The purpose of this chapter is to look into the Indian epistemological systems of Sāṃkhya-Yoga and Vedānta and examine certain principles that correspond to the Romantic philosophy of Coleridge and Wordsworth. The emphasis is also upon the delineation of reality in poetry and the process through which the knowledge of truth is achieved and portrayed in poetry. The first section of this chapter examines the ontological and the epistemological theories of Sāṃkhya-Yoga and Vedānta. It also discusses the Indian aesthetic theory of rasa bhāva and how it categorises various states of being. The second section highlights the strains of similarity between the Eastern thought and the views of the two Romantic poets.

The Yoga-sūtra of Patañjali propounds a very comprehensive system of epistemology. The Yoga philosophy is read in conjunction with the Sāṃkhya school of thought in the Indian tradition because the former system accepts the ontological doctrines of the latter system. Both, Sāṃkhya and Yoga, accept the existence of the material reality in which the constituents of the phenomenal existence are not external forms but inner attributes, i.e., guṇa. According to the Sāṃkhya-Yoga philosophy, reality lies beyond the external appearance. The two principles of existence are prakṛti and puruṣa, i.e., matter and spirit or object and subject. The guṇa are representative of
prakṛti and the universe is an evolute of the coincidence of these guṇa. Puruṣa is the spiritual element of reality, it can also be called the soul or the consciousness. The Vedānta philosophy, on the other hand, conjoins the two elements of prakṛti and puruṣa as one and the ultimate reality emerges to be the spirit or ātman. It is this convergence of dualism into monism that brings the Yoga system closer to the Vedānta system in the Indian philosophy.

Coleridge’s refutation of the materialist and the associationist beliefs is not at variance with the Indian philosophy’s repudiation of the phenomenal world and the positing of the existence of the absolute reality. But to understand the connection between the two, one has to grasp the fundamental precepts of Sāṁkhya-Yoga philosophy. “Sankhya can mean only what is related to discriminative knowing, Sankhya. The root Khya means ‘to know’ and then the preposition Sam means ‘clear’.”1 The aim of Sāṁkhya is escape from suffering through “the discriminative knowledge of the manifest, the unmanifest and the knower.”2 The subject or the knower has to contend with the reality that is manifest as well as unmanifest. Perception (pratyakṣa), inference (anumāna) and verbal testimony of a reliable person (āgama) are accepted as the means of knowledge.3 All objects of the world are effects that have evolved out of causes and the primal cause is matter or prakṛti. M. Hiriyana defines prakṛti as “the name which it [Sāṁkhya-Yoga philosophy] gives to the principle or entity, out of which is evolved the physical universe in its infinite diversity.”4 Prakṛti or the root cause is composed of three guṇa or constituents: sattva, rājas and tamas. K. Raja elucidates upon these guṇa:
Sattva gives illumination and it is light, having the tendency to rise up. This is more figurative than literal. Sattva helps evolution, forward movement, progression. It is Rājas that gives the impetus and movement to matter. The tendency of Tamas is to bring down, to arrest movement. It covers up the illumination. It would be noted that the Sattva and the Tamas are the opposites of each other. The three are the life, the movement and the matter aspects of the material world. The features of the three constituents must be taken in their widest sense possible.

In a lamp there are three factors when it burns and gives light. There is the wick which is of the nature of Tamas as described above; there is the flame which corresponds to the Rājas and the illumination all round corresponds to the Sattva. There is nothing in common between the wick and the light around. As a matter of fact they are opposed to each other. The wick as it is, can only obstruct the light. Yet they co-operate and there is the purpose served, to enable men to see.5

The presence of forces that are active and passive is reminiscent of Coleridge’s doctrine of the active and passive forces in the process of thinking. The difference is that Sāṃkhya posits the concurrence of opposing attributes in the process of creation and the material objects and not the process of knowing as Coleridge does. These active and passive elements are participants in an evolutionary procedure that results in the creation of a new state in a material mode. Coleridge’s procedure, on the other hand, results in the creation of a new state in a mental mode.

The phenomenal world, according to Sāṃkhya, is constantly transforming. The effects are already present in the causes. Nothing is created anew nor is anything annihilated. “When therefore we speak of an effect as produced, all that we mean is that what was latent merely becomes manifest. The underlying idea is that the effect is always there, though in a potential form,
and that it only becomes actual when certain conditions known as the efficient causes, like the activity of the potter in the case of a pot are fulfilled." Prakṛti in its unmanifest form is the primal matter or root cause of the phenomenal world. The origin of the multiplicity of the heterogeneous things is traced to this single substance.

Puruṣa is the spirit that is the second basic principle of the Sāṁkhya ontology. It is the sentient being, the subject or the self. Prakṛti is the non-intelligent, non-conscious, finite and modifying element; puruṣa, on the other hand, is the intelligent, conscious, infinite and static element. "The relation between any subject and any object is that of cognition or, more broadly, experience. The Sāṁkhya regards the knower as puruṣa and the known as prakṛti." Puruṣa is posited as an "onlooker" and not an "agent". It remains unaffected by the modifications of matter. Ignorance on the part of the human beings relates puruṣa to prakṛti. Awareness of the dissociation of the two primal principles of existence is the knowledge of truth. Though puruṣa cannot be affected by prakṛti yet matter is dependent upon spirit. Puruṣa is the external element that controls prakṛti by disturbing the equilibrium of sattva, rājas and tamas, rendering the causation of the universe:

There is an association of both, like that of a lame man and a blind man, that of the Self being to provide the sight and similarly that of the Primal being for isolation. The evolution is brought about by that.

Matter itself is lifeless, it only assumes life due to the presence of the spirit. Puruṣa provides the energy to the inanimate prakṛti. The Sāṁkhya system appropriates the existence of multiple puruṣa in the various objects but the
Yoga system subsumes the existence of multiple spirits under the concept of ātman. The Vedānta system offers a collateral concept of Brahman.

The evolution of prakṛti begins with the presence of the principle of puruṣa. The balance of the guṇa is disturbed and the evolution of the phenomenal world is initiated. The objects of the world are not created, they only evolve from the guṇa. The world is a manifestation of the three attributes of prakṛti. Every object is evolved from the combination of sattva, rājas and tamas. The dominance of a particular attribute determines the nature of the object. The three guṇa exist in every object but one dominates the other two. In fact, even thoughts and emotions are constituted by the presence of the guṇa and their nature is determined by the predominant role of a particular guṇa. Dasgupta explains the existence of guṇa in matter and thought:

The fundamental characteristic of external gross matter is its mass; energy is common to both gross matter and the subtle thought – stuff. But mass is at its lowest minimum in thought-stuff, whereas the capacity of translucence, or what may be otherwise designated as the intelligence-stuff, is at its highest in thought-stuff. But if the gross matter had none of the characteristics of translucence that thought possesses, it could not have made itself an object of thought; for thought transforms itself into the shape, colour, and other characteristics of the thing which has been made its object. Thought could not have copied the matter, if the matter did not possess some of the essential substances of which the copy was made up.10

The problem of matter and thought is resolved as both are considered to be evolutes of the same attributes. Sattva is predominant in thought, rājas and tamas are predominant in matter. Feelings are also based on these three substances or attributes. They are the lower evolutes of prakṛti. “As we go
lower down the scale of evolution the automatic actions and relations of matter are concomitant with the crude manifestations of feelings which never rise to the level of knowledge.” Feeling and thoughts are at the subtle level of matter.

Sāṃkhya philosophy subscribes a cognitive structure that is accepted and elaborated by the Yoga philosophy. Mind (manas), intellect (buddhi), ego (ahamkāra) and sense organs (jñānindriya) are accepted as evolutes of prakṛti. “Mahat, or the Great, the cause of the whole universe, is the first product of the evolution of prakṛti. It is the basis of the intelligence of the individual. While the word ‘mahat’ brings out the cosmic aspect, buddhi, which is used as a synonym for it, refers to the psychological counterpart appertaining to each individual.” Buddhi is the discriminating faculty that helps to distinguish and perceive the external reality. It is “both eternal and non-eternal. It exists in germ as seed-force in the causal condition of prakṛti when its functions are not manifested. When it is transformed into the condition of effect it is called buddhi.”

When puruṣa illuminates the sāttvic constituent, it gains predominance over the other two constituents. Prakṛti or the primal matter, in the state of sāttvic prominence due to the disturbed equilibrium caused by the primal spirit, emerges as buddhi.

The second evolute of prakṛti is ahamkāra or ego. It is the identification of the self with the external elements. Ahamkāra or “the principle of inviduation” arises out of buddhi and is dominated by rājas. Sarasvati Chennakesavan discusses the evolution of ahamkāra:
The ‘I’ is the active entity where rājas is predominant. This activity makes it self-conscious. At the mahat stage, there is only pure awareness, without any sharp contrast between the subject and object aspects of experience. At this stage the activity that is rājas perceives in itself the objective, and the self with all its connative and cognitive elements is evolved. In other words, the ego or ahamkāra is a modification of the universal buddhi in which rājas predominates.16

The awareness of ‘I’ or the selfhood relates the experience of the phenomenal reality to the self. But this self is not the real self or ātman, as the Yoga philosophy determines. The concept of ātman will be discussed later in the chapter.

Manas or mind is accepted as an organ of the cognitive structure in the Sāmkhya-Yoga system.17 It collates the information provided by the senses and transforms it into perceptions. The five sensory organs, jñānindriya and the five motor organs, karamindriya provide data for the mind. “The mind is also an indriya like others, but its peculiarity is that among the organs of cognition, it is an organ of cognition, for it perceives the senses of pleasure and pain, and among the organs of action, it is an organ of action, for it acts like the other karamindriya as the cause of knowledge.”18 Manas integrates all sensations as well as all actions and presents them as perceptions to the intellect or buddhi that transforms them into conceptions. The cognitive structure of manas, buddhi, ahamkāra and citta is accepted as the anta:karaṇa or the internal organ. The mind acts as a cognitive organ and at the same time, it is also an agent between the object and the subject. It processes information to the intellect that associates the concepts with the ego. “It receives the impression of the object and is a partner in the final cognition along with the ‘I’ nature and the intellect. It brings the impression
of the object to the subject as a channel and then it becomes the cogniser also; it is not merely the channel like the eye. So it is both an internal agent, what will be called *Antahkaraṇa* and an instrument of cognition.”

*Citta* is the fourth cognitive organ of the *anta:karaṇa*. *Citta* is the receptive faculty or the recollecting faculty that stores the residue of all experiences of the phenomenal world. “In addition to accounting for the actual experience of memory, recollection also serves to explain the manner in which the effects of past experience, in the form of behavioural, perceptual and intellectual habits or tendencies (*samskāra*), make their influence felt in present mental activity.” The data of the sensations is processed by the mind or *manas*, modified by the intellect or *buddhi*, related to the ego or *ahamkāra* and filtered to the receptive faculty or *citta* in the form of impressions or *vṛtti*. The lasting *vṛtti* of past experiences or sometimes even past lives are stored in the *citta* as *samskāra*. These impressions shape the self and determine the present and the future cognitions as well as the actions of the individual. The past experiences are stored in the *citta* in the form of these impressions. Radhakrishnan describes the *citta* as follows:

It is the first product of *prakṛti*, though it is taken in a comprehensive sense, so as to include intellect, self-consciousness and mind. It is subject to the three *guna*, and undergoes various modifications according to the predominance of the *guna*. It is essentially unconscious, though it becomes conscious by the reflection of the self which abides by it. It undergoes modifications when it is affected by the objects through the senses. The consciousness of *puruṣa* reflected in it leads to the impression that it is the experiencer. *Citta* is really the spectacle of which the self is by reflector the spectator.
The impressions filtered to the *citta*, in the form of *vṛtti*, modify and transform it constantly. It is a reservoir of these impressions that is dynamic in nature. The fact that *citta* is under constant modification means that it is not the true self or the *ātman*.

Vedānta accepts the cognitive structure propounded by the Śaṁkhya philosophy. A fundamental difference between Śaṁkhya and Vedānta beliefs is that Śaṁkhya accepts the dual ontology of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*, whereas Vedānta postulates the monism of *Brahman* as the only reality. According to the Śaṁkhya system, true knowledge reveals the distinction between *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. “In other words, to know *Prakṛti* is to see through the empirical self; and when its true character is realized, *Puruṣa* comes into its own.”

The material world is accepted as true, not in its manifest form but in the unmanifest form of *prakṛti*. Vedānta, on the other hand, postulates the absolute reality only as the energising principle, *Brahman*, because matter does not constitute the ontological truth. Both, Śaṁkhya-Yoga and Vedānta, accord the status of the ultimate reality to the spirit in the form of *puruṣa* and *Brahman* respectively.

The Yoga philosophy postulates the means of dissociating matter from spirit or reaching beyond the matter to the spirit. The spirit can be accepted in the form of *puruṣa, Brahman* or *ātman*. “It is Patañjali’s Yoga system that informs us of the practical means of disassociating the Self, the alert intelligence or life principle from the inert matter, of the *sādhana* to be followed to become aware of the difference.” The word yoga means method, concentration or to yolk. The means of realising the ultimate truth,
according to the Yoga philosophy, is meditation upon an object till the meditator can perceive beyond the object’s external form into its inner essence.

The aim is the isolation of puruṣa from prakṛti, to be attained by discrimination between the two. While Sāṃkhya holds that knowledge is the means of liberation, Yoga insists upon the methods of concentration and active striving. “Sāṃkhya is the way of salvation by knowledge, while Yoga is that of active striving or dutiful action in a spirit of disinterestedness.” Both philosophies aspire to gain knowledge of the reality which for them lies beyond the apparent. The aim of Yoga philosophy is to control the impressions or vṛtti through concentration upon the objects. This concentration evokes knowledge of discrimination between the outer and the inner reality.

The second, third and fourth aphorisms of Yoga-sūtra state, “Yoga is controlling the activities of the mind (chitta)... When mind is controlled, Self stays in His native condition... Otherwise He conforms to the nature of mind’s activities.” All movements within the mind have to be controlled if the knowledge of reality is to be achieved. What are these movements? They are the impressions that filter through the cognitive structure. If they are controlled, the modification of citta will be stopped and the knowledge of the ātman or the real self will be revealed. The Yoga system lays down a method for the attainment of true knowledge. Five types of vṛtti postulated are: pramāṇa (valid epistemology), viparyaya (misconception), vikalpa (linguistic knowledge), nidrā (sleep) and smṛti (memory). Pramāṇa
includes *pratyakṣa* (perception), *anumāna* (inference) and āgama (testimonial knowledge).²⁷

Perception is the basis of acquiring knowledge. Inference and verbal knowledge are also dependent upon perception. The sensory organs evoke sensations which are organised by *manas*, discriminated by *buddhi* and received by *citta* as *vṛtti*. The process of knowledge is elucidated by Radhakrishnan:

> The reality of external objects is accepted by the Yoga. Like the universe, all sensible objects have their eternal archetypes or *noumena*, which undergo phenomenal changes, but are never absolutely destroyed. When an object changes into another, only its form is modified, and when all forms are destroyed, the object ultimately reverts to its primary or *noumenal* state. The forms are, however, not phantasmal. Sensations occur whenever there are sensible objects exciting the senses. It is, however, true that though the presented object is the same, the resulting sensations may be different. For the *citta* receives the impressions of the presented objects under the influence of one or other of the three *guna*.²⁸

Perception requires an object, a subject and interaction between the two. Inference is dependent upon the past perceptions and the knowledge gained through them. "Inference is the mental modification through which we cognise the generic nature of objects. The cognition of invariable concomitance is the basis of inference. Of two things invariably connected with each other, the perception of the one serves to establish the existence of the other."²⁹ Bina Gupta differentiates between perceptual knowledge and non-perceptual knowledge:

> What distinguishes perceptual knowledge from nonperceptual modes of knowledge is that the mind in perception must be
united with the object. To perceive an object means that the object is manifest to subject consciousness. In nonperceptual knowledge, such as inference, there is surely the involvement of the mental mode approximating the object, but there is no contact between the two. In internal perception, as has already been observed, the mental mode is invariably one with the object, which is a state of the mind. In visual and auditory perception, however, the mind conjoined with the sense organ reaches out to the object and becomes united therewith.\(^{30}\)

Verbal testimony of a trustworthy person is the third accepted means of knowledge by the Sāṃkhya-Yoga philosophy. This too can be comprehended if the past perceptions partially evoke images according to the linguistic construct of verbal knowledge.

How does the actual act of perception occur? Sāṃkhya posits an interaction between the object and the subject where the manas actually goes out to take the form of the object. “If the antahkarana, internal sensory organ, is to have knowledge of the external object, the sense-organ that is involved must reach out to the object.”\(^{31}\)

The Yoga philosophy propounds that absolute knowledge can be gained by concentrating upon a single object and controlling the impressions or vṛtti. The control of vṛtti can be achieved through abhyāsa (practice) or vairāgya (renunciation). Both these means require discipline and control. Vṛtti can be brought under control by constant practice and giving up of passions and desires. This leads to concentration or a state of absorption where the meditator focuses and converges all his attention and energy on a single object or point. The state of absolute concentration or trance is the Yogic state of samādhi. Patañjali posits two types of samādhi – samprajñāta and
asamprajñāta. **Samprajñāta samādhi** is “that condition of conscious illumination, where mind is mixed up with consciousness of sentiment (sawitarka) or consciousness of discrimination (sawichāra) or consciousness of joy (sānanda) or consciousness of personality (sāsmīta).” In this form of meditation the mind is conscious of the object of meditation. There is an external stimulus on which the mind focuses. The object and the subject are united as the mind focuses on the object and its attributes. The mind is in control as it perceives the object with deliberation, reflection, joy and a sense of personality. **Samprajñāta samādhi** is the mind’s capacity to comprehend objects in their totality. It is a state in which the meditator stabilises the mind to grasp and focus on the micro level of a phenomenal entity. At this level, the object and the subject are united but the distinction between the two is not eliminated. The subject is aware of the object and proceeds from the knowledge of its external form to the knowledge of its attributes and properties.

**Asamprajñāta samādhi** is “that unmixed condition of conscious illumination, where by constant renunciation of all knowledge, mind retains past impressions only.” This is a shift from the qualified state of mind to the unqualified state of mind. It is a state of exclusion of all phenomenal objects as well as their impressions. There is no thought, no stimulus or seed of thought. The external stimulus dissolves and the *citta* becomes transparent, devoid of all *vṛtti*, only *sāmskāra* are the residue of all experiences. All gross objects and experiences are eliminated, what remain are the subtle elements or essences. It is a total state of immersion in which the object, the instruments of cognition and the subject finally lose all discrimination and converge as one. This state transcends the temporal
boundaries and evokes intuitive knowledge. The mind focuses on the macro level for concentration as the citra vṛtti are dissolved. Only the saṃskāra or the subliminal impressions are left in the citra as the essence of various experiences. "Saṃskāra-s are the impressions that vṛtti-s leave on one's mind and which go on to form one's set of convictions and beliefs and, in the final analysis, one's self, and one can appreciate that since asamprajñāta Yoga is not conscious of objects and it leads to a restriction of vṛtti-s in any case, the saṃskāra that is the end-product of this type of samādhi is of a different order from the normal saṃskāra-s."[34] The saṃskāra of asamprajñāta samādhi are different because the experience in this form of meditation is different and extra-ordinary. In this state the cittra is liberated from the state of ordinary experience. This is a process of altering and evolving consciousness. It is a state of pure consciousness. "Thus the mind masters everything from the smallest to the greatest. When mind's activity is controlled, illumination results, mind reflects the nature of either the seer, the seen or the seeing, as pure crystal reflects the colour of whatever is placed on it."[35]

Yoga-sūtra further mentions two kinds of samādhi: sabīja and nirbīja.[36] Sabīja samādhi is the meditation with seed or an object on which the mind focuses all concentration. Through this samādhi, the Yogi can reach the ultimate level of reality of any object. The truth of all phenomenal objects can be revealed. The second samādhi is the nirbīja samādhi that is meditation without any seed or object. In this state no phenomenal reality is revealed. The mind penetrates the truth in the absence of an object. This is the final liberation.
Eight methods are postulated by the Yoga system to achieve liberation. These are: *yama* (self-restraint), *niyama* (observance), *āsana* (posture), *prāṇāyāma* (regulation of breath), *pratyāhāra* (withdrawal of the senses), *dhāranā* (steadying the mind), *dhyāna* (contemplation) and *samādhi* (meditation).\(^{37}\) The first five methods control the body and the last three control the mind. The physical methods are indirect aids, whereas the mental methods are direct aids for the mind to comprehend the ultimate truth. The direct methods are elucidated as:

Attention fixed upon an object is *Dhāranā*... Union of mind and object is *Dhyāna*... *Samādhi* is that condition of illumination where union as union disappears, only the meaning of the object on which the attention is fixed being present.\(^{38}\)

The three aids constitute the state of *samamya* in which attention is focused on one object and all other *vr̥tti* are controlled. The object of concentration can be material, like the body or any part of the body, the sun, the moon or the stars. The focus of concentration can also be immaterial, like time, emotions, intelligence or heart. To know the real self one has to concentrate on the phenomenal self. The successful achievement of meditation leads to extra-ordinary powers. The yogi achieves the power to comprehend the meaning behind the word and discriminate between *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*: "Such knowledge, the result of discrimination, extended at the same time to all objects, under all conditions, leads to liberation. When intellect becomes pure as Self, liberation follows."\(^{39}\) Phenomenal experience cannot discriminate between the self (*puruṣa*) and matter (*prakṛti*). Knowledge gained through *samādhi* can evoke the knowledge of discrimination.
The knowledge of discrimination is the goal of all Yogic practice. This discrimination is the segregation of the self from the matter. Mind, intellect and ego are all products of *prakṛti* and are not to be confused with the self or *puruṣa*. All sensations and impressions arising out of them are also products of matter and can only provide finite knowledge. Once the self is seen distinct from matter, infinite knowledge can be achieved. "Mind without impurity and impediment, attains infinite knowledge; what is worth knowing in this world becomes negligible."

The Yoga philosophy suggests various practices to achieve the knowledge of reality through the control of the body as well as the mind. "It describes how the centre of consciousness penetrates, step by step, through the different levels of the mind during the different stages of *Samādhi*, and when all the barriers of the mind have been crossed, emerges finally into the realm of Reality. Then the Yogi becomes aware of what consciousness is in itself and not what it appears when functioning through the different levels of the mind." Sāmkhya-Yoga philosophy aims to attain the knowledge of the true self or *puruṣa* by segregating it from the phenomenal self.

The Vedānta philosophy opposes the dualistic belief of Sāmkhya-Yoga and posits a non-dualistic doctrine, where matter is not the primordial element. The hegemony of the spirit or the energising principle, *Brahman*, assumes precedence over any other reality or truth. *Brahman*, like Sāmkhya’s *puruṣa*, is the beginning and the end of all reality but unlike the Sāmkhya doctrine, matter is not accepted as a primordial truth. Empirical cognitions and experiences are postulates of a lower knowledge or *aparavidyā* and the knowledge of *Brahman* is the higher knowledge or *paravidyā*. Knowledge of the phenomenal world is not the real truth. When the
knowledge of *Brahman* prevails, any other knowledge appears to be ignorance or *avidyā*. “Knowledge is identity with *Brahman*. The epistemological priority in Vedānta nevertheless should not be underrated. It is what invests the system with its unique feature as a cognitive discipline.”

The Vedānta theory also accepts perception, inference and verbal testimony as the means of acquiring phenomenal knowledge. It bases its cognitive apparatus upon the Sāṅkhya-Yoga acceptance of *manas*, *buddhi*, *ahaṅkāra* and *citta*. The aim of Vedānta is to discover the real self beyond the empirical self – a state which is achieved by the process of imposition and exclusion. Ādi Sāṅkarācārya (780 – 812 AD), expounder of Vedānta philosophy, posits five levels of awareness. In *Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi*, Śaṅkarā undertakes the process of excluding the self-imposed realities of the inner being and proves how *manas*, *buddhi*, *ahaṅkāra* and *citta* are only false images of the inner being. The true self or the *ātman* is actually indistinguishable from *Brahman* – the substratum of all existence. The various levels of phenomenal experience are *annamaya* or the physical level, *prāṇamaya* or the active sensory level, *manomaya* or the perceptual level, *vijñānamaya* or the conceptual level and *ānandamaya* or the level of bliss.

Each experience penetrates various levels, corresponding with the cognitive structure and constitutes the phenomenal self. This knowledge is the lower knowledge, dependent upon the presence of the object, the subject and the means of perception. This five-layered cognitive structure will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.
Śaṅkara does not negate the existence of the phenomenal world. Das Gupta explains Śaṅkara’s concepts of objective existence:

The world is there even if it be not perceived by the individual; it has an objective existence quite independent of my ideas and sensations; but, though independent of my sensations or ideas, it is not independent of consciousness, with which it is associated and on which it is dependent. This consciousness is not ordinary psychological thought, but it is the principle that underlies all conscious thought. This pure thought is independent and self-revealing, because in all conscious thought the consciousness shines by itself; all else is manifested by this consciousness and when considered apart from it, is inconceivable and unmeaning. This independent and uncontradicted self-shiningness constitutes being... All being is pure consciousness, and all appearance hangs on it as something which is expressed by reference to it and apart from which it has no conceivable status or meaning. This is so not only epistemologically or logically, but also ontologically.45

The substratum of *Brahman* is not the phenomenal reality but the principle upon which all reality is dependent. It is a formless, changeless, infinite, absolute and energising principle of all existence. Ātman, the pure consciousness of an individual is not a separate entity but is *Brahman* itself. Puruṣa, ātman and *Brahman* are essentially the same. Śaṅkara describes this energising principle, “*Brahman* is truth, knowledge and eternity, the supreme, pure, self-existing, uniform, unmixed bliss, always pre-eminent... By the absence of all existence besides itself this *Brahman* is truth, is supreme, the only one; when the supreme truth is fully realized nothing remains but this... By reason of ignorance this universe appears multiform, but in reality all this is *Brahman*, (which remains) when all defective mental states have been rejected.”46 Ultimate liberation lies in realising the fact
"thou art ‘That’"⁴⁷ – you are Brahman. The phenomenal world is the manifestation of Brahman. The existence of the external world is not denied, what is refuted is the truth about its objective reality. The truth of the empirical world also lies in Brahman. On its own this world has no meaning but what can be discerned as meaningful can be the existence of the substratum of the energising principle. This principle is not the cause of the world and its objects but the basic element of all reality. Consequently, cognition of the phenomenal existence has been posited as lower knowledge and cognition of the ultimate reality as the higher knowledge. The way to achieve the higher knowledge has been stipulated as meditation. "The insect, abandoning attachment to all other action, meditating on that humble-bee, attains the state of the humble-bee. Similarly the yogi meditating on the Paramātam (Logos), becomes it through devotion to that one."⁴⁸ The control of body and mind, an essential postulate of the Yoga philosophy, is adopted by Śaṅkarā. Meditation is the means to the realisation of Brahman. "For him who is possessed of excessive dispassion there is samādhi; for him in samādhi there is unwavering spiritual perception. For him who has perceived the essential reality there is liberation, and for the liberated ātman there is realisation of eternal bliss."⁴⁹ The vikalpa samādhi is a meditative state in which the discrimination of the object and the subject exists. Nirvikalpa samādhi establishes a state in which the object subject distinction dissolves. The liberated state can only be attained by self-meditation. Verbal testimony of others will not induce such a state. The liberator continues to live in the phenomenal world but with the knowledge of reality.
What is the status of the reality portrayed in art, especially poetry? Does the poet depict the external world as it exists or as it is cognised by the poet? The poet, in the ancient Indian texts, has been given the status of a creator or *prajāpati* as well as that of a seer. In fact, even Brahma, the creator of the world has been designated as the *ādi kavi*. “The word *kavi* in its two possible derivations means (1) one who describes an object, and (2) one who talks about / uses words about a subject.” The poet in the Indian literary tradition is a learned man endowed with an innate ability to create. Raniero Gnoli translates Abhinavagupta’s (literary theorist) concept of a poet, “Like the Creator... the poet creates for himself a world according to his wish. Indeed, he is amply endowed with the power of creating manifold, extraordinary things, originating thanks to the favour of Deity, the Supreme Vocality, called *pratibhā*, and continually shining within his heart.” Gnoli goes on to quote another literary critic, Bhatta Tota who claims, “It has been said that no non-seer can be deservedly called a poet, one is a seer only by virtue of his vision. Vision is the power of disclosing intuitively the reality underlying the manifold materials in the world and their aspects.” Bhatta Tota describes *pratibhā* as intuition, “Intuition... is a form of intuitive consciousness, *prajñā*, which is an inexhaustible source of new forms. It is by virtue of this intuition alone that one deserves the title of ‘poet’, of one, that is, who is skilful to express.” *Pratibhā*, according to the Indian poetics, is the inborn genius that initiates the creative impulse in a poet, enabling him to create a world of beauty. According to the *Yoga-sūtra*, true knowledge is gained as a result of *pratibhā* or the inner radiance. *Abhyāsa*, i.e., practice or training and *pratibhā*, i.e., innate talent are two essential components in the making of a poet. Discerning perception and insight are combined with good expression. Added to these qualities is the
element of *rasa*, ordinarily considered as a concept of aesthetic delight of the reader but it is also the emotion that the poet infuses in his works. Ānandavardhana, another literary critic, describes the poet as “the true and sole Creator (lit., Prajāpati); as it pleases him to create, so the whole is transformed. If the poet is pervaded by *Rasa* in his poem, the whole world will be suffused by *Rasa*. But he be void of emotion, the world too will be void of *Rasa*. A good poet, by virtue of his independence, freely designs even insentient objects to act as sentient ones and sentient objects to act as insentient ones.”

*Rasa* is the aesthetic relish that the reader or the spectator enjoys while experiencing an object of art. “This *Rasa*, when tasted by the spectator, pervades and enchants him. Aesthetic experience is, therefore, the act of tasting this *Rasa*.” The poet experiences the aesthetic relish while composing and conveys it through the poem. Bharata’s *Nātyasāstra* (second century B.C.) and Abhinavagupta’s *Abhinavabhāratī* (eleventh century A.D.) are the seminal texts of the *rasa-bhāva* theory. The literal meaning of *rasa* is essence but in the literary context it means aesthetic relish or enjoyment of art or artistic compositions. *Bhāva* is derived from the root “bhu” which means to be or that which brings about a state of being. *Bhāva* is an emotional condition or a state of being.

*Rasa* theory postulates that every human being possesses nine basic emotions or *sthāyibhāva*: delight (*rati*), laughter (*hāsa*), sorrow (*śoka*), anger (*krodha*), heroism (*utsāha*), fear (*bhaya*), disgust (*jugupsā*), wonder (*vismaya*) and nirveda (renunciation). These emotions are inherent in everyone and as they rise to the conscious level, they evoke nine
corresponding *rasa*: śṛṅgāra (erotic), hāsyā (comic), karuṇā (compassionate), raudra (furious), vīra (heroic), bhayānaka (terrifying), bhīhatsa (odious), abdhuta (marvellous) and śānta (tranquil). Along with the eight permanent emotions or *sthāyibhāva*, are forty-two temporary emotions or *saṅcāribhāva*. These are the transitory emotional states that do not last long and do not evoke any aesthetic relish. The conditions that create the *bhāva* are called *vibhāva* or determinants. The following table enumerates the *rasa*, the *bhāva* and the *vibhāva*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rasas according to sthāyibhāva</th>
<th>Saṅcāribhāva</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Śṛṅgāra (erotic)</td>
<td>Nirveda (indifference)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hāsyā (comic)</td>
<td>Glāni (debility)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karuṇā (compassionate)</td>
<td>Śankā (apprehension)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raudra (wrathful, terribleness)</td>
<td>Asūya (envy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vīra (heroic)</td>
<td>Mada (intoxication of pride)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhayānaka (terrifying)</td>
<td>Śrama (weariness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhīhatsa (odious)</td>
<td>Ālasya (indolence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdhuta (marvellous)</td>
<td>Dainya (depression)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śānta (tranquil)</td>
<td>Cintā (painful reflection)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moha (delusion of mind)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Sthāyibhāva**

- **Rati** (love)
- **Hāsa** (laughter)
- **Śoka** (sorrow)
- **Krodha** (anger)
- **Utsāha** (enthusiasm)
- **Bhaya** (fear)
- **Jugupsā** (disgust)
- **Vismaya** (astonishment)
- **Nirveda** (renunciation / indifference)

---

**Vibhāva**

- **Kāraṇa rūpa**, cause
  - **Uddipana**
    - (context)
  - **Ālambana**
    - (experience)
  - **Viṣaya**
    - (event)
  - **Āśraya**
    - (experiencer)

---

**Smṛti** (recollection)
- **Dhṛti** (recollection)
- **Vṛda** (shame)
- **Capalatā** (unsteadiness)
- **Harṣa** (joy)
- **Āvega** (agitation / flurry)
- **Jaḍatā**(stupefaction/immobility)
- **Garva** (arrogance)
- **Viśāda** (despondency)
- **Autsukya** (impatience)
- **Nidrā** (sleep)
- **Apasmāra** (dementedness)
- **Supta** (dreaming)
- **Vibodha** (awakening)
- **Amarśa** (animosity/indignation)
- **Avahittha** (constraint/dissimulation)
- **Ugratā** (ferocity)
- **Mati** (resolve)
- **Vyādhi** (sickness)
- **Unmāda** (madness)
- **Marāṇa** (demise)
- **Trāśa** (alarm)
- **Vitarka** (trepidation)
Experiencing an object of art is not an ordinary experience according to Abhinavagupta:

The enjoyment of an aesthetic experience consists of a transcendental wonder (alaukicacamatkara) and is decidedly (eva) different from ordinary (laukika) knowledge such as (is produced) by memory and inference.58

Once a rasa (i.e. sthāyibhāva) has been universalised, its realisation (bhaga, i.e. saksatkara) (is possible), a realisation which is different from the perceptions derived from memory or direct experience, which takes the form of drutis vistara and vikasa, and which approximates the bliss that comes from realising (one’s identity) with the highest Brahman (parabrahamasvadasavidhah), for it consists of repose in the bliss (nirvrtivisranti) which is the true nature of one’s own self, and which is permeated with sattva (guna) intermingled with the diversity of rājas and tamas.59

Śānta rasa or tranquillity corresponds to mokṣa or liberation. In fact, Abhinavagupta posits that all other rasa evolve from and merge in śānta rasa. "Śāntarasa is to be known as that which arises from a desire to secure liberation of the Self, which leads to a knowledge of the Truth, and is connected with the property of highest happiness."60 Abhinavagupta equates the experience of rasa with that of liberation or comprehending the infinite and universal principle of reality. The infinite principle is represented in the finite dimensions and the universal is manifested in the particular. A finite art form engenders an experience that transcends the finite and the particular, moves beyond the spatio-temporal limitations and assumes a unity between the subject and the object, where what is significant is the essence. The rasa that is evoked by the art and experienced by the
subject as the highest bliss, which Abhinavagupta posits as the "knowledge of Truth", is the highest knowledge.

The creative process in the Indian literary tradition is not far removed from the Indian philosophical beliefs. The poet or artist is accorded the status of a yogi who meditates upon the object before creating his art. Ananda Coomaraswamy comments, "the later Hindu view which treats the practice of art as a form of yoga, and identifies aesthetic emotion with that felt when the self perceives the Self." The cardinal point of Yoga philosophy is the concept of *sāmādhi* – concentration on a single point until the distinction between the object and the subject is dissolved and what remains is pure consciousness. The artist undergoes a similar experience. The object of contemplation is not merely perceived but is concentrated upon intently till the artist is only conscious of that object and gradually merges his own identity with it. This is a kind of incubation period before the creative act actually takes place. The creative process according to the Buddhist belief is elucidated by Coomaraswamy:

The artist (*sadhaka*, *mantrin*, or *yogin*, as he is variously – and significantly – called), after ceremonial purification, is to proceed to a solitary place. There he is to perform the "Sevenfold Office," beginning with the invocation of the hosts of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and the offering to them of real or imaginary flowers. Then he must realize in thought the four infinite moods of friendliness, compassion, sympathy, and impartiality. Then he must meditate upon the emptiness (*shunyata*) or non-existence of all things, for "by the fire of the idea of the abyss, it is said, there are destroyed beyond recovery the five factors" of ego-consciousness. Then only should he invoke the desired divinity by the utterance of the appropriate seed-word (*bija*) and should identify himself completely with
the divinity to be represented. Then finally on pronouncing the dhyāna mantram, in which the attributes are defined, the divinity appears visibly, "like a reflection," or "as in a dream" and this brilliant image is the artist's model. 62

If the practice of a yogi and an artist are analogues, is their aim also similar? The state of bliss experienced by an artist and the state of mokṣa achieved by a yogi has been equated by Coomaraswamy who postulates that the realisation of Brahman, or the absolute, can be known to the artist objectively through his art. The artist concentrates upon the object of art instead of Brahman and attempts to reach the infinite through the finite. "As the object, like all objects, is imbued with Brahman, the artist's mind attaches itself to the object in reverence and love. This is the Indian understanding of the creative process, the conception of art as yoga. Yoga is the system of altering / heightening / unifying consciousness by ridding the citta, mind of all vṛtti (cognitions, impressions) through intense mental concentration that merges the subject-object and eliminates the instrument, i.e., the sense, from the process of jñāna, knowledge. Art is the product of such a yoga, of the yoking the artist's mind to the object." 63

When the state of pure consciousness has been reached, what does the artist create? How can the absolute be manifested in a piece of art? What the artist creates is not the absolute but only a finite image of the artist's version of the absolute. The artist is:

not the creator – he is a revealer of the inherent tattva / bhāva. Now we can make sense of why the Indian tradition of philosophy and literary thinking treats kumbhakara, the potter, as the paradigm artist. The kumbhakara merely fashions forms out of pre-existing substance – he gives rupa to dravya, and he
does this by shaping (not by measuring, segmenting and cutting as would a carpenter). With his hands he is in communion with the mitti, clay (dravya), and in that state of samādhi, the ‘form’ in the mind flows through the hands to the clay and the form, rupa comes alive. The forms (ākṛiti / rupa) are inherent in the substance (dravya) – the artist reveals (makes manifest or visible) them, i.e., makes it possible for the senses to recognise them.64

What is inherent in all the phenomenal objects is not only the primordial matter but also the primordial spirit. What the artist attempts to create is the eternal spirit behind all phenomenal appearance, be it a sculptor or a poet. The essence of the object is manifested into a form according to the imagination of the artist.

II

Resonances of certain Indian philosophical concepts can be discerned in Coleridge’s theory as well as Wordsworth’s theory and poetry. The epistemology of Coleridge and Wordsworth finds parallels in the Sāṃkhya-Yoga philosophy and even the Vedānta thought in the Indian context. Certain concepts like imagination, object and subject conjunction and transcendental reality are not really diverse in both the contexts.

Phenomenal reality for Coleridge is not the only truth. He claims that ontological reality lies beyond the external appearances. The objects of the universe represent a symbolic language of the divine. These objects are not
individual wholes but are parts of "one Life". He posits the reality of the principle of unity in the universe. The unity is underlined by the oneness of life. Wordsworth accords life and spirit to the objects of nature. For him the external world has an inner reality which is not very different from the inner self of a person:

\[
\text{for the bodily eye} \\
\text{Amid my strongest workings evermore} \\
\text{Was searching out the lines of difference} \\
\text{As they lie hid in all external forms,} \\
\text{Near or remote, minute or vast}.
\]

-The Prelude, bk III, ll 155-9

The spirit of the universe, according to Wordsworth, reconciles discordant elements and unites them into a single whole. Sāṃkhya posits the ontological reality on the basis of the primordial matter, \textit{prakṛti} and the primordial spirit, \textit{puruṣa} that constitute the truth behind the manifested objects of the world. The Vedānta philosophy reconciles the dualism of matter and spirit and posits the truth of the energising principle inherent in all external phenomena. The existence of a spiritual reality gains hegemony over the material existence. At the same time, matter is not denied its existence. Coleridge insists that the world outside exists independently. He accords two powers to nature, the produced or the phenomenal, external form and the productive or the active, inner principle. Sāṃkhya categorises matter into three constituents – \textit{sattva}, \textit{rājas} and \textit{tamas} – that exist in all phenomena and their imbalance results in the creation of the external reality. These constituents have the potential to create various objects of the world and the dominance of one constituent determines the typology of an object. Matter exists in its potential and produced forms.
Coleridge posits the status of the knowing self to the subject. He claims that the self or intelligence is "the sum total of all that is SUBJECTIVE". To comprehend the self one perceives it as an object even though it is really not an object. The self acquires knowledge through the mind which is part of the self because it is not matter. He admits, "the term, subject, is used by me in its scholastic sense as equivalent to mind or sentient being, and as the necessary correlative of object..." Mind or the self can evolve from the finite state and reach the infinite state:

Mind, therefore, may be regarded as a distinct genus, in the scale ascending above brutes, and including the whole of intellectual existences; advancing from thought, (that mysterious thing!) in its lowest form, through all the gradations of sentient and rational beings, till it arrives at a Bacon, a Newton, and then, when unincumbered by matter, extending its illimitable sway through Seraph and Archangel, till we are lost in the GREAT INFINITUDE.

The Śāmkhya-Yoga philosophy, on the other hand, posits the mind as an instrument of knowledge. Mind is an evolute of matter according to the Śāmkhya belief. It is quite distinct from the self. The belief that mind is the self is only an illusion because mind is in a constant state of flux and the true self is immutable. The inner self is distinct from the mind; it is the soul, the ātman that is part of the universal spirit, Brahman or paramātmā. Mind is the finite reality and self the infinite reality. Ego or ahamkāra is not the real 'I', it is only the finite self that is a reflection of the infinite self. Coleridge subscribes in the Biographia Literaria, "We begin with the I KNOW MYSELF, in order to end with the absolute I AM. We proceed from the SELF, in order to lose and find all self in GOD." Coleridge also claims, "It is asserted only, that the act of self-consciousness is for us the source and principle of all our possible knowledge. Whether abstracted form us there
exists any thing higher and beyond this primary self-knowing, which is for us the form of all our knowing, must be decided by the result.”

Sāṃkhya posits that puruṣa is distinct from prakṛti yet the presence of puruṣa causes the modifications of prakṛti. Puruṣa is the illumined spirit and it illumines the matter including the mind. Chennakesavan states, “in the process of evolution the Puruṣa has already become identified with its own reflection in buddhi. It is this reflection that is the cause of the citta vṛtti becoming illumined. The question of self-perception rises out of this context. The self infers its own existence from its reflection in the cognitive instruments. Just as the existence of the original can be inferred from the copy or the reflection, the self realizes its existence because of its reflection.” The self is posited as an object and a subject at the same time. It is the subject yet in self-perception it assumes the role of the object.

Coleridge claims that knowledge arises out of the fusion between the object and the subject. The priority of either the object or the subject cannot be determined. The individual identities of both are dissolved in the act of knowledge. In the Biographia Literaria he quotes Platinus, “For in order to direct the view aright, it behoves that the beholder should have made himself congenerous and similar to the object beheld. Never could the eye have beheld the sun, had not its own essence been soliform,” (i.e. pre-configured to light by a similarity of essence with that of light) “neither can a soul not beautiful attain to an intuition of beauty.” Sāṃkhya-Yoga and Vedānta claim that the mind goes out to assume the form of object in the epistemological process. The Indian philosophy accepts the mind as an active, not a passive instrument of knowledge because it receives
information from the sense perceptions, it discriminates and organises that information:

If the self is to gain knowledge then the mind must be active not only in the task of co-ordinating the received atomic sensations, but also in the actual gaining of these sensations. Mind being material, it can reach the object which is also material, but the mind is saturated with sattva guna which is capable of reflecting the jnana of the self, whereas the object, being predominantly tasmic, is not capable of doing so. The mind, as it were, forms the liaison between the self on the one hand and object on the other hand.\footnote{73}

The subject and the object need a mediator to conjoin in the act of knowledge and that mediator is the mind.

Coleridge postulates the faculties of knowledge as senses, imagination, fancy, understanding and reason. Understanding aggregates and organises the information provided by the senses. Fancy accepts these concepts in their spatial and temporal existence and associates the fixed concepts with the help of memory. Reason is the faculty that illumines the existence of infinity, the concepts of the universals and the eternal; it can also be equated with them. Imagination is the faculty that enables the mind to unite the finite with the infinite. Shrikrishna Mishra expounds the roles of reason and imagination in Coleridge's theory:

The activity of I AM when the object is nothing other than I is called Reason by Coleridge and the form of knowing then is I AM I. This is pure activity, where there is no touch with anything finite, fixed, passive or dead. The knowledge gained by Reason is of the type of feeling rather than knowing. The same activity, when modified by something, the nature of which is finite, becomes of a lower grade because of the impurity of the object of knowledge. And this faculty of the lower grade is called Imagination. Imagination is thus a link...
between the pure eternal life of the eternal I AM and the mortal life of human beings, between omniscience and limited knowledge.\textsuperscript{74}

Primary imagination is more than a faculty because it is the power and the agent of perception. It mediates between the finite and the infinite as it repeats the act of creation of the infinite in the finite mind. The fusion of the finite and the infinite, the object and the subject is rendered possible only by the faculty of imagination. The phenomenal world is only a reflection of the absolute or the eternal spirit. Perception of the external world is indirectly a perception of the absolute. Though all human beings possess the faculty of primary imagination yet only a few are able to comprehend its existence. Wordsworth apprehends the concept of infinity in the phenomenal existence:

There I beheld the emblem of a mind
That feeds upon infinity, that broods
Over the dark abyss, intent to hear
Its voices issuing forth to silent light
In one continuous stream; a mind sustained
By recognitions of transcendental power,
In sense conducting to ideal form,
In soul of more than mortal privilege

The Prelude, bk XIV, ll 70-77

The Sāṃkhya-Yoga philosophy posits the mind with the faculties of jñānindriya, manas, ahamkāra, buddhi and citta. The jñānindriya provide information to the manas that collects and organises the information, the ahamkāra relates that information to the empirical self, the buddhi discriminates it and the citta stores it and reflects upon it. Imagination or kalpanā, at the level of buddhi, relates the impressions stored by the previous experiences to the present perceptions and depends upon inference and intuition to arrive at truths that are not empirically perceptible. The
mental faculties can also be used to comprehend the presence of the universal energising spirit, *Brahman*. The phenomenal world is only a manifestation of the universal principle of *Brahman*. To apprehend this principle the Yoga philosophy advocates meditation. The knowledge of the universal principle, be it *Brahman* or *puruṣa*, in the phenomenal reality can be achieved by controlling the thought waves and focussing the mind upon an object or a concept. The focussed mind can perceive the universal in the particular or the infinite in the finite. Meditation upon the self can gain knowledge of the true self. The present, the past and the future are revealed to the meditator. Chennakesavan comments, “By concentrating on the nature of time, as represented in the past, the present and the future, and also as responsible for all change, the seer comes to have a knowledge of the past and the future. He is able to see into the future as well as the past. When the mind becomes steady, it is able to move with ease into the past and the future, or to use Western terminology, to have precognition.”

For Wordsworth, such seers are prophets or poets who are no less than the yogis with extra-ordinary powers:

They from their native selves can send abroad
Kindered mutations; for themselves create
A like existence; and, whene’er it dawns
Created for them, catch it, or are caught
By its inevitable mastery,
Like angels stopped upon the wing by sound
Of harmony from Heaven’s remotest spheres.
Them the enduring and the transient both
Serve to exalt; they build up greatest things
From least suggestions; ever on the watch,
Willing to work and to be wrought upon,
They need not extraordinary calls
To rouse them; in a world of life they live,
By sensible impressions not enthralled,
But by their quickening impulse made more prompt
To hold fit converse with the spiritual world,
And with the generations of mankind
Spread over time, past, present, and come,
Age after age, till Time shall be no more.
Such minds are truly from the Deity,
For they are Powers; and hence the highest bliss
That flesh can know is theirs – the consciousness
Of Whom they are, habitually infused
Through every image and through every thought,
And all affections by communion raised
From earth to heaven, from human to divine....
The Prelude, bk XIV, ll 93-118

Wordsworth suggests that the seers are able to comprehend the presence of the universal spirit in the particular. They can become prophets and do not have to depend upon empirical knowledge to arrive at the truth. They can apprehend percepts and concepts beyond the spatial and temporal boundaries. They commune with the divine and come to possess powers of the divine. Wordsworth’s concept of the poet and the prophet comes very close to the yogic concept of the asamprajñāta samādhi, where the yogi is not dependent upon the phenomenal objects or even the linguistic construct to achieve knowledge. Liberation is achieved when the worldly desires are denounced and the thoughts are controlled. This state brings peace and calm where ordinary experiences do not affect the liberator. Wordsworth also accepts that liberation can be achieved:

Hence cheerfulness for acts of daily life,
Emotions which best foresight need not fear,
Most worthy then of trust when most intense.
Hence, amid ills that vex and wrongs that crush
Our hearts – if here the words of Holy Writ
May fit reverence be applied – that peace
Which passeth understanding, that repose
Coleridge accords the secondary imagination to be the domain of the poet. Primary imagination is a faculty that exists in all but only a few have the capability of realising it. Secondary imagination is the faculty possessed by those who have realised the primary imagination and are aware of the oneness of the spirit of universe. They not only discern the reality and unity behind the appearances but also re-create this reality by bringing out the hidden essence or the harmony in the phenomenal objects. The creative minds attempt to portray the universal or the essence of reality in their works of art, not just the particular or the external form. The purpose of the artist is to imitate, not copy. Coleridge claims, “The impression on the wax is not an imitation, but a copy, of the seal; the seal itself is an imitation. But, further, in order to form a philosophic conception, we must seek for the kind, as the heat in ice, invisible light, &c., whilst, for practical purposes, we must have reference to the degree.”76 He also states, “The idea which puts the form together cannot itself be the form. It is above form, and is its essence, the universal in the individual, or the individuality itself, - the glance and the exponent of the indwelling power.”77 Wordsworth endorses the belief that the awareness of harmony in the universe enables the great minds to create. The poet is not dependent upon the empirical impressions of phenomenal objects:

And not alone,
‘Mid gloom and tumult, but no less ‘mid fair
And tranquil scenes, that universal power
And fitness in the latent qualities
And essence of things, by which the mind
Is moved with feelings of delight, to me
Came strengthened with a superadded soul,
A virtue not its own.

The Prelude, bk II, ll 322-29

Coleridge postulates that art reconciles the external and the internal reality. The artist attempts to master the essence of the object, the “natura naturans” and not the external appearance, the “natura naturata”. Creation of art is the recreation of the inner impulse of an object. That is why the secondary imagination “dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate.”

The creative process, according to the Indian theory of creativity, depends upon the intuition of the artist. The potter or the artist does not create something new but reveals the form that is innate in the clay. He is not the creator but an instrument or agent who manifests the potential behind the actual. Both, form and essence, are essential in the creation of art. Puruṣa or the primordial spirit is given a shape in prakṛti or primordial matter by the artist. Coomaraswamy explains:

... the doctrine of the universal presence of reality is that of the immanence of the Absolute. It is inconsistent with a view of the world as absolute māyā, or utterly unreal, but it implies that through the false world of everyday experience may be seen by those of penetrating vision (artists, lovers and philosophers) glimpses of the real substrate. This world is the formless as we perceive it, the unknowable as we know it... the world of Beauty, like the Absolute, cannot be known objectively... We can no more achieve Beauty than we can find Release by turning our backs on the world: we cannot find our way by a mere denial of things, but only in learning to see those things as they really are, infinite or beautiful. The artist reveals this beauty wherever the mind attaches itself: and the mind attaches itself, not directly to the Absolute, but to the objects of choice.
Thus we return to the earth. If we suppose we should find the object of search elsewhere, we were mistaken. The two worlds, of spirit and matter, *Purusha* and *Prakrti*, are one: and this is as clear to the artist as it is to the lover or the philosopher. So, art comes a full circle, it begins with the finite to reach the infinite and to express the infinite it returns to the finite. The absolute lies hidden in the particular and to create the absolute the artist has to resort to the particular. *Puruṣa* can only be understood through *prakṛti*.

According to Coleridge, “In every work of art there is a reconcilement of the external with the internal; the conscious is so impressed on the unconscious as to appear in it... there is in genius itself an unconscious activity; nay, that is the genius in the man of genius. And this is the true exposition of the rule that the artist must first eloign himself from nature in order to return to her with full effect. Why this? Because if he were to begin by mere painful copying, he would produce masks only, not forms breathing life.” The artist recreates the objects of nature by removing himself from them in order to contemplate upon their innate reality. He then creates these objects “not as they are, but as they appear” to the poet.

Wordsworth’s poet needs the qualifications of keen perception, intense sensibility and profound passion. Coleridge attributes to the poet the ability to diffuse, blend, unify, harmonise and activate the soul. The Wordsworthian or Coleridgean poet is no less than a yogi who develops insight into the phenomenal world and can discern the principle of harmony in the world of diverse objects. The process of creation requires concentration as Wordsworth admits, “I have at all times endeavoured to
look steadily at my subject....”83 He emphasises the need for tranquillity in the act of creation. The poet can penetrate the familiar and the obvious appearance and reveal the charm and wonder of the everyday world. *Samādhi* or meditation as the means to reach the ultimate reality is postulated by Yoga philosophy. Concentrating upon an object reveals various aspects of that object which can be overlooked in mere perception. “Creative art is art that reveals beauty where we should have otherwise overlooked it, or more clearly than we have yet received. Beauty is sometimes overlooked just because certain expressions have become what we call ‘hackneyed’; then the creative artist dealing with the same subject restores our memory. The artist is challenged to reveal the beauty of all experiences, new or old.”84 The meditator reaches a higher level of reality, just as the poet or the artist creates a novel or unique aspect of reality.

In the act of meditation the meditator merges with the object or the phenomenal world to reach the universal spirit pervading it. The object-subject fusion is complete. Coleridge advocates the unity of object and subject in the epistemological act as well as the creative process.

For Wordsworth, poetry originates in emotion. The poet contemplates upon emotion, removed from the stimuli that activate it. This emotion is “qualified by various pleasures” that render the mind “in a state of enjoyment”.85 Coleridge ascribes pleasure to be the purpose of poetry. Pleasure is a requisite state for the poet if he is to possess a keen insight and energised mind. *Rasa* or aesthetic pleasure is an essential pre-requisite for the creation of art in the Indian theory. *Rasa* denotes the aesthetic pleasure that the spectator or the reader derives from art but it is also the feeling of
pleasure that the artist should possess if it is to be communicated to the spectator or the reader. This pleasure is derived from the dominant emotion, or bhāva, in the poem or the work of art. The presence of bhāva determines the rasa.

Wordsworth postulates six point prescription for writing poetry: observation and description; sensibility and perception; reflection; imagination and fancy; invention; and judgement. The purpose of the Sāṃkhya cognitive structure – jñānindriya, manas, ahamkāra, buddhi and citta – is close to Wordsworth’s prescription. The jñānindriya and manas perform the act of observation and perception. Ahamkāra reflects upon the perceptions and associates them with the self. Buddhi involves imagination, fancy and invention. Citta accepts the role of judgement.

This chapter has examined Coleridge’s and Wordsworth’s theories of the creative process in relation to the Indian philosophical systems of Sāṃkhya-Yoga and Vedānta. Romantic movement in Europe being far removed in time and distance from the ancient Indian philosophies and also being quite disparate from the Eastern thought, still finds echoes of similitude in certain aspects. Coleridge’s and Wordsworth’s views about the creative process can be understood more comprehensively when read in conjunction with the Eastern transcendental beliefs.