Chapter II

The Sublime
Origin

The concept of the term the sublime is attributed to Longinus. It is in his extraordinary essay Peri Hypsos that the Horation interest in the author became part of a critical trend and a romantic concern for the poet's inspiration came to its climax. Naturally, Longinus has been called the first Romantic critic.

The main arguments of the text of Peri Hypsos, translated as On the Sublime is directed against Cecilius. Undertaking to improve on the work of Augustan Cecilius, Longinus insists that Cecilius has neither defined the nature of the sublime nor indicated the sources, or components, of what both authors call hypsos, a quality of elevation, of intensity or eloquence in writing, 'the sublime' as it was much later to be called. So complying with the request of his friend Postumius Terentianus, Longinus undertakes to write a treatise on the subject and discusses in detail first, the definition of the subject and second, in order of treatment, the methods by which we may reach the desired goal (On the Sublime, Int., 99).

Definition

As Longinus defines it, the sublime signifies 'a certain distinction and excellence of expression, that distinction and excellence by which authors have been enabled to win immortal fame' *(On the Sublime, 1, 100).* And he goes on:

For the effect of elevated language is, not to persuade the hearers but to entrance them; and at all times, and in every way, what transports us with wonder is more telling than what merely persuades or gratifies us. The extent to which we can be persuaded is usually under our control, but these sublime passages exert an irresistible force and mastery, and get the upper hand with every hearer--- a well-timed stroke of sublimity scatters everything before it like a thunder bolt, and in a flash reveals the full power of the orator *(On the Sublime, 1, 100).*

Here we have the first definite statement of a doctrine which Joubert could not make more precise when he said: 'Nothing is poetry unless it transports', which Sir Thomas Browne was to translate into the language of sentiment when he exclaimed, 'I love to lose myself in a mystery, to pursue my reason to an Altitude!' and which De Quincey was to state in his distinction between the literature of knowledge and the
literature of power – 'The function of the first is—to teach; the function of the second is to—move!' The sublime effect of literature, for Longinus, is attained, not by argument, but by revelation, or illumination. Its effect upon the mind is immediate, like a flash of lightning upon the eye.

The sublime, Longinus tells us, should not be confused with mere inventive skill and the proper order and disposition of material. They are contextual, they run through the whole texture of the composition and reveal themselves by slow degrees whereas sublimity, as has already been stated, is a well-timed stroke which scatters everything and reveals its full power.

This brings us to the famous question of Nature versus Art, to the old problem of the relative importance of art and training on the one hand, and natural talent on the other. Longinus states the view of those who hold that the attainment of the sublime is not teachable by art, that it cannot be explained away as a set of artistic precepts, 'the bare bones of rules and systems' (On the Sublime, 2,101). Like Horace, Longinus comes to the inevitable conclusion that both are needed. 'Nature is the first cause and the fundamental principle in all activities, but the function of a system is to prescribe the degree and the right moment for each'. Unlike Horace, however, he puts the main emphasis on natural talent.

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4 R.A. Scott James, opp. cit., p. 87.
Longinus next discusses the vices, improprieties into which the sublime may fall. There are three of these: (1) tumidity or bombast, (2) puerility; and (3) parenthyrsus or false sentiment. ‘Tumidity’ is one of the most difficult of faults to guard against, for those who aim at the sublime in the hope of escaping the charge of feebleness and aridity become a prey to it.

The second of the fault, ‘puerility’, on the other hand, is a complete antithesis of tumidity. Writers slip into this kind of fault when they strive for unusual and well-wrought effects, and above all for attractiveness, and instead flounder into tawdriness and affectation (On the Sublime, 3, 103). It is exemplified by the odd conceits of Timaeus, and even by some of the phrases of Xenophon and Plato. Xenophon speaks of the pupils of the eyes as ‘modest maidens’.

The third fault, ‘parenthyrsus’ or false sentiment, results from hollow emotionalism where emotion is not called for, or from immoderate passion where restraint is what is needed. In such cases writers are often carried away by their enthusiasm into outbursts of emotion which are not relevant to the matter and leave their hearers unaffected.

All these faults are faults of ideas and result from one cause, from the craving for intellectual novelities which is the dominant craze among the writers. Thus a fine style, sublime conception and happy turns of phrases all contribute towards effective composition, yet these very factors lead not only to the success but also to the failure.
Longinus now comes to a closer grip with his subject and distinguishes the sublime from the faults that are so closely bound up with its achievement. In other words, he discriminates between the true sublime and the false sublime. But this is not so easy an undertaking, for 'the ability to judge literature is the crowning glory of long experience (On the Sublime, 6,106). Therefore, we must be careful of the 'external trappings of a showy splendour'. For the benefit of those who aspire to the sublime, Longinus provides some touchstones which may be helpful in distinguishing the true sublime from the false. The true sublime uplifts our souls; we are filled with a proud exaltation and a sense of vaunting joy; it can stand up to repeated examination; it is impossible to resist its appeal; it remains firmly and exists in such works as please all men at all times (On the Sublime, 7,107).

The false sublime is just its opposite. It gives an impression of grandeur by means of much adornment indiscriminately applied and can be shown as mere bombast when they are stripped away. Hence with every successive reading it loses more and more of its effectiveness.

**Sources**

Having defined the sublime in terms of its touchstones, Longinus next passes on to a discussion of the sources of the sublime. These sources are of five kinds and beneath all of
these lies a common foundation – the command of language, without which nothing worthwhile can be done (On the Sublime, 8, 108). These are:

1. the ability to form grand conceptions (the most important of all the sources);
2. the stimulus of powerful and inspired emotion;
3. the proper formation of two types of figure – the figures of thought and the figures of speech;
4. the creation of a noble diction which includes the choice of words, the use of imagery and the elaboration of style, and
5. the total effect resulting from dignity and elevation (a source which embraces all those already mentioned).

Of all these five sources the first two are for the most part innate – they refer to the poet’s soul and hence may be said to pertain to the ‘content’ of literature, while the others are the product of art and refer to the artistic training of the poet, and hence to the ‘form’ of literature.

Of all the five sources of the sublime Longinus puts first the ability to form grand conceptions which in its turn originates in the author’s soul. Though this source is a gift rather than an acquired characteristic the author is advised to train his mind towards the conception of grand ideas, perpetually impregnating them with noble inspiration. For ‘greatness of speech is the province of those whose thoughts are deep
and 'stately expressions come naturally to the most high-minded of men' (On the Sublime, 9,110). In fact, 'Sublimity is the echo of a noble mind' says Longinus and maintains that 'it is the quality of mind which determines everything'. As an instance of this, Longinus gives us an example from the Odyssey in which he talks about Odysseus's visit to the underworld, where unlike the other spirits, Ajax 'strides away without saying a word' (On the Sublime, 9, 109).

Longinus next discusses the means by which greatness of conception may be achieved. The first means (as the treatise seems to suggest) is the distinction of the author's mind towards great objects. Among the various examples given by Longinus we may like to refer to the celebrated passage on creation from the Hebrew lawgivers Genesis: God said, '--- Let there be light and there was light; let there be land, and there was land'. Clearly, this is an expression of a high conception of the power of the Divine being and Moses, the lawgiver of the Jews is praised for it.

From divine affairs Longinus now moves on to human affairs to show the greatness of ideas. He takes the famous prayer of Ajax from the Iliad requesting Zeus to lift up the darkness from the battlefield so that he is enabled to see and continue his fight. Even if he meets his death in the day light, it will be a death worthy of his courage: 'Father Zeus, do but rescue the sons of Achaea from out of the gloom, give us fair
weather, and grant that we may see with our eyes. So long as it be in the light of day, even destroy us (On the Sublime, 9, 112).

Passages such as this and the other habitually associate their authors with their sublime themes. As such, Homer, Pindar, and the old Testament poets comprise a class of natural genius and are all the prodigies of mankind. By the strength of their natural talents, and without any assistance of training and learning they have produced works that were the delight of their own times and the wonder of posterity. Such authors are characterized by a natural fire and impetuosity and noble sallies of imagination and achieve works that are nobly wild, extravagant and sublime in their kind.

The selection and organization of material, and the ability to relate them to one another in such a way as to make of them a single organism is yet another means conducive to the conception of great ideas. This Longinus illustrates with Sappho's ode which shows her skill in selecting and fusing the most extreme and intense manifestations of the emotions attendant on the lover's frenzy. All such emotions are awakened in lovers but what gives the poem its distinction is the selection of them in their most extreme forms and their fusion into a single organism.
Yet another means of forming great conceptions is 'amplification which is used to increase the importance of a subject to a higher level as well as to diminish and disparage it'. It can show how a thing is great or small. The universal design of eloquence consists of three things, first, in grammatical speech, next in figures, third in amplification.

Amplification, says Longinus, consists in and is often associated with quantity and a certain amount of redundancy (On the Sublime, 12,114). This however is different from sublimity which consists in elevation and is often contained in a single idea.

There are innumerable ways of affecting this device. To name but a few, it may be managed by the rhetorical development of a commonplace or by exaggeration or we may resort to the orderly disposition of the factual points or of the appeals to the feelings. Thus, if Cicero is to be differentiated from Demosthenes in the use of sublimity it may be said that Demosthenes is characterized by a sublimity which is for the most part rugged, while Cicero by profusion. Demosthenes, by reason of his force, and speed, and power of intensity may be likened to a thunderbolt or flash of lightning.

Longinus does not illustrate this with the help of examples as he has given elsewhere. However, for our convenience we

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5 Alex Preminger, opp. cit., p. 32
may supply a few from other sources and show how this device helps in attaining the sublime. Thus in the sentence: 'It is a sin to bind a Roman Citizen, a crime to scourge him, little short of the most unnatural murder to put him to death; what then shall I call his crucifixion?\(^6\), we can see how a single idea is developed in such a way as to achieve the effect of the sublime. In yet another example when Othello has just realized that Desdemona is innocent: Whip me, Ye Devils / From the possession of this heavenly sight! / Blow me about in winds! / Roast me in sulphur! / Wash me in steep — down gulfs of liquid fire! / O Desdemona! Desdemona! Dead! (Othello, 5.2.276-80), we see how grandeur is achieved with the help of this device. But like all other devices, amplification should be regarded a means of attaining the sublime, and not an end in itself.

Apart from amplification, two other methods which may be of help in assisting the author in the formation of grand conceptions are suggested. These are mimesis, i.e., imitation or emulation of the great and the power of imagination.

Plato is said to show the sublime by way of mimesis. Longinus uses mimesis in the broadest, not the restricted rhetorical sense for he compares it to the inspiration of the Pythian priestess at Delphi: 'So --- certain emanations are conveyed from the genius of the men of old into the souls of

\(^6\) Ibid., opp., cit., p 32.
those who emulate them, and... even those who show very few signs of inspiration derive enthusiasm from the grandeur of their predecessors' (On the Sublime, 13, 119).

The power of imagination, the other method to the great conception, employs both the employment of imagery and the invention of appropriate details to suit the description. An image is defined as a 'mental picture' and the term is applied to a passage in which carried away by his feelings the author images that he is actually seeing the subject of his description, and enables his audience to see it as well. This Longinus illustrates from Euripides: 'Mother, I beseech you, do not set upon me those blood-bolstered and snake-like hags. See there, see there, they approach; they leap upon me'. Again in the sentence: 'Ah! She will slay me! Whither shall I fly' the poet himself sees the Furies, and thereafter, compels his readers, too, to see them (On the Sublime, 15, 121).

Making a distinction between the poetic imagination and the oratorical imagination Longinus says that the poetic imagination seeks to enthrall the audience by working on their feelings, whereas the oratorical imagination produces vividness of description, though here also an attempt is made to stir the feelings. We have already seen how Longinus has illustrated the poetic imagination from Euripides. Other illustrations have been given from Aechylus and Sophocles.
Examples of oratorical imagination are given form Demosthenes and Hyperides. The vividly drawn pictures of the orator, says Longinus, overpower the audience and the speech transcends the bounds of mere persuasion.

Longinus's treatment of the imagery and the power of imagination, and his distinction between the poetic and the oratorical imagination is commendable and complete than any other ancient critic and it is with this that his discussion of the first source of the sublime comes to an end.

Longinus's treatment of the second source, i.e., the stimulus of powerful and inspired emotion; of emotion which great literature stirs, the passion it calls forth and the transport or ecstasy to which it leads is to be found scattered in the treatise. 'Emotions', Longinus says, 'share a place in literature, generally, and especially in the sublime' and asserts forcefully that 'nothing contributes so decisively as a noble emotion in the right setting when it forces its way to the surface in a gust of frenzy and breathes a kind of divine inspiration into the speaker's words'.

Emotion is an important source of the sublime and together with thought it is demanded by Longinus in the same spirit in which Mathew Arnold demands 'truth and seriousness'. As has already been discussed the sublime effect of literature is

7 R.A. Scott James, opp., cit., p. 93.
like a flash of lightning and is attained not by argument, but by revelation or illumination and its appeal is not through reason but emotion. Thus if the Iliad is superior to the Odyssey it is by virtue of dramatic intensity and its heaping of passion which is lacking in the Odyssey. Similarly if Demosthenes is superior to Cicero it is by virtue of his force and speed and power and intensity. The right place for the Demosthenean sublimity and intensity is in passages where powerful emotions are involved.

Longinus, however, warns us against emotions that are mean and not in the least sublime, such as pity, grief and fear. Although no reason is given for the exclusion of these emotions, it is suggested that Longinus has in mind the emotions felt by the writer or the character in the drama, rather than those of the audience.

Improper passion is also condemned by Longinus (On the Sublime, 3,103). Writers who indulge in such excesses in their quest for the sublime make faults of this nature. Such irrelevant outbursts of emotions may produce upon them the effect of ecstasy but leave their hearers unaffected.

Longinus's treatment of the third source, i.e., of figures, is quite elaborate. Figurative language has been divided into figures of thought and figures of speech. Figures of thought also known as tropes are 'turns' or 'conversions' in which
words are used in a way that effects a decided change or expression in their standard meaning. Figures of speech or rhetorical figures are words in which the departure from standard usage is not primarily in the meaning but in order and the rhetorical effects of the words is a natural source of sublimity.

Adjuration, i.e., 'oath' or 'apostrophe' is the first of the figures which is discussed by Longinus. In its modern sense adjuration consists in addressing a dead or absent person, an animal, a thing, or an abstract quality or idea as if it were alive, present or capable of understanding. Some celebrated examples are: 'O judgment! thou are fled to British beasts'. (Shakespeare, Julius Caesar, 3.2.10), 'Milton! thou shoud'st be living at this hour'. (Wordsworth, "London", 1802), 'Ring out, wild bells'. (Tennyson, In Memoriam, 106), 'Thou still unravished bride of quietness'. (Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn"), 'O Greta, dear domestic stream'. (Coleridge, "Recollections of Love").

In the case of Longinus, however, adjuration involves a solemn appeal to something sacred to witness that a statement is true or that a contract is binding. Taking the famous Marathon oath from Demosthenes's De Corona, 'By those who stood the shock at Marathon, it cannot be that you were wrong?', Longinus analyses the underlying causes of its effectiveness. As a contrast to this oath Longinus cites
another from a comedy of Eupolis and shows that the oath is ineffective by comparison: 'For by the fight I fought at Marathon, no one of them shall vex my heart and not pay for it'. Though rhetorically speaking it is an oath, the context does not give it an effect of sublimity (On the Sublime, 16, 126).

The next figure in line of treatment is rhetorical question. A rhetorical question is a question asked, not to evoke an actual reply, but to achieve an emphasis stronger than a direct statement. Used frequently in persuasive discourse it commands attention from the audience, serves to express various shades of emotion and sometimes acts as a transitional device to lead from one subject to another. One of the most celebrated examples of this figure is the closing line of Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind": 'O Wind, /If Winter comes can Spring be far behind?'

In Longinus's treatment the figure very considerably enhances the grandeur and effectiveness of speech as is evident in this passage from Demosthenes: 'Now, tell me, do you want to go about asking one another, 'Is there any news?' For what stranger news could there be than that of a Macedonian conquering Greece?" "Is Philip dead?" "No, but he is ill". 'What difference does it make to you? For even if anything should happen to him, you will soon invent another

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8 Alex Preminger, opp, cit. p. 705.
Philip' (On the Sublime, 18,128). Here the inspired rapidity in the play of the questions and answers, together with the device of meeting his own objections as they were someone else's has not only added to the sublimity of his words, but also given them greater conviction (On the Sublime, 18,128). The figure, Longinus says, beguiles the audience into thinking that each deliberately considered point has been struck out and put into words on the spur of the moment (On the Sublime, 18,128). This method of asking questions and providing answers gives the appearance of being a natural outburst of feeling.

Longinus next discusses Asyndeton, the first of the figures of speech. Asyndeton consists of the omission of conjunctions, articles and sometimes even pronouns. Opposite of polysyndeton it enables the poet to achieve effects of extraordinary speed and economy. It is because the amplification of conjunctions, sometimes, does not help to achieve the desired effect of speed and economy and instead robs the sentence of its power, grandeur, drive and ruggedness of emotion which is toned down into pointlessness and loses all its fire as is evident in the example from Isocrates: ‘Furthermore, this too must not be overlooked, that the aggressor might do many things, first by his manner, then by his looks, and then by his mere voice’ whereas in Xenophon ‘And locking their shields’, they pressed forward, fought slew, were slain (On the Sublime 19,
129), the desired effect of rapidity, speed and economy is achieved by omitting certain conjunctions.

It is, however, a combination of figures for a common purpose rather than individual figure that brings greater and moving effect and endures the passage with force, persuasiveness, and beauty: 'By his manner, his looks, his voice when he acts with insolence, when he acts with hostility when he strikes you with his fists, when he strikes you like a slave'. Here the orator does just the same as the aggressor; he belabours the judge's minds with blow after blow. Thus, the interweaving of asyndeta and anaphora (repetition of words) adds to the general effect (On the Sublime, 20, 130).

Hyperbaton, also known as 'inversion' and 'anastrophe', consists in the arrangement of either words or ideas out of their normal sequence. A beautiful example of the first order of inversion is Coleridge's reference to Byron, 'So beautiful a countenance I scarcely ever saw'. Here the normal word order would have been 'I scarcely ever saw a so beautiful countenance'. Longinus exemplifies this form Herodotus:

For our affairs stand on a razor's edge, men of Ionia, whether we are to be free men or slaves, and runaway slaves at that. Now that if you are prepared to accept hardships straightway there is toil for you. But you will be able to overcome your enemies (On the Sublime, 22, 131).
Here the normal word order would have been 'O men of Ionia, now is the time for you to take upon you; for our affairs stand on a razor's edge'. Apart from this, the author has inverted the order of his ideas as well. Instead of saying that they must endure toil, which is the point of his exhortation, he first gives them the reason why they must toil when he says! 'Our affairs stand on a razor's edge'.

After Hyperbaton, the figure that comes for discussion is Polypton (accumulations, variations, and climaxes as well as changes in number, person, tense, gender and case). These figures are very powerful auxiliaries in the production of elegance, sublime and emotional effect. They diversify and enliven the composition to a great extent. This is exemplified in 'Straight way a countless host ranged along the beaches send out a cry, 'Tummy'! Here, the decorative quality of the sentence is enhanced not only by words which are singular in form, but which on close examination are found to have a plural meaning (On the Sublime, 23, 133).

The use of plural in place of the singular has a more resounding effect and impresses us by the very idea of multiplicity implied in the plural number. This is exemplified from Sophocles's Oedipus Tyranus in the following lines:

O marriages, marriages! it is you that begot me and gave me birth, and then brought to light again the same seed, and showed fathers, brothers, and
sons as being all kindred blood, and brides, wives and mothers, too, and all the foulest deeds that are done among men (On the Sublime, 23, 133).

All these relate to a single name, that of Oedipus with that of Jacosta. However, the expansion of the number serves to pluralize the misfortunes as well. The figure, Longinus points out, should be employed only when the subject admits of amplification or redundancy, or exaggeration and emotionality.

The opposite process, the contraction of plural ideas into a singular form also achieves sometimes an outstanding effect of sublimity. The compression from multiplicity into unity gives a strong impression of a single unity as is evident in 'And when Phrynicus produced his play The Capture of Milietus the theatre burst into tears' (On the Sublime, 24, 134).

The interchange of tense, i.e., to introduce circumstances that are past in time but are shown happening at the present is also recommended. It turns the passage from mere narrative into vivid actuality as is evident in Xenophon: 'Some one has fallen under Cyrus's horse and being trampled on strikes the horse in the belly with his sword. It rears and throws Cyrus, and he falls to the ground' (On the Sublime, 25, 134).
Similarly, a direct personal form of address is also very effective, for it brings the hearer right into the middle of the action being described: 'You would say that they met in the shock of war, all unwearied and undaunted so impetuously did they rush into the fray'. As Longinus puts it: 'When you seem to be addressing not the whole audience, but a single member of it---, you will affect him more profoundly, and make him more attentive and full of active interest, if you rouse him by these appeals to him personally' (On the Sublime, 26, 135).

Another, still more effective way is the conversion to the first person, i.e., when a writer, while speaking of a character, suddenly breaks off and converts himself into that character. This figure is in a way an outburst of emotion as is clear from the following example from the Iliad:

And with a far-echoing shout Hector cried out to the Trozans to rush against the ships and leave the blood-spattered spoils. And if I spy anyone who of his own will holds back from the ships I will surely bring about this death (On the Sublime, 27, 136).

Here, as we see, the poet appropriately takes upon himself the presentation of the narrative and then suddenly and without any warning attributes the abrupt threat to the angry chieftain. The change in the form of the passage, thus,
anticipates the sudden change of the speakers. The figure, Longinus says, should be used for preference when a sudden crisis does not give the author time to linger, but compels him to change at once from one character to another (On the Sublime, 27, 136).

Periphrasis, the next figure in order of treatment, known also as 'circumlocution' is used in its modern sense to avoid low, technical, or commonplace terms through a round about way but by using more elegant substitutes. As a round about way of naming something this figure makes it meaning apparent by approximating a whole or partial definition. Quintilian distinguished between the euphemistic (as in the phrase 'the lord of hosts' to signify God) and descriptive (as in the phrase 'the wandering stars' to signify planets).

According to Loginus this figure, especially, if it is not bombastic or inelegant, but pleasantly tempered, often harmonizers with the direct expression of a thought, embellishes it and contributes to the sublime. For instance, in 'You regard toil as the guide to a life of pleasure; you have garnered in you hearts the best of all possessions and the fittest for warriors. For nothing rejoices so much as praise' the author by rejecting 'you are willing to work hard' in favour of you make toil the guide to a life of pleasure' and by expanding the rest of the sentence in the same way adds to the effect, grandeur and sublimity of the thought. The figure,
however, is to be used with a sense of proportion, otherwise there is every chance of it lapsing into insipidity, empty chatter and dullness of wit as happens sometimes even with such great writers as Plato when he says in his *Laws*: ‘Neither golden nor silver treasure should be allowed to establish itself and develop in a city (*On the Sublime*, 28.29, 138).

Thus, advocating caution in the use of figures Longinus comes to the close of the third source. He however, does not forget to add in the end that all these figures are means of increasing the animation and the emotional effect of style, and emotional effects play a large part in the production of the sublime.

Longinus’ treatment of the fourth source begins with a discussion of the choice of words. Longinus opines that the choice of appropriate and high sounding words should be the aim of all orators and authors. As such, it imparts to style at once grandeur, beauty, mellowness, weight, force and power and moves and enchants the audience. But, as with the figures, the employment of high sounding words is also liable to abuse and the choice of grand words for trifling matters would be like putting a big tragic mask upon a little child (*On the Sublime*, 30, 139). On the other hand, familiar and homely words may be sometimes preferable to the ornamental words and may be used for an effect with accuracy and credibility.
This is illustrated form Herodotus and Cleomenes (On the Sublime, 31,140).

Longinus’s treatment of metaphor and other tropes under the fourth source is somewhat unconventional. He starts by questioning the propriety of limiting the numbers of metaphors in a passage to two or three and maintains that there are no literary rules as such governing the use of metaphors. In his support, Longinus refers to the depiction of the human body by a series of metaphors in Xenophon and still more divinely in Plato (On the Sublime, 32,140-141).

Like other embellishments of style, metaphor, Longinus says, is also prone to excess and for all his admiration for Plato, he does not fail to note the ‘harsh and intemperate metaphors and bombastic allegory’ which occasionally creeps into and disfigures the works of the otherwise divine Plato. For instance, when he calls water ‘a sober god’, and describes its mixing with wine as ‘chastening’.

The importance of metaphor has duly been emphasized by Aristotle. ‘The greatest thing by far’, says he, ‘is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing that cannot be learnt from others; and it is also a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars’.

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9 Alex Preminger. opp. cit., p. 491.
Longinus's discussion of metaphor takes him to a consideration of the superiority between flawed sublimity and flawless mediocrity, in other words, between faulty genius and flawless mediocrity. He does not hesitate to express his preference for the former and says that they should always be voted into the first lace for the greatness of mind that they represent. It is for this reason that he chooses Homer rather than Apollonius, Pindar rather than Bacchylides, and Sophocles rather than Ion. On the same principle Demosthenes is preferred to Hyperides, in spite of the fact that he lacks many secondary qualities that the latter posses in abundance, so also with Plato and Lysias (On the Sublime, 34.35, 144-146). Just as, by some natural instincts we admire the grandeurs of Nature—the Nile, the Rhine, the Ocean the Danube, the craters of Etna—even though they are marred by blemishes, so are we led by the writing of a sublime nature. It lifts the author above the level of a common man and they are able to redeem all their faults 'by a single happy stroke of sublimity'. (On the Sublime, 36, 147).

From this discussion Longinus goes back to a consideration of the figurative language and takes up 'similies' and 'comparisons' which remain incomplete and he next discusses hyperboles. Hyperboles are either bold statement or extravagant exaggeration and are used either to advance or abase the reputation of any thing or person. The best hyperboles, says Longinus, are those which conceal the fact
that they are hyperboles. This happens when they are used in connection with some great circumstances and under the influence of powerful emotion, as in the following passage from Thucydides:

For the Syracusans went down and began their slaughter; especially of those who were in the river. And the water was immediately polluted; but none the less it was drunk, thick though it was with mud and blood, and most of them still thought it was worth fighting for (On the Sublime, 38, 149).

That a drink of mud and blood is still worth fighting for is made credible by the height of the emotions excited by the circumstances.

Hyperboles that overstep the mark of propriety are condemned by Longinus. Like figures, hyperboles, if not used with care may fall flat and produce the opposite effect to that which was intended. To help the author avoid such faults Longinus reiterates the advice he had given in connection with the figures which we have quoted above.

With this, Longinus comes to the close of the fourth source of the sublime and takes up the last source, i.e., the total effect resulting from dignity and elevation. In this last and final source the emphasis is on the arrangement of words in proper order. Longinus praises the harmony of words as the
highest form of music. Since it also expresses meaning and therefore appeals to the mind as well as the senses, it draws our thoughts towards what is majestic, dignified and sublime (On the Sublime, 39, 151). He illustrates this from Demosthenes and shows how a single change in the order of words or even the addition of one syllable by using a lengthened form alters the total effect of the sentence.

We may like to recall how in the enumeration of the sources Longinus had remarked that the fifth source contains within it all the other sources of the sublime, for the arrangement of words presupposes thought, passion, figures and diction. If there is no proper combination and there is a lack of harmony in the structure of words, the elements of grandeur would be dispersed. On the other hand, when they are put in a proper order and combined into a single organism and enclosed within the bonds of harmony they form a rounded whole. Thus, there are writers like Philistus, Euripides and sometimes even Aristophanes who have a natural gift of sublimity and who, for the most part, have employed common and popular word and yet have achieved dignity and grandeur.

Longinus's primary concern, thus seems to be rhythm. This is quite apparent when he expresses his dislike for short and broken rhythms. He also disapproves rhythms that are too obvious, for, in such cases, the style does not communicate
the feeling of the words, instead it distracts the attention of
the audience towards the rhythm. Short, rhythmic phrases,
which usually result form a desire for excessive
compression are also no better. One further point that is
made is the use of trivial words which completely spoils a
great passage. Examples are given from Herodotus and
Theopompous and Longinus shows us how the authors
detract greatly form the sublime and tend to the trivial. (On
the Sublime, 43,154-155). With this the discussion of the fifth
and last source comes to an end.

Loginus exercised a remarkable influence in the shaping of a
tradition of the sublime which began with Robertello’s edition
in 1554 and reached its influential phase with the translation
of Boileau, De Sublime, in 1674. Burke and Kant developed
their own theories of the sublime. But that remains outside
the purview of the present study. We shall like to conclude
this discussion with the statement that the revival of interest
in the treatise On the Sublime had for reaching effects on the
poetry and criticism in the writings of English critics from
Dryden onwards.

From this discussion of the Longinian sublime, we now move
on to a discussion of the concept of the sublime, if any, in
the Indian tradition.
Indian Tradition

The Indian literary tradition starts with the *Vedas*. The *Vedic* seers, being self-conscious poets, made observation on their art: they spoke of speech being refined in their intellects. The Muse they said chose to yield herself to the elect. It was in a state of afflatus, a magnification of personality, that they uttered their hymns with which they established rapport with the God they adorned. The *Vedic* seer-poet was called *rishi* and *kavi*, 'seer' and 'maker', which as the 10th c. Kashmirian critic Tota explained, emphasized that poetry depended both on vision and expression. The hymn was also called *rasa*, 'essence or most delectable thing' and the *Upanishad* said that what was well done and perfect was indeed the most delectable thing (*rasa*). Here can be seen the concept of *rasa* which later became the core of Indian aesthetics.\(^\text{10}\)

In the epics – the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* there is mention of literary qualities like sweetness, beauty, richness of thought, and the power to make the past live through the graphic narrative. The *Ramayana* has a story of its origin in which the epic states that it was emotion (*rasa*), pathos in its case, that became poetry. According to this great epic when the seer Valmiki was out for a bath in the stream of *Tamsa*, he found a bird pierced by the shaft of a fowler, and as his heart became overwhelmed with sorrow at the sad

\(^{10}\) Alex Preminger, opp. cit, p. 383.
lamentation of the she - bird separated from her consort, he composed the verse which attained recognition as the first sloka: Ma nisada pratistham tvam agamah sasvatih samah / yat kraunca mithunad ekam avandthih kama mohitam. The composition caused tremendous wonder in the mind of the creator and kept him engaged in finding out the ingredients of the new creation. The surprise experienced by him was not, however, peculiar; it is experienced by all creators, - all poets. This story is of profound importance since it brings out the Indian concept of the essence of poetic creation, i.e., - a sense of wonder, the characteristic feature that enables an expression to reach the poetic heights. The story which tries to explain the genesis of poetry, is important from another point of view. It shows that the experience of the character is shared to some extent by the poet and that of the poet to certain extent by the reader which is explained by the theorists in the Indian theoretical tradition.

The earliest and the fullest treatise on theory is Bharat's Natyasatra which is followed by a long tradition of thinkers and texts. Besides the primary texts there are also pedagogical texts, that put together and elucidate the major theories^{11} (see table 1 and 2).

### Table 1: Major schools, thinkers and texts –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Thinker(s)</th>
<th>Text(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rasa</td>
<td>Bharata</td>
<td>Natyasastra (second century B.C.)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dhanika- Dhananjaya</td>
<td>Dasarupaka (tenth century A.D.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alamkara</td>
<td>Bhamaha</td>
<td>Kavyalamkara (sixth century A.D.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dandin</td>
<td>Kavyadarsa (seventh century A.D.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Udbhata</td>
<td>Kavyalamkarasarasamgraha (ninth century A.D.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rudrata</td>
<td>Kavyalamkara (ninth century A.D.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Riti</td>
<td>Vamana</td>
<td>Kavyalamkarasutra (ninth century A.D.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dhvani</td>
<td>Anandavardhana</td>
<td>Dhvanyaloka (ninth century A.D.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Abhinavagupta</td>
<td>Abhinavabharati (also for rasa theory) (eleventh century A.D.) and Locana (commentary on Dhvanyaloka) (eleventh century A.D.)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mahimabhatta</td>
<td>Vyaktiviveka (eleventh century A.D.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vakroti</td>
<td>Kuntaka</td>
<td>Vakrotijivita (eleventh century A.D.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guna-</td>
<td>Dandin also</td>
<td>Kavyadarsa (listed above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dosa</td>
<td>Bhamaha</td>
<td>Kavyalamkara (listed above)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aucitya</td>
<td>Ksemendra</td>
<td>Aucityavicaracarca (eleventh century A.D.)</td>
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### Table 2: Major pedagogical texts –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinker(s)</th>
<th>Text(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rajasekhara</td>
<td>Kavyamimamsa (ninth century A.D.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhojaraja</td>
<td>Sarasvatikanthavharana, Sringarapракasa (eleventh century A.D.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mammata</td>
<td>Kavya Prakasa (eleventh century A.D.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Viswanatha</td>
<td>Sahityadarpana (fourteenth century A.D.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pt. Jagannatha</td>
<td>Rasagangadhara (seventeenth century A.D.)</td>
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</table>
Bharat's *Natyasastra* deals with dramaturgy in all its aspects and includes topics of poetics, language, metre, figures of speech, literary flaws, stylistic qualities and above all emotions (*rasas*) without which, Bharata said, nothing stirred in drama. We have already seen how, for Longinus, the sublimity of 'noble' emotions constituted the value of literature and 'the stimulus of powerful and inspired emotion' constituted the second source of the sublime. Before Longinus, Aristotle talked about the emotional content of literature which constituted the chief source of Sophoclean tragedy. Johnson in his *Preface to Shakespeare* identified emotions as valuable constituents of Shakespeare's tragedies. Wordsworth's theory of poetry (*Preface to Lyrical Balladas*) talks of 'powerful feelings' and 'emotion recollected in tranquility' as the substance of poetry. Richards talks of the 'emotive language' for the sake of effects (*Principles of Literary Criticism*) and Eliot, talking of emotion and feelings, says that 'the business of the poet is not to find new emotions, but to use the ordinary ones' and that 'Great poetry --- may be composed out of feelings solely' (*Tradition and Individual Talent*).

To come to Bharat's theory of emotion or *rasa* as it is called, it is built around the concept of *bhava* which is subdivided into *vibhava, sthayibhava, sancaribhava, anubhava* and *sattvikbhava*. *Rasa* is the first of the eleven elements in

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12 Alex Preminger, opp. cit., p. 383.
literary representation and it is first or primary because (i) it is *rasa* that renders all the elements (*vibhava*, etc.), *sarthaka*, meaningful and illumines the meaning of *kavya*; (ii) in the absence of *rasa*, the purpose of the composition in the form of knowledge is not fulfilled; and (iii) it is *rasa* that creates *ananda* in the viewer /participant / reader. *Bhava* is that which brings about a condition or which gets established (through what happens).13

Bharata enumerates forty - nine *bhavas* - it is a claim about the whole range of human experience. Eight / nine of these are *sthayi*, relatively stable - stable because (i) springing from stranger causes, they tend to endure longer, (ii) almost everyone experiences them, and (iii) they are more frequent, are experienced again and again14. These are: (1) *rati* (love), (2) *hasa* (laughter), (3) *soka* (sorrow), *krodha* (anger), (5) *utsaha* (enthusiasm), (6) *bhaya* (fear), (7) *vismaya* (astonishment) (9) *nirveda* (renunciation / indifference). The *rasas* corresponding to these *sthayibhavas* are15: (1) *srngara* (erotic), (2) *hasa* (comic), (3) *karuna* (compassionate), (4) *raudra* (wrathful, terribleness), (5) *vira* (heroic), (6) *bhayanaka* (terrifying) (7) *bibhatsa* (odious), (8) *adbhuta* (marvellous), (9) *santa* (tranquil)16.

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13 Kapil Kapoor, opp. cit., p. 106.
14 Ibid. p. 106.
15 Ibid. p. 105.
16 Ibid. P. 105.
Then, there are ancillary emotions – the *sancaribhavas*: (10) *nirveda* (indifference), (11) *glani* (debility), (12) *sanka* (apprehension), (13) *asuya* (envy), (14) *mada* (intoxication of pride), (15) *srama* (weariness), (16) *alasya* (indolence), (17) *dainya* (depression), (18) *cinta* (painful reflection), (19) *moha* (delusion of mind), (20) *smrti* (recollection), (21) *dhrti* (contentment), (22) *vrda* (shame), (23) *capalata* (unsteadiness), (24) *harsa* (joy), (25) *avega* (agitation/flurry), (26) *jadata* (stupefaction/immobility), (27) *garva* (arrogance), (28) *visada* (despondency), (29) *autsukya* (impatience), (30) *nidra* (sleep), (31) *apasmara* (dementedness), (32) *supta* (dreaming), (33) *vibodha* (awakening), (34) *amarsa* (animosity/indignation), (35) *avahittha* (constraint/dissimulation), (36) *ugrata* (ferocity), (37) *mati* (resolve), (38) *vyadhi* (sickness), (39) *unmada* (madness), (40) *marana* (demise), (41) *trasa* (alarm), (42) *vitarka* (trepidation).

Then there are *sattvikabhavas* (inbuilt body responses), (43) *stambha* (paralysis), (44) *veda* (perspiration), (45) *romanca* (horripilation), (46) *svarabhanga* (Change of voice), (47) *vepathu* (trembling), (48) *vaivarnya* (Change of colour), (49) *asru* (weeping), (50) *pralaya* (loss of consciousness).

The *sattvikabhava* and *sancharibhavas* (also known as *vyabhicaris*) with the co-mingling, co-appearance of *vibhava*
(cause) and *anubhava* (manifestation) evoke the *sthayibhavas*.\(^{17}\)

The *bhavas* of Bharata enumerated above with all its subdivisions of *vibhava*, *anubhava* *sancaribhava* and *sattvikbhava* 'comprehensively study the whole range of human emotion and analyse the structure of these emotions in terms of cause, physical correlate (effect) and their effect on man's being'.\(^{18}\) The theory thus is a theory of aesthetic experience and may be said to encompass Longinus's first to sources of the sublime, viz. (1) the ability to form grand conceptions and (2) the stimulus of powerful and inspired emotions. Bharat's description of the *sattvikbhava* relates especially to Longinus's elaboration of nobility soul which plays most important part of all the sources. (Each *rasa* according to Bharat has three subtypes – three fold division of almost everything on the basis of the three *gunas* – *sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas* – provides the basis for classification, *Abhinavbharati on Natyasastra*, 6.52)

Apart from the theory of *rasa* which is the core to the *Natysastra* there is also in it a comprehensive treatment of language in all its manifestations. As already mentioned it deals with dramaturgy in all its aspects and includes topics of poetics, language, metre, figures of speech, literary flaws,

\(^{17}\) Ibid. p., 107.
\(^{18}\) Ibid. P., 15.
stylistic qualities and above all emotions (rasa). We have briefly discussed his theory of rasa. Let us now move on to a discussion of language, of diction and style as found the Natyasastra.

Bharat has discussed in detail the aspect of language and has devoted to its analysis four chapters entitled ‘diction’ (vagavhinaya), ‘rules on the use of languages’ (bhasavidhanam), ‘modes of address and intonation’ (kakusvaravyanjakh) and ‘styles’ (vrttivikalpah). There are references pertinent to this subject in other chapters as well. We propose to take ‘diction’ and ‘style’ for our purposes.

Bharat has devoted one chapter XVII of the Natyasastra to a discussion of diction. Under diction Bharat has enumerated thirty-six excellent points (Natysastra, XVII, 6-41). These are as follows:


These thirty six excellent points, Bharat believes, embellish and beautify a play, if used with discrimination according to the sentiment introduced. (*Natyasastra*, XVII, 42).

Bharat, next, mentions the following four figures of speech (*alamkaras*) (*Natyasastra*, XVII, 43):

1. Simile (*upama*)
2. Metaphor (*rupaka*)

4. Alliteration (*yamaka*)

Simile, Bharat explains, is of five kinds, viz, that of praise (*prasansa*), censure (*ninda*), conceit (*kalpita*), uniqueness (*sadsri*) and partial likeness (*kimcit sadrsi*).

Metaphor is that which is created with its own alternative – has comparable elements and some or little similarity (perceptible) and is expressed inseparably.

Condensed expression, the third figure of speech, is combining of words in different topics in a single sentence (Manmohan Ghosh translates this figure of speech as ‘twin’).

Bharat explains ‘*yamaka*’ as an embellishment born out of repetition of words at the beginning of the feet and other places (*Natyasastra*, XVII, 60). He then goes to define the ten kinds of ‘*yamaka*’ and gives illustrations from poetry.

Bharat recommends, in addition to these embellishments, the following ten merits (*gunas*) (*Natyasastra*, XVII, 95 - 105):

1. Synthesis (*slesa*). It is the union of words connected through intended meaning.

2. Perspiquity (*prasada*). It is easy comprehension through the use of simple words and expressions.
3. Smoothness (samata). When alamkaras and gunas match and illuminate one another, it is an instance of Smoothness.

4. Concentration (samadhi). It is condensation of meaning with the help of figures of speech.

5. Sweetness (madhuraya). When a sentence, heard or uttered many times, does not tire, it is Sweetness.

6. Grandeur (ojas). When a composition, censured and deficient in quality, reflects an exalted sense through its wealth of words and meanings, it is an instance of Grandeur.

7. Softness (saukumarya). When a composition consists of words easy to pronounce, euphonically combined, and giving agreeable meaning, it is an instance of Softness.

8. Clarity of Expression (artha-vyakti). When meaning becomes clear to the penetrating mind just after recital, it is an instance of Clarity of Expression.

9. Exaltendness (udatta). When a composition includes witty and graceful words having many special senses which are marvellous it is an instance of Exaltedness.

10. Loveliness (kanti). When a composition gives delight to the ears as well as to the mind on
account of its well-put-together words, it is an instance of Loveliness.

The ten faults (dosas) which, according to Bharat, should be avoided are (Natyasastra, XVII, 87-93):

1. Circumlocution (gudartha). Mentioning anything by means of a synonym which is more difficult than the original or the common expression is Circumlocution.

2. Superfluous Expression (arthantara). Mentioning anything that is superfluous or unnecessary is Superfluous Expression.

3. Want of significance (arthahina). An expression which is irrelevant or which remains incomplete, is an instance of Want of Significance.

4. Defective significance (bhinartha). An expression which is not refined or is worthy of a rustic is an instance of Defective Significance.

5. Tautology (ekartha). Saying of the same thing in many words is called Tautology.

6. Want of synthesis (abhiluptartha). When a sentence is complete within each foot of a verse (and all the sentences are not connected with one another by sense) it is an instance of want of synthesis.

7. Logical Defect (nyayad - apeta). Anything devoid of reasoning is an example of Logical Defect.
8. **Metrical Defect** (*visama*). It is a lapse in the metrical structure.

9. **Hiatus** (*visandhi*). It is keeping words separate whereas they should have been combined in *sandhi*.


Bharat mentions four styles (*vrtti*). These are as follows:

1. **bharati** (verbal). This is the style which gives a prominent place to speeches, and is employed by male characters only (*Natyasastra*, XXII, 25).

2. **sattvati** (grand). This is the style endowed with the quality of the spirit (*sattva*), the *nyayas*, proper metres, has exuberance of joy and suppression of the state of sorrow (*Natyasastra*, XXII, 38).

3. **kaisiki** (graceful). This is the style which is specially interesting on account of charming costumes worn by actors mostly women, having a lot of song and dance and the theme of love and its enjoyment (*Natyasastra*, XXII, 47).

4. **arbhati** (energetic). This is the style which includes mostly the qualities of a bold person (*arbhata*) such as speaking many words, deception, bragging and falsehood (*Natyasastra*, XXII, 55).
Bharat then recommends suitable styles for the various sentiments (Natyasastra, XXII, 63-64):

1. Verbal for the Pathetic and the Marvellous.
2. Grand for the Heroic and the Marvellous.
4. Energetic for the Terrible, the Odious and the Furious.

If we examine minutely Bharat's elaboration of 'diction'—the thirty six excellent points (laksanas), the four figures of speech, the ten merits (gunas) and the ten faults (dosas), we shall find that they concern both sense and sound, content and form, and aim at, not only the beauty and perspicuity of expression but also the depth and exaltedness of thought and language to which Longinus has also alluded to in his enumeration of the sources of the sublime. If Bharat were to sum up his views on diction after presenting this analysis of excellent points, figures of speech, merits and faults, his summing up could not have much difference from what the following passage says about Longinus's On the Sublime:

Its main object is to point out the essential elements of an impressive style, which, avoiding all tumsidity, puerility, affectation and bad taste, finds its inspiration in grandeur of thought and intensity of feeling and its expression in nobility of diction and in skillfully ordered composition.¹⁹

Poetics developed out of the theories of Bharat who was followed by Bhamaha, the first *alamkarika* poetician. Bhamaha considered that the locus of literariness contained in the mode of figurative expression, in the grammatical accuracy and pleasantness of sound (euphony). Apart from this Bhamaha concerned himself also with the merits and defects of literary composition which was later discussed by Dandin. Dandin took a more wholistic view and discussed the qualities and defects of both content and form of literary compositions. In Dandin, *guna* and *dosa* are primary attributes of literary compositions. In chapter 1 (*Kavyadarsa*) he discussed various qualities as attributes of *riti* and *riti* for him was a method of expressing and evoking *rasa*, states of being. In the third chapter he discussed (1) logical failure, (2) linguistic failures, (3) failures of accurate reference to facts of life and world, and (4) failure in communicating the desired meanings. He added, further, that through sheer originality, any of these defects could be transformed into an excellence (*Kavyadarsa*, 3. 179).²⁰

After Dandin, Udbhata, tried to correlate *guna / dosa* with both *alamkara* (figures of speech) and *riti* (linguistic styles) and claimed that excellences and defects are not independent features which can be distinguished in isolation - in fact, *guna* and *dosa* are properties of figural composition.

²⁰Kapil Kapoor, opp. cit., p. 27.
Next comes Vamana, according to whom, *riti* is the soul of poetry. This is of three kinds: 'vaidarbhi', 'gaudi' and 'pancali' (*Kavyalamkarsutra*, 1,11,9). The *vaidarbhi* is replete with all the *gunas*, and does not have even the slightest faults (*Kavyalamkarsutra*, 1,11,11). The *gaudi* exhibits a marked predilection towards *ojas* (compactness of structure and boldness of conception) and *kanti* (richness of words and the conspicuous presence of *rasas*). The *pancali* is endowed with the qualities that the *gaudi* lacks: *madhurya* (sweetness resulting from the conspicuousness of words and a periphrastic manner of utterance) and *saukumarya* (freedom from harsh words and disagreeable ideas) are its characteristic qualities.

From the above it is clear that *vaidarbhi* is the complete or the ideal *riti* for it is flexible enough to unify all the literary excellences (and is, therefore, capable of much variety) whereas the other two encourage extremes. Vamana defines *riti* as constituted by a particular arrangement of words *visist padaracana riti* (*Kavyalamkarsutra*, 1,2,6) which involves the *gunas* and *alamkaras*. As noted in our enumeration of the five sources of the sublime, the last three deal specifically with form and involve different aspects of word arrangement. Thus Vaman's definition of *riti* would seem to correspond at least in essence, to the last three sources of the sublime. In his discussion of *riti* Vamana talks of the *gunas*, the *dosas* and the *alamkaras*. The *gunas* are defined as those elements
which create or constitute the charm of poetry (Kavyalamkarasutra, III, 1.1). Hence the gunas are taken as inseparable attributes of poetry. These are:

(1) **ojas**

(a) Compactness in the arrangement of words (III, 1.2).

(b) Maturity and boldness of ideas (III, II, 2). This has been explained in five different ways (i) the use of phrase or a sentence for a single word, (ii) the use of a single word in order to convey the sense of a sentence, (iii) diffuseness of sentences, where the self same idea is sought to be expressed in more ways than one, (iv) brevity or synthetic expression of ideas, where several sentences (or phrases) are joined together in one integrated whole through the use of suffixes sanctioned by grammar, (v) the appropriateness of meaning due to the use of particular epithets.

(2) **prasada**

(a) Laxity of structure (III, 1.6-10).

(b) Clearness of meaning, arising from the uses of such words as are absolutely necessary.

(3) **slesa**

(a) Smoothness resulting from such a close proximity of coalesceness of several words by virtue of
which they all appear to constitute a single whole (III, I, II).

(4) *samta*

(a) Homogeneity of diction and manner throughout a verse or a literary work as a whole (III, I,12).

(b) Non-relinquishment of the proper sequence of ideas (III,II, 5).

(5) *samadhi*

(a) Orderly sequence of ascent and descent (III, I,13-20).

(b) A concentration of then and for the proper compression of meaning (III, II, 7-10).

(6) *madhurya*

(a) Distinctness of words, associated with the exclusion of long compounds (III, I,21). This is in keeping with the definition of the pancali riti, of which the excellence forms a dominant feature.

(b) Strikingness of utterance (III, II,11) by which is meant a statement in an impressive but periphrastic manner, in order to give special charm.

(7) *saukumarya*

(a) Freedom from harshness (III, I,22.).

(b) Freedom from disagreeable and inauspicious ideas (III, II, 12).
(8) *udarata*

(a) A certain liveliness of composition 'in which words seem to be' dancing (III, I, 23).

(b) Avoidance of vocabulary in the manner of the sense (III, II, 13).

(9) *arthavyakti*

(a) Explications of words whereby the meaning is easily comprehended.

(b) Explicateness of ideas, which makes the nature of things clear (III, 11, 14). The excellence consists in the natural description of the subject-matter, rather than in a description of a natural and simple language.

10. *kanti*

(a) Richness of words (III, 1, 25). Without this excellence the composition is stale and a reflection of conventional things.

(b) The conspicuous presence of rasas (III, II, 15). By 'conspicuous presence' Vamana means that the excitants which bring out the emotional elements of a poem are vividly represented by the excellence.

Vamana sums up the discussion by reiterating that it is only when all the qualities are fully manifest that literature is said to be fully developed. If literature possess grammatical
correctness, but its subject-matter is obscure and the *gunas* are not happily mixed, it is worthless.

Vamana includes the excellences of form, as well as those of content, among the characteristic features of his *gunas*. As might be expected the former aspect is more dominant in the *sabdaguna*, while the *arthaguna* delineates the beauty of ideas.

Talking of the *dosas*, Vamana defines them as the opposites of *gunas*. Once the nature of the *gunas* is understood, the *dosas* can be understood by implications (*Kavyalamkarasutra*, II, 1-2). The *gunas* produce beauty in poetry, so the *dosas*, being their opposites would naturally distract from beauty. The *dosas* are grouped under the following heads:

1. *padadosas* (defect of words).
2. *padarathadosas* (defects of the meaning of words).
3. *vakyadosas* (defects of sentences); and
4. *vakayarthadosas* (defects pertaining to the meaning of sentences).

After explaining the *gunas* and the *dosas* Vamana moves to a consideration of the *alamkaras* or the adornments of literature which enhance the charm that has already been produced by the quality. First he discusses the 'sabdalamkaras'. These are:
Then, he discusses the arthalamkaras. These are:

1. **yamka** or chime (IV,1,1).
2. **anuprasa** or alliteration

Then, he discusses the arthalamkaras. These are:

1. **upama** or simile (IV,11,2).
2. **parativasthupama** or typical comparison (IV,III,2).
3. **samasokti** or modal metaphor.
4. **aprastuta prasamsa** or indirect description, i.e., the description of the **upamana** (IV,III,4).
5. **apahnuti** or concealment (II,III,5).
6. **rupaka** or metaphor (IV, III,6).
7. **slesa** or Paronomasia (IV, III,7).
8. **vakrokti** or homonym (IV,III,8).
9. **utpreksa** or poetic fancy (IV,III,9).
10. **atisayokti** or hyperbole (IV,III,10).
11. **sandeha** or the dubious (IV,III,11).
12. **virodha** or contradiction (IV,III,12).
13. **vibhavana** or peculiar causation (IV,III,13).
14. **ananvaya** or unique (IV,III,14).
15. **upayopama** or reciprocal comparison (IV,III,15).
16. **parivrti** or exchange (IV,III,16).
17. **krama** or sequence (IV,III,17).
18. **dipaka** or illuminator (IV, III, 18-19).
19. **nidarsana** or illustration (IV, III, 20).
20. **arthantara Nyasa** or corroboration (IV,III,21).
21. **vyatireka** or dissimilitude (IV,III,22).
22. **visesokti** or peculiar allegation (IV,III,23).
(23) vyasastuti or dissembling euology (IV,III,24).
(24) vyasokti or artful assertion (IV,III,25).
(25) tulyayogita or equal pairing (IV,III,26).
(26) aksepa or disparagement / hint (IV,III,27).
(27) sahokti or connected description (IV,III,28).
(28) samahita or conformance (IV,III,29).

We have already noted how Vamana's definition of riti would seem to correspond at least in essence, to the last three sources of the sublime, in other words to 'form' which involve different aspects of word arrangement. The first source of 'great writing', according to Longinus, is the ability to form grand conceptions. Most of the arthagunas of Vamana possess features that do not have any direct connection with word—arrangement but are related to the meaning or 'content' of literature. The first two sources of the sublime also refer to content, and as such are similar in kind to arthaguna: arthagunas, arthadosas and the arthalamkaras refer more properly to the ideas of literature.

Ideas that are opposed to place, time, nature or the established principles of art and sciences are not permitted in literature (Kavyalamkarasutra, II,11,23-24 and III,II,5). Longinus also holds a strict adherence to reality as an essential feature of oratorical writing (On the Sublime, 15, 121), and even in tragedy, which may venture into the realm of the mythical and the incredible, ideas that are opposed to established facts are to be eschewed. It is on this ground
that he condemns a simile in Xenophon (*On the Sublime*, 4, 105).

Also to be avoided are frivolous, undignified and long-winded details, for they ruin the total effect of a passage, like air holes fostered on to impressive buildings. Trivial ideas, Longinus notes more than once (*On the Sublime*, 10, 114-146 and 43,154-55) terribly disfigure the sublime. Instead, a harmonious fusion of the most appropriate details should be the aim of the writer, for it invests the passage with grandeur (*On the Sublime*,10,115). Sappho and Homer exhibit this characteristic in abundance, for this reason, they have been praised by Longinus. Vamana also recognise this feature as one of the essentials of poetry; his *arthaguna kanti* is defined as the conspicuous presence of *rasas* (*Kavyalamkarakasutra*, III,II,15), for which a proper selection and unification of details is required.

Writers are also required to possess the ability to form grand conceptions of their subjects. This ability, Longinus maintains, originates in the nobility of the soul, and for this reason the author must have a mind that is not mean and ignoble (*On the Sublime*,9,109). Homer and Moses are praised for their grand conceptions; as is Alexander the Great whose reply to Parmenio, Longinus quotes with approval. Vamana's *arthaguna slesa*, as well as the first variety of meaning whose comprehension constitutes the
arthaguna samadhi also rely on grand and clever ideas for their effectiveness.

But it is not possible for every subject to be grand, and ideas that are commonplace many acquire at least some amount of grandeur by the use of amplification (On the Sublime, 11, 116-117). It may be managed in a number of ways, e.g., by exaggeration, or by the rhetorical development of a commonplace. The latter is also a feature of Vamana’s arthaguna ojas (i.e. the third variety of arthapraudhi, consisting in the diffuseness of sentences) (Kavyalamkarasutra, III,II,9), and also characterises his arthamadhurya (Kavyalamkarasutra, III,II,II). But he cautions against the excessive use of these methods, since such delatory style adds charm only within certain limits. Longinus, also cites instances where this technique, if employed improperly leads to the fault of frigidity (On the Sublime, 4,10,4-5).

Since greatness of mind is a prerequisite of great conceptions, the aspiring writer may train his faculties by an imitation of those that have attained greatness before him. In other words, if he can make his thoughts commensurate with their thoughts, he may succeed in forming noble ideas (On the sublime, 13-14, 118-121). In Vamana there is nothing that directly relates to this issue; but in his classification of meaning into absolutely original and that which is borrowed
from others (Kavyalamkarasutra, III.II.8.) he seems to accept that literature may echo great passages from antiquity. The concept of imitation as found in Longinus is very wide and elevated; whereas in Vamana (as his example of the second kind of meaning illustrates) it narrows down to a reproduction of ideas and the tricks of style.

Poetics as we noted earlier developed out of the theories of Bharata. Bhamha and Dandin (ca. 700 A.D.) as also Vamana (ca. 800 A.D.), defined poetry as word and sense in unison and endowed with beauty: this beauty was the result of the choice of proper words and constructions, avoidance of literary flaws, addition of stylistic qualities and figures of sound and sense and emotions. The emotions too, they said, went to embellish only the expression in poetry, and hence, these ancient critics who emphasized 'form' could be styled 'Expressionists' 21

But in the beginning of the 9th century A.D. the idea began to gain ground that emotions were the centre of appeal not in drama alone but in poems also, and soon there appeared in Kashmir the foremost Indian aesthete Anandvardhan (9th C.A.D.) who unified criticism by taking drama and poetry together and applied to all forms of literary expression – play, poem, lyric, and stray verse – the same principle of analysis and evaluation. Taking his stand on emotion, which he re-

21 Alex Preminger opp. cit., p. 383.
emphasized as the soul of poetry, he directed his main enquiry to the intriguing question of how this emotion was conveyed from the text of the poem and realized by the reader or spectator. Obviously the express mention could not evoke an emotional response. Emotional experience could not be part of the direct meaning of words and sentences, nor of their secondary significance. Between the text and the emotions, the only possible relation is suggestion, manifestation or revelation – dhavni, vyanjana, prakasa. Suggestion is a unique process and could be employed even in realms where the primary or secondary capacities of words were enough to convey an idea. Even figures could be rendered more attractive by suggestion; infact suggestion added a new dimension to speech, and reinforced the power of the limited medium of language. It may be the symbolism of suggestion that even the message of a whole work was conveyed by a poet. Anandvardhan thus emphasized ‘content’ or emotion as against formal features, style, figures etc – all of which he put in a subordinate place. The formal features were to be evaluated as good or bad not by themselves but in relation to the emotion which they were to suggest, and this relative value of expression called aucitya (adaptation or appropriateness) was developed by Ksemendra (11th C.A.D.) as a life giving complement to the principle of emotional suggestiveness.22

22 Alex Preminger, opp. cit., p. 384.
Ksemendra's theory of propriety or appropriateness claims that in all aspects of literary composition, there is a possibility of a perfect and most appropriate choice – of subject, of ideas, of words, of devices. As such it has close affinities with Longinus's theory of the sublime (On the Sublime). The concept of propriety with reference to custom, subject, character and sentiment recurs in almost all theorists and is often discussed with figures of speech, *guna ladosa* and *ritis*. Anandvardhan relates this principle specifically to *rasa* (*Dhvanyaloka*, 3.7,14). It has been used for propriety in delineating *bhavas* according to characters, and in the choice of *margas* according to the speaker, content and type of literary composition. Ksemendra made *aucitya* the central element of literariness.\(^{23}\) He defines *aucitya* as the state of being proper - 'the state of being proper is propriety' (*Aucityavicarcarca*, Verse. 7). In verses 8-10 Ksemendra enumerates the areas, locations or sites of literary composition where the concept of propriety is pertinent:

Propriety --- the very life of poetry, should be found pervading the word and sentence, the import of the composition, the merits and figurers of speech, the flavour, the verb, the case, the gender, the number, the adjective, the prefix, the particle, the tense, the surroundings, the family,

\(^{23}\) Kapil Kapoor, opp. cit., p. 27.
the vow or choice, the truth, the force, the purpose, the winding of a sense, the intuition, the stage, the thought, the nomenclature, the benediction and other essentials of poetry. *(Aucityavicarcarca, Verses 8-10).*

We have already seen how Longinus in the enumeration of the sources of the sublime has alluded to (1) the ability to form grand conceptions and (2) the stimulus of powerful emotion which may be said to pertain to ‘content’ and (3) the proper formation of the two types of figures, figures of thought and figures of speech, (4) the creation of a noble diction which includes the choice of words, the use of imagery and the elaboration of style; and (5) the total effect resulting from dignity and elevation which relate to ‘form’ *(On the Sublime 8,108).* One may safely trace all these sources in Ksemendra’s enumeration of propriety.

As noted before Anandvardhan emphasized content or emotion as against the formal features, style, figures etc. all of which he put in a subordinate place. The formal features were to be evaluated as good or bad not by themselves but in relation to the emotion which they were to suggest, and this relative value of expression called *aucitya* was developed by Ksemendra as a life giving complement to the principle of emotional suggestiveness.
But there was still the moot question: how could the emotion of one, the actor and character, be realized by another, the spectator: for in life, one's emotion produces diverse and disparate reactions among the onlookers. Another eminent critic of the 10th C.A.D. Nayak, offered the solution that in poetry the artistic medium generalized or universalized or abstracted the emotion from its contextual references, and this enabled the emotion as such, not as the emotion of a particular person and situation, to touch the corresponding emotion to the spectator's heart. Nayaka did not accept suggestion as all-in-all in poetry, though he accepted it as one of the resources at the command of the poetic genius. He and his younger contemporary Kuntaka established the unique way (kavi-vyapara) of the poet's genius as the basic principle in poetry. Comparing poetic expression with law and scriptures on the one hand, and story and news on the other, Nayaka said that in the former the letter mattered; in the latter, the substance alone mattered; in poetry the way a thing was said or conveyed was all-in-all.\(^\text{24}\)

The way a thing was said or conveyed was vakrokti, meaning literally deviant or marked expression. As a theory of language of literature vakrokti claims that the characteristic property of literary language is its 'markedness'. Kuntaka (11th C.A.D.) who made vakrokti a full-fledged theory of literariness proclaimed it to be the 'jeevita' or life of poetry.

\(^{24}\) Ibid., opp. cit., p. 30
He classifies it into six heads: (1) varna – vinyasa which is related with the unique use of letters, syllables or their arrangements, (2) purvarbha which relates to the uniqueness, appertaining to the first half of a noun or verb, (3) pada-parardha which is concerned with the uniqueness, arising from the letter of the 'padas' or phrases which embraces unique use of tense, number, case etc; (4) vakya which is related with the uniqueness of sentences, including figures of speech, (5) parakarna which is related with the uniqueness employed in delineating some part or episode of the main narrative and covers such things as delineation of the character of the hero or other characters, alternation of the historical story in some or the other detail or aspect, in a manner conducive to evocation of rasa such as becomes the life of the entire plot; manipulating a subsidiary part of the main story etc, and the last (6) prabandha which concerns itself with the handling or managing of the narrative as a whole. It is evident from this succinct description of the six varieties that Kuntaka has so enunciated vakrokti that it covers the whole art and craft of poetry.25

As Kuntaka did not attach any apparent importance to the riti concept, his enunciation of the three margas (style), sukumara (elegant), vicitra (brilliant) and madhayama (the mixed or intermediate) as devices of expression are to be treated as examples of vakrokti. Six gunas (aucitya)

(propriety), saubhagya (splendour), madhurya (sweetness), prasada (perspecuity), lavanya (grace), abhijatya (classicality). These are defined as kinds of language used to achieve particulars effects.26

We have already seen how Longinus defines sublimity as 'a certain excellence and distinction in expression.' While elucidating the different gunas, Kuntaka has emphasized fundamentally the choice of felicitous phrases and Longinus, too, underlines the importance of words and of phrases to produce the effect of sublimity and goes so far as to assert that 'words finely used are in truth the very light of thought' (On the Sublime, 30, 139). Another point of similarity between Kuntaka and Longinus is related to the use of poetic figures. Kuntaka's attachment of importance to alamkaras in his enunciation of vakya – vakrata parallels Longinus's acknowledgement of figures as one of the sources of sublime: 'figures reinforce the sublime, and in their turn derive a marvellous degree of support from it.' (On the Sublime, 17, 127). Kuntaka's vakrokti thus can be considered as another version of sublimity without damaging Longinus's concept of ecstasy or transport, belauded by him as the final result of reading poetry in as much as Kuntaka's ahlada largely approximates to it. The last point of similarity between the two theorists relates to their concept of the qualifications of the appreciators of poetry. In Kuntaka's critical jargon, such

26 Kapil Kapoor, opp. cit., p. 27.
gifted readers are known as 'vidagthas' or the cleverness and virtually the same thing has been affirmed by Longinus when he says: 'the ability to judge literature is the crowning achievement of long experience' (On the Sublime, 6, 106).

Let us return to Nayak's theory of universalization of emotion. It was Abhinavagupta, the philosopher-critic (ca. A.D. 1000) who accepted Nayak's theory and pointed out that aesthetic experience was a unique category, unlike any of the known epistemological processes - sense perception, inference, remembrance etc. It manifested itself on the presentation of the artistic stimulus which conditioned its duration: it was a cycle which started with the poet and the poem and completed itself in the heart of the connoisseur who had become by constant literary activity, attuned to the poet and was hence called sahrdaya, 'one of the same heart.'

In a well-known passage in the Locana, Abhinavagupta defines sahrdaya in the following terms:

Those people who are capable of identifying with the subject-matter, as the mirror of their heart has been cleansed and polished through constant repetition and study of poetry, and who sympathetically respond in their own hearts - those people are known as sahrdyas (responsive or sensitive readers (Abhinvabharti 1, 279).
In support of his stand, Abhinavagupta quotes from Bharata's *Natyasastra* which in Manmohan Ghosh's translation (1951, 120) reads as follows: 'The state proceeding from the thing which is congenial to the heart is the source of aesthetic delight and it pervades the body just as fire spreads over the dry wood'. Loginus, too, affirms that 'a well-timed stroke of sublimity scatters everything before it like a thunderbolt, and in a flash reveals the full power of the speaker' (*On the Sublime*, 1, 100). Aesthetic enjoyment is not a joy in any mundane sense, for it is a repose of the heart. It is the equilibrium, the peace and the poise of the soul, which is constantly disturbed by worldly preoccupations and which the artistic experience restores for the nonce. The nature of this artistic experience is discussed by Viswanath in the *Sahityadarpana*: 'It is pure, indivisible, self manifested, compounded equally of joy and consciousness, free of admixture with any other perception, the very twin brother of mystic experience (*brahmasvodana sahodarah*), and the very life of it is supersensuous (*lokottara*) wonder.' Jagannatha clarified this theory of aesthetic bliss as the manifestation of the Inner light and the bliss of the Self when the incrustations obscuring it are broken down by the impact of the art. Infusing the concept of *camatkara* into poetry, Jagannath defined poetry as *ramniyarta pratipadakah sabdah kavyam* 'expression in a verbal medium whose contemplation results

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in a supermundane bliss (lokottara - ahlada). This supermundane bliss is also alluded to by Longinus in his treatise *On the Sublime* and is said to be the final result of reading great writing.

From the above discussion, it becomes evident that the Indian aestheticians / theorists have suitably taken almost all the aspects of great writing / elevated style into their consideration. It may, therefore, be safely submitted that the concept of the sublime has always existed in the Indian tradition.

We shall now proceed to a study of Indian English Poetry. We shall first begin with a definition of Indian English Poetry followed by a discussion of its history from its inception to its present day.