CHAPTER II

AUCITYA AS AN AID TO LITERARY APPRAISEMENT

Human life in its totality is governed by the canons of aucitya or propriety, and it is only natural that this notion should extend to literature, which is an imitation of human actions. Almost all the ancient Indian aestheticians have accepted the potency of this critical precept in rasa realization. The publication of Kṣemendra's *Aucityavivekāraśca* has contributed greatly to the development of aucitya as a sound literary theory. The main objective of this chapter is to analyze the evolvement of aucitya as a valid literary theory and to ascertain whether it can be extended to the status of a full-fledged theory having a universal validity.

The unique Indian word sāhitya embodies in it the root of aucitya as it purports a fusion of sabda and artha, i.e. form and content blended in an appropriate manner to suit the rasa of a work. This conjunctive feature is denoted by the expression bhavikatvalankāra or the all-embracing embellishment that helps in the creation of rasa.

Bharata, the father of Indian dramaturgy has discussed in detail the appropriate figures of speech, rhythm, style, and metrical arrangements that enhance the rasa of a work. He has given a detailed account of the thirty-six "kāvyalakṣaṇas" or distinctive features that lend beauty to a poetic work. Bharata is particular that all poetic compositions both audible and visible must possess at least some of the thirty six lakṣaṇas and as they add beauty to the literary composition, they should be employed by the writers with due attention to the rasa introduced.

The poetic blemishes destroy the aesthetic relish of a work, so Bharata has coined the term "kāvyadosas" to describe them. As the poetic merits promote the aesthetic effect
Bharata has labelled them as "kāvyaguṇas". It is interesting to note that Bharata has given precedence to the kāvyat doṣas over the kāvyaguṇas. The fact that he has mentioned the doṣas ahead of the guṇas is an indication that he considers avoidance of dosas as the first step on the way to the realization of rasa. Bharata is of the view that guṇas and doṣas are only the means to an end, therefore their usage should be guided by the dictates of flexibility. He has also made a distinction between guṇas and alankāras; guṇas pervade and adorn the entire composition, whereas the alankāras beautify only the parts.

Bharata, who is particular about the aucitya of plot structure holds the view that the plot should be treated with propriety to stimulate the rasa of the work. The five stages in the development of the hero are closely linked with the development of the plot and a dramatist should blend these parts together with a single-minded devotion to attain the final end. Prārambha is the beginning of the play, where the longing of the hero to achieve a particular end is recorded. Prayatna is the effort made by the hero to fulfill his desire, prāptisambhava is the possibility of attainment, niyata phalaprayāti is the certainty of attainment and phalayoga is the ultimate attainment.

The five essential elements of the plot or artha-prakṛtis that contribute to the aesthetic relish are the bija, the bindu, the patākās, the prakarīs, and the kārya. Bija or the seed is the central theme of the play. Bindu or drop imparts continuity to the main objective till the end of the play and highlights the central theme. Patākās or the parallel incidents have close links with the main plot and are treated like the main plot. Prakarīs are the episodical incidents, and kārya constitutes the denouement of the play. The appropriate
treatment of these different elements by a writer is the sign of his creative genius. Bharata is particular that the exposition shall be with very few persons, whereas the denouement shall be like a “gopuchagra” or the tip of a cow’s tail with the exalted situations and bhavas coming at the end.

Bhāmaha, the author of Kāvyalakāra has discussed in detail the concept of guṇas and dosas that govern a literary composition. He regards the presence of guṇas as a sign of aucitya and that of dosas as a sign of anaucitya. Bhāmaha, who is finical about the perfection of a poem compares a poem violating the rules of propriety “to an unworthy son bringing shame on his father.” His concept of guṇas and dosas are bound by the rules of propriety, and since these qualities vary to suit the context and the rasa of a work he labels them as “anitya.” The three important guṇas mentioned by him are madhurya, prasāda, and ojas. The important poetic defects mentioned by Bhāmaha are srutiduṣṭa (the unmelodious use of words), arthaduṣṭa (the use of words which express vulgar meaning), kalpanaduṣṭa (the joining of two words that gives undesired meaning), srutikāṣṭa (the words which are troublesome to hear), kliṣṭa (the intervention in apprehending the intended meaning due to another meaning present), neyārtha (difficulty in comprehending the meaning), anyārtha (non-apprehension of the intended meaning), ayuktmāt (the illogical use of words), kalpanadustā (the joining of two words, which results in an undesirable meaning), gudasabdabhidhana (the use of words having concealed meanings), and avācaka (the use of words that are not well known in popular usage).
Dandin’s attitude to guṇas and dosas is free from all rigid canons and his flexible stand is revealed through his sloka: “Virodah sakalo pyesa kadācit kavikāsalat / Utkramya dosajananam guṇavīthim vijahate,” i.e. all kinds of dosas can be converted to guṇas by the consummate skill of a poet and suitability to context and rasa is the guiding factor in the use of guṇas and dosas. The guṇas of a kāvyā as mentioned by him have close affinity to the ten guṇas of Bharata. The important defects of a kāvyā mentioned by Dandin are desa-virodhi (the depiction of anything in contradiction to the region), kāla-virodhi (anachronism), kalavirdhi (contradiction to convention in arts), bhinnavṛtta (metrical defect), vyārtha (contradictory meaning), apārtha (the meaning of words not apprehended collectively in a sentence), ekārtha (the repetition of meaning or word), sabdahīna (when the proper procedure of wording is not followed correctly), apakrama (what is mentioned in order is not followed by further statements), yatibhrasta (the pause after a word in a verse is not observed properly), sasamsāya (the expression which creates doubtful meaning), and desa-kāla - kala-loka-nyāya-agamvirodhin (an expression that is in contradiction to place time, conventions of art and popular knowledge).

Vamana, the initiator of the Riti School is of the view that the elegance of poetry proceeds from the avoidance of doṣas, and in the selection of style and figures of speech suited to the rasa. In his Kāvyalāṃkāra-sutra-vṛtti he discusses in detail the faults existing in words and alankārās that hinder the development of rasa. He regards lucidity as an excellence common to all compositions as it aids easy comprehension.
Ānandavardhana, who has used the appellation aucitya in a formal manner has extended this concept to all dramatic elements including characterization. As far as characterization is concerned his emphasis is on the basic human nature or prakṛtaucitya. He permits the introduction of superhuman characters in a work, but stipulates that the human characters should never act in a superhuman manner. He considers aucitya of alāṅkāras as the prime requisite of an ideal work. The importance that Ānandavardhana has given to alāṅkāras in rasa realization is attested by Kalipada Giri:

When there is no soul, ornamentation is meaningless and sometimes ridiculous. In the case of poetry also, poetic figures are related to poetic soul, i.e. rasa. Alāṅkāras, which are not connected with the suggestion of rasa are, in Ānandavardhana’s opinion, unpoetic, mere vāgvakalpas. They can at best earn for a composition the appellation of citrakavya, imitation of poetry, not poetry proper.¹²

Ānandavardhana has discussed in detail the aucitya to be observed in the depiction of the sentiments. Lengthy digressions and scenic representations that are not suited to the rasa and abrupt break in the smooth flow of aṅgi-rasa would result in rasabhaṅga, so a writer should avoid these defects at all costs. The aṅgi-rasa should be properly high lighted, or else it would be eclipsed by the aṅga-rasas. Though he is aware of the importance of aṅgi-rasa he gives the warning that undue and prolonged importance given to it would result in the cloying of the senses. If a discordant sentiment is introduced in a work without aucitya it would result in the defect called “virasa.”¹³ Ānandavardhana considers this lack
of rasa as the greatest defect of a work. He feels that guṇas like prasāda, ojas, and mādhurya are the attributes of rasa and not of Śabda and artha to which they are only superimposed and as such they have no independent existence. As each guṇa suits a particular sentiment he is particular about the aucitya of guṇa. The guṇa called mādhurya is inherent in srṅgara, karuṇa and sānta rasas, whereas the quality of dipti is suited to the raudra and vīra rasas. He places the proper collocation of the syllables to suit the rasa under aucitya of “sanghatana”.\textsuperscript{14}

Abhinavagupta holds the view that rasa is manifested by the fusion of all the elements of a composition, ranging from phonemes to the entire work—either directly through the description of emotive factors or indirectly through the suggestive power of phonemes, words, etc. Aucitya has no independent existence. It is always subservient to rasa, and anaucitya occurring in any part of a work will definitely give rise to rasābhāsa. He has also made a reference to the vignas or obstacles like improbability of action, the intrusion of space-time particularity, neglect of the angi-rasa and lack of clarity that impede the course of aesthetic pleasure or rasa.\textsuperscript{15}

Kuntaka, the proponent of the Vakrokti school of aesthetics has given due recognition to aucitya in his work Vakrokti Jivita. It is the avoidance of anything that distracts the reader’s attention from the dominant rasa. He holds “aucitya or propriety as the striking expression in which the excellence of an object is rightly depicted”.\textsuperscript{16}

In his treatise Vyākrtiveka Mahimabhatta has discussed in detail the role of aucitya in poetry. He equates anaucitya with kāvyadoṣas. The two categories of anaucitya
mentioned by him are “antaranga-anaucitya or intrinsic impropriety and bahiranga-anaucitya” or extrinsic impropriety. 17

Mammata has given a correct definition of the concept of guṇas: “Those properties that belong to the passion, the principal factor, conducive to its maturity and having an unceasing existence, are called ‘guṇas’ excellences in the same manner as bravery and such qualities belong to the soul”. 18 He regards lucidity as an excellence that can be applied to all rasas and all works. Mammata’s stand is quite flexible as he surmises that the rules governing diction and syllable can vary with the nature of the speaker, the subject and the form of composition.

Kṣemendra, the literary dictator of the eleventh century is a very fecund writer, who wrote kāvyas, mahakāvyas and critical discourses. His style is clear, precise, illustrative, and instructive and he dons the mantle of a solicitous guide directing the young. His critical doctrines can be gleaned from his works like, Kavikṣemendra, Aucityanvīraścara, and Suvrīttatilaka. Kṣemendra’s Kavikṣemendra is in the nature of kavisiksa or counsel to the young poets and through this work he has discussed the poetic charm in all its aspects, and aucitya with regard to sense, sound, and sentiment. He propagated the notion that only the clarity and propriety of words, meaning, and sense can enhance the right rasa. A composition consisting of beautiful and flawless syllables, but lacking in sense is to Kṣemendra like the “youth of a woman devoid of the grace of beauty.” 19
In the fourth link of his *Kavikānṭhabhārana*, Kṣemendra has made a distinction between poetic merits and demerits. He compares an ideal poet capable of distinguishing poetic merits from demerits to the “swan royal capable of separating milk from water mixed in the same pot.” The three merits of a poetic composition mentioned by him are purity of words, purity of sense and purity of rasa. His perception of an ideal poetic style is marked by the qualities like sweetness, clarity, delicacy, equanimity and charm, but the use of faulty words and tautology are considered as glaring poetic defects by him.

Kṣemendra’s compendium on aucitya is a virtual *tour de force*, which encompasses all the important components of a literary composition. *Aucityaviccārācarca*, the product of great aesthetic and intellectual labour reveals Kṣemendra’s perfect critical objectivity. *Aucityaviccārācarca* is a milestone in the path of development signifying the culmination of previous efforts to reinstate the position of aucitya. He presents each point through a memorial verse which is further substantiated by suitable interpretations and illustrations: counter illustrations are also provided by him to indicate instances of anaucitya. He is absolutely meticulous when stating his viewpoint so his illustrations are free from all prejudices.

In his treatise Kṣemendra allots the pride of place to aucitya, and hails it as the life of poetry. His notion of aucitya can be gleaned from his dictum: “What befits a particular thing is what the great masters call proper. The state of being proper is propriety.” According to Kṣemendra aucitya is an all-encompassing precept that can exist in the twenty-seven places of a kāvya like the word, sentence, the meaning of the composition, merits, the figures of speech, the sentiments, verb, syntax, gender, number, adjective, prefix,
particle, tense, context, family, surrounding, vow, truth or validity, force, purpose, intuition, stage, thought content, winding up of sense, nomenclature, benediction, and other limbs of poetry.

Kṣemendra has struck the most appropriate note for his discussion on aucitya, by opening his treatise with a dedication to Lord Vishnu, who is described by him as a "doer of what is right and proper." He makes a clear-cut distinction between poetic guṇas and aucitya, and deems aucitya as the mediator that fixes the limits of guṇas and dosas. He illustrates the absurdity of anaucitya with an apt example taken from day to day life:

Kαnthe mekhalāyā nitambaphalake tāreṇa hāreṇa vā
Pāṇaunūpura bandhanena caṇe keyrapasena vā
Śauryena pranato ripau karunaya nāyānti ke īasya
Aucityenā vinā rucim pratanute nālankārtirno guṇāh

"A person would become an object of scorn and ridicule, if he wore the girdle string round the neck, necklace around the waist, anklets on hands and bracelets on feet, similarly neither the figures of speech nor the merits look charming without propriety." 21

Kṣemendra, who is particular about padaucitya regards the right and proper word used at the appropriate place as a sign of poetic maturity. He is particular about the employment of the accurate synonym of a word as only the right and appropriate synonyms can stimulate the right rasa. He is also fastidious about the suitable meaning of the composition or prabandhārta. According to him the meaning of a composition becomes charming with a particularly suitable meaning just as "a good person obtains lustre through
wealth, made blissful by the strength of virtues." Kṣemendra advocates the need for meaningful well-constructed sentences in a literary composition, as only such sentences can promote the sense in a proper manner. Aucitya in the use of syntactical cases makes a sentence bright and suitable and enhances its aesthetic delight. He compares alankāras to the appropriate ornaments that enhances the beauty of a lady: "A poem becomes bright with a figure of speech, which has a propriety of meaning, just as a fawn-eyed lady looks beautiful with a necklace hanging on her well developed bosom." He lays special emphasis on figures of speech like simile and metaphor, and insists that they should never degenerate into mere external embellishments. Out of place and irrelevant figures of speech create disgust in the readers and divert their attention from the main rasa, whereas figures of speech relevant to the context appealing to the heart, and untouched by impropriety can enhance the rasa.

Kṣemendra differentiates the concept of kāvyalakṣānas and aucitya. He acclaims the charm of a poem that is relevant to the context, theme and rasa as its greatest merit: "The sublime merit, possessed of charm and relevant to the context, rains down joy, as does the moon that rises in time for amorous sport." He holds the view that a poem should be marked by merits like vigour, clarity, sweetness, and delicacy suited to the sense and the rasa.

Kṣemendra has discussed at length the propriety to be observed in the treatment of the sentiments. He is emphatic that "the sentiment fascinating on account of its propriety, and pervading the entire sense, makes the mind grow, as does the spring the Asoka tree." He quotes extensively from various literary works to depict the propriety and impropriety in the
use of sentiments, and warns the young writers to exercise extreme discretion in choice of the ālambana vibhāvas, uddipana vibhāvas and anubhāvas. Kṣemendra's discussion of rasa is not arbitrary but guided by the concept of aucitya. The discordant emotions when put together in a clever manner provide indescribable joy to the sahṛdayas. He is not against the mixing of the discordant rasas like sānta or śṛṅgāra in a work provided the latter is treated as a subordinate rasa. The erotic sentiment by depicting the fickleness of worldly pleasures can enhance the sentiment of sānta. Śṛṅgāra and bibhatsa, vīra and bhayānaka, sānta and raudra, vīra and karuṇa, and sānta and śṛṅgāra are discordant sentiments, but by elevating one rasa to an angī-rasa, which is capable of eclipsing the other discordant rasas, rasabhāṅga can be avoided.

Kṣemendra advocates the propriety of genders and feels that the propriety of gender makes a composition more beautiful. He is well aware of the power of the appropriate adjectives in enhancing the effect of a work and advocates aucitya in the use of prepositions, particles, tenses and numbers. His reference to the propriety in the description of the country can be interpreted as the avoidance of anachronisms and in the selection of the suitable uddipana vibhāvas to stimulate the appropriate rasa. He is of the view that a moral theme suited to the context can enhance the charm of a poetic work. He regards naturalness as the hallmark of aucitya, as a work, which is easily comprehensible, can captivate the readers’ attention and fill them with aesthetic pleasure. He also gives importance to propriety of thought content and propriety of descriptions. He regards the
names of the characters that suit their temperament as signs of aucitya. He insists on aucitya of benediction: "A proper benediction raises the value of a poem, gives a complete sense and satisfies the learned, just as a proper benediction increases the prosperity of a king who gives all his wealth in charity and appeases the learned men." 28

Ksemendra's stand regarding aucitya is not very intransigent, he has clearly stated that his discourse is an open one, and the notion of aucitya should pervade all the poetic limbs even to those elements that are not mentioned by him. 29

Hemachandra's notion of propriety is linked with the qualities of gunas and dosas, and confirms to the speaker the subject matter and the composition. The presence of faulty metre, repetition, confusion of ideas and obscurity of ideas are regarded as kavya dosas by him. As far as the meaning of the word is concerned he regards anucitarthatvarn padasya or the improper meaning of the word as a defect of a kavya. Hemachandra's stand is not very rigid as he believes that by the propriety of the speaker even a dosa can become a guña.

Visvanatha is against poetic defects as they "are depressors of Flavour." 30 He considers the qualities like sweetness, energy, and perspicuity as the vital elements that constitute the success of a work. He stresses the relevance of aucitya in evaluating the merits and demerits of a work and upholds the view that by its power even dosas can be converted to gunas. His flexible stand regarding dosas and gunas can be gleaned from his remark: "Similarly it is to determined, according to propriety by the critics, that the other blemishes also are sometimes blemishes, sometimes positive merits, and sometimes neither, as the case
Kuppuswami Shastri regards aucitya as a synthesis of rasa, dhvani, sabda, artha, and anumana. He regards dhvani, rasa, and anumana as literary content, whereas guṇas, ritis, and alankāras are assigned the status of literary form. The expression “adaptation” used by him to denote aucitya is synonymous with his idea of perfect harmony.

The concept of aucitya submits all other poetic elements to a process of selection, screening, and elimination to suit the rasa. Even alankāras have no independent existence, as their role is only to enhance the soul of a work. V. Raghavan holds the view: “The body becomes a carcass, when there is no soul there, when life is absent from it. Of what use are ornaments on a carcass.”

K. R. Srinivasa lyengar compares propriety in a literary composition to the unity in an architectural design. He regards melodrama as an inferior type of literature because of its impropriety in the delineation of emotions. He is against breach of propriety with regard to rhyme as improper rhyme can lead to ludicrous effects, just as over-doing metre can make the verse mechanical. Rhyme to him is like spice or salt or sugar to seasoning, but he insists on propriety of rhyme as a little too much or in the wrong place could destroy the essential quality or rasa of the poem.

K. Krishnamoorthy stresses the point, that all other elements of a literary work should observe the rules of aucitya for the smooth delineation of rasa. The sole function of all alankāras in poetry is to serve as effective instruments for the suggestion of emotions. When the suggested emotions are entirely absent in poetry, it is reduced to mere pictorial acrostics or “citrakāvya.”
In Indian aesthetics, aucitya is regarded as an entity that extends to all poetic elements right from the syllables to the emotions. All Indian aestheticians are unanimous in their verdict that there is nothing other than aucitya that stands in the way of the supreme aesthetic bliss. In the Indian literary scenario rasa is regarded as the soul of poetry, and the various instances of aucitya in its treatment are discussed by Viśvanātha in a detailed manner. Alloting an emotion to a character that is not suited to his nature can result in aucitya of character and rasābhāsa. Introducing a permanent emotion or a transitory emotion by its own name can spoil the aesthetic relish of the work. A writer should never say that his hero is sad or is in love but should convey the emotions through dexterity of representation. The sudden rise and the abrupt interruption of the rasa and the undue importance given to the subordinate sentiments can result in rasabhaṅga. Prolonged importance given to one rasa can result in the cloying of senses and make the composition long drawn out. If the vibhāvas are not suited to the sentiments it can result in rasābhāsa. Having sexual infatuation for mother figures is an instance of aucitya as such a feeling would never culminate in śṛṅgāra rasa but would end up as rasābhāsa.

Though the notion of aucitya is intricately linked with concepts like lākṣāṇas, guṇas and doṣas there is much confusion regarding their usage. The earlier Indian critics have made no clear-cut demarcation between guṇas and doṣas. But Kṣemendra has made this position very clear, a poetic flaw is something that hinders the smooth flow of rasa. Since anything that hinders the flow of rasa is aucitya poetic dosas result from aucitya. Poetic guṇas are the abettors of rasa, and that is why the guṇas are labelled as
rasautkarṣahetu or promoters of rasa, and the doṣas are labelled as tad-apakarṣahetu or depressors of rasa. The very absence of poetic defects is regarded by Indian aestheticians as an excellence of poetry.

There is much confusion regarding the exact role of laksānas, guṇas, doṣas, and alankāras in a literary work. Guṇas are indispensable accessories that extends throughout a work, whereas alankāras have only a restricted usage. In the opinion of Ānandavardhana a writer should observe the following dictum in the treatment of alankāras:

The sole consideration that it is only a means to the delineation of sentiment and that it is never an end in itself, the necessity of employing it at the right time, the absence of over enthusiasm on the poets' part in pressing it too far and finally his keen watchfulness in making sure that it remains secondary element only; these are the various means by which figures like metaphor become necessaries of suggestive sentiments.37

The fact that Bhoja has given greater importance to guṇas than to alankāras in the realization of rasa is evident from his statement: “If there is a poem that has several embellishments in it, but lacks in guṇa, it is not beautiful like a woman lacking in youth, just though she is splendidly dressed.”38

Dandin has discussed at length the variable nature of guṇas and doṣas, and he mentions various instances in which defects can exist as guṇas. Apārtha doṣa or incoherence is not regarded by him as a defect when the speaker is unmatta- a mad man, matta- a drunkard, bāla- a child or asvasthachitta - a person, who is in a distracted state of mind.39
Vyartha doṣa or a contradictory statement can become a guṇa if used by a person suffering from the pangs of love or intense grief. “Sasamsaya” or doubt generally regarded as a kāvyadōṣa can become a guṇa, if it creates confusion in the mind of the listener.

The element of suitability to rasa is of the prime importance in the choice of words employed in a literary composition. There are some critics, who are emphatic that colloquial, ungrammatical, and irrelevant words should be avoided at all costs by a writer, but these words become appropriate in the dialogue of the uneducated and the uncultured characters in a work. The concept of guṇas and doṣas in relation to aucitya becomes clear if the notion of vaiśeṣika guṇas is examined. They are in actuality blemishes that can become guṇas if used in the right context.

It is to be noted that rasollasa is considered by the Indian aestheticians as the ultimate aim of literature, and a perusal of the concept of aucitya has emphasized the point that the ancient Indian aestheticians were not willing to compromise on any impediment that obstructed the path of rasa. The Poetic genius or kavikausalata is very important to a writer as it assists him to select those qualities that enhance the rasa and in avoiding those qualities that create rasabhāṅga.

In the Indian critical scenario the concept of aucitya is directed only at one target—rasa, whereas in the West the concept of aucitya is related to perfection. As the notion of literary perfection in the West fluctuated from period to period, and from writer to writer, and is guided by many extrinsic factors like language, culture, ethics, politics and social background, there are no hard and fast rules concerning propriety in the West.
The Princeton Encyclopedia defines decorum in the following words: "A careful attention to what is proper and becoming in action, character, and style. In a good poem action should fit the situation and character, thought and feeling should fit character, expression should so fit subject matter that weighty matters are treated with dignity, and trifling matters with humbleness."

In the Hellenistic concept of drama and poetry the stress is on harmony, regularity, precision, balance, and lucidity, and in Plato it almost centres round mathematical precision. The very basis of propriety in Western literature is contained in Aristotle's notion of poetry as springing from man's craving for harmony and rhythm. Aristotle considers a fitting language as the first requisite of a poetic composition marked by coherence, perfection, and organic unity. As far as the propriety of plot is concerned he believed in the unravelling of the action out of the plot itself, and not through deus ex machina.

Aristotle attitude to the propriety of style can be gleaned from his Rhetoric. He considers clarity and appropriateness of expression as the requisites of an ideal style. His attitude to propriety of characterization can be gathered from his dictum that the characters should be true to life and consistent. He is particular that the style must be appropriate to the context, and fine language in poetry should never be employed by trivial characters, or in the depiction of trivial situations. A writer must always disguise his art, and should give the impression of speaking in a natural manner. According to Aristotle lack of propriety in diction can result from the misuse of compound words, the employment of strange words, and the use of long unreasonable and unseasonable epithets. Though he insists on propriety in different parts of a poetic composition he does not stress the end result of the observance of propriety in a definite manner and even his notion of catharsis is to some
degree divorced from the concept of rasa.

In his *Ars Poetica* Horace advocates the need for restraint and perfection in a work. Appropriateness and suitability are the words used by him to indicate decorum. But Horace's notion of propriety, which is rooted in the Platonic idea of perfection is directed at the concept of genre criticism and not at aesthetic relish.

Longinus insists on a strict propriety of the various poetic components for the sublime effect of a work. He regards sublimity as a quality that transports and elevates a reader and insists that such a lofty quality can be manifested only by a harmonious blend of emotional intensity, apt diction and exact rhythm. His stand regarding the relationship between propriety, and the sublime feeling created in the readers is reminiscent of the Indian notion of rasauctiya.

The Renaissance writers' idea of propriety was confined to a suitable blend of form and content, but the interdependence between propriety and aesthetic pleasure was totally neglected by them. George Puttenham, the sixteenth century critic has discussed the importance of propriety in his work *The Arte of English Poesie*. He believes that the "comelynesse" of a work depends on "the good confirmitie of many things and their sundry circumstances, with respect to one another, so as there be found a just correspondence between them by this or that relation." His concept of decorum is closely bound by the rules of nature, and his insistence on the propriety of figures of speech echoes the views of Ānandavardhana and Bhāmaha on aucitya of alankāras.

The Neo-Classical writers with their strict insistence on rules and regulations believed in the propriety of form, but the aesthetic aspect of a work was totally neglected by them. Their stress was not on aesthetic pleasure, but on reason, and as far as they were
concerned the height of propriety extended to a suitable blend of sound and sense to promote the idea.

The poetic theories of Coleridge are reminiscent of the theories of Abhinavagupta, and his stress on decorum is evident from his statement, where he equates literary perusal to a smooth journey where, "the reader should be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, or by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution, but by the pleasurable activity of the mind excited by the attractions of the Journey itself." 46 Coleridge, who negated the idea of the independent existence of each poetic element insisted on a harmonious fusion of the different elements to enhance the total unity. He regards metre, and other poetic accessories as conditional and relevant to the thoughts and expressions depicted in a work: "But for any poetic purpose, metre resembles (if the aptness of the simile may excuse its meanness) yeast, worthless or disagreeable by itself, but giving vitality and spirit to the liquor with which it is proportionally combined." 47 Coleridge advocates an organic unity among the diverse poetic elements to gain aesthetic perfection. His idea of an organic form is that of a unifying whole, where the spirit of the whole pervades each element. The concept of wholeness stressed by Coleridge is a blend of the expressed idea and the organic form, and this approach comes nearer to the Indian idea of sāhitya.

T. S. Eliot, whose critical theories reverberate with ideas from Indian aesthetics, insists on the principles of unity, harmony, and perfection for the success of a work and his notion of propriety, and its affinity to aucitya will be discussed in detail in the third chapter of this thesis.
F. O. Matthieson, holds the view that the violation of the propriety of borrowing would result in a distorted version of the real emotion. He is emphatic that a "borrowed structure which has not been fully assimilated either of thought or of form, will give itself away badly as an affected gesture or second hand emotion." This second hand emotion mentioned by him is nothing but rasābhāsa.

Denis Donoghue's impression about the organic unity of a dramatic composition is evident from his comment: "A play is 'poetic' then, when its concrete elements (plot, agency, scene, speech, gesture) continuously exhibit in their internal relationships those qualities of mutual coherence and illumination required of the words of a poem." He insists on the overall unity of a dramatic work as only a work, which is finished and complete in itself can offer exquisite aesthetic pleasure to the beholders.

F. L. Lucas, who was well aware of the importance of an appropriate style in stimulating aesthetic pleasure has insisted on clarity and brevity of expression to arrest the feelings of the readers. He surmises the obscurity in a work as an unmixed and unnecessary evil that "may be caused by incoherence; by inconsiderateness, by overcrowding of ideas; by pomp and circumstance; by sheer charlatanism."

Cleanth Brooks has admitted the importance of decorum in a work but his notion of literary propriety is inseparable from social and cultural propriety. He feels that the concept of decorum can never be fixed as it changes from language to language and from community to community. His concept of propriety is not intrinsic to the given work but varies with many external factors.

The New critics and the Formalists have coined the term, "Dramatic propriety" to judge the real merit of a statement within its literary context. These critics treat the
literary text as an autonomous object and totally disregard the historical and biographical method of evaluation. They are of the view that the true pleasure and objective analysis of a literary work can be gained only if the text is divorced from the author and the background. Though these critics insist on propriety of form and content, the idea of the sublime aesthetic pleasure is not taken into account by them.

The Marxist-Leninist critics are convinced that only the artistic assimilation of reality can motivate the common man to join the struggle for liberation, and this has prompted them to insist on artistic simplicity and clarity of expression to enhance their propagandist techniques. The main aim of their practical aesthetics is to make the people aware of the socio-historical problems confronting them, and as such it concentrates on propriety of truthfulness, ideological content and correct reflection of objective reality. These critics insist upon a uniform methodological basis of propriety, which provides the essentials necessary for a unification of attitudes. As the complex forms and their corresponding meanings, will detract people from the accessibility of a literary text the communists are against violent experimentations in literature.

Yuri Barabash is of the view that “Marxist-Leninist aesthetics is based on the proposition that the unity of form and content is an indispensable condition for a work of art. The content of the work can only be revealed through a certain form, and form, in turn is inseparable from content and dependent on it.” The Russian critic Victor Vanslov is of the opinion that the vital quality expected from literature is ideological truth. As they are the starting point, the fusion of content and form is also necessary, but “they only become effective and demonstrate their full significance when the truthfulness and ideological depth of a work has been clarified, and when they are considered in their unity with the latter.”
The ultimate desire of the Marxist writers was to foster certain ideologies on the readers by enhancing their aesthetic pleasure. The evocative and propagandist technique employed by the Marxist school of criticism has prevented them from considering aesthetic relish as the ultimate target of literary perusal.

A study of the question of propriety in Western criticism has made one thing clear: they do not regard it as the ultimate end of a literary work. It is directed at different ends, and this vagueness in its treatment has prevented propriety from assuming the status of a valid critical theory in the West.

The question that is of vital importance is whether aucitya can be accepted as a literary theory having a universal validity. The critics of the theory of aucitya regard its flexibility as a drawback, since they feel it is almost impossible to fix the rules of a variable concept. But the concept of aucitya has only one ultimate end, i.e., the creation of the supreme aesthetic relish. Rasa is the soul of a literary work, and aucitya with its eye permanently fixed on that target only moulds the other formalistic and linguistic components to suit it.

Another common charge levelled against the theory of aucitya is its incapability in analyzing modern literature. But this charge can be properly refuted on the grounds that the incomprehensibility of a work occurs due to its anaucitya. Most people fail to get any pleasure out of a work if it is ambiguous, and the ambiguity of words and expressions, abstractions, distortions and, far-fetched allusions are all the signs of anaucitya. This makes it impossible for the reader to comprehend the meaning intended by the writer. If a literary work is governed by the dictates of aucitya, it would definitely result in aesthetic relish. If a work is guided by the dictates of aucitya there will be a blend of content and form,
perfection of images, mastery of execution, interaction of parts and the whole and freedom from ambiguity. The aim of a literary work is to restore the mental equilibrium of the readers and if a work fails to do so it suffers from anaucitya. If the theory of aucitya is incapable of analyzing a work in its totality it is not the theory that is at fault but the work and such a work, which violates all norms of aucitya suffers from rasabhāsa.

In the Western criticism, the perfection and success of a work is guided by various external factors like, social, linguistic, ethical and cultural propriety. This has prompted the Western critics to find fault with the theory of aucitya an intrinsic theory, which concentrates only on rasa realization. But strict insistence on political, religious, and social propriety had a baneful effect on the development of literature in the West. Some excellent works were doomed to be failures as they arrived at the literary scenario at the most inopportune time, and hence found it difficult to pass the test of social and literary propriety. Victorian England with its imperialistic and materialistic outlook labelled the poems of Matthew Arnold as complete failures as the optimistic vision of the period prevented her from appreciating the predominant melancholic tone of his poems. The racial prejudices of the Westerners had acted as a stumbling block in their appreciation of black literature and jingoism and religious fanaticism had acted as deterrents in the appreciation of some of the finest specimens of world literature. The Western evaluation based on extrinsic propriety can never do full justice to a work, and herein lies the validity of the theory of aucitya, which insists on the harmonious fusion of all other poetic constituents for the sole purpose of creating rasa.

Another charge levelled against the theory of aucitya is that it has denied the independent existence of the poetic elements like style, diction, rhythm, and figures of
speech. The critics of the theory of aucitya are of the view that a forced adaptation of all other poetic elements to suit the rasa tends to make the work dull and mechanical. This charge can be vitiated on the grounds that since rasa is the natural and spontaneous feeling created in a reader during literary perusal it cannot be squeezed out by such laboured mechanical precision. If the blending is forced, mechanical and artificial the result would be rasabhauga and herein resides the validity of poetic guṇas like prasāda, samata and mādhurya, advocated by Bharata and the later Indian theorists. If the qualities of clarity, perspicuity, and lucidity exist in a work it can never degenerate into incomprehensibility and artificiality.

The theory of aucitya is also condemned on the grounds of its incapability in analyzing a mighty work. These critics argue that it is impossible to analyze in a microscopic manner each and every syllable, word, sentence, and imagery in a work. The Western critics, who insist on the propriety of technicalities, discuss each and every aspect of a work in isolation, whereas the Indian theorists have given prime importance to the overall fusion that results in aesthetic relish. Kṣemendra’s stand is quite relevant in this context. “By means of appropriate sense, conceived through the flight of unfading fancy, which acts as a sprinkling of nectar which pervades the entire composition, a ‘mahākāvya’, as if glistening, acquires exquisite charm”. Prabandaucitya or the propriety residing in the very theme and substance of a work can result in aesthetic relish. Ayyappa Paniker substantiates this point by stating that a mahākāvya reaches the state of camatkārakarita or sublime pleasure by means of appropriate special significations caused by the writers creative power, and this feeling engulfs the whole Prabandhārta.”
Since Bharata has advocated the notion of loka-pramana in the delineation of rasa the critics, who negate the intrinsic nature of aucitya point out that it is not free from social propriety. But the loka-pramana, as presented by Bharata concentrates on the basic nature and behaviour of human beings in a given context. He insisted on loka-pramana in the depiction of character as its violation would bring about character distortion or loka-virodha.

The present day critical scenario is flooded with countless theories, which totally confuse the readers with their pedantic jargon, but they have contributed little to the evaluation of a work in its totality. The theory of rasaucitya, which liberates the text from the prompting of condescending critics will definitely lead to the surmounting of these static approaches to literary appreciation. Aucitya makes the way to the citadel of rasa smooth by submitting the other poetic elements to a process of rigorous censoring to weed out the undesirable elements. Aucitya seldom aspires to be the master, but is content to remain the trusted and devoted servant, whose only one objective is the supremacy of its master. It is ready to make any compromise with any poetic element provided it does not jeopardize the position of its master- rasa. Aucitya has no independent existence apart from rasa, but it can be an open sesame that leads the sahar dayas on to the charmed world of aesthetic pleasure.
Notes


2 Bharata 250.


3 Bharata 251.


4 Bharata 291-292.

5 Bharata 293.

6 Bharata 279.


8 Bhāmaha 1V:14.


10 Dandin, Kāvyadarsa (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1970) 1:7

11 Tarlekar, Glimpses of Ancient Indian Poetics, 112-114

12 Kalipada Giri, Concept of poetry: An Indian approach (Calcutta: Sanskrit Pustak Bandar, 1975) 54.


20 Suryakanta 107.

21 Suryakanta 119.

22 Suryakanta 118.

23 Suryakanta 119.

24 Suryakanta 123.

25 Suryakanta 126.

26 Suryakanta 124.

27 Suryakanta 128.

28 Suryakanta 170.

29 Suryakanta 119.

31 Viśvanātha 316-317.
35 K. Krishnamoorthy 122.
36 Viśvanātha 297-298.
37 Qtd. in Mavelikara Achuthan, *Jagannatha Pandita on Alankaras* (Trivandrum: Swantham Books, 1998) 64.
39 Dandin, 1V:5-7.
40 Dandin, 1V:16-18a.
43 Aristotle 171.
47 Coleridge 52.


56 Suryakanta 123.