
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-śāstra* where we find his famous *rasa-śūtra*. 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.
