ART AND THE ARTIST: ABHINAVA ON PERFORMING ARTS

4.0. Introduction

As in any age and for any philosopher, Abhinavagupta is a product of his time, greatly influenced by those who went before him and by the existing intellectual, cultural and philosophical milieu. That which had the most impact on him can be classified under: (i) Traditional literature of the Darśana-s and āgama-s (as elaborated in chapter two of the present thesis) and (ii) Aestheticians from Bharata to Abhinavagupta's contemporaries (as elaborated in Chapter three). His insatiable love for learning under varied masters along with his own family background steeped in ōaivism, led him to an aesthetic theory, both artistically satisfying and spiritually elevating. The Indian tradition generally records a linear evolution of a Guru-śiṣya paramparā i.e., learning under a specific master. In Abhinava's case, his having studied under a large number of teachers, rather than being a defect, helped him synthesise the various thought-systems into a holistic one. Having studied each philosophical discipline under the appropriate authority, his interpretations of the same were considered authentic and reliable. The eclectic nature of his philosophy appealed to a wide cross-section of people, scholars and laymen alike.

The influence of Abhinava's predecessors and contemporaries on him, was not merely an inevitable, historical fact. It was a complex phenomenon having far reaching ramifications with literary, aesthetic and philosophical dimensions. The two main aspects of this impact on Abhinava are his arguments against existing philosophical theories and his acceptance of existing aesthetic categories.

4.1. Abhinava's Approach vis-a-vis other Theories

There existed in Abhinava's time, a number of philosophical theories propounded by well known exponents, with their corresponding aesthetic principles. Abhinava in the pārva-pākūa of his works often put forth these
theories with due fidelity to the interpretation and specific usage of terms by the given theorist. However as an answer to his probing queries, the lacunae in the theories were exposed and the aesthetic theories dependent thereon, stood rejected. The theories could be broadly classified under different headings depending on the emphasis given to aesthetic concepts in their respective systems. Abhinava critically judged them on various counts: on the basis of their dualism or their opposition to dhvani; to their rigid interpretation of Bharata’s rasa-såtra or their inauthentic inclusion of other terms in the same; to their misplaced application of purely literary theories to drama or their dry, theoretical analysis with no practical viability. The most remarkable aspect of this critical analysis was the lack of rancour, contempt or one-upmanship on Abhinava’s part. His concerns were purely academic, guided by stringent principles of logic and reasoning, culminating in clarity of thought and expansion of knowledge. The goal was always jñàna and ànanda.

Abhinava however valued the contribution of those who went before him.¹ In keeping with the synthesising nature of his approach, he was able to sift the valuable tenets from a plethora of earlier explanations. As a result several terms and ideas got incorporated into his own theory. The àgamic tradition got linked with the Vedic, the poetic with the dramatic (including dance and music), the sensual with the sublime and the empirical activity with the trans-empirical, philosophical pursuit of the Ultimate Reality, knowledge and happiness.

Since Abhinava did not blindly accept or reject any concept or theory without proper study, it is only befitting that we do the same with reference to his aesthetic system. He has elaborated on almost every aspect of Indian Aesthetics in his two commentaries Locana on Dhványàloka and Abhinava-bhàratã on the Nàñya÷àstra. Despite these being commentaries on earlier texts, their sheer brilliance elevates them to the status of original works. They astound the mind with hidden and suggested meanings of the verses, far beyond the cursory scope of literary criticism. They show a depth of linguistic
analysis including the etymology and phonetics of the Sanskrit words, the appropriate usage and placement of different figures of speech, case endings and so on. The language is fluent, lyrical and pleasant to the ear, though heavy with meaning and content. There is a cogency of thought in the ABh., which highlights the various aspects of the Nø, illuminating and brightening the original work itself. Abhinava has also incorporated into his work the preceding and existing commentaries on the Dhvanyàloka and the Nø. We stand indebted to him for this invaluable information, since as mentioned earlier, many of the original works and commentaries in manuscript form, are lost to us. This great dependence is no doubt marred by the presence of corrupt passages and absence of crucial verses, almost entire sections in the ABh., particularly chapter seven on bhàva. This problem bemoaned by diligent researchers like Ramakrishna Kavi, Gnoli, Masson, Patwardhan, Bhat etc., has been rectified to some extent by them and scholars like V.Raghavan, R.S.Nagar, V.M. Kulkarni, P. Dvivedi, Nagendra among others by referring to even obscure manuscripts and by utilizing the texts of later theorists like Hemachandra, Guõachandra, Sàraï gadeva etc. These latter works have quoted almost verbatim important verses on bhàva and rasa, from the ABh. What was earlier dismissed as rank plagiarism has now been accepted as an authentic recording of an earlier significant work, (acknowledged through internal evidence), whose tenets have been universally followed by existing and subsequent scholars.

4.2. Overview of Abhinava’s inherited legacy: His Agreement and Disagreement with them

Abhinava gives first the aesthetic concepts and principles from other philosophical systems in order to showcase the comparative value of the Pratyabhijñà interpretation. Being the supreme votary of non-dualism he presents the dualistic theories of thinkers before him and proceeds to demolish them from his own standpoint. A select list of theorists commented upon by Abhinava and integral to his aesthetics are as follows: Bhañña Lollaña, øri
Saïkuka (Nyàya view), Bhañña Nàyaka (M âmâś sà view), Sâï khya, Vai-yeûka, Bauddha (Vijñânavâda), Vedânta (Vivartavâda), Bhañña Tauta and Bhañndu-râja (õaiva Dar-ana). Consequent to this survey, Abhinava's acceptance and refutation of certain concepts and principles is analysed here. In some contexts he maintains a certain initial duality to clarify the nature of aesthetic terms but ultimately rejects it when a theory appears to lead to philosophical dualism as well.

4.2.1. Abhinava's Philosophical legacy: Influence of Vaidika and A vaidika systems

The impact of philosophical systems preceding Abhinava or contemporaneous with him, on his aesthetics was deep and profound, as evidenced in earlier chapters of the same thesis. The discussion in Vedic literature of the twin concepts of body and self (Deha and âtman) and of the Individual Self and the Universal Self (âtman and Brahman) has touched every aspect of knowledge and culture in the country and Abhinava is no exception. It has transformed his aesthetic theories in subtle yet far-reaching ways. An attempt is made here to see this very impact and transformation.

The present day scholar may take either the historical or the logical path to study the Vedas, taking the divisions as compartments or parts of a homogeneous whole. Either way would reveal an important fact. A fundamental shift of focus of the Ultimate Reality, from a plurality of phenomena to a unitary principle, can be discerned. In the process, we would also see a shift from the material, manifest and tangible phenomena to the unmanifest, abstract and spiritual substratum underlying it. The supernatural powers deified as Gods become representations or manifestations of one supreme Godhead or Principle called Brahman. The Vedic philosopher always worked at both the levels, macrocosmic and the micro-cosmic, hence this would be applicable to the individual or jâva as well. The counterpart of the Brahman in the jâva would be called âtman. The analysis of the objective and subjective factors governing them ultimately identifies them as being one and
the same, "I am that Brahman", Aham brahmàsmi as expounded by Bçhadàraõyaka and other Upaniùads. Despite differences between schools regarding a relative or absolute standpoint or taking on theistic shades, this one principle came to be called as Sat-cit-ànanda or Existence-knowledge-bliss. The duality of the subject-object, necessary for epistemological purposes could be now dissolved metaphysically. With regard to aesthetics, this could be directly related to the Pràcàna-Nâvâna schools of poetics and their emphasis on situation and emotion respectively. The àtman doctrine seems to have inspired the Navâna school to highlight emotion due to 'the depth of its appreciation and intensity of delight'. The ramifications are seen in its proponent Abhinava, whose notion of rasa is that which 'transcends the subject-object dichotomy' in the aesthetic experience. Rasa, like the Ultimate reality in the Upaniùads is neither purely objective nor purely subjective. These notions though necessary to understand the aesthetic situation, need to be discarded to reach the essence i.e. rasa. What is of greater significance is the resultant bliss that ensues. There is a striking similarity between the enjoyment from rasa and the bliss from the experience of the Brahman. As a corollary of the earlier aspect, the emotional type of poetry/drama surmounts the subject object relation unlike the situational type wherein the experiencer gets more involved in the object. This is possible only with the sublimation of the ego or individuality in the spectator, just as the âtman realises that it is non-different from the Brahman. This bliss is ultimate and born out of awareness of one's true nature. This probably led Abhinava to declare rasànanda as Brahmànanda-sahodara and the method most appropriate to realise this was through Pratyabhijñà. According to Abhinava, rasânubhâti touches the core of the self which is consciousness. In the aesthetic experience, when the duality between the bhàva in the performer and the rasa in the sahçdaya dissolves into one universal experience of ànanda, the jàva recognises the real nature of his self i.e., consciousness. This gives him a glimpse into the Brahman, which is øiva for Abhinava.
A cursory glance into the Upaniṣadic texts would show the layered usage of the term rasa with reference to the ātman, as the 'essence' and as the delight we receive from 'the tasting of this essence'. When the identification of the ātman and the Brahman is realised, rasa becomes the bliss emanating from the source, i.e., the Brahman. Abhinava was particularly inspired with its implications in the practical aesthetic sphere, for the performer and for the spectator. With a shift from pluralism to non-dualism, the necessity of gratifying a plethora of Gods was lessened. Mere rituals and accompanying kārmic activity were bypassed for a pursuit of the puruṣārtha-s, particularly dharma and mokṣa, through knowledge and an enhancement of values. The enjoyment of Nāṇya and thereby the experience of rasa according to Abhinava is designed for this very purpose, as given in the Nāṇyotpatti chapter of the Nāṇyasūtra. As a staunch votary of Kashmir ēaivism which lays great emphasis on practical transformation of the individual, with sādhana of the jāva, dākṣa from the Guru and anugraha of ūṣṇa, Abhinava upholds nāṇyānubhava and rasānanda as vehicles of positive acculturation or citta-āuddhi. Art becomes a medium to achieve moral purification and spiritual elevation as an essential part of human life.

Just as the philosophical concepts enhanced the notion of rasa, the concept of dhvani also was transformed. From being the outer sound of a poem or form of drama it was recognised as the suggested, inner meaning of a work of art. The ātman doctrine helped go deeper from the outer to the unseen and suggested ultimate reality, of which the outer world was only a manifestation. Dhvani was that suggestive meaning of art and thereby of the reality itself. Hence Abhinava achieved two goals simultaneously. He was able to give the proper place to the external discernable world of temporal joys and sorrows and also use it as a platform to peep into the world of eternal reality through an aesthetic experience.

An overview of the various darṣanas will reveal a wide range of reactions to the status of aesthetic activity. While Čārvāka's hedonism takes living the
good life to the extreme, Baudhā and Jaina darśanas relegate the aesthetic activity to the background, being based on enjoyment of an empirical art form. Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta seems unable to give ultimate status to the aesthetic experience, as jagat is māyā and art imitates jagat, hence it is also māyā. Viṣṇu-advaita gives scope for the aesthetic experience but rasānanda becomes subservient to Bhakti in the final analysis.

Abhinava's exposition of Bharata's rasa-sāstra itself reveals the influence of preceding philosophical Vaidika darśanas on him, which accepted most of the above mentioned tenets. Many of the theorists belonged to one or the other darśana e.g., Īśākuka to the Nyāya, Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka to the Mīmāṃsa, both of which have already been discussed. Further Abhinava in the ABh., gives the Sāṅkhya interpretation of Bharata's Rasa-sātra before going to Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka. Sāṅkhya has been the primary contributor of the theory of triguṇa as also the twenty-four evolutes in the metaphysics of reality. Abhinava refers to the role of the three guṇa-s, (particularly sattva), in the reinforcement of the Puruṣārtha-s, through Nāya. The etymological analysis of sāttvika-abhinaya e.g., leads us back to sattva while all three guṇa-s are the constituent nature of all characters in a play or dance. As regards the aesthetic experience, in keeping with Satkāryavāda, the Sāṅkhya system believes in a causal relation between the situation and the basic mental state. All external causes are constituted under the former, which becomes the cause for the basic mental state (sthāyin). This sthāyin is identified with rasa or aesthetic experience. The actor does not imitate but himself becomes the hero. The spectator is 'de-individualised' while witnessing the play. He is in the same state as the puruṣa when aware of the distinction between himself and prakṛti. The three guṇa-s, are in constant play, hence the play is apprehended differently by different spectators. Again, since the worldly experience of senses and sense objects is full of pleasure and pain, the resultant effect (sthāyin) can also be both pleasurable and painful. Abhinava does not agree with the Sāṅkhya system, seeing the obvious non-adherence to Bharata's
tenets that sthàyin is different from rasa and the rasa experience is always pleasurable. While the twenty four evolutes are accepted by him with minor changes in terminology in the thirty-six tattva scheme, Abhinava being a non-dualist strongly criticizes the dualistic standpoint of Sàïkhya.

Bhañña Nàyaka was no doubt a votary of the M ānàs sà viewpoint, but he also displayed Vedàntic tendencies in categorising the world of art as similar to the phenomenal world. Just as the Brahman creates this world without diminishing his real nature and is the experience of bliss, so also the poet creates the artistic world out of his imagination (bhàvanà) and this captivates the heart of the sahçdaya. Like the phenomenal world, (which has a reality of only name and form), the aesthetic situation also serves the highest purpose of life. Abhinava retained the concepts of sàdhàraõãkaraõa, sahçdaya and bhoga elaborated in detail by Nàyaka. The notion of bhoga was treated differently by the Yoga and Vai÷eùika dar÷ana-s. Sattva in Yoga refers to buddhi which is insentient and opposed to puruùa who is sentient. According to Pandey, however as an intellectual reaction to a stimulus in practical life, there is no difference. The consciousness of identity of buddhi and puruùa is termed bhoga. The Vai÷eùika explains bhoga as the samavàya or relation of knowledge to the self (as inherence). Nàyaka spoke of bhoga in the context of ànanda from rasa but the above explanations seem to make this relation impossible. Abhinava himself states that he has improved upon Bhañña Nàyaka's definition of bhoga and is not influenced by the above. He points out that in an aesthetic experience, the spectator identifies with the same psychological conditions faced by the hero and `not with the objective perception of the presented'. Secondly, there is no need for a third power of bhàvakatva when sàdhàraõãkaraõa effectively universalises the emotions among spectators. Despite the difference between the cognition of the aesthetic process and other situations like perception, remembrance etc., the aesthetic experience can be explained psychologically.
From Bharata’s time to that of Bhañña Lollañä, the entire stress was on the artiste and then the performer. Their perspective was from the actual performance by the actor. Abhinava benefited immensely from Nàyaka’s insistence on going beyond the artiste and the actor to the spectator. Despite his demolition of Dhvanivâda, Abhinava was greatly inspired by his analysis of the aesthetic experience.

Before we go briefly into the commonalities and differences between òaïkara’s Advaita Vedânta and Abhinava’s Kô, we need to retrace our path to an older, inspiring tradition of early Vedânta, represented by none other than Gauóapàda, òankara’s Paramaguru. There have been fruitful attempts by scholars to trace Abhinava’s aesthetic ideas to Gauóapàda and the Buddhist schools of Màdhyamika and Vijjànavâda. The impact of Gauóapàda and later òaïkara on Abhinava is unique and complex. At a given level, we can discern the origin of his terms and concepts in their Advaita Vedânta. At other levels, Abhinava convincingly refutes òaïkara’s metaphysical absolutism which he feels does no justice to the reality-status of aesthetics. This is notwithstanding exceptional aesthetic works from the lyrical pen of òaïkara, the Saundaryalahiri being a case in point. The theories and concepts as discussed by Gauóapàda in his Mànóukya-kàrikà will be dealt with, as òaïkara was greatly inspired by him and carried forward most of his philosophy. There are also some aspects of his philosophy, which we shall see later, were accepted by Abhinava and not pursued by òaïkara. Gauóapàda became a bridge between the Avaidika traditions of Buddhism and the Vaidika traditions of Vedânta. The blending together of philosophy with the religious, mystical and ritualistic aspects of the tradition was the hallmark of both Gauóapàda and Bhartçhari. This seemed to have led indirectly to the òaïivism of Abhinava later. With this influence, Abhinava was able to synthesise the philosophical standpoint of Advaita, on the lines of òaïkara, yet lead logically to the ultimate religious principle of øiva as the source of both the phenomenal and the artistic worlds. This Godhead was a dynamic and potent one, creating
actively, out of his own free will, the macrocosmic and microcosmic worlds as the bursting forth of his ever renewing energy.

Gauóapàda and the Buddhist scholars of his time seemed to have mutually recognised and inspired each other. It is a matter of interest that the Buddhist theorists øàntarakùita (name itself meaning `protector of øànta'!) in his work Tattvasa§graha and Bhàvaviveka in Màdhyamika-hçdaya-kàrikà have included passages from the Mànóukya-kàrikà. Abhinava incorporated a large number of terms from Gauóapàda and the Buddhists. A few of them with a direct bearing on his aesthetics include àgama, spanda, vàk, States of Consciousness, Consciousness as shining, pratibhà, the thirty-six tattva-s, Pratyabhij¤à, the uniqueness of the Nàñya world, sthiti-gati principles (behind the karaõa movement), laukika and alaukika spheres and nàda-bindu. These have been discussed here briefly.

Gauóapàda's Màõóukya-kàrikà divided into four parts, begins with the àgama-prakaraõa. He says that there are four states (avasthà) of consciousness i.e., jàgarita, svapna, supti/su÷upti and tåriyà, which are actually the four steps (pàda) to be taken to achieve liberation. These personify the sacred speech (vàk) the very source of creation. Perception at the wakeful stage is termed `enjoyment' of external objects which is possible due to the seven limbs (sapta-ai ga or bodily organs) and nineteen mouths (eko-navigmsati-mukha or doors of perception). The latter are the accepted set of five organs of sense (buddhi-indriya), five organs of action (karma-indriya), five living forces (pràôa), an inner organ (antaõkaraõa) which is made up of three parts, intellect (buddhi), mind or the organ of integration of data from perception (manas) and the inner ego or sense of one's own individuality (aha§ kàra). Scholars have often felt that the nineteenth category i.e the process of consciousness called citta is a direct result of Buddhist influence. Abhinava's thirty-six tattva scheme is remarkably similar to the above. Both the above schemes however imply that these are basically potentialities and not fixed or rigid physical entities.
The consciousness that perceives all objects is referred to as taijasa or shining according to Gauóapàda, particularly at the dream state. Advaita Vedānta would reject the reality given to the different objects at the different states of consciousness which is accepted by Gauóapàda and Abhinava. Gauóapàda uses the term ânanda to the one and only feeling, experienced by consciousness at the third level of supti, when the constant contact with external and internal objects is no longer there. This state is still one step away from the real and ultimate state of bliss but the âtman gets to glimpse the infinite joy by pulling aside the veil of màyà. Abhinava in hailing Rasànanda as Brahmànanda-sahodarà is meaning precisely this, in that, there is experience of bliss, by the âtman, of the Brahman. He differs in assigning this to the level of jàgrat itself wherein in Nàñya, the spectator enjoys with full awareness of its meaning and reality. Suùupti for him is dominated by tamoguõa. However fleeting it may be, rasànanda instils a desire, an urge in the jàva to try for the same experience again and again by being a spectator of Nàñya, till he is in Brahma-j¤àna alone (here Pratyabhij¤à of òiva). When Gauóapàda says that in the fourth stage tåriyà, there are no external or internal objects, we are again reminded of Abhinava talking of the subject-object collapse into non-duality in aesthetic bliss. The British Scholar F. Whaling in his article ‘òaïkara and Buddhism’ traces the Buddhist influence in the insistence of tårãya being indescribable and of màyà as the foundation of all our worldly knowledge. However, Abhinava seems to be more guided by the example of màyà in Svetàsvatara-upaniùad (4.10) where it is the divine creative force or øakti, the energy potential. Consciousness operates at all the levels whether in contact with objects or resting in its own nature. In his commentary on the Màõóukya-kàrika, øaï kara often uses the analogy of the four quarters of consciousness to the smaller and smaller denominations of a kàrùàpaõa coin (Commentary on Màõóukya-upaniùad, 2), something similar to the Russian Matryoshka dolls. Abhinava utilises this explanation to signify that all levels of reality combine together to make a whole.
The concept of tārāya leads us to the fourth state which has no parallel in the phonetic form of the 'Om' and is best symbolised by an anusvāra, a 'point', a 'dot' and in Abhinava's language, the 'bindu'. Gaudapada's verse in the Māṇḍukya-kārīka 1.23 can be very aptly applied to the sthiti-gati concept in the karaṇa movement in dance. He says: nāmātre vidyate gatiṇa meaning 'While for that which cannot be measured, there is no movement at all'. This bindu known as the praṇava is the meeting point of all energies. According to Abhinava, it is the point of light essential for the awakening the kuṇḍalinī-akti. Representing the phonic energy mentioned above, in Kashmir Śaivism it is the pulsating radiant light, bearing the potential active urge to burst forth and shine through as the entire world. It becomes for Abhinava the śiva-akti - sāmarasya, the prakāra and the vimarṣa. Taken in the language of colour, prakāra would stand for white (for śiva) and vimarṣa for red (for ṣakti).

The Baudhā influence is on a different plane. They deny any reality to concepts, as there is no enduring self to which they could belong, are constantly subject to change and never lead to ultimate realisation. This would appear diagrammatically opposed to Abhinava's śiva as the eternal and ultimate reality, for Nirvāṇa itself is the realisation that all things change, attachment to worldly pleasure is the cause of duṣkha and metaphysical explanations are impediments to Liberation. Perhaps Hānayana Buddhism, in deference to Buddha's distaste for deification, had to veto art activity for a length of time before it was accepted as a legitimate means of human expression and liberation. Yet the tenets of Viśṇavāda had a tremendous influence on Abhinava. They shared a common ground that reality is consciousness, but as a Śaiva, Abhinava could not accept that the various individualities or 'mental states' are different from each other. He asks, how is it possible then that many subjects perceive an object in the same way? This is so because many subjects are in the same psychic condition i.e., they form a 'single knowing subject'. This forms the basis for the concept of sādhāraṇākaraṇa and tanmayabhāvana, where all the spectators irrespective of
their differences are able to perceive the emotions that are being portrayed in a play and enjoy it as a common aesthetic experience. The Yogācāra insistence on the non-eternal reality of the phenomenal world appears to have had a bearing on Abhinava’s conception of Nāyā also as a phenomenal world with a unique status. Even before Abhinava’s time, the similarities between Gauḍapāda’s Mādoāukya-kārikā and Nagarjuna’s Mādhyamika- kārikā on the nature of the phenomenal world as temporary and dreamlike is too great to be missed. A beautiful musical reference is given when both of them speak of a magic city of Gandharvas (celestial musicians) but it would imply the unreality of the world and total reduction to one level of perception. Abhinava phrases it differently. He says, external objects are not false but are projections of the subject, so also the artiste’s world is not unreal but a projection of his pratibhā. The notion of imagination also takes on a different hue when Abhinava applies it to his aesthetics. Etymologically kalpanā (from klp or viklp) would indicate the activity of ‘producing a mental construction’ or imagining. The Vedanta view is that, as Saguōa Brahman or I-vara he assumes the role of a designer of the phenomenal world, which is a mental construct, a blueprint. It then creates the illusory idea of a jāva which thereafter projects the world of external objects as a result of its creative imagination. For Bhañña Nāyaka it is bhāvanā and for Abhinava it is the activity of pratibhā, particularly in a dramatist/actor, indicating a capacity to create worldly and other worldly phenomena in a dramatic situation.

The two aspects of spanda and pratyabhijñā have been discussed by Gauḍapāda though Abhinava did not confine them to pure metaphysics but applied them most successfully to aesthetics. For the former, liberation was jñāna based, a kind of realisation of the true nature of saś sāra and the cycle of birth and rebirth. The knowledge which liberates the jāva from the bondage of saś sāra is the realisation of something already within, i.e already achieved (prāptasya praptīḥ) but not known so far due to avidya or ignorance. Since it is a combination of knowledge and action, Abhinava says that such a state can
be achieved through the performance of and witnessing of Nā̄ya in which both combine to lead to aesthetic delight.

Spanda is a unique term introduced by Gauḍapāda in the fourth chapter of the, Mādūkṣya-kārika, called the Alātā-ānti-prakaraṇa. The example given is of the burning coals which when swirled appear like one whole mass, an idea very popular in Nagarjuna's and Asaṅga's philosophies. Spanda implies that which `vibrates, pulsates, and shimmers'. It exists in and as all things.

We have seen how Īśākara’s Advaita as a philosophical system having preceded Abhinava, had a pervasive impact on him but some scholars believe that Īśākara also incorporated some of the ideas prevalent in Kashmir during his sojourn in the Himalayan region. No less than T.M.P. Mahadevan, an authority on Advaita Vedānta while elaborating on the Dakūḷa-mārti-loka in his book `The Hymns of Shankara' says "It is to be noted that in this hymn Shankara employs certain key-terms and concepts of the Pratyabhijñā system known popularly as Kashmir Shaivism. The illustration of the mirrored city is found in the Pratyabhijñā works". It is a moot question then whether Abhinava was influenced by Īśākara or only revived the tenets already existing in Kashmir in Īśaivism. Īśākara's use of the term rasa is unlike Abhinava. In the Brahmasātrabhaṣya he quotes the well known verses from the Taittirīya-upaniṣad, raso vai saṁ, rasam hyeyamlabdvānandi bhavati, vijñānambrāhma etc. and says raso nāma tṛptiheturānandakaro maduramladihi prasiddho loke. Though the capacity of rasa as leading to Brahman realization in the manner of Īśaivism could not be accommodated in the Advaita of Īśākara, Abhinava’s vyākṣanā could have retained shades of the Advaitic notion of mukti, attained with the removal of avidyā. Both in the Dhvanyālokā-locana and in the ABh., the idea of rasa as also reality being not created or produced but made manifest (abhivyakti) is very much there.
For øaïkara, as the jäva, he is unable to witness himself performing action, being in it. He says quoting Bçhadàraõyaka-úpaniùad, (3.4.2) ‘na dçùñer draùñaram pa÷yeþ..na vij¤àter vij¤àtraü vijànãyaþ’ translating thus, ‘burning fire cannot burn itself just as the most able actor cannot climb on his own shoulder’. Differing with øaïkara, Abhinava would say that the actor is able to see himself as acting, again due to the operation of his pratibhà when a sudden flash of intuition bursts forth and both levels of experience are simultaneously known. If he is unable to de-personalise while simultaneously acting the role, he would not be able to either get into the role or get out of it. Abhinava is able to explain the nature of role playing better with the aid of Agamic principles and practices, which is dealt with in the following section.

4.2.2. Agamic/Tantric legacy: Influence of K rama, K ula, Spanda, Pratyabhhîjñà

In the second chapter of the present thesis the different schools of Saivism current in Abhinava’s time have been discussed. It is a well known fact that he sat at the feet of teachers belonging to a variety of philosophical and religious systems, imbibed their teachings in an authentic manner and incorporated them in appropriate ways into his holistic system. Whether it is Utpalacarya’s Vâk-÷akti or powers of speech/language, Vasugupta’s analogy of àtman as a dancer, the K rama insistence on sàdhanà and yogic discipline or Pratyabhhîjñà emphasis on recognition of oneself as øiva for liberation, Abhinava is guided by all of them in formulating a composite aesthetic theory.

Vasugupta calls Parama øiva or àtman, a dancer, an individual soul a stage, and its sense organs spectators. He displays the world-drama in Himself as the foundation by His sportive internal vibrations, and manifests the mental stages of waking, dream, deep sleep, and ecstasy by veiling His real nature as universal consciousness in an individual self or knower. He, as the universal consciousness contracted by the five coverings, wrongly identifies himself with his vital forces, subtle body, or void, has the states of waking, etc, and called the stage because it delights in the world-play and fun. øiva, the
Supreme Yogan, manifests the world-drama from Sadà÷ivatattva to earth and other elements. The sense-organs are spectators. øiva manifests the world-play to an individual soul's sense-organs, which execute their functions with the powers of the Lord, and which cannot veil His nature as omniscience and absolute freedom. They are enchanted with the world-drama manifested to them. øiva veils Himself in an individual soul, called the inner self, and unfolds His world-drama outside.¹⁶

The term Pratyabhiññà, so fundamental in Abhinava's philosophy appears in both Bhartṛhari and the Buddhist texts. For the former, it is intrinsically connected with pratibhà due to which the vāk is illumined in a sudden burst to reveal the ultimate reality. The Buddhists usage of the term in Pali as paccabhìññà, is epistemological and indicates the knowledge attained through recognizing previously learned signs or abhiññà.¹⁷ Abhinava retains both the usages but applies them directly to the aesthetic situation which he says reveals previously known ideas (Pratyabhiññà of vāsanà-s) in a sudden flash of illumination (camatkàra). This camatkàra and pratibhà are non-different though they arise in apparently two sides of the spectrum i.e.the dramatist and the actor or the actor and the spectator.

Among the many texts and systems that Abhinava partakes of academically, two of them which stand out are Vijñànabhairava¹⁸ and Yogavà÷iùña-mahàràmàyana.¹⁹ The former authoritative text on Saivism describes elaborately the nature and significance of ecstatic experiences, prescribing exercises for inducing them, including the gratification of both sensual and sexual pleasures. It recommends that the mind firmly fixes itself wherever it finds pleasure, for the true nature of bliss to be manifest. Even remembrance of earlier moments of pleasure can lead to renewed pleasure as also the bliss that ensues after eating a fulfilling meal or sexual intercourse. According to the text 'That pleasure is one's own pleasure on the realisation of the essence of Brahman'²⁰ The usage of ghaõñyanuraõana (resonance of the bell) as an analogy for the pleasurable experience of Brahman and a complex
Tantric explanation attributed to Abhinava by the commentator raises the doubt of the influence of one over the other. Along with the confusion as to whether Abhinava was the commentator of Vijñānabhairava, the local tradition in Kashmir believes that he knew and commented on the Yogavaiṣṇava-mahārāmāyaōa, which cannot be classified as belonging to one particular school. That this work talks pointedly about ātmānanda as the most important goal of human existence is not its only commonality with Ananda and Abhinava, Scholars aver that it is the only work in Sanskrit, besides the Mahābhārata, that illustrates the relation between āśāstra and kāvya, a matter of primary concern for both of them. It is a wonderful combination of poetry and philosophy, with stories advocating philosophical tenets couched in lyrical and aesthetic language. Some of the most important aesthetic terms like sama, viśānti, tanmayā camatkāra are spread all over the work. In a verse, a surprising injunction is given to Rāma by Vaiṣṇava to drink, live, make love, as he has become a jāvanmukta and none of these worldly fetters are going to affect him, (YV.V.50,75). This is so obviously the Kashmir ēaivite understanding rather than an Advaitic one.

We have seen how Abhinava utilised many of the terms and examples from the āākta and ēaiva āgamas and Tāntric practices in explaining aesthetic experience. The most telling image of Abhinava as an expert in aesthetics and Tantra is no doubt the pen picture drawn by his student Madhurāja Yogin in a work of four verses called the Dhyāna-āloka. He is hailed as Dakṣāyānī and as an incarnation of ēiva himself. The entire description given of him in the Dhyāna-āloka reveals a deep understanding of Tantra and the rituals that went under its name. It was no mere token interest in Tāntric practices, particularly Kaula, given the elaborate treatment of it in the Tantrāloka, a massive yet esoteric work from Abhinava’s stable. They were obviously practised by him as well. He draws a parallel between the Tantric rituals and sacrifices and the performance of Nāyika. It is in the form of an elaborate play, with the use of hand gestures symbolically implying higher and deeper
concepts and leading to the same goal of perfect poise and peace. The concept of Dåti or messenger is central to Tantric ritual. In the ritual, the attempt is to reach the state where the female dåti identifies with øakti and the male participant with øiva. The terms camatkçti, rasa and ànanda are all used for both the experiences.23

The character of Dåti or lady-messenger is important in a dance performance, sometimes in the form of an element or object (e.g Meghasande÷am), or animal/bird.24 Though the messenger in a dance item is not shown as undertaking esoteric rituals like in Tantra, she is very much part of the bhàva-rasa complex in the situation and helps in the expression of bhàva and attainment of rasa. According to Abhinava, in the Tàntric ritual, the three makàra-s (madya, màüsam and maithuna) combine together to give the highest bliss (ànanda) which is none other than the bliss, i.e. Parabrahman.25 Masson and Patwardhan translate the verse 137 (on p 97) of the Tantràloka thus:

Because of the flow (rasa) of desire, through the force of the relish (carvaõà) of outward things which is filled with one's own flow, one attains the state of complete repose (vi÷ràntidhàma) and all phenomenal objects (comm..bhàvajàta) are merged into one's own self.”

In another chapter (XXVIII, 20, p.10, vol XI) of the Tantràloka as mentioned by the above authors, Abhinava gives an actual comparison with the theatre, seen in his reference to ñãígàra-rasa in the ABh.: ratikçâdasårdham ca paramàrthataèp kàminoreva, tattreva sukhasya dhàrâvi-rântiè. 27

Very often due to their obvious sexual implications, many verses directly related to rasànanda in the Tantràloka have not been taken up by scholars for study. It is important to note here that the intention is not mere satisfaction of carnal desires, but to show the level of Kàma-based experiences as a legitimate stage towards the ultimate goal of transcendental bliss or øiva-realisation.28 This also marks Abhinava's departure from the manual-like nature of Bharata's Nàñya-àstra which seems to concentrate more on a
compendious listing of different aspects of dramatic presentation than delve deeper into the underlying philosophical principles.

4.2.3. Abhinava’s Literary and Aesthetic legacy: Influence of theories of ōabda, Sphoña, Dhvani, Rasa.

The evolution of ōabda and sphoña and their analysis by Māmāś sā and Bhartṛhari has already been discussed in chapter three. The Māmāś sā, coming immediately after the heyday of Jaina and Baudhā attack on Vedic injunctions, had to necessarily hold up Vedic dharma and karma as infallible and above critical analysis. Abhinava’s concerns were however different. He had the luxury of utilising the Māmāś sā analysis of ōabda-artha to foster his own aesthetic theory of rasa-dhvani. If Abhinava had followed the Māmāś sā explanation of the ōabda-artha relation to its logical conclusion, he would have to admit that the relation being sacrosanct, it effectively foreclosed any analysis of language or such other vehicles of communication for aesthetic purposes. There would have been no role for pratibhā in the poet/actor, no interpretative experience for the rasika. The only significant pointer would be the import of the Māmāś sā concept of bhāvanā as indicating the meaning of a poem by Bhañña Nāyaka in the three stages of abhidhā, bhāvanā and bhoga in rasa-realisation. This did give Abhinava the logical movement forward from bhāvanā to tanmayābhāvanā, the integrating aspect of sādhāraākaraā. However, what Abhinava successfully extracted from the Māmāś sā doctrine was a unique sovereignty for the art world, the symbolic nature of Vedic sacrifice (mirrored in chapters two and three of the Nā) and the pursuit of the puruśārthas.

The influence of Bhartṛhari (and his sphoña-vāda) was on the other hand, at once fundamental and far reaching. Māmāś sā held that the pada was the locus of meaning, while Bhartṛhari shifted it to the vākya which is unitary and devoid of parts. The four levels of speech delineated by him i.e parā, parayanti, madhyamā and vaikhari, opened up a whole new world of creative possibilities for the aesthetcian. According to him, ōabda and artha are two
inseparable halves of a whole in sphoña, wherein the abda-artha rests undifferentiated in consciousness. The simile of the variegated plumage of the peacock bursting forth from the egg, within which it lies dormant, is an oft repeated one later in Kashmir øaivism.

Parà is beyond articulated speech, pa÷yanti is the level of undifferentiated speech equivalent to pratibhà in the poet. The demarcation of vâcaka and vâcya from the madhyamà stage is finally articulated speech as verbal abda and artha in the vaikhari, also known as dhvani, (different from à nanda’s interpretation) ruti and nàda. By insisting that there is no abda without its corresponding artha and vice-versa, he implied that there is no art without its meaning deep within sphoña. Yet at the nàda stage abda is separated from the real artha, if we understand that the real meaning of the word lies in the unitary sphoña. What lessons can Abhinava derive from this paradox? Metaphysically, it would mean the realisation of the illusory, incompleteness of nàda, rectified by greater and clearer cognition of the nature of Reality. Aesthetically, it would imply the process of the artiste moving from nàda to artha and the reverse process of the spectator from artha to nàda. The aesthetic experience is a combined journey of both the performer and the spectator towards consciousness, which is realised as common substratum in rasànanda. Abhinava realises that both sides of the communicative process are involved in the effort to reach the same goal, conversely there can be a meaningful communication only if the goal is common. Despite the apparent step-by-step progress of an art form or presentation, the actual understanding, born out of intuition, comes in a flash and is indescribable. To put it simply, this has two significant conclusions. One, pratibhà integral to sphoña, is the source of inspiration for the poet, actor and spectator. It implies the unitary and complete nature of Consciousness which cannot be grasped through discursive thought. Two, it implies experiences of earlier births which are tapped by the spectator in his understanding of what is being presented as art in the aesthetic situation. These vâsanâ-s, are revealed in the re-cognition or
Pratyabhijñā of the individual of the original source or Consciousness, which for Abhinava is śiva.

It is a revelation how Abhinava was inspired both by the Māmāśa emphasis on the source of artha only in the pada and Bhartṛhari who actually broke through the rigid barriers to make sphoña the significative seat of meaning. This can be seen as the one of the earliest stages of synthesis that Abhinava constantly attempts in his aesthetics.

In the present day aesthetic studies, the theory of dhvani would seem like the most natural and logical explanation of meaning in art. It was however the subject of great controversy before ānanda's time as made out by him in the Dhvanyāloka. He says "Though the learned men of yore have declared time and again that the soul of poetry is suggestion, some would aver its non-existence, some would regard it as something (logically) implied and some others would speak of its essence as lying beyond the scope of words. We propose, therefore, to explain its nature and bring delight to the hearts of perceptive critics." The categories of critics of dhvani, could be classified as Abhāvavādins, Bhāktavādins and Anirvacanāyavādins. Among Abhāvavādins who negate the existence of dhvani there are three types. One group attributes the charm in poetry only to guṇa-s and alaṅkāra-s while the other brings dhvani itself under the above. We have yet another group which denies the existence of dhvani on the ground that it was not discussed as one of the basic principles of literary criticism by earlier theorists. The Bhāktavādins highlight lākūṇa, which they feel fulfils the function of suggestion through indication. The Anirvacanāya-vādin-s as the name suggests hold that dhvani cannot be explained and is beyond articulation. Briefly put, the opponents may hold the view that dhvani would be metaphysically non-existent, epistemologically untenable and if existing then subsumed under one or the other kinds of poetic expression, hence redundant. ānanda answers these objections by showing the difference between dhvani and two other concepts viz., abhidhā (denotation)
and lakùaõà (indication). The meaning conveyed by dhvani, is something unique, delighting the sahçdaya-s in a special way.

According to ânanda poetry has two levels of meaning—the literal or vācyà and the implied or pratãyamàna. In the Dhvanyàloka, ânanda says that the former is explicit and known directly while the latter is implicit and can be known only through suggestion. Giving the example of a lamp used to see an object in the dark, the primary meaning is utilised to understand the suggested meaning which is the soul of poetry. In explaining the nature of dhvani, ânanda says that when the conventional word renders its meaning as secondary and suggests the intended or implied meaning, it is designated as dhvani or suggestive poetry by the learned. He has given an elaborate classification of dhvani, an in-depth analysis of which is not necessary here. Abhinava has however discussed them in great detail in the Locana. Of particular relevance to our understanding of Abhinava's rasa is his placing vastu-dhvani and ala§ kàra-dhvani, under samyaglakùyakrama which is sequential and rasa under asamyaglakùyakrama which is revelatory in nature. As soon as we hear a poem or see a performance we experience rasa-dhvani or aesthetic pleasure. It is not that we see a performance, slowly understand its meaning and then experience enjoyment. All the three processes appear simultaneous and non-sequential. Though the meaning is suggested or implied, the experience of pleasure is direct.

Abhinava is particularly impressed with ânanda's examples to prove the existence and importance of dhvani, several of which he gives in the Locana. He says that just as beauty in a woman is over and above (distinct from) the sum of her parts, so also is the implied meaning greater than the outward, direct meaning of a poem. Abhinava analyses the different powers associated with meaning in poetry and realises that dhvani becomes essential despite them. He says "We are thus forced to admit that this is a fourth type of operation, distinct from abhidhà, tàtparyà and lakùaõà, one which has been described by such closely related terms as suggesting (dhvanana), indicating
(dyotana), hinting (vyajjanà), giving a notion (pratyàyana), and giving to understand (avagama). For Abhinava, it is the imagination of a sahàçdaya that helps bring out the meaning of an art work. It goes beyond the sum total of the three powers viz., abhidhà, tàtparyà and lakùaõà. Using a simile of the resonance of a bell, he says the various shades of meaning are revealed in the use and understanding of dhvani in art. For a performing artiste it is layering of meaning that is tapped to give depth and variety to the presentation. This is employed not only in vàcika-abhinaya but in àïgika, àharya and sàttvika as well. If ânanda holds that dhvani is the soul of poetry, Abhinava maintains that rasa is the soul of dhvani.

This leads us to the third category of dhvani i.e. Rasa-dhvani. Krishnamurthy sums it aptly when he says "dhvani is the quintessence of poetry; and `rasa' is the quintessence of `dhvani." He goes on to say that sentiment, emotion, the semblance of sentiment or mood and their rise and cessation are all of undiscerned sequentiality. It is decided that when we have the prominent presence of this variety, we have the soul of suggestion. The sequence between the literal and suggested meaning collapses and rasa-dhvani results in delight. When Abhinava speaks of Rasa-dhvani, he obviously applies it to all art forms. It is other-worldly and relished by sympathetic listeners/spectators. He writes in the Locana:

Rasa-dhvani belongs to (gocara) only to the suggestive sense in poetry. It is never included under worldly dealings (vyavahàra) and is never even to be dreamed of as being revealed directly through words. No, quite the contrary, it is rasa, that is, it has a form which is capable of being relished (rasanãya) through the function (vyàpàra) of personal aesthetic relish (carvaõà), which is bliss (ànanda) that arises in the Sahàçdaya's delicate mind that has been coloured (anuràga) by the appropriate (samucita) latent impressions (vàsanà) that are deeply embedded from long before (pràk) appropriate that is, to the beautiful vibhàvas and anubhàvas, and beautiful, again, because of their appeal to the heart (sa§vàda), and which are conveyed by means of words. That alone is rasadhvani, and that alone, in the strict sense of the word, is the soul (of poetry).

ànanda alludes to writing a commentary on a Buddhist text in the course of his defence of dhvani. Without going into the debatable question of whether
Dharmakirti did indeed write a work on poetics (scholars acknowledge him as a poet), we can safely assume that his influence is substantial through verses quoting him in the Dhvanyàloka. Abhinava’s respect and admiration for Dharmakirti is revealed when he refers to his Pramàõavàrttika in several places in the IPVV. We are however on firmer ground when Abhinava delineates the shades of Ëanta as rasa. In the Rasàdhyàya chapter in the ABh., he mentions that some who accept Ëantarasa take the Buddha as the devatà for the same. In setting up an example of a Nàñya/play based on Ëantarasa he quotes the Nàgananda which is a Buddhist work. Though there is no compelling evidence of kàrikà-s or other commentaries on poetics or Ala§ kàra-àstra as a whole by other Buddhist theorists, Abhinava does refer to one Rahula as a commentator on the Nø.

In answering the objections raised by the opponents of dhvani, Abhinava was able to plug all the loopholes in the theory and thereby strengthen the doctrine of rasa as well. Thus we can see how Abhinava reiterates his debt to other writers in his explanation and acceptance of certain aesthetic concepts and notions. øaï kuka says that the spectator witnessing a play which is basically an imitation of reality, an artificial world and is so engrossed in it that he is not aware of its real nature. It is like the citraturaga which is neither real nor unreal yet the basis of a valid experience. Similarly, Abhinava stresses the fact that during the actual aesthetic experience we are not conscious of what he calls paurvàparyavimar÷a which stands for ‘propriety’ (thus synonymous with aucitya) rather than sequence. The poem may be describing something in normal life or non-literary contexts regarded as ‘vulgar’ or ‘improper’ but such notions do not occur to us when we are reading the play or watching its performance. This would probably answer the query as to how Abhinava was able to accept the performance and practice of Kaula rituals. The esoteric nature of their practices did not seem to disturb him as he had gone beyond, to their philosophical implications. In agreeing with øaï kuka’s conception of the world of rasa as alaukika, Abhinava goes against
Tauta for he believes that rasànubhava is beyond our everyday realms of space and time \(^{45}\) yet it is Tauta’s hçdayasaü våda that has left its imprint in the form of Abhinava’s tanmayåbhåva.

4.3. Enlarging the Periphery of Bharata’s Rasa-såtra by Abhinava

In delineating the rasa-såtra, Bharata states that the concept of rasa from the Atharva Veda, (rasàn atharvaõàd api Nø 1.17) can be further understood as that which is relished is rasa` (rasyate anena iti rasaþ äsvådyatvat, Nø, 28). In elaborating on rasa he is keeping in mind the poet/dramatist who scripts the play, which is dramatized by the actor/dancer under the direction of an able Såtradhåra through the four abhinaya-s and enjoyed by the spectators. Barlingay calls the entire Rasa process `a temporal continuum' starting with the dramatist and ending with the spectator.\(^{46}\) It would then imply the presence of rasa at every stage that qualifies it as an aesthetic experience for Bharata declares, na hi rasàdçte ka÷cidapi arthaþ pravartate, (Nø, VI, after Verse 34) that ‘no meaning can proceed from speech in the absence of rasa’. Here the word speech is applicable to all art forms as rasa forms the bedrock of all them in equal measure. Rasa like consciousness, is present at all stages of the aesthetic experience, for if it was not so, rasànanda then and later would be fragmented. Certain terms like rasa-uptattå and niùpattiþ, anukaraõa and anukãrta, äsvåda and äsvådyå have been used in a technical sense. Abhinava accepts the explanations given by Bharata with regard to these terms but gives certain clarifications in details. In his hands all of them point to a higher reality.

4.3.1. Uptattå and Niùpattå

What is meant by the `production` of rasa? Is it only a combination of the determinants and consequents or something over and above them? Is it merely another name for the sthåyi bhåva, in which case can we call it at all a new production? Uptatti-våda has already been advocated by Bhaña Lollåña. Would it suffice to explain the rasa-niùpattå, of Bharata? These questions
when analysed reveal Abhinava`s comprehensive answer to the status and nature of rasa vis-a-vis other existing bhàva-s. Before we go to that let us see Bharata`s answer.

In the use of the term rasa-niùpattiḥ Bharata clearly indicates his interest primarily in the production of rasa. Since the sthàyibhàva was to lead to rasa, the entire discussion by the interpreters of the rasa-sàtra tangentially changed course to the locus of sthàyibhàva rather than the actual rasa experience. Bharata`s concerns were the language and techniques of rasa production with reference to a presentation or performance. Hence the Nø became a compendium of various practices and devices involved in the above. Bharata makes a distinction between the process of rasa production (rasa-niùpattiḥ) and the appreciation of the experience by the spectator (rasàsvàda). The distinction is actually between that which is mental and made public or objective (the process) and the mental, subjective feeling of delight (the end of the process) in the spectator. The different bhàva-s are also not distinct entities but parts of a whole combined in an optimum manner to produce rasa. The drùñànta of different components of a dish adding up to its final taste, wherein we cannot distinguish each individual taste yet can see its role in the whole, is apt and relevant.

Lollàna`s purpose of defining rasa seems to be a faithful rendering of Bharata`s sàtra using the same terms to explain the creation of rasa. According to him the actor due to proper identification with the original character, say Ràma, is able to present the sthàyibhàva belonging to the character which the spectators accept though they have not seen Ràma. The sthàyibhàva which is at the subconscious, mental or sublimal level is brought to the surface by the vibhàva-s. The anubhàva-s are called effects but they are not of the developed rasa or relished emotion as rasa has not yet come into existence. Though Lollàna speaks of vásana-s, like Abhinava, he says the anubhàva-s are actually the effects of the sthàyibhàva-s in the vásanà or sublimal state. Causation in terms of utpatti cannot be of two different levels,
physical and mental. Anubhāva-s are physical while vyabhicāribhāva-s and sthāyibhāva are mental. Lollaña tries to solve this by calling vyabhicāribhāva-s as ‘potential states existing as deep rooted desires or vāsana-s'. Now all the elements of the rasa-complex belong to one subliminal level. He perceives the same problem in Bharata’s gastronomic example of a tasty dish produced from physical ingredients and resulting in a sense of delight. G.K. Bhat in explaining Lollaña’s theory states that "the sthāyi is fully developed or brought to the conscious perceptible level, this developed (upacita) sthāyi is rasa, an emotion to be relished."  

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Niùpattiþ is upaciti i.e development of the sthāyi with the other factors to the conscious state and rasa is the perception or pratāa of the abiding emotion (like vāra) of the original character. By making the sthāyi and rasa equivalent, the initial/essential duality between subject and object of aesthetic experience is sacrificed here making it an untenable theory. Abhinava says, if sthāyibhāva was rasa why would Bharata use two different terms for them? The dancer then would not need the spectator for rasa to be produced, for as soon as the vibhāva, anubhāva and vyabhicāribhāva combine, the sthāyibhāva is produced and rasa should happen simultaneously. Performance per se would become redundant.  

øri øaïkuka’s theory (sequentially coming next), will be analysed along with Bhañña Tauta’s objections to the same under anukaraða as he propounds the theory of imitation. Bhañña Nàyaka though a severe critic of the Dhvani theory (upheld by Abhinava) has been the inspiration for many of Abhinava’s aesthetic concepts (e.g., sàdhāranikaraða) and his criticisms of earlier interpreters of Bharata’s rasa-såtra. In the process of analysing the earlier theories, Nàyaka demolishes them. He says rasa experience cannot be described as pratāa utpatti, smçti, ÷abda-prayoga or dhvani. Rasa as pratāa implies that the spectator is able to get only the knowledge of the emotion either directly as explained by Lollaña or indirectly by øaï kuka, but does not experience the emotion itself. This does not guarantee the pleasure that arises from the experience of the emotion. The problem of the correct aesthetic
attitude has to be solved before venturing into direct or inferential nature of rasa-experience. Rasa cannot be described as being produced or utpattiṃ. If we accept like Lollaña that the emotion is actually produced in the actor, then the spectator is indifferent to it. If the actor acts convincingly and the spectator feels exactly the same emotion, he will be affected by it personally. In either case he cannot derive pleasure. It cannot be described as smṛti as no remembrance of a `thing not seen before` is possible. Mere words of the poet or the dramatic acting of the actor can be taken as means of expressing the knowledge of the emotion but not the emotion itself. As regards dhvani, Nāyaka’s attack is more vociferous. According to him rasa is not revealed through the process of suggestion i.e., dhvani or abhivyakti by vyāşjanā. Revelation can be only of that which is already in existence. If rasa already exists what is the necessity of Bharata talking of rasa-niùpattiḥ or production/creation of rasa? Revelation implies gradations of means e.g a candle versus a powerful lamp lighting up parts or whole of a dim-lit room. What are the best means to reveal the rasa completely? Once revealed would the emotion belong to the character, actor or spectator? Though a large part of Nāyaka’s criticism seems more of a semantic or hair splitting exercise, Abhinava retained some of the objections raised by him while answering some of the others in keeping with his abhivyakti-vāda. He dismissed Nāyaka’s inclusion of bhāvanā besides abhidhā as unnecessary, given the comprehensive nature of dhvani.

Abhinava’s answer to this question of aesthetic creation follows from his metaphysical standpoint that it is a manifestation of an eternal principle which suddenly is illumined (prakāśate) with the dawning of right knowledge (pratyabhijñā). Creation then becomes synonymous with expression of an already existing idea or fundamental meaning. The power of expression is evident at both the levels of the cosmological reality and the aesthetic activity of an artiste. The difference in analysis of the aesthetic experience by the predecessors of Abhinava to him show a certain shift of focus from the work
of art to the artiste and to the spectator. This done not imply that Abhinava accepts the ultimate reality of one aspect to the total rejection of the others. In Kashmir ñaivism there is no room for rejection of any aspect as the Reality includes everything. Being a system builder Abhinava integrates all the various aspects and components of the Aesthetic experience by assigning the appropriate position to each vis-à-vis the whole whereby both are automatically included and explained.

4.3.2. Anukaraõa and Anukãrtana

Abhinava quoting ñai kuka in the ABh., says that the vibhàva, anubhàva and vyabhicàribhàva all find expression by the dramatist in words. The actor and dancer with the help of the four fold abhinaya expresses this on stage. He is trained to do so, attaining perfection through training or ñikua and by repeated practice and stage performances. For authentic expression he can either learn from his own experience or from imitating those of others. The rendering of actions, events and emotions though artificial or man-made, are performed as if real and accepted by the spectators as such. This is possible due to the correct imitation by the dancer. Since sthàyi cannot be expressed in the same manner, it is not mentioned by Bharata. The production of rasa based on imitation (anukaraõa) is not niùpatti in the understood sense of new production. ñai kuka terms the process from the 'causes' to the expressed emotion as abhinayana in dramatic art where the inner content i.e.what is behind the words, is conveyed.

The usual logical processes of perception: sa§ yak-pratãaa (true perception), mithya-pratãaa (false or illusory perception), sam-aya-pratãaa (doubt) and sadç-ya-pratãaa (perception of resemblance) cannot be applied to the art experience as its nature is unique. This is because it is bhàva-anukaraõa. The creative artiste (dancer) imitates the emotional experience and expresses it through the abhinaya. This artistic imitation in keeping with the artiste`s world, is transformed by him from a mere factual rendering. It then
becomes anukārtana and can give rise to relish and enjoyment.⁴⁹ öaï kuka believes that since sthāyi or the original emotion is not carried forward to the spectators but only its artistic imitation, Bharata uses a different name i.e., rasa, which is the universal emotion imitatively presented by art (bhāvānukaraōam rasaḥ). The criticism of Abhinava against öaï kuka is actually those of his teacher Bhañña Tauta, who questions particularly the use of the term anukaraōa by him. He says that it is not clear whether the anukaraōa is to be done by whom or from whose point of view? Is it from the standpoint of the actor or the audience? If the spectator feels that the dancer is only imitating then he will not experience the same emotions though he may admire the artiste’s skill. If he takes the dancer temporarily as the original character, then it is identification and not imitation. The two levels of the imitation and the original being imitated are different. Again those of the imitator and the enjoyer are also at two levels, the physical, perceptible and the mental, psychological. Finally is imitation possible of that which has not been seen at all e.g. the character of Rāma or Sita?

Though Tauta’s criticisms of öaï kuka are fairly accurate and hard hitting, the fact remains that Bharata has himself used the term anukaraōa with reference to Nāñya. He says: lokavçttānukaraōam nāñyametanmayā kṣtam.⁵⁰ Nāñya is an imitation of facts and happenings of the world and life, inhabited by human beings who go through emotions and express them in their art. Imitation here does not mean as misunderstood, mere copying and duplication of these facts and emotions but the creative construction, rather an artistic recreation of them. Bharata also emphasizes āa and prakṛti, as the imitation should be appropriate (ucita) and faithful to the original. Dramaturgists have used the term rāpa or rāpaka in the sense of a metaphor as there is superimposition of a role on an actor. Abhinava himself admits that as artistic expression follows a life-like pattern of bhāva production and the resultant emotion is universally shared, imitation does take place in art.⁵¹ Abhinava is not content with a superficial explanation of imitative perception
or action. He discusses it in the ABh. In the first chapter he says, 
traylokyesāsyā sarvasya nāyam bhāvānu kirtanam. By imitation we do not 
mean that which produces laughter, or is identical like twins. Neither are we 
under a delusion (bhrama) nor is it mere substitution (like being instead of 
Rāma in his place). He highlights the role of awareness (saś vedana, samvitti) 
which makes the perception of sentiments and emotions involved in art as 
special (anuvyasāya-viśeṣa). This is combined with the artiste's own 
understanding of life. Neither the dancer nor the spectator is part of the 
aesthetic situation in an ignorant or non-participative manner.

At every stage of explanation of the aesthetic experience Abhinava 
brings in the philosophical underpinnings of art from Pratyabhijñā śaivism. 
This aspect of self awareness accompanying artistic creation is directly related 
to his conception of śaiva as prakāśa-vimarśamaya, both knowledge and 
activity. The anukārtana of the emotions by the dancer is recognized as such 
by the spectator because of the latent impressions of the emotions existing in 
him from his present life and earlier births. These ideas and emotions are 
inherent in the individuals and rise due to and in Consciousness. This explains 
how even an unmarried, adolescent girl can perform ṫṛṅgāra-rasa as nāyika- 
bhāva though in a simplified form, without the actual experience. All the ideas 
arise from within the śaiva Consciousness and are projected out of the free 
will of the performer, like the svātantrya-śakti of śaiva.

4.3.3. āsvāda and āsvādyā:

The data from the empirical experience, loka, is the material used for the 
artistic creation as well. Since it is used in the aesthetic situation, it is of the 
nature of taste or āsvāda. The aesthetic world follows its own rules and is 
unique in nature, hence this data has to be transformed and so become 
āsvādyā. Abhinava points out that it is important to remember that now we are 
dealing with the āsvāda of the āsvāda (experience of the basic transformed 
data), as the first level data (empirical) has become the source of the second
level (aesthetic). To the question, rasa iti kah padàrthaþ, he answers it as ucyateh àsvàdyatvåt. Both levels of taste are of the same data but the àsvàda of the second is different from the first, which is taken as its cause. Though both orders have significant existence it is the second order of àsvàda that dominates in the artistic process. When we talk of rasa it would be of the nature of àsvàda yet it still is of the nature of àsvàdyà as it is àsvàda which takes the form of àsvàdya. Abhinava clearly explains this distinction with the example of a glass (of alcohol), alcohol, the taste of alcohol and the taster of alcohol. The following quotation from Barlingay clarifies this succinctly:

He (Abhinava) explains the relationship by saying, pàtre na madyàsvàdaþ. He says àsvàda is not in the àsvàdyà but in the àsvàdi or àsvàdaka. Although in the case of a drama, the pàtra or the actor himself is a conscious being, as an actor, he is merely the container of the datum (rasa), and the àsvàda experience belongs to those who experience, that is to the spectators only. 

Abhinava is careful not to confuse the first order àsvàdya with the second order àsvàdyà or the first order àsvàda with that of the second. He also clarifies the locus of rasa which seemed to have occupied the earlier commentators of the rasa-såtra.

4.3. 4. Abhivyakti

To the question how is rasa produced, Abhinava uses the term Abhivyakti (meaning suggestion). Rasa is suggested by the union of the sthàyibhàva with the vibhàva-s etc., through the relation of the suggested (vyaïgya) and the suggestor (vya¤jaka) and the niùpattiþ in Bharata’s rasa-såtra actually means abhivyakti. It was an extension of the term vya¤janà as used by ànanda and understood as such by Nàyaka, who severely criticized it. In the Locana on the second Uddyota of Dhvanyàloka, Abhinava points out his rejection of suggestion as the nature of rasa-production. According to Nàyaka, rasa does not either arise or is induced by suggestion (abhivyakti) for, emotions such as love existing in a dormant form (øakti-råpa) in the spectator would motivate them to physically possess the object of love presented on the
stage. Instead the three powers of language/poetry viz abhidhāyakatva, bhāvakatva and bhoktṛtva alone can lead to rasa realization.

In answer to the criticisms Abhinava says since rasa experience is one of aesthetic enjoyment, abhivyakti is taken as the manifestation by the power of suggestion resulting in a special sense of relish called as rasana, avśāda or carvaṅga. dhvani and vyāśjanā operate on the same level as abhivyakti. In other words, the manifestation is not of rasa itself but of the resultant relish. Instead of the mood, what is manifested is its reflection as the subjective condition of aesthetic enjoyment in the spectator. Since the rasa experience is alaukika and does not follow the rules of the ordinary world, negative emotions like bibhatsa, bhayānaka and raudra also lead to a pleasurable state of mind in Nāṇya. Just as the dream state does not alter the mind of the dreamer, abhivyakti does not change the actual facts of life. The actor takes on many roles yet they do not change him physically. They emanate from him as manifestations, like the world emanates from øiva, but this does not result in determinism or change in them. Abhinava in chalking out the similarities between Rasānanda and Brahmānanda declares that, both are not `created' in the ordinary meaning of the word but are realized through abhivyakti, such is the power of suggestion.

4.4. Dimensions of human creativity from the finite to the infinite: Abhinava's Theory of Rasa-dhvani

Abhinava stands out as an exceptional aesthetician because he approaches the question of aesthetic experience from myriad dimensions; historical, analytical, psychological, logical and philosophical. Over and above this, his analysis is special because as a practitioner of the art forms, he takes great effort to reveal the practical relevance and applicability of the theories. It is no secret that his commentary, the ABh. has served as the key to open the vast and earlier unknown treasures of the Nø. A keen student of Abhinava's analytical study of art would be able to notice and appreciate his gradual journey from all sense based empirical events and actions, to the subtler realm
of the mental and psychological, finally culminating in the transcendental. The logical, critically analytical method adopted by him to present his predecessors and contemporaries is in actuality to reach the summit of Rasânanda where all form and content get subsumed into one complete experience of ânanda. Let us see the systematic analysis and holistic synthesis attempted by Abhinava in his commentary on Bharata's Rasàdhyàya.

4.4.1. Analysis of experience: Ordinary, Aesthetic and Transcendental Experience

A distinction has been made between ordinary language and poetic language by ânanda in the Dhvanyàloka. Udbhâna believed that the essence of poetry was not at the primary or external level but at the secondary and metaphorical level. Extending this to all art, ânanda and later Abhinava spelt out the differences between ordinary and aesthetic experience. Abhinava analyses the aesthetic experience into its components, in a scientific manner. It is obvious that not only the situation (comprising of actors, dialogues, costumes etc.,), the emotion and its expression is responsible for the aesthetic experience, but these i.e., situations and emotions, are very much present in ordinary life as well. Take e.g, in the everyday world, the birth of a child gives joy while the death of a dear one gives rise to sorrow. Are these then aesthetic situations? Abhinava says there are two vital differences between the two, one is, they are not artistic creations, (with all the underlying implications of calling an object an aesthetic-object) and two, there is no aesthetic distance. If we say that the personal experience of an individual is expressed in art, then his personal photo album which records such moments will have to appeal to and have value for everyone. Such is not the case. Even in the photo album, there may be a beautiful one of the individual as a baby with his mother, but a painting of a mother and child by an artist will be enjoyed by many people at the same time.

Abhinava says that the constituents of the aesthetic object occur in a special relationship to each other, by which an aesthete (the subject of the
aesthetic situation) is distinguished from an ordinary person. He accepts that universalisation of the emotion results in it being enjoyed by everyone, though he disagrees with Bhañña Nàyaka that it is due to the dual powers of language. The dramatist is free to employ as many sandhyāī ga-s or components as he wishes to but the final goal of all nāṇya is rasa. How does Abhinava define nāṇya or drama? He says:

Drama is distinct from worldly things and it is also distinct from their imitation (anukāra), reflection (pratibiī ba), pictorial presentation (ālekhyā), imposition of similarity (sadcyaropa), determination (adhyavasāya), fancy (utprekā), dream, magic (indrajāla) etc. It is also distinct from correct knowledge (saśyagjāna), erroneous cognition (bhrānti), doubt (saś-aśaya) uncertainty (anavadhāraōa), determination (adhyavasāya), ordinary knowledge of the spectator (vijāna). Its nature being rasa it can be known only in the aesthetic situation as the direct experience of aesthetic enjoyment.

It is distinct from a didactic work full of injunctions and a scientific work filled with facts. By declaring in the commentary on the Rasādhyāya, nāīye rasāp na tu loke, Abhinava clearly demarcates the domain of rasa which is drama and not the worldly life.

As regards the nature and level of rasa, Bharata is categorical that bhāvas are loka-svabhāva-saś siddha or well known as being part of human nature and activity. There seems to be no mention of terms like alaukika, anirvacanāya or lokottara in the Nø. If Abhinava spoke of it, he has a precedent in Daōōin, as far as the transcendence is concerned. Daōōin speaks of the transcendental experience in poetry characterised by ati-āyokti, an indirect turn of expression that goes beyond common usage and experience. Without this all expressions would be equivalent to vārta or conversation and not poetry. Ananda speaks of the extraordinary genius of the poet called pratibhā which creates wondrous things yet he follows Bharata in accepting that rasānubhāti is not a supernatural experience and is like other experiences. Bhañña Nàyaka differs from Ananda and terms rasānubhava as a peculiar experience, different from others. In quoting a verse from the now lost Hçdayadarpaōa (HD), Abhinava says kàvya is described as a milch cow and
rasa as the milk. The cow due to her great love for her calves pours down the milk by herself while the yogis struggle to get some out of her. The milk lovingly given by the cow tastes delightfully different from the other as it not dependent on worldly objects. Since rasānubhāti is not born or produced i.e not pratāti, utpatti or abhivyakti, it is alaukika. Sādhāraṇākaraṇa and bhojakatva raise rasa to the level of Nirvikalpa-samādhi where alone Brahman realisation takes place. Bhañña Tauta reinforces the alaukika nature by saying that the mind of the sahādaya merges in Rasa and this relegates all other experiences to the background. That `perception or experience` can only be supernatural.

Abhinava's conception of rasa as alaukika is important to understand the nature of aesthetic experience, for therein is the departure from art as mere sense based experience, to art as transcendent. Abhinava asserts that rasa, as the heart or ultimate aim of art, is alaukika but the means of artistic expression (the actors, language, etc.) are always laukika. When Bharata declares loka as a pramāṇa for Nāṇya, the obvious question is how do the elements of worldly level lead to the transcendental level? How is it that the aesthetic experience though based on the ordinary empirical world, differs from it? In response Abhinava answers that it cannot be categorised either as real or as illusory as it has a unique nature. By calling it unworldly, we are not denying its existence or banishing it to a shadowy nothing. It has a reality only in the aesthetic sphere and for those who partake of the experience. Divested of particularities it is ever in the present. Translating Abhinava's verse from the Locana Gnoli says "Such an experience, just as a flower born of magic, has, as its essence, solely the present, it is correlated neither with what came before nor with what comes after. This experience is therefore different both from the ordinary experience and from the religious one." Ordinary experience on the other hand is the given for everyone, but limited by time, space and causality. It is the ground also of bondage due to the attachment to people and events. In
comparison, the aesthetic experience which leads to bliss or ànanda is akin to the ultimate bliss, which is release from all bondage and suffering.

4.4.2. Analysis of Creation: Artistic and Cosmic

The similarities between artistic creation of the dramatist/dancer and cosmic creation of a Creator-God have been highlighted by aestheticians over the centuries. There are fundamentally three aspects involved here.

(i). One is the concept of drama (Nāyā) itself originating in the creator i.e artistic creation having a basis in cosmic creation. Hence, the use of the term Nāyaveda to refer to the dramatic art is itself an indication of the cosmic status given to drama. It is well known that Brahma took elements from all the four Vedas to create an educative form of entertainment, a kridaññakam which would be an effective remedy for the weary and warring human beings. Of greater interest is the interpretation of Bhañña Nàyaka (in the HD) quoted by Abhinava in the ABh.. He says the phrase"brahmaõà yad udàhçtam" actually implies that dance and drama are appropriate illustrations of the Brahman and not that Nāyà has been created and handed down by Brahma!  

An equally ancient notion is that of the poet as Prajàpati, equivalent to God or creator who creates new and enchanting things out of his imagination. In the Dhvanyàloka, ànanda says there are no boundaries to the field of poetry, suffused as it is with the genius of the poet. He goes to the extent of crediting the poet with the very nature of the world, i.e., if the poet is filled with love, the whole world is drenched in it; so also, if he is steeped in sorrow. Abhinava enlarges the above definitions by introducing the concept of pratibhà of the poet which arises from the highest speech or paràvàk. Like Prajàpati from whose will the world originates, the poet creates new and wondrous worlds out of his creative imagination (bhàvanà), with its seat in the poet’s own heart (svahçdaya).This is born out of pratibhà ever pulsating with creative energy (÷akti÷àlinaþ) He particularly mentions Ànanda’s verse in the
Locana where he speaks of the capacity of the poet’s pratibha to make even the same old things appear new, like trees appear new in the spring months.\footnote{62}

(ii). The second is that the world itself is like a stage or drama in which the individuals play out their designated parts, with specified entry and exit. This would literally mean taking on a role in a huge network of relationships. The word play traverses to a higher dimension if seen as the play or lālā of the Lord. Most theistic systems in India, particularly the øaivite and the Vaiñavite hail the phenomenal world as the handiwork of a creator-lord, as his great field where he plays out his sport. Abhinava as a øaivite would say that the rules are øiva's own and the need to create is nothing other than the free will or free expression (lālā) of beauty and joy. The limiting constraints of self-interest and goal oriented activity being absent in øiva's creation, it is a manifestation (abhāsa) of his svātantrya-akti, a channelization of his dynamic energy.\footnote{63}

The very use of the word sport involves a sense of thrill, an excitement with the prospect of ever renewing expressions of the ultimate power. It is also the pushing of boundaries, overcoming imperfections in the quest towards perfection. Despite the defining connotations of rules and regulations, which instil order and discipline (çta, satya, dharma), lālā or sport implies joy, enjoyment, gay abandon and a sense of achievement and peace. Abhinava reiterates that when expressed in its totality and in each part of creation, øiva-lālā evokes camatkāra, wonder and leads to vi-rānti. So does Nārīya, when seen as the lālā or sport of the performer.

(iii). Analogous nature of the phenomenal world and drama has been written about by many Kashmirian theorists particularly in the øiva-såtra-s, where âtman is conceived ‘as nartaka àtma, a dancer and identical with øiva’ and by Bhatña Nàyaka in his HD, quoted by Abhinava. Both the levels of creation are independent of the constraints of time, space and causality. Both are governed totally by the rules laid down by the creator of that world. In the Agnipurāṇa the capacity of the poet to turn inanimate things to animate and
vice-versa is elaborated in the following words, bhàvàn cetanànàpi cetanavaccetanatànacatnàvat, vyavahàrayati yatheùtam sukavìp kàvye svañtanratayà.\textsuperscript{64} In the ABh., Abhinava in several chapters salutes the infinite variety of øiva`s nature, first in the benedictory verses at the beginning of each chapter and in his interpretation of verses within. In the benediction to øiva in the fifth chapter titled Pårvaraï gavidhànam, he says, sa§sàrànàñya nirmàøe yàvakàavidhànataþ, pårvaraï gàyate vyomamàrti tām ñankarān numaþ, \textsuperscript{65} and in the Bhàvàvya-jàkà he identifies dramatic representation with the Lord of the Trinetra.\textsuperscript{66}

The concept of creative work being the expression of energy has taken various forms, not all of them in alignment with Abhinava`s idea of spanda or øakti. Among modern writers in India, Tagore explores the extension of the play in the word `display' when he says, "Man has a fund of emotional energy which is not at all occupied with his self-preservation. This surplus seeks its outlet in the creation of Art...In other words, where our personality feels its wealth it breaks out in display."\textsuperscript{67} Even among some philosophers in the West (Croce e.g), artistic creation has been seen as a way of working out the excess energy in individuals, something other than what is necessary for existence. This probably accounts for the sad state of affairs in our educational system today, where the arts are dubbed as only extracurricular activities, often dispensed with in times of concentrated academic study. Some would also argue like øankara that the empirical world and the dramatic world could be accepted only as illusory or phenomenal. This would not be acceptable to Abhinava for whom the reality of all levels of existence is essential. Using this to his advantage Abhinava would reply that, since all is of the nature of øiva, Nàñya is as much a part of the cosmic creation as any other.

4.5. Analysis of Rasa: Nature, Components, Locus, Number

In a passage from the Locana we can discern that at Abhinava`s time, there was a great deal of confusion about the nature and number of rasa-s. He says:
anye tu suddham vibhāvam, apare suddham anubhāvam, kocittu sthāyimātram, itare vyabhičārinam, anye tatsaś yoginam, eke anukāryam, kecana sakalameva samudāyam rasanāhurītayalam bahunā.

Some hold the pure vibhāva or anubhāva as the rasa, some the sthāyin, some even the vyabhičārin, some the interplay of these, some the story and others all of them put together in a combination.

Nature of Rasa

Equipped with the understanding of the distinctions between the different categories mentioned above as also the theory of Abhivyakti, we are in a better position to comprehend and appreciate Abhinava's aesthetics and theory of rasa. Briefly put, with the combination of vibhāva, anubhāva and vyabhičāribhāva, expressed by the dancer, the sthāyibhāva gets strengthened and is manifested as rasa in the spectator. In keeping with the Pratyabhijñā tenets Abhinava explains the status of Nāṇya and says that the performance as an appearance is real in that it is actually happening and we are affected by it in a positive way. It does not however have independent reality as it is the projection (appearance or ābhāsa/manifestation or abhivyakti) of the performer. When we watch e.g., the performance of Rāmāyaṇa, the actual Rāma and Sāśi are not present in front of us on stage. Yet we cannot deny that 'an actor as Rāma' is performing and projecting the emotions of Rāma. As we continue watching we get involved in the story (of Rāma and Sāśi) and are no longer concerned that they are not the real Rāma and Sāśi but impersonating them. We identify with them completely and experience delight when their emotions are worked out in the dance, to their aesthetically relevant conclusions.

To the question what is the role then of the poet/dramatist if the vibhāva-s and anubhāva-s are imitated from actual life, Abhinava puts forth the importance of the innate genius of the artiste pratibhā, which alone projects these bhāva-s in a creative and unique manner. The dramatist through the suggestive power of art conveys the emotion to the dancer, who is at the
second stage of the rasa process. With the appropriate abhinaya, the dancer expresses the emotion to the spectator who gets involved in the presented emotion (ātmānupraveśa). Though the material might be from the loka, it is transformed and transmitted with intuitive realisation by the dancer to the sahcdaya. It ceases to be personal and is in a ‘pure’ form without the constraints of time, place and person. The commonality of emotion experienced by the spectator is called saddharaōkaraōa leading to a communication between the two ends of the process, the performer and the rasika (hṛdayasamvāda). They are in a sense one; part of one collective experience. Abhinava says, sarvasāmājikanām ekaghanataya eva pratipattiḥ sātaram rasaparipoùaya.69 This commonality is possible only because as human beings we share a common ground of emotions and experiences, if not evident from this birth, then from births we have lived before. These saś skāra-s are in the form of vāsanās or residual trace of previous existences and their experiences. Abhinava in saying so, has gone beyond the mere aesthetic to the metaphysical, a route he could not but take considering his philosophical background and a route no aesthetician before has taken with such conviction. Provided there are no obstacles like inadequacies on the part of either the performer or the spectator, this leads to tanmayābhāvanā. Their immersion into the emotion is ‘being engrossed yet not personally attached’ results in tasting of the relish. Abhinava says that this stage is necessary as repeated tasting (carvaōā) is essential for aesthetic relish.70 The state of subject-object dissolution in which the knowing process is at rest (vīrānti) is actually the realisation of non-duality. This state of pure awareness (saś vid) is rasa.

Abhinava elevates the status of these aesthetic objects as beings those of the mind and not merely of the senses. They are perceived directly by the consciousness being jñānasvarāpa or of the nature of knowledge: na rasanāvyāpāra āsvādanam api tu manasa eva.71 For the performer, it is important to note Abhinava’s logical derivation of Nāyārasa. He says, the
vibhāva-s, anubhāva-s and vyabhicāribhāva-s make up Nāñya and they alone lead to rasa also. Hence not only poetry but Nāñya is rasa: rasasamudāyo hi nāñyam.²²

Components of Rasa

Let us see what exactly Abhinava means in the Rasādhyāya and Bhāvavyāxjaka chapters on the components of rasa. According to him the term vibhāva is not merely the cause as kāraṇa but as depicting the meaning of cognition i.e vibhāvo vijñānārtha. Abhinava's definition here is directly relevant for dancers, for no action is to be performed without the awareness of the kinetic and aesthetic principles behind it. He says:

vibhāvaḥ kāraṇam nimittam heturāṇi paryāyāṁ, vibhāvyante anena vāgāgosatvābhinnaya ityato vibhāvaḥ. yathā vibhāvitam vijñātamity-anarthāntaram.³³

The vibhāva-s become the base (cause) for the meaning of words, gestures and emotional temperament. They (words, gestures etc) are cognised or known only through the vibhāva-s. The notion of cognition or awareness starts at this very stage for Abhinava. Both the ālambana (primary sources like the characters) and uddāpana vibhāva-s (the situation or milieu) are connected to the characters represented on the stage. Defining anubhāva-s he says the vibhāva-s result in certain physical changes on the occurrence of the emotion and these are called anubhāva-s.

athānuṁbāva iti kasmat, uccyate, anubhāvyate anena vāgāṅsattvākṣo abhinaya iti.³⁴

In Nāñya the basic emotions are expressed and conveyed to the spectators through the anubhāva-s. The ai gā-s and upāi ga-s of āṅgika-abhinaya are particularly useful for this purpose. Abhinava accepts Bharata's explanation of the different varieties of bhāva yet he differs from him in that he places vibhāva-s and anubhāva-s as external elements as they become the medium of expression of bhāva-s.³⁵ In the actual presentation of these, Bharata's only instruction is that their source is the world and actual life events and they
should be presented as such. This would qualify drama to be called imitation according to Abhinava. The vyabhicāribhāva-s (translated usually as fleeting, transitory emotions), quantified as thirty-three in number, rise often plurally, strengthening the basic emotion. The same vyabhicāri-s could attach themselves to different bhāva-s depending on the situation and the sthāyibhāva. The vyabhicāri is paratrantra for Abhinava i.e, they help to heighten another bhāva. They are called by dance scholars as sancāribhāva-s also due to their dynamic or impermanent nature. In fact in dance it is the term sancāribhāva which is used to indicate the building up of a story made up of characters and situations in a given item. The dancer does sancāram within a particular line of music, going into great details and slowly but surely leading the spectator to the awareness of a particular sthāyibhāva. The goal is the equivalence and commonness of the sthāyibhāva in the dancer and the spectator. In both it is in an idealised form divested of limiting notions of the ego, time, space and causality.

Explaining the sthāyibhāva Abhinava says that when Bharata lists eight primary bhāva-s he is actually talking of the sthāyibhāva-s or the abiding emotions which finally transform into rasa in the hearts of the spectators. Multiple vibhāva-s, anubhāva-s and vyabhicāribhāva-s arise but depending on their combinations they slowly gravitate towards one primary bhāva which remains steady over a longer duration of time compared to the others. One becomes prominent while the others get relegated to the background. This sthāyibhāva grips the performer, putting all the bhāva-s into perspective. The analogy given by Abhinava is that the sthāyin is like a king among courtiers, a master among servants. It is svātantrya, ananyamukhaprekūn, ananyānuyāyin and svavi-rānta.76

Abhinava devotes a good number of verses to elaborate on the relationship between bhāva and rasa. The three questions asked are: do bhāva-s come out of rasa-s, rasa come out of bhāva-s or are they mutually dependent. Though Bharata says that rasa-s come out of bhāva-s, if we take
the entire process of aesthetic experience we find that it is a continuous circle where each leads to the other. The relation of rasa to bhàva has been compared to that of the seed of a tree and its fruits. In Rasàdhyàya Abhinava says yathà bijàdbhaveda vçkùo vçkùàtpuùpam phalam yathà/ tathà målam rasàþ sarve tebhyo bhàvà vyavasthitàha.77 Can anyone deny that from the fruits come again the seeds? The root is the consciousness of the poet expressed through the bhàva-s to the spectator which is the same as his consciousness. It is known through the experience accompanied by cognition (as known by the Buddh), of the emotions. Citing yet another analogy, Abhinava says, just as all the individual ingredients of a dish together contribute to the dish as a whole and is known as such, similarly the bhàva-s though individually created, with the various modes of acting are known as rasa.78 With this connotation in mind, he declares, na hi ka÷cid rasàdçte..., meaning there is nothing other than rasa. We shall discuss briefly the relation of the eight rasa-s to one another and to the Mahàrasa in a later section.

Locus of Rasa

Abhinava faults earlier aestheticians like Bhañña Lollaña, øri øaï kuka, Bhañña Nàyaka with trying to locate rasa either in the original character or in knowing it through other means such as inference or revelation. The relation of bhàva-rasa having been established, Abhinava locates the rasa in an indirect form in the actor/dancer and in a direct form in the sahçdaya. The work of art presents the emotion through Abhinaya in dance; hence the emotion and its relish are potentially present in it. What we call as kàvya or Nàñya already have the relish in them, i.e. the content of art itself is rasa. The actual performance is the occasion for the rasa, existing in the art, to be brought forth and lead to delight in the spectator, who is the final locus of rasa. Since this rasa is actually the same consciousness as the pratibhà (which is none other than the expression of universal emotion creatively flowing from the dancer’s genius), the locus of rasa as bhàva is in all the stages of the aesthetic experience albeit called by different names.
Number of Rasa-s

Since the goal of Nàñya is conclusively accepted by scholars as rasa, it is only natural that the total number of rasa-s should be a matter of some discussion. Among the eight sthàyibhàva-s, four are taken as primary by Bharata and reiterated by Abhinava. They are rati (love), krodha (anger), utsàha (heroism), jugupsa (disgust) and their corresponding rasa-s are scngàra (erotic), raudra (furious), vàra (Heroic) and bibhatsa (odious). The other four secondary bhàva-s, hàsa (laughter), ñoka (sorrow), vismaya (wonder), bhaya (fear) and their corresponding rasa-s, hàsya (comic), karuna (pathetic), adbhuja (marvellous) and bhayànaka (terrible) are based on the former four. The idea that Bharata spoke only of eight rasa-s was strengthened by Dhananjaya, an older contemporary of Abhinava and the author of Dàrâpaka, a summary of the Nà. He differs from Abhinava in two important aspects: he admits of only eight rasa-s and like Bhañña Nàyaka rejects the notion of dhvani.

Why is the discussion of the number of rasa-s important to us? Is it only to fix the total number of admissible rasa-s so that no needless multiplication takes place? While it is true that Abhianva does not favour multiplication of rasa-s, he assigns a more important reason for it. He says it is to mark out the abiding emotions universally present in man and to show the common substratum of all the rasa as one consciousness. This would lead us directly to Abhinava's incisive analysis of the ninth rasa i.e., ñàntarasa.

4.5.1. ñànta as the ninth Rasa.

4.5.1.1. Historical evolution of ñàntarasa

Abhinava believes in the comprehensive nature of Bharata's analysis of Rasa but for the non-inclusion of ñànta, which however has had a long but implicit history. Significant research has been done on the ñàntarasa verses of ABh., despite passages of doubtful reliability and chunks of the seventh chapter on bhàva missing. A brief account of historical mention of ñànta has
already been dealt with in Chapter three of the present thesis. From the discussion it appears that Abhinava had before him two recensions of the Nāṇya-āstra, one with eight rasa-s (earlier version) and the other with nine including ṛñtāntarasa (later version). The former he quotes in the Locana and even in the Nāṇya-āstra he speaks of those who have `read' ṛñtānta. Bharata says in Chapter VI of the Nāṇya-āstra that Brahma gave only eight rasas; yete hyaṁau rasāṁ prokta druhiṁna mahātmana. We have seen the views of ṛāradātanaya, Dharmasuri and Udbhaṇa. Abhinava himself has put forth arguments to show that Bharata does not deal with ṛñtānta. Since the acceptance of ṛñtānta by theorists before him has been a matter of uncertainty and still unresolved and Abhinava in his ABh., has so emphatically analysed and added ṛñtānta to the list of rasa-s, scholars generally attribute the addition of ṛñtāntarasa to him.

The questions that arise now are, how does Abhinava analyse the eight rasa-s by which an added ninth rasa of ṛñtānta is felt necessary? What are the components of ṛñtānta i.e vibhāva, anubhāva, vyabhicāribhāva and particularly Sthāyin? What are the arguments for and against adding it to the list of rasa-s? On what grounds did Abhinava elevate it to Mahārasa status? What are the differences between the experience of ṛñtānta and Mokūa?

4.5.1.2. Objections to ṛñtānta as a Rasa.

Let us first start with the objections raised against ṛñtāntarasa by aestheticians before Abhinava and the answers to them.

1. The most obvious objection comes from those who point out its non-mention in the eight Rasa scheme by Bharata. It is difficult to conclusively either sustain or reject this objection. There are some recensions with ṛñtāntarasa as Abhinava has himself pointed out, yet he gives the categories of bhāva-s (vibhāva etc) as different from the text. Even the introductory portion of the ṛñtāntarasa passages in the Nō with ṛñtānta and Abhinava’s commentary does not coincide.
2. The second objection is more serious and cannot be brushed away. If sama is the sthâyibhàva of øànta it would be difficult to portray its defining quality which is 'cessation or total absence of all feelings and activities'. If one of the main purposes of the Nø as expounded by Bharata is the sphere of performance, how can this be presented on stage?

If this objection is understood correctly it will be found to be untenable. The cessation of all activity (physical and mental) as characteristic of sama is not the beginning or middle of the process but the end. Then climaxing of every other rasa also is then not possible, as far as presentation on stage is concerned e.g., scñgàra climaxes in sexual union, a taboo on stage, same with raudra, bhayànaka etc. This judgement is hence dismissible.

3. It is contended that to portray the character/personality of a spiritually inclined individual in search of truth and tranquillity is impossible. If this objection is accepted, we would have to deny even the existence of saintly and evolved people in our midst who display such tendencies. Rather, for every individual, it is the triumph of spirit over obstacles that hinder his progress to a higher level of living, thinking, feeling and being. The actual lifestyle of Jàvanmukta-s like øaïkara, Ramanuja, Madhava and in recent times, Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati, Ramana Maharishi, etc., are meant to be emulated.

4. In the Indian tradition where it begins with knowledge (from vid, to know), and progresses to mokùa or liberation from ignorance, the concept of a sthithaprajña as in the Bhagavad Gàà has always been an ideal to be pursued and attained in the practical sphere. To say that it is not accorded any importance in the aesthetic tradition would be to effectively eliminate this ideal itself.

5. Rasa has been defined by some as the modifications of the citta or the mind. Lolla Lakùmàdhara would on this basis deny ântarasa as it implies an absence of mental modifications. Abhinava would counter this by pointing out that
bhāva-rama process is the transformation of the laukika into the alaukika to reach a state of citta-vcitti-nirodha, a state attained in āntarasa.

6. It is argued that Bharata has not given the vibhāva-s, anubhāva-s and the vyabhicāribhāва-s or its jāti, vṛctti etc. Abhinava disproves this by quoting from the recension that includes āntarasa. It is another matter that some have dismissed these passages as interpolated and corrupt. Abhinava points out vibhāva-s like tattvakāna, vairāgya, asangasuddhi, meeting with pious souls,(sådhusamāga), contact with good men (satsaũ parka), the good done in the past births, God's grace, study of philosophy etc. He adds to anubhāva-s like yama, niyama, penance (tapasya), virtues etc, others like disappearance of kāma, krodha, and other such evils. Despite the whole world becoming the vyabhicāri for ānta, V.Raghavan mentions a few prominent ones singled out by Adbhina like nirveda and jugupsa for worldly objects, dhṛti, mati, utsāha in Vāra, rati for God in the form of bhakti and ādadhå etc.

7. Finally considering that the general run of humanity is always bound by their attachment to material things and to rāga and dveśa, in a state of ignorance (avidya) it is impossible that ānta can ever become one of the rasas like the others. In the ABh., he says: dçtipravçtirapi pràptaviùayoparàgaḥ katham āntam syàt. The vyabhicāri of ānta can never occur in a pure state and is always mixed with imperfections.

8. Those who lay great stress on human effort or karma as a means to attain knowledge would raise the question as to how non-action implied by ānta can be of any value to the education of man (vyutpatti). Most of the members of the audience are ordinary men and women who come to enjoy drama and hardly respond to plays which spurn worldly pleasures and adopt renunciation. Does this not go against the aim of Nārya to serve as entertainment for weary people?

Abhinava answers this objection in an original way. He says there may be spiritually mended people in the audience to whom rasa like çngāra or
raudra, may nor appeal. Do we automatically eliminate them from the scheme of rasa-s? Abhinava quotes Bharata's verse to show that each individual derives what he wants from Nāñya which is a complete and holistic form of educative and enjoyable entertainment.

9. Very few plays can be cited as examples for ṣāntarasa as they are basically performed for the attainment of the puruùɑrtha-s, trivarga-vyutpatti i.e., dharma, artha and kāma, prosperity (çddhi) and enjoyment (vilâsa). Even Nâgânânda which is held up as a classic representative of ṣānta has been analysed as leading to other rasas like uçngāra and vāra. Abhinava effectively answers all the objections in the ABh., as he believes that the ultimate purpose of Nâñya is not just the trivarga-prâpti but attainment of mokùa or liberation.

10. Some theorists are ready to accept ṣāntarasa in poetry and in literature as a whole but object to its inclusion in Nâñya. As shown earlier, drama according to them is action and ṣānta a cessation of it. But to accept it in poetry and deny it in drama undermines its universal applicability. Abhinava who equates kâvya and Nâñya as far as rasa is concerned, will have nothing of this absurd distinction. His categorical assertion is that ṣānta is the ultimate substratum of all the rasa-s in all forms of art activity since everything is only a manifestation of ōiva as Prakâ–vimar–a.

4.5.1.3. Arguments in favour of ṣāntarasa.

The fact that writers before Abhinava had mentioned ṣāntarasa and discussed it briefly shows the significance it has had in the history of Indian Aesthetics. There is however a vital difference in the treatment given to it by other theorists and Abhinava who not only accorded centre stage to it but made its position in the rasa-s, both essential and Ultimate. He says, the fact that Bharata has not mentioned it specifically in the eight rasa scheme could also indicate the uncommon and alaukika nature of ṣānta. Just as it is a special and unique aspect of life, so also it is of drama. The fact that the trivarga is sublimated by mokùa as the ultimate puruùɑrtha also implies that sànta which
is based on it, is the culmination of all the rasa-s. The attitude to attain it is sama and assigned as the vibhāva just as other vibhāva-s are for their respective rasa-s.85

Entertainment and enjoyment of worldly things is natural and automatic for human beings. Yet the urge to rise above mere sensual pleasure and delve deeply into a higher plane of thinking and living is equally special to them setting them apart from the rest of creation.

In V. Raghavan’s words:

To say that it is impossible to exterminate ràga and dve÷a is to insult humanity, its heritage of philosophy and the long succession of its spiritual leaders...That Hedonists are not able to sit through it cannot disprove ṣànta...It has been accepted that all cannot respond to all rasas. Surely Bhayànaka will not raise sympathy in a heroic spirit...If Vān-s, sensualists, delight in oçngara,Vātaràga-s, those who are free of attachments, delight in sànta.86

Bharata has clearly identified the rasa-s that are enjoyed by different kinds of spectators e.g. bhaya and jugupsa for nàca-prakçti-s and has shown the range of emotional appeal of a play on people. An epic work would appeal to all kinds of people, such is the variety of its content and form. Ananda would present the Mahàbhàrata as the best representative play for ṣàntarasa. Though the entire gamut of emotions is found in it, ṣànta is the final emotion that remains in our mind, after all the gory fighting and endless rivalry. Abhinava also in his commentary on the Bhagavadgàtà says that the trivarga is for the development of the main purpose of the epic which is mokùa. In the ABh., he says the epics give rise to vi-rànti.87 That the epics held pervasive sway over the thoughts and actions of the people at his time, is evident from historical and literary sources. They served as guideposts for right action and were held in high esteem. To mark them as representative of ṣàntarasa was for Abhinava to show how literary and performance traditions based on them were directed towards mokùa or liberation. Kùemendra in the Bhàratamà¤jari goes one step further and declares that it is ṣànta that is implied as the message of both the Ràmayana and Mahàbhàrata. Among earlier
commentators on Nāya-āstrā, we can discern the acceptance of ānta by Udbhaṇa, Lollaṇa, ūaï kuka, Rudrata, Namisadhuv, Anandavardhana, Rajasekhara (as following Rudrata) with some certainty based on their works. As regards Abhinava’s strong insistence on ānta we can clearly see the influence of his teacher, Tauta whose explanation of ānta is quoted by Abhinava in the Locana. Tauta (in his Kāvyakautuka, now lost) gives a detailed analysis of objections against ānta and the very convincing answers to establish it as the supreme rasa. 88

Abhinava has thus highlighted the exalted position of āntarasa as the ninth and ultimate rasa in three of his major works, the commentary on Tauta’s Kāvyakautuka, the Locana and the ABh.. In the ABh., he quotes Bhaṇṇa Nāyaka’s views as given by him in the Mangala-ākāra in the HD. 89 Bhaṇṇa Nāyaka attributes the first verse in the Nā as an indication and affirmation of āntarasa. As mentioned earlier, he interprets the phrase, nāṇya-āstram pravakūyami brahmana yad udāhctam, as not indicative of Brahma as Pitāmaha i.e creator of Nāṇya, but as referring to Brahman, the Ultimate Reality to be realised through Nāṇya. He compares the naṇa to Brahman, both being the substratum of their respective created worlds, which as māyā is indescribable. As a lower level of reality the world does exist and aids in the attainment of the puruṣārtha-s. Worldly attainments and spiritual liberation are again discussed in chapter twenty seven on the siddhi-s where Bharata mentions two types, mānu-i (human) and deiviki (divine). āntarasa is reinforced here as the ultimate basis of all rasa-s. To say that ānta is a rasa is to indirectly accept that the individual can be liberated from the bondage of samsāra and mokṣa is a possibility and reality. For a saiva like Abhinava final emancipation through the grace of øiva, enacted through Nāṇya is the basis of his aesthetics. For aesthetics to be possible we have to extend it to the spectator as well. To deny such a state for the spectator is to admit an impossibility i.e., freedom from desires and worldly pursuits would then become the privilege of a few. According to Abhinava the svātantra (free
will) of Øiva is all encompassing and his anugraha is available and accessible to all, the saint and the sinner alike!

4.5.1.4. Nature of øàntarasa and its components: vibhàva, anubhàva, vyabhicàribhàva, sthàyibhàva

The question that is asked is what is the sthàyibhàva which leads to øànta and how do we portray it on stage? Abhinava interprets the passage in the Nàñya-àstra recension dealing with øàntarasa as follows: Taking vibhàva-s first, they include knowledge of the truth (tattvaj¤àna), detachment (vairàgya), purity of mind etc, the àlambana vibhàva-s can be taken as either a personal God or the Atman/Brahman and uddipana vibhàva as all aspects of the world, be it pilgrimage, company of the good people, retiring to quite place for meditation etc. Anubhàva-s such as yama, niyama, meditation on the self, concentration of the mind on the self (dhàraõà), devotion through worship (upàsana), compassion towards all creatures and wearing of religious signs/symbols (liïgagrahaõa). Regarding vyabhicàri-s he says:

vyabhicàriôascàsyà nirveda-smçti-dhçti-sarvàsrama-àuca-stambha-
romàncà-dayàp.\textsuperscript{90}

Other theorists, who believed that Bharata actually spoke of øàntarasa, interpret certain verses accordingly. They also claim that he had put forward varõa (colour), devata (God), vçtti, guõa etc for øànta like it has been done for the other rasa-s. Abhinava in pointing this out says, e.g., while the original text reads adbhuto brahmadaîvata for the devata, some read the verse as, viro mahendradevaþ...buddho jinaþ paropakàraîkaparaþ, prabuddho và.\textsuperscript{91}

Buddha or a similarly enlightened soul is the devata of øànta.

The colour is white (the undifferentiated white from which all colours emerge) as it symbolises purity of thought and action. Abhinava also feels that given the nature of øànta, it is above limiting categories of colour. The vçtti most appropriate to øànta is sàtvati vçtti as it is filled with sattva guõa, but if we analyse it closely, vçtti-s cannot be discussed for øànta like for all the others. Sama is taken as the sthàyibhàva\textsuperscript{92} and prasàda as the guõa. Prasàda is
really the absence of rāga and dveṣa, aspects which bind the human being to baser levels of existence. Later theorists like Mammaṇa, Jagannatha, Hemachandra among others prefer mādhurya and their interpretations reveal their tilt towards establishing rasānanda from sānta to Brahmānanda. This state of unalloyed happiness is no doubt preferred by all and sundry.

4.5.1.5. sānta as Mahārasa

There is a view that Abhinava supports Bharata’s non-inclusion of sānta and its sthāyan in order to take the number of rasa-s only as upalakūśa-s (i.e. a statement made by way of an example) rather than fixing it permanently, for the sthāyibhāva-s would remain as mere vyabhicāribhāva-s till intensified by the vibhāva-s. (ABh., VI.35) However we have seen the arguments for and against Bharata’s acceptance of sāntarasa and our focus here is more on Abhinava’s elevation of sānta as the Mahārasa or Rasarāja. Bharata himself as we have seen accepts four rasa-s as main and the four others as subsidiary and derivable from them. He says:

\[
\text{teùàmutpattihetava÷catvàro rasàh tattyathà sçngàro raudro vãro bãbhatsa iti//atra-sçngàràdhi bhavedhàsyo raudráccakaruno rasâp/vàràscavinādbhutotpattirbãbhatsàcca bhayànakaþ.}\]

Sçngāra, raudra, vāra and bibhatsa are taken as primary and the other four hàsya, karuna, abdhuta and bhayànaka as derivable from them. (Later Bhoja refutes this in his sçngāra- prakàśa). There is an allied concept of citta-vikāra-s discussed in connection with each rasa.

Citta-vikāra

There is great divergence in traditional accounts regarding rasa but a theorist like Ananda does not accept or reject aesthetic categories merely on the basis of tradition or convention. He applies the term rasa to that which is capable of producing druti (melting), dāpti (glow) or vikāsa (expansion) in the mind of the sahòdaya. In sçngāra and karuna the heart melts, in raudra it glows and in vāra it expands. Ananda accepts sānta independently (and thereby
navarasa indirectly) without trying to bring it under one of the other rasa-s. When there is an absence for possession of worldly things and this is presented properly to the spectator, there is bliss which is enjoyed in the form of ənta. He also allows for the possibility of it being differently experienced by different spectators. To A nanda's list of reactions, to the four main rasa-s, D hanaśajaya makes certain alterations. He holds up vikāsa, vistāra, kūobha and vikūepa as reactions produced due to the impact of scngāra, vāra, bibhatśa and raudra respectively.

Abhinava also talks of these citta-vikāra-s in his discussion on əntarasa. He quotes the verse by Bharata in the Rasādhyāya: bhāva vikāra ratyādyāpy sāntastu prakṛtirmataḥ/ ənta is the source (mālaprakti) of all the bhāva-s, which are herefore its vikāra-s. In the everyday world, effects or kārya-s are caused by kārana-s, made out of some material or prakti and merge back into it. So also, the bhāva-s come out of the primal causal rasa or mālaprakti i.e. əntarasa, due to some instrumental causes and disappear into it when the same instrumental causes disappear: svayam svayam nīmittamāsādhya əntādbhāvaḥ pravartate, punarnimittapāye ca ənta yevopalāyate/ Abhinava accepts əma as the sthāyibhāva of əntarasa. It implies the cessation of all the modifications of the mind or the citta-vṛtti-s. When the citta comes into contact with the external objects, there arises the four effects of vikāsa, vistāra, kūobha and vikūepa. When these are controlled the state is of ənta. The cessation of the modifications of the mind is referred to as citta-vṛtti-nirodha, leading to nirvikalapa-samādhi. As long as the individual exists in the human form, the citta will exist and vikāra-s will continue to function. They exist yet do not disturb or agitate the citta. Hence nirodha is not total absence of or complete cessation of vikāra-s. Abhinava gives the example of the sea with small and big waves. Sometime the sea appears calm though the waves are not non-existent. They rise in the water, go back into it and are essentially made up of it. Similarly the vṛtti-s exist in the citta, rise in it on the occasion and merge back into it. While the first and second
stages mentioned above are of the other sthāyibhāva-s (e.g., the vṛttī-s of vikāsa, vistāra etc) the last stage which is the disappearance of the vṛttī-s is of ṛāma. It is experienced by the spectators as āntarasa.

In the earlier section we have seen how objections were raised against including āntarasa on the ground that cessation of action cannot be shown through action or ceūña which is the nature of Nāñya. In Abhinava's reply we see the strengthening of his position on āntarasa as Mahārasa. He says that, the cittavṛttī-s in association with bhāva-s like kāma, become the object or viśaya of aesthetic experience due to the pratibhā of the poet or actor and is known as rati. This becomes the object of contemplation as ṣṛṅgāra for the sahādaya. When the cittavṛttī-s based on the trivarga of the puruṣārtha-s can lead to specific rasa-s, why can the same method not be adopted for the Paramapuruṣārtha i.e. mokūa? This can become the object of direct experience and is called ānta. There is a difference between the nirveda felt with earthly suffering like poverty and the nirveda felt as detachment due to a higher state of bliss (vibhāva for tattvajñāna). The ātmabodha leads to nirveda which results in āntarasa. So also there is difference between the jñāna behind the aesthetic experience of all other sthāyibhāva-s and that felt with the ānanda rising out of āntarasa e.g. the love that we feel towards our elders and Gods is not the same as ṣṛṅgāra for the beloved.

In the experience of ānta there is svātma-parāmarśa or revelling in one's own consciousness. It is obvious that the other rasa-s also cannot take place without the same contact with consciousness. Whether we give primary importance to the body or to the ātman, this is applicable. For the former, there can be no greater self interest than the protection and preservation of the body. Yet we see the glorious instances of soldiers who discipline their bodies, putting them through severe training only to sacrifice these very bodies in war for patriotic causes. There is a certain sense of happiness even in this behavior. In any aesthetic experience, when the sthāyibhāva-s come in contact with consciousness there is rasānubhāti. Conversely when there is rasānubhāti,
there is ātmānubhāti. Logically deriving the whole range of rasa-s, Abhinava concludes that the experience of every rasa ends in ānta. The impact of ānta however is longer than that of all the other rasa-s, as it forms their very backdrop. It is clear then that not only can ānta be accepted as one of the rasa-s but can be given the status of Mahārasa or the substratum of all the other rasa-s.

4.5.1.6. Acceptance of further Rasa-s by Abhinava

Though for him āntarasa is not equivalent to or the same as bhakti, he does not accept more than nine rasa-s. Any further addition would lead to an unnecessary multiplication of emotions and sentiments. It is for the same reason he rejects the inclusion of vātsalya. Even with reference to bhakti, there is a difference in the approach of the Viṣṇavas and Trika Saivism. The former retains the dualism though the ultimate reality is Parabrahman hence is qualified non-dualism whereas the Trika treats it as an inclusive experience or supreme non-dualism (parādvaita) that integrates the dualist perspective.

4.5.2. As Camatkāra: Transcendence of Subject-Object Duality

Abhinava in expounding his aesthetic theory has very clearly indicated its alaukika nature. What takes place with the transformation of the ordinary experience into the extraordinary aesthetic experience is called by him as Camatkāra. It points to the gift of Pratibhā, (prājñā nava navonmeśuālinā pratibhāmatā) innately present in artistes by which they are able to find newer and newer ideas and meanings into the mundane aspects of life. This astonishing and unique capacity creates a sense of wonder and amazement in the minds of the readers and is hailed as camatkāra.

Comparing the injunctions of the Vedas, the commands of a master and the sweet words of the beloved, Abhinava states that poetry is like the last mentioned as it educates in an entertaining manner. Though its purpose is finally the attainment of the Puruṣārthas, it gives immense delight (prātreva pradhānam) and ultimate happiness. The Rasa experience or camatkāti could
be described as one without obstacles, uninterrupted, ceaseless, perfect and complete. In the ABh., Abhinava defines it as "an immersion in an enjoyment (bhogāveśa) which can never satiate, and is thus uninterrupted (tripti vyatirekeśāvacchinnā)." The pleasure derived from aesthetic experience is so fulfilling that the spectator wishes for more and more of the same. Unlike our craving for material pleasure which is driven by self interest, there is a sense of detachment in aesthetic relish. Synonymously with camatkṣṭi, Abhinava uses terms like carvañā (tasting), rasānā (relishing), nivṛti (joy), pratāti (manifestation) and viśṛṇti (repose). If we take carvañā, the literal meaning is to chew, ruminate or in this context, go over the work of art again and again for the joyous experience.

How does carvañā occur? It is possible in rasānubhava only when there is ekaghanatā or a complete, compact experience. In the ABh., Abhinava says,"All the rasa-s are dominated by pleasure or (sukha), for the essence of closely dense (ekaghana) light consisting of the gustation of our own consciousness is beatitude." It is a psychological state of where the subject is so immersed in the object of contemplation (here of rasa), that there is complete quietitude and cessation of all other desires. When all our thoughts and energies are focussed on a given task and not dissipated, it amounts to meditation. This complete concentration alone leads to rasa. It is like living intensely in the present where past remorse and future worries are absent. For any performing artiste, personal experience on stage automatically reveals this fact. Any lack of concentration on the part of the dancer will mean going out of sync with the orchestra, story and the movement i.e., saṅgā, the tāla, laya or abhinaya which all form an harmonious whole.

4.5.3. Āsaṇanda: Experience of Unconditional Happiness

In the discussion on the nature of rasa, there is general acceptance that it is a relishable experience, one devoid of pain and suffering. Abhinava would vehemently denounce those theorists who include duṣkha as a possibility in
aesthetic experience, despite the beginnings of òoka being in òoka and the presence of negative emotions in individuals. The purpose of arousing the bhàva-s like rati, hàsya or even òoka is to ultimately come in contact with one`s own consciousness which is of the nature of bliss. In Nàñya he declares that the different types of abhinaya are utilised only to bring about this end:

\[\text{asmanmate saš vedanamevànandaghanamàsvàdyate, tatra kà duþkhàsankhà, kevalam tasyeva citratàkaraõe rati-òkàdi-\v{v}àsanàvypàràp, tadudbodhane cåbhìnayàdì-vyàpàràp.} \ 97\]

Bhañña Tauta uses the term priyàtmaka, `being the nature of prãti', while Ananda calls it prahlàdanàtmaka i.e.`being in the form of delight'. However these two terms could be classified under sukha as some sense-applicable object has been found to be anukålavedanàya or favourable. Rasànubhåti is altogether a unique experience as it is alaukika and going beyond mere sense stimuli to the inner core of an individual. When the contact with the senses is transcended it has gone beyond sukha also. It is at harmony with the all pervasive bliss and hence called ånanda. It can be best understood with the example given of Ràma by Bhavabhuti in his Uttararàmacarita (1.35). When Ràma feels the touch of Sita, his senses are rendered inactive, rather incapable of doing their normal functions because the experience touches a deep seated impression within him, probably from an earlier birth. The result cannot be termed either sukhàtmaka or duþkhàtmaka due to the non-operation of the senses. It is sheer bliss or ånanda akin to Brahmànanda-sahodara.

To the query as to whether bhoga can be taken as synonymous with ånanda, the term does not occur in the Nàñya÷àstra but is found in Abhinava`s explanation of the rasa-såtra. Though it was Bhañña Nàyaka who first used bhoga with reference to rasa-niùpattiõ, Abhinava notes several dimensions of the term in the ABh. (bhàvakatva-vyàpàreõa bhàvyamano rasaõ...bhogena param bhujyate.) In keeping with Bhañña Nàyaka`s explanation, Abhinava says it is the sahçdaya who has the bhoga of rasa. It is at the stage of the universalisation of the vibhàva-s etc, leading to the sthàyibhàva e.g.rati. This
has three ramifications. Each individual is made up of the three guõa-s, which are constantly re-arranging themselves in varying proportions. At this stage the sattvaguõa dominates relegating the other two, rajas and tamas to the background. An enhancement of the sattvaguõa leads to a blissful experience known as ànandamaya-sa§vid. As such, sa§ vit produced by the senses can be pleasurable or miserable as it is connected with sense objects. In the case of the bhàva-s which is produced by the inner sense or the mind and is universalised through sàdhårañoikaraõa there are no limitations. Hence the experience is blissful. With the predominance of sattva, the nature of this bliss is of that of light, both laghu and prakà÷aka. It is thus also called as 'prakåâànandamaya-sa§vit'. Finally this sa§ vit being blissful results in peace and contentment or vi-ránti. This prompted Nàyaka to refer to it as Brahmåsvåda-savidha or an experience closest to Brahmånanda.

4.5.4. A s Brahmånanda-sahodara: Experience akin to Brahman-realisation

Abhinava puts forward several points to establish the ànandatva of Rasa before revealing its akin-ness to Brahman-realisation. According to him, despite the life-like nature of Nàñya which appears most convincing, the factors involved in its creation are not factual or material. They are instruments which lead us to the emotion but do not bear any causal relationship among themselves. The emotions thus produced also do not bear a cause-effect relationship with us in that we are not affected by the artistic experiences in the same way that real-life experiences affect us. In our interactions with the practical world we are governed by selfish and individual traits, seek gratification of personal desires, avoid pain and crave for pleasure. Our motives are always of practical utility. In rasànubhava there is nothing to be practically gained or lost in this sense. The heart is free from the burden of `pragmatic prejudice` and is free therefore to enjoy what is being presented. This is also possible because of the art presented as a combination of the poet`s/dancer`s pratibhå, the abhinaya performed by the dancer and the special milieu or atmosphere created therein. None of the spectators are
burdened with the particularities of the presentation and can enjoy it unconditionally.

Abhinava contends that since rasànubhâti is not a phenomenal occurrence it is not formatted in terms of subject-object cognition or empirical parameters. It is an `awareness` and a visualisation by the mind of an aesthetic situation and aesthetic object, yet an awareness that results in peace and repose. The human being tossed and turned by the vicissitudes of life needs rest and rasa born out of Nàţya is the ideal panacea for it.

tatra sarve amā [sthâyibhâvāḥ] sukhapradhānāḥ svasasāḥ vit-carvaõarupasya ekaghanasya prakāãasya ānandasâtvā.\textsuperscript{98}

The use of the term Brahmânanda-sahodara prompts some thinkers to perceive an Advaitic influence on Abhinava. However scholars like K.C.Pandey have gone to great lengths to prove it otherwise. Abhinava’s whole attempt is to justify the aesthetic experience from the øaiva standpoint. The adoption of Bhañña Nàyaka’s terminology particularly the three guõa-s, explanation of rasa as predominance of sattva and identifying it with ānanda has led to this Vedantic slant. If we do accept his position, then rasànubhâti would have to belong to the sphere of màyà as it is triguõàtmaka. Abhinava does not relegate rasa to the level of màyà nor does he explain it in terms of the qualities of an individual subject. It is alaukika, unique and self-absorbing.

The entire attempt of Abhinava is the destruction of the ego or the `I`, not by strenuous, self mortification but by glorification of humanness and its infinite talent, by expansion of its limited sense of self to all encompassing reality and by surrendering the ego to the omnipresent, omnipotent øiva to reach the sublime happiness of being non-different from the Lord. The most common term used by seasoned maestros of music and dance while referring to their field of performing arts is- kalàsàgaram- an ocean of great depth and width, in which the performer is but a wave. Humility is the hallmark of these greats for they have tasted the bliss of being immersed in this sàgaram. Once tasted, the sweet experience of bliss pulls them again and again into its fold.
The inevitable question raised by scholars is about the use of the term `Brahmànanda-sahodara` and not `Brahmànanda` by aestheticians like Bhañña Nayaka and Abhinava who unlike others have propounded a philosophical interpretation of aesthetic relish. It is essential to map out the similarities and differences between the two and delineate their respective spheres of operation. By doing so we would be able to retain the sovereign nature of the aesthetic experience and simultaneously elevate it to the realm of the Ultimate Reality.

4.5.4.1. Similarities between Rasàsvàda and Brahmàsvàda

We can see the similarities between both with reference to the nature of the actual experience, the requirements for experiencing it, the status of the experience, its purpose and finally its impact on the self.

1. The nature of the experiences is alaukika or transcendental and extraordinary.
2. It is free from pain and suffering as it is of the nature of bliss, hence ñandaikaghana.
3. The empirical parameters of space, time and causality cease to function in the usual sense. The world of Nàñya follows its own rules, traversing several time and space zones simultaneously. In a mystic experience also the same limiting notions cease to matter.
4. With the limiting conditions absent, the self as limited is forgotten. There is total immersion in the experiencing moment and a withdrawal from mere sensual awareness to `being one with the whole'.
5. The self is absorbed in the experience that there is no distinction between the subject and object of cognition or experience. Abhinava specifies that the rasànubhava is not an objective one.
6. As regards the qualifications for undergoing these two types of experiences, a certain kind of training is necessary by way of music and dance in rasa and bhakti oriented practices to attain the spiritual state.
7. The actual process involved in them is not really the instances of a new creation but the re-cognition of an originally existing but now forgotten state. The veil of ignorance of the real nature of the àtman/brahman is removed and true knowledge and liberation occurs.
8. The purpose then of both is not material gain or a mere enhancement of social status. Rather it is the leaving behind of the ephemeral and
becoming one with the eternal that distinguishes them from other mundane pursuits.

9. The knots of egoity or avidya/mâyâ are loosened just as Abhinava talks of the removal of the vighna-s in rasânubhâti to achieve ânanda.

10. The means to these experiences are merely ladders to reach the top and of no value after that. Once realised the self is in a state of repose, rest or vi÷rànti.

4.5.4.2. Differences between Rasâsvâda and Brahmâsvâda:

There is an well-attempted translation of a passage from the ABh., where Abhinava analyses the two kinds of experiences, the aesthetic and the mystic and points out their differences.

Aesthetic experience (carvaõà) is different from the perception of love, etc., that arises because of ordinary valid mans of cognition such as direct perception (pratyakùa), inference (anumàna), textual authority (àgama), simile (upamàna) and others. It is also (an experience) different from the indifferent (tâñasthya) knowledge of another person’s thoughts that arises from direct vision in a yogin, and from the experience that consists of a single mass of the bliss (ànandaikhaghana) of one’s own Self that belongs to the highest Y ogin and which, being pure (ùddha), is devoid of contact (uparàga) with any object of the senses. The reason why aesthetic experiences differ from all the above, is because of the absence of beauty caused respectively by the appearance of distractions such as desire to acquire (arjanâdi), the absence of active participation, the absence of clarity (asphutatva), and being at the mercy of the object (of contemplation). 99

We have seen in the above quotation the differences in the nature of the two kinds of experiences. Two other such points seek our attention. They are:

1. The qualifications of the experiencer in drama are not so rigid or demanding as Nâñya is open and accessible to all. In keeping with the original purpose of Nâñyotpatti adults, children and people of low intelligence can still relate to and enjoy a play or dance. This is not the case in a religious or mystic experience which automatically demands a higher level of thinking and feeling. In short, a sahçdaya is different from a mumukùu.

2. Though Abhinava did talk of the aesthetic experience being uplifting and a stepping stone to mokùa or libeation, it is obvious that for most
people drama or dance is for entertainment purposes and to be enjoyed as such. As a consequence they may not be necessarily transformed into highly changed or liberated personalities simply by watching performance. A genuine religious experience on the other hand can be drastically transformative making the changes irreversible as in the case of say Siddharta as Buddha.

3. Very often the tendency of ordinary people who cannot rise above the mundane is to equate a drama based on ñçngàra rasa as a fulfilment of sexual desires and not perceive love in a heightened or spiritual way as done by Abhinava.

It would then be the attempt of this thesis to highlight Abhinava's philosophical interpretation and bridge the chasm between rasàsvàda and brahmàsvàda. It is no doubt heartening to see his influence on succeeding theorists who take pains to analyse and account for his philosophical viewpoint in their own theories. This is evident in a verse quoted by Jayaratha his commentator in the Tantràloka,

Just as when various objects such as pieces of wood, leaves, stones, etc., fall into a salt-mine they turn into salt, so also emotions (turn into bliss when they fall) the pure consciousness that is our very self.  

4.6. Abhinava's Comprehensive approach to aesthetic experience: Some additional points

The foregoing detailed elaboration of Abhinava's aesthetic system reveals the gradual progression from the level of sense experience to the higher levels of imagination, of personalized emotion, to universal depersonalised emotion to finally the ultimate stage of objectless experience wherein the Subject, the Self shines in its ànanda aspect. According to him, the entire gamut of aesthetic possibilities is covered from the øaivite standpoint and pulsates with the presence of Siva and his energy principle øakti.
Starting from the aesthetic experience from sense perception, the two main senses that operate in this regard are the ears and the eyes, राव्या and दच्या. In keeping with a philosophical approach, the aesthetic object is taken not merely as one that stimulates the senses but as a pointer to the artiste’s imagination which fills in the details to the sensually presented form. Abhinava’s system is so holistic that categories overlap and all concepts can be linked to each other at different levels in different ways. Notwithstanding the explanation of Abhinava's Theory of Rasa-dhvani in the preceding section, certain elaborations of allied concepts is delineated here to present the overall picture of his aesthetic system.

4.6.1. Pratibhā

Many theoreticians speak of pratibhā before Abhinava. Then how does his interpretation become different or unique? Those before him confine it to poetry while Abhinava discusses pratibhā from both the standpoints of poetry (applicable to all art forms) and metaphysics, particularly Pratyabhijñā ñaivism. It can be applied to both the macrocosmic and the microcosmic levels. The consciousness of the Supreme Being i.e. Īśvara is camatkāra and is of the nature of eternal light, prakāśa-vimarśa, the illuminating light without which nothing comes into existence. For him pratibhā in the individual, (born out of and equivalent to camatkāra at the macrocosmic level), is the fundamental genius of the artiste. As the creative aspect of Īśvara, vimarśa is also called ūakti. Īśvara is the ultimately real and also the reality behind the manifested universe. He is both the creator and the created. Consciousness is called so due to its capacity for action, which is really conscious creativity. The duality between subject and object, reality and appearance, being and becoming and an immanent and transcendent reality is reconciled through the pratibhā of the dancer and spectator. Abhinava declares "If the highest reality did not manifest infinite variety, but remained cooped up within its solid,
singleness, it would neither be the highest power nor Consciousness, but something like a jar".  

In Tantrasāra, Abhinava talks of the five functions of øiva as iccha, kriya, jñāna, cit and ânanda ðakti-s. These are the five powers of the process of manifestation of the øiva-ðakti-sàmarasya which is Prakà÷a-vimar-âmaya, charaterised by svàtantrya and ânanda. Just as øiva's creativity flows out spontaneously from within him so also the artiste's creativity i.e.pratibhà flows out as creative art. For the øaivites, øiva is the supreme artiste and the universe is only an expression of his art. We have seen how this is unfolded in the evolution of the thirty-six tattva-s. Just as we can talk about the unfolding of speech from the undifferentiated level (parà) to articulated speech (vaikhari) as the manifestation of øiva (as paràvàk), we can draw a parallel between the creation of the word (of art) and that of the world. Pratibhà becomes for Abhinava the origin of the word, world and art. He says:

The Poet is like Prajàpati, from whose will this world arises. For the poet is endowed with a power to create wondrous and unheard of things. This power arises from the grace of paràvàk (highest speech), which is just another name for poetic imagination (pratibhà), which has its seat in the poet's own heart, and which is eternally in creative motion (udita).  

Ananda's use of the term dçûñi as the poet's special imaginative outlook on life caught the attention of Abhinava as seen in the Locana:

Wondrous: for it comes by transcending the stage of perception of things which fall to a normal course of life. It is on that account that poet is called kavayah: from their being able to describe (in this wondrous way). New: that is, constructing worlds at every moment with ever new and delightful variations. Sight: that is, in the form of poetic imagination (pratibhà).  

He goes on further to call it the third eye of øiva, the seer and sàkùi of the past, present and the future. ðakti being blessed by øiva with the intuitive vision awakens with her power, the entire universe. Hence the artiste has pratibhà as power or ðakti and is one who possesses both the vision and the power to express it. Abhinava speaks of pratibhà at two levels, parà-pratibhà or the supreme power of øiva always residing in him and revealing the manifested universe as self revelation and kavi-pratibhà or the poet's vision which resides
within him and reveals the universe of aesthetic experience. Ultimately the two are non-different from each other. The aesthetic category of pratibhâ in art is none other than the metaphysical principle of pratibhâ in ðiva.

Abhinava’s strikes a balance between the artiste’s creative genius and the rasika’s appreciative response. He says that pratibhâ resides in both. Since the work of art is the expression of the one supreme consciousness, it is obvious that the artistic expression and its appreciation should also have pratibhâ.

4.6.2. Sàdhàraõãkaraõa

The concept of sàdhàraõãkaraõa is directly related to the bhàva-classification in the Nàñya-àstra. The indispensable existence of nine sthàyibhàva-s or universal emotions in individuals is the key to their expression and enjoyment of their enactment in Nàñya. These nine sthàyin-s are rati, hāsa, krodha, utsàha, bhaya, jugupsà, vismaya and nirveda. Taking each emotion individually, we can see that it is the natural human tendency of the jâva. He tries to avoid pain and seek out pleasure, sees others as object of his laughter believing in his own superior capacities, sorrow is an inevitable feeling when we are separated from either an object or person of our desire, anger follows for similar reasons, the loss of power and control results in fear, an attempt to overcome this powerlessness leads to enthusiasm and heroism, a sense of disgust is felt towards the ugly and repulsive, a sense of wonder in the presence of the extra-ordinary and finally a feeling of calm and peace at the freedom from misery and sorrow. Though Bharata does not include the term sthàyibhàva in the rasa-sàtra he reveals its importance in the following sàtra: vibhàvàdibhiþ sa§ yogoarthàt sthàyinstato rasaniùpattiþ. To whom is the sthàyibhàva related, i.e. on whose sthàyibhàva does rasaniùpattiþ take place: the poet/dramatist, the dancer or the spectator? In analysing this question we have seen the different types of bhàva-s by Bharata and subsequent theorists, as also the progression from the poet’s viewpoint to the performer and finally the spectator’s in chapter three of this thesis. What is of importance here is
Abhinava's acceptance of certain aspects of the above analysis and rejection of some others. He rejects the inclusion of concepts introduced by Bhañña Nayaka like bhàvanà since vyàjanà explains the process of suggestion effectively. If the meaning of the term sa§vedana is extended to imply sensitivity on the part of the spectator or understanding the suggestiveness or dhvani in an art work, it would be acceptable to Abhinava.

Taking the example of the deer fleeing from the pursuing chariot of Du÷yanta in the Abhijñàna÷àkuntalam, the spectators experience fear and trepedition though it in not them being chased. This is because the characters in presenting the permanently existing emotions lose their individualities, transcending time and space. They become universal and assume the qualities of common, ordinary men and women. This transformation into commonly experienced emotions results in sàdhàraõãkaraõa and makes rasaniùpattiõ or universal experience of aesthetic relish possible. Though agreeing with Bhañña Nayaka in the introduction of sàdhàraõãkaraõa, Abhinava believes that the two stage process of bhàvakatva and bhogakatva would rob rasa of its immediacy. According to him the generalisation of emotions or sàdhàraõãkaraõa and its enjoyment or rasa is one, unified experience.

4.6.3. Sahçdaya

The philosophical analysis of taste or rasikatva involves among other concepts, pratibhà or aesthetic genius and sahçdayatva or aesthetic susceptibility. Similarly the psychological analysis involves the point of view of the artiste and that of the spectator. In the universalisation of a particular emotion (sadhàranikaraõa), the role of the spectator gains significance as it is the end towards which the aesthetic process is directed. Hence, experience of similar situations is a necessary pre-condition for aesthetic communicatin to be possible. Without this the aesthetic presentation will have as little meaning as the sight of a delicious fruit to one who is seeing it for the first time and is
unaware of its taste. The concept of a 'common wave-length' in scientific parlance for communication to take place, indicates the very same principle.

The term हृद on which hinge both हृदयासंवा and saहृदया is not limited to `the heart as the reservoir of emotions alone, but as the seat of emotional, intellectual and volitional forces that are capable of lifting the entire personality to a higher state of being'. The हृद of the spectator is constantly polished by repeated exposure to art and parameters of art criticism. Highlighting the elevated status given to हृद in the आगमic tradition Aurobindo hails it as `supra-rational aesthetic soul' whereby the poet and the aesthete bound in a dynamic relationship rise from the superficial mental level to a higher spiritual consciousness. Abhinava highlights the dual attraction of नाया to the spectators as it appeals both to the eye and the ear. The saहृदयाconceptualise the dramatic situation inherent in the poem in their minds, enjoying the poetry also like drama.

Rasa itself acquires a special quality because of its ability to be transmitted from the performer to the saहृदया as compared to mere emotion or bhàva. For this very reason, the necessity of a cultivated aesthete gains centre-stage. This has been recognised by कàlidàsa in no uncertain terms when he declares: "I long to carry out the order of the spectators which I have already received with my head bowed". Since both ends of the aesthetic spectrum, the performer and the aesthete are equally important, the saहृदया is expected to have the similar kind of sa$skàra-s like the performer and proper training required to appreciate the same. In short the capacity to appreciate art is itself an art. Hiriyanna agrees with Abhinava that the poet's experience is the same as the spectator and that the creation and appreciation of art lie on the same scale. Aestheticians have traced the aesthetic process in comparison to the growth of a seed through the tree to the fruit, all parts of the process being equally important. Rasànubhåti takes place not only because of the capacity of rasa to flow from the artiste to the spectator but also due to the readiness of the latter to receive and enjoy it. Abhinava in the
Abhinavabhārati anticipates Bhoja’s statement that our emotions rise in us in this birth due to pious deeds performed by us in previous births. For both of them there is a cause, a means, a condition for the aesthetic experience to take place and that for Abhinava is sahādayatva.

In the Locana, Abhinava brings out beautifully the relationship between tanmayabhāvana, sahādaya and hṛdayasaṣvāda. He declares:

He alone is able to have aesthetic response, who by constant contemplation of poetry, has developed a mirror-like mind and a capacity to identify himself completely with what is presented in the play or poem; such a person has the same heart as the poet, a sa-hṛdaya or sa-cetas and he alone experiences rasa, and hence a Rasika.

yeṇām kāvyānu-ānanābyāsva-āvāda vi-ādāhute manomukure varōṇāya tanmayābhavanayogyatā te hṛdayasamvadhāhajāḥ sahādayaḥ.112

4.6.4. Tanmayabhāvanā

The term bhāvana could mean the revelation of the rasa-s through the bhāva-s (kāvyena bhāvayante rasāḥ) as used by Bharata or as the experience that is generated by vibhāva-s, anubhāva-s etc. The suffix-mayat-in tanmayabhāvanā implies 'identification', between the dramatic performance and the spectator. This experience is desired by the spectator but unlike the desire for material goods, is subtle and relishable. The identification in tanmayabhavanā is also unlike the laukika joy e.g the statement ‘putraste jātah’ indicating joy on the birth of a son. Disagreeing with Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka who introduces this term in a technical sense, Abhinava says these are nothing but suggestion or vyākṣjanā.

When bhāvanā is used in the sense of sensitivity of heart when the spectator is on the same wave length of the performer, it leads to tanmayabhavanā. This is the spread of a particular emotion among a group of people so that they all think or feel alike. The particular emotion becomes common (sāadhāraōkaraōa) and universalized (tanmayabhavanā). There is saṣ vedana or understanding/sensitivity among hearts which is called as hṛdayasaṣvāda. Abhinava poetically expresses this reaction by saying that
when meaning surcharged with emotion impacts the heart of the spectator, it pervades his body like dry suffused by fire.\textsuperscript{113}

Abhinava shows how tanmayābhāvanā works paradoxically in two directions simultaneously. It implies both 'immersion in the aesthetic experience' and 'distancing oneself from the particularities of it'. Involvement in the art appreciation should be complete but it should bear the quality of detachment from one's own personal perspective. It achieves the contraction of the ego and the expansion of the heart to finally soak in the aesthetic joy which results from rasānubhāva. This positive enlargement of heart occurs with the removal of ignorance of the ego (polishing of the heart), a distinct departure from the earlier negativistic and asceticism-oriented systems. This is a possibility because of the very nature of rasa which is wondrous and transcendental or camatkāra.

4.6.5. Carvaṇā/Camatkāra

In the use of the term carvaṇā Abhinava, who was the first to make it synonymous with svada, he has raised some fundamental points. The causes (vibhāva-s) kindle the latent emotions in the human mind which already exist but are not experienced as such till the occasion arises in the form of Nāṇya. As far as the knowledge of these emotions is concerned, they cannot be known through the regular pramāṇa-s like pratyakṣa or anumāna but only through the aesthetic experience. They cannot also be known as yogic experience as they are still accessible to everyone. They are thus different from both, the cognition born out of ordinary pramāṇa-s and those experiences like mystic states wherein these pramāṇa-s do not operate. Abhinava says:

Therefore, the tasting of rasa (which consists in a camatkāra different from other ordinary cognitions) is different from memory, inference and any other form of ordinary consciousness.\textsuperscript{114}

The function of the vibhāvādi (vibhāvādivyavahāra) which causes carvāna is described as alaukika (extraordinary) by him, alaukika evāyam carvanopayogi vibhāvādivyavahāraṇaḥ.
The experience though constructed from certain components of the material world is unique and different from all of them just as a drink prepared with the sugar and pepper is different from the taste of these ingredients when separately eaten. In short carvāṇa is the experience of one’s own consciousness in association with the various bhāva-s. If we accept this, then rasāṇubhāti is the removal of the veil of ignorance of the nature of the self. It is also known as rasana, the aesthetic experience and the taste or relish. The other significant aspect of carvāṇa as rasana is that it is tātkālika, it does not exist before being experienced. Rather it exists in the moment of experience only, hence rasāṇubhāti is a special and unique experience. Due to this it is said that carvāṇa is caused but rasa is manifested. (Mammata refers to Abhinava’s commentary on Bharata’s rasa-sutra in his Kāvya-prakāśa when he uses the phrase; carvyamāṇātaika-prānaḥ, p.50). If we accept that carvāṇa is the experience of one’s own consciousness, then rasāṇubhāti is the removal of ignorance of the nature of the self. Later Visvanatha points out that adbhuta-rasa should not be confused with camatkāra as the latter is the essence of all the rasa-s leading to the blissful state of mind or vi-rānti.

4.6.6. Vi-rānti

The specialized usage of the term vi-rānti, by Abhinava from the ōaivite viewpoint has some traces in the text itself though not in the exact way meant by him. It occurs in the Nāṇya-āśtra (Chap I: Nāṇyotpatti), in a general sense in the discussion on the purpose and benefit of Nāṇya, as giving relief to those in distress and repose (vi-rānti) to those suffering from sorrow. Bharata says: duḥkhārtānaṁ āmārtānaṁ ākārtānaṁ tapasvināṁ, vi-rāntijanam kāle nāṇyametadbhavi-yati.\textsuperscript{115}

If understood in this sense vi-rānti would be the end result of the achievement of all the qualities lacking in people which they gain by watching a nāṇya performance e.g.courage to the timid, rest to the weary, motivation to
the listless, solace to the distressed etc. There is another variation given by Nāyaka when he talks of nijāsaṣṭi vitri-rāṇti or `complete absorption of an individual in the experience produced in that moment'. Since Nāyaka uses the term bhoga (as enjoyment) to refer to the third stage of the aesthetic process, this is obviously an adjective to bhoga. The difference between the two usages of vi-rāṇti is that while for the Nā it is the enjoyment of happiness resulting from removal of distress, for the latter it is being absorbed in one's own thoughts. Abhinava seems to take a position incorporating both.

To the question whether all his successors were able to carry forward his theories in the true spirit of Advaitic Saivism, scholars have questioned the interpretation given by Jagannātha while discussing the aesthetic experience at the highest level. Jagannātha errs in interpreting Abhinava as saying that at that level the experience is of one basic mental state and the universalized self in a substance-attribute relation. Abhinava would declare that at the transcendental level, the aesthetic experience is no longer emotion based, for if it is so, the purpose of attaining rasānanda in order to be free of all limitations, would stand defeated.

4.7. Chapter Summary

A quick overview of Abhinava's aesthetic theory shows his acceptance of every level of reality starting from the sensuous and particular empirical stage, systematically subsuming it into higher and higher orders of reality, to ascent to the super-sensuous, universal, trans-empirical reality. There is no system, whether big or small that he has not touched upon, no idea or concept that he has not worked into the larger framework of Indian aesthetics. For Abhinava in expounding the ðaiva concept of aesthetics has revealed art as the realm of creative possibilities. Applicability in life was a major concern for him as at the level of values, nothing in life is to be rejected or looked down upon, impregnated as everything is, at all times, with the meaningfulness of its source or content. As an existing entity every individual inherently possesses
potentiality with the capacity to bloom in myriad ways and infinite forms. This is possible as they are all part of a reality that is an ever renewing field of energy-consciousness, Prakå-ṣa-vimarṣamaya.

The criticism that too much philosophizing would destroy the spontaneous outburst of creative activity is brought to naught when we peruse through Abhinava’s interpretation and analysis of the rasa-såtra in the ABh. Most of the practical applications of the bhāva-rasa scheme as also the practice and demonstration of the four-fold abhinaya is both intelligible and possible only through the ABh. The underlying meaning behind the symbolism, so integral to performing arts, from the ēaivite perspective, is again imperative for better understanding of them.

Notes and References

1. Nø, with ABh., GOS Edn, Vol I, p.278.
2. Infra, Chapter Three p.
4. Ibid, Pandey, p 81.
5. Scholars like Colin A. Cole and Natalia Isayeva.
6. Mundukya-kārīka,1.1, Gaudapada.Bahiçprajñap vibhur vi-vo..
7. Ibid,1.1. Hy antahprājnas tu tajasaḥ/
9. We can see the constant use of these two colours to signify the Lord and his consort or the twin principles of ēiva and Ṫakti from daily conventions like putting rangoli in front of houses to the garlands that are worn by the bride and the bridegroom during marriages.
10. It would appear to me that even the earliest artistic representation of the Buddha figure and architectural edifices of the Chaitya, Vihāra and Stāpa were more for meditative purposes, though they were no doubt works of great artistic merit.
12 svapnamāye yathā dūṣe gandharvanagaraū yathā, tathā vi-wam idaū dūṣaū vedānteu vicakiuālp. Māndukya kārikā,2.31
   yathā māyā yathā svapno gandharvanagaraū yathā, yathotpādas tatha sthānam tatha bhāi ga udirītaḥ. Mādhyamika-kārikā,7.34.
13. Scholars like T.M.P. Mahadevan believe that Gaudapada borrowed Buddhist terminology to actually refute and not strengthen them. See his Gaudapada: A Study in Early Advaita. (Madras, 1952, p239)


15. Also cited in aântarasa, Masson and Patwardhan, p.25.


18. Vijnânabhârata, Edited (with commentary by Ksemaraja and Sivopadhyaya), by M. Rama Shastri, Bombay, Tattvavivechaka Press, 1918, K.S.T.S.VIII.


21. Ananda's work Tattvâloka, commented on by Abhinava is believed to have analysed the intrinsic relation between poetry and philosophy and would have been the primary source text for the present thesis. It is unfortunately lost.


24. For example, the Swan in Yar poi solluvar, Subbarama Iyer padam in Todi Ragam or the friend/Sakhi, e.g Swamiye azhaithodi va sakhiye endan, in Ragam Todi.

25. Ibid, verse 97, p 64. See also Masson & Patwardhan, p.42.


28. Abhinavagupta, K.C. Pandey, CSS, Varanasi, p.X. âktopâya as a means to liberation asserts that the ethical value of an action is entirely determined by its motive. Hence the use of the paçcamakâra-s is not due to moral turpitude but the realization of the Real.

29. Infra, Chapter Three, pp.103-4.


31. Infra, Chapter Three, p.125.

32. One of the interpretations trace Bhartçhari’s concept of dhvani to Patanjali’s Sphoña. See From Early Vedanta to Kashmir øaivism, Natalia Isayeva, p 91.

33. The Vàkypadãyà, 2.1, K. Raghava Pillai, MLBD, Delhi.

34. vâgârthaviva sampçktavau vâgârtha-pratiprattaye, Kâlidâsa’s Raghuvâsa-4a,1.1.

35. Chapter Two, Infra, p.77.


37. Ibid, 1.2

39. Krishnamurthy, ibid, p. xxxi


41. A History of Sanskrit Poetics, P.V. Kane, p. 65.

42. ðàntarasa, Masson & Patwardhan, p. 34.

43. Ibid, p. 34.


45. Ibid, p. 12


47. Rasa Theory, G.K. Bhatt, Pune-4, p. 25.

48. Barlingay would make a difference between utpattip and niùpattip in the sense that the former is represented by the favourable and unfavourable reactions of the spectators, while the latter is the combination of the vibhāva, anubhāva and vyabhīcaribhāva-s. These do not lead to rasa, they themselves are rasa when combined. Ibid, Barlingay, p. 163.

49. Nāñya-āstra, with Abhinavabhārati, GOS, p. 272.


51. Abhinavabhārati, GOS, p. 280. Cited in G.K. Bhat, p. 32. The imitation theory though rejected by Plato has been hailed by Aristotle, Longinus and others. However some western scholars like Bosanquet, H.R. Marshal, J. Maritain etc., have found it difficult to apply the word imitation to all arts uniformly


Tasmād anuvyavasāyātmakam kārtanam rāpitavikalpasamvedanam nāñyaṁ.


55. Ibid, Barlingay, p. 194.


57. Locana, I, 21, Benaras Edn, pp. 158-160 as cited in Aesthetic experience according to Abhinavagupta, Gnoli, p. XXXIV.

58. The Sanskrit term for beauty ramya or ramanāya has its root in ramu krādāyām, meaning play.


60. Ibid, Apāre kāvyasaś sāre kaviśeva prajāpatiś, yathāsmaicarocate vi-wam tataiva parivartate. Dhvanyaloka, Trans., K. Krishnamoorthy, 3rd udyotta, verse 42.
64. Ibid.p.34.
65. ABh., GOS,Ch.5, p.207.
66. Sthåyi prabuddha hçdaye./ ABh., GOS,Ch 7, p342.
68. Ibid, Locana, Ingalls, Masson and Patwardhan,p.69.
69. Ibid, ABh., GOS, p 279.
70. Ibid, ABh, GOS, p 284. Laukika.. carvanàprànataya//.
71. Ibid, ABh., GOS, Ch 6, p.279.
72. Ibid, ABh., GOS,Ch 6, pp.290-1.
73. ABh., Nø, GOS, Ch 7.3, p 346
74. Ibid, ABh.,GOS, Ch 7.5, p 347.
75. Ibid, ABh.,Part I,Ch 7.4, p 347.
76. Ibid, ABh., A dihyaya-s 1,2 and 6,Ed.Nagendra, Delhi University,1973,p.481.
77. Ibid, ABh.,Ch 6,38, p.294.
78. Ibid, ABh.,Ch 6,35, p 293.
79. Some of the outstanding work has been by Gnoli, V.Raghavan, Masson and Patwardhan, V.M.Kulkarni, Y.S.Walimbe, K.D.Tripathi, R.V Tripathi and others. See Bibliography.
80. Infra, p.50. Masson and Patwardhan have analysed the varied textual influences on Abhinava’s theory of ñantarasa including Viùnudharmottarapuràõa and the Anuyogadvàrasåtra in their work ñantarasa, pp. 36-37.
81  The text ascribed to Bharata mentions tattvaajàna, vairàgya, etc as vibhàvas and nirveda, smçti, dhçti etc as vyabhicàri-s.
82  Anandavardhana answers this criticism in the Dhvanyàloka which is mentioned in the Avaloka on the Da÷arupaka, as cited in V.Raghavan’s Number of Rasa-s.,p.29.
83. Ibid, ABh, GOS, p 333.
84. Nanu tatra hçdayasamvàdabhàvådksamànataiva.nopapanna/ Locana, p177.
85. Atrocyate yathà iha tavad dharmàditritayam....kimiti rasatvam nàniyat iti vaktavyam. ABh.,GOS,Ibid, I, p.344.
86. The Number of Rasa-s, V.Raghavan, Ibid, p.31.
88. Locana, p178 as cited in Ibid, V.Raghavan, p.49.
89. ABh., GOS, Ibid, I, pp.4-5.
90. Nø, VI, after verse 82, GOS, p.333.
91. ABh., Ibid, p.300.
92. According to Masson and Patwardhan, the use of tattvajñāna as vibhāva in the jñāntarasa passage shows that it is interpolated as Abhinava gives it as the sthāyi for jñānta. jñāntarasa, Masson & Patwardhan, Ibid, p.92.
93. N.ø,GOS,6.39, p295
94. Bhavabhuti accords the Mahārasa status to karuna rasa in the Uttararāmacarīta III, 47 and relegates all the others to the background as vikāra-s of karuna just as bubbles and waves are different forms of one element water.
Eko rasah karuna eva nimitta bheda.. See also V.Raghavan, The Number of Rasas, p165.
95. Ibid, ABh., Ed Nagendra, p. 472.
97. Ibid, ABh., GOS,p 292.
98. Ibid, ABh...GOS,p 282.
106. The Sanskrit-English dictionary explains sa§vedana, as literally meaning `sensation, feeling, experiencing` Vaman Shivram Apte, M LB D, Delhi, 2005.
107. Ibid, ABh.,GOS,Chap.6,p.291.
108. Malavikāgnimitra, Kālidāsa, 1.2.
109. Nāyakasya kaveþ shrotuþ samāno anubhuvas tatatp. The actor, poet and the listener derive the same kind of experience from the enactment of a play. Dhvanyāloka-locana, 1.6.Abhinavagupta, Kāvyamālā reprint, p.34.
110. Ibid, ABh. GOS,6.38, p. 294.
ya artho hçdayasa§ vādātasya bhāvo rasodbhavahvab/ -arirāü vyāpyate tena suùkam kāùthāmivāgnina//
115. Nāyka÷àstra,1.114, GOS, p 40.