other words this distance here means that we must forget all the dangers, terror and all about the practical situation, whether it is harmful or not. We only contemplate the objective features of the phenomenon as such. If we try to realise the psychological tension felt by the passengers aboard the ship which is engulfed in the sea fog then we are not able to contemplate the scene aesthetically. When we view something aesthetically we must respond to the object of such viewing, that is to say what is presented by the object as such and not what might happen in our own life or actually does so. According to Bullough, the act of distancing is the essence of aesthetic attitude. Here we may quote from S.K.Saxena's analysis of it.

"According to Bullough, the essence of aesthetic attitude is a psychological process (or act) of distancing, the meaning is that, because of captivating quality or the contemplator's deliberateness, the object is put out of gear with or 'distanced' from our practical needs and ends. We

have open up to the object's new charm instead of regarding it as a mere spring-board for our personal reveries."¹⁸

We may illustrate the point with the help of the following example.

Consider a tragic film in which the hero is jealous of his wife. Now imagine a spectator who is also jealous of his wife in his practical life. It is difficult for him to view the play aesthetically because he will try to catch the similarity between his own life and the life of the hero, he himself being personally involved in the film. It may not be possible for him to view the play objectively by distancing himself from it. What the person needs to do is to view the play aesthetically so as to ensure "a careful viewing of play itself, his attention should not turn to himself."¹⁹

A confusion may arise here regarding the term "objective". In order to resolve the confusion mention of the point which Bullough makes is very relevant. To say that by distancing ourselves from a situation of a work of art we mean that our perception is that of objective features which sounds quite confusing. Every work of art is subjective in some sense and also objective in some other sense. To maintain that it is the one and not the other is to make a confusion. How, then, do we understand the term "objective" in the context of Bullough's theory? It is perhaps possible here to make the following distinction between subjective and objective. We may suggest that the element or the qualities that are

directly present in the work and are thus perceivable by the onlooker can claim to be objective. In the example "a fog at sea", a fog or its mountaineous form is a direct objective perception. But the moment we think of this fog in terms of its consequences, we are not referring to the qualities of the fog which is present there or something directly given. The consequences may be surely given to our thought not in perception, it is a mental state. We would think of the consequence or effect of the sea fog if we relate ourselves to the event on a personal plan. So, our perception of fog in the consideration of its consequence would be a subjective mode of seeing the thing.

In the aesthetic experience we are directly aware of the object as such. But in doing so the relation between the self and the object is not completely lost. When we speak of "impersonal" in the case of work of art we do not use it in the sense in which it is done in the case of sciences rather, we use it in a special sense. In Bulloughs word, "Distance does not imply an impersonal, purely, intellectually interested relation of such a kind. On the contrary, it describes a personal relation, often highly emotionally coloured, that of a peculiar character. Its peculiarity lies in that the personal character of the relation has been, so to speak, filtered. It has been cleared of the practical, concrete nature of its appeal, without, however, thereby losing original consitution."²⁰

The point which Bullough mentions here is that though the art object often appears to us like an object which is given in our normal mode of perception, yet it does not affect us on a personal level as it does in everyday life, e.g. in a play, the situation, character etc., appears to be life-like, it does not bring off the kind of response as actual events in the real world do.

According to Bullough, psychical distance is variable in nature. There are acts like "over distancing" and "understanding". In Bullough's words "underdistancing is the commonest feeling of the subject, and excess of distance is a frequent feeling of art, especially in the past."²¹

Sometimes "overdistancing" occurs because of the art itself, sometimes for the viewers inability to keep the proper distance. But most cases of "underdistancing" occurs because of the viewer's inability to keep life and art apart. It follows that it is a precondition for aesthetic experience that we implicitly draw a demarcation between art and life and do not confuse the two. Such experience is participative in nature and not what we gain passively. In life, events impinge or thrust themselves upon us which the consciousness has to face passively. In art the creative design can be apprehended by the viewer if there is an attempt on his part to participate in it.

“Psychical distance” admits of several degrees. Our response to the work of art is regulated by the degree of distance from it. Just as it is not desirable for an onlooker to “underdistance” himself from the work, the work itself should not be very difficult, obscure etc., so that it overdistances itself from the viewer. So it seems that there is an interaction between the work and the viewer. For this reason our encounters with the same work is not really the same. It is not as if the viewer only has to distance himself from the work, sometimes the work may not allow such “distancing” if it is too difficult or obstruct.

Bullough emphasises the “art character of art.”²² He maintains that art is not nature. The idea underlying this view is interesting. It is perhaps true that most works of art derive their inspiration from life or nature. For this also many works resemble life and nature. Some of the best examples of this type of works are the literary works. Most of the literary works, such as novels, stories, plays etc. which have a strong narrative character are based on events and incidents that occur in life, and yet it should never be confused with life. The artistic has a peculiar character that separates it from life even when inspiration for one may come from the other. Langer for example, says that art is characterized by “Illusoriness”.²³ Here illusions occurs with the full knowledge that it is an illusion. Bullough does not say this explicitly, but his use of the expression “Art character of art” is suggestive of such a idea. So long as we are

aware of this illusory character of art our response would be distinctly aesthetic and not realistic. It is in this sense that the term "antirealistic" in the context of art should be understood. It follows that for the so called realistic work which is wholly based on life and nature. Its representation is still antirealistic from Bullough's standpoint.

Another interesting point which Bullough makes is that, if psychical distance is not properly maintained in the case of a story which is tragic in nature then we end up being sad and grief-stricken. But this is not the essence of aesthetic enjoyment. Even a tragic work, when aesthetically viewed is capable of giving us a sense of enjoyment. Distancing ourselves from the work helps us to enjoy and appreciate it aesthetically. If such distanced is not maintained then it appears to us as sad, or we find it unpleasant. Events in the novel or story are in some sense regarded as "unreal" and therefore, are incapable of bringing of changes in our behavioural pattern. In everyday life, we are more less victims of events that affects us while we passively get into their clutches. But in art the distinction between the real and unreal or imaginary is maintained without which our response would lapse into actual behaviour.

The last point may be connected with another interesting point which is as follows : In our everyday life, distancing takes us away from the object but in art proper distancing brings us back into the heart of the

aesthetic object, we become more aware of the object and this makes us see the details of the object.

Bullough's concept of psychical distance gives the object of art a peculiar status whereby it is viewed as a dreamlike appearance. As we respond to it we do plane of our life. Consider, for example, a film which shows some violence. Obviously, we do not take fright at the sight of this violence. This shows that we do not allow the film to affect us in our practical life. This is due to distancing ourselves from the work. But at the same time the violence that we see in the film appears to be life-like with the marked difference that real life violence affects us emotionally whereas violence in the film may be a source of delight.

It is significant that Bullough gives the example of "a fog at sea" in order to explicate the concept of "psychical distance". It is possible to say perhaps that the dividing line between what is art and what is not is more a matter of our attitude towards them. Even everyday objects may give us aesthetic delight if we view them within the framework of aesthetic attitude. This idea has been imbibed by some of the Dadaist artists. We give here the example of one such artist called Man Ray who fixed some sharp nails on the face of domestic iron and gave it the title of a work of art. The idea here is that the object which is generally known to be an object of domestic utility may be transformed into an object of

aesthetic enjoyment if we make it useless or to say in Bullough's words ".... Putting it out of gear with practical needs and ends."²⁴

For J.Stolnitz "disinterested" remains the key concept to our understanding of aesthetic attitude. He defines aesthetic attitude as "disinterested and sympathetic attention and contemplation of any object of awareness whatever, for its own sake alone."²⁵

In order to understand Stolnitz's definition of aesthetic attitude in a *critical* way we must attend to each of the terms, such as , "disinterested", "sympathetic", "contemplation", "attention' etc. Stolnitz is quite clear that an attitude ".... Prepares us to respond to what we perceive, to act in a way we think will be most effective for achieving our goals."²⁶ For example, a practical attitude involves our taking into account the looking for the usefulness of functional efficiency of the object, system or situation. Hence, "When the attitude is practical, we perceive things only as a means to some goal which lies beyond the experience of perceiving them."²⁷

For example, an iron press as a domestic appliance is used for a certain purpose or in order to achieve some definite objective. In using it we do not generally pay much attention to this appliance.

But once in a while when we choose to pay it attention in terms of its visual characteristics or appearances we may be struck by the sheer

beauty of its form or the feel of smoothness of the surface and the shine on its surface. Such attention would be quite divorced from "practical" way of perceiving it since we are not concerned with the utility or usefulness. Similarly, we may use a pebble as a paper weight at the study table. But if we merely attend to its sculptural form, textural feel or its colour we adopting an attitude which is aesthetic in nature. It is in this context of a clear distinction between the two different ways of attending to the same object that the term "disinterested" can be understood more clearly.

It is important to note that the term "disinterested" should not be confused with uninterested or lack of interest. For, one may find an object of aesthetic contemplation intensely interested to demand a much closer attention to each of its minute details. And in doing so one may feel a sense of excitement, delight and stimulation leading to repeated attention to the same object.

Stolnitz makes it clear that aesthetic attitude can be adopted toward "any object of awareness whatever." "When we apprehend an object aesthetically we do so in order to relish its individual quality, whatever the object be charming, stirring, vivid or all of these."²⁸ His stress on the term "sympathetic" is to point out that in aesthetic attitude there is an attempt to inhabit any responses which tend to take us away from the object. Thus while "disinterested" ensures divorcing off from a

practical attitude, "sympathetic" stands for a complementary forces which help to remove the object from such of its association as would be inhibitive to our contemplation of aesthetic delight.

A significant point that emerges from the foregoing discussion is that, Stolnitz's attitude theory which is based on the "concept of disinterestedness" represents an active state of consciousness which chooses to look upon its object of contemplation as an end rather than as a means to some end. Without the framework of such an attitude the object rather than its utility comes under the focus of such that we find interest in attending to even the small details or features of the object, surely, such an attention would be qualitatively different and distinctive from the customary way of paying attention to objects.

Now to put together the important points we have discussed so far and also few criticism of this theory of disinterested attitude. According to the followers of aesthetic attitude theory, anything becomes aesthetic when discriminating attention is paid to it with a certain non-practical or to say disinterested attitude. Many of the critics of attitude theory argue that there can be no special sort of attention, attention is simple and invariant.

Against the attitude theory Dickie argues that there is no such events like special kind of attention. According to him either one is attending or not attending to something. For him attention is some sort of

indefinable primitive of which there cannot be different kinds. He further argues that, if disinterested simply means lacking ulterior purposes then it clearly need not make any difference in the object of experience itself. According to him two students listening to same musical composition, one with the ulterior purpose of analysing it and other with no ulterior purpose or motives may enjoy the music in the very same way. Schultz argues against Bullough's-attitude theory that one may be aware of how interesting a fog at sea is even when practically regarding it as menacing. From such types of examples they try to show that lack of ulterior purpose does not make anything aesthetic, it is not the defining characteristic of the aesthetic.

The central point of Dickie's protests against the concept of aesthetic attitude is that there is no such thing as disinterested attention. As pointed out earlier, according to him, either we attend to something or we are inattentive. *The way we attend is only one.* There is no special way of attending to things.

Our point here is that, we agree with this part of Dickie's view that either we attend to something or we are inattentive. This would seem to be tautological statement. It is true that these two are mutually exclusive to each other. There is no difficulty in accepting the view that either one is attentive to some object or there is want of attentiveness. For

example, I may be looking at a picture or may turn my attention away from it. Now our question is, - is there only one way of looking at the picture? Does the dealer of the art object look at the picture in the same way as a competent viewer does? or for that matter the carpenter who makes the wooden frame of the painting surely looks at it attentively in order to select the right kind of frame for it. Though such attentiveness is quite different from how a lover or an appreciator of art looks at the painting. In other words, we would argue "attentiveness" whatever that may it mean to Dickie, must be varying kinds.

In order to make the point clear let us know what does attending to something involves putting an object in relation to consciousness. On the other hand, inattentiveness is another way of putting the matter, viz. the object does not stand in any relation to consciousness. But there may be several ways of realising an object to consciousness. This relation may be of different types e.g. personal, impersonal, practical etc. So, if relation is different then the way of attending would be different. Our argument may be put as follows. There is no denying that attentiveness and inattentiveness are mutually exclusive to each other. But from this it does not follow that all attentiveness is of one kind. In our view, attentiveness is a relational term and involves an entity to which consciousness is related. Now the way consciousness relates its objects may be of different kinds

and so attending to an object does not entail the view that it is only of one kind.

The argument may be more clearly brought out with the help of some examples. Viewing of an actual war between two countries and a war in cinema. When viewing an actual war our relation of consciousness with the object or situation is personal because we all are more or less anxious about the impact of the war. So this is a case of interested attention. But while viewing the war in cinema and if proper attitude is maintained then our attention is directed only towards the film and not on the actual or possible consequences of it. The war movies will not affect the viewer personally. The viewer will not become anxious about the war's impact on him. But this attentiveness is quite different from the attentiveness in the first case. Both the cases are cases of attending to an object but the way to attend is different. Let us turn to the example of the art object dealer who deals in different art objects. He is required to be attentive towards each and every art object in his show-room in order to make sure, for example, whether it is marketable, whether it is a forgery etc. Now, think of a situation in which if someone come to his show-room and tries to take a Picasso painting by force then the art dealer may want to send away by giving him some money or in some other way because the art dealer knows the market price of the painting. Here the dealer's interest is mainly towards the economic gain. It follows that the dealer is

attentive towards every object in his show-room. But this attention is for economic gain not for any painting for its own sake. But if the dealer thinks about what is there in the painting for which the lovers of art give such high price when they buy them. And the dealer gives his attention toward the art object as such. This attention is different from the previous case because such attention is only to contemplate the painting as such. In both the cases the object is apparently the same, though the later would be the case of an aesthetic object and not the physical object.

Let us now turn to the various cases of "attending to" as they occur in different context with reference to different situations :

(i) Think of a situation, when we say that an electrician is "attending to" faulty fan. Here attending to means that the electrician first examines whether the fan is able to serve the special purpose for which it is made. And if he finds that it is not functioning properly he will try to rectify the defect in order to make it serviceable. In spite of all these efforts if the electrician does not succeed in making the fan all right we cannot say that the electrician did not attend to the fan.

(ii) Now, imagine another situation in which we say that a doctor is "attending to" a case. Here by "attending to" we mean that the doctor examines the patient and makes diagnosis about the disease and would prescribe some remedy in accordance with the requirement of the

patient in order to cure him. Here also if the patient is not cured it is not possible for one to say that the doctor did not attend to the patient.

(iii) What does “attending to” mean when we say a proof reader is attending to the proofs? Here “attending to” can be understood in the following way : (a) whether any ward is missed ? (b) whether any extra word is printed ? (c) whether any word is wrongly spelt? etc.

(iv) Similarly by “attending to” a lecture is meant to follow the lecture, to become aware about the points made in the lecture. On the other hand not attending to the lecture means not following the lecture.

(v) A mother may attend to her child, here “attending to” means that the mother is taking care of her child or that she is looking after the child's needs and welfare.

(vi) What does “attending to “ mean when we say that a student is attending to a poem which is part of his course material ? Here the student will attend to the poem keeping it in mind that he is required to answer some questions that may come in his examination.

Thus, we have seen that “attending to” means different things in different context. A point that strikes us as significant in the analysis is that in some cases the objective which is required to be fulfilled by attending to it need not necessarily result in any success. In other words, “attending to” may not be followed by the purpose for which it is done. For

example the electrician who attends to the faulty fan may not be able to set it right. Again, the doctor who attends to the case may not necessarily be rewarded with full success. In some case, one may speak of attending to a thing or event properly or improperly, adequately or inadequately, for example, the proof reader who does not ensure faultless printing. He may be accused of having attended to the work rather improperly or inadequately. It may now be asked as to what would be the sense of "attending to" in the aesthetic context. What does it mean to say, for example, that one is attending to a poem aesthetically ? Does he merely look for the missing words ? Wrong spellings, incorrect punctuation etc. as a proof reader often does. And further does it mean that he looks for certain faults or inaccuracy which he ought to correct ? How does one ensure that one is attending to a poem adequately or inadequately when such attention takes place ? We will discuss about these questions little later.

From the instances of different cases of "attending to" the following interesting points emerge :

- a) In cases 1,2,3,5 and 6 one thing about "attending to" is found to be common, that it involves doing something in relation to the object of attention.
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- b) "Attending to" in ordinary cases sometimes involves also doing something to oneself. For example, the electrician may wear a pair of rubber gloves .
- c) "Attending to" is done at a time by any one single individual. When more than one person at a time are said to attend to something they cannot do so independently of one another. In the case of the faulty fan not more than one electrician can attend to it at any given time. In the case of the patient not more than one doctor will be able to attend to one patient at a time. But one may say that, there are cases where more than one doctor or a team of doctors may attend to a patient or more than one electrician may attend to the same faulty fan our answer here is that all these different persons are not able to attend the same object *independently of one another*. A team of doctors may attend to the same patient have consultations among themselves and finally may take a decision. Or when more than one electrician attends to the same faulty fan they do the work combinedly and interact with one another or one may help the other. So there "attending to" is not independent of one another.
- d) In the cases cited above "attending to" involve attending to the same thing or the same aspect of it. The electricians "attending
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to” involves attending to the specific fault for which the fan is not functioning. Now if another electrician attends to the same faulty fan then he also will attend to the same fault.

(e) In all the above cases of “attending to” doing something is a necessary condition and this doing something brings about a change in the object. The faulty fan after being repaired shows a change in its functioning, it becomes serviceable.

(f) The process of “attending to” involves a terminal goal. In each of the above cases of attending to there is a terminal goal as far as each person is concerned. The electrician’s goal is to make the fan serviceable, the doctor’s goal is to cure the patient etc.

(g) In the ordinary cases of “attending to” there is no freedom on the part of the person concerned. If the electrician attends to the faulty fan then he must try to locate the fault or faults. He is not free to attend to any other part(s) of the fan except the specific fault which needs to be corrected. For all that matter any electrician who attends to the same faulty fan must be able to look at the same fault. The electrician is not free to attend to anything else other than that fault. If he does so we say that he is not properly attended the fan.

Out of all the cases considered here case(4) has some peculiarity which it does not share with the other cases. One may say about the case (4) that here "attending to" neither involves doing something to the object i.e. the lecture, nor doing something to oneself. And here more than one person may attend to the same lecture at a time independently of one another. Our argument here would be that in attending to the lecture one is getting the same points or meaning. Different persons will understand the lecture almost in the same way and there would be no room for wide variance of meaning.

Another point about attending to a lecture is that free interpretation is not possible here. But in the case of attending to a poem the freedom is such greater as such interpretation must be imaginative and need not conform to any strict set of rules. Different interpretations of the same poem may be very widely apart from one another which allows for variance in meaning.

In the aesthetic context "attending to" here does not involve doing something to it or to oneself. For example, think of a situation where one is "attending to" a film. What may the spectator do in relation to the film or unto himself? He attends to the film independently of one another at a time. Here, every spectator is free to view it in his own way.

Aesthetic attention does not have a terminal or fixed goal. By attending to a film one does not try to reach a fixed end or goal. Attending to here does not bring about a change in the object to which aesthetic attention is given. A poem remains intact after several persons may have read it. According to Kingsley Price, answer to the question "What makes an experience aesthetic?" does not depend on the sort of awareness or attention or contemplation in which a person apprehend or experiences given object but rather it depends on the nature of the object. There are some basic assumptions in holding such views, the assumptions are as follows : (a) experience is not a "homogeneous" concept, pure experience or experience as such does not exist. Existence consists of two elements "awareness' and an object of awareness", (b) "awareness" itself is passive, if the object of awareness is aesthetic then the experience is aesthetic.. (c) "Aestheticness" is simple quality like "yellowness", aestheticness is imparted to experience by the object (d) experience has no creative role to play.

Kingsley Price advanced several arguments in favour of his view that the nature of objects makes an experience aesthetic not the sort of awareness or attitude towards something. He argues that experiences are of such a kind that they cannot undergo changes of properties because they are not substances. Experience, he argues, is the entity like Pumpkin, it would be wrong to think that we qualify, an experience by the adjective

like "aesthetic" the way we qualify a pumpkin by an adjective "yellow". According to him two questions, what makes an experience aesthetic ? and what makes a pumpkin yellow ? though similar in their syntactical form yet they are different in many respects. In the pumpkin case, the object can undergo changes of quality, namely colour, it can be understood as the pumpkin is a substance not yellow before the present state in further it may change into another colour, it is a spatio temporal entity, it does not depend on whether it is yellow or brown or green etc. But this is not the case with experience, we contend with specific experience where our experience is replaced by other. So Price holds that "since an experience is not a substance which endures in time and since it cannot undergo change of quality, 'make' cannot be understood as a causal concept, because aestheticness cannot replace, hence cause, the experience to acquire a new quality which it did not please before."²⁹

For Mitias, Price's arguments are inadequate for various reasons. For him (Mitias) the difference between being a thing and being an experience is logical, this is formal difference not material because an experience is as real and enduring as a thing like pumpkin is real and enduring. Experience endure through time, which is to say that the flow of experience is endless and it becomes one or the other kind e.g. now as moral, another it may be religious or at some other time it may be aesthetic and so on. According to Mitias, "I characterizes my experience

as aesthetic, mainly because it possesses a property, which I and aesthetically inclined people, would call 'aesthetic' the presence of such property is the ground of my statement. The basic tissue or structure of my experience is fundamentally feeling. This feeling is a complex of four main types of mental ingredients; emotion, idea, image, sensation. That when I perceive Guernica my experience, may or may not be aesthetic, certain conditions should be fulfilled in order for it to be, or become aesthetic, I here assume that my experience of the painting lasts or endures as long as my perception the painting lasts or endures".³⁰

Another argument which Price advances in favour of his view is that, "the aesthetic character of an experience cannot be abstracted from a certain experience. Thus any attempt to isolate aestheticness the way we isolate yellow from the object to which this property belong is doomed to failure."³¹ Aestheticness is imparted in experience by object.

According to Mitias, Price's assumption that aestheticness is simple property which belongs to the pumpkin, is simplistic and one sided. Our characterization of an experience as aesthetic should require a special relation of mind between them.

Price again argues that, aesthetic experience is not a homogeneous concept but it is heterogeneous concept it composed of two elements namely awareness and object of awareness. Awareness is

homogeneous it is passive, it is like a transparent glass, it is the object which turns experience that what it is. Aestheticness cannot be attributed to the element of awareness but to the object.

Mitias's argument against this is that mere awareness of a painting or a statue, does not make their experience aesthetic. Price's argument is inadequate because of the following reasons as Mitias gives, (i) aestheticness does not belong to the experience the way yellow belong to an object, (ii) awareness is not a passive element in experience through which we look at things but constitutive, creative agent of experience itself, (iii) Price's use of 'awareness' is quite different, indeed indifferent, to the use adopted by most of the aestheticians.

Awareness is an activity of imagination, it is a creative power which assist in focussing our attention in object on the one hand and in grasping the structure of the object on the other. Aesthetic experience is not the unity of awareness and its object but, in Mitias's words, "what one feels when one aesthetically perceives a work of art; it is the unity of his feeling with the art work in the event of aesthetic perception."³² So it seems that Price's understanding of "awareness" is unrealistic and limited. In order to expose Price's mistaken assumptions about awareness Mitias shows Stolnitz's view about the role of awareness is aesthetic perception.

An attitude, for Stolnitz, is a way of directing and collecting our perception. It is a power, a readiness, to focus our attention to an object and respond to it actively, interestedly. The distinction between two types of attitude i.e. practical and aesthetic has already been made clear. One assumes a practical attitude when he perceives an object in terms of its utility, on the other hand, one's attitude is said to be aesthetic when one perceives the object "disinterestedly", "sympathetically", "attentively". In this sort of attitude one directs his attention to what the object has to offer. One does not allow his emotional, intellectual or cultural ideosyncracies to interfere his seeing i.e. apprehending the values "Pregnant" in it. On the contrary one controls and directs his power of awareness i.e. attention to respond to all or as much as the object has to offer.

From our discussion of Mitiás's view on aesthetic experience one thing is clear that the aesthetic attitude is a necessary condition for having an aesthetic experience. Awareness is not passive, it plays an active role in determining the nature of experience. Aestheticness emerges out of the creative function of experience that is to say, the way we look at it.

It is true that experience is always a experience of an object or situation but it is relevant to ask, what makes an object aesthetic in one's

aesthetic experience ? Because by merely looking at some painting or listening to some songs one may not get any aesthetic experience. Having aesthetic experience presupposes a special way of attending to it or adopting the aesthetic attitude.

So from our above discussion it is found that there is a great similarity between Indian and western concept regarding aesthetic experience. The factors like “disinterestedness”, “universalizability”, “Sharability” etc. are present in both Indian and western thought. We have already discussed about some western views regarding aesthetic experience which are very much akin to that of Abhinavagupta’s philosophy of aesthetic experience in details. Let us now turn to original aim of our project i.e. understanding Abhinavagupta’s philosophy of aesthetic experience.

For understanding *rasa* it is necessary to understand various technical terms which are closely associated with *rasa*. These terms are (i) *Vibhāva*, (ii) *Anubhāva*, (iii) *The Vyabhicāribhāva* (iv) *Sthāyibhāva*.

(i) *Vibhāva* : *Vibhāva* is the objective condition of approaching an emotion. *Vibhāva* again is of two types viz. (a) *Ālambana vibhāva* and (b) *Uddīpana vibhāva*.

(a) *Ālambana vibhāva* : *Ālambana vibhāva* means a person or persons with reference to whom the emotion is manifested. (b) *Uddīpana*

vibhāva means the circumstances that have excited the emotion. A young boy may be attracted towards a young beautiful girl if the situation is such that they are alone in a beautiful romantic place, which is surrounded by well-arranged rows of big trees and the ground is well-decorated with blooming flowers, the fragrant breeze blowing, the moon is peeping through the clouds and the like. Anyone of these circumstances may be regarded as the *uddīpana-vibhāva* whereas the boy and the girl are *ālabana-vibhāva* to each other.

(ii) *Anubhāva* : *Anubhāva* means movement of body by which the emotion is raised. Thus, the inviting smile of a beautiful girl may be regarded as *anubhāva*. (iii) *Vyabhicāri-vhāva* means a series of diverse emotions that feed the lump of a dominant emotion. A young girl in love anxiously waiting in a beautiful garden to meet her lover may feel disappointed for his not arrival in time, may be anxious that something might have happened to him; may be jealous that he might have fallen in love with other girl, may feel delighted by remembering the coaxing words that he would whisper her ears and so on.

(iv) *Sthāyibhāva* : By *Sthāyibhāva* in poetry and drama are meant certain more or less permanent mental states such as love, grief, anger, fear etc. These permanent moods, constituting the principal theme of a composition and running through all other moods like thread of a garland,

cannot be overcome by those akin to it, but can only be reinforced. Other mental states arise simply because the basic mental state is there. They are like waves, which rise from the ocean of the basic mental state and subside in the same. The permanent or dominant feelings residing in the human mind are generally eight viz. *Rati, Hāsa, Krodha, Utsāha, Bhaya, Jugupsā, Vismaya* and *Soka*. A description of *Sthāyibhāva* which may become *rasa*. It is called *Sthāyibhāva* because it is an invariable constituent of *rasa*, unlike other *bhāvas* which are variable.

According to Bharata, out of the determinants (*vibhāvas*) consequents (*anubhāvas*) and transitory mental states *rasa* is emerged. In Bharata's *Nāṭya-Śāstra* we find the famous *rasa śūtra* :

Vibhāva nubhāva – vyābhicāri-Samyogād rasa – niṣpattiḥ.

In this *rasa-śūtra* we find the above discussed technical terms viz. *Vibhāva, anubhāva* and *vyābhicāribhāva*. These three being combined evoke a kind of feeling which is called *rasa*, which is not real, due to its not being aroused through real causes but is sufficiently like a feeling to warrant its being categorised in the same class. *Rasa* is the name of this special kind of feeling. It is termed as *rasa* in order to distinguish it specifically from emotion as an ordinary physical phenomena referred to as *bhāva*. Though two are intimately connected yet they are generically different.

The main points which comes out from this theory are as follows :

(a) *Rasa* is not a feeling in the ordinary sense though *rasa* is constituted with the same material. This feeling also has those characteristics which are also there in actual feeling. Instead of this similarity *rasa* is free from the adverse effects of ordinary feelings. It is essentially and invariably pleasurable. (b) *Rasa* is achieved when feeling of our everyday life (*bhāva*) are purified on the one hand through the medium of art and through the imaginative faculty of the spectator. The union of the determinants, consequents and transitory mental states are necessary within the aesthetic situation. There must be a delicate balance of these forces. We cannot be determine the precise nature of this balance, sometimes the weight is given more on the objective factors as they are presented in the art work, and sometimes the weight is more on the side of subjective consciousness. No one factor is sufficient by itself. All must be combined to give rise to *rasa*. (c) the emergence of *rasa* becomes possible because aesthetic situation is unlike real life situation, being an imaginative creation; yet ideal as it is, it has a reality which is very much similar to that of everyday life (d) *Rasa* is not a mutual construct in the manner of a logical entity, nor is it the idea of feeling, nor the generic essence of one, it is feeling proper though a different kind; (e) *Rasa* cannot be explained in terms of imagination and illusion; it is the result of purification, but not in the same way religious or moral purification; it is

simply and purely an aesthetic quality, significant only within the aesthetic context, it has a logic, law and life of its own, a reality which is different but in no way less than that of real life.

As an aesthetic experience, *rasa* refers not to mere organic pleasure derived from tasting (*āsvādana*) but signifies a kind of impersonal and objectified pleasure. When the term *rasa* is used as a factor of art it refers to the much needed criteria of beautiful as against the merely agreeable.

This concept, therefore, become in Indian aesthetics and art theory the most important principle signifying the art process in all its phases viz; creative the created and the appreciative. An object which does not contain *rasa* cannot be classed in the category of art work, and also the experience which is without *rasa* can fall in the class of aesthetic experience. So, *rasa* is the most important factor.

The aesthetic feeling is aroused in the same way as ordinary feeling as it requires the same causes for its arousal which are also needed in the case of ordinary feelings but except that it appears in a situation which does not bear upon us directly this fact helps us to take the weight off our feelings as that would be in everyday life, and to enjoy activity, what in normal circumstances might be suffered passively. The problem this position raises, is : can we have a all pleasurable feeling,

indeed can we refer to a response that is devoid of the usual motivation, causes, as feeling at all? In real life, for instance, a passion or feeling is undergone due to the self being affected by certain causes, such as the sight of a lion which arouses terror or thought of a one's beloved which arouses love. Whether the cause is direct and immediate, the situation created by the art work however presents not an actual but an apparent situation. In aesthetic situation the lion though real enough for sight and hearing is a part of the unreal situation. We know that it cannot affect us; consequently it cannot arouse feeling equivalent to that undergone in real life. The point on which the *rasa* theorists stress is that even though the aesthetic emotion is part of an art situation and in a sense removed from the domain of practical life, and thereby establishes a direct relation with the spectator. Bharata therefore considers only those elemental human feelings which he calls *sthāyibhāva* or abiding emotion to be able to provide the material for the aesthetic emotion. Feeling is aroused in the spectator though the situation presented in an aesthetic presentation is unrealistic, because the person possesses inherently those feelings and emotions which are being presented; he has at sometime or another undergone them fully, with all the good and bad effects which generally accompany such feelings; this revival is not in the form of a memory, but an actual living experience. Aesthetic feeling is also different from empathy. Empathy is primarily a feeling which is dependent on object

and hence it is subject to all the adverse effects or otherwise which the object may undergo. Since it is not independent, it is suffered passively as are all ordinary feelings, and is controlled by the circumstances given in the objective situation. The aesthetic response on the other hand, uses the objective situation provided by the an-object, in order to create an experience with an existence and dimension of its own. The fact that the aesthetic context removes us from the reality of the situation, does not prevent the arousal of emotion, as indeed all the causes and other factors are present, it only removes from the emotion that aspects which connects it directly with the egoistic self, the limited narrow self which is concerned only with its own presentation, and which thereby cannot expand fully and enjoy the depth of the dimension of pure experience.³³

Spectators distance from real life helps to filter the aesthetic emotion from all its adverse reactions, the pain suffering, etc. which accompany even pleasurable emotions like love. It must be pointed out that it is not the actual physical and temporal distance alone that makes the detachment on the part of the spectator possible but his mental attitude as well. The spectator must be able to disengage himself from the events and situations presented within the art work, not by reminding himself that these are not real but refusing to let them affect his personality. He disengage himself not from the whole situation but only from that part of it which impinges upon his practical self and which in

normal life would lead to action. The difference between the everyday response and aesthetic response lies in the fact that in the former case the emotion aroused have a motivating force, while in the latter they only colour the consciousness.

Rasa as Abhinavagupta pointed out, is nothing but the transformation of ordinary emotion (*bhāva*) into generalized emotion. *Rasa* does not imply simply the expulsion of the disturbing effect, namely pain, which enters into pity and fear when aroused by real objects and which when eliminated brings about a certain quietude in the spectators mind; it is a more positive concept entailing an actual relieving on a different plane. *Rasa* does not involve the idea of an emotional relief alone, even though it is one of its effects, but is involves primarily the idea of a purification which leads to a state of exaltation and ecstasy. This purification result from the removal of pain, disquiet and unrest which generally accompany the egoistic and self seeking element.

Within the ideal world of art, the ego is disengaged from the events and actions that occur. Hence, the individual does not suffer the effects of the reactions either painful or agreeable, that generally accompany such events. The elimination of these disturbing effects results automatically in a perfectly peaceful state of mind (*sānta*) which forms the basis of an ecstatic condition.

This process also accounts for the fact that in a work of art, events which would normally arouse feeling of horror, disgust, fear and sorrow are actually enjoyed. For example, in a particular drama where Pathos (*karuṇa*) is the main sentiment the spectator can enjoy the taste of bliss from the pathetic situation. One could ask about the proof of the existence of bliss in the pathos etc. only proof for the existence of such bliss is to feel it heartily (*Karuṇādan rase jāyate yat Pramāṇ sukhaṁ/sascctasāmambhavaḥ Pramāṇam tatra Kevalaim*). "Kiñca teṣu yadā duḥkhaṁ na kōpi syāt tadunmukhaḥ/Tathā rāmāyanādīnām bhavitā duḥkhaḥetutā."³⁴ If someone really becomes unhappy after seeing some incidents like the pathos represented in the *Rāmāyana*, he would not want to see what happened latter.

Abhinavagupta describes poetry as a overflowing of some emotion of poets heart into the hearts of the reader or hearers. Thus there is a communication of feeling and contact of hearts. Some actual emotion suffered by a human being is conveyed to their hearts by the poet who thus establishes a contact between the suffering being a his readers or listeners through his own self. He also speaks of union of hearts of the audience in a play and considers this fact to be essential for aesthetic delight which is contemplative and universal.

Another important term *Sahṛdayayā* needs to be discussed. The *Dhvanyāloka* describes the term *Sahṛdayayas* as those persons whose minds after long and continued practice of literature has become as transparent as a mirror such that whatever is described to them through literature enters into them in such a manner that they by their capacity can experience a sympathy through which they may indentify themselves with the same and thereby the poets heart, as revealed through literature, may communicate itself without restraining them not only the poet but other persons having similar capacities may find themselves in communication with one another through the poet's heart as revealed in literature. The *Locana* speaks of Ānandavardhana as *Sahṛdaya-cakravartī* as the king of the *Sahṛdayas*.³⁵

Abhinavagupta in his commentary on Bharata's maxim on *rasa* (*Vibhāvānubhāvavyābhicārisamyogād rasanīṣpattiḥ*) was started the real discussion of *rasa*. Opinion differs regarding two terms *samyoga* and *rasa-nīṣpatti*. Before proceeding it is necessary to make a discussion about the foundation of *rasa*. Here we may quote this discussion from the book of S.N.Dasgupta and S.K.De. *Rasa*, "it is based upon a particular view of psychology which holds that our personality is constituted, both towards its motivation and intellection, of a few primary emotions which lie deep in the subconscious or unconscious strata of our being. These

primary emotions are the sex, ludicrous, the pathetic, the heroic, the passionate, the nauseating, the wonderous. Other aesthetic psychologists have in later times added to it the peaceful or intellectual, the devotional and the filial. These emotions are running through all natures in a permanent manner and may in that sense called dominant emotions (*Stāhayibhāva*). These dominant state that determine the particular internal temperaments are regarded as the dominant characteristics of those emotional states. Emotional states, such as, the amorous, the heroic and others, show in their expressions the appearance of atomic formations i.e., each emotion is manifestation shows a composition of diverse sentiments constantly shooting out and changing like kinetic atoms and gases, like the flamelets the continually come and go and thereby produce the appearance of the permanent, undivided whole of a flame; there are continually passing little flames of diverse sentiments that give expression to the permanent emotion of love or hate, heroism or anger. It should, however, be noted that no emotion is called *rasa* unless it is aesthetically excited. When a young man falls in love with a young woman and his whole fame is shaken, we cannot speak of him as being the subject of *Śṛṅgāra-rasa*, or when his son is dead and he is crying in teras, we cannot speak of him that he is the *karuṇa-rasa*. *Rasa* is an emotion excited by artistic circumstances or situations."³⁶

Experience of *rasa* means to enjoy, to surrender oneself to the detectable experience; and in that stage of enjoyment there is no place for any discrimination between man and man or cause and effect. It is to indicate this uniqueness of enjoyment in poetry that the very object which serve as cause etc. This aesthetic experience cannot be of the nature of remembrance since there is no possibility of its ever having been gained in the past by means of other *pramānas*, and in the present also other *pramāna* can lead to it because of its unique nature. Hence, Abhinavagupta concludes that *rasa* or aesthetic enjoyment is neither produced by the causes as Mimāṃsakas might argue nor cognized by means of pramanas like perception and inference as Naiyāyikas might hold. Being neither product nor an inferred piece of knowledge *rasa* must needs be regarded as suggested.

All of us are well acquainted with the phenomenon of aesthetic experience, in our everyday life, it is the philosophers business to trace the source and discover the nature of this type of experience. Abhinavagupta has confined himself in giving an account of this type of experience arising from literary art. In any piece of literary art i.e. *Kāvya* aesthetic enjoyment (*rasa*) is the cornerstone. Its aesthetic pleasure which controls the story, characterisation, style etc. According to some rhetoricians the poetic beauty depends on the sounds and their meanings.

Sounds associated with the rhetorics are able to create poetic beauty. The beauty in meaning is produced out of the rhetorics like *Vakrokti* etc.

The merit, rhetoric or figure etc. cannot be taken as vital factors of *Kāvya* due to their inadequacy in the field of creation of poetic beauty. When the poetic language is completely differentiated from the ordinary language, the beauty of the former can be easily realized. Though, the merit, rhetorics etc. are also found in language in our day to day behaviour, it is not taken as a *Kāvya*. All persons are able to follow the ordinary language, but not the poetic language. In enquiring the cause of this Ānandavardhana has discovered the theory of *Dhvani* which can give the reasonable explanation of the creation of poetic beauty. The nature of *Dhvani* is given in the following way “*Arthaḥ sahrdayaślāghyaḥ Kāvyaātmā yo vyavasthitaḥ*”.⁵⁷ The aesthetic pleasure arising from literary art cannot be understood by all, but only the appreciators (*Sahrdaya*). In other words, a *Kāvya* is always appreciated by the *Sahrdayas* alone. The portion which is specifically apprehended by the appreciators and which is taken as the vital factor of *Kāvya* is called *Dhvani* otherwise it is *rasavadalamkāra* (i.e. rhetorics mixed with *rasa*).

The aesthetic experience from a *Kāvya*, as Abhinavagupta has observed, is different from the experience of other sources (i.e. non – art objects). Those who enjoy a *Kāvya* (either in the form of poetry or in

drama) become happy or unhappy after sharing the happiness or misery of the hero or heroine. Behind this happiness or misery of the audience there is no argument by which a logical mind can be convinced. As for example, Rāma, a character of *Kāvya* might be happy or unhappy, but there is no reason of being involved emotionally with the dramatic character and being happy or unhappy. Though it is true, it is found in each and every case. From this particular effect of audience it is quite rational to search for a cause of it. As this cause is not found through ordinary sense organs and reasoning, it can be taken as mysterious.

That the aesthetic pleasure is mystic can again be known from the fact that the emotional mood involved in grief also gives rise to the realization of joy. How is joy realized from the painful situations? In this situation our mind is absorbed in the performances and this absorption depends on the equilibrium of mind. When our mind is disturbed, the pain follows. If our mind remains in the state of aesthetic experience, there is something which forcibly snatches our mind and keep it in a state of complete rest. It is the aesthetic pleasure which only can do this thing. This joy is endowed with such type of mystic power by which audience can enjoy this bliss even out of painful situation, but in our practical life human nature is found averse to experience of pain. Hence, Viśvanātha, the celebrated rhetorician, has said poetry is a peculiarly unwordly

phenomenon, an extra-ordinary creation of supernatural supernormal genius and hence it cannot be governed by the rules of ordinary human intellect. In ordinary life sorrow comes from sorrow, fear follows fear, but in the world of poetry we find pleasure from painful horrible and terrible situations.³⁸

In these cases there is some sort of identity between the audience and the object of perception, this notion of identity emerges from having self involvement (*ekātmatā*) with it. As for example, when an individual in perceiving a scene in which Dusyanta enjoys happiness in company of Sakuntalā, he is realizing bliss just as Dusyanta. For the time being he is identified himself with the character of the drama. Due to this identification (with the hero) the spectator loses individuality and forgets his personal worldly matters. This shows the mystic power of aesthetic pleasure.

The real appreciator of *Kāvya* is *Sahṛdaya*. The property of being a *Sahṛdaya* lies in the fact of being identified with the feeling of the poet. The poet creates a *Kāvya* in his own self. Just as fire over the dry wood, the aesthetic pleasure arising in one's heart covers his whole body. This aesthetic pleasure is produced if the object is appreciated by heart (*hrdayasaṁvādī*).

(“Yo ‘rtho hṛdayasāmvādī tasya bhāvo rasodbhavaḥ śarīraṁ vyapate tena śuṣkaṁ kāṣṭhamivāgninā.”³⁹)

It may be argued why this worldly pleasure is not aesthetic. In reply, it can be said that this is not aesthetic pleasure because aesthetic pleasure must be impersonal, disinterested and universal in character. When an individual becomes happy at the happiness of the dramatic character, this pleasure is not of his own (i.e. arising from his personal life) and hence it is impersonal. As this pleasure is not due to the fulfillment of his self-interest and hence it is disinterested. Such type of feeling does not occur in the case of only one individual. It happens to in the case of all individuals. That is why, it is universal.⁴⁰ It has been stated earlier that due to complete absorption in the aesthetic pleasure a man forgets his individual love, fear etc. At that time there prevails an universal love which is aesthetic pleasure. When a terrific scene is represented, there is enjoyment of aesthetic pleasure called *Bhayānaka*. In this case also we generally forget that this fear realized by us belongs to the dramatic character and enjoy the universal character of fear which is free from other barriers like individualistic elements. The generalisation is the process of individualization through which an individual may go from his personal emotion to the serenity of contemplation of a poetic sentiment. The poet and audience must have the capacity of idealization. For this

reason a poet can present personal emotion as an impersonal aesthetic pleasure which is enjoyed by others.⁴¹ As this pleasure transcends the limitations of personal interest, it is disinterested universal pleasure. A pleasure which transcends this – worldly interest is surely transcendental and hence mystic. As this worldly pleasure arising out of this worldly affairs like the birth of a son, attainment of property etc. is not impersonal, disinterested, universal, it cannot be described as aesthetic.⁴² Aesthetic pleasure is the emotional mood revealed in a blissful knowledge free from all barriers.

According to Abhinavagupta, an object becomes beautiful when our self is reflected there. When someone realizes the misery of some character in a *Kāvya*, he thinks it as his own due to the reflection of his own self there. This view is more firmfooted if the *Upaniṣadic* view is reviewed in this context. It has been stated in the *Bṛhadārn̄yakopaniṣad* that husband seems to be beloved to someone because she loves her husband but because she love her own self etc. (“... *na vā are patynḥkāmāya patih Priyo bhavati, ātmanastu kāmāya patih priyo bhavati*” etc.⁴³ One can realise the nature of *Rasa* with the help of bliss arising from the realisation of Brahman as accepted by the Advaintins, when an individuals personal desire is transformed in the impersonal aesthetic sentiment, the realisation of aesthetic pleasure which is universal

character is possible. Abhinavagupta has accepted generalisation (*Sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*) as one of the characteristic features of aesthetic pleasure. Though there is reflection of Brahman in an individual's mind which is free from pleasure of Brahman. Hence, it is described as dwarf image of the state of Brahman (*Brahmasyādasahodara*).⁴⁴

The aesthetic pleasure leads a man to the world of creativity. After perceiving the separation of the curlew couple Vālkamī became very much moved and out of the grief he created a *śloka*. He had intense feeling of pathos in which he had lost himself. Due to the complete loss of personality he had a sense of joy out of grief. This joyous experience of pathos provided him with the power of creating *śloka* spontaneously. Vālmiki's grief was not this worldly. If it were so, he would have some sympathy with the bird from which the creation of *Kāvya* would not be possible. When a poet's vision becomes very deep and clear, he will surely get an inspiration from within. Then the materials for writing a *Kāvya* (like characterisation, plot etc.) follow automatically just as water overflows automatically from the jar already filled in water. So poet's genius depends on the absorption of the aesthetic enjoyment and this absorption is endowed with capacity of creating *Kāvya* spontaneously. If a poet's heart is filled with emotion, it (emotion) finds a spontaneous outlet. In the case of a poet, this feeling is stirred up by an emotion, will find an

outlet in the material form spontaneously. This spontaneity comes when there are no barriers (like personal interest etc.) for the realisation of aesthetic pleasure. The spontaneous outlet of poetry from a man who was idle before having aesthetic absorption proves again the mystic character of aesthetic pleasure.

We shall discuss about all these aspects like 'mysticism', 'spontanity', etc. in the concluding chapter.

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42. "Ripuste mṛtaḥ putraste jātah ityādi vākyārthe ... na lokottartvamiti na
tatra Kavyaprasaktih" Kāvyaḍarsā commentary on verse no. 10, Ch.I,
Edited by K.Roy.
43. Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad 4/5/321/6.
44. "Bhavite tu rasa tasya bhogo yo'nubhavasmarāṇapratipattibhyo
vilakṣaṇa eva....
Rajastamorvaicityānubidhasattvamayanijacitsvabhāvanivṛtviśrānti-
lakṣaṇaḥ Parabrahmasvādasavidhaḥ" Locana p. 193, Chowkhamba.
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CHAPTER-III

LANGUAGE AS AN AID TO AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

One may raise the question, whether language plays any role in aesthetic experience or not? It is true that literary form of art i.e. *kāvya* is composed with language and hence it is the language which serves as vehicle... in aesthetic communication. The role of language in communicating aesthetic experience cannot be ignored.

The analysis of language is also essential for enjoying the poetic excellence. Had there been no analysis of language, one would not have been enjoyed the linguistic beauty represented through the implicative or suggestive and metaphorical meaning. Poetic meaning is not like ordinary meaning. From Ānandavardhana and his predecessor Abhinavagupta's view regarding poetic meaning we can say that there is no proper sense in which we can say that poetry means 'anything'. But rather it only suggests or evokes. They give the name '*dhvani*' to this suggestive meaning. The *Dhvani* is possible only when the primary meaning fails to convey the intention of the speaker. In other words, the suggestive or implicative meaning is available after analysing the given sentence bearing the primary meaning (*Śakyārtha*). We generally look for the secondary or suggestive meaning if there is incompatibility in the primary

meaning. When the suggestive meaning is known, the primary meaning becomes the instrument through which we arrive at the suggestive meaning.

According to the *Dhvani* theorists, poetic meaning is characteristically different in kind from logical meaning. In ordinary language when we state the meaning of a phrase or an expression or a word we are stating what the word refers to, what it has by convention come to stand for. Words are conventional symbols, referring to something beyond themselves.

The Indian thinkers mention three different logical functions of language viz. (1) *Abidhā* ; (2) *Tātparya* and (3) *Lakṣaṇā*.

(i) *Abidhā* - is that meaning which through denotation gives the conventional meaning of words. (2) *Tātparya* is that meaning which the word acquires within the contextual relationship of the sentence. (3) *Lakṣaṇā* is the implied meaning, often a statement if taken literally, gives contradictory meanings in which case the meaning even though it is not directly stated can be implied from the words. For instance, if we say, 'A house on the river, Ganges' it is clearly implied that the house is on the bank of the river Ganges and it is not situated on the current of water.

Above three functions of language is not sufficient to give the poetic meaning it depends on another indirect function of language i.e., the power to manifest a suggested sense.

In scientific works and for the purpose of everyday communication language is used as an instrument. We are concerned only with the meaning which is directly given. Meaning in poetry are not directly given but rather indirectly through the suggestive power of language. The essence of poetry lies in the effect it evokes, the imagery and feeling it gives rise to, and not in the factual accuracy of its statements.¹ In this respect it is totally contrasted to science, wherein the function of language is purely statement of fact.

“The words in poetry actually have a double function. As conventional symbols, they convey direct meanings. But within the structure of the poem words also function suggestively. Indirectly, they give rise to images, feelings, effective tones and associations. When all these are merged together they combine to give rise to a unique kind of meaning, which is not given by individual words in their normal usage. This indirect meaning is what the Indian aestheticians call *dhvani* in order to distinguish it from the ordinary and direct meaning of words. *Dhvani* taken as extraordinary meaning, however, does not totally forego the symbolic use of words. The vivid imagery of poetic language depends primarily upon a complete understanding of words, first is their symbolic and then their suggestive function.”²

We have to understand the symbolic meaning of words first in order to understand and appreciate a poetry. Vaguely or obscurely grasping the meaning of the words used in poetry cannot give us the meaning of the poetry

but it is necessary to know the words clearly upto their finest shade of meaning. The poetic meaning emerges when the referential use of words are understood but submerged into the background. It is when the symbolic meanings do not intrude upon the mind, but slip unobtrusively into the unconscious, that the suggestive sense is aroused. In poetry, the final effect of words is predominantly a suggestive one.

In poetry the meaning lies in the suggestive power evoked by the combined effect of the words, and emerges as the result of word juxtaposition, arranged to convey direct effects through rhythm, vowel quality etc. In science, the meanings are derived by an analytical process of the literal statement of words used as symbols for meaning lying beyond them. In poetry, the sense is immediately and directly presented, it appears to rise, wholly and suddenly from the words without any direct connection with the literal statements.

“The words in poetry do not have any conventional reference of things beyond them, their function is only to evoke certain images. The truth of these images do not lie in their correspondence to their inner essence and law of things. Of this essence and law, the sensitive spectator is made aware of in the depth of his experience.”³

Aesthetic experience takes place by virtue of the squeezing out of the poetical word. Aesthetically motivated person read and taste a same poem many times. Each reading may expose different meanings of the poem. But practical

means of perception once they are accomplished they have no use. Suppose a letter which contains some informations. After reading once when one gets the information then the letter becomes useless. There is no necessity of reading it several times. Here the meaning is fixed. So the words in poetry must have some additional power, this additional power is called the power of suggestion.

Kāshmiri writer Udbhata holds the view that the essence of poetical language is the secondary or metaphorical function of the words. Poetical expressions enriches itself with various things like rhymes, figures, inversion etc. which are considered as useless in Practical language but essential in poetic language. Practical language is dominated by a direct way of expression but the mode of poetic language is different from it. Poetic language is decriminated by the secondary function of words. But Ānandavardhana disagrees. The secondary function does not necessarily imply poetry. Actually all language is metaphorical. The source of poetry must then be another sense of value that is assured by words, altogether different from the primary and the secondary one. "Practical meaning is different from conventional meaning. In the words of great poet it shines out and towards above the beauty of the well known another parts even as charm does in ladies."⁴ This new sense – the poetical sense – irreducible, as it is, to the literary one cannot however do without it but is, as it were, supported by it. The "poetic meaning", he says,

“is not understood by the mere understanding of the grammar and dictionary. It is understood only by those who have an insight into the true essence of poetry.”⁵

The meaning of the poem comes to us at a flash or suddenly. We cannot find the meaning of a poem just by joining the dictionary meaning. Poeticians give the name resonance (*Dhvani*) to that particular type of poetry where the conventional meaning and conventional words both are subordinate.

A truly poetical expression or word is that which cannot be replaced by another expression or word and if we do this then this may change the value of previous expression or word. Poetry knows no synonyms.

Abhinavagupta points out that the meaning which is expressed by the poetry is not the literal, direct and referential meaning but rather it is suggested, indirect and emotive meaning. In a good poetic work this suggestive meaning dominates over literal meaning. Here we may mention famous western aesthetician S.K.Langer's distinction between discursive language and presentational symbol.

According to her, language is a system of symbol. She distinguishes between two types of symbol, viz. discursive symbol and presentational symbol, the latter being the case of art symbol. Langer's distinction between two types of symbols may be put forward in her own words :

“The import of an art symbol can not be built up like to meaning of a discourse, but must be seen in toto first; that is, the ‘understanding’ of a work of art begins with an intuition of the whole presented feeling ... In discourse meaning is synthetically construed by a succession of intentions; but in art the complex whole is seen or anticipated first.”⁶

We cannot get the meaning of a poem by combining all the dictionary meaning of the words used in the poem. After reading the whole poem we grasp the meaning of the poem. In the case of discursive language meaning is almost fixed. But in poetic language which Langer calls presentational symbol the meaning is not fixed. Different reader may interpret the same poem in different ways. This is due to the presentational character of poetic language.

The proper reader of poetry or spectator of drama gathers from the words or acting something more than the obvious presentation. Such a reader has to be an *adhikāri* i.e. duly qualified. His heart must be capable of pure intuition. Such a person on hearing the sentences attains a mental intuition where the specific time and place of direct meanings are disregarded. Thus, in the presentation of fear, neither the object nor the subject of fear are apprehended in relationship to any specific actuality. That is why the idea of fear is vividly experienced without the spectator being overcome by fear.”Abhinavagupta in his *Locana* has repeatedly stressed that *dhvani* is unique and uniqueness, that it

is exclusively a poetic function of language as distinguished from the commonly accepted function like *Abhidhā*, *Lakṣaṇā* and *Tātparyasakti* (Purport).”

The ideal critic is a *sahṛdaya* or one with the temperament of a poet. The poet creates and the critic recognises poetry because he recreates it in himself, being of a kindered heart. The poet and critic are not two different units; they are two faeces of one living principle like the mythical bird *Gaṇḍabheruṇḍa* on the mysore flag. This is the basic finding of the *Dhvani* theorists headed by Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta.

Many scholars of Indian Aesthetics deals with this theory to *Dhvani*. The theory is so complex and manifold in its implications that the task of mentioning its essentials in summary fashion is very difficult. Here an attempt is made to make the understanding of *Dhvani* theory clear. Here we are concerned mainly with the views of Ānandabardhana and Abhinavagupta.

‘*Dhvani*’ is the name given to the essence of poetry primarily in its synthetic aspect. For Ānandavardhana soul of poetry is that which *sahṛdayas* alone feel and which is behind the meaning grasped by dry scholars. *Sahṛdayas* also admire the beauty of form and beauty of content like other scholars but they do it in their own ways. *Sahṛdayas* realise the inner meaning or significance of a poem, if there is any. The realised inner meaning itself, which is over and above the logical meaning is its *Dhvani*. What is the scope of this poetic meaning? primarily it is concerned with the experience of the poet as transmitted

through the poem. The poet's experience, again, is to be distinguished from the experience of the laymen or academicians in the day to day world. It is a total complex of emotion, imagination and thought.

Any literary form of art depends on the linguistic factor. It is only the language which has been taken as raw materials for building the body of the literary form of art. Though language is taken as a body yet there are some specific character of the same which is accepted as the spirit (*ātmā*) of the literary form of art (*kāvya*).

Some particular linguistic structure is called sometimes *alaṅkāra*, sometimes *Ritī* (style), sometimes qualities (*guṇa*), sometimes *vokrokti*, and sometimes *Dhvani* or suggestive meaning. Among these there is a common element which is a kind of linguistic play. Hence without the help of it one cannot think of creating a literary form of art. Through the twist of language one can have various types of literary forms.

The infinite forms of literary arts would not have been possible, had there not been any mystic power in the language itself. Udhyaṇa, the celebrated Naiyāyika, mentioned the infinite diversity of this world as one of the proofs for the existence of god. From the fact of the infinite diversity of the universe (*vaicitryād visvavṛttitah*), the existence of god is to be admitted in as much as he is capable of creating infinite diversity in the universe. The infinite diversity of melody also points out the same mystic character in it. Nobody can say that

whatever we have heard so far are the final forms of melody, because innumerable forms of it are found to be originated through the amalgamation of different notes and ragas. From the time immemorial we are finding different melodic forms. All of them are novel in character though they are based on seven notes like *sā, re, gā* etc. Hence like God melody also possess transcendental or mystic power assumed from its infinite diversity. Māgha, the great Sanskrit Poet, has realised this aspect of melody and language when he says '*geyasyeva vicitratā*' in his *Sisūpalavadha*. The original *Śloka* runs as follows : "*Vaṇaiḥ katipayairiva grathitasya svarairiva/Anantā vāṇmayasyāho geyasyeva vicitratā.*"⁸ He has mentioned this aspect of melody as a metaphor to explain the infinite diversity existing in language. Just as melody though composed of seven notes is of infinite forms, language though composed of limited number of *varṇas* has got infinite diversity.

The importance of language may easily be understood if we look into the derivative meaning of the term '*sāhitya*' which means 'togetherness'. This concept of *sāhitya* or togetherness presupposes the proper association between sound and its meaning (*sabdārtha*), which is further clarified by Bhamaha. To him the togetherness between a sound and its meaning is called *kāvya* (*śabdārthau sahitaū kāvyam*)⁹. The term '*sāhita*' is used to refer to the togetherness between *śabda* and its *artha*, and hence the term *sāhita* is taken as a qualifier.

The book where there is the proper co-existence between a sound and its meaning is called *sāhityavidyā* as found in the *Kāvya-mīmāṃsā* (Śabdārthayoḥ yathāvat sahabhāvena vidyā *sāhityavedyā*)¹⁰

The relation between a sound and its meaning is called *sāhitya*. This relation is of twelve types viz, primary meaning (*abhidhā*), will to speak (*vivakṣā*), significance or intention (*tātparya*), potency (*sāmarthya*), faultless (*dosahīna*), association with rhetoric (*alaṃkārayoga*), a formation of quality (*guṇopādāna*) etc.

Kuntaka also did not ignore the importance of language while he said that *sāhitya* is a kind of extraordinary presentation of a term and its meaning. It becomes attractive and beautiful if there is the proper presentation of them – which means that they should be arranged in such a manner as if ‘they are made for each other.’ This is expressed in two terms : *anyūṇa* (not less) and *anatirikta* (no more). If a term and its meaning remains in such a way so that they should be properly arranged existing not in less places and not in more places.¹¹ There is such a beautiful combination between a *śabda* and its *artha* that one is neither superior nor inferior to another, which is expressed as ‘*parasparaspardhitva-ramaṇīya*’ i.e. one is so beautiful that as if one is challenging another.¹² There is a signifier and signified relationship (*vācya-vācaka-sambandha*) between a term and its meaning which is the form of *kāvya* as observed by *Kuntaka*¹³. In this

combination an individual finds the cause of aesthetic pleasure as one gets oil existing in each and every oil seed."¹⁴

A problem may be raised in this context. The signifier – signified relationship remains in each and every sentence. Can all such sentences be called *kāvya*. In reply, Kuntaka rejoins that a particular type of signified – signifier –relation.¹⁵ What type of peculiarity remains in such relation. The peculiarity remains in the challenging combination between a term and its meaning which is endowed with various attributes, rhetories etc manifested through *vakratā*.¹⁶

Śabda and its *artha* is complementary to each other as they can never be differentiated i.e. a sound is endowed with its meaning while its meaning is endowed with the sound. That is why, this phenomenon is described as *ardhanārīśvara* (a deity endowed with maleness and femaleness in each half) which can never be separated. Just as in the case of pictorial art no distinction can be made between lines and pictures, so sound and its meaning is non-distinct. Kālidāsa has beautifully expressed in the introductory verse of his *Raghuvamśa*- '*Vāgārthāviva sampr̥ktam vāgarthapratipattaye/jagataḥ pitaran vande parvatiparameśvaran.*'¹⁷

In this beautiful verse the combination of Pārvati and Parameśvara is compared to the combination between *vāk* (sentence) and *artha* (its meaning). In order to create perfection in the field of literary art Kālidās is praying to Lord

and Pārvati, which is compared to the embodiment of *vāk* and *artha* and in the *Rudrahṛdayopanisad* Śīva is known as 'artha'. From this it follows that the Śīva and Pārvati is an embodiment of *Vāgartha*.

Daṇḍin in his *Kāvyaḍarsā* has laid on the importance of a sound in the following verse – “*Idam andham tamaḥ kṛtsnam jayeta bhuvanatrayaṁ/yadi śabdāhvayaṁ jyotirāsaṁsāraṁ na dīpyate*.”¹⁸

That is, the whole world would have been covered by deep darkness, had there been no light in the form of word illuminating this world. A word, if applied properly, can associate us with all our needs of life just as a mythological cow (*kāmadhuk*). If it, on the other hand, is ill-applied, it proves the bluntness of the applier.¹⁹ The behaviour in our daily life is centred around the language which is also poetic language.²⁰

A particular type of language gives rise to implicative meaning and another type of peculiar language gives suggestive meaning that are called *lakṣaṇā* and *vyañjanā* or *dhvani* respectively. What type of language is to be understood as *dhvani*? The meaning of a sentence which does not directly follow from the words and which suggests some meaning through deeper implication indirectly is called *Dhvani* when the direct meaning of a sentence remains manifested without being contradicted, a reader might feel another meaning out of it simultaneously. This meaning is called *dhvani*. Just as the sound of a bell, though stopped, goes on singing for a particular span of time,

our mind while grasping the primary meaning feels the subtle sense from it. This sense is a suggestive sense (*dhvani*). Which is also based on language. That which is pointed out by the primary meaning is called suggestion, which is taken as a spirit of poetry.²¹

The grammarians and the *Naiyāyikas* have accepted two types of potency in a word – direct meaning (*abhidhā*) and implicative meaning (*lakṣaṇā*) when the primary meaning (*abhidhyārtha*) of a word is constrained, the implicative meaning is taken for account e.g. Kalinga is brave (*Kalingah sāhasikaḥ*). In this case, kalinga, being a country, cannot be brave and hence the ‘inhabitants of Kalinga’ has to be taken as the meaning through implication.

Sometimes a sentence bears a meaning which surpasses the primary and implicative meaning of the same. The power to provide such a “meaning is called *vyañjanā* or suggestion from which a suggestive meaning follows. Just as the glammer is something different from the constituents of the body of a woman, though it is manifested by these, the suggestive meaning though latent in the constituents is felt as distinct from them.²²

In other words, when the meaning suggests an apprehended meaning after making the primary meaning non-prominent, it is called *Dhvani* by the wise men.²³ Let us take a romantic example to show the beauty of suggestive meaning which is emerged from the description. A religious person would disturb the secrecy and beauty of a forest where the lovers and lady loves used to meet.

But the religious person was always scared of the dog remaining in the forest. The learned lady love told the religious person – 'Oh! Religious person, you may roam about the forest without any fear. Because, the dog is killed by an angry lion residing in the same forest on the bank of the *Godāvāri*. "*Bhrama dhārmika! viśraddhaḥ sa śunako'dya māritastena / godāvāri nadikūla latāgahana – vāsinā dr̥ptasiṃhena.*"²⁷ The suggestive meaning following from this verse is that, though there is no fear of dog, an angry lion has entered the forest. Hence, he should be cautious and leave the place as early as possible.

The linguistic usage is also described as one of the *Bhāvas* which become instrumental to the phenomenon of *rasaniṣpattiḥ*. Hence, it is very much important factor in aesthetics.

Some philosophers have described the poetic language as *Mantra* as it comes from the different plane of mind. Sri Aurobindo has described *kāvya* as a overhead poetry as it is the product of the overmind. The Vedic seers have invented a language which is called *Mantra* as it is a product of their vision. Hence, for understanding poetic language a different state of mind is also essential. Moreover, *Alaṃkāra*, *Riti*, *Dhvani* are the properties of language. Hence, language is the key factor in aesthetic communication. That is why, the implicative meaning or suggestive meaning of a sentence are discussed in the context of the philosophy of language particularly in the *Nyaya* and *Advaita* systems of philosophy.

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 8. *Śisūpālavadhā* 2/72
 9. *Kāvyaṅkārā*, 1/16.
 10. *Kāvyaṃimāṃsā*, 2nd Chapter.
 11. *Sāhityaṃ anayoḥ śobhāsālitāṃ prati kāpyasau/anyunaṅātirikta – tva – monohāriṇyavasthitih. Vakroktijīvita* - 1/17.
 12. *Vṛtti ḥi Vakroktijīvita*.
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13. *Vācako vācyāñca iti dvau sammilitau kāvyam'* – Vṛttī on *Vakroktijīvita*, p.7.
14. "*Pratilīlām iva tadvidāhtadakāritvaṃ vartate*" – Ibid.
15. *Viśiṣṭameva iha Sāhityaṃ abhipretam.* Ibid.
16. Kīdrśam ? Vakratā-vicitra – guṇalaṃkāra – sampradāṃ paraspāra – spardhārohaḥ. Tena-sama – sarvagunau śāntausuḥṛdau iva saṃgatau/Parasparasya śobhāyai śabdārthau bhavatoyathā', Ibid.
17. Verse No. 1/1
18. *Kāvyaḍarsā* – ¼.
19. 'Ekaḥ Śabdaḥ suprayuktaḥ samyag jñāta svaṛge loke ca kāmadhug Bhavati' - *kāvyaḍarsā* - 1/6.
20. 'Vācāmeva Prasādena lokayātrā pravartate' - *Kāvyaḍarsā*' – 1/3.
21. *Kāvyaśyātmā dhvaniḥ* - Dhvanyāloka 1/1.
22. "Pratiyaṃānaṃ punaranyadeva vāstvasti vāñiṣu mahākaviṃnām yatlat Prasiddhāvayavātiriktaṃ vibhāti lāvaṇyamivāṅganāsu". Dhvanyāloka – ¼.
23. "Yatrāthaḥ śabdo vā tamarthamupasarjanīkṛta – svārthau Vyaktaḥ kāvyaviśeṣaḥ sa dhvaniriti sūribhiḥ kathitaḥ" *Dhvanyāloka* 1/13.
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CHAPTER – IV

SOME PROBLEMS AND CRITICAL APPRECIATION

Various problems are raised regarding Abhinavagupta's philosophy of aesthetic experience. We shall try to answer these questions by following the views of Abhinavagupta.

At first let us turn our attention to the concept of pathos from which a *sloka* is originated as observed by Ānandavardhana – '*Krauñcadvandva-viyogotthaḥ śókah ślókatvamagataḥ*'. The impersonal and disinterested pathos generated through the sight of the death of the curlew-couple gives rise to a *śloka*. Both Vāṇiki and the curlew-couple blessed with human are under the sway of a feeling called pity. This pity being a pre-eminent feeling of the human heart has spread itself very widely. It affects easily men at different times and in different races in different degrees. Women are more moved by pity than men; civilised men than savages, and probably the northern more than the southern races. This pity rules most the mind of Christians. The area and scope of pity has expanded widely with the ease of communication in the world today.

Literature of the world has emerged from dramas called tragedies concern themselves necessarily with this human noble feeling called pity. Aristotle has rightly pointed out that tragedies could not exist and would not have any point if the human misfortunes would not have evoked pity. In poetry this

pity is depicted and sometimes it is depicted elaborately. But the depiction of pity in poetry evokes surprisingly a kind of joy which is something strange. We cannot blame ourselves when we enjoy this pity at the time of witnessing scenes of pity and sadness in a play or in the times of poetry. The relation of cause and effect between pity and joy is a puzzle till today which no competent authority on literary criticism has discussed in a convincing way. The furious sentiment (*raudra*), the sentiment of frightful (*bhayānaka*) the sentiment of disgustful – all create also an ethos of joy in the spectators but the relation of cause and effect in these has not sparked any debate. The poetic sentiment is not within the purview of laws of nature as we meet in the relation of cause and effect between an earthen jar and clay. The sphere of poetry is simply super-mundane (*alaukika*) and hence, the relation between pity and joy, fear and joy cannot and should not be accounted for. The domain of poetry as per Mammata's observation is untouched by the claws of day-to-day human existence and the laws of nature that permeate it (*niyatikṛtaniyamarahitā*). The words expressive of sentiments, moods, when mentioned, do not put any handicap to aesthetic relish (*rasa*), but the explicit mention of such words are the good means for evocation of aesthetic relish (*rasa*). The experience of pain, fear, anger in a play removes the same from the mind of a connoisseur and the vacuum is taken hold of by joy. This is like removal of serpent's poison by an injection prepared by serpent's venom.

Now we may turn our attention to another similar problem like a poet moved at a tragic sight at heart and giving vent to his experience in a metrical verse as in the case of the author of the Rāmāyana giving vent to his sorrow at the sight of the ghastly murder of the male curlew putting the female one into an ocean of sorrow. Sorrow grips the heart thoroughly and overflows from it to take the form of metrical poetry.

From this one could ask whether art is spontaneous or not. Both Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta are in favour of the spontaneity of art if the above mentioned episode of Valmiki is taken for consideration. In such cases of art plot, character, rhetorics, language follow spontaneously for the creation of a *kāvya*. It has been accepted by them that one whose heart is saturated with *rasa* receives the power of creativity (*rasāveśavaiśadyanirmānakṣamatva*). Someone may raised question – what is the utility of accepting creating genius (*kārayitri pratibhā*) and practice (*anusīlana*) as prescribed by some rhetoricians. It is also true that some great poets like Rabindranāth etc, being dissatisfied with their created words, are found to keep on changing the words, metres, etc. of the same works before giving a final shape to them. If these points are properly adhdred to the proposition that art is spontaneous will turn into a false one.

In response to this, some arguments may be put forth in support of Abhinagavupta and Ānandavardhana. What is more important in the creation of a poetry is the saturation of heart with aesthetic enjoyment which is called

rasāvesa. If somebody is covered with such sentiment, he becomes the sharer of the pathos or other sentiments of the dramatic characters. In fact, the creator's heart, spectators' hearts and the hearts of the characters are tuned in the same way which is technically called *sahṛdaya*. Being *rasāvesa* or *sahṛdaya* is a precondition of the power of creativity, which is called *kārayitṛī pratibhā* (creative genius). From this creativity follows spontaneously. This creative genius is not an isolated or arbitrary phenomenon, as it is due to the *rasāvesa* i.e. the feeling of sentiment. So far as practice or *anūśīlana* is concerned, it can be taken as a promoter to the phenomenon of creativity. Though a section of aestheticians gives an emphasis on the practice (*anūśīlana*), it should be borne in mind that mere practice without *rasāvesa* will not help much in creating a literary form of art. It should also be kept in mind that the practice can enhance the power of creativity already generated through *rasāvesa*. If there is quantitatively less in the enjoyment of aesthetic experience, the practice (*anūśīlana*) can fill up the gap, but it is not at all essential if someone's mind is completely saturated with aesthetic sentiment. The 'practice' can take an individual to certain extent, but not to the point of perfection if he has not '*rasāvesa*' at all. If there is no deficiency of such element, the creation of art becomes spontaneous.

We would like to point out the role of compassion arising out of pathos depicted in poetry for obtaining the ethos of universalisation. (*sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*)

experienced by a true connoisseur while enjoying a play or novel. The sentiment of pity or compassion as the resultant effect of sorrow described in literature acts also as a mighty bond for binding up the heart of the connoisseur with the theme of literature which we call the act of identification between the heart of a connoisseur and the theme told or enacted. Shelley has described the tale of saddest thought as the root cause of all sweetness in a song. The role of pity or sympathy resulting from it goes a long way in effecting the heart of a responsive soul and the literary theme presented before him.

Abhinavagupta has explained the universalisation as 'the melting of the knower hood' (*Pramātrbhāvavigalana*). Let us imagine the theatre hall which is decorated with leaves and flowers and illumined. The whole auditorium is full of various types of people having various dresses and various professions. All of them are eager to see the play though they are different in profession, nature, and culture. One does not know another. Among them, some are rich, some poor, some professors, some advocates etc. In spite of these differences what is common among them is that all of them are thinking themselves as inhabitants of a blissful world. When the play starts, they gradually forget their personal problems, sufferings, desires etc. Gradually the individual character of them gets lost in impersonal and non-individual feelings. The personal character of them gets lost in impersonal character after transcending their narrower and limited bindings. When an personal character turns into an impersonal one due

to the influence of a particular place, time and situation, it is called generalisation or universalisation (*Sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*) which is rooted in the *sahṛdaya* – spectators. Under these circumstances a knower who has got a limited power (*parimitapramāṭā*) has extended himself to the objects. In other words, an object becomes subjectified through the extension of the self who is a knower (*pramāṭā*). Consequently, a subject has forgot all his own characteristics like – ‘I am a father of such person’, ‘I have such and such problems’ etc. By virtue of being subjectified the object has no independent status. It may otherwise be called – ‘objectified subject’ – as there are two-way traffic. There is hardly any difference between ‘subjectified object’ and ‘objectified subject’. The feeling of a measured individuality is lost in an unmeasured one. This objectification is beautifully described by Abhinavagupta as a ‘*tanmayībhavana*’ i.e. to become that (object). As this feeling remain in all the enjoyers, their minds, ears, eyes are tuned with one object which is described as ‘*sauvasamjīkānāmekaghanatā*’ i.e., one-pointed attention or concentration of all the spectators. There is a common feeling in the hearts of all of them (*sakala-sahṛdaya-samvādaśīlatā*).’

It may be argued that Abhinavagupta's sole contribution was on the literary form of art. It may seem to us that he was out of all interested in the phenomenon of aesthetic experience arising from other forms of arts like music, painting etc. This point may be highlighted from Abhinavagupta's time. Though he was primarily concerned with literary form of art as his literature is introduced

in the form of a commentary his theories can easily be applied to other forms of art. I think Abhinavagupta's theory is equally applicable of other forms of art if its basic tenets like spontaneity, universalisation, impersonal attitudes are concerned. It is stated by Ānandavardhana that a person, though conversant in apprehending a word, its meaning and their relation, cannot relish a literary form of art until and unless his mind is saturated with aesthetic sentiment. This phenomenon is expressed by him with the help of an example from the world of music. To him an individual, though expert in science of music, cannot understand melody and pleasure arising out of it, until and unless his heart is saturated with *rasa*.² Such is the case with the enjoyment of pictorial art and dance. A dancer will show his/her excellence in dance-performance if his/her heart is full of *rasa* arising from the dance, which echoed in Tagore's poetry – 'nṛtyarase citta mama uchal haye vāje' (i.e. my mind is ringing through the vibration arising from the saturation through the aesthetic delight coming from dance). Kuntaka, another celebrated thinker, in aesthetics has accepted that the literary form of art can provide pleasure (aesthetic) to the reader just as a music does.³ This aspect is supported by Karlaila – who said – "... all speech, ever the commonest speech, has something of song in it Poetry, therefore, we will call musical thought." (The Hero as Poet).⁴

A word has got two forms – sound and sense. The *śabdālaṃkāra* remains in sound which is the property of music and *arthālaṃkāra* exists in meaning

which is the property of painting. Hence, in the perfect literature we get the properties of a good music and paintings.⁵

Various experiences of our daily life are represented in the art-objects like literature, paintings, music etc. In order to represent the reality one should need deep concentration as found in the *Gitā – na cāyuktasya bhāvanā*. This abiding emotion or sentiment must exist in artist, dramatic characters and spectators. The pictorial art also deserves to have such sentiment among artist, pictorial presentation and critic. Hence, the properties of *sahṛdaya, tanmayatā* etc are not only in a *kāvya*, but in other forms of art like paintings, dance and music also. Moreover, the suggestive meaning is the instrumental to the relishment (*rasa*). In modern paintings there is the prominence of suggestive meaning, the understanding of which gives rise to aesthetic pleasure. Hence, Dhvani is equally important in understanding the beauty of pictorial art. Like *Kāvya*, other forms of art have got some power which makes us forget our day to day problems and hazards. Now-a-days, music therapy is given to a psychologically disorder or drug-addicted patients for the speedy recovery. Hence, the power of transcending problems of this mundane world is hidden not only in literary form of art but in other forms also.

Another problem, the universal character of aesthetic experience as accepted by Abhinavagupta may not be accepted by ordinary people. A particular literary art may not be enjoyed universally. The suggestive meaning

which is essential for enjoying literary excellence may not be attained by all. The understanding of suggestive meaning of a sentence presupposes an individual's skill, intellect etc. If it is so, how can we say that this may surely communicable to others ? In reply it can be said that here the term "universal" is not to be taken in a restricted sense. The statement, 'the aesthetic experience is universal' means 'it is enjoyed by each and every individual whose heart is saturated with *rasa*. (*sahṛdaya*).' If someone is not *sahṛdaya* this feeling may not be attained by him. *Dhvani* or suggestive meaning alone can give the admiration of *Sahṛdayas* (*Sahṛdayasīlāghyaḥ*).

Let us now consider the question, whether aesthetic experience is mystic or not. Though a little discussion has already been made but here we shall consider the question in details. Our answer of the question by following Abhinavagupta stands in favour of the view that aesthetic experience is mystic.

The aesthetic experience from a *kāvya*, as Abhinavagupta has observed, is different from the experience from other sources. Those who enjoy *kāvya* becomes happy or unhappy after sharing the happiness or misery of the hero or heroin. Behind this happiness or misery of the audience there is no argument by which a logical mind can be convinced. As for example, *Sitā*, a character of a *kāvya* might be happy or unhappy, but there is no reason of being involved emotionally with the dramatic character and being happy or unhappy. Though it is true, it is found in each and every case. From this particular effect of

audience it is quite rational to search for a cause of it. As this cause is not found through ordinary sense organs and reasoning, it can be taken as mysterious.

If it is argued that the scenes, background music etc. (in the case of dramatic performance) are the causes of realisation of aesthetic experience, it may be asked whether these causes are producer (*Kārahetu*) or revealer (*jnāpakahetu*). The *kārahetu* is destroyed just after the effect comes into being. As for example, a table is made by a carpenter; but it may last for long time even after the death of the carpenter. So far as aesthetic experience is concerned, it ceases if the scene, background music etc. are withdrawn and hence, they cannot be described as producers. On the other hand, they cannot be put under *jnāpakahetu* because aesthetic pleasure cannot remain previously (i.e. before scenes, background music etc. are set). When a cause reveals an object, it must be there. As for example, the opening of the door reveals the objects existing in the room and hence it is called revealer. It cannot be said that the aesthetic experience exists before the causes mentioned above are set. As at this time there is nothing to reveal, they are not revealer but they can at best suggest the aesthetic pleasure enjoyed by us. As an object which is neither caused (*Kāvya*) nor revealed (*Jnāpya*) is not found in this empirical world, the aesthetic enjoyment is mystic or transcendental.⁶

From another standpoint aesthetic experience may be considered as mystic. Each and every type of experience must be either determinate

(*Savikalpaka*) or indeterminate (*nirvikalpaka*). Such type of experience is not indeterminate because it gives rise to bliss (*ānanda*). In the determinate stage one has the feeling of indifference. But in the aesthetic experience there is a feeling of bliss and hence it is not indeterminate. It cannot be described as determinate also (which is definite and related to name, quality etc.), because this experience though blissful, is beyond the reach of direct expression. After enjoying a *Kāvya* one may have blissful experience which cannot be explained with the help of descriptions (like name, quality etc) like ordinary pleasure and hence, it is not determinate. As this does not come under the purview of both types of knowledge, it is considered as mystic.⁷

Further, each and every type experience will be wholly true or false. Such type of experience (i.e. aesthetic experience) is not wholly true because this knowledge becomes contradicted by this worldly knowledge just after the absorption breaks up. When we come back to this practical world from the world of aesthetic experience, we do realise that the characters and the incident occurred (in the drama) are not real at all, but false. Again, this experience cannot be described as wholly false, as it gives rise to a particular kind of pleasure by which we are drawn again and again and hence, it cannot be ignored as saying mere unreal. If on account of this it cannot be ignored as partially true and partially false, which is not possible at all, because such type

of object is not found in this world, it can be concluded that it is mystic in character.

That the aesthetic pleasure is mystic can again be known from the fact that the emotional mood involved in grief also gives rise to the realisation of joy. How a joy is realised from a painful situation? In this situation our mind is absorbed in the performances and this absorption depends on the equilibrium of mind. When our mind is disturbed, the pain follows. If our mind remains in the state of equilibrium, there is bliss.⁸ The restlessness in the mind is the sole cause of misery in ordinary human life. In the state of aesthetic experience there is something which forcibly snatches our mind and keeps it in a state of complete rest. It is the aesthetic pleasure which only can do this thing. This joy is endowed with such type of mystic power by which audience can enjoy this bliss out of painful situation, but in our practical life human nature is found averse to experience of pain.

When a person gets a joy from painful, horrible and terrible situations presented in a literary work or through a drama there is some sort of identity between the enjoyer and the object of enjoyment. This notion of identity emerges from having self-involvement (*Ekatmatā*) with it. Let us consider here our earlier example, when an individual is perceiving a scene in which Dusyanta enjoys happiness in company of Sakuntalā, he is realising bliss just as Dusyanta. For the time being he is identified himself with the character of the drama. Due

to this identification (with the hero) the spectator loses individuality and forgets his personal this worldly matters. This shows the mystic power of the aesthetic pleasure.

It has been stated earlier that this worldly pleasure is not aesthetic because aesthetic pleasure must be disinterested, impersonal and universal in character. But this worldly pleasure is not impersonal, disinterested, universal in character. When a man is completely absorbed in aesthetic pleasure he forgets his individual fear, love etc. when a terrific scene is represented, there is enjoyment of aesthetic pleasure called *Bhayānaka*. In this case, also a proper enjoyer makes himself free from all barriers like individualistic elements and he generally forget that this fear realised by him belongs to the dramatic character and enjoy the universal character of fear. The generalisation is the process of idealisation through which an individual may go from his personal emotion to the serenity of contemplation of poetic sentiment. The poet and the audience must have capacity of idealisation. For this reason a poet can present personal emotion as an impersonal aesthetic pleasure which is enjoyed by others. As this pleasure transcends the limitations of personal interest, it is disinterested universal pleasure. So we may argue here that the pleasure which transcends this worldly pleasure is transcendental and hence mystic.

Mystic character can also be proved from the spontaneity of aesthetic creation. *Vālmiki* created a *śloka* out of grief arising out of the perceiving the

separation of the curlew couple. His intense feeling of pathos in which he had lost himself. Due to the complete loss of personality he had a sense of joy out of grief. This joyous experience of pathos provided him with the power of creating a śloka spontaneously. Vālmiki's grief was not this worldly. This-worldly bliss makes a man idle. Poet's creation flows automatically from his heart. If a poet's heart is filled with emotion, it finds its spontaneous outlet. This spontaneity comes when there are no barriers like personal interest, inclination, desires etc. for the realisation of aesthetic pleasure. The spontaneous outlet of aesthetic creation from a person who was idle before having aesthetic absorption proves again the mystic character of aesthetic experience.

Many aestheticians have tried to explain this mystic condition. Abhinavagupta has explained this mysterious state i.e. aesthetic pleasure as limiting adjunct of Brahman which is the *Rasasvarūpa*.⁹

After the realisation of Brahman a man has such type of pleasure. As both types of pleasure (from *kāvya* and realisation of Brahman) is impersonal, disinterested and universal, there is no qualitative difference between them in so far as the pleasure from the realisation of Brahman is eternal while aesthetic enjoyment is temporary.

The view of Benedetto Croce may be put forward in favour of substantiating the mystic character of aesthetic experience. Croce has also admitted that at the time of aesthetic experience a man forgets his past or his

practical world. According to him, "he knows nothing as to what has happened prior to having absorbed it." In order to explain the mysterious state of aesthetic experience he has described it as an intuition which is completely different from ordinary intuition. To put it in his own words, "Art is intuition, but intuition is not always art, artistic intuition is a distinct species different from intuition in general by something more."¹⁰ Here the phrase "something more" is significant, as it indicates the existence of a world which is beyond the ordinary intuition. As that world is beyond the reach of the ordinary intuition which a man possesses, it can be taken as mysterious.

Due to the mysterious character of the aesthetic enjoyment Samkaracarya and Sri Aurobindo have described it as a form of the Divine and hence art is worship. This is because the ideal of art, the Beautiful, is one with the Divine.¹¹

The mystic element can be traced in dance music etc. also. A man is found to forget his grief in his personal life at the time of enjoyment of the performance of music or dance. That the spontaneity is as already pointed out, one of the vital characteristics of aesthetic experience from *Kāvya* can be applied to the music and dance etc. How far the performance of dance and music is artistic can be known from the spontaneity of them along with other qualities. If the qualities or music is not spontaneous, they will seem artificial. As the spontaneity comes from within, it belongs to an artist whose heart is absorbed in

aesthetic pleasure. If a musician or a dancer is absorbed in this enjoyment in heart (which is usually called 'mood' in ordinary language), he or she cannot help dancing or singing. In this stage only spontaneity comes. Music and dance forms begin and end in aesthetic pleasure. The dance like other arts also has, as Ānanda Coomār Swami observed, spiritual significance, independent of its theme or charm. As music and dance clearly express the aesthetic pleasure and enable man to taste it they give them the wisdom of Brahman.¹² This again leads us to the world of mysticism.

The mystic power of art is revealed to us more clearly when we find the children stop their crying and engage in taking food being absorbed in music. Even the snakes are found to forget enmity and become spell-bound with music performed by a charmer, not to speak of the human beings. If art in the form of poetry is taken as a vehicle for being united with the Divine, as observed by Samkara and Sri Aurobindo then the medium of the beautiful in form (in the case of idol) colour (in the case of picture), rhythm and harmony (in the case of music) may also be taken as vehicle for the same and hence all forms of art spiritually culminate in mysticism.

Lastly, Abhinavagupta is a commentator of Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka* where the emphasis is laid on the external structure of language i.e. *Dhvani*. In other words, the objective criterion is taken into account for the manifestation of *Rasa*. As a commentator Abhinavagupta should have

emphasised on this. But emphasis was how shifted from objectivity to subjectivity. What may be the cause of such shifting ? Because commentator is likely to follow the text. Hence one may argue that Abhinavagupta has not done proper justice to the text. In reply, it can be said that Abhinavagupta has emphasised on the subjectivity because to him, without the acceptance of self or self-involvement no feeling, no love is possible, not to speak of aesthetic feeling.

The subjectivity is not new in Indian aesthetics, but aesthicians prior to Abhinavagupta have laid much importance on the objective character of language. The subjectivity follows from the concept of *Sahṛdayatva* which is accepted as a key concept in *Dhvanyāloka* as absorbed by Abhinavagupta. The *Sahṛdayas* alone can appreciate the suggestive meaning or *Dhvani* as said earlier.

In fact, *Sahṛdaya* and *dhvani* - is complementary to each other. It is *dhvani* through which *rasa* is manifested while it is *Sahṛdayatva* through which suggestive meaning is appreciated. It is not true that Abhinavagupta has not laid much importance on *dhvani*. To him, *dhvani* alone cannot give rise to aesthetic pleasure unless one extends oneself to the dramatic character etc. Hence, self-extension is main factor for the aesthetic enjoyment, *dhvani* – of course has got some instrumental value so far as Abhinavagupta's view is concerned.

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 3. "Gītavat hṛdayāhlādam vidadhati yat", *Vakroktijīvita vṛtti*, p.16.
 4. *Kāvyaṅloka*, p. 361.
 5. *Ibid.*, p. 393.
 6. A. Sankaran, *The theories of Rasa and Dhvani*, University of Madras, 1973, pp. 125-26.
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 8. "..... Sattvam vanijacit – svabhāvanivṛttiviśrāntilakṣaṇaḥ parabrahmāsvādasavidhaḥ."
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9. "Raso vairah", *Taittirīyopanisad*, II/7 "Parabrahmāsvādaṣavidhaḥ", *Locana*, p. 193.

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