CHAPTER - II  

Sanskrit Poetics

When one thinks of Sanskrit criticism one is naturally inclined to recall Bharata, the founder of Indian Poetics. But chronology can be very tantalizing when one is dealing with a branch of learning that has sprung up on Indian soil and is buried in immemorial antiquity. Hence perhaps the genesis of the 'apauruseya' vada — a tendency to ascribe an ancient text to divinity whenever its authorship is not established. However, with regard to the origin of Sanskrit Poetics it is now known that the date can be pushed back even further than that of Bharata — to the times of the Rig Veda when the composing seers were indeed conscious of some conventions to be followed, methods to be employed, ideas of excellence and factors that contributed to this excellence which T.G. Mainkar so rightly calls 'poetics in the making' in his book The Rig Vedic Foundations of Classical Poetics.¹ He notes in his Preface:

To be sure, there was neither a Bharata nor an Abhinavagupta nor a Nammata. But a period that witnessed such a wide and varied poetical activity on the part of generations of poets ought to yield something interesting on the side of the theory which could have been but vaguely present howsoever unconsciously in the minds of the practising poets.

Indeed, the compositions themselves are 'experiments in

expression' (p. 11); a search for proper or adequate expression has already begun and the poet is attracted by a memorable phrase or turn of expression. The piece has to be well-executed "suvrkta" and if language is found to be inadequate it has to be made powerful ("alam") by other devices. In fact, as the author observes, the word "alankara" itself has a very interesting Rig Vedic history, originally meaning "make fit", "strong", "equal to the occasion", etc. A Rig Vedic poet expressly put it that thought must be embellished as a war-steed is decorated with ornaments with love and care. The others spoke of good and bad poets, a master and a weakling; of faultless poetry that is above reproach; of so many gunas of an attractive composition as well as dosas arising from an inferior work. A statement like "the songs are trimmed like grass" (p. 62) indicates their awareness of technical perfection. An interesting theory to come across in these early times is the "craft theory of poetry" (p. 17) when a poet is compared to a skilful carpenter, cobbler or weaver, everyone of whom is a deliberate artist conscious of the excellence of his artifact. Indeed, in many places, the fashioning of a song is said to be similar to the fashioning of a chariot (p. 54) and also a fine poetical composition is likened to a fine piece of cloth (p. 40). This was inevitable in a society devoted to crafts, we gather. It is only later the 'aesthetic theory' gains ground and the 'craft theory' goes into background, though in a sense one can't dissociate a
craft from its aesthetic appeal. Their insistence that manner should be worthy of matter and constant experimentation with different forms surely forbids us from regarding them as primitives. In fact, Mr. Mainkar goes so far as to claim that whereas Vamana, Dandin, Kuntaka, Mammata, Visvanatha and others emphasize this or that aspect of the excellence of a composition the Rig Vedic view appears to be "all-inclusive" (p. 56). That there is a line of continuity in critical thought between these ancient seers and the subsequent theoreticians is convincingly pointed out by Mr. Mainkar who draws our attention to interesting parallels in the definition of poetry. A good song, according to the Rig Vedic poet had to be 'powerfully persuasive'; had to be 'bhadra, navya, sukrtā' (p. 56); 'spontaneous as a shower from a cloud' (p. 56) touching the heart of the deity and offering immortal pleasure. Mr. Mainkar has reasons to believe that this definition comes "pretty close to the classical ideas of 'uttama Kavya' that is adosau sabdarthau, sagunau, alamkrta, with shobadhayaka dharmas, rasavat, or rasatmaka, ramaniyarthapratipadaka, istarthavyayavacina" (p. 56). Their repeated use of the word 'Kavya' and their explicit references to Rasa which the Upanishads and the classical poets develop into a full-fledged, well-knit theory persuade us to conclude that here are unmistakable elements which could well form the foundations of classical Poetics. One cannot authenticate it better than by quoting a verse from the Rig Veda (X. 71.2) itself that seems to mark the
beginning of later aesthetic theories:

When men of wisdom create verse after winnowing words, as barley grains are sifted by means of a winnowing basket, then men of equal sensibility recognize the meaning. In such verses, blessed glory is enshrined.

It may be presumed that upon this foundation the mighty edifice of Sanskrit criticism was built by Bharata and others over a span of centuries which has endured even today. One cannot choose but begin with Bharata rightly considered as the father of Indian criticism. His monumental work The Natyasashtra which has been the cause of innumerable subsequent critical works and commentaries has shaped the critical sensibilities of our people and their mental and emotional make-up in a most vital and significant way. It should not be surprising that this encyclopaedic work which runs through the whole gamut of the art of drama, discussing the last conceivable aspect of stage-acting with minute detail should be considered as the fifth Veda and quite characteristically attributed to Brahma, a traditional Indian gesture. However, from the point of dramatic criticism, one could confine oneself to those chapters which expound the nature and number of rasas and bhavas.

It is astonishing that as far back as 3rd century B.C. Bharata should have not merely pinpointed as to what constitutes the soul of poetry but also defined with precision the existence and characteristics of all the mental states (bhavas)
in man and their role in the general of rasa. His enumeration of eight rasas and three bhava, and further classification of bhavas into eight sthayibhava, thirty-three Vyabhicari-
bhavas and eight satvika bhavas is so satisfying that even
today they form an important critical framework in the
judgement of Sanskrit literature. The repeated use of his
maxim by Sanskrit scholars, "Vibhava-anubhava-Vyabhicaribhava
samyogad rasanispattih" the union of vibhava, anubhava and
Vyabhicaribhava results in the production of rasa, should
justify the claim. The word rasa which has invited endless
interpretations to date has however, been explained quite
simply by Bharata himself by drawing analogies from the medical
and culinary worlds. According to him the combination of
different bhavas makes for rasa in the same way as a union
of different components in medicine results in creating a
particular effect or just as people who partake of a dish
prepared with different ingredients derive a delectable
experience, so also spectators enjoy a play composed with the
help of different elements such as Angika, Vacika and Satvika.
In other words they enjoy the sthayibhavas and feel delighted.
Bharata calls this enjoyment Natyarasa. At this juncture a
comparison of Bharata with Aristotle might profitably be
attempted. Attention has rightly been drawn to the fact that
while Aristotle's "purgation" of emotions or catharsis is a
negative approach Bharata's "rasanubhava" is a positive experience.

2 Natyasastra, translated into Kannada by Adya Rangacharya
(Akshara Prakashana, Sagar, Mysore, 1984), p. 58.
3 C.D. Narasimhaiah, Literary Criticism: European and Indian
Traditions (ed.), (University of Mysore), pp. 5-6.
A man does not throw anything out of his system but instead receives something which elevates his personality and puts him on a supra-mundane level. In the Indian system of poetics what is involved is not the elimination of 'pity' and 'fear' but the attainment of a supreme bliss. This essential difference between the two should mark the apparent advance made by the Indian rhetoricians over Aristotle. Yet it is ironical that in the Indian context even at present, Aristotle rather than Bharata should be invoked in the judgment of literature including our own. One is not advocating a wholesale rejection of Aristotle but rather bemoaning the exclusion of Bharata, lock, stock and barrel from Indian criticism. Today, we have however come to realize, thanks to the recent efforts of some scholars in English, the ominous implications of ignoring our own tradition. As a consequence we have begun to discover the inherent superiority of the rasa theory and also the fact that if this theory were to be applied, many mediocre works of art would just recede to the background. In fact, only the very distinguished ones would answer the demands made by it and precisely for this reason many of us are not prepared to apply it to works of art, especially Western fiction and its ilk in India where social preoccupations are dense and cannot bear the Indian interpretation. The argument that very few works of art would come up to the expectations of the theory and the concern to shield merely competent or less than competent works only betrays a lack of courage on our part to face the truth. If a poem like
Eliot's *The Waste Land* or his play *The Cocktail Party* could be considered as *kavya* capable of generating *rasanubhava* or some of Hopkins's and Yeats's poem, be regarded as great by any standards, there is no reason to doubt the feasibility of applying the *rasa* theory. If, however, the others do not stand the test, there is no need to reiterate that they better not press their claims for being considered as good literature at all.

It redounds to Bharata's credit that he not merely emphasizes the indispensability of *rasa* in a work of art without which there is no meaning but analyses in a scientific way how it is caused in the first place. His interesting poser: "Are *bhavas* produced by *rasas* or *rasas* produced by *bhavas*?" brings forth from him the explanation that *bhavas* are the cause of *rasas* and not the other way (it must be confessed that the question is more complex than the way he puts it, for the enactment of *bhavas* proves that *rasas* are also cause of *bhavas*), though he takes care to add that both are manifest in *abhinaya* and neither can exist without the other. He not merely describes how *rasas* are born but also the colours they are associated with and their patron deities followed by a description of *bhavas*, *vibhavas*, *anubhavas* and *vyabhicaribhavas*. He shows his deep awareness and experience of stagecraft when he discusses the *sthayibhavas* of *rasas* like *Srngara*, *Karuna* and others and lays down rules for enacting mental states like *bhibatsa*, *adbuta* or *vira* on the stage.
That there is nothing vague or hypothetical in Bharata’s presentation is seen in the lucid example (man’s physical and mental reactions on seeing a snake that acts as an external stimulus) he gives to explain the genesis of the three mental states in man. Besides giving the literal meaning of the three terms, vibhava, anubhava and vyabhicarabhava he also gives particulars of the three bhavas, sthayi, vyabhicari and satvika in a chapter devoted entirely to the analysis of bhavas where he discusses their characteristics and lays down rules for their enactment on the stage. While his chapter on abhinaya is an invaluable guide to an actor his chapter on alankaras, gunas and dosas in literature proves useful to a dramatist, for alongwith a description of the above elements it also carries Bharata’s instructions as to when alankaras should be used in relation to rasa. For example, upama and rupaka should be used more in the delineation of vira, raudra and adbhuta while rupaka and dipaka might be used in srngara rasa and so on.

It might be seen from even such a peripheral sketch that a text which discusses such important constituents of a kavya as rasas and bhavas, classifies and defines them with authority and assuredness could be relevant, more than ever, to our times which have begun to lean increasingly on the Western conception of literature. It is true that Longinus gave a "sublime" view; that was as far as a Westerner could go. But in describing rasa as Brahmananda-Sahodarah (the tasting of rasa is akin to the tasting of Brahman) the Indian mind was
imparting a metaphysical import to the study of literature, thus continuing the heritage of Raso Vai Saha. The inadequacy of the English word 'enjoyment' in contrast with the Sanskrit term 'rasa' should lift us from the morass we have laid ourselves in and wake us up to a knowledge of profounder insights into life and literature. That this is necessary for very practical reasons and not just sentimental ones is seen in the fact that the application of rasa theory could most effectively eliminate all sub-standard works, which goes to show that Western criticism is more accommodating and inclusive — rather dubious virtues in this context.

Acknowledged to be one of the earliest rhetoricians coming after Bharata and also as the foremost representative of the Alankara school of poetry is Bhamaha. However, it must be added that the objective is not to make a survey of all the Sanskrit rhetoricians here but rather present a critical account of only the major theoreticians and their work with particular attention to the efficacy and relevance of their critical concepts and theories in the present-day world.

It is interesting that as we move from Bharata to Bhamaha the emphasis shifts from rasa to alankara. Another essential difference between the two is while Bharata confined himself to drama, even though it is true that the term 'drama' was used in a wider sense then and whatever he said of drama is equally applicable to all the other arts, Bhamaha includes the
whole of literature, as evident in the very title *Kavyalankara*. By making use of concrete and homely examples drawn from everyday life Bhamaha makes a plea for making alankara primary in a work of art. In the first place he draws a parallel between the face of a lovely maiden which does not appear charming without jewels, however beautiful it is and a *kavya* which does not appeal without alankara.\(^4\) Secondly, he argues that however strong the *rasa* element might be, a *kavya* devoid of beauty is like a raw fruit, the wood-apple. (p. 150).

It is necessary to know at this distance of time what this ancient rhetorician personally thought of literature. He declares in the *mangala-sloka* of his work that the writing of good literature is a means of attaining all the four Purusarthas in life, Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Apart from enhancing one's interest in the arts it brings joy and fame. Even nitwits might practise the *sastras* and obtain scholarship after being initiated by their teachers. But only one in a million, who alone possesses the gift of imagination, is able to write literature. Without imagination there can be no literature though scholarship is possible without imagination. But one who wants to attain immortal fame must take to writing good literature only. That is the only sure means of achieving glory which survives even

\(^4\) *Kavyalankara* translated into Kannada by K. Krishnamoorthy, (Sharada Mandira, Mysore, 1955), p. 45. All subsequent references are to this edition only and will be made in the body of the text itself.
after the individual writer's death. It is gratifying that
long before Anandavardhana Bhamaha should not merely be using
the word 'pratibha' but also assigning great importance to
it in the composition of literature. The distinction he
makes between mere scholarship obtained by a study of the
sastras on the one hand and good literature made possible
with pratibha on the other is a point worthy of mention.
However, pratibha is not all in the writing of literature
according to Bhamaha. In addition to it, an aspiring
writer must possess an intimate knowledge of word and meaning,
previous works of literature, grammar, metre, arts, puranas,
laws and no less, the ways of the world — thus anticipating
modern Western critics, Leavis and Richards who have expressed
themselves memorably about the complete equipment of the
poet. What exacting standards Bhamaha applied to the composi-
tion of literature is seen in his explicit note of warning to
the poet that no faulty word should ever be written adding
that anything written in violation of rules would bring as
much disgrace to the poet as a bad son brings disgrace upon
his father, finally clinching the issue with an eloquent
argument that no sin is committed by not writing poetry nor
any disease is caused either but to write bad poetry is living
death. His preoccupation with the word urges him to express
himself strongly on this aspect of literature again and again.
If on one occasion he says that an obscure word should never
be used as it would delight no one including scholars (p. 55),
on another he says that words must be easy to understand,
melodious to hear and pleasant to pronounce since only such words are appreciated by rasikas (p. 66) and asserts elsewhere that a single good word is far better than a whole faulty epic. (p. 150) And again it is the same sensitivity to language that prompts him to advise the poet to avoid the repeated use of a similar sound in a single place like "gatho, yatho, hatho" (p. 173). Interestingly his definition of kavya is summed up as Sabdarthau sehitau kavyam — word and meaning together make poetry.

Now coming to the topic of the alankaras proper, Bhamaha classifies them into two, Arthalankaras and Sābdalankaras and devotes the whole of the III Chapter of his Kavyalankara to a discussion of various alankaras and their characteristics with appropriate examples. It is necessary to understand first that Bhamaha uses the word alankara in a broad sense, meaning not mere external embellishment superimposed on a work but rather meaning the inherent beauty of the entire kavya. Whatever contributes to the beauty of the entire work is alankara. Hence in this sense Bhamaha's grouping of rasadis with alankaras would not invite objection from the modern reader, particularly brought up on Anandavardhana. The fact that Bhamaha assigned rasas to the category of rasavad alankara might invite the comment that he was equating rasa with alankaras like upama and others. But he can be defended on the ground that the word alankara did not have a limited meaning for him but rather meant saundarya in a broad sense.
Wherever there was saundarya there was alankara and secondly alankara was not supposed to have only abidha but also vyngya or vakrata; he made it plain that vakrokti alone imparted charm to the subject dealt with and that a poet must make extra effort to achieve it. "Without it where then is alankara?" he asked and effectively pointed out how, melodious words alone did not bring beauty to a Kavya but rather the vakrokti element found in both word and meaning, which gave the status of alankara to words. Consequently he is not prepared to consider hetu, sukshma, lesa and so on as alankaras, for in his opinion they do not possess vakrokti. And without vakrokti, a composition cannot be called Kavya but a song pleasing only to the external ear (p. 52). In fact, he makes fun of lines like:

The sun has set, the moon shines best, the birds reach their nests. (p. 84)

with the query, "Is this literature?" (p. 84) rather, this is known as "prattle". He elaborates this point in his V Chapter with the observation that it is futile to think that good literature can be written by resorting to a description of shining pearls, fruit-laden trees and fully-blossomed flowers. Some poets vainly try to embellish their writings with a description of these things. (p. 151) But mere description cannot result in beauty in literature, he says, for in his estimation, pearls, trees and flowers bring beauty to jewellery, orchards and garlands respectively but not to words. It is vakrokti alone — a new twist in the words — that can impart
charm. (p. 151) Had Sarojini Naidu and other Romantic poets of our country read this and heeded the critic's warning, perhaps the course of their poetry would have been different. Bhamaha is here expressing a sensibility that would have done credit to a very intellectual poet of the modern times. He also draws our attention to how misguided enthusiasm to write lengthily prompts some to weave meaningless, complicated and contradictory words (p. 151) with a very good example to prove his stand. His fourth and fifth chapters devoted exclusively to a delineation of various poetic blemishes with suitable examples are bound to be extremely useful to a practising poet. As for gunas, while Bharata, Dandin, Vamana enumerate ten, Bhamaha lists only three — madhurya, prasada and ojas (sweetness, clarity and forcefulness) accepted by Anandavardhana and Mammata also.

Bhamaha concludes his text with a plea that those desirous of composing literature must try to do it independently with their native abilities. "What joy can imitation of other people's writings bring?" (p. 154) he asks. Here is a critic who began by insisting on the poet's knowledge of other kavyas but ends by stressing the value of self-reliance. The two aspects are not inimical to each other, for they ought to exist simultaneously. With this knowledge the work has completed a full circle.

Of course, Bhamaha does not attempt a full-length analysis of any play in which respect, he is not alone in Sanskrit
criticism, but he deserves to be studied for his definition of the scope of kavya and broad use of alankara.

After a great deal of controversy regarding Dandin's date, a general consensus has now been reached that he lived later than Bhamaha and not earlier. It is therefore fitting to examine his work at this juncture not merely because he is Bhamaha's successor but also because inspite of several differences with Bhamaha, he seems to hold identical views with his predecessor.

Kavya shoba karan dharmanalankaran prachakshate⁵ (whatever brings beauty to a kavya is alankara). In this respect he is continuing Bhamaha's tradition. Before the points of differences are considered, a word might be added to point out Dandin's pre-eminence as a poet, summarized in the maxim, "Dandinah pada - lalityam". His greatness as a poet and critic must have been considerable judging by the number of references subsequent poets make to him and the number of languages into which his well-known work on poetics — Kavyadarsa is translated. According to Dr. K. Krishnamoorthy the work was so influential that it was translated into Pali, Prakrit, Sinhalese, Kannada, Tibetan, etc., unlike any other critical work in Sanskrit (pp. 3-4).

⁵ Kavyadarsa, translated into Kannada by K. Krishnamoorthy, (Sharada Mandira, Mysore, 1975), p. 37. All subsequent references are to this edition only and will be made in the body of the text itself.
Like Bhamaha once again he is also justifiably preoccupied with the correctness or otherwise of the word used in literature, for the word, as he puts it, is the source of all worldly transactions and without the Word which shines like a lamp, all three worlds would have been immersed in darkness. (p. 15) Hence his description of a well-used word as Kamadhenu. On the other hand a wrongly-used word assigns man to the status of cattle (p. 16). His impatience with carelessness towards errors in literature is reflected in the comment:

Even though the whole body is beautiful it looks ugly and revolting on account of a single leprous spot. (p. 16)

Similarly a single faulty word in an otherwise faultless composition causes disgust in the mind of the reader. Unlike Bhamaha who listed three gunas Dandin enumerates ten. He demonstrates with examples how some of the gunas like Madhurya and Saukumarya are achieved in poetry; and picks out a crudely worded sentence in sloka 63 of the I Chapter (p. 28) to show how the same can be transformed into a refined one; how gramya can give way to madhurya, the truth of which however, is perceptible in Sanskrit and cannot be easily put across in English. Similarly in the final chapter he points out through examples how some of the very faults (dosas) can be transformed into virtues (gunas). (p. 116)

Elsewhere (pp. 29-30) he cites an instance to show how even though the subject is not anything profound nor even the alankara, it still captivates the hearts of rasikas on account of its Saukumarya guna.
It is interesting that like Harivara after him Dandin also attributes creativity to imagination, learning and constant practice. However, unlike other Lakshanakaras who set supreme store by Poetic Imagination without which there could be no poetry Dandin believes that even though a poet might possess very little imagination or even lack it altogether he can still win the grace of the goddess of learning provided he works hard. Such is his faith in sheer application.

The whole of the second parichcheda is devoted to the enumeration and description of the 35 alankaras mentioned by previous rhetoricians. He departs from Bhamaha in considering hetu, sukshma and lesa as notable alankaras while Bhamaha had refused to recognize them. In the same way he differs from Bhamaha in not according due recognition to Pratijnahina, hetuhina and Drastanthahina as dosas in his third parichcheda. While Bhamaha devotes a whole chapter to a consideration of these three dosas, Dandin dismisses them by merely saying that it is futile to discuss whether they are dosas or not. As such, what we have here is a summary dismissal of blemishes in literature that had engaged Bhamaha so vigorously earlier. Instead, if Dandin had shown how and why any discussion of them is unprofitable the chapter would have proved more useful. However, he is emphatic that the learned must always eliminate the ten main dosas from their works which we discover are different from the ones listed by Bharata with the exception of one (Ekartha). These differences and departures go to show that even influences and borrowings had a mark of
originality about them. Even while they promptly acknowledged earlier sources whenever necessary, they made it clear they were not bound by any of them, for in Dandin's own words, all those elements that impart beauty to literature are evergrowing. New additions are made constantly and so who can recount them completely? (p. 37) — thus giving scope for the critic in every age to talk about the inexhaustible beauties of literature.

It might be seen from the foregoing account that what invariably engaged the attention of the critic in ancient India were alankara, guna, dosa and marga in literature (Kavvalaka ana) in addition to defining the equipment of the poet. Each has commented upon them in his own individual way. Dandin regards words as the "outer body" of literature with alankaras as ornaments. (p. 17). If so, what is the soul of literature, one might very well ask, but one has to wait till the time of Yamana who speaks of 'soul' for the first time in Sanskrit poetics, when he declares "Ritiratma Kavyasya" — Riti is the soul of poetry.

But then comes Anandavaradana, perhaps the greatest name in Sanskrit criticism with his theory of suggestion which completely revolutionized hitherto-held beliefs on the conception of poetry and had far-reaching consequences on subsequent schools of critical thought. His epoch-making work in Sanskrit poetics, Dhavanyaloka is acclaimed by later writers as the last word in Indian poetics.
Anandavardhana's first task was to refute all allegations made by the opponents of the Dhvani theory and establish convincingly that Dhvani exists, though in the same breath he added that the implicit meaning was understood not by a mere learning in grammar and dictionary but only by those who have an insight into the true significance of poetry. Then he proceeds to define Dhvani as that kind of poetry wherein the conventional meaning renders itself secondary or the conventional word renders its meaning secondary and suggests the intended or implied meaning. He gives an interesting analogy to explain how Dhvani could be comprehended by the reader of poetry. "Just as a man interested in perceiving objects (in the dark) directs his efforts towards securing a lamp since it is a means to realize his end, so also does one who is ultimately interested in the suggested meaning proceed by first evincing interest in the conventional meaning." (p. 17)

Like his predecessors Anandavardhana also speaks about alankara but by making it subservient to rasa he breaks new ground in the history of Sanskrit criticism. His stand was:

Even trite subjects in poetry will put on a new freshness if they get into touch with sentiment just as the same trees appear quite new with the advent of spring. (p. 271)

This shift in emphasis from alankara to rasa came at a crucial

6 Dhvanijloka, translated into English by K. Kishnamoorthy (Karnatak University, Dharwar, 1974), p. 15. All subsequent references are to this edition only and will be made in the body of the text itself.
time when every notable writer of poetics after Bharata, namely, Bhamaha, Vamana Rudrata and Dundin had made alankara the supreme end in poetry and had gone on multipling the number of alankaras until they threatened to become unwieldy. It must have been immensely courageous of Anandavardhana therefore to depart from a well-established tradition and look at alankara from a totally different angle. The passage where he advises the poet to exercise discrimination in the employment of figures is most striking for its critical incisiveness and needs to be quoted in full.

The sole consideration that it (figures) is only a means to the delineation of sentiment and never an end in itself, the necessity of employing it at the right time and of abandoning it at the right time; the absence of over-enthusiasm on the poet's part in pressing it too far, and finally, his keen watchfulness in making sure that it remains a secondary element only — these are the various means by which figures like metaphor become accessories (of suggested sentiment). (p. 63)

And like the modern teacher of practical criticism, Anandavardhana cites two instances where the poets concerned exhibit an ability for the timely employment of figures as well as an abandonment of them owing to demands of propriety. His faith that a poet bent upon the sole object of delineating sentiments should desist from carrying a figure too far (p. 65) expresses itself now and then and sometimes assumes the form of a warning that if the conditions laid down are transgressed, a figure will invariably become a destroyer of
sentiment instead of a promoter. (p. 71) So much for figures of speech. As for the element of suggestiveness in poetry one cannot think of a better example than the lines Anandavardhana himself quotes:

Knowing the mind of the paramour seeking the time of assignation, the clever maid closed her toy-lotus with a smiling glance tell-tale. (p. 85)

In fact, Anandavardhana goes so far as to rate a work high if even one word is fraught with suggestiveness. (p. 115). And suggestion to him was inextricably associated with rasa — which explains the genesis of the great rasa-dhvani theory. Hence his exhortation to the poet that if he is faced with situations conflicting with the intended sentiment in a theme adapted from a traditional source, he must be ready to leave out such incidents and invent in their place imaginary ones with a view to delineating the intended sentiment. (p. 135) And in addition to it a poet had to preserve the unity of the principal sentiment from beginning to end, (p. 137) for the delineation of a single sentiment as the predominant one in a work as a whole would endow the work with not merely novelty but also abundant charm. (p. 273).

The topic of rasa understandably leads Anandavardhana to a consideration of the various impediments to rasa and the ways and means of overcoming them, whether it is a whole work or a single stanza. Among the chief hindrances he considers, indecorum forms the gravest threat to the delineation of rasa.
I a celebrated passage he says:

There is no other cause for a breach in sentiment except indecorum. The greatest secret about sentiment is conformity to well-known considerations of decorum. (p. 139)

ence a writer should direct all his efforts towards avoiding indecorum in all matters like over-elaboration of a sentiment that has already received sufficient attention, description the plot for its own sake and inability to discriminate between principal and subsidiary emotions. Anandavardhana so gives useful tips to the poet on how to maintain the suggestive quality of his poetry. Thus done he addresses himself to a most important aspect in literature which had hitherto received little or no attention, namely the question the reader. By calling him a sahradaya, (one who possesses similar heart or samam hridayam vasya sah), a corroborator, partner in a joint enterprise, Anandavardhana was for the first time elevating the status of the reader and also emphasizing his role in the enjoyment of literature or sanubhava. Seldom, perhaps, in world literature is a reader poetry so exalted as here in Sanskrit Poetics. Hence the pertinent question: 'what constitutes a refined critic?'

Is it a mere knowledge of certain conventional canons of literary criticism irrespective of sentiments and emotions; or is it a skill in appreciation of literature imbued with sentiments, emotions, etc? (p. 159)

follows then that the reader of poetry, too, must be a
qualified man, capable of appreciating all the subtle shades and nuances of emotion. "Just as the quality of preciousness in diamonds is discernible only to select connoisseurs, so also the presence of sentiments ... only to select critics". (p. 191)

Again and again Anandavardhana's mind harps back to the business of a first-rate poet of whom he expects a proper marshalling of all contents and expressions in the direction of sentiments and an awareness of the opposition and non-opposition of sentiments. Some of the observations he makes particularly in relation to what a good poet could make of the erotic sentiment in poetry reveal a mature critical sensibility. His insistence that this most delicate, charming and important sentiment be carefully handled by the poet certainly helps in creating a healthy convention in poetry.

After a due consideration of rasa and alankara, Anandavardhana offers a very subtle analysis of the concept of Dhvani which should sound most adequate and satisfying to the modern reader. Before any assessment of either its definition or its classification into various kinds could be made, attention must be drawn to Anandavardhana's revealing observation that suggestion could be found even in music. This is as it should be, for gestures which are not even sounds, possess the function of suggesting specific ideas, (that is when one is looking at the musician).
Anandavardhana reiterates his stand that the designation of "suggestion" is to be given only when the suggested sense happens to be primary; but when it is secondary he calls it unabhutavyangya or poetry of subordinated suggestion. Despite being a staunch advocate of Dhvani Anandavardhana is not dogmatic about it. He himself declares that one should not be unduly biased in favour of Dhvani everywhere, for on certain occasions the artistic excellence of the expressed might be greater than the suggested. This kind of flexibility of approach is a characteristic that could be emulated by the modern critic whose pet obsessions often preclude him from a total grasp of the work of art in front.

However, Anandavardhana does not think highly of the three styles of poetry, Vaidarbhi, Gaudi and Pancali since they do not explain the fundamental principle of poetry as fully as the Dhvani theory does. Perceptive critics, he contends, would certainly not countenance the position that style is a mere arrangement of letters without any concern for meaning. At that rate, every clever arrangement of sweet-sounding syllables, irrespective of meaning, should have deserved the designation of poetry. (p. 283) Anandavardhana establishes suggestion as superior to denotation and indication on the plea that it can invest even trite, commonplace themes with novelty and freshness and that an idea acquired beauty only when it is revealed in a way other than the expressed. He points out how in refined circles it has indeed become a convention with the learned to evoke their
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best ideas only through suggestion and not at all by expressed words. And for a poet, notwithstanding the presence of figures, suggestion is the most important ornament in his poetry even as bashfulness is to women. (p. 233).

Anandavardhana's exalted conception of a poet reveals the pride of place he occupied in ancient India and implicitly the critic's own possession of a superior critical mind.

In the boundless realm of poetry, the poet alone is the creator, and as it pleaseth him, so doth this world revolve. If the poet be intent upon the erotic sentiment in his poem, the whole world will be suffused with that sentiment. But if he be void of emotion (in his poem), the world too will be devoid of sentiment. A good poet will freely design even insentient objects to act as sentient ones and sentient objects to act as insentient ones. (p. 251)

For a poet who can make the world revolve at his will the poetic themes are naturally inexhaustible:

Like the resources of primordial Nature herself, the infinite possibilities of poetic themes can never be drained off even by a million Brhaspatis composing with all their might simultaneously. (p. 293)

This fine insight offers a perspective to the poet labouring under the illusion that only new ideas should be striven after and that there is no virtue in writing about what others have already written. Anandavardhana's view that there can be no impoverishment of themes as long as they are dealt with in a new way savours of a mature and
sophisticated mind.

So here is a critic who borrowed the term Dhvani from the grammarians who maintain that sound in its eternal form of Sphota (literally meaning 'burst') is identical with Ultimate Reality itself that can only be suggested and never expressed; and applied it to poetry with remarkable appropriateness, for the ultimate content of poetry also defies all attempts at direct expression. The idealistic and metaphysical implications of the term should not create doubts as regards its applicability to poetry, for Ananda-vardhana himself has classified it into three kinds in the ascending order of importance, (1) Vastu Dhvani (2) Alankara Dhvani and (3) Rasa - Dhvani in consonance with various kinds of poetry. This kind of classification makes the application of dhvani not merely feasible but also very adequate and satisfying in the judgement of poetry. Nor is there mere theorizing in this seminal book, because concrete examples from various works including prakrit are provided to show how suggestiveness can be achieved by the power of word, sense, letters, prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions, compounds tense, case terminations, conjugational terminations, repetition of words and figures of speech, thus proving that dhvani is neither indefinable nor impossible to achieve.

We have here a critic who anticipated the newest of the New Critics in the West who have spoken of suggestion and statement in poetry but have not gone to the extent of saying
"Kavyasvatma dhvanih" ("Dhvani is the soul of poetry") nor created different gradations of suggestion to assess different kinds of poetry. Besides suggestion, Anandavardhana also spoke of such vital issues as emotion, imagination, figures of speech, decorum, indecorum and the ideal reader of poetry as far back as 9th cent. in a manner that is still very much valid even today. His discourse on the use and abuse of alankara and elaborate instructions in matters of Rasa, as to how the main Rasa has to be delineated, how the subsidiary Rasas are to enrich the main, which Rasas are mutually compatible and which incompatible, how a Rasa like Srngara must not be overdeveloped as to cloy or Karuna which might make the heart 'fade' — all these in addition to his insistence on dhvani establish him as a critic par excellence.

Between Anandavardhana and Kuntaka another distinguished name to reckon with is Rajashekara, justly famous for his Kavyamimamsa and from whom Kuntaka also quotes profusely.

The origin of Poetics is attributed by Rajashekara to the Supreme Being and as a logical sequel he claims a very high position for the discipline which is regarded as the seventh anga without which the significance of Vedic texts cannot be grasped. The self-born Srikantha Himself taught this science to his sixty-four will-born disciples among whom the most venerable was Kavya-Purusa, son of Sarasvathi.
Kavyamimamsa begins by dividing literature into sastra on the one hand and kavya on the other. Enumeration of different sastras and styles is followed by the classification of poets into three kinds, Sastra-Kavi, Kavya-Kavi and Udbhaya-Kavi. The characteristic Indian flair for classification is seen in his rather strange and illogical cataloguing of Kavya-Kavi into eight varieties: racana-kavi, salda-kavi, artha-kavi, alankara kavi, ukti-kavi, rasa-kavi, marga-kavi and sastrartha kavi, as if a poet functioned not as a whole man but as so many fragments. But his enumeration of ten grades of apprenticeship through which a poet has to pass until he becomes a kavi-raja (King of Poets) sounds more natural and convincing. The work is remarkable for the light it throws on the three modes of speech, brahma, saiva and vaishnava, the literary practices of a period, a poet's life in general, the methods of reading and pronunciation of different peoples, of appropriate language and style of gods, apsaras and pishacas. These topics might of course seem to fall outside the province of general Poetics but they are in themselves interesting and delightful as also instructive. It is also possible that there was a time when it was not illegitimate to include these seemingly extraneous matters under the broad head of sahitya and Rajashekara is only conforming to some old tradition. But as this is only a hypothesis it would be best to judge the work as it is available today.

Kavyamimamsa, trs. into English by C.D. Dalal, et al., (Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1934). All references are to this edition and will be made in the body of the text itself.
Rajashekara devotes a whole chapter (Aupanishadika) to discuss ways and means of attaining poetical excellence which is said to be a new thing in the history of Sanskrit poetics. It has been pointed out that this is similar to what Kautilya did in his Arthasastra and Vatsyayana in his Kamasutra. The object of all these three must have been the same in view — namely utility or prayojana. Such exercises undoubtedly enhance the utilitarian value of the works besides revealing the amazing practicality of the Indian mind when occasion demands it. Rajashekara's advice to the poets to mix freely with common folk in order to be acquainted with their mode of life and expression (p. 183) should bring home to us the absurdity of invoking Wordsworth as the sole propagator of the idea of infusing rustic life and idiom into poetry. In his insistence on a good knowledge of the sastras for a poet or bahugnatha — also described as Vyutpatti meaning many spheres of knowledge and representing subjects such as lokavidyaprakirnaka — Rajashekara resembles such early writers on poetics as Dandin, Vamana and others who acknowledged Vyutpatti as an essential factor in the composition of poetry. In fact, he calls the second chapter of his Kavyamimamsa "Sastranirdesa", for he states here the names of different Sastras which should first be studied by a poet before beginning to compose anything.

While Anandavardhana thought pratibha was more important to a poet than Vyutpatti, Mangala, another expert on poetics, is supposed to have held Vyutpatti more important than pratibha.
However, Rajashekara thinks that the poet who possesses both the faculties is the best, thus striking a fine balance between seemingly conflicting qualities.

The intimate relationship between poetry and poetics is very interestingly developed in Rajashekara's conception of the marriage of Kavyapurusa, the spirit of poetry (son of Sarasvathi) with Sahityavidya or science of poetics. That a critic should have envisaged the idea of a close alliance between these two branches of learning several hundreds of years ago is a tribute to the maturity of Indian criticism.

The Kavyamimamsa compels our attention also for the significant views it expresses on Kavyapaka, a concept unparalleled for its loaded expressiveness. Rajashekara not merely refers to the earlier views on the subject but also extends the canvas to include Guna, Alankara, Riti, Sabda and Artha in consonance with the Rasas, unlike his predecessors, Mangala and Vamana who had limited the sphere to either words in appropriate places or grammatical points only. Rajashekara also classifies paka into 9 kinds under three headings, "high", "middling" and "low" — all of which reveals the notable efforts of these early critics to evolve satisfying critical tools. Rajashekara's reference to imagination as of two kinds, karaviti and bhavaviti, creative and critical (p. 153): one denoting the ability to create and the other the ability to appreciate is a valuable contribution to Indian poetics in that it suggests that the critic of yore had paid attention to
all intricate matters concerning poetry. So also is his distinction between *Vagbhavakas* (those who are apt to lay much stress on the words of poetry) and *hrdayabhavakas* (those who are inclined to lay emphasis on the essence of poetry). Nor did he fail to define *kavya* as such, which to him consisted of sentences having *gunas* and *alankaras*. All early authors on poetics from Bhamaha onwards have attached equal importance to both words and their meanings in the composition of a *Kavya*. Rajashekara differs from them and rather surprisingly holds that words alone are important in the constitution of a *Kavya*, eliciting the comment from the modern readers that any indifference to meaning or attention to word at the cost of meaning would certainly amount to a limitation, for the two are inseparable like the Divine Couple, Siva and Parvathi. In this respect, Rajashekara resembles Visvanatha and Jagannatha Pandita in his definition of a *Kavya*, for they also hold that sentences alone are the chief constituents of a *Kavya*.

However, what Rajashekara has to say about appreciation of poetry is more important than his definition of it. For him mastery in the art of reading *Kavya* can be obtained only by those persons who are highly cultured. He goes even further and states that the art of composing poetry is easier in comparison with its reading, (p. 174) and adds that like the art of singing, the art of correct reading is not obtained in one birth, but is the result of experience in many previous births. (p. 174) Rajashekara's remarkable observation only
highlights the difficulties involved in making a sensitive and intelligent response to literature on the part of the reader and the critic's awareness of them.

Understandably it was the method of presentation, according to Rajashekara, that was responsible in rousing the different rasas and not actual things. He draws support for his argument from the verses he cites where highly skilled poets are able to rouse different rasas by means of excellent presentation of commonplace happenings whereas inferior poets would be unable to do so even though they may handle very sublime topics. (p. 189) He provides in particular the example of an inexperienced poet who fails to rouse the desired rasa even though he is handling such a delicate subject as Vipralambasrnagara. It might be recalled in this connection how a poet like Marvell could write on a dew drop and invest it with a new dimension while Milton wrote on heaven and hell and often failed to make them a felt experience for us. Which only goes to show that it is not the theme but the treatment that is important in literature which is to acknowledge Rajashekara's fine critical insight.

Rajashekara has a few firsts to his credit by virtue of the fact that he deals for the first time with a concept like Kavisamaya exhaustively, different from Vamana's Kavyasamaya. While the latter prescribes a strict adherence to rules relating to grammar, metre and gender so that errors may not creep into poetic compositions, the former allows a certain
freedom better known as poetic licence. Rajashekara himself is aware that *Kavisamaya* is *lokasastraviruddha* and *asastriya* but his readiness to use it in poetry bespeaks of a permissive mind.

His advice to the poets not to record their observations indiscriminately nor follow the rules of poetics blindly but take care to maintain propriety in description deserves mention.

It is also pointed out that no author before Rajashekara had dealt with the subject of *Sabdarthaharana* or plagiarism of both words and ideas with such a wealth of detail as Rajashekara does here in three chapters.

All in all, the book occupies an important place in the history of Indian poetics — a book that begins by tracing the origin of poetry and concludes with the most significant observation that all "poetic culture is only the discrimination of the proper and the improper, Ucita and Anucita" — a criterion that would seem to endure for all times.

With Kuntaka, the inaugurator of a new school of poetics called *Vakrokti*, we enter upon yet another phase in Sanskrit literary criticism which partly continued Anandavardhana's tradition and partly deviated from it. Some of Kuntaka's successors, notably, Mahimabhatta thought *Vakrokti* was but *dhvani* served out in another garb; that Kuntaka had modelled
his work on that of Anandavardhana utilizing most of the instances given by the former and changed the name dhvani into Vakrokti. The charge was apparently based upon the statistical support offered by the forty odd verses common to both works, Dhvanyaloka and Vakroktijivita. Strong as Anandavardhana's influence might understandably be, Kuntaka nevertheless retains the individuality of his work by extending, supplementing and even departing when necessary. However, many later advocates of the dhvani theory are found referring to Kuntaka with approval.

The nearest English translation of the term Vakrokti often offered by the Sanskrit scholar being "irony", Mahimabhatta's argument that Vakrokti was but Dhvani in a different form could be challenged on grounds that irony and suggestion cannot be one and the same. Though irony could be suggestive Kuntaka's accent is not so much on its suggestibility as its strikingness, its deviation from common parlance dictated by the necessities of poetic function.

Aware as he is of the existence of several earlier studies of poetry, Kuntaka yet justifies his own work as a "fresh study which contains matter not found in earlier works". Be that as it may, his definition of a poetic composition which recalls that of the earlier poeticians places him in the mainstream of Sanskrit poetics.

Vakroktijivita, trs. into English by K. Krishnamoorthy (Karnatak University, Dharwad, 1977), p. 288. All subsequent references are to this edition only and will be made in the body of the text itself.
A poetic composition created with an eye to beauty is not only a means for the inculcation of values like righteousness, but also a delight to the hearts of the elite. (p. 289)

This is an attribute of poetry which almost every Indian critic without exception is agreed upon notwithstanding other differences.

Kuntaka wanted poetry in the first place to be purposeful. The ancient Indian critic's repeated insistence on the prayojna of Kavya must set at nought the Western allegation that the Indian mind which revelled in abstraction pursued a contemplative life at the cost of the active. As though in answer to the charge Kuntaka very soon launches on a practical analysis of poetry in the utmost modern sense winning both attention and respect. He quotes a verse which elicits the following comments from him:

Here we have a poet so poor in imagination and so weak in skilled speech that he shows off only his craze for verbal alliterations. There is not even an iota of beauty in the content. (p. 293)

and again,

Here the poet seems to have a striking idea flashing across his creative fancy; but unfortunately his mind is so soaked in the terminology of dry logical syllogisms that his language becomes a poor vehicle to express the idea adequately. There is not an atom of artistic grace in the language employed by the poet. The form of this verse remains the form of a syllogism in logic. (p. 293)
Kuntaka takes up every word for detailed analysis and sums up how one is "uncouth", another "unidiomatic", another "wrong" while yet another far from "common usage". A passage that bears out his minute attention to what is there on the page, a quality that has made Leavis so respectable today, needs to be studied closely.

In the third line the long compound used appears tedious and in no way appears acceptable to the man of taste. In the last line, the compound expression 'ravivyapara' puts wrong emphasis on vyapara (activity) instead of ravi (the Sun-God) which alone deserves emphasis. Nor is it difficult of achievement by a trained poet, for by simply removing the word from the compound and giving it its nominative case-termination, that is, saying raveh vyaparah instead of ravivyaparah, it would suit the metre as well. (p. 294)

Here is a positive kind of criticism — that first exposes the fault and then tries to rectify it with the authority of a master. This exercise continues and examples abound from well-known works such as Malatimadhava, Balaramayana, Sisupalavadha, Kumara Sambhava, Raghuvamsa, Meghaduta, Venisambhara, etc. If a verse in Bhallata-Sataka strikes him for its "discrepancy between idea and expression" (p. 301) "which detracts from its beauty" (p. 301) (anticipating Eliot's "between the conception and the execution there falls a shadow"), another in Balaramayana strikes him with its 'impropriety' and consequently a loss of beauty owing to carelessness in respect of sentiment. Elsewhere he quotes
from *Raghuvaṃsa* where Rama remembers an incident that smacks of "extreme impropriety" considering his heroic qualities. (p. 356) A similar instance of impropriety is seen in *Kumaraśambhava* also where a certain speech by the Love-God before Indra "bristles with bad manners" (p. 357). The very reasons he assigns for singling out Kalidasa for censure reveal Kuntaka's incisive mind.

It is because this poet is full of beauties packed with natural elegance that we have selected him for pointing out the lapses. We are not bothered by other ordinary poets who abound in only artificial tricks of poetry. (p. 357)

It is not always denunciation either. He is alive to the "artistic beauty of expression", to the poet's capacity to convey the particular shade of thought and 'original invention'. He therefore rightly insists that "only when the right verbal correlative for the particular has been found, the delight of the reader is assured". (p. 302) The identity of thought between Kuntaka's "verbal correlative" and Eliot's "objective correlative" like the other example of Kuntaka's "discrepancy between idea and expression" and Eliot's "shadow" between "conception" and "execution" should make Kuntaka's contribution even more arresting by virtue of his antiquity in addition to compelling the present Western oriented Indian critic to do some heartsearching.

Kuntaka devotes considerable space to a definition of *marga* in poetry, namely (1) the elegant (2) the brilliant
and (3) the mixed. His description of the first two in particular is memorable and worth quoting. The elegant style is "juicy", where words and meanings spring out of their own accord "as naturally as tender shoots appearing in a plant"; (p. 331) and are not "devised by force" (p. 331) (the amazing parallelism with Keats's "poetry should come as naturally as leaves to a tree" cannot be missed) and is reminiscent of the "supreme artistic creation of the universe by the Creator himself" (p. 333) in its beauty and inscrutability. The 'brilliant' style is 'impassable'; wherein the whole order of nature is made to appear in a new perspective altogether by "the sweet will of the poet"; all existing things are "transformed into new shapes at his will". Kuntaka makes it unambiguous that these styles are perfected only by the master-poets in their earnest quest after perfection with the aid of long, assiduous practice. In fact, Mammata is later going to make Abhyasa (practice) one of the three pre-requisites for a poet.

Like Anandavardhana, Kuntaka also attaches supreme importance to aucitya or propriety. Propriety is a "literary quality" (p. 352); "adds to the grandur of the subject", in fact, "the vital essence of all poetic description" (p. 352) which along with another twin literary quality, "splendour" ought to permeate all the three different styles extensively. "Appropriate expression" is the "life-breath" of a sentence ... "absence of it even in a part will destroy the delight of the connoisseurs" (p. 356). In fact, in a work as a whole.
if some part should lack in propriety, it becomes tarnished even like a garment which is wholly spoilt though burnt only at one end. (p. 356)

The theory of Aucitya which was systematically developed by Kshemendra but which nevertheless received utmost importance at the hands of several other rhetoricians is undoubtedly one of ancient India's valuable contributions to world poetics. What makes aucitya itself possible is a sense of discrimination — a key word in Leavisian criticism. Even so, it is good to realize, this fine awareness was an essential part of the equipment of every Indian critic of the past — in fact, they not merely offered a significant epithet, samiksha (discrimination) but also to repeat what was earlier posited, went so far as to say that all poetic culture is the discrimination of ucitya and anucitya, of what is proper and what is not. Indeed, this preoccupation with propriety assumes the form of an obsession, so much so we have Anandavardhana talking of Aucitya of Rasa, Vastu, Alankara, Guna, Varna, Pada, Vrtti, Riti and character, all finally leading him to the inevitable conclusion that Aucitya is the greatest secret of Rasa, para- upanisat and that its presence and absence makes and unmakes Rasa and ... implicitly ... poetry. Reverting to Kuntaka, the examples he provides from master-poets to illustrate cases of impropriety, (anucitya) are educative in that they sensitise us not merely to the artistic and literary failures on the part of the poets concerned but serve as a warning against man's inner
transgression in personal life. Such an exercise is befitting a great critic indeed.

Kuntaka attempts a special treatment of the first variety of Vakrokti, namely "art in the arrangement of syllables" in his second chapter. His remarks on alliteration reveal an amazingly modern and sophisticated sensibility. Alliteration should be achieved effortlessly — "effected without extra effort" (p. 365), "adorned with syllables which are not harsh" (p. 365); should not suggest any "inordinate craze" on the part of the poet. If effected with "downright craze and great labour", there will be a loss of "harmony" which will destroy the "mutual coherence" (sahitya) between word and meaning that is the pre-condition of all good poetry. His examples of "laboured alliteration" support the argument. Hence his repeated exaltation of a 'master-poet' who alone could produce a unique aesthetic experience by his expert art in the usage of words in a manner warranting comparison with the craft of a good jeweller skilled in the placement of gems or that of an old and experienced florist who arranges his diverse flowers in such a way as to please a man of taste (p. 463).

The section which deals with the (1) art of beautifying conventional sense (2) art in the use of synonyms and (3) art in the use of epithet is particularly fascinating, for Kuntaka draws our attention to several revealing examples from classical plays where the playwrights have conveyed the intended emotion
with great power and force by resorting to the use of a mere proper name. For instance:

You cannot lay claims to success until you have conquered Raghu. (p. 372)

But oh, if only he were not Ravana! (p. 372)

I am, to be sure, Rama, ... and I will bear all. But how will Vaidehi be? (p. 371)

The mere proper names here suggest forcefully what whole sentences would not have done. It is fitting that the critic should be sensitive to all these delicate shades of poetry and dwell at length on the beauty of various aspects like metaphor, gender, number, person, action, time, etc., with examples. He also devotes a whole chapter to a discussion of various figures of speech like rasavat, dipaka, rupaka, utpreksa, atisayokti, upama and others with examples widely drawn from different sources: Malathimadhava, Kirata-Juniya, Raghuvasa, Kumarasambhava, Balaramayana and others. Kuntaka's sense of discrimination is seen in his rejection of Samasokti as a figure of speech on grounds that it cannot be regarded as an independent figure, because it shares the characteristics of other recognized figures and also because it is devoid of beauty. The same applies to Sahokti, he suggests. Credit must be given to Kuntaka for not merely restricting the number of alankaras to a minimum, but for insisting on their proper use so as to justify them in a kavya. In his opinion "the only justification for an adornment
lies in its adding aesthetic charm to the adorned and in nothing else" (p. 469). Accordingly if a figure "lacks in beauty, it forfeits its claim for a figure of speech." (p. 517) Hence his warning to the poet to avoid "hackneyed metaphors like face-moon" (p. 472), which are not adequate to convey his extraordinary feeling. Kuntaka's own justification for discussing the various figures are based on the assumption that they help in the "promotion of aesthetic effect". (p. 522) Referring to the lines that Bhamaha made fun of in his Kavyalankara, "The sun has set/the moon shines best", etc, Kuntaka also ridicules them, calling them "no better than mere reportage (Vartha)" (p. 462). Each such discovery startles us into a recognition that all intricate aspects of poetry that engage a modern critic's mind had already come within the ambit of this early Indian critic. That he should, for instance have thought it necessary to point out that in a Kavya, the meaning should be "undimmed", "original" and not "trite" or "worn-out by repeated usage" (p. 463) reflects in a large measure his inwardness with poetry. Yet with a humility he could confess on occasions:

The infinite forms of poetic expression arising from the creative genius of the poet baffle enumeration even like the infinite graces of one's own beloved. (p. 495)

mence he found it easier to sum up his enjoyment of literature in an innocuous way such as:

The artistic speech of a good poet appeals to one's heart even like one's beloved. (p. 535)
This excessive importance given to the artistic merit of the word should not mislead us into thinking that the critics of the past were not concerned with other aspects like construction of the plot etc., for Kuntaka gives a whole chapter of his Vakroktijivitam to a consideration of beauty of Prakarana, i.e., incident or episode in a composition. In the first place, "a poet should select only such themes as are capable of evoking sentiments and moods and generating a sense of wonder in the readers. He should also see that the theme so selected will give full scope for the exquisitely aesthetic, original and matchless inventive power of his genius". (p. 541) As a next step Kuntaka discusses the role of a poet's originality in the building up of a plot:

When a poet is constructing a plot of his own, based though it might be on a well-known source, if he succeeds in infusing even a small streak of originality the beauty gained thereby will be singular. (p. 540)

Kuntaka's awareness of the importance of evoking bhava, rasa and abhuta in the mind of the reader by the poet crystallizes itself in such illuminating passages as the following despite the inevitably inadequate English translation of terms like rasa into 'sentiments', etc.

The words of great poets come to life only when they contain incidents which are bubbling with sentiments: not when they merely follow the story as found in the source. (p. 544)

And again,
even a little incident, when given literary treatment, ... will shine with unique artistic beauty. (p. 552)

Kuntaka gives the example of the hunting episode in Raghu-vamsa which could have been "stated in a short sentence" (p. 552) but the creative genius of Kalidasa invests it with exquisite beauty that instantly appeals to the readers.

Kuntaka's amazing unorthodoxy of mind and catholicity are seen in his unconventional approach to rules of poetics and the extent of freedom he allows the poet. The passages, long as they are deserve to be quoted for the sheer courage and insight they show in resisting a puritanical attitude to poetic rules and regulations.

The art of the dramatic plot ... should not be vitiated by any excessive craze for observing rules even when they are inopportune. Only in such cases, the episodes will reveal a unique charm of originality. (p. 566)

... ...
Such a construction of incidents merely for the sake of rules will not result in poetic beauty. A poet should have the fundamental logical discretion in deciding the total purport of his whole work... A disregard of these results in the craze for observing theoretical rules for drama ... as enunciated by Bharata for their own sake ... will lead to construction of incidents ... which are not integral to the story. (p. 568)
Kuntaka gives an example of such a bad construction of episodes in the second Act of the *Venisamhara* when Duryodhana is shown in the harem of his queen indulging in amorous sports when a great battle is raging outside and all his kith and kin are slain and Bhismā is lying on a bed of arrows: "... all this is extremely inappropriate and deserves only condemnation" (p. 586). Kuntaka points out a similar defect in the *Sisupalavadha* when a detailed description of Dvarakā is attempted in the course of a description of Krishna who has actually set out towards Indraprastha!

Similarly Kuntaka's advice to the poet to eschew repeated descriptions of such occurrences as the moon-rise with the qualification that they might be resorted to only in case the plot demands their recurrence and in such a context the poet should take care to see he varies the style of description in each case (p. 548) speaks volumes for Kuntaka's creative and critical sensibilities and an ever-vigilant aliveness to stereotyped patterns in poetry. To prove that such an elegant variation invests even conventional themes with aesthetic appeal, he cites the examples of *Harsarita*, *Tapasavatsaraja* and others where the poets have imparted beauty by a strikingly new and varied style. On other occasions they are at liberty to abandon a particular *rasa* in a story borrowed from an ancient source and substitute it with another *rasa* which is calculated to yield greater delight to cultivated readers besides securing for the work a new beauty all its own.
The last section of Vakroktijivitam carries an interesting discussion on the aptness of titles for plays. Rightly in Kuntaka’s view a poet can display his art even in designating his play with an arresting title.

The proper name itself reveals the abounding inventive power of the poet, since it significantly highlights the most important and interesting aspect of the whole plot itself, serving as the vital essence as it were of the work as a whole. (p. 575)

In fact, in Kuntaka’s estimation an appropriate title occupies such an important place that he goes so far as to declare that there is greater merit in giving a significant title than in the construction of a plot, for it is there that a poet truly displays his great constructive skill. By way of illustration, Kuntaka offers such titles as Abhijnana-Sakuntala, Mudra-raksasa, Pratimani-ruddha, Mayapushpaka, etc., which contribute to the beauty of the works concerned as against such simple and straightforward titles as Hayagriva-vadha, Sisutulavadha, Pandavabhuyudaya, Ramananda and Ramacarita which are inane and therefore not evocative.

Kuntaka concludes with a perceptive passage that serves as a fitting finale to this very important critical work:

Even when great poets compose different literary works based on an identical theme, they are each seen to possess infinite individual beauty, each
possessing distinctness from the others... (p. 576)

A fine instance that Kuntaka provides in this connection is that of the original story of Rama, on the single theme of which are based innumerable literary works. Though they are all based on an identical theme they present an infinitely rich variety, so much so "each word, each sentence and each incident radiates a new glow of originality ..." (p. 576).

It is significant that Kuntaka is aware of all the underlying potentialities in a theme that lend themselves to various types of treatment at the hands of the poets depending upon their individual genius and equipment. At a time when there is a clamour for new themes and a hue and cry raised against worn-out ones, Kuntaka’s fresh outlook on the subject must provide the necessary perspective. All in all he is a worthy successor to Anandavardhana.

The next important name to be mentioned in Sanskrit criticism is perhaps that of Mamata whose Kavyaprakasa has enjoyed immense popularity judging by the number of commentaries and glosses it has caused to be written. Besides being treated as a standard text-book in Sanskrit literary criticism it is also looked upon as the starting-point of endless text-books and exegesis. It is also admitted that Mamata helped to establish finally the doctrines of the Dhvani school of Anandavardhana. Attention is justly drawn to the fact that Mamata presented no novel theory or concept
but only summarized in a concise and lucid way all the
previous stock of ideas put forward by his predecessors and
yet his distinction consists in this very lucid and clear
presentation of some already discussed, but vital ideas.

In his Kavyaprákása, Mammata glorifies the poet's word
as "supreme", "free from the laws of náyati or destiny" and charming on account of the nine rasás. The essential
Indian character comes out when poetry is interpreted as
resulting in a "cessation of the inauspicious" and "immediate
bliss par excellence". (p. 5) The West might have regarded
poetry as one's redemption but seldom perhaps as "cessation
of the inauspicious". The concept of auspiciousness ascribed
to Oriental sensibility carries with it a whole ethos of
national culture and way of life that are unmistakably Indian.

If Keats upheld the view that a poet should whisper
thoughts a to one's neighbours, this is what Mammata has to
say of poetry: "It imparts advice in the manner of a beloved."
(p. 5) Another evidence to prove that we could meet the
West on our own terms. That literature was conceived to have
a practical end by the so-called impractical Indians is seen
in Mammata's observation that poetry teaches one to behave
like Rama and not like Ravana.

9 Kavyaprákása of Mammata, Vols. 1 & 2, translated into English
by R.C. Dwivedi (Motilal Banarasidass, Delhi), p. 3.
All subsequent references are to this edition only and
will be made in the body of the text itself.
As against Wordsworth's rather inadequate theory of poetry as "emotion recollected in tranquillity" and "a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" we have Mammata ascribing the origin of poetry to "imagination, proficiency resulting from a study of the world, sciences, poetical compositions and the like, practice under the guidance of those who know poetry". (p. 7) "Those who know poetry" here apparently refers to those who know both how to write and judge poetry.

Mammata's division of poetry into three kinds on the lines of Anandavardhana, namely (1) Suggestive poetry (2) Mediocre poetry and (3) Lowest poetry and the pride of place he assigns to dhvani kavya where the suggested meaning far excels the expressed sense anticipates Western critics like Eliot who pleaded for a poetry of indirection and tentativeness as against one of assertion and dogma.

At the same time it must be added that the work abounds in divisions and sub-divisions, classifications and re-classifications in a manner characteristic of Sanskrit criticism. Mammata not merely describes the Word to be of three kinds, (1) expressive (2) indicative and (3) suggestive but makes further sub-divisions. Having determined that suggestive poetry is the best kind, Mammata goes on to analyse how suggestion itself arises and attributes three causes (1) power of word (2) power of meaning and (3) both. Further, suggestion arising from the power of word is two-fold; from
the power of meaning is initially three which later becomes six-fold and finally twelve kinds and that arising from both word and meaning is only one. (fortunately for the readers!) If suggestive poetry is of three types, vastu, alankara and rasa, the poetry of subordinated suggestion is known to be of eight varieties. However, on closer examination, even this 'exercise in cataloguing serves to highlight the keen analytical mind of the ancient Indian critic who never tired of contemplating on cause and effect of things. It was not enough for him to say that there was suggestion but he had to probe how suggestion arose from various factors such as inflection, declension, case-termination, genitive termination, tense, number, besides suffix, compound, locative, syllable and style. So this is how Mammata expatiates upon the nature of poetry in the first half of his work kavya-prakasa. The second half is given over to a discussion of the time-honoured topics in literary criticism namely, gunas and dosas in poetry. It is significant that the critic of the older times was aware not merely of the merits of poetry, but of its defects. Mammata furnishes a list of sixteen defects pertaining to the word used in poetry. They are of mixed nature, some of them convincing and valid even today while others betray a certain conservative attitude. It must however be appreciated that Mammata does not just state but demonstrates by example how blemishes are committed and even suggests an alternative word, phrase or expression that would have been more appropriate in the context. His examples are drawn
from such celebrated and established works as Kumarasambhava, Vikramorvasiyam, Raghuvasa, Bhattkavya, Malatimadhava, Venisamhara and so on. Words which are unmelodious to hear also receive attention at his hands which shows the Indian critic's attention to the euphonic value of words. Next follows the list of blemishes accruing in the sentence form. These number twenty-one according to him. It is worthy of mention that as before he offers suggestions and corrections which makes his criticism on the whole fruitful and constructive. His list of twenty-three defects of meaning renders his survey complete and comprehensive. Defects such as "irrelevance", "tautology", "want of novelty", "indecorum", etc., mentioned by Mammata suggest his alert critical mind. He takes up each of them separately for study supporting and defending his argument with copious illustrations from well-known works. A method which is most enviably modern in character that Mammata employs is that of comparison and contrast. For instance he takes two examples from two different works to show how one author has failed while another has succeeded in making a similar attempt. He takes care to point out, with examples too, how in certain cases these very blemishes like indecorum, obscurity, redundancy, etc., can turn into excellences depending upon the speaker, the one spoken to, the content and the context. (pp. 293-299) Last but not least in importance are the blemishes of rasa which number ten in Mammata's opinion. Some of the important blemishes mentioned by him are repeated heightening, untimely
elaboration, untimely interruption, excessive expansion of a subordinate factor ignoring the principal factor, etc. But what he most emphatically denounces is the verbal expression of *rasa*. A verse which describes Parvathi growing "bashful at the lover's face" is a case in point. Mammata rightly finds fault with the word "bashful" which is too directly expressed and not simply hinted at, and himself offers a substitute, 'cast down' which *suggests* bashfulness instead of *expressing* it! Similarly he protests against the verbal expression of the basic emotions like *srngara*, *utsaha*, etc. A highly evolved and modern sensibility is at work when he points out the defect arising from untimely elaboration of a disharmonious sentiment. He furnishes in this connection the same example of the II Act of the *Venisamhara* that Kuntaka had earlier illustrated, where the love of Duryodhana for Bhānumathi is described at a time when many had perished to death. This is perhaps where criticism can improve and refine our responses and act as a civilizing influence. What is involved here is a question of propriety and in the words of Anandavardhana the greatest secret about *rasa* is propriety. As before Mammata hastens to add that there could be exceptions to blemishes in *rasa* under certain circumstances. This flexibility of approach shows that there is no hard and fast rule to be applied in relation to literature but only certain revokable norms depending upon the context. This readiness to examine both aspects reveals Mammata's undogmatic approach in his elucidation of poetic 'blemishes.'
It is appropriate that Mamnata should dwell on the excellences of poetry after enumerating the various blemishes. He recognizes only three guṇas, (1) Madhurya or sweetness (2) Ojas or forcefulness and (3) Prasada or perspicuity as against the ten excellences admitted by Vamana. This leads him logically to a discussion of diction, figures of speech and style. A fondness for classification continues even here when pun is described to have eight varieties, simile two and metaphor two. The other figures of speech dealt with in great detail supported by illustrations number far too many and the reader finds it incredible to accept even plain factual statements or expressions of truth as falling into the categories of figures of speech. But what saves the chapter from deteriorating into a dry and fruitless exercise is the critic's awareness of the blemishes that arise from faulty figures of speech like harsh alliteration, stylistic disharmony, futility of alliteration, impropriety of meaning caused by the absence of similarity and improbability in a simile, inexpressiveness, tautology, irrelevance, etc.

For all his indebtedness to his predecessors Mamnata shows originality of mind on several occasions which makes the work distinctively his and not just a variation of other great works that have gone before it. It is true that he offers no new theory or concept but the modern reader could still turn profitably to him for his refreshing insights into poetry.
The same could be true of Visvanatha as well, the author of *Sahityadarpana*, said to have lived in 14th Cent. Influenced by the schools of *rasa* and *dhvani* his observations on the nature of poetry give one the impression that he is more a compiler than an original thinker. Yet his definition of poetry as *Vakyan rasatmakam kavyam*,\(^{10}\) his strong differences with his predecessors like Vamana, Kuntaka and Mammata and his inclusion of the dramatic form in his poetics unlike many other critics who concern themselves exclusively with poetry confer upon him the status of a critic worthy of attention. True to Indian tradition he mentions the four *Purusarthas* of life as the final aim of poetry. While Vamana felt that the fruits of a *Kavya* were pleasure and fame (*priti* and *kirthi*) Mammata thought that poetry led to fame, acquisition of wealth, knowledge of the ways of the world and cessation of the inauspicious. Visvanatha however, includes all this comprehensively under the four *Purusarthas* and strives to show how poetry can lead to the attainment of each of the four goals of life. In this context he draws support from an ancient Indian authority, the *Agnipurana* which also upholds the view that the science of dramaturgy or dramatic representation is a means of accomplishing the *trivarga*: *dharma*, *artha* and *kama*. To this extent at least all writers on poetics are agreed that any poetry worth its name must have a *pravojana*. In fact, this is one of the four requisites of

\(^{10}\) *The Sahityadarpana*, translated by P.V. Kane (Motilal Banarasidass, Delhi), p. 5. All subsequent references are to this edition only and will be made in the body of the text itself.
a book according to Sanskrit writers, the other three being adhikarın, visaya and sambandha.

Visvanatha's criticism of Mammata shortly after his definition of a Kavya raises a few interesting points. In the first place this tendency to criticize a predecessor is not uncommon in Sanskrit poetics and secondly this practice itself must be regarded as a healthy convention by the modern reader for the sheer opportunity it provided to keep the critical climate active and invigorating. The sense of freedom with which a writer took exceptions to an idea or a concept formulated by his predecessor in ancient India is also extremely commendable.

Visvanatha attacks Mammata on two points; in the first place for defining Kavya as adosau, faultless. If none but a faultless piece were to be regarded as poetry, then poetry would be a rare thing indeed or would not exist at all, since it is extremely improbable that a piece should be free from faults in every respect. Therefore if all pieces that are faulty in any respect are to be excluded there will remain nothing that can answer to the definition of a Kavya given by Mammata. Mammata's definition of a Kavya is too narrow (Avyapti) according to Visvanatha. Any definition in his opinion must be free from three faults — avyapti, ativyapti and asambhava (too narrow, too wide and quite impossible). Mammata's is narrow because it excludes certain verses which are universally acknowledged to be the best type
of poetry. Visvanatha also raises objection against Mammata's compromising attitude of considering a poem as faulty only in such parts where blemishes occur and the rest of it as good, for Visvanatha's contention is that such blemishes do not mar merely a part of a poem but the whole of it, since rasa itself suffers in the process. He also takes exception to Mammata's statement "sagunau sabdarthau" (meaning that the gunas (excellences) are the properties of words and senses) on the ground that the gunas are the properties of rasa and not of sabda and artha and so we should say sarasau and not sagunau. But his view that gunas simply heighten a kavya and are not of its essence and therefore should not be referred to in the definition of a kavya sounds rather intriguing. His similar opinion of alankaras is however more understandable. He objects to Mammata's mention of them on the same ground he dismissed gunas earlier, for figures also merely heighten the beauty of a kavya and not form the essence of poetry. In defining poetry then, only the essentials should be selected and no reference at all be made to alankara. Justifying his stand he says:

If we were to define a child, we should not refer to the ornaments which children might wear, since they do not constitute the essentials of a child.

(p. 16)

From the foregoing remarks of Visvanatha on Mammata's definition of poetry it looks as if Visvanatha is a little too fastidious and even self-contradicting, for in one breath,
he says poetry cannot be entirely free of blemishes and in another he says that a fault in a poem mars not merely the section in which it occurs but the entire composition. So what is one to make of his ambiguous stand?

His differences with Kuntaka stem from the fact that he views vakrokti as merely an alankara and as not even the body of poetry, much less the soul. While this censure might sound unwarranted and unjustified his reservation about Vamana’s definition of poetry, “Ritiratma kavyasya” and “visista pada racana ritih” seems to be well-grounded and his argument is both convincing and authoritative:

Riti is a particular kind of arrangement; and arrangement is nothing but a particular disposition or posture of parts; and what is called soul is different from this. The different parts of our body assume different positions; but they are distinct from the soul. Similarly sabda and artha are the body of kavya. The various arrangements of words etc., can never constitute the soul. (p. 28)

Visvanatha’s rejection of gunas and alankaras as the essence of poetry does not however preclude him from a discussion of word, sentence, meaning and figure of speech. Like his predecessors he too expatiates on the nature and power of the word, its varieties and its attributes with examples. Apart from offering his own definition of word and sentence he shows an awareness of the several interpretations provided by grammarians, rhetoricians, mimamsakas, the ancients and the moderns. However, his statements on vyanjana as the most
important and necessary function of the 'word' in the communication of rasa, sound like mere echoes of what the illustrious Anandavardhana had already propounded.

Yet in fairness to Visvanatha, it must be admitted that he retains his individuality on such occasions as when for instance he accepts only two divisions of poetry, viz., dhvani and gunibhutavyangya kavya and rejects the third, the citra-kavya on grounds that it is entirely devoid of rasa and therefore inconsistent with his definition of poetry, though his wisdom in rejecting it altogether must be held in question, for it is a form of literature that exists irrespective of one's tastes and one simply cannot wish it away. The fact that Anandavardhana recognized such a category of literature does not mean that he was accommodating or lax in his standards but that he was simply realistic enough to give designation to a form of literature which however occupies the lowest place in his scale of importance.

It might seem paradoxical that Visvanatha should devote a lengthy chapter to alankaras even though he had himself earlier brushed them aside as non-essential to poetry and also enumerate ever so many of them — including 'doubt', 'error', 'representation', 'concealment', 'certainty', 'frustration', 'reminiscence' and so on. But then Visvanatha's position is that of a critic who deems alankaras as accidental and not essential; rather as indirect promoters of rasa.
In the final analysis barring some differences with his predecessors over matters of guna and riti, his work is modelled extensively upon the schools of rasa and dhvani. His role has been more that of a man who continued and preserved the traditions of these two schools of criticism rather than being an innovator himself of any new theory or concept. To the extent he did this with clarity, conviction and authority he is assured of the same kind of popularity that Mammata enjoys today.

No survey of Sanskrit criticism would be complete without including the names of Udbhata, Rudrata, Mahimabhatta, Bhattanayaka, Sankuka, Bhatta Thauta, Bhatta Lollata, Abhinavagupta, Kshemendra and Jagannatha Pandita, especially when one considers the fact that at least three of the mentioned here, Mahimabhatta, Abhinavagupta and Kshemendra were chiefly responsible for the systematic development of the theories of Anumana, Santha and Aucitya respectively. But for fear a separate analysis of each of them in the manner the earlier rhetoricians are treated might inflate the present investigation and make it too unwieldy, such an endeavour is not undertaken. Suffice to say that while the Anumana theory has only a historical importance Santha with its spiritual and philosophical overtones and Aucitya with its aesthetic appeal have made an indelible impact on succeeding generations. Particular mention must be made of Abhinavagupta's singular achievement in making Anandavardhana
not merely acceptable but popular and respectable by clarifying and elaborating his ideas through the now justly famous commentary, *Dhvanyaloka-Locana*. Credit must also be given to Abhinava-gupta for investing the *Dhvani* theory with a philosophical implication. Besides, his own efforts to view *aucitya* against the background of *guna* and *dhvani* contrary to the existing practice of some to view it independently of *guna* and *dhvani* make him a major critical force.

Thus Sanskrit criticism with its beginnings in the Vedic period, kept amazingly alive till the 17th cent., presents a remarkable picture of continuity notwithstanding its diverse currents. The diversity itself is a part of its spectacular richness, depth and complexity. A body of criticism that offered such vitally important theories as *guna*, *alankara*, *riti*, *dhvani*, *vakrokti* and *aucitya* cannot be allowed to become obsolete and antiquarian. The vitality and the livingness of its thought is seen in its incisive concepts, explanations and illustrations. Just a handful of the celebrated ones could be considered here to remind ourselves of the forgotten treasures:

*Rasasvada* is equivalent to *Parabrahma-saksatkara* or *Brahmasvadamiva anubhavayan* if not *Brahmananda Sahodarah*. And again *rasacarvana* is comparable to *anandacarvana* that one experiences while contemplating *Brahmi-sthiti*. The very vocabulary used in the description of *Rasa* with all its
evocativeness could be a significant contribution to world-
criticism. Perhaps no other concept has given rise to so
many terms as rasa has done and each in its turn fathers
forth a new thought: rasanubhava (aesthetic rapture),
rasapratiti (perception of rasa), rasaprakasa (illumination
of rasa), rasabhava-para (devoted to or subserving rasa and
bhava), rasavesavaisadya (clarity of vision resulting from
the inspiration of rasa), rasanidhanabhuta (treasure-house
of rasa), rasanuguna-sabdartha-cinta (contemplation of the
word and the meaning conforming to rasa) rasaksipta (brought
forth by rasa), rasajnata (often interchangeable with
sahrdhayatva: sensibility) rasabhasa (a semblance or improper
manifestation of rasa) and so on. The other terms like
sahitya (togetherness of word and meaning), drsti (vision),
darsana (vision), prajna (consciousness), prakhya (intuition),
aveksana (examination), aucitya (propriety), sabdapaka (perfect
expression), arthapaka (perfect meaning), sabda-pradhanya
(supremacy of word), 'sabda-saundarya (beauty of expression),
sakti (imagination), sadaranikarana (universalization),
paranivrtthi, alaukika (transfiguration), samiksa (discrim-
ination), jivita, (life), vani (speech), vyapara (function),
lokadharmi (way of the world) cittavrtti (emotional state),
ramaniyata (beauty), Sannivesa-saundarya, alaukikahlada
(supernormal or transcendental joy), ananda, avsada (unique
joyful experience), etc., also convey the maturity of critical
thinking besides the power and majesty of the Sanskrit
language. The scintillating mind of the ancient Indian critic
is perhaps best manifested in the rhythmic and hypnotic
definition of Pratibha or Imagination: "Prajna nava-navolleka
salini pratibha"; "Pratibha apurvavastunirmana ..." A people
who discussed the body and soul (sarira and sariri) of poetry,
of Kavi-Vyapara (poetic function), Kavi-Samaya (poetic con-
vention), Kavyahetu (equipment of a poet), Kavvalaksana
(characteristics or attributes of poetry), Kavyaprayojana
(the purpose of poetry), Kavyasyatma (the soul of poetry),
Kavya-sobha (beauty or excellence, the ultimate test of all
poetry), Sabda and Artha as Ardhanaarisvara, Tadvid-ahlada-
karitva, sakala-prayojnastulibhuta, Pasyanti Vak (the Seeing
Word), Vyutpatti (culture), Bahujnata, Bahusrutatva (vast
erudition), Ucitanucita viveka (ability to discriminate),
Visesa, apasabda, nirasa (devoid of rasa, the greatest literary
flaw), cacophony which must at all costs be avoided; defined
a poet as one who "transforms" life (parivartate) and as
varnananipuna; examined the creative moment and looked upon
a mechanical figure of speech as a-kavya (unpoetic, and hence
no alankara) and an insufficiently-expressed idea as Mrtakalpa
(dead) and wrongly expressed idea as Vyadhibhuta (diseased)
have today placed themselves at the receiving end and mouth
pathetically"... what Robert Bridges calls..." or "what
Abercrombie describes..." The immediate need therefore is to
go back to our own past not either as slaves of an earlier
inheritance or masters but with a spirit of freedom and equality.\(^1\)

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\(^1\) Am indebted to Dr. S.K. Desai, Professor of English, Shivaji
University, for this idea. He made this point at a
Seminar on "Towards the Formulation of a Common Poetic
for Indian Literatures Today" held at Dhvanyaloka,
The excellences of this criticism should not however, make us oblivious of its limitations. In the best of Sanskrit criticism, analysis is confined only to single verses and whole works are never discussed. Criticism being an elitist affair might have thought it fit to dispense with demonstration which has resulted in a lack of method by which to judge a work of art. And whatever demonstration there is, is inadequate and unconvincing, for the examples provided to illustrate the concepts are invariably mediocre and puerile.

So this is where the modern Indian reader stands confronted with two streams of critical thought, Western and his own. While the Western tradition has taught him how to read a piece of literature intelligently and critically with the aid of very sophisticated devices, the Indian heritage has provided him with excellent concepts and a transcending aesthetic. Wisdom lies therefore not in abandoning either the one or the other, but in integrating the two, the "alacrity of the West" and the "illumination of the East". Scholars like Hiriyanna, Aurobindo and Coomaraswamy have demonstrated such a possibility before — the reason why they form the nucleus of the next chapter.