INDIAN AESTHETIC PERSPECTIVES
Chapter - 2

Indian Aesthetic Theories

Dr. Sunil Kumar Chatterji, the late professor in his foreword to the Bengali Translation of Visvanathan Acharya's Sahityadarpana by Dr. Bimala Kanta Mukhopadhyaya wrote on 15th May 1969 one the most profound aspects of the thought of India as part of its speculations in the domain of the higher philosophy and the ultimate reality has been its criticism of literature in its intent, its scope and its expression. Indian dramaturgy, Indian Poetics, Indian Aesthetics are among the finest productions of the Indian mind and as in all other branches of Indian thought, in its desire to go to the fundamentals, we have here a great system of original endeavour to unravel the mystery of literary and aesthetic enjoyment and to find its rationale.

Poetry has been a very precious possession of mankind from a very primitive period. Poetical production, obviously led to the development of a literary taste and the origin of the science of the Poetics. In poetics we are concerned with the effects of poetry in the mind of the man of literary taste and as such we are to examine certain mental states. The merits of a poetical work is determined by this science on the basis of this mental states. It will be observed that the man of literary taste may very in temperament and the assessment of the merits and the nature of appeal of a certain poetical work may not be the same incase of all the readers. Poetics in so far as it has the states of mind as the subject of study falls at per with introspective psychology the claim of which to be called a science is very insecure in contrast with modern psychology. Thus, poetics is useful in so far as it embodies certain broad generalisation on the nature of poetry and suggest some precisely proved mean and techniques for the production of better poetry.

India claims the distinction of having a long and glorious literary heritage. Sanskrit Kavyas were composed from as early a period as that of the Ramayana which marked the beginning of a more illustrious literary tradition.

"Even Rigveda the earliest of all the extant literary composition of the world, had good amount of poetic element and even that claims a good degree of poetic appeal."
This long literary heritage resulted in a standard literary taste and consequently there were very large number of work on poetics. These works had the already existing Kavyas a the objects of criticism or they formulated certain rules for composing good type of Kavyas and presented a theoretical discussion on the fundamental of kavya (the word kavya means not only poetical compositions in verse but also fiction, dramas and campus romances composed in mixed prose and verse). In English the term 'literature' is often used to mean the technical literatures also and the term poetry is used in a much restricted sense to mean only the literary compositions in verse. Hence the term 'Kavya' is used here more conveniently to cover all the varieties of the type of fine art based on words and meaning.

Poetics is one of the three main branches of knowledge in which Indian scholarship has made significant contribution, the other two being grammer and philosophy. The earliest Indian scholars formulations on poetry are seminal and Indian poetics presents a most fascinating and exciting area of Indian scholarship. Thomas Munro speaks highly of the comprehensive, thorough and systematic point of view enshrined in it. The great works produced by Indian scholars reveal the will and ability to develop a certain aesthetic theory in great detail, relating it to a metaphysical world-view on the one hand, and to a considerable amount of empirical data on the other. Their conclusions are undoubtedly the outcome of long close, professional observation and experience of art.

The insights of Indian aestheticians have remained unexplored owing to grave obstacles to communications. Their treatises are in sanskrit and are written in a terse and difficult style. The texts bristle with linguistic technicalities and are not always free from obscurity their wealth of details, mystical, dross, quaint, terminology and abstruse discussions create insuperable barrier to a reader who is not well-versed in Sanskrit and has not been properly initiated to this type of study. A careful perusal of Indian poetics, however after weeding out in essential details scholastic niceties, somewhat worn-out observations and unnecessary technicalities enmeshed in a dense opaque diction, will reveal profundity of Indian views on certain significant aspects of poetic creativity.

Indian poetics is far more profound than a system of rhetoric and in its highest reach, soars into aesthetics and linguistic philosophy. The field of poetics, as it developed in India, is full of logical, philosophical, epistemological, metaphysical and linguistic problems, a systematic study of which is likely to unfold new spheres of study and research. Indian ancient thinkers laid down excellent standards of literary taste and formulated an accurate theory of poetic expression.
Their finding reached their apex in the works of scholars like Anandvardhana, Kuntaka and Abhinavagupta which are still valid today and relatively novel to western thought and call for a systematic analysis.

Ransom calls poetry 'aesthetically organised language'. Indian aestheticians made the same point nearly thousand years ago with greater confidence. They have considered the language of poetry from various angles, and, as Krishnamoorthy points out, "the whole field of Sanskrit alankarasatra or poetics may be regarded as one continued attempt to unravel the mystery of beauty in poetic language". Most of the Indian poets and scholars have attached considerable importance to the form of poetry some of them have considered the form of poetry even more significant than its content. Bhoja regards poetry as a specialized mode of expression. In the prologue to Karpuramanjari Rajashekara also define poetry as a particular kind of speech (uktivisesah kavyam). He remarks: Neither is the idea the point nor the mere word but the manner of expressing that idea in word i the thing that makes for poetry. Citing Udbhata's observation, he again maintains in his kavymimansa that the subject matter is less important than the beautiful manner of poetic expression.


In the following lines we come to know about the theories mentioned above.
1. The Rasa Theory

The concept of Rasa in Indian literature is an indefinable realization. It suggests intense feeling with detachment. It covers two grounds, namely, a general nation and a technical meaning. Rasa has been expressed as flavour by some scholars, 'aesthetic emotion' or other suitable terms of others. In the aesthetic context the word suggest the sense of 'taste' with special emphasis on universality. The word in its etymology has grown out of the Sanskrit root which means 'tasting'.

The theory of Rasa forms one of the most important aesthetic foundations of Sanskrit poetic. From its first appearance in the dramatic theory of Bharata down to its establishment as the 'Soul of poetry' in the work of Visvanatha there has been a steady working out of the idea through its fairly long course of history.

Sanskrit poetics started with Bharata's Natyasastra and after him Bahama, Dandi, Vaman, Anandvardhana, Abhinavagupta, Kunteka, Mamatta Bhatta, Visvanatha, Acharya Jagannatha, Acharya Bhattacharjya and many others contributed their learned views and commentaries. The eminent rhetorician Visvanatha Acharya who belonged to Orissa had said, "Vakyam Rasatmakam Kavyam" which means poetry is that arrangement of words which is charged with rasa, that is the aesthetic emotion. That Rasa is the soul of poetry was for the first time stated by Anandvardhana, who was known for his famous treatise 'Dhvanyaloka'. Thus we find that rasa has been recognised as the essential constituent and essence of poetry since the time of Bharata. After him the tradition are Rajsekhara, Abhinavagupta, Mahimbhatta and Visvanatha, though it is apparent that Anandvardhana, Mamatta and Jagannatha too indirectly support this view with an accent in 'dhvani'. Instead of mere rasa they call it rasadhvani.

Bharata, who is said to be the first exponent of this school is of the view that rasa is the essence of poetry, as is evident from his statement in the sixth chapter of his Natyasastra-

--- 'na hi rasardate Kascidarthah pravartate' - no meaning can proceed from speech in the absence of rasa. Rasa primarily means 'taste' or 'flavour' or 'relish' but metaphorically it means, the emotional experience of beauty in poetry and drama. But taste flavour, of relish none of these renderings seems to be adequate. The word rasa is the simplest and at the same time the most
bewildering expression in the Sanskrit language. It is the simplest in the sense that even an illiterate and unsophisticated person instantly comprehends its meaning, even though he may not be able to define it precisely. 'Rasa' literally means, juice, essence of elixir, whether the relish is of the Aryans drinking of the soma juice or yogi's communion with the cosmic soul; or the reader's delightful experience of a beautiful piece of literature it is rasa. Bharata's explanation makes this abundantly clear. The sages ask him 'what is this commodity called Rasa? Bharata's reply is cryptic - 'That which is relished is rasa. In fact whether we use the word in its association with the palate or the transcendental experiences of a yogi or the delight afforded by art, the word rasa indicates the pleasure that each class of people receive from their experience. It has been found that no comprehensive word or phrase is adequate to convey the full import of rasa. Rasa is actually the impression created on the mind of the sympathetic audience by the expression of bhavas and is an experience the individual is subject to, on account of this expression. The idea of rasa is unique to Indian poetics and dramatics and is essentially a creation of the Indian genius, so how ever much one may try to translate the word rasa such a translation has always been found to be yet wanting.

Before proceeding further it is necessary to say a few words about the foundation of Rasa. It is based upon a particular view of psychology which holds that our personality is constituted, both towards its motivation and intellective, of a few primary emotion which lie deep in the subconscious or unconscious strata of our being these primary emotions are the anomalous, the ludicrous, the pathetic, the heroic, the passionate, the fearful, the nauseating, the wonder. Other aesthetic psychologists have in later time added to it the peaceful or intellectual and devotional. These emotions are running in a permanent manner and may in that sense be called dominant emotions (Sthayibhavas). These dominant states that determine the particular internal temperaments are regarded as the dominant characteristics of those emotional states. It should be noted that no emotion is called Rasa unless it is aesthetically excited. When a young man falls in love with a young woman and his whole frame is shaken we cannot speak of him as being the subject of Shringararasa or when his son is dead and crying in tears, we can not speak of him that he is in the Karunaraa. Rasa is an emotion excited by artistic circumstances or situations.

Now let us find how our dominant emotions can roused by aesthetic or artistic means? For this we are going to start with Bharata maxim from Natyasastra - 'vibhavanubhava-vyabhicarisamyogad-rasanispattih'. It means that the realisation
of rasa results from the union of vibhava, anubhava and vyabhicharibhava. When the permanent emotions (sthayibhavas) unite in the various other emotions (vibhavas, anubhavas, vyabhicaribhavas) attain the quality of rasa. Thus this is the original outline of the theory as propounded by Bharata. The sthayibhava or the permanent emotion in a piece of literature is the basis of rasa. The essence of which lies in asvada. When the vibhavas, anubhavas, and the vyabhicaribhavas unite to awaken the sthayibhava it emerges as rasa.

To be able to understand the rasa sutra of Bharata and the process of realisation of rasa, let us turn to the detailed examination of the nature of these emotions -

The sthayibhavas:

The Sthayibhavas are permanent or dominant moods which are made manifest within the heart of man of taste by the reading of kavya or the witnessing of a dramatic performance. These are eight in number, viz. rati (love), hasya (gaiety), soka (sorrow) krodha (anger), utsaha (ethusiasm), bhaya (fear), Jugupsa (repugnance), and vismaya (wonder). A ninth sthayibhava has been added by Abhinavagupta and Anandvardhana - nirveda (passiveness). These sthayibhavas are connected respectively with following sentiments (rasa) viz. shringara, hasya, Karuna, vira, bhayanaka, bibhatsa, abdhuta and santa.

Bharata explains that the sthayibhavas are the basis of rasa and are supreme among all the bhavas which are forty nine in number. Just as a king is supreme among men and a preceptor among his disciples, so is the sthayibhava, supreme among all bhavas. The sthayichava constitutes the principal theme of a composition. It runs through all other emotions like the threat of a garland and cannot be overpowered by them. Rather the latter feed and strengthen it and help it emerge as rasa. Thus the sthayibhavas are the core of rasa theory as enunciated by Bharata and elaborated by his successors. The word sthayibhava has been variously interpreted as a permanent state, durable psychological state, mental affection sentiment permanent mood and emotion. And so we can say that sthayibhavas are the innate, abiding impulses or emotions or instinctive disposition about which Mc Dougall says:

Take away this instinctive dispositions with their powerful impulses and the organism would become incapable of activity of any kind it would be inert and motionles like wonderful clock-work whose mainspring had been removed or a steam engine whose fires had been drawn. These impulses are the mental forces
that maintain and shape all the life of individuals and societies and in them we are confronted with the central mystery of life and mind will.  

The vibhavas:

Vibhava means the situation which is responsible to bring out sthayibhavas. It has two aspects - alambana and uddipana. In the mind of the person to which the sthayibhavas begin are known as alambana vibhavas. For example in the case of rati sthayibhava the beloved is the alambana. She is the mainstay responsible for the arousal of the emotion of love. The spring season, the moon lit night, the soft breezes and the fragrance of flowers are the uddipana (or exciting situation). Bhartrhari has beautifully explained the role of uddipana vibhavas in the following verse: who is it that can avoid the excitement of passion in the midst of a lovely night of spring, when the air is full of agreeable smell, the boughs of trees are covered with fresh foliage, the sweet cooings of cuckoos are causing great sensation on the hearts and the within sweet is slightly perceptible on the cheeks of moon faced ladies. The vibhavas, by their very nature, are stimuli, they presuppose a mental disposition in the character upon whom they operate. Coleridge too was referring to the importance of our mental disposition which we wrote: Dejection - AnOde.

We receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature give,
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud;
Ah! from the soil itself must issue forth

A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud Enveloping the earth -- And from the soil itself must there be sent A sweet and potent voice of its own birth,

Of all sweet sounds of life and element!

The Anubhavas:

Anubhavas suggest the effect which is seen upon the character after the emotions have been developed. Bharatamuni explains that anubhava is so called because it makes the spectators feel or experience the effect of abhinaya by means of words and gestures. Thus it speaks about the emotions experienced by the characters. For example we may quote the passionate outburst of the Moor on Othello, when stricken with remorse and anguish and weighed down by the death of his innocent wife at his own hands, he cries our:
Whip me, Ye devoids,
From the possession of his heavenly ight,
Blow me about in winds I roast me in sulphur!
Wash me in step-down gulfs of liquid fire!
O Desdemona! Desdemona dead!

(Shakespeare, Othello V-ii, lines 275-80)

These manifestations of emotions, whether through words or gesture, are voluntary. They spring from the intension of the characters swayed by emotion, to communicate it to others. But there are some other manifestation which are involuntary such as perspiration, change of colour, trembling, hamipilation.

The vyabhicari bhavas:

Vyabhicaribhavas are transitory mental states. They strike the mind in a feeling manner in course of experiencing a permanent mood. Although they are mental states they may be acted out in a manner so as to make others know about their occurrence. Bharata explains that in word 'vyabhicari' 'vi' and 'abhi', are prefixed and the root 'cari' means 'to make', since they move in relation to the principal emotion and help it emerge as sentiment (rasa) they are called 'vyabhicari'. They are thirty three in number - passiveness (nirveda), weakness (gani), Indolence (alasya), depression (dainya), Anxiety (cinta), Despair (visada), etc. Although Bharata numbered them thirty three, there may be many more transient emotions accompanying the principal one. Important thing to note is that they spring out of the principal emotions and ultimately merge into it. These transient emotion in Drama are like the waves and bubbles that appear and disappear as the mighty stream of the dominant emotion flow on, smiling and rippling and dancing. This can be explained from a passage in The Merchant of Venice, when Bassanio announces his choice of the right Casket, Portia remarks to herself:

How all the other passions fleet to air
As doubtful thoughts, and rash embraced despair,
As shuddering fear and green eyed jealousy,
O love, be moderate, allenly they ecstops,
In measure rain thy joy, scant this excess.
Thus we find that the realization of rasa is the result of the action of the senses (Prakriti) which is the cause of the experience of the inner world and the destination of the emotions. One can also say that the suggested meaning is rasa is a part of life that is distinct from the reality and is entirely a separate entity, a theory of the mind of the reader. It is the mental, way of life which really is a continuing experience of the same faculty of all the ideas, as it is an experience.

The basic thing to note about the theory of rasa is that it draws a clear distinction between real life experience and art experience. Art experience is not necessary it transpires from the mundane world of unalloyed beauty and bliss. That is why a Sahridya derives aesthetic pleasure from nature, Shringara rasa is also from Karunamaya. It is a universal experience of a response of a Sahridya, in a creative piece of art unless the reader possesses an adequate degree of mental and emotional equipment, he may not be able to establish that rapport with the poet which is essential for the realization of rasa by him. He must be samanabhama or the nature of poet himself. Rasa as has already been emphasized is a subjective experience and presupposes a degree of culture imagination and training in the reader. Only a Sahridya (having a feeling heart) or a Sumanas (having a trained mind) can gain access to the magic world of poetry.

Thus we came to the conclusion that rasa is a contemplative creative experience and not a purely abstract emotion.

Now we shall explain the determinants (vibhava) the consequent (anubhava) the transitory states (vyabhicarana) of the different sentiments (Rasas).

1) Shringara Rasa has been given highest honour ever since the beginning of the poetics. In words of Bharat whatever is sacred and pure and worth seeing can be compared to Shringara Rasa. According to Rudrate, "No other rasa is capable of producing that bliss of pleasure which the Shringara rasa does"

The Shayi vibhava of the erotic sentiment is amour (kama, love). The alambananvibhava are the hero and the heroine. The men, Sandal, the swarm of the bees youth, solitude, the songs of the cuckoo etc. are the udipana vibhavas. The side glances, twisting of limbs, knitting of the brows, etc. are the anubhavas. Leaving aside, light (prasada) etc. are vyabhicaribhavas.
(2) Karuna Rasa: A Sahrdaya derives aesthetic pleasure not only from the sringara rasa, hasya rasa, etc. but from karuna bhayanaka also. Karuna (pathos) is much more pleasurable because of its unusual power to meet the human heart.

'Of course only a competent poet with a profound understanding of human heart and of the mysterious realm of words can make his theme come to life and evoke the sentiment of pathos."

Following is the definition of Karuna rasa - The loss of the desired and obtainment of undesired are the cause of Karuna rasa. Grief (soka) is its sthayibhava, the deceased person is its alambana, the reference to the lost person's merits, offering libation to him, are the uddipana-vibhavas, causing destiny, stupefaction, etc. are the anubhava. Disgust, anxiety, uneasiness, etc. are vyabhicaribhavas.

(3) Hasya Rasa: the comic (hasya) sentiment has as its base the dominant emotion of laughter. This is created by the vibhavas such as showing unseemly dress or ornaments, impudence, greediness, quarrel, defective limbs, etc. throbbing of the lips, the nose and the cheek, perspiration, colour of face etc. are anubhavas. Indolence, drawiness, sleep, envy, etc. are vyabhicaribhavas.

(4) Raudra Rasa: The sthayibhava of raudra rasa is anger. The alambana vibhava are anger, rape, abuse, insult, threatening, jealousy, etc. beating, broaking crushing, cutting, etc. are uddipana vibhavas. The Red eyes, knitting of eyebrows, biting of lips, pressing one hand with other are the anubhavas. The vyabhicaribhavas are presence of mind, determination, energy, restlessness, trembling, etc.

(5) Vira rasa: the sthayibhava or vira rasa is zeal (utsaha). Perseverance, diplomacy, discipline, military strength, etc. are vibhavas. Firmness, patience, heroism, are anubhavas. Contentment, judgement, pride, agitation, energy ferocity, etc. are vyabhicaribhavas.

(6) Bhayanaka rasa: Fear is the sthayibhava of this sentiment. Hideous noise, sight of ghosts, panic and anxiety, sight of death, etc. are vibhavas. Anubhavas are trembling of hands and feet, change of colour and loss of voice. Its vyabhicaribhavas are paralysis, trembling, fear, dejection, agitation, restlessness, etc.

(7) Bibhastsa rasa: its sthayibhava is disgust. The vibhavas are hearing
of unpleasant, offensive, impure and harmful things. Anubhavas are stopping the movement of all the limbs, narrowing down of the mouth vomiting, pitting, etc. Epilepsy, delusion, fainting, sickness, death, etc. are vyabharicabhas.

(8) Adbhuta rasa - Astonishment is the sthayibhava, sight of heavenly beings or events, attainment of desired objects, seeing a magical act are the vibhavas. Wide opening of eyes, tears of joy, littering words of approbation, etc. are anubhavas. Vyabharicabhas are weeping, hurry in activity, choking of voice, etc.

(9) Santa Rasa: Nirveda is its sthayibhava. Reason showing this world is false and full of illusions are vibhavas. The struggle of saintly and meditative individuals are anubhavas. Anxiety, delight, etc. are the vyabharicabha.
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2. The Alankara Theory

The theory of alankara seems to have influenced poetic compositions in Sanskrit. Even the earliest Mahakavyas, as those of Asvaghosa seem to have followed some of the dicta incorporated in the teachings of the alankara theorists. What ever poetic theories came to be vogue, in actual practice poets seem to have had the alankara theory always in mind. Though the theory of alankara was the oldest in literary speculation, and was superceeded by theories of rasa and dhvani. Yet alankara was a subject dealt with even by writers of comparatively recent times. For example, Mammata and Visvanatha, though they were followers of the rasa-dhavani theory, have devoted considerable space to alankaras. This would convey an idea of the extent of the influence that the alankara school exerted on poetry as well as on the theory of poetry.

Bhamaha, the author of Kavyalamkara was the first exponent of this school. After him came Udbhata and Rudrata. Dandin who is accepted to be an adherent of the gunariti school by consensus of opinion also devotes considerable space to the treatment of alankaras. So much so that his importance as an authority on alankara theory is of no mean magnitude. Many later theorists, if they were attempting to cover the field of poetry comprehensively, always included a treatment of alankaras also. To mention a few, one may cite Bhoja's Shringarpakash, Hemcandra's Kavyanusasana and Kesavamisra's Alankara Sekhara alongwith Mammata's Kavya Prakash and Visvanatha's Sahityadarpana already mentioned. Apart from these, many treatises have been compiled dealing exclusively with alankaras, and one need mention only a few such as Alamkarasavasva of Ruyyaka and Alamkarakaustubh of Visvesvara, in addition to Kuvalayananda of Appayya Diksita already mentioned Bhatti (of Bhattikavya fame) can also be reckoned as an exponent of the alankara school though he was a poet. Bhattikavya the purpose of which was to narrate a story in verse and to supply examples for rules of grammar and poetics had devoted considerable attention to the entire set of alankaras in vogue at the time.

The meaning of the term 'alankara' underwent several changes within the course of time. At first it was a generic term for ordinary figures of speech and of sound such as Upama rupaka, Yamaka etc. i.e. what we designate by the term 'alankara' today. By the time of Dandin, the term had acquired a more extensive meaning and had come to designate any factor that produces poetic beauty (Kavyasobha) under this wide concept, everything that brought about poetic appeal (Kavyagunas) could be introduced. Then in next stage, Vamana
use the term synonymous with entire beauty in poetry, i.e. Sundarya. This gave the term a still wider connotation. Along with this change of meaning the theory of alankara also developed. But the term lost all its wider significance and came to mean a generic term for the two types of figures, viz. arthalankaras and sadrilankaras.

The supporters of the alankara school thought of poetry as having a body (kavyasarira) which required to be ornamented. This Kavyasarira on one hand and the set of poetic figure on the other, were two main separate real existence of poetry. The body consisted of a group of words which was not devoid of an agreeable idea. Hence, the body constituted of two basis elements - (1) sound (sabda) and (2) sense (artha). According to Bhamaha, what constituted Kavya was the combination of these two elements. But, this Kavyasarira of poetry never shines without proper ornaments in the form of poetic figures and hence they are essential. Just as the face of a danseel though beautiful, lacks lustre if unadorned, so is poetry. The employment of alankaras is the characteristic feature of poetry the factor that converts the matter of fact, prosaic speech into poetic speech, and the criterion for judging its worth. While ordinary speech is straight and lacks ornamentation, poetry is marked by a striking turn of expression. Apart from the treatment of figures, the alankara theory also devoted attention to the incorporation of poetic qualities (gunadhana) and the exclusion of flaws poetry (dosadana) as expedients that contribute to produce appeal. Hence the whole alankara theory is primarily concerned with the formal embellishment of the external aspect of Kavya.

In the hands of later exponents, the alankara school deteriorated into an insipid science of mere enumeration of poetic figures. They indulged in the multiplication of alankaras on the grounds of grammatical and hair splitting logical differences, and the theory reduced itself into rigid formal rhetorics. On the whole the alankara theory focussed attention solely on the figure as a decorative, thus dwelling upon the formal aspect of poetry at the cost of the content aspect. Obviously, such a discipline would not be competent enough as a critique of poetry and hence the quest was always present for better solutions.

Alankara theory was the first attempt to explain the nature of appeal in literature. The theory was older even than Bhamaha the first exponent of the school. Hence, both poet and critics from early times were greatly influenced by it and also the theory contributed in determining the form of Sanskrit poetry. In spite of its drawbacks it could stand against modern and acceptable theories. Even Kalidasa was greatly influenced by it. Its influence can be seen even on the poets...
like Bhatti, Bharavi Magha and Srilitarsa.

The significance of the alankara school is best noticed against the background on which it came into being. Bhamaha gives some interesting information regarding the nature of literacy criticism prior to the advent of the alankara theory. He says that the theory of poetry that existed before alankara school, only the grammatical aspect in literary composition was considered. Thus the poetry was judged on the basis of correctness of grammar by the critics of pre-alankara days. And the poetry was considered best in which the grammar is also absolutely correct. That is, they were never concerned with the beauty of ideas expressed therein, they were no sahardayas, but were of scholastic temperament - consequently wide off the mark in the judgement of literary worth. Before Bhamaha the grammarians were concerned only with the beauty of sound and judged poetry by the effect it produced on the ear. While another school of critics gave importance to the logical correctness of the ideas. But Bhamaha asserts that in poetry, both sound and sense are important. Though the alankaravadins deals with figure both of sound and sense, more importance was given on the figures of sense (aarthalankaras). Thus we see that alankaras (figure of speech) are given the highest place than grammatical and logical correctness.

As it has already been mentioned above the alankaras was divided into two kinds; (1) Sabdalankara and (2) Aarthalankaras. The function of the former was to make the sound aspect of the composition agreeable to the ear and the later, to produce the appealing turn of speech. By the time the alamkaravadins invented new figures, and gave new names to the old ones. Gradually the number of alankaras was ever on the increase. Bharata starts with a small number of figures which he mentioned in his Natyashastra i.e. anuprasa and yamaka which are varieties of alliteration; rupaka which is same as metaphor; dipaka as exemplification, similar to parabole, and upama or comparison. Bhamaha increased the number to thirty nine. Dandings Kavyadarsa came with few more additions. Although Vamana and some other tried to bring down the number, still the tendency was already to increase, and by the time of Appayya Diksita's Kuvalayananda the number of aarthetmakaras had reached one hundred and twenty five.

In the opinion of Bhamaha all poetic speech is marked by a roundabout turn of expression (vakrokti) as opposed to the ordinary speech which is straight forward expression. By mere verbal expression, beauty in speech is not achieved and that type of expression called Vakrokti is the factory that adorns...
Hence Vakrokti is that which makes the difference between ordinary speech and poetic speech and what converts the former into the latter. All types of poetry whether it be mahakavya drama or single verse must possess this feature. Vakrokti. Hence poets should always strive to achieve Vakrokti in their compositions. Whatever the prevalent view may be, Bhamaha would not give the place of alankara to any figure unless it possesses Vakrokti. In this terminology expression devoid of Vakrata (and hence having no claim to poetic appeal) is called varta (report). Such prosaic expressions like, the sun has set, the moon shines. Birds go to their night's rest, are not poetry but mere varta. Dr. De is also of opinion that Bhamaha sometimes identifies the concept of vakrokti with atisayokri (or later writers) The real import of this concept of Bhamaha was later realized by Kantaka, who considered Vakrokti as the very life of poetry and elaborated this idea in his Vakroktiswadha with a separate school of thought viz. Vakroktivada. In the hands of later alamkaranas the term vakrokti lost this wider and important significance and came to be the name of another figure of speech among the numerous figures that embellish poetry. 

To Dandin the term Vakrokti does not mean the same thing as it means to Bhamaha. He uses the word as a generic term for all alankaras except svabhavokti and divides all poetic speech into svabhavokti and vakrokti. On the other hand Dandin has another name for the element that underlies and beautifies all alankaras and that is atisayokri (Hyperbole). This term is used in two senses. Firstly, it is the name of a poetic figure involving hyperbolic expression and this figure he considered to be the highest adornment (uttamabhusana). Secondly and in the wider sense, atisayokri (hyperbolic expression) is the factor that helps all other figures to achieve poetic beauty and as such it is at the basis of all other figures of sense. By atisayokri Dandin means a turn of expression which is a statement of an experience which transcends the common experience of the world. Any expression which lacks this nature of transcendental experience would not amount to poetry, but is mere Varta. Atisayokri does not mean gross exaggeration exceeding mundane possibilities which is atyukti. It reflects the super-normal sensitivity of the poet who is a seer.

A poet compares the face of a damsel to the moon. Literally speaking, there is very little in common between the two objects and the whole comparison seems to be a gross and absurd exaggeration. But this is meant to serve some purpose, and should not be taken so literally. It is this exaggeration or atisayokri that produces the particular delight from that expression, bringing into focus only the subtler aspects of similarity. Hence, Dandin's view that atisayokri nourishes all alankaras. Anandvardhana says that a figure would be
found appealing only if the poet, through his imagination, establishes atisayokti in it. Atisayokti is hence regarded as the life running through the bulk of poetic figures. Abhinavagupta commenting on this statement says, “Tena atisayoktih sarvalamkara samanyam” (Atisayokti is the common property of all poetic figure).22

(1) Simile (Upama): Of the bulk of alankaras, Upama - simile plays the most significant part. It was one of the alamkaras conceived in the earliest of times, as Bharata mentions this figures in his discussion on poetry. As a rhetorical device it was used in the oldest of vedic writings "and has played an important part in Indian literature at all times”. 23 It can be asserted that simile as a figurative expression is as old as speech itself. It is one of the basic devices used by poets of any language "to make the description of his subject more responsive to his emotions and to the reactions which reality rouses in his feelings, and, which he intends to rouse in his hearers and readers.21

Apart from being a widely used figures in itself upama forms the basis of many other poetic figures in Sanskrit, many of the alankara being different turns of expression given to the simile. Yamana says that the entire world of the figure of sense is the offspring of this main figure.25 For example, rupaka (metaphor) is only another way of expressing the simile - a simile in a condensed form. Arthantaravasana is a figure involving comparison between two ideas. Utpreksa too has an element of comparison behind it. In the same wasy Upamayopama ananvaya, pratipa, parinama, tulyayogita, prativastupama drstanta, nidarsana, vyatireka, and a host of other alankaras have upama or more correctly, the element of comparison.

Let us examine some other important alankaras which are the counterparts of most of the figures used by Greek and Latin rhetoricians.

(2) After Upama - simile the next poetic figure that deserves attention is the figure of Metaphor Rupaka which rests on the relation of identity.

Aristotle says in his poetics, “Metaphor consists in the transference of a noun to another or form the gender to the species or form the species to the gender or form the species to another or by analogy. Mammatta says “Rupaka” consists in the identification of the standard of comparison with the object with which it is compared. Danin affirms that metaphor is a simile with the comparison implicit. It may not be out of place to remark here that a metaphor bords an exaggeration if the difference between the terms of a comparison is too big.
(3) Let us examine the next figure Dipaka. Definition of this figure has been given only by Dandin. According to him dipaka consists in mentioning in a unique place, a word which indicates gender, action, quality and subject but is understood differently in different places. This figure is based on the principle of similarity. According to Mammatta the charm of dipaka consist in the connexion of one with many as the lamp is connected with the objects which it illuminates.

"Your face and the moon rejoice at night." Here, there is a depaka, because it is impossible for an inanimate like the moon to rejoice, the action of rejoicing being possible only to a rational being.

(4) 'Hetu': this void means 'cause'. Some of the alamkarikas call it a very important figure, others deny it. Rudrata is the first to give a definition of it and he looks upon it as a sabdalankara 'ornament of sound'. The definition given by Visvanatha may be considered as suggesting that it is variety of metonymy. He says 'when a cause is represented as being identical consists in naming the author instead of the works and vice versa. Dante says, with the effect 'hetu' arises" Metonymy. "But read Ezekiel. We cannot read a person but we can read the book written by a person. The book is but the effect of the cause that is the author.

(5) PARYAYOKTA: This figure is same as the Greek Trope periphrase, meaning to speak in a roundabout way. Keith defines this figures as an utterence in which some thing is expressed indirectly, because the only way of explaining it, as Monier says, is by a turn of speech. Visvanatha and Mammatta define it by saying that it consists in the utterance of a fact, in which the speaker and the spoken person is not mentioned. This figure falls into two major categories (1) circumlocutory - where ideas are such arranged that what preceds is the cause of what follows, and (2) the synonymic - which is used by poets instead of proper name, for example Bhutesa (Siva), Mauli (head), Stak (Girdle), which translated is, "the girdle of the head of Shiva" is a periphrasis to denote the celestical Ganga.

(6) Virodha: This figure is same as antithesis. According to Keith this figure consist in an apparent in congruity, but Monier Williams states that it consists in instituting a comparison in which the terms are in opposition, for example, 'your face and the lotus are similar', we say 'your face and the lotus are rivals. The ancient alamkarikas such as Bhamaha, Dandin, Ruyyaka, and Vamana accept this figure. This alamkarikas says that 'the mind of the Malaya mountain,' 'the cool beams of the moon', 'the white petals of lotuses' which are refreshing things.
Instead of causing their natural effect, because of the circumstances of the lover in separation, produces the contrary owing to a psychological process. Thus it is clear that 'virodha' consists in an apparent contradiction.

(7) Vyajastuti: It is one of the more common rhetorical figures in all literature. The Greek rhetoricians call it Irony when a person utters words or sentences that contain an idea contrary to what he means, 'vyajastuti' occurs. Visvanatha's definition is very precise. He says ukta Vyajastutih punah (when from blame and praise expressed are understood praise and blame respectively there occurs Vyajastuti). The world 'Vvaja' properly means 'feigned' and 'stuti' praise. Thus the compound word 'vyajastuti' means 'feigned praise' or 'irony'.

(8) Slesa: This figure is also common to all literature and also important which is same as Pun. The Greek rhetoricians call it 'Paronomasia'. The ancient alamkarikas like 'Bhamaha, Dandin, Vamanā and the next ones as Mammatta, Vivanstha, Bhōja, Jagannatha both define and discuss it. This figure has been divided into two classes. (1) "Arthaslesa" which consists in words of only one meaning but which convey another and (2) Sabdaslesa which is expressed with words conveying a double meaning which can be interpreted in different senses. Etymologically the word "slis" means "union" - union of several meanings in one word. The Greek verb Paranomazo means 'to suggest' in one word something more than the used. Therefore the pun consists in the use of words of more than one meaning.31

(9) Atisayokti: Greek rhetorician like Longinus and Demetrius call this figure hyperbole and is said to be brightest and the most vivid. Etymologically the word hyperbole is a noun built on the root bel/bol/bal which means 'to launch'. In Sanskrit the word atisayakti means an expression which lies an excess. In fact this figures represents things in excess than the thing described by nature. Bhamaha describes it as something that surpasses the ordinary. Dandin says that it surpasses the limits of what is normal. The hyperbole is one of the most graceful. It is also one of the most frequent. It is a means for conveying the most pleasing flatteries.

(10) Anuprasa: The name given to this figure by the Roman rhetoricians is alliteration. It consists in the harmonic repetition of the same sound in a verse or in a series of verse by means of the same letters. Etymologically the word 'anu-praasa' means 'utterance of sound.'
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THE ART OF THOMAS HARDY'S NOVELS: INDIAN AESTHETIC PERSPECTIVES
25. Vamana, op. cit. IV, ii.1; IV. iii. 1-32.
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27. Visvanatha, Sahityadarpana, X, 63.
The theory of dhvani which came into limelight in the 9th century A.D. through its great exponent Anandavardhana dominated Indian poetics from the 9th to 12th century. Aestheticians of poetry were compelled to wake up from their dogmatic slumber and revise their notions about the older concepts of alamkara, guna and riti in the light of the theory of dhvani. They were compelled to recognize the fact that there could be live factors in poetry only so far as they shed the feature of conventionality and shared in the feature of dhvanana which is integral to poetic imagination. As Bhjattatanta pointed out it alone can catch the infinite nuances of feeling and express it in ever new forms. Though earlier aestheticians of poetry like Vamana recognised that imagination is the main spring of poetry, they thought that alamkaras were the only expressive forms of imagination. An aesthetician like Bhamaha clearly recognised that some alamkaras were vyanga and as Dr. Krishnamurthy following Jagannatha Pandit points out, though Bhamaha did not use the word dhvani, he was clearly aware of Gunibhuta Vyanga. But what Vamana and Bhamaha did not clearly see was that the oblique turns of expression which all good poetry has is not limited to the thirty six alankaras. Every part of speech and such small factors like even case endings and particles can at the touch of imagination, became pregnant with poetic meaning. This is a great discovery of Ananda and western poetics had to wait to make that discovery until the present century. Aestheticians of poetry subsequent to Ananda could no longer afford to be blind to this important discovery.

Anandavardana gave another important fact that feeling cannot be objectively brought to consciousness by liberal expression (vacya) and that it can be made an object of direct experience only through indirect expression (Vyangya). While literal expression is most adequate to fulfill the purposes of discursive thinking such as is involved in Sastra (Science) it is insufficient for purposes of poetry. While the strength of what is called abhinda or essential meaning lies in being direct and exact the strength of poetic meaning (Vyanga) lies in being indirect, wave like and dynamic. While in a scientific proposition the meaning of a word remains the same in what ever context it is used in poetic expression the meaning of word changes with the context and is not rigid even within the same context but sways and spreads like a wave. This is characteristic not merely of the poetic word but of all artistic symbols. An Indian aesthetician of painting compares the meaning of a picture to the liquid light that plays on a pearl. While the light of scientific expression is like the steady light of a lamp,
the light of poetic expression is like that of a star. The beauty of a star dies not so much in what we catch out the first glance but the twinkle that follows. In the same manner the beauty of the poetic word does not lie in the meaning we light upon in the first instance, but on the flash that follows. In brief the essence of poetic expression lies in its spreading and spraying. The theory of Dhvani understood as stated above is quite sound and is a permanent contribution to the aesthetic poetry.

The theory of Dhvani was expounded as the most significant principles in literary criticism by the new school of critics headed by Anandavardhana. The Great Acarya Abhinava Gupta wrote an elaborate and authoritative commentary on the Dhvanyaloka where in he has explained all the implications involved in the theory with the aid of copious illustrations culled out from the whole range of Sanskrit literature and criticism. The masterly treatment of the subject by Anandvardhana combined with the authoritative interpretation of it by Abhinavagupta was able to over come all opposition of theory by rival school and to elicit universal admiration and acceptance of it by later theorists.

The theory of Dhvani was very much in vogue in a famous circle of cultured critics, and though it was never committed to writing, it was being traditionally handed down as a valuable treasure from generation to generation. It was looked upon as a precious inheritance from the past rather than as a glorious achievement of the present. By establishing the soundness of the theory on a solid basis in a well planned book, by removing all possible objections that might be raised against the theory and by reinterpreting the accepted categories of rhetoric in the light of the new theory Anandvardhana thought that he was rendering a salutary service.

To sum the estimate of Anandvardhana and his work Dr.K. Krishnamoorthy says:

Unlike the ancient writers on Sanskrit rhetoric who aimed at nothing more than the provision of elaborate systems of device, with ample divisions and subdivisions capable of mechanical applications. Anandavardhana enunciated the broad general principles of poetry based on an insight into the psychology of human nature. Instead of viewing literature, as mere verbal artistry, mere meretricious glitter or glamour of expression and imagery, Anandvardhana strikingly demonstrated that emotive and suggestive significance is the very soul of poetry. By thoroughly explaining the linguistic and logical implications of the theory of Dhvani, he tried to secure for it the high place of honour in the eyes
of appreciators and thinkers alike. By properly defining the scope of Dhvani in relation to earlier concepts he was able to settle the precise importance of each in literature. And he brought to bear upon his work, all the qualifications essential for a great literary critic. No wonder that his Dhvanyaloka came to be looked upon as the final authority in all literary matters by the subsequent writers on Sanskrit poetics. A striking original work it combines the merit of fullness with that of conciseness. It sums up and explains all the previous speculations on the subject and becomes in its turn the starting point of a number of brilliant text books on poetics. It is a great landmark in the history of Sanskrit poetics dividing the whole range of criticism into two schools - the old and the new. It marks the terminations of the old school of criticism and heralds the birth of a modern school, modern in style, in theory and in approach.

In almost all the schools of Indian Philosophy, attempts were made to arrive at a satisfactory explanation of the problems of meaning. Though in point of minor details they differed from one another, it was commonly held by all that words denote primarily a conventional meaning and secondarily an implied one. Anandvardhana endeavours to prove that the suggested sense in poetry cannot be brought under any of these recognised sense in poetry and hence a third function of words should be postulated for its explanation.

He argued that in the province of poetry it is suggested sense alone that matters most. He says - "There is not a single specimen of good poetry appealing to man of taste, which does not owe all its beauty to the play of suggestion. And this should be considered as the supreme secret of poetry." The most important element in poetry, which elicits unstinted admiration from all men of taste is its sense. And this sense in poetry will be founded to have two aspects - the one fundamental aspect is the explicit and the suggested happens to be the other aspect. Every critic is bound to recognise its importance and all the earlier writers in the field have elaborately explained it through their scheme of figures of speech like simile and metaphor. The beauty of the suggested sense is not identical with the beauty of its components but something over and above it. This unique phenomenon can be linked to the bewitching beauty in lovely woman pervading their whole physical frame and yet exceeding the symmetry of harmony of their various limbs.

Dhvani is a type of poetry where in words and senses lose their primary signification in order to suggest other things. (These suggested ideas at their best, e.g. Rasas etc. do not admit of being directly expressed at all and even at their worst, e.g. (vastu) they look much better when suggested than when they
are directly stated. The surface meaning of the poem as a whole may subordinate itself to the suggested sense; the primary meaning of only particulars words in the poem may allow themselves to be eclipsed by suggested significance. In either case the predominance of suggestion is unquestioned and hence such poetry as provides ample scope for the play on suggestion comes to be termed Dhvani.2

But is must be remembered that unless the suggested sense arises naturally from a poem, it will not be entitled to the status of Dhvani-Kavya. The suggested sense must be such as can be grasped readily and not strained.3 Secondly it should be of primary importance not being subordinated to explicit sense. And finally words prominently used in old fashion by a beginner in the composition of poetry either because of his lack of education or sufficient imagination should also be regarded as falling out side the province of Dhvani-Kavya.4 Clarity and importance are thus the two fundamental conditions of Dhvani in what ever form it is found.5

The Dhanyaloka divided Vyarga sense into three varieities Rasadi, Alankara (figure of speech) and Vastu (ideal). Under the first are included not only the nine rasas but all the bhavas and their abhavas also. What is meant by Vastu Dhvani is this that a mere fact is suggested by words that express another sense. What is meant by an alankara-dhvani is this that what is suggested is an imaginative thing (Not a matter of fact) which if expressed in so many words would assume the form of a figure of speech.

Abhinava remarks that those who by constant association with literature can make their mind like a mirror are the persons who can be called Sahrdaya or men of taste. It is they who can feel at once that dhvani is the essence of poetry. Anandvardhana further says that just as the loveliness of women is something over and above their limbs, so in the words of great poets we find an exquisite charm which over and above the words and their meanings, and this is dhvani. The rasa, of which so much has been spoken is also communicated by the dhvani. But what is dhvani? Let us take some instances. We shall see how the suggested ideas differs from the explicit idea (Vastu)

(Ramble, ohermit, confidently
That dog is today killed
By the fierce lion that dwells
In the wild thickets yonder
On the anks of the river Godal)
(English translation of the Sanskrit version of the Prakrit verses).

If we take only the primary sense into consideration the verse will be seen to contain an idea that encourages the traveller to rankle without any hesitation since the cause of his anxiety so long viz. the dog has been conveniently killed. But there is no mistaking the suggested idea which is just the opposite of what is directly expressed. Will a man who is afraid of a dog hazards in grounds frequented by a lion? In other words a sly threat is issued to the traveller that his life will be in greater peril than before if he ventures any more into these grounds. The suggested idea stated plainly would be 'Do not frequent, this place hereafter. The relation between the explicit idea and the ideal suggested is in this instance are of direct opposition.

The following is an instance where the position is reversed. While the explicit idea is that of prohibition, the suggested idea is a positive invitation.

Mother-in-law in deep slumber sleeping here

While I lie quite on this side dear

Mark our cot in daylight clear

Don't by chance come of me too near.

This is spoken by a spoilt lady who lived alone with her mother in law, who snored deeply in the night and the lady in showing the mutual positions of their sleeping places and in warning the guest not to come too near her bed in actually inviting him to come to her bed in the night for the mother-in-law would be sleeping like a stick.

So far examples of Vastu dhvani have been examined, as an illustration of alamkara dhvani the following verse of Anandvardhana himself may be considered:

Lit up are the quarters with your lustrous beauty

And your face looks charming with a

smile upon it

And still, or darling if the ocean does not smell

Obviously it is a mark of inertness.
Though the idea of the moon-face is not directly stated, it is clearly suggested. It is only when the metaphor that the lady's lovely face is identical with the moon is understood, the passage will become fully meaningful. Much of the beauty in the passage is due to this *Rupakalankara dhvani*. And the figure is not at all to be discovered in the explicit sense.

And as regards *Rasadhvanior* suggestions of an emotion or mood, it is obvious that it always outreaches what is merely matters of fact. It is in this variety only that the supreme importance of suggestion can be readily realised. As a matter of fact no emotions can be delineated, without the agency of suggestion, in so many common place words. Grating for arguments sake that words do denote emotions, there will be only two possibilities for such a phenomenon *Rasas* will have to be denoted either by the words standing for them or by a treatment of *vibhavas* etc. The acceptance of first alternative would mean that there will be no *rasa* in the absence of words signifying them. But it is a matter of common experience that emotions are never represented through the mention of their names. Even in instances where the names are found, it is not because of these names that *rasa* is communicated but because of a poetic description of the *vibhavas* etc. leading up to the *Rasa*. The name only seems to identify the *Rasa* and not to manifest it. And in several other instances we do not have the names of the *Rasas* at all and yet we experience *Rasa*. Thus in the light of these facts, both positive and negative we are led to the conclusion that emotions are represented not by their proper names, but only by the delineation of *vibhavas*, etc. Now, these *Vibhavas* and other accessories too do not generate *Rasa* like so many physical causes. They only suggest *Rasa*. Thus it is clear that *Rasa* is only suggested and never expressed. Of the three varieties of Dhvani mentioned above, *Rasa Dhvani* alone happens to be the most important.

Since suggestion forms such an important feature in the words of master-poetes, the difficult task of getting at the suggested sense and sometimes at the words too that are its vehicles develops on the conscientious critic.

The holders of the doctrine of Dhvani remained unconvinced and on the basis of their theory they declared that the soul of poetry was not style or sentiment but tone. *Dhvani* by which they meant that an implied sense was the essence of poetry.

... ... ...
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4. The Vakrokti theory

The expressional strikingness \(\text{Vakrokti}\) has been regarded in Indian poetics as the basal principal of all poetic language. Gholi designates it 'The curve or oblique diction, peculiar to poetic language. It would be however incorrect to describe it as roundabout turn of expression. \text{Vakrokti} as S.K. De suggests refers to a kind of heightened expression. Indian aestheticians, right from \text{Bharata}, have acknowledged the oblique or indirect mode to be the most appropriate medium of externalization of the poetic vision which differs from the daily experiences because of its ideality and intensity.

The Indian theory of \text{Vakrokti} shows a remarkable divergence of views spelt out by such scholars as \text{Bhamha, Dandih, Vamana, Kuntaka, Abhinavagupta and Bhoja} on the one hand and \text{Rudrata, Mammata and their followers} on the other. \text{Vakrokti} is one of most important theories propounded by Indian scholars. \text{Kuntaka}, who is the greatest exponent of the theory of \text{Vakrokti}, defined it as the 'vital essence of poetry' - \text{Vakroktih Kavya- Jivitam}. He attached so much importance to poetic expression that he devoted a whole treatise to this subject and tried to subsume under \text{Vakrokti}. Embellishment, style and even \text{Rasa} and \text{Dhvani}. His \text{Vakrokti} is synonymous with poetry (\text{Kavya}) itself. According to \text{Kuntaka} both inadequate expression and expression devoid of ideal are of no use. He would call a beautiful expression without a beautiful idea 'dead - \text{Mrtakalpa} and a beautiful idea not couched in an equally beautiful expression 'diseased' \text{'vyadhibhuta’4}.

He cannot conceive of poetry as bereft of ornamentation \text{Sa/an Kar,sya Kavyata}. A strikingness \text{Viacitrya} in poetic speech in parts an an excellent charm even to an object which is stable and tasteless \text{Yadapyanulanolekham}. By \text{Vakrokti} \text{Kuntaka} means a certain striking or charming \text{vicitra} mode of expression / \text{vinyasa Karma} which is different from and excels the common or matter of fact expression in common parlance or scientific treatises.

The theory of \text{Vakrokt} can be taken in a sense the cru of Indian thinking on poetic expression. The Dhavare, it is an 'extremely interesting theory of meaning in poetry.'5

\text{Krishna Chaitanya} rightly observes that \text{Kuntaka} has 'formulated a significant theory of poetic expression and that he has attacked the problem of diction and the poetry of tension 'with a rate intention', while appreciating its 'originality' literary acumen and 'great value'. P.V. Kane tells us that the theory has
fallen in neglect. It is true that most modern scholars on Indian poetics have either ignored Kuntaka altogether or presented his views rather inaccurately. Even a scholar like S.K. De who edited Kuntaka’s text and attempted a pioneering analysis of his contribution is of the view that Kuntaka could not get himself entirely out of the conventional groove and that he started well on his journey but stood 'half way enmeshed and uncertain.' This attitude is undoubtedly unfair to Kuntaka and his work. His vakrokti explains and explores in a remarkable way the secret of poetic form and content and the aesthetic essence of poetic expression.

The concept of vakrokti can be profitably considered in relation to the western concepts of oblique style and linguistic dislocations. It can also be placed beside certain formulations of the new critics. Vakrokti bears distinct resemblances with certain stylistic and linguistic concepts. It would be really worthwhile to considered vakrokti in relation to the Saussurean language/ parole dichotomy and Noam chomsky’s distinction between ‘competence’ and performance and also concepts like idiolect and deviance discussed in considerable detail in modern stylistics. This line of approach will open up a fresh field of inquiry and unfold the many faceted nature of the Indian theory of Vakrokti.

The word ‘Vakrokti’ has been used in Sanskrit literature from ancient times. The earliest uses of the term can be found in Subhandhu, Amaru and Bana. In the very beginning of his Vasavadatta, Subhandhu refers to himself as one who, by the blessings of the Goddess of learning, has been able to compose work of a rare ingenuity, which makes use of paromasia, at every step. P.V. Kane says that the term Vakrokti has been used in Vasavadatta. But not where does Subandhu actually use this term in his work, he uses the word ‘Vaidagadhya’ in this sense. He seems to be how ever fully conversant with the significance of obliquity in language use. Amaru has also used vakrokti in the sense of a humorous remark in the description of his heroine’s condition, who becomes angry with her husband for the first time. There are unequivocal references to Vakrokti in Bana’s Kadambari. The first time the term is used in it is in the description of Ujjaini. Bana describes its people as wise men expert in Vakrokti. It is used again in the episode of Sukanasa. Further when candrapida makes a bantering speech about the quarrel of the parrot and the jealous maina, the parrot tells him that “she also understands all oblique statements and can make use of witty remarks. Bana uses Vakrokti in these contexts in the sense of a bantering humorous speech or a ‘witty remark’. It may be mentioned that Bana has been remembered respectfully by Kaviraja as one of the three poets (the other two being Subandhu and Kaviraja himself) who are skilled in the use of Vakrokti. However in the term Vakrokti has been used by Subandhu, Amaru and Bana in its general, non-
technical sense of a witty bantering or humorous speech. S.K. De says - "It is not clear whether the term Vakrokti here signifies the special poetic figure ... Subandhu and Bana Bhatta have indeed praised Siesa and Sista composition of which the work of the former is an excellent example: but they have hardly employed Vakrokti in this (technical) sense."

The greatest exponent of this theory, Kuntaka considers it in a very detailed way, delineating its nature, types and significance in poetry. He affirms that Vakrokti which he holds to be essential in poetry, is a certain charming duration from the ordinary mode of expression of ideas. It constitutes, according to him, the soul of poetry. He further describes vakrokti as a 'striking denotion' (victra/abhichha) and conceives of it as a striking mode of expression depending on the peculiar turn given to it by the skill of the poet. Kuntaka says both words and meanings are to be embellished and their embellishment lies in their obliqueness. Vakrokti is an ingenious utterance peculiar to poetry and is distinct from popular usage. It is a cleaner turn of speech, witty and startling in effect.

Dandin before him had maintained that poetry is embellished words communicating the desired meaning. Kuntaka does not hold with Dandin that mere words or mere ideas conveyed by it constitutes poetry (na sabdasyaiva remaniyata-visistasya Kevelasya Kavyatvan, napi arthasyeti) what makes them into poetry is the presence of strikingness originating from Vakrokti. He describes Vakrokti as a mode of expressing depending on the peculiar turn given to it by the skill of the poet. By recognizing the significance of the poet's imagination in poetic creation he has established the theory of Vakrokti on a sound aesthetic footing.

An ideal of the comprehensiveness of Kuntaka's concept of Vakrokti can be formed from an analysis of his treatment of the Sukumara Marga (Brilliant style). He observes that the 'artistic beauty of expression will form the vital essence of poetic style and that Vakrokti alone should therefore be regarded as its life-breath or vital essence. To Kuntaka, Vakrokti is the only embellishment (alankrti) possible to the word and its meaning and all poetic figures are but different manifestations of vakrokti. Both word and meaning are the adorned and their adornment consists in the poetic process known as Vakrokti. Kuntaka also remarks that it is atisaya that is involved in vakrokti vicitrya.

Kuntaka has thus treated the subject of poetic expression in great detail. He has added new dimensions to the theory of Vakrokti. He established the concept and lent it unprecedented profundity. His theory of vakrokti has been
harshly described as a certainly new wine in old bottle. Abhinavagupta and Bhoja are the other two scholars who treated the concept in detail. Abhinavagupta's, the great commentator of the Natyasastra and the Dhvanyaloka remarks as Vakrokti are no less significant. Bhoja also discusses vakrokti in considerable detail. Vakrokti in Bhoja is put down as a general name for all figures beginning with simile.

The period of Kuntaka Abhinavagupta and Bhoja marked the culmination of Indian thinking on Vakrokti. Afterwards its significance underwent a conspicuous wave. The popularity and imporance of Kuntaka's vakrokti were completely overshadowed by the dominance of the theories of rasa and dhavni. Kuntaka's central theory of vakrokti was discredited and his own name lingered only as a half forgotten propounder of an ingenious doctrine.

Though Kuntaka's concept of Vakrokti was not endorsed by later writers, his view regarding strikingness as the central characteristic of the language of poetry were widely upheld. The value of strikingness in a poetic expression has been realised by even in those scholars who denigrate vakrokti and consider it merely a figure of speech.

Strikingness, highlighted by Bhamaha, Kuntaka and others serves thus as the substratum for all poetic expression 'wonder' arising out of strikingness, as Raghavan suggests is an invariable element in all enjoyment, mundane or artistic. In art and literature, the element of surprise is present everywhere. Bharata himself had said that poetry has to be in the form of a cow's tail, bushy at the end, with a crowd of surprises. Certain modern critics have also emphasized the role of wonder and strikingness in literature. T.S. Eliot for example writes: 'The element of surprise is essential for poetry.' The basic idea regarding strikingness of poetic expression keeps on appearing in Sanskrit poetics in the form of Bharat's Lokanata to Kuntaka's Vakrokti.

... ... ...

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3. V.N.Dhavale, "Meaning in poetry and Indian poetics", in C.D. Narasimhaiah (ed.) Literary Criticism; European and Indian Traditions pg. 56.


5. S.K.De, Vakrokti. Jivita of kuntana, P.Xvi


5. The Riti Theory

Acharya Vamana is the propounder of riti theory and declared 'the riti to be the soul of poetry.' He makes his statement more clear by saying that the (word) Sabda and its Artha (sense) constitute the body of which the soul is the Riti. He defines riti as 'visistapada rachana' or particular arrangements of words.

The two concepts Riti and Guna are so intimately mixed with each other than one cannot be explained separately. Gunas are involved in the riti theory and ritis being constructed upon theguna concept. The oldest known theorist to deal with the guna concept was Bharata. After him came Bhanaha who dealt both with riti and guna, next came Dandin who named riti as 'marga' and guna as 'prana'. All the writers up to the time Mammata, Visvanatha, and Tagannatha were attracted by this topic, Kartaka deals with the concept of riti under the name marga. Bhoja too discussed riti. Anandvardhana is quite appreciative of the originality of Vamana's doctrine of riti. He says that the element of Dvani must have flashed even though indistinctly into the mind of the propounder of the doctrine of riti the soul of poetry, only he could not explain dhvani which brought about charm in poetic composition, and for the reason delited it and propounded riti in stead.

The statement that riti is a particular arrangements of words does not give any clear idea of riti, because there would be no end to the ways in which words could be arranged. The particulars nature of arrangement of words consists of a specific combination of gunas, and riti is to be grasped through them. Gunas are said to be the beauty of poetry.

The particularity of arrangements of words depend upon certain definite combinations of the different gunas or fixed excellences of composition. Vamana proposed three kinds of riti, Vaidarbhi, Gaudi and Panchali - and also clarified Gunas into ten. Vaidarbhi possesses all the ten Gunas, Gaudi possesses the two ojas and kanti it may possess any other gunas except Madhurya and Sukumarya, and Panchali is endowed with Madhurya and Sukumarya excluding ojas and kanti. Apart from those it may have any other gunas.1.

Gunas, as defined by Vamana, are factors that produce poetic charm while alamkaras enhance it, and therefore it is assumed that gunas are essential but alamkaras are optional. As gunas are directly related to riti, pertains to the soul of poetry, while poetic figures, alamkaras are concerned to its sarira (body).
I.e. words and their meaning. Thus we see Vamana gave a definite differentiation of Guna from Alamkara. Before this, the earlier writers created confusion between the two concepts, by considering both as factors contributing to poetic charm.

Vamana clarified Gunas as ten which seems to be the standard number from Bharata's time but Vamana doubles the number by differentiating between the sabdagunas and artha gunas and regarding each gunas belonging separately to Sabda and artha. These sets of guans can be briefly explained as follows:

(A) Sabda Gunas (Excellence of sound):


(B) Artha gunas (excellences of sense):

(i) Ojas - maturity of conception (ii) Prasada - clarity of meaning due to absence of verbosity, (iii) Slesa - Com mingling of many ideas, (iv) Samata - non relinquishment of proper sequence of ideas, (v) Samadhi - grasping of the original meaning arising from concentration (vi) Madhurya - the strikingness of the expressed ideas, (vii) Saukumarya - Freedom from disagreeable ideas (viii) Udarata - absence of vulgarity, (ix) arthavyakti - explicitness of ideas which makes nature of things clear, (x) Kanti - brilliance of the rasas.

In Vamana's view gunas are definite excellences in all poetry indispensable to poetic appeal. All poetry should adhere to these formulas like gunas. The quality of literature depends upon the number of gunas used. Thus 'Vaidarbhi' which possesses most of the gunas when used becomes best of literature. The guna-riti theory too concerns itself only with the form of poetry. Analysis of form without any consideration to content fails to reveal aesthetic worth. Although Vamana accepted rasa in poetry as inherent, that too is considered an excellence of form. Gunas and riti is are objective entities, and in declaring Vaidarbhi riti as poetry par excellence, Vamana attempts to set up an objective norm to judge poetry with.
To Vamana, poetry was not an assortment of alamkaras. He had realised that some peculiarity of diction differentiated creative writing from scientific and normal speech, and this could be possible only because of some poetic qualities. 'Saundarya' (poetic appeal) was considered to be the purpose of poetry and this was to be achieved by the inclusion of gunas and alamkaras and the exclusion of poetic blemishes. Poetry was a happy blend of all these virtues.

Vamana never agreed that poetry is the result of the collection of words with an accepted ideas and decorated with figures of speech. On the contrary he realises the aesthetic element, soul which brings liveliness. He considered Riti to be their soul. To his consideration, Visvanatha comments, "By Vamana it is said that riti is the soul of poetry. But it is not so. Riti is merely a special form of verbal collocations, and verbal collocation bears the nature of arrangement of subordinate elements. The real souls (of poetry) is quite different from such an activity."

After Vamana, Kuntaka in Vakroktijivita made contribution to the guna-riti theory remedying some of the defects of Vamana. But the Riti system never appears to have... Very great influence, and its existence was comparatively short-lived. There is no that like the Rasa and the alamkara system, it left its impress on later theories, but it never found a serious champion after Vamana. Once poetry was explained in terms of rasa and dhvani the riti concept could claim no more recognition than as a subordinate Kavyanga.

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6. The Aucitya Theory

The principal of aucitya (appropriateness) had been indirectly reckoned with from the time of the earliest writers on the theory of poetry in Sanskrit. Bharata, the earliest known critic has been dealt at length on appropriateness in the way of speaking, modulation of voice, musical tunes, dress and make up - all suiting to the Rasa and Bhava. Thus propriety or appropriateness has been recognised as the secret of success of a dramatic performance or a poetic creation. In the hands of Bhamaha, Dandin and Rudrata, the theory of aucitya flourished. In the treatment of alamkaras the term was used several time by Rudrata. Anandvardhana gave very high place to Aucitya. Kuntaka too gave important place to it ultimately, it was Ksemendra who lightend this concept to its extreme. He considered aucitya to be the jivita (life) of poetry. In his valuable treatise Aucityavicaracars: Ksemendra elaborated the view expressed in Dhavanyaloka.

Ksemendra explains the terms Aucitya in the following way: that which is suited to a certain thing is called proper, ucita, the abstract notion of which is 'Aucitya', propriety. Between angin and anga, propriety is perfect harmony. This is the reason why Ksemendra considered it the secret of poetic appeal. He says: ucitam prahruracaryah sadrsam kilayasya yat ucitasya ca yo bhavastadaucityam pracaksyato. "Aucitya is the condition of being proper when one thing befit another, or when things suit each other well and match perfectly, they may be said to be proper or appropriate. Such matching or fitting quality is aucitya. Aucitya is harmony and in one aspect it is proportion between the whole and the parts, between the chief and the subsidiary. This perfection is all the morals and beauty in art. At the final stage of its formulation as a theory explaining the secret of poetic appeal, Aucitya is stated to be the jivita, life-breath, of poetry. This Aucitya proportion and harmony on one side and appropriateness and adaption on the other, cannot be understood by itself but pre-supposes that to which all other things are harmonious and appropriate, viz. Rasa, the 'soul' of poetry.2

The principal of propriety is a vast and is appliable to various parts of Kavyangas (parts of poetry). They are: (word) Pada, Vakya (sentence) Prabhandhartha (meaning of composition) guna (excellences) alamkarana (figure of speech), rasa (rasa), Kriya (verb) Karaka (syntax) Linga (gender) vacana (number) visesa (adjective) upasarga (prefix) Nipata (indicinable), Kala (tense), desa (locality) Kula (family), vrtta (choice), tattva (truth) sattva (force). abhipraya
(purpose), svabhava (reality), Sarasangraha (winding up of sense), pratibha (creative genius), avastha (stage), vicara (thought) nama (nomenclature), and as is benediction).

In his text Aucityavivaracharacharacha he has given detailed explanation of all these aspects of aucitya. The appropriateness and inappropriateness of each of the above mentioned aspect are explained. In his analysis he not only criticises the eminent writers but also bring in light in own faults, which shows his sense of aesthetic judgement.

'Appropriateness is the abiding life of poetry that is endowed with rasa. Ksemendra passionately declares the essentiality of aucitya in poetry. Every Kavyangas (parts of poetry) when used with appropriateness only then it brings the real essence of poetry. In the absence of aucitya the alankara, guna are all useless. These are all external requirements of poetry while aucitya is the jivita (life) of poetry. This is applicable to vakrokti, riti, dhvani too and this is the reason why Ksemendra declares all these components subordinate to aucitya. Even in case of rasa appropriateness is essential.

"If the girdle were to be worn on the neck, or the brilliant necklace on hips, the anklet on the arm or the bracelet on the foot, or of might were shown on these subjugated or compassion on enemies who will not be the object of ridicule? In the same way neither alankra or guna in parts any beauty without propriety.

Different flavours when mixed by an expert cook gives an extraordinary pleasant taste. In the same way when non-contradictory rasas are put together cleverly, they provide unusual poetic beauty. Ksemendra emphasizes the need for aucitya in all such combinations. A subsidiary rasa should be introduced in such a way that the main rasa benefits by it. His concept of aucitya in combination of rasas is based on anga-angi-bhava relationship of rasa.

The theoretical difference of Ksemendra’s exposition of aucitya from that of the dhvanivadin’s is that the former considers it to be the supreme source of poetic appeal - the life of poetry-superior to either rasa or dhvani, an independent entity justifying itself. To the dhvani theorists, “aucitya is understandable without something else to which things are Aucita’ - appropriate. Aucitya is a relation and that to which things are or should be in that relation must first be grasped. That is Rasa. Thus aucitya is the appropriateness of the various components of a composition in respect of principally evoked rasa.
Even western critics, old and new, mention the importance of propriety. According to these critics Aucitya is external part of the body (Kavya) whereas Indian critics consider Aucitya not only to be the internal part of the Kavya but, jivita of Kavya. The critics who deal with aucitya area - Aristotle, Longinus, Horace and pope, Aristotle has, in his poetics & Rhetorics, mentioned about aucitya. Longinus on the sublime is considered in western criticism. He is of the opinion that not only in poetry but in all arts astonishing Element is sublimiting and in this same connection he speaks of aucitya (propriety). He has given importance to sabda aucitya. Horace in this latin book Art Poetica - Art of poetry has given three Advises - in one of which he says that aucitya is to be given proper attention. Thus we see Latin critics gave much importance to aucitya in classical criticism.

The discovery and recognition of the principal of aucitya can be said as significant advance in the field of aesthetic. Purpose of literature is hence achieved in the absence of aucitya. The concept of rasa, dvani and aucitya are the main stages of Sanskrit criticism. Aucitya is a very large principle within those arbit comes everything else. Rasa and dvani including alamkara, riti and vakrokti obey the Aucitya rule of criticism. While the other three concepts, alamkara, riti and vakrokti deal with the external aspects of poetry, rasa, dvani and aucitya with its inner contents.

"The aim of poetry (or of any art for that matter) is communication - communication of feelings and experience. On the terminology of Sanskrit literary criticism, this is rasa - nispatti - evocation of rasa the process whereby the sahradhyya blissfully lives though the sentiments and moods of the poet's experience, presented through his creative ability. Rasa is conveyed through the medium of suggestion (dvani) and that alone; a task at which a grosser medium like verbal expression invariably fails. Figures of speech, dictions, turns of expression, sound patterns, imagery are but accessories, whose employment with due concession to appropriateness (aucitya) would serve as conveyors of dvani. More over, the rasa manifesting elements (vibhavas, etc.) discharge their functions only when appropriately employed. Thus, within the bounds of rasa, dvani and aucitya, the entire theory of aesthetics in Sanskrit is comprehended.9

Now the question arises weather aucitya should be considered as a separate school. As it has already been mentioned Ksemendra considered aucitya to be the jivita of poetry. With the same basis he says that all the components (alamkara, raga, riti, dvani and vakrokti) should be used appropri-
ately then only the real essence of poetry is been brought. He has always given importance to the proper use of these components. Hence, 

ице, Aucitya should be considered as the exaltant element of, every poetic element.

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7. Theories of rasa and Dhvani, Dr. A. Sankaran, p.146.
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7. The Anumana Theory

The anumana theory has been propounded by Mahimabhatta in his illustrious work called Vyativiveka. He wrote a full length book called Vyaktiviveka to examine afresh the true nature of the Vyanga sense and found out that all the varieties of dhvani may duly be included in the scope of anumana (inference). He criticised not only the conception of dhvani but also every word and syllable of the Dhavanyaloka, whatever he found fault in it. But it may be observed that, Mahima had in the core of his heart a great amount of admiration for Anand and had agreement with Anand’s view in most places as regards the causes, effects and the essence of Kavya. In his first chapter of Vaktiveveka Mahima Bhatta wrote verse which clears the blind sense of Dhvani supporters and that verse leads them to understand anumana theory. The definition of anumana for a detail study is very vast. There are so many texts in which anumana comes as a major facts.

Mahima explains and recognises the phenomenon of suggestion (vyanjana) as poetic inference (Kavyanumiti). He explains that all the varieties of dhvani are the cases of Kavyanumiti. Mahimabhatta says the permanent mental status of love, sorrow, etc. belonging to poetical characters are inferred through the cognition of the Vibhava, Anubhava and the vyabhicaribhava, described in the Kavya. It is inexplicable magic of the poetry that the inferred Sthayibhavas lead to the exquisite pleasure of reminiscence whereas the ordinary life the sthayibhavas as belonging to others do not lead to any such pleasure. He accepts all the cases of dhvani and explains them in terms of Kavyanumiti. And whereever he find difficulty in applying the process of inference he totally stopped using the case.

In the Dhvanyalok, Anandavardhana has given a detailed exposition of the nature of Abhivyakti though he does not give a formal definition of it as such. He has carefully distinguished Vyanjakatva from other functions of sound like vacakatva and Gunavritti. From his treatment, it is clear that he comprehends the illumination of an unexpressed meaning by sound or the expressed meaning as Abhivyakti. He includes the cognition of the unexpressed Vastu, Alamkara and Rasa in Abhivyakti. It is remarkable that Anandavardhana does not give any transcendentical explanation for the realisation of Rasa and confines Abhivyakti to a purely cognitive level.

Mahimabhatta’s theory of Abhivyakti is evidently meant as a substitute for the theory of Abhivyakti by Anandavardhana. The Abhivyakti theory...
developed by Abhinavagupta offers a transcendental explanation for the aesthetic experience by incorporating the idea of the illumination of the true nature of the self. This explanation is greatly influenced by the aesthetic principles of Bhattanayaka who pointed out several defects in the Utpattivada of Lollata, the Anumilivada of Sankuda, and the Abhivyaktivada of Anandvardhana. Bhattanayaka quietly rightly points out that the herories of his predecessors donot offer any solution to the problem how Rasenispatti yields pleasure in poetry and drama. His observation that the cognition of Rasa existing in another person cannot generate aesthetic experience is pertinent and to the point. He also correctly maintains that the theories before him cannot explain the sharing of the emotion by the reader or the spectator. Bhattanayaka's doctrine of the universalisation of emotions and the transcendence of ego in aesthetic experience are accepted by Abhinavagupta who broadens the concept of Abhivyakti to include all the characteristics of aesthetic experience starting from the cognition of the suggested meaning and ending in the contemplation of emotion. But it would be wrong to suppose that all these ideas are implicit in Anandvardhana's theory of Abhivyakti. Hence Mahimabhatta's concept of Anumana being its substitute, cannot be held defective on the score that it does not satisfy the conditions considered necessary by Abhinavagupta for aesthetic experience. Mahimabhatta has refuted the argument that the inference theory cannot explain aesthetic pleasure. It is not clear whether he is specifically referring to the objections raised by Bhattanayaka or Abhinavagupta. It seems that Mahimabhatta tries to explain aesthetic pleasure on the basis of the fictiveness of the emotions and the unexpectedness of its cognition. Dr. V.K.Chari also subscribes to a similar view when he maintains that it is the fictive nature of the poetic representation that makes it possible for us to enjoy it with detachment and without the impingement of Arthakriya or causal efficiency.

However Mahimabhatta's theory of Arumana is useful in the explanation of the comprehension of meaning preceding appreception of poetry. Actually the aesthetic experience is a complicated process sparked off by the reading of poem and culminating in the rapt contemplation of emotion. It has several steps. In the appreciation of poetry, it involves the comprehension of the sound, cognition of the expressed meaning, understanding the deeper significance of poetry and emotional involvement in the depicted theme. It is with regard to the comprehension of the unexpressed deeper significance of poetry that Mahimabhatta's theory of inference can serve as a key. The main objection against inference as a cognitive process is that it leaves no ground for any doubt or dispute as to the nature of the meaning cognised. This point, which is referred
to by Anandavardhana actually does not have much substance since it is common knowledge that any meaning cannot be cognised from petry. It may also be pointed out that the combination of Vibhava, Anubhava and Vyabhicaribhava, can give rise to only the specific Rasa as per Abhinavagupta’s dictum. Thus, it can be reasonably maintained that inference theory is really helpful for the explanation of the cognition of the unexpressed meaning.

The advent of the Anumana doctrine as a substitute for Dhvani, proposed by Mamimabhatta resulted in a raging controversy among his immediate successors. It is curious that Kuntaka and Mahimabhatta, the two post Anandvardhana authors who were not the adherents of the Dhvani theory did not have a single follower for their poetic doctrines. The poeticians coming after Mahimabhatta approached his doctrine as a purvapaksa to the Siddhanta, viz. Dhvanis essentially distinct from all other factors of poetry and all other cognitive functions like Abhidha, Laksana and Anumana. They tried to demolish the Anumana Theory by raising a number of objections to it and thus tried to defeat Dhvani against the former’s onslaughts. It can be seen that objections of the Anumanavedins to the Dhvani theory is a lively issued in the authors of the early post Mahimabhatta’s period like Mammata, Ruyyaka, Visvanatha, Vidhyanatha, Vidhyadharma. But gradually Anumana Theory losses its prominence and when we come to the time Appayyadiksita and Jagannasha, it has ceased to be a controversial issue at all the Dhvani Theory having been established firmly once for all. Hence it is not surprising that Vyaktiviveka also sank into oblivion and lost its prominence as the time passed.

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