INTRODUCTION

The great Indian puranas and epics describe the vast Indian subcontinent as Bhāratvarsa or as the land of Bharat. The geographical vastness and the rich cultural ancestry of the Indian subcontinent can be gleaned from the Vismpratam sloka:

Uttaram yat samudrasya
Himadreschaiva dakṣiṇam
Vasām tad Bhāratam nāma
Bharati yatra santāth\(^1\)

'The country that lies north of the ocean and south of the snowy mountains is called Bhārat; for there dwell the descendants of Bharat'.

The wide geographical terrain of India offers a myriad panorama of cults and customs, creeds and cultures, manners and tongues, racial types and social systems. But in the midst of this mystifying and astounding omnium-gatherum there exists a deep fundamental cultural unity, which is responsible for the undimmed splendour of the country in the fields of art, philosophy, literature, and aesthetics. India is a country exhibiting unity in diversity, and its unique culture constitutes the woof and warp of its national panorama. An insight into this cultural unity of India is offered by Herman Kulke: "India's history is the fascinating epic of a great civilization. It is a history of amazing cultural continuity which has reasserted itself again and again."\(^2\)

In an effort to unravel this unique culture of India, the late Jawaharlal Nehru has described her as "an ancient palimpsest on which layer upon layer of thought and reverie had been inscribed, and yet no succeeding layer had completely hidden or erased what had been written previously."\(^3\) The creative power of the Indian spirit is revealed in its process
of symbiosis, and the ennobling idea of assimilation, integration, and interdependence among the different schools of thought form the basis of Indian religion, philosophy, grammar, and aesthetics. It also accounts for its infinite wealth and potentiality in all branches of learning.

This mutual dependability among the different branches of learning is a unique feature of the Indian tradition. In India the concept of ideal governance is monitored by the ethical precepts laid down in the sacred text books, and the term sanatana dharma or the eternal religion encompasses the entire religious and philosophical thought as well as the practical rules of conduct. It is interesting to observe that the Sanskrit terms for philosophy are darsana and tattva, which means vision of truth and reality and nature of reality respectively. The Vedic rituals with their cosmological and cosmogonic connotations constitute the fountainhead of all Indian philosophical enquiry, and the mastering of the four Vedas requires a study of the other sastras. There also exists a close interdependence among the six systems of Indian philosophy like vedānta, mimāṃsā, sāṅkhya, yōga, nyāya, and vāikesika.

As a result of this assimilation of ideas the conflict between philosophy and religion that has rocked the very edifice of the Western culture is conspicuous by its absence in the Indian scenario. This process of assimilation among the different branches of learning in India is stressed by S. Radhakrishnan:

The twin strands which in one shape or another run through all the efforts of the Indian thinkers are loyalty to tradition and devotion to truth. Every thinker recognizes that the principles of his predecessors are stones built into the spiritual fabric, and, if they are traduced, one’s own culture is defamed.
A progressive people with a rich tradition cannot afford to neglect it, though it may contain elements which are not edifying.\(^4\)

The aesthetics of a country is the quintessence of its culture and civilization, it sprouts from the lofty ideals that prevail in the atmosphere and imprints the unconscious stamp of tradition in its theories. The process of assimilation is also manifested in the field of Indian aesthetics, where the different literary schools flourished together during many centuries each integrating the quality of the other and thus strengthened and enriched by the other. Indian aesthetics is marked by a striking breadth of outlook that testifies to its unflinching devotion to the quest of the ennobling aesthetic pleasure. It was built, developed, strengthened and shaped by the tradition of commentary, and this interaction has enriched it by making it both meaningful and functional.

Indian aesthetics, which embodies the essence of Indian culture is not the work of one man or a group of men, but a collection of the principles of artistic creation and aesthetic relish discovered by the entire aestheticians. Some of the authors are anonymous, the time of their origin is obscure, the form and style in which they have been handed over to the modern world differ, yet there is a vital agreement on the fundamental concepts. These fundamental principles on which there is a consensus among the various scholars constitute the very essence of Indian aesthetics. What distinguishes the later Indian critical theories is not so much their originality, as their probing for new interpretations of the earlier theories to arrive at a coherent critical approach.

Though there were many different schools of criticism in medieval India each school was eager to learn the views of all others by considering, what they had to say and how far their observations could be met. This spirit has created in the Indian aestheticians
a passion for clear and precise enunciation of ideas, and has also contributed greatly to the creation of a broadened critical perception in them. The catholic spirit of treating rival views with due consideration was more than rewarded by the exemplary perfection attained by the Indian literary schools in their respective areas. This openness of mind, the willingness to listen to what the others have to say has been one of the chief causes of the infinite wealth and greatness of Indian aesthetics in the past, and is its anchor for the future.

The concept of puruṣartha has played a dynamic role in all branches of learning in India. The literal meaning of puruṣartha is what is sought in men and this concept is intricately intertwined with human existence. The four purusarthas are dharma, artha, kāma, and mokṣa, and the different branches of learning in India deals with either one or the other of these four ends. In India the aim of all learning is not merely a superficial satisfaction of the intellectual curiosity of men but an attempt to lead them to an enlightened life. In the Indian tradition there is a close interdependence between aesthetics and religion, and since a non-egoistic delight is offered by both of them aesthetic pleasure is always linked with mystic experience.

The Indian aestheticians regard an ideal artistic activity as a holistic one, in which there is an abnegation of the self. Even the dance of Shiva has a sound rationale behind it as it can successfully evaluate any literary and artistic activity in its totality. The three fundamental principles involved in it are Shiva, shakti, and an identity of both. A K Awasthi represents this triad principle existing in the poet as the desire to realize truth followed by ensuing activity that would lead to the contentment of the soul.}

In the Indian literary scenario there exists a close link between poetics and
linguistics. Expression is the function of language, and since literature is the expression of human experiences and emotions, one can rightly say that poetry comprises of sentences enriched with rasa. Tarapada Chakrabarti illustrates the close link between Indian aesthetics and the science of language in the following words: “The totality of emotion - the fullness of feeling is communicable only through the medium of an expression competent to present a complete thought-unit, and as the sentence brings out this complete thought, no poetry can dispense with this essential tissue.”

The Indian grammarian Bhartṛhari considers language as consciousness in the form of internal and external experience, and his acceptance of the power of the word in depicting an experience is revealed through his dictum: “Word is not a mere collection of transient sounds, but displays the eternal word, which has the capacity to deliver the meaning and the experience.”

The fact that in India the concept of grammar was not confined to the mere drafting of rigid rules of linguistics, but had a spiritual dimension to it can be gathered from Patanjali’s bold view:

The study of grammar has been declared to be the direct means of attaining the Supreme Being who, though one and without a second, appears to be manifold owing to the operation of maya. Grammar in its religious and mythical speculations is in line with the teachings of Upanisads, reinterpreting the same doctrine of yoga and upāsana as are generally found in the sacred texts of India.

The Indian grammarians have stressed the power of words in representing ideas and
images, and the Indian aestheticians have insisted on the power of appropriate expressions in conveying artistic experience, thereby establishing the close link between the word-essence and the aesthetic experience. This has prompted the Indian linguists to consider poetry as a science, where the linguistic expression is converted to poetic expression by the genius of the poet.

Rasa is the fountain-head of Indian aesthetics. The different schools of aesthetics and the theory of rasa have continued to exist as an unbroken chain of successive adherents for centuries. The theory of rasa has served as the crucible for the fusion and crystallization of the diverse critical canons of India, and the social and political vicissitudes have not been able to stunt the growth of this indigenous school of criticism.

The Indian scholars with thorough dexterity and erudition were able to deal with the abstruse problems of literary criticism in a rational manner, and the eight schools of Indian aesthetics are not mutually conflicting entities but complementary streams, each dealing with a particular poetical component aimed at the development of the soul of poetry or rasa. The eight leading schools of Indian aesthetics are the rasa school of Bharata, the alankāra school of Bhāmaha, the guṇa school of Acharya Dandin, the riti school of Vamana, the dhvani school of Anandavardhana, the vakrokti school of Kuntaka, the aucitya school of Kṣemendra, and the anumana school of Mahimabhatta. Though the different schools of Indian criticism present a diversity of views, the stamp of rasa and aucitya is discernible in all of them. Almost all the later theorists have accepted the importance of rasa, and have moulded their theories to suit it.
The legendary story of Kāvyapuruṣa establishes in no uncertain terms, the connection between sāhitya and poetics. It is believed that Sarasvati, the Goddess of learning sent Kāvyapuruṣa her son as the personification of poetry down to earth to woo Poetics or Sāhityasāstra his bride, and in this story is encompassed the entire signification of sāhitya as a fusion of sound and sense.

The fact that Bhāmaha the proponent of the alankāra school has given the pride of place to rasa can be gleaned from his sloka quoted below:

Swādukāvyā rasāṃśīram
Sāstramapya payuṣyate
Prathamādha mādhava:
Piバンθi kaṭubhēṣajam.\textsuperscript{10}

‘Even dry scientific facts become delectable if it is mixed with kāvyā rasa, as bitter medicines are taken after tasting a bit of honey.’ The alankāras or the figurative expressions have the right to exist only if they serve to enhance rasa. Otherwise, they will make a work degenerate into mere pictorial poetry.

In his work Kāvyadāna Dandin, the proponent of the guṇa theory discusses in detail the ten guṇas or the merits of an ideal poetic work. The theory of guṇas is closely associated with the theory of rasa and aucitya, as only a strict observance of aucitya to suit the rasa can lead to the observance of guṇas and the avoidance of dosas or demerits. K. Krishnamoorthy has elucidated the close connection between rasa, guṇas, and alankāras through his statement: “If rasa is the soul (ātman), a language heightened by alankāraś and guṇas is the very body (sūtra) of poetry, and both are inseparable pre-requisites.”\textsuperscript{11}
In the Indian aesthetic context riti is the appropriate arrangement of words to suit the underlying sentiments, so the notion of style is intricately linked with the concepts of aucitya and rasa. Riti school has its exponent in Vamana who has made a deep analysis of the interdependence among guṇas, alankāras, and rasa. He included alankāras and rasas among the necessary qualities of poetry and labelled them respectively as “formal and essential.” Vamana stresses the point that the arrangement of words and figures of speech should be guided by the norms of aucitya to enhance the rasa. A mere linguistic style unaccompanied by rasas and alankāras does not make good poetry, and herein lies the importance of the poetic merits.

Ānandavardhana, the proponent of the dhvani school considers it as an important constituent of poetry. He stresses the point that rasa can be realized only by the power of suggestion or dhvani. According to him “dhvani is the soul, guṇas like mādhurya and ojas are the properties of the soul of poetry, as bravery is the property of the human mind, and alankāras are ornaments which enhance the charm of poetry, as ornaments of gold set off a person’s beauty.”

It is evident from this study of dhvani that even a semantic aspect like dhvani has close affinity to an affective theory like rasa. The meaning and suggestive power of words can kindle emotions so the concept of dhvani is closely linked to the notion of rasa. The three aspects of dhvani like abhidha or the literal meaning of the word, laksāṇa or a deeper expressive significance of the word, and vyanjana or the implied meaning can contribute greatly to rasa realization. Abhinavagupta holds the view that the “blending of a word and
its meaning can enhance the rasa of a work provided this blending is guided by the dictates of aucitya."

The exponents of the vakrokti school headed by Kuntaka uphold the view that rasa can be created only by the power of deviant expressions. The fact that Kuntaka has accepted the significance of the proper fusion of sound and sense to create rasa can be gleaned from his dictum: "Poetry consists in the combination of the sound and sense introduced in a linguistic composition that shines with the strikingness of expression caused by the skill of the poet—the composition that imparts delight to the connoisseur." The interdependence among aucitya, vakrokti, and rasa is evident from this dictum of Kuntaka.

Mahimabhatta, the exponent of the school of anumana emphasizes the inferential power of words in creating aesthetic relish. He is of the view that "the task of the poet is only to present the conditions, which act as the signs of the emotion, as this would invariably lead to the manifestation of that emotion." Mahimabhatta’s theory of anumana equates emotive suggestion to a kind of deductive reasoning. He subordinates dhvani to anumana and argues that the implied sense can be gleaned from the expressed sense only through the process of inference called "kavyanumiti." Though he believes in the inferential power of the word he has given due recognition to alankāras and dhvani, and has accepted their interdependence in rasa delineation.

Ksemendra, the proponent of the school of aucitya considers propriety as the very life of flavour and an agency for producing poetic charm. The question whether a poetic component may be accepted as uciita (appropriate) or rejected as anucita (inappropriate) to the rasa is the criterion of literary judgment, and as such aucitya is the link between rasa and the other poetic components.
Rasa is the kernel, the core, the pivot of Indian aesthetics, and all the other qualities revolve round this vital concept. The theory of rasa is as old as literature itself, and will last as long as literature survives in this world. In India's multifarious and heterogeneous literary immensity rasa is the binding factor. The theory of rasa is able to assimilate the other theories and in this critical symbiosis resides the unshakeable foundation of Indian aesthetics.

On examining the development of the various Western literary theories it is understood that the different critical schools come into existence successively and each school predominates only till another school comes in and replaces it. The present critical scenario fraught with torrid tussles over theories appears like a quagmire that has spelled the doom of many a promising literary work, but it is almost impossible for these theories to write off the ancient Indian theories as invalid.

The cultural heritage of India has engaged the close attention of the West, and it has started an excavation of the hidden treasures of Indian culture to unveil its glorious splendour. In this fast moving modern world a nation cannot live by itself, every nation has the moral obligation to share its cultural heritage with the others, and the importance of this interdependence is evident from the view of S. Radhakrishnan: “Our system of thought must act and react on world progress. Stagnant systems, like pools, breed obnoxious growths, while flowing rivers constantly renew their waters from fresh springs of inspiration.”

The well established and crystallized school of Indian aesthetics has now expanded its horizon beyond its precincts, whereas the unfortunate trend in India is to ignore its indigenous theories. Theoretical study concerning the Western indebtedness to Indian
aesthetics is good, but the validity of a literary theory can be asserted only if it is proved on the practical plane, and as the last plays of Eliot are the virtual literary crusades by him to popularize his dramatic theories, it would be interesting to analyze his plays on the basis of the doctrines of rasa and aucitya.

It is true that a majority of critics have referred to the presence of Indian elements in Eliot’s dramas and criticism, and an application of the concepts of rasa and aucitya to his later dramas to find out how far they have enhanced the beauty, richness, and aesthetic pleasure of these plays will contribute in no small way to the greatness of these theories. The main objective of this thesis is to highlight the significance of the ancient Indian literary theories of rasa and aucitya by conducting a practical appraisal of the last four plays of T. S. Eliot, viz. *The Family Reunion*, *The Cocktail Party*, *The Confidential Clerk*, and *The Elder Statesman*.

An attempt is made in the first chapter to study in a comprehensive manner the various aspects of the theory of rasa. Chapter two of this thesis traces the growth and development of the theory of aucitya. Chapter three discusses the influence of Indian aesthetics and vedântic philosophy on T. S. Eliot the dramatist. The focal point of the fourth chapter is the element of rasabhanga in the play *The Family Reunion*. An effort has been made in the fifth chapter to discuss the notion of rasaucitya in the play *The Cocktail Party*. An analysis of the play *The Confidential Clerk* on the principles of rasa and aucitya is carried out in the sixth chapter. In the seventh chapter a detailed study of the treatment of sânta rasa in Eliot’s last play *The Elder Statesman* is made. The conclusion of this thesis offers a general summing up of the given study by telescoping the various inferences drawn at the practical level.
Notes


19 Radhakrishnan 780.