PART—III

CHAPTER V:
CONCLUSION

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There is a general belief that the Western and Eastern traditions are dichotomous, sharing nothing in common, and whatever development the world has achieved in respect of culture is chiefly the contribution of Western Europe. But truth is no monopoly of one nation. If we turn back to the great tradition of our country, we find that Indians too have approached in the philosophical problems pertaining to art and culture in their own way and according to their own light. The problems of human experience are one, their contexts of origin may be different. Cultural tradition of humanity is one whole, a single unit. In order to reveal the incandescent unity of human aspiration and achievement through the ages, one needs drink deep in the springs of both Indian and Western traditions in criticism. Only a synthesis of the two opulent traditions of critical thought, the Indian and Western, can break the existing dichotomy between Eastern and Western world views. With this end in view, a comparative approach has been attempted in this work.

If the views of some Western thinkers be kept side by side with the Indian thinkers on aesthetic feeling, one is marvelled at the close resemblance of the two in essentials. Thus, though in point of time, geographical distance and tradition, Ānandavardhana and his follower Abhinavagupta on the one hand, is far removed from Immanuel Kant on the other, in point of thought-currents they are at amusing proximity. In the foregoing chapters, we have drawn an outline of the theories of these thinkers and the context of the origin of the theories. Let us now give ear to the chord of unity.

SECTION 1: THE SUBJECTIVE TURN

As we have indicated in chapter I, Sanskrit poetics started its journey apparently from some theory of alaṅkāra. Alaṅkāras are those decorative devices which render poetic expressions attractive. In the earliest extant works from Bhāmaha to Rudraṭa, alaṅkāra formed the main topic of discussion. These early rhetoricians confined their energies to the elaboration of more or less mechanical formulas with reference to the technique of expression. The whole
aesthetic judgement was directed to the means of externalization, and aesthetic pleasure was regarded objectively from the standpoint of extraneous facts which contributed to it. Thus alaṅkāra śāstra in this period was an “objective, empirical, and more or less mechanical discipline.” More care was taken about objective and external charm, than about the subjective and inward beauty, the aesthetic fact.

Bhāmaha, Udbhāta, Rudraṭa, Daṇḍin – all remained confined to the kāvya śarīra or the body of poetry and paid no attention to its ātman, its soul or animating principle. Even when Vāmana called riti the ātmā or essence of poetry, he meant by it only external beauty of objective representation realized by means of certain standard excellences (gunaś). The sole function of those elements, as well as of alaṅkāras was, in their treatment, to embellish the external aspect of poetry, namely the word and its sense: they were vācyavācaka-cārutva-hetu.

It was Ānandavardhana (and following him Abhinavagupta) who first recognized the existence of the soul of poetry over and above the existence of the kāvya śarīra (the body of poetry). The soul of poetry is dhvani. As ātman (soul) is different from śarīra (body), so dhvani, the ātman of poetry, cannot be equated with the body of poetry, which is the external structure such as the words and their meanings (śabdārtha), style (rīti), figures of speech (alaṅkāra), denotation (abhidhā), indication (lakṣaṇā) etc. What pleases the sahṛdaya (connoisseur) is this kāvyātmā (the soul of poetry). Though there are three types of pratīyāmyānārtha (implied meaning), the rasādi type alone is the most important. Vastudhvani (suggestion of matter of fact or idea) and alaṅkāradhvani (suggestion of figure of speech) can be understood through the rasa alone. Vastudhvani and alaṅkāradhvani resolve themselves ultimately into suggestion of rasa (sentiment), which is in fact the essence of poetry. Vastudhvani and alaṅkāradhvani are admissible in poetry because they have a touch of rasa; they are not neutral evocations. Rasadhvani is, in fact, the soul of poetry. It is dhvani proper, the intrinsic dhvani.

Rasa is that mental state which is derived from the experience of poetry. The poet through the suggestive power of words and their meanings call up a reflection of the emotion which the reader realizes as a particular condition of his own mind. Rasa therefore consists of a self manifested state of the mind. The
mental state is comprised of bliss alone. We have observed in section 4 of Chapter II that rasa has been described by Abhinavagupta in Locana as “sukumārasvasamvidānandacarvarā.” Rasa is tasted through the act of blissful relishing (tasting) the beautitude of one’s own consciousness. Rasa is therefore a matter of inner experience, a realization of a specific state of consciousness in oneself. The poet realizes the specific state of consciousness in himself and communicates his experience through his poem, through a specific arrangement of language (the dhvani way). The reader, on reading poetry, realizes in himself that specific state of consciousness. Rasa is therefore flashing across (parisphurantam), revealing itself, and thus self evident. That is why rasa is described as subjective in character. It is consciousness being aware of itself as subject without being objectified. Poetry does not give the content an object, rather through its medium of śabdārtha, it leads us to this realm of awareness.

Dhvani thus takes one to subject understood as awareness. Rasadhvani, therefore, works on the level of the subject. The subject comes in contact with the subject. Beauty, then, in Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta’s philosophy, does not inhere objectively in the kāvyā śarīra. The kāvyā śarīra is only a medium, through which the aesthetic awareness blooms forth automatically in the sensitive reader. The poet creates the kāvyā śarīra which is, as if, a mirror through which the sensitive reader visualizes his own generalized state (sādhāraṇīkṛta) of consciousness. This aesthetic awareness or generalized consciousness, which is itself rasa, gives him disinterested delight. Beauty, in the hand of dhvani - theorists, is thus reduced to a kind of self revelation or self awareness.

From the above discussion, it becomes clear that the enquiry as to what constitutes the speciality of the sāhitya of śabda and artha in poetry was conducted by rhetoricians from Bhāmaha to Vāmanā from an objective standpoint, who declared that the speciality of poetic language consisted in the attributes of śabda and artha, which could be analyzed into the categories of alaṅkāra or guṇa. But the enquiry took a subjective turn in the hands of Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta. They approached the problem not from the standpoint of outward expression, but from the standpoint of the experience of the aesthete.
Since our objective is to discover affinities and resemblances in the philosophical ideas of the East and the West, we now turn over to Western aesthetics to show that in the Western tradition too, the quest for the nature of beauty started with the object, but ultimately took a subjective turn in the modern period especially in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant.

We have pointed out the developments of Western aesthetics in chapter III. Ancient writers devoted special attention to the objective side of beauty. The Greeks considered beauty as an attribute of things. The beautiful was considered as identical with order and proportion. The Greek conception of beauty as harmony finds its final embodiment in Kantian aesthetics, when it becomes a purely subjective phenomenon. The different stages of this development towards ultra-subjective tendency we discuss below.

In Western aesthetics harmony was first treated as a fundamental cosmological relation. The first use of the concept of harmony, as we have seen, can be traced back to Pythagoras and extends through much of the classical and medieval use of the term. Though Plotinus rejected symmetry as a criterion for beauty, he incorporated the essential elements of metaphysical harmony. He identified beauty with likeness and communion. Beauties of this world come by communion in Ideal-Form. Since the Idea is a unity, the more an object expresses unity, the more beautiful it is. It is the Idea (Form) which has made the sum (matter) one harmonious whole. Thomas Aquinas in the medieval period held that the three conditions of beauty are integrity or perfection, proportion or harmony, and brightness or clarity.

In the classical and medieval uses of harmony, the harmonious relation and the beauty it produces are objective. A harmony in the object reflects a harmony in the cosmos. It the 17th and 18th century empiricist school, on the other hand, we observe a subjective turn. Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and the followers of Hutcheson identified beauty as fundamentally a feeling experienced by the subject, and the criteria they suggest for producing this feeling one way or other include harmony. A harmonious feeling pleasurable in itself produces beauty. Harmony in empiricism is, therefore, with-in sense. It is not a cosmological relation.

Still for Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and his followers, harmony is achieved through the arrangement of the object. In the next phase, we observe a third use
of the concept of harmony in the work of Burke and Kant. Harmony, in their
treatment, is to be found not in the arrangement of the object at all but in the
play of the faculties themselves. According to Burke, to be found aesthetically
pleasurable, the works must employ the faculties of the mind in moderate ways—
neither over-stimulating nor boring. This faculty psychology emerges into a full-
fledged aesthetic theory in Kant’s *Critique of Judgement*. Kant bases the
universality of aesthetic judgement not on some cosmic harmony, but on a
common operation of the judging faculties themselves. Harmony in this usage
is not a harmony of the parts of the object at all. It is a harmony which exists in
the faculties of cognition and the way that they construe the sensory input
available to them. We call objects beautiful because their representation makes
us conscious of a harmony of our faculties of representation. We feel pleasure in
the harmony of our faculties. Our consciousness of pleasure in the beautiful is
our sole direct consciousness of the ground of this pleasure, i.e., the
consciousness of the harmony of the cognitive faculties. Beauty, in Kant’s
philosophy, is therefore an attribute, not of things, but of our representative
states. This principle of the harmony of the faculties holds equally for products of
nature and products of art. A work of art is beautiful if its representation makes
us feel the harmonious relation of our mental powers. At the time of judging an
object of nature or art to be beautiful, the representation (the object of nature or
art) is thus referred or related back solely to the subject. A judgement of taste,
then, is a subjective judgement, in the sense of being ‘of the subject’. As Kant
says in the ‘First Moment’ of the ‘Analytic of the Beautiful’, “The judgement of
taste, therefore, is not a cognitive judgement, and so not logical, but is aesthetic
— which means that it is one whose determining ground cannot be other than
subjective”.

The subjectivity of the beautiful, for Hume, was a fact. But for Kant,
the subjectivity of the beautiful is no longer merely a fact, but a *law*. Beauty is no
longer an attribute of things, but an attribute of our representative states.

**SECTION 2: OBJECTIVE CLAIM**

Kant, in his philosophy of beauty, avoids pure objectivism which holds
that a judgement of the form “This object is beautiful” is wholly determined by
certain qualities or relations as are perceived to exist in the object. Judgement
of taste is not at all concerned with the object or its properties, but merely with
our feeling about it. Judgements of taste are subjective. It is subjective in the sense that its determining ground must always be the feeling of contemplative pleasure or displeasure. However, according to Kant, a judgement of taste is not subjective in the sense that it is a subjective report, a bare statement or expression of personal liking or disliking. According to Kant, the proverb ‘Everyone has his own taste’ is not true for a judgement of taste. The proverb is an expression of the view of pure subjectivists. Pure subjectivism implies that if one individual judges that an object is beautiful, and under the same circumstances, another individual judges that it is not, they could never be contradicting each other. Judgement about the pleasant (agreeable) is a party to this doctrine. Kant avoids pure subjectivism. According to him, one who appraises an object aesthetically lays claim to the consensus of others. In his aesthetic theory, Kant tries to break down the subject-object dichotomy by explaining how a judgement based on feeling (of pleasure or displeasure) can at the same time legitimately lay claim to be universally true, true for all human beings. This position, maintained by Kant, is called sophisticated objectivism.

Kant argues for the claim to universal assent in terms of a general inference from the non-idiosyncratic nature of aesthetic appraisals. The pleasure (or delight) which forms the basis of the judgement of taste is disinterested. If a certain object is an object of disinterested pleasure to one, he will have no reason to believe that his pleasure arises from personal inclinations, desires, needs, and so on, which may be peculiar to him; idiosyncrasies are ruled out in the case of aesthetic pleasure. It follows that whatever grounds or reasons there might be for the pleasure he takes in the object he must think of these as grounds or reasons why others also should take similar pleasure in the object. He, therefore, naturally assumes that the object will be judged in the same manner by everybody else.

The universality of a judgement of taste is subjective. We cannot logically prove to others that an object is beautiful, since the judgement does not rest upon any concept, but only on feeling. We feel the object to be beautiful, and we expect that others too feel it for themselves.

Kant recognizes that delight occurs on other occasions as well as in aesthetic appreciation. That is why he distinguishes delight from aesthetic appreciation from other kinds of delight, the delight from the agreeable and the
delight from the good (which includes instrumental worth and moral worth). All these delights which are other than the aesthetic one have in common the ability to serve an interest. Only aesthetic delight is \textit{sui generis}; it is independent of all interest. Abhinavagupta alludes to this distinction in his theory of \textit{rasa}. The aesthetic experience is \textit{sui generis} – a unique experience not at all on a par with sensuous pleasure. What we find ‘pleasing in sensation’ is linked up with pragmatic requirements, but \textit{rasa} is a state of consciousness free from pragmatic requirements (\textit{atptiyatireka}), since it is a state of resting on one's own consciousness (\textit{njacitsvabhāvanirvṛttiviśrāntilakṣaṇaḥ})\textsuperscript{6}. Abhinavagupta contrasts the \textit{rasa} experience with worldly pleasure and pain by pointing out how \textit{rasa} is different from pleasure brought about by happy news such as “\textit{putraste jātaḥ}” (“A son is born to you”) in ordinary life. Pleasure in this case “we connect with the representation of the real existence of an object”, to use an expression of Kant; the object, in this case, is the son, who has been desired long. It is precisely for this reason Abhinavagupta designates \textit{rasa} as ‘\textit{avighnā saṁvit}’ (a state of consciousness free from all obstacles) and as ‘\textit{acchina}’ (an uninterrupted state).\textsuperscript{8} Desire for some object creates obstacle in the uninterrupted state of enjoyment, because desire is a feeling of insatiety, and the feeling of insatiety invariably possesses a tinge of pain. Therefore, \textit{rasa} too can be described as a state of ‘disinterested delight’.

Rasa, so far as we have seen, is a special kind of delight, and as delight it is an inward reality of the relisher. Yet \textit{rasa}-experience is not ‘individualistic’ in the sense of closed, ego-centered disregard for others. Rasa is communitarian: it is an experience of communing. The \textit{dhvani}-way of communication is its essential characteristic. \textit{Rasa} as generalized consciousness can be seen as the counterpart of the universality of aesthetic appraisal in Kant’s doctrine.

The communication of \textit{rasa} is possible due to the operation of \textit{sādhāraṇīkaraṇa} (universalization). The process of universalization operates in two levels, at the level of creation of poetry and at the level of its appreciation. The feeling of the poet is universalized. The poet reacts to the world, the prime source of all experience, not as an ordinary person. He sees into the inner essence of the worldly happenings. His experience gets universalized. Had Vālmīki undergone the spell of worldly and personal emotion of grief, he would
not be incited to compose the ādiśloka. The poet’s personal emotion of grief was transformed into a universal, impersonal flavour of pathetic sentiment (karuṇa rasa). The poet then embodies his reaction in evocative language which is endowed with tremendous power to transform the ordinary into extraordinary. The poet’s powerful language effects an ideal reawakening of the poet’s feeling in the reader. The sensibility of the responsive reader first becomes attuned with the emotional situation portrayed (ḥṛdaya saṁvāda). The poet’s language infused with suggestion puts the reader’s mind in such a state that the vibhāvas etc. appear in their generality as generic essences or ideal contents. The basic emotion of the appreciator (the spectator in case of drama and reader in case of poetry) also is awakened in such a manner that it has none of its usual conative tendencies and is experienced in an impersonal, contemplative mood. It is precisely this impersonality (sādhāraṇīkaraṇa) or trans-personality of aesthetic content which enables the experiencer to rise to a heightened consciousness of his self and the world. He loses his narrow sense of individuality. All idiosyncrasies are sent to sleep and the appreciator transcends the limits of personal possessions. Meaning requires a sharing or a shared experience; and this sharing is achieved in art when there is an intense impersonality. In this impersonal state, it now becomes possible for the appreciator to share the feelings of the artist, and it becomes possible for poetry also to effect connection between the mind of the poet and the mind of the experiencer. The receiver of the artistic impression is so united to the artist that he feels as if what it expresses were just what he had long been wishing to express.

It is not just that there does occur a contact of heart of the poet with the heart of the appreciator. In the case of some actual emotion suffered by a human being or animal, it is conveyed to other hearts by the poet who thus establishes a contact of hearts between the suffering being and his readers through his own self.

Now Abhinavagupta speaks also of the unison of hearts of the audience in a play, and considers this fact to be essential for aesthetic delight which is contemplative and universal. According to him, the cognition of sādhāraṇya or generality is not limited to any person, but is extended (vitata). The mood is generalized in the sense that it refers not to any particular witness or reader but to witnesses or readers in general. The emotion is not felt as a personal
psychical affection but an inter-personal ideal object of contemplation. All the 
competent persons in an audience (or all whose minds receive the message of 
the poet) are capable of apprehending it in one compactness (ekaghanatā), and 
this helps in the nourishment of rasa. The particular individual: while relishing 
the generalized sthāyī does not think that it is relished by him alone, but by all 
persons of poetic sensibility. The de-individualized appreciator is raised to a 
wider and higher plane of consciousness, being conducted to which he feels that 
the mood is not relished by him alone, but by all sensitive persons. In this plane 
of consciousness, he finds himself one with other connoisseurs 
(sarvasāmājikānāmekaghanatā)⁹. The spell of rasa thus destroys, in the 
consciousness of the receiver of art, the separation between himself and all 
whose minds receive the work of art. Poetry, the dhvani-language, then frees 
our personality from its separation and isolation, and unites it with others; it 
effects union between man and man. Rasa is therefore expressive of 
universality. An individual experience is transformed into a stage which is 
experienceable by others as one’s own or enables others to identify themselves 
with it.

The experience of the poet is able to meet the sympathetic reader or 
observer, and the consensus of the sympathetic readers or observers is possible 
because of the common structure of being in which they all participate. The 
objectivity of aesthetic experience has its root in the psychical substratum 
(vāsanāloka) common in man, the generic instincts of humanity. The basic 
emotions are held to be rooted in the fundamental instincts and emotions in man 
(vasanās or vṛttis). Human nature and emotions are generally identical all over 
the world, the difference lies only in the intensity with which different human 
beings in different parts of the world react to new situations. Love and 
separation, birth and death, joy and sorrow are universal occasions which bring 
people nearer each other emotionally. Disgust and contempt towards the base 
and vulgar things of life are the same for all people of refined taste. The feeling 
of repulsion that we have at the description of Othello’s killing of Desdimona in 
Shakespeare’s Othello is not much different qualitatively from the one we 
experience when we read in the Mahābhārata the description of Bhima’s 
splitting the heart of Duḥśāsana and sucking his blood. The poet and the
connoisseurs at large are capable of experiencing a harmonious apprehension because the minds of all of them possess a uniform residue of subliminal impressions.

Kant establishes the possibility of aesthetic communication by postulating an aesthetic common sense. We possess a ground in common with other subjects which is the source of aesthetic pleasure. Kant here points to our common possession of the “same subjective conditions of judgement”. We judge an object (of nature or of art) to be beautiful when in representing it to ourselves we become aware of a harmonious relation of our cognitive faculties, the imagination and the understanding, which are conditions of knowledge in general. Kant warrants the similarity of the subjective conditions of the power of judging by arguing that without a similarity in these subjective conditions we should never be able to communicate our knowledge claim. The universal communicability of feeling is possible only if there exists a harmonious relation between the faculties of cognition which must be the same in every subject which judges. Everyone in representing the objects (of nature or of art) to themselves will find themselves in the same state of mind, and consequently will feel the same pleasure. Kant calls this specific state of mind common to all judging subjects the “common sense”.

It is not just that the spectators, in enjoying beauty, become aware of that specific state of mind. The creation of beauty on the part of the artist too involves such a mental state. Just as the appreciator enjoys beauty only when the imagination and the understanding are in an indefinite relation, so the “happy relation” between the mental powers enables the artist to find out Ideas for a given concept. The union of the mental powers in a certain relation is what constitutes genius. Just as appreciation depends on productive imagination, so also the creative power is spurred into activity when imagination is involved in its productive capacity. It is because the common subjective ground (the common mental state) is there that it becomes possible for the artist to communicate the subjective mental condition induced by aesthetic Ideas by means of aesthetic attributes, which stirs up the mental powers of his audience into full imaginative activity centering round what has been presented and this
leads the audience to the reflection on same aesthetic ideas.\textsuperscript{12} Kant thus admits the identity of experience of the artist and of the aesthete by postulating common sense.

Kant ultimately links aesthetic communication to ontology. The ‘supersensible substratum’ is the ultimate common ground, which seems as the foundation for the universal communication of aesthetic feeling. Human beings differ from each other only conditionally, on their possession of certain capabilities. Difference exists in the phenomenal level. In the noumenal space, all differences dissolve. If the free harmony of our faculties be supposed to rest on a noumenal ground, this noumenal ground will, by its very nature, secure the identity of those faculties among us in spite of our phenomenal differences, which, in turn, will justify taste’s claim to intersubjective validity.

\section*{SECTION 3: DHVANI AND AESTHETIC IDEAS}

We have mentioned earlier that \textit{Ānandavardhana} recognized the soul of poetry, which is \textit{dhvani}. Kant also talks of the soul of work of art, which he calls ‘Geist’ or spirit. He says, “A poem may be very neat and elegant but without spirit: even of a woman we say that she is pretty... an agreeable talker and courteous, but without spirit.”\textsuperscript{13} A work of art may not violate the rules of taste, yet we may miss something in it which debars us from judging it to be beautiful. Kant here seems to be talking of something which has close similarity with \textit{dhvani}. \textit{Ānandavardhana} also says that \textit{dhvani} or the soul of poetry is like the \textit{lāvāṇya} (charm) of lady which is distinct from all the parts of the body (\textit{yattatprasiddhāvāyāvātiriktaṁ vibhāti lāvāṇyamivāṅganāsu}).\textsuperscript{14} It is often found that critics say of a woman that she is not really beautiful, even though her limbs be ornated with jewels. \textit{Dhvani}, the suggested meaning, is just like this. It is something separate from the well-known bodily elements of poetry. Such type of poetry, which owes its construction only to the bodily elements, viz. to the \textit{strikingness} of the expressed meanings and expressions denoting them (\textit{kevalavācyavācakavaicitryamātra} \textsuperscript{15}), and lacks the power to reveal any particular suggested meaning (\textit{vyāṅgyārthavisēṣaprakāśanaśaktīṣunyam} \textsuperscript{16}), is called by \textit{Ānandavardhana} ‘\textit{citra kāvya}’. Just as a picture (\textit{citra}) is not real thing, \textit{citra} is not real poetry at all. It is only an imitation of poetry (\textit{kāvyānukāro hyasou} \textsuperscript{17}); it imitates the \textit{dhvani kāvya} and \textit{guṇībhutavyaṅga kāvya}.

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The soul of a work of art, according to Kant, is nothing but the aesthetic Idea. An aesthetic Idea is that representation of imagination which involves much thought than could be comprehended in a concept. Imagination, in working out aesthetic Idea, is free and produces novel combination of intuitions. Since an aesthetic Idea cannot be spelled into determinate concepts as objects of sense, it cannot be rendered literally, for linguistic expressions stand for definite concepts. The artist presents only a symbolic representation, the aesthetic attribute, which diffuses in the mind of the connoisseur a multitude of thoughts, such as no expression within the compass of a definite concept completely attains. Aesthetic Ideas correspond to what Ānandavardhana calls dhvani (the suggested sense). Like aesthetic Idea, dhvani (the suggested sense) is more than the mere intellectual understanding (understanding through concepts), but an emotionally experienced content. Guṇa, rīti, alaṅkāra – all are merely intellectual ideas, and involve concepts. They miss the soul of poetry, which is the feeling aspect, and therefore non-intellectual. The suggested sense is not known by the mere knowledge of rules regarding words and the meanings (śabdārthaśāsanajñāna na vedyate)\textsuperscript{18}. Thus like aesthetic Idea, dhvani is not mere objective knowing which involves concepts and categories. Like aesthetic Idea, dhvani (suggested sense) is not a definite and one meaning (denotation) but consists of layers of meaning which have yet an affinity among themselves. The poet has to use the denotation but also achieve a quantal leap towards poetic resonance and suggestion. The reader feels himself, as it were, transported into another world full of fascinating subtleties, and discerns finer shades in even familiar and simple things. Ānandavardhana has shown in numerous examples how a whole world of meaning is to be imagined by the sahrdaya to catch a glimpse of the heart of poetry. We have mentioned some of these examples in Sections: and and analyzed them in Abhinavagupta’s way.

Common language, whose business solely is with denotation, behaves like natural light of the day. The day light, as a rule, does not illumine such places which torch-light in its focus can illuminate. The language of poetry, or the dhvani language, like a torch light, directs only towards hidden layers of man’s mind and heart after revealing very many meanings and their exploration. Dhvani acts like a prism in literature where we can see light into different wavelengths or seven colours, which are invisible otherwise. A good writer, provides
a prism like effect in his style and forces whatever kind of contemplation he wishes on the reader. A true creative writer drops his words into our minds like stones in a pool, and ever widening circles of meanings eventually ring round and encompass the store of our own experience. In doing so, they provide new contexts for familiar things, and what has been lying half dead in our mind and imagination, takes on a new life in virtue of its new context, so that we not only recognize whatever we feel we know but see that the familiarity carries us to the rich and exciting new meanings. All this comes very close to what Kant says when he says in § 49 in the context of explaining aesthetic Ideas that “the material can be borrowed by us from nature in accordance with that law, but be worked up by us into something else – namely, what surpasses nature”. The role of aesthetic Ideas in works of art is to extend the mind in thought. In dhvani experience too, the imagination “brings more thought into play in the matter, though in an undeveloped manner, than allows of being brought within the embrace of a concept, or therefore of being definitely formulated in language.”

One thing has to be noted in this connection. As we have mentioned earlier, suggested matter of fact or idea (vastu) and suggested figure of speech (alaṅkāra) are not ineffable unlike aesthetic Ideas; they are not said directly in a dhvani kāvyā because this is the only way in which they become effective and charming. It is only rasadhvani that cannot be denoted by the language of sense-perception, for the experience of rasadhvani belongs to a realm of reality which is beyond the grasp of categories and concepts. So strictly speaking, it is rasadhvani proper which can be likened more to aesthetic Idea than the other two types of dhvani.

What is more, just as aesthetic Idea strives to present what lies beyond the bounds of ordinary experiences i.e., the concepts of Reason, rasadhvani too involves the attitude of transcendence of the mundane world, because in course of rasa experience one is liberated from tensions caused by attachment to objects. Since rasa is a state of freedom from narrow personal greed and all sorts of mental limitations which constitute our empirical personality, and since freedom belongs to the domain of Reason, rasa is exactly a feeling impregnated with Reason.

The suggested meaning is not just something given, a mere happening in the world. It is an attainment, an achievement. Descriptive language giving
information cannot render rasadhvani. A philosopher’s way of knowing or ascertaining truth through pramanas is far removed from aesthetic consciousness. In order to communicate his rasa experience, the poet has to arrange the language in a specific way, structure it deliberately so as to give it an evocative power. The specific arrangement of language is called dhvani. Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta employed the word ‘dhvani’ in both the senses of suggested sense (‘dhvanyata iti dhvani’) and suggestor (‘dhvanatiiti dhvani’). Kant’s ‘aesthetic attribute’ seems to agree with ‘dhvani’ as suggestor (the evocative words and meanings).

Although Kant held that the beautiful (whether in nature or art) is what gives pleasure without a concept, yet he admits that a conscious intellectual operation is present in the experience of the beautiful. A cognition in general is involved in the perception of the beautiful. Though the representations which the artist’s imagination produces contains more than can ever be made explicit or expressed in words, it is a fact beyond question that there must be some reference to the understanding and its rules. Aesthetic spontaneity is in accordance with the fundamental lawfulness of understanding. Caliban must look to Prospero for discipline and guidance. The imagination without a general rule of lawfulness remains in the shackles of its own freedom.

Kant’s point is that in aesthetic appreciation we are not in an unself-conscious state of mind, although the state of mind is not one of cognition. In art experience, we are conscious of the art object as something created by an artist and intended to express some meaning (which is some contemplated feeling). The meaning being the end, the matter of art is the means to this end. The mind of the enjoyer of an art-object is fully conscious of this relation of means to some end, that is the working of ‘purposiveness without a purpose’. And because the mind is conscious of the design of the artist, it is delighted when the adaptation of means to some end is perfect. This matter, in the case of poetry, consists ultimately of sense meant by words.

Ānandavardhana fully recognized the part played by conscious intellectuality in aesthetic contemplation. Though the evocative power of language wakes up a host of rich imagery in the reader’s mind, his imagination cannot run riot, since it is also bound up by the expression of the poet, which has a definite expressed sense (vācyārtha). Though the essence of poetry
consists in the transcendence of the expressed sense, the operations of denotation (abhiddhā) and secondary power (lakṣapā) cooperate in the operation of suggestion. \(^{20(b)}\) Vyaṅga is vācyasāmarthāyūṣiptaḥ. The expressed sense (vācyārtha) reveals the hidden suggested sense (vyaṅgyārtha) just as the dīpaśikhā (lamp) reveals the object in the dark. That Ānandavardhana never ignores the importance of expressed senses is clearly revealed from the fact that he makes a division of dhvani into avivakṣitavācyā and vivakṣitānyaparavācyā types based on the relation of the suggestor and suggested. Even in case of avivakṣitavācyādvani, the sojourn into the hidden kingdom starts at the expressed sense. It serves as a means to perceiving the suggested sense. So in a dhvani kāvyā, the expressed sense must always be in grasp, only to be surpassed subsequently, either by being stultified (avivakṣitavācyā), or by being relegated to a subordinate position (vivakṣitānyaparavācyā). Since the expressed sense of a word is able to give us the concept of the object denoted by the word, Ānandavardhana’s claim that the expressed sense has a role to play in the evocation goes very much like Kant’s claim that aesthetic appreciation involves a reference to the understanding.

We can aptly claim, so far our above observations show, that the concept of dhvani is not bound by its own historical placement. Dhvani is a truth which is not confined to traditional Indian drama or poetry. Dhvani is not a tradition-bound concept, but a potentially universal concept in aesthetics – East and West. Our observations go to show that the terms ‘Eastern’ and ‘Western’ are no bar in our understanding of the artistic tradition. Despite the myriad local nuances, it is possible for us to integrate the total art tradition and arrive at a universal cultural heritage.

SECTION 4: GENIUS OR PRATIBHĀ

Creation of art like poetry is not a work of an amateur but of an expert, of one who has understood the mystery and meaning of life. He is called kavi because he can see behind and beyond the sensible world (kaviḥ krāntadarśī). He perceives in the cry of krauṣṭa bird something more than a mere cry, Ānandavardhana discovered the secret of this mysterious poetic power in rasāveṣa or possessive power of rasa. The poet intensely feels the pathetic sentiment (karuṇa rasa) in the wail of the he-curlew. This is the appreciative
aspect of *kavi pratibhā*, which is called *bhāvayitrī pratibhā*. The truth in the poet also struggles to make its manifestation. The unique experience of the poet finds a unique outlet in the form of creation. The poet’s capacity of giving expression to the truth realized is the *kārayitrī pratibhā* or creative imagination. Man cannot truly integrate with others unless he forgets his narrow self. On the other hand, it is only in *rasa* experience that he truly becomes oblivious of his narrow ‘I’ and ‘mine’. So, steeped in *rasa*, what the poet creates, even come to have an universal appeal. The poet’s message soaked in *rasa* resonates in every mind. Kant also talks very much in the same manner when he maintains that both genius and taste are necessary for the production of works of art. Genius is the productive faculty of the artist. It is creative imagination. Genius is the faculty of expressing aesthetic ideas. The aesthetic ideas expressed by the work of art must be universally communicated. It is taste and not genius which is responsible for rendering the aesthetic ideas universally communicable. The artist shares the aesthetic taste with his public. The artist must be a spectator as well as a creator. He must have the ability to discern the beautiful. In other words, he must be possessed of aesthetic sensibility or *rasabodha*. Kant’s view that both genius and taste are necessary for the production of art seems to be an echo of that of the Indian aestheticians who hold that the word *pratibhā* has the double sense of *kārayitrī pratibhā* and *bhāvayitrī pratibhā*.

In the previous section, we have pointed out that Kant’s conception of aesthetic idea is fairly similar to Ānandavardhana’s conception of *dhvani*. Genius for Kant is the faculty of presenting aesthetic ideas. The poet presents the ineffable aesthetic idea by means of aesthetic attribute. For Ānandavardhana also *pratibhā* is that power which produces a poetic work throbbing with the suggested meaning.

The poet gives us in dower a new earth and new heaven, for he is the ‘*Prajāpati*’. The universe revolves according to his nod. In Kant’s language, the poet creates “a second nature out of the material supplied to it by actual nature.” The creative imagination of the poet is free. It transforms (*parivartate*) one thing into another. Kant also recognizes this principle of artistic production when he says that “Art is production through freedom.” The imagination of the artist is not fettered by definite concepts. The artist enjoys freedom in his faculties of cognition when he gets absorbed in his sport of creation.
Since judgements about artistic products cannot be based on determinate rules derived from concepts, the products coming into existence cannot be described theoretically. Kant says that the genius cannot tell anyone how the work came into existence, let alone tell anyone the rules which would enable them to emulate the genius. Genius can thus be regarded as spontaneity. Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta also cherished the idea that artistic creation is spontaneous. Abhinavagupta says in the Locana of Kārikā 1.5 that like the spilling over of a jar filled with liquid, the grief of the First Poet (now transformed into the rasa of compassion) poured forth (niḥṣyanda) into a cry of lament in the form of a verse cast into fixed forms of meter and into appropriate words. The word ‘niḥṣyanda’ (pouring forth) clearly indicates that when Vālmīki was wholly engrossed in the rasa of compassion (karuṇa rasa), the words came from him naturally (spontaneously). And it is because the words came out from within Vālmīki spontaneously, the words were appropriate (samucita). Ānandavardhana also says in the Vṛtti of Kārikā 1.6, “tat vastutattvāṁ niḥṣyandamānā mahatāṁ kavīnāṁ.” The speech of master poets pours forth the essential matter (vastu tattva). Lest the spontaneity of creation is obstructed, Ānandavardhana dejects the use of figures like rhymes (yamakas) in instances where we find the erotic sentiment, particularly the love-in-separation, as the soul of suggestion. Yamakas etc. require a separate effort on the part of the poet, which interferes with his concentration on the delineation of the aesthetic object or rasa. So yamakas etc. cannot be anything but an extraneous element to the suggestive process. Only a figure whose employment is rendered possible just by the emotional suffusion of the poet (rasāṅśiptatayā yasya bandhaḥ śakyakriyō bhavet) and which requires no separate effort in itself (apṛthagyatnavartyāḥ) is acceptable as an ornament in suggestive poetry. Such figures (figures like Metaphor) come (spontaneously) swarming at the beck and call of a poet of imaginative genius precisely while he is concentrating his mind on the rasa, and compete with one another for their first preference at his hands.

According to Kant, genius creates something according to indeterminate rules. The artist himself is not conscious of the rule which he applies. The rules which he applies belong to his own individual nature. They are an expression of the individual nature of the artist. So genius is a natural gift, which is bestowed
to each individual immediately by the ‘hand of nature’. We have mentioned in Section 25 of Chapter IV that Kant uses the term ‘nature’ in a special sense, i.e., in the sense of the ultimate nature of the individual, his faculty of bringing about the harmonious relation of the cognitive faculties which is also called subjective purposiveness. The rule in accordance with which the artist produces the work of art can only be derived from the supersensible substrate of all the faculties of the subject. If is only by reference to supersensible substrate of the subject who produces the work of art that the universal appeal of his work of art can be justified. Ānandavardhana too says in the Dhvanyāloka 1.6 that kavi pratibhā is superhuman (alokasāmānyaṁ). He also says that it is Saraswatī (the Goddess of speech) working within great poets who pours forth through pure and beautiful composition the divine rasa of bliss from her very self. We quote below the entire Kārikā:

Saraswatī svādu tadarthavastu niḥṣyandamānā mahatāṁ kavi nām 1
alokasāmānyamabhivyanaṁt parispurantāṁ pratibhāviśeṣam 2

It means, “Saraswatī [ working ] within great poets, in pouring forth this sweet matter (arthavastu) [ viz, the emotions and flavors ] reveals a special, vibrant, genius (pratibhā), which is superhuman.” For Kant, since genius is one of nature’s elect, it is but a rare phenomenon. Even world famous scientists like Newton are not men of genius. Ānandavardhana goes so far as to state categorically the number of great poets in the long succession of poets in this world—only two or three, or at the most five to six, such as Kālidāsa.

According to Kant, from the fact that genius is independent of the rules based on concepts, it follows that genius is opposed to the spirit of imitation. For, imitation can proceed only according to definite conceptual rules. Hence work of art is not imitation. On the one hand, art is not an exact copy of what exists in nature (the view of Plato which we have discussed in Section 2 of Chapter II). For art (poetry) either presents invisible things or presents things of the empirical world with a completeness of which there is no example in nature. One the other hand, art a not an exact copy of what has been produced by an earlier genius. The work of an artist may stimulate the productive capacity of his pupil. But the work may at best serve as a model, not for imitation, but for
following. Following the work of his master as a model, the pupil will produce his own work. But his own work will be original.

Ānandavardhana admits that there may be coincidences (sādṛśya) in poetic themes. However, he too is vehemently opposed to the doctrine of imitation. This is evident from the fact that among the three types of coincidences he rejects the first two types on the ground that they are bare imitations of the original poetic theme. The first one is like that of a reflected image of a person (pratibimbavat) and the second one is like that of a painted picture of persons (ālekhyākāravat). As bare imitations of original theme, both these types of coincidences lack in the essential life of poetry. We have discussed about these coincidences in Section 8 of Chapter II. Ānandavardhana accepts the third type of coincidence which is like the body of a person which resembles one’s own (tulyadehivat). For although it is like something else (sādṛśa), it has a soul of its own. Having a soul of its own is the mark of originality of a piece of composition for Ānandavardhana, although the theme it presents may not be new. So the third type of coincidence, unlike the other two, is not a mere imitation, but is very much original for its possessing a separate soul of its own. The soul of poetry is the suggested meaning. Originality, therefore, is not newness of poetic theme, but consists in the manner of presentation, the dhvani mode of presenting even the older theme. We have explained the point in Section 8 of Chapter II by the example “yaḥ prathamāḥ prathamāḥ” etc. It is needless to repeat it here.

SECTION 5: AESTHETICS: THE PATHWAY TO NUMINOUS

In the Critique of Pure Reason Kant says that human reason is burdened by questions about the beyond which it is not able to ignore, but which it is also not able to answer, because they transcend its power. Our theoretical knowledge is limited to objects of experience. The noumenon lies beyond the scope of theoretical knowledge. Yet according to Kant, the Idea of a world beyond the world of experience is possible, and it is necessary for us to form such an Idea. In the Critique of Practical Reason, Kant holds that in the field of practical Reason, the Idea of an intelligible causality is possible and even necessary, for since the moral law is given to us we cannot but assume that as moral beings we are determined by a principle, which belongs to an intelligible
world. Still, in the second *Critique*, Kant, without moving away in the least from the fundamental principle of his transcendental philosophy, maintains that we can have no theoretical knowledge of an intelligible causality. In both the first two *Critiques*, Kant tries to use the supersensuous as the foundation of our place in the world. He is unable to do more than postulate what could only really be available to us in an ‘intellectual intuition’. As we have no power of intellectual intuition, the supersensible or the noumena cannot be given to us. It is only in a negative sense, i.e., in the sense of what is not given to our sense-intuition, that the term is useful or significant for us.

In *The Critique of Judgement* too, Kant remains stick to this fundamental principle that the supersensible is unknown and unknowable by human beings. But whereas in the first two *Critiques* Kant maintains that any metaphysical discussion about supersensuous entities plunge reason in darkness and involve it in contradiction, in the third *Critique* he tacitly removes the embargo placed upon all tentative and probable reasoning in matters metaphysical, though with characteristic reservations (i.e., the supersensuous is unknown and unknowable). The supersensuous is now available in aesthetic feeling to which Kant now assigns a specific philosophical status. Beauty (both artistic and natural) and sublime gives us a glimpse of the supersensible.

Fine art is expressive of aesthetic Ideas. All Ideas are supersensible in that no sensible intuition is adequate for them—they are not empirically knowable. Aesthetic Ideas are supersensible because they strive towards something beyond the boundary of experience. We have mentioned in Section 23 of chapter IV how, according to Kant, poets attempt to make the Ideas of the invisible being, the realm of the blessed, hell, eternity etc. into sensuous images. Aesthetic Ideas are the pendant to Ideas of Reason in that the Ideas of Reason, such as goodness, cannot be demonstrated empirically. Aesthetic products of genius make the Ideas of Reason sensuously available.

In § 51, Kant says, “BEAUTY (whether it be of nature or of art) may in general be termed the expression of aesthetic ideas.” So the expression of aesthetic Ideas is not restricted to art. However, nature does not express aesthetic Ideas in the same sense as the artist. Natural beauty cannot express Ideas of hell, envy, eternity etc. According to Kant, all natural beauty ultimately expresses the same Idea aesthetically—it is the indeterminate Idea of the
supersensible in general. The Idea of the supersensible is the principle of the subjective purposiveness of nature for the power of judgement. It is the Idea that nature was designed for our powers of cognition. Those natural objects are beautiful objects which, when contemplated, are suitable for arising in us a feeling of a harmony of our faculties of representation. The beautiful is judged by the purposive mode in which the imagination is attuned so as to accord with the understanding generally—formal subjective purposiveness. Natural beauty brings with it a purposiveness in its form by making the object appear, as it were, preadapted to our power of judgement, so that it thus forms of itself an object to our delight. We regard nature as if it were an artist who gives its object a form which seems designed for our contemplation of it. We conceive the Idea of a Technique of nature. Artistic beauty also symbolically expresses the supersensible in this sense because it presents in microcosm the harmony between a formal ordering of nature as intelligible to us and our cognitive faculties.\(^{34}\) So all natural and artistic beauty ultimately expresses the Idea (indeterminate concept) of the supersensible, which is the Idea of the purposiveness of forms in the phenomenal world being adapted to our powers of cognition and judgement.

The principle of the subjective purposiveness of nature is a supersensible principle, because it is a principle which our understanding cannot comprehend, since understanding is concerned with nothing but nature and its mechanical laws. Kant also postulates the Idea of the “supersensible in general, without further determination, as substrate of nature”.\(^{34(a)}\) This postulation of the supersensible substratum provides a firm foundation to taste’s claim to intersubjective validity. We have indicated it in Section 25 of Chapter IV. Since humanity and nature stands on the same supersensible substratum, it is what provides guarantee of the experience of beauty which is the harmony between nature’s forms and our own responses which constitutes the subjective finality of nature.\(^{35}\)

At this juncture I may also refer to Pabitra Kumar Roy’s approach to Kant’s conception of the supersensible in his book ‘Kant’s Concept of the Sublime – A Pathway to the Numinous’. We speak of subjective purposiveness in so far as the object (of nature or of art) makes us feel the harmony of our faculties of representation. The cognitive powers are in free play. The
imagination in this context is free from the constraints of the understanding, and its power is productive and spontaneous. In feeling the free play of the imagination and the understanding, we feel the mind’s freedom. We feel our freedom from the constraints of time which is the condition of inner sense. So when we are in presence of the beautiful, we get a sense of timelessness, and thereby become aware of the possibility of a world that exists beyond the constraints of time. As we have discussed perviously, and as we shall discuss hereafter, in rasa experience too, the connisseur looses his spatio-temporal determinations.

The sublime also relates to the supersensible. The inadequacy of all sensible standards to measure what is absolutely great remind us of the limitations of our sensuous relationship to nature. The sense of limitation entails the sense of its opposite, the fact that we have a capacity for Reason and not limited by sensuousness. The very inadequateness of the imagination in estimating the magnitude of things of sense excites in us the feeling of a supersensible faculty being more important than, and having dominion over, our sensible faculties, legislating their activities for them toward a goal which, however, they cannot attain. This is the ‘mathematically sublime’. The ‘dynamically sublime’ is experienced at those moments when we are confronted with natural forces which are beyond our power to control. This provokes in us a resistance which makes us wish to measure ourselves against the seeming omnipotence of nature. The physical threat of nature can make us aware of our capacity for Reason, of the preeminence of our rational nature over our physical nature. This potential, the potential of Reason’s non-finite relation to the laws of nature, is actually generated by the way in which nature reveals its irreducibility to our interests as sensuous beings in the experience of the sublime.

The point of beauty of nature and of art is that they make something infinite, Reason, sensuously available. The sublime does not represent Ideas sensuously, it merely points to the limitations of sensuous representation. In the sublime, then, the supersensuous becomes available in a negative way, its effect is to broaden the soul. Because we feel our limits we must also feel what is not limited in ourselves, otherwise we would have no way of being aware of a limit.
The link with the supersensible is also found in the traditional Indian aesthetics. Abhinavagupta says that the perception (pratīti) of rasa is lokottararupa; it transcends the experience of the workaday world. Aesthetic perception differs from correct (samyak) perception, mistaken (mithyā) perception, doubt (saṃśaya) and perception of similarity (śādṛśya). Taking cue from Śaṅkuka’s citraturaga-pratīti, Abhinavagupta asserts that the spectator experiences a peculiar sensation at the time of witnessing a theatrical performance. The actor appearing before him is neither taken as an ordinary man of present times nor as an extraordinary personality of ancient age. In a similar manner the moods inferred from the vibhāvas and the like are cognized by him in their idealized forms. The generalization excludes the individuality of the saḥṛdaya (the spectator) himself also—of his friends and foes. All this accounts for the fact that ordinary feelings of pain and hatred, hope or disgust, horror or despair are not experienced by the saḥṛdaya at the time of appreciating rasa. Rasa perception thus does not form a part of our experience of the ordinary world. Rasa cannot be understood as any type or mode of normal awareness. It is alaukika (super normal) experience. The term ‘alaukika’ has also been used by Nyāya and Buddhist epistemologists for types of perception that could not be explained by normal physical causes.

Rasa as a level of awareness transcending the mundane reminds us of a still higher mode of awareness and being, the acme of all awareness and existence. It is the Brahmacaitanya. What Kant calls the supersensible or the noumenon which is the ground of the phenomenon is very much like the Brahmacaitanya of the Vedāntins. Brahman is the essential self of the jīva and is the ground of the universe. Bliss is the inherent nature of this reality. Art is a pointer to and an aid in the attainment of this higher form of experience.

Though Brahman is pure bliss, human life is full of suffering because it is bound by the chains of selfish desire, and action motivated by egoistic desire only tightens the chain. According to the spirit of the Upaniṣad, when one liberates oneself from the bondages of egocentric impulsions, Brahman is obtained. The Indian world view was spiritual. The very climate of India was such that everything was perforce to be invested with the holy spirit of religion. In this widest sense, art can also be a way to divinity. The Indian aestheticians deemed art to be on a par with the hardest disciplines like yoga. They found in
art a means of release from the life of the desire-action-satisfaction-desire cycle.\textsuperscript{38} Since \textit{rasa} is a state of lysis (\textit{laya})\textsuperscript{39}, \textit{rasa pratiti} does not serve as spring board of action. Art experience can therefore break through the cycle. That is why Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka and Abhinavagupta correlated \textit{rasāsvāda} with \textit{Brahmāsvāda}. They located the two experiences on the same level as \textit{śāvidha}, \textit{sa布拉ha}\textit{macārin}. In \textit{rasa} experience the individual ego rises above the immediate involvement which binds. This is the stage of \textit{ahaṅkārarahitam}. We have also observed in our previous discussions that \textit{rasa} experience transcends factors like time, place and the individuality of the knowing subject.\textsuperscript{40} The unselfish absorption in the aesthetic mood breaks down what obscures the self-expression of the spirit and enables the innate bliss of the spirit to shine forth. \textit{Brahmāsvāda} is also described in similar terms. The terms Abhinanagupta uses in describing aesthetic experience, viz rest (\textit{viśrānti}), identification (\textit{tanmayābhavana}), unworlly (\textit{alaukika}), beatitude (\textit{ānanda}), universalization (\textit{sādhāranābhāva}), relish (\textit{varaṇā}), suggest its close kinship (\textit{sahodara\textit{tā}}) with the mystical experience of \textit{Brahmasākṣātkāra}.

Yet the two experiences are not identical. Abhinavagupta in the \textit{Locana} of \textit{Kārikā} \textit{III.43} says that the relishing of aesthetic sentiment (\textit{rasāsvāda}) is no more than the reflection (\textit{avabhāsa}) of a drop (\textit{vipruś}) of that ambrosial bliss.\textsuperscript{40(a)} The detachment that art gives is only transient, and the consequent bliss is not eternal (\textit{akṣaya}) or infinite (\textit{atyanta}). The \textit{ānanda}, the beatitude experienced in the realization of \textit{Brahman} or the essential nature of the spirit, on the other hand, is not a state which is ephemeral.

Abhinavagupta admits in the \textit{Locana} of \textit{Kārikā} \textit{III.43} that there are different levels of joy. At the lowest level there is the everyday joy (\textit{laukika\textit{ṣukha})}. It is the joy that results from conceptual understanding of both seen and unseen objects which are ascertained (\textit{pariniścita}) by all means of valid cognition. This ‘\textit{laukika sukha}’ or everyday joy is what Kant calls delight in the agreeable. Above this everyday joy is put that transcendent joy which consists in relishing an aesthetic sentiment (\textit{lokottara\textit{ṃ rasacarvaṇātmaka})}. The everyday joy is generally lower in value than the aesthetic joy, because it is mixed with an abundant suffering (\textit{vahutaraduḥkhānuṣaṅga}) as well. The bliss that comes from finding rest in God (\textit{parameśvaraviśrāntyānanda}) is far superior to both of these
bliss. Rasa or aesthetic delight, then, so far as the above analysis shows, lies midway between sensuous joy and spiritual delight.

The value of the experience of beauty is that it makes us progressively conscious of the illusoriness of the empirical world and ego-life and the reality of the higher and non-attached spirit within us. Art experience is an intimation to man of the possibility of rising permanently above the imperfections of this-worldliness. Art experience gives us a foretaste of the ideal state and arouses our interest in it, and thus serves as a powerful incentive to the pursuit of that state. The aesthetic experience therefore can be treated as a stage in the realization of the spirit. The support for the possibility of positing such stages of consciousness can be sought in the Advaita theory of levels of reality (based on consciousness).

SECTION 6: SELF REALISATION

As we have said in the Preface, Ānandavardhana did not belong to any philosophical school of thinking. His commentator, Abhinavagupta, however, was a philosopher of the highest class; he belonged to Kashmir Śaivism. In any case, there is no dearth of philosophical contents in Ānandavardhana’s theory of dhvani. The theory has its deeper metaphysical implications which are of relevance to Kantian metaphysics as well. Ānandavardhana says that poetry (or, for that matter, any kind of beauty) is dhvani incarnate (in śabdārtha kāvyāśarīra). Dhvani is no quality of the object, but the resonance of the soul which the poet as well as the connoisseur (sahrdaya) are able to experience, and which fill their mind with divine delight. The delight of either composing or reading poetry cannot be compared with any kind of mundane pleasures arising out of satisfaction of material wants; it is the joy of self-realization. Obviously, Ānandavardhana’s theory of dhvani presupposes a theory of self or soul.

Most of the orthodox schools of Indian philosophy believe that in man there is something divine to live by. It is the non-personal, non-bodied self or soul. The worldly man, the individual, is the soul incarnate in the material body. Thus man, as the Kaṭhopaniśad and the Bhagavadgīta say, is like an inverted tree (ūrdhvamūlamadhaḥśākham). He lives and acts in the world in the shape of an individual human being, but his roots lie in the limitless world-beyond. The
disembodied soul, as the Advaita Vedānta explains, is one with the Absolute, the Brahman. Brahman is Being-as-such, Consciousness-as-such and Bliss-as-such. The non-dual Brahman becomes many persons and many objects through a process of individuation, the mystery of which is inexplicable. The worldly man, however, is sometimes conscious of his goal of life on earth; it is self-realization, that is, realization of his basic identity with the Consciousness-Absolute.

Indian philosophers speak of various routes of approach to self-realization which may be either a temporary vision or a permanent accomplishment. Even a temporary vision gives a taste of the heavenly pleasure and creates a serious longing for permanent accomplishment. Aesthetic perception is that temporary self-vision. It is affected through a process of deindividuation and denaturalization, which is, at the same time, a process of universalisation (sādhāraṇīkṛtī). The poets and other creative geniuses are able to create such effects as may make us forgetful of our narrow individuality, our mundane needs, our differences with others, and help us see our oneness with things past, present and future, with others, and indeed, with the whole of reality. I lose my individuality, but, thereby, I also grow big. The taste of beauty is the taste of rising above mundane existence, above narrow individuality and getting truly big. At first I find you out there as the other. But if I realize that you are not really the other, that you and I are one, I become double in size. This is how we grow big through unification and identification. Sometimes Indian philosophers call this identification a union or yoga. The taste of beauty is the feeling of joy of getting united and getting big.

During the course of study we have explained that the main thing about poetry, according to Ānandavardhana, is its effectiveness in producing delight in the mind of the sympathetic reader, the sahrdaya. Delight is, as Ānandavardhana says, twice transformed emotion or passion. A passion like that of the passions of love, laughter, sorrow, anger, fear, etc. is transformed into general sentiment or rasa in so far as it is depersonalized, and thereby it becomes a general message of every human heart-sakalahrdayasamvādī. It is next transformed into rasadhvani which is the tone of the all-pervasive being or reality. It now speaks of the splendors of reality. In this, the blind feeling becomes an eye of the soul. The poet by his poetical skill is able to produce this wonderful effect.
But, does poetry give us knowledge? Ānandavardhana refutes the anirvacaniya theory of poetical charm. Even then, if knowledge is taken in the sense of predicative judgement, poetry does not bring knowledge. The rasa-dhvani does not bring any new determination of the object. But it helps realize man’s identity with the rest of mankind, and with the all-pervasive being, the Absolute. The charm of poetry is due to ātmasākṣātkāra, which Abhinavagupta regards as parabrahmāsvādasabrahmacāritvam. It is certainly knowledge, but of a higher order, because it is also a kind of communication occasioned by the spirit’s presence to reality. As we have explained in the previous section, Kant, who, in the Critique of Pure Reason, regarded the unconditioned as the unknown and the unknowable, an empty-space-like noumenon, has something positive to say of the transcendent reality in his Critique of Judgement; it is the ground of unity of all that seems to be diverse and disconnected in the sensible world.

As is well known, Kant is a system-builder in philosophy. Three or four Critiques encompass his system. In the Critique of Pure Reason Kant says that there are three great questions of philosophy. They are — (1) what can I know? (2) What ought I to do? and (3) What may I hope? In the Logic he supplements his previous list of great philosophical questions by the fourth one — (4) What is man? or Who am I? His philosophical system is built up around these four great questions. The first Critique is purported to answer the first question, and the answer obtained there is — the domain of the concept of nature or the phenomenal world is the world of actual and possible knowledge or experience. However, the known and the knowable are not coextensive with the thinkable. We can even think of such things as are unknown and unknowable provided that our thought of them does not meet with self-contradiction. Thus there is no logical incongruity in thinking that behind or beyond the world of experience, the phenomenal world, there is a real and self-subsisting world, standing out there as the ground of the world of appearance, but man has no knowledge of that intelligible world; that is the territory of the humanly unknown and the unknowable, the noumenon.

Kant’s second Critique, that is, Critique of Practical Reason is purported to answer the second and the third great philosophical questions — What we ought to do, and, if we do what we ought to do, then what we may hope for.
They are moral actions that we ought to do, and what we may hope for is the *Summum Bonum*. Moral actions are those that are caused by freedom. However, freedom is not to be met with anywhere in nature; it is noumenal. Yet moral actions are performed by men living in the world or nature. That means, the noumenal world of freedom acts on the phenomenal world through the moral agency of man. Moreover, the moral ideal of the *Summum Bonum* presumes that there is in man something noumenal to live by, that is, the soul, and that soul is immortal. What we call freedom is freedom of the will and the free will is the will of the noumenal self. The worldly man is the soul incarnate, which is to say that, in man the phenomenal and the noumenal stand in unison. If man were entirely a phenomenal being then his moral sense would be just an illusion, and it is likely that with the progress of learning and understanding he would be completely rid of it. But that would be the greatest of calamities that might befall on humanity.

It becomes increasingly evident that if the concept of the noumenon is taken as just a negative concept needed for clarifying certain epistemological points, then it can hardly accommodate the non-phenomenal self or soul that may satisfy the needs of Kant’s moral theory. The human self or soul must be something more than what we can just conceive of, something barely intelligible; it must be approachable by something which may give us an assurance of its living presence. Kant’s aesthetic theory in *The Critique of Judgement*, as we have discussed in the course of this work, explains the ground for the possibility as well as the mode of self-realization, and thereby assures us that the feeling of respect for the “moral law within” is no trance of illusion. It, too, by connecting the phenomenal man with the noumenal in him seeks to provide answer to the question who am I. Aesthetic perception, as Kant explains, is the necessity with which the judging mind views the self, its non-phenomenal reality, its unity and identity, and its community with the rest of mankind, in the wake of the experience of aesthetic joy.

In the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant speaks of only objective experience which involves both intuitions and concepts. In *The Critique of Judgement* he speaks of a deconceptualised experience of joy in which the cognitive vision is turned away from the object and is turned towards the subject. Kant thus characterizes the aesthetic judgement as one species of reflective judgement. In
a reflective judgement the object judged about serves, as it were, like a looking
glass, which shows not itself in its qualities, but the image of the viewer who
views himself through the glass. In so far as the reflective judgement is
teleological, it reflects the image of a remote intelligence, and in so far as the
reflective judgement is one of taste it reflects the state of mind of the subject
that makes the judgement.

The aesthetic judgement, according to Kant, being one species of
reflective judgement, is purposive. The judgement of taste is subjectively
purposive. That means, it serves the purpose of the subject that makes the
judgement, and the feeling of joy associated with the judgement is due to the
satisfaction or fulfilment of the purpose of the subject. Now, a purpose may be
either mundane or non-mundane. Since in making judgement of the beautiful no
interest is taken of the existence of the object about which the judgement is
made, the purpose in it is non-mundane. This is expressed by saying that the
judgement of taste is purposive without a purpose. The non-mundane purpose
served in an aesthetic judgement is self-realization, and the pleasure associated
with it is due to the fulfilment of that purpose. In short, aesthetic joy is the joy of
self-realization.

Then, in which particulars is the self realized or viewed through the
aesthetic looking glass? This needs a little elaboration.

In the ‘Introduction’ to The Critique of Judgement Kant says that
philosophy properly falls into two parts – a theoretical as Philosophy of Nature,
and a practical, as Philosophy of Morals. The former has as its realm the realm
of the concept of nature, as the sensible, and the latter has as its realm the
realm of the concept of freedom, as the supersensible. Between the two realms
there is a great gulf fixed, so that it is not possible to pass from the former to the
latter, still the latter is meant to influence the former. That is to say, the concept
of freedom is meant to actualize in the sensible world the end proposed by its
laws. There must, therefore, be a ground of unity of the supersensible with the
sensible. As in Plato, so also in Kant, man is the connecting link, the ground of
unity of the supersensible with the sensible. Thus Kant’s critical philosophy feels
the compulsion of investigating both the phenomenal and the noumenal
directions of man, and as Kant says, The Critique of Judgement is a means of
connecting the two parts of philosophy in a whole. At the same time, the third
Critique is to fill the gap or the shortcomings of the first two Critiques, specially those that are created by our lack of understanding of the transcendental self and the transcendental other self.

In the first Critique Kant’s enquiries into the a priori grounds for the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge as we meet with in different accomplished sciences led him to necessarily presuppose certain transcendental about the human subject, all of which are noumenal, namely, the subject-as-sensibility, the subject-as-understanding, and the subject-as-Reason. The Critique of Practical Reason presupposes yet another noumenal direction of the human subject, namely, the subject-as-will. But are they so many noumenal subjects, or so many elements or stems of one and the same subject? The Critique of Pure Reason finds evidence for a unitary ‘I think’ which necessarily accompanies all of my conceptual representations, and as Kant’s critical enquiry unveils, perception, too, involves conception. There is also a suggestion that sensibility and understanding are two stems originating from the same root.45 But no transcendental evidence is given in favour of such a suggestion. The ‘empty space’ called noumenon indeed houses the diverse roots of the subject-in-itself, but in no way they are proved to be the roots of the same subject-tree. The Critique of Judgement explains that aesthetic perception, that is taking delight in the perception of a beautiful object, is the expression of the realization of the unity and harmony of the sensible and the intellectual faculties of the mind. That means, aesthetic perception is self-realization in respect of self-unity.

Aesthetic perception also involves realization of the subjectivity in others, that all the selves form a harmonious community in the noumenal ‘space’. Aesthetic joy is not simply the feeling which arises from our awareness of the harmonious play of the faculties of the mind, it is also universally communicable. The communicability of aesthetic joy, the demand that others ‘ought’ to feel the same pleasure as do I, involves realization of the common human ground, the ‘sensus communis’ in which we all stand together. Thus if the moral law necessarily leads to the concept of the ‘Kingdom of ends’, then the ‘sensus communis’ of aesthetic perception provides the ground for the possibility of such a kingdom. Really, moral perception is the other face of aesthetic perception,
and the feeling of respect for the moral law is the analogue of disinterested aesthetic delight.

Thus the essence of self-realization that aesthetic perception brings in consists in the perception of unity and harmony in the inner life of the subject, in the relationship of the subject with other subjects, and in the relationship of the subject with nature, which, indeed, is hospitable to the moral aspiration of the subject. The realization of unity and harmony is also the key to the creative life of the human subject. This may best be realized by sharing in Tagore’s perception:

“The joy of unity within ourselves, seeking expression, becomes creative; whereas our desire for the fulfilment of our needs is constructive. The water vessel, taken as a vessel only, raises the question, ‘why does it exist at all?’ Through its fitness of construction, it offers the apology for its existence. But where it is a work of beauty it has no question to answer, it has nothing to do, but to be. It reveals in its form a unity to which all that seems various in it is so related that, in a mysterious manner, it strikes sympathetic chords to the music of unity in our own being.”

To expand gradually the consciousness of one’s unity with all is the striving of humanity. Living in world-consciousness is the truth of our being. We are not present to ourselves, and, therefore, need an other through which to understand ourselves. Taste of beauty (in nature or art) provides the alterity necessary for self-understanding. For in aesthetic experience, we attain world-consciousness since aesthetic experience involves the interpenetration of our being into the life of the universe. The world-consciousness realized in the taste of beauty may or may not be a state of Brahmaṇhood. But surely, it is our authentic existence, the truth of our being. Taste of beauty, then, is more than pure aesthetic experience: it is a mode of self-understanding.

SECTION 7: EPILOGUE

A few words on the message of unity of the aesthetic theories of Anandavardhana and Kant will now conclude this work. Indeed, in the form of the present study we are seeking for ourselves the message of unity which we are sadly lacking at this moment. The modern science has brought the different parts of the globe so close to each other. And yet the mental distance between a
man and a man, between a nation and a nation, between a religion and a
religion, is widening day-by-day. For quite sometime we have been hearing
people say, the East is the East and the West is the West, and they do not meet
each other. Now we also notice that the world is getting divided into two
religious camps, and there is a general feeling that the distance between these
two warring camps is ūngulfable. This is frightening. Everywhere we find divisive
forces are at work, resulting in mutual suspicion, antagonism and restlessness.
Is then, men’s estrangement fait accompli? Or, will men love each other again,
and when? Will the sense of belongingness to one human family ever prevail
over our personal, local and group interests? These are some of our
melancholious thoughts. But as we read Ānandavardhana, as we read Kant, we
overcome our depressions and grow in optimism. As Ānandavardhana says,
‘sṛṅgārī cētkaviḥ kāvye jātaṁ rasamayaṁ jagat’. Let the poets and other
prajāpatis wake up, and we are sure, the smell of gun-powder will soon
evaporate, and the world will become rasamaya again. Let also the great
masters like Ānandavardhana and Kant teach us to distinguish between
rasāsvāda or disinterested delight and the agreeable pleasures or excitements
created by commercial successes etc. Let all of us have a share of the life of
bliss: sarvve sukhinaḥ bhabantu sarvve santu nirāmayāḥ.
REFERENCES:


4. Vide, Chapter IV, Section 7, page 179.


6. Vide, Chapter II, Section 6, page 84.


8. Vide, Chapter II, Section 6, page 90.

9. Vide, Chapter II, Section 6, page 90.


10. Vide, Chapter IV, Section 23, page 245.

11. Vide, Chapter IV, Section 23, page 246.

12. Vide, Chapter IV, Section 23, page 246.


15. *Vṛtti* on *Dhvanyāloka* III. 42.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Vide, Chapter II, Section 3, page 38.

20(a). Vide, Chapter IV, Section 13, page 211.
20(b). Vide, Chapter II, Section 5, page 68.
23. Vide, Chapter IV, Section 19, page 231.
24. Vide, Chapter IV, Section 20, page 233.
25. rasaparipūrṇakumbhoccalanavaccittavṛttinīḥsyandavabhāvāvgailāpādiv
    -acca samayānapekṣatve ’pi cittavṛttivyajjakatvāditi
    nayenākṛtyakatayaivāvesavaśātsamucitaśabdacchandovṛttādīniyantritaślo-
    karūpataṁ prāptaḥ.

   — Locana,
Dhvanyāloka of Sri Anandavardhanacharya with the Lochana Sanskrit
Commentary of Sri Abhinavagupta, ed. by Acharya Jagannath Pathak,
26. Dhvanyāloka, II.16.
27. Ibid.
28. alāṅkārāntarāṇi hi nirūpyamāṇadurghaṭanānyapi rasasamāhitacetasāḥ
    pratibhānavataḥ kaverahampūrvikayā parāpatanti |

   Vṛtti on Dhvanyāloka II.16.
29. Vide, Chapter IV, Section 21, page 236.
30. Translated by Daniel H. H. Ingalls, Jeffrey M. Masson and M. V.
    Patwardhan, The Dhvanyāloka of Ānandavardhana with the Locana of
    Abhinavagupta, edited by Daniel H. H. Ingalls, Harvard University Press,
31. yenāśminnavicitrakaviparamparāvāhini saṁsāre Kālidāsapravṛtyayo
dvitrāḥ pañcaśā vā mahākavaya iti gangyante |

   Vṛtti on Dhvanyāloka I.6.
32. The phrase ‘Pathway to the Numinous’ has been taken from the title of Prof.
    Pabitra Kumar Roy’s book ‘Kant’s Concept of the Sublime – A Pathway
    to the Numinous’.
33. Immanuel Kant, The Critique of Judgement, translated by James Creed
34. Donald W. Crawford, Kant’s Aesthetic Theory, The University of
    Wisconsin Press, Madison, Wisconsin, 1974, Chapter 6, section 6.2.
35. Vide, Chapter IV, Section 25, page 253.
37. Vide, Chapter II, Section 6, page 80.
39. The terms ‘laya’, ‘nirvṛtti’, etc. express the same concept. They mean simply a form of consciousness free from any obstacles. It is a state of total rest of the whole being on the object of perception. In the language of Śaiva metaphysics, the terms ‘laya’, etc. denote the repose of everything that exists in the ‘I’ and, implicitly, the repose of the limited ‘I’ in the consciousness in its original fullness (cf. Raniero Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*, page 56, note c, and page 77).
40. Vide, Chapter II, Section 6.
40(a). *tadānandavipruṃmātrāvabhāso hi rasāsvāda ityuktaṁ.../
— *Locana*, op.cit., page 543.
41. *vāhyasparśēvasaktātmā vindatyātmani yat sukham I
da brahmayogayuktātmā sukhamākṣayamaśnute II — *Gīḍā*, 5.21.
42. *sukhamātyantikaṁ yattad buddhigrāhyamaṁindriyam I
tetti yatra na caivaḥyamā sthitaścalatī tatvataḥ II — *Gīḍā*, 6.21.

yutījannevaṁ sadātmānaṁ yogī vigatakalmaśaṁ I
sukhena brahmaśaṅsparśaṁatyantāṁ sukhamāśnute II
— *Gīḍā*, 6.28.
43. *sakalapraṃpariniścitadṛśṣtadṛṣṭaviśvaśeṣaśaṁ yatsukham, yadapi vā lokottaraṁ rasacamaraṇatmakāṁ tata ubhayato’pi paramesvaraviśrāntyānandaḥ prakṣyate... I laukikaṁ tu sukham tato’pi nikṣṣāpāryaṁ vahutaraduḥkhānuṣaṅgāditi tātparyam I
*Locana*, op. cit., page 543.

45. Ibid., A 835 = B 863